



SOUNDS—he brings 'em back alive!

A good reporter is said to have a nose for news. But Thomas J. Valentino, not being a reporter, can afford to be different. He has a nose for noises! In fact he has spent the past fifteen years collecting them—not merely as a hobby, but as a fascinating and profitable vocation. Proof of this is the fact that the sound effects catalog of Thomas J. Valentino, Inc., New York City, lists disc recordings of over five hundred different noises—"From a cat's meow to a lion's roar—a pistol shot to a world war."

That quotation, incidentally, is Mr. Valentino's trade slogan—one that gives a pretty good idea of the scope of his collection. There are soft, peaceful, pastoral sounds—like the chirping of crickets and croaking of frogs in the dead of night. Busy, active, crowded sounds—like the din of heavy traffic in New York's Times Square. Quick, urgent sounds—like the fast, rhythmic clack-clack of a battery of teletype machines in a busy news room. Exciting, dangerous sounds—like the staccato barking of a machine gun and the whine of ricocheting bullets.

Name just about any kind of sound you can think of, and chances are you'll find Mr. Valentino already has a recording of it. Take bells, for example. He can give you ambulance bells, burglar alarm bells, church bells, dinner bells, door bells, fire alarm bells, locomotive bells, telephone bells, ship's bells, and even the melancholy clang of a bell buoy. Or, suppose you want airplane noises. Take your choice of these: Air-cooled motor, fast; airplane crash; dive bombers diving for attack, zooming; Navy bi-plane; PB-40, zooming; twin-motor transport; fast bomber; flight; landing; propellers winding; squadron takes off; squadron passing; start motor; starts, takes off, flies; stunting; take-off, tri motor; twin-engine bomber; twin engine bomber, one engine missing. And of course there are all the associated sounds, too—like air raid sirens, falling bombs, crashing buildings, ack-ack, etc.

Mr. Valentino explains that his sound effects recordings sound so real because they are real—recorded from life on sound film, then re-recorded on Audiodiscs in the studio.

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Thomas J. Valentino, America's No. 1 Noise Maker, spins a platter of one of his five hundred different sound effects.

Two Audio-Sponsored Script Contests Seek New Talent in Student Writers

For the third consecutive year, Audio Devices is sponsoring both the Scholastic Magazines' and AER radio script writing contests for 1950.

These two nation-wide competitions—Scholastic Magazines' Radio Script Writing Contest, for high school students, and the AER National Radio Script Contest for college students—offer all aspiring (and perspiring) scripters an excellent opportunity to win valuable cash awards, and still more valuable recognition for their creative talent.

As the trend, for the past two years, has been steadily upward—in both quality and quantity of scripts submitted—it looks as though the 1950 contests will pass all previous records in both respects.

So come on, students—sharpen your pencils and your wits, and start now to lay a foundation for your future career as

a radio script writer, by entering the Scholastic Magazines' or AER contest.

Complete rules and instructions for the high school students' contest have already been published in Scholastic Magazines, so they will not be repeated here. But don't forget that the closing date for the National Contest is March 1, 1950. And if you're entering one of the many Regional Contests, scripts must be submitted by around February 15th—which can sneak up on you mighty fast.

The National AER Contest, in which Audio Devices is again sponsoring the Special Classification of Scripts suitable for home recording, will close on March 30, 1950. For complete rules and instructions for preparation of scripts, write to Dr. Sherman P. Lawton, AER Script Contest Chairman, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

audio record

Published monthly by Audio Devices, Inc., 444 Madison Avenue, New York City, in the interests of better sound recording. Mailed without cost to radio stations, recording studios, motion picture studios, colleges, vocational schools and recording enthusiasts throughout the United States and Canada.

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On Record No. 5031A, for example, you hear the sound of subway turnstiles, the rumble and roar of an approaching subway train, the click of the wheels on the rails, the hissing of air brakes, the opening of the doors, the surging shuffling footsteps and grunts of the passengers getting off and squeezing on, the closing doors, the train starting up and rumbling away into the tunnel again. This recording was made in the Lexington Avenue subway station at 116th Street. Mr. Valentino's recording equipment was parked in a station wagon near the entrance, and he carried the microphone on a long line right down to the platform. This is realism — for nothing sounds quite as real like a subway train as a subway train!

It's not always an easy matter to get exactly the sound effects he wants. In making recordings for the Broadway show, "Casey Jones", for example, he was asked to reproduce the sound of a locomotive hurtling along at 90 miles an hour. Valentino finally got the New York Central Railroad to "loan" him a locomotive and a mile of straight track at Harmon, New York. But even that didn't solve the problem, for the engineer said the best speed he could possibly develop in that distance would be a scant 60 miles an hour (provided the engine would hold the rails). Not to be daunted by such a technicality, he had the rails coated with grease. Then the locomotive rolled along at 40 miles an hour, with the wheels spinning madly at 90 miles an hour or better! This was one of Mr. Valentino's favorite assignments — one, incidentally, on which he was accompanied by Mr. William C. Speed, president of Audio Devices.

Once, when selecting sound effects records for the Broadway production "The Farmer Takes a Wife", playwright Marc Connelly wasn't exactly satisfied with the numerous "baby crying" records. "I want something like this", he explained — and proceeded to demonstrate by emitting a most realistic infantile wail. Whereupon Valentino grabbed a mike, asked for a repeat performance, and recorded it on

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First Audio Fair Outstanding Success

C. J. LeBel, retiring president,
honored for contributions to
Audio Engineering Society

The Audio Engineering Society's Audio Fair and first Annual Convention was held in New York City on October 27, 28 and 29. This, the first convention and exhibition devoted entirely to audio equipment, occupied the entire 6th floor of the Hotel New Yorker. The 56 exhibitors each had private rooms in which were displayed their latest equipment.

One of the high spots of the convention proceedings was the presentation of the Audio Engineering Society Award to C. J. LeBel, vice president of Audio Devices, in recognition of his many contributions as one of the founders of the organization and its first president. Mr. LeBel was suc-

ceeded by Theodore Lindenberg, of the Fairchild Recording Equipment Company.

The Audio Fair chalked up a total registration of 3,022 more than four times the membership of the sponsoring organization. Attendance at the technical sessions averaged 250. Exhibitors, visitors, and members of the Society all evinced great enthusiasm — which augurs well for an even bigger and better Audio Fair in 1950.

The Audio Devices exhibit featured the new plastic-base Audiotape which at that time had just been released to the trade. Demonstrations of recorded music on both plastic and paper base Audiotape gave eloquent proof of the fidelity, brilliant high-frequency response, uniformity, and freedom from background noise and distortion which are made possible by this new and perfected recording medium.

Tomorrow's Hucksters Taught with Tape

— in new
radio advertising
course at
Montana
State
University



Sterling Soderlind, Montana State University journalism student, places a tape of his 13 radio commercials on the recorder as Prof. O. J. Bue (left) and Larry Wilkinson, (right) another member of the class, prepare to listen. After the tape has been played, they and other class members will participate in a critical analysis of the recording.

A course in radio advertising is being taught for the first time this fall at the Montana State University Journalism School, Missoula, Montana. Prof. O. J. Bue is in charge of the course — "Radio Commercials".

Students in the class learn the theories of radio selling and get considerable practice in the preparation of commercial copy. They each prepare and make tape recordings of a series of 13 commercials for each of 12 different products. The copy will be submitted to local stations for criticism and suggestions.

An extensive collection of recorded commercials also is used for classroom

analysis. In another phase of the course the young writers study the report on radio advertising recently prepared by Joske's of Texas. Audience studies and analyses of listening habits also come in for consideration by the students. All the students have completed a course in principles of advertising.

Professor Bue, veteran journalist, is one of the first journalism teachers in the United States to be selected for a summer radio internship. He served at Station KVOO in Tulsa, Okla., in 1945. He has taught the radio journalism courses at MSU — newscasting, radio editing, and special events — since their inception.

audio pointers for the Recordist

by C. J. LeBel, Vice President,
Audio Devices, Inc.

MODULATION NOISE

Tape recording is afflicted with a species of noise which is of no practical significance in disc recording. Sometimes it masquerades as distortion, sometimes as ordinary ground noise, but in any case modulation noise must be suspected.



C. J. LeBel

We may distinguish between ordinary ground noise and modulation noise when we recall that the former is constant in intensity, whereas the latter varies with the signal and is modulated by it. In Fig. 1 we have exaggerated the effect for greater clarity. The ear interprets this as distortion, for the result has been the creation of innumerable intermodulation products which make the tone fuzzy.

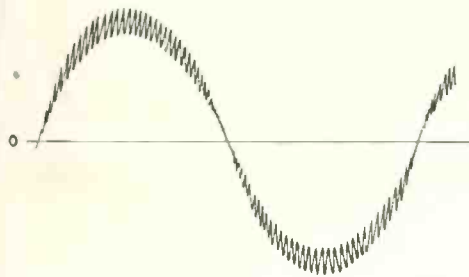


Fig. 1. Showing how modulation noise is superimposed on signal.

Modulation noise is a function of the character of the oxide and of the uniformity of coating. Many of the natural oxides seem to be very bad in this respect. Since they also seem to be rather poor recording media, this additional fault poses no special problem. Synthetic oxides with good recording characteristics seem satisfactory as regards modulation noise, and indeed certain procedures that lead to best results in one respect also are beneficial in the other.

Variation in coating thickness will also introduce modulation noise. Perfection of the coating surface in contact with the base

material is determined, of course, by the smoothness of the base, and a plastic-base tape, therefore, has about 15 db less modulation noise than the smoothest paper base material. A poor paper-one that has not been supercalendared will have 5 to 15 db more noise than the best paper. We have exaggerated the effect in fig. 2 so that it can more easily be seen.

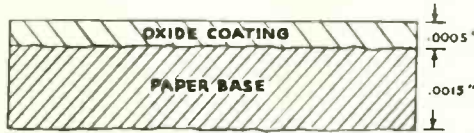


Fig. 2. Showing how microscopic surface irregularity of base can introduce coating thickness variations and hence modulation noise.

The professional user will naturally use a plastic base tape for all critical work, but he will not thereby assure the lowest possible modulation noise. It is possible to have a rather uneven coating top-surface, and, therefore, much noise. Some plastic tape presently marketed has considerable modulation noise in the 40 to 60 cps range due to coating machine imperfection. However, our engineers, with more than ten years experience in the construction and use of disc coating machines, were able to design and build coating equipment that makes the tape free from such low frequency components.

If the recording machine's bias waveform is even slightly asymmetrical, the resulting dc component will create modulation noise. Since this will be as steady as the bias current, it will masquerade as ground noise. Most machines on the market suffer from this defect, in varying degree. If there is a 40 to 60 cps component in the modulation noise, it will show up as a hoarsely raspy hum in the background, when run on such a machine.

SOUNDS: (Continued from Page 2, Col. 1)

the spot. And when the show opened, the audience never suspected that what they actually heard was the voice of Marc Connelly, crying like a baby — literally, that is.

Up until fairly recently, all of Mr. Valentino's original recordings were made on film before being transferred to Audiodiscs. But, now that high fidelity portable tape recorders are available, many of his original recordings are made on Audiotape, and then re-recorded in permanent form on Audiodiscs.

Readers of this article who would like a copy of Mr. Valentino's latest sound effects catalog can obtain a copy from their local sound equipment dealer, or by writing to Thomas J. Valentino, Inc., 150 West 46th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

NAME YOUR PROBLEM:

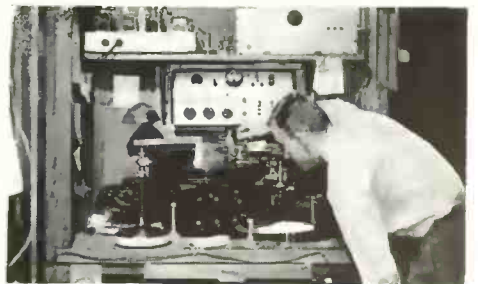
From Choosing a Mate, to Raising a Family, You'll Find the Answer on Discs!

Raising a family presents plenty of problems these days, aside from financial ones. Solving many of these growing problems, from the cradle to the altar, is the objective of a series of 24 recordings, entitled "The Family Grows Up" — produced by the Department of Extension Teaching and Information (N. Y. State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics, Cornell University), in cooperation with the Department of Child Development and Family Relationships.

This record loan library was started as a means of filling the many requests from Child Study Clubs in the state for help from the college. But the records are also available to other organizations, schools, PTA's, etc., which are interested in using them as a basis for discussion. Topics cover all phases of family life. Each record runs about 10 minutes in length, and when it is sent out to a group, a copy of the script, suggested questions for discussion, references for further reading, and directions for playing the recording are included in the packet.

The programs are under the supervision of Dr. Russell Smart, Associate Professor, Department of Child Development and Family Relationships. Each program consists of an interview between Nita Albers, Radio Editorial Assistant, and either Dr. Smart or Mr. Edward Pope, Assistant Professor in the same department. Some of the records have been dramatized to a certain extent. For example, the first half of several of the programs consists of a skit, and the second half is a discussion of the problems brought out in the skit. It is suggested that the first half be played, then followed by a discussion period by the group, and the last half played as a summary.

The recordings of these programs are made at 78 r.p.m. Rental fee is \$1.00; purchase price is \$3.50 each. A complete list of the available programs can be obtained by writing to Film Service, Mailing Room, Roberts Hall, Ithaca, N. Y.



Ted Richards, editorial assistant and recording engineer, drops the cutting stylus on a fresh Audiodisc, recording another program for "The Family Grows Up".

Recording of "Columns Write" Makes Double Discussion-Time For Eds

When Radio Station WPAT's (Paterson, N. J.) "Columns Write" goes on the air every Sunday morning at 10:00, its participants are to be found anywhere else but at the station's studios.

Most likely, at that precise moment they will be surrounded by a group of their community's intellectuals, vociferously going over every point with the editor no sooner than he has made it over the air.

This seeming impossibility of a man being in two places at once and engaging in a discussion with two groups simultaneously, is easily explained. Here's how.

"Columns Write" is the oldest panel discussion program on WPAT and probably the oldest newspapermen's program on the air today in continuous broadcasts (five years). Each week, it features from two to four different editors of leading New Jersey newspapers in a discussion of state, national and international problems as viewed through their own editorial policies and opinions of their readers.

Reflecting varied and individual thoughts by men who have no hesitation about voicing them emphatically, the program has always been a lively one — and possesses one of the finest adult listening audiences for its time in the metropolitan area.

But the newspaper editor—a busy individual, and jealous of his Sundays off — began to demur, after the program had been on the air for a couple of years.

He liked the program, the station, the fine job the program was doing, but he definitely did not like this travelling from every part of the state to Paterson on his one sacred day to make the broadcast. What could WPAT do about it?

The answer was simple. Let's record the program on a day and time most convenient to you gentlemen and broadcast it Sundays as usual. The editors said okay; and for the last three years this procedure has been followed.

But, to everybody's satisfaction? Why, no. While the station is eminently satisfied with the arrangement, what's happened to the editors?

Well, the editors still do not have their Sunday's free. Should they not be present where their townspeople can be with them at the time WPAT's "Columns Write" goes on the air to see if their opinions were correctly presented by the editor on the program, and to take exception to any opinion he may give on the show with which they disagree, he hears from them for the rest of the week.

"Columns Write" interviews the daddy of all City Managers Mr. Paul A. Volcker, who has been Township Manager of Teaneck, N. J., for twenty years. Left to right, Mr. August Weisner, editor of The Press Journal of Englewood, Bennett H. Fisher, moderator, editor and publisher of The Sunday Sun and Sun-Bulletin of Teaneck and The Herald-News and Sunday News of Ridgewood, Mr. Edward A. Flynn, managing editor of The Sunday Sun and Sun-Bulletin of Teaneck and Mr. Paul A. Volcker.



audiotape
it speaks for itself

● You would have read this announcement two years ago — except for one thing. Our engineers were not content to offer you a recording tape that was merely "good" by existing standards of comparison. They wouldn't put their seal of approval on Audiotape until it had been so perfected in every detail that it would match the quality and uniformity which have characterized Audiodiscs for the past decade.

NOW AVAILABLE

on plastic or paper base
with red or black oxide

Audio Devices now offers you a complete line of professional quality magnetic recording tape — designed for matched performance in any tape recorder.



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13 EAST 40TH ST., NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

SEND FOR YOUR FREE SAMPLES and let Audiotape speak for itself. We will be glad to send you a 200-foot sample reel of plastic or paper base Audiotape. Write to Dep't. T-1.