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JUNE THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS[®]

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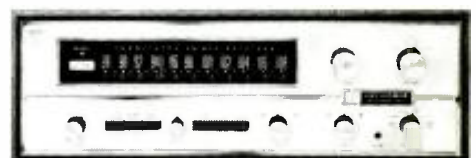
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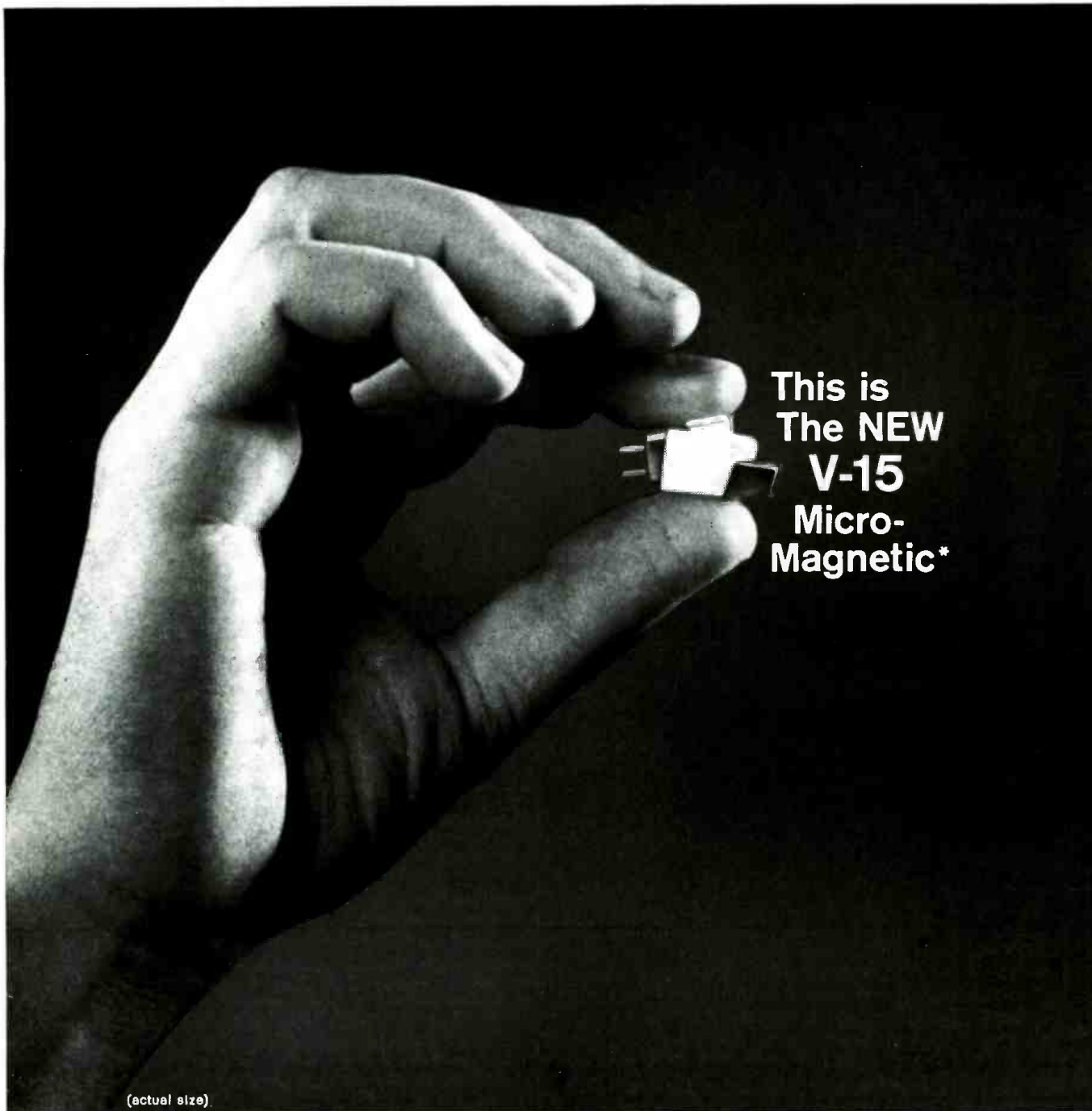
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



high fidelity

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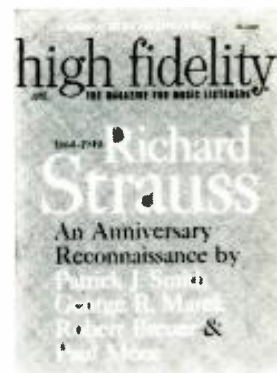
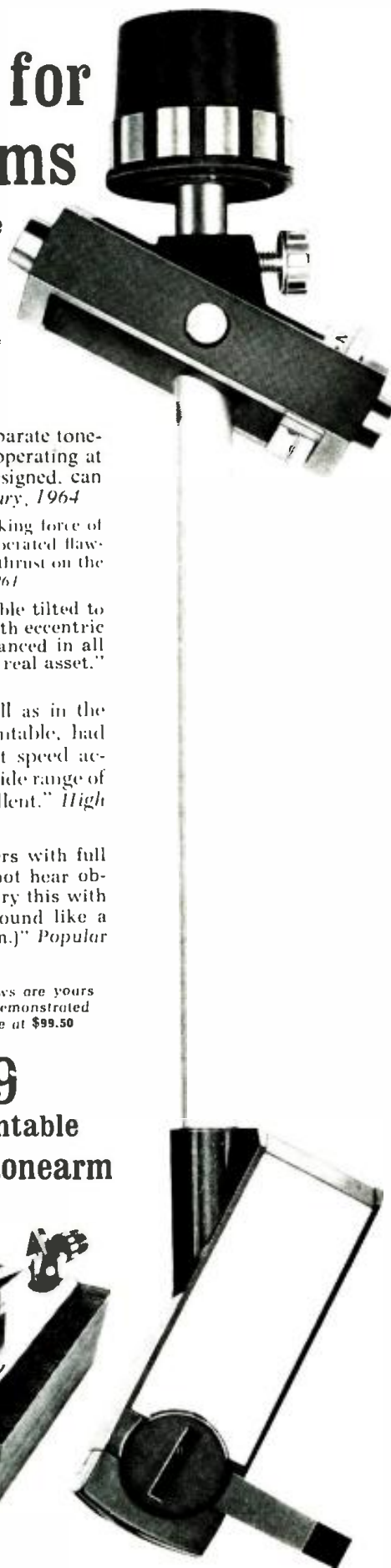


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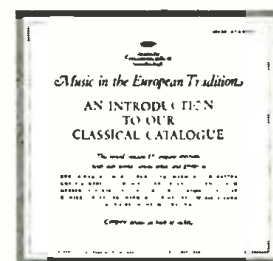
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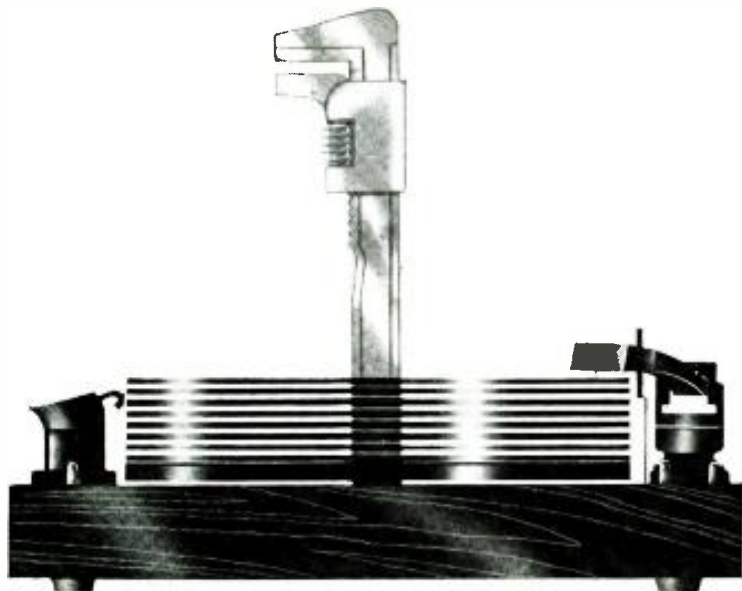
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CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

AUTHORitatively Speaking

"The Paradox of 'Late Strauss'" is the over-all rubric accompanying the two articles that open this month's reconnaissance of the music of Richard Strauss, born one hundred years ago on June 11. Like any paradox, Strauss's lifework is open to varying explanations, leading to disparate conclusions. Here we present a case in point.

Claiming that the works written after *Rosenkavalier* represent the height of "Sweetness, Serenity, Sentiment . . ." (see p. 36), is Patrick J. Smith, a young writer now making his first appearance in this journal. Since graduating from Princeton, Mr. Smith has made his home in New York, where he is presently engaged in producing a book on Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the poet-dramatist who was Strauss's collaborator. Mr. Smith is also at work on a critique of the novel as a form, and, concurrently, on a novel of his own.

Taking exception to Mr. Smith's Straussian views is George R. Marek, who sees in the composer's later works mainly "Pose, Pretense, Pomposity . . ." (p. 39). Mr. Marek, who is Vice President and General Manager of RCA Victor Records, is of course in a strategic position to estimate public taste in such matters (and, as his article makes clear, he respects public taste), but he is here, we feel, expressing strong personal convictions formed over many years of critical listening. Mr. Marek, by the way, is author as well as businessman: *vide* his biography of Puccini, his anthology *The World Treasury of Grand Opera*, and—most recent—*Opera as Theater* (Harper & Row, 1962).

As some people may have forgotten, Strauss was a celebrated conductor, whose appearances on the podium extended even to America. In "A Case of Hard-Earned Bread" (p. 42), Robert Breuer takes us along on these tours. A Viennese by birth, Mr. Breuer as a schoolboy heard many Strauss-led performances at the Staatsoper, and in the ultimate rift between Strauss and the Opera's codirector, Franz Schalk, young Breuer was a vociferous member of the Strauss cohort. He was also an admirer of Hofmannsthal, upon whom he wrote a school graduation essay that earned congratulations from the subject himself. Long a resident of this country, Mr. Breuer is New York music correspondent for a number of European newspapers and periodicals.

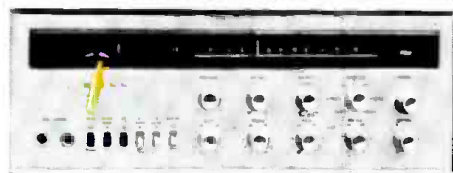
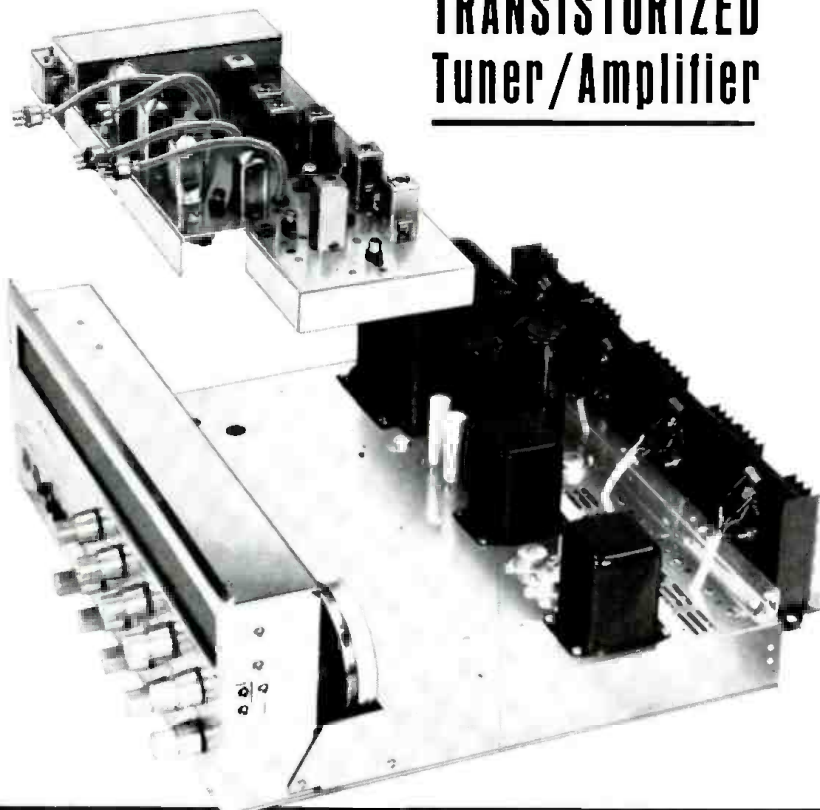
Our Berlin-based colleague Paul Moor communicates with us only by cable, and we are thus dependent upon hearsay for the latest chapter in his *Life & Works*. Current rumor has it that he's gone into seclusion to complete an epic poem. What we know for a fact, however, is that when we suggested his investigating the subject of Strauss's ambivalent relationship with his home city of Munich, Mr. Moor at once left for the Bavarian capital. For the result of this expedition, turn to p. 46.

Electronics engineer and all-round audio man, Len Buckwalter is a thorough professional—five books and some two hundred articles have appeared under his byline—but he faces in his own home the problems of the average high fidelity enthusiast. One of these is space; i.e., there's never enough. Mr. Buckwalter has found a solution, and he's spreading the good news—p. 50.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

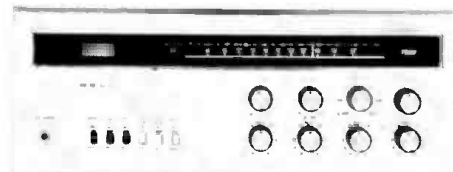
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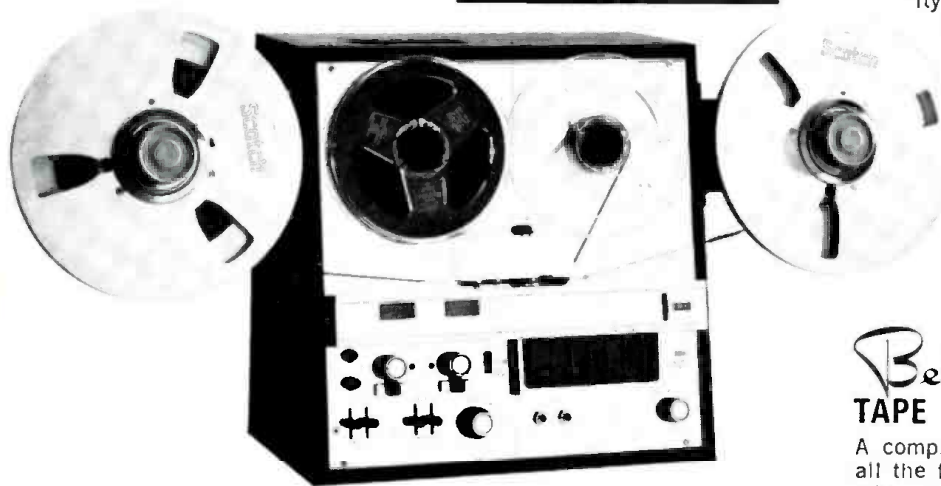


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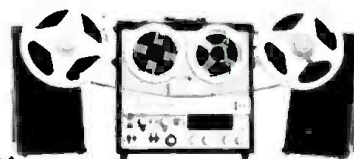
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Meanwhile, send for a free copy of Tarzian's illustrated 32-page booklet, "Lower the Cost of Fun With Tape Recording." It's full of tips to make your tapes more enjoyable and more valuable.



Piano Rolls

SIR:

Harold C. Schonberg made some comments about reproducing pianos in his review of piano roll recordings ["Twenty Pianists on Piano Rolls," March 1964]. With these comments I enthusiastically disagree.

With my Duo-Art reproducing piano I realized for the first time the difference between Copland's nervous Debussy and Paderewski's calm, controlled Debussy; between Hofmann's somewhat straightforward *Moonlight* Sonata and Carreño's amazingly distorted effects. In this I agree with Mr. Schonberg: no pianist nowadays could get by with such mannered playing. But only on a reproducing piano have the shadings, the odd accents, the rhythmic accuracies been apparent to me.

I would appreciate your publishing my name and address because I would beg, borrow, or give a larcenous small payment for any reproducing piano rolls your readers might have.

Art M. Faner
2202 East 14th Ave.
Denver, Colo.

SIR:

The *Vorsetzer* (or push-up, as it is known in England) was developed as the earliest type of piano player. It was not invented by Edwin Welte and, in fact, was reintroduced in an improved form. There never was any such company as the Duo-Art Company. In fact, Duo-Art rolls were made by the Aeolian Company, and were designed to be played as artists' recordings, just like the Welte rolls, on an electrically run reproducing piano. The Aeolian Company also made ordinary piano rolls intended for foot-pumping, which were strictly low fidelity. The Welte rolls were proper reproducing rolls, as were the Ampico rolls in America, the Duo-Art rolls in America and England, the Triphonola rolls in Germany, and the Pleyela rolls in France. Each of these systems operated on a differing principle, and with results which are interesting to compare.

Mr. Schonberg states that the rolls were "highly doctored" and physically tampered with. In this connection, it may be interesting to recall the words of Rudolph Ganz, who broadcast on an American radio station in 1960 on the subject of his Duo-Art recordings (which

Continued on page 12



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CIRCLE 57 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



The following is AUDIO magazine's "Equipment Profile" on the Fisher XP-10 Console speaker system, reprinted in its entirety:

The Fisher XP-10 was introduced in the latter part of 1963 and represents the crowning achievement of the Fisher line of loudspeakers. It is a three-way system encompassing a 15-in. woofer, an 8-in. midrange speaker, and a "soft dome" hemispherical tweeter.

Before going forward with an explanation and description of this speaker system, it might be worthwhile to look back briefly. If our memory serves us correctly, Fisher has been making speaker systems for only a few years, and yet some trade sources indicate that they are amongst the top few in current popularity. A rather striking performance which has been largely unheralded. Undoubtedly part of this success was due to the fact that the Fisher name was on these speakers. Equally important, however, was the fact that the progression of systems have been excellent performers for their day and age, and have been consistently upgraded over the years. Thus we arrive at their best and most elaborate system to date.

The XP-10 is also the finest piece of speaker furniture produced by Fisher, which is only partially indicated in the illustration. Measuring 24³/₈-in. wide, 30¹/₂-in. high, and 14⁵/₈-in. deep, it makes an unusually handsome piece of furniture with its Scandinavian Walnut exterior. Now let us take a look at what lies beneath that exterior.

The Woofer

The 15-in. woofer features the eddy-current damped electrolytic-copper voice coil which was introduced in the Fisher XP-4A. This technique provides excellent damping, and thus excellent transient response. The open air resonance of this speaker is 18 cps, and in the enclosure provides good output in the 30-cps region. The crossover frequency of 200 cps permits the woofer to operate in its most effective range and avoids some of the phasing problems resulting from a higher crossover point. The low-frequency driver utilizes a 6-lb. magnet structure.

Altogether, the 15-in. cone, the powerful driver, the excellent damping, and the low crossover frequency combine to produce clean and tight bass.

The Midrange Speaker

Often, the importance of the midrange

"The XP-10 is truly a step forward in smoothness, transient response and musical quality. It handled percussion, piano, strings, brass, and what have you, as cleanly and precisely as any speaker system we know." —AUDIO magazine, March, 1964

speaker is overlooked, especially since it is usually the least expensive speaker in a decent-quality three-way system. In fact the mid-range does the lion's share of the work since it must carry the majority of the orchestral fundamentals. Just glance at one of those charts which show the frequency range of orchestral instruments if you want to be convinced.

In addition to doing all that work, it must also be a smooth bridge between the woofer and tweeter. We can't overstress the importance of properly bridging the high and low frequencies in a three-way system; a poor bridge can make even the best woofer and tweeter sound somewhat poor.

The preceding makes us well believe the statement by the manufacturer that he tried literally hundreds of different combinations of parameters before the right combination was found. The final result is a midrange which is flat within 1¹/₂ db. It required an 8-in. speaker with a 5¹/₂-lb. magnet structure, 1¹/₂-in. voice coil, and its own separate-from-the-woofer loading. The upper crossover frequency of 2500 cps was chosen as a good compromise between the major orchestra fundamentals and the increasing importance of dispersion with increasing frequency.

The Tweeter

The major innovation introduced in the XP-10 is the "soft dome" hemispherical tweeter. Usually, hemispherical tweeters have domes made of molded phenolic or spun aluminum, both very stiff substances. The assumption behind these stiff domes is the same as one would have in making a cone tweeter; they require a stiff, light material because of the frequencies involved. Unfortunately, these stiff domes have certain resonances which tend to show up above 10 kc.

The designer of this system reasoned that the hemispherical tweeter is different than the cone tweeter in that it is driven at its periphery so that there is a certain amount of structural strength (like an arch) making it unnecessary to use materials such as aluminum or phenolics. Instead he used a rubber-impregnated cotton diaphragm and achieved the same excellent dispersion and transient properties of the stiffer materials, without the characteristic resonances of these materials. (A patent is pending on the idea.)

Of course, to take advantage of the excellent properties of this tweeter, and to match

it to the more efficient cone speakers, a 5¹/₂-lb. magnet structure with an air-gap flux density of 16,000 gauss was used. It is interesting to note that the magnetic circuit on this tweeter is more powerful than the circuit on many woofers—but of course this speaker is much, much less efficient.

Performance

In order to gauge the performance of the XP-10, we decided to go through extensive listening tests in addition to the usual microphone pickup tests.

First let us look at what the microphone revealed as far as frequency response and dispersion. The frequency-response curve was essentially flat (within 2 db) from 50 cps (our starting point) out to 16,000 cps. At 30 cps the curve was down 5 db and at 20,000 cps it was down 7 db. The dispersion was constant, within 3 db, over an angle of about 90 deg., which was as far as we measured. We noted that the high-frequency response was unusually smooth, thus corroborating the designer's contention concerning the soft dome. Indeed, our measurement of the midrange also agreed with his statements: it was well within the 1¹/₂-db variation he claimed. Beyond that, the unit we tested had a remarkably smooth response curve overall.

The listening tests were the best of all however. (They don't always agree with measurements, as you may well know.) We must report that the XP-10 is truly a step forward in smoothness, transient response, and musical quality. It handled percussion, piano, strings, brass, and what have you, as cleanly and precisely as any speaker system we know. We won't use that hackneyed term "best," because it is a meaningless term when applied to speakers, but we will say it pleased us immensely. You try it.

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CIRCLE 34 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 10

he felt were still perfectly valid as recordings of his own playing). He had also made a number of recordings for the Welte-Mignon Company in Germany. Mr. Ganz, a pupil of Busoni, was explaining that he had had a chance to make corrections in his Duo-Art recordings—which he thought was a good idea, since the rolls were never issued until the recording artist was completely satisfied with them. Whereas, "the Welte-Mignon Company, of Freiburg, Germany, did not want the artist to have anything to say any more after he had played. It was some kind of arrogance on their part to think the machines are so good and all the artists are so good, but neither the machine nor the artists were what I would call impeccable. After all, an artist is a person with nerves and thoughtfulness, and even a machine can go haywire at times."

From this it will be seen that of all the reproducing piano rolls which might have been tampered with, the Welte rolls are the ones which were distinctly not tampered with. The Busoni playing on the Welte records, heavily criticized by Mr. Schonberg, is also an interesting point. Artur Rubinstein, quite rightly, criticizes the defective pedaling in the Verdi-Liszt *Rigoletto* Paraphrase. Those familiar with the actual roll will already have realized that the Welte mechanism misbehaved on this particular recording and, in fact, missed the pedal punctuations which were marked on the roll. This should not be an occasion for condemning the whole system.

Whilst on the subject of Busoni, it is worth recalling that, in a letter to his wife dated May 31, 1908, he mentioned that he was asked to sign a testimonial for the piano rolls which he had made, but he declined to put his signature to a testimonial served up to him by the manufacturers, and decided to write one of his own. It is interesting to consider the testimonial which he did, in fact, write: "The Welte-Mignon, so to say, a cinematograph of piano playing, is an invention of quite equal importance, as surprising for mere amateurs as it is wonderful for the skilled musician. It will be of great use for artists, and through them, let us hope, afford great pleasure to the general public." This is a long way from Mr. Schonberg's comment on the same subject: "Basically, then, piano rolls are to be distrusted." There is, in fact, much in piano rolls of very great value, both musically and historically. Mr. Schonberg found Teresa Carreño's playing of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody* No. 6 rather strange. I found it strange myself, but she herself has left a comment on *this very roll* which reads as follows: "The rendering was so exactly as I played it, that I should like to express once again my admiration for this incredible invention." Historically, therefore, it is of very great interest to hear what this roll sounded like.

G. C. Stonchill
London, England

SIR:

I read with great interest Harold C. Schonberg's criticism of Welte-Mignon, and I agree with all his reservations about these instruments of reproduction. Naturally the *Vorspeler* is more disappointing than the built-in apparatus. I possess about a hundred Welte rolls and a Steinway reproducing piano, and I played some rolls for Petri and Serkin, recorded by them for Welte in the Twenties. Serkin said: "I never played slowly and without vigor like the rolls." Petri said: "Old beer." I also played for Petri rolls by Reisenauer and Busoni, and his comments were similar to those made by Artur Rubinstein to Mr. Schonberg. As Mr. Schonberg says, however, the Welte apparatus is a wonderful instrument for wise use, such as studying cadenzas and unpublished variants in Liszt works played by Liszt pupils.

Dr. Roman Flury
Radio Basel
Basel, Switzerland

SIR:

The problem of piano rolls has exercised London musical circles lately as well. Your critic Harold Schonberg is the first reviewer to examine the considerable difficulties raised by this subject in a reasoned scientific manner while preserving his musical faculties.

The British Broadcasting Corporation grasped the nettle a year or two ago and sought, once and for all, the truth about Welte piano roll recordings. I was associated with the program which probed these mysteries and our approach was substantially the same as Schonberg's.

A panel of three experts was appointed, consisting of a pupil of Leschetizky, a professor and concert pianist, and a senior member of the musical staff of the BBC responsible for auditioning pianists, amongst other duties. First of all, comparisons between rolls and ancient gramophone discs were carefully checked. Then veteran pianists were interrogated and their views canvassed. Contemporary and disinterested critical opinions were sifted and scrutinized. Very many rolls were listened to, both live and on commercial recordings. We were fortunate in possessing trial pressings of the records discussed by Mr. Schonberg, amongst other Welte recordings. The verdict of the panel was unanimous. Granted a correctly functioning mechanism, the rolls in question—Ampico and Welte-Mignon—were faithful recordings and superior to the acoustic recordings on disc made at the same period.

J. J. S. Farmer
Secretary, Liszt Society
London, England

SIR:

It is unfair to criticize *all* piano rolls merely because *some* were doctored. The fact that they were subject to possible tamperings or "hanky-panky" cannot be a valid basis for criticism, unless one applies the same yardstick to our evaluations of all modern recordings made from easily altered tape masters. We

Continued on page 14



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parably priced recorders from these countries can be expected to rate significantly lower in performance.

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CIRCLE 3 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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LETTERS

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should give Welte credit for at least as much integrity as we give modern recordists, especially when we have the testimony of the artists themselves to the effect that their performances were respected in every detail. I have read Mr. Schonberg's reviews for some years, and he obviously has a preference for present-day interpretation as against the highly individualized styles of the past. It is quite true that the artists of the past played quite unusually at times, but this is precisely what gives the CRL recordings their value to modern pianists.

As a lifelong student of the piano and an avid collector of early piano recordings, I must say that your reviewer's arguments to support his claim that the recordings do not truly represent the artists' playing are based purely on his own personal bias, or upon fallible memory of the distant past and of the styles in question. I have compared, for example, the Mendelssohn *Rondo capriccioso* as played by Hofmann on Columbia (A 6078) with the electrical recording of the same number which he made in concert in 1939 (issued in 1957 on Allegro 1711) and both of these with the CRL recording, and I certainly do not find the latter to be the inferior of the three. (Apparently Mr. Schonberg is not familiar with the Allegro pressing, for he does not mention it.) It is obvious that the CRL and Allegro performances resemble each other more closely than does the Columbia acoustical either of these records. If one compares the CRL with the Allegro recording, it becomes clear that, similar as they are in many ways, the earlier Welte is superior for its youthful vitality. The interpretation is quite similar in the two, and thus, if Mr. Schonberg wants to criticize it, he must criticize Hofmann himself. Actually, I was amazed at how true to the artist the Welte recording of this number was, and shocked at your reviewer's comments to the contrary.

The Classics Record Library recordings made from Welte rolls are not perfect, of course, but neither are they of slight musical value, as your reviewer has implied. They are a great achievement and a true treasure-house to serious piano enthusiasts.

Charles E. Carranza
Fullerton, Calif.

Mr. Schonberg replies: May I make a few comments about the letters received on my review of "Legendary Masters of the Piano"? Many of the writers put strong credence on the remarks of the artists themselves about their piano rolls. I am not impressed with such testimonials. From the earliest days of recording we have had eminent musicians saying that their records (or rolls) were positively the last word in high fidelity, in accuracy, in reproduction of their art; and this was as true in 1910 as it is today. It has been my experience that the better the musician, the less he knows about sound. Hans von

Bülow once said of Liszt that in the house of the greatest pianist one heard the worst playing (he was referring to Liszt's pupils). Similarly, today, in the best musicians' houses one hears the most ghastly, distorted "high fidelity" sound—to which they listen with perfect equanimity and contentment. Musicians have a tendency to hear with the brain as much as with the ear, especially when they are listening to their own interpretations. I was rather amused by Mr. Carranza's statement to the effect that I "obviously" have a preference for present-day interpretations as against the highly individualized styles of the past. Most pianists who know my work seem to think I am an anachronism who responds only to the old style. I am familiar with Hofmann's Allegro record of the Mendelssohn but did not mention it in my review because it is an example of Hofmann c. 1940. The Columbia disc, c. 1915, is much closer to the 1913 roll. Hofmann's playing had changed considerably by 1940. All I can do is repeat my conclusion, based on a bit of experience, that piano rolls are much more an index to the style of a period rather than to the style of a specific artist; and that I still find much more freedom and flexibility on old records than on any piano roll I have ever heard.

Live Opera on Records

SIR:

I found your editorial "Opera from the Stage—A Declaration and a Plea" [February 1964] both sensible and pertinent. Your support for the Deutsche Grammophon *Ariadne* is most welcome—I hope it will encourage the company to release similar performances from the past as well as the present. Certainly the great live performances have an aura of excitement and naturalness that is unique. The great performances, however, are few and far between. I trust we will be spared a series of mediocre performances on disc—advanced solely because they are live.

John Eyre
New York, N. Y.

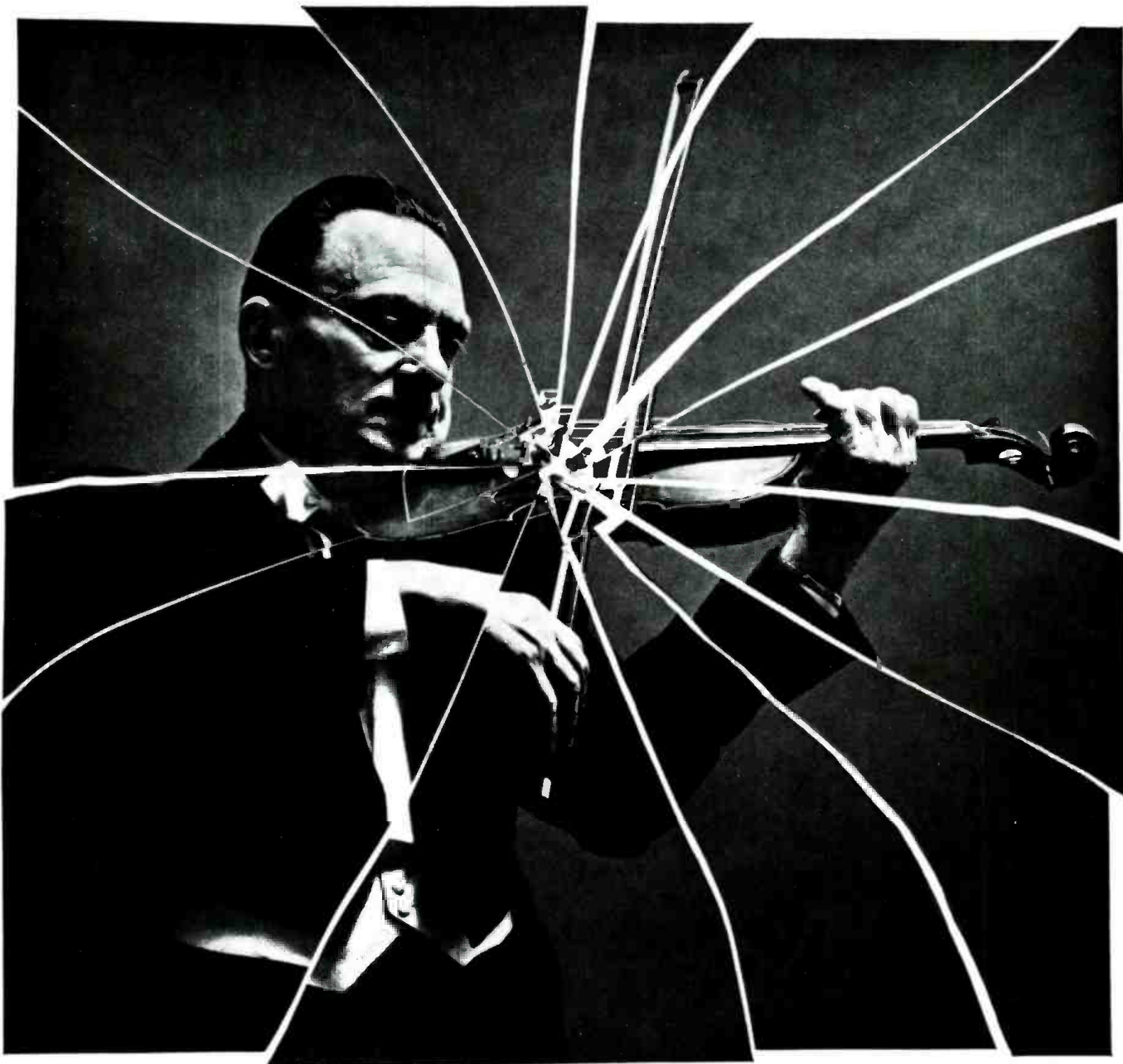
SIR:

Your stand on live opera was most gratifying. The outlook for the future release of such performances on records would seem much more promising now that a publication as influential as yours has expressed its wholehearted approval.

The performances that you submitted as especially worthy of commercial release were unquestionably good ones. Even so, I think that your list could have been extended to include others equally valuable. Flagstad's 1952 broadcast performance of *Alceste* would surely be as readily sought by the public as her 1941 *Fidelio*. Many feel that Flagstad's 1952 *Alceste* was her crowning achievement at the Met—even better than her earlier *Isolde* and *Brünnhilde*. Unfortunately, the version which she recorded for London in 1956 was not

Continued on page 16

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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LETTERS

Continued from page 14

Gluck's revised second version but the first one in Italian. Most critics commended this recording, but not without questioning London's choice of Gluck's first version and judging Flagstad's 1952 accomplishment as superior. Let us hope that it, as well as the 1941 Bruno Walter *Fidelio*, will be released in the future to complete the great singer's recording legacy.

Frederick Seinfeld
Indiana, Pa.

More of the Minors

SIR:

Robert Lawrence, in his fine article on Massenet [March 1964], makes the point that our operatic repertoires are sadly in need of some "minor composers." I wholeheartedly agree, and feel, like Mr. Lawrence, that a Massenet revival is a step in the right direction.

I also feel, and I suspect that I am not alone, that bringing back mediocre examples of Italian verismo (which is, at best, an art form with all the depth and subtlety of, say, the 1812 Overture)—works like *Adriana Lecouvreur* or any of the other trivial excursions of such deservedly minor figures as Giordano, Cilea, Zandonai, et al.—is no solution to the problem.

Wasting our time with this trash is an affront, especially when one considers the amazing number of really good operas today unplayed. For a start, there are the Dvořák operas, *Rusalka* in particular. How about Peter Cornelius' *Barber of Bagdad* (fortunately available on a superb Electrola import)—a comic opera that can stand on equal terms with *Die Meistersinger*? What about Goldmark's lovely *Queen of Sheba*? Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*? Some Weber operas besides *Freischütz*?

And what about Hugo Wolf? I'm sure that there are a great many operaphiles who would like to see even a roughly sung performance of *Corregidor*. Surely if some of your readers make their opinions felt, some sort of start can be made.

Abram Turner
Hackensack, N. J.

On Taping 78s

SIR:

In reference to Conrad L. Osborne's article on taping from 78s [March 1964], I'd like to add some suggestions. To begin with, if one has a good recorder, he won't need to tape at any higher speed than 3¾ for many early 78s. The modern tape recordist owning the latest and best stereo equipment may have some difficulty maximizing the sound

from 78s, before or after they have been put on tape. I have found that a magnetic pickup-preamp combination cannot do justice to 78s without one of the old mono equalizer-preamplifiers like Scott's 121 series and the McIntosh Equalizer. The best solution is to use a ceramic (crystal) cartridge and bypass the preamp stage.

For electrical 78s from the late Twenties to the late Forties, a standard 3-mil diamond stylus does the best job of all nonspecial-sized needles. Unfortunately, most stylus manufacturers do not make real 78 needles. They make them 2.5 mil or 2.7 mil, rarely 3.0 mil, the optimum size for electrical 78s.

Like Mr. Osborne, I also have committed the Büsser *Faust* to tape (unfortunately only from a post-1940 pressing) and am now looking for good pressings of the Sibelius and Delius Society Sets and the Talich—Czech Philharmonic readings of three of Dvořák's symphonies, none of which have been put on LP.

John P. Dahlquist
Oakland, Calif.

SIR:

I'd like to add another technical hint—on centering 78 discs before dubbing. The elimination of the traditional 78 "wow" is an absolute necessity before dubbing. If the spindle doesn't fit the center hole too tightly, a judicious knock at the point of greatest swing can, with repeated attempts, center the record. (When the cartridge has no lateral movement at all, success has been attained.)

Abandon all hope for best 78 dubbing if a record changer is used: the spindle often prevents centering. However, if you are using a transcription turntable, with low center spindle, just pile old 78s under the one to be dubbed until the pile goes above spindle level. The weight of the 78 holds the disc in place while dubbing.
William E. Schultz
Milwaukee, Wis.

SIR:

With some of the newer recorders it is possible to obtain a quite acceptable stereo effect by using the device built into these machines for this purpose. This, plus reverberation or "echo," adds a modern-day live quality to many earlier discs which were made in an acoustically dead recording studio or concert hall. If there are pops or ticks on the dubbed tape, I find it much easier, rather than going through an elaborate splicing process, simply to use my tape head demagnetizer to remove these unwanted sounds. I spot the point of noise by manually centering the noise on the center of the playback head, then bring the tip of the demagnetizer to the center of the head, leaving the power turned on as it approaches the head. The noise will be eliminated quickly and completely without having to cut the tape. And, since the erased area is small—less than a half inch—it will not be heard in a 7.5 playback. A certain amount of care must

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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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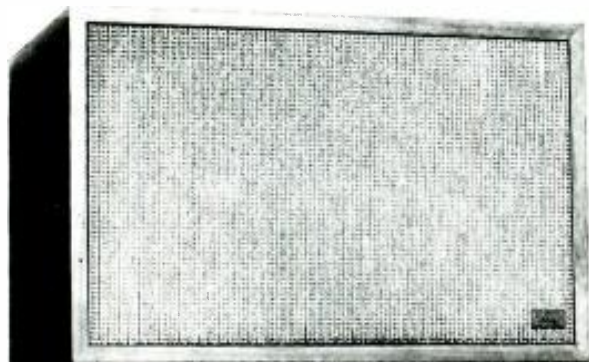
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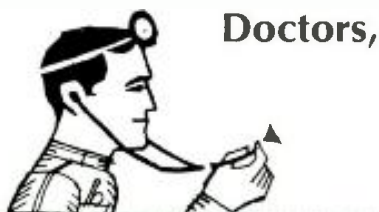
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CIRCLE 67 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

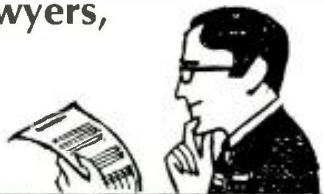
LETTERS

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Doctors,

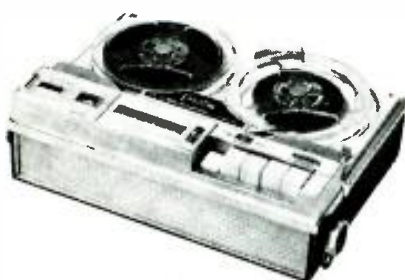
Lawyers,



Indian
Chiefs,



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COSMOPOLITAN 400**

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be applied in learning the characteristic erase pattern of each demagnetizer, but this can be easily learned. And it's certainly easier and quicker than making so many splices in the tape.

M. E. Baker
Hollywood, Calif.

Loudspeaker Diaphragms

SIR:

Loudspeaker diaphragms of new construction and of new materials like polystyrene foam have been introduced in recent years. A common explanation for their use is that their improved stiffness-to-mass ratio helps prevent them from vibrating in sections ("breaking up"), allowing them to approach the behavior of a uniformly moving piston.

This seems reasonable, but happens to be incorrect. The effect of increasing the stiffness of a speaker diaphragm, other things remaining the same, is to raise the frequency range in which breakup resonances occur and, with mathematical precision, to increase proportionately the violence of breakup. (In more technical terms, the mechanical Q of the diaphragm's internal resonant systems varies directly with the frequency of resonance. Resonant frequency, in turn, varies directly as the square root of the stiffness.) Unfortunately, it has not been possible, with current usable materials—including metal—to make the diaphragm so stiff that breakup resonances are moved up in frequency beyond the range where they are a problem.

The relationship between diaphragm stiffness and violence of breakup has been known and used by speaker designers for years. Speaker cones for small radios are sometimes made stiff in order to encourage violent breakup, making the sound appear louder and brighter. If you flick your fingernail against such a cone you will hear it "ring"—at higher frequencies than with a better speaker, and much more sharply.

Speaker performance at the lower bass frequencies is unaffected by the use of stiffer diaphragms, since there is no significant breakup or flexure below 200 cycles or so in any reasonably well-made cone. Piston action in this frequency range has been a reality for a long time.

Better internal damping and/or a sharp electrical high-frequency cutoff have been used as countermeasures to breakup in stiff woofer diaphragms. Whatever the merits of such diaphragms, good performance from them requires that the handicap of their increased stiffness-to-mass ratio be overcome.

Edgar Villechur
Acoustic Research, Inc.
Cambridge, Mass.

Clearly, the polystyrene foam diaphragm (as well as other new types) is a subject of disagreement among speaker designers. It is interesting to note what another expert says on the subject. In his recent

book *More About Loudspeakers* (1963), G. A. Briggs writes: "Expanded polystyrene combines lightness with rigidity and an absence of resonance; qualities which appeal naturally to the designer of loudspeakers." Briggs acknowledges the "limited acoustic range" of this type of diaphragm but does point out that it can be designed to give improved bass response (low resonance and free suspension) in a small enclosure. And when the material is "fixed to a certain area in the main cone," it can be used to control "the effect of cone breakup to some extent."

Aside from polystyrene as such, there also are other plastics such as polyurethane foam, and laminates of different materials, such as a plastic with paper, or with metal foil and paper, and so on. Such "composition" diaphragms, it has been pointed out, are less subject to becoming brittle with age. What's more, if the laminate be made of materials with dissimilar damping characteristics, it becomes inherently self-damping.

We feel that these new materials have enough promise to be given a chance for fulfillment in terms of product application. And Mr. Villechur does allow in his letter that the new types of diaphragms may have merits. In further discussion he indicated to us that these merits can be realized if the speaker diaphragm design "is in the direction of better internal damping." What Mr. Villechur objects to is the confusing of the theoretical ideal of piston action with the practical limits of speaker design. "We must accept diaphragm breakup as a fact of life—but breakup and resonances are controlled by internal damping rather than by increased stiffness. In the final analysis, the resonance and characteristics of the material—whatever it be—should not intrude into the reproduced sound."

With this we agree, of course. What matters most is how any design concept or material is applied to make the final product we listen to. The fact is that Mr. Villechur has demonstrated that his type of diaphragm is capable of excellent performance. But so too have many manufacturers of alternate types, including the new plastic diaphragms.

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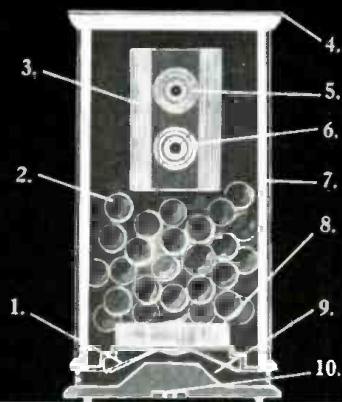
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CIRCLE 55 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

PHILADELPHIA

"I can tell you one thing," said Eugene Ormandy, looking happy as could be over the news he was about to announce. "this work is difficult to perform in concert, but it is much more difficult to record!" And certainly no one would question that the Berlioz Requiem (in which the composer, in a footnote to the score, hopefully made provisions for handling a chorus of seven or eight hundred voices) is probably one of the most challenging concert pieces to put on records. On two consecutive afternoons recently, in the big square ballroom of the Philadelphia Athletic Club, Mr. Ormandy and his orchestra, along with the Temple University Choirs and their director, Robert E. Page, devoted roughly ten hours to accomplishing this feat for Columbia Records. The performing forces required are enough to tax the resources even of the Philadelphia Orchestra—which, in addition to hiring ten outside players for the famous four extra brass choirs, had taken one man out of the violin section to play bass drum and put its librarian on tam-tam,

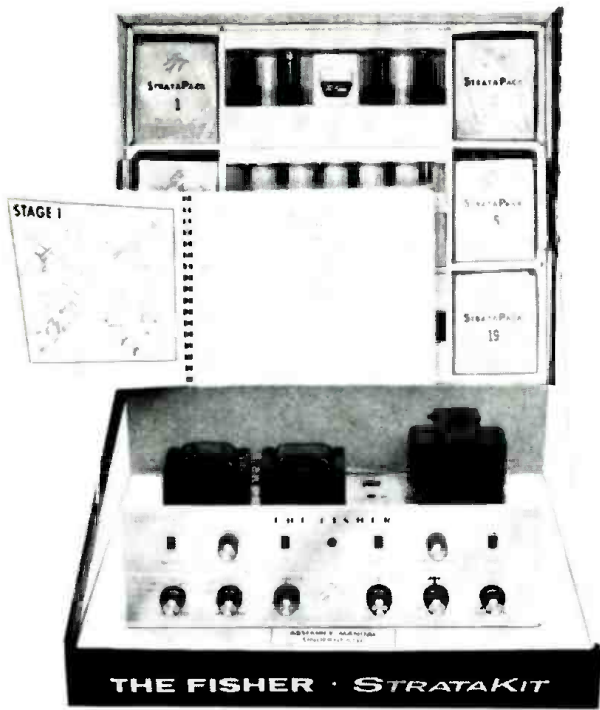
much to the delight of the pinch hitters' colleagues in the orchestra. One aspect of recording the Requiem was summed up succinctly by the personnel manager: "This puts a dent in the budget."

Sixteen microphones were set up in the hall, plus a seventeenth just beside the podium for Cesare Valletti, who sang the tenor solo in the Sanctus. The brass bands, which Berlioz rather picturesquely designates as "North, South, East, and West," were grouped in two segments instead of four, for the purposes of stereo. North and West were in the balcony to Mr. Ormandy's right, East and South in the balcony to his left, each facing a microphone perched on a twenty-foot tripod standing on the auditorium floor. The choirs, which stood as far back on the stage behind the orchestra as space permitted, had five of the mikes spaced evenly in front of them. Between the choirs and the rear of the orchestra was an empty space of twenty-five feet or so—calculated, Columbia's a & r director Tom Frost explained, to prevent the voices from projecting too far out into the room.

Continued on page 22



In a brown study for Berlioz: Frost, Valletti, Page, and Ormandy.



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CIRCLE 32 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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The distance between the choirs and the conductor created one of the ticklish problems of the session. "Up to eighty feet," Mr. Ormandy told me, "you can be sure of control. Here we have at least a hundred feet. It is very difficult to keep them together with the orchestra." He frequently exhorted the singers to keep their eyes on him. "Don't listen to the orchestra—something which ordinarily I would demand. Just watch my beat." Once, during the *Requiem et Kyrie* when the tenors began a descending scale with eighth rests between each note, they got a little ahead of the beat in their effort not to drag. "Don't push me," he told them, tapping his baton in their direction as a teacher might tap a pencil at a naughty class. "Don't push me. I am doing the pushing here."

The Parental Rod. Throughout the two days, however, Ormandy displayed a consistent and humorous kindness toward the Temple University students—who, it should be mentioned, had sung superbly for him at the New York performance of the *Requiem* the night before the first session and also, I was told, at several performances in Philadelphia the preceding week. It was director Robert Page who exercised the parental privilege of not sparing the rod, and he bore down with articulate fury from time to time. "Watch the bloody *s* at the bottom of page forty-five," he shouted once over loudspeakers from the control room. "The bloody *s* on page forty-five," intoned Tom Frost in confirmation. Later, when Page inquired "who the stupid soprano was who didn't take a breath between *requiem* and *aeternam*," a third of the men in the orchestra stood up and raised their hands. Chivalry, it was easy to see, was not dead in the City of Brotherly Love.

But the difficulties of the *Requiem* are by no means purely vocal, and this fact was brought to mind at the opening of the *Sanctus*, where the violins, in high unison and octaves, begin alone amid a rather awful stillness. Ormandy, who insisted that every man have his bow on the string before the start of the first note (played up-bow), went through these four measures a dozen times before the tone and intonation satisfied him. An even more hair-raising trial occurs repeatedly during the *Hostias*, where unison trombones and flutes in three parts—completely alone—must converge on a sustained chord with a four-octave hole in the middle. "These notes are very difficult to tune up," one of the horn players whispered to me. "They make musicians neurotic." I could well believe him.

By four-fifteen on the second afternoon the job was done. The musicians (who had spent the morning, incidentally, running through a rehearsal of Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Schumann, and Mozart

Continued on page 24

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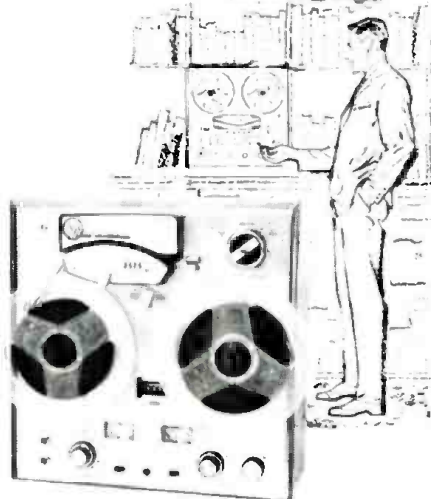
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NOTES FROM
OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 22

with a guest conductor) packed up to go home, and Robert Page's hundred and fifty students trooped off with chemistry and biology books under their arms. The Philadelphia Orchestra's conductor, looking fresh enough to do the whole thing again, was the last man out of the hall.

S.F.

PARIS

The annual "Festival du Son," organized under the attentive ear of André Malraux, has come and gone in an atmosphere that is increasingly scientific,

aesthetic, show-biz, and evangelical. What started out six years ago as the usual trade fair has developed into one of the most entertaining cultural bazaars in town. If you are an off-season tourist next spring, you ought to put the show on your list.

This year four floors of the Palais d'Orsay hotel were occupied. The actual organizer was of course not M. Malraux, but the Syndicat des Industries Electroniques de Reproduction et d'Enregistrement—which is better known as SIERE and which in action often turns out to be Marc Boissinot, the secretary-general. M. Boissinot had the help of the French national radio network and the federation of electronic industries, and the active participation of the Japanese, West German, Italian, Swiss, and Czech radios. There were special contributions from the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, which runs the national test laboratory, from the Phonothèque Nationale, which runs the museum of recordings, and from the Académie Charles Cros, which awards Grands Prix du Disque.

The Higher (French) Psychology. As these credit lines may suggest, the festival's six days were filled with much besides the demonstration of audio equipment. In a theatre on the ground floor there was an audio-visual spectacular called Diaporama (nothing to do with babies: a *diapositive* is a lantern slide). A battery of six projectors, equipped with enough switches to constitute a crude color organ, flashed onto three large screens a miscellany of handsome pictures to an accompaniment of taped music and effects. The young men working the projectors synchronized by eye and ear and did a bit of modulating between thematic sequences. The whole thing was surprisingly beautiful and exciting, and at the same time rather amateurish—which was the point. You left persuaded that you could do the same thing at home with last summer's vacation slides and some imaginative splicing of tapes.

Every morning this downstairs theatre was transformed into a classroom. French, German, Dutch, and Belgian

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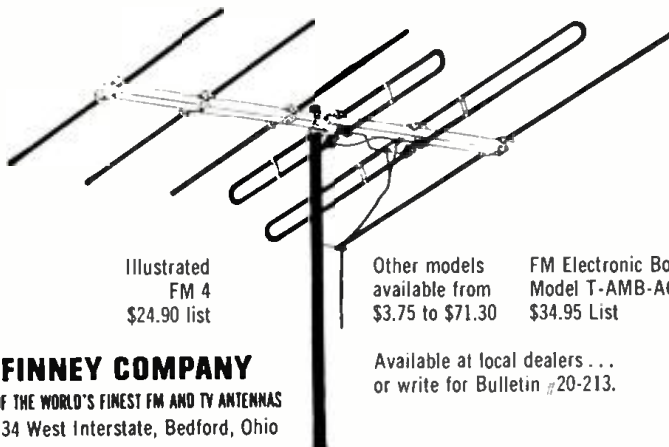
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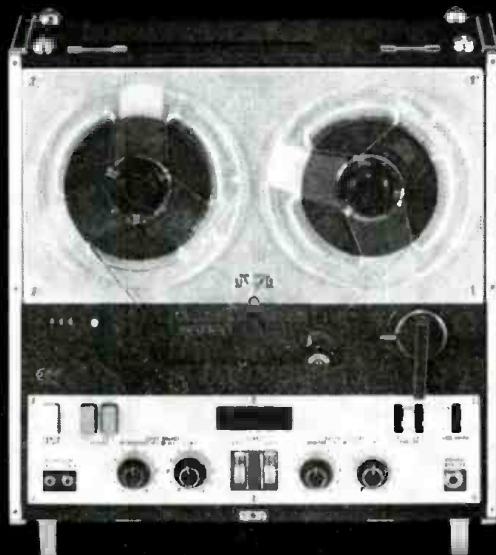
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CIRCLE 13 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM
OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 24

professors and sound engineers lectured on such subjects as "the sociology of sound" and "the problems of reproducing in apartments the atmosphere of theatres and concert halls." Each lecture was followed by half an hour of discussion, often lively, in which the audience participated.

On the floor above, in the hotel's ornate grand salon, there was a series of hour-long live concerts every afternoon, the intention being to provide a standard of reality with which to compare the recorded sound demonstrated elsewhere in the building. Visitors were free to wander in and hear Mady Mesplé sing Meyerbeer, or Andréa Guiot sing Duparc, or the Octet of the Orchestre National play Schubert, or Jean-Pierre Rampal play Handel, or Maxim Saury's New Orleans jazz band play *Dardanella*.

Down the hall, past the restaurant, the bar, and the tearoom, the French radio had a room where one could listen to its new FM-stereo broadcasts, now on an experimental basis but due for regular service late this year. On the other side of the restaurant there was a magazine and book shop, with browsing encouraged. Here you could buy, among other things, a little record (pressed by EMI) of extracts of material in the Phonothèque Nationale. It includes that 1904 recording of Mary Garden as Mélisande, with Debussy at the piano; the sound of an 1896 music box playing Chopin; Aristide Briand addressing the League of Nations in 1931; a Congo Pygmy playing a musical bow; Sarah Bernhardt, Guillaume Apollinaire, Francis Carco, and Paul Valéry reciting poetry; and Darius Milhaud talking about *la musique d'ameublement* forced on him in an American dentist's office.

What all this will finally mean in terms of business is hard to say. Some of the exhibitors felt that there were so many live and other nonphonographic attractions (or distractions) that people often did not bother to go up to the hotel suites where the commercial demonstrations were going on. But M. Bois-sinot and the other directors of the festival are convinced that their primary task is to stimulate the potential customer and to let him hear so much good sound that he will go home and be unhappy with his old record player.

Statistics. There were roughly forty thousand visitors to the festival, which represents a leveling off after an upsurge last year. Approximately fifty per cent of these visitors, according to a sampling poll, had not attended any of the earlier festivals. More dealers from the French provinces were on hand. One hundred and ten makers of equipment displayed their wares in rooms along a kilometer and a half of hotel corridors. In 1963 sales of equipment in metropolitan France were up about twenty per

Continued on page 28

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

two questions:

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"Maximum Fi: The Dyna outfit (PAS-3, Mark III's, FM-3) with stacked AR-3s is the least expensive way to obtain state-of-the-art performance.

Music Lovers: The Dyna (PAS-3, Stereo 70, FM-3) plus AR-3s has been recommended by more experts, and their nephews, than any other hi fi system. We don't hesitate to join the parade knowing that we run no risk whatever that anyone will be unhappy with the expenditure.

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High Fidelity Magazine, in individual test reports on Dyna-kits, has reported:

"We feel that the Dynakit PAS-2 is the equal of any manufactured preamplifier we have used, including some selling for several times its price."

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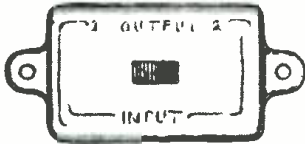
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NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 26

cent (measured in francs). There are now about 5,400,000 turntables in use in the country, but not many are part of high fidelity component systems. A fair guess is that at the present time stereo discs account for five per cent of record sales.

ROY McMULLIN

VIENNA

For the first time in the history of the Austrian press, news of recording contracts recently made headlines in this country's leading papers. It had come out that Herbert von Karajan had signed an exclusive contract with the German firm Deutsche Grammophon, and the announcement brought unexpected repercussions, some commentators inferring that the conductor was thus turning his back on the Vienna Staatsoper. In fact, the new DGG affiliation does mean the end of Karajan's recording activities with the Vienna Philharmonic, since that orchestra is under contract to Decca-London. Whether it also marks the first step in his relinquishing his post as one of the two directors of the Vienna Opera remains to be seen.

Certainly, fears of that prospect have not been allayed by reports from Berlin of the forthcoming Karajan agenda: a series of operatic recordings (including *Meistersinger*, *La Bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, and *I Pagliacci*) and a long list of symphonic recordings to be made with the Berlin Philharmonic. In some quarters there have been cries of "betrayal." Cooler heads feel that the matter hardly warrants being treated as a National Issue. As of this writing, the storm continues, having reached a first climax with Karajan's bringing a suit for libel against a well-known Viennese journalist.

Florestan Without Chains. The Vienna Philharmonic, of course, does not need this sort of publicity. As usual, it's been forging ahead with a full schedule. A *Götterdämmerung* for Decca-London is on the books, and work is currently under way—in the Theater an der Wien—on Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* under the baton of André Cluytens (to be released in the U.S.A. by Angel Records). The latter opera follows immediately on Decca-London's *Fidelio*, just completed in the Sofiensaal with Lorin Maazel conducting.

During a talk I had with Maazel after the last session, he emphasized that in his opinion the new *Fidelio* owed much of its artistic unity to the contribution made by the orchestra. It was, in any case, the only homogenous "Viennese" element in the production. The cast was an international one: Swedish (Birgit Nilsson as Leonore); American (James McCracken as Florestan, Donald Grobe as Jacquin); Italian

(Graziella Sciutti as Marzelline); Finnish (Tom Krause as Pizarro); German (Kurt Böhme as Rocco, Hermann Prey as Fernando). What struck me, in the course of the session which I attended, was the ease with which these singers of such diversified background appeared to adapt themselves to the general concept of the conductor.

Both Maazel and recording director Erik Smith insisted on an awareness that *Fidelio* encompasses the whole range of expression, from the lighter vein of *Singspiel* to the most powerful music-drama. When the new recording is released this fall (complete, though the dialogue has been shortened), listeners will notice the lighter sound of the first scenes as compared with the more massive orchestral forces to be heard in the beginning of the second act. Neither Maazel nor Smith had begun with preconceived ideas about how they would introduce such alterations. ("What is being done in the opera house," the conductor said, "cannot automatically be regarded as suitable for the recording studio.") Actually, they adopted a practice of experiment: a number of identical passages were taped with orchestral groups of varying sizes in order to assess their effect and discover the best solution.

Stage action was kept to a necessary minimum. It was felt that the gradual appearance of the prisoners on the stage did not need any real movement on the part of the singing-actors since the "stereo effect" of the slowly advancing choir is already built into the score by Beethoven. Florestan's aria will *not* be heard accompanied by the clanking of obbligate chains, and even the temptation to make the reverberating dungeon an occasion for the display of sonic ingenuity was stoutly resisted.

McCracken and Maazel. The *Fidelio* sessions were the first large-scale recording experience for the Florestan. James McCracken came to Europe in 1957, and achieved prominence with his singing of the role of Bacchus in *Ariadne* at the Vienna State Opera in 1959. (He had studied the part on Karajan's suggestion, and was rewarded with the conductor's offer of a contract.) In 1960, he was invited by Herbert Graf to sing *Otello* at the Zurich opera. Since then, McCracken has divided his time mainly between the Swiss city and Vienna. It seems likely that the *Fidelio* album will bring the tenor conspicuously to the attention of recording companies.

As for Mr. Maazel, present highlights in the career of this thirty-four-year-old maestro are his appointments as *Generalmusikdirektor* at the Berlin Opera—a post he will take up in 1965—and his engagement (succeeding the late Ferenc Fricsay) as permanent conductor of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra.

KURT BLAUROPP

CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY NEWSFRONTS

BY NORMAN EISENBERG

Expansion in the Solid State. If high attendance combined with serious interest in wares displayed is a hallmark of success, then the 1964 Los Angeles High Fidelity Music Show held this past March must be ranked as one of the most successful yet. An estimated 27,000 visitors attended, which is about three thousand more than last year's number. What's more, experienced audio exhibitors advised us that perhaps half of these were new faces, indicating that interest in high quality equipment continues to widen. The warm, bright weather no doubt helped attract many, but even on the one cool rainy night that marred an otherwise beautiful week, attendance was astonishingly high.

As to the equipment shown, the trend to transistors continues *fortissimo*. Manufacturers who had introduced solid-state units before were showing brand-new models; several others were exhibiting such equipment for the first time. For instance, in Acoustech's room (where Britten's *Spring Symphony* had replaced last year's switch-blade from *West Side Story* as the demonstration material), we saw this company's Model 2, a preamp-control unit, and its Models 3 and 4—basic amp and preamp kits respectively; we also learned about plans for a forthcoming integrated amplifier. J. B. Lansing surprised us by showing its first preamp-control, a richly styled unit that signalizes, according to a company spokesman, this speaker manufacturer's serious entry into electronic components. A new transistor basic amplifier was shown by Hadley Laboratories, while Kenwood introduced its first solid-state unit, an integrated amplifier.

We saw dozens of other models, including amplifiers by K.H. McIntosh, and Sherwood; the Astro series of tuners, amplifiers, and combination chassis from Altec Lansing; the new lines offered by Bogen, H. H. Scott, Fisher, Harman-Kardon, Pilot, and Eric. Recent tube models also were shown by some of these companies as well as Marantz, whose latest offering is its Model 10 tuner, and by Eico and Dynaco, on hand with newly styled kits and hinting that before long they too would be offering solid-state equipment.

In loud-speakers, the field seemed equally divided among compact and larger models. Thus, Acoustic Research's exhibit featured its well-known AR series, and company president Edgar Villechur told us he is planning to bring out an AR-4—more compact and probably costing less than \$60. At the opposite end of the size scale, their Autograph system was being shown by the Tannoy people—a huge horn enclosure driven by two 15-inch dual concentric units. Standing

about five feet high and costing \$895, this system seemed to be attracting as much attention as smaller models. Another manufacturer of large speakers, Bozak, told us of new kits for building its full-size systems. Altec Lansing also made a bid to large speaker do-it-yourselfers with its A-7 system, while Fisher offered two compacts in kit form. Among various-size speaker systems, mostly small to medium dimensionally, were models by Audio Dynamics, the Wharfedale line of British Industries, the FMI systems offered by FMI-Scope, the cylindrical Grenadier of Empire, several systems by Frazier, the Goodmans line offered by Rockbar, Grado's new compact system, and the diverse models of H. H. Scott, University, K.H. J. B. Lansing, AR, Altec Lansing, and Electro-Voice. The new E-V Patrician kit was not at the show, although a spokesman for the company indicated that it was being readied for release soon. An interesting system, incorporating the original Pickering Isophase electrostatic tweeter and a dynamic woofer of unknown origin, was used in the Pickering-Stanton room; a company spokesman declined to say whether this system would be offered commercially. Koss and David Clark showed their smooth-sounding headphones.

Several familiar, but recent, models of record-playing equipment were on display, including the AR turntable; the ADC pickups and tone arm; the Miracord changers and Elac cartridges offered by Benjamin; British Industries' Garrard models; the Dual of United Audio; the B & O Stereodyne sold by Dynaco; the Thorens and Ortofon turntables and a new line of Watts record-cleaning devices, offered by Elpa; the Grado turntable, arm, and pickups; the Stanton and Pickering products; the Rek-O-Kut line; the latest Shure equipment; the Empire and the Weathers disc players. The newest tone arm shown was the very fancy Castagna, developed in Brooklyn, featuring a reverse magnetic pivot suspension, and offered by EMI-Scope for \$125.

All the exhibits were quite attractive, and the bungalows on the grounds of the Ambassador Hotel in which they were held—with their roominess and fairly decent acoustics—allowed for displays that were more satisfying visually and sonically than their counterparts in New York shows. Among the more novel exhibits was an electronic pistol range set up by Norelco to permit visitors to try to score a bull's-eye and thereby win a portable tape recorder. By late afternoon of the fourth day of the show, twenty-three persons had already done so. Another "live" exhibit was that of a

young lady calmly building Scott kits under the watchful eyes of scores of visitors. One manufacturer not at the show but exhibiting in his own showroom elsewhere in the city, was Eugene Freeman; during a visit we made to this salon we saw all the machines in the expanding Freeman line and were told by Mr. Freeman that from the standpoint of potential public involvement in the magnetic medium, "tape recording is where radio itself was in its infancy, about forty years ago."

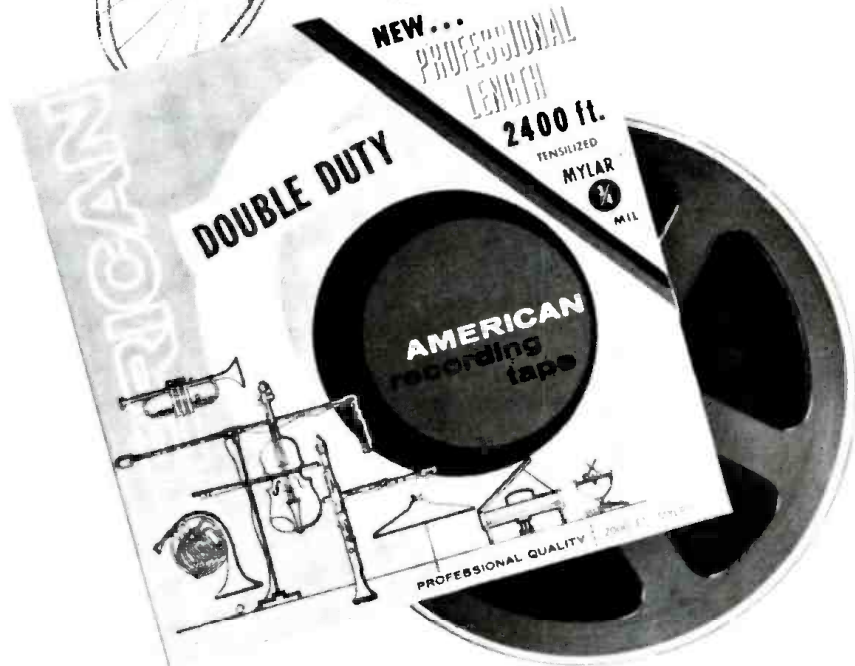
This belief seemed to be echoed by what struck us as the largest single group of exhibitors at the show, the tape recorder companies. Ampex, Benjamin/Truvox, Intermark/Cipher, Concertone, United Audio/Dual, Eico, Norelco, Revere/Wollensak, Roberts, Sony/Superscope, Tandberg, and Viking had—in sum—models to suit every tape recording need and taste, from professional machines to handy portables. Automatic reel reversal, synchronization of sound for slide projectors, and improved response at the slower speeds are among the features that were more in evidence this year than ever before. The 3M cartridge system, sounding better than ever, also was demonstrated. Aside from Ampex's Signature, no video tape system was shown, although several company spokesmen agreed that video tape was "a coming thing."

FM broadcasting, both stereo and monophonic, was represented at the show by local stations KRHM and KPFC. The KRHM exhibit featured a business-like console which was actually used to broadcast stereo programs from the show. The KPFC exhibit was quieter but the station's representatives were aglow with pride over the fact that this non-commercial, listener-supported station had just reduced its deficit from \$31,000 to \$4,000 in three weeks' time, thanks to contributions. In discussing this with a station representative, we learned that "Our listeners are very conscious of program content; we respond to their tastes and they respond to our needs."

Leaving the bustle of the show for a while, we sought out a prominent West Coast dealer for a reflective chat on the state of the audio art, and motored to Santa Barbara where we met Gordon Mercer who has been selling, servicing, and designing audio components for years. Mr. Mercer, who represents what might be called a Golden Ear of the West, told us that the next significant development in "all-out" amplifiers will be the rigorously designed, high-powered transistor basic. He maintains that even a reduction in distortion of a mere 0.1%

Continued on next page

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NEWSFRONTS

Continued from preceding page

can be heard—at least by some people. He also confirmed our feeling that tape recording interest is somewhat higher in the West than elsewhere in the U.S.A. and has increased over what was evident a year ago.

We encountered not only new equipment but also the first samples of a totally new recording technique used by Repeat Records. Known as the Barcus-Berry direct recording system, it eliminates microphones in favor of direct transducer pickups inserted under the bridge of a string instrument or into the reed of a wind instrument. A full report on this process is planned for a future issue; for now we will say that it has much promise and wide implications, particularly inasmuch as it virtually does away with the need for a formal studio. For instance, performers can actually talk to each other while playing without being picked up on the recording. The samples we heard, using the new process, had a startling closeness and presence.

Although not at the show, Westrex—the company which developed the stereo disc cutter nearly seven years ago—contacted us to talk about its new cutter and amplifier, both designed to produce quieter disc surfaces and, at the same time, greater dynamic range. Westrex had no official position on the question of the 15-degree vertical angle, and a spokesman explained that the new cutter remains nominally a 23-degree-angle type because of its inherent design. However, it will fit into the scheme of things to come whether or not the record industry standardizes at 15 degrees because it can be adapted, when used, to cut at angles less than 23 degrees.

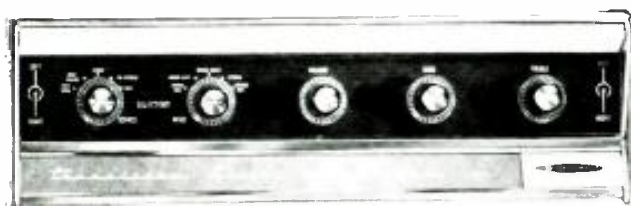
Remote but Near. If you enjoy listening to music, as we do, when performing such chores as preparing an income tax return or balancing the checking account, you also must know what a nuisance it is to have to cross the room to turn off the set when the telephone rings. The "set" in this instance happens to be a full-fledged stereo system that would be impossible to park on the desk or on a nearby, already cluttered, bookshelf. Besides we prefer the sound, in our study, from the wall opposite the desk. This means that some thirty-two feet have to be traversed each time the phone rings (cross room to shut off stereo; return to phone; cross room to turn on stereo; return to desk). To the rescue of such lazy souls as we comes a new gadget from Fedtro, Inc.—its Model RC-110 remote control switch. The device consists of an AC plug and socket to which is attached a 15-foot line cord and remote switch. The Fedtro plug goes into the wall socket, and the equipment plug goes into the Fedtro. Of course the device has other uses, too. If you are in bed, by design or of necessity, you can use it to control any electric device, such as a TV set, a lamp, or the alarm clock.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

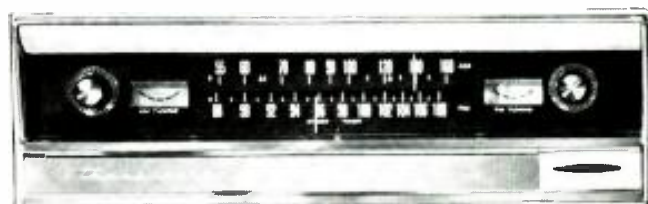
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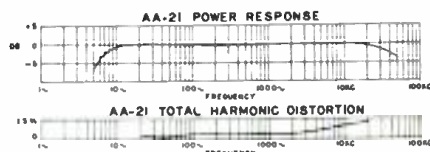
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An Anniversary Reconnaissance

THE MUSIC of Richard Strauss, whose centenary we celebrate this month, has never quite escaped the critical firing lines. To be sure, Strauss no longer arouses the sense of outrage he often provoked in the years before World War I. Nowadays *Ein Heldenleben* does not strike us as hideously discordant or *Salome* as wholly depraved—but their creator remains nevertheless a figure of controversy, whose lifework continues to resist a neat and ready summing-up.

The dispute today centers on the work of Strauss's later years. Until a decade or so ago, it was widely held that the composer's creative genius had declined rapidly after the completion of *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1910. Thenceforth, according to all the best authorities, he merely repeated himself, fabricating one vapid exercise after another. The classic expression of this view is to be found in *Grove's Dictionary*, which curtly dismisses a half dozen or so late Strauss operas as works of "skill without inspiration."

This evaluation might have gone undisputed had it not been for the pieces Strauss composed at the very end of his long life—the *Metamorphosen* and *Four Last Songs*. Clearly, anyone capable of creating such glorious music was far from being desiccated. If Strauss could achieve these miracles in his eighties, it was asked, what, in truth, had he done in his fifties, sixties, and seventies? And so the much maligned body of music from the decades between *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Metamorphosen* was taken off the shelf for reappraisal. To some this fresh examination only served to reinforce the standard indictment of Strauss's flagging powers. But to others the "late Strauss" period opened up captivating new vistas. For them, such works as *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Arabella*, and *Capriccio* proved to be filled with music of unsuspected marvels, and soon a thorough reestimate of Strauss's entire output began to be formulated.

In this issue we explore the paradox of "late Strauss" by presenting a debate between the opposing

schools of thought. Patrick J. Smith represents the body of opinion that loves and admires the long series of works after *Der Rosenkavalier*. Indeed, in the article in the following pages, Mr. Smith is bold enough to suggest that *Arabella* should be considered a more successful and accomplished work of art than either *Salome* or *Elektra*. (Here is reassessment with a vengeance!) Disagreeing with this judgment—and disagreeing wholeheartedly, as his article on page 39 makes abundantly plain—is George R. Marek, who contends that with a few rare exceptions the music of "late Strauss" is both empty and pretentious.

As we said, Strauss still has the power to arouse strong controversy.

But whether we—the audience for serious music—as yet have the power to see Strauss whole is open to question. In the course of Mr. Marek's argument he admits to being "extremely suspicious of works of art which after due time—ten to twenty years—fail to capture the public's imagination. The undiscovered or resisted masterpiece is an anomaly. . . . By now, if nobody wants to listen to certain of [Strauss's] works one must conclude that there is something wrong with them." Is not this time limit for public acceptance of a masterpiece much too short? If all music had to sink or swim within ten to twenty years of its composition, we would today be without some marvelous works (the *St. Matthew Passion*, for instance, or the middle-period Haydn symphonies). But time limits aside, the public—at least in this country—has had precious little opportunity to form any judgment on the bulk of "late Strauss."

A beginning, it is true, has been made to document this repertoire on records. Recordings of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Arabella*, and *Capriccio* are already in the catalogue, and they are all well worth attention. But six post-*Rosenkavalier* operas and a sizable collection of smaller works remain unrecorded. If ever there was promising virgin territory to be explored, this is it. Will the a & r men please take note?

BY PATRICK J. SMITH

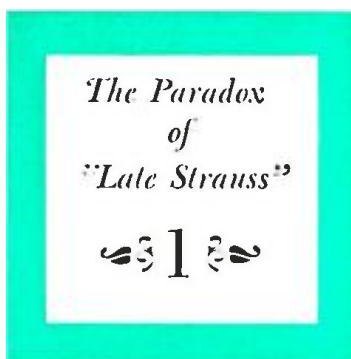
Sweetness, Serenity, Sentiment . . .

The qualities of the real Strauss, argues Mr. Smith, are to be experienced at their apogee in the works of his later years. For a dissenting view, see page 39.

EVER SINCE the death of Richard Strauss in 1949 we have needed a thorough reappraisal of his artistic work. The standard evaluation is still the one formulated in the 1920s and 1930s. Though seriously weakened since then by emendation and alteration, it has remained in force for want of another comprehensive view. I feel that this "standard evaluation" has, in the light of the totality of Strauss's work evident since his death, become archaic and representative neither of the composer nor his creations. My task in these notes is to try to assemble the beginnings of a new approach to the work of Strauss, and to review his work in the light of this new approach. This review will be quite general and subject to revision, but the hope is to provide the basis for a more cogent and coherent explanation of the musical phenomenon of Richard Strauss.

The standard evaluation has its seeds in the notion that Richard Strauss was the logical inheritor of the mantle of Richard Wagner. Strauss had boomed into the end-century musical scene like a thunderclap. It would have been indeed difficult not to have been dazzled by his extraordinary technical and melodic gift or by the precocity and talent of the series of tone poems beginning with *Don Juan* in 1888 and ending, for all practical purposes, with *Ein Heldenleben* in 1898. Here, said his admirers, was the successor to Wagner and Franz Liszt. Their wonderment increased when Strauss turned to the operatic stage and produced *Salome* and *Elektra*. There seemed to be no barriers for the man: he was as accomplished in one field as in another.

And then came *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the shock set in. *Der Rosenkavalier* was a good opera, but it certainly was not as ambitious, audacious, or novel as what had come before. It was, as it said it was, a period piece. And each succeeding work seemed to be a step backwards into the Romantic Age. Furious that they had been flum-



moxed as to the stature of their erstwhile idol, many of Strauss's earlier admirers closed in with a vengeance upon his later work. The rumblings of senility, the last gasp of sentimental romanticism, they said. Once, he wrote some good music—and they turned to new gods. Strauss was left to compose and die as a relic from a bygone age.

With the growing reexamination of the later work of Strauss, the above view seems more and

more out of focus. It may satisfy abstract theory, but it has little relation to the merits of the music itself and their projection of the composer. It is ludicrous to assert that Strauss was "worn out musically" in 1915, in the face of *Arabella* (1933), *Metamorphosen* (1942), and the *Four Last Songs* (1948), to name but three.

The Strauss problem is complicated by the composer's own personality and its interrelation with his music. Unlike a Debussy or a Webern, whose composition follows a more or less regularly channeled course, or a Wagner, whose life may have been a chaos of contradiction but whose music is superbly ordered, Strauss's music fluctuated as greatly as did his not overly strong-willed self. There is no doubt that, until the later years, Strauss never understood himself as a composer, never saw his limitations nor realized his true strengths—and was thereby led to believe the adulatory flatterings of those who saw in him the heir to Wagner. This in turn led to the posings evident in most of his tone poems, culminating in the pompous posturings of *Ein Heldenleben* and the philosophical bathos of *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Strauss was acting the genius for his countless admirers.

Of course Strauss had a great deal of talent with which to impress his listeners. He had mastered the complexities of the large "Wagnerian" orchestra and could manipulate it with ease; he was skillful at the classic forms of composition and bountiful with themes and ideas. We can hardly

blame the listeners of the 1890s if they indeed thought that this young man, with a new box of tricks each time out, was the new musical Messiah. I can and do blame them for castigating Strauss when he finally developed into the composer he truly was, simply because they had duped themselves (and, in part, Strauss) into thinking that Strauss was something he was not.

WHAT, THEN, was Strauss as a composer? He was a highly skilled artisan with a great melodic gift. At the same time, he was a composer possessed of a vulgar streak which expressed itself clearly in his music, especially in the music he wrote between 1890 and 1910. Strauss always wrote from emotion, directly, and he wrote on the immediate level of human experience. At its best, this writing was simple, compassionate, and often sentimental, with a shrewdness for musical characterization, especially of women, and an insight into human frailty. These emotional qualities led to a sort of personal mysticism in his music akin to that of his contemporary Gustav Mahler but yet quite different from it: nowhere as anguished or tortured—serene, rather, with an aurally sensuous serenity which may be a contradiction of the terms of mysticism (the divorce from the world of sense) but which is, in my estimation, the most deeply personal and enduring of Strauss's traits.

Once the mists of what Strauss was not have been cleared away, we can more readily see and evaluate the Strauss that was and is. This can best be done by considering first the works he wrote at both ends of his long life, for it is this music—the very early and the very late—that show the pure Richard Strauss: the Strauss before the world intruded and the Strauss after he had ceased to care what the world thought. Of course, the contrast between the pure and the tarnished Strauss is oversimplified. Strauss as a composer was such a complex musical mind that much of his work (especially that written between 1890 and 1920) vacillates between pose and genuine feeling, between the superficial gloss of a great talent and the largely unconscious working of quasi-mystic emotions: the difference between the battle section and the final apotheosis of *Heldenleben*. The above approach, however, can serve as a general guide to a reexamination, in chronological order, of some of the major compositions of Strauss.

I have already mentioned the exuberant, somewhat naïve yet wholly charming early works, the chief of these being the *Burleske*, for piano and orchestra, and the Horn Concerto, Opus 11, dedicated to his father. These pieces show the influence of Wagner and Liszt, and even of Brahms, but they are completely free of the pretense that began to creep in as Strauss turned to the tone poem. By the time he wrote the early tone poems he had increased his mastery of orchestration and form, and in addition was beginning to show his ability to

delineate character in music. *Don Juan* is a quick bold-stroked sketch of the Don in comparison even to *Till Eulenspiegel*, but its merit lies in the unabashed youthful romanticism and ardor of the writing rather than in subtlety. Yet, other elements were entering.

A good example of this Straussian duality can be observed in *Tod und Verklärung* of 1889. It is an important work not in that it is greater than the aforementioned ones but because it shows more clearly the composer's virtues and faults. Strauss was turning from simple musical portraits to "greater issues," and trying to project them in musical terms. Certainly he was sincere in his aim, but the scope of his mind simply was not adequate for the expression of such abstractions as "death," "transfiguration," or the philosophy of Nietzsche. The result could only be the vulgarization of these ideas, which was precisely the opposite of Strauss's intention. Coupled with this yearning to say more important things musically, Strauss found that he was in a sense the prisoner of his reputation as an orchestral wizard and a young genius. As his letters clearly show, he never failed to keep one eye on the reactions of his public.

Tod und Verklärung therefore is an ambivalent work, more so than his later tone poems, for here both aspects of the composer Strauss are intermingled. To some listeners the work is poetically evocative to an intense degree; to others, it is an orchestral tour de force with little relation either to death or to transfiguration. The "transfiguration" section exemplifies this: a *trompe-l'oreille* that can be heard two ways at once, either as a mystic experience or as a twin to the "falling violin" section of the 1812 Overture which prepares for the emotional response to the *God Save the Czar* theme entrance. This device works perfectly in the framework of a *pièce d'occasion* (and the 1812 Overture is one of the finest of that genre), but it stands as more than a little bald and obvious when used to portray suprahuman emotions.

With the later *Heldenleben* and *Zarathustra* the *trompe-l'oreille* clarifies into orchestral massiveness and fireworks versus intellectual poverty. Strauss returned to reality only when he returned to character—Don Quixote and Sancho Panza—a reality of dreams and wistful sadness captured so well (within the classical variation form) that the "realism" of the sheep and wind machine sections of the work is wholly subordinate to the finely drawn portraits of the protagonists.

IT WAS NATURAL, then, that Strauss should turn to opera. And yet, even here (leaving aside the early imitative efforts) he ran to excess. His one-act operas *Salome* and, more especially, *Elektra*, have been rightly praised for their driving force, their cohesion, and their characterizations, not only of the heroines but of the lesser figures. Yet the feeling persists that both of these operas are ag-

grandizements-for-effect of their originals, and occupy a similar position in operatic history (albeit on a different level of achievement) as do the Italian veristic operas of the same period. Upon repeated rehearing of these works, particularly in the light of Strauss's later writings, I am struck by the extent to which he, as a composer, was obviously uncomfortable with the material with which he had to work. He was seduced by the obvious melodramatic appeals of these narratives—the shock effects, the distorted figures—and was thus blinded to the fact that neither libretto was suited to his best genius. The result is that both works are filled with the peacock-preening which passes for musical astuteness: the flamboyant use of the monster orchestra, the piling up of climaxes in an almost neurotic blaze of late-romantic musical techniques.

Yet, even with these *fffs*, Strauss could not still his own voice: if these operas are not played at fever pitch (as the corresponding *Cavalleria rusticana* should be played), I constantly hear the beginnings of waltzes and other tags totally alien to this world—which only make the librettos seem more clearly contrivances and not representations of life. It is no accident that the one character for whom Strauss writes his best music is the gentle sister of Elektra, Chrysothemis. While Hofmannsthal had used her as a counterweight to the fury-driven Elektra and her mother, Strauss's music for her enlarges the secondary role, adding an almost sentimental tone to an opera which has no need for sentimentality and distorting the whole. But it is in the character of Chrysothemis—and not in those of Elektra, Klytemnestra, Salome—that we see the true Strauss.

If opera is to be considered the integration of libretto and music, in tone as well as in the technical sense, then *Salome* must be granted a greater unity than *Elektra*, for Wilde's play and Strauss's music are highly similar in their blend of pretense and excess, in their cohesion of mood. They combine well, if vulgarly, to form what must be considered the most depraved opera in the repertory, with all the putrid majesty of a barrel of silver fish rotting in the moonlight. *Elektra* technically is a clear advance over *Salome*, and there is no question that its story is also more elevated. But the music Strauss wrote for *Elektra* is in essence identical to that he wrote for *Salome* and, within the framework of a rigidly classical drama, it is entirely misapplied.

Whereas the characters of Sophocles' tragedy surge all the more because of the channeling of the force of their tightly constrained lives, Strauss's music—overstated, profligate, romantic, and vastly self-conscious—works constantly in the opposite direction: to dissipate this force and to transform it into stage effectiveness. At the end of the opera Elektra is no longer a tragically noble figure, degraded but yet a princess, pushed beyond the power of reason first by her own will and then by her emotions: she is a late-romantic caricature dancing not a Maenad dance of ecstasy but a trick-larded *Ur*-waltz. And thus the culminating scene becomes

a grotesque rather than a meaningful experience, and whatever majesty there is will be due to Sophocles and Hofmannsthal and not to Strauss. In place of "terror and pity" the composer has provided naught but emotional exhaustion.

THE WORLD that Hofmannsthal created for Strauss in *Der Rosenkavalier* was precisely the world that Strauss yearned for, in his sentimental peasant's heart, and precisely the world for which he could write his best music. There are faults in both the music and the libretto of this opera, but the music's faults stem rather from the padding techniques so in evidence in the later tone poems than from the romantic sweetness of the whole. To reject romantic sweetness in Strauss and to hail the morbid aspects of his work is to misunderstand the man and his music, and to impose our current prejudices upon him. A comparison of *Rosenkavalier* and, to my mind, the finest achievement of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal collaboration, *Arabella*, will show the extent to which Strauss learned the values of understatement and appositeness. Far from being played out, Strauss from 1910 on was finally emerging as the composer he had been, in flashes, all along. The delicacy, melodic richness, and mystic close of the imperfect *Ariadne auf Naxos* show him at his most characteristic—and most hauntingly beautiful—as does the suite he arranged for the *Bourgeois gentilhomme*. In the latter there is no striving for effect, no weighty Wagnerian *Weltanschauung*: merely charming and ingratiating music. The 'merely' therefore becomes far more than that. The music for Barak and his family in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* follows the same pattern: there is hardly a more poignantly human passage in opera than the close of the first act.

Perhaps the most underrated—and most typical—work Strauss ever composed was his autobiographical opera *Intermezzo*, for which he wrote his own libretto. The faults in the libretto have nothing to do with those customarily ascribed to it (i.e., being sentimental tripe). Strauss has succeeded in an inordinately difficult task: the creation of a woman at once demanding, not a little shrewish, and yet totally feminine and sympathetic. It is a measure of his ability both as a composer and as a librettist that by the end of the opera we accept "Frau Storch" not in spite of her shortcomings but (as Strauss did) because of them: because through them one can see an aspect of the *Ewigweibliche*, the "eternal woman." I doubt that many composers would have had the insight, the tenderness, and the compassion to set forward such a character, or to create a scene as the one where the composer-husband defends his wife to his cynical skat-playing friends, who believe only the worst of her. This opera, in its simplicity and its charm, thus achieves far more with far less pretentiousness and pose than many of Strauss's earlier works. It is a genre opera as De Hooch is a genre

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BY GEORGE R. MAREK

Pose, Pretense, Pomposity . . .

A counteropinion to that propounded on page 36.

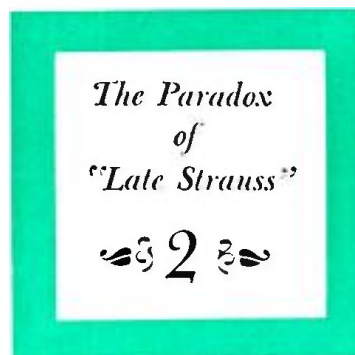
Mr. Marek sees a steady decline in the works of Strauss's later years—and here suggests an explanation.

AN OLD ADAGE defines the difference between a pessimist and an optimist thus: a pessimist says, "This glass is half empty"; the optimist says, "This glass is half full."

Mr. Patrick Smith, who in the immediately preceding pages pleads for a reappraisal of Strauss's later music, is more than an optimist: he sees a *full* glass where the glass is half empty. What is even more astonishing, he sees good wine in that same glass where, according to the taste of the general public, the wine is a bit stale and sour.

We have been wrong right along, it seems. Our evaluation of Strauss's later output is in need of correction. Those of us who sit through *Der Rosenkavalier* experiencing a sense of smiling exhilaration had better learn to stifle our yawns at *Arabella*. Those of us who find in *Elektra* the painful but cleansing punishment which is the function of tragedy had better see what we can descry in the murky panorama of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Hold still, please, for four hours and watch the symbolisms go by. Shed a tear for the frying fish which are really unborn children.

How could we have gone awry? Why do we still want to hear most of the works that antedate *Ariadne* while we resist most of the creations of Strauss's later period? Why do people buy recordings of *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Don Juan*, while you can't give the *Alpensinfonie* away? (Really, you can't. I know it.) Had the Metropolitan better cancel its performances of *Der Rosenkavalier* projected for next season and let us hear *Die ägyptische Helena* once again? Mr. Smith says that "far from being played out, Strauss from 1910 on was finally emerging as the composer he had been, in flashes, all along." Oh! Then we are all lured astray, those of us who think that far from being a composer "in flashes" he was—*before* 1910—a superb romantic composer, and that his occasional and brief mo-



ments of later inspiration when he was playing around with neo-Greek themes were a flash in the Pan.

But how come we don't appreciate the later Strauss? Mr. Smith thinks that we expect him to be something he was not, that we misjudge him because we consider him "the logical inheritor of the mantle of Richard Wagner." What difference does that make by this time? In evaluating music—or, what is more

important, in responding to music—we are, I hope, not prompted by historical considerations. We evaluate and respond with our heart and without holding in our hand a biographical dictionary. Every artist is appraised for himself, not for his genealogy. At least the public appraises him according to the intrinsic appeal of the work and not the work's chronological position in musical history.

All the same, Strauss *was* the inheritor of Wagner's mantle. He added new and gorgeous patches to that mantle, though he wore it so long that it became threadbare. Strauss was educated by his father Franz, the fine horn player of the Munich Royal Opera House, as a rabid anti-Wagnerian. It is amusing now to read some of the young boy's early letters in which he makes the remarkable prediction that "ten years from now nobody will know who Richard Wagner was." But then he came under the influence of Bülow and of Alexander Ritter, a composer *manqué* who had not only married Wagner's niece but had swallowed Wagnerian philosophy as a whole (without quite digesting it). Strauss was profoundly influenced by the magician from Bayreuth, and that influence was to last not only through *Guntram*, the early very Wagnerian opera, but through much of the major output. Indeed, how could he help being captured by Klingsor's magic garden?

All his life Strauss acknowledged his debt to Wagner; he said that he could never create anything as great as *Tristan* or *Die Meistersinger*, modesty



being one of Strauss's attractive characteristics. Early in life he knew that only by immersing himself in the stream of Wagnerian music could he learn to become a strong swimmer. But let me suggest that it is no disgrace to have been influenced by Wagner. At any rate, it is doubtful that many listeners would respond to Strauss simply because his music reminded them of Wagner. So the measure of Strauss's indebtedness to Wagner, even if that measure were false, is of no importance. Strauss is Strauss. He is a composer with something to say in his own language. Unfortunately, there are two Strausses. The division between the two is wider than in most artists. It is wider, for example, than in Delacroix, whose uneven creations bear a certain kinship to Strauss's music.

I THINK IT IS FALSE to claim that not until his later years did Strauss understand himself as a composer. As is true of every major creative artist, his work was a combination of instinct and skill, of emotion and craftsmanship. With his subtle intellect and comprehensive knowledge of the craft of music, a knowledge acquired as an executant musician—he was a magnificent conductor, particularly of Mozart and Wagner, as I can testify from personal experience—he knew what he was doing and knew it every step of the way. He understood himself very well. If even some of the major works show certain weaknesses, those weaknesses are not the result of Strauss's wandering on a false path but of inherent limitations of mind, character, and genius.

I use the word "genius," for I believe that Strauss was more than a talent: he was a genius. I agree

with the by now generally held verdict, repeated by Mr. Smith, that *Ein Heldenleben* is marred by fustian—though it is not marred to the extent that we are willing to reject the tone poem. I agree that *Also sprach Zarathustra* contains philosophical bathos—worse, that it contains some third-rate music—though here again the admixture of the shoddy does not rot the total fabric. *Don Quixote* may be a little too long and the wind machine jarring. But what treasurable music is there! To be sure, *Salome* has moments of questionable taste; even in *Der Rosenkavalier* there are one or two passages (such as Baron Ochs's recital of his amorous adventures in the first act and the beginning of the third act) through which the music coasts. Yet is there much doubt that *Der Rosenkavalier* can be placed among the half-dozen greatest comedies produced for the lyric stage? And who can deny the gripping potency of *Salome* and *Elektra*? I don't believe that Strauss "was obviously uncomfortable with the material with which he had to work" in these two operas: had he been he could not have produced living, strong lyric dramas. I do not agree that Strauss had a "sentimental peasant's heart" (where does the peasant come in?) or that the best music of *Elektra* is the music for "the gentle sister of Elektra, Chrysothemis." My, how I disagree! I think the best music in *Elektra* was written for the orchestra, that the most vividly realized character in the opera is Klytemnestra—and that Chrysothemis is a big bore.

Whatever their defects, the major works before 1910 remain vital. In such works as *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Don Juan*, many of the songs, and *Salome*, Strauss gathered unto himself the rich tradition of the nineteenth century and brought this tradition to an end in a riot of humor, color, and melody. Humor, color, and melody continue to interest and satisfy. I would also include here *Ariadne*, which gave both Strauss and Hofmannsthal so much pain and which they could never manage to shape into a completely successful entity. *Ariadne*, in my opinion, is three quarters of a glorious opera—the whole Prologue being one of the wittiest and one of the most beautiful scenes the collaboration produced, and the second part being charming up to and including Zerbinetta's bravura aria—which then peters out in a final duet of Teutonic pompousness in Greek costume.

But now we are told that the real richness lies in the later works, those which the general public resists or fails to appreciate. These works, predominantly operas, are intermittently staged in Munich or Vienna or Berlin and occasionally in non-German cities (such as the revival of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in San Francisco or *Capriccio* at Glyndebourne), and some of us will have an opportunity to hear them again during this Strauss festival year. What will happen? We will be curious, we will here and there be impressed by their orchestral opulence and sophisticated workmanship. Then they'll sink back into the oblivion to which their spiritual sterility must banish them.

I am extremely suspicious of works of art which after due time—ten to twenty years—fail to capture the public's imagination. The undiscovered or resisted masterpiece is an anomaly. The public is not stupid. Strauss's works have long ceased to be formidable; his musical language is easy on the ear. By now, if nobody wants to listen to certain of his works, one must conclude that there is something wrong with them.

WHOLESALE CONDEMNATION of Strauss's later work is as unjust as is the implication that we are ignoramuses if we prefer his earlier ones. There are to be found among the sand occasional jewels, some of sparkling beauty. But how much sand one has to wade through!

Let us examine briefly some of the operas that followed *Ariadne*. *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was created during the First World War. It is a tribute to Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, as *Der Rosenkavalier* was to *Figaro*. It suffers with libretto trouble as severe as Schikaneder's mixed-up mess. But it takes itself much more seriously, being unrelieved by humor. Its symbolism is obscure, its Orientalism manufactured in Munich, its verbosity insupportable, its fairy-tale quality contrived, its philosophy—for all its seeming depth—naïve. These defects are due to Hofmannsthal who, after writing quite a charming short story on the theme, expanded it into a libretto packed with allegoric gadgets, including the kitchen sink. Confronted with this monstrous libretto, Strauss failed. Though there are fine orchestral interludes in this opera, though instrumental color is applied with an expert hand, though here and there, as in the figure of the Dyer, Strauss creates music of human warmth, the total effect of the music is pretentious and the result oppressive fatigue.

Five years after he completed *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Strauss produced a slight work for which he himself wrote the text. *Intermezzo* is autobiographical, detailing an episode of his own marriage when his wife thought he was being unfaithful. The fact that the opera is autobiographical should be no deterrent to the appreciation of the work, any more than we ought to worry whether or not Arthur Miller's new play *After the Fall* is autobiographical. The only criterion is—is it good? I agree with Mr. Smith that *Intermezzo* may well be the most underrated of Strauss's later operas. He did write music for it that is charming, gay, sentimental, and often brilliant, particularly in the orchestral interludes. He did create a musically interesting woman in Frau Storch. I love the little work and hope that it will become better known.

After that came *Die ägyptische Helena* which, so to speak, is the last duet of *Ariadne* pulled out into a strudel-dough of a full-length opera, the filling of the strudel being sparse. Repetition of symbolism, a return to complexity, a jejune sexuality, a reuse of formula—you find them all here. What is most infuriating is the fact that we find at least one pas-

sage of great beauty, Helen's *Apostrophe*, and we mourn for a Strauss who has disappeared.

Arabella, which is highly considered by some critics, I find to be a rewrite of *Der Rosenkavalier*. In Vienna they used to call it "*Der Sklerosenkavalier*"—"The Sclerosis Cavalier." Here again we are up against severe libretto trouble, the story having neither the humanity nor the believability nor the charm of the earlier comedy. No character in it comes within light years of the Marschallin. The Fialkermilli is a shriveled cousin of Zerhinetta and her aria embarrassing. *Arabella* is not really alive, though she seems so when a fascinating actress such as Lisa Della Casa plays her. Only in the latter half of the third act does Strauss rise to the kind of radiant musical ecstasy which we have come to expect from him.

The four operas that followed, *Die schweigsame Frau*, *Friedenstag*, *Daphne*, and *Die Liebe der Danae*, are all weak works. Mr. Smith thinks that they do not suffer "from paucity of invention but rather from the old disease of inadequate librettos." They suffer from both, and quite as much from poor music as from the kind of dramatic treatment which in German is called "*ausgeklügelt*," ("excogitated"). I fail to find here "some of his best music," though once again we must note with sadness that there are fine passages to be heard, such as the moment in *Friedenstag* where the hells announcing peace begin to ring, or the final moments of *Daphne*.

It is interesting to read the correspondence between Clemens Krauss and Richard Strauss while they were working on *Capriccio*. The letters are copious; they were written during the Second World War while furious fires were raining down on Germany. Seemingly untouched by what was going on around them, these two men put their heads together to produce a treatise on the operatic craft. I say "their heads" for I miss in *Capriccio* the presence of heart. The libretto makes interesting reading for a professional, and the music contains some intramural jokes. The last scene does have a certain nostalgic charm, but here again the effect of the total work on the stage is conducive to boredom, or at least lassitude.

Mr. Smith is, in my opinion, quite right in praising *Metamorphosen*, one of Strauss's last orchestral works. He is equally right in praising highly the *Four Last Songs*. These sunset works are suffused with a warm and beautiful glow; the light shines once more, even if only as an afterglow. Yet between *Ariadne*, finished in its final version in 1916, and Strauss's death in 1949 the light was prevailingly gray and dull and dusky.

The question I'd like answered is, why was it so? Why this decline? All great artists produce some work which is less than their best. Artists who lack sharp self-criticism produce work of very uneven quality, Berlioz being a notable example. Some artists are restless experimenters and are driven to try for the new even if that new is not so nourishing as the old. That may be

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A CASE OF HARD-EARNED BREAD

☆☆☆☆ STRAUSS MET WITH GREAT

ACCLAIM DURING TWO VISITS TO

AMERICA, BUT HE PAID THE VISITING

CELEBRITY'S USUAL PRICE IN BOREDOM, FATIGUE, MONOTONOUS MENUS,

AND A SURFEIT OF ADMIRING CLUBWOMEN. ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

by Robert Breuer

THIS YEAR the musical world observes the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Richard Strauss and the fifteenth anniversary of his death. But there is another Straussian aspect to this year which may be of more immediate interest to Americans. Sixty years ago, the composer, accompanied by his wife, the dramatic soprano Pauline de Ahna, crossed the Atlantic to fulfill his first American guest engagement. Welcomed as "the monarch of modern music" he appeared, from February 27 to April 26, 1904, both as conductor and pianist in thirty-five public concerts. His works—chiefly the tone poems and the Lieder—though acclaimed in Europe, had not yet conquered American audiences.

Aboard ship Strauss enjoyed the company of some excellent partners for his favorite card game, skat. But he grew a bit impatient when the *Schnell-dampfer* (express liner) *Moltke's* arrival was delayed for a couple of days by severe storms. The ship's sophisticated facilities excited the interest of the bucolic Strauss. He marveled at an "electrically equipped gymnasium" with "horse and camel rides, all on electric apparatuses" and at the brand-new "electric massage machine." He was also fascinated by the "Marconi wireless telegraphic station on the upper deck" which, he observed in amazement, "operated solely through electric air waves." Altogether, he was confounded by "a lot of new and interesting impressions," which strengthened his desire to "be at home again, happily, peacefully, and able to work. . . ."

Reporters who interviewed him upon his arrival straightaway wanted to know whether he was related to Johann Strauss. After denying this question emphatically, he further disappointed several of the gentlemen by telling them that he did not intend

even conducting any works of the waltz king. The identity of the surnames, in a few instances, proved to be a ticklish problem: a series of small-town newspapers reported in all innocence about the "great Viennese waltz composer's" American tour.

Staying at the Manhattan Hotel on the northwest corner of 42nd Street and Madison Avenue—it was converted to an office building about 1920—and participating at the rehearsals of the Wetzler Orchestra "in the tremendously large Carnegie Hall, holding about four thousand people, but acoustically excellent," Strauss and his wife soon became engulfed in American life. The hospitality of "everybody," from the "top millionaire" to the "man in the street," he remarked in a letter to his parents and in-laws, was as striking an impression of America as the "magnitude" of an "otherwise rather wild land with hotels, railroad stations and trains, business life and industry of extraordinary caliber," and with "gigantically high buildings" which because of their well-proportioned structure "are by no means an eyesore."

"The attendants at Carnegie Hall these days are humming motives from the tone poems of Richard Strauss," a New York paper reported. "Everything at the big music hall on 57th Street denotes the early coming of the celebrated composer. The wind machines for *Don Quixote* have arrived, and the Wetzler Orchestra is rehearsing daily with fervor and patience, so that Dr. Strauss will have only the finishing touches to add before the festival." The "Number One Musical Man of the Hour," however, had to face pro- and anti-Strauss parties, the one deifying him as heartily as the other damned him. He upheld his *devise*, "I try to make music, not quarrels," and succeeded in being detachedly polite

amid the critical storm that broke loose following his first conducting assignments. In any case, official honors were heaped upon "the world's leading composer." As the *Washington Post* wrote:

"It is well that the country is waking up to the importance of art, and, above all, of art's creative geniuses. The coming of Richard Strauss has indicated fully the strides this country is making in this regard. In every city he has visited during the past couple of months ovations and enthusiasm—rare, indeed, to witness—have shown Richard Strauss that millionaires and empty titles do not hold the monopoly over the hearts and heads of our people.

In Morgantown, West Virginia, where [Dean] Sydney Lloyd Wrightson, an ardent Strauss disciple, has infused his feeling into the people, the governor of the State, State officials, city mayor, council, and other dignitaries were made to band together to do honor to the great musician. Schools, the university, places of business were closed, and every possible honor shown to the distinguished couple personally, aside from the extraordinary spectacle of a two-day Strauss festival in a town of less than 15,000 inhabitants. New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Milwaukee, all those points to which we look for the seal of approval upon foreign ventures, are all doing homage to Richard Strauss. It now remains for the National Capital to do itself and him due honor. Richard Strauss is but forty years of age and young-looking at that. He is tall and thin, with arms and legs in evidence. His coloring is pale blond, eyes dreamy to sleepiness, nose fine and straight, mouth drooping and silent, head large and noticeably bulging. He talks little, drinks less, sleeps easily, and is not as particular about his dressing as his sprightly little wife would have him. . . ."

Strauss's Washington recital, on April 26, was witnessed by a capacity audience "composed of the best of the capital's musical craft and *dilettanti*." The rather long program consisted of Lieder sung by Mme. de Ahna, the Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 18, played by Anton Kaspar and the composer, and the melodramatic recitation of *Enoch Arden* (with Dean Wrightson and the composer). Prior to the event, Strauss and his wife were feted by official Washington. In the morning the composer was invited to the Senate by Senator Elkins of West Virginia, and later was shown the Library of Congress and other famous landmarks of the city. In the early afternoon the Strausses were presented by special invitation to President Theodore Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt at the White House, and then paid a visit on the German ambassador, Speck von Sternberg. The day concluded with a dinner given by Mr. William Knabe of Baltimore.

AMONG OTHER COMMITMENTS, Strauss had been engaged to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra, then only four years old. This episode was recently described to me by Anton Horner (*nomen est omen*), a horn player who took part in the Strauss-led concerts of the Philadelphians both in their home city and in Boston:

"Strauss's first American concert was in New

York where the practice of sending substitutes to rehearsals was common. In the middle of *Don Juan* the orchestra broke down and they had to stop and begin anew.

When Dr. Strauss reached Philadelphia, he may have been prepared for another such occurrence. But Fritz Scheel, our conductor at the time, had separate string, woodwind, brass and percussion rehearsals, and did his utmost to please Strauss. In the two concerts for which Strauss was with us in Philadelphia, Scheel conducted the first half; then Strauss ended the first concert with *Tod und Verklärung*, and the second one with *Till Eulenspiegel*.

As soloist we had Mme. Strauss-de Ahna; Strauss had made orchestrations for the Lieder, but for the encores he himself played the piano part. He was a brilliant pianist, and I can still see his long, spindly fingers gliding over the keys in the song *Ständchen*.

Strauss seemed a very quiet and unassuming person. When he was in Pittsburgh, where Victor Herbert was conductor, pictures were taken of the orchestra. One, with Strauss on the podium, had Herbert standing behind a double bass. When Herbert was on the podium, Strauss was behind a double bass in the orchestra. In the conversation with Herbert, Strauss said: 'If I took conducting as hard as you do, I wouldn't be around anymore.' Strauss had a fine, decisive beat, and never demanded too much of any orchestra. But, of course, he wanted the utmost attention from his musicians."

In Pittsburgh, Strauss was greatly intrigued by the brilliance of the Steel City's orchestra. His appearance on its podium evoked the following comment from a critical observer, however: "As he



In 1904, at Niagara Falls: Strauss in top row center.



In 1921, some saw "a prosperous businessman."

walked toward the conductor's stand, one had the impression of seeing the headwaiter in some café: for a baton he made use of what seemed to be a spaghetti stem, and they declare that once during the evening he dared to crack a smile. . . ." The *Pittsburgh Post's* critic retorted: "Ah, but what a consummate master this timid-voiced, unassuming fellow is! Mere orchestral technique is a closed incident, and he stands far and above it, for with him 'the idea' is all in all. He has clear, sane conceptions, and his whole 'living' is toward this cleanest possible voicing with means musical." Another commentator noted his "remarkable personality," saying: "As man, he spreads the charm of the lovely, unspoiled, ingenuous, open-eyed child. A favorite word as he leaves the podium is '*Fabelhaft!*' [magnificent]."

"Do you know," Strauss remarked to a Pittsburgh friend, "it appears to me more strongly each day that you are so differently constituted from us Germans. If I play something that has rapidity of movement, you appear to be carried away, whereas the more quiet compositions leave impressions less marked. My song *Cäcilie*, for example, is full of life and affects you people wonderfully; my *Morgen*, on the other hand, with its dreamy tinge is less effective. In Europe the reverse is true. There the reposeful and tranquil in music is highly in favor. Yes—you are a wonderful people, so hearty, so warm in your greetings, and you do know what good music is."

Still, Strauss had his reservations about the American cultural climate. He felt that this country "is none too congenial for the creative mind." "It seems to me," he observed midway on his tour, "that you lack certain things that work a man up to the pitch of creative work. I can walk through one single Italian ruin and experience more inspiration than I have thus far had on my entire American tour." Strauss also reported home about New York's "badly paved streets." He rode in a hired "electro-automobile" from Manhattan to Brooklyn across "the magnificent Hudson bridge" [sic]—and that for the "exorbitant fee of forty Mark." He said of New York that it is "many houses, but no city," and that

Americans seem to have "everything except time."

During Strauss's stay in New York the Lotos Club played host to the composer, with a dinner given in his honor that was one of the social highlights of the whole tour. The affair was attended by more than two hundred guests, including "representative men in the music, finance, commerce, and art of New York." The rooms in the club's Fifth Avenue mansion were lavishly decorated with smilax and carnations, and each diner was presented with an exquisitely artistic menu, consisting of a steel engraving of various scenes symbolizing Strauss's tone poems, a list of all his orchestral works and many of his songs, and an excellent portrait of the composer himself. Also, the dishes on the menu were named after some of his tone poems. After a brief address by Walter Damrosch ("His presence here is a tribute to the artistic bonds that unite the old and the new world") a lighter tone prevailed, and Strauss was asked by someone about the rumor of his wife's having fainted on the concert stage. Yes, she did faint, confessed the composer, but he quickly added: "Not because she was hypnotized by me, but from—hunger. . . . I spoke indeed very sharply to her after this happened." When asked what he said, Strauss replied with true Bavarian humor: "I said, 'Wiener Schnitzel with spaghetti, but after the concert!' That's her favorite dish—and she felt all right instantly!"

The tour's greatest artistic event was the world premiere of the gigantic *Sinfonia domestica*, which was sandwiched in between *Don Juan* and *Also sprach Zarathustra* on a Carnegie Hall program. The memorable date, March 21 (it was noted in the *Musical Courier's* extensive and rapturous review), could be compared only with the first production of Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle. This magazine, which had gone overboard earlier when it had hailed Strauss as "a true king, whose rule may be long and untroubled" ("*Vivat Richard Strauss, Imperator!*"), described the new work as the composer's greatest opus. The *New York Times* reviewer observed that Strauss, whose somewhat "cool attitude" towards performances under his baton had been noted previously, threw himself "into the affair" with a great amount of energy, and worked indomitably with an orchestra of by no means remarkable ability to do justice to one of the "most complicated scores ever produced." Although there were reservations on the part of some critics, the audience received the *Domestica* with cheers and prolonged applause.

SEVENTEEEN YEARS and a World War later, Strauss made his second trip across the Atlantic. Again, the fifty-seven-year-old "giant of modern music" did not, at first glance, suggest a musical revolutionary who had divided two continents into factions warring over the polyphony of his tone poems and the aesthetics of his operas. An observer likened his spare, erect figure and sedate bearing, his ruddy face and thinning gray hair, to the appearance of a pros-

perous businessman. But while there was the steady hint of idealism in his deep-set blue eyes, it was only when he talked that one began to perceive more clearly that other and dominant phase of his nature—the side that had made him a commanding figure in artistic life.

Landing in New York with his son Franz and the soprano Elisabeth Schumann (whose charming recollections of this tour I was privileged to peruse by the courtesy of her son), Strauss and his party were escorted by a motorcycle squad to City Hall. There they were greeted by New York's Chamberlain (a now defunct office) Philip Berolzheimer and Victor Herbert, who escorted them to a reception room where Mayor John F. Hylan, other official dignitaries, and several hundred music lovers were waiting to receive them. After the official welcome Dr. Strauss replied in German, begging the Mayor's pardon for not having mastered the beautiful language of Shakespeare sufficiently to avoid the risk of "offending your ears by mishandling it." He then continued his address:

"Permit me therefore, Mayor Hylan, to attempt to express to you in my mother tongue how deeply moved and how happy I am because of the unusual distinction of this flattering official reception which you are so generously according me. I am not so immodest as to accept this great honor only for myself, but, as a representative of the noble German music, I may be allowed to thank you most heartily for giving today such a new and generous welcome to German music, hitherto always a welcome guest in this impressive country, always received with richest understanding and broad sympathy.

This happy hour will have its welcome and grateful echoes in my Fatherland, and I shall do my best to prove myself worthy of it. Permit me, honored friends, to express the hope that this magnificently beautiful city and this so powerful advancing country may forever blossom and prosper, and that the blessing of a true peace may for all time bring together the United States of America and my Fatherland in closer and closer friendship and labor for that culture which is the property of all peoples. In this spirit, Mayor Hylan, accept again, I beg you, my most sincere and deep-felt thanks."

Strauss disclaimed the notion that "there is such a thing as a national school of music," asserting that "Genius or talent is not the exclusive property of any one country; it belongs to the entire world." Before embarking on the two-month tour, he talked with reporters about the progress of his newest works: "I have completed the sketches for my new two-act ballet, *Schlagobers*, and I am writing a light opera, *Intermezzo*, based on an episode in my own life—and with a happy ending." He confessed to being interested in American jazz (because of its new rhythmic forms) and in new musical developments in general, but maintained that "Mozart is probably my favorite composer." Asked about his reaction to the proposals that he accept a long-term conductor's post in America, he declared himself too old to take up any invitation that would keep him away from his own home for years.

Towards the end of his visit, in a letter addressed

to his wife, Strauss remarked: "So far I have spent 320 hours in railroad trains!" The whirlwind tour was, according to his son, an artistic and social success, although the composer's appearances in Philadelphia, Boston, and other cities were somewhat overshadowed by the acclaim for Marshal Foch, who was also touring the country. Coming from an inflation-stricken nation, Strauss not only took home the dollars he earned in America, but also was very cautious about expenses during his visit. "Papa probably always figured in Austrian currency," Franz Strauss told me, "because he even felt the expenses for a shoeshine on a street corner as too high and ordered me to be in charge of cleaning our footwear."

In 1904 Strauss had conducted two concerts in the Wanamaker Auditorium, being paid one thousand dollars and thus creating quite a stir over the integrity of his artistic interests. He had stilled that storm in a teacup with the statement: "True art ennobles any man—and earning money in a decent way for wife and child is no disgrace, even for an artist." No such ado was raised during the second tour. In 1921, aside from appearances in Carnegie Hall and other leading concert halls, he conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in three concerts at the Metropolitan Opera House. These took place on November 15, December 13, and December 27, and featured, among other works, *Macbeth*, *Zarathustra*, *Salomes Tanz*, Five Songs with Orchestra (Elisabeth Schumann), *Don Quixote* (cello solo Michael Penha), and the D minor Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (Bronislaw Huberman). William Kincaid, flutist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, recalls "He was very fluent and flexible" *Continued on page 108*



With his son and soprano Elisabeth Schumann.

BY PAUL MOOR

Munich

**Notes on the love-hate bond
between Strauss and his highly
musical home town.**

MUNICH's international reputation as a center of great music begins with Orlando di Lasso, who came to "Monaco di Bavaria" in 1560 and passed a prolific thirty-four years there until his death, and it extends to the contemporary residency of Werner Egk and Carl Orff. Other composers—Mozart, Wagner, Reger, Henze—have had close associations with the charming old city. Münchners, though, tend to regard non-Münchners as aliens and non-Bavarians as barbarians, and by their standards most of these luminaries remain mere *Zugereiste*—outsiders who *came* to Munich. Today, in the Munich Pantheon, the position of Richard Strauss stands unassailed not only as Munich's greatest native composer but also as its greatest native son.

This winter, in the newly rebuilt Nationaltheater and in the little rococo Cuvilliéstheater, the Bavarian State Opera acknowledged the city's cultural debt to Strauss by presenting the most ambitious Strauss Festival ever held: three gala weeks devoted to *Rosenkavalier*, *Salome*, *Die schweigsame Frau*, *Daphne*, *Die ägyptische Helena*, *Elektra*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Arabella*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Intermezzo*, *Capriccio*, and to Strauss's only ballet, *Die Josephslegende*. Surely the old man could hardly have wished a more festive or loving hundredth birthday party. When he was seventy he once wrote to a Bavarian State Opera official: "I surely need not fear seeming immodest if I take the standpoint that if Strauss Festivals or Strauss Weeks ever take place anywhere, they should, rather than in Dresden, Berlin, Salzburg, Amsterdam, etc., be located in my *Vaterstadt* Munich." Munich's contemporary opera record reads like something of a Strauss festival in itself: from 1895 until this year's festival began, the Bavarian State Opera had given 1,456 performances of seventeen Strauss stage works. *Rosenkavalier* of course leads the list, with 378 performances, but *Salome*, *Ariadne*, and the *Josephslegende* are all over the hundred mark.

At the bottom stands the first Strauss opera to be done in Munich, the now forgotten *Guntram*. Total number of performances: one. That black date—November 16, 1895—touched off the kind of relationship between Strauss and Munich that Germans call a *Hassliebe*, or hate-love, which lost its virulence only after Strauss had become an old man, finally able to forgive. After the opening night, when the composer's first wife Pauline de Ahna sang the soprano lead, general

and
Its
(Sometimes)
Favorite
Son



For centuries, Munich has been a city of music—and a city of vast charm, as the photos above attest. In this heritage its citizens take great pride: 200,000 of them petitioned that their bomb-ravaged Nationaltheater (pictured on the facing page) be rebuilt with all possible dispatch. This year the building reopened its doors, with a festival in honor of Strauss as a part of the gala celebrations.

mutiny among the other singers and musicians impelled the house to cancel further performances. From that point on Strauss could never quite get along with Munich (nor really quite get along without it). Not until forty-three years later, with the inconsequential *Friedenstag*, did he allow his *Vaterstadt* the privilege of unveiling an opera of his.

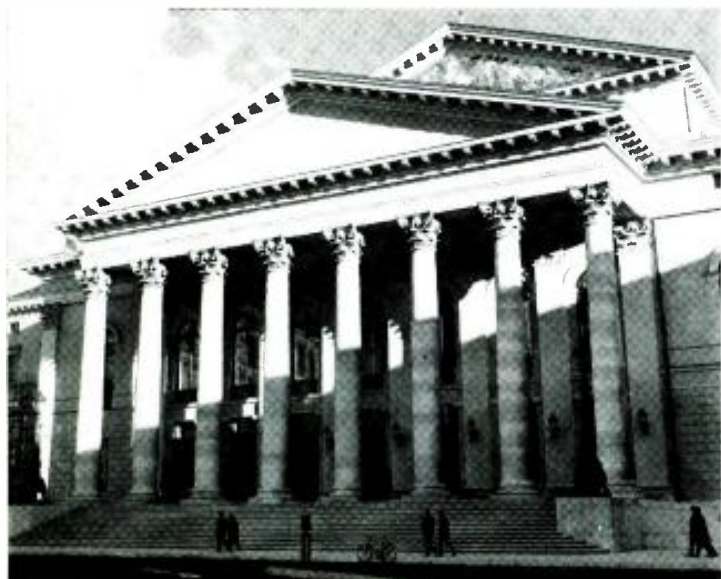
Strauss's sister, Johanna von Rauchenberger, today at ninety-six still vividly recalls family stories about her brother's first sortie into Munich's musical life. Recently she told a visitor: "Richard was about seven when our parents first allowed him to go to the Court Theatre, which had become his most ardent wish. Mama couldn't set out early enough, as far as he was concerned, for everything about it was for him enormously important, an experience of the very greatest significance. The theatre itself, the great, high room, the balconies and loges, the wonderful curtain with the painting by Guido Reni, all transported Richard into an enthusiasm he had never before experienced. The work to be performed was *Der Freischütz*. The orchestra's tuning up aroused his feverish interest: Father was down there with them. [Strauss Sr. was the opera's first horn player for almost half a century.] The horn solos and the difficult passages which Papa especially practiced were only too familiar to my brother and me. We crossed our fingers, full of excitement, and exhaled when it went well. Richard had often enough played the overture as a piano duet, and he knew all the arias thoroughly. He almost trembled with excitement as he waited for the great moment when the curtain went up. When Samiel first appeared up-stage, Richard pressed Mother's hand and whispered anxiously, 'Is something going to happen to him?' The wonderful music, especially that of the *Wolfschlucht* scene, put him in an indescribable humor."

About seventeen years later, on April 17, 1888, Richard Strauss himself conducted that same opera in that same house, the house which, rebuilt, was

the setting for this year's Strauss Festival. Even earlier, though, he had begun to make his presence in Munich felt. In the old Odeon, which World War II destroyed, he made his debut as a composer at sixteen and as a conductor at twenty. Two years later, after a conducting novitiate in Meiningen, Strauss was engaged by Baron von Perfall as one of the Munich Court Theatre's conductors, and on August 1, 1886 his first three-year contract went into effect. It was hardly a happy period for him. In Meiningen he had been boss of the orchestra; in Munich he was merely third *Kapellmeister*. From the beginning, his own strong personal notions about tempos and interpretation created friction. In those first three years he was given only forty-three performances to conduct, fulfilling the remainder of his obligation by conducting rehearsals. The final indignity came in 1888 when, after he had directed production of Wagner's early opera *Die Feen* up through the final dress rehearsal, the premiere was turned over to a conductor of more seniority, Strauss, who by this time had become known as the composer of *Aus Italien* and *Wanderers Sturmlied*, refused to swallow this humiliation, and in the autumn of 1889 went off as Court *Kapellmeister* to Weimar. There he finally got to conduct Wagner in public for the first time, and there he also found his first wife.

In 1894, Strauss was enticed back to Munich with the understanding that he would succeed the great conductor Hermann Levi, one of the pillars of the early Bayreuth festivals, who had become ill. This time Strauss got meatier conducting fare, mainly Wagner, with less gratifying chores left to others. As a conductor, and in one of Europe's greatest houses, he had definitely arrived. He also was one of the three leading figures in the "Mozart renaissance" for which Munich's opera during that period was responsible.

But that *Guntram* episode had stuck in Strauss's





The sumptuous interior of the Nationaltheater.

crow. By now such masterpieces as *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Zarathustra*, and *Don Quixote* had established him in the first rank of German composers, and guest conducting engagements were taking him throughout Europe. When Levi retired in 1896, Strauss did in fact take over his duties, but his official appointment as Levi's successor was continually postponed by the house administration. Adding insult to injury, Baron von Perfall at the last minute tried to talk Strauss into accepting less than the salary originally agreed upon. Fed up, by the fall of 1898, Strauss signed a contract to go to Berlin, and derived sardonic pleasure from Munich's subsequent fruitless exertions to make him change his mind.

His revenge on Munich took form in his opera *Feuersnot*, in which he vented his wrath against his native city's hidebound attitudes. Even so, Munich kept trying to lure him back, and on December 23, 1905, Strauss had the satisfaction of conducting there the lampooning *Feuersnot* itself. The premiere had occurred five years earlier, in Dresden. For the rest of the composer's life, even though he gave Dresden, Vienna, and Stuttgart preference in the matter of world premieres, Munich was usually prompt in adding any new Strauss opera to its repertoire.

After Strauss established residence in the Bavarian Alpine resort of Garmisch, only a short distance from Munich, he became more amenable to guest appearances there. In 1910 Munich honored him with a Strauss Festival Week, during which he conducted *Feuersnot* and *Salome*. In 1932, under the aegis of Clemens von Frankenstein and Hans Knappertsbusch, came another Festival Week, with Strauss conducting *Die ägyptische Helena*, *Elektra*, *Intermezzo*, and *Ariadne*. He also occasionally conducted Mozart and his own operas during the regular season.

Strauss's second wife was a daughter of the wealthy Munich brewing family Pschorr, and it is largely to her formidable personality that most people attribute Strauss's passive, not to say opportunistic, behavior during the Nazi era. Two lines from the Bavarian State Opera's recent program booklet are

worth quoting verbatim for their noteworthy phraseology. "The dismissal of Hans Knappertsbusch, forced by the Third Reich authorities and so painful for Munich opera lovers, did have its positive aspect. For the interim period the house administration succeeded in engaging the 71-year-old Strauss for a series of guest appearances." This is far from the only instance of Strauss's willingly substituting for conductors unacceptable to the Nazis. One wishes the venerable composer-conductor had cut a somewhat nobler figure, but the truth is that he did not.

After Knappertsbusch's departure, Clemens Krauss, an old Strauss champion, took over the musical leadership of the opera, with Rudolf Hartmann, today's administrative director, as chief producer. Together, they undertook a long-range project of doing all of Strauss's operas in new, as nearly as possible authentic and definitive, productions. Krauss wrote the libretto for *Capriccio* and also conducted its world premiere, with the composer present, on October 28, 1942, eight days after Strauss, with *Daphne*, had made his last appearance as a conductor of opera.

On the night of October 2, 1943, a bombing raid reduced the great old opera house to ruins. (It was about this time that Strauss entered into his sketch-book a brooding musical theme which he headed "Mourning for Munich" and which subsequently was to dominate his *Metamorphosen*.) Four years after the war, Munich, though still largely in ruins, celebrated Strauss's eighty-fifth birthday with a modest festival, and Strauss came from his new home in Switzerland to attend. On June 10, 1949, he conducted the close of *Rosenkavalier's* second act for a documentary film, and that same summer, at his special request, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* was performed in the Gärtnerplatztheater. Three months later, on September eighth in Garmisch, he died. At his burial in Munich's Ostfriedhof four days later, members of the Bavarian State Opera took their last leave from him with the *Rosenkavalier* trio, which begins: "*Hab' mir's gelobt, ihn lieb zu haben . . .*"

MUNICH'S Strauss Festival this year was only one part of a whole gala season to mark the opening of the sumptuously rebuilt Nationaltheater (formerly the Court Theatre) which had played such an important part throughout Strauss's life. Local and even world-wide reaction to this reopening provides the answer to any question as to what opera in Munich means to its public. The super-gala opening performances were scaled at \$125 top, and even the most expensive seats sold out four months in advance, with orders coming in from as far as America and Tanganyika. As for the Münchners themselves, a few years ago they collected no fewer than 200,000 signatures on petitions to rebuild the Nationaltheater as soon as possible. Munich's opera, theatres, museums, and orchestras annually receive five million dollars in subsidy from city tax funds, plus seven and a half million from the Bavarian



After Capriccio: Clemens Krauss and Strauss, center.

State, making Munich's the most heavily subsidized cultural complex in Germany.

And it is opera on which Munich's musical tradition is most solidly based. Overtones of Italian cultural influence are strong in Munich even today, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that influence was dominant, especially in music. Resident singers were almost exclusively Italian, and the opera was even called the Italian Opera. The magnificent Hercules Room of the royal Residenz was opened in 1653 with the cantata *L'Arpa festante* by Giovanni Battista Macchioni, a work "in the new musico-dramatic style"—i.e., with arias, recitatives, and choruses: this performance is usually considered the beginning of Munich's operatic tradition. Some years later Munich saw its first real opera, a work brought from home by the Electress Adelaide of Savoy, who was born in 1652 and had a strong influence musically on Munich until she died at the age of twenty-four.

Similar works continued to be produced fairly regularly on festive court occasions, but by the 1740s this had given way to a preference for *opera buffa*. The Court imported one of the geniuses for rococo architecture, François Cuvilliers, and commissioned him to build what turned out to be one of the gems of that epoch, the exquisitely ornate little Residenztheater. Here, in this case too, tradition has been kept viable and up to date despite international cataclysm. The entire interior of the theatre, which had opened in 1753, was made of intricately carved and painted wood, and when the Second World War came, it was laboriously dismantled and hauled away for safekeeping—*Gott sei Dank*, for the empty structure was destroyed by bombs in 1943. After the War, a new theatrical housing, in the same vicinity but not on the same spot, was erected, and today Mozart's operas as well as more intimate works by such recent composers as Strauss are once again presented in the same uniquely beautiful setting which Cuvilliers originally conceived and created two centuries ago.

Mozart, as it happens, had badly wanted a posi-

tion in Munich. That chance to add one more supreme jewel to its musical crown, Munich, for one reason or another, muffed, but Mozart did compose *La finta giardiniera* and *Idomeneo* for the Court of Bavaria, and both received their first performances in Munich. Italian operas and German *Singspiel* had continued to be produced, but with the advent of Gluck the dominant Italian influence on Munich's operatic life came to an end. Early in the nineteenth century, King Ludwig I disbanded the Italian Opera, apparently brought to this decision by the impact of his first encounter with *Fidelio*.

It was also Ludwig I who commissioned Carl von Fischer to design a new opera theatre much larger than what is known today simply as *Das Cuvilliéstheater*. Opened in 1818, the new house burned down that same year, but five years later Ludwig ordered it rebuilt according to the original plan. In this house, known as the Court and Nationaltheater, Munich's opera came into full flower. Its rise began with the engagement as chief *Kapellmeister* of Johann Aiblinger, a Bavarian who, after studying in Vicenza and settling in Venice, was summoned to Munich by his King in 1819 and remained, as conductor at the opera and at Court, until 1833. Under his leadership, opera in Munich came to rank with any in Germany. Under Franz Lachner, who died in 1860, the Munich company continued to improve.

Then came the tempestuous epoch dominated by Ludwig II's infatuation with Richard Wagner and his music-dramas, that famous friendship which almost brought Bavaria to revolution but delivered to the world a whole series of musical masterpieces. Through Wagner, Hans von Bülow came to Munich, first as Court pianist, soon becoming *Generalmusikdirektor*. In 1868 the great conductor Hans Richter was appointed, originally to direct the chorus, and a year later Franz Wüllner became chief conductor. Baron von Perfall had become

Continued on page 109



The Interior of the Cuvilliéstheater: rococo elegance.

Herman Miller's Comprehensive Storage System, designed by George Nelson, uses floor-to-ceiling poles, cantilever brackets, and an assortment of modular units. Below, the Spatial 500 System by Wallsystems, Inc., in which vertical members are bolted flush to the wall. Systems such as these can be planned to suit individual storage and décor needs; they also may be rearranged readily.



A Guide to **STEREO** **SHELVING**

SOMEWHAT testily, a distraught matron looked about her living room recently and exclaimed: "Stereo in this room? There's not even enough floor space left for another lamp."

"Simple," I replied. "We'll use the walls."

The most floor-cluttered room generally has some wall area claimed for no other function than supporting the ceiling, and such a wall can afford excellent housing for a first-class stereo system. By virtue of shelves every component, including the speakers, can be installed for optimum performance and to pleasing decorative effect. And, happily, most shelving requires little or no mechanical skill in assembly, can be erected in a fairly short time, and can be added to or modified at a later date. Shelf arrangements that are built-in or physically integrated with cabinets are fairly permanent; others can be dismantled and reassembled with comparative ease. Any shelf system, however, has the unique advantage of providing ample storage without encroaching on precious floor space.

Furthermore, mere expediency is not the only *raison d'être* for a music system on shelves. Latter-day audio components are so sleekly and attractively styled that they not only fit readily onto shelves of ordinary depth but lend real visual interest to a room. Perhaps even more important from the point of view of the serious music listener is the fact that several acoustic considera-

● ● **BY LEN BUCKWALTER**



The Royal System, by Danish designer Poul Cadovius, is used here to create a music wall combined with storage space for a dining room. This system employs vertical uprights that are bolted to the wall. The cabinets and shelves may be regrouped or added to after installation.



Shelf system by Allied Radio, above, holds equipment and also may serve as a room divider. A more permanent décor is possible with shelves that are custom-built and fitted into a specific area, as shown above right. Stereo group by Peter Wessel, Ltd., directly right, is a modular system using vertical uprights on the wall.

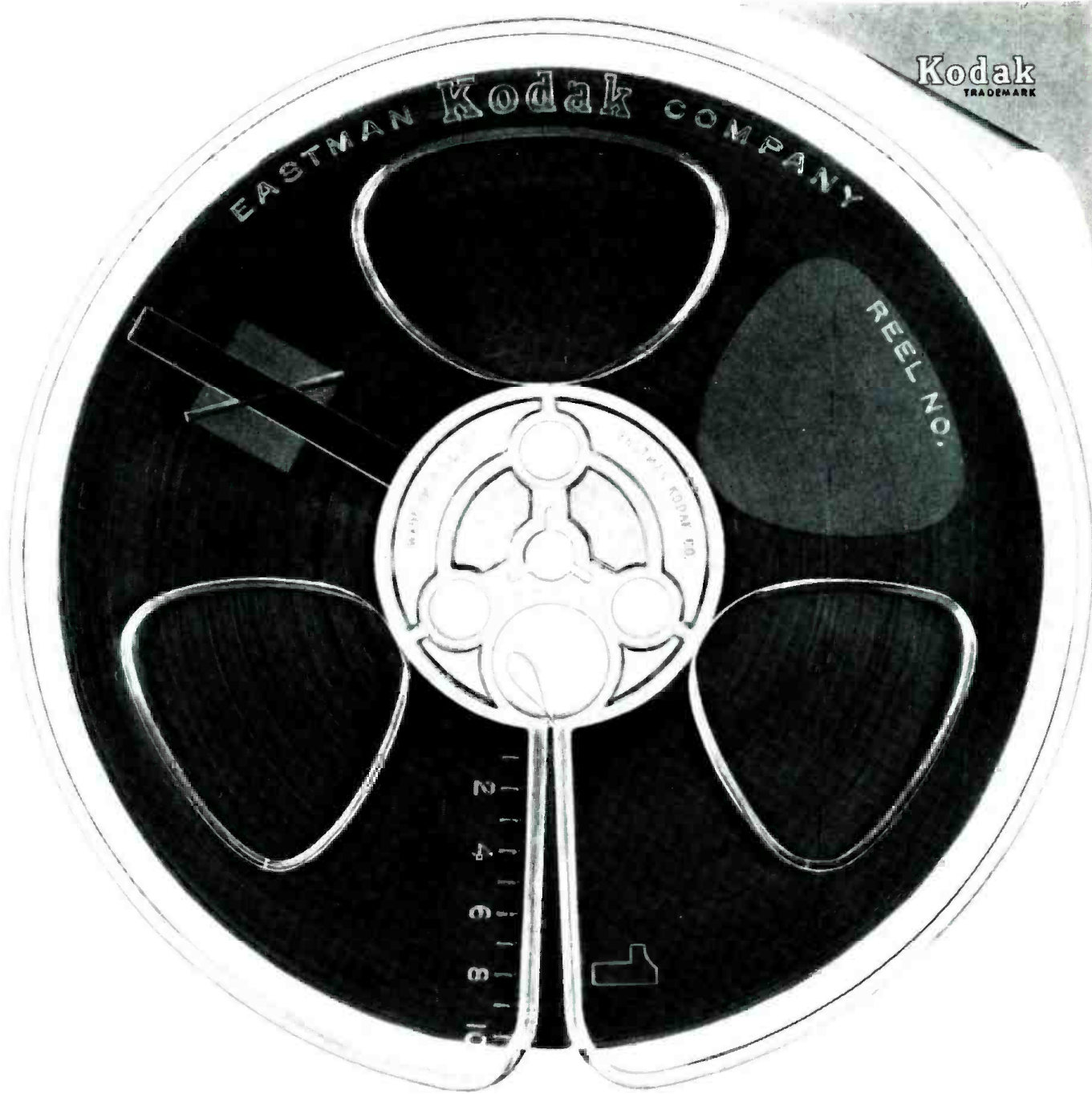


STEREO SHELVING

tions work in favor of shelf mounting. For one, elevating tweeters off the floor reduces premature absorption of high tones by carpets. Such elevation also can set up an obstacle-free path to the listener's ear, itself usually positioned some forty-two inches above floor level. Readily reflected high tones no longer need diffract around chair backs and other obstructions. Height also is of great value when balancing the output of two stereo speakers. When both speakers can "see" the listener, they can be balanced to cover a greater listening area in a room.

As for the shelves themselves, they have, by and large, progressed well beyond the day when the family mechanic cut his own, finished them, and then devised some way of getting them to stay up—usually by direct attachment to the wall, a process that took effort, time, and such esoteric skills as fashioning cleats and finding hidden wall studs. In contrast, shelves now come cut to size, finished, and edged. Some even are fitted with braces at the ends to help support their burden; for others, similar end pieces are sold separately. In fact, the main problem today is simply selecting a particular "shelf system" that meets individual budget and taste requirements.

One fairly low-cost system on the market *Continued on page 110*



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1) The new KODAK Thread-Easy Reel eliminates fumbling and saves you time. This specially designed reel threads instantly. Just put the tape into the slot, give the reel a turn and it's ready to run.

2) And, it has a handy time-saving splicing jig on *both* sides of the reel.

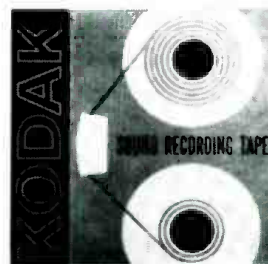
3) And, there are also index scales on both sides for even greater convenience.

KODAK Sound Recording Tape comes in 3-inch, 5-inch, and 7-inch reels. The 7-inch size

comes on the KODAK Thread-Easy Reel at no extra charge.

KODAK Sound Recording Tape is made with a new kind of high-performance oxide layer. We've packed more oxide and dispersed it more evenly in a tougher and chemically more stable resin binder. Because we've put more oxide in, you get better output—with less noise. And, because the oxide layer is smoother, there's less recorder-head wear.

Next time get Kodak tape, and enjoy a new standard of tape quality. Available at your Kodak photo dealer's.



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EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY, Rochester, N. Y.

CIRCLE 26 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A MAJOR BREAK-THROUGH IN SOUND PURITY

... BY **SHURE**

THE SOUND FROM THE NEW SHURE V-15 STEREO DYNETIC® CARTRIDGE WITH ITS REVOLUTIONARY BI-RADIAL ELLIPTICAL STYLUS HAS NEVER BEFORE BEEN HEARD OUTSIDE AUDIO LABORATORIES

by S. N. SHURE, President, Shure Brothers, Inc.

The sound from the new Shure V-15 Stereo Dynetic Cartridge is unique. The unit incorporates highly disciplined refinements in design and manufacture that were considered "beyond the state of the art" as recently as the late summer of 1963. The V-15 performance specifications and design considerations are heady stuff—even among engineers. They probably cannot be assimilated by anyone who is not a knowledgeable audiophile, yet the sound is such that the critical listener, with or without technical knowledge, can appreciate the significant nature of the V-15 music re-creation superiority. It is to be made in limited quantities, and because of the incredibly close tolerances and singularly rigid inspection techniques involved, it is not inexpensive. Perfection never is.

THE BI-RADIAL ELLIPTICAL STYLUS

The outstanding characteristic is that the V-15 Stylus has two different radii . . . hence the designation Bi-Radial. One is a broad frontal plane radius of 22.5 microns (.0009 inch); while the actual contact radii on each side of the stylus are an incredibly fine 5 microns (.0002 inch). It would be impossible to reduce the contact radius of a conventional spherical/conical stylus to this micro-miniature dimension without subjecting the entire stylus to "bottoming" in the record grooves.

The Shure Bi-Radial elliptical stylus, because of its larger frontal radius of 22.5 microns (.0009 inch), cannot bottom . . . and as you know, bottoming reproduces the crackling noise of the grit and static dust that in practice cannot be eliminated from the canyons of record grooves.

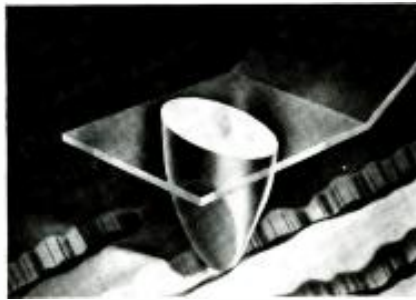
TRACING DISTORTION MINIMIZED

The prime objective in faithful sound re-creation is to have the playback stylus move in exactly the same way as the wedge-shaped cutting stylus moved when it produced the master record. This can't be accomplished with a spherical/conical stylus because the points of tangency (or points of contact between the record grooves and the stylus) are constantly changing. This effect manifests itself as tracing distortion (sometimes called "inner groove distortion"). Note in the illustration below how the points of tangency (arrows) of the Bi-Radial elliptical stylus remain relatively constant because of the very small 5 micron (.0002 inch) side contact radii:



Cutter Elliptical Conical

The Shure Bi-Radial Stylus vastly reduces another problem in playback known as the "pinch effect." As experienced audiophiles know, the record grooves are wider wherever and whenever the flat, chisel-faced cutting stylus changes directions (which is 440 cycles per second at a pure middle "A" tone—up to 20,000 cycles per second in some of the high overtones). An ordinary spherical/conical stylus riding the upper portion of the groove walls tends to drop where the groove gets wider, and to rise as the groove narrows. Since stereo styli and cartridges have both vertical and horizontal functions, this unfortunate and unwanted up-and-down motion creates a second harmonic distortion. The new Shure Bi-Radial elliptical stylus, on the other hand, looks like this riding a record groove:



You'll note that even though it has a broad front face with a frontal plane radius of 22.5 microns (.0009 inch), and it measures 30 microns (.0012 inch) across at the point of contact with the groove, the small side or contact radii are only 5 microns (.0002 inch). This conforms to the configuration of the cutting stylus and hence is not as subject to the up-and-down vagaries of the so-called "pinch-effect."

SYMMETRY, TOLERANCES AND POSITIONING ARE ULTRA-CRITICAL

Frankly, a Bi-Radial elliptical stylus, however desirable, is almost impossibly difficult to make CORRECTLY. Diamond, as you know, is the hardest material . . . with a rating of 10 on the Mohs hardness scale. It's one thing to make a simple diamond cone, altogether another to make a perfectly symmetrical Bi-Radial stylus with sufficiently close tolerances, actually within one ten thousandth of an inch! Shure has developed unprecedented controls, inspections and manufacturing techniques to assure precise positioning, configuration, dimensions and tolerances of the diamond tip. It is a singular and exacting procedure . . . unique in the high fidelity cartridge industry. And, unless these inspection techniques and safeguards are used, an imperfectly formed elliptical configuration can result and literally do more

harm than good to both record and sound.

THE V-15 IS A 15° CARTRIDGE

The 15° effective tracking angle has recently been the subject of several Shure communications to the audiophile. It conforms to the effective record cutting angle of 15° proposed by the RIAA and EIA and now used by the major record producing companies and thereby minimizes tracking distortion.

The major features, then, of the V-15 are the Shure Bi-Radial Elliptical Stylus, the singular quality control techniques and standards devised to produce perfection of stylus symmetry, and the 15° tracking angle. They combine to reduce IM and harmonic distortion to a dramatic new low. In fact, the distortion (at normal record playing velocities) is lower than the inherent noise level of the finest test records and laboratory measurement instruments! In extensive listening tests, the V-15 proved most impressive in its "trackability." It consistently proved capable of tracking the most difficult, heavily modulated passages at a minimum force of 3/4 grams (in the Shure-SME tone arm). The entire V-15 is hand-crafted and subject to quality control and inspection measures that result in space-age reliability. Precision machined aluminum and a special ultra-stable plastic stylus grip. Exact alignment is assured in every internal detail—and in mounting. Mu-metal hum shield surrounds the sensitive coils. The V-15 is a patented moving-magnet device—a connoisseur's cartridge in every detail.

SPECIFICATIONS

The basic specifications are what you'd expect the premier Shure cartridge to reflect: 20 to 20,000 cps., 6 mv output. Over 25 db separation. 25×10^{-6} cm. per dyne compliance. 3/4 gram tracking. 47,000 ohms impedance, 680 millihenries inductance per channel. 650 ohms resistance. Bi-Radial diamond stylus: 22.5 microns (.0009 inch) frontal radius, 5 microns (.0002 inch) side contact radii, 30 microns (.0012 inch) wide between record contact points.

But most important, it re-creates music with a transcendent purity that results in a deeply rewarding experience for the critical ear.

Manufactured under U.S. Patents 3,055,988; 3,077,521 and 3,077,522. Other Patents Pending.

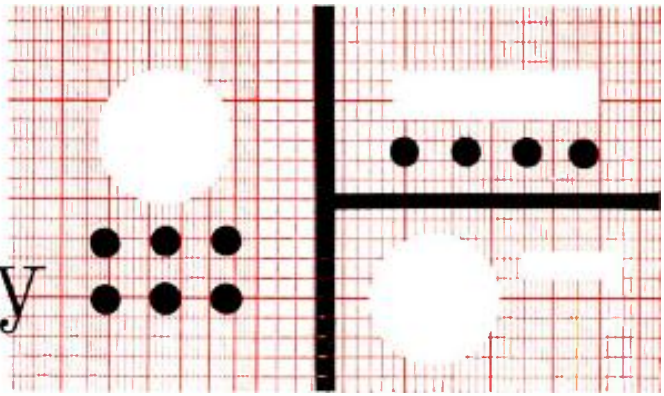
V-15 Cartridge—\$62.50 net
Replacement stylus VN-2E—\$25.00 net

SHURE BROTHERS, INC.
222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois

CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS



Viking 88 Stereo-Compact Tape Recorder

THE EQUIPMENT: Viking 88, a stereo tape deck with built-in record/playback preamplifiers. Chassis dimensions: 12-1/4 by 12-1/4 by 5-1/2 inches (exclusive of plugs, knobs, and reels). Front plate (overhangs chassis), 13-1/16 inches square. Prices: RMQ model (quarter-track record and play), \$339.95; ERQ model (half-track record and quarter-track play), \$347.95. Manufacturer: Viking of Minneapolis, Inc., 9600 Aldrich Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn., 55420.

COMMENT: The Viking 88 is a worthy successor to the Viking 86, offering new features and improved performance. Although the new version of the "Stereo-Compact" looks like its predecessor, it employs newly designed tape heads (that require no pressure pads); a better braking system; and redesigned electronics. Among its more outstanding features (found, as a rule, on larger or costlier tape machines) is an A-B switch that enables the user to monitor and compare the program source and the tape being recorded; the "sound-on-sound" function by means of which multiple-recording effects can be made; and a built-in filter for off-the-air FM stereo (multiplex) recording.

The deck runs at two speeds (7.5 and 3.75 ips) and is fitted with three heads: erase, record, and playback. The ERQ version records in half-track mono or stereo, and plays quarter-track mono or stereo (four-track

stereo). The RMQ version, which was the model tested by United States Testing Company, Inc., is a completely quarter-track machine, for stereo or mono. Both versions have shift levers that position the heads to handle half-track playback.

The deck is neatly styled in anodized aluminum and is designed for installation either vertically or horizontally (as well as any attitude in between). It is supplied with a pair of mounting brackets for custom installation. Tape movement is governed by a two-piece concentric control. Its outer ring is for fast-forward or rewind; the inner bar is for the "play," "record," and "cue" functions. In the "cue" mode, the tape remains in contact with the heads, but the reel brakes are disengaged so that the reels may be rocked back and forth by hand to position the tape precisely for editing and splicing. In the neutral, fast-forward, and rewind positions, tape filters hold the tape away from the heads. To prevent accidental erasure of a recorded tape, the tape motion control has a button that must be pressed for recording; it will stay "in" only when the tape motion bar is in the "play" position. The head shift control—for playing half-track or quarter-track tapes—is located on the tape head cover. Directly under the cover is the speed-change knob. Located between the reels is a three-digit tape counter. The tape, when threaded onto the take-up reel,

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, or equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization not affiliated with the United States Government 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. No reference to the United States Testing Company, Inc., to its seals or insignia, or to the results of its tests, including material published in HIGH FIDELITY based on such tests, may be made without written permission of United States Testing Company, Inc.

must engage the run-out switch, which will automatically shut off the transport mechanism when the tape runs out or if it happens to break.

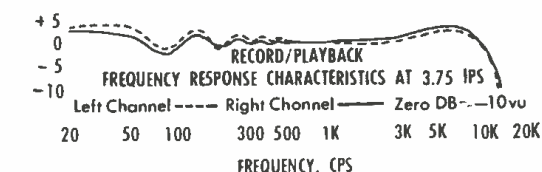
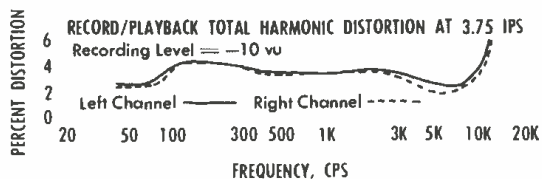
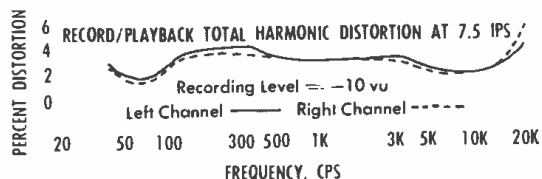
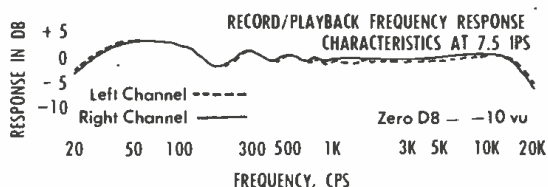
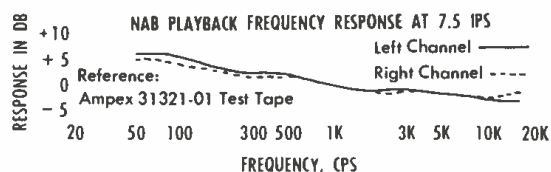
The controls for the electronics of the Viking 88 are arranged along the lower part of the deck. They include a recording level control and a playback level control for each channel; a function selector switch (off, play, record, or sound-on-sound); a stereo-mono switch (when in mono position it cuts out channel 2); and a source-tape switch for the monitor and compare functions. There are also two VU meters, a pilot lamp that glows when recording, and a pair of microphone input jacks. Phono jacks for high-level inputs (such as from a tuner or the tape-feed outputs of a high fidelity amplifier), for the Viking's amplifier outputs, and for its monitor head outputs are at the rear of the machine. A fuse-holder and a switched AC receptacle also are on the rear.

The transport is powered by two motors, one for the capstan drive and the other for the take-up reel. The amplifier circuitry employs two transistors and six tubes; the power supply uses semiconductor rectifiers.

The recorder, in tests, ran smoothly and quietly,

and handled various kinds of tape gently, including the thinnest polyester types. Speed accuracy was average for this class of equipment. Wow and flutter were satisfactorily low. The fast-forward speed on this deck, incidentally, was one of the fastest we've encountered, and very handy when moving from one part of a reel to another. The measured playback characteristic had a rising bass response; inasmuch as it was very gradual and linear (rather than peaked), it was not really objectionable and might even be preferred by many listeners. In any case, it could be readily compensated when playing prerecorded tapes by adjusting the bass tone control on one's amplifier.

The record/playback response at the fast speed was very good, and both channels were uniform within plus or minus a few decibels out to 18,000 cps. As expected, response at the slower speed did not go out as far or as uniformly, but did remain reasonably smooth to just beyond 10,000 cps—which is better than typical response at 3.75 ips used to be and which attests to the internal improvement made in the new Viking. Distortion at both speeds was generally low; signal-to-noise ratio, favorably high. Of significance, in our view, was



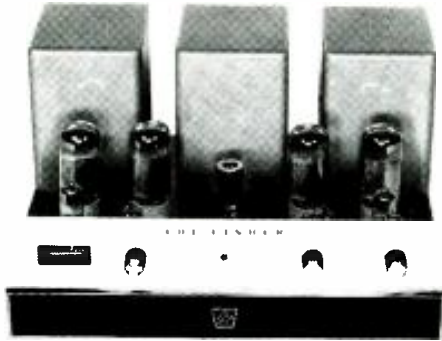
Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 7.5 ips	2.3% fast at 117 v AC line; 3.3% at 129 v; 1.9% at 105 v
3.75 ips	1.85% fast at 117 v; 3.2% at 129 v; 1.5% at 105 v
Wow and flutter, 7.5 ips	0.06% each ch
3.75 ips	0.24% and 0.1% respectively
Rewind time, 7-in., 1,200-ft. reel	1 min, 21 sec, either speed setting
Fast-forward time, same reel	43.5 sec, either speed setting
NAB playback response (ref Ampex test tape No. 31321-01), 7.5 ips	l ch: +5, -2.5 db, 50 cps to 15 kc r ch: +6.5, -3 db, 50 cps to 15 kc
Max output level (with 0 VU at 700 cps, test tape)	2.3 volts, either ch
Record/playback response (with -10 VU recorded signal), 7.5 ips	either ch: ±3.5 db, 20 cps to 18 kc l ch: ±4 db, 20 cps to 11 kc r ch: +3, -4 db, 20 cps to 11 kc
3.75 ips	
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU test tape), playback record/playback	either ch: 50 db l ch: 45 db; r ch: 46 db
Sensitivity for 0 VU recording level high level input microphone input	l ch: 230 mv; r ch: 240 mv l ch: 2.3 mv; r ch: 2.4 mv
THD, record/playback (-10 VU recorded signal)	
7.5 ips	l ch: 3% at 1 kc; less than 4%, 40 cps to 20 kc
3.75 ips	r ch: 3% at 1 kc; less than 4%, 40 cps to 18 kc either ch: 3.4% at 1 kc; less than 4%, 40 cps to 10 kc
IM distortion (-10 VU recorded signal) record/playback	l ch: 4%; r ch: 4.5%
Recording level for max 3% THD	l ch: +0.6 VU; r ch: +0.7 VU
Accuracy, built-in VU meters	l ch: no error; r ch: 0.9 VU high

the unusual number of performance characteristics (see accompanying list) that had identical or nearly identical measurements on each channel. This high order of conformity indicates careful engineering and, from the user's standpoint, very closely matched stereo channels.

Using and listening to the Viking 88 is an easy and

pleasant experience. The deck is set into operation in jig time, and the arrangement of signal jacks and controls simplifies its use. Like other Viking models we have known in the past, the 88 Compact is a reliable little "workhorse"—with thoroughbred performance and new, "show-class" features.



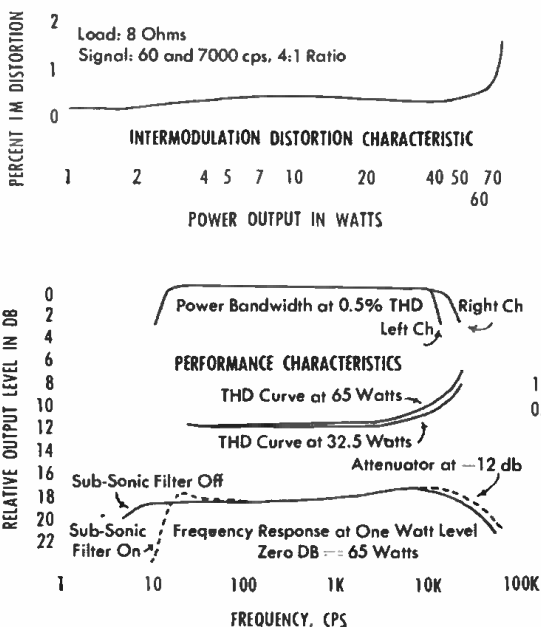
Fisher Model K-1000

Power Amplifier Kit

THE EQUIPMENT: Fisher K-1000, a basic or power amplifier available in kit form. Supplied with metal cage. Dimensions: 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ by 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 12 inches. Weight: 71 pounds. Price: \$279.50. (Factory-built version, Model SA-1000, \$329.50.) Manufacturer: Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 44th Drive, Long Island City, N.Y., 11101.

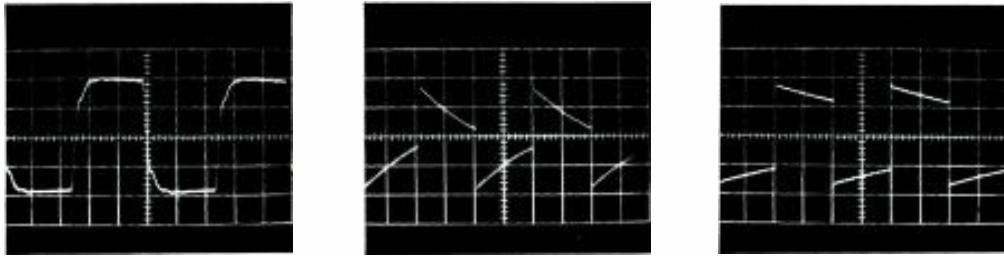
COMMENT: The K-1000 is the largest and most powerful amplifier yet offered by Fisher. Tests of a kit-built sample, conducted at United States Testing Company, Inc., indicate that it meets its power and distortion specifications with room to spare. The output circuit uses a new type of tube, the 8417, which was designed especially for this amplifier and which is energized by three separate power supplies, one each for plate, screen-grid, and control-grid voltages. The input stage uses an unconventional circuit designed with wide-band characteristics and associated with a step-type attenuator designed to control signal level without rolling off the high frequency response. There also is a subsonic filter to prevent overloading the amplifier with low-frequency

noise sources. The input attenuators (one for each channel) are on the front panel of the K-1000, along with a pilot lamp, a meter, and another knob for adjusting the output tubes. Also on the front panel, but concealed behind a hinged section, are the screw-adjust-



Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Power output (at 1 kc into 8-ohm load)	
Channels individually:	
Left at clipping	65.5 watts @ 0.15% THD
Left at 0.5% THD	75 watts
Right at clipping	65.5 watts @ 0.18% THD
Right at 0.5% THD	75 watts
Both chs simultaneously:	
Left at clipping	57.7 watts @ 0.11% THD
Right at clipping	57.7 watts @ 0.11% THD
Power bandwidth, constant 0.5% THD	l ch: 10 cps to 13 kc r ch: 10 cps to 20 kc
Harmonic distortion	
65 watts output	under 0.3%, 20 cps to 4 kc; 1.3% at 20 kc
32.5 watts output	under 0.3%, 20 cps to 7 kc; 1% at 20 kc
IM distortion	under 0.5% up to 60 watts; 0.6% at 65 watts
Frequency response, 1-watt output	filter off: ± 1 db, 7 cps to 30 kc; -3 db at 52 kc filter on: -1 db at 14 cps; -9 db at 8 cps
Damping factor (8-ohm output)	13.3
Sensitivity, various attenuator positions, volts, and relative cor- responding db values	0 db 0.5 volt (0 db) -3 db 0.68 volts (-1.6 db) -6 db 0.99 volts (-5.8 db) -9 db 1.35 volts (-7.6 db) -12 db 1.86 volts (-11.4 db)
S/N ratio, at clipping	85 db



Square-wave response to 10 kc, left, and to 50 cps with subsonic filter on and off.

ments for bias and balance, as well as the subsonic filter switch. The rear of the amplifier has two pairs of left and right input jacks, a test jack, a fuse-holder, and left and right speaker terminals of 4, 8, and 16 ohms. Separate grounding terminals also are included on the speaker terminal strips. No off/on switch is provided: the K-1000 is intended for use with a control unit that has an AC convenience outlet into which the K-1000's line cord would be plugged so that both units are turned on or off together.

The hardness of this amplifier is indicated by the fact that *USTC* measured its continuous power at the same level specified by Fisher for its music power rating (the former usually is lower). Harmonic distortion was found to be very low at all power levels. IM distortion remained below 0.5% up to 60 watts output, and rose to only 0.6% at 65 watts output.

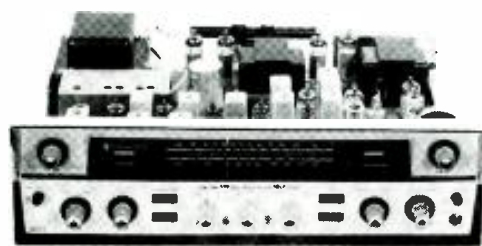
Frequency response extended well beyond the 20- to 20,000-cps range. When the subsonic switch was in the OFF position, the bass response was flat down to 7 cps. When ON the filter caused the extreme low end to fall off more rapidly, but not until well below 20 cps. The 5-position attenuator—which may be used to adjust the amplifier's gain to suit different input signal levels and to help balance the two stereo channels—made a difference of about 1 db in the response past 20,000 cps, thus confirming the manufacturer's claim that its use will not cause high frequency degradation.

Square-wave response of the K-1000 was very good. The low-frequency photos show one slight tilt and the more pronounced tilt when the subsonic filter was OFF and ON respectively; the high frequency photo shows only a slight ringing and is indicative of good stability and transient response. The difference in power bandwidth measured on the two channels is not very important, and means only that the left channel distortion may be slightly higher than that of the right when the amplifier is called on to deliver maximum power above 10 kc—a situation relatively infrequently encountered in normal program reproduction.

The Fisher K-1000, in sum, is one of the better basic amplifiers available today, being an extremely high-powered unit with very low distortion, and offering such "response-tailoring" features as an input filter and attenuator that do not compromise its important performance characteristics.

How It Went Together

The K-1000 was a pleasure to build, because of the superb packaging of the kit, the excellent instruction manual, and the good physical layout of the chassis. Some errors were encountered in the early edition of the manual; these, we are told, have been corrected in current versions. Total construction time was about ten hours.

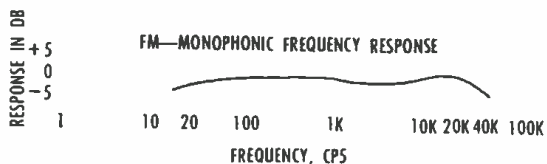
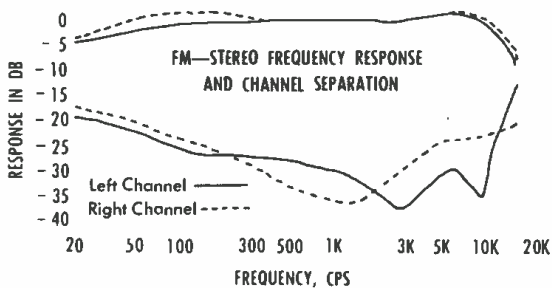
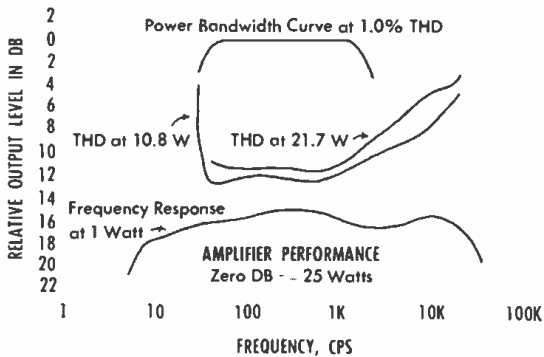
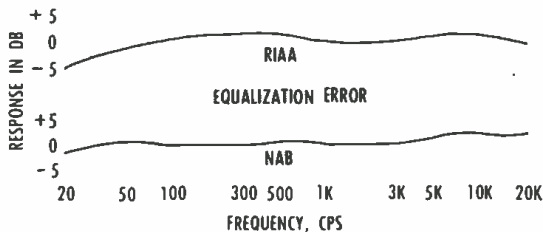
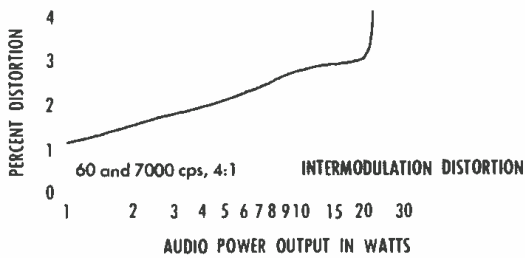
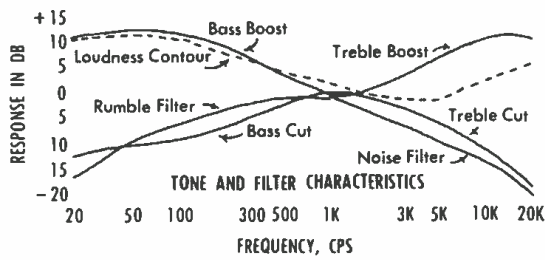


Kenwood Model KW-70 Tuner/Amplifier

THE EQUIPMENT: Kenwood KW-70, a combination FM, FM stereo, and AM tuner and stereo preamplifier-power amplifier on one chassis. Dimensions: 17¾ inches wide; 5½ inches high; 14 inches deep. Supplied in brushed metal case with rubber feet. Price: \$269.95. Manufactured by Trio Corporation of Japan and distributed by Kenwood Electronics, Inc., 212 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N.Y. and 3700 S. Broadway Pl., Los Angeles, Calif., 90007.

COMMENT: The Kenwood KW-70 is another in the growing roster of stereo "all-in-ones" that offer, in convenient format, all the functions of a home music center. It can receive AM, monophonic FM, and stereo FM broadcasts, and may be readily connected to record players and tape recorders. The set has many features that are representative of this class of equipment, and a few that are unusually fine.

To begin with, it is handsomely and functionally



Lab Test Data

FM Tuner Section

Performance characteristic	Measurement
IHF sensitivity	2.3 μ v
IM distortion	0.21%
Capture ratio	4
S/N ratio	58 db
Frequency response	
mono	+0.7, -2 db, 20 cps to 35 kc
stereo, l ch	+1, -4 db, 20 cps to 13 kc
r ch	+1.5, -3 db, 20 cps to 13 kc
THD, mono	0.62% at 400 cps; 0.6% at 1 kc; 0.61% at 40 cps
stereo, l ch	1.2% at 400 cps; 1% at 1 kc; 1.6% at 40 cps
r ch	1.4% at 400 cps; 1.1% at 1 kc; 2% at 40 cps
Channel separation	better than 30 db at 1 kc; better than 20 db, 50 cps to 11.5 kc
19-kc pilot suppression	-37 db
38-kc subcarrier suppression	-47 db

Amplifier Section

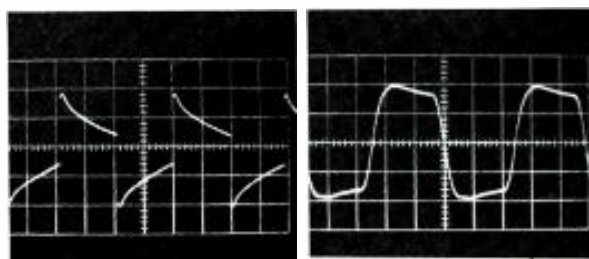
Performance characteristic	Measurement
Power output (at 1 kc into 8-ohm load, individual chs)	
left at clipping	21.7 watts @ 0.72% THD
left for constant 1% THD	24.5 watts
right at clipping	21.1 watts @ 0.76% THD
right for constant 1% THD	24.1 watts
both chs simultaneously	
left at clipping	20.1 watts @ 0.78% THD
right at clipping	19.2 watts @ 1% THD
Power bandwidth @ 1% THD	32 cps to 2.5 kc
Harmonic distortion	
21.7 watts output	under 1.5%, 40 cps to 3.5 kc; 2% at 7.2 kc
10.8 watts output	under 1.5%, 32 cps to 9.2 kc; 2% at 15.2 kc
IM distortion	2% at 5 watts output; 2.8% at 20 watts output
Frequency response	\pm 1 db, 15 cps to 22 kc; -2 db at 8 cps and at 27 kc
RIAA equalization	\pm 1 db, 50 cps to 20 kc; -3 db at 28 cps
NAB equalization	+2, -0 db, 30 cps to 20 kc; -0.75 db at 20 cps
Damping factor	10
Sensitivity, various inputs	
mag	2.15 mv
tape head	3.2 mv
crystal	23.5 mv
tape play	128 mv
aux	128 mv
S. N ratio, various inputs	
mag	57 db
tape head	57 db
crystal	57 db
tape play	87 db
aux	87 db

styled, and boasts just about every control feature that could be expected in a home music system. On the front panel are AM and FM tuning dials and a logging scale. To the left of the dial is a tuning beam indicator that operates on FM and AM. To the right of the dial is a stereo FM indicator. The tuning dial is illuminated when the set is used for broadcast reception. When using the KW-70 as an amplifier (for other program sources), the tuning dial is not lit, but two pilot lights remain on. Both the tuning indicator and the FM stereo indicator are maximum closure types, and were found—in our locale—to respond accurately to the marked station numerals for best reception. The tuning knob is at the extreme right; at the opposite end of the panel is a blend control that varies the set's output from full stereo to full mono, and which may be used for broadcasts as well as other program sources.

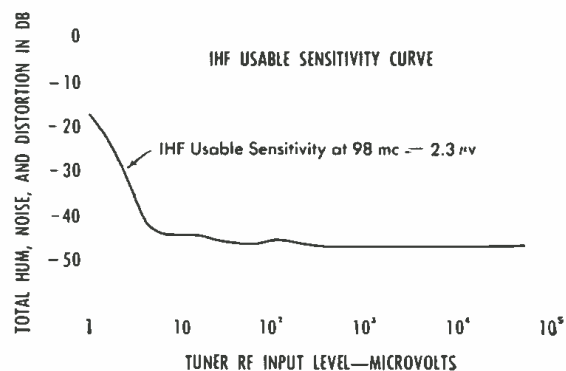
The other controls are arranged across the lower half of the front panel. Left to right, they include: a tape monitor switch; the power off/on switch; a volume control; rumble filter; loudness contour off/on; concentric bass controls, operating independently on each channel; similar type treble controls; channel balance control; AFC off/on switch; noise (scratch) filter; program selector (AM, FM, FM stereo, phono, tape, aux); mode selector (left, right, stereo, reverse); a low-impedance stereo headphone jack; and a speaker-defeat switch. (The speakers connected to the KW-70 may be left on or off when using headphones.)

The rear of the chassis has additional adjustments for hum balance, speaker phasing, and FM stereo dimension. Here also are the inputs for external program sources (stereo pairs for magnetic phono pickup, crystal or ceramic pickup, tape head, and auxiliary) plus a stereo pair for feeding signals to a tape recorder and another pair for signals from a tape playback preamp. Speaker connections are provided in impedances of 4, 8, and 16 ohms on each channel. There is no "center channel" speaker connection, but the blend control on the front panel serves to reduce excessive stereo separation for the left and right speakers—as well as for headphones used with the KW-70. A built-in ferrite loopstick AM antenna, mounted on a swivel bracket, may be swung out from the rear to a short distance away from the set. There also is a screw-terminal for an external ("long-wire") AM antenna, and terminals for the twin lead-in of a 300-ohm FM antenna. The AC line cord, a fuse-holder, and a switched AC convenience outlet complete the rear complement.

FM reception characteristics were measured by United States Testing Company, Inc., and then checked in listening tests. Sensitivity of the tuner section was high; distortion, low. Combined with the set's good capture ratio and favorable signal-to-noise ratio, this makes for very fine FM reception. When switched to stereo FM, the set's distortion rose as expected, but by no means excessively. The frequency response was



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



rolled off somewhat at the very high end, but channel separation was excellent. AM reception was adequate, with enough sensitivity for local stations, reasonably low distortion, and a response characteristic that sloped downward at the high end.

The amplifier's frequency response was smooth and uniform from below 20 cps to above 20,000 cps. At high power demands, distortion increased, particularly at the extreme low and high portions of the frequency response. Mollifying this were other, very favorable characteristics—good sensitivity, high signal-to-noise ratio, high damping factor—as well as very good equalization for both the RIAA (discs) and NAB (tape head playback) standards. The low-frequency square-wave response showed the tilt (phase shift in the deep bass) that is typical of this class of equipment. The high-frequency square-wave response showed no evidence of ringing, and only slight tilt—indicating good transient response and stability. All this would indicate the set's suitability for driving medium- to high-efficiency speakers at normal listening levels in an average-size room—which indeed was verified with enthusiasm in listening tests. The KW-70, in sum, has not been designed to be an audio world-beater, but rather a reliable and satisfactory performer, consistent with its cost and format. As such, it fills the bill very nicely.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

University Tri-Planar Speaker
Bogen RT-1000 Tuner/Amplifier
Tandberg 74 Tape Recorder



The AR turntable

good for the money?

SPEED ACCURACY

high fidelity

"... showed the lowest speed error that has been encountered in *{fixed speed}* turntables"

WOW AND FLUTTER

HiFi/Stereo Review (Julian D. Hirsch)

"The wow and flutter were the lowest I have ever measured on a turntable."

RUMBLE

AUDIO

"The AR turntable introduces as little 'signal' of its own as any turntable we have had occasion to test."

ACOUSTIC FEEDBACK

HI-FI Review (John Milder)

"... the best answer so far to the interrelated problems of rumble and acoustic feedback in stereo-record playing"

SAFETY



The AR turntable is listed under Reexamination Service of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc. We do not know of any other current non-automatic separate turntable or record player so listed.

The AR turntable is guaranteed for one year; the guarantee covers both repairs and reimbursement of any freight costs.

Literature, including a list of dealers in your area, is available on request. The AR turntable and AR speakers are on continuous demonstration at AR Music Rooms, on the west balcony of Grand Central Terminal, N.Y.C., and at 52 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts. No sales are made or initiated at these showrooms.

\$78⁰⁰ complete with arm, oiled walnut base, and dust cover, but less cartridge, 33 1/3 and 45 rpm

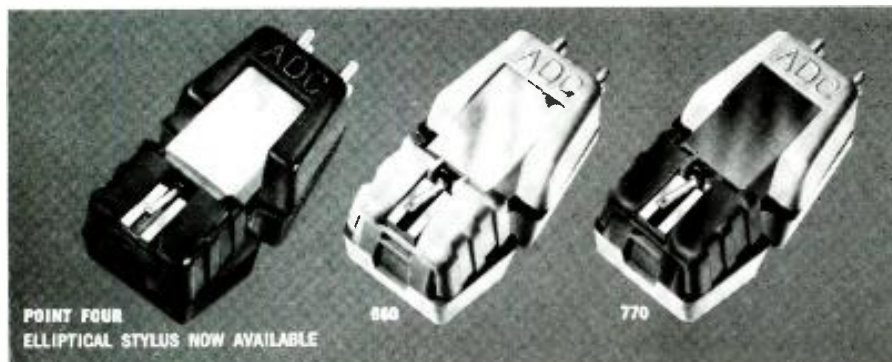
The price of the two-speed turntable has been increased from the original \$68 because of manufacturing costs.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141
CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

"MASS" REVOLUTION NOW IN PROGRESS

ADC is successful in achieving lowest mass cartridge design

What are the characteristics of the ideal stereo phonograph cartridge? Recording engineers and equipment manufacturers are in agreement here. Distortion will be eliminated only when the cartridge can trace the exact shape of the record groove and reproduce its exact electrical analogy. What changes must be made to free the stylus for precise tracing are now also known. As to the manner in which these changes are to be achieved, experts are less optimistic. They say, "Not today, but years hence."



Stylus mass they hold, will have to come down. Not another shade or two, but drastically. Compliance will be concomitantly increased. Not refined slightly, but brought to a new order of magnitude. And there is more reason than ever to insist on adherence to a standard vertical tracking angle.

The low-mass, high-compliance cartridges will permit exceptionally low tracking forces. Only then will we have truly flat response beyond the limits of the audio spectrum, free of resonant peaks and dips. Record wear and distortion will at last be brought to the point where they are truly negligible.

WHAT ADC HAS DONE

These conclusions were the starting point some time ago for ADC, not the end. We knew that marginal upgrading of existing designs would not bring us within reach of the ideal goals. We faced the need for boldness in seeking completely new solutions. From this decision came the concept of the INDUCED MAGNET TRANSDUCER. In short order we had prototypes of this new class of magnetic cartridge which shattered old technical limitations. What followed were three startlingly new cartridges that incorporated this principle: the ADC Point Four, recommended for manual turntables; the ADC 660 and 770, recommended for automatic turntables and record changers — NOT YEARS HENCE, BUT TODAY.

YEARS AHEAD PRINCIPLE. TODAY

How do ADC cartridges using the new principle measure up to the

"years ahead" goals? "Significantly reduced mass" was the key advantage, we said — months before the spotlight was turned on this factor. The use of a fixed magnet, separate from the moving system, inducing its field into an armature of extremely light weight, slashed mass to "half or less than that of systems previously regarded as low-mass designs." The tubular, aluminum stylus arm or cantilever connected to the stylus to move this negligible mass was made even lighter. We were then able to match this low mass with a suspension of exceptionally high compliance.

As to stylus tracking force, we have suggested a minimum of 3/4 gram. But we have tracked the Point Four perfectly at 1/2 gram. The chief problem here is the ability of available tone arms, not of the cartridge. The physical arrangement of elements, using the new INDUCED MAGNET principle, brought other gains. "The remote position of the magnet with respect to the main structure," we said, "ensures freedom from saturation and hysteresis distortion—serious effects that are beyond control by conventional shielding."

As to the vertical tracking angle, we noted that "obtaining the now established tracking angle of 15° is no problem" with the pivot point of the arm brought close to the record surface by the new physical configuration.

OTHER ADVANTAGES OF THESE NEW CARTRIDGES

These are not the only virtues of the new Point Four, the 660 and the 770
CIRCLE 9 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

which employ the INDUCED MAGNET principle. There is the exceptional ease of stylus replacement by the user. There is the self-retracting stylus that protects itself and your records. There is the difference in sound that you MUST hear for yourself. There are others. We stress a few of the many virtues only because they involve factors designated for an idealized cartridge of the future. And we ask you to compare the ADC cartridges AVAILABLE TODAY with these eventual goals. We believe you'll agree that these are the most advanced cartridges available anywhere. We can only hope that you try them with equipment that will do them justice.

SPECIFICATIONS	ADC POINT FOUR*
Type	Induced magnet
Sensitivity	5 mv at 5.5 cms/sec recorded velocity
Channel Separation	30 db, 50 to 8,000 cps
Frequency Response	10 to 20,000 cps ± 2 db
Stylus tip radius*	.0004" (accurately maintained)
Vertical tracking angle	15°
Tracking force range	3/4 to 1 1/2 grams
I.M. distortion	less than 1%—400 & 4,000 cps. at 14.3 cms/sec velocity
Compliance	30 x 10 ⁻⁶ cms/dyne
PRICE	\$50.00

SPECIFICATIONS	ADC 660
Type	Induced magnet
Sensitivity	7 mv at 5.5 cms/sec recorded velocity
Channel Separation	30 db, 50 to 8,000 cps
Frequency Response	10 to 20,000 cps ± 3 db
Stylus tip radius	.0007" (accurately maintained)
Vertical tracking angle	15°
Tracking force range	1 1/2 to 4 grams
I.M. distortion	less than 1%—400 & 4,000 cps. at 14.3 cms/sec velocity
Compliance	20 x 10 ⁻⁶ cms/dyne
PRICE	\$46.50

SPECIFICATIONS	ADC 770
Type	Induced magnet
Sensitivity	7 mv at 5.5 cms/sec recorded velocity
Channel Separation	25 db, 50 to 8,000 cps
Frequency Response	10 to 18,000 cps ± 3 db
Stylus tip radius	.0007" (accurately maintained)
Vertical tracking angle	15°
Tracking force range	2 to 5 grams
I.M. distortion	less than 1%—400 & 4,000 cps. at 14.3 cms/sec velocity
Compliance	15 x 10 ⁻⁶ cms/dyne
PRICE	\$29.50

* ADC POINT FOUR available with elliptical stylus at slightly higher price.



AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION
PICKETT DISTRICT ROAD,
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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER
NATHAN BRODER
O. B. BRUMMELL
R. D. DARRELL
SHIRLEY FLEMING
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

Records in Review

HARRIS GOLDSMITH
ROBERT C. MARSH
CONRAD L. OSBORNE
ALAN RICH
ERIC SALZMAN
JOHN S. WILSON

by Conrad L. Osborne



"His cobbling must be like his poetry."

Excerpts from *Die Meistersinger*—Schorr's Hans Sachs

WHEN Friedrich Schorr sang his last performance at the Metropolitan (March 2, 1943, as The Wanderer in *Siegfried*, with Traubel, Melchior, and Branzell), Olin Downes wrote, in part: "Other great artists have been and are and will be on that stage. Other singers with as great and greater voices will appear. None will serve their art more devotedly, with a truer perception of the line that separates what is great and what is not great in interpretation, or a loftier understanding of the traditions of the works he interprets."

Schorr's retirement came four years before I started attending the Metropolitan, so I never heard him on the stage. (He did have a hand, though, in one of the first *Meistersingers* I saw—the 1951 production at the New York City Center, for which he acted as an advisor.) But there were his records, by means of which I—and many others—first came to appreciate the beauties of Sachs's great monologues. Just as his Sachs and Wotan set a standard by which all subsequent Metropolitan interpreters have been judged, so have his recordings (especially of the *Meistersinger*, *Walküre*, and *Siegfried* extracts) functioned as the classic presentations of the Wagnerian bass-baritone repertoire: no singer recording these roles can escape comparison with Schorr.

There have been times, to be honest, when other interpretations have seemed to me superior. Paul Schoeffler's Sachs is, I think, more thoughtfully colored, more sensitively detailed. Hans Hotter's voicing of the monologues (Decca DL 9514, regrettably deleted) is richer, warmer, and more romantic in feeling. Yet Schorr wears the best of all; one turns back to his Sachs as one might turn back to a simple, direct singing of a Lied after hearing (and expiring over) an ultrarefined, supersensitive one.

Like all great interpretative art, Schorr's does not call attention to itself. Neither the voice nor the technique seems, at first, remarkable. Indeed, there is more than a trace of hootiness in the higher reaches—F is most distinctly a tone for which he must reach. But even in purely vocal terms, this is outstanding singing, *bel canto* in as real a sense as Ponselle's "*Casta diva*" or Galli-Curci's "*Il dolce suono*." Schorr's singing makes a point that is always worth noting: good Wagnerian singing bears a close resemblance to all good singing. It is based on steadiness of tone, evenness of scale, ease of emission, and the sustaining of a *legato* flow. Schorr never compromises by use of a flat or *parlando* tone, never overloads his voice with an unnatural weight. (It is interesting to note that, as Desmond

Shawe-Taylor points out in his excellent biographical sketch, Schorr sang the big Wagnerian roles right from the first—he took on the *Walküre* Wotan in 1912, when he was twenty-three, and kept singing it for thirty years.)

The voice was an honest bass-baritone. It had the darkness and depth of a *basso cantante*, yet partook of a baritone timbre and of the baritone's ease around C and D—as is demonstrated in the very difficult sustained passages in that area in, for example, "*Ein Kind war hier geboren*," etc.

Interpretatively too, there are satisfactions that elude more lavishly gifted artists: there is nothing showy. There is a good measure of subtle shading, and an always knowledgeable projection of the text. But it is mature, un sentimental. There is no pushing to make Sachs "lovable," never any begging for sympathy or, worse yet, pity. And best of all, this Sachs remains something above the hearty bourgeois craftsman—a man whose "*Bin ein gar einfältig Mann*!" is the genuine self-doubt of the artist. Too many Sachs'es make us feel that their poetry must be like their cobbling; Schorr persuades us that his cobbling must be like his poetry.

All of Schorr's recordings from this role are gathered here, except for duplications and one unfortunate exception:

the two sides of V 8195, which contained the Act III, Scene 4 duet with Eva ("Sieht, Ey'chen! Dächt ich doch," etc.), with Rethberg as Eva. This gives us the *Fliedermönolog*; the ensuing scene with Eva ("Gut'n Abend, Meister, with Göta Ljungberg); the *Schusterlied* ("Jerum! Jerum!"—minus Bechmesser's part); the *Wahnmonolog*; the following scene with Walther ("Grüss' Gott, mein Junker!" with Laubenthal, then "Abendlich glühend" with Melchior): then right into "Aha! da streicht die Lene schon ums Haus," and then the quintet "Selig, wie die Sonne," with Schumann, Gladys Parr, Melchior, and Ben Williams; Sachs's address to the multitude in the *Festwiese* ("Euch macht ihr's leicht"); and finally "Verachtet mir die Meister nicht" through to the end of the opera.

The two monologues and the quintet are such famous recordings that comment is almost superfluous. I think the quintet may very well be the most perfect ensemble recording ever made, with the opening magically molded by Schumann, and the voices blending superbly throughout (the heady *voix mixte* used by Melchior to negotiate the difficult high *mezza-voce* phrases is an especially fine example of his technical command). If persuasion is needed with the monologues, listen to what Schorr does with "Wie Vogelsang im süßen Mai" in the first one, or "Gott weiss, wie das geschah . . . Ein Kobold half wohl da" in the second.

The second-act scene with Eva is done with warmth and lightness by Schorr, Ljungberg, vocally quite satisfactory, is bland—there is no spit, no charm—though she brings some life to the last couple of pages. The lightness and gentle good humor of Schorr's Sachs are again in evidence in the scene with Walther; Ljungberg, vocally quite satisfactory, lutely straight tone, but Melchior does his verse of the *Preislied* most beautifully (this is more lyric and liquid than his recordings of the song in its final form). The address and peroration are firmly, nobly sung, though the chorus at the close is quite dreadful.

The dubbings are excellent, except for some preëcho on "Aha! da streicht die Lene," and Angel's presentation booklet, with essay, text and translations, discographic information, and photos, is exemplary. Buy Schorr's Sachs, and give it some time, as you would a wine or a cheese. If you are not overwhelmed at first, suspend judgment—you will soon find its mellowness, dignity, and beauty have gotten under the skin.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger* (excerpts)

Elisabeth Schumann (s) and Göta Ljungberg (s), Eva; Gladys Parr (c), Magdalene; Lauritz Melchior (t) and Rudolf Laubenthal (t), Walther; Ben Williams (t), David; Friedrich Schorr (b), Hans Sachs; London Symphony Orchestra, Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera, Albert Coates, Lawrence Collingwood, Leo Blech, Robert Heger, and Sir John Barbirolli, conds.

• ANGEL COLH 137. LP. \$5.98.



Photo: Archives of G. Ricordi & Co., Milan, Courtesy of Franco Colombo, Inc., New York

Gian-Francesco Malipiero

Rispetti e Strambotti Reappears

by Alfred Frankenstein

THE ISSUE of this recording once again focuses attention on Gian-Francesco Malipiero, the most sinfully neglected great composer of the present day. The current Schwann lists only a handful of his works, none of them major, and none performed by major interpreters; the return to the record lists of his Second Quartet, superbly performed and amazingly good in sound, is therefore an event of more than ordinary importance.

Rispetti e Strambotti was written in 1920 and is a prime example of that very special attitude towards musical form which was so characteristic of Malipiero at the height of his career. The composer himself described this principle as "constant joining on"; it represented a revolt against the classical ideal of thematic manipulation and development and replaced these things with a long procession of fresh themes and ideas. There was a strongly nationalistic tinge in this approach. Malipiero saw "constant joining on" as a return to an old Italian philosophy of musical structure as it might be found in the madrigals of Monteverdi, whose complete works he had edited; but since his themes are not vocal but instrumental and often dancelike, Malipiero gave his compositions of this period titles derived from the terminology of Italian folk verse. Actually, these titles are largely window dressing: what counts is that Malipiero had a genius for the composition of melody, couldn't sit down to music paper without producing a fabulously beautiful tune, and was as shrewd and knowing as a Venetian Renaissance jeweler when it came to stringing these tunes together, alternating the grave and the gay, the pungent and the tart.

Rispetti e Strambotti consists of twenty movements, or "stanzas" as Malipiero

liked to call them, seldom running more than a page in the miniature score; these "stanzas" are strung on the occasional, widely spaced repetition of a trumpetlike phrase of open-strings and a quiet little chantlike fragment; these *ritornelli* represent the composer's only concession to the classical principle of recurrence. Why the four quartets of Malipiero are not the most popular works of their kind after Debussy and Ravel I cannot understand. All four of them are masterpieces, and it is a great privilege to make large, happy noises about the reappearance of the *Rispetti* on discs.

The First Quartet of Hindemith, on the other side of the disc, is the opposite of everything Malipiero stands for in a philosophic sense. The coupling is much as if we were to be given a disc with a Brahms quartet on one side and the Verdi on the other (which would be a very good idea, especially since there is no Verdi in Schwann right now). But, although Hindemith put his material through all the paces of sonata form, fugue, variation, and such (which were anathema to Malipiero), that's how he got his kicks; and no one was better at communicating his kicks than Hindemith—especially in the early, lyrical, juicy phase of his career, to which this quartet belongs.

All in all, I have not had such a good time with a record of chamber music in years.

MALIPIERO: *Rispetti e Strambotti* †Hindemith: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in F minor, Op. 10*

Stuyvesant String Quartet [from *Harmonia*, mid-1950s].

• Nonesuch H 1006. LP. \$2.50.



Sir Alec Guinness, the actor.



Dylan Thomas, the poet.

“Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night”

by O. B. Brummell

THE POET Dylan Thomas, wild and tempestuous, came from the calm seaside of Wales to burst like a rocket—a brief rocket—upon the world of American letters in 1950 with a poetry reading in New York. In a voice rich as plum pudding, sonorous and flexible, he declaimed verses from Yeats, Hardy, Auden, certain lesser poets, and, of course, from Dylan Thomas. The next three years saw him touring campuses from coast to coast, literally charming the birds from the trees in the groves of academe. As a practicing poet, Thomas brought sympathy, insight, and a sure sense of meter to his readings of other men's verse as well as his own; and, it is safe to observe, we are unlikely ever again to encounter these virtues in conjunction with that glorious, resonant organ of a voice.

The Welsh artist hit America like an intellectual typhoon. He was uninhibited, funny, amorous, and—above all—a certified man of letters. In the end, his excesses killed him. But they fathered a legend, already embodied in John Malcolm Brinnin's book *Dylan Thomas in America* and now repeated in Sidney Michaels' Broadway play, *Dylan*. The play hews closely both to the spirit and the content of Brinnin's book. Brinnin, also a poet, arranged Thomas' turbulent tours of the New World, and he scrupulously recorded all the frustrations, fornications, alcoholic blunders, and generalized hell-raising that marked Thomas' bouts with the podium. Certain lines even carry over intact from life to book to drama, including Dylan's deathless description of his fellow passengers on a transatlantic flight as “gnomes, international spies, and Presbyterians.” Michaels also adopts Brinnin's thesis that Thomas was long written out by the time of his American tours, an assumption at least open to question.

The play itself—progressing in a series of some twenty scenes—strikes me as both episodic and dramatically diffuse. But Sir Alec Guinness weaves all the loose ends into a stunning whole. In a dazzling tour de force, he has adopted the voice and mannerisms—even to the lilting on-again/off-again Welsh accent—of Thomas. And he makes the poet's sodden, ruttish descent into

death both believable and tragic. It is Guinness' projection of Thomas' inner, contrapuntal core of quiet despair that lifts the play beyond the mediocrity of its writing, that makes it theatre of a high order. In one scene, the stage Dylan equates his life with the lines of *Baa Baa Black Sheep*. Entrusted to a lesser actor, this exegesis could have emerged as a treacherous exercise in self-pity; in Sir Alec's projection, it is shattering.

The play opens in Wales with a beautifully modulated dialogue between Dylan and his wife Caitlin, magnificently played by Kate Reid. It also ends in Wales with the same Caitlin claiming the body of her dead husband on the ship returning it from New York. Between, we witness Dylan in bars, Dylan on the cocktail circuit, Dylan missing lecture dates, Dylan reading his verse. To my taste, the progress of the play suffers from too many party scenes—three, to be exact. The repartee, shifting and staccato, purports to be very sophisticated indeed. Actually it is dull—something like flat soda pop found in a champagne bottle.

In sum, the play is overshadowed by its star. So memorable is Guinness' portrayal of the poet caught in the act of chronic suicide that it may well rank as his finest characterization. On these terms, the recorded performance deserves a place in every home that regards theatre as a fine art.

To turn from Sir Alec's striking recreation of Thomas' voice to the real thing is almost eerie. “An Evening with Dylan Thomas” presents a typical program from his first roistering tour: it was, in fact, taped live on April 10, 1950, at the University of California. Here is the real-life Thomas at his best and worst. His worst is the maundering, patronizing introduction, delivered between rounds of a joust with the microphone—“Is this damn thing working?”—and peppered with the likes of “I don't know anything about poetry at all . . .” When he comes to grips with the verse itself, however, his performance suddenly takes on luster. He offers a beautifully nuanced reading of Hardy's *The Ruined Maid*—a small comic masterpiece proving that the wages of sin are

very high indeed. He apes a brogue with telling effect in James Stephens' *A Glass of Beer*, and his reading of three Yeats poems is magnificent. He concludes with several of his own works: one of them, *Poem in October*, ranks among his finest.

In the two-disc album “Dylan Thomas Reading His Complete Recorded Poetry” we hear twenty-eight of his poems. Sources as disparate as the BBC and private tapings—along with the contents of earlier Caedmon releases—have contributed to this collection. Here is the same golden voice, the same masterly delivery heightening the drama of every selection. And here, too, lies the nub of a problem. Thomas is still too close to us, his vivid life still coloring his verse, to permit any detached evaluation of his work. Behind the cascades of imagery and metaphor, what really lurks? How substantial is the substance? Does the ringing Thomas voice move us by exploiting all the roaring splendor of these poems, or does it merely present them in another dazzling—but illusory—light? Time and the aesthetic sensibilities of each listener alone can tell.

In any case, here is the sonic testament of a larger-than-life poet who, beyond the hothouse readings and the hangovers and the girls, exercised his “sullen art . . . in the still night/When only the moon rages . . .”

SIDNEY MICHAELS: *Dylan*

Sir Alec Guinness, Dylan Thomas; Kate Reid, Caitlin Thomas; et al.

• COLUMBIA DOL 301. Three LP. \$15.00.

• COLUMBIA DOS 701. Three SD. \$17.00.

DYLAN THOMAS: “An Evening with Dylan Thomas”

Dylan Thomas, reader.

• CAEDMON TC 1157. LP. \$5.95.

DYLAN THOMAS: “Dylan Thomas Reading His Complete Recorded Poetry”

Dylan Thomas, reader.

• CAEDMON TC 2014. Two LP. \$11.90.



BACH: Cantata No. 51, Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen; Suite No. 1, in C, S. 1066

Judith Raskin, soprano; Festival Orchestra of New York. Thomas Dunn, cond.
• DECCA DL 10089. LP. \$4.98.
• DECCA DL 710089. SD. \$5.98.

There aren't many American sopranos around today who can sing highly florid music against a well-played trumpet obbligato and come out of it with colors flying. Miss Raskin does it here. Not only does she toss off high-climbing scales with no sign of effort and without wavering from true pitch, but she sings Bach with feeling—notice, for example, the expressiveness of the roudade on "lallen" (stammer) in the accompanied recitative—as well as good technique. This is a performance in a class with Maria Stader's, on Archive—hitherto the best available one on records, in my opinion.

In the Suite the beginning of the overture has a nice crispness, because of Dunn's double-dotting; in the allegro all the contrapuntal lines are clear. Excellent balance is a characteristic of the whole recording, and for once the harpsichord has just the right weight: it can be clearly heard without usurping the function of the melody instruments. The sound is very good in both versions. N.B.

BACH: Suites for Orchestra, S. 1066-69

Orchestra of the Saar, Karl Ristenpart, cond.
• COUNTERPOINT/ESOTERIC 603/04. Two LP. \$4.98 each.
• COUNTERPOINT/ESOTERIC 5603/04. Two SD. \$5.95 each.

Ristenpart, a conductor with considerable experience in baroque music, leads his chamber orchestra in these four Suites in well-paced, straightforward readings. Except in the last two Suites, where the trumpets are sometimes too loud, the balances are excellent. The slow sections of the overtures sound to me a little too mathematically correct, and the celebrated Air of No. 3 is played rather sentimentally, but otherwise the set seems quite respectable. More imaginative performances are those by Menuhin on Capitol, Richter on Archive, and Münchinger on London. N.B.

BACH: Suites for Unaccompanied Cello: No. 2, in D minor, S. 1008; No. 5, in C minor, S. 1011

Janos Starker, cello.
• MERCURY MG 50370. LP. \$4.98.
• MERCURY SR 90370. SD. \$5.98.

BACH: Suites for Unaccompanied Cello: No. 5, in C minor, S. 1011; No. 6, in D, S. 1012

Pierre Fournier, cello.
• ARCHIVE ARC 3188. LP. \$5.98.
• ARCHIVE ARC 73188. SD. \$6.98.

There are interesting interpretative differences between the two artists in the C minor Suite. Fournier takes the first section of the Prelude faster and the second section slower than Starker. Since the form is that of the French overture, Starker's sharper contrast seems to be more correct historically. On the other hand, Fournier's *Allemande* has more swing. His playing in general, while musically penetrating, is more elegant. This completes his recording of all the suites for Archive on the same high plane on which it began. Starker's smoothly vigorous performances give the impression of a strong temperament, usually under complete control. Once or twice it threatens to run away with him, as in the *Courante* of No. 2, which is very fast. Technically, he, like Fournier, is equal to all the demands made by this difficult music. His tone, however, is not as smoothly blended from bottom to top: his C string seems to have a much darker color than the other strings. Both artists are given excellent recording. N.B.

**BARTOK: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta
†Hindemith: Concert Music for Brass and Strings, Op. 50**

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5979. LP. \$4.98.
• COLUMBIA MS 6579. SD. \$5.98.

In Bernstein's pre-Philharmonic days, he often performed the Bartók MSPC when he appeared with other orchestras as guest conductor. Usually, the results were disastrous. The fantastic intricacy of Bartók's writing, the interplay among sections, and the extraordinary combinations between string and percussion tone can't be learned from a new conductor on a one-week stand. But now Bernstein has his own ensemble, and the results are decidedly different. "Amazing" is the word, in fact. The surging vitality of Bernstein's personality vivifies every note of this score, and the result is breath-taking. The playing itself is flawless. In short, we are here given a disc that cannot be overlooked by anyone aware of his own time.

Hindemith's lively and powerful score, which dates from 1930, to a remarkable degree prefigures some of his later scores, but it has its own sharp-edged vitality. This work too receives a slashing and

brilliant performance, surpassing in excitement both the older Ormandy reading and the deleted one by the composer himself. A.R.

BECKER: Concerto Arabesque, for Piano and Orchestra—See Ives: Thanksgiving.

BEETHOVEN: Leonore Overture, No. 3, Op. 72a—See Schumann: Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano

No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"); No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata").

Walter Klien, piano.
• VOX PL 12530. LP. \$4.98.
• VOX STPL 512530. SD. \$4.98.

No. 17, in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2 ("Tempest"); No. 30, in E, Op. 109.

Hans Richter-Haaser, piano.
• ODEON C 80654. LP. \$5.98.
• ODEON ST 80654. SD. \$6.98.

No. 32, in C minor, Op. 111 (2 versions).

Elly Ney, piano.
• ODEON SCLP 576. LP. \$5.98.

About the only thing these three discs have in common is that they all contain Beethoven Sonatas. They differ enormously in performance styles, and are patently aimed at different audiences. The Vox is an inexpensive coupling of three popular pieces; the other two are premium-priced imports assigned for the special collector.

Klien's performances are sturdy and musicianly, but rather undistinguished. The young Austrian pianist lacks the concentrated energy, controlled accentuation, and faultless rhythm to do real justice to these works, and the recorded sound on the review copy was dreadfully overloaded as well as afflicted with tracking difficulties.

Richter-Haaser's renditions are far more difficult to dismiss. If absolute fidelity to the composer's explicit instructions is a virtue, then his work here must clearly be commended. In the D minor Sonata, which tends (for all its difficulty) to "play itself," the German artist provides a satisfactory exposition. The Op. 109, on the other hand, points up with cruel clarity the drawbacks of Richter-Haaser's extreme literal-mindedness. He is woefully deficient when he is called upon to provide the aesthetic judgment which is a prerequisite for the interpretation of late Beethoven. There are all sorts of *implicit* interpretative situations in the E major Sonata: one has to negotiate various sections and tempos into a single, continuous unit (the change from *Vivace ma non troppo* to *Adagio espres-*

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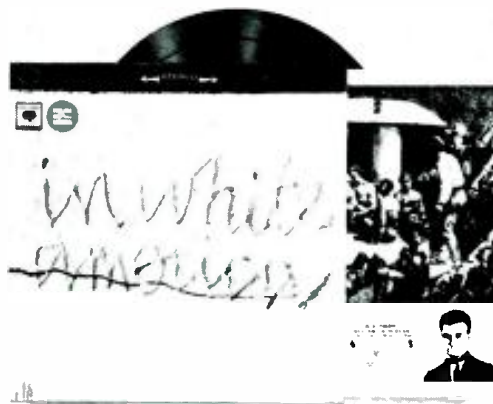
"A performance of electric power and sweeping virility," said Howard Taubman of Richard Burton's Hamlet in John Gielgud's historic Broadway production. "As one sits through a long evening that seems all too short," the noted *New York Times* critic continued, "one is humbled afresh by the surge of Shakespeare's poetry."

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*STEREO COLUMBIA REG. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

CIRCLE 17 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

sivo at bar 9 in the first movement, and the shift in meter from 2/4 to 9/8 at the start of Variation IV in the third, are examples). The transitions must be made gently, and on no count should the listener be made conscious of them. Schnabel, Firkusny, Petri, Myra Hess, Lili Kraus, and Gieseeking have all provided feasible (and strikingly dissimilar) solutions to these problems in their recordings. Richter-Haaser, unfortunately, completely misses the point. His is as clumsy and ungracious a performance as one can expect to hear of this Sonata. One can add only that the artist's dry, chalky piano tone is faithfully reproduced.

The Ney disc is a strange release. On its two sides one can hear the veteran artist in *two* performances of Beethoven's last Sonata, one recorded in Berlin during May of 1936, the other recorded there in October 1958. Mme. Ney, a pupil of Theodor Leschetizky and Emil von Sauer, has the reputation of being a pianistic Brünnhilde, but everything that I have heard of her work proves her to be just the reverse: a delicate, feminine player with a smallish tone and an intimate style of interpretation. Here, for example, she seems unable to sweep through the difficult writing with the cumulative sense of power that others (notably Petri and Schnabel) have brought to bear on the music. Instead, she substitutes line for weight, accent for force. Her colors are applied pointillistically in short dabs and sharp strokes. Various details are highlighted by minute retardations of tempo, at times verging on fussiness. Withal, however, there is a certain imaginative glow to her artistry.

Both old and new performances are extremely similar in viewpoint. The earlier one is, perhaps, more flexible and intense, but the later, in addition to being better recorded, is more precise (thanks, most likely, to the felicities of tape editing). Furthermore, the earlier version omits measure 69 in the first movement the first time around. Whether this is due to faulty transferring of the 78-rpm originals, or to the artist's use of a corrupt musical text, I cannot say. In any case, the passage in question is unexceptionable on the 1958 version.

H.G.

BEETHOVEN: *Trio for Piano and Strings, in G, Op. 121a ("Kakadu Variations")*—See Brahms: *Trio for Piano and Strings, No. 2, in C, Op. 87*.

BIZET: *L'Arlésienne: Suites: No. 1; No. 2*

†**Offenbach:** *Gaité Parisienne: Suite* (arr. Rosenthal).

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5946. LP. \$4.98.

• • COLUMBIA MS 6546. SD. \$5.98.

The items on this record are scarcely what one would expect to encounter at

a Philadelphia Orchestra concert. Yet, such are the versatility of the conductor and the brilliance of the players that these "light classics" are brought off with a flair and a flourish sure to please even the most exigent listener in search of musical relaxation. Altogether, a delightfully entertaining disc, presented in the highest musical and engineering standards. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Chorale Preludes, Op. 122* (complete)

Robert Noehren, organ.

• LYRICORD LL 123. LP. \$4.98.

• • LYRICORD LLST 7123. SD. \$5.98.

There is much to be said for Mr. Noehren's trim, classical approach to Brahms's last compositions. In contrast to the crooning sensuousness and technicolored registrations of Virgil Fox on a deleted RCA Victor disc, Noehren works within a severe dynamic range and underplays extremes of tempo. He is, for example, considerably slower than Mr. Fox in Preludes Nos. 1 and 4, but the situation is sharply reversed in No. 8, where Noehren marches ahead in steadfast phrases while Fox languishes. Noehren omits the Bach settings of the chorales which Fox played in preface to the Brahms arrangements, but to compensate for this he includes an extra Fugue which Brahms composed in 1856.

My basic sympathy lies with the type of restrained interpretation Noehren provides, but the ideal recording of these Chorale Preludes remains to be made. A bit more brilliance and animation (indeed, perhaps even a touch of Fox's showmanship) would have ignited the present organist's sound musicianship. Perhaps Helmut Walcha or Finn Videro will try his hand at this literature. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Trio for Piano and Strings, No. 2, in C, Op. 87*

†**Beethoven:** *Trio for Piano and Strings, in G, Op. 121a ("Kakadu Variations")*

Gary Graffman, piano; Berl Senofsky, violin; Shirley Trepel, cello.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2715. LP. \$4.98.

• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2715. SD. \$5.98.

It was RCA Victor which brought us the original "Million Dollar Trio" of Rubinstein, Heifetz, and Feuermann. By that standard this is a somewhat less costly group, a \$500,000 trio, say, cut-rate only on a fairly grandiose scale. The present record duplicates an earlier release by the Albeneri Trio, which I appear to have regarded rather highly. Well, that edition is still a pleasing disc to hear, but this one is better on all counts. The performances are more sharply focused and intense—which means they're more interesting—and the recorded sound is fuller and more vivid. The players are very strongly projected as individuals. The Brahms is especially recommended. If you're fond of his music



Monique Haas: Debussyan classicism.

and don't know this work, here is the ideal way to make its acquaintance.

R.C.M.

BRITTEN: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34*

†**Saint-Saëns:** *Carnaval des animaux* (verses by Ogden Nash)

Hugh Downs, narrator; Leo Litwin and Samuel Lipman, pianos; Martin Hoherman, cello (in the Saint-Saëns); Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2596. LP. \$4.98.

• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2596. SD. \$5.98.

The musical tyro possessed of both stereo equipment and children never had it so good. Here is all he needs, neatly packaged in one album. For his own musical education or that of his children, there is Hugh Downs to deliver in simple, unaffected accents Benjamin Britten's informal yet informative explanations for that composer's ingenious instrumental demonstration the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. For his own entertainment or that of his friends—some of it may be above his children's heads—there is Downs, on the other side, delivering in straightforward fashion Ogden Nash's outrageous rhymes about animals, music, Saint-Saëns, and what have you? Most important of all, there is Arthur Fiedler leading robust and humorous yet neatly polished performances of both works.

For the stereo buff the disc offers sparkingly clear reproduction and easy-to-follow but never distracting instrumental pinpointing and distribution—so distinct that one can easily distinguish between the excellent duo-pianists and between the first and second violins. Only item on the debit side: a slight excess of hall reverberation detracts from the complete naturalness of the over-all sound. Otherwise, this is certainly one of the best pairings of these two attractive works in the catalogue, provided one wants them with their narrative accompaniments. P.A.

CARPENTER: *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*—See Ives: *The Fourth of July*.

DEBUSSY: *Preludes, Book II*

Monique Haas, piano.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18872. LP. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138872. SD. \$6.98.

Mme. Haas's superb performances here represent French classicist pianism at its finest. She is a true Debussy stylist, who knows that programmatic realism must be kept subordinate to the more abstract values in this music. She demands severity of tonal color (but always avoids bleakness), and tempers her virtuoso technical equipment with an underlying sobriety. One could point to single performances of this or that prelude that are more immediately arresting, more exotic, but as an integral presentation her statement must be placed alongside the Gieseking-Angel edition in musical merit. In the Debussy Preludes, one can pay no higher compliment.

Ultrarealistic piano tone; silent surfaces. H.G.

DEBUSSY: *Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10*

†Ravel: *Quartet for Strings, in F*

Loewenguth String Quartet.

- Vox PL 12020. LP. \$4.98.
- • Vox STPL 512020. SD. \$4.98.

Stuyvesant String Quartet [from Philharmonia PH 104, 1951].

- NONESUCH H 1007. LP. \$2.50.

Vlach String Quartet.

- ARTIA ALP 204. LP. \$4.98.
- • ARTIA ALS 7204. SD. \$5.98.

The case of "Tradition vs. The Composer" is an old story in the annals of musical performance. The conventional interpretation of some compositions is often in flat contradiction to the unmistakable indications in the score, and yet they persist. Who has not heard Chopin and Tchaikovsky torn to tatters by wrenching sobs and other heart-on-sleeve mannerisms? Who has not heard Mozart rendered impotent and inexpressive by rigid, metronomic phrasing, and colorless dynamics? Or Schubert turned into a formless blob by heavy "expressivity" and uncalled-for changes of tempo? Few composers have managed to escape this sort of time-sanctioned license completely.

The present pair of string quartets used to suffer from the excessively "impressionistic" treatment deemed correct for everything their composers wrote. Now, fortunately, most performances respect the classical antecedents and compactness inherent in both works. One problem remains, nevertheless: it derives from the traditional juxtaposition of the two compositions. Though the two leading French composers' only string quartets have common points of convergence, one or the other is done dissively when a given performing group superimposes the identical interpretative approach on both. The older of the two Budapest

records (Columbia ML 4668—now deleted), for example, offered a supremely precise Ravel, admittedly more German classic than French but very good all the same. The same ultrametrical, tightly accented framework as applied to the more turbulent, loosely cast Debussy, however, was catastrophic. When the same foursome re-recorded the two compositions some fifteen years later, in 1951 (ML 5245/MS 6015—still available), they had begun to acquire an expressive flexibility that did justice to the Debussy (their subsequent performances of the score in concerts have been even better—in fact, well-nigh ideal). But did they stick to their erstwhile idiomatic procedure for the Ravel? No, they did not: this time Ravel was loosely phrased, simpering, and oversweet. These are, of course, extreme examples. What usually happens is that a compromise approach is adapted—one that works passably well for both quartets while leaving important features unexplored in each. In such vein, record collectors have available a lean, noncommittal set of readings from the Juilliard Quartet (RCA Victor LM/LSC 2413). It is beautifully played (on a purely technical level) and realistically reproduced. Without denigrating the solid merit of the Juilliarders' accomplishment, however, their work is more like a plotted graph than a compassionate re-creation.

All of which is prelude to welcoming back the Stuyvesant's coupling with open arms. There are a few minor shortcomings in both performances (among them

an occasional impression of turgidity—probably due to the reverberant and slightly over-amplified sound), but on the whole the Nonesuch disc offers less to complain about than any other version of the same coupling. The Stuyvesant people play "big." They eschew the cameolike intimacy which many prize in the Ravel, and feature instead a red-blooded, gleaming sonority, forthright urgency, and just enough individualism in the phrasing to scintillate without antagonizing. They avoid the suety quality of the Budapest versions, and are much more involved emotionally than the Juilliard. At \$2.50, the reissue of this 1951 recording is an outstanding bargain.

There is much to be said for the Loewenguth coupling too, but the Vox disc presents an extremist point of view that will inevitably find a much more limited audience. These players are what can be described as "antivirtuosic." They do not look for beauty of tone, and couldn't be less concerned with exotic "atmosphere." What they give us on this disc is a blunt, slightly italicized version of both quartets—strongly in the *sec* French classic tradition. The first violinist's wan, slightly sweet phrasing is very much to my liking, and one can easily find justification for the dogmatic way the foursome accentuates the first movement of the Debussy. (The composer, after all, did write *Animé et très décidé* over his score.) Furthermore, the very clean, tightly unresonant studio acoustics (the very antithesis to the Bronxville Community Church sonics heard on the Nonesuch disc) flatter the Loewenguth players' lean asperity, and permit an unprecedented amount of detail to emerge clearly. This disc may not provide the ultimate in finesse or in poetry, but it should please serious students of composition and the general listener tired of hearing these quartets sounding like sonic cream puffs. It represents a different, and salutary, type of "tradition."

The Vlach Quartet is a Czechoslovakian ensemble of patently virtuoso caliber. Like the Budapest, they offer a dark, burnished sonority (more reminiscent of mahogany than of jade), and an orientation that is Teutonic rather than Gallic. They keep these characteristics under control in the Ravel, and play the piece with lovely restraint and unobtrusive finesse. Their precise attacks and headlong energy in the Scherzo make their performance of it one of the finest I have heard, and they realize the *Très Doux* of the first movement exceedingly well too. The Debussy is, unfortunately, something else again. Here the Vlach adapt plodding, four-square tempos, and are merciless in their use of effete slides and sickly *portamentos*. Furthermore, they make the tempo transitions in the third movement cumbersome and unconvincing: one hears something more akin to "*Adagio sostenuto e con molto sentimento—Langsam und sehnsuchtvoll*"—by no stretch of the imagination can their opening of this section be accepted as "*Andantino, doucement expressif*." And must these

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players utilize the mannerism of making crescendo after they have already attacked a sustained note? This produces blurred outlines, and a most vulgar type of inflection (at least to my ears). Artia's sound is slightly overresonant, and my stereo review copy had what sounded like a bad tape splice in the fourth movement of the Debussy. I was not able to ascertain whether this same defect was also present on the original Czechoslovakian pressings, issued—in monophonic format only—by Supraphon. H.G.

DOWLAND: *Ayres for Four Voices*

Golden Age Singers.
 • ARGO RG 290. LP. \$4.98.
 • • ARGO ZRG 5290. SD. \$4.98.

DOWLAND: *The First Book of Ayres*

Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels, Safford Cape, cond. [from Period STL 727, 1954].
 • DOVER HCR 5220. LP. \$2.00.

These songs by the celebrated lutanist who was a contemporary of Shakespeare were published in four parts. According to the title pages all the parts or any combination could be performed with instrumental accompaniment. The Golden Age group elects to sing all the sixteen songs it selects in four parts without accompaniment. This turns out to be a mistake, because the quartet needs instrumental support. The voices are frail, the performances bloodless, and there is considerable off-pitch singing, especially by the tenor.

Things are livelier on the Dover disc, reissued from a Period recording made some years ago. There the texture varies from song to song: there are solos and duets as well as quartets, mostly with accompaniment. The only time this does not work well is in *Unquiet thoughts*, where only the bass part is sung. Since that part happens to be more of a supporting-bass than an independent melody, it does not make a good solo. Whereas the Argo record includes seven songs from Dowland's First Book, the Pro Musica people do all twenty-one songs in that collection. Unlike the Golden Agers, Cape's performers bring out the dance-like character of much of this music. The individual voices on the Dover disc are pleasant, and they blend nicely, with only rare moments where pitch is a problem. Although these singers are apparently all Belgians, their English pronunciation is remarkably good. The sound is entirely acceptable on all three discs. N.B.

**DUFAY: *Mass, Se la face ay pale*
 }Obrecht: *Mass, Sub tuum praesidium***

Vienna Chamber Choir, Hans Gillesberger, cond.
 • VANGUARD BG 653. LP. \$4.98.
 • • VANGUARD BGS 70653. SD. \$5.95.

The Dufay Mass is one of the landmarks

in the history of music, a masterpiece whose position as an aural equivalent of the great Flemish painting of the early fifteenth century is obscured only by the fuzziness and fragility of musical tradition. We are finally learning how to perform this music (the present performance, for example, uses instruments with the chorus, which we now know is absolutely right and even necessary), but I wonder if we really know how to listen to it. *Se la face ay pale* is a charming Dufay *chanson* and the entire Mass is built over and around the *chanson* melody. The piece is thus based on a very remarkable musical and intellectual content, but unless one knows the *chanson* it is hardly possible to appreciate the extraordinary rhythmic, phrase, variational, and contrapuntal structure. But who the dickens nowadays does know *Se la face ay pale*?

If Dufay is a difficult case, Obrecht seems almost impossible. This astonishing Mass employs not one cantus firmus but seven! Furthermore, the original texts of these melodies—Gregorian hymns to The Virgin Mary—are retained and superimposed onto the text of the Mass proper and even onto each other. All of this is contained within a complex structure of increasing textural densities, beginning with a three-voice Kyrie and ending in a seven-part Agnus Dei. As if this were not enough, the work is permeated with medieval number mysticism: complicated symbolic patterns built on 3s, 4s, 7s, and 12s.

But what makes the Obrecht meaningful—even for a modern listener unaware of all the subtleties inherent in the work—is that it is basically a vital, joyous piece of music. It must have been a kind of celebration piece, a great Mass especially consecrated to Mary. In fact, the fervent Marian hymns appear over the increasingly complicated textures like giant chorales soaring above. If this is numerology and mysticism, it is a great and glorious mysticism, full of deeply felt joy and fresh expression. To say that such a piece could be at once highly intellectual and highly expressive is to pay it the highest of compliments.

These Viennese performers are very successful with the Obrecht. Conductor, singers, and instrumentalists (whose parts have been effectively worked in) really feel the music and make it swing a joyous swing.

The Dufay, neither as overtly glorious nor as complicated underneath but with a subtler and more difficult piece, does not fare as well. The instrumental realizations seem perfunctory and the performance somehow misses the cantus firmus structure and its big significance; rhythmic subtleties are also largely missed and, as a result, what we hear tends to be merely factual and competent. The sound is good, although the contrapuntal strands are never quite sorted out the way they might be. E.S.

GIANNINI: *Symphony No. 3*—See Hovhanness: *Symphony No. 4, Op. 165*.

GIORDANO: *Andrea Chénier*

Antonietta Stella (s), Maddalena: Stefania Malagù (ms), Bersi; Luciana Moneta (ms), Comtesse de Coigny; Anna di Stasio (ms), Madelon; Franco Corelli (t), Andrea Chénier; Piero de Palma (tt), L'Incredibile and The Abbé; Mario Sereni (b), Carlo Gérard; Dino Mantovani (b), Fléville; Paolo Pedani (b), Schmidt, The Major Domo, and Dumas; Giuseppe Modesti (bs), Roucher and Fouquier-Tinville; Paolo Montarsolo (bs), Mathieu; Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, Gabriele Santini, cond.
 • ANGL. 3645 C/L. Three LP. \$14.94.
 • • ANGL. S 3645 C/L. Three SD. \$17.94.

Andrea Chénier, the best bad opera there is, has not had a new recording since the release of the Tebaldi/Del Monaco/Bastianini version on London five years ago. The outdated and very uneven Cetra set is the only other competition in the domestic catalogue, though if I am not mistaken the wartime La Scala edition is available as an import in some shops.

The last-named performance is still the standard by which other recorded interpretations must be judged. Chénier was one of Beniamino Gigli's greatest roles, and though he was past his peak when the recording was made, he still offered the effortless legato, the instinct for vocal phrasing, and (especially in the last act) a good measure of the sumptuous, ringing tone for which he was famous ("*Come un bel dì di maggio*" and most of the final duet are incredibly beautiful, despite the too open, often frayed passages that have gone before). Maria Caniglia, another veteran, has her arguments with notes above the staff, but brings all her theatrical command and passionate projection to Maddalena, while in the role of Gérard, Gino Bechi finds the perfect vehicle for his big, snarling dramatic baritone. Best of all, the small but important roles of the Countess, Roucher, and Fléville are taken by Giulietta Simionato, Italo Tajo, and Giuseppe Taddei, respectively—an array giving this cast almost as much strength in reserve as in the first line. London's version, the first in stereo, boasts high-voltage principals and, of course, is better recorded, but it is not as much of a piece as the older edition, and suffers from Del Monaco's unremitting assault upon the title role.

The present edition offers sound even better than London's, though occasionally there is a suspicion of added echo to impart a juiciness to the solo voices—certainly the Sereni heard here is not the Sereni heard on even an exceptional night at the Met. But the clarity and brilliance of the sonics in both editions is a large plus, for much of the opera's appeal lies in the color and force with which the revolutionary milieu is presented, and it is a great pleasure to hear, for example, the play of woodwinds as the spy, L'Incredibile, eludes Chénier's gaze in Act II ("*Nessuno . . . per questo loco e periglioso*"). And in the stereo

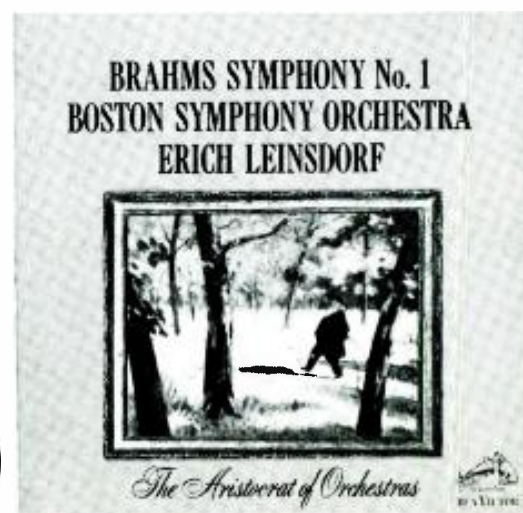
“The greatest first symphony ever composed”*

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Brahms' “Symphony No. 1” by the Boston Symphony under Erich Leinsdorf

Thanks to the advanced Dynagroove system, every note, every subtlety in the architectural majesty of this great symphonic work can be captured to perfection. A leading critic called the fourth movement of the symphony... “one of the sublimest utterances human ears have heard.” Hear this new Red Seal recording by the Boston Symphony, under Leinsdorf's direction. We think you'll agree.

*James Lyons, Editor, American Record Guide



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version, the frequent crowd scenes have a splendid presence.

The other great strength of this set is the Chénier of Franco Corelli. His voice fits the music like a glove, for it has not only the juicy ring and heft and unfailing top required, but the ability to sustain a long legato line and to shade dynamically, as well; his performance is far superior to Del Monaco's in these respects. And there are few tenors whose enunciation is as beautifully formed as Corelli's. Unfortunately, some bad musical habits detract from his performance, sometimes seriously. Aspirate h's are never welcome, and neither is habitual scooping, particularly on repeated notes of the same pitch. These transgressions are really no more excusable here than in Mozart; it is mistaken to condescend to this music, or to the verismo style in general. Still, such habits can be endured, and there is so much vibrant tone, exciting dramatic projection, and very knowledgeable phrasing here that few will feel dissatisfied with the Corelli Chénier. All reservations notwithstanding, he is by all odds the most exciting tenor for the Italian repertory to come forward since the War.

The other principals are really not in this class. Antonietta Stella's sound remains a cherishable one, and she sings with reasonable care on this recording. But her voice is afflicted here with a slow beat which widens to a quaver in many sustained passages—seldom is her tone really steady. She is closer to her best form in the last scene, where she and Corelli combine for some really exciting results. Stella knows what to do with this sort of music, too; but still, the over-all effect is rather lacking in character, and certainly not up to the Caniglia/Tebaldi level. Sereni sounds fine most of the time—round, warm, and firm, and especially impressive on the high F sharps. But the basic sound is also the only sound, and one grows tired of the unvarying pitch of the performance, interrupted only by his barking of some of the more dramatic lines. Perfectly competent, but unimaginative, and inferior to both Bechi and Bastianini.

The many small roles are all competently done, though none in a really outstanding way except for the brilliant doubling of the Spy and the Abbé by Piero de Palma. Santini always seems to opt for slower-than-normal tempos, and that is the case here, except for a few peculiar departures. In general, this is not a bad thing; *Chénier* has plenty of impetus, and doesn't need emphasizing, and there are places—the opening of Act II is one—where deliberate treatment increases the stature of the music, making it seem less splashy and emptily "effective." At times, as in Roucher's little arioso in Act II or the climactic section of "*La mamma morta*," the slowness does damage by pulling the melodies out of contour, and I do not understand why, in this context, certain lighter passages, such as the Gavotte, or the Spy's solo in Act III, are taken quite a bit faster than usual. But on the whole the treatment works.

The orchestral execution is quite good, barring some blurred runs in the strings, and the choral work is adequate, though not outstanding. I wish the cymbals, drums, and other percussive devices had been toned down here and there, but that is probably the engineers' doing.

Altogether, a middling strong set, but not preferable, on balance, to London's. For those whose primary interest is the tenor, however, this is the one to buy. Unless, of course, you can find Gigli's.

C.L.O.

GLANVILLE-HICKS: *Nausicaa* (excerpts)

Teresa Stratas (s), *Nausicaa*; Sophia Steffan (ms), *Queen Arete*; Edward Ruhl (t), *Phemius*; Michalis Heliotis (t), *Antinous*; John Modenos (b), *Aethon*; Spiro Malas (bs), *King Alcinous*; et al.; Chorus and Athens Symphony Orchestra, Carlos Surinach, cond.
• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 175. LP. \$5.95.

This disc contains about half of Peggy Glanville-Hicks' opera, taped from the 1961 world premiere at the Athens Festival. The principals, all Greek or Greek-American, sing in English; the chorus, in Greek. The recording is quite faint, but enough comes through to give some idea of the music.

Nausicaa is the Australian composer's fourth opera. Its libretto is by Robert Graves, based on his *Homer's Daughter*, which is in turn a witty paraphrase of the story of Penelope, her suitors, and the return of Ulysses. In Graves's retelling, *Nausicaa* and Penelope are merged, but then become distinct as *Nausicaa* haggles with the bard Phemius to revise the original legend and redeem Penelope from the accusation of infidelity.

Much of the music is quite beautiful. Miss Glanville-Hicks draws heavily upon folk sources, and the score has a near-Eastern flavor, enhanced by the jingling orchestration. The vocal lines are sinuous and often heavily ornamented, not unlike traditional religious chants from the area. The composer knows her operatic tradition, too: *Nausicaa* is an opera of arias and ensembles, with a title role that should gladden the heart of any lyric soprano.

Teresa Stratas sings this part with fine urgency and luminous vocal quality. Her one fault, and it is a serious one, is the flatness of her English diction; words like "motherrrr" and "Drrrream" give her singing an appearance of immaturity that it does not really have. Although his English is accented, John Modenos, as Aethon-Ulysses, shows far better command of diction, along with a velvety light baritone. Spiro Malas and Sophia Steffan are excellent in smaller roles, but Edward Ruhl produces the same strangled stridency in Athens that he does in New York.

In short, the recording offers a sketch of what seems to be a fine opera, one certainly worth the attention of an American producer. A.R.

GRAZIANI: *Sonatas for Cello and Figured Bass, Op. 3: No. 1, in G; No. 5, in D; No. 6, in E flat*

Aldo Parisot, cello; Fernando Valenti, harpsichord; Italo Babini, cello continuo.
• MUSIC GUILD M 48. LP. \$5.50.
• • MUSIC GUILD S 48. SD. \$6.50.

Comes now one Carlo Graziani (d. 1787), Italian by birth, German by adoption, court cellist and composer to Friedrich Wilhelm II. These sonatas are from a collection found in Berlin and republished in Milan in 1943, further edited by Messrs. Parisot and Valenti.

From the evidence, Graziani is a fluent composer of the generation that links Vivaldi to Cimarosa, talented but undistinguishable from hundreds of others. His music is full of bland charm. The sonatas come closest to life in their finales. That of No. 1 is particularly fine, with the keyboard part sharing importance with the cello. The performances are excellent, with Mr. Parisot's suavity and elegant phrasing very much in evidence. The realization of the continuo (for two performers, as is proper) is extremely stylish. A.R.

GRIGG: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16*—See Schumann: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54*.

HANDEL: *Concertos for Organ and Orchestra*

No. 1, in G minor, Op. 4, No. 1; No. 2, in B flat, Op. 4, No. 2; No. 3, in G minor, Op. 4, No. 3; No. 4, in F, Op. 4, No. 4; No. 5, in F, Op. 4, No. 5; No. 6, in B flat, Op. 4, No. 6; No. 7, in B flat, Op. 7, No. 1; No. 8, in A, Op. 7, No. 2; No. 9, in B flat, Op. 7, No. 3; No. 10, in D minor, Op. 7, No. 4; No. 11, in G minor, Op. 7, No. 5; No. 12, in B flat, Op. 7, No. 6; Op. posth: No. 13, in F; No. 14, in A; No. 15, in D minor; No. 16, in F.

Marie-Claire Alain, organ; Chamber Orchestra, Jean-François Paillard, cond.
• DECCA DL 10085/88. Four LP. \$4.98 each.
• • DECCA DL 710085/88. Four SD. \$5.98 each.

This four-record edition of the complete Handel organ concertos offers a saving of one third over the six-disc Biggs/Boult set on Columbia. The price of this economy is a trifling amount of end-of-side distortion in the stereo.

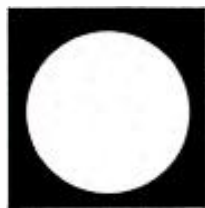
Musically, the sixteen performances are equal to all competition, for they offer the pleasures which often come when traditional British cooking is served up by a French chef. Tempos are brisk. The line is animated—with frequent touches of wit. And there is an elegance and polish to the proceedings made all the more effective by extremely good recording. The organ (at the Eglise des Maronites, Paris) has the right quality

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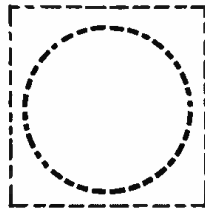
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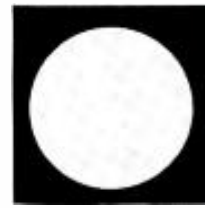
With the addition of a separate phantom middle channel, it is now possible to establish such control over the reproduction of instruments and musical selections that a beautifully textured curtain of sound can be hung across the listening spectrum through which distinctive musical colors are woven so that they stand out like gold or silver threads in a magnificent tapestry.



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PHANTOM
(CENTER)
SPEAKER



RIGHT
SPEAKER

To begin to understand the full potential of DIMENSION 3, you only have to listen to the first selection in this album . . . "All I Do Is Dream Of You".

INTRODUCTION:

1. Right SpeakerDrum Sticks played on snare drum rim.
2. Left SpeakerBongos.
3. Phantom SpeakerBass and Guitar enter with organ accompaniment. Drum appears on Hi-Hat cymbal.
4. Right SpeakerBrass explosion on right speaker completes introduction . . .

1st CHORUS:

1. Left SpeakerSaxes begin melody—Organ heard in phantom speaker plays rhythmic afterbeats.
2. Phantom SpeakerOrgan picks up the melody.
3. Right SpeakerBrass make dynamic entrance on melody while the drums alternate with breaks—left and right speakers.
4. Phantom SpeakerOrgan repeats melodic line.
5. Left + Right + Phantom ..Full ensemble completes the 1st chorus.

This is just a clue to the tremendous musical satisfaction and heightened emotional potential that can be achieved through DIMENSION 3. Each selection in this album reveals new aspects of the exciting possibilities that have been opened up by the amazing total presence of this new approach to stereophonic recording.

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Uses 3 Drums and Organ..... Byplay between organ on phantom speaker, one drum playing on drum case heard on left, and another drum also playing on drum case heard on right. Remainings drum plays break on snare drum, heard on phantom speaker, leading into . . .

2nd CHORUS:

1. Left Speaker Guitar with woodwinds heard on melody.
2. Right Speaker Brass punctuations along with bongos heard on right speaker.
3. Phantom Speaker Organ on the melody takes over from guitar.
4. Right Speaker Brass alternate on the right speaker.
5. Left + Right + Phantom ..Ensemble provides rhythmic punctuations, while in the phantom speaker, the selection finishes with the spotlight on the organ.

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for baroque music. At times Mme. Alain's registration seems slightly bland, and on this point comparison with the Biggs set is consistently interesting. She tends to prefer a pretty sound (although always within the limits of the style). I would like, on occasion, the bite of a few more reeds, but this is a matter only organists will take very seriously. The balances of organ and orchestra, essential for success in music of this type, could hardly be improved.

These dance-filled concertos are a thoroughly pleasing exhibition of a great master writing for his own favorite instrument—so that he may show off his own skill. Their availability in a reasonably priced edition of this quality ought to make their charms known to all who are even moderately interested in eighteenth-century music. For those who do not want the complete set, the discs may be purchased separately: DL 10085 (or 710085) contains Op. 4, Nos. 1-4; DL 10086 (or 710086), Op. 4, Nos. 5-6 and Op. 7, Nos. 1-2; DL 10087 (or 710087), Op. 7, Nos. 3-6; DL 10088 (or 710088), the opus posthumous pieces. R.C.M.

HAYDN: Concertos: for Trumpet and Orchestra, in E flat; for Two Horns and Orchestra, in E flat; for Organ and Orchestra, in C

Maurice André, trumpet (in the Trumpet Concerto); Georges Barbotin and Gilbert Coursier, horns (in the Horn Concerto); Marie-Claire Alain, organ (in the Organ Concerto); Chamber Orchestra, Jean-François Paillard, cond.

- MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 533. L.P. \$2.50.
- • MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 533S. SD. \$2.50.

Concertos for French horn are rare enough, concertos for two horns are in about the same class as the Giant Auk. Scholars debate whether this one is genuine Haydn, some maintaining it's by Rosetti. Taking it by ear, the average listener might guess Rossini—for it has the gay and wicked quality of that composer. Actually, it's probably genuine Haydn and a late work from the years that also produced the marvels of the more widely known Trumpet Concerto. The performance is a good one, though less than note-perfect. The style is right, however, and the recording is bright enough to let you in on all the fun.

From the sound of the instrument I assume that the Organ Concerto was made in the Eglise des Maronites, Paris, where this same group recorded the Handel organ concertos (reviewed above). Balances are good and the performance is thoroughly sympathetic. But this is a concerto from 1756, a youthful work, and though it has pleasing qualities there is none of the matured genius or striking originality of the works for brass.

Maurice André's accounting of the Trumpet Concerto is acceptable, but it is no real rival for Jeannoutot's recent version on Angel. R.C.M.

HAYDN: Quartet for Strings, in C, Op. 76, No. 3 ("Emperor")
†Mozart: Quartet for Strings, No. 17, in B flat, K. 458 ("Hunt")

Amadeus Quartet.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18886. L.P. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138886. SD. \$6.98.

This is a completely attractive record, with music of a level only Beethoven could rival among eighteenth-century masters of the quartet, and with the Amadeus playing in its excellent form. In addition, the recording is one of those robust, intimate tapings which seem to range the players round the fireplace within your arm's reach.

The coupling of a major Haydn work and a matching piece of major Mozart appears to be one of those instances where good sales psychology and good music go together. By my reckoning this is the stereo debut of the *Emperor*, a peculiar state of affairs, since this work—with its variations on the Austrian national anthem—has always been among the most popular. The *Hunt* takes its name from the galloping to the hounds in the first bars. It's always been one of the most difficult themes to set bounding into motion, but the Amadeus get it just right and then proceed to show you that they have the rest of the score equally under control. R.C.M.

HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 1, in D; No. 17, in F; No. 57, in D

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Max Gberman, cond.

- of • • LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPIECES HS 13. L.P. or SD. \$8.50 on subscription, \$10 nonsubscription.

Haydn's Symphony No. 1 is, in fact, his first symphony, according to H. C. Robbins Landon's notes for this set. It is also "a quite unremarkable little piece," hardly different from hundreds of other eighteenth-century symphonies, and of limited interest even in a performance as fine as this one. The Seventeenth (which probably isn't really seventeen in the chronology but stands around that spot)



Hovhaness: his band is brand-new.

is a more mature work but still juvenile compared with No. 57, which is major Haydn from nearly twenty years later. The Gberman performance is one of the late conductor's best, particularly in the wild and wicked finale where the master draws on an unusually full bag of tricks. R.C.M.

HINDEMITH: Concert Music for Brass and Strings, Op. 50—See Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta.

HINDEMITH: Mathis der Maler: Symphonic Metamorphoses of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5962. L.P. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6562. SD. \$5.98.

Ormandy is no stranger to *Mathis*; his was the first recording of it made in this country, on 78s issued around 1940, and he has also recorded it before on L.P. The three performances seem identical in spirit: sober, eloquent, and spacious, somewhat broader than the composer's own recording (now deleted) but eminently satisfactory. The sound of the new disc is, naturally, superior to other editions now available, and the performance is as good as any on records.

The *Metamorphoses* have always struck me as a bad joke on Hindemith's part, a gaudy dolling-up of some of Weber's charming four-hand piano pieces. It is a brilliant showpiece, of course, and Ormandy gives it the full treatment. His performance is preferable to the recently issued Furtwängler on DGG, which I find ponderous to the point of absurdity. A.R.

HOVHANESS: Symphony No. 4, Op. 165

†Giannini: *Symphony No. 3*

Eastman Wind Ensemble, A. Clyde Roller, cond.

- MERCURY MG 50366. L.P. \$4.98.
- • MERCURY SR 90366. SD. \$5.98.

This record provides a fascinating case study in the difference between a genuine creative composer and a skillful academician in tackling one and the same problem. The problem is the composition of a symphony for band. Vittorio Giannini writes for the band in the conventional way—as if it were a symphony orchestra with clarinets instead of violins. His symphony is tuneful, agreeable, makes good listening, but says nothing that hasn't been said a million times before.

Alan Hovhaness, on the other hand, writes for the band as if it were some brand-new medium that had just been discovered in heaven and the celestial properties of which he had been called upon to explore for the first time. He produces an absolutely novel and unprecedented world of sound with the brass,

woodwinds, and percussion of the band; "band," in fact, is not the right term for it, but neither is Eastman's term "wind ensemble," since the beaten instruments are quite as important here as the reeds and horns.

Hovhaness' Orientalism is decidedly in evidence here, but held more in restraint and better merged with other elements than in many of his earlier works. The jacket notes quote him, typically, as saying he admires "the great melody of the Himalaya Mountains, seventh-century Armenian religious music, classical music of South India, orchestra music of Tang Dynasty China around 700 A.D., and the opera-oratorios of Handel." All these things are present in this wonderful work, and a few others besides. One suspects that he has been listening to a good Japanese koto player: the koto might well be the source of those bright, discreet spangles of sound in glockenspiel and vibraphone, a few thousand light years away from the tonal orbits of the long, unrolling melodic lines of bass clarinet and brass which they adorn, and bouncing off Cloud 9 in the most entrancing kind of way.

The performance is absolutely magnificent; if these players are students at Eastman, they are the most amazing students in the country. The recording is a marvel. Wind instruments and percussion always record well, but Mercury has come across with something extra special here, both in mono and stereo. A.F.

IVES: *Thanksgiving*

†Riegger: *Canon and Fugue, in D minor*

†Becker: *Concerto Arabesque, for Piano and Orchestra*

Jan Henrik Kayser, piano (in the Becker); Iceland Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, William Strickland, cond. (in the Ives); Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, William Strickland, cond. (in the Becker and Riegger).

• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 177, LP, \$5.95.

IVES: *The Fourth of July*

†Piston: *Concertino for Piano and Chamber Orchestra*

†Carpenter: *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*

Marjorie Mitchell, piano (in the Piston and Carpenter); Göteborg Symphony Orchestra, William Strickland, cond.

• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 180, LP, \$5.95.

Over the years Charles Ives composed four pieces about American holidays which, he ultimately suggested, could be played together as a symphony. CRI released *Washington's Birthday* some time ago. Now it gives us *Thanksgiving* and *The Fourth of July*, and only *Decoration Day* remains to be recorded.

Thanksgiving is the oldest piece of the set. It was written in 1904, and in the course of its fourteen minutes manages to sound like a kind of synopsis of



the same composer's Second Symphony, which dates from approximately the same period. It begins with a great, polytonal fantasy on New England hymns derived from one of Ives's organ improvisations; it goes on to a meltingly beautiful passage of sentimental, old-time song, then a barn dance, and finally a choral coda based on a sturdy Protestant tune. *The Fourth of July* was composed eight years later than *Thanksgiving*. It is only half as long but it is a hundred times noisier and more dissonant. It is like a volcanic eruption, tossing up fragments of patriotic songs instead of hot rocks; it is, in fact, one of the most extreme and exciting compositions in the whole Ives canon.

Of the compositions surrounding Ives on these discs, only the Piston—a pointed, witty, hard-driving bit of neo-classicism dating from 1937—comes anywhere near offering competition. Wallingford Riegger often entertained himself writing strictly old-fashioned, academic music, and the Canon and Fugue, in D minor, is a case in point. John J. Becker was at one time much discussed in the publications of the musical avant-garde, but the *Concerto Arabesque* is the only work of his on records. It is also strictly academic and very dull, although its academy is that of the musical left, c. 1930.

John Alden Carpenter's Concertino is no concertino at all but a full-blown concerto lasting twenty-five minutes. Like most of Carpenter's music, it begins well, in a witty dialogue of piano and orchestra which sounds like a bit of jazz by MacDowell, but before long the work bogs down in Carpenter's kind of banality.

Performances are in general adequate, and those of Miss Mitchell are brilliant. CRI 180 (Piston, Carpenter, *Fourth of July*) is much better engineered than CRI 177. The review copy of the latter also suffered from scratchy surfaces. A.F.

LASSUS: *Masses: Bell' amfitrit' altera; In die tribulationis*

Prague Madrigal Choir, Miroslav Venhoda, cond.

• VANGUARD BG 651, LP, \$4.98.
• • VANGUARD BGS 70651, SD, \$5.95.

More than fifty Masses by Lassus have survived but only two of them were listed in Schwann when the present pair ap-

peared. The new ones are therefore very welcome, especially *Bell' amfitrit' altera*, which is an unusually fine example of Lassus' polychoral writing. Based on a madrigal that is not otherwise known, it is for two four-part choirs of equal constitution (stereo is consequently practically mandatory). Lassus, one of the most skilled and inventive of the sixteenth-century masters, holds one's interest throughout by constantly varying the textures, juxtaposing one choir against the other, dropping voices out and bringing them back, putting them all together in chords or counterpoint of thrilling richness. The result is a splendid work in a class with the composer's great motets.

The five-part *In die tribulationis* has some lovely moments but is in general less engrossing than the other Mass. The Prague Choir, which does very well in that work, here is less convincing. In the Gloria and Credo, Mr. Venhoda varies the tempo and spirit from section to section according to the text, but within a section there is the tendency towards a relentlessness, an unyielding drive, noticeable in this group's recent recording of Palestrina's *Song of Songs*. Nevertheless, *Bell' amfitrit' altera* alone is worth the price of this well-recorded disc. N.B.

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 4, in A, Op. 90 ("Italian")*

†Schubert: *Symphony No. 5, in B flat*

Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, cond.

• MERCURY MG 50356, LP, \$4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90356, SD, \$5.98.

In both instances a very brisk approach is adopted in an early romantic score which is better served if allowed to sing in slightly more flexible and expansive phrases. Take, for contrast, the excellent Bernstein version of the Mendelssohn or the suave Beecham account of the Schubert. When compared to Skrowaczewski, these sets have a sense of drive but also lightness and delicacy. They also allow room for a felicitous turn of phrase such as is notably absent with the supercharged propulsion of the Minneapolis conductor. For all the speed, however, it is Bernstein who finds time to play the essential repeat in the Mendelssohn. Mercury's recorded sound has a rather cold brilliance, but it suits the mood of the performances. R.C.M.

MILHAUD: *Sacred Service for the Sabbath Morning*

Heinz Rehfuss, baritone; Chorus of the French Radio; Orchestra of the Paris Opéra, Darius Milhaud, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 19052, LP, \$4.98.
• • WESTMINSTER WST 17052, SD, \$4.98.

Commissioned for Temple E-Manuel in San Francisco and first performed there in 1949 under the composer's direction.

this is a big incantatory work but a curiously unambitious and unimaginative one. I can find little sense of religious uplift or even mere musical consistency to recommend it. There is something offhand—almost careless—about the way the piece is written, and the same is true here even about the way it is performed and recorded. Rehfuss is adequate; chorus and orchestra are rough and lifeless (though it would certainly take an exceptionally fine performance to make much of this work convincing to me in any case). The sound is not remarkable, and the stereo version is so awkwardly and unmusically split into two almost unconnected channels that I could be inclined to think it was a paste-up job engineered from a monophonic original. E.S.

MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 17, in G, K. 453
 †Schubert: *Impromptus, Op. 90: No. 3, in G flat; No. 4, in A flat*

Artur Rubinstein, piano; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2636. I.P. \$4.98.
 • • RCA VICTOR LSC 2636. SD. \$5.98.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 19, in F, K. 459; No. 20, in D minor, K. 466

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

• COLUMBIA ML 5934. I.P. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6534. SD. \$5.98.

MOZART: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 16, in D, K. 451; No. 23, in A, K. 488

Geza Anda, piano; Camerata Academica of the Salzburg Mozarteum, Geza Anda, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18870. I.P. \$5.98.

• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138870. SD. \$6.98.

Of all the numerous categories of music to which Mozart contributed voluminously, that of the piano concerto assays highest in percentage of gold to ore. There are twenty-one original concertos for one piano and orchestra, and more than half of these are masterpieces by any generally accepted definition of that overworked term. By great good fortune, all of the masterpieces and most of the others are available in excellent recordings. When good new versions come along, the matter of choice becomes difficult; it may boil down to a question of choosing a favorite pianist, or of wanting a given coupling. To a considerable extent this is the situation that these three new discs give rise to.

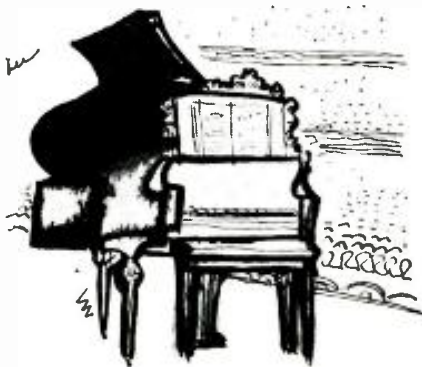
Among the imaginary conversations one muses about is the talk Artur Rubinstein may have had with himself one day a couple of years ago: "Now that you have reached musical maturity, my friend—I can say that with confidence since your chronological age has passed

seventy—perhaps you are ready to record the Mozart concertos." Whether that was the way it began or not, it was a happy day for the rest of us when this project was decided upon. The performances of the four concertos that preceded this one are either topnotch or only very slightly below that level. The same may be said of this new disc, K. 453, from beginning to end an unalloyed joy, is one of the most lyrical of all the concertos, and Rubinstein sings it with serene mastery. Wallenstein and his men are worthy of the soloist. Notice, for example, how perfectly the fine detail work in the woodwinds is fitted together in the Andante. Mozart's cadenzas are used, and the sound is magnificent. There are a few spots that keep this recording from being absolutely first-rate, in my opinion: in the first movement the bassoon is sometimes lost when it has important things to do, and the pianist occasionally exaggerates the "Mannheim sigh" a little; in the finale the orchestra could be crisper in the second variation, and the beginning of the fourth variation drags a bit. My favorite recording of this work remains the Serkin, but the present one (and the one by Geza Anda) is very close.

I have no reservations whatever about the playing of the Schubert pieces. These are exquisitely beautiful performances. In the A flat major Rubinstein gets a wonderful rippling smoothness by the simple expedient of avoiding any stress on the second beat (the half note) in the left hand.

In the hands of Serkin and Szell, K. 459 is a delight. The opening movement is jaunty; the Allegretto, with its lovely dialogues between woodwinds and piano, is tranquil and satisfying; and the two artists collaborate perfectly in bringing out the humor of the finale, with its playful beginning and mock-serious *fugato*. It is good to hear Serkin taking advantage of an invitation by Mozart to interpolate a little passage of his own, in the best of taste. This artist, along with some other distinguished performers, used to refrain from playing anything not printed in the score, but scholars have shown that to follow the score slavishly at such points is less authentic, less Mozartean, than to improvise. From every point of view, sound as well as playing, this is the best available recording of K. 459.

The present reading of K. 466 is far superior to the old one Serkin made



with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The first movement is dramatic, but its intensity is held under control. The piano playing is always moving, the music is obviously deeply felt. Szell's "accompaniment" is worth a review to itself; the orchestral interludes are gorgeously played; there are many marvelous touches, as in a passage in the Romance where Szell brings out a line in the violas. Tension and irresistible verve are combined in the finale. This is a first-class performance and, aside from some places in the first movement where the woodwinds should be more prominent, a first-class recording.

Anda does some beautiful playing in both the concertos on the DGG set, but he is less flexible as a conductor than as a pianist, some of the *tutti*s being rhythmically rather square. Moreover in both works he faces, and doesn't quite match, formidable competition: Serkin for K. 451, and Rubinstein and Serkin—and, if a copy can still be found somewhere, Haskil—for K. 488. In the fast movements of the latter work figurations in the piano sometimes drown out thematic work in the winds, but otherwise the sound here too is very good. N.B.

MOZART: Quartet for Strings, No. 17, in B flat, K. 458 ("Hunt")—
 See Haydn: *Quartet for Strings, in C, Op. 76, No. 3 ("Emperor")*.

MOZART: Serenades: No. 6, in D, K. 239 ("Serenata notturna"); No. 9, in D, K. 320 ("Posthorn")

Chamber Orchestra of Lausanne, Victor Desarzens, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 19057. I.P. \$4.98.
 • • WESTMINSTER WST 17057. SD. \$4.98.

The playing in both of these delightful works is clean, bright, and not devoid of nuance. It is generally, however, rather detached and objective. The richly inventive finale of the *Posthorn* Serenade can be more fun than it is here; but the jolly Allegretto of K. 239 is played in just the right pointed, saucy manner, enhanced by precise ensemble. This, it seems to me, is the high spot of the disc from the standpoint of performance, even though one might disagree with the interpretation of some of the grace notes. Elsewhere too, except for a high note that the posthorn doesn't quite hit, the playing is on a high level, and the sound is good in both versions. Stereo, of course, is almost mandatory for K. 239, which is for two groups of performers. Prospective purchasers might do well to consider the Van Beinum version of K. 320 on Epic, but I haven't heard a recording of K. 239 that is pronouncedly superior to this one. N.B.

MOZART: Sinfonia concertante for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, in E flat, K. 364; Duo for Violin and Viola, in G, K. 423

Igor Oistrakh, violin; David Oistrakh,

viola; Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Kyril Kondrashin, cond.

- LONDON CM 9377. LP. \$4.98.
- • LONDON CS 6377. SD. \$5.98.

There is no indication anywhere on the sleeve about which soloist plays which instrument. I therefore refrained from reading the label, to see if I could guess, since I had never heard either Oistrakh play the viola. It was, I regret to say, easy. In the Sinfonia the violinist played with a tone that was just a bit too sweet, and sometimes his intonation was slightly off, perhaps for expressive purposes. The violist produced a firm, live tone with no trace of sugar, and hit every note on dead center. If every other element of the performance had been on the level of the senior Oistrakh's refined viola playing, this would have been a topnotch affair. But Kondrashin accents heavily, makes of the beautiful slow movement a lachrymose lament, and is indeed rather heavy-handed throughout. There is a wide dynamic range, which enables the conductor to whip up, in the first movement, a tremendous—and quite un-Mozartean—crescendo. Except for some thickness in the bass, the sound is satisfactory. In the Duo the saccharine quality in Igor's tone was no longer noticeable (or had I grown used to it?). In both works the rapport between the soloists and the dovetailing of the two parts were perfect. N.B.

NICOLAI: Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (excerpts)

Ruth-Margret Pütz (s), Mistress Ford; Edith Mathis (s), Anne; Gisela Litz (ms), Mistress Rose; Fritz Wunderlich (t), Fenton; Friedrich Lez (t), Slender; Ernst Gutstein (b), Ford; Gottlob Frick (bs), Sir John Falstaff; Carl Hoppe (bs), Dr. Caius; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian State Opera (Munich), Robert Heger, cond.

- ANGEL 36149. LP. \$4.98.
- • ANGEL S 36149. SD. \$5.98.

It's very much a shame that certain operas of worth—some that touch greatness, even—are all but totally eclipsed by more popular treatments of their subjects. One thinks of Paisiello's *Barbiere*, of Rossini's *Otello*, and of Nicolai's *Lustigen Weiber*, though of course in German opera houses this last is decidedly a part of the active repertory.

It's a work of tremendous charm and good spirits, of unflinching melodic invention, partaking of the flavors of both the *Singspiel* and emergent German Romantic opera. It is not *Falstaff*, obviously, but it has its points of similarity—the scene in which the costumed hobgoblins torment Sir John, for example, bears a rather striking resemblance (even in the orchestration) to the Verdi/Boito treatment.

The present selection of excerpts offers most of the score's really strong passages, sung by a cast that is not notable for the individual vocal contributions but which leaves a pleasant over-all impression. For this, credit belongs to

the experienced Heger, who has a way with the music that is gentle and warm without being limp or soggy; everything is nicely filled out, but nothing overstated. Three of the cast members make strong impressions: Fritz Wunderlich sings better than I have ever heard him on previous releases—his "*Horch, die Lerche singt im Hain*" has ravishing lyric tone, beautifully controlled; Edith Mathis, as Anne Page, shows a full-bodied, freely produced lyric soprano and good taste; and Frick, in good form, makes a fat-sounding, convivial Sir John. Ruth-Margret Pütz has a pretty coloratura with a high extension that sometimes sounds unsupported; her singing is pert, but a bit lacking in character. Gutstein

is an inoffensive light baritone with good stylistic grasp; Litz a somewhat imprecise mezzo. The bit parts are well done, the sound is fine, and the final sum effect quite enjoyable. Texts with translations are provided. C.I.O.

OBRECHT: Mass, Sub tuum praesidium—See Dufay: *Mass, Se la face ay pale*.

OFFENBACH: Gaité Parisienne: Suite (arr. Rosenthal)—See Bizet: *L'Arlésienne: Suites: No. 1; No. 2*.

Continued on next page



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PISTON: *Concertino for Piano and Chamber Orchestra*—See Ives: *The Fourth of July*.

RACHMANINOFF: *Piano Works*

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18; Etudes-Tableaux, Op. 39: No. 1, in C minor; No. 2, in A minor; No. 5, in E flat minor.

Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano; Moscow Philharmonic, Kyril Kondrashin, cond. (in the Concerto).

- LONDON CM 9390. LP. \$4.98.
- ● LONDON CS 6390. SD. \$5.98.

Ashkenazy's approach to the Concerto, though in less heroic cast, is closely akin to the composer's own. One encounters much the same combination of sobriety and emotionalism in his work, and also the transcendental type of technique that makes even the most difficult of passages sound easy. One experiences too a similar type of coloration (subdued in hue, not flamboyantly brilliant) and a similar sort of rubato. The young Soviet pianist is less sheerly brilliant than Byron Janis or the late William Kapell, yet leaner, more muscular than either Moiseiwitsch or Richter. Where Van Cliburn (and with less expertise, Philippe Entremont) bore down heavily on the succulent harmonies, Ashkenazy is altogether winged and suggestive in his handling of the music. Moura Lympny, in her recent remake of the Concerto for Angel, largely duplicates Ashkenazy's poise and lack of ostentation, but the latter, in addition to being a more scintillating player, clearly has the idiom more in his bloodstream. Indeed, the only questionable detail that comes to my mind is the inexplicable accelerando in the octaves preceding the fugal passage of the third movement. Kondrashin's accompaniment is completely sensitive and idiomatic, while the euphoniumlike tone of the Moscow ensemble's woodwind section has its own attraction. The orchestral work, moreover, is superbly detailed.

The three *Etudes-Tableaux*, some of the most "modern" of Rachmaninoff's

creations (they sound almost like Prokofiev), suit Ashkenazy's intellectualized style even better than does the more obvious music of the Concerto.

London's reproduction is finely etched and superbly balanced. H.G.

RAVEL: *Quartet for Strings, in F*—See Debussy: *Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10*.

RIEGGER: *Canon and Fugue, in D minor*—See Ives: *Thanksgiving*.

ROREM: *Songs*

Song for a Girl; To the Willow Tree; Echo's Song; Upon Julia's Clothes; The Silver Swan; Three Psalms (Nos. 134, 148, 150); The Lordly Hudson; Snake; Rain in Spring; Root Cellar; Sally's Smile; Such Beauty as Hurts To Behold; My Papa's Waltz; Early in the Morning; I Am Rose; See How They Love Me; Visits to Saint Elizabeth's; Three Medieval Poems: A Christmas Carol, The Nightingale, The Call; Spring and Fall; Spring; To You: Youth, Old Age, and Night; O You to Whom I Often and Silently Come; Pippa's Song; Lullaby of the Woman of the Mountain; What If Some Little Pain; In a Gondola; Requiem.

Gianna d'Angelo, soprano; Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Regina Sarfaty, mezzo; Charles Bressler, tenor; Donald Gramm, bass; Ned Rorem, piano.

- COLUMBIA ML 5961. LP. \$4.98.
- ● COLUMBIA MS 6561. SD. \$5.98.

Ned Rorem, still young, is a prolific writer of songs, and a serious one—he respects the form, and has succeeded with it almost to the exclusion of other sorts of writing (though he is currently at work on an opera). He is, in fact, generally regarded as the most important American song composer since Ives, and Columbia deserves thanks for putting such a healthy representation of his work on disc.

Almost all of Rorem's songs are short—the thirty-two heard here take up just fifty-seven minutes. The best of them are straight lyric expressions, like *Upon Julia's Clothes* or Robert Hillier's *Early in the Morning*; or they are bright, syncopated bits of musical energy, like Dryden's *Song for a Girl* or *The Nightingale*, the latter being one of a group of three anonymous medieval poems. Interestingly, most of the songs that really "go"—perhaps half of them, a startlingly high percentage—are settings of Biblical, medieval, or Restoration poets, or of nineteenth-century authors (Browning, Robert Louis Stevenson) at their most unabashed (*The Year's at the Spring; Under the Wide and Starry Sky*). Most of the contemporary poems Rorem has picked seek to express thought in an abstract way, or to express feelings in an intellectual way. This is the hardest sort of thing to set into music, and the Paul Goodman songs—

with the possible exception of *Sally's Smile*, which has the effect of a minor tour de force—do not quite jell; they leave the impression of a composer finding sensible solutions to problems. Elizabeth Bishop's *Visits to Saint Elizabeth's*, in some ways the most ambitious song of the collection, is perilously close to parody. St. Elizabeth's is a mental hospital, and the poem, a powerful one, evidently has a connection to Ezra Pound, who was committed there. But the song is bound by the calculated form of the poem, which is a set of repetitive variations on the *This Is the House That Jack Built* pattern. The trouble is that the suggestion of madness and of lives in suspension is made in the poem through the variations in each return—the man in the House of Bedlam is described as "tragic," "talkative," "honored," "old," "brave," etc., the sailor is "batty," "silent," "staring," etc.—and the music, which deafens us to these variations and to the accuracy of the adjectives, must make a mere cumulative effect, which is not the point.

Curiously, the verbally compressed, image-rich poetry of the late Theodore Roethke is more successfully set: *Root Cellar* is a chilling song (no pun), and *My Papa's Waltz* a delightful one. All of Rorem's songs, I should add, are easy to listen to and genuinely vocal.

The performances here vary, the only consistent excellence being that of Rorem's own splendid accompaniments. Donald Gramm's smooth, warm bass and cultivated musicality make him the most impressive of the soloists. Gianna d'Angelo sings with a free, lovely tone, but Rorem has placed several of her songs so high in the voice that not a word can be understood—not altogether Miss d'Angelo's fault. Phyllis Curtin brings musical authority and rhythmic precision to what she does, but her insistently bright tone sometimes becomes shrill, and turns almost to a whinny at the difficult climax of Psalm 148. Bressler is intelligent, accurate, and rather nasal, while Sarfaty is most disappointing here—her basically fine mezzo sounds harsh and pressed, and her enunciation is much too self-conscious.

Columbia's sound is topnotch. C.L.O.



Ashkenazy: a piano quite winged.



Ned Rorem: song writing a specialty.

SAINT-SAENS: *Carnaval des animaux*—See Britten: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Op. 34.

SCHUBERT: *Impromptus*, Op. 90: No. 3, in G flat; No. 4, in A flat—See Mozart: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*, No. 17, in G, K. 453.

SCHUBERT: *Quartet for Strings*, No. 14, in D minor ("Tod und das Mädchen")

Hungarian Quartet.

- Vox LP 12520. I.P. \$4.98.
- • Vox STPL 512520. SD. \$4.98.

This is a fairly broad and spacious account of the music, relaxed and free to sing when song is called for, but equally able to provide the strong inflections essential to the drama of the work. The result is a performance that most Central Europeans would take as appropriately Schubertian and that Americans can admire unless they want a more ostentatious show of technical skills.

R.C.M.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 5, in B flat*—See Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 4, in A, Op. 90* ("Italian").

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38* ("Spring"); *Genoveva, Op. 81: Overture*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5981. I.P. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6581. SD. \$5.98.

With this disc Leonard Bernstein and the Philharmonic complete the project of recording all four Schumann symphonies in the "original" orchestration (or, more accurately, the composer's final orchestration, since he himself made many changes: in the First Symphony, for example, he transferred the opening brass exhortation from repeated B flats to Ds at the first rehearsal). Mr. Bernstein has not completely proved his point—that the symphonies sound better as written than in the commonly used revisions—but he has come close to doing so.

Schumann's own version of the *Spring* Symphony offers relatively few problems. Most of the scoring is light, and the few moments where the instrumental doubling might seem excessive (bars 3-5 of the introduction, for example) can be cleared up in careful performance. The bright and spacious stereo recording is of further assistance in untangling this work's few really murky passages. The important thing, then, is the performance itself, and it is an excellent one. I cannot fully accept Mr. Bernstein's speed in the coda of the first movement, nor the deliberate pacing of the second trio in the scherzo. On the whole, however, he brings to the work vitality and lyricism, and it comes alive.

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The *Genoveva* Overture is a rarity, but it is far from top-drawer Schumann. The thickness here is in the melodic material, more than in the orchestration, and most of it is undistinguished. It too receives a strong and sympathetic performance.

A.R.

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120*
†Beethoven: *Leonore Overture, No. 3, Op. 72a*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2701. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2701. SD. \$5.98.

Leinsdorf's Schumann is clean, spirited, and bright, and the orchestral playing on this disc merits the same adjectives. What is lacking, however, is the strong lyric impulse that makes the old Furtwängler or the more recent Klemperer performances so communicative. I find that Leinsdorf's reading of the slow movement is wanting especially in depth and eloquence.

The *Leonore* Overture is, similarly, strong and clear, though without special pleading. This is not entirely to Leinsdorf's discredit, since performance standards in music like this are pretty well set by now. But I do not see the need for "just another" Schumann Fourth or Third *Leonore*, which I'm afraid this record is.

A.R.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Orchestral Works*

Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28; Don Juan, Op. 20; Salomes Tanz; Festival Prelude.

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond.

• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18866. LP. \$5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138866. SD. \$6.98.

As more and more orchestral recordings arrive from European sources (the inevitable consequence of the steady decline in the recording activity of American orchestras) we are increasingly reminded of the difference in American and European home music systems and, hence, in American and European concepts of good recorded sound.

The average American has a much finer music system than the average European. It has the speakers to handle a wider dynamic range and reproduce a wider frequency response, and it sounds best when given material which exploits these potentialities. The present disc was apparently made with European playback equipment in mind, with low bass and big climaxes having to be hedged. This is managed by the artful use of reverberation, which provides the illusion of a big, full sound while actually keeping the signal levels within the limitations of mediocre machines.

Musically, the content is first-class.

The Berliners play with all their familiar excellence, and Böhm's performances are based on years of study and success with this repertory. The *Festival Prelude* is the only really unfamiliar part of the collection, an example of Strauss's skill in the big rhetorical gesture, made musically viable by a pleasant lyric section in the middle of the bombast. *Salome's Dance*, for all its weaknesses, is a better score and gets an especially vigorous performance.

The result is a pleasing record, especially recommended for those with modest phonographs. But if you want to hear your best equipment at its best, other editions put it to a more significant test.

R.C.M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake, Op. 20; Ballet Suite*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2688. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2688. SD. \$5.98.

It's good to hear Fiedler again not only in more substantial fare than he has recorded for some time but in a work previously unrepresented, at least as extensively as it is here, in his discography. It's even better to hear him and his Bostonians in a characteristically engaging blend of animation and suaveness—and best of all to hear them in a stereo recording (I have not yet heard the mono edition) in which the typically vivid presence of Dynagroove technology is enhanced by a considerably warmer acoustical ambience than in any recent Boston Pops releases. I still would welcome a slightly smaller ratio of direct to reflected sound pickup, and some non-hi-fi listeners may deem the prominence of percussion excessive here. But even these factors make for superb clarity of detail and a dramatic sonic incandescence in the climactic moments. And there are many of these in the representative fourteen selections. Of course, no abridgment can ever substitute satisfactorily for a complete *Swan Lake*, but among the single-disc suites surely none is more electrifyingly festive in both performance and sonics than this one.

R.D.D.

VICTORIA: *Responsories for Tenebrae (1585)*

Westminster Cathedral Choir, George Malcolm, cond.

• ARGO RG 149. LP. \$4.98.
• • ARGO ZRG 5149. SD. \$4.98.

These are eighteen motelike pieces that Victoria wrote for matins in Holy Week, six for each of the last three days before Easter Sunday. Each is for four-part chorus, and in each the second section

is repeated after a verse for two or three solo voices. The texts, most of which concern the Crucifixion, are especially suited to Victoria's turn of mind, and his settings have the grave and intense but controlled emotional quality characteristic of this composer. Among the responsories are well-known ones that have not lacked recordings, such as *Tenebrae factae sunt* and *O vos omnes*, but many of the others—particularly *Unus ex discipulis* and *Tamquam ad latronem*—are very fine too.

The choir, which consists of twenty-three boys and men, is obviously well trained; it is nicely balanced, sings with good tone and usually accurate intonation, and is capable of a wide range of dynamics. Malcolm indulges in quite a bit of dynamic nuance and sometimes changes tempo markedly in the course of a piece. Especially on the first side it seems to me that he overindulges: there are crescendos, diminuendos, explosive attacks, sharp accents which seem to have little justification in the text or the musical structure. On the second side the speed-ups and dynamic changes are more closely related to the text, although they still appear to be procedures better suited to performances of secular madrigals than to these tragic sacred motets. The sound is clear and lifelike in both versions, and English summaries of the texts are provided.

N.B.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger* (excerpts)

Elisabeth Schumann, Lauritz Melchior, Friedrich Schorr, et al.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 63.

WARREN: *Abram in Egypt; Suite for Orchestra*

Ronald Lewis, baritone, Roger Wagner Chorale, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Roger Wagner, cond. (in *Abram in Egypt*); Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, William Strickland, cond. (in the Suite).
• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 172. LP. \$5.95.

The best thing here is the singing of Ronald Lewis, a magnificent English baritone who gives Elinor Remick Warren's academic little cantata what life and vigor it possesses in this performance. The same composer's Suite on the other side is remarkable only for a pleasant, slightly Delius-like slow movement, but it is poorly recorded and, one suspects, not too well played.

A.F.

WEILL: *Happy End*

Lotte Lenya, vocalist; chorus and orchestra, Wilhelm Brückner-Rüggeberg, cond.

• COLUMBIA OL 5630. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA OS 2032. SD. \$5.98.

This recording is another in the series



made by Lenya and Brückner-Rüggeberg in Hamburg (*Der Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* and the complete *Dreigroschenoper* were others, and I understand that *Silbersee* was yet another, though it's never been released). The album consists of incidental songs to Brecht's *Happy End*, which was first performed in Berlin in 1929, a year after the *Dreigroschenoper* premiere. The play was not a success (hard to sort the political considerations from amongst the artistic), and the score died with it, though Lenya has popularized *The Bilbao Song*, the *Matrosen Tango*, and *Surabaya Johnny* within the last decade, and Munich staged *Happy End* in 1958.

The play seems to be a fairly typical Brechtian product, set in an imaginary Chicago and populated by gangsters and Salvation Army cohorts. The songs, however, have little direct connection with the play—important ones are parables or inverse-morality stories in ballad form, and are much closer in function to the incidental songs in *Good Woman of Setzuan* or *Man Is Man* than to that of the score to *Dreigroschenoper*. The above-mentioned ones are all splendid examples of their type, available in Lenya's album of German theatre songs. (Here, though, they are given in more complete form, with a particularly significant addition in the *Matrosen Tango*.) Among the others, I particularly like the *Song of the Brandy Merchant*, certainly one of the finest in Weill's venomous vein, with choral interpolations that deserve to stand beside the salvation of Mackie Messer or the delicious moment in *Mahagonny* when the city is delivered from threatened destruction by hurricane. *In der Jugend goldn'em Schimmer* is also precisely right, and the *Mandalay Song* is one of those propulsive, crackling Brecht/Weill ballads in which everything goes from hunky-dory to dreary in a couple of minutes. In all these numbers—*Der kleine Leutnant des Lieben Gottes*, not really a memorable song, is a good example—there is the remarkable technical craftsmanship and sensitivity to subtle rhythmic, orchestral, or harmonic changes that always sustain Weill's songs.

The performances are splendid; Lenya is slightly more mannered and generalized than on some of her earlier (by just a few years) recordings, but still uniquely persuasive, and *Surabaya Johnny* has all the old aching magic. I cannot agree, though, with the decision to assign all the songs to her; it simply would have made a better record to alternate one or two other performers with so distinctive and specialized a vocalist (true, the chorus takes a few brief numbers to itself). And in previous Weill recordings, Columbia has shown that ample talent is available in Hamburg. Orchestrally, things are in splendid shape, and the sound is superb. There are also very detailed notes (as well as texts and translations) by the English critic David Drew, who has specialized in Weill's work. How about the *Berliner Requiem* or *Die Burschaft*, or at least the Walt Whitman songs, while Miss Lenya is still actively on the scene? C.L.O.



THE BIEDERMEIER ORCHESTRA:
Works for Orchestra with Solo Instruments

Mozart: *Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in G. K. 382*. Haydn: *Double Concerto for Violin, Piano, and Orchestra*. Vivaldi: *Concerto for the Dresden Orchestra, in G minor*. Viotti: *Double Concerto for Violin, Piano, and Orchestra*.

Eugene List, piano; Carroll Glenn, violin; Biedermeier Orchestra, Kurt List, cond.

• MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 539. LP. \$2.50.

• • MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 539S. SD. \$2.50.

Here is no haphazard collection of workaday leftovers—only the Haydn, in fact, is conventional enough to cause the ear to wander from time to time. The Mozart, originally written as a new finale to the Piano Concerto K. 175, was played by the composer as an independent work, and certainly qualifies as one (it is closer, actually, to a theme and variations than the Rondo title would indicate). Its "Turkish" *tutti*, resplendent with trumpets and drums, reminds me of an outdoor serenade, and even more strongly, for some reason, of *Così fan tutte*.

Vivaldi's wonderful Concerto for the Dresden Orchestra is like three or four concerti grossi wrapped up into one. The first movement is sprinkled with solos by violin, flute, and oboe, each presented in a kind of *pas de deux* with solo bassoon; the second movement is given over entirely to oboe and bassoon (both played with a "white" tone that can only be described as cool, man); and the finale alternates a further effective solo appearance with a great deal of commotion in the *tutti*.

The Viotti displays all the elegance and rarefied humor of a drawing-room setting by Oscar Wilde: the piano and violin engage in a tea-time conversation of such propriety that one wonders if it is, indeed, a parody; the second movement, however, introduces some surprising—dare one suggest, improper—rhythmic figuration that disrupts the marvelous decorum.

Eugene List plays this music superbly; Carroll Glenn is entirely acceptable in all save the Haydn, where the playing sounds cramped and thin, and some of the runs rather hectic. The orchestral

contributions are disciplined, close-clipped, and vigorous, and the sound is clean and sharp, with solo instruments nicely staged in stereo. S.F.

E. POWER BIGGS: "The Golden Age of the Organ"

E. Power Biggs, organ.

• COLUMBIA M2L 297. Two LP. \$9.98.

• • COLUMBIA M2S 697. Two SD. \$11.98.

For lovers of organs and organ music in general, and baroque organ music in particular, this should be one of the most interesting of Mr. Biggs's phonographic essays. What he does here is to play music by Bach and other composers on all twelve of the surviving organs constructed or designed by Arp Schnitger and his son Franz Caspar in the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first quarter of the eighteenth. The Schnitgers, along with the Silbermanns, were the greatest German organ builders of the time, and how well they built is shown by the North German and Dutch instruments recorded here. In every one of them (almost all have been restored in recent years) there is the clarity, the markedly individual character of the various stops, the rhythmic precision, the agility, and, when needed, the grandeur that make them ideal media for the music of Bach. I was particularly struck by the beauty of the organ at Uithuizen, but the others are hardly less fine.

In addition to baroque pieces, Mr. Biggs plays some choral preludes by Ernst Pepping, who is regarded as the outstanding living composer of German Protestant church music. His works come off very well on the old instruments; I thought his *Freuet euch* quite jolly and *Nun freuet euch* charming. The sound is magnificent. N.B.

IGOR KIPNIS: Harpsichord Recital

Dussek: *The Sufferings of the Queen of France*. Handel: *Suite No. 5*, in E. Soler: *Fandango*. Bach: *Tocatta in E minor*; *Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, in E flat*; *Fantasia in G minor*; *French Suite, No. 6, in E*.

Igor Kipnis, harpsichord.

• GOLDEN CREST CR 4071. Two LP. \$9.96.

• • GOLDEN CREST CRS 4071. Two SD. \$9.96.

This is a curious, idiosyncratic disc, not well produced but with interesting although uneven musical contents. It is most notable, however, for its exceptional and high standard of performance.

Igor Kipnis, the son of Alexander, is a young harpsichordist with a really profound sense of eighteenth-century style and performing practice. His feeling for ornament and rhythmic flexibility (also, in the baroque sense, ornamental—we would say expressive) is both historical in its reference to the sources and to tradition, and musical in its natural,

textual, and poetical meaning. For example, his ornamentation of the last movement of the Handel Suite (the so-called *Harmonious Blacksmith Variations*) is based in part on an old source—an ornamented manuscript version in the New York Public Library, possibly written by a Handel pupil—and partly on a projection of these notions through the performer's own sense of structural and expressive articulation. The results are admirable.

In most other respects, the playing is equally interesting. True, there are some small side-slips in the fingerwork; the rest is well on the plus side. The sense of accent, articulation, and phrase (all closely related and tied up with the ornamentation, of course) helps to build these pieces up in an architectural way.

The repertoire is a mixed lot. The Dussek is amusing—a program piece about Marie Antoinette complete with “savage tumult of the rabble” and falling guillotine (loud dissonance, fast descending C major scale)—but the musical content, alas, is mighty slim. More can be said for the *Fandango* attributed to Padre Soler, a work not only full of remarkable evocations of guitars and castanets but almost hypnotic in its ritual dance rhythm, its curious, almost savage harmonic and melodic patterns, and its insistent, strumming, drumming, obsessive repetitions.

Not all of the Bach is on a high order either; the Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro in E flat has been doubted as an authentic work, and it is easy to see (or hear) why: the fugue writing is perfunctory and the long, sectional, running Allegro which follows seems anticlimactic and without the strong sense of direction generally permeating even the old master's most minor compositions.

The Toccata is small, multisectional, almost in a condensed concerto slow-fast-slow-fast form. The Fantasia, which has also been questioned, is, however, a strong, small contrapuntal work of character. No such questions arise with the marvelous *French Suite*, preceded here—as in an old text—by the E major Prelude from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*.

Kipnis is exceptional in his ability to distinguish these works stylistically and he gets far into some of the fascinating musical problems they present. It all works well on his harpsichord, a Rutkowski and Robinette built to late eighteenth-century French specifications and a versatile and attractive instrument. The recorded sound is something else; it is much too close and not too attractive. In addition my review set had a great deal of surface noise as well as a curious and almost subliminal vibrational rumble that seemed to come and go—something like a far-off subway train, felt more as a faint physical tension than as an actual sound. E.S.

IDA PRESTI and ALEXANDRE LAGOYA: *“Masters of the Guitar, Vol. 1”*

Diabelli: *Serenade in D, Op. 63: Ro-*

mance; March. Carulli: *Serenade No. 3, in C.* Dowland: *Three Dances: Galliard; Allemande; Galliard.* Bach: *English Suite, No. 3: Sarabande; Gigue.* Presti: *La Hongroise.* Granados: *Goyescas: Intermezzo.*

Ida Presti, guitar; Alexandre Lagoya, guitar.

• RCA VICTOR LM 2705. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2705. SD. \$5.98.

A two-guitar team must lay the foundations of its own repertoire as it goes along, and it is obvious that the husband-and-wife team of Presti and Lagoya are doing a very good job of masonry. Lagoya, who arranged everything here but his wife's own work, has resisted what must be an occupational hazard—to burden a piece with elaborate ramifications in order to make the most of the two instruments. His scoring is at times so simple that one instrument might almost do the job, as in Diabelli's *Romance*; even when both guitars are engaged to the hilt there is no sense of thickness or overweight. The festive little march by Beethoven's publisher never bogs down, and Carulli's variations on a very close relative of *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* is rather quaint.

The Bach seems to me to make the transfer less successfully, and while the *Gigue* is deftly set forth, it is played at such a clip that the rhythmic pulse is lost. But the easy Spanish lilt of the Granados suits the team to perfection. Ida Presti's seven-minute piece in honor of Bartók is no mean accomplishment. As a composer, Miss Presti is persuasive not only in mood but in her ability to produce fairly elaborate tapestries out of small germinal designs. Stereo provides a pleasant separation, yet the playing is so clean that it loses very little in mono. S.F.

AMIRAM RIGAI: *“Piano Music of the Near East”*

Amiram Rigai, piano.

• Vox PL 12570. LP. \$4.98.
• • Vox STPL 512570. SD. \$4.98.

Most important of the six works recorded here is the *Sonatina*, Opus 38, of Paul Ben-Haim, who translates Israeli folk idioms into the idiom of the piano with a light, deft, extremely skillful hand. Also affording pleasurable listening are the *Pièces sentimentales* by Ilhan Mimaroglu of Turkey—entertaining and plausible in a very quiet, open, false-naïve kind of way; and echoing the spirit of Satie if not his content—and the crisp and whimsical *From the Aegean*, by Anis Fuleihan.

The rest is merely trash. The *Prelude to Magic Herbs* by Manolis Kalomiri, the *Prelude No. 1* and *Persian Legend* by André Amine Hossein, and Rigai's own *Israeli Rhapsody* are amateurish Lisztian improvisations; the piano in every college dormitory rings all day with this kind of earnest, showy stuff. It is all very well played, however, and reasonably well recorded. A.F.

PHILLIP STEINHAUS: *“The King of Instruments”*

Phillip Steinhaus, organ.

• AEOLIAN-SKINNER A 317. LP. \$4.98.
• • AEOLIAN-SKINNER AS 317. SD. \$5.98.

As a demonstration of the capacities of the Aeolian-Skinner organ in All Saints Church, Pontiac, Michigan, this is an impressive disc. The instrument, completed in 1958, is of moderate size, for a church seating 450, but it is capable of plenty of variety, and it sounds fine. As an organ recital, on the other hand, there is not much to be said for this record. Two of the works—*Tumult in the Praetorium* by Paul de Maleingreau and a *Cantilène* by Jean Langlais—are insignificant. In the Buxtehude *Prelude and Fugue in F sharp minor* (not C sharp minor, as both sleeve and label have it) the sectional structure is over-emphasized by changes of registration and the work ends with a retard a yard wide. Both the *Passacaglia* and the *Trio Sonata No. 6* of Bach suffer from a lack of rhythmic backbone, though the *Vivace* of the *Sonata* is played with agility and charm. The most interesting performance on the disc is that of Reger's *Benedictus*, in which the highly chromatic beginning and ending are made to sound mysterious and lovely. N.B.

STORIA DELLA MUSICA ITALIANA, VOL. 3

Various performers.

• RCA ITALIANA ML 40002. Ten LP. \$85.00.

The third volume in RCA Italiana's sumptuous four-volume history of Italian music is devoted to the eighteenth century, the era in which Italian compositional procedures formed the basis of an international style. Early in the century chamber music and concerti grossi by Italians were published in many cities north of the Peninsula, and an opera overture or aria of about 1770 was most likely to be thoroughly Italian in shape and spirit, whether it was written in Stockholm or Vienna or Madrid or St. Petersburg, and regardless of the nationality of the composer. Throughout the century Italian composers and performers were eagerly sought after and commanded the highest fees. It was with keen anticipation, therefore, that I opened this handsome album. Only about half the time, I regret to say, were my expectations fulfilled.

The first five sides are devoted to opera. Here we have excerpts, sometimes extensive ones, from works by composers from Alessandro Scarlatti to Salieri. Some of these are well chosen, others are routine examples of their kind. The performances seldom strike sparks. All the singers are competent without being especially distinguished. The orchestra, however, is none of these things. It is called the Orchestra della Camerata per il Settecento Musicale Italiano and is

directed by Piero Cavalli, who also sings bass in the vocal excerpts. It sounds tiny—I would be surprised if there were more than two first violins—and out of its depth, and there is occasional off-pitch playing.

Things begin to pick up in the next section—vocal chamber music with continuo and excerpts from cantatas. This is a rich and little-known field, from which Cesare Valabrega, who is responsible for the contents, made some interesting selections. Especially fine here, it seems to me, are Astorga's *In questo core*, with its chromatics and lovely, winding line; the charming and bucolic *Qual odo in lontananza* from a *Serenata* by Alessandro Scarlatti; and the deeply expressive duet *Fiero acerbo destin* by Durante. Margherita Baker, one of the better singers in the album, rises to a high level of artistry with the broad line of *Scioglie ormai le nevi*, by Perti. This section ends with a surprisingly frivolous ensemble by Padre Martini and a poor patriotic hymn for the short-lived Republic of Naples by Cimarosa.

The next three sides offer religious and liturgical music. Though here again a pall is cast over the proceedings by the inadequate little orchestra, it is possible to derive some enjoyment from a scene from Alessandro Scarlatti's oratorio *Sedecia* and an excerpt from his *Te Deum*; the beautiful *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* from a four-part unaccompanied Mass by Domenico Scarlatti; some melodious excerpts from a *Salve Regina* by Leonardo Leo; and the brilliant *Domine ad adjuvandum* by Vivaldi.

Keyboard and instrumental chamber music occupy the next four sides. Here practically every piece has something of interest, and the playing is on a high level. Special praise is due Gabriella Gentili Verona for her skillful and varied performances on the harpsichord, to Giovanni Guglielmi for tender as well as lively violin playing that is accurate and clean, and to Giuseppe Selmi for some satisfying cello playing. This section ends with a remarkable string quintet, *La Musica notturna di Madrid*, by Boccherini (1780), in which he presents a vivid programmatic picture of religious and secular doings in an evening in the streets of the Spanish capital.

The last four sides deal with concertos and concerti grossi. Here, fortunately, the orchestra used previously in the album is replaced by an ensemble called the String Orchestra of the Solisti Veneti, conducted by Claudio Scimone. It is an excellent band, and turns in first-rate performances of concertos by Vivaldi (in D minor, P. 280; in D major, P. 188), Pergolesi (the *Concertino* No. 4, if it is indeed by Pergolesi), Geminiani (in D minor, Op. 3, No. 4), Tartini (for violin, in G minor), Bonporti (for violin, Op. 11, No. 5), Padre Martini (for violin, in F), and Cambini (for piano, Op. 15, No. 3), as well as a symphony in G by Sammartini. Here again we have occasion to admire the solo violin playing of Guglielmi.

As in the earlier volumes the sound is good except when a soloist is too close to the microphone, which happens not

seldom. The book of notes is in Italian. In line with the uneven character of the whole project, we have in this book many interesting illustrations, one of which is printed backwards and another upside down. There are also some striking pictures in color. But Giacomo Perti is called Jacopo; Porpora is both Nicola and Nicolò on the same page; Jommelli both Nicolò and Niccolò. N.B.

JOHN CHARLES THOMAS: "This I Leave You"

The Little Brown Church in the Wild-wood; Lily of the Valley; O God, Our Help in Ages Past; No, Not One; Blessed

Assurance; Where He Leads Me I Will Follow; A Mighty Fortress Is Our God; Let Him In; I Love To Tell the Story; Showers of Blessing; Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross; Faith of Our Fathers; My Faith Looks Up to Thee; Softly and Tenderly.

John Charles Thomas, baritone; The King's Men; Roy Urseth, organ.
• WORD W 3276. LP. \$3.98.

Fortunately, this release is a good deal more than a nostalgic reminder of the countless radio shows featuring what Charlie McCarthy insisted on calling "the great Metropolitan trio, John, Charles, and Thomas." It is also an an-

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tidote to the overarranged, oversophisticated treatment that religious music, including even four-square revival hymns and spirituals, almost invariably comes in for.

To my ears, there are only two legitimate ways of approaching this kind of music. The first is to put it in the hands of a large, willing congregation bolstered by a strong choir. The second is to turn it over to a singer with a great voice and enough belief in the music to let it speak for itself. Paul Robeson plus a piano does the trick for spirituals, and Thomas plus an organ does it for these hymns. True, a quartet called The King's Men is on hand, but while it's a perfectly good group of its kind, by and large it is more nuisance than help here. But far better the King's Men with its simple harmonies than the slick, rich-toned chorus/orchestra combinations which contemporary arrangers and engineers seem to love.

The selections here are taken from radio transcriptions dating from 1949. Thomas was then fifty-eight, but only once or twice does a momentary hitch or quaver betray the age of the singer. In nearly every bar he sends his rich, open, beautifully focused baritone barreling through the old tunes. There is no vocal nonsense of any kind, and no musical meddling in the name of "art" or "sensitivity." There is just the music, magnificently sung in a characteristically American way which seems to have passed with the fading of the Tibbetts and Thomases. The hymns are fine ones, without exception, and the sound is surprisingly good for the age and source.

Ken Darby, an old radio associate of Thomas', apparently performed the task of searching out and selecting this material, at the suggestion of Jerrell McCracken. It was a good idea. C.L.O.



SIDNEY MICHAELS: *Dylan*

Sir Alec Guinness, Kate Reid, et al.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 65.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: "*Come, Woo Me; A Shakespearean Entertainment*"

Arnold Moss, Kim Hunter, Joyce Ebert, Annette Hunt, Robert Geringer, Robert Stattel; Arnold Moss, dir.

• UNIFIED AUDIO CLASSICS WU 101/02. Two LP.

According to the legend on the present

album (which occupies as much space as the colored picture of Adam and Eve will spare it), courtship is "an Art, a Game, a Pastime, and a Major Pursuit," while the records the box encloses are "Full of Rapture and Joyous Ribaldry." I am glad to say that nothing in the contents of these discs is comparable to the vulgarity of the written matter, but it is clear that the less seasoned Shakespearean is being pretty consistently addressed.

What we have are scenes illustrating various aspects of the man-woman relationship from *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Tempest*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Richard III*, *Henry V*, *Measure for Measure*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Each selection is introduced in junior high school terms by Mr. Moss, and at each conclusion we are regaled with a more or less (generally less) connected song by Daniel Elliot, accompanying himself on the guitar.

All the actors work hard, and there is little in the set that is really bad. But it is by no means only in the way they handle the blank verse that the performers show themselves inexperienced interpreters of Shakespeare. I do not believe many who hear these discs would encourage Kim Hunter to go on with the Bard, for her reading of Rosalind is wholly rhetorical and matter-of-fact, missing all the poignancy and underlying poetry of the lovely lines she speaks. Joyce Ebert, on the other hand, obviously has considerable temperamental sympathy with what she is called upon to do, and there is already much that might be said for her Isabella in *Measure for Measure*. Annette Hunt, too, is an entertaining Katherine of France, though I cannot say much for her Viola. The director, Arnold Moss, has, of course, had considerable experience with Shakespeare, but there is little in his performances in this set to show that he had greatly profited by it.

Quite the nicest thing in the album is the handsome case-bound book, illustrated with drawings from Rolfe's Shakespeare, which contains the text. As time moves on, it does seem that an increasing ratio of the record dollar is going to the printers.

EDWARD WAGENKNECHT

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *The Tempest*

Sir Michael Redgrave, Hugh Griffith, Vanessa Redgrave, Anna Massey, et al.; Peter Wood, dir.

• CAEDMON SRS 201. Three LP. \$17.85.
• • CAEDMON SRS S201. Three SD. \$17.85.

Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*, is more poem than drama, and is probably richer still for its moral and spiritual suggestiveness. Though there is no warrant whatever for the popular notion that in the Prospero of the last act, the Man of Stratford intended to present himself taking his leave of the theatre,

and though it is as certain as anything can be that most of the symbolic meanings which critics have from time to time read into the play never entered Shakespeare's mind, the temptation to make an allegory of it is almost irresistible. With a little encouragement, I myself could describe Prospero as the only safe image of the man of the future, possessed of boundless power and virtuous enough to be entrusted with its exercise.

Perhaps it is impossible to stage *The Tempest* with complete success; perhaps, for this reason, it is the one Shakespearean play that is done greater justice on the phonograph than in the theatre. However the Elizabethans may have reacted to the masque in Act IV, it is certainly a bore to us; and though the clowns and lesser villains have their moments, few would maintain that they are among Shakespeare's most interesting essays in either type or that the scenes in which they appear never drag. Worse still, two of the major characters—the monster Caliban and the fairy Ariel—are likely to move us more when viewed with the inner eye than when given actual body before our eyes of flesh.

Surely there never was such a Caliban as Hugh Griffith has given us here; his grunts and groans alike would crown him the nonpareil, and there is much more to him than that. Sir Michael Redgrave's daughter, who has already demonstrated her Shakespearean sensitiveness by her fine Rosalind in Caedmon's *As You Like It*, has fancy and wonder, a brittle unreality and a surprising human sympathy, all somehow quite coherently combined as Ariel, while her father gives Prospero as noble and intelligent a reading as any of us can ever have hoped to hear. As Miranda, Anna Massey, daughter of another famous actor (Raymond Massey), is faced with no such impossible assignment, but what she has to do, she does charmingly; and if John Hurt's Ferdinand is not quite as good, we must remember that the role is not quite as good either. The minor characters are all about as well done as anybody could do them. One might, in fact, sum up by calling Caedmon's *Tempest* a nearly perfect recording.

E.W.

DYLAN THOMAS: "*An Evening with Dylan Thomas*"

DYLAN THOMAS: "*Dylan Thomas Reading His Complete Recorded Poetry*"

Dylan Thomas, reader.

For a feature review including these recordings, see page 65.





BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37*

Gary Graffman, piano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Walter Hendl, cond. [from RCA Victor LM/LS 2396, 1960].
 • RCA VICTROLA VIC 1059. LP, \$2.50.
 • RCA VICTROLA VICS 1059. SD, \$3.00.

Here are two American artists with a secure grasp of the Beethoven style. When this disc was originally issued, their collaboration was immediately regarded as one of the better recorded versions, and with the passing of time its stature has not been altered. This is the Chicago Symphony at the height of the Reiner period, and exceptionally good stereo recording remains one of the further assets of an outstanding release. R.C.M.

BOITO: *Mefistofele*

Mafalda Favero (s), Margherita; Giannina Arangi-Lombardi (s), Elena; Ida Mannarini (c), Marta; Rita Monticone (c), Pantalis; Antonio Melandri (t), Faust; Giuseppe Nessi (t), Wagner; Emilio Venturini (t), Nereo; Nazareno de Angelis (bs), Mefistofele; Chorus and Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala (Milan), Lorenzo Molajoli, cond. [from various Italian Columbia albums, late 1920s].
 • ODEON QCX 10017/19. Three LP, \$17.94.

It's a bit chastening to think that only fifteen years ago the sound of this recording was considered merely below average. How its age (thirty-plus) shows now! The sonics are cramped, dull, muddy; climaxes carry distortion, low dynamics are practically out of the picture. The set can still be listened to, but one must really adjust to make it an enjoyable experience.

The adjustment is worth it, though. *Mefistofele* is one hell of an opera, and this is still the only really satisfactory performance of it ever put on records. It's also the most socially acceptable—Molajoli was a Cavaliere and De Angelis a Commendatore.

De Angelis is the big reason for the superiority of this performance over its competition. Fine a singer as London's Siepi is, he doesn't possess the kind of instrument demanded by Boito's cosmic villain; Giulio Neri, who sings the role

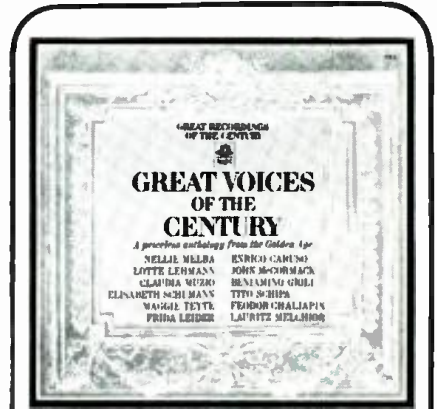
in both the Cetra and Urania versions, does not have the color or liveness required. (Happily, the bleeding carcass flung onto the market as an "abridged version" by Victor, starring Christoff, is no longer around to confuse the issue.) De Angelis' vocalism is not always what one would term *bel canto purissimo*. It is sometimes guttural, sometimes woolly. But his was a huge, peeling true bass of very wide range, rather nasty-sounding but still magnetic—exactly the kind of voice the Devil might very well have. And more important, he had the sort of unashamed, larger-than-life personality without which the opera wilts. He growls, roars, chuckles; he turns everything to some theatrical end, and all with a sense of naturalness, of ease—one never feels he is laboring to sound satanic. All the sneering irony, the contempt for man, the sense of cruel power, are here conveyed. An awesome performance indeed.

The lovely Mafalda Favero is heart-breaking as Margherita. Again, everything is pointed toward a dramatic meaning, so that the runs in "*L'altra notte*," for example, are a part of the emotional line, as well as the musical one. The voice is bright, round, and free, the interpretation intense and utterly honest—not a false step. Try the wonderful passage in the Prison Scene beginning with "*Spunta l'aurora pallida*" if you need convincing. Antonio Melandri is a peculiar singer. Phrases molded with a splendid control over tone coloring and dynamics alternate with others that sound very tentative and insecure; he seems never to have cemented the transition from middle to high register. The basic quality of the voice is beautiful and strong, and there is enough in his performance to make it interesting. Giannina Arangi-Lombardi, the Aida of the old Columbia set, is splendid as Elena, sending her dramatic soprano through the extremely demanding music in rock-secure fashion. The smaller roles are well taken.

Maestro Molajoli, impressive in nearly all his recordings, is especially so here. His reading has more impetus than Serafin's, without losing sweep, and his tempos seem to me "righter" than Franco Capuana's (it has been some time since I listened to the *Questa* set, but surely Molajoli would not suffer in the comparison). This is a challenging score—the rhythms in the *Domenica di Pasqua* dances change practically with every bar, and the climax of the Garden Scene quartet can really be a scramble, to say nothing of all the tremendous choral passages. Despite the undeniable rigors of the primeval sound, Molajoli makes more sense of the score than any of the other conductors on records have managed to do.

I hope that no one needs persuasion where the opera itself is concerned—it is one of the really great ones in the Italian canon, and has a flavor, a color that is decidedly its own. The restoration of this performance to the catalogue is most welcome. The Ricordi libretto is supplied, in Italian only.

C.I..O.



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CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

CIMAROSA: *Sonatas for Harpsichord* (32)

Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord
[from Westminster XWN 18698, 1958].
• WESTMINSTER COLLECTORS SERIES W
9307. LP. \$4.98.

These tiny one-movement works by the
composer of *Il Matrimonio segreto* do
not have any of the distinction of
that fine comedy. Some of them are
idiomatically written; others are anemic
in texture and seem to invite harmonic
filling-in. They are pleasant enough,
but completely unadventurous. Admirers
of the "oboe concerto" attributed to
Cimarosa but actually put together by
Arthur Benjamin will recognize the
source of its charming first movement
in No. 29 here. I'm afraid that all I can
say is that Veyron-Lacroix does as well
as can be done with the material. N.B.

DEBUSSY: *Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10*

Stuyvesant String Quartet [from Phil-
harmonia PH 104, 1951].
• NONESUCH H 1007. LP. \$2.50.

For a review including this recording,
see page 69.

DOWLAND: *The First Book of Ayres*

Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels. Safford
Cape, dir. [from Period STL 727, 1954].
• DOVER HCR 5220. LP. \$2.00.

For a review including this recording,
see page 70.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 99, in E flat; No. 102, in B flat*

Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Mogens
Wöldike, cond. [from Vanguard VRS
491, 1957].
• VANGUARD SRV 129SD. SD. \$2.98.

For all the increased activity in re-
cording Haydn repertory, Wöldike's per-
formances remain among the most widely
admired statements of these scores.
Originally released on discs in mono
only but available also in stereo tapes,
they have become a sort of standard edi-
tion, and their reissue suggests recog-
nition of the fact that many listeners will
want to hear them for a long time to
come.

Their strengths are many. To begin
with the obvious, Wöldike is an extremely
sensitive Haydn conductor who knows
how to impart the distinctive eighteenth-
century vitality of the music. The mu-
sicians are playing from the Robbins
Landon texts, and this adds a further
stamp of authenticity. Moreover, they
play well. The orchestra is a first-
rate Viennese ensemble, and the engi-
neers have recorded it with a completely
convincing sense of presence. R.C.M.

HOLST: *Suites for Band: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in F (A)*

†Vaughan Williams: *Folksong Suite;
Toccata Marziale (A)*
†Grainger: *Hill-Song No. 2 (B)*

Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fen-
nell, cond. [(A) from Mercury MG
50088, originally 40015, 1956; (B) from
SR 90221, 1960].

• MERCURY MB 50388. LP. \$4.98.
• MERCURY SR 90388. SD. \$5.98.

One of the first releases to establish
Fennell's fame and that of his Eastman
Wind Ensemble series, the "British Band
Classics." Vol. 1, of 1956, remains one
of the finest recorded programs of origi-
nal symphonic-band music ever made.
It sounds better than ever in remastered
mono, but since many of today's record
buyers insist on stereo at all costs,
Mercury has provided a twin-channel re-
processing—and both editions are now
augmented by a Grainger piece which
first appeared in the (stereo as well as
mono) "Diverse Winds" program of
1960. This *Hill-Song* No. 2 is unusually
interesting for its predominantly reedy
timbres and tautly woven texture, but
the prime appeal still lies in the spirited
performances of the larger work.

In the SD the electronic reprocessing
has been done discreetly with no at-
tempt at pinpoint localizations but with
an effective broadening of over-all sonic
perspective; and the recording itself still
sounds amazingly live and vivid, with
perhaps slightly less sharp highs but even
more mid- and extreme low-range fre-
quency content. R.D.D.

MALIPIERO: *Rispetti e Strambotti* †Hindemith: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in F minor, Op. 10*

Stuyvesant String Quartet [from Har-
monia, mid-1950s].

For a feature review of these record-
ings, see page 64.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonatas for Piano* (complete)

*No. 1, in F minor, Op. 1; No. 2, in D
minor, Op. 14; No. 3, in A minor, Op.
28; No. 4, in C minor, Op. 29; No. 5,
in C, Op. 38; No. 6, in A, Op. 82;
No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83; No. 8, in B
flat, Op. 84; No. 9, in C, Op. 103.*

Yury Boukoff, piano [from Westmin-
ster XWN 18369/71, 1957].

• WESTMINSTER COLLECTORS SERIES W
9311/13. Three LP. \$4.98 each.

Boukoff, the second artist to record
the Prokofiev sonata cycle (his efforts
were preceded by London's integral edi-
tion by Robert Cornman) brings to these
works most of the merits of solid Teu-
tonic pianism: meticulous deliberation;
emphatic, slightly rigid rhythm; discreet
tonal shading; and an almost total lack
of exhibitionism—in short, just about
everything *not* appropriate for these wit-

ty, daring, scintillant, and, above all, emotional compositions. He comes through passably in the early Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3, and better than that—indeed, admirably—in the extended No. 8. The mazurkalike flexibility of the opening movement of the fine No. 4, however, is quashed by the stolid “scholarship” of the present reading, while an aura of tepidity negates the bravura possibilities of the exciting No. 6.

With splendid versions of Nos. 6, 7, 8, and 9 available from Richter, a breath-taking one of No. 7 from Horowitz, Boukoff’s inhibited readings can be given short shrift. For those who are interested, Westminster’s sound is clean but a bit unresonant. The Sonatas are distributed as follows: Nos. 1-4 on W 9311, 5-7 on W 9312, and 8-9 on W 9313. H.G.

RAVEL: *L'Heure espagnole*

Janine Linda (s), Concepción; André Dran (t), Gonzalve; Jean Millien (t), Torquemada; Jean Hoffman (b), Ramiro; Lucien Mans (bs), Don Inigo; Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris de la Radiodiffusion Française. René Leibowitz, cond. [from Vox Pl. 7880, 1952].
• Vox OPX 150. LP. \$4.98.

It is surprising how well the sound of this release holds up; its only competition, Ansermet’s London version (mono only), is not significantly better in this respect, if at all. And despite the excellence of Ansermet’s work, London enjoys scanty advantage there, for Leibowitz is justifiably admired for his work in this repertory; his reading has both an affectionate, sunlit atmosphere and noteworthy rendition of detail.

In the matter of singers, London is somewhat in front: it is particularly bothersome that Vox’s Ramiro, Jean Hoffman, is hardly a baritone of the sort required, but more of a heavy-sounding tenor. London’s Heinz Rehfuss brings a solid, virile baritone to the role, and this is surely more appropriate. Suzanne Danco is also a stylish Concepción, but Vox’s Janine Linda, while quite ordinary vocally, also brings a nice projection of the situation and considerable innuendo to the lovely role—the truth is that neither lady has the needed sensuous fire in her voice. In any case, sheer vocal plush is of secondary importance in this work, and the Vox performance has plenty of style and spirit; price might well determine preference between the two available versions. Synopsis, no text. C.L.O.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36*

Paris Philharmonic Orchestra, Rudolf Albert, cond. [from Omega OSL 71, 1959].

- COUNTERPOINT/ESOTERIC 611. LP. \$4.98.
- • COUNTERPOINT/ESOTERIC 5611. SD. \$5.98.

As we hear him in this reissue of a

disc released some five years ago, Albert harbors some strange (not to say bizarre) notions on the Tchaikovsky Fourth. The music is either limping or whizzing along at breakneck speed. There are all sorts of rhythmic and phraseological vagaries, including horrid hurdy-gurdy crescendos of massed brass and percussion towards the end of the first movement. All of this, I might add, is aggravated by the typically vibratoed sound of the Parisian instrumentalists. For an account of the music as Tchaikovsky composed it, Dorati and the London Symphony get the nod.

Counterpoint/Esoteric has given Albert deep, spacious sound and slightly obtrusive surfaces. H.G.

CAECILIA MANDOLINE PLAYERS

Vivaldi: *Concerto for Mandoline, in C*. Beethoven: *Sonatina: Adagio*. Hasse: *Concerto for Mandoline, in G*. Mozart: *Die Zufriedenheit, K. 349: An die Zither, K. 351*. Quantz: *Concerto for Flute and Strings, in G*.

Paul Conrad, tenor (in the Mozart); Hubert Bahrwahser, flute (in the Quantz); Caecilia Mandoline Players, Wessel Dekker, cond. (in the Vivaldi, Beethoven, Hasse, and Mozart) Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bernhard Paumgartner, cond. (in the Quantz) [from Philips 0068R, c. 1945].

- PHILIPS PHM 500049. LP. \$4.98.
- • PHILIPS PHS 900049. SD. \$5.98.

This recording, which was available once as an import but was eventually withdrawn from the catalogues entirely, now makes its first domestic appearance, in electronically contrived stereo. You’ll have to be a member of the club, I’m afraid, to get the most out of it. Though a good G major scale is about the extent of my own accomplishment on the mandolin, I’d be the first to welcome a skillful mandolin solo in the Vivaldi concerto, set off properly by a normal string orchestra. But massed mandolins in the supporting cast, with sprinkled pick-sounds falling like hail on every down beat? It strikes me as comic, somehow. Beethoven sounds like a love-sick Neapolitan—or like half a dozen of them put together—in the Sonatina written for his friend Krumpholz, a mandolin virtuoso, and matters are not helped by the fact that the two Beethoven bands are just a hair under the pitch, due, evidently, to a mechanical slow-down somewhere along the production line. The Hasse is good-natured and appealing in a folkish sort of way, but the most beautiful moment on the whole record is when all those golden, liquid, lovely, legato violins come in with Quantz’s flute. S.F.

MAFALDA FAVERO: *Operatic Recital*

Mascagni: *Lodoletta: Flammen, perdona mi. L'Amico Fritz: Suzel, buon di;*

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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Son pochi fiori. Puccini: *La Bohème: Si, mi chiamano Mimi; O soave fanciulla; Donde lieta uscì.* *Madama Butterfly: Bimba dagli occhi pieni di malia. Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide. Turandot: Signore, ascolta!; Tu che di gel sei cinta.* Boito: *Mefistofele: L'altra notte, in fondo al mare.*

Malfalda Favero, soprano; Tito Schipa, tenor (in "*Suzel, buon dì*"); A. Ziliani, tenor (in "*O soave fanciulla*" and "*Bimba dagli . . .*"); orchestra [from various Voce del Padrone albums, 1930s].
• ODEON QALP 10350. LP. \$5.98.

Favero was a lovely singer—bright, full-toned, with excellent stylistic sense, and, always, a freshness and spontaneity which brought her characters alive. Her Metropolitan career was very brief—a few performances as Mimi in 1938, her debut having been somewhat overshadowed by that of her Rodolfo, Jussi Bjoerling—but her Margherita on the fine old Molajoli *Mefistofele* [the recent reissue of this recording is reviewed on page 85] is one of the most distinctive individual performances on records, and her recording of the "Cherry Duet" with Schipa (also on Odeon's "*Ricordo di Pietro Mascagni*") has long been one of the most widely admired vocal 78s.

It would be difficult to find a more engaging Mimi, a more touching Liù, a more sympathetic Butterfly—she never fails to extract the emotional content from this sort of music. I would prefer a fuller, darker voice for "*In quelle trine morbide*," but within the framework of her light *spinto* voice, this too is a splendid performance. Ziliani, her partner in the Puccini duets, is a straight-voiced, rather sharp-sounding tenor, clear-toned and well routined, but not precisely captivating. For the source, the sound is quite acceptable; there are biographical notes, in Italian only. C.L.O.

SALOMEA KRUSCENISKI: *Operatic Recital*

Meyerbeer: *L'Africana: Selika's Death.* Boito: *Mefistofele: L'altra notte, in fondo al mare* (two versions). Verdi: *Aida: Ritorna vincitor; I sacri numi.* Puccini: *Madama Butterfly: Un bel dì, vedremo.* Tosca: *Vissi d'arte.* Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur: Io sono l'umile ancella; Poveri fiori.* Catalani: *Loreley: Da che tutta.* La Wally: *Ebben? ne andrò.* Wagner: *Die Walküre: Tanto fu trista.* Quaranta: *Lasciati dir* (two versions); *Si dice.* Oddone: *Capelli d'oro.*

Salomea Krusceniski, soprano; piano; orchestra [from various originals made c. 1903-10].
• ROCOCO 5211. LP. \$4.95.

Krusceniski, a Polish soprano who sang first in Eastern Europe and later in Italy, was a Marchesi pupil, and she bears the stamp that this remarkable pedagogue seems to have left on innumerable famous pupils—extraordinary

technical facility coupled with a severe, consciously cultivated break between registers. Her tone on these recordings is basically dark and very round, but is capable of brightness and lightness of execution. It was evidently a rich voice, for it has recorded to much better advantage than the evidently purer, higher instruments of, say, Sembrich and Melba.

She is at her most impressive here in the *Aida* selections—especially the prayer, which is sung with unusual freedom and purity, and in a really gorgeous "*Io sono l'umile ancella*," which is exactly right both vocally and stylistically. The other items are perhaps not quite so special, but they all afford evidence of vocal authority, technical and stylistic command. The usual idiosyncrasies of very early recordings are in evidence—noise is quite fierce on one or two bands, there is a big cut in the middle of "*Un bel dì*," one version of "*L'altra notte*" offers only one verse, etc. But there are some genuine rarities here, which one will certainly not hear under any better circumstances, and the artist is decidedly an important one. Recommended for the vocal buff. C.L.O.

ROSETTA PAMPANINI: *Operatic Recital*

Puccini: *Turandot: Signore, ascolta!; Tu che di gel sei cinta.* *Madama Butterfly: Love Duet, Act I.* *La Bohème: Si, mi chiamano Mimi.* *Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide.* Catalani: *La Wally: Ebben? ne andrò lontana.* Verdi: *Otello: Ave Maria.* Giordano: *Andrea Chénier: La mamma morta.*

Rosetta Pampanini, soprano; Francesco Merli, tenor (in *Madama Butterfly*); orchestra, Lorenzo Molajoli, cond. [from various Italian Columbia albums, 1925-40].

• ODEON 33QC 5030. 10-in. LP. \$2.98.

One of the leading Italian lyric sopranos of the '20s and '30s, Pampanini sang at most of the major Italian theatres, including La Scala, as well as in South America, Germany, Austria, and the United States (at Chicago). She also participated in several of the early electrical complete opera recordings, released here under the Columbia label.

Her soprano, at least on records, was of the light, rather fragile-sounding sort, more notable for brightness and focus than for roundness and volume. She could infuse it with a darker color, but basically she was a lyric singer, suited for Mimi or Nedda or Manon. The "*Mi chiamano Mimi*" included on this disc illustrates her attributes: the vocalism is easy and always on center, and everything is "right," stylistically speaking—there are no distortions, no fussy points of "originality," and yet there is never a feeling of routine. This is perhaps the most attractive thing about her interpretations—there is nothing really startling, but everything has a fresh, spontaneous spirit. She is always in empathy with the music and the character.

The *Wally* aria, which is a very respectable piece of writing, is not often recorded, and Pampanini's excellent rendition of it is therefore doubly welcome. In the *Butterfly* duet (beginning at "*Quest' obì pomposa*") Merli is his usual strong, somewhat metallic self. The sound is acceptable, and Molajoli's accompaniments are always above average. C.L.O.

RICCARDO STRACCIARI: *Operatic Recital*

Leoncavallo: *I Pagliacci: Si può?* Bizet: *Carmen: Con voi ber.* Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Mille grazie, mio Signore; Largo al factotum.* Verdi: *Rigoletto: Pari siamo; Cortigiani, vil razza dannata; Ah! solo per me l'infamia; Si vendetta.*

Mercedes Capsir, soprano (in the Verdi); Dino Borgioli, tenor (in the Rossini); Attilio Bordonali, baritone (in the Rossini); Riccardo Stracciari, baritone; Chorus and Orchestra of Teatro alla Scala (Milan), Lorenzo Molajoli, cond. [from various Italian Columbia originals, 1927-29].

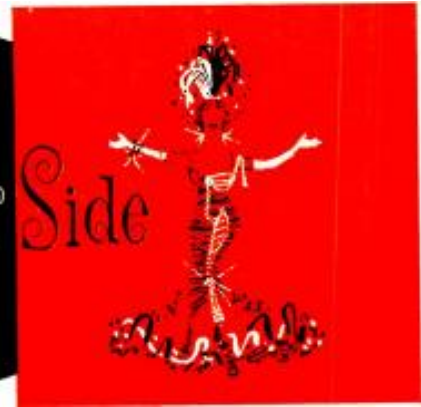
• ODEON 33QC 5039. 10-inch LP. \$2.98.

Stracciari was one of the real giants, and one of the last in the line of prodigious Italian baritones that took in such singers as Battistini, Magini-Coletti, Ancona, Scotti, Amata, Ruffo, Danise, and De Luca, and which boasted such "second line" (!) figures as Giraltoni and Borghese. They were all smoother, more elegant singers than even the best of today's baritones, and they achieved their vocal polish without sacrifice of the dramatic accent; Stracciari's "Toreador Song" has more punch and bite than any recent version, but at the same time more grace and dash too.

The *Rigoletto* excerpts are the great prize of this disc. They are drawn from the old Columbia complete recording, and preserve a significant portion of Stracciari's magnificent characterization of the title role (the complete recording, which also features the splendid Duke of Dino Borgioli, has been unavailable since the withdrawal of the Entré transfer several years ago). The strength and color of the voice, the sure roll of the legato, the nobility of the utterance, and the dramatic intensity of the portrayal put this *Rigoletto* head and shoulders above all others on records. Mercedes Capsir, unfortunately, is shrill and metallic, but this is not enough to nullify the value of the excerpts.

The "*Largo al factotum*," also from a complete set, is an old-fashioned piece of virtuoso razzle-dazzle: it is amazing to think that these recordings were made when Stracciari was already a veteran of better than thirty years on the operatic stage. Only one reservation about this release: why were the *Rigoletto* sections not grouped on one side for continuous listening? Sound: reasonably good transfers (the originals are not sonic miracles). Notes: in Italian only. C.L.O.

The Lighter Side



Los Indios Tabajaras: "Maria Elena." RCA Victor LPM 2822, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2822, \$4.98 (SD). "Always in My Heart." RCA Victor LPM 2912, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2912, \$4.98 (SD).

THERE MUST BE a law—akin to the law of gravity or the law of diminishing returns—that concerns the relative believability of press agent prose. When a story is preposterous enough, one can be reasonably sure that it is not entirely the product of a press agent's imagination. Not that some members of the PR Corps do not have sufficient imagination to produce outlandish stories—it's just that they wouldn't dare try to pawn them off as the truth. Thus, faced with the narrative of Los Indios Tabajaras, one can only accept it at face value. Nobody would have the gall to invent it.

About twenty years ago, in the jungles of the isolated northeastern corner of Brazil, there lived an Indian tribe, the Tabajaras, who had little contact with white men. One day two sons of one of the leaders of the Tabajaras found a guitar lying in a path in the woods. They took it home, hid it, and when, after a couple of weeks, it still appeared to be harmless, they took it out to examine it. The sound of the strings interested them and they taught themselves to play (possibly in much the same trial-and-error fashion of the earliest jazz musicians). Eventually they emigrated from the jungle to Rio de Janeiro, where they sang tribal songs with guitar



Los Indios Tabajaras: right out of the jungle.

accompaniment. A theatrical agent booked them for a tour of South America that lasted six years. The brothers then decided to take formal guitar instruction, whereby their Indian repertoire became augmented with compositions by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Falla, Albéniz, and American popular songs. After two years of study, they returned to the concert circuit and toured Europe, and in 1957 they made an LP disc which attracted no attention whatever.

Six years later, the producer of a New York disc jockey show, looking for some filler music, discovered a performance of *Maria Elena* on this LP. It was played on the program often enough to stimulate interest, and eventually it was reissued under the over-all title "Maria Elena" (RCA Victor 2822). RCA Victor, finding themselves with a sudden success on their hands, reached down into the Brazilian jungle to which the two brothers—known professionally as Los Indios Tabajaras—had retired, and brought them to New York this past winter to make a second album.

Whether the more fantastic elements of this tale are true or not is, in the long run, beside the point. For the two Indians, Natalico and Antenor Moreyra Lima, play with a style so direct and so melodic that their abilities seem to border on genius. The style is equally appropriate to tunes reflecting their own native music and to such popular American songs as *Star Dust*, *Moonlight and Shadows*, *Over the Rainbow*, and *Moonlight Serenade*. Natalico, the lead guitarist, has a strong and graceful approach full of rhythmic impulse. He can stretch his lines in romantically singing phrases on some tunes, and on others, notably in *Los Indios Danzan* (on 2822), he sounds like a very direct descendant of the great gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt. Elements of both turn up in almost every selection, backed by close, sympathetic accompaniment from his brother and an unobtrusive, unidentified rhythm section.

The brothers' latest disc (2912) is not as varied as their 1957 collection (the latter included several folk pieces and also gave them an opportunity to sing). But the new performances, all instrumental, have a polish that reflects the experience gained in the intervening years. Both discs are remarkable collections of indigenous musical creativity. J.S.W.

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American Artist

FIFTH ANNUAL
TRAVEL ART ISSUE



Quincy Jones: "Explores the Music of Henry Mancini." Mercury 20863, \$3.98 (LP); 60863, \$4.98 (SD).

Henry Mancini and His Orchestra: "The Pink Panther." RCA Victor LPM 2795, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2795, \$4.98 (SD).

One can only be grateful that in the realm of movie music Henry Mancini has taken the play away from the tiresome pomposities of the Tionkin-Rózsa school and the empty obviousness of the Elmer Bernstein style. It is undoubtedly a reflection on the work of Mancini's predecessors that his compositions have been recorded so much that, whatever the merit of his tunes, they seem to have been run into the ground. Quincy Jones's arrangements, however, are remarkably successful. Jones has combined his own talents with those of a highly imaginative group of musicians (assuming that the solo segments are the creations of the individual members), and enlivens these more or less familiar Mancini compositions with sparkle, vitality, and humor. He balances the obvious with the unexpected; the superficially banal is colored by the off-beat. The listener who wants strong rock 'n' roll will find it here. And the listeners who appreciate innovations will also find them—particularly in Toots Thielemans' harmonica playing and whistling on the haunting *Soldier in the Rain* and the catchy, finger-snapping trio with bowed-bass and saxophone (and that's a unique ensemble) on *The Pink Panther*. And there are occasional wild outbursts by Roland Kirk on either stritch or manzello.

As for Mancini's latest film score, *The Pink Panther*—he has a provocatively rhythmic tune in *It Had Better Be Tonight*, along with several languorously Italianate themes. The latter may not set the world on fire, but they maintain Mancini's position way out in front of the Hollywood music parade.

The Piano Roll. Record, Book & Film Sales RBF 7, \$5.98 (LP).

Piano rolls have been transferred to discs long before now, but this is the most extensive survey so far of the types of rolls that caught the public fancy in the first three decades of this century. This record is divided between mechanically cut rolls (before 1913) and hand-cut (i.e., reproduced from actual performance), which came after 1913. In general, the mechanically cut have a stiffness that betrays their source, but as period pieces they are interesting, and range from the programmatic *Bubbling Spring* (it bubbles) to the popular *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*.

The hand-cut rolls represent a variety of performers. Among them are Pete Wendling, a prolific piano roll artist who is best known today as a composer of many popular tunes; Scott Joplin, the composer of rags, doing a rather starchy version of one of his pieces; Roy Bargy, Paul Whiteman's pianist, in a sprightly tune of his own composition; *Dardanella*, played with sweeping, four-handed grace by Ted Baxter and Max Kortlander; a straight-out treatment of *Sweet Georgia Brown* by the popular

pianist Lee Sims; and one roll by jazz pianist James P. Johnson of *Dr. Jazz's Raz-Ma-Taz*, which takes off in driving style. The disc is accompanied by a fascinating essay on the background of the player piano by Trebor Jay Tichenor, a twenty-three-year-old student of the instrument who selected the rolls used here. This collection offers a great deal of period charm to the casual listener, and is an essential source to anyone interested in the popular music of the early twentieth century.

Ray Charles Singers: "Something Special for Young Lovers." Command 866, \$4.98 (LP); 866 SD, \$5.98 (SD).

This group is one of the few vocal ensembles that manage to project a distinctive personality. The clue may lie in Charles's statement, quoted in the liner notes, that he thinks of his group as "a twenty-five-faceted reflection of me. They sound the way I would like to sound if I had that many voices." The way they sound is fresh and alive and pliable. There is none of the stiffly starched chorale feeling in these pieces. Whether they are singing all together or in male and female segments, the phrasing is that of a single voice—which permits an unusually relaxed and easy development of the songs. The selections have been chosen from the cream of the newly arrived standards—*This Is All I Ask*, *I Left My Heart in San Francisco*, *Quiet Nights* (the bossa nova *Corcovado*, with lyrics), *Charade*, and, for a lively change of pace, *Hello, Dolly!*

Joseph Schmidt. Capitol 10367, \$3.98 (LP); S 10367, \$4.98 (SD).

Schmidt was a strikingly lyrical tenor in prewar Germany who could endow a lilting popular tune or an operetta melody with great radiance and *elan*. Because he was less than five feet tall, the heroic roles in opera that might have suited his voice did not come his way, but he found a career in radio and on discs. Once his voice had established his reputation, he was also accepted on visual terms, and for six years, in the early Thirties, he was an international favorite. But Schmidt was a Jew, and in 1937 his career in Germany was ended. He moved around Europe and finally settled in Switzerland, where he died in an internment camp in 1942. This disc brings together a delightful set of performances, revealing the full-bodied lyricism of a voice that could, when the occasion offered, achieve much the same dramatic projection as Richard Tauber's.

Al Caiola and His Orchestra: "50 Fabulous Guitar Favorites." United Artists 3330, \$3.98 (LP); 6330, \$3.98 (SD).

United Artists is releasing a series of discs billed as "50 Fabulous"—"Piano Favorites," "Latin Favorites," "Folk Favorites," "Dance Favorites," and so on. Most of those I have heard suggest that anyone actually interested in pianos, Latin music, folk music, or et cetera is apt to find little satisfaction in them. A notable exception is this disc, although the guitar has very little relationship to its success. The fifty tunes that turn up

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here are not in any sense "guitar favorites"—they are some of the best show tunes and pop standards from the Twenties and Thirties. And even though guitarist Al Caiola is featured all through the disc, its principal pleasure is actually as a wonderful album of small-band dance medleys. The group occasionally bursts into exuberant Dixieland terminology, but most of the time it simply swings along in free and easy style with bright ensemble passages and solos by trumpet, clarinet, trombone, and piano, as well as guitar. This bright, happy music can serve for listening, dancing, or as background for conversation.

Barbara Carroll: "Fresh from Broadway!" Warner Brothers 1543, \$3.98 (LP); S 1543, \$4.98 (SD).

Miss Carroll, a pianist who worked on the fringes of jazz early in the Fifties, plays tunes from *Hello, Dolly!* and *What Makes Sammy Run?* in a manner that blends her piano easily and unpretentiously with a string-dominated orchestra. Glenn Osser has provided her with strong, interesting arrangements which allow her piano to flow along with an ingratiating attachment to the melody. Although *Dolly* offers Miss Carroll her most frequent opportunities, the outstanding selection is a tune from *Sammy*—*The Friendliest Thing*—arranged in a spectacularly sinuous and rhythmic fashion.

Buddy Greco: "My Last Night in Rome." Epic 24088, \$3.98 (LP); 26088, \$4.98 (SD).

Greco has been developing from a sit-down pianist-singer to a stand-up singer at the microphone—leaning, in the process, on derivations from Frank Sinatra. In English, his efforts have been conditioned by his fascination with the hip idiom, and his injections of what he, presumably, considers bright inflections and asides. To one listener, at least, who finds this boring when Sinatra does it, such things are not impressive coming from a second-line imitator. This disc puts Greco in a much better light than usual, for in Italian (the predominant language here) he sounds fine. He really sings the songs, and if he is being hip in the process (and in Italian), I don't have to know it. He has developed an engaging, lyrical singing style which could be quite effective in English.

NBC's Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street. RCA Camden 802, \$1.98 (LP); S 802, \$2.98 (SD).

The prime aim of The Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street, which flourished *circa* 1940, was to get a little jazz on network radio. The weekly program functioned, theoretically, on two levels. One was as a take-off of pontifical commentaries on opera and symphony broadcasts (beautifully written by, if memory serves, Weldon Kelly and meticulously spoken by Gene—or Gino—Hamilton). The other level was—and this is where the "theoretically" comes in—is a setting for jazz performances. But even by the extremely loose standards of 1940, when the Swing Era had sown a crop of confusions about jazz,

there was relatively little on the Chamber Music Society programs that was really good jazz by anybody's standards. Certainly these recorded samples are essentially pop music—quite adequate of their kind. One exception is Sidney Bechet's performance of *Muskrat Ramble* which, with Bechet at the helm, *has* to come out jazz. For the rest, we have Dinah Shore purring her way through a set of very good tunes (*Mood Indigo*, *Sophisticated Lady*, *Star Dust*, and *Body and Soul*), and Lena Horne singing some W. C. Handy tunes. Both Miss Shore and Miss Horne were in their young and unmanipulated periods (for Miss Shore, this is good; for Miss Horne, not so good), and the result is a pop collection which, even after almost a quarter of a century, is fresh and enlivening. But don't look for much jazz here.

Dick Rodgers and His Orchestra: "Old-Time Polkas and Waltzes." Decca 4466, \$3.98 (LP); 74466, \$4.98 (SD).

For those who enjoy a hearty, robust polka band, Dick Rodgers (no kin, presumably, to the Broadway composer) offers a group that can compare favorably with the Six Fat Dutchmen and others of their ilk who were once spawned around New Ulm, Minnesota. This band displays a solid ensemble attack, lifted and driven by the marvelously big and buxom tuba work of Glenn Richmond. A group such as this is apt to rise or fall on the merits of its bass horn, and Richmond keeps this one riding high, harrumphing and rumbling along with the flittering of the three reeds, or providing a foundation for the two trumpets. This is strong, forthright dance music, played with zest and enthusiasm.

"What Makes Sammy Run?" Original Broadway Cast, Columbia KOL 6040, \$4.98 (LP); KOS 2440, \$5.98 (SD).

The heel-as-hero has its flaws as a fictional device. John O'Hara's *Pal Joey* might seem to be a refutation of this, but Joey was a human, rational heel, a small man with a big ego who was inadvertently as amusing as he was irritating. Sammy Glick of Budd Shulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run?*, like Harry Bogen in Jerome Weidman's *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, has no redeeming humanity. Both are totally self-centered and totally ruthless. Bogen proved to be a less-than-suitable focal point for a musical when Weidman's novel was equipped with songs and dances two years ago. The basic problem remains with the current musical treatment of Sammy Glick. It is, however, alleviated to some extent by making the role of Sammy susceptible to a brilliant personal performance—which Steve Lawrence provides with virtuosic adeptness—and by offering a score by Ervin Drake (music and lyrics) which is consistently attractive and, at moments, memorable.

The difficulty involved in writing an appealing musical to offset an unappealing character like Sammy is made apparent in a song called *A New Pair of Shoes*, a sweeping, dancey, soft-shoe sort of melody which Lawrence projects very effectively—but sings in character. The

character is repulsive, and out go the inherently charming qualities of the song. Lawrence, making his first appearance on Broadway, carries the role of Sammy extremely well as the predatory youth makes his way up in the movie industry by fang and claw. Lawrence is allowed to change his colors in some of the songs sufficiently to prove his broad values as a singer and as a comedian. With Sally Ann Howes and Robert Alda, he carries off a comedy routine, *Lites-Camera-Platitude*, which is staged by Abe Burrows so skillfully that its satirization of old movie clichés (a cliché in itself) manages to be funny almost in spite of itself. Miss Howes is warm and winning in an unrewarding role (how could so obviously admirable a girl be even briefly attracted to so crude a thug as Sammy?). She is particularly effective with Lawrence in *A Room Without Windows*, the score's principal ballad (which is slightly jarring in stereo when Lawrence suddenly moves to the left near the end of the song). But it is Bernice Massi, a female Sammy, who gets Drake's best song—a sinuous and lazy invitation to coexistence called *The Friendliest Thing*—and she makes the most of it. The score is fresh, lively, and melodious enough to provide solid foundation for several good singing performances.

The Beatles: "Second Album." Capitol 2080, \$3.98 (LP); S 2080, \$4.98 (SD).

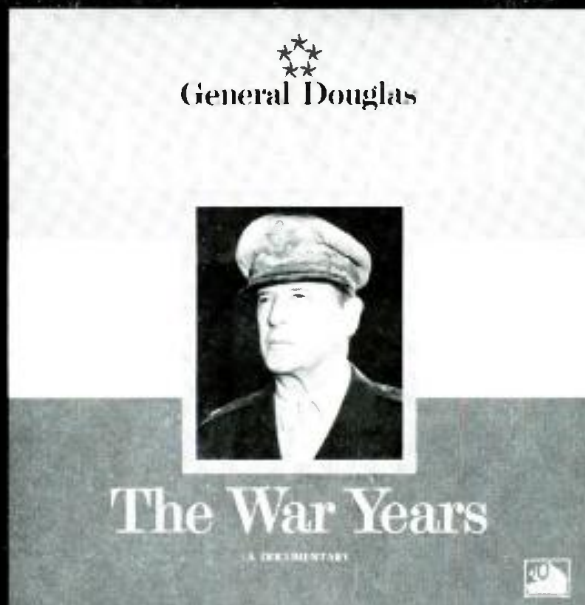
The Dave Clark Five: "Glad All Over." Epic 24093, \$3.98 (LP).

As a dutiful reporter on sociological phenomena, we note this follow-up to the first disc by the Beatles. This is, by and large, a second serving of what came before and should produce similar reactions. One might note that this time the Beatles are depending for material on sources other than their own fertile brains, possibly indicating that one cannot be pursued from pillar to post, perform several times a day, and still think up new songs.

The Dave Clark Five is a group that beat the Beatles at their own dodge by dislodging them from the top spot on England's best-selling record list. They too have shaggy hairdos, but they differ from the Beatles by wearing what appear to be barbers' jackets with collars that button up the side. They also differ from the Beatles by including a saxophone along with the compulsory guitars. They produce a Beatle-ish clanging, whanging, bleating on most selections, but they show an original turn of mind by including two instrumental selections and a strangely sedate version of *Camptown Races*, retitled *Doo Dah*.

"Tom Jones." Clive Revill, Bob Roman, Karen Morrow, Iggie Wolfington, Carole Shaw. Theatre Productions 9000, \$4.98 (LP); S 9000, \$5.98 (SD).

This is listed as "The Original Musical Cast Recording"; it has nothing whatever to do with the current film version of *Tom Jones*. The Fielding novel has been adapted as a musical-on-records by Ruth Batchelor and Bob Roberts (book,



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music, and lyrics). Both are trying the medium for the first time, coming to it from the field of pop songs in which they have written for Elvis Presley, Annette, and Bobby Rydell. An excellent cast has been assembled for the recorded production—Clive Revill serves as narrator. Bob Roman sings a robust Tom Jones, Carole Shaw is a warm and gentle Sophia Western, and Karen Morrow is a superb Mrs. Waters. But Miss Batchelor and Mr. Roberts seem to have made the beginners' error of accepting the most conventional Broadway terms as their goal instead of trying to rise above them. At best, they have produced routine Broadway-like material, exemplified by a ballad for Tom and Sophia, *Believe Me*. At their worst, they have copied the musical theatre's more glaring mistakes (the witless vulgarity of *Some o' That Man* is an example). In the midst of their clichés, however, there is one shining jewel, *How Can I Thank You*—the equivalent of the eating scene between Mrs. Waters and Tom in the film—sung with exquisite shading by Karen Morrow and Bob Roman. Robert Shad's staging has made imaginative use of stereo in underlining the scene.

Barbara McNair: "I Enjoy Being a Girl."
Warner Brothers 1541. \$3.98 (LP);
S 1541. \$4.98 (SD).

Miss McNair is not only a captivating singer but a strikingly beautiful one. Yet neither of these qualities is made as evident as they should be here. The two pictures of her on the sleeve might as well be of somebody else (they manage to miss any suggestion of her fresh, sparkling beauty), and much the same is true of her performances. Miss McNair can project a song with skillful drama, but in the present performances the listener is conscious only of the deliberation that goes into her delivery. Her striving for effect sounds mechanical, and conveys none of the easy assurance that is the ultimate goal. Part of the blame lies with routine orchestra accompaniments, and part also with the kind of routine thinking that demands an up-tempo belter for the opening number, no matter how banal it is. There is some good material—George Gershwin's *I'll Build a Stairway to Paradise*, the lilting *Irma la Douce*, Bart Howard's charming *My Love Is a Wanderer*, Cy Coleman's catchy *The Best Is Yet To Come*. Occasionally Miss McNair's warmth shines through, but much of the time it can't penetrate the chill of the studio setting.

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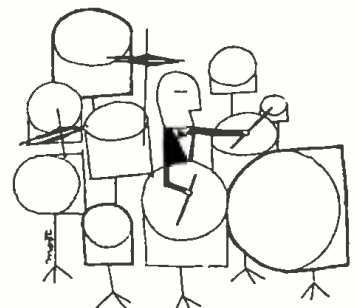
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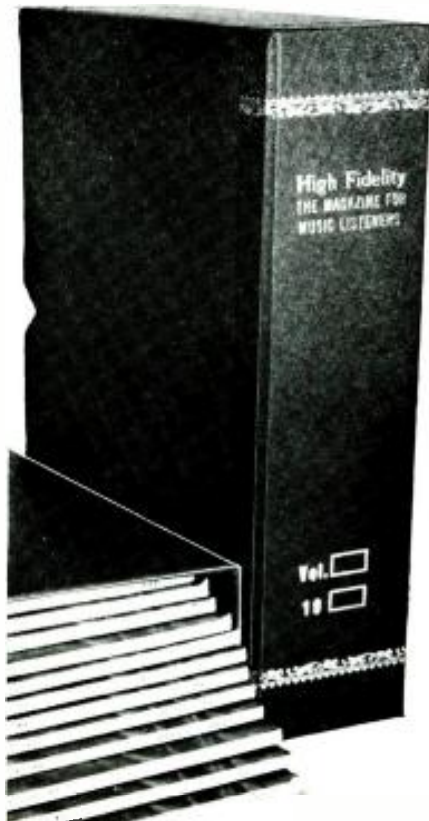
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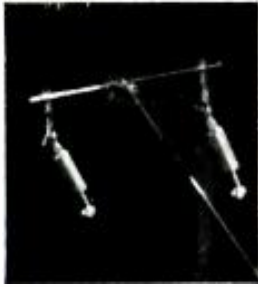
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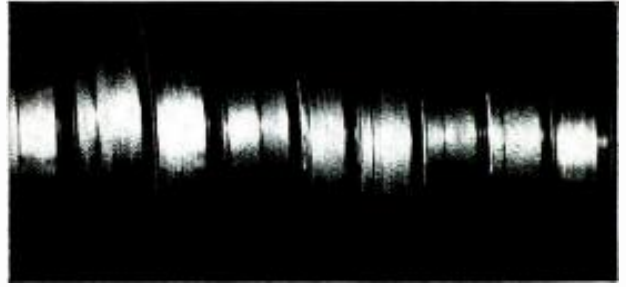


HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE





The SONIC SHOWCASE



“Der grosse Zapfenstreich.” Band of the 11th Panzer-Grenadier Division (Hamburg), Major Hans Friess, cond. M-G-M SE 4197, \$4.98 (SD).

“Trooping the Colour.” Massed Bands and Pipes of the Grenadier Guards, Capt. R. Bashford, cond. London SP 44044, \$5.98 (SD).

These two releases are outstanding of their kind. The German entry is of particular historical interest; the other provides us with a badly needed stereo updating of a celebrated British ceremony.

Major Friess's band may not be a particularly big one, but its performances are distinguished by their precision and zest (noteworthy especially on the part of the assured, clarion-toned high trumpeters), and they are cleanly and crisply recorded in well-spread stereoism. What makes this disc unique is its program: a “Big Tattoo” and a “Historical Medley of Marches.” The former begins with Beethoven's *York'scher Marsch*, includes some spoken commands and troop maneuvers (with audience murmurs in the background), and features various fanfares and marches climaxed by the impressive, choralelike *Prayer to the Power of Love* and (inevitably!) the *Deutschlandlied*. The medley reaches as far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and samples much of the memorable military music of the seventeenth and eighteenth before finally winding up with Strauss's *Radetzky*, Piefke's *Düppler Schanzen*, and Friedemann's *Kaiser Friedrich*. The trumpet, piccolo, and drum fanfares are arrestingly brilliant; nearly all the marches are novel (to American ears, at least), with special mention going to that of the Finnish Cavalry in the Thirty Years War, an *Honor March* of the Dutch Mariners, and an *Ancient Hunter March* of the War of Liberation. The jacket notes (in English and German) deal briefly with the evolution of the “Big Tattoo”; detailed information on the historical items is regrettably lacking. Even so, every band specialist will want to place this disc on the shelf that contains his Fennell and Goldman examples of early Americana, the Angel “Regimental Marches of the British Army,” and other such special treasures.

On the same shelf, the 1955 LP of “Trooping the Colour” now can be replaced with a genuine and legitimately spectacular stereo documentation of the famous British ceremony—complete with its elaborate troop and cavalry maneuvers (to barked commands which are, curiously, much brusquer than those

of the German sergeant in the disc above). A wide variety of lively marches and traditional tunes are included, heard over background audience noise and polite applause. The Grenadier Guardsmen, so richly mellow in their “Pomp and Circumstance” transcription program, are here again all spit-'n'-polish in vigorous parade display. The Phase-4-Plus recording is appropriately robust and stereogenic in its vivid evocation of a military/musical spectacle which remains quite incomparable—anachronistic as it may be in a world of cold wars, missiles, and push buttons.

“Dimension 3.” Enoch Light and the Light Brigade. Command RS 867, \$5.98 (SD).

Determined to maintain Command's reputation for stereo-spectacular innovations, the indefatigable Mr. Light now proudly caps his earlier “Persuasive Percussion” and “Stereo 35mm” achievements with the first demonstration of what he calls the “Dimension 3” technique. The term may not be strictly accurate, since no real spatial expansion is involved, but the technology itself does effectively enhance the aural definition of the so-called phantom third, or center, channel in twin-channel reproduction. To my ears this enhancement is not quite as pronounced as it is claimed to be (or as can be obtained from many stereo discs when an actual third speaker, fed from an equal blend of left- and right-channel signals, is used in playback), but it certainly does plug any possible hole in the middle by localizing center sound sources with more consistent precision than is normal in conventional twin-speaker stereo reproduction. And needless to say, the new technique, allied to the familiar ultraclarity and solid presence of earlier Command engineering, is sensationally exploited by Lew Davies' Mexican-jumping-bean arrangements and the regular Light Brigade virtuosos.

Except for the electrifyingly fast and furious *Caribe* (original), a driving *Swamp Fire*, and an imaginatively organized *Adiós*, most of the scorings here are too frantically synthetic for my taste. I'd welcome a warmer acoustical ambience and less excessively staccato and vehement performances. But stereo sensation seekers who relish following the bouncing ball, as it were, as various instruments are vividly spotlighted in various channels, undoubtedly will delight in graduating from ping-pong to

ping-pang-pong listening. “Dimension 3” well may be a hit medium for pop novelties of this kind: I'm more dubious about its usefulness in serious music where the resolution of center ambiguities, as such, is surely less vital than a seamlessly spread sonic panorama achieved by the effacement of individual channel contributions.

“Rome 35/mm.” Roman Pops Promenade Orchestra, Enoch Light, cond. Command RS 863, \$5.98 (SD).

Enoch Light's Italian tour brings a refreshing change from the American pop scene, and while the successful Command formula of the past has not been radically changed, it strikes me that Lew Davies' ingenious scorings are beginning to rely less exclusively on percussion shock tactics. Here, certainly, both the percussion and the other soloists (notably accordionist Dominic Cortese and guitarist Tony Mottola) are exploited to more musically expressive purposes than heretofore, and the kaleidoscopic tonal colors and effects are more artistically integrated into mosaic patterns. The present arrangements of Roman favorites are generally effective, and at their best—especially in *Arrivederci Roma*, *Non dimenticar*, *Anna*, *Scalinatella*, and *Parlami d'amore Maria*—extremely engaging. The recording, from magnetic film masters, is characteristically clean, brilliant, and—in the disc edition—sharp (slightly less so in the simultaneously released tape version, RT 863, 32 min., \$7.95). But the apparently big orchestra, recorded in a studio acoustical ambience, would surely have sounded even better in an auditorium.

“The Sounds of the Junk Yard.” Recorded by Michael Siegel. Folkways FX 6143, \$5.95 (LP).

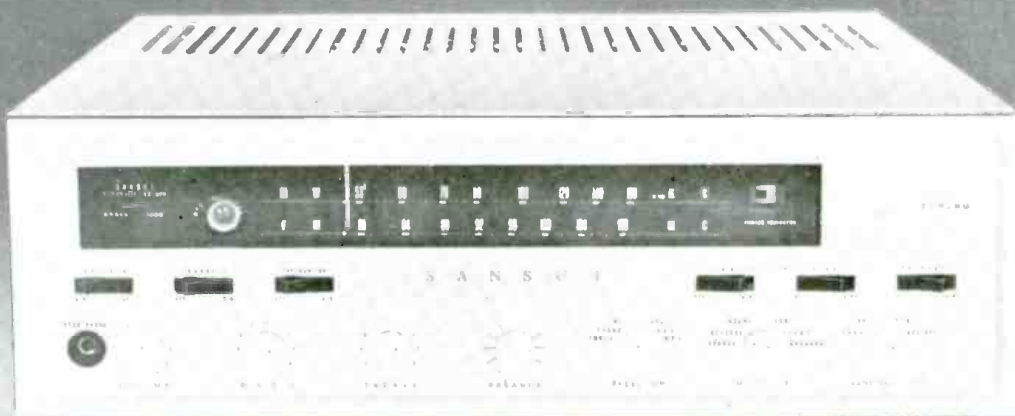
Here is a sonic documentation of Mr. Siegel's visit to a Warren, Pennsylvania, junk yard. There his imperturbably candid mike and tape recorder listened in on the work of acetylene torches, paper and metal balers, magnetic cranes, pipes and metal sheets being bitten to pieces by alligator shears, and even the crackling of the final dump fires. I don't know whether all this ranks simply as scraping the bottom of the aural barrel or as a critique of a mechanical civilization's *Götterdämmerung*. At least it's recorded vividly enough to warrant some place in our sonic archives, twentieth-century realism division.

R. D. DARRELL

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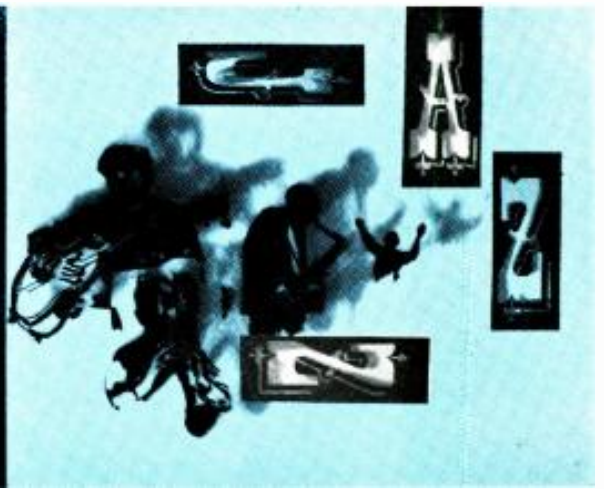
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George Barnes and Carl Kress: "Town Hall Concert." United Artists 3335, \$3.98 (LP); 6335, \$4.98 (SD).

This two-guitar concert, which took place late on a Sunday afternoon in April 1963, was one of the most refreshing jazz programs offered in New York last season. Its low-keyed charm comes across splendidly here. In most selections Barnes plays a high, tight, single-string lead over Kress's chorded accompaniment (both use electric guitars). Kress, who was one of the leading jazz guitarists using a chordal style in the late Twenties and early Thirties, occasionally moves out front, still retaining his chordal approach. The duets are light and airy, happily melodious, effortlessly rhythmic. And the material is practically impeccable—a good serving of Gershwin (*Bidin' My Time*, *A Foggy Day*, *Someone To Watch Over Me*); Rodgers and Hart (*Mountain Greenery*); *Three Little Words*; Claude Thornhill's theme, *Snowfall*; plus a graceful ballad by Barnes called *Something Tender*, and a bright and perky original by Kress that epitomizes the spirit of this set: *Golden Retriever Puppy Dog Blues*.

Ronnie Brown Trio: "Jazz for Everyone." Philips 200130, \$3.98 (LP); 600130, \$4.98 (SD).

The musical credits of Ronnie Brown, a pianist and vibraphonist, seem to have been gained exclusively on the cocktail-jazz circuit (the Embers, P.J.'s, Las Vegas). His debut disc gives several indications (in *I Could Write a Book* and *Angel Eyes*, for instance) why he would fit into such situations very well. He plays brightly and melodically, and projects a superficial flashiness that is eminently suited to these circumstances. But he also has something more to offer than mere flash. On *My Heart Stood Still* and *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To* he shows an impressive virtuosity on both of his instruments, as he and his drummer and bassist (neither identified) drive headlong through performances full of dazzling breaks, stops, shifts, and swirling lines that explode in all directions. Brown's fingering is very clean and positive on piano (a manner of attack reflected also in his vibraphone

playing). The close, sustained support of the bassist and drummer accounts for no small part of the disc's success.

Paul Gonsalves: "Tell It the Way It Is!" Impulse 55, \$4.98 (LP); S 55, \$4.98 (SD).

An impatient listener might understandably dismiss this disc as a disgrace. The title tune is a monotonous eleven-and-a-half-minute waste of the talents of Johnny Hodges, Ray Nance, Rolf Ericson, Ernie Shepard (all Ellingtonians), and Osie Johnson. As for Gonsalves himself, also an Ellingtonian, his playing is so banal in the Ellington band that this record is scarcely a novel experience. But once the demands of commercial drudgery have been assuaged by the excruciating opening performance, everybody settles down to play as proper Ellingtonians should. There are some fine Hodges and Nance performances to be heard on the remainder of the disc, for which we can be grateful, and even Gonsalves plays fairly well.

"Italian Jazz of the Roaring '50s." Odeon 8017, \$5.95 (LP).

The Fifties apparently did not really roar to any great extent in Italy. This potpourri, recorded by a variety of groups between 1952 and 1955, is almost equally split between exponents of traditional jazz who hark back to the Roaring Twenties in the United States and those who practice the cool jazz that occupied many American musicians in the early Fifties. Of the two, the traditionalists come much closer to roaring and they maintain considerably more interest than their withdrawn cool colleagues. Several extremely good clarinetists and trumpeters turn up among them. Both the Roman New Orleans Jazz Band and the Milan College Jazz Society are strong in these two departments, and they are quite impressive playing *Black and Blue* and *Someday Sweetheart*. The cool groups are vacuous in much the same way that American cool groups of the period were, although Franco Cerri projects some nicely phrased guitar passages with the Flavio Ambrosetti New Quartet.

Roger Kellaway: "A Jazz Portrait." Regina 298, \$3.98 (LP); S 298, \$4.98 (SD).

For several years now, almost every young pianist who has made himself felt in jazz has sounded very much like every other. In this atmosphere, Roger Kellaway arrives like a breath of fresh air. He too can sound like other pianists at times—and he does on several occasions here. But Kellaway is essentially a strong, two-handed pianist, and his vigor creates some of the most stimulating piano jazz to be heard these days. This set appears to provide a reasonably representative view of his style. He is a thoroughly contemporary jazz musician, yet he was so pleased to stumble across a relatively obscure Sidney Bechet tune, *Broken Windmill*, that he has developed it into a striking unaccompanied solo possessing much of the fire and vigor and some of the style that lifted Earl Hines to fame. He kids the current gospel-funk school on *Same Old, Same Old*—and at the same time turns out a driving, gummy performance on piano. He shows himself to be a superb practitioner of the blues on *Black Walt Tunnel Blues* (another obscure tune he has unearthed). And on *Crazy She Calls Me* one hears echoes not only of Hines but of Art Tatum and Bud Powell, all absorbed in an amalgam that is Kellaway. Here is a really exciting pianist, with the curiosity, the imagination, and the technique to become a major jazz musician.

Julia Lee: "And Her Boy Friends." Capitol 2038, \$3.98 (LP).

Julia Lee, a fine pianist and singer of blues and ballads, spent an unfortunate amount of her recording time singing tawdry single-entendre songs. It is equally unfortunate that Capitol has chosen, in this collection of recordings made between 1946 and 1952, to place the emphasis on this tasteless aspect of her work. There are, however, two fine examples of her superb way with a torch song—*Draggin' My Heart Around* and *There Goes My Heart*—as well as an attractive jazz novelty entitled *After Hours Waltz*, and one good blues, *I Was Wrong*. On the last selection she has excellent

accompaniment with solos by Red Nichols on trumpet, Vic Dickenson on trombone, Benny Carter on alto saxophone, and Red Norvo playing xylophone. The other saving factor in the collection as a whole is the presence of a number of fine jazz musicians. A remarkable two-trombone passage by Dickenson and Benny Carter is one high spot. There are also biting trumpet sections by Geechie Smith, and some strong tenor saxophone solos by Henry Bridges and Tommy Douglas, neither of whom has had much representation on records.

Rod Levitt Orchestra: "Dynamic Sound Patterns." Riverside 471, \$4.98 (LP); 9471, \$5.98 (SD).

Levitt played trombone with Dizzy Gillespie's big band in the late Fifties, and in recent years has been a member of the Radio City Music Hall orchestra. In 1960 he formed an octet, primarily to provide a workshop for his own compositions. This disc, presenting six of his works played by the octet, indicates that his interests lie in what is, at the moment, a generally neglected middle area of jazz. The compositions are soundly conceived and developed, melodically strong and full of fascinating colors and accents. The aura of Duke Ellington hovering over a good deal of Levitt's work is acknowledged in one selection, *His Master's Voice!*—a tribute that takes on Ellingtonian overtones through the presence in the octet of Rolf Ericson, a member of the Duke's band. It also calls attention to Levitt's unusually able absorption of the Ellington growl trombone technique. Both Levitt's lusty trombone and Ericson's edgy trumpet are strong solo voices throughout. Gene Allen, on baritone saxophone, has some solo opportunities, but Levitt uses his three reeds (Buzz Renn and George Marge are the other two) primarily in ensemble passages. It's very refreshing to hear a jazz group that has arrived at the recording studio with something interesting to play worked well into shape ahead of time. Levitt stands on very solid ground with this disc.

Metropolitan Pops Choir: "More of the Greatest Hits of Bach." Laurie 2023, \$3.98 (LP); S 2023, \$5.98 (SD).

Enough is enough. When the Ward Swingle Singers showed how successfully a highly skilled group of scat singers could apply its special talent to swinging treatments of the compositions of Bach, it was a provocative and amusing idea. But even that began to wear thin during the forty-five minutes or so of a single LP. This disc, packaged and titled so as to appear to be a continuation of the Swingle Singers' record (which was released on the Philips label) is a rather feeble imitation of the original. The Metropolitan Singers, conducted by Robert Mandel, lack the bright attack and authority of Swingle's group and their rhythmic drive is not impressive. Taken by itself, this is a competent set of performances, but it owes too much to its predecessor to be of anything but passing interest.

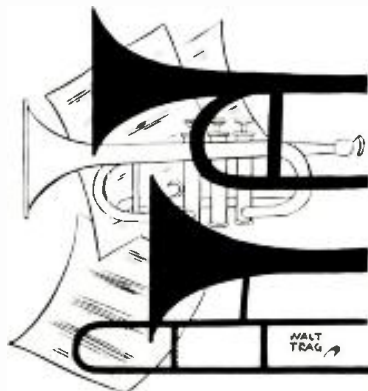
Romano Mussolini: "At the Santa Tecla." Audio Fidelity 2126, \$4.98 (LP); 6126, \$4.98 (SD).

Romano Mussolini, a son of Benito Mussolini, has been a jazz pianist since 1956. Playing as part of a quartet that includes trombone, bass, and drums, he proves to be a very unpretentious and pleasant performer. With a light, airy style, he develops his lines in a spare but rhythmic manner. He is almost overshadowed, however, by trombonist Dino Piana, who plays muted most of the time but with a rough, assertive tone and a style based on big, chunky blocks of sound. He takes the mute out on *Honeysuckle Rose* and reveals an attack bursting with rugged strength. Despite Piana's virile playing, the disc as a whole is low-keyed, sticking to moderate tempos and strolling along in a manner designed to win on amiability rather than forcefulness.

"New Orleans Jazz: The '20s." Record, Book, and Film Sales RBF 203, \$9.98 (Two LP).

After suffering almost complete neglect for more than thirty years, jazz recordings made in New Orleans in the Twenties are suddenly being reissued in unprecedented fashion. We have just had Columbia's "The Sound of New Orleans, 1917-1947" (Columbia C3L 30), which deals with New Orleans musicians in New York and Chicago as well as at home, and Odeon's four discs on "Jazz Sounds of the Twenties," one of which (Odeon 1171) focuses on New Orleans. And now comes Samuel Charters with this two-disc collection of New Orleans jazz as it was recorded in the Twenties. Of the three sets, this one gives the broadest view of the actual recording of jazz in New Orleans, for Charters devotes both discs to this one area.

Several of the recordings in this set can also be found in the Odeon or Columbia collections, but a number of outstanding pieces are available here only. Right at the top of the list is a rollicking treatment of *Let Me Call You Sweetheart* by the Halfway House Orchestra—which makes it amply clear why the memories of this band have continued to shine so brightly even though its records have been scarce for almost four decades. And their *Maple Leaf Rag* is only slightly less impressive. Considerable grace and charm is displayed by



Piron's New Orleans Orchestra in *Red Man Blues*, a piece that reveals the lilt-ing clarinet style of Lorenzo Tio, Jr. Louis Dumaine's Jazzola Eight, a group which appears on this set only, proves its worth in a strongly stated *Franklin Street Blues*; and the New Orleans Owls, heard once and not very impressively in the Columbia album, are represented by two extremely interesting selections. There are also two entries by the excellent Jones and Collins Astoria Hot Eight, and one sample of the Beiderbecke-influenced cornet of John Hyman. Altogether, an admirable survey, made even more valuable by Charters' highly knowledgeable commentary.

Oscar Peterson and Nelson Riddle. Verve 8562, \$4.98 (LP); 6-8562, \$5.98 (SD).

As one who has often been distressed by the manner in which Oscar Peterson has wasted his very evident technique and intelligence on shallow displays of flashiness, it is gratifying to hear him applying his talent to good purpose on this disc. Riddle, who is an old hand at putting singers in the most favorable kind of setting, has done much the same for Peterson. In beautifully conceived, reflective arrangements for an orchestra with a large string section, Peterson plays in simple, direct fashion in his solo passages, sometimes trickling through the ensembles in a manner reminiscent of the Claude Thornhill band. The selections are too similar throughout to be taken more than one or two at a time. But approached judiciously, this is an unusually successful jazz-tinged program.

Django Reinhardt and the Quintet: "The Hot Club of France." Capitol 2045, \$3.98 (LP).

The quintet with which Django Reinhardt is heard here is *not* (as I suspect it is hoped that one will believe) the quintet of the Hot Club of France with which Reinhardt and violinist Stephane Grappelly rode to fame in the Thirties. These performances, recorded between 1940 and 1943, come from the period when Reinhardt was using various clarinetists in place of Grappelly's violin. Of the three clarinetists here, only Hubert Rostaing has periods of momentary distinction (balanced with periods of equal indistinction). Reinhardt, however, is always a thing apart, playing away as though the surroundings were superb. He gets suitable assistance on two selections from Alix Combelle, who plays tenor saxophone with a virile drive that suggests an amazing prediction of some of Stan Getz's contemporary work.

Judy Roderick: "Ain't Nothin' But the Blues." Columbia 2153, \$3.98 (LP); 8953, \$4.98 (SD).

Miss Roderick is a striking new singer who moves through folk-blues, jazz, and pop material with great flair and an astonishing authority. Producer Bobby Scott (who, as a performer, has consistently shown a bright imagination in more or less the same areas) has had the excellent sense to back Miss Roderick with unusually capable musicians representing folk and jazz as well as pop—John

Hammond, Jr., on harmonica in the folk-blues field, Sidney de Paris and Lou McGarity on trumpet and trombone for jazz-blues, and Scott himself on piano and organ in the pop-jazz area. All the performances are top drawer. Miss Roderick is a strong and often moving singer who can range from a ruggedly blues-tinged treatment of *Brother, Can You Spare a Dime* through a tender *Baltimore Oriole* to a subtly dramatic *Blues on My Ceiling*. De Paris is a superb accompanist, and his trumpet and Hammond's plaintive harmonica work splendidly together. Scott himself is responsible for a number of extremely effective instrumental accents and shadings, while Miss Roderick adds a few touches on her own guitar.

The St. Louis Ragtimers: "Volume 2." Audiophile 81, \$4.95 (LP); 5981, \$4.95 (SD).

For a four-man group, the Ragtimers manage to get an amazing amount of body into their playing. This semiprofessional St. Louis group consists of Bill Mason, cornet and washboard; Trebor Jay Tichenor, piano; Al Stricker, banjo; and Don Franz, tuba. Their repertoire covers blues, minstrel songs, cakewalks, rags, spirituals, and pieces by Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. Instrumentally, the group can scarcely be faulted. They move readily from one idiom to another—from novelty song (*They Gotta Quit Kickin' My Dog Around*) to the solid, small-band style of Morton's *Tank Town Bump* and a rollicking piano solo by Tichenor called *Bucksnot Stomp*. Franz, the leader, is a potent and light-footed tuba player, Mason gives the band a strong lead when he is playing cornet, and Tichenor is an entertaining and authoritative pianist who is particularly good at catching the nuances of Jelly Roll Morton. Unfortunately, the disc is presented in semidocumentary form, with spoken introductions before each selection which might have been included in the liner to much better purpose. Even more objectionable are the vocals by Stricker, who is a stiff singer to begin with and who seems to go out of his way to give clumsy stress to the "darkey" pronunciations, which—though appropriate in their day—are quite out of place today.

The Tailgate Ramblers: "At Pier 500." Tailgate Ramblers 8921, \$3.98 (LP). (By special order from The Tailgate Ramblers, 20912 Fenkell, Detroit 23, Mich.)

The Tailgate Ramblers is a Detroit traditionalist group which, unlike most local groups of this type, displays a loose and easy attack over a light, bright rhythm foundation. The band is apparently a judicious mixture of youth and age—both John MacDonald, clarinet and saxophone, and Bob Butler, piano, have been playing professionally since the early 1930s, while Frank Foguth, the drummer, and Tom Saunders, trumpet, were born in 1935 and 1938, respectively. In MacDonald, the Ramblers have a tenor saxo-

phonist of real distinction. He plays with a swirling, lifting drive and with a tone related to that of Eddie Miller. Saunders on trumpet and Bruce Gerletti on trombone bring a lot of rugged exuberance to their work. Enthusiasm is the band's strong point, although some of the tempos they rush into prove difficult to sustain. There is certainly nothing adventurous about the program—*Washington and Lee Swing*, *Bill Bailey*, *Midnight and Moscow*, even *The Saints*, and two vocal efforts by Gerletti and Saunders which are amateurish. But the band makes up for this with its free and easy style, and its willingness to be itself rather than a starchy imitation of some band long gone.

Jack Teagarden: "Tribute to Teagarden." Capitol 2076, \$3.98 (LP); S 2076, \$4.98 (SD).

Dipping into its files, Capitol has come up with a splendid collection of recordings by the late Jack Teagarden made in 1956 and 1958 with West Coast studio musicians and with his own small group. With the studio men, who give him a comfortable big-band setting, Teagarden repeats songs associated with him in the late Twenties and early Thirties—*After You've Gone*, *The Sheik*, *If I Could Be with You*, *Beale Street Blues*, *Stars Fell on Alabama*, *Peg o' My Heart*. Four selections with his own group in 1958 offer a slightly broader view of the Teagarden repertoire—*Casanova's Lament*, *Someday You'll Be Sorry*, *China Boy* and, surprisingly, *Doctor Jazz*, which must have been brought into Teagarden's book by Don Ewell, who was playing piano with him at the time. The final selection is *Goin' Home*, which was played at Teagarden's funeral. The warmth that colored his singing and trombone playing pours out of all these performances, but the richest and most rewarding selection of all is *Goin' Home*, in which Teagarden, who absorbed so much of the Negro idiom, seems to have become the perfect vehicle for the feeling Dvofák wanted to convey in this theme from his *Symphony From the New World*.

Clark Terry and His Friends: "What Makes Sammy Swing!" 20th Century-Fox 3137, \$3.98 (LP); S 3137, \$4.98 (SD).

Joyous jazz has been found by Pat Williams in the score of *What Makes Sammy Run?*. These tightly voiced arrangements are built around some catchy phrasings, and are played by Terry's excellent little group with airy delight. Phil Woods on alto saxophone and clarinet, Terry on trumpet and flugelhorn, and Mel Lewis' craftily graceful drumming are the most important cogs in these beautifully turned performances. And there is excellent support by Dave McKenna, piano; Urbie Green, trombone; Seldon Powell, reeds; and George Duvivier, bass. Jazz treatments of show scores rarely come alive, but in this case the tunes prove to be eminently suited to such neat, polished, and imaginative treatment. JOHN S. WILSON

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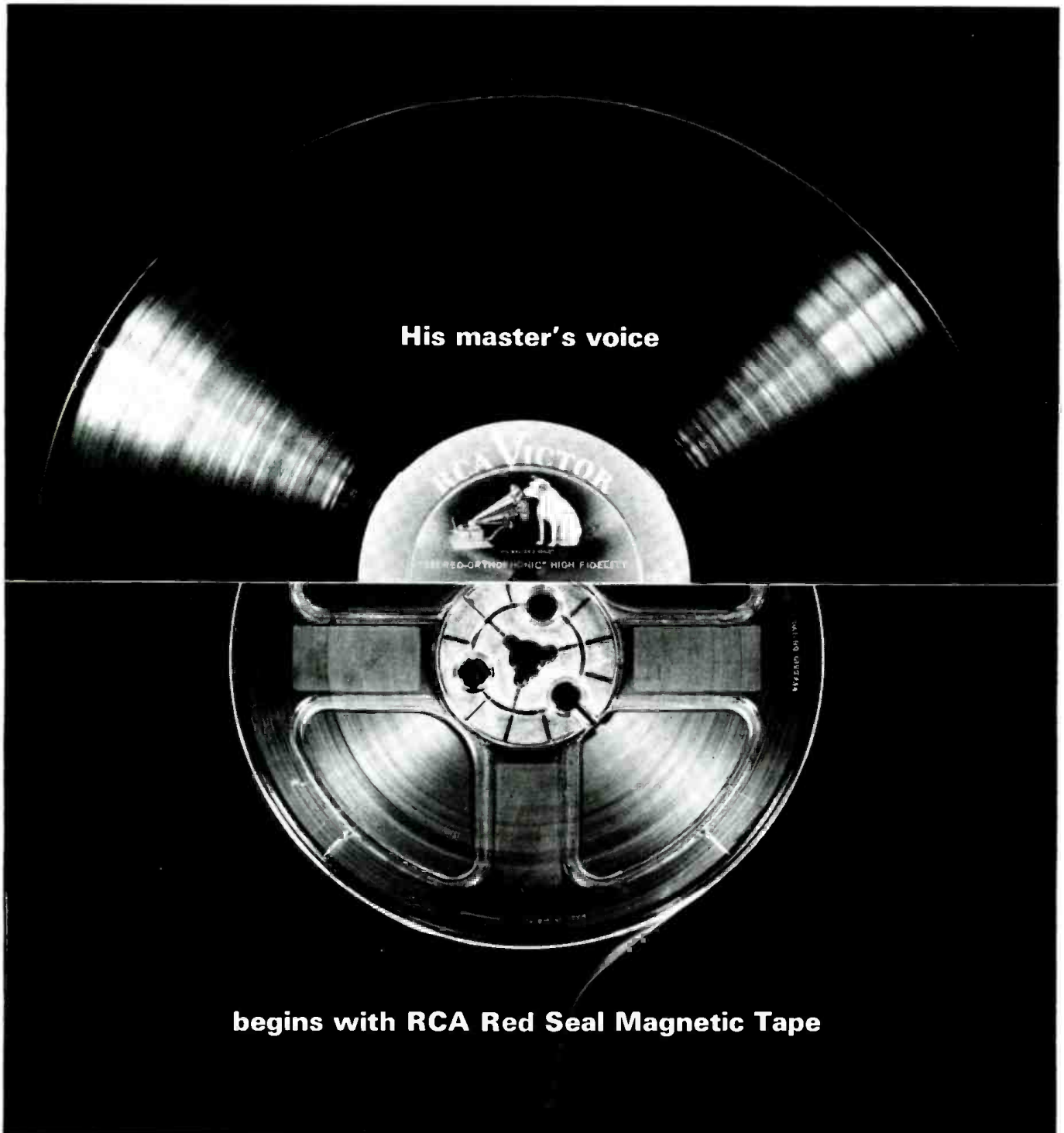


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the tape deck

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BELLINI: *I Puritani*

Joan Sutherland (s), Elvira; Pierre Duval (t), Arturo; Ezio Flagello (bs), Giorgio; et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Richard Bonyngé, cond.

• • LONDON LOR 90074. Two reels; approx. 71 and 85 min. \$21.95.

This first tape edition warrants outright rejoicing. As its star has been demonstrating lately in live performances, she is singing better than ever before. Miss Sutherland may never be ranked among the greatest singing actresses, but she certainly has improved notably in this respect, while her long acknowledged mastery of *bel canto* artistry never has been revealed more magnificently. It scarcely matters that her supporting cast (with the exception of Flagello) seldom rises above adequacy. It is the heroine who alone can ensure the success of the whole opera—and the matchless tonal purity and rhapsodic *fiorature* of Miss Sutherland's Elvira make this *Puritani* a triumphant one. She is recorded to perfection, as are the Florentine chorus and orchestra under the highly competent direction of Bonyngé. The tape processing is first-rate, too; and the opera "breaks" quite conveniently on two reels: Act I is complete on the first, II and III each on a side of the second.

DELIUS: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (1916)

Barber: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 14*

Robert Gerle, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Robert Zeller, cond.

• • WESTMINSTER WTC 167. 49 min. \$7.95.

Both these concertos are far more romantic than "modern" in idiom, and as such will be relished by listeners who have

never been able to warm up to the more austere works in this form by Stravinsky, Hindemith, and other contemporaries. For myself, the rhapsodically soliloquizing Delius work is particularly welcome, for it's long been a favorite of mine as one of the best-organized of this composer's infrequent essays in orthodox forms. It is, too, one of the more vital examples of uniquely Delian radiance and nostalgia. Samuel Barber's Op. 14 (first performed in 1941) also has a haunting lyricism which makes it an unexpectedly suitable coupling, but it is less poignantly introspective and—in its *moto perpetuo* finale, at least—more of a virtuoso show-piece. In their tape debuts with these two reel firsts, both soloist and conductor make a notably favorable impression; indeed, the former's security of intonation and tautly controlled expressiveness are outstanding—as are the exceptionally attractive tonal qualities of his "Hubay" Strad of 1726. The forward placement of the soloist in the strong, lucid recording is sonically ideal for both the instrument itself and its role in the Barber Concerto, but I should have preferred a closer blend with the orchestra in the more involuted, quasi-concertante textures of the Delius.

GABRIELI, GIOVANNI: *Sacrae symphoniae and Canzoni*

Choir and Brass Ensemble of the Gabrieli Festival, Hans Gillesberger, cond.

• • VANGUARD VTC 1680. 54 min. \$7.95.

Collectors who have treasured the "Processional and Ceremonial Music" reel of 1960 will be the first to welcome this somewhat belated taping of a companion Vanguard Gabrieli program. For others it will be a gripping introduction to the great "premature stereophile" whose antiphonal writing for vocal and instrumental ensembles in the choirs of St. Mark's so vividly anticipated the need for today's twin-channel medium. *Audi Domine hymnum* dates from 1611;

the eight other motets and three instrumental *canzoni* (including the famous *Sonata pian e forte*) comprise the *Sacrae symphoniae* collection of 1597.

The performances by Gillesberger and his Italian forces are appropriately grave and jubilant, as called for if not always as precise as one would wish. And while the recording is patently not of the very latest vintage, it makes the most of the stereogenics and boasts a suitable cathedral-like acoustical spaciousness. My only complaint is over the choice of modern instruments—except for the organ on which Anton Heiler plays introductory *intonazione*. The sound of trombones may not have changed radically from that of sackbuts, but present-day trumpets are very different from the cornetts (*Zinken*) which Gabrieli had in mind, and a tuba is a complete anachronism. Some DGG Archive discs (and perhaps others) of early music have featured period instruments—and it seems high time that some of these appear on tape too.

MOZART: *Mass No. 19, in D minor, K. 626 ("Requiem")*

Saramae Endich, soprano; Eunice Alberts, contralto; Nicholas DiVirgilio, tenor; Mac Morgan, baritone; Chorus Pro Musica, Harvard Glee Club, Radcliffe Choral Society, New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 7006 (double-play), 88 min. \$14.95.

As a document of the Solemn Pontifical Requiem Mass celebrated in memory of President Kennedy on January 19 in Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross, this reel obviously stands outside criticism. I can only echo Alan Rich's sentiment—that ownership is a rare privilege, if not indeed a duty. The strictly musical qualities here, considerable as they are, remain subservient to the profoundly mov-

Continued on next page



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by R. D. Darrell

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THE TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

ing solemnity of the liturgical drama on this particular, tragic occasion.

What does remain within a reviewer's province is, first, an expression of gratitude for the recording's prompt appearance on tape, its dignified format, and the fact that normal royalties and profits will be contributed to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library fund; and, second, genuine admiration for the success with which RCA's technicians mastered the well-nigh insuperable problems of live recording. Using only three microphones, they have captured the music with vivid clarity and with an amazing sense of the participants' widespread disposition in depth as well as breadth. Even the spaciousness of the cathedral itself is evident (yet without excessive reverberation), while the presence of an immense audience is revealed with minimal extraneous noises. The contributions of the audio engineers to this memorial can have been no less dedicated than those of everyone else involved.

PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 5, in B flat, Op. 100; Symphony-Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 125*
 †Fauré: *Elégie in C minor, Op. 24*

Samuel Mayes, cello (in the *Symphony-Concerto* and *Elégie*); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 3007 (double-play). 89 min. \$10.95.

The Leinsdorf/Boston Prokofiev series gets off to an impressive start with an arresting reading of the great "spirit of man" symphony and the first stereo version of one of his most elaborate, relatively unfamiliar concertos. On first encounter the *Symphony-Concerto* strikes me as oddly fascinating yet not wholly successful: a consequence, perhaps, of its extensive rewriting over many years, with some almost inevitable overelaborations and material stretching. Possibly the present performance is weakened also by something less than electrifying bravura in the solo part. (Mr. Mayes seems more at home in the richly romantic songfulness of the Fauré *Elégie*, where his cantilena tonal qualities and heavy vibrato are more suitable than in the concerto's lyrical passages.) Nevertheless, this is a work of unusual interest to every Prokofiev specialist.

With the more familiar—yet to some extent always enigmatic—Fifth Symphony, Leinsdorf's objective, galvanic approach reveals many new values in music which never sounds quite the same in any two interpretations. Although I personally prefer a more serene treatment of the Adagio, Leinsdorf's intensity is very moving, and in the livelier movements it is quite overwhelming. It is blazingly, "forwardly" recorded in Dynagroove, with somewhat more reverberant acoustics than those of most recent Boston Symphony releases. Curiously, the modulation (or perhaps processing) level

here seems slightly lower than that of the overside concerto. The present Fifth eclipses earlier tapings of the work; I still hope that sometime Ormandy may remake—and Columbia provide on tape—his quite different, no less individual, and even more passionate reading.

SOR: *Twenty Studies for Guitar*

John Williams, guitar.

• • WESTMINSTER WTC 168. 45 min. \$7.95.

The tape debut of John Williams, one of Segovia's star pupils, in the first major reel representation of Spanish composer and guitar virtuoso Fernando Sor (1778-1839) might seem to be of interest mainly to specialists. But don't let the name "Studies" mislead you. Their interest is much more musical than technical; partly because Williams' artistry minimizes the digital techniques involved; mostly, though, because these miniatures are so engagingly lyrical—indeed often Schubertian or even Schumannesque. It is sheer delight to hear Williams play, so consistently appealing are his color nuances and interpretative lucidity. Although stereo is scarcely necessary (fortunately, it neither inflates nor "splits" the solo instrument here), the recording and tape processing are as close to the ideal as technology ever approaches. And although the miking is fairly close, there is no exaggerated blow-up effect and only a rare inclusion of the finger-release and other extraneous sounds that so often disfigure guitar recordings. If you haven't been a guitar aficionado in the past, this reel may make you one!

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake, Op. 20: Ballet Suite*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2153. 47 min. \$8.95.

These excerpts are well chosen and exuberantly played. Fiedler's suite is less lushly performed than Ormandy's for Columbia (October 1962), but it is far more vital, and its climactic moments fairly blaze in a vivid, acoustically warmer-than-usual Dynagroove recording (to my ears a notable improvement over recent releases in the Boston Pops series). The tape itself is flawlessly processed at only a slightly lower level than the stereo disc edition, and its sonic qualities are practically identical, even in the prominent (and gloriously theatrical) percussion passages. But it is Fiedler's ability to communicate his own gusto that makes this release quite irresistible.

VIRTUOSI DI ROMA: "*The Baroque Concerto*"

Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano, cond.
 • • ANGEL ZS 36153. 37 min. \$7.98.

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for so small a slice of the baroque concerto repertory, at least the four selections are both representative and well varied. Two of them are first 4-track tape editions. These are the Bach Concerto for Four Harpsichords (after Vivaldi) in a brightly jingling if somewhat lightweight performance, and the Adagio from a Cello Concerto in A by the now seldom remembered Leonardo Leo. The latter piece stars Benedetto Mazzacurati in an eloquent reading which is very appealing even though it is much too vibrantly expressive to be characteristically baroque in style. The other works are Vivaldi's D major Flute Concerto, Op. 10, No. 3 (or P. 155) subtitled "The Goldfinch," featuring the dexterous if rather hollow-toned fluting of Pasquale Rispoli, and the C minor Oboe Concerto now attributed to Alessandro Marcello, with Renato Zanfino as the small-toned but very lyrical soloist. Each of these concertos has appeared before on 4-track tape in equally good versions by, respectively, Samuel Baron (in a 1961 Ferrodynamics release) and Harry Schulman (in last September's Kapp double-play reel of "Music for Oboe" and "Music for French Horn"). But the present performances, if scarcely *echt*-baroque in character, are engaging ones; and the clean, bright, light, and not-too-close recording is most attractive.

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"Joan Baez in Concert," Part 2. Vanguard VTC 1679. 47 min., \$7.95.

This sequel to VTC 1653 (March 1963) again gives us the privilege of listening in on the incomparable Miss Baez's appearances before various live audiences—mostly collegiate—whose breathless silence during her performances and fervent applause after them testify to the almost hypnotic spell she weaves. Yet, even when she leads them in *We Shall Overcome* and the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, there is no militancy here: she sings as simply and quietly as if for a few friends in her own home. There is sheer enchantment in her now lilting, now haunting ballad repertory: *Jackaroe*, *Hush Little Baby*, *Don't Think Twice*, *Queen of Hearts*, *The Three Fishers*, etc. Her unique voice and deft guitar accompaniments are intimately recorded in the purest of stereoism, and the tape itself is immaculately processed. Only a heart of stone could fail to respond to such charms!

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Command RT 853, 35 min., \$7.95. Best known for their contributions to many Harry Belafonte programs. De Cormier and his twenty-five-voice chorus strike out on their own in a well-varied program particularly notable for its rhythmic precision and clarity of enunciation throughout. They do well with such jaunty fare as *Dance*, *Boatman*, *Dance* (in square-dance style), and also with the poignant expressiveness of

Continued on next page

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Where Have All the Flowers Gone? and *Go Tell Aunt Rhody*. But they are most distinctive in the Negro work songs (*Rainbow* and *Hammer Song*) and gospel songs (*Amen. Bye 'n' Bye*, *The Virgin Mary Had a Child*). Command's characteristically bright and clean recording makes the most of De Cormier's highly stereogenic arrangements, but I would have welcomed a warmer, more expansive acoustical ambience.

"Film Themes of Ernest Gold." London Symphony Orchestra, Ernest Gold, cond. London LPM 70079, 40 min., \$6.95.

"Music from Motion Pictures." Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, various conductors. Capitol ZP 8598, 36 min., \$7.98.

Although few of Gold's many film scores are as gripping or as original as that for *Exodus*, most of them are marked by a tunefulness which is seldom overtly reminiscent, and most of them, too, are distinguished by uncommon skill in orchestration. Given a fine British orchestra and robustly rich stereo recording, the composer-conductor makes the most here of his own scoring felicities, which redeem from banality his occasional lapses into sentimentality. There is considerable evocative appeal in the lyrical *Young Philadelphians* theme, the jauntier *Pressure Point* tune, and a novel, quasi-cello-concerto treatment of the famous *Exodus* theme.

The more pretentious Capitol program is a "Promenade" series anthology of display hits from previous Hollywood Bowl Symphony releases. The best star pianist Leonard Pennario in the *Spellbound* Concerto (with composer Rózsa conducting), *Warsaw* Concerto and *Cornish Rhapsody* (Dragon conducting). These recordings, while still effective, begin to show some signs of age; in the other selections, more recent technology is allied with the cruder, more synthetic music of Alfred Newman: *Hallelujah* (from *The Robe*), *Conquest* (*Captain from Castille*), and *The Twenty-third Psalm* (*David and Bethsheba*).

"Georgia Brown Loves Gershwin." Georgia Brown, Mike Sammes Singers, orchestra, Ian Fraser, cond. London LPM 70078, 42 min., \$6.95.

Most of those who profess their love for Gershwin nowadays don't let their affection stand in the way of bringing his scores "up to date." In this case, Ian Fraser's new arrangements are at least imaginative, though often overfancy, and while Miss Brown's highly idiosyncratic interpretations are a far cry from the traditional ones, her dramatic powers make even the relative failures fascinating. No girl could really succeed with *It Ain't Necessarily So* and *I Got Plenty of Nuttin'*, but Miss Brown comes mighty close. She is at her best in lilting revivals of the wonderful *Blah-Blah-Blah* and *Slap That Bass*, and in the more mannered but engaging *How Long Has This*

Been Going On. The stereoism is clearly detailed, with the soloist well centered and not too far forward. A moderate amount of reverberation enhances not only the big orchestra's contributions but those provided by the fine Sammes Chorus.

"Hello, Dolly!" Original Cast Recording, Shepard Coleman, cond. RCA Victor FTO 5028, 43 min., \$8.95.

Well now, this is more like it! Most of the recent Broadway show tapes have been only mildly entertaining at best. It's a delight, therefore, not only to have a personality-plus star (and Miss Channing again proves herself to be an irresistible one) but a score with tunes and ensembles that really stick in one's mind. Jerry Herman's score is by no means as substantial as his earlier *Milk and Honey*; indeed it is often frankly old-fashioned except in the few moments that echo *How To Succeed in Business* techniques. But it is so seemingly spontaneous and so zestful that one can't help being entranced. Miss Channing, of course, dominates the whole proceeding, but the supporting cast and Coleman's fine chorus and orchestra never let one down. And the theatrical effectiveness throughout is admirably enhanced by stereogenic staging, and by vivid if at times a bit flamboyant Dynagroove recording. Tape processing admits minimal preëchoes despite its high modulation level.

"Let Freedom Ring!" Fredric March, Burgess Meredith, narrators; various bells and carillons. Colpix CXC 607, 32 min., \$7.95.

What gives this tape more than Fourth-of-July interest alone is its inclusion (after readings of the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights by March and Meredith respectively) of the pealing, tolling, or clanging of some eighteen old and new American bells and carillons. Among them are the replica of the Liberty Bell in Christ Church, Philadelphia, and its twin in Hartford, Connecticut; various famous ships' bells (from the *U.S.S. Constitution*, *Enterprise*, etc.); service academy, chapel, and cathedral bells and carillons; the Groton and Kent School change-ringers; the Spartan handbell ringers of Michigan State University, etc.; and the mighty carillon of Riverside Church, New York City, heard in *The Star-Spangled Banner*. The recording throughout is extremely clean and brilliant, and the tape processing quiet-surfaced and preëcho-free. The reel constitutes an invaluable sonic documentary.

"On Tour." Dick Schory and His Percussion Pops Orchestra. RCA Victor FTP 1241, 39 min., \$7.95.

Much as I admire Dick Schory, I'm growing more and more aware that his recent pop-orchestral programs (in which only five or six of the some twenty-three participants are percussionists) are losing some of their sonic adventuresomeness. Here he is possibly playing up (or down) to his live audience in Chicago's Orchestra Hall. At least some of these performances, though expert as ever, seem

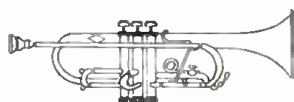
rather blatantly showy—as in the over-elaborate *St. Louis Blues*, a heavily rocking *Baby Elephant Walk*, and a slam-bang *Sing Sing Sing* dominated by the explosive drumming of guest soloist Joe Morello. Happily, however, there are also stimulating reminders of the old Schory inspiration in two jaunty originals, *Bleep Blop Bloop* and *The Wanderin' Fifer*, and in a brilliant Dixieland-spectacular version of *South Rampart Street Parade*. The stereoism is strongly marked, the arrangements often effectively antiphonal, and while the close recording is ultraglistening there is still some trace of Orchestra Hall acoustics—if by no means as much as in Schory's pre-Dynagroove releases. My review reel is flawed by considerable left channel noise on the second side, but this is evidently a slip in the individual tape processing, for there is no hint of it in the otherwise practically identical-sounding stereo disc edition.

"Play Bach Jazz," Vol. 1, Jacques Loussier Trio, London LPM 70081, 35 min., \$6.95.

Can it be sacrilege to suggest that these performances on piano, bass, and drums—usually quite "straight" at first, then freely improvisatory—are not entirely incomparable with Bach's own metamorphoses of works by Vivaldi? Certainly this dexterous, lyrically rhapsodic treatment of the great organ Toccata and Fugue in D minor is a refreshing experience, and no one who has ever struggled for fluency in the first, second, and fifth Preludes and Fugues from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* can fail to relish the buoyant lilt they are given here. The tape processing is first-rate; and if the recording may space the three instruments a bit too stereoisically, it is an ideally transparent medium for the players' artistic manipulation of tonal nuances.

"Second Barbra Streisand Album," Barbra Streisand; orchestra, Peter Matz, cond. Columbia CQ 607, 38 min., \$7.95.

High up in the disc best-seller lists for some time, Miss Streisand's second program evidently pleases the public more than those reviewers (like John F. Indcox, last December) who found it less satisfactory than her first (which was reviewed here in its tape edition last March). To my ears there is evidence to justify both pro and con views, for the gifted soloist is still experimenting a bit too desperately to find her ideal métier—or perhaps to discover its extent. I like her best when she simply relaxes and sings out naturally, as in the present lovely *Who Will Buy?* and the not too sentimental *My Coloring Book*. *Down with Love* and *Gotta Move*, more intense and idiosyncratic, are effective too. It is only when she—and arranger-conductor Matz—try too hard, that melodramatic obscure truly communicative interpretation.



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THE PARADOX OF "LATE STRAUSS"

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I Continued from page 38

painter, and music, as well as art, has need of its De Hoochs.

Arabella is the culmination of Strauss's operatic life, and it stands as one of the most accomplished operas written, in terms of its creation of character and its effectiveness and economy of scene. This is so because Strauss understood inherently the world that Hofmannsthal had here created for him: an impoverished Viennese noble family trying to get their beautiful daughter married to a wealthy suitor; the bridling of the proud girl; the appearance of the perfect suitor; the complications and—finally—the muted happy ending. It is to Hofmannsthal's credit that he managed to avoid stereotypes and mawkishness to achieve a great measure of human wisdom in the libretto, and it is to Strauss's credit that he surrounded the whole with some of the most humanly touching music he ever wrote.

There are many scenes in this work that stand out as first-class examples of collaboration between poet and musician to create a unified work: the absolute psychological rightness of every moment of the scene where the suitor Mandryka arrives to ask for the hand of Arabella from her father, the subtle yet distinct differentiation in mood and tone of Arabella as she rejects her three suitors after she has accepted Mandryka's proposal of marriage, the interplay between the lovers in the third act as they come to realize that the instant of first love is not everlasting, and that they must learn to adjust to each other—to know and forgive each other—if they are to "live happily ever after." These scenes, combined with the more purely musically oriented ones—the first-act duet between Arabella and her sister which differentiates the two in word and in the musical setting, the beautiful love duet of the second act which is far more than the on-key yawping of two singers, the final, symbolic yet immediate scene, where Arabella once and for all forgives her betrothed and accepts him—make up the finest opera of manners in the repertory, a fitting tribute both to poet and to composer.

The later operas suffer not from paucity of invention but rather from the old disease of inadequate librettos. Yet

even for them Strauss wrote some of his best music—the close of *Daphne*, for example, or the close of *Capriccio*.

The last works of Richard Strauss can be considered "the old master's toys": works written for his own pleasure, and for a few close friends. These works measure the man as an artist, for they are the distillation of all that had gone before. In the Horn Concerto, written in 1942 (which can be compared to the earlier one to show the young and old Strauss), *Metamorphosen*, the second Couperin Suite, the Oboe Concerto, the opus posthumous Symphony for Wind Instruments, and the *Four Last Songs*—here the technical bravura, the use of ideas for the sake of new ideas, the swelled-bullfrog aspect are all gone. The result is the Strauss that preëminently was: the composer using his gifts for the creation of music from his inner self. As such, these works have a beauty and serenity—and, in the case of the *Metamorphosen*, a simplicity past and through complexity—rarely found in today's music. Perhaps it is because they are so profoundly out of tune with the spirit of much being written today that they have been neglected and denigrated. This argument, however, does not talk to the worth of Strauss as a composer.

The *Four Last Songs* fuse all that was most typical and best in Strauss: his great, somewhat sentimental love of life. Of the four, *Im Abendrot* must be the finest, the most beautiful, and the most touching composition he ever wrote. The gentle alternation of the common time and 3/2 meters, the simplicity of the musical line and of the conceits (the trilling larks in the evening sky), and above all the great love: the love for his wife and for the peace they had both found at the end of their lives, and the love he had for the world. It may be a somewhat narrow and by-gone vision, but it is a true vision, expressed truly, with a beauty that comes from the maturing of a talent. Like the music of the aging Brahms, these works are a discovery not of new shores and new horizons, but a discovery inward, of what was for one man the essence of his musical life. We cannot ask for more.

II Continued from page 41

said of Stravinsky or Picasso. Neither apology will serve here. Strauss did not, after a certain point, try for the new. He was content to repeat formulas. Why? Was it simply a case of lack of self-criticism, was it exhaustion, was it laziness, fatigue? Did he have too much success?

I believe that there is a deeper cause. To analyze that cause fully goes beyond the province of this article. It needs a book, which I hope to write. Suffice it here to say that the world was too much with Strauss. He was an active man, highly honored both as a composer and as an executant musician. He was, though physically isolated and protected in his fine home in Garmisch, mentally and spiritually all too intertwined with the thought and *Zeitgeist* of a defeated nation. His later life was lived in a world which was crumbling and decaying, breaking apart and sinking ever deeper. The cruel First World War, its famine aftermath, the horrible inflation which followed, the febrile writhing of the Weimar Republic which led to the rise of Hitler, the gigantic gangsterism of the Nazi conspiracy which shoveled to the surface all that is worst in the German character, and the final holocaust—all these he lived through.

True, he tried to protect himself and be indifferent, but he was too much of a man of his world not to be rocked by the earthquake all around him. His very intellectuality, that highly educated brain he possessed, betrayed him. The moral decay of his milieu seeped into him. He lived, unfortunately, in a time when natural human emotion in its best sense, in the eternal sense, became suspect. The natural smile and the natural tear became replaced by the grimace, now frightened, now truculent. He tried to escape to fable and complicated legend. He couldn't. The beauty of *Morgen* and the humor of *Till Eulenspiegel* were replaced by tricks and stratagems.

Yes, certain artists are able to close themselves off from the world and refresh themselves from within. During Napoleon's siege of Vienna, Beethoven put pillows over his head to protect his ears, went into a cellar and continued to compose. Strauss did not put a pillow over his head.

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A CASE OF HARD-EARNED BREAD

Continued from page 45

with his baton, and he was happy he didn't have to rehearse too much with us. He made himself very clear, when he tried to explain in German and with gestures several intricacies of *Till Eulenspiegel*. And he was pleased to see his own flexibility duplicated by Maria Ivogün who sang with us Zerbinetta's big coloratura aria from *Ariadne auf Naxos*."

TRAVELING, rehearsing, conducting, appearing at receptions and dinner parties, and speaking at formal functions took much if not all of his time. "I am being greeted by the Mayor of every big city and I am using everywhere the same words of thanks I uttered in New York," he reported in a letter to his wife. "I endure everything," he confessed to Pauline, "from the monotonous menu to the clapping of twelve hundred appreciative club women, but I look forward to be with you again, in our home, to work in Vienna, Garmisch. . . . With the exception of New York which has developed into a really strikingly beautiful and impressive city, the stay in this mechanized country is deadly boring." And (in another yet unpublished letter) he remarked: "Believe me—it is hard-earned bread. . . . We traveled fourteen hours to Wheeling—through rain, fog, soot, storms—a hillside landscape that resembles Elberfeld; the other afternoon a pleasant auto drive through charming suburbs surrounded by wooded hills—but after the concerts a two-hour-long tram car ride through Indian territory to Steubenville, from there twelve-hours' train ride to New York—and again, three hours after arrival, rehearsal for last night's chamber music concert. When it was over, I almost collapsed."

The first week of the tour ("A *par force* chase, including six concerts and four nights in sleeping cars!") culminated with the "conquest of Boston, that fortress of the British and French." The audience that filled Symphony Hall to the brim cheered the composer and Mme. Schumann in "the most enthusiastic and unexpected manner," and Strauss, gratified, wrote: "The ice of hate has now been broken completely—and German music will not longer be banished from this city!" Again the composer marveled at the brilliance of Pierre Monteux's Boston Symphony which, after some misunderstandings had been cleared up, he had also conducted on his earlier visit. The occasion was an outstanding triumph for Mme. Schumann too, who was feted as "the most perfect German singer ever to appear in Boston." The soprano, by the way, had discovered lobsters to be her favorite American food, and Strauss, in a gleeful mood, nicknamed her "Elobsterbeth," adding: "I'll have fun with your husband [conductor Carl Alwin] by addressing him as 'Mister Lobster' from now on!" Dutifully, Strauss reported home at the end of November that he

had spent "only 201 hours on trains these past four weeks"—"with the exception of the gorgeous Hudson Valley from Albany to New York we did not see anything that could be called 'nice countryside.'"

Towards the end of the tour, on Thursday, December 22, three hundred prominent musicians and society leaders assembled at the reception rooms of the William Knabe Company to bid a farewell to Strauss and Mme. Schumann. During the afternoon both artists thrilled guests with a rendition of some Strauss compositions, and the mechanical Ampico piano also presented works by Strauss (as well as Mme. Elly Ney's first record for the instrument). The unique event of the affair (witnessed also by the recently arrived Artur Schnabel) was the sending of several of Strauss's compositions by wireless to the function. For that purpose the Ampico had been set up in a New Jersey wireless studio and was heard in the reception rooms as well as at twenty-four recording stations throughout the country and on the high seas.

Two hours before Mme. Schumann left New York aboard the *Olympic* a recording session took place, but unfortunately neither the soprano's diary nor the composer's letters contain any details from which we might learn which songs and orchestral works were recorded and where. "For Richard's sake I do hope that he'll be satisfied with our work," is the only statement about this session in Mme. Schumann's American log book, which closes on December 31. That New Year's Eve Strauss and his son spent alone and "with all our thoughts with you," Strauss wrote in a note to his wife. In their rooms at the Hotel Wellington, they ate steak and went to bed at 10:30. "Tomorrow is my farewell concert in the Hippodrome." He had declined two invitations because of complete exhaustion. "Bubi [Franz] nurses a slight cold and the city is gripped by icy winds."

There are no immediately recognizable indications that Strauss's music was influenced by his impressions of this country. He did, however, cherish his memories of these shores. The friendships he established with many American artists lasted until the end of his days, and he was intensely proud of the memorabilia of his American visits that adorned his Garmisch home. There, as part of the Strauss Archives lovingly kept by Dr. Franz Strauss and his wife, can still be seen the honorary documents, rings, keys to cities, letters, photographs, and other tokens of the esteem he had earned in the New World.



HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

MUNICH AND ITS (SOMETIMES) FAVORITE SON

Continued from page 49

Administrative Director in 1867, and under this constellation the works of Wagner attracted attention throughout the world, as did, through them, the Munich Opera. Between 1867 and 1892, the Munich Opera gave 742 Wagner performances—an astonishing record for a contemporary composer. *Tristan, Meistersinger, Rheingold*, and *Walküre* all had their world premieres in Munich, and the first post-Bayreuth *Ring* cycle took place there.

As the century ended, other aspects of the city's musical life began to flourish, independent of the Opera. Felix Weingartner conducted the Kaim Orchestra from 1898 to 1907. Felix Mottl arrived in Munich in 1903, and until his death eight years later set a tradition which permeated every German school of conducting. His successor was Bruno Walter. After the 1918 revolution, Munich's three operatic theatres were reorganized under a single authority, the Bavarian State Theatre. Baron von Frankenstein, who had been forced to retire by the revolution, returned in 1922 as Administrative Director and brought with him as *Generalmusikdirektor*, for the next fourteen years, Hans Knappertsbusch.

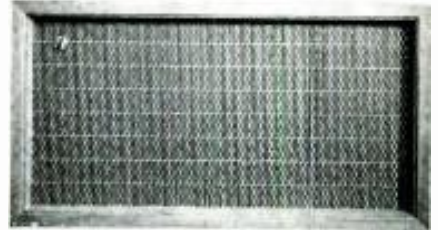
Munich today still has three opera houses: the Nationaltheater, the Cuvilliés, and the Prinzregententheater, which housed the opera after the war until last November. It also has three full-time symphony orchestras: the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Rafael Kubelik; the Munich Philharmonic under Fritz Rieger, and the Bavarian State Orchestra under Joseph Keilberth, who is the Opera's present *Generalmusikdirektor*. Munich suffered an irreplaceable loss this past winter in the death of the composer Karl Amadeus Hartmann, founder of the city's uniquely successful and influential *Musica Viva* series. Starting soon after the War, in a small unheated hall, Hartmann organized discriminating concerts of new music (which in due time moved to a much larger hall), engaged the Radio Orchestra and the very finest conductors

and soloists, and, most remarkable of all, sold out his concerts by subscription.

The postwar political division of Germany has resulted, due to one man, in Munich's becoming a Bach center to challenge the ancient monopoly of Leipzig, which lies in what today is East Germany. That man, Karl Richter, was once organist in Leipzig's Thomaskirche and, in the pattern of tradition, could anticipate becoming Thomaskantor in the unbroken teacher-pupil succession which has prevailed there since Bach himself held the post. As a result of some unpleasantness in Leipzig after the War, young Richter turned refugee and settled in Munich. There, drawing largely upon the 22,000 students at the University, he wasted no time before assembling the Munich Bach Choir, soon followed by the Munich Bach Orchestra, and in a remarkably short period established himself among West Germany's leading musicians. The annual Bach Festival in Ansbach and his many recordings brought him international fame. After Thomaskantor Günther Ramin died, Leipzig asked Richter to succeed him, but he chose to stay in Munich, where he enjoys enormous popularity; during my most recent visit, his performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*, in the city's largest hall, had people lining up for standing room. Americans will hear Karl Richter and his group this winter.

But with all this musical wealth, Munich still awards Richard Strauss a special place. Of course there has long been a Richard Strauss Strasse, and now there is also a Strauss memorial fountain. It was during the recent Strauss Festival, though, that I encountered what I think would have pleased and touched the old Bavarian most of all. When you walk up the majestic, wide steps of the new Nationaltheater, pass between the Roman columns, and enter those massive doors, you soon find yourself in a room called the Court of Honor. There, in one of three niches, is a bust of Mozart; in the second, Wagner. In the third is Munich's favorite son, Richard Strauss.

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A GUIDE TO STEREO SHELVING

Continued from page 52

employs metal poles which stand upright between floor and ceiling. The poles are notched to receive metal brackets on which the shelves rest. A simpler form of upright is the kind that is bolted to the wall; it too accepts adjustable brackets for holding the shelves. A more elaborate form is the free-standing type, resembling a pair of ladders between whose rungs the shelves are suspended. Because of its strength, this type is especially well adapted for holding cabinets as well as naked components. These systems are sold at many furniture dealers', in the larger department stores, by large mail-order concerns, and at some of the larger hardware retailers'—particularly those that have sprung up in many suburbs and feature a "do-it-yourself" department. Cost varies from a few dollars for the kind that are bolted into the wall to several hundred for free-standing, furniture-finished systems.

Most of the new shelf systems stress "modularization"—a technique that enables the buyer to choose and manipulate basic storage units into an arrangement to suit his own needs. Another characteristic of modern shelving is its attention to decorative values. Most current designs display Scandinavian influence, often making use of oiled walnut or teak. A prime example of the present-day approach is the Comprehensive Storage System of Herman Miller, Inc., which uses the "OMNI" wood shelves, cabinetry, and aluminum poles. Literally hundreds of variations are possible with this system. The poles vary in length to accommodate ceiling heights from eight to thirteen and a half feet. Once the structure is in position, storage pieces can be mounted in a number of locations; at another time they can be added to, removed, or rearranged without disturbing the basic assembly. The choice of modules includes audio equipment cabinets, general storage cabinets, a drop-front desk, and other units for a multitude of uses. Another example of the flexible shelf system is that of Peter Wessel, Ltd. As shown in the photo on page 52, stereo speakers are slung

high in the structure at both ends. Electronic equipment is located within a single drop-front cabinet near the center. Note how the vertical standards are embedded with metal rails. Perforations in the rails permit raising or lowering any components to the desired height.

Flexibility and attractiveness characterize two recent Scandinavian shelf systems—the Royal and the Cado—by the Danish designer Poul Cadovius. The Royal system is sold through furniture and department stores; the Cado line is available through interior decorators, architects, and—according to a company spokesman—an increasing number of high fidelity component dealers. The cabinets are the same in both systems; the difference is in the method of support. The Royal system uses hardware; the Cado, wooden members. A special series of cabinets, available in many finishes, employ removable front panels for the custom fitting of components. Alternately, equipment may be placed directly on the shelves.

The same principle of flexibility can be found in room divider units, multi-purpose assemblies that demarcate a room area, afford intrinsic visual interest, and provide housing for audio and other equipment. Allied Radio, for instance, offers a system in which brass poles are predrilled to accept numerous combinations of divider shelves and cabinetry, all finished in oiled walnut. The poles are hollow for concealing interconnecting wires between the audio components. Assembly requires only the use of a screwdriver.

BEFORE PURCHASING any shelf system, try to visualize the projected arrangement in terms of available space, desired shelf area, and one's components themselves. A handy rule-of-thumb is to think in terms of thirty-two-inch widths. This spacing—used between vertical elements in the various modular systems—is also just right for do-it-yourselfers who abjure the free-standing shelf systems and insist on bolting their own standards into the wall. The spacing of thirty-two inches

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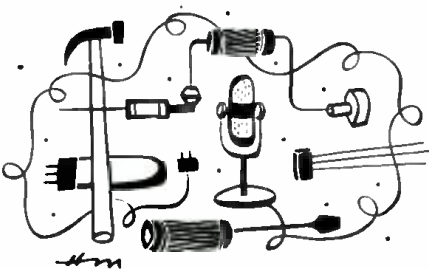
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corresponds to the distance between alternate wood studs in the wall, which make for strong anchor points.

In planning your installation, give particular attention to the kind of speakers you own. A speaker that requires the bass reinforcement of a corner location may be problematic. One solution is literally to design the shelf into a corner position and mount the speaker there. If the pair needed for stereo then are too widely separated—as on wall-to-wall shelves—a center-channel "fill" speaker may be required. Aside from such units, there are a number of compact or "book-shelf" speakers that provide ample bass response without any assist from adjacent walls or corners. Many of these may be mounted in either horizontal or vertical planes. If a choice exists, favor the plane that puts midrange and tweeter units in the path of least obstruction. Bass tones, relatively nondirectional, are less sensitive to position.

Two other factors that bear upon shelf-mounting are heat and mechanical feedback. Unless amplifiers are cool-running transistorized types, careful attention to proper ventilation is important. This is usually not troublesome when equipment sits on open shelves; a space of several inches above equipment is adequate. But equipment cabinets integrated into the shelving structure may restrict air flow. The result is often short tube life and potential damage to the cabinet finish. If ventilation holes would mar the appearance of the installation, be sure to keep cabinet doors open whenever the system is in operation. A simple test may be conducted with the smoke from a cigarette. Allow the smoke to be drawn into the equipment near the bottom, and check to see that it exits near the top. This assures that proper convection currents exist for dissipating heat.

Because shelves are neither as massive nor as rigid as built-ins or cabinets, mechanical feedback between speakers and pickup may occasionally occur in shelf-mounted sound systems. Vibrations from the speakers are coupled to the shelf and then transmitted through the wood to the tone arm. Such a closed-circuit can introduce significant distortion into the sound. A simple way to check for mechanical feedback is to compare sound reproduction between tuner and record player (the tuner is less subject to speaker vibration). The remedy is to avoid using the same shelf for speakers and turntable. If feedback persists, some resilient material, such as a layer of foam rubber, may be placed under the turntable base to serve as a damping medium.



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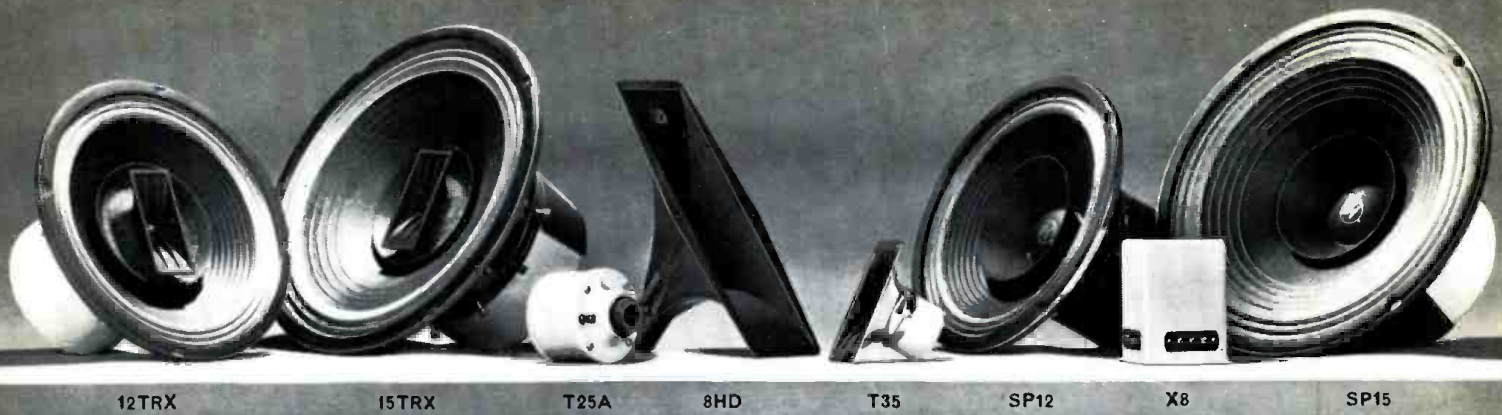
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A Return to the Fundamental Concept of High Fidelity: SOUND OF UNCOMPROMISING QUALITY!

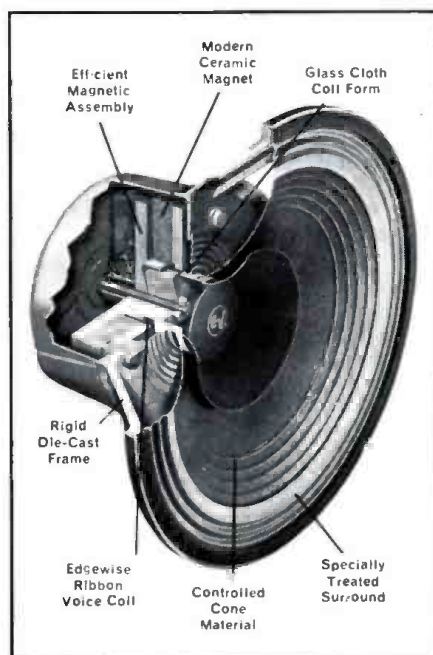
Before you make the final choice of speakers for your high fidelity system, take a moment to review your goals. What comes first—size, cost, or performance? If performance is of prime importance, then you owe it to yourself to look at—and listen to—Electro-Voice Deluxe component speakers. Granted, they are not the smallest or the least expensive speakers you can buy, but their design is predicated on the need for quality reproduction above all other considerations.

Your ear is the final arbiter of speaker system quality, but it may help you to know what's behind the unequalled popularity of E-V in the component speaker field. It begins with the finest engineering laboratory in the industry, finest not only in equipment, but also in the size of its staff and in its creative approach to electro-acoustics.

The basic design for E-V Deluxe components was laid down over a decade ago, and, despite numerous detail improvements, this approach is just as valid today. It begins on a firm foundation: the rigid die-cast frame that provides a stable basis on which this precision instrument can be assembled. It is this frame that assures that each E-V Deluxe speaker will forever maintain its high standard of performance by maintaining perfect alignment of all moving parts.

Added to this is a magnetic assembly of generous proportions that provides the "muscle" needed for effortless reproduction of every range at every sound level. In the case of the SP15, for example, four pounds, ten ounces of modern ceramic magnet (mounted in an efficient magnetic assembly weighing even more) provides the force needed for perfect damping of the 15-inch cone.

Within the gap of this magnetic system rides the unique E-V machine-wound



edgewise-ribbon voice coil. This unusual structure adds up to 18% more sensitivity than conventional designs. Production tolerances on this coil and gap are held to $\pm .001$ inch! The voice coil is wound on a form of polyester-impregnated glass cloth, chosen because it will not fatigue like aluminum and will not dry out (or pick up excess moisture) like paper. In addition, the entire voice coil assembly can be made unusually light and rigid for extended high frequency response.

In like manner, the cone material for E-V Deluxe components is chosen carefully, and every specification rigidly maintained with a battery of quality control tests from raw material to finished speaker. A specially-treated "surround" supports the moving system accurately for predictably low resonance, year after year, without danger of eventual fatigue. There's no breaking-in or breaking down!

Now listen—not to the speaker, but to the music—as you put an E-V Deluxe component speaker through its paces. Note that bass notes are neither mushy nor missing. They are heard full strength, yet in proper perspective, because of the optimum damping inherent in the E-V heavy-magnet design.

And whether listening to 12-inch or 15-inch, full-range or three-way models, you'll hear mid-range and high frequency response exactly matched to outstanding bass characteristics. In short, the sound of every E-V Deluxe component speaker is uniquely musical in character.

The full potential of E-V Deluxe component speakers can be realized within remarkably small enclosure dimensions due to their low-resonance design. With ingenuity almost any wall or closet can become a likely spot to mount an E-V Deluxe speaker. Unused space such as a stairwell can be converted to an ideal enclosure. Or you may create custom cabinetry that makes a unique contribution to your decor while housing these remarkable instruments. The point is, the choice is up to you.

With E-V Deluxe component speakers you can fit superlative sound to available space, while still observing reasonable budget limits. For example, a full-range speaker such as the 12-inch SP12 can be the initial investment in a system that eventually includes a T25A/8HD mid-range assembly, and a T35 very-high-frequency driver. Thus the cost can range from \$70.00 up to \$220.00, as you prefer—and every cent goes for pure performance!

Write today for your free Electro-Voice high fidelity catalog and list of the E-V audio specialists nearest you. They will be happy to show you how E-V Deluxe component speakers fulfill the fundamental concept of high fidelity with sound of uncompromising quality!


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