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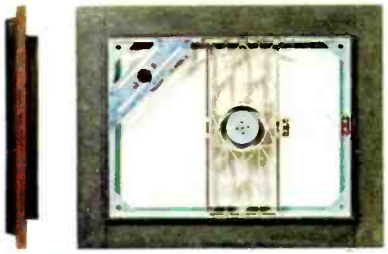

Back view of the white polymer diaphragm of the Fisher Sound Panel. Note the separate drivers for highs and lows. Each is made with a large, concentric magnet structure and four-layer voice coil. No crossover network is necessary.

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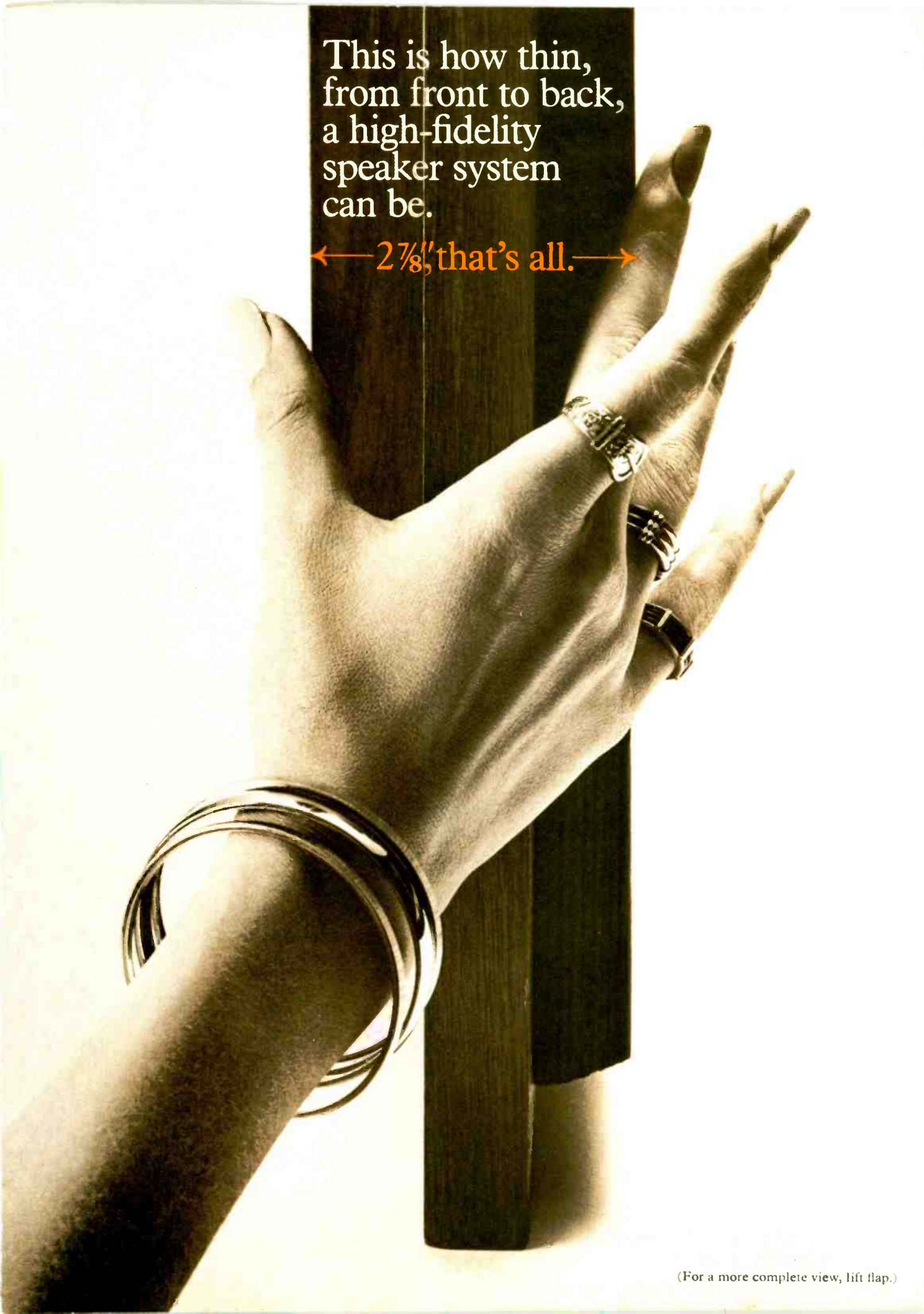
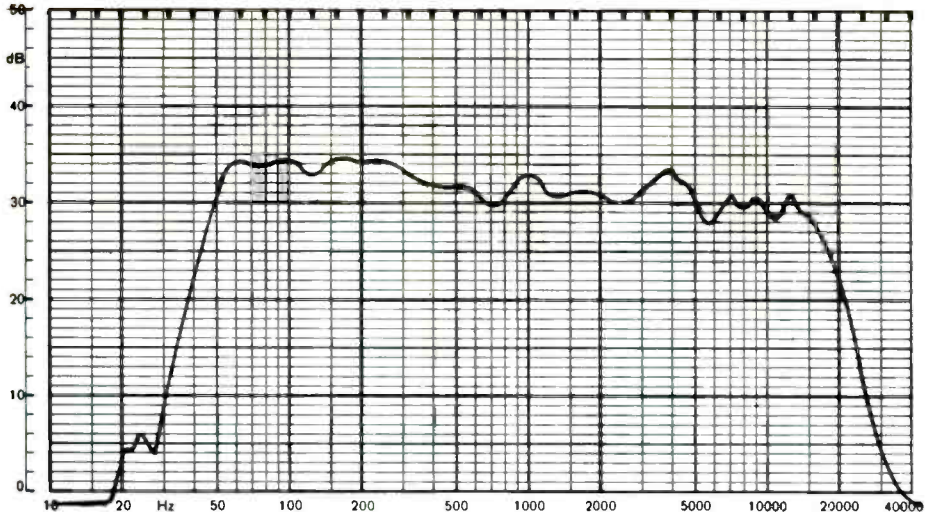
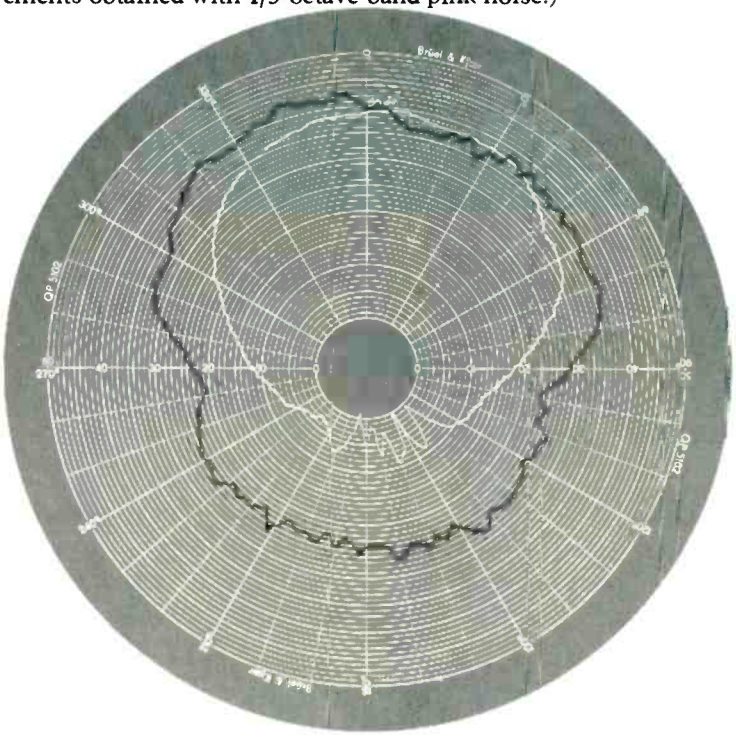


(For a more complete view, lift flap.)



Frequency response of the Fisher Sound Panel on axis, proving it comparable in range and smoothness to high-quality acoustic-suspension speaker systems.

Polar response at 10 kHz of the Fisher Sound Panel (black line), compared to that of a conventional three-way bookshelf speaker (white line). As can be seen, the Fisher Sound Panel has greatly superior high-frequency dispersion, thanks to the special characteristics of the diaphragm. (Measurements obtained with 1/3-octave-band pink noise.)



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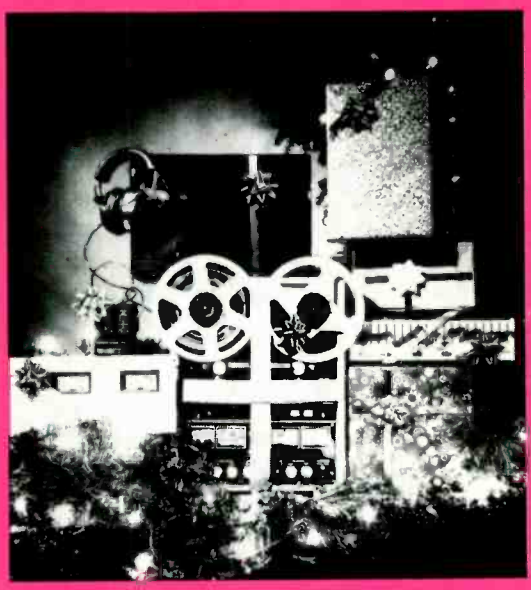

What the experts want. See page 46.

Year's best records. See page 30.

His *Ring* at last. See pages 60 and 63.

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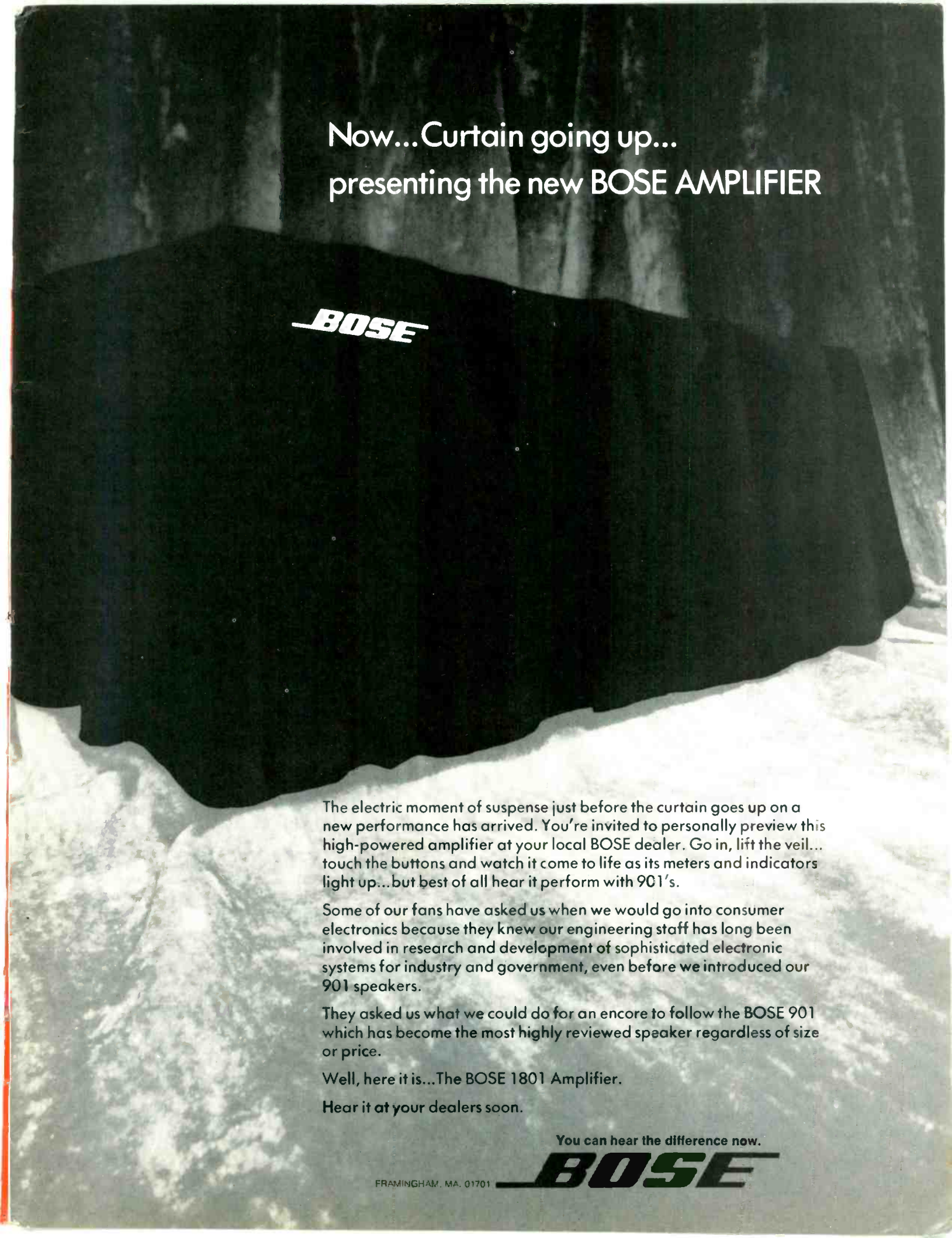

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letters

Warrack on Weber

In his review of the recent Vox release of the complete piano music of Weber [August 1972], Paul Henry Lang questions the reliability of both the composer's memoirs and the biography written by his son, Max. "A modern biography," Mr. Lang concludes, "is very much needed."

The need has already been filled. I refer to John Warrack's *Carl Maria von Weber*, which was published by the Macmillan Company in 1968. Comprehensive, readable, and skillfully organized—the major events of the composer's life are used to frame analyses of the compositions to which they are historically adjacent—the book should, I imagine, appeal equally to the neophyte Weberian and the graduate musicologist. The analyses themselves are commendably clear and pointed. Whether they are also accurate—well, excepting *Freischütz* and one or two other Weber "standards," we won't really know until such time as the more venturesome recording companies begin blazing trails through the "German forest" to which Mr. Lang refers.

William D. Badgett
Lexington, Va.

Mr. Lang replies: Perhaps I should have mentioned Warrack's Weber, *because it is the first decent modern book in English on the composer. But I would have had to qualify its merits, and a record review is not the place for that. Nor is this reply the proper occasion for a detailed critique. Warrack's musical analyses are good if a bit old-fashioned, but he is more a compiler than a creative scholar. Though he conscientiously combed the large German literature on his subject, this mass of information is conveyed in lexicographic condensation that can be breathless. Also he made the grave methodological error of retaining the German orientation of his sources. One cannot throw at an Anglo-American audience torrents of German literary figures (Görres, Lenz, Gleim, Klinger, Hamann, Iffland, and so on) and little known composers (Albrici, Moneglia, Schuster, Naumann, Seidelmann, Poissl, and many others) without identifying them. Also there are German grammatical mistakes which he could have avoided by translations. In sum, we are still waiting for the "definitive" monograph on Weber.*

A Change of Heart?

Has Royal S. Brown changed his views on the Shostakovich Fifth Symphony? In his discography of the Shostakovich symphonies [April 1969] Mr. Brown stated, "That last movement of the Fifth presents, in fact, a real tempo problem, particularly at the end, which, if played as indicated, is absurdly slow and pompous." Since reading Mr. Brown's review of the new Melodiya/Angel recording [July 72] with the composer's son conducting which "offers by far the most authentic, the most profound statement of this music yet to be on disc," I have heard this "profound" recording and was surprised to find out that the last movement, unlike my excellent Previn recording, was slow and pompous at the end, and presumably played "as indicated." Perhaps Mr. Brown has changed his views on this controversial movement, but he failed to let the readers of his review at least know that young Maxim plays it as indicated.

Russell Low
San Francisco, Calif.

Mr. Brown replies: No, I haven't changed my views. Maxim's interpretation simply makes a better case for the slow tempo than the Kondrashin performance, to which I specifically referred in my article. But to be perfectly honest, it doesn't seem to me that even the best possible interpretation will ever entirely save the last movement, certainly the weakest in the symphony, and if I did not "let the readers know" of the detail Mr. Low seems so concerned over, it was, alas, because space is always limited and I felt there were more important areas in the symphony on which to concentrate.

Record Reconstruction

In the August 1972 issue, Lawrence Huffman asks whether any work has been done with regard to signal recognition theory whereby the audio signals of an acoustic recording could be "digitalized," read into a computer to remove the noise and correct the distortions, and thus produce recordings in modern sound.

This problem is being studied and was reported at the Forty-First Convention of the Audio Engineering Society in October, 1971, by Dr. T. G. Stockham, Jr. under the title "Restoration of Old Acoustic Recordings by Means of Digital Sound Processing."

Caruso—the voice is back.

According to Professor Stockham, the results are very striking, particularly from an artistic point of view. The restored recordings retain some of their "acoustic flavor" but there is a dramatic change in the clarity of expression and the texture of the voice. The surges in volume that are experienced when the singing voice strikes a recording horn resonance are almost entirely gone. With the megaphone sound almost completely eliminated, the voice seems much closer to the listener. As examples of this technique, restorations of the following three Caruso recordings were demonstrated: *Pagliacci*: "*Vesti la giubba*" (Victor 88061, 3/17/07); *La Bohème*: "*O soave fanciulla*" (Victor 95200, 3/24/07); and *Les Pêcheurs de perles*: "*Je crois entendre encore*" (Victor 88580, 12/7/16).

We had the pleasure of hearing these recordings demonstrated and concur with the author that the realistic qualities of Caruso's voice "provided by the upper range of frequencies within the range of the restoration process are dramatically obvious." Professor Stockham also reported that attempts are now being made to remove surface noise and to extend the band of frequencies beyond those now attainable. It may be possible in the future to approach very close to the modern recording quality when restoring old acoustic records.

It is questionable whether such reprocessing can ever be done commercially inasmuch as the work is very tedious, time-consuming, and costly.

B. V. Pisha
Albertson, N.Y.

Mr. Huffman's hope that technical advances would allow early recordings to be reconstructed in modern sound. His seems a forlorn hope. For one thing, how does one make up for the highs, unrecorded in the first place?

The correction of distortion (other than noise) is only a little less challenging. Sure, Mr. Huffman mentions the possibility of simulating the characteristic distortion of early equipment, but working backward requires knowing a lot more. Putting a shattered waveform together again is harder than fixing poor Humpty-Dumpty—at least his original appearance is well-known.

Stephen Rhodes
Hyattsville, Md.

Eagle-Taloned Harpsichordist

A letter from Richard W. Stiles in the September 1972 issue, elicited by my recent harpsichord article ["Back from the Brink," June 1972], mentions the "powerful eagle-taloned technique" of harpsichordist Fernando Valenti. I have a great respect for the virtuoso fingers of Mr. Valenti. I do not know whether his fingers are joined to "eagle-taloned" hands, but I do know that an overpowerful approach to a harpsichord keyboard is always disastrous

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for the tone, producing an increase in noise elements without any gain in total musical volume. The loudness of Valenti's recordings is merely the result of an unnaturally high recording level.

At this point it should be said that the familiar photographs of Wanda Landowska's hands (and they *did* look like eagle's talons) have misled many a would-be harpsichord player. Landowska adopted that arthritic hand position first because she played a poorly designed "modern" harpsichord with an intrinsically heavy touch, and second because she then compounded the damage by regulating the action of her instrument in such a way that its key resistance became still heavier. The result was not a better or larger tone, but simply a tone that was more difficult to produce: hence the eagle's talons. There was no historical justification for this procedure. The great baroque harpsichordists, including Couperin and C.P.E. Bach, were unanimous in recommending the use of a reasonably light keyboard touch.

To return to Valenti: Despite my admiration for his nimble fingers, his obvious preference for approaching eighteenth-century music with nineteenth-century ears prevents me from hearing his performances with much pleasure. Valenti habitually adds and subtracts registration colors in the middle of musical phrases, perhaps hoping to create the semblance of crescendos and diminuendos. This may be pleasing to those who think of Bach and Scarlatti as if they had composed for the Romantic piano, but it is contrary to the aesthetic basis of baroque keyboard music, and superfluous to a truly expressive style of harpsichord playing.

A letter from Baird Hastings chides me for failing to mention Yella Pessl, but as Mr. Hastings himself points out, Pessl did not make any LPs. My article, which also omitted mention of other notable harpsichordists, was not intended to be encyclopedic.

Victor Wolfram
Stillwater, Okla.

Nail It Down

After reading your tests on the Empire 7500 loudspeakers [June 1971] and five others, I decided to trade. I was quite surprised at the difference when I got the 7500s home. Much less distortion than the 6000s at high volume. Led Zeppelin has never sounded better. But how do I keep the furniture from vibrating?

Arthur W. Covert
Battle Creek, Mich.

Sign of the Dollar

I object to Paul Henry Lang's curious and unfashionable intrusion of a political sour note as a punch line to his review of what is the most passionate legacy Mozart has left us: his string quintets [August 1972]. Mr. Lang finds it necessary to end with the erudite nitpickery that the new Tátrai recording for Qualiton omits certain repeats in three quintets, and especially that "they do not repeat the second half of the minuet—and that is really not cricket. Apparently, different though the political ideology of present-day Hungary may be from ours, when it comes to cramming an entire work on one side of a disc, their methods are startlingly similar to those practiced by our ruthless capitalists."

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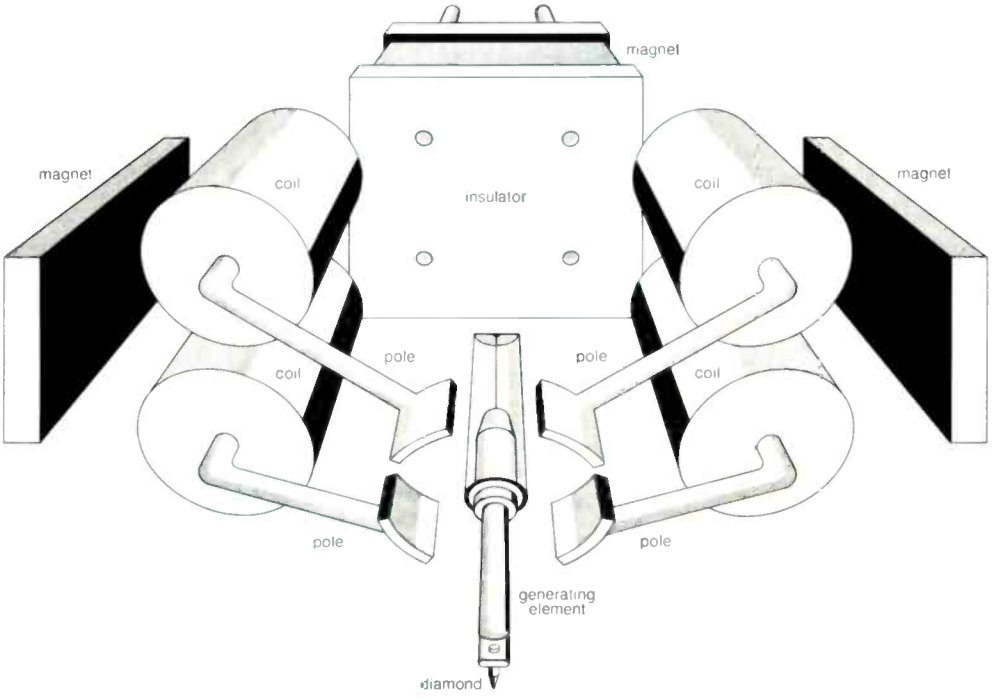

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What this seems to mean, if it means anything at all, is that the Tátrai Qualiton set of the Mozart quintets offers on three discs exactly the same six quintets also offered (on three discs) by such "capitalists" as the Budapest Quartet on Columbia, the Heutling Quartet on Seraphim, the Pascal Quartet on Monitor, and the Barchet Quartet on Vox. So what precisely is the beef? And what has it to do with the virtues of capitalism vs. communism *e tutti quanti*?

Subpolitical snideisms of this kind, as you are certainly aware, were once considered in America, about ten or twenty years ago, a necessary kind of Cold War genuflection even in the most extravagantly irrelevant contexts (such as this), when writers on existentialism, nerve-gas fall-out in Montana, and the sex life of the elephant somehow always found it imperative to end with some cute primness about how much worse it all is in Russia—here Hungary—or no better.

Making the sign of the Holy Dollar on one's breast has no place in music criticism. So let's please allow Mozart to lie in peace in the unmarked grave in which they shoved him like a dog in Vienna, city of music, when *he* would not toe the dollar mark and jump on the gravy train like so many since.

G. Legman
Valbonne, France

Tchaikovsky, Op. Posth.

As a postscript to my earlier communication ["Letters," June 1972] regarding the so-called

Tchaikovsky—a thicket of revisions.

three-movement version of the Tchaikovsky Third Piano Concerto, I might note that whereas the reconstruction of the "Seventh Symphony" has been carried out with the sanction of Soviet artists, I have been informed by an official of Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga that the Third Concerto is considered as one movement and has in fact recently been recorded in that form (Zhukov at the piano). Moreover, they note, "according to Melodiya specialists they have no intention to consider it any other way." This inconsistency on the part of the Soviets between accepting the bogus "Seventh Symphony" and rejecting the three-movement Third Concerto is curious, to say the least; nevertheless, it does appear to reflect current Russian musicological opinion on the matter and as such could be said to support my view of the work (and Tchaikovsky's too, for that matter) as being in one self-contained movement.

Incidentally, I fully agree with reader Charles Marootian ["Letters," September 1972] that not only *Voyvode* but also *Fatum*, *The Tempest*, and the seldom heard concert overture in C minor should receive more attention from domestic recording companies. However, it is one thing to reconstruct an orchestral work from a set of completed instrumental parts as in the case of *Voyvode*, and quite another to fabricate an orchestral score out of a handful of piano sketches as in the case of the "Seventh Symphony" and the three-movement version of the Third Piano Concerto. Such efforts are of great interest, but one must always keep in mind that they reflect only the opinions of those doing the orchestrating and should not be thought of as if they were the definitive statements of the composer.

Steven J. Haller
Detroit, Mich.

Russian Anthems

Steven J. Haller ["Letters," June 1972] stated that a recent Melodiya recording of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* substituted the Soviet national anthem for the Tsarist anthem. I have both recordings currently listed in the Soviet edition of the Melodiya catalogue, and neither of them is arranged with the Soviet national anthem (*Hymn of the Soviet Union*, composed in 1943 by Aleksandrov). Both recordings employ the Shebalin arrangement of the score which replaces the Tsarist anthem with the march/hymn *Slavsya*. Glinka utilized this theme in the epilogue to his opera *A Life for the Tsar*. The same change is also made in Soviet performances of *Marche slave*.

Larry Jackson
Berkeley, Calif.

Can You Top This?

I would like to respond to a letter by Felix Farthing that appeared in the July 1972 issue commenting on Telefunken's Bach cantata series and Argo's complete Shakespeare recordings. While it is true that these projects dwarf our Haydn undertaking (of forty-nine records, not forty as you stated), please note that we claimed only that it is the largest *ever completed*.

Evidently Mr. Farthing and HIGH FIDELITY are unaware that some time ago we began another project that will be, indeed, the largest recording project in history: all the works of Johann Sebastian Bach—on over two hundred

Haydn on record—bettered by Bach.

records. The Society has already issued 124 records in this series.

Michael Naida
President
Musical Heritage Society
New York, N.Y.

Gunnar Johansen's complete keyboard music of Bach (Artist Direct label, Blue Mounds, Wisconsin) totals, I believe, forty-eight discs. This would put Mr. Johansen, in terms of recorded *musical* projects, apparently in third place to the Musical Heritage and Telefunken Bach series. It also has had, for some years now, the unique distinction of being finished. Now, how's the complete keyboard music of Franz Liszt progressing, Mr. Johansen?

Morgan B. Usadel
Champaign, Ill.

Ballet for Listening

I agree with the major points made by Dale Harris in his review of Richard Bonynge's "Homage to Pavlova" album [June 1972]. Like the previous ballet sets—*La Péri*, *Giselle*, *Le Diable à quatre*, and "The Art of the Prima Ballerina," recorded by Mr. Bonynge—it is an exceptional pair of discs. But when Mr. Harris states, "You cannot, in other words, listen to ballet music as if it were absolute music," I must take up arms.

While I agree that *Firebird*, *The Three-Cornered Hat*, *The Rite of Spring*, etc. depend "on the stage to fulfill their ultimate intentions," this is not true of many other ballet scores. *La Bayadère*, *La Péri*, *Giselle*, *Le Diable à quatre*, *Don Quixote*, and some of Tchaikovsky's ballet music are all eminently able to stand on their own two feet as musical scores. The clear melodic line, the strong rhythms, and the fact that the music is so very whistleable (i.e., can

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Having one Harman/Kardon Multichannel receiver can be like having two of something else.

If you have two extra speakers, connect them to your receiver and with a mere flick of a switch you create two entirely different stereo systems. Each with separate tone controls.

So while you're happily enjoying Humble Pie in the living room, someone else can be listening to Roberta Flack in the den.

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Set up all four speakers in one room and you move on to "enhanced stereo." Where you play stereo...tapes, records or FM through four channels.

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SQ matrix best reproduces the ambiance of music recorded live in concert halls. SQ matrix blend is best for playing hard rock, contemporary music and music where a soloist is predominant.

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be enjoyed, retained, and easily reproduced by ordinary music lovers without a Ph. D. in Abstract Musicology) make it listeners' music. The sort of music in, say, "The Art of the Prima Ballerina" is so very down to earth, so lovely, that I can't agree that one is unable to enjoy it as absolute music.

Needless to say, my next stop is the record shop to buy the record Mr. Harris reviewed so well, "Homage to Pavlova." It will have to be good to compare with its predecessors in the series.

David W. Keyho
Kitchener, Ontario
Canada

Musical Hot Dogs

I was somewhat disappointed after reading the article "Exploring the Offbeat" [June 1972], which was authored by a most respected man, Michael Tilson Thomas. Mr. Thomas has committed musical universalism by suggesting that he would take rock music with him (along with some classical warhorses) were he to be deployed to a desert island.

With so much exciting and inspired classical music yet unpublished, and so much already published that even Mr. Thomas has not heard, why would a musical "gourmet" wish to take along a musical "hot dog"? For variety? I'd say that would be like going to a well-praised French restaurant and complaining because ice cream cones were not available.

Daniel Talbot
Boston, Mass.

Repertoire Rejuvenator?

I have just listened to a remarkable recording: Mahler's Sixth Symphony with the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell (Columbia M2 31313). It was recorded at a live performance originally broadcast throughout the country as part of the Cleveland Orchestra's syndicated concert series.

Might this not be a way of buttressing the sagging repertoires of domestic recording companies? Couldn't arrangements be made to release records made from tapes of other outstanding Cleveland performances, not to mention Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other orchestras that have or had syndicated concert series?

Orin Hood
Detroit, Mich.

Planned Obsolescence

What does every equipment manufacturer emphasize in a component? Judging by the advertising, from what friends tell me, and from what salesmen stress, it is the product's newness, its improvements and convenience features, and other factors that outdate last year's model. Rarely does anyone bother to stress reliability or durability—and this sort of thing is ignored in equipment reviews as well for the most part.

The result is a fantastic turnover rate which is wonderful for companies. My friends and I have been through forty pieces of stereo gear in the last two years for three good reasons. First is that the products themselves never quite do what they promise in print. Second, because advertising and constant emphasis on newness create dissatisfaction with what we

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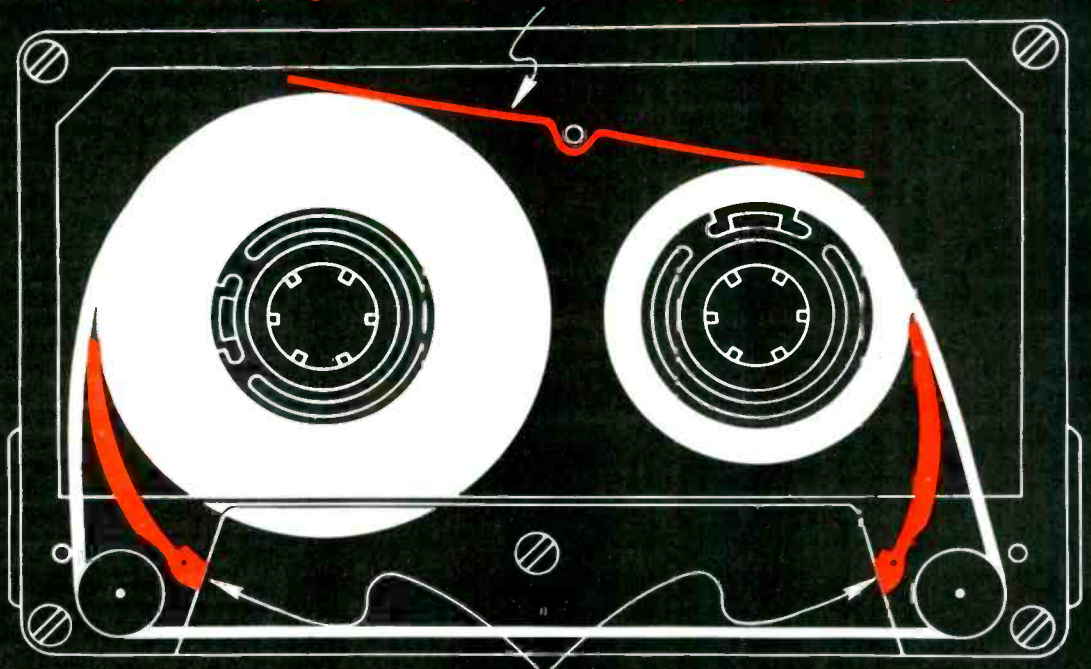

Two precision guide-arms insure smooth precise winds to eliminate jamming.

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Audio/Video Products

*Patent Pending

already own. And thirdly, few companies really see the need for repairing old components (service centers are overloaded, understaffed, and indifferent) since the products become obsolete so quickly.

The results of all this seem totally ridiculous to me. No longer do we think about music but about what kind of equipment reproduces it best. We go through hell trying to fix our old components while a slick salesman tells us to buy something that we may not really need. New, legitimate improvements are made to seem like Nirvana, but bitter disappointment and cynicism set in once the customers find out how they've been tricked.

K. Wiley
Rochester, N.Y.

Warped Expertise

Many thanks for HIGH FIDELITY's truly inspired choice of RCA Records' chief engineer W. Rex Isom as the author of your September 1972 article on record warping. This is one of the major reasons I have subscribed to HF for so many years—the assurance of knowing that articles will be written by *real* experts.

Certainly, *nobody* knows more about how to warp records than the people at RCA! Some indication of their great lead in this admittedly difficult field of accomplishment is witnessed by the extraordinary luck I recently had: I was able to obtain within a period of only a couple of months *three* pressings of the Persichetti *Sinfonia: Janiculum* all so perfectly warped as to be completely unplayable. This is a "record" not even approached by any other manufacturer in my some twenty-five years of record collecting, and RCA can be justly proud of such an accomplishment.

H. J. Martin, Jr.
Abilene, Texas

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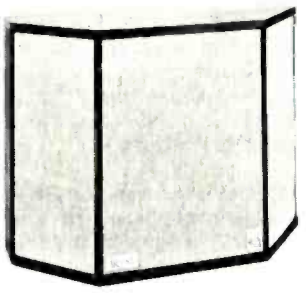
"The performance of the LST is truly prodigious." *High Fidelity Magazine*

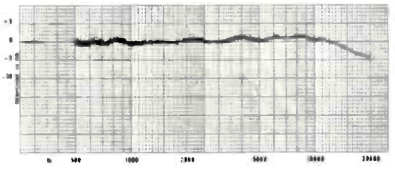


The idea behind our Laboratory Standard Transducer was to offer engineers and scientists a quantitative standard where before there was none. Since its introduction to the professional, however, a number of these speakers have found their way into home stereo systems.

This fact is not so remarkable, though, since the AR-LST is simply a logical extension of the philosophy long employed at AR in designing loudspeakers for the home: The best loudspeaker is the most accurate one.

Linear response

High Fidelity's recent review of the AR-LST (January 1972) reflected their appreciation of this approach: "The performance of the LST is truly prodigious. Its response was found to be among the most linear



Total radiated energy of the AR-LST above 500 Hz; selector switch in the "flat" position.

yet measured for a loudspeaker. From 50 Hz to 15,000 Hz, the LST was measured as flat within plus or minus 3 dB!"

Flexibility

The AR-LST offers a choice of six different energy output characteristics — the flat one shown here, plus five others — all accurately known and available at the turn of a switch. *High Fidelity* reported that "different program material (depending on variations in high-frequency emphasis and over-all tonal balance) did seem to call for different settings of this switch", and that the various settings were "very useful for satisfying individual listener preference and/or suiting the playback to different types of rooms."

Overall performance

High Fidelity summed up its reaction to the AR-LST's unique characteristics this way: "The LST's sonic accuracy becomes manifest not only in terms of the natural tonal balance it provides for all manner of musical material, but also in the way it reveals subtle differences in the upper midrange and high-end response of different recordings — differences that often are obscured by otherwise fine loudspeakers but which are of importance to the critical listener. With good recordings and an appropriately powerful amplifier driving them, a pair of LST's are a joy to hear whether the material is rock or chamber music, grand opera or a baroque ensemble, Sinatra or a Mahler symphony."

HF-12

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too hot to handle

Given your druthers—and price no object—which outboard Dolby unit would you people choose for your own use?—J. T. Allen, Auburn, N.Y.

Keeping in mind that what's best for our purposes may not be best for yours, the Advent 100A. We use many different tape recorders and many types of tape, and we do a good deal of mono recording and copying. For such purposes the multiple control options of the 100A are unmatched by any other Dolby unit we've used. The double line inputs (and the options in converting them for mike use by way of Advent's preamp) with their separate faders are a big advantage where special mixing problems are involved, too. (Would you believe stereo mixdowns from quadraphonic open-reel tapes, for example?) There was one feature of the now-discontinued Advent 100 that we particularly liked: the little knobs for Dolby-level alignment controls. Since we use such a variety of equipment and tape we've made it standard practice to realign before each recording—and usually in playback as well. The knobs are marginally more convenient for this purpose than the screwdriver controls on many current models, the 100A included.

I have recorded an extensive library of stereo tapes on my present open-reel deck. While I would like to get an Akai automatic-reverse deck, I don't see how it could play the correct tracks on the second side without turning the reels over. Does everything come out properly paired and in the right direction, or will I have to make copies of my tapes? Will the playback characteristics be the same in both directions?—V. David Lee, Appleton, Wis.

Have no fear about getting the right tracks in the right direction. All automatic-reverse models have exactly the same track configuration as the nonreversing kind. They manage it in one of three ways: by having a second set of heads (or a second playback head alone) mounted upside down with respect to the forward-direction heads; by using a four-track playback head and switching electronically to the gaps needed for a given mode and direction of tape travel; or by inverting the whole head assembly (instead of the tape). Playback characteristics never are identical from one track to another, even with fixed heads, of course—though the differences normally are negligible. But a moving head assembly increases the possibilities of misalignment between tape and head and often prevents separate alignment for each direction of travel. Modern automatic-reverse equipment is vastly improved over the early models in this respect, so the point need be taken to heart only if you're uncompromising in your demand for the best possible reproduction.

In reading your test reports on FM tuners I notice that you published no alternate-channel selectivity figure for the Sherwood SEL-300 (April 1972). Can you supply it? And why do you use alternate-channel figures instead of the more stringent adjacent-channel measurement?—Jack Yurkiewicz, Flushing, N.Y.

In the report we said selectivity was among the measurements that placed the SEL-300 in the top class of tuners. It was, in fact, 85 dB—an excellent mark. Most of our readers live in urban or suburban areas tied to a particular metropolitan center. Since FCC rules specify a minimum geographical separation between the transmitters of stations on alternate channels (400 kHz apart on the dial) and an even greater minimum between adjacent channels (200 kHz apart), alternate channels may come in from the "next city down the pike" but most of our readers have little hope of receiving anything worthwhile on adjacent channels. It's only when you get out in the country, away from powerful stations and approximately midway between metropolitan centers, that usable signals may occur at such close spacing, and then only with a good antenna system for the most part. Generally speaking, a set with good alternate-channel selectivity also will have good adjacent-channel selectivity; and since the former is far more important to the large majority of our readers, that is the figure we publish.

In the floods this spring we lost our entire record library. In view of the rumored release of Dolbyized open-reel tapes, cassettes of high quality, quadraphonics, and whatever, do you still recommend disc recordings as the ultimate in high fidelity? If not, what do you recommend?—Elmer F. Seavey, Painted Post, N.Y.

Whew! As a matter of fact our preference still is for disc because of the much greater variety of musical material available on it and because of its greater convenience and lower cost. Obviously most Americans agree with us, since discs outsell tapes by a huge margin. For that reason we believe that if quadraphonics are to become a commercial success they must do so by way of disc systems. In comparing discs with tapes purely on a sonic basis (and using the commercially recorded product rather than special home-brew material) we find the quality of the tape issues to be more variable than that of the discs, making comparisons difficult. Even in open-reel issues at 7½ ips the hiss can be somewhat more audible than the disc's surface noise, though (in some recent issues from Ampex particularly) the tape may be quieter than the disc. At this writing we have heard no commercial Dolbyized open reels though stereo tapes should be available from Ampex and quadraphonic ones from Vanguard by the time you read this. High-level, high-frequency passages on cassette often sound a bit pinched by comparison to the disc. And cartridges seldom are quite up to the disc standard either because of hiss (on a wide-range player) or somewhat muffled highs (on one that filters the hiss). The best bet for clear sonic superiority, then, would appear to be the Dolbyized open-reels at 7½ ips; but if they ever are to compete with discs it will take years of catalogue-building.

I'm shopping for a magnetic phono cartridge, but I'm confused about output ratings. For example Pickering gives theirs in terms of a 5.5-cm/sec. groove velocity, while Shure uses 5 cm/sec. How can I compare these figures?—David Langer, Altoona, Pa.

The nominal 0-VU recording level for a 1-kHz tone in mono discs was standardized at a groove velocity (actually the velocity developed by the stylus tip in tracking the modulation) of 5 cm/sec., and some cartridge manufacturers (Shure for example) continue to use that velocity in specifying cartridge output. There is no prevailing standard in this respect, as your question demonstrates. To translate ratings you divide by the given velocity (reducing them to the equivalent of ratings at 1 cm/sec.) then multiply by the velocity in which you want the figures to read. For example you can take Shure's 5-cm/sec. ratings, divide by five, multiply by 5.5, and come out with the equivalent of the Pickering 5.5-cm/sec. ratings. Incidentally, for purposes of comparing the cartridges' output ratings to your preamp's input sensitivity for optimum match we'd suggest you translate all output ratings to 3.54 cm/sec., the nominal 0-VU for stereo disc.

You mention in your report on the Tran-Static I loudspeaker system [June 1972] that the crossover frequencies to and from the midrange driver are 300 and 1,350 Hz. What do these frequencies indicate? That is, how do they help in choosing a speaker?—Carl S. Grossman, New York, N.Y.

Crossover frequencies, while of importance to the designer in getting from each driver the best it has to offer, have little practical significance to the user. We mention them—when we mention them—primarily for benefit of readers who interest themselves in internal workings; and many speaker-system designers do believe in getting the bass crossover frequency as low as possible. We believe, however, that the hallmark of a fine product is in what it achieves (sonically speaking) rather than in how it achieves it.

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Great specs. Is there a receiver manufacturer of any consequence who doesn't claim them?

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The Pilot 254 Stereo Receiver $429.90.

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the Sansui Seven

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1. **DIRECT-COUPLED POWER AMPLIFIER WITH AUTOMATICALLY RESTORING DOUBLE-PROTECTED OUTPUT.** Direct coupling from one end of the power amplifier to the other yields unimpaired damping factor and transient response at exceptional power bandwidth and phenomenally low distortion levels. Both quick-acting fuses and relay circuits protect both amplifier and speakers if failures occur, with automatic self-restoration if the problem is transient.
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6. **THREE-STAGE, DIRECT-COUPLED EQUALIZER/PREAMP AND CONSTANT CURRENT DRIVER AMPLIFIER.** High signal-to-noise ratio, high stability, extremely wide dynamic range and elimination of crossover distortion, as well as other types, all contribute to an exceptionally clean, effortless, unclipped sound. Broad frequency response beyond the audio extremes also prevents phase shift at the low or high end of the spectrum, to add to the exceptional purity of reproduction.
7. **NEW-DESIGN, QUALITY AM TUNER.** AM reception is not just an "also" on the SEVEN: learn again how good AM can sound, at its best. An RF preselector-amplifier combines with a 3-gang tuning capacitor and an IF section that includes a 2-resonator ceramic filter for ideal bandpass characteristics. A 2-stage Automatic Gain Control Circuit acts on both RF and IF sections for constant volume regardless of signal strength. A whistle filter eliminates other-station beat interference.

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Sharp-cutoff, Negative-feedback High and Low Filters. Low-distortion circuitry using especially designed transistors provide 12dB/octave characteristics.

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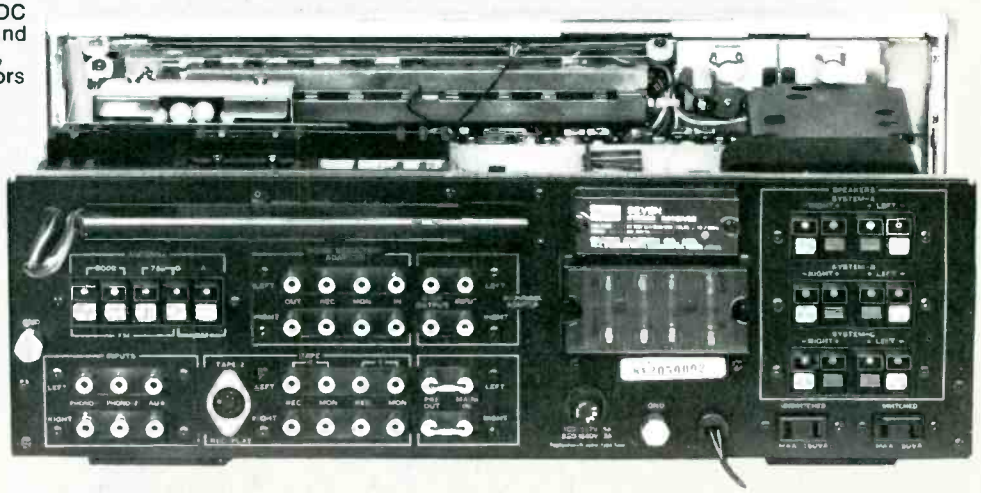
Two Large Tuning Meters. One for signal strength, the other for center channel, for precision tuning.

FM Muting Switch. Off for hunting distant stations; on for velvet-quiet tuning.

Three-System Speaker Selector Off for headphone-only listening; also A, B, C, A+B and A+C.

Adjustment-free Sharp-cutoff Filter for Multiplex Carrier. Front-panel Headphone Jack, Grounding Terminals, Switched and Unswitched AC Outlets, One-Touch Connector Terminals for Speakers and Antennas, 300-ohm/75-ohm FM Antenna Inputs, Loudness Switch . . . and more, more, more.

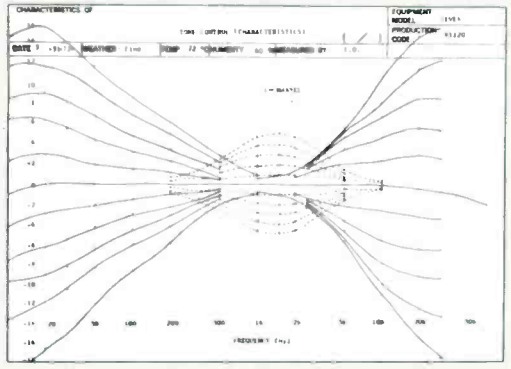


Sansui

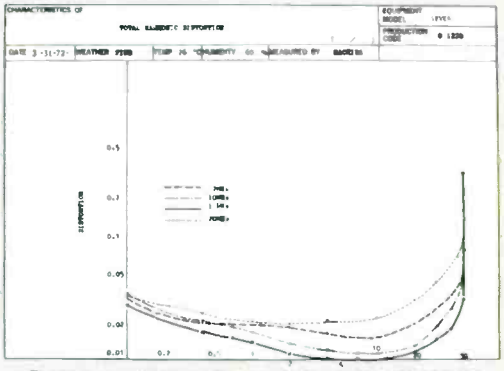
and its seven wonders

SPECIFICATIONS

Power Output	
IHF Music	160 watts, 4 ohms
Continuous RMS	47/47 watts, 8 ohms
Power Bandwidth, IHF	10 to 50,000 Hz, 8 ohms
Frequency Response, Overall	15 to 40,000 Hz +1dB, −1.5 dB (1 watt)
Distortion, Overall	
Total Harmonic	below 0.3%, rated output
IM	below 0.3%, rated output
Hum and Noise, Overall (IHF)	80 dB (AUX input)
FM Sensitivity (IHF)	1.3 microvolts
FM Signal/Noise	better than 63 dB
FM IF or Spurious-Response Rejection	better than 100 dB
FM Capture Ratio	below 1.5
AM Sensitivity	46dB/m (bar antenna)
AM Selectivity	better than 30dB (±10kHz)
Phono Input Sensitivity	2.5 mv
Phono Input Maximum	100 mv



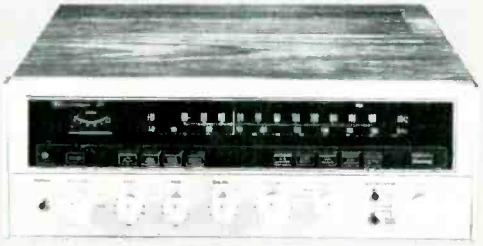
Action of the Triple-range Tone Controls



Total Harmonic Distortion vs. Power (20 to 20,000 Hz)

THE SANSUI MODEL SIX:

There's great news for those who want the essential performance capability of the Model SEVEN, but whose power-output requirements are somewhat less demanding. Look into the Superb Sansui SIX, close relative of the SEVEN with basically the same design, features and performance capability. **$389.95.**



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CIRCLE 60 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

news and views

Eight Tracks for Four Bits

If you keep your eyes open you may see some unusual vending machines turning up soon at gas stations, department stores, tape dealers . . . wherever. Make-A-Tape, Inc., of Fraser, Michigan, a supplier of high-speed duplicators, is offering a coin-operated 8-track unit for public use.

To operate the machine, you bring in a commercially recorded cartridge, check the calibrator on the duplicator for the correct tape length, and purchase the proper length blank cartridge from the store. (There's nothing that says you can't bring in your own blank tape though.) Put the cartridges in the machine, insert your fifty cents, and in two minutes you have your copy. The company says that all tracks are duplicated in a single pass at 15 ips.

With the current litigation over tape pirating (unauthorized duplication of copyrighted material for commercial purposes), this machine is certain to raise some eyebrows. By making the consumer himself the "pirate," it may well meet the letter of the law; but we fail to see how it can jibe with the spirit of the law, let alone the ethical principle the law seeks to implement.

Thank You, Schwann

If the phrase "electronically rechanneled stereo" has a somewhat tinny ring, it isn't just because the recordings it characterizes are trying to be something they're not: stereo. More important (to us), many rechanneling jobs just don't sound very good. Played on stereo equipment, they may seem a little more open and spacious than the mono originals; but there's often a hokeyness to the sound that more than offsets the spacious "modernization." Playing them in mono usually doesn't help. Since phase-shift techniques are among the rechanneler's bag of tricks, some frequencies may tend to be self-canceling in mono, and the sound comes out peaky (or should we say peaked?).

Many reissues of prestereo recordings (particularly from Angel, Columbia, and Victor) have resisted the blandishments of rechanneling, however; and we say more power to them. Mono reissues have been at a disadvantage because they appeared only in Schwann 2 (Schwann's semiannual supplementary catalogue), while rechanneled jobs were listed in the regular monthly Schwann 1 along with the true stereo discs and tapes. Now that's changed. Schwann is putting all reissues from prestereo days into Schwann 2 only and is indicating which are rechanneled by adding an "E" to the listing number.

What will happen, we wonder, when the time comes to list reissues of prequadraphonic recordings? Some companies (Columbia in particular, it seems) were recording with quadraphonics in mind for some time before anything was issued in that form; and all companies have been using multichannel recording equipment for years. There are sure to be all sorts of arguments about what constitutes "real four-channel sound"—arguments that can't be resolved by simple reference to the original recording date or even to the number of tracks on the original tapes. In the meantime, bravo Schwann for having included the relatively clean-cut degrees of mono/stereo distinction in your listings.

Budget SQ discs from Capitol

Another major-label record company is dipping a hesitant toe into the murky waters of four-channel recording. Capitol Records has introduced seven SQ-matrixed LPs to test the consumer market. The LPs will sell for $1.98, or $3.00 less than the average LP—making them the first quadraphonic bargain issues to come to our attention. Titles in the group will be fairly middle-of-the-road: "Great Songs of Bacharach and David," "Songs of the Seventies," music from *Fiddler on the Roof*, and so on.

Capitol currently plans to introduce quadraphonic recordings of contemporary artists such as Grand Funk Railroad and Leon Russell in 1973. These records will carry regular $4.98 and $5.98 prices. Capitol's only previous four-channel venture was a single 8-track tape release: John Lennon's "Imagine."

Beating Time with a Soldering Iron

Whether your interest in high fidelity is primarily musical or electronic, here's a little item that may be of interest. For those who know how to wield a soldering iron, Radio Shack is offering an electronic metronome in kit form.

Marantz brings you stereo today and 4-channel anytime you want it.

If you're thinking about getting into stereo now, but may be ripe for 4-channel later, the new Marantz 4430 AM/FM Stereo Receiver will grow with your needs.

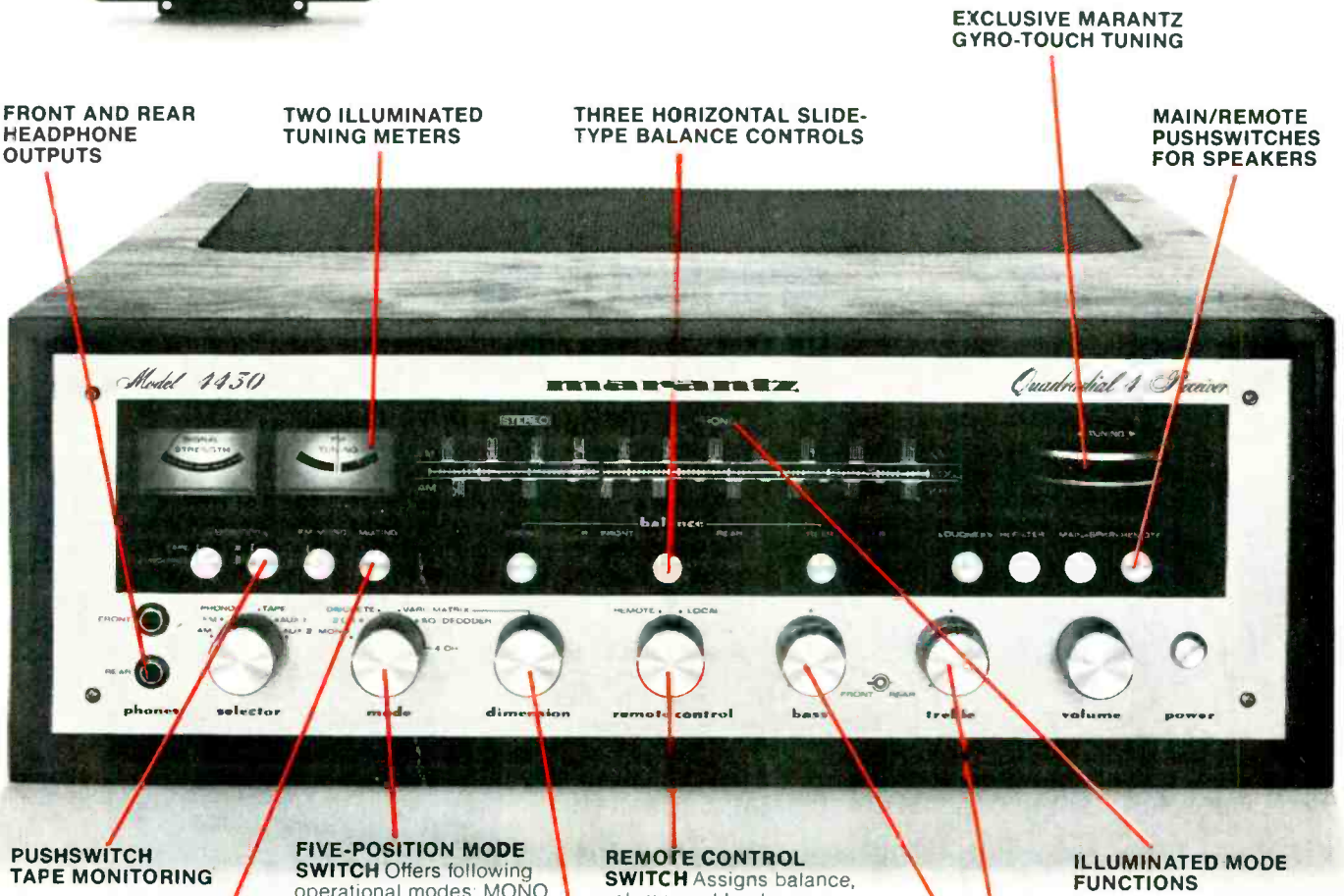
A twist of a knob is all that it takes for the Model 4430 to switch from regular stereo to exotic 4-channel. What's more, Marantz components synthesize 4-channel sound from any stereo source (including your stereo records and tapes), decode any matrix-encoded 4-channel disc or FM broadcast, *and accept optional SQ* matrix decoders and CD-4** demodulators*. This Marantz exclusive plug-in decoder feature provides built-in snap-in, snap-out adaptability to any future 4-channel matrix development.

Packed with every feature you could imagine, the ultra-sophisticated Mocel 4430 delivers 120 Watts of continuous RMS power with less than 0.3% distortion.

Also available: the Marantz Model 4415 AM/FM Stereo Receiver (60 Watts RMS). It's another member of the Marantz family of 2 or 4-channel receivers, amplifiers and adaptors starting at just $299.95. See your Marantz dealer now.

marantz.
We sound better.

OPTIONAL MARANTZ MODEL SQA-1 DECODER (shown) is just one of a variety of optional matrix decoders which snap instantly into exclusive SQ* *decoder pocket* found on all Marantz 4-channel equipment.



*SQ is a trademark of CBS Labs, Inc.
**CD-4 is a trademark of Victor Co. of Japan

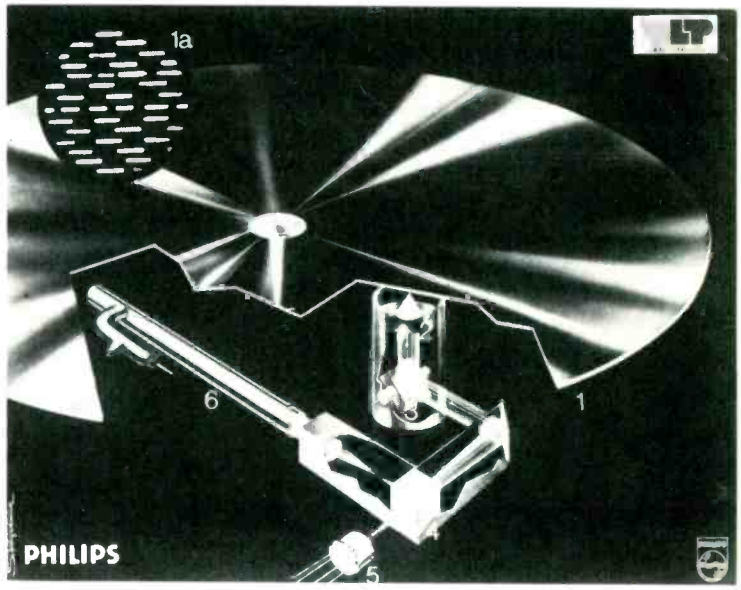
The all-electric Archerkit No. 28-3392, as it is called, has a range from 40 to 210 beats per minute and marks time either with the usual audible beat or by flashing a green light—which is nice if you play a loud instrument or use headphones for practice purposes and can't always hear the beat. The kit costs under $10 and is available by mail order or through Radio Shack and Allied Radio Stores.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

video topics Feast or Surfeit?

The home video recording market—only now digesting the many proposed videocassette and videocartridge tape formats—must soon widen its girth to encompass new types of video discs. Until recently Teldec had the disc field all to itself. At this writing, however, RCA, MCA, Philips, Thomson-CSF, and Zenith all seem to be preparing to join Teldec on the menu.

The new disc types seem to share little of Teldec's technology. Teldec used a vertically-oriented pulse-coded groove embossed into a thin vinyl disc. Among the newer systems are electrostatic discs for playback with a variable-capacitance transducer and laser-etched discs that are pressed in vinyl and aluminum coated for playback through an optical transducer system. Little information is available about most of them—particularly that under development in the Thomson-CSF laboratories in France—and possible marketing dates are still vague; 1974 seems to be the earliest.



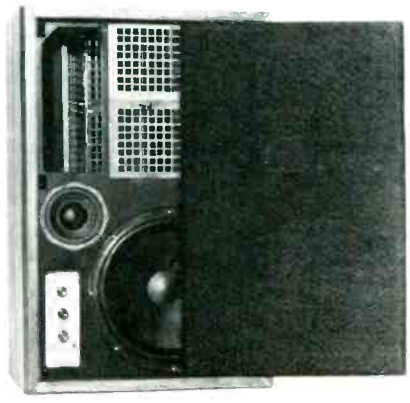
Philips VLP (Video Long Play) disc (1) is tracked by beam from laser (6), passing through prism (4), tracking mirror (3), and lens (2) so that it focuses on "pits" in underside of disc. (See enlargement, 1a.) Light reflected from metalized disc passes back through lens and mirror system to activate photodiode (5), which converts pattern of pits into electrical signals. Maximum playing time is said to be up to 45 minutes per side—or 1½ hours per disc.

equipment in the news

The luxurious Sequerra FM tuner

Among the specs that the Sequerra Co. lists for its new solid-state FM tuner are 120 dB of dynamic range, 140 dB of alternate channel selectivity, 100 dB of spurious response rejection, and a 2-microvolt IHF sensitivity. The unit includes digital frequency readout, Dolby noise reduction, and oscilloscope displays for tuning (signal strength, channel centering, multipath) and audio (stereo or quadraphonic signals from the system to which the tuner is connected). The price is $1,600.

CIRCLE 154 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Soundcraftsmen unveils electrostatic speaker

The SC-12ES bookshelf speaker from Soundcraftsmen combines a 12-inch acoustic-suspension woofer, a dual-cone midrange, and two electrostatic radiators, coupled to a back-wave emission-doubler, for the high frequencies. In addition, the SC-12ES features a logic-controlled protection circuit, illuminated system-on and overload-cutoff indicators, and a response-equalization control panel that includes a low-frequency crossover control in addition to midrange and tweeter knobs that are continuously variable from full on to off. The SC-12ES costs $399.50.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

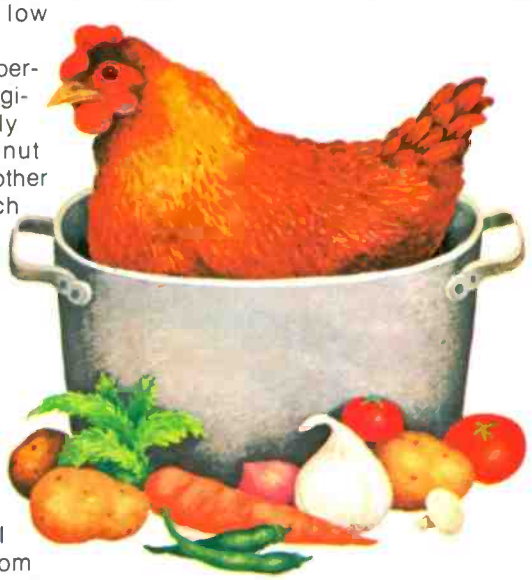
Superscope stereo products fulfill the American dream.....quality stereo components everyone can afford.

A pledge from the company which brings you Sony/Superscope tape recorders and Marantz stereo equipment.

Two cars in every garage. And a chicken in every pot. There's no reason today why everyone who listens to music shouldn't enjoy stereo in his home the way it was meant to be heard. The way the professionals and buffs do. With a stereo system made up of separate components (which can be as basic as a receiver and two speakers).

But up to now, components have been beyond the reach of the average budget. Now, however, Superscope combines its knowledge and years of experience in the audio field to bring to every music lover, high quality, solid-state stereo components at a modest price. Whether it's your basic AM/FM receiver and two speakers, or a separate tuner, amplifier and speakers, Superscope offers an exciting new line of quality stereo components starting as low as $79.95 for our amplifier.

Not only are these new Superscope components brilliantly engineered, but they're beautifully styled with handsome walnut cabinets (an option with most other brands). Most important, each Superscope stereo amplifier, tuner and receiver carries a *three-year guarantee on parts and labor*. Is the high degree of reliability and quality at so modest a price an impossible dream? Not at all. It's an absolute reality at your Superscope dealer.



The Superscope three year guarantee.

Superscope, Inc. guarantees the original registered owner that all parts are free from operating defects for three years from purchase date. Products are repaired or replaced free of charge subject to the following: if purchased in U.S.A. from authorized dealer; if registration card transmitted within ten days of purchase; if serial number not altered/removed; if connected/operated subject to instructions; if not repaired by unauthorized parties; if not altered/repaired so as to affect stability/reliability; if shipped with shipping charges fully prepaid; in original package from within U.S.A. Return shipment to points in U.S.A. is prepaid if foregoing met. Owner has responsibility to proving date of purchase at time service sought.

SUPERSCOPE.

You never heard it so good.®

CIRCLE 69 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Pickering dynamic headphones

Pickering has put separate dynamic woofers and tweeters, together with an L-C crossover network, into the earpieces of its top stereo headphone, the PH-4955. The model has a nominal input impedance of 8 ohms and a frequency response rated at 22 to 20,000 Hz. Other features include molded earcups, molded-in strain-reliefs, and headband adjustment knobs. Weighing 28 ounces and supplied with a 10-foot coiled cord, the PH-4955 is priced at $59.95.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Dokorder deck has bidirectional recording

Bidirectional recording and automatic reverse and repeat in playback are provided by Dokorder's Model 6020 tape deck. Other features include automatic shutoff, four heads, three motors, center drive system, one-hand tape threading, and pause control. The four-track stereo/mono deck has two speeds (7½ and 3¾ ips) and sells for $279.95.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Thorens updates a turntable

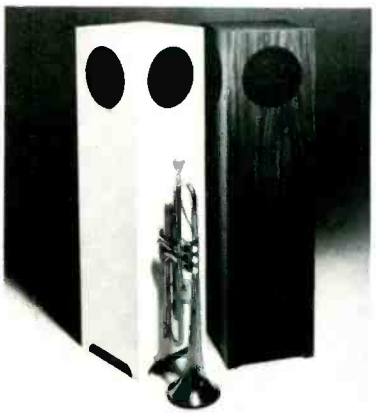
A more efficient motor, reduced stray magnetic field, and a completely new tone arm are the major innovations in the Thorens TD-125AB Mk II turntable. The tone arm, the TP-16, is said to have a bearing friction of less than 20 milligrams in both planes, measured at the stylus tip. The TD-125AB Mk II is powered by an electronically controlled synchronous motor and belt drive, delivering 16, 33, and 45 rpm. The turntable with the TP-16, but less an optional dust cover, costs $310.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

EPI's Micro Tower

Sleek and slender, the Micro Tower Model M-75 speaker from Epicure Products uses a column of air tuned to resonate over two octaves, rather than a separate low-frequency driver, to extend bass response down to 50 Hz. The compact design stands 32 inches high and is so efficient, according to EPI, that it can be driven by many compact stereo systems. Minimum recommended power in the driving amplifier is 5 watts continuous per channel. The speaker comes in white or walnut finish, and a pair costs $120.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Heathkit's sound-on-wheels system

The high fidelity kit builder can now turn his attention to music for his car, thanks to a new series from Heathkit. It includes the CR-1000 stereo FM tuner (top) at $64.95, the CRA-1000-1 power amplifier at $29.95, the CT-1001 cassette deck (below tuner) at $89.95 including microphone, and a choice of two speaker systems, at $19.95 the pair. The components operate from a 12-volt car battery, and each kit includes all necessary mounting hardware.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

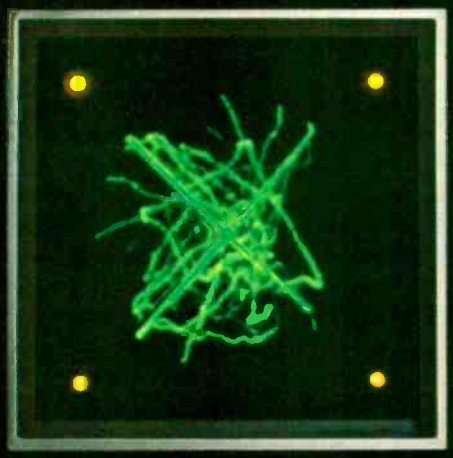
CIRCLE 52 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

Do you know what 4-channel sound looks like?

If you don't know, then you're probably missing something. Because it's easier to adjust your 4-channel system when you see where all that sound is coming from. That's why Panasonic has made a 4-channel audio scope. Model SH-3433. With it you'll be able to see if you're getting the most out of your music. Whether it happens to be stereo. Matrix. Or discrete 4-channel. In either 8-track tapes or Compatible Discrete 4-channel (CD-4) records. Like RCA Quadradiscs.

The SH-3433 lets you see the strength and phase relationship of all 4 channels, at one time. You can look at two channels, if you're listening to stereo. Or one. Turn the Wave Form selector to the one channel you want to see. The screen will show it.

The audio scope has controls for position, balance, focus and brightness. A gain control to



change the size of the wave form. Plus a Scope Mode switch for either matrix or discrete sound.

The back panel has jacks for most accessories. Stereo or 4-channel. Including two for an FM tuner. So you can monitor FM stereo wave forms and detect possible FM multipath problems. And if you're using 2 stereo amplifiers to get 4-channel sound, you can see if the front signals and back signals are in phase. With our special Rear Phase switch.

Of course, you need more than an audio scope to get 4-channel sound. So look, and listen, to our other discrete 4-channel equipment. Like our Model SA-6800X receiver. It has Acoustic Field Dimension, so you can adjust the speaker separation electronically. You move the sound to fit the size of the room. Without physically moving the speakers. It also has a phase shifter for the various matrix systems. 300 watts of power (IHF). Plus a remote balance control.

You can see our 4-channel audio scope, receivers and other components at your franchised Panasonic Hi-Fi dealer. But before you settle back and listen, take a look. Because in 4-channel sound, seeing is believing.

FOR YOUR NEAREST FRANCHISED PANASONIC HI-FI DEALER, CALL TOLL FREE 800 243-6000. IN CONN., 1-800 882-6500.

Panasonic®

Hi Fi 4-Channel Audio Scope

FIRST PRIZE WINNERS

speaking of records

The Best Records of the Year

by Leonard Marcus

CAVALLI: La Calisto. Ileana Cotrubas, Janet Baker, Raymond Leppard. Argo ZNF 11/2.

SCHOENBERG/BERG/WEBERN: String Quartets. LaSalle Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 2720 029 (five discs).

BRAHMS: String Quartet, Op. 51, No. 2. **HAYDN:** String Quartet, Op. 76, No. 1. Tokyo String Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon (not available in the U.S.).

BACH: Cantatas, Vols. 1 and 2. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Gustav Leonhardt. Telefunken SKW 1/1-2; SKW 2/1-2 (four discs).

BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 29 ("Hammerklavier"). Rudolf Serkin. Columbia M 30081.

BERIO: Epifanie; Folk Songs. Cathy Berberian, Luciano Berio. RCA Red Seal LSC 3189.

BERNSTEIN: Mass. Alan Titus, Leonard Bernstein. Columbia M2 31008 (two discs).

BRAHMS: Die schöne Magelone. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Sviatoslav Richter. Angel S 36753.

CRUMB: Ancient Voices of Children. Jan DeGaetani, Arthur Weisberg. Nonesuch H 71255.

DEBUSSY: Images; Children's Corner. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 196.

FIVE CENTURIES OF EUROPEAN CHORAL MUSIC. Eric Ericson. Odeon SME 153-29 916/9 (four discs).

HAYDN: Symphonies 82–92. Antal Dorati. London Stereo Treasury STS 15229/34 (six discs).

HONEGGER: Le Roi David. Michel Corboz. Erato (not available in the U.S.).

JANÁČEK: Piano Works. Rudolf Firkusny, Rafael Kubelik. Deutscne Grammophon 2707 055 (two discs).

MONTEVERDI: Madrigals. Raymond Leppard. Philips 6799 066 (five discs).

MOZART: Le Nozze di Figaro. Jessye Norman, Mirella Freni, Yvonne Minton, Wladimiro Ganzarolli, Ingvar Wixell, Colin Davis. Philips 6707 014 (four discs).

MOZART: Requiem. Edith Mathis, Julia Hamari, Wieslaw Ochman, Karl Ridderbusch, Karl Böhm. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 143.

MUSSORGSKY: Boris Godunov. Nicolai Ghiaurov, Herbert von Karajan. London OSA 1439 (four discs).

NYSTROEM: Sinfonia del mare. Elisabeth Soederstroem, Stig Westerberg. Swedish Society (not available in the U.S.).

THE PHENOMENAL HEINZ HOLLIGER. Heinz Holliger. Philips (not available in the U.S.)

ROSSINI: La Cenerentola. Teresa Berganza, Luigi Alva, Claudio Abbado. Deutsche Grammophon 2709 039 (three discs).

SCRIABIN: Piano Concerto; Prometheus. Vladimir Ashkenazy, Lorin Maazel. London CS 6732.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 14. Phyllis Curtin, Simon Estes, Eugene Ormandy. RCA Red Seal LSC 3206.

STRAUSS, R.: Capriccio. Gundula Janowitz, Hermann Prey, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Karl Ridderbusch. Karl Bohm. Deutsche Grammophon 2709 038 (three discs).

STRAUSS, R.: Sonatina for Winds; Serenade. Edo de Waart. Philips 6500 097.

VERDI: Don Carlo. Montserrat Caballé, Shirley Verrett, Placido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, Ruggero Raimondi, Carlo Maria Giulini. Angel S 3774 (four discs).

WAGNER: Die Meistersinger. Helen Donath, René Kollo, Theo Adam, Herbert von Karajan. Angel S 376 (five discs).

WAGNER: Tannhäuser. Helga Dernesch, Christa Ludwig, René Kollo, Victor Braun, Georg Solti. London OSA 1438 (four discs).

Jury Felix Aprahamian, *Sunday Times* and *The Gramophone*. England. President
Carl-Gunnar Ahlén. *Svenska Dagbladet*. Sweden
Karl Breh. *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*. Germany
Gerold Fierz. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. Switzerland
Edward Greenfield, *The Guardian* and *The Gramophone*, England
James Lyons. *American Record Guide*. U.S.A.
Leonard Marcus. HIGH FIDELITY. U.S.A.
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Daniel Webster. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. U.S.A.
Tilden Wells. *The Columbus Dispatch*. U.S.A.

MONTREUX—I have finally concluded that, at least when it comes to music, I really am an Occidental chauvinist. And, paradoxically, I reached this conclusion after pondering the remarkable musicianship of so many Japanese. Within two days here in Montreux, Switzerland one of three First Prizes for the best recordings of the year went to a young Japanese string quartet playing the music of Brahms and Haydn; and Tokyo's NHK Symphony Orchestra, under its forty-year-old director, Hiroyuki Iwaki, gave exceptionally well-received nineteenth-century Germanic performances of Brahms's First Symphony and Stravinsky's *Sacre du printemps* (and if you haven't heard Stravinsky done in nineteenth-century Germanic style, you haven't heard anything). On the recording, the Tokyo String Quartet plays Haydn's Op. 76, No. 1 with the abandon of Hungarian gypsies, and Brahms's A minor with a depth of feeling and perfection of ensemble, demonstrating a total commitment to a music that Brahms's or Haydn's Japanese contemporaries would have found barbarous.

Now I couldn't imagine a group of Viennese, Parisians, or Philadelphians playing the koto, samisen, and shakuhachi being acclaimed in Yokohama for besting the natives in performances of sankyoku. There are few enough Westerners knowledgeable, much less proficient, in non-Occidental music. But for every American amateur of the sitar, sarod, or samisen you can find a hundred professional, or at least serious, Japanese violinists alone. The reasons, as any scholar can tell you, are many—historical, sociological, cultural, economic. Of course, one does not come right out and claim that there can not be anything in Japanese music as universally enlightening, as communicative as a Beethoven sonata, a Bach concerto, or a Dvořák symphony. We are too sophisticated for that. After all, contends the ethnomusicologically-minded college grad, our Western music may have developed a useful and flexible harmonic system, but Oriental music has . . . er . . . uh. . . .

In short, developed nothing to equal that miracle. So, while a Debussy may have been *influenced* by the colors of Asia and a Louis Armstrong by the rhythms of Africa, the harmonically-based music of the West has *conquered the musical foundations* of the non-Occidental cultures it has met—to the dismay, I might add, of professional ethnomusicologists, who are racing to study "primitive" musics while there is still such music to study.

We had never before given a prize to a recording of any chamber music. But the Fifth Annual HIGH FIDELITY/Montreux International Record Awards bestowed a *prix mondial* not only on the DGG recording by the Tokyo String Quartet, incidentally their disc debut (and on DGG's budget "Debut" series, which the company unfortunately does not intend to distribute in America), but coincidentally on another album of string quartets, and also on DGG: the LaSalle Quartet's recording of the complete works by Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern for the medium. The other *prix* went to the recording of Raymond Leppard's modernized Glyndebourne performance of Cavalli's 300-year-old opera *La Calisto* on Argo.

A word about how some of the other major contenders fared. Bernstein's *Mass*, Karajan's *Boris* and *Meistersinger*, Davis' *Marriage of Figaro*, Giulini's *Don Carlos*, and Böhm's inordinately slow Mozart Requiem (there are some things that are successful in the concert hall which do not work on a recording to be listened to in a living room) all fell on the first ballot. In fact, the only standard opera that remained after the initial holocaust was Solti's *Tannhäuser*, and I am sure that this eventually succumbed only because we seem to give Solti something nearly every year and in the darkness of their secret ballots some jurors may have been afraid that Montreux would begin to look like "Solti territory." I stuck it out to the end.

Other strong contenders turned out to be Michelangeli's Debussy piano music, the Scriabin disc by Maazel and Ashkenazy, and one of my favorites, "The Phenomenal Heinz Holliger," in which the young man who might very well be the world's greatest oboe virtuoso shows his extraordinary stuff in avant-garde works (did you ever hear an oboist play "double-stops"?). I am sure that if Holliger's instrument were the violin instead of the oboe he would be as widely acclaimed as Heifetz. Here again is a stunning recording that its company (Philips this time) has no intention of releasing in the United States.

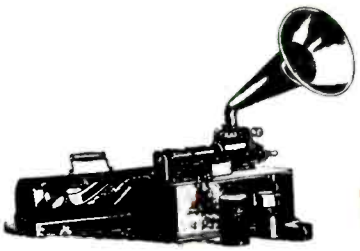
At the awards ceremony in the Chillon castle, Hugues Cuénod, who sings the drag role of an aging virgin nymph—at least she's a virgin when the opera begins—in *La Calisto*, picked up the prize for Argo. Incredibly, the man is seventy years old! The exclamation point is there for those of you who have heard the album. ("How is it possible that you have retained your voice all these years?" juror Edward Greenfield asked him. "Because," Cuénod responded, "I never had a voice to begin with.")

But Cuénod was a "youngster" to the man awarded this year's *diplôme d'honneur* for exceptional achievement in the field of recordings: eighty-year-old violinist Joseph Szigeti. Columbia had rushed the first album of "The Art of Joseph Szigeti," a retrospective reissue of his major recordings, to Montreux so that CBS executive Peter de Rougemont could present it to him. Szigeti was also "awarded" a chocolate cake in the shape of a huge violin, with eighty candles on it. This year's jury voted next year's diplômes, as last year's voted this year's. For 1973 there will, in fact, be three: to pianist Artur Rubinstein and to recording engineers Horst Redlich of Teldee and Arthur Haddy of Decca/London—both pioneers in the development of high fidelity.

photos by A. Altaffer

Joseph Szigeti, surprised by violin-shaped birthday cake, wonders how he will be able to blow out all eighty candles (he got some help from bystanders).

"Aging virgin nymph" Hugues Cuénod accepts the *prix mondial* for *La Calisto*.



those were the days

A nostalgic romp through the pages of High Fidelity and Musical America

60 Years Ago

After having divorced three wives, Eugen d'Albert, the pianist/composer, has now brought suit against his fourth. His present wife, who as Frau Fulda divorced her husband to marry D'Albert, is said to be very ill in a Vienna sanatorium as the result of throwing herself from a moving train after an argument with her husband over gowns and bonnets. Frau D'Albert is said to have broken several ribs in her fall. Her husband went to London and from there instructed his attorneys in Vienna to sue for an absolute separation. D'Albert's divorce from his third wife was granted just thirteen months ago.

The much-heralded Metropolitan revival of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* finally reached the stage during Christmas week. A very large and very brilliant audience assisted at the resuscitation of the long-silent opera; during the first half of the evening, at any rate, it was very enthusiastic. That this enthusiasm was entirely for the brilliancy of the production and the work of certain of the principals was made manifest by the general trend of entr'acte comment, which found not a word of sympathy for the dreariness and almost unbelievable inanities of Meyerbeer's music. The brightest luminaries of the cast were Frieda Hempel, Enrico Caruso, Emmy Destinn, Bella Alten, Antonio Scotti, Léon Rothier, and Adamo Didur. Undoubtedly bygone days have seen some of these characters sustained by more capable hands, but the present management has for the most part cast the opera as efficiently as the vocal means at its disposal permit.

40 Years Ago

An Elgar Festival in London, celebrating the composer's seventy-fifth birthday, proved to be the outstanding event of the closing of the year. Sir Landon Ronald conducted the First Symphony, Dr. Adrian Boult led *The Kingdom* and *Enigma* Variations, while Elgar himself conducted the *Cockaigne* Overture and the Violin Concerto, Albert Sammons as soloist. Throughout the Festival we all felt that there was a peculiar satisfaction in thus celebrating the composer's achievement in his lifetime. It cannot be pretended that antipathy toward Elgar's music has been entirely dispersed. But to see the youngest of young things calling for the composer at the end of the First Symphony encourages one to believe that the antipathy is at last beginning to weaken. The BBC, by the way, has announced that Sir Edward is at work on a third symphony for performance in the autumn of 1933.

At the American premiere of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 3 (*May Day*), Leopold Stokowski asked the audience if it would like to hear the work again. The invitation was declined. The work, largely diatonic in thematic material and without much intrusion of modernistic dissonances, is written to a Bolshevik program: There are passages that definitely suggest the march of Soviet armies, and possibly the hum of industry, though it would be too much to read into the score any allusions to the Five Year Plan.

20 Years Ago

La Forza del destino was produced and sung recently by the prisoners of the Connecticut State Prison Farm at Enfield. Except for two ladies from the town, the cast was made up entirely of inmates, two of whom had had operatic experience and one who had been a night club singer. The performance, according to Warden George H. Bradley, who describes himself as "a frustrated opera singer," had the backing of the Enfield Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers, a 125-year-old organization for the apprehension of cattle rustlers and horse thieves, and the public was invited to attend.

There has been much ado during the past year about binaural sound, as recorded and reproduced from tapes. Though more and more audiophiles have tape equipment at their disposal, the size of the potential market is questionable because of the cost of the necessary reproducing equipment. Just what the future may be for binaural sound is open to debate—we feel that binaural discs could well become of major importance and be *the* way to record and reproduce music in the reasonably near future. Or, the whole idea can fizzle after a brief clash of interest on the part of the inveterate-experimenter group. Only time can answer that question.

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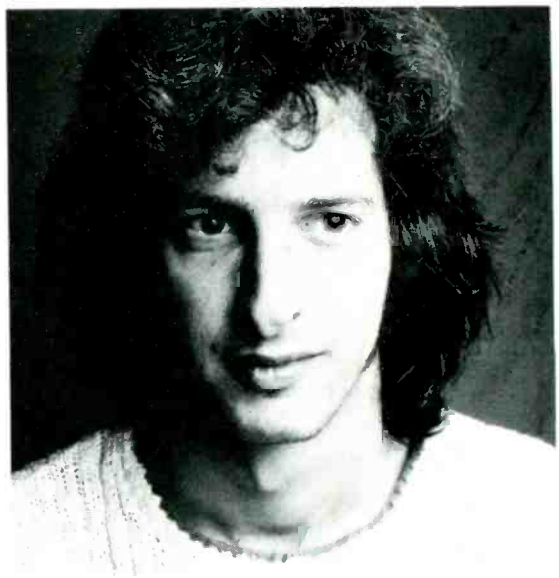


Stephan Goldman— A Producer to Watch

WHEN A NUMBER of films by the same director turn out to contain excellent acting, first-rate photography, and a consistent sense of style, it is reasonable to assume that the director is responsible. The same holds true for record album producers.

Some, of course, have *no* style. They sit there as the artist performs and the engineer records him and that's about it, except for the mixing. And there are some producers who aren't very good at that, either. I have one album in which an entire low brass section was dropped out of audibility in the mix.

There is a young producer in Los Angeles who genuinely impresses me. Artists who have recorded for him are similarly impressed. His name is Stephan Goldman. Goldman broke into the record business in 1967 as a producer of Gary Puckett and such groups as Canned Heat and The Iron Butterfly. He was then twenty. At twenty-five, he is emerging as one of the most thoughtful, musical, sensitive, and consistent producers of jazz albums in the business.

Goldman's albums for A&M have a quality of understated, unhysterical adventurousness that—in view of the variety of artists involved—must be attributed at least in part to him.

"He's beautiful," says Gerry Mulligan, who has just finished an exciting and powerfully rhythmic album for Goldman: "The Age of Steam" (A&M SP 3036). "That album was hard to make because I did so much experimenting. Steve was so patient."

Indeed, the album was made over the course of a year. Mulligan, who was known initially as an arranger and composer, has written very little in the last few years. It was Goldman who got him back to the score paper. A far less confident man than his brash manner would indicate, Mulligan was tortured by self-doubt while making the record. He wanted to try things with new orchestral combinations and effects, particularly in the rhythm section, and he junked a lot of material. Goldman kept working and A&M kept paying the bills. The result is more than worth it; the album is selling well.

Another superb Steve Goldman production is Roger Kellaway's "Cello Quartet" (A&M SP 3034). The title seems to suggest four cellos. Actually, the cello is used as the lead in a quartet that includes piano, bass, and drums. A chamber symphony orchestra is added on some tracks, and one (*On Your Mark, Get Set; Blues*) is a stunning five-minute excursion in polytonal blues by unaccompanied piano.

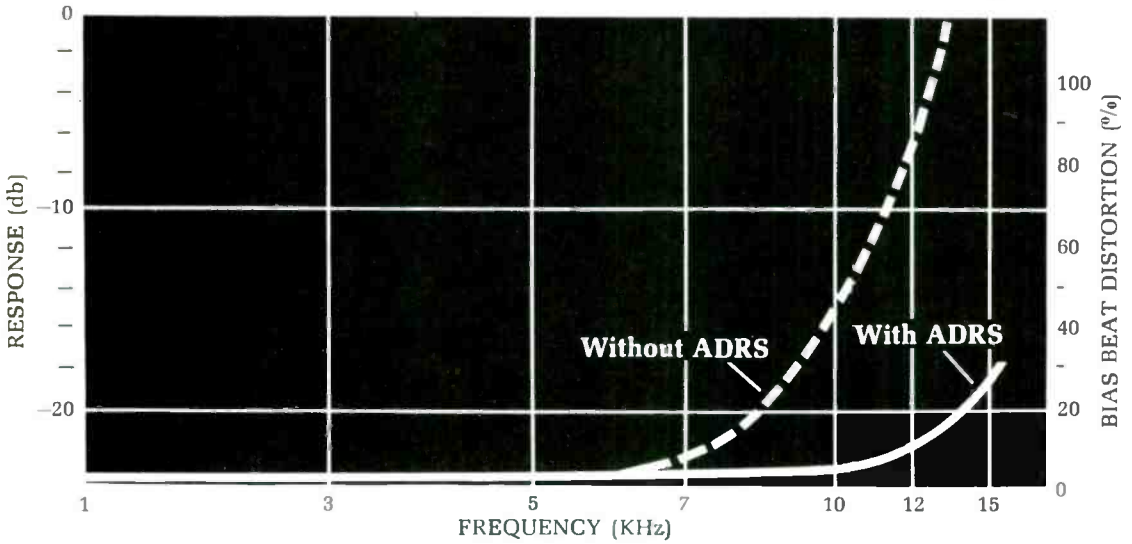
The album's range is broad—from the aforementioned blues to a liquidly beautiful Brazilian-inflected ballad called *Jorjana*. All the compositions are Kellaway's, as well as the piano work. Kellaway has emerged as one of the major jazz pianists, even while evolving as a film composer. The depth of his harmonic security is dazzling. Yet he is never a flash: His playing has exquisite tone, and he never ceases to think and—more important—feel. A beautiful album.

Kellaway was a key figure in turning Goldman from rock into jazz production. Kellaway made an album for Epic, the CBS subsidiary; Goldman produced it. It has never been issued. How good was it? "Fantastic," Goldman said. "But it was too much music for them. That seems to be the problem—the quality of the music supersedes the commercial considerations."

Not long after this debacle, Herb Alpert asked Kellaway to record for A&M. Kellaway requested Goldman as his producer. Alpert agreed. He and Goldman

ADRS*

The curve that bent the Cassette Market out of shape.



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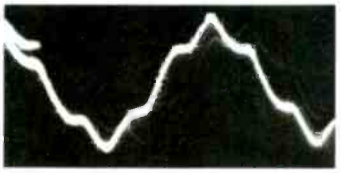

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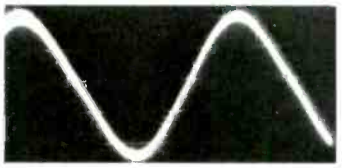

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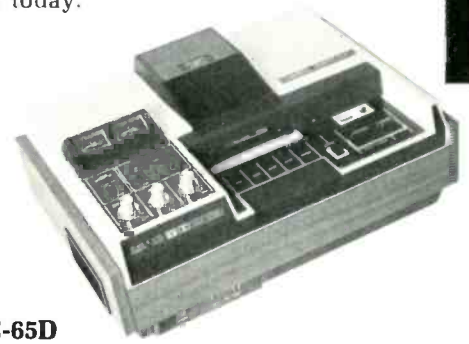

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hit it off immediately. "Herb and I think very much alike about aesthetics," Goldman said. "We both want to get the best music on the label, whether or not it's commercial. He wants to get people such as Roger, and have them recognized as the artists they are."

How did Goldman make the transition from rock to jazz?

"I don't put rock in a certain category and jazz in another. It's all music. The rock thing was around, it was part of my environment. But I was a jazz fan when I was a kid, and I got into more quality in music as time went on.

"The rock people are more or less limited in scope, and they have less to work with in their technical abilities. I like to work with somebody you can ask to do something and not feel you're taking him beyond his roots and capabilities. Jazz musicians have enormous knowledge and flexibility. You have to take a different approach in producing them, of course. With acoustical music, the point is to get a live and natural sound, and not that high, peaked rock sound. Also, in the mixes, you want a natural balance and spread."

Goldman, it should be noted, mixes beautifully. "Anybody who can get that kind of sound on trombone," said a fellow producer, listening to one of Steve's mixes, "is all right in my book. Trombone is one of the hardest sounds to record, although most people don't know it. And he really gets it."

Goldman was born in New York City. Ten years ago his parents moved to California. He attended Grant High School in the San Fernando Valley, where he studied composition and orchestration. "We had a great music department there. Tom Scott went to that school," he says. Scott is the almost legendary young saxophonist/flutist/composer/arranger boy wonder of Los Angeles. Goldman has completed an album with him, too.

Goldman thinks there is a growing fascination with jazz among young people. "But they still have to be educated, I think. The record companies spend so much money promoting rock. If only they would get behind jazz in the same way and educate the kids."

Goldman lives with his bride of one year on a four-hundred-acre ranch at Malibu. What's on the ranch, I asked? Steve laughed in his quiet way—he's quiet and self-effacing. "Nothing," he said. "Just dirt."

Another Kellaway album is available on A&M. And Steve is working on an album with Dave Grusin.

"I'm more a music man than a businessman," Steve says. "My relationship to making records is to give these very talented people the chance to create. I'm here to help."

He's helping a lot. GENE LEES

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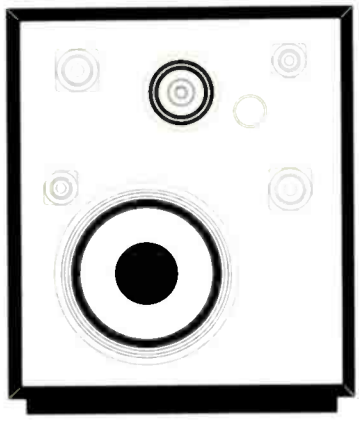

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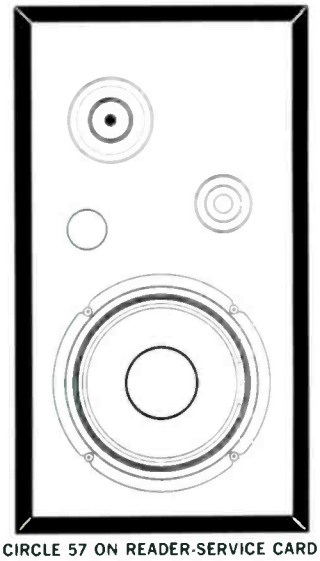

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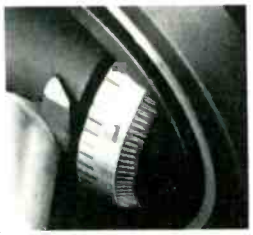


Stylus pressure dial calibrated in tenths of a gram from 0 to 1.5 grams; in quarters of a gram from 1.5 to 3.0 grams.

Another refinement is on the stylus pressure dial which is now calibrated in tenths of a gram from 0 to 1.5 grams. This provides finer control in setting optimum stylus pressure for today's finest cartridges, designed for tracking in this range.

Such refinements, while giving you more control over your Dual, don't actually affect its performance. Dual performance is a function of the total precision inherent in the design which has long made Dual's premier model the best-selling "high-end" turntable of them all.

The gyroscope is the best known scientific means for supporting a precision instrument that must remain perfectly balanced in all planes of motion. That is why we selected a true gyroscopic gimbal for the suspension of the 1229 tonearm. This tonearm is centered and balanced within two concentric rings, and pivots around their respective axes. Horizontal bearing friction is specified at less than fifteen thousandths of a gram, and Dual's unerring quality control assures that every 1229 will meet those stringent specifications.

The platter of the 1229 is a full-size twelve inches in diameter, and cast in one piece of non-magnetic zinc alloy. Each platter is individually dynamically balanced. Dual's powerful continuous-pole/synchronous motor easily drives this massive seven pound platter to full speed in one quarter turn.

A turntable of the 1229's caliber is used primarily in its single-play mode. Thus, the tonearm was specifically engineered to perform precisely as a manual tonearm: parallel to the record instead of tilted down. For multiple play, the Mode Selector raises the entire tonearm base to parallel the tonearm to the center of the stack.

All these precision features and refinements don't mean that the Dual 1229 must be handled with undue care. On the contrary, like all Duals, it is quite rugged and virtually foolproof.

Illuminated strobe with adjustable viewing angle, from directly overhead to 20° away.

So we're not being rash when we include a full year guarantee covering both parts and labor. That's up to four times the guarantee you'll find on other automatic units.

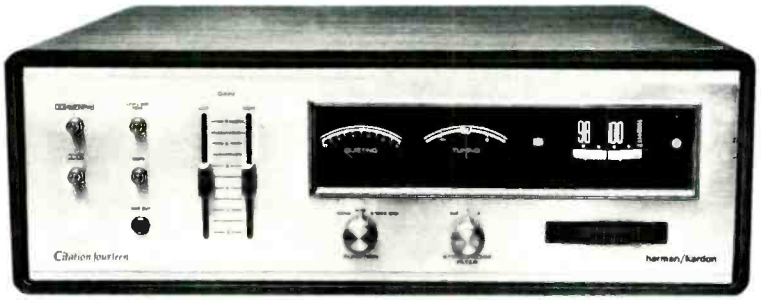
Visit your franchised United Audio dealer and ask for a demonstration. We believe you will join the other "purists" who prefer Dual.®

The new Dual 1229, $199.50 less base.

United Audio Products, Inc., 120 So. Columbus Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10553

Exclusive U.S. Distribution Agency for Dual.

CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Citation Tuner Features Built-In Dolby

The Equipment: Harman-Kardon Citation Fourteen, a stereo FM tuner with built-in Dolby B noise reducer (NR). Dimensions: front panel, 16 by 5 inches; chassis depth, 13½ inches. Price: $525. Manufacturer: Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

Comment: The latest H-K model in the Citation series of premium stereo products, the Model Fourteen is a basic tuner (intended for connection to an amplifier and speaker or headphones) of advanced design and superb performance. Among its innovations is the inclusion of a Dolby B noise-reduction circuit that improves reception of Dolbyized FM broadcasts. (Reports indicate that more stations are adding Dolby constantly.) Another innovation is the set's quieting meter (on which patents are pending) which indicates the signal-to-noise ratio of incoming programs and which, together with the more conventional center-of-channel meter, makes for very accurate tuning. The RF section employs circuitry geared for high suppression of spurious signals, phase linearity, "hard limiting" of noise, and wideband response that is designed to feed an optimum composite FM signal into an external four-channel adapter. Included too is a 400-Hz calibration reference tone (available at the push of a button) that facilitates setting recording levels on a tape recorder.

Four pushbuttons at the upper left portion of the escutcheon provide control for the Dolby action, the 400-Hz tone, power off/on, and interstation muting. Below the power switch is a pilot lamp; below the muting switch, a stereo phone jack output for feeding signals to a tape recorder. This receptacle is identical in function to a pair of fixed-output phono jacks at the rear. Next to this front-panel group is a pair of slide controls that regulate audio level on each channel independently when taken from another pair of variable-output jacks at the rear of the set—the jacks that normally feed your stereo amplifier.

The largest portion of the front panel is given over to a blackout section that includes the quieting meter, tuning meter, Dolby pilot lamp, station dial scale, and stereo indicator. The dial scale employs oversize numerals that resemble those used in digital tuning; the numbers themselves rotate on a drum, controlled by the large knurled knob directly beneath the dial so that the traditional pointer on a fixed dial has been eliminated. To the left of the tuning knob there's a three-position stereo noise filter; to its left, a three-position function switch (mono, automatic stereo, stereo only).

In addition to the outputs already mentioned, the rear of the Citation tuner contains outputs to feed an oscilloscope (for professional or lab applications; these are identical to the fixed-gain outputs and may be used as a second pair if desired), an output to feed an external quadraphonic-FM adapter, a muting threshold adjustment, a stereo threshold adjustment, a switched AC convenience outlet, fuse holder, and power cord. In addition to screw terminals for 300-ohm and 75-ohm antenna lead-in, there's also a separate connector for direct hookup of 75-ohm coaxial cable. This last item is a nice touch that will be especially appreciated by those

Citation Fourteen Tuner Additional Data

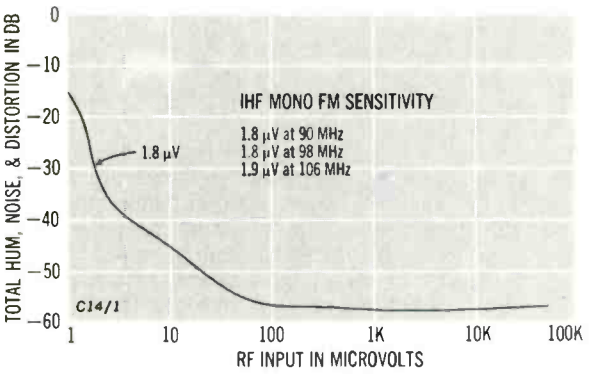
Capture ratio		1.5 dB	
Alternate-channel selectivity		70 dB	
S/N ratio		74 dB	
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.13%	0.15%	0.22%
1 kHz	0.11%	0.13%	0.13%
10 kHz	0.29%	0.66%	0.56%
IM distortion		0.25%	
19-kHz pilot		-66 dB	
38-kHz subcarrier		-66 dB	

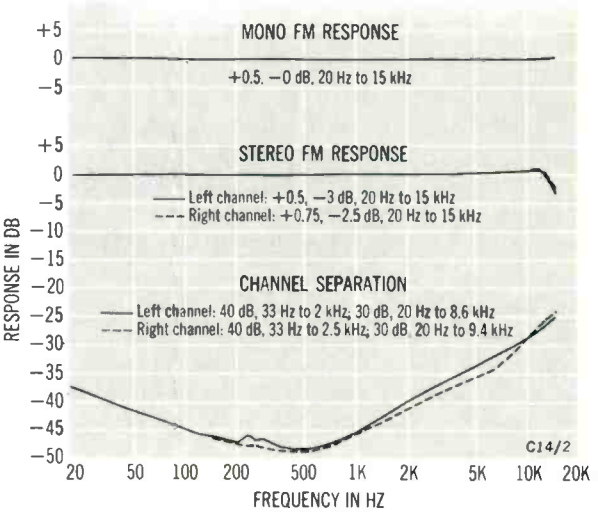
who live in a cable-served area or who otherwise use 75-ohm coaxial cable.

In tests at CBS Labs the Citation Fourteen rolled up an impressive score that, together with its actual performance and sound, places it at the top of an already distinguished group of the very best FM tuners. Sensitivity is excellent; distortion figures for both mono and stereo reception are very low, even at the usually difficult frequency of 10,000 Hz. As shown on the graphs, audio response and stereo channel separation are exemplary.

To characterize the sound of the Citation Fourteen would be to repeat the hallmarks of true high fidelity reproduction. Indeed, when tuned to a good station, this tuner makes you think you're listening to high-quality discs or tapes played in the same room. In terms too of its ability to pull in stations, the Citation Fourteen is second to none. It's also a joy to use; everything works smoothly and correctly. It is very much a tuner for today, and with its Dolby feature and quadraphonic adapter output it qualifies as a tuner for tomorrow.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





Concord's Top Cassette Deck

The Equipment: Concord Mark IX, a stereo cassette deck with Dolby circuitry, in wood case. Dimensions: 16¼ by 4¼ by 10⅝ inches. Price: $274.85, suggested retail. Manufacturer: Concord Div., Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp., 40 Smith St., Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

Comment: The Mark IX not only is the most advanced model to appear under the Concord name, but is among the first under any brand name to offer some particularly interesting features. The most obvious is the large pop-up meters, styled like those on professional equipment. When not in use they lie flat in the top plate; at a press of the finger they rise to an angle of about 25 degrees, making them easier to watch from a sitting position while you use the unit. (They can be left flat if you're standing over the unit while you use it.) But we found another feature of much more practical use: the mixing controls, which we'll describe in a moment.

Aside from the meters, the top surface contains only the indexing counter, the cassette well, and—at its front edge—the control keys. At the very bottom of the front panel is a narrow vertical area containing the "mixing" input, left and right microphone inputs, and a stereo headphone output—all of the phone-jack type. Between these two areas is a sloping panel that contains the main electronic controls: sliders for "mixing" level, left

and right recording levels, and left and right playback levels, plus four pushbuttons for tape (chromium dioxide or "regular"), recording mode (stereo/mono), Dolby noise reduction (on/off), and AC power (on/off). Set into the trim at the bottom left of this sloping panel are colored pilot lights indicating Dolby operation, power on, and recording.

The back panel contains phono-jack pairs for line output, high-level line input, and low-level line input. The high-level pair, which is rated for a half-volt input sensitivity, should be appropriate for use with most present stereo equipment. Also on the back panel are trimming adjustments for aligning Dolby levels. CBS Labs found the factory presetting of these controls close to Dolby specifications (averaging about 1-dB high, according to the built-in meters).

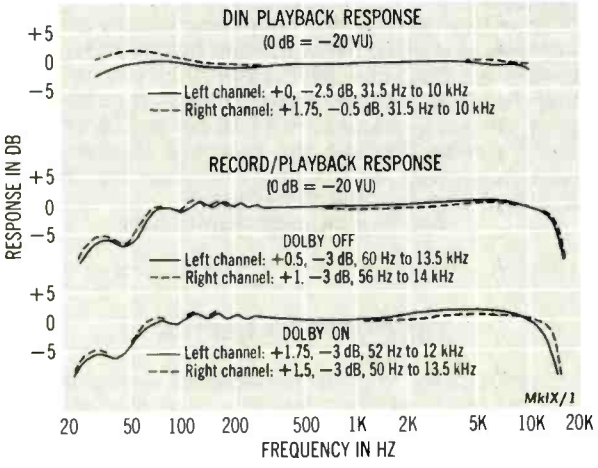
The so-called mixing input might also have been labeled "center-channel" since it feeds an identical signal to both channels of the recording. The mixing level control affects the signal from this input only; the recording level controls affect both the mixing input and the signals from line or left and right mike inputs and therefore act as the master level controls for each channel. Electrically the mixing input is appropriate for use with a microphone (though the rather sketchy instruction manual says that it is to be used with "aux"—implying line-type—inputs). We found this setup a great deal of fun for adding voice to instrumental records. Copy them in stereo through the line inputs, sing along via a mike connected to the mixing input and you become the centered soloist in the resulting cassette. Many other uses are possible of course.

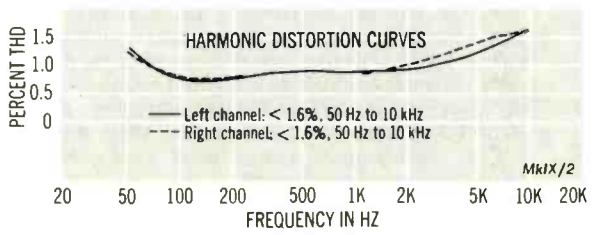
The drive system is unaffected by changes in line voltage, as documented by the lab tests, and is low in wow and flutter. At 1.0% fast it is about on a par with cassette models we have tested recently. The drive system disengages automatically at the end of the cassette, preventing damage to idlers or other drive parts.

We tested the unit with both chromium dioxide tape and TDK SD, with the tape switch set in the "special" and "regular" positions respectively. This switch alters recording characteristics, but not playback equalization. Surprisingly (considering the performance we have encountered in other units treating chromium dioxide equalization comparably), the frequency response with the ferric oxide SD tape was at least as good as that with chromium dioxide, and the record/playback response curves shown here were made with SD. The remainder of the record/playback data was tested with chromium dioxide. Over-all we would count performance with the latter as better—though perhaps only marginally better—than that with ferric oxide on the basis of both the lab report and our own listening tests.

The Mark IX points clearly the direction that the better cassette decks are taking: They are larger and more impressive, more flexible and comprehensive in their capabilities, and better in over-all performance (even ignoring the Crolyn option and the Dolby circuit) than comparable units of only two or three years ago. In addition, the Mark IX offers an attractive value; while competing models are creeping above $300, it is generally available for less than $300.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





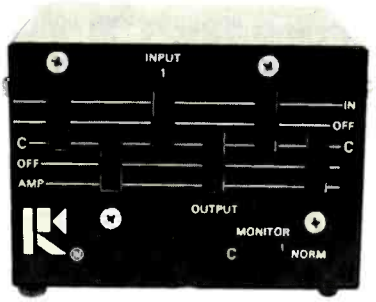
Concord Mark IX Additional Data

Speed accuracy	105 VAC: 1.0% fast 120 VAC: 1.0% fast 127 VAC: 1.0% fast	
Wow and flutter	playback: 0.12% record/playback: 0.15%	
Rewind time, C-60 cassette	1 min. 28 sec.	
Fast-forward time, same cassette	1 min. 23 sec.	
S/N ratio (ref. DIN 0 VU; Dolby off)		
playback	L ch: 54 db	R ch: 55 dB
record/playback	L ch: 50.5 dB	R ch: 51 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	60 dB	
Crosstalk (at 400 Hz)		
record left, playback right	41.5 dB	
record right, playback left	40.0 dB	
Sensitivity (for 0-VU recording level)		
high-level Input	L ch: 550 mV	R ch: 500 mV
low-level input	L ch: 125 mV	R ch: 110 mV
mike input	L ch: 0.33 mV	R ch: 0.31 mV
"mixing" input		0.35 mV
Meter action (ref. DIN 0 VU)	L ch: 3 dB high	R ch: 2 dB high
IM distortion (record/play, −10 VU)	L ch: 4.8%	R ch: 5.0%
Maximum output (preamp or line, 0 VU)	L ch: 1.45 V	R ch: 1.35 V

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Next month: A special issue featuring ten product reports

Two Handy Gadgets from Russound



The Equipment: Russound TMS-1 Tape Recorder Selector, a selector box for controlling recording, dubbing, and monitoring with up to three tape decks. Dimensions: 4¼ by 3 by 3½ inches. Price: $19.95. Russound SWB-2 Multi-Play speaker selector, a power-switching unit handling up to three pairs of speaker systems individually or in combination, driven from either of two power sources. Dimensions: 7 by 2 by 3 inches. Price: $11.95. Manufacturer: Russound/FMP, Inc., P.O. Box 204, Stratham, N. H. 03885.

Comment: Here are two exceedingly clever units from Russound designed to solve problems that arise in hooking up relatively elaborate systems. The TMS-1 handles up to three tape decks; the SWB-2 controls up to three speaker setups. Both are entirely passive devices, without line cord, power supply, transistors, and so on.

The Tape Recorder Selector accepts input and output connections from three stereo tape decks (open-reel, cassette, or cartridge) and leads from the tape-recording and tape-monitor connections of a preamplifier or receiver. On the front panel there are six tape-recorder switches: one for input and one for output of each recorder. A seventh switch controls output to the amplifier, and is marked "C" and "norm." The "C" stands for "common" and refers to the common dubbing bus within the unit to which all tape-recorder inputs and outputs can be switched. Other options for the input switches are "in" (that is, connected to the input from the tape-recording connection on the main amplifier system) or "off"; tape-recorder outputs also can be switched to "amp" (this time, of course, the monitor connections) or "off."

To record from a signal source arriving via the amplifier system (from phono, tuner, or whatever) the input switch for the deck on which the recording will be made is flipped to "in," its output switch is flipped to "amp," and all other tape-recorder switches are left in their off positions. With the monitor switch in the normal position the system will work just as though the box were not in the system. If two recordings are to be made simultaneously, the input switches for both are turned to "in" and the output monitoring is selected at the tape recorders' output switches. For copying from one recorder to another, the "C" position is used for the output switch of the feeding recorder and the input switch of the recorder on which the copy is being made.

This sounds complex on paper, but it only scratches the surface of the options made possible by the unit, whose operation seems increasingly simple with experience. Its big advantage, even in working with only two recorders or in using units (cassette decks for example) without simultaneous playback monitoring, is that so

many purposes and interconnection schemes can be accomplished without reconnecting leads. An inventive recordist will find almost unlimited ways of applying it.

We don't know how many of our readers regularly use two or more recorders, but we do know that many of you are troubled by problems of hooking up extra speakers. The Multi-Play can be a big help here. Its power-source selector can be handy (we've used it to select either the back-channel amplifier or the back output from a Dyna Quadaptor in playing quadraphonic discs for example), but it's the speaker switching itself that is the most impressive. There are on/off switches for three speaker pairs: M (for main), 2, and 3. The internal circuit configuration is so designed that when only one speaker is used, it is hooked directly to the selected power source. When two pairs of speakers are switched in, resistors automatically are put in series with the secondary speakers while the preferred pair continues to be fed directly. That is, the main pair gets preference for direct feed over either 2 or 3; 2 gets preference over 3. When all three pairs are switched in, the main pair is fed directly, while both 2 and 3 have series loading.

What all this means is that the total impedance of the speaker complex, even with 8-ohm speakers, is never allowed to fall below 4 ohms (which could endanger the amplifier by allowing excessive current flow), but at the same time there are never unneeded resistors in the circuit (which could compromise performance by lowering effective damping factor). The Multi-Play will work equally well with 16-ohm speakers though it is not recommended with 4-ohm models.

Russound's ingenuity in accomplishing so much with extremely simple means has given us two very useful products at prices that are modest, to say the least. In fact, we know of no comparable commercially available products at any price. (For our own homemade hookup device, see December 1970, page 70.) If you can't find them locally they can be ordered directly from the company. Shipping charges are $1.25 per unit. We understand that by the time you read this Russound will have dressed-up versions of both models: the TMS-1W at $30.95 and the SWB-2W at $25.95.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Bulk Eraser for Cassette Tapes

The Equipment: Erasette Model 200B, a battery-powered permanent-magnet degausser for cassettes. Dimensions: 4 by 3½ by 2¾ inches. Price: $15.95. Manufacturer: Magnesonics Corp., 8748 Remmet Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304.

Comment: There's no argument about the desirability of bulk-erasing cassettes (or other tapes) before they're reused if best results are to be obtained, and a number of bulk erasers for home use have been on the market for years. The Erasette is quite different from the typical degausser, however. It uses a permanent magnet rotated by a small DC motor instead of the conventional AC coil.

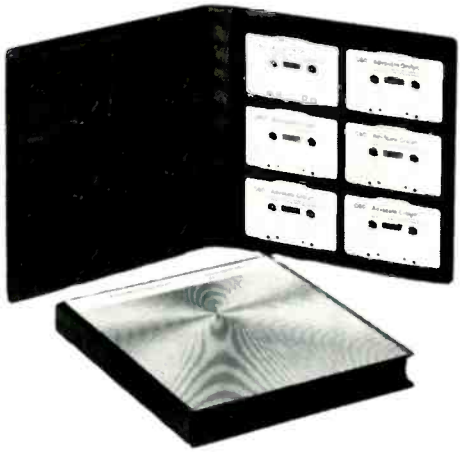
To power the motor you will need four "AA" penlight cells (not included with the Erasette), which fit into a holder behind a sliding door in the bottom of the unit. A molded plastic "handle" normally stored on the top of the Erasette is inserted into the wind holes in the cassette (to prevent a loose loop of tape from forming inside during erasing), and the cassette is moved slowly across the upper surface of the unit. At the same time you must press the motor button on the top surface; this rotates the magnet, causing its field to fluctuate with respect to any given point on the tape. As the cassette is slowly removed, the fluctuating field decreases producing the desirable random magnetic orientation in the tape coating.

Precise results will vary depending on the care you take to keep the cassette moving slowly and evenly with respect to the top surface of the Erasette. And because of its simplicity and design we found it easier to remove the cassettes evenly from the Erasette's magnetic field than from that of a typical AC degausser of comparable price. The AC model's field attracts the tape's magnetic coating; when this "hold" on the tape is broken, the movement of the cassette out of the field tends to be abrupt and leaves part of the tape still with a magnetic "signal"—actually produced by the degausser rather than the original recording. The sliding action of the cassette on the Erasette effectively prevents this.

Assuming full care however—which in the Erasette may mean several passes of the cassette, particularly in erasing chromium dioxide—the results from the two degaussers were comparable, with both producing lower residual noise levels than a typical recorder's erase head. One caution, however. Since the Erasette contains a permanent magnet, it can partially erase tapes placed on it even when the motor button is not pressed. When the tape-lock handle is in storage position on top of the Erasette, it discourages you from placing anything on it; but just to be on the safe side we'd suggest storing the unit out of harm's way—in a niche where tapes can't come near it even by accident.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

From Advent: A Packaging "Deal"



The Equipment: Advocate Storage Album containing six Advocate C-60 Crolyn cassettes plus space for six more cassettes. Price: $18; also available with C-90 cassettes, $22.50. Manufacturer: Advent Corp., 195 Albany St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

Comment: Convenient storage facility for the cassette home recordist is available to purchasers of Advocate blank tapes in the C-60 and C-90 configurations. The Advent Corporation (distributor of Advocate products) explains that, in effect, purchasers of these tapes (in half-dozen lots) are getting the Cassette Storage Album in place of the hard plastic boxes that normally enclose individually bought cassettes; the album-plus-blank-tape package costs no more than the same number of blank cassettes purchased individually.

The "book's" cover design is printed on a sheet of heavy stock, inserted into a pocket in the clear plastic covering. The back of this sheet acts as an index guide for the twelve cassettes, with more room to list detailed contents than the average label on the cassette itself affords. The pocket also can be used to store additional notes on the contents or, perhaps, song texts or cast listings.

We found the Storage Album a welcome addition to our living room. Recorded tapes are easily organized and indexed, and the identification on a single cassette is easily read without removing the unit from its snap-in storage compartment. The Storage Album looks handsome on a bookshelf and gives strong testimony to cassettes' ability to store a vast amount of material in a very small space.

Eight Experts Choose "The Component I'd Like to Get for Christmas"

When we planned this feature we weren't quite sure what we'd get. Would all of our experts choose the same product? (And if so, which product?) Would they all want to write about esoteric or perhaps professional gear? Or would everybody want, for example, tape equipment?

Fortunately there are enough goodies (audio goodies) around so that we were saved that prospect simply through the laws of chance. Or almost. Three of our experts did pick the Heathkit tuner the first time around. Ivan Berger made his request first, so he got the assignment. Two selected multiband equalizers. We were about to ask one of them for an alternate when he started to tell us his reasons for the choice. They were almost entirely different from those of the other writer.

Naturally our experts tended to choose expensive units (it costs no more to ask Santa for a yacht than a canoe), and they did show an affinity for the unusual.

Audio components are very personal things when you really get into them—as the contrasting views of equalizers prove. Your choice—if you're lucky enough to know an appropriately munificent Santa—might be entirely different from any of those represented here. But whatever the product, merry listening.

Heath AJ-1510 digital FM tuner kit

Ivan Berger
Audio columnist
(Saturday Review) and editor
(Popular Mechanics)

I've been writing about state-of-the-art components for ten years, and it's high time I got one for myself. (Usually that takes more money than a high fidelity writer has.) So: Santa, I want a Heathkit AJ-1510 digital FM tuner.

Mainly I want it because it's *different:* not just in its digital readout and pushbutton tuning (though they're important and they're the only ways in which it *looks* different from the outside), but in the totally new—and possibly trendsetting—way the circuitry does all the things that ordinary tuners do in ordinary ways.

From all reports, its performance is as way-out as its circuitry. Maybe it's the finest tuner in the world and maybe it's not. But it's fun to own either the finest or a close contender. Will I be able to hear the difference between the AJ-1510 and something good but more conservative (and cheaper)? Here in New York City, I doubt it. But the thought is still exciting.

The look of the tuner is exciting too. Not pretty (Heathkits, alas, seldom are), but, as I say, different. And different in a way that looks more interesting as you turn the room lights down and let all the little bulbs in back of the AJ-1510's front panel do their stuff with a minimum of competition. Their glow has a romance that is purely technological; but isn't that romance a major chunk of high fidelity's appeal as a hobby? After all, there are many enthusiasts—should I say suitors?—who toss model numbers about by the hour without ever mentioning music.

Since I'm lazy, I like the Heathkit's easy ways to tune—all three of them. When I know what station I want to hear, I won't twirl a knob. (I've twirled knobs for years, and I can't say it excites me.) Instead I'll just punch up my station's frequency on a ten-button keyboard—like dialing a pushbutton phone. Punch 93.9 and out comes WNYC (at least in my area) with no chance of confusing that station with WVOX (on 93.5) or any other neighbor. And in going from WBLS (107.5) to WCWP (88.1), the highest and lowest stations on my local dial, I won't have to twirl through all the intervening stations either. Listening to my favorite stations will be even easier because the AJ-1510 will let me select any of three preprogrammed frequencies, using punched cards inserted into the three slots that Heath provides for that purpose. And if I don't know what I want to hear, I'll have another option: the

Most

AJ-1510 will sweep the dial for me, as fast or as slowly as I like. If I set the sweep speed slow enough, I can be sure I won't miss any stations (as I could with conventional knob-driven tuners)—even if those stations are broadcasting a moment's silence as I tune by. If I'm lazy, I'm a perfectionist about it, so I'd like to see still more. How about auto-sweep that scans the dials in both directions (not just down)? Or a remote tuning control?

I'll be able to check any station I tune in for multipath. The AJ-1510 has a built-in multipath meter (it doubles as a signal-strength meter, but in my location, and with the Heath's high sensitivity, multipath will mean more to me than signal strength).

Those are my reasons for wanting an AJ-1510. Maybe they aren't really rational. But then, who's rational in a letter to Santa? [If Ivan were really as lazy as he implies, he wouldn't be up to the time-consuming task of building the AJ-1510. It's fortunate that he's not, since Santa appears to have come through ahead of schedule, and we understand that Ivan's AJ-1510 will be finished before you read this.—Ed.]

Sony/Superscope TC-854-4S open-reel tape deck

Robin Lanier
Audio consultant

Santa's bag is so full of fine audio toys these days that it's hard to decide on just one. My choice was influenced by three special needs:

1) I belong to a group that has some recordings made on ½-inch tape at 30 ips on an ultimate-quality custom-built tape machine. Those who hear the originals are bowled over. But comparatively few people can hear the originals because they should be played on the machine that made them (it has special equalization). It weighs 300 pounds and has to be disassembled each time it's moved. What I want is a machine that is reasonably portable and yet can make dubbings with minimum compromise to the special qualities of the originals.

2) We are going to make a number of experiments in four-channel recording in a variety of situations. We are converting our big machine to four-channel, but that will take time. Besides, we don't need ultimate quality for our tests. What we need is excellent quality plus portability.

3) We also have a number of *half-track* stereo recordings on ¼-inch tape. We want to be able to splice parts of these into our dubbings from the ½-inch tapes. But we've found that our half-track tapes do not reproduce well on tracks 2 and 3 (the right channel) of ordinary quarter-track equipment. A deck that will play from tracks 1 and 4 of a quarter-track head would solve the problem.

Now we all know that open-reel tape machines in the semipro class (those selling at, say, about $600 and up for a stereo deck) have been remarkably good lately. On the basis of specs, one machine that I've considered for our needs is especially high in promise: the Sony/Superscope 854-4S. It has a 10½-inch reel capacity—a necessity for us. It meets the foregoing stipulations, and we could use it for a great variety of jobs: just about everything we want to do, in fact, except live recordings that must compete with the recording industry's million-dollar studio setups. And even in that arena, the Sony could give a good account of itself if we did no dubbing at all but cut lacquers from the originals—a practice we follow whenever possible.

Well, I've recently had the opportunity of working with a borrowed sample, and using it is a joy: The human engineering of control functions is at a very high level. The deck has far more features than you can get in a $600 deck of course. It costs closer to $1,600, though it

is available as the plain 854 at lower cost and shorn of a few features. But I wouldn't want to give up anything it's got—even the variable speed control, which may seem like an esoteric gadget. Actually it's not. Let's say we want to add an organ part to some previously made tracks, using the 854-4S's Syncro-Trak multidub feature, and we find a slight discrepancy in pitch. If we couldn't tune the recording to the organ, we might have to retune the organ—a time-consuming nuisance with an electronic organ and a practical impossibility with a pipe organ. No, I'd like the 854-4S just as it is.

Harman-Kardon HK-1000 cassette deck

Anybody who's doing Christmas shopping for me could find no more welcome audio present than the Harman-Kardon HK-1000. To begin with, it's the first cassette deck I've seen with variable speed adjustment. I've picked up a number of off-speed tapes over the years, so that's a real asset. Moreover, the HK-1000 has all the things you'd expect in an audiophile recorder: bias adjustment, Dolby "B" circuitry, dual sliding controls for recording and separate controls for playback, and raised VU meters. It also has many attractions found heretofore on only the more expensive open-reel models.

The bias control, for example, offers three positions instead of the conventional two—one for standard cassette tape, one for low-noise ferric oxide, and one for chromium dioxide. There's a memory feature that permits you to locate a preprogrammed point on the cassette you're working with. Neither the three-position bias switch nor the memory rewind is a Harman-Kardon exclusive, of course, but they add a lot to the unit's appeal. And the HK-1000 is the first cassette recorder I've seen (apart from some of the inexpensive portables) where easy access to the heads, tape guides, and capstan allows cleaning with a minimum of bother. The removeable hood protecting these parts simply snaps in and out.

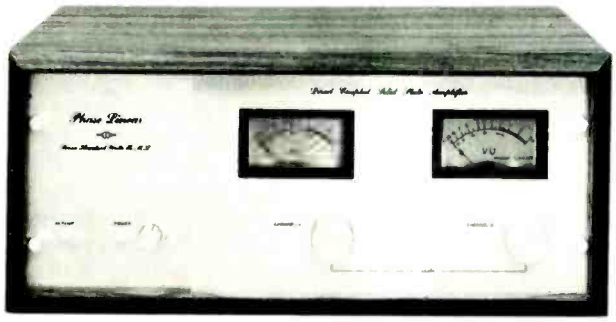
But all of this is beside the point if the unit doesn't sound good. H-K demonstrated it for me with a Dolbyized Crolyn copy of a master tape—one of the recordings the company uses to demonstrate its receivers and loudspeakers at high fidelity shows. While I've been a cassette booster since the first stereo decks appeared, I was prepared to concede that they didn't really match the performance of a good open-reel deck at 7½ ips. That was before I heard the HK-1000 under optimum conditions. While commercially-recorded Dolby cassettes don't sound as good as that demo tape on this deck, the combination of Dolby, Crolyn, and a really good transport finally convinces me that the cassette has fully arrived as a high fidelity medium.

Robert Angus
Audio editor *(Penthouse)*

There are a number of attractive technical details to the unit—DC servo-drive for example—but one intrigues me in particular. H-K says it has tried for minimum phase shift in the 1000's design. Now I'm told that unwanted phase shift can cause awkward by-products in copying matrixed quadraphonic recordings. The phase shift is "read" by the decoder as a shift in placement in the sound image. H-K's design emphasis means that the 1000 may turn out to be a good bet for quadraphonics in addition to its other features.

Finally, there is the handsome look of this new cassette deck. I can picture it now underneath the tree—black and chrome in its walnut case, with a nice big red bow around it, and my name on it. It's the most dramatic single improvement I can make in my audio system this year. (Would it be greedy of me to ask for a stockingful of chromium dioxide cassettes as well?)

Phase Linear 700 power amplifier



The intercom buzzed and Susan, my secretary, announced: "Bob Long from HIGH FIDELITY!"

After the pleasantries, Bob came to the point. "I'm putting together a compendium of what eight high fidelity experts want most for Christmas. How about it? What do you want most for Christmas?"

Now that was a tempting question and how could I refuse after being softened up with the "expert" bit? "Well, let me think a minute. How about . . .?"

"Please, something other than the Heath AJ-1510. You've been very active in tape; how would you like . . . ?"

"No, no tape decks. What I'd really like is a superpower amplifier: the Phase Linear 700."

"Okay: why?"

"Well, I often have the feeling that there's more to having tremendous power reserves than many would credit. Sure, a watt or so from a small radio produces a reasonable squawk and twenty-five watts per channel provide quote room-filling stereo sound unquote, but do they really handle the peak power demands that can be made by a first-class recording of a symphony orchestra? That's the ultimate test of a power amplifier.

Edward J. Foster
Research-group manager
(CBS Labs)

"Now, I have to admit I listen to music at a rather high volume. I clock in regularly at sound-pressure levels of eighty-five to ninety dB in listening to classical music and some ten dB higher for pops. That's a short-term average reading. It's certainly no more than you get in a concert hall and I'm sure a lot of high fidelity enthusiasts listen at similar levels. While it takes only a few watts of power *on average* to produce this level, the peak demands are quite a different matter. If you think about it, an increase of ten dB is ten *times* the power—the equivalent of going from two or three watts to twenty or thirty watts. An increase of twenty dB represents a hundred-fold rise in power—to two hundred or three hundred watts. And peak-power to average-power ratios of more than twenty dB aren't unknown.

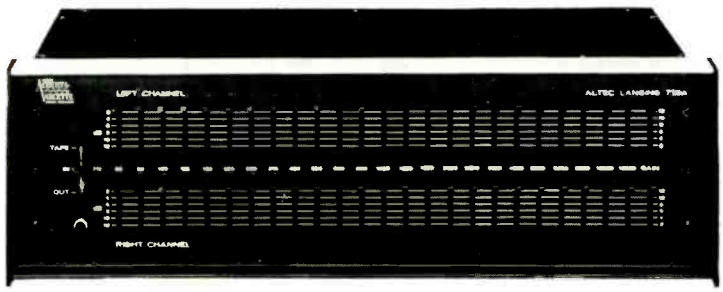
"A while back I designed a forty-five-watt-per-channel stereo amplifier that I still use. A few months ago I tried an experiment. I put in a circuit that would turn off the amplifier if the total instantaneous power exceeded one hundred and eighty watts. That represents the peak instantaneous power two forty-five-watt amplifier channels can deliver. With the circuit installed there couldn't be any question. No need to recognize distortion on the peaks; the amplifier would just quit, and the ensuing silence would render the verdict. Well, I didn't get to listen very long before it quit!

"By the way, that amplifier is a fine unit. The distortion is low and the sound is very clean—which goes to show that a medium-power amplifier can give you good, honest high fidelity sound. Most of your readers will attest to that. But if you are the purist who wants to handle the peaks with the same ease and clarity of reproduction as the quieter passages, you need plenty of reserve power.

"So that's why I'd like to be assigned the Phase Linear 700 for your Christmas issue."

"By the way, are you still fooling around with that telephone recorder?" Bob asked. "Why don't you have Susan transcribe this conversation and send it in?"

Altec Acousta-Voicette room equalizer



Though I own a laboratory that is close to ideal for the work I do in the high fidelity field, like the proverbial barefooted shoemaker I can't claim that my home listening room is even close to ideal. The sound is trapped in an L-shaped, living/dining area, a most difficult room to balance sonically by using tried and true devices such as draperies, rugs, tone controls, and infinite (but futile) speaker-placement variations. There are several large bumps in my low-end response, a fairly well-sucked-out midrange in the vicinity of 500 or 600 Hz and a high-end response that often has me convinced that my speakers are connected out of phase. (They're not.)

Leonard Feldman
Electronics consultant

Some two years ago I joined a group of sound contractors at a three-day course on Acousta-Voicing—Altec's system for equalizing an auditorium by means of elaborate filters, each covering only a third of an octave in the audio range. I watched with fascination as a room having an inherently boomy bass response and lackluster highs was gradually transformed into one having astonishingly even response. The equalizing filters are easily switched out of the system, so before-and-after tests were part of the demonstration. The tubby, canned quality of the "before" sound was transformed magically into the most lifelike musical performance I have ever heard short of the real thing.

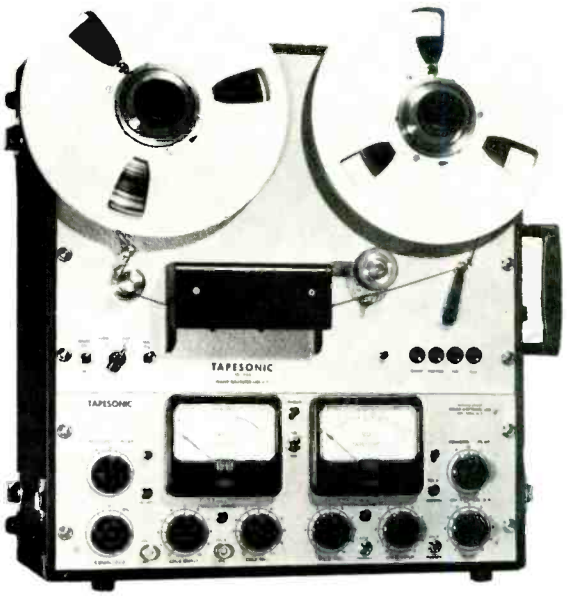
Altec offers a consumer version of the filter system in the Model 729A Acousta-Voicette Stereo Equalizer. It contains twenty-four pairs of filters, with center frequencies ranging from 63 Hz to 12.5 kHz, and each with a 12-dB adjustment range. Altec contends (and I fully believe) that only this many narrow-band filters can truly balance a room because some of the room resonances are quite narrow.

The Acousta-Voicette costs about $850, but before you wince, remember that the price includes a trained sound technician who comes with the unit and tunes it to your room. It goes without saying that if your speakers themselves produce anything but flat acoustic output over the audio range, the Acousta-Voicette will easily take care of that matter as well (providing you're not talking about peaks and valleys greater than, say, 6 dB or so).

Once your room is equalized (and you've made careful notes of the forty-eight control settings so you can return them to "ideal" positions), you can use the Acousta-Voicette to create an almost infinite variety of sonic effects—from "telephone sound," through barrel-bass, strident highs, and table-radio sound. The unit would be great for demonstrating how inferior home-entertainment products sound by contrast to the real thing.

But there's one thing I think a prospective Santa should know: I now feature quadraphonic sound in my home listening setup and could therefore use *two* units so I can equalize all four channels. And since I'm presently using back speakers that are different from the ones in the front channels, the need for equalization is even greater now than in my all-stereo period. In the event that I receive more than two Acousta-Voicette units, you won't find me rushing to the exchange counter on December 26. You see, there's this stereo system downstairs in my recreation room. . . .

Tapesonic 70A-TRS open-reel tape deck



I suppose I'm destined to be one of those people who are embarrassed by luxury. I could never imagine having a servant or a fancy car or even a very lavish sound system, although audio is a big thing in my life. I still gape at elaborately equipped broadcast and recording studios, and I sometimes feel a twinge of discomfort at the expensive redundancy built into such establishments—even though, intellectually, I can understand the need for it. Time is money, after all, in our society. . . .

By contrast to such technologically posh installations, the radio program service where I've spent a lot of my time over the last four years might be called an off-the-cuff operation. It is a very low-budget organization financed largely by the people who staff it, and yet it has to meet certain minimum standards of audio quality. And it was in these studios that I fell in love with the Tapesonic 70-TRS. It has been described as the Volkswagen of the recording studio, the poor man's Ampex, a machine only an impecunious parent could love; but I have come to respect it enormously.

If I were to choose a tape recorder for my own, mostly nonportable use, I would choose

Peter E. Sutheim
Freelance engineer,
former audio editor
(Radio-Electronics)

the current Tapesonic 70A-TRS. It is large and heavy, designed for rack mounting (that is, in studio-type equipment racks) though a carrying case is available. It takes up to 10½-inch reels, runs at 3¾, 7½, and 15 inches per second, and can be bought with either half-track or quarter-track heads. It has a sturdy, reliable three-motor transport with solenoid push-buttons for all tape motions and can be adapted for full remote control. It has three heads, and each of the channels can accept either a microphone or a line-level input. The amplifiers and the bias/erase oscillator all are on pull-out printed-circuit boards, which can be replaced in a few seconds. (And all of this costs Santa only $675 plus tax.)

But that describes only the product, not the romance. One can mix in audio circles (pun unintended, but yours if you want it) for quite some time without encountering another toiler who knows the Tapesonic. When a meeting does occur, it is with grins of recognition. (Sports-car owners toot and wave; we're not so demonstrative.) The Tapesonic is, in its understated way, a legend. Designed and built basically by one man who works in a fourth-floor loft in a warehouse district of lower Manhattan, this totally unglamorous machine comes with no written guarantee and an instruction booklet that leaves a great deal to the imagination. There is no sales organization and no advertising. When you want one, you go to the man who makes them, put down a $50 deposit, and are told to come back in three weeks. Your unit may or may not be ready by then. But when it is, and once you have gone over the head adjustments carefully, you have a very fine recorder.

I don't know what will happen when the man who makes Tapesonics retires. But for the time being, I know there is a solid, dependable workhorse recorder that I can fix by myself. In this time of complexity, that's knowledge to treasure.

Koss ESP-9 electrostatic headphones

Michael N. Marcus
High fidelity editor
(Rolling Stone)

I want something that will make me dissatisfied with my present stereo system and turn me into a snob—a product that the world isn't even ready for: the Koss ESP-9 headphones. Well, maybe the listening world is ready, but certainly not the high fidelity manufacturers, record companies, and radio stations. That $100 phono cartridge, $300 turntable, $800 tape deck or tuner that sounded so great, so absolutely, utterly realistically live? Play them through ESP-9s and you'll curse them, now realizing how much better they *should* be. Every tiny malfunction, misadjustment, or design shortcut that would've sneaked by with other headphones or walnut-box speakers is suddenly bared, intruding into your music—thrusting, disrupting, distracting, destroying your pleasure.

The ESP-9 has such wide, flat frequency response, such superclarity, and such zapping, flapping, machine-gunlike transient response that shoot out each note so quickly and so deadly that *nothing* escapes. Sloppy musicianship, hum in one of a dozen microphones, burps and sneezes in a recorded audience send you running for the record reject lever. A radio station that doesn't clean styli and tape heads, that plays dusty records or poorly spliced tapes, that loads its sound with phony equalization and limiting and compression, is an instant tune-out.

The ESP-9 *makes* you a snob: an intolerant technobigot impossible to live with. The headphones let you hear things that no mortal was meant to know. You are the high fidelity god—omnipotent, omniscient, omnaural.

That joker from across the street brings over his new Dolbyized cassette deck and some tapes to show off. He thinks he's got the best that can be bought. Hah! You listen with the ESP-9s and you know that while his cassette *is* Dolbyized, the master it was dubbed from was not. The hiss squirts through your ears, scathing your brain. (Might it be that the ESP-9s come not from Koss but from Dolby Labs, who designed them with such extended and even high-frequency response to better demonstrate the evils of tape hiss?)

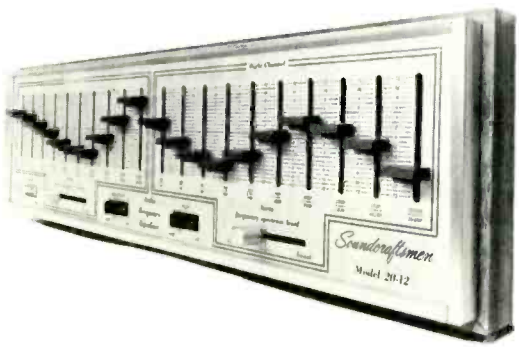
But enough of the wise-guy stuff. The ESP-9 is made not for one-upmanship but for music, and it's *glorious* for music. With the best program material fed through the finest hardware you can find, it turns you on as never before. You are hooked! You lurk around recording studios trying to steal a master tape; you trade your car for a new amplifier, trying

to do justice to the ESP-9s. But you seldom can. With each new height of listening ecstasy you shout at your amplifier, like the sub-chasing captain to his engine-room crew, "Give me more, give me more, more, more!"

Sure, the ESP-9 hurts your head; it squeezes your ears and weighs on your neck muscles. It's expensive and needs a lot of power, and the cord is short and not even coiled. But for ultimate bliss, the holy grail of music listening, you gladly make sacrifices.

Big band, orchestral, or hard rock performers—once multitracked into muddy oblivion—re-emerge as separate musicians. You hear not only an electric guitarist's amplified whines and clanks, but his fingers skimming on the strings. A soft piccolo tickles your spine. When a percussionist puts his brushes to the cymbals, your guts tingle; the brass and steel ooze and shimmer through your ear canal. You don't dare open your eyes for fear the magic will vanish. You are in the audience; behind the stage; on the stage; in a clarinet's mouth or an organ's pipe. You and the music are one.

Soundcraftsmen 20-12 equalizer



Herbert Friedman
Electronics consultant

The total cost of all the redundant booze, records, books, and gimmicks I will receive this holiday season will easily exceed that of a really fine piece of audio gear. So I'd like to suggest to family and friends that they pool resources and give me something I really want—a Soundcraftsmen Model 20-12 Audio Frequency Equalizer. Now I'm just proud enough of my present setup to hope they'll reply, "How can anything improve what is already superb, namely your high fidelity system?". But I'd like to remind them of those endless stacks of 78-rpm oldies but goodies I have been moving from house to house over the last thirty years, each time losing a few precious performances through the efforts of the moving men.

Always at the back of my mind was the idea that some day I would "clean them up"—remove the surface noise, equalize out the resonances of the acoustic horn or early electrical cutter head, and perhaps give a little boost to a mike-shy bass line. Eventually I would wind up with a tape library of the greatest in popular music as I think it should (i.e., originally did) sound. And don't tell me to buy LP reissues. I don't want a half-hearted attempt to "improve" Ossman's banjo version of the *Maple Leaf Rag* nor so much reverb that the Bing Crosby/Duke Ellington *St. Louis Blues* sounds like a broadcast from the Howe Caverns. And what some engineers have done to early Carusos defies description.

The major difficulty with hopes and dreams is that they often turn out to be very expensive. The professional equalizers that were until recently the only way of rescuing the sound buried in old recordings are expensive, while the tone controls common in high fidelity amplifiers don't contribute much toward these specialized needs. Then came the Soundcraftsmen 20-12 at under $300 to put my dreams into a new perspective.

The 20-12 wasn't designed expressly for my purposes. It is a stereo (two-channel) equalizer, each channel having ten controls covering the frequency range from 20 to 20,480 Hz. Each control covers one octave of that range and provides ± 13 dB nominal equalization at the center frequency of the octave. The suggested purpose of the unit is to correct the stereo system's over-all frequency response so that—regardless of the speakers employed or the listening room's acoustics—the final sound quality from the system is truly flat.

As anyone who has heard the effect of the Soundcraftsmen knows, it can be startling at the very least. Ten or fifteen minutes is all that's needed to set up the 20-12, so that a medium-priced speaker gets the rich, full bass of more expensive equipment, and the squawks caused by resonances in the midrange and highs are attenuated.

Well, I fully expect to use the 20-12 more or less as prescribed—but not to correct for speaker/acoustics response. Rather, by simply rearranging the patch cords to connect the 20-12 between the amplifier and tape recorder, I will be able to restore some bass to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, squash the midband acoustic-horn resonances on some early works by Jabbo Smith and King Oliver, and spread the lows and highs of the early Bessie Smiths for a more realistic and natural sound without the cavernous echo so loved by studio engineers. Last, but certainly not least, I have W. C. Handy's 1917 group with a roaring version of the *Maple Leaf* that's buried under surface noise. If I just push the top three controls on the 20-12 all the way down, *voilà!*—the music's in and the scratch is out.

Except for some *carefully applied* reverb (and then only rarely), the 20-12 will give just what I need to make my oldies real goodies.

At last a serious rival to the KLH Model Fifty-One.

The new KLH Model Fifty-Two.

When it comes to power, performance and overall product integrity, KLH's classic Model Fifty-One is a tough stereo receiver to beat. At $259.95†, it literally wipes out its competition. We just could not make a better AM/FM stereo receiver for the money.

So we've made a more expensive one.

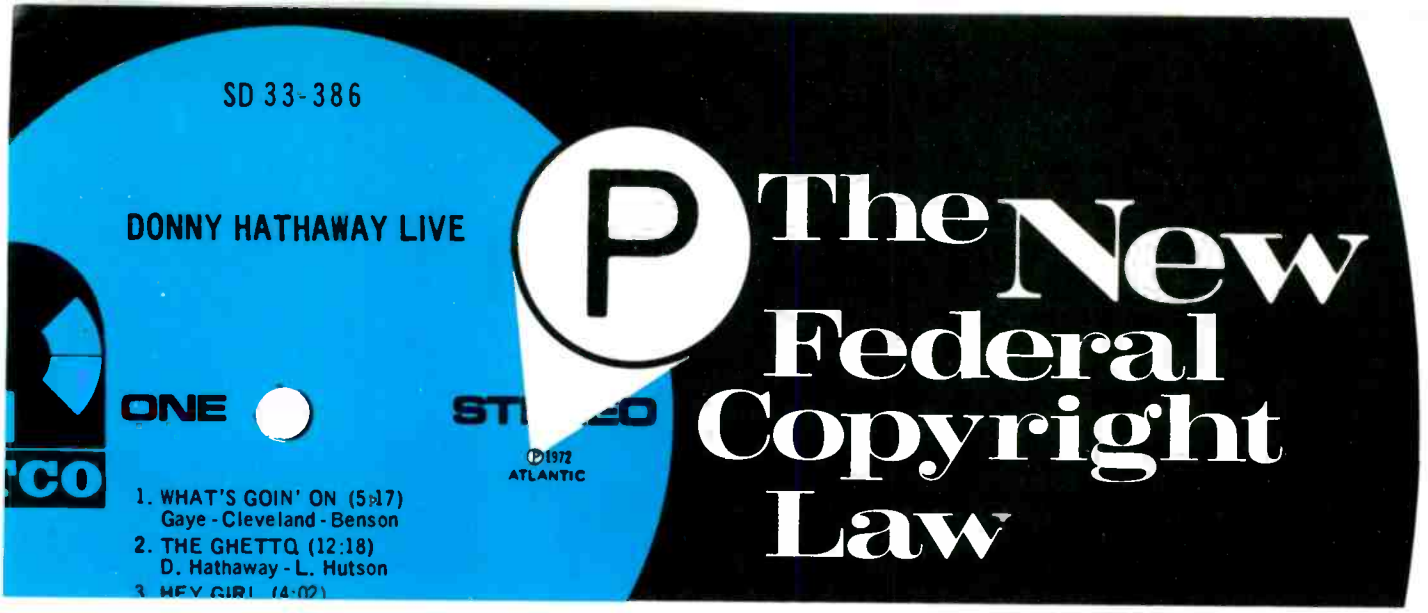
It's called the Model Fifty-Two. And it costs $289.95†. The additional thirty dollars buys you additional power (30 watts per channel RMS compared with the Fifty-One's 20 watts per channel RMS). The Fifty-Two also has a new KLH look, dual tuning meters, and a host of new convenience features. Now we know the Fifty-Two will never replace the Fifty-One; we never intended it to. But if you have a special need for somewhat more power than the Fifty-One offers, *but* you want the same dependability, precision engineering and super quality, we have a new receiver for you. The Fifty-Two . . . the Fifty-One's serious, but friendly rival.

See the Fifty-Two at your KLH dealer now. Just $289.95† (including walnut-grain enclosure). Also see the rest of the KLH receiver line, especially KLH's newest and lowest priced AM/FM stereo receiver, the Model Fifty-Five. Powerful. Dependable. And very special for just $199.95†. For more information, write to KLH Research and Development Corporation, 30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

KLH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

†Suggested retail price. Slightly higher in the west.

CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



The New Federal Copyright Law

YOU MAY HAVE SEEN a new symbol, ℗, on records or tapes you have bought or browsed over recently and wondered what it means and whether it has any significance for you.

It stands for Phonogram. It means that for the first time in United States history, recordings can be copyrighted and shielded by federal law from unauthorized duplication.

Recording copyrights, which were authorized a year ago when Congress passed the so-called antipiracy act, will not be as significant to the buyer of classical and other "esoteric" fare as it will be to those who spend over one-and-a-half billion dollars a year on popular, rock, country, and soul albums and singles. Many of these buyers have found bargains in the cascade of pirated tapes of noncopyrighted hits that flooded the country in the past few years. Bargain days may soon be over.

Records bearing the ℗ symbol are unequivocally protected from any and all unauthorized duplication for commercial sale, public distribution, leasing, or lending, with a few exceptions for nonprofit educational and broadcaster use. Copyrights can be granted to any recording made on or after February 15, 1972, and to older recordings if substantial revisions are made or new material added. While the law is aimed primarily to halt the large-scale commercial duplicators, copyright owners could use it to prosecute the makers of *any* illegal copies.

Moreover, the copyright can cover foreign recordings if 1) they originate in one of the thirty-seven countries with which the United States has bilateral copyright treaties, and 2) they were made on or after the February 15 date or meet the substantial revision requirement. (There will be stronger antipiracy protection for foreign recordings here and for American recordings in other countries if the Senate ratifies the recent Geneva accord—a special international agreement that will protect member nations against import and export of pirated copies.)

As time goes by, then, and all new recordings acquire protection under federal law, there will be restraints on owners of tape recorders who make copies of hard-to-find, out-of-print, or expensive recordings for friends or for exchange through clubs. There will also be more risk of prosecution for the friendly retailer who caters to buyers of underground tapes.

What Can You Tape?

Before you throw out your tape recorder, however, note that the law does allow you some uses for it beyond recording the voices of your family.

For one thing, your fundamental privilege of making copies for individual home use is not affected, even if you are taping the new copyrighted recordings. The House Copyrights Subcommittee made this emphatically clear in its report approving the record copyright bill:

> Specifically, it is not the intention of the committee to restrain the home recording, from broadcasts or from tapes or records, of recorded performances where the home recording is for private use and with no purpose of reproduction or otherwise capitalizing commercially on it. This practice is common and unrestrained today, and the record producers and performers would be in no different position from that of the owners of copyright in recorded musical compositions over the past twenty years.

Furthermore, don't confuse the making of extra copies for lending or swapping, which is culpable, with your traditional right to do what you wish with your own legally acquired recording—the "right of first sale." As Copyright Office counsel Abraham A. Goldman clarifies it, you can do what you like with your copyrighted record or tape as you can with a copyrighted book you have purchased. You can sell it for a penny; burn it; give it away; lend it to whomever you like as often as you like. But if you make duplicates of a copyrighted recording—just as if you photocopy a book—to sell, give, lend, or lease to friends, you are infringing on the

owner's right to make copies for public distribution and sale.

The new law also offers no bar to taping concerts. It applies only to copyrighted recordings, not to live performances. Note, however, that there may be other concert-taping restrictions. For one thing, the music being played may itself be copyrighted, and you would be infringing on the composer's rights if you make copies for sale or any use beyond your own individual one. Counsel Goldman admits that it is not easy to draw the line, and one single copy given to a friend probably would not land you in jail. But you would be technically in violation of the law.

Moreover, there may be a ban on taping at any particular concert. The main body of the copyright law permits the owner of a copyrighted work (in this case the music) to impose terms in licensing a performance of his work. He can make conditions such as "no recording in the concert hall." When concert halls make buying a ticket conditional on leaving recorders at home, you record at your own risk.

The Battle Continues

Even though the record copyright act is now law, that doesn't mean that you've heard the last of the arguments that accompanied its passage. The enabling legislation is scheduled to die on December 31, 1974. This bill, S. 646, was actually an emergency amendment, an advance section of an overall revision that has been stalled in Congress for five years, of the 1909 copyright statute. The House Copyrights Subcommittee put the three-year limit on the amendment to give Congress a period in which to study its effect. But unless the revision passes or the amendment is renewed, records will be unprotected again beginning in 1975.

The problem of tape piracy had been exacerbated recently because the new tape technology—the cartridge and the cassette—has made copying easier and cheaper than ever. In addition, the underground tapists had been able to come out into the open, claiming they were operating legally because they paid royalties on any copyrighted music they offered and the records they copied were not protected.

Opponents of the bill, including of course the unauthorized duplicators, have not been content to wait until 1975 to attempt to overturn the record copyright act. They have:

1. Challenged the constitutionality of S. 646, contending that the bill as worded breaks with the intent of the Constitution by permitting the copyright to go to an uncreative, undeserving, risk-capital enterprise.

2. Demanded that records be put under compulsory licensing that will permit copying—similar to the licensing that already exists with copyrighted music. (In the copyright law, once a piece of music has been recorded anyone can record it simply by paying the songwriter a "mechanical" royalty of about two cents a tune or one-fourth of a cent per minute of play on longer works.)

3. Warned that the new law will result in higher prices for the consumer since the exclusive rights it grants will promote monopoly among the record companies or other owners (in some cases the performing star or group) of record copyrights.

4. Stated that compulsory licensing will permit duplicators to release tapes containing several hits rather than, as is often the habit on established labels, recordings offering one big hit buried among a lot of filler material.

5. Praised the enterprise of the early underground tape operations that made and sold recordings of relatively uncommercial musical happenings that would never have reached the public otherwise.

Spokesmen for the record industry, however, have stated that their prices are in line with the costs of doing business—unless there are no original production costs. These costs can run to $100,000 and over on a single album, and moreover only one or two albums out of ten have profitable sales. The superhits have to carry the costs of the losers—particularly of the less profitable classical recordings. The implication is that the industry can continue to produce records at current prices only if its most popular efforts are no longer knocked off as soon as the sales figures start to rise. Since the duplicators bear none of the initial production costs, it is easy for them to undercut the established labels on price, the record people charged. Furthermore, they said, there is a possibility that the price of recordings will be lower if the record companies no longer have to make up for sales lost to the unauthorized duplicators.

In passing the bill, Congress agreed with the record industry. The lawmakers rejected the idea of compulsory licensing, which they felt would not only be unfair to record manufacturers and performers but would promote mere copying—not new or creative versions. Record companies could begin to copy each other's releases, and bedlam would ensue. So far the courts seem to agree with this attitude.

Obviously the consumer has a stake in the outcome of this battle. If the record copyrght law remains in force, it will mean the end of unauthorized duplicate recordings. For the home tapist, since the law applies to him as well as to the commercial duplicator, it puts federal restrictions on his right to do as he pleases with any copies he makes.

But if the bill works as Congress intended, record producers will be able to continue to offer a wide variety of creatively (and expensively) made recordings at a fair return to themselves. ●

by Mike Jahn

The Royalty Cheaters

A funny money game sometimes leaves composers singing the blues.

ARTHUR "BIG BOY" CRUDUP is called "The Father of Rock 'n' Roll" by his record company, RCA Victor. This is not so far from the truth as to be discounted as aggressive public relations. Yet Crudup, on a visit to New York to attend ceremonies launching a new Vintage Series of LPs, including one of his own, sighed, "The only thing I can say about it is the big fish eat the little ones.

"I haven't drawn a royalty statement for the records I've made in years," he says. "And the records that other people made of my songs, I haven't received any money from that."

The old-time blues musician who has never been paid for his work is fairly common in the music business. However, the slightest investigation into this situation leads to an incredibly complex web involving poor black men, rich white men, crusading composers' agents, and a legal tangle that would put William Kunstler back in Moot Court. Through all of it the net effect remains: The people who created most of the music—some of the principal figures in one of America's original art forms, blues—haven't been paid for their work, or have received only token payment. Typical of these artists are Arthur Crudup, Jimmy Oden, and Floyd Jones.

Arthur Crudup (pronounced Croo-dup) was born in 1905 in Forrest, Mississippi, a small town halfway between Jackson and Meridian. He began playing guitar at the relatively advanced age of thirty-two. "In 1940 I went to Chicago and got stranded up there," he says. "I used to take my guitar and get on the corner, and whatever anybody wanted to hear, if they put a dime in my hat, well, I would play it.

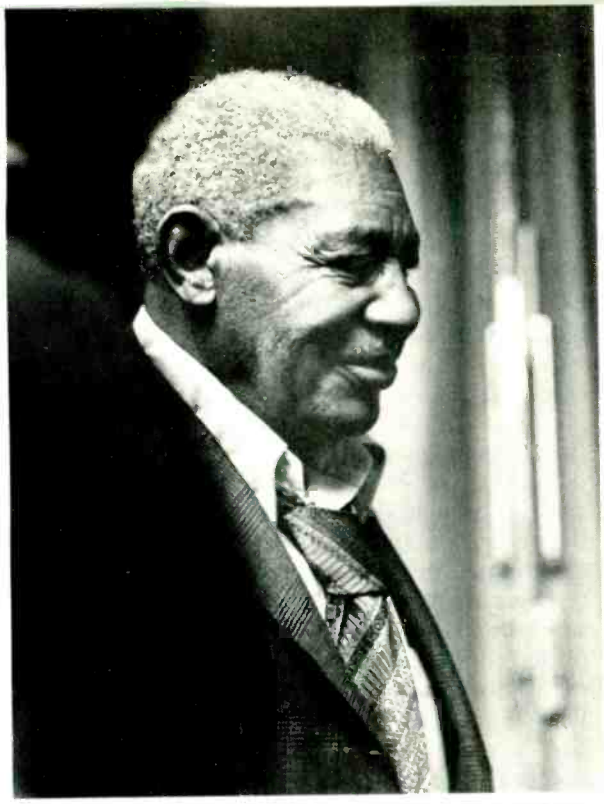
"I was trying to make the fare back South. I used to catch a freight train every morning and ride it all day trying to get out of town." Crudup didn't know that he was boarding a little spur line that ran from central Chicago to the main yards outside of town. He would hop in a car and sit back waiting for Mississippi. The train would go out to the main yards and back to Chicago. "Night would come and I would end right back at the same spot," he says. "Then I would go back on the corner and pick up enough to get a little food. Around midnight or 1:00 a.m. I would go to the "El" track, by the bridge where there was a hole under the tracks. I had a pasteboard carton stuck in there, so I could sleep. I'd get in the carton and get out around 5:00 a.m. before the police could come around and catch me. Then take the same trip over again." It took him a while to figure out the train system. It took him even longer to figure out the music business.

"One night I was standing on the corner there, playing my guitar, and Melrose came up." That's Lester Melrose, then a field agent for RCA/Bluebird and a free-lance talent scout. "He put a dollar in my hand and asked me to play. So I played a couple of pieces. Then Melrose said, 'How'd you like to make ten dollars a night?' I said 'Fine,' cause it didn't take but $11 to carry me back South, back to Mississippi. I went with him, to 35th and State, to Tampa Red's house to play for a party."

Tampa Red was a known bluesman of the time, and he convinced Crudup to record for Melrose. "I sang one of Tampa's songs, *Let's Get Drunk and Truck*, and a few other songs, and he said, 'Listen, you don't need no help. You're just as good as me or Lonnie Johnson or Big Bill or Big Maybelle. All we can do is what we do, and that's all you got to do. You got a lovely voice, and I like the type of music you play.' So I went on and recorded."

Between 1941 and 1956 Crudup recorded some eighty songs for Bluebird. Some of the best of them are included on the Victor Vintage LP released in 1971, "Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup; the Father of Rock 'n' Roll" (LPV 573). Through the 1940s and into the 1950s, Crudup worked bars in small towns around Mississippi and some South Side bars in Chicago. He alternated this with working as a sharecropper, and by working for the sanitation department in Silver City, Mississippi, the town that became his home base. He got married and raised seventeen children. "I would go to Chicago, make records, get a little money for the recording session, catch the bus back to Mississippi, and work all day for the city for $28.44 a week. I had the family to take care of, a car note to pay off, a gas bill, a light bill. I took my guitar on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, played until twelve o'clock at night,

Mike Jahn, a "Lighter Side" regular, also covers the pop-music scene for Cue *and in his syndicated column.*



Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup may have fathered rock-and-roll, but, typically, paternity brought honor but little cash.

and had to get up the next morning, get on the white man's truck, and haul garbage all day."

In 1955 Elvis Presley recorded a Crudup song, *That's All Right Mama*, as his first record. In the next two years Presley recorded several other Crudup compositions, *So Glad You're Mine* and *My Baby Left Me*. These were included on best-selling albums. *That's All Right Mama* has been recorded often since then; the most notable case being its inclusion on Rod Stewart's 1971 album "Every Picture Tells a Story," which as of this writing has sold two million copies. At the customary rate of two cents per record sold, Crudup should be walking around with $20,000 in his pocket, just from Rod Stewart. In all, his earnings from royalties should have come to an estimated $120,000, according to Crudup's agent. "Nothing," Crudup says. The closest he has come to recognition was when Elvis Presley sent him a letter praising *My Baby Left Me* as being "the best hillbilly song ever written." Crudup framed the letter and stuck it on a wall, but the house burned down.

In the mid-Fifties Crudup retired from playing to work on the farm. While sales of records written by him mounted, he continued farming, including one memorable year when he had no income; he produced enough food to feed the family, but that was it. In the late Sixties he was "rediscovered" when many young whites developed an interest in blues, and now supports himself by playing occasional college dates. Still a big man, still possessing the curious high voice and easy shuffling style of country blues notable in *That's All Right Mama*, he talks gently, but is bitter toward the music business, still waiting for the Big Check.

Two years ago Crudup joined the American Guild of Authors and Composers (AGAC), an organization of songwriters whose function is to ensure that members who write songs get paid for them. John Carter, managing director of AGAC, took an interest in Crudup's complaints of nonpayment, and since then he has been raising a bit of hell with the system of music publishing.

Music publishing is one of the most profitable ends of the music industry. Theoretically, it goes this way. A songwriter contracts with a publisher, whose job it is to convince performers to record the man's songs. When one is recorded and released, the record company pays the publisher royalties at the customary two cents per record sold. For a disc that sells a million copies, this amounts to $20,000. The publisher pays the writer 50%, or $10,000. This is standard practice. If the publisher is a small one and contracts with a major publisher to handle the songs, the second publisher's fee comes out of the first publisher's share. The writer should, under standard practice, end up with half the money the record company disburses.

But in the 1930s and 1940s, it was not always this way. For example, a blues singer would be discovered by a talent scout like Lester Melrose, and then would record for a label such as Bluebird, which sold entirely to the "race record" market. At the time, no one imagined that a record of this type would ever become a classic. So the singer was paid $25 or $50 as a "recording fee," and given a ticket back to Mississippi. No formal contract was drawn. Sometimes there would be a bill of sale whereby the writer, not anticipating royalties and ignorant of record industry practices, would sign over to the talent scout all rights to his songs. Melrose listed Crudup's songs under his own Wabash Music and contracted with Hill & Range Music in New York to release them to other artists. Hill & Range also worked with Presley, and so it went.

When sales of Crudup's songs mounted, the money apparently filtered back to Melrose, but not to Crudup. When first asked about this, a lawyer for Hill & Range said, "We certainly met all our commitments, and we had a clause in the contract (with Melrose) requiring him to pay the writer. Whether in fact he did so, we cannot say." Melrose died several years ago. His widow lives in an orange grove in Florida and could not be reached for comment. According to Carter, Crudup received almost no money until his investigation began, and since then has been paid at most $2,500. A settlement is now being worked out with Hill & Range which, Carter says, will pay Crudup about $50,000 in back royalties and his fair share of future monies. The Hill & Range lawyer refused any further comment until the settlement is signed. Carter noted that Hill & Range is being "very co-operative" and is apparently eager to have the matter worked out.

James Burke Oden is a blues singer and guitarist

who worked out of Chicago in the late Thirties, Forties, and Fifties. He never became particularly well known because his activities were largely restricted to Chicago. He formed his own company, JOB Records, which distributed almost entirely to black outlets in Chicago. Oden wrote songs, some of which were published, by coincidence, by Melrose's Wabash Music and administered not by Hill & Range this time, but by MCA Music in New York. One Oden song, *Going Down Slow*, was recorded in 1968 by Aretha Franklin and sold well. According to Carter, the writer's share for *Going Down Slow* was about $10,000. "Oden was a member of AGAC then, and he wrote me that he hadn't been paid. When we made overtures to Wabash Music and MCA, Melrose produced a document which purported that he owned the song.

"The document was certainly open to question," adds Carter. "It was a small piece of paper, a bill of sale for several songs, their names written across the top in pencil. *Going Down Slow* was one of these. Oden was paid less than $100 as a 'recording fee' for the songs. After discussions, MCA conceded that it was Jimmy Oden's tune and that the bill of sale probably wouldn't hold up in court. Since then he's been paid directly by MCA ... $10,000 in royalties through 1968." A spokesman for MCA Music said he couldn't recall the document, but noted, "Rights flowed to us under assignment from other parties, there was a dispute as to those rights, Jimmy had his point of view, the people we were involved with had their point of view, and in the end it went the way of all sensible things: Everybody agreed to agree."

Oden did manage to complicate his own case by selling rights to *Going Down Slow* to several different publishers, which he was not entitled to do, apparently hoping one of them would connect with it. Carter says many bluesmen used to do this out of sheer frustration. He feels the matter is now being straightened out.

Floyd Jones, a guitarist working in Chicago, wrote a song called *On the Road Again*, and recorded it in 1953 for Oden's JOB Records. It was distributed mainly in Chicago. One musician who participated in the 1953 recording session was Sunnyland Slim, another familiar blues figure. The record went nowhere, but over the years Jones got along all right, and in the mid-Sixties joined AGAC. In 1968 the Los Angeles blues-rock band Canned Heat had a hit record of *On the Road Again*, but watch: First it was credited to Jimmy Oden, but the publisher was listed as Metric Music, Canned Heat's firm; then Alan Wilson, a member of Canned Heat, claimed he wrote it. According to Carter, "At that time Canned Heat was saying they never heard the Jones record, until we found out that Sunnyland Slim also played in the Canned Heat session." A settlement was worked out whereby Wilson and Jones shared the credit—Wilson having made a significant contribution to the song—and Jones has received several thousand dollars in royalties. Previously, Carter says, Jones hadn't received anything.

A lawyer for United Artists couldn't recall the case and referred me to Canned Heat, but the group was in Australia at the time. Canned Heat's Los Angeles management office hasn't returned the calls. Alan Wilson died in 1970. Probably Wilson had thought the song was a traditional one, in the public domain, and that Jones and he had both copyrighted their arrangements of it.

There are many aggravations to be found in pursuing this kind of story. One is that anyone connected with music publishing can easily lose a layman between the copyright office and the third licensing agreement with the fourth publisher. It does get hard to stick to the basic facts. Another problem is that there are no absolute heroes and no absolute villains. Even the individual who seems the most blameless has sinned someplace. Arthur Crudup exaggerated on the low side the amount he was paid by Lester Melrose: He claimed to have received nothing, but records show that he got around $2,500. What is most annoying about this is that in many cases the people who were, in essence, exploiting the ignorance of black musicians in the 1930s and 1940s do have an argument. Rights to songs *were* often signed over by musicians who should have known better. There is no law requiring music publishers to inform signees of their rights. The excellent reference work *This Business of Music* (Billboard Publications, N.Y., N.Y.) states, "Unlike the typical book publisher's agreement, or the show music contract, the copyright on popular music is assigned to the publisher, and if the writer is not protected within the confines of the contract he has little chance to be safeguarded by custom in the industry." Ethical crimes can be so much more infuriating than actual, legal ones.

Says Carter: "There's a lot of material being used by some of the young rock groups, and some of the contemporary blues artists, that really is traceable back to a lot of fellows who are still living and who have never gotten paid for their works. They're being claimed by firms who don't know where these people are and do nothing about trying to locate them. I haven't even scratched the surface here, that's the sad thing about it. There are some firms who are just out and out screwing writers."

Says Crudup, who is still waiting for contracts to be drawn up so he can get his money: "I wouldn't mind recording again, on one condition. That I get something out of it. I don't want you to feel like I'm singing my songs to make you a million and I don't get a little bit from it. I'd rather go on just like I am. Just Arthur 'Big Boy' Crudup, who was once a blues singer; now he's dead and forgotten." ●

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behind the scenes

The Strange Case of the Furtwängler Ring

Everyone knew these recordings existed, but getting them to the public involved some tricky questions about who, how, and when. by Peter Andry

THE LONG-AWAITED RELEASE of Wilhelm Furtwängler's historic RAI recording of Wagner's *Ring* cycle is a particularly joyous artistic occasion for me. In a sense, too, I find it something of an anticlimax, for the entire project has been very close to me—not for a few months, as is usually the case with a new recording, but for a total of seventeen years, ever since I joined EMI in 1955. The Furtwängler *Ring* has actually been in the forefront of company policy for nearly twenty years. Other record companies were of course interested in releasing the performances, and the active and energetic Furtwängler Society has continued to campaign vigorously for its issue; the general public, however, has heard relatively little about the behind-the-scenes activities that postponed the release of these discs for such a long time.

Historically, the facts are these. EMI had always wanted to make a complete recording of the *Ring*, a completely impractical project until the development of the long-playing record. But in 1952 David Bicknell, then manager of the International Artists' Department, renewed Furtwängler's exclusive contract and planned with him what was to have been the first complete recording of the *Ring*. *Die Walküre* (still currently available on Seraphim IE 6012) was completed in 1954 in mono as a studio recording and issued in 1955—sadly as a memorial, for Furtwängler had died before the other operas could be recorded. However, in 1953 Furtwängler had been engaged by RAI's Rome Radio to tape broadcast performances in their studio, with a studio audience, beginning with *Das Rheingold* on October 26 and continuing with one act per night in sequence until November 27. As Frau Elisabeth Furtwängler recalls that month in Rome: "The Radio Italiana Orchestra was barely familiar with the *Ring*. This had disadvantages, but they were outweighed by the advantages. The musicians were gripped by this 'new' music. How hard everyone worked—orchestra, singers, and Furtwängler himself! The studio, which was shaped like an amphitheater, was always full at these performances. The audience of music-lovers was invited by Radio Italiana—on two conditions, that guests be prompt and have no colds. Hence, no one made a sound. As we returned home from the last performance—the third act of *Götterdämmerung*—after a long pause Furtwängler said to me quietly, 'I think he would have been satisfied with me.'"

Now that a studio-produced *Ring* with Furtwängler was impossible, we realized how important it would be to secure the rights to these tapes and issue them on records. As long ago as 1955 David Bicknell sent EMI's musical adviser Lawrence Collingwood to Turin, where the tapes had been stored, to report on the quality of the recordings. Collingwood's report was favorable, and a contract was then negotiated with RAI for the rights that they possessed.

By this time, however, the original tapes had disappeared—in fact, there is a good possibility that they have been destroyed, since no trace of them has ever been found. But fortunately RAI's engineers had made metal masters and stampers, and a few sets of records had been pressed. In 1959 RAI presented one of these sets to Frau Furtwängler, who now desired more than ever to see her husband's *Ring* cycle in public circulation. Over the

Wilhelm Furtwängler congratulates Martha Mödl after her appearance as Brünnhilde in Wagner's *Ring* cycle.

Peter Andry is manager of the International Artists' Department of EMI (Capitol/Angel here).

years EMI continued negotiations: Full agreement of each artist had to be secured—not only the cast of twenty-seven soloists, but the chorus and orchestra as well. Naturally over the years the musicians had dispersed—some had retired, some were dead and their heirs had to be contacted—and it seemed an almost impossible task.

However, we finally secured all the principals' agreements except for two—Wolfgang Windgassen (Loge and Siegmund) and Josef Greindl (Fasolt, Fafner, and Hagen), both of whom were contracted at the time of the recording to Deutsche Grammophon. DGG had at one time apparently thought of issuing the recordings, as had other companies, but they were faced, of course, with the same contractual problems as we were: And above all, Furtwängler had been under contract to EMI. There seemed to be a complete deadlock. But in 1963 I went to Hamburg and set up a basic agreement with DGG, though it was not possible to implement this until 1970. Then came the problem of tracing all the soloists and this took another year to resolve. One of our representatives in Germany, Constantin Metaxas, was given the grueling assignment of traveling around Europe to search for artists or their heirs. A settlement with everyone had to be secured in writing before final arrangements could be made with RAI, and David Bicknell kept at me, insisting that he could not reach full agreement with the Italian Radio until every artist had been accounted for.

In particular three artists—Dagmar Schmedes, Magda Gabory, and Olga Bennings—continued to elude us, and no one had the slightest idea of their whereabouts. Every German and Austrian opera company has very well documented archives where all artists' names are registered, but Metaxas drew a blank on these three ladies. However, he was told that most likely he would find them in Austria, and sure enough, after several months Gabory and Schmedes were traced. There now remained only one person: Olga Bennings, and where was she? Metaxas went to the Austrian State Department, which was unable to supply any information. In desperation Metaxas turned to Professor Heinrich Schmidt, a member of the Vienna State Opera who has appeared in many productions made by EMI. Professor Schmidt said, yes, he knew Olga Bennings—she lived just around the corner from the Vienna Staatsoper. He hadn't seen her in some time, but he still had her address. By a stroke of luck, Metaxas found Miss Bennings at home and added her signature to those of the other twenty-six soloists. Now we could truthfully say that all participants were safely accounted for.

One further result of these negotiations must be mentioned. When we talked with Martha Mödl, the Brünnhilde of the series, she told me: "I know you're going to pay me a small fee for this; the sum is not important—I'm simply delighted that the recordings may be issued at last. But if there is any difficulty with the others who might perhaps be in need and request a larger amount, I'd like you to use my fee if necessary to increase somebody else's." Luckily, there was no need to take advantage of this generous gesture.

Then with the contractual details all settled at last, there were the technical problems to be solved. The records were at Turin, all on metal positives which the Italians refused to play. However, from these the RAI made up tapes for us and we sent down to Turin our engineers Tony Griffith, an expert at reconditioning recordings, and John Hughes, who has now been with EMI for more than forty years. They listened and then worked on the tapes, for it was a tricky operation to match up the different endings of the separate discs. But they managed to do it and brought back to London a completed tape; by the end of last year we had everything set so that the complicated work of matching transfers and balance could be started.

I know that some "pirated" tapes of these performances have come to light here and there over the past nineteen years, possibly made privately from the original RAI broadcasts. But what we now have is a properly engineered recording, put together as a commercial operation. Into it has gone nearly twenty years of effort and a great deal of money. In fact, the entire project cost about as much as it would have to issue recordings of, for instance, a live Bayreuth performance. And many will ask whether, in the light of present-day conditions, such an exercise can be justified. I believe that it can. Decca, with its complete *Ring* under Solti, has set a very high standard, possibly the highest from the engineering point of view. Herbert von Karajan's complete *Ring* for Deutsche Grammophon is a musical document of great artistic merit. But this Furtwängler performance is something unique. He was, after all, the greatest Wagner conductor of his time. We know that compared with modern studio recordings in stereo this one has its imperfections. But these are mainly technical, not artistic, questions and it is on artistic grounds that we believe that this magnificent performance should be made available to all music lovers. It has, in my view, a documentary value of the highest importance. In a musical performance, content is what really matters. We know that the sound is not of the standard that contemporary listeners have come to expect, but my own feeling is that after no more than a couple of minutes' listening such technicalities will be forgotten: The listener will be captured by the magic of Furtwängler's incomparable interpretation of what Deryck Cooke has so aptly described as "the supreme large-scale musical achievement of the human mind." ●

For a review of the monumental "Furtwängler Ring" *recordings, see page 63.*

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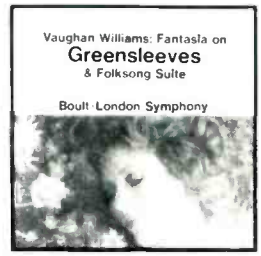

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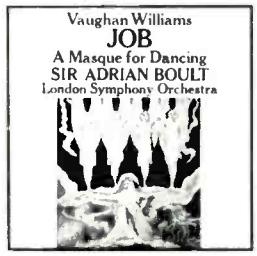

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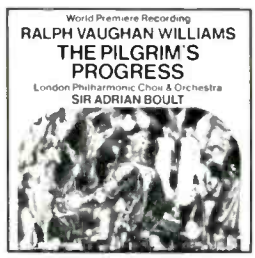

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Frantz, Gabory, Siewert, Rössl-Majdan, Furtwängler, and Malaniuk after the 1953 RAI concert performance of *Das Rheingold*.

The Furtwängler Ring

A staggering work interpreted by a legendary conductor

by Conrad L. Osborne

THIS COMPLETE PERFORMANCE of the *Ring* cycle, here released commercially for the first time, is a substantial contribution to the Wagner discography. Its "legendary" aspects (final view of the work by a great conductor; long-rumored impending availability and shadow existence on pirate discs; etc.) are strong enough to make a clear-eyed view especially desirable—it is so easy to address the stature of the conductor and the nature of the circumstances, rather than the interesting but extremely uneven presentation that actually exists.

Furtwängler's remarkable qualities are indeed in evidence all the way, and are particularly to be treasured inasmuch as they afford strong contrast with the interpretations of Solti and Von Karajan. His ideas about the score emerge with reasonable consistency, despite relatively inferior sound. His orchestra, that of the Radio Italiana, responds extremely well in view of the fact that it is considerably less than a great one, and that it had practically no experience with either the music or the conductor prior to the performance—large qualifications. Finally, the casting offers a welcome stylistic unity and a few individual performances of note, though it is on the whole not the sort to carry the listener through the lengthening hours with a thrill of anticipation.

Perhaps the matter of sound is best settled at the outset. It improves steadily through the cycle, being quite dim and foggy for *Rheingold*, and improving to what might be described as mediocre early-LP mono by *Siegfried*. This last means a frequency and dynamic range about on a level with the better Cetra opera sets of the 1950 era, if one can imagine that standard applied to the color and weight of the *Ring* scoring. Even the *Rheingold* sound is a large improvement on the faraway noise of the pirated version (at least on the basis of memory); but it is disappointing indeed, in this music, to have so many crucial transitions and climaxes compromised by such compression and distortion—the Rhine Maidens' launching of their first concerted "*Rheingold!*" is a depressing example. The later operas are perfectly listenable if one allows at least some tolerance for source and date, and these albums give at least fair representations of the music and performance.

My own feeling is that if Furtwängler had completed his projected commercial *Ring*, with a great orchestra and in good studio sound, the orchestral interpretation would stand as the richest, most mature and majestic of those thus far recorded. It is easy to read those qualities into even this performance, and there is no denying their audible presence at many points. The very special dark glow of Furtwängler's Wagner sound, with its sharp projection of low string and woodwind sonorities that affords a caste I can only hint at with the term "primeval," is authentically present, despite a good deal of muddiness in the lowest frequencies and simple lack of life in the uppermost.

Like all highly gifted and experienced conductors, Furtwängler had arrived at a very firm and individual shaping of every melodic gesture—in the case of this music, every motivic variation. And fortunately, his orchestra is competent enough (especially in the strings) to follow him with some decision a good share of the time, so that again and again one is struck by the pointing and phrasing of such gestures in a way that draws some emotional significance from what often sounds merely neutral or repetitive. And his sense of the shape of larger entities and their interrelationships is so secure that it almost seems taken for granted, and execution of detail never interferes with the progression.

In terms of tempos, there is, I suppose, a certain stateliness to much of what Furtwängler does. But I could not characterize this as a "slow" *Ring*, even in the sense that his *Tristan* is "slow" (many of the sections seeming almost stationary when played in isolation, but turning out to possess a natural motion and deep urgency when heard in context). And it is interesting to note where he seems to hold rein on tempo, and what effect this makes.

The conversation among Wotan, Loge, and Mime in the Nibelheim scene of *Rheingold* is certainly played with great deliberation, for instance, and the orchestral commentary takes on a fascinating weight and finality as a result; but this is combined with a truly conversational treatment of the vocal parts and the smaller orchestral interjections, very like good standard treatment of accompanied recitative in middle Verdi, so that the scene's total effect is actually one of lightness and naturalness, set against a background of some import and menace. It is entirely unique, and for me is the highlight of the whole *Rheingold* performance. Altogether, I find myself most persuaded by the second and third acts of *Walküre* and just about all of *Siegfried*—the very center of the cycle, in other words. I was just slightly let down by the total impact of the *Götterdämmerung* for three reasons: 1) So much of this score does depend for its effect on really fine orchestral playing and/or truly satisfying recorded sound; 2) the second act, excellent though it is, doesn't have quite the intensity of the private recording of the 1937 Covent Garden performance with a far superior cast (an unfair comparison, which will be irrelevant to most listeners, but I can't shake it); and 3) there is no way the piece can leave one with its full emotional impact unless the Immolation takes off with a great soprano.

The RAI Orchestra rises to the challenge with the sort of job that compels professional admiration—that is, it is amazing how close the playing comes. It is, however, no better than decent large-opera-house routine. There is a serious weakness in the brass work, particularly in the horns, whose playing has some beauty but almost no punch or thrust, and is often insecure. Seldom is a brass chord played with true balance or precision of attack. String execution is better, despite some intonation problems, and the woodwind best. The orchestral "attitude" that comes through is alert and mettlesome; even so, there is more than one tempo change that takes a bar or two to settle into something clear and solid.

The evaluations of the singers are probably best gone at opera by opera. In *Rheingold*, the strongest contributions are unfortunately not made by the singers of the most important roles. The annotations that accompany the set suggest that the casting represents the very best of the Central European generation represented. This is not quite true even as far as it goes, but in any case the Wagner performances of those years were sustained by a few over-the-hill survivors of the great prewar years, bolstered by a doughty garrison from what should have been the next generation—the one decimated and dispersed by World War II. Since this is not an "international" cast, we naturally do not have any of the prominent Americans (e.g., Varnay, Harshaw, Thebom) or Scandinavians (Svanholm, Berglund) of the period. And many of the best Germanic singers then still active (especially among the men—Hotter, Schoeffler, Weber, Böhme) are also absent.

So our Wotan is Ferdinand Frantz, a solid singer of basically lighter timbre who (like Herbert Janssen and other contemporaneous artists) moved into the heavier Wagner roles because they needed doing. His range shortened at the top as a result, and since he was not a bass, he did not have much ease or presence in the low extension; the color of the voice as produced was rather monochromatic, and the dynamic choices limited. Fortunately, he still had some of the native strength and quality of his baritone voice left at the time of these performances, and is never less than honest and musical in his interpretive intentions. However, the *Rheingold* finds him in poor form, straining for Es and even E flats at the top and frequently breaking the flow of the only moderately demanding line; it's quite a struggle, and makes one wonder how he will contend with the far more severe tests of *Walküre* and *Siegfried*.

The real lead in *Rheingold*, albeit a character role, is Alberich, and this is strongly taken by Gustav Neidlinger. His voice possessed more beauty and ease than he commanded a few years later in the Solti performance, but here his performance has less dramatic thrust (it's surprisingly flaccid at key moments) and less musical precision. Still, it is a highly capable rendition of a vital role.

Among the important supporting parts, fine work is turned in by Frick (at his very finest as Fafner, the voice rolling easily and freshly) and Patzak, a tenor who can bring some real tonal substance and beauty, as well as musical shrewdness, to the role of Mime. Ruth Siewert is a somewhat mouthy but very solid Erda, with no holes in her quite lovely deep mezzo.

After an insecure start, Windgassen renders a Loge that is well above average vocally and musically, though a bit nondescript interpretively (a combination I far prefer to the reverse proportion). Malaniuk has some expressive thoughts as Fricka, but is too frayed and wobbly of voice to make them stick, and Greindl is a real trial as Fasolt, singing in a grey tone that is not once free of a marked quaver. Grümmer is a nice Freia, but Poell sounds aged and dry as Donner, who must have precisely the opposite qualities. The Rhine Maidens are strongly cast, though only Rössl-Majdan is really outstanding, capturing a real flavor in her mock-tender little scene with Alberich. Jurinac is luxurious casting on paper, but actually pulls away from high notes a good deal and flies sharp at two or three important spots.

Die Walküre, happily, finds Frantz in fresher, more resonant form, and he gives a substantially better performance than one could have predicted on the basis of his *Rheingold*. The vocalism is still rather stolid and predictable, but only occasionally does the top seem out of comfortable reach, and it is clear that within his vocal limits he is constructing a carefully judged and musically exact performance. There is often some real declamatory force, and in the Farewell he sings with surprising line and lyric nuance. Not a great interpretation, but one that commands respect.

Enter Brünnhilde, embodied by Martha Mödl. A never-quite-converted mezzo, this artist took up some of the dramatic soprano slack in the '50s, and still occasionally performs in low-voiced character parts. She acquired quite a following among devotees willing to overlook vocal problems in favor of dramatic intensity and nuance; as for myself, I've always had a hard time enjoying her work. The voice is a fine one, a great one even, but the transition to soprano was simply not carried out with any technical success, and indeed there is much too much chesty weight in her singing no matter how she is categorized. Intermittently she flashes the imposing size and attractive timbre of her true voice, but most of the singing is simply a battle, and I find it fatiguing to hear. She is a musical artist, and pays careful attention to textual values, but I don't even hear much of the supposed interpretive projection—determined desperation to sing

the notes is not the same thing. Her best work here is the "*War es so schmälich*," where she is fresh and free enough to do some really expressive phrasing; she and Frantz make a good thing of most of this scene.

Konetzni's Sieglinde is good routine: a solid artist with a big, round voice under imperfect control, always very careful toward the top. In Act III, she is extended by the big moments. Basically, Windgassen does not have the heft or the heroic ring for Siegmund, and doubling this with Loge is particularly unfortunate. Nevertheless, he is a truly intelligent and communicative singer, and does some of his cleanest, most secure singing on records in this performance. Frick is a good Hunding, though less effective than his *Rheingold* Fafner, somehow trying to make his tone blacker and nastier than it really is. I should emphasize that the musical intelligence of all the soloists, plus the extremely well-gauged and poignant accompaniments, add up to a first act that is greater than the apparent sum of these parts.

Regrettably, the Fricka of Cavelti is in no way sufficient, the voice heading every which way despite her obvious stylistic sense. A shame, for the orchestral performance in this scene is really gripping. The Valkyries are all in all a poor group.

In *Siegfried*, we meet our hero in the person of the experienced Ludwig Suthaus. Here is another performance one can respect as a highly professional piece of work without actually enjoying it. Basically, he is exactly wrong for the young Siegfried; the voice sounds old, and in the all-important middle range has a cottony texture of no vibrancy or core. His efforts to secure ring and thrust in this area lead only to spreading or pinching; it simply isn't good singing, and the first act becomes quite a marathon. In the second act, the more lyrical sections allow him to relax and sing nearer his true level, so that his musicality comes through, and the *Waldweben* scene has some lovely moments. In the final act the problems mount again, and the best one can say is that he has found a way of getting round them and singing all the notes (except grace notes and turns); itself quite a feat, but it's a long way through.

His partner in carrying the first act is the admirable Patzak, for whom one is increasingly grateful. At times, he sings long stretches in a white, vibratoless tone that ceases to carry any expressive load; but at all the important points he is really singing, and presenting his dwarf in a straightforward, human way that is quite touching. A mature artist, he knew the value of simple craft, and time and again makes delicious points just by precise execution of the purely musical requirements.

Frantz continues on his improved way and sings quite commandingly in the scene with Mime, aided by true nobility from the orchestra in the Wanderer's magnificent chords (the brass's best work of the cycle). Act II brings a new Alberich, Alois Pernerstorfer, singing substantially better than I remember ever hearing him. It is a fairly "straight" sort of Alberich, not especially individual, but bitingly vocalized, with the challenge of the insistent high declamation easily met. Patzak is brilliant in the scene with Siegfried: one is sorry to lose him. Greindl is again weak as Fafner, nasal and unsteady. *Sprachrohr* or no; but Streich is an excellent Forest Bird.

In the last act, Klose, somewhat past her prime and sounding rather hollow toward the bottom, is nonetheless an authoritative Erda. Frantz sings firmly here, though not with all the legato one would like, and is sturdy in his confrontation with Siegfried, bowing out of the cycle with a good deal more honor than his shaky beginnings suggested.

The last scene of course brings Mödl, throwing herself at the music with a will, sometimes making it, sometimes not, but certainly not shirking. The sound of this set is, I should say, the most successful of the cycle, and Furtwängler argues quite a case for this difficult score, despite his less than ideal heroic couple.

Götterdämmerung finds Suthaus and Mödl on their wonted courses, he secure and intelligent, though not attractive or heroic, she fluctuating noticeably. After a reasonable traversal of the prologue duet, she gets into rather serious difficulty in the Waltraute scene; then (with the act-at-a-time rest) summons energy for a propulsive second act, and so on. The Immolation is surmounted, but without any sense of ease or expansiveness.

Greindl, fortunately, is able to bring rather better form to the role of Hagen, where his dramatic intelligence is also given some chance. Vocally, it's still a compromise at best, but at least the character and the music are there in a basic way. Poell presents a decent, standard Gunther, a bit small-scaled but adequate. Pernerstorfer is again a strong, unsubtle Alberich—a performance probably more effective in the theater than on records.

The Norn Scene goes extremely well, all three singers making good contributions. Doubling as Waltraute, Klose has some trouble with the extroverted outer sections of the scene, but is most moving in her hushed evocation of the gods' plight. Jurinac is highly musical but a bit light for Gutrune. The male chorus betrays its Latin identity at a few points, particularly in the typically *cupo* sound of the basses: on the other hand, it is nice to hear a tenor contingent singing sustained B flats on pitch.

The serious Wagnerite will have to hear these records for Furtwängler, and own all or part of the cycle as a second version. At the Seraphim price, this will also obviously serve to put the *Ring* in the hands of many collectors who simply can't afford the outlay for the full-priced albums. And despite the vocal and technical weaknesses, the power and beauty of this staggering work are here in good measure.

WAGNER: Der Ring des Nibelungen. Ferdinand Frantz (b), Wotan; Alfred Poell (b), Donner; Lorenz Fehenberger (t), Froh; Wolfgang Windgassen (t), Loge; Ira Malaniuk (ms), Fricka; Elisabeth Grümmer (s), Freia; Ruth Siewert (c), Erda; Gustav Neidlinger (bs), Alberich; Julius Patzak (t), Mime; Josef Greindl (bs), Fasolt; Gottlob Frick (bs), Fafner; Sena Jurinac (s), Woglinde; Magda Gabory (s), Wellgunde, and Hilde Rössl-Majdan (ms), Flosshilde (in *Das Rheingold*). Windgassen, Siegmund; Frick, Hunding; Frantz, Wotan; Hilde Konetzni (s), Sieglinde; Martha Mödl (s), Brünnhilde; Elsa Cavelti (ms), Fricka and Grimgerde; Judith Hellwig (s), Helmwige; Gabory, Ortlinde; Gerda Scheyrer (s), Gerhilde; Dagmar Schmedes (s), Waltraute; Olga Bennings (ms), Siegrune; Malaniuk, Rossweise, and Rössl-Majdan, Schwertleite (in *Die Walküre*). Ludwig Suthaus (t), Siegfried; Frantz, Wanderer; Patzak, Mime; Alois Pernerstorfer (bs), Alberich; Greindl, Fafner; Rita Streich (s), Woodbird; Mödl, Brünnhilde, and Margarete Klose (ms), Erda (in *Siegfried*). Suthaus, Siegfried; Poell, Gunther; Greindl, Hagen; Mödl, Brünnhilde; Jurinac, Gutrune, Third Norn, and Woglinde; Klose, Waltraute and First Norn; Rössl-Majdan, Second Norn and Flosshilde; Pernerstorfer, Alberich, and Gabory, Wellgunde (in *Götterdämmerung*). Chorus and Orchestra of RAI Rome, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. Seraphim 6100, $53.98 (nineteen discs, mono only).

Walter Gieseking

New Perspectives

A complete edition of the concertos from Ashkenazy

RACHMANINOFF'S MUSIC, his concertos and the *Rhapsody* in particular, has never lacked adherents. Notwithstanding the tendency of nose-in-the-air intellectuals to scoff, it is pretty evident that this segment of the literature has more than withstood the test of time. Yet for all the frequent performances, relatively few pianists have attempted a complete cycle of the concertos. The first to assay it on discs was, quite rightly, the composer himself who collaborated with his beloved Philadelphia Orchestra as led by Stokowski (in the Second Concerto and *Rhapsody*) and Ormandy (in the balance). Curiously, Rachmaninoff's most celebrated older-generation disciples—Horowitz, Moiseivitsch, and Rubinstein—have recorded only one or two of the works; and to the best of my knowledge, the only protagonists to endisc all five works especially for microgroove are Leonard Pennario (Nos. 1 and 4 with Previn conducting for RCA; two versions of No. 2 led by Golschmann and Leinsdorf, both for Capitol; No. 3 with Susskind also for Capitol; and two versions of the *Rhapsody*, one for Capitol with Leinsdorf at the helm, the other for RCA with Fiedler and the Boston Pops). Earl Wild (who taped the cycle with Jascha Horenstein for *Readers' Digest*), and the present set with Ashkenazy and Previn.

Ashkenazy comes to his task with considerable experience. His earlier recordings of the Second and Third Concertos were well received in their day (and their day is far from over—high fidelity was already well advanced in 1962!). He also performed the entire cycle at Carnegie Hall a few years ago in a series of LSO concerts that launched Daniel Barenboim as conductor. The new versions of the Second and Third preserve the fleetness and direct lyricism of the older Ashkenazy renderings but are changed in subtle ways that reflect the pianist's revised thoughts on the music. In the C minor the new edition is a bit less broadly paced than of yore, the tension more tautly drawn and forwardly impelled. In the D minor (again performed without cuts), just the opposite has happened: Here the easygoing flexibility of the 1962 reading has become even slower—the phrasing, despite a few surviving *capriccioso* touches, is now more "Romantic" in the traditional sense. A more important change is that Ashkenazy now favors the less frequently heard, more thickly sonorous alternate cadenza in the first movement, whereas on the previous record he played the standard cadenza used by Rachmaninoff, Horowitz, and the majority of players. Frankly, I happen to prefer the standard cadenza, and I also continue to prefer the earlier Ashkenazy which has always seemed to me the best of the lyrical interpretations (my favorite versions of all, though, are the Horowitz/Reiner and Weissenberg/Prêtre, which have a gaunt intensity that eats into Rachmaninoff's lush harmonies like acid).

Considering the general excellence of London's sound in the past, the present offering is surprisingly mediocre. The pickup is rather distant and off-center, the range somewhat limited, and in the Second and Third Concertos detail is minimal. No. 1 has some of the same brittleness that one finds in the 1939/40 Rachmaninoff/Ormandy restoration, and only in the Fourth Concerto and *Paganini Rhapsody* are the sonics comparable to what one rightly expects to find in the best of today's product. I do not want to give the impression that the engineering is wretched or even unpleasant to the ear but only to register unanticipated disappointment. If you like Ashkenazy's playing (I find it most accomplished and musical although lacking the ultimate driving force I have learned to look for in this music) and are not looking for a demonstration record, this set ought to give you pleasure. Previn clearly shares the pianist's fondness for the music and secures lyrical support from his orchestra.

In his liner notes for the Ashkenazy/Previn album, Caine Alder mentions a "truly phenomenal" Gieseking performance of the Third Concerto in 1939 which so impressed the composer that he hesitated to play the work himself in public. I find this surprising for two reasons. For one thing, I had always believed that it had been Horowitz's ultrabrilliant interpretation that had given Rachmaninoff qualms about his own technique. Secondly, I distinctly recall reading the account of another first-hand witness to Gieseking's performance, the late music critic Warren de Motte. De Motte cited the performance as a classic example of a great pianist coming to grief in repertoire totally uncongenial to him. Fortunately, an air check was made of the occasion and the International Piano Library's recent issue gives us a chance to form our own opinion.

As so often happens, the truth lies somewhere in between the two polarities. To be sure, Gieseking's phrasing is rather unidiomatic—somewhat spare and ascetic, a bit jumbled and spiky in the more technical passages. I also was initially shocked by the strange slow-motion tempo Gieseking takes for the opening theme of the first movement. Yet after several replayings I find myself liking Gieseking's reading more and more for its genuine integrity and intellectual severity. There is a fresh, prob-

on Rachmaninoff

and some surprises from Gieseking

by Harris Goldsmith

Vladimir Ashkenazy

ing mind at work here and even a sort of rugged power that gives the music stature of a different sort than I have ever heard before. As noted above, Gieseking uses the less frequently heard first-movement cadenza, and unlike most performances of that era he eschews cuts. The rather scratchy, primitive sound may not do complete justice to the orchestra (the New York Philharmonic, although the label gives no credit), but Barbirolli deals manfully with the score. However one takes to Gieseking's account, it certainly provides fuel for thought.

The Rachmaninoff Second by Gieseking and Mengelberg from a year later will arouse no such controversy: It is clearly the firmest, strongest, most pulsating account I have heard after the celebrated Rachmaninoff/Stokowski. It is really quite astonishing to hear the patrician Mozart/Debussy specialist mold a Romantic cantabile line with the ultimate freedom and flexibility. I wouldn't have thought it possible! With all due respect to Gieseking, though, much of the credit for this wonderful performance undoubtedly belongs to Mengelberg who had performed the work many times with the composer himself and who draws richly dramatic, vibrantly effusive, totally committed playing from his magnificent Concertgebouw Orchestra. It is instructive to note how similar Mengelberg's approach to the score is to Stokowski's: Surely this is no mere coincidence. The sound here is several notches better than that in the (perfectly listenable) Third Concerto. Presumably this broadcast was taken down professionally by Netherlands Radio rather than by some eager amateur.

The other Gieseking mementos presented by IPL feature the pianist in more familiar literature. The Mozart K. 595 Concerto may lack the spiritual, world-weary muted happiness heard in the beautiful interpretations of Clara Haskil and Mieczyslaw Horszowski (with Casals conducting), but the silvery, brilliant Gieseking touch and his mercurial, biting phraseology add up to an equally incandescent experience. Certainly the poised, responsive support from Victor Desarzens and the very detailed 1948 recording which favors the important woodwind parts give him every assistance. Unquestionably one of Gieseking's finest Mozart performances, it is lucky that this work, never recorded by the pianist commercially, has been so well preserved for posterity.

Gieseking of course recorded all of Debussy's standard works for solo piano. He never got around to the composer's early *Fantaisie* for Piano and Orchestra although he did perform the work frequently in concert. In fact, a 1951 performance once found its way onto a private underground disc (MJA 19693) coupled with the same Rachmaninoff No. 2 that IPL brackets with the Mozart concerto. A later performance with André Cluytens appears in conjunction with the Rachmaninoff Third. It seems to be a better balanced, more fleetly animated statement, although comparison is made more problematical because of the thicker sound and slightly low pitch of the older issue. (The sonics of the Rachmaninoff Second, though, are virtually identical in the two pressings.)

Finally, the one disappointing Gieseking issue: the Brahms D minor Concerto. Again there are inspired moments—the muscular, heroic weight of some of the first movement's bravura passages, some finely molded lines from conductor Hans Rosbaud, and most particularly the unprecious, forward-moving tempo in the sometimes dragged Adagio. For all that, Gieseking was in bad form on this c. 1951 broadcast—his playing is labored, teeming with missed or outwardly wrong notes, and rather tired-sounding. The orchestra (presumably the Baden Baden Radio Symphony) is similarly untidy and lethargic, the sound tubby and dull-sounding. Admirers of Gieseking will want to know of the disc's existence, but in truth Brahms was never one of this great artist's strong points.

RACHMANINOFF: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in F sharp minor, Op. 1; No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18; No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30; No. 4, in G minor, Op. 40; Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. London CSA 2311, $17.94 (three discs).

BRAHMS: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, Op. 15. Walter Gieseking, piano; orchestra, Hans Rosbaud, cond. International Piano Library IPL 504.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18. **MOZART:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 27, in B flat, K. 595. Walter Gieseking, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, cond. (in the Rachmaninoff); orchestra, Victor Desarzens cond. (in the Mozart). International Piano Library IPL 506.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30. **DEBUSSY:** Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra. Walter Gieseking, piano; New York Philharmonic, John Barbirolli, cond. (in the Rachmaninoff); Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond. (in the Debussy). International Piano Library IPL 505 (the above IPL recordings are available, with a $15 contribution, from the International Piano Library, 215 West 91st St., New York, N.Y. 10024).

A musical cure for epilepsy was hardly a song and dance as drawing dated 1564 and ascribed to Pieter Brueghel shows.

A Musical Panacea or a Literary Ovum?

Columbia's latest Legacy release explores medicine, mind, and music.

by S. J. London

WHAT IS IT, bird or beast? Or both, perhaps—a platypus, or a griffin, or even a Chimera? Columbia's thirteenth and latest release in its Legacy Collection sports two records at either end of an album separated by forty-five three-columned pages of type with a heavy supercargo of illustrations. What to do first: listen to the music or read the writing? And what, in turn, to write: a record review or a book review?

Well, to begin with, this album purports to be not only a joint musicoliterary effort at illuminating the hoary relationship between music and medicine, but an attempt to view this interesting symbiosis in some kind of historical perspective. What results then is not only music but musicology, not only literature but historiography—a tall and commendable order. But when this reviewer had finally managed to bulldoze his way to the end and was able to sit back and reflect on the three metaphoric avio-mammalian crossbreeds that had come a-conjuring when first he clapped eyes on the album, he could only conclude that the platypus was the most apt. For when properly sexed and programmed this rare Australian beastie, part duck and part mole, will give milk and lay eggs. So with this hybrid opus: In the music itself the album gives good milk, but for all the rest—writing, musicology, historiography—it's laid an egg.

Nevertheless, whether this ovum was posited in a platypuserie or in the executive offices of CBS, its fundamental thesis is a good one, possibly one of the most intriguing areas of human scholarship. Just think on it: Music has been closely linked with medicine since the Stone Age, and all because it has had remarkable therapeutic effects on a variety of disease states. Nor are these effects merely a matter of history; music therapy still makes for a lively pharmacopeia even in these days of wonder drugs. There is, however, more. A whole host of interesting side issues have sprung from this basic premise, among them an avid curiosity about the psychophysiological effects of music; about the human singing voice, one of the most successful experiments in respiratory physiology; about the dance, just as successful an experiment in neuromuscular physiology; about the remarkable physiology of the human ear; about the psychophysiologic forces that underlie musical creativity. These side issues, of course, are generally more attractive to physicians than to musicologists (or musicians) but the latter confraternity, being historians at heart, have acknowledged an interest in the history of this musicomedical symbiosis and especially in music with medical themes. And *this* is the tack that Goddard Lieberson, Columbia's famed *éminence grise*, has chosen to follow in the latest opus of his Legacy Collection.

Each age of man, with its own perspective and its own research tools, has in its turn sought to discover the roots of all these musicomedical phenomena. For the primitives, prehistoric as well as latter-day, it was rather a simple case of magic and for the Graeco-Romans another convolution in their complex mathematical philosophy. The medievals tried to fit their haunted metaphysics to the phenomena while the Renaissants, the Reformants, and the Enlighteneds each attempted a refit with their fumbling quasi-science. We moderns, of course have a leg-up on all our predecessors because science has burgeoned into its own in our time, but if we were candid we would admit to having a harder time making a fit of music-medicine and modern science than, say, the primitives or the medievals. Be that as it may, Mr. Lieberson has given Meg Welles Karlin and Fred Karlin—both of them musicologists and perform-

ing musicians—the charge to find music to follow this historical spoor and they have done a most creditable job in a most difficult area.

To wit: Side 1 proceeds swiftly from ancient Egypt (with its opening *Invocation to Ra*) to medieval Germany with such beacon titles as *From Early Times, Spells, Chants and a Street Cry, Veneration, Purgation and Flagellation*, and *Three Plague Songs*. Side 2 rather slows a bit in going from medieval to Georgian England (*The Sick Tune, The Death of Robin Hood, The Death of Queen Jane, Tom a' Bedlam*) with a side trip to the court of Louis XIV (*Tableau of a Lithotomy*). Side 3, titled "Drugs- and Disease-Blues," leaps out of historical sequence into twentieth-century Americana and includes such memorabilia as Woody Guthrie's *Dust Pneumonia Blues*, Baldwin Hawes's *Arthritis Blues*, and Olive Brown's *Monkey on My Back* and *Doctor, Have Mercy on Me*.

Side 4, however, really throws historical perspective to the winds for the sake of indulging an international humor fest labeled "Quacks, Quirks and Quick Remedies." The Germans are represented by their notorious seventeenth-century quack *Doktor Eisenbart* and a comic eighteenth-century dialogue on the curative properties of Spanish fly (*La Cantharide, ou le Philtre*), but the lish are represented by *The Infallible Doctor* (eighteenth-century), and *The Clinical Examination* (nineteenth century), the French by a quaint ballad extolling the virtues of Spanish fly (*La Cantharide, ou le Philtre*), but the Americans by the most exciting representatives: the deathless *Lydia Pinkham*, Carl Sandburg's favorite *Cigarettes Will Spoil Yer Life*, and for a socko finale *The McBurney Square Dance* (*Appendectomy—Country Style*) and *Surgery* ("And though they will call you Mack the Knife/ Your bank account will grow and grow like Topsy.").

Could there have been more appropriate choices of music for this curious repertoire? Perhaps. A tarantella, for example, the medieval Italian dance that was supposed to cure the bite of the tarantula. Or, for another example, the performance of the third entr'acte of Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire*, music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, a biting parody on the academic ceremonies indulged in by the medical faculty of the Sorbonne during the reign of Louis XIV and one of the most telling lay indictments ever created of medical pomposity and charlatanry. Or, at the very outset on Side 1, one of the many excellent examples of shamanistic incantations, the earliest and most primitive examples of so-called healing music, that dedicated ethnomusicologists have made available for occasions like these.

Yet the performances of the Karlins' musicological harvest (by the two Karlins themselves, Olive Brown, Paul Rogers, Igor Kipnis, and Aldo di Tulli among others) are generally of such fine caliber and in such accord with their subject matter that they compensate well for the holes in the repertoire. What else could hope to equal the stark a capella horror of *Ring Around The Rosie* and *Ach du lieber Augustin* when sung (by Meg Welles Karlin) not as lighthearted childhood games but as somber runes to ward off the dreaded plague, or the simple keening heartbreak of the ballad known as *The Death of Queen Jane* as it tells of how Henry VIII's Jane Seymour died in childbirth. The lively ones also have their high moments: the *Tableau of a Lithotomy*, a truncated concerto grosso by the eighteenth-century Parisian Marin Marais that depicts with unusual cheer an operation (his own, presumably) for bladder stone; the brisk jiggy Scottish cadences of *The Clinical Examination* thanks to Pat Clancy on the accordion and Tommy Makem on the vocal cords; or the rouser known as the *McBurney Square Dance* with Logan English calling the turns.

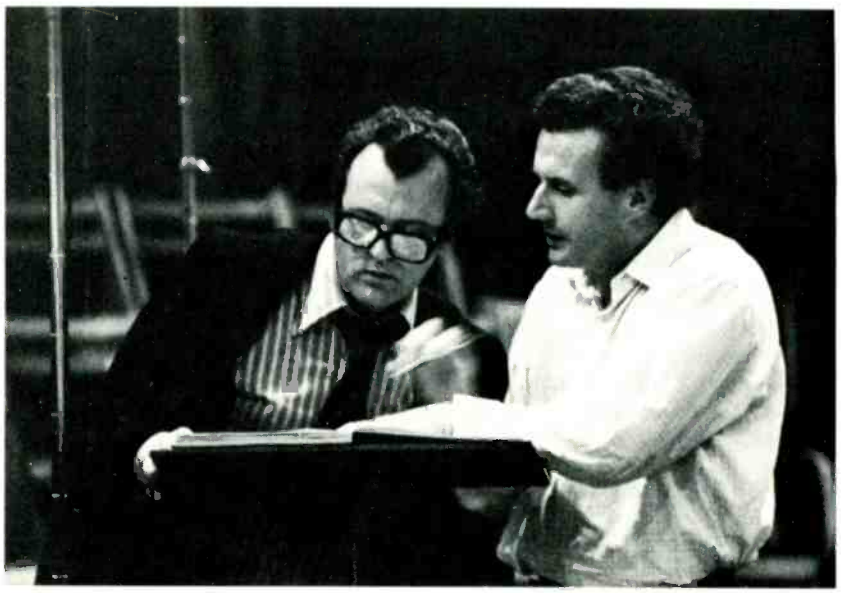
Which now brings us, alas, to the egg in the proceedings. These literary offerings come in a sandwichlike format with a foreword by Goddard Lieberson and the program notes by Leonard Burkat fore and aft and the main features, two essays, lying somewhere in between: *Music, Physician of the Soul* by Emanuel Winternitz, and *Analects in Medicine, Mind and Music* by Nicolas Slonimsky. The prevailing tenor is of course that of the two essays and the content, alack, is rather thin. All the more unfortunate because Dr. Winternitz, Professor of Music at the City University of New York and Curator of the Musical Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Dr. Slonimsky, scholar/critic/composer/conductor, are among the doyens of American musicology. For all that, however, and for all the sizable research they must have done for their essays, they both have something less than a nodding acquaintance with medical musicology. To have a working acquaintance with this outpost of musicology, the interface between music and medicine, requires considerable hard knowledge of both disciplines and a great store of hard conceptual thinking, and neither of these two eminent musicologists give evidence of having done either exercize.

Winternitz has attempted to write a condensed (nineteen pages) history of this interface but having missed the main thrust of its evolutionary force by ignoring at least a dozen of the most important landmark points along the way, he has delivered instead a potpourri of metaphysics, astrology, Mesmerism, and the history of musical instruments, all encased like a sausage in pedestrian prose. Slonimsky, on the other hand, eschews any attempt at historiography and contents himself with strewing bits and pieces of irrelevant information about the place disguised as Confucian analects. He does, however, deserve credit for one of these iota: pointing up the significance of Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique* as a masterpiece of unabashed clinical music, a description of the effects of morphine on an artist's sensorium. The prose, although less pedantic than that of Dr. Winternitz, is only slightly more interesting.

Mr. Lieberson, however he writes a fine hand, says little of any real consequence, not even when he calls the therapeutic agency of music a placebo (which, because of its definitive effects on the central nervous system and based on current definitions of placebo, it decidedly is not). As for Leonard Burkat, suffice it to say that he deserves no place in this triple-yolked egg. His program notes are explicitly and richly written with a sense of drama, a sense of humor, and a sense of history, all wrapped in delightful language.

And so, back to the rookery, the hennery, the bestiary, or what you will; but this reviewer is all for sending "Medicine, Mind and Music" back to the drawing board.

MEDICINE, MIND AND MUSIC: A Consideration of Their Links Through the Centuries. Musical research by Meg Welles Karlin and Fred Karlin; text by Emanuel Winternitz, Nicolas Slonimsky, and Leonard Burkat; edited by Goddard Lieberson. Columbia L2X 30680, $15 (two discs; illustrated book).



Colin Davis (right) and his Cellini—Nicolai Gedda.

by David Hamilton

Sheer Berliozian Poetry

Benvenuto Cellini—a flawed but indispensable example of the composer's genius

THE FIRST of Berlioz' operas, and the last to reach us on disc, *Benvenuto Cellini* suffered a history of vicissitudes that unfortunately leaves it today in an anomalous condition textually. First composed in the mid-1830s as an *opéra-comique* (i.e., with spoken dialogue), it was supplied with recitatives in order to qualify for a premiere at the Paris Opera in 1838. Hardly a success on that occasion, it was next produced by Liszt at Weimar in 1852, at which time Berlioz made further revisions and accepted a compression of the last two tableaux (of the original four) into one—a plan that evidently originated with the young Hans von Bülow; this "Weimar version" was used by the composer himself for a single London performance the following year, and was published (in vocal score) in Germany. A later French vocal score replaced the recitatives with dialogue, but otherwise retained the Weimar changes.

Evidently Berlioz hoped some day to rework *Cellini* as an *opéra-comique*, but he never found the opportunity to do so, and the opera thus comes down to us in a "nondefinitive" form; some of the Weimar changes are clearly improvements, but others—especially the abridgments and second half—are just as clearly *not*. Faced with this problem, the musical advisers in charge of the 1966 Covent Garden production undertook to make a performing edition that would give us the best of both worlds, and it is this edition that Philips has now recorded. Since nothing other than the Weimar version has ever appeared in print (a miniature orchestral score of this is currently available from Edwin F. Kalmus), outsiders are not as yet in a position to pass judgment on the historical or aesthetic validity of the Covent Garden version—we simply don't know all the alternatives; the reasoning at work, if not all the details, is described by David Cairns in a characteristically informative essay in the Philips libretto. Presumably the New Berlioz Edition (one of whose editors, Hugh MacDonald, had a hand in preparing this new version) will eventually give us the versions that Berlioz *did* write, as distinct from what he *might have* written had there been time to make a further revision after Weimar.

The plot of the opera, loosely drawn from the goldsmith's famous autobiography, builds up to the casting of the famous *Perseus* by way of Cellini's love for the daughter of the Papal treasurer (with whom he plans to elope during the carnival), his rivalry with another sculptor, Fieramosca (to whom the lady in question has been promised by her father), a duel in which Cellini kills an accomplice of Fieramosca, his flight, and the intercession of Pope Clement VII (who wants his statue cast and agrees to pardon the artist and grant him his lady-love if this great work is achieved).

The appeal of this material to the young Berlioz is self-evident: inspiration triumphing over mediocrity and bureaucracy, but the questions remain whether he has been well served by his librettists and whether he has disposed of his (nearly always fascinating) music in such a way as to keep the action moving, the proportions just. On the first count the verdict cannot be very positive, for the plot develops sluggishly, with too much trivial byplay: The first finale, after a hide-and-seek game among Balducci (the treasurer), Teresa (his daughter), Cellini, and Fieramosca, is a long ensemble devoted to the ejection of Fieramosca, who comes out loser in the game—and Berlioz, with typical enthusiasm, has poured out a great deal of invention here. (But to shorten the piece, as in the Weimar version, is equally unsatisfactory, for it spoils the musical proportions—the other horn of the dilemma.) Similarly, the carnival scene (and, for that matter, the tavern scene that precedes it) has so much in the way of *divertissement*, fun at the expense of Balducci, and other noncentral material, that one begins to wonder what has happened to the main drama.

A corollary of this is that the characters are drawn rather skimpily for all that time devoted to local color and foolery is necessarily taken from them. Teresa, despite an attractive entrance aria, never takes on enough substance to convince us that she is really worth the time of a great artist, and remains simply the other half of Cellini's love duets. Ascanio, Cellini's apprentice (a travesty part for mezzo-soprano) is merely a cheerful ninny, who gets one of the best tunes in the work when he comes to the tavern bearing the Pope's payment for the casting of the statue, and Fieramosca and Balducci are just caricatures, far less well filled out than Wagner's Beckmesser (the parallels with *Meistersinger* are fascinating, but also revealing: Wagner drew his libretto in such a way as to give all the characters a genuine dramatic function, and laid out his scenes so that they developed continually).

That leaves Cellini himself, the artist-hero, as the opera's dramatic justification, and fortunately Berlioz' obvious self-identification serves him well here, for it is a bravura role with many facets, strong enough to carry the evening if well performed: ardent lover, conspirator, swordsman, artistic gambler (when metal runs short in the casting, he orders all his previous works at hand to be melted down), and occasionally a pensive soul who longs for the peaceful life of a shepherd. His final antagonist, the Pope, is rather a presence than a character—an impressive sonority, who becomes overfond of repeating his impressive opening tune.

A theatrically flawed work, then—but no discredit to Berlioz, who at this point was after all an apprentice himself on the operatic stage. The music, in any case, is the work of a master, and from this point of view the decision to use this edition for the recording, giving us something like a maximum of music, was a correct one. The exuberant overture is not the only music that you will recognize, for of course the *Roman Carnival* Overture is drawn from this opera—the English horn tune from the first Teresa-Cellini duet, the Allegro from the carnival scene (where it is sung by the chorus!). All the local-color music is first-rate, in fact: the rousing goldsmiths' chorus, the carnival pantomime, the various offstage choruses. And Cellini's two arias—especially the second, with its pastoral tone and sudden surge to the climax—are superbly written, if in a rather altitudinous tessitura. Throughout, the orchestration is a delight: original, colorful, and always drawn with a fine sense of linear clarity.

The present recording, made last July in advance of a London concert performance, is a considerable achievement, as well as an obviously welcome addition to the recorded literature. Davis is, of course, the premier Berlioz conductor of the day, and his sense of pacing, his ability to achieve orchestral clarity, his eye for the long-range shape, are much in evidence. (I would question only one major point, the tempo of the Overture: just right for a knock-'em-dead concert performance but perhaps a bit too excited for this context, starting the long work off at too high a pitch of tension.) However, the BBC Symphony does not always play with the ultimate in polish and the chorus is hard put to keep up the pace set for them when they have to sing the Allegro from the *Roman Carnival* Overture.

If Davis is the obvious conductor for such a recording, Gedda is the obvious protagonist, and it is good that Philips was able to secure his release from EMI for this occasion, for, as already intimated, the opera stands or falls on this role. The voice is harder in sound than it used to be, and the evidence of technical difficulties continues to accumulate (register seams and the like), but basically it's clean and musical singing, nearly always projecting from inside the music rather than imposing superficial touches from the outside. As Teresa, Christiane Eda-Pierre offers a slightly shrill, "French" sort of sound, used with agility but not always purely pitched. Jane Berbié is a charming, warm-voiced Ascanio, and the lower male voices are all serviceable, with Roger Soyer a Pope of imposingly rich profundity. A special mention too for Hugues Cuénod, who makes a tiny part into a richly detailed cameo. On one score, at least, this set improves on *Les Troyens*, for the French-diction problem has been squarely faced in the casting.

One could wish the recorded sound were a bit more open, for in climaxes the timpani tend to take over, swallowing everything (and especially the strings) in a cloud of resonance. But otherwise the balances are good. Not to end on a negative note: This is a worthy continuation of the Philips Berlioz series, and brings to the catalogue a wonderful swatch of Berliozian exuberance and poetry, a flawed but indispensable example of his genius.

BERLIOZ: Benvenuto Cellini. Christiane Eda-Pierre (s), Teresa; Jane Berbié (ms), Ascanio; Nicolai Gedda (t), Cellini; Hugues Cuénod (t), Innkeeper; Derek Blackwell (t), Francesco; Robert Massard (b), Fieramosca; Raimund Herincx (b), Pompeo; Roger Soyer (bs), Pope Clement VII; Jules Bastin (bs), Balducci; Robert Lloyd (bs), Bernardino; Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; BBC Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. Philips 6707 019, $27.92 (four discs).

classical

reviewed by
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ARGENTO: Postcard from Morocco. Barbara Brandt and Sarita Roche, sopranos; Janis Hardy, mezzo; Yale Marshall and Vern Sutton, tenors; Barry Busse, baritone; Edward Foreman, bass; Center Opera of Minnesota Instrumental Ensemble, Philip Brunelle, cond. Desto DC 7137/8, $11.96 (two discs).

Postcard from Morocco, commissioned by Minneapolis' Center Opera and first performed by the group on October 14, 1971, is a serious, high-minded effort, if not ultimately a very satisfying one. John Donahue (head of the Children's Theater Company in Minneapolis for which he has written a number of plays) has devised a libretto that combines a kind of exalted, Hofmannsthalian symbolism with simple, sometimes rather too poetical imagery. The time is 1914. Seven travelers are waiting in a tacky Victorian railway station in "Morocco or some place." As the piece progresses they interact, matter-of-factly yet mysteriously, with occasional entertainers, cardboard figures drawn by wires, puppets, and an onstage nine-member "Algerian" combo, which provides the sole instrumental accompaniment. Most of the seven singers double as entertainers or puppets. The central symbolic device is the travelers' luggage, which in none too subtle fashion contains their hidden secrets. Each traveler refuses to divulge his secrets, but finally Mr. Owen, an artist and the only character with a name, has his jostled open aggressively. It turns out to be empty, the others leave, and Mr. Owen drifts away into his dreams.

Those dreams involve sailing away in an updated, fantastical transformation of the Flying Dutchman's ship, a kinship which Argento stresses explicitly in both his prefatory remarks and in the score itself. Perhaps the highlight of his music is a sleazy little instrumental interlude called *Souvenirs de Bayreuth*, in which Wagner tunes are ground out in the context of a spa-flavored medley. The number epitomizes Argento's score at its best: giddily eclectic, yet never crude either in its stylistic juxtapositions or in its direct quotations. The music manages to embrace everything from rigorous chromaticism to turn-of-the-century popular music to tonal lyricism without self-prostitution.

What is lacking is over-all freedom, spontaneity, and individuality, in both the words and the music. *Postcard from Morocco* is full of nostalgia, more self-conscious than evocative, curiously combining the dreamlike abstraction of Continental theater pieces of the past fifteen years or so with the more prosaic, down-home linearity of present-day American operas. But here abstraction vitiates psychological realism, realism compromises the mood of abstraction, and any kind of clarity is muddied by needlessly convoluted complexity. One knows these curiously flat characters are meant to be symbols, but of exactly what never becomes quite clear. Argento's score is full of ingenuity and delicious effects, and Mr. Owens' final music almost succeeds in buoying up Donahue's nautical rhapsodizing. But too frequently, on records at least, the pace slows to the point where the listener can no longer be expected to care.

Still, all is by no means lost. Argento's credentials indicate the gulfs he is trying to span: His teachers include Nicolas Nabokov, Henry Cowell, Bernard Rogers, Alan Hovhaness, Howard Hanson, Luigi Dallapiccola, and above all Hugo Weisgall. Now forty-five, he has taught at the University of Minnesota since 1958, and has had a whole series of operatic works performed there. The commissioning of this opera, and the altogether distinguished performance it receives on this set, attest to a high level of music-making in Minneapolis. Clearly the Center Opera is working hard to foster something new—not just through one glamorous premiere, but by creating a situation in which serious, popular art can evolve and grow. *Postcard from Morocco* may not be a modern-day *Fliegende Holländer*. But it is neither so simplistic and folksy as to be repugnant nor so abstruse as to be self-defeating. On today's American operatic scene, that in itself represents a hopeful sign for the future. J.R.

BACH: "Bach Organ Favorites, Vol. 5." E. Power Biggs, organ (Flentrop Organ in the Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University). Columbia M 31424, $5.98. Tape: ●) MA 31424, $6.98; ●● MT 31424, $6.98.

Fantasy and Fugue in G minor, S. 542; Fantasy in G, S. 572; Prelude and Fugue In B minor, S. 544; Prelude and Fugue in C, S. 545; Chorale Preludes: Jesu, meine Freude, S. 753; Wir glauben all' an einen Gott, Schöpfer, S. 680.

BACH: "Famous Organ Works." Ferdinand Klinda, organ (Michael Engler organ in S. Maurice's Church, Olomouc, Czechoslovakia). Supraphon 1 11 0975, $6.98.

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; Fantasy and Fugue in G minor, S. 542; Prelude and Fugue in D, S. 532; Partitas on "Ach, was soll ich Sünder machen?," in E minor, S. 770.

BACH: "Four Great Toccatas." Harry Grodberg, organ (Organ of the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory). Melodiya/Angel SR 40195, $5.98.

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, S. 565; Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C, S. 564; Toccata and Fugue in D minor (*Dorian*), S. 538; Toccata and Fugue in E, S. 566.

With this release Biggs's "Bach Organ Favorites" series now numbers five volumes. Like its four predecessors this one is played on that marvelous Flentrop organ in the Busch-Reisinger Museum, and like most of Bigg's records the playing is never less than engaging and satisfying, and frequently quite good. The few quibbles I have stem from the suspicion that the repertory here suits Biggs's own temperament and style slightly less well than certain other Bach works. Biggs, it seems to me, is most successful with those pieces into which he can inject a little wry humor or some good-natured playfulness—only a soupçon, of course: His integrity and highmindedness are never anywhere but in the foreground, and I respect him for that. However, the improvisatory nature of the G minor Fantasy cries out for more wild-eyed virtuosity. The fugue is played with verve and authority, but Biggs seems unable to settle on a consistent approach in matters of articulation; little articulative burps interrupt at unpredictable places, often putting the emPHAsis on the wrong sylLAble. The B minor Prelude and Fugue is perhaps the best performance here: The mood is profoundly serious and Biggs has some really interesting interpretive ideas about the prelude. The articulations are more consistently handled here, and if the tempo of the fugue were only a little faster, it would be a superb performance.

The whole record I would summarize as good average Biggs—not up to the remarkable level of his recent Bach record from the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, but very good nevertheless. If you like Biggs's playing, you'll surely want to add this to your collection. Columbia is also releasing this record in its SQ quadraphonic format, which I'm not yet equipped to listen to, but it sounds great through my two-channel setup, though the organ is rather more distantly (and less distinctly) miked than is usual for Columbia, perhaps to provide more reverberation to swirl through the extra pair of speakers.

The Supraphon record is interesting primarily because of the 1970 Michael Engler organ in the Moravian town of Olomouc. The notes tell us the instrument was "modernized" in 1968 by the Rieger-Kloss Organ Works at

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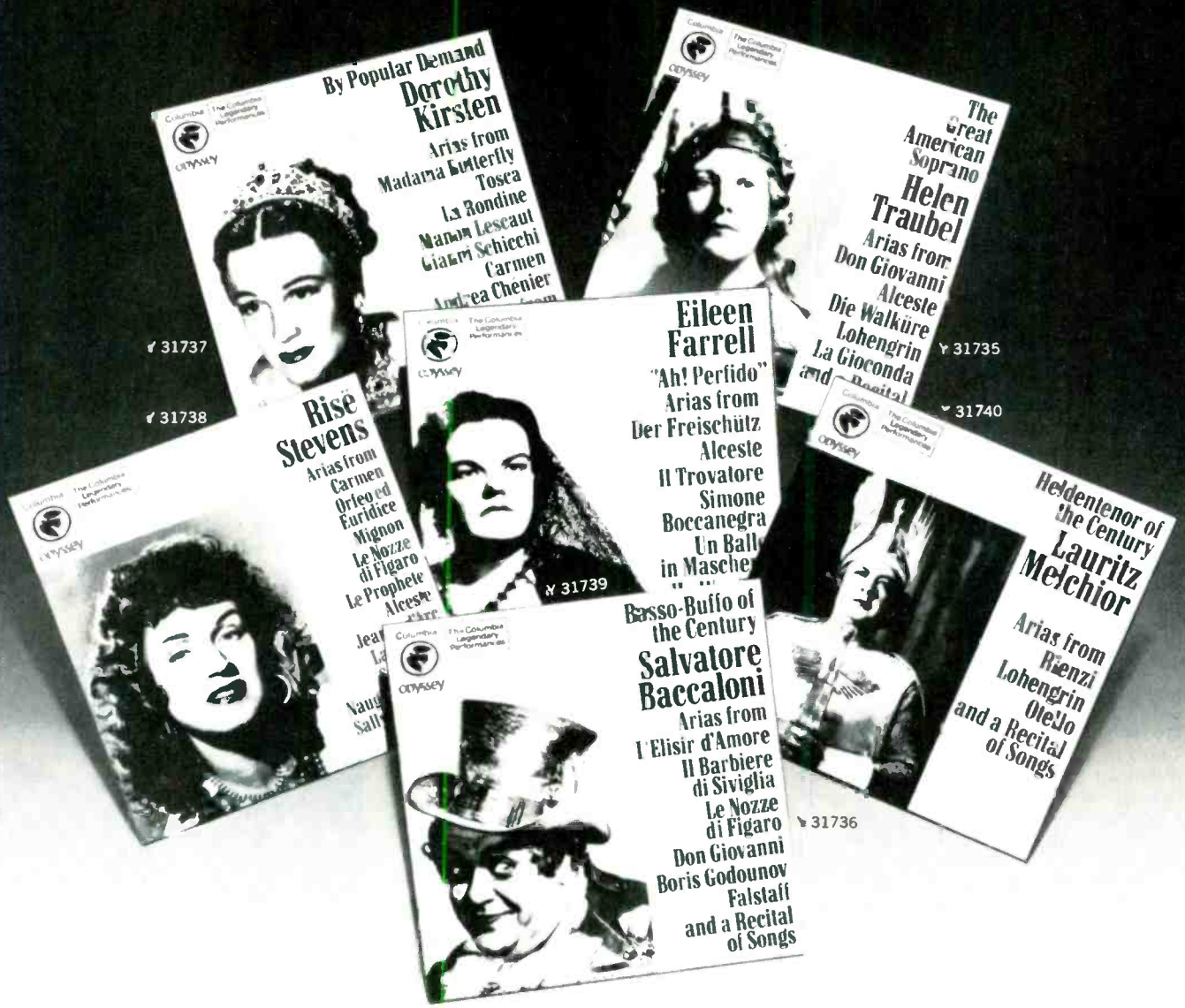

On Odyssey Records

Krnov, but then hasten to add that for this recording "only the historical part of this monumental instrument was used." Anyway, the organ is extremely attractive, with a rich, heavy sound that is superbly capped by a buzzy trumpet on the Hauptwerk which Klinda is quite fond of drawing with the full *plenum* sound. The pedal is extravagantly equipped with reeds of 32', 16', 8', and 4' pitch, which also help provide that rich, reedy quality.

Klinda's playing is technically totally secure and he plays in a rather facile, free-and-easy manner which I find satisfying: There are no gimmicks, no decorations, just good, capable, relaxed playing. The only problem is, there's not much excitement either, and ultimately these are not what I would call memorable performances. The recorded sound is very good, but my pressing seemed too eager to offer up distortion instead of musical climaxes.

The Melodiya disc doesn't really have too much to offer. Grodberg's technique is not as secure as Klinda's, and he tends to get frantic himself in the places where he should be exciting his listeners. He does try hard (successfully) to articulate very cleanly and he is aided by very clean, airy recorded sound. The unidentified organ in the Moscow Conservatory seems to be a rather good, if not exceptional, modern instrument, built along classical lines. I should point out that Grodberg includes in his program of four toccatas the seldom played E major toccata (and leaves out the well-known F major). The F major is a much better piece, but it's good to hear the E major occasionally, even in such a routine performance. C.F.G.

BACH: St. Matthew Passion S. 244: Excerpts—See Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem, Op. 45.

BARTÓK: The Miraculous Mandarin; Dance Suite. New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez, cond. Columbia M 31368, $5.98. Tape: ●● MT 31368, $6.98.

Selected comparisons (Mandarin):

Ferencsik	DGG 138873
Martinon	RCA 3004
Solti	Lon. 6784

Bartók's music for the ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* is one of the composer's masterpieces, a score of extraordinary vitality and inventiveness. Thus a new version would be welcome in any case, but this one under Boulez is especially so since it represents, as far as I know, the first absolutely complete recording of the score. (The only other version of the full ballet currently listed, that by the Budapest Philharmonic under Ferencsik on DGG, contains some cuts.) Unfortunately, however, Boulez' reading is disappointing. Although it is carefully shaped and tightly held together, it is not the sort of forceful performance this score requires. Everything seems framed on a small scale, and the subdued character of the interpretation is emphasized by the slightly dull recorded sound. There are some striking moments—particularly the beautiful playing of the clarinet-piano figurations in the third decoy game section—but the performance ultimately fails to get off the ground.

Despite the cuts, the Ferencsik version seems preferable to me: It has more character than the Boulez and it is at least its equal in precision. There are also several excellent versions available of the suite taken from the ballet, which is identical to the full score except that the entire last section is omitted and a cadential ending is supplied at the cut-off point. My own feeling is that the suite is more successful than the full work as a concert piece, for although the close of the ballet is certainly effective from a dramatic point of view, considered purely musically it makes a strangely muted ending for such an active score. Also, the suite is available in what seems to me the best over-all performance of the *Mandarin* on record, that by Martinon and the Chicago Symphony on RCA. Although also marred by minor cuts, it is one of the most exciting orchestral performances I know of.

The *Dance* Suite is more compatible with Boulez' talents, and here he leads a very elegant, if restrained, performance. For comparisons you might try the other end of the spectrum, namely Solti's bigger-than-life reading with the London Symphony, but I find this one holds up very well. R.P.M.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 37. Christoph Eschenbach, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Hans Werner Henze, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 254, $6.98.

This is "Wedgewood Beethoven"—a close descendant of the old and now discredited "Dresden China" approach to Mozart. What can one say about such a performance? It's cleanly, and of its genre, sensitively played; everything has obviously been worked out to the artists' satisfaction, and the dovetailing between solo and orchestra is often remarkable.

Nevertheless, I take vehement exception to the feminine daintiness apparent at the outset of Henze's opening tutti and to the prissy mincing about apparent at countless other places as well. Actually, the first-movement tempo is not particularly slow (although hardly the heady Allegro con brio asked for by the composer and supplied, to give one example, by Lili Kraus on her Monitor recording), but the feeling is so cosmetic and artificial as to falsify the music. The Largo and finale come off better—the first with some well-limned imitation in the piano part, the last with much of the requisite swagger and bounce—but even in these portions of the work, an occasional touch of preciosity comes between music and listener.

Fine, bright, well-balanced recorded sound, although Eschenbach's piano has a faint metallic twang not always to my liking. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G, Op. 58; Sonata for Piano, No. 26, in E flat, Op. 81a (*Lebewohl*). Zoltan Kocsis, piano; Hungarian Radio and Television Orchestra, Ervin Lukacs, cond. Hungaroton LPX 11496, $5.98.

One would not automatically think of Beethoven's most subtle (and, I think, most difficult) concerto as the natural vehicle for an eighteen-year-old making his recording debut. The fact that young Zoltan Kocsis does so well with his challenging assignment speaks well for his native musicality and excellent pianistic training. Kocsis has a healthy feel for rhythm coupled with exceptional fingers and a mellifluous, singing style. He does far more than merely play the notes: he molds them into meaningful phrases and arching lines. I do not wish to imply that he is yet a completely finished artist: As Kocsis matures, he will undoubtedly learn how to make his points with greater subtlety and economy; but even now one senses harmonic planning and a searching, poetic sensibility. He plays Beethoven's cadenzas (the standard later No. 1 in the first movement) and gets mellow, deftly pointed support from Lukacs and his excellent ensemble. In the sonata, Kocsis appropriately becomes more robust, but nevertheless has plenty of room for individual license (e.g., the middle part of the third movement where a slower tempo than the basic one is momentarily—and convincingly—employed). In sum, a noteworthy introduction to a budding talent who might well turn out to be a musician of major proportions.

The Hungaroton engineering places the piano a bit too close (in the concerto it sometimes even overshadows the orchestra). It is to the soloist's credit that he draws such a solid, colorful sonority from his instrument and so rarely verges on percussiveness: With the microphones at such proximity, that's a real feat. H.F.

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (complete). Gwyneth Jones, soprano; Tatiana Troyanos, mezzo; Jess Thomas, tenor; Karl Ridderbusch, bass; Chorus of the Vienna State Opera (in Symphony No. 9); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2720 045, $40.50 (nine discs).

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: Coriolanus, Op. 62; Egmont, Op. 84; Creatures of Prometheus, Op. 43.

Although the Vienna Philharmonic participates in this cycle of the Beethoven symphonies, the style of performance is decidedly North German rather than Austrian. That arch classicist, Karl Böhm—even his essays of Romantic music are notable for their tautness and sobriety—refuses to allow his Viennese musicians to lapse into the easy superficialities

Karl Böhm—a classical view of Beethoven.

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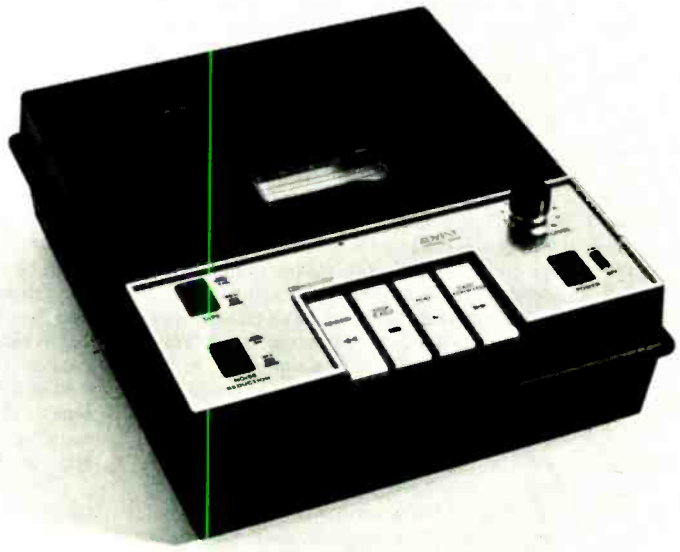

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of Viennese style. He draws an ascetic, even slightly astringent sonority from the players—a sound that emphasizes clarity in the string part-writing, a decided burring prominence of the brass, and *sec* linearity of woodwind detail. The rhythmic figurations, wherever they appear, are always firmly delineated and sharply sprung. The creamy string cantabile, which I suspect the Viennese can turn on in their sleep, is banished to excellent advantage. At the same time, though, the style of execution is always singing, deeply involved, subtly nuanced, and utterly congenial.

Deutsche Grammophon has given Böhm and his players every opportunity to make their work heard to good advantage. Some might think that nine discs for the symphonies and merely three overtures is an extravagance, but the advantages of this generous layout are everywhere apparent in those brilliantly lifelike, solidly registered, ungimmicked recordings. Detail is brilliant throughout as is impact, and there is added pleasure in encountering pianissimo and fortissimo in unmonitored contrast. One could safely state that this set stands among the very finest of contemporary orchestral reproductions. Here is a brief rundown on the individual works as they are here coupled.

Symphonies Nos. 1 and 8: Böhm views the First as "big" Beethoven. His tempos are on the slow side but the rhythms are vigorous, the tuttis full of weight, and the general mood powerful rather than playful. He observes all repeats—even the relatively unusual one in the second movement. I find it a valid and convincing view of the work, although I continue to prefer the tauter *opera buffa* approach so incomparably stressed by Toscanini. The Eighth under Böhm's aegis gets a truly epical reading: measured in its tread, but powerful and thrusting nonetheless. The grimness and sobriety, to my way of hearing, are more appropriate to this sardonically mocking work than the usual "charming" approach. There are, after all, many kinds of humor. Allowing for the slower tempos and temperamental disparities, the effect of Böhm's Eighth, with its discipline and sharply etched detail, is actually rather similar to what Toscanini used to make of the score. Again, there is an exposition repeat in the first movement.

Symphony No. 2: *Prometheus* Overture: Böhm begins the Second with firmness and gravity. The anticipation of Beethoven's Ninth in the introduction is amply, even nobly, stressed, and the Allegro proper sounds exciting and large-scaled despite the fairly leisurely tempo. Rather surprisingly, there is no exposition repeat in this movement. The Larghetto is very broad—even slower than Bruno Walter used to take it—but it is mostly sustained. Only at the end is the heaviness felt. The slow tempo for the Scherzo, on the other hand, is less justifiable: There each measure is duly accented and the effect is elephantine rather than bracing. Such a snail's pace plainly makes it impossible to convey the paragraph structure of the music to any degree. The performance never really quite recovers and the finale comes forth sounding both a bit dogged and ill at ease. The overture is well played but Prometheus is replaced by Atlas who carries the weight of world suffering on his hefty shoulders.

Symphony No. 3: This *Eroica* goes through the proper motions but often seems lethargic and bumptiously shaped. Tempos are moderate but line is sometimes lacking and the drama of the *Marcia funebre* is rather leathery. No exposition repeat in the first movement (nor would I want one—this has always struck me as one of the master's *pro forma* efforts, delaying the drama and forward motion of an already long symphonic movement).

Symphony No. 4: Here, by contrast, is a truly beautiful performance. Böhm's control of texture and rhythm is exemplary, with a subtle control of tension and superb clarity. The unanimity of phrasing in the third movement rivals that of the Toscanini/NBC version, and though the finale is leisurely, it is also graceful and exciting. Here there are exposition repeats in both first movement and finale. A winner.

Symphony No. 5: This Fifth is notable for heft. Rarely have I heard such a noble and compelling sound in a recorded performance of this universal work. In truth, I suspect that the sonic magnificence makes Böhm's reading seem more impressive than it really is. If you can divorce yourself from the seductive sound, the sturdy performance is, in fact, a wee bit stodgy. There is a repeat in the first movement but not in the finale.

Symphony No. 6: The *Pastoral* was issued singly last year (and presumably the others will also be available apart from the complete set). A rehearing of Böhm's performance confirms my initial reaction that this is a reading of integrity and general distinction, beset by a few "traditional" mannerisms here and there but full of stature. Part-writing is marvelously clear, and once again the recorded sound is in the *ne plus ultra* class. All repeats are made, and the general effect is profound rather than frivolous—rather like Klemperer with an infusion of forward motion.

Symphony No. 7: Böhm's tempos are consistently on the slow side, but his rhythm is so well judged that momentum is preserved. The dotted figurations of the Allegro vivace swing with striding gusto, while the Allegretto, though broadly inflected, is always an alla breve and never the erroneous funeral trudge it so often becomes. The scherzo is jolly and unbuttoned but I violently dispute the extreme ponderousness of the assai meno presto trio. Granted, "tradition" has accustomed us to hearing this played far too comfortably (and far removed from Beethoven's very sensible metronome marking of 84 to the dotted half-note) but Böhm's way is slow even by conventional reckoning. The finale makes amends though—excellent rhythm and clarity here, and also tremendous vitality in spite of a decidedly easygoing tempo.

Symphony No. 9: *Coriolanus* and *Egmont* overtures: Böhm's Ninth is in the traditional German manner. The first movement, broad and noble, could stand a bit more tautness and firmness. The Scherzo is deliberate but grimly incisive rather than easygoing. Unfortunately Böhm observes the repeat of only the first half of the Scherzo. The Adagio is ripely expansive yet reserved, and the finale benefits from the closely miked detail and the efficient singing. The soloists do not exactly sing with tonal beauty but their ensemble is good and the difficult lines are both clear and accurate. The *Coriolanus* moves too slowly for my taste, but its biting, aspirant sound is perfect. There is even a modicum of energy—something I would have thought impossible at such a tempo. The *Egmont*, on the other hand, blossoms under a weighty approach: The climaxes are tremendous.

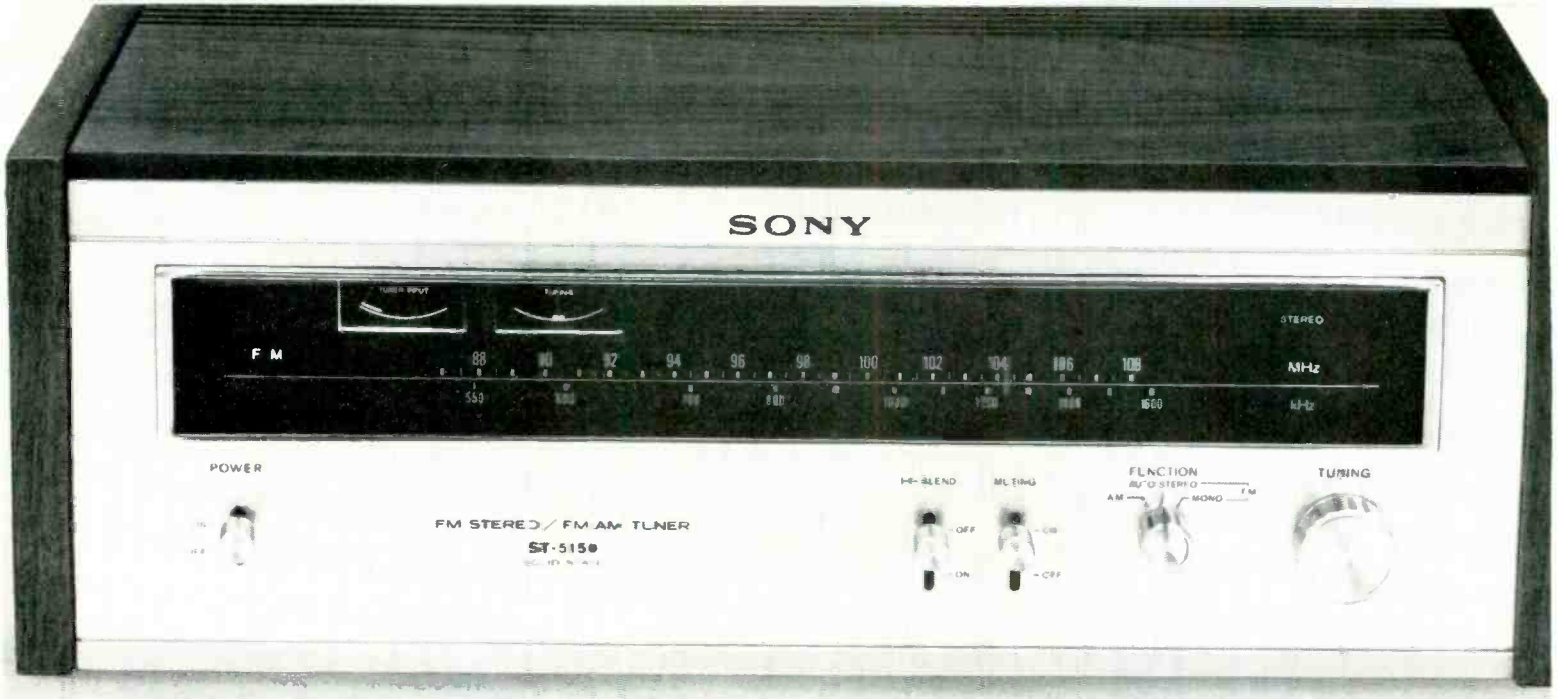
All considered, this is a major contender in the Beethoven symphony sweepstakes. H.G.

BERLIOZ: Benvenuto Cellini. Christiane Eda-Pierre, Jane Berbié, Nicolai Gedda, Robert Massard, et al.; Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; BBC Symphony Orchestra. Colin Davis, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 70.

B
H

BRAHMS: Ein deutsches Requiem, Op. 45. **BACH:** St. Matthew Passion, S. 244. Excerpts. Jo Vincent, soprano; Max Kloos, baritone; Zanglust Boys' Choir; Amsterdam Toonkunst Choir; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, cond. Turnabout TV 4445/6, $5.96 (two discs, mono).

Willem Mengelberg—his historical recording sheds new light on the Brahms Requiem.



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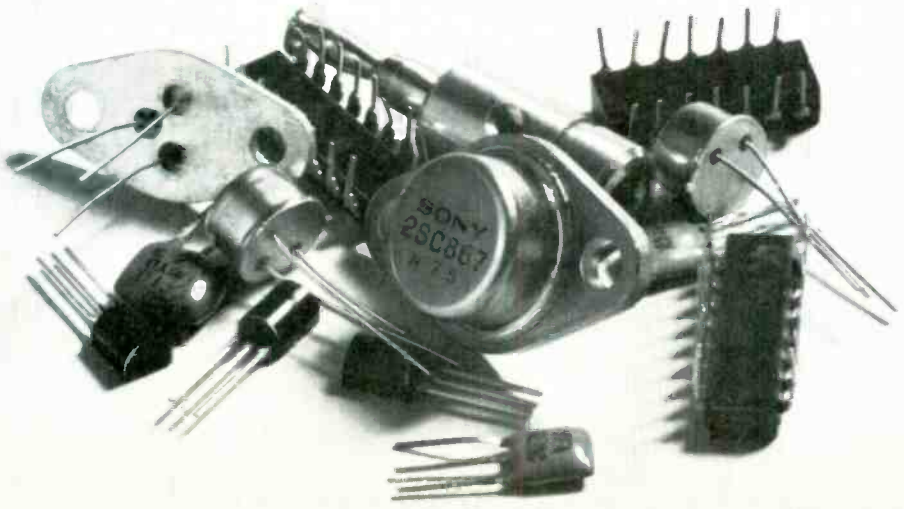


Selected comparisons (Brahms):

Klemperer	Ang. 3624
Walter	Ody 31015

This is the second historic recording of the *German Requiem* to be issued this year, the first being the 1954 version under Bruno Walter. Mengelberg's performance, recorded in concert, dates from 1939: This is the first time it has been available in America.

Walter's performance has been called uneven, simply a polite way of saying some of it is good and some bad. The Mengelberg presents the same problem. It has defects, but clear virtues as well; and as far as the former goes, what a listener with a slight antiromantic bias may hear as faults another listener will accept as proper liberties in an individualistic interpretation. One point can be established: This is too idiosyncratic a recording for someone who simply wants a good standard interpretation and the sound is faded. It is, rather, for those who know and love the work and are interested in seeing it in a new light.

Mengelberg, characteristically, imposes his own style and inclinations on the music. Such a personal approach to conducting has fallen into disfavor since his day, but in Romantic music it is not entirely out of place. The basic lack is a sense of over-all line and forward motion. Each movement becomes a separate entity, and each breaks down into small sections within itself. Mengelberg sets inappropriately fast tempos in the sixth movement and the first portion of the second; otherwise his tempos are hard to describe because they change so often. Also working against unity is his desire to emphasize individual phrases of text and each small musical event, so that he loses the effect of the major climaxes and gives the entire work a hesitant quality.

The chorus is not well disciplined. Their entrances are sloppy, and their diction is poor. Much of the time the orchestra is playing too heavily for a work already heavily scored. Miss Vincent is thoroughly adequate but unexciting in the fifth movement. Brahms calls for a baritone soloist, and Kloos is described as a baritone, but I cannot recall ever hearing a baritone who sounded more like a tenor. His lightweight voice lessens the impact of his solos.

There is all this for a carping critic to seize on. And yet there are moments of emotional exaltation—most of the first and second movements, all of the fourth and seventh—that force the listener to at least tolerate the deficiencies. The emphasis is on feeling rather than literalness, and although the result may not be exactly what Brahms wrote, it adds up to a profoundly moving statement.

Klemperer, of course, is a different proposition. His *Requiem* is a world of serene and reverent contemplation. No excessive or inappropriate effects are to be heard; rather, the piece moves on steadily from beginning to end, each movement's individual nature noted without loss of a total view. His orchestra and chorus are well controlled; his soloists cannot be bettered.

Walter, Mengelberg, and Furtwängler were the prime exponents of the Romantic-personal conducting style in the first half of the century; yet in this work Walter is really far less individualistic than Mengelberg. His approach is about halfway between Mengelberg and the classical style represented by Klemperer, and this neither-sheep-nor-goat aspect makes his version the least interesting of the three.

There is less defense to be made of Mengelberg's Bach than of his Brahms. To 1972 ears, what is pardonable excess in Brahms is indefensible tastelessness in Bach. The chosen excerpts are the choruses that end Parts I and II and three chorales. There are about a thousand too many performers, and the ritards, accelerations, diminuendos, and crescendos are all thoroughly out of place.

The best approach to this recording is probably to hear the *Requiem* as an interesting, and often highly exciting, commentary on the norm, best exemplified by Klemperer. A.M.

BRAHMS: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in D minor, Op. 15. Walter Gieseking, piano; orchestra, Hans Rosbaud, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 66.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 9, in D minor. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel S 36873, $5.98.

The present popularity of the Bruckner Ninth is due in large part to its stature as a work of music, but this success surely is not divorced from the fact that the symphony is an ideal vehicle for the Romantic conductor. Thus, for some at any rate, interest in the work is also interest in a style of performance, and the two factors are very closely linked. For those who see the Furtwängler recording of the Bruckner Ninth as the paradigm of how this music should be played, the present edition from Klemperer will be a disappointment. (Their choice, in terms of contemporary sound will be the Mehta album, at least until Dashing Danny Barenboim has an opportunity to bring them *his* version with its artfully studied Furtwänglerisms.)

Klemperer's performance is intellectually intense, concentrated, analytic, articulated to mathematical clarity and precision. Wherever Furtwängler starts to let himself go, Klemperer becomes even more controlled. His reserve is never marred by emotion. Nothing ever gets remotely out of hand.

These qualities in the music are underlined by the recording which presents what I would call a consistent balcony-seat perspective. I have 250 watts of amplification on tap, and I really had to turn up levels to get any sense of presence from pianissimo pizzicattos, for example. And the big climaxes never are *that* big. The hall is dry. Its resonance never disturbs clarity. And the orchestra is somewhat remote. There is no way to get any effect comparable to the recent Solti/Chicago Mahler Eighth, in which the performance is going on all around you.

If you can be attracted by a master's meticulous exposition of this work in the Nowak edition, Klemperer has much to offer. But the passionate delight in a beautiful phrase which others find here is missing. R.C.M.

CHERUBINI: Symphony in D—See Weber: Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 19.

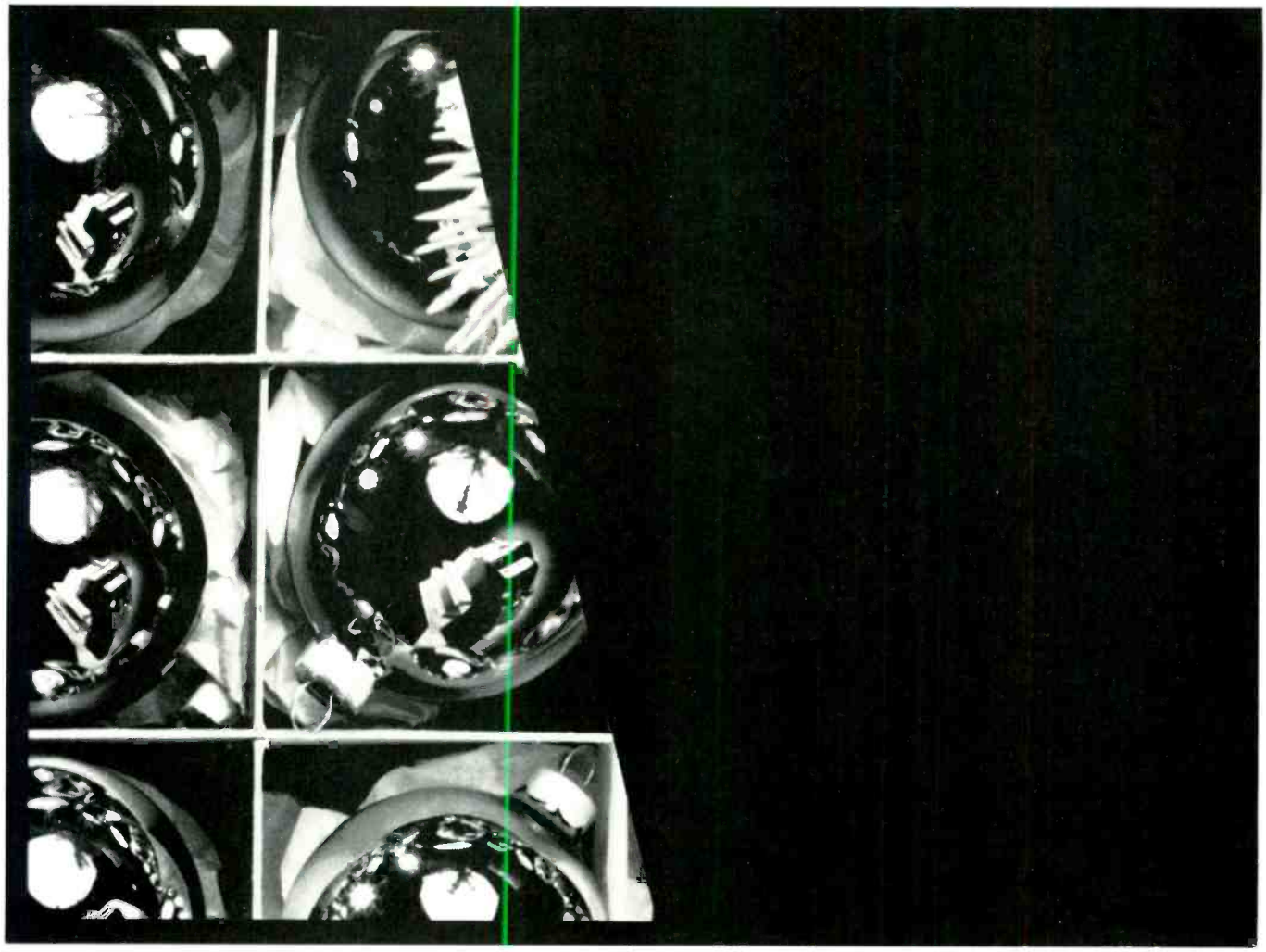
CHOPIN: Piano Works. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 236, $6.98.

Ballade in G minor, Op. 23; Mazurkas: In B minor, Op. 30, No. 2; in D flat, Op. 30, No. 3; in G sharp minor, Op. 33, No. 1; in B minor, Op. 33, No. 4; in C, Op. 56, No. 2; In G minor, Op. 67, No. 2; in A minor, Op. 67, No. 4; in C, Op. 68, No. 1; in A minor, Op. 68, No. 2; in F minor, Op. 68, No. 4; Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 45; Scherzo In B flat minor, Op. 31.

The unpredictable Michelangeli navigates a curiously low-keyed course in the ten mazurkas that form the first side of this recorded recital. He doesn't present them in chronological sequence, but in a quixotic order of his own devising. Much of the playing here is wistful, even ghostly, and its totality is affecting. Michelangeli's phrasing is quite wayward, but there is an aloofness to his style that prevents an excess of maudlin subjectivity. This pianist, who thinks at least twice before making the slightest move, intentionally throws some of the mazurkas away—presumably to create a contrast with some striking point still to come. One keeps waiting, but the flash of lightning never strikes. He plays the gloomy final Mazurka, Op. 68, No. 4 (the longer, restored version by Arthur Hedley) as if paying final homage to a departed friend. These mazurkas, for all their consummate silken detail and fine-spun nuance, are very far removed from the earthy abandon and wild rhythmic verve of the standard interpretations. Michelangeli's way is that of an aristocrat, a lapidarian.

In the G minor Ballade the approach is, I'm afraid, that of a master embalmer. The well-known piece is mulled and mauled, brooded over, and ultimately distorted beyond recognition. Naturally there are impressive moments—e.g., the imperious, bronzen solidity of the big climaxes—but I miss the cumulative grandeur and sweep that Horowitz brought to his similarly mannered but far more thrilling performance. The B flat minor Scherzo is a perplexing mixture of tortured *langueur* (in the first part) and uncustomary terseness (the big climax just before the final recapitulation is taken without the slightest rhetoric and sounds all the better for it). Although unset-

The controversial Michelangeli in thought.



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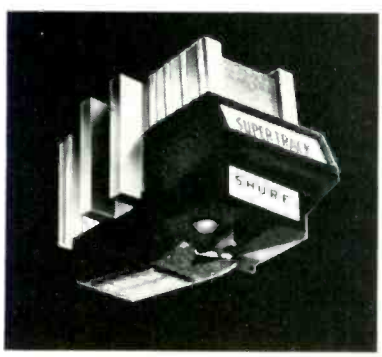

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tling as a whole. I find the reading attractive because of its demonic element. The remarkable late Prelude, Op. 45—with its foreshadowings of Brahms's F sharp minor Capriccio, Op. 76, No. 1—is played with fiery magnetism. This is easily the most absorbing account since Cortot's.

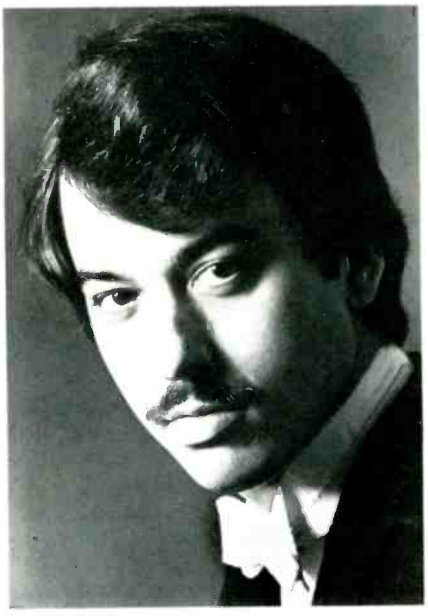
DGG's sound is excellent—a trifle on the distant, spacious side, but with ample impact and splendid clarity. An exceptional if controversial disc by an exceptionally controversial artist. H.G.

CHOPIN: Preludes for Piano, Op. 28. Edward Auer, piano. Pathé 045 10893, $6.98.

Edward Auer, like Misha Dichter, is a pianist with a violinist's name! It so happens that the two musicians have other points in common: Both are Americans; both started their studies on the West Coast with Schnabel-assistant Aubie Tserko; both came to Juilliard (and, incidentally, were roommates); both were first recognized in European competitions—Dichter, of course, as second prize winner in the Moscow Tchaikovsky competition; Auer as winner of the 1966 Warsaw Chopin Prize.

But whereas winning the Tchaikovsky award holds some magic spell for Americans, the Warsaw trophy, alas, appears to be no such drawing card. Thus while Dichter has been thrust into the limelight at home, Auer has been laboriously building his career abroad. This French disc confirms the impression I had from a concert in New York several years ago—that Auer is a first-class virtuoso-musician. His performances of the Op. 28 Chopin preludes are technically clean as a whistle, thoroughly diversified, astutely judged, and constantly intriguing. He is not at all precious or terribly interested in color for color's sake. He treats these vignettes compassionately but without any perfume or artifice. Sometimes his tempos are quite broad (Nos. 7 and 11) but there is no lack of fiery excitement (Nos. 12 and 16). Indeed, his supercharged account of the last prelude is as throbbingly impassioned as could be.

Two minor complaints in an otherwise stunning presentation: Firstly, the French studio sound is a bit constricted and unmagical; secondly, it's too bad that room wasn't found for the two posthumous preludes. The C sharp minor, Op. 45 is a particularly strong piece—very reminiscent of the first Brahms Capriccio from Op. 76—and its absence here must be deplored. H.G.



Edward Auer—an intriguing Chopin pianist.

CHOPIN: Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58. **LISZT:** Sonata for Piano, in B minor. Nelson Freire, piano. Columbia M 31128, $5.98.

The first thing one notices about this German-produced Columbia disc is the ravishingly beautiful quality of the Hamburg Steinway. Its full, velvety, diversified texture is ideal for romantic music which strongly relies upon quasi-orchestral richness and singing clarity without brittleness. Given so magnificent a sound, Freire starts out with an inestimable advantage, and he makes the best of it here. The interpretations are spacious, lyrical, and beautifully executed.

The Chopin is rather free in its rubato, even a mite old fashioned in its revelation of inner lines and grandiose sentiment. But the music flows and retains its sometimes elusive shape most convincingly. In the Liszt, Freire never pushes. The music is allowed to gather its force at its own easy momentum. I like the way Freire expunges some of the usual questionable mannerisms, but he is no mere literal player of the notes. Both sonatas are tenderly rendered, and Freire—more than on any of his previously issued discs—convinces that he is indeed a pianist of uncommon sweep and resourcefulness. H.G.

DEBUSSY: Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra. Walter Gieseking, piano; Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, André Cluytens, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 66.

DEBUSSY: Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10 (two versions)—See Ravel: Quartet for Strings, in F.

DELIUS: Paris; Eventyr; Dance Rhapsody No. 1. Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Charles Groves, cond. Angel S 36870, $5.98.

With this record EMI/Angel makes a substantial contribution to what appears to be a comprehensive modern series of Delius recordings. Following previous records by Sargent and Barbirolli, Groves has now produced his third addition to the series. I have not heard his *Mass of Life*, but I do find this a substantially better effort than his earlier miscellany, possibly because the repertory here has much greater substance.

Though none of these three works is currently available on records, each must be regarded as major Delius. As many of us learned from Beecham's early recording in the 1950s, *Paris* represents Delius' emergence as a distinctive composer: begun in 1898, the composer's thirty-sixth year, it was extensively revised about ten years later. *Eventyr* came a decade afterwards, not long before illness drastically slowed the pace of Delius' work. Falling between these is the *Dance Rhapsody* No. 1, cast in free variation form. Eric Fenby's excellent annotation has much to say about the provenance and programmatic reference of all three pieces.

In this country at least, Delius' music would seem to be a rather specialized taste: It usually appears on our orchestra programs when a British conductor is on the podium and most recordings of his works emanate from Britain. As one who has listened to this music since the early Beecham records first appeared in the '30s, I still can muster little more than respect for Delius, but I know that others find him intensely moving. To me it has a sort of faceless neutrality, lacking the finesse and sensitivity of Debussy and the distinctively strong profile of early Strauss.

Nevertheless, for Delius fans this is an important release, containing excellent performances of three important works otherwise not available on records. P.H.

DVOŘÁK: Legends, Op. 59. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Raymond Leppard, cond. Philips 6500 188, $6.98.
NOVÁK: Slovak Suite; Overture, Maryša. Brno State Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Sejna, cond. Supraphon 1 10 0648, $6.98.

These two records of previously unrecorded Czech music raise rather interesting questions about the use of folk materials in concert music. In addition to its incorporation into the serious music of such composers as Mussorgsky, Dvořák, and Bartók, the impact of nationalism on concert music also produced a great deal of lighter repertory that deserves to be heard more frequently than it is. Such music emphasizes melody, rhythm, and harmonic mood in a way that falls between the folk original and more intensive thematic and formal development. This process of adaptation varied a great deal from the rather "civilizing" extremities of Dvořák to the rougher "authenticity" of Bartók. In any case, in such lighter music simple singable melody, uncomplicated forms, and strong often complex rhythms predominate. Harmonic interest rises more often from exotic color than from tonal progressions and modulations.

Just as one can compare the varying treatment of indigenous materials by Bartók and Dvořák, one can also hear how the latter clearly differentiates between the use of folk elements in his symphonies, concertos, and chamber music, and in such lighter pieces as the *Slavonic* Dances and these *Legends*. Like the *Slavonic* Dances, the *Legends* were originally composed for piano duet, but in both cases the orchestral versions seem to have much greater appeal today—and rightly so, for Dvořák lavished on them his very great talent for orchestration. Though somewhat less energetic in rhythm, the *Legends* exhibit the qualities that have contributed to the popularity of the *Slavonic* Dances; I find it hard to believe that this is a first recording.

The Novák suite, though similarly motivated, operates on a considerably lower level of musical inspiration and creative force. Comparing the *Slovak* Suite with the *Legends*, one can see that Dvořák did much more than simply *arrange* the original folk material. Whereas each of the ten *Legends* emerges with gemlike originality and individuality, the five sections of the Novák suite exhibit a general sameness, a lack of truly personal imprint. If the Dvořák series remind us at times of the great symphonist, those of Novák were toward

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the idiom of salon music. Moreover, such is the sameness of Novák's music here that I detect little difference between the *Slovak* Suite and the *Maryša* Overture that fills out the second side of the record.

Leppard's reading of the *Legends* is exemplary: My previous acquaintance with his work has been as arranger and conductor of early opera, but he here shows a sensitive grasp of the Romantic style. The London Philharmonic is a considerably better orchestra than that of Brno, though the latter is well directed by Sejna. The British record also has a brighter, more open orchestral sound. P.H.

FELDMAN: The Viola in My Life; False Relationships and the Extended Ending. Various performers. Composers Recordings S 276; $5.95.

No American composer, not even John Cage, is closer to the contemporary New York painters than is Morton Feldman. He has long been a friend and disciple of Philip Guston, he has served (and may still serve) as an officer of Guston's art school, and his immensely sensitive style has clear parallels to the trembling, delicately pale runs and strokes of paint on which Guston's reputation rests. Now that Guston has changed his style completely—he is doing rough, tough, zappy caricatures of the military and other authoritarian types—perhaps Feldman will discover that the gamut of nuance in music does not run solely from *p* to *ppppp*.

The Viola in My Life is a new piece inspired by the playing of Karen Philips, whom Feldman met at the University of Hawaii, and who has the viola part on the disc. It is actually a series of compositions with the viola more or less—often decidedly less—to the fore; only the first three of them are recorded here. In addition to the viola, the scoring calls for violin (Anahid Ajemian), cello (Seymour Barab), piano (David Tudor), flute (Paula Robinson), clarinet (Arthur Bloom), and percussion (Raymond des Roches).

Morton Feldman—there is a very soft viola in his life as provided by Karen Philips.

As is usual with Feldman, the piece consists of what Brian O'Doherty calls "durations of silence and sprays and clusters of sound." The clusters pile up quietly; extreme delicacy of shading is essential to this music, and the notes in the clusters, at various levels of pitch, seem to coincide almost casually and just as casually to terminate. But the effect, when the music is as beautifully played as it is here, is totally captivating; for me, at least, its effect is close to hypnotic. In some of the viola pieces Feldman takes off into two- and three-note sequences which are clearly linked melodically; O'Doherty is not altogether correct when (in a critical note on the jacket) he says Feldman's work involves "succession but not relationships"; and the last viola piece ends with something that sounds for all the world like a ten-note tune. Move over, Mr. Guston, we're coming too.

False Relationships and the Extended Ending is for violin (Matthew Raimondi), cello (Seymour Barab), two pianos (Paul Jacobs and Yuji Takahasi), trombone (Arnold Fromme), and chimes (Richard Fitz). It is an earlier piece than the viola set, has no perceptible melodic progression, but takes its very special character from its beautiful scoring. No one in the world has a keener ear for timbre than Feldman, and what he does here with the sounds of brass, bells, piano wires, and violin harmonics, all very low dynamically, is altogether magnificent. A.F.

HARRISON: Koncherto por la Violino Kun Perkuta Orkestra. **LINN:** Concertino for Violin and Wind Octet. Eudice Shapiro, violin; Los Angeles Percussion Orchestra (in the Harrison); Winds of the Crystal Chamber Orchestra (in the Linn), William Kraft, cond. Crystal S 853, $5.98.

Lou Harrison's title is in Esperanto, a language this composer favors because of its international implications. Esperanto is a world language, and Harrison often talks about world music systems, as he does in the notes to this work. Standard musical usage all over the world, he says, involves a single melodic voice accompanied by rhythmic percussion; hence the very special texture and color of this "koncherto," which uses percussion instruments of the Western orchestra as well as flower pots, coffee cans, lengths of pipe, and other unorthodox sound-makers. In addition, the violin part is limited to three melodic intervals—the minor second, the major third, and the major sixth—exploiting a technique of control which Harrison invented and has often used.

The main thing, however, is that it all works. The violin soars and sings, and the percussion is wonderfully vital and colorful. The composer says the piece was inspired by Alban Berg's violin concerto, and it fully matches the stature of that celebrated work. Not a little of the effectiveness of the record, of course, lies in Miss Shapiro's superb performance of the solo part and the subtle, adroit work of Mr. Kraft and the percussionists.

Robert Linn's Concertino for Violin and Wind Octet is an essay in modern neoclassicism. This composer talks about taking his cue from the wind serenades of Haydn and Mozart and employing diatonic melodies, tertial harmonies, and uncomplicated rhythms; this is exactly the kind of thing composers were handing out in the Twenties, and many of them did remarkable things within the framework of that aesthetic. Unfortunately—as we also learned in the Twenties—the dividing line between the neoclassical and the academic is exceedingly thin, and Mr. Linn's work falls, at least in my opinion, on the wrong side of that boundary. A.F.

B **HAYDN:** Symphonies: No. 82 in C (*L'Ours*); No. 83, in G minor (*La Poule*); No. 84, in E flat; No. 85, in B flat (*La Reine*); No. 86, in D; No. 87, in A; No. 88, in G; No. 89, in F; No. 90, in C; No. 91, in E Flat; No 92, in G (*Oxford*); Sinfonia concertante in B flat.Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati, cond. London Stereo Treasury STS 15229/34, $17.86 (six discs).

With this volume of his projected complete edition, Dorati has taken the Haydn symphonies through the "Paris" series to the final dozen composed for London impresario J. P. Salomon. Those, presumably, will be another six-record set such as this, leaving fifty performable early symphonies to be released to complete the chronology. The triple attraction of these Dorati sets to date has been excellent performances, splendid recording, and the genuine musical bargain that issue on Stereo Treasury provides. When the cost per symphony is reduced to this level, you don't mind buying a few lesser works (such as No. 89) that you may not play very often. Annotation of the series by H. C. Robbins Landon, whose edition of the music is also used, remains at a high level.

The present volume will probably be of interest to many who might not have been attracted by the earlier releases. These symphonies are, with two or three exceptions, popular works of the composer, frequently played and widely admired. This means that Dorati now has more competition from other recordings of this music, but he seems to manage that with ease. Thus, although I greatly admire Ansermet's version of the six "Paris" symphonies on London, I would recommend that you acquire this music in the present Dorati volume, not simply because of its price, but because it is also musically of comparable stature, or better.

The present writer has been spending a lot of time with the Haydn symphonies in recent months in connection with a series in which all 107 were broadcast in chronological order on WFMT, Chicago. The effect of this has been to intensify my respect for the composer, for the better you come to know this music, the more you recognize the all but infinite exercise of the imagination that it represents.

Surely the works in the present album must be regarded as a sequence of joyous events. Nos. 88 and 92 are, of course, among the most frequently played Haydn scores, with Nos. 82–87 rapidly achieving almost equal familiarity. So take the opportunity to discover Nos. 90 and 91, which (like the "Paris" series that begins this album) were intended for Comte D'Ogny. Dorati makes it plain that they are glorious works, that only the caprices of the music business (the "Fifty Famous Pieces" complex, to use Virgil Thomson's historic phrase) keep music such as this in obscurity.

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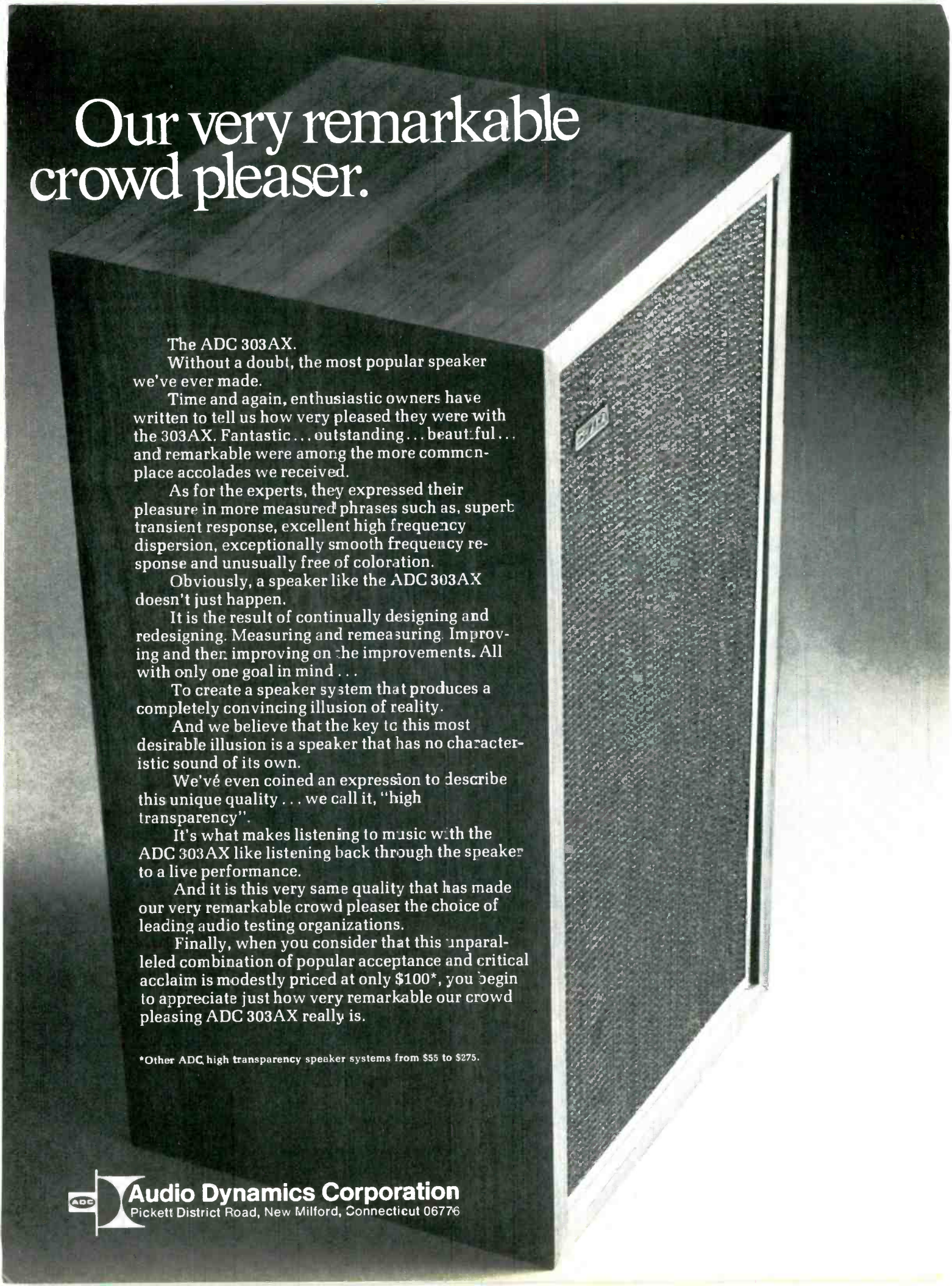

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is gratifying, and at times breathtaking, to note what a remarkable combination for the performance of this music they have become. Surely they are the natural heirs to George Szell and his Clevelanders as the best Haydn orchestra in the business. They are really into this style, and it now comes with the zest and freshness and light touch and rhythmic drive that result when a manner of playing has become completely spontaneous.

This is why Dorati so frequently brings a sense of discovery to music that is already well known. There is something in the line of a phrase, the bite of a woodwind attack, or the balance of the ensemble that make you aware of things which somehow or other hadn't registered before. For example, no one has ever been wittier in the poultry pages of *The Hen*, or brought a more beguiling bear dance into the finale of *The Bear*. And if there were any mysteries as to why Marie Antoinette was especially fond of No. 85, Dorati makes the matter clear with as splendid a realization of this music as I have ever heard. Add to this some dazzling playing in the Sinfonia concertante (from an accurate text for a change), the true nobility Dorati finds in No. 88, his eloquent advocacy of Nos. 90 and 91, and one of the finest *Oxfords* ever recorded, and you have an album that should stand tall among the major releases of the season. R.C.M.

HELPS: Three Etudes; Recollections; Quartet. David Del Tredici (in the études); William Masselos (in the *Recollections*); Robert Helps (in the *Quartet*), pianos. Desto DC 7122, $5.98.

Each of these three piano pieces by Robert Helps is recorded by the pianist who gave it its first public performance—the études by David Del Tredici, *Recollections* by William Masselos, and *Quartet* by the composer himself.

Helps describes his études as "criminally difficult," and they are. The first and third of them also assault the ear with that sweaty, laborious idiom I call Composers' Forum music: the old Composers' Forums were full of that sort of thing and they made one wish the piano might be banished from modern music forever. Strangely, the second étude has a Ravel-like color and dreaminess, and this idiomatic contrast runs all the way through the disc. It is less apparent in *Recollections*, which is almost entirely in the dreamy, floaty style, and fortunately it manifests itself only rarely in *Quartet*.

Quartet, a four-movement sonata composed in 1971, is by far the biggest, finest, and most meaningful work of the three. It explores the color of the piano magnificently; it makes mood of color and expressivity of mood, and a grand largeness of feeling holds it all together. There is magnificent piano playing throughout the set, but the recording is somewhat thin and wiry. A.F.

B **HERTEL:** Double Concerto for Trumpet, Oboe, Strings, and Continuo, in E flat. **MOZART, L.:** Concerto for Trumpet, Two Horns, Strings, and Continuo, in D. **HUMMEL:** Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, in E. Edward Tarr, trumpet; Helmut Hucke, oboe (in the Hertel); Consortium musicum, Fritz Lehan, cond. Nonesuch H 71270, $2.98.

Edward Tarr—a collection of classical trumpet concertos from the protean virtuoso.

Tarr, the protean expatriate American trumpeter/musicologist, has been considerably better represented on records in Europe than in his native country, but the present release augments his domestic discography with what well may be his most widely appealing solo recital to date. For here he moves from the baroque repertory (such as that of his earlier Nonesuch release, H 71217 of November 1969) into the domain of early classical concertos—leading off with a work co-starring trumpet and oboe by the North German composer Johann Wilhelm Hertel (1727–89). Hertel was represented earlier by a trumpet concerto with two oboes and two bassoons in D, and a symphony, but the present work appears to be a disc first. And if it is of only relatively mild historical importance, its cheerfully engaging melodism and piquant timbre contrasts make it a welcome novelty.

Papa Mozart's two-movement concerto is almost too familiar by now, yet Tarr and Lehan revitalize it as well as, if not better than, any of its previous performers. But it is in the major work here, the relatively familiar, impressively Beethovenian Hummel concerto, that Tarr excels most strikingly—even in direct comparison with such virtuosos as Ghitalla, Berinbaum, Dokschitser, et al. The soloist's infectious relish of the music, his interpretative grace and verve, and his beautifully controlled and colored tonal qualities (given full justice by the brightly clean, ungimmicked recording) make this a little masterpiece.

For good measure, Tarr identifies the particular trumpets he plays here, specifies the selections' sources and modern editions, and writes the informative musical annotations. One of these, incidentally, clears up the long-standing key ambiguity of the Hummel concerto. It's listed in Schwann as in E flat, and indeed most earlier recordings play it in that key, but Tarr (like Ghitalla in his memorable first recorded version for Cambridge) goes back to the original manuscript key of E. R.D.D.

HINDEMITH: Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50; Symphony, Mathis der Maler. Boston Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 246, $6.98.

Standards for the performance of Hindemith's music were set by the composer himself. He recorded both these works, and his version of Op. 50 is still in print. (His performance of *Mathis der Maler*, with the Berlin Philharmonic for Telefunken, is unfortunately a rare item.)

If, in addition to the records, one also knew the man, it is not difficult to conclude that he would give these Steinberg performances his full approval. One repeatedly has the sense that the conductor has managed somehow to see these scores precisely as the composer saw them and to realize them in sound exactly the way Hindemith wanted them to be. The idiom is fully grasped with all the distinctive features of Hindemith's writing made plain.

Essential to this music is the kind of clarity of line, precise articulation, and strong, even rhythmic support that Steinberg provides. The complex musical textures, as rhythms interact and themes cross, must always be precisely defined—and they are. Steinberg never permits any intrusion by alien musical elements. Most emphatically, that is not neoromantic music. It is to be played in the same spirit as one plays a Bach fugue. Steinberg does exactly that, with no gratuitous additions of sentiment or expression. The power of the performances comes from within.

The result is one of those uncommonly successful records that makes you want to shout. At last a stereo *Mathis* worthy of the score! (And for all the vagaries of fashion, it is a landmark in the music of this century.) And though Steinberg has made many records, surely this is one of the most complete fulfillments on discs of his musicianship. Moreover there is a nice sense of pride. The Op. 50 concert music was commissioned by the Boston Symphony more than forty years ago as one of the works to mark its fiftieth season. (The music has, indeed, on occasion been called Hindemith's *Boston* Symphony, in contrast

to the *Pittsburgh* Symphony produced on a similar commission in 1958.)

Most of all, this is a dazzling re-creation of what it is really like to hear the Boston Symphony in Symphony Hall. This is not a wow recording by any means, but how wonderfully natural everything sounds. Then, if you have four channels and an SQ decoder, turn on some ambience and behold, you are surrounded by this spacious auditorium and the very walls are singing. I have heard a lot of music in my time in Symphony Hall, and the engineers have brought back all the memories of what that orchestra sounds like from a good main floor seat about a third of the way back. My, it's lovely! R.C.M.

HUMMEL: Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, in E—See Hertel: Double Concerto for Trumpet, Oboe, Strings, and Continuo, in E flat.

IVES: Symphony No. 2. London Symphony Orchestra, Bernard Herrmann, cond. London Phase 4 SPC 21086, $5.98.

Selected comparison:
Bernstein Col. 6889

The Second may be the finest of Ives's four symphonies—the most logical in form and in that balance of integrity and contrast which is essential to the symphonic idea, the least beholden to essentially literary concepts, and the most successful in its handling of popular and folk materials. As I have probably said before in these columns, it reminds me, in a broad and general way, of Schumann's *Rhenish* Symphony: It has a similar grand vitality, a similar delight in the popular, and a similar brilliance in the transformation thereof. Ives even introduces his folk-festival finale with a cathedral scene, precisely as Schumann does, and if Ives's cathedral is a little Connecticut church rather than the great Gothic monument at Cologne—well, the good Lord is the good Lord on the banks of the Housatonic as well as on the banks of the Rhine. The main thing is that the Second Symphony of Ives is the first American symphony that can be put alongside one by a major European composer like Schumann without apology.

Bernard Herrmann was one of the first to recognize the genius of Ives, and his interpretation of a work like the Second Symphony still shines with the lustrous enthusiasm of discovery despite the high-powered Ives cult of recent years. This record competes with Leonard Bernstein in one of that conductor's most plausible, persuasive, and ebullient performances. To say it comes out ahead would be unfair to both conductors and to the composer as well, since a major work should be studied in the varying lights of different interpretations; but I like Herrmann, especially in the symphony's two slow movements. A.F.

B **JANÁČEK:** Quartets for Strings: No. 2, in E minor (1923); No. 3 (1928) (*Intimate Pages*). Austrian String Quartet. Turnabout TVS 34471, $2.98.

The numbering of these quartets above is correct if one counts a lost work of 1880. Both of those recorded here date from the last five or six years of Janáček's life.

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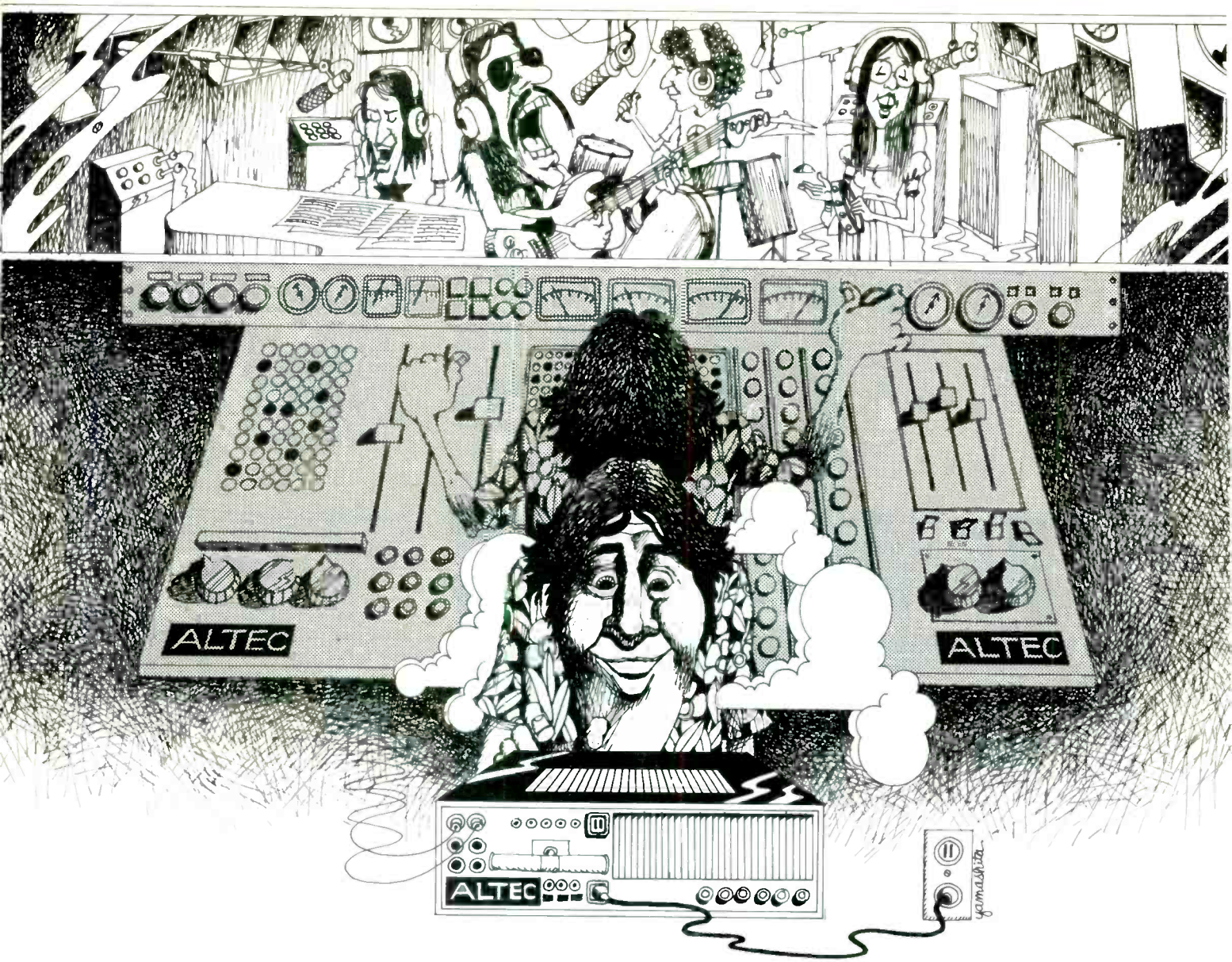

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The subtitle often associated with the Second Quartet, *Kreutzer Sonata*, refers not to the Beethoven work but to the short novel by Tolstoy of a tormented marriage in which the violin sonata played an important part. A major theme in Janáček's literary associations was that of the suffering woman, which dominates such operas as *Katya Kabanová* and *Jenůfa*. Thus, in drawing inspiration from the Tolstoy story, he was less concerned with its tragic marital conflict than with the "unhappy, tormented, misused, and ill-used woman." The inspiration of feminine love also inspired Janáček's Third Quartet, composed but a few months before his death at the age of seventy-four in 1928. Subtitled *Intimate Letters*, it is a tribute to his devoted mistress Kamilla Stösslová.

Musically both quartets represent Janáček's full mature mastery of a highly individual musical language. Working closely with the performers who were to play them, Janáček composed for the medium with great idiomatic skill, producing a genuine quartet texture and achieving a fine quality of color and expressiveness. Formally both quartets are typical of Janáček's fondness for sectional structure. The melodies, characteristic of his theories of melodic speech inflection, lend themselves to some extremely dramatic development. Both works are dominated by recurring brief motives that give unity to what might otherwise be rather fragmentary organization.

At least two recordings of these quartets have been issued previously in this country, by the Smetana and Janáček Quartets, both recorded in Prague by Supraphon, and issued here by Artia; neither is currently available. Of the two, a superb reading by the Smetana group had ensemble polish and emotional intensity that made it one of the notable performances of twentieth-century chamber music on records. Though the new version by the Austrian String Quartet is superbly reproduced in Dolby sound, I find the otherwise excellent performance somewhat lacking in the requisite intensity of emotional fire.

Repeated hearings of these quartets convince me that they rank among the most important chamber works of this century. They deserve a place in any repertory of chamber music, and the present recording, though not quite up to the previous Smetana version, still offers a performance that conveys the unique importance of this music with great impact.

P.H.

KALKBRENNER: Sonata for Piano, in A flat, Op. 177 (*Grande Sonate Brillante*). **THALBERG:** Sonata for Piano, in C minor, Op. 56. Adrian Ruiz, piano. Genesis GS 1016, $5.98.

Kalkbrenner's magnum opus sounds like a soundtrack for a silent movie! It's real salon stuff, full of Weberesque arabesques, Chopin mannerisms without the Chopin ability to rise above banality, and even smatterings of Schubertian lyricism without that master's ability to see a lovely melody through to its logical (or unexpected) conclusion. The music, to be sure, is demanding and at times beautifully written for the instrument. And admittedly some of it is even very pretty. The chief trouble with so many of the lesser nineteenth-century Romantics, it seems to me, is their crippling inability to organize their material convincingly. The rhythmic scansion is constantly vacillating and the work lacks any sort of convincing structure. It's too long for its length—more of a crazy quilt than a *Grande Sonate, brillante* or otherwise.

Thalberg's sonata was written in 1844, a year before Kalkbrenner's. At the outset it promises more in the way of substance, but as the edifice grinds to a double bar, this listener, at least, became impatient with its pretentious hollowness. Again, on a purely pianistic level the work is admirable—Thalberg made a name for himself with the so-called "three-hand" effect (although Schumann and Chopin were equally adept at the trick without calling attention to it so ostentatiously).

I must make it (perfectly) clear that I am not a musical snob. Of course I prefer late Beethoven, but the tonal ecology obviously needs the lesser matter too for the check and balance of nature. Moreover, some of the recently unearthed Romantic literature (and much of it that is still buried) has real substance. In fact, I have just finished relishing a Genesis disc of "Vignettes of Old Russia," not to mention important works of Liapunov and Balakirev on Turnabout. Still, the vacuous escapades of the Kalkbrenner/Thalberg variety (you can, if you wish, substitute the names of Herz, Hunten, or any of the other nonincandescent luminaries of the Parisian School, c. 1840) appeal to me about as much as a fifty-pound package of cotton candy would to a starving man.

Adrian Ruiz, a young American virtuoso who took first prize at Montevideo and fourth in the 1968 Busoni Concours, does nobly by

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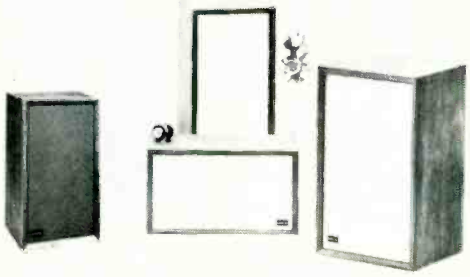

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LINN: Concertino for Violin and Wind Octet—See Harrison: Koncherto por la Violino Kun Perkuta Orkestra.

LISZT: Sonata for Piano, in B minor—See Chopin: Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58.

B **MENDELSSOHN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 25. **SCHUMANN:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54. Rudolf Firkusny, piano; Orchestra of Radio Luxembourg, Louis de Froment, cond. Turnabout TVS 34468, $2.98.

Selected comparisons (Mendelssohn):

Kalichstein/Previn	RCA 3239
Serkin/Ormandy	Col. 6128 or 7185

Selected comparisons (Schumann):

Fleisher/Szell	Odys. 30668
Lipatti/Ansermet	Lon. 15176
Lipatti/Karajan	Odys. 32 160141
Hess/Schwarz	Ser. 60009
Rubinstein/Giulini	RCA 2997
Serkin/Ormandy	Col. 6688 or 7185

Firkusny has been around for a long time, but strange to say he has never before recorded either of these popular concertos. He plays them with his customary blend of patrician poise, jewel-like proportion, and singing line. He is an impeccable artist who sees a work whole, shapes it with elegance, and rarely strains a line in order to make a dubious point. It's all very limpid and sophisticated though some might wish for something more rugged and less reserved. Serkin certainly supplies the ruggedness, although to my way of thinking he misses the point of the Mendelssohn, which in his rendition is bristling with nervous energy but almost totally devoid of the nimble grace that is absolutely *de rigueur* to the idiom (and which Firkusny provides so notably). Kalichstein, on the other hand, attempts to combine some of the power with the delicacy. I like his direct, unmannered performance very much. It is well supported by Previn.

In the Schumann, all of the alternatives listed above are superlative. In that work, Serkin's voltage is more appropriately applied (and indeed, the present Serkin/Ormandy reading surpasses both of their deleted earlier ones for ardor and freedom). If you decide on that version, I would suggest the coupling with the fine, rarely heard *Konzertstück* in G major, Op. 92 (MS 6688), which Serkin plays uncommonly well. The virile, supercharged Fleisher/Szell reading is another favorite of mine (somewhat in the same tradition as Serkin but with a bit more intellectualization in the orchestral direction). The Hess is very different; leisurely in tempo, lyrical, and full of tender warmth. The recently issued live performance by Lipatti and Ansermet is full of broad humanity. Lipatti's slightly earlier studio version with Karajan is a bit less personal, with a taut grace and sparkle. Both are classics. Rubinstein/Giulini has magnificent poise, an arching line, and golden sonorities. It would take a braver soul than myself to call one of these "the best."

Unfortunately, Firkusny's readings (which would otherwise be comparable to the best) are somewhat compromised by the lackluster quality of the recorded sound and the understaffed orchestral support. De Froment leads with spirit and precision, but the lack of heft makes for puny tuttis and detail is lost. H.G.

MESSIAEN: Cantéyodjayâ; Neumes rythmiques; Ile de feu 1 and 2. **SHERLAW JOHNSON:** Sonata for Piano, No. 1; Seven Short Piano Pieces. Robert Sherlaw Johnson, piano. Argo ZRG 694, $5.98.

Unlike most of Messiaen's other piano music, the four works recorded and superbly executed here by Messiaen pupil Robert Sherlaw Johnson are not as deeply immersed in the extramusical themes (such as those related to Christian mysticism and ornithology) that one finds in much of the composer's work. As such, they manifest a certain purity often lacking in the obsessive musical structures of such works as the *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus* or the *Catalogue d'oiseaux*. In fact, all four of the pieces performed on this release are basically studies in which Messiaen seems to have expanded the possibilities of rhythmic combinations and piano sonorities almost to the furthest limit possible. As his base the composer uses such "primitivistic" elements as the diverse rhythmic patterns of Hindu mu-

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sic (*Cantéyodjayâ*, which contains indications in both Hindu and Sanskrit) or plainchant (*Neumes rythmiques*), plus inevitably some bird calls in the *Ile de feu* pieces; but here these elements are subtly integrated into the over-all texture of the music, in which the harmonic idiom is particularly unrelenting.

At any rate, these pieces require not only a colossal technique, they demand a big, resonant tone in order not to sound clangy and generally ear-splitting. Sherlaw Johnson amply displays both of these qualities, along with many, many others. It is simply impossible to imagine a better performance of these works—Sherlaw Johnson executes the staggering rhythmic complexities with incredible precision while imparting a momentum to Messiaen's waves of sound that is absolutely essential to the music's spirit. Even Messiaen's wife and favored interpreter, Yvonne Loriod, does not attain the richness of tone and total identification with the style one finds here.

Sherlaw Johnson likewise applies this same brilliance to his own compositions, which themselves afford no small amount of interest. Here he has drawn upon his obviously profound knowledge of the piano and its possibilities to produce, in the First Sonata, an exhilarating work abounding both in dazzling rhythmic configurations and in atmospheric sonorities; although they owe a certain debt to Messiaen (and also to Scriabin), these qualities are much more strongly rooted in the traditions of Western music. Going even further in sonorous experimentation, the *Seven Short Piano Pieces* call for a number of sounds made within the piano, a device that can become gimmicky with some composers but used here with refreshing finesse and subtlety. This is an outstanding release, greatly enhanced by excellent recorded sound, in which a certain lack of brilliance in the highs is a very minor detraction. R.S.B.

MOZART: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 27, in B flat, K. 595. Walter Gieseking, piano; orchestra, Victor Desarzens, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 66.

MOZART: Les Petits Riens, K. Anh. 10; Overtures: Il Re pastore; Lucio Silla; La Finta semplice; Der Schauspieldirektor. Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. Angel S 36869, $5.98.

This is a disc for Mozart collectors, but also for those who like to hear eighteenth-century music, of whatever type, played as it should be.

None of the music is part of the basic Mozart repertory, but without being rarities these works make a refreshing change from the usual type of Mozart collection that gives us the *Figaro*, *Magic Flute*, and *Abduction from the Seraglio* overtures plus *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Some of the music is rather undistinguished but all is enjoyable.

Neville Marriner and his Academy perform to near perfection. Their approach emphasizes clarity, restraint, balance, and close attention to contrasts and detail. They play classical music in the best of classical manners.

The first three overtures are all bright, energetic compositions, with only *Lucio Silla* briefly taking on a more serious character. While these can be thought of as short divertimentos, the overture for *The Impresario* is a symphonic movement in miniature despite its brevity; it is the only work on the record in Mozart's distinctive mature voice.

Les Petits Riens is probably not entirely Mozart's work, and it shows it. It is extremely uneven, its overture and thirteen brief dance movements ranging from pleasant pastoral serenades to portions that recall very bad minuet movements by second-rate Bachs.

The liner notes list the sections that are probably Mozart's and those probably spurious, according to the findings of Harald Heckmann (*Neue Mozart-Ausgabe*, Kassel, 1963). Whatever the truth of this scholarly matter, there is no doubt that the whole suite, whoever composed it, was dashed off in a tearing hurry for the lightweight Paris ballet it accompanied.

But still it is pleasant entertainment music, and no more should be expected. The Academy musicians make the most of it with a sprightly and delicate treatment. One can only hope that Mozart had an ensemble of equal quality at his disposal in 1778. A.M.

MOZART: Requiem, K. 626. Sheila Armstrong, soprano; Janet Baker, mezzo; Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; John Alldis Choir; English Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. Angel S 36842, $5.98.

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the world; for a long time it was the almost exclusive choice for funeral services of the great—even the chauvinistic French used it for Napoleon's obsequies. It also acquired romantic attraction through the story of the mysterious stranger who commissioned it, and by being the master's last, unfinished work. Yet few are the performances and recordings that do justice to this incomparable masterpiece; the present contribution by Daniel Barenboim is also disappointing.

Mozart was a sincere Catholic and—perhaps this will surprise many—with a penchant for mysticism that became very strong in his last years. From the *Magic Flute* and the Masonic music a straight line leads to the Requiem. And this Mass for the Dead, so powerfully dramatic, is at the same time Mozart's most severely liturgic work. One might also say that while retaining his inimitable personality, Mozart here leaves the contemporary scene to return to the spirit and to the vocal expression of his great baroque ancestors, notably Handel. But there are elements, such as the irregular and asymmetric entry of voices in fugal passages and the continuous close imitation, that go back to the old polyphonists. All this contributes to an extraordinary mixture of stylistic components that nevertheless coalesce into a prodigiously unified whole. The conductor who does not recognize these elements is lost, which, regrettably, is Barenboim's fate.

The Requiem is far more polyphonic than any of Mozart's earlier church music, yet it is also starkly dramatic. The dynamics too are dramatic, sharply contrasting rather than graduated, but Barenboim constantly rounds off the edges by the use of microdynamics. This is particularly objectionable in those numbers or passages where the vocal parts are sternly objective and churchly while the subjective dramatic excitement is discreetly maintained in the orchestra; the most sensitive balance is called for, but Barenboim's orchestra merely accompanies. The setting is remarkably faithful to Latin diction, yet Barenboim often misplaces the accents or fails to give the syllables those tiny elongations (*Domine*) that cannot be indicated in notation. Indeed, in many places verbal rhythm dictates even the pace. Take the *Hostias*, "We offer Thee, O Lord, sacrifice of praise and prayer." It is not a dirge; it is in the warm E flat major (as opposed to the prevailing dark D minor), and its ineffable prayerlike choral recitation is destroyed in this performance by the extremely slow tempo, sentimental dynamics, and inert ending.

The cadences are generally moribund, and the tempos slow; when they are not slow they are turgid—there is no bite in the inexorably tumultuous Kyrie, no confident shouts in *"Quam olim Abrahae."* And those three tremendous acclamations in *"Rex tremendae,"* which Mozart deliberately placed on the weak beat to enhance their dramatic impact, here just happen. The melodies do not have their proper profile, the counterpoints their geometry, and the harmonies their color, nor is there much sense of orientation or direction. Barenboim is not aware of the subtlety that rules Mozart's rhythm, aptly called by Lowinsky "an asymmetry growing out of a perfectly symmetrical conception," and makes little distinction between structural and emotional tension. The conductor's inexperience is demonstrated by his handling of the voices, both solo and choral. He has first-class forces at his disposal, yet the choral sound is often opaque and the balances leave a good deal to be desired. The echo in the church where the recording was made as well as microphone placing are partly responsible for that, but Barenboim's soft rhythm makes the choral entries lazy, while the slow tempos compel the soloists to sing single notes, a disadvantage to Fischer-Dieskau, since he has no real bass register. All the others do as well as they can under the circumstances.

Obviously, what is missing here (and in most other recordings of this magnificent work) is a lack of knowledge of the spirit and nature of the liturgy in general, and the specific quality of the eighteenth-century orchestral Mass in the Latin or Latinized south. The rapprochement between stage and church, characteristic of this age and this area, has never been understood in the Protestant north. Finally, one would nowadays expect a young conductor to be cultivated enough to dip into at least the most important literature on the Requiem. Though ever since Mozart's death a controversy has raged about the authenticity of several of the sections of the Mass, today we are better informed about Süssmayr's role in this great score. Barenboim need not have hurt the choral euphony by using the trombones indiscriminately. Brahms had already called attention to the trombone parts added by Süssmayr to the entire score, and Abert perceptively reconstructed Mozart's intentions as to their proper use. P.H.L.

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MOZART, L.: Concerto for Trumpet, Two Horns, Strings, and Continuo—See Hertel: Double Concerto for Trumpet, Oboe, Strings, and Continuo, in E flat.

MUSSORGSKY: Songs and Dances of Death. **RACHMANINOFF:** Songs: In the Silent Night; I Wait for Thee; Child, Thou Art Fair As A Flower; Fragment of Alfred de Musset; Lilacs; A Dream; O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair. Irina Arkhipova mezzo; John Wustman, piano. Melodiya/Angel SR 40198, $5.98.

The passage of time has done nothing to diminish the boldness of Mussorgsky's musical imagination. After ninety years the *Songs and Dances of Death* still sound astonishingly vivid. Each of the four songs is a complete, self-contained drama in which Death in different guises asserts his mastery over Man. In the first, Death, overcoming the fears of a mother, enfolds her sick child in a final, quietening embrace; in the second, Death serenades a suffering girl like a lover and calls her forth into his arms; in the third, Death brings rest and consolation to a weary old peasant who has lost his way in the blinding snow; and in the last, Death like some avenging and apocalyptic warrior rides by night across the field of battle, boasting that the ultimate victory is his.

The originality of Mussorgsky's conceptions, rhythmically, melodically, and harmonically, rivets our attention on the dramatic circumstances of the unfolding stories. We follow all the shifts of power as Death gradually insists upon his right to take command. The vocal line throughout is very free. Sometimes lyrical, sometimes declamatory, it follows the progress of death's ascendency from the initial situation of human woe to the final annihilation of all resistance. The piano part is singularly original and dramatic, rising to what is still a startlingly dissonant climax in the final song as Death claims eternal supremacy over the fallen.

It follows from this that the *Songs and Dances of Death* require exceptional performers. As far as the vocalist is concerned, each song must be acted out in all its different voices and moods, like Schubert's *Erlkönig*. Mussorgsky calls for a daunting range of expressiveness: from an exhausted mother to a triumphant, swaggering soldier, from suave lyricism to heaven-storming clamor. *The Field-Marshal* requires the kind of vocal and emotional resources demanded by Wolf's *Kennst du das Land?*, together with an even greater ability to create a mood of emotional desperation. Jennie Tourel, in what remains one of the phonograph's most exciting achievements (and a performance that should be restored to the catalogue as soon as possible), was mistress of every musical and interpretive situation until *The Field-Marshal*, at which point she found herself hard-pressed. Irina Arkhipova, on the other hand, is triumphant all the way through. Arkhipova, as might be expected of a famous exponent of the Kostelnička in *Jenůfa*, is a dramatic mezzo-soprano with a voice capable of handling both nuances and outbursts. In the *Serenade* she is sinuous and seductive. In the final song she summons up all the turmoil of a battlefield. The scope of her vocal acting is such that Mussorgsky's achievement is perfectly realized. Some moments, indeed, are unforgettable: the sinister emphasis she gives to Death's final "hush" to the ailing baby; the plangency and grace of her amorous serenade, and the sternness with which at its conclusion she orders the young girl to be silent; the joyless rapture she creates after the fatal Trepak is over and winter with all its tribulations gives way to a vision of summer peace. John Wustman is a worthy partner in this magnificent performance. He does not have quite the near-reckless brilliance that Leonard Bernstein brought to his accompaniments for Tourel, but he is a poetic and powerful collaborator nonetheless.

As far as the entire record is concerned, Wustman is actually slightly more consistent than Arkhipova, for whereas his playing of Rachmaninoff's piano parts is full of grace her singing here is slightly too strong. These seven songs are very beautiful. Most are expressions of melancholy regret and need a rather sweeter and more lyrical treatment than Arkhipova accords them. But the side is attractive, for all that, and given the neglect of Rachmaninoff's song literature, musically rewarding.

The sound on this disc is not especially noteworthy. The voice is a bit too close for comfort and at the large climaxes everything sounds congested. But this is not serious enough to detract in any serious way from the success of the Mussorgsky songs, which, it should be noted, have been restored to Mussorgsky's original order. D.S.H.

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NOVÁK: Slovak Suite; Overture, Maryša—See Dvořák: Legends, Op. 59.

PUCCINI: Manon Lescaut.

Manon	Montserrat Caballé (s)
Des Grieux	Placido Domingo (t)
Geronte	Noël Mangin (bs)
Lescaut	Vincente Sardinero (b)
Edmondo	Robert Tear (t)
Innkeeper	Richard van Allan (bs)
Dancing Master	Bernard Dickerson (t)
Singer	Delia Wallis (ms)
Lamplighter	Ian Partridge (t)
Commandante	Gwynne Howell (bs)
Sergeant	Robert Lloyd (bs)

Ambrosian Opera Chorus; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Bruno Bartoletti, cond. Angel SBLX 3782, $12.98 (two discs). Tape: 4X2S 3782, $9.98.

Selected comparisons:

Perlea	RCA VICS 6027
Molinari-Pradelli	Lon. 1317

What chiefly impressed Bernard Shaw about *Manon Lescaut* and led him to call Puccini the likely heir of Verdi was the combination of a quasi-symphonic sense of structure and a melodic prodigality reminiscent of the early days of Verdi. These, after nearly eighty years, are still the opera's impressive features. The profusion of tunes in Act I—some of them brief, even fragmentary—is shaped into drama by Puccini's sense of large-scale design. Examined in cold blood, the libretto of *Manon Lescaut*, like that of *La Bohème*, is full of holes. Circumstances and relationships change so radically during the intermission that often the curtain goes up on situations undreamed of at the end of the previous act. What keeps everything together is the composer's emotional comprehensiveness, his belief in the inevitability of his drama. As a result the conductor must attend to the details, the melodic graces and orchestral textures, while at the same time investing these elements with passion and energy. Heedless bustle makes this music sound crude, but dawdling is fatal.

Bruno Bartoletti manages his assignment with great skill. The opening scene, a square at Amiens, is alive with expectation, and the intrigue, in which Des Grieux seduces Manon, is carried through with brio. The brooding atmosphere of the docks at Le Havre, whence Manon is shipped off to exile in America, is marvelously realized. The only drawback to Bartoletti's conducting is an occasional want of elegance. Some of Puccini's instrumental felicities and inner voices get swept along in the general air of excitement; they need more room to breathe in. In addition, Bartoletti takes the largo sostenuto of "*Guardate, pazzo son*" in Act III rather too briskly. Otherwise, his handling of the score, from the youthful buoyancy of Act I to the weary despair of Act IV is irresistible. Neither Molinari-Pradelli on London nor Jonel Perlea on RCA can equal him in over-all control. And their orchestral forces do not match the distinction of the New Philharmonia.

For most listeners to Puccini, however, vocal casting is the more important consideration, and Bartoletti's success is matched here by Placido Domingo's. To judge by this recording the two artists have a lot in common. Domingo's performance is marked by impetuosity, fervor, *slancio*. He is not overbearingly insistent like Del Monaco on London, and though he cannot manage Bjoerling's control or delicacy in passages like "*Tra voi belle*," his vocal manner is on the whole disarmingly attractive, even if the voice has now become very dark. Certainly, Domingo sounds better here than in many of his recent recordings. After a sluggish start in his entrance scene, where he slides up to all his top notes, he settles down and by Act II is singing splendidly. The climax of "*Ah! Manon, mi tradisce*," with its ringing B flat, is magnificent.

Caballé is less successful. At this stage of her career she is unlikely to have anything new up her sleeve, and because she cannot find the proper manner for this sort of music among her gifts she simply sounds miscast. Vocally she lacks warmth and plentitude. She is unable to weight her tone with sensuousness for Puccini's emotional outbursts; on occasion her top notes (for example, the B flat in "*In quelle trine morbide*") are effortful; and sostenuto passages are sometimes unsteady. The voice, moreover, lacks color: The tone often seems curiously dead. Caballé's is a peculiar vocal method that only functions effectively at very low dynamic levels. Dynamism of any sort, however, is lacking here. Puccini's markings like "*con immensa passione*" at "*Tu, tu, amore?*" in Act III, or "*con passione infinita*" at "*Io t'amo tanto e muoio*" in Act IV elicit nothing more than careful, reflective phrasing. It is hard to believe that this Manon has ever felt any deep emotion. The manner and voice of Renata Tebaldi (London) are infinitely more appropriate to the role. Licia Albanese, too, though the sound is scrawny in the extreme, manages the emotional climaxes with greater involvement. Caballé is better at coquetry than deep feeling, better in filigree

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than large-scale effects. She is superb in "*L'ora. o Tirsi*" and in the mockery she turns on Geronte later in the Second Act.

The Lescaut of Sardinero, after an indecisive start in Act I, improves greatly. The remainder of the cast is British. They are mostly young, promising singers, who are also good musicians. Robert Lloyd in the tiny role of the Sergeant sounds as remarkable as he did in the part of Dr. Grenvil on Angel's recent *Traviata*. But the rest sound comfortable neither with Italian music nor with the Italian language. The intelligent Robert Tear seems quite miscast. Noël Mangin, the thick-toned Geronte, sings with an inappropriately backward placement of the voice and often makes a hash of the words. In this respect he is eclipsed by Bernard Dickerson, the Dancing Master, who cannot distinguish between single and double consonants and should have been better coached. The Ambrosian Opera Chorus enunciates well and sings with tonal beauty; they are, however, too genteel, either as students at Amiens or as onlookers at Le Havre.

But despite the foregoing reservations this is on balance the best *Manon Lescaut* currently available. The brilliant, forward recording, which excels the sound of all earlier sets, Bartoletti's vivid conception, the persuasive Des Grieux of Domingo, and Sardinero's effective Lescaut sweep the less satisfactory features along with them, so that all in all Puccini is handsomely served. D.S.H.

RACHMANINOFF: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra (complete); Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. For a feature review of these recordings, see page 66.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18. Walter Gieseking, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 66.

RACHMANINOFF: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 30. Walter Gieseking, piano; New York Philharmonic, John Barbirolli, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 66.

RACHMANINOFF: Songs: In the Silent Night; I Wait for Thee; Child, Thou Art Fair As A Flower: Fragment of Alfred de Musset; Lilacs; A Dream; O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair—See Mussorgsky: Songs and Dances of Death.

RAVEL: Quartet for Strings, in F. **DEBUSSY:** Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10. LaSalle Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 235, $6.98.

B **RAVEL:** Quartet for Strings, in F. **DEBUSSY:** Quartet for Strings, in G minor, Op. 10. Via Nova Quartet. Musical Heritage Society MHS 1211, $2.79 (Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

The new LaSalle and Via Nova versions of the "ham and eggs" of the French chamber repertoire strike me as being very much in the right direction. I am particularly impressed with the Via Nova Ravel—a beautifully direct, thoroughbred reading in *echt* French classic style. The tempos are lithe, forward-moving, and always planned strictly along the lines specified by the composer. There are no protracted ritardandos or anticipated accelerandos. Moreover, the group plays with marvelous togetherness, completely secure intonation, and a welcome (yet rare) avoidance of sickly portamentos and hairpin swells. Indeed, the Via Nova Ravel is one of the most beautiful I have ever encountered—a bona fide example of what is meant by idiomatic interpretation. The overside Debussy is also well done, though here the group seems a bit tame and even matter-of-fact. The defect is by no means serious though, and the coupling impresses me as one of the finest in the entire catalogue. The sound (originally by Erato of France) is good without being exceptional—a little close and *sec* and not quite atmospheric enough—but at $2.79 this disc is an irresistible bargain.

The LaSalle engineering is of a different order—a well-nigh perfect example of how these works ought to sound. DGG has mastered them at a rather low level, but their surfaces are so silken smooth that one can turn the volume up with no incursion of background hiss. The sound is lean, radiant, beautifully centered, and intimate. One really hears a string quartet—not a string orchestra as one gets in the really badly recorded examples of this music (e.g., the Vlach/Artia edition). The LaSalle foursome shares with the Via Nova

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the right ideas as to tempos and dynamics. They too get a sense of line and purity into their interpretations. On the whole though, their actual playing is less incisive and distinguished than their French rivals: Here one finds some of the hairpins and some of the diddly articulation so happily absent from the Via Nova versions. Still, the coupling wins itself a high place for one can certainly do a lot worse. H.G.

ROREM: Symphony No. 3—See Schuman: Symphony No. 7.

ROSSINI: Il Barbiere di Siviglia.

Rosina	Teresa Berganza (ms)
Berta	Stefania Malagù (ms)
Almaviva	Luigi Alva (t)
Figaro	Hermann Prey (b)
Bartolo	Enzo Dara (bs)
Don Basilio	Paolo Montarsolo (bs)
Fiorello	Renato Cesari (b)

Theodor Guschlbauer, harpsichord; Ambrosian Opera Chorus; London Symphony Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2709 041, $20.94 (three discs).

Selected comparison:

Varviso	Lon. 1381

Like DGG's recent *Cenerentola* this is essentially the souvenir of a theatrical production. The Abbado/Ponnelle *Barbiere*, first presented at the 1968 Salzburg Festival, was greeted with enthusiasm, one of the reasons being its fresh approach to what had previously seemed a worn-out masterpiece. This performance, though it makes use of a different orchestra and a couple of new singers, gives a very good idea of what pleased Salzburg so much. Moreover, it had the additional advantage of dispensing with Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's maddeningly overinventive production and allowing the music to assume its rightfully predominant position.

When this *Barbiere* was new, much was made of Abbado's efforts to cleanse Rossini's score of later excrescences. Under the conductor's guidance the orchestra has been reduced, the orchestration corrected, the coloratura mostly limited to what Rossini prescribed. In addition, the role of Rosina is once again a mezzo-soprano. Bartolo sings Rossini's aria "*A un dottor*" instead of Romani's later "*Manca un foglio*," and in the Lesson Scene the original duet "*Contro un cor*" is preferred to a display piece for the prima donna. However, none of these acts of musical restoration is especially startling. The part of Rosina often has been sung in its original keys over the past twenty years, and London's 1965 recording makes use of a more or less authentic score. Indeed, for anyone in search of Rossini's intentions the latter is still the preferable version. Apart from the severe curtailment of the recitatives (a wise move, since a lot of them are tedious without stage action) and a small cut in Bartolo's aria, the score as presented on London is complete. Abbado, on the other hand, makes most of the traditional elisions, despite his original claims to authenticity. Not only is Bartolo's aria cut (and more than in the London set), but so is "*Contro un cor*," and Almaviva's grand and elaborate aria in the final scene is entirely suppressed. Actually, Abbado does not offer a scholarly and definitive edition of the score, but rather a carefully prepared performing version. As such, it is not without its attractions. The orchestration is scintillating and the vocal line, especially Rosina's, has more point than dazzle.

Abbado's cast has distinct merits. Berganza, also Rosina on London, is here a shade less fluent than she was seven years ago, especially at the top. She lacks effervescence and wit—she makes little of Rosina's minxlike cunning—but she is a gifted, sensitive musician who always gives pleasure. The same is true of Luigi Alva, though on this recording he sounds vocally spent: Slow sustained music like "*Se il mio nome*" taxes him to the limit and a lot of the roulades are extremely breathy. Yet all in all he is a brilliant performer. The voice may lack all trace of sweetness, yet the final effect is one of charm and elegance, mainly because of Alva's phrasing, his enunciation of the text, and his skill as a vocal actor. Bennelli on London sounds like a novice by comparison, immature rather than youthful. Prey is less idiomatic than Ausensi (London), but not so clumsy. However, his Germanic style with its tendency to vocalize at the back of the throat and to nudge the notes along, is not appropriate for Rossini. Because Prey lacks directness he sounds less shrewd than devious, less witty than bumptious. Moreover, he cannot really get his accent around the fast patter and so loses some of Figaro's mercurial nimbleness. Paolo Montarsolo, the Basilio, is like Alva in that though the voice is rusty and initially disconcerting his artistry soon makes itself felt. By comparison Ghiaurov (London) is vocally imposing, but

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decidedly unfunny. Enzo Dara's Bartolo is a great success, a fine characterization and very well sung. The patter that concludes "*A un dottor*" is wonderfully deft.

Abbado's conducting is elegant and full of good humor. As with his *Cenerentola* he does not try for nervous brilliance. The tempos, like his phrasing, allow for subtlety and charm. It is a pleasure to hear so many notes beautifully articulated—and moreover so beautifully played. The London Symphony Orchestra is a wonderful ensemble. Some of the playing, indeed, is quite remarkable, like the light-fingered orchestral allegro that succeeds the "*Buona sera*" ensemble.

The recording, too, is warm and smooth. The ensembles sound particularly convincing, with individual voices discernible yet blended into the whole. A good deal of this venture is very enjoyable; but for anyone wanting Rossini's music almost complete the London set remains indispensable. D.S.H.

SCHOENBERG: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 36; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 42. Zvi Zeitlin, violin (in Op. 36); Alfred Brendel, piano (in Op. 42); Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 257, $6.98.

Selected comparisons:
Marschner/Brendel — Turn. 34051
Baker/Gould — Col. 7039

Although Schoenberg probably wasn't thinking about the matter in such terms, these two concertos, with their neatly contrasted characters, certainly make a congenial coupling for the LP record: the fiddle concerto with its heroic solo part stretching the limits of both instrument and player, an almost grimly serious work in the tradition of the Brahms First Piano Concerto, and the later piano work, lyrical, full of humor and color, and less conspicuously virtuosic (although still of imposing difficulty). Neither work is exactly overplayed in the concert repertory, nor have the record catalogues had to add extra pages to make room for listing of disc versions, but perhaps one may hope that this new entry, made by musicians not obviously and exclusively associated with the contemporary literature, will suggest to the public and to other performers that both the Schoenberg concertos deserve more consistent attention than they have received.

To date, the optimum recordings have been paired on a Turnabout disc (unfortunately available now only in "rechanneled stereo"). The soloists on that occasion were Wolfgang Marschner and the same Alfred Brendel, who now appears on the new DGG, with the SWGR Orchestra conducted by the excellent Michael Gielen (it was one of the earliest disc appearances of that conductor, who made such a fine impression with the New York Philharmonic last season). Despite sonic deficiencies (especially in the Piano Concerto, a particularly muddy job), the Turnabout was hardly surpassed by the Baker/Gould/Craft coupling on Columbia or the somewhat somnolent Peter Serkin/Ozawa version of Op. 42. And the Turnabout still retains some unique qualities, for Wolfgang Marschner's conquest of Schoenberg's monumental technical hurdles stands as a very special achievement, carried off with a supreme confidence that enables him to shape the lines with a security that no other violinist in my experience has been able to match. Zvi Zeitlin comes close, and plays with a fine feeling for the large gestures that populate the concerto; in its rather more openly Romantic style, this is a fine job.

Another special quality of that Turnabout disc was the superb playing of the Baden-Baden radio orchestra, at that time one of the finest in Europe; the Bavarian Radio group simply cannot reach that standard, despite some good individual work. In general, they start better than they continue, but at least Kubelik maintains the music's momentum and character, and brings off such dramatic moments as the tam-tam stroke in the last movement of Op. 36 (from which the solo violin emerges to launch a cadenza accompanied by snare drum!) with considerable flair.

Without doubt one of the brightest aspects of this new disc is that Alfred Bendel's performance, here much more clearly audible, has gained in depth and contrast, informing the Piano Concerto with a marvelous warmth in its lyrical aspects and a mordant diablerie in the faster music; the continuity of the piece—the shapes of phrases, and the logic of their succession—has never been more clearly defined. One of the great hurdles that Schoenberg's music has faced over the years has been the doggedly earnest, characterless, we'll-get-the-notes-if-it-kills-us performance—a treatment that would kill even a Mozart *Contretanz* (and even today occasionally does); if we heard more performances of the kind on this new disc, the music would certainly win readier acceptance, for at last it really sounds like music (you know, melodies, phrases, harmonies, textures, and that sort of thing).

Naturally, DGG has produced a record that sounds vastly better than the old Turnabout, although it is on the brash side in the tuttis and prone to slight distortion in the very top ranges, with a somewhat shallow perspective. Much of the time here, Schoenberg is, in effect, drawing chamber ensembles from the full orchestra, and I miss a sense of depth that would underline the contrast with the full-orchestra climaxes. But this *is* a great improvement. D.H.

B **SCHUMAN:** Symphony No. 7. **REMOREM:** Symphony No. 3. Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond. Turnabout TVS 34447, $2.98.

Ever since I first became acquainted with the music of William Schuman, it has struck me that here is one of the most American-sounding of all composers. At the risk of making a dangerous generalization, one might say that Aaron Copland is the composer of the openness, the expansiveness of America, while William Schuman is the composer of its big cities—in particular New York, where he was born and has spent much of his life. I do not of course mean this in any programmatic sense. Nor am I referring only to the more obvious links between Schuman's art and New York, such as the jagged and often frenetic rhythms that pervade much of the Seventh Symphony (to give but one example). The feeling is there, even in the cold, angular grandeur of the polytonal opening chords of the symphony, or in the bleak solitude of some of the whispered chord progressions in the strings.

For all its rhythmic impact and skillful orchestration, however, the Seventh does not

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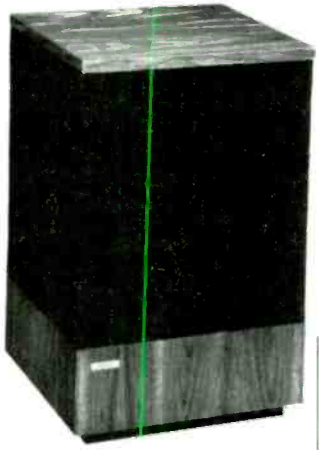

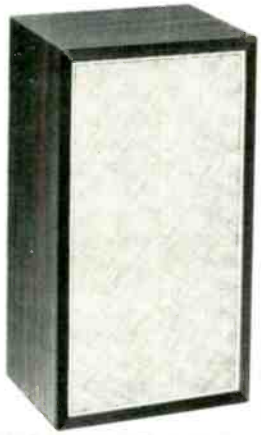

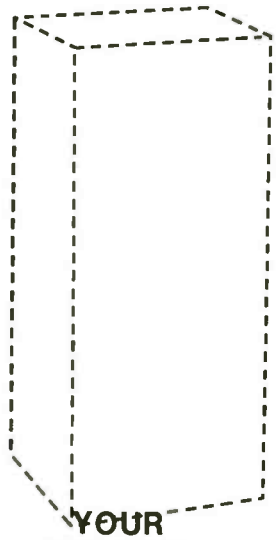

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strike me as one of Schuman's best symphonies, although this detracts very little from it, considering such masterpieces as Nos. 3, 5, and 6. But the twelve years that separate No. 6 (which is in desperate need of a new recording) and No. 7, Schuman seems not only to have moved toward an even more dissonant harmonic idiom than before (there are even some tone clusters in the second movement), but also to have stripped his style down to such an extent that there are certain parts of the Seventh Symphony that seem entirely manner. Thus the second movement offers such a quintessentialized array of Schumanesque rhythms, harmonies, and instrumentation that the composer has been able to dispense almost entirely with anything resembling a theme. Much of what Schuman says in this work is already present in other pieces, such as the 1955 *Credendum* whose ending, for instance, has much in common with that of the Seventh Symphony. Furthermore, the performance recorded here does not strike me as one of Abravanel's most inspired. Although the interpretation is more than adequate, it does not always convey the intensity inherent in many pages of the score. The sound, on the other hand, is excellent: The miking, which has been perfectly conceived and realized here, is close enough to capture the full, rich sounds of Schuman's scoring for winds and yet not so close as to destroy the over-all sheen of Schuman's distinctive orchestral sound. Even with its relatively minor shortcomings, this is an important link in the *oeuvre* of a master symphonist, and this sumptuously recorded version of it represents a valuable addition to the Schwann catalogue.

This is more—much more—than can be said for the Rorem Third Symphony, an innocuous work that seems to reach for even greater heights than the Schuman and gets maybe an nth degree as far. How, for instance, the mindless and eventually boring repetition of a four-note theme in the first movement merits the designation of "passacaglia" is beyond me. Nor do I see the slightest justification for the insipidly bouncy second movement, which Rorem himself calls "out of context." Then again, nothing in this five-movement work appears to have any inevitable *raison d'être*. Abravanel, for some reason, seems to conduct this symphony with more conviction than the Schuman Seventh, but in my opinion the performance represents a lost cause. R.S.B.

SCHUMANN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54—See Mendelssohn: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 25.

SCRIABIN: Piano Works. Roberto Szidon, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 217/8, $13.96 (two discs).

Sonata-Fantasia in G sharp minor; Sonata in E flat minor; Sonata No. 1, in F minor, Op. 6; Sonata No. 2 (Sonata-Fantasia), in G sharp minor, Op. 19; Sonata No. 3, in F sharp minor, Op. 23; Fantasia in B minor, Op. 28.

If only Robert Szidon could bring himself not to hammer the daylights out of his poor piano in the loud passages, he could become, in my opinion, one of the best Scriabin interpreters today. As it is, Szidon's performance of the First Sonata is outstanding in so many ways that one is tempted to overlook the pianist's fulminating fortissimos. With his smooth, rippling runs and his excellent octave work for instance, Szidon is able to impart an exhilarating and dramatic élan to the first movement, while the absolutely sublime pianissimo tone he produces for those other-worldly chords of the second movement seems all the more remarkable considering the pianist's penchant for explosives.

Szidon's interpretation of the Second Sonata benefits from many of the same qualities plus the extraordinary feeling of movement he generates in the work's *perpetuum mobile* finale. Szidon also impresses in the early and very Chopinesque Sonata-Fantasia in G sharp minor (Szidon's playing of the unusual ornamentation in this work is particularly striking) and in the more Lisztian Sonata in E flat minor, both composed before the official No. 1. On the other hand, even a toning down of the fortes would not entirely save Szidon's version of the Third Sonata: he takes too deliberate a pace in the first movement, and in the second movement he falls victim to some ridiculously headstrong accelerandos.

But it is the Fantasia in B minor, not one of Scriabin's most ingratiating works to begin with, which suffers the most from Szidon's percussiveness. Szidon simply does not play fortissimo chords with anything resembling a listenable tone, and since a good proportion of the Fantasia is little else but such chords, one has the impression by the time the piece is over of having sat in the bell tower of a busy church for the better part of a Sunday. Deutsche Grammophon's engineers, while coming up with some decently realistic piano sound at times, have not helped matters any with their unduly close-up and harsh recording of Szidon's many cacophonous clangors. R.S.B.

SHERLAW JOHNSON: Sonata for Piano, No. 1; Seven Short Piano Pieces—See Messiaen: Cantéyodjayâ; Neumes rythmiques; Ile de feu 1 and 2.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Concerto for Piano, Trumpet, and Strings—See Stravinsky: Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes, Op. 115; Symphony No. 1, in F minor, Op. 10. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Maxim Shostakovich, cond. (in the *Overture*); Yuri Aranovich, cond. (in the symphony). Melodiya/Angel SR 40192, $5.98.

Selected comparisons (symphony):

Horvat	Turn. 34223
Toscanini	RCA 6711

The *Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes* should come as a pleasant surprise—at least it did for me, since Shostakovich's occasional music usually leaves me stone cold. Here, however, Shostakovich's love for his native folk music (he recently served as chairman on an editorial board to prepare a sixteen-volume anthology of Russian folk music) has not caused him to lose sight of his personal style; the result is a particularly lively work filled with typically asymmetrical, Slavic

Shostakovich, Jr.—a brilliant and definitive performance of his father's Overture.

rhythms, offering a brief catalogue of many of the composer's stylistic ties, including an ending à la Sixth Symphony. Maxim Shostakovich not only turns in a brilliant, definitive interpretation of the *Overture*, but he also manifests extraordinary control over the orchestra, which plays with amazing precision here.

About six years ago, Maxim conducted a performance of his father's first major work in honor of the elder Shostakovich's sixtieth birthday, and I find myself disappointed that the son was not chosen for the task here. I would be even more disappointed were it not for the fact that Yuri Aranovich offers a truly exceptional interpretation of the First Symphony. Although the First presages a remarkable number of the formal devices Shostakovich was to use in his later symphonic frescoes, unlike those latter works the symphony seems more of a chamber piece (an aesthetic to which Shostakovich returned in his Fourteenth and Fifteenth Symphonies) rather than a symphonic one; there are even moments when Shostakovich subdivides the strings into multiple groups in order to attain a chamber orchestra effect, and throughout the work the interest lies more in the clashes between small instrumental combinations and their melodic lines rather than in the over-all orchestral sound.

Aranovich's interpretation is perhaps the first to bring out the full value of these sometimes audacious clashes, with the result that one hears more in this reading than in any of the others—although both Horvat and Toscanini offer strong competition. Aranovich also gets beneath the surface of the typically Russian, nondevelopmental treatment of the themes and sets the various melodies in a perspective that brings out their true relationships to each other throughout the work: among other things, Aranovich manages better than any other conductor to stress the link between the "funeral march" motive of the third movement and the timpani theme (the inversion of the former) at the end of the fourth.

Only two flaws—the occasionally shoddy playing in the third and fourth movements and the gymnasiumlike reverberation of the otherwise excellent recorded sound—make this performance slightly less than out-

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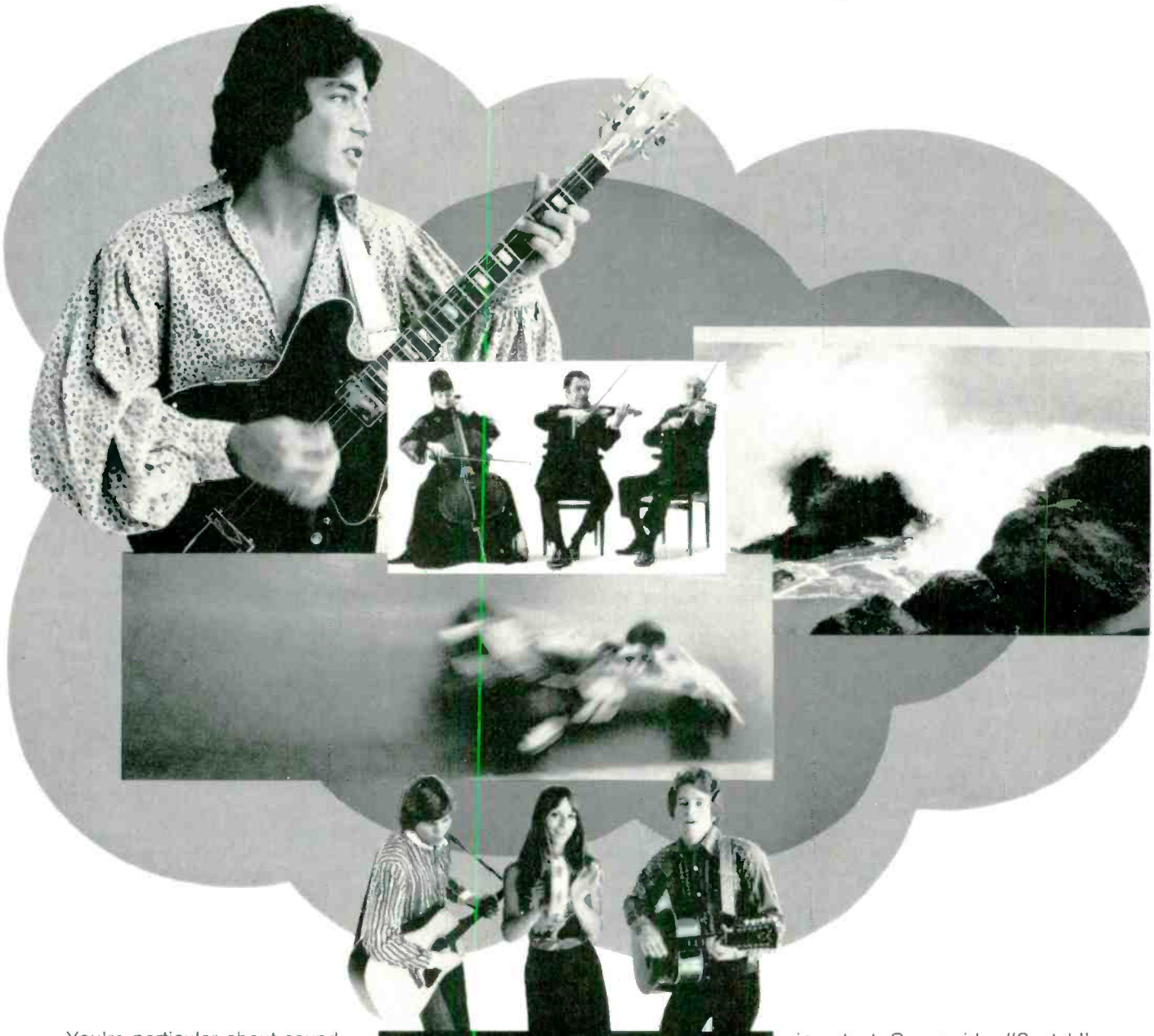

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standing. But it is a very near miss and eminently worth having, particularly in its coupling with the *Overture*. R.S.B.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 6, Op. 54. **STRAVINSKY:** Apollo. Leningrad Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Mravinsky, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40202, $5.98.

Selected comparisons (Shostakovich):
Boult — Ev. 3007
Stokowski — RCA 3113
Selected comparison (Stravinsky):
Stravinsky — Col. 6646

Although one of the Soviet Union's outstanding conductors, Yevgeny Mravinsky has not exactly turned out a plethora of recordings, a fact due, we are told, to his less than enthusiastic attitude toward making discs. Recently, therefore, in order to document the efforts of this important artist, Soviet engineers have been obliged to capture live Mravinsky performances, two of which are offered on this release. The results, unfortunately, are less than satisfying. Mravinsky makes the same mistake common to all recordings of the Shostakovich, save Boult's, of taking the first movement—which is, after all, a largo—too fast, a fault that is accentuated by the glibness of much of his phrasing in the movement. The second and third movements fare better (the tempo Mravinsky uses for the last movement is certainly the fastest on disc, and this certainly does not hurt the music any) but are likewise marked by a certain intransigence that makes this recording come in a poor third, after those by Boult and Stokowski.

The strings-only Stravinsky work fares much better. Mravinsky's efforts lack the energy one finds in Stravinsky's own version; but this is largely compensated for by the finesse of Mravinsky's dynamic shading, which gives a character to certain sections, such as the opening *Birth of Apollo*, lacking even in Stravinsky's own performance. Mravinsky also does an impressive, all-stops-pulled rendition of the coda. But with this work, as with the Shostakovich, the recorded sound is not particularly distinguished and the album as a whole must be considered a disappointment. R.S.B.

SMETANA: Tone Poems. Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 248, $6.98.

Richard III, Op. 11; Wallenstein's Camp, Op. 14; Haakon Jarl, Op. 16; Carnival in Prague.

Smetana wrote ten symphonic poems, of which the six grouped together as *My Fatherland* are by far the best known. To his recent excellent recording of that cycle, Kubelik now adds the remaining four in authentic and well-played performances. Except for an elderly Artia version by the Czech Philharmonic under Senja, now no longer available, the current issue is the first to reach this country of the three earlier poems and the first ever of the *Carnival in Prague*. In all respects the present release may be regarded as definitive.

Smetana started his musical career as a pianist, but despite the encouragement and assistance of Franz Liszt, he failed to gain recognition as a virtuoso and subsequently he turned to conducting. Shortly after assuming his first post as conductor in Göteburg, he composed his first three symphonic poems obviously stimulated by the example of Liszt. Brilliantly orchestrated and free in form, they also betray the defects of his model as well. Their loose structure makes them seem to proceed from one idea to the other, possibly in response to the subjects portrayed, without achieving real musical coherence even in their short spans.

After serving in Göteburg, Smetana returned to Prague to engage in a highly successful, artistically at least, career in opera. His *My Fatherland* and the *Carnival in Prague* date from the conclusion of those years. In fact, the latter was composed just before his career was cut short by his insanity. *Carnival in Prague* consists of two well-defined sections, each a highly organized dance. A fine work, it deserves a place in the concert repertory; to my best knowledge, it is unknown in this country. P.H.

STRAVINSKY: Apollo—See Shostakovich: Symphony No. 6, Op. 54.

STRAVINSKY: Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra. **SHOSTAKOVICH:** Concerto for Piano, Trumpet, and Strings. John Ogdon, piano; John Wilbraham, trumpet (in the Shostakovich); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. Argo ZRG 674, $5.98.

This coupling of the Stravinsky *Capriccio* and the Shostakovich concerto offers an excellent example of two entirely different approaches to musical humor. In the Stravinsky, the wit lies dominantly in a general lightness of approach and style that often remarkably parallels the work of Poulenc (Honegger's Concertino also comes strongly to mind in part of the second movement). Stravinsky also keeps his listener constantly off guard with a brilliant, oft-shifting instrumental texture in which a concerto grosso is more or less woven about a piano part that almost never stops. Shostakovich's humor, on the other hand, is much less subtle and creates its effects mainly by jolting the listener out of any complacent attitudes he may have had, after listening to the work's relatively tranquil introduction, concerning the therapeutic value of music. Leanly scored, Shostakovich's concerto offers no place for the often deliberately banal melodies to hide, and the result is frequently a raucously brazen belly laugh. Satire also plays no small role in this work, with its near quotes from other pieces and its flirtations with a number of the well-known clichés of the classical style.

By far the greatest joy of this disc is the playing of the Academy of St.-Martin-in-the-Fields under Neville Marriner, whose efforts are superbly backed up by the recorded sound. There is both precise ensemble work and some brilliant solo playing (in the Stravinsky) by the members of the orchestra, and the phrasing and balance—the latter beautifully captured by the engineers—attained by Marriner make you hear these two works as you've never heard them before. On the other hand, whatever strengths John Ogdon's piano playing may have—and I for one find him much too conservative and straightforward for these two pieces—are all but lost due to what appears to be a peculiarly English penchant for under-recording piano solos (and this makes the judgment-day volume given to John Wilbraham's extraordinary solo trumpet work in the Shostakovich seem all the more out of place). Ogdon seems to pull out all the stops just once—in the last movement of the Shostakovich, which he plays with unparalleled energy and drive. The orchestral performances, however, make both these interpretations competitive with the others currently available, and sonically—save for the miking of the soloists—it is far superior. R.S.B.

Shostakovich, Sr.—new recordings of his First and Sixth Symphonies on Melodiya.

STRAVINSKY: Symphony in C; Concerto for String Orchestra, in D; Circus Polka. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 267, $6.98.

This performance of that *locus neoclassicus*, the Symphony in C, is a textbook model of how not to play Stravinsky—indeed, of how to *not* play him even while appearing to do so. Karajan's deadpan unwillingness to inflect effectively turns the complex phrase structures of this very tuneful piece into gabbling nonsense, for the internal rhythmic relationships of, say, the oboe theme in the first movement are never made clear. Nor is the orchestral playing really of great distinction: The oboe and violins should blend in the third and fourth measures of the slow movement, but here they are far from doing so; throughout, in fact, the Berlin oboe is something of a trial, both tonally and musically.

The string concerto is marginally less maladroit, but the tendency to soup up the tone and scoop up the phrasing in the slow movement is genuinely trying. And while this *Circus Polka* might pass in a German *Tierpark*, the spirit could not be further from that improbable combination of Ringling Brothers and Balanchine for which it was composed. By all means stick with the composer's versions on all three of these. D.H.

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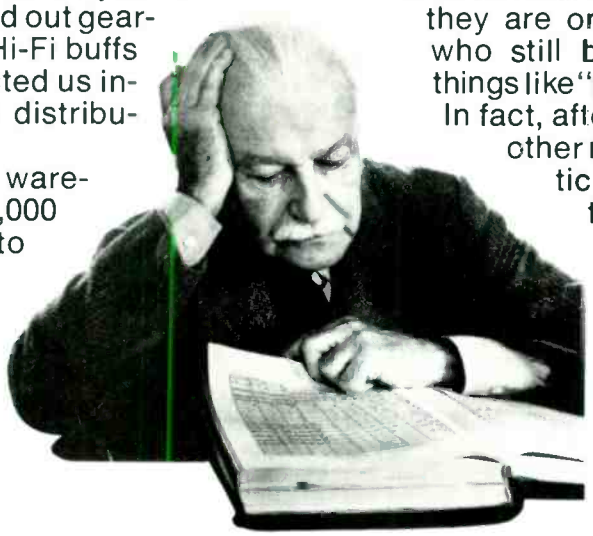

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TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphonies: No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36; No. 5, in E minor, Op. 64; No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 (*Pathétique*). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Angel S 36884/6, $5.98 each (three discs). Tape: ● 8XS 36884/6, $7.98 each (three cartridges). ●● 4XS 36884/6, $7.98 each (three cassettes).

If this heading looks familiar, that's hardly surprising. Karajan recorded the Tchaikovsky Fourth for Angel with the Philharmonia in the early 1950s, again for that company in the late Fifties with the Berlin Philharmonic, still another time for Deutsche Grammophon (again with the Berliners), and now this present version. The *Pathétique* got its first Karajan recording in 1939 (a Berlin Philharmonic recording currently reissued on the German Top Classic line); another, c. 1950 with the Vienna Philharmonic (once available here on an early Columbia LP); again c. 1958 with the Philharmonia (an English Columbia disc never released domestically); one a few years ago with the Berlin Philharmonic for DGG; and now the present edition. By contrast, the Fifth Symphony has been "slighted" by Karajan with merely three different disc versions. The one big reason, I suppose, for such endless duplication is that superstars like Karajan sell records. Would that Toscanini were still around today: If we didn't like the sound he got from RCA, we could bide our time for a few years until he re-recorded the same piece for one of the other majors!

DGG gave Karajan such splendid sound the last time around for these symphonies that I can scarcely imagine anyone being dissatisfied on those grounds. In fact, an A/B comparison, as my ears hear it, is all to the advantage of DGG. Angel's sound has plenty of frequency range but there are problems. Generally, I find the reverberation not only excessive but actually bothersome and objectionable. The Berlin trumpets tend toward bright, cutting sonority and on the present discs (especially in the Fifth Symphony) they positively scream at the listener. The Fifth Symphony suffers the most from the blowzy, decentralized pickup, with everything swimming across big spaces and in the tuttis ricocheting back and forth in the most confusing manner. The *Pathétique*, on the other hand, sounds firm, lustrous, and natural with the echo only bothersome in one or two heavily scored passages (the third movement, for example, loses detail in the cavernous spaces). Unfortunately, the engineers have omitted the opening pedal point and the work begins directly with the bassoon. Symphony No. 4 is somewhere between the other two companion works, with clean, bright woodwind sound, a slight gushing quality in the string tone, and comb-on-tissue paper trumpets. Possibly machines with very wide equalization possibilities can cope with these problematical discs, but the three set-ups I heard them on all produced substantially the same rather swollen, artificial results.

Karajan's present account of No. 4 reminds me of an effusive cat. The performance is full of feline grace, the rubatos purr and rub against your leg in quest of affection. Some listeners will find Karajan's liberties outrageously provocative and sentimental, but the only place where I found the approach really objectionable was the middle section of the second movement which is mauled and dragged in the most tedious way. Elsewhere, I marveled at Karajan's refinement, at the concertante detail brought so exquisitely to the fore, and for all the liberties at the basic integrity of the reading as a whole.

I have never been particularly enamored of Karajan's way with the Fifth Symphony and described his DGG version as "furtive," "unintuitive," "a well-trained feline eyeing the family canary." There is less constraint in the newer version, but even more sentimentality. The waltzlike third theme in the first movement, somewhat spinelessly rendered on the DGG disc, now swims in complete bathos—even during the lead-in to that passage. Karajan introduces a gross-sounding rallentando he avoided previously.

The new *Pathétique* is less careful than its immediate precursor, but parts of it are also more exciting. The first movement is played a bit faster than of yore (albeit with more sententious underpinning in the second theme), the march goes like the wind (some might even find it a bit trivial), and the tempo is mostly sustained to the bitter end. In the finale, Karajan takes some sections *slower* than before and builds a truly wrenching climax (the gong at the end is surprisingly ineffective, though). With one exception I find the new *Pathétique* preferable to the old. That exception is the 5/4 waltz movement which now lacks lilt and lift. H.G.

THALBERG: Sonata for Piano, in C minor, Op. 56—See Kalkbrenner: Sonata for Piano in A flat, Op. 177 (*Grande Sonate Brillante*).

WAGNER: Overtures and Preludes: Tannhäuser; Tristan und Isolde; Die Meistersinger (Acts I and III); Lohengrin (Acts I and III). New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Angel S 36871, $5.98. Tape: ● 8XS 36871, $7.98; ●● 4XS 36871, $7.98.

In his eighty-three years Sir Adrian has made many records, but never any that did him greater justice than this. One senses that in this music, recorded at this point in his life, we have fully revealed the mind and heart of the artist. Educated at Oxford, the young Boult, like many English musicians of the day, turned to Germany for further study. There his masters were Max Reger and Artur Nikisch, and his idol, one suspects, was Wagner. Certainly it was with Wagner's music that Boult, at twenty-five, made his entrance into British musical life, playing the tubular bells at Covent Garden. Four years later he was on his way as a conductor.

Over the years Sir Adrian has won recognition for many things: his skill as an orchestra builder, the wide scope of his musical taste and interpretive abilities, and his special eloquence as an advocate of English music. Few Americans would regard him as a Wagnerian—but plainly this was an oversight. He plays this music with meticulous regard for its structure. The polyphony sings with clarity of line and firm rhythmic support. The climactic moments ring out nobly. Most of all, there is a sense of high romanticism, an intensity, a sense of warmth and passionate dedication to the composer that make these performances stand apart from the usual collection of Wagner extracts.

The stature of Boult's Wagnerian scholarship is shown by the fact that he provides one of the rare occasions to hear the *Tristan* Prel-

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ude with its proper concert ending, as the composer intended it to be heard, rather than awkwardly mismatched to the *Liebestod*. (Leinsdorf is the only other conductor in recent years to record the Prelude in this text.) Moreover the Boult performance is unusually eloquent, filled with the special magic these pages can have.

Neither of the *Meistersinger* extracts has a proper ending in concert form. The Act I Prelude really needs its choral close, and the introduction to Act III always sounds strange when it leads to a harmonic resolution that does not exist in the opera. The other three works stand well by themselves. And everyone, musicians, engineers, and conductor, appears to be at his very best, working *con amore*. R.C.M.

H **WAGNER:** Rienzi (excerpts).

Cola Rienzi	Max Lorenz (t)
Irene	Hilde Scheppan (s)
Steffano Colonna	Robert von der Linde (bs)
Adriano	Margarete Klose (ms)
Paolo Orsini	Jaro Prohaska (b)
Baroncelli	Gustav Rödln (t)
Cecco	Wilhelm Hiller (bs)

Chorus of the Berlin State Opera; Berlin Staatskapelle, Johannes Schüler, cond. Top Classic/Historia H 657/8, $11.96 (two discs, mono; recorded in 1942).

Wagner's three early operas—*Die Feen*, *Das Liebesverbot*, and *Rienzi*—will probably always remain shadowy names for the opera goer. Unlike Verdi's initial endeavors, these flawed, groping attempts by a budding genius are simply too problematical to be revived today. In the case of *Rienzi*, the difficulties are especially acute: It is an opera on an immense scale, a vast historical spectacle that would tax the facilities (and limited budgets) of any major opera house; its music, despite many interesting prophetic overtones, effective moments, and youthful high spirits, is extremely uneven. Furthermore, for reasons too complex to explore here, the score itself was never left in a definitive state by Wagner and the textual problems are fearsome.

Still, recordings of these works would be invaluable reference items, not only for the professional but the general opera lover as well. EMI is presently engaged in a *Rienzi* in Dresden, but until that welcome project materializes, here are two discs imported from Austria, a 1942 Berlin radio broadcast of excerpts evidently celebrating the opera's centenary. About one hour and twenty minutes of *Rienzi* is barely enough to give a general flavor of the work (the uncut world premiere in 1842 lasted over six hours), but fortunately this includes much of the best music: the Overture, Adriano's "*Gerechter Gott*," Rienzi's Prayer (the most famous and often recorded set numbers), and three large-scale finales. These latter concerted sections show the young Wagner at his most ambitious, trying to outdo Meyerbeer in grandiose effects. For all their occasional clumsiness, these passages convey a tremendous amount of vitality and even theatrical excitement—one can easily understand why the opera had such a vogue early in its career. The third-act finale is particularly impressive for its crafty manipulation of choral ensembles, on-stage band, and unabashed blood-and-thunder melodrama.

The performance here demonstrates another *Rienzi* dilemma. All these singers were practiced Wagnerians and when the writing calls for forceful declamation all is well and good. But both Klose and Lorenz are not especially successful with the sustained Italianate lines of their arias; these are strenuous roles but more flexible voices are required if the lyrical portions of the music are to tell effectively. Lorenz's tenor was becoming rather thick and beery at this stage in his career, while Klose's massive voice never really "spoke" freely in the more agile mezzo repertory (like most Adrianos she takes "*Gerechter Gott*" down a minor third). The other singers have little to do here and Schüler's conducting is not especially invigorating. Sonically, the constricted, boxy quality is subpar even for 1942: There is a plentiful amount of fade-out and surface noise on the broadcast transcription originals. Until the EMI edition arrives, though, these "bleeding chunks" will offer the curious Wagnerian at least a good taste of the young composer's first major operatic effort. P.G.D.

WAGNER: Der Ring des Nibelungen. Martha Mödl, Ludwig Suthaus, Wolfgang Windgassen, Ferdinand Frantz, Josef Greindl, Gottlob Frick, et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of RAI Rome, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 63.

WEBER: Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 19. **CHERUBINI:** Symphony in D. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Wilfried Böttcher, cond. Philips 6500 154, $6.98.

One would think that after the *Eroica* and the Fifth, few of Beethoven's contemporaries would have cared to write symphonies, but the symphony remained the most exalted form of instrumental music, and production was plentiful. This interesting recording demonstrates why this was possible: The composers got around the colossus by carefully avoiding any confrontation. There was only one exception. Schubert, who not only clearly saw Beethoven's greatness but was willing to challenge him. The others, among them Weber and Spohr, either could not grasp the Beethovenian symphony, or if they did, like Cherubini, preferred to go back to the late Haydn's world rather than risk the unequal battle. That there was room for all kinds of symphonies is also evident from this recording, for there could scarcely be personalities and works more antithetic than those of these two composers. Weber, carrying the fake title of nobility, writes "popular" music, a bit lacking in cohesion, style, and form, but fresh, inventive, and colorful. Cherubini, an authentic musical aristocrat, offers a chiseled score that explains why both Haydn and Beethoven considered him their true confrere.

Weber wrote two symphonies, both in C major, of which the first is recorded here. Composed in 1807, when Beethoven was at his Sixth, it shows total unawareness of the Beethovenian world, indeed, even of the principles of symphonic construction as codified by Haydn. The first movement has no shape (Weber later apologized for this movement) but plenty of dramatic ideas, brilliant orchestration, and appealing tunes. The second movement, in C minor, is a remarkable romantic genre piece the like of which the symphony had not known up to this point. It is the work of the born opera composer, and its dramatic turns are impressive. The twenty-one-

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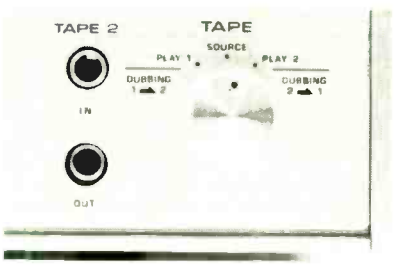

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year-old shows astounding originality; he is indebted to no one. The future composer of *Freischütz* is here, and he opens wide the door to Romanticism. The minuet is pleasant, and the finale, busy, vigorous, and full of drolleries, was a great favorite until the 1860s; it is still entertaining.

With Cherubini we enter a totally different musical atmosphere. This Italian, ensconced in Paris most of his creative life, was a composer's composer possessing superb technique, impeccable taste, poise, and solid form. Haydn called him his "musical son," and Beethoven, not given to tipping his hat to living composers, had a deep admiration for his arch classicist, whose influence is often present in his music. Yet, aside from some of his operas Cherubini has never been popular; there is a certain frosty quality in him caused perhaps by too much precision and polish in his marvelous craftsmanship. But there is nothing frosty about this symphony composed in 1815. The opening largo is airily poetic, the succeeding allegro, masterly in sonata construction and thematic convolutions, has a particularly fine second subject which is treated canonically—lyric canons! The slow movement is an homage to Haydn, spacious, deeply felt, and rising to powerful utterance; but the minuet is curiously moody, dark, hesitating, and searching, the piquant trio oddly recalling Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* music. The finale is a robust symphonic piece whose élan and thrust are irresistible. This is certainly one of the finest symphonies of the age and should be better known.

Böttcher does an excellent job with the Weber and on the whole the Cherubini goes well too. The opening movement of the latter and the larghetto are very fine, and the many remarkable points of orchestration (both of these composers were ahead of their time in handling the orchestra) are well brought out. But the minuet, which is really a scherzo, is misjudged and played much too slowly. The finale, though well done, is also a shade slow. Böttcher is in good company, however: Toscanini, going to the other extreme in his old recording of this symphony, performs the finale at such a breakneck speed that all definition is lost. The orchestra is first-class, the recording unusually quiet and clear, though the treble can use a little boost. P.H.L.

WILLIAMSON: Quintet for Piano and Strings; Five Preludes for Piano; From a Child's Garden; Pas de Quatre. April Cantelo, soprano; Malcolm Williamson, piano; Gabrieli String Quartet; Nash Ensemble. Argo ZRG 682, $5.98.

Although not well known in this country, Malcolm Williamson is one of the most active contemporary English composers. He has been particularly prominent as a composer of theater music, and as one would expect of a musician working in that field, Williamson is an extremely versatile composer of an essentially practical persuasion. Although this record is devoted mainly to concert pieces, there is an "occasional" quality to these works which reminds one of theater music. The music varies considerably both in quality and in style. Most impressive is the Quintet for Piano and Strings, a tightly organized work in three closely related movements (so close, in fact, that it is difficult not to hear the first and third,

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both of which are rather static in nature, as an introduction and coda to the longer middle movement).

I also liked the ballet music, *Pas de Quatre*, scored for woodwinds and piano in a witty, neoclassical style and featuring some brilliant writing for the solo woodwinds. The longish song cycle, *From a Child's Garden*, based on the children's poems by Stevenson, strikes me as a bit cloying in its cuteness and professed naiveté. Finally, the Five Preludes are pleasant, if inconsequential "tone pictures" depicting aspects of London. In sum, Williamson's music is always well written, sometimes interesting, but rarely compelling.

The performances are quite good, and Williamson himself, who takes the piano part in all four pieces, turns out to be an accomplished performer in his own right. He also provides the liner notes. Texts for the song cycle are included. R.P.M.

recitals and miscellany

ITALIAN ROMANTIC SONGS. Lydia Marimpietri, soprano; Ugo Benelli, tenor; Enrico Fabbro, piano. London Stereo Treasury STS 15164, $2.98.

BELLINI: Il fervido desiderio; Bella Nice; Per pieta, bell'idol mio; L'abandono; Almen se no poss'io; Malinconia, ninfa gentile. **DONIZETTI:** Me voglio fa 'na casa; Meine Llebe; A mezzanotte; Amore e morte; Eterno amore e fè. **ROSSINI:** La gita in gondola; La serenata; L'orgia; La partenza.

The songs of the bel canto composers are among the most delightful trifles in music. Most of these pieces aspire no higher than the salon. They are lightweight trifles—whether melancholy or joyful—charmingly turned and consummately written for the voice. The familiar long, graceful arcs of Bellinian melody, the dark pathos of Donizetti, the swagger of Rossini can all be heard in these songs, though in miniaturized form. There is nothing here of the profundity or scope which is the glory of the German Lied, only a desire to give minor pleasure. Unlike the Lied, which has long transcended its domestic origins, this music is inevitably redolent of a whole world of intimate, elegant music-making which, together with the society that gave it birth, has utterly vanished. Yet the songs deserve something better than oblivion, and this recital, on that account, is very welcome. Rossini's *L'orgia* and *La partenza* are especially delightful, as are Bellini's *Almen se non poss'io* and *Bella Nice*, the latter, in addition, being interesting for its reminiscences of the Adalgisa-Pollione duet in *Norma*.

Every note of this music bespeaks not merely a lost social age, but also the sort of vocal cultivation that gave early nineteenth-century opera its character. The supremacy of the singer at that time was based on a combination of great technical facility and expressive power. Essential requirements then were steady, pure tonal emission, ease in fioriture, elegance of style, meaningful enunciation of the words, and the ability to create atmosphere by means of vocal coloration. Neither Lydia Marimpietri nor Ugo Benelli really comes up to these demands. Both of them are modest, likable, and musical, but neither has the right kind of technique or artistry to support their efforts. Marimpietri's voice lacks sweetness, Benelli's lacks body. Benelli, indeed, sounds very pallid and, moreover, his intonation is not always very accurate. In *L'orgia* Benelli is expected to trill twice on top F and is quite unable to do so. Both singers tend to run out of breath in long phrases and both have only sketchy lower registers. Enrico Fabbro gives solid support, but then we expect instrumentalists to have better technical equipment than vocalists. What we need now is a recital of this music by a singer like Teresa Berganza. D.S.H.

TERRY KING: Cello Recital. Terry King, cello; Milcho Leviev, piano. Orion ORS 7287, $5.98.

REGER: Suite for Solo Cello, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 131, No. 2. **DVOŘÁK:** Polonaise in A. **SCHUMANN:** Adagio and Allegro, in A flat, Op. 70. **SAINT-SAËNS:** Allegro appassionato, Op. 43. **BRUCH:** Canzone, Op. 55.

This record introduces Terry King, a young California musician and pupil of Piatigorsky. Whether pursuing the tortuous musical and technical challenges of Reger's solo music or luxuriating in the Romantic warmth of Bruch or Schumann, he shows himself here to be a master technician both in digital facility and in his richly varied tone. Musically, he seems something of an extrovert in the free play of his musicality.

Not being a Reger fan (I can occasionally endure his orchestra variations in the kind of superb performances that Hans Rosbaud used to offer) I have little to say about his music, of which I have heard my share. Like his music for unaccompanied violin, this cello suite impresses me as a skillful technical exercise, for composer and performer, with minimal musical interest for the listener. However, Reger's champions will undoubtedly like the secure and strong performance here.

Bruch's *Canzone* is idiomatic for the instrument and offers a certain melodic appeal. Schumann's Adagio and Allegro might have been a portion of a larger sonata, but this isolated movement does not have the immediacy of that composer's concerto. The Dvořák Polonaise is an engaging trifle. Of the repertory here I was most fascinated by the Saint-Saëns Allegro appassionato: It revives my desire to hear his Second Cello Concerto of legendary difficulty.

In these four short pieces Terry King receives solid, but rather reticent, support from pianist Milcho Leviev. The recording, made under the auspices of the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation, is exceptionally brilliant. P.H.

MEDICINE, MIND AND MUSIC: A Consideration of Their Links Through the Centuries. For a feature review of this recording, see page 68.

LAURA NAST NICHOLAISEN: Variations for Piano. Laura Nast Nicholaisen, piano. Klavier KS 501, $5.98.

BEETHOVEN: Variations on "La stessa, la stessissima." **BRAHMS:** Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 21, No. 1. **MENDELSSOHN:** Variations sérieuses, Op. 54. **PADEREWSKI:** Thème Varié, Op. 16, No. 3.

A former child prodigy, Miss Nast Nicholaisen now teaches at Notre Dame College. This collection constitutes her recording debut, and an auspicious one it is. The Beethoven is played in a deft, insinuating manner. The tone is gleaming and fine-spun, the phrasing full of twinkling good spirits (and with also a touch of the celebrated Beethovenian gruffness). In the Mendelssohn and Brahms, the tonal dimensions are bigger, the sonority more massive than linear, and the dynamic contrasts extremely wide. I was particularly happy to hear the oft-sentimentalized Mendelssohn handled with such healthy robustness and naturalness. The Paderewski of course requires schmaltz as opposed to sentiment, but even there, Miss Nast Nicholaisen doesn't overdo it.

The recording is billed as "a live performance at Hardesty Hall," but there is no applause and nary a sound from the audience—if, indeed, there was one. In any case, the piano tone is reverberant but very lifelike. H.G.

DON SMITHERS: "The Virtuoso Trumpet." Concertos, sinfonias, and sonatas by Torelli, Bononcini, D. Gabrieli, Grossi, and Perti. Don Smithers, trumpet; I Musici. Philips 6500 304, $6.98.

This is a sequel to the British virtuoso's "Baroque Trumpet Anthology" (Philips 6500 110) of December 1971, similarly featuring music of the Bolognese School, but with Marriner and the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields replaced by the noted Italian ensemble I Musici. Smithers himself seems to play even more brilliantly than before, although sonically this well may be an effect of recording that sharpens the highs a bit as well as adding a little more solidity to the lows. And while the members of I Musici are perhaps not quite as individually zestful as Marriner's men, they are perhaps even better ensemble players and surely no less elastically graceful. If you relished the earlier Smithers recital, you'll not want to miss this one; and if you haven't been an aficionado of baroque-era trumpeting, this sampler just might convert you.

Programmatically, it's well chosen, too, with only the first of two Torelli concertos in D a really familiar one, although the jaunty Torelli sinfonia has been recorded before (by Voisin for Kapp), probably also the second Torelli concerto, and possibly the eloquent Domenico Gabrieli Sonata à 6 as well (although I haven't been able to pin down specific earlier versions). The other works are new, at least to me, with the latest example of Bononcini's sinfonias, No. 8, a particularly fine work in both its rousingly lively movements and expansively sonorous slow ones. It's good too to have a second example of the more obscure Andrea Grossi's work, Sonata à 5, No. 12, also with well-contrasted exuberant and calm moments. Giacomo Perti (1661–1756) has been represented earlier only (as far as I know) by a Sonata for four trumpets in the Wobisch/Vanguard series, so his sometimes hard-driving but always impressively ceremonial *Sinfonia avanti la Serenata* is a welcome addition to the repertory. Indeed the only demurrer in my welcome for the entire release deals not with the music or recorded performances but with the notes' lack of sufficiently detailed identifications (including keys) and sources—an unexpected failure on the part of Smithers, who has some standing as a musicologist as well as a virtuoso executant. R.D.D.

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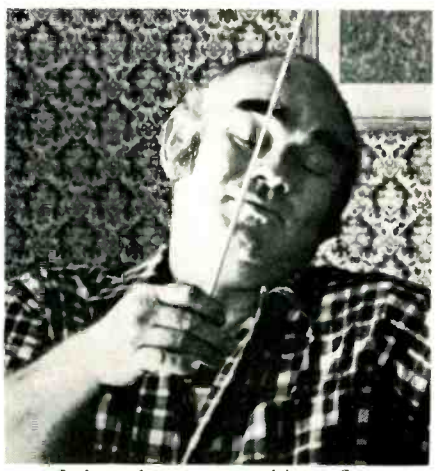

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CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

in brief

B **ARENSKY: Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op. 35a. PROKOFIEV: Classical Symphony, in D, Op. 25. TCHAIKOVSKY: Serenade for Strings, in C, Op. 48.** English Chamber Orchestra, Johannes Somary, cond. Vanguard Cardinal VCS 10099, $3.98.

Only soured musical sensibilities could resist a program as engaging as this one. Familiar as all the selections are, the mellifluous Arensky work is currently available elsewhere only in Barbirolli's 1965 version for Angel, which leaves ample room for a new budget-priced competitor. Somary plays it with admirable straightforwardness; and he copes surprisingly well with the far tougher demands of Tchaikovsky's grandeurs and Prokofiev's scintillations—both works as hard to play satisfactorily as they are easy to listen to. What prevents this disc from winning unqualified endorsement is the inadequacy of the English Chamber Orchestra to command the warmly glowing tonal coloring and expansive sonorities of the best discographic choices. R.D.D.

B **DVORAK: Symphonic Variations, Op. 78; Scherzo capriccioso, Op. 66; Notturno for String Orchestra, Op. 40.** Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Václav Neumann cond. Nonesuch H 71271, $2.98.

This record offers good value with a fine performance of the important *Symphonic Variations*, a delightfully vital *Scherzo capriccioso*, and the largely unfamiliar *Notturno*. In the budget-price category, one must buy Sargent's set of *Má Vlast* to secure an alternate version of the variations. Sargent's orchestra may be better, but his recording is considerably older. Similarly, Kempe's miscellaneous Seraphim collection including the *Scherzo* shows its age. If you are willing to pay a higher price for really strong orchestral playing, the Davis (Philips) and Kertesz (London) versions of the variations offer more polished performances and fine engineering. However, Neumann and the Czech Philharmonic play with an infectious verve and rhythmic bite, and the Dolby processing is very good. P.H.

LALO: Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21. RAVEL: Tzigane. Henryk Szeryng, violin; Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, Eduard van Remoortel, cond. Philips 6500 195, $6.98.

The distinguishing feature of this *Symphonie espagnole* is a distinguishing feature of Henryk Szeryng himself—a dignity in artistic approach which, for all the virtuosic flair (and there is plenty), maintains respect for the music and refuses to wring out sentiment even when the score might lend itself to exaggerated gestures. There is no excess of portamento here, no unnecessary sobbing. But there is the sweet, soaring tone, which sets off the second subject of the Allegro non troppo with complete persuasiveness; there is the easy naturalness of the syncopated rhythms of the Intermezzo, and the flavorful, fine-spun singing in the finale. The orchestra is not subtle and comes in heavy on the brass, but it stays out of Szeryng's way. A very satisfying traversal of the score. The Ravel *Tzigane* profits by the same virtues. The solo portion is beautifully turned out, and the fireworks leave nothing to be desired. S.F.

RAVEL: Daphnis et Chloé: Suites Nos. 1 and 2; Ma Mère l'Oye. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. Philips 6500 311, $6.98.

Back in 1965 a somewhat different Ravel program from Haitink was rather coolly received—a small enough blot on the versatile Dutch conductor's reputation, but one he evidently has been anxious to expunge. And indeed he does do much better here: with fresher programmatic choices (neither the complete *Mother Goose* music nor the First *Daphnis* Suite are frequently recorded); with more interpretative eloquence, especially in the tenderly expressive fairy-tale episodes; and with masterly playing by the Amsterdamers. Nevertheless, he still falls short of the success he almost always achieves nowadays. The omission of the wordless choral parts from the *Daphnis* scores is one handicap, particularly in the First Suite, and another is the lack of distinctively *French* accents and stylistic grace. Yet the most serious disadvantage is not Haitink's fault, but that of his engineers: They fail to provide the tonal sumptuousness and acoustical warmth demanded for the full realization of this music's sonic splendor. R.D.D.

RUDHYAR: Syntony; Pentagrams: Book III, The Release. Michael Sellers, piano. Orion ORS 7285, $5.98.

Dane Rudhyar is a mystic and a philosopher for whom music is only one of many forms of communication. There is a tremendous striving, urgency, and sense of grandeur (not always attained) in this music, which is much beholden to Scriabin and somewhat indebted to Debussy. The titles of individual movements suggest the character of the whole: Those of *Syntony* are called *Dithyramb*, *Eclogue*, *Oracle*, and *Apotheosis*, while the third set of *Pentagrams* is composed of pieces entitled *Gates*, *Gift of Blood*, *Pentecost*, *Stars*, and *Sunburst*. All are beautifully played and recorded. The disc is sponsored by the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation. A.F.

SIEGMEISTER: Fantasy and Soliloquy for Cello Solo; On This Ground; Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 4. Nancy Mandel, violin; Robert Sylvester, cello; Alan Mandel, piano. Orion ORS 7284, $5.98.

The main thing here is the Fourth Violin Sonata, a big, sweeping work, full of colorful ideas and dramatic pressure. One of its greatest assets so far as this record is concerned is the superlative performance of the violin part by Nancy Mandel, who is the composer's daughter and the wife of her pianistic collaborator. Sylvester plays magnificently too, but the piece he plays is basically academic and conventional, and so are the five short piano pieces in the suite called *On This Ground*. A.F.

SIEGMEISTER: Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3; Sonata for Piano, No. 2; Sextet for Brass and Percussion. Isidore Cohen, violin; Alan Mandel, piano; brass and percussion ensemble. Desto DC 6467, $5.98.

This record bears the general title "Elie Siegmeister, a Musical Profile," but it is really a series of profiles of different musical media. The composer here seems to be saying that the violin is a lyric medium best exploited in terms of long lines and soaring expression, that the piano is a percussive medium, and the wind and percussion ensemble a medium for the study of color and dramatic sonorities. The violin sonata and the sextet come off extremely well here, but the piano sonata is just the same old bang-bang piece we have been hearing at Composers' Forum concerts since the days of Herbert Hoover. A.F.

ZUBIN MEHTA: "Hits from the Hollywood Bowl": RAVEL: Boléro. TCHAIKOVSKY: Marche slave, Op. 35. BIZET: Carmen: Preludes to Acts I and IV. VERDI: La Forza del destino: Overture. SUPPE: Poet and Peasant: Overture. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. London XPS 613, $5.98. Tape: ●● L 70196, $7.95; ●● M 72196, $6.95; ●● M 57196, $6.95.

Not many outstanding baton virtuosos are able to turn from serious to summer concertizing and still avoid any effect of "playing down" when they venture into the light-symphonic warhorse and encore repertory. But Mehta, rather to my surprise, evidently is one of these few. At any rate, his present program commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts in the open-air Bowl is marked by an enthusiasm and a vivacity that are hard to resist. Everything is taken rather fast, sometimes verging on the slam-bang, with little care for subtlety or finesse, but most listeners are likely to have too much fun to quibble over executant niceties. Certainly no audiophile can quibble over the gleamingly brilliant yet transparent recording and the open if not exceptionally reverberant acoustics (obviously not those of the Bowl itself). Of the tape editions, I've heard only the Dolbyized cassette, but that proves to be practically a spittin' sonic image of the disc with, if anything, even quieter "surfaces." R.D.D.

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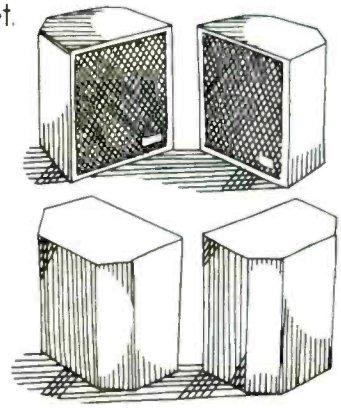

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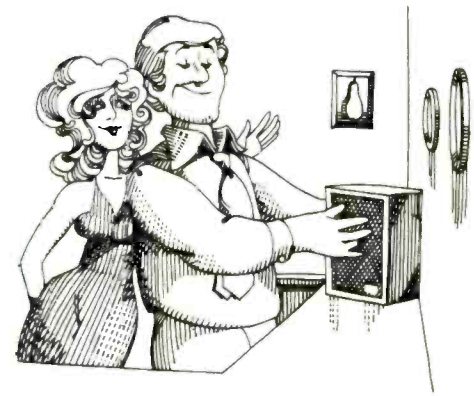

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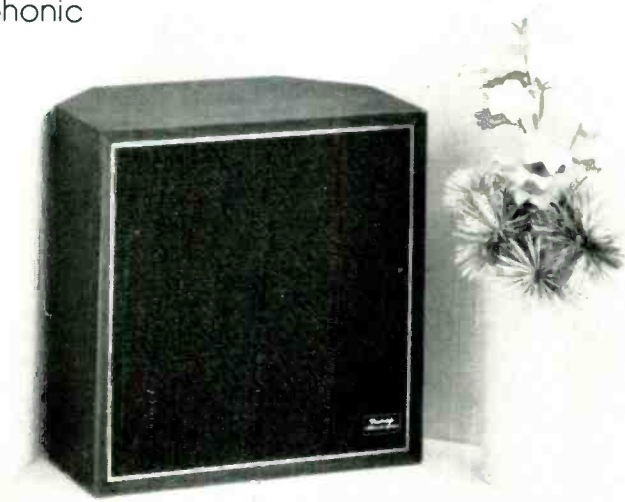

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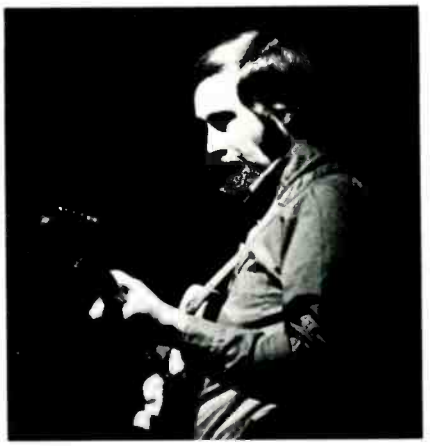
✻ symbol denotes an exceptional recording

✻ **THE BAND:** Rock of Ages. Rick Danko, bass and vocals; Garth Hudson, organ and vocals; Richard Manuel, piano and vocals; Robbie Robertson, guitar and vocals; Levon Helm, guitar and vocals; horn accompaniment. *Don't Do It; King Harvest (Has Surely Come); Caledonia Mission*; fourteen more. Capitol SABB 11045, $6.98 (two discs).

Recorded live on the evening of December 31, 1971, at New York's Academy of Music, the Band's "Rock of Ages" is a perfectly smashing New Year's present. This two-record set is one of the most pleasurable live recordings I've ever heard. It succeeds in capturing perfectly that mellow, infectious sound of one of America's grandest groups and it also preserves the Band's interaction with its devoted audience, an audience that does not sound nearly as rude, selfish, and overly demonstrative as most rock audiences do. Live albums tend to be merely fillers, ways to make money easily while groups are busy putting together their new material. "Rock of Ages," however, is a worthwhile and affectionate document of what must have been one of the lovelier evenings of the New York concert year. It's the kind of record that makes one believe in all of the therapeutic claims partisans are always making about rock.

The Band's first four discs, "Music from Big Pink," "The Band," "Stage Fright," and "Cahoots," introduced a number of songs that have now become classics. All of those songs are given new performances on this album and they are just as captivating as ever. It's a pleasure to add these new renditions of *The Weight*, *Across the Great Divide*, and *Rag Mama Rag* to one's collection. In addition, five horn men and occasionally Garth Hudson on tenor and soprano sax under the direction of Allen Toussaint augment the Band, and the effect is totally positive. The Band does not seem to be copying today's popular horn bands; the Band does not seem to be following a current trend; the Band sounds like it's having a jolly good time.

While every cut on these discs has its own highlights, mention must be made of Levon Helm's powerful drumming on *Caledonia Mission*. Garth Hudson's superlative horn playing on *Unfaithful Servant* and *W.S. Walcott Medicine Show*, sideman Howard Johnson's ebullient tuba on *Rag Mama Rag*, and Rick Danko's soaring violin on the same cut. Throughout, Rick Danko's and Richard Manuel's vocals are peerless and Garth Hudson's eight-minute organ solo—*The Genetic Method*, which incorporates jazz, gospel, Gregorian chant, lullaby, "wah-wah" sound, and even *Auld Lang Syne*—is most impressive. The entire album culminates in a joyous version of Chuck Willis' *(I Don't Want To) Hang Up My Rock and Roll Shoes*. H.E.



Roy Buchanan—world's best?

ROY BUCHANAN. Roy Buchanan, vocals and guitar; Ned Davis, drums; Dick Heintze, keyboards; Teddy Irwin, guitar; Chuck Tilley, vocals; Pete Van Allen, bass. *Sweet Dreams; I Am a Lonesome Fugitive; Cajun; John's Blues; Haunted House; Pete's Blue; The Messiah Will Come Again; Hey, Good Lookin'*. Polydor PD 5033, $5.98.

A Washington, D.C.-based guitarist, Buchanan has come a long way since one critic called him the world's best rock guitarist. He sold out Carnegie Hall, and appeared on a NET TV special. Whether he's best . . . well, I can't worry about such cosmic distinctions. He's good, no doubt about it. He does tend to be a bit flashy for my taste, and he does, on this debut album, waste a lot of time on country music, a form not too well suited to guitar virtuosity.

John's Blues is quite nice, a familiar slow guitar blues which he handles well. *Pete's Blue* is also notable. Buchanan makes a lot of noise when he plays. I think he might learn a little taste from B.B. King, who wrote the book on slow guitar blues, or even from Mike Bloomfield, who handles this sort of material better than Buchanan. All things considered, Roy Buchanan's first LP is promising, but not much more than that. M.J.

CHI COLTRANE. Chi Coltrane, vocals, piano, and songs; Jim Horn and Paul Buckmaster, arr. *Goodbye John; The Tree; I Will Not Dance*; eight more. Columbia KC 31275, $6.98. Tape: ●● CT 31275, $6.98; ● CA 31275, $6.98.

When I first heard Miss Chi (pronounced "shy") Coltrane's record on the radio and heard her name, I figured she was a dynamic new black Motown-type lady, maybe a relative of the late John Coltrane. Wrong again. From her photograph, Miss Coltrane is a pretty blond in her early twenties. The single is called *Thunder and Lightning* and was written by Miss Coltrane. It is aimed deliberately at the radio singles market, somewhere between r & b and rock, but closer to r & b. The mix is hot so that Miss Coltrane's voice is somewhat buried in the stereo (album) version, though it's out front on the radio mono version.

Thus, *Thunder and Lightning* works better in the car than in the living room. The rest of the album, produced by Toxey French, works better at home.

Chi Coltrane is talented and strong. Her material is personal and well written; her piano playing is powerful if not elaborate; her voice is clear and intense. It is clear that she can do the r & b thing quite effectively, but having heard the whole album I suspect that r & b is a place she enjoys visiting rather than a place where she lives.

One way or the other, Miss Coltrane is one of the best female talents to be heard since Carole King, whom she does not resemble. But let us hope that this album and her career in general are handled as well as Miss King's. If so, the future looks good. M.A.

✻ **FRANK ZAPPA:** Waka/Jawaka—Hot Rats. Frank Zappa, guitar and percussion; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Big Swifty; Your Mouth; It Just Might Be a One-Shot Deal; Waka/Jawaka*. Bizarre/Reprise MS 2094, $5.98.

This is Zappa's "serious" music as opposed to the satirical rock he writes as leader of the Mothers of Invention. It is a follow-up to "Hot Rats," an LP that introduced his brand of avant-garde jazz-rock to the world two years ago.

This LP is magnificent, a true gem. Zappa succeeds where 2,001 jazz groups fail because his roots are in corny old rock-and-roll, which means that he never gets so serious that he won't drop a romantic melody into the most avant-garde, flat composition. *Big Swifty* and *Waka/Jawaka* are fine exponents of this. The latter goes from rock to aggressive jazz to something that sounds like Herb Alpert and the Marijuana Brass. Two vocal compositions prove little, being thrown in "for comic relief," but don't spoil the album. Highly recommended. M.J.

✻ **BOBBY WOMACK:** Understanding. Bobby Womack, vocals and guitar; rhythm, strings, Moog, keyboards, horns, and vocal accompaniment. *I Can Understand It; Woman's Gotta Have It; And I Love Her*; six more. United Artists UAS 5577, $5.98. Tape: ●● K 0381, $6.98; ● 8381, $6.98.

From the first notes of this LP's first selection, *I Can Understand It*, one knows one is in the presence of a superlative rhythm-and-blues artist. *I Can Understand It* is six-and-one-half minutes long. It is a thoroughly hypnotic, totally insinuating selection and it sets the pace for the rest of Bobby Womack's album. Womack knows how to knock out a tune that

seems to be a subtle version of Sly Stone's best work. He has the vocal equipment to make those tunes truly come alive. Womack can create charts for twenty-one musicians and three back-up voices that do not overwhelm the material and yet fully utilize all the musical resources he has made available to himself. The singer/guitarist not only triumphs with his own songs like *I Can Understand It* and another soul stirrer, *Simple Man*, but also takes on two favorites, the Lennon/McCartney *And I Love Her* and Neil Diamond's *Sweet Caroline*, and both selections become textbook lessons in what the soulful approach can do for a good tune. I heartily endorse "Understanding" and I'm sure you will too. H.E.

JOHN DAVID SOUTHER. John David Souther, vocals, guitar, piano, and songs; rhythm accompaniment. *The Fast One; Run Like a Thief; Kite Woman*; seven more. Asylum 0598, $5.98.

The record world is a thousand lulls broken up by occasional pockets of real activity and excitement. Such a pocket now exists: a new company called Asylum Records.

With this album by John David Souther, Asylum introduces and promotes its fourth heavyweight contender in a row. The others were Judee Sill (her first album was not a hit except underground but Miss Sill was superb); Jo Mama (hit single *Keep On Truckin'*, hit album, first-rate group); and Jackson Browne (hit singles *Rock Me on the Water* and *Doctor My Eyes*, hit album, hit talent).

John David Souther is equally good and already one track, *White Wing*, from this debut album is receiving airplay. Souther's orientation is young and country. His voice and approach are not unlike that of Jackson Browne, but more country. Souther sings clear and clean. Country singing is a disaster when the intonation is shaky and it's a pleasure when the pitch is pure. Souther's is pure, like James Taylor's.

Souther sings all his own background voices as well, and sometimes, as in *White Wing* and *How Long*, they are fascinating. The harmonies are clustered and intricate, unorthodox and intuitive. His songs are easy and simple, graceful in melody, young and real in lyric, covering such subjects as leaving home, kind women, and Jesus.

The best place in town for a young artist right now is Asylum Records. John David Souther is there and deserves to be. Winners are fun to watch. Winning corners are friendly places. Keep on keepin' on. M.A.

KENNY RANKIN: Like a Seed. Kenny Rankin, vocals, guitar, and songs. Rhythm accompaniment. *Stringman; I Was Born; Sometimes*; eight more. Little David 0598, $5.98.

Welcome back, Kenny Rankin. No artist is more deserving of another chance. Rankin's first album appeared in 1968 and though the album bombed commercially, everyone in music knew and loved it. Mercury did not help Rankin much. He made another album for them in 1970, another well-kept secret. Rankin has now switched over to Little David, which is distributed by Atlantic, and Atlantic knows how to run. Let's hope they run this time.

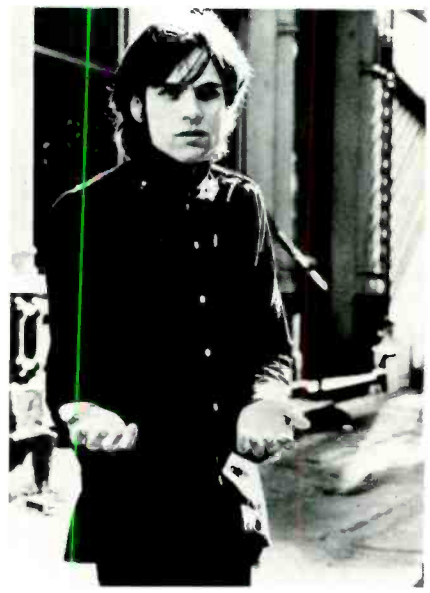
Rankin is one of our best pop artists and has been for years equally talented as singer, guitarist, and writer. One of his tunes is vaguely well known: *Peaceful*. You might not know the title but you might recognize the tune. It's that infectious. You can hear it now because Rankin has re-recorded it in his new album and this version is as fine as the original.

The thing that seems to hold Rankin back in terms of success is the very essence of his charm: his gentleness. His voice is light, warm, sweet, and all but perfect in terms of intonation and time. If a voice were visible, Kenny Rankin's would be a dancer. His guitar playing matches, as do most of his moods—sunny, airy, sad, and happy. *Comin' Down* is an exception, a hard and bitter song. Rankin sings it as a man who has known a few hells. Indeed, he is so effective that the song becomes a jarring note in an otherwise serene trip. *Like a Seed* features the most charming children's voices I've ever heard. Presumably, from their last names, they are Rankin's kids. On *Eartheart* and elsewhere, Rankin has moments of slight resemblance to David Crosby, which is nice. A strange thing happens on *Bad Times Make You Strong*: Rankin's background voices are flat. It would not be worth mentioning except that elsewhere the pitch is so pure.

The album, produced by Monte Kay and Jack Lewis, is definitely one of the most musical and satisfying projects of the year. You should buy it immediately. M.A.

ERIC ANDERSEN: Blue River. Eric Andersen, vocals, guitar, piano, and harmonica; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Is It Really Love at All; Pearl's Goodtime Blues; Faithful; Blue River; Florentine; Sheila; More Often Than Not; Round the Bend*. Columbia KC 31062, $6.98.

Eric Andersen's debut album on the Columbia label is a masterful one—simple, tasteful, and warm. It's a departure from the country-and-western music that has marked several of his previous recordings. In "Blue River" Andersen dips into balladry, accenting Andy Johnson's excellent piano, and thus arrives at music that is a showcase for his sensitive but too-often-hidden voice.



Eric Andersen—masterful debut.

Andersen sings very much like Jack Elliott—quiet and soulful, with an edge of despair perfectly suited to some ballads but which is easily overpowered by aggressive instrumentation. *Blue River*, the title song, is best—a melodic ballad written in tribute to the rock group, The Band. *Is It Really Love at All* is a traditional sort of love song, and it's magnificent. *Wind and Sand* is a notable song about growing old. The only non-Andersen tune on the album, *More Often Than Not*, written by David Wiffen, is a jouncy little tale about show business, along the lines of "It's driving me crazy and I think I'll quit sometime or another."

The arrangements are tasteful throughout, using three or four instruments with infrequent accompanying strings. Several female voices, mainly Deborah Andersen and, on *Blue River*, Joni Mitchell, contribute a haunting effect. In all, "Blue River" is a major achievement for Andersen, one that should earn him the popularity he has long deserved and, at times, almost earned. M.J.

JERRY BUTLER: The Spice of Life. Jerry Butler, vocals; keyboards, strings, rhythm, woodwinds, horns, and vocal accompaniment. *What's So Good About It (You're My Baby); If I Could Remember (Not Ever Having You); I Only Have Eyes for You*; thirteen more. Mercury SRM 2-7502. $5.98 (two discs). Tape: ●● MCT 4-2-7502, $6.95; ● MCT 8-2-7502, $6.95.

This two-record set is an ambitious package designed to convert soul star Jerry Butler into soul star Isaac Hayes. The use of the full orchestra, the complicated arrangements—even Butler's subdued, sexy approach—are all variations of the style that Hayes has utilized on the road to superstardom. Unfortunately, the same techniques do not work for Butler.

There is just too much production and not enough imagination on these discs. The tunes wash each other out and Butler does not have enough vocal variety to maintain interest throughout. Nevertheless, the star does have flashes of soulful genius.

He does best with two Bacharach/David numbers, *(They Long to Be) Close to You* and *All Kinds of People*. Those who have sworn to shoot themselves upon hearing one more version of *Close to You* should listen to the way Butler handles the tune. It is a truly tasteful and sensitive performance and one has difficulty remembering its equal among the many other recordings of this song that are currently available.

In addition to these favorites, Butler also handles many r & b selections of his own composition including *What's So Good About It (You're My Baby)*, *A Prayer*, and *If I Could Remember (Not Ever Having You)*. Surprisingly, these cuts are among the least memorable on this two-record set. The singer does better with current pop favorites like *Baby I'm a Want You* and Carole King's *So Far Away*, and he does an amazingly pleasing job with the traditional pop standard, *I Only Have Eyes for You*.

"The Spice of Life" has been designed as a large, ambitious, expensive showcase for the

hopefully versatile Jerry Butler, an attempt to make him the equal of all other current soul super-stars. One can respect the aims even though one frowns at the results. H.E.

TIM BUCKLEY: Greetings from L.A. Tim Buckley, vocals and guitar; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Move With Me; Get on Top; Sweet Surrender; Nighthawkin'; Devil Eyes; Hong Kong Bar; Make It Right.* Warner Bros. BS 2631, $5.98.

Tim Buckley burst on the scene (as they say all too often) in 1967 via a fancy, in-keeping-with-the-times overproduction number called *Hello and Goodbye*. Therein, with lyricist Larry Beckett, he strained folk-rock and especially "pop poetry" to the breaking point, with forced images and musical razzmatazz. Then Buckley spent several albums delving into simplicity, a kind of pleasantly sultry jazz-folk mix.

Now, after two years' absence from recording, Buckley reappears with a fancy album, "Greetings from L.A." He does his version of rock on it, and it doesn't work. The rock overpowers all the good qualities of his voice, the effortless, wiry tenor becoming a raspy, forced irritant in its effort to keep up with the background. None of the songs, including two Beckett collaborations, is worth discussing on its own. A solid disappointment. M.J.

✱ **JOHN STEWART:** Sunstorm. John Stewart, vocals and guitar; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Kansas Rain; Cheyenne; Bring It on Home; Sunstorm; Arkansas Breakout; An Account of Haley's Comet; Joe; Light Come Shine; Lonesome John; Drive Again.* Warner Bros. BS 2611, $5.98.

I think this is one of the best LPs by a folk-singer since the appearance of "Sweet Baby James" in 1969. Stewart, whose 1971 release "The Lonesome Picker Rides Again" was also magnificent, has a remarkable ability to blend soft and hard, folk and rock. His way with melodies is impressive, and he leans toward sing-along choruses that are absolutely irresistible. On this album his range is apparent in the first three tunes: *Kansas Rain* is a light rock song; *Cheyenne* a soft ballad; *Bring It on Home* a great rock-and-roll song.

Few contemporary folksingers seem able to write melodies that amount to anything. The best thing you can say about them is that they don't get in the way of the words. Such has never been the case with Stewart. His songs are dramatic and infectious, but without indulging in all the usual tricks folksingers have used in the past to involve the audience. This is no more a folk album than was James Taylor's 1969 effort, but it's folk-derived and a must for anyone serious about this music. M.J.

John Stewart—remarkable ability.

JAKE WITH THE FAMILY JEWELS: The Big Moose Calls His Baby Sweet Lorraine. Jake, guitar, Hawaiian guitar, and lead vocals; "Raquin Rob" Rothstein, bass; Danny Manselino, keyboards; Mike Rosa, drums; strings, horns, rhythm, percussion, and vocal accompaniment. *Sunshine Joe; Don't Look Back (I Heard Somebody Say); Lake Louise;* seven more. Polydor PD 5024, $5.98.

Jake has always made people feel good by creating his own lively brand of good-time music. This collection of new Jake material is just as pleasurable as ever even though it finds Jake in a much more mellow mood. Here, Jake writes and sings about how nice it would be to live in a penthouse, how nice it would be to drive an old motor car, how nice it would be to have a true love. These fantasies are wistful but not self-pitying and they do have a certain universal charm since everyone has fantasies about having something that he doesn't have now.

In addition, Jake's bright, well-arranged settings turn each of these musings into a fanciful ditty. For good measure, Jake also performs Dylan's *Minstrel Boy* and the Everly Brothers' *When Will I Be Loved*. Both numbers do not resist Jake's upbeat approach. Jake has been knocking around for quite a while. He may be a little melancholy but that only makes his music more interesting. Anyone who can name an LP "The Big Moose Calls His Baby Sweet Lorraine" deserves to make it. H.E.

BEAVER AND KRAUSE: All Good Men. Paul Beaver and Bernie Krause, Moog, Sonic V, production, some keyboards, some guitar, and some arranging and conducting. *A Real Slow Drag; Looking Back Now; Legend Days Are Over;* eight more. Warner Bros. BS 2624, $5.98.

Paul Beaver and Bernie Krause are odd birds within the music community of Hollywood. The simplest category for them is Moog men. They rode in on the crest of enthusiasm for the Moog synthesizer and there was a time not long ago when, in Moog terms, they were just about the only game in town.

Things change fast. The Moog craze was diverted by other more versatile electronic synthesizing instruments such as the Yamaha Combo Organ and several pianists jumped in to become experts at using them (Clare Fischer is one).

As the ground began to shift beneath them Beaver and Krause were wise enough to try to diversify. One thing they did was to get a

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recording contract with Warners. While it is difficult to define precisely what the two do on record, some kind of Beaver-Krause personality is emerging with each successive album. The team works with meticulous care and great technical skill.

Musically, things continue to be experimental. Each album runs several potential directions up the old flagpole. This wide spread of ideas is one reason the pair has not yet caught on. An audience is lost without a focus. On the other hand, Beaver and Krause had little other choice in terms of concept, and through sheer strength of will and expertise the team may hold on long enough for the public to warm up.

This album has its fine moments and its indulgences. Bernie Krause, who is the younger of the two men, bears the slight distinction of having been a member of a folk group called The Weavers, who had their heyday during the folk boom of the late Fifties. On this album Krause gave in to his urge to get back to singing. It was too soon. He is back in time, thin and ragged, hesitant and sincere. Because he is surrounded by pros, both singers and players, his inexperience sticks out even more clearly. But to balance things, Krause has written several lovely melodies with generally able lyrics provided by Adrienne Anderson.

The album features a most interesting girl singer named Chris Williamson. For me, her singing is the highlight of the set, particularly her backgrounds on *Child of the Morning Sun* (one of Krause's pretty melodies).

As usual, Beaver and Krause bring us some far-out electronic effects (*Waltz Me Around Again Willie*), plus a taste of jazz from such masters as Howard Roberts and Bud Shank. Also included is *A Real Slow Drag* written in 1907 by Scott Joplin. The promo men are pushing this track. I find it competent, but dusty, and dull, including the sharp soprano note on the last chord, which may or may not have been accidental. But that era is not my bag anyway.

For all their flaws, Beaver and Krause are a bright light in the Warner Bros. stable. They conform to no standards but their own; they are thoughtful, creative chance-takers, and I find their work entertaining. M.A.

✱ **VIGRASS AND OSBORNE:** Queues. Paul Vigrass and Gary Osborne, vocals and lyrics. Music composed and arranged by Jeff Wayne. *Men of Learning; Ballerina Forever Autumn*; seven more. Uni 73129, $4.98.

Since I could not face the twelve pounds of promotional literature that arrived (as usual) with this month's releases, I don't know too much about this duo (it must be added that most promo accompanying albums is remarkably uninformative, concentrating instead on exclamations of greatness).

Vigrass and Osborne have a hit from this album called *Men of Learning*. The duo collaborates on lyrics to music written by Jeff Wayne, a slightly different mode of operation that works quite well. Vigrass and Osborne also concentrate on singing but leave the playing to others, which should be more widely practiced. They're very good.

The album is well produced by composer Jeff Wayne (executive producers: Roger Holland and Mike Duffey). Please note that the project was done in London, which has put out a great deal of inferior music in the past couple of years. Perhaps the trend is changing.

Of the fifty faceless new rock releases of the month, this one is highly recommended. M.A.

THREE DOG NIGHT: Seven Separate Fools. Jimmy Greenspoon, keyboards; Joe Schermie, bass; Floyd Sneed, drums and percussion; Michael Allsup, guitars; Danny Hutton, vocals; Chuck Negron, vocals; Cory Wells, vocals. *Black and White; My Old Kentucky Home; Prelude to Morning*; eight more. ABC Dunhill DSD 50118, $4.98. Tape: ● M85118, $6.95; ●● M55118, $6.95.

Three Dog Night, with its unbroken string of hits, is a seven-man band with three lead singers, each of whom can sing powerfully. The opening cut on this new disc, a song of racial harmony called *Black and White*, is in the best Three Dog Night tradition. It is filled with exciting rhythms and carefully wrought harmonies, and it is a real pleasure.

Unfortunately, nothing else on the LP measures up to the standard set by this selection. That's sad to say because it is evident that plenty of hard work went into this release. The musicianship is as professional as ever with Jimmy Greenspoon's keyboards deserving special mention, and the singing is just as authoritative. The band even ventures in new directions and, on occasion, cultivates a heavier than usual rock sound. The material, which includes Randy Newman's *My Old Kentucky Home* and Alvin Toussaint's *Freedom for the Stallion*, is generally interesting and still the tunes wash each other out. There is a sameness that runs through this disc that is discouraging, especially after that exciting *Black and White* opening. H.E.

theater and film

✱ **DUCK, YOU SUCKER.** Music by Ennio Morricone from the original motion picture soundtrack recording. United Artists 5221, $6.98.

This recording certainly contains more music (over forty-five minutes) than you're apt to find on most any soundtrack LP these days, and none of it is mere filler. Serge Leone has, in fact, made such extensive use of Morricone's music in his films that his works it is said are cine-operas; nowhere is this more evident than in the expansive and lyrical *Duck, You Sucker*, in which Morricone's poignant melodies are often allowed to soar throughout entire sequences.

But in addition to these nostalgic themes, Morricone has come up with a brilliant concoction of unusual scoring effects, including the vocalized *Sean Sean* that punctuates the title song; the wordless female voice; the plaintive whistle (also used to great effect in Morricone's music for *Without Apparent Motive*, a soundtrack that should definitely be released in this country); diverse instrumental effects, including some Indian flutes; and even something sounding suspiciously like a burp. All in all, a splendid score providing a great deal of *Duck, You Sucker*'s atmosphere, all of it nicely captured and well recorded on this release. R.S.B.

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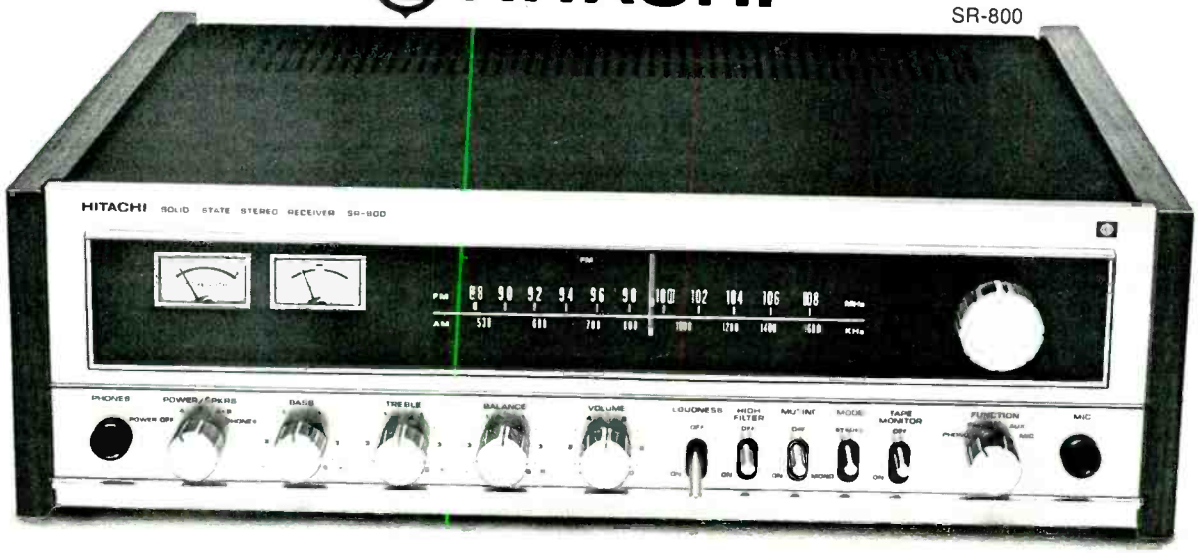

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jazz

BLACK AND WHITE PIANO RAGTIME. Eubie Blake: *Charleston Rag*. James P. Johnson: *The Harlem Strut*. Fletcher Henderson: *Unknown Blues*. Alonzo Yancey: *Everybody's Rag*. Blind Leroy Garnett: *Louisiana Glide*. Jimmie Blythe: *Jimmie's Blues*. Jesse Crump: *Mr. Crump's Rag*. Zez Confrey: *Kitten on the Keys*. Vera Guilaroff: *Maple Leaf Rag*. Rube Bloom: *Spring Fever*. Frank Banta: *Sailin' Along*. Jean Paques: *Pianotes*. Willie Eckstein: *Knice and Knifty*. Jelly Roll Morton: *Original Rags*. Biograph 12047, $5.98.

This release differs somewhat from others in the current flurry of ragtime recordings. Most of the earlier discs have been devoted to more or less classic piano rags and the focus has been on the leading composers of those rags. This collection includes a pair of Scott Joplin rags—*Maple Leaf* and *Original Rags*—and one by Eubie Blake. But the over-all thrust of the set deals with the jazz pianists who followed the ragmen in the Twenties—James P. Johnson, Fletcher Henderson, Jimmie Blythe—and the white pianists contemporaneous with these men who focused on novelty rags such as *Kitten on the Keys* (played here by its composer, Zez Confrey).

This is the first time, as far as I know, that a label has paid much attention to the latter school, represented here by Rube Bloom, Frank Banta, and Willie Eckstein, as well as Confrey. They do very well by themselves, swinging with almost as much verve as their black colleagues. In fact, no one on the entire set matches the all-out drive of a white Canadian pianist, Vera Guilaroff, on *Maple Leaf Rag*. Eubie Blake's 1921 recording of *Charleston Rag* shows how faithfully he still plays this piece, which has become one of the staples of his current performances.

With two exceptions, all the recordings were made in the Twenties and some of the surfaces on the side devoted to black pianists are a little noisy, most notably Jimmie Blythe's *Jimmie's Blues*. For some reason, Jelly Roll Morton (playing his 1939 recording of *Original Rags*) is included in the "white" side, a happenstance that might have cheered Jelly who was always trying to emphasize his Creole heritage. J.S.W.

CAPITOL JAZZ CLASSICS: Vol. 11, Big Band Bounce: Benny Carter and Cootie Williams. Vol. 12, Piano Reflections: Duke Ellington. Vol. 13, Strictly Bebop: Tadd Dameron, Babs Gonzales and Dizzy Gillespie. Vol. 14, Crosscurrents: Lennie Tristano and Buddy De Franco. Vol. 15, Bebop Spoken Here: Benny Goodman and Charlie Barnet. Capitol M 11057/61, $5.98 each.

The second batch of Capitol's jazz reissues—produced, oddly enough, by the label's Dutch affiliate (a fact for which we can be grateful considering the general superiority of European jazz reissues to American ones)—leans heavily on the bop period and does relatively little to enhance the reputation of that era of jazz. We have, for example, one side by Benny Goodman's 1949 band when he was making an extremely reluctant dip into bebop, a low point in his career as a band leader. There is Dizzy Gillespie's fading big band of 1949 and 1950 which is totally uninteresting both in the material and in performance; Bert Vuijsje, writing liner notes that must set a new high for candor, not only points out the superiority of the band's recordings for Musicraft and RCA but quotes Michael James's chilling comment that "the lack of imagination in the writing and the listlessness of the section playing must be heard to be believed." Charlie Barnet's bop-flavored big band of 1949 does much better by the idiom and Tadd Dameron and Buddy De Franco give it an in-and-out representation.

Of the "modern" groups of the post-World War II period represented on these discs, only Lennie Tristano's uniquely flowing sextet stands up over the years and retains every bit of its validity. Tristano's single side and the full disc of Duke Ellington piano solos are the outstanding segments of the release. Ellington,

Duke Ellington—outstanding mulling.

playing alone and with bass and drums, mulls his way through a now classic set of ad-lib creations and familiar compositions such as *Prelude to a Kiss*, *All Too Soon* and *Passion Flower*.

The Benny Carter-Cootie Williams pairing are reports on two prebop big bands that were reaching the end of their roads (both bands broke up in 1946 just after these sides were cut). Carter, as arranger and soloist, was still working at a peak but Williams' band was fighting a downhill battle, supported only by the leader's trumpet, the saxophone of Sam Taylor, and Eddie Vinson's singing. J.S.W.

EARL HINES: Fatha and His Flock on Tour. Earl Hines, piano; Haywood Henry, clarinet and baritone saxophone; Larry Richardson, bass; Khalil Mhadi, drums; Marva Josie, vocals. *All of Me; Night in Trinidad; Second Balcony Jump*; nine more. MPS 20749, $5.98.

There has been an astonishing flow of discs by Earl Hines in the past couple of years—to some degree an overflow—but surprisingly, none of them have paid attention to what Hines is doing currently. Most of these recordings have been by Hines alone at the piano or in a pick-up trio situation. This new set, recorded at the Berlin Jazz Festival in 1970 with what was then Hines's regular group, catches the spirit and feeling of an ensemble that has been working together as opposed to the one-man shows on Hines's previous recent records.

Not that Hines is slighted here. He does an unaccompanied solo on *Somebody Loves Me* that is an astonishing bit of virtuosity even for him—a dazzling display of involuted lines tumbling over each other in a way that could be matched only by Art Tatum but with an outgoing, positive attack that was not part of Tatum's bag. And he romps through his old big-band number, *Second Balcony Jump*, backed by his rhythm section, making it sound as though the whole band is taking part.

But there are also a pair of showcase numbers here for the excellent but infrequently heard Haywood Henry—a lovely low register clarinet solo on *Passion Flower* and a gently swaggering solo on baritone saxophone on *Things Ain't What They Used to Be*. To me, the most revealing aspect of this recording is what it shows of Marva Josie, a singer who has never impressed me during her long association with Hines. But on this record the strong, richly textured qualities of her voice, her control and range, and the perceptiveness of her phrasing place her with the very best of contemporary singers.

She is brilliantly earthy on *I Just Wanna Make Love to You*, skillfully Vaughan-like on *Easy to Love*, and backed by some excellent Haywood Henry baritone, gay and airy on *I Feel So Smoochy*. But even with Henry's warming background clarinet, she can't do much with the banal lyrics of *Night in Trinidad*, an original by Hines that is the only weak number in the album. J.S.W.

TURK MURPHY JAZZ BAND: The Many Faces of Ragtime. Turk Murphy, trombone; Leon Oakley, cornet; Phil Howe, clarinet; Jim Maihack, tuba; Carl Lunsford, banjo; Pete Clute, piano; Thad Vanden, drums. *Mississippi Rag; Original Rags; The Cascades*; nine more. Atlantic SD 1613, $5.98. Tape: ●▪ TP 1613, $6.97; ●● CS 1613, $6.97.

Stick around long enough and it all comes back. Twenty-five years ago Turk Murphy was the trombonist in Lu Watters' Yerba Buena Jazz Band, which spearheaded the San Francisco Revival of the then all but forgotten 1920s music of King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Jelly Roll Morton. Orchestrated piano rags were part of their repertoire too, and through them Wally Rose, the Yerba Buena's pianist, became one of the first of the ragtime revivalists. Now a quarter of a century later a new revival is on, this time focused on Scott Joplin and his fellow composers of rags, and Turk Murphy, who has been leading a band of his own during most of the intervening years, is once more involved in orchestrating rags just as the Yerba Buena band did.

The solo piano spotlight falls this time on Pete Clute, who is Murphy's partner in Earthquake McGoon's, the San Francisco club where his band has been playing for ten or twelve years. Clute plays these rags with a light and airy grace that is most becoming. But he is just one thread in this fabric. These are pri-

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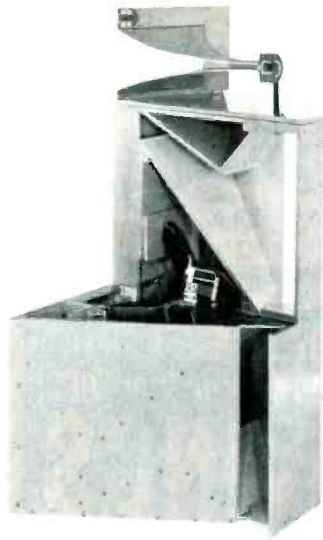

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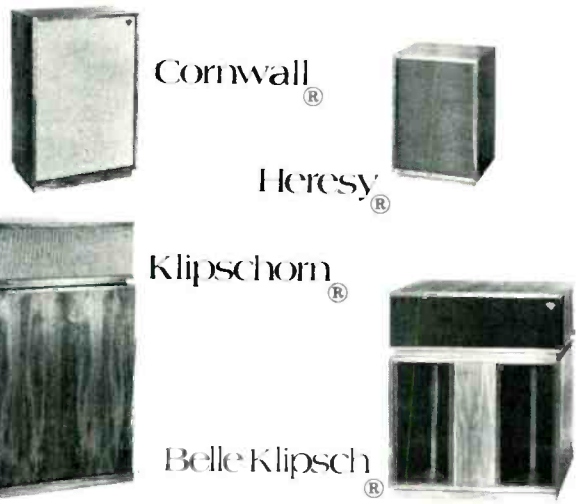

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marily jazz-band versions of some of the classic rags, orchestrated by Murphy in a manner that is suggestive of the old New Orleans arrangements used by the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra but with a much stronger jazz flavor. Phil Howe's clarinet has an appropriately sprightly, bubbling quality that is reminiscent of the way Tony Parenti played rags and the way Raymond Burke plays almost anything. Leon Oakley gives the band a strong lead on cornet but, along with Murphy, is relatively self-effacing in solo terms. The solid, square-jointed attack of the Murphy band suits these rags remarkably well, even to the elephantine grace of a dancing tuba foundation for *Euphonic Sounds*. These are delightful variations on the customary piano-rag interpretations and make Murphy's return to a major label after an absence of a decade doubly welcome.

J.S.W.

LUCKY THOMPSON: Goodbye Yesterday! Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Larry Ridley, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. *Lazy Day; Soul Lullaby; Then Soul Walked In*; four more. Groove Merchant 508, $4.98.

CORKY CORCORAN: Plays Something. Corky Corcoran, tenor saxophone; Jack Perciful, piano; John Smith, bass. *Funny Valentine; How High the Moon; Happy Reunion*; three more. RCS 2555, $5.50 (R.C.S. Records, P.O. Box 362, Tacoma, Wash. 98409).

Lucky Thompson and Corky Corcoran are both tenor saxophonists who came to prominence in the 1940s: Thompson with Count Basie, Corcoran with Harry James. In the years since then, each has had a relatively obscure career so far as American jazz fans are concerned—Thompson because he has spent most of the last fifteen years in Europe, Corcoran because he has spent almost his entire career as a sideman with James.

Thompson's album, made on one of his occasional and strangely futile attempts to find a place for himself in the American jazz scene, reveals that he is still a warm-toned, smoothly swinging mainstream tenor saxophonist and an extremely appealing soprano saxophonist. He makes very effective use of the upper register on the soprano. On both instruments, his playing is thoroughly contemporary without falling into any of the avant-garde traps. Corcoran, a product of the Coleman Hawkins school of burly-toned tenors, has polished that style to a fine gloss, but this record puts him in a rather tiresome light since all six selections (taken from live performances) are played at a plodding tempo with never a suggestion of rhythmic lift. One or even two such slow pieces might be programmed to good effect, but two solid sides become soporific. J.S.W.

WEATHER REPORT: I Sing the Electric Body. Wilmer Wise, D and piccolo trumpet; Andrew White, English horn; Hubert Laws, flute; Wayne Shorter, reeds; Joe Zawinul, keyboards; Ralph Towner, guitar; Miroslav Vitous, bass; Eric Gravatt, drums; Dom Um Romao, percussion. *Unknown Soldier; Directions; Second Sunday in August*; four more. Columbia KC 31352, $6.98.

All that Weather Report apparently needs in order to start living up to its ecstatic publicity is to get out of the recording studio. The first side of this disc, like the group's first record, is studio-made and projects much the same vapidity and pretentiousness that colored that debut set. The second side, however, is taken from concert performances in Japan and on these the band suddenly comes to life with the kind of lusty performances that seem to elude it in the studio.

In both situations, Wayne Shorter's soprano saxophone is a clean, clear, guiding light—a ray of interest in the more routine pieces, a pillar of strength when everything is going well, as on *Surucucu*. But Shorter alone cannot salvage this group, for his superb solo on the studio-recorded *Crystal* is largely nullified by the flabby, fuzzy electronic background over which he plays. One added point of interest in this set is a brilliant 12-string guitar solo by a guest, Ralph Towner, on Shorter's exotic composition, *The Moors*.

J.S.W.

* **JAY MCSHANN ALL STARS:** Going to Kansas City. Jay McShann, piano; Buddy Tate and Julian Dash, tenor saxophones; Gene Ramey, bass; Gus Johnson, Jr., drums. *Doggin' Around; Hootie's Ignorant Oil; Moten Swing*; four more. MJR 8113, $5.50 (Master Jazz Records, Box 579, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10021).

The lusty, swinging spirit of the southwestern bands of the '20s and '30s roars through this reunion of four Kansas City veterans and one brother-in-spirit from Alabama—Julian Dash. The session brings together Jay McShann, Gene Ramey, and Gus Johnson—the rhythm section of the celebrated band that McShann led in Kansas City—for the first time in twenty-nine years. Add to that Buddy Tate (still the most exuberant exponent of the swinging southwestern saxophone style) as a teammate for Dash, and the result is a disc that is sheer joy from one end to the other.

There are bows to Count Basie and Herschel Evans (it was Tate who took Evans' chair in the Basie band after Evans' death) in *Doggin' Around* (with McShann turning in some very Basie-like piano) and *Blue and Sentimental*; to the Kansas City kingpin, Bennie Moten, in *Moten Swing*; and to McShann's old band in *Say Forward I'll March*. The performances are easy, straightforward, building with a riff-motivated inner drive. Tate is in particularly fine form and McShann, in addition to several well-stated piano solos and consistently buoyant comping, turns out to be a delightful and unpretentious blues singer, a chore he once left to the likes of Walter Brown and Al Hibbler.

J.S.W.

PAT MARTINO: The Visit! Pat Martino and Bobby Rose, guitars; Richard Davis, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. *Road Song; Footprints; How Insensitive*; three more. Cobblestone 9015, $5.98.

Pat Martino, who is rapidly establishing himself as the most distinguished of the younger jazz guitarists (a field that has become surprisingly crowded with talent in recent years), conceived this album as a tribute to Wes Montgomery, whose influence is strongly evident in much of Martino's playing. But there is relatively little outright derivativeness here—except in Wes's tune, *Road Song*, when it is deliberate—for Martino has arrived at his own

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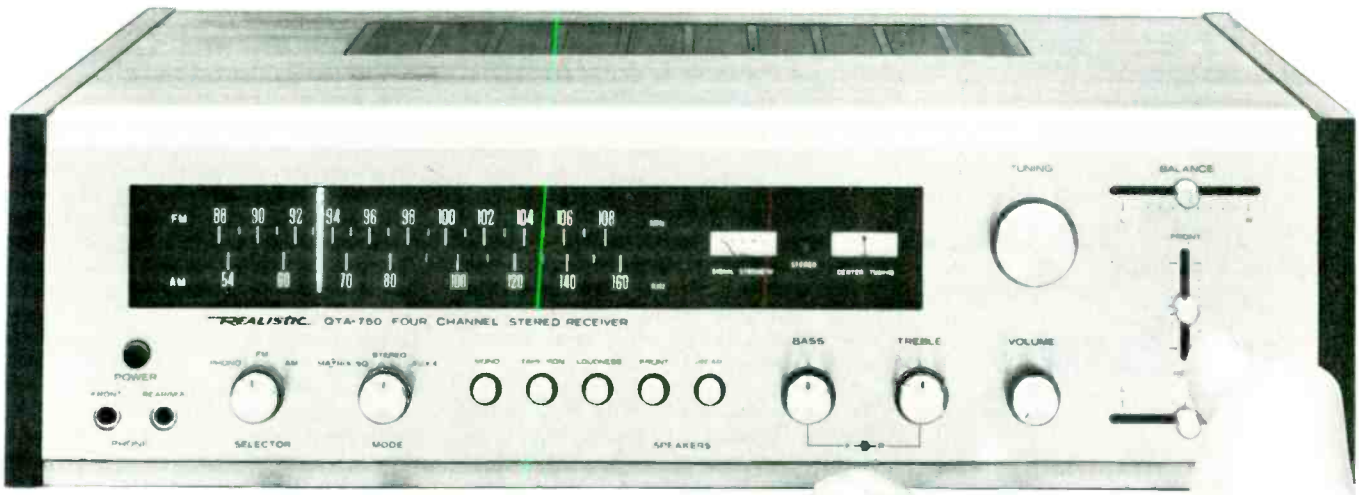

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polished and often virtuosic manner. His original. *The Visit*, although dedicated to Wes, is full of swirling lines that are typically Martino. He is, in fact, closer in style to a pianist, Art Tatum, than he is to Montgomery.

The Tatum parallel is particularly noticeable in the flood of mingling lines that he develops in Wayne Shorter's hauntingly ominous blues, *Footprints*, and in the way he keeps opening up the basic melody of Jobim's *How Insensitive*. But Martino is not simply flash and dazzle—in fact, even when he actually is flashing and dazzling he does it in such a way that you are never conscious of a look-ma-no-hands attitude. He is also richly rewarding on ballads—Michel LeGrand's *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life*, in this instance, which could stand as a model of an exquisitely warm development of a melody.

J.S.W.

NEW ORLEANS RAGTIME ORCHESTRA. Lars Edegran, piano; William Russell, violin, Lionel Ferbos, trumpet; Orange Kellin, clarinet; Paul Crawford, trombone; Frank Fields, bass; John Robichaux, drums. *Black and White Rag; Maple Leaf Rag; The Entertainer;* nine more. Arhoolie 1058, $5.98.

This is the second LP by the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra to be released within a period of a few months. Such unexpected largesse might be considered dangerous overexposure for a group that works such a specialized field as orchestrated ragtime. But this set is somewhat different from the earlier NORO collections (there have been two, both issued by Pearl Records, P.O. Box 1411, Salisbury, N.C. 28144).

This time the NORO goes beyond the rags to which it limited itself on the Pearl discs. The seven musicians, led by pianist Lars Edegran, show a much broader potential as they tackle A. J. Piron's exotic signature theme, *Purple Rose of Cairo*; jazz tunes (*New Orleans Hop Scop Blues*, *Panama*, and *War Cloud*, the tune that was first recorded as *Fidgety Feet* and is still generally known by that title); and a version of *High Society* in which everything sits so well—tempo, attack, orchestration, and solos—that this *must* be the way the piece *should* be played. It includes a lovely violin and clarinet duet by William Russell and Orange Kellin, and a relaxed, sure-fingered version of the traditional clarinet solo by Kellin that sets him in the forefront of those who have undertaken what was once considered a "challenge" solo.

The fact that someone other than Russell has a solo also differentiates this set from earlier NORO albums for this is basically an ensemble group. Russell's main solo in this set is on *Purple Rose of Cairo*, a beautiful bit of pre-Wayne King schmalz. The band as a whole is more open, more authoritative, and seemingly much more certain of what it is doing on this disc than on its earlier ones, and with the broader perspective indicated by the nonrag material, it seems to be on its way toward finding a very viable place in our musical spectrum.

J.S.W.

DAWN OF THE CENTURY RAGTIME ORCHESTRA. David Bourne, cornet; Jack Langlos, trumpet; Dave Kennedy, trombone; Mike Baird, clarinet; Jack Malek and Donna McCluer, violins; Dick Zimmerman, piano; Art Levin, tuba; Roy Roten, percussion. *Cubanola Glide; Silver Bell; Dixie Blossoms;* nine more. Arcane 601, $5.25 (Maple Leaf Club, 5560 W. 62nd St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90056).

In what appears to be a growing interest in orchestrated ragtime, the Dawn of the Century Orchestra has turned up as California's answer to Lars Edegran's New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra (which records for Pearl Records). Dawn of the Century, led by David Bourne, may or may not be as authentic as Edegran's group in its style of performance, but it is certainly livelier and draws from a broader range of material. While Edegran leans to Scott Joplin and the classic composers of piano rags, Bourne focuses on such pop songwriters of the period as Percy Wenrich, Harry Von Tilzer, and Irving Berlin, and he has no compunctions about including a contemporary rag —*Portuguese Rag*, composed by Mike Baird, the group's clarinetist. Dawn of the Century uses two violins (as against the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra's one violin) and bases its performances on a cache of arrangements written around 1910.

This collection is particularly notable for giving a more rounded view of Wenrich, who is now known primarily for *Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet* and *When You Wore a Tulip*. His *Dixie Blossoms* and *Silver Bell*, as played by Bourne's band, are exhilarating experiences. There may be a bit too much of the concert-in-the-park atmosphere on this disc for some tastes. But the performances are high-spirited, cleanly played, and unusually well recorded.

J.S.W.

✻ **CLARE FISCHER:** Reclamation Act of 1972. Clare Fischer, piano; Chuck Domanico, bass; Colin Bailey, drums. *The Blues Reclaimed; Soon; Sometimes I Feel It This Way; Pensativia; Meade Lux Lewis, I Love You; W.P.A. Work Chant.* Revelation 15, $4.98.

To hear Clare Fischer on this disc is to be reminded of how rarely a jazz pianist goes beyond the limits of a personal style or an accepted tradition. If Fischer can be classified in any way by past performance, he is a modernist. And yet in this collection he emerges as a pianist so deeply immersed in the blues roots of jazz that he falls naturally and without pretension into the strong, rugged kind of statements that normally come from far less sophisticated musicians than he.

A key piece in this connection is his *Meade Lux Lewis, I Love You*, a warm and generous tribute to Lewis. This track not only sums up some of his qualities but in effect removes the protective shell that Lewis wore as a performer and reveals what really went on inside him. The moody, pensive opening is very much like some of Lewis' earlier recorded work, before his position as a boogie-woogie star turned him into an eight-to-the bar automaton. But Fischer invests this opening with more shading than Lewis ever showed, and from there he builds the kind of power that Lewis reserved for his faster pieces.

The Blues Reclaimed is more basic blues in which Fischer unleashes some magnificently rolling bass figures, while *W.P.A. Work Chant* is exhilarating shuffle-stomp music with superb interplay between Fischer's piano and

Chuck Domanico's bass. The more customary side of Fischer comes out on Gershwin's *Soon* and on *Pensativia*, a Fischer bossa nova that owes a bit melodically to Antonio Carlos Jobim. The set covers a lot of ground and Fischer is thoroughly at home in every aspect he touches. But it is his approach to the blues that is the most revealing and refreshing element. J.S.W.

WALDO'S GUTBUCKET SYNCOPATORS: Vol. 1. Roy Tate, trumpet; Bob Butters, trombone; Frank Powers, clarinet; Terry Waldo, piano; Jim Marshall, banjo; Blaine Garver, tuba; Tom Hyer, drums. *Here Comes the Hot Tamale Man; Deep Henderson; Black Bottom Stomp;* eight more. GHB 55, $5.98 (GHB Records, P.O. Box 748, Columbia, S.C.).

It is encouraging to find a good traditionalist jazz band going beyond the now overdone Oliver-Armstrong-Morton repertory. Terry Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopators, an Ohio group, does not disdain these three standard sources—there's an excellent version of Morton's *Black Bottom Stomp* here—but they also dig into a variety of the aspects of jazz from a Joplin rag to Ellington's *The Mooche*. A. J. Piron, Doc Cook, Coon-Sanders' Kansas City Nighthawks, and the Original Dixieland Jazz Band *after* its initial impact on Victor Records in 1917 and 1918 provide some of the provocative, rarely heard material on this disc. The band has lots of rugged enthusiasm, making up in spirit and zest for its occasional shortcomings in polish.

For the most part, however, it is a strong, well-knit unit. Frank Powers, who plays a rich-toned, Dodds-like clarinet, is a forceful and consistent soloist and apparently he is responsible for the arrangements (or copies) that lift these performances above the more customary ad-lib, solo-around style. Waldo, a neat, adept pianist, has a dazzling solo feature on *Entertainer's Rag* with strong backing by nineteen-year-old Blaine Garver on tuba. Bob Butters on trombone plays a supporting role most of the way, but he has a chance to show off his gruff, lusty attack on *The Mooche*. The weakest link in the band is trumpeter Roy Tate who often throws himself into wildly ebullient passages that he can't quite sustain, although he is just as apt to come through with bristling passages that manage to link suggestions of Bix Beiderbecke and Wild Bill Davison. Even with its ups and downs, this group projects spirit and energy with none of the lead-footed clumping that has often been the bane of traditional groups. J.S.W.

✱ **CHARLES MCPHERSON:** Siku Ya Bibi (Day of the Lady). Charles McPherson, alto saxophone; Barry Harris, piano; Earl Dunbar, guitar; Sam Jones, bass; Leroy Williams, drums; Max Ellen, Gene Orloff, David Nadien, Selwart Clarke, Joe Malin, and Emanuel Green, violins; Julian Barber and Alfred Brown, violas; Kermit Moore and Alan Shulman, cellos. *God Bless the Child; Lover Come Back to Me; Miss Brown to You;* five more. Mainstream 365, $5.98.

Charles McPherson has been prominent on the jazz scene for a dozen years, primarily in New York. But such is the obscurity in which even a "prominent" jazzman works these days that one New Yorker, who follows jazz with some interest, was startled when he heard McPherson at the 1972 Newport Jazz Festival in New York and wondered how such an exciting saxophonist could suddenly appear apparently from nowhere.

McPherson had been recording for years, but evidently without getting either his name or his message across as successfully as he might. So this disc can be viewed as an astute move to remedy the situation because there are several appeals involved. For one, there is a program of tunes associated with Billie Holiday including, in addition to such obvious entries as *Lover Man* and *Don't Explain*, such lovely but half-forgotten songs as *Good Morning, Heartache* and *For Heaven's Sake*. As a second angle, several of the pieces have been arranged with string accompaniment, a throwback to the time when Charlie Parker recorded a memorable series of ballads with strings. The use of Parker as a model is not just a gratuitous bit of name-grabbing, for McPherson's style on alto saxophone is directly descended from Parker, although he has long since left behind him any reliance on Parker's ideas. The third line of appeal is McPherson himself, one of the strongest, most personable of contemporary altoists.

All three legs of this production are sturdy and the whole set stands up extremely well. On his own, McPherson has always been a consistently interesting saxophonist to those who could hear him. Possibly the added lure of the Holiday songs and the Parker-like settings will help bring him to the attention of those who, like the New Yorker at the Newport Festival, would enjoy him if they knew he existed. J.S.W.

in brief

Rick Springfield: Beginnings. Capitol SMAS 11047, $5.98.
Rick Springfield is quite a big star in his native Australia. He is a pleasant enough writer/performer and with a little seasoning he should do quite well here. These "Beginnings" do show promise. H.E.

The Golden Age of Rhythm & Blues. Chess CH 50030, $9.98 (two discs).
A two-disc collection of early 1950s r & b vocal groups such as the Moonglows, Orchids, and Ravens. Not all of this is topnotch stuff, and a few of the groups are quite properly unknown. Only for the true collector. M.J.

Spencer Davis: Mousetrap. United Artists UAS 5580, $5.98.
Spencer Davis, an integral part of the English rock scene since 1963, emerges here with his latest group, a four-man ensemble who play tasteful versions of Leadbelly's *Easy Rider* and *Ella Speed*, and also work over Spencer's latest material with a great deal of élan. This may be Spencer's "mature" period; if so, he certainly has become one of the great masters of folk-blues. H.E.

Alice Cooper: School's Out. Warner Bros. BS 2623, $5.98.
As a reviewer, I love the group Alice Cooper because their albums are accompanied by the only truly clever promotional material I've ever gotten. This one includes a bio disguised as a term paper, a photo of nude Alice with a snake wrapped around his torso, and a few unmentionables. On Sunset Boulevard is a gigantic billboard that says, "I'm Alice. Fly my new album." Alice Cooper's music is every bit as outrageous and well conceived as their promo. As a matter of fact, crazy Alice is dynamite. M.A.

Mar Y Sol: First International Puerto Rico Pop Festival, April 1, 2, and 3, 1972. Atco SD 2-705, $9.98 (two discs).
Two discs, twelve performers and groups, and thirteen songs from this year's April Fools' Day in the sun. The groups are generally worthwhile: J. Geils Band, Dr. John, B.B. King, John Baldry, and others. The songs, though, are not always the performers' best and in many places are poorly recorded. The album is mainly a souvenir for those who were there and enjoyed it. M.J.

Linda Hopkins. RCA LSP 4756, $5.98.
Ms. Hopkins is the brilliant gospel singer who won Broadway's 1972 Tony Award for her amazing performance in *Inner City*. She is a powerful singer and deserves better than the pedestrian production job given her on this debut disc. H.E.

Otis Redding: The Best of Otis Redding. Atco SD 2-801, $9.98 (two discs).
Twenty-five songs including all of Redding's best work, combined in a two-disc set. This collection needs no more words to recommend it other than notification that it exists. Some praise to the liner notes, though: For once on a soul album, complete information is provided on what musicians played in the various sessions. M.J.

The Mothers: Just Another Band from L.A. Bizarre 2075, $5.98.
What Don Rickles is to mainstream entertainment, The Mothers are to the pop world, only more honest about it—and maybe even more deadly accurate in their attacks. When the pop world crumbles, The Mothers will be the group that described its essence best. Like the others, this album is disjointed, spaced out, and brilliant. M.A.

Ramatam. Atlantic SD 7236, $5.98.
This powerful new band features Iron Butterfly's Mike Pinera, Brooklyn Bridge's Tommy Sullivan, the Jimi Hendrix Experience's Mitch Mitchell, and an amazing lead guitarist named April Lawton. *Heart Song*, a melodic tune with plenty of punch, is especially recommended. H.E.

Little Walter: Boss Blues Harmonica. Chess CH 60014, $9.98 (two discs).
A two-LP set, containing twenty-four of the more than 100 sides Little Walter recorded for Chess, primarily during the 1950s. It's a distinguished selection of the work of one of the most unique-sounding Chicago bluesmen. M.J.

Cass Elliot: The Road Is No Place for a Lady. RCA LSP 4753, $5.98.
This disc maintains the rather mediocre level of most of Cass Elliot's recent performances. It's a shame because Ms. Elliot has, can, and should do better. H.E.

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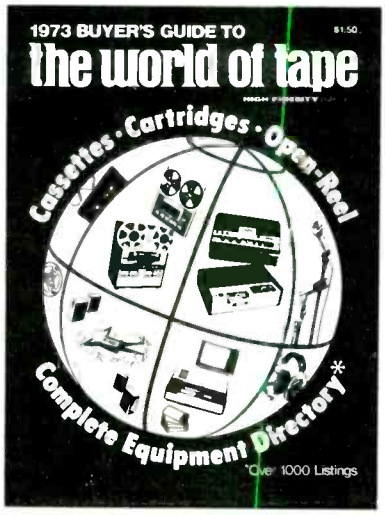

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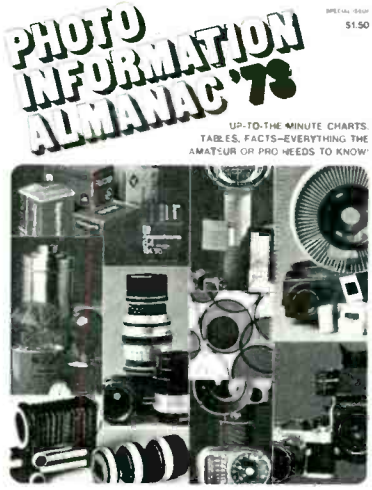

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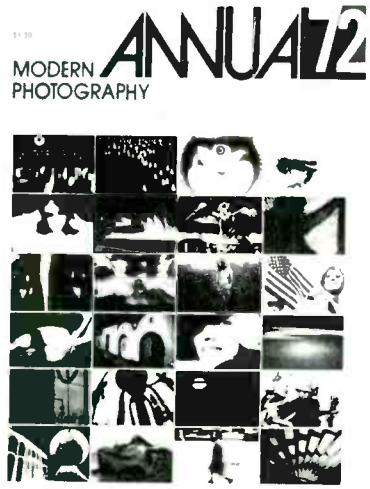

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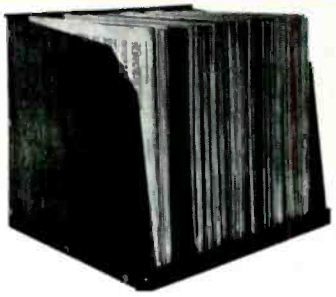

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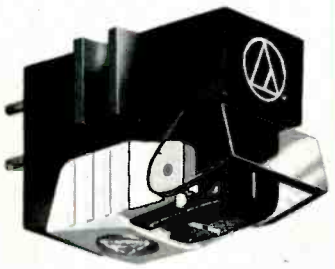

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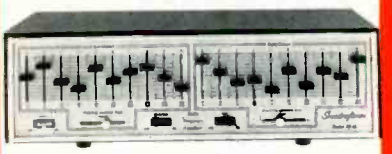

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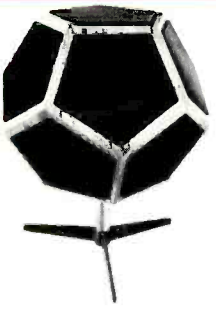

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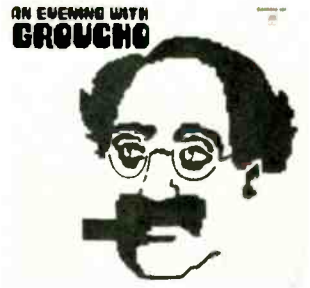

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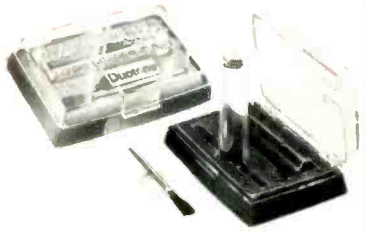

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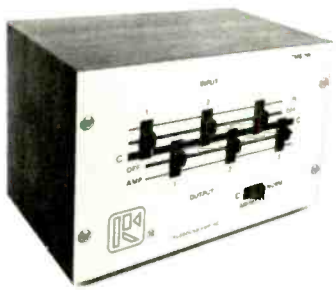

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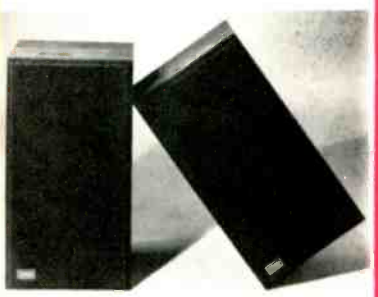

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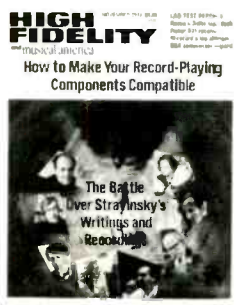

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the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

The Cat with Nine Lives. The burgeoning popularity of quadraphonic (Q-8) cartridges and the continued triumphal progress of Dolbyized musicassettes captured the headlines in the tape world this past year. Nevertheless open reel, patriarch of the tape family, isn't dead yet. Veteran fans of this format have been steadily, if quietly, reassured by solid evidence of renewed vitality. The most substantial achievement probably has been Ampex's expansion of the Philips/Mercury repertory (giving long overdue tape representation to Colin Davis and Bernard Haitink in particular); but it's significant that Columbia has resumed at least occasional reel releases, and that the gap left by RCA's inactivity in this realm is soon to be filled by Stereotape's 7½-ips open-reel processings of current and catalogue RCA recordings.

Retail distribution of the reel repertory continues to be a problem, but mail-order dealers are increasing in both number and coverage, with one of the largest and most active tapes-by-mail services celebrating its successful first year (20,000 customers!) with a revised edition of its big catalogue. Augmented by new releases and partially cleansed of the musical illiteracies that made the first edition a comedy-of-errors collectors' item, this Ampex Vol. 2 catalogue lists some 1,500 classical and pop reel programs, and even more cassettes and 8-track (and Q-8) cartridges. It is available for 50¢ from Ampex Catalogue Offer, P.O. Box 178, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007.

Dutch Treats. Except for the Bruckner Symphony No. 0 of 1968 and a more recent group of Liszt symphonic poems, Haitink and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw have been represented on tape by only a few imported Philips cassettes—which makes the launching of a major new reel series truly good news. I haven't yet received their Mahler Eighth, but I have been delighted by the welcome, however belated, tape versions of their great Bruckner Fourth and Ninth Symphonies, and a more recent coupling of Hungarian showpieces by Bartók and Kodály.

Critics and connoisseurs alike have generally credited the Dutch conductor and orchestra with a special affinity for Bruckner; certainly I know of no other present-day recording artists who are more consistently straightforward and profoundly eloquent in their treatments of the Austrian master's scores. The well-named *Romantic* Symphony, No. 4, in E flat, is particularly susceptible to interpretative mannerisms, but Haitink couldn't be more unself-consciously outspoken. And if his recorded sonics are not spectacularly brilliant, they are suitably solid and nobly expansive. This reel (Philips/Ampex L 9171, 7½ ips, $7.95) is easily the preferred choice of the available tapings; and even if the fine 3¾-ips Angel version by Klemperer were in print, I'd still give a thin edge to Haitink (in every respect, that is, except the failure to follow Klemperer's example in dividing his first and second violins, left and right).

There is stiffer active competition for Haitink's deeply moving Ninth Symphony, in D minor—not only from Karajan for DGG and Mehta for London, but also from the historically valuable mono version by Furtwängler for Heliodor (cassette only). Yet these often more romanticized readings are made to seem somewhat affected and lacking in humor compared to Haitink's bluff directness and gusto (Philips/Ampex L 9162, 7½-ips reel, $7.95). Again the recording is admirably solid and expansive, but I wish that the second movement could have been completed on the first side, as Mehta's is. Locating the break before the reprise of the Scherzo is only marginally preferable to locating it before the Trio, as in the Karajan version.

The more recent Dutch/Hungarian treat with paprika seasoning (Philips/Ampex L 5015, 7½-ips reel, $7.95; also imported Philips cassette, 7300 017, $6.95) is appropriately more glitteringly recorded, while Haitink himself applies a good deal of wit and bravura, especially in the rollicking *Háry János* Suite by Kodály. Why this superb *jeu d'esprit* never has become a mass-public hit is a mystery to me. At any rate, its irresistible appeal never has been more vividly projected, even in the previous first tape choice conducted by a native Hungarian, Kertesz for London (1965). Haitink also does very well indeed with Bartók's anticipatory exploration of the stereo medium: the *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*. But here he wins partly by default since Reiner's matchless performance for RCA seems to be no longer available on tape.

Time Travel. My personal first choices for science-fiction transmutation would be Minoan Crete and Elizabethan England. But if no music at all has survived from Knossos to encourage mental time-traveling, I have been able to disguise my twentieth-century Hudson Valley surroundings a bit by motoring through them in what purports to be an almost Elizabethan—Henrician anyway—sonic ambience provided by David Munrow's soundtrack for the TV series *Henry VIII and His Six Wives* (Angel 8XS 36895, 8-track cartridge; 4XS 36895, cassette; $7.98 each). This score may have its musicological weaknesses; even so, it serves its purposes admirably, and unlike most TV music it bears rehearing—especially for the period quality of the London Early Music Consort's instrumental timbres, if perhaps less so for the presumably authentic little dance, song, virginals, and lute pieces, and for Munrow's own imitative pastiches. There was far finer music written at the time than we hear here and I hope it was better played and sung; but I forgot all such quibbles as I watched the TV series itself, and I certainly don't let them interfere with my carborne enjoyment.

Unfortunately, I haven't received the cartridge equivalent of a later English era, the Georgian. But listening at home to the cassette edition of "The Magnificent Mr. Handel," Vol. 2 (Columbia MT 31206, Dolbyized cassette; MA 31206, 8-track cartridge; $6.98 each), I can share at least some of the aural pleasures of George I and George II and their contemporaries. E. Power Biggs's name is featured here, but his organ continuo is only rarely evident in this glorious miscellany from a dozen or so Handelian operas and oratorios. Charles Groves conducts the Royal Philharmonic in piquant, if sometimes overintense, very brilliantly recorded performances; but since I so relish the infinite variety of the music itself—cheerful, busy, tender, stately—I find it impossible to apply any critical caveats here.

Delayed Below Deck. I can't resist mentioning at least two fine, if not necessarily pressingly newsworthy, releases which I continue to replay with undiminished personal pleasure. One of these is Karl Böhm's impressive rejuvenation of Schubert's unjustly neglected First and Second Symphonies (Deutsche Grammophon 3300 216, cassette; 89 442, cartridge; $6.98 each; also DGG/Ampex L 3216, 7½-ips reel, $7.95). Another tape, as quintessentially French as Böhm's is German, is Martinon's elegantly graceful tribute to the talents of Bizet in the heart-wrenchingly tender *Jeux d'enfants*, seductive *Scènes bohèmiennes* from *La Jolie Fille de Perth*, and that incomparable student work, the miniature Symphony in C (Deutsche Grammophon 3300 225, cassette; 89 446, cartridge; $6.98 each; also DGG/Ampex L 3186, 7½-ips reel, $7.95). Both are well-nigh ideally recorded and in both instances the cassette editions (except for some very slight non-Dolbyized surface noise) practically match the reel versions in sonic terms. ●

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