

DECEMBER 1974

ICD

HIGH FIDELITY®

DECEMBER 1974 \$1.00

08398

Christmas Shopping List For The Audio Buff

Best RECORDS OF THE Year

MF LTH3G4424C009 OCT 76 1 03
MR C LATHAN
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ST LOUIS MO 63123



First Tests of CD-4 Cartridges

Speaker under \$110 that can reproduce without distorting or falling apart.

In the middle.

Instead of a conventional midrange driver, the ST-445 uses an unusual unit mounted in a heavily damped sealed chamber to isolate it from any interference from the rear of the woofer. The diaphragm is light in weight and the magnet unusually heavy for extremely precise transient response. This driver gives you very broad dispersion, sending out sound waves to every corner of your room, and has smooth frequency response and can handle lots of power with low distortion.

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The ST-445 uses a Mylar dome tweeter. It has an effective piston diameter of only 1" to give you frequency response up as far as 20,000 Hz, both directly in front of the speaker and, most important, at wide angles to each side up and above.

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Many multiple-driver speaker systems use electronic crossover networks to direct the various musical frequencies to the drivers designed to reproduce them. Our crossover network does all that, and does it very smoothly; and uses oversize capacitors and coils to easily handle the high power levels you will want to feed into it. A three-position level control lets you tailor the high frequency balance to match your room and your ears.

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We think the ST-445 is a lot of speaker for under \$110. But if you want even more speaker for even more sound, be sure to listen to the ST-465, at less than \$200. It's similar to the 445 but has a larger woofer and a Fisher-invented flare-dome mid range.

If you're watching your dollars, you'll probably



find that our ST-425 2-way system has unusually good sound for less than \$90.

For more information, write: Fisher Radio, Dept. HF-12, 111-40 45th Road, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Fisher
Studio-Standard

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That's power.

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No more.

There's a new speaker. The Fisher ST-445.

It can sit on any bookshelf.

Without ripping the

shelf off the wall. It can handle sound peaks of 90 watts and output sound pressure levels of 100 dB. And it has incredible low distortion to boot.

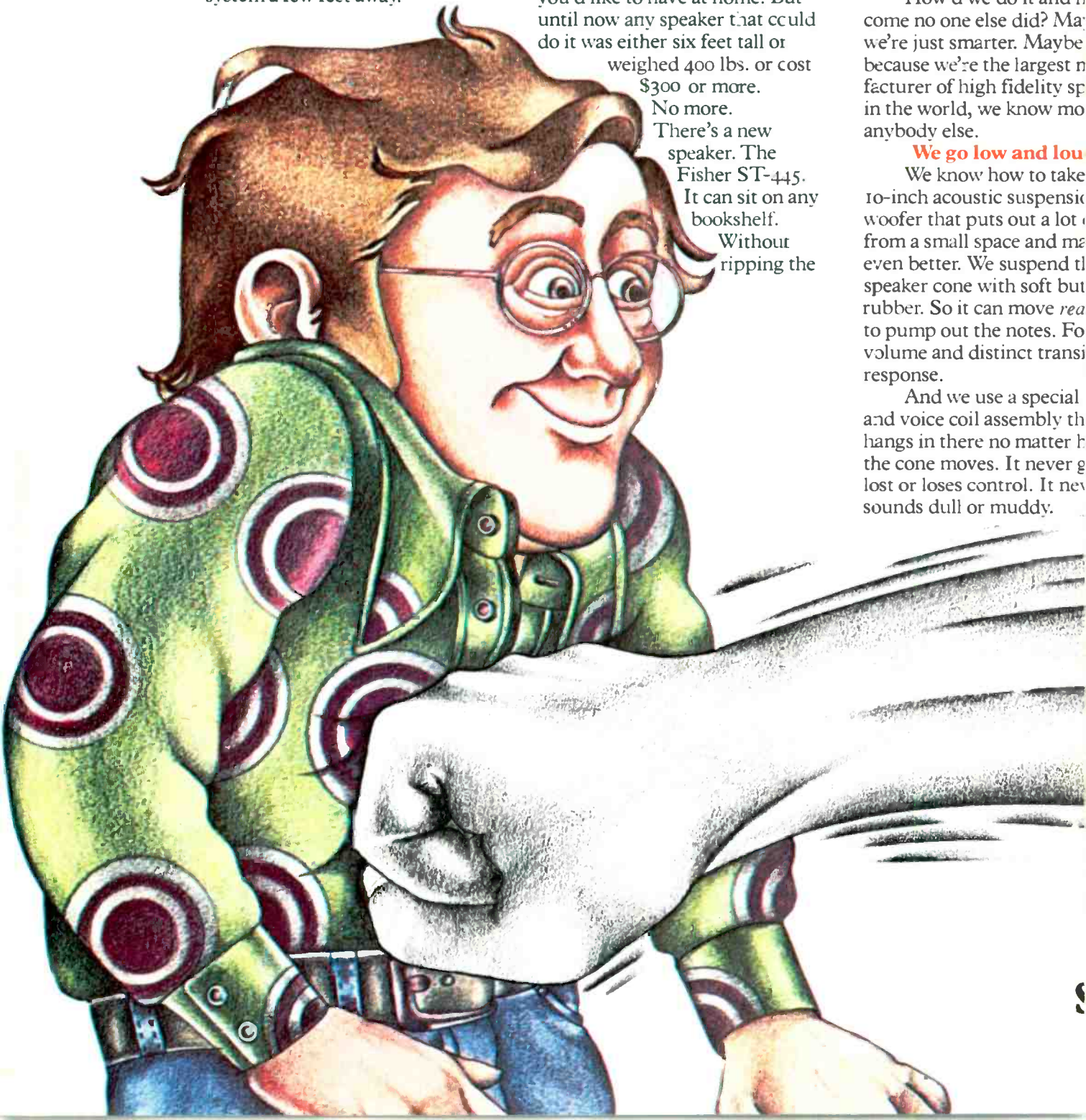
That's pure power.

How'd we do it and how come no one else did? Maybe we're just smarter. Maybe because we're the largest manufacturer of high fidelity speakers in the world, we know more than anybody else.

We go low and loud.

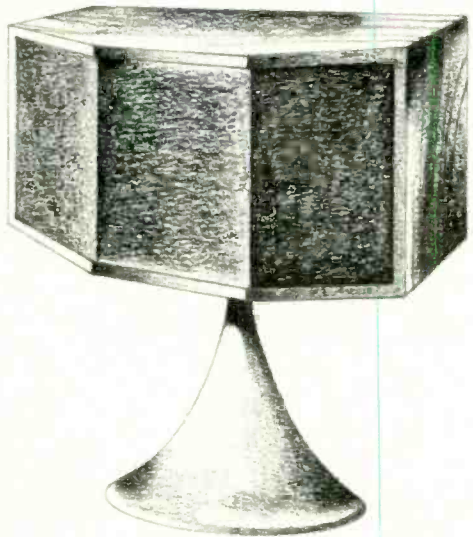
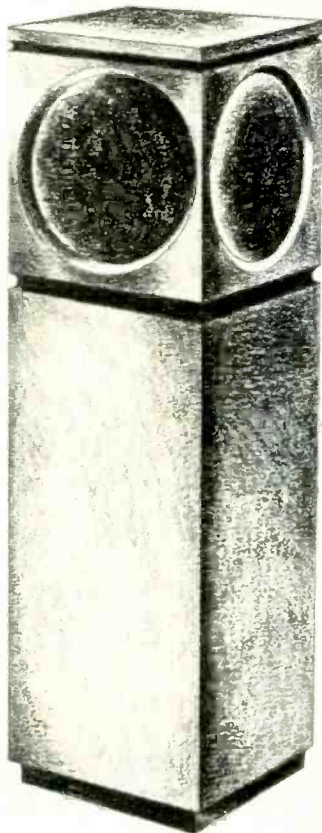
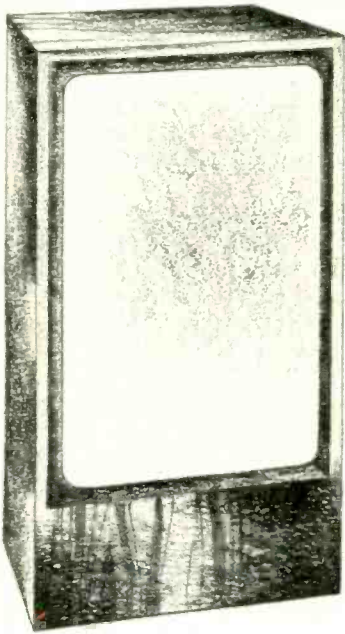
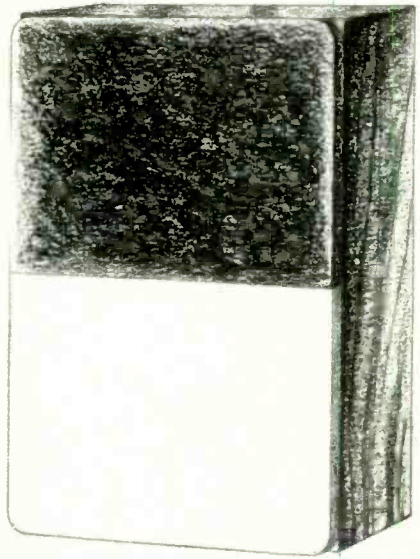
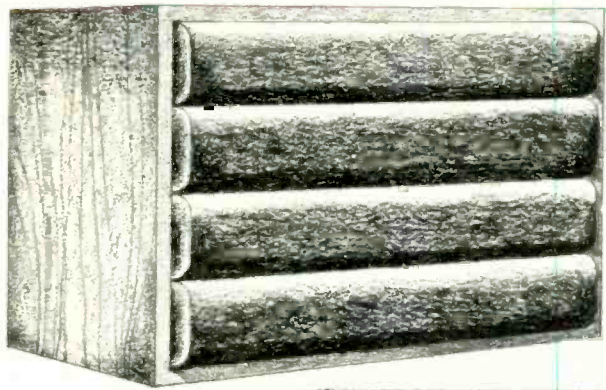
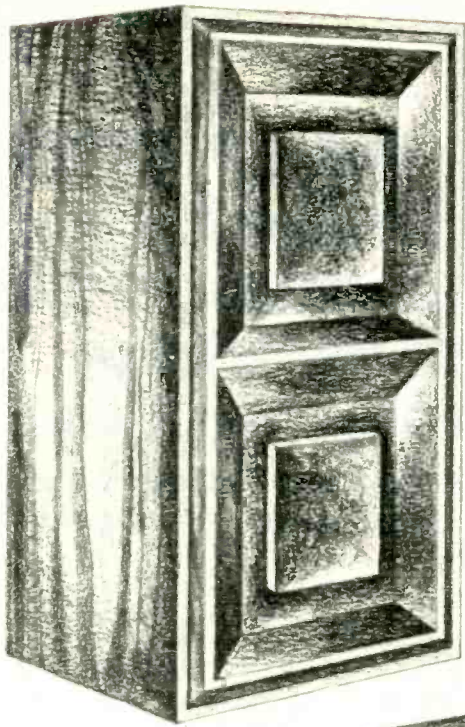
We know how to take a 10-inch acoustic suspension woofer that puts out a lot of sound from a small space and make it even better. We suspend the speaker cone with soft but firm rubber. So it can move really fast to pump out the notes. For volume and distinct transient response.

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But...



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DCF 2400



UV-15 2000 Q

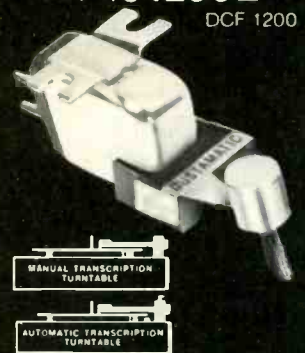
DCF 2000



STEREO AND MATRIX

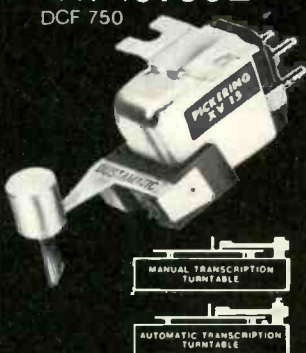
XV-151200E

DCF 1200



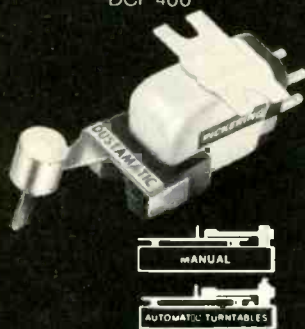
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DCF 750



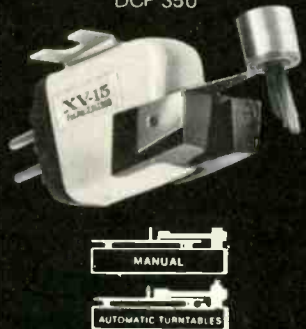
XV-15400E

DCF 400



XV-15350

DCF 350



XV-15200E

DCF 200



XV-15150

DCF 150



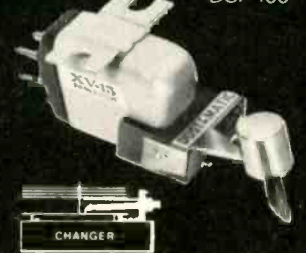
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PICKERING

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December 1974

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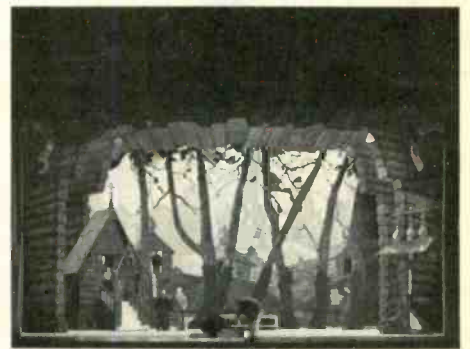
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HIGH FIDELITY



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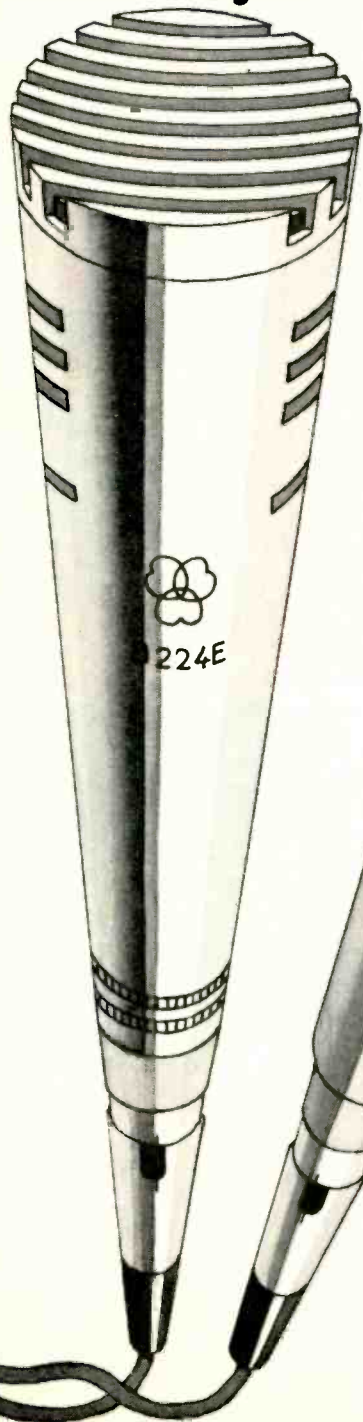
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If it is.



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WARREN B. SYER
Publisher

Cover: Roy Lindstrom

ADVERTISING

Main Office: Claire N. Eddings, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230 Telephone: 413-528-1300

New York: ABC Leisure Magazines, Inc., 130 E. 59th St., 15th floor, New York, N.Y. 10022 Telephone: 212-581-7777 Seymour Resnick, Eastern Adv. Mgr

New England: The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Telephone: 413-528-1300 Ross Turner

Los Angeles: ABC Leisure Magazines, Inc., ABC Entertainment Center, 2040 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 270, Century City, Calif. 90067 Telephone: 213-553-5648 Andrew Spanberger

Chicago: ABC Leisure Magazines, Inc., 2011 Spring Road, Oak Brook, Ill. 60521 Telephone: 312-323-3800 Leonard Levine

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In fact, since we introduced MRX₂ Oxide, a lot of other ferric tapes have been scrambling to find something to beat it.

Nobody has.



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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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WHEN LISTENING BECOMES AN ART.
CIRCLE 15 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

letters



Gustav Leonhardt—illuminating arguments for *Art of Fugue*.

Bach's *Art of Fugue* Revisited

Your editorial reply to Christopher Brewster's September letter presents an unfortunately biased view of Bach's *Art of Fugue* as an abstract theoretical work.

Gustav Leonhardt has admirably summarized and illuminated the arguments for the *Art of Fugue* as a harpsichord work (*The Art of Fugue, Bach's Last Harpsichord Work: An Argument*, The Hague, 1952). I would only like to mention here that, as you admitted, the work is playable on a keyboard (and certainly *not* coincidentally), but it is also *not* playable by any normal instrumental ensemble of the mid-eighteenth century. Furthermore, the open score, far from excluding or even making unlikely performance on a keyboard instrument, is one of several standard ways of notating keyboard music in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nobody in the eighteenth century or even the nineteenth, down to the time of Spitta, thought of the *Art of Fugue* as anything but a keyboard work. Certainly it achieves its best effect in that medium.

Dale C. Carr
Department of Music
Dartmouth College
Hanover, N.H.

That Unpublished Caruso

Dale Harris' September review of the Stanford Archive of Recorded Sound release of an unpublished test segment of the *Rigoletto* quartet by Caruso greatly interested me, especially W. R. Moran's and his attempts to date the recording. Somewhat indirectly, I can attest to the correctness of the date assigned—January 25, 1917—with something told to me by the late Bruno Zirato, the person who in our time knew Caruso the artist and Caruso the man better than anyone.

As a co-director of the Gustave Haenschen Oral History Project here at Ithaca College, I have been privileged to interview many distinguished singers, some of whom performed with Caruso. In August 1972, in the first full year of the project, it was therefore my ambition to record interviews with Mr. Zirato and his wife, the soprano Nina Morgana, who had appeared with the great tenor in most of his American concert engagements. While Mrs. Zirato has since accorded us a generous interview, Mr. Zirato's health would not have permitted such an undertaking at that point.

As matters evolved, my initial contact with the couple came within a few months of Mr. Zirato's untimely passing. Feeling that my request had been an intrusion into their lives at a most difficult time, my staying at a nearby hotel enabled me to hand-deliver a small gift to their Manhattan apartment. To my surprise, I was met at the door by Mr. Zirato directly, and seeing that he was tired and simply not well, I prepared to offer this gift to him, and especially to his wife, after which I would hastily dismiss myself. To my greater surprise, I found him asking me in his inimitable courtly mannered way what our project involved, whom we had interviewed, and what our interest in him might be—all this an example of the generosity with which he always met others.

His inquiry led me to ask his permission to forward two questions about his years as Caruso's personal secretary, one of which concerned the apparent expansion and darkening of Caruso's voice during the 1907-20 recordings, and my example was the tenor's opening phrases in the four *Rigoletto* quartet issues. Always the gentleman, he answered briefly my rather hastily framed questions, noting that as far as the quartet recordings were concerned, he could speak only for the January 1917 ses-

Continued on page 14

THIS IS A PROGRAM PANEL. WITH IT YOU CAN MAKE B·I·C™ PROGRAMMED TURNTABLES DO THINGS NO TURNTABLE HAS EVER DONE BEFORE.



The B-I-C 980 and 960, like many fine turntables, use a belt drive system.

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The program lever (second from the bottom in the picture at left) gives you 22 possible ways to play your records in manual and automatic modes.

By moving the lever to "MAN", the turntable is turned on and can be operated as a manual unit.

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By moving the lever to 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, you can play a single record 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 times.

And this same program lever controls multiple play. If, for example, you want to play 2 records, simply put them on the spindle and move the lever to "2". Or move the lever to "3" and the second record will repeat once. Or move it to "4" and the second record will repeat twice. And so on, and so forth.

Must be seen to be appreciated

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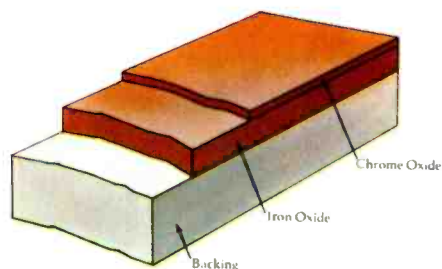
Introducing the Classic Cassette with ferri-chrome.



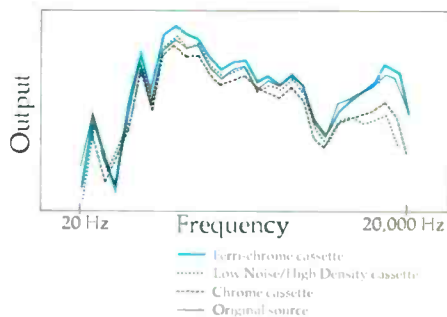
Truer than chrome. Truer than iron oxide. Compatible with all cassette recorders.

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This ferri-chrome combination gives "Scotch" brand Classic cassettes



fidelity that often deceives the sharpest ear. Included in a variety of test procedures was the use of a Brüel and Kjaer Model 3347 spectrum analyzer. We began with the original play (record) of a broad-spectrum piece of music, first measuring output levels versus frequency from the record, then the Classic cassette recording of the record, and finally, the record recorded on our low noise/high density cassette and on our chrome cassette. Our graph shows the results:



Compatibility is another ferri-chrome bonus. It means Classic cassettes will deliver optimum performance on any quality machine. (On machines with a chrome switch position use the HIGH or NORMAL switch position.)

®"SCOTCH" IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF 3M CO.

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From the Critics...

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Stereo & Hi Fi Times

"The feel of precision machinery... rumble was inaudible"

Hi Fi Stereo Buyers Guide

"No acoustic feedback even directly in front of loud-speakers"

**Hirsch-Houck Laboratories
Stereo Review Magazine**

"Absolutely no speed error at either 33-1/3 or 45 rpm"

High Fidelity Magazine

"Built to last... gives great results"

FM Guide

"The turntable suspension is almost impervious to jarring or bumping"

Audio Magazine

From the Public...

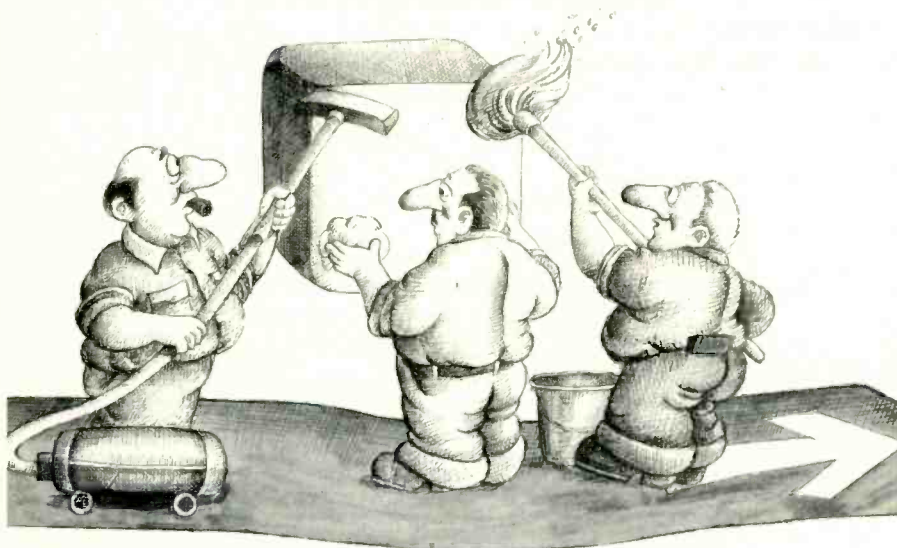
"I'm glad I bought it" **E.G., Lowell, Mass.** "It has no faults" **H.W., Birmingham, Ala.** "The whole turntable is beautiful" **D.G., Kalamazoo, Mich.** "No plastic parts" **T.H., Wilton, Conn.** "Own one for nine years" **W.L., Houston, Texas** "General overall feeling of quality" **R.J. Ft. Knox, Ky.** "Best reputation among people who know" **F.A., Sarasota, Fla.** "Far out" **J.W., Milwaukee, Wisc.** "Workmanship is outstanding" **R.W., Baltimore, Md.** "Fantastic" **R.E., Canton, Ohio** "Empire has a wonderful attitude towards the customer" **R.B., Arlington, Va.** "The best turntable in the world" **H.M., Honolulu, Hawaii**

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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 8

sion, which he had attended personally, as he would eventually do for each of the Caruso sessions through the last one in September 1920.

This led me to inquire about the many test pressings taken at the Caruso sessions in Camden—where they might have gone, and so on. Mr. Zirato replied that Caruso doubtless retained some of them, while certain others he gave away as gifts, sometimes to participating singers. Rather in passing, he did say that one particular test pressing from that January 1917 session, either from the *Rigoletto* quartet or else the *Lucia* sextet—he could not recall which—Caruso had apparently intended to keep, as he had written something humorous on the label.

I gave little thought to this at the time, as Mr. Zirato had mentioned it only in an incidental way. It was something that had evidently remained with him through the years and that was perhaps triggered merely by the conjunction of my questions. But Mr. Harris' review seemed to render it important enough to convey, as I am certain that outside his normal circle I was the very last person to ask Mr. Zirato anything about his association with Enrico Caruso and specifically about the recording sessions he had attended. As this was something he said impromptu and without a third person present who could verify it, it is offered rather *de fide* on my part, with the thought that it might contribute something singular to the dating of the Stanford side.

James A. Drake
Chairman, Dept. of Education
Ithaca College
Ithaca, N.Y.

The Revised *Candide*

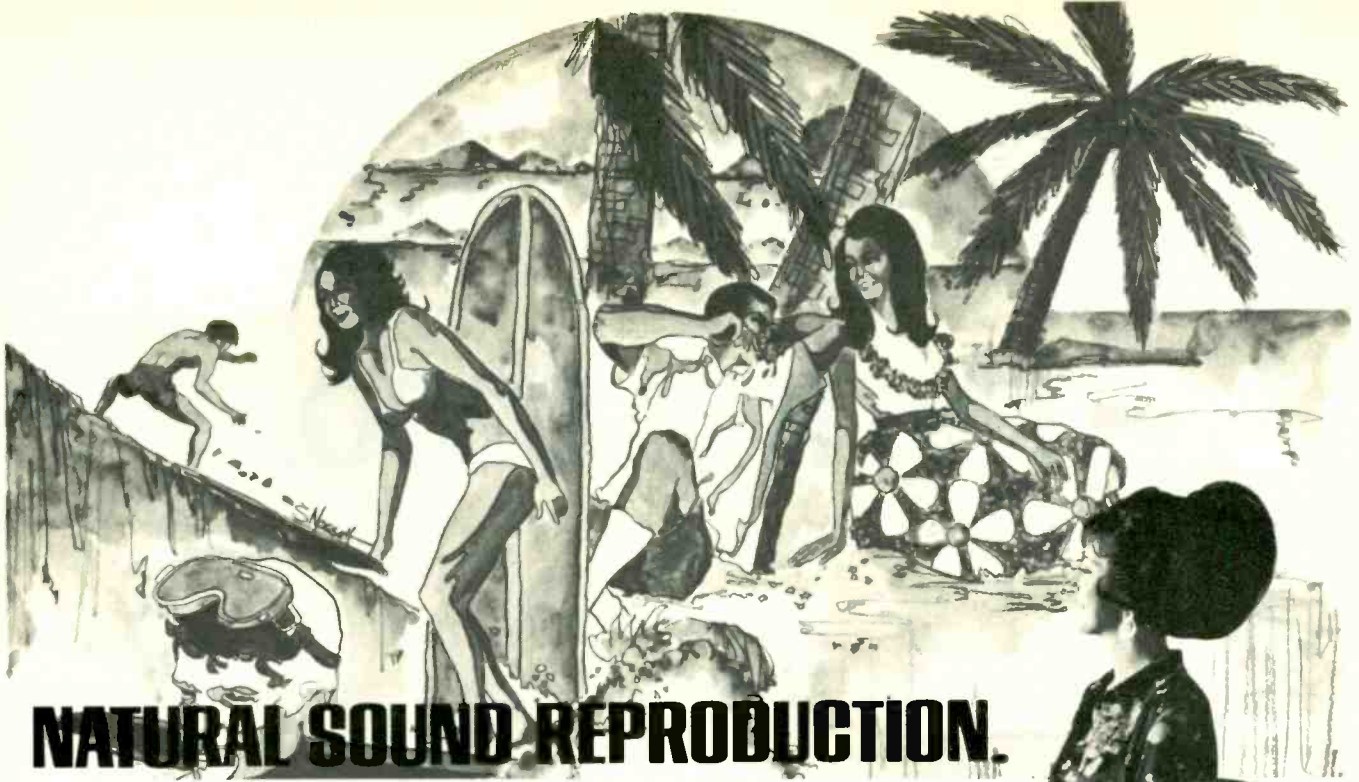
It was reassuring to read Royal Brown's critical review of the new Columbia recording of *Candide* [September]. Being a great fan of the original musical, I was very pleased to see the enormous praise lavished on the recent revival. I rushed to buy a ticket (at terribly inflated prices, even for Broadway), having only slight reservations regarding the "revisions" made to the original version. To my great dismay, this production bore almost no resemblance to the original, turning a near-opera into nothing more than cheap burlesque.

I imagine that producers will never be able to resist the urge to make a piece of music more popular by "improving" it in one way or another. It is a pity that such improvements always seem to ruin the works involved.

Michael Picheny
Cambridge, Mass.

A round of applause to Mr. Brown for his review of the new *Candide* album. Enough potshots have been taken at the original Hellman script in the past few months, and the recording only confirms the impression that the current production succeeds through the brilliance of Leonard Bernstein's score and the exciting production of Harold Prince and Eugene and Franee Lee. One of the major disasters of Edwin Lester's 1970 production was the Sheldon Patinkin rewrite, in which the best lines were Miss Hellman's original ones, for which she received no program credit.

Continued on page 26



NATURAL SOUND REPRODUCTION.

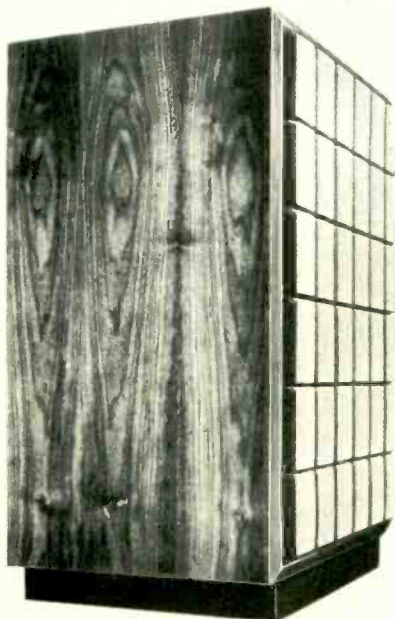
The Thrill of it all...

What's natural sound reproduction? It's sound so real you can see swaying palm trees and grass skirted dancers . . . feel the sun-warm sand beneath your feet . . . and smell the salt sea air . . . right in your own living room.

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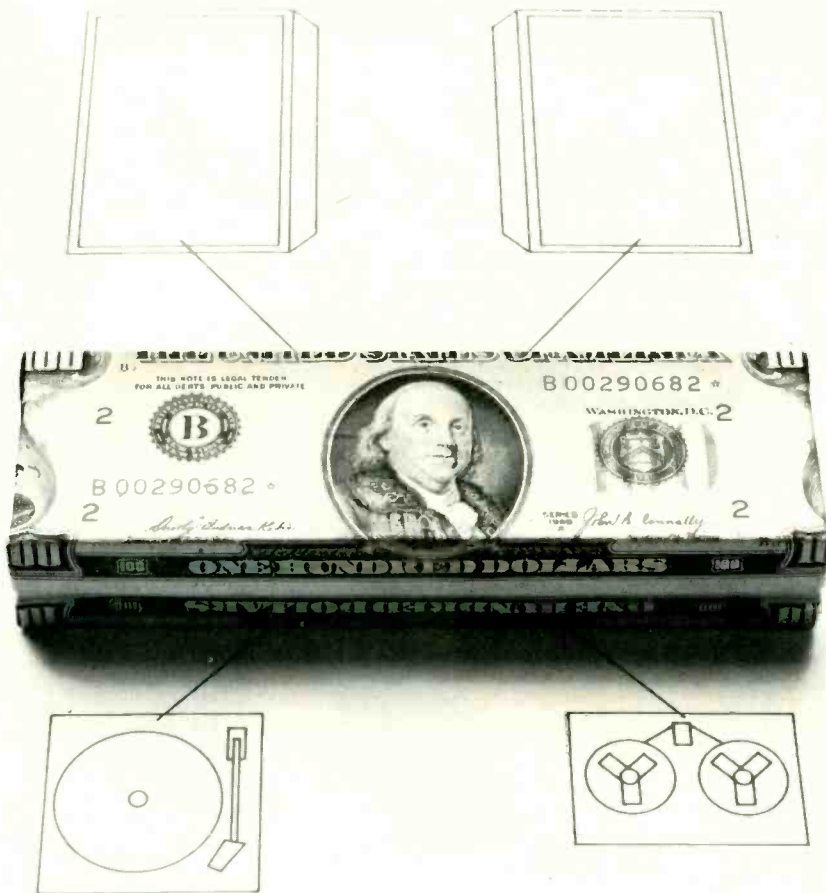


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CIRCLE 67 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Start here. harman/kardon's 330B. Except for the fact that we make it better every year, it's the same receiver we've been making for five years. And in this new-product-of-the-week, whiz-bang business, that's more than leadership. It's a dynasty.

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amp and a superb, drift-free AM/FM tuner. 20 watts per channel continuous power from 50Hz to 20,000Hz. Anything less is Pretend Stereo.

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The 330B has one more built-in feature you ought to know about: a promise.

A year from now, three years from now, when you've upgraded everything else in that stereo system, the 330B will still be there—right in the middle of things.

harman/kardon's 330B. The first \$200 is the easiest.

The harman/kardon 330B	Harmonic Distortion: Less than 0.5% THD
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CIRCLE 25 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Five disturbing facts about loudspeakers no other manufacturer has the guts to tell you.



The Loudspeaker Jungle

1. There are approximately one hundred different makes of "high fidelity" speakers sold in the United States, confronting the buyer with an incredible clutter of names, types, claims and counterclaims.

Of the hundred, no more than twenty are relevant, in the sense that they represent some sort of serious engineering effort and manufacturing philosophy, whether successful or not.

The remaining eighty are opportunistic marketing ventures, big and small, responding to the merchandising needs of stores rather than to the listening needs of the public.

2. One reason for this commercial jungle is that anyone with no other qualifications than a few thousand dollars can go into the speaker business.

About nine out of ten speaker manufacturers, the good guys as well as the bad guys, buy their drivers (woofers, tweeters, etc.) from outside suppliers in the U.S., Europe and Japan.

There are only a handful of these "raw speaker" houses and they stand ready to make anything their customers specify, from the most sophisticated drivers to the cheapest, a hundred

thousand units or just five hundred.

The typical speaker manufacturer is therefore merely a contractor with practically no overhead; he throws a Gundersen woofer and a Furuhashi tweeter into a Gonzalez cabinet and sells it as the one and only original Astrodynamic speaker system. (The names have been altered to protect the innocent.)

There's nothing *inherently* wrong with this way of making speakers, as long as a talented and experienced speaker designer is in charge from beginning to end.

At Rectilinear, we buy our drivers only from the best suppliers, who make them to our own rigid specifications to match the system designs we've developed. We make our own cross-over networks and cabinets.

But not every manufacturer is like us.

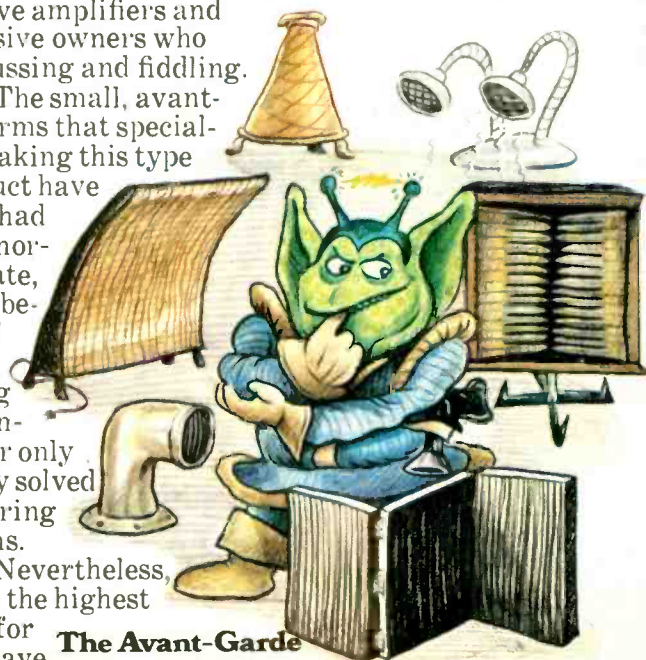
3. Among the approximately twenty technologically and ethically respectable speaker brands, some six or seven are relevant only to a small coterie of dedicated audiophiles.

These are the exotic designs, utilizing electrostatic or other unconventional drive principles as well as diaphragms of unfamiliar shape and construction.

In most cases, these speakers require special, expensive amplifiers and compulsive owners who enjoy fussing and fiddling.

The small, avant-garde firms that specialize in making this type of product have always had a high mortality rate, usually because of wishful thinking about unsolved or only partially solved engineering problems.

Nevertheless, we have the highest regard for these brave



The Avant-Garde

experimenters and consider it entirely possible that the future belongs to one of them.

But which one?

(Will you buy the first electric automobile when it comes out?)

4. The thirteen or fourteen speaker makers who are both serious and reasonably conservative, and among whom we confidently number ourselves, are hopelessly split on the issues of sound dispersion and speaker "personality."

The West Coast Sound

Some believe, and so far we're one of them, that a speaker should radiate sound only forward, over as wide an angle as possible. Others aim various drivers at the back wall or the ceiling, to bounce off the sound before it reaches the listener.

We feel that the arguments for the latter approach are unscientific and that the resulting sound is phony. No guitar is nine feet tall and twelve feet wide. (When somebody comes up with a reflective design that presents a correct spatial perspective, we may change our mind.)

As for personality or character, a speaker should theoretically have none, since it's a reproducer, not a musical instrument. *When two speakers sound different playing the same program material, at least one of them is wrong. Maybe both.*

But they do sound different, even in this heavily screened group.

There's the West Coast sound, for example, favored mainly by California-based firms and characterized by sizzling highs, a huge bass and lots of so-called presence. Everything a bit overstated and larger than life.

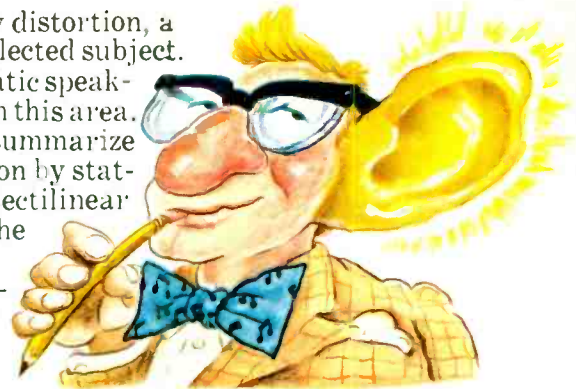
There's also the polite New England sound, with its origins in the Boston area. Nice and smooth, neutral, everything in its place, nothing shrill, but somehow muffled and less vivid than real life.

We believe that, despite their charms, both of these personalities are wrong. Only a totally characterless accuracy is right. What goes in must come out, no more and no less. Let the record producer create the type of sound you hear, not the speaker manufacturer.

Accuracy has a great deal to do with low

time delay distortion, a much-neglected subject.

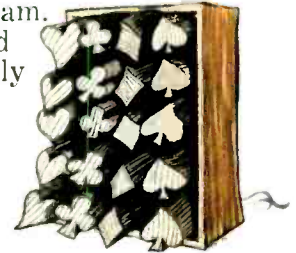
Electrostatic speakers excel in this area. We could summarize our position by stating that Rectilinear aims for the accurate, electrostatic type of sound without giving you the problems associated with electrostatics.



The Accurate Sound

5. There's also a new impediment to accurate sound reproduction, in addition to the established schisms discussed above. We're referring to the epidemic of "three-dimensional" or "sculptured" speaker grilles made of polyfoam.

A speaker grille should be, above all things, acoustically transparent. There should be no audible, and virtually no measurable, difference in the output of the speaker with the grille on or off.



The 3-D Grille

But the foam these newfangled grilles are made of is in many cases the same as the appliance people use for muffling the noises of air conditioners!

How a reputable manufacturer can use a *sound deadener* for a speaker grille is beyond us, but everybody seems to be doing it.

Until acoustically transparent three-dimensional materials become available, *our* grilles will remain prosaically two-dimensional.

So. Okay.

Besides Rectilinear, are there any sincere, serious, nonexotic speaker companies that make forward-radiating, personality-less, accurate-sounding systems without 3-D grilles?

We don't know of any.

In our own methodical way, we're unique.

One more thing.

We aren't telling you all this just for laughs.

Next time you're in a hi-fi store, use these five facts to guide you through the loudspeaker jungle.

And remember who told you.

RECTILINEAR

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CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



The Polite New England Sound

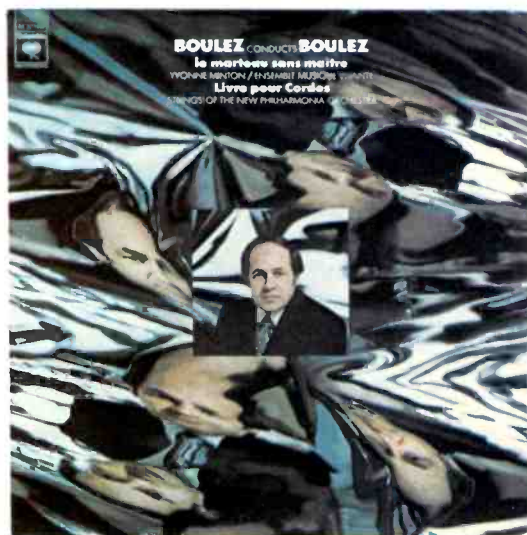
First Prizes



SCHUMANN: Scenes from Goethe's "Faust." Jennifer Vyvyan, Peter Pears, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Benjamin Britten. LONDON OSA 12100 (two discs).



WEBER: Der Freischütz. Gundula Janowitz, Peter Schreier, Theo Adam, Carlos Kleiber. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 046 (three discs).



BOULEZ: Le Marteau sans maître. Yvonne Minton, Pierre Boulez. COLUMBIA M 32160. Quadriphonic: MQ 32160 (SQ-encoded disc).

The Koussevitzky International Recordings Award*

CORDERO: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Sanford Allen, Paul Freeman. COLUMBIA M 32784.

*Presented annually to the best first recording of a work whose composer is still living.

Jury

- Georges Cherié, *Diapason*, France
- Dominique Chouet, *La Tribune de Genève*, Switzerland
- Edward Greenfield, *Guardian* and *Gramophone*, England
- Irving Lowens, *Washington Star*, U.S.A.
- Leonard Marcus, *HIGH FIDELITY*, U.S.A.
- José-Luis Pérez de Arteaga, *Revista Musical Ritmo*, Spain
- Ulrich Schreiber, *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Germany

Preselection Committee

- Carl-Gunnar Ahlén, *Svenska Dagbladet*, Sweden
- Claude Banieres, *le Dauphiné libéré*, France
- Luigi Bellingardi, *Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana*, Italy
- Jacques Bourgeois, *Diapason* and *Harmonie*, France
- Karl Breh, *Hi-Fi Stereophonie*, Germany
- Jay Carr, *Detroit News*, U.S.A.
- Peter G. Davis, *New York Times*, U.S.A.
- Marcel Doisy, *La Revue des Disques*, Belgium
- Ingo Harden, *Fonoforum*, Germany
- Roy Hemming, *Scholastic International*, U.S.A.
- Michel Hofmann, *ORTF*, France
- Pierre Hugli, *La Gazette de Lausanne*, Switzerland
- Tadao Koishi, *Record Geijutsu* and *Mainichi Shimbun*, Japan
- Robert Layton, *Gramophone* and *B.B.C.*, England
- Robert C. Marsh, *Chicago Sun-Times*, U.S.A.
- Louis Nicholas, *Nashville Tennessean*, U.S.A.
- Sylvie de Nussac, *L'Express*, France
- Laura Padellaro, *Radio Corriere*, Italy
- Bengt Plejel, *Musik Revy*, Sweden
- Manfred Reichert, *Musikredaktion Südwestfunk Baden-Baden*, Germany
- Revista Musical Illustrada Ritmo*, Spain
- Dorde Saula, *Radio Zagreb*, Yugoslavia
- Michael Steinberg, *Boston Globe*, U.S.A.
- Numa F. Tetaz, *24 heures Lausanne*, Switzerland
- Gerard Verlinden, *Elseviers Magazine*, Holland
- Edith Walter, *Harmonie*, France
- Daniel Webster, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, U.S.A.
- Tilden Wells, *Columbus Dispatch*, U.S.A.

The Other Nominated Recordings

ALBÉNIZ: Iberia; Cantos de España. Alicia de Larrocha. LONDON CSA 2235 (two discs).

BEETHOVEN: Concertos for Piano (5). Vladimir Ashkenazy, Georg Solti. LONDON CSA 2404 (four discs).

BERIO: Recital I (for Cathy). Cathy Berberian, Luciano Berio. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-0036.

BERLIOZ: La Damnation de Faust. Josephine Veasey, Nicolai Gedda, Jules Bastin, Colin Davis. PHILIPS 6703 042 (three discs).

COPLAND: Appalachian Spring. Aaron Copland. COLUMBIA M 32736. Quadriphonic: MQ 30649 (SQ-encoded disc).

HAYDN: Symphonies Nos. 1-19. Antal Dorati. LONDON STEREO TREASURY STS 15310/15 (six discs).

MESSIAEN: Visions de l'Amen. Peter Serkin,

Yuji Takahashi. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-0363.

MOZART: Die Zauberflöte. Anneliese Roth- enberger, Peter Schreier, Wolfgang Saw- wallisch. ANGEL SCL 3807 (three discs).

OCKEGHEM: Missa pro defunctis. **DES PREZ:** Déploration sur la mort d'Ockeghem. Pro Cantione Antiqua. ARCHIV 2533 145.

PFITZNER: Palestrina. Nicolai Gedda, Diet- rich Fischer-Dieskau, Rafael Kubelik. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2711 013 (four discs).

POULENC: Chamber Music (complete). Jacques Février. EMI C165 12519/22 (four discs).

PROKOFIEV: Romeo and Juliet. Lorin Maa- zel. LONDON CSA 2312 (three discs).

PUCCINI: Turandot. Joan Sutherland, Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, Zubin Mehta. LONDON OSA 13108 (three discs).

RACHMANINOFF: Vespers. Alexander Sveshnikov. MELODIYA/ANGEL SRB 4124 (two discs).

ROCHBERG: Quartet for Strings, No. 3. Con- cord String Quartet. NONESUCH H 71283.

ROSSINI: Guillaume Tell. Gabriel Bacquier, Montserrat Caballé, Nicolai Gedda, Lam- berto Gardelli. ANGEL SEL 3793 (five discs).

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, in A minor, D. 784; Moments musicaux. Alfred Brendel. PHILIPS 6500 418.

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, in B flat, D. 9600. Sviatoslav Richter. EURODISC 86 222 MK.

SCHUMANN: Davidsbündlertänze; Fan- tasiestücke. Murray Perahia. COLUMBIA M 32299.

SCHUMANN: Sontata for Piano, in F sharp minor, Op. 11; Fantasy, Op. 11. Maurizio Pollini. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 379.

VERDI: I Vespri siciliani. Martina Arroyo, Pla- cido Domingo, James Levine. RCA RED SEAL ARL 4-0370 (four discs).

VICTORIA: Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae. HISPAVOX 16/18 (three discs).

The Best of the Pops 1974

Selected by HF reviewers

RUBY BRAFF-GEORGE BARNES QUARTET. CHIAROSCURO 121.

JOE COCKER: I Can Stand a Little Rain. A&M SP 3633.

DEODATO: Whirlwinds. MCA 410.

MARVIN GAYE: Live! TAMLA T6-333.

DICK HYMAN: Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Mor- ton. COLUMBIA M 32587.

JANIS IAN: Stars. COLUMBIA KC 32857.

LOGGINS AND MESSINA: Full Sail. COLUMBIA KC 32540.

PAUL MCCARTNEY: Band on the Run. APPLE SO 3415.

JONI MITCHELL: Court and Spark. ELEKTRA/ ASYLUM 7E 1001.

CARLY SIMON: Hotcakes. ELEKTRA/ASYLUM 7E 1002.

THE SMITHSONIAN COLLECTION OF CLASSIC JAZZ. SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

JAMES TAYLOR: Walking Man. WARNER BROS. W 2794.

BOB WILBER-KENNY DAVERN: Soprano Sum- mit. WORLD JAZZ S 5.

STEVIE WONDER: Fulfillingness' First Finale. TAMLA T6 332S1.

STEVIE WONDER: Innervisions. TAMLA 326.

The Best Records of the Year

How the Voting Went by Leonard Marcus

EACH YEAR THERE seems to be a new member of the HIGH FIDELITY/Montreux Inter- national Record Awards jury; this year it was the German member, Ulrich Schreiber from Frankfurt. Although militantly political in his musical orientation, he proved to be quite an astute critic when it came down to specific musical judgments. I would place myself, how- ever, at the other end of the spectrum, as musically evangelical, trying to spread the Good News of music. The most exuberant musical

evangelists present, to be sure, were HF's Brit- ish correspondent, Ted Greenfield, and the young Spaniard, José-Luis Perez de Arteaga. I mentioned José-Luis in last year's report, and in appreciation he brought to Switzerland this year an extraordinary gift for me: *La musica en el Museo del Prado*, a book of reproduc- tions of all the art with musical motifs in the Prado. Hm—

Paul Getty, Jacques Cartier, Remy Martin, Fort Knox.

We convened during the last days of August, somewhat earlier than usual, in order to accommodate the schedule of Karl Böhm, the conductor who would receive a *diplôme d'honneur* this year for his contributions to the world of recordings. Still, the date limitations remained May 1 (1973) to April 30 (1974) for the first issuance of the recordings.

Our procedure calls for each juror to give his opinion of each album nominated by the Preselection Committee and then for a preliminary vote to determine which recordings should remain on the ultimate ballot. During the discussion, several heated arguments broke out, two of which I was involved in. The first concerned Pfitzner's *Palestrina*. I maintained that the opera was a unique work, an absolute masterpiece, and that not only was the album under consideration its first commercial recording, but it was as fulfilling a recording as we could hope to achieve. But then Ulrich Schreiber pointed out that, in Germany, Pfitzner had become a symbol of the extreme right wing, not only of the aesthetic reactionaries, but of the political ones as well. *Palestrina*, he insisted, was "too German, in the worst sense." I never thought I'd be upholding the opposite point of view against a German, but to me the argument seemed irrelevant. At any rate, *Palestrina* stayed on the

ballot by one vote.

The next eruption broke out when I, rather innocently I thought, expressed my preference for the full orchestral version of Copland's *Appalachian Spring* over the nominated Copland-conducted chamber version. Everyone jumped on me at once, all claiming that this was the most musical arrangement, the best performance, and one of the finest quadriphonic discs ever issued. Ironically, although I finally voted to keep it on the list, it was eliminated by one vote.

Most of us had remembered being disappointed by the two Schubert piano discs: Richter's we recalled as having been a great performance marred by inferior recorded sound; Brendel's had had very fine sound indeed, and the performance had been remembered as excellent, but a few of us expressed reservations about the pianist's pedaling, which seemed to muddy several passages. We decided to retain both on the ballot so that all could rehear them the next day before the final voting.

Considering only the preliminary "elimination ballot," the two most popular albums were *Der Freischütz* under the direction of Carlos Kleiber and Ockeghem's *Missa pro defunctis*. Few of us knew the latter recording before we arrived, but when we heard it in

Montreux it seduced us all.

The other albums to make the "finals" were the Joan Sutherland/Zubin Mehta *Turandot*, Benjamin Britten's recording of Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's "Faust,"* Antal Dorati's album of Haydn symphonies, and Pierre Boulez' *Le Marteau sans maître*, with Yvonne Minton and conducted by the composer, which was destined to become the first quadriphonic recording ever to win a *prix mondial* in Montreux.

Before breaking up after the final vote, we elected next year's recipients of the *diplôme d'honneur*. (This year's were, besides Maestro Böhm, Benjamin Bauer of CBS Laboratories for the invention of the SQ quadriphonic system and Toshiya Inoue of JVC for the development of the CD-4 quadriphonic system.) The 1975 honors will go to Michel Garcin, the founder of the French record company Erato, whose recordings are issued here by both RCA and the Musical Heritage Society, and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, whose recordings seem to be issued everywhere by everybody.

For the first time since 1968, when the awards were initiated, the Koussevitzky International Recording Award was presented in conjunction with the Montreux ceremonies. Photos of the gala event are on the following pages.



Once a month 275,000 readers (more than ever before) turn back the cover of HIGH FIDELITY, the Magazine for Music Listeners, then cast off into a dream world of their own.

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- Payment enclosed Bill me later

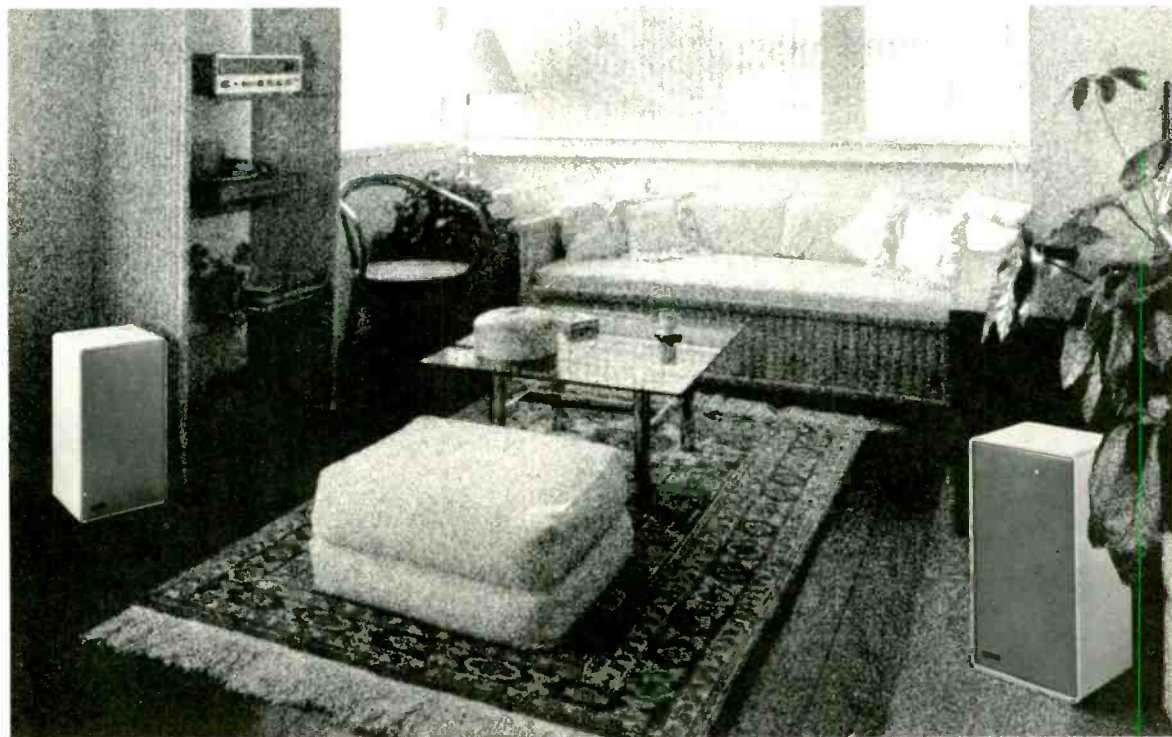
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With any of several good low-cost receivers (from Harman-Kardon, Kenwood, Sherwood, Sony, and others) and a good automatic turntable (like the low-cost models from BSR, Garrard, and others), you can put together a stereo system for \$350 or less that isn't a "starter" or a compromise for a tight budget, but a real and continuing joy to live with for year after year.

The only essential difference between the Advent/2 and the two more expensive Advents is that it doesn't have the final half-octave of bass response that they do. It has the same clean, clear, and beautifully defined overall sound, with a musical balance that is satisfying

not just with the best recordings or one kind of musical material, but with the whole range of music and the various ways of recording it. Its frequency range is as wide as that of most speakers at any price.

If you would like full information on the Advent/2, including a list of Advent dealers who will be happy to demonstrate what it can do in a low-cost stereo system, please send in the coupon.

Thank you.

Advent Corporation, H
 195 Albany St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139
 Gentlemen:
 Please send me information on the Advent/2.
 Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____

Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.

* Pictures are pictures and rooms are rooms. In real life, the speakers face the sofa, but we turned them around so that you can see them.



A Party for the Winners at a Swiss Castle

The three winners of a diplôme d'honneur this year for their outstanding contributions to the recording industry were conductor Karl Böhm (left in photo top left), who received a silver decanter along with his award from René Klopfenstein, director of the Montreux Music Festival, as Nicole Hirsch-Klopfenstein, secretary-general of the Montreux awards, looked on; CBS Laboratories' Benjamin Bauer (left in photo top right), director of the team that developed the SQ quadriphonic system, here being presented with his diplôme by HF's Leonard Marcus; and JVC's Toshiya Inoue, inventor of the CD-4 quadriphonic system, here accepting his award from Karl Breh, editor of Germany's HiFi Stereophonie.



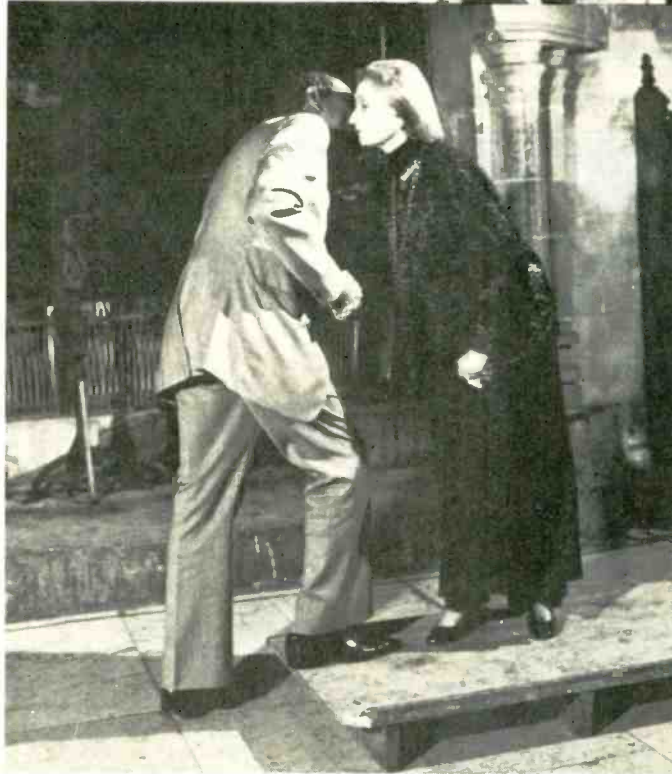
Evan Senior

Panamanian composer Roque Cordero plants a kiss on Mme. Serge Koussevitzky's cheek after she had given him the Koussevitzky International Recordings Award for his violin concerto on Columbia.



Evan Senior

A touching moment during the gala presentation dinner at Montreux's Chateauillon came when Maestro Bohm (seated at the right side of the table above, back to camera) presented the rose from a cake baked in his honor to Mme. Koussevitzky (mostly hidden). Sharing the moment around the table from left were Benjamin Baler, juror Jose-Luis Perez de Arteaga (standing); HF's Leonard Marcus; Roque Cordero; and HF's London correspondent Edward Greenfield (standing).



On hand to accept a prix mondial du disque this year were mezzo Yvonne Minton, featured on Columbia's *Le Marteau sans maître* (presented by juror Irving Lowens); Decca/London's Fred Widmer (in white jacket) for the *Scenes from Goethe's "Faust"* (presented by juror Edward Greenfield); and DG's Werner Güttinger for *Der Freischütz* (about to be presented by juror Ulrich Schreiber).



Evan Senior



Evan Senior

Continued from page 14

All the reviews I have seen mention the new music, which for the most part appears in some form in the original vocal score for the 1956 production. For example, the current "Alleluia" was originally a processional for pilgrims going to America, and bits of the current "Auto-da-fé" existed as a prolonged sequence involving the Lisbon earthquake and market day. It is unfortunate that Columbia did not generously provide two records for the original production.

One song that I really hoped to see in the current production (you hear it briefly under Pangloss' opening speech) was Pangloss' clever paean to the benefits of syphilis. This,

sadly, has been junked along with the "Quiet" trio, which Mr. Brown laments, and the fine ensemble "What's the Use?"

Perhaps the saddest aspect of the current revival is the fact that it may become the only performable version of the work. G. Schirmer, I have been told, no longer has the performance rights for the original Bernstein-Hellman collaboration, which should have provided opera companies with a successor to *Fledermans* and other comic operettas.

W. Lawrence Moore
Middletown, Ohio

Mahler and Waldmärchen

Supporting my psychological hypothesis.

Abram Chipman gave in the October "Letters" column some excellent functional reasons why Mahler would, because of unconscious guilt, have deleted the *Waldmärchen* section of *Das klagende Lied* without suppressing the whole work.

I would just like to add the suggestion that D. J. Coombs ["Letters," August] and other Mahlerites ought to read my full hypothesis in the Angel-Wyn Morris record folder (or in *The Music Review*, November 1968, or *Chord and Discord*, 1969), rather than just the perfunctory mention of it in the Columbia album to which Mr. Coombs refers, before rejecting it out of hand.

Jack Diether
New York, N.Y.

Wire, Anyone?

I wonder if anyone knows if it is still possible to get spools of recording wire for the old Webster-Chicago wire recorders. I have a machine that is in working order, but I have little wire to use with it. I would appreciate any information.

Bob Barnett
101 N. Prairie
Sioux Falls, S.D. 57104

Cassette Shells

Cassettes are becoming the preferred format for tape correspondence, but they seem to take quite a beating in the mails. Many come back to us damaged or even broken. Do you know where we could purchase cassette shells at a reasonable price to replace the broken ones in salvaging the tape and hubs?

I know that some stores sell replacement kits for about a dollar, but for that price we could buy brand-new loaded cassettes; it seems as though the shells alone should be available for less.

Thomas H. Havens, Director
Global Tape Recording Exchange
Wayne, N.Y.

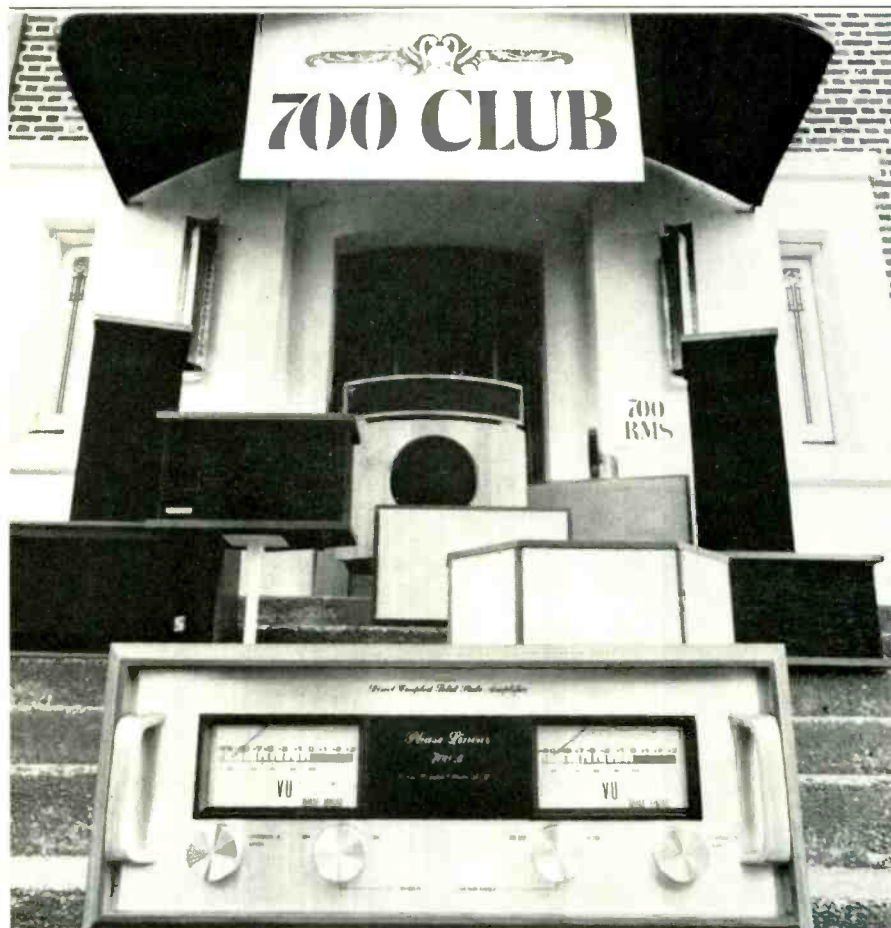
It probably would cost almost as much on a single-unit basis to market an empty shell as to fill it with tape. We're publishing your letter, however, in the hope that it may find a source willing to sell the shells in bulk and therefore realize the kind of saving you're looking for. We plan to publish any offers we receive, including minimum quantities that can be accepted as bulk orders, so that other groups with similar needs may make use of them. Obviously the screw-type shell would be preferable, but the type designed for sonic welding can be glued, if you're careful. And with any type of case it may be necessary to replace the hubs as well for correct clearances.

You might, however, consider a restudy of packing methods as an alternative solution.

Losing Lennon

In this time of pardons and amnesty and in the light of our national self-re-evaluation, isn't it also time we consider the deportation of John Lennon an injustice—not only to him, but to us and to America?

Bernie Mitchell
President
Pioneer High Fidelity
Moonachie, N.J.



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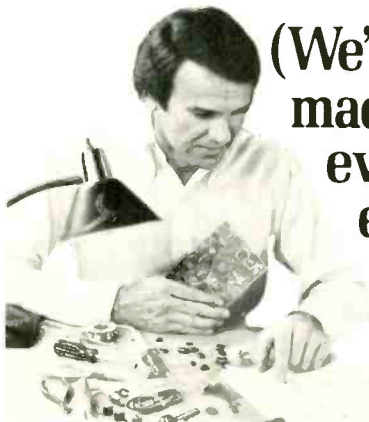
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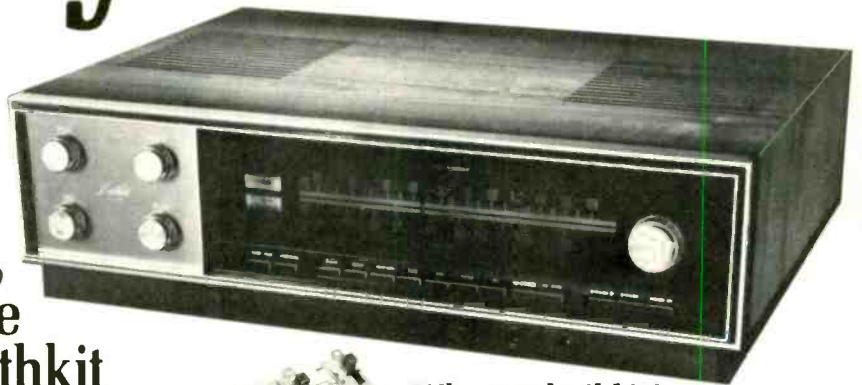
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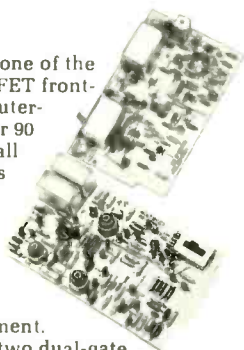
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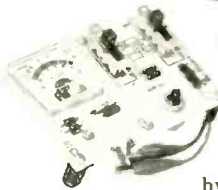
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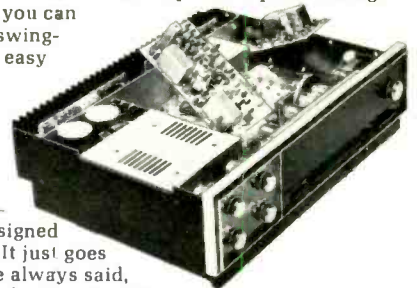
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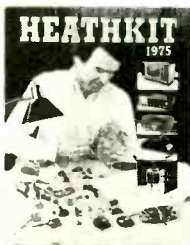
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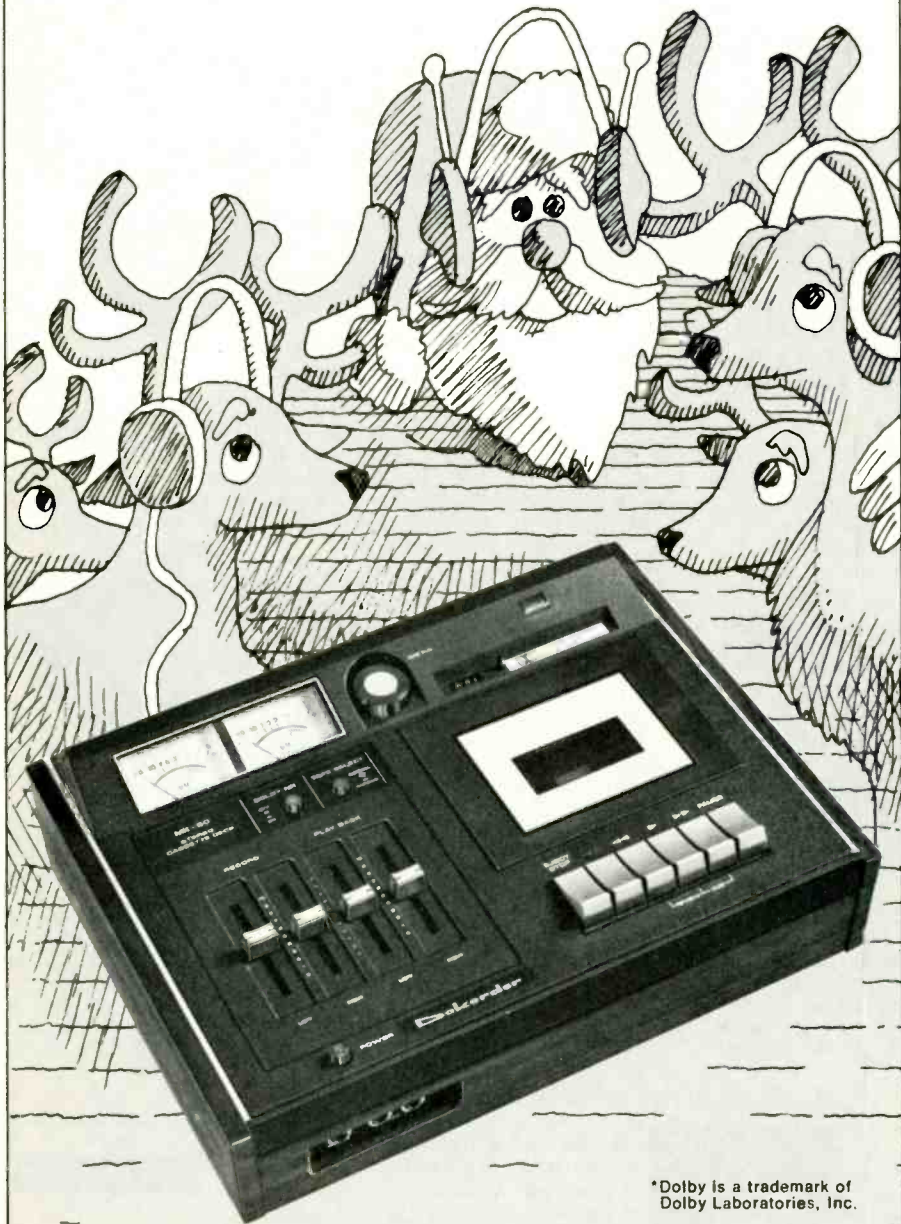
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Stokowski's New World

This is to correct a factual misstatement in R. D. Darrell's excellent review of the two Stokowski recordings of Dvořák's *New World* Symphony [August].

The record listing at the end includes "with 'Outline of Themes,' Stokowski, narrator and piano." This information, presumably copied from Edward Johnson's generally excellent liner notes, is incorrect—along with other material noted below. The Victor archives note that on October 6, 1927, Stokowski narrated the outline of themes with Artur Rodzinski at the piano. On the same day, the two also made the extra-side outline of themes for the Franck symphony (M 22). Stokowski *did* play the piano for his earlier Brahms First and Beethoven Seventh outlines.

Mr. Darrell also mixes in his review the information (again from the notes) that "initial engineering experience forced the omission of timpani in the 1925 version and demanded sarrusophone reinforcement of its string basses." Portions of this statement are debatable, according to the Victor archives, for nothing below cellos is listed in the orchestral forces. Timpani are apparent in the second movement, and one delicious tinkle from the cymbal is heard in the final movement, while drums, etc., are silent in the third and fourth movements. The first movement, recorded at a different session from the final three, had neither timpani nor double basses. The term "sarrusophone" may be poetic, but the archives indicate the use of tuba or bass saxophone for the bass line.

I also have a query re the August "Tape Deck," in which Mr. Darrell attributes the superb *Sayão Forest of the Amazon* to Stokowski. All sources I know credit Villa Lobos himself as conductor. Which is correct?

Robert L. Gatewood
Warren, Ark.

Villa Lobos it is.

Rodzinski Discography

For a discography of the conductor Artur Rodzinski, I would appreciate information on any noncommercial or broadcast recordings in private hands.

Michael H. Gray
2638 39th St. N.W., Apt. 2
Washington, D.C. 20007

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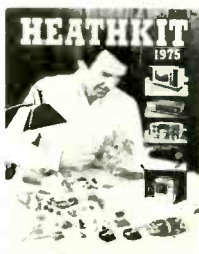


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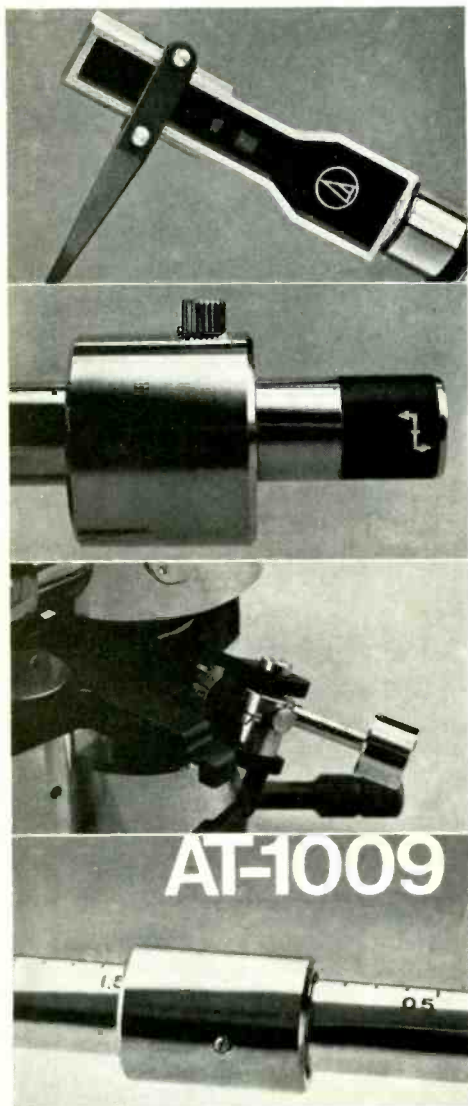


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the lees side



Sergio Mendes and Brasil '77

Sergio Mendes— Out of the Cold

THE WINTER OF 1962-63 was bitterly cold in New York City. It was harsh enough to those of us who were used to it, but for the Brazilian musicians who had been swept there by the wave of bossa nova, it was particularly punitive, and they would shiver in something close to pain on their way to a little Brazilian cafe on West 44th Street whose name I have forgotten. There, finding solace in the Portuguese chitchat of the waiters and Carioca cooking, they would linger over *cafezinho*, their faces long with *saudade* for the Rio de Janeiro sunshine, reluctant to go out again into that bleak winter.

Saudade is a peculiarly Brazilian word meaning longing, homesickness, and sadness, but not exactly any of these. Brazilians say it's untranslatable, but you'd expect them to say that.

I was at that time very much involved in the bossa nova movement, having been by accident one of the first people in North America to become aware of it. I went to Brazil, learned at least some

Portuguese, and wrote what were—so far as I know—the first translations into English of the bossa nova songs. Some of these lyrics I wrote in Rio; others I was writing during that pitiless winter.

The Brazilian musicians who had come to New York seemed very lost. They were just about the most charming—and the least cosmopolitan—collection of people I have ever encountered. Tragically for them, many were almost childishly irresponsible.

New York was positively inundated with Brazilian talent—Antonio Carlos Jobim, João Gilberto, João Donato, Bola Sete (it means Seven Ball; I have never learned how he got the name), Carlos Lyra, and Baden Powell, carrying his guitar wrapped in a blanket to guard it against the cold. Most of them had come to play in a concert of bossa nova music at Carnegie Hall, then went on to a concert in Washington, D.C. Within a few weeks many of them went home, although over the next several years they would turn up again from time to time to

Soundsational Advice



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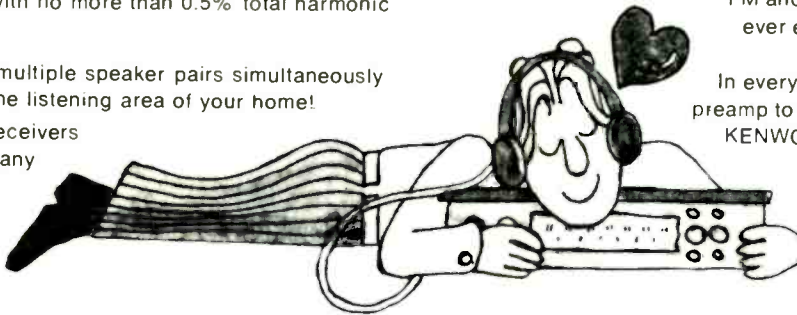
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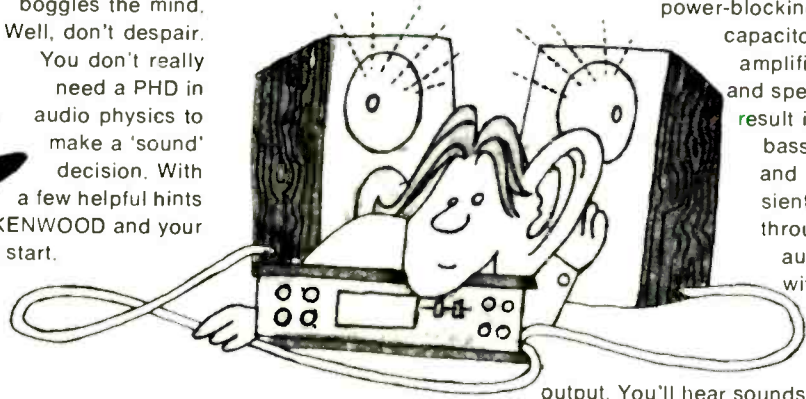


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record in Los Angeles or New York, only to keep disappearing.

Of all of them, the one who seemed least likely to succeed was a certain obscure young pianist named Sergio Mendes. After the Carnegie Hall concert, he played an engagement at the Village Vanguard. And what he played wasn't bossa nova or even popular music. It was jazz, and his playing reflected his admiration for Bud Powell and Horace Silver. With dark hair and a serious, almost forbidding mien, he didn't seem very communicative.

And yet these twelve years later, most of his colleagues of that time have gone back to Brazil or have been forgotten or both. And with the one probable exception of Pele, the football player, Sergio must be the best-known Brazilian on earth.

When I saw him in concert last summer, thirteen thousand people came to see him. The girls gathered backstage for a glimpse of him and called for his autograph. He was treated like, and he is, an international celebrity. So busy is he that he gets to spend only about three months of the year at his home in Encino, California—and when he's there he is either rehearsing or recording. (He still spends about three months of the year in Brazil; the other six are consumed by his concert schedule.)

I had dinner with Sergio the night after the concert. I hadn't seen him—literally—since the Village Vanguard show. I had never really known him well, and I was unprepared for the thoughtful, affable, and rather poetic man I now encountered—a man, I might add, of obvious and exceptional shrewdness. He studies people, and carefully.

Why did he, of all the people from Brazil in that winter of '62-'63, succeed? Not that I question his musicianship: I always liked his playing. But we can all name brilliant talent that should have made it and didn't. Why did he *break through*? That's the question.

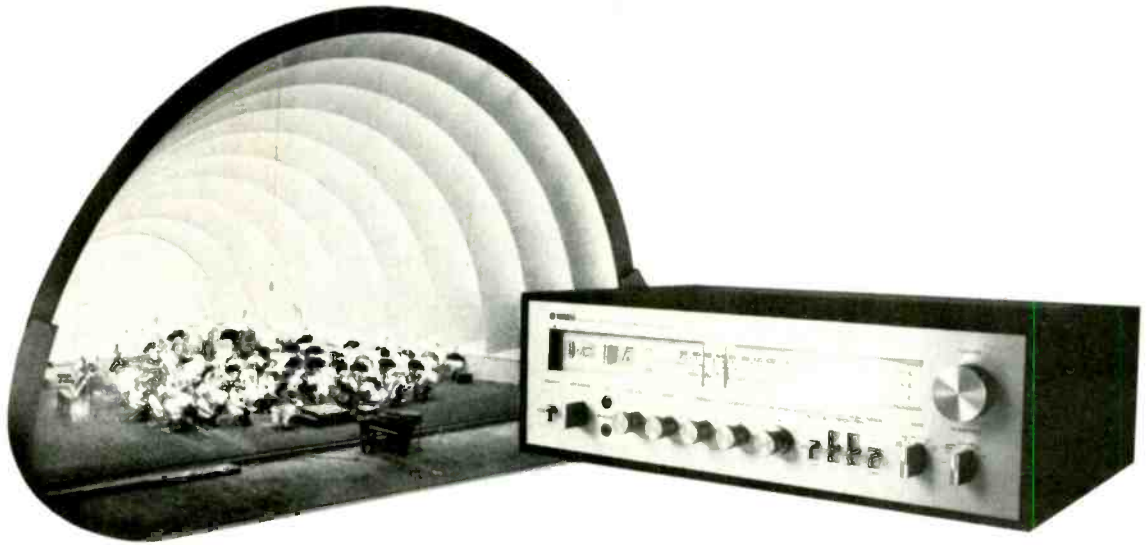
First of all, he is known to be an astute businessman. The other Brazilians were not.

But there is this factor, too:

"They left Brazil at that time," Sergio said over a glass of white Macon. "but they never really left, if you know what I mean. They were always thinking about going back, and when they went back all they were talking about was the United States. But I went to the United States with the idea of having a career, of having a group and developing a sound.

"Wherever they were, the others were always thinking about the other reality. And I was always thinking about this reality.

"I had my idea about a group with two girl singers, singing in English. And when we got a hit with *Mais Que Nada*, I



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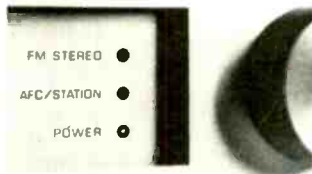
The result is low distortion performance, typically

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The CR-800's FM tuner section is the first to utilize negative feedback around the multiplex demodulator. This achieves superb separation (45 dB) and reduces MPX distortion to 0.05%.

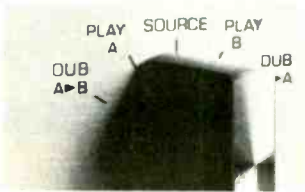
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tuning allows the electronics to fine tune the station for minimum distortion (and keeps it there).



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CIRCLE 68 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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CIRCLE 39 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

didn't go home. I tried to get another hit, and another one.

"And I didn't close my mind to other kinds of music. I was glad to be able to do something by the Beatles or Paul Simon and adapt it to our sound. I think that is the most exciting thing that is happening: the way all different kinds of music in the world are blending.

"I was interested in the world, in people, in life in all its scope. I wanted to make music that wasn't just for Brazil or the United States. I wanted to have a style that would have an international appeal."

As the foregoing indicates, Sergio Mendes has an intense and focused drive. What is the source of it? Perhaps one factor was a childhood illness. When he was three years old, he contracted osteomyelitis and spent much of the next three years in a cast. He could not have the bicycle and football he wanted, and so when he was seven (and by then out of the cast) "a piano came my way, as a substitute for the bicycle. I hated it." Parenthetically, one is reminded that Oscar Peterson had to give up the trumpet as a child when he developed tuberculosis—and so he turned to the piano.

Sergio had the customary classical piano lessons and went to the conservatory in Rio, and still he loathed the piano. Then, when he was fifteen, he heard a Dave Brubeck record. The idea of improvisation held immense fascination, and he began to take music seriously. With some other young Brazilian musicians, he collected jazz records and analyzed the harmony he heard. And at last he began playing jazz himself.

Then came the winter of 1962-63 and the move to the U.S. From there on, Sergio's history is fairly public. Within three years, he and his Brasil 66 group (it's now Brasil 77) were into big success.

It is pleasant to think that a genuinely talented and deserving musician has made a lot of money. But Sergio Mendes is more significant than that. Through the late '60s, when the level of popular music was generally low and the record company press agents and merchandisers were perpetrating the Great Hype that this was all Significant Art, Sergio stood as a reminder of what popular music could be. He succeeded in selling a high level of pop to the people, all the while absorbing influences from the air around him and disseminating the Brazilian influence into other kinds of pop.

Perhaps a psychologist would conclude that he has been compensating for a fragile childhood. If so, the world is a better place for his effort.

"It's been a long time since the Village Vanguard," I said over coffee.

"The Village Vanguard," Sergio repeated musingly, as if he hadn't thought about that engagement in years. "Yes—a long time."

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GTE SYLVANIA



too hot to handle

Your report on the Pioneer QX-949 [quad receiver] in the September issue points out, correctly, that the thing that looks like a scope on the front panel isn't one and "doesn't give as much information as a true quadruphonic oscilloscope display does." But you should have pointed out what a ripoff it is. It looks so much like a true scope that you can be fooled until you get it home and turn the unit on. Why couldn't Pioneer have used a real one or something like those jazzy JVC "memory" indicators?—Carleton M. Mitchell, New-castle, Del.

As a matter of fact, the more we use the Pioneer display, the more useful we find it. The JVC device (a professional level indicator that will "hold" the maximum previous levels in each of four channels while continuing to show instantaneous levels in each) is prohibitively expensive for use in a receiver; except in holding maximum levels, the Pioneer display gives much the same sort of information. A "real" quad scope (Pioneer, as well as Panasonic and Heath, has offered this type, though not in a receiver) does give somewhat more detailed information about the signals, but we suspect that a great many users would find it easier to "read" important information (channel balance, basic placements, and so on) from the QX-949 display. In a word, we certainly don't consider the Pioneer a ripoff.

I recently sold my Akai 365 tape deck, because I didn't feel I used it enough to justify its \$600 price. Now I wish I had it back, which puts me in the market for a new deck—preferably one that doesn't involve such an investment. From your reviews of some of the better cassette decks like the Advent 201 and the Harman-Kardon HK-1000, I wonder whether I might find what I'm looking for in that format. Is it unreasonable to expect any close semblance of the performance I got from my Akai? What makes me wonder in particular is the relatively high distortion that some cassette decks (the Harman-Kardon, for example) seem to have.—Steve Bower, Tampa, Fla.

First, the cassette format is not technically the equal of open-reel. Second, depending on what you record and how you listen, you may not be able to hear the difference. Third, the testing methods required by the two formats are sufficiently different that the "same" measurement can have two different meanings when applied to the two formats.

The key difference is in the assumed "0 VU" and its relationship to the total dy-

namic range. The NAB 0 VU against which open-reel equipment is measured is (depending on the tape used) some 10 dB below the midrange overload point. Harmonic distortion measurements (which CBS Labs make at -10 VU) are therefore taken about 20 dB below overload and about 40 to 50 dB above residual noise (assuming S/N ratios of 50 to 60 dB). DIN 0 VU, the standard for cassettes, is very close to overload; cassette distortion measurements are therefore some 10 dB below overload and 30 to 40 dB above residual noise (with S/Ns of 40 to 50 dB). As you move higher in frequency, particularly with cassettes, the -10 dB creeps closer to overload (and tape saturation) levels, while the noise also rises. This is why Dolby is so important to good cassette recordings: It helps squeeze high-frequency signals in between overload and noise. With open reels there's room to spare (at least at 7½ ips or higher transport speeds), but with cassette it's a very tight fit.

Fortunately the normal distribution of levels across the frequency band in regular musical material matches this tight fit quite neatly. (The cassette system was engineered so that this would be true, of course.) This is why a really well-made cassette can sound approximately as good as an open-reel tape under most circumstances but can't match the quality of a really superb open-reel tape. And of course it's harder to record well on cassette than on reels; the latter are more forgiving of imprecise level riding, for example.

After reading a report that said the BSR 710/x turntable didn't have a very accurate tracking-force setting (it read 0.5 gram high) I bought a Shure STF-2 tracking-force gauge and tested my 710/x. I found it was 0.5 gram off, but in the opposite direction!—Robert W. Larson, Eatontown, N.J.

In testing the BSR 810, CBS Labs found tracking-force errors of no more than 0.1 gram, which we would consider negligibly small. The 710 is, of course, less expensive, but we would think that 0.5 gram is significant even so. The vast majority of changers use spring loading to achieve vertical tracking forces, and spring tension can change with time. So even a sample that is perfect when it is brand new may become significantly inaccurate. We don't know how long you've had yours, but we have often said such tracking-force settings should be checked with a gauge from time to time for this reason. And if you find a discrepancy, you should of course follow the reading on the gauge, rather than the

calibration on the built-in control, in adjusting your arm.

Your test report on the Marantz 4240 [Dolby quad receiver, August 1974] has a great deal to say about the buttons and knobs on the front panel. Why don't you use this space to discuss how the unit operates? Are you trying to hide something?—Gene Peltz, Racine, Wis.

Not at all. On any receiver—particularly on one as complex and unconventional as the 4240—we discuss the controls in great detail because they are the key to what the unit will do (or won't do). We give our own views on how all these features work together in the last four paragraphs of the Marantz report, but we're aware that not all readers will share our value judgments in this respect. Only by understanding the actual layout and mechanics can a reader match the equipment, feature by feature, against his own needs and come to his own evaluation. And that evaluation is much more important than our *ex cathedra* pronouncements, since it is the reader who will (or will not) be buying the equipment.

I am trying to choose between the Avid 100 and the Smaller Advent loudspeakers. I have a Pioneer receiver that delivers 15 to 17 watts rms per channel. I heard the Avids and liked them more than the Advents. But I had never heard of Avid until I found the speakers in a Washington stereo shop, and it bothers me that the company is unknown and the reliability of its products unproven. What do you have to say on this?—Michael Powe, Washington, D.C.

Avid is new; its founder, Victor Brociner, has been doing impressive things in high fidelity since the early Fifties, first at his own company and later at H. H. Scott. Of course the fact that you like the Avid speaker better than the Advent is a salient one. We might add one other: In our tests (August 1974 for the Avid; April 1972 for the Advent) we found the Avid to be the more efficient of the two—that is, it required about one-sixth the power input to achieve the same acoustic output. Since your receiver is not particularly powerful, the greater sensitivity of the Avid might prove an advantage in allowing greater headroom and therefore cleaner peaks.

What's with Uher? It made such a splash with the 4000 Report L and the stereo 4400 [portable open-reel recorders], but now the company seems to be going to pot. And I note that Robert Angus says ["What Makes Some Recorders So Special?," HF, August 1974] its products are distributed "on an extremely limited basis in the U.S." Has Rosemary Woods's little contretemps with the 5000 scared Americans away?—C. J. Fenton, St. Louis, Mo.

Not as far as we can tell. Just after Mr. Angus' piece was prepared we got word that a new company had been formed to handle Uher in this country: Uher of America, 621 South Hindry Ave., Englewood, Calif. 90301. And judging from some of the goodies that the new distributor has in store for the American market (see William Tynan's new-products article in the October issue), there are yet more splashes for Uher to make.

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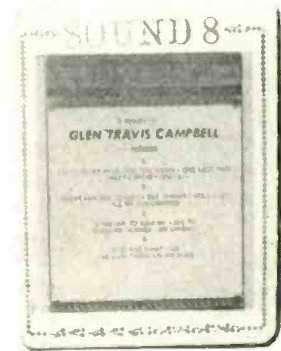
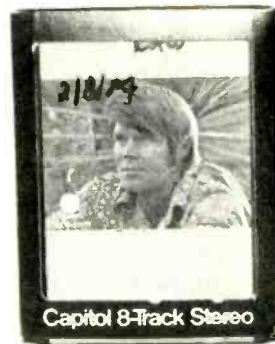
BFL © Admark International

Fall of the Not-So-Jolly Rogers

Viewed from the vantage of an editor's desk, the fight against recording piracy takes on some of the qualities of a William S. Hart epic. The good guys at first are baffled and cowed by the incredible wiles of the tape rustlers. But with clenched jaws they set out to right the wrong. And the almost incredible thing for our times is that the good guys seem to be winning—though, according to one estimate, a third of the eight-track tapes now on the U.S. market are illegally produced.

The pictures shown here were supplied as part of a press package (one of many we've received on the subject of antipiracy measures from several sources) prepared by William D. Keller, a U.S. attorney in Los Angeles. Presumably the reason he and his fellow good guys want us to be informed on the subject is to underline the facts that the recordings copyright law is working, that the pirates can't get away scot-free any more—however deviously they ply their once-lucrative trade—and that they might just as well give up and find something more ethical (or at least safe) to do.

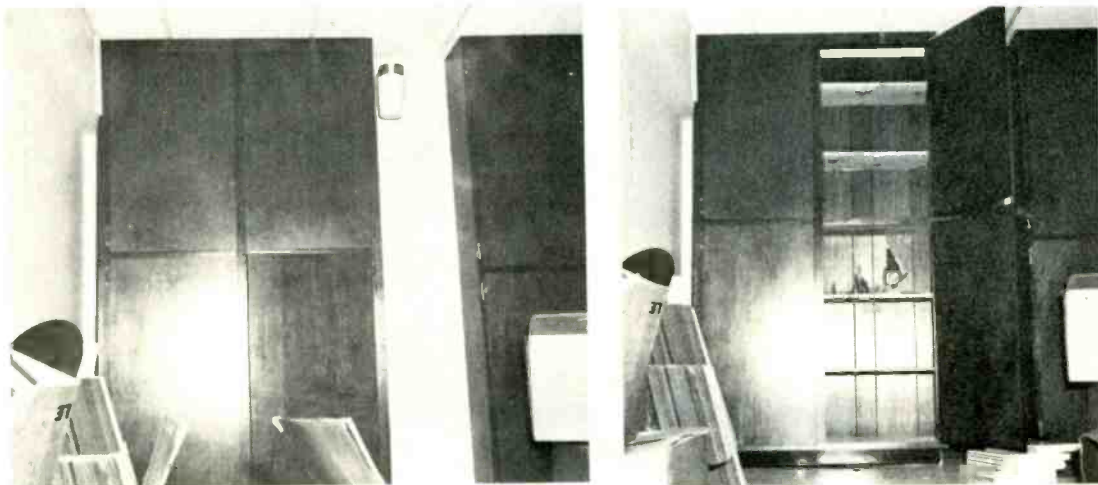
According to Keller's release, this particular case involved headquarters offices and "plants" at several Los Angeles locations, one with a hidden room to which phone calls were shunted from numbers in Phoenix, Arizona. To further confuse would-be investigators, there were the usual series of multiple identities (both personal and corporate), all claimed to have been dreamed up by one Richard Taxe. And Keller and friends made the claims stick in court, in a six-week trial that led to Taxe's sentencing on twenty-six federal counts last August. Three other defendants also were convicted.



This is an example of pirate booty. At the left is Capitol's original "Glen Travis Campbell" offering; on the right is the pirated version. Errol Flynn's pirates at least had style.



Pirated tapes were made in this "factory." In the seizure operation, during which this photograph apparently was taken, a stock of some 80,000 illegal tapes was taken in evidence.



The most cloak-and-dagger element in the story centered around what appeared to be some storage cabinets at Taxe's headquarters. Though agents had twice visited the Los Angeles address, it wasn't until January of last year that they discovered the secret: When the cabinet was opened and its contents removed, a doorknob was revealed. Behind the door was the communications center of the operation receiving calls placed to a fictitious company in Phoenix.

JVC's exclusive SEA prevents wasted watts!

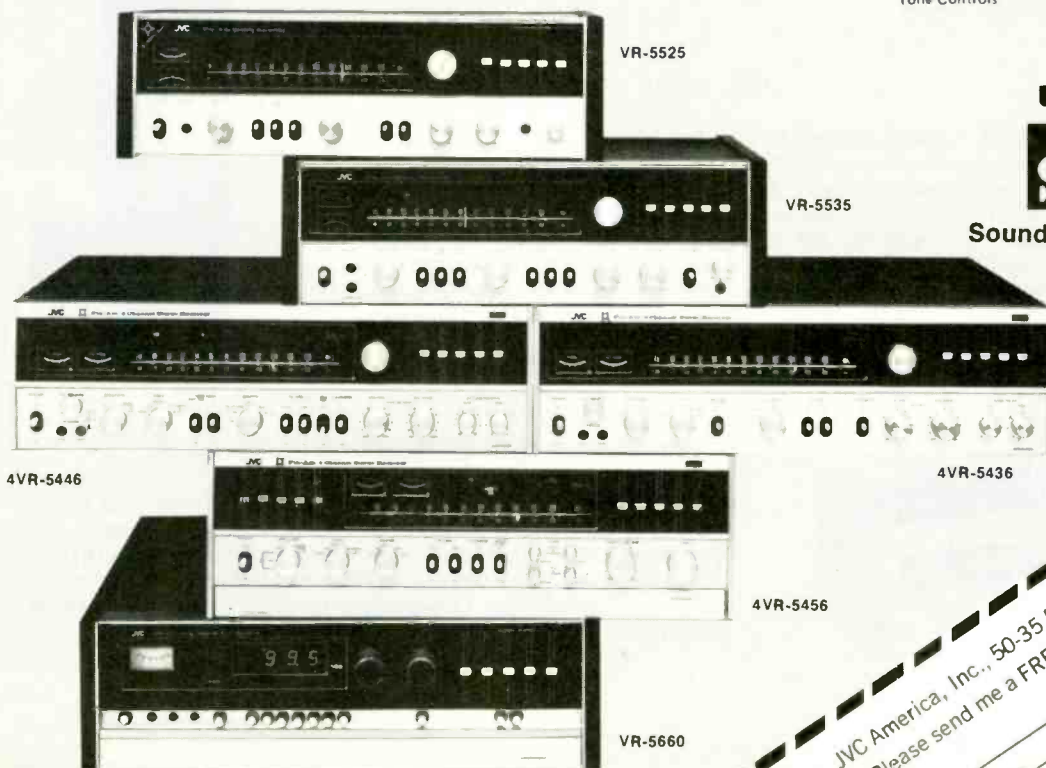
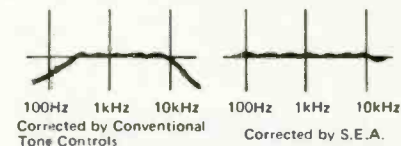
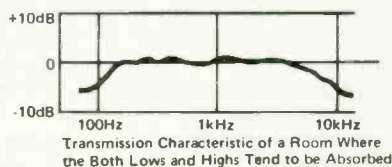
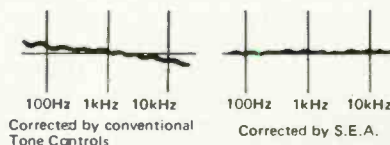
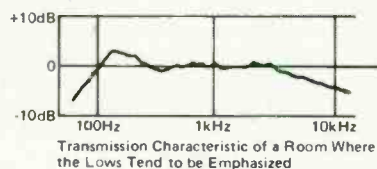
\$50 out of every \$100 you spend on a hi-fi receiver may be on wasted sound!

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Dolby, Dolby, Who's Got the Dolby?

A trade-press report early last autumn stated that more than a hundred FM stations had begun broadcasting with Dolby B noise reduction and that component manufacturers were falling all over each other to get into the market with Dolby reception equipment. While, as far as we know, the report is not exactly untrue, it does present the subject in a rather more attractive light than it might.

At about that time we were discussing the subject with many manufacturers. The consensus seemed to be that equipment for receiving the Dolby broadcasts with the equalization now specified by the FCC (see "News and Views," September 1974) should be in their respective lines. Some companies, like Marantz, Akai, Harman-Kardon, and Lafayette, already have made forays into this territory, of course. But what about those of us who are not ready to buy new equipment just to get ideal performance with the Dolbycasts? There's where the throat-clearing begins.

Most FM tuners and receivers have no provision for Dolby FM reception, of course, and even relatively few Dolby tape decks do. One can add an outboard Dolby unit to the tuner or receiver, but either with such a setup or with most Dolby decks having the FM switch, one problem remains: the change in equalization that now is tied into Dolby broadcasting. How, we asked manufacturers, can this be corrected? Could the U.S./European equalization switches on the backs of some receivers be altered for the purpose? Could an equalization change be added to the Dolby-FM switch positions on tape equipment?

In the early stages of our querying, a surprising number of product managers and company engineers

seemed not to have considered the matter. But, with growing consciousness that a problem (though, perhaps, a relatively minor one) was upon us, they began to sound a little uncomfortable. "A factory alteration would be possible," one told us. "It only takes a couple of resistors. But don't say that in your magazine, because we're not set up to handle the requests."

The state of things at this writing seems to be as follows: 1) Most manufacturers of receivers, tuners, and Dolby recorders should have at least some token models with the equalization switching on display (to the trade) by next June, with deliveries at least by the fall of 1975. 2) None that we know of is talking in terms of any across-the-board program for adapting existing models. 3) Most schemes for adapting existing models seem fairly awkward as long as some stations in a given area are Dolby-encoded while others are not. 4) Recorder manufacturers would like to see any adapting done—if it is done at all—in the receiver or tuner; the electronics manufacturers, citing the number of Dolby decks in the field, see the tape equipment as the logical point of attack. 5) Anybody who can seem to be hiding behind the statement that "you'll hardly hear the difference even if there is no correction for the altered equalization."

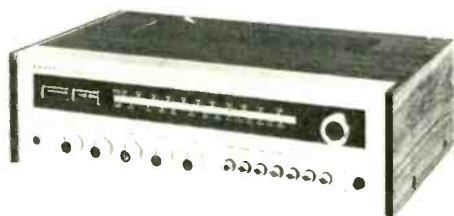
Dolby Labs says that those of us who are listening to Dolby broadcasts through non-Dolby equipment may hear an improvement in signal due to the processing equipment (see "What's Wrong with FM Sound?," HF, November 1973) that no longer need be used. Ignoring that improvement, however, we may find the loud passages a little wanting in highs. Switch in a Dolby decode circuit and, unless it has the equalization change built in, the sound will be shy of highs at any level. The casual listener probably won't hear anything amiss, but in essence high fidelity—and noise reduction—presumably isn't intended for casual listening.

equipment in the news

JBL adds another Aquarius

James B. Lansing Sound has added the Aquarius Q to a loudspeaker series known for its striking styling and omnidirectional sound dispersion pattern. The 43-inch column occupies a 1-foot square of floor space and is topped by a glass panel. When a pad beneath it is removed the crossover and controls can be viewed through the glass. The stretch-fabric grille is replaceable with six optional colors; a brown grille is delivered with the walnut-finish Aquarius Q, a black one with the satin-white model. The three-way system is rated to handle 50 watts and costs \$600.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Scott's moderate-priced stereo receiver

H.H. Scott has added a medium-cost model to its new—and newly styled—receiver line. The Model R-36S is rated for 30 watts per channel (continuous) into 8 ohms for less than 0.5% distortion at any frequency in the audio band. The FM portion of its tuner section is rated at 1.9 microvolts. The receiver has the uncluttered look of other recent Scott introductions and sells for \$329.95.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BEST.

Unanimously, critics have called our HD 414 the world's best headphones. Praising its wide response, unusual smoothness and superior transient abilities. No less important, from their standpoint, is the HD 414's exceptional comfort, thanks to its exclusive open-air* design that eliminates uncomfortable ear seals, and keeps the unit's weight to just 5 ounces. Review after review, in magazine after magazine, has helped make the HD 414 one of high fidelity's most remarkable success stories.



* U.S. Patent No. 3,586,794

BETTER.

The reviews aren't in yet, because the HD 424 is so new. But even our conservative engineers believe the HD 424 is something better. Thanks to significant technical advances that provide even greater accuracy and linearity at extremely high and low frequencies. There's an additional measure of comfort, as well, with even lower pressure on the ears, thanks to wider, thinner ear cushions and improved earpiece geometry. Plus a comfort-cushioned headband, that feels as good as it looks. Naturally, the HD 424 costs a bit more.



Try them once, and you'll probably be spoiled for any other kind of headphones. Then the choice is easy. You can buy the HD 414 and have the best. Or pay a little more, and have something better. Either way, you can't lose. Sennheiser Electronic Corporation, 10 West 37th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018 (212) 239-0190. Manufacturing Plant: Bissendorf, Hannover, West Germany.

Ampzilla—it's a GAS



The news that a 400-watt power amp—with or without metering and in kit or wired form—is available from The GAS Company is sure to raise some eyebrows. GAS, it turns out, stands for Great American Sound, and the company says it guarantees the Ampzilla for 200 watts per channel, continuous, with both channels driven, for less than 0.05% harmonic or intermodulation distortion. The wired version costs \$550 with meters, \$500 without; as a kit it runs \$400 and \$365 respectively. The GAS Co., Inc., handles mail orders but says it will be selling through dealers as well.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Beyer's featherweight stereo budget headset

Beyer—via Revox Corporation in this country—has introduced a new stereo headset that at 2.3 ounces (less cord) is exceptionally light. It is an "open-air" type that rests on the ears (rather than encircling them with a high-isolation seal) and delivers its sound through acoustic foam cushions. Beyer rates the model for response over the full audible range with a maximum input of approximately 7 milliwatts (2.1 volts for 600 ohms). Impedance of the model is rated at 600 ohms; it can be driven from either high or low impedance sources. The price is \$29.95.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Sansui offers an all-format quad receiver

The Sansui QRX-7001 AM/FM receiver includes IC Vario-matrix chips for both SQ (called "phase matrix" on the front panel) and QS decoding, a CD-4 demodulator for Quadradiscs, and a full complement of inputs and controls for mono, stereo, or quad reproduction from discs, tapes, or broadcasts. Among the circuitry features of the FM section is a differential multiplex demodulator developed by Sansui. FM specs include 1.9 microvolts of sensitivity, 70 dB of S/N, 40 dB of separation (at 1 kHz), and a capture ratio of 1.5 dB. The amp is rated at 35 watts (continuous) full band with all four channels driven simultaneously at less than 0.4% distortion. The price is \$879.95.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Cleaning system designed for Quadradiscs

In announcing the AT-6008 cleaning system, Audio-Technica says that CD-4 Quadradiscs in particular should not be subjected to excessive cleaning solutions and that the new device is designed to meet this need. The solution is applied to a reservoir at the top and moistens the velvet pad beneath. This loosens soil, which is then picked up by the pad, which revolves in use to present a continuously "fresh" surface to the disc. Cleaning unit, solution, applicator, and brush are sold together for \$7.95.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



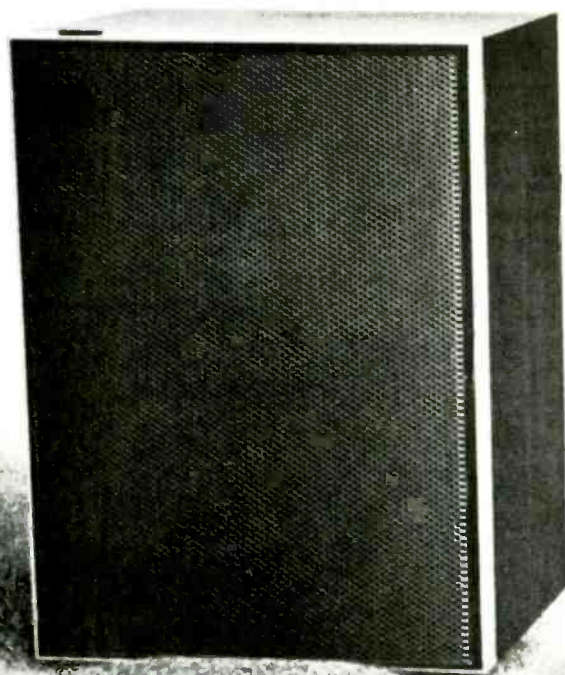
Kenwood receiver for penny-pinchers

Kenwood has announced the KR-1400 AM/FM receiver at only \$179.95—making it one of the least expensive units of its type from any component manufacturer. Output is rated at 10 watts (continuous, at 1 kHz) per channel with both driven into 8 ohms. Inputs are provided for magnetic phono (with a 2.5-millivolt sensitivity rating), aux, and tape monitor. The FM section is rated for a 2.6-microvolt sensitivity.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



MEET DAVID



The Philips Motional Feedback™ System. It challenges the giants.

Don't be bullied onto believing that size alone means quality. The Philips Motional Feedback System is only 11½ x 15 x 8½ inches small. Yet it stands up to speakers many more times its size.

The reason is a piezoelectric transducer in the apex of the woofer. This enables the Philips unit to literally "listen" to itself ...and electronically correct any distortion. You've got to hear it to believe it.

But the piezoelectric "sensor" is only part of the story. There's also a 3-way speaker system (woofer, mid-range and tweeter): electronic and passive crossover networks. Plus integral bi-amplification...A 20 watt amp to drive the tweeter and mid-range; Another 40 watt amp for the woofer...A total of 60 watts of continuous sine wave power, rated in accordance with the most recent F.T.C. ruling.

Low Frequency Amplifier: Minimum continuous average sine wave ("RMS") power: 40 watts. Bandwidth: 35 Hz to 1000 Hz. Maximum total harmonic distortion: 0.2%. Load impedance: 4 Ohms. High Frequency Amplifier: Minimum continuous average sine wave ("RMS") power: 20 watts. Bandwidth: 400 Hz to 20 kHz. Maximum total harmonic distortion: 0.2%. Load impedance: 8 ohms.

The result is a powerful, high performance sound system in a walnut finished 0.764 cubic foot cabinet. At better audio dealers now. The size will speak for itself.

PHILIPS HIGH FIDELITY COMPONENTS.
Distributed by
NORTH AMERICAN PHILIPS CORPORATION
100 East 42 Street
New York, New York 10017

TM—N.V. Philips—Holland

CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Klipsch Talks Price

We recently raised prices 4.3% on items the public buys most. And this raises the question of the prices of our products compared with the value received.

For example, a KLIPSCHORN® loudspeaker in oiled walnut, style B, was recently raised to \$1040. Ten years ago the price was \$884. In that same period of time the humble Volkswagen has gone to about \$2665 from \$1565.

Value

Maybe I should have titled this ad "Value;" because that's where my heart is right this moment, and really has always been, with regard to the audio buying public. That public of course, is not the reason for our success. They are our success.

Stable Design

To me, one of the most desirable features of the KLIPSCHORN has always been its stability. Its design remains today largely unchanged since it was stabilized in 1952. Our dealers relate to us what a joy it is to have their Klipsch customers who own five, six, or fifteen years old KLIPSCHORNS bringing in potential buyers for the same products they own.

No "Major Breakthrough"

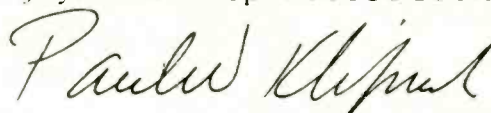
Dealers seem particularly proud not to have to eat the "major breakthrough" of the previous selling season, or to worry about whether to buy this year's "Cosmic Muffin"



or next year's speaker with the built-in waterfall and personal vibrator.

Lifetime Investment

We like for people to buy our loudspeakers. But we also like for them to use our loudspeakers the way they were meant to be used: as lifetime investments. Considering the small price increases and lifetime of enjoyment afforded by Klipsch speakers we believe you'll find no greater value in the enjoyment of reproduced sound.



Paul W. Klipsch

Send this coupon for information on all Klipsch loudspeakers.



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CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by Daniel Gravereaux

HIGH FIDELITY unveils its new methods that include a meaningful evaluation of CD-4 factors.

How We Test Phono Pickups

MODERN DISCS, WHETHER stereo or quad, make immense demands on the pickup cartridge if reproduction is to be satisfactory. Records have been getting "louder" and more "brilliant"—that is, they are cut at higher levels and contain more high-frequency information—than ever before, and they contain a greater dynamic range. In matrixed quad (whether encoded by the SQ, QS, or any other system) a myriad of intricate musical subtleties are represented indirectly—as relationships between the "wiggles" on one groove wall and those on the other. CD-4 Quadradiscs introduce yet another element that the stylus and cartridge must contend with: the high-frequency "carrier" that holds quadriphonic "information." All the considerations that have been important in evaluating a phono pickup remain important; the changes that have occurred place more importance on some of them and add some new ones.

The existence of the CD-4 system has also introduced new terms into the lexicon of disc reproduction. The carrier, for example, is a (nominally) 30-kHz tone (and therefore beyond the reach of both normal hearing and the design range of conventional stereo pickups) whose instantaneous fre-

quency is varied from the 30-kHz norm (that is, frequency modulated) by the musical information it "carries." The "space" between 20 and 45 kHz in the frequency spectrum is reserved for the carrier and sidebands.

The audible range from 20 Hz to 20 kHz is called the baseband in CD-4 reproduction. These frequencies are reproduced by stereo pickups being recorded in the usual way—as modulation directly on the groove walls. (Actually, CD-4 baseband characteristics generally are specified only to 15 kHz because some safety margin must be left between the end of the baseband and the beginning of the carrier band.) So conventional stereo cartridges may be thought of as "baseband" cartridges.

Cartridges designed to reproduce the carrier range as well have come to be called "CD-4 cartridges," though obviously their ability to reproduce the baseband means they also can be used for stereo or matrixed quad. Conversely, a conventional cartridge, designed to reproduce stereo or matrixed-quad discs, will reproduce (as stereo or simulated quad) the baseband information on Quadradiscs, cannot necessarily be expected to deal successfully with the carrier.

When the CD-4 quadriphonic system first appeared on the market it was obvious to us at HIGH FIDELITY and to CBS Laboratories (which supplies measurements for our test reports) that new methods would be needed to test the CD-4 cartridges used in playing Quadradiscs. The laboratory has been in the vanguard of electroacoustic research for many years; both for its own purposes and for ours, measurements could no longer be confined to the audible range. (In order to play Quadradiscs, a cartridge must be sensitive to the "carrier" range in the neighborhood of 30 kHz.) At the same time, we believed we could improve the way we had been reporting technical performance even in conventional cartridges.

Dan Gravereaux of CBS Labs, a specialist in the field of disc cutting and reproduction, worked out the method we will be using—for conventional pickups and for those intended for CD-4 reproduction as well—and, in the accompanying article, he outlines the nature and significance of the tests involved. So far we have tested five cartridges (all of them with the CD-4 capability) by this new method. Our reports on them appear in this issue.

Frequency Response and Separation

Frequency response portrays a cartridge's ability to transform the record's "sound" into electrical signals without tonal alterations. Ideally, all frequencies should be reproduced at the same level for "flat response." This applies directly to audio sounds—those contained in stereo or matrixed records and those contained in the baseband of Quadradiscs. Peaks and valleys in the curves represent sound-quality (tonal) alterations—boosts and losses respectively.

In judging the effects of frequency response above the baseband range, the curves have different meaning. Here the musical sounds have been used to modulate or alter the phase and frequency of 30-kHz carriers located on the left and right groove walls and are "contained" in the amount and rate of this variation. The system is similar to stereo multiplexing in FM broadcasts except that angle (phase and frequency) modulation is employed. In playback these carriers are demodulated back into audio and mixed with the baseband sounds to create the four channels, using a CD-4 demodulator.

We are therefore faced with different criteria: the pickup's carrier band tells us nothing (directly) about the tonal quality of sounds imposed on the carrier portion of the Quadradisc's modulation. But sufficient pickup output level must occur at all frequencies from 20 to 45 kHz to allow demodulation in a CD-4 receiver or demodulator unit, the minimum requirement varying somewhat with the equipment used. Of course, better performance is anticipated the flatter the response is. (Peak levels and highest treble in the audio modulating the carriers need the full 45-kHz range.)

Channel separation describes the degree to which sound from one channel is excluded from another channel. Ideal (infinite) separation would mean that no extraneous sound appears in any channel. Figures showing 20 dB of separation mean that 10% of the music in another channel appears in the measured channel. 40 dB means 1%. Adequate channel separation is required for good stereo *and* quad.

But separation figures, too, take on new meaning. SQ logic decoders, for example, derive placement cues from the groove vibration direction. Hence good separation in the audio range (20 Hz to 20 kHz) is a prerequisite for precision direction enhancement. The measured quadriphonic separation of an SQ system depends also on the logic system employed. CD-4 operation requires good pickup separation in the audio range, not only for left-to-right separation in the sound, but for front-to-back as well. Since the angle-modulated carrier at 30 kHz is a form of FM, a certain degree of natural immunity to crosstalk between the left and right groove walls is inherent at carrier frequencies. This immunity depends on the electronic capability of the demodulator and not strictly on the pickup's separation in the range from 20 to 45 kHz. (It is similar to the capture effect of an FM receiver.) Therefore, perceived quadriphonic separation is relative to auxiliary components and not directly to the CD-4 cartridge's performance above 20 kHz.

How do we measure quadriphonic separation in a scientific manner so that the audiophile may judge this performance relative to actual use? CBS Laboratories' view at this time is that this cannot be done from pickup measurements alone. For such information it is necessary to test playback *systems* rather than the individual components used in them. Each pickup cartridge is listened to through appropriate modern four-channel equipment. We observe that reasonable separation is achieved in intended circumstances. Additional listening tests are conducted by the editors of HIGH FIDELITY, and comments concerning audible separation are included in the published cartridges reports.

High-frequency response and separation graphs for CD-4 cartridges are obtained by playing back the JVC test record TRS-1005. This disc, designed specifically for CD-4 cartridge measurement, contains many sweep-frequency bands covering the

range from 1 to 50 kHz. The outside band provides the test signal for the high-frequency response and separation graphs. Baseband frequency response and separation curves (20 Hz to 20 kHz) are obtained by playing our standard laboratory test record (STR-170) used for stereo cartridge evaluation.

The carrier-band curves are "normalized" for 30 kHz (that is, response at 30 kHz is arbitrarily taken as the 0-dB reference for each channel), while those in the baseband are adjusted for 0-dB reading at 1 kHz. The absolute levels in the two bands may be quite different, but this is far less important than the flatness of the curves within their respective ranges. Carrier-information output and baseband output are, of course, adjusted with respect to each other by the demodulator's alignment controls.

Tracking Ability

A modern cartridge must be able to track the loudest music passage in the record groove in a precise manner. We must therefore gauge this ability for *all* types of cartridges. A cartridge mechanism has a stylus mass, a shank, and a movable element within the motion-to-electric-signal transducer, plus some form of bendable "hinge." To the engineer it possesses a *dynamic* tracking property: its ability to track—or remain in constant contact with—the record groove can vary with frequency. (Compliance, heretofore reported, is but one part of tracking ability.)

Mistracking creates the worst type of audible distortion—groove jumping, raspiness, and general loss of clarity. And midrange and high-frequency mistracking is detrimental to Quadradisc reproduction. Irrespective of the type of demodulator, mistracking can produce both momentary carrier loss and spurious harmonics. This may cause disruptive sounds in CD-4 playback. Tracking ability therefore has new importance in judging CD-4 operation.

We perform three tests in both the lateral and vertical mode to measure the cartridge's ability to track high levels. The first two measurements are straightforward: We play a record containing a band of increasingly loud sine waves while observing the left and right wave forms on a dual-trace oscilloscope. The loudness level that first causes visible (on the oscilloscope) and audible mistracking is called the maximum output level. (For this test the tracking force must be carefully set within the optimum range.) We use a frequency of 300 Hz increasing in amplitude in steps to four times the average music record: +18 dB (re 1.12×10^{-3} cm peak amplitude) or 0.009 cm, the equivalent of +12 dB re RIAA 0 VU. Similarly for the midrange tracking measurement, we use a 1-kHz sine wave increasing to eight times the average level: +18 dB (re 5 cm/sec rms velocity) or 40 cm/sec, equal to +18

dB RIAA.

In order to gauge the tracking ability at the highest audio frequencies we prepared a special disc containing white noise from 10 to 20 kHz, which similarly increases in level by steps to +9 dB re 5 cm/sec, or -5 dB RIAA. If mistracking takes place during playback, an inordinate amount of intermodulation will appear in the lower frequency range. The point at which this phenomenon occurs is reported as the maximum level for high-frequency tracking. The final step in each of the test cuts applies to the cartridge signals that represent the highest levels encountered on modern discs.

Stylus Tip Size

Unaltered brilliance of sound from your records demands a properly shaped stylus. Theoretically, the smallest possible tip radius in contact with the groove wall with the least possible tracking force is desirable. In seeking to achieve this end, stylus manufacturers have produced biradial styli, and now the Shibata and other "multifaceted" tips. Their advantages do involve additional care in the mounting of the jewel in the cantilever and of the cartridge in the arm.

Let me explain what these styli have in common and why excellent sound results from their use. First, remember that in cross section a record groove is shaped like a wide "V" and that this V, always having the same shape, varies from instant to instant with music only in position—up, down, and sideways—with respect to a groove without music. Therefore, if the playback stylus has a vertical cross section closely approximating this V, it will rest all along both sides of the V-shaped groove. Its contact area measured up the slope of the groove wall therefore is greater than that of the regular, "sharper" tip ending in a round shape. Since these new styli have almost-V-shaped tips, they can now afford to have a sharper curvature measured front-to-back along the groove wall without increasing pressure in the record groove.

Pressure, you must remember, has a specific scientific meaning here: *force per unit area*. CD-4 pickups generally are designed to track at higher *forces* than top-of-the-line stereo cartridges. But since their new stylus shapes can have greater area in contact with the two groove walls than the standard jewel shapes, the *pressure* can be equal to or even less than that for a round or elliptical tip tracking at a substantially lower *force*.

A consequence of the sharp tip curvature in line with the record groove is that high-frequency sounds are reproduced with less "tracing" distortion—that is, the playback stylus moves more precisely like the chisel-shaped cutting stylus with which the master was made. Also, higher output levels of the CD-4 carrier are possible, along with better quadriphonic fidelity—as long as precise

alignment of the multifaceted stylus tip is maintained.

At the laboratories, the stylus jewel of each cartridge is viewed under a high-powered microscope using various kinds of directed light. We observe the type of stylus geometry, the effective radius of curvature presented to the record groove wall, and judge the orientation of the jewel itself with respect to the groove direction.

Other Performance Considerations

Standard measurements previously reported in HIGH FIDELITY are duplicated for quadriphonic cartridges. We test the left and right channels for frequency response and separation in the audio range, pickup output voltages, harmonic distortion, intermodulation distortion, vertical tracking angle, and tone-arm/stylus resonance. And we photograph, via an oscilloscope, the output of the cartridge when playing a 1-kHz square wave. The performance in each of these tests for a quadriphonic pickup is no less critical than for a stereo unit. In fact an excellent quadriphonic cartridge must excel in all the standard tests.

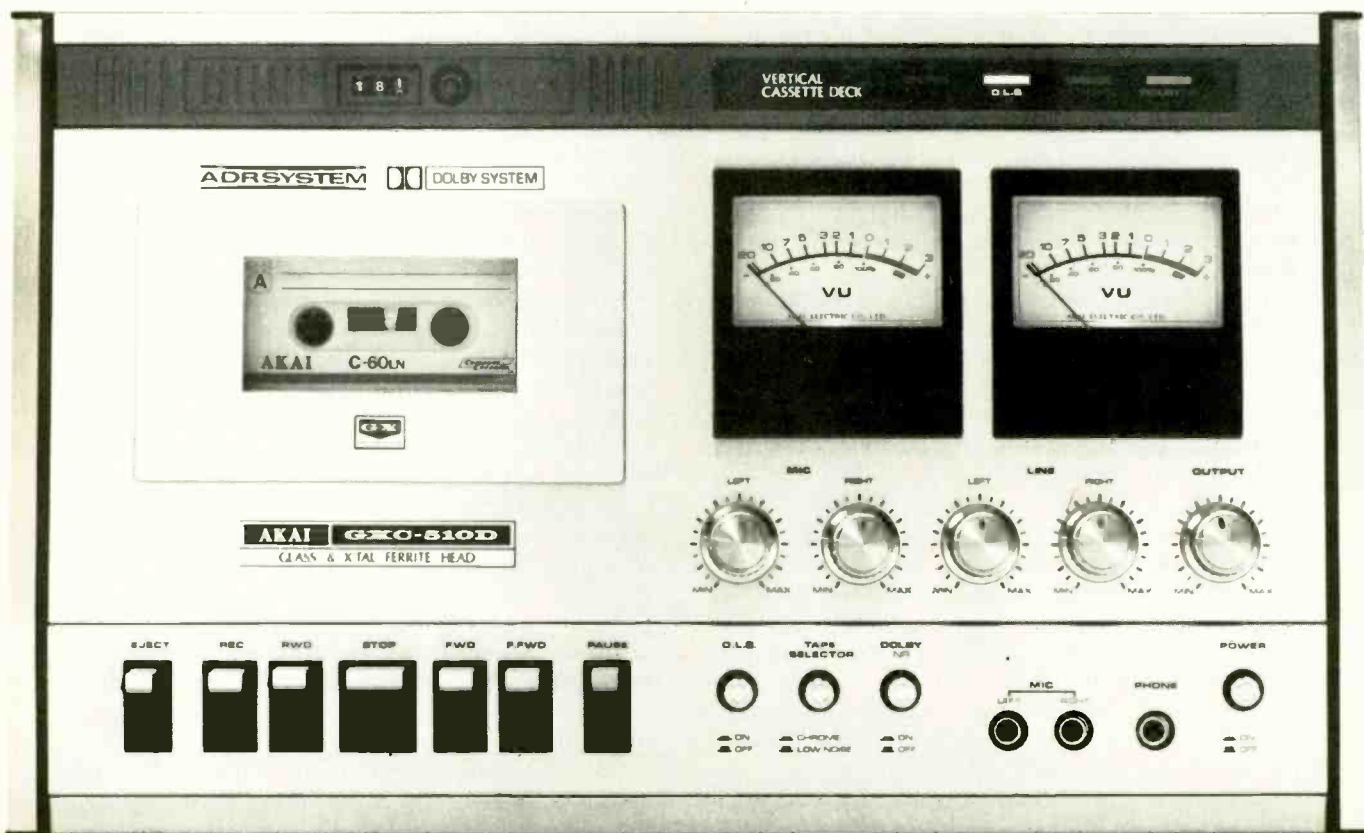
For instance the channel balance, which is derived by comparing the output voltages of the two channels, must be good for superior SQ performance. (The separation between the two back loudspeakers depends on this balance.) And for a CD-4 cartridge the total harmonic distortion readings should be very low. (The carrier signal can be influenced by the harmonics.)

The quadriphonic attributes of a cartridge used for matrixed-quad playback are characterized by measurements within the audio band. This means that a stereo cartridge with excellent measured performance—or a CD-4 cartridge with top-notch performance below 20 kHz—will permit excellent reproduction from matrixed discs. The final quadriphonic effect will, of course, relate to the sophistication of the matrix decoder used.

Since the quadriphonic performance of a CD-4 cartridge includes operation above the audio band, the relationship between measurements and audible performance is not so direct. Certain physical interdependencies exist between the carrier range and the audio baseband and are handled in various ways by the CD-4 demodulator unit. Because of this, those relationships are not yet fully measurable in terms meaningful to the audiophile or the engineers. Therefore, in gauging quadriphonic performance of a CD-4 cartridge considerable emphasis presently is placed on listening evaluation, utilizing specific CD-4 demodulators.

As in any high fidelity component, your personal listening evaluation is a main ingredient in determining your choice. To this extent, technical tests can be used to help you limit the field to the likeliest candidates, but the final judge is your ear. ●

AKAI's new cassette deck stands up for itself



We decided to stand up and cheer! And AKAI's radically new cassette deck format is something to cheer about. The front-loading vertical design — with vertical head block assembly — combines the quality of open-reel and the convenience of cassette. We call the newest member of our cassette line the GXC-510D. You'll

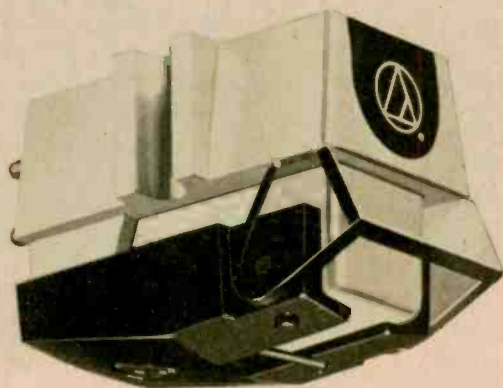
call it supreme, with features like Dolby* noise reduction circuit plus AKAI's automatic distortion reduction system (ADRS), which eliminates distortion in the critical cassette range of 8 KHz and up; GX heads,

one of them a glass and crystal head for recording/playback; 0.08 percent wow and flutter; microphone and line mixing; full direct functions controls; output level control to match amplifier input; automatic stop and pause control; and many others. Step over to your nearest AKAI dealer and see how the GXC-510D stands up for itself. We think you will stand up and cheer right along with us. AKAI America, Ltd., 2139 East Del Amo Boulevard, Compton, California 90220. *Dolby is the trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

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The Innovators



Dress it up with this 23" x 35" full-color poster. Just send name, address, and \$1.00 to "Wall Poster," AKAI America, Ltd.



Audio-Technica's "Almost Best" Pickup

The Equipment: Audio-Technica Model AT-15S, a phono pickup cartridge capable of playing CD-4 Quadradiscs, with Shibata diamond stylus. Price: \$100. Warranty: one year parts and labor, shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Audio-Technica, Japan; U.S. distributor: Audio-Technica U.S., Inc., 33 Shiawassee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313.

Comment: The AT-15S, tested here, may be thought of as the top model in the "regular" Audio-Technica line; the only model offered by the company at a higher price (the AT-20SL, \$175) is essentially a hand-selected version of the AT-15S, chosen for (among other things) even tighter specs than the AT-15S itself. Considering the difference in price, the excellence of the AT-15S, and the relative scarcity of the AT-20SL, we would expect most home users to be satisfied with "second best."

As is typical of Shibata-stylus pickups, the AT-15S is rated for a relatively high tracking-force range: 1.5 to 2 grams. Actually CBS Labs was able to put the cartridge through the torture test at only 1 gram; they and we used it at 1.75 grams for the remaining tests. At this VTF setting it produced the best results we have yet seen in the new maximum tracking level test.

Output is a little higher and channel balance considerably better than spec (2.7 millivolts and 1.5 dB respectively) at 3.1 millivolts in the left channel and a hair less (say, 3.05 millivolts) in the right. These lab measurements, in fact, exceed the specs even for the AT-20SL. Channel separation approximates the Audio-Technica spec for either cartridge (25 dB at 1 kHz) over most of the audible range.

In terms of distortion, the cartridge measures typically for a good modern pickup. Vertical tracking angle checks out at 16 degrees and low-frequency resonance (in the SME arm) at 6.8 Hz. Under the microscope the geometry and alignment of the Shibata stylus prove to be good, and the effective contact radius measures 0.2 mils. The response and separation curves are excellent, both in the baseband (the audible frequencies) and in the CD-4 carrier region (around 30 kHz). The primary

high-frequency resonance appears to be at about 45 kHz; the square-wave curves show no significant ringing.

And the AT-15S listens as well as it tests. By now we have used several samples (some of older vintage than the one documented here by CBS Labs) with excellent results on CD-4 material, even in systems that were not especially engineered for the purpose in terms of lead capacitance. On stereo material, too, it produces sound

A Note About Comparisons

Our presentation of five cartridge reports in the same issue would appear to invite minute comparison between them. But if you accept that invitation, don't be misled by minor differences between one model and another. In many respects the models represented are more striking by their similarities than by their differences.

This should not surprise you since all are cartridges designed to play Quadradiscs as well as regular stereo or matrixed-quad discs, and all but one (the Audio-Technica) is the top model in the respective line. Obviously much greater differences would have shown up had we chosen a cross section of available cartridges of all types to introduce the new test procedures. Since the lab test methods previously employed in our cartridge reports had not encompassed parameters that are important in Quadradisc reproduction, we were unable to test any of the CD-4 models adequately until now; and this group is chosen to fill that gap.

To underscore: All of the cartridges tested in this issue proved to be fine models. While there are areas in which one will outperform another, these differences should not be interpreted as meaning that any is substandard. All, for example, were successfully used for first-rate playback of both stereo and quad discs. You can expect that less successful performance will be documented when we come to test garden-variety pickups by the new method.

REPORT POLICY

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

that is clean and bright. (Note that it has been designed for very flat response in the audible range when working into a standard 47,000-ohm impedance. The response shown in our graphs documents its behavior into the CD-4 standard of 100,000 ohms; the slight rise at the upper end of the audible band is largely canceled by typical CD-4 demodulators.) To what extent the dual-magnet principle—a proprietary Audio-Technica design feature, even in less expensive models, claimed to promote clean sound and exceptional separation—is responsible for the AT-15S's excellence, we can't be sure; but this unequivocally is an excellent cartridge. It is supplied with a brush for cleaning the stylus, a small screwdriver, and the usual assortment of mounting hardware.

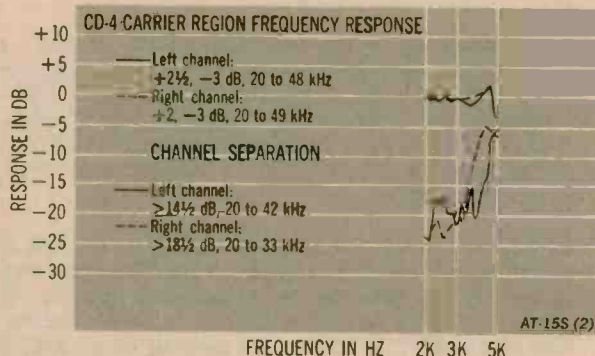
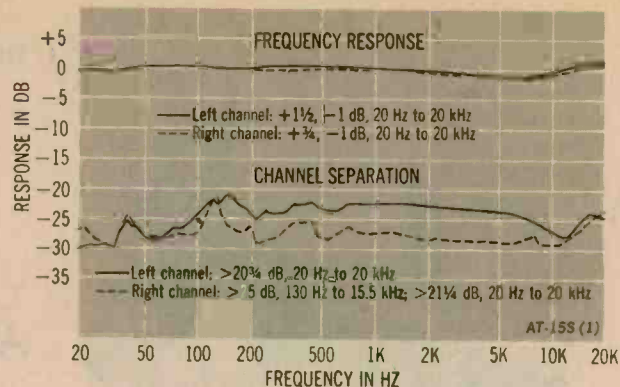
CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Audio-Technica AT-15S Additional Data

Maximum tracking levels (1.75 grams VTF; re RIAA 0 VU)

300 Hz	> +12 dB
1 kHz	+12 dB
10-20 kHz	>-5 dB

Square-wave response

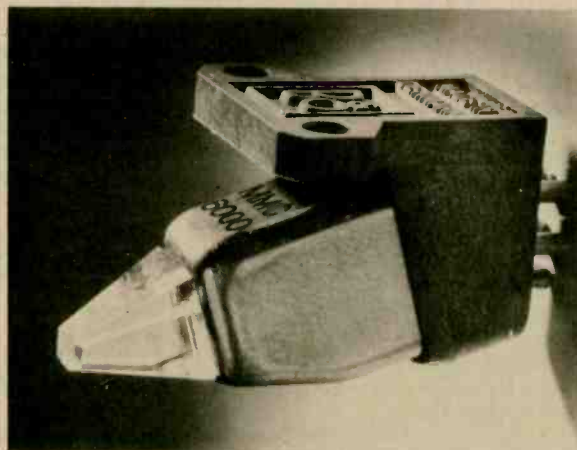


B&O's CD-4 Supercartridge

The Equipment: Bang & Olufsen Model MMC-6000, a phono pickup capable of playing CD-4 Quadradiscs, with specially formed diamond stylus. Price: \$85. Warranty: three years parts and labor, shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Bang & Olufsen, Denmark; U.S. distributor: Bang & Olufsen of America, Inc., 2271 Devon Ave., Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007.

Comment: This cartridge arrives in the U.S. with a considerable aura of glamor about it. Originally it was hinted at as a Shibata-equipped or quasi-Shibata-equipped version of the SP-15, B&O's supercartridge that, at the time, was available only with the radical and luxurious Beogram 4000 turntable and only in Europe. And it was only when the (slightly modified) Beogram 4002 turntable was made available here that the MMC-6000 emerged along with it.

As delivered, the cartridge is conceived with the 4002 in mind. It has no standard mounting bracket; it is designed so that it will plug directly into the tone arm on the 4002. An accessory adapter bracket for standard



arms is supplied with the MMC-6000, however, and we tested the cartridge using that bracket and a variety of arms. B&O also supplies stylus brush, VTF gauge, screwdriver, and mounting hardware—including an angled shim to correct vertical tracking angle on changers designed for perfect operation in this respect only at the middle of the record stack.

The first thing we looked at in CBS Labs' measurements was the distortion data. The SP-12, you may recall (see HF equipment reports, October 1971), exhibited the lowest distortion the lab had ever measured on a phono pickup tested for us. Well, B&O has done it again. In terms of intermodulation the B&O is good—

about median for the present group of cartridges—and in harmonic distortion it measures in at about half the figures clocked for the other models. On averages, then, it is the best of the five in this regard. At 1 kHz, THD in the MMC-6000 measured under 1% in both channels—unimpressive if you're comparing with amplifier measurements, but a striking achievement in a phono pickup.

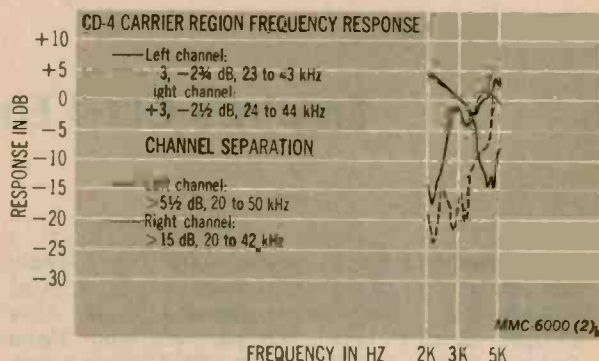
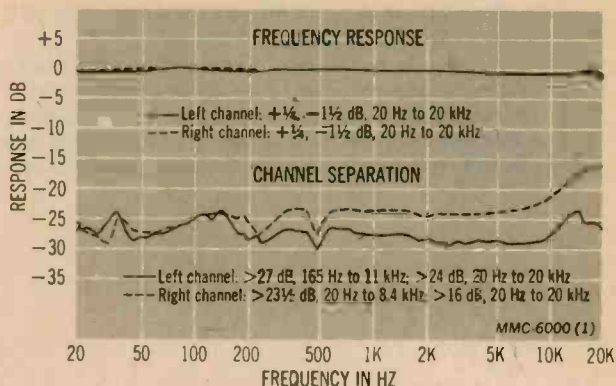
B&O delivers the cartridge with some performance documentation. First, there are strip charts showing response from 20 Hz to 50 kHz. CBS Labs' tests confirmed these charts within narrow margins. Right-channel response in the supersonic range was not quite as flat as in the lab's tests, but response for both channels in the audible band appeared perhaps a little more linear. B&O uses 1 gram as the VTF for its tests. The lab got the MMC-6000 through the torture tests at only 0.7 gram, but all remaining tests were at a 1-gram setting.

The output of our test sample from the lab's standard test cut at 5 cm/sec (peak) measured 3.6 millivolts in the left channel and 3.4 millivolts in the right—a hair higher than average in the present group. The company gives channel balance at 1 kHz as 1/2 dB; the lab's measurements are well within this spec. CBS Labs confirms B&O's measurement of 28 dB for separation in the left channel at 1 kHz and very nearly confirms its 26 dB in the right. Of course the inability of one lab to give exact confirmation of another's measurements in most of these parameters is dependent on many factors—test-record vinyl composition, atmospheric conditions, and so on. The striking thing about these comparisons is not the series of differences we have given, but the close over-all correlation.

On microscopic examination the stylus proved to be geometrically more like a conventional elliptical stylus than like the Shibata (which, among other things, is asymmetrical front to back). Effective contact radius measures approximately 0.2 mils, and vertical tracking angle 16 degrees. Alignment is good. Low-frequency resonance (in the SME arm) is at 7 Hz. Maximum tracking level measurements are excellent.

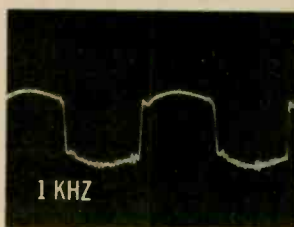
Though it will be immaterial to most of our readers, we must raise one point about the adapter mounting bracket. B&O tells us that it actually was designed for another cartridge and that one specifically for the MMC-6000 is not yet ready. By the time you read this, however, it should be; and if your bracket is the correct one we can foresee no problems. The interim version—which at this writing appears to be virtually out of stock already—poses a bit of a puzzler.

Since the contact order on the pickup for which it originally was intended is not identical to that on the MMC-6000, B&O found it necessary to include instructions for reversing pins when using the combination. Those instructions call for left-to-right reversal, keeping hot pins connected to hot leads and ground to ground. We found, however, that correct CD-4 orientation required keeping left and right connections on the same sides and reversing, instead, the hot and ground leads. This would be no big deal (and in any case need not concern you if the cartridge is to be used for stereo reproduction only) except for one minor catch. B&O cartridges have five pins; the fifth is a grounding pin for the case and normally is strapped (with a small spring clip supplied with the pickup) to one of the signal ground leads. When you reverse hot and ground leads, any hum picked up in the cartridge case will be fed into the audio instead of being grounded out. We had no problem in this respect with any four-conductor arm we tried



B&O MMC-6000 Pickup Additional Data

Maximum tracking level (1 gram VTF; re RIAA 0 VU)	
300 Hz	+12 dB
1 kHz	+12 dB
10-20 kHz	>-5 dB



Square-wave response

(and five-conductor arms still would offer correct case grounding, of course), but you might. The cure obviously would be the use of the bracket that currently is being readied for the MMC-6000. Why the discrepancy between B&O's instructions and our experience? Apparently something was lost in the translation between the (Danish) engineering department and the (English language) instructions.

We also should note that the relatively long horizontal surface of the pickup's underbelly makes it, perhaps, a shade more subject to trouble with severely warped records than some models. (Conversely, its narrow width makes it less likely to catch on the outer bead in playing the first few grooves, as some cartridges do with bad warps of some types.) Since we encountered some "bumping" in playing one disc, we feel cuty-bound to mention the fact; but since the disc flattened sufficiently overnight to solve the problem, and since we have been

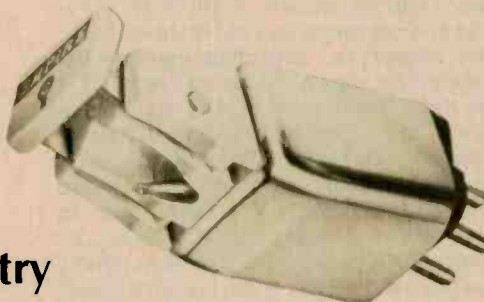
unable to find another disc with enough warp to cause it again, we cannot honestly fault the pickup.

It is, in fact, a very fine one. The square-wave photo shows it to be unusually free of significant ringing; there are no resonances evident anywhere in the audible band. Reproduction from stereo and matrixed discs has that ineffable clarity that we have noted in past B&O car-

tridges and attribute to their exceptionally low distortion. The same quality carries over into Quadradisc reproduction. We found the MMC-6000 perhaps a bit less tolerant of demodulator misadjustments than other models, but we successfully reproduced Quadradiscs with it in all of our test setups.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Empire's CD-4 Entry



The Equipment: Empire Model 4000D/III, a phono pickup cartridge capable of reproducing CD-4 Quadradiscs, with 4 Dimensional diamond stylus. Price: \$149.95. Warranty: ninety days, parts and labor. Manufacturer: Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

Comment: The Model 4000D is Empire's CD-4 cartridge. It is available in three versions, at three prices: the \$85 4000D/I, the \$125 4000D/II, and the \$150 4000D/III reviewed here. The specs for the models are similar, the primary differences being in recommended tracking-force range ($\frac{3}{4}$ to 2, $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ grams respectively) and in top frequency response (40, 45, and 50 kHz respectively). All have Empire's 4 Dimensional stylus tip and are intended for both Quadradiscs and regular stereo or matrixed records.

Like some (but not all) of the CD-4 cartridges we have looked at, the 4000 shows evidence of a mechanical resonance in the range where one might expect it with a stereo cartridge (in this case, just shy of 15 kHz) but with extended response beyond this resonance. Unlike most cartridges with such a resonance, square-wave photos show no real evidence of ringing. And of course most CD-4 demodulators are equipped with filters that attenuate output in the range of the resonance, while in regular stereo use (and working into the standard stereo impedance of 47,000) some smoothing of the resonance rise can be expected.

All this was confirmed in our listening tests. Not only does the 4000D/III provide excellent sound in both stereo and quadraphonic reproduction, but we had no difficulty whatever getting satisfactory quad playback through any demodulator or with any turntable of appropriate quality at our disposal. (We didn't try the pickup with any record-changer model; either the II or I model presumably would be a better choice for such units.)

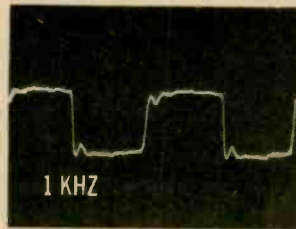
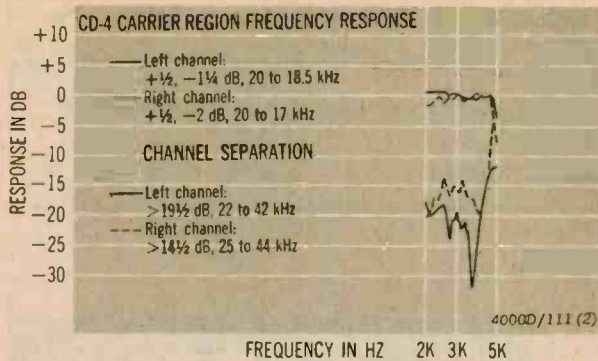
CBS Labs found that 0.9 gram VTF was needed to track the torture-test bands with the Empire mounted in the SME arm; 1.0 gram was used for subsequent tests. Output in the right channel (from a 5 cm/sec test cut)

measured exactly 3 millivolts; the left channel measured a hair higher (say, 3.05 millivolts), for unusually precise channel balance. Distortion measurements are about average for top cartridge models like those reported on in this issue. The 4000D came through the maximum tracking level test with excellent results.

The lab reports the shape of the stylus tip to be, like the Shibata tip, asymmetrical front to back. The contact radius measured exceedingly small: under 0.1 mil. (Note that this is measured in a plane perpendicular to the groove wall and measuring front-to-back curvature. Vertical curvature, looking along the groove, is much greater than the front-to-back curvature in any CD-4 stylus tip we have examined so far; this vertical curvature is used to "spread out" the bearing surface of the tip, so a very small front-to-back curvature doesn't necessarily imply relatively high bearing pressures for a given tracking force. The smaller the measured curvature, the greater the stylus' theoretical ability to trace extremely high frequencies accurately, but also the greater the theoretical difficulty of achieving adequate bearing area.) Vertical tracking angle was measured in the lab at 22 degrees, low frequency resonance (in the SME arm) at 7 Hz.

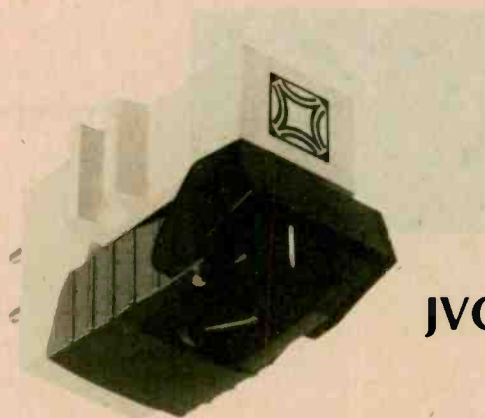
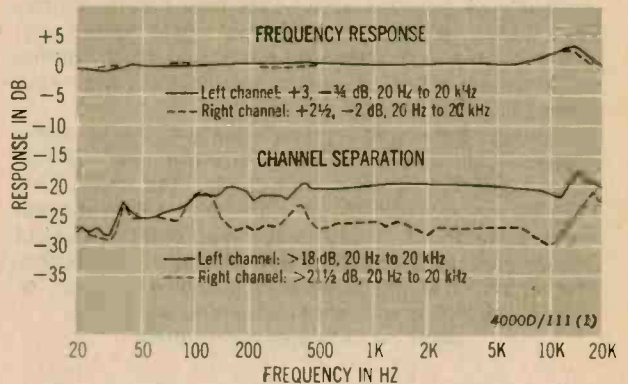
The cartridge does a fine job in reproducing stereo or matrixed quad, and we had no trouble getting good Quadradisc reproduction with the 4000D/III in any of our test systems. And—though this presumably will be of interest to you only for the one-time mounting of the pickup—we liked the ease with which we could switch it from arm to arm. We often worry about styli during mounting and like cartridges that (the Audio-Technica reviewed in this issue, for example) recommend removal of the stylus assembly when mounting the cartridge body in a tone-arm shell. Empire goes this approach one better. The entire cartridge body is held in place by a light metal clip or bracket; remove the cartridge body from the bracket, mount the bracket in the shell, clip the body back into the bracket, and you're ready to go with virtually no potential danger to the stylus even if you have thumbs as big as tree trunks.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Empire 4000D/III Pickup Additional Data

Maximum tracking level (1 gram VTF, re RIAA 0 VU)	
300 Hz	+ 12 dB
1 kHz	+ 12 dB
10-20 kHz	> -5 dB



JVC's "Standard" CD-4 Cartridge

The Equipment: JVC Model AMD-20X, a phono pickup cartridge capable of playing CD-4 Quadradiscs, with Shibata diamond stylus. Price: \$79.95. Warranty: ninety days. Manufacturer: Victor Co., Japan; U.S. distributor: JVC America, Inc., 50-35 56th Rd., Maspeth, N.Y. 11378.

Comment: Though we list the 4MD-20X as "manufactured" by the Victor Company of Japan, it is well known in the audio trade that it actually is produced to order in the Audio-Technica plant. Its physical resemblance to the Audio-Technica line is therefore not surprising. Since JVC is the inventor of the CD-4 system and initially was the only source of equipment for playing Quadradiscs in this country, the 4MD-20X has become the de facto standard against which other Quadradisc cartridges are compared.

JVC rates the pickup for tracking between 1.5 and 2.0 grams. CBS Labs found that it would track the torture-test bands as low as 1.4 grams; the lab used 1.75 grams

as the VTF for subsequent tests, and we found that it tracked satisfactorily at the theoretically minimum VTF with a variety of equipment—though we tended to use 1.75 grams "to be on the safe side." It came through the lab's maximum tracking level tests well. Output (at 1 kHz, for a 5 cm/sec groove velocity) measured 3.4 millivolts in the left channel and 3.9 millivolts in the right. This represents greater output than JVC's spec of 2 millivolts and approximates the company's channel-balance spec of ½ dB.

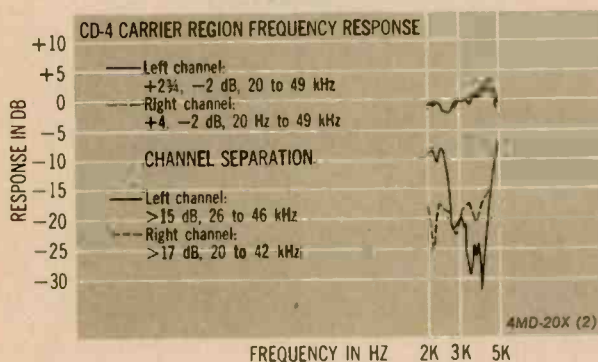
The lab measured the vertical tracking angle at 16 degrees and the low-frequency resonance in the SME arm as 11 Hz. Under the microscope the Shibata stylus proved to have good geometry and alignment, and the effective contact radius measured about 0.2 mils.

Both harmonic distortion and intermodulation check out as good: about average among the better contemporary cartridges. Working into the 100,000-ohm impedance that is standard for CD-4 cartridges, some resonance, at about 15 kHz, is noticeable in both the re-

sponse graph and the square-wave photo. Elsewhere in the audible band, response is extremely linear and separation generally excellent at about 25 dB (though JVC specs the cartridge for 30 dB of separation in the audible range); but at the resonance peak, both linearity and separation are adversely affected. It is important to note, however, that 15 kHz is the upper limit of the specified baseband in the CD-4 system. Our own tests have shown that demodulators often are rolling off at this frequency, so *effective* linearity in playing Quadradiscs generally will be somewhat better than that measured here for the cartridge alone. And in regular stereo use, working into the standard impedance of 47,000 ohms, the resulting slight attenuation of the top range also should improve linearity.

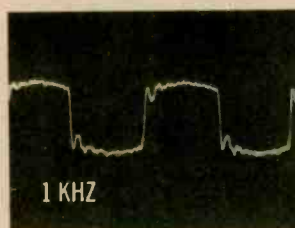
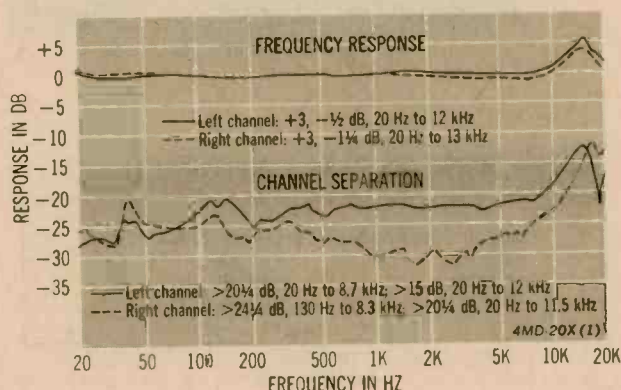
Although the sound over-all is certainly good, some listeners detect a slightly "hard" quality in the 4MD-20X when used for regular stereo or matrixed discs. This may be associated with the resonance within the audible range and is, in fact, a common comment about stereo cartridges that display a similar phenomenon. But whether playing Quadradiscs, matrixed quad, or stereo, the JVC is well within accepted standards.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



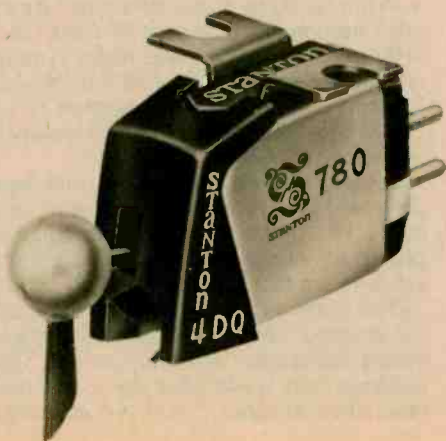
JVC 4MD-20X Pickup Additional Data

Maximum tracking levels (1.5 grams VTF; re RIAA 0 VU)	
300 Hz	+12 dB
1 kHz	+12 dB
10-20 kHz	>-5 dB



Square-wave response

Stanton's "Quadrahedral" Cartridge



The Equipment: Stanton Model 780/4DQ phono pickup cartridge, capable of playing CD-4 Quadradiscs, with Quadrahedral diamond stylus assembly including record-cleaning brush. Price: \$125. Warranty: guaranteed against defects in materials and/or workmanship. Manufacturer: Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.

Comment: The Quadrahedral name, though it has a specific meaning in solid geometry, is used by Stanton (and by Pickering, which has the same stylus shape in its CD-4 cartridge) to specify the shape to which the diamond is ground so that it can trace the high-frequency carrier in Quadradiscs. A geometric quadrahedron has sharp edges, of course; the Quadrahedral stylus has an

effective contact radius—as measured under the microscope by CBS Labs—of about 0.2 mils. So, though it is not literally a Shibata stylus, the Quadrahedral compares closely with lab measurements for Shibatas.

The 780 is delivered in an attractive metal case. Inside are a small, nicely finished mounting screwdriver (with a ring, so you can attach it to a keychain if you want—a nice touch) and a small "pillbox" finished like the main case and appropriate for storing a replacement stylus. There is an assortment of mounting hardware too, of course, some of it cleverly designed to dispense with mounting nuts and hence simplify that always-pesky job of getting the pickup into its shell.

We mention these niceties at the outset, because they are evidence of the care that Stanton has taken in producing the 780/4DQ. One other area of special care is harder to document. Stanton says it has taken particular pains to preserve time-delay characteristics between baseband (the audible frequencies) and super-sonic carrier in Quadradisc reproduction so that phase relationships will be presented to the demodulator and its matrix-decode circuitry precisely as intended. Want of care in this respect can result in fuzzy placement relationships within the "sound picture," particularly at higher frequencies. And indeed we did find the quadriphonic imaging, using the Stanton in a first-class CD-4 setup, perhaps a little more precisely defined than with other cartridges. For example, we could detect no undue tendency for sounds loaded with highs to "bleed" into other channels. The difference is subtle, but it appears to be real enough.

The output of the 780 is a little lower than that from other CD-4 cartridges we've tested, but the two channels are very closely matched; at 1 kHz the output (for a 5-cm/sec peak recorded velocity) measures 2.7 millivolts in the right channel and only a hair less (say, 2.65 millivolts) in the left. Stanton recommends from 1 to 3 grams VTF. In the SME arm, CBS Labs needed 1.4 grams to put the pickup through the torture test, and 2 grams was chosen for subsequent tests. At that VTF, maximum tracking level measurements were good, though not exceptional.

Distortion is similarly good, and intermodulation in the vertical plane measures lower than that of any other CD-4 cartridge we have measured. (This is particularly important in CD-4 cartridges because of the potential intermodulation between the audible frequencies in the baseband and the ever-present 30-kHz carrier frequency.) The lab measured the vertical tracking angle at 18 degrees and the low-frequency resonance frequency (in the SME arm) at 8.5 Hz.

The response curves and the square-wave photo suggest a high-frequency resonance at approximately 20 kHz but no significant ringing as a result. If the cartridge were terminated at 47,000 ohms for stereo use (instead of the test loading of 100,000 ohms specified for CD-4 use), we would expect some attenuation of the 20-kHz peak—which is, in any event, at the very edge of audibility even for the best hearing. Playing through CD-4 demodulators, the region around 20 kHz is suppressed, of course; a peak at this frequency is theoretically preferable to one at 15 kHz or below, where one would expect full reproduction by a CD-4 system.

In using the cartridge with fine systems we had no trouble setting up for Quadradiscs and achieved excellent reproduction both with them and with stereo or matrixed recordings. Since the output of the cartridge is a bit lower than that of other CD-4 cartridges we've tested we found it required more preamp gain. But in any of the

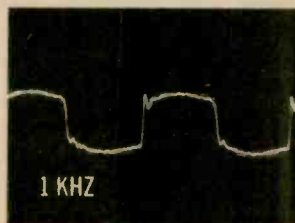
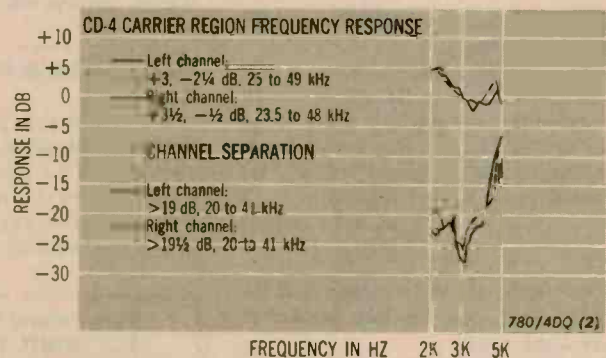
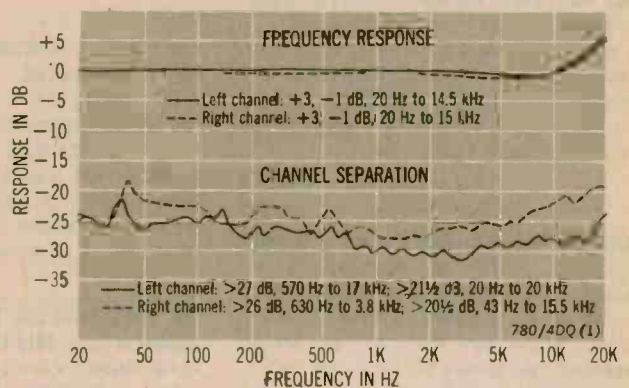
systems we tested the pickup with we were able to match baseband levels correctly to carrier demodulation. The possibility that some inexpensive equipment might not have sufficient gain for this purpose remains, but we consider it pointless to spend \$125 on a fine cartridge—which the Stanton certainly is—and then play it through a cheap quad receiver.

This is the only CD-4 cartridge we've tested so far with the integral cleaning brush. If you choose the 780/4DQ, just keep in mind that you must apply the arm-balancing technique required for any cartridge with the brush: Balance the arm, set the tracking force for 1 gram *more* than the actual VTF you want, and enjoy.

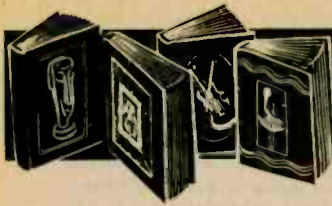
CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Stanton 780/4DQ Pickup Additional Data

Maximum tracking level (1.5 grams VTF; re RIAA 0 VU)	
300 Hz	+18 dB
1 kHz	+9 dB
10-20 kHz	>-5 dB



Square-wave response



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Russian Opera

Part I

From Glinka to Tchaikovsky



Jerome Hines as Boris Godunov in the Coronation Scene from a Metropolitan Opera production of Mussorgsky's opera.

Many treasurable music moments will reward the persistent shopper who searches out the recordings of the unjustifiably ignored works of this genre.

by Conrad L. Osborne

THERE ARE TWO excellent reasons for exploring the recorded literature examined here. The first is acquaintance with the operas themselves. Of the nearly forty works considered, not more than a half-dozen figure in Western repertory. Among the remainder there are some very strong and fascinating pieces, and many more that are at least as deserving of a hearing as revivals that have received quite serious attention in our houses. I think listeners approaching them for the first time will be pleasantly surprised and impressed by the virtues of many of the works of Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Prokofiev, and Rim-

Well known to HIGH FIDELITY readers for his many reviews and articles on vocal music, Mr. Osborne is a voice teacher and is forming his own company, Uptown Opera, in New York.

sky-Korsakov; the last is, in my judgment, the most important operatic writer to suffer real neglect in Western Europe and the U.S.

A second major point of interest is, of course, the singing to be heard on these discs. Only a handful of Slavic performers have appeared in the West, and most of those infrequently. While the general vocal standard is not necessarily higher than our own, there are some very remarkable and individual singers to be heard, particularly in the immediately postwar generation of Bolshoi artists.

Further, there is offered here a type of singing rather different from ours, forthright and sizable, come what may. Russian performances, good or bad, nearly always have a largeness of format, a weight and grandeur, that



In a recent New York City Opera production of Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Julian Patrick in the title role enjoys the hospitality of Konchak (William Chapman), the Polovtsian chief.

even scale and sings out with authority. This performance also has consistent quality in the smaller roles—the Skula and Eroshka, the Ovlur and Polovtsian Maiden, are all artists of appropriate vocal capabilities, intent on rendering the music and the characters, and it is a great pleasure to hear their work. Alexander Melik-Pashayev leads a rhythmically firm, well-played performance that is not done justice by the fairish mono sound, an undoubted drawback of the set. Another is the absence of the third act, usually cut in production but surely desirable on a recording. Otherwise, Melik-Pashayev makes only two little snips in the second act.

The other three-act version is Angel SCL 3714, in good stereo sound. The main attractions here are the fine orchestral and choral work (the Sofia company, very strong in these respects) and a propulsive, well-balanced reading by Jerzy Semkow, plus Boris Christoff, who doubles Galitzky and Konchak. This is latter-day Christoff, not in top vocal form, but still probably the best of the Galitzkys and certainly a good Konchak, though rather obvious in comparison to Reizen. There is a good Konchakovna from Reni Penkova, but the rest just squeak by: a muddy, monochromatic Igor from Constantin Chekerliskii; an unsteady, though musical, Yaroslavna by Julia Wiener; a Vladimir (Todor Todorov) of the same general type as Lemeshev but less beguiling; and mediocre supporting artists. This is the only *Igor* to squeeze onto three discs, but at the cost of some nearly crippling cuts (the heart of the Vladimir/Konchakovna duet; about half of Yaroslavna's second lament, and others).

Richmond SRS 64506 (four discs) has

the advantage of low price, plus acceptable stereo sound and inclusion of the third act. It is probably true that this act is musically weaker than the rest, but it does include a fun aria for Konchak, the excellent escape trio, and some happenings important to an understanding of the work. It is also brief, and I do not believe its excision is justified.

Richmond again uses the Belgrade ensemble, which here performs quite well under Oscar Danon, who seems to get the best from them. The *Igor* is Dushan Popovich, a highly musical and expressive singer who is at his vocal best here, the voice ringing out impressively. Bugarinovich sings Konchakovna beautifully but unfortunately is recorded at a distance throughout. Beyond this, things are a shambles. Valeria Heybalova, always game, is in very scratchy voice as Yaroslavna, and Zharko Tzveych, who like Christoff doubles Galitzky and Konchak, is really swamped by the vocal demands, especially as Galitzky. Noni Zhunetz, the Vladimir, also goes down for the third time vocally, though his musical intentions are good.

Least recommendable of all, regrettably, is the newer Bolshoi performance on Melodiya/Angel SRDL 4116 (four discs), a four-act edition. It suffers from one of the sloppiest and most unmusical pieces of stereo engineering I can recall, and the domestic pressings feature a powerful, judiciously spotted pre-echo. The conductor, Mark Ermler, sounds impatient with the music. Petrov is the Igor, but is sadly dried-out of voice and perfunctory with the music. The Galitzky (Artur Eizen), the Vladimir (Vladimir Atlantov), and the Konchakovna (Yelena Obratsova) are all people with sizable, decent voices but

elementary techniques, who drive through the music with astonishing disregard for dynamics and phrase markings. Atlantov, who has the makings of a fine dramatic tenor, is the worst offender. Tatiana Tugarinova, the Yaroslavna, is a loud, characteristic Slavic Spinto. Alexander Vedernikov, the Konchak, is a light bass of the crudest vocal and musical inclinations, whose "interpretation" is plain silly. The small roles are flavorlessly done. All told, a sorry showing alongside the precedent Bolshoi recording.

Since the two recordings with the strong Konchaks are the ones that omit the third act, in which he is central, my reluctant recommendation has to be the MK edition, with Richmond an alternate or supplementary choice for those who want the third act. The MK performance has been circulating on a Period Thrift Edition; if the pressings are adequate, this is a fine bargain and might make possible acquisition of the low-priced Richmond in addition. London could perform a real service with a Richmond highlights disc including, perhaps, Igor's aria, the Polovtsian dances, and Act III.

MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-81)

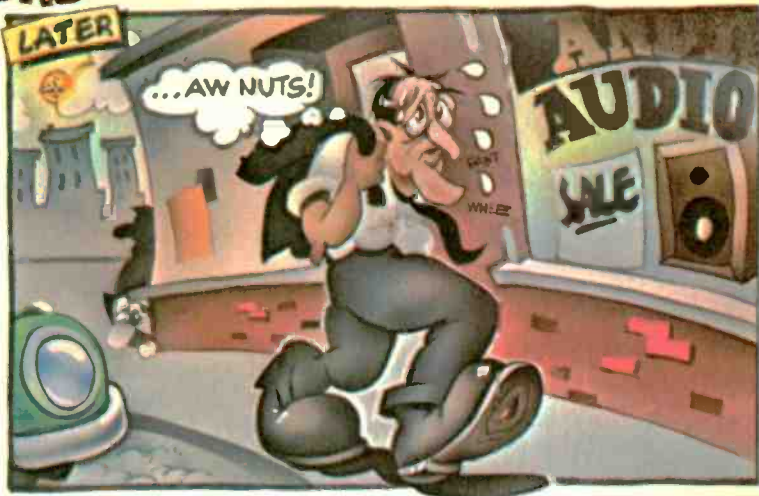
The Marriage (1868)

This was a projected full-length opera on a Gogol comedy of manners, of which the first act was completed in vocal score only. The composer abandoned the project after its first act met with a mixed reaction from his fellow composers, and went on to *Boris Godunov*.

In this work Mussorgsky, following in Dargomizhsky's footsteps, attempted for the first time to flesh out his goal of setting stage dialogue in a wholly lifelike way, creating the music straight out of the text. Regardless of one's feelings about this approach to operatic composition (it has a lot to answer for these days), it is one of the important ideas about operatic creation, and Mussorgsky one of the most talented to have worked at it. Even more than *Fair at Sorochinsk* (see below), *The Marriage* must be approached as a play that happens to have music; you can't sit back and listen unless you have the text by heart (well, you can, but I doubt it'll turn you on). But it is a remarkable and amusing setting of its type and rewards attention.

The opera was completed by Ippolitov-Ivanov, but on the only available recording (Olympic 9105, rechanneled,

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one disc) it is just Mussorgsky's first act that is performed, presumably in Ippolitov-Ivanov's orchestration. (The complete Ippolitov-Ivanov score was once released on Westminster OPW 1202, but I have been unable to turn up a copy.) This instrumentation is generally effective, though at times it stretches for piquant effects in a piece where economy of means is of the essence.

The performance, an old Paris production under René Leibowitz, is quite expert. I know nothing about Nicolas Agroff, who sings the principal role of Podkolessin, but I wish I did: He has a fine bass voice and is truly inventive and funny in the part. He is capably assisted by mezzo Charlotte Dezmaures as a matchmaker, tenor Jean Mollien as a friend of the anti-hero, and bass Alexander Popovitzky as an indolent servant.

Regrettably, Olympic has taken the old recording sound and "encoded" it for stereo and quad, resulting in booming echo that renders the performance hard to make out. I have found that playing it in mono helps some, and taking a bass cut helps a bit more. The sleeve contains no notes (Gogol's name doesn't even crash the billing), but it does offer the complete English text, which is essential.

Boris Godunov (1869)

Pay no attention to the date; I'm just at a loss to do any better. It is the date of Mussorgsky's first version, when of course what we're dealing with on records is not that, nor his second version (1872), nor even Rimsky's first edition (1896), but Rimsky II (1908). We cannot here get into the controversy as to which version, for practical performance purposes, is best, but I will risk the truistic comment that with six recordings of the Rimsky over the dam (four still available), it is unthinkable that there should be no document of one, or preferably both, Mussorgsky editions.

On the presumption that *Boris* is the one Russian opera not in need of any sort of introduction, description, or defense, I will proceed directly to the recordings. The two earliest, long out of print, will not be considered in detail here, but both had definite strengths and may be worth some inconvenience to the enthusiast, so their existence will be noted: 1) Victor LHMV 6400, with young Christoff (three roles), young Gedda, and Eugenia Zareska, Paris Radiodiffusion forces under Issay Dobrowen; 2) Period 554, with Pirogov, Mikhailov, Maksakova, Khanayev, Nelepp, and the Bolshoi under Nicolai Golovanov. Mono sound good on the former, mediocre on the latter.

Of the four currently available editions, Richmond's (RS 63020, mono, three discs) can be disposed of fairly quickly. Since it is on a low-priced label

and takes three records to the others' four, it can perhaps be commended to anyone for whom the price differential is really crucial. However, the edition makes what I regard as inadmissible cuts (both Rangoni scenes, the St. Basil scene, other internal cuts), and though the performance offers an adequate Boris (Changalovich) and Marina (Bugarinovich), there is nothing about it to recommend it versus the competition. The Pimen is atrocious. Orchestral and choral work (Belgrade under Kreshimir Baranovich): stodgy. Sound: pretty good mono. Death scene last, following Kromy. The set was a gap-plugger in its day, but at the moment there's no gap.

The remaining entries, all four discs, all stereo: Columbia M4S 696, Angel SDL 3633, and London OSA 1439. With such a many-faceted work, I do not think an over-all recommendation can be made, so I will try to describe the qualities of each performance as I hear them, in arbitrary order.

Columbia's performance is basically a Bolshoi production of the early '60s, with George London *als Gast* in the title role. It has the enormous advantage of the Bolshoi orchestra and (especially) chorus under Melik-Pashayev, who is an authoritative conductor with, as it were, no interpretive ax to grind. The performance is forthright and strong, really stupendous in the big choral passages, and has a gratifying weight. It includes St. Basil but cuts the second Rangoni scene, bits of the second act, and a chunk of Pimen's narrative in the cell scene.

Before commenting on London's work, I should clarify my general feeling about the traditions of this role, which for me always stand in the way of believability. This problem is often defined as the influence of Chaliapin on his successors, but I think it is more a case of a frozen stereotype. Great operatic roles tend to be marmorealized this way, with the coaching system transmitting what really amounts to an imitation of long-dead acting styles. We would consider this absurd in the spoken theater—actors being taught how to inflect and declaim Hamlet, say, as it was done in Booth's time (or even Shakespeare's—"authentic!")—but we accept it regularly in opera, and that is one reason most operatic acting is, literally, incredible.

The problem is particularly difficult with Boris, because it has become known as an "acting" role, and its prominent interpreters are conscientious about assimilating this imitative approach. Chaliapin apparently had the sort of instinctive inner technique that got past the obstacle, and we can be convinced by the recordings of his performance, just as we can by films of Barrymore or Garbo, even though the style in which he and they perform is no longer generally credible. But for others to perpetuate the

same style, however intelligently and notwithstanding the selections they may make, makes no creative sense. All this by way of saying that I have never in my life seen or heard a really persuasive rendition of either the Shuisky interview or the Clock Scene, except for Chaliapin's, and so all the performances we are considering here are, for me, more or less accomplished failures by admirable artists, most conspicuously in Act II.

Within this context, London gives, as he generally did, a strong and well-thought-out performance. The recording dates from 1964, near the close of his singing career, and from a vocal viewpoint does not do justice to his interpretation at its best. There is some tightness in the voice and a tendency to ride a bit sharp. But in comfortable tessitura, as in the Coronation Scene prayer and most of the farewell and death, his voice retains much of its former beauty and firmness, and his phrasing is that of an artist throughout.

Among his colleagues, the outstanding performance is Arkhipova's classic Marina. Her commanding voice is in fine shape, the role lies exactly right for her, and she knows how to steer the music. The Pimen, Mark Reshetin, has an attractive bass and sings a long-lined, well-modulated cell scene; for some reason he is less effective in the last act. Vladimir Ivanovsky is a strenuous-sounding Dmitri, Alexei Gueleva a decent, conversational type of Varlaam, Yevgeni Kibkalo an unctuous, light-baritone Rangoni who uses an oily legato to excellent effect. There is a good, light singing tenor for the Fool (Anton Grigoriev), but the Shuisky (Georgi Shulpin) is hard to listen to.

It is interesting to find many of the Bolshoi's sometime leading artists in smaller roles: Shumskaya, Verbitskaya, Alexei Ivanov, and Borisenko are all here. They do not invariably sound good, but the easy command of the material and the cumulative experience are what helps to give this version a certain unity and integrity the others do not quite have.

Angel's recording is complete—that is, all of Rimsky II plus the Ippolitov-Ivanov St. Basil scene. André Cluytens conducts the Paris Conservatory Orchestra and the Sofia National Opera Chorus, both good bodies. His reading is musical, thoughtful, and rather polite-sounding; its texture is a bit soft, its rhythms a little loose-jointed, for my taste. His approach is not helped by the engineering, which tends in the same direction, overmikes the upper voices, and throws in some dreadful studio effects, like the mushy bells that bong interminably at the end of the Coronation Scene.

Christoff is the star, assuming all three important bass parts. The Varlaam is spectacular—one is not apt ever to hear it

sung this way in live performance, and in fact the Inn Scene as a whole is a big success in this rendition, with a good Hostess (Mira Kalin) and Police Officer (Nicolai Cristov). Christoff's Pimen offers some fine *mezza voce* singing and a shrewd lightening of timbre to contrast with himself as Boris. In the title role, he is at his best in the last act, where he is restrained and musical; earlier, there is really a lot of generalized shouting, and the voice assumes a rather hollow timbre at forte. It is probably unnecessary to add that using the same singer for all these parts is an indefensible notion.

We have a soprano Marina, Evelyn Lear, and she inflects the role with considerable intelligence and insight; vocally, she was in secure condition, with a trace of timbral harshness that is not out of place in the music. Her Dmitri, Dimiter Uzunov, combines the timbral drawbacks of both Slavic and Western Heroics with an unvaryingly loud assault upon the music—no bargain. There is a bass Rangoni, Anton Diakov. This is a strong, dark voice, and the weight is welcome with much of the role lying in the octave between Cs, but there is no way for a bass to be quite as insinuating as a baritone above the staff, and we get a picture of a faintly clumsy Jesuit. The English tenor John Lanigan is musical and has more vocal substance than most Shuiskys, though his technique renders the tone cloudy. The small roles are quite effectively taken on this recording.

Finally, on London we have Herb Karajan and his glorious Salzburg Easter Pageant. In his reading we are given pointed, we might even say ostentatious, observance of dynamics and phrase markings, an insistence on care with intonation, and a consistent musical point of view from the entire ensemble. There are values to be gotten from the approach—a clarity in ensembles, a loveliness of timbre and a sweet musicality in the more lyrical passages, a fulfillment of the music's structure—that cannot be found in the other performances. There is also a sense of constraint, a "coached" atmosphere, and a final lack of theatrical spontaneity, that can give a listener the feeling of being held at arm's length from a beautiful object.

For sheer vocal beauty and ease, Nicolai Ghiaurov is the choice Boris of our time, and there is some truly magical singing here. Interpretively, he has the sense to sing rather more and yell rather less than most, though when he does break from the music, he tends to inflect everything the same way, regardless of the meaning.

The best of the other individual efforts is the Rangoni of Zoltán Kélémen. (Here, as on Angel, we have the complete role.) His voice has exactly the combination of dark and bright properties and ease in the tessitura demanded

by the writing, and he is masterful in his control of long, firmly shaped phrases. Martti Talvela, the Pimen, sings lyrically with his steady, lovely bass, but I find him a monochrome, anonymous singer who tends to give the same performance in every role. Diakov moves over from Rangoni to Varlaam and is splendid in the part; Ludovic Spiess, who at least sings clearly and with regard for the score's indications, is on these accounts the best Dmitri we have. Alexei Maslennikov doubles the Fool and Prince Shuisky and is fine at both, but I think it especially unfortunate to have such distinctive character roles accorded the same timbre. I wish I liked Vishnevskaya's Marina—she is such a conscientious artist and does so many of the small things so well. But her lyric soprano, wrong for the part in any case, is in wiry, wobbly condition, and it's just not good singing. The sound on this recording is outstanding.

Khovanshchina (1883)

[Mr. Osborne discusses *Khovanshchina* in his feature review this month of the new Melodiya/Angel recording.]

The Fair at Sorochinsk

Considering that Mussorgsky left this opera in a proportionately less complete state than even *Khovanshchina*; that, with Rimsky out of the picture, half of Russia's conservatory graduates seem to have taken a crack at finishing it (among them Liadov, Cui, Tchernin, Shebalin, and the critic Karatygin); and that it is based on one of the inimitable comic primitives in Gogol's collection of Ukrainian folk tales, choked with incident and superficially quite unpromising as lyric material, it is astonishing that *Fair at Sorochinsk* has anything at all to recommend it.

Yet it is a quite appealing, if very special, piece. In it Mussorgsky made wholesale use of Ukrainian folk melodies, letting them carry the burden of the song elements while he labored at developing his concept of "justified melody" in the dialogue scenes. In the lengthy peasant husband/wife squabble that opens Act II, and even more in the recitative scene for the wife that follows (sections Mussorgsky did complete), it is clear what he was driving at and how accomplished he was becoming at it. (Shebalin, whose version is used in the recording, did excellent work—the score has an admirable consistency of style.)

It is clear, too, that seeking acceptance for such an approach would be a problematic enterprise, for it demands that the performers approach their work first of all as actors and that the theatrical values of the comic situations be really carried through. Several of the scenes and

characters are potentially hilarious, but it is the hardest sort of thing to play and would demand a brilliant company.

This aspect of the work also militates against it on records, for the purely musical appeal of long passages is only moderate—the introduction and opening chorus, two nice *dumkas* for the young lovers, a couple of developed ensembles, and the orchestral/choral dream sequence we know in a different form as *The Night on Bare Mountain* are the only numbers that do not require an active, imaginative participation by the listener to come to life. But for those willing to make such an effort, the work is well worth investigation.

The performance on Melodiya/Angel SRBL 4117 (stereo, two discs) is flavorful. A difficulty is posed by the fact that, given the nature of the work, casting will of course incline toward character singers in even the most important roles, and performances that may have a fine vitality and specificity in the theater are less of a joy on records. This is true here of the mezzo Antonia Kleshcheva in the important part of the wife—she is obviously intelligent and expressive, and one appreciates her performance, but the voice itself is of a dry quality. Boris Dobrin is enjoyable in all respects in one of three important bass parts; the lyric soprano Ludmila Belobragina makes attractive and lively sounds in the romantic lead; and the character tenor Yuri Yelnikov is amusing as a young priest's son who can't quite overcome his seminary background but is giving it a very, very hard try. The others are, as they say, in the picture; the choral and orchestral work under Yuri Aranovich is fine; and so is the recording.

EDUARD NAPRAVNIK
(1839–1916)

Dubrovsky (1895)

A native Bohemian, Napravnik became extremely influential in St. Petersburg as both a composer and a conductor. *Dubrovsky*, taken from an unfinished novel by Pushkin concerning a young man who turns outlaw to avenge a family feud, is the only available example of his large output.

There is a dull opening scene and a perfumed sentimentality to some of the love music, but this is a far from negligible opera: Much of the choral and orchestral writing has authentic theatrical power. The solo writing is less imaginative but often effective; an ironic strain makes several telling appearances. Real Romantic music drama.

The performance (Ultraphone ULP 118/20, mono, three discs), competent throughout, is dominated by Kozlovsky, who sings with rare refinement in the lyric passages and with a fiery ring in the proclamatory ones. He is abetted by the two Ivanovs and a soprano named Chubenko, with Bolshoi forces performing with vitality under Vassily Nebolsin. The recording is poor—dim and cramped with respect to chorus and orchestra, often distorted in solo passages. But with adjustments it can be listenable. I could not locate a score and cannot testify concerning cuts.

**PYOTR ILICH TCHAIKOVSKY
(1840-93)**

The Oprichnik (1872)

I have nurtured an affection for this opera since the Ultraphone release first appeared about nine years ago. It is very much a grand opera, set in the time of Ivan the Terrible and dealing with the fortunes of one Andrei Morozov, who, to avenge the death of his father and the ruin of his family, joins the brotherhood of the Oprichniks, a paramilitary gang that carries out the tsar's unofficial will while busting up people's homes, raping the women, and so on—a sort of Plumbers' Unit rampant. He must renounce mother and girlfriend in order to be with the boys, and, when he decides he didn't want to be an Oprichnik anyway, this naturally comes home to roost, just a moment or two before he is to be de-Oprichnik-ized.

The score is certainly uneven in quality, having little of the rhythmic fluidity of Tchaikovsky's best operas, nor their specificity of instrumental color—the repeated choral and orchestral gestures grow tiresome. Still, there are some beautiful and imposing passages, mostly of the "big" variety: a fine overture, a chilling entr'acte before Act II, and two really splendid, *Gioconda*-esque concerted finales in Acts III and IV. Also good are the hushed prayer of the Oprichniks and a strong melody, also used in the overture, with which Andrei launches the Oath Scene—though it seems to have little connection to the emotional situation. A fine aria for Natalia (the girlfriend) in the first scene, and an interesting duet passage for her and Andrei in the last scene, show for the first time the composer's ability to write haunting music for foredoomed lovers.

The biggest problem in performance would be the stagecraft of the piece, the

sort in which 500 people rush on-stage and two of them sing a ten-minute duet while the other 498 stare into the middle distance, whereupon all 500 depart as the act's crucial happening occurs off-stage.

The recording (ULP 131/4, mono, four discs—Moscow Radio forces under Alexander Orlov) dates from 1948 and is hampered by distortion, particularly toward the ends of sides. The choral singing is good, but the orchestra slipshod.

The best all-round performance comes from mezzo-soprano Zara Dolukhanova in the trouser role of Basmannov. It is gratifying to hear the rich solidity of her lower range, an asset not shared by her mezzo colleague Legostaeva, who is therefore only intermittently authoritative in the juicy role of Andrei's mother. Andrei is Tarkhov, whose clear vowels, good sense of line, and attractive vibrato mitigate the Slavic Heroic sound of his upper range. He begins impressively and sings with feeling throughout, but seems to tire as proceedings advance. Rozhdestvenskaya, the Natalia, has the Slavic Spinto timbre but is steadier than most, and when she can set her voice on a sustained line, as in her lovely solo near the end of the first scene, she is impressive. The several important supporting roles are all strongly taken.

The performance embraces a number of cuts, mostly brief, of repeats or orchestral interludes.

Yevgeny Onegin (1878)

Onegin is Tchaikovsky's most popular opera in the West; even so, it cannot be said to have more than a foothold in the repertory, and it has certainly never inflamed American audiences.

It is a work of beauty and subtlety, and of a psychological depth that can be obscured by the very prettiness of the music. It is also a piece that demands to be set and acted with a precision and clarity that will make theatrically understandable some quite subtle and ambivalent attitudes among the characters, and between the characters and their society. The fullness of Pushkin's characters, only half-conveyed by Tchaikovsky's selection of tableaux, must be created by the performers.

None of these things is likely to happen in the usual grand-opera context, and more than most operas *Onegin* depends upon them to come to life. Most listeners will enjoy several of the arias and dances, but elsewhere the music itself must be justified through the characters and their relationships. *Onegin* is one of those operas that will probably never receive its due until we have a true opera ensemble of trained singing actors and shared rehearsal techniques.

Meanwhile, recordings are an excellent way to approach the work, and fortunately it has been fairly well treated on disc. Less fortunately, the performance that is by a good distance the best is the MK (204D, mono, four discs), which is now difficult to obtain and has been displaced by the Melodiya/Angel (SRCL 4115, stereo, three discs), which has grander sonics but is in no other respect the equal of the older Bolshoi production. Personally, I prefer even the sound of the older recording, which is mono engineering of excellent balance and perfectly sufficient range, to that of the new, which is lush but also of a fatiguing reverberance and exaggerated separation. Its primary virtue is the immediacy with which it conveys some very beautiful orchestral playing.

On the MK set, we are offered three near-perfect principals. The young Vishnevskaya sends her firm lyric soprano sailing through the phrases with the sort of spontaneous, "artless" naturalness that results when a freely working voice is at the disposal of a highly musical and temperamental artist. The Onegin, Yevgeny Belov, would be hard to improve upon: His virile high baritone has just the combination of supple warmth with occasionally suggestive bite that the role needs; he is in easy command musically and interpretively, and his technical poise allows him a superbly decrescendooed upper F at the close of his aria. Finally, the brief but vital role of Gremin finds the huge, plush basso of Petrov at its best, and his singing of the aria is highly satisfying.

The Lenski, veteran Slavic Lyric Lemeshev, is by no means poor—stylistically he has much to offer, and his upper range has a good, clean ring. This recording finds him at less than his best, though; the lower range has little tonal substance and his *mezza voce* is delicate to the point of disappearance. This performance also offers the best of the Triquets in Sokolov, and Larissa Avdeyeva's solidly sung Olga has a suggestion of bitchiness that I find quite plausible in the party scene. Finally, the performance is splendidly conducted by Khaikin—no other conductor on records has this easy mastery of the music's gestures, this solidity of rhythm, or this ability to capture the sad color of some of the opera's most compelling moments.

The Melodiya/Angel conductor is a magnificent musician—Rostropovich—but that is not the same as a good theater conductor. Though he has some interesting ideas and, strangely, captures the difficult conversational lilt of the first scene memorably, the reading is finally dispiriting—there isn't enough urgency of pulse or rhythmic backbone, and the more dramatic moments die on the vine.

The casting looks better on paper than

it sounds on vinyl. Vishnevskaya is here older and wiser, but she was already wise enough when her voice was of a Tatiana freshness and steadiness, and her scrupulously musical performance sounds like a mature intellectualization beside the earlier one. Yuri Mazurok, the younger generation's continuation of the Russian high-baritone type exemplified by a Belov or Pavel Lisitsian, makes a basically handsome sound and sings fluently enough, but really without more than the most generalized projection of attitudes and passions—he's boring, in short. Atlantov is a heavier sort of tenor than the average Russian Lenski, but the strength is often welcome, and, while elegance is not his strong suit, he shades and phrases intelligently. The Gremin, Alexander Ognitsev, has a splendid instrument, but he sings the aria quite blandly and stiffly and fades to a weakish low G flat. Tamara Sinyavskaya is a positive Olga, the others of a routine competence.

Richmond SRS 63509 (stereo, three discs) is above the level of most of this series, and at its price is worth serious consideration. Heybalova's faintly tough timbre is not ideal for Tatiana, but her voice is steady and healthy here, and she sings the role most capably, with some moments of real imagination and passion. Popovich is heard to good effect—his warm baritone has its imprecise and muffled moments, but they are minimal in this performance, and his Onegin has a great deal more color and life than Mazurok's. Changalovich, a bit lighter of voice than Petrov, is an admirably musical Gremin, and Bugarinovich easily the best Filipyevna from the vocal standpoint. Drago Startz is a competent, rather anonymous Lenski. As usual, the Belgrade orchestra is less than a model of intonation and ensemble, especially among woodwinds and brasses, but this is really bothersome only in the dances of the Gremin scene. Danon offers per-

fectly solid leadership, and the early stereo sound is still serviceable.

Another complete Bolshoi performance has circulated here, on Period (507, mono, three discs). This performance, originally on 78s, dates from the '40s, and its cast is of more than incidental interest, including Eva Kruglikova, Kozlovsky, and Nortsov, all estimable artists, under Melik-Pashayev. Regrettably the sound, already cramped and shallow, is given the *coup de grace* by a transfer that is a half-tone high and at spots more; since all three of these singers have voices that are already on the high and bright side, the pitch error lends their dialogue a Disneyesque caste, and the reapers' chorus sounds like a Munchkin celebration. The set might be worth a search to the specialist collector with a variable-speed turntable.

The Maid of Orleans (1879)

There are some splendid pages in *Maid*, but in general it represents a precipitous backslide from *Onegin*. Like many composers, Tchaikovsky succumbed to the blandishments of grand opera in the French manner and lost sight of his own strengths while taking aim at an audience success.

The Schiller play still can stir us, but the things in it that now seem most admirable are exactly those eliminated by Tchaikovsky, e.g., the fine portrayal of personal attitudes and conflicts on the English side, the moving reconciliation of Burgundy with Charles VII, and the death of Talbot. Tchaikovsky wanted the heroic romanticization of the heroine, the spectacle effects, and a demonstrable love interest, and to obtain the last he stretched the thin material of the relationship between Joan and Lionel, then soldered on the pyre at Rouen in place of Schiller's battlefield death.

The results are psychologically false;

Tchaikovsky sold himself short. The music reflects this. The first scene is the only entirely successful one—a pastoral genre scene of the type Tchaikovsky painted well, intruded upon by the flame-and-tocsin description of the English advance, continuing with the fine aria commonly called "*Adieu, forêts*," and concluding with an angelic voice incident that does capture some visionary ecstasy. Later, some of the orchestral writing is good, one or two of the ensembles build impressively if predictably, and the second Joan/Lionel scene (a standard love duet) is at least pretty. But a great deal of it is empty gesture—phalanxes of brass for arrivals, chromatic woodwind runs accompanied by harp for miraculous references, and so on—and at spots it gets downright tacky. A highlights disc would serve the cause well.

There have been two recordings, and once more we face the awkward fact that the older, harder-to-find one (Ultraphone ULP 135/8, mono, four discs) offers a substantially better performance than the newer one (HMV/Melodiya SLS 852, stereo, four discs, available only as an English import; Melodiya/Angel has issued a disc's worth on SR 40156).

The Ultraphone version is taken from a production by the Kirov (Leningrad) in 1946, and the sound is badly compressed by contemporary standards, though actual distortion is not severe. But this does not disguise an impetuous, soaring reading by Khaikin, boldly played with outstanding choral work. The Joan is Preobrazhenskaya. Her giant mezzo has brief moments of imperfect control, but it sounds like a great voice, and she sings with much feeling and color. There is a quite beautifully sung Lionel by the lyric baritone Solomyak, and the other principal singers (the tenor Kilchevsky as Charles, the bass Konstantinov as the Cardinal, baritone Runovsky as Dunoix, soprano Kashevarova as Agnes), whatever their assorted faults, are without exception preferable to their Melodiya counterparts. The gap is even wider with the supporting roles, such as Thibault and Bertran.

Arkipova is the Joan of the Melodiya set. She makes a brave sound and has a bit more vocal consistency than Preobrazhenskaya; I find the latter more exciting, but it's a reasonable matchup. There is also an effective enough Dunoix from Vladimir Valaitis, but these are the only two roles that offer real alternatives. Gennady Rozhdestvensky, conducting Moscow Radio forces, gives a perfectly solid, well-judged reading, but it hasn't the theatrical pulse of Khaikin's, and I am afraid that the sound (not outstanding stereo, but far better than Ultraphone's mono) is the only basis for recommending the set.



At the party at Mme. Larina's in Act II of Tchaikovsky's *Yevgeny Onegin* at the Metropolitan Opera, Alessio de Paolis as Triquet sings to Lucine Amara as the troubled Tatiana.

Cherivichki (1885)

This is another arguable date, for *Cherivichki* (commonly called *Little Shoes* or *Golden Slippers* in English) is a revision of the earlier *Vakula the Smith*.

It is Tchaikovsky's only attempt to deal with the materials of Gogol's *Evenings on a Farmstead Near Dikanka*, at which Mussorgsky and Rimsky also took their licks, and on the whole it doesn't work. Whereas each of the other two composers was comfortable with at least two of the three basic ingredients (sexual humor, folk fantasy, and the charm of the rural setting in Ukraine), Tchaikovsky was buffaloed by all three, so that for long stretches the writing is simply dead. He was more at home with some of the subsidiary elements—there are some expressive moments for the young couple, lively passages for the Devil and the witch Solokha, and some winning incidental choral and orchestral interludes—but he comes fully into his own only in the scene at the tsaritsa's court in St. Petersburg, where he is able to write some very good dances and a serviceable song, rather like Tomsky's ballads, for the grand duke. A few rus-salkas turn up, down by the river, but they just sing a chorus and go away. Despite its appealing moments, the work seems largely of documentary interest.

The performance (Ultraphone ULP 111/3, mono, three discs) is a decent one. Nelepp is at his best as Vakula; the voice is firm and ringing, and in some of the climactic passages he sounds like a major romantic tenor. The Oksana, Eva Kruglikova, was apparently past her prime, and her basically sweet lyric soprano curdles whenever she's taken out of midrange. Both baritone Ivanovs are on this set, Alexei as the Devil, and Andrei as the grand duke. The former gives a virtuoso character performance, finely pointed and possessed of considerable vocal substance in his few sustained moments, while the latter projects his song quite magnificently. The mezzo Yelena Antonova is a good Solokha, especially enjoyable in her scenes opposite Ivanov. The smaller roles are not quite up to the best Bolshoi standard, but the performance has good impetus under Melik-Pashayev. The sound just passes muster.

The Sorceress (1887)

For me, *The Sorceress* (or, I think better, *The Enchantress*) is Tchaikovsky's strongest and most important opera apart from *Onegin* and *Queen of Spades*. He found a subject congenial to his inclinations, which he was able to approach in his compositional maturity.

I. V. Shpazhinsky's libretto can seem confusing—there are many characters and many happenings and all the trap-

pings of Romantic melodrama. But in a competent production I think the development would be clear, for the characters behave with psychological consistency, and the conflicts proceed logically, even though people are acting, as so often in life, in an extravagant and irrational fashion.

The "sorceress" of the title is not a woman of magical inclinations, but an innkeeper of generous and frank disposition, called Kuma, who is trying to enjoy life and help others to do so—an intolerable aim, and one that is misinterpreted by everyone but her close companions. The work is about the threat this sort of person poses to a rigid social framework and the ways in which attitudes and customs founded on fear and power work to destroy all who are caught in them. Shpazhinsky's characters are not stereotypes, but well-fleshed people torn by believable feelings, and altogether I would account his libretto one of the most interesting I know.

Tchaikovsky's score is powerful and beautiful; at moments it touches greatness. His craft was completely at his disposal here, and he clearly felt the characters deeply—the music strikes right at them. Kuma is perhaps the most attractive and touching of all his heroines, while the Prince and Princess (particularly the former), whose failing marriage she inadvertently touches, are forcefully and understandably drawn. The classic family conflicts (also including the son, Yuri) assume vivid life in both libretto and score. The writing has structural strength and emotional integrity throughout; nothing is wasted, nothing is sentimentalized.

The performance on Westminster OPW 1402 (mono, four discs) has its vocal imperfections but is thoroughly committed. Samuel Samosud, conducting the Moscow Philharmonic and the Chorus of the State Radio, offers a blood-and-thunder reading that is also disciplined and proportioned; it has great cumulative impact.

In the title role is Natalia Sokolova, a lyric soprano who alternates some lovely singing with some that is unsteady, but who is well into the role and sings with a poetic tenderness in the lyric passages. As the Prince and Princess, baritone Mikhail Kiselev and mezzo Veronica Borisenko are both sometimes tried by the considerable vocal challenge of their roles, but both have strong voices, neither plays it safe, and they project these vital parts compellingly. Nelepp, as the young Prince Yuri, is not in his finest vocal estate, but sings with artistry and feeling. There is vivid character work in a long list of supporting roles, headed by Alexei Korolyev, who has a really nasty old court adviser to play and takes full advantage of the chance.

The Queen of Spades (1890)

This opera is possibly even harder to perform convincingly than *Onegin*, but it can exert a gloomy spell. Once again Tchaikovsky is absorbed by the responses of hypersensitive people to the traps set by society, and the extended "milieu" scenes are of great importance for the contrast they afford with the turbulent inner worlds of Ghermann and Lisa.

Ghermann is the key to the piece—he captured Tchaikovsky's empathies as completely as had Tatiana and is far more complex. A social and emotional outsider, he really manufactures the tragedy entirely out of his own fantasy projection. This is true not only of his fixation on the countess in her fateful incarnation of the title, but of his investment in Lisa, whom he has not even met when he tells Tomsky in the opening scene that he contemplates suicide if she will not have him. He senses that there is something in her, bound though she is by her social position and engagement to the prince, that will respond to a pale and penniless man of the night and the storm. He is right, and the inevitable futility of their bitter passion is the secret of the power behind this strange and shifting score—provided the audience is let in on the secret.

The practical decision for those who want an enjoyable recording is the Melodiya/Angel set (SRDL 4104, four discs), the only one that combines a solid performance with current stereo engineering and ready availability. It is also the only one to occupy four discs; the others are all contained on three. There is no grave weakness in the casting, though Slavic Heroic Zurab Andzhaparidze, unusually gulpy around the break, is accorded vibrant immediacy of recording when distance, gentle distance, is what we want. The Lisa is Tamara Milashkina, who here and there betrays signs of incipient Slavic Spintohood but is for the most part highly effective, with a nice *morbidezza* in the introspective sections and a round, firmly attacked full voice for the bigger moments.

Mazurok makes a fine Yeletsky, his sunny baritone centering easily on the show-stopping aria in the masque scene, and Arkhipova is a bit of casting lagniappe as Paulina, though in truth she sounds somewhat imperious for the role. Mikhail Kiselev is a solid Tomsky (a difficult and thankless part), and Valentina Levko a moderately effective Countess. Khaikin conducts, as one would expect, with authority and impetus, and a particular pleasure of the recording is some beautiful choral work, especially apposite in bringing the opening scene to life.

There are two earlier Bolshoi recordings, one from the early '50s on MK



On television, NET gave Americans a rare chance to hear *The Queen of Spades*. The production starred Jennie Tourel (the Countess), John Reardon (Tomsy), and Evelyn Mandac (Lisa).

207C, the other from a 1942 Moscow performance (!) on Ultraphone ULP 141/3; both are mono only.

The MK performance has many virtues, and depending on a listener's specific interests could even be recommended as choice to those content with mono sound, provided a copy can be found and the condition of its surfaces ascertained (my copy is fearsome in this respect, something to be watched with these older Soviet imports). Smolenskaya, a plucky and spirited Slavic Spinto, is no match for Milashkina as Lisa, but Nelepp, the Ghermann, though at times shaky or hard-pressed, is a bit more lyric than the run of the role and more acceptable than Andzhaparidze. The other roles are more or less a stand-off, with the exception of the Yeletsky of Lisitsian, a demonstration of classic vocal mastery. The aria is stunning, and his nine bars of *moderato assai* at his exit in the first scene become the high point of the act. There is an especially pretty bit by Firsova as Prilepa (Chloë in the pastorate); she also does it for Melodiya/Angel, but much less well. Melik-Pashayev makes more conservative choices than Khaikin, but his work always has weight and vitality, and this reading is no exception.

The wartime performance is crippled by sound that is not basically poor for date and conditions, but beset by frequent distortion. Too bad this could not be cleaned up—it renders the set a curiosity, when the performance deserves better. The heavily accented reading of Samosud is interesting to hear, however

dimly, and three of the principals are outstanding, including the Ghermann, Khanayev, who is a trifle steely sounding but who sings the part with some true line and expressive variety, making something quite special of the challenging barracks scene. This must have been an exciting performance in the house, and it's too bad that he suffers most from the distortion, in company with his Lisa, the whoopy Slavic Spinto Dzerzhinskaya. Baturin, the Prince Igor of an old 78 abridgement of that opera, is also the best of the Tomsksys, coupling a firm dramatic baritone with easy interpretive authority. Finally, Zlatoragova is the only countess who really sounds like a mean old aristocrat, really sounds like she's falling asleep as she sings her Grétry, and really sounds like she's back from the dead in the barracks.

The Richmond set (SRS 63516, stereo) has to recommend it availability, decent sound, and low price, but little in terms of the performance. Heybalova gives Lisa a good try, but the role extends her vocally, and the result is far less happy than her Tatiana. Alexander Marinkovich is an especially piercing Slavic Heroic whose Ghermann is only fractionally redeemed by some dramatic commitment, and among the others the most positive factor is an expressive Yeletsky by Popovich, which is still well below the vocal level of Lisitsian or Mazurok. The stodgy standard of the Belgrade ensemble is not raised by the flaccid leadership of Baranovich.

Two closing notes: 1) The Richmond and MK performances follow the tradi-

tion of having Tomsy assume the role of Plutus (or Zlatogor) in the pastorate, while the Melodiya/Angel and Ultraphone ones cast separate singers (for Melodiya, the excellent Nechipailo). 2) Among the four soprano/mezzo pairs who essay the Lisa/Paulina duet in Scene 2, not one makes a stab at the concluding trills.

Yolanta (1891)

Tchaikovsky's last opera is a one-acter (though a lengthy one) concerning the daughter of the aged King René of Provence, blind from birth, whose gift of sight is awakened by a Moorish physician through the instrumentality of her love for a young knight who speaks to her of the glories of light. It's better not to hide from the world, the libretto explains.

By its nature the piece inclines to an insistent lyricism and to sentiment that borders on the lugubrious. But Tchaikovsky's lyric gift was an extraordinary one, after all, and *Yolanta* contains several fine arias (one apiece for the four leads, in fact) and is at least enjoyable listening throughout. One can imagine that a younger Tchaikovsky would have drawn it into four acts and overplayed his hand, but as it is the material is tastefully and economically handled, and it's a moving little work.

The available recording (Ultraphone ULP 106/7, mono, two discs) is by the forces of the Maly Theater in Leningrad, that city's "second" company, and there are no great voices on display. The only really weak point, though, is in the baritone role of the Moorish doctor, a secondary personage. The *Yolanta* is an above-average lyric soprano, T. Lavrova, who sings well except in one or two forte passages above the staff, and handles the part simply and sincerely. There is a good *basso cantante*, V. Andrianov, as King René, and as the two young knights in the case, lyric tenor M. Dovenman and baritone S. Shaposhnikov are capable enough. Under a conductor named Eduard Grikurov, the Maly's orchestra sounds solid, its chorus a bit tenuous at anything less than forte. The sound captures the solo voices cleanly, the chorus and orchestra rather fitfully.

Unlike most Russian operas, *Yolanta* has a manageable cast list, a single set, and no grand choral demands, and these factors should recommend it to some of our regional companies. No doubt they can do something topical with the faith-healing bit. . . .

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CIRCLE 43 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by William Radford-Bennett

An Audiophile's Hints to Santa



If you have a high fidelity buff on your Christmas list, here's a roundup of hardware, software, and accessories he would be delighted to find in his stocking.

EVEN IF YOU aren't a regular reader of HIGH FIDELITY, chances are that you will find, skulking among the names on your Christmas shopping list, a few audiophiles or serious music listeners—whether their wassail be pops or Pops (say, Denver or Boston). Everyone knows the traumas of the gal who subscribed to the twelve-day gift plan and ended up with a terrific headache from too many drummers a-drummin', more gold rings than she had fingers, and lords a-leapin' like grasshoppers in June. I trust you'd like to avoid the useless sort of gifts that she fell victim to, and that can be difficult, especially if you're not as deep into the subject as the friend for whom you're buying. Maybe I can help with a few suggestions.

Software

"Software" is a term that has come to designate whatever the music is recorded on—be it a disc or a reel of tape. The software is played on and through the "hardware": the equipment, of whatever description.

A true music or audio buff can never have too many recordings. (For comparison let's say the lass in paragraph one received a new outfit instead of each milkmaid or piper. I doubt that she'd have complained.) For many, it is mandatory to have several different recordings of favorite pieces (I have sixteen of the Beethoven Seventh Symphony!) and to try out new versions that come out from time to time in the hope of finding a more perfect one. A recording, therefore, can be a welcome gift, but often only if the intended recipient either has a very small record collection or makes out a list of possibilities with catalogue numbers. If not, your "outfit" could be like a dress for a lass who wears only slacks.

Washington-based William Radford-Bennett is a conductor and free-lance writer whose articles on music and audio have appeared in many publications.

In wrapping records, remember that they are vulnerable to temperature changes. If they are to be left under a tree for any length of time, they should be protected from its lights. Most record stores have "mailers" that will provide an extra measure of thermal insulation and enough extra stiffness to inhibit warping.

I'm a person who hates gift certificates and considers them an impersonal "easy way out," but my viewpoint changes when it comes to recordings. Certificates can be a joy for the collector, especially if they will cover more than one disc. It is, quite frankly, a lot of fun to enter your favorite store, browse, make a selection, and then give the cashier a slip of paper that is neither a personal check nor a twenty-dollar bill. If I come away with *both* the records and the money, I find myself whistling *Ein Heldenleben* every time.

One word of caution. Be sure the certificate you give covers the sales tax. It's a real downer to hand over the piece of paper and then have to dig in your pocket for miscellaneous change.

If you're buying for someone who prefers his music recorded on tape, the price may come a little higher of course. More important—unless you are using a gift certificate—you will need to know what *kind* of tape: open-reel, cassette, or cartridge. If it's cartridge, you must assume 8-track these days (many users don't even remember 4-track cartridges); and if it's open-reel, you must make sure that the intended recipient has quarter-track equipment (which he probably does).

Both reel and cassette tapes may come with Dolby processing (a few 8-track cartridges may as well), and for best results with these recordings the playback machine should be equipped with Dolby compensation. Try to get a peek at the recipient's equipment and look for a Dolby switch on the recorder or a separate Dolby unit—or for the Dolby symbol (Ⓜ), which appears on most Dolby tapes as well.

Blank tape always is welcomed by the recordist, of course. It also gets you off the hook on questions

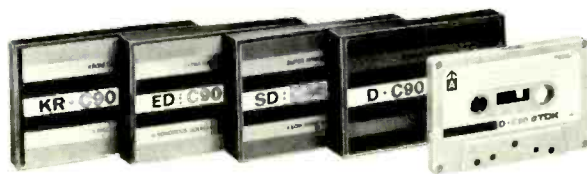
of head configuration, but it raises others that may require research. You'll need to know what specific kind of tape he would want. It would be judicious to show more than a passing interest in the reasons for the recordist's preference for his medium. Fortunately audio people love to talk about, and demonstrate, their equipment (and even are easily hurt by insensitive portable-radio-owner types who don't care).

The first thing to establish is the format: open reels, cassettes, or 8-track cartridges. You must then find out the favorite tape length being used. Tape people are very sensitive about this. For example, some cassette users avoid anything shorter than C-60 or even C-90 as awkward for long works, while others avoid anything longer than C-90 as trouble-prone or even stick to C-60s or shorter for their minimum print-through. In buying open reels, 1,800 feet (on a 7-inch reel) usually is a safe length. It gives the user one and a half hours of stereo at 7½ inches per second, three hours at 3¾. If you are faced with a *real* perfectionist, notice whether he uses standard 7-inch reels or the big 10½-inch NAB ones. Not all machines will take NAB reels, and, if the recordist has gone to the trouble to get a model that will, you probably can deduce that he prefers the large size. In 8-track cartridges, the preferred length may be dictated by the program material; most LPs fit on a cartridge 40 to 50 minutes long, while radio programs obviously may do better on the 60-minute length.

In buying tape, get a good brand. If the recordist has been using economy tape, it is likely that he would appreciate something better than he normally buys. If he already is using high-quality tape, he wouldn't accept less and probably would never use a poorer quality even if it were given to him. What tape is "best" obviously will depend on what kind the recorder is biased for. This has become a very important consideration in the past three years.

There are many good tapes on the market. I personally have had very good luck with Scotch premium tapes, Maxell UD, and TDK SD in open-reel tapes. All of these give excellent recordings and come on sturdy reels with leader attached. For a gift, I particularly like the Scotch storage box. (Check the corners to make sure the plastic hasn't been chipped due to rough handling.)

Cassette tape comes in two basic types: ferric



Brand tape lines (like TDK) are graded from good to super; better grades are welcome if matched to deck.

oxide and chromium dioxide. The two oxide types also can be combined in what are known as ferrichrome tapes. It is most important that you know whether a given machine will compensate for the tape you intend to give. Ferric oxides are relatively interchangeable, but chromium types will work best only with machines that have circuits to make use of their special properties.

New tapes are coming out every day. Especially noteworthy, because they are especially new, are the ferrichrome cassettes. At this writing I haven't yet used them, but, if the recordist is as curious as I am about their performance, they could make a timely gift. Ask your dealer for advice and information on them. Ferrichromes aren't (yet?) used for open reels, but there are new ferric open-reel tapes like TDK Audua, Scotch Classic, and so on. For the 8-track enthusiast, if he's into quad, there also are new tapes from Columbia Magnetics that will take advantage of switches found on some 8-track machines that automatically change over to quad reproduction when that is the recorded format.

Tape can be fun to give. Cassettes, in particular, are so small that by using different boxes and packing around them they can be disguised to look like almost anything except an umbrella. They make excellent stocking stuffers as well.

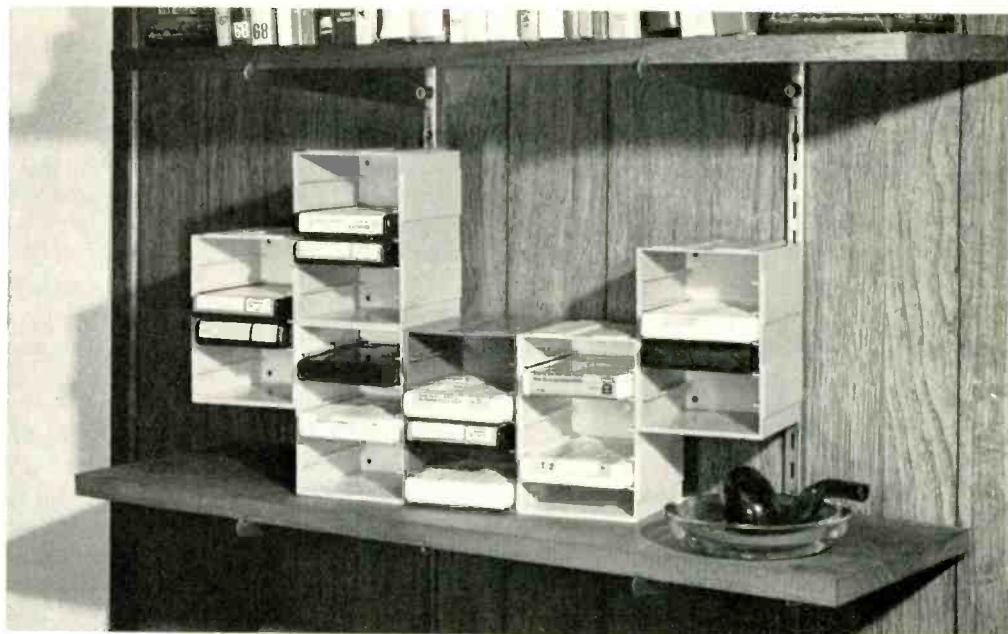
Storage

Most collectors find that they need special shelving to store their records and tapes. If recordings are improperly kept, deterioration will begin more quickly than one might imagine. Record shelving has always been a problem due to the size of a disc and the fact that it must not lean diagonally if it is to be kept warp-free.

There are two ways of housing records that I would recommend. The more expensive housing is the "cubes" that seem to be available everywhere these days in a great variety of colors and materials. Some of them even come equipped with dividers to help keep the discs upright. (Sometimes the dividers also serve to hold optional drawers, making the cubes extremely versatile.) If you get a plain open cube, books can be used to take up extra space so the records remain upright. As the record collection expands, it's generally much easier to find an alternate place for books than for records. Cubes have an advantage, too, for the person who moves around a lot: They can be used as shipping or moving cartons so that the collection need not be disturbed or rearranged at all.

The second recommended solution is freestanding shelving, which ends up costing less in the long run but is not as flexible. For records, which are very heavy in large numbers, the shelves should be no more than two feet long between supports.

Storage units for tape cartridges and cassettes abound; these Royal Sound Add-N-Stack modules (for 8-track) interlock so you can assemble "sculptural" storage groups, and may be attached to wall. They and cassette counterparts are available in four-packs.



Wooden shelves should be of material at least $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick, and I've found that, even then, they should be turned over about once a year to avoid shelf warpage caused by the weight. Under no circumstances do I recommend shelves that fasten to the wall unless they are professionally installed and the company doing the work will guarantee it. I'll never forget the night the paneling parted from the wall and all Valhalla (well, the *Ring*) broke loose and crashed to the floor.

A good alternative to wood is the highly durable heavy-duty steel shelves that have become so popular in the past ten years. They are inexpensive and flexible in that the shelves can be fastened at different points along the frame to create different-sized spaces. Once thought of only as an item for the workshop, steel shelving units can, in their modern incarnation, be very attractive anywhere in the home. Most come in "wood grain" finish (usually walnut) and include levelers that cope remarkably well with uneven floors. The sets are usually shipped unassembled and can be put together easily with no tools except a screwdriver and a pair of pliers.

My favorite steel unit comes from Sears, but all department and hardware stores seem to be carrying them now. I've found the ones that are actually advertised for books to be the best, assuming the vertical spacing is adjustable. These shelves are usually only ten inches wide, which is actually an asset. Most homes and apartments have moldings that will force the units to stand a little away from the wall. This width of shelving, then, will allow the records to butt up against the wall for solid support and perhaps overhang the front by about an inch—which makes them much easier to pull out—while their weight still is approximately centered on the

shelves. A typical unit of this sort will make three shelves: space for about six hundred records.

Open-reel tape is fairly easy to store; the 7- or 10½-inch reels fit into most bookshelves. Cassettes and cartridges have spawned new types of storage. One of the more popular units for cassettes has been a lazy-Susan type. I definitely would stay away from it, as the compartments on all I've seen are too small to hold the cassettes in their protective plastic boxes, which should be retained to avoid damage from dirt and dust. Awkward, too, is the album type of thing that unfolds to reveal space for six to eight cassettes per "page." It is a bother getting the tapes out if you use them very often, and though some albums have a pocket to hold the program notes that come with the better-packaged cassettes they must (unhandily) be separated from the cassettes themselves.

The very finest cassette and cartridge cabinets I've seen are those that are shallow rectangular boxes with individual compartments for each tape—including its box. The cassette versions are especially nice, because the boxes are held with their long spine out, which allows more room for labeling than the short end does. Mounting holes are provided on the back of some units so they may be hung on the wall. Some cassette manufacturers recently have offered this type of storage unit free when you buy several of their cassettes at the same time. The comparable cartridge storage boxes are almost identical except that, owing to the larger size of the cartridge, they hold fewer tapes and are slightly deeper so the cartridge can be placed with the label end out.

These units are so well thought-out that I'm surprised how difficult they are to find in my area. The type I have been buying is called the Tape-Stor,

made by Recoton and sold at Lafayette Radio. I'm told, however, that several companies make such units, so you may find a wider selection.

If you know someone who uses cassettes or cartridges and travels a lot, you might consider one of the numerous carrying cases that are sold just about everywhere. Many are highly attractive and look like expensive attaché cases or fine luggage. Make sure there is room enough in the compartments to hold the cassette or cartridge in its original case and that the carrying handles and clasps are secure. If the unit locks, as many do, be certain that a key is included and that it works. And check that there is enough finger room for easy removal of the tapes.

Hardware

It is extremely difficult to buy basic audio equipment for someone else, and it can, of course, be very expensive. There are, however, a few items that make nice gifts, are moderately priced, and fall into the category of hardware.

If cost is no object and there is tape in the system you are buying for, you might consider a noise-reduction unit. Most people are familiar with the Dolby models by now (and the system may already include this function, so check before you buy), but ask your dealer about the Burwen and DBX models as well. Burwen's consumer unit is a de-noiser, as opposed to a noise-preventer [see the new-equipment article, HF, October 1974]; DBX's new models can be used to decode specially made (DBX-encoded) discs as well as for compression/expansion tape noise reduction [see "News and Views," HF, November 1974]. Of course you must know something of the subject—and the stereo system for which the unit is intended—to choose wisely.

I've stayed away from quad in this piece so far, because there are still different systems involved and divergent ideas on recording perspectives as well. But if, again, you are sufficiently familiar with both the technical considerations involved and with the intended recipient's system, you may want to take a flier in this direction. The least expensive quad gadget for the stereo-system owner is the "speaker matrix" type of simulator that drives four speakers from two channels of amplification. Dynaco offers it in the Quadaptor, but there are several imitators. Beyond that, prices begin to rise and the complexities multiply, so I must leave you on your own.

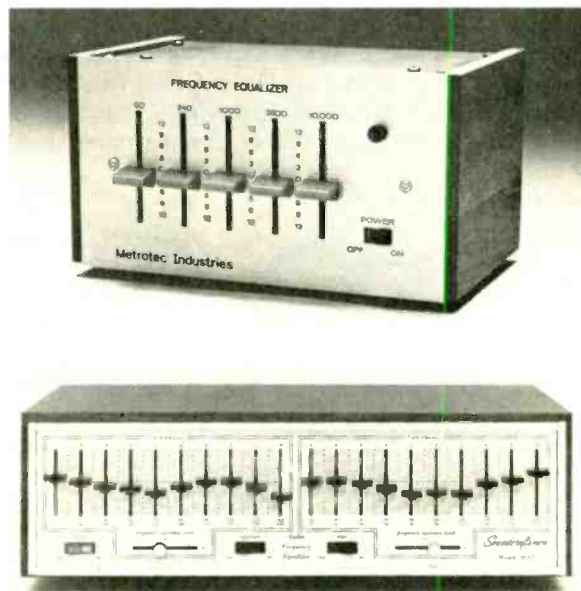
You might help upgrade someone's system with a high-quality phono cartridge. Most audiophiles like to have a selection so they can change from time to time, but you must know what sort of record-playing equipment the pickup will be used with. Then you can check the suitability of a given cartridge with your audio dealer [or see "Picking a

Pickup," HF, November 1974]. If your audio friend has a cartridge he is happy with, how about a replacement stylus? Even if he doesn't need it right now, he presumably will sooner or later.

An even more welcome gift, since many systems owners overlook this possibility for themselves, is a replacement stylus for playing 78-rpm records. First make sure that the turntable in question has the 78 speed, of course. If your friend seems thoroughly satisfied with the pickup he has and you know its model number, check to find out whether such a slip-in stylus assembly is available for it. Or, if his tone arm is the type with plug-in cartridge shells or clips, he might prefer a cartridge just for the old records.

A pair of extension speakers make a wonderful gift. Most people have a room, other than the main listening room, in which they spend a good deal of time. And even demanding audiophiles generally will settle for smaller speakers as extensions; when they want to listen intently they will return to the main system. I've found the ADC-303A speakers to be superb extensions, but there are dozens of others on the market. If someone you know is especially happy with his main speaker systems, you might look into smaller models of the same brand. Staying with the same brand won't guarantee a similarity of sound, of course, but it will raise your chances of making the right choice.

Avoid the really "cheap" (under \$30) brands of extensions unless you know what you're doing. Bargains can be found, but not as easily as white elephants. If the main system is of fairly high quality, the listener probably will tire quickly of drasti-



Price and capability ranges of add-on units are wide, require knowledgeable buyer; for example, equalizers run from five-band Metrotec (above) to Soundcraftsmen.

cally inferior extensions and stop using them. And for goodness' sake, if you're buying extension speakers, be certain to include some wire to connect them with. At gift-opening time, a pair of speakers with no way to use them could dispel any good cheer that was intended. Eventually, *inadequate* speaker wire could too. Common "zip cord" (the wire that is used for AC extensions) is easy to find, reasonably priced, and adequate even for long runs—which the skimpy wire often sold for speaker extensions is not.

Headphones make a good gift at Christmas or any other time. Currently there are headphones that serve different purposes. Some are sealed and fit around the ear tightly (for example, the Koss Pro 4AA or its electrostatics). This type of phone literally will isolate you from the world, alone with the music. The "open air" type, by contrast, does not completely block out other sounds, though at high volume levels it is difficult to hear outside noise unless it too is extremely loud. Probably the best-known model of the type is the Sennheiser 414—or the newer 424.

Unless you absolutely must keep out loud noises, I would suggest the open-air type. The frequency response seems a bit better to me (though some people disagree), and since these sets tend to be lighter they help to eliminate the fatigue problem that keeps many people from using headphones in the first place. But the choice is primarily a personal one.

Before buying headphones, make sure the recipient's system has a headphone jack. (It is highly unlikely that it won't.) Almost all electrostatic models work off the speaker connections, however, so they don't use the jack. If the set is to be used for monitoring from a tape deck, which has no amp, avoid electrostatics and look for reasonably high efficiency. If you are buying what will be a *second* headset, how about including a junction box and extension cord so that both sets can be used at once?



For headphone user, how about junction box like Koss's.

Accessories

There is a wealth of eminently givable items that fall into the accessories category. Modern audio equipment requires that discs and tapes be kept extremely clean and that equipment itself be treated with care if optimum results are to be obtained.

Recent technology has produced tone arms and cartridges that will do their things at extremely low tracking forces and extend the life of records considerably. This blessing is a double-edged sword, however, for the new equipment demands that the software be kept superclean; the stylus will not plow through dust and grit like the brute-force pickups of an earlier age.



Watts Dust Bug, often copied, is original of its type.

Most people probably are familiar with the Watts Dust Bug, a small arm with brush and roller that "plays" the record simultaneously with the tone arm, collecting dust and reducing static along the way. Now many other companies make similar arms. Some are "dry" systems, and some dispense small amounts of antistatic fluid. They all help, and, if I prefer the dry systems, it is because I've found that the residue from some liquids can be as harmful as greasy fingerprints. I must add, though, that others have used liquid systems with no ill effects.

The arms will take off surface dust as the record revolves, but to get down into the grooves and do a thorough cleaning one must use other approaches. There are several hand-held devices that do well at getting to the bottom of things. The one I've found to be the best is the Watts Parastat. Its row of nylon bristles is paralleled on either side by felt rows. As you hold the device lightly to the rotating record surface the bristles get down into the groove to loosen grit, and as it is tilted slightly the felts collect the debris. The Discwasher is a somewhat similar device that, I'm told, also is very good.

Other measures can be taken. I just purchased a Vac-o-Rec, a standing AC device that whirls a record around and around as brushes loosen debris that is then literally vacuumed away. The thing at first looked laughable and gimmicky, but since using it I've not had to clean my stylus at all. The big-



Choosing a blank tape is like selecting a wine

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Recordists welcome degaussing gear—either bulk eraser like Nortronic's (left) or head degausser like Nakamichi's (below).



gest problem with this unit appears to be psychological: It still scares me to see a record whirling away like that. Other vacuuming devices, some quite expensive, have been marketed in England and may be available in some stores in this country.

Before getting the Vac-o-Rec, I installed one of the newer electrostatic air cleaners in the stereo room. It keeps the dust down and really helps with smoke. (A side benefit of the air cleaner appears to be clearer sinuses—and that, I find, makes for clearer listening.)

A few words from sad experience. In buying any of the arm devices (like the Dust Bug) for someone else, make certain that the recipient's equipment has room enough on the turntable plate and height enough under the dust cover. My Bang & Olufsen turntable, for instance, has a sunken platter and a very low dust cover, so I can't use any of the arm devices with it. And in general the arm-type cleaners can be used on automatic turntables only when they're *not* operating as changers.

Other accessories for records would include a stylus force gauge or a brush and solvent for cleaning the stylus. (Regular brushes intended for other uses do not do a good job.) You might consider one of the new stylus timers that tell you how many hours you've used the cartridge. As with any other items that will actually be fastened to and working with the turntable, be sure they will fit. Back to my beloved B & O, for instance: Its design will not allow the use of the stylus timer, a fact I regret.

There are accessories for tape buffs, too. A really good splicer would be in order. Look for excellent construction rather than elaboration; many recordists prefer the EdiTall blocks, which are about as simple as you can get but superbly finished. Be sure you know whether you're getting one for quarter-inch (reel or cartridge) tape or for the narrower cassette tape. Splicing tape, leader tape, cleaning fluids, head lubricants, and applicator swabs all make

nice stocking stuffers. Cartridge fans can use the plastic caps that snap over the "business end" of the case to protect the tape from dirt and dust.

For convenience-format enthusiasts a head cleaning cassette or cartridge might be a thought. They don't take the place of a good cleaning fluid and plain Q-Tip swab, but they certainly are better than no maintenance at all. The box should state clearly that the cleaning tape is nonabrasive; otherwise it could damage recording heads. There are many of these cleaning tapes on the market.

This brings us to the subject of demagnetizers, which are as important to a recordist as a stylus brush is to a record buff. If the heads are not demagnetized periodically, they can damage valuable tapes. A number of demagnetizers are on the market in all price ranges. [See HF test reports, September 1974.] Your audio dealer should be able to make a recommendation.

Also very useful, unless your "recordist" is a playbackist only, is a bulk eraser. Used correctly, it will do a more thorough job of removing previous recordings than an erase head will—particularly on chromium dioxide tapes, which resist erasure more than ferric types. Many models are available, and almost any audio store will stock at least one.

Printed Material

No audiophile would be disappointed at receiving a book or magazine on either high fidelity or music. There are many magazines published specifically for the audiophile and/or music lover. A gift subscription would be a thoughtful item. Perhaps your city has an FM guide that would be appreciated. But don't overlook gift "memberships" in educational or public-sponsored FM stations. Program bulletins often are offered to members; more important, the contribution does its bit toward the

continuation of the station's (often very fine) independent programming.

One magazine that I've found terribly interesting as a supplement to the American ones is the British *Gramophone*. It looks at audiomusical life from a different viewpoint and opens the world of imported discs to the American buyer. If someone you know is more into the music than sound, there are many interesting publications available—from the specialization of, say, *Opera News* to the erudition of *Musical Quarterly*.

The best way to find out what magazines are available and what their addresses are is to visit your local library and ask for periodicals references. If a magazine listing arouses your curiosity but the library doesn't have any copies, try a newsstand.

Books on audio and music are almost as numerous as recordings themselves. There are biographies of composers and performers, books on particular types of music, books on particular instruments, even books on particular pieces of music. And, of course, there are innumerable electronics "how-to" and technical books, many of them available through radio parts stores. Among the publishers specializing in this sort of thing are Howard W. Sams & Co., Rider Publications, and Tab Books.

Librettos to many operas are available in book

form, as are opera plot outlines. The best bet for music-book needs is a music store. If it is a good one, one that actually stocks serious music and scores, prepare to spend a little time; the wealth of selection is likely to stagger one unprepared for it. Some bookstores have music sections as well, though most tend to stock only currently popular titles.

If you have a listening friend who can follow a bit of music, why not consider giving him miniature scores of his favorite compositions? (Score-reading is something you should try if you haven't. Even if your *solfege* is less than so-so, you'll be surprised how much more you get out of complex orchestral music with the score in front of you.) Again, your music store will be a likely source, though I have seen some of the more popular scores in bookshops here and there.

Miscellaneous

This is the "way out" section of the article. If you've come this far without getting any ideas, then you are looking for something to give the "compleat audiophile."

Okay, what about light-show equipment to hook into the system? This comes in two basic formats. You can obtain finished boxes that look like speakers but with the light show taking place where the grille cloth normally would be. The lights in these systems are of varying complexity, usually depending on price, but generally change with the pitch and intensity of the music signal put through them.

For a do-it-yourselfer there are light-control centers that allow you to connect your own lights. Since they are Christmas-seasonal, you might consider three strings of tree lights, each a different color. You could connect, say, green to the lower frequencies, blue to the midrange, and save red for the highest sounds. Use one complete set for each stereo channel, and you'd have quite a show. I'd suggest you keep the lights away from the tree, however; traditionalist types are liable to get very upset at seeing a spruce playing a tricolor *Messiah*!

Oddities to set your imagination turning further might be: a bust of a favorite composer, a stopwatch (or clock) for those who love to time things (especially people who use tape), and—why not—a pocket metronome. As a practicing musician I use one, but I also can see its use by those listeners with some basic music knowledge who love to insist that Furtwängler takes X metronome marking in the Beethoven Third while Walter takes Y.

If you've gone to reputable stores to do your shopping, alert salesmen have probably pointed the way to enough extra items to comprise another full article. Manufacturers have been extremely good at satisfying the audio and recording buyer's slightest whim. I hope this article will help you do the same. ●

IF YOU WANT TO GIVE ANY OF HIGH FIDELITY'S PUBLICATIONS

Reading or reference matter, as the accompanying article points out, always makes good Christmas giving. You may want to consider these suggestions:

* A subscription to HIGH FIDELITY or HIGH FIDELITY/MUSICAL AMERICA. You will find a subscription-order card bound into this issue.

* The new 1975 editions of our buyer's guides, THE WORLD OF TAPE and FOUR-CHANNEL SOUND. Both are now on newsstands. If you can't find them there, they can be ordered (for \$1.50 apiece) from High Fidelity, 1 Sound Ave., Marion, Ohio 43302.

* The 1975 edition of HIGH FIDELITY'S TEST REPORTS. It will be available in January. Copies ordered in advance (for \$2.95; from High Fidelity, The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230) will be shipped directly to the address you name immediately upon publication.

* STEREO. The Winter 1975 issue of this quarterly presently is on newsstands (at \$1.50); subscriptions (at \$6.00 per year in the U.S., \$7.00 per year elsewhere) are available from Stereo, 1 Sound Ave., Marion, Ohio. 43302.

* In addition, stay-at-home shoppers may find what they're looking for in the "Music Listener's Book Service" in this issue. (See the advertising index.)

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Although the 1225 has all the precision your records need, the 1229Q has refinements you may well want. For example, the 1229Q is a full-sized turntable with a 12" dynamically-balanced 7 lb. platter. It is driven by the powerful Continuous-Pole/synchronous motor. The gimbal-mounted 8-3/4" tonearm can track at as low as 0.25 gram, and vertical tracking angle adjusts for single or multiple play. The 1229Q also has an illuminated strobe, and cueing is damped in both directions to prevent bounce.

Dual's other multi-play turntables, the 1226 at \$159.95 and 1228 at \$189.95, offer one or more of these refinements.

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Khovanshchina: Mussorgsky's Unique Epic Canvas

Arkhipova heads Melodiya/Angel's Bolshoi cast for "one of the most satisfying opera recordings of recent years."

by Conrad L. Osborne

Louis Melançon



Persian dancers provide a little exotic color in the Metropolitan Opera's *Khovanshchina* in 1950.

PERHAPS *Khovanshchina*, Mussorgsky's last opera (unfinished, like all the others, if we consider that even *Boris* was never given definitive form), is at last coming into its own—two recordings within a year, though stage productions are still well scattered. It deserves the attention, for, though it is difficult of access and at spots frustrating, it is a work of genius, and when it is well performed—as is fortunately the case on the new Melodiya/Angel recording—its impact is overpowering.

The new release is one of the most satisfying opera recordings of recent years, and I do not at all want to slight it. However, since the work itself is relatively unfamiliar and poses some real obstacles, and since we will be considering the performance on a comparative, discographic basis, let us first turn our attention to the piece of goods itself.

The composer struggled over the work for the last nine years of his life, as he sank under his many personal problems and labored at *Fair at Sorochinsk*. The main difficulty lay in editing down the overabundance of historical incidents and characters, a chore against which he made only partial headway. The indefatigable Rimsky constructed the present performing edition in 1883, executing not only the orchestration, but much of the actual music of the fifth act (working from sketches), and suppressing several scenes that did not fit the logic of the theatrical scheme, at least as he saw it.

The historical situation that fascinated Mussorgsky is frighteningly complex, and this is reflected in the libretto as it exists, wherein the attitudes and actions of the characters frequently seem blurred or even capricious and the dramatic sequence arbitrary. One has the sense that momentous conflicts are being pictured, but it's hard to tell what and why, and none of the booklets accompanying the recordings gives the faintest hint. A few background notes are in order.

The story opens in the year 1682, at the start of the reign of the regent Sophia, when the strongest single force in Moscow was the *streltsy*, a legion of musketeers whose backing was the balance of power in the brutal quarrels between the Miloslavskis and the Naryshkins (families of the two wives of the recently dead Tsar Alexis). Among the Naryshkins was the already formidable ten-year-old Peter, just beginning a seven-year absence from Moscow during which he would bide his time and nurse the memory of a Kremlin bloodbath in which the *streltsy* tortured and killed many of his relatives and supporters. The Princess Sophia was strong and intelligent, and had as her lover and chief adviser the Prince Vassili Golitsin, a cultivated and Westernized nobleman who assisted Sophia with a program of governmental and social reform that reduced the influence of the conservative Muscovite nobles, represented in the opera by the Princes Khovansky.

The political chaos was worsened by the serious schism within the Orthodox Church. Some three decades earlier, the Patriarch Nikon had undertaken a series of reforms intended primarily to bring Russian church practice into closer conformance with the old Greek rites and texts, which were in the process of being rediscovered. Many of the secular clergy refused to accept the changes, on both doctrinal and patriotic grounds (which were in any event virtually identical—"Holy Russia" is a literal term); they formed a sect called the Old Believers, exchanged anathemas with their opponents, and were duly persecuted, largely by burnings, which they countered by beating their brothers in Christ to the punch with mass self-immolations, as in the final scene of the opera. (Some of their fanaticism, well pictured in the libretto, is traceable to their literal belief that victory of the Nikonian doctrines signaled the reign of the Antichrist, to be followed by the end of the world, and self-

immolation—in case it's of use to you—is the accepted Antichrist antidote.)

The first three acts of *Khovanshchina* set forth these conflicts and develop them slightly, but do not really pull them together in a form that is comprehensible without outside study. The first act proceeds logically enough, but the second falls into a series of dialogue scenes between Golitsin and various visitors, in which the arrivals and departures are bewildering to the audience. This act was to have included an interview with a pastor from the German quarter who tries to intercede with Golitsin on behalf of Emma, the girl we see briefly in a vestigial (but very good) Act I scene as a sexual pawn of the two Khovanskys. This, plus Mussorgsky's original plan to finish the act with a quintet, was not carried through by Rimsky, who abruptly ends the act after Shaklovity's brief and disturbing intrusion by reprising the Dawn Over Moscow melody from the prelude—a singularly inelegant notion, but one sympathizes with the problem. This act, even without these scenes, is very long in the theater but would not be if the director would clarify for us the nature of the sequence—the office day (or evening) of Golitsin, the most powerful person in Moscow save Sophia herself, to whom representatives of all factions naturally come for appointments, ushered in by the secretary, Varsonoviev. The petition of the pastor would, of course, be one such appointment, and as for Marfa's Divination by Water, busy executives are constantly visited in their offices by attractive young women offering anything from manicure to massage: I daresay this very lunch hour some young Manhattan blood has his office door closed for palm reading by a blonde with a Romansch accent.

Sometime during Act III or IV, the events of 1682 give way to the events of 1689. Gerald Abraham, in his completion of Calvocoressi's discussion of the opera, places this quite late—after the murder of the elder Khovansky but before the scene of Golitsin's banishment, midway through Act IV. But in the libretto it really seems less clear-cut: At the end of Act II, Shaklovity has already announced the mounting of what is in effect the "wanted" poster at Ismailov and Peter's order for the arrest of the Khovanskys. In the same act, Marfa has been saved from Golitsin's order to drown her in the marsh by the providential arrival of the Petrovtsy—Peter's private guard—and the same body has joined Sophia's troops to rough up the *streltsy* in Act III, as reported by the terrified Scrivener. All this sounds very much like Peter's return to Moscow and the onset of the purge, and it appears that what Mussorgsky was trying to do was telescope events spread over a number of years into a gradual theatrical crescendo, with the adolescent Peter's growing power in the background. He does not appear to have been much concerned with literal reportage.

Historically, Golitsin indeed went into exile in 1689, when the *streltsy* were also subjected to mass torture and execution in Red Square. In the opera, they are pardoned, after marching in bearing their own blocks and axes; but in reality, Peter paid them back severalfold for their earlier depredations. (Golitsin was sent to the Arctic, Sophia to a convent—Peter was apparently kindly disposed toward them.)

It is the character of Marfa that is evidently intended to tie all this together. As the former lover of Andrei Khovansky and an ecstatic Old Believer, she unites the secular and clerical aspects of the Old Russia. As a mysti-



cal seeress and a woman of action (she even pulls a knife on Andrei to defend Emma), she unites the worlds of longed-for spiritual peace and tooth-and-nail reality. One of the many useless regrets about *Khovanshchina* is that her character is not completed: She is robbed of the extended duet with Andrei in Act V, which Mussorgsky had in his head and even played for friends, but never wrote down, and of the further contrast that would have been afforded by elaboration of the figure of Susanna, whose one existing scene with Marfa, like Emma's with Andrei, is interesting but vestigial.

Through his sympathetic development of Marfa and of Dosifei, the Old Believer priest, and his placement of the scene at the pyre at the climax of the work, Mussorgsky enlists our sympathies with the Old Russia. Even the lecherous and vain elder Khovansky, who has a touch of humor and of cavalier magnanimity, gains some affection from us: We are sorry to see him struck down by an underling of the severe and cold-blooded Shaklovity, with his not altogether convincing protestations of patriotic sentiment.

But I believe the composer intended our response to be ambivalent—completion of the work would have relieved the confusion of plot, but not of feeling, I think. This is a ghastly diorama in which none of the figures is really appetizing, none of the religious or political viewpoints morally persuasive. Rulers mistreat subjects with arrogant impunity; everyone moves in a miasma of paranoid distrust and mortal terror. The Old Believers are underdogs, but their popeyed shrillings about the Nikonian heretics make it clear just how *they* would handle power. In the contrast between old Prince Khovansky and young Andrei, who is inexcusable on all counts, there is a suggestion that members of the older nobility may at least have had a code, a patriarchal sense of responsibility toward their subjects—but that is gone; private armies flog their way to power, and those in a position to act for justice instead stab each other in swamps



B. F. Stein

The Chicago Lyric Opera (photo above; Mussorgsky at left) is the only U.S. company besides the Metropolitan to have staged *Khovanshchina* since World War II.

and hallways. Even Marfa is, at least, passing strange: She thinks it is marvelous to perish in a bonfire, clutching her ex-lover, who is still singing about the girl he tried to rape.

The unseen Peter will bring his awakening to Russia, by purge, banishment, and murder, and we hardly know what to feel—we are moved as this hateful regime passes. And that is the truth, the perplexing reality of the work. The final scene, with the clarion trumpets of the arriving Petrovtsy sounding the New Russia while the Old sinks beneath self-ignited flames, is, for anyone with a sense of history, one of the most bloodcurdling passages in opera.

Mussorgsky's score is so suggestive of what might have been that there is a temptation to underrate what is; the more often I hear it, the more deeply I am impressed by its specificity and individuality. Each of its characters and scenes is like no other. Like a great epic painting, it has both the gut impact of a single, sweeping compositional stroke and the fascination of moment-by-moment detailing of a most meticulous and imaginative sort. Calvocoressi seems to feel that the finer crafting of the piece is less adept than that of *Boris* and that this is the main difference between the two scores, but I do not at all agree.

The music of *Khovanshchina* suffers primarily from the sequencing and pacing of its events, most noticeably in Acts II and III. This weakness would surely have been ameliorated, if not wholly corrected, by completion of the opera. And the set pieces in *Boris* are, purely in terms of melodic aptness, in general a bit better: None of *Khovanshchina*'s closed-form numbers is quite as effective as *Boris*' monologue, Varlaam's song, Marina's aria, or the Garden Scene love duet.

The feeling comes through, at least to me, that Mussorgsky didn't really want to write arias in *Khovanshchina* but at certain points didn't quite see how to get away from it. Shaklovity's aria, often praised as the most beautiful in the work, possibly is just that—yet is one of

the least memorable passages in the score. It is true that the melody is lovely. It is lovely eight times, in fact, with small variations, one brief interjection, and a peculiarly indecisive conclusion. But it does not say much about Shaklovity or his feelings and attitudes; it discloses little. (On the other hand, the aria's placement is not as arbitrary as Calvocoressi would suggest. According to the stage directions, Shaklovity does not exit but conceals himself in the street during the scene that follows; he has come to this unfriendly turf because he is on his way to the assassination of Khovansky, which takes place in the next scene. These two scenes, outside and inside Khovansky's house, are a continuous action—another point for clarification in production.)

This does not mean that *Khovanshchina* is at all lacking in strong melodic material. Marfa has wonderful tunes: the *andante tranquillo* in which she prophesies Golitsin's exile in the Divination by Water scene (and which returns to tremendous effect as his carriage drags through Red Square in Act IV); the haunting folk-derived lament about lost love in Act III, and even better, the *largo appassionato* that follows; and the luscious suspensions with which she entices Andrei to the pyre, are all splendid inspirations.

But the most interesting melodic development lies in the selection and variation of characteristic melodic fragments for each character, such as the grave measures with which Dosifei addresses the Old Believers. Two of the most vivid characters, the elder Khovansky and Golitsin, have nothing much resembling an aria. And the Scrivener is magnificent—his gait, the squeak of his pen, the cunning whereby he survives, are all in his music, and it would be hard to conceive anything more graphic or exact than his description of the gathering of Peter's and Sophia's marauders in Act IV. And as in *Boris*, the choral sections drew the best from Mussorgsky: The exultant, yet rather formal, chorus of praise as Khovansky makes his entrance, the drinking song of the *streltsy*, the deadly earnest supplications of the Old Believers, are all powerful, all characteristic.

Khovanshchina may never be a repertory piece and probably shouldn't be—it does not survive sloppy directing, conducting, or casting as some simpler works do. When the Metropolitan tried it in 1949–50, it did what producers usually do to try to take the curse off a problem opera: put it into English, cut it (the excisions including the exile tableau!), made transpositions to accommodate favorite singers. In Chicago four years ago (its only other American mounting since the war), it received a respectful but ponderous production, strongly cast with some Slavic singers in the leads but indifferently designed and directed with the worst grand-opera anonymity. I would suggest that it is time to look at the suppressed scenes (the Scrivener in Act I with the proclamation; the pastor scene, etc.), commission a first-rate craftsman to orchestrate them and write a better ending to Act II, and give the work full festival treatment, with a supper intermission if need be.

Meanwhile, we do have the recordings, among which the new edition takes pride of place. The enjoyment starts with the fine Bolshoi orchestra under the veteran Boris Khaikin, equally impressive in the balance and depth of the thicker moments or the delicacy and beauty of the lighter ones—in the prelude, for instance, the solo oboe and clarinet (important throughout) are clearly superior to those on the other recordings. Khaikin and his

soloists make some highly idiosyncratic choices en route, e.g., the exceptionally slow treatment of the heavily accented *marziale* introduction to Khovansky's first address (p. 34 of the Bessel vocal score), the very quick tempo adopted for Dosifei's despairing outburst at Golitsin in Act II (pp. 85-86), or the sudden animation for the final verse of Marfa's song (p. 101, ignoring the Tempo I marking). There are frequent fermatas for high notes. But always, there is the sense that conductor and singers are in conscious command of the material, making choices for reasons, and the results are nearly always convincing.

Best of all, the performance has a constant dramatic life—the pauses, the inflections always seem part of a continuing, increasingly tense situation. This is true across the board, not only for the principals, but for the supporting singers: Kuzka and the other guards in the opening scene, Varsonoviev in the second act, and so on. There is a baritone Streshniev to announce the pardon of the *streltsy*, far more imposing and apt than the usual comprimario tenor. The Bolshoi chorus fully lives up to its own high standard.

The principals are a very strong group, headed by the Marfa, Irina Arkhipova. She is one of the major singers of our time, and she has never been better than here. Her large, solid mezzo, slightly tough of timbre but attractive and well centered, is in excellent condition, and every phrase reveals a mature, instinctively musical artist who shapes everything she does without losing vocal spontaneity. This is not only the best Marfa on records, but one of the finest individual performances on modern recordings.

Another complete piece of work is the Golitsin of Alexei Maslennikov, singing with more fullness and beauty than one would expect from a singer identified with character roles and making the character's position clear throughout. The Shaklovity, Viktor Nechipailo, has a sturdy bass-baritone and sings with good line and care for phrasing, though his tone is sometimes a bit labored and covered-sounding. Vladislav Pyavko, a tenor I have not encountered before, is the Andrei, and a good one—he shows some of the typical Slavic Heroic muddiness around the break, but he sings strongly, with good intonation, sharp rhythmic observation, and much more than the usual indication of the who and why of this unattractive personage.

The experienced Alexei Krivchenya is the elder Khovansky. Unfortunately, his good bass voice is well past its peak and sounds quite dry and diffused—there are a couple of passages in which Khovansky must resort to real singing to make an effect (in Chicago, Ghiurov made a stunning moment out of his farewell to the *streltsy*), and Krivchenya can no longer pull these off. He is a shrewd and colorful artist, however, and makes much of this wonderful character. As the Scrivener, Gennady Yefimov is superb. In the two brief female roles of Emma and Susanna, neither Tamara Sorokina nor Tatiana Tugarinova, respectively, can produce pleasing or cleanly intoned sound, but the latter at least makes partial amends with a good statement of the old fanatic's stance.

I have saved the Dosifei of Alexander Ognivtsev for last in order to pick on him a bit. He has a big, resonant voice, clear and fresh-sounding, sometimes a bit nasal and effortful toward the top (the bottom is not tested by this role), but handsome nonetheless. Though his tech-

nique does not allow him a well-resonated *mezza voce*, he makes a creditable effort at soft singing at certain selected points. But he seems to be rather representative of the younger generation of Bolshoi singers (as noted on such recent recordings as the *Prince Igor* or *The Tsar's Bride*) in his failure really to get much out of the music. One example: There is a magnificently expressive series of rolling *doloroso* phrases, with which Dosifei first bemoans the sinful state of affairs in Act I and again, most movingly, calls his followers to their foretold deaths in Act V. The dynamic markings are very explicit and very expressive, and much of the effect of the passage depends on observing not only the *p*, *f*, and *mf* indications, but even more the giving and withdrawing of the voice in *messa di voce*, also clearly marked. Both the musical shape and the dramatic sense reside at least fifty per cent in this observance; if readers would like to hear the special effect this can create in a first-class bass voice, they should dig out the old Cetra recording of *La Forza del destino* and listen to the great Tancredi Pasero in the similar passage in Guardiano's duet with Melitone ("*Del mondo i disinganni*"). Ognivtsev belts it all out in a healthy forte, good to hear but far from the potential content of these bars.

Similar criticism could be leveled at much of his singing, and indeed he is no special offender except by the unusually high standard of this recording and the object lessons offered by such artists as Arkhipova and Maslennikov. It's just that the music could be so much more beautiful and moving, and, if this becomes the standard, we will be left with what amounts to first readings of operas—which is about what some of the recent recordings sound like.

Happily, this generally excellent performance is afforded fine stereo sound, and the few theatrical sound effects chosen are apposite and add to the good dramatic feeling.

The other recent *Khovanshchina*, a Sofia performance on Balkanton not yet officially released domestically, made a splash in Europe last year, but I tend to think the opera itself must have taken people by surprise. This edition is well recorded, and the conductor, Atanas Margaritov, is obviously a knowledgeable and lively musician. The Sofia chorus and orchestra are just a notch below the Bolshoi's, but that's still very good, and there is little to complain of in their work.

But the singing! Only Nicola Ghiuselev, the Dosifei, is of real stature; he does not do much more than Ognivtsev musically, but his dark bass is perfectly matched to the role and a real pleasure to hear throughout. The Marfa, Alexandrina Milcheva-Nonova, makes a good sound at forte, but can only indicate at lower dynamics and musically is not in a class with Arkhipova. Lyubomir Badurov, who did Golitsin in Chicago, also does it here—a typical medium-weight Slavic tenor with top trouble, competent in a general way. Both Khovanskys (Dimitar Petkov as Ivan, Todor Kostov as Andrei) sing unceasingly loudly and with intonation that cannot be confidently defined any large share of the time, while the Shaklovity (Stoyan Popov) discloses a large, leathery, disagreeable baritone from which most of the vibrato has been extracted—he, too, sings at a single dynamic level throughout. The Emma and Susanna (Maria Dimchevska, Nadya Dobryanova) both sing rather well, and on purely vocal grounds are preferable to their Bolshoi counterparts—but these are short roles. Milen Paunov,

the Scrivener, is quite weak. The general dramatic atmosphere of this performance is far feebler than that of the Bolshoi—one just hears a lot of generalized vocal noise and clichéd gestures, rather than conversations, proclamations, confessions.

Richmond's older Belgrade recording is not as well recorded, played, or conducted as the newer two, but is nevertheless decent on these counts, with the normally somnolent Baranovich giving a surprisingly alert reading. There are patches of bad execution from the oboe and the horns. Vocally it is uneven but certainly stronger than the Bulgarian performance. Changalovich, in fact, is a more musical and expressive Dosifei than either Ognitsev or Ghiuselev, and his voice sounds lovely except in one or two declamatory passages, where it spreads under pressure. Bugarinovich does not shape Marfa's music as Arkhipova does but is vocally very solid and appealing, save for her habit of clambering onto top Gs and A flats with a great heave from below. Both tenors (Alexander Marinkovich as Andrei, Drago Startz as Golitsin) are perfectly competent, clear-voiced, and within their technical capacities in these roles, and the always-enjoyable Popovich, in fine voice, is the best Shaklovity on records, both musically and vocally. Nicholas Tzveych does a typical character-bass job with Ivan Khovansky. The small roles are adequately done. While I would strongly recommend the Melodiya/Angel edition, the Richmond is a suitable substitute if the lower

price is an important factor and gives a sufficient picture of a work all opera-lovers will want to know.

Finally, there is an older MK recording with the forces of the Kirov, also under Khaikin. It is strongly cast, but the recording is so dim and dull that I do not feel listeners will get a reasonable experience of the opera. The orchestral playing is also a bit scratchy, and Khaikin surprisingly limp in some sections, though again the faint recording no doubt exaggerates this impression. It is a shame that so distinguished an assumption as the Dosifei of Mark Reizen must be buried thus, and for that matter several of the others are good too, including Preobazhenskaya as Marfa, Nechayev as the elder Khovansky (the best we have in sheerly vocal terms), and Shashkov as Shaklovity. But the set is useful only for those who wish to collect their individual performances, as opposed to enjoying the work.

MUSSORGSKY: Khovanshchina.

Ivan Khovansky	Alexei Krivchenya (bs)	Kuzka	Yuri Grigoriev (t)
Andrei Khovansky	Vladislav Pyavko (t)	Varsonoviev	Yuri Korolev (bs)
Golitsin	Alexei Maslennikov (t)	Susanna	Tatiana Tugarinova (s)
Shaklovity	Viktor Nechipailov (b)	Streshniev	Andrei Fedoseyev (b)
Dosifei	Alexander Ognitsev (bs)	Streitsy Guards	Vladimir Filippov (t)
Marfa	Irina Arkhipova (ms)		Leonid Maslov (bs)
Scrivener	Gennady Yefimov (t)		Mikhail Shkaptsov (bs)
Emma	Tamara Sorokina (s)		

Bolshoi Theater Chorus and Orchestra, Boris Khaikin, cond. [Igor Veprintsev and Yelena Buneyeva, prod.] MELODIYA/ANGEL SRDL 4125, \$27.98 (four discs, automatic sequence).

by Harris Goldsmith

Mozart at the Pinnacle of Musical Civilization

The Danish Quartet renders the quintets with strings magnificently for Telefunken.

MOZART'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENTS in the string-quartet medium are the six works he dedicated to Haydn (K. 387, 421, 428, 458, 464, and 465) and the so-called *Hofmeister* (K. 499) that immediately followed. His subsequent efforts, the three *Prussian* quartets (K. 575, 589, and 590), while lovely and consummately resourceful by any but Mozart's own standards, display a surprising lessening of both creativity and scope—"surprising" because as a rule the higher the Köchel listing within a genre, the greater the composition. The probable explanation is that the string quintet replaced the quartet in his affections. The added mellowness of the second viola part was obviously suited to the heightened expressivity of Mozart's last period.

In any case, the last four of the six quintets for strings alone (K. 515, 516, 593, and 614) are, in their different ways, among the supreme products of musical civilization. To this foursome may be added K. 406 (516b), a superbly effective adaptation of the masterful woodwind octet, K. 388, the music of which would be great in any instrumental guise.

The clarinet quintet (K. 581) is another example of musical perfection, akin both in mood and in workmanship to the even later clarinet concerto (K. 622). The K. 546 Adagio and Fugue for string quartet looks back to

Bach on the one hand and ahead to Beethoven on the other. Mozart also arranged this cryptic, dramatic work for two pianos, but to my mind it is more effective as a string quartet.

The K. 407 (386c) Horn Quintet is a strangely subdued essay due to its mellow "horn" tonality of E flat, the obviously limited flexibility of the valveless instrument for which it was intended, and the unusual lineup of cello and two violas against a lone fiddle. At the other end of the popularity spectrum is *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, which makes a charming effect in its original string-quintet form, particularly when played with the exquisite care, polish, and sparkle of the Danes on this superb recording. Even the youthful K. 174 String Quintet has its share of high-spirited charm and contrapuntal felicity.

To be paid for listening to such exquisite music, magnificently performed, is one of the high spots of a reviewer's lot. But then, the Mozart quintets have always attracted superior exponents on disc, dating back to the first of the three Budapest efforts, in shellac days. The new Valois/Telefunken set upholds that tradition nobly.

The Danish Quartet regulars (violinists Arne Svendsen and Palle Heichelmann, violist Knud Frederiksen, and cellist Pierre René Honnens) have already proven

their adeptness in classical music in their recordings of the Haydn Op. 77 quartets. Theirs is a lean, aristocratic style—nothing is slurred, there are no hairpins in the sound, vibrato is fast and evenly matched, never too wide. In terms of phrasing, everything is detailed and expressive but never in the least externalized or self-indulgent. Rhythm is taut and incisive, tempos in the allegros rather brisk.

Almost anywhere you set the tone arm on these records will reveal a detail worthy of citation: the imperious first movement of the C minor Quintet, nobly structured yet full of energy and fire; the last-movement variations of the same work, where the players diversify each interlude with slightly contrasting tempos and yet suggest a solidarity of expression (the first violin, to show his fine sense of Mozartean style, inserts a delicious little cadenza before the final *maggiore* conclusion); the bite and crystalline precision of the C major's finale; the witty eloquence of the third-movement trio in the D major; the devil-may-care adventurousness of that work's finale (so anticipatory of Beethoven's Op. 18, No. 3). Then too one remembers the romping high spirits in the E flat's first movement, the buoyant sparkle of the early B flat, and the remarkably apt pacing of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik's* second movement, for once in proper *alla breve* but full of songful expressive *rubato* around an otherwise firmly delineated bass line.

This is music-making at its most sophisticated and perceptive. The only relative disappointment is the (very good) performance of the G minor, which seems a mite static in the minuet, unflowing in the two slow movements.

The "extras"—mostly French musicians, judging from their names—are of similarly high caliber. Serge Collot, the violist of the fine Trio à Cordes Français, plays with forthright assurance and smooth sound but is not afraid to bite into *sforzandos* when necessary (e.g., in the finale of K. 515). Johan Poulsen, the double-bass player in the *Nachtmusik*, is trim, supportive, and incisive. Jacky Magnardi, the French-horn player in K. 407, has a dark, burnished, bronzen sound reminiscent of Aubrey Brain and uses just a touch of vibrato, to which some (not your reviewer!) might take exception.

Guy Deplus is the finest French clarinetist I have ever heard, avoiding the reedy, oboish sound of such players as Lancelot. Indeed Deplus commands a full, succulent forte and a legato pianissimo comparable to our own Harold Wright (on Columbia's Marlboro recording of the quintet, MS 7447), and his coloristic sense, while not quite in Wright's well-nigh incomparable class, is nevertheless impressive. But whereas Wright is partnered by competent but more-than-slightly flabby string players, Deplus is magnificently supported by playing of aristocratic purity. It is one of the finest accounts of this oft-performed work I have ever heard.

One should also note the intellectuality of these performers. They are sticklers for repeats, and they are obviously using the scholarly urtext editions. This zealously pursued purism can, though, sometimes prove a problem, at least to my taste. I prefer the first movements of K. 515 and 516 *without* the exposition repeats, and I also prefer the now discredited practice of playing the minuet of K. 515 before the slow movement, which seems to make more sense in terms of both key relationships and emotional balance. On the other hand, the leadback to the recapitulation in the first movement of K. 516 sounds



more subtle without the continuing crescendo of the bowdlerized edition.

Obviously this is a highly competitive release, beautifully reproduced. For those who find the Danes a bit too stern and straitlaced, I can recommend the fine Qualiton album (LPX 11438/40) of the six string quintets performed by the Tátrai Quartet with second violist Anna Mauthner. Their performances are a bit more homespun and less intense rhythmically, slightly more mellow in tone but still stylish and beautifully refined.

The current Budapest Columbia set (D3S 747), while certainly acceptable, is rather flaccid and lackluster in comparison with either of their earlier versions (and with the best of the present competition). The Heutlings on Seraphim (SIC 6028) give excellent value—the playing is suave and as cognizant of scholarly details as the Danes', but ultimately too tepid and metrically four-square to compete with the best. The Monitor series by the Pascal Quartet with Walter Gerhard (MCS 2111/3) is highly musical and expressive but rather slovenly in ensemble. The Griller/Primrose K. 515 and 516 (Vanguard Bach Guild HM 29SD) are impeccably played in rather broad, Romantic style, but the same team's K. 593 and 614 (Vanguard Everyman SRV 194SD) are beset by inaccuracies of intonation and insanities of tempo (the finale of K. 593) that make this a record to avoid. Avoid, too, the slick, superficial readings by Heifetz and Associates (they are too businesslike to warrant the now fashionable designation "Friends").

My own choice for the string quintets veers, by just a hair, to the Danish performances, with the Tátrai coming in a photographic second. Odyssey would do music-lovers a service by reissuing the 1957 mono performances by the Budapest and Trampler.

MOZART: Quintets with Strings. Danish Quartet. TELEFUNKEN SLA 25097, \$34.90 (five discs, manual sequence).

Quintets for Strings: In B flat, K. 174; In C minor, K. 406 (516b); In C, K. 515; In G minor, K. 516; In D, K. 593; In E flat, K. 614 (with Serge Collot, viola). Quintet for Horn and Strings, in E flat, K. 407 (386c) (with Jacky Magnardi, horn; Collot, viola). Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, In A, K. 581 (with Guy Deplus, clarinet). Serenade in G, K. 525 (*Eine kleine Nachtmusik*) (with Johan Poulsen, double bass). Adagio and Fugue, for String Quartet, In C minor, K. 546.

by Abram Chipman

The Other Side of Anton Bruckner

Recent releases sample the "pious, gentle" sacred works.

BRUCKNER IS STILL a bundle of paradoxes. Though his principal employment for several decades was as an organist, his catalogue lists few works for that instrument, and they are in any case performed even more rarely than the handful of chamber and miscellaneous orchestral pieces. Though most of us maintain an image of him as an ascetic, humble, and unworldly-wise fellow, we hear far more of the aggressive and sonically voluptuous symphonies than of the far more numerous pious, gentle, modest, and rarefied motets, Masses, etc.

We now have two complete recorded cycles of the symphonies (at least of the numbered nine), but a similar attempt has yet to be made on behalf of the sacred vocal music. The closest we've come was a recent five-disc DG limited edition conducted by Eugen Jochum, never released here and even overseas available for barely half a year. At this writing there are no plans for domestic release of any more than has already been issued separately: my favorite recording of the *Te Deum*, a filler to Jochum's three-sided Ninth Symphony (2707 024), which is *not* my favorite version; *Psalms 150* and eight motets, a single disc in Germany (136 552) but here split as final sides for the Fourth (2707 025) and Seventh (2707 026); and the Mass No. 3, in F minor (138 829), which—now that Angel has deleted Karl Forster's performance—is easily the better of the two current versions (see my May 1973 review of the Barenboim/Angel).

Still unreleased domestically from the Jochum anthology are the brief motets *Afferentur regi* and *Pange lingua*, apparently new recordings; the stereo premiere of the Mass No. 1, in D minor (available singly to import hunters as 2530 314), a powerful and rugged work with Brahmsian and Wagnerian overtones; and the Mass No. 2, in E minor, a splendid reading competitive with the best among the four versions reviewed below.

DG and Jochum left unrecorded, of course, a fair amount of the Bruckner sacred choral literature: several more motets (some of which can be found elsewhere), the B flat *Missa Solemnis* of 1854, the incomplete *Psalms 112* of 1863, and others. The foreign record catalogues help out again in the case of the lovely D minor Requiem (an early work, but revised in 1894), which Hans-Hubert Schönzeler has conducted for the English Unicorn label (UNS 210)—wisely coupled, by the way, with the only extant recording of the *Four Orchestral Pieces*. [Unicorn records are now being distributed in the U.S. by H.N.H. Distributors, Box 222, Evanston, Illinois 60204.]

The E minor Mass

This seems to be the year for this work. And I can think of works far less worthy of such duplication than this Mass for four- to eight-part mixed chorus and an ensemble of winds and brass. Bruckner's mastery of that stark and noble texture is absolute, and his narrative sense for the liturgy is exceedingly subtle. The work's austere beauties and profundity unfold slowly, but here slowly means surely and well.

The BASF edition seems to be the only one employing a boys' choir. Unfortunately, the soprano and alto parts

demand the assurance and tonal polish of females. The prevalent level of execution—vocal and instrumental—is a matter of starts and fits. Martini sets rapid speeds throughout, which not only violates specific directions, but dissipates any meaningful projection of the text.

The strangest thing in this rendition is the lack of spoken intonations for the opening lines of the Gloria and Credo, which Bruckner didn't set musically. He obviously counted on liturgical tradition to supply a recitative in any properly churchlike performance. For Martini to stick so literally to the printed score and ignore the historically and stylistically correct improvisation is, in the case of the line "*Credo in unum Deum*," for example, to make the following section not so much a statement of belief as, in Jack Diether's words, a "laundry list." (Rilling, Norrington, and Jochum have a solo "pr est" intone the lines; all other current versions assign them to the lower choral voices.)

Slightly more competent, though still at a provincial level, is Rilling's version for Bärenreiter/Oryx, released here by Musical Heritage. He goes to the opposite extreme from Martini, taking every movement at a somnolent crawl (44 minutes for MHS, 29 for BASF). Rilling seems to have rounded up every choir he could find around metropolitan Stuttgart; the singing, alas, is rough and labored. Polyphonic and harmonic detail gets swallowed up in some vast, cavernous resonance, which obscures the lighter winds as well. The oboes and clarinets not only can't hold their own when the big brass are cackling away, but get lost in the fog even when the choir alone rises above a mezzo-forte.

London's import wing has been generous indeed to release nearly at once two rival editions of the E minor Mass. Apart from interpretive questions, Telefunken does have the economic advantage of a major coupled work, while Argo stretches the Mass over two full sides.

Telefunken's Hellmut Wormsbächer is a new name to me, but he is obviously a crisp, no-nonsense conductor who knows the idiom and can maintain solidly professional discipline, clean rhythm, and a strong line. The Hamburg brass players are incisive, and the dry Telefunken engineering assists their lusty tone to shine through with considerable force. Wind detail could occasionally be projected more cleanly (cf. the sixteenth-note figurations in the middle of the Benedictus, as passed among oboe, clarinet, and bassoon). The choir is generally good, despite minor lapses—e.g., the second bar of the Kyrie, where second sopranos and second altos are not together. But these blemishes are the exception rather than the rule.

Argo's Roger Norrington lets almost no detail escape his notice, though he goes too far in anticipating six bars early the "*erwas langsamer*" at letter P in the Credo. Only Jochum rivals him in giving scrupulous heed to Bruckner's tempo and dynamic directions. Norrington makes more accurate differentiations among the various slow tempos; Jochum elucidates better the gradations of fast speeds. The Schütz Choir and Philip Jones Brass Ensemble are a good match for Jochum's Bavarian Radio forces, and both are better disciplined by a few notches

than Wormsbächer's forces. Argo's engineering may yield less "presence" than Telefunken's, but it gains by achieving greater internal transparency—especially between winds and brass.

Argo's easily surpasses the Lyrichord version by Hans Gillesberger, a competent and moderately paced rendition of no memorable distinction, though crisply recorded and cleanly executed. The strongest challenge to the Norrington version (and the Jochum, if it becomes available) is the likewise two-sided Gönnewein (Electrola C 063 29061, imported by Peters), which has a peerless combination of acoustical spaciousness, vertical transparency, and immediacy, along with the most awesomely perfect intonation and sumptuous tone production to be heard from any of these choruses. Gönnewein is a shade less imaginative about pacing, however, than are Norrington and Jochum.

Shorter Choral Works

The Argo and BASF collections, five motets apiece, have only one in common: the gradual *Os justi* (printed on BASF's label as "*Os Lusti*"!).

BASF's Vienna Boys' Choir selection of unaccompanied motets duplicates exactly a splendid program by the New Philharmonia Chorus under the late Wilhelm Pitz (Angel S 36428, deleted), while all but *Os justi* are done to a turn by the John Alldis Choir on Argo ZRG 523. The Pitz disc included Brahms's *Nänie* and other rarities; the Alldis has important a cappella works of Messiaen, Debussy, and Schoenberg. Though less elegant and polished, Gillesberger's readings are reasonably secure technically, and they are well shaped and full of momentum. I can accept the gentle ritard at the end of *Os justi*, since there are more sentimental excesses in Jochum's traversal of this literature (along with frequently edgy sopranos).

The DG cycle includes a grand total of seven unaccompanied motets: the five on the BASF disc plus *Vexilla regis* and *Pange lingua*.

George Guest's Argo collection is an interesting alternation of a cappella works and works with varying numbers of trombones, composed over a twenty-four-year span of Bruckner's maturity. The three accompanied pieces also appear as the fillers for BASF's E minor Mass, but Martini and his associates cannot equal Guest and the St. John's College Choir for accurate and focused sonority and structural cohesion. The new Argo, for example, contains a tremendously fluent performance of *Afferentur regi*, though an even more dramatic—if less clearly recorded—one is among the new material in the Jochum box. The latter also contains the stunning antiphon *Tota pulchra es* for tenor, choir, and organ—sadly bypassed by both Martini and Guest, though they both "one-up" Jochum in offering *Inveni David*, a handsome piece for choir and trombones.

As a brief introduction to the Bruckner of the miniature sacred work, a cappella and brass-accompanied, Argo ZRG 760 may be the best buy around, and the superb packaging, with a full-cover reproduction of John Martin's *The Bard*, adds an unquestioned visual delight.

Non-Bruckner Couplings

Schubert's so-called *German Mass*, a setting for mixed choirs, winds, and organs of popularized verses by the composer's patron, J. Neumann, makes an apt compan-

ion (on Wormsbächer's Telefunken disc) for the Bruckner E minor Mass. It is like an adjacent link in a historical chain, and this simple, guileless, and altogether lovely piece has long needed a recording to replace the angelically sung deleted DG version by the Regensburg Cathedral Choir. Wormsbächer is perhaps more poker-faced than was DG's Hans Schrems, but his light touch and obvious sympathy do right by the piece.

The Guest Bruckner motets on Argo are actually a filler for the first adequate domestic release of Franz Liszt's uncharacteristically austere and intense *Missa choralis*. The clarity and atmosphere of the new edition are spectacular, and that organ postlude in the final Agnus Dei is captured with thrilling power. Guest's direction is more extroverted than the taut, angular, poignantly ascetic reading of Miklós Forrai (imported Qualiton SLPX 1141), but the Budapest version takes a full disc. Both the British and the Hungarian ensembles acquit themselves expertly, however, and Gillesberger's Turnabout version is comfortably eclipsed.

Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* is certainly one of his loveliest scores, and it is not so strange a match for Bruckner motets as one might at first blush think. Too bad Gillesberger was not in charge of both sides of the BASF disc, for Anton Neyder's Britten is plodding and sodden-spirited, afflicted too by borderline intonation. Though evidently recorded in a small, dead studio rather than a more churchly ambience, the choir nonetheless emerges with a thick harmonic texture and garbled articulation—and that takes some doing! Strangest of all, the opening and closing antiphons (meant to be processional, and fading on and off stage in most recordings) are delivered here entirely on mike.

If you're in the market for the *Ceremony*, you can do far better with either version from Cambridge University: David Willcocks' with the King's College Choir (Seraphim S 60217) or Guest's with St. John's (Argo ZRG 5440). Both include Britten's *Missa brevis*—along with his *Hymn to St. Cecilia* on Seraphim and *Rejoice in the Lamb* on Argo. Sadly missed is the classic Decca/London mono *Ceremony* by the Copenhagen Choir under Britten and Mögens Wöldjke.

BRUCKNER: Mass No. 2, in E minor. Heinrich Schütz Choir of London; Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, Roger Norrington, cond. [Michael Bremner, prod.] ARGO ZRG 710, \$6.98.

BRUCKNER: Mass No. 2, in E minor. **SCHUBERT:** German Mass, D. 872. Bergedorf Chamber Choir; Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra members, Hellmut Wormsbächer, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAT 22545, \$6.98.

B **BRUCKNER:** Mass No. 2, in E minor. Various choruses; Stuttgart Bach-Collegium Wind Ensemble, Helmuth Rilling, cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE MHS 1801, \$3.50 (Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

BRUCKNER: Mass No. 2, in E minor; Choral Works. Darmstadt Junge Kantorei; Vienna Symphony Orchestra members, Joachim Martini, cond. BASF KMB 21336, \$6.98.

BRUCKNER: *Afferentur regi; Inveni David; Ecce sacerdos.*

BRUCKNER: Choral Works. **LISZT:** *Missa choralis*. St. John's College Choir, Cambridge, George Guest, cond. [James Walker, prod.] ARGO ZRG 760, \$6.98.

BRUCKNER: *Afferentur regi; Os justi; Inveni David; Pange lingua; Ecce sacerdos.*

BRUCKNER: Choral Works. **BRITTEN:** *A Ceremony of Carols*. Elisabeth Bayer, harp (in the Britten); Vienna Boys' Choir, Hans Gillesberger (in the Bruckner) and Anton Neyder (in the Britten), cond. BASF KBB 21232, \$6.98.

BRUCKNER: *Locus iste; Virga Jesse floruit; Os justi; Christus factus est; Ave Maria.*

classical

reviewed by

ROYAL S. BROWN
ABRAM CHIPMAN
R. D. DARRELL
PETER G. DAVIS
SHIRLEY FLEMING
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN
KENNETH FURIE
CLIFFORD F. GILMORE
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STEVEN LOWE
ROBERT C. MARSH
ROBERT P. MORGAN
ANDREW PORTER
H. C. ROBBINS LONDON
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B **BACH:** Concertos for Organ. Anton Heiller, organ (Marcussen organ, Hålsingborg, Sweden). [Peter Willemoes, prod.] BACH GUILD HM 35 SD, \$3.98 [from VANGUARD BGS 5049, 1963].

Concertos: No. 1, in G, after J. Ernst, S. 592; No. 2, in A minor, after Vivaldi, S. 593; No. 3, in C, after Vivaldi, S. 594; No. 5, in D minor, after Vivaldi, S. 596.

WALTHER: Concertos after Italian Masters. E. Power Biggs, pedal harpsichord (by John Challis). [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32878, \$6.98.

Concertos: in F, after Albinoni; in A, after Gentili; in B minor, after Vivaldi; in B flat, after Taglietti; in A minor, after Torelli; in D minor, after Torelli.

During Bach's years at the court of Weimar, he struck up a close friendship with the town organist, Johann Gottfried Walther (who was also a distant kinsman). According to Geiringer, "Their common interest in Italian music formed a strong bond, and there was a friendly competition between them in the arrangement of Italian concertos for keyboard instruments." Both made numerous arrangements (Bach made about twenty, Walther about half as many), perhaps as a means to assimilate the structural innovations of the newly fashionable Italian concerto style into their own compositional language. Bach's favorite Italian seems to have been Vivaldi, while Walther chose a wider variety of composers as models and transcribed their scores more literally than Bach.

Heiller's record (which has been available on Bach Guild for more than ten years) offers four of Bach's five transcriptions for organ—three of them of Vivaldi concertos. His performances are very fast, hard-driving, intense, and perfectly secure technically.

Compared to Biggs's slower and less secure but wonderfully sparkling and vivacious readings, though, Heiller sounds pretty humorless. Heiller is playing a rather good Marcussen organ in Hålsingborg, Sweden (the same one Alain has recorded on frequently), but the recording makes it sound slightly harsh and strident. I prefer Biggs's performances, but

Heiller includes one concerto not available from Biggs (S. 594), and at its new reduced price his album is worth considering.

Biggs's new disc of six of Walther's similar concerto transcriptions played on the pedal harpsichord is a sequel to his record of the same six concertos played on the Silbermann organ in Freiberg, East Germany, released about two years ago (Columbia M 31205). He and Columbia have been hammering home the point recently that many organ works are just as suited to the pedal harpsichord (and vice versa). Following his two-disc pedal-harpsichord recording of Bach's six trio sonatas and two of the concerto transcriptions (S. 592 and 593; Columbia M2S 764), along came "Bach Organ Favorites, Vol. 6" (M 32791) containing organ performances of the same two concertos and two of the sonatas (Nos. 1 and 5).

The point is well taken, and Biggs's parallel performances are most convincing. I was very impressed by his organ performances of these delightfully festive transcriptions, and the pedal-harpsichord versions are every bit as captivating. The complet collector should really have both records: if the budget allows only one, I recommend the organ version, because Biggs's Challis pedal harpsichord is not a very attractive instrument to my ears.

His producer, Andrew Kazdin, seems still to be addicted to that exasperating old gimmick of fading out final chords on the harpsichord, thereby eliminating that satisfying clunk of the jacks falling back into place—it's like hearing only one shoe drop. Paradoxically, he leaves in, unnecessarily, some clunks caused by registration changes in mid-piece.

Now that I've delivered myself of that minor gripe, let me again strongly urge that you hear one or both of Biggs's Walther concerto discs and one or both of his recordings of Bach concertos and trio sonatas. C.F.G.

BACH: Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord: No. 1, in G, S. 1027; No. 2, in D, S. 1028; No. 3, in G minor, S. 1029. Leonard Rose, cello; Glenn Gould, piano. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 32934, \$6.98.

The combination of the often eccentric Gould and the rarely so Rose may look odd on paper, but in point of fact these two wholly dissimilar artists work surprisingly well together. Despite what may seem irreconcilable differences in musical sensibilities, both share a few basic features. Chief among them, in an admittedly negative vein, is that neither artist is especially inclined toward colorific expression: neither man is a tone painter. On a positive note, Rose is a remarkably articulate cellist, relying on clarity of execution to make his musical points, rather than on heightened drama, and of course the same can be said of the incisive playing of the Canadian pianist.

The current disc may not be to everyone's liking, though. The jacket itself is quite explicit regarding instrumentation: viola da gamba and harpsichord. Needless to say, this is not what one will hear on this album. From a strictly historical perspective, then, we are not hearing the sonorities that Bach had in mind when he pitted the sparkling harpsichord against the woody tones of the gamba. Still, there is an equally strong performance tradi-



Leonard Rose
A mediating influence.

tion for the more modern tonal world of the cello and the piano.

Gould's personality is the basic force behind these performances, though the fact that they are in general less wayward than usual suggests the mediating influence of Rose's less idiosyncratic musicianship. The quicker movements tend toward lightness of inflection. Gould's *détaché*—almost ascetic—touch is echoed closely by Rose. Impetus seems to derive from extremely precise, crisply played rhythmic figures, and not especially from heartfelt passion.

Yet the slow movements are quite a different kettle of fish. I was surprised to find Gould and Rose allowing themselves so much rhythmic freedom in the various andantes and adagios. Here rubato is as prevalent as metric uniformity is in the allegros. In contrast to the monastic severity of some of the quicker movements, the slow sections—and particularly the D major's Andante—are characterized by a kind of barely contained ecstasy that is quite extraordinary.

These performances, then, are studies in contrast. No accounts I've heard present the dialogue nature of the music so clearly. The lightness of tone certainly contributes to this textural clarity, but so too does Columbia's essentially dry, close-up recording perspective. Surfaces on my copy were obligingly quiet.

S.L.

Explanation of symbols

Classical:

- B** Budget
- H** Historical
- R** Reissue

Recorded tape:

- Open Reel
- 8-Track Cartridge
- Cassette

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 6, in F, Op. 10, No. 2; No. 7, in D, Op. 10, No. 3. Rondo in C, Op. 51, No. 1; Minuetto in E flat; Bagatelle "für Elise." Bruce Hungerford, piano. VANGUARD VSD 71187, \$6.98.

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas for Piano: No. 19, in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1; No. 20, in G, Op. 49, No. 2; No. 21, in C, Op. 53 (*Waldstein*). Andante favori, in F, WoO. 57; Lustig, traurig, WoO. 54. Bruce Hungerford, piano. VANGUARD VSD 71186, \$6.98.

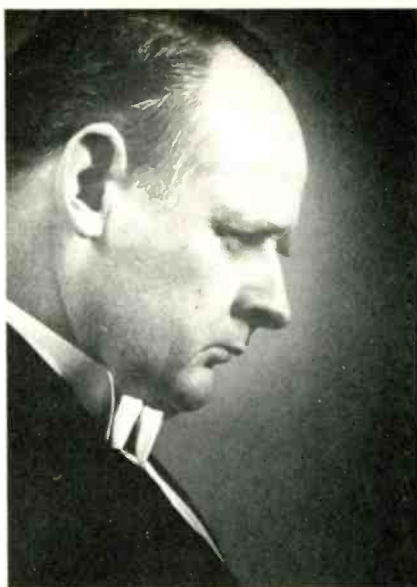
The flood of recordings of Beethoven's piano sonatas continues, and should continue, because these works are among the main pillars of our musical culture. The continued recordings are called for also because Beethoven interpretation, perhaps more than in the case of any other relatively recent composer, has undergone many, and often radical, changes. There are reputations to be questioned and interpretations to be challenged; the hearer's memory judges between past and present experiences. We used to have performances innocent of scholarship, the grand old virtuosos, descendants of Liszt's school, endowing Beethoven with lush sound, thunderous dynamics, rubato and tempo changes galore. But today pianists, especially the younger ones, prefer to bring to these great scores a leaner and more respectful style of playing that takes into consideration the sober analytical findings of the historians.

I use "sober" advisedly, even though the epithet scarcely fits Beethoven's character. But sobriety here comes from the realization that we are not dealing with the full-blooded Romantic whom the nineteenth-century, and a good deal of our own, saw in this tempestuous composer.

The Romantics eagerly annexed Beethoven, seeing in him a prophet, an artist who broke with the past, or, as an unfortunate author said in the 1930s, "the man who freed music," a revolutionary republican, a fierce individualist, and an unconventional innovator. But they (notably Wagner and Berlioz) concentrated on what we may call Beethoven's negative characteristics, on what they took for his revolutionary "destruction" of all conventions of the past. They did not see the positive aspects, the order, logic, and lucidity that he inherited from the eighteenth century, and the eternal desire for perfection of structure and proportion.

Yes, he was "unconventional" and an innovator: At times he shifted the traditional order of movements—or omitted one or more; replaced the minuet with the scherzo; and beginning with the *Appassionata* abandoned the usual repeats. There is, furthermore, in his music a vastly enhanced subjectivity, and, above all, Beethoven did create an audacious new piano style and technique. Nevertheless, his originality manifests itself not in the "overthrow" of classical forms and procedures, but in their enlargement and dramatic intensification.

It was this dramatic dialectic that the nineteenth century took for pure Romanticism, whereas in reality it is Classicism trying to surpass itself. Beethoven was not a Romantic, and far from dissolving form he strengthened it. In his late works he did reach strange frontiers, which a century and a half has not yet fully explored and fathomed, but in his earlier works he was the archclassicalist, the culminator of an epoch and a style. He was confident in



Bruce Hungerford
An ardent musical anatomist.

his power to such a degree that everything in his being was concentrated on a purpose. The verities of Haydn's and Mozart's century (a century in which Beethoven spent, we should not forget, his first thirty years) were not discarded, but their position in the hierarchy of virtues was changed.

We now recognize that Beethoven carried the manipulative extension of a basic or central musical idea (which is not necessarily what we call a "theme") to its culmination. These sonata subjects are, in the sense that Haydn had established, motif cells that in themselves are usually altogether insignificant, but they become cogs in the machinery of design; they are twisted and turned, fragmented and tossed about with infinite inventiveness, only to be reassembled after the battle.

The most remarkable quality of this principle of composition, and a quality earlier pianists did not recognize, is that the motif cells, while in themselves insignificant, are nevertheless the carriers of expression—if properly realized and exploited.

Bruce Hungerford does realize and exploit them to an impressive degree. He seems to be an ardent musical anatomist, familiar with every facet of the unfolding thematic web. He knows that Beethoven does not follow a pattern, the textbook "sonata form," but submits the form to the imagination while retaining the principles.

So the pianist adopts a simple, straightforward approach, which is a means not only of producing an obvious and lucid design, but also of unveiling the essential structure beneath the varied surface and disentangling the regular and orderly movement of the thematic substance from its casual incidence. This approach does not resemble a surgical procedure carried out with metronomic uniformity as the more extreme champions of "historical accuracy" advocate: the concepts of phrasing, tone, and dynamics, as well as articulation and changes of pace, which are the individual performing artist's birthright, should be—and in this instance are—in evidence, but they must accord with the requirements of the style. Hungerford also notes the not infrequent con-

tradition in Beethoven's instructions and is not afraid to correct them according to his lights.

In Op. 10, No. 2, the finale is designated presto, but the pianist slows it down a bit, effectively bringing out the movement's humor; the articulation of the quasi-fugue theme, however, could have been a little more piquant. He is attentive to the grace notes and does not bother about their being long or short provided the accent falls on the dissonance. The orthodox embellishers will cry murder, but Hungerford is entirely within allowable limits.

In the slow movement of Op. 10, No. 3, a movement generally agreed to be among Beethoven's finest in that vein, the pianistic equivalent of the funeral march in the *Eroica*, Hungerford disappoints a little. He is commendably free of Romantic mannerisms, but in this Largo he tries a subdued expressiveness that robs the theme of some of its strength; later the movement picks up quite satisfactorily.

The minuets he handles with exquisite taste. He knows the difference Beethoven had in mind when he called such a movement a "minuetto" or "tempo di minuetto," and acts accordingly. Both minuets in these early sonatas glide pleasantly without being a throwback to the rococo or a projection to the future scherzo.

What Emanuel Bach's keyboard music gave to the orchestra in the eighteenth century, Beethoven now returns with generous interest: the vastness of the orchestral symphony and its idiom spill over into the piano sonata, a good example being the *Waldstein*. Beethoven called it *grande sonate*, and it is grand in every way. The passagework rolls in enormous waves, well sustained by Hungerford, who also makes it clear that this is not decorative fireworks, for the virtuoso element is an integral part of style and structure. And he deals properly with the gigantic cadences (which are more like those in a symphony than those in a solo sonata), never permitting them to sag.

The two early "easy" sonatas, Op. 49, and the fillers are performed with the same competence, taste, and musicianship.

There are a few little flaws in these performances, through they are insignificant compared to Hungerford's achievement. The pauses, which are as important in the thematic play as the notes themselves, he observes scrupulously, but at the double bars and at times at the end of some sections, he lengthens them, not by much, but sufficiently so as to cause a little hesitation in the listener. The paradox here is that, while the sonata structure is built on the logical interaction of sections, all spatial sectionalism should be avoided because the tonal scheme takes care of the formal design. Beethoven was fond of modulations carried out by unison passages, and those require careful articulation by means of almost imperceptible emphasis on the decisive tones, which Hungerford does not always observe. But in general, these intelligent, serious, and reverent performances should find acclaim everywhere.

Harris Goldsmith's notes are excellent: they deal with the works, not with biographical trivia. P.H.L.

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (9); Overtures. Anna Tomowa-Sintow, soprano; Annelies Burmeister, mezzo; Peter Schreier, tenor;

Theo Adam, baritone; Leipzig Radio Chorus (all in Symphony No. 9); Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Kurt Masur, cond. [Beimar Bluth and Dieter-Gerhardt Worm, prod.] JAPAN VICTOR CD4K 7530/7, \$49 plus shipping (nine Quadradiscs, manual sequence; available from JVC Cutting Center, 6363 Sunset Blvd., Suite 500, Hollywood, Calif. 90028).

Symphonies: 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: *The Creatures of Prometheus*, Op. 43; *Coriolan*, Op. 62; *Egmont*, Op. 84; *The Ruins of Athens*, Op. 113; *Namensfeier*, Op. 115; *King Stephen*, Op. 117; *The Consecration of the House*, Op. 124.

This Japan Victor set is being imported in limited quantities by JVC America in an attempt to beef up the repertory available in Quadradisc form. Simply as a tactical exercise in marketing, this decision must give JVC (and the CD-4 approach to quadriphony) a notable place in the season's releases. This is not a set to be ignored, even though its role is to supplement rather than replace the editions of this material already available.

This appears to be an East German-Japanese coproduction, as several works were actually recorded in Tokyo; most of the set was recorded in the Lukaskirche in Dresden. The labels are a mixture of languages: the legal boilerplate for trademark and copyright in English, the titles of the works in German with surrounding clouds of Japanese that, I surmise, duplicate that information. The booklet is in Japanese: the eye is caught by pictures that mean little without captions and a large city map that turns out (if one is prepared to do a little research) to be Leipzig.

Complete editions of the Beethoven symphonies by distinguished conductors and orchestras are no rarity, and this set, in terms of both engineering and performance, is easily challenged by a number of recent versions (Böhm, Jochem) as well as the older, but still valuable, legacy of Toscanini, Walter, Klemperer, and Szell. The record surfaces are not as quiet as the best European production, and I could find no setting for my CD-4 demodulator (a JVC 4DD-5) in which occasional distortion could not be heard.

In the past I have deplored the omission in quad recordings of a balance band, since, even if one wishes to adjust these matters for himself, it is useful to know the relationships, especially front to back, that prevailed in the mixing room. In the case of this set, quite different effects can be produced by variations in channel balance. Both recording sites are evidently very large halls, which participate actively in the events and engulf the music with warmth and resonance. The orchestra is not closely miked but is playing, instead, to panorama microphones that cover large sections and do not single out individual performers. It thus appears most natural to set up a balance in which one appears to be over the center of the orchestra in a sort of private box for one at the top of the stage. You are surrounded by sound, and it is very pleasant sound, but all the action is taking place at some distance, and the immediacy and presence of the Boulez/New York Philharmonic SQ recording of the Bartók *Concerto for Orchestra* is never realized.

The Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra is the type of ensemble one would expect to play Beethoven well, and it does. Its roots can be traced to 1743, and its place among the major

orchestras of the world was established once and for all after Mendelssohn became its conductor in 1835. It is a characteristic German group, well trained and stylistically unified, and although the virtuosity of its first chairs is not equal to the Vienna Philharmonic (not to mention some orchestras in the U.S.) it has a solid level of musicianship throughout and excellent string sections. These are Beethoven performances that reflect years of study and experience, and they are achieved with insight and refinement. The playing, which is always in excellent taste, is at its finest noble and exalted in spirit and at the worst reverent and reserved. All the repeats normally observed in present-day performance practice are heard.

Kurt Masur as a Beethoven conductor reminds me of the young Otto Klemperer. There is the same largeness of view, the same emphasis on a consistent, methodical approach, with clean articulation, precision and order in playing, and spacious, smoothly flowing legato phrases that build into grand architectural designs rather than erupt into passion and drama. Thus, this is the sort of Beethoven collection that grows on you, that reveals new merits with replaying, and that produces, after a few days of close association, a strong cumulative effect. Here are a conductor and an orchestra we should know better.

The overtures are all well played, with *Coriolan* receiving a particularly effective performance with strong dramatic conflicts. Quad works well here, but the distant microphones lose detail elsewhere, most regrettably in the *Consecration of the House*, where the countertheme in the bassoons, against the opening brass fanfares, is almost totally inaudible. Indeed, the shortcomings of the set, I suspect, are more uniformly those of engineering rather than of musical realization, and when a detail is unclear or a balance is faulty I am inclined to blame the engineers rather than the conductor.

Masur's clear intent is to play classical symphonies in a classical manner, and his emphasis, to borrow a phrase from Paul Henry Lang, is upon "the logical and consequent manipulation of the thematic material." Thus he finds all the strengths in Symphony No. 1 and gives it a stunning, forthright statement that is one of the finest things in the set. The Second Symphony, for me a less attractive work, gets another excellent performance with particularly lovely string playing in the slow movement. Masur's fine sense of balance and form is revealed in full scale with his performance of the *Eroica*, at once heroic and noble, in which slow tempos are sustained to produce long lines and some very grand effects. I wish for a little more presence here, but the performance is musically impressive, and the quad playback adds substantially to its impact.

The radiant Fourth Symphony, with its wide emotional range and intermingling of the classical and Romantic spirits, receives a reading that strikes a near-ideal balance between these elements; this too is one of the assets of the edition. The Fifth Symphony suffers, as does the *Eroica*, from less tonal weight than one might consider optimum, but this is still a fine demonstration of the potential of the quad medium. The ominous quality of the third movement is beautifully realized by both musicians and engineers.

The *Pastoral* Symphony is given an essentially lyric statement with long, flowing thematic lines, plenty of warmth, and robust storm in which quad again shows its potential.

Lyricism prevails also in the Seventh Symphony, which has more than adequate heft (the microphones seem closer this time) and thus yields a room-filling sound that is consistently exciting. Much the same applies to the Eighth Symphony, which Masur plays with appropriate felicities.

This brings us to the Ninth. Masur has a very able group of soloists (with Adam especially fine) and a good chorus (too far off-mike for my taste); most of all, he has a firm grasp of the score that permits him to give it the sense of unity and development it requires. The orchestra plays well, with the strings again a special glory. The result is a performance that musically is fully competitive with nearly everything in the catalogue and technically is quite interesting and exciting, even though one suspects that later quad versions will make more dramatic uses of the four channels.

Anyone who buys this complete edition for quad effects may, in the long run, come to respect it more for its musical qualities, while those who are simply in search of some fine Beethoven performances in the German tradition will find that musical legacy well served.

R.C.M.

BERNSTEIN: *Trouble in Tahiti*. Nancy Williams, mezzo-soprano; Julian Patrick, baritone; Antonia Butler, soprano; Michael Clarke, tenor; Mark Browne, baritone; Columbia Wind Ensemble, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [John McClure, prod.] COLUMBIA KM 32597, \$7.98. Quadriphony: KMQ 32597 (SQ-encoded disc), \$7.98; MAQ 32597 (Q-8 cartridge), \$7.98.

Leonard Bernstein's music demonstrates the fact that cleverness is not enough, and it does so with awful decisiveness. Measured against the rest of us workaday, uncreative mortals, Bernstein no doubt looks pretty impressive. In *Trouble in Tahiti* he has singlehandedly written the libretto of a satire on a middle-class suburban couple, Dinah and Sam, and then has gone on to compose music for it. Along the way he has parodied a little jazz and a little swing, he has dreamed up a big romantic song "Island Magic," such as, once upon a time, you might have expected to hear in a Dorothy Lamour movie; and for his serious comments on the empty, sad lives of husband and wife he has made use of tidbits from Stravinsky, Copland, Blitzstein, and even maybe Menotti.

All of this is more than most people could have done. Nevertheless, musical theater, lighthearted or solemn, imposes other, more stringent standards, and measured, as it must be, against the demands of art, Bernstein's opera does not begin to suffice in quality. Or in personal commitment. *Trouble in Tahiti* is the work of someone on the artistic make. The very variety of Bernstein's sources is in the end his undoing. Instead of putting them to use, he is himself at their mercy, so that he never at any point achieves an individual statement. Eclecticism, one has come to see, is the characteristic form taken by Bernstein's artistic impersonality.

Perhaps it all meant more in 1952. But twenty-two years after the opera's premiere the dramatic ideas look as unoriginal as the musical ones. Today suburbia seems an unworthily obvious target. In any case, one realizes now that Bernstein is merely using it to provoke an automatic reaction of superiority on the part of his audience and that the idea

has nothing whatever to do with the plight of Dinah and Sam, she introspective and he outgoing. Their ruminations about the loss of mutual understanding—clearly intended to move us emotionally—are the most embarrassing feature of this shallow score. They are both verbally trite (e.g., "Maybe there's time to go back/And take your hand again/And face your face") and musically bathetic.

The performance, under the composer's guidance, is presumably authentic. Julian Patrick and Nancy Williams are both effective, though after a while the beat in the latter's voice becomes annoying. The trio, entrusted with Bernstein's ironical, jazzy commentary, does not enunciate very well: Too many phrase endings get lost. The "Columbia Wind Ensemble" is otherwise unspecified and includes a xylophone. A libretto is supplied. Did

Bernstein really intend to have Dinah sit on a chaise lounge? D.S.H.

BRAMHS: Ballades (4), Op. 10—See Schumann: Carnival.

BRAMHS: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 77. Henryk Szeryng, violin; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS 6500 530, \$7.98.

Szeryng's first recording of the Brahms Concerto (with Pierre Monteux and the LSO) is still available as an inexpensive reprint, but his second (a fine performance with Antal Dorati leading the same orchestra) vanished from the catalogue some time ago.

One cannot quibble with endless duplication of repertory when the results are as fine as they are here. Haitink's rather austere, measured conception is handsomely abetted by spacious acoustics and the gloriously dark tone of the great Dutch orchestra. When the other Philips version of this concerto—by Arthur Grumiaux and Colin Davis—was issued several years back, I complained of the slow tempos and the rather straitjacketed approach. The Szeryng/Haitink reading is similar to the Grumiaux/Davis in many respects, but somehow it sings more and flows better. (Both are extremely well played and beautifully engineered.) Haitink, unlike Davis, manages to project great rhythmic vitality without even slightly accelerating in the ritardellos—proving that it *can* be done.

Szeryng, as before, is a rather cool, efficient player, but his tone is of the utmost purity, his intonation and bowing impeccable, and his general musicianship of the highest discernment and taste. This time, his performance has been caught at a judicious distance, and the ratio of solo to orchestra is virtually ideal (the violin is uncomfortably, but not fatally, prominent on the Monteux/RCA Victrola disc).

I still treasure Monteux's brisk, urgent, virile conception (he had a very special way with Brahms and, alas, made all too few commercial recordings of his music). The new Szeryng/Haitink record can nevertheless be confidently added to the long list of recommendable editions of this challenging masterpiece. H.G.

BRAMHS: Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 73; Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. Janet Baker, mezzo-soprano; male voices of the John Alldis Choir (both in Op. 53); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Adrian Boult, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL S 37032, \$6.98.

Strange as it may seem to younger readers, Boult and Brahms have been a groovy pair ever since the British maestro's early years with the BBC Symphony. Sir Adrian was on the podium for the first electrical recording of the D minor Piano Concerto (with Backhaus). He first did the cycle of the symphonies, overtures, *Havdn* Variations, and *Alto Rhapsody* (with Monica Sinclair) in the mid-Fifties (part of that Westminster mono series survives on Everest 3149—the Second Symphony, presumably rechanneled). Boult has remade the symphonies for EMI, and I hope this Angel release portends domestic availability of the full four-some.

Sir Adrian's way with the D major is characterized by resolute simplicity, an attitude that says implicitly, "I hate rehearsals, you gentlemen are professionals, and we all know how it goes, so let's play it." Hence, this is not a Brahms Second of vast, sunlit, autumnal landscapes (à la Karajan, Monteux, Walter, Furtwängler, Szell, Sanderling et al.). Neither does it have the musele and sinew that characterize the rather diverse phonographic statements of Klemperer, Toscanini, Steinberg, Kertész, and Van Beinum. This is mostly a brisk romp through the score (though time is found for the first-movement repeat), captured in very close miking that avoids the "big"-orchestra perspective on the one hand, but inhibits gossamer soft pianissimos on the other. Boult doesn't fuss much with agogics, with the turn and nuance of phrasings. Some listeners may find their minds wandering. Others will

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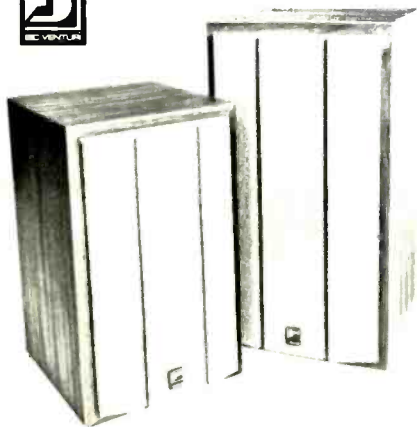
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delight in such a relaxed, yet buoyant, chamber-music approach. Myself, I would rather listen to this version for sheer pleasure than maybe two-thirds of its current rivals.

Presumably, the drawing card of the new release will actually be Miss Baker's singing of the *Alto Rhapsody*. This, too, is stark simplicity itself, direct and to the point, with a throbbing urgency from the Boult baton and a warm-blooded, caressing vibrato from the soloist that reminds one of such other famous recordings as Ferrier/Krauss (Richmond R 23183) or Forrester/Fricsay (a ten-inch DG mono, never widely known in this country, that also contained my favorite integral set of Mahler's five Rückert-Lieder). I have never been comfortable with the exaggeratedly measured pace of those two readings; the *Rhapsody* unfolds more naturally and with an easier flow in the equally expressive and dignified Baker/Boult. With all due respect, then, for the current stereo versions of Watts, Ludwig, Miller, et al., I feel the latest edition is an easy winner.

A.C.

B BRAHMS: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a. **ELGAR**: Enigma Variations, Op. 36. London Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond. LONDON STEREO TREASURY STS 15188, \$3.49 [from RCA VICTOR LSC 2418, 1960, and RCA VICTROLA VICS 1107, 1965].

I doubt that it was planned as such, but this reissue appeared ten years to the month after the death of one of the podium's most serene and beloved figures. A better commemoration could hardly be found, for Monteux's way with these well-trod scores was to steer a comfortable middle course between the extremes of crisp, frenetic, and sometimes depersonalized rigor on the one hand, and turgid ponderosity or cloying affectation on the other.

Elgar especially can use such an antidote, while Brahms's inventive variations bloom under this spontaneous and fresh treatment. The LSO plays *con amore* throughout, and Monteux's lateral splitting of the violin sections makes for good stereo, particularly in the Elgar.

In comparison with previous incarnations on RCA, London's transfer is heavier on the bass end and not as airy and clean in the climaxes. No matter. One would be hard-pressed to find better versions of either score, least of all at such an irresistible bargain price.

A.C.

BRITTEN: A Ceremony of Carols. For a feature review, see page 95.

BRUCKNER: Mass No. 2; Choral Works. For a feature review, see page 95.

BUSONI: Elegies (6); Ballet Scene No. 4. Martin Jones, piano. ARGO ZRG 741, \$6.98.

BUSONI: Indianisches Tagebuch. **TCHAIKOVSKY**: Sonata for Piano, in G, Op. 37. Stephen Manes, piano. ORION ORS 74154, \$6.98.

Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924) is a composer

whose reputation involves more respect than popularity. From all accounts he was an extraordinary pianist, exceptional in his time for his musicianship, though still a formidable technician. His students and colleagues worshiped him with awe and affection, creating a sort of Busoni cult that remains to this day. He was revered as much for his intellectualizing about music as for his performance.

This intellectualizing led him, around 1907, to seek a new concept of music beyond the Romanticism that was the tradition in which he was nurtured and in which he composed such works as the sonata and concerto for violin, the opera *Turandot*, and the piano concerto. Like his younger contemporary Schoenberg, he recognized that the harmonic revolution of Wagner was reaching a historical cul de sac, but Busoni's solution of this problem, though free in harmony, did not go as far as the younger composer and his followers.

The *Elegies* for piano solo (1907) represent one of his first efforts to write in a "new" style: compared to such younger masters as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, or Bartok—or even to his contemporary Debussy—Busoni does not sound so terribly revolutionary, though his followers certainly found much new ground broken. These seven pieces are characterized by extraordinarily idiomatic writing for the piano, a rather free concept of harmony, but not too much really radical dissonance.

The same is true of the *Indian Diary* (1915), though the writing has a lighter texture. Its four sections are based on American Indian themes brought to Busoni by a New York pupil. They provide the basis for rather complex improvisation, though the melodic line is supported with rather free harmonization.

Martin Jones plays the *Elegies* with idiomatic mastery of the piano, considerable tonal variety, and sensitivity to Busoni's harmonic texture. I have not heard David Bean's recording on RCA Victrola, and I recall that Edward Steuermann's (Contemporary 8501) was not too well reproduced, though of course the performance was of interest coming from a pupil of the composer.

The *Ballet Scene* No. 4 is an early work, later revised and expanded; I find it less engrossing than the *Elegies*.

Stephen Manes, whom I knew while he was a student at Juilliard, has since grown into a very fine young artist, apparently overcoming some of the reticence that hampered his early work. He is an excellent technician and fully projects the *Indian Diary*, though I still find him less interesting than Jones. Nor is he really at ease in the Tchaikovsky sonata, which needs a Gilels, Richter, or Graffman to reveal the full impact of Romantic sentiment in this uneven score.

Argo's reproduction is excellent, somewhat better than Orion's.

P.H.

CAVALLI: Egisto.

Egisto	Rudiger Wohlers (t)
Clori	Lilian Sukis (s)
Lidio	Nikolaus Hillebrand (bs)
Climene	Trudeliese Schmidt (ms)
Hipparco	Heiner Hopfner (t)
Dema, La Notte, Venus	Kenko Kawata (a)
L' Aurora, Amor	Hildegard Heichele (s)

Chamber Ensemble of the Bavarian State Orchestra, Hans Ludwig Hirsch, cond. EURO-DISC 87 120 XGK, \$13.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

The fourth Cavalli opera to enter the recorded lists is certainly witness to the well-deserved popularity of seventeenth-century opera today. A few years ago *Ormindo* brought Francesco Cavalli's melodic invention and dramatic sensitivity to twentieth-century audiences; then there was *Erismena*, followed by *La Calisto* with the superlative Janet Baker in a dual role. Now we have *Egisto*, the opera that took Europe by storm in 1643, the year following Monteverdi's *Poppea*, and I am happy to report that this Eurodisc release is a complete delight. Although as a historian I had some doubts that Venetian audiences heard quite the sound that was coming from my speakers, as a music lover I enjoyed it thoroughly.

The libretto by Giovanni Faustini draws on the common fund of stories and incidents available to any dramatist of the day. In this case, the plot opens with a scene much like the lovers' awakening in *Midsummer Night's Dream* after Puck has confused the two couples with the flower's magic potion. Clori and Lidio, who are betrothed respectively to Egisto and Climene, wake to find themselves hopelessly in love, to the despair of their former partners. The rest of the opera proceeds along a predictable line of complications, including a mad scene for Egisto and several good opportunities for laments by all the characters, until Amor restores harmony and the original couples are reunited.

Librettos did not mean as much to Cavalli as they did to Monteverdi, and *Egisto's* effect lies largely in its individual scenes, arias, ariosos, and duets. By the end of Cavalli's life in 1676 recitative and aria had divided into two distinct styles, but in 1643 the line between heightened arioso and short arialike forms was mercifully blurred. Lyrical moments can appear anywhere in a scene, but most frequently they come at the beginning or the end. Two- and three-phrase "arias" are not uncommon, but when the occasion calls for it the characters readily break into flowing refrain arias, tuneful canzonets, or expressive laments over a ground bass. Much of the style will remind listeners of Monteverdi's *Poppea*, but Cavalli allows more space for sheer lyrical expansion, and what a splendid melodist he is! Surely melting tunes like Clori's "*I riposi de le piume*" and "*Amor chi ti die l'ali*" or "*Hor che del ciel*," a rousing canzonetta that sounds a bit like "Rule Britannia," must have been on everyone's lips shortly after the premiere of *Egisto* wherever it played.

The genesis of this recording is somewhat vague. A joint production of Ariola-Eurodisc and the Bavarian Broadcasting Company, the performance seems to have been prepared for a Munich radio broadcast in 1973 by conductor Hans Ludwig Hirsch. The sleeve note also acknowledges a debt to "the concept which Gianfranco Prato presented in Venice in 1972," about which I can discover nothing. In any case the product is eminently successful.

Both the music and the libretto have been heavily but skillfully cut. The two discs contain only an hour and a half of music, which is almost like highlights from *Egisto* except that the continuity is so well maintained. All the choruses and several characters in the original are gone; some nice melodic spots are transferred, text and all, to the remaining actors (Venus and Amor, for example, borrow "Di



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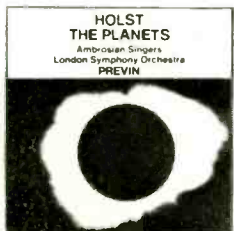
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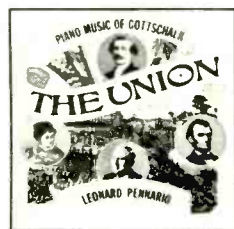
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the guance" from some excised mythological figures); and other scenes are tightened considerably. Climene's big aria, "*Piangete occhi dolenti*," a gorgeous tune that has survived through the centuries in singer's anthologies, is preceded by a most affecting recitative that is actually from the preceding scene, yet the cut makes perfect musical and textual sense.

Another aspect of the essential musicality of this performance is the exquisitely appropriate use of ornamentation. I assume it is Hirsch who is responsible for the delicate turns, the Cacciniesque falls and graces that come so effortlessly from the singers. It seems so completely natural that I cannot help wondering if this manuscript is more detailed than most in notating details of vocal decoration.

A good deal of the opera is accompanied by orchestra, the five-part strings specified by the composer, though I doubt that the early Venetians heard anything as lush as the Germans give us here. Still, the warm string sound of the orchestra and the bass reinforcement of the continuo are not totally out of place with this velvety music.

The singing is excellent. Lilian Sukis would perhaps win first prize for her seductively lovely Clori: it's no wonder both Egisto and Lidio are so taken with her. Rüdiger Wohlers' Egisto is suitably noble. Wohlers has a supple tenor with a warm quality and good low register, something a singer needs in early baroque music. He is particularly moving in his splendid aria "*Lasso io vivo*" and in the bizarre latter half of his mad scene.

Trudeliene Schmidt does full justice to Climene's arias, but occasionally she slips under pitch at less crucial moments. Perhaps if she billed herself as a soprano, which the role really calls for, she would feel free to lighten up a bit. Nikolaus Hillebrand sings very well, but the extraordinarily dark color of his voice makes Lidio sound uncomfortably like Hunding. Climene's brother, Hipparco, a lighter tenor, is sung with great style and élan as well as a beautiful tone by Heiner Hopfner. Male alto Kehko Kawata and soprano Hildegard Heichele round out an excellent cast.

The sound of the recording is satisfactory but not spectacular. There is no effort to distinguish scenic perspective sonically, for example. I don't hold with a lot of gimmicky channeling, but one would think that, in a production planned for broadcast, stereo could have been used more imaginatively. Particularly annoying is the failure to distinguish between scenes. This is aggravated by the truly terrible plot summary and the inadequate list of numbers that substitutes for a libretto. It is hard enough for the average listener to tell where he is in such a plot under the best of circumstances. Here Eurodisc makes it virtually impossible. Surely the marketers of such a fine performance as this could have sacrificed some of the three and a half pages of pictures for the illumination of their audience. S.T.S.

D'INDY: Sonata for Piano, in E minor—See Dukas: Variations, Interlude, and Finale.

DUKAS: Variations, Interlude, and Finale on a Theme by Rameau; *La Plainte, au loin, du faune*. **D'INDY:** Sonata for Piano, in E minor. Vladimir Pleshakov, piano. ORION ORS 7266, \$6.98.

This record is a follow-up to Pleshakov's version of Dukas's Sonata in E flat (coupled with Chausson's *Quelques danses* on Orion ORS 6906).

The variations were composed in 1903, four years after the sonata, and, although this may horrify the Francophiles, they sound here something like the product of a French Reger. Dukas takes Rameau's theme and subjects it to a working out using the full battery of turn-of-the-century harmonic devices. Yet like Reger in his elaborations of baroque tunes, the mood remains reasonably light—lighter and more graceful, in fact, than Reger could usually manage.

Even more fascinating is *La Plainte, au loin, du faune*, from 1920. This was one of a series of elegiac short pieces submitted by several composers for a *Tombeau de Claude Debussy*. Dukas takes Debussy's *Faune* material and immobilizes it into a most curious yet wonderfully evocative series of mysterious harmonic suspensions and cloudy tonal indirections. It is short and surrealistic.

In comparison, the overside D'Indy sonata is more academic stuff. D'Indy enjoys a worthy historical place as a cultivator of French musical self-esteem; his pedagogical role in the encouragement of French composers and the rebirth of historical performance practice remains unquestioned. His music has its virtues too—even this sonata. But for the most part it sounds unduly bound to nineteenth-century and even Germanic models, ponderous and overly rhetorical.

Pleshakov's performances are committed and technically adept. In short, a record well worth its price. J.R.

ELGAR: Enigma Variations—See Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn.

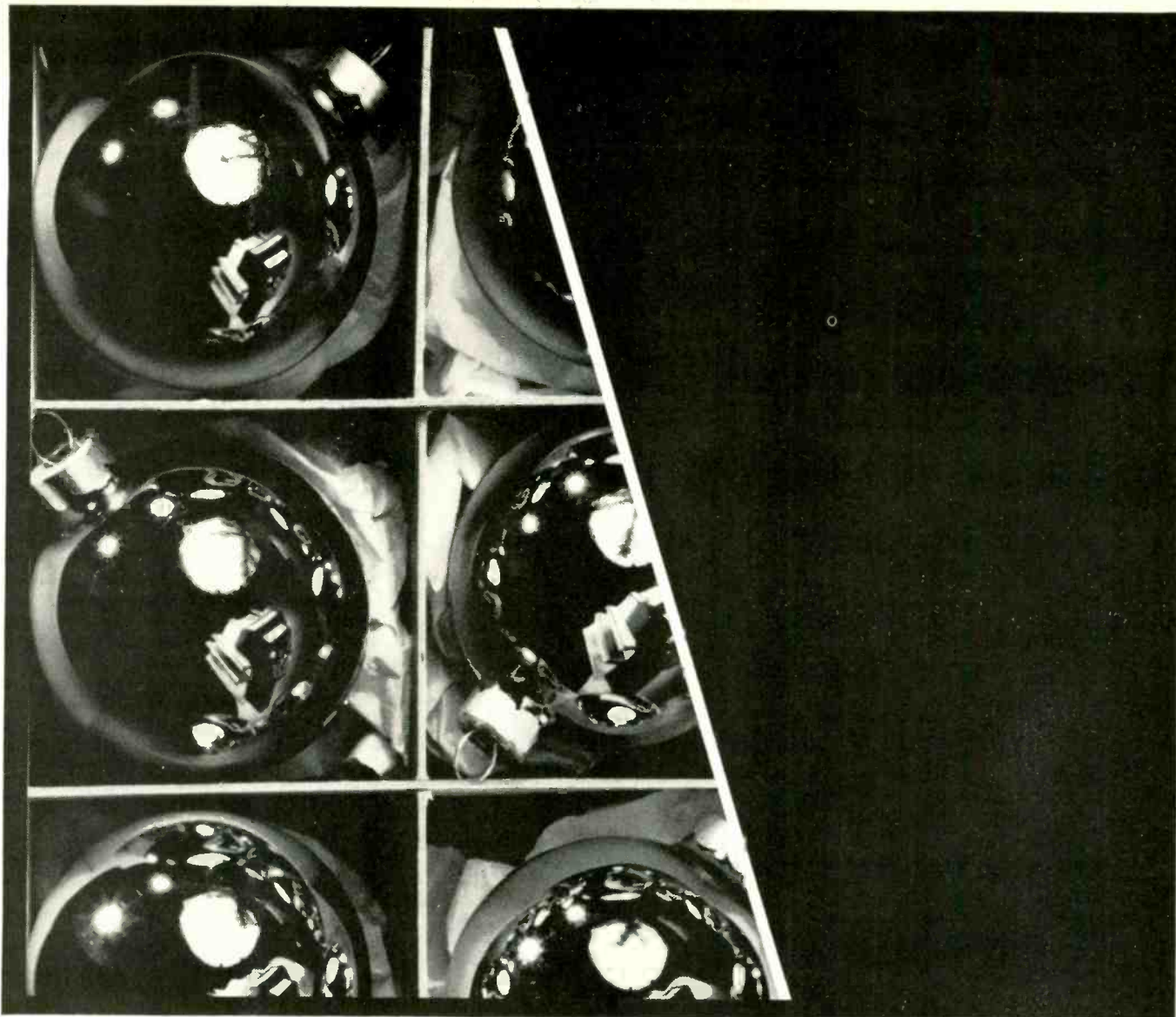
FRANCK: Pièce héroïque; Prière; Final; Pastorale. Michael Murray, organ (organ of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, Indiana). ADVENT 5007, \$5.98.

MICHAEL MURRAY: French Organ Recital. Michael Murray, organ (Aeolean-Skinner organ, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco). ADVENT 5008, \$5.98.

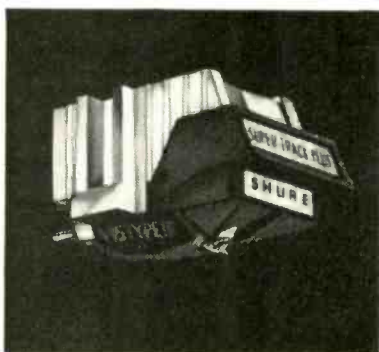
VIENNE: Symphony for Organ, No. 1, Op. 14; Prélude, Andante, Finale. **WIDOR:** Symphonie V, Op. 42, No. 5; Toccata. **LEMMENS:** Fanfare in D. **DUPRÉ:** Carillon, Op. 27, No. 4.

Michael Murray is a young American organist (born 1943) whose training has been primarily French: He was a student of Marcel Dupré in Paris. The training seems to have been thorough, for Murray has, besides a surefire and exciting technique and an elegant style, a marvelous understanding of and respect for the French Romantic repertory. His intelligent and no-nonsense approach to this music results in highly attractive performances that are neither of the eccentric, highly personalized variety nor of the coldly analytical type one often hears these days. Above all, it's Murray's apparent respect for the integrity of this music that he communicates so successfully to the hearer (and, let's face it, some of these pieces have been heard in third-rate performances so often they're sometimes difficult to respect).

The Franck disc is my favorite of the two, even though there are several other equally good recordings of all four pieces included.



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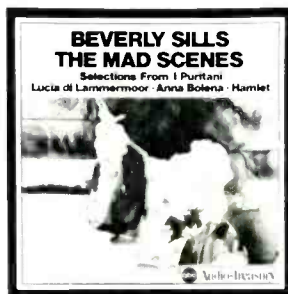
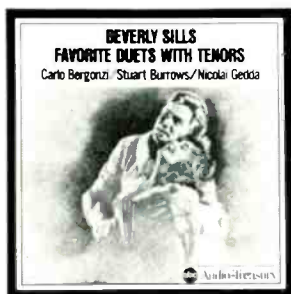
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Murray's performances, especially of the *Pièce héroïque* and the *Final*, are strong, intense, and exciting. He's playing an organ in a Benedictine monastery in Indiana built in 1963 by one of the resident monks, Father Eugene Ward, O.S.B. The instrument has three manuals and forty-two stops, and the specification (printed on the jacket) looks like a typical recent bland Aeolian-Skinner organ—duplexing, unification, and all. The sound is not Skinner, though, but is much more colorful and "French" sounding, with broad but clean montres, exceptionally assertive and fiery reeds, and a beautifully cohesive full ensemble. It's one of the most attractive instruments of its kind I've heard, and it is further blessed by a spectacular acoustical environment in the Archabbey. Advent's engineers have done a superb job of preserving the sound of the organ as it probably is heard in that room, though to be sure considerable detail is necessarily lost.

Murray's performances on the recital disc are again stylish and assured. The first movement of the Vierne symphony comes across as a solemn and majestic and substantial piece, and Murray almost succeeds in convincing me that the popular finale of this symphony and the well-known toccata from Widor's Fifth Symphony are also works of consequence. The organ here is the huge, lugubrious Aeolian-Skinner (1934) in San Francisco's Grace Cathedral. It has four manuals and more than ninety stops—more than twice the size of the organ heard on the Franck disc—and is eminently suited to the grand, pompous style of this music. Murray handles it skillfully, and Advent's engineers have again done a fine job of recording it, but I can't say I'm fond of the sound.

This country has no shortage of virtuoso organists, and the French Romantic organ repertory has long remained popular with audiences here, but Michael Murray offers a combination, rarely found anywhere, of dazzling technique, seriousness of purpose, and a real understanding of and interest in this music. Let's hope he produces more records as fine as these.

C.F.G.

HAYDN: Quartets for Flute and Strings (4), Op. 5. Vienna Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 360, \$7.98.

The only trouble with this nice divertimento music is that, though published as early as 1767 as Haydn's work, only No. 4 is his. However, if not by him, the other three are by a good hand and make for very pleasant listening.

No. 4, which was originally a six-part divertimento for flute, oboe, two violins, cello, and bass (hence in the twilight zone between chamber and orchestral music), was transcribed for quartet by Haydn. It differs palpably from the other three in "Op. 5" (Haydn himself did not use opus numbers), and while the divertimento character is still there the part-writing is closer to the quartet style. The fourth movement, entitled *La Fantasy*, is a set of variations with an interesting construction. Each of the instruments is allotted a solo variation, but the bass remains the same, as in a passacaglia.

The performance is both spirited and inti-

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mate, an agreeable blend; the players are solid musicians, the ensemble finely balanced, and the sound excellent. P.H.L.

LISZT: Missa choralis. For a feature review, see page 95.

R MILHAUD: Les Choéphores, Op. 24. Vera Zorina, narrator; Irene Jordan and Virginia Babikian, sopranos; McHenry Boatwright, baritone; Schola Cantorum of New York; New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [John McClure, prod.] COLUMBIA SPECIAL PRODUCTS AMS 6396, \$6.98 [from COLUMBIA MS 6396, 1962].

This important reissue restores to the catalogue what is very simply one of the twentieth century's major operatic endeavors. *Les Choéphores* is the second of three works by the late Darius Milhaud forming the Orestian trilogy, based on Paul Claudel's French translation of the Aeschylus tragedies. The first, *Agamemnon* (1913), is more or less incidental music to be used at only one point in the play. *Les Choéphores* (1915), on the other hand, sets seven of the episodes of the *Libation Bearers*, and like a number of French dramatic works written during this period and subsequently (notably by Arthur Honegger) it lends itself particularly well to concert presentation as a short oratorio. Only the final work of the trilogy, *Les Euménides* (1917-22), is a full-fledged opera, one I would not hesitate to rank, along with

Les Choéphores, as a twentieth-century masterpiece.

The prime forces generating the enormous dynamism of Milhaud's musical language here grow from the tensions, antinomies inherent to the structure of the play (strophe-antistrophe, individual-chorus, etc.) and recreated by Milhaud in the exceedingly appropriate polytonal harmonies, with which he was strongly preoccupied at the time. Whether in the somewhat strident setting of chorus against orchestra in the first section; in the weird, a cappella second section pitting solo voice against chorus, and male voices against female within the chorus; or in the amazingly splendorous fanfares that close the third, Milhaud's harmonic idiom could not have been better suited to the work he was setting.

In total contrast to the style of the first three sections, the fourth, fifth, and seventh create music almost entirely out of rhythms produced both by a large battery of indefinite-pitch percussions and by the highly accented declamation of the French text by a female narrator and the chorus. (This is a practice that runs counter to standard French prosody, in which syllabic rhythms tend to be much more important than stressed ones.) It is the pulse of this music that moves the play towards its savage, climactic murders and then returns at the end as the Euménides begin to hound Orestes. (This leads automatically into *Les Euménides*, which begins with the same declamatory and percussion effects.)

This disc, originally released in 1962 as a tribute to Milhaud's seventieth birthday, now reappears to honor the composer, who died several months ago shortly before his eighty-second birthday. While very well, even excitingly recorded, the performance here does not match up to the brilliant interpretation done by Igor Markevitch for Deutsche Grammophon and released here many years ago on a long-deleted Decca disc (DL 9916), coupled with a definitive Honegger Fifth Symphony. Even so, Bernstein's version has a great deal of drive to it, and he proves especially effective in the percussion-declamation sections. But he is not helped much by the soloists, who tend to sound much too ripe for their roles (McHenry Boatwright in particular makes Orestes sound more like Boris Godunov) or by narrator Vera Zorina, whose high-school-poetry-recitation French accent was curiously chosen to mar similar French-language roles, from Honegger's *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher* to Stravinsky's *Perséphone*.

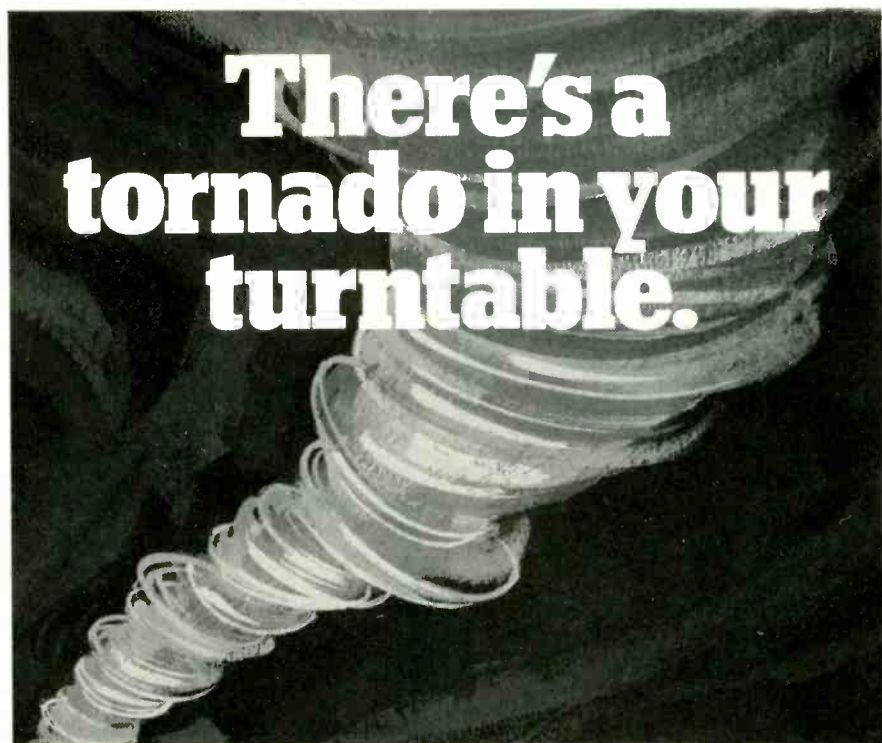
For all this, the disc still strongly communicates the tensions, brutality, and polarities so admirably translated by Milhaud in musical terms. After almost sixty years, the effect remains devastating. R.S.B.

MOZART: Quintets for Strings; Quintet for Horn and Strings; Quintet for Clarinet and Strings; Serenade, K. 525; Adagio and Fugue, K. 546. For a feature review, see page 93.

MUSSORGSKY: Khovanshchina. For a feature review, see page 89.

PROKOFIEV: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3—See Ravel: Concerto in D.

RACHMANINOFF: Aleko: Suite; Caprice bo-



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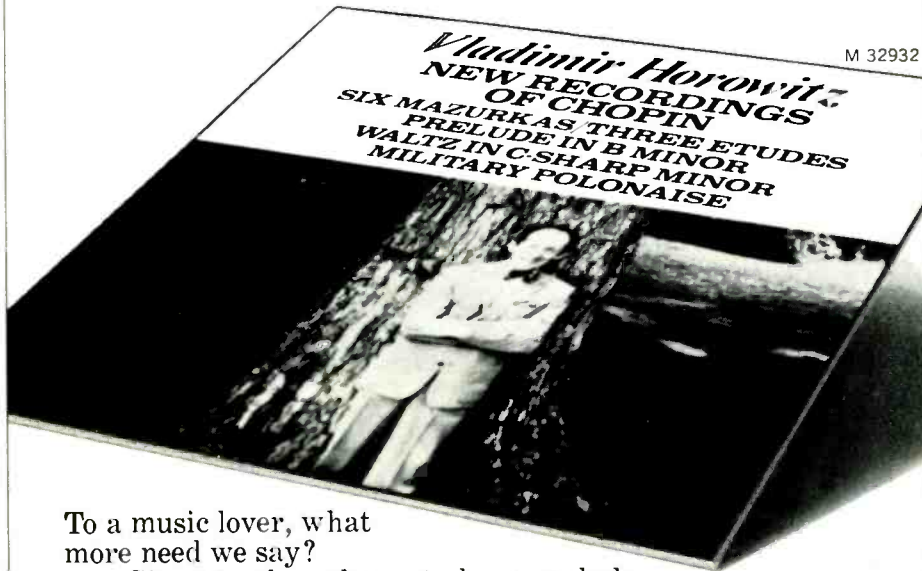
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hémien, Op. 12. U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, Yevgeny Svetlanov, cond. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40253, \$6.98.

Comparison—*Caprice bohémien*: De Waart/London Phil.

Phi. 6500 362

Aleko, completed in 1892, is the first of Rachmaninoff's three operas. In the early Fifties, Concert Hall circulated a complete recording under Nikolai Golovanov, and Monitor will shortly release a new one. A concert suite was briefly available on Columbia under André Kostelanetz, but the new Melodiya/Angel offers a more sensible and convenient coupling.

Svetlanov's suite differs from Kostelanetz', notably in the substitution of a moderately pleasant scherzo for the opera's best-known excerpt, the lovely bass cavatina "The moon is high" (sung on Columbia by Simon Estes), and in the different sequence of the remaining four numbers. Svetlanov's order makes more musical and dramatic sense. I feel, and in every other respect Melodiya offers an altogether ravishing performance—the Russians obviously have the music much more in their blood than did Kostelanetz' studio musicians. Tempos are broad and flexible; the cellos dig into the cantabile melodies with loving conviction; and woodwind solos—nasal in tone or not—have the utmost expressive eloquence. If you're not going to wallow in the sheer moonshine of this early score, you may as well not bother. A pity Svetlanov didn't include the cavatina, but then, it's available separately from the likes of Chaliapin, Reizen, and Ghiaurov.

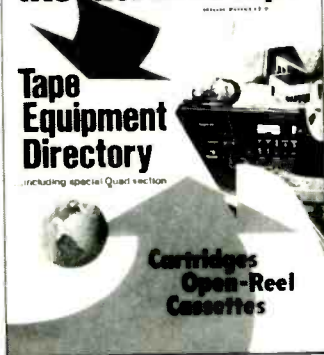
The early *Caprice bohémien* here receives its third recording. (I regret that in my June 1973 review of the De Waart version I accepted Philips' claim of a premiere recording, overlooking a mid-Fifties Soviet version by Alexander Gauk, never much circulated in the West.) The De Waart rendition sounds terribly uptight alongside Svetlanov's uninhibitedly coloristic, rhythmically plastic interpretation. Even Philips' impressive sonics—Melodiya's sound relatively constricted—cannot swing the balance. And De Waart's coupling, the *Symphonic Dances*, can be had better elsewhere, which can hardly be said of the *Aleko* Suite. A.C.

B RAVEL: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in D (for the left hand). **PROKOFIEV**: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 3, in C, Op. 26. John Browning, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. SERAPHIM S 60224, \$3.98 [from CAPITOL SP 8545, 1960].

A welcome reissue. Browning has always had a flair for Ravel. His pianism furnishes the balance and definition, the cool jade sonority, and the slight calculation often called for in this extremely neoclassical music. The Prokofiev is similarly well handled, although others have brought a shade more *diablerie* (Kapell, Graffman, Janis) or whimsicality (Argerich, François, Prokofiev himself) to the work.

Browning and Leinsdorf remade the Prokofiev a few years later for RCA in Boston. The two performances are virtually identical, and if anything I prefer the inexpensive earlier version, since its sound has a bit more spaciousness and dynamic range. H.G.

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ROSSINI: *Messa di Gloria*. Margherita Rinaldi, soprano; Ameral Gunson, alto; Ugo Benelli and John Mitchinson, tenors; Jules Bastin, bass; BBC Singers; English Chamber Orchestra, Herbert Handt, cond. PHILIPS 6500 612, \$7.98.

Herbert Handt, the able researcher who dug out, restored, and made the first recording of this early "short" Mass of Rossini, rightly cautions us that "we cannot judge Italian Catholic music with German Protestant criteria." The polarity of northern Protestant and Latin Catholic music has been a long-standing subject for critical discussion, one that has suffered from the basic misconception that there is only one kind of legitimate Christian sacred music.

With the nineteenth-century Romantic Palestrina revival and the foundation of the Caecilian Society, most Italianate church music, notably the orchestrally accompanied Mass, was proscribed, because even the Catholic authorities, led by the Vatican itself, came to accept the view that post-Palestrinian church music is "theatrical." Everyone was piously mouthing the "strictures" attributed to the Council of Trent (which they knew only from hearsay), so the greatest masters were figuratively placed on the Index.

We are still unenlightened about this problem, still disputing the admissibility of "the music of the marketplace" (i.e., opera) into the House of God, as even well-educated musicians and critics fail to realize that ever since Monteverdi the presence of operatic-dramatic elements in church music has been inevitable. There are plenty of operatic elements in the revered B minor Mass of Bach, but since these come from baroque opera most people fail to recognize them. But when we enter known territory—Mozart—the operatic is instantly recognized.

Well and good, but there are certain limits and requirements for liturgical music that Rossini does not observe, or does so only sporadically. When Mozart in his C minor Mass writes an "*Et incarnatus est*" that is a bravura aria in the purest operatic vein, we discard our scruples because this is sheer beauty become adoration; Mozart summoned all his talents and offered them to the altar. This is the final criterion of the spirit of church music, but so much cannot be said about Rossini's apparently hastily written *Gloria* Mass.

To be sure, there are many flashes of his great talent, even an awareness of how it should be employed, but the work is stylistically extremely untidy and formally loose, full of pat modulations (when in doubt, crash in with a resounding diminished-seventh chord); its ornamentation and extended coloraturas are perfunctory and often in bad taste. The composer seems unable to terminate sections and just goes on and on; the setting of the text is careless, at times amounting to caricature; and the proportion of the purely orchestral portions, with expressive wind solos, is unusually large and disruptive for a Mass. There are echoes from *The Barber* and *The Siege of Corinth*, and in turn Rossini later used some material from the Mass in *William Tell*.

Yet there are many interesting aspects to this composition when looked at as a historical phenomenon. Though a nineteenth-century composer, Rossini's roots remained in the eighteenth, and it is fascinating to observe how

he retained the spirit and techniques of the late classic era, superimposing on them features of early Romanticism. His marvelous orchestral and choral techniques are fully present, and except for the often cavalier disregard of prosody and the trivial ornamentation, the solo writing is always that of the experienced opera composer.

The *Kyrie* starts auspiciously, with the dark hues we know from Haydn, Cherubini, Beethoven's C major Mass, and other such works of the turn of the century. Here Rossini, who knew far more music than most of his contemporaries (later he became one of the charter subscribers to the *Bachgesellschaft* edition), hews successfully to the style. But the "*Christe eleison*" becomes sentimental. The *Gloria*, a mile long, begins with a brassy fanfare followed by a long marchlike ritornel that makes us fairly expect the entrance of the king and his retinue from one of Verdi's early operas.

The "*Laudamus Te*" is again eighteenth-century Rossini, but after a while he goes completely operatic in this soprano aria. The "*Gratias*" is given to one of the tenors. It is an endless piece—truly noodling—in which the tenor is accompanied by a concertante English horn, a dangerous combination in the best of circumstances. The "*Domine Deus*" is a trio. The "*Qui tollis*" brings back the chorus rather successfully, but the tenor solo badly hurts its effectiveness as it makes a travesty of the "taking away of the sins of the world." The setting of the "*Miserere*" simply tears the text to pieces with totally irrelevant coloraturas.

The "*Quoniam*" finally gives the bass his due; it is another concerted aria, this time with clarinet solo. Rossini here gives a preview of Cardinal de Brogni's part in *La Juive*; the poor soloist must descend into the lowest range of the human voice only to vault without warning into the heights. Then, in the "*Cum sancto spiritu*," this unpredictable composer suddenly remembers the tradition and writes a choral fugue, a spanking good one, in the Handelian sense, which means "never mind the rules." It is quite possible that Handel was his model, for this inquisitive musician studied everything. Well, it is a curious melange, this Mass; interesting, but too diffuse to be viable.

Margherita Rinaldi does well with her difficult soprano part, but alto Ameral Gunson is barely in evidence. Not so the two tenors. Ugo Benelli and John Mitchinson, one of whom (there is no way of telling which) seems to have vertigo the minute he gets above the staff; he squeezes out some frightful high tones. The bass, Jules Bastin, wobbles a bit on the very low tones, but then, he has a punishing part, and on the whole he holds his own.

The BBC Chorus is good; the English Chamber Orchestra needs no encomiums—it is always first-class; and the conductor, Herbert Handt, valiantly holds together this unwieldy company—and work—as well as the circumstances permit. P.H.L.

SCHUBERT: German Mass. For a feature review, see page 95.

SCHUBERT: *Sonata for Piano*, in C minor, D. 958; *Impromptu in A flat*, D. 935, No. 2. Svatoslav Richter, piano. MELODIYA/ANGEL SR 40254, \$6.98.

B **SCHUBERT:** Sonatas for Piano, Vol. 2. Walter Klien, piano. Vox SVBX 5466, \$10.95 (three discs, manual sequence).

Sonatas: in C, D. 279; in A minor, D. 537; in A flat, D. 557; in F minor, D. 625; in C minor, D. 958; in A, D. 959.

Richter is one of those artists capable of fascinating even when he fails to convince. His most recent Schubert performance (he has also recorded the posthumous B flat Sonata, which will presumably be along shortly) turns out to be both fascinating and convincing.

His style has changed perceptibly over the years. Some of his earlier Schubert (e.g., Sonatas, D. 845 and 850) was strictly objective, making points through breathtaking digital fluency and transparent textures, scrupulously heeding every accent and agogic point. On the new disc, the scrupulousness, the clarity, and the tonal beauty remain, but the treatment of rhythm and phrasing are much more willful and introspective. The subjectivity seems completely organic and natural, never in the least contrived. Voicing is exceptional, tone colors so diversified that often the resultant tones seem more like an idealization of the piano than the instrument itself: Such even crescendos and diminuendos, such perfectly gauged ritards make me think of prismatic reflections and ripples in some enchanted lake!

Almost every detail in the sonata performance is worthy of citation: the languorous (but completely unsentimental) beauty of Richter's treatment of the first movement's second theme, the suspended tranquility of the slow movement, the undulant way the pauses and hesitations are handled in the menuetto, the fleet humor and symmetry of the dancing finale. Kempff, in his great DG recording, takes the latter movement slowly and brings out its eerie, phantomlike shadows; Richter, by contrast, is pure sunlight: The music pours forth with humorous verve (at a very brisk pace), but the drama and tension are there as well. Richter observes the long exposition repeat in the first movement but varies the restatement enough to avoid monotony.

The A flat Impromptu from Op. 142 is affectingly done—probably the most moving recording of this often mishandled piece since Schnabel's.

The reproduced sound is serviceable without being exceptional or even particularly good. Is the murkiness attributable to the instrument itself, to the acoustics, or to indiscriminate use of echo chamber? No matter—the sonics are certainly better than what the collector will hear on the majority of Golden Age piano discs, and the playing is at least on a par with the Rachmaninoffs, Schnabels, and Friedmans of yore. No one should miss this disc.

Coming back down to earth, there is much to praise in the latest installment of Walter Klien's unfolding Schubert sonata cycle. On its own level, Klien's work is wonderfully forthright, sturdy, and even perceptive, growing in stature with the music. He does his finest work in the two posthumous sonatas and is perhaps a bit percussive and charmless in the juvenilia.

The first three movements of the C minor are played with structural cohesion and an appropriately extroverted, Beethovenian point of view; the finale is a trifle stolid and square. The posthumous A major is more introspectively handled. Klien observes the exposition repeat here (that of the C minor is eschewed)

and takes quite a bit of leeway with phrasing and tempo. The stretching seems excessive only once or twice (e.g., at the beginning of the development). To be sure, there are details to cavil at: the slightly rigorous unfolding of the central storm episode of the Andantino, for example, or the slightly imperfect articulation of the scherzo's main theme. On the other hand, Klien manages to be both meltingly lyric and structurally granitic in the rondo. While not a reading to eradicate memories of Schnabel, this is nonetheless more than acceptable as a bargain version.

It was a novel idea to couple the great A major Sonata with the almost unknown A minor, D. 537, whose second movement uses an earlier version of the D. 959 rondo theme. The A flat Sonata, D. 557, has its archaic moments, but the C major, D. 279, exudes energy. Schu-

bert obviously patterned this first movement on Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony. H.G.

B **SCHUMANN:** Piano Works, Vol. 1. Peter Frankl, piano. Vox SVBX 5468, \$10.95 (three discs, manual sequence).

Toccata in C, Op. 7; Carnival, Op. 9; Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13; Arabeske, Op. 18; Blumenstück, Op. 19; Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26; Album für die Jugend, Op. 68; Canon on "To Alexis," Op. posth.

SCHUMANN: Noveletten, Op. 21 (complete). Claudio Arrau, piano. PHILIPS 6500 396, \$7.98.

SCHUMANN: Carnival, Op. 9. **BRAHMS:** Ballades (4), Op. 10. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, piano. Rococo 2064, \$6.95 (mono; Rococo Records, Box 175, Station K, Toronto 12, Ont.).

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Enter Peter Frankl, yet another distance runner in the Schumann Piano Sweepstakes—joining thoroughbreds Claudio Arrau (Philips), Wilhelm Kempff (Deutsche Grammophon), Karl Engel (Telefunken), and Jörg Demus (Musical Heritage).

The Hungarian-born Frankl, who now lives in London, has unassailable credentials. Basically he is of the modern persuasion, favoring taut rhythm, patrician phrasing, and scrupulous attention to the composer's markings (whenever possible—Schumann was in the habit of contradicting himself or changing his mind). His pianism is agreeable in sound although not particularly colorful; inner voices are heeded but not exactly sought out; and such mannerisms as left hand ahead of right and theatrical rubatos, considered *de rigueur* in this music by a whole previous generation of specialists, are almost nonexistent in Frankl's work.

His best performances in this album are *Carnaval*, a breezy, extroverted, dynamic reading; the Toccata, very clearly executed (including the problematical—to play!—exposition repeat); and the charming *Canon on "To Alexis."*

The *Symphonic Etudes* are expertly handled, albeit slightly wan and generalized. The textures do not always spring to life with enough relief, and the livelier etudes are a bit too rounded off. Frankl plays the revised edition complete on Side 1 and then on Side 2 offers the five variations Schumann had deleted, but not the earlier, inferior version of the finale. An unexceptionably puristic solution, but I confess to preferring the interpolated sequences such pianists as Cortot have used.

The *Blumenstück* is played with simplicity but is decidedly less fragrant than Horowitz's gardenialike reading. Engel's (sub-Horowitz) performance (in his Vol. 2, Telefunken SKA 25085) has a bit more acuity and inner tension than Frankl's. Similarly, though there is nothing really wrong with Frankl's *Faschingschwank aus Wien*. I prefer the sharper attacks and firmer contours of the Engel performance (also in Vol. 2). Frankl's way in the *Album for the Young* is to treat the entire series as miniature porcelain figurines—a common failing of adults looking back on their bygone growing-up days. Demus, in his more robust MHS version (OR 400/2), also includes an appendix that gives us some extra discarded pieces, in addition to earlier versions of some that were included. Everyone knows the “Wild Horseman,” a perennial favorite of second-year piano students, but how many people know that in the more interesting original draft the horse gallops away into nowhere?

Arrau's new installment in his Schumann cycle, now more than half complete, is one of his very best. Everything comes together for him in the *Novellettes*: The music is full of sudden contrasts and arbitrary dynamics, scintillant textures, and feverish flights of fancy. Arrau brings fabulous virtuoso flair and plenty of character to bear on the writing without dulling its brio or misrepresenting its (for Schumann) rather festive, public decorum. Whereas Arrau sometimes became lost in the introspection of *Kreisleriana* or bore down too heavily on the gentle character pieces of *Waldszenen*, he is exactly right in the first two *Novellettes*, treating them with dash and gusto. The famous F sharp minor *Novellette* (No. 8) is judiciously paced, perhaps a hair's breadth

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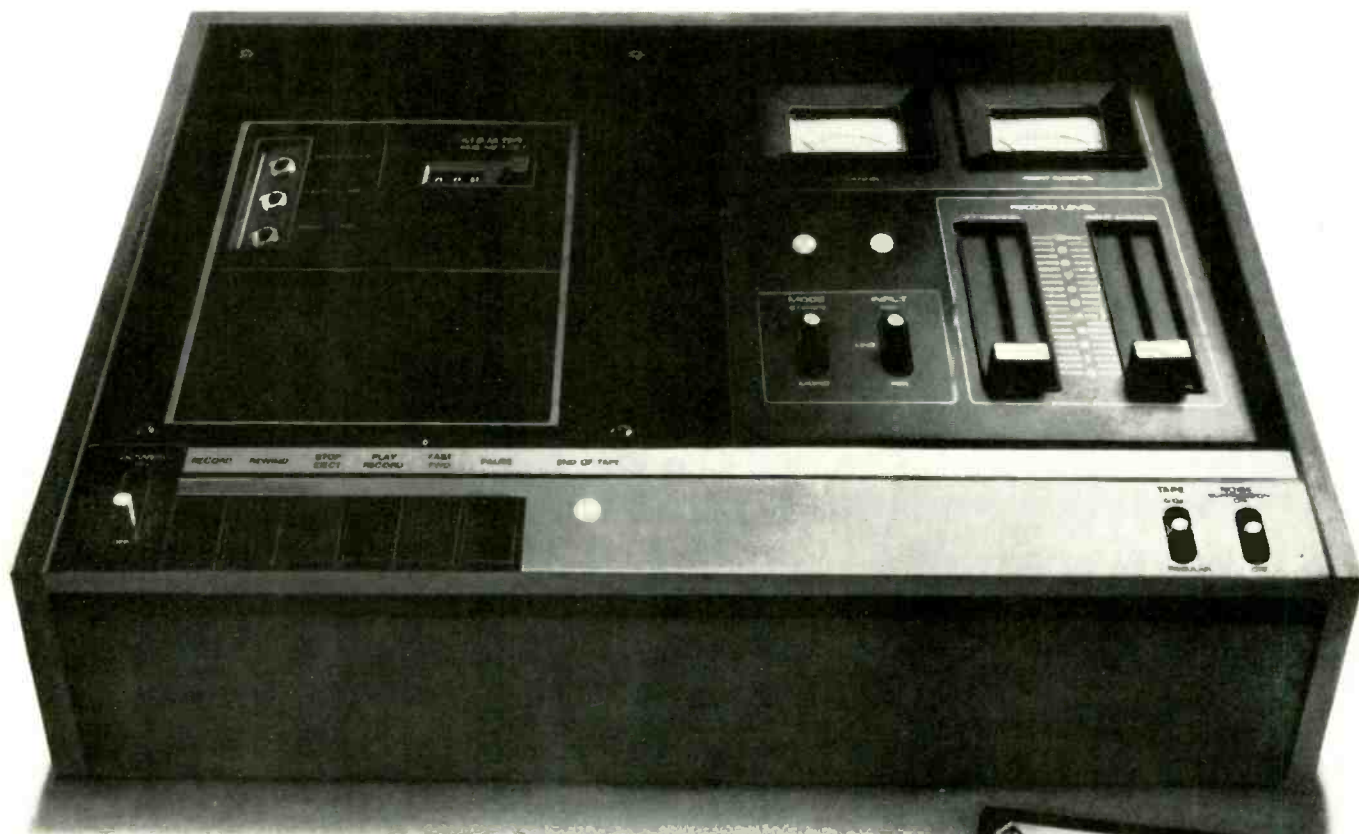
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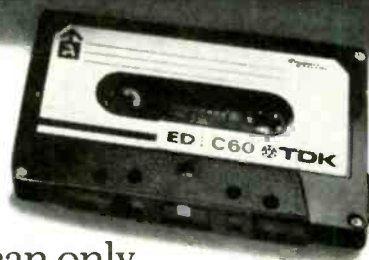
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calmer and more collected than in some performances, but executed with gleaming tone and just enough rhythmic license. All told, this is as memorable as Arrau's great readings of the *Humoreske* and C major Fantasia, which is to say close to unbeatable. Philips has given its artist magnificently ample assistance.

The Michelangeli disc is culled from unspecified live recitals, probably dating from the mid-1960s. *Carnaval* gets an interesting if not necessarily persuasive rendering. There are a few mannerisms, such as extra fifths in the bass, anticipation of the right hand with the left, and the linking of certain pieces not indicated to be so joined. For the most part, however, this is *not* a particularly willful or eccentric *Carnaval*. In fact, most of the places where Michelangeli fails to convince suffer

from an excess of purism. To cite a splendid example, the beginning of the final "*Marche des Davidsbündler contre les Philistins*"—which Schumann cautions against taking too rapidly—emerges in a rather plodding, downbeat-laden manner. Michelangeli, like Arrau and Frankl, is pretty much of a stickler for repeats.

The overside Brahms finds the controversial Italian virtuoso in a rare frame of mind. These are noble, restrained readings that capture the requisite solidity and most of the ardor of the young composer's style.

The sound, though dullish and beset with noisy surfaces, is reasonably lifelike. H.G.

STEIN: Quartets for Strings, Nos. 1–5. Anne

Perillo, soprano (in No. 5); Chicago Symphony String Quartet. DE PAUL UNIVERSITY 74S100, \$21 postpaid (four discs, manual sequence; available from Quartets, De Paul University, 25 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Ill. 60604).

Leon Stein has been a prominent composer in the Chicago area for some forty years now and has written a wide range of works in various genres. His five string quartets cover almost the entire span of his career, the earliest dating from 1933. The other four are much more recent, all having been written during the 1960s.

Stein teaches at De Paul University in Chicago, where four players from the Chicago Symphony comprise the string quartet in residence. During the 1973–74 season the ensemble gave a series of programs that included all of Stein's quartets, and it is out of these concerts (and thanks to a grant from the university) that the four-disc set, consisting of two and a half hours of music, came into existence.

The quartets are surprisingly consistent in character and quality. This is true even of the First Quartet, which—although somewhat less fluent technically—is remarkably similar to the others. In fact the main problem with this set is simply that it contains a great deal of music that is very much the same.

Stein's style is essentially conservative in approach and Romantic in character. It is mildly dissonant (and rather soupy chromatic), features rich textures, and is almost obsessively repetitive in motivic structure. Yet the music does have a certain expressive force, and all of the pieces, with the exception of the First Quartet, have obviously been shaped by a sure craftsman.

The performances are generally good. Soprano Anne Perillo, also on the faculty at De Paul, sings the setting of the Dylan Thomas poem "And Death Shall Have No Dominion" that dominates the final movement of the Fifth Quartet. There is an introductory booklet with information about the composer, performers, and each of the pieces. R.P.M.

STRAUSS, R.: Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30. Herman Krebbers, violin; Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS 6500 624, \$7.98.

Comparisons:
Reiner/Chicago Sym.
Karajan/Berlin Phil.

RCA LSC 2609
DG 2530 402

A lifetime of professional listening has never prepared me for the fresh amazement I feel every time I rediscover how *different* certain conductors can make even the most familiar music sound. How is it possible to perform any standard work with well-nigh perfect fidelity to the letter of the score, yet at the same time evoke not only the interpreter's own personality, but a spirit of the music itself that differs distinctively from what other interpreters realize from the same work? For me, this seeming miracle is my prime criterion for interpretative greatness—and its ever more frequent presence in the recent recorded performances of Bernard Haitink is the most powerful of many reasons for my acclaiming his imposing growth in artistic stature.

The latest example of his miracle-working is in what he does with an only too familiar "spectacular" showpiece. *Also sprach Zarathustra*, an extremely uneven, episodic, and grandiloquent work based on a "philosoph-

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ical" Nietzschean program that no one has ever taken seriously. But Haitink apparently does, and in so doing he somehow finds unity in its diversity and a wholly unsuspected yet now patently "right" formal coherence.

In every episodic detail as well as over-all, this approach seems strikingly and freshly "different" from those of other conductors. Yet as one incredulously checks it bar by bar in the published score and against the readings of others, it becomes unmistakable that while Haitink is just as, if not more, painstakingly literal, he still succeeds in infusing such straightforwardness with hitherto unrevealed meanings and illuminations. In comparison with even Reiner's long-famous paradigm interpretation, we learn for the first time how needlessly grim Reiner actually is, how far his powerful dramatic grip misses the warmth, grace, and expansiveness Haitink finds in the same music.

And if the Chicagoans and a very few other orchestras have played as well as the Concertgebouw does, I doubt that any have consistently maintained such glowing radiance.

Certainly no violinist has ever realized the solo passages as graciously and as free from any taint of sentimentality as Herman Krebbers.

This combined interpretative and executant nobility (no other word serves!) may be best appreciated by direct contrast with Karajan's indulgently mannered, empty rhetorical approach to this music. While his version remains the most sensational of all sonically, it is made to seem—even technologically—crudely melodramatic when heard just before or after the superbly lucid, panoramic, and above all auditorium-authentic Philips recording.

It's not often that we get what can be immediately recognized as a genuine recorded masterpiece. But I have no hesitation at all in hailing this Haitink/Philips *Zarathustra* as one of the Himalayan peaks of the all-time worldwide discography. R.D.D.

STRAUSS, R.: Sinfonia domestica, Op. 53. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. [Michel Glotz, prod.] ANGEL S 36973, \$6.98.

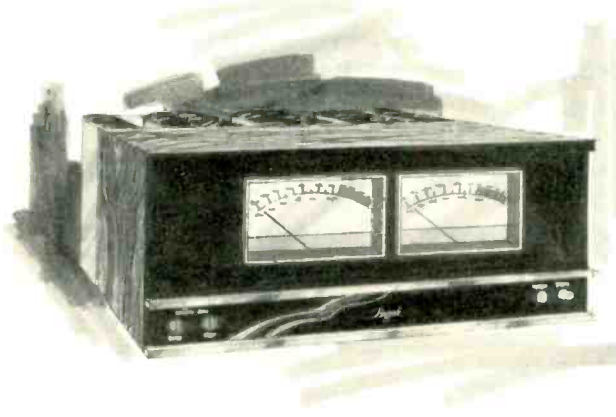
B **R** **STRAUSS, R.:** Sinfonia domestica, Op. 53; Concerto for Horn and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat, Op. 11. Myron Bloom, horn; Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond. [Paul Myers and Thomas Frost, prod.] ODYSSEY Y 32889, \$3.49 [from COLUMBIA MS 5527, 1964, and EPIC BC 1241, 1962].

Perhaps the *Sinfonia domestica's* time has come at last. Surely no one today is going to worry about its silly Day in the Life of Papa, Mama, and Baby program (not excluding a washing-the-baby episode), nor is anyone likely to be shocked by what was once deemed its too vividly realistic *Liebesnacht und Träume* evocations. Today too its extraordinarily complex and imaginative scoring demands for very large orchestra are no longer as difficult to meet as they once were for even the best orchestras and state-of-the-art audio technology.

To be sure, this latest recording is open to adverse criticism in several respects, yet its very defects may be virtues where this particular work is concerned (except, that is, depressing surfaces that are as much less than ideally smooth as those of my review copy). Interpretatively, for instance, Karajan's familiar qualities of ultra-intensity and heart-on-sleeve sentimentality are by no means unsuitable here. And while the Berliners sound surprisingly different when recorded away from home (in the Salle Wagram, Paris) and by a different company (EMI rather than Deutsche Grammophon), the balance engineer Paul Vavasseur's relative favoring of the strings over the winds, with a corresponding increase in tonal sleekness while still maintaining notable transparency and brilliance, gives the whole work an appropriately pervasive sonic as well as interpretative sensuality.

In contrast, the welcome reissue of the notable Szell/Cleveland version is made to seem just a bit too properly restrained, too lacking in unbuttoned bourgeois *Gemütlichkeit*, and sonically too cool and less dazzlingly vivid. Actually, Szell's reading is more straightforward, more tautly controlled, and more

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graciously eloquent—but those are scarcely the qualities that best suit this music.

The disc is to be warmly recommended, however, to listeners more interested in Szell than in Strauss (or at least this particular side of Strauss) and to every economy-minded collector. For not only is the price half as much, but the record also includes a bonus filler in the young composer's ingratiating if romantically conventional *First Horn Concerto*. That too is played very well indeed—which is not to say that the able soloist, Myron Bloom, can match the greater geniality as well as greater bravura of the incomparable Dennis Brain, whose Angel version, coupled with the *Second Concerto* of Strauss's last years, is still listed in Schwann 2. R.D.D.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sonata for Piano, in G*—See Busoni: *Indianisches Tagebuch*.

VERDI: Simon Boccanegra.

Simon Boccanegra	Piero Cappuccilli (b)
Jacopo Fiesco	Ruggero Raimondi (bs)
Paolo Albani	Gian Piero Mastromei (b)
Pietro	Maurizio Mazzieri (bs)
Maria Boccanegra	Katia Ricciarelli (s)
Gabriele Adorno	Placido Domingo (t)
Captain	Piero de Palma (t)
Amelia's Servant	Ornella Jachetti (s)

RCA Italiana Chorus and Orchestra, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, cond. [Benito Vassura, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 3-0564, \$20.98 (three discs, automatic sequence).

Comparisons:
Silveri, Petri, Stella, Molinari-Pradelli Ev. \$434/3
Gobbi, Christoff, De los Angeles, Santini Ang. CL3617

Who's afraid, one wonders, of the Big Bad Doge? We have had to wait till now for a stereo *Boccanegra*, and the new issue merely muddies the Genoan waters. This almost unrelievedly gloomy product of Verdi's middle and late years has enormous power, but you'd hardly guess it from the three recordings.

Very much on the plus side here is the Fiesco of Ruggero Raimondi, on his best musical behavior. His singing is smoother, more pointed, and more secure than that of his very capable predecessors, Mario Petri (Cetra) and Boris Christoff (Angel). Even though the role has been quite satisfactorily handled on both previous recordings, Raimondi's work is a distinctive addition to the *Boccanegra* discography.

The other role that has been reasonably well taken on both earlier sets is Adorno, but RCA's Placido Domingo is a plus too. He manages some passages of real urgency but otherwise sings through the role much like a dozen others in his repertory (he gets little help from his conductor, but more of that later). It's pleasant to listen to, and he's hardly alone in paying minimal attention to Verdi's dynamic instructions—nobody gets much below *mf*. Carlo Bergonzi's Adorno (Cetra) is uncharacteristically loud but otherwise effective. Giuseppe Campora (Angel) is quite satisfactory if a bit lightweight—he's certainly the most involved of the three.

Katia Ricciarelli's Amelia/Maria is nothing to write home about, but she avoids catastrophe—in these humble surroundings she's almost an asset. The voice is so badly produced that one can't tell what, if anything, she might be capable of. She hasn't much sense of the character, but then neither does Victoria de los Angeles in her much better-sung but placid Amelia (Angel). Antonietta Stella (Cetra) communicates some real anguish, but the vocalism is rather squally. Not much of a choice.

Piero Cappuccilli's Boccanegra is almost nonexistent—he rises to almost none of the challenges of one of the juiciest baritone parts in the literature. He has some good notes in the F-to-A region, but the crucial B-to-D area is murky and, when pressed, tremulous. He generally carries his chest voice all the way up to E and F, and strangled though the sound is it's preferable to his squeaky head voice, which he risks only when he can prepare sufficiently in advance (like Peking duck). The *Boccanegra*/Fiesco scenes are embarrassing: Raimondi not only phrases with much greater point and line, but manages controlled, ringing Es and Fs. Paolo Silveri (Cetra) and Tito Gobbi (Angel) managed to conjure up a real *Boccanegra* despite their vocal deficiencies—Silveri's basically colorless voice, Gobbi's lack of tonal variety and a top—and both are vastly preferable.

The Paolo and Pietro are okay, but the four lower male voices sound pretty much the same. If the sound is genuinely focused and the line shaped, it's Raimondi; otherwise it could be Cappuccilli, Mastromei, or Mazzieri. Mastromei does get a nice sinister effect by almost whispering his Prologue solo.

We descend finally to the pit. Gianandrea Gavazzeni is unquestionably a better conductor than Cetra's Molinari-Pradelli and Angel's Santini: he can maintain a tempo and make it musically persuasive. Santini sets better tempos (he frequently starts a number quite close to Verdi's metronome marking), but he can't hold them—every number grinds down inex-



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Giuseppe Verdi
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orably, sometimes all too conspicuously. Molinari-Pradelli can't shape or animate a phrase as Gavazzeni can, but he at least gives a fairly straight reading and even injects some color—though only a fraction of what's in the score.

I suspect, however, that Gavazzeni doesn't much like the opera, or regards it as a somewhat anemic piece of goods that requires his ministrations. His tempos are generally much faster than Verdi's, as if he were afraid to let the music make its points. Curiously, the effect is seldom undue haste, but merely insolidity. When he does slow down, it is, for example, to let Ricciarelli and Cappuccelli slog through the (almost indestructible) *Amelia/Boccanegra* Act I scene.

There is another problem, when more than one singer is singing simultaneously: In a way that is difficult to pin down, the singers don't seem to be listening to each other. The phrasing (to the extent that there *is* phrasing) doesn't match; the sound levels don't seem to be measured against each other. One particularly bad case is a number that should have been most successful, since it involves the set's two best singers: the Fiesco/Adorno "*Vieni a me*" in Act I, one of those haunting Verdian inspirations that can melt into triteness when inadequately performed. Gavazzeni sabotages the thing from the beginning: Verdi marks it *sostenuto religioso*, quarter note 68; Gavazzeni ups that to a jaunty 88. Even so, Raimondi gets the duet off to a good start with a beautifully measured, grave (quite a feat, at that tempo) statement of the melody. But when Domingo enters, he's monotonously loud and rhythmically all over the place—one never quite knows where the beat is, and the two really don't seem to be singing the same opera. The effect is what I imagine you would get if the singers had taped their parts separately.

Additionally, Gavazzeni makes one signifi-

cant, though small, cut. The Act II *Amelia/Adorno/Boccanegra* trio has a stunning seven-bar coda, all but the last bar a cappella, that delays the final cadence. Well sung it's a hair-raising effect, the sort of little twist and suspension that Verdi delighted in. Gavazzeni and Santini cut it and simply let the trio reach the cadence the first time; as a result, it doesn't sound "wrong"—it merely deprives the trio of the final touch of genius that distinguishes it expressively. Molinari-Pradelli leaves the passage in, and even his singers make the effect.

In reviewing RCA's *Vespre* last April, I noted that "*Simon Boccanegra* has yet to be heard in stereo (though British RCA has just issued a new set): the two mono versions, apart from their musical defects, barely hint at

the richness and subtlety of the orchestration." Well, the RCA set does give us a better image of the orchestration than we have had, and that gives it a certain value despite sound that isn't very good by current standards: shallow and brittle, with blaring winds. But Gavazzeni's glossy treatment still deprives us of much of what's in the orchestration. If I had to pick one *Boccanegra*, it would still be the Cetra, though not in Everest's ludicrous re-channeling. But if you're judging by the recordings, you'll still have to take the opera's greatness on faith.

RCA, by the way, has a side break in the Council Chamber scene, which Angel managed to avoid. There is an attractively illustrated booklet.

K.F.

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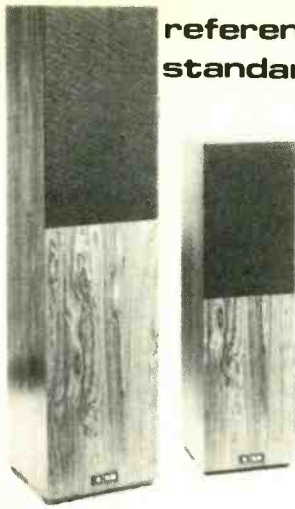
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B **VILLA LOBOS:** *Bachianas brasileiras* No. 7; *Chôros* No. 6. RIAS Symphony Orchestra, Heitor Villa Lobos, cond. **H** **TURNABOUT** THS 65002, \$3.98 (rechanneled) [recorded June 1954; *Chôros* only from REMINGTON 199-207, 1955.]

For several years before his death on November 17, 1959, Villa Lobos was active as a conductor of his own works in recording studios as well as in concert. Nowadays, however, most of his recordings have been allowed to go out of print: The current Schwann 1 lists only his *Fantasia concertante* for massed cellos on Everest 3024 of 1958; Schwann 2 lists only his *Bachianas brasileiras* Nos. 2, 5 (with De los Angeles), 6, and 9 on Angel mono 35547, also of 1958—the same program conducted by Capolongo (with Mesplé) in the recent Angel S 36979.

The incalculable value of composer's versions of course would make any further Villa Lobos examples most welcome. But the present coupling is unique in that it restores the only recording I know of the *Chôros* No. 6 (once available for a few years only in this country on a Remington disc that coupled it with Enesco's *Romanian Rhapsody* No. 2 conducted by its composer) and gives us the first recording I know of the *Bachianas brasileiras* No. 7 (which apparently was released earlier, in the current coupling, only in Europe).

The electronic rechanneling of the robust, clearly detailed original monophony seems to

have been done without upsetting natural balances (if with minimal actual stereoization), and the performances themselves reveal still-vital forcefulness and distinctively Villa Lobosian personality projection. The sixth of his more than fourteen works bearing the title *Chôros* (the name of a popular Brazilian dance) is the only one of the orchestral examples in today's discography. Highly episodic, even chaotic, its organizational scheme is hard to grasp on first hearing, but it's certainly never dull, and it's often wildly exciting. The composer's intention well may have been—in Slonimsky's description of the *Chôros* No. 10—"to picture, in its pandemoniac turmoil, the unity in diversity of the Brazilian landscape."

The Seventh *Bachianas brasileiras* is more familiar in idiom (at least to anyone who knows Nos. 2 and 5) and much more immediately appealing. A fairly long (28½ minutes) and highly varied work, it comprises four movements: a haunting *Preludio* that begins with echoes of No. 5; an infectiously zestful *Giga*; an orientally clattery *Tocata*; and a concluding *Fuga* with a very long subject heard first in the strings and eventually in a Stokowskiian full-orchestral apotheosis. R.D.D.

WALTHER: *Concertos after Italian Masters*—See Bach: *Concertos for Organ*.

recitals and miscellany

B **AMERICAN STRING QUARTETS:** Vol. II, 1900–50. Kohon Quartet. Vox SVBX 5305, \$10.95 (three discs).

COPLAND: Two Pieces for String Quartet. **PISTON:** String Quartet No. 5. **GERSHWIN:** Lullaby. **THOMSON:** String Quartet No. 2. **SCHUMAN:** String Quartet No. 3. **SESSIONS:** Second String Quartet. **HANSON:** Quartet in One Movement, Op. 23. **MENNIN:** String Quartet No. 2. **IVES:** Scherzo.

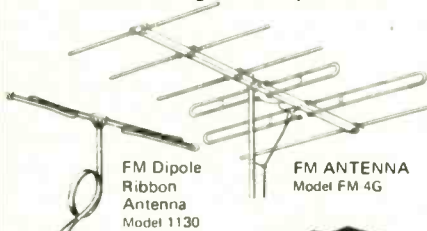
This is the second volume in a series of three 3-record Vox boxes devoted to the American string quartet. The first included early American quartets, ranging from a work attributed to Benjamin Franklin to early twentieth-century quartets by Griffes and Chadwick; and the third, entitled "The Avant-Garde String Quartet in the U.S.A.," comprised pieces dating from 1950 to 1970.

The present set, the last to appear, is listed as containing works in the 1900–1950 period, although three of the nine pieces were actually written after 1950. Nevertheless, all of the works can be said to represent compositional approaches belonging essentially to the period in question. The prevailing style in the U.S. during this time, at least from the 1920s on, was generally neoclassical: characterized by a basically tonal pitch orientation, motivic melodic organization, and traditional formal and textural patterns. Virtually all of the pieces in this set exhibit these characteristics.

There are, of course, important differences. Virgil Thomson's quartet (1932) is triadic and decidedly straightforward, while Howard Hanson's Quartet in One Movement (1927), although also basically triadic, is neo-Romantic in its expressive aspirations. The works by Copland (1928), Schuman (1939), Mennin (1952), and Piston (1962), on the other hand, are considerably more varied in harmonic language. More complex still is Roger Sessions'

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highly dissonant, tonally ambiguous Second Quartet (1951), although it shares with all of these works the use of a formal layout derived from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century models.

Even the works by Ives and Gershwin, the only composers who can in any sense be considered "outsiders" in this company, betray a basic formal conservatism. Indeed, the Gershwin piece is structurally so regular that it gives the impression of being in a straitjacket. Composed c.1920, it was discarded by Gershwin, who, according to the liner notes, "lost interest in the work after he used the opening theme as part of an aria in a one-act opera entitled *Blue Monday*, which closed immediately after its premiere in 1922." (The *Lullaby* did not receive its premiere in its original form until 1967.) As one who greatly admires Gershwin (particularly his songs), I am sad to report that he was right. The piece is of little interest. Material that might have been sufficient for an agreeable three-minute cameo has been stretched into a pretentious eleven-minute bore. The Ives *Scherzo* (1914) is great fun, but it is very brief (under two minutes) and hardly a major work.

In other words, what you have here is basically a group of solid compositions that can be said to represent the main line (the Establishment, if you like) of American composition from the 1920s to the 1950s. As such, this is a valuable set that documents a particularly important period in the growth of music in this country, a period that witnessed the coming to maturity of the first group of native composers who could be said to be both fully American and fully professional.

What is missing, however, is some indication of what might be viewed as the "other side" of American composition during the same period, a side represented by such "experimentalists" as Ives, Carl Ruggles, and Henry Cowell. There are several Cowell quartets, none of which are available on disc; and Ives, although he is of course included here, would be better represented by a major work such as the Second Quartet. Another innovative composition that comes to mind is Ruth Crawford Seeger's remarkable String Quartet of 1931.

The performances by the Kohon Quartet are generally clear and always sympathetic to the music, and Donald Chittum's extensive (and somewhat technical) liner notes provide helpful introductions to the pieces. R.P.M.

CLASSICS FOR BRASS. Philip Jones Brass Ensemble; Elgar Howarth, cond. (in the Strauss, Grieg, Dukas, Jolivet, and Schuller). [Michael Bremner, prod.] ARGO ZRG 731, \$6.98.

R. STRAUSS: Fanfare "Stadt Wien." **GRIEG:** Funeral March. **BOZZA:** Sonatine. **DUKAS:** Fanfare for *La Péri*. **JOLIVET:** Fanfare "Narcisse." **POULENC:** Sonata. **SCHULLER:** Symphony for Brass and Percussion.

Of the seven works on this disc, the one that best escapes from the diverse clichés of brass composing is the dissonant Gunther Schuller *Symphony for Brass and Percussion*, a masterpiece of tonal movement, overlapping sonorities, contrasting dynamics, and mood, ranging from the desolateness of the first movement to the excitement and pulse of the second. At the opposite end of the scale, the Poulenc sonata for trumpet, horn, and trombone (1922) is one of the few pieces by this composer in which the simplicity of the basic material sinks into silliness and puerility, as much as it pains me to say so: and the Philip

Jones Ensemble seems to be trying here to make it sound even more namby-pamby.

The beautiful and strikingly mellow Dukas fanfare is one of the finest ever written; but it has also been recorded to death and receives an especially perfunctory performance here. The Richard Strauss fanfare, arranged for brass ensemble from his *Fesmusik der Stadt Wien* (1943), is quintessential brass brass. The Jolivet *Fanfare "Narcisse,"* one of the six he wrote for Racine's play *Britannicus*, begins with a rather crudely conceived flourish, but its central section turns to more subtle complexities with a distinctly archaic flavor quite suited to the play.

The Grieg *Funeral March*, one of the three versions of a piano work originally written in 1866, receives, along with the Schuller *Symphony*, the best performance on this disc. And

although nothing in it goes beyond the usual requirements of the genre, it turns out to be an exceptionally moving piece. As for the often busy and scurrying *Sonatine* for two trumpets, horn, trombone and tuba (1951) by French brass specialist Eugène Bozza, the work is pervaded by a wit and *drollerie* climaxing in some apparently satirical references in the last movement to the Ravel Piano Concerto in G.

The recorded sound produces some juicy jolts in some of the tutti passages; but in general there is too much reverberation, and the solos and smaller combinations do not have the depth and brightness they should. All in all, this disc somehow does not seem to live up to its promise. R.S.B.

MICHAEL MURRAY: French Organ Recital—See Franck: Piece héroïque.

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JOE COCKER: *I Can Stand a Little Rain.* Joe Cocker, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Put Out the Light; I Can Stand a Little Rain; The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress; Don't Forget Me; Performance; Guilty;* four more. [Jim Price, prod.] A&M SP 3633, \$6.98. Tape: ● 8T 3633, \$6.98; ●● CS 3633, \$6.98.

Joe Cocker is back, and he could hardly be more welcome. In the more than two years he has taken off since his last long-playing recording, Cocker has regained the fire he displayed during his famous American tours, and, not insignificantly, he has matured into a singer with a great deal more depth than previously. In his former manifestation, he seemed a talented freak balancing temporarily upon the wit of Leon Russell. Now Cocker has proved himself his own man, beholden neither to Russell nor to Ray Charles, whose hoarse vocalizations his singing so often resembles.

On this new album, produced by trombonist Jim Price, Cocker sings a fine selection of songs, accenting ballads. The best of these is Allen Toussaint's hauntingly beautiful "Performance," which Cocker imbues with a quantum of dignified emotion. Randy Newman's "Guilty" and Jimmy Webb's "The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress" are also well handled.

This comeback LP lacks the flash of Cocker's first two A&M albums, but it has a lot more substance. M.J.

MARVIN HAMLISCH: *The Entertainer.* Marvin Hamlisch, piano and arr. *The Entertainer; Maple Leaf Rag; Bethena; I Love a Piano;* seven more. MCA 2115, \$6.98. Tape: ● T 2115, \$7.98; ●● C 2115, \$7.98.

In "The Entertainer," pianist Marvin Hamlisch returns to the legacy of Scott Joplin, which he so successfully rendered into contemporary hitdom with his score for *The Sting*. He tickles the ivories with gusto, including some works by Joplin's contemporary Joseph Lamb. Hamlisch also retrieves from limbo a Jelly Roll Morton tune plus Gershwin and Berlin melodies that were fostered by the infectious spirit of ragtime.

Many have bemoaned the fact that Joplin's success has come a half-century too late for him, criticizing Hamlisch directly or indirectly as some sort of musical grave-robber. What nonsense! Do not all classical pianists play the



Joe Cocker—welcome back with the old fire intact.

music of dead composers? I'm happy that someone has helped spread this beautifully expressive music, ranging from the delicate Joplin waltz "Bethena" to "The Entertainer," which every kid in my neighborhood can plunk out on the piano.

More people have heard and enjoyed Joplin's music in the past few months than in his entire lifetime. What more could an artist wish for? J.G.

B. B. KING: *Friends.* B. B. King, vocals and guitar; strings, keyboards, rhythm, horns, and vocal accompaniment. *Friends; I Got Them Blues; Baby I'm Yours;* four more. [Dave Crawford, prod.] ABC ABCD 825, \$6.98.

"Friends" is a pop-flavored extravaganza featuring the world's most beloved electric blues guitarist, B. B. King. On this disc the fun begins with the opening cut, the album's title tune and a jolly crowd-pleaser that should please those who are not already part of B.B.'s devoted crowd. On this track—and throughout the LP—the guitarist effortlessly dishes up blues licks that are not flashy but demonstrate nevertheless that even a restrained B. B. King is still a bluesmaster.

For much of the disc, however, he seems to be doing nothing more than wiggling his pinky. The set does explode at one point: The riproaring "Philadelphia" is filled with ebullient picking, and it's a performance that

one will listen to many times before putting "Friends" out to pasture.

It's going to be interesting to see whether this broad-based approach succeeds in winning B. B. King a larger audience. If it does, the master will undoubtedly return to the blues roots from which he earned his legendary reputation. H.E.

JOANNE GLASSCOCK: *Lady Joe.* Joanne Glasscock, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Here I Am Again; Momma No More; Don't Be Afraid to Touch Me; Willowy Billowy Land; The Centaur;* five more. A&M 3636, \$6.98.

This album is something of a puzzlement to me. I can't develop any feeling toward it: I neither like it nor dislike it. It's the debut album of Ms. Glasscock, an ardent young singer, with all but one of the songs composed by the iconoclastic wit-about-town, Shel Silverstein.

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He can be a very funny fellow; these songs, however, reflect a wholly different aspect of his songwriting bent. Only "Willow Billowy Land" bears the faintest resemblance to what you might have heard from him before. The others are a considerable departure from the Silversteinian stamp. Some are quite interesting, particularly "The Centaur."

Guitarist Chet Atkins is featured in the back-up band, which has to deal with arrangements that vary from quasi-country to quasi-gospel to quasi-boring.

Even after repeated listenings, I'm still ambivalent about the album. I hesitate to recommend it and hesitate to dis-recommend it. There is a kind of off-beat appeal. Best thing to do is audition it for yourself before you buy.

J.G.

BLOOD, SWEAT, & TEARS: Mirror Image. Bobby Colomby, drums; Jerry LaCroix, saxophone and vocals; David Bergeron, trombone and tuba; Larry Willis, keyboards; George Wadenius, guitar and vocals; Anthony J. Klatta, trumpet and flugelhorn; William Tillman, saxophone and flute; Ron McClure, bass; Jerry Fisher, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Tell Me That I'm Wrong; Are You Satisfied; Mirror Image;* five more. [Henry Crosby, prod.] COLUMBIA KC 32929, \$5.98. Tape: ● CA 32929, \$6.98; ●● CT 32929, \$6.98.

After years of proving it can be exceptional, Blood, Sweat, & Tears has finally proved it can be mediocre. Perhaps the reason is that only one original member is still in the band—Bobby Colomby, the drummer.

In this latest album, BS&T has opted for an easy sort of soul music. This is the same, non-descript, low-key soul being heaped on the market by dozens of black bands. A long instrumental passage in "Mirror Image" does save the recording as a whole, which must be written off as a bad idea that had the misfortune to find its way to fruition.

M.J.

* **MIKE OLDFIELD:** Hergest Ridge. Mike Oldfield, electric guitars, glockenspiel, sleigh bells, mandolin, nutcracker, timpani, gong, acoustic guitar, Spanish guitar, and Fafisa, Lowrey, and Germini organs; reeds, horns, rhythm, strings, and vocal accompaniment. [Mike Oldfield and Tom Newman, prod.] VIRGIN VR 13-109, \$6.98. Tape: ● TP 13-109, \$7.98; ●● CS 13-109, \$7.98.

Serving as his own producer and playing the most eclectic collection of instruments imaginable, Mike Oldfield made "Tubular Bells" (Virgin VR 13-105), one of the year's most striking debut discs. Now, the multitasking lad has returned with another dishing up of the soothing Oldfield sound.

Consider these forty minutes movie-sound-track music accompanying a movie that you compose in your mind. The music flows forward—a rush of melody; then it recedes into the background to quietly underscore one's thoughts; it then erupts into electronic exclamation points.

For all its artistry and professionalism, I did think on first listening that "Hergest Ridge" lacked substance. Then the music stole over

me. What seemed slick eventually became entrancing. Every town has a radio station that pours forth "mood music" to hush away the hours until dawn. Mike Oldfield creates modern mood music. He is not only the creator, but the master of this striking new form. H.E.

EMERSON, LAKE, AND PALMER: Welcome Back, My Friends, to the Show That Never Ends. Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, instrumentals. *Hoedown; Jerusalem; Toccata; Tarkus;* five more. MANTICORE MC 3-200, \$12.98 (three discs).

This is a lavishly packaged recording of the Emerson, Lake, and Palmer 1973-74 world tour. The highly talented virtuoso group has a slight tendency toward overkill, decibel-wise. Without a breath of trepidation the musicians tackle such widely diverse works as "Hoedown" from Aaron Copland's *Rodeo* and the fourth movement of Ginastera's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, which EL&P call "Toccata."

The album also includes a concert version of their own multi-movement "Tarkus," Keith Emerson's solo "Piano Improvisations" is a display of prodigious keyboard technique that includes quotations ranging from Friedrich Gulda's *Fugue* to "Little Rock Getaway" by Joe Sullivan.

EL&P's eclectic, electric music is sometimes overwhelming—not in an emotional sense, but in sheer force of its dynamics. If you like to listen with the volume turned way up, this is the perfect album. It will fill your speakers.

J.G.

SUZI QUATRO: Quatro. Suzi Quatro, bass and vocals; Dave Neal, drums; Alastair McKenzie, keyboards; Len Tuckey, guitar; instrumental accompaniment. *Devil Gate Drive; Keep A-Knockin'; Too Big; Hit the Road, Jack; Trouble; Cat Size;* five more. [Mike Chapman and Nicky Chinn, prod.] BELL 1313, \$5.98. Tape: ● M 81302, \$6.97; ●● M 51302, \$6.97.

Suzi Quatro is the most prominent member of a Detroit musical family that also includes Michael Quatro, whose keyboard jazz-rock ramblings are always most inspired. Suzi went to England to become a star, and did, being a major performer in nearly every Western country but this one.

What distinguishes her from most other female pop stars is her desire to "just be one of the boys." She plays bass well and is by no means a pretty front for her three male accompanists.

This, her second American release, is a good exercise in hard rock. Suzi favors a Little Richard-style clean, crisp rock and roll, varying it with occasional electronic effects and rhythm and blues. Her version of "Hit the Road, Jack," is very innovative and quite exciting. But her forte clearly is the loud and noisy ("Devil Gate Drive"), with repetitive choruses and a lot of wailing.

M.J.

ADAM FAITH: I Survive. Adam Faith, vocals; rhythm, strings, keyboards, and horns accompaniment. *I Survived; I Believe in Love; Honey;* seven more. [Adam Faith and David Courtney, prod.] WARNER BROS. BS 2791, \$6.98. Tape: ● L 82791, \$7.97; ●● L 52791, \$7.97.

Adam Faith was an English pop star in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He then decided to become an actor and starred in "Budgie," a beloved English TV series. Now he is back in the pop arena, both as manager and record producer for the rising English rock star Leo Sayer and as the creator of a comeback album entitled "I Survive."

I doubt that "I Survive" will rocket Faith to pop prominence for a second time. It is for the most part a demonstration of formula songwriting, though some of these conventionally structured tunes do give the hint that he has been listening to and studying the Randy Newman songbook. In addition, the former star's singing style, while it attempts to have a contemporary ring, is a series of clichéd and strangled effects—almost a parody of the pop-rock vocalist in action.

Only "Maybe," a simple song relying primarily on its keyboards arrangements, has the honesty and quality to survive. "Goodbye" overworks its music-hall effects, and the disc's closer, "Star Song," is interminable. I'd like Adam Faith to survive; I trust that his next album might be the one to do the trick.

H.E.



* **CAROLE KING:** Wrap Around Joy. Carole King, vocals and keyboards; instrumental accompaniment. *Wrap Around Joy; Nightingale; Jazzman; Sweet Adonis; A Night This Side of Dying;* seven more. ODE SP 77024, \$5.98. Tape: ● 8T 77024, \$6.98; ●● CS 77024, \$6.98.

It was one of the biggest-selling albums of all time—a collection of superior songs, each a hit recorded by scores of other artists. What they call in the record business a "monster." That was Carole King's album "Tapestry." What a tough act to follow, even for Carole King, and her subsequent albums seemed to shrink in



Ode Records

Carole King
A singular quality of sincerity.

contrast to the giant she'd created. "Wrap Around Joy" may not be another "Tapestry" either, but then that may just be hoping for too much.

Ms. King has assimilated a variety of sources: pop, rock, folk, jazz; the arresting lyrics even have occasional flashes of genuinely poetic insight and imagery. Her own ebullient piano playing is prominent in a group of studio stalwarts. And there's that singular quality of sincerity in her singing that makes her so believable. It's the quality that makes great acting performances—and great singing performances.

There are some outstanding songs. "Sweet Adonis," "Change of Mind, Change of Heart," "You Go Your Way, I'll Go Mine" all have attractive lyrics and melodies. "A Night This Side of Dying" is a shattering sketch of the junkie's incipient death awaiting a girl who "hears her life-line crying" and whose "day's inside the dropper on her shelf." The title tune is a rhythmic rejoicing in a healthy lust that reminds one of some of the songs Bessie Smith used to sing.

Instrumental contributions by Danny Kortchmar, guitar, George Bohannon, trombone, and Tom Scott and Jim Horn, saxophones, also deserve special mention. Norm Kinney has replaced Hank Cicalo as engineer on this album, and he's done an excellent job of mixing so that there's great presence in the instrumental background without overwhelming the singer.

All in all, a highly recommended album. "Wrap Around Joy" is what its title promises and is well worth the price of admission. J.G.

THE POINTER SISTERS: Live at the Opera House. The Pointer Sisters, vocals; keyboards, rhythm, strings, and orchestral accompaniment. *Overture-Prelude to Islandia; Walk-On; Salt Peanuts*; twelve more. [David Rubinson and Friends, Inc., prod.] BLUE THUMB BTS 8002, \$5.98.

These scattin', swinging, Forties-style ladies are back again and in the rarest of form. With plenty of good humor and a rousing sense of rhythm, they wait their way through a set that includes jazz songs, show tunes, rock numbers, and eccentric novelties.

It's amusing; it's gleeful; it has pizzazz. Eventually, however, it does wear down. An act has to have something besides camp—even brilliant camp—for it to entertain totally. H.E.



ROGER MCGUINN: Peace on You. Roger McGuinn, guitar and vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Peace on You; Without You; Going to the Country*; seven more. [Bill Halverson, prod.] COLUMBIA KC 32956, \$5.98. Tape: ● CA 32956, \$6.98; ●● CT 32956, \$6.98.

This is said to be Roger McGuinn's first solo album, which it may be. However, for more than a decade McGuinn has been the leader of the Byrds—for at least half that time running a rather autocratic show. So this is rather hollow as a debut.

It is not so, fortunately, as a musical creation. McGuinn has augmented his familiar folk-country rock with hard rock and emerged with a winner. Best is the opener, Charlie

Rich's marvelously nasty "Peace on You," played and sung perfectly by McGuinn. He shows his usual virtuosity on electric twelve-string guitar, and he has brought in such excellent sidemen as keyboard player Paul Harris and guitarist Donnie Dacus to assist.

McGuinn and his Byrds were always best on the rock tunes. They fell short of the mark when attempting country. If this album is an indication, McGuinn has corrected that mistake. M.J.



GIL SCOTT-HERRON: The Revolution Will Not Be Televised. Gil Scott-Herron, vocals and songs; instrumental accompaniment. *Get Out of the Ghetto Blues; No Knock; Lady Day and John Coltrane; Pieces of a Man; Home Is Where the Hatred Is; Whitey on the Moon*; five more. FLYING DUTCHMAN BDL 1-0613, \$5.95.

Gil Scott-Herron may be LeRoi Jones, James Baldwin, and Langston Hughes all rolled into one—with a rhythm section. Steeped in the cauldron of the ghetto, matriculated with the whitey-baiting, whitey-hating Last Poets, he is a stinging prod to the conscience and consciousness of us all. His anger is unabated as he lashes out at blacks and whites alike for their mutual failure to find solutions to problems or even recognize that problems exist.

This album is actually a compilation of several previously released LPs and contains some of his best work, although some of it does sound just a little dated now. "Lady Day and John Coltrane" elatedly exhorts the listener to turn to the music of Billie and Trane for sustenance in times of troubled mind. There's a scathing indictment of the holier-than-thou attitude toward the junkie who won't/can't kick in "Home Is Where the Hatred Is," with its sordid portrayal of the "junkie walkin' through the twilight."

The poignant "Pieces of a Man" illumines the crushing defeat of the individual by forces he cannot control or comprehend. It's devastating.

Scott-Herron's assaults on your sensibilities in "Brother" and "Whitey on the Moon" have a certain black humor (pardon the expression), but it always serves its purpose: to get the message through. Gil Scott-Herron is a disturbing force. This album contains substantial evidence that he is an artist of major dimensions. J.G.

BILLY PRESTON: The Kids and Me. Billy Preston, vocals and keyboards; rhythm, strings, and keyboards accompaniment. *Tell Me You Need My Loving; Nothing from Nothing; Struttin'*; eight more. [Billy Preston, prod.] A&M SP 3645, \$6.98. Tape: ●● BT 3645, \$6.95; ●● CS 3645, \$6.95.

Only the opening cut on this disc, "Tell Me You Need My Loving," a rhythmic, swinging, punchy tune, has the distinction that one expects from Billy Preston. The composer/performer has arranged this album with taste, utilizing on occasion disparate effects, such as the wah-wah pedal. He sings with a Ray Charles-like intensity and conjures up some truly soulful feelings as well as an abundance of good cheer.

But too many of Preston's instrumentals re-



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Roger McGuinn
Correcting a mistake.

peat themselves endlessly. After a while one wonders: Where is the originality?

Preston also offers up his own version of his "You Are So Beautiful," a tune cut recently by Joe Cocker. The differences, in terms of performance, arrangement, and production, are astounding. Cocker, after all, has opted for simplicity, and mixing splash with simplicity always make the splash look better. Preston may very well need an eagle-eared producer looking over his shoulder if he is to fulfill himself again in the recording studio. H.E.

HERB OHTA: Song for Anna. *Song for Anna; A Shade of Blue; Love Is Blue*; nine more. [Newell Bohnett, prod.] A&M SP 3651, \$6.98.

They also serve who make music to be played in elevators, supermarkets, and airport lounges. This easy-listening album is better than most of that sort, as it avoids the sweet vocal choruses that so easily turn a pretty melody into a case of bathos.

Herb Ohta, I presume, is a guitarist, since a well-played acoustic guitar is the featured instrument. One often gives in to the temptation to believe that nobody actually records easy-listening music, that it sort of springs whole from the bowels of middle-of-the-road radio stations (and, of course, elevators), perhaps by spontaneous generation. This fine French effort gives the lie to that vision. M.J.

SONNY AND CHER: Greatest Hits. Sonny and Cher, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *You Better Sit Down Kids; I Got You Babe; The Beat Goes On; What Now My Love*; six more. [Snuff Garrett, Sonny Bono, and Denis Pregnolato, prod.] MCA 2117, \$6.98. Tape: ● T 2117, \$7.98; ●● C 2117, \$7.98.

As the specter of Sonny's whine and Cher's vampire teeth fades like yesterday's Nielsens, it's time to look once again at the music of this former duo. This MCA album contains their key tunes, albeit in new, in-concert versions



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("I Got You Babe," "The Beat Goes On," and "What Now My Love"). The songs weren't much, and sometimes the singing was less than that, but there was a magic to the act that still remains. Whether that is enough to make one shell out five or six bucks for a recording is a personal decision. M.J.

MICHAEL WENDROFF: Southpaw. BUDDAH BDS 5609, \$6.98.

Wendroff's second LP is another pleasant collection of melodious, good-natured tunes. All this young man needs is a hit! H.E.

MICHAEL D'ABO: Broken Rainbows. Michael d'Abo, vocals and songs; instrumental accompaniment. *Handbags and Gladraggs; Fuel to Burn; Papa Didn't Tell Me; The Last Match; Broken Rainbows*; five more. A&M SP 3634, \$6.98.

Here's another album full of songs of personal revelations and aspirations by someone who has purportedly been around the block and has a lot to tell. Michael d'Abo is a young Englishman with standard rock-and-roll credentials: lead singer of a group (Manfred Mann), songwriter. ("Handbags and Gladraggs," a hit for Rod Stewart), English accent, et cetera.

The songs themselves are almost narrative in their directness, and some do, indeed, strike a responsive chord. But the album as a whole isn't remarkable. It's difficult to say what's missing to make the difference between attempt and achievement, but what it boils down to is that the album just doesn't reach out and grab you.

That's not meant as an absolute put-down. "Broken Rainbows" is definitely a cut above mediocrity but still a cut below excellence. Don't write off D'Abo; there well may be something substantive still to come. J.G.

jazz

* **FREDDIE HUBBARD:** High Energy. Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Junior Cook, tenor saxophone; George Cables, piano; et al.; Dale Oehler, arr. *Camel Rise; Black Maybe; Baraka Sasa; Crisis; Ebony Moonbeams; Too High*. COLUMBIA KC 33048, \$5.98. Tape: • CA 33048, \$6.98; • CT 33048, \$6.98.

After several successful albums for CTI, this is the first Hubbard album for Columbia. Freddie is in fine fettle, which is to say he lets you have his entire spectacular repertoire of trumpet mastery. He can melt your marrow with a ballad, as in Stevie Wonder's "Black Maybe," or let loose an emotional storm of notes, glissandos, growls that encompass whatever the trumpet is able to do. At the peak of his considerable powers, Hubbard is an electrifying performer, with or without the electronic devices he employs on another Wonder tune, "Too High."

Although he has since left the band, Junior Cook provides some blistering tenor-sax work. Superb pianist George Cables is evident throughout, particularly on his composition "Ebony Moonbeams." The vital arrangements by Dale Oehler called for augmenting the Hubbard quintet, and those assignments



Columbia Records

Freddie Hubbard
A jazz giant emerges.

are more than capably filled by Joe Sample, clarinet and organ; George Bohannon, trombone; Ernie Watts and Pete Christlieb, reeds; King Errisson and Victor Feldman, percussion; and Ian Underwood, ARP synthesizer. Harvey Mason was borrowed from the Herbie Hancock group to play additional drums.

Even in the presence of these high-caliber players and his own superb group, there's no doubt that Freddie Hubbard is the star here. He has emerged in the last three or four years as a jazz giant in his own right, no longer in the shade of Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, or the late Lee Morgan. Which is not saying that Hubbard eclipses them, but that Diz and Miles will have to move over and make a little room in the constellation of trumpet superstars. It's not like having just one heavyweight champion of the world—there is room at the top. J.G.

* **BIX BEIDERBECKE MEMORIAL JAZZ BAND.** Billy Barnes, trumpet; Skip Strong, trombone; Joe Ashworth, clarinet and soprano saxophone; John Schober, alto saxophone; Tex Wyndham, piano; John Gill, banjo; Bill Taggart, tuba; Bill Donahoe, washboard; Jay Duke, drums. *Davenport Blues; Louisiana; From Monday On*; seven more. AUDEX 103, \$6.50 (Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Band, 171 Summit Ave., Upper Montclair, N.J. 07043).

* **SOUTHAMPTON DIXIE, RACING, AND CLAMBAKE SOCIETY JAZZ BAND:** Come On and Stomp. Billy Barnes, trumpet; Roy Rubinstein, trombone; Joe Ashworth, clarinet; Tex Wyndham, piano; Connie Worden, banjo; Barry Bockus, bass; Bill Donahoe, washboard; John Gill, drums. *The Chant; Buddy's Habits; Panama*; six more. FAT CAT'S JAZZ 142, \$5.98 (Fat

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Jazz LP of the Year?

by John S. Wilson

Since the heyday of Sidney Bechet in the Thirties and Forties, the soprano saxophone, which he played with great personal distinction, has been either ignored or, in the Sixties, taken up by saxophonists whose deliberate avoidance of Bechet's flamboyant style made them as anonymous on soprano as most of them were on tenor saxophone, their regular instrument. The only soprano saxophonists to achieve real identity in the past thirty years are Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern.

Wilber's emergence in the Seventies is surprising. In the late Forties, the young Bechet protege seemed destined to spend his career as the best copy of Bechet ever to turn up. But Wilber, wisely seeing no future as a copy, went through a long period of shedding that image and finding his own musical personality. Much of this exploration was done on the tenor saxophone, in a conscious effort to avoid the identification with Bechet that the soprano saxophone or the clarinet might imply. Yet by the late Sixties Wilber's exploratory process had taken him back to the soprano saxophone—but with a difference: He was playing a small, curved soprano, rather than Bechet's straight model, and his stylistic source seemed to be not Bechet, but Johnny Hodges. Though Hodges had learned soprano from Bechet, he was basically an alto saxophonist, and Wilber's playing on his return to the soprano reflected Hodges' alto rather than Bechet's soprano.

Meanwhile Davern, basically a clarinetist, had taken up soprano saxophone, and while his style did not depend entirely on Bechet's it included much of the vast, open exuberance that characterized Bechet's work. As a team, Wilber and Davern played together at one of the New York Jazz Repertory Company concerts early in

1974, they made this record, and now, although Wilber is still nominally a member of the World's Greatest Jazz Band, they are open for engagements as a duo.

On the evidence of this record, anyone in a position to book jazz groups who does not grab Wilber and Davern is out of his/her mind. This is one of the most satisfying, exciting, and heart-warming jazz performances I have heard on a record in the past ten years.

When one considers all the outrageous posturing that is put out as jazz (and that can be found on the "best-selling" so-called "jazz" charts in *Billboard* and *Cash Box*, where this disc will certainly never appear), it is heartening to realize there are still musicians of talent who are creating brilliant, polished jazz performances such as these. The record draws on a variety of basic sources—Bechet, Johnny Dodds, Ellington (but not specifically Hodges), even Benny Goodman, as well as the theoretically schmaltzy middle European "Song of Songs," which Wilber and Davern turn into an excruciatingly compelling virtuoso performance.

The two stars are backed by an exceptionally perceptive and compatible group. Bucky Pizzarelli threads the tunes with subtle, sly passages and backings on guitar, and Dick Hyman adds some provocative piano solos. If there is going to be a jazz LP of the year, this would have to be it.

BOB WILBER AND KENNY DAVERN: Soprano Summit. Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern, clarinet and soprano saxophone; Dick Hyman, piano; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar and banjo; George DuVivier and Milt Hinton, bass; Bob Rosengarden, drums. *Egyptian Fantasy; The Mooche; Stealin' Away*; nine more. WORLD JAZZ S 5, \$6.98.

therefore, resigned themselves to part-time participation in music, have recently gone full time—Ed Polcer, also a trumpet player, is another notable example.

Although the basic *raison d'être* of the Beiderbecke Memorial Band is to play at the annual Bix Festival in Davenport, Iowa, each August 6, they manage to sneak in Ellington's "Creole Love Call" (on the strained reasoning that the Duke's Bubber Miley once recorded with Bix) and Sam Morgan's "Bogalusa Strut," which they don't even *try* to explain. But these numbers strengthen a program that, inevitably, includes some watery tunes that are remembered only because Bix recorded them.

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These two bands, as the personnel lists indicate, are roughly the same, representing the nucleus of an active group of traditional jazz musicians who play in the New York metropolitan area under a variety of names.

The key figure is Billy Barnes, a trumpet player who survived for many years as a part-time musician but is now into music full time (and justifiably, on the evidence of these discs). It is encouraging to find that an increasing number of jazz musicians who are not part of the contemporary jazz trend and who have,

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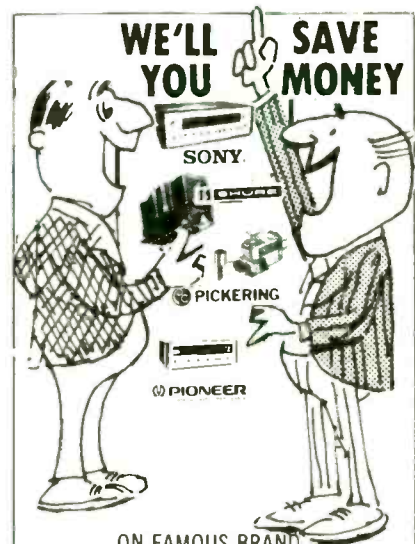
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The Southampton band, on the other hand, draws from a broad range—Jelly Roll Morton, Johnny Dodds, King Oliver, and others.

Joe Ashworth, who plays good soprano saxophone with the Bix band and a strong clarinet with the Southampton, manages two commendable vocals on the Southampton disc ("Sweet Substitute" and "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out") that have a more genuine quality than the bad imitations of old singers that usually turn up in bands such as these. And it's interesting that the rhythm sections of both groups—completely different except for washboard virtuoso Bill Donahoe—are usually strong and solid, a welcome sign that things are looking up in what used to be the weakest element in traditional jazz bands. J.S.W.

* **DUKE ELLINGTON: The Pianist.** Duke Ellington, piano; John Lamb, Victor Gaskin, and Paul Kondziela, bass; Sam Woodyard and Rufus Jones, drums. *Don Juan; Tap Dancer's Blues; Never Stop Remembering Bill;* seven more. FANTASY 9462, \$6.98.

During the Sixties, when Duke Ellington could interest scarcely anyone in releasing records by him or his band (no less than four albums recorded in the Sixties were finally issued in the early Seventies), there were reports that Ellington was, as usual, disregarding the system and going into studios regularly at his own expense to put things on tape. This reflects the same spirit of conviction in his own creative talent that led him to keep his band together all through the Fifties and Sixties, when big bands had no market and when it often cost him money to continue.

Now this stockpile of tapes is beginning to emerge. This collection of piano solos (with bass and drums) was recorded partly in 1966, partly in 1970, with no expectation of immediate release. They are treasures, just as any undulterated evidence of Ellington's true personality is a treasure.

Twelve or thirteen years ago he made an LP of piano solos for Capitol, the first real collection of solos he had ever done. They were delightful improvisations that revealed much more of Ellington than most of his big-band performances did. These solos do much the same thing, although for the most part they are not in quite the reflective vein of those earlier piano pieces. There is a stronger sense of structure, of preparation, here. Which does not make them any less interesting—just different. And, by being different, they add to our knowledge of Ellington.

And, it should be added, to our knowledge of the incomprehensible habits of the commercial recording industry that did not release these solos while the Duke was alive. In memoriam, we have them now and forever. J.S.W.

* **JOE TURNER AND COUNT BASIE: The Bosses.** Harry Edison, trumpet; J. J. Johnson, trombone; Eddie Davis and Zoot Sims, tenor saxophones; Count Basie, piano and organ; Irving Ashby, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; Louis Bellson, drums; Joe Turner, vocals. *Cherry Red; Wee Baby Blues; Roll 'Em, Pete;* seven more. PABLO 2310 709, \$7.98.

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After several years of exile in Switzerland counting the money he made disposing of his Verve label, Norman Granz is back in the recording business. His new label is Pablo. Unlike his earlier LPs, which were often sloppily produced and even more sloppily packaged (particularly insofar as liner information was concerned), the first instance of Pablo to come this way is cleanly recorded, lists not only the personnel, but the soloists on each selection, and has a literate liner essay by the knowledgeable English critic Benny Green.

The only thing that is not revealed is the date of the recordings. The two principals, Count Basie and Joe Turner, were associates in Kansas City in the early 1930s; these recordings were obviously made more recently. But when?

This is of particular interest in the case of Turner, whose singing here is rough and heavy. He has had his ups and downs in the past twenty years, surviving first in the rhythm-and-blues world and later in the face of rock and roll and of a blues revival that did not include him. One would like to know whether this is the contemporary Joe Turner or the Turner of several years ago.

The date is of less consequence in Basie's case. He goes on, year by year, being his inimitable self at the piano. His band may become dreary—as it often has been over the past twenty years—but the Count is always rewarding whenever he is off on his own. He has plenty of solo space on this disc, and he is supported, in solo terms, by the equally intrepid Zoot Sims as well as by Lockjaw Davis and Harry Edison.

This is a pleasant conjunction in which even a fading Joe Turner seems revived in the strong supporting setting in which he finds himself. J.S.W.

in brief

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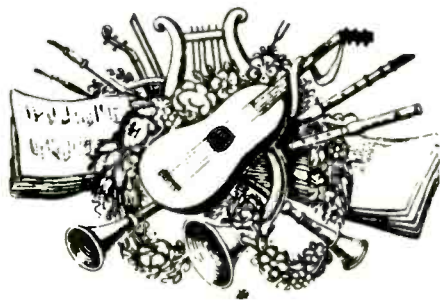
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Coleridge-Taylor: *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*: "Onaway! Awake beloved"; *Danse nègre*. Brown; London Symphony Orchestra, Freeman. June.

The Complete Rachmaninoff, Vols. 1–3. January.

The Complete Recordings of Enrico Caruso. February.

Cordero: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*; *Eight Miniatures for Small Orchestra*. Allen; Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Freeman. June.

Debussy: *Complete Works for Piano Duet and Two Pianos*. Kontarskys. June.

Debussy *Fantasia*. London Symphony Orchestra, New Philharmonia Orchestra, Stokowski. November.

Dvořák: *Symphonies*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Kubelik. February.

Dvořák: *Symphony No. 8*. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Szell. February.

Dvořák: *Symphony No. 8*. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Neumann. February.

Falla: *El Amor brujo*. Verrett; Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski. November.

50 Years of Film Music; 50 Years of Film. April.

Handel: *Saul*. McIntyre; Davies; English Chamber Orchestra, Mackerras. January.

Handel: *Semele*. Armstrong; Diaz; English Chamber Orchestra, Somary. January.

Haydn: *Symphony Nos. 93–98*. Cleveland Orchestra, Szell. February.

Haydn: *Symphonies Nos. 93–104*. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Jochum. February.

Hindemith: *Sonatas for Piano*, Nos. 1–3. Gould. February.

Homage to Pablo Casals. July.

Charles Ives: *The 100th Anniversary*. Various performers. October.

Ives: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano* (4); *Largo for Violin and Piano*. Zukofsky; Kallsh. October.

Ives: *Symphony No. 2*. Philadelphia Orchestra, Ormandy. October.

Ives: *Symphony No. 4*. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Serebrier. October.

Jazz Archives Series. Various performers. August.

Kay: *Markings*. London Symphony Orchestra. June.

Kirchner: *Henderson: Lily*; *Quartet for Strings*, No. 2. Hoagland; The Ensemble, Kirchner; Lenox Quartet. March.

Mahler: *Das klagende Lied*. Harper; Procter; Hollweg; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Haitink. May.

Mahler: *Symphony No. 4*. Price; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Horenstein. May.

Mahler: *Symphony No. 8*. Soloists; Symphonica of London, Morris. May.

Mahler: *Symphony No. 10*. New Philharmonia Orchestra, Morris. May.

Mozart: *Così fan tutte*. Lorengar; Davies; Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; London Philharmonic, Solti. October.

Mozart: *Don Giovanni*. Wixell; Arroyo; Te Kanawa; Ganzarolli; Freni; Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, Davis. July.

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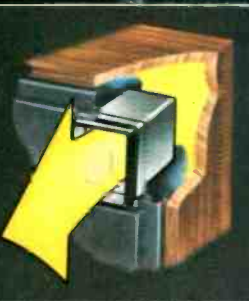
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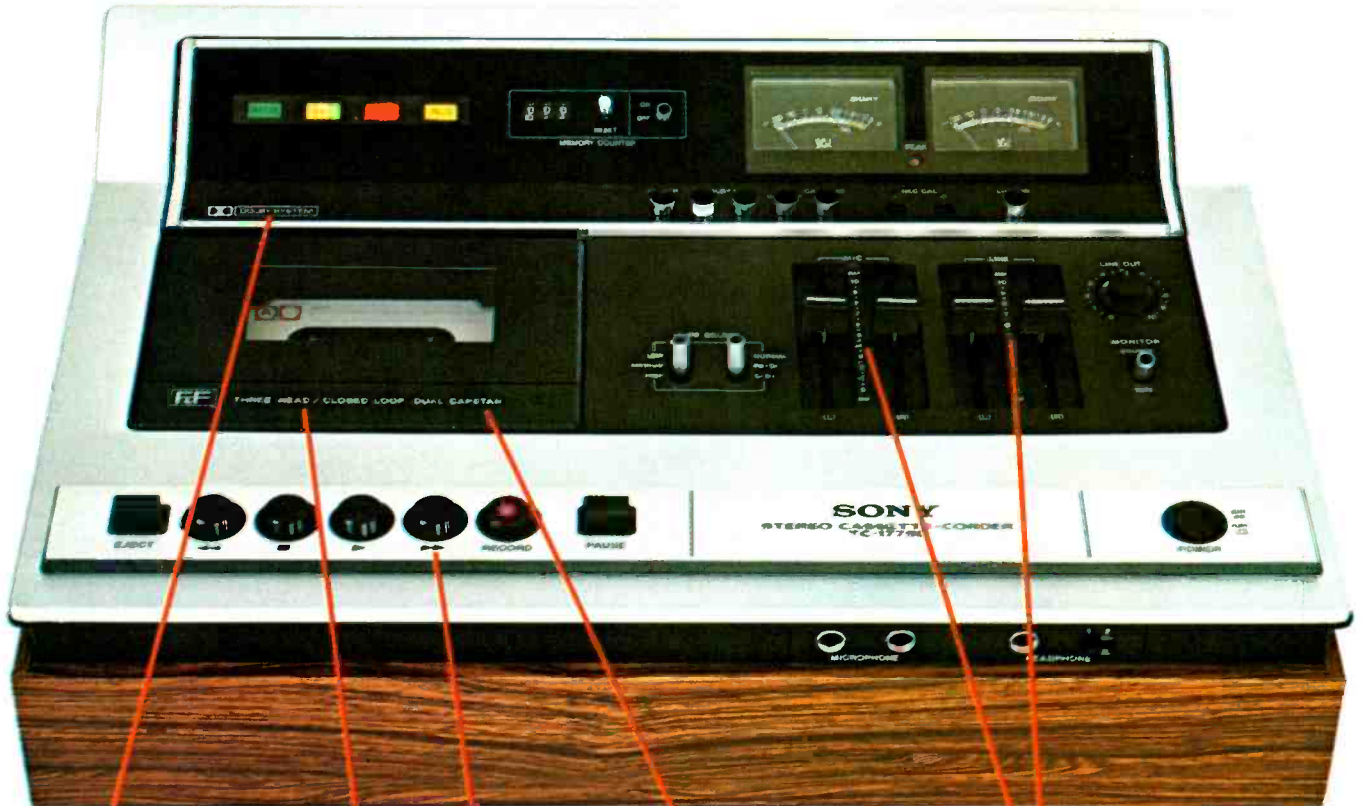
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Mozart: Quintets with Strings. Danish Quartet, et al. December.

Mozart: Sonatas for Piano, Vol. 4. Gould. February.

Mozart: Symphony No. 41. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Jochum. March.

Musgrave: *Night Music*. Tuckwell; Chidell; London Sinfonietta; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Prausnitz. November.

Mussorgsky Fantasia. London Symphony Orchestra; Orchestre de la Suisse Romande; New Philharmonic Orchestra, Stokowski. November.

Mussorgsky: *Khovanshchina*. Arhipova; Ognivsev; Bolshoi Theater Chorus and Orchestra, Khaikin. December.

Charlie Parker: The Complete Dial Recordings. Various vocalists, instrumentalists. November.

Pfitzner: *Palestrina*. Fischer-Dieskau; Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kubelik. January.

Pizzetti: *Preludio ad un altro giorno*. New York Philharmonic, Cantelli. April.

Ravel: Complete Works for Piano Duet and Two Pianos. Kontarskys. June.

Riegger: *Dichotomy for Chamber Orchestra*. Tuckwell; Chidell; London Sinfonietta, New Philharmonic Orchestra, Prausnitz. November.

Russian Fantasia. Various orchestras, Stokowski. November.

Saint-Georges: Symphony No. 1; Symphonie Concertante for Two Violins and Orchestra; Quartet for Strings, No. 1; *Ernestine*; *Scena*; Juilliard Quartet; Fried; Laredo; Robinson; London Symphony Orchestra, Freeman. June.

Schubert: Piano Works. Brendel. August.

Schubert: Sonata for Piano, D. 845; Impromptus (4), D. 899. Rosenberger. August.

Schubert: Sonata for Piano, D. 960; Impromptu, D. 935, No. 2. Curzon. August.

Schubert: Sonatas for Piano, Vol. 1. Klien. August.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Jochum. March.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8. *Die Zauberharfe*. Overture. Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Groves. March.

Schubert: Symphonies (8); *Rosamunde* (incidental music). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Böhm. March.

Schumann: *Scenes from Goethe's "Faust."* Fischer-Dieskau; Harwood; English Chamber Orchestra, Britten. August.

Sessions: Symphony No. 8; Rhapsody for Orchestra. Tuckwell; Chidell; London Sinfonietta, New Philharmonic Orchestra, Prausnitz. November.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 8. London Symphony Orchestra, Previn. October.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 3; *En Saga*. Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Sanderling. March.

Sibelius: Symphonies (7); *En Saga*; *The Swan of Tuonela*; *Finlandia*; *Valse triste*; *The Bard*. Helsinki Radio Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Kamu and Karajan. March.

The Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz. May, Starring Fred Astaire. April.

Still: *Afro-American Symphony*; *Highway 1 U.S.A.*; *You're Wonderful, Mary*. Brown; London Symphony Orchestra, Freeman. June.

Survey of the World's Greatest Organ Music. France, Vols. 1-6. Isoir; Darasse; Terrasse; Saorgin; Raynaud; Lehrndorfer. August.

Tchaikovsky Fantasia. Various orchestras, Stokowski. November.

Tippett: Symphony No. 3. Harper; London Symphony Orchestra, Davis. May.

Tippett: *The Knot Garden*. Minton; Tear; Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Davls. May.

Wagner: *Tristan and Isolde*: Love Music from Acts II and III (symphonic synthesis; arr. Stokowski). Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski. November.

Wagner-Gould: *Die Meistersinger*: Prelude; *Götterdämmerung*: Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey; *Siegfried Idyll*. Gould. February.

Walker: Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra. Wick; London Symphony Orchestra, Freeman. June.

Wolf: Lieder. Fischer-Dieskau; Moore. September.

Wolf: Spanish Songbook (16 excerpts). DeGatani; Kalish. September.

Audio and Video

ELECTRONICS

Ads from the Thirties. April.

An Audiophile's Hints to Santa. William Radford-Bennett. December.

Be Your Own Binaural Dummy. (News and Views.) November.

Dolby, Dolby, Who's Got the Dolby? (News and Views.) December.

Dolby FM: Emphasizing De-Emphasis. (News and Views.) September.

An Electronics Line for Teac. (News and Views.) June.

High Fidelity Compares Columbia's and RCA's Four-Channel Disc Systems. January.

High Fidelity and the Energy Crisis. Edward J. Foster. July.

High Fidelity Equipment—What Will Be New in 1975? William Tynan. October.

Lux Is Back. (News and Views.) March.

Old-Time Radio Is Alive and Well in a Croton-on-Hudson Garage. Robert Angus. April.

Our Four-Channel Project. Leonard Marcus. January.

A Push for FM—But Which Way? (News and Views.) October.

Radios, Too, Are Collectible. Robert Long. April.

Stereo AM Update. (News and Views.) March.

SQ Eyes the 45 Market. (News and Views.) February.

RECORD-PLAYING EQUIPMENT AND CARE

DBX Disc-Noise System Unveiled. (News and Views.) November.

How We Test Phono Pickups. Daniel Grave-reaux. December.

Picking a Pickup. Larry Zide. November.

Should You Buy a Manual or an Automatic Turntable? Larry Zide and Michael Marcus. May.

Which Cartridges Go with Which Tone Arm? November.

VIDEO

Letting the Chips Fall. (News and Views.) February.

Software for the Masses. (News and Views.) September.

TAPE

Another Approach to a "Supertape." (News and Views.) June.

A Dangerous Charge. (News and Views.) November.

Experts Answer Fourteen of Your Questions. (Tapes and Records.) February.

Fall of the Not-So-Jolly Rogers. (News and Views.) December.

First The Bad News . . . And Then Some Good (tape sales). (News and Views.) January.

The Tape Around Us. Tony Schwartz/John Carey. August.

TV's Golden Moments Can Be Captured by Your Tape Recorder. Robert Long. August.

What Makes Some Recorders So Special? Robert Angus. August.

SPEAKERS

There's (Almost) Nothing to It (foam grilles). (News and Views.) August.

How Do Speakers Work? Robin Lanier. June.

Made in America—From German Parts; Made in Mexico—For American Users. (News and Views.) August.

Why Do Speakers Sound the Way They Do? Robert Angus. June.

Equipment Reports

AMPLIFIERS (Basic and Integrated)

BGW 500R. February and May.

Radford SPA-60 Mk. II. March.

SAE Mk. XXXIB. May.

Superscope A-260 integrated. June.

CARTRIDGES (Phono)

Audio-Technica AT-15S. December.

B&O MMC-6000. December.

Empire 4000D/III. December.

JVC 4MD-20X. December.

Stanton 780/4DQ. December.

HEADSETS

Koss HV-1/LC. July.

Pioneer SE-700. October.

Scintrex Supra. May.

Superex PEP-79. March.

PREAMPLIFIERS

Ace Audio Zero-Distortion. March.

Radford SC-242. April.

RECEIVERS AND TUNERS

Concord CR-250. March.

Dynaco AF-6 tuner. June.

Harman-Kardon 800 + quad. May.

JVC 4VR-5456 quad. July.

Kenwood KR-9340 quad. March.

Lafayette LR-4000 quad. January.

Marantz 4240 quad. August.

Pioneer QX-949 quad. September.

Rotel RX-600A. February.

Scott R-77S. October.

Sony STR-7065. January.

Yamaha CR-1000. June.

SPEAKERS

Acoustic Research AR-8. January.

Avid 100. August.

Bzack B-401. August.

EPI Microtower MT-2. March.

Electro-Voice Interface A. February.

Infinity Monitor IA. November.

Magitran Poly-Planar DS-60. April.

Magnavox MAX-15 SE-2510. May.

Microstatic MS-1 accessory tweeter. July.

Rectilinear Xia. March.

Sherwood Evolution One. July.

Technics T-400. November.

TAPE EQUIPMENT

Akai GX-600D open-reel. September.

Ferrograph 7504 open-reel. November.

Hitachi TRQ-2040D cassette. March.

Pioneer RT-1020L quad open-reel. July.

Sony TC-152SD cassette. April.

Sony TC-177SD cassette. November.

Tandberg TCD-310 cassette. August.

Teac 2300S open-reel. October.

Technics RS-279US cassette. February.

Technics RS-858US quad cartridge. April.

Wollensak 4765 cassette. January.

Wollensak 8075 cartridge. September.

TURNTABLES

B&O Beogram 3000 auto single-play. January.

Dual 701 auto single-play. March and September.

Elac Miracord 760 changer. June.

Philips GA-209 auto single-play. November.

Sony PS-2251LA manual (less arm). October.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ampex 228 degausser/head cleaner. September.

Han-D-Mag degausser. September.

McKay Dymek DA-3 AM antenna. June.

Nortronics QM-202 degausser. September.

Olson HF-38 degausser. September.

Pickering PST-1 stylus timer. May.

Realistic degausser. September.

Russound Multi-Play MP-2 speaker control. February.

Shure SFG-2 VTF gauge. March.

Shure VN-78E stylus. April.

Teledapter TE-200 TV sound adapter. October.

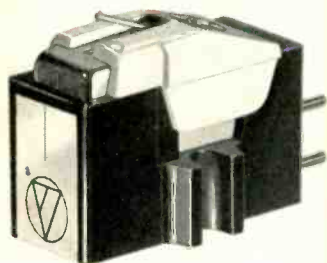
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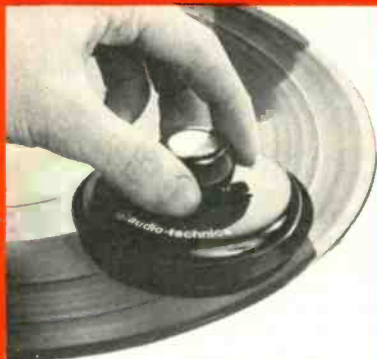
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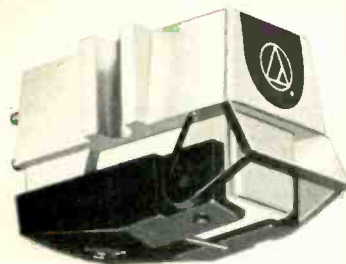
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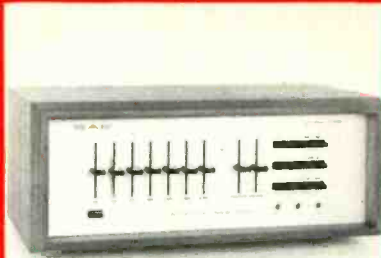
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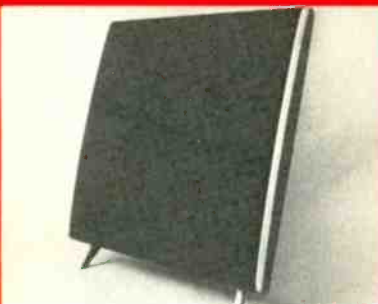
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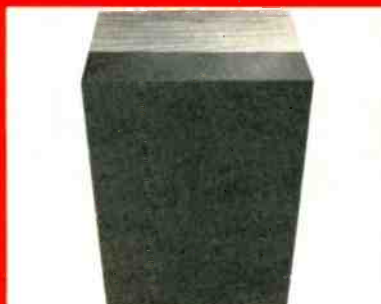
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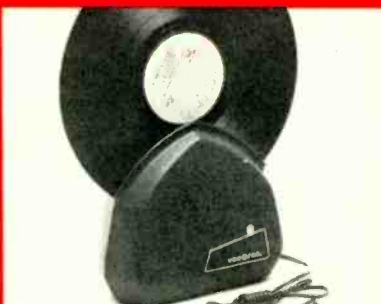
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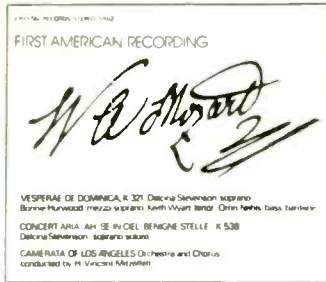
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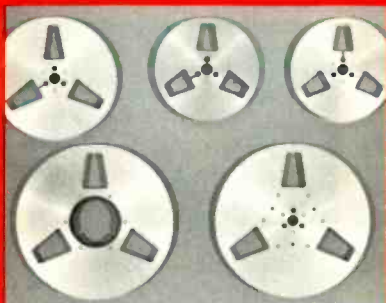
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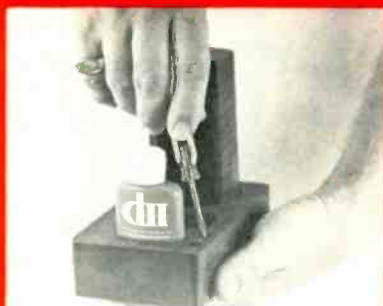
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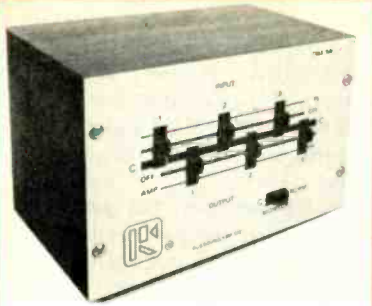
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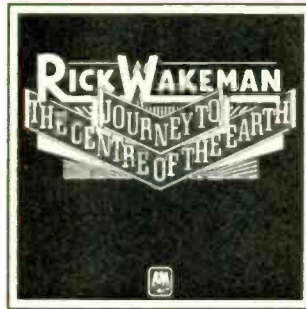
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the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

"The flute of morning stilled in noon."

In music, as well as poetry, probably no legend has been more often or more eloquently celebrated than that of the doomed young lovers Romeo and Juliet. And of all its musical epiphanies, including those by such masters as Berlioz and Tchaikovsky, probably none is more distinctively imaginative, more economical in means, or more poignantly evocative than Prokofiev's. Yet for many years after its composition in 1935 this extraordinary Op. 64 ballet achieved few stage productions, becoming known only gradually as bits and pieces of the music were given occasional concert performances via the three orchestral suites the composer drew from his complete score.

Discographically too *Romeo and Juliet* long has made its way only slowly and in fragments. The first complete stereo recording (the disc edition of the present tape version by Maazel and the Cleveland Orchestra) appeared only last year, to be followed almost immediately, ironically enough, by another—that by Previn and the London Symphony for EMI/Angel.

This music can't be properly known in any one or few of the fifty-two quite short, kaleidoscopically colored individual pieces that have been so deftly fitted together to make up the grand design of the mosaic as a whole—a whole infinitely greater than the mere sum of its parts. And I strongly doubt that either its delicate subtleties or its heart-twisting pathos can be properly appreciated in crowded big auditoriums. It's in one's own home, alone or among a few kindred spirits, that Prokofiev's incomparable blend of creative imagination and skill can best work its magic spell. What that magic is like must be experienced for oneself, but the poet e. e. cummings uncannily anticipated it in lines I serendipitously stumbled upon when I was reviewing Stokowski's early-stereo-era taping of five *Romeo and Juliet* excerpts:

it is the autumn of a year
when through the thin air stooped
with fear
across the harvest whitely peer
empty of surprise
death's faultless eyes

the flute of morning stilled in noon—
noon the implacable bassoon—
now Twilight seeks the thrill of
moon.
washed with a wild and thin
despair of violin

The Maazel performance may do better justice to the score's eerie lyricism and poignance than to the rarer moments of wit and bite, but its fervent eloquence is

impossible to resist, especially as so potently enhanced by superbly lucid yet glowing recording—and in the present open reels by well-nigh ideal tape processing free from any of the over-modulation, frequency-spectrum imbalance, or reverse-channel spillover that have marred some Ampex reels in recent years: London/Ampex R 480275, two 7½-ips Dolby-B reels, \$21.95; D 10275, two Dolby-B cassettes, \$14.95; illustrated booklet on request by postcard.

The Man Who Knew Mahler Best. For many years I felt sure that I was afflicted by a deaf spot or a mental block where the most often played and recorded Mahler symphony was concerned. And it wasn't until I heard the First performed by the late Jascha Horenstein that I realized the fault had been not necessarily in me, but in conductors (famous as they may have been) unable to pull together this perhaps overepisodic score and to give it—as Horenstein uniquely does—meaningful coherence and dramatic point. Unfortunately, Horenstein's truly definitive (at least for me) 1970 reading with the London Symphony has been hitherto available on tape only in one of the long Astrostereo 3¾-ips reel miscellanies, where it doesn't sound nearly as satisfactory as it now does in a deluxe Dolby-B chromium-dioxide cassette edition: Nonesuch/Advent D 1019, 56 minutes, \$5.95.

Mahler's larger-scaled Third Symphony represents his powers of atmosphere-evocation so much more magisterially than his First that it can be enchanting even in readings by lesser Mahlerians than Horenstein. But here too only he can surely capture the very quintessence of the work. He inspires the London Symphony, alto Norma Procter, the Ambrosian Singers, and the Wandsworth School Boys' Choir to play and sing like angels. The original British Unicorn recording of 1971 is even more impressively lucid, radiant, and dramatically expansive; and again there is an unusual economic attraction—a standard "single" price for a double-length taping: Nonesuch/Advent E 1009, 95 minutes, \$6.95. What more can one ask for?

Twanged and Bowed String Virtuosity.

After some twenty years as an exclusive Decca artist, Segovia was cast adrift when that company (becoming part of the MCA conglomerate) abandoned its classical-music activities. But now he makes a welcome return via RCA, and not only is his *sui generis* guitar artistry captured as cleanly and brightly as ever before, but his "Favorite Spanish Encores" program proves to be an unexpectedly novel one. Only a few of the fourteen fairly short pieces have been recorded earlier by Segovia, and (apart

from an Albéniz transcription) they provide an effectively varied representation of such specialist composers as Narváez, Valderrábano, Pisador, Mudarra, Sor, Llobert, Tárrega, and Torroba: RCA Red Seal ARK 1-0485 and ARS 1-0485, cassette and 8-track cartridge, \$6.95 each.

Another welcome but quite different return is that (in part, at least) of the Beethoven violin sonata series by David Oistrakh and Lev Oborin. Originally dating from 1963–65 and once, but no longer, partially available in open-reel editions, this series' first musiccassette representation couples the Sonatas No. 8 in G and No. 9 (*Kreutzer*) in A. The assured vigor of both performances is still a marvel of violin and piano virtuosity, while the bold vividness of the recording convincingly belies its age: Philips 18413 CAA, \$6.95. Its only real shortcoming is that it was manufactured before Philips adopted its present Dolby-B processing policy.

Italian-Chinese Detente. Although I've long held the minority view that Puccini's last opera—not quite finished by himself—is the most fascinating and perhaps finest of all those he wrote, I didn't feel any urgent need for a new recording of *Turandot*, at least while the two justly admired versions starring Nilsson in the title role were available on tape. But both the 1960 RCA and 1966 Angel reel editions went out of print sometime ago and are currently replaced only by imported cassette/cartridge editions (RCA Italiana RK/R8S 6149/50 and Odeon C545/C645 1519/20).

That fact and the technological advantages of engineering and Dolby-B processing would alone justify any new reel version, but—to my surprise, I must admit—the new London recording starring Sutherland with Pavarotti and Caballé provides excitingly close competition even for the acclaimed earlier triumvirates of Nilsson/Bjoerling/Tebaldi and Nilsson/Corelli/Scotto, while Zubin Mehta surely surpasses conductors Leinsdorf and Molinari-Pradelli. The decisive superiorities, however, are those of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, John Alldis Choir, and Wandsworth School Boys' Choir, and the British engineers Kenneth Wilkinson and James Lock—all combining to achieve the most dramatically thrilling realization to date of the full sonic, as well as musical, grandeur of the Puccini-Alfano score. And as in the case of the Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet*, the tape processors share notably in the over-all technological success of this tape release: London/Ampex R 490244, two 7½-ips Dolby-B reels, \$21.95; also D 31244, two Dolby-B cassettes, \$14.95; texts and notes on postcard request. ●

Marantz Stereo Electrostatic Headphones—

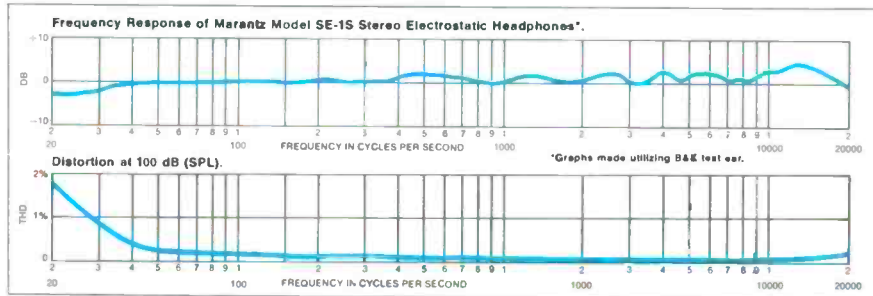
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That's poetic justice.



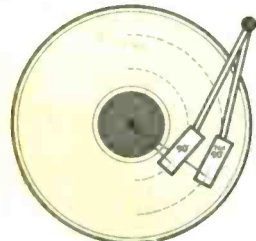
The tonearm of the original Emile Berliner gramophone of 1887 had tracking error.

Why? Because it was a pivoted arm with a fixed head, traveling across the record in an arc.

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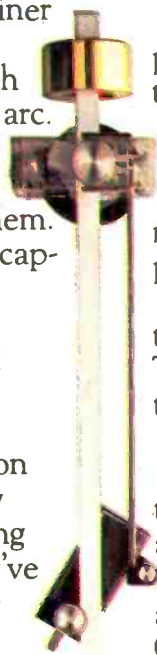


All conventional arms with a fixed offset have tracking error.

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