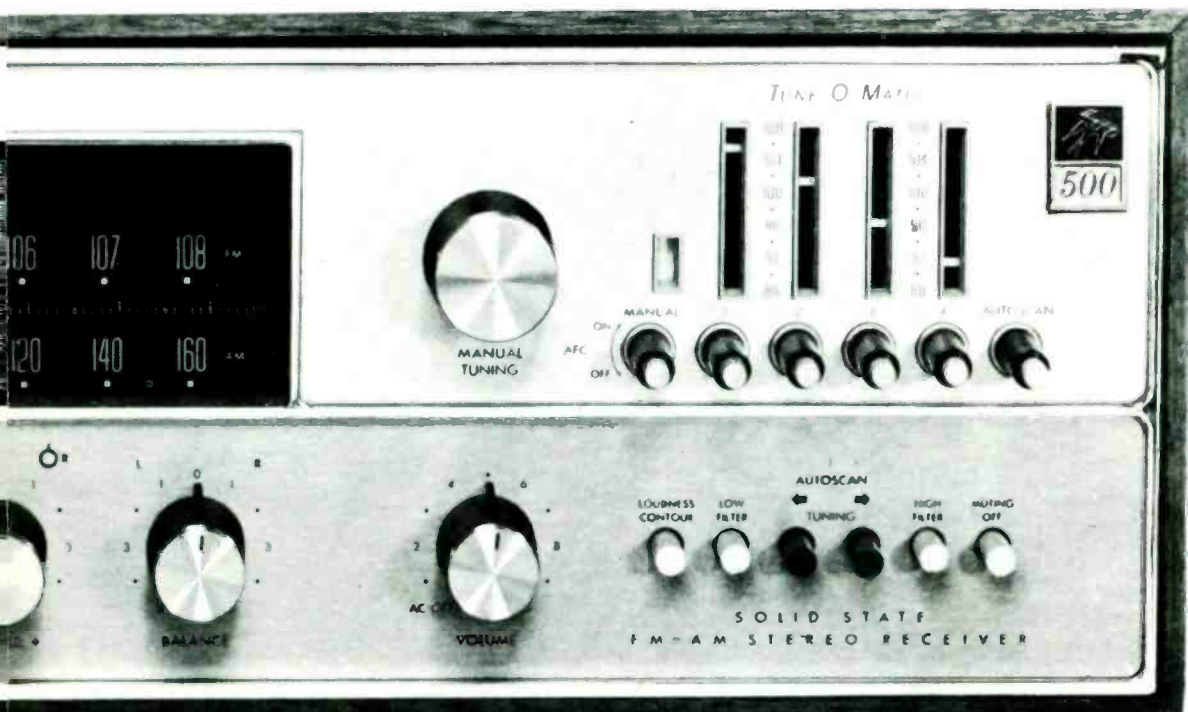




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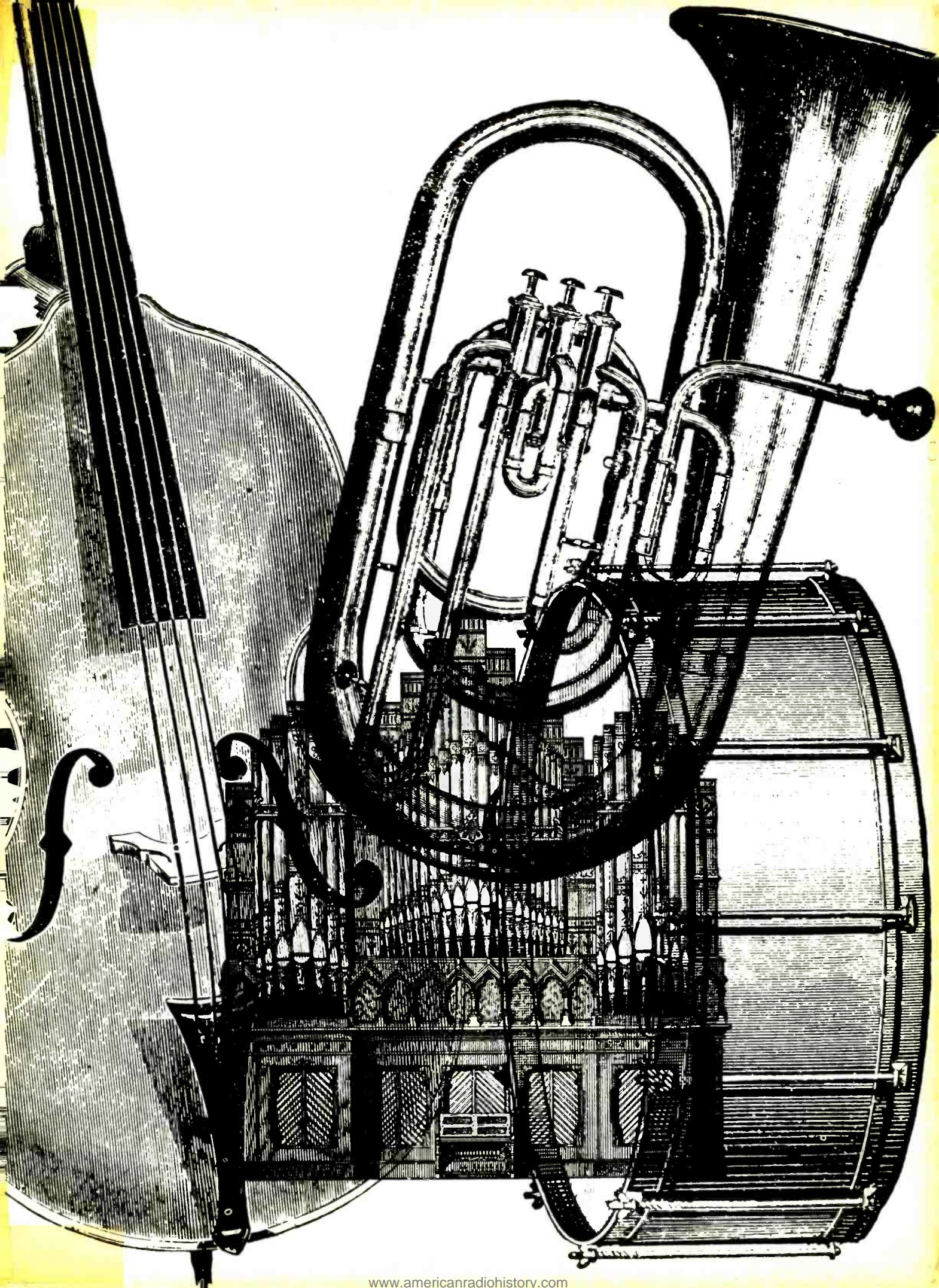
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# HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 19 NO. 2, FEBRUARY 1969

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# Who the Devil Wrote This Nonsense?

DEAR READER:

Although I am universally renowned for my gentle, sweet disposition, a mere written statement recently ignited my temper. If it appears innocuous to you, then you either are unfamiliar with standard violin literature, or are so familiar with it that you understand that the statement is in fact true. (When my temper goes, it is an almost sure sign that I am wrong.) Elsewhere in this issue, in his review of Wanda Wilkowińska's recording of the Wieniawski Violin Concerto No. 2, Robert Schaaf suggests that it "should be in the repertoire."

*Should be in the repertoire!*? When I read the manuscript, I froze in disbelief that one of our knowledgeable critics should have written such an idiocy. Everyone knows that the piece *is* in all violinists' repertoires. Ever since Joachim and Auer gave lessons, every budding violin virtuoso has gotten the Wieniawski No. 2 under his fingernails. It came after the Spohr No. 8, just before the Mendelssohn, as one of the first concertos the student learned which he could look forward to hearing in the concert hall. In the days when violin recitals included piano-reduction-accompanied concertos, the Wieniawski seemed to be on at least every other one. Who could have written such a statement? I did not even bother to turn to the last type-written page to examine the reviewer's initials, but shouted to my Music Editor, Peter Davis, "Who the devil wrote this nonsense?"

Now, you have to know that Peter Davis is one of those Harvard graduates who knows, if not everything about music and records, at least anything anyone else is likely to know, in order to appreciate my reaction to his reply: "What's wrong with it?"

"If anything is in the repertoire, the Wieniawski is."

"No it isn't. Look in Schwann."

The Schwann Catalog listed only Michael Rabin's recording (and Rabin even recorded the practically unknown No. 1) and the thirteen-year-old mono Heifetz. Was it really possible that this once so popular concerto had died? I called up my local orchestra. In the past ten years, the New York Philharmonic had played it only once. I called my other local orchestra (one of the advantages of having offices in both New York and Massachusetts). The Boston Symphony Orchestra gentleman's finding ("Could you please hold the phone a little longer?" . . . long pause . . . "We have to re-check our files because it's simply not possible." . . . long pause . . . "It's apparently right, though nobody here can believe it . . .") was that the BSO had last performed the Wieniawski in 1912!

With trepidation I checked Schwann for other at-least-once-warhorse concertos. Vieuxtemps No. 5? Two: Heifetz and Kogan. Spohr No. 8? A little better: Heifetz again, the old mono; Hyman Bress; and somebody named Barries. Viotti No. 22? Never much of a repertoire piece, but here were Stern and Suzanne Lautenbacher. On the other hand, one could find not only six recordings of *The Bartók Violin Concerto*, but four of the recently uncovered "No. 1." Stravinsky, Berg, Schoenberg, and Barber each had three recordings of his violin concerto.

So that's where the repertoire had gone. Now if some young fiddler could still light up those nineteenth-century musical firecrackers, why, he'd make a name for himself as a performing musicologist.

\* \* \*

The closest Hector Berlioz ever got to a concerto was *Harold in Italy*, for viola and orchestra, which Paganini rejected for not being firecracky enough. Still, we will devote a major portion of next month's issue to *Le Grand Hec-tor*. Composer/conductor Pierre Boulez will discuss "**Berlioz and the Realm of the Imaginary**"; conductor Colin Davis will give his views on "**The Trojans**," which he will soon record; Roy McMullen, whose picture book about Marc Chagall became one of last Christmas' most popular coffee-table gifts, will present a photo essay on "**Berlioz' Paris**"; and Contributing Editor Bernard Jacobson will let us know what he thinks are "**The Best Berlioz Recordings—and the Worst.**"

*Leonard Marcus*

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# LETTERS

## TO THE EDITOR

### Homemade Opera

I have just finished reading John Culshaw's article in the October HIGH FIDELITY ["The Record Producer Strikes Back"], and at the same time I happened to be reading his book, *Ring Resounding*, which also propounds his philosophy of record making. I want to say that I enthusiastically agree with Mr. Culshaw. I own more than thirty complete opera recordings, as well as about 1,000 other records, and I have never been inside an opera house. I have only recently reached the economic position in life where, if I wanted to, I could travel the sixty or seventy miles to Chicago to attend opera performances, paying for tickets, parking, etc. In the meantime I have already been digging the sounds for about ten years.

There are not many opera lovers in Kenosha. My parents wouldn't be caught dead listening to an opera. I got hipped on it more or less accidentally—probably by reading magazines such as HIGH FIDELITY more than any other way. I question whether or not I would be as interested in opera as I am if it were not for the immediacy that a good recording provides. I think Mr. Culshaw gets to the heart of it when he writes that an opera recording should not be a souvenir. (Movie sound track recordings are "souvenirs," and that's why most of them are not worth owning.)

When I slip a record onto my turntable, I don't want to be reminded of a huge hall and a relatively small stage. An opera is certainly more than music, and the more immediacy that can be provided, the more the drama becomes real to the listener. (Not to mention the other advantages of recordings—no coughing, no latecomers, etc.)

Personally, I think Wagner would be tickled to death with Mr. Culshaw's *Ring*. But what it boils down to, it seems to me, is whether or not opera is going to be just for the cognoscenti, and whether or not productions like the London *Ring* are going to justify themselves in terms of sales. In his book, Mr. Culshaw predicts that some day we will have opera on our living-room wall, in wide screen, color, and three dimensions, to say nothing of stereo sound. When that happens, your Mr. Osborne will probably lock himself up in a closet. But not me. I can hardly wait.

Donald M. Clarke  
Kenosha, Wisc.

### Department of Amplification

Dr. Garry D. Whitlow in December's "Letters" column asks if there is any chance that Orchestra Hall in Chicago

will be restored acoustically to regain its past stature as a recording room. In the *Musical America* section of HIGH FIDELITY (January 1968) I observed that work in the summer of 1967 had largely compensated for miscalculation in the original project to improve the hall, and I may now add that further modifications (including a new stage floor) have made the hall better than ever from the standpoint of the listener.

The first recording to reflect this situation will be the Ozawa/Chicago Symphony disc of the Tchaikovsky Fifth Symphony. After listening to the edited master tape, I think the kind of Chicago Symphony recordings recalled from the Reiner period are again possible.

With respect to Warren Kronmeyer's comments about the writing of Conrad L. Osborne also in the December issue (and the article by John Culshaw which prompted this reply), one need only note that the international jury of the Montreux International Record Award, by voting the Gold Prize to the London recording of *Elektra*, dissented from Osborne's evaluation of the set.

Constructive diversity of opinion can be the key to progress. I have always regarded criticism as a forum in the Socratic spirit that encourages vigorous intellectual exchange. In that context, Osborne has always been an interesting writer. I have followed his work and admired the way in which he develops his point of view.

The problem at HIGH FIDELITY is that in the field of operatic recordings, Osborne has had the floor pretty much to himself. Alfred Frankenstein, who reviewed resident opera in San Francisco for decades, rarely discusses this literature in the magazine. When I was on your roster of critics I got to review an operatic album about once in two years, although I was discussing opera regularly in my newspaper columns.

Meanwhile, my vote of confidence to Osborne, who is never more deserving of attention than when he has maneuvered himself to the end of a long and whippy limb. It is, after all, one of the classical positions in criticism.

Robert C. Marsh  
Music Critic.

The Chicago Sun-Times  
Chicago, Ill.

Hardly a month goes by without a spate of letters to the editor complaining that there are not enough operatic reviews signed C.L.O. It's refreshing to hear from the other side. In point of fact, Mr. Osborne has shared the operatic floor pretty generously of late: among the thirty-six complete and excerpted opera

Continued on page 8

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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This is a photograph taken immediately after our final test of the prototype of the AR-5. The speaker system was measured while buried in a flat, open field, facing upward, its front baffle flush with the ground. This technique provides more accurate information than indoor tests, especially at low frequencies, where the precision of such measurements is adversely affected by the limited size of an anechoic chamber.

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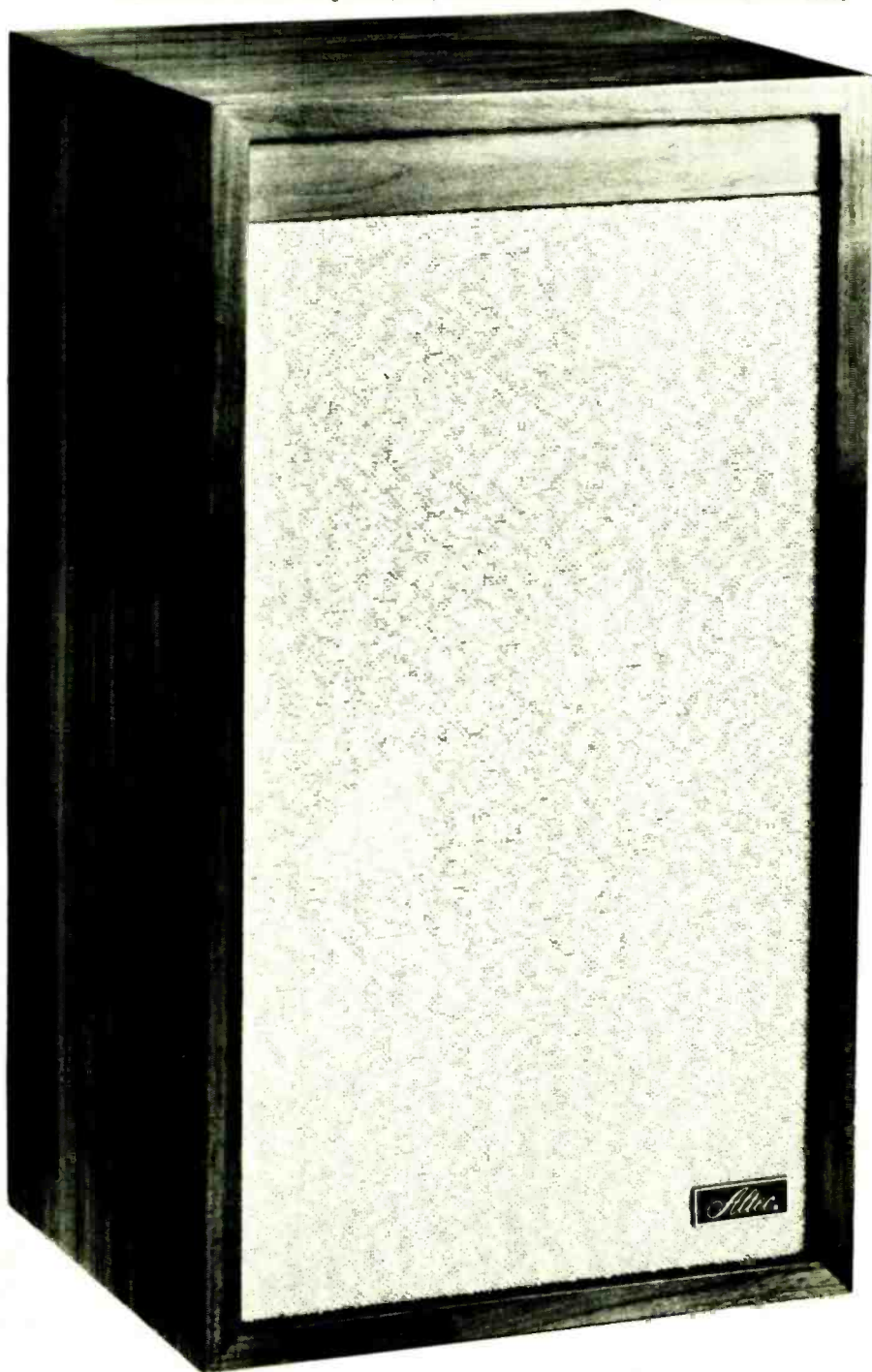
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CIRCLE 4 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## LETTERS

Continued from page 6

recordings considered in *HIGH FIDELITY* during 1968, Mr. Osborne reviewed fourteen and eight other critics divided the remaining twenty-two.

### War Songs

Gene Lees was way off base in his recounting of the Pete Seeger/CBS/*Big Muddy* controversy in his article "Fifty Years of War Songs" [November 1968]. According to Lees, "Pete Seeger caused a scandal when he sang *Waist Deep in the Big Muddy* on the Smothers Brothers television show, using a last line that accused Lyndon Johnson of getting America into that predicament [Vietnam]. Network officials bleeped the line out. . . the Smothers Brothers. . . invited Seeger back. He sang the song again—including its last line."

Lees's recollection of the facts is as muddy as that stream. Seeger taped the song for that first Smothers show, which aired September 10, 1967, but the entire performance was cut out when CBS objected to the last verse containing the thinly veiled swipe at LBJ. Seeger did the song in toto on the Smothers' February 25, 1968 program; only one CBS affiliate, apparently, WJBK-TV in Detroit, engaged in any bleeping, fading to a commercial after the next-to-last verse.

The "last line" that Lees refers to—". . . the big fool says to push on"—is more accurately the last line of each verse, and is thus heard six times during the course of the song, not, as Lees implied, only at the very end.

George Friedman  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Gene Lees's article on war songs of the past fifty years pricked a vein of nostalgia. I swear that two songs I remember quite well to this day were taught to music classes at Junior High 210 in Brooklyn in 1943-44.

The first song is *Meadowlands*, the Russian anthem. But we also learned the Soviet Air Force Song: "Fly higher, and higher, and higher/Our emblem is the Soviet star. . ." I can't say whether the New York Board of Education suggested this, or whether the music teacher was employing academic license. We were, at any rate, rather tepid allies of the Soviets.

Gerald M. Plevin  
Stony Brook, N. Y.

### No One's Perfect

As one of the commercially unimportant minority of audiophiles who notice the failings of currently available equipment and recordings, it disturbs me to see the perennial pursuit of the "best" receiver (for instance, the letter from Guy Welch in November's "Too Hot to Handle" column).

I can assure Mr. Welch and the thousands of others who want to be told

Continued on page 10

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music — yet  
each counts  
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23 Songs

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IN BLUE**  
Spellbound  
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3 MORE

3302. A real bargain for classical music lovers

**Diana Ross  
and the  
Supremes  
Greatest Hits**

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Continued from page 8

they have the "best," that their receivers' occasional transgressions of the half per cent distortion level will not bring down wrath from above, or, for that matter, even notice from the owner. When even the best commercial LPs and tapes have noticeable hiss and distortion, not to mention the gritty tapioca emitted by car stereos and cassettes, it's adding insult to injury to insist on a distinction between 1.7 and 1.8  $\mu$ V FM sensitivities. While such considerations are important to the designers, to Mr. Welch and me they are useful only in the preliminary phase of selecting a system. The final test is *how does it sound*. If you can't hear it, don't buy it.

Allen Watson III

Redwood City, Calif.

*The pursuit of perfection is a hallmark of the audio field, and certainly a buyer has a right to expect that he's getting the best value for money spent. However, we must agree that quibbles over a tenth of a microvolt need not concern the average listener—regardless of the white heat such discussions may generate among inside circles.*

**Good Old (German) Soul**

Bravo to Peter G. Davis and the other American critics who greeted DGG's excellent recording of Pfitzner's *Von deutscher Seele*. Bravo also to him and the other reviewers who suggested that Pfitzner's centenary year of 1969 should be commemorated by a complete recording of *Palestrina*.

My suggestion for a performance to be issued is one from the 1963 Munich Festival, of which the Bavarian Radio very likely has a good-sounding stereo tape. Since DGG seems to occasionally dig actual performance recordings (their *Daphne* from the 1964 Vienna Festival was a good enough job to win a Grand Prix du Disque), it would be worth investigating—especially since the performance by the immense cast was on such a high level as to bring tears to my eyes—and I am not so easily moved.

Perhaps the great length of this opera and the obtuse machinations of the Act II Council Scene (very difficult to comprehend unless one knows German well) have mitigated against its general acceptance outside Central Europe. However, the music itself counts on a record, and the opera is for the vast majority of its playing time magnificent.

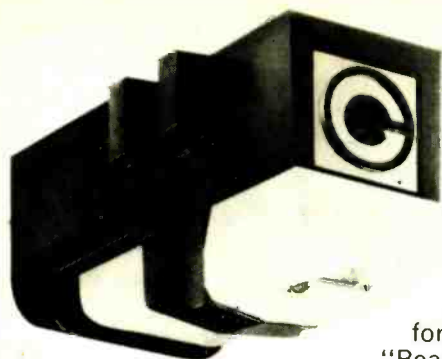
Since DGG has begun its noble work so well, it would be a pity if Pfitzner's most famous (and greatest) work should languish in recorded limbo in 1969.

William Zakariasen  
New York, N.Y.**Stokey in Stereo**

Now that the Philadelphia Orchestra has returned to RCA, could someone arrange for Leopold Stokowski and his

Continued on page 12

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



## "IT LIFTS THE VEIL"

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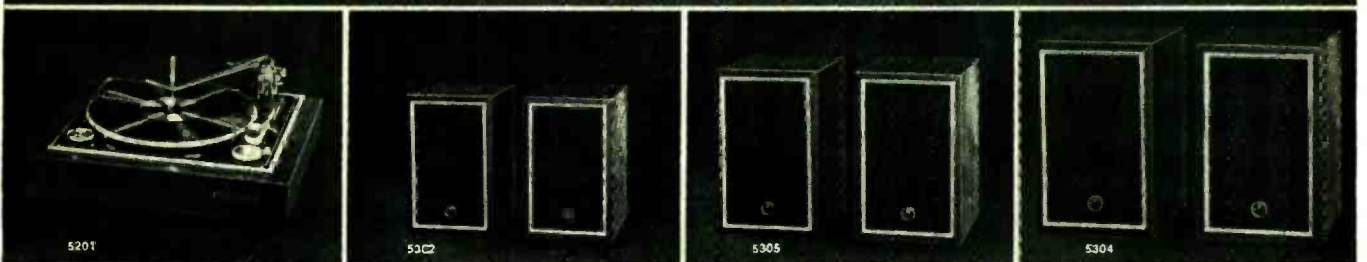
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5303

5303

6102



5201

5302

5305

5304

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JVC America, Inc., A Subsidiary of Victor Company of Japan, Ltd., c/o Delmonico International Corp., 50-35 56th Road, Maspeth, N.Y. 11378, Subsidiary of TST Industries, Inc.

CIRCLE 46 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dept. G

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CIRCLE 76 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

## LETTERS

*Continued from page 10*

onetime orchestra to recreate in Dynagroove some of those memorable performances which Stokowski devotees still treasure in their old 78-rpm format? We would love to hear the Maestro in brand-new stereo performances of the Brahms First, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, the Franck Symphony, or even Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*. Alternatively, may I suggest some recordings of music which Stokowski gave with the Philadelphia but never recorded with them—such as Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, Sibelius' Second Symphony, or Mahler's Second and Eighth Symphonies. It would be wonderful to hear the old magic again—but in really up-to-date sound!

Edward Johnson  
London, England

### Manual Versus Automatic

I would like to commend your campaign against electronic stereo, and say that it is largely through journals such as *HIGH FIDELITY* that the record buying public can be educated to refuse such discs, and hence bring pressure to bear on the manufacturers to cease such practices.

For this reason let me recommend to you another campaign that you might lend your voice to. This is an attempt to persuade the record companies to revert to the old practice of issuing sets, particularly operas, in a manually coupled form—i.e., Sides 1 and 2 on the first disc, 3 and 4 on the second, and so on—instead of the current automatic coupling form: 1 and 6, 2 and 5, 3 and 4 for a three-disc set. I find it hard to believe that there are many people who want to stack the six discs of *Götterdämmerung* on their changer. Conversely, an automatically coupled set played on a manual turntable is not only very inconvenient, but also involves greater handling, more frequent putting in and pulling out of sleeves, and hence increases the risk of scratching the disc.

Perhaps your other readers might like to express their views. If American practice would change, we in Australia would reap the benefit on RCA and CBS discs, and possibly on DGG also.

A. Watson  
Newtown, Australia  
*Angel Records has already taken a step in this direction. The new Gillets/Szell recording of the five Beethoven Piano Concertos is manually coupled.*

### A Mono Repository

The genocidal warfare against the mono disc is tragic (as was the disappearance of the 78-rpm "golden age" before it). What can be done? Is there any way that the minority voices of the collector with specialized tastes can be satisfied? A number of record libraries and scholarly collections have, I understand, gotten together to try and preserve large sections

*Continued on page 16*

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



# Now...The First All-Label, Discount Record Service to Offer All These Advantages

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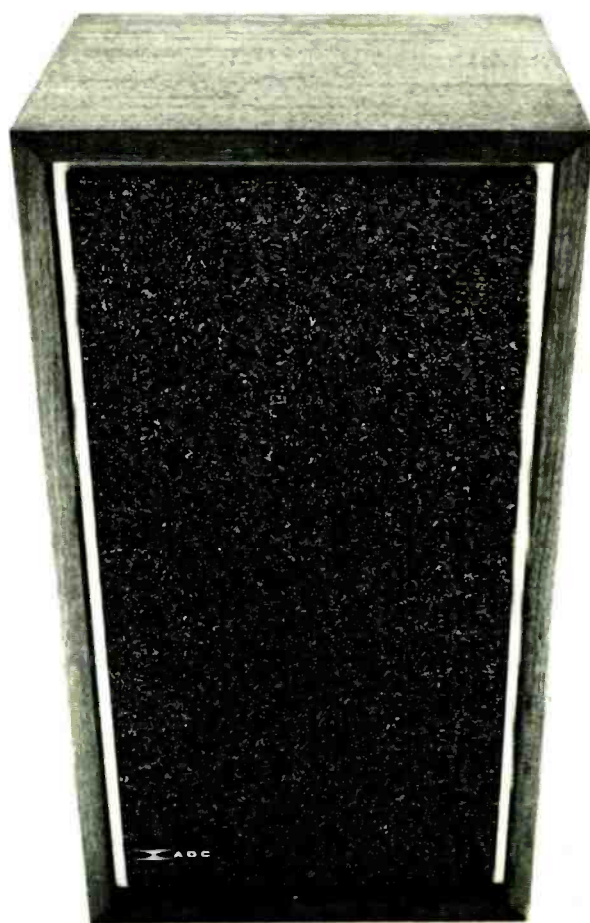
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CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Which 303 is the best buy? You should have this decision every day of your life. Audio Dynamics Corporation, New Milford, Connecticut 06776



The new ADC 303AX \$99.95



LETTERS

Continued from page 12

of the recorded repertoire in central locations over the country, with provision for the public (or at least the student and specialist) to listen.

This laudable aim does not, however, begin to attack the question of making available for purchase old recordings that have been deleted through lack of consumer demand. Here it would seem that better systems are needed. There are several possibilities: 1) The major companies could, at the point of discontinuing a record, press or otherwise keep in stock a modest inventory of that number on a permanent basis, to be specially ordered by

the customer either directly or through a dealer (RCA, for one, has made sporadic efforts in this direction at various points). 2) A sizable stock of cut-outs from all labels could be sent to a central repository, perhaps a foundation or other socially responsible agency, which could then issue an "archival" catalogue to interested collectors, run audition facilities in major cities, and share the profits (if any) with the record companies. 3) Some combination of the above plans could be instituted, but with tape as the major vehicle (assuming that the collector whose curiosity extends beyond the stereo era of today would have tape equipment). Thus, the man interested in finding out which, if any, of the prestereo Brahms First Piano Concertos was worth his while

to get could hear them at some central library facility. Then he could pay the library, or foundation, to make a copy for him, with part of the proceeds going back to RCA. London, Decca, as the case may be. Surely, the legal roadblocks to open and above-board tape copying would not exist under these arrangements.

All of the above sounds terribly utopian and there are a thousand practical objections to any such plan. But something must be done to prevent the continuance of what is currently happening whereby the enormous legacy of the past half century's music making is falling into limbo because of our deafness to anything that is not the latest in technical fidelity or in promotional marketing. I would enjoy hearing other readers' views on this matter.

Abram Chipman, Ph.D.  
Boston, Mass.

Under Pressure

In "Too Hot To Handle" [November 1968] you advise a reader to use just under 2 grams stylus force for his Shure V-15/II cartridge in the AR tone arm. You comment also that CBS Laboratories found 1 gram to be enough when they tested this cartridge, but that their tests were conducted with the SME tone arm "with its numerous adjustments, ultra-fine balancing, and anti-skating." You noted further that you had found the V-15/II to work beautifully at 1.5 grams in the AR tone arm and turntable. I feel obliged to make two points concerning this reply.

Shure recommends a maximum of 1.5 grams stylus force for the V-15/II. I would not disregard their recommendation; surely they would not set an upper limit without good reason.

AR recommends 1 gram stylus force for the V-15/II in the AR arm. We use this value consistently at audio show demonstrations and in the AR Music Rooms. If a higher stylus force offered even a slight improvement in the quality of sound available to us for demonstration of our products, you can be very sure that we would use the higher force.

Without getting involved in technical arguments about arm performance, I make this categorical statement: if a Shure V-15/II does not track the most difficult record grooves at 1 gram in the AR tone arm, then the arm is defective, the stylus assembly is defective, the record is defective, or there is a serious misadjustment of the arm.

Roy F. Allison,  
Vice President  
Acoustic Research, Inc.  
Cambridge, Mass.

Norman Eisenberg replies: We agree that under ideal or optimum conditions, the AR turntable can accommodate the Shure V-15 Type II at less than 1.5 grams vertical stylus force. However, the conditions described by the reader in his letter were obviously not ideal. He talks of record defects, including warpage. Further, we have no way of knowing


Continued on page 18

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LETTERS

Continued from page 16

whether or not the arm is defective. But, assuming that nothing is wrong with his equipment, the best solution to the problem would be to increase the tracking force to the maximum recommended by the pickup manufacturer, which in this instance is 1.5 grams.

Tapes for Troops

We would like to solicit help from your readers in strengthening the morale and providing relaxation for the servicemen in Vietnam. "Tapes for Troops" is a program whereby people in the U.S.A. do-

nate tape recordings for the listening pleasure of American servicemen. The tapes are shipped to 1st Logistical Command and are distributed to each Corps Area where they are further disseminated to units and clubs that have tape equipment.

The types of tapes we receive cover many musical areas—classical, jazz, pop, country & western, religious, etc. They can be in stereo or monaural; 3¼ or 7½ ips; and 3-, 5-, or 7-inch reels. The object of this program is troop entertainment not necessarily the production of a quality product. Because this is not a funded program of the Department of the Army, the cost of mailing the tapes must be borne by the sender. Once the tapes are received by the servicemen,

they become the property of the recipient and will not be returned to the sender.

The enthusiastic reception of this program by the troops in the field has led us to attempt to contact more tape collectors who would be interested in making donations.

If your readers wish to contribute tapes, the address is: "Tapes for Troops," Hq 1st Logistical Command, att: Special Services, APO San Francisco, Calif. 96384.

Ben Kvitky  
LTC. AGC  
San Francisco, Calif.

The Old Man

I could not help but be shocked and annoyed after reading Alfred Frankenstein's November "In Brief" review of Maksim Shostakovich conducting two of his father's compositions: shocked to read that the only fitting description Mr. Frankenstein had for the great Russian composer was "the old man," and annoyed that you permitted this to pass through your fingers unnoticed.

That description was completely uncalled for and demonstrates the writer's complete disrespect for Dmitri Shostakovich. I have been reading your magazine for the past seven years, but until now I have never encountered such a gross display of ignorance on the part of a reviewer. If Shostakovich is just an "old man" to Mr. Frankenstein, I suggest he give up the idea of reviewing his works. Since he has already expressed his opinion of the composer, what more can he say about his works.

Daniel Lewicki  
Bronx, N. Y.



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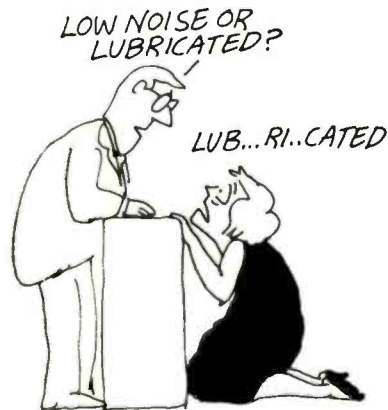
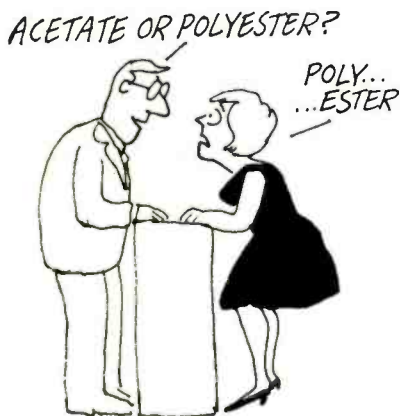
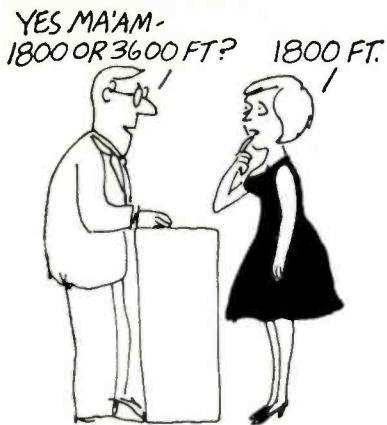
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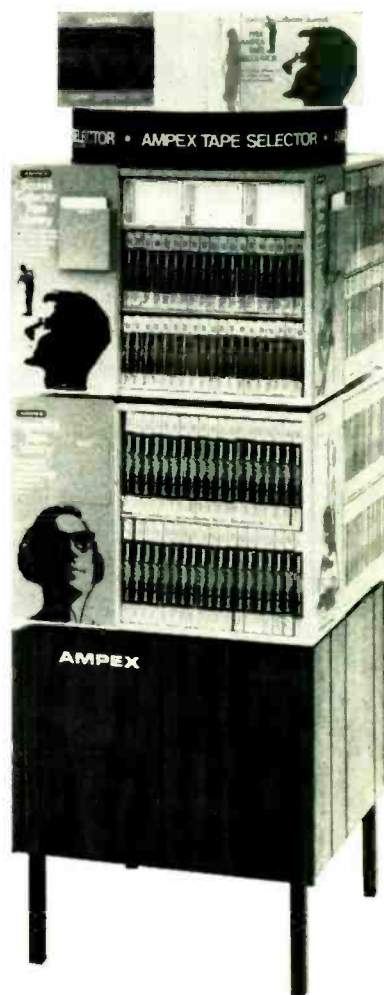
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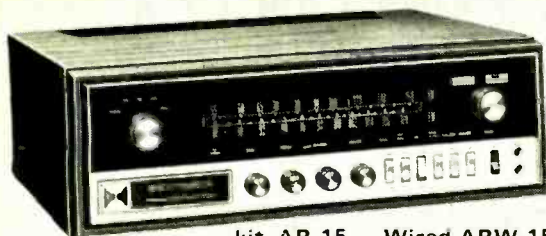
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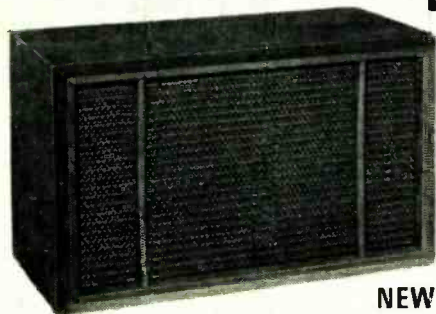
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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# ...From The Leader



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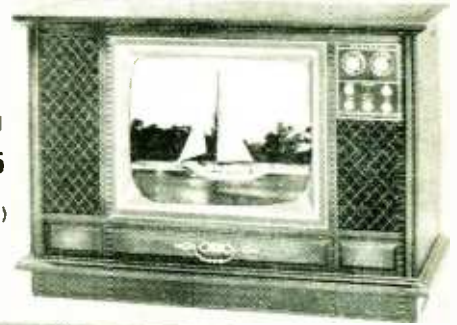
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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Immediately above, the soprano with her little girl, Muffy, after a recording session in Vienna—and, above right, as a child in the Thirties, after a radio show with the indomitable Major Bowes.



## "But Julius, I've Always Sung This Way"

A look at the "new" Beverly Sills

**B**EVERLY SILLS, the amazing Brooklyn-born coloratura soprano whose first solo recording is reviewed elsewhere in this issue (page 76), frankly admits to being a late bloomer. "Everything takes me much longer than it takes anybody else," she says, "but when it finally happens I'm usually more ready for it than I would have been when I thought it should have happened." Most coloraturas historically hit their stride long before reaching their late thirties. Miss Sills has been breaking all the rules. At thirty-nine, she is a flawlessly brilliant artist whose "new" career can be said to have only just begun.

Actually, Beverly Sills has had a variety of careers, stretching back to the palmy days of radio in the early 1930s. She was singing and tap dancing at the age of three on a Saturday morning children's program called *Uncle Bob's Rainbow House*. A few years later she became a regular on *Major Bowes' Capital Family Hour*, following in the footsteps of another youngster whom she subsequently came to idolize: Maria Callas. Then she traveled on to the *Cresta Blanca Carnival*, *Our Gal Sunday*, and commercials for Rinso.

By the time she got out of high school in 1945, aged sixteen, Beverly was already a seasoned pro. During her teens and early twenties she toured the length and breadth of America, first in Gilbert and Sullivan and Viennese operetta, later as a member of the Charles Wagner Opera—an itinerant company for which she performed *Violetta* fifty-four times and *Micaela* sixty-three. She began besieging the New York City Opera in 1951 and after eight effortful auditions and three years of patient solicitation finally got them to sign her on. But Miss Sills, as advertised, did not immediately burst into full bloom. Though she sang many leading roles with the still struggling opera company and made something of a stir as the steadfast heroine of Douglas Moore's *Ballad of Baby Doe*, there were no delirious successes. Her image was not that of an exciting star but rather that of a good trouper—

charming in looks, agreeable in voice, musical, flexible, dependable.

"I guess the trouble was repertoire," she says, musing contentedly on the past with the air of someone nursing no regrets whatsoever. "I knew right along I was a coloratura. I had studied this stuff since I was a little girl. Why, trills have been second nature to me since the age of ten. And I studied all the important scores—*Lucia*, *Sonnambula*, *Puritani*—knew them all by heart. But I never got a chance to sing these operas. The New York City Opera just didn't do coloratura repertoire. So I sang what they offered me, and was glad for the experience."

Two years ago, after the company had moved into its elegant new Lincoln Center home, Beverly Sills finally got a chance to show off her coloratura stuff. As *Cleopatra* in Handel's *Julius Caesar* she astonished everybody with the faultless precision and joyous sparkle of her bravura singing. She even astonished Julius Rudel, the company's artistic director, who had expected a high level of accomplishment from Miss Sills but was totally unprepared for the speed, dexterity, and sheer virtuosic luster with which she negotiated Handel's fiendishly difficult arias. He said as much after the first ear-opening rehearsal. "But Julius," the singer replied, "I've *always* sung this way. It's just that nobody has ever heard me."

True to form, Beverly Sills took awhile in getting onto records. She does, of course, figure in the "original cast" albums of *Baby Doe* (M-G-M) and *Julius Caesar* (RCA), but unfortunately neither does her proper justice. Now at last she is safely under contract as an important solo artist in her own right. The Westminster collection of Bellini and Donizetti scenes just released constitutes the first in a long series of contemplated recordings. Coming up next is a complete *Lucia di Lammermoor*, to be recorded in Europe this spring and released in the fall to coincide with the

Continued on page 27

## MUSIC MAKERS

BY ROLAND GELATT

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The reconstructed Nationaltheater in Munich, originally built 1811-18, scene of the world premieres of "Tristan" and "Meistersinger."

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK I

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## MUSIC MAKERS

Continued from page 24

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\*Each Stanton 681 is tested and measured against the laboratory standard for frequency response, channel separation, output, etc. The results are written by hand on the specifications enclosed with every cartridge.

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CIRCLE 80 ON READER-SERVICE CARD  
FEBRUARY 1969

City Opera's new production of the work. (Now that the company has discovered a coloratura star in its midst, it is belatedly turning to the coloratura repertoire.) More operas and recitals for Westminster are also being discussed. *Manon? Coq d'or? Roberto Devereux?* "I'd rather not get into specifics now," Miss Sills hedged. "It's all so tentative. But I very definitely want to record as much as I can during the next few years, while I'm still at the top of my form."

Her indecision is complicated by one particularly vexing circumstance. "My voice," she explains, "is a coloratura, but my soul is that of a dramatic soprano. Even after *Julius Caesar*, when the City Opera decided to put on a new production just for me, what did I choose? *Manon!* I want to create a character. Just to sing a lot of high notes is boring for me. Right now, I'm preparing the part of Zerbinetta for a concert performance of *Ariadne* with Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony, but I don't think I'd ever want to play this silly lady on stage. She's too much like whipped cream. Now, the role of Queen Elizabeth in *Roberto Devereux*—that's something else again. I'd love to get my teeth into that part." Impresarios, please take notice.

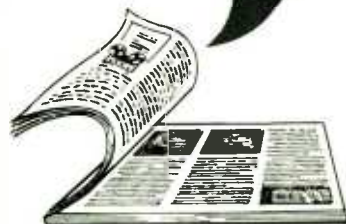
Although the City Opera is certainly New York's most adventurous and artistically stimulating opera company, the accolade of the venerable Metropolitan is still not to be taken lightly. Would Miss Sills ever be singing on the Met's big stage? "Perhaps," she says. "One never knows. There have already been offers, but only for repertoire that was of no interest to me. And why should I cross Lincoln Center Plaza for that?" If she and the Metropolitan do ever agree on repertoire, she would consent to sing there only as a guest artist on loan from the City Opera. Her engagements elsewhere are restricted solely to those occasions when the City Opera can spare her. It is the same with records. Her first loyalty now is to Westminster, but she has the option of working for other labels in any repertoire that Westminster wants to pass by. This spring, for example, she has been tapped by RCA for a recording of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy, and there is also talk of her doing an opera for Decca/London.

By the age of seven, Beverly Sills had memorized all the well-known Italian coloratura arias from her mother's collection of Galli-Curci records. Later on, she studied for many years with Estelle Lieblich, who was Galli-Curci's coach. My ears detected many Galli-Curcian moments in Miss Sills's new recital record—particularly the liquid trills and the rapid, delicate staccatos—and I passed on this opinion to the lady in question. "Do you really think so?" she purred. "Then let me ask my mother to come in, and please say it again. It will really make her day."

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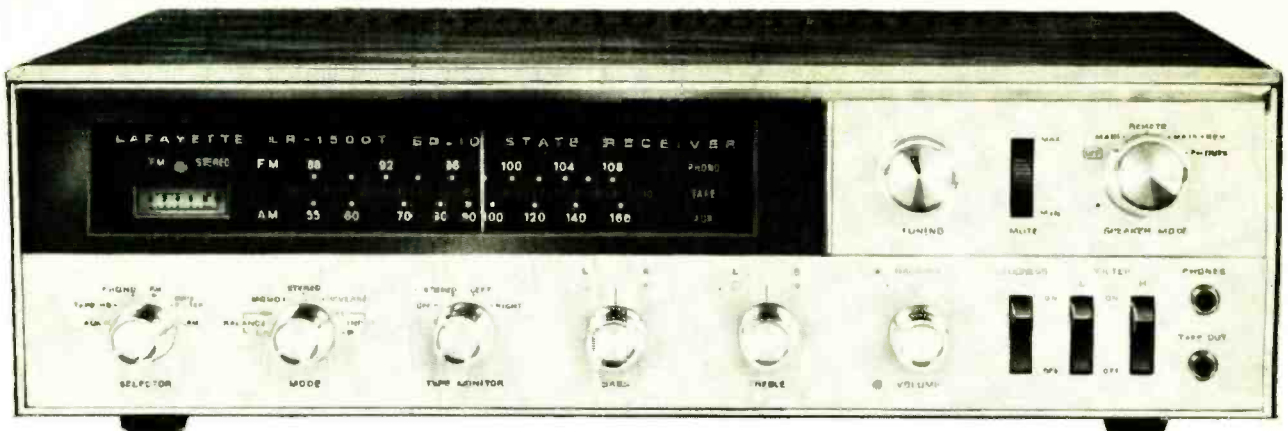
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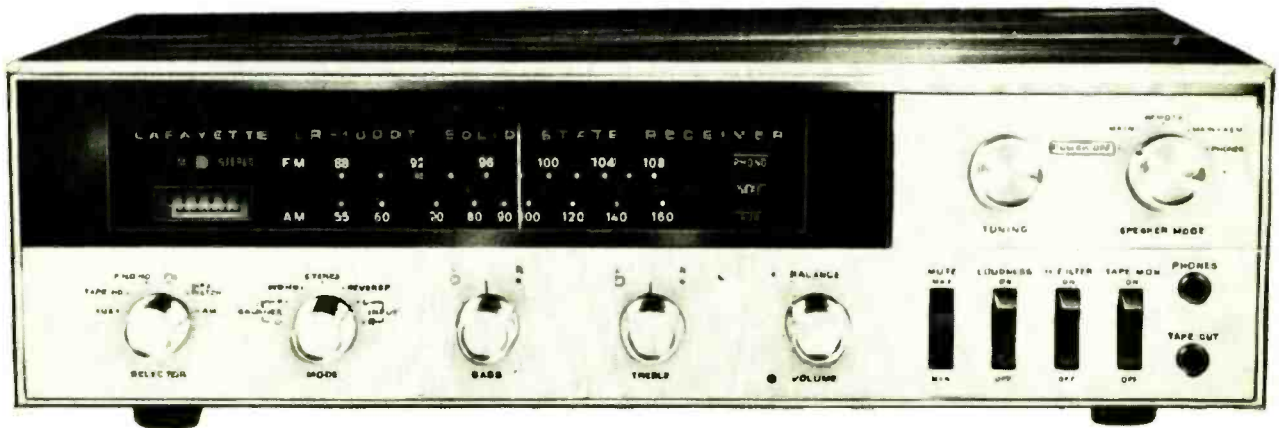
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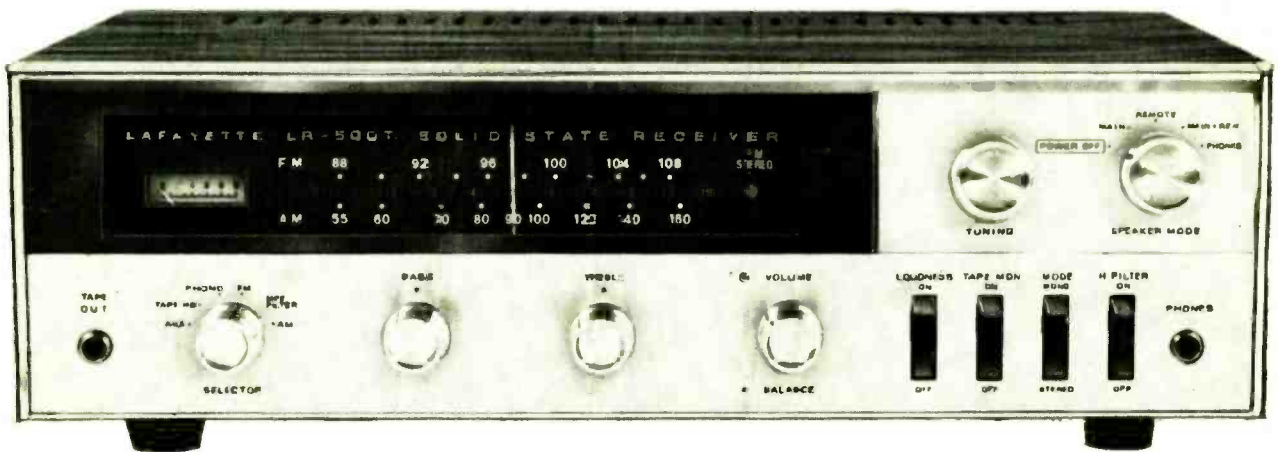
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CIRCLE 54 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



At left, organist and baroque specialist Simon Preston; below, Yehudi Menuhin in a relatively rare role for him, as soloist on the viola.



## NOTES

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

### LONDON

#### EMI's Month:

#### From Haydn to Walton With Stops In Between

The Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank has had its first recording session. This modest-sized hall seating 1,100 has provided a bone of contention ever since it was opened by the Queen in March 1967. Its concrete-slabbed sides represent to many eyes the architecture of brutality, and many music lovers felt the same way when they heard the harsh resonances that emanated from the concrete box of the stage area at the early performances. Nowadays a curtain is literally drawn over the stage and things are much improved, but for its recording sessions—Handel Organ Concertos with soloist Simon Preston, Yehudi Menuhin and the Menuhin (formerly Bath Festival) Orchestra—EMI did exactly the reverse. The engineers excluded the hall acoustic as far as possible by concentrating their microphones within the box of the stage.

Even if the Queen Elizabeth Hall is unlikely to become a regular recording site, the EMI people seemed pleased with the results they were getting, and especially with the sound of the Flentrop chamber organ, an instrument designed in collaboration with Ralph Downes. Like almost everything else in the hall, the organ has been a subject of dispute, but only because of its position. It rises up from beneath the stage, but then ef-

fectively slices any choir present into two separate sections. For the Handel Organ Concertos, of course, the problem did not arise.

The sessions I attended were the second of a planned series of four covering all the concertos and representing a variety of baroque organs. (The first were done on the reconstructed eighteenth-century organ by Renatus Harris in the Merchant Taylors Hall in the City of London.) As I walked in, Menuhin (eye-catching in a bright crimson shirt) had just come to a halt in conducting the charming B flat Concerto, Op. 4, No. 6. "I'm not yet convinced," he was saying quizzically, "about the alternation of violins and flutes." Preston persuaded him that the reading was completely authentic, and they went on to discuss the exact details of double-dots and ornaments, particularly in the elaborated repeats of different sections. "That may be too frivolous," said Menuhin almost apologetically in suggesting an extra trill, but everyone readily agreed. London taste at the moment is for more ornamentation rather than less, perhaps as a reaction against the bald manners of earlier years. In the work at hand echo effects too were regarded as important, and Preston's registration emphasized the lightness of lute stops and the like, with the accompanying strings muted for the whole of the first two movements.

**Menuhin with Viola.** Only a few days later, Menuhin was in EMI's No. 1 Studio, not with the baton this time but in a rare role for him, playing the viola. It was through the persuasion of recording manager Ronald Kinloch An-

derson that Menuhin first started playing the viola seriously. Anderson suggested to him that he ought to take the lead in the Bath Festival recording of the Sixth *Brandenburg*. Finally Menuhin agreed, and since then he has periodically recorded full-scale viola concertos—notably Berlioz' *Harold in Italy* with Colin Davis and Bartók's Viola Concerto with Antal Dorati.

This time it was Sir William Walton's Viola Concerto, and the composer himself was on hand to conduct the New Philharmonia Orchestra. Following a strict rule he has set himself, Menuhin agrees to act as violist only after he has had a spell of holiday from conducting. This time he had been "relaxing" for three weeks, practicing the viola—not an instrument of his own but a Bergonzi lent to him by Peter Schidlöf of the Amadeus Quartet. "Peter has now graduated to a Strad," Menuhin said, but he added how much he himself loves the "fat tone" of this Bergonzi instrument. Oistrakh, he recalled, sometimes played on a very beautiful Guarneri viola, but "I prefer this."

Sir William Walton fusses less about a recording he's conducting than any other composer I can think of, yet the results as a rule are astonishingly vital. Within seconds of the first movement's completion, ten minutes before the scheduled end of the session, Walton took up the baton for the scherzo (having checked with Menuhin on exactly how fast he would like it). Straightaway, without a word, he whisked soloist and orchestra through a very tricky movement. No re-

*Continued on page 34*





1. RCA VICTROLA. Rimsky-Korsakoff. Scheherazade. Pierre Monteux—London Symphony Orchestra.



2. RCA VIC. Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture. Liszt-Mephisto Waltz. Debussy Iberia. Reiner Chicago Symp.



3. RCA VIC. Beethoven—Symphony No. 5. Schubert—Symphony No. 8. Munch and Boston Symphony.



4. RCA VIC. Beethoven—"Eroica" Symphony. Pierre Monteux—the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.



5. RCA VIC. Beethoven—Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral". Pierre Monteux—the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.



6. RCA VIC. Bartok—Concerto for Orchestra. Reiner—Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



7. RCA VIC. Mendelssohn-Midsummer Night's Dream. Schumann—Symphony No. 3. Toscanini—NBC Symphony Orch.



8. RCA VIC. Mozart—Symphonies No. 39 & 40. Toscanini—NBC Symphony Orch.



9. RCA VIC. Ravel—Bolero, La Valse. Debussy—Afternoon of a Faun. Ibert—Ports of Call. Munch—Boston Symphony.



10. RCA VIC. Sibelius—Finlandia. Grieg—The Last Spring—Others. London Proms Symphony.



11. RCA CAMDEN. Glenn Miller original recordings. The Nearness of You, My Blue Heaven, Fools Rush in.



12. RCA CAM. Music from Doctor Zhivago, Alfie, A Man and a Woman, others. Living Strings.



13. RCA CAM. Music of Irving Berlin. Blue Skies, How Deep is the Ocean, Always. Melachrino Strings.



14. RCA CAM. The Sound of Music. My Favorite Things, Do-Re-Mi, Climb Every Mountain. Living Strings.



15. RCA CAM. The Magic of Hawaii. My Little Grass Shack, The Reef, Lovely Hula Hands, others. Leo Addeo—Orch. & Chor.



16. RCA CAM. Chet Atkins. Music from Nashville My Home Town, Summer Sunday, Love Offering, Lonesome Road.



17. RCA CAM. Eddy Arnold. I'm Throwing Rice, This is the Thanks I Get, Wagon Wheels, others.



18. RCA CAM. Side By Side. Norman Luboff Choir. Oh What a Beautiful Mornin', All the Things You Are.



19. RCA CAM. Peter Nero. If Ever I Would Leave You, A Certain Smile, Scarlet Ribbons, Tangerine.



20. RCA CAM. Perry Como. Hello Young Lovers, Vaya Con Dios, I've Got You Under My Skin, Tomboy.

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## NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 30

hearsal whatever. The result was not perfect, but much better than many a first take I have heard. The Viola Concerto will be coupled with Walton's Violin Concerto, to be recorded at a later date.

**Klemperer, and Others.** EMI, as it happens, has lately been booking up recording studios almost as if they were squash courts. With Klemperer it has been recording Mahler's Seventh and re-recording the same conductor's Beethoven Seventh as well as Schumann Second and *Genoveva* Overture, all of them with the New Philharmonia Orchestra. During the *Genoveva* sessions producer Suvij Raj Grubb casually asked the octogenarian maestro whether he was familiar with the opera for which the overture was written. "There is one good duet in it," the old man answered promptly and at once proceeded to sing it in his croaking voice. Not much wrong with the Klemperer musical memory.



Otto Klemperer: at eighty-four, fast on the draw with an answer.

Grubb found that during a single week he presided over no fewer than nine separate sessions, including not only work with Klemperer but with Daniel Barenboim, whose Beethoven sonata recordings are proceeding apace: Op. 2, No. 3; Op. 28, the *Pastoral*; Op. 21, the *Waldstein*; and Op. 110 are the latest. Barenboim has also conducted for his wife, Jacqueline du Pré, in the Schumann and Saint-Saëns Cello Concertos; and with Sir John Barbirolli, Du Pré has recorded the Cello Concerto of Georg Monn. The last-named will be coupled with the Haydn E major Concerto, already in the vaults.

Barbirolli had earlier completed the main bulk of the sessions for Verdi's *Otello*, which produced a characteristic Barbirolli story. He kept trying to get the chorus to look at him instead of burying their heads in the music. Finally, in exasperation, Barbirolli lay down full length practically at their feet, and challenged them: "Perhaps you'll look at me now!" No more trouble over missed cues. EDWARD GREENFIELD

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**CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD**

BY ROBERT ANGUS

# VIDEO TOPICS

## WILL ELECTRONIC VIDEO SUBVERT VIDEO TAPE?

SOMETIME DURING 1969, many insiders feel, there will begin a battle whose outcome may well determine whether the home video system of the future will be a playback-only system (EVR) or one that permits the user to make his own recordings (VTR). Ostensibly, the struggle will appear to be between two systems for reproducing pictures on the home television screen. On one side will be companies like Ampex, Minnesota Mining, Sony, Matsushita (Panasonic), Philips (Norelco), Bell & Howell, and a number of other companies that are already involved with magnetic tape recording in general and with videotape recording in particular. In the opposing corner will be the television networks, program producers, and what is euphemistically called "talent"—all backing a system called electronic video recording.

Both systems will be trying to establish themselves as *the* medium for picture reproduction in the home. EVR uses motion picture film. Although it started over a year ago as monochrome (see this column, November 1967), EVR recently has shown itself capable of also making color pictures—and at costs lower than either color film or video tape. However, you can't record on EVR film; you must buy programs already recorded, as you now buy a phonograph record.

EVR was developed by CBS Laboratories, in conjunction with the Ciba Pharmaceutical Co. of Switzerland and ICI, an industrial group in England. The developers last December licensed Motorola to produce the device; other licensees are anticipated, while CBS Labs' parent group, the Columbia Broadcasting System, is looking on with interest. The TV networks have long been nervous about the home video recorder. As one network executive put it when the home VTR first appeared, "If somebody is watching a recording of *Birth of a Nation* he videotaped from some educational channel, he isn't watching whatever's on our network. As we lose viewers, we'll have to adjust rates to advertisers. If we lose enough, we'll have to cut our rates. And that will mean less money for new productions. The first ones to go will be the most expensive—news and public affairs, and cultural specials."

Just as the record companies look with some fear at tape cartridge units that can record as well as play back, so the owners of video programs are shy of the VTR. "After all," asks one movie executive, "why should anybody buy a videotape of one of our features if he can tape a copy for a fraction of the price the next time it plays on television?" Film producers would naturally prefer a playback-only system, in which you'd have to buy your copy of *Cleopatra* prerecorded and prepackaged, or do without. Understandable as these fears are, however, it may be that they are essentially unrealistic. Videotaping Julia Child on \$30-worth of tape to play back in your kitchen doesn't make sense when her book, containing the equivalent of dozens of programs, costs only about \$5.00 and fits on a few inches of counter space. And re-recording, the only factor that presently makes economic sense of the home VTR, draws the user right back to the output of his local stations.

EVR, like videotape, hopes to establish a beachhead in the schools, where playback units can be supplied at a fraction the cost of VTRs. If EVR's present price and quality advantages can knock VTR out of the schools—even for a year or two—the home picture system your children use may well be limited to pictures on a reel of film.

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CIRCLE 7 ON READER SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

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(Oh, you bet we could.)

We saw you the other day buying recording tape and cassettes.

You looked like you could use some help. Asking for just any tape. Buying a big name brand just because you heard the name. Actually, nothing wrong with that. Unless you want to build an exceptional library of music, sounds of history, family sounds, speeches, you name it. Unless you want to preserve the spontaneity of your children's voices, a party, a cherished moment as clear and alive as you taped it.

Then you come to us. Audio Devices. We're the people who make the tape the "pros" buy. We think we have what you want to hear...whether you are an audiophile or a beginner.

## How to get to us from where you are and how you'll know you're there.

First of all, run your fingers down the list of Audiotape distributors on the facing page. Find the one nearest you.



Walk, ride a bike, scooter, subway, bus or cab to get there.

Once you're there look for one of the Audiotape displays on the left.

You can't miss it. It will be wearing a sign, "Audiotape Recording Center" and will be stacked with Audiopaks and Audiotape. We call our cartridges

CIRCLE 7 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Audiopak cartridges and our cassettes Audiopak cassettes.

We're the only cartridge and cassette maker who uses Audiotape. That's pretty important. A cartridge or cassette tape should be specially formulated because it goes back and forth, again and again, around guides and rollers and hubs.

Ours is.

Most tape makers start with the same raw materials: plastic base, iron oxides and so on. It's a lot like cooking or baking. Start with the same ingredients but what a difference a great chef makes in the finished product.

Our difference?

We're tape specialists. We make tape only. Sound tape, lubricated tape, computer tape, videotape. You know yourself what happens when you put all your efforts into one thing. You get to know more about it—become a perfectionist. Does it make a difference in the way we sound? The major studios and radio stations think so. Good enough for you? Good.

Meet us at an Audiotape Recording Center.

If you don't find a distributor listed near you, drop us a line at Audio Devices, Inc., Dept. HF-2, 235 East 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017

**audiotape**<sup>®</sup>  
SOUND TAPE

**audiopak**<sup>®</sup>

CASSETTES & CARTRIDGES

Audio Devices, Inc.

A subsidiary of Capitol Industries, Inc.



# TOO HOT TO HANDLE

I'm considering purchase of the AR-5 speaker system, which is offered in walnut, birch, pine, and mahogany. I have asked audio salesmen whether the different types of wood affect the sound. The salesmen are vague in their replies, apparently trying to plug the more expensive finishes. Or are they right?—J. A. Aguero, Passaic, N. J. They are wrong. Either seven-core plywood or flake-core plywood (both of which have the same acoustical properties) is used for all AR's enclosures. The finish is only a thin veneer bonded to the outer surface, and it has no effect on performance. Incidentally, veneered plywood is almost universally used for cabinetry and furniture, in and out of the high fidelity industry.

I would like to know what you consider the best 4-track stereo recorder for \$225 or less.—Arnie Bell, Playa Del Rey, Calif.

Of the low-priced machines we have tested in the past three years, the one we liked best was the Allied TD-1030, costing \$129.95. (See report in HF, February 1968.)

Would you rate the AR amplifier (\$225) and the Heathkit AJ-15 tuner kit (\$190) as a better combination than the Heathkit AR-15 stereo receiver kit (\$340)? The guarantee is much better on the AR amp; and if the combination is about the same qualitatively, it would be worth the extra \$75 to me.—David Rawding, Lynn, Mass.

From a performance standpoint, our published test results show that the combination in fact comes out a little ahead—mainly because of the AR amplifier's somewhat higher power and somewhat lower distortion than the amplifier section of the Heath receiver. On the other hand, the Heath receiver offers controls and features that the Heath/AR combination lacks: a headphone jack for more than just FM listening, speaker-system selecting facilities, a four-position program selector, a loudness contour switch, and an AM band. If the attractive warranty of the AR amplifier and the slightly better performance of the combination outweigh for you their extra cost and fewer features, we'd say yes.

It is impossible for me to hear the following speakers together for personal

evaluation. Separately, they all sound as though they would provide lasting pleasure. They are the KLH 17, Harman-Kardon 40, AR2X, AR2a. With the 2a in unfinished cabinet they are all in the \$60 to \$100 price class. By your knowledge and test reports on low distortion, bass full or hole in middle, clean highs, and over-all transience plus quality parts—how do they compare and rank, if driven by a 60-watt receiver of 18 watts RMS?—B. Brown, Louisville, Ky.

The AR2a is no longer listed as available, and we never tested the AR2X. Of the AR2 series, we have tested the AR2aX; our opinion is that it's the best in the group in which you seem interested. It's also the most expensive (\$109 to \$128 depending on cabinet). The lowest-priced speaker in the group is the KLH-17 at \$69.95. Its response is fairly similar to that of the AR2aX except that it doesn't reach as far down into the deep bass. The AR makes it down to below 40 Hz; the KLH is a little shy at about 45 Hz. The HK-40, at \$100, is fairly similar to the AR2aX in that its bass gets down to below 40 Hz; the top end rolls off a bit sooner at 13 kHz than either the AR or the KLH at 14 kHz. Your 18 watts RMS power per channel should suffice for any of these speakers.

I plan to return to my native country, Turkey, where the electrical standards are 220 volts AC at 50 Hz, rather than the American 115 volts AC at 60 Hz. Would the difference in Hz cause any harm to my stereo system?—Secil Tuncalp, Champaign, Ill.

For your turntable and tape recorder you should obtain from their manufacturers any required adapter-parts (pulley, motor shaft, or capstan) that permit them to operate correctly and safely on 50-Hz power. This line frequency doesn't matter for electronic units such as tuners, amplifiers, or receivers, but the line voltage (115-120 vs. 220-230) does matter for tape recorders and turntables. You will need a step-down transformer that changes the higher voltage abroad to the lower voltage required by U.S. products, unless your equipment has such provisions built in. We recommend a separate transformer to handle the electronics (tuner and amplifier, or receiver) and additional separate transformers for turntable and tape recorder. You will

probably need about 250 watts from the transformer handling your electronics, and 100 watts each from the transformers handling your turntable and tape recorder. Typical transformers would be the Stancor P-6385 (250 watts, about \$25), and the Stancor P-6383 (100 watts, about \$15). For exact details, contact your local hi-fi dealer or radio parts supply store.

I am located in a valley, where distant FM reception is so poor that most people can receive only two stations twenty to thirty miles away. (We get TV by cable, but it's not equipped for FM reception.) I'm lucky in that with my Scott 388 receiver, stacked pair of Finco FJ-5 antennas, JFD-FT-1 amplifier, and eighty feet of Belden 8290 shielded twin-lead, I can receive enjoyable sound from at least ten other FM stations. None of these, however, has signals strong enough for stereo reception. Would coaxial cable give better signal than my twin-lead?—Claude Cook, Mullens, W. Va.

It's well worth trying, in our view. Foam-filled coaxial cable is not only just about as rugged and certainly as noise-free as shielded twin-lead but it also has less signal loss. For your eighty-foot stretch, the cost would be only about \$4.00 more than twin-lead.

Is a free-standing room divider strong enough to keep a turntable with very light tracking cartridge steady while controls are being adjusted on a tape deck, tuner, or preamplifier?—Malcolm R. Kimball, Talahassee, Fla.

If it's strong enough to support the turntable's weight, and is firmly anchored in place, such a structure will do the job. In shopping for a room divider, pay attention to the manner in which its uprights are fastened to floor and ceiling. Pressure-type fittings, supplemented by bolted brackets, will suffice. If the thing still wobbles, brace it from the rear with a 1-by-4-inch board, itself bracketed to the floor at one end and bolted to the rear of a shelf or cabinet at the other end. We've installed a Barzilay Multi-Span system this way and it works fine.

I have seen the Maximus 2 speaker system advertised for \$110 a pair. They are small, but I'd like them for a starter system, to be replaced later by larger speakers. I plan to drive them with either a Dynaco Stereo 120 or an AR amplifier. What do you think?—David Y. Holcomb, Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

You may have a problem driving the Maximus 2 speakers from either of your powerhouse amplifiers. Each speaker is rated for power-handling ability of 30 watts; each of your proposed amplifiers can easily supply double that amount per channel. So, if you want to avoid distortion or even possible damage to the speakers, remember not to turn the volume control up to full.

Other than that, you have a good buy here—half the price the system sold for when it was introduced in this country about four years ago.



# Why do we make it so easy to live without an expensive Fisher speaker system?

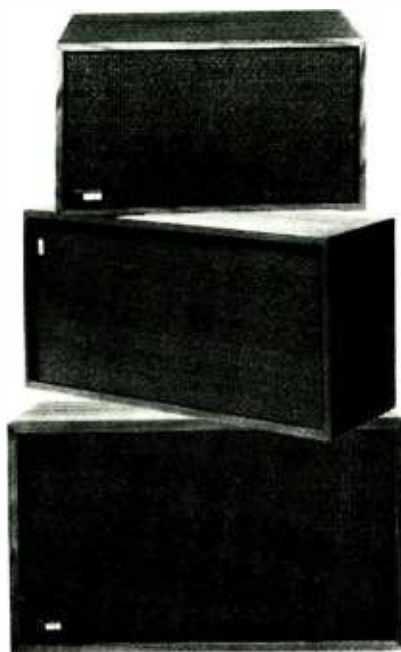
We could probably get a lot more people to spend \$200 or so for a pair of Fisher speaker systems if we didn't make the low-cost speakers you see here.

These systems sell for as little as \$89 a matched pair. The sound of each is unmistakably full and natural. Unmistakably Fisher.

And there are three easy-to-live-with low-cost Fisher speaker systems, so you don't even have to give up the luxury of a choice.

The Fisher XP-44 (\$44.50 each) we call our Little Giant®. It's a two-way system that manages a frequency response of 39 to 19,000 Hz in just 8¼" x 15¼" x 6½" of space!

The Fisher XP-55B (\$49.95 each) is the most popular speaker we make. It's the one that makes our \$450 compact sound so good. The XP-55B uses a massive 8-inch woofer that extends its low-end frequency response



## The Fisher

down to 37 Hz, and a low-mass treble speaker with peak-free response to 20,000 Hz. It's also quite small: 10" x 20" x 7½" deep.

Our best two-way speaker system is the XP-60 (\$79.95 each). It offers extremely clean sound from 35 Hz to beyond audibility. The treble speaker in the XP-60 has a unique shape that makes possible the speaker's extremely wide dispersion characteristics. The system is small enough to fit on any bookshelf: 13" x 23" x 10½" deep.

Sure, we'd like everyone to buy our expensive speaker systems. So why, you might ask, do we make such good low-cost speaker systems?

Because we can.

(For more information, plus a free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1969 edition, an authoritative 72-page reference guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on magazine's front cover flap.)

# NEWS & VIEWS

## STEREO SHOWS—A TALE OF THREE CITIES

With three major shows taking place in as many weeks, high fidelity may well be developing into America's newest spectator sport. Certainly, the events last November in San Francisco, Toronto, and—of all places—Paramus, New Jersey strongly indicate that people are eager to come out to see and hear the latest in high quality stereo gear. In fact, the Paramus show boasted some 28,000 visitors according to official count—a figure which, to our knowledge, sets a new attendance record for audio shows.

The San Francisco show, held at that city's Civic Auditorium October 30 to November 3, under the sponsorship of the Institute of High Fidelity—offered West Coast stereo enthusiasts a chance to audition most of the offerings introduced by the industry a month earlier at the New York show. In addition, the SF show boasted a few products not seen at previous shows, including a new tape deck from Teac, two Sansui stereo receivers, and a budget tuner, amplifier, two receivers, and stereo compact from Nikko of Japan. While the Nikko line isn't, strictly speaking, unfamiliar to Southern Californians, it will be new to stereophiles in other parts of the country when it begins to appear on dealer shelves.

The Civic Auditorium, with its king-size rooms and spacious halls, proved to be one of the best auditoriums we've seen from the standpoint of permitting equipment to be properly displayed and large numbers of visitors to move about freely. Because the spaces are so large, people don't have the claustrophobic feeling they get in corridors and rooms at the New York show (and, incidentally, which we experienced in the minirooms of Toronto's Lord Simcoe Hotel). For the same reason, the Tijuana Brass doesn't leak from one exhibit to the next. However, the very size of many rooms, combined with their "hard" acoustics, caused problems of excessive reverberation for several exhibitors, who had to resort to carpets and drapes to improve the sound dispersal characteristics. Be that as it may, the Civic Auditorium's vastness made a crowd which almost doubled Toronto's estimated 7,000 seem small, while the Toronto show had seemed to be playing to capacity.

Visitors to Paramus' audio extravaganza—sponsored by Sam Goody, Inc. at Garden State Plaza, November 14 to 16—didn't have much new to look at. Goody made up for it by offering the first 10,000 visitors a free booklet on installations and by handing out, every hour on the hour, door prizes such as transistor radios, stereo receivers, tape decks, and stereo compacts.

The Goody show differed from the others in several important respects: it was dealer-sponsored, which meant you could place orders right at the show; it provided plenty of free parking in a suburban shopping mall; and there was no admission fee. Held in an auditorium, the show permitted some thirty manufacturers to set up exhibits remarkably similar to those from the New York High Fidelity Music Show and manned by company personnel. Factory experts were on hand to answer specific questions about equipment, while Goody salesmen were available to anyone who wanted to buy something.

Torontonians, at a show sponsored jointly by *Electron* magazine and the Dominion High Fidelity Association (November 20 to 23), also got their first look not only at Canadian-made components by Hallmark, Studiotone, H. H. Scott, and Martel, but a new receiver from Japan



IHF president John Koss with Frank Sinatra, Jr. at ribbon-cutting ceremonies to open San Francisco show.

(AGS) a new tape desk from England (Ferroglyph), and other stereo products. Canadians now can choose from brands familiar to U.S. buyers, plus many not yet sold in the states, such as AGS, Studiotone, Hallmark, RSC, Arena, and others. One interesting component exhibited was AGS' TK170 stereo receiver. It claims 170 watts of music power, stereo FM and AM, flywheel tuning, sliding volume control, push-button operation of other controls, and a flip-down drawer containing less frequently used controls. Price is \$599.95, and the set is available, so far, only in Canada.

Here is a rundown of some of the new products introduced in either Toronto or San Francisco. The Teac A-7030 tape deck, at \$749.50, holds reels up to 10½ inches, it records half-track, and it plays either quarter-track or half-track tapes. The unit is intended for semi-professional use. Ferroglyph's Series 7 deck, introduced in Canada and expected south of the border later this year, is a three-speed, three-motor transport available in mono or stereo. It can also be had with a wood case and built-in loudspeakers. It holds reels up to 8¼ inches and weighs 49½ pounds.

Sansui's Model 350 is a 46-watt stereo receiver retailing for \$200, while the \$260 Model 800 claims 70 watts. Both offer stereo FM and AM, and feature meter tuning, stereo indicator, earphone jack on the front panel, and blackout dial. The Nikko equipment includes the Model TRM-40 amplifier at \$99.95, which offers 44 watts of music power and features separate bass and treble controls as well as all the standard inputs and outputs. The companion tuner, FAM-12, sells for \$109.95 and claims a sensitivity of 1.8  $\mu$ V IHF. The two receivers, Models STA-501 and STA-701B, are stereo FM/AM units. The former is rated at 50 watts output IHF and lists for \$189.95; the latter, at \$239.95, has a 70-watt amplifier. Model STA-301 is a compact system, including a 30-watt receiver and two SS-83A minibookshelf speaker systems for \$199.95.

*Continued on page 44*

# PIONEER SX-1500T

AM-FM STEREO RECEIVER • 170 WATTS, FET AND IC'S



(The SX-1500T Price, only: \$360.) Shown with PIONEER CS-88 Speaker Systems at \$175. each.

## What can we say after we've said "It's the Greatest"?

### JULIAN HIRSCH, in STEREO REVIEW, said:

"If anyone doubts that moderately priced integrated stereo receivers are capable of really top-quality performance, let him examine, as we have, the specifications — and the actual performance — of the Pioneer SX-1500T. This import outperforms, both in its audio and FM aspects, most of the components we have tested in recent years. Die-hard advocates of vacuum-tube design should ponder the fact that no FM tuner of pre-solid-state days matched the overall performance of the SX-1500T, and only the costliest vacuum-tube amplifiers approached its high power output with such low audio distortion."

*After you've heard it, we're reasonably sure what you're going to say.*

Because you want a better receiver, *don't be misled*—pick the one with the optimum features at an honest price. You owe it to yourself to evaluate the SX-1500T against any other receiver on the market, regardless of price. What more can we say?

Write Pioneer for reprints of the entire reviews from *Stereo Review* and *Audio Magazine* and the name of your nearest franchised Pioneer dealer. PIONEER ELECTRONICS U.S.A. CORP., 140 Smith Street, Farmingdale, L.I., New York 11735 • (516) 694-7720

### This is what AUDIO MAGAZINE had to say:

"The engineers at Pioneer must belong to the 'wide-band' response school for, although we suspected that the Pioneer Bandwidth published specification might be a misprint, it actually *does* extend from 17 Hz (they claim only 20 Hz) to 70 kHz! You'll never lack for 'highs' with this one!

If you crave lots of power and don't want to get involved with separate pream-amps and tuners, the Pioneer SX-1500T AF/FM stereo receiver certainly has enough power and enough true component features to make it very worthy of consideration at its remarkably low price of \$360.00."

**PIONEER**   
... More Value All-Ways!

CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**CANADIANS GETTING MORE STEREO  
—AND THE U. S. MAY GET SOME OF IT TOO**

Speaking of Canada, for many years it took more than dedication for a Dominion resident to be an audiophile—it took money, and lots of it. A receiver that sold in the United States for \$500 might cost Canadians as much as \$750—including all the import duties and luxury taxes. Although Canada has one-tenth the population of the United States, it consumes only eight per cent as much high fidelity equipment—or it did until recently.

Because such a small market wasn't worth the attention of a domestic manufacturer, Canadians had to make do with imports—Fisher, Scott, and Harman-Kardon tuners and amplifiers from the United States; Wharfedale speakers and Garrard changers from Britain; Philips tape recorders and components from Holland; Dual and Miracord changers from Germany; and Pioneer loudspeakers, Sony tape recorders, and other products from Japan. "In fact," one Toronto audiophile lamented recently, "we had a wider choice of products than even U.S. buyers did—but nobody could afford them."

Well, prosperity has come to Canada, and with it a determination on the part of Canadians to acquire high fidelity components. Today, Canadians can choose from not one but two domestic brands of electronics with a third made-in-Canada product carrying an American name. There are Canadian-made loudspeakers and loudspeaker systems. The Canadian market has become so important to H. H. Scott that it is licensing a Canadian manufacturer to produce Scott components in Toronto, while Ampex is making prerecorded cassettes there. Finally—can you believe it—Canada is exporting components to the United States.

The first export is Martel Electronics' Model 40W 40-watt AM/FM stereo receiver, which sells in Toronto for \$180. Until recently, Martel's electronics all were manufactured under contract in Japan, but recently Martel switched to Canada. At the same time, the company licensed Wide World of Electronics, a Canadian marketing firm, to use the Martel name on its products in Canada. Wide World markets not only the 40W but two higher priced receivers, the 100-watt T14MC at \$300 and the T12MC, an 80-watter selling for \$240.

At the same time, Automatic Coil Manufacturing Co. in North Toronto is making three stereo receivers, two stereo compacts, and three loudspeaker systems under license from H. H. Scott. The receivers are the 341, 344C, and 384; there are two Scottie compacts (2550W and 2550T) and the S-10, S-14, and S-15 loudspeaker systems. Joe Bass, Automatic Coil's general manager, points out that the first thing Canadian audiophiles will notice about these models is the lower price. The 344C, for example, used to sell for \$677.95 imported. Today it sells for \$500.

Another manufacturer hoping to invade the American market during 1969 is RSC Audio Sales Ltd., whose loudspeaker systems include two bookshelf models and three minispeakers.

Two other firms—Hallmark Sound of Canada and Studiotone Ltd.—are offering made-in-Canada stereo receivers. Hallmark's receivers are the 36-watt CW-90 (\$400) and the 80-watt CW-120 (\$550). Both include FM stereo and AM, stereo indicator beacon, earphone jack on the front panel, and other features. Stereotone's 200R is rated at 25 watts, while the 300R claims 50 watts. Controls and features are similar to Hallmark's. The firm also markets a stereo compact, the 300RC music center; and two minibookshelf loudspeaker systems.

What all this means to the Canadian audiophile is lower prices. It also seems safe to predict that products in Canada will get better and prices will get lower in the months ahead.

**EQUIPMENT** *in the* **NEWS****SONY OFFERS NEW DECK**

From Sony/Superscope comes the Model 355 three-speed (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ , 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ , 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  ips), three-head (erase, record, playback) stereo tape deck. Priced at "less than \$229.50," the 355 includes built-in switching for sound-on-sound and for echo effects during recording. Additional features include source and monitor switches, four-digit tape counter, automatic tape lifters, twin VU meters, and more.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**ORGAN FOR THE SOLDERING-IRON SET**

If you're a kit builder looking for greater worlds to conquer, you may want to consider Allied Radio's new Knight-Kit electronic spinet organ. The instrument is a 2-manual, 14-voice design from Schober. Pedals cover the range down to three octaves below middle C (32.7 Hz). Swell shoe, continuously variable vibrato, and spring-type reverb are among the instrument's other features. Output, rated at 25 watts (rms), feeds a 12-inch bass speaker and a 6- by 9-inch treble unit (with crossover network). The walnut-veneer console is included in the kit, with the glue and screws needed for assembly; it is sanded but must be finished by the builder. Price is \$599.50.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

*Continued on page 46*

# uniCLUB

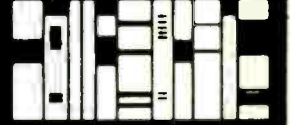
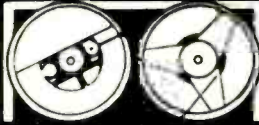
## saves you more on more of what you want!

RECORDS

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uniCLUB has all the labels. All of them. No exceptions. Choose any LP or tape on over 350 different labels. Capitol • Columbia • RCA • Angel • DGG • Folkways • Mercury • London—to name just a few. Your selection is absolutely unlimited. Every LP and tape available in the U.S.A.

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You save a minimum of 35% on LP's; 1/3 on tapes; 25% on books except texts. No guesswork about it—the prices are shown below.

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<b>ALBUMS</b>	\$1.98	1.35	.63
	2.98	1.95	1.03
	3.79	2.49	1.30
	4.79	3.09	1.70
	5.79	3.79	2.00
<b>TAPES</b>	5.98	3.99	1.99
	6.98	4.65	2.33
	7.98	5.35	2.63
	8.98	5.99	2.99
	9.98	6.65	3.33
<b>BOOKS</b>	4.95	3.75	1.20
	5.95	4.50	1.45
	6.95	5.25	1.70
	7.95	5.95	2.00

**FACT 3—REQUIREMENTS—NONE!**

There is no requirement to buy anything until you wish. And you'll never get a record, tape or book until you order it.

**FACT 4—COST TO JOIN—\$5**

\$5 covers LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP in uniCLUB. There are no dues and no annual fees. There is never another fee although benefits are increasing all the time.

**FACT 5—QUALITY—GUARANTEED PERFECT**

You receive only factory-sealed brand new albums, tapes and books. You are guaranteed satisfaction with the quality of all purchases. A defective album or tape is always returnable at Club expense. Books are first quality original publishers' editions only.

<p><b>MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE</b> If after receiving your uniCLUB materials you aren't convinced we meant what we said—that uniCLUB membership offers more Club for the money—or if you've simply changed your mind, tell us within 30 days and your money will be fully refunded at once.</p>	<p><b>GIFT MEMBERSHIPS</b> Save even on your enrollment. \$2.50 brings full privileges for life to friends, relatives and neighbors. Splitting the cost with one person brings cost down to \$3.75 each, with four others, cost is only \$3.00 apiece.</p>
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## SPECIALS!

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Every MGM popular, jazz or classical LP:

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DGG entire catalog, mono & stereo: List \$5.79 — Only \$3 per disc.

High-Fidelity Special — The new Garrard Synchro-Lab SL95:

List \$129.50 — Club Special \$83.00

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A FREE Schwann catalog is sent upon joining. It lists over 30,000 LP's—every LP available on every label. No guesswork here either. The records you want you'll find under "Classical," "Popular," "Opera," "Folk," "Jazz," "Original Cast Shows," "Drama and Comedy," etc. The Harrison catalog, sent FREE upon joining if you request, does the same job for tapes and auto cartridges. uniGUIDE, the Club magazine, keeps you posted on releases of your favorite artists, supplements the Schwann and Harrison catalogs and lists extra-discount club specials.

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Specials are a regular feature of uniCLUB. You save extra dollars—often on a single item—40-80%. Specials appear in the uniGUIDE. See examples of the uniCLUB specials right here. You could save the price of your membership on 2 or 3 of these specials alone. You may order any or all of these 50% off items when you join—if you wish.

**HERE ARE THREE FEATURES THAT ONLY UNICLUB HAS:**

**FACT 8—STEREO GEAR COSTS UP TO 50% LESS**

• Acoustic Research • Ampex • Dynaco • Electro Voice • Empire • Kenwood • Tandberg • Garrard • Fisher • Sony. These are just a few of the manufacturers whose equipment you may buy at large discounts through uniCLUB. Both uniCLUB and full manufacturers' guarantees apply. Factory-sealed units are shipped promptly, always insured. Get a low uniCLUB quote on your needs and expand your system today!

**FACT 9—BOOK DIVISION SAVES YOU 25%—ALL PUBLISHERS**

Random House • Doubleday • Little, Brown • McGraw-Hill • Simon & Schuster • MacMillan—to name just a few. uniCLUB furnishes every book except \*texts and \*technical books at 25% discount. And, you get only original publishers' editions—not book-club editions. All paperbacks are available too at the same 25% discount. \*Texts and technical books—10% off.

**FACT 10—YOUR ORDER IS SHIPPED THE DAY UNICLUB GETS IT**

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Send my Free Schwann catalog, order blanks and uniGUIDE by return mail. \$5 enclosed guarantees me:

1. LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP in uniCLUB
2. 35%-80% savings on LP albums, 1/3 off on tapes, 25% on books.
3. No requirements ever to buy anything. Nothing will ever be sent until I order it.

I must be delighted with uniCLUB or within 30 days I will let you know and receive a full refund.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Send gift memberships at \$2.50 each to names and addresses listed on attached sheet.

I am also interested in pre-recorded tapes.

CIRCLE 81 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**PACE SETTERS FOR TEAC**

Teac, now selling to the U.S. market under its own name through Teac Corp. of America, has expanded its production facilities in Japan and revamped its line to give broad coverage to the consumer tape recorder field—as witness the two models illustrated here. One is the A-7030 tape deck, capable of 15- and 7½-ips operation; it takes NAB (10½-inch) reels and offers other professional features; price is \$749.50. At the other end of the line is the A-20 cassette deck, selling for \$139.50.

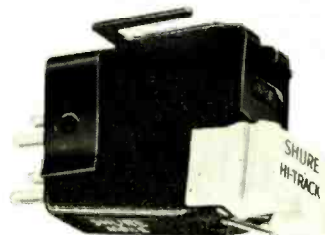
CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**RECEIVER PLUS TAPE CARTRIDGE**

Automatic Radio has announced its Model HMX-4000, an AM/stereo FM receiver combined with a built-in 8-track and 4-track cartridge tape player, with which Automatic Radio's Gidget device may be used. Rated output is 20 watts (music power). Terminals at the rear permit connecting external program sources, speakers, and antenna. A front-panel headphone jack is provided. Price was not known at press time.

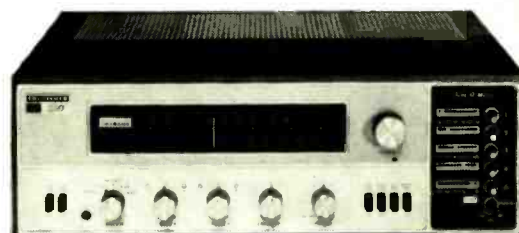
CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**SHURE MAKES IT EASIER**

"Trackability," Shure's watchword for its cartridge line these past couple of years, has been joined by a new one: "Easy-Mount." The term refers to a mounting clip, held in place in the tone arm shell by the usual mounting screws. The cartridge, after its leads are connected, slips into the clip. Top of the line is the M91E (\$49.95), designed to track at ¼ to 1½ grams in high-quality arms. Its stylus tip is a 0.2- by 0.7-mil biradial diamond, as is that in the M92E (\$44.95), designed for similar use but with arms whose specs aren't quite so exacting. The third model in the new line is the M93E (\$39.95), equipped with a 0.4- by 0.7-mil biradial diamond and recommended for use in automatic turntables that require 1½ to 3 grams tracking force.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



**PRETUNING WITH FISHER**

The Fisher 250-T stereo FM/AM receiver, rated at 50 watts music power per channel, features pretuned push-buttons for the FM band. Each can be turned to tune, like the full-scale FM dial, across its own miniature dial and then pressed to the channel selected. Positions on the master selector switch allow for FM, local FM, AM, phono, and aux. In addition there's a tape monitor switch. Main and remote speaker systems are individually switchable; both can be turned off when you're using the 250-T's headphone jack. Price is \$299.95.

Incidentally, the automatic turntable used in the Fisher 127 stereo compact is a BSR and not a Garrard as stated last month.

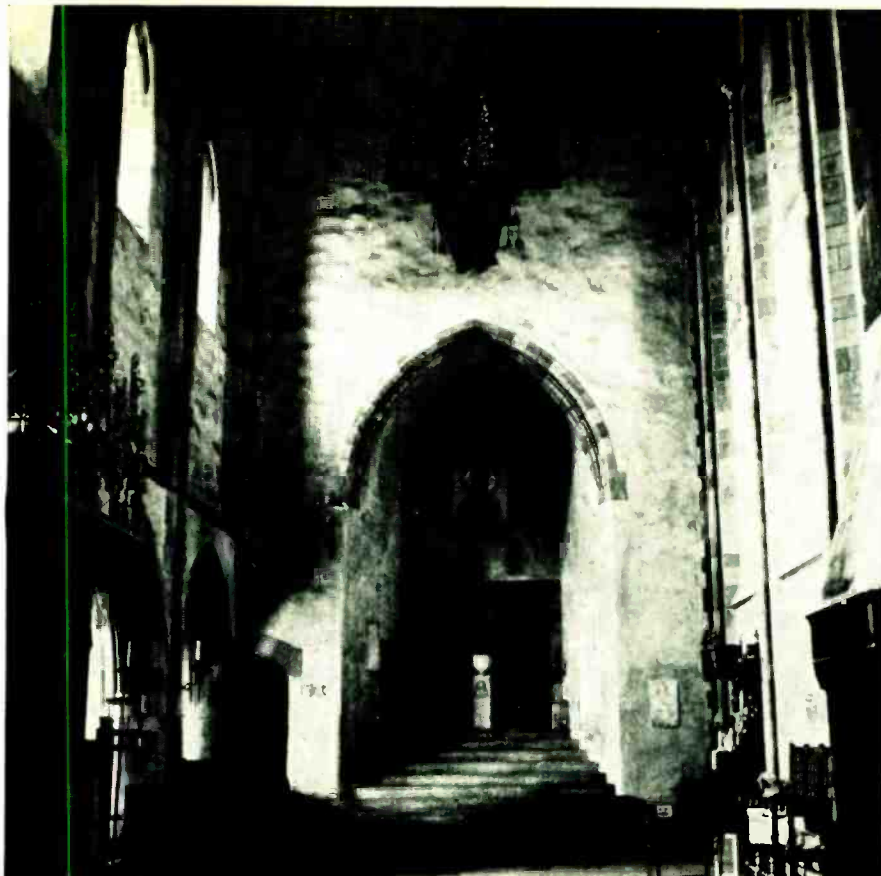
CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**SYLVANIA ADDS ANTENNA LINE**

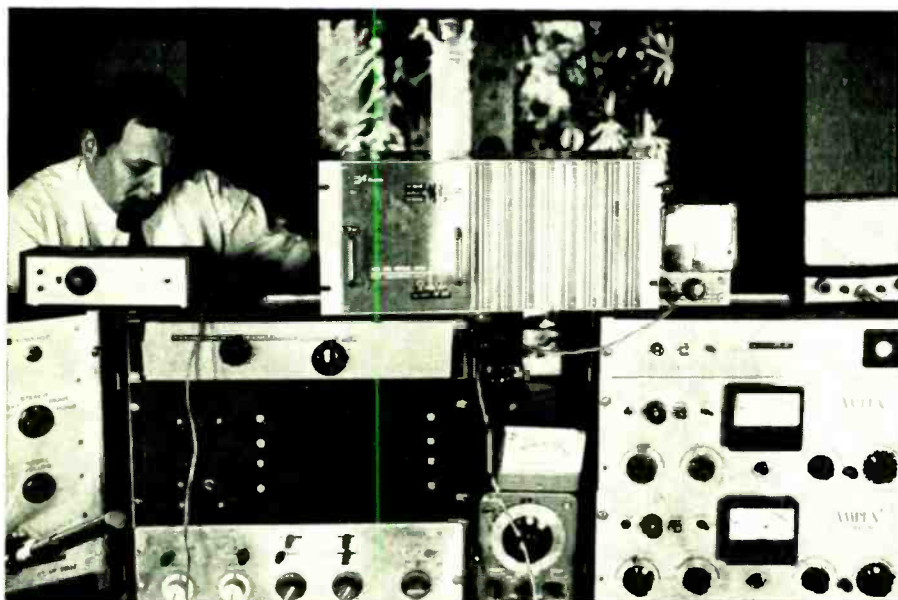
A line of fifteen antennas ranging in price from \$11.95 to \$74.95 has been announced by Sylvania Electric Products. The top-of-the-line Model 32UV-SG, which is suggested for fringe-area FM and VHF-UHF TV reception, is constructed of what Sylvania calls gold-anodized, structural-grade seamless aluminum tubing a half-inch in diameter. Although Sylvania has been active in supplying antennas for space, military, and communications purposes, these are its first for the home entertainment market.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The great hall of the Hammond Museum. This room is the location of the organ played by Richard Elsasser on Nonesuch H-71200 ("Yankee Organ Music") and H-71210 (Organ Symphony No. 5 by Charles-Marie Widor).



**AR-3a** speaker systems were designed for home music reproduction. Nonesuch Records uses them as monitors at recording sessions.



Nonesuch Records recently recorded several volumes of organ music played by Richard Elsasser at the historic Hammond Museum near Gloucester, Massachusetts. To make the recording, Marc Aubort of Elite Recordings, engineering and musical supervisor, used Schoeps microphones, and Ampex 351 recorder, Dolby A301 Audio Noise Reduction apparatus, and several pieces of equipment which were custom made. To monitor the input signal and to play back the master tape, Aubort used an AR amplifier and 2 AR-3a speaker systems.

*The AR-3a speaker system is priced from \$225 to \$250, depending on finish.*

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02141

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

IN LISTENING TO the room-filling sound of a modern stereo system, you might be oblivious to the fact that all those thrilling highs, middles, and lows you hear have their beginning—as far as your playback system is concerned—at an impossibly tiny juncture between a microscopically sized stylus tip and a set of invisible (to the naked eye) wiggles along the walls of a vinyl groove. Moreover, the conjoining here is no placid, or even orderly, affair; rather it is a turbulence of forces which, despite their small dimensions, kick up a veritable storm in physical terms. When playing a normal record, for instance, the stylus must accelerate to several hundred times the force of gravity merely to reproduce middles and highs (a 20,000-Hz tone requires acceleration of 1,000 G!). Just to reproduce an “easy” tone—say 5,000 Hz—the stylus must move twice that number of times per second, and not in a manner that would be “easiest” in relation to its own inertia and mass but rather in conformity to the unique, and constantly changing, shape of the groove wall.

Not only does the success of stereo playback depend to a large extent on the pickup’s ability, but that ability probably is qualified more strictly by a set of difficult physical laws than is the functioning of any other single element in the playback chain, with the possible exception of loudspeakers.

Gauging a pickup’s ability to perform is no cut-and-dried matter. To begin with, we are dealing not with something that can be stopped and leisurely analyzed but with a state of flux. Then too, there are no industry-wide standards for pickup measurements. Even when engineers agree on method and on the relative importance of different performance criteria, they are apt to disagree on test materials (such as the records used), on the instrumentation for reading the results, and on the interpretation of the results.

This is not to suggest that objective pickup measurements are impossible; quite the contrary—at CBS Laboratories we certainly make precise measurements and documentation of pickup performance. There are bound to be differences, however, both between specifications and test results for a given cartridge and among test results derived by different means. All this only emphasizes the need, in evaluating a cartridge, to supplement the reading of test reports with actual listening to the musical end-product.

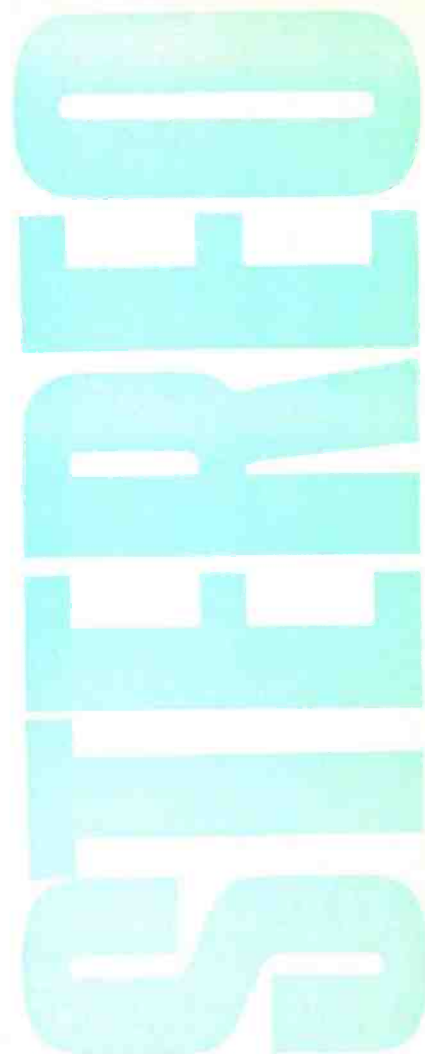
If we are unable to see what goes on between stylus and record groove, we can at least study the effects of this action. At our lab, we test for eight specific criteria: frequency response, channel separation, sensitivity, distortion, stylus compliance, tracking ability, stylus tip geometry, and vertical tracking angle.

The cartridge must transform the groove modulation into an electric signal accurately. Its frequency response thus must cover the audio range in a linear or “flat” manner. Resonant peaks and sharp roll-offs within the range from 20 Hz to 20 kHz will color or distort the sound.

**Frequency Response** Most pickups have two inherent resonances, one at low frequencies and the other at high frequencies. The low-frequency resonance is determined by the effective mass of the tone arm and the stylus compliance. The peak occurring at high frequencies results from the interaction of the effective mass of the stylus tip with the resilience of the vinyl record groove. These resonances may be “designed out” of the audible response—that is, below and beyond 20 Hz and 20 kHz respectively. Alternately, the peaks can be damped so that, although they fall within the audible band, they will remain largely inaudible.

As is true of any audio device, the flattest response describes the best response. Incidentally, pronounced and undamped resonances, even when occurring outside the normal audio band, are undesirable since they can overload the amplifier and speakers, or cause objectionable noises, or both.

For measuring a pickup’s frequency response, we at CBS Labs use a fresh copy of a highly accurate test record especially prepared by us and played on a turntable fitted with a vacuum platter which firmly holds the disc and prevents mistracking due to any slight warpage. Unless the cartridge manufacturer has specified a particular arm the cartridge itself is installed in the SME arm, using appropriate anti-skating compensation force. The response of the pickup is automatically traced on a graphic recording device; other equipment permits us to monitor and observe the effects of pickup motion and of pickup response in each channel.



## HOW WE JUDGE

The performance criteria and test methods described here are those used by the author and his associates at CBS Laboratories in preparing data for HIGH FIDELITY’s equipment reports.



# CARTRIDGES

By Daniel Gravereaux

Channel separation is a measure of how well the cartridge keeps left- and right-channel signals on the record from interfering with each other in the output stereo signal. Separation—essential to stereo—is measured with the

## Channel Separation

help of our special test record, which itself has a channel separation of better than 30 dB. The signals, like those used for frequency response, are long tonal sweeps from one end of the audible band to the other. The left-channel separation sweep is obtained by measuring the output from the left channel of the cartridge when playing the right channel on the record. This sweep is then compared with the actual left play/left measure curve to give the separation directly in dB. Right-channel separation is similarly obtained.

Generally, separation figures of about 25 dB are considered excellent for today's stereo cartridges. The wider the frequency span covered by the separation curves, the better, although we feel that for satisfactory stereo a good separation characteristic, from at least 200 Hz to 10 kHz, is required. Note too that small peaks in a separation curve do not appreciably change the audible stereo quality; such peaks can be ignored when assessing a pickup.

A pickup's sensitivity figure denotes its output voltage when the cartridge is tracking a standard test signal on a record. The output voltage figures for most of today's magnetic cartridges are not a matter of great concern, being

## Sensitivity

always only a few millivolts, an amount of signal easily accommodated by all modern high fidelity amplifiers (and receivers) via their "magnetic phono" inputs. Of course, extreme cases of mismatch should be avoided if you want to enjoy the best sound from the pickup and the most favorable signal-to-noise ratio from the amplifier. For instance, it wouldn't be desirable to connect a pickup whose output voltage was only 2 millivolts into an input whose own sensitivity required 6 millivolts. As for the other way around, you might overload the preamp circuits. A "mismatch" within 2 or 3 millivolts, either way, is generally of no consequence—except of course to the audio perfectionist.

In measuring sensitivity, the most widely used signal is a 1-kHz tone, recorded at a velocity of 3.54 centimeters per second RMS, although some firms choose to rate their models by other standards. We play back left and right signals from CBS Laboratories Test Record STR-100, and measure the cartridge's output voltage on each channel.

The signal values thus obtained actually do more than indicate the cartridge's sensitivity; they also show how similar the two channels are. A cartridge in which left and right sensitivities are quite different will of course throw the channels off balance through the playback system. You can correct this by adjusting the amplifier balance control or the individual channel gain controls, but an ill-balanced pickup often signifies that its design is in general faulty.

Distortion in phono cartridges is caused by many factors, such as an oversized or irregular stylus tip, vertical and lateral angle errors, nonlinear mechanical properties, and others. The two distortion measurements we make—

intermodulation (IM) and total harmonic distortion (THD)—describe the over-all nonlinearity

of the cartridge for all the factors over most of the frequency range. Inasmuch as they are, essentially, two different ways of gauging the same total effect, you might expect that high IM and high THD always go together in a pickup. This is generally, but not always, the case.

IM measurements reveal mainly the low-frequency linearity of the pickup. Consequently, they do not tell us much about distortion at middle and high frequencies. THD measurements, however, are made at various frequencies, and therefore these figures do relate directly to the frequency response.

To illustrate: a pickup with high IM distortion might show little harmonic distortion at 10 kHz. Examination of its frequency response would probably show that it was rolling off beyond 10 kHz—that is, the pickup would be acting as a filter, actually removing the harmonics (20 kHz, 30 kHz, etc.) caused by its distortion. This explains why cartridges with poor high-frequency response appear to have low harmonic distortion at high frequencies.

The IM distortion measurement is obtained by playing CBS Laboratories

Test Record STR-111, which provides IM test bands for both lateral and vertical response. Lateral IM is caused mainly by mechanical nonlinearities in the cartridge; vertical IM is, additionally, a function of tracking angle errors and effective tip size.

Harmonic distortion is measured at individual frequencies between 1 kHz and 10 kHz. The spot frequencies on STR-100, left and right channels, are used. The playback system is set for RIAA equalization, so that the actual harmonic content relates to what would appear on home playback systems.

Compliance in general is a measure of the distance an object moves when a known force is applied to it. For a pickup cartridge, it defines the force required to properly track (comply with) a signal of known amplitude. Once

the cartridge compliance is known, an engineer may calculate the maximum amplitude signal before mistracking for a given vertical tracking force. In other words, compliance determines the tracking force to be used with a given cartridge. As a rule, the higher the compliance, the lower the tracking force required. Compliance normally is measured at a low frequency, and is expressed as the number of millionths ( $10^{-6}$ ) of a centimeter the stylus will deflect when a force of 1 dyne is applied—e.g.,  $20 \times 10^{-6}$  cm/dyne. To get a feel for these numbers: in order to play records with 1 gram vertical force, a cartridge should have a compliance of at least  $10 \times 10^{-6}$  cm/dyne. For twice this compliance (20), the vertical force could be reduced to  $\frac{1}{2}$  gram before groove jumping occurs.

The tracking ability of a cartridge takes into account not only compliance but other factors such as tip mass and dynamic friction. It is determined by measuring the minimum vertical tracking force needed to play, without groove jumping or distortion, the high-level bands on both the CBS Laboratories STR-100 and the STR-120 test record. The values reported in *HF's* equipment reports are the lowest recommended tracking forces for use with refined tone arms—either separate models or those found on top-quality record players.

The distortion produced by the stylus tip as it engages the wiggles (modulation) along the walls of a record groove is called tracing distortion. It is most prevalent when the modulation is at a high amplitude level, a high frequency,

### Stylus Tip

and towards the inner bands of the disc. If, for instance, bells, cymbal crashes, or tambourines sound unrealistic at the inside diameters, the reason usually is tracing distortion.

Tracing distortion is caused by the relatively large playback stylus radius (see Fig. 1). The problem arises in the first place because the master disc is cut with a sharp stylus, whereas the records produced from it are played with a rounded stylus. Figure 1 shows a signal wave on a record which is being played with a smooth stylus tip. Because of its size, the tip cannot follow the modulation; the output is distorted. Logically, we should reduce the tip radius so that this wave can be played without distortion. But then the stylus would gouge out the vinyl grooves, making the disc unplayable. Consequently, a "happy medium" must be devised.

Unfortunately, a "happy medium" stylus is in danger of riding on the bottom of the groove—and a stylus must be supported so that it rides, or traces, both groove walls. One solution has been the elliptical, or biradial, tip, which has a very small effective curvature in contact with the groove walls and thus is able to trace the modulation and still remain out of contact with the groove bottom (see Fig. 2).

There are three tip sizes popularly in use: the 0.7-mil spherical, the 0.5-mil spherical, and the elliptical, most often specified as a nominal  $0.2 \times 0.7$  mil—although these last dimensions may vary with individual designs. The ellipse, to be sure, is the most effective in reducing tracing distortion. However, great care should be taken when using it. The tone arm and turntable should be suited for low tracking forces, the cartridge should be very compliant, and the vertical tracking force should not be more than 2 grams. If turntable/tone arm properties do not permit tracking at or below 2 grams, then a spherical tip should be used. The so-called conical tip, by the way, is really a spherical tip terminating a cone.

We measure stylus tip radius under a special microscope which shows the

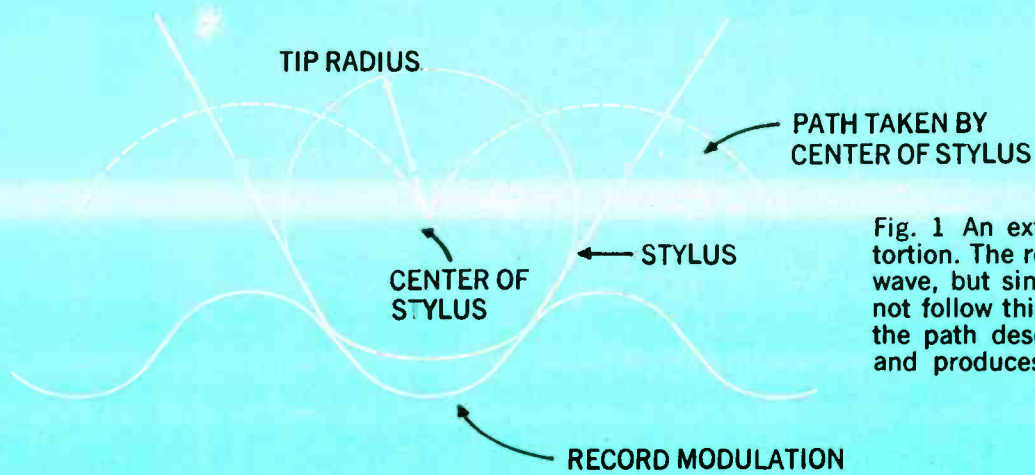


Fig. 1 An extreme case of tracing distortion. The record modulation is a pure wave, but since the tip is round it cannot follow this wave. Instead, it follows the path described by the dotted line, and produces a distorted output.

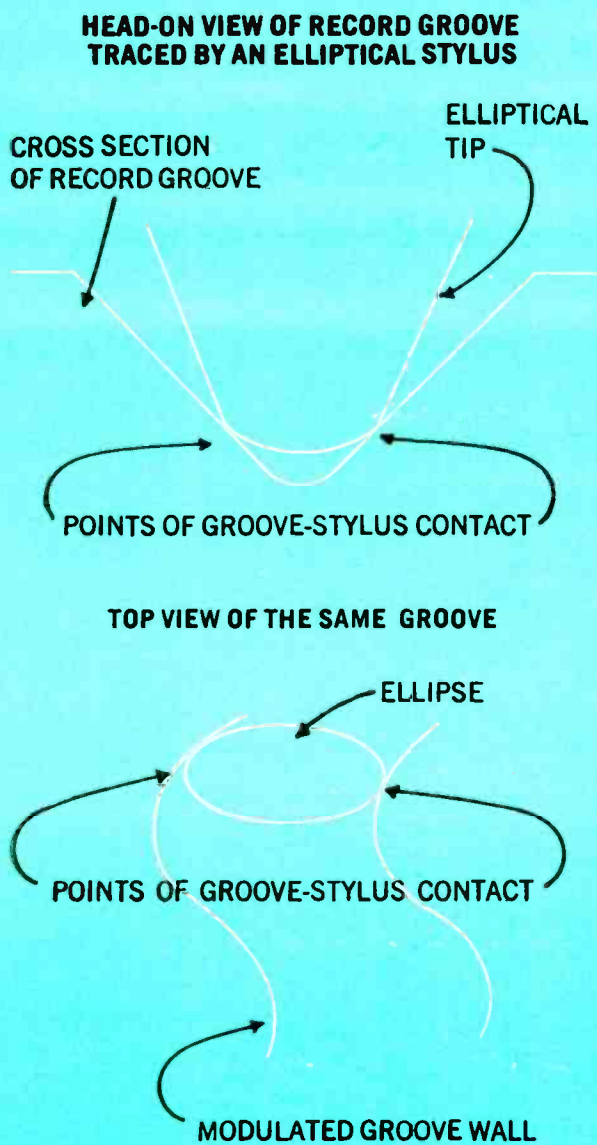
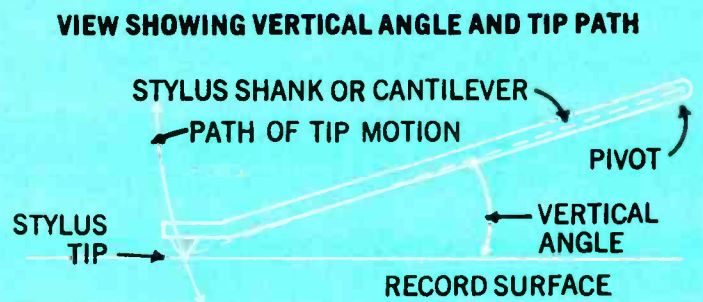
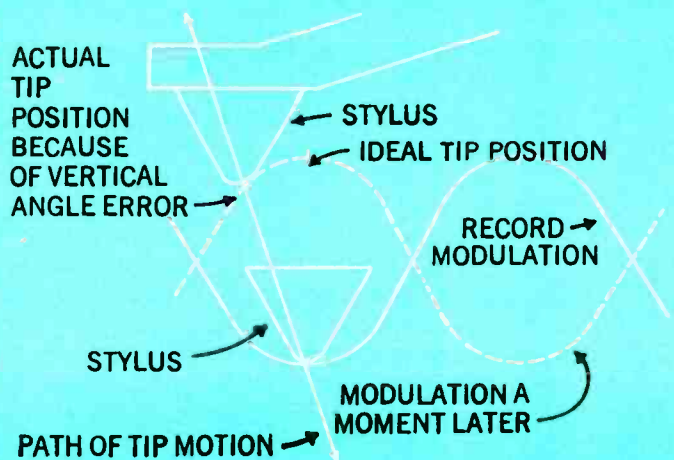


Fig. 2 Close-up of an elliptical tip, showing points of contact with groove walls.



CLOSE-UP OF STYLUS TIP WHILE TRACKING HIGH LEVEL DISC MODULATION



ELECTRICAL OUTPUT FROM THE PICKUP

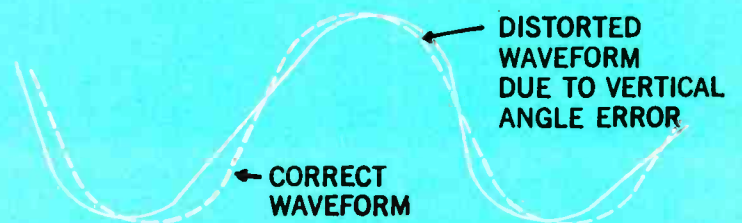


Fig. 3 Simplified diagram of distortion caused by vertical angle error.

outline of light reflected from the stylus surface at 45 degrees. This method can be used for spherical and for elliptical tips.

Another source of distortion in pickups are errors in tracking angle. These occur whenever the plane of motion of the playback stylus does not match that of the cutting stylus. To see how this distortion occurs, consider the typical pivoted type stylus shank as shown in Fig.

**Tracking Angle Errors** 3. Note the path of tip motion, due to the vertical angle. The close-up view shows the tip tracking a high-level vertical signal. For small excursions, as on a record, the path of tip motion is almost a straight line tilted an amount equal to the vertical angle. However, an instant later, as the stylus moves upward to the top of the wave, it also moves forward, because of that vertical angle. Because it takes a longer time to move upwards than downwards, it distorts the wave as shown.

The standard tracking angles are zero degrees laterally and 15 degrees vertically. Strictly speaking, the only way to get zero lateral tracking is to use a straight-line or radial arm. However, if a pickup is correctly installed in any good arm of recent design, the lateral angle will vary by less than 1.5 degrees over an entire record, and the distortion produced will be almost negligible. On the other hand, vertical tracking angles—which depend on the cartridge design rather than on the tone arm—may vary considerably from the standard of 15 degrees, and thus introduce distortion into the system.

The distortion caused by vertical angle error also rises rapidly as the velocity of the recorded signal increases. For instance, a “raspy” sound on a cymbal crash at middle or inside diameters of a record is often due to vertical angle error. Vertical angle errors of 2 to 3 degrees are quite innocuous, but errors of 10 degrees or more can produce audible distortion on stereo.

We measure vertical tracking angle by using CBS Laboratories Test Record STR-160. This disc contains 15 bands of 400-Hz tone recorded at an effective vertical angle graduated from -6 degrees to +43 degrees. Since minimum distortion will occur when the recorded vertical angle equals the pickup's vertical angle, we look for just that during the test. By means of a filter and distortion-measuring instruments, we can determine just when the record's vertical angle matches that of the playback stylus. We then note the band on the record, and report its indicated angle as that of the pickup. This method for measuring vertical angle involves the stylus in actual operating conditions and in our judgment yields the most meaningful information.

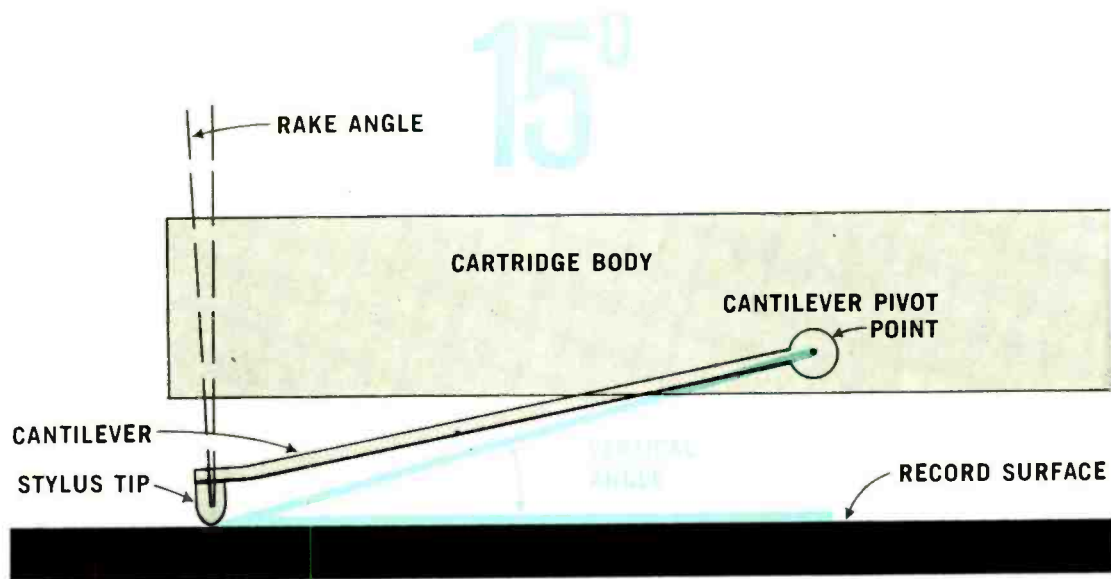
If you ask a record collector for his most important requirement of a cartridge, the answer inevitably will be: “It must sound good.” How then, does this “specification” relate to the objective data we supply in the test reports?

**Choosing a Cartridge** No single performance characteristic in itself supplies the answer. Rather the total effect of all the reported data should be considered. Low distortion, obviously, is paramount in choosing a cartridge. To the extent that such factors as vertical angle and the size and regularity of the stylus tip influence distortion, one should look for the smallest tip consistent with the vertical tracking force to be used, and for a vertical angle close to 15 degrees.

Equally important to pickup performance is the bandwidth and response. Certainly, being able to cover the audio band from 30 Hz to 15 kHz, at least, is a prime requirement. Cartridges with peaks below 10 kHz tend to color the music and should be avoided. Slight tilting in response curves can always be compensated for with tone controls and is in itself of no great importance.

Electrically, the output voltage of the pickup should relate to the input sensitivity of the amplifier, as described earlier. But a cartridge also should match its record player in a mechanical sense. One cannot expect to use with much success a highly compliant cartridge in a poor changer, or indeed, in any tone arm that lacks the refinements of balance, anti-skating, low mass, and minimum pivot friction. Conversely, a modern, high-quality arm almost demands a superior cartridge.

Finally, before actually choosing a cartridge, the best test—as with any hi-fi component—is a listening test. I'd advise using the published equipment reports to narrow one's choice to a few models. Then, zero in on *the* model by comparative listening tests at a reputable audio dealer's.



## How Important?

As shown in the drawing, the vertical tracking angle is defined as the angle formed between the record surface and an imaginary line drawn from the stylus tip to the cantilever pivot within the cartridge.

Note that as a consequence of the slanted stylus shaft and the manner in which the stylus is typically fastened to the end of that shaft, the stylus itself invariably extends forward in a slight angle to a vertical from the record surface. This particular angle is the "rake angle"—a term that has been confused with vertical angle. The two are not necessarily equal and are not the same thing. The angle that matters is the vertical angle as we have defined it, since that angle directly influences the manner in which the elements inside the cartridge translate mechanical vibrations into electrical signals.

The actual angle employed doesn't matter; what does count is the agreement between cutter and playback heads. The value of 15 degrees was chosen by the recording industry as a convenient angle to work with.

In assessing the vertical angle figures given in test reports, bear in mind that the method we use to measure vertical angle is not necessarily that used by all cartridge manufacturers. And, of course, variations in the test procedure (for instance, whether the cartridge is merely resting on the record lightly, or actually tracing it at normal working pressure while the disc is spinning), not to mention the test record used, will influence the outcome.

Consider too that the tracking force (or stylus pressure) used in making HF's measurements

never exceeds 2 grams. With a tracking force of 3 grams or more, which might be required on some equipment, the vertical angle resulting would be about 2 degrees less for any pickup.

Yet another point: standard laboratory procedure employs a manual turntable and a high-quality arm installed *parallel* to the table. However, many or most cartridges are used in record changers. This is the reason, it has been suggested, that cartridge manufacturers sometimes deliberately offer a vertical angle greater than 15 degrees—to compensate for the decrease in angle that occurs as the arm of a changer rises to play at an increasing height. The difference in angle resulting between one record and a pile of eight is 6 degrees.

Of course, on many changers the arm slants downward for the first disc—and so the best the arm can then do is to reach horizontal somewhere along the pile, perhaps not until the top of the pile, where of course the vertical angle remains whatever it was in the cartridge. On the other hand, as indicated above, vertical angle does lessen as tracking force is increased; this force, as a rule, is greater for changers, and it increases as the arm plays at a greater height. It thus is conceivable that a cartridge with a vertical angle of, say, 24 degrees when measured in a parallel arm tracking at 2 grams will exhibit an angle of perhaps 19 degrees when used in a changer (subtract 2 degrees for the added stylus force and another 3 degrees for the pile of records). So, what started out as a seemingly high error may turn out in a given installation to be insignificant. N.E.



# THE LATEST IN STEREO CARTRIDGES

BY ROBERT ANGUS

**I**F THE PAST FEW YEARS have been a time of innovation and experimentation in cartridge design, 1969 appears to be a year for consolidation and refinement. Such developments as reduction in the size and mass of pickups and the introduction of elliptical styli are by now familiar stories. The current news is the availability of a variety of better-engineered cartridges incorporating these changes, and often selling at lower prices than earlier models. In fact, in the thirteen months since *HIGH FIDELITY* last surveyed the cartridge scene some eight suppliers have introduced about two dozen new pickups (for details, see the chart accompanying this article).

In any event, it's clear that the stereo pickup has acquired a new sort of importance among audio components. In the early mono era, the average audiophile was generally satisfied with one pickup. Today he may very well own several, and probably has at least two—for playing different records, or for making comparisons, or for demonstrating his own interest in perfectionism. And many stereo owners on a budget have discovered that the cheapest way to upgrade a playback system is to install a new cartridge; they know that at the very least the new cartridge—correctly installed in an arm that permits it to track at its recommended stylus pressure—will be kinder to their records.

In surveying the latest crop of cartridges, several areas of development merit consideration: stylus shape, stylus compliance, cartridge tracking force, cartridge mass, vertical tracking angle, ease of installation, transducing element, and cartridge specialization—to name the major ones.

## Stylus Shape and Angle

For years, the playback stylus had (or was supposed to have) a conical ball-shaped tip. Actually, records were—and are—cut by a chisel-shaped stylus, but it quickly became obvious to early record makers that if you used one chisel to trace the groove that another chisel had cut, it would gouge out at least as much sound as it reproduced. So for generations the tip remained conical (or spherical). With the advent of the long-playing microgroove disc, the diameter of the stylus tip shrank from .003 inch (3 mils) to .001 (1 mil). When the first stereo records appeared, the tip diameter shrank again—to .0007 inch (.7 mil) for a stylus designed to play both mono and stereo discs. Soon after, the .0005 inch (.5 mil) stylus was offered as a perfectionist's stereo-only reproducer, the tacit understanding being that mono discs would be played with a 1-mil stylus.

Even the half-mil stylus, however, had trouble tracing every curve and dip in a record groove that had been cut by a chisel operating in three planes at the same time. The stereo record groove not only widens and narrows as it goes along, but rises and falls as well. At times these excursions were so complex and narrow that the ball-shaped stylus simply popped out of the groove. Again, the ball sometimes took a short cut, failing to reproduce some bit of stereo information or producing distortion instead of clear sound. So, about three years ago, manufacturers began experimenting with elliptical styli—diamond tips which were neither spherical nor chisel-shaped but essentially ovals. The elliptical stylus more nearly approximates the cutting chisel, yet its rounded edges do not gouge out the groove even while contacting both of its walls.

Introduction of the elliptical stylus hasn't completely solved the stylus problem. For one thing, elliptical diamonds must be precision-cut, a fact which makes these styli more expensive to produce than the sphericals. Because the dimensions are small to begin with and because tolerances are so critical, the reject rate for elliptical styli is very high. Moreover, the experts haven't agreed on the proper dimensions for the ideal stylus: although the most widely listed size is 0.2 x 0.7 mil, some ellipses are specified as 0.2 x 0.9 mil, 0.4 x 0.9 mil, 0.3 x 0.8 mil, and 0.4 x 0.7 mil. The reasons for the variations have to do with individual solutions to the complex of problems in designing a cartridge, as well as with the realistic tolerances that prevail at such minuscule dimensions. Finally, some engineers argue that the elliptical stylus, in any event, results in greater record wear because of the higher pressure it exerts on the record surface. Pending some additional research, this controversy is likely to continue, with each type of stylus having its own partisans.

A related characteristic is the pickup's vertical tracking angle. Because the vertical angle of a cutting stylus has been standardized at 15 degrees, more and more cartridges are approximating this angle, although we have yet to find one that actually meets it.

## Stylus Compliance

The more accurately a stylus traces the record groove, the better the reproduced sound and the less likelihood of damage to records. Accordingly, manufacturers try to make their pickups as compliant as possible, so that the stylus is free to move horizontally and vertically as well as in an infinite number of attitudes between. During the mid-1960s, manufacturers and audiophiles placed such emphasis on compliance that they occasionally lost sight of other properties important to good cartridge design. A few cartridges, in fact, were so compliant that they proved structurally weak after several playings. Since there are many methods for calculating compliance and since each manufacturer wanted to show his product in the best possible light, consumers began

to be bombarded with astronomical compliance specifications. Eventually, the word got around that compliance is only one factor in the playback complex. Other characteristics—such as low tip mass, elimination of resonances, linear response—began to be emphasized in discussions of pickup performance. Some firms have flatly refused to publish any compliance figures. For these reasons, we have omitted manufacturers' compliance specifications in our informational chart.

## Cartridge Mass

Anybody comparing the new cartridges with those popular only five years ago will note immediately that today's models are about half the size and weight of their predecessors—and with good reason. The lower mass and weight enhances a cartridge's ability to trace a record groove while simultaneously reducing groove wear.

## Tracking Force

One of the goals of most cartridge engineers is a tracking force near zero—which would mean records would be completely immune to wear caused by action of the stylus. In recent years, engineers have come within one-half gram of that goal, thanks not only to higher compliance, lower mass, and better cartridge design but also to the development of low-mass arms which track at such low weights.

Because, strictly speaking, a very low tracking force implies a high compliance, some audiophiles have used manufacturers' compliance figures to set their tone arms for unrealistically low tracking forces. The results have been disappointment and frustration, as evidenced by complaints of mis-tracking and distortion.

The important thing to remember about tracking force is that you'll get no benefit from installing a cartridge whose recommended tracking force is  $\frac{3}{4}$  grams in an arm that cannot track well at that force. Check the specifications for your tone arm or automatic turntable before you buy a new cartridge to upgrade your system.

## Cartridge Specialization

The increase in the number of models now offered by an individual company (often several versions of the same basic model) has led many firms to advise prospective purchasers which models are intended for use in older or inexpensive record changers, which in better automatic turntables, and which in perfectionist separate tone arms. A few manufacturers recommend that for best results specific arms be used with specific cartridges. Some manufacturers even provide a detailed guide showing which of their cartridges perform best with specific models of automatic turntables. Because the same cartridge design can come in configurations suitable in one

version for a highly professional tone arm and in another version for an inexpensive record changer, it's more important than ever to be sure you've got exactly the right model for your arm.

## Ease of Installation

It has been estimated that two million "hi-fi type" cartridges (that is, excluding those offered as replacements or supplied anonymously for use in package sets) are manufactured annually in the U.S. The cumulative effect of this proliferation cannot be gauged, but obviously there are many times two million pickups in use today—by stereo listeners who own more than one pickup and by others who have purchased their very first stereo pickup.

To make things easier for this expanding market, a few cartridge manufacturers (and for their part, most manufacturers of separate arms and of turntable/arm combinations) have begun to simplify cartridge installation by introducing clip-on mounts or slide-in platforms. Much remains to be done in this area, however: for one thing, the color-coding of the four leads in the tone arm head or shell has not yet been universally standardized; for another, the metal sleeves at the ends of those leads remain fairly fragile and pesky to work with.

## Transducing Element

Basically, there are three methods to convert mechanical energy from the record groove into electrical energy. Theoretically, each has built-in advantages and disadvantages; and on balance, all would appear to be about equally satisfactory. The method most widely used in high fidelity design involves some form of magnetic interaction between tiny iron members and tiny coils. The signal voltage produced is very low—on the order of a few millivolts—and requires preamplification. Its frequency characteristic also varies in a way that the recorded signal does not—and so the signal must be equalized in addition to being boosted.

Less expensive to manufacture, smaller in size, and lower in weight are ceramic cartridges, sometimes promoted with the magic phrase "solid state." In these types, the stress of ceramic elements generates a voltage—usually much larger than that possible with a magnetic. Here too the frequency characteristic varies, but differently from a magnetic. So, while a ceramic does not as a rule need preamplification, some types do require unique forms of equalization. Theoretically, ceramics can be designed to offer, vis-à-vis magnetics, less (or no) hum pickup, just as high compliance, and lower mass. For the most part, however, the ceramic idea has been applied to low-cost pickups—the kind typically supplied with cheap package sets. A few of the manufacturers who were experimenting with new ceramic

models a year ago have given up because of lack of consumer interest. Actually, the ceramics still being offered for serious hi-fi use have abdicated one of their class's inherent advantages over magnetics—that is, their high signal output. Nowadays, virtually all preamplifiers, integrated amplifiers, and receivers have inputs only for low-output magnetic pickups. Hence, ceramic manufacturers invariably supply their models with some form of adapter which tailors the signal from the ceramic to resemble that of a magnetic.

A third class of pickup, the photoelectric, offers perhaps the greatest promise of reaching that goal of near-zero grams tracking. First introduced more than twenty years ago, this idea has never attained any real product popularity, nor has it quite died. In its original form, it used a beam of light to track the groove, instead of a conventional stylus. The one model now available—A. Bernard Smith's Lumisonic—uses a conventional needle linked to a photoelectric cell. In sum, the photoelectric cartridge, while an intriguing idea, has not yet demonstrated to my knowledge any superiority over the more conventional (and less expensive) magnetics.

## Cartridge Prices

Most of this year's new models fill gaps in manufacturers' lines. Thus, the design improvements introduced in higher-priced cartridges are being incorporated in more moderately priced models. Many of these are being offered for use in older record changers or other less critical applications.

A glance at the chart on the opposite page shows that you can pay anything in a wide spread of prices for an acceptable cartridge.

If you live in a big city and have shopped around, you'll have discovered that some of last year's models can be had for a fraction of their list price. In fact, some models—introduced even earlier and possibly no longer listed by their manufacturers as available—may be found at some dealers for \$10 or less.

Certainly, any high fidelity pickup in normal working condition made since, say, 1964 will sound satisfactory even by today's standards. If, however, you want the ultimate in sound combined with maximum protection for your records, you must look to today's generation of cartridges, which, roughly speaking, can be described as those having first appeared since 1967.

In any event, it would be wise to check the test reports on any bargain cartridge you're considering. They'll tell you how old it is (generally, the more recent models are the more desirable), tip you off to possible problems like too much compliance, and tell you the good things about it. If your dealer doesn't have reprints and you don't save back copies of *HIGH FIDELITY*, try your public library. An index of all test reports published during the previous twelve months appears in the June and December issues.



# STEREO CARTRIDGES THE NEWEST MODELS

MODEL	PRICE	STYLUS (mils)	MFRS. RATED OUTPUT (mV)	WEIGHT (grams)	TRACKING FORCE (grams)	REMARKS
Audio Dynamics 550E	\$50	.3 x .7	4	6.7	¾ - 2½	For use in "any kind of equipment."
Benjamin Elac STS-244-17	\$25	.7	7.5	7¾	1½ - 3	For older record changers. Use in better changers. Use in separate arms or best automatics.
STS-344-17	\$40	.7	5	7¾	1-2	
STS-344-E	\$50	.2 x .9	5	7¾	1-2	
STS-444-12	\$60	.5	5	7¾	¾ - 1½	
STS-444-E	\$70	.2 x .9	5	7¾	¾ - 1½	
Dynaco Stereodyne IV	\$30	.7	7	8.5	1-2	Use in any good arm. Removable mounting wedge.
Empire 888	\$25	.7	8	7	¾ - 5	Use in record changer. Use in separate arms or best automatics.
888E	\$40	.4 x .9	8	7	¾ - 4	
888TE	\$50	.2 x .7	6	7	½ - 3	
888VE	\$60	.2 x .7	5	7	½ - 2	
IMF - Goldring 800/E	\$50	.3 x .8	5	7.5	¾ - 1½	Use in any good automatic turntable or arm.
Super 800/E	\$70	.3 x .8	4	7.5	½ - 1¼	Use in best automatic turntables or tone arms.
Lab Capacitance	\$250	.2 x .7	400	5	1	Integrated arm/cartridge combination.
Pickering XV-15/750E	\$60	.2 x .9	4.4	5.5	½ - 1	Use in any arm that tracks at this weight.
Shure V-15 II-7	\$62	.7	3.5	6.8	¾ - 1½	Use in best automatics or manual arms. Use in older automatics.
M91E	\$50	.2 x .7	5	6	¾ - 1½	
M92E	\$45	.2 x .7	6.2	6	¾ - 1½	
M92G	\$40	.6	6.2	6	¾ - 1½	
M93E	\$40	.4 x .7	6.2	6	1½ - 3	
Stanton 500A	\$25	.7	0.8	5	2-5	For broadcast turntables.
500AA	\$30	.5	0.8	5	¾ - 3	
500E	\$35	.4 x .9	0.8	5	2-5	

This table does not list all the available cartridges, but rather those of recent vintage (released since our last survey, January 1968) and of interest to the serious stereo listener. Thus, in addition to the models mentioned here, others also are available from the companies named, and still others are offered by companies not tabulated, such as Euphonics, Grado, Ortofon, A. Bernard Smith, and Sonotone.

Note that stylus size given in one dimension indicates a conical stylus; two dimensions indicate an elliptical tip. Prices are rounded off to the next highest dollar.

BY LEO HABER

# The Perils of Record Collecting



IT'S IMPORTANT to begin by emphasizing what we classical LP collectors are not. First of all, we are not sound buffs: we do not listen to squeals and whistles that only a dog can hear (unless they're part of a John Cage electronic score), and we never lower ourselves before guests by turning our modest living room into Grand Central Station with trains chugging in opposite directions at once. Secondly, we are not 78-rpm connoisseurs: we do not spend our time in musty rear cubbyholes of record shops looking for a 78 that hardly anyone else wants and that will undoubtedly cost us a small fortune; and when some fabled old recording has been remastered on LP, we enjoy it without succumbing to paroxysms of *Weltschmerz* ("Where are the snows of yesterday?") and guilt. Thirdly, we are not professional critics or professional musicians. Fourthly, we are not women—in my experience women don't like to listen to music, although they seem to enjoy being in the presence of music. And finally, we are not specialists: we collect everything by everybody.

How did we arrive at this state of grace? What a strange divine mystery! I'm almost willing to wager that most of us began in the conventional way. There was an apartment to furnish and a shelf or two to fill, and along with the set of Shakespeare and the *Columbia Encyclopedia* we bought a Beethoven Fifth, an African figurine, the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 played by Cliburn, an imitation vase from the diggings at Troy, and the original-cast albums of *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific* and *My Fair Lady*. That was that, so we thought. Of such modest beginnings are empires built. (If somebody had told us then that one day our shelves would sag under the weight of sixty-seven of Haydn's 104 symphonies, we would have laughed in derision.)

Who knows how it happened? Perhaps an idiot relative presented one of us with the Toscanini set of the Beethoven Nine upon the birth of our eldest son and thereby unleashed the consuming passion. Perhaps our wives were foolish enough to get us the Horowitz recording of the Tchaikovsky concerto as an anniversary gift, innocent of the fact that our Cliburn disc was of the same music. This has happened. And sometimes it has led us to think of getting the same Tchaikovsky concerto done by Rubinstein, Gilels, Janis, Istomin, Ashkenazy, Dichter, Richter with Mravinsky, Richter with Ančerl, and indubitably Richter with Von Karajan!

I know of one fellow who wandered into a second-hand record shop during his lunch hour and picked up a battered copy of *Scheherazade*, the sixth record of his collection. When he got home, he found that the sultry Arabian princess had vanished and that the jacket contained Book I (1 to 8) of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* done by Wanda Landowska. Since he could never face up to a shopkeeper with a defective article, he kept his purchase. He now owns two piano recordings of the complete two Books, one complete harpsichord recording, and also Book I on the clavichord—a total of eighteen discs of the *WTC*.

He's presently working on Bach's harpsichord concertos. If he ever finds out about the 212 cantatas, his wife will divorce him.

Enough of preliminary speculation. What are the problems and pleasures that a devoted classical record collector encounters in assembling a representative collection? They are almost delightfully innumerable, but let me try to list some of them that might be overlooked by the unwary beginner.

**1. The bugaboo of the basic record library:** It doesn't take long for our votary to find out that there is no such thing. What is basic to editor A is not basic to editor B. A little listening proves to our man that neither editor can satisfy him forever. One fellow lists Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto No. 5, for Piano and Orchestra, the other lists No. 4. A third editor insists on Nos. 3, 4, and 5. But our novice collector happened to hear on the radio the First Beethoven Piano Concerto, and a myriad of musicologists claiming the work isn't vintage Beethoven could not keep him from acquiring it. My very own wife paid no heed to my awesome collection of Mozart until I had come up with the Twenty-fifth Symphony, the little G minor. She now tolerates every Köchel listing I take home, from 1 to 626. (Not all women, incidentally, are permanent nonlisteners. The trick is to woo them during the courting period with strong stuff—play the *Rite of Spring* at the opportune moment. The collector who opts for Frank Sinatra or *Gâté Parisienne* is in trouble for the rest of his life.)

**2. The compulsion of completeness:** Sooner or later, all serious collectors get to the point where they want to own a recording of every work written by the great composers. This isn't easy. Somebody seems to be coming up with a newly discovered Vivaldi concerto every other month. No sooner does our man put together all six Tchaikovsky symphonies than Ormandy belts out a hybrid Seventh. Our fellow thought he had all the Mahler symphonies, and along came Ormandy again (and Deryck Cooke) to finish the Tenth. Denis Vaughan did the same for Schubert's *Unfinished*, and a certain Dr. Durr began and finished Bach's *Saint Mark* Passion! Eventually our collector will pride himself on owning the unusual—Beethoven's Violin Concerto transcribed for piano and orchestra by Beethoven himself, his Fifth Symphony arranged for solo piano by Liszt, Bach's *Musical Offering* done in nine different instrumentations, Bruckner's symphonies in every extant edition, Haydn according to H. C. Robbins Landon and Haydn according to everyone else.

My friend mentioned above—the one who bought Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 before he got the *Emperor*—has become a veritable zealot about cadenzas. How many recordings of that perky concerto does he now own? Let me count the cadenzas. Beethoven himself wrote three for the first move-

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ment. Our crony acquired the set by Arrau, who plays the first cadenza; by Brendel, who gives us the first and parts of the third; by Solomon, who plays the second; by Kempf, his own cadenza based on the second; by Fleisher, the third; by Richter, the third with cuts at the end; and by Rubinstein, the third with alterations. He then added the versions by Glenn Gould and Robert Casadesus, who wrote their own cadenzas; by Serkin, who precedes the third-movement cadenza with a cadenza of his own; by Eschenbach, who puts in a cadenza of *his* own in another place in the third movement; and finally by Gieseking. This last was purchased not for the cadenzas but for the presence of the Philharmonia Orchestra, here conducted by a Mr. Anonymous (and sounding it).

Is the instrumentation slightly different from the usual in Colin Davis' version of Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*? Reason enough to acquire the record. Does Beecham add trumpets and cymbals to his *Messiah*? Has Bernstein restored Schumann's original orchestrations in the symphonies? Has Stokowski reorchestrated Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*? (My friend naturally owns the Ravel version of the *Pictures* and the original piano version, but he also has hidden in a wayward closet a jazz version by Ralph Burns—his sole jazz recording of any kind. I haven't the heart to tell him about Duke Ellington's versions of *Peer Gynt* and the *Nutcracker Suite*.)

The "complete collector" knows no limits. He seeks out a recording of Chopin's 24 Preludes by one Sergio Fiorentino because it contains 26 Preludes. He glows over Novaes' rendition of Chopin's 14 Waltzes because she also plays number 15, and then grabs Vásáry's because he adds 16 and 17. He refuses to part with a Denis Matthews recording of Mozart's D minor Piano Concerto (No. 20) because Matthews improvises on the melodic line of the slow movement.

Oh what delicious perplexities completeness be- trays! Should one look for Bach's violin concertos in the original, or in harpsichord transcriptions by Bach, or in modern piano versions, or in all three? Bach by Segovia, or Bach by Stokowski, or Bach by Ormandy (and Elgar and William Smith and Respighi and the Swingle Singers and Walter Carlos' synthesizer)? Vivaldi by Vivaldi on the violin or Vivaldi by Bach on the organ? One must not conclude that only ancient baroque masters provide such sweet problems. Shall it be Stravinsky's *Firebird*

complete or Suite—1911 of the latter, or 1919, or 1945? Shall it be one of Stokowski's retouched jobs, or Leinsdorf's unduplicated mix, or all six?

I can't count the number of collectors who have been overwhelmed with delight in discovering that almost every work seems to exist in duo-piano form, from Brahms's *Variations on a Theme of Haydn* to Ravel's *Bolero*. Some are yet to be recorded. Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* is a case in point. And one of these days an enterprising team of duo-pianists will tape Beethoven's own duo-piano version of the *Grosse Fuge*, with its own opus number 134, and collectors everywhere will murmur hosannas.

The opera collector brooks no opposition, entertains no doubts. He wants complete operas, no single aria excised, no spoken dialogue (*The Magic Flute*) omitted. But along with every complete set he manages to acquire a highlights album featuring other artists—presumably for the less tenacious members of his family, not for himself. This isn't always very easy to accomplish. The DGG *Ballo in maschera* highlights and the London highlights of the same, each almost one hour in duration, contain a half hour of music respectively that is not on the other record! Our man settles the issue by keeping both (to go along with his complete Angel-Callas set). He always adjudicates in favor of holding on to a record—never against. This is a sacred principle.

**3. The drug of duplication:** Every neophyte collector originally vowed to keep only one recording of each major work. Blame the recording companies for sabotaging his sworn resolution. Before long he owns delightful recordings by Cantelli of Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*, by Karajan of Beethoven Overtures, by Ludwig of Mozart's Fortieth, by Maazel of Schubert's Fourth, by Munchinger of Schubert's Second, by Steinberg of Schubert's Third, by Szell of Haydn's Ninety-second, by Toscanini of Schubert's Fifth, by Walter of Beethoven's Fifth. He refuses to give up even one of these nine discs. All nine of them contain Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* on the other side!

Once he is stuck with duplications, he becomes drugged with them. He seeks out alternate performances with a passion. I'm willing to swear that half of our collectors began their careers with the pious assertion that they could not distinguish one conductor from another and that their interest was solely in the piece of music. What a change! What a development! Now they are aficionados of tempo and dynamics and inner voices and instrumental timbres, and each aspect calls for, nay demands, another recording. Beethoven's *Eroica* will satisfy in the Scherchen fast version only if one owns the Klemperer slow version (two for Angel, one slow, one slower). Schubert's Ninth means Toscanini and Furtwängler for fast and slow. All violin concertos require Heifetz for top speed and others for medium to schmaltz. The solo literature, particularly for piano, can never be adequately duplicated. Another friend of mine owns nine recordings of the Beethoven

*Appassionata* Sonata, from deliberate Kempff to whirlwind Serkin, from evenly paced Rubinstein to stop-and-start Richter. He has timed every one of the performances and claims that not one resembles the other even remotely.

His family, by the way, is reconciled to the fact that Sunday is comparison day. Give him his easy chair, his turntable, his earphones when the others are looking at television in the same room, plus his stopwatch, and his day is made.

An addendum: Opera lovers become addicted to duplicating much earlier than orchestral fans do. The human voice is more easily differentiated, and it doesn't take long to pant for ten recordings of the very same Verdi aria. In fact, an LP was once issued of "*Di quella pira*" from *Il Trovatore* done by forty tenors in succession hitting more than eighty high Cs! What might drive others close to the abyss is paradise to our opera buff.

**4. The sacrilege of stereo replacement:** Should the collector replace all his mono recordings with stereo? He never does. He supplements—in keeping with the sacred principle enunciated above. How can anyone be gross enough to insist that he discard Toscanini for Solti in stereo! Sacrilegious, to say the least. But there is no harm in supplementing the maestro with a version in modern sonics. Some of my pals own several pressings of the *same* Toscanini performance—one with the highs in, another with the lows out, and the third with or without added reverberation, to say nothing of electronically reprocessed stereo.

**5. The curse of the critics:** Our collector has gone far beyond the basic record library, he is on his way to a complete repertoire, he duplicates performances, and he supplements with modern sound and stereo. Only one thought deters him from becoming a master collector living a bittersweet, hazardous life among mountains of records. He's afraid of the critics. Actually critics affect him both ways. They compel him to add and to discard, to accept and to reject. Our man becomes a voracious reader of HIGH FIDELITY and the British *Gramophone*. He keeps files of back copies and checks ancient reviews before and after purchasing a record. If Harris Goldsmith once insisted that Richter's Columbia recording of Mussorgsky's *Pictures* is a once-in-a-lifetime feat, he must hold on to his copy even though it sounds as if recorded in a Swiss sanatorium for compulsive coughers rather than in a Bulgarian concert hall. (He won't be rid of a tamer Richter performance on Artia because it includes a Prokofiev sonata on the reverse side.) If Conrad L. Osborne prefers Fricisay's version of Mozart's *Abduction* to the one by Beecham that the collector heedlessly bought before studying the critics, he must hunt about for the Fricisay performance. Luckily, he retains the Beecham for the sake of comparison and finds that the spoken recitatives differ in the two versions! What is more, Beecham transplants "*Martern aller Arien*" from Act II to Act III. O happy day. These are reasons enough for keeping both albums.

Gradually, our collector becomes partly inde-

pendent of the critics. Never completely. He still relies on them to tell him what to get. But he begins to disregard their strictures on what not to get. He suddenly prides himself on owning a performance that the critical fraternity overlooked or disparaged. My friend of the nine *Appassionatas* loves to impress (or oppress) an evening visitor with such delicacies. The other night I listened to Sylvia Marlowe in the *Goldberg Variations* ("Better than Landowska in the 25th variation!"), to Hans Henkemans in the Debussy *Etudes* ("Who is he? . . . Lord, the poor man's Gieseking!"), and to a record of *Figaro* highlights wherein my pal played arias done by Jurinac and Kunz while adjuring me to forget about the renowned performances led by Kleiber and others. I am now planning to invite my friend to my home some evening to hear Barbara Hesse-Bukowska play the Chopin Waltzes so that he can feel unfulfilled with Lipatti, Novaes, and Rubinstein.

I could go on for reams of pages writing about the tribulations (and joys) of a classical LP/ST collector. When one's wife is won over (nice shelves in a hidden part of the basement or in someone else's house will also do the trick), there are often neighbors to contend with. They just don't fancy hearing a comparison of seven versions of *Rite of Spring* in succession of a Sunday afternoon though one's wife melts with emotion upon hearing her song. (*Vide* courting advice above.) But I won't go into this.

I'd rather end with some hidden advantages of classical record collecting. You are not always an outcast, a pariah, by dint of your passion. Your collector friend's wife, for instance, becomes quite dependent on you: whenever she desires to present her husband with a gift of records, she comes to you for advice because you're the only one who knows what he has; this leads to fine relationships. Your colleagues at work and your relatives also make you the perennial adviser (and purchaser) of record gifts for others. You are needed—a state of affairs not to be disparaged.

Your children who have lived in your household for ages without actually hearing a single note of the classical music swirling all about them are suddenly dependent on you to pass a silly high school course in music appreciation. Your wife begins to feel that the massive expense is finally paying dividends when you take her more frequently to live concerts (where she does listen). ("Oh, that Sibelius Second is luscious. Did I ever hear it before?" "Only sixty-two times at home this year done by Ansermet, Collins, Stokowski, Von Karajan, Monteux, Ormandy, Paray, Sargent, Schippers, Szell. . . ." "Oh, shut up!")

Need one say more? There are worse compulsions in this driven world of ours than that which exposes our man (and woman) to so much of the divine in classical music. Consider the hapless fellows who collect jazz, folk, original-cast albums, and/or spoken word recordings from *Beowulf* to Rod McKuen. Do such exist? Good Lord, to contemplate *their* problems. . . .



# hi fi in the sky?

BY ROBERT ANGUS

**“T**HIS IS GALACTIC AIRLINES, Miss Jones speaking. May I help you?”

“Yes. I want to fly to Los Angeles on the 23rd. What’s playing?”

“On the screen, you can see the film *The Young Americans* in full color. We also have nine channels of stereo sound. On the classical music channel, for example, you can hear the Debussy and Ravel quartets played by the Budapest.”

“Don’t you have anything a little more rousing?”

“Well, if you want to wait until after the first of the month, there’ll be Leonard Bernstein conducting the New York Philharmonic in Mahler’s titanic *Symphony of a Thousand*.”

“Have you the Verdi Requiem scheduled on any flight soon?”

“I’m sorry, we don’t play things like that. Now what time of day do you plan to travel?”

While the airlines’ battle for passengers hasn’t quite come to this yet, reservation clerks now joke about travelers who may be shopping around for flights which not only take them where and when they want to go, with pretty stewardesses and delicious meals (free apéritif, of course), but which also offer the right movie and stereo sound.

On Air France, for example, you can see a color film with either English or French sound track, plus stereo classics or jazz on certain transatlantic flights and long hauls. On long flights via American Airlines, you have a choice of a color movie, stereo classics, or stereo pops. Continental Airlines has no movie, but offers three stereo channels (classics, pops, and contemporary—i.e., rock) and two mono channels (comedy and miscellaneous adult entertainment).

Trans World Airlines has no less than nine channels (counting the movie sound track), two of them in stereo: besides standard classics and pops you might hear jazz in mono, mono background music, hard rock announced by a disc jockey, a “Memory Lane” program by Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, and Fred Astaire, a mono program of folk and international music, or a language course for European travelers. Only slightly less ambitious is United Air Lines, which also offers classics and pops in stereo; in a recent month you could also choose among the following mono programs: Hawaiian music, comedy and show tunes, marches and patriotic airs, and lush instrumental and choral arrangements plus the movie. Pan American provides movies (in black and white only, on TV screens) plus pops, classics, and a mono language course.

**J**UST WHAT’S INVOLVED in the typical sound system aboard an airliner? First, there are the earphones—plastic tubes shaped like a stethoscope with rubber-tipped earpieces. On domestic flights the stewardess dispenses them free in a sealed plastic bag; if you’re flying on Olympic, Pan Am, Pakistan International Airlines, or TWA’s international flights, you have to pay \$2.50 for the privilege. After each flight the stewardess collects all the headsets and turns them in for sterilization and repackaging. Actually “all the headsets” may be too inclusive a reference: according to one airline, millions of these plastic tubes—which cost the companies about twenty-five cents apiece—are pilfered each year. “I really don’t know why they do it,” one airline executive wondered.



*In the Lockheed L1011 trijet of the 1970s (facing page), upwards of 345 passengers will be able to hear stereophonic music emanating from JBL loud-speaker systems installed (as indicated here by the dotted rectangles) on opposite sides of the huge cabin. In 1933 (above) a radio for the entertainment of passengers was a novelty, while today a young traveler (at right) takes stereo via headphones in his stride; stewardesses have altered their uniforms—but not their smiles.*



“Those headsets aren’t good for anything—unless you’re planning to fly the Atlantic and want to save \$2.50.”

The possibility of pilferage and the need for sterilization are two reasons given by the airlines for not adopting the direct-coupled dynamic headset. Many airline executives—often audiophiles in their own right—privately admit the low fidelity output of today’s acoustic headsets compared to the dynamic versions. “But we couldn’t stand the cost of replacing large numbers of them if they were stolen,” one explained. “We can’t sterilize them cheaply, they’re bulky, and we can’t store a large number of them conveniently aboard an airliner, as we can with the acoustic type. Finally, women passengers object to having a headband which interferes with their hairdos.” Most acoustic types join in a yoke under the chin.

A few airline spokesmen feel that the acoustic headset doesn’t have to be as low-fi, uncomfortable, and noisy as are most of today’s. Bell & Howell recently produced one for American that features an earpiece of floppy rubber. Like the direct-coupled headset, the rubber shuts out extraneous noise while shutting stereo sound in. It also feels more comfortable than do most acoustic phones. A problem with conventional airline earphones is that a kink in the tube or a twist at the yoke can shut off or reduce sound in either earpiece. American’s new headsets have reduced that possibility.

The earphone plugs into a transducer built into the back or armrest of your seat. Besides two tiny dynamic speakers, this soundbox contains a program-selector switch. There’s a volume control (in the

case of audio-oriented American, separate volume controls for each ear) as well. The range of the transducers is similarly limited—relatively flat from about 100 Hz to 1,500 Hz, falling off sharply at either extreme. While the airlines admit that better transducers are available (American hopes to use one with its new earphones to produce sound fairly flat to about 6,000 Hz), they feel that the extra cost of really quality equipment would still only provide sound better than the earphones could accommodate.

On today’s airliners, a pair of wires connects each position on the selector switch to an amplifier. That could mean over 2,000 extra wires running through a 120-seat plane, a fair amount of excess weight. Besides, with the present-day setup, if a large number of people are tuned to one channel and you’re the farthest one from the amplifier trying to listen to it, you may get a pretty weak signal.

To overcome the problem in the jumbo jets of the 1970s, manufacturers like Douglas, Lockheed, and Boeing are experimenting with multiplex via wire. “A single wire will carry all of the signals to each seat,” an engineer at Bendix Aviation told me. “At the amplifier, there’s a miniature transmitter which adds all of the signals together, and at the seat, the control which selects the program actually decodes the multiplex signal to re-create the original program.”

Most of the amplifiers in use on airlines today are capable of wider range reproduction than the earphones can handle, and they do produce reasonably flat frequency response. “The trouble is that noise in the cabin presents entirely different problems from living-room listening,” says a Bell & Howell

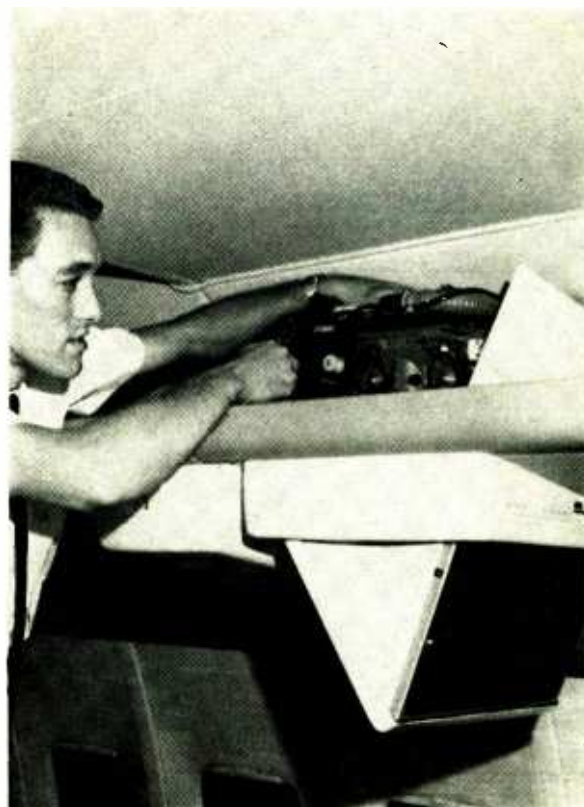
project engineer working on the American system. "The roar you hear, which may reach as high as 94 dB, about twice as loud as a Times Square traffic jam, masks low tones, so you have to do something about them. At the same time, higher tones need a boost to make them intelligible through the playback system. Actually, the ideal airline frequency response curve would look something like the letter U."

**T**HE SOURCE FOR all in-flight sound, with the exception of movie sound tracks, is a compact transistorized tape deck. Two types are commonly used: the Gables, an automatic-reversing deck which provides up to three hours' worth of stereo sound; and the Ampex AR-104, a machine which rewinds automatically at the end of the reel. Both tape decks operate at a speed of 3¾ ips, using standard quarter-inch tape.

The Gables records two ninety-minute programs (one in each direction) on a reel. The recorder begins before the plane leaves the ground, at whatever point in the tape it stopped after the last flight. It continues until it comes to the end of the first track, reverses automatically and plays the second track, reverses again and again until the plane lands and the system is shut off. The Ampex also plays continuously, but it features two stereo or four mono programs recorded in the same direction on the tape. A program may last up to ninety minutes. At the end, the tape rewinds automatically and the recorder plays the tape again and again until the end of the flight. American uses two Gables recorders (one for classics and one for pops), while TWA, United, and some others use two or more AR-104s (one with classical and popular stereo, another with mono programs teaching a language, telling children's stories, playing mood music or teen favorites, and so on).

At their best, both types of recorder are capable of first-class 3¾-ips sound. But airline machines operate up to twenty hours a day for twenty days a month without service—no head demagnetizing, no tape cleaning or machine lubrication. Once a month they get checked, and loaded with that month's program; the servicemen don't see them again until the next program is ready. In the meantime, the recorders aren't readily accessible to the crew—and in any case stewardesses are not trained in changing tapes or cleaning a recorder. So, if something goes wrong, the offending machine simply gets turned off until the next time a serviceman can look at it. The result is that the passenger at the beginning of a month is likely to hear better sound on more channels than the man who occupied his seat a week earlier. Recorder heads do clog up, and one or more channels can develop noise.

"It's not as bad as it sounds," says Bill Johnson of Ampex Stereo Tapes, one of the leading suppliers of in-flight tapes. "Remember that the same tape is



*An engineer inspects a projector in American Airlines' Astrocolor system.*

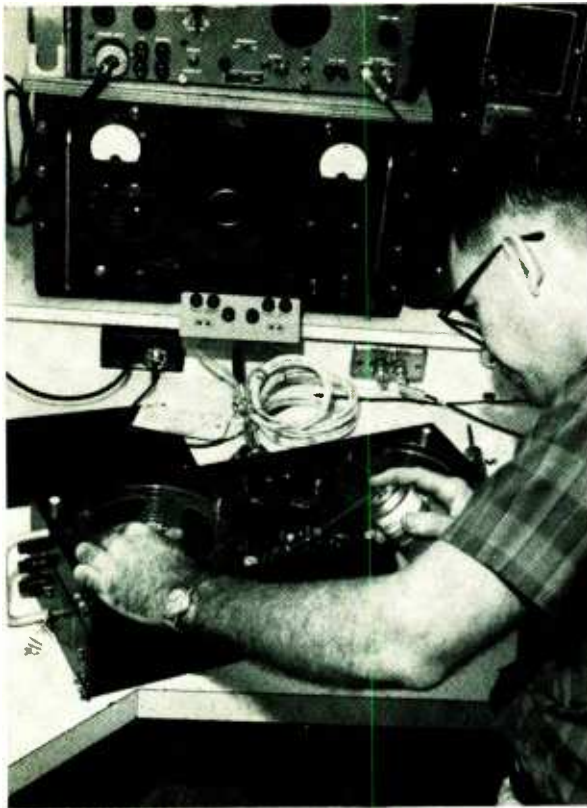
passing back and forth over the heads, and it gets polished. It's not the same thing as playing a series of different tapes on your recorder at home, where each contributes some oxide and some dirt every time it passes through the recorder. After the tenth continuous pass, there's very little to get knocked off on subsequent passes."

A problem faced by all carriers is interference in the audio system caused by all of the other complex electronic gear on board. Generators, radar equipment, navigational gear, and the engines themselves conspire to produce a 400-Hz noise. It can be reduced, with luck, by careful wiring of the sound system—and American makes it a point to check theirs regularly. During several recent flights, I encountered it only once—and then only intermittently on a United flight to California.

Finally, there are the tapes themselves. Purchasers of prerecorded tapes are aware that they can buy copies of tapes heard aloft, and some titles have become best-sellers. "Originally, people bought them because you got an awful lot of music for \$24.95," says Johnson. "More and more people are now buying them as souvenirs of their flight, or because of the really creative programming some of them offer." But the tapes are still most commonly bought, Johnson believes, by people who want long programs of background music without commercials.

The man behind much of American's program-





A serviceman cleans a stereo tape recorder as part of its monthly checkup.

ming is Hal Cook, publisher of the music trades journal *Billboard*. "The secret of the appeal of these tapes, whether you hear them in the air or buy them at your local hi-fi dealer's, is that they contain something for everybody, without offending anybody. We never include anything we know will appeal to only one type of listener, or anything that will alienate any listener. For example, it's unlikely that you'll find electronic music in our classical programs, or rock groups like The Beatles in the pop programs. We may include Beatles tunes—but they'll be recorded by a full orchestra in arrangements which are palatable to adult listeners."

In the case of classics, for instance, Cook aims for selections that are eight to ten minutes in length, preferably instrumental. Does that rule out opera and complete symphonies? "In some cases we may play a movement or two of a symphony, then go on to a vocal selection. We'd never schedule an entire opera." Generally, he and his associates stick to familiar selections (*Rhapsody in Blue*, *Fantasia on Greensleeves*, the first movement of the *Moonlight Sonata*); but somewhere during the trip listeners might encounter a Vivaldi concerto complete or two movements from a Schubert string quartet. As for planning pops, "We discovered very early that people don't want to hear twelve songs by Frank Sinatra, one after the other. So we'll feature a tune by George Shearing, then one by Ella Fitzgerald,

followed by Laurindo Almeida, the Hollyridge Strings, and Peggy Lee before coming back to George Shearing."

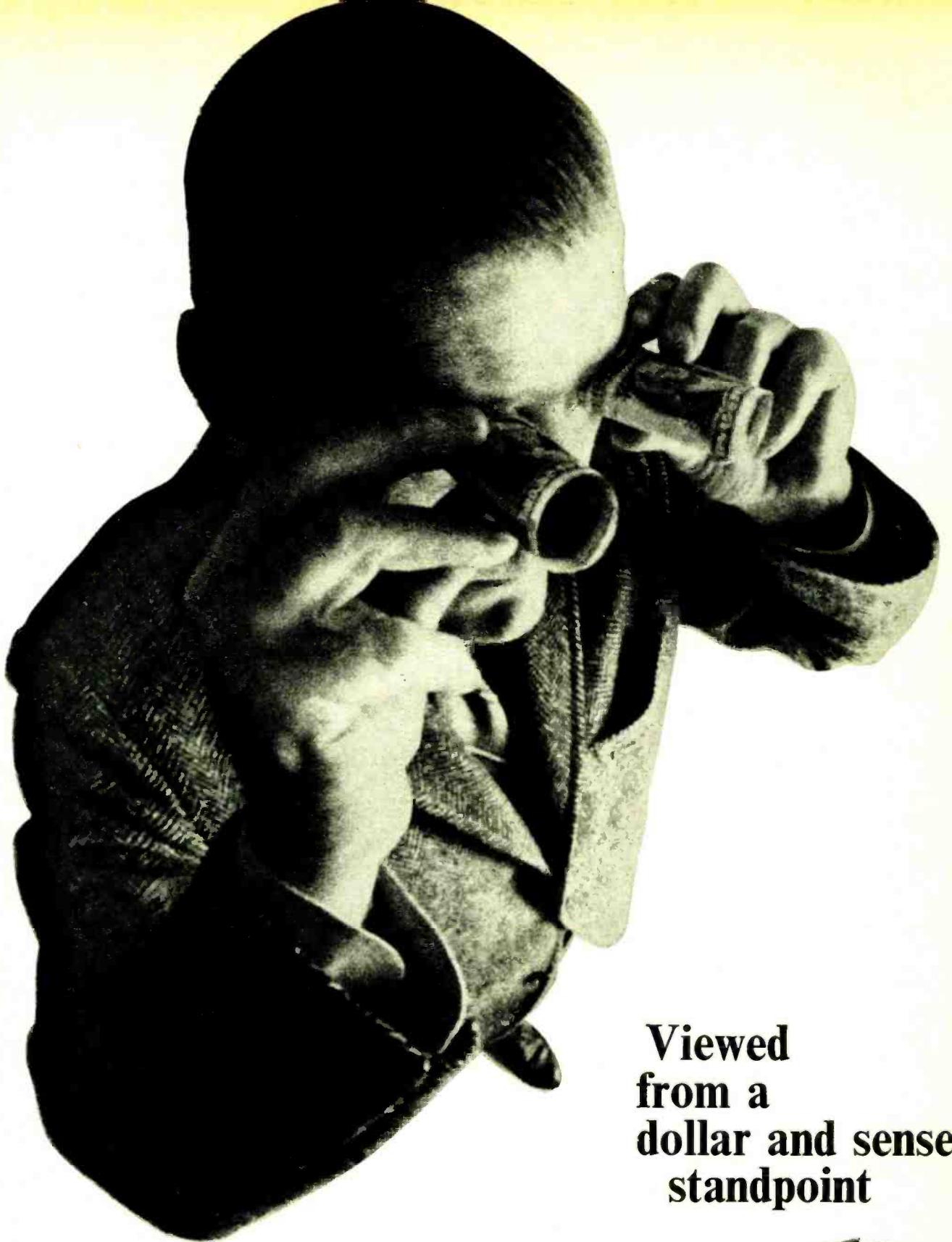
United Air Lines prescreens its music—particularly classics—for long, low passages (such as a solo cello) which might be drowned out by cabin noise. For the most part, however, the only taboos in programming are those against songs whose lyrics might offend passengers—rock tunes involving drugs and sex (and presumably those with a strong social or political message), and those dealing with tragic or catastrophic events: even the most rabid rock fans would feel queasy five miles up hearing *Last Kiss* or *Leader of the Pack*, which celebrate deaths by automobile and motorcycle crashes; you also never hear *The High and the Mighty* while aloft.

**I**F YOU'VE TRAVELED on a recent flight with stereo, you may well have been disappointed. The airlines readily admit that the headsets are uncomfortable, and that the sound isn't all that good. All of the equipment currently in use, they point out, was designed for use somewhere other than the cabin of an airliner. And there are more things to go wrong than you can shake a plastic tube at.

Interestingly enough, although stereo and movies do attract customers to specific airlines and flights, once on board, many customers choose not to take advantage of the service. A survey by American some months ago showed that sometime during the flight some seventy-eight per cent of passengers used the plastic headsets provided by the stewardess to listen to *something*. On my last few continental flights, I noticed passengers listening to stereo for a maximum of twenty to twenty-five minutes at a time; and at any given time, only about one-fourth of the passengers seemed to have their headsets on.

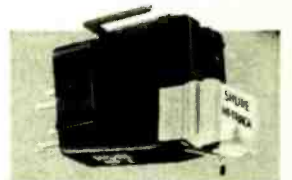
But the first of a fleet of planes with better-quality sound equipment should be in the sky shortly: the sound systems to be used in Boeing's 747, Lockheed's 1011, and the Douglas DC-10 will be designed specifically for planes. The decisions about what passengers in the 1970s will hear and what it will sound like are being made by these three companies today. "We can choose from among the 747, the 1011, and the DC-10. Within each of those, there are a lot of optional items, like JBL speakers in the Lockheed. But if you don't want JBLs and you like the rest of the 1011, you do without speakers of any kind," says an executive of one airline. The result is that differences in services and sound among American, United, TWA, and the others will depend more upon the supplier of the planes than on the preferences of the airlines.

In the meantime, here's a tip for the sound-conscious traveler: the quietest seat on the plane is an aisle seat farthest from the engines (usually in the front row). It's about 10 dB quieter than a window seat near or next to the engine.



## Viewed from a dollar and sense standpoint

You can't get a better buy for your new hi-fi system than a Shure cartridge, whether it's the renowned "Super Track" V-15 Type II at \$67.50 or the new M91E Easy-Mount "Hi-Track" at \$49.95, made in the tradition of all fine Shure cartridges. If you're new to hi-fi, benefit from the published opinions of experts the world over: the **Shure V-15 Type II** Super Track makes a decidedly hearable difference. If you want to spend less, the M91E is right for you. You can always "trade-up" to a V-15 Type II at a later date. Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204.



NEW! M91E Hi-Track Elliptical Cartridge with optimized design parameters for trackability second only to the incomparable V-15 Type II. Bi-radial .0002" x .0007" diamond stylus. 20-20,000 Hz. Channel Separation: more than 25 db @ 1 KHz. Tracking force range 3/4 to 1 1/2 grams. Trackability specifications @ 1 gram: 20 cm/sec @ 400 Hz.; 28 cm/sec @ 1 KHz.; 25 cm/sec @ 5 KHz.; 18 cm/sec @ 10 KHz. \$49.95.

CIRCLE 72 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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# EQUIPMENT REPORTS

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO NEW AND IMPORTANT HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



## NEW RECEIVER PERFORMS LIKE COSTLIER MODEL

**THE EQUIPMENT:** Allied 395 stereo FM/AM receiver. Dimensions (in metal case supplied): 16 by 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  by 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Price: \$299.95. Optional walnut wood case, \$19.95. Manufacturer: Allied Radio Corp., 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60680.

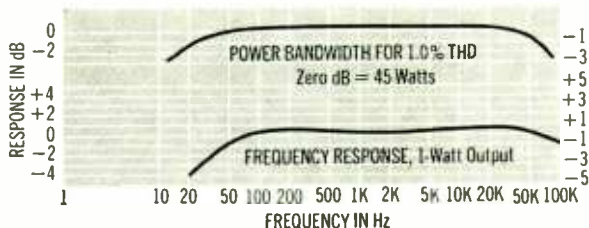
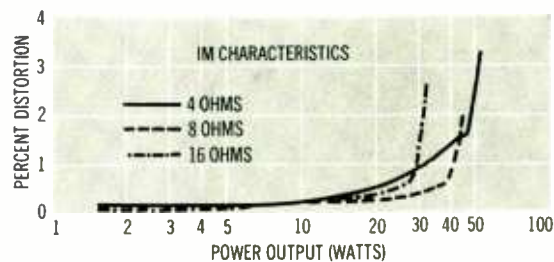
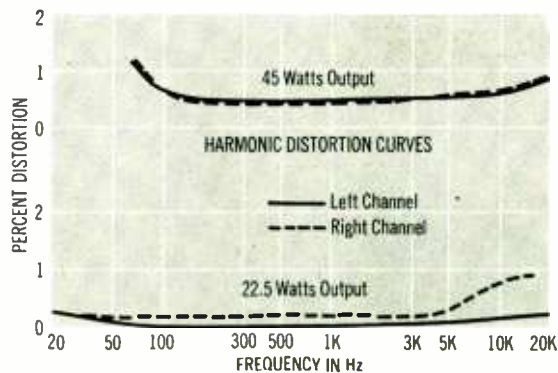
**COMMENT:** Another very good buy in stereo receivers has entered the lists: the new Allied 395 offers features and performance that are distinctly better than average for a combination chassis in its price class. As for those performance characteristics not above average, the worst you could say about them is that they seem to be as good as average for this price class.

The tuner section, to begin with, is a real winner. Stations seem to pop in all up and down the dial, thanks to a happy combination of extremely high sensitivity, low distortion, astonishing capture ratio, and very good signal-to-noise ratio. Audio response on mono FM is good; it actually improves on stereo FM (see accompanying CBS Labs graphs) where many tuners show a characteristic slight high-end roll-off. Channel separation is excellent. In our cable-FM test, the 395 logged a very high total of 49 stations of which 28 were judged suitable for long-term critical listening and off-the-air taping. And for those interested, the AM section of this set is distinctly better than the AM section found on many other stereo receivers. In fact, the entire tuner portion of this receiver has a performance level which suggests much costlier equipment.

The amplifier section shapes up as a good medium-high-powered unit. Output power for rated distortion (of 1 per cent) holds up to beyond 75,000 Hz which, for a set in this price class, is prodigious. Even at a lower amount of distortion, which would be a more rigorous test, the set's power bandwidth would easily span the audio range. At normal power output demands, the amplifier's harmonic and IM distortion both remain very low across the better part of the audio band. The only real evidence of design compromise from ultimate perfection (inevitable in some form in a low-priced combination set) would seem to be in the roll-off in the amplifier's frequency response below 40 Hz, which is reflected in the equalization curves and in the low-frequency square-wave response. Above this frequency, though, re-

sponse is exemplary—with a very linear characteristic to beyond audibility and excellent transient response. Input sensitivities are at comfortable levels for today's program sources, and corresponding signal-to-noise ratios are very good. The S/N figures on magnetic phono and tape playback inputs, in particular, are excellent.

Styling and control features have not been skimped



## REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Laboratories, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Laboratories assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.

# Allied 395 Stereo Receiver

## Lab Test Data

### Performance characteristic

### Measurement

#### Tuner Section

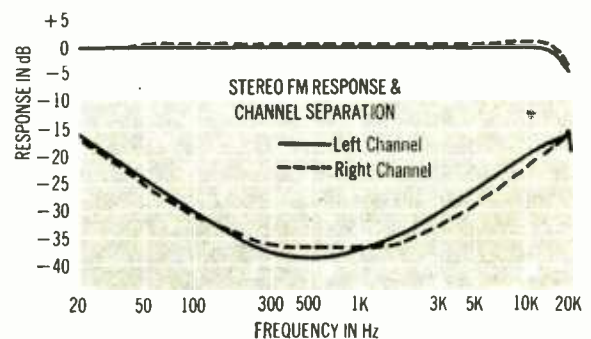
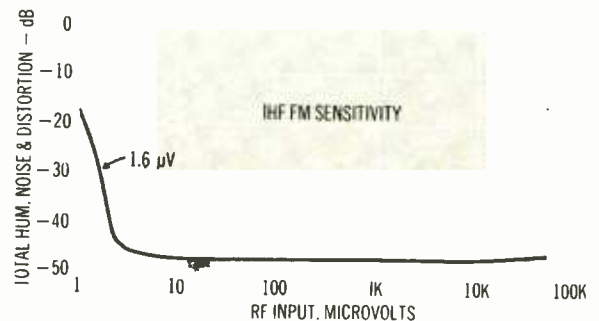
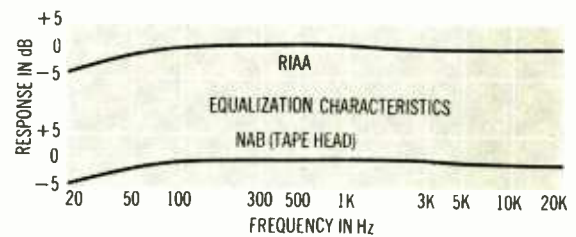
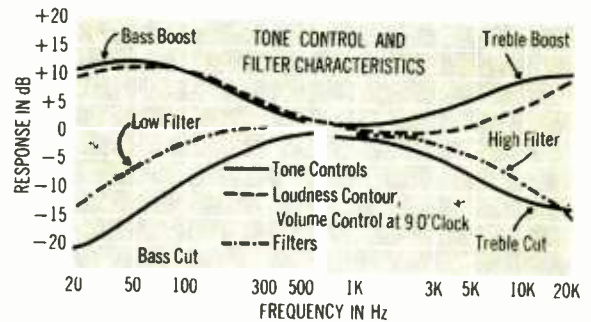
IHF sensitivity	1.6 $\mu$ V at 98 MHz, at 90 MHz, at 106 MHz
Frequency response, mono	+1, -4 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
THD, mono	0.40% at 400 Hz; 0.43% at 40 Hz; 0.36% at 1 kHz
IM distortion	2.7%
Capture ratio	0.75 dB
S/N ratio	65 dB
Frequency response stereo, l ch	+0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
r ch	+0.5, -1.5 dB, 20 Hz to 15 kHz
THD, stereo, l ch	0.60% at 400 Hz; 1.0% at 40 Hz; 0.52% at 1 kHz
r ch	0.44% at 400 Hz; 0.49% at 40 Hz; 0.48% at 1 kHz
Channel separation either channel	better than 35 dB at mid-frequencies; 20 dB from 30 Hz to above 10 kHz
19-kHz pilot suppression	50 dB
38-kHz subcarrier suppression	42 dB

#### Amplifier Section

Power output (at 1 kHz into 8-ohm load)		
l ch at clipping	38.3 watts at 0.15% THD	
l ch for 1.0% THD	47.5 watts	
r ch at clipping	39.6 watts at 0.09% THD	
r ch for 1.0% THD	50 watts	
both chs simultaneously		
l ch at clipping	35.2 watts at 0.09% THD	
r ch at clipping	35.7 watts at 0.23% THD	
Power bandwidth for constant 1% THD	12 Hz to 76 kHz	
Harmonic distortion		
45 watts output, either ch	under 1%, 80 Hz to 20 kHz	
22.5 watts output, l ch	under 0.30%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
r ch	under 0.98%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
IM distortion		
4-ohm load	under 1% to 34 watts	
8-ohm load	under 0.5% to 39 watts	
16-ohm load	under 0.5% to 27 watts	
Frequency response, 1-watt level	+0.5, -1.5 dB, 40 Hz to 100 kHz	
RIAA equalization	+1, -4.5 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
NAB equalization	+0, -5 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz	
Damping factor	40	
Input characteristics, ref. 45 watts output	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
mag phono 1	2.1 mV	67 dB
mag phono 2	2.1 mV	67 dB
cer phono	47.0 mV	46 dB
aux	192.0 mV	80 dB
tape monitor	192.0 mV	80 dB
tape head	0.74 mV	54 dB

on in this set. The upper portion of the front panel has a generous-sized dial that lights up when the set is turned on. Between the FM and AM station numerals is a logging scale; at the upper left there's a stereo indicator, while a tuning meter is at the right. The two large knobs further to the right are for tuning and for signal selecting respectively. The selector has positions for AM, mono FM, FM auto-matic, phono, 7½ tape head, 3¾ tape head, and auxiliary. The stereo indicator will come on whenever a stereo FM station is tuned in, regardless of whether the knob is on mono FM or FM auto although the latter position is required for hearing FM in stereo.

The lower half of the panel contains a speaker selector; a stereo headphone jack; bass and treble





Square-wave response to 50 Hz, left, and to 10 kHz.

tone controls; channel balance control; volume control; six toggle switches for loudness contour, low and high filters, interstation muting, automatic frequency control, and phono 1 or 2; and a mode/monitor knob. The muting action is especially good: in cutting out most of the rushing noise between stations, it eliminates only the poorest of incoming signals which you wouldn't care to listen to anyway. The AFC action is quite effective in holding onto a station to which you may have slightly mistuned the set. The phono 1 or 2 switch lets you choose between two record players that you may opt to connect to the set. The speaker selector permits choosing either, both, or neither of two sets of stereo speakers; the headphone jack is live in any position of this switch. Bass and

treble controls are friction-clutched dual-concentric types that let you adjust either channel separately or simultaneously, as you choose. The mode/tape monitor knob has positions for right and left mono and stereo.

At the rear are the inputs corresponding to the front panel selector and the speaker outputs. The latter are polarized plug-in connectors fitted with protective rubber covers. The rear also has one switched and one unswitched AC convenience outlet for powering other equipment. The set has a built-in AM loopstick antenna which is adequate for local reception; there's also a screw terminal for a long-wire AM antenna. FM antenna terminals are for twin-lead. A power line fuse, grounding post, multiplex separation adjustment, and the line cord complete the rear complement. The model 395 comes in a metal case fitted with four small feet; it may be tabled or shelved "as is," or fitted into a custom cut-out, or dressed up in an optional walnut cabinet. A supply of terminal connectors and installation screws is packed with it, and the owner's instruction manual is clearly written and well illustrated.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**THE EQUIPMENT:** Sennheiser MD 421/N, a low-impedance dynamic microphone, cardioid pattern. Weight: 15 ounces. Dimensions: 6.96 inches long by 1.9 by 1.81 inches. Price: \$136. Manufacturer: Sennheiser Electronic Corp., West Germany; and 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10036.

**COMMENT:** The MD 421/N is one of a series of mikes from Sennheiser that are aimed at the professional user and the advanced amateur recordist. Its low impedance (200 ohms) means it can be jacked into the mike inputs typically found on today's recorders, and also that several hundred feet of cable may be used without degrading the signal. The mike has a built-in compensation coil which protects the sound pickup against the effects of random magnetic fields. It also has a two-position (M and S) switch near the bottom of the body that adjusts the response for music and speech respectively—the M position permits flat response into the bass region; the S position rolls off the bass to avoid "heaviness" in the sound that could occur when a performer gets too close to the mike.

The sound pickup pattern of the Sennheiser is cardioid—that is, unidirectional: sounds are picked up predominantly from the front of the mike, slightly less from the sides, and very little from the rear. This general configuration—low-impedance, dynamic, cardioid—has been for years the favorite of many recordists and broadcasters. It furnishes an ample and clean signal, it is fairly rugged, it is easy to use, and it can be positioned—after some experimentation—for a satisfying mix of direct and reflected sound.

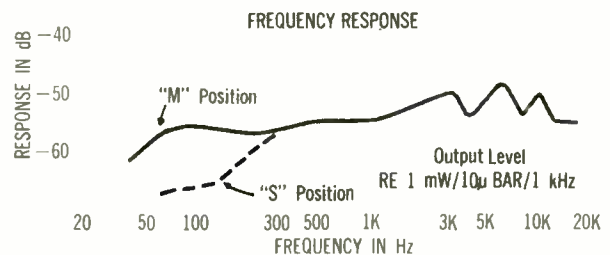
As tested at CBS Laboratories, the MD 421/N had an excellent frequency response. By way of explanation, the legend on the response graph of "1 mW/10 $\mu$  BAR/1 kHz" refers to the sound pressure level fed into the mike to get the output response shown. This 10 $\mu$  bar is an arbitrary average level that is fairly standard in professional use; it corresponds approximately to a sound somewhat above normal conversation level at a distance of three feet from the mike. For judging frequency response, the -55 dB line on the graph can be regarded as a 0 dB line. The useful out-

## UNUSUALLY SMOOTH RESPONSE FROM NEW DYNAMIC MIKE

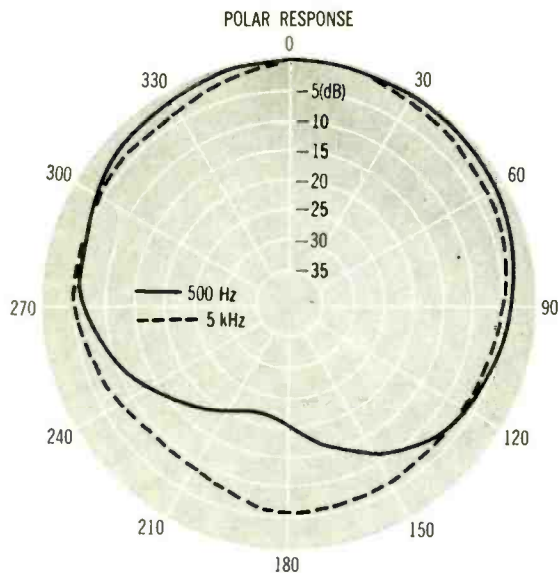


put signal level of this mike, feeding into the input of a typical recorder would be about 1 millivolt, which is of course quite ample.

At this level, and with the M/S switch in M position (no bass roll-off), response was clocked within



Re the Lafayette LR-1500T receiver report, October 1968: due to a typographical error, the distortion percentage figures listed on the left-hand side of the IM chart all were one number too high. The bottom line, shown as 1 per cent, should be zero per cent; all subsequent horizontal lines should be reduced by 1 accordingly.



plus or minus 7.5 dB from 40 Hz to beyond 15 kHz. The greater portion of this response was very smooth and linear; the two peaks at the high end are actually less prominent than found on many good microphones. With the switch moved to S position, response—as intended—rolled off gradually and linearly to minus 10 dB at 1 Hz, continuing down to minus 13 dB at 60 Hz. The middles and highs are not affected by this contour.

The polar response plot shows the cardioid pattern at two test frequencies of 500 Hz (the solid line) and 5 kHz (the dotted line). Incidentally, the more unidirectional pattern at the lower of the two frequencies is normal for this type of mike.

The Sennheiser MD 421/N—packaged in a plush-lined, leather, zippered case—comes with a standard attachment for mike stands and a 15-foot cable fitted at one end with a mike connector. The other end terminates in pigtailed for hookup as required. A dual-impedance version, model 421/HL, fitted with a 6-foot cable, also is available at \$139. In addition, the firm offers many accessories such as wind-screens, table stands, flexible shafts, and so on.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



## MINISPEAKER SOUNDS MADE FOR NORMAL-SIZE ROOM

**THE EQUIPMENT:** Bogen LS-10, a full-range compact speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 15 by 8 by 7 inches. Price: \$49.95. Manufacturer: Bogen Communications Division, Lear Siegler, Inc., P. O. Box 500, Paramus, New Jersey 07652.

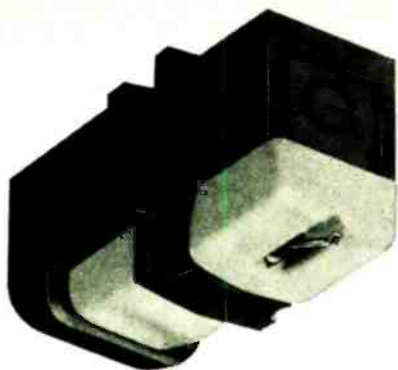
**COMMENT:** The LS-10 is a new minispeaker with more than minisound. Barely a half-cubic foot in interior volume, it provides—for its size and cost—very creditable performance. The system is completely sealed inside an attractive walnut enclosure trimmed with brushed aluminum. A 6½-inch woofer, which functions as a miniature air-suspension type, crosses over at 1,100 Hz to a 3-inch cone tweeter. Impedance is 8 ohms. Connections are made at the rear to screw terminals marked for polarity. No level adjustments are provided. The LS-10 is recommended for use with any amplifier rated for 10 watts or more (per channel), although with amplifiers capable of supplying more than 30 watts per channel, the manufacturer advises not turning up the volume control to full (to avoid overloading the speaker). The LS-10 may be positioned horizontally or vertically. It is sold with a seven-year guarantee.

The low end response of the LS-10 was surprisingly full, holding up very nicely to just below 40 Hz. Very slight distortion is evident downward from about 100 Hz, but it does not increase as much as we have observed on other minispeakers when raising the input signal level in this response region. It takes an awful lot of amplifier drive to get the LS-10 to double severely down to its design limit. Response continues below 38 Hz but it is mostly doubling. Upward from the bass, the response has some minor peaks and dips within a generally strong output from about 1,000 Hz to 9,000 Hz. Dispersion is very good, and directional effects increase only gradually as you go up the scale. A 10,000-Hz tone is audible at more than 90 degrees off axis, and fairly strong on axis. This effect continues up to about 14,000 Hz which is thinly audible mostly on axis and from which frequency the response slopes towards inaudibility. As seems to be true of most petite speaker systems, white noise response is a little on the bright side with a trace of hardness when listening on axis; it sounds much smoother off axis.

The over-all tonal quality of the LS-10, reproducing normal program material, is surprisingly wide range albeit with a slight upper midrange emphasis. A pair, playing either mono or stereo, provides a pleasant, fairly open sound with a very good transient response. In a larger than average room, they sound—compared to larger and costlier speakers—clear enough but somewhat distant when handling heavy orchestral material. They make a better acoustical showing in smaller rooms, where they don't have to work as hard in projecting heavier musical textures and can be driven by relatively less power from an amplifier. Indeed, in such use, the LS-10s are very easy to listen to for long periods of time.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**REPORTS IN PROGRESS**  
**Crown 300 Amplifier**  
**Sony TA-2000 Preamplifier**



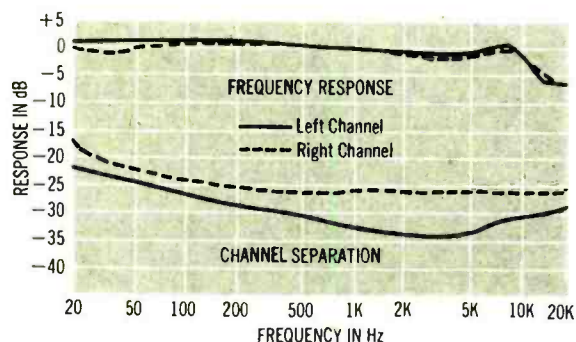
## IMPROVED PICKUP RATES HIGH IN TESTS

**THE EQUIPMENT:** Goldring G-800 Mark II, a stereo phono pickup. Manufactured by Goldring of England; distributed in the U.S. by IMF Products, 7616 City Line Ave., Philadelphia, Penna. 19151. Price: \$49.95.

**COMMENT:** Some segments of the audio world move faster than others, it seems. We had barely finished tests of the first pickup in the new Goldring series (December 1968) than we received word, and samples, of a Mark II version. The new model looks like the other but some canny design refinements have given it a generally smoother response. The high end, in particular, shows a more extended and stronger output signal while simultaneously measuring lower distortion—which, as stereo cartridge design goes, is a neat trick indeed. So, kudos to Goldring!

As tested at CBS Labs, the Mark II needed only 0.6 gram to track bands 6 and 7 of test record STR-120, and the glide tones on STR-100. For subsequent tests, and for normal listening to commercial discs, a tracking force of 1 gram was used. The pickup furnished a signal output of 3.5 and 3.3 millivolts on left and right channels respectively—values that indicate close balance between channels and which are well suited for the magnetic phono inputs on today's stereo equipment. Harmonic distortion measured, for a pickup in this price class, lower than average—particularly in the midrange and treble regions. IM distortion, laterally and vertically, was average. The pickup's vertical angle was found to be 19 degrees which is 2 degrees closer to the 15-degree standard than in the former version. Compliance was the same as in the other model,  $18 \times 10^{-6}$  cm/dyne) in both lateral and vertical planes. The stylus was found to have a geometrically good elliptical tip.

Frequency response, on either channel, remained very linear across the audio band. The left channel ran within plus or minus 2 dB from 20 Hz to 11 kHz, with a slope that reached minus 7 dB at 20 kHz. The right channel showed plus 1 dB, minus 3 dB from



20 Hz to 12 kHz, with a similar slope. Channel separation averaged 25 dB and better than 30 dB to right and left channels respectively over much of the response range, and remained unusually good (20 dB or more) to beyond 20 kHz, where most cartridges show very little separation.

After listening to the new Goldring, tracking at 1 gram, playing several recent stereo discs, we would rate it as one of the best-sounding cartridges yet auditioned, with a sound that seemed natural, full, and well balanced from top to bottom. It is an excellent groove tracker. One new release in particular that we feel will give a pickup a good work-out is Von Karajan's reading of the Bruckner Ninth (DGG 139011). This is an unusually clean, wide-range recording of a complex work that has many passages to challenge one's playback equipment: the polyphonic dissonances of the first movement; the nervous scherzo; the broad, rich-hued textures of the adagio. We don't doubt that recording this work this well was a chore of major proportions; the Goldring took it in stride with ease and authority.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

### TEST REPORT GLOSSARY

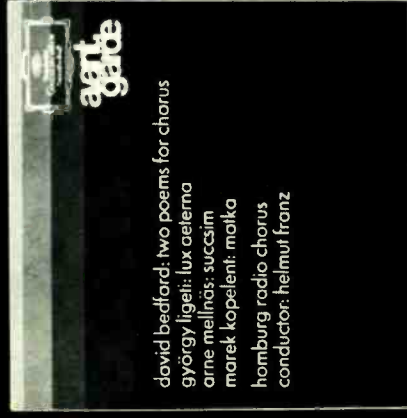
- Capture ratio:** a tuner's ability, expressed in dB, to select the stronger of two conflicting signals. The lower the number, the better.
- Clipping:** the power level at which an amplifier's output distorts.
- dB:** decibel; measure of the ratio between electrical quantities; generally the smallest difference in sound intensity that can be heard.
- Doubling:** a speaker's tendency to distort by producing harmonics of bass tones.
- Harmonic distortion:** spurious overtones introduced by equipment to a pure tone.
- Hz:** hertz; new term for "cycles per second."
- IM (intermodulation) distortion:** spurious sum-and-difference tones caused by the beating of two tones.
- k:** kilo; 1,000.
- m:** milli; 1/1,000.
- M:** mega; 1,000,000.
- μ (mu):** micro; 1/1,000,000.
- Power bandwidth:** range of frequencies over which an amplifier can supply its rated power without exceeding its rated distortion (defined by the half-power, or -3 dB, points at the low and high frequencies).
- Ringings:** a tendency for a component to continue responding to a no-longer-present signal.
- RMS:** root mean square; the effective value of a signal that has been expressed graphically by a sine wave.
- Sensitivity:** a tuner's ability to receive weak signals. Our reports use the Institute of High Fidelity (IHF) standard. The lower the figure the better.
- Sine wave:** in effect, a pure tone of a single frequency, used in testing.
- S/N ratio:** signal-to-noise ratio.
- Square wave:** in effect, a complex tone, rich in harmonics, covering a wide band of frequencies, used in testing.
- THD:** total harmonic distortion, including hum.
- Transient response:** ability to respond to percussive signals cleanly and instantly.

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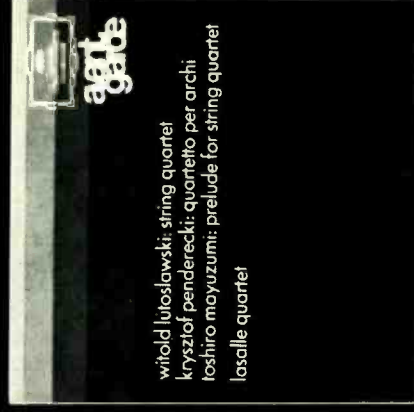
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krzysztof penderecki: quartetto per archi  
toshiko mayuzumi: prelude for string quartet  
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CIRCLE 27 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



# THE NEW RELEASES

*Reviewed by* ROYAL S. BROWN • R. D. DARRELL • PETER G. DAVIS • SHIRLEY FLEMING  
 ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN • CLIFFORD F. GILMORE • HARRIS GOLDSMITH • DAVID HAMILTON • PHILIP HART  
 BERNARD JACOBSON • PAUL HENRY LANG • STEVEN LOWE • ROBERT P. MORGAN • GEORGE MOVSHON  
 CONRAD L. OSBORNE • ROBERT W. SCHAAF • SUSAN THIEHMANN SOMMER



*During the Texan's triumphant Russian tour in the summer of 1960*

PRIZE WINNERS ALL: CLIBURN'S CHOPIN—HIS FINEST RECORDING;  
 OGDON'S RESCUE OF RACHMANINOFF; SOKOLOV'S IMPETUOUS SCHUMANN

*by Harris Goldsmith*

THE FIRST CONCERTS and records to come from prize winners are invariably less interesting than their sequels. A contestant will frequently enter a competition or give a debut recital with a program that has been drilled into the marrow of his fingers since childhood. The second, third, and fourth concerts, on the other hand, will expose an artist's range, temperament, and capacity for growth. This point I think can be demonstrated by the albums at hand, which offer sequel recordings from three of the four first-prize winners in the Soviet Union's Tchaikovsky Competition—an American, a Briton, and a Russian. Van Cliburn, as everyone knows, came out on top in 1958; John Ogdon tied for first prize with Vladimir Ashkenazy in

the deadlocked 1962 affair; and Grigory Sokolov—aged sixteen at the time—took the 1966 medal over our own Misha Dichter. The happy news is that they all can play other music even better than they do the (inevitable) first Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto.

Cliburn's Chopin Sonatas are in many ways the most surprising and exciting of all these releases. A Mozart/Beethoven solo disc issued a few years ago led me to announce Cliburn's musical coming of age, from which it might have been assumed that I was expecting a continued artistic growth on his part. Nevertheless, these present performances have struck me as nothing short of astounding in their personal conviction, temperamental resourcefulness, and sheer sophis-

tication. From the outset of his career, Cliburn, with his huge twelfth-spanning hands and plushy romantic tone, gave promise of one day becoming a grand-manner interpreter in the Rubinstein tradition. To judge from the evidence at hand, that day has now arrived—certainly this is the Texan's finest recorded performance to date. He tapers his melodic lines ("teases" them, if you don't agree with his ideas), expands and contracts his rhythm with elaborate elasticity, and shows that he has acquired a heightened sensitivity both intellectually and emotionally. Moreover, he demonstrates here a sure instinct for cumulative, split-second timing, not one of his strong points in the past. He chooses to begin the Scherzo of the B flat minor

Sonata hard on the heels of the stormy first movement, for example, and similarly lunges *attacca* into the Largo of the B minor.

Actually, the performance of the B flat minor strikes me as a bit more stimulating than that of the B minor. For one thing, Cliburn's license almost verges on fussiness in the latter work, and for another, the B flat minor—aside from being a shade "straighter" and more tightly knit—features some interesting details, including a repetition of the first-movement exposition and a rhythmic variant in the *Marcia funebre* (which the authoritative Paderewski Text attributes to the manuscript and the first German edition—the initial French text contains the version usually heard). I implied above that Cliburn's masterly playing might be termed "Rubinsteinian," but in fact it takes only a brief sampling of the Russian's own recording of these same two compositions to show how utterly different and uniquely original the younger artist's accounts of them really are. Cliburn is more elaborate and leisurely, while the veteran chooses to play with an understated economy. Both approaches are completely valid.

From the beginning—even, in fact, in his debut recording of the Tchaikovsky—John Ogdon has displayed a single-mindedness rather unusual for prize contestants. The possessor of big, splashy equipment, this fine Petri-trained artist has preferred to display it in the more obscure citadels of virtuosity. These long languishing Rachmaninoff Sonatas, which could easily be unbearably cloying, profit especially from his unwillingness to add further interpretative syrup. Though not a colorist in the conventional sense of that word (Ogdon's playing has always tended to the sober-sided and the structural), he does manage some lovely pellucid soft playing here. He also keeps the sometimes sprawling architecture of these treatises under stringent discipline; and if he doesn't quite make us wonder why they are not in the mainstream of the repertory (the Sonata No. 2 is, let's not mince words, a pretty dreadful hodgepodge of morbid



Ogdon: cowinner (with Ashkenazy) in the 1962 Tchaikovsky Competition.

romanticism and inspired pianistic effects), he at least convinces one that they are partially worth salvaging.

Of the two works, the Sonata No. 1—for all its greater length and, at times, greater crudity—seems to me considerably more direct and appealing than its successor. Rachmaninoff himself evidently regarded the Second as something of a problem child: his first edition, of 1913, was abandoned as "unplayable," and then was supplanted many years later by a second edition that carried the simplification process too far. Ogdon apparently is giving us the revised text, but it should be mentioned that perhaps the ideal solution is the one that Vladimir Horowitz hit upon. With the composer's sanction, Horowitz worked out a composite. If and when a Horowitz recording appears, it will prove instructive to compare the textual divergencies (at a Carnegie Hall performance Horowitz seemed to add all sorts of interlocking octaves and the like), but I am quite certain that Ogdon's record will remain a strong competitor. Indeed, this coupling will be as welcome to collectors of out-of-the-way keyboard literature as were Ogdon's recent recording of the Busoni Concerto and Nielsen piano works.

Grigory Sokolov's account of the Tchaikovsky Concerto tended to be on the sprawling, unsubtle side. While the appealing songfulness and red-blooded romantic temperament he also showed in that performance are no less apparent in the Schumann *Carnaval* and Saint-Saëns G minor Concerto, the young man (he is now only nineteen) has made great strides in channeling his vast instincts towards meaningful music making.

The *Carnaval* performance, for all its delectable details, moves in a steady line from the opening *Préambule* to the closing *Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins*. Though very different in actual detail, you can see that Sokolov obviously is planning his conception along the same lines as Rachmaninoff did. In other words, he favors a thrusting, angular kind of *brío*, and a forceful, impetuously extroverted sonority. Like Rachmaninoff and Cortot, Sokolov even plays the *Sphinxes*—those cryptic note sequences which provide the riddle around which all of *Carnaval* is based. Clara Schumann's strictures notwithstanding, I like the *misterioso* touch of melodrama the sphinxes provide, for the ensuing *Papillon* then emerges in a new burst of B flat major sunshine that would otherwise be dissipated. Apropos the *Sphinx* question, I might point out too that Sokolov's account in straight, unadorned octaves is quite as awe-inspiring (if less blood-curdling!) as Rachmaninoff's treatment in spooky tremolos. It should also be noted that though Sokolov generally favors brisk—not to say downright impossible—tempo (listen to his fantastic repeated wrist action in the famous *Reconnaissance* episode), he does find the time to let the music breathe. I am particularly grateful for his much slower than usual treatment for the central section of



Sokolov: winner, at age sixteen, in the 1966 Tchaikovsky Competition.

*Pantalon et Colombine*. At this speed, the downward chains of double sixths are truly legato as marked. Another interesting device in the performance is the forging-ahead *attacca* from Chopin right into the *Estrella*. Although this *Carnaval* is up against some severe competition, it proves to my ears one of the most enjoyable of modern recorded versions.

Sokolov is every bit as impressive in the Saint-Saëns Concerto. His first movement does not belabor the pseudo-Bach Chorale elements, but instead savors to the fullest the potentialities for electrifying octave bravura. The second movement—inspired by a phrase lifted right out of Chopin's E major Scherzo—rollicks with good-natured poise. In the final Tarantella, Sokolov and his capable conductor Neimye Yarvey take off like a sputnik, but rarely do they lose control of the dotted-note rhythm, a frequent pitfall here. Indeed, this impassioned, fully committed performance ought to grant Saint-Saëns's *démodé* opus a firm new lease on life.

The Sokolov recording on Melodiya/Angel, as heard in the review acetates, is brightly reverberant yet admirably detailed. The fine recorded sound of the two RCA discs is marred by abnormally noisy surfaces throughout.

✓ CHOPIN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 35; No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58*

Van Cliburn, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3053, \$5.79.

✓ RACHMANINOFF: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in D minor, Op. 28; No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 36*

John Ogdon, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3024, \$5.79.

✓ SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9*  
† Saint-Saëns: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 22*

Grigory Sokolov, piano; U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, Neimye Yarvy, cond. (in the Saint-Saëns). MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40074, \$5.79.



The composer was also a talented performer on a variety of string and keyboard instruments.

by Alfred Frankenstein

## HINDEMITH'S SO-CALLED BRANDENBURGS: SEVEN PIECES FROM THE TWENTIES

**B**ETWEEN 1921 and 1928 Paul Hindemith composed seven works to which he gave the title *Kammermusik*. Now we can hear them in a recorded performance by a most remarkable organization known as Concerto Amsterdam. On the cover of the box, the seven *Kammermusiken* are identified as "the so-called *Brandenburgs*." We are not told who called the pieces so, but the designation is very apt, for many reasons.

The Hindemith of the 1920s resembled Johann Sebastian Bach in a good many ways. "*Er komponiert nicht, er musiziert*," said Paul Bekker in a great untranslatable phrase. What it means is that Hindemith was not a specialist in any one branch of music but a general practitioner, in the baroque tradition. Six of the seven *Kammermusiken* are solo concertos—for violin, viola, viola d'amore, cello, piano, and organ—and Hindemith was capable of giving public performances of the solo parts in all of them. For him, there was no break between writing and playing; they were all part of the same intense, vivid, vitally absorbing musical activity. As the new set of records amply proves.

The first of the series, Op. 24, No. 1, is the only one without a solo part, and that may explain why it is the best known. It is for twelve instruments, starts the series in an atmosphere of irresistibly excited, trumpeting joy, goes on to a breathtaking slow movement for three woodwinds and a single, mysterious, quietly insistent bell, and ends with a jazzy finale entitled "1921." This is one of the earliest examples in music of our century's self-conscious delight in its noisiness and in its mechanized dynamics, and it is to this day one of the best.

No. 2 is the Piano Concerto, with heavy emphasis on a toccatalike, Bach-like handling of the solo part, which runs on for pages in two contrapuntal lines and parallels the "motoric" treatment of the piano by Bartók and other major composers of the period. In No. 3, the Cello Concerto, the style begins to take on larger outlines, to compromise with the romantic expression which Hindemith always professed to disdain. (What he really disdained was the academic officialdom which rested its case on the music of the nineteenth century; drive him into a corner and you would discover that he admired Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms quite as much as anybody else who had any sense.) The Cello Concerto is a big work, with a fine, flourishing solo part. People who *musizieren* have no truck with the nonsense about subduing the solo role in the concerto; Hindemith knew better than anybody that the root of the word is *concertare*, which means to compete, and his soloists really do.

No. 4, the Violin Concerto, is the most romantic *Kammermusik* of them all. The orchestra is the largest of the series, the solo part the most strenuous, brilliant, and, in the slow movement, the most tenderly expressive. But the romantic delights of No. 4 are nearly matched by those of No. 5, the Viola Concerto, which Hindemith himself often presented in his later years, when he specialized in the viola on the concert stage.

The concertos for piano, violin, cello, and viola form a single opus, 36. The last two *Kammermusiken* make up Op. 46, and for me they are somewhat less interesting than the earlier set. Op. 46,

No. 1, is a Concerto for Viola d'Amore and Orchestra. The soft tone of this old instrument is completely submerged more often than not here—this is the one recording of the seven that one may question. Op. 46, No. 2, is a Concerto for Organ and Orchestra that foreshadows Hindemith the academician, proud of his heritage, who during his middle years turned out more than his share of exercises in contrapuntal technique. The performances—all, apparently, done without a conductor since none is named—are beautifully balanced, transparent but rich in texture, perfectly in tune, and superlatively colorful. The recordings, with the single exception noted above, are in keeping. Three of the soloists—Schröder, Vermeulen, and Bylsma—are members of Concerto Amsterdam, while Van Blerck and De Clerck are other well-known Amsterdam musicians; viola soloist Doktor is of course well known everywhere.

The accompanying pamphlet contains far too many pictures of Hindemith and the performers and far too little about the music.

HINDEMITH: *Kammermusiken*: Op. 24, No. 1; Op. 36, Nos. 2-5; Op. 46, Nos. 1-2

Gerard van Blerck, piano (in Op. 36, No. 2); Albert de Clerck, organ (in Op. 46, No. 2); Jaap Schröder, violin (in Op. 36, No. 4); Paul Doktor, viola (in Op. 36, No. 5); Joke Vermeulen, viola d'amore (in Op. 46, No. 1); Anner Bylsma, cello (in Op. 36, No. 3); Concerto Amsterdam. TELEFUNKEN 43110/12, \$17.85 (three discs).



Miss Sills discusses Donizetti's *Queen Elizabeth* with conductor Jasas.

## STAR STATUS FOR BEVERLY SILLS—A FIRST RECITAL DISC

by Conrad L. Osborne

IT IS A PLEASURE to see Westminster making a bit of a project of American singers who are not at the Metropolitan or who for some reason have not cracked the international recording scene. We have had a disc from Norman Treigle (his second is now ready for release), and a recital by the tenor Barry Morell has just been issued (see review elsewhere in these pages). And here we have the first solo aria disc by Beverly Sills, though her extraordinary talents have already been made known to record listeners through her brilliant contributions to the RCA *Giulio Cesare* and—let it not be forgotten—the excellent performance of *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, taped nearly a decade ago by M-G-M and currently available on Heliodor.

Comparisons are odious, but irresistible too. And when a singer tilts in the international arena with the repertoire recently made almost familiar by the likes of Callas, Sutherland, and Caballé, she invites judgment by big-tournament rules. In this case, such judgment is implicit in the quality of the singing as well; Miss Sills is not in need of hand-capping.

It is fascinating to observe the career patterns of our *prime donne*. They seem to fall into two patterns, and longevity really does seem to depend a great deal not only on a secure technique but on finding out before it is too late just which kinds of music are healthy for the voice in question. We have had Callas and Tebaldi, both of whom started early,

reached stardom while quite young, and ran into difficulty while still relatively young. Each had certain technical flaws, Callas' quite obvious, Tebaldi's less so. Each sang certain roles she might better have left alone, with the difference that Callas attempted several different sorts, which pulled her voice in several directions at once, whereas Tebaldi tended to stay within the approximate limits of her voice and technique, simply inclining increasingly to the overheavy side of her voice. Tebaldi's troubles have been correspondingly less severe, her career correspondingly more active.

Sutherland, Caballé, and Sills have all been late bloomers. Each sang all sorts of music for a number of years without lighting on a particular specialty. Each had a perfectly solid, respectable career of ten to fifteen years behind her before anyone began to notice that she might be a great singer. Sills was perhaps a bit more protected during this time than the other two, for the voice is so obviously a light one that there was little chance of her being asked to sing some of the roles essayed at one time or another by Sutherland and Caballé.

In each of these cases, things suddenly coalesced in the course of a single evening. The elements which had been lying about for anyone to view came together, under the spotlight. For Sutherland, it was of course *Lucia* that did it, in the context of the new production mounted in 1959 by Covent Garden, where the piece had not been done for many years.

For Caballé, it was the 1965 concert performance of *Lucrezia Borgia* at Carnegie Hall, before one of those hyperthyroid audiences attracted by such events. And for Miss Sills, it was the premiere of the *Giulio Cesare* in the fall of 1966—a flossy production in a still new house, and the first Handel opera actually staged by a major company in New York within memory.

Now, Miss Sutherland was not a better singer the day after the *Lucia* premiere than she had been the day before it, and in fact she had already sung in London in roles that come quite close to her greatest strengths—as Gilda, for example, and in several Handel pieces. As for Miss Sills, I can recall seeing her Philine as long ago as 1956, and feeling that one would not be likely to hear it sung any better. For that matter, *Baby Doe* is a real challenge to voice and technique—it's just that no one *thinks* of it that way. But on those evenings, the signs were right, and everyone present woke up with a start.

I do not mean to put these ladies in the same vocal bag, though they share a good deal of repertoire. Miss Sills is closer than either Sutherland or Caballé to our traditional concept of "coloratura soprano." Hers is a full-bodied high soprano, with considerable warmth and roundness and a reasonably good bottom octave—by no means the slim, very high Galli-Curci/Pons type. But there is little of the dramatic about it; Sutherland remains unique for the size and fullness

of her sound and for her ability to carry truly big tone into the area above the top C.

Sills's sound has a singular freshness and freedom about it. The qualities we rather ineptly call "spin" and "float," which give the impression of tone coming forth with no impediment, no "holding" or "setting" of any sort, are amply evident in her singing. Her trill rivals Sutherland's as the most beautiful that can be heard today, and her ability to carry it in flight over most of her range is something I have otherwise experienced only from recordings of pre-electric vintage. She has no superiors in the execution of runs and divisions of various sorts; Sutherland and Berganza are her only equals whom I know of. Her skill in the several means of executing the  *messa di voce*  is also of the highest order, as is her capacity for sustaining and shading very long, controlled legato phrases. The clarity of her vowels is unusual for a soprano, and in consequence the words are accorded much more considerate treatment than is normally the case.

As to limitations, there are a couple. One is in the sheer size and bite of the voice—there's not a great deal of either. Actually, the volume is ample for most of the music she is ever likely to sing, but she sometimes seems to "nurse" the voice, using her lovely floated *mezzopiano* as a basic singing level and letting it out only occasionally. Carried to an extreme, this can rapidly become cloying and fatiguing; one wants the sound to be *there*. The other limitation is at the very top end of the voice. The D and E flat are there, and they are usually attractive. But they are not really exciting, and one does not have the feeling that she could carry on up from there. Needless to say, this is only occasionally a drawback in practice.

Such a voice is marvelously suited to Linda and Amina, only a little less to Lucia. It is also beautifully adapted to the French repertory, of which she is also a mistress from the stylistic and linguistic standpoints. Her Manon is extraordinary, and one can imagine her reviving a piece like the *Dinorah* "Shadow Song" or the Mad Scene from *Hamlet* to great effect. Fortunately, she has a remarkable stylistic adaptability; she seems able to feel many sorts of music from the inside out.

The thing that is quite special about her, I think, is a particularly communicative temperament. She is absolutely direct and honest with what she does on the stage, and her presence has a feminine radiance that is most unusual. This is most easily experienced in the theater, of course, but it comes over on the record too, in her handling of recitative (always urgent and personal) and in the joy with which she sails into passage-work. She seems always in love with the music and with the sensations of singing, and this is what makes her, for me, perhaps the finest of these performers (certainly the most endearing). I do not say that Sutherland does not sing as well as

Sills, or even better in certain respects (if worse in others). But I do say that she does not begin to move me or exhilarate me in a way that Sills does in one of her better roles. Which is, as they say, the name of the game.

I have almost no cavils about this record, which presents each of these scenes in its complete form (e.g., the recitative with the gorgeous horn obbligato before "*Oh! quante volte*"; the cabaletta to "*Come per me sereno*," etc.), so far as actual performance is concerned. But I do think Miss Sills must learn to say "no" to Roland Gagnon. Mr. Gagnon, a member of the New York City Opera's musical staff, is the gentleman responsible for the embellishments and cadenzas which turn up about twice per groove. He is no doubt an excellent musician, and he clearly knows what to show off in this artist's voice. But he needs an editor. Some sort of flight, turn, or other ornamental invention manifests itself at every conceivable point, and at some inconceivable ones. Sometimes they sound right on the button, and sometimes not (certainly they become harmonically outlandish at a few points). The point is that no selectivity has been exercised; the music has been simply drowned in the stuff. It is not necessary for Miss Sills, or any singer, to show her entire arsenal in the course of each little recitative, and I am afraid that we soon get the feeling that much of the display is being undertaken for its own sake, despite the singer's earnest efforts towards giving them a musical or dramatic meaning. There is nothing more predictable than this sort of tireless inventiveness—it becomes a case of *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Such music may occasionally be held up for ornamental commentary to tremendous effect, but when it is constantly detained, we grow impatient. Basic tempos must not be allowed to disappear, especially when the singer's proclivity is in any case towards quite moderate ones.

The engineering is good, if not spectacular: the surfaces of my copy were less than immaculate. Jalas' accompaniments are well above average for the brief periods of time when he is allowed to keep the music on a rhythmic path, and the choral work is competent. Now that the mandatory display record is out of the way, perhaps we may have some Handel, Haydn, and Mozart, and some of the French repertory. (Hint: a complete *Manon* in stereo is badly needed.)

#### BEVERLY SILLS: "Bellini and Donizetti Heroines"

Donizetti: *Linda di Chamounix: O luce di quest'anima; Lucia di Lammermoor: Regnava nel silenzio; Roberto Devereux: Vivi, ingrato; Rosmonda d'Inghilterra: Perché non ho del vento*. Bellini: *I Capuletti ed i Montecchi: Oh! quante volte; La Sonnambula: Come per me sereno*.

Beverly Sills, soprano; Sonia Drakster, contralto (in *Lucia*): Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Jussi Jalas, cond. WESTMINSTER WST 17143, \$4.79.

## CLASSICAL

#### BACH: *Cantata No. 198 ("Trauerode")*

Rohtraud Hansmann, soprano; Helen Watts, contralto; Kurt Equiluz, tenor; Max van Egmond, bass; Monteverdi Choir of Hamburg; Concerto Amsterdam, Jaap Schröder, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9496, \$5.95.

#### BACH: *Cantatas: No. 51, Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen; No. 202, Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten ("Wedding Cantata")*

Agnes Giebel, soprano; Maurice André, trumpet; Concerto Amsterdam, Jaap Schröder, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9513, \$5.95.

#### BACH: *Cantata No. 215, Preise dein Glück, gesegnetes Sachsen*

Erna Spoorenberg, soprano; Werner Krenn, tenor; Erich Wenk, bass; Gächingen Kantorei, Chorus of the Gedächtniskirche, Bach-Collegium, Stuttgart. Helmuth Rilling, cond. NONESUCH H 71206, \$2.50.

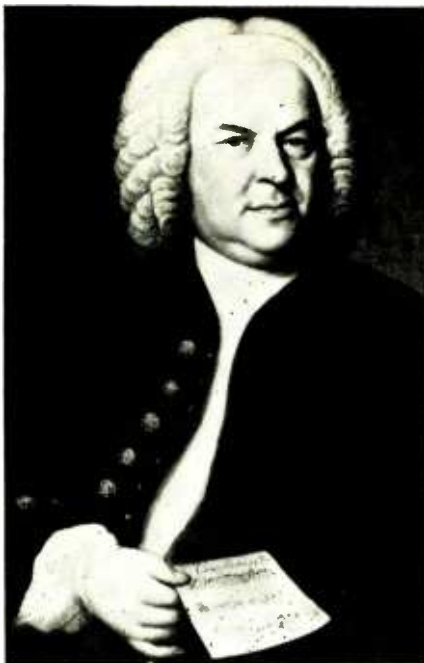
The *Trauerode* was written in 1727 for the funeral of the Electress of Saxony, Christiane Eberhardine. About four years later Bach probably incorporated most of the music from this strictly "occasional" composition into his setting of the *St. Mark* Passion, though all of the Passion music has been lost and only the text remains. A few years ago Wolfgang Gönnerwein recorded twelve numbers, taken from various sources, that fit a portion of the text of the *St. Mark* Passion, including the two great choruses and three arias from the *Trauerode*. That Epic recording (reviewed in these pages in December 1965) remained in the catalogues only a short time, however, and is presumably no longer available. The only other existing recording of the *Trauerode* is Scherchen's on Westminster, a performance which epitomizes for me the very worst possible interpretation of a Bach cantata—huge chorus, slow and ponderous tempos, and the whole dripping with a stifling Reverence and Awe.

This new Telefunken release presents an entirely different approach. The recent tremendous surge of interest in authentic readings has produced several ensembles who specialize in performing baroque music in as stylistically accurate a manner as possible. The Concerto Amsterdam, heard on this record and in the two solo cantatas, is one of the best of these groups. Its playing is light, clean, and confident, and often tremendously expressive. The rich orchestration—which includes pairs of flutes, oboes d'amore, lutes, and gambas—produces in the great opening chorus a sumptuous yet subdued sound that is unique among all the cantatas I know. Outstanding in this work full of outstanding music is a tender and

meltingly beautiful alto aria accompanied by two gambas and a continuo consisting of the two lutes and cello; Miss Watts realizes its expressive potential completely. Rohtraud Hansmann and Kurt Equiluz turn in first-rate performances, vocally and musically, of their single arias, and though Max van Egmond has only one recitative/arioso to contribute, he manages to fill it with a memorable warmth and sensitivity. The thirty-two-voice Monteverdi Choir is a solidly mature and thoroughly professional-sounding ensemble, and their balance with the orchestra is near ideal. The spacious church acoustic contributes greatly to the serious and spiritual atmosphere of the work without any loss of clarity or articulation.

In the two soprano solo cantatas the playing of the Concerto Amsterdam is again a model of stylistic accuracy; special mention must be made here, however, of the fascinating and imaginative continuo realizations by harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt, particularly in the C major aria in *Weichet nur*. With each of Agnes Giebel's recorded performances, I have become more and more impressed by the shining and pure quality of her voice and by her really superior musicianship. This record may represent her best work so far. The torturous coloratura of *Jauchzet Gott*, that classic soprano tour de force, seems to present no technical difficulties whatsoever; Miss Giebel sails effortlessly up to each of the high Cs and navigates the tricky course through the opening aria and final alleluia with apparent ease, in spite of the brisk tempos. Though she just misses making the spectacular impact that Maria Stader does on an Archive recording with Richter, Giebel's voice is certainly better suited to the work. In the more lyrical *Weichet nur*, she is able to project her best qualities even more effectively. This delicate and lovely performance is one of the best on record.

The festive cantata *Preise dein Glücke* is a work of more uneven quality than the gems discussed above. A *dramma per musica*, it was put together in about three days and was performed outdoors for the visiting Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, August III. The giant opening eight-part double chorus accompanied by flutes, oboes, trumpets, kettle-drums, strings, and continuo was borrowed from an earlier secular cantata, *Es lebe der König*, BWV Anh. 11. This same work appeared some years later in a much shortened form as the "*Osanna*" in the B minor Mass. The soprano aria later found its way into the fifth part of the *Christmas Oratorio* as a bass aria. Rilling manages to inject considerable life and forward motion into the work, but he seems slightly hampered by a somewhat overlarge and sluggish chorus. A distant and too diffuse recording acoustic probably is partly to blame. One recitative and aria each for soprano, tenor, and bass are all admirably presented, though the dry "salutations" of the texts don't offer much opportunity for expressivity. The bass recitative, the only one accompanied by continuo alone, provides harpsichordist Martin Galling with a



J. S. Bach, in an unbuttoned mood, holds forth on his "Canon triplése à 6 Voc."

text that invites very meaningful musical illustrations; the instrument here expresses the meaning almost better than the words.

The jacket notes for the Nonesuch disc consist of an interesting and informative essay by Alfred Durr, plus complete text and translation. The person responsible for preparing the jackets for the two Telefunken releases, particularly the *Trauerode*, should receive some sort of award for thoroughness: the cantatas are discussed in detail, and very specific information is provided on the performing forces involved in the recording. C.F.G.

#### BACH: *Organ Works*

*Tocatta and Fugue in D minor*, S. 565; *Prelude and Fugue in C*, S. 547; *Fantasias and Fugues: in G minor*, S. 542; *in A minor*, S. 904.

Wilhelm Krumbach, organ. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9503, \$5.95.

Thanks to the ever broadening range of material being recorded and marketed throughout the world, American listeners are now able to hear increasing numbers of Europe's truly historic organs. This record brings to my attention for the first time an instrument built in 1732 in the tiny village of Lahm in southern Germany, near Bayreuth. The organist of the Schlosskirche at the time was Johann Lorenz Bach (a second cousin of Johann Sebastian) and he very likely had a hand in the design of the instrument. The builder, Heinrich Gottlieb Herbst, representative of the strong central German tradition, produced a two-manual twenty-nine stop organ tonally closer to the instruments of his famous south German contemporary Gottfried Silbermann than to those of the brighter, more sparking north German builders such as Arp Schnitger. Exceptionally

broad scaling, which seems thickest in the tenor octave, and a generous supply of large-scale quints (a 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ ' Quinta as well as a 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ' Nassat on the Great and a 10 $\frac{2}{3}$ ' Gross Quint on the pedal) combine to produce a tremendous thick yet rich sonority, though without the sweetness and warmth characteristic of Silbermann's best efforts. This kind of richness must be paid for, of course, with a certain loss of definition of individual voices, and the extremely reverberant Lahm church does little to help matters. Fortunately, sensible tempos and clearly articulated playing go far in making sense out of the dense part-writing in these works.

Krumbach does his best playing in the warhorse D minor *Tocatta and Fugue*. The *Tocatta* is played with tremendous drive and powerful intensity, with sonorities piling up on one another to a really exciting climax. The *Fugue* is much smoother but no less exciting. The same kind of violent energy characterizes the G minor *Fantasia*, but its *Fugue* is marred by inconsistent, almost random, phrasing at each entrance of the subject or countersubject.

The A minor *Fantasia and Fugue* (S. 904) was written for harpsichord or organ, but is most often grouped in the former category; I know of no other recordings of the work played on an organ. Here Krumbach wisely adopts a calmer, more restrained approach for this mature and very serious work. After hearing it so sensitively performed, I feel that its broad grandeur is much better suited to the organ than to the harpsichord.

Though perhaps too much of the Schlosskirche's reverberation has been included, the recorded sound is nevertheless magnificently lifelike. The level is high, but I detected no signs of overloading or distortion, and the surfaces are excellent. As usual, Telefunken has assembled impressively thorough and intelligent jacket notes, including an informative essay on the history of the instrument and a complete stop list.

C.F.G.

#### BACH, CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL: *Magnificat*

Elly Ameling, soprano; Maureen Lehane, contralto; Theo Altmeyer, tenor; Roland Hermann, bass; Tölzer Boychoir; Collegium Aureum, Kurt Thomas, cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1368, \$2.50.

The joy and splendor of this work bring two questions immediately to mind. What prompted Bach to compose it in 1749, at a time when his professional pursuits were nothing if not worldly? (Frederick's court certainly displayed no pressing need for sacred music.) And, once having composed it, why did he do nothing so fine in this vein again, even when he took over musical direction of the churches of Hamburg and was turning out church music to meet a weekly deadline? The composer Zelter suggested that the *Magnificat* was an "audition piece," written when Bach hoped to obtain an appoint-

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ment to the court of Frederick's sister, Princess Amalie. That may be the answer; perhaps too there is an element of showing the old man, for Carl Philipp made no bones of patterning the work on his father's Magnificat in matters of key and in straight borrowing of thematic material.

Much has been said about the work's looking both forward and back, with the old baroquisms bumping against the new tendency towards "sensibility" and the *galant* spirit. To my ear the vista Bach points to is mainly backward: there is very little in the jubilant opening and closing choruses that couldn't have been written fifty years earlier, and if that final fugue and the triumphant passages for clarino trumpet in preceding sections don't set you to reminiscing, nothing will. The new look is perhaps suggested in the lamenting soprano aria "*Quia respexit*," a bit more subjective than the customary church fare, and the fluid string subject in the contralto/tenor duet "*Deposuit potentes*" is rather more facile-sounding than anything J. S. Bach would have written; but the pacing gravity of the "*Suscipit Israel*" for contralto solo suggests nothing new, and doesn't need to. Whatever the Magnificat's historical components, I hope your curiosity is aroused; it is a lovely work.

Problems of choice. The RCA version is as good as the older Archive disc when it comes to the choruses, and better when it comes to the soprano soloist—Elly Ameling is superb at this kind of thing. But the DGG male soloists have the edge over RCA's—bigger voices, more effortlessly produced, with more rhythmic thrust. The matter of rhythmic tension crops up as a basic matter here: the Collegium Aureum is certainly not slack, but the DGG forces add just enough voltage to lend that extra zing. Collegium Aureum has on its side, however, the inclusion of a boy choir, and that special quality of sound is worth having. S.F.

#### BEETHOVEN: *Mass in C, Op. 86*

Patricia Brooks, soprano; Lili Chookasian, contralto; George Shirley, tenor; Bonaldo Giaiotti, bass; Musica Aeterna Chorus and Orchestra, Frederic Waldman, cond. DECCA DL 79433, \$5.79.

Somewhat overshadowed by its stupendous successor, the *Missa Solemnis*, the C major Mass is one of Beethoven's strong middle-period creations and deserves better than being shunted to the rear. Vox once offered a very fine early LP by Rudolf Moralt and the Vienna Symphony, which in spite of its antiquated sound I found easily superior to a later edition by Beecham for Capitol/EMI, which was a bit fussy in interpretation and disappointingly substandard in sound for its circa 1959 vintage. Another recorded version, on the Baroque label, I have never had an opportunity of hearing. Now we are given a sinewy, tautly disciplined American-style reading. If it lacks that last touch of reverent spirituality which graced the Moralt, it is also mercifully free of Beecham's preciosity.



Frederic Waldman offers a sturdy interpretation of Beethoven's rare *Mass in C*.

Though Patricia Brooks's voice is not a large one and she sometimes forces it unpleasantly, she sings with purity. Conversely, though purity of timbre and enunciation are sometimes lacking in Lili Chookasian's singing, she does furnish the requisite heft. Basso Giaiotti may be a trifle overmiked, but he displays a big, rolling sonority, and tenor George Shirley impresses me as well-nigh ideal.

I will hang on to my copy of the old Moralt performance, but for general sturdiness of interpretation and vast superiority of sonics new purchasers are directed to the Waldman. H.G.

#### BERG: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*

†Stravinsky: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D*

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Igor Markevich, cond. (in the Berg), Ernest Bour, cond. (in the Stravinsky). PHILIPS PHS 900194, \$5.79.

Grumiaux's playing of the Berg concerto is a pretty distinguished piece of fiddling, and it's too bad that the orchestra and the recording let him down. Although more obviously "hi-fi" in sound, this Philips disc doesn't match the recent Suk-Ančerl version (Crossroads 22 16 0172) when it comes to clarity of orchestral detail—nor does the Concertgebouw play with such striking unity and fidelity to Berg's dynamic markings and indicated balances. Rehearing the Czech recording recently, I was more than ever convinced that it is one of the "great recordings," quite breathtaking in its restrained mu-



sicality. Since the demise of Crossroads appears to be imminent, be sure to secure a copy.

The new version of the Stravinsky concerto is also well executed by the soloist, if without the special *spiccato* dash that distinguishes Silverstein's playing (on RCA LSC 2852). But the total effect somehow lacks vitality—everything just chugs along in an orderly fashion. So we still haven't a really satisfactory version of this piece; Stern's inappropriate style and (occasionally) intonation mar the composer's version (Columbia MS 6331), while Silverstein soups up the second Aria unmercifully, and is somewhat driven by his conductor in the outer movements. I guess one should opt for the Columbia disc, since it is obviously unique in significant ways. D.H.

#### BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

Orchestre de Paris, Charles Munch, cond. ANGEL S 36517, \$5.79.

The *Fantastique* was something of an *idée fixe* throughout Charles Munch's long and distinguished career. The late conductor recorded the work four times (his first essay, done with the Orchestre National for French Columbia 78s, was never issued in the U. S.); it appeared on his initial concerts with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, he programmed it innumerable times during his Boston tenure, and—only a few days prior to his death—he led the piece in New York with the new Orchestre de Paris.

It would be a pleasure to be able to report that the recording now under review was the best of all the Munch performances I have heard, but I am afraid that such a report would be more sentimental than true. The Orchestre de Paris, despite its agreeable sound and immense potential, is not yet an ensemble of the highest caliber. On this very first recorded specimen of its work (it was taped in the spring of 1968), the ensemble is very scrappy and the rhythmic discipline loose-limbed indeed. The violins in "*Un Bal*" sound like thirty willful soloists; the brass are extremely nervous about their dotted rhythms in the "*Marche au Supplice*" and the resulting slapdash inaccuracy tends to transform that movement into a sinister-sounding variant of the *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polka. The execution in the "*Witches' Sabbath*" has all the carelessness of the first Munch/Boston edition but little of that version's malevolent nervous energy. This particular failing, I suppose, can rightly be paid to the conductor: it is really shocking to discover how much bite Munch had lost by the time he led this session. Of course, there are details that have more creative impulse or more delicacy than either Boston performance (e.g., the eerie *col legno* violins in the final movement), but, in the main, the tempos are weary alongside the second Munch/Boston recording (RCA Victor LM/LSO 2608) which remains a clear choice for anyone desiring this conductor's surrealist, Dali-esque interpretation.



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Among other recent *Fantastiques* of uncommon interest are the Ozawa/Toronto (CBS), Boulez/LSO (CBS), Ansermet/Suisse Romande (London), and Davis/LSO (Philips). The last-named—an extremely classical view of the music as opposed to the usual programmatic one—is currently my own favorite. H.G.

**BIBER:** *Sonatas of the Rosary* (15); *Passacaglia for Solo Violin*

Eduard Melkus, violin; Huguette Dreyfus, harpsichord; Lionel Rogg, organ; Karl Scheit, lute; Gerald Sonneck, cello; Alfred Planyavsky, double bass; Jans-Jürg Lange, bassoon. ARCHIVE 198422/23, \$11.58 (two discs).

There is, as far as I know, nothing in the violin literature quite comparable to these incredibly imaginative, relentlessly intense pictorial essays by Heinrich Franz Biber (1666-1704), that still only half-known Salzburg *Kapellmeister* who plunged with an almost Joycean intellect into the task of delineating the Mysteries of the Rosary in musical outline. Yet to call these fifteen pieces (often referred to as the Mystery Sonatas) pictorial essays is to sell them short, and that is where the Joycean parallel comes to mind: these works can be approached on three levels at least, and possibly four, if one takes into account that even the choice of keys had religious significance in Biber's day.

More accessible to our ears are the facts that: 1) the composer drew upon standard forms—dance forms, passacaglias, chaconnes—and stretched them to unprecedented limits, conjuring a world of Blakean images and eccentric torments which defy any straightforward designation as "courante" or "aria"; 2) the violin itself seems also prodded to unprecedented feats, tuned, in keeping with the practice of scordatura, in a different manner for each sonata, rendering chordal effects not otherwise available, and sounding occasionally, indeed, like another instrument altogether, so strangely is its tone altered with certain tunings; and 3) the programmatic points in the music are at times literal and vivid—the leaden weight of the cross borne by Jesus, the hair-raising drive of the quaking earth and rending rocks—and at times more veiled (the accompanying notes account for more pictorial content than I, for one, can concede, but no matter). Any way you look at it, these sonatas are an experience; one is apt to forget, over a long period of time, just how remarkable—even exhausting—they are.

The first violinist to bring the Rosary Sonatas to the attention of the American record buyer was Sonya Monosoff (Cambridge), and that three-disc album remains in very good standing. The Melkus performance, a bit more assertive and tending towards brisker tempos, also offers a strong temptation to the buyer. For the continuo part it employs the six instruments listed above, in varying combinations (the Monosoff called on organ, harpsichord, viola da gamba, and bassoon), and in certain sonatas it seems to me that the handling of continuo is more

successful—that is, more aggressively set forth—in the new set. Melkus is tremendously skilled and forthright, and his work is exciting. These qualities are evident too in his playing of the solo Passacaglia, a relatively simple example of the form which nonetheless manages to hold you fast. Sound is superb—spacious and clean. S.F.

**BONDON:** *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* ("Concerto de Mars")—See Castelnuovo-Tedesco: *Quintet for Guitar and String Quartet, Op. 143.*

**BOULEZ:** *Structures for Two Pianos*—*Books I and II*

Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky, pianos. MACE MXX 9043, \$2.50.

Because of Boulez' practice of revising, rewriting, and extending his works after their initial public presentation, the chronology of his music is more than a little complex. A case in point is the composition of the *Structures*: the first book was composed in 1951-52 (its three parts in the order Ia, Ic, Ib), while the two sections of Book II followed in 1956 and 1961, respectively. Boulez relates that in undertaking this work he sought to purify his musical vocabulary of all previous influences and to develop a musical language in which all aspects of a work would stem from the same principles. Contemporary with the first book is the composer's famous polemic *Schoenberg Is Dead*, in which he attacked the late Viennese master for retaining classical ideas of rhythm and form rather than carrying his serial idea into other dimensions of music than pitch; the first book of *Structures* is the musical counterpart of that polemic.

The theoretical issues need not concern us here; Boulez was not the first to apply a rigorous serial scheme to durations,



*The brothers Kontarsky collaborate on a new recording of Boulez' Structures.*

dynamics, and attacks, but to many younger Europeans *Structures I* became kind of a classic example of such procedures. For the listener, the most obvious effect of Boulez' specific procedures in this work is virtually to guarantee that there will be no elements of conventional repetition in the work—no sequence of pitches will be associated twice with the same durations, dynamics, or attacks, and thus an apparent randomness suffuses the musical surface. Marked textural contrasts take place and articulate the sections, but the over-all impression is that every single note remains an independent entity; this "pointillistic" texture is the more pronounced in that the "shape" of a piano tone is so heavily weighted towards the initial attack rather than the sustained after-portion.

The second book incorporates elements of aleatory procedures in some passages, and is altogether a work of more profile and more obvious coherence (I can speak only of this particular performance, for a score of Book II is not at hand). The serial principle is here applied to harmonic elements, and there seems to be some perceptible relation between surface and structure. If Book I seems now mostly a historical monument to the mathematical stage of "total serialism," the more recent portions are a better argument for Boulez' prominent position in the European avant-garde.

The Kontarsky brothers have recorded Book I once before, in the VEGA series stemming from the Paris Domaine Musical concerts. The present stereo version, made in January 1965, is a great improvement, for the playing is more secure, and the stereo separation helpful (it could with benefit be still more pronounced). The original German issue of this disc, on the adventurous Wergo label (WER 60011), was embellished with an essay by Boulez and an analytic study of Book II, including numerous music examples: those who read German might find this a worthwhile investment, for the Mace liner note offers little in the way of hard facts: some biographical information, vapidities about musical revolution, and some trivial technical information—which applies, in any case, only to Book I (but how would the annotator know, for he thinks the whole work was written in 1955!). All this is set in nasty small type, surrounded by acres of white space.

The sound (described as—I'm not kidding—"Stereo-Monic") is quite a reasonable facsimile of the original Wergo. The labels are curiously reticent about what is on which side; fortunately, it's really very simple—side A holds Book I, side B Book II. D.H.

**BUSONI:** *Six Elegies*  
†Villa Lobos: *Rudepoema*

David Bean, piano. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1379, \$2.50.

In comparing his own music with that of Debussy, Busoni once wrote: "Debussy's art implies a limitation which strikes many letters out of the alphabet.

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... I strive for the enrichment, the enlargement, and the expansion of all means and forms of expression." While Busoni doubtless intended in this statement to place his own art in a positive light, it seems to me that he actually touched here upon an essential problem in his compositional output. The fact is that the "all-inclusiveness" of this composer's approach leads to an eclecticism which has highly dubious musical consequences. Whereas I am usually fascinated by Busoni from an intellectual point of view, aesthetically I am left uneasy. The *Six Elegies*, composed in 1907, illustrate this eclecticism most clearly. They could well be described as six pieces in search of a composer—or perhaps more aptly, a compositional style. One feels that Busoni is continuously groping for the desired expressive effect and its proper musical embodiment, but the results, ranging in style from the most naïve diatonicism to a peculiarly mellow brand of chromaticism, do not add up to a convincing totality. One of the six—No. 4—is nothing more than a highly sophisticated arrangement of *Greensleeves*, thus compounding the effect of a musical potpourri. Still, there is certainly much that is of interest in the *Elegies*, and significantly, Busoni himself felt they were the first pieces in which he had put down his "entire musical vision." (They were composed, incidentally, after the recently recorded Piano Concerto.)

David Bean's performance is both musical and clear, but I would suggest that those primarily interested in the Busoni side of this disc try the version by Edward Steuermann on Contemporary. Bean studied with Steuermann at Juilliard and, as might be expected, their readings are not dissimilar; but Steuermann (who himself studied with Busoni) plays the pieces with considerably more rhythmic flexibility, and he also comes closer to capturing the "visionary" qualities implied in the phrase quoted above. The Steuermann record also has the advantage of containing Busoni's *Toccata and the First and Sixth Sonatinas*.

Villa Lobos' *Rudepoëma* (literally "rude poem"), which can be described as a twenty-minute orgy of pianistic pyrotechnics, is played by Bean for all it is worth. He has the drive, stamina, and sheer muscle power to bring it off, and I must confess that the results are not without a certain impressiveness. I do so reluctantly, however; *Rudepoëma* is obviously geared towards outward effect rather than any real musical continuity and development. It consists of a series of loosely connected sections, each one of which is itself highly fragmentary in structure, all spun together so as to evoke as much sound and fury from the instrument as possible. The style of this 1926 piece is often reminiscent of Stravinsky, but it is a Stravinsky who has lost all of his elegance. There are veritable cascades of notes (usually fortissimo), consisting for the most part of little more than cadenzalike passagework held together by occasional scraps of folkish melody. The whole process reaches its climax—or nadir—when the piece finally closes with the pianist banging

away at the lower end of the keyboard with his fist—a fitting conclusion, all the same. R.P.M.

**CAGE: *Variations IV*, Vol. 2**

EVEREST 3230, \$4.98.

*Variations IV*, which runs six hours and is being released on records some forty-five minutes at a time, is an almost exact musical counterpart to the "combine paintings" which Cage's close friend, Robert Rauschenberg, was making about ten years ago. Rauschenberg threw together almost anything he could find—rags, stuffed birds, pillows, color plates of Goya and Rembrandt, old neckties, bits of discarded posters, and tin signs, slashed them all with thick, brilliant, vigorous paint, and produced some of the most sumptuous and eye-filling art of his time.

In this work, Cage (according to the unnamed gentleman with the slight Slavic accent who tells us all about it at the start of the record) began by recording the sounds of a gathering—presumably an opening party—at a Los Angeles art gallery; microphones were also placed in the street to add traffic sounds to the mix. But there is a great deal more to it than that. The second side opens with speech obviously taken from a recorded French lesson, and part of a talk on health follows shortly; what is most important, however, is that the score is full of snatches of familiar music—Chopin, Beethoven, Berlioz, Schubert, Tchaikovsky, Handel—collaged into the speech and wild, rumbling electronic distortions of both.

The whole thing is immensely sonorous and stimulating. It attains its sonorities precisely as Rauschenberg attains his coloristic resonances, but Cage's musical quotations have a much greater value as quotations than do Rauschenberg's color plates. One thing Cage may be pointing out here is the degree to which the cele-

brated music of the past has become part of the sonic garbage with which we are all surrounded today. If so, he *likes* the garbage; and he makes a fine case for it, in all its aspects, in this most remarkable work. A.F.

**CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Quintet for Guitar and String Quartet*, Op. 143**

†Bondon: *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* ("Concerto de Mars")

Manuel Lopez Ramos, guitar; Parrenin Quartet (in the Quintet). Konrad Raggosnig, guitar; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Jacques Bondon, cond. (in the Concerto). RCA VICTROLA VICS 1367, \$2.50.

The words that Castelnuovo-Tedesco's guitar quintet (1950) bring to mind are all of an academic cast—well crafted, carefully balanced, classically conceived, seriously intended. They can be reduced to a simple and deflating summary: the work, despite its careful virtues, strikes me as dry and, well, academic. Only the third movement, a kind of Mandarin cakewalk (if there isn't such a thing, there ought to be), gets off the beaten track and catches the ear, mainly because of its fancy sonorities. Ramos and the Parrenin Quartet are stodgy, which may be part of the trouble.

Jacques Bondon's *Concerto de Mars* (1966) is quite another matter. No classicism here, but an exotic, richly orchestrated, highly pictorial score which—so film-oriented are we—keeps conjuring vistic views of frozen wastelands, interstellar space, and the like. If it's not Bonaparte retreating across Russia, it's another spaceship in search of Mars. All probably as unfair to the composer as it is unavoidable. (The title, incidentally, is ambiguous; "Mars" is French for March, the month in which the concerto was written, and of course



The unpredictable John Cage takes aim at an unsuspecting timpanist.

## New Recordings of the Remarkable Feats of Elliott Carter

THESE TWO WORKS occupy important places in Elliott Carter's output, and therefore in the music of the last fifteen years; it is good to have them available in these new and improved recordings. The 1955 Variations, a Louisville commission, have been available in the series devoted to those commissions, but this performance is decidedly superior, and the equally fine reading of the Double Concerto also outclasses the long deleted Epic version made immediately after the premiere in 1961. Except for the Second String Quartet, which falls immediately between the present two pieces, all of Carter's major compositions since 1948 are now available on discs (as I have pointed out before, RCA could fill that one gap very quickly by reissuing the fine Juilliard recording).

One of the most striking aspects of Carter's music is the utter individuality of every work. For all that there are certain recurrent preoccupations that one comes to recognize as "typically Carterian," certain technical procedures that are characteristic (although never statically so, for this composer's musical language continues to expand in new directions with every

work), each piece is conceived from the ground up as an all-embracing conception, in which thematic, harmonic, rhythmic, timbral, even spatial materials all form interrelated parts of the same logical and compelling progression.

In the Variations, changing degrees of character contrast form the main structural thread, and the relatively "normal" orchestral surface makes this an easily approachable piece at several levels. As I remarked last year in connection with Carter's Piano Concerto, much of this music, although forbidding on the printed page, sounds perfectly clear; our ears are much better equipped than our notation is to handle the noncommensurable rhythms and shifting tempos basic to the kinds of change and contrast that Carter sets up.

The same is equally true of the Double Concerto, although this is certainly a much more difficult and complex piece to unravel at first. With its contrasting solo instruments (each matched by its own ensemble), with its elaborate percussion parts, and with its infinitely higher degree of individualization of every part, the Concerto presents a novel and perhaps

forbidding sound picture. But persistence is well repaid, for repetition brings clarity—and you may be sure that the tremendously active texture is not the result of random improvisation (as in many equally dense textures today) but of careful decisions; every note is there for a purpose.

As I have said, the performances are good, and that of the soloists in the Concerto is more than good, it is simply staggering; the difficult problem of balancing the two disparate keyboard instruments has been well handled, and the recording throughout is quite good. For anyone who wants to have his musical experience extended, and is willing to do some really active listening towards that end, this record is highly recommended.

DAVID HAMILTON

Carter: *Variations for Orchestra; Double Concerto for Harpsichord and Piano with Two Chamber Orchestras*

New Philharmonia Orchestra (in the Variations); Paul Jacobs, harpsichord, Charles Rosen, piano, English Chamber Orchestra (in the Concerto); Frederik Prausnitz, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7191, \$5.79.

it is also the name of the god of war; maybe planets have nothing to do with the matter.) Anyway, it is a pleasure to know that a single guitar can be so courageously juxtaposed against so formidable an orchestra and come through intact. Bondon, a pupil of Milhaud, is a master at scoring for percussion, in particular, and some very interesting instrumental relationships are developed. A fine performance by both the soloist and the composer-conducted orchestra.

S.F.

✓ CHOPIN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 35; No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58*

Van Cliburn, piano.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

✓ DVORAK: *Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")*  
 †Smetana: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")*

Juilliard String Quartet. COLUMBIA MS 7144, \$5.79.

The Juilliard plays both these familiar works with such a lively sense of style, conviction, and technical precision that the pieces seem absolutely rejuvenated, recapturing in this fresh light much of their lost (at least for me) charm. As one has come to expect from this quartet, the ensemble playing is remarkably good: the instrumental balance is beautifully controlled, and the resulting textural clarity brings out the best features of both pieces. The playing also shows a great deal of differentiation; the essential characteristics of the various sections are explored in such a way that one seems to be hearing something new all the time.

Another facet of these performances, and one perhaps less characteristic of some of the Juilliard's earlier playing, is the group's pronounced rhythmic flexibility. There is an almost constant give-and-take of tempo, entirely appropriate to these pieces; as a consequence they seem to breathe more easily than they often do. Only occasionally does this lead to questionable results: the first movement of the Dvořák suffers particularly from the much slower tempo accorded to the second subject, which thereby acquires a somewhat saccharine quality. This also has unfortunate reper-

cussions on the rest of the movement, as the return to the original tempo during the development section seems both strained and awkward. But don't let this stop you. On the whole, the results are excellent; and if you like this music, I can't think of a better way of hearing it.

R.P.M.

### ELGAR: *Orchestral Works*

*Chanson de Matin and Chanson de Nuit, Op. 15; Cockaigne Overture, Op. 40; Pomp and Circumstance Marches: No. 1, in D, Op. 39, No. 1; No. 4 in G, Op. 39, No. 4; Serenade for Strings, in E minor, Op. 20.*

Pro Arte Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, George Weldon, cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1377, \$2.50.

This collection, recorded for the World Record Club, Ltd. in England, must date back at least five years inasmuch as Weldon, known chiefly as the City of Birmingham's Maestro, died in 1963. You would never guess that the sonics are not the very latest—the sound is first-rate in its spaciousness, purity, and clarity.

Weldon delivers first-class readings of the Overture, the String Serenade, and the two Chansons (originally written for violin and piano). In the *Cockaigne*, particularly, the large, complex scoring is controlled with judicious poise. The string playing, more insinuating and pointed than lush, is never permitted to swamp the delicious clucking asides of the wind, while the very civilized brass and percussion departments provide force without bombast. The organ point at the very end makes a splendid noise, which the recording captures without constraint or blur. (Speaking of organ points, incidentally, it might as well be mentioned that the broad, bland melody of the *Chanson de Nuit* merely reiterates—less successfully—the second movement of Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony.) Some listeners might find the style of string *cantabile* in the *Chanson de Matin* a bit archly inflected in the present performance, but I rather think it adds character to the writing. As for the two most popular *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches, they receive incisive, muscular statements, though the combination of brass-band scoring and (one suspects) the scarcity of strings in the Pro Arte Orchestra tends to make the nobly intended middle sections seem a mite seedy. All other selections, it should be noted, involve the Royal Philharmonic.

On the whole, this is a very attractive disc at a bargain price. H.G.

**FIELD:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in A flat; Nocturnes: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in C minor; No. 3, in A flat; No. 4, in A; No. 7, in C; No. 10, in E minor; No. 11, in E flat*

Rena Kyriakou, piano; Berlin Symphony Orchestra, C. A. Bünte, cond. (in the Concerto). CANDIDE CE 31006, \$3.50.

Another release in Vox's new middle-priced Candide line, the present disc offers the rare opportunity to hear a piano concerto by John Field (1782–1837), the Irish-born protégé of Clementi. Though best known today as Chopin's precursor in the genre of *Nocturne* writing, Field wrote seven concertos. His Concerto No. 1 was recorded by Sandra Bianca for M-G-M some years ago. Now Rena Kyriakou gives us the Second Concerto—a teaser in every sense of that word.

For one thing, the work wanders like a vagabond between the polarities of classic decorum and romantic ardor. It begins with a long orchestral ritornello à la the classical masters. The first theme sounds like an attempt to quote the Austrian national anthem without using any of its melody outright, while the second subject, on the other hand, is a hodgepodge of Weber and early Rossini turns of phrase. Before passing on to the solo instrument, Field commits something of a *gaffe* by allowing the orchestra to restate the first theme in a form virtually unaltered from its initial statement. The key relationships also tend to be static. The solo writing pre-

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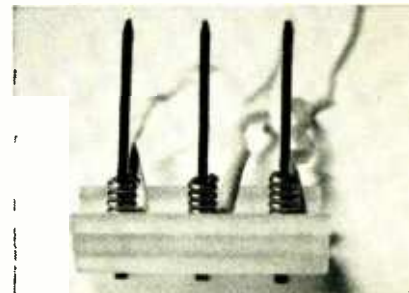
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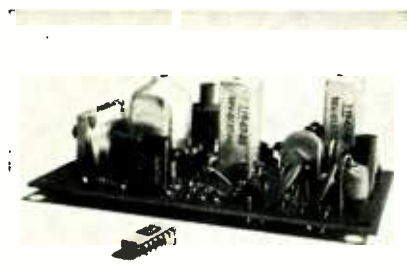
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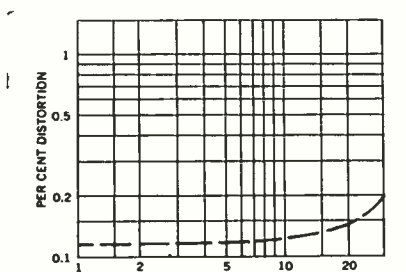
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sents us with the rhythmic ambiguities of a classically trained composer attempting to try his still wobbly wings of romanticism. The piano hobbles around with constricted fantasy, occasionally leaving the ground in little hops and leaps that might well have come out of Chopin's *Eccossaises*. Aside from this rhythmically choppy ornateness, the scales and chords hark more to Hummel or Weber than to Chopin. The *krackowiack*-style rondo is the one that has the most infectious charm, although the bland nocturnelike slow movement is not without grace. All told, the documentary value of the piece makes it a welcome addition to the record catalogue, particularly so in Kyriakou's expressive, nimble-fingered account. Her orchestra supports well, and the sound, aside from some stridency and hollow timpani thwacks, is most acceptable.

Aside from Nos. 1, 7, and 11, all the overside *Nocturnes* here were also contained in the more extensive Field collection played by Noël Lee. His faster tempo for No. 2 provided greater structural clarity than the present pianist's more amiable account. On the other hand, Mme. Kyriakou sets brisker tempos for Nos. 3 and 4, and to her loss, for she sounds square and metronomic where Lee sounded gently expressive. Kyriakou's account of No. 10, however, has an intense, melancholy languor that definitely evokes the mood of some of Chopin's finest *Nocturnes*.

The solo piano sound tends to be a mite tubby and indelicate. H.G.

#### HANDEL: *Ode on the Death of Queen Caroline*

Kurt Bauer, organ; vocal soloists: Choir and Orchestra of the Dresden Cathedral, Kurt Bauer, cond. EVEREST 3227, \$4.98.

It is difficult to believe that this should be the first recording of a magnificent work that Dr. Burney considered among Handel's greatest. The Funeral Ode is an anthem, but unlike the pastorals and dynastic paeans which almost all the other anthems are, this is a deeply moving personal tribute to a beloved person. Handel had known the Queen of England since she was a young German princess, and there was a genuine bond of friendship between the erstwhile Hanoverian music master (who now taught her daughters) become the master of opera in London, and the gentle and patient Queen, eternally suffering from the escapades of a philandering husband and a wretched son. Among Handel's mature compositions this 1737 work is the one that comes closest to being genuine church music; since there was no example of an English Requiem before him, he fell back upon the experiences of his youth, the German cantor's art. The tremendous opening chorus, "The way of Zion mourn," intones the old chorale tune "*Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut*," one of the very few instances where Handel quotes a Lutheran hymn. Similarly, at "Their bodies are buried in peace" we hear the strains of

the great funeral motet of Jacobus Gallus, used and admired in Saxony since the sixteenth century. Yet the general tone of the anthem remains English, for it was the language of the King James Bible that shaped Handel's choral style.

The anonymous notes on the sleeve are inept, full of mistakes, and say nothing about the composition they are supposed to introduce. We are told, for instance, that Handel was "*Kapellmeister to the Duke of Chandos*," which—even if it were true, which it is not—would make James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon and Duke of Chandos, a German-speaking Hanoverian like George I. Neither the text nor even the number of the psalms is printed. So I just put the record on the turntable and listened. The choral singing is not bad and I was not unduly worried about my inability to understand a single word—except for some fine English choirs one seldom gets the words in choral recordings—but something was wrong and I could not immediately identify the trouble. Gradually it dawned on me that the chorus was singing in German and even though I could not catch the words I did miss the typical English cadence and inflection. This is one more example to show that one cannot trifle with the language of vocal works; the rise and fall of the original words is an essential part of the *musical* style.

The choir is well trained and sings with good balance, but it is poorly recorded; it seems to me that this group must be considerably better than the recording makes it appear. The tapes were probably made right in Dresden Cathedral, which would account for the distant sound; a church is seldom the best place for lively sound. While on the whole things are in good order and in good taste—this is a remarkably good vocal-instrumental ensemble to be maintained by a church—the attacks are at times somewhat tentative, the rhythm a little soft, the orchestral sound pale, and the continuo weak. In a word, the Dresdeners play and sing like church musicians, even allowing for the contribution of the locale and poor recording techniques to the general paleness. But Handel cannot be performed in such a subdued way, not even when the piece is funeral music; he was not a church musician, and in his music the vertebrae must always be in evidence. Still, there are many nice moments in this recording, and since this is the only available release of a great masterpiece, we should be grateful for it. P.H.L.

#### HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 93, in D; No. 94, in G ("Surprise")*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7006, \$5.79.

One might best describe this record by adapting the terminology of the wine taster and calling it *triple sec*. The style is flinty, sparkling clear, and technically perfect.

Reviewing all twelve of the Haydn "Salomon" Symphonies in these pages in



George Szell conducts Haydn: kinetic excitement and sheer musical beauty.

January, I expressed the desire to hear this music in authentic scoring and played by an orchestra and conductor of first rank. Well, here it is—at least the first two of the twelve symphonies. No one can fault Szell's Haydn in technical or musical terms. Though I might cavil at the apparently large body of strings in proportion to the wind band, the former play with that chamber music clarity and flexibility exhibited only by the Cleveland Orchestra under Szell. Always a superb master of form, Szell's sense of tempo and his ability to join sections rhythmically is as extraordinary as ever: one problem after the other is solved with consummate musicality. The opening Adagios are beautifully balanced in tone color, with just enough emphasis on the touches of "purple" harmony. I have never heard either Finale played with such dash and precision.

But Szell still falls a mite short in human terms. His Haydn lacks geniality, a sense of being rooted in a native soil. Where Haydn is playful, Szell's wit is intellectual. In the "Bronx Cheer" in the slow movement of No. 93 or the timpani interjection in the Finale of No. 94, for instance, Szell almost appears to view Haydn as just a bit crude. Beecham, operating with a quite different sort of musical instinct and by no means as formidable a technique, offers a more *human* Haydn; he placed the problematic bassoon blast in the context of the whole movement, not as a low comedy intrusion. This qualification aside, the sheer musical beauty and kinetic excitement of these performances place them among the finest Haydn records we have.

Columbia's recording favors the strings over the winds; the latter are not obscured, but they seem a mite distant. The sonics have a body admirably suited to the text of the music and realistically reproduce the sound of the Cleveland ensemble. My review copy, however, had a distinct postecho not only audible after a sforzando but also casting a slight haze over the tuttis. P.H.

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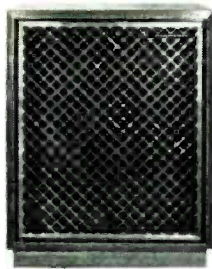
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HINDEMITH: *Kammermusiken: Op. 24, No. 1; Op. 36, Nos. 2-5; Op. 46, Nos. 1-2*

Instrumental soloists; Concerto Amsterdam.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 75.

JANACEK: *Sinfonietta*  
†Prokofiev: *Suite for Orchestra, Op. 110*

Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL 40075, \$5.79.

Just a few weeks before receiving a copy of this record I heard Janáček's Sinfonietta played at Carnegie Hall under the direction of Rafael Kubelik. It was perhaps the best performance I've ever heard of this work—vigorous, dancelike, buoyant, enthusiastically youthful. It is with that memory so fresh in mind that I came to review this record, and Rozhdestvensky does not approach the magical wonderfulness of Kubelik's triumph.

Pitted against its recorded rivals, however, the Melodiya/Angel disc is a welcome addition to the catalogue. The playing of the Moscow Radio Symphony does not equal the suave perfectionism of Szell's Clevelanders. The wind playing there is particularly laudable, and in

general Szell's performance is admirable in its balances and over-all integration; but it is static interpretatively—above all, static. Rozhdestvensky is far less so. His tempos are quicker than Szell's, and he comes close to achieving the light and festive mood one desires in a performance of this effervescent work. The first and last movements of the Sinfonietta are showpieces for brass and the Moscow ensemble possesses that heavy vibrato long associated with Eastern orchestras, a sound that requires a certain degree of adjustment in the ears of one accustomed to the smoother ambience of Western orchestras. Having made the adjustment I still found the brass sound much too, well . . . brassy. A certain metallic edginess was present, partially corrected by a slight attenuation of the treble.

The Prokofiev Suite contains a sampling of waltzes from *Cinderella*, *War and Peace*, and the movie *Lermontov*. The performance is big, ripe, warm, and rich with a goodly dose of rhythmic snap. S.L.

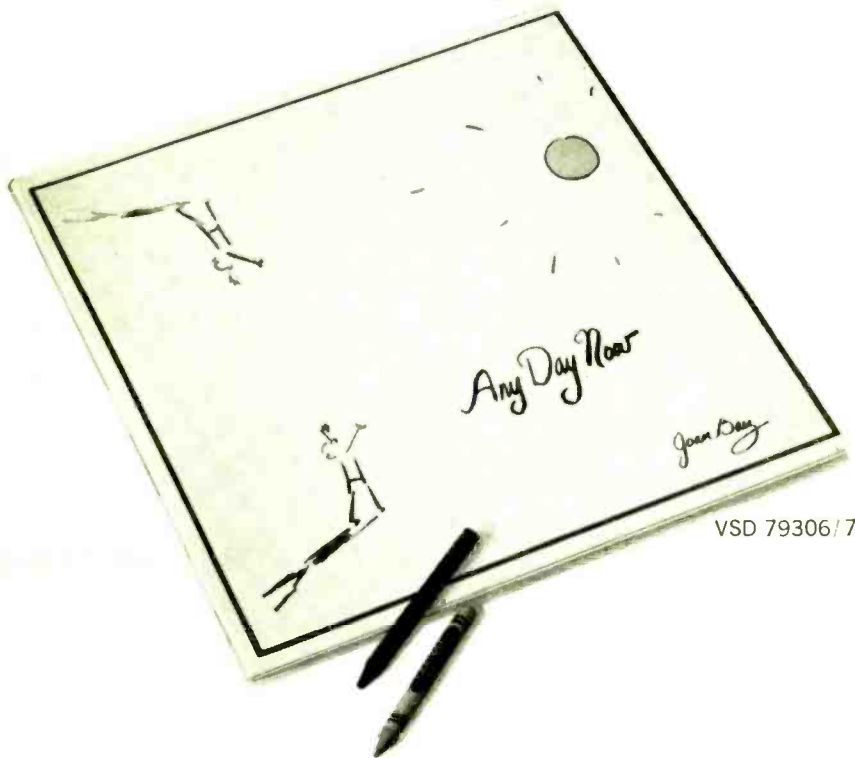
LUTOSLAWSKI: *Quartet for Strings*  
†Penderecki: *Quartet for Strings*  
†Mayuzumi: *Prelude for String Quartet*

La Salle Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 137001, \$5.79.

The earliest of these three examples of the modern string quartet is that by the youngest composer: Penderecki, whose quartet dates from 1960. It is also the most immediately striking, with all its bangings and knockings in addition to the more usual "far-out" string sounds—and it will prove, I suspect, to be the least durable as well. Although Penderecki's effects come through more clearly (fewer problems of ensemble here) than in his orchestral works, this is a fairly simple-minded piece.

Far more interesting is Lutoslawski's much longer work, written in 1964 for the Swedish Radio. Not a highly complex work, it is nevertheless a serious one, in which a real sense for shape is evident. Many sections are constructed according to a sort of "mobile" technique, by which the players start together but proceed independently for a while, after which an arrangement is made to bring them back into strict ensemble (there is no score, in the traditional sense, for these parts of the quartet—it would be misleading to imply that particular notes should sound simultaneously). These sections "work" because their harmonic content is regulated in such a way that no matter how the details fall out, the total "harmonic field" is bound to be substantially the same at a given point. Like Penderecki, Lutoslawski makes great use of cluster chords, but with the important difference that he relies mostly on small ones; thus the harmonic content can be varied somewhat. And the frequent glissandos and quarter tones function as extensions of thematic material derived from the clusters, not merely as chic coloration.

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a brief epilogue follows. By comparison with what precedes, the climax is somewhat conventional, but the piece really *sounds*, with great clarity and a very distinctive surface.

Not the least of this disc's pleasures is the playing of the La Salle Quartet, one of the great chamber ensembles, and highly skilled apostles of this repertory. They have previously recorded the two Polish works for Muza (XL 0282), but the new performances are even better, especially in DGG's crystalline sound. D.H.

**MARTINO:** *Concerto for Wind Quintet*—See Wuorinen: *Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players*.

**MAYUZUMI:** *Prelude for String Quartet*—See Lutoslawski: *Quartet for Strings*.

**MENDELSSOHN:** *Trio for Piano and Strings, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 66*—See Mozart: *Quintet for Strings, in C, K. 515*.

**MOZART:** *Church Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra: Nos. 1-2, 4, 8, 11-12, 14-17*

Pierre Cochereau, organ; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Kurt Redel, cond. PHILIPS PHS 900185, \$5.79.

Mozart wrote seventeen church sonatas in all between 1772 and 1780, while he was employed at the Salzburg Cathedral, first as *Konzertmeister*, then as organist. Inasmuch as his disputes there with Monsignor Colloredo have been well documented, there is no need to go into that story except to point out that Colloredo, who probably detested music and was bored with the Mass, had ordained that even the most formal High Masses were not to last more than three quarters of an hour. He further discontinued the singing of the Gradual between the Epistle and Gospel and directed Mozart to supply a *short* and light instrumental piece.

Hence, we have seventeen light-hearted examples (ten are included on the present disc) of Mozart at his bubbling best. Aside from the pure pleasure they afford, they also make it possible to follow Mozart's increasing mastery of the medium as, from first sonata to last, the form becomes richer and the organ part becomes increasingly more independent. All are single movements and cast in a rudimentary sonata-form with two contrasting themes and very short development sections. In the first three the organist plays from only an unfigured bass part, while in the next six sonatas the bass part is figured. From this point on the organ parts are fully written out, and in the last sonata we have a full-blown keyboard concerto movement, complete with an opportunity for a cadenza. Most of the sonatas are scored for two violins, organ, cello, and bass; however, oboes, trumpets, horns, and timpani are added to three of these miniature masterpieces (none of which is even five minutes long).

In the first nine of these sonatas (of which four are included here) the organ is used solely as a continuo instrument. M. Cochereau is content, however, to do very little more than fill in the required harmony and to do so as quietly and unobtrusively as possible. There are so many opportunities for really imaginative continuo realizations that it is rather disappointing to be unable to determine most of the time even if the organ is playing at all. Part of the problem, of course, is the tremendous reverberation of Notre Dame Cathedral and Philips' rather distant microphone placement, which muddies the texture to the point where individual lines are very difficult

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Could Mozart be contemplating the two new recordings of his K. 503?

to distinguish. Also, the music demands an articulate, classically voiced organ which can come through the orchestral texture without overwhelming it. The Cavaillé-Coll organ at Notre Dame is most definitely not in that category.

In the remaining sonatas the more independent nature of the organ part assures that it will be more often heard, though there are still no bursts of imagination until the cadenza of the seventeenth sonata. I think M. Cochereau goes into some keys that Mozart didn't even know about . . . at least he gets there by means that would have raised the *Wunderkind's* eyebrows.

If one can overlook the blurred acoustic and resign himself to being unable to distinguish the polyphony, one will probably very much enjoy the spirited and stylish orchestral performance ably led by Kurt Redel. However, all these virtues, plus many more, can be found in Marie-Claire Alain's much more exciting performances with the Jean-Francois Paillard Chamber Orchestra, available in this country on the Westminster label. The extremely small ensemble there plays with crystalline brilliance and the organ is an ideal instrument, ideally recorded. Mme. Alain's two-record set includes all seventeen sonatas plus three other works for organ solo (originally written for mechanical organ works) and can be most warmly recommended. C.F.G.

**MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra: No. 25, in C, K. 503; No. 8, in C, K. 246**

Géza Anda, piano; Camerata Academica of the Salzburg Mozarteum, Géza Anda,

cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139384, \$5.79.

**MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra: No. 25, in C, K. 503; Serenade for Winds, No. 12, in C minor, K. 388**

Daniel Barenboim, piano; Wind Ensemble of the New Philharmonia Orchestra (in K. 388), New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. ANGEL S 36536, \$5.79.

Whoever ventures a recording of K. 503 is up against the highest standards of the game: Szell and Serkin, Szell and Fleisher. For its Anda version, Deutsche Grammophon would be wise to plead *nolo contendere*, but the reviewer cannot stop there. This is a concerto laid out along spacious lines, the performers must avoid haste in order to unfold the large panorama. Anda, who directs from the keyboard, proceeds too swiftly and with too large brush strokes; he fails to differentiate sufficiently between the straightforward symphonic élan and the lyric element. The first movement is too fast and impetuous, and the relentless drive reduces the elegant figurations to mere runs without melodic values. There is none of the elasticity and give-and-take in tempo, phrasing, and dynamics that is so characteristic of this particular style. The second movement is unpoetic, while the third misses the piquancy of the musical substance by once more following a fast and unyielding tempo. Anda plays fluently and securely, but without much inflection and sensitive articulation. A rondo theme should be presented with delicacy and a little teasing at each ap-

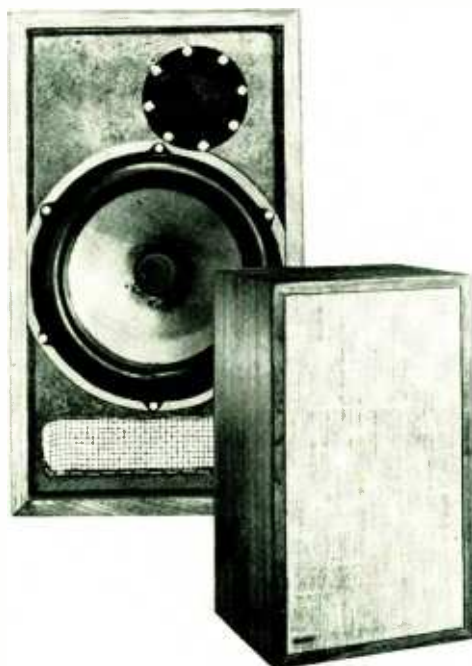
pearance, but Anda and his orchestra land on it in a "here we are" manner. Finally, Anda's cadenzas (Mozart did not write any for K. 503) are contrived, out of style, and irritating with their harmonic mayonnaise.

The Angel recording is even more unsatisfactory. The octogenarian Otto Klemperer is by no means a man no longer able to discharge the exacting office of conductor: he has a definite concept of this work and enforces his intentions, but the concept, sadly, is one which in its execution deliberately dismantles a magnificent musical edifice. Under Klemperer's hand the great opening tutti is ponderous rather than festive. The marvelous sudden cloud between the radiant fanfares cast by the bassoons and oboes is taken as a mere detail: and indeed, the details throughout are not always organically related to the whole. Klemperer is so intent on underlining every accent and raising little asides to prominence that the grand line is lost while we try to absorb the significance of the emphasis. The tutti are somewhat muddy, which may be the engineers' fault, but the conductor's *allargando* at the end of the first movement is no one else's fault; it beats anything that any church musician ever did to a piece in *Messiah*.

Barenboim holds his own fairly well in this movement. He has a fluent technique, good tone, and he is obviously a very talented young man, but his frequent dynamic alterations within the phrase, and especially at phrase endings, are out of bounds in this style. Barenboim furnishes a cadenza that Grieg could envy and Paderewski could not play more archly. In the second movement both conductor and soloist employ unnecessary microdynamics, but their worst shortcoming is the loss of continuity. Mozart marked this movement "Andante," but it is really an adagio, a fact both artists recognized by using an appropriate tempo: unfortunately, they proceed note by note. Compared with the beautifully poetic reading of Fleisher and Szell, this is a mannered, heavy-gaited, and sentimental performance, and these adjectives are never applicable to Mozart.

The saucy rondo theme is played just a shade more slowly than its character requires, but the shade is sufficient to rob it of its piquancy. It is here that Barenboim's lack of maturity shows most disadvantageously. Large portions of the solo part consist of figurations, but these figurations are not rococo fretwork, as Barenboim plays them, with many dynamic changes: they are brilliant virtuoso runs that constitute a foil to the sharp symphonic substance in the orchestra. This is indeed the crux of the Mozartean ideal of the concerto: the combination of the logical symphonic deployment in the orchestra with the capricious, improvisatory material of the solo. The runs, even the trills, are not condiments but integral parts of the melodic design which must not be permitted to sound like mere ornaments. Fleisher's delicate but masculine figurations never leave one in doubt about their role in the ensemble, but Barenboim allows the tone to become





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thin and his rubatos and deflected phrase endings are decidedly un-Mozartean.

The DGG recording backs up the Concerto with another, K. 246, which again opens fast and busy. Such a tempo is not impossible if there is daylight between the notes, but this orchestra, while technically competent, is not capable of achieving such transparency and airiness while under remote control in amateur hands. These concertos call for the most experienced and fastidious orchestral technique, the kind George Szell demonstrates in his concerto recordings: the orchestra cannot be coached and manipulated as a side job. Listening to this opening movement one is again annoyed by the inflexible onslaught and is compelled to ask: "Where is the fire?" The performers relent somewhat in the slow movement and things become a little less congested, but the woodwinds—featured soloists to a man—do not sigh, they only complain, and Andra is thin and sentimental where he should be "romantic." The third movement comes off best, because for once the tempo is sufficiently relaxed to permit better articulation, but on the whole the impression one gains is that Andra, a distinguished pianist, is temperamentally unsuited for Mozart.

As to Angel's complementary piece, the blurb on the recording calls it "Serenade 12 for woodwind octet": I trust that the two horns, one fourth of the "woodwind" ensemble, are made of brass. Once we hear them there can be no doubt about it, because in this recording they are handled like orchestral instruments, far too prominent for chamber music. Incidentally, since when does such a chamber music piece require a conductor? The net result is that Klemperer largely succeeds in eliminating the intimate tone and quality and adds a lead keel to the hull. This just is not good chamber music playing, and the situation is exacerbated by pinched, wailing oboes and dry-throated clarinets lacking the velvet so characteristic of the instrument. The horns are good—when not pushed—and the bassoons excellent. It is a pity that this recording did not turn out better, for the Serenade is a major work, full of imagination and of an astounding expressive range from the tragic to the jovial. Mozart even teases us with some tricky canons which sound like an innocent minuet. How about getting one of our own superlative wind ensembles to make another try? P.H.L.

**MOZART: Mass No. 18, in C minor, K. 427**

Maria Stader, soprano; Nedda Casei, soprano; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; Heinz Rehfuss, bass; Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra. Jean-Marie Auberson, cond. VANGUARD EVERYMAN SRV 258/59, \$5.00 (two discs).

This work has been called the only composition in its genre to be worthy to stand between Bach's B minor and Beethoven's D major Mass. One can easily see why. It more than lives up to the title "Great"

which has traditionally been bestowed upon it, not only in regard to its proportions but also in regard to the quality of its music. Written in 1782-83, at a time when Mozart had only recently discovered the music of Bach, it clearly reveals the composer's preoccupation with his predecessor, a fact evident both in the contrapuntal nature of much of the writing (particularly that of the choral ensembles) and in the enormous scale of the over-all conception.

Unfortunately, the Mass was never finished (most of the Credo is missing), surely one of music history's great losses. In 1901 Alois Schmitt, a German musicologist, completed the work by borrowing sections from the composer's earlier Masses, and this is the version recorded here (with the substitution of a different "Crucifixus," the one chosen by Schmitt having since been discovered to have been written by someone other than Mozart). While the added portions are not of equal interest, they at least make the work performable as a complete Mass. It is particularly irritating here, however, where the additions are all included, that cuts are made in the "Laudamus te" and "Et incarnatus est" from the finished part, presumably for the purpose of simplifying things for the soprano (at least in the latter case where the cut contains an elaborate coloratura section).

Nor does the recording recommend itself on the basis of the performances. Without exception the soloists sound strained and uncertain, and there are glaring intonational lapses, particularly on the part of Miss Stader. The chorus is no better, singing the louder sections at something approaching a scream, apparently in an attempt to make up in volume for what they lack in numbers. The orchestra plays reasonably well, but the voices are so closely miked that it is barely heard in sections with elaborate choral parts. For comparison I suggest you listen to the Epic version under Rudolf Moralt with Teresa Stich-Randall as soprano soloist. A handsome performance, this is one of those mono-only discs which is apparently doomed to immediate extinction. The tenor there, as on the present Vanguard set, is Waldemar Kmentt, who seems much more relaxed in the earlier surroundings. The Epic recording is also interesting in that it uses a somewhat different completed version from the one by Schmitt. R.P.M.

**MOZART: Quintet for Strings, in C, K. 515**

†Mendelssohn: Trio for Piano and Strings, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 66

Jascha Heifetz, violin; Israel Baker, violin (in the Mozart); William Primrose, Virginia Majewski, violas (in the Mozart); Gregor Piatigorsky, cello; Leonard Pennario, piano (in the Mendelssohn). RCA RED SEAL LSC 3048, \$5.79.

Right off it is apparent here that the performance of Mozart's K. 515 is of a pattern long established by Heifetz in the several-years-old Heifetz/Piatigorsky series: that is, an aggressive—almost

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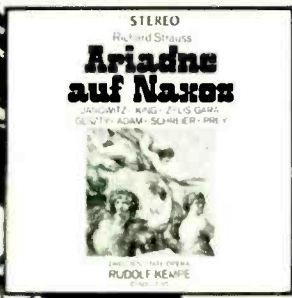
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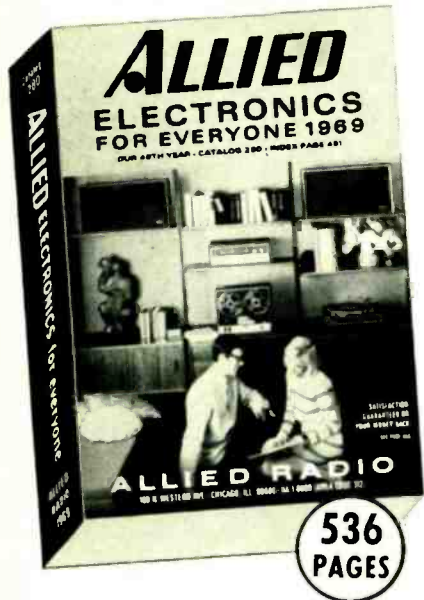


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intimidating—style of chamber playing that bears the stamp of Heifetz the Soloist. Tempos are brisk, accents vehemently stressed. Chief emphasis is on constant energy—push, push, push! This ceaseless energizing borders on anxiety, and quite frankly, the performance made me nervous.

Things work differently in Mendelssohn's gorgeous—and shamefully neglected—C minor Trio. The performance is among the least frenetic of the Heifetz/Piatigorsky recordings yet released. Tempos are generally slower than those chosen by the Beaux Arts Trio in its World Series disc. Heifetz/Piatigorsky's conception of restraint and grandeur is consistently maintained throughout all four movements. Much greater contrast is found in the Beaux Arts essay—a quite turbulent exposition of the Brahmsian first movement, a freely sentimental andante, an elfin *Midsummer Night's Dream* kind of scherzo, and an impetuous finale. After many comparative listenings I find myself equally convinced by both accounts.

RCA's sound is close-up and very well defined. S.L.

**MOZART: Symphonies: No. 29, in A, K. 201; No. 39, in E flat, K. 543**

Sinfonia of London. Colin Davis, cond. RCA VICTROLA VICS 1378, \$2.50.

More and more, Colin Davis seems like the maestro destined to take Klemperer's place some day. Everything about Davis' work in these symphonies brings the older man to mind—the strongly granitic rhythmic pulse, the preference for orchestral sonorities that favor clarity and gruff directness over sensuousness, the purist attitude towards textual details.

As in Klemperer's recordings, Davis' Symphony No. 29 starts with a leisurely tempo for the first movement, a true *allegro moderato* rather than the winged *alla breve* of the usual performance. Appoggiaturas are played on the beat, giving a different profile to the second theme—again, Klemperer did likewise.

Though I prefer a lighter touch in K. 201 (such as that of the Cantelli/Philharmonia performance, which I hope Scraphim issues soon), I find Davis well-nigh ideal in the overside K. 543. The recorded sound here lacks the swimming acoustic of his earlier LSO reading for Philips, with the result that the strings have more clarity and the important timpani parts an impressive bite. Then too, Davis has readjusted certain details of his phrasing, and the finale, especially, makes more point now, with the appoggiaturas played on the beat rather than in the conventional way as formerly. My only regret is that this time Davis eschews the first-movement exposition repeat which he took in the earlier version. This record is, unquestionably, a genuine bargain. H.G.

**NAUMANN: Gustaf Wasa: Ballet Excerpts—See Roman: Drottningholms-musique: Suite.**

**PENDERECKI: Quartet for Strings**  
—See Lutoslawski: *Quartet for Strings.*

**PFEIFFER: Electronomusic: Nine Images**

RCA VICTROLA VICS 1371, \$2.50.

John Pfeiffer defines his "electronomusic" as "a kind of exploration of an aesthetic idea without stretching the musical credibility gap to the extreme." To be sure, the "musical credibility gap" has a way of marching on; some of the effects Mr. Pfeiffer now finds safe were violently iconoclastic ten years ago, and many of them have really become clichés. But Pfeiffer handles everything with cheerful clarity, precision, and fine control of effect.

The first of his nine *Images* are the weakest because in his search for a bridge between convention and innovation he inflects electronic sound towards the sounds of traditional instruments. The first *Image* sounds like a solo for a somewhat distraught harpsichord, the second like a snatch from the slow movement of a particularly marshmallowy violin concerto. Pfeiffer is at his best in a piece called *Moments*, which doesn't try to sound like anything but electronic music and does so with great style, economy, and humor. The perky command of a piece called *Orders* is most entertaining, even if military orders are not what the title signifies, and *After Hours*, which takes off from the sound of a typewriter, is also very successful. But Pfeiffer's attempt at a twelve-minute piece in *Forests* is disastrous, and some of his other "images" are a bit on the trivial side. A.F.

**POULENC: Orchestral Works**

*Sinfonietta; Music for "Les Maries de la Tour Eiffel"; Two Marches and an Intermezzo; Suite Française.*

Orchestre de Paris, Georges Prêtre, cond. ANGEL S 36519, \$5.79.

Nowadays we tend to think of Francis Poulenc as the rather serious composer of a Mass and *The Dialogues of the Carmelites*. This collection from the composer's relatively small output of works for orchestra reminds us of the lighter side of Poulenc, who, especially in his youth, was inclined to bright wit and acid mockery.

The major work here, the *Sinfonietta* of 1947, is a throwback to the youthful style represented by the other, shorter pieces on the disc. Poulenc himself was apparently aware of this return to his earlier manner, for he not only gave the piece a diminutive title but also said of it, "I was dressing too young for my age." Indeed with its Stravinskian echoes—especially of *Le Baiser de la fée*—the *Sinfonietta* frequently does sound more like the 1920s than the postwar period. Yet, though eclectic in style and free in form, the piece displays extraordinary craftsmanship and its materials are both honest and interesting.

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It seems to me that Georges Prêtre finds his proper métier in this music, and the orchestra has a delightfully French sound completely appropriate to Poulenc. The strings are, for a new orchestra, exceptionally well blended; the flutes and clarinets have that typically French warmth and refinement; and the acidity of the oboe is beautifully controlled, especially when it blends with the violas. Even the vibrato of the horns sounds right in this music.

So far as I know, none of this music has been widely available before on records. Though the shorter pieces, delightful as they may be, are trivia, the *Sinfonietta* deserves to be better known. The present record should further its cause. P.H.

**PROKOFIEV:** *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 3, in C, Op. 26; No. 4, in B flat, Op. 53 (for the left hand)*

John Browning, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3019, \$5.79.

The Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto has been lucky on records: of the some dozen versions in the current Schwann catalogue, most of them are very good indeed. The present Browning/Leinsdorf collaboration (their second in this work) belongs in the top rank. In the main, these artists are a bit more genteel, graceful, and elegant here, less cold-bloodedly dynamic and hard-hitting than on their older set for Capitol. RCA's more reverberant sound contributes to the effect, though one certainly does not lose percussion detail (those castanets in the first movement come out marvelously well). My personal preferences for this work remain the earlier Browning/Leinsdorf account, the Argerich/Abbado (with a more volatile vein of lyricism and even more realistic sound than RCA's), the Graffman/Szell (remarkably solid in the "Age of Steel" rendition), and the version led by Piero Coppola with the composer himself as soloist. Aside from the immense documentary value of the last-



Gustav Leonhardt performs a group of Purcellian delights not to be missed.

named reading, it also has—1932 sound notwithstanding—a uniquely appealing charm. But, to repeat, the new release merits the highest consideration.

The left-hand concerto (written for, but rejected by, the one-armed pianist Paul Wittgenstein) has naturally been less frequently tackled. Browning's account is a bit lighter in texture than Rudolf Serkin's altogether inspired Columbia version with Ormandy. The difference is one of elegance and fluency as opposed to titanic savagery, and the two supporting conductors share the views of their respective soloists.

I regret to add that my review copy of the new release had alarmingly noisy surfaces in Concerto No. 3 and some sudden intrusions of what sounded like tape hiss in sections of the Fourth's slow movement. H.G.

**PROKOFIEV:** *Suite for Orchestra, Op. 110—See Janáček: Sinfonietta.*

**PURCELL:** *Consort Music for Strings and Harpsichord*

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Leonhardt Consort, Gustav Leonhardt, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9506, \$5.95.

This is an absolutely marvelous release. The music is glorious, the performances—using mostly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century instruments—are exemplary in both style and musicianship, and the recording is flawless.

Not all the pieces included employ continuo support for the strings. The three great Pavans are for strings alone, and further variety is provided by the D minor Ground, the D major Suite, the little minuet entitled *Sefachi's Farewell*, and the *New Ground*, all of which are for solo harpsichord, idiomatically played by Leonhardt himself.

The usefulness of Telefunken's copiously annotated and illustrated "*Musik und ihre Zeit*" series is enhanced by the fact that it now comes in a full English-language edition. The present album is especially well documented: it has full details both of the instruments and of the works, which are duly provided with Zimmermann numbers for ease of reference. A record not to be missed. B.J.

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in D minor, Op. 28; No. 2, in B flat minor, Op. 36*

John Ogdon, piano.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

**RAVEL:** *Bolero; Pavane pour une infante défunte; Miroirs: La Vallée des cloches; Chansons madécasses*

Maurice Ravel, piano (in *Pavane, La Vallée, and Chansons*); Madeleine Gray, soprano (in *Chansons*); Lamoureux Orchestra, Maurice Ravel, cond. TURNABOUT TV 4256, \$2.50 (mono only).

Question: What could possibly justify another recording of Ravel's *Bolero*? Answer: Ravel himself conducting the work. It is Ravel's interesting version of *Bolero* that is the outstanding feature of the present release—the third in Turnabout's "Historic Recording" series—inasmuch as the other performances are already available on LP (the piano works on Everest's Archive of Piano Music series, the *Chansons* on Angel).

Although Ravel's so-called objective attitude towards his own works has become something of a legend, it is still a bit startling to hear these almost unflinching mathematical interpretations. Ravel's version of *Bolero*, recorded shortly after the work's premiere (which Ravel did not conduct) on November 22, 1928, must be the slowest on records—even slower than the quarter-note = 72 metronome marking indicated on the score (I timed it at sixty-six). Interestingly enough, the slow tempo does not tend to drive one crazy, as Ravel is said to have desired; rather, it actually intensifies, at least on the intellectual level, the effect of the work's celebrated crescendo. On the other hand, I cannot imagine anybody dancing to the Ravel reading, although the work was conceived as a ballet.

For reasons I am not sure I understand, several of the instruments playing solo passages sound flat in some spots here, especially the tenor saxophone. Besides this peculiarity and the slow tempo there are certain instrumental effects—particularly a few trombone slurs—that distinguish this recording from others available.

Turnabout's engineers have done a good job of transferring the work from the original 78s to the present LP. There are the inevitable changes in hiss level, and there is one section where the beat is broken (at measure 273) at a record change—a serious flaw for a work and interpretation of this nature. On the other hand, the sound is clean, and the various instrumental groups are well defined. Obviously, the important orchestral effects are not going to have their full impact on a recording of this vintage, but all things considered, the sound is quite passable. Turnabout should also be congratulated for not "rechanneling" the work in phony stereo.

A colleague of mine recently asked a fairly sophisticated group of students to state their preference after having heard, without knowing which was which, both Gieseking's and Ravel's interpretations of the piano works recorded on this disc. Almost all preferred the Gieseking. I rather imagine most people would react in the same way. Again, Ravel uses slower-than-what-we-are-used-to-tempos, and his playing, particularly in the *Pavane*, is surprisingly mechanical

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Maurice Ravel conducts his own Bolero and achieves a startling performance.

and *détaché* (perhaps due to the recording's piano-roll origin). The piano sound on this recording is good and particularly unwavering.

I have little to add to what has already been said about the celebrated Madeleine Gray performance of the *Chansons madécasses* on this record. As is the case with the other selections here, it would not be my own favorite version

even if recorded in modern sound. This release is an important one, however, and should be a must for Ravel aficionados. R.S.B.

**RAVEL: *Sonatine; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Gaspard de la Nuit***

John Browning, piano. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3028, \$5.79.

Ravel's peculiar blend of textural complexity and formal clarity is well served by pianist John Browning, who turns in handsome performances of all these pieces. The three works differ widely in effect, despite their obvious similarities. The *Sonatine*, with its almost pristine eighteenth-century associations, seems somewhat dated to my ears, although I can't help being impressed by its technical perfection. *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, whose title is even more specific in its reference to an earlier musical style, nevertheless seems much less stereotyped, and the brilliant pianistic writing and less than reverent tone of these character pieces still hold considerable musical interest. Finally, *Gaspard de la Nuit* is blatantly virtuosic in conception and much more voluptuous in sound and rhapsodic in construction than either of the other two pieces.

All three works supply attractive vehicles for Mr. Browning, and he polishes off each in its turn with disarming ease. His approach to Ravel is reminiscent of that of Gieseking in its steely clarity and somewhat detached emotional character, but Browning brings to the pieces a softer, warmer touch and a more fluid and

lyrical rhythmic conception. All and all, the disc is a very pleasant affair, and the piano sound is excellent. R.P.M.

**ROMAN: *Drottningholms-musique: Suite***

†Naumann: *Gustaf Wasa: Ballet Excerpts*

†Uttini: *Il Re pastore: Overture*

Chamber Orchestra of the Drottningholm Theater, Ulf Björlin, cond. NONESUCH H 71213, \$2.50.

If accounts of the musical life at the eighteenth-century Swedish court at Drottningholm remind one of a similar milieu associated with Frederick the Great, that is probably because it was all in the family: Princess Lovisa Ulrika of Prussia, whom the Swedish heir-apparent Adolf Frederick married in 1744, was one of Frederick's sisters, and was not to be outdone by the artistic splendor prevailing at Sans Souci. She had, it is clear, much on which to build. Her wedding festivities took place to the tunes of Johan Helmich Roman, who had been Swedish court *Kapellmeister* since 1727; his suite for this occasion contains twenty-four movements, of which thirteen are heard here—enough to show that he was much influenced by Handel, that he had a nice way with both triumphal brassy movements and pastoral woodwind ones, and that he knew how to create considerable variety within the suite form.

Next on the scene after Roman's retirement was the Bolognese, Francesco Antonio Uttini, who wrote five operas

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The score, which the notes aptly call a “launching pad” for the music, is printed in its entirety on the jacket. It consists of fifty-three figures ranging in length from a single sixteenth note to a phrase that would be four or five bars long if there were any bars. Each member of the ensemble goes through these fifty-three figures, but with rests and hiatuses as he desires. Any number of instruments can be employed; in this case, an ensemble of eleven instruments

was recorded and then overdubbed twice, ending up with this effect: three each of saxophone (played by Riley), flute, oboe, trumpet, viola, trombone, and vibraphone; two each of clarinet, bassoon, and marimbaphone; and one piano. (The piano part consists of the one note, C, played in high octaves over and over for the duration.) The triple recording results in an absolutely unique sound. One is aware that it was produced by normal instruments, but their individual timbres are somewhat blurred as they blend into the general hum of the piece.

Columbia's excellent annotator (not identified) speaks of the work as revealing “a teeming world of groups and subgroups forming, dissolving, and re-forming within a modal panorama which shifts, over a period of about forty-five to ninety minutes, from C to E to C to G.” Of course, not even Columbia has found a way to make a record run forty-five minutes on one occasion and ninety minutes on another; we have here to settle for the shorter version, and it is veritably a dilly. ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

**Riley: *In C***

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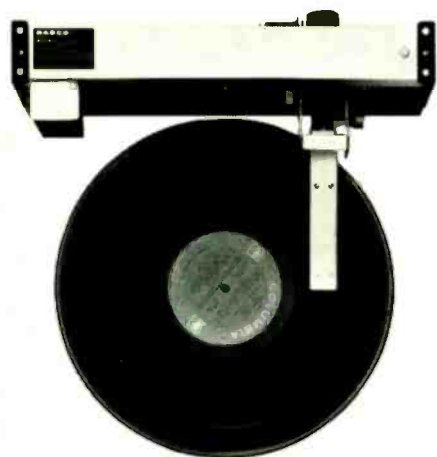
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for Drottningholm, of which *Il Re pastore* was the second. The overture won't demolish Mozart's reputation, but it is well put together, with a lamenting middle movement in the minor that is particularly effective.

It was Lovisa Ulrika's son Gustav III (destined for assassination and immortality via Verdi's *Ballo in maschera*) who brought Johann Gottlieb Naumann to the court for a series of visits, during which the composer wrote the first Swedish opera, *Gustaf Wasa*. Not much can be surmised from the two ballet excerpts here, except that Naumann could turn out a *pas de deux* as well as the next man and do pleasant things with a solo flute over string accompaniment. The performances are elegant, beautifully phrased, and worthy of any court on the map. S.F.

**SCHOENBERG:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 42; Five Piano Pieces, Op. 23; Phantasy for Violin and Piano, Op. 47*

Peter Serkin, piano; Arnold Steinhardt, violin (in Op. 47); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. (in Op. 42). RCA RED SEAL LSC 3050, \$5.79.

Without a doubt, this is the "prettiest" recording of Schoenberg's 1942 Piano Concerto that we have yet had—and I don't mean the statement in a derogatory sense. It is no mean achievement to play the piece so cleanly, with nothing sounding scratchy or scrambly, and it is very well recorded to boot. On the one hand, this should go far to convince skeptics that Schoenberg's mature works need not be hard to listen to, for the lyrical side of the music is strongly emphasized—in fact, so strongly as to be, on the other hand, something of a misrepresentation of the force and vigor that is also a significant element of the piece. The tempos are often so slow (the total timing is a fifth again as long as the average of other recordings) that the line is not sustained—notably in the Adagio but also in the more moderate opening movement, while even the *Giocoso* finale loses momentum very easily. Although Serkin and Ozawa give a performance that is obviously carefully thought out, I can't agree that this is anything like a full picture of Schoenberg's conception. Gould and Craft (Columbia MS 7039) come closer, despite some oddities and far less beautiful orchestral playing, while Brendel's ancient and foggily recorded Turnabout disc (TV 4051) was probably the best performance of all, judging by what one can hear of the pianist's forceful, long-breathed phrasing and brilliant technical command (the stereo of that disc is faked, by the way, and can hardly be an improvement on the already superresonant mono). Since the Turnabout also contains Marschner's fantastic reading of the Violin Concerto, it should be in any Schoenberg collection: the Serkin-Ozawa might then be an interesting complement, at least until we get a remake from Brendel.

The Op. 23 Piano Pieces suffer from a

similar fondness for slow tempos, especially the third piece, which is taken at something like half the indicated speed. Great clarity of voice-leading certainly results, but the relationship between one note and the next virtually disappears. On the other hand, the marvelous late Phantasy comes off quite well. Steinhardt plays very accurately, and the tempos are altogether reasonable (although the return to "Tempo I" in the middle of the piece is rather too fast). All told, this is a considerable improvement on the Baker-Gould version in the Columbia series. D.H.

**SCHUBERT:** *Moments musicaux, D. 780; Fantasy for Piano, in C, D. 760 ("Wanderer")*

Wilhelm Kempff, piano. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139372, \$5.79.

Kempff approaches the six *Moments musicaux* (*Moments musicaux*, if you accept Schubert's own bad French) with an intriguing blend of Beethovenian asceticism and the yielding graciousness of a born lyricist. He displays a marvelous wealth of subtle shading and tone color, but these niceties of romantic refinement are always tempered by an innate classical rigor. Clarity would seem to be his uppermost pursuit here—clarity of sonority and clarity of structure. There is consummate attention to part writing, and details such as *forte-pianos* and *sforzandos* are executed with refreshing "ping." Kempff also achieves symmetry by observing the repeats.

Rhythmically and in terms of tempo there is a certain forthright solidity. Some of Kempff's tempos indeed are sufficiently different from "traditional" choices to merit discussion; I have nothing but praise for the pianist's refusal to rush the daylights out of No. 4. Schubert, after all, did write *Moderato* there (and Schnabel—to take one admittedly extreme example—seemed to think that the word was "*Agitato*"). Kempff's very leisurely handling of the treacherous dotted-rhythm chords in No. 5 is, for me, a positive revelation. How big and noble the work sounds, played in this manner! On the other hand, the brisk one-to-a-bar speed for No. 6 struck me as making for an uncomfortable tightness. I could also quibble with Kempff's old-fashioned before-the-beat execution of appoggiaturas and with the absence from his reading of any of those delicious variants revealed in some of the Urtext editions. But quibbles or no, Kempff's *Moments musicaux* are not to be missed.

I have suddenly realized that I don't much care for the *Wanderer* Fantasy. The emphasis on technical rhetoric, it seems to me, is a bit oversized, and the thematic material has a way of falling into banal four-bar segments. An exceptionally nuanced performance (such as the ancient Curzon edition) or one played with feline tautness (the deleted Fleisher) can temporarily change my opinion, but Kempff's, I am afraid, does not. His rhythmic scansion is a little

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square; the fingerwork, while not seriously remiss in itself, is just a mite labored and imprecise. Moreover, with reliable editions of the score represented in a number of recordings, I cannot recommend a performance that perpetuates such misprints as the D sharp throughout the entire final bar of the slow movement. In the absence of Fleisher and Curzon, Kuerti's solid, lyrical reading for Monitor (with the G major Fantasy Sonata) and Richter's monumental one for Angel (coupled, like Fleisher's, with the "little" A major Sonata) get my endorsement.

But, again, don't miss Kempff's *Moments musicaux*. H.G.

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9; Sonata for Piano, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 22*

Alexis Weissenberg, piano. ANGEL S 36552, \$5.79.

Digitally impressive but pianistically rather calculated (not to say expressively jaded), Weissenberg's *Carnaval* seems to me to smack more of a sports arena than the specified ballroom. It has, to be sure, a rather showy brilliance, with every note in its proper place . . . and a certain kind of structural cohesion, due in part to the monumental tempos and in part to Weissenberg's insistence on observing every last repeat. Indeed, he even puts extra ones in *Arlequin* and *Chiarina* which, so far as I can ascertain, are spurious if interesting. True to traditional practice—and unlike young Grigory Sokolov in his concurrent recording—Weissenberg does not play the *Sphinxes* though he does repeatedly play a questionable bass harmony in *Reconnaissance*. His tempo for *Paganini* is fantastic in its incredible speed and lightness, and for the most part he is even more refined and note-perfect technically than Sokolov, brilliant as the latter is. But for freshness, romantic ardor, and sheer feeling, I'll take Sokolov any time. Weissenberg, for all his intelligence, sounds slick and methodical, with nary a spark of romance in him. He captures a glassy "brilliance" which would be more appropriate to Strauss's *Don Juan*, and all told his contrived, virtuoso-effect playing sounds terribly passé today.

Though it too requires romantic passion to some degree, the G minor Sonata, being a sonata, can withstand a more stringent approach. To be sure, Weissenberg's tight-lipped, compressed reading underplays the rhetorical expansiveness of the first movement, but he gets a sensitive inwardness by playing the *romanza* second movement with understated deliberation. His scherzo and finale, both taken very rapidly, are digitally impeccable. Everything considered, Weissenberg's reading here reminds me of very early Horowitz.

I do not much care for this artist's brittle, pugilistic kind of piano tone, but Angel has reproduced it faithfully.

H.G.

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9*  
 †Saint-Saëns: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in G minor, Op. 22*

Grigory Sokolov, piano; U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, Neimye Yarvy, cond. (in the Saint-Saëns).

For a feature review including this recording, see page 73.

SCRIABIN: *Piano Music*

*Etudes: Op. 8, No. 12; Op. 42: Nos. 4 and 5; Guirlandes, Op. 73, No. 1; Nocturne for the Left Hand, Op. 9, No. 2; Poème—Nocturne, Op. 61; Preludes, Op. 11: Nos. 5, 14, and 24; Sonata for Piano, No. 4, Op. 30; Vers la flamme, Op. 72.*

Hilde Somer, piano. MERCURY SR 90500, \$5.79.

In this collection you get a well-balanced anthology of imbalanced music. Miss Somer has adroitly culled her samples from Scriabin's entire output, and the result gives a fair representation to the early Chopin-derived pieces (the romantic Left-Hand Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 2; the bravura Etude, Op. 8, No. 12—so obviously inspired by Chopin's last Prelude of Op. 28; the group of Preludes, Op. 11) as well as to the tenuous fantasy and febrile mysticism of the late period (*Vers la flamme*, Op. 72; *Guirlandes*, Op. 73, No. 1; *Poème—Nocturne*, Op. 61). The Fourth Sonata, with its serene beginning and zany excursions into the realm of early jazz might be taken as the piano-solo equivalent of Milhaud's *Création du Monde*. It stands midway between the polarities represented in the other pieces here. Scriabin's idiom is of a very personal sort; and while one might detest some of this music, there is no escaping the evidence that this post-impressionist eccentric had talent. Moreover, it is unarguable that without Scriabin's pioneer work we might never have heard such things as Stravinsky's *Oiseau de feu*.

At a recent Carnegie Hall concert Hilde Somer played some of these same compositions with admirable projection and authority. This recording is, in comparison, disappointing. Part of the trouble here seems to be the tubby, bass heavy, studio-bound reproduction of the piano. Granted, one doesn't seek a percussive tone for romantic music, but surely it is not unreasonable to want some grace, line, and delicacy. And sonics aside, for all Miss Somer's musical instincts and technical expertise she takes cautious tempos for the Left-Hand Nocturne and Op. 8, No. 12 Etude. It all suggests that this artist might have been suffering a case of mike-fright.

As Scriabin collections are hardly commonplace, Miss Somer's musicianly virtues entitle her efforts in this area to respect, but one hopes that her subsequent releases will better represent her potential.

H.G.

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Continued on page 112



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# Strauss's *Ariadne*—Expertly Conceived on All Sides

BY CONRAD L. OSBORNE

IN VIEW OF THE NUMBER of more or less standard operas that do not yet have a really satisfactory recording, the good fortune that has attended *Ariadne* is astounding. This is the opera's fourth complete recording, and it is the fourth recommendable one—a record I believe is unmatched by any other opera.

And despite the fact that these recordings have been accomplished over a twenty-five-year span, none is really out of the running from a sonic standpoint. Of course, it can hardly be argued that the earliest of these (earliest to be recorded, not earliest to be released) does full justice to the delicious scoring of the opera; the DGG version is the preservation of a broadcast of a live performance from the Vienna State Opera in June 1944, in celebration of the composer's eightieth birthday. Yet the sound of the recording is surprisingly good, considering its origin, and the aura of the occasion, somehow transmitted on discs of vinyl, is even brighter than is indicated by a listing of the principal participants: Maria Reining, Alda Noni, Irmgard Seefried, Max Lorenz, Erich Kunz, and Paul Schoeffler, under Karl Böhm.

The next issue is a studio recording made a decade later—Angel's first version, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Rita Streich, Seefried again, Rudolph Schock, Hermann Prey, and Karl Dönch, Von Karajan conducting. I recently included it in my little list of the mono recordings most worth preserving, and after rehearing good chunks of it I find no reason to strip it of rank. The orchestral playing is expert, Schwarzkopf and Seefried just about irreproachable, and Streich very pretty and accurate if not as characterful as one might wish. Schock's tight, strained Bacchus is a drawback, but so is nearly everyone else's attempt at this role.

The first stereo version was RCA Victor's, which dates from 1961, led by Erich Leinsdorf. Leinsdorf punps along too much in the *commedia* scenes but on the whole turns in one of his best recorded operatic performances, aided by splendid playing from the Vienna Philharmonic. Leonie Rysanek's *Ariadne* has neither the aristocratic air of Schwarzkopf's nor the way with words of Reining's, but her work is undeniably exciting at the vocal climaxes. Sena Jurinac is simply a great Composer—finer, even, than the mature Seefried—and both Roberta Peters and Jan Peerce sing well above their norms as Zerbinetta and Bacchus.

So the new Angel entry moves into a picked field. Perhaps it is the special quality of this opera (and its special difficulty) that has saved it on records; the cast requirements are so severe and unusual and the orchestral demands so high (in terms of quality, of course, not quantity) that one would not dream of undertaking the piece without an extraordinary assemblage of talent. In the case of the present release, a firm base is provided by Kempe and the Dresden orchestra. One is aware from the start of a remarkable warmth and fineness of grain in the playing, with the result that when the solo oboe betrays a slight high-register quaver, it really jars. The playing of nearly all the little solo and chamber passages is exquisite, particularly in the strings—something of great importance in this transparent, exposed score. Fortunately, the quality of Kempe's reading is maintained not only in the languishing lyric passages one expects from him. The orchestral and vocal ensemble in the *commedia* scenes is close to a brisk perfection, and is balanced and proportioned to a turn. And the big moments are given full measure, as with the gorgeous orchestral racket that leads into *Ariadne's* cry of "*Theseus!*" as Bacchus becomes visible in the final scene.

The most solid asset among the singers is Gundula Janowitz, whose *Ariadne* is the finest work I have yet heard from her. This is one of those voices that seems made for the Straussian line: cool, even, full, with an easy play from *mezzo-piano* to *forte*. Her particular sort of musicality, or temperament, also is called into fullest play by the role; she has a fine instinct for phrasing the music, and treats the words more meaningfully than has sometimes been the case in the past. It is marvelous to hear a voice that works so cleanly at low dynamics yet stays right on the track when let out—it really soars at places

like "*Du wirst mich befreien*" (in "*Es gibt ein Reich*"), or, two pages later, the sweep up to the B flat on "*du nimm es von mir*." She is also surprisingly lively as the Prima Donna in the prologue, though she doesn't get quite the universe of contempt for Zerbinetta into "*Abstand! Ha ha ha ha! Eine Welt, hoffe ich!*" that Schwarzkopf manages.

The Zerbinetta is a newcomer to the international recording scene, Sylvia Geszty. She is in most respects altogether excellent. She gets more than a suggestion of the character across; is almost frighteningly accurate with the rhythms—all those triplets, dots, and runs of thirty-seconds in The Scene are truly put in their places; tosses off staccatos with the best; and travels right up to a sustained top E natural without losing the bottom. Regrettably, the sound per se is simply not very attractive. Sometimes (usually when she is singing rather softly in the upper range) she floats over into a pretty timbre; but sustained tones too often have that wiry, edgy quality associated with Slavic female voices, and sometimes a wobble too.

Also slightly disappointing to me is the Composer of Teresa Zylis-Gara, a young lady of whom good word has traveled across the water and whom we are about to hear as Elvira at the Met. The voice is a lovely one, and of roughly the correct weight and quality for the role. But her use of it seems incomplete as yet: the middle has a kind of body which she cannot carry up comfortably, and thus when she tries to remove the pressure to sing softly (as she must a good share of the time), the sound turns innocuous and she loses the ability to articulate clearly. She has some excellent moments, seems musical, and may be a better singer than she shows here. But her Composer is not on a level with that of Jurinac or Seefried. As for the trio of Nymphs, they are musically accurate but vocally weak, with the exception of Miss Burmeister, who sings steadily.

On the male side, honors must go to the low voices. Hermann Prey repeats his splendid Harlekin, more secure than Kunz's and more sympathetic than Walter Berry's. Theo Adam is first-class in every way as the Music Master, though it is hard to pick anyone among such strong competitors as Adam, Schoeffler, Berry (doubling on the RCA set), and Karl Dönch. Peter Schreier is adequate in both his roles.

James King makes some fine sound, but finally becomes simply another in a long line of tenors who haven't solved Bacchus. In purely vocal terms, he comes closer than Lorenz, who is in trouble whenever the music lies high, as this does with cruel regularity. And King's tone certainly has more ring and freshness than Schock's. But the singing has a rather stiff, pressured quality; it does not move in a free, open way through the upper-middle area, and consequently does not produce much in the way of a real legato or gracefulness of phrasing. Solid, manly, square. No recorded Bacchus succeeds in sounding truly beautiful (the music almost prohibits it), but of the four I am a bit surprised to find myself recommending Peerce, the only Bacchus to sing with true line and actually to shape the phrases. He accords the words their dignity, and brings some excitement to these phrases that head for the top, return to earth for a second, then head right back.

Despite the reservations I have voiced, this is an excellent performance. Its very fine, admirably balanced stereo sound may well be a factor in elevating it above other versions for some collectors, though not for me. If I were forced to pick one *Ariadne*, I'd close my eyes and point.

Strauss, Richard: *Ariadne auf Naxos*

Gundula Janowitz (s), *Ariadne* and Prima Donna; Sylvia Geszty (s), Zerbinetta; Teresa Zylis-Gara (s), The Composer; Erika Wüstmann (s), Najade; Adele Stolte (s), Echo; Annelies Burmeister (c), Dryade; James King (t), Bacchus and The Tenor; Peter Schreier (t), The Dancing Master and Scaramuccio; Hans-Joachim Rotzsch (t), Brighella; Hermann Prey (b), Harlekin; Theo Adam (bs), The Music Master; Siegfried Vogel (bs), Truffaldin; Orchestra of the Dresden State Opera, Rudolf Kempe, cond. ANGEL SCL 3733, \$17.37 (three discs).

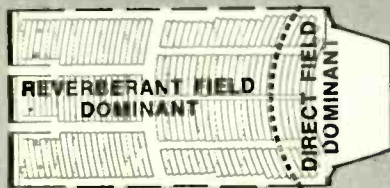
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\*From 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUD-SPEAKERS', Dr. A. G. Bose, a paper presented at the 1968 convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Copies of the complete paper are available from the Bose Corp. for fifty cents.

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Continued from page 108

**SMETANA: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E minor ("From My Life")**—See Dvořák: *Quartet for Strings, No. 6, in F, Op. 96 ("American")*.

**STRAVINSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D**—See Berg: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*.

**STRAVINSKY: Four Etudes, Op. 7; Ragtime; Piano-Rag-music; Sonata; Serenade in A; Tango; Circus Polka**

Noël Lee, piano, NONESUCH H 71212, \$2.50.

Although this disc does not contain all the Stravinsky solo piano works, it does cover the major ones, except for the Three Movements from *Petrushka*. The Sonata and Serenade in A (from 1924 and 1925 respectively) are the relatively well-known *pièces de résistance* here, in the "neoclassical" idiom that often has more to do with Bach than with the later eighteenth century, and always more to do with Stravinskian ideas of phrase structure and metrics than with anything else.

Less often encountered are the Four Etudes (1908), brilliant but conventional works in a kind of late-nineteenth-century Chopinesque idiom; the first two are studies in cross-rhythms, thus hinting at future developments. The two "jazz" pieces, from 1918 and 1919 respectively, explore the syncopated idiom first broached in *L'Histoire du Soldat*; *Ragtime*, originally for eleven instruments, is played here in the composer's rather tame piano version, and isn't nearly so much fun as the rather more difficult *Piano-Rag-music*.

Finally, there are two entertaining trifles from the early 1940s, which probably owe their existence to financial inducements as much as to musical necessity. The Tango is a dead-pan satire, which has twice been orchestrated, first by Felix Guenther for full orchestra, again in 1953 by the composer himself for a smaller ensemble (the latter version has been recorded by Stravinsky but still awaits release: Dorati, on Mercury, plays the Guenther version said to have been "examined and approved" by the composer). The *Circus Polka* was, of course, originally created for the Ringling Brothers' Band, and is best known in the later orchestral version.

Mr. Lee's performances are reasonably competent, although consistently on the heavy-handed side, especially by comparison with Charles Rosen's superb recording of the Sonata and Serenade (Epic BC 1140), which has far more dynamic subtlety and accentual variety. Since a similar coupling, played by Beveridge Webster, is promised by Dover, I recommend either of two alternatives: Rosen or patience, depending on whether your main interest is the bigger pieces or the smaller ones. D.H.

**STRAVINSKY: Sacre du printemps; Fireworks**

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3026, \$5.79.

A few months ago we had the first recording of *The Rite of Spring* from Russia; now, here is the first one from Chicago, and it certainly suggests that environment, rather than heredity, is more important in these matters. The Chicago Symphony may be the best orchestra in America, and this is the best-played performance of this piece that you are likely to hear. Ozawa's reading is very straightforward—no fussiness, no frenzy—and the results are extremely satisfactory, particularly since they are so well recorded, with lots of dynamic range and clarity (the percussion has rarely come across in such detail, particularly the vicious timpani parts at the end of the *Danse sacrée*—but there is also some impressively soft playing at the beginning of Part II).

Among currently available recordings, two others lay claim to special distinction. Boulez (Nonesuch H 71093) has the advantage of price, but also of a very special clarity: his orchestra doesn't quite reach the Chicago level of ensemble and balance, but the highly pointed, brilliantly accented playing produces a remarkably transparent sound. On the debit side is a slight tendency to gain speed, some erratic dynamics, and a less satisfactory recording job. The other competitor is the composer's own version, which has a quite unique rhythmic force. If only he could have had the Chicago Symphony to play for his recording.

The brief *Fireworks* is also well played; three cheers to whoever thought to put it *before* the major work—a much more sensible arrangement than the usual one. Alfred Frankenstein provides an interesting liner note, giving Nicolas Slonimsky's more literal translations of the various titles to the sections of the ballet; unfortunately, he has been betrayed by the label department, for still another set of title translations, which he promises "will be found on the labels," has been omitted therefrom. (Incidentally, the new RCA label is a good piece of design, with lots of room for good big type and the side number given so large that you can read it on the moving turntable even if your head doesn't revolve at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm.) D.H.

**SZYMANOWSKI: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1**

†Wieniawski: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22*

Wanda Wilkownirska, violin; Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra. Witold Rowicki, cond. HELIODOR HS 25087, \$2.49.

Although many people consider Szymanowski's First Violin Concerto to be one of the twentieth century's major works in this form, it is rarely played—perhaps understandably so, as there are no big tunes in the piece nor is there much opportu-

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nity for pyrotechnical display. The structure is rather incoherent (actually the piece is more of a rhapsody than a concerto in the proper sense), and the eclecticism of the harmonic and melodic materials is a bit off-putting. Shades (and more than shades) of Scriabin and Strauss haunt every page of the work. Yet it contains a wealth of fascinating detail which, for me at least, more than compensates for its over-all shapelessness. Listen, for instance, to the opening measures: a glittering orchestral introduction into which the violin slips, all but unnoticed; the fabulously colorful orchestration; the ecstatic harmonies and languid melodies. Here is a piece one can lie back and bask in. A bit overripe perhaps, but of high value nonetheless.

The soloist here plays the work perfectly. Of the half-dozen performances I've heard, Wilkowińska's stands head and shoulders above all competition (which includes the formidable David Oistrakh). Her intonation is flawless and her "sound" is marked by the most voluptuous of vibratos and an almost excruciating sensitivity. She is an artist of the first rank—a pity her work isn't better known in this country.

No less impressive is she in the Wieniawski concerto, the surprise of this disc. Expecting to find one of those dull romantic turkeys which depends more on formula than invention, I was delighted to discover a strong, well-made, entertaining piece, in the best Schumann-Brahms tradition. It is at least the equal of the Bruch or Saint-Saëns concertos, and should be in the repertoire.

Rowicki and his orchestra are in fine form in both works, and deserve credit in particular for their efforts on behalf of Szymanowski, whose orchestral writing is all but impossible to bring off successfully.

I am somewhat unimpressed with Heliodor's contribution, the sound being quite fuzzy, losing some of the hard-won detail. R.W.S.

UTTINI: *Il Re pastore: Overture*—See Roman: *Drottningholms-musique: Suite*.

VILLA LOBOS: *Rudepoéma*—See Busoni: *Six Elegies*.

WEBER: *Concertos for Clarinet and Orchestra: No. 1, in F minor, Op. 73; No. 2, in E flat, Op. 74*

Benny Goodman, clarinet; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Jean Martinon, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3052, \$5.79.

If you can't get to the opera this week, listen to Weber's two clarinet concertos—they're the next best thing. I find it unfaillingly amusing and rather endearing that the composer treats this instrument like the hottest coloratura to come round the corner. Sometimes the solo entrance is unintentionally comic: after all that orchestral striding about at the opening of No. 1, for instance, the stage

is set for an in-trodding *Commendatore*, at the very least—and what do we get? An utterly unassuming slip of a girl, self-possessed and singing happily. Later she even waltzes a bit (and what a fine touch Benny Goodman displays here). The curiously gentle second movement of this work drops some of the operatic trappings, but the clarinet/French horn duet could come straight out of *Freischütz*. The finale reverts to pure instrumental concerto, of all things, and you won't get the tune out of your head for hours.

The second Concerto is more determinedly a virtuoso vehicle—a study in skips, actually—introduced by a perfect operatic overture. The second movement is one of those rarities, a real slow-motion display piece, and the finale utilizes every vocal trick in the book, and more. Benny Goodman handles it all with total finesse—a lifting rhythm, and a fine control of tone throughout the range. The Chicago players are right with him. S.F.

WIENIAWSKI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22*—See Szymanowski: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1*.

WUORINEN: *Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players*  
†Martino: *Concerto for Wind Quartet*

Harvey Sollberger, flute, Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University, Charles Wuorinen, cond. (in the Wuorinen); Contemporary Chamber Ensemble, Arthur Weisberg, cond. (in the Martino). COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 230, \$5.95.

New-York-born Charles Wuorinen has compiled an impressive catalogue of musical works, as well as a wide range of credits as author, teacher, conductor, pianist, and codirector (with Harvey Sollberger) of the Group for Contemporary Music at Columbia University, which presents a half-dozen important concerts of new music each season. At the age of thirty, he is well established as a major talent of his generation, and the present Chamber Concerto—one of a series of such works—shows why.

Wuorinen's music has a very distinctive and individual sound: a hard, crystalline surface, with great clarity of texture and tremendous virtuosity in the instrumental writing. The scoring in the Chamber Concerto is characteristic, for it is designed for maximum contrast to the soloist's sustained tone: aside from a string bass (at the opposite end of the pitch range), all the instruments are either plucked (harp, guitar, harpsichord) or struck (xylophone, vibraphone, celesta, piano, and percussion for two players). The way Wuorinen uncovers sonic correspondences with the flute is one of the work's fascinating aspects, in the course of a nonrepeating, always forward-moving form that slowly spins out into subsidence from the momentum of the opening violent, jabbing gestures. Harvey Soll-

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berger is one of the sovereign instrumentalists of the day, and the performance is impressively brilliant. Occasionally, a confluence of high flute sound and percussion transients creates a brief patch of distortion, but otherwise the recording is clean.

Donald Martino, born in 1931, has centered his activities at Yale. In this Concerto (written in 1964) he calls upon his direct experience as a proficient clarinetist and his broad knowledge of wind technique to deal with the notoriously difficult medium of the wind quintet. Solo cadenzas for the five instruments function as articulations between a series of ensemble passages, in a general conception of the musical work as a discussion among the instruments that perhaps owes something to the music of Elliott Carter but is here handled in a personal way. Martino's work has many striking passages: the clarinet solo is worth singling out, and also a fine section right after the horn cadenza, with fluid tremolos in the other instruments. I'm not certain he has solved the wind quintet problem, for the horn sounds as much of an obstreperous intruder here as in previous literature for this combination—but the performance, in which the horn seems to be the weakest link, may be at fault. All the same, this is an absorbing musical conception, skillfully executed. D.H.

## RECITALS & MISCELLANY

FIorenza COSSOTTO: "The Artistry of Fiorenza Cossotto"

Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana: Voi lo sapete*. Verdi: *Un Ballo in maschera: Re dell'abisso*. Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa*. Donizetti: *La Favorita: O mio Fernando*. Verdi: *Nabucco: Oh, dischiuso e il firmamento*. Cilea: *L'Arlesiana: Esser madre; Adriana Lecouvreur: Acerba volutta*. Cherubini: *Medea: Aria di Neris*. Bellini: *I Capuletti e i Montecchi: Deh! Tu, bell'anima*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Voce di donna*.

Fiorenza Cossotto, mezzo; Ricordi Symphony Orchestra, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond. EVEREST 3224, \$4.98.

Fiorenza Cossotto is the outstanding present-day candidate among Italian mezzo-sopranos to carry on the noble tradition of Stignani, Barbieri, and Simonato; she has proved in recent years to be an accomplished artist and the possessor of a richly beautiful voice. This record offers an opportunity of listening to her work in a wide variety of styles, reaching from the preromantic Cherubini all the way through the nineteenth century to the *verismo* school. It is an impressive recital, though, for technical reasons, it does not give a complete picture of her character as an artist.

I hasten to say that there is nothing wrong with the technology of this record: it is well balanced and competently taped.

But the orchestra sounds fairly small and the dynamic span has obviously been kept short—a studio job with close microphoning. Consequently, Miss Cossotto rarely needs to project, as she would do in a concert hall or opera house. All of this makes for happy listening at the hearthside, but tells us not as much as we might wish to know about the singer's over-all character.

One result of the restrained dynamics is a certain lack of emotional intensity in, for example, the opening *Cavalleria* aria, very much underplayed though faultlessly sung. Ulrica's invocation, from *Ballo*, is also impeccable in its vocalism but is entirely without chills or shocks—and slackness in Ulrica's one big scene cannot be permitted.

The happiest results are to be found in the *Adriana* and *Gioconda* arias, where the artist's involvement is total and her shaping of the vocal line proclaims her caliber as an artist. The *Nabucco* aria (Fenena's prayer in the finale) is clean, firm, and very moving. And the Cherubini excerpt shows how capable this singer is of projecting a sense of tragedy while retaining every element of dignity.

But Rosina's aria from *Barbiere* lacks sparkle entirely, in the sense that Berganza and Simonato have led us to expect it. Although it is all very well for mezzos to reclaim this material from the higher voices and to restore the practice of Rossini's day, they must have the temperament to bounce this music about and have more fun with it than Cossotto does here.

There is no question, however, that this record contains some very enjoyable singing by an important artist. Gavazzeni's work is on the slack side but his musicians play well. The stereo is genuine, not the electronic kind sometimes offered on this label. G.M.

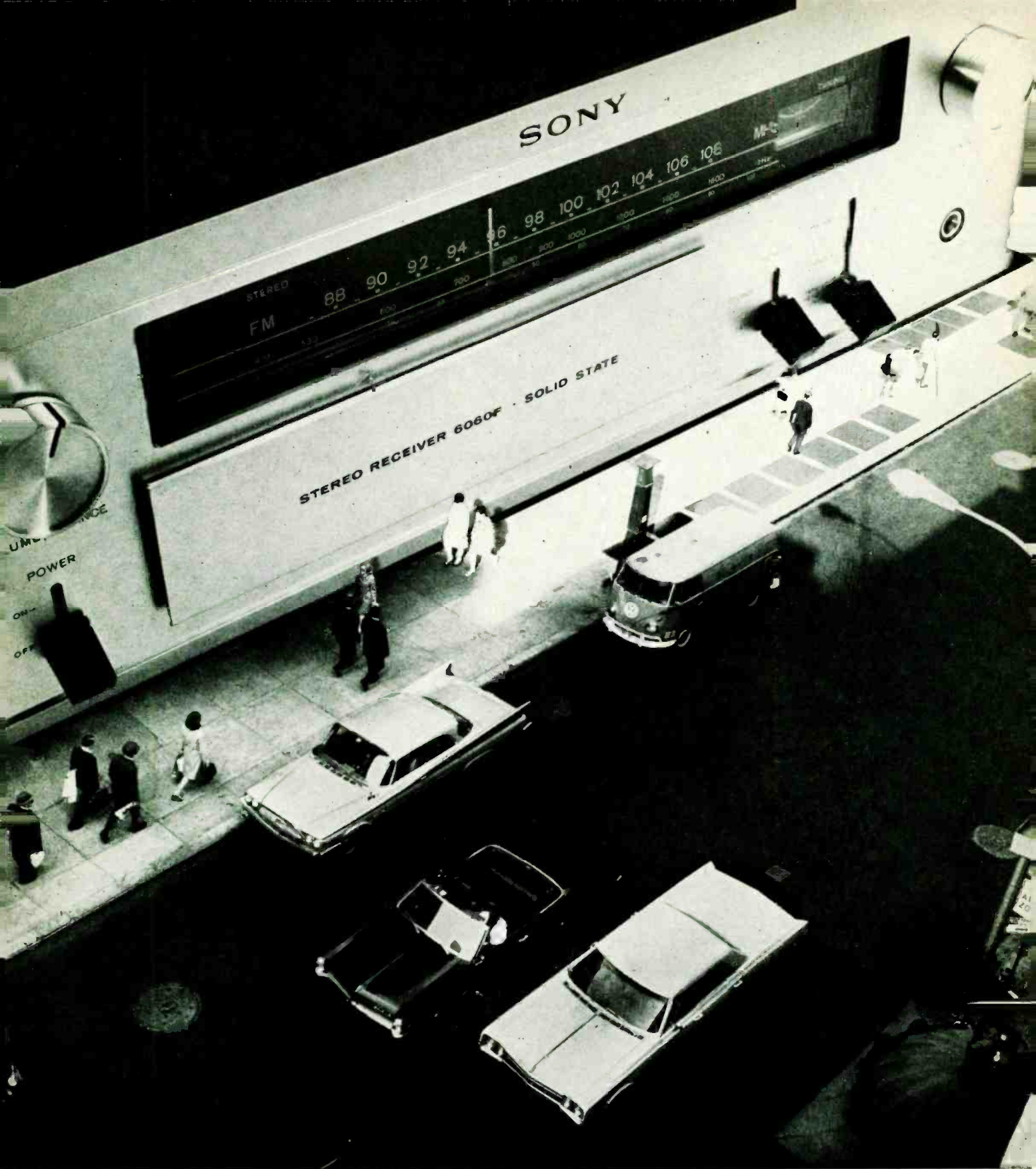
VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES:  
*Zarzuela Arias*

Gimenez: *La tempranica: Zapateado; Canción de la tempranica*. Chapi: *La patria chica: Canción pastorale; La chavala: Canción de la gitana*. Chueca and Valverde: *La gran via: Tango de la menagilda; Chotis del eliseo madrileño*. Serrano: *Los de Aragón: Romanza de Gloria; La alegría del batallón: Canción de la gitana; Los claveles: Escena lirica*. Lleo: *La corte de Faraón: Couplets babilónicos*. Caballero: *Gigantes y cabezudos; Romanza de Pilar*. Barbieri: *El barberillo de Lavapiés: Canción de Paloma*.

Victoria de los Angeles, soprano; Coro de Camara del Real; members of the Spanish National Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, cond. ANGEL S 36556, \$5.79.

Here we have a zarzuela anthology far removed indeed from the spirit of the Caballé/Marti collection of bouncy and swashbuckling duets (RCA LSC 3039) reviewed here in December. Victoria de los Angeles' way is quieter, gentler, more refined. She approaches this music as a miniaturist, concerned to shape each song

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On the present disc we hear a dozen fresh and appealing melodies from the zarzuela melodists, each one rich with opportunities for individual decoration and character insight. The skill of Miss de los Angeles is breathtaking, and her ability to propel emotion fully and convincingly without resorting to a single "broad" effect—there is hardly a note in the record that exceeds a *mezzoforte* level—makes the entire recital a cumulative work of art.

The playing of the instrumentalists and the recording balance are appropriate and proficient. Recommended without reservation. G.M.

### ENGLISH SECULAR MUSIC OF THE LATE RENAISSANCE

Weelkes: *The Cryes of London; Since Robin Hood; Thule, the period of cosmography*. Vautor: *Weep, weep mine eyes*. Tomkins: *Alman*. Ravenscroft: *Rustic Lovers*. Gibbons: *Do not repine, fair sun*. Peerson: *Sing, love is blind*. Dering: *Country Cries*. Anon.: *Hey down a down a down; Take heed of time, tune, and ear*.

Purcell Consort of Voices; Jaye Consort of Viols; Grayston Burgess, cond. CANDIDE 31005, \$3.50.

This record is a splendid follow-up to the same group's "Music of the High Renaissance in England" on Turnabout TV 4017/TV 34017. "Even at twice the price this record would be a bargain," I said when reviewing that issue. This new set (also on a low-priced label, just a dollar more than the Turnabout) is equally desirable.

The repertoire here is still more unfamiliar, yet there is not a dud on either side of the disc. The only really well-known pieces are two of those by Thomas Weelkes. The *Thule* madrigal is very well done, though a little more work might have clarified the words of the first two lines. Weelkes' *Cryes of London* is not so touchingly human as Orlando Gibbons' similar setting, but it is charming enough, and the singers do it with a nice feeling for the accents of their native capital.

There are several pieces on the record that I have never heard before. All of them have their beauties, and they are cleverly varied in texture and pace. The performances are excellent, with Ian Partridge's lovely tenor once more in evidence. Recording first-class. Highly recommended. B.J.

### SIEGFRIED HILDENBRAND: "Historic Organs of Switzerland"

Pachelbel: *Fantasia in G minor*. Frescobaldi: *Toccata per la messa "In Festis B. Mariae Virginis I."* Speth: *Toccata prima; Toccata sexta*. Guilain: *Grand Jeu*. Marchand: *Plein Jeu*. François Couperin: *Gloria*. Lebègue: *Puer nobis nascitur*. Buxtehude: *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*.

Siegfried Hildenbrand, organ. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9514, \$5.95.



A recording session in Madrid: Victoria de los Angeles and son Juan.

"The recordings of this organ in particular will convey to the lover of organ music and historic instruments something of that atmosphere which can only be created by an organ kept safe from all perfectionism through its unaltered character." So read the jacket notes in describing the organ of St. Antonius' Chapel at Münster, heard here in the Johann Speth work, and these words sum up pretty well the dominant impression conveyed by the three instruments documented on this delightful disc. All three organs—located in the German-speaking district of Valais in Switzerland and built at various times in the eighteenth century—are beautiful examples of the baroque organ builder's art at its finest: voicing is warm, light, and transparent and there is a preponderance of bright and sparkling upper-work. The most interesting of the three is the fine ten-rank St. Antonius instrument, for which the wind is still supplied (somewhat unsteadily) by a pair of hand bellows.

For the Pachelbel and Frescobaldi pieces Hildenbrand uses the organ of the "Liebfrauen" Church at Münster, for the French pieces and the Buxtehude that of the Parish Church ("Maria Geburt") at Reckingen. All are played with typically German precision and accuracy. For the pieces by Jean Adam Guillaume Guilain, Louis Marchand, François Couperin, and Nicolas Lebègue he changes hats effectively and adopts an appropriate French style—but he remains unmistakably a German playing French music.

It's a pity the instruments couldn't have been put into better tune for the recording, but perhaps the slightly sour mixtures add to the "atmosphere"—and there's plenty of that on this wonderfully attractive recording. First-rate sound, and jacket notes providing a partial history of each organ, a complete stop list for each, and the registrations Hildenbrand uses for each piece. C.F.G.

### BARRY MORELL: "Famous Tenor Arias"

Verdi: *Macbeth: Ah, la paterna mano; Simon Boccanegra: Sento avvampar nell'anima; Un Ballo in maschera: Forse la*

*soglia attinse; Di' tu se fedele*. Cilea: *Adriana Lecouvreur: La dolcissima effigie; L'anima ho stanca*. Meyerbeer: *L'Africana: O Paradiso*. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor: Tombe degli avi miei*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Cielo e mar*. Puccini: *La Bohème: Che gelida manina; Manon Lescaut: Tra voi, belle; Donna non vidi mai; Guardate, pazzo son*.

Barry Morell, tenor; Vienna Akademie Chorus; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Argeo Quadri, cond. WESTMINSTER WST 17148, \$4.79.

There are some fine ringing tones on this record, and a generous measure of very acceptable tenoring. Mr. Morell knows how to mold a good singing line, holds his intonation impeccably, and seems confident in the climaxes and cadenzes. He is happiest in those arias (Puccini, Ponchielli, and Cilea notably) where the tenor is affirming a single, uncomplicated passion, proclaiming his love in the major key. At other times, and particularly where more complex emotions are involved, he is sometimes a little square, and shows a want of subtlety.

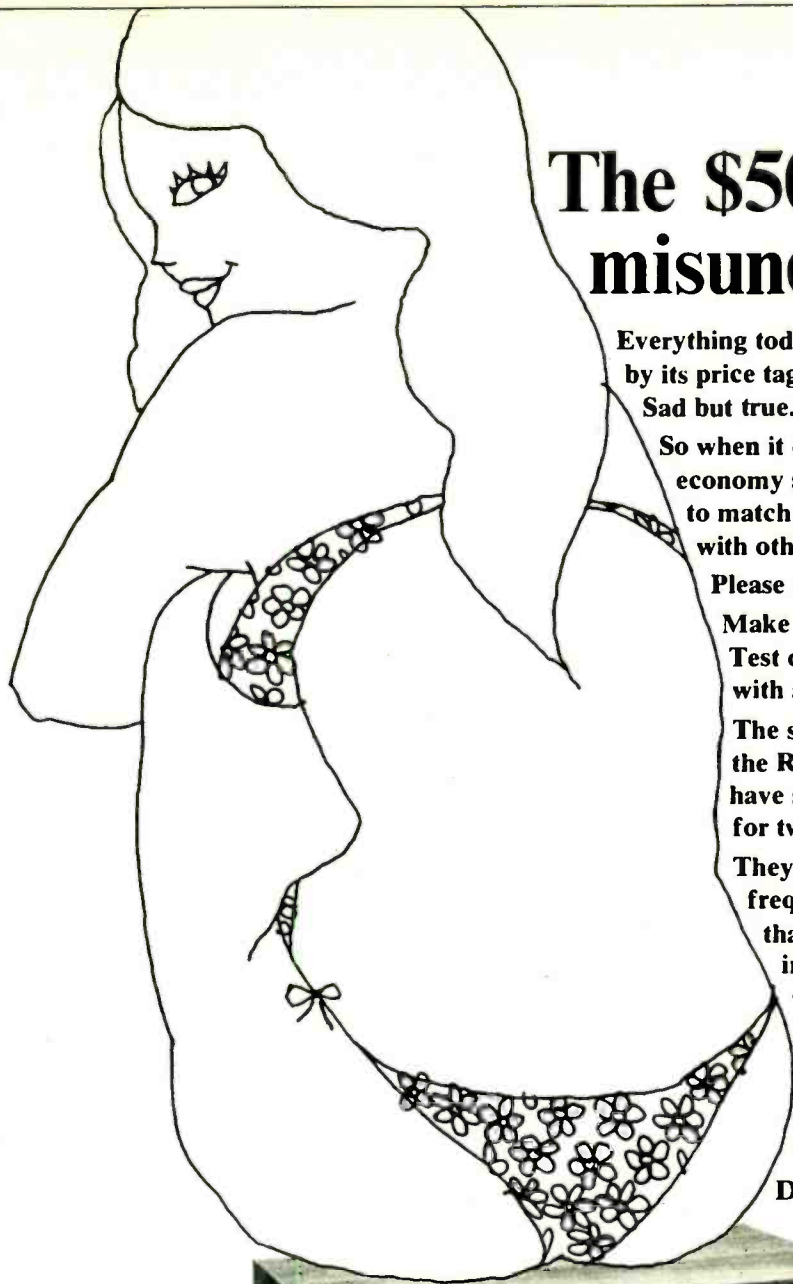
He has not the insouciant manner, for instance, to do much with Verdi's Riccardo in *Ballo*, in the scene where he lightheartedly asks the fortune-telling gypsy to proclaim his fate. And he is plaintive and self-pitying in the aria preceding the death scene from that opera (which, incomprehensibly, is placed ahead of the earlier aria). Unlike certain other tenors, Barry Morell rations his sobs severely—but he does not always avoid those lapses in taste which are the hallmarks of the entire *vil razza*.

The work of Maestro Quadri and his players and singers is very good indeed, and the recording is excellent. G.M.

### BEVERLY SILLS: "Bellini and Donizetti Heroines"

Beverly Sills, soprano; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Jussi Jalas, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 76.



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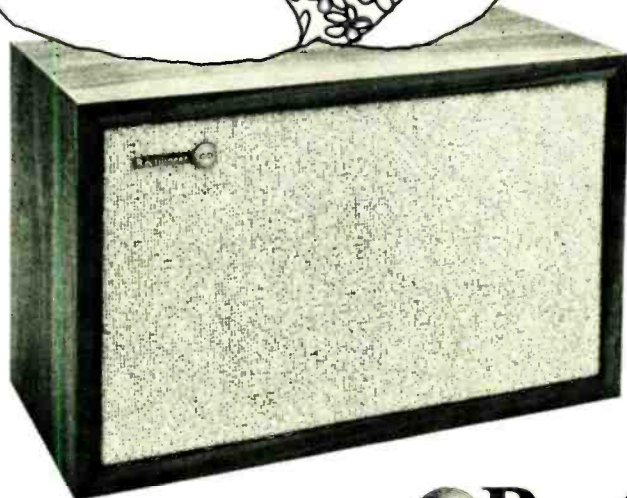
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# IN BRIEF

**DEBUSSY:** Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune; Jeux; Nocturnes. Women's Chorus of the Vienna State Opera (in Nocturnes); Vienna New Symphony, Max Goberman, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0226, \$2.49.

**DEBUSSY:** Six Epigraphes antiques. **MILHAUD:** Scaramouche, Op. 165b.  
**RAVEL:** Ma Mère l'oye. Walter and Beatrice Klien, pianos. Turnabout TV 34234, \$2.50.

**IVES:** Songs (13). **GOEHR:** Four Songs from the Japanese. **SCHUERMANN:** Chuench'i. Marni Nixon, soprano; John McCabe, piano. Nonesuch H 71209, \$2.50.

**RACHMANINOFF:** Etudes tableaux. Opp. 33 and 39 (complete). Beveridge Webster, piano. Dover HCR 5284 or HCRST 7284, \$2.50.

**STRAUSS, RICHARD:** Der Rosenkavalier: Suite, Op. 59. **STRAUSS, JOHANN II:** Die Fledermaus: Overture, Op. 362; Wein, Weib, und Gesang, Op. 333; Donner und Blitzen Polka, Op. 324. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Max Rudolf, cond. Decca DL 710158, \$5.79.

**WILLIAM GOMEZ:** Guitar Recital: Works by Sor, Tarrega, De la Maza, Torroba, Villa Lobos, Albéniz, Pipo, and Tansman.

**JAN PEERCE:** "Journey Through Opera." Arias by Ponchielli, Mozart, Donizetti, Puccini, Flotow, Meyerbeer, Boito, Verdi, and Gluck. Jan Peerce, tenor; Orchestra of the Vienna Festival, Julius Rudel, cond. Cardinal VCS 10036, \$3.50.

With four *Fauns*, three *Jeux*, and two and two thirds *Nocturnes* already listed in the catalogues of various CBS affiliates, it's hard to imagine why anybody at Odyssey thought this record worth releasing. Obviously recorded under minimum rehearsal conditions, by an orchestra unfamiliar with the scores (how else to explain such appalling inconsistencies as the flutist's random variation of breath pauses in the *Faun* theme's repetitions?), these readings are listless, mucilaginous, innocent of necessary dynamic variation, and replete with sloppy execution. Just what this disc adds to the Columbia catalogue is a mystery to me—unless perhaps the company's management feels impelled to offset the best recording of *Jeux* and the *Faun* (Boulez) with the worst. D.H.

In this well-recorded disc the Klien duo offers a welcome supplement to its first volume of French four-hand music. Although these artists do not strive for the *sec* tonal qualities of the authentic French school and some listeners may find their treatment a mite ample and bass heavy in sonority, the Kliens do give us remarkably lively and unaffected playing. Their rhythmic handling of the *Brazileira* samba from Milhaud's *Scaramouche*, for example, makes the Gjerth/Lohmeyer rendition on Mace sound hopelessly square in comparison. The Kliens also capture the hushed stillness of the Debussy pieces, and invest the Ravel with a frail lyricism devoid of preciousness. H.G.

Thirteen here proves to be a most unlucky number for Miss Nixon. Her voice is a pale shadow, often overpowered by the piano; her projection of English is so faulty that it is often impossible to follow her even with the texts as given on the record jacket; and her choice of material is unfortunate. Among her thirteen Ives songs are all the chestnuts and a few of the composer's less familiar songs. On the overside of the record are two short cycles to Japanese and Chinese texts, conscientiously set by Alexander Goehr and Gerhard Schürmann but not very interestingly. A.F.

Rachmaninoff's two sets of *Etudes tableaux* are not among that composer's most accessible works. They tend to be a bit caustic, brooding, and very modernistic—somewhat in the macabre vein of the composer's Fourth (and least popular) Piano Concerto. Webster sweeps through the essentials of the writing with probing force. He commands a big, bleak sonority, a persuasive grip over technical and structural matters, and a terse, rather unpretty directness of purpose. His sometimes copious use of sustaining pedal and his tonal monochromaticism give these pieces a Prokofiev cast, but the result is, in the end, surprisingly persuasive. Dover's sonics are of breathtaking plangency and realism. H.G.

If, like me, you haven't heard any Max Rudolf performances for several years, you're likely to be as pleasantly surprised as I am by his marked growth in both executant assurance and interpretative illuminations. The present notably candid, ungimmicked recordings demonstrate what a fine orchestra he has made of the Cincinnati Symphony. And for good measure conductor and players combine to achieve the authentically Viennese lilt missing in most American (and many European) Strauss performances. Above all, I salute Rudolf for giving us what surely must be the full-length score of *Wine, Women, and Song*—one of the longest of Strauss waltzes and one too often brutally abbreviated in concert and recorded versions. R.D.D.

A thoroughly attractive recital by a guitarist who takes naturally to the free-flowing rhapsodic style of Villa Lobos and who, at the same time, can tick off the neat, clockwork accompaniments in works by Sor, Pipo, or the anonymous composer of a piece titled *Jeux interdits*. This disc is well balanced between the two kinds of music, and culminates in four works by Tansman—by turn Debussyan, assertive, moody, and outgoing. Gomez displays a light touch in the exotically Spanish *Fandanguillo* of Torroba and a nice way with the fast, bell-like cascades of De la Maza's *Habanera*. He is an admirable instrumentalist. S.F.

Jan Peerce made his Metropolitan Opera debut thirty years ago and soon showed audiences that he had a firm, even, and clear (if not over-large) voice matched to a musically refined and graceful temperament. He has given devoted service and much pleasure. To record, at age sixty-four, a program brimming with such tenorial blockbusters from the standard repertoire has taken a certain amount of boldness, but it was perhaps asking too much—both of Mr. Peerce's resources and of his listeners' complaisance. The gentler things work best. The others are often belted or pushed too hard; and too often legato and pitch control give way. "*E tardi*," as Violetta might have said. G.M.





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# REPEAT PERFORMANCE

## A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

### BACH: *Ein musikalisches Opfer*, S. 1079.

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15063, \$2.49 [from London CS 6142, 1955].

Live performances of the *Musical Offering* generally insert the trio sonata and two ricercares among the ten canons, although—despite the pregnancy of Frederick the Great's theme that forms the basic material for each number and Bach's ingenious musical solutions—these ten studies could hardly have been meant for continuous performance. This disc, however, groups them all on one side prefaced by the ricercare a 3 (unfortunately without separating bands). The arrangement is a sensible one for those who wish to confine their listening to the musically richer trio sonata and ricercare a 6 on Side 2.

The performances are scholarly, stylish, and impeccably played by the well-chosen soloists of Münchinger's excellent Stuttgart ensemble. Perhaps to insure absolute polyphonic clarity, the tonal ambience tends to be a bit chilly, not altogether inappropriate for this music. Early stereo notwithstanding, the sound is splendidly clear and lifelike, with each instrumental line in perfect phase and balance.

### BRAHMS: *Academic Festival Overture*,

Op. 80; *Symphony No. 2, in D*, Op. 73. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Seraphim S 60083, \$2.49 [from Capitol SG 7228, 1960].

There are numerous lovely moments in the *Symphony*—Beecham could hardly fail to respond to the over-all pastoral mood of this work—but on the whole the performance is something of a lame duck. All the notes are precisely in place, but one senses a lack of involvement and a point of view that might have given the music some sort of lively immediacy. Brahms just doesn't seem to be Sir Thomas' composer. The *Academic Festival* is also curiously lackluster—one would have imagined that here the conductor might have also found congenial material. The pleasantly warm, natural sound highlights the many textural beauties of the performance.

### DONIZETTI: *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Maria Calla (s), Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Tito Gobbi (b), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Florence May Festival 1953, Tullio Serafin, cond. Seraphim IB 60032, \$4.98 (mono only) [from Angel 3503, 1953].

America had not yet heard Maria Callas in the flesh when this recording was first released. Its appearance certainly gave the opera public something to ponder and

the performance's dramatic impact has not lessened a whit during the intervening fifteen years. First of all there was the presence of Callas herself—and no one need be reminded at this date of her remarkable qualities as a singing actress. More specifically, Callas was perhaps the first singer in generations to show that the role of Lucia had more potential than simply as a pretty vehicle for a chirping coloratura.

No one is going to pretend that the work is a startling study in Freudian psychology. Nor does Callas. What does emerge from her singing of the five set pieces in which Lucia appears is a vivid portrait of an unstable, passive woman destroyed between her opportunistic brother and her insensitive lover (and Edgardo is in his selfish way even more despicable than the bullying Enrico). Yet with all her acute understanding of the dramatic side to Lucia, Callas never fails to make complete musical sense. Listen to the arioso passages leading into the slow section of the Mad Scene: each phrase is thoughtfully molded and weighted with precise musical purpose, building logically and surely to the first line of the cavatina, "*Alfin son tua*," the pathetic expression that sums up Lucia's tragedy. This is a rich, superbly sung performance that yields new perceptions with each repetition.

Di Stefano's Edgardo and Gobbi's Enrico are both forceful, well-sung characterizations, perfect foils for Callas' Lucia, and Serafin's sure, no-nonsense pacing of the score (presented here with all the traditional cuts) is also very much to the point. The sound is a trifle boxy but a faithful replica of the Angel edition. Definitely a basic item for every opera collection.

### HANDEL: *Music for the Royal Fireworks; Concerto a due cori*, in F.

Orchestra, Charles Mackerras, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 289, \$2.50 [from Bach Guild BGS 5046, 1963].

The notes for this recording maintain that the finest wind players in London were recruited for the sessions. After reading the instrumentarium, one might possibly assume that *all* the wind players in London participated: twenty-six oboes, fourteen bassoons, four contrabassoons, two serpents, nine trumpets, nine horns, three sets of timpani, and six side drums. No stereophile will be able to resist this grand noise. Mackerras has managed to coax everyone to play reasonably in tune and with considerable dash. All in all a unique sonic delight.

The *Concerto*, a pastiche of eight brief movements largely borrowed from earlier Handelian works, makes an equally delightful racket with its two

wind bands creating some charming antiphonal effects. Reproduction is crucial for a disc of this sort and Vanguard's bright, open-air acoustic is perfect.

**SCHUBERT:** *Die schöne Müllerin, D. 795.* Fritz Wunderlich, tenor; Kurt Heinz Stolze, piano. NONESUCH H 71211, \$2.50 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Eurodisc 70880 XK, 1957].

Wunderlich's innate musicality and beauty of voice almost disguise the fact that his interpretation of Schubert's cycle at this early stage of his career ranged from the hesitant to the merely dull. (His DGG version, recorded shortly before his death in September 1966, is a thousand fold improved in this respect, although the tenor's full potential as a Lied-er singer remained unrealized.) The accompanist here is hardly an attractive proposition either—I have never heard these piano parts played so prosaically. A further demerit is the atrocious job of re-channeling that transforms the warm, airy sound of the Eurodisc original into a harsh, pinched acoustic, robbing the voice of its natural sweet, full-bodied tone. True, the DGG runs to an extra side and costs almost five times as much, but artistically and technically this Nonesuch bargain issue comes in a poor second.

**STRAUSS, RICHARD:** *Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30.* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15083, \$2.49 [from London CS 6129, 1959].

Strange are the ways of record companies. When Stanley Kubrick required the opening "Sunrise" music from *Also sprach Zarathustra* for his 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, only the Decca/London recording with Karajan would do. Decca agreed, provided, for some odd reason, that there would be no mention of the fact in the film's publicity (if you watch the credits at the end of the movie, you will see the title of each composition used for the sound track followed by the performers—except for *Zarathustra*). One of the engineers who worked on the Karajan recording saw *Space Odyssey*, recognized the performance, and the word was out. By then, the soundtrack album on M-G-M—whose DGG affiliate had provided most of the music—was doing a brisk business (as was a hastily compiled potpourri by Columbia based on Kubrick's musical selections and three other recordings of the complete *Zarathustra*), and London suddenly realized its mistake in losing out on a legitimate slice of the pie. Hence this quickie reissue of the "original" recording, adorned with a proud note on the jacket that clearly throws anonymity to the winds.

For those in search of a performance of *Zarathustra* rather than the ninety seconds included in *Space Odyssey*, this one ought to have done nicely. Karajan's slick and slightly cynical reading of the score is just what the music calls for: the Vienna Philharmonic plays to perfection, and the sound is exceptionally vivid. Unfortunately, the disc is disqualified by an error in the pressing that causes an excruciating waver in pitch at the end of

each side. (Apparently haste does make waste.) Luckily there is an equally fine performance with Reiner and the Chicago Symphony on a Victrola budget version.

**WAGNER:** *Götterdämmerung: Daybreak; Brünnhilde and Siegfried Duet; Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Immolation Scene.* Helen Traubel (s); Lauritz Melchior (t); NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1369, \$2.50 (mono only) [from RCA Victor LM 2452 and LVT 1004, recorded in 1941].

A marvelous disc this—not only a splendid memento of the grand Traubel/Melchior performances of *Götterdämmerung* at the Met during the early Forties but an example of Toscanini's Wagner conducting at its blazing best. Traubel carries most of the vocal burden here and her powerful, steely soprano sweeps through Brünnhilde's phrases with ease (barring a couple of top Bs and a C that give her some trouble). This is exactly the sort of music in which she was most exciting—the really heroic Wagnerian heroines where she could peel forth uninhibited floods of tone. And Melchior's Siegfried reminds us again of the current dearth of tenors capable of doing justice to the role and he handles his assignment brilliantly.

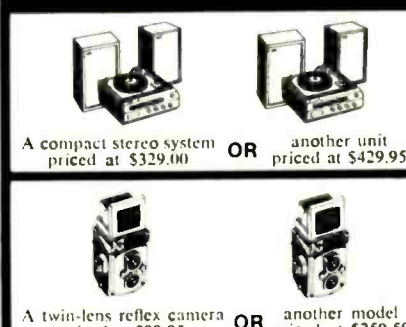
Toscanini's taut accompaniments have the typical lean clarity that he brought to Wagner; many might prefer a plusher orchestral texture and more flexibility in shaping the line both here and in the *Daybreak* and *Rhine Journey* music, but there is certainly a great deal to be said for this intensely ecstatic and beautifully executed performance. Naturally the sound is dated, although decidedly on a par with many Toscanini discs from a later decade.

**HANS KNAPPERTSBUSCH:** *Orchestral Program.* Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a.* Schubert (arr. Feninger): *Marche Militaire.* Weber (orch. Berlioz): *Invitation to the Dance.* Nicolai: *Die lustige Weiber von Windsor: Overture.* Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knapperstbusch, cond. Stereo Treasury STS 15045, \$2.49 [from London CS 6192, 1960].

On the face of it, Knappertsbusch in this repertoire sounds about as probable as Klempner, say, in *An American in Paris*. Oddly enough, while many of the conductor's large-scale studio recordings fell pretty flat, this collection of pop-concert miniatures could not be more delightful. The *Nutcracker* is light and airy (save for the *Waltz of the Flowers*, which is a bit ponderous), full of careful attention to instrumental details overlooked in most other versions. The items on Side 2 receive an appropriately larger orchestral sonority and benefit hugely from the Vienna Philharmonic's special virtuosity in the string and brass departments. Fine warm, natural-sounding acoustics.

PETER G. DAVIS

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## John Hartford—~~Lyricist~~ Poet



IN TRYING TO CONVERT a skeptic, a country-and-western music buff will often say, "Yeah, but listen to what they're saying, man, not what they're playing." This is judicious, for in c & w the music has always been the weaker half of the equation. Country-and-western melodies range from the dreadful to the tolerable. Now and then one turns up that is good.

The lyrics are way in front of the music. To be sure, there are plenty of them about hearts that are broh-kin, and tear-drawps that fah-wull. But then there is Merle Travis' grim documentary of life in the coal mining country of eastern Kentucky, *Sixteen Tons*, and there's Roger Miller's sly and sardonic body of comment on the folly of just about everything. The late Hank Williams could write songs so syrupy that they'd make a statue squirm, but then he could turn out a startling little character study such as *Cold Cold Heart*. And in other songs, he carved off realistic chunks of life that still dripped red pain and throbbled as he held them up to the light.

Of late, the music has been catching up with the lyrics in c & w. The music has become more and more eclectic, for both its makers and consumers are more worldly than they once were. But the lyrics lead the music still.

The experiments and innovations of c & w are, I insist, more interesting than most of what is happening in rock, which remains an intensely commercial and ersatz idiom, even while proclaiming its own artformhood. In pop music today, everybody's a bloody poet, if not a genius.

"Poet" and "genius" are the big words among show business phonies this season. Sample usages: "You have genius, baby, and you and I are close enough friends—" (this after you've met the guy twice) "—to know I wouldn't say that unless I meant it from the heart." Or: "We need you in this project, baby; only you, with your unique genius—" (is there a common or garden-variety of genius?) "—can bring it off for us." Or: "Ralph Gleason (or Robert Shelton) thinks he's a genius." Or: "John Lennon is a genius." You can substitute at random in the last example the names of Jim Webb, Bob Dylan, Rod McKuen, Paul Simon, and several more. What the word "genius" has come to mean in this time is: his records (pictures, books,

whatever) sell like hell and make the company a lot of money.

Not one of the aforementioned is a genius, and only two—Jim Webb and Paul Simon—have even a touch of the poet. In all current popular music, there is, in my opinion, only one lyricist fit to be called a poet, and that's John Hartford. He is, not surprisingly, a country-and-western writer, with roots in folk music.

Hartford's third album for RCA Victor, *Gentle On My Mind* (LSP 4068), contains the tune of that name, which Hartford wrote and recorded as a single, only to have Glen Campbell's recording of it come in the winner. Hartford sings this and the other songs of the album passably well—though I like Trini Lopez' record of the tune better than anyone's. It's worth noting that there is a minimum of drawl in Hartford's work; he sings like what the lyrics suggest he is, an articulate and literate man.

Most of the current pop "poets," particularly Dylan, make too-lazy-to-work-it-out use of the English language. They're like the little kid who can't get the nose in the right place in the drawing, and finally sticks it in under the armpit, and argues, "That's the way I meant it." Hartford's in a different bag. Even his solecisms have the feeling of sure-handed control. One can sense that his distortions are effects, not blunders. I am reminded of Van Gogh's painting of a wicker-bottomed Provençal chair. It looks at first as if he couldn't get the perspective right. But then you realize that the flattened effect is that of photographs taken through a very long lens. Van Gogh was able to see that way.

Not that Hartford specializes in distortion: on the contrary, he throws the language out of joint only occasionally, and for firm purposes. And he can be penetratingly direct, as in this lyric:

*All around somebody else's pad  
You stumble as you chase the latest fad.  
If you're confused with all the things  
you find,  
Just wait till the crowd makes up your  
mind.*

"Like Unto a Mockingbird" © 1966 by Glaser Publications Inc., Nashville—used by permission.

One of the best lyrics Hartford has done is *The Six O'Clock Train and a Girl with Green Eyes*. But my favorite

is the one that made it so big. Full of marvelous lines, it's one of the best montages of contemporary America I've seen.

*Though the wheat fields and the clothes  
lines*

*And the junkyards and the highways  
come between us,*

*And some other woman crying to her  
mother*

*'Cause she turned and I was gone,  
I still might run in silence.*

*Tears of joy might stain my face,  
And a summer sun might burn me till  
I'm blind,*

*But not to where I cannot see you  
Walkin' in the backroads*

*By the rivers flowing gentle on my mind.  
I dip my cup of soup*

*Back from the gurglin' cracklin' cauldron  
In some train yard*

*My heard a roughening coal pile and a  
Dirty hat pulled low across my face.*

*Through cupped hands 'round a tin can  
I pretend I hold you to my breast and  
find*

*That you're wavin' from the backroads  
By the rivers of my memory.*

*Ever smilin', ever gentle on my mind.*

"Gentle On My Mind" © 1967 by Glaser Publications Inc., Nashville—used by permission.

*Gentle On My Mind* is an exquisite song. Many musicians dislike it. It has no melody, they say, to which I say: its line is rhythmically interesting. They say its endlessly repeated simple chords offer the arranger or player nothing to work with. And that's true. But the music in the end does what it's supposed to do: helps Hartford tell the story.

Yet the musicians are right, in the larger sense. Where Hartford falls down is in the music. He's nowhere near as good a composer as he is a lyricist, and too many of the tunes are rewrites of *Gentle On My Mind*—or for that matter, of Hartford's first two albums. He should either collaborate with a composer whose music is as good as his lyrics: or he should study music at some school until his tunes are worthy of his words. He's repeating himself, clearly, because he doesn't know any other ways to express himself in music.

But Hartford is no fake, like so many of the current pop heroes. He's for real. And he's adding importantly to the solid body of country-and-western lyrics. What a beautiful, beautiful talent. I do hope it grows.

GENE LEES



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# THE LIGHTER SIDE

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SYMBOL \* DENOTES AN EXCEPTIONAL RECORDING

\* **JOSE FELICIANO: Souled.** José Feliciano, vocals and guitar; Mike Melvoin, Al Capps, and George Tipton, arr. *Younger Generation; Sad Gypsy; Hitchcock Railway*; eight more. RCA Victor LSP 4045, \$4.79.

Last summer when José Feliciano became a hit, rock-and-roll was starving for heroes. Most of the big groups were disbanded or sleeping. Dylan was quiet. Feliciano came along and, as they say, ruined everybody's scene.

While Feliciano has become a prince in the rock world, he is not of it. The separating factors are his firm Latin roots and his intense technical mastery, both vocally and as a guitarist. No matter what anyone tells you, rock is a sub-technical field. Its purveyors are interested in feeling, not craft, and many even think that craft impedes soulfulness. The more practical among them are realizing that, after the first free-ride flush, antcraft spells antigrowth. These are the people who are finally looking beyond the preachments of rock mythology toward the real challenge: their instruments, their fingers, and the mysterious art of music.

Feliciano is an example of what can happen when an accomplished musician makes a successful shift to rock. Instinctively he raises the quality of every song he touches. At the same time, for all his skill, Feliciano is nonintellectual. His style is earthy, his voice rough but warm, his message fierce and immediate.

Feliciano has stuck with the winning formula in his new album. Again it works beautifully. Even the rhythm section is the same—bassist Ray Brown and percussionist Milt Holland, both jazz masters. Like all artists who have found themselves, Feliciano knows what material suits him. Included are Bob Dylan's *I'll Be Your Baby Tonight* (a good song poorly recorded by Dylan); Nilsson's *Sleep Well My Lady Friend*; and a blues hit of several years ago, *Hi-Heel Sneakers*.

A sure sign of Feliciano's impact is already occurring: several blunderers are trying to imitate him. None will come near until they do what Feliciano did: sit down and learn to play the guitar.

Of all the success stories in rock, none is so well deserved as that of José Feliciano. It's a knockout album. M.A.



*José Feliciano: a master craftsmanship and a fierce message combined.*

**BARBRA STREISAND: A Happening in Central Park.** Barbra Streisand, vocals; orchestra, Nick Perito, arr. and cond. *Second Hand Rose; Happy Days Are Here Again; Cry Me a River*; eight more. Columbia CS 9710, \$4.79.

Miss Streisand remains the most affected, synthetic, self-conscious, overstylized singer in popular music. And she still produces an excruciatingly adenoidal sound in high notes. It's quite sad: if she could ever get past being a canned ham, she'd be as great as her flacks and fans claim she is.

This album was recorded in concert in Central Park during the summer of 1967. People who were there say that since all the miking was for the benefit of the recording equipment, and not the audience, it was hard for them to hear her. They didn't miss that much. G.L.

**JERRY LEE LEWIS: Another Place Another Time.** Jerry Lee Lewis, vocals and piano; instrumental accompaniment. *What's Made Milwaukee Famous; Play Me a Song I Can Cry To; Walking the Floor Over You; On the Back Row; All the Good Is Gone*; six more. Smash SRS 67104, \$4.79.

**CHUCK BERRY: From St. Louie to Frisco.** Chuck Berry, guitar and vocals; small band. *I Love Her, I Love Her; Little Fox; Misery; Mum's the Word; Soul Rockin'*; seven more. Mercury SR 61176, \$4.79.

**FATS DOMINO: Fats Is Back.** Fats Domino, vocals and piano; The Blossoms, vocal backgrounds and instrumental accompaniment; Randy Newman and John Andrews, arr. *Honest Papas Love Their Mamas Better; Wait Til It Happens to You; So Sweet! When You're Well; Make Me Belong to You*; seven more. Reprise RS 6304, \$4.79.

Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry, and Fats Domino were three of the biggest-selling and most entertaining acts of the '50s. Berry was probably the finest rock songwriter of the decade, and his singing and guitar playing, though not polished, were perfect for his material. Domino, more than any other black performer with a large white following, stayed close to his roots: even when pounding out clichés like *My Blue Heaven*, he imposed his personal style of New Orleans jazz/blues vocalizing and barrel-house piano on the material. Lewis was a showman out of the Presley bag; his *Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On* is one of the all-time great rock singles. If Jim Morrison of The Doors, whose act is distinguished by overt displays of aggressive sexuality, has a spiritual father, it is Jerry Lee Lewis.

Lewis' *Another Place Another Time* will probably appeal least to pop listeners, although it is fine, straightforward country-and-western music of the pre-Roger Miller type. Lewis, who is obviously enjoying himself, has a warm "talky" voice, and his piano fits as well here as it used to on *Great Balls of Fire* ten years ago. The title tune was a hit on the c & w charts and the rest of the LP strikes a nice balance between country standards like *Walking the Floor Over You* and newer tunes like John D. Loudermilk's pop-influenced *Break My*

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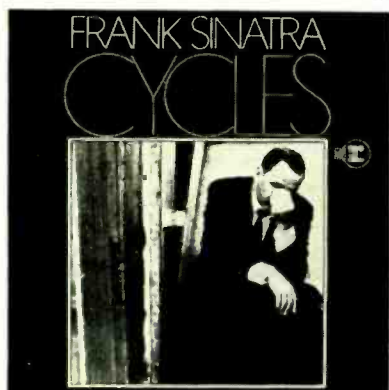
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*Mind.* Lewis manages to avoid most of the emotional excesses that often plague this style of music.

*From St. Louie to Frisco* is a great disappointment. Berry has released one other album since beginning to record again last year, and if this is an improvement over that, it is because the back-up musicians on the new release have a near-perfect grasp of all the clichés in Berry's old hits (the submoronic liner notes don't tell us who the musicians are—in fact the only information is the somewhat disarming admission that there are only thirty-two minutes and nine seconds of music on the album). Most of the songs themselves are simply the oldies with new and unfortunately inferior lyrics. Whoever encouraged Berry to release this album did neither him nor the record buying audience a favor.

Fats Domino was pretty much his own man in the '50s and it's not surprising to find that he continues to be on *Fats Is Back*. Warner Bros./7 Arts, which generally takes a respectful attitude towards its pop performers, is to be commended for providing a proper setting for Domino's voice and piano. Producer Richard Perry has succeeded in subtly modernizing Domino's sound—the horn arrangements, for example, are just right—without sacrificing his unique simplicity. The old Fats is here for everyone who misses him, but *Fats Is Back* will also satisfy listeners whose experience is limited to recent *Ars-rock*. Attention will inevitably center on the album's two Beatles' songs, *Lovely Rita* and *Lady Madonna* (Fats's reading of the first is excellent, though both cuts are weighed down by unimaginative backgrounds by The Blossoms), but Domino is at his best on the simpler, more direct material that fills out the album. This is a happy record. J.G.

## \* H. M. ROYAL MARINES BAND: The World's Greatest Marches.

Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines (Royal Marines School of Music), Lt. Col. F. Vivian Dunn, cond. *National Emblem; Hands Across the Sea; Invincible Eagle; Cavalry of the Steppes*; eleven more. Capitol SP 8692, \$4.79.

Do kids today really know what a good marching band sounds like? Small-town school ensembles are inadequate substitutes. And if some of the college football half-time bands are any good, no TV viewer could ever guess from their atrocious, infinitely distorted audio-channel reproduction.

Kids could learn a lot from the present release featuring one of the best British bands—not only sonically, via gleamingly clean, reverberationless, out-of-doorsy stereo recording, but also interpretatively, via Dunn's easygoing yet infectiously swinging readings. They (and their elders too) can also learn that even the sainted Sousa had no monopoly on good marching compositions. Besides the three American and one Russian example cited above, Dunn includes three English marches (*Old Panama, The Contemptibles, Army and Marine*), three more hackneyed ones from Germany, the fine

French *Père de la victoire* and *Belphegor*, and one each from Italy, Spain, and Belgium—topped by Leeman's irresistibly lilting *Marche des parachutistes belges*. R.D.D.

## \* SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '66. Fool on the Hill.

Lani Hall and Karen Philipp, vocals; Sebastião Neto, Dom Um Romão, Rubens Bassini, and Sergio Mendes, rhythm accompaniment and vocals; Dave Grusin, arr. and cond. *Festa; Canto Triste; Laia Ladaia*; six more. A & M SP 4160, \$4.98.

Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66 have had a recent string of hits by successfully putting their special stamp upon pre-established hit songs. The group alters such songs as Lennon/McCartney's *Fool on the Hill* and Paul Simon's *Scarborough Fair*, changing the simple chords and rhythmic patterns to fit their own Americanized-Brazilian style. So expert was the face-lifting that the tunes emerge familiar, yet profoundly better than we remember them in their original forms.

The music of Brasil '66—which was always good—has become so well handled and infectious that it is difficult to stop playing this album once it starts. Dave Grusin's arrangements are inspired, especially *When Summer Turns to Snow*, and why not? He wrote it.

The rest of the material is by Brazilians such as Edu Lobo and Baden Powell. (Could the "D. Cammy" referred to on the copy be Dori Caymmi?) On *Lapinha*, the guest guitarist is Oscar Castro Neves, the vocalist Gracinha Leporaél. John Pisano's fine guitar is heard intermittently. Everyone on the album deserves a credit.

Apparently, after several years of solid success, Mendes has been persuaded to disclose the names of his teammates in print. If you're among the countless people who keep asking who the girls are, take note. They are Lani Hall (who wrote two English lyric translations) and Karen Philipp. Both are reportedly from Chicago, not Brazil, but they've learned to sing Portuguese with competence and fervor. It is Miss Hall who makes the group click. Perhaps, if she's a good little girl, in another few years Mendes will give her the credit she earns. The rest of the group appears to be Brazilian, but while their names are divulged, there is no mention of who does what. Mendes is the piano player. His work, while not unique or more than passingly Brazilian, is clean and strong. One thing is sure: Mendes is the leader of one of the finest musical units at work anywhere.

Don't be put off because there are only nine tunes in the album. The tracks are long. M.A.

## GRACE SLICK AND THE GREAT SOCIETY: Volume Two.

Grace Slick, vocals and recorder; Great Society, vocals and rhythm accompaniment. *That's How It Is; You Can't Cry; Everybody Knows*; five more. Columbia CS 9702, \$4.79.

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with whom she sang before Jefferson Airplane. The name of the first volume was *Conspicuous Only in Its Absence*, reportedly a bit of graffiti written by Miss Slick on the wall of a coffeehouse where some of these tracks were cut. She didn't know how right she was. There is nothing conspicuous in the group's presence, except the ineptitude of beginners.

As for Miss Slick, this work was done before she developed into one of the better female voices in rock—something that occurred only after she left The Great Society. While it is mildly interesting to note the early attempts of an eventually good performer, it's not worth two albums. The recordings themselves are amateurishly made—further evidence of the group's humble situation.

While there are moments of hope in The Great Society, most of their playing is hopeless. *Father* features a bumbling saxophone solo by someone who liked John Coltrane but simply cannot play his instrument. The group tries to bolster the embarrassed sax by speeding the tempo, making things worse. In Eden Ahbez' *Nature Boy*, it's strangely sad to hear the way the song's haunting quality caught the imagination of the group, and how they were unable to solve its harmonic demands—simple as they are. Their chord substitutions are pathetic.

In all, the album embodies much that is bad about rock—the monotony, the inane lyrics, and musical ignorance; and it reveals little of the good—the humor, the sensitive search for restatement. Miss Slick's talent towers above this group she had the wits to leave behind. M.A.

**WOODY ALLEN: The Third Woody Allen Album.** Woody Allen, narrations. Capitol ST 2986, \$4.79.

Writer/comedian Woody Allen is a professional whimsey maker, and he's good at it. His wit can tow your high-flying energy level straight down to his own quiet place, full of carefully numbed asides ("I'm going down the hall, and I look back, and I thought I heard the elevator make a remark . . . but I didn't want to get involved") and whacky fantasies ("I dreamed I was changed by a fairy godmother into a sixty-pound suppository"). It's all in the calculatedly innocent readings.

Allen is an odd bird, but if you hear this album, it will make you laugh. M.A.

**RONNIE ALDRICH: This Way "In."**

Ronnie Aldrich and His Two Pianos; London Festival Orchestra. *This Guy's in Love with You; MacArthur Park; Blowin' in the Wind*; nine more. London SP 44116, \$5.79.

Ronnie must be one of the London Phase-4 series' best-sellers, so it shouldn't disturb his fans to be told that the present program differs from its many predecessors only in choice of selection—here including such current favorites as *Honey, Mrs. Robinson*, and *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*. But one man's bonbons are another's sourballs. I continue to find Ronnie's playing stiffly articulated, jerkily rhythmized, gussied up with tinsel decorations, and maniacally-methodically ping-ponged (with practically no attempt

at antiphonal interplays) from right to left channels and doggedly back again. Lush Mantovanian strings contribute the only moments of sonic warmth, for the ultralucid and here pretty dry Phase-4 recording is only too cruelly candid in its reproduction of the lusterless, brittle piano tone. This way "in" is, for me, a revolving door that leads immediately out. R.D.D.

**JOHNNY RIVERS: Realization.** Johnny

Rivers, vocals and guitar; rhythm accompaniment; Marty Paich, arr. *Hey Joe; Look to Your Soul; The Way We Live; Something Strange*; six more. Imperial 12372, \$4.79.

For reasons I have never been able to fathom, Johnny Rivers remains one of the most consistently underrated pop vocalists. Last year, for example, he issued an album called *Rewind*, which was not only one of the best pop vocal albums, but which introduced Jim Webb long before anyone else had noticed him. And yet the album was largely ignored, especially by the rock-as-high-art aficionados who unaccountably find Rivers beneath their dignity. Perhaps it's his teeny-rock past, but even in those distant days he always selected better than average songs like *Memphis, Tennessee*. The Beatles managed to live down *A Tasty of Honey* and Rivers has nothing as bad as that to his debit. It beats me.

Anyway, Rivers is back with another fine album, *Realization*, and, incidentally, another songwriting discovery, James Hendricks. Hendricks penned *Summer Rain*, Rivers' last hit, and he contributes two other solid tunes to the album. As usual, most of the material is excellent, including Oscar Brown's *Brother, Where Are You*; Scott McKenzie's *What's the Difference*; and Rivers' own *Going Back to Big Sur*. The only quibbles I have are with *Positively 4th Street* by Bob Dylan, whose voice Rivers' too closely resembles, and Procul Harum's *A Whiter Shade of Pale*, which was cute the first time around but hasn't worn well.

Rivers' voice is oddly hesitant and has a tensile quality to it that lends it tremendous strength. And since the singer is also an accomplished musician and producer, he is able to build exactly proper settings for his voice and his thoughts. J.G.

**P. P. ARNOLD: Kafunta.** P. P. Arnold, vocals; Tony Meehan and John Paul Jones, arr. and cond. *God Only Knows; Dreamin'; Yesterday*; eleven more. Immediate Z12 52016, \$4.79.

**MARLENE VERPLANCK: A Breath of Fresh Air.** Marlene Verplanck, vocals; Billy Verplanck, arr. and cond. *Mr. Lucky; Brasileiro; Show Me*; seven more. Mounted M 108, \$4.79.

These two female vocal albums are reviewed together to point out the two poles of today's music business: amateur and professional.

Although P. P. Arnold is an unfamiliar name, the album jacket gives no information about her other than several photographs, three of which feature Miss Arnold in a preposterously ornate coiffure of mismatched hairpieces and bright blue

braids (with matching blue false eyelashes). The album is a rough blend of Detroit-style rhythm-and-blues and new pop. You could fit Miss Arnold's vibrato into Dionne Warwick's and still have room for Ethel Merman's.

The record is poorly balanced, leaving Miss Arnold either stranded too far in front of the music or lost behind it. The arrangements are distracted and directionless, as one often blends monotonously into another.

Miss Arnold's problem is her lack of song-sense—where to build, where to hold back. Her vagueness, even her cutting vocal quality, could have been covered by an expert arranger and clever producer. Instead, all concerned took the wrong approach and proved they didn't know what they were doing.

At the other pole is Marlene VerPlanck, every inch a professional. It's her voice you hear on many television commercials. Her sound is clean, energetic, intelligent, and incredibly agile.

Miss VerPlanck's level of taste is well met in her choice of material (including a dazzling, wordless vocal treatment of Hank Mancini's *Baby Elephant Walk*), and in the knowing arrangements of Billy VerPlanck (presumably her husband).

The album's problem is common among studio musicians: too much of a good thing. Everything shines, like an apple on the teacher's desk. The singing is so smooth that afterward one feels pleased, warmed up, and ready to hear the feature personality on the bill.

The package is curiously dated, as if the VerPlancks had to wait too long for a chance to say something of their own. My favorite track is Lionel Bart's *Where Is Love*, featuring a Hi-Lo-like male vocal group in a Hi-Lo-like arrangement. (What a splendid group the Hi-Los were. How sad they're gone.) That's the mood of this well-made album—nostalgic, expert, orphaned. M.A.

**JACK SHELDON: The Warm World of Jack Sheldon.** Jack Sheldon, trumpet; Don Sebesky, arr. and cond. *Look of Love; Sweet Talk;* nine more. Dot DLP 25908, \$4.79.

The cover of this album shows Jack Sheldon in some sort of summer field, its golden tones matching the trumpet he holds. The romantic overtones are happily perverted by Sheldon's expression as he squints into the sun, probably trying to catch the punch line of someone's particularly lurid joke.

Sheldon is a bundle of impressive incongruities. First and foremost he is probably the finest trumpeter in the country. Certainly he's the busiest in the studios. He has also been featured in two TV series, the *Cara Williams Show* and *Run, Buddy, Run* (in which he starred). Currently he's up for a third. Less known are the facts that he is an excellent singer, not to mention the composer of an outrageous but highly musical "show" fondly titled *Freaky Friday*, starring several characters of his own invention including a psychiatrist named Dr. Deep. With luck, it will be recorded soon—at least the recordable parts.

This album shows one of Jack's most appealing sides, that of trumpet player. The arrangements are by the imaginative Don Sebesky, best known for his work with the late Wes Montgomery. It was Sebesky's idea to make this album with Sheldon. Its intentions are commercial—in the best sense of the word. There's nothing really far out here, unless it's Sheldon's spoken plea, "Please don't graze in the grass!" in the Latin-flavored tune of similar title.

But turn the album over and you hear Sheldon's incredible warmth as he interprets Johnny Mandel's exquisite *Emily*. Lennon McCartney's *With a Little Help From My Friends* comes out as a cheerful waltz. *Nature Boy* features a sitar. The only unfortunate factor is a sour string section, typical in New York. But Sheldon overcomes. Whether he's playing tenderly, brightly or conversationally, never has a trumpet's tone been sweeter, more sensual.

Jack Sheldon is the compleat trumpeter. He never does anything wrong. This is an excellent example of his art. But wait till you hear *Freaky Friday*. M.A.

**GRADY TATE: Windmills of My Mind.** Grady Tate, vocals; orchestra, Gary McFarland or Mike Abene, cond. *A Little at a Time; Windmills of My Mind; Don't Fence Me In;* six more. Skye SK 4, \$5.79.

Grady Tate is a musician who was trained as an actor. In recent years he has sewed up a large part of the recording studio work as a drummer in New York. And all along he's been telling us in Jim and Andy's bar that he's really a singer. It took Gary McFarland and his new label, Skye, to give him a shot at it. Gary produced the album, wrote half the arrangements in it.

Grady's voice turns out to be full, strong, with a vibrant lower register. It bears vague resemblances to Arthur Prysock's and Billy Eckstine's, but Grady is his own man. His intonation is on the button, and so, as one might expect, is his time. If he errs, it is on the side of acting: he overreads the material in places. Some of the material leaves me less than thrilled—the title song, for example, a Michel Legrand tune from *The Thomas Crown Affair*. The lyric is self-consciously "poetic," according to current fashion; and also, according to current fashion, doesn't really go anywhere or say anything. The track I liked best is *A Little at a Time*, a straight ballad that permits Grady's natural warmth to surface.

Another good track is the blues *T.N.T.*, and there's an amusingly churchy reading of Cole Porter's *Don't Fence Me In*.

The flaws in this album are small. This is an auspicious debut. We are probably about to lose a fine drummer, as we once lost a fine pianist: Grady Tate is probably the best singer to emerge from the ranks of instrumentalists since Nat Cole. G.L.



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**GLEN CAMPBELL: Wichita Lineman.**

Glen Campbell, vocals and guitar; Al de Lory, arr. and cond. *Dock of the Bay*; *Words*; *Reason to Believe*; eight more. Capitol ST 103, \$4.79.

Not all artists wear success well. Indeed, some cease to be important the moment they begin to feel important. Conversely, success has been good for singer Glen Campbell.

Before his wide-scale acclaim, Campbell was one of the busiest studio guitarists in California. He had acquired a background attitude towards performing, common among studio players whose efforts are absorbed in enhancing other people's albums. While his competence was evident on his first hit, *Gentle On My Mind*, his personality was pale.

This time out, Campbell has acquired the ego-consciousness he needed. It's the work of a man who not only is good, but one who knows he's good. Much of the album's success is due to arranger/producer Al de Lory, who has been behind all of Campbell's recent hits. De Lory has mastered the arranger's trickiest task: complementing the quality of his singer.

Campbell's singing is clean, relaxed, pleasant. His message is unpretentious, leading him to story-songs such as Sonny Bono's *You Better Sit Down Kids*, Billy Edd Wheeler's country tune *Ann*, and Billy Graham's *That's Not Home*. The stories are not profound; often they're corny, but Campbell makes them charming and believable.

The most interesting track is Jim Webb's *Wichita Lineman*, bearing the same evocative sadness as Webb's *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*.

Campbell also gives us the best-yet reading of *If You Go Away*. An added surprise is *Fate of Man*, a narrative written by Campbell, a simple tale of a simple old man facing death: "He comes here against his will, and he goes away disappointed."

Along with his singing, Campbell's fine guitar playing, plus a happy moment of banjo picking is also featured. In the end, Campbell's charm comes from the blend of his Arkansas roots, urban outlook, and most of all, his natural musicality. M.A.

**MAURICE LARCANGE: The French**

**Touch.** Maurice Larcange, accordion; Roland Shaw Orchestra and Chorus; *Marieka*; *What Now My Love*; *It Must Be Him*; *Michelle*; eight more. London SP 44110, \$5.79.

Still another Janus-like example of Phase-4 strengths (gleamingly bright, almost palpably solid sound) and weaknesses (not letting well-enough alone). Larcange is one of the most tasteful and imaginative French "musette" or concertina—as well as concert-instrument—accordionists, as he persuasively demonstrated back in 1962 with his *Avec moi à Paris* Phase-4 program, in which he was accompanied by a small, typical *bal musette* ensemble. Here, however, he's saddled with a big, wholly un-Gallic symphonic-pops orchestra complete with lush massed strings and vocalizers. It's a miracle that Larcange still is somehow able to maintain intact both his good sense and piquant personality,



Glen Campbell: with a deserved success comes the projection of a personality.

weaving at least one distinctive tonal thread through Shaw's plush textures. It's his graceful lilt and idiomatic accent that alone command one's attention and respect. And for that matter, it's his own two compositions (the haunting *It's Only Goodbye* and *Voulez-vous*) which overshadow the more famous—but here more arrangement-handicapped—ones by Brel, Bécand, Trenet, Distel, et al. R.D.D.

**BEE GEES: Idea.** Bee Gees, vocal group with rhythm accompaniment. *Let There Be Love*; *Kitty Can*; *Down to Earth*; *Idea*; *I Started a Joke*; seven more. Atco 254, \$4.79.

The Bee Gees, an Australian rock group, got off to what appeared to be a good head start early last year with a song called *New York Mining Disaster 1941*. It was a false start. Their next hit *Massachusetts*, was a treacherous mess, dripping with Victorian sentimentality.

This album is an extension of *Massachusetts*. Though their vocal style stemmed originally from The Beatles, they now sound like students of Johnny Ray. No kidding, I could easily imagine the Bee Gees singing *The Little White Cloud That Cried*. Their songs are sticky, gooey molasses. They project the sincerity of Jack Paar's tear-laden gestures to televisionland, the deep-felt emotionalism of Richard Nixon's legendary "Checkers" speech.

Backgrounds are thick and muddy. Ever consonant arpeggios from a harp intrude throughout. It's really tacky. Robin Gibb's vocalizing is beset by a juddering vibrato that sounds like he's gagging on a chicken bone and trying to suppress a sneeze at the same time.

God only knows what brought about so unfortunate a transformation. All I know is that whatever potential they exhibited with their first song has not been realized at all. S.L.

**BILL COSBY: 200 M.P.H.** Bill Cosby, narrations. Warner Bros./7 Arts WS 1757, \$4.79.

Two albums ago, comedian Bill Cosby ventured into singing. Music lovers every-

where, including lots of Cosby fans, went into shock. Cosby the singer proved to be all the tiresome things that Cosby the comedian never is. Rumor has it that Cosby knew all along he wasn't much of a singer, but by God, he was a Big Man and he was going to sing. One can't quarrel with the premise. Cosby is a star, and he has a perfect right to sing amateurishly in public if he wants to. In the same way, one can understand Jerry Lewis when he says that if his children want to be stars, he'll swing all the power he can to force the issue. What father doesn't harbor such dreams for his children? Unfortunately, all the public can do is endure these ego-enforced promenades and sigh with relief when the wishful thinking fades back to the privacy of the home where it belongs.

It is with pleasure that we report the presence of not the first but the second *funny* Cosby album since the vocal crash dive. The first post-vocal disc was *To Russell, My Brother, Whom I Slept With*. This is *Bill Cosby 200 M.P.H.* Both are delightful, both are Cosby the King doing his hip, grown-up-child thing. The *200 M.P.H.* album relates Cosby's fear and fascination with sports cars ("faster than anything Steve McQueen owns"), parents, pets, and more. Either or both albums may be previously recorded routines that Warner Brothers has held till now, since Cosby has left the label to begin his own company with Roy Silver. It doesn't matter. The point is that both are dependable Cosby. M.A.

**DON SEBESKY: The Jazz-Rock Syndrome.** Orchestra, Don Sebesky, arr. and cond. *The Word*; *Shake a Lady*; *Never My Love*; seven more. Verve 6-8756, \$5.79.

Mike Zwerin says in his accurate and honest liner notes—and I agree—that there will be no more big bands on the Basie-Herman-Ellington pattern. That day is gone. Those bands will go on being heard as long as their leaders are the vital men they are. If we're going to have new big bands, they'll be built on another pattern. Rock groups are adding horns. *Some* rock players are digging deeper into music—Sanford Gold and Tony Aless, two of the most respected teachers of jazz piano in the country, are getting students from the rock groups, kids with a real hunger to grow. Meantime, jazzmen, out of the sheer need to feed their families, have been making rock dates, adding to this music their thorough musicianship and highly developed taste. I wouldn't say it's a love affair; it's more like a shot-gun wedding. But the children could be beautiful.

The effete quality that had crept into jazz is being dissipated by the rockers; and the ignorant amateurism that so long characterized rock is being dispersed—very slowly, mind you—by the jazzers. (When you think you know it all, then you sit beside a guy on a date who can play rings around you, you naturally begin to wonder how.)

Don Sebesky, a younger arranger and composer (he's thirty) rooted in the big band era, has taken the plunge in this album. He uses musicians who are famil-

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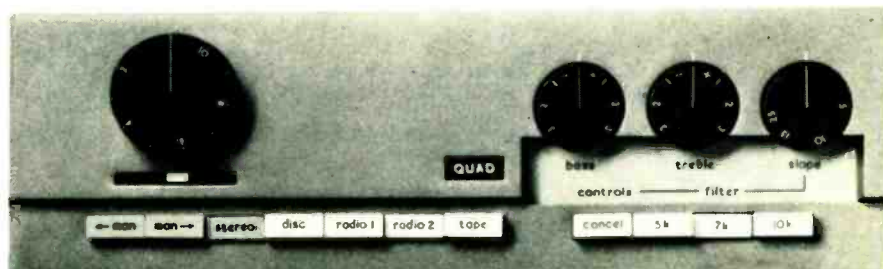
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iar with both rock and jazz. The flavor of the album is bluesy. The instrumentation is mixed: saxes and brass wait over drums, playing rock patterns, and Fender bass—which Gerry Mulligan aptly observes is reminiscent of the tuba in early jazz bands. The writing here is simple. Obviously it's simple by choice: I've heard very complex writing from Sebesky. The result is provocative, musical, energetic, and at times very exciting.

Sebesky is quoted by Zwerin as saying, "This is the first big band of the rock era." He may well be right. G.L.

**CAROL STROMME: The Soft Sound of Carol Stromme.** Carol Stromme, vocals; Lincoln Mayorga, arr. and cond. *In My Life; Inside, Out; Loving Carol;* eight more. Pete S1103, \$4.79.

I first heard singer Carol Stromme (pronounced Strommy) on a car radio. What struck me was the fact that I was being sung to instead of at. Miss Stromme was being interviewed on the show, and I had the same feeling of directness and intelligence from her talk.

Unlike nine out of ten new artists, Miss Stromme does not bludgeon the listener with dramatics to get his attention. Her presentation is sure, quietly tasteful, and—of all things—elegant. When was the last time you heard a twenty-one-year-old singer with elegance? Ironically, it is Miss Stromme's refreshing restraint which may make recognition slow when thrown against all the current recorded bluster. On the other hand, her approach makes her a good risk for long-time success as opposed to surface hot-shots with only enough magnetism for a season or two. In short, Miss Stromme has been recorded correctly, whether this first album succeeds or not.

A word of praise for arranger/conductor Lincoln Mayorga. His work for Miss Stromme is a large lesson in how to make a full sound on what must have been a low budget. Using little more than half a dozen instruments and a few background voices, Mayorga has hand-fashioned his music to Miss Stromme's needs in an impressive blend of sensitivities. Mayorga also wrote the music for one of the better tracks, *Living for Today*.

In all, this is a charming and attractively made debut album, promising a warm future for both Carol Stromme and the newly formed Pete Records.

M.A.

**JAMES BROWN: Out of Sight.** James Brown, vocals; James Brown band; unidentified orchestra and chorus. *I Got You; Only You; I Love You Porgy;* eight more. Smash SRS 1-67109, \$4.79.

James Brown is one of the top rhythm-and-blues acts in the world, worth some three million dollars a year. He works at such a high energy level that, according to the believable liner notes, he suffers regularly from dehydration and exhaustion. His explosive act, complete with his own band and singers, literally quakes with shouts, screams, and collapses. Behind the showy gyrations is Brown's unshakable, intuitive sense of

tempo, dynamics, and gospel-based music. He kills audiences. It's not my bag, but one must respect his professionalism.

Most of this album does not express the real James Brown. He is on his best turf with long, pleading builders such as *Papa's Got a Brand New Bag* or tight-rhythmed blues. Here Brown has chosen pop standard material such as *Come Rain or Come Shine, I Wanna Be Around,* and *Nature Boy*. In every case (except perhaps *Till Then*) the nature of the song is twisted to his own specifications, shout-sung in long, one-note strings. Brown's sincerity is undeniable; it's just inappropriate. One would as soon hear an album of hillbilly breakdowns sung in French by Charles Aznavour.

If you're a pop standard fan, this album will put you off. If you're a James Brown admirer, choose a better album.

M.A.

**SAMMY DAVIS, JR.: Lonely Is the Name.** Sammy Davis, Jr., vocals; H. B. Barnum, Ernie Freeman, Al Capps, and J. J. Johnson, arr. *Good Life, Upright; We'll Be Together Again;* eight more. Reprise R 6308 or RS 6308, \$4.79.

Sammy Davis, Jr. has been a durable force in mainstream American entertainment for over a decade. At this point Davis, still a young man, disconcertingly finds himself a member of the old guard—and fading fast.

Like most of his recent work, this album is an attempt to revive a stale career. Davis needs a hit. To find it, he has employed such hit-maker arrangers as H. B. Barnum and Ernie Freeman, neither of whom have anything deep to say. The result is a thudding bore. The statement is made with sadness, for Davis is still a knockout talent.

What's more, he's the sort of nervous-energy performer who is likely to re-energize when you least expect it. His problem now is searching, within himself as well as in today's musical climate, until he finds a new key to the golden door.

This album is not the winner Davis is seeking. It's an accident that found a place to happen. What we do now is wait. My bet is that Sammy Davis will win again.

M.A.

**GENE AUTRY: Back in the Saddle Again.** Gene Autry, vocal; orchestra. *Back in The Saddle Again; You Are My Sunshine; Blueberry Hill;* seven more. Harmony HS 11276, \$1.89.

Now here's my nomination for The Most Unimportant Record of the Month. Autry's flat, emotionless, reedy delivery made him a dull cowboy singer, if one of the most successful of the breed. And those arrangements! The bass player playing one and three and the accordionist chuffing two and four, and wheezing violins playing some sort of half-fast counterline. (The strings are in tune, though.) And when they try to swing, as in *Cowboy Blues*, it's just funny.

To be sure, this reissue will recall Saturday matinees for a lot of men; Autry had his following. Personally, I was a Ken Maynard man. G.L.

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

# JAZZ

**MILT JACKSON: And the Hip String Quartet.** Milt Jackson, vibes; James Moody, tenor saxophone, flute; Hubert Laws, flute; Sanford Allen, violin; Alfred Brown, viola; Ronald Lipscomb, Kermit Moore, or Sidney Edwards, cello; Cedar Walton, piano; Ron Carter or Bob Cranshaw, bass; Mickey Roker or Grady Tate, drums. *In Walked Bud; Bags and Strings; New Rhumba*; five more Verve 6-8761, \$5.79.

The search to find a valid use for a string ensemble in jazz continues. In these arrangements, Tom McIntosh's intent was to "jolt the strings out of the whole-note approach and really involve them in the music—complete interaction." He has removed the string quartet—violin, viola, and two cellos—from their customary cushion role even to the extent of leaving them out entirely on the only ballad in the set, *For All We Know*, where their stretched-out carpet of sound might possibly have been too inevitable.

In an effort to let the quartet swing on the other pieces, McIntosh gives them strong, riff-based fills for the most part, occasionally allowing them to emerge on their own for a few bars. Since the album is primarily a showcase for Milt Jackson, with a few short solo spots for James Moody, Hubert Laws, and Cedar Walton, the strings are necessarily placed in a background role, replacing what might have been brass or reeds. In this role, they bring a provocative color to the backgrounds and, with the addition of Laws's flute, a texture is created that makes a very interesting setting for Jackson's vibes.

Jackson, of course, swings—strongly, insistently, maintaining a seemingly simple, direct approach even when strings, flute, and vibes are entwined in complexities. The fascinating originality of his conception is particularly evident on *For All We Know* when, without wasting a moment for introductions, he transforms a banal pop tune into a richly exotic tapestry of sound. J.S.W.

**COUNT BASIE: Straight Ahead.** The Count Basie Orchestra; Count Basie, piano; Sammy Nestico, arr. and cond. *Fin Time; Magic Flea; Hay Burner*; six more. Dot DLP 25902, \$4.79.

Count Basie has gone a strange road, or rather roads, in recent years. Some of his albums have been flagrantly commercial—and flagrantly tedious. Others have contained the traditional Basie vitality and swing. This is one of the latter. It consists of original compositions by Sammy Nestico, who is virtually unknown to the profession or to the public. That's because Nestico, who in the old days played saxophone in the bands of Gene Krupa and Tommy Dorsey, among others, has for years been chief arranger for the U.S. Marine Band in Washington, D.C. That's one way for a musician to find security.

He writes beautifully. His grasp of the Basie band's weaknesses and strengths is sure, and he gets from them all they've

got. The tunes and charts thereon are simple, but not simplistic. This is fine Basie. G.L.

**WES MONTGOMERY: Road Song.** Wes Montgomery, guitar; Don Sebesky, arr. *Scarborough Fair; Serene; Green-sleeves*; seven more. A & M SP 3012, \$4.79.

**WES MONTGOMERY: Down Here On the Ground.** Wes Montgomery, guitar; Don Sebesky and Eumir Deodato, arr. and cond. *Georgia on My Mind; The Fox; Goin' On to Detroit*; seven more. A & M SP 3006, \$4.79.

**WES MONTGOMERY: Best of Wes Montgomery, Vol. 2.** Wes Montgomery, guitar; Claus Ogerman, Oliver Nelson, and Don Sebesky, arr. and cond. *O Morro; Bumpin'; California Dream-in'*; five more. Verve 6-8757, \$4.79.

One feels numbed after hearing that a great musician has been stopped in his tracks. Wes Montgomery died of a heart attack last June, at forty-five. He had just finished scuffling and was beginning to be comfortably successful. Following are some quotes from liner notes of the above albums, from men who knew Montgomery and loved his talent.

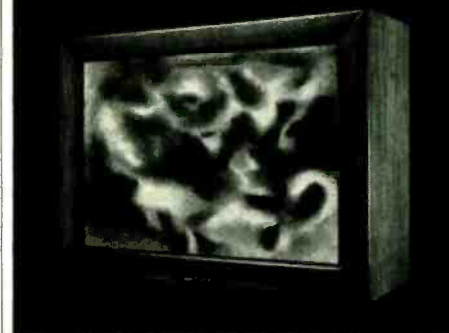
Ira Gitler quotes Dan Morgenstern's *Downbeat* review of Montgomery's *Down Here on the Ground* album: "Like all jazzmen who've made it big, Wes Montgomery has a sound—hear that good, ye squealers and brayers—a lovely sound. Like all jazzmen who've made it big, he is a superb melodist—hear that, ye runners of tuneless runs—a singer. And like all jazzmen who've made it big, he swings—hear that, ye twisters of the time." Dom Cerulli says, "Montgomery's genius will continue to grow in the young guitarists . . . who listened to these selections . . . and who found stimulation enough in Wes's music to do something of their own that they couldn't have done without Wes first having done something of his own. . . . He took today's better pop tunes and played them with such jazz feeling and power that he caught the ear

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of the pop listener by *what* he was playing, and the imagination of the jazz listener by *how* he was playing what he was playing."

*Road Song* was the last of the three albums to be recorded. *Wes Montgomery, Vol. 2* is a best-of compilation of things done before Montgomery moved with producer Creed Taylor to A & M. *Down Here on the Ground* was Montgomery's next-to-last album. I like it best.

This death of Wes Montgomery is doubly poignant in a musical age which is producing, among thousands, pitiful few with the skill or inspired frame of reference to take his place. As Ira Gitler says of the final album, "be glad we have it." One of its tunes is entitled *I'll Be Back*. But he won't. M.A.

\* **MICHEL LE GRAND: At Shelly's Manne-Hole. *Los Gatos; The Grand Brown Man; Watch What Happens*; five more. Verve 6-8760, \$5.79.**

Pure joy emanates from this disc. Michel LeGrand, normally occupied composing or conducting, is heard away from such hum-drum chores, playing piano at Shelly's Manne-Hole with Shelly Manne and Ray Brown. They all had fun. The audience obviously had fun. And the record is fun as Legrand, in the course of eight numbers, runs an amazing gamut from sheer romanticism on *A Time for Love* to romping virtuosity on *Another Blues*. Along the way he does some remarkable vocal things to *My Funny Valentine*, joins with Ray Brown to create a magnificent and very funny version of *Willow Weep for Me*, and plays everything with a rare sense of relish and pleasure. J.S.W.

**ARTIE SHAW: Re-Creates His Great '38 Band. *Begin the Beguine; Back Bay Shuffle; Octoroon*; nine more. Capitol 2992, \$4.79.**

The argument against "re-creating" records of the past is summed up in a most effective fashion in this set. One of the reasons that the summation is so effective is that these performances are just about as good as they could be today. The band is made up of some of the most facile of New York's studio musicians, many of whom came out of the big band era. Artie Shaw was both conductor and producer (his clarinet parts are played by Walt Levinsky who does a skillful job of catching Shaw's personal inflections). Man for man, this studio band is probably more proficient than the 1938 Shaw band that originally played these arrangements.

But the fact remains that it is a studio band. It does not have the rapport and the looseness that comes from developing the performance of an arrangement night after night. The very proficiency of these musicians works against them in this case because no working band ever sounded quite as clean and rich and full as this well-polished studio group. Moreover, today's methods of recording throw the band out of balance—if you are trying to reproduce the sound of a band of the Thirties. The isolation of soloists that is customary today takes away from

the effect of soloist-rising-within-a-band that was part of the character of Shaw's band and every other band in the Thirties.

And, basically, this simply is not the 1938 Artie Shaw band, a band which was made up of individuals who produced certain individual sounds. If you want to know what that band really sounded like, you can refer to its Victor records. Aside from that, this is a good contemporary recording by a studio band but it does little to explain why the Artie Shaw band of 1938 was such a success. J.S.W.

**JIMMIE LUNCEFORD: Vol. 1, *Rhythm Is Our Business. Dream of You; Sleepy Time Gal; Runnin' Wild*; eleven more. Decca 79237, \$5.79 (rechanneled stereo only).**

**JIMMIE LUNCEFORD: Vol. 2, *Harlem Shout. Swanee River; My Blue Heaven; Organ Grinder's Swing*; eleven more. Decca 79238, \$5.79 (rechanneled stereo only).**

Jimmie Lunceford's orchestra had so many different facets that it is impossible to pin it down as readily as one could any of its contemporaries. Even the Ellington band, for all its variety and its distinctive soloists, was, whatever it did, a reflection of Ellington's musical personality. The Lunceford band, however, did so many things and did them with such distinction that any of them could stand as representative of the band's work. It could be the solid but crisp, two-beat style of arranging originated by Eddie Wilcox and refined by Sy Oliver. It could be the vocal trios that built on this same sly phrasing. It could be the novelty material—*Rhythm Is Our Business, T'Ain't What You Do*. It could be the steamrolling powerhouses—*Jazzocracy, White Heat, Lunceford Special*. It could be the superb saxophone section and the rich alto solos of Willie Smith. It could be the sense of flash and showmanship which the Lunceford band sustained without diminishing its jazz qualities.

It might even be a few things you had forgotten until your memory was jogged by this two-disc set, such as the surprisingly effective electric guitar solos by Eddie Durham in 1935. It was the experience of hearing Durham jam on a primitive electric guitar that led Charlie Christian to take up the instrument. And for sheer *chutzpah*, how do you like a new band moving into the Cotton Club, Ellington's home base, picking up three of the Duke's big hits—*Mood Indigo, Rose Room* (the Ellington arrangement), and *Black and Tan Fantasy*—and giving them a positive Lunceford touch without really removing any of the Ellingtonisms?

Those three Ellington pieces open the first disc and get the collection off to a strong start.

Possibly the most impressive thing about the Lunceford band was that it played everything, absolutely everything—including such nonconsequential pop hits as *On the Beach at Bali-Bali*—and found something interesting to do with them (the band's only concession to mediocrity was the routine crooning of Dan Grissom who, fortunately, turns up



here only twice in the course of twenty-eight numbers). The period from 1934 to 1936 represented by this set was the time when Lunceford, Sy Oliver, Eddie Wilcox, Willie Smith, and the rest of the band were bringing it all together to create a group of such depth, creativity, and polish that it could be matched only by the Ellington band. And it's interesting to find on these cleanly engineered LPs that under the cementlike surfaces of the 78-rpm discs on which Decca originally released these performances, there actually is all the music that often had to be filled in by a knowledgeable ear. J.S.W.

**\* JIMMY RUSHING ALL-STARS.**  
**Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You.**

Buck Clayton, trumpet; Dickie Wells, trombone; Julian Dash, tenor saxophone; Sir Charles Thompson, piano; Gene Ramey, bass; Jo Jones, drums; Jimmy Rushing, vocals. *St. James Infirmary; Who's Sorry Now; Good Morning Blues*; three more. MJR 8104, \$5.00 (Master Jazz Recordings, Inc., Box 579, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N. Y. 10021).

A couple of years ago Bill Weilbacher and Don Kanter, a pair of advertising agency executives who know what kind of jazz they like, decided that there was so little of what they liked played in New York that they would put on private sessions of their own. They mailed out invitations to like-minded friends, got a \$20 subscription with each acceptance, and held their first jazz party in a photographer's studio with Jimmy Rushing and some onetime Basie men. This was such a success that they decided to hold another party and record it. The result has been a series of jazz parties that have produced recordings under the aegis of Master Jazz Recordings, which sells only by mail.

The focus of Weilbacher's and Kanter's taste can be seen from the fact that Jimmy Rushing has figured in all their parties—the original dry-run, the first recorded party (which included Earl Hines and Budd Johnson), and the present one. This session brings Rushing together with some old Basie mates plus Julian Dash, once of Erskine Hawkins' band, and Sir Charles Thompson, who has the Basie feeling for piano without copying the Basie style. If ever an argument were

needed for making records in this sort of informal atmosphere, this disc is it. With just enough of the party sound in the background to take the cold studio chill off the session, the musicians play with a feeling and directness that even the best pros cannot always summon in a studio.

Buck Clayton has rarely been recorded in such brilliant form. Sir Charles is a constant delight. Dash, who was doomed to relative obscurity in Hawkins' band, is a startlingly warm and moving performer, and Jo Jones has some of his most elegantly theatrical moments on drums. As for Rushing, his voice is a chancey thing these days, at times a bit too hoarse to do the bidding that his musical instincts call for. But he has everything under control on the title tune *Gee, Baby, Ain't I Good to You*—a magnificent performance with instrumental support that just wraps him up and carries him along. The party was held in the Fine Recording Studio in New York and the consequent sound is topnotch although some of the editing, such as an abrupt cut-off on *MJR Blues*, is inexplicable. J.S.W.

**FLETCHER HENDERSON: The Immortal Fletcher Henderson.** *Down-Hearted Blues; Gulf Coast Blues; Hop Off*; eleven more. Milestone 2005, \$4.79.

After many years of neglect, Fletcher Henderson has suddenly flourished in the reissue market with Columbia's four-disc set, two discs from Decca, and two from Historical Records. Despite everything that has already been reissued, this Henderson collection is of more than routine interest. It includes one of Henderson's few piano solos (*Chimes Blues*); some pre-Louis Armstrong pieces that in some parts refute the idea that the Henderson band was not really much of a jazz band until Armstrong joined it; four selections with Armstrong's bright, pungent horn bursting out of ensembles; and an interesting view of the Henderson orchestra as a standard dance band playing what sounds like a stock arrangement of *Star Dust* in 1931. Most of the selections come from such relatively obscure labels as Black Swan, Puritan, Ajax, Apex, and Broadway, although several were released on Paramount. J.S.W.

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# THE TAPE DECK

BY R. D. DARRELL

**Stereo Road-Tested.** Until very recently, my evaluations of 8-track, endless-loop cartridge tapes have been based on home listening via a 117-volt player feeding my big stereo system. This approach seemed to me a reasonable one for testing technical qualities, since judgments could be made without regard to the limitations imposed by automobile installations—where high ambient noise levels make signal-to-noise ratio checks meaningless and where the necessarily tiny speakers can give no really adequate notion of frequency range. Heard on my home setup, the best of the cartridge tapes sent me for review have met admirably high technical standards, though the endless-loop medium still gives pride of place to open reels for serious listening to serious musical works.

The fact is, however, that the most distinctive characteristics of the cartridge tapes (their push-in/pull-out ease of handling and their automatic replay feature) were especially designed to provide entertainment for the highway traveler. How well they meet that specific purpose can be fully appreciated only by actually road-testing them—and this I have finally got around to doing. While it has been no surprise to discover the vast superiority of stereo tape sound over that provided by a monophonic car radio and to be reminded of the pleasure of being one's own program maker, I have been delightfully surprised by how much tape-in-the car can do to alleviate the boredom of routine driving.

Moreover, in an automobile the medium's home-listening handicaps disappear or become glossed-over. The annoying clicks which accompany head-position changes (in longer works often right in the middle of a movement) tend to be lost, along with any tape surface noise, in the over-all noise of even the quietest moving vehicle. And whatever the actual frequency limitations of the tiny speakers may be, one is scarcely aware of them in listening to what seems—in the confined space of a car—to be thrilling brilliance and depth.

**Traveling Companions.** The most startling discovery is that "serious" music can be heard casually, en route, with rewards no less real (no matter how different) than those afforded by concentrated listening. Much as I admire, for example, the Schwarzkopf/Szell Richard Strauss *Last Songs* in the reel edition of June 1967, I relished these moving performances if anything even more when "overheard"—on my way to a neighborhood shopping center—via one of the new Angel/Capitol series of "classical" 8-track cartridge releases (8XS 36347, \$6.98). And while another in the same series, Sir Adrian Boult's recent reading of Holst's *The Planets* (8XS 36420, \$6.98), certainly is more constricted in its frequency and dynamic ranges in mo-

bile playback than it is in big-system home reproduction (particularly via the alternative 3¼-ips reel, YIS 36420, \$6.98), the losses are more than compensated if you're hearing the music as you drive along on a moonlit evening—especially when it comes to that unforgettable "fat" tune in the "Jupiter" movement.

Then there are the simultaneously released 7.5-ips reel and 8-track cartridge editions of a "Phase-4 Concert Series Sampler" (London/Ampex LCL 66005 and LEM 66505, bargain-priced—for double-play lengths—at \$7.95 and \$6.95 respectively). If you've heard any of the fourteen recent Phase-4 Concert Series programs conducted by Stokowski, Munch, Dorati, Sargent, and Black (most of them reviewed earlier in this column), you will know just how sonically varied and spectacular the present excerpts are. In its reel edition this is surely the most impressive of all demo tapes to date, but the slower-speed, endless-loop edition is not very far behind it even by absolute standards. By relative ones it is without question technically the finest cartridge release I've encountered so far.

Among other excellent recent cartridges is Ormandy's Tchaikovsky anthology, "Waltz of the Flowers." The "magnificently mellifluous" sonorities which I praised in my review of the disc edition last November come through with surprising effectiveness here (Columbia 18 11 0078, \$6.95; on a 7.5-ips reel as MQ 998, \$7.95). In a very different way, I've also relished Columbia film-track cartridge editions of Barbra Streisand's bravura singing/acting in *Funny Girl* and of various mod and rock characters in the completely zany, but often riotously amusing, *You Are What You Eat* (18 12 0034 and 18 12 0036 respectively, \$7.95 each).

Although RCA no longer has a well-nigh exclusive monopoly on classical programs in cartridge editions, it continues to issue more of them than any other single company. Indeed RCA probably produces more cartridge tapes of every musical kind—claiming a total of eight million at the end of last October, just a month after having celebrated the third anniversary of its 1965 introduction of the 8-track cartridge format. Among the company's current releases, I've particularly enjoyed the "Highlights" cartridge from last month's Robert Shaw reel edition of Handel's *Messiah* (R8S 1102, \$6.95), even though the lack of full musical continuity (to say nothing of the listener's less than full attention while carborne) inevitably diminishes the work's true grandeur. Nevertheless, it still gives wings to one's traveling—in a way ineffably more exhilarating than the easier "lift" provided by such fare as, say, Arthur Fiedler's latest symphonic enhancements of *Up, Up, and Away* and other pop tunes (R8S 1103, \$6.95).

Finally, to demonstrate the workings of my latest double standard, there's the

case of the André Previn/London Symphony performances of Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, Op. 44, and *The Rock Fantasy* for Orchestra, Op. 7, which I heard first in a car playback of the RCA R8S 1097, \$6.95 endless-loop edition and then in home playback of the double-play, 3¼-ips reel edition (TR3 5030, \$10.50, also including Previn's Second Rachmaninoff Symphony). Apart from the mild novelty of the early Fantasy (a tape first likely to be new even to Rachmaninoff specialists), the objective attractions here are limited: Previn's fervency is never completely persuasive and the bright stereoism is never as overwhelmingly rich as it should be—and is in Ormandy's Third Symphony for Columbia and Steinberg's Second for Command. Nevertheless, I forget all such considerations when I turn onto the highway and raise the cartridge playback level to enable Rachmaninoff's lush melodies to sing above the roar of high-speed motion.

**Some Practical Considerations.** For the benefit of potential seekers after the very tangible rewards of mobile music in cartridge tapings, a few bits of advice. If you don't have an original factory installation of a Stereo-8 player, check carefully in advance on the likely installation costs for your car make and model.

Invest in a test tape to check the correctness of the installation and the operation of the player itself. (Mine was first hooked up with the left and right stereo channels transposed!) One test tape I know and can warmly recommend is the RCA Stereo-8 *Installation and Service Test Cartridge* (8TSC 101, \$4.95). Most of its checks can be made by listening only; a few require a meter or oscilloscope for accurate playback-head azimuth and vertical alignments. Another convenience is a *Head Cleaning Tape Cartridge* (again I use RCA's, 8THC 100, \$1.95), which eliminates the awkwardness of trying to clean the playback head with a Q-stick poked in through the letter-box slot.

If you have any mechanical aptitude at all, learn how to dismount your cartridge player, remove its outer case and chassis cover. You may need access to the interior should a defective or too loosely wound tape get wrapped around the capstan, jamming operation entirely until it can be cut and tweezered out.

In general, confine your cartridge purchases to programs of music you already know: a moving car is no place to try to concentrate on unfamiliar works even if you're only a passenger. This realm of musical enjoyment calls for repetitive hearing of old favorites—which will take on unexpectedly fresh attractiveness in an entirely new environment. Remember that the world of cartridge tapes is supplementary to, rather than competitive with, the usual world of music listening—and accept it for its magical powers.



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