

HIGH FIDELITY

Over 175
Recordings
Evaluated in
This Issue

**Cassette,
Cartridge, Open Reel—
Which Tape Recorder
Should You Buy?**

**Low-Noise Tape:
Is It Right
For Your Recorder?**

**Will Your
Present Recorder
Handle Four-Channel
Sound?**





magnificent cabinets.

sound in a 150-degree arc, virtually eliminating the highly directional quality you find in many speakers without wide-dispersion tweeters.

Add it all up.

Now, for some startling arithmetic.

You'd expect a 4-way floor-model speaker system that sounds better than any other speaker system in the world (even better than any other Fisher system!), to cost \$300 or more. Even if it came in an unfinished cabinet.


And you'd expect a cabinet as elegant as the three styles of the XP-16 to cost another hundred dollars, at least.

So when you put the world's best-sounding speaker in the world's best-looking cabinet, you'd expect to pay more than the actual price, \$299.95.

\$299.95? It doesn't add up, does it?

A word to the wives is sufficient.

In case you're a wife, attracted by the beautiful speakers pictured above, and you want to know how to tell your husband you want a pair, just show him the opposite right-hand page.



WS-80

WS-70

And here are two new Fisher speakers your wife can place anywhere she wants.

Wives have unorthodox ideas about speaker placement. Like putting one speaker under your Tiffany lamp. And the other somewhere in front of the couch where you can rest your coffee cup.

Which produces, with conventional bookshelf or floor-model speakers, a rather strange stereo effect. (The strings seem to be coming from behind you, while the percussion is right there, near your elbow.)

Fisher has solved this problem. With some rather unique speakers, called the WS-70 and the WS-80. (The "WS" stands for Wide Surround®.)

No matter where in the room you place these revolutionary new speakers, they give you good stereo sound reproduction.

How is that possible?

The new Fisher speakers are omnidirectional. They disperse sound in all directions, not just in front of the speaker.

Here's how they work.

There's a woofer that points up (acoustically sealed in back, as are all Fisher woofers). The woofer sound radiates upwards against a sound deflector and outwards in a 360-degree circle. (The \$99.95 WS-80 has an 8-inch woofer, while the \$79.95 WS-70 has a 6-inch woofer.)

As for the mid-range and treble, the WS-70 has a 3-inch treble cone pointing upwards and radiating up and out, in a 360-degree circle; whereas the WS-80 has a mid-range speaker pointing up. Sound from this mid-range is deflected by the tweeter cone and is dispersed in a circle. The tweeter disperses sound up and outwards in a 360-degree circle.

End of the wife problem.

The Fisher®

SLIGHTLY HIGHER IN THE FAR WEST.

Circle 31 on Reader Service



Just show her these

Even the most tolerant of wives might balk if you were to tell her you're thinking of installing 20 cubic feet of stereo components in the living room.

So you don't mention the word "stereo." Instead, you talk about those bare corners badly in need of a matched pair of beautiful Country French miniature armoires in gorgeous cherry wood (or Contemporary in walnut, or Mediterranean in pecan).

And you talk about Fisher. Not Fisher, the world's leading maker of stereo components. But Fisher, the maker of the world's most beautiful cabinets.

(You can refer to our old-world master craftsmen who authenticate every detail of the furniture designs. And to the

men who spend literally days polishing and rubbing cabinet wood till it glistens. Etc.)

There's no reason to tell your wife about the really important parts of the new Fisher XP-16, unless she asks you.

Then, of course, you begin at the beginning.

Not one, but two 12-inch woofers.

By itself, a 12-inch woofer moves a lot of air.

So you can imagine what a pair of 12-inch woofers can do. (If your imagination fails you, just stick your hand in front of the woofers of the XP-16 during a loud orchestral passage with heavy bass. You'll feel the air move!)

When you have a big woofer, you need a massive magnet structure to move it. In this case, you need two massive magnets, one for each woofer. So Fisher installed a 5-lb. magnet in each woofer. The result? You appreciate it most when there's one of those sustained organ-pedal notes at a frequency of, say, 33 Hz (that's low C). It may be the first time you've ever heard that note in your living room.

The 8-inch mid-range driver.

The mid-range driver is the most critical component in a

speaker system. In the XP-16 it covers the frequencies from 250 to 2,500 Hz. Most of the musical information on a record or tape falls into this range. Which is why Fisher puts an 8-inch mid-range driver into each XP-16 speaker. (8 inches is as large as the diameter of many bookshelf woofers.) The 8-inch mid-range is responsible for that smooth, effortless, natural quality of the XP-16's sound.

The mylar dome tweeter.

Usually a tweeter as fine as this 1½-inch mylar dome driver would be called on to deliver the entire audio spectrum above, say, 2,500 Hz. But that's not the case here. In the XP-16, each component does exactly what it's best at doing and no more. So the tweeter reproduces only the frequencies from 2,500 to 7,000 Hz. Cleanly. Transparently. Without coloration.

The horn-type super tweeter.

This is the driver that makes the XP-16 sound unique. Because it's the super tweeter that reproduces the frequencies that add richness and life to the sound. And the horn-type super tweeter has one big advantage over the dome-type tweeters: dispersion. The horn disperses



Mail this coupon for your free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1970 edition. This reference guide to hi-fi and stereo also includes detailed information on all Fisher components.

Fisher Radio
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Long Island City, N.Y. 11101

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____ 0108702

**This new Fisher
speaker weighs 105 lbs.,
takes up 10 cubic
feet of space, and
costs \$299.95.**

**How are you going
to tell your wife you
want a pair?**



The new Fisher XP-16.

A lot of people don't know that a cartridge that's great for one high fidelity system could be disastrous for another.

That's why Pickering has done something fantastically simple.

We've developed *Dynamic Coupling Factor*—henceforth known as *DCF*.

All it is is a complicated name for an uncomplicated way to select the best cartridge for your system. It is your guide to the selection of that cartridge based on its intended application in playback equipment—just as horsepower is the guide to the proper engine for a vehicle.

It works like this. You own an XYZ model record changer. What cartridge do you pick? Not the \$29.95 model because it isn't designed for the capability of your XYZ player. Not the \$60.00 cartridge either, for its quality cannot be realized in that unit.

Our chart—available to you free—reveals that you need our model XV-15 with a *DCF* rating of 400 for optimum performance. This means that you will get

100% of the music from your records. Not 50% or 75% but *all* of the music capable of being obtained from your particular playback unit.

Technically, what we've done is taken virtually every high fidelity record player and pre-analyzed the vital variables for you; those affecting cartridge design and those related to the engineering features of the various turntables and changers.

So now all you need to be well informed on cartridges is to send for our *DCF* application guide containing our recommendations for what cartridge you use with which record player.

And next time you walk into a high fidelity salon, tell the man: "I'd like a Pickering XV-15 with a *DCF* of 400." Or whatever.

Pickering cartridges are priced from \$29.95 to \$60.00. For your free *DCF* chart, write *DCF*, Pickering & Co., 101 Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, N.Y. 11803.



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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY

VOL. 20 NO. 8 AUGUST 1970

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How Do You Spell *Eroica*?

Madrid, Spain

DEAR READER:

When reasonable and knowledgeable men disagree both are often right; the source of their conflict can frequently be traced to their semantics. This thought returns to me on my way back from the second annual *Billboard*-sponsored music industry conference, held this time in Mallorca, about which I wrote last month. This year the music businessmen in grudgingly allowing a soupçon of their time—equals-money to be spent on the industry's disaster area, classical repertoire, were treated to an apparent headlong clash, in a seminar chaired by HIGH FIDELITY's publisher, Warren Syer, between two of the most respected men in recording circles.

First, a few facts. In France, 25% of all LP sales are classical. In Japan, classical recordings make up 40% of "international" record sales. (Three out of five Japanese discs are native products.) The figure for the United States has, in recent years, fallen to—below 5%.

To help solve this problem in the world's largest record market, James Frey, former classical marketing director for DGG, and John Culshaw, former chief producer for Decca/London, urged divergent paths, reflecting their opposing points of view. Culshaw believes that classical recordings should be made with a specific, limited audience in mind; Frey aims for a larger audience that should, and can, be found for specific recordings through "the [marketing and promotion] techniques we've learned in pop." Culshaw counters with "There is no huge untapped market for so-called serious music. This fantasy is encouraged whenever a particular record starts climbing up the charts. The mistake is to assume that it represents a trend, rather than itself. Since that kind of breakthrough cannot be predicted with any certainty, it seems to me that one's principal duty is to keep up standards in terms of the faithful minority."

To us faithful minority, Culshaw sounds like music, Frey like mercantilism. Yet Frey's path may have to be taken before Culshaw's once again becomes viable. A few months ago Radio Luxembourg, a European pop station, began to play a Vivaldi two-mandolin concerto recorded by I Solisti Veneti for the esoteric Erato label. At this writing, in France alone (where the average classical sale is 1,500) the LP has sold 80,000 copies. Back in New York, a WNEW-FM rock jockey named Rosko thought his teenage listeners would "dig" the "new sound" of the classics and began to play music by Praetorius and Stockhausen, hardly the most popular composers in history. Local sales picked up to such an extent that DGG, whose discs they were, decided to experiment with—now get this—the slow movement of the *Eroica*! The kids began calling WNEW: "Where can we get this recording?" "How do you spell *Eroica*?" Now, I notice, DGG is sending "promotional singles" to rock and pop stations of music by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and other similar out-of-sight cats.

What has this to do with those of us for whom Mozart is more than a "new sound"? Simply this: it has become increasingly difficult to find good classical recordings. American record companies are spending proportionately less money on their classical divisions; record shops are stocking fewer classical items. "I can order it for you" has become the "Don't call me . . ." to the classical customer. Unless the manufacturers and retailers find that they can make a buck on serious music—that is, unless the faithful minority helps hook the noisy majority—we will some day soon find that the only available classical albums will be repackaged repressings from the Sixties.

In our annual **PREVIEW OF FORTHCOMING RECORDINGS** you can see what is still due to be released. You will learn too how one retailer tripled the national classical average in **THE WORLD'S MOST COMPLETE RECORD STORE?** September's issue will also tell you **HOW TO SHOP FOR A STEREO RECEIVER**, will clue you in to **BARTOK'S EXTRAORDINARY STRING QUARTETS**. L.M.

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CAN YOU GUESS

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(Circle the number at the bottom of this page on your reader service card for complete reprints of the seven reviews and a list of BOSE dealers in your area.)

2 The 12 Years of Research?

— research that went beyond the collection of graphs and numerical data into the basic problems of correlating the perception of music with speaker design parameters. (Copies of the Audio Engineering Society paper 'ON THE DESIGN, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF LOUDSPEAKERS', by Dr. A. G. Bose, are available from BOSE Corp. for fifty cents.)

3 The Sound of Music Through the 901?

(Enjoy it at your nearest BOSE dealer or in the more comfortable surroundings of your friend's home.)

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(AS INDICATED BY CUSTOMER SURVEYS)

THE REASON MADE IT POSSIBLE AND THE RAVE REVIEWS CAUSE PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO THE BOSE 901. BUT, THE SURVEYS SHOW THAT THE SOUND OF THE 901'S, BY FAR, THE MAJOR REASON THAT OWNERS OF LARGE AND SMALL SPEAKERS TRADE FOR THE 901 AND THAT RECOMMENDERS TO STEREO SELECT THE 901. THAT'S NOW IT SHOULD BE — YOU ARE NOT BUYING REVIEWS OR RESEARCH THE RELEVANCE OF WHICH RESTS COMPLETELY UPON THE 901'S ABILITY TO PRODUCE MUSIC WITH A FIDELITY THAT YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE AS SUPERIOR. YOU ARE BUYING SOUND. LISTEN TO THE BOSE 901 IN DIRECT COMPARISON WITH ANY OTHER SPEAKERS, REGARDLESS OF SIZE OR PRICE. YOU WILL ONLY APPRECIATE WHY WE MAKE THIS REQUEST AFTER YOU HAVE MADE THE EXPERIMENT.

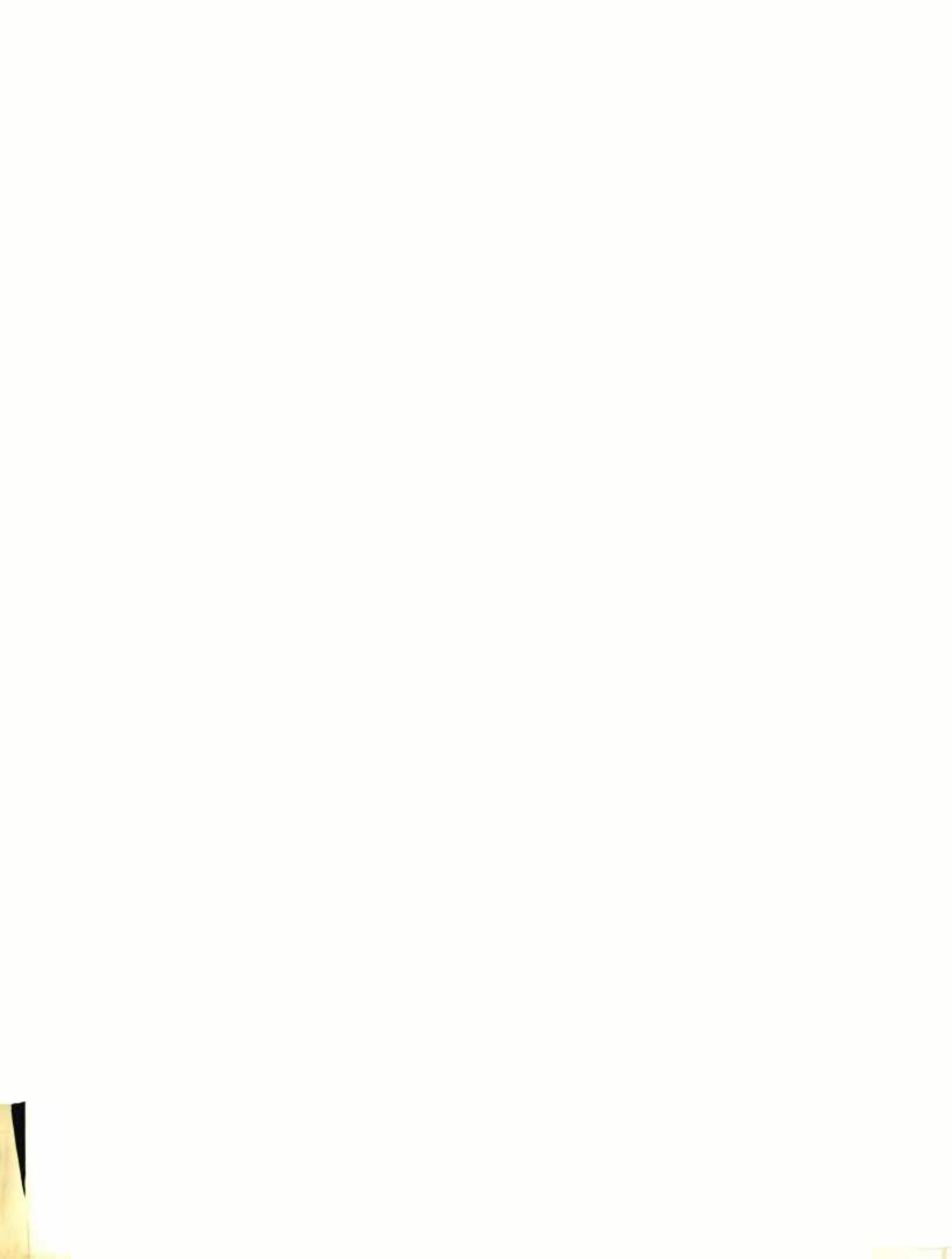


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Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



42673 LED ZEPPELIN
II
Atlan LP, 8TR



49706 B.B. KING—
Completely Well
Blues LP, 8TR, CASS



44368 PAUL MAURIAT
—Midnight Cowboy
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



30602 JACKSON FIVE
—I Want You Back
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS



42693 KING CRIMSON
Atlan LP, 8TR



33032 IAN & SYLVIA
—Nashville
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



17317 CASALS—
Plays Beethoven
Phil LP



34525 HELLO DOLLY
TwenCen LP, 8TR,
CASS



42638 HERBIE MANN
Memphis Underground
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



33495 BLIND FAITH
Atco LP, 8TR, CASS



33252 WES
MONTGOMERY—Best
River LP, 8TR, CASS



31799 THREE DOG
NIGHT—It Ain't Easy
DunH LP, 8TR, CASS



15116 MANDEL—
Jephtha
Vangu LP (3 records)



17263 GREGORIAN
CHANT
Phil LP



44365 JACQUES BREL
—If You Go Away
Phil LP



33486 CREAM—Best
of Cream
Atco LP, 8TR



42577 RASCALS—Great
Hits Time Peace
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



44373 HAIR: French
Original Cast
Phil LP



16759 TCHAIKOVSKY
—1812 Overture
Mercu LP



67503 SMITH—
Minus—Plus
DunH LP, 8TR, CASS



34506 ZORBA THE
GREEK—Soundtrack
TwenCen LP, 8TR, CASS



33063 JOAN BAEZ—
David's Album
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



30606 TEMPTATIONS
—Psychedelic Shack
Gordy LP, 8TR, CASS



33078 WEAVERS—
On Tour
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



17042 BEETHOVEN:
Piano Sonatas/
Richter Phil LP



33083 COUNTRY JOE
& FISH—CJ Fish
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



68546 RARE EARTH—
Get Ready
RarEa LP, 8TR, CASS



44369 MYSTIC WOODS
—Stormy Weekend
Merc LP, 8TR, CASS



17238 BERLIOZ—
Te Deum—London Sym.
Phil LP



31795 RICHARD
HARRIS—Love Album
DunH LP, 8TR, CASS



48782 APPLAUSE
—Original Cast
ABC LP, 8TR, CASS



33487 BEST OF BEE
GEEES
Atco LP, 8TR, CASS



42703—ARETHA
FRANKLIN—This Girl's
In Love With You
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



17049 SIBELIUS
—Sym #2 Concert-
gebouw/Szell
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



33443 IRON
BUTTERFLY—In A
Gadda-Da-Vida
Atco LP, 8TR, CASS



31781 THREE DOG
NIGHT—Suitable
for Framing
DunH LP, 8TR, CASS



35113 MAHLER—
Sym #3 Utah Sym
Vangu LP (2 records)



43793 SPANKY AND
OUR GANG—Greatest
Hits
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS



30609 SUPREMES—
Right On
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS



17064 MOZART: Sym
Nos. 25, 29, 32—
Lon. Sym, Davis
Phil LP



33029 BUFFY
SAINTE-MARIE
—Gonna Be A
Country Girl Again
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



42704 CROSBY,
STILLS, NASH &
YOUNG—Deja Vu
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



44195 FOUR
SEASONS—Gold Vault
of Hits
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



31973 JOHN COLTRANE
—Selflessness
Impul LP



30601 DIANA ROSS
& SUPREMES—
Greatest Hits 3
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS



67500 STEPPENWOLF
—“Live” (2 records)
DunH LP, 8TR, CASS

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Glen Campbell—Oh Happy Day	Cap	5.98	2.99
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Leontyne Price—Verdi Heroines	RCA	6.98	3.49

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letters

Missing Kreutzer, Misplaced Bohème

For shame! Certainly your distinguished roster of music critics should have caught the error on page 62 of your April 1970 issue.

The Puccini autograph is not from the duet at the end of *La Bohème* but is in reality the beginning of Mimi's first-act aria, "Mi chiamano Mimi."

Howard J. Hirsch
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

We accept our shame; Mr. Hirsch is right.

It was with considerable surprise that I read in the April HIGH FIDELITY ("Musicians' Autographs") that The New York Public Library owns the autograph manuscript of Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata. As head of the Music Division's rare book and manuscript collections, I can say that we do not now nor have we ever owned any manuscript even connected with this Sonata. In fact Mr. Eyer's whole story with its "mysterious lady," etc. baffled me completely until with the help of Samuel Orlinick (who was unable to recognize most of the material he provided as it was presented by Mr. Eyer), I sorted out what must have been the two unrelated stories behind the remarkable anecdote.

Around 1940 Mrs. Mary Flagler Cary, a distinguished if somewhat secretive collector, purchased the autograph of Mozart's *Haffner* Symphony for the National Orchestral Association. During her lifetime, however, the manuscript was not available for consultation. After Mrs. Cary's death in 1967, the NOA deposited the Mozart autograph in the Music Division where it is now. The autograph of Beethoven's *Kreutzer* Sonata, on the other hand, was believed to have been lost until in 1965 a Berlin auction house, Galerie Gerda Baasenge, announced the forthcoming sale of a section of this manuscript—the exposition to the first movement. At that time the auctioneer anticipated a sale price of around \$20,000. I do not know who acquired the autograph nor the final sale price, but it might have been the \$25,000 referred to by Mr. Eyer.

The statement about the *Kreutzer* autograph is of course my particular concern, but unfortunately the garbled facts and careless misstatements in this paragraph are typical of the article as a whole. I shan't enumerate the boners that stand out even to a novice like me, but surely someone should have done a little checking before publishing such a careless piece of work.

Susan T. Sommer
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Ever replies: If Mrs. Sommer says The New York Public Library does not possess the Kreutzer Sonata, that undoubtedly is the case and I regret that

the accreditation appeared in the article.

I can only say that as a reporter and writer and by no means an authority on autographs, musical or otherwise, I simply supplied information given to me in personal interviews with Messrs. Orlinick and Hammond, the two leading dealers in this country in musical autographs, who supposedly know what they are talking about. Since this rather murky field is such a limited one, these two experts were my only sources of material. The Kreutzer story, if I remember correctly, was told to me by Mr. Hammond.

Mahlerian Controversy

In the past, Bernard Jacobson reserved the highest praise for the Horenstein performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony (HF, September 1967), and in general he was extremely sympathetic to Bernstein's Mahler performances.

Now we have Robert C. Marsh, who considers (HF, May 1970) the Horenstein performance of the Ninth musically interesting but opines that "few will miss" this currently unavailable recording. In recent reviews of the Third and Ninth symphonies, Mr. Marsh does not even mention the Bernstein performances. One accepts the interpretive range of Mahler's music agreeably, but one does have some difficulty with the interpretive range of HIGH FIDELITY's authors. This controversy makes reading your pages interesting.

Philip Shapiro
Los Angeles, Calif.

Since none of the charter members of the Mahler cult has risen to the opportunity offered by Mr. Paul Turok's letter (March 1970) about the Adagio of Mahler's Tenth, perhaps an amateur may attempt to provide the requested enlightenment. Mr. Turok is quite correct in stating that Kubelik's recording does not follow the old score published by Associated Music; rather, it uses the 1964 Critical Edition (Volume Xa of the new edition of Mahler's complete works). All the points of difference Mr. Turok has so accurately noted correspond exactly to this new score, and in all cases except the first (the octave register of the first violins in meas. 20-21) the "new" reading is explicitly confirmed by the facsimile of Mahler's autograph; the correct reading of the autograph in that one case apparently requires more experience with Mahler's notational and correctional practice than I would presume to possess, but Dr. Erwin Ratz, the editor of the new score, gives specific reasons for his choice.

The truth of the matter seems to be that the "old edition" was very much tampered with by an anonymous hand; the new one is a much more accurate

Continued on page 10

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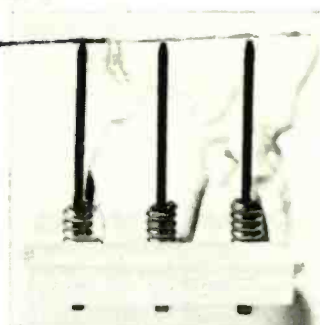
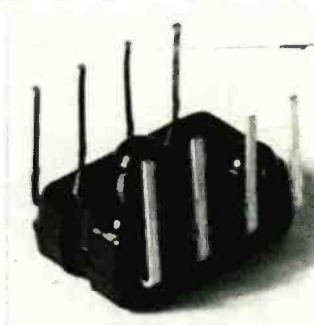
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LETTERS

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transcription of Mahler's manuscript, and we may earnestly hope that other conductors besides Kubelik will avail themselves of the opportunity it offers.

David Hamilton
New York, N.Y.

Youth and Mr. Lees

I am thirty-six years old, a psychologist by profession, an athletic coach also by profession, a devotee of most of the musical spectrum by avocation, and I have been working with kids between the

ages of ten to twenty-five for the past fifteen years. I have also just read Gene Lees's "For Adults Only" (May 1970), and all I can say is: beautiful! At last somebody (besides me) has the guts to call for a screeching halt to this ridiculous youth-worship bit. At last I hear somebody besides me demanding that the cry-baby generation grow up and accept responsibility for its actions instead of blaming everybody from the cops to Uncle Sam to dear old Dad. I love the kids, but sometimes their pathetic ignorance and blinding intellectual arrogance sadden me.

I was impressed also with "Rock, Violence, and Spiro T. Agnew" (February 1970). Again: this is it, right on the

button. This is telling it like it is rather than the way the kids like to hear it. Keep it up, Gene, we're out here cheering. Somebody has got to speak as an adult or nobody will ever grow up!

Richard F. Oles
Baltimore, Md.

What Mr. Lees lacks in understanding of youth culture, he compensates with his journalistic skill. His articles are highly provocative and absorbing. The measure of his success lies in the written response his writing elicits from various "up-tight" supporters and critics.

I grew up in a family of five musicians, all with tastes ranging from classical to progressive jazz. I find pleasure in the amalgam of musical types which comprises modern rock. Because of my background, "relativity of taste" was not just a cliché, and I am thankful that I haven't developed into a musical snob who regards only one or two forms of music as "real music." I can forgive the lack of technical accomplishments by the modern rock performers because I am more of a listener than a critic.

Perhaps one day Mr. Lees's perspicacity and understanding of social problems will equal his journalistic talent, but then his articles wouldn't be half as interesting, would they?

Dan Sparlin
Willoughby, Ohio

Afterthoughts on Montreux

I would like to congratulate Mr. Leonard Marcus on his musical perception in voting for "Switched-On Bach" as the recording of the year at the Montreux Festival ["The Best Records of the Year," December 1969].

After having purchased and listened to approximately six to eight hundred LPs of "serious" music over the past fifteen years, I feel that this recording will prove to be the greatest or close to the greatest thing ever pressed onto microgroove.

I cannot believe that the bulk of MIRA's international jury can amount to much if they voted for Berio's *Sinfonia* which I also own and have listened to. It's a phony fraud!

Albin J. Bielawski
Bowie, Md.

Mr. Marcus replies: I am flattered by Mr. Bielawski's compliment, but would I like to point out that I voted for Berio's *Sinfonia* for second place and find it one of the most brilliant and successful works to achieve a first recording since Ives's *Symphony No. 4* in 1965.

Shostakovich Revisions

Having had neither the Russian text nor the score on hand when I wrote my review of Eugene Ormandy's new recording of the Shostakovich *Symphony No. 13* (June 1970), I inadvertently neglected to mention the other point in the score where a revision was made in the text. This change, similar to the one I cited

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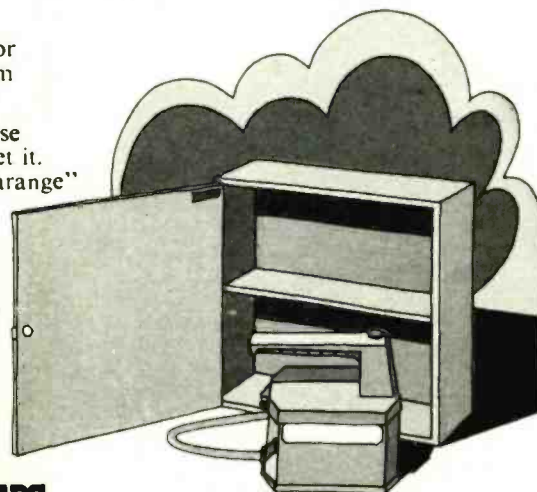
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LETTERS

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in my review, comes toward the beginning of the Symphony's first movement. The first four lines sung by the baritone were modified, so that the text, instead of speaking only of the martyrdom of the Jews at Babi Yar, includes others, such as the Ukrainians, in the massacre.

Royal S. Brown
Flushing, N.Y.

In Defense of Scriabin

I was distressed by the unperceiving, rather vulgarly off-the-point review by Robert Schaaf [April 1970], which covered recent recordings of three Scriabin symphonies.

First of all, I was dismayed by his use of the word "fun." Expect some fun from the choral finale of Scriabin's First Symphony? Surely it is incumbent on a critic to read the words of the poem Scriabin wrote for this movement. Scriabin having fun with the finale of the *Divine Poem*? Scandalous misreading of the facts. Scriabin was penetrating a very special realm of musical and mental activity. *Jeu Divin* is what the Stoics of ancient Greece called "divine senseless play."

Mr. Schaaf finds it a "burden" to have "bizarre philosophical programs." Very well: Scriabin himself said "I prefer to have my music approached first as music," and he even deplored his 1914 success in London because he felt people were responding to the message of *Prometheus* rather than its music. All this notwithstanding, no plot in Scriabin's program notes is as absurd as Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory*, or the inflated myths of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, or *Tod und Verklärung*.

No, again: Scriabin was not a "spoiled dilettante," and Mr. Schaaf, who is a very self-indulgent reviewer, has no basis in fact for so saying. The *Divine Poem* belongs to 1903, not 1905. Surely Mr. Schaaf read the program notes on the record's sleeve—or was that also a burden? The "unforgivable blunder" at the end of the same record does not cut the "Symphony's last note" but a chord and a final unison.

Lastly, the "mental illness" allegation against Scriabin is most destructive and misleading. Those were different times, different days, and the psyche suffered in other ways. What critic deprecates Schumann for being carted off to a nut-house? Who wouldn't pay a million dollars for a Van Gogh painting done in the insane asylum? And since when can creativity be discredited by charges of "megalomania?"

And last of the last, Scriabin never heard Franck's *Psyché*; so he could hardly have "lifted" (oh, abusive word!) from it.

Faunton Bowers
New York, N. Y.

Mr. Schaaf replies: Evidently Mr. Bowers values these symphonies more highly than

I do. This is his right; but his emotional involvement with this music has led him to misinterpret my remarks.

Yes, Mr. Bowers, I do expect at least some "fun" from music I consider banal. Your own example, Wellington's Victory, is a delight, and being based on historical fact, it is the premise of the piece that is absurd, not the program. (And, while we're on the subject, no one who has read Robert Donington's Wagner's Ring and Its Symbols could possibly call the story mere "inflated myths." Also, it is probable that Strauss didn't know much about either death or transfiguration, but where in all of Scriabin will one find invention on this level?) Yes, I did read the poem of the First Symphony's choral finale, and found it as commonplace as the music.

Nowhere in the review did I assign the composition of the Third Symphony to 1905. The program of the work was in all probability written in this year for the occasion of the premiere. And who can take it seriously, since it was written after the fact by a lady friend of the composer? At any rate, what does the flatulence of the *Jeu Divin* movement have to do with any Stoic ideal?

Irrationality does indeed interfere with the creative process. Where are the masterpieces of Schumann's madhouse period? (Concerning the work of Van Gogh, I claim no expertise.) Does Mr. Bowers suggest that it was Zeitegeist rather than madness that prompted Scriabin to compose for a hypothetical giant carillon to be strung out along the Himalayas? The seeds of mental decline are sown early, and one can safely say that by 1905 the composer was on his way to madness. It was at this time that he started formulating plans for his "Mystery," which was to be a fusion of all the arts (including perfumery) to be performed in a specially built temple in India. The signs are clearly there.

Mr. Bowers also oversteps himself by saying that Scriabin had never heard Franck's *Psyché*. Can he document all the concerts Scriabin attended up to 1900? Doesn't it seem likely that a professor of composition at the Moscow Conservatory would know the masterpiece of one of the most influential composers of the previous generation? Was not Paris the major triumph of his 1895/96 concert tour? Franck's music was in the air, he could hardly have avoided it.

Lastly, my pressing of the *Divine Poem* cuts only the final unison, and it is possible that Mr. Bowers' pressing is from a different matrix, one which cuts the last chord as well. This point is not arguable.

The next time Mr. Bowers decides to play "Keeper of the Flame," I suggest he be sure something's burning—other than his temper.

The Musical Majority

Apropos of Vice President Agnew's recent remarks concerning mass media commentators, I would like to make somewhat the same point in relation to

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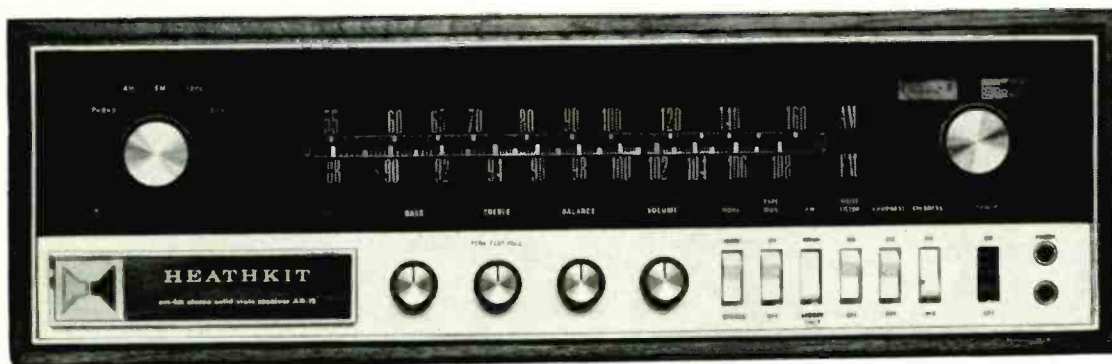
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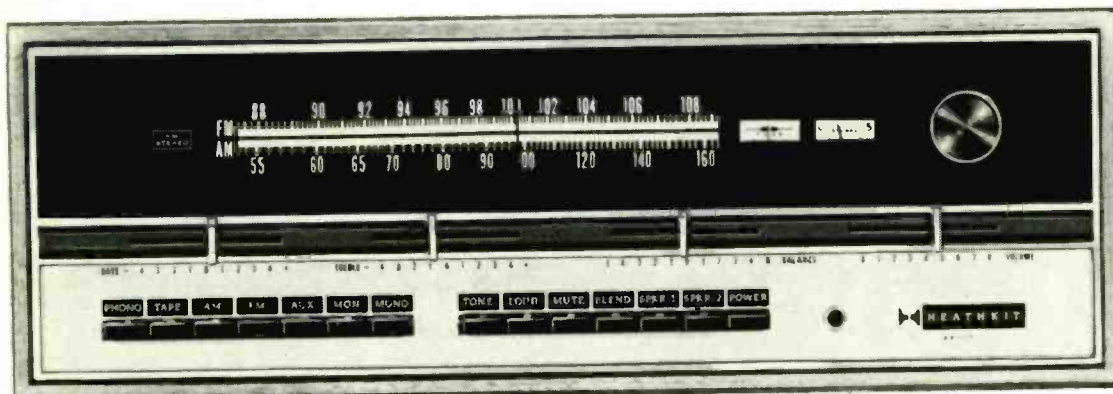
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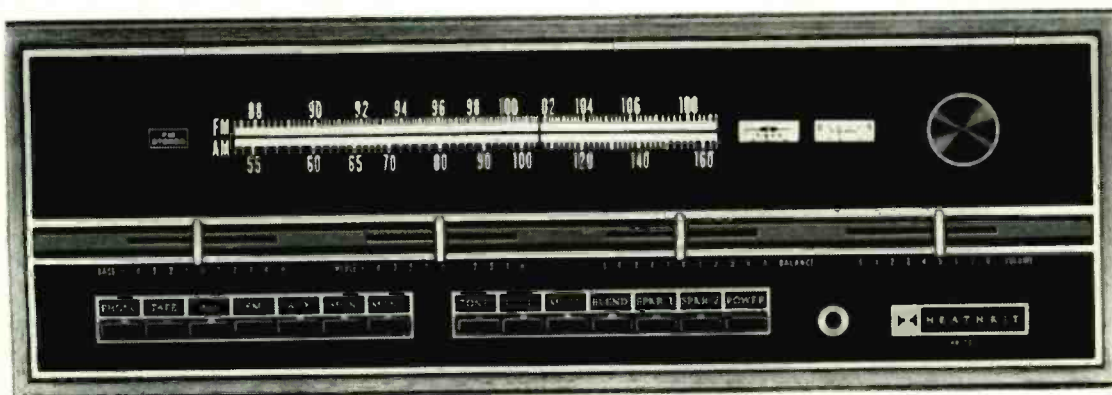
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LETTERS

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"musical commentators," i.e., reviewers. They too seem to have lost touch with the "silent majority" of listeners. "Intellectual" critics heap scorn upon many widely loved compositions, especially those of the Romantic era. I have therefore compiled a list of what I think are the ten most underrated compositions (underrated by critics, that is), recognizing that it represents purely personal opinion.

BEETHOVEN: *Wellington's Victory*. This much-maligned piece of program music is great fun to hear, and the delightful tугe on *God Save the King* is alone worth the price of admission.

RESPIGHI: *Feste Romane*. No other work so spectacularly displays the color and beauty of the orchestra.

SIBELIUS: *Lemminkainen's Return*. From its opening attack to the crashing final chords, this searing tone poem is six minutes of solid excitement.

ROZSA: *Ben Hur*. A fantastically intricate yet emotionally powerful film score. *Ben Hur*, along with so much other music by Rozsa, Herrmann, Korngold, et al., is dismissed because the composer committed the unpardonable sin of writing for films.

LISZT: *Piano Concerto No. 2*. Speaking as a pianist, I find the synthesis of poetry and bravura in this piece to be so ideal as to make it a nearly perfect piano concerto.

IBERT: *Escapes*. This typically French

tour of three cities somehow manages to capture the dissimilar essences of the suite's itinerary with a flow of irresistible melody and brilliant orchestration.

GOULD: *Spirituals for Orchestra*. Because Morton Gould's compositions are not atonal and dissonant enough, critics deride even the best of them; nonetheless, *Spirituals* is one of this century's most important and original compositions.

JANACEK: *Taras Bulba*. There is more substance to this three-part tone poem than most critics realize, especially in the concluding pages which combine orchestra and organ with powerful effect.

PARAY: *Mass in Honor of St. Joan of Arc*. Paul Paray's monumental *Mass* is one of the few contemporary choral compositions that bears repeated listening (and well worth reissuing, Mercury).

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Antartica Symphony*. Disparaged because of its origins in celluloid, this breath-taking composition has been the object of a shameful campaign of sneering invective, none of which diminishes the greatness and originality of Vaughan Williams' creation.

Mark Koldys

Dearborn, Mich.

More of the Same, Please

Bravo to Sir John Barbirolli and the men of the Hallé Orchestra for their absolutely superb performances of *In a Summer Garden* and other compositions by Frederick Delius (Angel S 36588). In my opinion, Sir John's interpretations match, if

not surpass, the performances of Sir Thomas Beecham on his earlier Columbia and Capitol recordings. Angel Records is also due a vote of thanks for having issued this release on a 4-track 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -ips reel that has simply gorgeous sound.

I sincerely hope that I and other admirers of this fine English composer can look forward to more releases of such high standard: Delius' works have been unjustly neglected for too long.

Edgar S. Cowper
Philadelphia, Pa.

High Fidelity, August 1970, Vol. 20, No. 8
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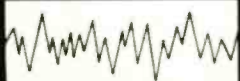
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from Alpha to Omni . . .

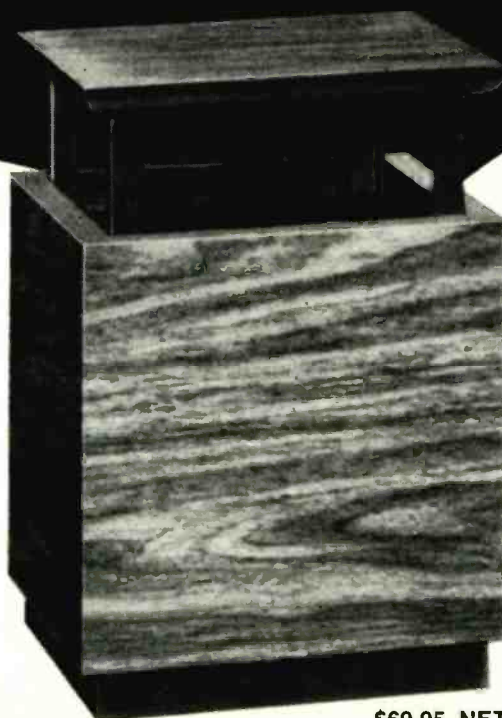
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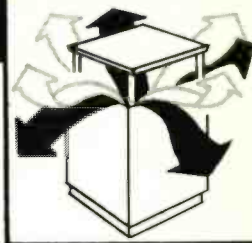
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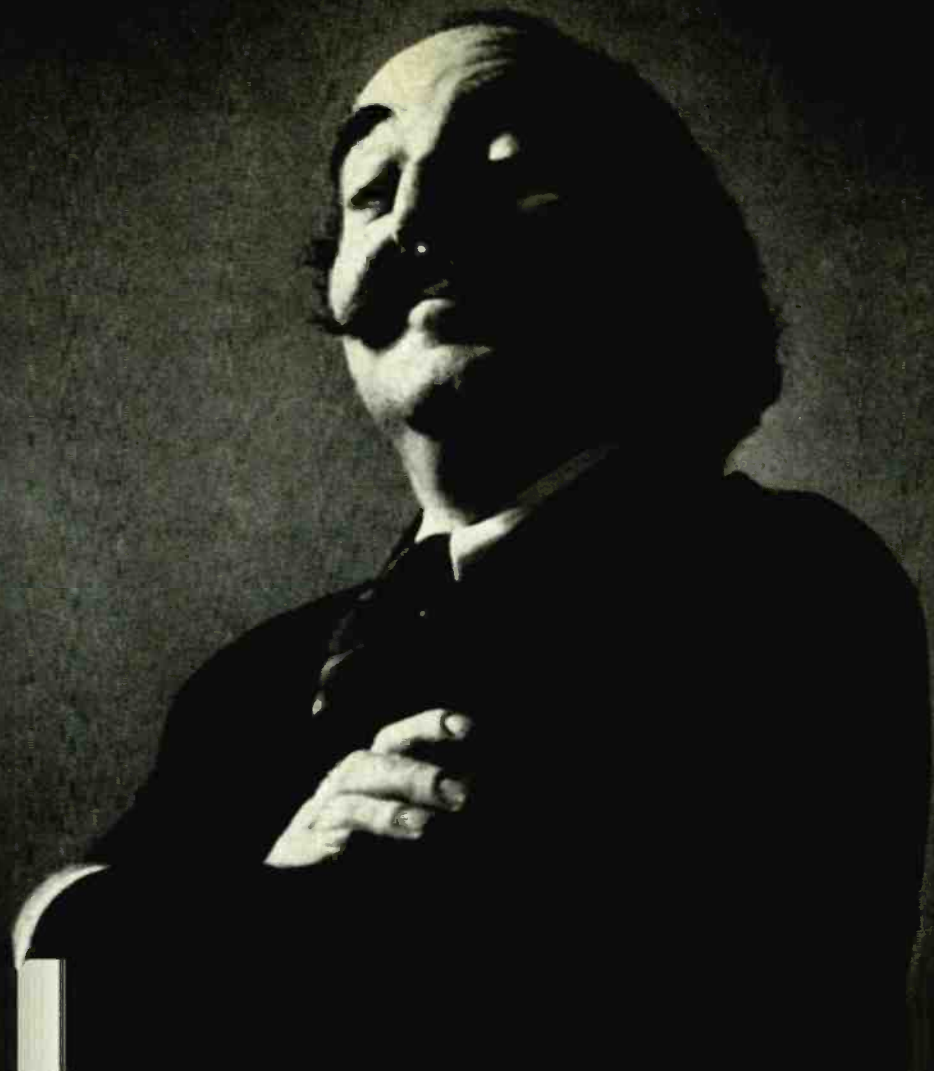
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Porgy Showed the Way to the Ring

by John Culshaw



Mr. Culshaw, former chief producer for Decca/London, captained the four Solti-led operas of Wagner's Ring cycle. He is now head of music on television for the BBC.

I HAVE NEVER cared much for very old records, nor for the kind of person who won't collect anything recorded after 1930. Still, I wouldn't part with Rachmaninoff playing his own arrangement of Kreisler's *Liebesleid* (recorded in 1921) because it is an object lesson in style and rubato. Come to that, I'd keep all of Rachmaninoff's records and just about all of Toscanini's. But the era that really interests me is the one that began after World War II, when recording techniques began to do justice to the sound of music, and the recording producer began to have a voice in the land.

There was Ansermet's first *Petrouchka*, Britten's *Serenade*, an incredible *Carnaval romain* from Victor de Sabata, the Flagstad/Furtwängler Immolation Scene and all sorts of Stokowski excitements. These were all on 78 rpm discs, but the real revelation to me in terms of what could be done towards production for records was, of all things, an early CBS/Columbia LP album of *Porgy and Bess*. I no longer have it. Years ago someone stole or borrowed *Porgy*, so I have no means of checking the impression it made. I remember it had a credit—produced by Goddard Lieberson—which may have been the first of its kind. I didn't know who he was, but I thought of him as a pioneer. Although it was recorded long before stereo, it had all sorts of vocal and choral perspectives, crowd involvement, and street noises of a kind that had never been attempted in a studio production. Clearly, an imagination had been at work. A little later a French recording of *Carmen* took cautious steps in the same direction, but there was no producer credit.

As it happened, *Carmen* was to be my first opera, although by accident rather than design. To produce its first French operas, Decca/London had hired an extenor turned stage producer called Max de Rieux. His assignment in 1951 was to make *Manon* followed by *Carmen*, and halfway through *Manon* he called for

assistance, which was why I was sent to Paris. Max had gone one better than Goddard Lieberson: he'd added a commentary, a blow-by-blow account of the story, spoken in French and superimposed on the music. There were two things to be said about it: first, that it was horrible and second, that it was irremovable because it and the music were on the same track. He was all prepared to honor *Carmen* with the same treatment, despite my loud protests, when suddenly we lost our leading lady, Martha Mödl, who was about to turn into a soprano and sing Brünnhilde and Isolde instead of Carmen. By the time we had found a replacement, Max had to be somewhere else and I took over the production, throwing out the commentary in the process. I have great affection for that early *Carmen*, although the only really good singing came from Janine Micheau as Micaëla.

It took some critics quite a time to grasp the function of a record producer; and it took some record companies even longer. Yet almost all great records bear the mark of their producers, credited or uncredited. I don't know for certain, but I think I detect the hand of Capitol's Richard Jones behind that superlative early Sinatra LP called "Close to You," with the Hollywood String Quartet and some hand-picked instrumentalists, including Reginald Kell. The work of a good producer can be applied in terms of aural imagination (perspectives and movements and the like in opera) or in terms of pure musical judgment. A great producer like Walter Legge has molded and indeed altered performances by many distinguished artists, not all of whom are overgenerous in acknowledging their debt to him. It isn't a question of being a Svengali. A good producer has a conception of what the artist is striving to achieve, and tries to help him. A bad producer sits in the control room and consigns music to tape without getting deeply involved musically or technically.

The pop business has been much more astute in recognizing and encouraging its producers. It was a sad day for classical recordings when my friend John McClure, of Columbia Records, moved into pop, but I can understand his reasons without accepting all of his theories. Management is still inclined to give more and more power to its classical artists, who more often than not use that power to confound their rivals. Fifteen or twenty years ago it was possible to work for one of the major companies and define a classical policy. Now it is a question of what this conductor wants to conduct and what that soprano wants to sing, and the result is a mess. If, as I believe, morale among the remaining good classical producers is low, then the fault lies with management for placating the whims of artists at the expense of the product. It's the Hollywood syndrome again.

Yet it's not all gloomy. The Decca/London *Rosenkavalier* is a terrific achievement as a performance, as a production, and as a technical knockout. The complete *Les Troyens* from Philips [reviewed on page 65] may not reach a comparable standard, but it is far and away the best thing that has ever come out of that stable. Both of these were the direct result of the sort of dual enthusiasm between artist and producer which is the first step in the creative process of recording: on the one hand Georg Solti and Christopher Raeburn, and on the other Colin Davis and Erik Smith. Yet only the other day I read in an English magazine a statement allegedly made by a spokesman for the company that will soon release a new *Götterdämmerung*. With what seemed like pride, he said that no attempt had been made to produce it for records. Now isn't that something—twenty years after Lieberson's *Porgy*, seventeen years after Legge's *Tristan*, and six years after the only rival *Götterdämmerung*, my own baby? I hope he was talking nonsense, but I have a cold feeling that he wasn't.

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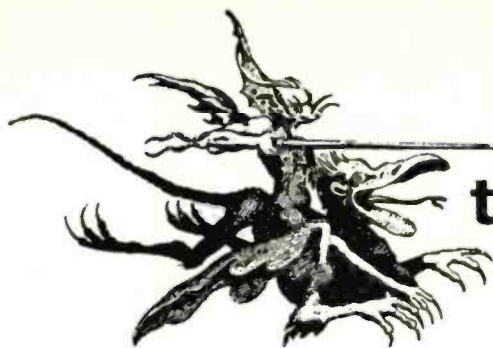
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For more information, and the complete text of the review, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Dept. HF8

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too hot to handle

I've just replaced my Garrard A70/Shure M44 record-playing setup with a Sony PS 18004 turntable and a Shure V-15 Type II Improved cartridge. The old setup sounded cleaner and brighter than the new one, though both use the same receiver (Kenwood KT-88) and speakers (JBL Novas). Also I must turn the volume control almost twice as far up with the new cartridge, increasing speaker noise. Is this normal?—John D. Glowacki, Bloomington, Ind.

It is not normal for newer and better equipment to sound poorer than older and less sophisticated equipment. It is normal, however, for the V-15 Type II to require more gain than the M44. The output of the M44 is slightly more than twice that of the V-15, which (at 3.5 millivolts per channel) should still be enough to drive the KT-88 (with a phono preamp sensitivity of 1.72 millivolts) to full output. But if the extra gain required also raises noise and distortion through the system it would be a good idea to have the Kenwood checked by a competent technician.

If you accept advertising claims, just about all audio equipment except FM radio is flat from 20 to 20,000 Hz—and FM goes up to 15,000 Hz. But how much of that range do we actually need for good reproduction of different kinds of music? By that I mean how much of the overtones of various instruments do we really need to perceive solidly the characteristic sound of each? For instance, my Teac 6010 is nearly flat to 15 kHz at $7\frac{1}{2}$ and then drops off to 18 kHz; at $3\frac{3}{4}$ it's almost flat to 10 kHz and drops off to 14 kHz. What material can I record successfully at the slow speed?—Stephen D. Hellier, APO, San Francisco.

The question is not what information you need if you are to hear the difference between one instrument and another (you can do that on a telephone, but who wants to listen to music on a telephone?)—rather it's how much information you need for reproduction that sounds convincingly like live music. And the answer to that will depend partly on how much of the live sound you can perceive in the first place—on the state of your hearing, in other words. The closer the reproduction comes to the live experience, the more it will satisfy you. Don't think, though, that if your hearing cuts off at 15 kHz (typical for most adults) anything beyond that in your equipment's specs is wasted. If its performance were

limited to your hearing's bandwidth, its output probably would display unfortunate properties right down into the audible range—poor transient response, for example. That's why an amplifier that's flat out to 100 kHz probably will sound cleaner than one that only makes it to 18 kHz.

With greatly improved noise specs in preamplifiers and turntables and the use of the Dolby system in recording, one problem still remains to prevent us from having a quiet background during the softer passages in music: the jet-like roar and rumble from the record groove itself. What causes this and why hasn't the Dolby eliminated it? Thomas J. Hauptert, New Haven, Conn.

If the roar you hear really is "jetlike," then there's something wrong with your equipment. (Are you sure you loosened the screws used to keep your turntable from rattling about during shipping?) Taking your expression as an extreme exaggeration, however, we would assume you are hearing what is known as the "orange-peel effect"—a tendency of vinyl to form little rumble-producing valleys that don't match the perfect smoothness of the stamper used in pressing the record. Since professional Dolby equipment affects only the tape portion of record production, it does nothing to control any rumble introduced after the signal is transferred from tape to disc. A special Dolby technique comparable to that now being introduced to control tape hiss in cassette recordings and players might help; but it would have to affect the low frequencies and would therefore be entirely different from present home Dolby equipment, which affects the top end only. And it would add a good deal to the cost of record-playing equipment. Record manufacturers might be unhappy about that since price is presently the most striking advantage of discs over prerecorded tapes.

I would like to set up a center-channel woofer for use between my two Quads (driven by a Quad 303 amplifier). I have a spare Futterman H-3 amplifier that I would like to use for the purpose, but I can't use an AR-1W speaker with it since the H-3 won't drive a 4-ohm speaker. Which would you recommend instead: a new Dynaco A-25 or a used KLH-4, which I'm told functions particularly well with an H-3?—Harry O. Ansonge, Holliswood, N.Y.
Whether the speaker is new or second-

hand is beside the point as long as it hasn't been damaged, which you can tell soon enough by listening. Speakers do age like everything else, of course, but our tests would give enough of an edge to the KLH for your purposes so that a little stiffening in the suspension shouldn't be critical. As we've said before, however, the ultimate quality of a stereo system using dissimilar equipment for an added channel is problematical, so don't expect instant success with either speaker. In such cases nothing succeeds like experimentation.

My present record player, a portable stereo model, has the stylus force set at 10 grams. I plan to replace it with a component system in a year and a half. But what about my records—will they be ruined by the time I get the new system?—Robert Vellky, Youngstown, Ohio

You'd better figure that they will be unless your present player can be fitted with a modern stereo cartridge tracking at no more than 4 or 5 grams. Your new system, particularly if it includes an elliptical stylus in the cartridge, may track a relatively fresh portion of the groove walls and produce acceptable sound; but don't count on it.

Some friends of mine tried three samples of the Astrocom/Marlux tape recorder in their apartment so far and each one had the same fault: pops and clicks occur in the audio whenever a light or an appliance is switched on or off. If they're recording, the noises go right on the tape. Doesn't that make the unit pretty useless, since they can't go around taping down switches and disconnecting automatic equipment like the refrigerator every time they want to record?—Joan Conte, New York, N.Y.
During our tests of the unit we found nothing to indicate that it is sensitive to the RF (radio-frequency) energy generated by such surges, so we've got to assume that it is the current surges themselves—entering the unit via its power cord—that have caused the problem. Presumably all that's needed is an inexpensive power-line filter, available from an electronic parts supplier or service agency. It's possible that the leads between the Astrocom/Marlux and the rest of the system are not correctly or securely attached and pick up the noise by induction. This is particularly likely if audio leads have been run next to power cables, which always is a bad practice.

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Scott Muni
WNEW-FM, New York

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FOUR-CHANNEL SOUND: THE SECOND WAVE . . .

The first news came almost a year ago: Vanguard was planning to issue four-channel Surround Stereo open-reel tapes. Reactions varied. Some companies rushed onto the bandwagon with four-channel products that would reproduce the quadriphonic tapes; others seemed stunned by the whole idea. Then a period of stock-taking and regrouping set in. Manufacturers big and little were turning research and development departments loose on the new technique, but any announcements on progress were usually pretty guarded.

Some marketable fruits will be resulting from these activities by this fall. Sony is adding a four-channel open-reel model. RCA, Motorola, and Lear Jet all have announced their intention to produce four-channel eight-track tape-cartridge wares (see "Tape Recording at Twenty-Five" elsewhere in this issue). Mikado has a four-channel broadcast/reception system that, it says, will interfere neither with stereo reception nor with SCA subcarriers for background music services. Jon Scott Fixler has patented a headphone design with dual drivers



Four-channel sound on eight-track cartridges from RCA.

in each earpiece for quadriphonic reproduction. The Scheiber four-channel disc moves closer to marketability with Advent's agreement to manufacture the encoding and decoding hardware.

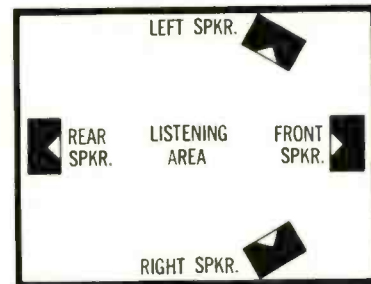
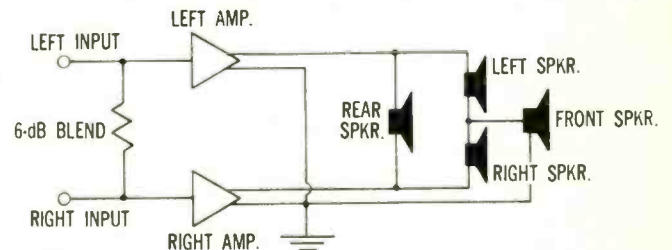
And there's more to come. At the Consumer Electronics Show in New York (which is not open to the public and will be over by the time you read this) manufacturers will be parading their ingenuity for the benefit of trade insiders in what promises to be one of the biggest displays of one-upmanship in years. Hints of momentous announcements seem to come from every quarter. Though many of these hints can be discounted as pure press-agency to get dealers and reporters into this or that manufacturer's exhibit, there's obviously a lot happening behind the scenes.

. . . AND A NEW APPROACH

Dave Haller of Dynaco has filed a patent application covering a four-channel system that would, he says, be most compatible of all. Present means and present equipment should serve the purpose as long as: 1) miking

during recording follows his scheme; 2) the reproducing equipment is provided with a blend control that reduces channel separation to 6 dB; and 3) four speakers are wired and oriented correctly. No extra amplifiers, no multiplexing, no decoder.

The miking scheme employs the usual left and right microphones plus a center mike that is fed equally to



both channels in phase (L + R) and a rear, or ambience, microphone that feeds both channels out of phase (L - R). A disc recorded this way would, he says, sound virtually identical to any stereo LP as long as there is no prime musical information in the rear channel. That is, it must be a true ambience pickup reproducing the hall sound. Moving the guitarist on a pops session to the rear channel, for example, will not work.

To reproduce as four channels, the output of a standard stereo pickup would be fed to a stereo amplifier—with the 6-dB blend control—whose output is connected as shown in the block diagram. Note that the orientation of the four speakers is different from that of most quadriphonic proposals, which place two speakers on each side. With a little thought you can see how the "front" information would cancel out in the rear speaker and vice versa. Left and right speakers likewise rely on phase-cancellation effects to re-establish full separation.

STEREO AND VIDEO

About two years ago we received a call from CBS in New York. The network was planning a series of simulcasts that would permit Leonard Bernstein's young people's concerts with the New York Philharmonic to be watched on television and heard at the same time in stereo using the combined facilities of the local CBS television and multiplex FM stations. Would we care to see a preview in the network's office? We would.

It was all in glorious color, of course. (Closed circuit monitors are notoriously better than home sets at keeping a healthy bloom in flesh tones without watering down more vivid surroundings.) We watched with interest while the synchronization between the three-track

Continued on page 28



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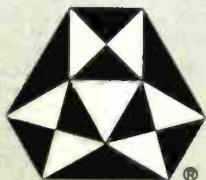
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Murray Allen owns one of the world's keenest ears. He played sax and clarinet with big name bands like Skitch Henderson's and Bobby Sherwood's before becoming an engineer. And has done sessions for Bobby Melton, The Hi-Lo's, Julie London and many other famous names. Murray was one of the first to experiment in multi-track recording and recently pioneered in the use of 16-track. He is now with Universal Recording Studios where he engineers records and commercials, including the Schlitz and United Air Lines television campaigns which are currently on the air. He was also Audio Consultant to Science Research Associates.

An audio the new

"The VM professionals are really worthy of the name. I've never seen so much professional control in home-type equipment."

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"You know how hard it is to reproduce a clean piano or harp. Well, the 1555 does a beautiful job. Absolutely no wow."

"I listened to an album I engineered on a VM professional rig, and I can honestly say it was closer to the master tape than I'd ever heard. I could even hear tape noise which is really rare."

"I've decided to take my VM professional outfit to my office. Every day I deal with people who really know a good sound when they hear it."

"And it always pays to make a good impression."

THE VM PROFESSIONAL 1555
Two synchronous motors — 24-pole for turntable, one for changer mechanism • Belt driven, completely isolated, low mass, dynamically balanced turntable • Gentle lowering spindle • Automatic record size sensor system • Photo cell cycle-change sensor eliminates side pressure and trip noise • Piston-damped 2-way cue control • 9 1/2" tone arm (from pivot to stylus); the longest on any automatic turntable • Piano-key control center isolated from turntable and pick-up arm • Built-in anti-skate system • Detachable head • Tracking error: 1 1/2 degrees maximum over entire record • Rumble: —52 db (CBS weighting) • Comes complete with Shure magnetic cartridge and attractive walnut base with dust cover.



For engineering specs on
the complete VM Professional Series write:

VM CORPORATION

Dept. 74, P.O. Box 1247, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022
or call direct, Area Code 616-925-8841. (Ask for Dept. 74.)

FM tape (left, right, and sync-signal) and the video tape (with its usual mix-down for mono broadcast of the audio portion) was locked in—quite a problem once allowances for intervening station break announcements were made. But it all worked beautifully until the camera dollyed around behind the orchestra and looked Bernstein full in the face. Behold! When he gestured to the right of the screen, the violins would strike up on the left; when he pointed off to the left, the cellos would begin sawing on the right.

That's the inherent problem of simulcasting, of course. It would be easy enough for the engineers to switch stereo channels whenever the camera gets the "wrong" side of the subject, but what about the radio-only listener? He might be hard put to accept violins that jumped back and forth in his stereo perspective. CBS's answer, apparently, was that the stereo televiewer would simply have to take his orientation lumps. This limitation notwithstanding, we were genuinely disappointed when the subsequent simulcasts were canceled.

The stereo-video idea has come up again, however, with the N.E.T. production of *My Heart's in the Highlands*, Jack Beeson's new opera based on the William Saroyan play. According to Tom Keller, director of engineering for educational station WGBH-TV in Boston, where the opera was produced, the new work can be presented as a simulcast with stereo FM sound. Keller further points out that a stage production of this type, which doesn't lend itself to direct views from the stage, neatly bypasses the left-right orientation problem.

"We have been doing simulcasts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra concerts, of course," Keller told us. "But frankly, I don't see simulcasting as the real future of this sort of presentation—and I believe very firmly in the future of stereo audio for television." FM, in his view, is a separate medium from TV; simulcasting represents a sort of stopgap comparable to the first AM/FM stereo broadcasts in which the listener to only one signal heard a badly lopsided presentation of the program material.

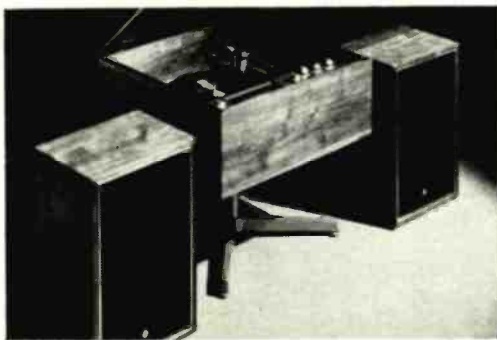
Instead he looks to development of a technique that already is on the air in Japan: true stereo TV broadcasts with the second audio signal multiplexed on the first. Introduction of the technique was timed to the world's fair in Osaka and its first use was not in presenting left-and-right stereo but in adding a second language to broadcast soundtracks. English is the preferred second language, it seems. (The first broadcast using the dual sound paired English and Japanese soundtracks on an airing of—are you ready—the Doris Day Show!)

To meet the demand for equipment capable of receiving the multiplexed-audio telecasts, some Japanese manufacturers have been offering adapters. Toshiba recently introduced a color set for under \$800 and a low-cost (under \$150) model, both of which can receive the two languages in various loudspeaker/earphone combinations. Pioneer has a multiplex-audio-only receiver for the TV channels that is designed to work into a component stereo system.

There's the rub, as Tom Keller points out. The sound currently emanating from all but a handful of special-model TV receivers is just not good—and the simple switch to stereo presumably won't make it much better. But he looks forward to the day when the stereo-sound output of TV receivers will be readily adaptable to reproduction through component-quality sound systems. That's when WGBH's projected series of opera recordings will *really* come into its own, he feels, particularly if large-screen images for the home have become available by then.

That day may not be very far off. The Videocassette system introduced recently by Sony [*"News and Views,"* February 1970] already has the double-soundtrack capability; the switch from two-language to true-stereo use of multiplexed TV sound represents only a minor adjustment of the technique. The large-screen color image is being worked on by a number of companies here and abroad. At any rate, it's a concept worth keeping an eye on. Or an ear—or two.

equipment in the news



From Pioneer: a high-style stereo

Pioneer calls its new C-6000A a "three-component home music center," and the model falls somewhere between a compact system and a console. The main section, containing a Pioneer PL41A two-speed record changer and a 36-watt (IHF) stereo FM/AM receiver, can be used compact-style without its pedestal base. The top of this section is made of tinted safety glass capable of supporting more than 500 pounds according to Pioneer. The two-way speaker systems and the sides of the main unit are finished in walnut. The \$550 price includes the pedestal base and wall-mount fittings for the speakers.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BSR broadens its McDonald line

The RD8S eight-track cartridge record-playback deck is one of the components being added to the McDonald line, which until now has concentrated on record-playing equipment. Front-panel controls make possible the selection of continuous repeat of all four "programs" on the cartridge, automatic eject after the fourth, or automatic eject after a single "program." The automatic-eject feature operates in both record and playback; manual eject and selector are provided as well. Separate mike and line input level controls for each channel allow input mixing. The home-style deck is designed for use in conjunction with a component or compact system and sells for under \$200.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Continued on page 30

Small news from Sony.

The World's Most Versatile Tape Recorder! The Model 124-CS portable stereo Cassette-Corder® lets you record your favorite music and play it back in glorious stereo. When there's work to be done, you can use it as a functional tape recorder. Compact, lightweight, the 124-CS weighs just five pounds with batteries and measures just 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{16}$ " x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

Full-Range Extension Stereo Speakers. Ideal for desired stereo separation. In addition, recorder also features its own built-in speaker, which cuts off when extension speakers are used.

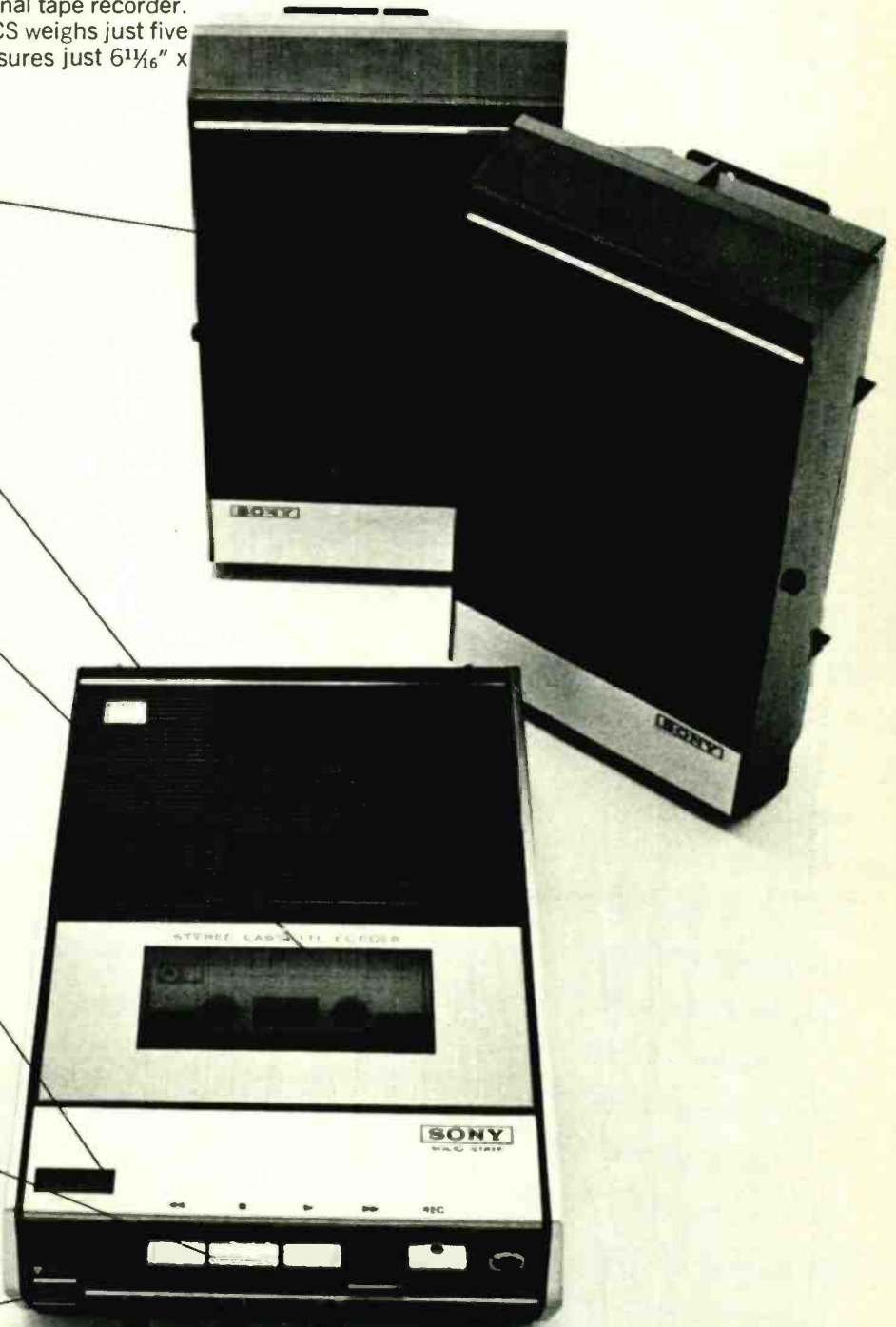
AC or Battery. Cassette-Corder® plays off house current, car or boat battery, four flashlight batteries, or optional rechargeable battery pack, providing use-anywhere versatility.

Constant-Speed Motor for True-Fidelity Sound. Regulated-speed DC motor ensures constant tape speed for pitch accuracy. Signal-to-noise ratio: 45 db or better. Frequency response: 50 to 10,000 Hz.

Recording-Level, Battery-Level Indicator. Extremely accurate meter for monitoring proper input level. Meter also continuously indicates battery condition during playback mode. Sony-matic level control automatically controls recording level.

Push-Button Tape-Transport Controls. Just push a button for forward, record, rewind, fast-forward, or stop. Safety interlock prevents accidental erasure of recorded tape. Separate controls permit continuously-variable stereo balance, tone, and volume. Stereo or mono mode switch.

Lid & Cassette Pop-up Button. Push the button, the lid flips up, the cassette pops out. Snap a new cassette into place in seconds. Use Sony C-90 cassettes and get 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours' playing time.



Sony Model 124-CS Portable Stereo Cassette-Corder®. Less than \$199.50, complete with carrying case for recorder, speakers, and accessories. Also available: Sony Model 110, Easy-matic Cassette-Corder®, priced at only \$109.95. For your free copy of our latest catalog, please write Mr. Phillips, Sony/Superscope, 3144 Vireland Ave., Sun Valley, California 91352.

SONY SUPERSCOPE The Authority in Stereo.

You never heard it so good.®

Sherwood announces low-cost receiver



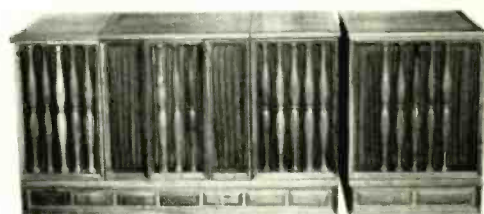
The Model S-7100 AM/FM receiver, which will sell for \$199.95, marks Sherwood's first venture into the low-priced receiver market. The unit has provision for main and remote pairs of speakers plus headphone listening. A front-panel tape-recorder output is included. FM sensitivity is rated at 1.9 μ V by Sherwood, and output power is in the moderate range. The walnut case is included in the price.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sombras group new from Aztec

The Sombras custom line of hand-carved equipment cabinets and speaker-system enclosures from Aztec offers a number of options in housing component stereo systems. The equipment cabinet—to hold receiver, tape deck, turntable, and records—may be either high-boy or low-boy style. The small speaker enclosures house drivers and crossovers comparable to those in Aztec's Gaugin systems; the larger ones include a 15-inch woofer driven through a folded horn. The finish on all units is polished walnut. Prices range from about \$400 to \$800 per unit. A 48-inch equipment console is shown with one 21-inch speaker enclosure (at right).

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Rabco upgrades straight-line-tracking arm

A new model (SL-8E) of the Rabco servo-driven tone arm for use on manual turntables has electric-motor action to control lowering and raising of the arm. Arm motion is triggered by the push-button cue control or by the automatic reject at the end of the record side. Price of the new model, which supersedes the former SL-8, is \$169.50. Owners of the older model may have it factory-converted to an SL-8E for \$30.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Roberts adds a stereo receiver

Roberts, best known for its tape recorders though the line has included electronic components as well in recent years, has announced the Model 120 AM/FM receiver, priced at \$299.95. It is rated at a continuous power output of 37.5 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads. Front-panel features include switching provision for two stereo pairs of speakers (either, both, or neither) plus a stereo headphone jack. Rear-panel tape recorder connections include both phono jacks and a DIN-style input/output jack. Either 300-ohm twinload or 75-ohm coax may be used for the FM antenna connections.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Carlsson speakers offered by Sonab

Sonab of Stockholm has announced that this fall it will be marketing here a series of speaker systems designed by Stig Carlsson. From the left, the four models shown are: the OA-5 Type 2 with an 8½-inch woofer and four tweeters; the OA-4 with one less tweeter; the OA-6 Type 2, similar to the OA-5 but with a motion-feedback bass energizer built in; and the V-1 with a single full-range driver. All feature a grille-cloth top and "omnidirectional" dispersion. Prices are expected to range up to about \$400 for the OA-6.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

With two exceptions — the Mode Selector which lowers the tonearm base for single play, and the arm's true gimbal suspension — you'll find a lot of features like the 1219's on one automatic turntable or another.

After all, every turntable has to rotate records, and every tonearm has to track them.

But all the features of the 1219 are quite different than those you'll find on any other turntable. They're engineered to finer tolerances, function with greater accuracy and do precisely what they're supposed to do.

As a result the caliber of the 1219's performance is very exclusive indeed.

Some of the 1219's features are highlighted below. You should be able to make any comparisons you like very easily.

These and other features are described much more fully in our literature. It's yours for the asking, together with complete reprints of test reports from independent laboratories.

United Audio Products, Inc.,
120 So. Columbus Ave., Mount Vernon,
New York, 10553



Not all of these Dual 1219 features are exclusive. But the way they perform is.



One-piece spindle rotates with platter; doesn't need record to turn it. And the multiple-play spindle doesn't have to come out when the records come off; saves wear and tear on the owner too.

Platter isn't just 12 inches wide and 7 pounds heavy. It's dynamically balanced too.

Motor provides high starting torque plus synchronous speed constancy. Drive system adds 6% pitch control.

8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " tonearm is the longest of any automatic and its tracking error is the lowest.

Tonearm centered and balanced within concentric rings of gimbal suspension. All four suspension points have identical low-friction bearings.

Counterbalance with hundredth-gram click stops makes adjustment easier. Faster too. Especially when interchanging cartridges of different weights.

Stylus force is applied around the pivot by a small fraction of a long coiled spring. Arm remains balanced in every plane.

Unique Mode Selector provides 15° stylus tracking in both single-play and multiple-play modes.

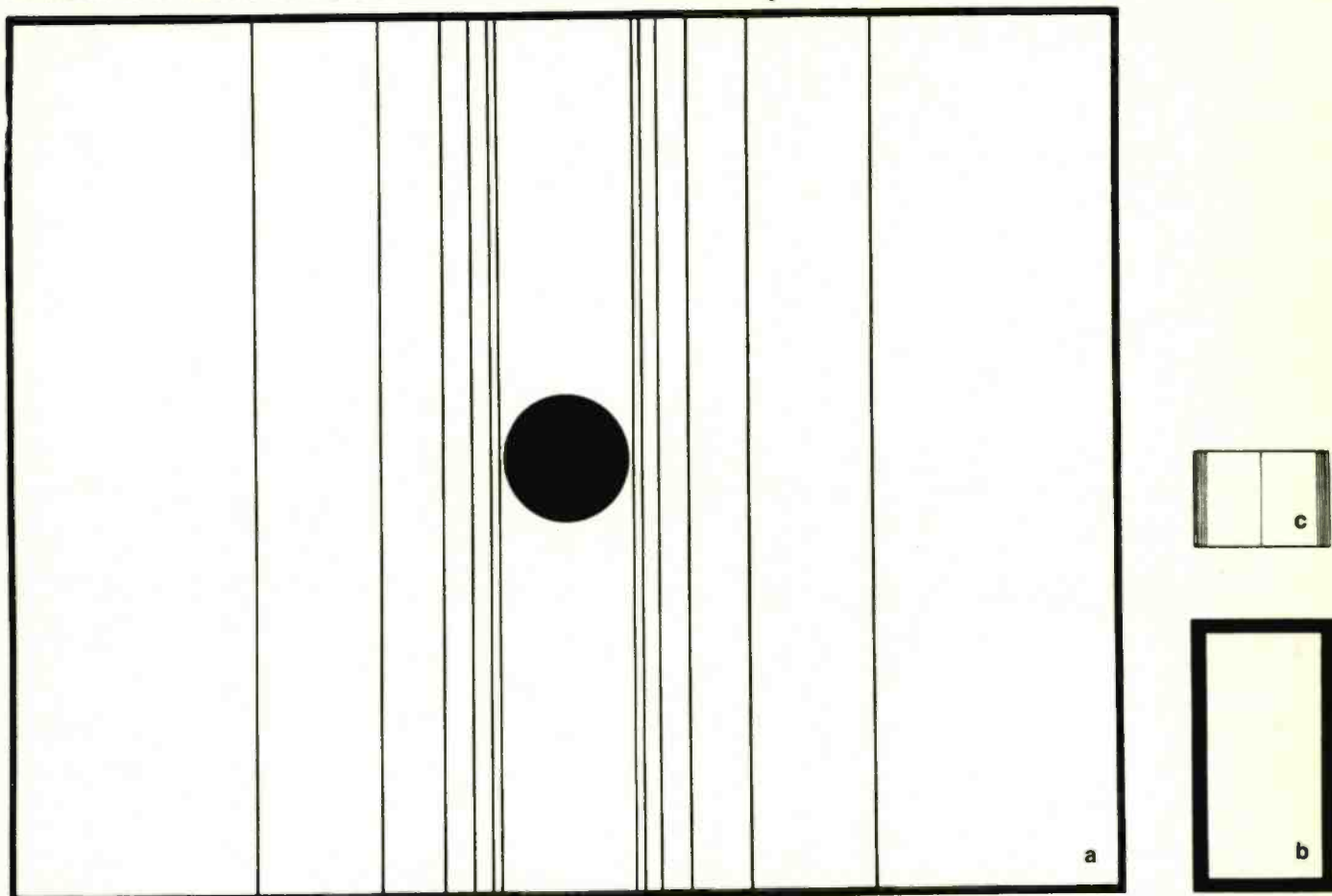
Anti-skating control is calibrated separately and differently for elliptical and conical styli. Naturally, since each type skates differently.

Cue-control needs only light touch. Tonearm movement is damped in both directions. And slow descent functions during all automatic starts as well.

\$175.00

CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Acoustic Research designed "Big Horn" to show the size of a horn-type speaker system that could match the bass response of the AR-3a.



a Big Horn; b AR-3a; c *Acoustics* by Beranek; all drawn to the same scale.

When the AR-3a is placed against a wall, its frequency response is flat to below 40 Hz, and continues even at lower frequencies with very low distortion. To design Big Horn, we turned to page 268 of the standard text, *Acoustics* by Leo Beranek*, to find the equation used to calculate the size of a horn with a cutoff frequency of 40 Hz.

As shown in the scale drawing above, Big Horn is 7 feet high and 9 feet wide; its depth would have to be greater than either of these dimensions. A pair for stereo would take up slightly more space in a living room than two VW buses. Yet, played at the same loudness, the only audible difference between them and a pair of AR-3a systems would be the slightly rougher response of the Big Horns due to reflections inside them. Other than that, the Big Horns should sound excellent; they would simply be not quite as good, and much more costly than AR-3as.

Complete technical data for the AR-3a is available free on request.

*McGraw-Hill, \$14.50.



Acoustic Research, Inc.

24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

new equipment reports

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE
TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



BRAVO, LESA!

THE EQUIPMENT: Lesa PRF-6, a three-speed automatic turntable with integral arm. Chassis dimensions: 14½ by 12⅝ inches; allow 4½ inches clearance above and 4¼ inches below. Price (includes manual, automatic, and single-play 45-rpm spindles): \$179.95. Extras: walnut base, \$14.95; plastic dust cover, \$19.95; 45-rpm automatic spindle, \$7.95. Lesa PRF-6 mounted on deluxe teakwood base with plexiglas cover, as Model 90A, \$249.95. Manufactured by Lesa of Milan, Italy; U.S. distributor: Imperial Sound Co., Division of Component Specialties, Inc., 39 St. Mary's Place, Freeport, N.Y. 11520.

COMMENT: From the standpoint of the quality-minded U.S. stereo buyer, Italy is a latecomer to the audio scene; in the past we have not been aware of any significant marketing thrust in our direction. Considering the strong tradition in Italy of music, not to mention its reputation for producing other items of high artistic merit and some of the world's finest machinery, this absence has been cause for speculation. Given a people that can turn out a Sistine Chapel, a *Traviata* and a Ferrari, what manner of audio gear might we expect?

The answer is here in the form of a superb automatic turntable that performs admirably and is a joy to use both as an automatic and as a manual. That is to say, while it goes through its automated operations flawlessly, it also lends itself to manual operation with a minimum of bother and a satisfyingly high order of audio perfectionism.

A three-speed (33, 45, and 78) model, the Lesa

can be adjusted for complete accuracy at any of its speed settings by means of a built-in vernier adjustment and an illuminated strobe dial. The adjustment also permits you to vary speed somewhat if you want to listen (or play along) at a tempo or pitch slightly different from that recorded. The exact range of adjustment according to CBS Labs' measurements (made with reference to a line voltage of 120 V AC) is within plus 1.1, minus 3.7 per cent. Doubtless this specific range will vary with departures from the 120-volt standard that are common throughout the U.S., but the net effect is still available.

The 6-pound, 3-ounce platter is driven by a six-pole induction motor; total rumble by the CBS ARLL method was well down at -56 dB. Average flutter and wow came to 0.1 per cent. None of these effects could be heard from the turntable fitted with a late-model high-compliance pickup feeding a high-powered amplifier driving very wide-range speaker systems.

The Lesa's tone arm is of excellent design; the lab simply could not measure any friction in its movement either laterally or vertically, and concludes that it must be below 10 milligrams, which is of course negligible. A low stylus force of 0.45 grams is all that is needed to trip the automatic change mechanism. The built-in stylus-force gauge is virtually lab-accurate; the following calibrated settings produced the stylus forces indicated: 1, 1.1; 2, 2; 3, 3; 4, 3.9. A built-in dial for adjusting antiskating or bias compensation also is included. The numbers on this dial do not indicate actual amounts of bias applied but rather are the settings to use that correspond to whatever stylus force has been selected. CBS Labs found that they were extremely close to optimal values for use with a spherical-tip cartridge and slightly low for elliptical tips. At that, the net bias applied by this method for any stylus force represents a good, workable compromise between the theoretical requirements of the two types of stylus tips; if, however, you want to squeeze a bit closer to perfection with an elliptical tip, simply adjust the antiskating knob a shade higher than the number marked on its dial for any given stylus-force setting.

The Lesa's built-in cueing control is unusually good: it is sturdy, extremely gentle, and permits the pickup to return to the record precisely at the spot from which you lifted it. The change cycle during automatic operation seems foolproof and very

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.

easy on records; it takes thirteen seconds. The arm may be adjusted for pickup height from the record and for set-down point with respect to the lead-in groove, although our test samples needed no retrimming. The arm has no adjustment for vertical angle as such, but rather is optimized for a pile of four records. That is to say, with four discs on the platter the arm's attitude will have no effect on the vertical stylus angle of the pickup stylus, whatever that happens to be. However, the difference in the number of records versus vertical angle is hardly worth being concerned about: one record on the platter increases the pickup's vertical angle by only 1.5 degrees, while a stack of six records decreases the angle by a mere 0.8 degree.

Again, the arm has no adjustment for stylus overhang but we don't regard this as a serious omission. Here's why: the geometry of the Lesa arm requires the stylus overhang to be exactly one-half inch for minimum lateral tracking-angle error across most of the record. As it happens in this arm, this requirement translates to a distance of one-half inch from stylus tip to an imaginary line connecting the centers of the cartridge-mounting holes in the shell. The total tracking error across a record will then be within plus or minus 3 degrees. Mathematical analysis indicates that a tip-to-hole dimension as little as $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch (which probably is the extreme that might be expected among today's pickups) will not appreciably increase the lateral angle error, offering as it does a total error of +1.5, -5 degrees across a record. We obviously could not measure this dimension on every available pickup, but we did check a few. The Shure V-15, for instance, measures one-half inch exactly; the Goldring 800E measures about $\frac{7}{16}$ inch; the new ADC 220 measures $\frac{3}{8}$ inch. Theoretically, distortion should increase as the dimension decreases, but none of our listeners could detect a trace of distortion with any of these pickups.

Its technical performance measurements aside, the Lesa has a "personality" that may prove especially appealing to the long-time audiophile who was weaned on separate, completely manual turntables. While it

functions beautifully as an automatic, it also lends itself readily to manual operation. For instance, even with the long spindle inserted you can convert from automatic to manual cueing and start/stop whenever you opt to do so. In manual mode the platter and arm are free so that you can start the table and let it run as long as you like before cueing up. You also can "cue instantly"—that is, set the pickup down on any part of the record before the platter starts to spin, then turn the motor on. You can even "back cue"—that is, set the pickup on the record and rotate the turntable by hand in either direction, thereby locating a precise spot for instant play the moment you move the control lever. You can interrupt play at any portion of a record, manually return the arm to its rest, and shut off the motor. If you are set up for manual operation or single-play and have moved the control lever to "manual" to start the machine and then decide you'd rather operate it automatically, you simply move the lever to "auto" and the arm will lift off the rest and descend into the lead-in groove. Even then you can go back to manual operation if you care to. In manual mode the only vestige of automation is the arm's automatic return to rest at the end of a record.

Taking all in all—performance, styling, construction, and general "feel"—our editorial hat is off to the people in Milan who created the new Lesa.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Speed Setting (rpm)	Speed Accuracy (percentages slow or fast)*		
	105 VAC	120 VAC	127 VAC
33	0.1 s	set exact	0.1 f
45	0.2 s	set exact	0.1 f
78	0.2 s	set exact	0.1 f

* Measurements made with Vernier speed control set for exact speed at each setting using 120 volts AC, 60-Hz power line. If control is set for exact speed at 33 and then turned to other speeds, error is: 45 rpm, 0.3% fast; 78 rpm, 0.4% fast. With six records on platter, speed varies by less than 0.1 per cent.

REALISTIC RECEIVER OFFERS MANY FEATURES



THE EQUIPMENT: Realistic STA-120, a stereo FM/AM receiver supplied in walnut case. Dimensions: 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide; 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches high; 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches deep. Price: \$269.95. Manufacturer: Radio Shack, 730 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, Mass. 02215.

COMMENT: Amply laden with features, including a few unusual controls, the new STA-120 offers AM and stereo or mono FM reception combined with a medium-powered control amplifier.

The front panel, with its two-tone station dial and an assortment of knobs, switches, and levers, looks busy but is stylish. FM tuning is aided by two meters: one for signal strength, the other for center-of-channel adjustment. In addition, there's a stereo indicator that lights up when a multiplexed FM signal is received. The signal-strength meter, by the way, also operates for AM tuning. To the right of the tuning knob is the first unusual feature: a pair of sliding controls that handle volume on the two stereo channels. Since they operate

independently of each other, they also serve as a channel-balance device—and a very precise and effective one too. Another unusual feature is the “mid-range” control which—like the “presence” control of some years ago—may be used to vary a broad section of the frequency band, its maximum effect covering the range from 1,000 to 5,000 Hz. You can use this control to bring soloists, especially singers, “closer” or to place them further back with respect to the accompaniment.

The front panel also includes more customary features: a headphone jack, two speaker-system selectors, the input-program selector, and switches for stereo/mono mode, tape monitor, automatic frequency control, loudness contour, low filter, and high filter. Normal treble and bass controls (each handles both channels simultaneously) also are included. The speaker switches enable you to run either one, both, or none of the stereo speaker systems connected to the rear. The headphone jack is live at all times. All controls, by the way, operate smoothly and positively, giving one the feeling that it is a higher-priced unit. The meters are responsive and the dial calibration accurate.

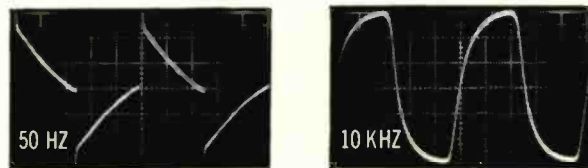
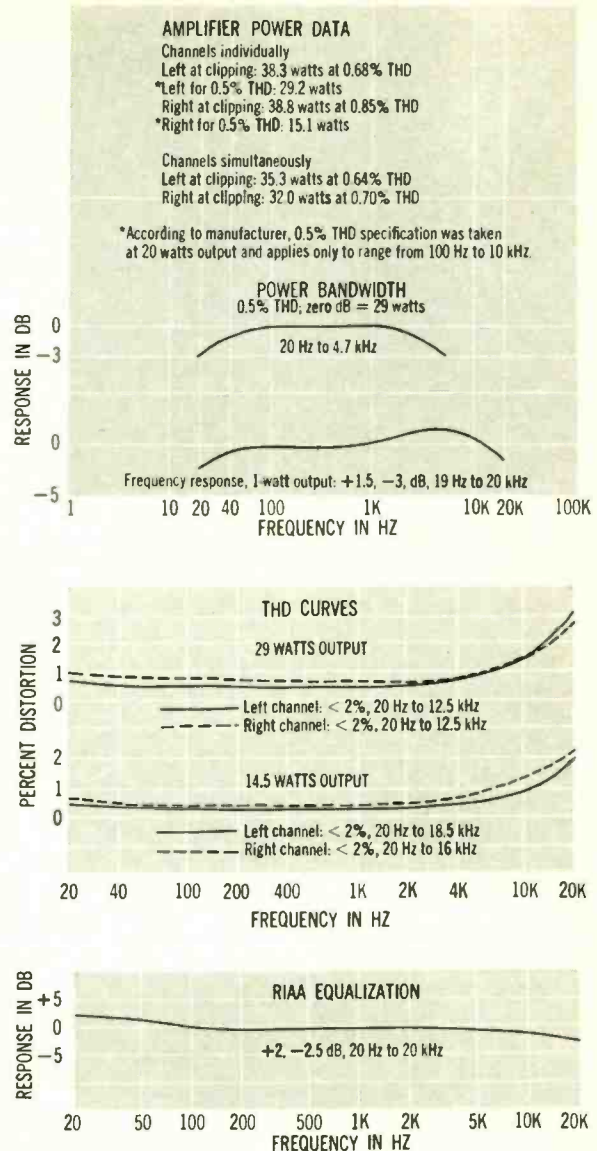
The rear of the STA-120 contains screw terminals for connecting the main and remote speakers, plus an extra set of phono jacks for the main speakers if they happen to be connected via shielded cable. Signal inputs are provided for a magnetic phono cartridge, tape playback, and an auxiliary source. There's also a stereo pair of jacks for feeding signals to a recorder. The tape-in jacks are controlled by their own level adjustment (the third unusual feature) which enables you to match tape playback volume to other source volumes for a given setting of the front-panel loudness control. The phono-input jacks are controlled by a high/low switch, again designed to match phono levels to other sources. While this particular control is in itself not unusual, it is rarely found on a low-priced set. Additional items on the rear include antenna-input terminals (300 ohms for FM, long-wire for AM), an unswitched AC convenience outlet, three fuse holders (left- and right-channel outputs, and AC main line), and the set's power cord. The unit appears to be sturdily constructed, and the owner's manual is clearly written and generously illustrated.

The FM section's measured sensitivity indicates the set's ability to receive all local stations and a few beyond the normal reception radius. While no long-distance champion, the STA-120—thanks to its good capture ratio, favorable signal-to-noise ratio, and low distortion—renders clean signals from the stations it does pull in. Our cable-FM test clocked a total of 32 stations, of which 24 were judged suitable for long-term critical listening or off-the-air taping. For those interested, the set's AM section performed in above-average fashion, logging a fairly high number of stations with sonic clarity.

The STA-120's amplifier section shapes up as a competent medium-powered unit. It is not the kind of amplifier you'd hook up to drive low-efficiency speakers to room-filling volume or to study, say, low-pedal organ recordings, but it will serve nicely as the control and power center of a modest installation using medium-to-high efficiency speakers in a small- to average-size room. Power output and distortion characteristics begin to weaken at the extreme low and high ends of the audio band although they are satisfactory enough across the largest portion of the spectrum. The amplifier also is quiet and stable.

Supplied in an attractive walnut case with small feet, the STA-120 may be installed as is or fitted into a custom cutout.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



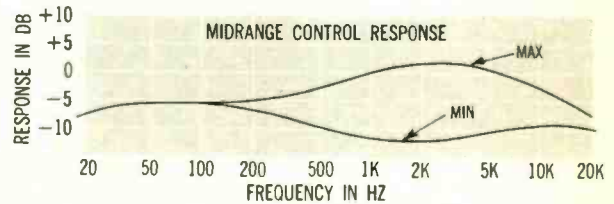
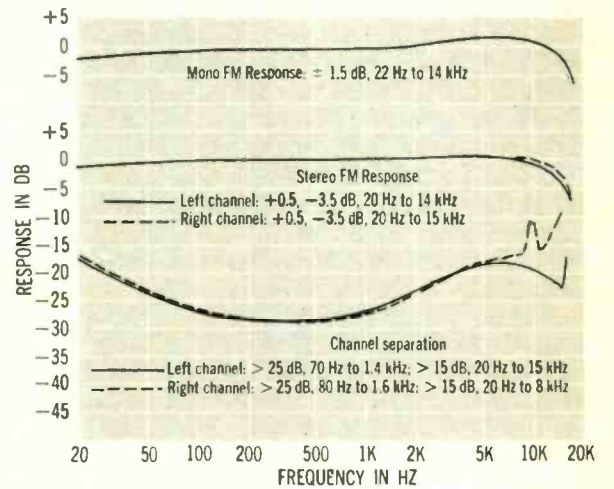
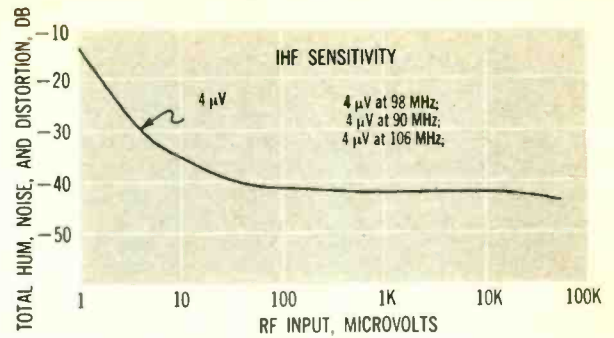
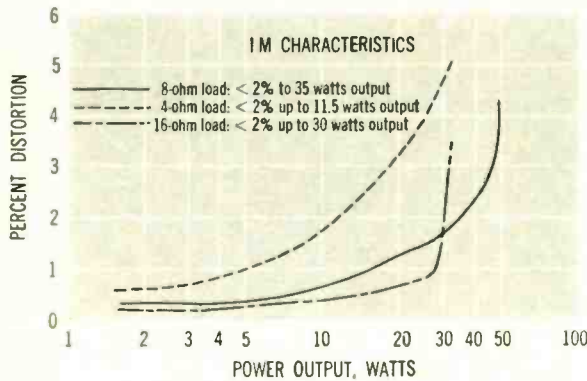
Square-wave response

Correction, Servo-Statik I Speaker Report

The electrostatic panels shown in the block diagram describing the Servo-Statik I speaker system (June 1970, page 72) were incorrectly labelled. The dotted lines shown on the panels represent the division of each panel into frequency ranges from 110 Hz to 2 kHz and from 2 kHz upward. In other words, the full range from 110 Hz and up is handled on each channel by each electrostatic panel; it is not divided between the two panels as implied by the drawing.

Realistic STA-120 Additional Data

Tuner Section			
Capture ratio	2.5 dB		
S/N ratio	63 dB		
IM distortion	0.25%		
THD	mono	l ch	r ch
40 Hz	0.62%	1.3%	1.3%
400 Hz	0.54%	0.68%	1.2%
1 kHz	0.42%	0.42%	0.95%
19-kHz pilot	-56 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-56.5 dB		
Amplifier Section			
Damping factor	15		
Input characteristics	Sensitivity	S/N	
phono	low, 1.9 mV	62 dB	
phono	high, 3.6 mV	62 dB	
tope	from 122 mV to 880 mV	from 61 dB to 62.5 dB	
aux	180 mV	62 dB	



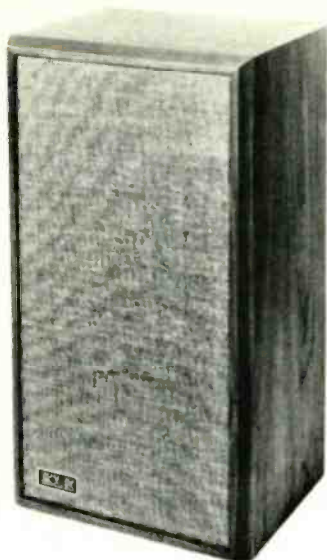
WHAT DOES "ON AXIS" MEAN?

In the wake of our June article on loudspeaker testing and the accompanying reports in that issue, we have been asked about our "on-axis" measurement. The question apparently stems from the fact that some engineers in Europe measure "on-axis" response of a multi-element (two-way, three-way, etc.) speaker system by locating the microphone one meter away from, and in a direct line with the exact center of, the midrange unit, wherever it is located on the front baffle. In contrast, CBS Labs measures "on-axis" response by placing its microphone one meter away from, and in a direct line with the center of, what the listener would regard as the entire frontal area of the system regardless of the specific location of the midrange unit. One meter, incidentally, is a good distance for permitting the outputs of the various drivers to blend while avoiding the effect of microphone reflections.

The CBS Labs method is, we feel, more accurate because it more closely simulates the manner in which a listener hears the system. We do not, after

all, listen separately to the various reproducing elements of a speaker system; we listen, quite literally, to the system as a whole. And a speaker-system designer knows that his midrange unit (or any other unit in the system) is bound to be acoustically influenced by its proximity (which he deliberately controls when designing the system) to other elements in that system.

Thus, an on-axis measurement of only the midrange driver would not give a true picture of either that driver as it is employed in the system or of the system itself. Furthermore, how would you measure by the European method the "on-axis" response when two midrange units are used in the same system? Patently, the European definition of "on axis" in that instance could mean several different things. Finally, any discrepancies (usually on the order of a few dB) between on-axis response measured by the European method and ours are compensated for by the fact that we present loudspeaker response data taken not only on axis but also from thirteen other points around the speaker; it is the net result of this additional and rather complex measurement that we emphasize as the most meaningful response of a speaker system.



KLH DESIGNS A NEW SPEAKER

THE EQUIPMENT: KLH-33, a two-way compact speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ by 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 10 $\frac{5}{16}$ inches. Price: \$99.95. Manufacturer: KLH Research & Development Corp., 55 Cambridge Pkwy., Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

COMMENT: A smooth, open, and well-balanced response characterizes the latest bookshelf speaker system from KLH. The new Model 33 is a two-way system housed in an oiled walnut enclosure fronted with a tinted grille cloth. It may be described as a modified air-suspension type in which an auxiliary, but acoustically damped, opening on the front baffle helps increase the stiffness of the air mass within the enclosure. The woofer measures 10 inches across its frame; it is crossed over at about 1,500 Hz by a network to the tweeter, a smaller center-dome driver that radiates from behind its own perforated cover, which helps spread the middles and highs uniformly and over a wide angle into the listening area. The rear of the enclosure contains a pair of binding posts for leads hookup (marked "ground" and "8 ohms") and a three-position upper-range level control marked "decrease," "normal," and "increase." This section is recessed into the back panel so that the unit may be placed virtually flush against a wall on a shelf, if desired. The Model 33, which coincidentally (or maybe not) weighs 33 pounds, may be positioned horizontally or vertically.

CBS Laboratories measurements show an impedance of 9 ohms at 100 Hz, rising slowly to 16 ohms at about 1,000 Hz, and continuing at that level out to 20,000 Hz. The valuable feature of this characteristic is that it permits the speaker to load to a solid-state amplifier at the latter's usually favorable power/distortion levels and will not load down the amplifier excessively if it is paired with another speaker on the same output terminals. That is to say, two Model 33s (or a 33 and another 8-ohm speaker) in parallel will not present an "unsafe" load to a solid-state amplifier. The speaker can produce a midrange frequency level of 94 dB when driven by an average of 2.9 watts of power. It can handle up to 95.5 watts of average power before producing audible distortion. In other words, the Model 33 may be used with just about any amplifier on today's market.

Pulse tests made at 300 Hz showed virtually no change in the speaker's response (which conformed very closely to the input test pulse signal) at either low or high output, indicating no significant distortion at normal listening levels. The high-frequency pulse test (at 3,000 Hz) showed no serious ringing.

The response curves, reproduced here, indicate above-average smoothness for a compact speaker in this price range. The over-all response may be stated as within plus or minus 6 dB from 40 Hz to 20,000 Hz, with no pronounced peaks or dips. As speakers go, this is a very good characteristic regardless of price. The middles and highs are fairly wide-angle in their dispersion, although the speaker will sound somewhat smoother when you listen a bit off axis, as one would anyway in a normal stereo installation. A high-end slope is typical of most speakers; here it is obviously a very smooth slope that helps keep upper-end distortion to a minimum. The low-end roll-off seems normal enough; it is in any event quite smooth and does not detract from the full sense of bass power you get when listening to normal program material. On such material, the Model 33 has a full-bodied, well-balanced, transparent quality that—by comparison with former KLH speakers, seems to put the performers a bit "more in the room." This agreeable effect is most obvious with the rear control at maximum position. This control, by the way, works as such a control should: it adjusts response above 2,000 Hz by a few dB without any spurious "cross-over" effect and without changing the basic contour of the upper-end response. All told, we'd say that the KLH-33 is another very worthy contender in the \$100 price class—it "listens" very well for long periods of time. Consider it.

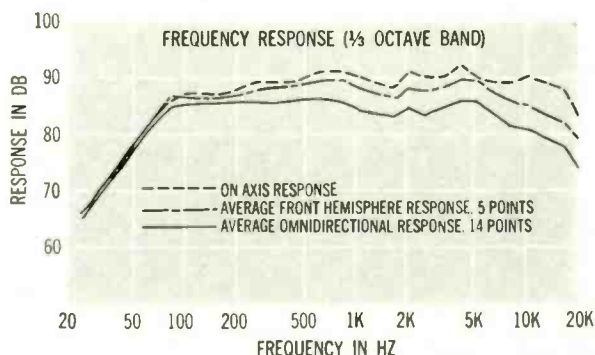
CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

KLH-33

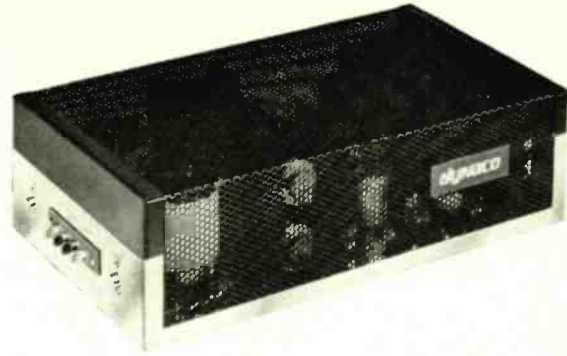
Harmonic Distortion*

Output Level (dB)	Frequency			
	80 Hz		300 Hz	
	% 2nd	% 3rd	% 2nd	% 3rd
70	0.4	0.5	1.0	0.5
75	0.35	0.56	1.2	0.68
80	0.5	0.52	1.3	0.7
85	0.45	0.75	1.5	0.85
90	0.7	0.75	2.2	0.9
95	1.4	0.8	4.4	1.1
100	3.4	1.1	7.0	1.2

* Distortion data is taken on all tested speakers until a level of 100 dB is reached, or distortion exceeds the 10-per-cent level, or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.



A FIRST-RATE BASIC AMPLIFIER FROM DYNACO



THE EQUIPMENT: Dynakit Stereo 80, a stereo basic or power amplifier available in kit form. Dimensions: 14 by 4 by 8 inches. Price: kit, \$119.95; factory-wired, \$159.95. Manufacturer: Dynaco, Inc., 3060 Jefferson St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19121.

COMMENT: Continuing its tradition of offering high-performing, conservatively rated, and reasonably priced separates, Dynaco has come out with a medium-high-powered basic amplifier for use with a separate preamp/control unit. The amplifier is generously designed, with obvious attention to chassis layout and evidence of high-grade parts. The unit's input jacks and speaker terminals are located at one end of the chassis; the power cord, fuse-holder, and off/on switch are at the other end. No level controls are furnished; listening volume must be controlled by whatever preamp one uses before the Stereo 80. A multiple-type power transformer enables the amplifier to be used on line voltages found anywhere in the world. Its transistors are protected by special circuitry rather than by circuit breakers or fuses.

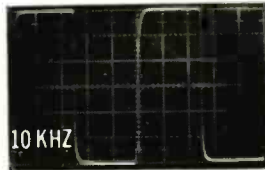
Performance tests run at CBS Labs on a kit-built version indicate that the Stereo 80 performs exactly as advertised. The test results, detailed in the accompanying graphs and table, add up to a high-performing, reliable basic amplifier that offers clean power reserves and high stability. Distortion is extremely low; note that we had to expand the vertical scales of our graphs to show the actual amounts measured. Input sensitivity for rated output is 1.28 volts, which is just about average for typical preamp outputs. Signal-to-noise ratio, at 97 dB, marks the Stereo 80 as one of the quietest amplifiers yet tested. Frequency response is literally a ruler-flat line from 30 Hz to 25 kHz, being down by only 1 dB at 10 Hz at the low end and at 70,000 Hz at the high end.

Building the Stereo 80 from a kit is an easy, straightforward job that shouldn't take more than five or six hours. The hardest and most fascinating part of the work was the winding of heavy-gauge wire into coils that get wrapped around the enormous coupling capacitors. The amplifier worked satisfactorily upon completion with no need for any adjustments.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dynakit Stereo 80 Additional Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Damping factor	80
Input sensitivity 1.28 V	S/N ratio 97 dB



Square-wave response

POWER DATA

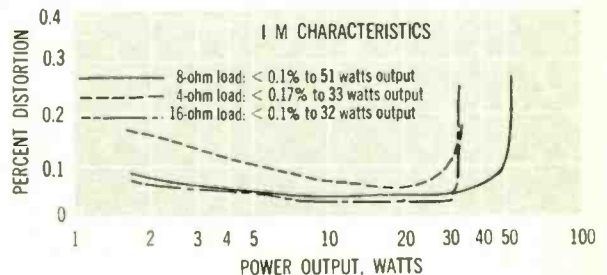
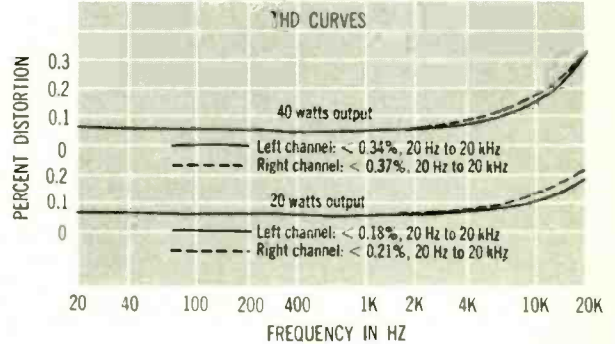
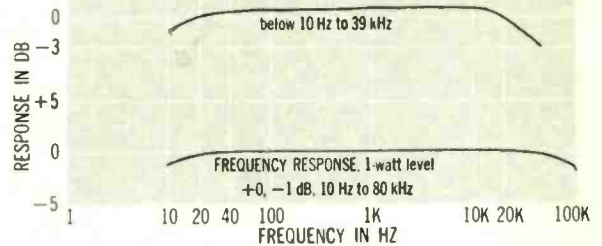
Channels individually

Left at clipping: 43.2 watts at 0.48% THD
Left for 0.5% THD: 45.6 watts
Right at clipping: 45.6 watts at 0.054% THD
Right for 0.5% THD: 49.5 watts

Channels simultaneously

Left at clipping: 36.1 watts at 0.050% THD
Right at clipping: 43.2 watts at 0.048% THD

POWER BANDWIDTH
for 0.5% THD, zero dB - 40 watts



REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Harman-Kardon Citation Twelve
Power Amplifier

Heathkit AR-29 Receiver



Why an automatic turntable from Swindon, England has made it big in the States.

At the risk of seeming immodest, we've had a smashing success in the United States.

There are more Garrards being used in component stereo systems here than all other makes combined.

Even we find this a curious fact.

But the die was cast thirty-odd years ago.

Not parity, but superiority

H. V. Slade, then Managing Director of Garrard Limited, decreed, "We will sell a Garrard in the U.S. *only* when it is more advanced than any machine made there."



H.V. Slade, O.B.E.

A commitment to, not parity, but absolute superiority.

Spurred by it, Garrard of England has been responsible for every major innovation in automatic turntables.

In the thirties, Garrard pioneered the principle of two-point record support. Still the safest known method of record handling. Oddly, still a Garrard exclusive.

In the forties, we introduced the aluminum tone arm. Today, widely used by makers of fine equipment.

By 1961, increasingly sensitive cartridges had led us to adapt a feature originally developed for professional turntables: the dynamically balanced tone arm, with a movable counter-

weight to neutralize the arm and an adjustment to add precisely the correct stylus tracking force.

In 1964, we added an anti-skating control, and patented the sliding weight design that makes it permanently accurate.

Then, in 1967, Garrard engineers perfected the Synchro-Lab motor, a revolutionary two-stage synchronous motor.

The induction portion supplies the power to reach playing speed instantly. The synchronous section then "locks in" to the 60-cycle frequency of the current to give unvarying speed despite variations in voltage.

"We're bloody flattered"

This year one of our competitors has introduced a copy of our Synchro-Lab motor on its most expensive model.

To quote Alan Say, our Head of Engineering, "We're bloody flattered.

"After all, being imitated is a rather good measure of how significant an innovation really is."

The new Garrard SL95B features still another development we expect will become an industry standard.

Garrard's viscous damped tone arm descent—originally offered to provide gentler, safer cueing—now operates in automatic cycle as well.

It seems only logical. Yet, for the

present at least, it is another Garrard exclusive.

Other 1970 Garrard refinements include a counterweight adjustment screw for balancing the tone arm to within a hundredth of a gram. A window scale on the tone arm for the stylus force gauge. And a larger, more precise version of our anti-skating control.

Un-innovating

At the same time, we've eliminated a feature we once pioneered. A bit of un-innovating, you might say.

Garrard's disappearing record platform is disappearing for good.

We've replaced it with a non-disappearing record platform. A larger, stronger support with an easy-to-grasp clip that fits surely over the stack.

A small thing, perhaps.

But another indication that H.V.'s commitment remains with us.

\$44.50 to \$129.50

Garrard standards do not vary with price. Only the degree of refinement possible for the money.

There are six Garrard component models from the SL95B automatic turntable (above) for \$129.50 to the 40B at \$44.50.

Your dealer can help you arrive at the optimum choice for your system.

Garrard
British Industries Co.,



Tape Recording at Twenty-five

For a quarter century the tape medium has been growing and changing — and it still is

by ROBERT LONG and NORMAN EISENBERG

ACCORDING TO recent data from Ampex, prerecorded tapes in 1966 represented a mere four per cent of total recorded music sales in the U.S., opposed to ninety-six per cent for phonograph records. By 1969 recorded tapes had captured twenty-six per cent of the market and the figure is expected to reach thirty-five per cent this year. "Further," declares Donald V. Hall, Ampex Stereo Tapes general manager, "by 1972 or 1973 we expect tape sales to equal record sales."

A startling prediction. Even more intriguing is the breakdown into specific tape categories. We are told that while recorded open-reel tapes last year reached the \$18 million mark in stores around the U.S., four-track cartridge tapes hit \$30 million, cassettes \$60 million, and eight-track cartridges zoomed to the \$300-million level. This year, AST predicts, open-reel sales will drop to \$16 million despite renewed interest in this category, four-track cartridges will drop to the \$25 million level, while cassettes will more than double last year's figures at \$140 million, and eight-track cartridges will top out at \$450 million.

While these figures are impressive enough, the four categories used to express them point up an even more significant fact: tape today—and concomitantly, the equipment for playing it—is hardly standardized. Indeed, diversity of format, while attesting to the growth and developmental aspects of tape, raises yet another question about tape's future: what form or forms is it likely to take? This translates into a very real problem for the prospective buyer who may hesitate to invest in one format as long as there is a possibility that it will be replaced by any of the others or by a totally new format.

The Format Sweepstakes

In a sense, the present diversity is part of a natural evolutionary process regarding tape. And tape as an integral part of the home music scene didn't always seem as well rooted and as viable as it does today. At its inception, historically speaking, magnetic tape introduced a new dimension into home music systems, and enhanced their potential for providing enjoyment. With a tape recorder added to an

existing sound system one could dub his own program material from other sources: discs, broadcasts, the sound portions of TV shows, or live via microphones. Since the tape machine also could, like a phonograph, play commercially recorded fare, a certain redundancy of function entered the home high fidelity scene. The basic question of whether one program form actually sounded better than the other (the old tape-versus-disc controversy) never could be resolved to the satisfaction of any but the confirmed partisans of one medium or the other, and this lack of a clear-cut victory for either side became even more hopelessly unresolved when disc matched tape by going stereo.

Of course tape still boasted one advantage over the new stereo discs: the ability to record. But a severe slump in the tape market did follow the advent of stereo discs. By the end of 1958, the sales of pre-recorded tape had fallen to half of 1957's high of \$7 million. Many observers were already counting out tape as a consumer product; at best it appeared that do-it-yourself recording as such had a very tenuous foothold in the consumer home-entertainment scene. And if tape began slipping in the face of stereo discs it nearly vanished in the morass of confusion precipitated by new recorder designs. The original two-track, staggered-head stereo configuration competed with both in-line two-track and four-track. And slower speeds became increasingly common. Then there were a series of tape-cartridge designs, all differing in tape speed, tape width, head configuration, and/or physical size.

Thanks, however, to the upgrading of the four-track system (i.e., a single tape reel providing stereo in both directions of tape travel, or mono back and forth twice), tape survived and thrived. The pre-recorded tape repertoire grew both in numbers of selections available and in the diversification of its program content to interest a broad spectrum of musical tastes. At the same time, new recorder models appeared that offered improved over-all performance plus a host of new features that made tape very appealing: automatic reverse, self-threading reels, push-button facilities for sound-on-sound, automatic sync of sound with slides, and so on. Hence, the home tape recorder epitomized during the last decade was a reliable, easy-to-use open-reel machine that made it more pleasant and easier to play recorded tapes while at the same time offering unprecedented features for the more activist role of making one's own recordings. This general class of tape equipment still abounds and still offers the highest performance and the most versatility of any tape format to date. For this reason it will in all likelihood remain the choice of the hard-core high fidelity buff, the serious and relatively affluent music devotee who also wants the option of recording his own—a conclusion seconded by every industry spokesman we have consulted on the subject.

At the same time, the potentially much broader cartridge market settled on three formats—four-

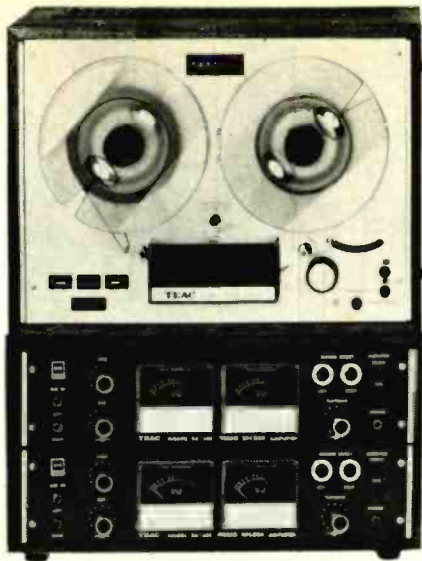
track cartridges, eight-track cartridges, and cassettes—but not before a good many proposed systems had dropped by the wayside. That gives us four basic approaches to the use of tape in the home. The relative strengths of each of these approaches over the next few years can't be assessed without reference to a number of new developments, some recently announced and some waiting expectantly in the wings.

Low Noise and Four Channels

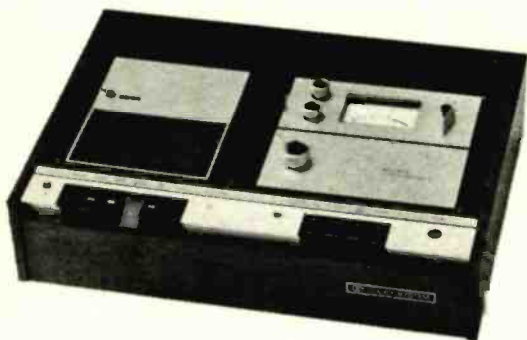
Continuing research effort on the part of several companies both here and abroad is improving tape response and suppressing tape noise at slow speeds—specifically the 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ - and 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ -ips speeds used in closed-loop cartridges and twin-hub cassettes. This improvement covers refined tape-head design, redesign of bias and equalization electronics for the slow speeds and new heads, the use of new tape coatings (notably chromium dioxide, but including also the many more conventional high-performance iron-oxide types) and, of course, the Dolby noise-reduction techniques. Latest word has it, in fact, that a Dolby-ized cassette recorder may be expected this year from several companies: Advent, Fisher, Harman-Kardon, and KLH are among the names mentioned.

Superimposed on this trend is the continuing interest in quadriphonic (four-channel) sound—but here we encounter less clearly delineated outlines for the future, due to the fact that quadriphony can be accomplished in any of several ways. To begin with, quadriphonic sound has been demonstrated in terms of four completely independent tracks covering the full width of the tape. While this configuration had already existed in some special-purpose open-reel equipment, it does require special heads and doubled playback electronics with respect to regular stereo tape equipment. Moreover, a four-channel system doesn't lend itself readily to disc recording, and it involves some amount of retooling and ancillary equipment if it is to be broadcast by one FM station and received on one FM set. One alternate technique for quadriphonic sound has been demonstrated, employing a form of encoder and decoder that together enable four channels to be handled on stereo tape, disc, and FM with no significant modification of, and minimum additions to, existing equipment. That is to say, although four speakers and their driving amplifiers still are needed, the previous elements in the sound chain—phono pickup, FM tuner, and tape deck—remain essentially unchanged. The most prominent example to date of this technique has been the Scheiber system, although rumor has it that similar systems are being actively researched elsewhere behind closed doors.

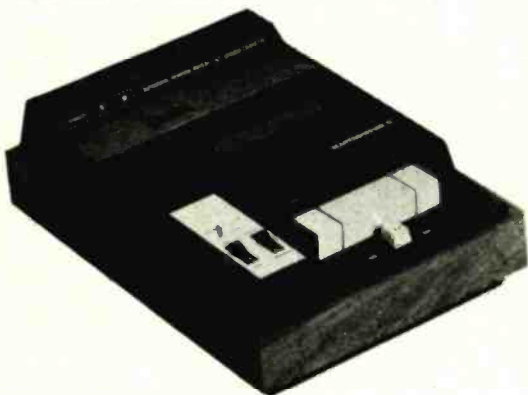
In any event, a cassette machine that combines the low-noise advantage of the Dolby technique with the quadriphonic feature of the Scheiber system might not be long in coming. Advent Corporation has moved in that direction by signing a contract with Scheiber to produce encoders and decoders for



Teac A-4010SRA open-reel quadriphonic tape deck.



Advent 200 cassette deck with Dolby circuitry.



CBS Masterworks M-400 reversing cassette deck.



KLH Model 40 "Dolbyized" open-reel tape deck.

quadriphonic applications, and this same company already has begun producing consumer noise-reduction equipment using the Dolby technique.

Finally, and independently of any of these developments, there is growing evidence of automated cassette equipment—that is, cassette recorders that feature automatic reverse of a single cassette or some form of multiple sequencing for automatic play of successive cassettes. Automatic reverse works in cassette players much as it does in open-reel equipment: when the tape runs out in one direction it stops and then plays in the other direction. In other words, it allows you to enjoy the entire stereo contents of a cassette without turning it over physically. The first auto-reverse cassette players do this by providing a head with four playback gaps (two for the forward direction and two for reverse) and two capstans, one driving the tape toward the right, the other toward the left.

It should be obvious that the four-gap head could also be used to play quadriphonic cassettes with four separate tracks filling the entire tape width for one-direction-only operation. So far no such cassettes have been announced and no players have the extra two channels of playback electronics. But apart from quadriphonics there may be a more immediate benefit from automatic cassette reversing. Cassette changer mechanisms comparable to record changers have been available for some time. But, again like record changers, they play only one side of each cassette fed into them. Adding automatic reverse would make it possible for them to play an entire cassette before going on to the next.

As if to underscore the rising interest in four-channel sound as well as the continuing rivalry between cassettes and cartridges, RCA, Motorola, and Lear Jet recently announced a four-channel eight-track cartridge and equipment for playing it either in vehicles or in the home. Like the Vanguard open-reel tapes, cartridges for the new players (called Quadrasonic by RCA, Quad-8 by Motorola) use four separate tape tracks and their respective reproduction channels. The tracks and heads are arranged as shown in the accompanying diagram. Counting down from the top edge, tracks 1, 3, 5, and 7 carry four-channel material for the first part of the program; tracks 2, 4, 6, and 8 do the same for the latter half. The new Quad-8 players will handle not only these new cartridges, but the older Stereo-8 (two-channel stereo) types as well. For that matter, the older Stereo-8 player will accept the new Quadrasonic cartridges, but it can only reproduce two of their four channels at once.

Compatible, But . . .

We thus are offered a measure of compatibility of the old and the new: existing collections of Stereo-8 cartridges will not be made obsolete by the new Quad-8 format. In this sense, the RCA-Motorola product will relate to cartridge tapes in much the same way that other proposed four-channel con-

figurations relate to their respective two-channel counterparts. Compatibility, of course, has been a watchword of the home entertainment industry ever since the rabid competition between LPs and 45s in the early Fifties. Later, every effort was made to achieve mono-stereo compatibility on discs. Today, all of the four-channel systems being offered to the public are called "compatible." But there is a catch.

Take the Vanguard Surround Stereo tapes. Since their "front" two channels are where the usual stereo pair would be on the tape, a two-channel stereo tape recorder will play back only this pair. Theoretically, this will give you an up-front stereo perspective comparable to a regular stereo recording, and the "ambience" information on the other two tracks can (and will) be ignored. Fine. But what about a recording in which musical forces are distributed among the four channels to place you in the center of the action on quadriphonic listening? Tapes of this sort have been prepared by Columbia for demonstration purposes and are expected to be common at least in pop and rock if quadriphony receives public support. A stereo recorder playing such a tape ignores half of the music; and that's not quite what most people mean by compatibility.

The Scheiber or some similar encoding system is said to solve this problem. The ambience or rear channels are telescoped right onto the front channels and recorded just like a normal stereo pair. Played back on stereo equipment, both left channels will remain telescoped and be reproduced on the left speaker; the two right channels will be similarly reproduced. Thus all of the music on those Columbia demo tapes would be available to a listener using conventional stereo equipment.

This assumes, of course, that front-to-rear balances will be set correctly before the telescoping of the encoding process takes place. But note that front-to-rear balances are not predetermined on the Vanguard tapes; they are left to the discretion of the listener. For most symphonic recordings the ambience should be about 10 dB lower in level than the two front channels. But in order to keep the ambience signals well up out of tape hiss and electronic noise, Vanguard records them to the same peak levels as the main channels. While considerations of this sort are easily adjusted in practice, the fact remains that they must be given thought before we can truly say that all the problems of compatibility have been solved. Until all the techniques involved—in microphoning, mixing, recording, and reproduction—have been refined through a thorough shakedown process, all of them should be considered subject to change. At any rate, if all goes sensibly, your present equipment will probably be adaptable to four-channel sound.

New Developments in Tape

To focus now on the new tape formulations alluded to earlier: a couple of years ago we first began to hear about Crolyn tape—Du Pont's name for a magnetic recording medium in which the iron oxide mag-

netic coating of conventional tapes is replaced by chromium dioxide. Chromium dioxide offered a major advance, we were told, in terms of both high-frequency resolution and noise. Since the slow speed of cassettes makes them the most difficult of all standard tape formats to achieve good high-frequency response on, and since the extremely narrow track width of stereo cassettes and eight-track cartridges makes them intrinsically noisier than competing formats, Crolyn was looked to as a potential savior of these "convenience" tape formats.

It hasn't quite worked out that way, however. Du Pont began manufacturing Crolyn in half-inch widths for instrumentation, computer, and video uses. Experimentation with the potential of Crolyn for audio use was begun by other companies specializing in that field with Du Pont supplying samples for the purpose. Its hesitancy to start manufacturing for audio uses appeared to be based on the quite different electromagnetic properties of chromium dioxide as against iron oxide.

Crolyn requires greater bias current than conventional tapes if standard equalization is to be used. Those who tested samples expressed concern that the vast majority of consumer recorders would be unable to handle the new tape because the user couldn't adjust bias or equalization appropriately. (Concord has since introduced a cassette deck with adjustable bias, however.) If chromium dioxide was to be used only in the manufacture of prerecorded cassettes and cartridges, the problem could be solved relatively easily during duplication, of course.

But there were other causes for hesitation. Chromium dioxide is expected to be more expensive than iron oxide. And it is intrinsically harder; would it therefore be more abrasive, causing greater head wear? Some insiders said yes. Others suggested that chromium dioxide also is smoother and therefore actually less abrasive than iron oxide. So far no tests on the new materials seem to satisfy all commentators and the debate continues.

In the meantime Du Pont has licensed other companies—Memorex, Sony, and Philips among them—to manufacture chromium-dioxide tapes. But manufacturers committed only to iron oxide have not stood still; while chromium dioxide has yet to reach the market in any format for consumer audio use, new high-performance iron-oxide tapes of one sort or another come along all the time. Several companies have followed the lead of the 3M Company's Scotch Dynarange series by issuing similar low-noise formulations of their own. Some (notably BASF and Sony) couple low noise with high output and claim an even greater noise advantage when the product is used on a tape recorder capable of taking maximum advantage of its properties.

Iron-oxide grain size (to borrow a term from photography) appears to be a key factor in some of the new tape coatings. The structure of the iron-oxide coating is related to high-frequency response because as the frequency of the signal is raised or the transport speed of the tape is lowered, the area

Which Tape Format is For You?

covered on the tape by a single cycle of that signal becomes smaller. Sooner or later it becomes so small that its detail gets lost in the coarseness of the oxide and the magnetic coating can no longer reproduce it. The problem is similar to that of trying to retain very fine picture detail in movies; the smaller the frame, the finer the film's grain structure must be.

Specific reference to this problem has been made by companies like TDK and Bell & Howell in in-

roducing recent high-performance cassette tapes. And a relative newcomer to iron-oxide production for use in recording tapes, Magna-Tech Corporation, has announced that it will replace batch processing with continuous processing—a method new to the field and one that Magna-Tech claims will give greater control over and consistency to the grain characteristics in iron-oxide coatings.

Chromium dioxide may yet make an appearance

For playback at home

Deck models (that is, recorders minus built-in power amplifiers and speakers) are the logical choice for playback through a component stereo system. If you want maximum sound quality, you'll choose an open-reel model. Even though your prime interest is in playing back prerecorded tapes, you'll probably want the record capability for occasional use as well; playback-only units have never sold well and have all but disappeared. If you want maximum convenience, choose an automatic-reverse model.

For even greater convenience, though with some sacrifice of ultimate sound quality, you can go to a cartridge or cassette unit. Cartridges offer higher tape speed ($3\frac{3}{4}$ ips as compared to the $1\frac{7}{8}$ ips of cassettes), but generally lack such features as fast forward and reverse winding. (Rewind would appear to be impossible without mechanical redesign of the cartridge, but the endless tape loop means that fast forward will accomplish the same end, albeit with somewhat less convenience.) Some cartridge players will handle both four- and eight-track. But avoid four-track-only models, since the variety of repertoire available in four-track cartridges is growing ever smaller, while it is on the increase in the eight-track format. The prerecorded repertoire in cassette form also is growing, and the best cassette equipment sounds remarkably good considering its slow speed. What's more, because of reversing and fast-forward features, a cassette unit can be somewhat more convenient to use than a cartridge model. Automatic-reverse cassette models are now beginning to appear too.

Recording in the home

Because the endless-loop cartridge format is intrinsically more difficult to successfully record on than either cassettes or open-reel tapes, the recording function has been missing from most cartridge equipment until very recently.

The record capability is standard on cassette equipment, of course. However, if you are really serious about recording, or if you want to create special effects such as sound-on-sound, artificial tape echo, and the like, you still should choose open-reel. Generally speaking, such effects are less successful at slower speeds and are not offered in cassette or cartridge equipment. If you will be doing any tape editing, the open-reel format is still vastly more convenient than either cassettes or cartridges.

Musical composition on tape

This activity really is a specialized form of recording that puts a premium on all the technical advantages of open-reel equipment. If you are adventurous enough to want to create your own tape compositions, you should look for quality

and versatility in your tape deck and recognize that simplified controls, including most convenience features, sooner or later may prove inhibiting to your creative efforts. Choose the best (professional-class, if possible) deck you can afford and look for features like separate level controls for each channel and mode (playback and record), easily accessible multiple inputs and outputs, input mixing, large VU meters, user-replaceable head mounts, and so on. These features, to clarify the point, are not germane to playback of prerecorded tapes or simple recording of other material.

In-the-field recording

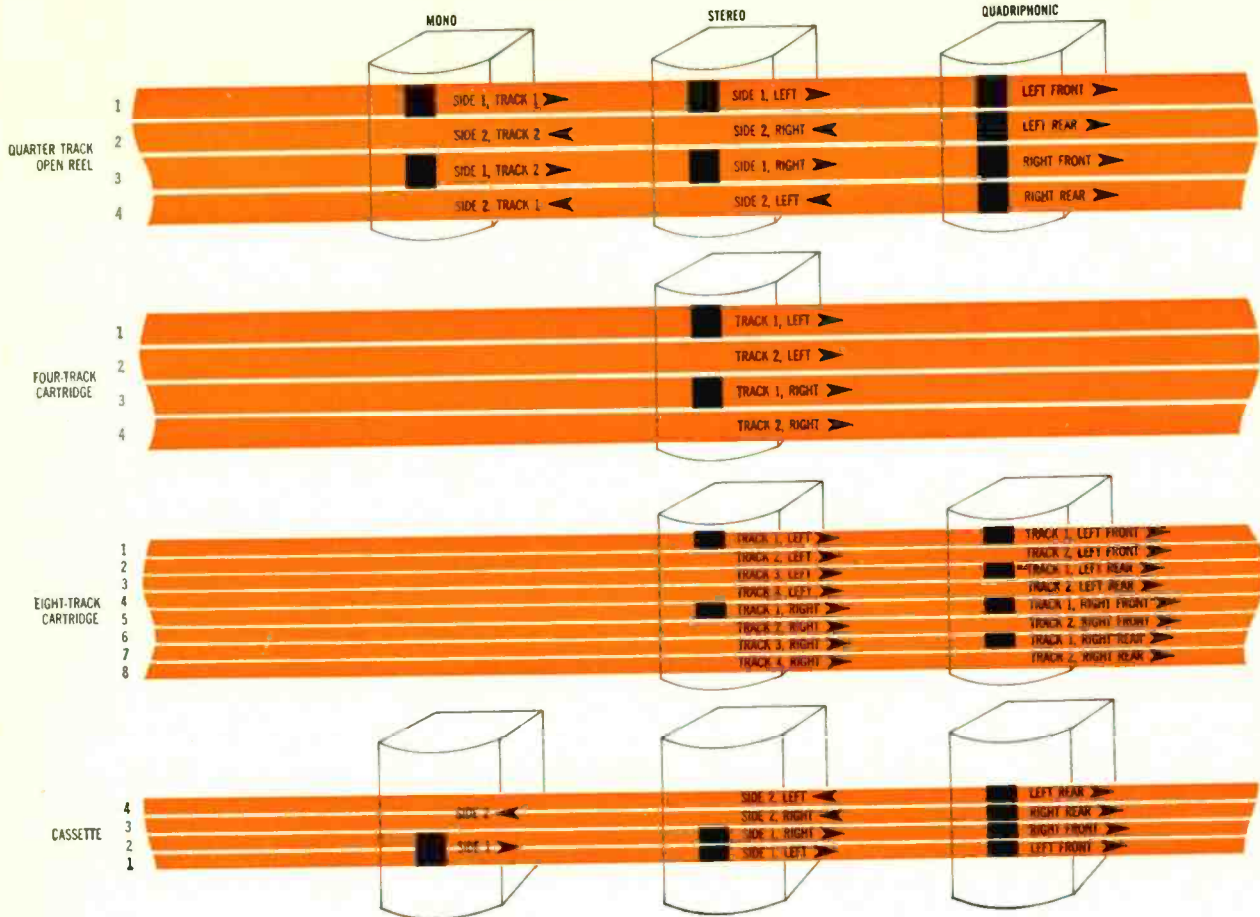
Many home-style recorders have carrying handles, but their weight and bulk might not encourage you to carry them very far. Moreover, the vast majority operate only on AC power. Such an open-reel recorder or deck may still be fine if you only want to visit musician friends and record them in their own living rooms. But if you want to move about—at a parade or fair, for example—and capture sounds in their natural habitats, battery portability is a must. Because they are so compact and light, cassette units will be the first choice of most users these days. If you want greater quality or versatility in terms of mike inputs, special features, and—above all—film syncing, you'll want one of the professional-style open-reel battery portables. There is some equipment for recording sound tracks for home movies live on cassettes, but generally speaking the manufacturers' systems are compatible neither with each other nor with the open-reel syncing recorders.

Portable playback

If you just want to hear music on the beach or in the forest, either a cassette playback system or an eight-track portable is fine. Many cassette units include the record feature, which you can ignore, making your choice, rather, on the basis of audible quality from prerecorded cassettes. Since you probably will be listening via small speakers or inexpensive headphones, the superior signal quality of open-reel means little for this use.

Music on the move

For listening in your car or boat (or even your plane or snowmobile) endless-loop cartridges still offer the simplest one-hand operation, though cassette-equipment manufacturers are working to close the gap. Again, you'll find a more varied fare recorded on eight-track than on four-track cartridges. But watch the input specs on the unit you buy. Most players, like most cars, are built for 12-volt negative-ground operation. Check the electrical system of the vehicle and choose the player accordingly.



The major tape configurations, present and proposed, are compared here in stylized form. Mono cartridges are no longer marketed, and because of their waning popularity, four-track closed-loop cartridges probably won't get a quadriphonic format. (For uniformity, cassette heads are shown on the far side of tape, though the tape itself is seen from the oxide side.) Quadriphonic cassettes aren't standardized; one proposal would interchange rear channels.

for consumer audio uses; but at this writing, conventional tapes are doing so well and show so much promise of continuing improvement that the interest in Crolyn and similar tapes has lost some of its steam.

Final Words of Wisdom

Only a fool would attempt at this time to predict with certainty the ultimate direction of tape. We can offer some educated guesses, however, based on our own continuing study of this field and recent comments by industry insiders. The open-reel format—whether it goes four-channel or no and regardless of *how* it goes four-channel—probably will remain the first choice for the professional and for the serious amateur who is interested in the best sound quality and/or in maximum versatility.

Packaged tape—in cassette or cartridge form—probably will continue to take over in the broader, less critically oriented market. Conceivably, many buyers will own both types of tape equipment in much the same manner that they own more than one TV set or more than one stereo system (one for serious use, the other for secondary use). The growing number of units that handle more than one format demonstrates that a single tape format can't be all things to all users. Roberts, which introduced

the first open-reel/eight-track-cartridge recorder some time ago, has shown a model that will handle both of these formats plus cassettes. Superscope has announced a Sony model that will handle both cassettes and open reels. Even some portable equipment is multipurpose; one Soundtech model pairs a stereo cassette recorder with an eight-track player. Aiwa has a car player that takes cartridges *and* cassettes.

These multiformat models offer fence-sitters a way of having their cake without eating crow should they choose the ultimate loser in the competition between cassettes and eight-track cartridges. Just as the players that will reproduce either eight-track or four-track cartridges make it possible for the owner to dip into the much larger eight-track catalogues without shelving his older four-track recordings, so the other combinations are a hedge against almost anything that may happen—even perhaps the advent of quadriphony. But if you must choose between cartridges and cassettes, at this writing our considered judgment would tend to favor cassettes for the long haul despite the uncertainty of their going quadriphonic, and because of their compactness, continually improving response, proven (and widely available) recording capability, and adaptability to use both at home and on the move.

Will we still think so next year? Ask us then.



How to Match Your Tape to Your Recorder — and Vice Versa

by Herbert Friedman



If you want the best that your tape recorder can give, bias adjustment and tape choice are critical.

IT IS AXIOMATIC in working with recording tape that optimum performance is obtained only when the recorder's bias is specifically adjusted for a particular brand and type of tape. Of course, if a recorder has no provision for bias adjustment (and most budget models do not), then it becomes a matter of choosing the right tape—that is, a tape whose own characteristics most closely match those of your recorder. The fact is, performance and bias are interrelated, and you can expect some loss of quality when bias and tape are not matched to each other.

When we speak of the linear characteristics of most electronic devices—transistors, tubes, and the like—we mean that functional range in which output is proportional to input. Driven outside this range, the devices become nonlinear—that is, they introduce some form of distortion. But recording tape has such a small linear range that if we were to stay within it during recording, the maximum signal that could be captured with low distortion would be almost equal to the inherent noise level of the oxide coating. Record bias is the agent that stretches the working linear range from this unusable minimum to as much as 60 or even 70 dB by preconditioning the tape with a magnetic field some ten times greater than the sound field.

Early attempts at preconditioning involved a magnet, which subjected the tape to a relatively constant magnetic field. This did improve the signal-to-noise ratio enough so that a sort of tape recorder could be sold for home and other noncritical uses; but the hiss level—not to mention distortion—was still too great for what we would now call professional use.

Mr. Friedman, the chief engineer of educational FM station WYNE in New York City, has written and published extensively on technical audio matters.

Then came AC bias: a strong high-frequency current applied to the record head with the audio-signal current. The high-frequency bias signal, usually somewhere between 75 kHz and 150 kHz, enables us to obtain a signal-to-noise ratio and distortion equal to the best in FM tuners, disc recorders, and all but the most expensive amplifiers. For example, it is not unusual for a semiprofessional tape recorder to boast a 58-dB S/N ratio with a 0.5% THD (total harmonic distortion) at normal recording level.

Unfortunately, the preconditioning current, or bias, is not an unmixed blessing, for while it cures some ills it creates others; chief among them is the necessity of matching bias strength to the magnetic properties of the tape in use if over-all performance is not to be degraded. We are not talking of insignificant differences, for the bias current that will produce an 18-kHz top end on one type of quality tape may produce only a 13-kHz top on a competitive type. For any tape, the bias often determines the recorder's over-all performance in terms of S/N ratio, distortion, and frequency response.

Since most semiprofessional and all professional recorders provide for user adjustment of bias current and amplifier frequency equalization, any of them can be adjusted easily and quickly to optimum or specified performance—if the user knows what to expect when he turns the adjusting screws. But bias current is fickle: it does not treat all frequencies alike. Fig. 1 demonstrates why the maximum playback level is not constant for all frequencies in the audio signal; there is a specific bias current that produces maximum output for each frequency in the audio range. Also, the lower the frequency the greater the output for a specific bias current. As shown in Fig. 1, if the bias current is adjusted for peak output at the highest frequency, it will produce an even higher out-

put from the lower frequencies—though the lower frequencies can be even further optimized for output by increasing the bias current.

Then there is distortion; although mainly third harmonic, it is given as a THD figure for purposes of servicing and adjustment. Fig. 2, which is exaggerated for clarity, shows the output compared to distortion characteristics for a wide range of bias current. Note that as the bias is increased the tape's output increases to a maximum and then drops off once again. The distortion, however, steadily decreases until it levels off. If the tape is biased to the left of the output peak, the distortion is high, and just a slight downward drift in bias current such as that caused by component aging tends to make the distortion rise sharply. But if the bias is adjusted slightly to the right of peak output level, a loss of bias would keep the tape in the low distortion region. (This is the reason many recorders specify a bias level that produces 0.5 to 1 dB less output *on the high side*.)

Finally, consider output and distortion curves for several popular brands of so-called standard tape, as shown in Fig. 3. It is obvious that all three brands require a different bias for maximum output. Also all three tapes produce a different peak output for the same input level (-10 dB), with the worst-case variation approximately 2.5 dB. When bias is set for peak response or a bit higher, all three tapes are well inside acceptable distortion limits. In recording studios, where different tape brands must be used at fixed bias values, the bias is set at a point where the output-level curves cross over so that the output level will match within 2 or 3 dB regardless of brand.

The Low-Noise Tapes

So far we have discussed only standard tape types—not the popular “low-noise” or “high-performance” formulations often recommended for home use, particularly at the slower speeds. Tape noise—actually the hiss level—has always bordered on acceptability. For what we would call a dead-quiet noise level, a signal-to-noise ratio of 60 dB or more is required. Where dubbing is involved, the noise levels become additive and a reserve of at least 6 dB (for a 66-dB total S/N ratio) is required to maintain this dead quiet through several dubs. Even the least expensive full-track, 15-ips machines could easily attain a 60-dB S/N ratio. But as the track width was cut to one half, then one quarter (and now to one eighth on endless-loop cartridges and cassettes), the S/N ratio has been degraded, since the smaller the track width the lower the output signal in relation to both the residual tape and playback amplifier noise. Transistors, with their inherent high-frequency noise in the region to which the ear is most sensitive, further complicate the problem of getting a good signal-to-noise ratio. Today, we accept a 55-dB S/N ratio for relatively low-cost professional quarter-track recorders—though not for mastering recorders of course.

To obtain that quiet S/N ratio of 55 dB or better, many tape manufacturers supply their recorders

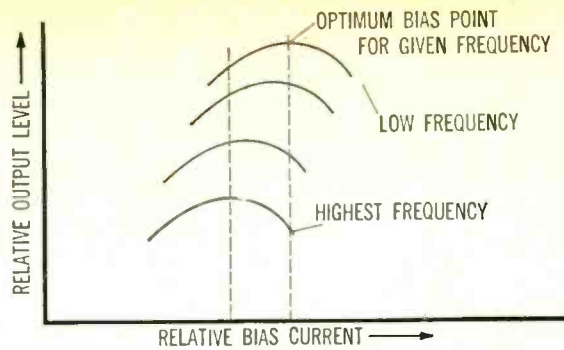


Fig. 1: Bias and output. A given value of bias produces greater output from the lower frequencies. There is an optimum bias for each frequency. As a rule, bias is adjusted at 400 Hz or 500 Hz; other frequencies are then equalized for flat response.

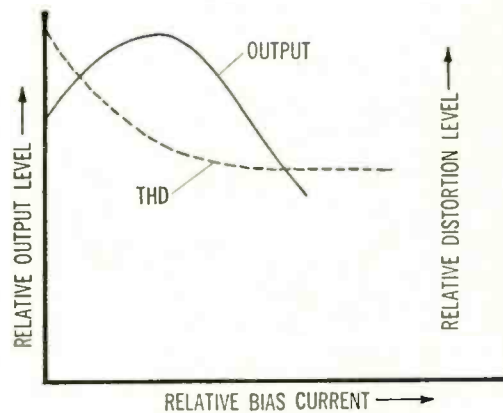


Fig. 2: Bias and distortion. The THD drops sharply as bias current is increased. At the bias corresponding to peak output level the THD is close to the lowest value. Biasing output to the left of the peak (sometimes done to improve high frequency response) caused the distortion to increase sharply.

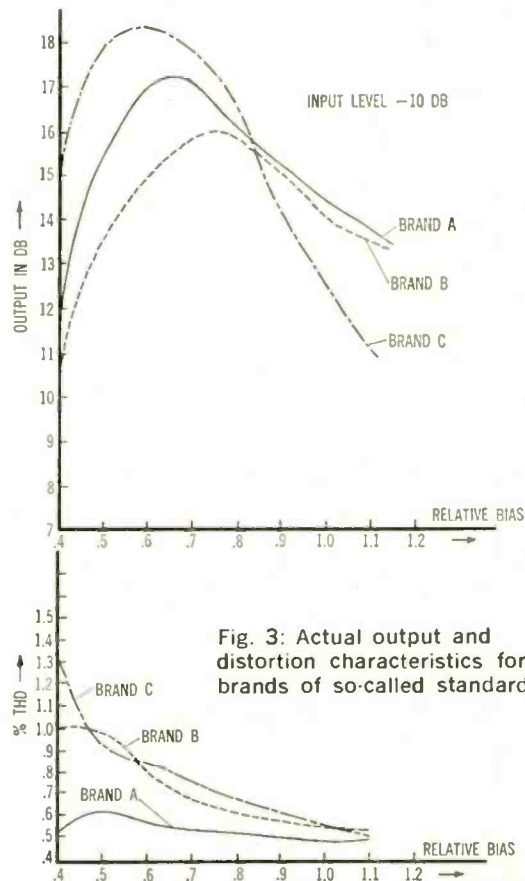


Fig. 3: Actual output and distortion characteristics for three brands of so-called standard tape.

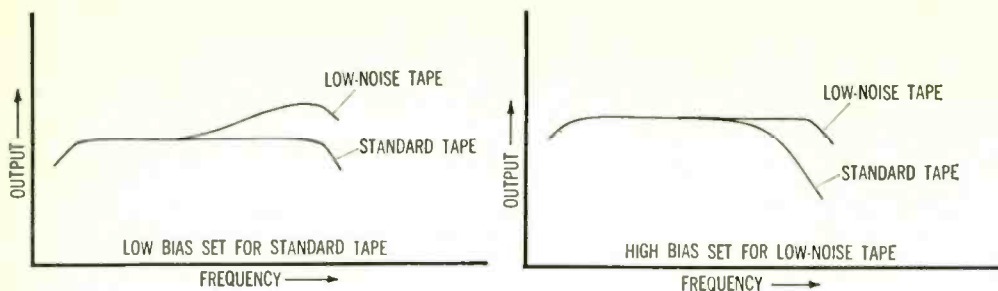


Fig. 4 (a & b): How bias affects top-end response. "Standard" and low-noise tapes cannot be interchanged if recorder bias is maintained at a given value.

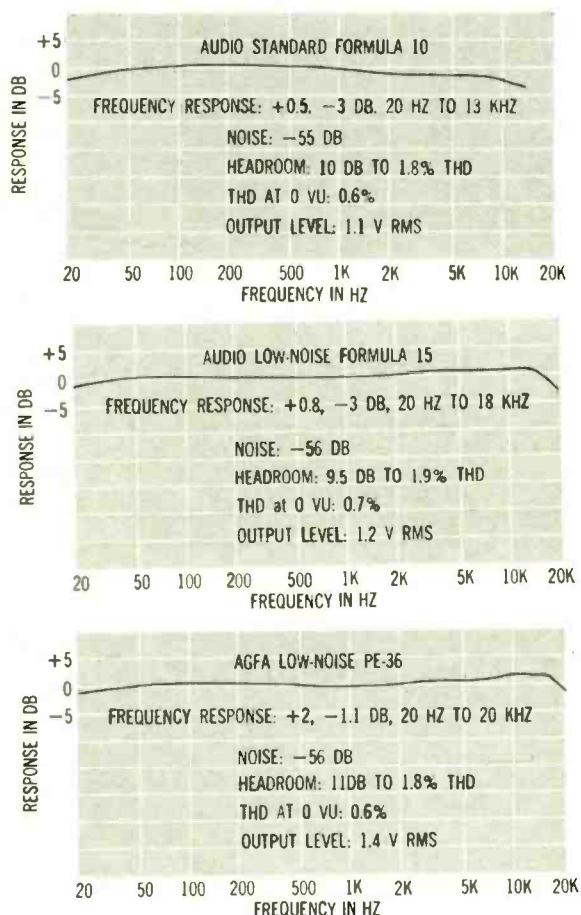


Fig. 5 (a, b, c): Performance of three tapes on the same recorder. Bias was optimized for Agfa PE-36 (the tape recommended for maximum performance by the recorder manufacturer). Similar tests using two other recorders produced equivalent results.

biased for what is often called low-noise tape. Basically, low-noise tape uses an oxide that under ideal conditions will produce approximately 2 dB greater output than standard tape for the same input level while generating 4 dB less inherent noise. Add the two figures together and the spread is 6 dB, indicating that in optimum circumstances the same tape recorder will have a 6-dB better S/N ratio with low-noise tape. In practical terms, a recorder manufacturer, if his electronics can manage a passable 52-dB S/N ratio with standard tape, can obtain a "professional" 58-dB S/N ratio with low-noise tape. In actual practice, however—depending on the specific brand of tape—the S/N difference will range between 4 and 6 dB. One possible advantage of low-noise tape is less distortion, but this offers such an insignificant

improvement on nonprofessional machines that for practical purposes it must be ignored. Often the distortion is higher.

Of course, no one gets anything for nothing. You cannot slap a reel of low-noise tape on your recorder and expect a new dimension in sound. If there is a new dimension, it may be toward degraded sound because the bias requirements of low-noise tape are sharply different from that of standard tape like Scotch 111 or Audio Formula 10. Fig. 4a shows the performance of standard and low-noise tapes on a recorder biased for standard tape. Note the sharp rise in the low-noise tape's high-frequency response. Conversely, Fig. 4b shows the performance of both when the recorder is biased for low-noise tape, delivering only limited high-frequency response on standard tape. (While the Fig. 4 curves have been exaggerated for clarity, Fig. 5 shows the actual results of standard and low-noise tapes used on a popular semiprofessional recorder biased for low-noise tape.)

In Fig. 4, it is apparent that the lower the bias current the greater the tape's high-frequency response. One recent expensive recorder used this principle to secure a good high-frequency response with an amplifier design that did not achieve flat response because of excessive amplifier noise when equalized to overcome the head's high-frequency losses. The recorder was deliberately biased to the *left* of the output zenith—the high-distortion side. While the design achieved the desired extended flat response, a few months of aging caused the bias to fall off, pushing the tape response characteristics into excessive distortion.

If You Can Adjust Bias and Equalization

The recordist can utilize the variability of the high end when adjusting his recorder for low-noise tape. Here's one of the many ways to do so. First, using a standard NAB test tape (or other preferred equalization), adjust the recorder's playback equalization for as flat a response as possible from 50 Hz to 15 kHz. (If you want response from 20 Hz to 20 kHz, you must use a test tape with a wider range of test tones.) Next, place a roll of virgin tape on the recorder and record a 400- or 700-Hz signal from a tone generator at least 15 dB below *peak* recording level. This generally is about 10 dB below the zero level on the VU meter. Adjust the bias control for maximum output level. Then set the input signal to the highest desired frequency and increase the bias current until the top frequency is 2 or 3 dB

What Tape-Recorder Manufacturers Recommend

As a starting point in your search for the best tape for your recorder, here is a table of popular open-reel recorders, showing the basic type of tape recommended for each by its manufacturer. Keep in mind that you may get better performance on a given machine with one tape brand than another, and that bias settings alone are not the whole answer to recorder-tape matching: equalization and bias are closely interrelated as explained in the accompanying article. Where user adjustment of bias is allowed for, the process generally is simplest if the recorder's VU meters can be used for the purpose. Because the use of external meters requires a certain amount of technical expertise, manufacturers usually discourage (often vigorously) this method of bias adjustment by anyone but a qualified service technician. The amateur can still make adjustments on those recorders that include bias or equalization switches or have provision for using their VU meters (in conjunction with a thorough understanding of the owner's manual). Failing such features, simply look up the recommended tape type in this table and choose appropriate tapes from the tape table or from the catalogues of comparable tape manufacturers.

Manufacturer	Model	Adjusted for
Ampex	all	standard tape
Astrocom/Marlux	407	low-noise tape*
Bell & Howell	all	standard tape
Concord	"Mark" series	low-noise tape
	older models	standard tape
Crown International	all	user-adjustable (VU meter)
Ferrograph	Series 7	user-adjustable (VU meter)
Magnecord	all	standard tape (user-adjustable in professional models)
Norelco	all	standard tape
Panasonic	RS-1000	user-adjustable (VU meter)
Revox	all others	standard tape
	A77	low-noise (user-adjustable with external meter)
Roberts	recent models	low-noise tape
	older models	standard tape
Sony	all	standard tape
	(on TC-780 equalization is switchable for either low-noise or standard tape)	
Tandberg	1600X, 6000X	low-noise tape
	older models	standard tape
Teac	all but special-order	standard tape
3M Co.	6150, 6250, etc.	user-adjustable (2-position switch)
	others at 7½	standard tape
	at slower speeds	low-noise tape
Uher	10000, 9500	user-adjustable (external meter)
Viking	all others	standard tape
	all models	standard tape
	(user-adjustable in some models — see instruction manual)	

* During lab tests of this model we found that it showed a distinct preference for Audio Formula 15 tapes.

A Representative List of Tape Types

In this table, which includes most of the best-known national brands, we have listed both standard and low-noise formulations and three types of base material: 1.5-mil (or standard-play) acetate, PVC (polyvinyl chloride) of similar thickness, and 1.0-mil (long-play) polyester—often identified as Mylar, Du Pont's brand name. These are the most commonly used bases for home recording. Some recorder manufacturers discourage use of 1.5-mil polyester because they say that its stiffness inhibits good tape-to-head contact. Conversely, others discourage use of 1.0-mil PVC or even acetate and all thinner tapes on two grounds. Since these tapes are more flexible, they may exhibit some tendency to conform to and exaggerate any existing head-wear patterns. Also the thinner the tape, the less strength it has to resist stretching or breaking under abrupt recorder action or misuse.

While we have used the basic term "low-noise" in every case, some manufacturers (BASF and Sony, for example) claim high-output characteristics as well for their low-noise tape. Others may have a high-output formulation (Soundcraft's is GTA-12 and GTM-18, in 7-inch reels) that is not low-noise in the usual sense, though it may actually produce lower noise levels on some recorders.

Brand	Class designation	Type	7-Inch Reel Designation		
			1.5-mil Acetate	1.5-mil PVC	1.0-mil Polyester
Ampex	600 Series	standard	611		641
	400 Series	low-noise	414		444
Audio	Formula 10	standard	1251		1861
	Formula 15	low-noise	1257		1867
BASF	SP 52	standard		SP 52	
	LP 35LH	low-noise			LP 35LH
Bell & Howell	A-4	standard	216104		216117
	AX-4	low-noise	216113		216141
Irish	190 Series	standard	195		197
	270 Series	low-noise	271		273
RCA		standard	15A12		10M18
		low-noise	15ALN12LT		10MLN18LT
Scotch		standard	111		150
		low-noise	201		203
Sony	Dynarange	standard			PR-150
	PR-150	low-noise			SLH-180
Soundcraft	SLH-180	standard	S-12		PL-18

below the output at 400 or 700 Hz. Then adjust the *record* amplifier's equalization for the flattest possible frequency response. (The equalization fills in the head-loss "hole" at approximately 10 kHz.) Keep in mind that the higher the top frequency the greater the noise level. If you have no use for a 20-kHz top, limit yourself to 15 kHz (12 kHz at 3¼ ips).

A quick-and-dirty, though effective, bias adjustment can be made with one of the inexpensive two-tone generators available from mail-order electronics distributors. Feed in 10 kHz at -10 dB and adjust the bias for maximum output. Then increase the bias current until the output level from low-noise tape decreases 5 dB. Switch to the 400-Hz tone at -10 dB and note the playback level. If it differs by more than 2 dB from the 10-kHz playback level, adjust the record equalization (which affects 10 kHz) for the best match.

Of course, the best bias adjustment usually is the one in the recorder's manual, if it is specified. Theoretically, there should be a 6-dB improvement in S/N ratio over standard tape, though the distortion might be higher by 0.1%. More likely, you might be shocked to find that there has been no improvement in the S/N ratio.

How Low Is Low Noise?

The graphs in Fig. 5 show the performance obtained from three types of tape on a Revox A77 specifically adjusted for low-noise tape. We have included other pertinent data such as "headroom," which is the difference in dB between zero-VU recording level and the peak level, coming as close as possible to 2% THD (the greater the headroom the less likely is overload on sharp transients).

Note that there is only 1-dB noise difference between Formula 10 (standard) and the low-noise tapes. Something wrong with low-noise tape? No—the answer lies in amplifier noise. Unless the residual amplifier noise is considerably below that of the tape, as it is in mastering recorders, the advantage of low-noise tape gets buried in the amplifier noise. In fact, the performance of the Formula 10 tape is the same as that for the Formula 15 low-noise tape when the Revox bias is adjusted for the former. And you may expect this performance even on solid-state professional machines. For example, the Revox performance was almost exactly duplicated on an Ampex 600 and an RCA RT-21B, a professional broadcast recorder priced at \$2,000. Even more strange, the amplifier noise of one of the most expensive professional cartridge recorders (\$2,000 and up) showed at best a 50-dB S/N ratio on any tape used—from "white box" to low-noise—and this is the specified performance.

As a general rule, and assuming quality equipment, a specified S/N ratio of less than 60 dB (say, 57 dB) implies a noise level established by amplifier noise, and standard and low-noise tapes will give essentially equal performance as long as the recorder is biased for the particular type of tape used. (Low-noise and standard tape, as we have shown, cannot be

interchanged without affecting the final sound quality, provided there is a fixed-bias current.) Also, a S/N ratio of better than 60 dB implies that the tape noise is the limiting factor, and low-noise tape would give an improved S/N ratio assuming proper bias adjustment.

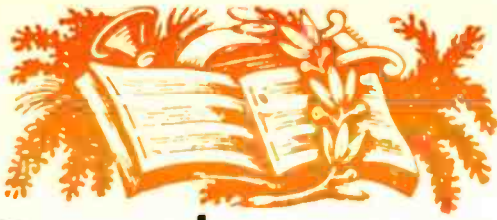
If You Can't Adjust. . .

The bias and equalization in most home recorders is either difficult for the owner to adjust or is permanently preset to deliver the specified performance with a standard tape, such as 3M's Scotch 111. Unfortunately it is not uncommon for the performance of a standard tape to change within a period of years. For instance a few years back I found that three different boxes of 111 gave three different results—all good, but different. Moreover, other brands of standard tape aren't necessarily bias-equal to 111. For several reasons, in fact, the word "standard" hardly characterizes these tape oxides.

In order for budget recorders to accommodate different standard tapes and to protect against bias loss caused by component aging, many budget machines are bias-adjusted slightly to the high side of peak tape output. This cures a multitude of sins: even with the passage of time, bias tends to stay on the low distortion side and allows interchange of tape brands without a high-end loss of more than a few kHz from the specified frequency range. By experimentation, however, you can determine which specified brand or brands of tape work best on a fixed-bias recorder. Start with the brand and type recommended by the recorder's manufacturer and try similar types before going further afield. If the distortion is low on any brand, it will most likely be low on all other brands and types—within 0.1 to 0.3% THD of each other. To check for frequency response, simply listen for the brand that gives the desired high end—normally a top 3 dB below the response at 400 Hz or 1 kHz. Some brands might cause a peak of 2 to 3 dB at 10 kHz, but this is considered normal or "flat."

Don't expect an improvement in S/N ratio if low-noise tape is used however. Working against a fixed bias, S/N improvement might well be nonexistent, unless the tape you select produces greater output level for a constant (zero-VU) input level, which some low-noise tapes do. But tape experimentation will produce at best a wider frequency response and perhaps a little greater output (in the order of 1 to 2 dB).

To sum up, although distortion, frequency response, output level, and noise are highly bias-dependent, you can expect reasonable to very good performance as long as the bias level is reasonably close to the optimal amount. To achieve the utmost of these performance criteria, however, precise bias adjustment becomes a necessity—as long as the improvement is not obscured by the residual noise, distortion, and frequency limitations of the recorder's electronics.



Part VI: The Concertos

Beethoven on Records

Continuing High Fidelity's appraisal of all available recordings of the composer's music

by Harris Goldsmith

WHEN HIGH FIDELITY published its first Beethoven discography over fifteen years ago there were five *Emperor* Concertos to choose from; at latest count there are well over twenty pretenders to the throne. A clear-cut preference—problematical enough with five contenders—becomes a virtual impossibility with so many records and so many different valid approaches to consider. I presume that few collectors really expect a discography to state categorically that a given version is the only possible choice. The microgroove era has seen both an increase in the production of recorded music and a lowering in the cost of a recorded performance. The bounty has, moreover, spawned a new variety of hobbyist—the “hi-fi-natic” who buys multiple versions of the same music with the nonchalance of the concertgoer who buys a ticket to hear Serkin play the *Emperor* one week and Arrau the next. Such comparative collecting is, to my mind, definitely to be encouraged. A pocket score, moreover, might also be considered a worthy investment by those interested in really knowing the music rather than the idiosyncrasies of an isolated performance.

The present discography has been prepared with due consideration for both the confirmed collector and those who wish to go “cold turkey”—that is, confine themselves to one or two interpretations. I make no apology for my own personal likes and dislikes; but rather than attempting to be doctrinaire in choosing one performance over another, I have tried to furnish concise—and I hope useful—descriptions of all the renditions both good and bad. In that way each listener will be able to decide for himself which discs might best fulfill his requirements.

The Piano Concertos

Complete Sets

- Claudio Arrau, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. Philips PHS 5-970, \$29.90 (five discs).
- Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CSA 2401, \$23.92 (four discs).
- Daniel Barenboim, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel S 3752, \$23.92 (four discs, with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80).
- Felicia Blumental, piano; Innsbruck Symphony Orchestra, Robert Wagner, cond. Orion ORS 7018/6, \$17.95 (six discs, with other works for piano and orchestra).
- Alfred Brendel, piano; various orchestras and cond. Turnabout 34205/9,

\$14.90 (five discs, with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80; Rondo in B flat, Op. posth.; other works for solo piano).

- Emil Gilels, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Angel S 3731, \$29.90 (five discs, with Variations, Op. 76, G. 182, and G. 191).
- Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138774/7, \$23.92 (four discs).
- Artur Schnabel, piano; Symphony of the Air, Josef Krips, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 6702, \$29.90 (five discs).
- Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia D4S 740, \$17.94 (four discs, with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80).

Although my own inclination would be to acquire individual discs of the five

concertos (most of the available boxed sets are, were, or will be available singly), I realize that many discophiles prefer to own a handsomely boxed, unified interpretive outlook. Unfortunately the two complete sets which I personally like the best are presently in limbo:

Artur Schnabel's early recordings with Sir Malcolm Sargent (once available as RCA Victor 6700, five discs, with the Variations, Op. 35) and Leon Fleisher's set with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra (Epic BSC 151, four discs).

Schnabel, perhaps the most eminent Beethoven specialist of the century and—contrary to legend—a brilliantly endowed pianist, consistently found more meaning in this music than anyone else known to me. He recorded these performances between the years 1932 and 1935. In later years, Schnabel re-recorded all the concertos save No. 1 (there are, in fact,

three versions each of Nos. 4 and 5), but with one exception the earlier performances are stronger, more ravishingly nuanced, and altogether more spontaneous and flexible. Moreover, in spite of its earlier vintage, RCA's sound was sweeter and more natural. The orchestral accompaniments were a bit swoopy and old-fashioned (annoyingly so in No. 2), but Sir Malcolm was a wonderfully companionable Beethovenian. A re-issue of Schnabel's cycle is urgently needed, and it is to be hoped that these early versions, rather than the later ones (once on Angel COLH and also now out of print), will be picked for resurrection.

Fleisher, who studied with Schnabel for many years, comes closer to matching his mentor's statements than other contemporary pianists. His playing is robust, with a touch of gusty extroversion and a superb sense of structure. The slow movements have breadth and meditation, while the fast ones are full of wonderfully roguish brio. Fleisher even preserves some of Schnabel's idiosyncrasies and foibles: a tendency to angularize certain passage work in order to clarify the harmonic writing and a slightly cloudy, controversial approach to trills and other ornamentation. To be sure, the "young American pianist" in Fleisher does come to the fore with his rather flinty, almost brittle tone, but both he and conductor Szell bring more crispness to their readings than Schnabel ever did. It is good news indeed to learn that Columbia will be reissuing these performances this fall and on their low-priced Odyssey label at that. The Fleisher/Szell stereo sound was fully contemporary.

Of the editions now obtainable Kempff's is the only one I would recommend as a set. Kempff's phonographic association with the Beethoven piano literature dates back as far, maybe even farther, than Schnabel's (I recall hearing his ancient shellac set of the Concerto No. 1, which—since it is not listed in the *World Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*—is presumably pre-electrical). Whereas Schnabel was the first "modern" Beethoven player (e.g., businesslike, hewing closely to the composer's markings), Kempff—though in the same general German Romantic mainstream—is the last of the great "pre-Schnabel" Beethovenians. He frequently lingers lovingly over some eloquent detail (as often as not, unspecified by the text, though usually always implied); he substitutes his own cadenzas (short, imaginative, and attractive) for those of the composer; and in general, presents a more intimate, less cosmic view of the music. For all his improvisational self-indulgence, however, Kempff is an old-fashioned man who was perceptive and flexible enough to modify his approach to suit the changing tastes of the era. A comparison with his sundry 78-rpm versions and his monophonic integral LP set with Paul van Kempen at the helm (Decca DX 125) documents the gradual tightening up and economization in the pianist's approach. His latest accounts for DGG are simpler, a bit lighter and more refined, and certainly more generally recommendable than the previous ones (though Kempff devotees will, as before, find many color details and



Kempff: old-fashioned but perceptive.

personal niceties to delight in). The orchestral work under Leitner, moreover, is beautifully sturdy and well conceived.

Arrau's performances with Haitink present a traditional, finely tempered, and beautifully modulated brand of pianistic solidity, ably if somewhat lightly and noncommittally accompanied by the fine Dutch orchestra. Arrau plays Beethoven's cadenzas (completing the first, rarely heard one in the Allegro con brio of No. 1, and opting for the gentler, more frequently performed alternative in No. 4) and is as always a wonderfully poetic, if sometimes overly meditative and subdued, interpreter. Philips is presently making these performances available singly, sometimes with bonus fillers not contained in the boxed album, and the new imported Philips pressings are far, far superior to the noisy domestic ones in the album.

Brendel's style is that of a classicist: quiet, reserved, delicately colored, yet rather patrician and lightweight. Unfortunately, he is spottily supported by the scrawny orchestras, though conductors Wilfried Böttcher (in No. 1), Heinz Wallberg (in Nos. 2, 3, and 4), and Zubin Mehta (in the *Emperor*) are by no means musically unsympathetic. Brendel plays the same first Beethoven cadenza as Arrau in Concerto No. 1 (combining it with fragments of the composer's longer third version to make a suitable conclusion), the alternate, earlier "second" cadenza in No. 4, an unfamiliar short one (his own?) in No. 3, and the usual Beethoven in No. 2. Felicia Blumental also offers a complete set of the concertos at a budget price. Mme. Blumental is a fluent, musical player, but on the whole her performances are not sufficiently polished or well supported orchestrally to meet the tremendous competition.

Rubinstein's interpretations were recorded late in 1956 within the space of ten days. These performances were once available separately but were deleted when RCA began replacing them with newer Rubinstein versions. No. 2 has so far not appeared in the Leinsdorf collaboration, but when it does, the Krips album will probably disappear altogether. The later performances are more scrupulously Beethovenian, often more accurately played and certainly better reproduced, but most listeners will probably find more of the quintessential Rubinstein on the Krips records. The famed virtuoso's playing tends to be more freewheeling, lovingly nuanced, and less self-conscious here (sometimes *too free-*

wheeling: there are actual mistakes in the first-movement octaves of the *Emperor* which are corrected in the Leinsdorf recording); and in the newest pressings, RCA has minimized the tendencies toward overresonant orchestra sonics and brittle piano tone. Krips, aside from the stodgy first movement of No. 4, is a vigorous, experienced partner. My reservations vis-à-vis Rubinstein's way with Beethoven are epitomized in his choice of cadenzas. He uses the composer's own, but in the revised Busoni editions (save for that in Op. 19, which seems to be the original). What Busoni has done is to amplify a bass line here, throw in some gaudy technical ear-catchers there, and inaugurate a few insidious changes of harmony. The modifications are admittedly slight and in the best of (bad) taste, but do not, to my reckoning, add up to a change for the better. Any artist who can think of using such a vulgarized text (which is far different from taking the historically valid prerogative of writing original cadenzas as Kempff does) is already a trifle suspect. I feel, moreover, that even in the "pure Beethoven" parts of the music, Rubinstein tends to make many subtleties unsubtle and overlook many apt details. He is a bit too glibly extroverted and externalized, too fond of the emphatic emphasis and the grand gesture. However it is wonderfully large-scaled, exciting piano playing, often musicianly—and even, at times, deeply affecting—but, over-all, a shade too casual and lacking in nervous tension. Even so, this set documents the work of an important pianist, vigorous, alert, and full of vibrant life.

Both Serkin and Backhaus offered earlier mono editions which were among the best in the catalogue, but in each case their stereo remakes are generally less attractive. With Backhaus, advancing years had brought a loss of digital poise; and the last flush of humanity that graces the veteran artist's recent recordings of Beethoven sonatas had not yet appeared when these concertos were taped in the late 1950s. I also find the orchestral treatment of Schmidt-Isserstedt lacking this conductor's present-day distinction (e.g., his *Eroica* recording), and the early stereo microphone placement seems chilly and remote compared to Backhaus' full-blooded mono pickup. Backhaus, like Kempff, is rather stylistically old-fashioned, but unlike Kempff, he is apt to be a bit too extroverted and emotionally void. Bigness and breadth are applied in the Fifth Concerto, but any artist who can race so perfunctorily through some of the great slow movements is *persona non grata* in my book. Serkin, considerably younger than Backhaus, remains an incandescent virtuoso and is, in addition, a more thoughtful, intense interpreter of Beethoven's music. Yet concertos Nos. 3 and 5 are here indifferently accompanied, while the new Nos. 2 and 4 are slower, more labored, and less spontaneous in feeling than the earlier performances. Serkin has it in him to give this music a superstatement (his recent New York concert performance of No. 4 with George Szell was just that) and since he is still one of our most active musicians, it is reasonable to assume that in due time he will make a

recorded version worthy of his abilities. (The mono set—while easily preferable to the latest—still fell short of Serkin's very best.)

Gilels is a scrupulous pianist but, to my mind, not a very enlivening one. In the early concertos, he avoids Beethoven's long pedalings and burst of bravura temperament, substituting a dainty, spry objectivity. Nor does Gilels really rise to the bravura demands of the *Emperor*. Szell too seems less happy than he did with Fleisher; the mechanized precision and spiky clarity of the Clevelanders here taste like a mouthful of lemon sourballs. Cadenzas are by Beethoven: the short No. 2 for Op. 15; that less frequently heard "No. 2" in the first movement of Op. 58. The most serious deficiencies of this well-reproduced set are humor, true rhythmic "lift" and imagination: it all comes out in deadpan machine-tooled "perfection" (and—as in the cadenza to No. 2—sometimes not even that).

Some listeners have professed to hear miraculous musical revelations in the work of Barenboim and Klemperer. To these ears, the *Emperor's* clothes consist of orchestral rags, threadbare and stained with schmaltz, a percussive piano tone, loosely maintained structure, stolid tempos, and in general, a miserably obese, vulgarly pretentious musical outlook—and the other concertos fare no better. The sonics are as bloated as the interpretations. For me, this is the worst set of the Beethoven concertos ever put on the market . . . and they pall with greater acquaintance. Save for Barenboim's tasteful addendum to No. 1, the cadenzas are by Beethoven.

Individual Performances

Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15 (1797).

- Claudio Arrau, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. Philips SAL 3712, \$5.98 (with Piano Sonata No. 7).
- Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Issersiedt, cond. London CS 6099, \$5.98 (with Piano Sonata No. 8).
- Paul Badura-Skoda, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Westminster S 1018, \$9.98 (three discs, with Piano Concertos Nos. 3 and 5).
- Leonard Bernstein, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6407, \$5.98.
- Robert Casadesus, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0056, \$2.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 4).
- Christoph Eschenbach, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139023, \$5.98.
- Emil Gilels, piano; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Parliament 138, \$4.96 (mono only, two discs, with Piano Concerto No. 2).
- Glenn Gould, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. Columbia MS 6017, \$5.98 (with Bach: Piano Concerto No. 5).
- Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond.

London CS 6451, \$5.98 (with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80).

• Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138774, \$5.98.

• Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victorla VICS 1478, \$2.98 (with Piano Sonata No. 22).

• Artur Schnabel, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3013, \$5.98.

• Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 6838, \$5.98 (with Bagatelles, Op. 119).

• Solomon, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert Menges, cond. Seraphim S 60016, \$2.49 (with Piano Sonata No. 27).

• Friedrich Wührer, piano; Vienna Pro Musica Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky, cond. Vox STPL 513070, \$1.98 (with Rondo in B flat, Op. posth.).

You might suspect that this First Concerto is a little too good for a virgin effort—even when a Beethoven is involved. Actually the C major was preceded by a juvenile work written in 1784 as well as the B flat Concerto. In its revised form of 1798, that later effort was published a little after Op. 15 and is thus commonly known as No. 2 in the composer's canon. The C major Concerto is, nevertheless, early Beethoven and while characteristically robust, rambunctious, and wonderfully original, it still preserves and owes much to Mozartean decorum. Your choice of a recorded interpretation will largely depend on whether you think the Op. 15's Mozartean paradigm is the large, festive C major Concerto, K. 503 or the more intimate C major Concerto, K. 415. For me, the stride, weight, and similarities of orchestral scoring with K. 503 (especially the assertive trumpets and timpani) provide the clue.

Both Fleisher and Serkin obviously share my own view of Beethoven's C major and present readings full of fire and pomp. And characteristically, both players opt for the longest and most turbulent of the composer's three first-movement cadenzas. Moreover, both Szell and Ormandy give their soloists the kind of charged framework appropriate to their conceptions. It should also be noted that in its single-disc format, the Serkin offers a valuable bonus by way of a marvelous performance of Beethoven's Op. 119 Bagatelles. Solomon/Menges and Arrau/Haitink provide a more lyrical, less Olympian approach. The Englishman's beautifully sculptured, proportioned pianism is ably, though a shade genteelly, supported by Menges, and his low-priced Seraphim disc similarly offers fine value by including an excellent performance of the Op. 90 Sonata. Solomon's use of the short second Beethoven cadenza is perfectly consistent with his avoidance of any flamboyance, but I rather miss the wildness of the other, perhaps less stylistically apt, later one.

Arrau's earlier performance with Galliera (Angel, deleted), is a good, sound reading—a shade faster and

earlier than the remake with Haitink—but, on the whole, less thoughtful and sophisticated. The Kempff/Leitner is a superb version, very much in the Schnabel/Sargent manner: in other words, it combines some of the brilliance and vigor of Serkin and Fleisher with the classical, coloristic finesse of Solomon, Arrau, and the deleted Gieseking (Columbia). In the third movement, Kempff puts the third statement of the Rondo theme up one octave. He took a similar liberty with his earlier mono edition, and also interpolated a cadenza at the end of that movement which is omitted on the newer disc. That older Kempff version had a great deal of point and personality but I like the new one even better.

The Casadesus/Van Beinum is another excellent bargain. The pianist's style is similar to Solomon's albeit a shade cooler and more brittle. The slightly trivial cadenzas (by Casadesus), however, are less appealing than Kempff's or Beethoven's own. If ugly cadenzas are what you are after, the Gould/Golschmann provides them with a vengeance. That Columbia disc also provides an amazingly brilliant, vigorous, and exciting reading that used to be one of my favorites. I like it less on rehearing, finding it rather machinelike and unnuanced—though it continues to be mighty impressive. Bernstein presents a "personality" reading of another sort: full of fancy tempo changes and gaudy effects. He tears into the long third cadenza in a nineteenth-century show-off manner carried to existential limits: Gorillawitsch. The Eschenbach/Karajan, in sharpest contrast, is so leisurely, introverted, and perfumed that it swoons dead away. In its manner, though, I suppose it is an artistic, beautiful interpretation. Like Kempff on the aforementioned older edition, Eschenbach interpolates a roudade at the end of the Rondo. In the first movement he uses a truncated version of Beethoven's longest cadenza.

Gilels' account with Sanderling and the Leningraders is, I find, far more appealing than the pianist's later Szell-led performance. He still is graceful rather than vigorous, but his work here sounds so much more sparkling, alive, and natural. Sanderling's orchestral framework too provides more in the way of true vigor and airy ebullience and is far less oppressively didactic. Backhaus' sturdy reading is offered in a single-disc format but with its rushed, perfunctory slow movement the picture isn't altered much. Wührer and Swarowsky follow a similar course with their rather brisk pace for that movement but manage it with more sensitivity. The pianist's treatment of the outer movements is vigorous, with the big third cadenza used in the first movement and (as with Eschenbach and the older Kempff/Van Kempen versions) a sporting roudade added to the Rondo just before the coda. On the whole, this disc makes a very estimable impression and its electronic stereo sound is agreeable. Rubinstein/Leinsdorf's fine sonics and sinewy orchestra work are somewhat diminished by less incisive solo playing than on the pianist's earlier recording with Krips. (Compare the runs in the first movement at measures 114 to 116 and the tempo for the Rondo with the

Beethoven on Records

Continued

Krips edition and you will probably prefer, as I do, the first version.) Brendel's statement has a pleasing expansiveness and grace. Katchen/Gamba start rather soggy, but by the cadenza (Beethoven's No. 3), the pianist is playing with more profile and flair. The Largo has sensitive legato nuances and the finale is somewhat lightweight, though quite lively. One of the several factors that incline me to pass over the 1960 Richter/Munch edition is the xylophone-like, unpleasantly cutting piano tone. Other debits are Munch's blowsy accompaniment, an ill-advised cut made by the pianist in the third Beethoven cadenza, and Richter's alternately sentimental (first-movement entrance) and excessively detached outlook (second-movement recapitulation). Badura-Skoda and Scherchen present a similar middle-ground stand, but their balanced statement is blemished for me by aging (reprocessed) sound, crude orchestral playing, and sundry textual modifications on the order of Kempff's but less judicious. (Badura-Skoda uses a cadenza of his own.) Blumental's orchestral backing loses focus and her playing is unenlivening and sometimes labored. Barenboim/Klemperer are a bit—but only a bit—better than their norm here.

Concerto No. 2, in B flat, Op. 19 (1795).

- *Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6188, \$5.98 (with Piano Sonata, No. 14).*
- *Emil Gilels, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Angel S 36028, \$5.98 (with 32 Variations in C minor, WoO. 80).*
- *Emil Gilels, piano; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Parliament 138, \$4.96 (mono only, two discs, with Piano Concerto No. 1).*
- *Glenn Gould, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia ML 5211, \$5.98 (mono only, with Bach: Piano Concerto No. 1).*
- *Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond. London CS 6374, \$5.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 4).*
- *Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138775, \$5.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 4).*
- *Artur Schnabel, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Issay Dobrowen, cond. Seraphim IC 6043, \$7.47 (three discs, mono only, with other concertos).*
- *Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 6839 (with Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 27).*
- *Friedrich Wührer, piano; Stuttgart Pro Musica Orchestra, Walter Davisson, cond. Vox STPL 513060, \$1.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 3).*

The B flat Concerto is the earliest and

shortest of Beethoven's standard five, but as one pianist who has recorded the entire set points out, it is far from the weakest in its motivic workmanship. In a three-way comparison with which I quite agree, the cited musician (Glenn Gould) sheds light on the opening orchestral expositions of this Concerto and the C major and C minor Concertos and shows how the last of these three—though undoubtedly the most superficially impressive—is actually the weakest of the triumvirate. For one thing, the dramatic structure of Concerto No. 3 is weakened by having the orchestra state both themes in their entirety and by stating them, moreover, in the same respective keys in which they later appear when the solo takes over. The miscalculation (or whatever one calls it when an immortal composer allegedly falls from grace) is compounded by the stylistic necessity of returning to the home key and repeating the opening idea symphonically prior to the arrival of the solo Chief of State. In the same article, Mr. Gould opts for the B flat's opener as the most skillfully composed. Here Beethoven saves his real second theme for the pianist. Furthermore, by going to the surprise key of D flat major, the composer evokes a touch of the exotic in his otherwise clear-cut framework and also inaugurates an unusual structural device which (here I am carrying Gould's valid trend of thought one step further) is to form the capstone for the entire first movement: e.g., the intervallic climb from C natural to D flat at the crucial spot (bars 40-41), to cite just one tiny example, is repeated on other tones at bars 75, 76, and 77.

If all of the foregoing seems a bit tedious to those unlettered in musical theory, the music, for all its learned craft, is amazingly zippy and unpretentious. At least that is the way it ought to sound. For that reason, I prefer interpretations that stress breezy, forward-moving tempos in the two outer movements and that dig into the more boisterous bits of writing with relish and gusto. Philosophy and weighty significance, in my view, are sorely misplaced in this opus. Artur Schnabel's 1946 performance with Issay Dobrowen (the one exception to the truism that the earliest Schnabel recording is always the best) is available in a three-disc Seraphim "Great Recordings of the Century" album along with other concerto performances by "historical" artists. The collection is inexpensive and well worth owning. Schnabel outlines the Beethoven work exactly along the lines I think are correct. His first movement is replete with scampering jollity, the Adagio is superbly inward (note Schnabel's wonderful declamative realization of that long pedal recitativo marked *con gran espressione*), and the off-beat accents in the Rondo (taken at a true *molto allegro*) are delineated with the elemental, child-like (but, of course, wonderfully ripe) directness of a nursery rhyme. Dobrowen doesn't fight the pianist's rapid tempos as Sargent did in the earlier set, and Schnabel consequently returns the compliment by playing with more discipline and metrical steadiness. Since this is the only currently surviving example of

Schnabel in a Beethoven concerto, it is indeed fortunate that both the performance and recorded sound are more than equal to the task.

Fleisher's soon-to-be-reissued rendering with George Szell offers modern engineering and a performance that equals Schnabel's in every important aspect. The old Backhaus/Krauss and Serkin/Ormandy monophonic performances were both dapper and impeccably lightfingered. Unfortunately, both have been replaced with less satisfactory stereo remakes: the Backhaus/Schmidt-Isserstedt is brusque and ungainly while the Serkin/Ormandy has a musclebound first movement and a leaden, stolid finale. Glenn Gould's mono disc (still listed, though it may be difficult to find) provides a lightfingered, beautifully articulate, but somewhat mincing account. The Rubinstein/Krips is surprisingly akin to Schnabel and Fleisher, but suffers from a brittle, unalluring piano reproduction. Brendel's version is conscientious and unremarkable, and the Gilels/Sanderling again far surpasses Gilels/Szell for the same reasons outlined in Concerto No. 1 (the Gilels/Szell version of No. 2 is the weakest performance in their collaboration). Certain characteristic details are eschewed or compromised but the music is played with rhythmic crispness. Katchen, on the other hand, meticulously obeys every marking, sets the right quick tempos, plays with attractively liquid tone quality, but lacks both rhythmic exactitude and clear articulation. The well-intentioned reading is without profile and intensity.

The Arrau/Haitink and Kempff/Leitner are both remarkable. Both teams set leisurely tempos of which I basically disapprove, but each succeeds in justifying the breadth with apt dynamic differentiation, purposeful phrasing, and a wealth of personal insight. You thus lose a bit of romping hilarity and gain more than a bit of *Innigkeit*. Both Blumental's sympathetically smiling reading and Wührer's dryly literal one are hindered by the respective orchestras, while Barenboim and Klemperer stagger through the score like brontosaurus.

Incidentally, although Beethoven sent this Concerto to his publisher with the advice that it was not his best, he retained some measure of esteem for it—years later, he composed a wonderful cadenza for the work. Every artist but Kempff plays that addendum; Kempff plays his own and its quiet ending necessitates cutting the first loud orchestral chord when the tutti re-enters. The alteration is worth noting; it is by no means a change for the worse.

Concerto No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37 (1800).

- *Joey Alfidi, piano; Antwerp Philharmonic Orchestra, Jef Alpaerts, cond. Jubilee 3000-2, \$9.96 (mono only, two discs, with Symphony No. 8; Alfidi: Piano Concerto No. 2; Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 3, No. 2).*
- *Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6094, \$5.98.*
- *Paul Badura-Skoda, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scher-*

chen, cond. Westminster WMS 1018, \$9.95 (three discs, with Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 5).

• Daniel Barenboim, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Laszlo Somogyi, cond. Westminster WST 17078, \$5.98 (with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80).

• Rudolf Firkusny, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Susskind, cond. Pickwick S 4019, \$2.49.

• Bruno-Leonardo Gelber, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Seraphim S 60130, \$2.49 (with Piano Sonata No. 26).

• Glenn Gould, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6096, \$5.98.

• Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138776, \$5.98.

• Lili Kraus, piano; Amsterdam Philharmonic Society Orchestra, Gianfranco Rivoli, cond. Monitor S 2092, \$2.50 (with Rondo in B flat, Op. posth.).

• Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138848, \$5.98 (with Rondo in B flat, Op. posth.).

• Artur Schnabel, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2947, \$5.98.

• Rudolf Serkin, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6616 (with Choral Fantasy, Op. 80).

• Solomon, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert Menges, cond. Seraphim S 60019, \$2.49.

• Friedrich Wührer, piano; Stuttgart Pro Musica Orchestra, Walter Davisson, cond. Vox STPL 513060, \$1.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 2).

When Beethoven completed this work he entered the third decade of his life-span and (so far as his concertos are concerned) the second important phase of his creative career. Many performers choose to underline the music's added depth by adopting staid tempos and treating the first movement as if it were a weighty (if not actually dirgelike) processional. This tradition, which has had some pretty important adherents, is clearly contradicted by the score itself. Lili Kraus and her conductor Gianfranco Rivoli have the courage to ignore such an approach and have recorded an inspired performance which gives us, for one thing, the alla breve Allegro con brio first movement that Beethoven wrote. The correct tempo might seem fast and too agitated at first, but one quickly becomes accustomed to it. In other ways too the Kraus/Rivoli departs from ordinary interpretive channels: instead of the massive orchestra, you have an ensemble which, while by no means lacking in muscle, tends toward almost chamber music asperity. Mme. Kraus's pianism is similarly kinetic and, indeed, almost explosive in the personalized force of its phrasing. Some might feel that the central Largo in this interpretation is too nervously played and lacks sufficient introspection. I admit to being mesmerized by this extremely subjective, authoritative playing. Beethoven's cadenza is utilized. The Kraus record is not only superb, it is also inexpensive.

The Third Concerto, as a matter of fact, has quite an outstanding assortment of excellent low-priced editions: the Gelber/Leitner, Annie Fischer/Fricsay (Heliodor HS 25001, recently dropped but copies should still be easy to obtain), Firkusny/Susskind, and Solomon/Menges are all distinguished. Both Fischer and Firkusny adhere to tradition but remain reasonably alert in the tempo department. The Fischer/Fricsay is a bit stronger rhythmically (Fricsay got wonderful spring and life into the third-movement passage beginning at measure 75), the Firkusny is a bit more coloristic, plastically nuanced, and pianistically adroit (though his distaff competitor negotiated the difficult notes ably enough). On rehearing, I liked Solomon's performance even better than before; the Englishman's heartfelt serenity gets right to the core of the Largo and every note has the poise and finish of a consummate artist. Moreover, the orchestra under Menges—which seemed rather lackluster and untidy on my original test acetate reference copy—sounds perfectly beautiful on the finished pressing. My only quibble here concerns Solomon's inexplicable preference for Clara Schumann's rather namby-pamby cadenza. I would put the Gelber slightly below these foregoing editions despite the fine sound and excellent direction from Leitner. Gelber plays the silly Reinecke cadenza and tends to give his polished pianism an added superficial gloss in the manner of Rubinstein. Here the tempo is really too slow in the first movement and the young Argentine-born pianist's high artistry still has too much Chopinesque rounding off to suit me. An additional economy edition by Gary Graffman with Walter Hendl and the Chicago Symphony (RCA Victrola VICS 1059, recently deleted) was technically superb, interpretively unfussy, had fine orchestral support, and the right brisk tempos, but missed some of the music's color and poetry. The Largo, in particular, came out sounding prosaic and flavorless.

The Arrau/Galliera (Angel, deleted) is superbly weighted and well recorded. The Arrau/Haitink, in the complete set, suffers from noisy surfaces (on my copy at least), but is perhaps a bit fleetier and more pointed orchestrally than its Angel predecessor. Both convey the deeper aspects of the music most beautifully, though the lighter, more athletic ones tend to be understated in the Arrau approach. Clara Haskil made a specialty of this Concerto and recorded it twice, although neither her Westminster nor Epic versions survive in the catalogue. Philips would do admirers of this lamented artist a service by reissuing her later (and better) recording with Markevitch on their World Series label; the performance was a bit slow and sedate, but full of pianistic elegance and gentility. Backhaus is altogether tougher and less inward, though by no means without insight. Like Gelber, he plays the Reinecke cadenza, but gives it with more relish and direction than his younger counterpart. Both Gilels and Richter present an aspect of the music that is admittedly valid, but which I find unsympathetic: their performances give us a cold, phlegmatic C-

minor monumentalism in the manner of Cherubini (a composer much admired by Beethoven). The emotional temperature is low, colors are employed with skill, but in each instance it comes out sounding rather remote and denatured. Of the two, Richter/Sanderling is preferable: at least this pianist has some poetic inclinations and cannily avoids Gilels' trite schoolboy-practicing-scales phrasing in the second-movement passage beginning at bar 73. The Rubinstein/Leinsdorf far surpasses the Rubinstein/Krips in this Concerto. For all the similarities between Rubinstein's style and that of Gelber, the older man's newest account is more detached and forward-moving. Surprisingly, I like the fast tempo for the Largo, which now sounds less precious than it did under Krips. You still must contend with those Busonifications in the cadenza, but this is one of the finest versions in the catalogue.

Glenn Gould also omits the opening bars of Beethoven's cadenza as did Rubinstein on his earlier disc, and retouches the end conspicuously. Gould's revisions, however, are consistently more meaningful than Busoni's. Rehearing this 1959 version was one of the more pleasant surprises of this discography. I like this reading far more now than I did previously. True, the first movement is rather slow, but many details take on a fresh life in this very personalized, rather exaggeratedly eighteenth-century approach. The second movement, especially, is presented with rapt introspection and sensitivity of nuance. Bernstein's ensemble is rather small and the sonics have an artificial echo, but this is a disc to regard highly. Rehearing Bernstein's other version (with Serkin) unfortunately brought no comparable change of heart. Even on his earlier recorded version I felt that Serkin's treatment of this particular solo part was too tense and knotted. Here he also has to contend with Bernstein's insecure, crudely insensitive leadership and steely recorded sound. Kempff/Leitner are disappointing in a different way. The pianist favors a dainty "forte-piano" sonority and his Largo is fast and flip-pant here (the older Van Kempen LP had more serenity, and the still older 78-rpm version was the most serene of all). Blumental gives the best performances of her cycle here. I found plenty of breadth and fire in her treatment, and the orchestra—while unpolished here and there—upholds its end satisfactorily. Badura-Skoda and Scherchen, in the only true stereo disc of their partially complete cycle, are also rather prissy but without Kempff's undeniable refinement. Barenboim/Somogyi are neat and trim. That Westminster disc is far to be preferred to the more recent Barenboim/Klemperer, with its lumbering, elephantine tempos and imprecise orchestral chording. Brendel's orderly statement is rather acridly reproduced. Joey Alfidi's version was recorded at a live performance, when the pianist was eleven years old. The boy plays rather sweetly and musically, but is technically and interpretatively out of his depth. Wührer's Vox disc suffers from feeble, undernourished orchestral work and faded, woolly orchestral sound. Moreover, in squeezing the whole Concerto onto a

single side, several injudicious cuts were inflicted on Beethoven's cadenza.

Concerto No. 4, in G, Op. 58 (1805-6).

- *Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6054, \$5.98.*
- *Alfred Brendel, piano; Vienna Pro Musica, Heinz Wallberg, cond. Vox STPL 511360, \$1.98 (with Variations on a Salieri Air).*
- *Robert Casadesu, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0056, \$2.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 1).*
- *Van Cliburn, piano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2680, \$5.98.*
- *Walter Gieseking, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0371, \$2.98 (mono only, with Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 23).*
- *Emil Gilels, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Angel S 36030, \$5.98 (with 6 Variations in D, Op. 76).*
- *Emil Gilels, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. Angel S 35511, \$5.98.*
- *Emil Gilels, piano; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Monitor 2032, \$2.50 (mono only, with D. Scarlatti: Piano Sonatas).*
- *Glenn Gould, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6262, \$5.98.*
- *Eugene Istomin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7199, \$5.98.*
- *Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond. London CS 6374, \$5.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 2).*
- *Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138775, \$5.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 2).*
- *Lili Kraus, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Victor Desarzens, cond. Vanguard Everyman S 252, \$2.98 (with Rondo in B flat, Op. posth.).*
- *Ivan Moravec, piano; Orchestra of the Vienna Musikverein, Martin Turnovsky, cond. Connoisseur Society CS 163, \$5.98.*
- *Guimar Novaes, piano; Vienna Pro Musica, Hans Swarowsky, cond. Vox PL 58530, \$4.98 ("electronic" stereo, with Piano Sonata No. 14).*
- *Artur Schnabel, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2848, \$5.98.*
- *Rudolf Serkin, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 6745, \$5.98.*
- *Rudolf Serkin, piano; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Red Seal LM 2797, \$5.98 (mono only).*

The G major Concerto is the most inward and subtle of Beethoven's canon; it is also the most demanding from a technical standpoint. Though the digital demands of its passage work are often concealed, they are none the less formidable. The soloist is called upon to execute filigree abounding with both pearly legato and steely precision. There are also double notes requiring absolute smoothness and aerial lightness. In es-

sence, the tender, spacious, subtle detail here is often harder to realize than the more outspoken, magisterial generalities of the *Emperor* which certainly sounds harder to the layman.

Schnabel's interpretation, with its marvelous compendium of raw nerve feeling, chuckling humanity, luminous tone color, and limpid, undulant pianism, has always been for me the yardstick with which to measure all others. Fleisher/Szell, in their set's best performance, equal Schnabel (and indeed, surpass him in his two later recordings). I continue to be most deeply moved by the Moravec/Turnovsky and the Istomin/Ormandy. Moravec treats the music as a giant tone poem. He is the most personal and controversial of the pianists to have recorded this work, but the incursions of subjectivity (exemplified in arbitrary contrasts of tempo and dynamics) do not obliterate the structural logic of the writing. I remain fascinated—indeed, almost hypnotized—by the Czech artist's fierce, almost manic, intensity. Turnovsky's accompaniment and Connoisseur's reproduction help to make this edition something special. Istomin and Ormandy are exponents of a more urbane, conventional point of view, but there is absolutely nothing commonplace in the exquisite manner with which they realize it. That pianist's every phrase has a serene, beautifully pellucid arch and the orchestral work is broad and assertive. Gilels and Szell give the finest performance in their cycle here. The Soviet virtuoso is rather cool and reserved, though there is a vein of tenderness behind his scrupulously rippling, superbly nuanced patterns. The Gilels/Ludwig is similar, nearly as well reproduced (despite being ten years older) and compassionately partnered orchestrally, though perhaps without quite the refinement of the Gilels/Szell. The Gilels/Sanderling (a Leningrad production dating from about the same time as the Gilels/Ludwig 1957 effort) has a heavier, more emphatic piano tone and a more opaque-sounding orchestra; I would place it behind the pianist's other two editions, though it remains a sturdy, adequately reproduced performance.

Arrau and Kempff bring deeper sonority and more spiritualism to the music than Gilels. Arrau's earlier version with Galliera, however, had a bit more con-

centration and spontaneity than the new one in the Philips set. The Kempff/Leitner provides that extra little thrust, though you must be prepared to accept the non-Beethoven cadenzas. Serkin/Ormandy present in their current reading the strongest rebuttal to the erstwhile supposition that this is a "ladies' concerto." For all its spiky angularity and (some will say unacceptable) unorthodoxy, this is the performance of a unique, deeply committed artist. The Serkin/Toscanini, a 1944 broadcast affair, is a historical curio, but offers less profile from the soloist. Toscanini, of course, is Toscanini but you can find much the same volatile approach with more pianistic distinction and better sound in the Moravec/Turnovsky. Lili Kraus is as feminine here as the Serkin/Ormandy is masculine. Her playing is even a bit *too* nuanced and intimate. She does, however, remain within the bounds of good taste, which is more than can be said for Glenn Gould's impossibly swooning, sophomoric elongation of the music. Gould's uncanny ability to approach each Beethoven concerto with a distinctive voice is certainly remarkable, but this particular narrative could have been better still. Casadesu's shapely, classical style is handsomely partnered by Van Beinum's dark-toned, vigorously alert orchestral framework. On one side of a low-priced Odyssey disc, this is an excellent performance and a real buy for the money (though, as in the Concerto No. 1, Casadesu plays an original, rather banal cadenza). Gieseking's cherished 1951 performance with Karajan has been transferred to one side of another Odyssey release and this too is a worthy proposition, if you favor the late German pianist's rippling, almost Mozartean point of view. The sound is adequate though slightly muffled. A later Gieseking version with Galliera (on imported Odeon SMC 91481) offers essentially the same performance, somewhat more cleanly played and sharply reproduced, but it has the disadvantage of a side break after the slow movement (which of course should lead directly into the Rondo).

The Cliburn/Reiner partnership is heard to its best advantage in this score. I find some of Cliburn's passage work in the first movement a bit blandly shaped and I also object to the late conductor's occasional, almost Wagnerian point-making, but on the whole, the disc gives ample rebuttal to the assertion that Cliburn is a mere superficial virtuoso. He gets far deeper into the music, for example, than Rubinstein, whose brilliant, ultra-refined playing (in the Boston version) lacks warmth and humanity. The combination, though, of Leinsdorf's meticulous accompaniment and RCA's sensationally crisp, forward placement of the brass and woodwind instruments, manages to unearth more detail in Beethoven's scoring than I have ever before heard. The Krips edition, though less cold-blooded, is comparatively turgid and undistinguished. Brendel's version falls apart because of too



Gilels is cool, reserved, but tender.

Continued on page 60

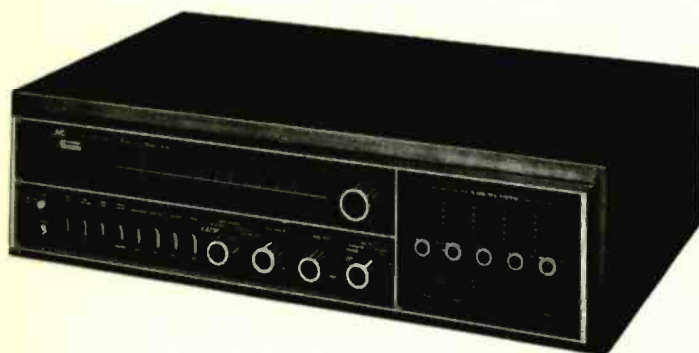
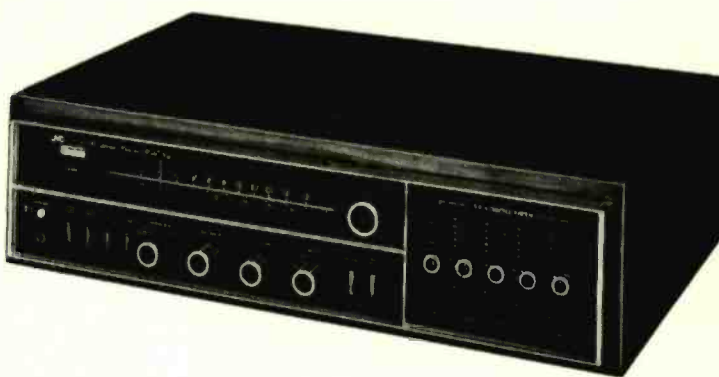
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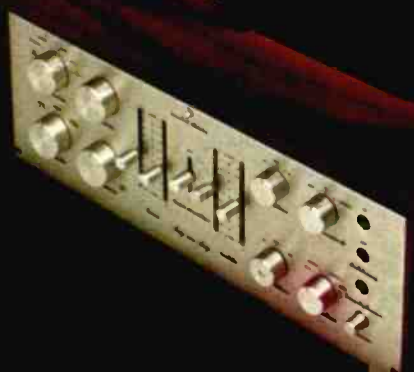
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Beethoven on Records

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many tempo variations, though there is considerable feeling in his limpid execution. Backhaus/Schmidt-Isserstedt produce a leathery, prosaic performance that falls far beneath the poised standard once set by Backhaus/Krauss (Richmond, deleted). The Wührer/Perlea reading (Vox, deleted) is a much better stereophonic approximation of Backhaus' earlier version. The Novaes/Swarowsky, antiseptically reproduced, similarly fails to reach the degree of profundity and feeling previously expressed by Novaes/Klemperer (Vox, deleted). Blumental's amiable, loose-limbed account lacks discipline and polish. Katchen/Gamba nimbly survey the musical shallows, while Barenboim and Klemperer drag the lake for profundities and come up with an interpretive corpse.

Concerto No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73, "Emperor" (1809).

- Claudio Arrau, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Angel S 35722, \$5.98.
- Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6156, \$5.98.
- Paul Badura-Skoda, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. Westminster WMS 1018, \$9.95 (three discs, with Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 3).
- Stephen Bishop, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. Philips 839794, \$5.98.
- Robert Casadesu, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Hans Rosbaud, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0326, \$2.98.
- Van Cliburn, piano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2562, \$5.98.
- Clifford Curzon, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond. London CS 6019, \$5.98.
- Rudolf Firkusny, piano; Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Pickwick S 4006, \$2.49.
- Bruno-Leonardo Gelber, piano; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Seraphim S 60131, \$2.49.
- Walter Gieseking, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Seraphim S 60069, \$2.49.
- Walter Gieseking, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0029, \$2.98 (mono only).
- Emil Gilels, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig, cond. Angel S 35476, \$5.98.
- Emil Gilels, piano; Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Monitor 2033, \$2.50 (mono only).
- Emil Gilels, piano; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. Angel S 36031, \$5.98.
- Glenn Gould, piano; American Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski,

cond. Columbia MS 6888, \$5.98.

- Vladimir Horowitz, piano; RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA Red Seal LM 1718, \$5.98 (mono only).
- Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond. London CS 6397, \$5.98 (with Egmont Overture).
- Wilhelm Kempff, piano; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138777, \$5.98.
- Guiomar Novaes, piano; Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Jonel Perlea, cond. Vox STPL 511930, \$4.98.
- Vlado Perlemuter, piano; Vienna Festival Orchestra, Christian Vochting, cond. Audio Fidelity 50024, \$2.98 (with Piano Sonata No. 14).
- František Rauch, piano; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Sejna, cond. Parliament S 147, \$2.98.
- Artur Schnabel, piano; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 2733, \$5.98.
- Rudolf Serkin, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6366, \$5.98; M2X 788, \$9.98 (two discs, with Piano Sonatas Nos. 8, 14, and 23).

If Beethoven confided to his diary, so to speak, when he wrote his Fourth Concerto, the Op. 73 presents itself with the formality of a business letter. It would be folly to subscribe to the surprisingly common notion that the Emperor is a mere empty display piece or a vehicle for glittery virtuosos, for in the right sort of performance the music is richly human and satisfying. Nevertheless, certain aspects—for example, Beethoven's frequent juxtaposition of such remote tonalities as E flat and B major—do give his Fifth Concerto a distant, magisterial aloofness. This music addresses the multitudes over a public address system; never—not even in the tenderest phrases of the slow movement—does it communicate on a man-to-man basis. No one had composed a concerto on such a grand scale before, and few have approached, let alone surpassed, these dimensions since.

Several superb readings of this regal work have recently vanished from the catalogue, but it should not prove too difficult to locate copies. Fleisher/Szell (my favorite, shortly to reappear on Odyssey) brought a grand complexity and imperious thrust to their interpretation, and Epic's sound itself lent it monumental weight and a martial excitement. The Roumanian virtuoso Mindru Katz turned in a judiciously paced, alert, and thoroughly distinguished account on the inexpensive Vanguard Everyman label, and Sir John Barbirolli eschewing his usual flaccid, sentimental style offered orchestral support of lean vitality. Schnabel's postwar reading with Alceo Galliera (Angel COLH), if not quite so charged with nuance and rhythmic tension as the earlier one with Sargent, was superbly solid and authoritative. Indeed, like the aforementioned Fleisher/Szell, that disc will doubtless appeal to those who generally admire the

Schnabel manner but are sometimes put off by his inclination to rush phrases and agitate the tempos. Schnabel keeps these tendencies well in check on this 1947 release and gives one of his least controversial performances. Discophiles with somewhat longer memories will recall the magnificently poised, thoroughbred, and surprisingly robust version of Solomon and Menges which was briefly available here on the RCA label in the mid-Fifties. If you ever see a copy of that withdrawn disc around, don't hesitate—it was the British pianist's finest Beethoven performance, and admirably well engineered. Another Emperor, now generally unavailable but well worth noting, is the massive, slightly sedate but nobly impressive Edwin Fischer/Furtwängler performance.

A rich array of diverse readings graces the current list too. Three of these—the Casadesu/Rosbaud, the Gieseking/Galliera, and the Gelber/Leitner are offered at budget rates but entail absolutely no compromise in terms of quality or realistic recorded sound. Casadesu (whose earlier New York Philharmonic/Mitropoulos reading was also a fine one) turns in a firmly shaped, aristocratically clear statement, sturdily, if a bit rigorously, supported by Rosbaud. Its last movement may be too sedately paced for some tastes, but its many interpretive insights and the vibrant, cleanly etched, marvelously detailed engineering make this an important edition. Gieseking brings an effervescent, champagnelike animation to his elegant Seraphim version. Even the more introspective episodes move ahead with untroubled urgency and swiftness. With Galliera's absorbingly intense, luminously mercurial direction and bright sonics (early but true stereophony), this too adds up to a fine proposition indeed (and immeasurably supersedes the leaden brutality and opaque, lackluster sonics of the older Gieseking/Von Karajan Odyssey reprint). Gelber's Emperor is a bit more conventional in its extroverted glint and caressing nuance. It's all a bit brash and youthful, but splendidly accompanied and realistically reproduced. This work suits the young Argentinian pianist better than the Third Concerto.

The Kempff/Van Kempen Emperor was the most impressive item in the old Decca mono set and the newer Kempff/Leitner equals it for stride, weight, and depth. This *echt Deutsch*, slightly old-fashioned performance (note the rhetorical devices in the first movement development) results in breadth without sluggishness, felicitous nuance without any loss of rugged power. Backhaus/Schmidt-Isserstedt are in the same general interpretive corner, albeit slightly more extroverted and muscular. Schmidt-Isserstedt brings a marvelously propulsive character to the tuttis and imparts a tighter, more unified forward impetus than on the earlier, more sectionalized Backhaus/Krauss (Richmond). In Arrau's case, the older edition with Galliera offers that fine artist's most convincing statement of the music (the more recent Philips one with Haitink is altogether too cool, swift, and lacking involvement). Angel's sound, though much improved over the earlier

pressings, is nevertheless still a bit lacking in impact. On the whole, though, that disc (happily still available) is worth acquiring for the Chilean virtuoso's probing, fastidious, and deeply sensitive treatment of the keyboard part.

In their divergent ways Rubinstein and Horowitz both offer variants of the traditional, red-blooded "knock 'em dead" approach. The Rubinstein/Krips is a freer, more impulsive statement though the Rubinstein/Leinsdorf, more scrupulous and premeditated, is quite impassioned enough. Horowitz' disc is older than either of Rubinstein's, though his slightly thin sound remains suave and well balanced. Horowitz favors more headlong, less rhetorical tempos than either of the Rubinsteins. Though Horowitz' chromium-plated legato and dazzlingly matched scale passages are undeniably rather superficial, I confess a great fondness for his fresh, tautly delivered, uncluttered statement. Serkin's impetuous energy ideally requires a level-headed podium personality to keep it under control. His ancient account with Bruno Walter was clean-limbed and compact; even the 1951 mono LP with Ormandy was adequately reserved (though more finicky than I like). Unfortunately, the current Bernstein-led performance is even less impressive. The cadenzas explode with hysterical sentimentality (which is a different thing entirely from charged bravura). Furthermore, the orchestral tone is crude, raw, and distressingly metallic. Gilels is conventional, tidy, and rather colorless in his recent version with Szell. The Gilels/Ludwig, while very similar, puts Gilels closer to the fore which makes the pianist's first movement sound more assertive and convincing. The slow movement, though, is phrased with greater simplicity with Szell at the helm. The Gilels/Sanderling is more brusque orchestrally and less cleanly reproduced than either of the Angels.

Firkusny, Curzon, and Novaes all give the music a more introspective cast than is usual, but in each case, nuance and proportioned sensitivity are present. Of these, the Curzon/Knappertsbusch is clearly preferable to the Firkusny/Steinberg (which loses orchestral definition) and the Novaes/Perlea (which, for all its musicality, sounds too mild-mannered).
✓ The Vlado Perlemuter/Voehchting is a genuine sleeper: this French virtuoso turns in an absolutely first-class, musicianly reading, well supported by the orchestra, and benefits from beautiful piano reproduction. Unfortunately this disc throws in another pianist's inferior performance of the *Moonlight* Sonata as a questionable makeweight, causing a disastrous turnover just before the Rondo. Brendel/Mehta are unparalleled for nervous, tensile urgency and chamber music intimacy. Their refusal to linger strikes me as overly severe. Gould and Stokowski could benefit from the very qualities which seem excessive in the Brendel/Mehta edition. There is much thoughtful work here, though Gould is constantly fussing with the basic pulse. All of his pointing is interesting, though much of it is also highly perverse (e.g., his Schenkergraph detailing of the work's very last

cadenza). The Barenboim/Klemperer, with its slow-motion tempos, is another misconceived though admittedly interesting contender. Cliburn/Reiner present a freewheeling extroverted account in the Rubinstein tradition. Their disc, though, is blemished by poor balance (orchestral details are obliterated), moments of shaky co-ordination (first movement, bar 481) between soloist and conductor, and general blandness. Blumental's effort is also in the grand manner and somewhat more forceful than Cliburn's. Some of the pianism is labored, though, and the orchestral work is not of the best. Katchen/Gamba, superbly reproduced, give a meticulous, unaffected sort of performance but are outclassed by many other more personally eloquent entries. Rauch and Sejna give a fast, lean run-through somewhat on the order of Brendel/Mehta though nowhere nearly so distinguished. The old Parliament sound, moreover, confronted me with some very nasty pitch wavers at the end of Side 2. The Badura-Skoda/Scherchen performance is dismally undernourished interpretively, technically inadequate, and shrilly recorded. (The new recording by Stephen Bishop and Colin Davis will be reviewed in a later issue.)

Other Works for Piano and Orchestra

Concerto in E flat (1784).

• Felicia Blumental, piano; Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiri Waldhans, cond. Orion ORS 7016, \$5.98 (with *Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in B flat; Tempo di Concerto, in D; Romanze in E minor*); ORS 7018/6, \$17.95 (six discs, with complete piano concertos).

This Concerto lay buried in obscurity until 1890 when a transcript of the solo part with piano reduction of the tutti interludes turned up in Vienna. The handwriting was not Beethoven's, though certain notational corrections seemed to come from his pen. The copy was unsigned but bore the following legend: "*Un Concert pour le Clavecin ou Forte-Piano, composé par Louis van Beethoven âgé de douze ans.*" (Beethoven was really fourteen, not twelve—his father found it profitable to reduce the age of his prodigy son by two years.) Willy Hess, the noted Beethoven scholar, pronounced the music authentic and prepared a reconstruction from the evidence at hand. It is the Hess score which is used in all the recordings of this pleasant but minor work.

An old Polydor/Vox LP with Orazio Frugoni and Paul Paray has long vanished from the catalogue along with a somewhat less antiquated Oceanic rendering by Paul Jacobs and René Leibowitz. Vox/Turnabout has announced a new edition played by Martin Galling with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra under C. E. Bünte, which was not available at this writing. It will have to be very good to surpass the excellent, lyrical statement of Mme. Blumental, which is adequately accompanied and reproduced with wide-range sound.

Tempo di Concerto, in D (c. 1788-91).

• Felicia Blumental, piano; Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiri Waldhans, cond. Orion ORS 7016, \$5.98 (with *Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in B flat; Concerto in E flat, 1784; Romanze in E minor*); ORS 0718/6, \$17.95 (six discs, with complete piano concertos).

The authenticity of this concerto movement is disputed. The manuscript, again in a hand other than Beethoven's, was unearthed in 1888 and bore the inscription "Concerto in D by L. v. Beethoven." An article appearing in the *Neue Beethoven Jahrbuch* in 1925 maintained that the fragment is in reality the first movement of a Concerto in D, Op. 15 by the Bohemian composer Johann Joseph Rösler, published by Anton André in 1809. It is perfectly possible that Rösler filched this forgotten bit of juvenilia from its rightful owner and added two additional movements (which scholars claim are rather different and stylistically inferior). Before there were laws of copyright, piracy of that sort was very common.

The question of authorship aside, this *Tempo di Concerto* is patently a more animated, substantial specimen than the little 1784 work. Followers of the late Sigmund Spaeth (i.e., "The Tune Detective") will note an uncanny likeness between its principal theme and the finale of Mozart's C major Sonata, K. 330. Mme. Blumental does the music full justice and gets reasonably spirited assistance from the Brno forces.

Concerto in D, Op. 61 (arr. from Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 61) (1806).

• Felicia Blumental, piano; Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiri Waldhans, cond. Orion ORS 7017, \$5.98; ORS 7018/6, \$17.95 (six discs, with complete piano concertos).

Beethoven undertook this arrangement at the behest of Muzio Clementi; but he probably didn't need much encouragement, for piano concertos tended to sell much better than works for violin and orchestra. The piano version was actually published in 1806, a full year before the original. Op. 61, of course, is perfectly written for the violin and even Beethoven found it difficult to make its material sound pianistically convincing. In order to give the keyboard player something to do, he extended the range and figuration of the solo writing, and often the tinkle-tinkle left-hand effects—which were obviously applied as an afterthought—rob the melodic lines of their deep spiritual purity. Interestingly enough, though Beethoven left no original cadenzas for the violin version of this piece (most fiddlers use those by Joachim or Fritz Kreisler), he did compose extensive and extended ones for the keyboard modification. That for the first movement is incredibly long (over 130 bars with repeats!), and calls for a kettledrum obbligato. All three Beethoven cadenzas, moreover, are rather wild and fully

pianistic (perhaps he was relieved at being liberated from his arranger's tasks).

There once were recordings of the Piano/Violin Concerto by Artur Balsam with Clemens Dahinden (Concert Hall) and Helen Schnabel with F. Charles Adler (SPA). By the year's end, Mme. Blumental's account will be joined by ones from Peter Serkin and Seiji Ozawa (RCA) and Martin Galling with C. E. Bünte (Vox/Turnabout). A detailed comparison, of course, must wait until then. For the time being, let it be said that though I rather preferred the faster, more structural, less detailed view of Miss Schnabel on the discontinued SPA disc, Mme. Blumental gives the music an artistic, leisurely, expansively lyric state-

ment, which is well enough recorded, and decently if a bit phlegmatically supported by her conductor.

Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in B flat, Op. posth. (1795).

• Felicia Blumental, piano; Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiri Waldhans, cond. Orion ORS 7016, \$5.98 (with *Concerto in E flat, 1784; Tempo di Concerto, in D; Romanze in E minor*); ORS 7018/6, \$17.95 (six discs, with complete piano concertos).

• Alfred Brendel, piano; Vienna Volksoper Orchestra, Heinz Wallberg, cond. Turnabout TV 34205/09, \$14.90 (five discs, with complete piano concertos);

Choral Fantasy, Op. 80; and other works for solo piano); Turnabout TV 34095, \$2.98 (with Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 20).

• Lili Kraus, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Victor Desarzens, cond. Monitor S 2092, \$2.50 (with Piano Concerto No. 3); Vanguard Everyman S 252, \$2.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 4).

• Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Kurt Sanderling, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 138848, \$5.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 3).

• Friedrich Wührer, piano; Vienna Pro Musica Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky, cond. Vox STPL 513070, \$1.98 (with Piano Concerto No. 1).

I can't for the life of me understand why some musicologists are so baffled as to the origins of this little charmer. Everyone knows that Beethoven composed his B flat Concerto (No. 2) in 1795 and that he revised it three years later for a performance in Prague. This Rondo, then, is the original last movement of the Concerto, and any simpleton would guess that from the many thematic similarities it bears to the finale he wrote later.

All the recorded versions, past and present, are good. Brendel's differs from the others in one important aspect. He has researched the work by going back to Beethoven's fragmentary manuscript and presents us with the fruits of his quest. He has filled out certain cadences with apt interpolations and has eschewed the very creditable Czerny revisions which all the other performers use. Moreover, as his rendition is witty and sensitive, there is ample reason to award it first honors. Richter's, though, is the most driving and exciting of the lot. Both he and Katchen (whose version filled out a deleted London LP of the Third Concerto) kept consistent tempos and favored bite and brilliance rather than charm (Mme. Kraus) or heft (Mme. Blumental). Wührer's version is sturdy and muscular but not superior to Richter's similar approach. Blumental's performance is warm-hearted and thoroughly Beethovenian (in a rather middle-period way). Lili Kraus (whose versions for Vanguard Everyman and Monitor presumably derive from the same tape) has wit, charm, and sensitivity, but her mini-eighteenth-century approach has too many disturbing tempo changes for my taste. Richter's DGG disc gets the clearest sound, most closely matched by Katchen's out-of-print London release (which may be slated for reissue on the Stereo Treasury label). All, however, are more than decent.

Recordings of the Triple Concerto, the Violin Concerto, and two Romances will be considered in next month's issue.



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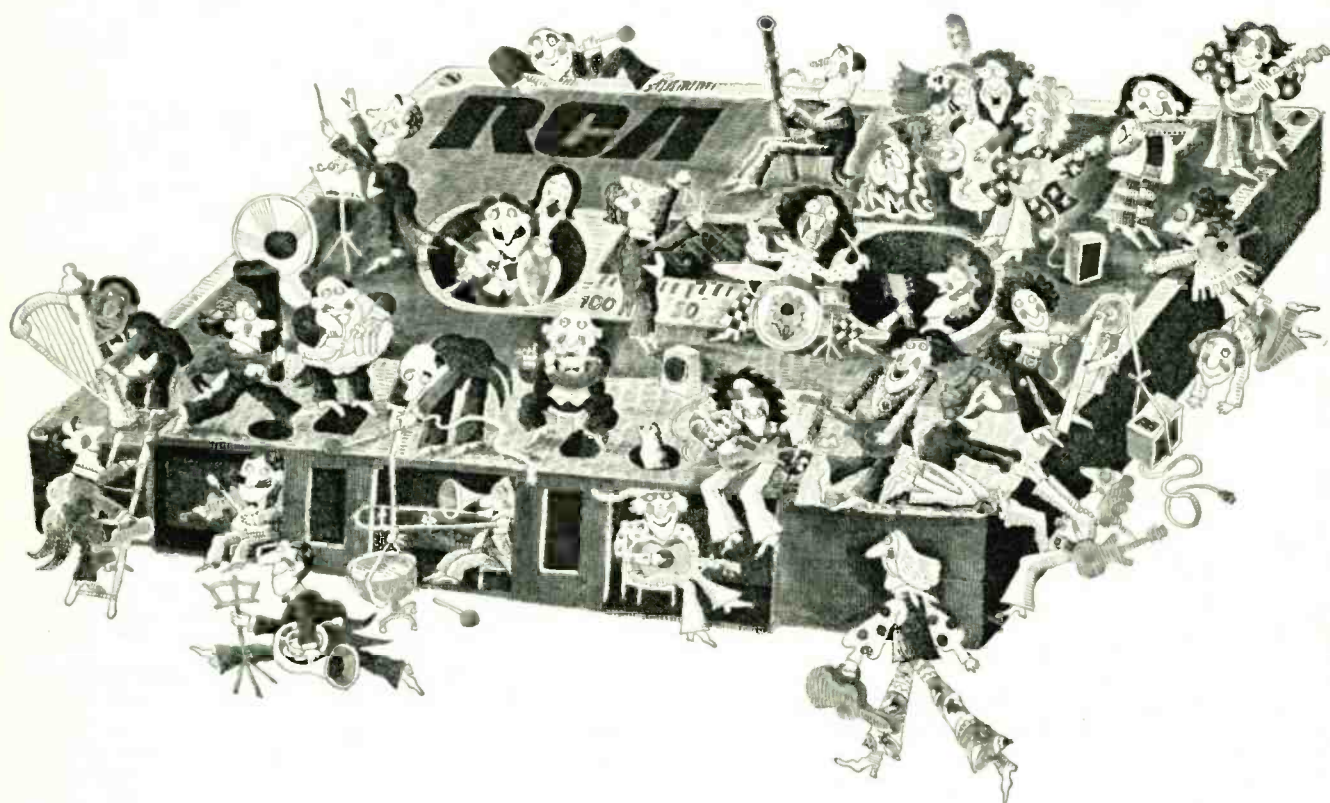
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a slouch in that respect for his day), but the great ideal of French musical drama, an expressive declamation entirely devoid of vocal display, is found here in its purest form.

In this respect, one might even say that this is a reactionary opera—but reactionary in the same sense that Bach was, applying the greatest mastery in an idiom no longer favored by his younger contemporaries. There is none of the “romantic excess” of the better-known, “sensational” early works; merely an extraordinary command of all aspects of a rich and well-balanced musical language, spread over a vast, indeed epic canvas with great sureness of timing and pacing. Undoubtedly the scale of *Les Troyens* presents severe problems for opera-house production. The running time of the recording is just under four hours (about the length of the abridged version of *Die Meistersinger* presented by the Metropolitan Opera); with four intermissions this makes for a long evening. And the time-scale is leisurely, not in the busy, expansive Wagnerian way, but in a spare, concentrated style that permits close exploration of every shade of textual import—and this is difficult to make visually convincing to a generation of operagoers increasingly conditioned to very actively pantomimed stage action. Furthermore *Les Troyens* is not merely a throwback to Gluckian *tragédie lyrique*; it is also a full-fledged nineteenth-century grand opera, lavishly provided with spectacles, processions, ballets, and the like. All in all, a tremendous challenge to those who would present it to modern audiences, but one supremely worth taking up in view of the potential rewards.

Of course these problems need not concern us in connection with the recording. Merely to catalogue the memorable aspects of the score would exhaust the space available for this review, so I will single out only a few points. First of these is the sheer compositional skill manifest in the ensemble numbers. Few composers in operatic history have managed such an elaborate and varied statement as the F sharp minor octet with chorus in Act I, where the Trojans express their horror at the fate of Laocoön, and the sequence that concludes Act IV, which is justly famous: the quintet in which Dido banishes her reservations about her love for Aeneas, the septet with chorus praising the beauty of the night, and of course the piercingly beautiful love duet, with its lines borrowed from Shakespeare.

Those who know the *Trojan March* only as a concert piece can scarcely imagine the power that it accumulates in the opera through its various presentations. The brassy blatancy that predominates in the concert version is much less obvious in the initial appearance offstage by several groups of brass and winds, and what of this character that remains is a perfect foil for Cassandra's despairing interjections. Later, a minor version introduces the Trojans to Dido's court, and other transformations underlie the later music, including the bounding dotted rhythms that accompany Aeneas' decision to flee. Berlioz' management of this material, his skill at building the processional climax of that first appearance (magnificently abetted here by the Philips engineers), is just one testimonial to his sense of the theater.

An easily overlooked delight of the score is the ballet music, full of original orchestral touches (and, in the *Pas des Almées*, an idea that Léo Delibes must have remembered). The *Royal Hunt and Storm* is sufficiently celebrated, to be sure, but it should be noted that here at last it is restored to its proper place, at the beginning rather than at the end of the fourth act; and of course the important choral parts are included.

I cannot resist mentioning a few more numbers that impressed me: the Anna/Narbal duet in Act IV, really two successive arias that are then combined (the scoring is very canny here, with a rich accompaniment of horns,

trombones, and divided cellos for Narbal's gloomy forebodings, the higher strings and winds reserved for Anna's lighthearted rejection of such pessimism); the following March based on the Carthaginian hymn, here scored most delicately for high winds doubled with harmonics from three harps and a running violin counterpoint; the lovely pastoral song for Hylas at the beginning of the last act; the grimly humorous duet for two sentries who don't understand why Aeneas is so intent on leaving Carthage for Italy. The various scenes involving the spirits of departed Trojans are conceived with great orchestral imagination—e.g., the chords for solo violin harmonics in the last act.

Only at one point does the sustained inspiration of the score seem to flag—in the first Carthaginian act, the municipal festivities run on a bit, and the duet of Dido and Anna takes quite a while to cover rather little ground. After that the pace picks up with the arrival of the Trojans, and virtually every number until the end of the opera is masterful (I have already dilated on the beauties of the final scenes in June 1970 HF, when reviewing the Janet Baker/Alexander Gibson version).

It would be quixotic to expect that every aspect of a recording project as immense as this one should prove flawless, if only because there is so little performance tradition for the work and so few singers are experienced in the roles (the majority of singers in the Covent Garden production—Jon Vickers is the main exception—were taking their parts for the first time). Even so, I should be inclined to rank this among the great operatic recordings, for it is informed with a really impelling dramatic tension and never fails to give the feeling of an actual performance in progress. For this we must thank, most of all, Colin Davis, who had the considerable advantage of conducting complete performances in the opera house at the same time as he was piecing together the opera in the studio. Never did I feel uncomfortable about a tempo, and the playing of the Covent Garden Orchestra is really of very high quality, especially some of the wind and brass solo work. Once again, it is clear that there is no substitute for a great conductor in achieving a truly memorable operatic recording.

In truth, I must confess to one reservation about the recording, for one facet of Berlioz' genius does not receive its just due: the prevailing level of French enunciation simply isn't good enough to give full value to the composer's prosody. The noble exceptions are the two imported French basses, Messrs. Soyser and Thau; everybody else is trying hard, but the vowel qualities simply aren't right, and much of the text remains incomprehensible. Of the three principals Jon Vickers makes the best impression in this respect; even though he sometimes seems to be in rather rough voice he brings the true heroic sound to the part and is always musicianly, often exciting. Berit Lindholm, who sounds rather like a young (pre-tremolo) Astrid Varnay, is also on the gusty side, but she delivers the memorable arias of Cassandra with genuine enthusiasm, and is able to dominate the ensembles when necessary. Josephine Veasey is an eloquent Dido, although her tone is sometimes less well focused than was Janet Baker's. All the others in the large cast are adequate, and Ryland Davies deserves special mention for his mellifluous way with Hylas' song.

But the important thing about this recording is that it adds up to a real performance, a continuous experience with an unbroken line of dramatic-musical impulse. The use of the complete score is surely a help in this respect, for the conductor can make the composer's effects as intended, without forcing points to make up for missing elements of the original plan (remember Schoenberg's dictum that cutting a long piece does not produce a short one, merely a long piece that sounds short in places). Congratulations are due to everyone involved in making

this decision; the history of *Les Troyens* is full of corner-cutting, but at last justice has been done to this extraordinary masterpiece.

I have already mentioned one of the booklets included with the set; in addition to the historical material it includes an essay by Davis and a note about the recording by Erik Smith, the producer (as on other occasions, I could have wished for more illustrations of stage sets instead of the usual recording-session candid shots). The second booklet is a trilingual libretto (translations in English and German). All of this is enclosed in an album box at least an inch thick—very impressive in its way, but I wish Philips had not been quite so prodigal with my limited shelf space!

BERLIOZ: Les Troyens. Berit Lindholm (s), Cassandra; Josephine Veasey (ms), Dido; Anne Howells (ms), Ascanius; Elizabeth Bainbridge (ms), Hecuba; Heather Begg (c), Anna; Jon Vickers (t), Aeneas; Ian Partridge (t), Iopas; Ryland Davies (t), Hylas; David Lennox (t), Helenus; Peter Glossop (b), Chorebus; Roger Soyer (bs), Narbal and Shade of Hector; Anthony Raffell (bs), Pantheus; Pierre Thau (bs), Priam, Trojan Soldier, and Mercury; Raimund Herinx (bs), First Sentry and Ghost of Priam; Dennis Wicks (bs), Second Sentry, Ghost of Hector, and Greek Chieftain; Wandsworth School Boys' Choir; Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Colin Davis, cond. Philips 6709 002, \$29.90 (five discs).

Horowitz vs. Rubinstein

by Harris Goldsmith



Rubinstein: a literal approach.

Two keyboard virtuosos record Schumann's "Kreisleriana"



Horowitz: great dynamic range.

SCHUMANN'S EIGHT-PART piano suite, *Kreisleriana*, was at least partially inspired by Johannes Kreisler, an eccentric Kapellmeister who was the fictitious creation of that indefatigable nineteenth-century spinner of fantasies and horror stories, Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann. One can easily understand why Schumann was so strongly attracted to E.T.A. Hoffmann. Both men were irrepressible free spirits and both were in the habit of inventing alter egos: Schumann's extrovert Florestan and introspective Eusebius were paralleled by Hoffmann's Kreisler and his extraordinary pet tomcat, Kater Murr. (The cat's *Philosophy of Life Together with Fragments from the Biography of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler from Random Sheets of Waste Paper* was supposedly drafted on the back of his keeper's autobiographical manuscript and unfortunately sent to the publisher, who printed the book in that garbled form!) Hoffmann's characters, however, were drawn from life. He himself owned a pet cat named Kater Murr and Kreisler, aside from representing Hoffmann himself, was also inspired by one Ludwig Böhner, a real life Thuringian Kapellmeister who was coincidentally an intimate of Schumann.

Kreisleriana, in keeping with its fantastic background, contains some of its composer's wildest, most sensitive thoughts; Schumann always considered the score to be his best piano composition. It is also considered a problematical work to hold together. For all its formidable hurdles (musical rather than technical—despite the occasional pianistic nastiness, *Kreisleriana* is less digitally difficult than, say, *Carnaval*) some of the greatest pianists have gravitated to this music. In the past there

have been superlative recorded accounts by Cortot (Pathé), Arrau (Columbia), Kempff (DGG/Decca), and Vlado Perlemuter (still available on Dover 5204). Now we are favored with the coincidental simultaneous release of recordings by today's two most prestigious keyboard virtuosos, Horowitz and Rubinstein. Rubinstein's account was taped at Carnegie Hall back in 1964 and was initially intended to share a disc with the still unreleased C major Fantasy. Horowitz' version was made last year (also presumably at Carnegie Hall) in sessions following two recital performances. Since the two pianists are lavish with respect to repeats, both performances spill over onto Side 2.

Rubinstein and Horowitz share a basic romantic approach to music; the point of divergence here is in Horowitz' greater dynamic range. My notes for these two performances are scattered with such observations as "Rubinstein much too loud in second part of first section . . . Horowitz achieves a hauntingly beautiful *pp*" or "Horowitz produces a gorgeous pianissimo in the sixth piece, giving all the more effect to the subsequent sforzandos . . . Rubinstein is ruinously loud and bland here. . . ." In fairness to Rubinstein, it must be stressed that the closer microphoning on his disc tends to put him at a disadvantage on this score: heard on its own, much of his playing sounds sensitive and beautiful. I should also point out that in at least one place Rubinstein does achieve a hushed calm that could be deemed pianissimo by any reckoning.

In terms of fidelity to the text neither pianist is a purist. Rubinstein generally takes a more literal approach to the score than Horowitz, but often the latter is more

successful in realizing Schumann's implied intent. Both musicians wisely opt for an intelligent mixture of Schumann's original edition and his later version. Rubinstein frequently favors the second version, while Horowitz more often tends to prefer the first edition. (In the da capo of No. 2, Horowitz inserts a few embellishments that are not found in either text.)

Rubinstein uses quite a bit of rhythmic rubato, but in general his way with the music is fairly close to the solid, large-boned mainstream of Teutonic Schumann playing. Horowitz, as noted before, is generally more volatile and certainly more individualistic in his treatment of many details. It seems to me, though, that he misses—or rather, chooses to ignore—one very important aspect of Schumann's musical vocabulary: the really slow tempo. In the *sehr langsam* of No. 4 he not only distorts the rhythmic note values of the opening but takes a controversially brisk tempo in order to impart a frivolous momentum that I can't believe Schumann wanted here. On the other hand, his *affettuoso* touches are often very exciting indeed. No. 5, in his performance, has an irresistibly scherzando quality that quite eludes Rubinstein, and the *ad libitum* cadenza leading into the Adagio of No. 2 is very imperiously conveyed (Rubinstein is much more uncomplicated and metrically solid at that point).

Quite surprisingly, Rubinstein, who tended to over-pedal in some of his older recordings, uses hardly any at all here. In the very opening measures, for example, he is almost too *sec* and notey. Conversely, Horowitz, who sometimes in the past went to the opposite extreme, uses a more conventional pedal technique, although his part playing retains tremendous clarity with more sheen and line than he sometimes achieves. It is also interesting to note how Horowitz by distorting and modifying some of the composer's instructions sometimes ends up actually enhancing the very effect Schumann obviously intended. Take for instance the displaced, off-beat bass notes in the final section of *Kreisleriana*: by altering the note values of the left hand and playing them a bit after the right hand the quirky displacement becomes all the more scintillating. I'm sure that Schumann would have approved—and might have even revised the notation accordingly!

As for the couplings, Rubinstein's newest account of the *Arabesque* is unusually spacious, even a mite tortured in its slow tempo. Though I continue to prefer the recent Arrau version (Philips) for its solidity and cogent harmonic pointing, Rubinstein's poetry and individuality are indeed impressive. Rubinstein's *Vogel als Prophet* is much nearer Cortot's broad, athletic, yet flexible account than it is to Richter's more hushed introspective one. Horowitz' previous recording of the *Clara Wieck Variations* (from an actual recital) was far more turbulent and agitated than the present version, which in its quiet, serene way strikes me as far better Schumann playing. Indeed, Horowitz' pianism throughout this beautifully engineered disc has an easy flow and limp naturalness of feeling that I haven't heard from him since his earliest shellac recordings; certainly it is his most distinguished phonographic effort in years. Rubinstein's performance, though less alluring and stimulating, is nevertheless a distinguished addition to the Schumann discography, and it too is capably, though less scintillatingly, engineered.

SCHUMANN: Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck, Op. 14. Vladimir Horowitz, piano. Columbia MS 7264, \$5.98.

SCHUMANN: Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Arabesque, Op. 18; Vogel als Prophet, Op. 82, No. 7. Artur Rubinstein, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3108, \$5.98. Tape: Ⓜ R8S 1153, \$6.95; RK 1153, \$6.95.

A Musical Musical

by Gene Lees



Stephen Sondheim's "Company" has the freshest Broadway score in years



Dean Jones and Susan Browning.

WHEN THE FARE in his field has been unrelievedly tedious, the critic begins to ask: am I getting finicky? From a surfeit of entertainment, am I becoming indurated to enjoyment? This syndrome is the only explanation I can posit for good reviews given to many bad musicals (and for that matter, bad movies) in the last two or three years. I haven't in a long time heard a show that was even worth the energy it takes to put it down. My ears perked up a little at the score for *The Last Sweet Days of Isaac*, which really isn't bad. But neither is it as good as some reviewers have suggested.

Even such successes as *Applause* and *Coco*, both enjoyable shows, have things other than their scores to commend them. Both are primarily performers' vehicles, the former for Lauren Bacall, the latter for Katharine Hepburn. *Coco* has clever lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, a skilled writer. But stylistically they echo his work in *My Fair Lady*, which in turn echoed the work of William S. Gilbert. This worked well in *My Fair Lady*, which was that rare thing, a perfect show. And it works reasonably well in *Coco*, perhaps because Lerner has made Coco Chanel a sort of Henry Higgins à la française. But in his loig-rhythmed lines he has given composer André Previn almost no melodic elbow room: all Previn can do is set patter songs for the character. There is nothing fresh about the *Coco* score.

Company has the freshest score in years.

I approached *Company* with trepidation. I had never cared for Stephen Sondheim's lyrics, which always seemed like bits of broken glass in a magpie's nest: shiny, sharp, and cold. I particularly disliked his lyrics for *West Side Story*; indeed I am part of a small but stubborn minority that thinks this musical is horribly ersatz, Leonard Bernstein's music included. (Sondheim once admitted to a television audience that he still was embarrassed by some of his lyrics for that show.)

After seeing *Company* I am now an ardent admirer of Sondheim's work. He has grown enormously as a lyricist, and as a composer he is now without peer on the current musical stage. The *Company* score is absolutely first-rate.

It's the most musical Broadway (or off-Broadway, which nowadays is much the same thing) score since *Man of La Mancha*—and it's even better. It works very well on stage, and (what matters more to the record buyer in Chicago or Kansas City) it is the only musical score since *La Mancha* that I can recommend as an album. It knocks me out more with each hearing.

If you plan to see *Company*, be warned that its weakest part is its book. *Company* began as a group of playlets by actor George Furth. Sondheim apparently got the idea that by introducing a central character who threads his way through the lives of the various characters these pieces could be turned into a musical. It doesn't quite work, partly because Bobby, a thirty-five-year-old bachelor who wanders through life balling various chicks and dining with married friends, all of whom try to marry him off, isn't a well-drawn or interesting character. He's a nice-looking nothing. One friend of mine complained that the other characters are equally uninteresting, but they constitute, as a matter of fact, a gallery of caricatures of people I've known in eight years of life in New York City, and I smiled often in moments of recognition.

Some people feel that *Company* is cynically anti-marriage. This puzzles me, for the import of the show is clearly this: whatever the hassles, whatever the disadvantages, marriage beats being alone—and marriage has deep and genuine compensations for the sacrifices it entails. I think what threw people is that Sondheim did Larry Hart's trick: he took the curse of sentimentality off his lyrics by being sardonic.

The music and lyrics almost overcome the diffusion

in the book. Sondheim integrated the show by using the characters as a kind of Greek chorus: after a given married couple's episode is finished, they keep returning to the stage to add comment on the current action. The cast numbers twelve. Yet you have the impression of a large and busy chorus.

Sondheim's sense of musical (and theatrical) form is impeccable. He uses an interval of a falling minor third, based on the character's name, Bobby, as a motif throughout the show. It becomes a comment on, and comment between, the other songs.

The music is a departure from anything that's been done in Broadway shows. Musical theater made the jump from Richard Rodgers to rock with virtually no nod to the intervening stages of development. (*Golden Boy* had a jazz-influenced score; but in general the jump was sudden and complete.) Sondheim has filled in the gap with *Company*. He uses jazz, bossa nova, bossa rock (but no rock as such), and other influences; it's all rich with rhythmic variety and highly syncopated. I think *Company* has the only Broadway score I've ever heard that actually swings. It is almost always propelled by the rhythm section, which has never been so well utilized in theater. Orchestrator Jonathan Tunick, who worked on *Promises, Promises*, has helped Sondheim greatly. (Since he is billed as orchestrator, not arranger, I assume Sondheim was quite specific about what he wanted.)

The show has a large orchestra, but it is used like a small one—that is, for range of colors, not for massed sound. It maintains the essentially intimate flavor of the show, which is really a hybrid of musical comedy and review. An electronic keyboard instrument has been added to the orchestra to good effect.

Company is full of excellent songs, though I doubt that many can be successfully extracted from the score. Ten years ago the song *Another Hundred People*, an exciting piece of material about all the people who pour into New York every hour, every day, looking for life, would have been picked up by every cabaret singer in town. But rock has all but eliminated that kind of performer from American music.

Sorry-Grateful is a fine song about the inevitable second thoughts and moments of doubt that everyone gets in marriage. *The Little Things You Do Together* is a bitingly funny recitation of horrors married people commit against each other: "The concerts you enjoy together, the neighbors you annoy together, the children you destroy together. . . ." *What Would We Do Without You* is an amusing little thing in a vaudeville style.

The best song comes just before the finale. *Being Alive*, a true song for our times, expresses the emotional anesthesia in which most people seem to be living and the yearning to awaken from it. It is Bobby's song of self-discovery and it's gorgeous—the best song of the year, perhaps the best song in a musical in ten years.

Dean Jones sings the part of Bobby extremely well. All the people sing well and that brittle Broadway vocal sound turns up only here and there, where appropriate.

Only a few writers in American musical theater have been able to handle both music and lyrics. Cole Porter was the best of them. Sondheim seems to have come into his maturity, and if he maintains this level of quality in future work or, as seems more likely, raises it, Porter will have found his heir. This is a wonderful musical score, the one that Broadway has long needed, and my hat is high in the air for Stephen Sondheim.

I'm going back to see *Company* at least twice more.

COMPANY. Original Broadway cast album. Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Dean Jones, Elaine Stritch, and others, vocals. Columbia OS 3550, \$5.98.

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BACH: Cantatas: No. 67, Halt' im Gedächtnis; No. 130, Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir; No. 101, Nimm von uns, Herr, du treuer Gott (selections). Elly Ameling, soprano; Helen Watts, contralto; Werner Krenn, tenor; Tom Krause, baritone; Choeur Pro Arte de Lausanne; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Ernest Ansermet, cond. London OS 26098, \$5.98.

Ernest Ansermet's name does not come immediately to mind as a Bach interpreter, and as far as I know, the late conductor's only previous recorded ventures into this repertory are a pair of cantatas (Nos. 45 and 105), released here in 1967, and a couple of the orchestral suites. Cantata 130 has been available for several years from the Musical Heritage Society in an adequate version by Fritz Werner, but it is easily outclassed by Ansermet's impressive performance. The thrilling opening chorus, scored for three trumpets, timpani, three oboes, and strings, is a chorale-based movement in which the sopranos sing the familiar melody of *The Old Hundred* over a rigorous and agitated choral and orchestral accompaniment. Though both chorus and orchestra are large, Ansermet's firm rhythmic control and the clean, fine-toned singing by the Choeur Pro Arte de Lausanne assure that every detail comes across clearly and emphatically. This Cantata also contains a magnificent "trumpet" aria for bass accompanied only by the three trumpets, timpani, and continuo. Krause sings with an impressively hard-edged bravura tone that I didn't know he was capable of. The trumpets, incidentally, both here and in the opening chorus are superb.

Cantata 67 joins a fine version by Karl Richter on Telefunken. Ansermet's soloists are consistently better, however, and I think I would give a slight edge to this new recording for that reason, since they are otherwise about equally impressive. In fact, Ansermet's way with all these cantatas is similar in several respects to Richter's familiar style. The two conductors, of course, obtain two very different choral and orchestral "sounds," but both seem to favor quick tempos and strive for maximum rhythmic tautness and vitality. The high point of this Cantata is an aria for bass and choir that is one of Bach's most remarkable and moving creations. Here, Bach alternates between agitated entreaties to Christ—sung by the upper three choral voices in an animated manner—and the Saviour's calm salutation, "Peace be with you," sung by the solo bass. Krause's beautiful, lyrical tone here (in marked contrast to the aggressive style in the aria mentioned above) is most affecting, though Ansermet's transitions between calm and animated sections are not quite as smooth as Richter's. Werner Krenn sings his bouncy aria (as well as the "gavotte" aria in No. 130) with particular grace and charm. I must also mention that Helen Watts's two secco recitatives here and the one in No. 130 are beautifully sung with gorgeous tone and intensive expressivity.

While these two cantatas could fill

out the disc nicely. London has thrown in three (out of seven) movements of Cantata No. 101. The opening chorus is an austere chorale movement describing Jesus' weeping over the destruction that is to come to Jerusalem. It is a powerful statement with some intense chromatic word painting. A beautiful duet for soprano and alto accompanied by flute, English horn, and continuo (reminiscent of the "Erbarme dich" from the *St. Matthew Passion*) is exquisitely sung by Elly Ameling and Helen Watts, followed by a straightforward setting of the chorale that served as the basis for the duet and opening chorus. Presumably the recording session that resulted in these movements produced the complete Cantata (omitted are fine arias for tenor and bass, and two of those wonderful and rare movements in which arioso and chorale alternate phrase by phrase—one for soprano and continuo, the other for tenor and continuo). Hopefully London will someday release the whole of this uniquely fine work.

This final "Memorial Album" is indeed a fine tribute to one of this century's most gifted conductors—but don't buy the record as an act of homage to a great man; buy it because these are wonderfully moving performances, magnificently recorded. It's a pity that Ansermet didn't leave us more cantata recordings—or the Passions or the B minor Mass, for that matter. C.F.G.

BARTOK: Concerto for Viola and Orchestra. HINDEMITH: Der Schwanendreher for Viola and Orchestra. Raphael Hillyer, viola; Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, Akeo Watanabe, cond. Nonesuch H 71239, \$2.98.

The ill-fated Bartók Viola Concerto has never had many takers—partly because it is to some degree the work of another hand (though all praise to Tibor Serly for piecing together a jigsaw puzzle of sketches to complete the piece after the composer's death) and partly because violists of solo caliber do not grow on trees. On domestic labels only Primrose, who commissioned the work, and Menuhin have recorded it for the current market; the former (in mono) is on the Bartók label, now almost impossible to come by; the latter is still very much with us, on Angel. Now Raphael Hillyer, who was for twenty-three years the violist of the Juilliard Quartet, brings us a new version in stereo—handsomely performed, deeply felt, rather less virtuosic than Menuhin's. Hillyer is a superb violist, and he approaches Bartók's

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wealth of melancholy melody with full understanding of the richness to be drawn from the instrument's lower register particularly. He is cooler, less intense than Menuhin, less given to the broad gesture. This concept goes very well in the slow "religioso" movement, but in the first movement it may leave you missing the excitement created by Menuhin and the New Philharmonia under Dorati.

This is not entirely Hillyer's doing, for the Japan Philharmonic is a rather subdued partner: conductor Watanabe doesn't seize on those few orchestral climaxes the way Dorati did—and they should, it seems to me, be seized upon. Otherwise the shape of the work becomes somewhat flattened out and the solo instrument almost too predominant. (This work, incidentally, must be the violist's dream concerto. In what other does he have so much to say?) But the Japan Philharmonic does deserve compliments on its woodwind players: the oboe and bassoon solos are perfection. The sound of the recording, produced by Nippon Columbia in Tokyo, is on the cavernous side, and manages to lose the viola occasionally in less important passages despite the transparent orchestration that Bartók intended and Serly supplied.

Oddly enough, the somewhat subdued character of the Bartók performance does not seem to carry over into the Hindemith, or perhaps it is not felt here because *Der Schwanendreher* is a much easier work to put across than the Bartók. Hillyer conveys all the strength, delicacy, and sentiment that his part calls for (his performance seems to me quite on a par with Paul Doktor's, on *Odyssey*), and Watanabe is not wanting in either rhythmic bounce or in the good sonorities required for the choralelike harmonies of the second movement.

It is good to know, as this recording makes clear, that the thin ranks of solo violists are augmented by Mr. Hillyer. S.F.

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (complete): No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"); No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"); No. 7, in A, Op. 92; No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"); **Overtures:** Leonore No. 1; Leonore No. 2; Leonore No. 3; Fidelio. Liselotte Rebmann (s), Anna Reynolds (ms), Anton de Ridder (t), Gerd Feldhoff (bs), Netherlands Radio Chorus (in Symphony No. 9); Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eugen Jochum, cond. Philips SC 71 AX 900, \$53.82 (nine discs).

The latest item in the endless flow of Beethoven's symphonies is a fat Philips album, fat because the box boasts a bas-relief of the composer—only paper (although suitably bronzed) and not deserving of real metal. The performances however are much better and just short of the top category. Eugen Jochum officiates at the head of one of the world's greatest orchestras, the Amster-



Eugen Jochum's set of the Beethoven symphonies approaches the top of the list.

dam Concertgebouw. One is constantly aware that an excellent and cultivated musician is at work. The orchestra is well balanced, the superb winds always in evidence, and they can sing. If there is an occasional contretemps I would attribute it to the engineering, for the sound varies from record to record, as does the slight echo. Another strange variable is the length of the pauses between movements, which in some of the symphonies lasts about one beat's worth. Jochum's interpretations are straightforward, a little cautious perhaps, and though he does make some tempo changes and rubatos that are recognized these days as improper, they are few and not exaggerated. Ensemble precision is first-class, but Jochum tends to slow the tempos slightly even though he can whip up a good allegro.

The First Symphony is held nicely within an eighteenth-century framework: its second movement is a shade professorial, but for the same reason the Minuet is played at the right tempo and not like a fast scherzo. Beethoven's solemnization joke in the finale is a little overdone; otherwise the movement is well played. The great introduction to the Second Symphony is spacious, the Allegro fast (as it was intended) but not so fast that the violin runs are merely slurs, as is so often the case. The Andante is also well played, the whimsical second theme is particularly attractive, and the movement rises to an impressive peroration. Once more, the third movement—this time a bona fide scherzo—is taken somewhat more slowly than is customary, but at this pace Jochum is able to carry out the question-and-answer game so that every exchange is clear. The finale shows real dash.

The *Eroica* opens with a degree of tameness, lacking something of the propulsive force that is so marked in this movement. Jochum slows down for the second theme and there are a few other spots where he does so. The E minor episode is a little matter-of-factish, and the reprise does not create the surprise it should. In the *Marcia funebre* the basses are a bit too precise—they do not

growl mysteriously enough—and the conductor takes some mighty retards. The movement is cut in the middle, a most unfortunate spot to end Side 1. The Scherzo is a shade slow and another shade cautious; this can be said of some of the episodes in the finale also. This last movement should rise to eloquence, but Jochum's excellent brass choir is kept on a leash. The Fourth, Beethoven's most Haydnesque symphony, is amiably rendered but in the reprise of the first movement the timpani are almost inaudible until it is time to cut loose, yet they are the key to the situation. This again must be an engineering *faux pas* because without the rolling B flat the harmony makes no sense. The Adagio starts with a beautiful slow song, perhaps a mite slow, but eventually settles on a near-correct tempo. The rough Scherzo is too genteel under Jochum's hands and the sound here is not quite clear; the basses, the timpani, and the echo prove to be too much. The final Allegro is troublesome unless the conductors observe Beethoven's *ma non troppo*. Few of them do, but Jochum is judicious, saving the life of the bassoonist who has an impossible solo passage at the reprise. Except for some retards, the first movement of the Fifth flows straight, the winds are particularly well integrated into the whole, and the Allegro is really vivace; the final retards, however, are massive. The Andante is taken a little too deliberately. Beethoven took pains to warn the conductor that his Andante should not just amble—con moto he demands—and in this kind of music the tolerances are very small. The Scherzo once more has that slight tameness. The basses are not positive enough, though they assert themselves in the trio; then everything goes well until we reach that unearthly transition to the finale, which is a bit too tidy. The onslaught of C major lacks the feeling of utter jubilation, but the final stretto is well managed.

The *Pastoral* Symphony opens with a real "Klemperer," an extremely slow invocation. The rest of the movement is also slow though not offensively so. While *non troppo*, this is still an allegro, and

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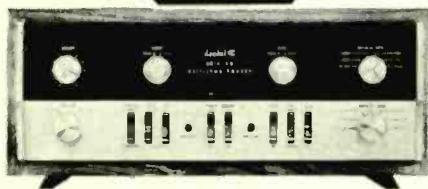
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the musicians feel it because they imperceptibly pick up the tempo. The second movement is also on the slow side and a trifle sentimental; these generous melodies do not need extra "feeling," only good articulation. There are also some retards, but there is warmth too. The Scherzo is pretty good, but the following storm scene is wanting in its full measure of excitement. The Allegretto is taken at the right tempo and proceeds nicely; the ultimate climax, however, is not overwhelming and there are some unneeded *Lustpausen*. The introduction to No. 7 has lots of poise and ably graduated crescendos. The Vivace is the best-played movement in the set, offering no perceptible retards. Perhaps it lacks the near-orgiastic verve that Toscanini and a few others bring to it; nevertheless, this is superior music-making. The Allegretto is played allegretto and not adagio; every instrument sings, and the long, long crescendo is built up beautifully, if perhaps not to the ultimate peak. And now

in the Scherzo, Jochum for the first time hits the real Beethovenian tone in such movements—there is bite, élan, sharp rhythm, and excellent ensemble work here; only in the trio, otherwise well done, are there a few latter-day Germanisms. The finale is bracing and Jochum even manages a little of the savagery which this bacchanalian piece invites. The Eighth Symphony is performed in a simple, unaffected, and healthy manner. In the second movement the wind staccatos, while good, do not have the roundness, the water droplet quality we are accustomed to from our top orchestras. Like most other conductors, Jochum does not realize that the third movement is a joke, a take-off on the eighteenth-century minuet: he plays it by toning down Beethoven's outrageous dynamics and deliberately misplaced accents. The finale is brisk and romps with gusto.

The Ninth starts auspiciously, with good rhythm; the woodwinds, difficult to

Stokowski's Splendid One-Disc Phase 4 Ninth by Harris Goldsmith

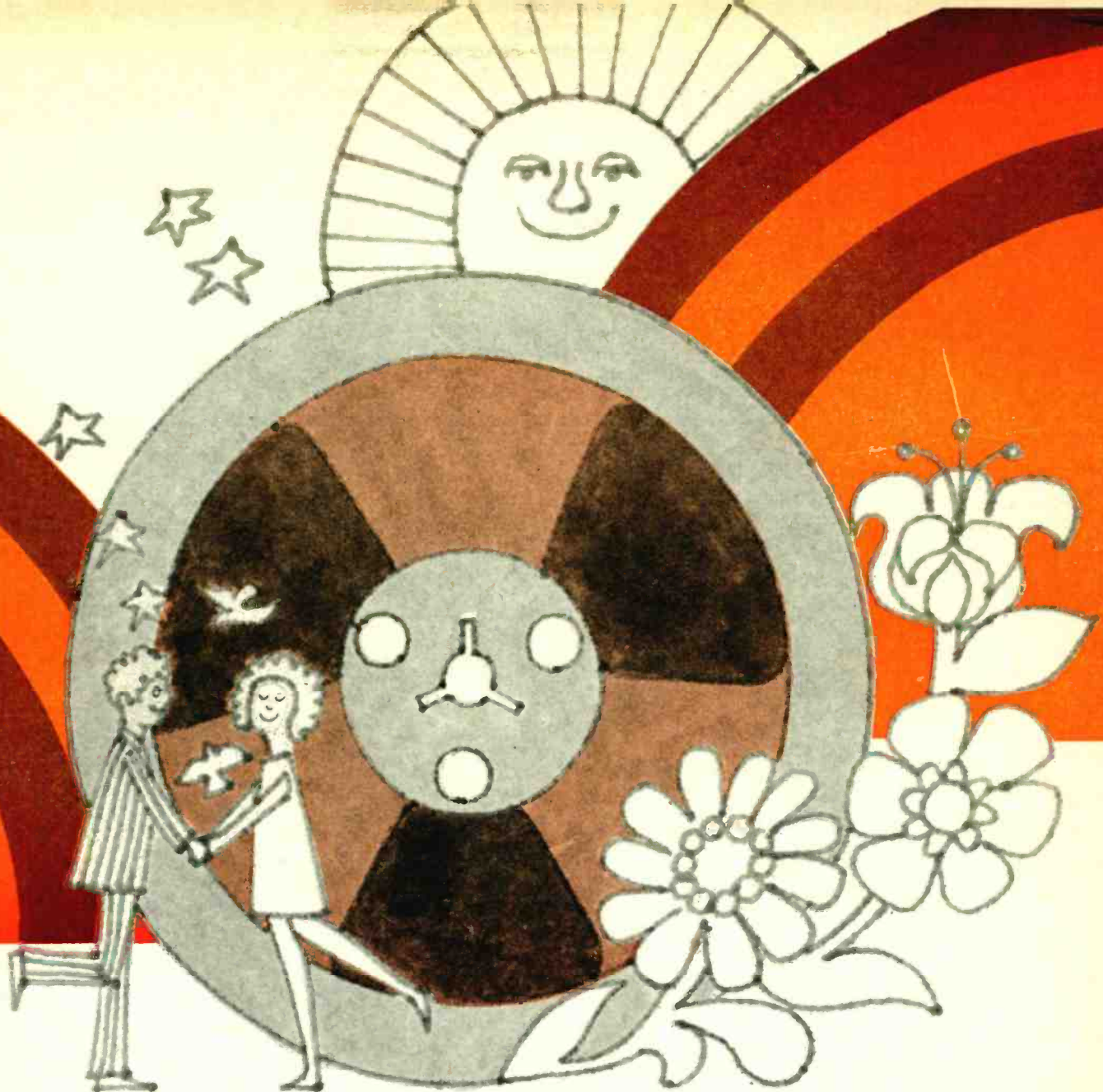
DURING HIS HEYDAY in Philadelphia, Leopold Stokowski recorded an English-language Beethoven Ninth. My recollection of the old M 236 is necessarily dim, but I do recall all sorts of Hammond-organ, funeral-parlor exaggerations and even fade-outs at the end of each 78 side that faded back in after missing several bars of music.

Well, either Stoky has changed radically in the intervening years or I have. His new Ninth is a splendid interpretation, slightly unorthodox but always within the legitimate bounds of interpretive leeway: it provides an unusually rich and satisfying listening experience. Stokowski sweeps through the first movement with inexorable power, a fast but well-maintained basic tempo, and a kind of heady nervous energy that rivals Toscanini's in its effectiveness. The Scherzo, on the other hand, is slower than customary, but very firm and architectural. Note, for instance, the way Stokowski enunciates the opening motto and punctuates slightly before plunging into the main body of music there. The Adagio is warm, generously but not extravagantly free, and benefits—as all four movements do—from the ripe, full-throated sonorities that are such a specialty with this maestro. But this time he at least burns incense in a Bonn-fire rather than at some exotic, quasi-Oriental site!

Despite a few conservative modifications of the instrumentation (like a number of other conductors, Stokowski reinforces the woodwinds with horns in the second movement), there is absolutely nothing vulgar or untoward here: it always *sounds* like Beethoven. A few details do give me slight pause, like the omission of all repeats in the Scherzo and the side break at midpoint in the Adagio. Both obviously are due to the single-disc format (which I continue to question for this particular work). The other quibbles are all found in the finale: for one thing, the clashing dissonance of the opening fanfare is rather too legato and smoothed out for my taste; for another, the climax on the words "*vor Gott*" is a trifle anemic and understated; and finally, I take exception to one or two rhetorical pauses which verge (but just verge) on willful exaggeration. Otherwise, I am quite taken with Stokowski's moderate, unpressured pace for the *Ode to Joy*. This, in combination with an excellent quartet of soloists, a fine John Aldis-led choir, and London's detailed Phase 4 microphoning techniques, clarifies the complex web of scoring in a remarkable fashion. Monteux's version (with the same orchestra, incidentally) boasted a similar expansive, truly joyful, and unhurried approach to this final movement, but Stokowski projects it even more convincingly and powerfully. The engineering, despite compression onto two record sides, is magnificently solid, realistic, and warm. From every point of view, this is a Ninth to own.

✓ **BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral").** Heather Harper (s), Helen Watts (c), Alexander Young (t), Donald McIntyre (bs); London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21043, \$5.98.

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balance in this Symphony, are nicely kept in the foreground. In the development section there is quietly sensitive thematic work and the tremendous bedlam at the reprise is well sustained; too bad that after a strong ending the last two chords are elephantine. The greatest of symphonic scherzos goes well, for as in the Seventh Symphony, Jochum takes the bit in his mouth, but there are a few spots where the aural picture is not clear and the sound of the important drums is not clean; these too may be the engineers' doing. The immense Adagio is held together impressively—Jochum, an eminent Bruckner man, knows how to take the long view—the cantilena is warm and sustained, part-writing admirably highlighted, and eccentricities in tempo and phrasing absent. In the finale, where the tempo *does* fluctuate, Jochum is strangely inflexible. The recitatives are square cut and the chorus is held to a strict and tight beat, but the introductory orchestral variations are fine and the woodwinds' counterpoint delectably clear. The chorus is good even though it is kept down somewhat by the monitor; the solo quartet is not well balanced because the soprano is a little unsteady, while the tenor squeezes hard. The bass is fair, though he runs out of breath in his cruel first recitative. This choral finale seems crowded and hurried, but then Jochum is not the first good conductor who has had his troubles with this baffling piece.

The bonuses to fill out some of the sides are the four overtures to Beethoven's sole opera. *Leonore No. 1*, a Cherubinian piece that falls short of the excellence of its model, is well performed and the sound is extremely good, without any noise in the nether regions. The orchestra that sounds so fresh in *Leonore No. 1* is less so however in No. 2. Jochum's concept of this "French" overture is not sufficiently dramatic—tempo changes and pauses do not necessarily create tension. But the performance of the third of these overtures is largely first-rate, even though there are some soulful retards; the strettos in both overtures are spirited and technically impeccable. The *Fidelio* overture is also excellently played, without any *chichi*.

P.H.L.

BERLIOZ: Les Troyens. Berit Lindholm (s), Josephine Veasey (ms), Jon Vickers (t), Peter Glossop (b), et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Colin Davis, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 65.

BIZET: Carmen (excerpts, in German): La cloche a sonné; Habanera; Séguedille; Les triangles des sœurs; Votre toast; Je vais danser; Melons! Coupons! . . . En vain pour éviter; Les voici; Duet and Finale. Ursula Schirrmacher (s), Frasquita; Ursula Gust (s), Mercédès; Christa Ludwig (ms), Carmen; Rudolph Schock (t), Don José; Herman Prey (b), Escamillo; Ivan Rebhoff (bs), Zuniga; Chorus and Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper (Berlin), Horst Stein, cond. Seraphim S 60119, \$2.49.

Carmen has been performed in Finnish, Japanese, Hebrew, and a German version has existed for almost as long as the original. There is perhaps no good reason why a record company should not try to sell a German-language version internationally, particularly if the record has a cast of international repute—names like Ludwig, Prey, Schock, and Rebhoff, the last an emigrant Russian basso of notable sonority—but this potted *Carmen* is not simply a German-language version but a de-gutted one as well. Everybody sings and plays with devotion and accomplishment and they contrive together to bring off a travesty of Bizet's opera and a denial of its passion, fire, and thrust. Like a cloud of perfume, the Collegium Musicum spirit hovers over this recording: an atmosphere of tiptoes and pursed lips and good manners, quite fatal to the score.

Conductor Stein beats away prissily, never allowing anything to go wrong—nor to take off, either. Christa Ludwig is usually an artist of spirit and judgment but here she simply conforms to the tepid, bourgeois Gestalt and delivers that intolerable paradox: a ladylike, *Hausfrau Carmen*.

If you still want to know about the technical quality of the record, it's just fine. G.M.

BRAHMS: Symphonies: No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68; No. 2, in D, Op. 73; No. 3, in F, Op. 90; No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98; Overtures: Academic Festival, Op. 80; Tragic, Op. 81; Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. Angel SDC 3732, \$17.94 (four discs).

Sir John Barbirolli's integral recording of Brahms's orchestral music embodies a highly individual but completely consistent and scrupulously musical interpretive approach. As contrasted with the epic style of Klemperer or the more lyric approach of Walter or Karajan, Barbirolli offers rich and sensuous readings; the performances are leisurely paced, broadly conceived in matters of phrasing and structure, and infused with considerable expressive sentiment. With such broad tempos, Barbirolli succeeds in clarifying and intensifying much of the subsidiary thematic material that Brahms packed into his orchestral textures—the arching arabesques and short decorative phrases that accompany so many of his main themes. Most conductors achieve this in the slow movements, but Barbirolli's slower pace in the fast movements is enlivened considerably by his carefully nuanced treatment of this subsidiary material, thus defining the musical relationships with great clarity—his conception penetrates the entire web of the music.

The sound that Barbirolli evokes from the Vienna Philharmonic matches this approach, as does the warm and rich recording. The entire orchestra responds with a considerable variety of tone color: the upper strings play with glowing tone and, when appropriate, with a rather wide vibrato. The orchestral texture is rich

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and warm, but never so thick as to obscure the interplay of voices; at Barbirolli's tempos Brahms's syncopations and cross rhythms emerge clearly and with great vitality.

Starting with the First Symphony, my first impression was that the leisurely tempos would not work; but when I returned to this piece after hearing the other three discs, I found greater validity in Barbirolli's approach and its consistent integrity. However, the heroic energy of the first and last movements are to some extent vitiated by the slow pace, the two inner movements being considerably more responsive to Barbirolli's methods.

Sir John finds much more congenial material in the Second Symphony, where

the broad lyric lines and detailed decorative material come across with exceptional strength. The syncopations of the second movement are especially effective—precisely defined but flowing without awkwardness.

The first movement of the F major Symphony presents a special challenge to any conductor: the mixture of 6/4 and 9/4 requires an adjustment of bar rhythm to the longer phrase which many conductors find difficult, especially at a moderate tempo. Barbirolli shows himself to be a master of the long phrase as well as of thematic detail and his reading is most effective. The two middle movements again suit his style admirably and he infuses the major portion of the finale with considerable energy.

The Fourth Symphony fares less well. The first movement sags at times, especially in the recurring statements of the opening theme and the general effect lacks the tragic impact that many expect from this movement. Though the slow movement is excellent, the joyless Allegro giocoso is the one clear failure in the set. In the Passacaglia, Barbirolli sacrifices drive for a more leisurely presentation of decorative detail. In Variation 12 he anticipates Brahms's dramatic tempo change, depriving the extraordinary flute solo in Variation 13 of its impact; this is one of the few instances where Barbirolli is completely at odds with Brahms's instructions.

The *Haydn* Variations fail for much the same reason and though Barbirolli doesn't betray Brahms's text as he does in the finale of the E minor Symphony, he fails to project the variety and strength of this score. By devoting such painstaking attention to inner voices he does not give this work sufficient profile; all in all, a rather bland account. Both Overtures are well played. The *Academic Festival* has an appropriate rich texture and rather pompous solemnity, while the *Tragic* creates a proper mood of mystery and anticipation.

The Vienna Philharmonic responds sympathetically and effectively to Barbirolli's direction, with relatively few lapses of orchestral precision. There are however a distressing number of imprecise pizzicato passages and the horns, whose tone and phrasing generally give great pleasure, occasionally enter just after the rest of the orchestra: this is particularly damaging in the exposed brass passage in Variation 15, where they are clearly out of phase with the trombones.

In sum, therefore, this set offers a consistent approach by a seasoned musician to a major corpus of orchestral repertory staples. Though one may not necessarily agree with Barbirolli's conception, there is no question that it is rooted in a thorough identification with the music and is projected with impressive authority. P.H.

BRITTEN. Suite for Cello, Op. 72; Second Suite for Cello, Op. 80. Mstislav Rostropovich, cello. London CS 6617, \$5.98.

Benjamin Britten's compositions of the past seven or eight years have been dominated by the role that the Aldeburgh Festival plays in his life. Not only have there been the three church parables, but a large catalogue of works written for specific performers associated with the festival: the guitar *Nocturnal* for Julian Bream, the *Gemini* Variations for the Jeney twins, the Blake songs for Fischer-Dieskau, a harp suite for Ossian Ellis, the song cycle *The Poet's Echo*, to Pushkin texts, for Vishnevskaya and Rostropovich (as pianist). In his more usual role as cellist, Rostropovich is the dedicatee of two suites for solo cello, written respectively in 1964 and 1967, and now the Russian virtuoso gives us a recording coupling these two pieces.

It is evident that two challenges inform



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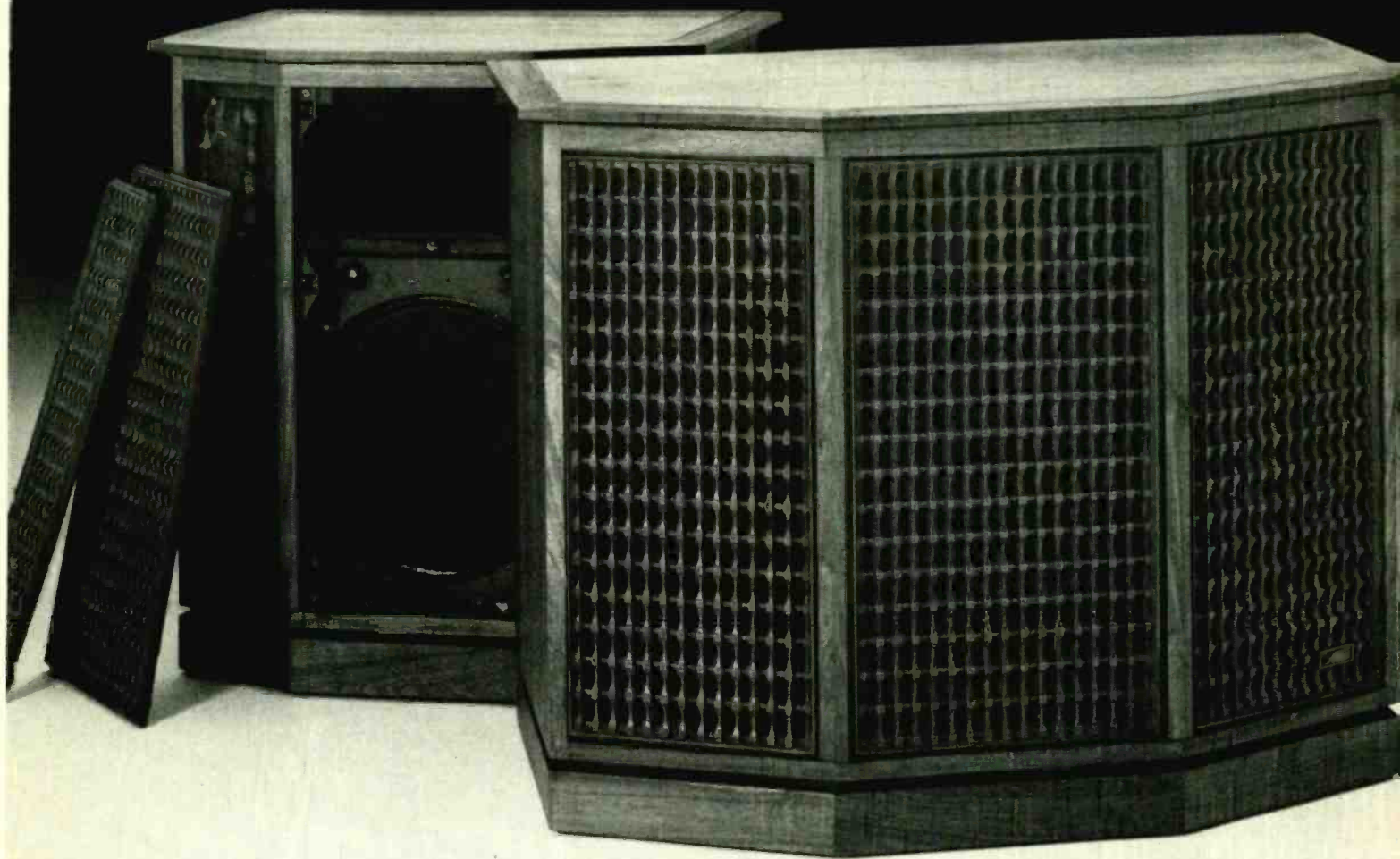
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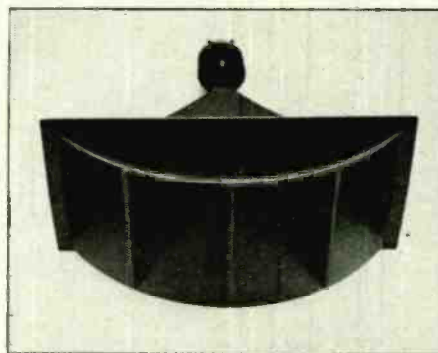


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these remarkable and difficult works: the virtuosity of the soloist (and also his rhapsodic style) and the shadow of Sebastian Bach's cello suites (both as an ideal of writing in this medium and, at the same time, a kind of roadblock, direct imitation of which is to be avoided).

The earlier Suite has six movements, linked by a free Canto, primarily in double stops. The main movements are a Fugue (a good subject, but not entirely convincing in its working-out for solo instrument); a free Lamento; a pizzicato Serenade; a March that recalls somewhat the one in Schoenberg's Op. 24; a Bordon revolving around a sustained open-string D; and a brilliant Moto Perpetuo that is interrupted by fragments of the Canto. Except for the Fugue there is no movement that even suggests baroque pastiche; however, although the writing is proficient and demanding, the technical problems seem to circumscribe the invention except in the last movement.

The Second Suite is more consistently successful: a linear Declamato; another Fugue, and a much more tightly written one; a lively Scherzo full of rhythmic tricks; an Andante whose basically four-beat melody is played off against a six-beat pizzicato on pedal notes; and finally—the most explicitly Bachian reference in either work—an immensely demanding Chaconne, which seems to me to lose tension only in its slower middle section, where the figuration of turns, trills, and tremolos fails to sustain the rhythmic interest of what precedes and follows.

Despite the reservations I have expressed, these are notable additions to a limited repertory—especially the Second Suite. Rostropovich plays them with great address and panache; in a few spots I felt that his rubato tended to obscure the rhythmic structure, but this is a minor flaw when placed against the conviction of the performances. The sound is extremely realistic, and I should say that this record belongs in any collection of great string playing. D.H.

BULL: Fantasia à 3 in G minor; Dorick à 4 in A; In nomine à 5 in G minor, (viol consort); My Self; My Choice; My Jewel I; Dallying Alman; Alman; Regina Galliard I; Galliard; My Grief; What Care You (virginals); In Nomine XII; Dorick Music: 4 parts; Fantasia, Te lucis ante terminum; Pavan and Galliard, "Symphony"; 8 Dances from Benjamin Cosyn's Second Book; Carol "Den Lustelijcken Meij"; Bull's Goodnight (organ). Francis Cameron, organ; Susi Jeans, virginals; Johannes Koch Gamba Consort. Archive 198472, \$5.98.

Because he wrote for instruments alone instead of setting words to music, John Bull is a neglected star in the galaxy of Elizabethan composers, which includes Byrd, Weelkes, Wilbye, and Gibbons. An organist by profession, Bull held a variety of positions during his life including the first professorship of music at London's Gresham College, tutored James I's son Henry, and traveled extensively. He spent his last years on the continent, apparently due to some legal entangle-

ments although his firm Catholicism may also have influenced his decision.

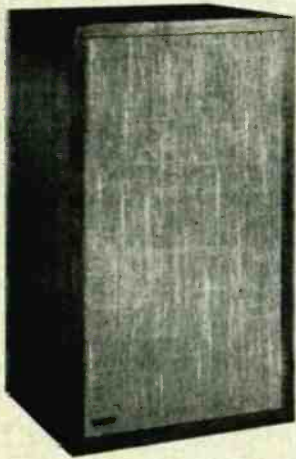
His keyboard works, the bulk of his *oeuvre* occupying two fat volumes in the *Musica Britannica* series, were written for church and chamber, and range from dainty trifles with such imaginative titles as *My Jewel* and *My Grief* to monumental fantasias and variations of staggering proportions. The works chosen for this Archive release do not include any of the largest compositions—it was probably felt that these would overbalance a single disc—but do cover just about every other important aspect of Bull's composition.

Stylized dances—pavans, galliards, almans, and corantos—form the largest group of Elizabethan keyboard music and they occupy a fair proportion of this disc. One of the largest works included is the paired pavan and galliard, curiously labeled "Symphony," which combines the virtuoso passage work characteristic of Bull with the technique of paired variation. The pavan is divided into sections, each followed by its own variation, while the galliard, also in several parts, is itself a variation of the pavan. Five dances from Benjamin Cosyn's *Second Virginal Book* are suggestive of Bull's travels—*German Almaine*, *Dutch Dance*, *Galyard Italiano*, *English Toy*, and *French Almaine*—and are technically simpler. Bull's setting of the Dutch carol *Den Lustelijcken Meij* is cast in a single set of variations, another popular technique of the time which is here subtly applied to give the listener the feeling that the piece is one mighty uninterrupted statement.

Bull's church music is marked by an awesome austerity, pervaded by the archaic cantus firmus principle and the composer's penchant for dense and unyielding polyphony. I found the *Fantasia* and *Dorick Music* uncompromisingly dull, but the stunning *In Nomine*, which combines the inexorable march of the theme with a rivet-gun accompaniment, is easily the outstanding moment on the disc.

Much credit must go to Francis Cameron, who plays a contemporary single-manual organ without pedal board. Mr. Cameron, a co-editor of Bull's organ music for *Musica Britannica*, is well acquainted with the style and combines the authority of his interpretation with a superb technique. He maintains the clarity of his fingerwork even in a harpsichord piece like the charming *Bull's Goodnight*, which closes the disc. Susi Jeans, who performs the delightful dances and character pieces, lacks a bit of bounce, but this may be partly the fault of the virginal, a singularly inexpressive instrument.

Bull's consort music is virtually unknown. These three pieces, taken from manuscripts in the British Museum by Francis Cameron, show that this master of the keyboard also had a keen appreciation of music for stringed instruments. The skillful polyphony and expressive sense of phrase entitle these lovely works to a place in viol literature next to Bull's famous contemporaries Byrd and Gibbons.



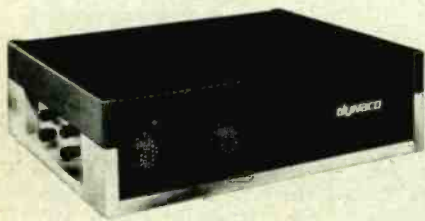
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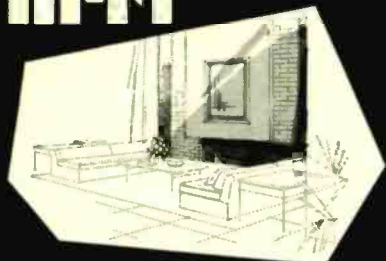
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Archive, usually most precise in their labeling, fails to make clear just which alman and galliard Lady Jeans is playing (there are multiple possibilities). For the record, the alman is No. 114 in *Musica Britannica's* Volume 2 of Bull's works, and the galliard is No. 73, subtitled *Charlotte de la Haye* (which Thurston Dart suggests may have been written abroad for the granddaughter of William the Silent). Other than this minor criticism, I would find it hard to fault either the sound or the production of this thoroughly admirable disc. S.T.S.

CAGE: "Music for Keyboard, 1935-1948." Jeanne Kirstein, piano. Columbia M2S 819, \$11.98 (two discs).

This is one of the season's greatest records. The twelve works recorded on the four sides of the set date from a time when Cage actually wrote music instead of devising elaborate strategies for avoiding composition as he does today. Like all of the essential Cage, the music is delicate, understated, and quietly thoughtful. Except for one dutiful 12-tone nod toward his teacher, Schoenberg, in a piece called *Metamorphosis*, all the works in the set subscribe to the aesthetic of Satie: that is to say, their interest is primarily melodic, rhythmic, and colorful; their harmonic and contrapuntal interest is of the very slightest.

Cage's concern for color far exceeds Satie's however. Most of the dozen pieces presented here are for prepared piano—the piano turned, by means of screws, bolts, rubber erasers, and whatnot, into a miniature orchestra. One piece, however, is a suite for toy piano—a super-Steinway among toy pianos, but still a toy. Characteristically, Cage gives it much solemn music to play; it sounds like the little bells in *The Play of Daniel*.

The interpreter, Jeanne Kirstein, is surely one of this country's finest pianists. The sensitivity and insight of her playing, whether on the piano straight or prepared or toy, are magnificent, and so is the recording. A.F.

CHOPIN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E minor, Op. 11. Van Cliburn, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3147, \$5.98.

This is not one of Cliburn's happiest recorded enterprises. In fact, coming as it does after the pianist's excellent versions of the last two Chopin sonatas the present performance seems even more of a disappointment. The pianist plays the work with a great deal of fancy rubato, but it all sounds rather cautious, self-conscious, and phlegmatic. Ormandy's accompaniment is sodden—much too massive and generalized. Indeed, one or two details in the last movement strike me as downright sluggish and mannered.

But whatever the merits of the collaboration, it has to contend with indifferent recording: the tuttis come through with a leaden, garbled, thoroughly "canned" quality reminiscent of heavily filtered

dubbings from 78 rpm masters. The piano, on the other hand, is made toneless by a hard, constricted "sealed-time-capsule" remoteness. The Rubinstein/Skrowaczewski, Lipatti, Pollini/Kletzki, Argerich/Abbado are all clearly superior. H.G.

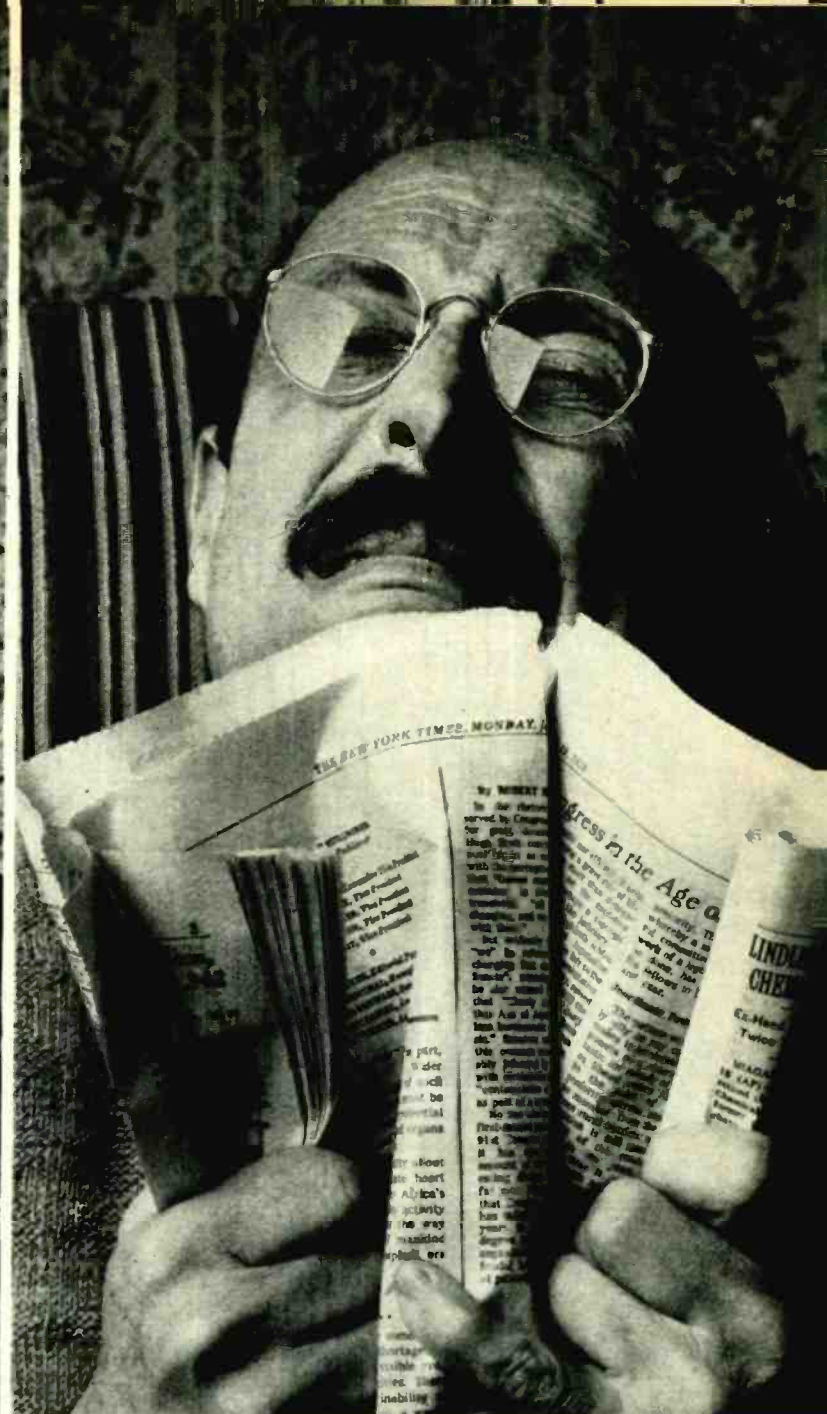
COUPERIN: Ordres for Harpsichord: No. 6, in B flat; No. 8, in B minor; No. 13, in B minor; Les Folies françaises. Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord. Decca DL 710174, \$5.98.

Sylvia Marlowe continues her interpretation of Couperin's keyboard works, this time presenting the Sixth and Eighth Ordres complete and parts of Ordre 13. The qualities exhibited in the earlier recordings are all here: integration of the embellishments into the melodic line and observance of the symmetry of these lines, variety in leading to the frequent cadences, and felicitous rendering of the intimacy of this art of miniature. She also knows that while Couperin's art is refined, it still requires virtuosity, and this she supplies unobtrusively.

Couperin boasted of having invented portraiture in music, these musical portraits depicting not only persons like the king but also the countryside. The titles are fanciful, piquant, and often almost graphically descriptive. *Les Folies françaises ou les Dominos* ("domino" meaning the half mask worn by ladies at masked balls) present Virginité, Modesty, Ardor, Coquetry, Frenzy, and so forth, in every instance the color of the domino being indicated—Virginité's has "invisible color," Ardor's is "flesh colored." Needless to say, all this is only the Frenchman's traditional attachment to poetic and pictorial images and has nothing to do with the music, which is charming, inventive, often bold and passionate. Miss Marlowe does not try to present bonbons, as used to be done not so long ago, but gives us well-rounded portraits of music. The sound is excellent, and so are the notes by the maestra herself. P.H.L.

CZERNY: Variations for Piano and Orchestra on a Haydn Theme, Op. 73. **RIES:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C sharp minor, Op. 55. Felicja Blumental, piano; Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Hellmuth Froschauer, cond. (in the Czerny); Salzburg Chamber Orchestra, Theodore Guschlbauer, cond. (in the Ries). RCA Victorla VICS 1501, \$2.98.

As the annotations accompanying this disc so aptly point out, these revivals are offered as by-products of the Beethoven bicentennial. Both Carl Czerny (1791-1857) and Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838) were intimates and esteemed pupils of the Bonn master. If any conclusions are to be gleaned here from Beethoven's pedagogical prowess, one would have to be that he certainly didn't stifle individuality. These compositions are as different from each other as any two could be—and neither one sounds terribly rem-



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incent of Beethoven's music. Czerny of course is the better known today, though chiefly by way of his etudes and other studies devoted to pianistic drudgery (his dowdy solo variations on *La Ricordanza* gets an occasional playing).

The present opus is a charmer in every way. The theme subjected to all these fireworks is Haydn's *Gott, erhalte den Kaiser* which he had used as a variation theme himself in the second movement of the Op. 76, No. 3 Quartet (the tune later gained further notoriety as *Deutschland über Alles*). The format consists of a long, brilliant introduction, a quasi-cadenza, the statement of the theme, a series of variations, and finally a brilliant coda. The structure is very similar to Chopin's *Là ci darem la mano* Variations, and the style too is amazingly akin to early Chopin—not the glittery piano writing so much as the harmonic background and type of passage work Czerny employs. This is a skillfully fashioned, spirited work and Mme. Blumental romps through it all with gusto; the orchestra supports her with equal relish.

Ries is all but forgotten today, though he is remembered as Beethoven's amanuensis and one of the early interpreters of the C minor Concerto. It would appear that none of Ries's music has hitherto been recorded; on the evidence at hand this seems to be a rather grievous omission. As a performer, Ries's playing impressed many people with its "romantic wildness . . . much novelty . . . great boldness." Certainly these qualities of heart and imagination are more apparent in his Concerto than any great sense of formal discipline. The harmonic essence is closer to Beethoven than to Czerny although it pursues flights of fancy akin to the early romantic musings of Weber. Some of the thematic material lacks concision (e.g., the main tune of the final Rondo starts off like the third movement of Beethoven's Triple Concerto but then goes off to chase butterflies). But what taste, dignity, and beauty are to be found here—this is an altogether more serious work than Czerny's Variations. Mme. Blumental employs a fine sense of color and style and the orchestra provides capable, though not quite virtuoso support. Excellent, warm sound of the big, European *Konzerthaus* variety, finely equalized and well processed. H.G.

ELGAR: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in A minor, Op. 84; Concert Allegro; Sonatina; Adieu; Serenade. John Ogdon, piano; Allegri Quartet (in the Quintet). Angel S 36686, \$5.98.

John Ogdon's enterprise here adds a new dimension to our over-all view of the music of Sir Edward Elgar. Except for three or four orchestral works, Elgar's music seldom appears on American concert programs, although his religious oratorios continue to find favor in Britain. Stylistically conservative with a pronounced Brahmsian flavor, Elgar's music lacks a strong profile—compared with Brahms, he is a less impelling and expressive composer. Though he had broad practical musical experience as a youth,

his formal training was limited, and it is said that he began to compose intensively only after he married a wife whose faith in his genius and whose constant urging prodded him into creative work.

The Quintet is typical of the composer in its lack of variety and expressive urgency. Somewhat lighter in texture than Brahms's chamber music, the imaginatively scored piano-with-strings blend does demonstrate Elgar's keen ear for tone color even when working with such a relatively limited palette.

Ogdon approaches this music with formidable technical skill and obvious sympathy. As in his performances of Busoni, he gets a great deal out of the late-Romantic idiom. He is ably partnered by the Allegri Quartet, and the entire performance indicates thorough and devoted preparation. Ogdon also performs the piano solos on this record with equal dedication to material of appreciably less consequence. The *Concert Allegro* is an obvious effort to produce a short recital piece, but it is rhythmically monotonous and its thematic material sounds contrived. The little *Sonatina* has a certain eighteenth-century charm, but both the *Adieu* and *Serenade* are little more than salon pieces. The Quintet is spread over both sides of the record, preceded by the *Concert Allegro* and *Sonatina* and followed by the two lighter solos: for fanciers of the composer, this arrangement offers a well-balanced Elgar recital featuring a very fine young pianist. P.H.

GLUCK: Orfeo ed Euridice. Pilar Loringar (s), Euridice; Helen Donath (s), Amor; Marilyn Horne (ms), Orfeo; Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Georg Solti, cond. OSA 1285, \$11.96 (two discs).

Orfeo's popularity with the operatic public has fluctuated considerably during the 208 years of its performance history. Calzabigi's compact and relevant libretto, Gluck's melodic and perennially fresh score have together yielded a masterpiece that has secured a place for itself in the history books and in the regard of many music listeners of elevated taste. At the box office, success has generally needed something more, like the drawing power of a Louise Homer, a Karin Branzell, or a Kathleen Ferrier (to mention no contemporary names).

Impresarios have always looked kindly on *Orfeo* and for a very practical reason: it makes for a nice, inexpensive evening. All you need is an orchestra of eighteenth-century dimensions, a chorus to match, and only three soloists, all female: a majestic mezzo for the role of Orpheus, a melting lyric soprano to sing his wife, and a cool *leggiera* to play Cupid. Now, there's a night to help balance the budget! At the risk of being thought cynical, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that some such consideration of economics accounts for *Orfeo's* apparent popularity in the record catalogue, where the present release brings to seven the number of competing versions available—a total surpassed among operas only by the most

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A Percy Grainger Posy

by R. D. Darrell

FAIR WARNING: I must confess to considerable personal bias in welcoming the first substantial Grainger program to appear since the death in early 1961 of the fabulous Australian-American composer/pianist. Like most amateur pianists of my generation, I labored long and futilely to dash off *Country Gardens*, *Shepherd's Hey*, and *Spoon River* with even a fraction of Grainger's own ebullience. And later I cherished every one of Grainger's Columbia releases in the late Twenties and early Thirties—a series acclaimed for its combined musical and engineering success and crowned by the first recordings of the Chopin Second and Third Sonatas, Brahms's Third Sonata, Schumann's *Etudes symphoniques*, and an extraordinary album of Bach transcriptions.

So my extreme pleasure in London Records' "tribute" program may not be shared by younger listeners to whom Grainger is little known or associated only with quaint evocations of Ye Olde Englishe folk music. The music here does consist mostly of English folksong and dance settings, as a matter of fact, but even the most skeptical youngster is likely to respond to the rollicking gusto of these choral-and-orchestra settings of a Scotch Strathspey and Reel (*What shall we do with a drunken sailor?*) and *I'm Seventeen Come Sunday*. And there's nothing old-fashioned at all about the lusty wind-band settings of *The Duke of Marlborough* (fanfare) and *Lisbon*, or the deceptively simple yet really quite intricate two-piano setting of *Let's Dance Gay in Green Meadow*. Some of the other pieces may have moments of self-conscious folksiness perhaps, and there certainly are moments of unabashed sentiment. But who could resist the sheer fun of the unaccompanied choral *There Was a Pig Went Out to Dig* and the lilting orchestral *Shepherd's Hey*: the robust balladeering in *Bold William Taylor* (baritone and orchestra) and *The Lost Lady Found* (chorus and orchestra); and the poetic tenderness in Peter Pears's now hoarse and shaky-voiced but always superbly eloquent singing of *The Pretty Maid Milking Her Cow* and *The Sprig of Thyme* (with piano), *Willow Willow* and *Lord Maxwell's Goodnight* (with orchestra). I do find the setting of *My Robin's to the Greenwood Gone*—for flute, English horn, and six strings—a bit too monotonously Delian for my taste, but the final *Shallow Brown*, sung by John Shirley-Quirk with male ensemble and orchestra, is dramatically poignant for all its uninhibited emotionalism.

Certainly every Grainger fan will share my pleasure in this admirably performed, recorded, and produced (with a leaflet of texts as well as jacket notes) tribute. I hope others will be tempted to sample the disc: may it soon be followed by reissues of Grainger's own recordings as well as a modern version of the ever-popular little piano pieces.

GRAINGER: "Salute to Percy Grainger." Peter Pears, tenor; John Shirley-Quirk, baritone; Benjamin Britten and Viola Tunnard, piano; Ambrosian Singers; English Chamber Orchestra, Benjamin Britten, cond. London CS 6632, \$5.98.

popular Verdis and Puccinis, and by *Fidelio* at the high tide of the Beethoven Year.

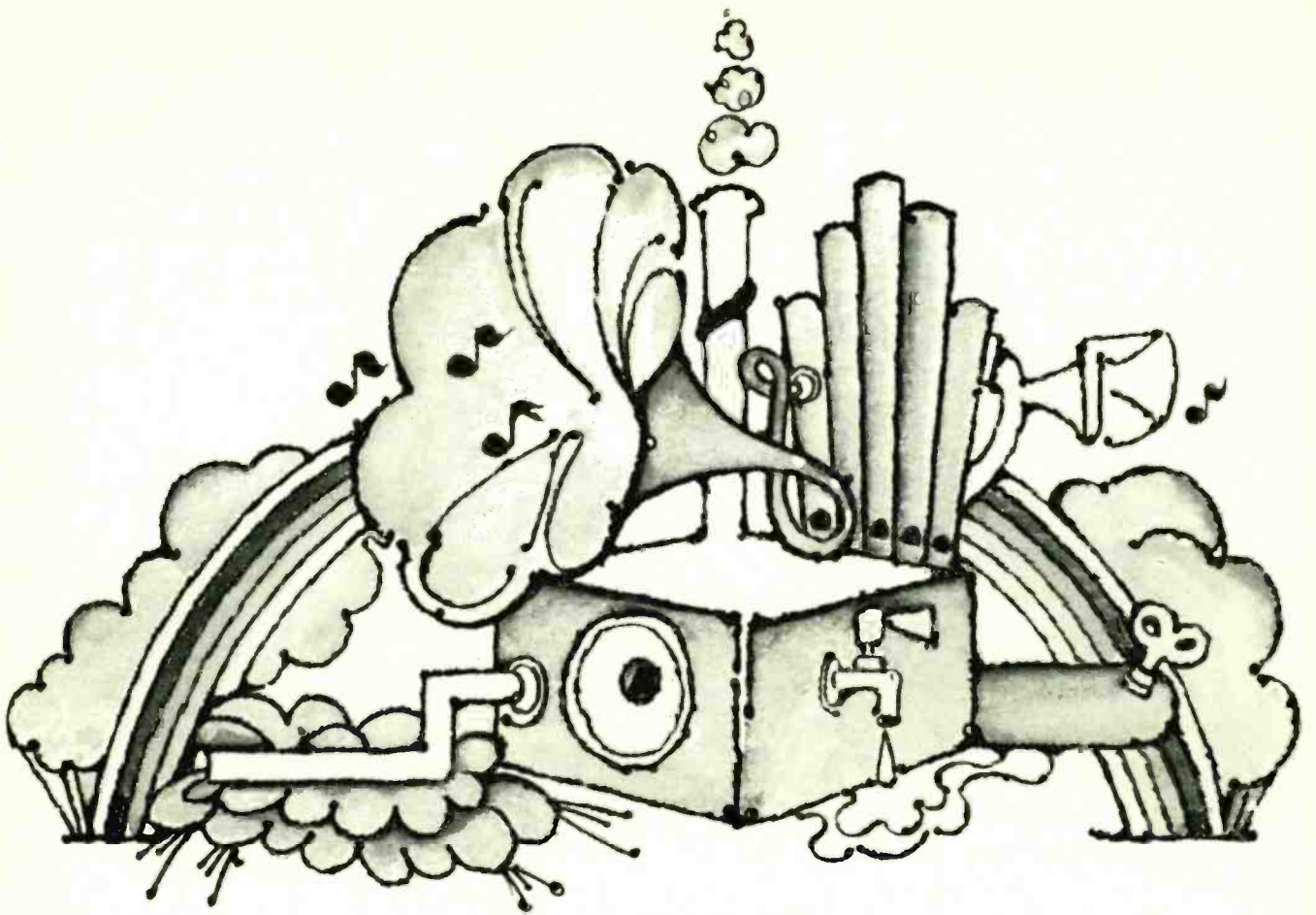
The eternal problem of *Orfeo* is that Gluck wrote two versions; and every performance you're likely to hear, whether live or recorded, will revive and pose afresh the textual situation. The first version of 1762 was written for Vienna in Italian (the ruling operatic language of the era) and the role of Orfeo was scored for the range and style of Gaetano Guadagni, an alto castrato. Twelve years later Gluck rewrote the opera for Paris, to a French translation of the libretto. He added several new arias and ensembles and greatly expanded the ballet music in Acts II and III. He also revised the role of Orpheus for the high tenor voice of Joseph Legros.

During most of its two hundred years, *Orfeo* has been given with a contralto or mezzo-soprano in the lead, the age of the castrato having petered out, as it were, around the end of the eighteenth century. Commentators agree that the contralto sound is very different indeed from that of a castrato. Since not even the boldest or most venturesome of record companies is likely to afford us an opportunity to hear what the first Orfeo sounded like (though some must on occasion be sorely tempted to try), we shall have to rest content with this compromise—and choose among some of the excellent artists who presently sing the Italian version of the role and have recorded it: Shirley Verrett, Grace Bumbry, Maureen Forrester, or (in the set here considered) Marilyn Horne.

Or else we must jettison Gluck's intentions entirely, as DGG has done by casting Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as the hero, transposing the entire role an octave down and so do violence to almost every sonority in the score. (The baritone's artistry is incontestable and the rest of the production shows deep devotion; but nonetheless the procedure adopted always strikes me as a coarse expedient.)

Or else we can get authentically close to the known intention of Gluck—at least to his second thoughts—by choosing the French version and so seek out World Series PHC 2-014, which offers the tenor Léopold Simoneau in the 1774 revision, without transposition, adaptation, or mucking about of any sort. That performance, conducted in 1956 by Hans Rosbaud, was a realization of the printed score that Gluck himself approved in 1776. The other singers are Suzanne Danco and Pierrette Alarie. Another performance of the Paris score was once available on Angel 3569 (issued in 1958 and long since deleted) in which Nicolai Gedda sang a deeply impassioned Orfeo, although one not always free from strain.

Or else again we may leave all such matters to the scholars and settle back to enjoy at face value the many pleasures offered in such a generally admirable new release as this new London surely is, recorded in splendid acoustical perspectives, embracing singing, playing, and conducting of a high order. This undertaking takes its roots from a production at Covent Garden last year (with the



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same conductor but not, save Lorengar, the same cast) in which the edition used was basically the Italian one but with lots of interpolations from the Paris score. So we get, for instance, an extra aria for Orfeo at the end of Act I and expanded ballet in Act II—including the Air with flute solo; Euridice and the Blessed Spirits, also in Act II; and a superbly lyrical trio after the revival of Euridice in the finale. But the recording ends with the "Trionfi d'Amore" chorus and not the extended ballet and Chaconne of the Paris score. All in all, an acceptable compromise and a great deal of wonderful music.

My advance pressing came with incomplete notes, so one must assume (but not declare) that the edition used is that prepared by Charles Mackerras for the Covent Garden production, which in turn incorporates much of the work done for the 1967 Bach Guild recording with Mackerras himself conducting. One fruit of this research is a confident ease of decoration shown at many points in the recording, notably by Miss Horne: appoggiaturas, portamentos, cadenzas, and the like. The other two singers are far more reserved in this department (and even Miss Horne is content to leave intact the translucent cadences of "*Che puro ciel*" and to provide very few embellishments for "*Che faro senza Euridice*"). Our listening habits have changed much in the last decade or so: we accept (and therefore seek) a lot more decoration than before, indeed miss it in old recordings. There's not much reason for anything but gratitude for what we are given here; but it is well to recall Gluck's own views on the subject, as given in a letter he wrote in 1773: "... always as simple and natural as possible, my music merely strives to achieve the fullest expression and to reinforce the poetic declamation. That is why I do not employ the trills, passages, or cadenzas in which the Italians revel."

Of all the mezzo-soprano Orfeos on record, Marilyn Horne has by far the most satisfactory evenness of scale. Her low register is rich and ample, yet it never sounds like another's voice (as both Grace Bumbry and Shirley Verrett do on occasion). There is a wondrous sense of line and shape to her singing and for luscious shapeliness of tone it is unrivaled. She sounds somewhat tested in the bravura aria tacked on to the end of the first act ("*Addio, miei sospiri*")—this might better have been omitted, since it really clashes with everything else in the act. But if there is a complaint at all, it is that she occasionally seems to lack intensity of conviction. This is most apparent in the long sequence of arias and recitatives in the first act, but is not entirely absent even in "*Che faro*," where intensity is all: it is a lament in the major key.

A very different set of qualities is required for the role of Euridice, all femininity, confusion, despair; and Pilar Lorengar proves ideal for this part. Her touch of warm vibrato makes for a tremulous, pathetic quality that sometimes approaches the sentimental but never crosses the line. Her singing is a

delight. And Helen Donath's Cupid is detached, cool, impeccable: a youthful spirit, but one devoid of the ingénue cuteness so often found in this role. Entirely satisfying.

Solti's work is vigorous, muscular, and authoritative, though he treats the score without emphasizing its "period" character—which is perhaps the way to underline its timelessness. He draws playing of the utmost precision from the orchestra and fine cohesion from the chorus. But he does not extract the last measure of tragic intensity while accompanying the grieving Orfeo: there is a sense of restraint, of something held back. Despite the quibbles, this is a recording I expect to revisit often and with much pleasure. G.M.

HAYDN: Symphonies: No. 91, in E flat; No. 102, in B flat. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Max Rudolf, cond. Decca DL 710173, \$5.98. Tape: 73 10173, \$6.95.

As I listened to this record, I found myself thinking, "What a fantastic composer Haydn is!" Possibly no greater tribute can be paid to a performance than this reaction. To be sure, one could pick out a few flaws here and there, but the over-all effect conveys the excitement and originality of Haydn as few other recordings of his symphonies do.

Symphony No. 91 is one of three written in 1788 between the six "Paris" symphonies and the first "London" set. As H. C. Robbins Landon points out, these three symphonies are the first that Haydn wrote after Mozart had completed his last four, and there is ample internal evidence that the younger composer's music had created a profound impression on his older colleague. Mozart's influence is by no means fully absorbed in these three symphonies: that process was to continue with Haydn for several years. A good instance of this is the first movement of No. 91, where the main theme itself is a contrapuntal treatment of a lyric phrase, very much in the Mozartean style. At the same time, it is also evident that Haydn has not completely made this effect his own and the movement remains stylistically problematical and most difficult to interpret.

The liner notes tell us that Max Rudolf studied the manuscript of this Symphony, only recently made available to scholars, in the Morgan Library in New York. Robbins Landon, in his 1965 edition of this Symphony in miniature score, reports that he had been unable to examine this manuscript; the score, formerly in a private American collection, was then in the hands of a dealer who had refused him access to it. He therefore based his edition on early copies and printed editions, including a French publication by Le Duc; the discrepancies between these sources are fully footnoted in the miniature score. To the best of my knowledge, no scholarly comparison of Robbins Landon's edition and the Morgan Library autograph has been published. Following Rudolf's performance with the Robbins Landon score, I hear little dif-

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ference between them, but Rudolf generally rejects the Le Duc variants in the footnotes.

Rudolf, like Blum on Vanguard/Cardinal and Jones on Nonesuch, has trouble putting the structure into correct focus at the beginning, but by the recapitulation his performance catches fire. In the last three movements, moreover, Rudolf is much closer to the essence of Haydn than either Blum or Jones.

In Symphony No. 102, however, Rudolf faces stiff competition, especially from Leonard Bernstein whose recent performance impresses me as one of the best Haydn records available. It is to Rudolf's credit that even with an admittedly inferior orchestra he surpasses Bernstein in many respects. His rapid

tempos, for one thing, are not quite as hard-pressed as Bernstein's; the latter conductor's furious pace sacrifices articulation in both the first and last movements. This can be rather crucial in a work where subtle variants of phrasing and articulation play so important a part. In the slow movement, moreover, Haydn calls for novel timbres—muted trumpets and timpani and an important solo line for cello. Here Bernstein covers the cello solo as well as the solo flute, oboe, and bassoon with a rich violin tone, while Rudolf projects this unique texture somewhat more successfully. Neither conductor lets the muted trumpets sound as strongly as I would like, but they are more audible in Rudolf's performance.

Throughout both symphonies, Rudolf

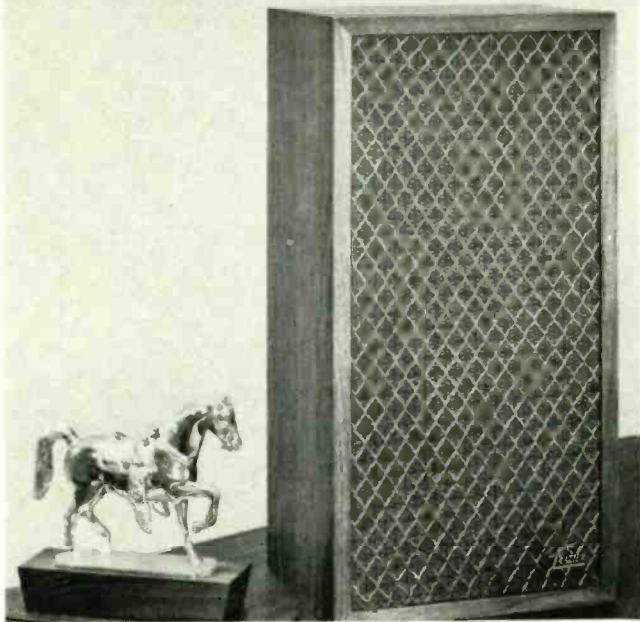
and his recording engineers achieve a completely satisfying balance between winds and strings. The Cincinnati Orchestra, to be sure, does not play with the suavity and brilliance of a really great ensemble, but they are more than adequate here and the balance is far more appropriate than the rather string-heavy textures of Bernstein's (and Szell's) Haydn recordings. In reviewing Jones's integral set of the "London" symphonies, I expressed the hope that the same scrupulous attention to text and texture could be combined with conducting of major stature. The musical insight and directorial control of Rudolf's performances here answer that call. P.H.

HENZE: Versuch über Schweine; Concerto per Contrabasso. Roy Hart, narrator (in the Versuch); Garry Karr, contrabass (in the Concerto); Philip Jones Brass Ensemble; English Chamber Orchestra, Hans Werner Henze, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139456, \$5.93.

The latest disc in DGG's Henze series brings two recent works differing widely in character. *Versuch über Schweine (Essay on Pigs)* was written in 1968 and is based on a text written by Gaston Salvatore earlier the same year. Salvatore is an active member of the SDS in Berlin and his poem, as one might expect, is openly political. Those familiar with Henze's own recent political activities (see my review of his *Raft of Medusa* in HF, December 1969) will not wonder at his choice of text. Its setting however is something of a surprise.

It is not sung at all, at least in any normal sense: Roy Hart rather chants, intones, murmurs, and screams his way through it, making full use of something like an eight octave range. The technique is distantly akin to *Sprechstimme* but much more differentiated in the type of vocal effects employed and more dramatic in intent. It provides, in fact, an extremely effective realization of the tortured quality of Salvatore's poem. All of this is accompanied, however, by what can only be described as a rather sophisticated form of background music. In the review referred to above, I wrote that the *Raft of Medusa* had something of the character of a melodrama in which the music itself seemed to have a merely perfunctory role. This is even more evident here, where the orchestra, although it plays almost continuously, is confined to eclectic, overly dramatic comments on the text. There is even an apparent attempt to imitate a rock band through the use of an electric guitar and "beat organ," but the actual music given these instruments is so characterless (and really closer to jazz than to rock) that the result is only embarrassing. I am reminded of a middle-aged man trying to do the Watusi. Still, the vocal setting of the text is fascinating, and Hart gives it a virtuoso performance (his German is excellent). I assume that it was written with Hart in mind and probably under his supervision, as I know of no other "singer" who could possibly do this kind of thing.

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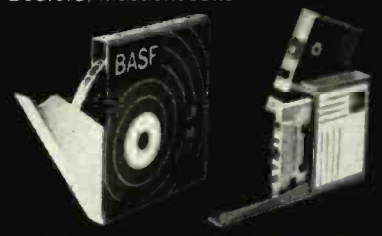
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The *Concerto per Contrabasso* is another story entirely. Written in 1966, it is a quite conventional neo-Romantic concerto which is remarkable mainly because the instrument itself is not normally found in a concerto role and the music that Henze has written for it is terribly difficult. Double stops abound (no easy matter on the contrabass!) and the general tessitura is extraordinarily high. The latter fact makes for fierce intonational problems, yet despite an occasional lapse bassist Gary Karr comes through beautifully. Particularly impressive is the opening movement, a lyrical song for the solo instrument with delicate orchestral accompaniment, strongly reminiscent of Berg.

The English Chamber Orchestra (augmented by the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble on the *Versuch über Schweine*) plays convincingly under the composer's direction. A text is provided, plus an English translation. The latter, however, is unfortunately not very good and frequently confuses what is already a rather obscure poem. R.P.M.

HINDEMITH: Der Schwanendreher—
See Bartók: Concerto for Viola and Orchestra.

MENOTTI: The Medium. Judith Blegen (s), Monica; Emily Derr (s), Mrs. Gobineau; Regina Resnik (ms), Mme. Flora; Claudine Carlson (ms), Mrs. Nolan; Julian Patrick (b), Mr. Gobineau; Orchestra of the Opera Society of Washington, Jorge Mester, cond. Columbia MS 7387, \$5.98.

With a crafty scene-stealing mezzo in the central role of the bemused Mme. Flora, *The Medium's* Grand-Guignol hokum may possibly still ruffle an untouched hackle or two. She will have to be awfully good though, for the opera is pretty trashy stuff—cheap tunes, tawdry filler music, tinny orchestrations, an overripe libretto ("little grotesque children drained white by the voraciousness of filth"—really). Like most of Menotti's operas, there are characters and ideas well worth exploring: the central issues here are, according to the composer, "the creative power of faith" and "the multiple texture of reality." Unfortunately, Menotti's treatment of both these interesting topics is so superficial and theatrically opportunistic that *The Medium* never amounts to much more than a clever potboiler.

While perhaps a bearable vehicle for the right singing actress or a director adept at creating spooky atmosphere, the opera becomes intolerably tedious when heard on a disc without its stage trappings—despite the fact that Columbia's new recording is about as fine a performance as you'll hear. Regina Resnik does a marvelous job depicting the coarse, besotted, vision-haunted Mme. Flora while actually managing to sing every note—not a simple task since Menotti's declamation is far from easy and often invites melodramatic ranting. Judith Blegen provides some pleasant

lyrical relief as the ingénue Monica and the supporting cast is exemplary. Jorge Mester paces the score smartly: it's hardly his or the musicians' fault that the chamber orchestra sounds so scratchy. P.G.D.

MOZART: Symphonies: No. 31, in D, K. 297 ("Paris"); No. 32, in G, K. 318; No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"). Klassische Philharmonie of Stuttgart, Karl Münchinger, cond. London CS 6625, \$5.98.

When we get into 1778-79 and the third dozen of Mozart's symphonies, the Italians—as well as Christian Bach, Holzbauer, and the Mannheimers—are all left behind by the sovereign master. Yet here and there we encounter a symphony which, though exceedingly well made, reflects Mozart's personality only in patches. No. 31 is one of these: superbly composed but impersonal, and nearly everything is on the surface. To be sure, he composed the Symphony with ulterior motives in mind, for the work was written for the Concerts Spirituels; and though Mozart detested both the French and their music, he intended to conquer Paris. Wanting to exploit the famous precision playing of the Paris ensemble, he decided to give this large orchestra a good workout. (Yes, there was precise orchestral playing in those days, even though Koussevitzky was convinced that he had invented it.) The connoisseurs at the concerts loved and expected this virtuoso finesse from the *premier coup d'archet*, the famous unison chord at the beginning, and Mozart obliged them with a bushful of tricks. He set the *premier coup* four times ("what a fuss these oxen here make of this trick!"), and all the runs, crescendos, and other dynamic niceties are designed to display the virtuoso orchestra. How calculated all this was is indicated by the unusually large number of changes and corrections in the manuscript and even more by a letter Mozart wrote to his father in July 1778. Speaking of the finale, he says that he deliberately omitted the resounding *premier coup* and began with the violins alone. *piano*. The audience, as he expected, expressed displeasure, but when the clangorous tutti came eight measures later, they broke into applause. Given these circumstances the Symphony requires a precise virtuoso performance to be effective: Münchinger and his excellent orchestra supply it in good measure.

The little eight-minute Symphony, K. 318, is really an overture without rests between movements: the manuscript is in the New York Public Library. It is pleasant, though not an outstanding work. But the third Symphony of this recording, the *Haffner*, is top drawer. (Incidentally, the manuscript of this great work is also in the United States.) Its first movement, which obviously influenced the finale of Beethoven's Second Symphony, has one of the most incisive symphonic themes in the entire literature, and the contrapuntal development of the material is elaborate and darkly propulsive. The fast tempo required makes great demands on the performers, be-

cause the rushing string figurations are easily lost. Toscanini used to run the daylights out of it, but Münchinger stays within acceptable limits, and while perhaps he does not reach ultimate clarity of contrapuntal articulation, this is a very good performance. The last movement, Presto alla breve, also tempts to tempos beyond reason. These fast movements demand—and can take—breakneck speed, but unless the articulation is clear, everything is lost in a mad scramble. Münchinger carefully gauges the capabilities of his orchestra and the natural limits of intelligibility—the result is a bracing movement that still makes eminent musical sense. His performances are masculine but always within the classical orbit of the eighteenth century, the playing is clean, the orchestra well balanced, and the conductor pays constant attention to the niceties of thematic filigree work. He is perhaps a little perfunctory in the introduction of the reprises and rondo sections. His instrumentalists are very good, the horns particularly fine, and the bassoons play the fast staccato runs as clearly as the cellos. This is a fine disc, well worth possessing. P.H.L.

RAVEL: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: in D, for the left hand; in G. Werner Haas, piano; Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. Philips 839755, \$5.98.

Werner Haas, a young German pianist who presumably arrived at his stylistic affinity for French music by way of his late mentor Walter Gieseking, gives sleek, colorful performances of these two rather diverse works. Though his approach, in the main, is basically classical and reserved, the "other" Haas (Monique, that is, who has a splendid DGG disc of this music to her credit) is even more severe and pointed in the same general style. Both pianists' versions of the G major fail to emphasize the work's jazzy facets, but the present Philips performance is a trifle more willing to be expansive in a yielding, romantic way. Similarly, though Werner Haas's left-hand Concerto is a shade more emphatic and picturesque than his fine distaff competitor's, both are in the shapely, symmetrical tradition of Robert Casadesus and John Browning, rather than the shaggier styles of Alfred Cortot, Jacques Février, and Samson François. Galliera's handling of the orchestral comments is about on a par with Paul Paray's accompaniment for DGG—in other words, both are distinguished and aristocratic. Both discs are spaciously reproduced and smoothly processed, the DGG engineering excelling in biting clarity, the Philips perhaps offering a bit more opulence and weightier sound.

A choice is all but impossible between these two excellent versions. I slightly favor the DGG, but maybe you'll prefer the other. Why not be a *Haaser* and get both! H.G.

RIES: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C sharp minor, Op. 55—

See Czerny: Variations for Piano and Orchestra on a Haydn Theme, Op. 73.

SCHOENBERG: Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31; Variations on a Recitative, Op. 40. Southwest German Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hans Rosbaud, cond. (in Op. 31); Gerd Zacher, organ (in Op. 40). Heliodor 2549 008, \$4.98. Tape: 3313 008, \$4.98.

In the exploratory period of the 1920s. Schoenberg made considerable use of the variation form; unlike many of the classical patterns, its basic principles do not depend on the tonic/dominant relationships of classic/Romantic tonal harmony, and it thus provided him with an excellent framework within which to work out

novel modes of organization. The Serenade, Op. 24 contains a variation movement that, although not 12-tone, is enormously suggestive of how the composer was feeling his way to the new method; and both the Suite, Op. 29 and the Third String Quartet, Op. 30 incorporate sets of variations, this time rigorously 12-tone. The climax of this series—and the first work for full orchestra using the new methods—is the Variations, Op. 31, completed in September 1928 and first performed on December 2 of the same year by the Berlin Philharmonic under Wilhelm Furtwängler. Although the initial press reception was thoroughly scathing, Schoenberg himself

Continued on page 96

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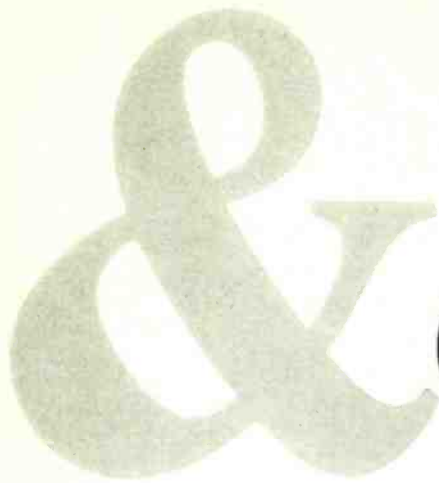
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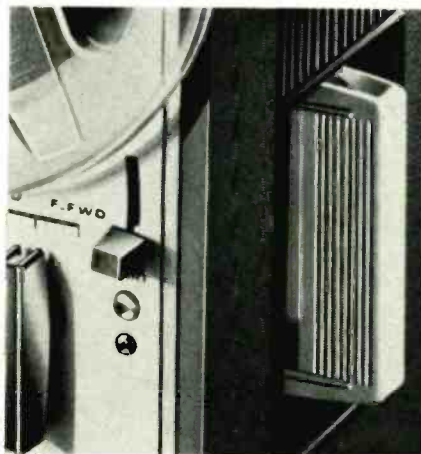
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Continued from page 93

seems to have been pleased by the quality of the performance (however, he later chided Furtwängler for not playing the work more frequently).

There cannot have been very many more performances until after the war, but a 1931 reading in particular seems to have given the composer much pleasure, as a letter to its conductor, Hans Rosbaud, attests: "You must have seen for yourself that I was most unusually pleased by these performances and that I am capable of appreciating your achievement, having for years done all I could to get such work, such thorough study, such preparation not only of the orchestra but also of the conductor, established as the basic requirement of all playing of music in public."

When the war ended, Rosbaud continued to be one of the most frequent advocates of the Variations, but he never made a studio recording. Fortunately a number of radio tapes exist, and this Heliodor/Wergo disc originates from a 1959 broadcast, transmuted into *Breitklang*-type stereo. As a document of the work's performance tradition, it would be valuable enough; fortunately it is also an immensely authoritative and expressive statement of the musical content. The recorded sound is not free from distortion (how much of it introduced by the stereoizing one cannot say) and flaws of balance (the violins get somewhat short shrift), but the rhythmic security, the coherence of phrasing, and the justness of pacing make this by far the best way on records to listen to Schoenberg's *Orchestral Variations*.

The organ piece, one of those once-surprising tonally leaning works from the 1940s, is a lesser piece, and presents some serious problems of performance (see my review of an earlier version in *HF*, March 1968). Gerd Zacher, playing on the 1962 organ of the Lutherkirche in Hamburg-Wellingsbüttel, achieves a good deal more clarity than did Marilyn Mason (in Volume VII of the Columbia Schoenberg series), but there is also a frequency of register change that strikes me as merely tricky (on the original Wergo issue of this disc in Germany, two "registrants" were credited as assisting in the performance). Granting that Schoenberg's intentions are far from clear, and that he probably did not know nearly enough about the instrument or its various types, I must admit that the piece emerges making more sense here than in any earlier recording. Perhaps when the editors of the new collected works of Schoenberg publish an authoritative score, it will be possible to arrive at a more satisfactory performance.

The surfaces of the Heliodor pressing are not as smooth as those on the imported Wergo discs, but the results are certainly passable. The extensive liner notes, running over onto an inserted sheet, are not very attractively printed, but contain much useful information: they appear to be intelligently cribbed from the much more elaborate Wergo booklet (those who read German are advised that the imported release is well

worth the extra cost). Because of Rosbaud's reading of the *Orchestral Variations*, this is a cornerstone disc for any collection of twentieth-century music—and one of the relatively few Schoenberg recordings that I would strongly recommend to the absolute novice, for it is so unerringly musical. D.H.

SCHUMANN: Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Variations on a Theme by Clara Wieck, Op. 14. Vladimir Horowitz, piano.
SCHUMANN: Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Arabesque, Op. 18; Vogel als Prophet, Op. 82, No. 7. Artur Schnabel, piano.
For a feature review of these recordings, see page 67.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 6, Op. 54; The Age of Gold: Suite, Op. 22a.
Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA Red Seal LSC 3133, \$5.98.

Although *The Age of Gold* ballet contains what is probably the most popular single piece ever written by Shostakovich (the Polka), this new recording of the Suite is only the third version currently available (the complete ballet has never been recorded). Written in 1929-30 only two years after the composer's audacious first opera, *The Nose*, *The Age of Gold* is the first, and certainly the most interesting, of a series of three ballets written by Shostakovich preceding the condemnation of his music by *Pravda* in 1936 (he has not written a ballet since then—the four post-1936 "Ballet Suites" are compilations of earlier material). *The Age of Gold*, while not as daring as *The Nose*, still bears a number of stylistic earmarks characteristic of the earlier score—a deliberate use of "off-key" (one is tempted to say "off-color") dissonances for "shock" value; frequent and often unexpected shifts in instrumentation, along with an avoidance of tutti passages, thus often giving the scoring a chamber-like quality; and, growing out of the preceding elements (and many others), a sardonic, satirical, and almost bawdy humor that is typically Russian. Stokowski is particularly masterful in projecting the latter qualities. The conductor brings out all of the work's many instrumental nuances, and he also manages to exploit the full potential of each melodic line and underline the ballet's oft-changing moods. This is probably the best *Age of Gold* ever to be recorded—and it is certainly the funniest.

As is the case with the other recent recordings of the Sixth Symphony, I take exception to the tempos used by Stokowski in the first two movements—the first is too fast to sound like a true largo, while the second seems overly slow. However I must say that Stokowski makes his tempos work much better than either Bernstein (Columbia), with his dirgelike second movement, or Kondrashin (Melodiya/Angel), who paces the first movement at a ludicrously fast clip. Stokowski's somewhat rapid tempo in the first movement, for instance, enables him to sustain the extended melodic

lines and create a striking lyrical continuity that is lacking even in the Boult performance (one that I still prefer however). And Stokowski's treatment of the acerbic second movement is effective for much the same reasons as his *Age of Gold*, even to the inevitable Stokowskian liberty of replacing the harp glissando at the end of the movement with a glissando on the xylophone.

The orchestral playing is in general quite good, although not always what one would expect from the Chicago Symphony. And while the recorded sound is both rich and natural (sonically this is probably the best Shostakovich Sixth), the instrumental balance occasionally does not do justice either to the work or to Stokowski (the xylophone is all but lost in the shuffle, even in the Polka from *The Age of Gold*). I should also point out that, immaculate surfaces notwithstanding, this recording is pressed on the thinnest piece of vinyl I have ever seen, bringing to mind those commor-phous watches painted by Salvador Dali. Finally, although the kitschy, *Götterdämmerung* portrait of Stokowski on the album cover is in questionable taste, Arthur Cohn's liner notes on the opposite side are excellent. R.S.B.

recitals & miscellany

"AVANT-GARDE PIANO." BERIO: *Sequenza IV*. BOULEZ: Piano Sontata No. 1. DALLAPICCOLA: *Quaderno musicale di Annalibera*. KRENEK: *Sechs Vermessene*. STOCKHAUSEN: *Klavierstück VIII*. David Burge, piano. Candide CE 31015, \$3.98.

Here is a very useful survey of two decades of contemporary piano music, even though the use of the term "avant-garde" seems a little extreme with reference to music written as long ago as 1947; stylistically, some of this is very old hat today—which does not, however, mean that there isn't some good music here.

To take the pieces in chronological order, one begins with Boulez' First Piano Sonata, written when the composer was twenty-two. Among its characteristics are a spare texture with relatively few simultaneities, a consistent use of the entire keyboard, and the absence of metrical articulations—all familiar enough features by now but remarkable for their day. "Post-Webern" is the standard adjective, of course, but that distracts attention from what is uniquely Boulezian in this music—a fluidity of musical progression, a rhythmic flexibility, and sonic imagination that are continually absorbing; let me call attention only to the passage shortly after the beginning of the second movement, its figuration of running eighth-note melodic fragments racing around the keyboard in a kind of modern version of the finale of Chopin's B flat minor Sonata.

The next work is one that we should have had on records long since, Luigi

Dallapiccola's *Musical Notebook* for his daughter Annalibera (1952), a collection of related short pieces in a more traditional mode. Despite the extensive use of very strict contrapuntal (as well as serial) devices, each piece is a distinctively colored whole, and the *Notebook* in its entirety is more analogous to, say, the Debussy Preludes than to the *Art of Fugue*; it is Debussyan too in its variety of wit and lyricism. Adventurous amateur pianists are strongly urged to try this piece out; the music is published by Suvini Zerboni of Milan, and distributed in this country by Associated Music Publishers.

The only piece on this disc that duplicates an available recording is the eighth of Stockhausen's piano pieces, written in 1954 and dedicated to David Tudor. This is a very short example of the virtuoso, highly pointillistic manner—five "phrases" only; a good display piece, but little else.

The oldest of the composers represented here is Ernst Krenek, who during the 1950s embraced "total serialism" with a vengeance. "The six measured pieces" are the writing-out of a mathematically determined scheme, a work that presents a completely arhythmic aspect and a texture that, by comparison with the other works on the record, sounds poverty-stricken. This particular phase of contemporary development had a brief vogue, but it is hard to regret its passing.

Most recent (1966) is Luciano Berio's *Sequenza IV*, another of his series of brilliant explorations of the resources of solo instruments (those for flute and trombone are also recorded, on Time 8008 and DGG 137005, respectively). You might think that the possibilities of the piano had been pretty thoroughly explored by now, but Berio has come up with an extremely interesting sonic conception, ingeniously using the sustaining pedals to create a background of changing harmony, against which are deployed both staccato chords and rapid passagework. He also incorporates tone clusters into the passagework to very good effect.

David Burge plays this music with great skill, although I could wish now and then for even more precise gradations of dynamics. The recording is not much more than passable, and suffers from some postecho and a couple of tape burbles. Nevertheless, this disc is strongly recommended, especially for the Dallapiccola and Berio pieces. The pianist contributes his own program notes, which are helpful although marred by the omission of a music example for which space has been provided. D.H.

"FRENCH OPERA OVERTURES." New Philharmonia Orchestra, Richard Bonynge, cond. London CS 6643, \$5.98.

A more accurate program title for this disc would have been "French Opéra-Comique Overtures"—or even, if we overlook the familiar *Mignon* Overture by Thomas, "French Operetta Overtures." But by any name this collection would be welcome for such relatively unfamiliar

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yet delectable works as the overtures to Lecocq's *La Fille de Madame Angot*, Planquette's *Les Cloches de Corneville*, Boieldieu's *Le Calife de Bagdad*, and perhaps especially the piquantly cheery *La Poupée de Nuremberg* by Adam. And Bonyngé does better still by adding three other works that surely must be new even to specialists in this repertory. These are the overtures to Adam's *Giralda* of 1850, which is a typically varied and animated but otherwise unremarkable example of the genre; Auber's much more boldly imaginative overture to *Marco Spada* of 1852; and—the prize discovery—the same composer's delectable overture to *Lestocq* of 1834. Fine as Auber's better-known overtures are, these two rank with the best of them.

It's ungracious to qualify one's welcome for such a novel and rewarding program, but I have two mild complaints: Bonyngé is too polite and gentlemanly to capture all the rowdy humor and exuberance of this music; and while the New Philharmonia plays beautifully, it never even suggests the cruder but more idiomatically Gallic accents of a French theater orchestra. The irresistible appeal of the music itself more than compensates for such slight shortcomings, and London's ideally pellucid stereo recording is irreproachable. R.D.D.

"MUSIC FOR TENOR VIOLIN." BACH: Cantata No. 156: Arioso. GAL: Suite for Recorder and Tenor Violin. TELMANN: Trio Sonata in F. BOCCHERINI: Sonata for Tenor Violin and Continuo, in A. Alberta Hurst, tenor violin; Ruth Adams, viola da gamba; Konstanze Bender, recorder; Ralph Linsley, harpsichord. Crystal S 735. \$5.98.

String players have been perturbed for years over what might be called the Case of the Missing Link—the Link in question being an instrument that would correct the imbalance existing in today's string family of violin, viola, cello, bass. Roughly speaking, two things are wrong with this family: 1) the viola is called upon to produce pitches too low, acoustically, for the size of its resonating body; 2) the gap between viola and

cello (one octave) leaves a hole in the middle of the pitch spectrum which could very well be filled by an instrument tuned midway between the two.

Various makers have gone about solving the problem in various ways. Carleen M. Hutchins of New Jersey sees a solution in a whole new family of instruments, of which only the violin retains its present size and proportions (see *Scientific American*, November 1962); Hans Weisshaar of Hollywood built an instrument in 1966 that coincided with one of Mrs. Hutchins' in its tuning—GDAE, an octave below the violin—and in its name: a tenor violin. Weisshaar's instrument demonstrated on the present recording, has interesting forebears. It is based, according to the album notes, on the best features of three instruments: a *viola alta* built in Würzburg early in the century and two large violas built by the Frankfurt maker Eugen Sprenger in the 1920s, one of which was used by Hindemith. (Packaged with this recording is an interesting article on the whole question by Hans Bender, reprinted from *The Instrumentalist*.)

Weisshaar's tenor violin is played between the knees, cello fashion, and its lower register sounds rather like that instrument. Higher up, however, it has that nasal dignity beloved of violists, combined with a slightly brighter, more accessible tone quality. Miss Hurst gives it a good showing, though she is not the most subtle of artists. She is quoted in praise of the tenor violin's "facility of response," and one can sense what she is talking about in these performances.

Proposals for altering the instruments of the string family may seem, on the surface, to hold as much hope of realization as proposals for altering the form of the horse. The matter, of course, rests not only with makers and performers but with interested composers like Henry Brant, who has written expressly for the family of instruments developed by Mrs. Hutchins. The present recording boasts no original tenor violin compositions, but Alberta Hurst is to be commended for sticking her musical neck out, and her example may encourage composers to do the same with theirs. S.F.

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"NEW MUSIC FOR HORNS." SCHULLER: Lines and Contrasts. LASSUS: Madrigal (arr. Burdick). PALESTRINA: O che splendor (arr. Burdick). WILDER: Nonet for Brass. KRAFT: Games: Collage No. 1. JOHNSON: Suite for Six Horns. VICTORIA: Ave Maria (arr. Donfray). ROSSINI: Fanfare de chasse. Horn Club of Los Angeles. Angel S 36036, \$5.98.

Only Hollywood could give birth to a record that boasts the participation of twenty-seven hornists assisted by six trumpeters, three bass tuba players, and four percussionists. But the Horn Club of Los Angeles is not only a reflection of Southern California's slightly larger-than-life style; busy television and film studio orchestras have attracted some of the country's finest instrumentalists to

Hollywood—probably no other city in the world would be able to corral a better ensemble of brass players.

It goes without saying, then, that the performances are accomplished to an awesome degree: letter-perfect intonation, flawless articulation, and an easy flexibility of ensemble banish any sense of discomfort one might feel when confronted by over two dozen of these unpredictable instruments. The Kraft piece provides the most aural variety. These eight short "games"—sonic equivalents of certain moves in chess, poker, and shadow boxing as well as musical games of chance—give the players a stimulating workout and keep the listener busy sorting out the compositional tricks. Gunther Schuller, a member of the Met's horn section for nineteen years, certainly knows the instrument from the inside out, and his muscular two-part study for sixteen horns is a brilliantly written tour de force.

Alec Wilder and Roger Johnson offer less stimulating but wholly digestible conservative exercises and the four brief "old music" fillers lend a nice touch of contrast. Both the Kraft and Schuller pieces make use of spatial effects and the recording reproduces them faithfully. P.G.D.

"ORCHESTRAL WRKS BY PORTUGUESE MASTERS." MDREIRA: Sinfonia for Two Orchestras, in D. **PEREIRA:** Sinfonia in D. **PORTUGAL:** Sinfonia in D. **CARVALHO:** Penelope: Overture. **ANON.:** Concerto for Cembalo and Orchestra, in G minor. Cremilde Rosado Fernandes, harpsichord; Orquesta de Camara Gulbenkian, Gianfranco Rivoli, cond. Archive 198481, \$5.98.

There is not a graceless gesture or an ill-behaved sixteenth note throughout this showcase of eighteenth-century Portuguese composers, who conformed beautifully to what was expected of socially acceptable composers everywhere in Europe at the time. The most substantial work is the Harpsichord Concerto by Anon., which permits sensible and attractive interplay between solo and orchestra. Sousa Carvalho pits strings against woodwinds in his overture to *Penelope*, written for the birthday celebrations of the Queen of Portugal in 1782; of his pupils Portugal and Moreira, the latter is the more interesting—Portugal's Sinfonia for two orchestras goes nowhere in a most agreeable way, with solo instruments in each stereo speaker vying for attention. A fine record to eat, drink, or polish your shoes by. Well-behaved performances, too. S.F.

OSIPOV BALALAIKA ORCHESTRA: "A Program of Classic and Folk Favorites." The Nikolai Osipov State Russian Folk Instrument Orchestra, Viktor Dubrovsky and Vitaly Gnutov, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40120, \$5.98; 8XS 40120, \$7.98; 4XS 40120, \$6.98.

No one who remembers the sensational 1963 Mercury program by the Osipov

Balalaika Orchestra, or who heard this Russian ensemble on its American tour last fall, will want to miss its latest release. The group itself is somewhat more sophisticated in both makeup and repertory than the better-known Moiseyev Song and Dance Ensemble and the Soviet Army Band and Chorus. The orchestra is basically a more orthodox one, augmented by balalaikas, domras, goosli, bayahs (Russian accordions), ancient shepherd horns, etc. (sixty-five musicians in all); it also plays not only folk-music arrangements but standard compositions and those by more or less "serious" contemporary composers as well.

The most ambitious work here is an uninhibitedly energetic, blazingly brilliant *Festival Overture* by Nikolai Budashkin; but there is also the bravura version of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumblebee* featured in the earlier Mercury program, an appealingly bouncy arrangement of Rachmaninoff's *Italian Polka*, and a strikingly dashing *Podgornaya* by Margarita Kuss. The Mercury program's poetic *Evening Bells* by Mossolov is heard again here, as is a V. Poponov folksong setting; and there are engaging if less distinctive new pieces by Vera Gorodovskaya, Yevgeny Glebov, and Georgy Sviridov. But the present disc's irresistible charmer is a delectably jaunty *Accordion Player* by David Lvov-Kompaneyets. Throughout the entire program the playing of standard as well as specifically Russian instruments is excitingly bravura and the variety of instrumental timbres is recorded in today's most lucid, gleaming, and powerful stereoism. R.D.D.

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CIRCLE 44 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

in brief

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6658, \$5.98.

HEROLD: *Le Pré aux clercs*. Renée Doria (s), Michèle LeBris (s), Françoise Louvey (s), Pierre Giannotti (t), Michel Sénéchal (t), Andrien Legros (b); Orchestre Symphonique, Jesus Etcheverry, cond. Music Guild MS 873, \$2.98.

PROKOFIEV: Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1, in F minor, Op. 80; No. 2, in D, Op. 94a. Wanda Wilkomirska, violin; Ann Schein, piano. Connoisseur Society CS 2016, \$5.98.

STRAUSS, R.: *Parergon* to the *Sinfonia domestica*. **CORIGLIANO:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. Hilde Somer, piano; San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, Victor Alessandro, cond. Mercury SR 90517, \$5.98.

SUBOTNICK: *Touch*. Buchla electronic music system. Columbia MS 7316, \$5.98.

TELEMANN: Suite for Violin and Orchestra, in F; Concerto for Violin and Strings, in G; Suite for Strings, in E flat ("La Lyra"). Jaap Schröder, violin; Paul Doktor, viola; Amsterdam Concerto, Frans Brüngen, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9541, \$5.95.

"EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OVERTURES." **BACH, J.C.:** *Catone in Utica*, **LOCATELLI:** *Introduzioni teatrali*, in D, Op. 4, No. 5. **MOZART:** *La Finta giardiniera*. **RAMEAU:** *Les Paladins*; *Zais*. **BOYCE:** *Cambridge Installation Ode*. **SCARLATTI, A.:** *Il Giardino di rose*. **CIMAROSA:** *I Traci amanti*. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Philips 802901, \$5.98.

Schmidt-Isserstedt's ideas about these two early Beethoven symphonies might be summed up as Klemperer-*cum*-Walter. On the one hand you get Klemperer's rather strong, unprettified formal delineation (his slow though not eccentric tempos, I might add), and on the other the creamy richness of the Vienna Philharmonic's string sound which, coupled with Schmidt-Isserstedt's rather comfortable treatment of rhythm, produces some of Walter's easygoing amiability. I prefer more hard-hitting zest in No. 2 and a more mercurial way with No. 1, but these are certainly first-class, musically penetrating performances, superbly played and wonderfully well recorded. H.G.

Judging from arias, duets, and trios excerpted here, there is very little in Herold's secondhand Italianate style that was not bettered by Rossini in his *Le Comte Ory*, premiered four years before *Le Pré aux clercs* saw the light of day in 1832. Bouncy rhythms, a touch of the burgeoning romantic flavor of the day in the orchestrations, and pleasant if unmemorable melodies are hardly enough to save this insipid affair for modern listeners. The performance, moreover, is a rather grisly example of the current state of French singing. One's gratitude for the brief synopsis, text, and translations is somewhat tempered by the shrill sound, noisy surfaces, and absence of background notes. P.G.D.

Here are fine performances that reflect dedicated ensemble preparation, complete technical assurance, and real musical insight. But they face stiff competition from RCA's recent release of the same sonatas with Perlman and Ashkenazy, who play with musicality and virtuosity of an even higher order. But there are more ways than one to interpret such music within the composer's intention, and these two young ladies have their own approach, more lyrical, and at a considerably lower temperature of intensity than that of the two young men. Perlman and Ashkenazy enjoy exceptionally brilliant reproduction; Connoisseur's reproduction has fine clarity, but sounds a bit brittle in comparison to the RCA. P.H.

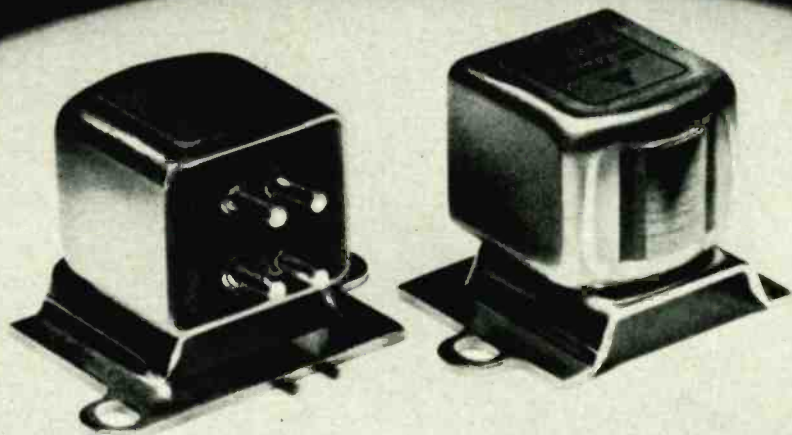
A *parergon* is a by-work or supplement. This one, based on themes from the *Sinfonia domestica*, is a piano concerto which was written for Paul Wittgenstein, the one-armed pianist. The *Sinfonia domestica* is one of Strauss's poorer works, and this supplement to it is poorer still. All the familiar Straussian traits of style are there, but despite the best efforts of Miss Somer and Mr. Alessandro, the total effect is dull and inert. The Concerto by John Corigliano, son of the former concert-master of the New York Philharmonic, is an academic modern piece which I, for one, find completely uninteresting. A.F.

Morton Subotnick has had exceptional success with large-scale electronic works, partly, I suspect, because he has combined sounds peculiar to the medium with sounds very close to those of conventional instruments. Here Subotnick, as Mel Powell writes in the jacket notes, has "uncorked a surreal amalgam of what in 'real life' would have been metallo- and xylophones, marimbas, [and] mallet percussion of all sorts," creating "a prize voltage-controlled gamelan." The texture throughout is thin and spare, hence the title; but there is enough of the purely electronic for contrast, and the whole establishes a very satisfactory if conservatively oriented atmosphere of sonic zest and adventure. A.F.

Concerto Amsterdam, which performs its Telemann in a trim, bouncy, and quite captivating manner, gives us two unfamiliar works in addition to the Viola Concerto. The Suite for Violin and Orchestra includes in the ensemble two high horns (trombe di caccia) and two trombones, and the presence of this impressive brass contingent lends a military flavor to the piece; the solo violin plays a rather modest role and is handled by Jaap Schröder with decorum rather than brilliance. The *Lyra* Suite takes its name from the hurdy-gurdy imitation in the third movement—quite a startling sound effect. The Viola Concerto is handsomely put forth by Paul Doktor. S.F.

Two facts emerge from this very pleasant collection—that conductor Raymond Leppard writes exceptionally lucid liner notes and that the genre "eighteenth-century overture" can include almost anything in the way of styles. In this, his second disc drawn from what seems to be one of his favorite little historical tributaries to the mainstream of music, Leppard gives us everything from a Locatelli concerto grossolike piece, which is a bit of a bore, to the extraordinary *Zais* overture by Rameau, a dazzler with swirls of flutes, whirlwinds of strings, and muffled tread of kettledrums. And there's the grace and sentiment of J. C. Bach's slow movement, the trim precision of Boyce's fugato, the spirit of Scarlatti's trumpets. Never a dull moment—well, almost never. The New Philharmonia does it all justice. S.F.

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the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

Roses for Rosenkavalier. Any new version of *Der Rosenkavalier* is handicapped when compared to the universally acclaimed historical 1933 abridged set (currently on Seraphim) which boasts the incomparable Marschallin of Lotte Lehmann. Nevertheless London's new recording, starring Régine Crespin with Georg Solti conducting the Vienna Philharmonic, not only overshadows the other stereo versions (not excluding the fine 1959 Angel set with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf) but demands to be ranked among the greatest recorded performances of all time. If you think I've been carried away, you're quite right. But listen for yourself—noting in particular the enchantingly blended yet differentiated vocalism of Mesdames Crespin, Minton, and Donath; the unexaggerated acting and straightforward singing of Manfred Jungwirth as Baron Ochs; above all, Solti's mesmeric interpretation and the intoxicating sound of both singers and orchestra.

That special *Rosenkavalier* sound is captured to perfection by London's engineers in one of the most completely successful of all their many outstanding achievements. And if its tuit technical grandeurs are probably encompassed only in the open-reel edition (London/Ampex EX+ 1 90165, three 7½-ips reels, \$29.95), the cassette edition (1 31165, \$29.95) is still the most impressive release in this format to date, both in size (four cassettes in an album, with libretto) and in audio quality. These cassettes demonstrate a wider dynamic range and more sheer sonic weight, power, and expansiveness than I would have ever thought possible in this medium. Ironically, though, even so magnificent a production shortchanges the tape collector in one respect: he must pay more than a discophile but he gets only a plain notes-and-texts booklet instead of the deluxe brochure supplied with the disc edition.

Sonic Dynamite in a Mini-Package. Further proof of the cassette's rapid technical maturation is the appearance of the formidable new Boulez/Cleveland Orchestra version of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (Columbia 16 11 0154, \$6.98). Here again the dynamic range of this 1½-ips taping is extraordinary: it fully captures the superbly detailed lucidity that makes Boulez' reading so vividly illuminating. The composer's own version (also for Columbia) remains a uniquely valuable documentation, but no student of Stravinsky's epochal score can afford to miss this quite different yet equally impressive approach.

Auld Acquaintance. A third cassette milestone to be noted this month is the debut of a really notable low-price series. DGG's reactivated Heliodor label features—in simultaneous disc and cas-

sette releases, list-priced at \$4.98 each—both classic recordings from the mono era and a selection of avant-garde music from Germany's Wergo label. I haven't yet tackled the initial seven examples of the latter, but I've been thoroughly fascinated with the first five examples of the historical material. As a long-time admirer of the great—yet now almost forgotten—baritone Heinrich Schlusnus, I particularly relished hearing him again, not only in many of the German lieder I once enjoyed on Polydor 78s and later on Polydor/Decca LP reissues but also in a 1951 radio broadcast performance (with the Hessian Radio Symphony under Winfried Zillig) of Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* (Heliodor 3312 702, \$4.98). Schlusnus, who died in 1952 at the age of sixty-four, was a singer of exceptional artistry, but this Mahler cycle is surely the crown of his whole career.

Never a fan of the brilliant-voiced Maria Cebotari (1910–1949) I can merely commend her Verdi/Mozart/Bizet aria collection, all sung in German (Heliodor 3312 700), to her admirers. And the present coupling of Wilhelm Furtwängler's Fourth and Fifth Beethoven Symphonies (Heliodor 3312 704) doesn't strike me, fine as these performances are, as the best representation of his strange genius. I found his reading of the Bruckner Ninth Symphony—also with the Berlin Philharmonic—more interesting (Heliodor 3312 701); I had never before heard the earlier disc edition of this 1944 concert performance of a work which had been the conductor's choice for his debut at the age of twenty.

Presumably these cassettes, like their disc equivalents, have been reprocessed for stereo, but if so, the stereo effect is negligible. But the tape editions are excellently processed (in contrast to the discs reviewed last month by David Hamilton) and they are provided with the same notes. The full technical potentials, however, are exploited only in the Victor de Sabata/Berlin Philharmonic coupling of the Brahms Fourth Symphony and Kodály *Dances of Galánta* (Heliodor 3312 703), originally recorded in 1939 and 1948, respectively. The latter in particular was esteemed as a sonic spectacular in its day—and it still stands up extremely well. A technological landmark, it also provides convincing testimony of De Sabata's distinctive and dramatically gripping interpretive power.

Rambling with Old Friends. Together with Handel's incomparable *Water Music*, my favorite traveling companion of late has been the same composer's *Royal Fireworks Music*, augmented by three marches, a Violin Concerto arrangement of a Sonata à 5, and the first of the two B flat Concertos for Double Woodwind Choir and Orchestra—again in Menuhin/

Bath Festival Orchestra performances (Angel 8XS 36604, 8-track cartridge, \$7.98). Handel has proved to be such an ideal composer for highway travel that even such inflated versions of the "Hallelujah" and other choruses by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia 18 11 0176, 8-track cartridge, \$6.98) aren't ruled out by purist objections.

Second only to the high baroque as a source for irresistible sing-along carborne enjoyment is the Romantic era. So I knew in advance how much I'd delight in driving to Ansermet's Tchaikovsky *Swan Lake* highlights and Szell's complete Dvořák *Slavonic Dances*; but after submitting these new 8-track-cartridge editions of old reel (and disc) favorites to an actual road test, they proved more richly satisfying than I had expected (London M 67045, \$6.95 and Columbia 18 11 0098, \$6.98, respectively).

El Supremo. After a lengthy dearth of tape review copies from Decca, I've recently been reveling in no less than ten of the sixteen currently available 8-track-cartridge editions of the Segovia guitar programs. And these represent only a part of Decca's thorough enterprise in making their star soloist accessible in every recorded medium and format: all sixteen programs in stereo (including a couple that were reprocessed from mono originals) are also published in open-reel, cassette, and disc editions. (Ten older mono releases are maintained in print on discs only.) While Segovia may sound just a bit larger than life in some of the earlier recordings, both these and the better proportioned, well-nigh flawless later releases bring his personality as well as his music vividly to life.

I can recommend without qualifications the wholly delectable recent recitals: "Castles of Spain," "Unique Art of Andrés Segovia," and "On Stage" (Decca 6-10171, 6-10167, and 6-10140; 8-track cartridges, \$7.95 each). Six of the other seven cartridges I've heard are equally admirable for their interpretive artistry and musical interest, but they are not quite on a technical par with the latest three. The occasional intrusions of adjacent-channel spillover would normally be noticeable however only in home listening: on the road these ghostly whispers are covered up by ambient wind and engine noise. These six cartridges are 6-10112, 6-10093, 6-10063, 6-10054, 6-10034, and 6-10027 (the latter reel couples the Ponce and Rodrigo concertos with the Symphony of the Air under Enrique Jorda). The only cartridge I can't recommend, solely on account of the excessive adjacent-channel spillover in my review copy, is 6-9751 (with the Bach Chaconne) in reprocessed stereo. All the rest are inexhaustibly enjoyable.

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A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92. New York Philharmonic, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victrola VIC 1502, \$2.98 (mono only) [from Camden CAL 352, recorded in 1936].

Irving Kolodin has provided a unique but wholly appropriate liner note for this disc, tracing the history of a performance which is now appearing in its fifth recorded format and will surely always be with us. "Immortal," "historical," "unforgettable"—call it what you will, this is a Beethoven Seventh quite unlike any other. First of all, here is perhaps the closest we shall ever come to the "young" Toscanini; he was sixty-nine when the New York Philharmonic gathered in April 1936 to play again for its former chief. The straight-jacketed rigidity that so often intruded upon his later readings with the NBC Orchestra is absent from this account. Toscanini's flexible control of textures, phrasings, and rhythms impels the music forward with irresistible vitality and brilliant formal clarity. A fine-sounding recording in its day, the latest transfer may well be the best yet—an indispensable bicentennial issue.

BERLIOZ: Roméo et Juliette, Op. 17. Patricia Kern (ms), Robert Tear (t), John Shirley-Quirk (b); John Alldis Choir; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. Philips 839716/7, \$11.96 (two discs) [from Philips PHS 2-909, 1969].

Colin Davis' magnificent performance of the Berlioz *Roméo* Symphony is, of course, not strictly a reissue. But its appearance on imported Philips discs is good news for those who gave up trying to locate a decent domestic pressing (although cool comfort for collectors who decided to stick with their noisy copies of PHS 2-909). The presentation remains the same, but the new box is much sturdier and the booklet is printed in easy-to-read black type instead of the American issue's vertiginous sepia-colored print. But even more to the point, the smooth pressings and enhanced frequency range of the tape-to-disc transfer at last provide a worthy technological frame for this superb interpretation.

SAINT-SAENS: "Saint-Saëns' Greatest Hits." Various orchestras, Leonard Bernstein, Andre Kostelanetz, and Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 7522, \$5.98 [from various Columbia originals, 1936-68].

What next? Perhaps "Schoenberg's Greatest Hits"—Columbia certainly has the material. I suppose Saint-Saëns does have a few hits to his credit—the *Bacchanale* from *Samson*, *Danse Macabre*, *The Swan*, and maybe *Omphale's Spinning Wheel*—

but it seems more likely that this disc slipped through as someone's idea of a joke. Still, if anything is going to sell Saint-Saëns to the unwashed, it's Ormandy sailing into the hokey *Bacchanale* and, with Biggs at the organ, the humid finale of the Third Symphony. Slick, slick, slick.

SCHUBERT: Die schöne Müllerin, D. 795. Aksel Schiøtz, tenor; Gerald Moore, piano. Seraphim 60140, \$2.49 (mono only) [from Odeon MOAK 1, recorded in 1945].

Schiøtz's classic *Schöne Müllerin* recording enters a shamefully deserted terrain—only Fischer-Dieskau's Angel account and two versions by Fritz Wunderlich (DGG and Nonesuch) remain in the catalogue. Even if the field were a crowded one, the Danish tenor's polished performance would command attention for its cultivated vocalism and engagingly fresh interpretive innocence, two qualities that are especially appealing in this cycle.

The general tone of Schiøtz's approach is closely akin to Wunderlich's, although both the latter's gorgeously vocalized studio recordings leave a rather bland impression. Schiøtz maintains simplicity but does a far more thorough job of suggesting the mood and color of each song—and of course Gerald Moore's accompaniments are a decided plus factor. The 78-rpm surface noise and lack of sufficient breathing space between separate songs are negligible drawbacks. Texts, translations, and a detailed biographical note of the singer are included.

STAINER: The Crucifixion. Richard Lewis (t), Owen Brannigan (bs), Brian Runnett, organ; Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, George Guest, cond. Argo ZRG 5320, \$5.95 [from London OS 25333, 1962].

Connoisseurs of John Stainer's Passion setting—for better or for worse the epitome of Church-of-England musical Victorianism—are hereby directed to this reissue, probably the most satisfactory version currently available. Unlike the Angel recording which omits three hymns, it is note-complete and preserves the contrast of full congregation (for the hymns) and small choir (in the narrative choruses). Angel's soloists may be a shade more fulsome, but Argo's choral forces and organist collaborate to create a uniquely chaste atmosphere of sunny Easter-morning devotion. The resonant, churchly acoustic complements the suave performance, and the superb diction compensates for the lack of a text leaflet.

MIRELLA FRENI: "Favorite Arias." Arias by Puccini (Gianni Schicchi and Suor Angelica), Mascagni (L'Amico Fritz),

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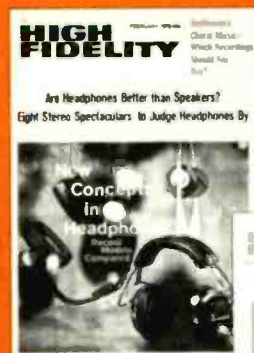
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Bellini (*La Sonnambula* and *I Capuletti e i Montecchi*), Bizet (*Carmen*), and Verdi (*Falstaff*). Mirella Freni, soprano; Bavarian Radio Symphony, Ino Savini, cond. Cardinal VCS 10068, \$3.98 [from Eurodisc 71021, 1964].

There are some lovely sounds to be heard on this disc which contains less hackneyed material than the title "Favorite Arias" might suggest. Freni is a disarming vocal personality, with an evenly produced lyric soprano of undeniable beauty, and the repertory here is admirably suited to her voice. Even so, these performances remain rather superficial, unruffled by interpretive perceptions aside from a vaguely generalized melancholia, and more stitched together than artfully phrased. Like any artist, Miss Freni has grown with time and experience; this early recital shows only the promise and potential. Excellent accompaniments, full-bodied sound, texts, and translations.

JOSEPH SCHMIDT: "The Art of Joseph Schmidt." Arias by Adam, Flotow, Meyerbeer, Donizetti, Verdi, and Puccini; eight popular songs. Joseph Schmidt, tenor; various orchestras and cond. Seraphim 60120, \$2.49 (mono only) [from Odeon 80718, recorded between 1933-36].

Like his successors Peter Anders and Fritz Wunderlich, Joseph Schmidt was needlessly cut down in mid-career—in Schmidt's case a Nazi concentration camp repaid him for the vocal bounty he spread through Germany in the Thirties via films, radio, and recordings. He was a tiny man and rarely appeared in public, but his voice as heard through the loudspeakers made him one of the most popular vocal personalities of his time.

Schmidt's voice had a caressing soft-grained beauty in mid-range and opened on top with a ringing abandon well calculated to sweep any German matron off her feet. He was further blessed with an innate musical intelligence that colored all his work, especially the pop potboilers that grace Side 2 of this disc. Listening to him toss off such chestnuts as *Tiritomba*, *Du bist die Welt für mich* and his signature tune *Ein Lied geht um die Welt* is still quite an experience. He tended to be a bit more restrained when singing opera, but even the eight well-worn arias recorded here benefit from his graceful touch and pliant vocalism. A disc, in short, that belongs in any collection of fine singing.

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The Face Behind the Performer

Desmond: tone like a dry martini.

"WHAT'S HE LIKE?" a girl asked about a certain European singer she idolized.

"He's a show business machine," I said. "He eats, sleeps, and lives his work. And that's it."

"You mean he's not a warm person? He seems so warm when he sings."

"No. He's about the coldest person I've ever known."

"Then he's a phony!" she said. "He always seemed so romantic to me!"

"No," I said. "He's not a phony: he's a professional and a damned good one. It's entirely possible that he puts so much warmth and romance into his work that there's little left over for his life."

She was little reassured.

People want their idols to be like their work. This seems to be true in all fields of music. Sometimes this yearning expresses itself naively, as in the case of the aforementioned young lady, who was eighteen. But sometimes it comes out in squirmy scholarship that attempts to reconcile the known pettiness of Beethoven's personality with the grandeur of his work—an exercise in futility that is fortunately less common than it once was. Indeed, as a reaction, a school of modern biography seems obsessed with demonstrating that no artist, no statesman in history ever had so much as one noble thought. That of course is equally silly.

The relationship between performance and personality is a complex one, and not infrequently an artist expresses his nature in reverse. It is notorious among writers that specialists in comedy are often unscintillating, and in some cases morbidly melancholy people, while the writers of tragedy are often happy swingers. It may be that the writer of tragedy gets rid of his sadness in his work and is delighted to spend his leisure time with fast cars, faster women, and funny cronies. And comedy, as everybody knows, is made out of pain.

One jazz musician I know is a treacherous, lying, avaricious, arrogant, paranoid monster. He produces some of the most lyrical and sensitive music I have ever heard. On the other hand, the late John Coltrane, whose playing has impressed many people as angry and even bitter, was one of the most gentle, nicest men I ever knew.

In general, though, jazz musicians seem to express their personalities rather

directly. That is to say, they usually *are* like their playing. No doubt this is because the music is improvised. By its very nature, music is largely a spontaneous outpouring. The musician strives to achieve a fluency that will permit him to express his thoughts or feelings instantaneously, with little or no impeding mechanical problems. Once he achieves that, there is little time for dissembling: what he is comes out.

Louis Armstrong sings the way he plays and plays the way he speaks: simply, sparsely, and to the point. The late Jack Teagarden too spoke and sang the way he played: with a kind of luxurious laziness.

Paul Desmond is an almost incredibly verbal man whose mind operates at altitudes that send his friends away muttering, "He's a genius, the man's a genius." (That Paul Desmond is a genius is something everyone seems to know but Paul.) Paul's famous wit, with its involuted references and its dashes of scholarly esoterica, is exactly paralleled in his playing. "This is the way the world ends—not with a whim but a banker," is one of my favorite Desmonds. When he still was playing with the Dave Brubeck Quartet, I asked him, "Are you working much?" "We're working as if it's going out of style—which of course it is," he replied. It was a comment on the present melancholy state of jazz economics. At the same time, it was a model of the way his musical mind works. At what you think is the end of a phrase, he'll suddenly swing the steering wheel and turn into a new street. His thought never seems to go where you think it will. When I asked him how he had developed his unique tone on alto saxophone, he said, "Well, I had it in the back of my mind that I wanted to sound like a dry martini." Not even Whitney Balliett, in one of his most fanciful flights of poeticism, could more neatly describe Paul's sound.

Gerry Mulligan is another literate and articulate man. He is an indefatigable talker: he is an indefatigable player. He is Irish to the core, and I swear I hear in his playing echoes of *I Met Her in the Garden Where the Praties Grow* and *Kathleen Mavourneen* and all the rest of that marvelous Irish schmaltz.

Bob Brookmeyer talks in an intelligent and sardonic mumble. That's how he

plays trombone. Bill Evans is as shy and reclusive and intelligent as his playing would lead you to think. As for the origins of his melancholy lyricism—he's half Welsh and half Russian. Bill's lyricism has often been noted, but the wit of his playing is usually overlooked. That too is in his conversation.

Oscar Peterson, by contrast, is an aggressive talker who will not be bested in argument: he will go down to the death rather than back down on a point. And that quality is in his playing, which is as assertive and convinced as his conversation. It is what makes him so exciting.

Singers are an entirely different breed of people from jazz musicians. I have never known a singer (with the possible exception of Jack Jones, and I'm not entirely sure about him) who wasn't painfully insecure. And the women are even harder to figure out than the men. Page Cavanaugh once said, "Girl singers are the fourth sex."

A singer goes out there all alone every night, at the mercy of his throat. If a musician cracks a note in the orchestra, who notices? But if a singer misses, he makes a fool of himself in front of a large public. Public singing is an excruciatingly tense experience, and some singers become ill before going on even after years in the business. Will I crack notes tonight? Will I remember the lyrics for the whole show? The singer must make a new pitch with every note and he can't tune the instrument: he can only tune his ear and pray. A forty-five-minute performance is fraught with peril. No wonder a singer is drained when he comes off stage. No wonder a lot of singers are neurotic. But perhaps they become singers because of a neurotic need for acclaim. What else would make you put up with hell night after night?

I have a great respect and liking for singers. Sometimes, to be sure, they get to be a bore. They are constantly in need of reassurance, and evidently even all that applause doesn't give enough of it. They want to know from their friends: was I good tonight? Was the show okay? At a party, when the conversation wanders from the subject of himself (or herself), the singer usually sits in almost palpable impatience, waiting for the subject to turn back to that of Me.

It isn't necessarily that they have over-inflated egos. Too often, indeed, the problem seems to be that of underinflation. It is as if they are so uncertain of their worth as human beings, of their right to go on existing, that they must constantly be told how good they are.

That's worth remembering the next time you read a crack made by some jackass gossip columnist about the ego of a performer. The complex structure of the performer's ego may in fact be what makes the talent tick: without it, the talent would never have been developed. It takes a lot more ability, and certainly more guts, to walk into a spotlight and sing than to write a gossip column.

In the end, why should anyone care? Whether a performance is a direct or an inverted expression of an artist's personality, it *is* the performance that counts.

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THE BEATLES: Let It Be. John Lennon, vocals and guitar; Paul McCartney, vocals, bass, and piano; George Harrison, vocals and guitar; Ringo Starr, drums. (Two of Us; I Dig a Pony; I've Got a Feeling; For You Blue; five more.) Apple AR 34001, \$4.98. Tape: R8 001, \$6.98; C2 001, \$6.98.

PAUL MCCARTNEY: McCartney. Paul McCartney, vocals and various instrumentals. (The Lovely Linda; Valentine Day; Every Night; Glasses; Junk; O You; Teddy Boy; seven more.) Apple STAO 3363, \$4.98. Tape: 8XT 3363, \$6.98; 4XT 3363, \$6.98.

RINGO STARR: Sentimental Journey. Ringo Starr, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (Night and Day; Whispering Grass; Bye Bye Blackbird; Star Dust; Blue, Turning Grey Over You; Dream; You Always Hurt the One You Love; five more.) Apple SW 3365, \$4.98. Tape: 8XT, 3365, \$6.98; 4XT 3365, \$6.98.

It's been National Beatle Month—with the release of three albums and a new movie. If you have seen *Let It Be*, let me assure you that the album is not nearly as bad as the movie. In fact, compared to "McCartney" and "Sentimental Journey," it is positively wonderful. There are a number of Beatles fun tunes, especially *Two of Us*, *I Dig a Pony*, and, of course, *Get Back*. *Let It Be* may be the best thing musically that McCartney has done, although I think the lyric is dangerous politically. And it's nice to hear Lennon, one of the great natural rock-and-rollers, cutting up on *I've Got a Feeling* (he also plays some interesting guitar on the otherwise boring *For You Blue*). On the other hand, I can't think of anything awful enough to compare with *The Long and Winding Road*. *Across the Universe* is bloated and self-satisfied—the kind of song we've come to expect from these rich, privileged prototenagers.

"McCartney" was potentially a great album. McCartney is one of the best pop singers, a good bass player, and a growing pianist. He also has written a considerable number of attractive songs. *Let It Be*, the movie, provided some hints about why the solo album fails. McCartney gave the impression in the film of being the only Beatle who has stagnated as a human being. He still seems to think of himself as the cute Beatle, while the others barely think of themselves as Beatles at all. In addition he is incredibly arrogant, attempting to push John and George around and ignoring Ringo entirely. On this disc Paul thinks that we should dig his every little noise; he even has the chutzpah to include a drum solo on *Kreen-Akore*. Perhaps the greatest disappointment lies in the songs, although most of them could have been saved by better performances, especially the instrumentals.

If "Sentimental Journey" had been done by anyone but Ringo, I doubt that it would get reviewed at all, despite the presence of the arranging talents of people as diverse as Chico O'Farrill, Oliver Nelson, Quincy Jones, Johnny Dankworth, Elmer Bernstein, Paul McCartney,

Klaus Voorman, and Maurice Gibb (they weren't taking any chances with this one). The problem is that they all spend a lot of time compensating for the fact that Ringo can't sing. Not only has Ringo dipped into a bag of antiques, by and large he has come up with some of the tidiest junk ever written. And even the good songs are destroyed by the performance. Who wants to hear *Star Dust* or *Night and Day* rendered off key?

Ringo has shown in the past that he has a genuine talent for certain kinds of folksy children's songs (i.e., *Octopus' Garden*); he should exploit it.

I wonder what Mike Jagger's drumming is like. J.G.



JOSE FELICIANO: Fireworks. José Feliciano, vocals and guitar; Al Capps and Perry Botkin, Jr., arr. (Destiny; Norwegian Wood; Pegao; eight more). RCA Victor LSP 4370, \$4.98. Tape: TP3 1044, 3¾ ips, \$6.95; P8 1595, \$6.95. PK 1595, \$6.95.

In his lifetime a top artist will make a lot of good albums, a few leaders, and a couple that are sensational. You'd better buy this one by Feliciano, because only God and the artist know when he'll get it on like this again. The title tells the story: fireworks.

It often happens that a performer's first album forces him into grinding out a series of sequels while maintaining a newly crowded schedule of concerts, interviews, and so on. It happened after this man's first smash, "Feliciano!" The best tracks here beat anything he's done before: *I Can't Get No Satisfaction*; *She Came in Through the Bathroom Window*; *Blackbird*; and *Susie Q*. In every case Feliciano sets a groove that sizzles, then his imaginative music floats atop it like a big, bad, vividly colorful Latin American bird.

A few inclusions are imperfect, for my taste. *Yesterday* is tired out from continual coverage. *Let It Be* is sung with beautiful feeling, but the tempo is not Feliciano's best, and the chart never quite comes together underneath. *Once There Was a Love* features the distant sound of a piccolo trumpet as Feliciano sings harmony with himself. The real trouble with all the above songs is simply that they are done as ballads, and this album was born to swing hard. One waits politely through the ballads to get back to the cookers, and these are so good that one is left with little to complain about.

Who knows how these albums happen? Everyone feels good; sufficient preparation time is spent; selections are right and tempos perfect. No matter; just get it. You'll hear few more exciting moments this year. M.A.

JERRY BUTLER: You & Me. Jerry Butler, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (I Could Write a Book; Tammy Jones; Real Good Man; Something; Ordinary Joe;

five more). Mercury SR 61269, \$4.98. **EUGENE McDANIELS: Outlaw.** Eugene McDaniels, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (Welfare City; Silent Majority; Cherrystones; Black Boy; five more.) Atlantic SD 8259, \$4.98.

Jerry Butler, the Ice Man (for his considerable cool), is back with another disappointing album. It seems to me that Butler is hands down the best male soul singer. His phrasing is marvelous, and he usually has good material, and the team at Gamble-Huff, his producers in Philadelphia, is very talented. And yet the albums never really work—for two reasons, I think. The material, though excellent, is always very similar to songs on his earlier discs; and Butler's noted cool, so impressive on stage, is a little deadening on record. When he overcomes it, on up-tempo numbers or particularly strong ballads (in the past: *Only the Strong Survive; Brand New Me; What's the Use of Breaking Up;* etc.; here: *I Could Write a Book, George Harrison's Something, You and Me*), he is a superbly effective performer. The wishes of record reviewers are and should be irrelevant, but I wish anyway that Butler would go outside Gamble-Huff more often for songs and that he would include more unusual pieces like the anti-injustice *Life's Unfortunate Sons* included here. The truth is that my criticism is being made in the hope that he will give us the blockbuster that he is capable of. He is the best.

Oh yeah, one other little thing. There is shamefully little music on "You and Me"—ten songs (16:38 on Side 1; 16:07 on Side 2). Full list price.

During the bland pre-Beatles '60s, when the only black men who could get on radio and TV had to look and sound like Johnny Mathis, one of the best of that type of singer was Gene McDaniels. But his day passed, or rather *that* day passed, and McDaniels disappeared. Well, he hasn't been wasting his time up there in Harlem during the past half dozen years. What's happened to him, apparently, is that he has been reading the newspapers, listening to Bob Dylan and the blues—not to mention living the life of a black man in America—and he has turned into a serious and articulate singer and songwriter. So far, McDaniels, the singer, is more interesting, but some of his own songs are quite good and all are worth hearing. They break down when they are most topical: *Silent Majority* and *Outlaw*, for example, have both been left somewhat behind by developments in Indo-China, in Kent and Jackson, and in our streets. But as a vocalist, McDaniels is first-rate and he has assembled an excellent band that includes Ron Carter, Ray Lucas, and Eric Weissberg. I hope Atlantic really gets behind this album, both on its merits and for what it indicates about the future possibilities for Gene McDaniels. J.G.

JILL WILLIAMS. Jill Williams, vocals; Charles Calello, Robert Dennis, and Al Gorgoni, arr. (Not Comin' Home; Old Memries; Brother Love; eight more.) RCA Victor LSP 4314, \$4.98.

ESSRA MOHAWK: Primordial Lovers. Essra Mohawk, vocals and piano; rhythm accompaniment. (I Am the Breeze; Spiral; Lion on the Wing; five more.) Reprise 6377, \$4.98. Tape: 8RM 6377, \$6.95; CRX 6377, \$5.95.

The success of Joni Mitchell and Laura Nyro has opened the recording gates for a host of young ladies looking for similar recognition. Here are two debut entries for this month.

Jill Williams is expertly packaged and presented by RCA (who does not yet have a big-draw Young Girl). One of the album's three excellent arrangers is Charlie Calello, who did such superb work on Laura Nyro's breakthrough album. "Eli and the Thirteenth Confession." Not that Miss Williams is in Miss Nyro's alley musically. Miss Williams' voice is low, natural, and not particularly striking. (She looks a little like *Hair's* Jennifer, who has one of the best young voices around.) Miss Williams writes her own material of course. But even the splendid arrangements cannot make them more than what they are: nice little ditties, with the here-and-there good line. In the end, this is just another unimportant album that cost a lot of money.

Reprise's entry is Essra Mohawk, whose album is produced by Frazier Mohawk (father? brother? coincidence?). Miss Mohawk has issued the highest form of flattery here. From first note to last, one can think of no one but Laura Nyro. Miss Mohawk uses her voice, her piano playing, her song structure, her emotions, and her lyrics—*Lion on the Wing*: "Ah, my baby is a Venus Lover" (repeat four times)—in faithful likeness.

We must note that Miss Mohawk is a talented young lady and this is a well-made album. Except that someone got there first. Miss Nyro is the rightful owner of this ground; Miss Mohawk is dreaming if she thinks people won't notice. Imitation is a traditionally acceptable place to start finding oneself—in the privacy of one's own home. If you're good at it, your friends and family will love it. But be careful when you throw it out to strangers in the market place. They do not know how different the two people are—Nyro and Mohawk. They will hear only the similarities—and in this case they are overpowering.

Either Miss Mohawk has made her album three years too late or too early. Perhaps later she will have spun far enough away from Miss Nyro's pervasive spell to find another way. Ordinarily, when one is accused of plagiarism, the defense is, "But I always sounded like this!" The artist may believe it; the listener does not. Still, talent is not to be dismissed. It is worth the wait till the emergence of the real Essra Mohawk. M.A.

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with a photo of Mom, Dad, and many little Levitts on the cover. Both parents come from music (father Al is a jazz drummer) and the kids grew up around it. All take a turn here, joined by family friends, including bassist Ted Kotick and noted jazz pianist Chick Corea. There's no slickness. In fact, the album doesn't hang together all that well. It's bits and pieces. Mother Stella (vocals) sounds rusty but pleased; daughter Michelle (vocals) isn't quite ready; son George (drums) is green. But if you had to listen to as many mechanically ground-out albums per month as I do, you'd appreciate the reality of their feeling.

Good luck to the Levitts on the bitter commercial market. Any family whose old man makes his living as a jazz drummer has paid its dues. But they still sound happy and make you feel good. Four stars, baby. M.A.

MASON WILLIAMS: Handmade. Mason Williams, vocals and guitar; Al Capps, arr. (José's Piece; All the Time; It's Over; seven more.) Warner Bros./7 Arts 1838, \$4.98. Tape: 8WM 1838, \$6.95; CWX 1838, \$5.95.

Mason Williams' new offering sounds unpressured and is his best recent effort. Perhaps he's had a chance to step back since the dizzy success of his song *Classical Gas*—which occurred in the same busy season in which he was involved with the Smothers Brothers TV show as both writer and performer.

This is a rather simple, honest album in which Williams sounds as if he's enjoying himself. He has redone two songs from earlier albums—something every artist often longs to do. One of them is his own song *All the Time*. Williams isn't the most prolific songwriter on the set, but he's a very good one, and this is the best track in the album.

But Williams' taste is erratic, jumping from one level to another. He's involved in his own sense of comedy, for one thing. This preoccupation produces things like *The Tomato Vendetta*, about a man who hated tomatoes and what he did about it. Such musings stopped amusing me about the time I graduated from high school. A similar sort of story is told in *The Exciting Accident*, but the punchline somewhat mitigates its trivia: "This is not a true tale, but who needs truth if it's dull?" Both are the kind of thing that folksingers dust off during a concert lull. Williams is also fond of Fifties' rock-and-roll and countryish picking. Considering the number of dynamite guitarists at work, there's more concentration on Williams the guitarist than seems justified.

Williams' strong personality and performer's sense bail him out in the long run—or almost, anyway. M.A.

ANANDA SHANKAR. Ananda Shankar, sitar; Paul Lewinson, keyboards, Moog, and arr.; rhythm accompaniment. (Mamata; Dance Indra; Snow Flower; five more.) Reprise 6398, \$4.98. Tape: 8RM 6398, \$6.95; CRX 6398, \$5.95.

Children of famous people are cursed with a special identity problem. It deepens when such children are drawn toward the parent's area of expertise. Ananda Shankar, like his renowned father, Ravi, plays the sitar. In his liner notes, Ananda reveals his dilemma clearly: "I do not want to be linked with the famous Shankars."

The album is designed around Ananda's wishes. Along with an Indian tabla player, he is backed by several rock-oriented American musicians, plus arranger Paul Lewinson's interesting Moog effects. Side 1 includes two well-known rock tunes, *Jumpin' Jack Flash* and *Light My Fire*, both of which prove how differently Eastern and Western meters are felt. While Ananda avoids his native quarter-tone scale, his time sounds stiff despite his obvious sincerity. Paul Lewinson's tune, *Mamata*, is ruined by an amateurish guitar introduction, but it didn't have a lot to offer anyway.

Things improve considerably on Side 2 with Shankar's and Lewinson's thirteen-minute *Sagar* ("The Ocean"), which, writes Shankar in the liner notes, "is the only track on which I play as a classical musician." Ironically it is the finest inclusion; its Indian flavor is dramatically underlined by a simple bass line on the Moog. At last we see how well these two unlikely instruments mate, so long as the sitar dominates. And we are spared the uncomfortable assault of drums, Fender bass, and electric guitars. This track is the sound of young Ananda, compelling, strange, and unique. It is the heart of the album, and the track from which future albums should be built. M.A.

MAC DAVIS: Song Painter. Mac Davis, vocals; Artie Butler, arr. and cond. (Once You Get Used To It; Home; Babies' Butts; eight more.) Columbia CS 9969, \$4.98.

One of the pleasant things about this business is that there is always room for another genuine talent. Otherwise, a singer such as Glen Campbell might get nervous about the rise of a Mac Davis, since they both work the same territory; country-oriented pop.

Mac Davis makes his singing debut here under the best possible circumstances. He enters as the composer of several hit songs (Presley's *In the Ghetto* and *Memories*, O. C. Smith's *Daddy's Little Man*). Davis' voice is immediately likable, relaxed, at home with us. One senses that he has sat in many an office with his guitar, charming highpowered executives as the afternoon sun fades.

Davis' songs have wit, honesty, ease, graceful simplicity. With his southern blood, he rides the line of maudlin sentiment pretty hard, but his sense of structure bails him out nearly every time. *Daddy's Little Man* is a song with equal parts of cleverness, corn, and sincerity. It works. The album is well produced by Jerry Fuller and subtly arranged by Artie Butler. Davis' fans include Presley, the Sinatras, and Glen Campbell. That's heavy armament—and Davis is equal to it. M.A.

jazz



BILL EVANS: Alone. Bill Evans, piano. (Here's That Rainy Day; A Time For Love; Midnight Mood; On a Clear Day; Never Let Me Go.) Verve 68792, \$4.98.

About ten years ago Bill Evans told me that he would be perfectly content to never play in public again. The remark shocked me, for I of course heard it from the selfish viewpoint of the listener. If Bill checked out of public performance, we who loved his playing would be cheated of a great joy. And yet, as the years have gone by I have come to understand this reticence. Public performing is a kind of agony. Some people enjoy that agony. Certain temperaments, including Bill's, are not made for it. His basic shyness is probably the real cause of the fetal position he assumes (concert-dropout Gould does this too, let us note) in performing.

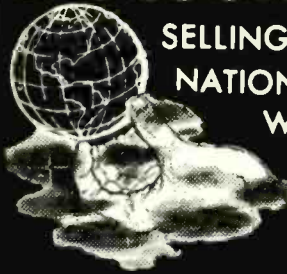
On that occasion ten years ago, Bill said he did not want to quit playing—only playing in public. "The best playing I ever do," he said, "is in my living room." (Oscar Peterson once told me, "The best playing I've ever done has been in my basement at home.") I've heard Bill in his living room and in my living room, and it's true that some of his best playing happens in that kind of relaxed and intimate atmosphere. This album was inevitable, therefore. It attempts to capture the kind of music he makes for himself. It comes very close to succeeding throughout its first side. And in the second side it succeeds completely: this is a 14 min. 32 sec. take of *Never Let Me Go* (quite possibly the longest unaccompanied jazz solo on record), and we hear Bill at his explorative, ruminative best.

In effect this is the third album in a sequence. Evans made one called "Conversations With Myself," in which he played, by means of overdubbing, three pianos. Then he did a disc called "Further Conversations with Myself," in which he played two pianos. "Who knows?" he said at the time. "Maybe next I'll do a solo album." I thought it was a quip. Here's the solo album.

Surprisingly it's the first solo recording by Bill Evans ever to be released, although there are some unaccompanied tracks on other discs. Another such album was made for Riverside, but the label folded before the record could be released.

I welcome "Alone" for several reasons. One is that the piano, a complete instrument, is always to some extent limited by the presence of a rhythm section (even when it is adding buoyancy and pulse). Art Tatum didn't like rhythm sections; he said they boxed him in. Oscar Peterson made a fine solo album in Germany that came out a year or more ago in this

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country: he too sounded like he'd had fetters removed.

But I am even more excited by an album of Evans-without-bass-and-drums than a Peterson album of the same kind, because I have rarely liked Evans' rhythm sections, and I have usually liked Oscar's. Evans' rhythm section was fine when it contained drummer Paul Motian and the brilliant young bassist Scott LaFaro, who died in an automobile accident at the age of twenty-four. In general, Evans' rhythm sections are too busy. His bassists are usually of the kind that the master punster Paul Desmond characterizes as butterfly-fingers. They don't punch, they don't push, they don't pulse. They could however: his present bassist, Eddie Gomez, is wonderfully skillful and he can walk the instrument when he wants to. But most of the time there's just too much going on behind the piano and I find it all terribly distracting and at times damned annoying. I would like to hear Evans record with Ron Carter.

In the meantime we have this album, one of the simplest and most effective yet made by the most admired and imitated jazz pianist of our time. It was recorded at Webster Hall. The engineer was Ray Hall, who recorded "Conversations With Myself." Hall is the only engineer I know who captures all the nuances of Evans' ringing golden tone.

Without having attended the sessions, I'll bet this was recorded with the lights out: it's that kind of music. Magnificent.

G.L.

JOHN COLTRANE: The Coltrane Legacy. John Coltrane, tenor and soprano saxophones; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Eric Dolphy, flute; Milt Jackson, vibes; McCoy Tyner and Hank Jones, piano; Steve Davis, Art Davis, and Paul Chambers, bass; Elvin Jones and Connie Kay, drums. (26-2; Original Untitled Ballad; Untitled Original; Centerpiece; Stairway to the Stars; Blues Legacy.) Atlantic 1553, \$5.98.

These previously unreleased Coltrane performances come from three sessions in 1959, 1960, and 1961—during a period when the saxophonist had broken through the almost desperate searching of his "sheets of sound" years and before he moved in amongst the jazz avant-garde. He was at this time at his most openly

communicative, playing with a calmness and serenity that make up the pervasive quality in this collection. This comes through most vividly in his rendition of Billy Frazier's *Original Untitled Ballad* (is this awkward title going to hang on, as Charlie Shaver's *Undecided* did?) on which Eric Dolphy, Freddie Hubbard, and McCoy Tyner all fall in with the spell that Coltrane casts.

On Side 2 three pieces by a Milt Jackson-Coltrane quintet blend the warmth of both Jackson and Coltrane with some of Hank Jones's gentle, ruminative piano passages.

J.S.W.



MILT JACKSON QUINTET: That's the Way It Is. Milt Jackson, vibes; Teddy Edwards, tenor saxophone; Monty Alexander, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Dick Berk, drums. (Frankie and Johnny; Here's That Rainy Day; Wheelin' and Dealin'; three more). Impulse 9189, \$5.98.

If I had to choose a record to give to that mythical character, the "jazz fan," this would be it. A jazz fan, as you know, likes what he likes, which is a small portion of jazz, and hates all the rest, which is considerable. More properly he might be identified as "a Dixieland fan," "a bop fan," "a new-thing fan," "a swing fan." But he calls himself "a jazz fan." This disc is for the jazz fan. It can't miss, no matter which category of jazz is your bag.

This is the pure, sheer essence of jazz: blues, ballads, and swingers with two incredible masters in charge—Ray Brown on bass doing fantastic things with *Frankie and Johnny* and *Blues in the Basement* and Milt Jackson showing the almost unbelievable skill that never ceases to fascinate me in the way he combines melodic beauty and motivating swing in a slow ballad. Teddy Edwards, Monty Alexander, and Dick Berk add their own touches, but it is the utter mastery of Brown and Jackson that makes this such a magnificent set. Unpretentious, too. Nobody's making a big thing about anything. It's relaxed, informal, full of joy (shouting joy sometimes), but those two geniuses are always in control.

J.S.W.

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The Swing Era— From the Magnificent to the Ridiculous

by John S. Wilson

THE FIRST SET in Time-Life Records' projected six-album venture into nostalgia, "The Swing Era," indicates that in its various aspects the series will run a gamut from the magnificent to the ridiculous. The initial package is made up of three LP discs containing thirty arrangements that became hits in 1940 and 1941 for Glenn Miller, Harry James, Artie Shaw, Les Brown, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Charlie Barnet, Woody Herman, and several others. In addition, there is a hard-covered book that includes a personal memoir of growing up in the '30s and '40s, biographical essays on Glenn Miller and Harry James, background annotation on each of the thirty recordings, plus a discography listing composers and arrangers of each of the pieces and the original recording date and personnel of the orchestra that recorded it at that time. Loads of period pictures, which capture the moods and modes of those years, are scattered throughout the text.

Both George Frazier's waspish profile of Glenn Miller and Bruce Henderson's more amiable sketch of Harry James are illustrated with an unusually fresh assortment of photos—pictures that dig back into the early days of both band leaders and catch them later on in informal moments.

The book, aside from a gangrenous cover picture of two jitterbugs in action, is an imaginative, beautifully produced accompaniment to the records. The records too are handsomely produced. But there is one flaw in these records—and this seems to me to undermine the whole concept: they are fakes. Despite the essays on Glenn Miller and Harry James, neither Miller nor James—nor their bands—are heard on these records. The names of Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Charlie Barnet, Tommy Dorsey bubble up through almost every line of the annotation—but not one of them or their bands are ever heard.

The recordings are, in part, copies of swing era hits that were made under Glen Gray's name for Capitol several years ago, plus recent recordings done in the same fashion under the direction of Billy May. Time-Life does not try to hide this fact. Indeed it's used as a selling point—instead of offering the monophonic and technically limited recording techniques of the '30s and '40s, the original arrangements have been painstakingly copied, played by highly

capable and eminently qualified musicians, and recorded in stereo with all the benefits of contemporary sound know-how.

The sound is unusually good—very clean, beautifully defined, and well balanced except for an unnatural (for that period) overdose of booming bass on some pieces. The ensemble passages usually come through effectively. But although the soloists are often clever in capturing the idiosyncrasies of the original players, that element of personal musicianship by which every outstanding jazz soloist is identified cannot be merely reduced to an understanding execution. The particular flair that is a part of Benny Goodman's way of playing, of Tommy Dorsey's soft, smoothly furry tone, of Earl Hines's glitter, of the bite of Cootie Williams' trumpet is not readily available to even the most accomplished musicians.

So, while an unidentified trumpeter catches the nanny-goat quality of Harry James's trumpet on *You Made Me Love You* (which is practically a parody to start with), a very able pianist (Ray Sherman) can't quite equal the spirited quality of Earl Hines's *Boogie Woogie on the St. Louis Blues* (which is fouled up even more by a shouting voice that is all wrong). Some of these bands—Duke Ellington's, Jimmie Lunceford's—had a special group personality. But the very qualities that made these orchestras so distinctive entirely escape these studio musicians.

If the original performances of these arrangements were not available, there might be some point in producing a series such as this. But the original version of every arrangement in this first Time-Life set can be found on a current LP. The question boils down to this: if you were offered a choice of an original Van Gogh or an "improved" copy of the same picture done by a capable artist, both at the same price, which would you take? If you like copies, Time-Life has a beautiful package for you.

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Only Peter Green, the guitarist, is really in Spann's class. J.G.

JETHRO TULL: Benefit. Reprise 6400, \$4.98. Tape: 8RM 6400, \$6.95; CRX 6400, \$5.95.

A lot of people love this group, which is fronted by flute player Ian Anderson, who also writes all the material. Their press agents are thoroughly professional, displaying them recently on a gigantic billboard on Sunset Boulevard. And their music drones on and on and on, significantly, humorlessly. Jethro Tull plays with the big kids, but they're all second stringers in rock. M.A.

COUNTRY COALITION: Time To Get It Together. Bluesway S 6043, \$4.98.

By mixing several contemporary styles (among them, I think, the Band, Edison Electric, RCA-type Nashville), Country Coalition comes up with a nice sound of its own. J.G.

LIBERACE: A Brand New Me. Warner Bros./7 Arts 1847, \$4.98.

Considering the title, I was a little afraid to play this album. It proves, however, that even Liberace can get bored with himself after all the years of ice-cream arpeggios and "gee-dad" trills. Here he is, the devil, playing hits of today. He's even modernized his *Naughty Marietta* time-feel a little. Something about Liberace's career has always simultaneously impressed and embarrassed me. Is this set simply a whimsical moment or an attempt to get into something? Anyway, cheers. M.A.

RAY STEVENS: Everything Is Beautiful. Barnaby Z12 35005, \$4.98.

Ray Stevens, a former c & w novelty-song singer (remember *Ahab the Arab?*), is Andy Williams' summer fill-in on the tube. The last five songs on Side 2 of this album demonstrate he is as good as anybody in the Joe South/Glen Campbell school of pop singing. May God grant him the humility to hire a producer other than himself. J.G.

REVEREND JESSE JACKSON: I Am Somebody. Respect TAS 2601, \$4.98.

Young Rev. Jackson is the dynamic leader of Chicago's "Operation Breadbasket." *Life* magazine wrote: "It is abundantly clear at these Saturday meetings that Jackson is both a man of God and a shrewd, even arrogant, political infighter." I'm not sure about the "arrogant," but the rest is on. This is a series of his sermons. I think everyone in the country should listen to this beautiful man, and this album provides the opportunity. M.A.

JIMI HENDRIX: Band of Gypsies. Capitol STAO 472, \$5.98. Tape: 8XT 472, \$6.98; 4XT 472, \$6.98.

Jimi Hendrix with a newly-formed trio at the Fillmore East last January 1. The guitar work is fantastic, the rest of it mediocre. For Hendrix freaks. J.G.

TOM PAXTON. Elektra EKS 74066, \$4.98.

If you liked folksinger Paxton in the '50s' folk boom, here he is, doing the same old thing. M.A.

MELANIE: Melanie. Buddah BDS 5060, \$4.98.

Another Melanie album that in no way demonstrates her considerable talent as a singer and songwriter. Her first album is still her best. J.G.

POCO: Poco. Epic BN 26522, \$4.98. This is the second album by the band formed by the third important member of the defunct Buffalo Springfield, Richie Furay. It is a good country-rock band and another reminder of what we lost. J.G.

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