

HiFi

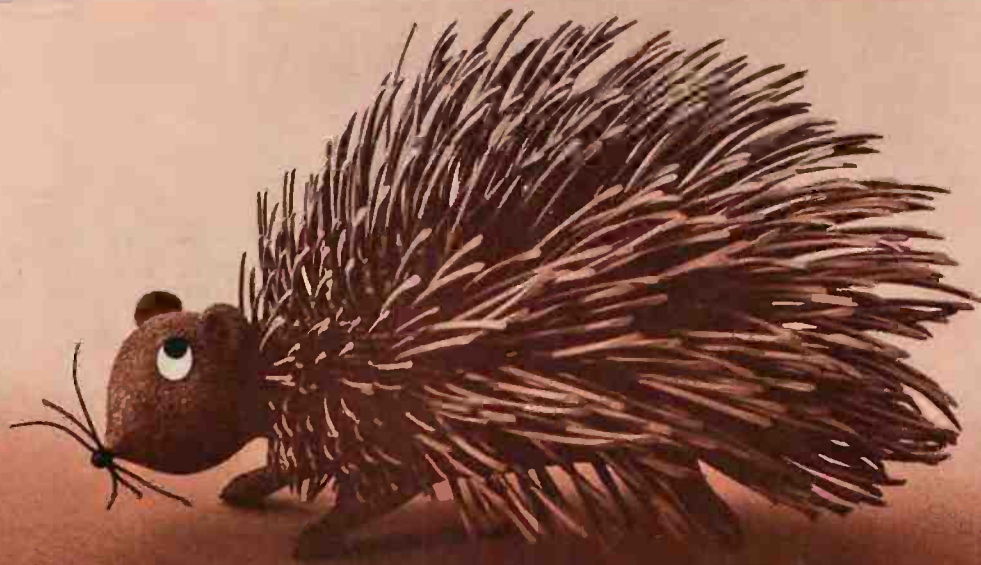
REVIEW

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HiFi

REVIEW

May, 1959

Vol. 2 No. 5

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FEATURE ARTICLES

- | | | |
|---|----|------------------|
| The High Cost of Creativity | 31 | Abraham Skulsky |
| Why is there so little monetary budgeting for the American composer? | | |
| Stereo via Sonic Environment | 37 | Warren DeMotte |
| James B. Lansing's Paragon and Melregon offer something new in stereo speakers | | |
| The Primal Eloquence of Pablo Casals | 39 | David Hall |
| New insight on "the greatest musician that ever drew a bow" | | |
| Letters of Mark | 40 | Warren DeMotte |
| Letting the cat out of the bag on how to create a keyboard virtuoso—on records only | | |
| Have Pipe Organ—Can't Move | 42 | Robert Hazelleaf |
| Presenting the genius of the modern "Mighty Wurlitzer"—concluding a 2-part article | | |
| Mail-Call for Stereo | 45 | Hans H. Fantel |
| Three house-brand stereo tuners with vastly different functional design concepts | | |

REVIEWS

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|---|
| Stereo HiFi Concert | 53 | Martin Bookspan, George Jellinek, David Randolph, John Thornton |
| Mono HiFi Concert | 67 | Martin Bookspan, George Jellinek, David Randolph, John Thornton |
| Stereo Entertainment | 75 | Ralph J. Gleason, Stanley Green, Nat Hentoff |
| Mono Entertainment | 79 | Ralph J. Gleason, Stanley Green, Nat Hentoff |

COLUMNS AND MISCELLANEOUS

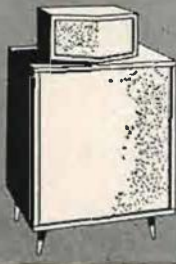
- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----|--|----|
| HiFi Soundings | 6 | HiFi-ndings | 49 |
| Musical Oddities | 12 | Realistic "Solo" Speaker System; JFD "Mardi Gras" Speaker System Model ALC-2 | |
| The Basic Repertoire | 14 | Advertisers Index | 89 |
| Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony | | The Flip Side | 90 |
| Just Looking | 18 | | |

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HiFi Soundings



By DAVID HALL

Charles E. Ives on What to Listen For in New Music

The decade since World War II has witnessed a fantastic pre-occupation with style and technique on the part of contemporary composers all over the world. Its most virulent manifestation has centered around post-Webernian 12-tone fashions and the various forms of "electronic tape" music. The mass commercialization of hi-fi and "sound for sound's sake" has added further to an atmosphere in which the composer is tempted to indulge in all manner of sonic and intellectual gimmickry.

How is the listening and record-buying public—other than the *cognoscenti* of arty esoterica—to judge what is worthwhile and what is "gimmicky" in the great mass of contemporary music finding its way to the LP and stereo catalogs, whether from specialty labels like Louisville's *First Edition* series or Composers Recordings Inc., or from major labels working under Koussevitzky or Fromm Foundation auspices?

Nearly forty years ago, Charles Edward Ives (1874-1954)—still the most modern and truly creative of all American composers—published privately and at his own expense a 124-page volume *Essays Before a Sonata*, the "sonata" being his Second for piano (*Concord, Mass., 1840-60*). The book was, in a sense, a justification of his life and work as a musician and a deeply probing statement of what he felt to be the place of the creative artist among his fellow humans.

Together with his 1912 pamphlet on life insurance—*The Amount to Carry—Measuring the Prospect*, printed by his own firm, Ives & Myrick, *Essays Before a Sonata* has become something of a legendary classic in its field. In 1956 a new edition of the *Epilogue* to the "Essays" was issued by Paul Boatwright of New Haven as edited by the distinguished musician and Ives scholar, Howard Boatwright. From this *Epilogue* we have distilled those passages which seem to us to have particular bearing on the present situation in contemporary music composition—especially as experienced by the enterprising concertgoer and audiophile. We feel that there is much in Ives' words that can help relieve the present confusion of values in the modern music field—if not on the part of the composers, then at least on the part of their audience.

"Many sounds that we are used to do not bother us, and for that reason we are inclined to call them beautiful. Frequently—possibly almost invariably—analytical and impersonal tests will show, we believe, that when a new or unfamiliar work is accepted as beautiful on its first hearing, its fundamental quality is one that tends to put the mind to sleep."

"That which the composer intends to represent as "high vitality" sounds like something quite different to different listeners . . . How far can the composer be held accountable?"

* * * * *

"It may be that when a poet (or a whistler) becomes conscious that he is in the easy path of any particular idiom—that he is helplessly prejudiced in favor of any particular means of expression—that his manner can be catalogued as modern or classic—that he favors a contrapuntal groove, a sound-coloring one, a sensuous one, a successful one (whatever that means)—that his interests lie in the French school or the German school, or the school of Saturn—that he is involved in this particular "that" or that particular "this," or in any particular brand of emotional complexes; in a word, when he becomes conscious that his style is "his personal own,"

(Continued on page 8)

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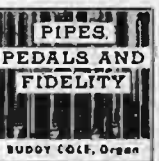
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(Continued from page 6)

that it has monopolized a geographical part of the world's sensibilities—then it may be that the value of his substance is not growing, that it even may have started on its way backwards—it may be that he is trading inspiration for a bad habit. . . .”

“The intensity to-day with which techniques and media are organized and used tends to throw the mind away from a ‘common sense’ and towards manner.”

“Manner breeds a cursed cleverness only to be clever—a satellite of superindustrialization—and perhaps to be witty in the bargain—”

“We are going to be arbitrary enough to claim . . . that substance can be expressed in music, and that it is the only valuable thing in it, and, moreover, that in two separate pieces of music in which the notes are almost identical, one can be of substance with little manner, and the other can be of manner with little substance. Substance has something to do with character; manner has nothing to do with it. The substance of a tune comes from somewhere near the soul, and the manner comes from—God knows where. . . . Substance leans toward optimism and manner [towards] pessimism.”

“The lack of interest to preserve or ability to perceive the fundamental divisions of this quality accounts to a large extent, we believe, for some or many various phenomena (pleasant or unpleasant according to the personal attitude) of modern art, and all art. It is evidenced in many ways . . . over-interest in the multiplicity of techniques, in the idiomatic, in the effect as shown by the appreciation of an audience rather than in the effect on the ideals of the inner conscience of the artist or the composer.”

“Manner breeds partialists. Is America a musical nation?—If the man who is ever asking this question would sit down and think something over, he might find less interest in asking it; he might possibly remember that all nations are more musical than any nation—especially the nation that pays the most, and pays the most eagerly, for anything after it has been professionally rubber-stamped.”

* * * * *

“We hear that Mr. Smith or Mr. Morgan etc., *et al.*, design to establish a ‘course at Rome’ to raise the standard of American music (or the standard of American composers—which is it?); but possibly the more our composer accepts from his patrons ‘*et al.*,’ the less he will accept *from himself*. It may be possible that a day in a Kansas wheat field will do more for him than three years in Rome. It may be that many men—perhaps some of genius (if you won’t admit that all are geniuses)—have been started on the downward path of subsidy by trying to write a thousand dollar prize poem or ten thousand dollar prize opera. . . . A cocktail will make a man eat more, but will not give him a healthy, normal appetite. . . . Such stimulants, it strikes us, tend to industrialize art rather than develop a spiritual sturdiness. . . . And for the most of us, we believe this sturdiness would be encouraged by anything that will keep or help us keep a normal balance between the spiritual life and the ordinary life. If for every thousand dollar prize a potato field can be substituted so that these candidates of ‘Clio’ can dig a little in real life, perhaps dig up a natural inspiration, art’s air might be a little clearer. . . . Perhaps the birth of art will take place at the moment in which the last man who is willing to making a living out of art is gone, and gone forever.”

“The humblest composer will not find true humility in aiming low—he must never be timid or afraid of trying to express that which he feels is far above his power to express. . . . He should never fear of being called a high-brow . . . John L. Sullivan was a ‘high-brow’ in his art. A high-brow can always whip a low-brow. . . . If he ‘truly seeks,’ he ‘will surely find’ many things to sustain him. . . . He can believe it is better to go to the plate and strike out than to hold the bench down, for by facing the pitcher he may then know the umpire better, and possibly see a new parabola.”

—David Hall



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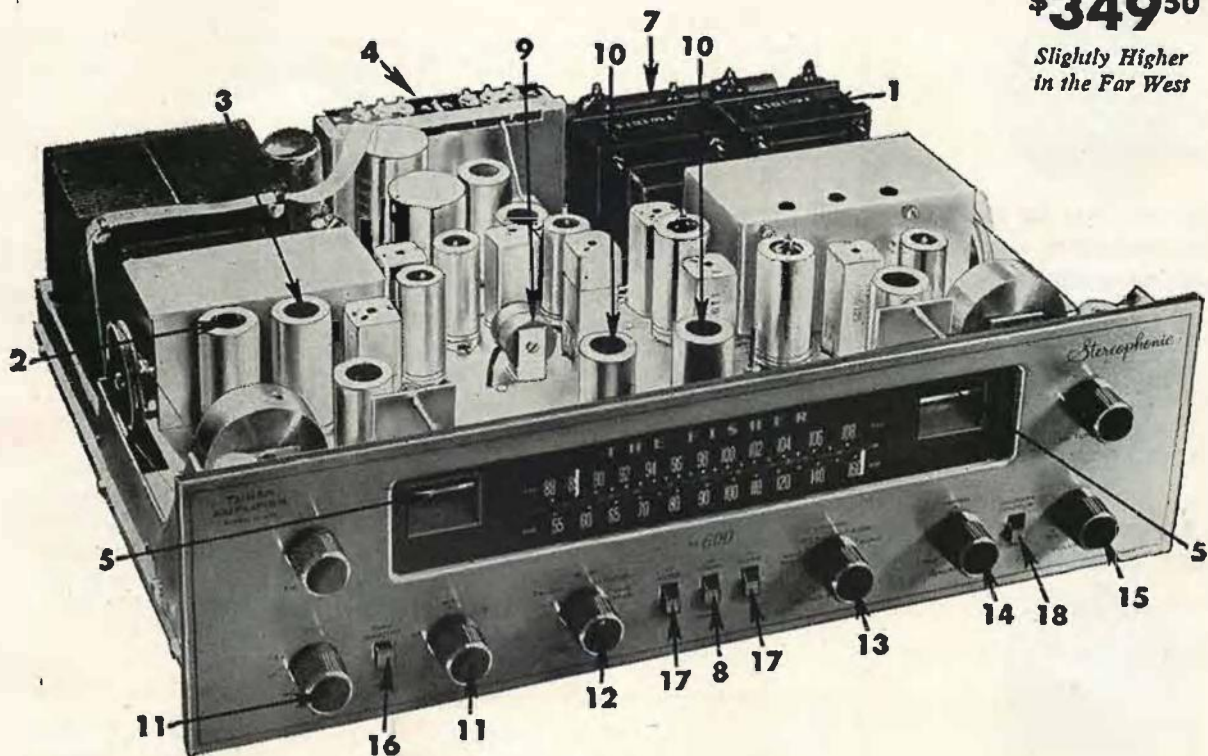
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Musical Oddities

Is musical greatness inversely proportional to the neatness of manuscript? It should appear so from a comparison of the musical manuscripts of Beethoven and of Luigi Cherubini. Beethoven's untidiness, both in personal habits and in writing music, was notorious. Luigi Cherubini, who was a composer of great distinction but lacked genius, was, on the contrary, a paragon of tidiness. When ink spread by accident on music paper, he would cut out the spotted section and replace it by a piece of manuscript paper fitted so precisely that the patch was barely noticeable. Cherubini was a man of stern character, and during his directorship of the Paris Conservatory demanded perfection from his students. He was sarcastic in his criticism but reticent in his praise. After a particularly successful rehearsal of the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, he was asked his opinion. "I said nothing," he replied, "consequently it was satisfactory." His pupil Halevy invited Cherubini to the premiere of his first opera. Cherubini listened attentively, but remained silent during the first two acts. "Maitre," exclaimed Halevy, unnerved by his silence, "please say something about my music!" "For two acts your music is saying nothing to me," observed the master, "so what can I say to you?"

In his memoirs Berlioz presents a very disagreeable and perhaps unfair picture of Cherubini as a pedantic and querulous old man. In turn, Cherubini was naturally antagonistic to the type of music that Berlioz was producing. Once he passed by the entrance of a concert hall where the *Symphonic Fantastique* was to be performed. One of his friends asked him whether he intended to hear it. "I have no desire to learn how music should not be composed," was Cherubini's gruff reply.

The name cello is the result of a curious process of truncation, similar in derivation to the word bus (which is the last syllable of *omnibus*, which in turn is the dative plural of *omnis*, the Latin word for *all*). The full name of cello is *violoncello*, which really should be *violonecello*, *violone* being a large viol, and *cello* being the suffix expressing minuteness. So *violoncello* is a big little fiddle, something as incongruous as *bullfiddlekins*.

The roles of young lovers in opera are often performed by females. The situation becomes doubly inverted when a supposed male is disguised as a female, thus reverting the singer to the original sex. In *Der Rosenkavalier*, Octavian, a mezzo-soprano, professes ardent love to the Princess von Werdenberg, but flees when Baron Ochs von Lerchenau arrives on the scene. Octavian reappears in the disguise of a chambermaid, to whom the libidinous Baron promptly makes advances. But since the person who sings the role of Octavian is actually a girl, the Baron's natural instincts are amply vindicated.

The famous K. of the Mozart catalog—or Schwann LP catalog listings—was not a musician at all. Ludwig von Köchel was a learned mineralogist and botanist; several plants that he discovered and described bear his name. He lived most of his life in Vienna, but traveled throughout Europe in pursuit of his scientific studies. It was at the Mozart centennial in 1856, that his great interest in Mozart became, to use a mineralogical term, crystallized. He classified Mozart's works as he would minerals and plants, and made the letter K. immortal as a symbol. Köchel died in 1877, at the age of 77. His span of life was more than twice that of Mozart.

In his Meiningen orchestra, Hans von Bulow had two horn players, Miller and Schmid, whom he disliked violently, but could not dismiss before the term of their contract. One morning, before the rehearsal, the superintendent of the orchestra announced: "I have sad news for you, Herr von Bulow, Miller is dead!" "Is he really?" said von Bulow. "And Schmid?"
—Nicolas Slonimsky

Original manuscript, in Johann Sebastian Bach's own handwriting, of the first movement of Sonata #1 in G Minor for unaccompanied violin.



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ON APRIL 10, 1823, the name of Franz Schubert was proposed for honorary membership in the Styrian Music Society at Graz in Austria. His qualifications were presented as follows in the nomination papers: "Although still young, he has already proved by his compositions that he will some day rank high as a composer."

When the governing body of the Society voted to elect Schubert to membership, the 26-year-old composer gratefully accepted the honor and wrote: "May it be the reward for my devotion to the art of music that I shall one day be fully worthy of this signal honor. In order that I may also express in musical terms my lively sense of gratitude, I shall take the liberty, at the earliest opportunity, of presenting your honorable Society with one of my symphonies in full score."

The late Alfred Einstein, in his masterful book, *Schubert, A Musical Portrait* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1951), surmises that soon thereafter Schubert presented the score and parts of a two-movement symphony he had recently completed to the director of the Society, Anselm Hüttenbrenner. Hüttenbrenner apparently stuck the symphony away in a drawer and promptly forgot about it—and so, too, did Schubert! It was not until 1865, thirty-seven years after the composer's death, that the Symphony finally came to performance. And thereby hangs a tale.

In 1860 Hüttenbrenner's brother, Joseph, had written to the conductor of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* concerts in Vienna, Johann Herbeck, that Anselm had in his possession a "treasure in Schubert's B Minor Symphony." For five years Herbeck ignored this information, fearing perhaps that

part of any deal to pry the Schubert Symphony loose from the Hüttenbrenners would involve a commitment for the simultaneous performance of one of Anselm's dreary overtures. Finally, in 1865, Herbeck had occasion to stop at Graz. He sought out the aging and eccentric Anselm and is supposed to have said to him: "I am here to ask your permission to produce one of your works in Vienna." According to the account of Herbeck's son, Ludwig, Anselm's response was instantaneous and uninhibited: he threw his arms around Herbeck in an embrace and then proceeded to parade before the weary conductor manuscript after worthless manuscript of his own music. Finally, Herbeck decided upon one of the overtures and informed Hüttenbrenner that he intended to give a concert of music by three contemporaries, Schubert, Hüttenbrenner and Lachner. "It would naturally be very appropriate to represent Schubert by a new work." "Oh, I have still a lot of things by Schubert," came Hüttenbrenner's reply, and he pulled a pile of manuscript paper out of an old chest. On the cover of one of the manuscripts Herbeck saw the words "*Sinfonie in H Moll*" in Schubert's own handwriting. Casually, he evidenced interest in the score and Hüttenbrenner promptly obliged by giving it to him for performance. On December 17, 1865 the music was finally heard for the first time. Since then Schubert's "*Sinfonie in H Moll*" (B Minor) has become one of the most beloved classics of the entire literature.

Before we get to the recordings of the score, let us touch upon the "Unfinished" aspects of the symphony. The lack

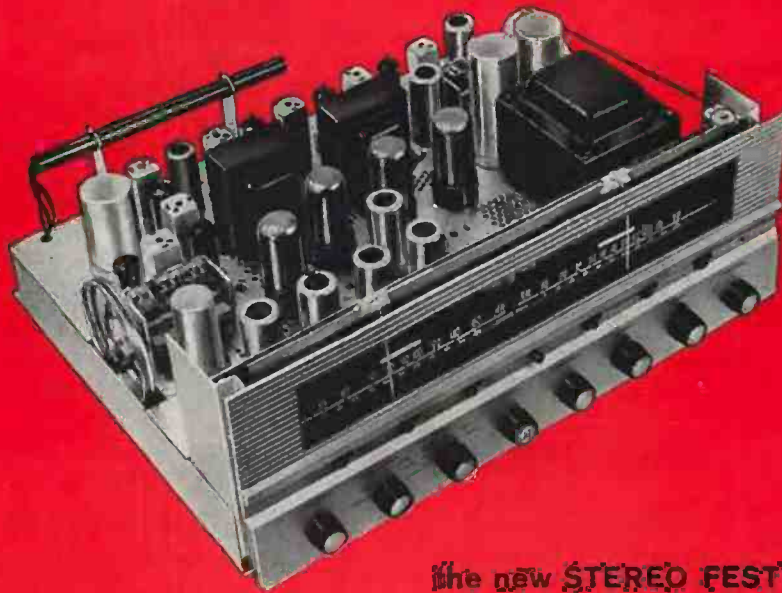
(Continued on page 16)



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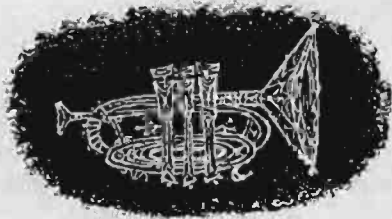


harman kardon

(Continued from page 14)

of a scherzo and finale has given posterity a handy title by which to identify the score. If one insists upon the four-movement format of the classical symphony as an unalterable model, then Schubert's B Minor Symphony may be said to be unfinished. On purely aesthetic grounds, however, the work is a unified whole, a thing of beauty and completeness in itself, no more unfinished as an artistic masterpiece than the *Venus de Milo*, missing arms and all. Schubert must have felt this instinctively when—having penned nine bars of scherzo—he put the work aside with only two movements completed.

There are presently more than two dozen monophonic recordings of the score. Strangely, there has been no new



major recording of the "Unfinished" since Decca's release (DL-9975) more than a year ago of a splendid performance by Fricsey and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. And stranger still is the curious fact that there is currently available only three stereo disc versions of the score, and only that by the late Artur Rodzinski (Westminster 14052) merits any consideration. Sooner than later, undoubtedly, the floodtides of stereophony will engulf the "Unfinished" Symphony and every major label in the business will have its own new stereo recording of the score. But as of the time of this writing, there exists a curious void vis-à-vis Schubert's B Minor Symphony and its availability on stereo in truly outstanding interpretation.

Six among the mono recordings of the score seem to me to have special distinction; these are the performances conducted by Beecham (Columbia ML-4474), Cantelli (Angel 35524), the aforementioned Fricsey, Munch (RCA Victor LM-1923), Szell (Epic LC-3195), and Toscanini (RCA Victor LM-9022). In general the conductors take either of two alternative approaches to the music: there is the Toscanini approach—a kind of demonic attack upon the score which elicits sharp contrasts of dynamics and mood and makes of the symphony a herculean, defiant thing. Then there is what may be called the Viennese approach—a spontaneous and casual warmth and mellowness, in which the listener is left spellbound by the inevitability of Schubert's lyrical outpouring. The Toscanini recording is, of course, the very prototype of the forceful and dynamic approach. Recorded in NBC's old Studio 8-H in 1950, the sound matches the performance: it is hard, dry, and unresonant. Yet there is no denying its power; but of grace and charm and easy flow there is precious little.

The Fricsey is the very antithesis of Toscanini's: Where the great Italian is often breathless in his unceasing momentum, Fricsey brings calm flow and relaxed care. Phrases are beautifully moulded, dynamic markings scrupulously observed, and the orchestral playing is luxurious, yet elegant. The whole is surrounded with an acoustical environment of warm mellowness. Fricsey's tempi are generally slow but never lethargic.

The remaining four recordings in the "Top 6" category

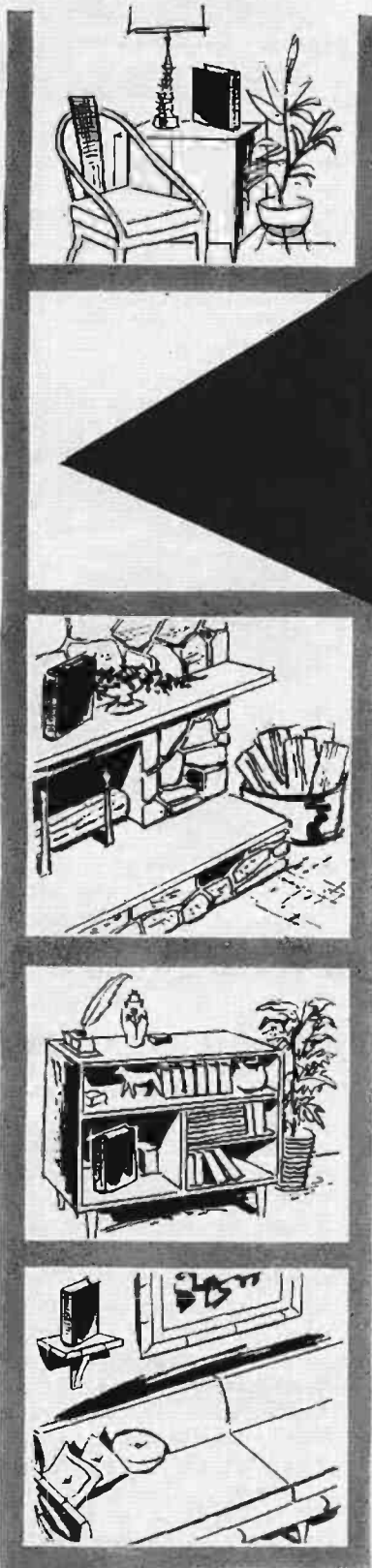
generally ply a neat middle ground between the two extreme approaches, Cantelli and Szell closer in spirit to Toscanini; Beecham and Munch (surprisingly!) to Fricsey. Cantelli's reading is superbly disciplined and very smoothly recorded. He makes much of the drama in the score with especially keen dynamic contrasts. Szell is fussier and sometimes forced, at times sacrificing spontaneity to calculation. He is the only conductor, though, who observes the repeat of the first movement exposition and his orchestra is recorded marvelously well. Beecham, for his part, hasn't conveyed quite as successfully the gentle and tender side of the music as he did in a memorable pre-war set of 78 rpm discs, but his is nevertheless a deeply felt, strongly-focused interpretation, sentiment-full without becoming sentimental. The Munch, as intimated above, is a surprise. I have heard him drive this music unmercifully in the concert hall, but at the time he prepared this recorded performance he was content to take a more leisurely approach. What emerges is a beautifully shaded, if slightly heavy-handed, treatment. The recorded sound tends to become a little boomy, but this remains one of Munch's most successful standard repertoire efforts on disc.

Conspicuous by its absence in all this discussion is the name of the conductor who, perhaps more so than anyone else in our time, has made of this symphony a very precious and personal specialty: Bruno Walter. Walter has thus far recorded the symphony twice during his long career: with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra during the 1930's in a performance which had a brief currency in this country in the Black Label Series of RCA Victor, and a performance of the mid-1940's with The Philadelphia Orchestra (still listed in the current catalog in a transfer to Columbia LP disc ML-4880) whose glories were but dimly perceived through very distant recorded sound. It is to be fervently hoped that Walter will be given an opportunity to re-record the "Unfinished" with the West Coast musicians with whom he has now re-made all the Beethoven Symphonies for Columbia.

—Martin Bookspan

Basic Repertoire Choice To Date

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto
Nov. '58, p. 48 | Cliburn; Kondrashin with Orch.
RCA Victor LM 2252 (mono)
Cliburn; Kondrashin with Orch.
RCA Victor LSC 2252 (stereo) |
| 2. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony
Dec. '58, p. 41 | Toscanini—NBC Symphony
RCA Victor LM 1757 (mono)
Ansermet—Suisse Romande
Orch. London CS 6037 (stereo) |
| 3. Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata
Jan. '59, p. 37 | Petri
Westminster XWN 18255 (mono) |
| 4. Dvořák's "New World" Symphony
Feb. '59, p. 54 | Toscanini—NBC Symphony
RCA Victor LM 1778 (mono)
Reiner—Chicago Symphony
RCA Victor LSC 2214 (stereo) |
| 5. Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony
March '59, p. 49 | Klemperer—Philharmonia
Angel 35328 (mono)
Szell—Cleveland Orchestra
Epic BC 1001 (stereo) |
| 6. Bach's Chaconne for Solo Violin
April '59, p. 16 | Heifetz
RCA Victor LM 6105 (mono)
Segovia (guitar)
Decca DL 9751 (mono) |

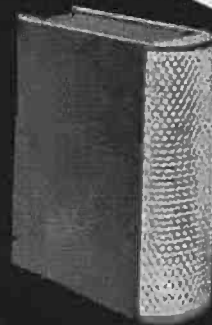
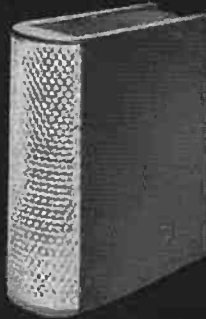


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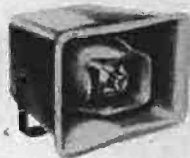
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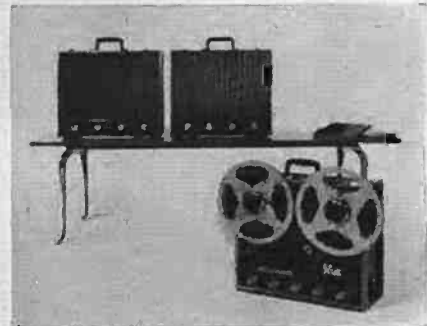
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The High Cost of Creativity

The Plight of American Composers

discussion/ABRAHAM SKULSKY

AMERICAN music, from its beginnings, has depended almost totally on European sources and techniques. Although we may refer to the jazz element and the skillful use of folklore idiom, our composers have followed and still follow Western European techniques and schools of thought when it comes to large scale concert works. Whether it suits our inclinations or not, it is that yardstick of European music which we must use as the basis for judging our own development. At the same time we must take into consideration the very different conditions of musical life as they have existed on opposite sides of the Atlantic. In every country and every city of Europe there are active composers, and they play an unquestioned role in their community and national milieu, though they may not attain major world stature. Those few who achieve fame beyond their national frontiers

do so in accordance with long recognized procedures and criteria; and under these circumstances, there is little danger of confusing local celebrities with figures of genuine universal consequence.

On our vast continent, however, there exists no such accepted "natural selection." Creative musical activity is focused for the most part around two or three great metropolitan centers, with New York, for economic reasons, as the principal one. One consequence of this is a certain confusion when it comes to singling out composers and their work on the basis of *quality*. True, New York can boast of the greatest amalgamation of composers within its confines wherein important creative figures work in a highly competitive situation against second-rate and even mediocre ones who are apt to be given performance priority.

One avenue of approach to a study of the current situation of American music for the concert hall is through the performance statistics of native works by our major symphony orchestras. In order to be fruitful, such an approach must be based on the certainty that what is being played is truly the best that exists—with no stylistic trend being kept from our concert audiences. If such a certainty were indeed the case today, the situation would be rather disheartening, for it would then appear that for a decade or so no major American composer has appeared on the horizon to gain recognition comparable to that accorded such well-known creative figures of the 1930's and 40's as Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, and William Schuman.

However, if we look beyond the statistics of performances and discover what is *actually being composed*, it becomes evident, so far as concert hall performance is concerned, that works of importance by a whole younger generation of American composers are being systematically ignored by our symphonic organizations. Thanks to the yeoman work of various Foundations and allied groups, the situation is not quite as bad in terms of recording.

But the fact remains that there exists at this very moment a unique crisis which, while not reflecting on the creative act itself, can become extremely dangerous for the composer. Willy-nilly, he is being slowly but surely separated from his audience by an ever-widening gap that is by no means wholly of his making. This in turn creates an impression among knowledgeable listeners that our composers are ignoring and falling behind many of the most stimulating present European trends in creative music. To gain a clearer view of this picture and its significance, let us set forth some basic truths regarding the actual relationship between our music and that of Europe, and in so doing give a brief summary of our development in terms of musical composition.

Until the end of World War One, American music may be considered as having a strictly local character. The sole exception seems to have been Charles Ives (1874-1954), who was pioneering in a sort of ivory tower and who was not "discovered" until almost twenty years after he had composed his finest works. His case, too well known to be discussed in detail here, does highlight in its own way a characteristic of our own time which can be summed up in the form of a question: How would Ives have developed had the opportunity of being a fulltime composer and hearing his own works competently performed presented itself during the years when he was at his creative peak (1910-20)?

It was in the 1920's that American music suddenly began to achieve stature worthy of international consideration. Chief among the composers who, by their individual qualities of creative invention and by their awareness of the most vital new trends in Europe, contributed to this country's attainment of status as a major musical nation were Roger Sessions (1896-...), Edgar Varèse (1885-...), Carl Ruggles (1876-...), Wallingford Riegger (1885-...), Aaron Copland (1900-...), Henry Cowell (1897-...), and Virgil Thomson (1896-...). Not the least interesting aspect of these gaddy-creators is the wide disparity of their childhood homes: Sessions (Boston); Varèse (Paris—came to the U. S. in 1916); Ruggles (Massachusetts); Riegger (Georgia); Copland (Brooklyn); Cowell (California); Thomson (Kansas City).

As for the works produced by these men during their first fine flush of creation, we find *The Black Maskers* and *First*

Symphony by Sessions notable in their structural strength and powerfully dissonant language. Though Ruggles and Riegger developed along different lines, both dealt in the tonal chromaticism first explored by Schoenberg in the first decade of the century. French-born Varèse and Brooklyn-born Copland created immensely exciting abstract pieces which could be called distinctively American, for all their lack of any specifically folkloristic element. Such obvious Americanism as is found in Copland's music of the 1920's stems from his highly original "spatial" harmonic idiom, his Stravinsky-like sharp sonorities, occasional use of jazz flavoring (*Music for the Theatre*; Piano Concerto), and the general zestfulness of his musical language. In this music Copland could be said to evoke the serious aspect of city folklore in contrast to the lighter-veined expression of Gershwin. Varèse, on the other hand, through his prophetic explorations in the realms of sheer sonority and rhythm could well be said to represent the audible expression of our technological era and of the architectural grandeur of New York. In truth, Varèse's music could have been conceived in no other city. To round out these various aspects of musical creativity, Cowell and Thomson must be mentioned, though their music is of considerably lighter substance than that of their confrères. One can scarcely equate Cowell's piano tone clusters against the huge tonal structures encompassed by Varèse!

So it is that for the first time in our history we find American music keeping pace with the European scene and on both continents the 1920's manifest themselves in the musical arts as a decade of dazzling new ideas and works of truly seminal importance for the years to come. Interestingly enough, the modern composers of the Twenties, both in America and in Europe, had ample chance to hear their own works. Organizations like the International Composers' Guild and the League of Composers were operating at peak power, with magnetic conducting personalities like Stokowski in Philadelphia and Koussevitzky in Boston backing their efforts to the hilt.

With the 1930's we come to an era of reaction against the volcanic eruption of new tonal languages and forms of expression that characterized the preceding decade. The trend was worldwide in scope and in the totalitarian societies of Germany and Russia it assumed an official character, silencing in drastic fashion all tendencies toward "modernist" experimentation. Elsewhere the manifestations of this reaction were more varied and confusing. While Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and Bartók continued along their uncompromisingly individualistic paths, composers like Milhaud, Honegger, and Hindemith attempted to simplify their musical idiom whilst preserving their essential originality. During this same period, we find new composers coming on the scene who, almost as a form of protest against Stravinsky's classicism, sought to create newer means of expression without going back to traditional formulas. The young Igor Markevitch, Luigi Dallapiccola, Olivier Messiaen, and André Jolivet were the chief heralds of new things to come. In the field of contemporary music performance, the radio studio now began to replace the concert hall throughout much of Europe.

The manifestation of this general trend in the U. S. A. took on a yet different form. The genuinely original composers of the 1920's found themselves for the most part being forgotten, if one can say that their importance had ever been fully realized except by a discerning few like critic



Wallingford Riegger



Roger Sessions



Henry Cowell



Edgar Varèse



Carl Ruggles

Paul Rosenfeld. Varèse and Ruggles disappeared into a kind of limbo; Sessions and Riegger were little heard. Only Aaron Copland seemed to develop his style in accordance with the prevailing trend so that he emerged as the most consistently important of our composers during this second stage of musical growth in America. While adding a strong folkloristic color to his creative palette and simplifying certain other aspects of his musical expression, Copland still retained in his work a characteristic harmonic and sonic originality which made it impossible to confuse his scores with those of any other composer of the day.

With the ascendance of Copland, there emerged during the middle of the decade a number of new American composers who at present seem to constitute, from the standpoint of symphonic repertoire, the backbone of our concert music up to the present day. A distinctive new folkloristic aspect, reflecting the vast expanses of the West was introduced by the music of Oklahoma-born Roy Harris (1898-), whose work has also suffered at times from lack of structural cohesion. A further development of this trend appears in the music of New Yorker, William Schuman (1910-), but he succeeded in giving a more sharply defined form plus a strong dramatic force entirely his own. From New England arose Walter Piston (1894-) who carried on a tradition of refined French symphonism, but powerfully organized nonetheless. Then there was Samuel Barber (1910-), almost none of whose music has shown any distinctively American traits; and while he has leaned strongly toward traditionalism complete with varied influences, he has also proved to be one of our truly superb musical craftsmen. These are the composers whose music provided us at the beginning of the 1940's with a full self-awareness of our status as a sovereign musical nation.

This process was facilitated by the frequent performances given the works of these composers by Koussevitzky and others and by the beginning of substantial recording activity. It was during the latter part of this era, on the eve of World War II, that the names of David Diamond (1915-), Paul Creston (1906-), and Leonard Bernstein (1918-) began to assume an aura of significance in the contemporary American concert repertoire.

But now we must turn to consideration of certain crucial aspects of the musical situation as it developed during and just after the Second World War. The War years resulted in almost total cultural isolation between the European continent and America. The acknowledged European masters, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Bartók, Milhaud, and Hindemith, all took up residence on these shores and in the subsequent course of their teaching and of performances accorded their work, a whole younger generation of com-

posers came under their powerful influence. From 1945 on, it became clear that two main currents of compositional style were taking shape among these young composers—a neo-classic manner deriving from Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Copland; and a 12-tone style reflecting the teaching of Schoenberg in California and certain of his disciples. Though Bartók did no direct teaching of composition either here or in his native Hungary, there were more than a few American composers of the middle 1940's who became influenced by his music as it became more and more widely performed.

In Europe, the combination of wartime isolation, lack of contemporary music performances, and the absence of these all-powerful creative masters seemed to have brought about something like a destruction of the neo-classic "tradition" established during the 1920-40 era. True, Dallapiccola in Italy, now in his middle fifties, has developed a distinctive and mature 12-tone style; and Messiaen and Jolivet in France have gone their special ways in working out rhythmic and harmonic innovations. But the youngest generation of composers found themselves at the end of the War in a complete stylistic vacuum. For those who turned twenty-one at the time of the liberation, the music of the "mainstream" masters of the century had comparatively little significance. The first really modern music to be experienced by this youngest generation was that of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern—Viennese 12-tone wizards all. In a matter of a few years, 12-tone serialism became the order of the day for growing composers throughout the length and breadth of Europe.

It was in 1948 that I came to this country to live, and not long after it became obvious that what we had heard in Europe as *new* American music was actually that of an older generation. This music of Harris, Barber, Piston, Schuman, Creston, and even Copland sounded on the whole much too conservative for contemporary-music-oriented European ears in 1948. What I did find in this country after several months of intensive exploration was something quite different from what I had experienced in Europe. There were indeed younger composers working in terms of the most advanced musical techniques and compositional materials. However, it was not the policy among the cultural powers that be to display our *avant garde* works abroad. Serge Koussevitzky, though, was still active as conductor of his great Boston Symphony Orchestra and as founder of the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. He could still indulge in programs of American works in which the younger neo-classicists began to take their place alongside of the accepted masters whom Koussevitzky had introduced to the public in the 1930's. Then there was Dimitri Mitropoulos who in Minneapolis



William Schuman



Walter Piston



Samuel Barber



Roy Harris



Aaron Copland

and during his early years with the N. Y. Philharmonic took up the battle on behalf of a broader public understanding of 12-tone composers from Schoenberg and Berg to the younger men working in that idiom. During the years just after the War, the League of Composers and the I.S.C.M. (International Society for Contemporary Music) were still strong progressive forces. By 1952 it was apparent that we did have among us some few composers who, in terms of technical brilliance combined with creative power, could stand up against the best of their European contemporaries.

Pride of place, in my opinion, belongs to Elliott Carter who, though born in 1908, was late in gaining substantial recognition. While the works he wrote during the late Thirties and early Forties show some influences of Stravinsky and neo-classicism, his Cello Sonata (1947) and his *Minotaur* ballet (1948) represent a wholly individual and immensely powerful musical speech. Here we find the beginnings of Carter's subsequent development of subtle polyrhythmic patterns and a highly flexible use of variable metres; but such intellectual refinements enhance rather than vitiate the dramatic urgency of his music. A distinctive use of serial technique becomes manifest in the String Quartet of 1952 and the Variations for Orchestra (1955), commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra. Both are striking works of the most impressive individuality and expressive power; and they may well mark him as one of the most important composers anywhere in the world today. Indeed there is good reason to believe that certain novel technical elements in Carter's Quartet may have provided stimulus for some of the developments carried forward most recently by Pierre Boulez in France and Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne, Germany.

Leon Kirchner (1919-) is another major creative talent among the American composers who have come into their own during the last decade. Combining the strong expressive qualities of Bartók's music with the linear patterning of Berg and Schoenberg, together with metrical devices of his own, Kirchner has arrived at an individual and strongly urgent style of his own. The Piano Concerto, Toccata for Orchestra, String Trio, and Quartet No. 2 are among the most notable of his recent works.

Other composers among the post-War generation who must be taken account of are Ben Weber (1916-), whose 12-tone work follows more traditional lines; Milton Babbitt (1916-) whose works take the innovations of Webern as a point of departure; George Rochberg (1918-), an orthodox 12-toner with unmistakable expressive gifts; and finally Gunther Schuller (1925-) who, apart from having produced some very original concert works, has tried his

hand at combining 12-tone serialism and "jazz"—Milton Babbitt has also turned his hand to this.

A special word is in order at this point on behalf of Stefan Wolpe (1902-) who, since his arrival in this country from Germany twenty years ago, has become a singularly powerful teacher-composer. His own compositions cover a wide variety of forms and trace his development from a use of orthodox 12-tone technique in the 1930's to a highly individualized counterpoint as applied to every possible musical element. The trademarks of his style arise out of the expressive strength of his musical ideas, together with a structural design flexible enough to allow for soft and angular contours by turn. As a teacher he has strongly influenced some of the most gifted composers of the youngest generation. Two whose names have begun to come into prominence are Ralph Shapey and Keith Robinson.

The neo-classic side of the current American musical fence has also brought forward some very valuable new works. Typical among the most skillful composers in this vein is Alexei Haieff (1914-) whose Piano Concerto, Ballet in E, and Second Symphony can be counted among the best works of their kind to be written in recent years. Lukas Foss (1922-) and Harold Shapero (1920-) are two other Americans of neo-classic persuasion who have made notable contributions to the riches represented by today's American music. Arthur Berger (1912-), until recently a dyed-in-the-wool neo-classicist, most lately has followed the Stravinskian weather vane in a Webernian direction.

Above the hustle and bustle of these two main "schools" of present-day American composition still loom the giant figures of the 20's and 30's. As a matter of fact, the renewed post-War interest in *avant-garde* musical techniques has brought with it a demand for rehearsals and reevaluation of the music of those men who created such a stir in the 1920's—Varèse, Ruggles, Sessions, Riegger, and the early Copland. Meanwhile, Copland today in his Piano Fantasy has adopted certain aspects of serial technique and has turned his back on the more obvious elements of his folkloristic style of the 1930's. Sessions has completed a Third and Fourth symphony, as well as the beautifully expressive and inventive *Idyll of Theocritus* for soprano and orchestra (a Louisville commission). Riegger's new Fourth Symphony is only the latest in a remarkable series of scores to come from his pen within the last half-dozen years; while Edgar Varèse after years of silence has come into his own both in Europe and America, creating in his *Deserts* and *Poème Electronique* music of the most holdly advanced character, using both conventional and electronic means of tone production with

the most exciting results yet achieved in this field.

I have avoided until now discussing the field of American opera because here the American composer is still far behind his European colleague. Except for Gian-Carlo Menotti (1911-), still an Italian citizen and thus a "special case," only two composers to my way of thinking have achieved total mastery in the art of operatic composition. Hugo Weisgall (1912-), of Czech origin, has composed four operas—*The Tenor*, *The Stronger*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, and *Purgatory*. All except the full-length third of the series are one-acters. Weisgall's art impresses by its powerful synthesis of musical structure and dramatic urgency. The style is chromatically lyric with a very rich harmonic texture, together with Stravinsky-like rhythmic ideas.

Norman Dello Joio is the other American operatic composer of distinction. Both in *The Ruby* and in *The Trial at Rouen*, lyricism and dramatic strength join forces to create a powerful artwork. While his musical materials are based in tonality, Dello Joio makes use of a tightly knit harmonic and contrapuntal texture, rich in the extreme.

Oddly enough, Weisgall and Dello Joio have been almost totally neglected by our professional opera institutions. Broadcasting and the "workshops" have been the chief sources for production of their stage works.

Despite the good work of the recording companies—with the help of support from the Koussevitzky, and Fromm Foundations, the American Composers Alliance, and other groups; despite the fact that Leonard Bernstein as conductor of the N. Y. Philharmonic has embarked on a systematic concert revival of the controversial works of the 1920's; the fact still remains that one is hard put to find a single conductor of a major American orchestra who has assimilated the best of what our composers have created since the War.

There seems to be no willingness on the part of these gentlemen of the baton to educate their audiences to what is new in music by bringing the best of these new American works into the repertoire, not just for a "first-and-last" performance, but for the kind of repeated hearings that makes possible a stable evaluation based on reasonable familiarity.

Then there is that nagging question of the amount of rehearsal time allowed new works scheduled for concert premieres here in the U. S. A. Two rehearsals constitute par for the course with a new score; three amount to a minor miracle. An orchestra of virtuoso geniuses cannot hope to master a complex work like Elliott Carter's *Orchestral Variations* in this amount of rehearsal time. Thus are concert

audiences cut off from new music—however interesting and meritorious! If a reason can be found why New York has never heard the remarkable *Holidays* Symphony of Charles Ives in its entirety (though Minneapolis did some five years ago), here, in the rehearsal limitations, lies part of the answer.

Europe today presents a quite different situation for the composer working with the most advanced musical means, thanks in large measure to state-subsidized broadcasting establishments. There are conductors like Hans Rosbaud, Hermann Scherchen, and Bruuo Maderna for whom the most advanced music of Schoenberg or Dallapiccola is as Beethoven and Tchaikovsky to our American podium gentry. Publishers and writers are fully up on what composers are doing. When extra rehearsals are needed for a new difficult work scheduled for European broadcast performance, ways and means are usually at hand to provide them. The gifted European composer need feel no limitation in terms of developing new techniques of musical expression. Such is not the case in this country for a composer who wants to be widely performed. He had better be careful to see that his new work can meet the two-rehearsal limit for adequate performance—or else!

A situation of this kind can only be regarded with fear and wonderment; for with such limitations tacitly imposed on today's young American composers, we may find them resorting to three possible courses of action: 1) resignation to a limited standard of quality and daring when it comes to large-scale orchestral composition; 2) composing directly onto tape by electronic means, thus doing away with the need for performers and rehearsals altogether; 3) resignation to the Ivesian ivory tower, composing idealized tonal concepts for the future with neither thought nor hope of hearing the music in live performance.

It is up to the persons and organizations responsible for the channels of communication—concerts, broadcasting, recording, publishing—between the composer and the listening public to make sure that such a triple-threat does not become an actual and dismal reality.

• Abraham Skulsky came to these shores from his native Antwerp in 1948 and has been in the swim of contemporary music activity ever since as critic, program annotator, and feature writer—*Musical America*, *ACA Bulletin*, and others. He has been active both as composer and violinist and is presently at work on a book dealing with contemporary opera.



Hugo Weisgall



Leon Kirchner



Gunther Schuller



Elliott Carter

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STEREO via SONIC ENVIRONMENT

A home-use report on the new JBL-Ranger METREGON stereo speaker system

equipment/WARREN DeMOTTE

NOT every stereo enthusiast wants to be an "experimenter" in the field of speaker placement. The problem of fixing the relationship between stereo speakers is not solved merely by deciding upon the distance one should be from the other. In the normal use of two separate speaker systems, the trial and error method must be employed to obtain satisfactory results.

For some situations, stereo speakers have been designed that offer the maximum in flexibility.* Other systems propose possible alternatives** which are more effective in other situations and work out very well in certain living rooms. But regardless of the extra flexibility, the end result could never be predicted.

The James B. Lansing designers of the PARAGON and METREGON have sought to overcome all of the difficulties usually encountered in the selection and placement of stereo speakers by creating a stereo speaker system with a built-in "sonic environment." By combining direct speaker radiation

with a carefully calculated amount of reflected sound, they have achieved a means of producing optimum stereo sound from speakers in a fixed relationship—with excellent stereo spread, depth, and directionality.

In the very nature of the matter, such speaker systems must be large. The PARAGON measures no less than 106 inches in length and 24½ inches in depth. Its new little brother, the METREGON, is 30 inches tall, which is ordinary table height, extends only 22½ inches in depth and is just under 74 inches in length. These are impressive figures, but in view of the functions the unit performs, they are an assurance that every square and cubic inch of the METREGON has its purpose.

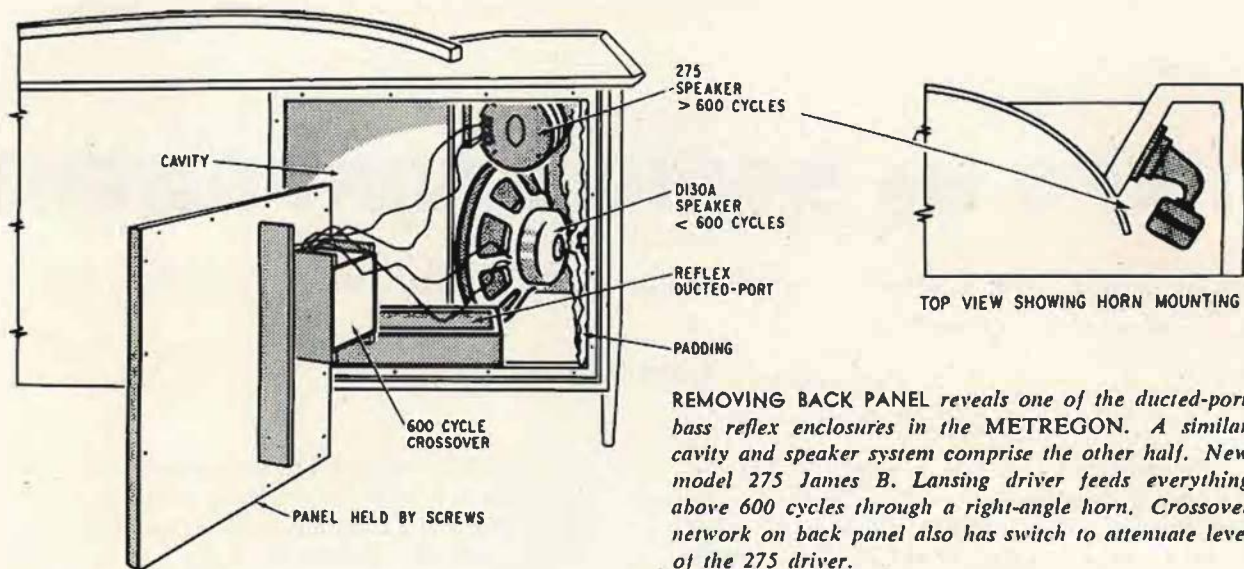
The graceful, curved panel between the two louvered grilles on the METREGON acts as a sound wave reflector. Its purpose is to diffuse and integrate the sound waves radiated by the two speaker systems mounted behind the grilles. Behind the curved panel is a huge padded cavity, divided by a rigid separator, which contains the two speaker systems. Each of these twin enclosures, with its ducted port, enables its own speaker system to operate at maximum efficiency.

* See "Stereo—With a Speaker and a Half," November 1958, p. 39.

** See "They Aim for Stereo," January 1959, p. 39.



TWO SPEAKER SYSTEMS are behind the louvered grilles—one right (visible), one left (hidden). The high frequencies making up the directional component are radially dispersed by the huge curved laminated panel.



REMOVING BACK PANEL reveals one of the ducted-port bass reflex enclosures in the METREGON. A similar cavity and speaker system comprise the other half. New model 275 James B. Lansing driver feeds everything above 600 cycles through a right-angle horn. Crossover network on back panel also has switch to attenuate level of the 275 driver.

Our particular METREGON employed the Model 130A 15-inch bass drivers, working in conjunction with the new JBL Model 275 high frequency drivers and H5040 exponential horns. The crossover point between the bass drivers and the high frequency drivers is established at 600 cycles.

While this is the optimum speaker system recommended for use with the METREGON, other James B. Lansing speakers and horns may be employed with very good results. In fact, the manufacturer indicates that the METREGON system can be built up, starting with two D130 full-range speakers.

Producing and distributing stereo sound through the "sonic environment" method—partly direct and partly reflected—is exceptionally effective in avoiding the "hole-in-the-middle" shortcoming that plagues many stereo systems. The well-balanced diffusion of sound from the two speaker systems blends the two stereo signals into a solid sound wall, while the direct-reflection principle maintains directionality without separating the points of sound-origin from the main body of sound. This provides the type of listening you would customarily expect to find in the concert hall, where primary directionality is from the stage, with the sound enveloping the listener rather than engaging him in a species of musical ping-pong.

While there is effective pinpointing of instruments within the METREGON'S deep wall of sound, such pinpointing does not become an end in itself. In our tests, we found that this balance between fusion and pinpointing permitted an easier, more relaxing relationship between the music and the listener, in effect making the listening area more spacious and less critical.

When driven by a monophonic signal, the METREGON deserves the appellation of "sensational." The sound seems to unfold and, oddly enough, take on much of the spatiality of stereo, frequently to a degree wherein it is hardly distinguishable from two-channel stereo.

The METREGON is also an extremely efficient system. Only a very small fraction of the rated output of the average stereo amplifier is utilized in normal operation. Hence, the results are almost identical regardless of whether it is driven by a 12 or 50-watt amplifier.

The character of the sound produced by the METREGON—stereo or mono—is bright, crisp and clear. There is an absence of the "cavern effect" noted in some bass reflex and

exponential horn systems. Transient response is very good and the over-all bass reproduction is firm, with no sign of mushiness. Instruments are sharply delineated and speech is natural and free from sibilance.

In their pursuit of the ideal in an integrated stereo speaker system, the JBL designers of the METREGON have achieved considerable success. They had the option of striving for the maximum sound separation possible with a given physical distance between speakers. However, their decision was rather in favor of a maximum sound spread coupled with center fill growing out of the original speakers in a natural fusion, an acoustic principle the company terms "radial refraction."

There is an integrity in this concept that is refreshing to the serious audiophile who looks for quality before all else. Here, quality has been maintained as well as conditions met. The METREGON is an easy stereo speaker system to live with and enjoy. And, given adequate wall space, its handsome, beautifully crafted cabinetry is indeed a decorator's delight.

—Warren DeMotte



IN HEIGHT and depth—Length speaks for itself—the METREGON measures a little less than an average floor-standing system with identical speakers.

THE PRIMAL ELOQUENCE OF PABLO CASALS

feature review/DAVID HALL

● **BACH:** 6 Suites for Unaccompanied Cello—No. 1 in G Major; No. 2 in D Minor; No. 3 in C Major; No. 4 in E-flat; No. 5 in C Minor; No. 6 in D Major. Pablo Casals. Angel COLH 16/18 \$5.98 each

● **DVOŘÁK:** Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104. Pablo Casals with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, George Szell cond. Angel COLH 30 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Dvořák—for everyone
Bach—for Bachians & Casals/dolators
Performance: Unique and irreplaceable
Recording: Pre-LP best

If the more than three dozen Columbia LPs issued from the festivals at Perpignan, Prades, and Puerto Rico can be called the artistic testament of Pablo Casals the complete musician, it is these four remarkable Angel reissues which reveal the essence of Casals the supreme artist of the violoncello.

The great Catalan had just passed his 60th birthday when he began this series of recordings by committing to disc in London the Second and Third of the Bach Solo Suites. That was on November 23, 1936. Casals' native country was already torn by civil war and Franco was besieging Madrid. April of the following year found Casals in Prague recording the Dvořák Concerto with George Szell and the Czech Philharmonic. The remaining four Bach suites were recorded in Paris—in June of 1938 and in June of 1939. By the time the last sessions were done, Franco's German "technicians" and Italian "volunteers" had staged their victory parade through the ruins of Madrid. If one senses an almost demonic intensity of phrasing in these recorded performances there is ample reason for it.

Unlike the Prades and Perpignan discs, some of which seem to have been recorded under makeshift conditions, the originals of these Angel LPs were done in the most ideal recording studio environment. They sounded that way when first issued in 78 rpm format. Thanks to the loving care with which Angel's Paris engineers have accomplished the transfer to LP, they still sound that way. Despite the lack of overtones that characterize today's hi-fi reproduction, it is astounding how much of the presence of the man and his instrument has been preserved. So much the better that Casals should have been at the peak of his artistic and technical powers.

The Casals version of Dvořák's lush Cello Concerto still remains unique in its dramatic intensity, its lyrical fervor, and in utter perfection of orchestral collaboration. This is not only one of the greatest of all Casals recordings, it is very possibly the finest work ever done on discs by the Czech Philharmonic and by George Szell. Hearing the initial cello entry on the Angel disc still carries with it the overwhelming impact that it did back in 1938 when I heard the RCA Victor 78's for the first time. Of the more than half-dozen "modern" recordings of the music, that by the extraordinary Janos Starker (available on Angel stereo and "mono") represents the most formidable solo competition; but there is no George Szell and the Czech Philharmonic on hand to provide an orchestral backdrop of comparable excitement and color.

It is young Starker who also provides (on Perind 542 and 583) the most interesting point of comparative reference to Casals in the Bach solo suites. These works offer neither the weight nor the complexity of the Leipzig master's stupendous solo violin sonatas and partitas; but there are some lovely



PABLO CASALS was just past 60 when he began the recordings newly re-issued by Angel.

individual movements scattered throughout the entire set. My own personal preferences are for the grave No. 5 in C Minor and the exuberantly virtuosic No. 6 in D Major (this last was written in actuality for the higher-pitched *viola pomposa*, so that anyone playing the music on the solo cello has to spend a lot of time skating on thin ice in the upper register). Casals himself introduced these six suites into the active repertoire back in 1908, creating a sensation at the time; for only he among the cellists of that day had developed an agile enough bowing and fingering technique to make such unaccompanied music palatable to the ear.

In general Starker tends toward faster tempi and a somewhat lighter tone. Where Starker is elegant, Casals is earthy. It is the synthesis of weight, line, and tension that appears to be the secret of the Catalan's unique artistry. Indeed, this type of artistry seems to have disappeared almost completely among the younger artists of our own time. They are more pre-occupied with agility and perfection for their own sake.

Be this as it may, Casals' "weighting" of a phrase seems to stem from an essentially organic conception—that the principle of inherent vitality in the psycho-biological sense shall have priority over mere musicological considerations, and on occasions even over the letter of the score. How else explain the daring freedom of Casals' phrasing? At the hands of any lesser master, it would sound downright eccentric. Harpsichordist Wanda Landowska (one year Casals' junior) is the one other major artist of our time who successfully exhibits a similar daring. Others, like pianist Artur Schnabel and conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, have carried off the trick from time to time. It will be interesting to see whether the art of truly organic musical phrasing will come into its own again. What a welcome relief that would be from the merely efficiently musicological or virtuosic! Cellist Janos Starker together with pianists Glenn Gould and Van Cliburn are some of the young artists to watch.

While these four Angel discs represent the very cream of the Casals recorded performances of the pre-microgroove era—particularly as an ideal combination of interpretation and sonics—we hope that there will be more re-issues forthcoming, in particular the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas.

—David Hall

Letters of Mark

fiction / WARREN DeMOTTE

Enroute to Paris
May 8, 1958

Dear Mabel:

Would you believe it—I'm on my way to Europe! Mr. Hemmlein's secretary eloped and he chose me to make the trip with him. He's our new A & R man at Syncratic Records. His full name is Otto Royce Hemmlein.

A & R stands for Artists and Repertory. They decide what music the company should record and the artists who will perform them. In some companies, the A & R man doesn't do all the deciding; for sometimes the boss's wife butts in and then the A & R man has trouble and maybe finds himself out of a job.

At Syncratic, Mr. Hemmlein does the deciding. He's a genius and the bosses know it. He is going to Europe to record Syn.'s winter releases. Someone told him about a young pianist who Mr. Hemmlein's going to make into another Horowitz or Rubinstein. This pianist is a young fellow from one of those Iron Curtain countries and he escaped not so long ago. We're going to meet him in Zimmer-am-Amster, a little town near where Mr. H. was born.

Mr. H. wants to record him there because he doesn't want the other record companies to find out how this fellow plays or what he's going to record for us. Mr. H. doesn't want the other companies to discover his recording secrets. He has his own way of recording so it sounds better than anybody else's. He doesn't want our competitors to know how he does it and I'm not supposed to tell anybody. He won't even tell me the pianist's name.

We're going to stay in Paris two or three days while our tape recording equipment goes on ahead to Zimmer-am-Amster. Then we'll drive out and get to work. Mr. H. is real energetic. He can work right through a whole week with hardly any sleep or time off for eating or anything. He's awfully handsome, a real dreamboat, about 6 foot one with wavy hair. I wonder if he's married. He never talks about personal matters; he's all business. He's very dynamic, knows just what he wants and makes sure he gets it.

I'll tell you all about everything when I have a few free moments.

Remember me to the gang.

Au revoir,
Allison

Zimmer-am-Amster
May 14, 1958

Dear Mabel:

This town is just like a postcard. There's the river down below, and beautiful fields and mountains right in back of us. We have all our tape equipment in a lovely old building they call a schloss—that means castle—it's small but very old and has a very large room that Otto (Mr. Hemmlein) uses as a recording studio. It's filled with microphones and two big tape recorders and two tremendous grand pianos.

The rooms in the schloss don't have the conveniences of home, but they are very clean. Otto's room is across the hall,

HiFi REVIEW



"IT SOUNDED HIGH AND BRILLIANT and Otto's eyes started to gleam. He was excited."

next to Howard Wemley's—he's the piano tuner and more or less Otto's assistant—he's a mousey sort of fellow.

Next to Mr. Wemley's room is Shibi Ornu'd's room. That's the name of that pianist I was telling you about. Otto says he will be a sensation.

We got to work as soon as we unpacked our clothes. The first thing, Mr. Wemley tuned the pianos. There are these two big grands plus a small upright. The upright won't be used for recording. It's just for reference and Mr. Wemley tuned it first. Otto told him how he wanted it tuned, exactly to 440 A. That's the standard pitch that practically all pianos and other instruments are tuned to for concert purposes. It means that the middle A on the piano vibrates 440 times or cycles per second when it is struck. Gee, isn't science wonderful!

Otto then told Mr. Wemley to tune one of the grands with the A at 350 cycles. Mr. W. said he had never heard a piano tuned so low, but Otto told him to go ahead. If you ever heard Otto give an order, you know that Mr. W. went right to work and tuned it just as Otto wanted. Otherwise, there would have been fireworks and Mrs. Wemley's husband would have been out of a job.

When Mr. W. finished tuning this piano, Otto had Shibi play some scales first on the upright and then on the grand. They sure sounded different. The grand sounded so deep that Shibi Ornu'd said it was hard to get used to playing it.

Then Otto told Wemley to tune the other grand, only he wanted it tuned very high, about 550 cycles for the A. Mr. W. said the strings might not take it, but Otto told him to go right ahead. Mr. W. wasn't happy about it but he couldn't argue with Otto. He tuned it high. A few strings snapped but he replaced them.

Otto told Shibi to play something. It sounded high and brilliant and Otto's eyes started to gleam. He was excited. You could see he had something important in mind. I wouldn't want to get into an argument with him when he looks like that. Of course, I wouldn't get into an argument with him about anything.

Anyhow, they set the mikes around the pianos and started up the tape machines. It took more than an hour to set the mikes to Otto's satisfaction. They'd set one and play a few notes on the piano and then they'd play them back on the tape machine and Otto would move the mike another inch or so. He's so particular; everything must be just right.

After the longest time, Otto finally said, "I've got it," and I knew we were ready. I was almost dying with excitement.

Otto then told Shibi to play a scale on the low-tuned piano as fast as he could. Ornu'd's fingers ran up and down the keyboard and I thought it was very fast, but Otto said, "You're slow, boy." He was smiling when he said it so I wasn't sure he really meant it was slow.

Next he told Shibi to play the same scale slowly on the high piano, but play it legato. That means the notes are tied together so they won't sound choppy. Ornu'd played the same thing on the high-pitched piano that he played on the low one, but it certainly sounded different. When he finished, Otto patted him on the shoulder and told him, "We'll slow you down, boy; don't you worry."

Shibi looked confused. You could see he did not understand. Neither did I. But Otto played back the tape of the two scales that Shibi had just played. They sounded fine, just like the originals.

Otto fiddled with the knobs and levers on the tape machines. They are special machines, with a lot of secret

features that Otto had built into them. When he finished adjusting the machines, he told us to listen carefully while he played back both of the scales.

Suddenly the music started and Mabel, I swear you never heard such a brilliant scale in your whole life. It was as fast as lightning, yet every note was just so, clean as could be. Then the slow scale started, and Mabel, it was slower than slow. You'd swear no pianist could play that slow and still have one note tied to the other.

Then I realized the pitch of both scales was the same! What I mean is originally, the slow scale had sounded much higher than the fast one. Now both scales sounded alike.

Mr. Wemley yelled that Otto had done it, but Shibi Ornu'd just sat there. He was flabbergasted.

Well, there we had it. An example of pure genius by the greatest A & R man in the business. Was I ever proud!

None of this fazed Otto. He got right down to business. He and Mr. W. loaded the tape machines with fresh tape and then Otto told Shibi to sit down at the low piano and start playing the *Hammerklavier* Sonata by Beethoven. Just like that! Mabel, that *Hammerklavier* Sonata is about 45 minutes long and it's ever so hard to play. But there you are. The first recording Shibi Ornu'd is making for Syn. Records and it's no less than the *H.* Sonata.

What a day! Ornu'd played the Sonata through on the low piano, stopping every time he hit a clinker and playing that part over. They patch up the bad spots easily on tape. Then Otto made him play sections at a time, first at one speed, then at another.

Got to close now. I'm bushed. Write you tomorrow.

Love,
Allison

Zimmer-am-Amster
May 16, 1958

Dear Mabel:

We didn't finish recording the *H.* Sonata yesterday. Ornu'd was too tired after about 6 hours of steady playing. After 4 hours at the low-pitched piano, he had to do it all over again on the high-pitched piano. No wonder he was pooped. We all were, except Otto. He's made of steel, I think. He wasn't at all tired, just pepped up.

Today, they worked hour on hour, and believe me, it is work. At about 3 P.M., Otto said that was it. Shibi went out and Otto and Mr. W. made safety copies of everything they had taped and then Otto set to work editing one complete performance of the *Hammerklavier*. He shoosed us all out of the schloss, telling us to go into the village and see a movie or something, just so long as we didn't return until about 10 o'clock. Otto likes to do his editing alone.

Just before we went out, I was alone with Otto for a few minutes and I asked him what he thought of Shibi's playing.

"It stinks!" he said. "But that doesn't matter. When I get through with these tapes, you'll hear the best performance of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata anybody ever heard. This kid can't play for beans, but when we finish the record, the critics'll turn handsprings and hail him as a Horowitz, Rubinstein and Rachmaninoff rolled into one."

In the village, Shibi, Mr. W. and I wandered around a while and then dropped into an inn for dinner and a couple of beers. I'll tell you all about that some other time. Right

(Continued on page 50)



HAVE PIPE ORGAN CAN'T MOVE

Wurlitzer vs. Baroque

history/ROBERT HAZELLEAF

Part II of Two Parts

WHO is responsible for the sound of an organ? That is where the artisan leaves off and the artist begins.

Each manufacturer employs a *tonal designer*. He is responsible for layout of the pipe blueprints for a specific installation and the ultimate quality. A good man is as jealously guarded as a Milwaukee brewmaster.

When pipes are made, using methods little changed in a millenium, they are given to a *voicer*. He does the finish tuning along with bringing out the exact tonal nuances desired: keen string, soft string, strident reed or plaintive oboe.

On flute pipes, the voicer will gently notch the languid, lovingly bend the metal here and there; on reeds he will burnish and curve the reed itself, performing other operations known only to him. He must match tone quality in sets going up to 96 pipes, along with volume of sound. The delicate shadings brought by partials or overtones must be balanced.

When the voicer is done, the completed instrument is set up on the builder's floor for a complete checkout. The man responsible is a *finisher*, who must meld the instrument into a cohesive, pleasing blend of sound. W. H. Barnes, in his book, *The Contemporary American Organ*, says that finishers are a temperamental lot. They are sometimes lovers of the fermented grape, and not without reason—theirs is a tremendously nerve-racking job. Barnes goes on to say that more than once an organ-builder has had to hunt for his finisher, then dry him out before he could be put to work.

When his job is done, all circuitry checked, and the organ given a complete run-through, it is taken down and shipped to the buyer. It will weigh many tons, made as it is from 5,000 pipes or more if a large church or auditorium instrument. Each pipe must be carefully guarded against dents or other damage. Any slight mar or blemish can frequently change the delicate tonal balance.

On church instruments especially, there is the additional task of designing a suitable case. Some of these are great works of art, serving to set off large speaking pipes at the front of the organ. Heavy tomes have been written about casework alone, delving into acoustics as well as looks.

HIFI REVIEW

Early in the 18th century, the romantic outlook first began to make itself felt in the arts. The pipe organ was not immune to the movement. Composers from Mozart onward began to tear themselves from classic form. Gradually, the organs became partners in this movement with the addition of purely orchestral-imitative voices—much to the chagrin of the classicists. It became during the next century a period of high-voltage dissension among composers and keyboard artists alike. The outcome was the ascendancy of the romantic “orchestral oriented” organ. Previously the organ had been limited almost exclusively to the music for oratorios. Recitals were compounded of this music. Exemplifying a dogma still very much in existence, organists said, “Nothing should be played on the pipe organ that is not expressly written for that instrument. Down with transcriptions of symphonic themes, operatic works, and especially music composed for piano!”

In reality, the classic group may have had little room to quibble. They might have remembered that it was a long time after the invention of the organ before the church accepted it. There was plenty of dissension too, because early in their history the first water organs had been employed in the Roman amphitheaters to accompany the gladiators—and the throwing of Christians to the lions. The organ was little more than a calliope-type noise box then, but in Nero’s time the public taste in entertainment was also crude.

These modern instruments incorporate many voices originated by the romanticists, though opinion is still sharply divided. We’ve mentioned the theater organ (Part I, p. 41, *HtFt REVIEW*, March '59), but what makes it different from any other instrument? Many details, all of them roundly cursed by classicists.

In a book published in 1934 in England, A. C. Delacourt de Brisay says: “. . . that it should ever pass under the term of organ is, I repeat, to travesty and degrade a name which five centuries and more of sanctified effort have made hallowed in the annals of music. Those who wish to go to a musical perdition should do so to the tune of an instrument bearing a name other than that of organ; or be made conscious of the sin of sacrilege.” Opinionated, isn’t he? That general thought was and is shared by organ builders and musicians. It will never be decided who is right, of course. Some people like green olives, others prefer ripe.

Blame or credit for the theater type instrument most certainly goes, in large measure, to Robert Hope-Jones. He was an Englishman who was both electrical engineer and organ builder. As a businessman, he was destitute much of the



ROBERT HOPE-JONES—
created the high-powered
orchestral organ.

time. His association with organ companies here and abroad was marked by a trail of financial losses, lawsuits, firings and hirings, and finally his suicide. His genius, however, has its monument in thousands of pipe organs.

In an early demonstration of his newly designed electro-pneumatic action, about 1886, he played on a console among the tombstones in a churchyard. The organ and audience were inside the church. Hope-Jones had a decided flair for the dramatic.

He designed many new kinds of pipes, among them *tibia clausa*, “sobbing flute,” and *kinura*, both dear to the hearts of theater organists. He also used leathery lips on some voices to accommodate the great increase in wind pressure he pioneered.

The old Wurlitzers bear the legend on the nameplate: “Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra.” The idea was to make an organ that would provide an orchestra at the fingers and feet of the organist. “Unifying” meant the borrowing of pipes from one set to combine with others, thus making “new sounds” as well as duplicating single voices of the classic organ. Hope-Jones went a step further with coupling, making it possible for the artist to use practically any stop set-up on any manual, from top to pedals.

The result was to give the theater organ, even one of two manuals and eight or 10 ranks of pipes, the sound and versatility of a much larger instrument. And don’t you dare mention a fully unified organ to builders of classic organs. There are instances, for economy’s sake, where churches buy partially unified instruments, but some builders fight them every inch of the way. The electrical work added on a unified organ is more than offset by the saving in pipework.

Some of Hope-Jones non-controversial ideas are used today on classic organs. The electric action, a swell shutter he invented, and a few other brain-children have proved a boon to overworked organists.

For theater music, you’ve got to have traps. Any percussion gimmick that can be actuated by striking with a blunt object or blown is fair game: climes, bells, pianos, drums, marimbas, vibraharp, sleigh bells, train whistle, Klaxon horn, you name it. The theater man in the silent movie days handled sound effects as well as mood music.

The semi-circular arrangement of stop tablets at the console is a strictly theater organ innovation. It’s an efficient arrangement for the artist who had to keep one eye on the screen and one on the music, if any.

There are *crescendo* pedals and *sforzando* pedals. Sometimes found on church organs, the former, when depressed, gradually bring more pipes into play to increase volume and effect. The *sforzando* pedal does the same thing—not gradually, but *right now*.

Another cute trick is “second touch.” Certain stops are designed as such. The organist plays with normal finger pressure until he needs to bring different voices into play. Depressed beyond the first set of key-springs, the keys drop down, engaging whatever is set up on second-touch stops.

Besides all this, there are combination *pistons*, used on practically all types of larger organs today. The artist selects the stops desired for a passage, then punches the piston located under the proper manual or above the pedals. This he may do for each change until he runs out of pistons. The little gadgets, when pressed again, cancel previous settings and engage the new voices immediately. Occasionally, the pffut-pffut can be heard on a hi-fi theater organ recording as piston changes are made. Some recording companies ask the

artist to set the stops manually, pausing in the session. The gap is later edited out.

An outstanding difference between church and theater organs is in wind pressure. Classic organs do very well on from 2½ to 7½ inches of pressure on a water gauge. On a theater monster, that wouldn't make a peep. They usually start at 7½ inches, running as high as 25 on some of the really big ones. Hope-Jones designed an organ at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, on 50 inches of wind for the large pipes, which were bolted down to keep them in the loft.

Early builders experimented with attaining a tremolo effect for certain *vox humana* stops, then carried the idea to the whole organ. They tried fan-type heaters to disrupt the air flow; tuning pipes slightly off-pitch; and weighted bellows into which the main air supply for a wind chest was diverted. This, too, was a bone of contention among the classicists. They wanted nothing to do with such schemes. The theater organ took the weighted bellows to its bosom. It "shakes" the wind supply, and when two or more are used together, gives us the lush sound found only on the picture house giants.

The theater organist of the silent film era was a busy fellow. Sometimes he would have the advantage of a prior run-through of the filmed feature, but frequently he saw the picture for the first time in a crowded theater. Cue sheets were furnished, but more often than not the organist was flying blind, ready to improvise a passage for a scene or call on his memory for *Hearts and Flowers*.

Bob Mitchell, of boys' choir fame, says many of the early theater men didn't read music at all. The trick was to rush downtown to hear Jesse Crawford or another top artist play a matinee so they could use the same new material on their evening programs. This silent film tradition was responsible for the flamboyant, colorful sound we hear today when the "old pros" take a turn at the console in a recording session.

If you're looking for someone to build a theater organ, give it up. The two largest builders have long since given up the ghost. Wurlitzer closed its pipe organ department in the early '40s. One of the last of the Wurlitzers made virtually the last boat to England in the early days of World War II. Another grand old name, Robert Morton, is heard no more. From something like 6,000 theater instruments that graced the silent movie houses during the palmy days, the number has dwindled to little more than a score of first class instruments in regular use across the country.

Some traditional organ manufacturers strayed into the theater field, but their primary customers have always been

churches. Among these were Skinner, Kilgen, Moller, Austin, Marr & Colton, to name a few. Their combined output in the motion-picture field probably totaled far less than either Morton, with about 1800 installations, and Wurlitzer, with about 2500. Theater chains ordered from the latter firms not only by model number, but by the dozen!

Then came the debacle. When "talkies" made their appearance, it was as though someone had turned the blowers off of nearly every theater organ in the country. "Why," said theater owners, "pay good money for music when it's already on the film?" Partly due to maintenance costs, most theaters merely let their organs wear out, after using them only for pre-program and intermission music. The records being made today depend on the Hub Rink in Chicago, the Paramount Theater in New York, Radio City Music Hall, the Byrd Theater and Mosque Auditorium in Richmond, Virginia, to name a handful.

Much of the credit for today's fine recordings belongs to individuals who have had theater organs dismantled for installation in their homes or studios. A goodly number of these individuals belong to the nation-wide American Association of Theater Organ Enthusiasts or the Los Angeles Theater Organ Club. The AATOE is composed of some 750 members—organists, music lovers and technicians. The Los Angeles group embraces about 300 paid-up members drawn from the same cross-section.

Whenever a theater organ is about to be torn out, club members hear the cry on their private frequency and immediately try to find someone to save it. They have been successful. George Wright uses an organ from the Paradise Theater, Chicago, owned by Richard Vaughn of Los Angeles, who, incidentally, is the mentor of HiFi Records. Wright, Gordon Kibbee (Omegatape), Don Baker (Capitol) and others have used a 4-manual Morton from a Redwood City, California, theater now owned by Lorin Whitney Studios in Glendale. Other organs are spotted across the country, making music instead of food for mice.

Now, how about the music itself? Never did a devotee of either theater "pops" or classical music have such a wide field to choose from. Take a more-than-passing glance at the organ selections available in any large record shop. You will see over two hundred good LPs waiting to be placed on your turntable. Along with the theater organs, there are scores of excellent classics made on some of the finest instruments in the world. As this issue goes to press, over fifty theater organ stereo discs are on the market, as well as a substantial number of classic organ recordings in the new medium.

The labels on the latter read like an itinerary for a trip around the world. Organs in France, England, Holland, Germany, and stops in between are represented. Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company has a series of fourteen records entitled "King of Instruments," made on their installations across the country from San Francisco to New York, and available on the Washington label.

Stereo fans should come into their own in the near future. With an eye to the future, several companies recorded on stereo tape, "just in case." Undoubtedly, many of these releases will be put out on stereophonic discs, as well as tape.

Maybe you haven't gone in much for classical organ music. Now you can break in gently, starting with lighter works and developing a taste for the more aesthetically advanced compositions. Admittedly, some music requires getting used to, but so does a taste for rocquefort! —Robert Hazelleaf



E. POWER BIGGS—
spearheads revival of
the classic instrument.



MAIL - CALL FOR STEREO

New features and circuits in "mail-order" stereo tuners

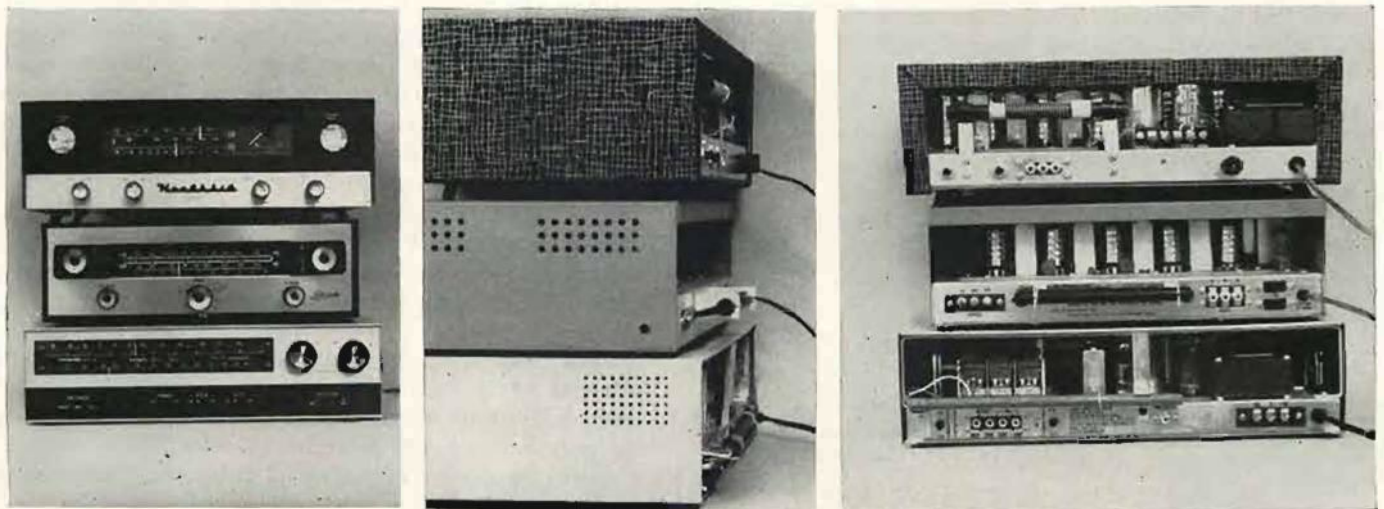
equipment/HANS H. FANTEL

THIS is an article about three stereo AM/FM tuners. The one thing that they have in common is that they are all "house brands" distributed by mail-order firms with the aid of catalogs. One of them is available only as a kit (Heathkit PT-1), another as a pre-wired, preassembled model (Allied Radio "Knight KN-120"), while the last is offered both ways—kit or pre-assembled (Lafayette KT-500 or LT-50).*

Combining two separate tuners on one chassis—one for

* Both Allied Radio and Lafayette also sell virtually every brand of custom-made stereo tuner—in addition to their exclusive house brands.

AM, the other for FM—is by far the most convenient and economical way to receive stereophonic AM/FM broadcasts. Now that a wide repertoire of stereo recordings is coming into existence, numerous *good music stations* in the major metropolitan areas are devoting increased time to such broadcasts. The self-contained stereo tuner obviates the cost and complexity of separate AM and FM tuners. Unlike conventional AM/FM tuners, they permit separate tuning of each section and provide separate signal outputs for AM and FM. This allows the audiophile with stereo equipment to receive simul-



HOW THEY STACK UP—three house-brand mail-order stereo tuners pictured here represent unique dollar values. Heathkit (top), Lafayette (center) and Knight (bottom) are similar in physical size. Each tuner has a ferrite rod antenna for built-in AM reception. On the Lafayette and Knight it overhangs the chassis but, on the Heath, is located on top of the chassis deck. The Knight ferrite rod may be swiveled to secure maximum AM signal pickup—a good idea according to our tests. Heath is only tuner that is fused for maximum circuit protection. Lafayette has two accessory a.c. sockets controlled from front panel—along with level adjustments of AM and FM output.

MAIL-ORDER STEREO TUNERS

(Based on data and specifications supplied by the manufacturer)

Make & Model	Mail-Order Address	Price	No. of Tubes	Availability	Tuning Indication	Multiplex Output	Size in inches
Heathkit PT-1	Heath Company Benton Harbor 40 Mich.	\$89.95	16 plus silicon rectifiers	kit only	single meter	yes	4½h x 15w x 12½d
Knight KN-120	Allied Radio 100 N. Western Avenue Chicago 80, Ill.	\$129.50	12 plus rectifier and tuning indicators	pre- assembled only	separate cathode beam tubes	yes	4¾h x 15¾w x 13½d
Lafayette KT-500 (kit) LT-50 (pre-assembled)	Lafayette Radio 165-08 Liberty Avenue Jamaica 33, New York	\$74.50 (kit) \$124.50 (pre- assembled)	11 plus tuning eye and selenium rectifier	kit or pre- assembled	single cathode ray "eye"	yes	4½h x 13¾w x 10¾d

taneously the AM signal through one channel and the FM signal through the other channel.

Stereo by radio was actually the first two-channel sound ever reproduced in the home. Years before stereo discs and tapes made two-channel reproduction the modern norm, enterprising broadcasters were already linking AM and FM transmitters for what was then called "binaural" transmission. In those early days, the only available stereo material was live concerts.

Now that the bottleneck in stereo sources has been broken with such spectacular success, there is no doubt that the trend toward stereo broadcasting is gaining rapid momentum.

With stereo broadcasting still in its infancy, some might hesitate to buy stereo tuners at this time. It has been pointed out that stereo broadcasting is inherently unbalanced because of the different characteristics of the AM and FM channels in regard to frequency response, dynamic range, and signal-to-noise ratio. For these reasons they look forward to the replacement of AM/FM stereo by some form of multiplex transmission.**

But this distant prospect is no reason to put off the purchase of a stereo tuner. All tuners are designed with an eye to the future. Multiplex outputs are provided on all models. Whatever type of multiplex may finally become the national norm, present tuners will accommodate the proper adapters. In this sense, they are fully obsolescenceproof. Meanwhile, stereo tuners are the royal road to the enjoyment of presently available AM/FM stereo broadcasts as well as conventionally transmitted radio programs.

All three of these "house-brand" mail-order tuners are quality products capable of very fine performance. Each is highly individual in concept, differing from the others in design and circuitry. For this reason it may be helpful to compare the technical aspects of these tuners.

** See "The Flip Side," this issue, p. 90.

What Is the AM Circuitry?

Heath: An exceptionally well-engineered circuit design with equivalent 7-tube performance. Selective tunable r.f. stage and rigidly mounted ferrite rod antenna atop the rear of the chassis. Two-position bandwidth switch and coil arranged in plate circuit of the 6BE6 mixer—controlled from the front panel. Two i.f. stages, first stage fully a.v.c. controlled, second stage ½ controlled. Novel push-pull crystal diode AM detector reduces possible r.f. and audio distortion. Also simplifies filtering out residual i.f. signal. Highly effective bridged T-notch filter removes 10 kc. whistle without undue loss of quality. Separate a.v.c. voltage amplifier and delayed a.v.c. rectifier. Bandwidth is 6 db. down at 14 kc. ("Narrow") and 20 kc. ("Broad"). Image ratio is more than 55 db. and harmonic distortion is less than 1%. Tuning meter (set for maximum swing) switched into circuit on "AM" and "Stereo" positions. Very sensitive tuning indicator driven by separate voltage amplifier. Also has cathode follower output and provision for adding single-wire AM antenna.

Knight: Basic 4-tube circuit with one tube having two sets of elements (3-tube total). Tuned r.f. stage with ferrite rod antenna, 6BE6 combination mixer-oscillator, single i.f. stage using one half of a dual purpose 6AS8 tube. Half-wave diode AM detector uses second section of above tube. Rod antenna mounted on pivot and may be swiveled away from tuner and

Your Opinion Please

This article has been made more "technical" in comparison with material of this nature we have previously published. The editors would appreciate your comments on the value of this article and whether or not we should follow the editorial procedures outlined here.

chassis to secure maximum AM signal pickup. Three-position *bandwidth* switch peaks high frequency audio response while simultaneously lowering Q of rod antenna in r.f. stage grid circuit when in "Broad" position. Intermediate steps of "Med" and "Sharp" lessen above effects. Nominal frequency response flat from 50-7000 cycles. Built-in LC filter removes 10 kc. whistle. Separate tuning indicator (EM84 tube) turned on when function switch is moved to "AM" position. Also has cathode follower output and provisions to add single-wire AM antenna.

Lafayette: Essentially the same circuit as the Knight. However, ferrite rod antenna is rigidly mounted to rear skirt of chassis. No provision is made to control AM bandwidth characteristics. Bandwidth is reported to be 6 db. down at 8 kc. Utilizes 6U5 tuning eye—same one switched between AM and FM sections by front panel control. Also has cathode follower output and provision for adding single-wire AM antenna.

What Is the FM Circuitry?

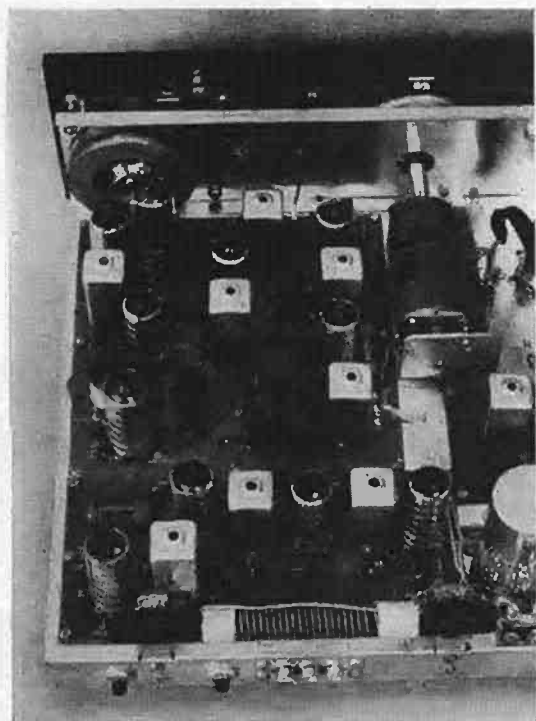
Heath: Essentially an 11-tube circuit counting the double-purpose tubes in the front end. Special antenna coil arrangement built into the a.c. line permits good signal pickup in moderately strong signal areas. Tuned r.f. stage is cascade-coupled 6BS8 into a 6AB4 triode mixer from a 12AT7 reactance modulator (for a.f.c.) and local oscillator. I.f. strip consists of five 6AU6 tubes—four of which operate as limiters. With a weak signal only the true 6AU6 limiter goes into action, but with increasing signal strength, consecutive limiting in three of the previous i.f. stages occurs. A wide-band discriminator (with multiplex takeoff), tuning meter, amplifier and cathode follower (latter tubes not included in above total) finish up the circuit. Full quieting occurs at 20 μ v. input, 20 db. quieting at 2.0 μ v. R.f. and i.f. sections—less discriminator—are pre-aligned to simplify wiring. Printed circuits used throughout.

Knight: A 9-tube circuit with a tuned 6CB6 r.f. stage (pentode-operated), 6AB4 mixer and 12AT7 oscillator/reactance modulator (for a.f.c.) followed by two 6CB6 i.f. stages and two 6AU6 limiters. Foster-Seeley discriminator, cathode-follower output, and EM84 tuning indicator complete the circuit. Most novel feature is the addition of what Knight calls its "Dynamic Sideband Regulator" (DSR), which improves quality of overmodulated or very weak FM signals. May be switched in or out of the circuit. When an FM station overmodulates, the DSR circuit feeds a small voltage from the discriminator back to the local oscillator. This reduces the frequency deviation by wobbling the oscillator to counteract the overmodulation effect. Disadvantage of DSR is in the need to switch it out of circuit when tuning from station to station. However, DSR principle is valid and quite valuable in areas where most FM signals are very weak (it cuts back on noise picked up with the signal), or are heavily overmodulated. Sensitivity rated at 2.5 μ v. for 20 db. of quieting. IM distortion with DSR switched on is less than 2% at 130% modulation—a most remarkable figure substantiated in our tests. Has a multiplex takeoff jack.

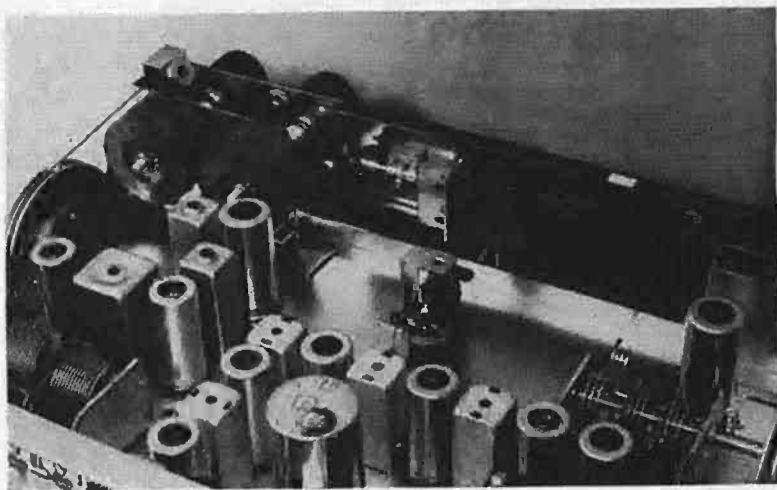
Lafayette: Also a 9-tube circuit with a grounded-grid r.f. stage (6AW8), triode mixer, and 6BK7B oscillator/reactance modulator (for a.f.c.). Two 6BA6 i.f. stages, two 6AU6 limiters and Foster-Seeley discriminator. Cathode follower and tuning indicator finish up circuit. Prealigned assemblies on two printed circuit boards for convenience in kit wiring. Identical model sold completely wired at extra charge (\$50.00). Sensitivity claimed to be 2 μ v. for 30 db. of quieting.

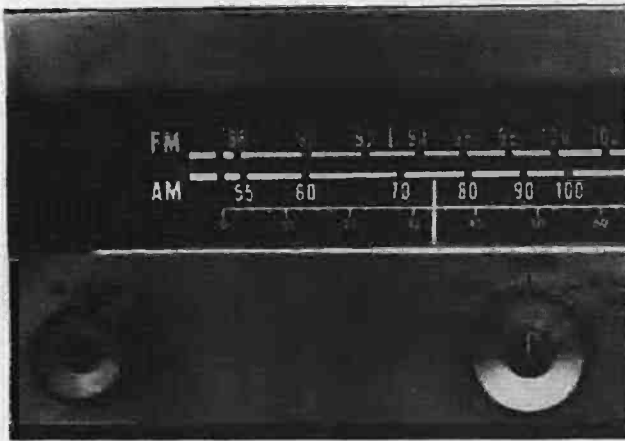
Is It Convenient to Operate?

Heath: Despite the presence of a well-proportioned front panel, it is unfortunately difficult to decide (in the absence of a stereo broadcast) whether you are listening to



BEHIND—PANELS OF THE HEATH AND KNIGHT show the intricate workmanship that goes into the construction of a stereo tuner. Note that both units have massive heavy flywheels to facilitate smoothness of tuning action. Heath (on left) is built on a printed circuit board to simplify kit wiring. Spiral wound coil at bottom of illustration is special ferrite rod antenna. Pre-assembled Knight uses point-to-point wiring.





LAFAYETTE KT-500 (or LT-50) has single "magic eye" tuning indicator hidden behind FM decal on slide rule dial glass. Both AM and FM output levels are controlled from the front panel. Extreme left-hand position of control function switch turns off tuner and two a.c. accessory sockets on rear skirt.

AM or FM. The only available indication is derived from an almost pointerless knob and the extremely small print under the rotary "Selector" switch. Has smallest slide rule dial of three units tested, only moderately illuminated. Although a kit, the tuning controls can be made to operate smoothly and without backlash. Only tuner of this group with a fuse, thus assuring adequate protection should power supply fail. The AM tuner section is probably one of the most sophisticated designs on the market. The FM section is equally as good and the novel arrangement of using signal pickup from the a.c. line will often be preferable to the pickup obtainable from twin-lead dipoles supplied with most FM tuners.

Knight: Considerable "human engineering" went into the design of this tuner. Commendable convenience in mounting both tuning knobs on the right-hand side of the panel. Such adjacent knobs save a lot of waste motion when tuner is used for straight-through AM or FM reception. Oddly enough, this is the easiest stereo tuner to show quickly whether the output is AM or FM. Bright EM84 tuning indicators (AM to the right, FM to the left) are activated by the "Selector" switch. Use of horizontal levers on two of the 3-position



KNIGHT KN-120 has two "beam-type" tuning indicators—the left for FM and the right for AM. When tuner is used to receive non-stereo material, only one section (AM or FM) and its indicator is activated. Bandwidth switch labeled "AM Tuning" is of the lever type, as is the function switch in the opposite corner.

switches is a good idea. As mentioned above, DSR must be switched off when tuning FM section to find a new station. If left in circuit, there is a tendency for the tuner to go into "motorboating." DSR also reduces volume level of FM output, necessitating readjustment of amplifier volume level.

Lafayette: Smoothest working dial mechanism of the three units tested for this article. Mounting AM and FM level controls on front panel appears to be of doubtful advantage (could have been used best on the Knight). Pair of a.c. convenience outlets on rear skirt controlled by tuner on-off switch. These are handy for the audiophile who listens mostly to AM/FM and wants amplifier turned on at the tuner. Disadvantage to the fellow playing records—must turn on tuner to start amplifier. Overly active tuning eye indicator rather anachronistic on a supposedly modern stereo tuner. Eye closes completely with slightest signal input, tending to make user undecided rather than assisting him while tuning in a station.

What Are the Most Important Features the Buyer Should Consider?

Heath: This kit was designed by some of the smartest engineers in the electronic industry. It is the most complicated hi-fi kit offered to the general public. But, in keeping with standards established years ago by the Heath Company, the instruction booklet makes assembly a reasonably easy matter. The AM circuit is capable of true high fidelity performance—provided you are in an area where such programs are being broadcast. The FM section is clean and straightforward and the inclusion of the novel signal pickup from the a.c. line should be used by more receiver manufacturers. "Cascade limiting" is a valuable FM circuit innovation. In strong signal areas it enables two of the i.f. stages to lead a double life and act as limiters. The quieting ability is equal to some of the best FM tuners on the market. The value of the assembled unit is well worth twice the selling price of the kit alone.

Knight: The DSR circuit is far from being a gimmick tacked on to a conventional FM tuner. It is the only cure we have ever seen whereby the listener can neutralize the effects of FM station overmodulation. The Knight people claim that overmodulation is far more common than we suspect. There is little reason to doubt that this may be so since it is often to the advantage of the small FM station to overmodulate and make its signal appear that much louder—while simultaneously losing quality. The DSR permits the tuner itself to correct this situation—dramatically improving the quality of weak as well as overmodulated signals.

Lafayette: The kit version of this stereo tuner can be assembled in just under fifteen working hours. This represents a real bargain over the price of the wired model—unless you consider your personal time worth more than \$3.30 an hour. As in the Heathkit mentioned above, the r.f. and i.f. transformers are prealigned. Satisfactory FM performance is obtainable with a rather simple "touch-up" procedure. The FM section is a joy to operate; first, because of its astonishing sensitivity and second, because of the very effective a.f.c. circuitry.

—Hans H. Fantel

HiFi-ndings

AN EQUIPMENT REPORT

Realistic "Solo" Speaker System

Manufacturer's Data: A small, ducted-port speaker system in a dark mahogany enclosure. Lacquer finished on four sides for horizontal, vertical or suspended use. Employs an 8-inch dual-cone driver. Frequency response: 50-14,000 cps. Power handling capacity: 15 watts. Power requirement: less than 1 watt. Impedance: 8 ohms. Size: 14½" w. x 11" h. x 10½" d. Price: \$15.95 (or 2 for stereo: \$29.50). (Radio Shack Corp., 730 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston 17, Mass.)

JFD "Mardi Gras" Speaker System Model ALC-2

Manufacturer's Data: A small sealed enclosure speaker system with top and bottom panels of walnut, mahogany or blond wood. Frequency response: 55-18,500 cps ± 5 db. Cone resonance: 63 cps. Power handling capacity: 10-15 watts continuous, 24-40 watts peaks. Power requirement: 5-15 watts. Magnet weight: 0.5 lb. Total flux: 15,000 maxwells. Flux density: 5,000 gauss. Cone design: acoustic loading by cone center structure. Impedance: 16 ohms. 4 ohms and 8 ohms impedance taps also provided. Size: 14" w. x 10" h. x 10" d. Price: \$30.00 (JFD Electronics Corp., Brooklyn 4, N. Y.)

High fidelity is a relative term. It has been stretched from quality instruments of music reproduction to cover also what might best be called a multitude of sins. Somewhere a line must be drawn by which we can tell whether a given piece of equipment is still on the side of the angels. Obviously, not all items can be of equal merit. Differences in size, price and concept—and consequently in performance—are legitimate insofar as they serve a variety of situations and purses. As long as we have to be practical, perfection cannot be the only aim. The industry must fire a few scattered volleys in the general direction of intelligent compromise. In this kind of shooting these two speakers score a clear hit.

The two bantam-size speakers, by example, provide a workable definition of minimum hi-fi. This is meant as compliment and approbation, for speakers of this category are an honest answer to a definite need.

To pin down specifics we must examine a) what is the need, and b) what is the answer.

Obviously there are innumerable people unwilling or unable to spend sizable sums on high fidelity, but eager to have music in their homes and have this music sound pleasurable. Ordinary radios and or "hand-me-down" package-type phonographs fall short of their requirements while large hi-fi installations exceed them. For them "minimum hi-fi," as represented at its best by these speakers, has much to offer, especially if installed in moderate-size rooms where a large sys-

tem could not function to full advantage in the scant space.

What is really important in listening is not so much extreme bass and treble, but clean, undistorted balanced sound (not too low and not too high) in the region from about 60 cps to 10,000 cps. Of course, the frequency extremes, deep lush velvet in the bass and silken in the treble, are dear to the hard-bitten audiophile. But the less demanding listener can easily reconcile certain abridgements of range. What he cannot abide is the grating erosion of his nerves caused by severe unbalance or high distortion content. To him, the primary sought-for object in high fidelity is low distortion rather than wide range.

In this respect, both the Realistic "Solo" and the JFD "Mardi Gras" perform nobly. The sound is clean and balanced. Bass becomes effective around 60 cycles, though there is measurable output further down. It won't shake the floor, nor put much conviction into orchestral thunder. But if placed in a corner for acoustic bass reinforcement these speakers will put an adequate bottom under most musical material.

The high end of these speakers extends beyond what is actually necessary to balance the bass response, thus offering the possibility of extra brightness to those who like that kind of sound.

The speakers respond nicely to a deft touch of the tone controls. Adding a little bass boost and shaving just a trifle of treble produces an extremely listenable and musically correct balance.

Though comparable in performance, the two systems differ in design. The Realistic operates on the bass-reflex principle, with a ducted port (plus lining) to provide low resonance in a cabinet of minimal dimensions and efficient use of amplifier wattage. The JFD employs a sealed enclosure, lined with fiberglass for acoustic absorption of the back wave. Low resonance in this case is attained through the speaker cone design itself.

Both systems have 8-inch drivers with unconventional cone structures to obtain what amounts to dual-cone action with a mechanical crossover. In the JFD, the center cone treble radiator also acts as an acoustic load for the surrounding parts of the cone.

High efficiency is an inherent attribute of ported enclosures. It is therefore to be expected that the Realistic excels in this respect. But relatively high efficiency for a sealed enclosure is attained by the JFD. This means that either of these speaker systems can be used with even the smallest low-power amplifier—an important factor to consider in a "minimum hi-fi" installation.

If JFD has sacrificed a small margin in efficiency by its choice of the sealed enclosure principle, it has gained in the bargain the ability to absorb more bass boost from the ampli-

fier without encountering problems of cabinet resonance and a generally somewhat tighter sound and sharper transients than the Radio Shack's Realistic "Solo."

The most conspicuous difference between the two speaker systems is in their appearance. The grille cloth of the Realistic is stretched to all four corners of the front panel and the sides of dark mahogany have lacquer finish in the Oriental style, so smooth as to seem almost like plastic.

In contrast, the JFD has only a light finish on top and bottom slabs of decorative wood, permitting the grain to show.

There is a choice of blond, walnut or mahogany. The fabric-covered "working structure" of the JFD enclosure is made of $\frac{3}{4}$ " "Tim-Board," a new type of composition board said to be acoustically equivalent to $1\frac{3}{4}$ " solid core lumber.

These speakers, each small enough to be tucked under one's arm, make a convenient stereo pair, and it is in this capacity that they will probably find their most widespread use.

In summary, if your requirements tend toward "minimum" without degradation of essential musical quality, these speaker systems definitely deserve your consideration. ●

Letters of Mark

(Continued from page 41)

now, I want to tell you about the recording.

I know you'll be as excited as I was. Well, almost, because I could see Otto in person and he's really something to watch when he's working. He's awfully handsome. I guess I've got a crush on him. What girl wouldn't?

Naturally, I didn't get a chance to finish this letter last night because we didn't get back to the schloss until 10 for the big event and I didn't want to mail what I had written until I could tell you all about it. So here it is the next day.

Well, it was a big event. When we got back, Otto was ready for us. He's a wonderful showman. He had our chairs set in a circle in front of the speakers and then he started the tape machine going.

Mabel, you never heard anything so wonderful in your life! The sound was terrific and the playing, well, all I can say is that nobody ever played the fast passages of the *H. Sonata* so fast and so clean without even missing a single note. It was fabulous! The last movement, one of the most difficult things to play, it's a complicated fugue, went at breakneck speed, and was it brilliant! The slow movement seemed to float. You'd think it was an orchestra playing. It was so rich.

Of course, it was that final fugue that got us. Mabel, it was so exciting! When it ended, we got up and cheered. Mr. W. brought out a bottle of champagne and we drank to Otto's wonderful achievement.

Only poor Shibi looked downcast and almost ready to burst into tears. You could hardly blame him. It really

wasn't his performance at all. I don't think it helped his morale either when Otto slapped him on the back and said, "Cheer up, Shibi, you'll be world-famous soon. Only you'd better not let the public and the critics get you on a stage and hear you in person."

Otto is so frank and honest. Poor Shibi Ornuud. He just ran up to his room. He couldn't take it. C'est la guerre or something.

On second thought, it's not so bad. He's no worse off than many movie actors. The director has to lead them around by the hand and film scenes in bits. These are spliced just like tape recordings. Put those actors on a stage in front of an audience and they'd be paralyzed.

Well, we slept late this morning and today we'll loaf around. The mailman was just here with a special delivery for Otto. I'd better close now and go down to the village and get this letter off or it won't go out today.

Auf wiedersehen,
Allison

Zimmer-am-Amster
May 17, 1958

Dear Mabel:

We were just finishing breakfast this morning when a woman and two children drove up to the schloss and what do you think? She's Otto's wife and they have two children. She's not much to look at, horsey type, if you know what I mean. I was just wondering if I shouldn't pack this job in and get back to the good old U.S.A. You get pretty lonesome for an honest-to-goodness hot-dog after a while.

See you soon,
Allison ●

ORCHESTRA FOR HIRE

Back in the dark days of the great Depression, Vienna's Philharmonic, despite its musical renown, sometimes found it expedient to balance the budget by selling itself bodily. The kind of overtures the orchestra liked best apparently were those from well-heeled baton-wielders who let it be known that they would find ways to express their appreciation for the honor of being invited to conduct the orchestra. Rank amateurs, of course, were excluded from consideration. But there were a number of orchestra leaders financially upper-class but artistically strictly lower-middle. Conducting

the Vienna Philharmonic, they felt, would give a needed boost to their prestige:

A suitable assignment of this kind was thus arranged for an ambitious young American conductor. After a generous contribution, he found himself facing the great orchestra. The players gamely lived up to their bargain and gave a superb performance. But when a newspaper reporter called the orchestra manager preceding the concert to find out "what Mr. X was going to conduct," he only got the tart answer: "That we don't know. But we are playing Beethoven's Fifth."

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The five modes of operation (stereo, stereo-reversed, monaural 1, monaural 2, monaural 1+2) are selected by the function switch which also operates a corresponding group of indicator lights to identify the selected operating mode... and all Sherwood amplifiers feature the exclusive presence rise control.

Model S-4400: Stereo pre-amp, controls & single 36-watt amplifier, Fair Trade \$159.50

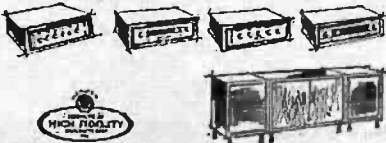
Model S-5000: 20+20 watt dual stereo amplifier, Fair Trade \$189.50

For complete specifications write Dept. V-5

SHERWOOD

ELECTRONIC LABORATORIES, INC.
4300 N. California Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois

The "complete high fidelity home music center"—
monophonic or stereophonic.



MAY 1959

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF AN AWARD?



Those illustrated above mean everything!

But some awards mean little—only that the manufacturer shook hands in the right place, or paid the right price.

Fortunately, for the audiophile, this sort of meaningless award "giving" has never been a part of the High Fidelity industry. Here, awards come the "hard way" for outstanding performance based on high technical standards.

Therefore, Sherwood is justly proud of its many outstanding honors bestowed, unsolicited, by most recognized testing organizations, plus many other special recognitions.

For the American Pavillion at the Brussels World's Fair, the only FM tuner selected was the Sherwood S-3000.

Undoubtedly the most commonly displayed seal in the United States is the "UL" of Underwriters Laboratories—commonplace except in the Hi-Fi field! Only Sherwood and two other popular Hi-Fi tuners bear this seal of acceptance—your guarantee of safety from the hazards of shock and fire.

And when the Dean of High Fidelity publishers created the Hi-Fi Music in the Home performance commendation seal, Sherwood's S-2000 AM-FM tuner was the first to be chosen for the honor.

Wyeth Engineering, Inc. just one of many, many testing laboratories (one in particular must remain anonymous) recently tested Sherwood tuners and certified their adherence to F.C.C. and I.R.E. standards of conducted and/or radiated interference.

Just ask High Fidelity dealers—you'll find a majority recommend Sherwood as "the best buy" in a complete High Fidelity Home Music Center.

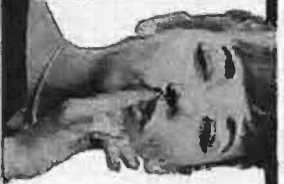
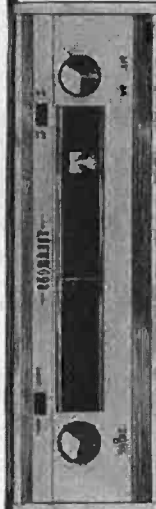
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SHERWOOD*

FM inter channel hush

A new noise muting system without loss of sensitivity



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- "Feath-Ray" Tuning Eye
- Automatic Frequency Control
- Model S-3000 II FM (only) Tuner, \$125.50 Net
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- Frequency Tuning
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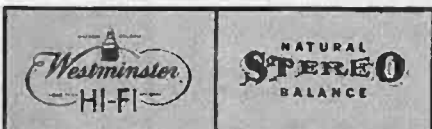
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STEREO HI-FI CONCERT

Reviewed by

MARTIN BOOKSPAN

GEORGE JELLINEK

DAVID RANDOLPH

JOHN THORNTON

● **BACH:** Clavier Concerto in D Minor; Clavier Concerto in A Major. Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord) with the Canto Soli Orchestra of Paris. Victor Desarzens cond. Omega OSL-13 \$5.95

Musical Interest: Masterpieces
Performance: Done with gusto
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Very good
Stereo Depth: Good

Don't be frightened away by the tasteless back cover of the jacket, with its garish yellow. This is a fine disc. The performances are direct and straightforward. There is no attempt here at any "museum recreation" of Bach. The orchestra sounds fairly full and the playing has body to it.

The soloist does a fine job, and his harpsichord has an appealing sound. Moreover, it is located squarely in the center of the group, with an amazing degree of presence. The recording is full-bodied.

The D Minor Concerto is, of course, one of Bach's finest, and the companion piece is an appealing work. **D. R.**

● **BACH:** Magnificat in D; Cantata No. 50—Nun ist das Heil und die Kraft. Mimi Coertse and Margaret Sjöstedt (sopranos), Hilde Rössl-Majdan (contralto), Anton Dermota (tenor), Frederick Guthrie (bass) with Choir and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, Felix Prohaska cond. Bach Guild BGS-5005 \$5.95

Musical Interest: Baroque staples
Performance: First rate
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: Good

As the above thumbnail descriptions might indicate, this disc can be highly recommended. If any fault can be found with it, it is the tendency of the tenor soloist to over-balance the alto in the beautiful *Ei misericordiu* duet. Otherwise the recording is nicely balanced throughout, and the stereo perspective is fine. Gratifying is the "bite" of the tone of the three trumpets, thanks to the excellent stereo recording.

All the soloists are good, but a special word should be said for the artistry of Mr. Dermota. The bass has a rather big voice, but he wisely keeps it within the bounds of the stylistic needs of the music.

The chorus, also, deserves commendation, despite the fact that the contraltos might be a little more prominent. This might be due to their placement, though, rather than to any inherent weakness on their part.

The Cantata No. 50 consists of a single

BEST OF THE MONTH

- London's flair for "stereo theater" recording pays off again with a near-definitive album of Lehar's immortal Viennese operetta, The Merry Widow. — "In this bubbling production . . . the over-all recorded sound is delightful." (see p. 56)
- Decca's stereo disc of the Richard Strauss Thus Spake Zarathustra is, under Karl Böhm's baton, a brilliant achievement. — "A magnificent addition to the recorded Strauss catalog . . . a vivid reading that bristles with energy." (see p. 60)
- Capitol's Music for Strings finds Leopold Stokowski achieving a remarkable re-creation of the glorious string sound of his Philadelphia days. — "Breathtaking . . . and from start to finish commands attention for the plastic beauty of the string choirs." (see p. 63)

movement, lasting less than four minutes. It is presumed to be part of a larger work, the remainder of which is lost. What it lacks in length, it makes up in strength. It is a powerful, almost angry work, for double chorus and orchestra. It is, with its antiphonal writing, a "natural" for stereo.

Prohaska has brought a fine sense of style to his readings of both works. **D. R.**

● **BEETHOVEN:** Overtures—Leonore No. 3; Egmont; Fidelio; Coriolan. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Karl Münchinger cond. London CS-6053 \$4.98

Musical Interest: High indeed
Performance: Dull
Recording: Slightly muffled
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

These performances have very little to commend them. Münchinger's tempi, by and large, are plodding and dull. *Leonore No. 3* and *Egmont*, both of which should erupt into ecstasies of jubilation at their conclusion, are delivered in a very ho-hum manner and there are some ragged string attacks in the chords that open *Egmont* and *Coriolan*. The *Fidelio* Overture fares best of all, but here again the element of jubilation in the peroration is missing. Completing the sorry picture is recorded sound muffled in quality. Münchinger obviously was the wrong conductor to entrust with this heroic music. **M. B.**

● **BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 3 in E Flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. Stereo—Columbia MS-6036 \$5.98. Mono—Columbia ML-5320 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Olympian
Performance: Steady and assured
Recording: Bigger sound in the mono, with details better in stereo
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: OK

In the March issue I included a brief discussion of this performance in the Basic Repertoire article on the recorded *Eroicas*. Walter's is a broad, assured reading, slower than most but with its own particular brand of heroism. I would put it second to Klemperer's Angel disc in my own affections.

The recorded sound is, surprisingly, bolder and fuller in the monophonic recording, but there are details in the scoring which emerge more clearly in the stereo version. The directionality in the stereo version is especially well contrived, with good separation between the two channels. Walter's new Beethoven series is off to a good start with this release and the *Pastoral* Symphony of a few months ago. **M. B.**

● **BIZET:** Carmen Suite. RAVEL: Bolero. Virtuoso Symphony of London, Alfred Wallenstein cond. Audio Fidelity FGS 50,005 \$6.95

● **BIZET:** Carmen Suite; L'Arlesienne Suite. Suisse Romande Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. London CS6062 \$4.98

● **BIZET:** L'Arlesienne Suites Nos. 1 and 2; Carmen Suite No. 1. Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert Von Karajan cond. Angel Mono 35618 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Familiar all
Performance: Close race
Recording: London and Audio Fidelity, the winners
Stereo Directionality: Equal and good
Stereo Depth: Good throughout

The three recordings represented offer fascinating comparisons in technique and interpretation, and each offers something the others do not. Audio Fidelity has gathered a fine orchestra of many of England's leading players and given them a polished leader in Alfred Wallenstein. Ansermet, long an accomplished conductor, heads one of Europe's best orchestras, while

Von Karajan and the Philharmonia are top rank in any league. Which of the three, then, should be chosen, considering that no collector in his right mind would want to spend his money on three versions of the *Carmen* Suite combined with two of *L'Arlesienne*?

Audio Fidelity presents a marvel of balanced stereo, with plenty of articulation too, in a performance, while not noted for exceptional interpretative finesse, is to the point, expert, and flawlessly done. London and Ansermet combine to present a more plastic performance, one that has a much more varied dynamic sense, a delicacy and a sensitivity not present in the Wallenstein issue. Von Karajan, who leads the Philharmonia in a fuller and more energetic reading than either, offers his interpretation in a very good monophonic release. The latter offers more music from *L'Arlesienne*, and a shorter quota of *Carmen*, while Audio Fidelity offers on its other side Ravel's *Bolero*. So you flip this musical coin and what comes down is interesting to behold. If you want sound to demonstrate, then it is Audio Fidelity, and a great engineering triumph it is. London's sound is close behind, with a bit of an edge on first string sound, but also a more satisfying reading by Ansermet. It is unfair to compare Karajan in sound; but the monophonic Angel is as good as any from the viewpoint of engineering, and indeed some of the finest *L'Arlesienne* playing is to be heard from the Philharmonia.

All things considered, this is a victory for Audio Fidelity. Spatiality is very pronounced, and everything is smoothly set out, in as well balanced a stereo spread as I've yet heard at this stage of the art. J. T.

BORODIN: Polovetsian Dances (see COLLECTIONS)

● **BRAHMS: Double Concerto in A Minor, Op. 102; Tragic Overture, Op. 81.** David Oistrakh (violin); Pierre Fournier (cello); with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera cond. Angel S-35353 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Certainly
Performance: Just misses catching fire
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Unobtrusive
Stereo Depth: OK

This slightly sedate performance of the Brahms Double Concerto somehow falls short of its promise. Everything is played well, with great polish, but the sparks don't fly the way they should. Undoubtedly a more assertive figure on the podium would have galvanized the whole to a far greater degree than Galliera.

The stereo recording has a richer, fuller sound than the previous monophonic issue, with both soloists coming from just left of center. M. B.

BRUCH: Scottish Fantasy (see MENDELSSOHN)

● **CORELLI: Concerti Grossi, Op. 6 (complete).** Chamber Orchestra of the Societas Musica, Copenhagen, Jorgen Ernst Hansen cond. Bach Guild BGS 5010/12 3 12" \$17.95. Mono—Bach Guild BG 585/17 3 12" \$14.95

54

Musical Interest: Baroque Masterpieces
Performance: Completely idiomatic
Recording: Very fine
Stereo Directionality: Just right
Stereo Depth: Good

No hesitation is in order when it comes to recommending this set. The performances are masterful in every way, and the fine stereo recording puts the players right in your living room. Moreover, they'll fit into your living room since they sound like a chamber group. In this respect, this set differs from both the Westminster and the Vox album of the same music. Both the latter two are larger conceptions, employing a greater number of players. The Vox version, especially, seems to have been made with a full string orchestra.

It should be made clear that comparison with the other versions was made on the basis of the monophonic versions only. Westminster supplies a fuller bass than either of the other recordings, while Vanguard puts the largest space around the players, yet preserving fine clarity of line. From this point on, your individual preferences must determine final choice. D. R.

● **DOHNANYI: Variations on a Nursery Tune; Piano Concerto No. 2.** Erno Dohnanyi with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult cond. Angel S-35538 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Variations—A delight;
Concerto—Variable
Performance: Excellent
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: Good

The appearance of the stereo versions of these two performances is most welcome, especially since the stereo is so successful. Dohnanyi, who is over eighty, is still a remarkable pianist and his performances of these scores will probably be studied by future generations. The Nursery Tune Variations is a sturdier work by far, but the Second Concerto, with its bold Romantic splashes, may prove to be durable also. First class collaboration from Boult and the orchestra rounds out an unqualifiedly successful release. M. B.

● **DVOŘAK: Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104; FAURÉ: Élégie for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 24.** Janos Starker with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Süsskind cond. Angel S-35417 \$5.98

Musical Interest: High
Performance: Technically fine
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

There's not much channel separation in this stereo re-issue of performances released monophonically about a year ago, but the cello is firmly planted a little to the left of center and there it remains through both works. The stereo recording does, however, give off a rounder, fuller sound than its monophonic equivalent.

Starker's performances of both works are marvels of technical security; an added measure of virility would have made these interpretations landmarks of the recorded repertoire. M. B.

● **FALLA: Concerto for harpsichord, flute, oboe, clarinet, violin and cello (Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord, with soloists of the National Orchestra of Spain); El Retablo de Maése Pedro (complete opera).** Julita Bermejo (soprano)—The Boy; Carlos Munguia (tenor)—Maése Pedro; Raimundo Torres (baritone)—Don Quixote. The National Orchestra of Spain, Ataúlfo Argenta cond. (both). London CS 6028 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Stimulating oddities
Performance: Very good
Recording: Sharp and vivid
Stereo Directionality: Life-like
Stereo Depth: Likewise

These two works of Falla's full maturity, both written in the same period (around 1923), provide a logical coupling as well as an interesting stylistic contrast to the better known national-romantic aspect of the composer's art. Both utilize harpsichord, and the presence of this instrument symbolizes Falla's striving for classical discipline and the influence of 16th and 17th century traditions.

The concerto is a work of austere neo-classicism in which the composer achieves stringent sonorities with the unconventional blend of his instrumentation. Argenta conducts his soloists with admirable vigor and, if your ear relishes the sound Falla contrived for this concerto, your enjoyment will be enhanced by stereo's added dimension.

Argenta's authority lends similar weight to a smooth and expert performance of Falla's inventive operatic treatment of the familiar Cervantes episode. Raimundo Torres sings the music of the Knight vigorously but with more strength than elegance; the other two parts are well sung and characterized. The appeal of both pieces is of a somewhat specialized nature, but the program adds up to a rewarding listening experience, mirrored in fine stereo realism. G. J.

FAURÉ: Élégie (see DVOŘAK)

● **GLAZOUNOV: Birthday Offering (arr. Robert Irving). LECOCQ: Mam'zelle Angot (arr. Gordon Jacob).** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Robert Irving cond. Angel S 35588 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Romantic ballet fare
Performance: Very good
Recording: Disappointing
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good, a little close

Angel has released a coupling of opulently arranged ballet scores—a very beautiful presentation of lush romanticism. Glazounov has the edge for long-lasting melodic value. Lecocq's music is typically French, dazzling and saucy, but without too much imagination. Irving, a much better conductor than he is given credit for, makes the most of his opportunities with the Royal Philharmonic.

Irving has taken music from four Glazounov scores for *Birthday Offering* which was given by Sadler Well's company in 1956 to celebrate its Silver Jubilee. The production was a surprising and overwhelming success, so it has been kept in the repertoire. Most listeners will recognize quotations from *The Seasons*. There is a bad tendency for the orchestra to sound too hard in full *ff* pas-

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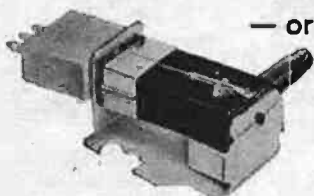
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sages, a result of too close brass pickup, and the first strings also become too brilliant at times. The problem can be solved by high frequency roll-off. Otherwise, all is serene. The recording offers a great deal of sublime melody and some really breathtaking woodwind playing. J. T.

● **HALFFTER:** Sinfonietta. Orquesta Nacional de España. Azañola Argenta cond. London CS-6029 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Fascinating
Performance: Tremendous
Recording: London's best
Stereo Directionality: Perfect
Stereo Depth: Exactly right

There are several reasons why this new London stereo record is exceptional. The most important reason is that the Halffter score is so fascinating! It is unpretentious, it abounds with good humor, it is part classical, part Romantic, part modern in sound, part sensual and nationalistic in texture—and wholly individual.

Magnificently played by Orquesta Nacional de España under the inspired direction of Argenta, this score, despite its transparency, poses no problems for the leading seats, and the first desk men of this orchestra carry off their parts with polished virtuosity. London does not have a more perfectly engineered stereo disc in its already sizable catalog. It is easy to understand why Toscanini, Walter, Stokowski, and others so strongly favored this Sinfonietta when it won a prize in 1924. Players and conductors alike must find this charming score a delight to work with. The Halffter work was the last recording Argenta made for London before his untimely death, which makes it all the more valuable.

J. T.

HANDEL: Messiah—Hallelujah (see COLLECTIONS)

● **HAYDN:** Symphony No. 100 in G Major ("Military"); and Symphony No. 101 in D Major ("Clock"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Mogens Wöldike cond. Vanguard SRV 109-SD \$2.98. Mono—Vanguard SRV-109 \$1.98

Musical Interest: Enduring Haydn masterpieces
Performance: Exemplary
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Sufficient
Stereo Depth: Pleasing

There is no attempt at the merely spectacular in this recording. As a result, it is an eminently satisfying disc. Wöldike's way with Haydn is thoroughly admirable, and his tempo in the last movement of the *Military* Symphony does not suffer from the excesses of the Scherchen version (Westminster).

Both stereo and monophonic versions might benefit from slightly more bass, but this is a very minor criticism. A word should be said for the fine presence of the percussion instruments, so important in the slow movement of the *Military* Symphony.

D. R.

HAYDN: Trumpet Concerto (see COLLECTIONS)

LECOCQ: Mam'zelle Angot (see GLAZOUNOV)

● **LEHAR:** The Merry Widow (complete). Hilde Gueden (soprano)—Hanna Glawari; Per Grunden (tenor)—Graf Danilo; Waldemar Kmentt (tenor)—Camille de Rosillon; Emmy Loose (soprano)—Valencienne; Karl Dönch (baritone)—Mirko Zeta, and others. The Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Robert Stolz cond. London OSA 1205 2 12" \$10.96

Musical Interest: Everlasting
Performance: Effervescent
Recording: Exciting
Stereo Directionality: Expert
Stereo Depth: Exemplary

The Merry Widow is Viennese operetta at the summit. The story may add up to little more than a conglomeration of tired clichés, yet misguided efforts to endow the book with Broadway-styled "sophistication" can only result in a hopeless tangle akin to a staging of *Pal Joey* by a group of Tyrolean yodelers. On the other hand, if you preserve the spirit of the original inspiration and entrust the parts to a group of singing actors who can perform their tasks with conviction but also know the right moments for a tongue-in-cheek approach—the enterprise just cannot fail. Not when you have Lehár's music on your side.

In this bubbling production, London wisely relied on yet another powerful ally—the



directional hand of Robert Stolz, who, as some will recall, presided over the operetta's brilliant New York revival of 1943 (with Martha Eggerth and Jan Kiepura). Of course, his association with the treasureable score is much deeper than that—it goes back all the way to 1905 when *The Merry Widow* started its fabulous journey. Stolz, now 79, is probably the world's leading exponent of a great tradition, a fact this set most attractively demonstrates.

The cast is excellent. Hilde Gueden's glamorous and lively portrayal of the Widow makes Danilo's stubborn reticence to the very end of the third act almost incomprehensible, and she sings with charm and assurance. Per Grunden, the young Swedish tenor of the Volksoper, does not create a very dashing image of Danilo, but he, too, sings with an easy grace, thoroughly steeped in the style. Waldemar Kmentt, as Camille, is an ardent-voiced wooer whose singing of "Komm in das kleine Pavillon" is one of the high points of the performance. I am not sure I could describe a Marsavian accent,

but whatever it is, Karl Dönch has mastered it hilariously in the delicious characterization of the bungling diplomat. Equally excellent is Emmy Loose in the role of the "dutiful wife."

Aside from certain spots on Side 1 where the chorus gets a slightly blurred reproduction, the over-all recorded sound is delightful. There is a distinct spatial illusion but the engineers have wisely and tastefully concentrated on the "middle zone," leaving incidental attractions ("on stage" dancing of the *Polonaise* and off-stage effects) distinctly separated in the right channel. All in all, a high degree of stage illusion is achieved in this well-prepared production.

For all my whole-hearted endorsement of the foregoing, my admiration for the older (non-stereo) Angel set is by no means lessened. (Schwarzkopf, Gedda, Loose and Kunz are Angel's singing principals, the last named a superb Danilo even though this role is conventionally sung by a tenor). Angel's sound, on re-hearing, is as bright as ever and the over-all performance is every bit as exciting (even more so in the Schwarzkopf-Kunz ensembles) as the one offered by London.

The London set starts off with a splendid performance of the overture—a brand new potpourri fashioned by Stolz. The updating shows a masterly hand and the passing anachronism of the beguine rhythm is more charming than intrusive. One demerit, however, goes to London for failing to include a libretto. The notes and synopsis which accompany the set are only so-so. G. J.

MENDELSSOHN: Midsummer Night's Dream (see TCHAIKOVSKY)

● **MENDELSSOHN:** Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64; **BRUCH:** Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46. Alfredo Campoli with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult cond. London CS-6047 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Mendelssohn—A masterpiece; Bruch—No masterpiece, but engaging
Performance: OK
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: OK

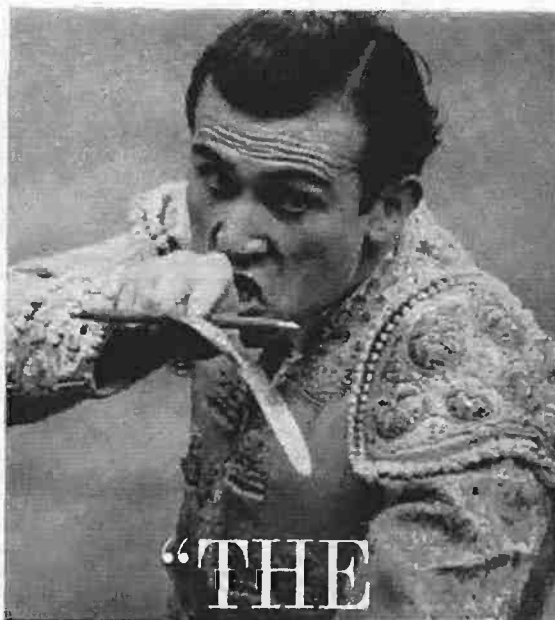
Campoli has had a previous go at the Mendelssohn Concerto, in a performance with this same orchestra under Eduard van Beinum (now available on Richmond 19021). That one is a beautifully poetic, understated reading. Since then Campoli has become more of the virtuoso showman and this new reading is flashier and more extroverted. I still prefer the old Campoli for it possesses qualities which are all too rare in today's music mart.

Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* is a minor, but charming score. Campoli plays it well, but Boult's accompaniment is no more than routine—much less involved with the score than when he conducted the Philharmonia Orchestra for Rabin's Angel recording of the music (35484). The recorded sound is well-balanced and cleanly-focused. M. B.

● **MOORE:** The Devil and Daniel Webster (complete). Lawrence Winters (baritone)—Daniel Webster; Joe Blankenship (bass)—Jabez Stone; Doris Young (soprano)—Mary Stone; Frederick Weidner (tenor)—Mr.

HIFI REVIEW

Juan Montero, matador.
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Scratch, and others. The Festival Choir and Orchestra, Armando Aliberti cond. Westminster WST 14050 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Fine Americana
Performance: Enjoyable
Recording: Tops
Stereo Directionality: Very effective
Stereo Depth: Very good

Douglas Moore's setting of Stephen Vincent Benét's famous story has long been recognized as one of the best examples of American folk opera. It is tuneful, rich in native color and makes its point plainly and vigorously. The Westminster performance is no more than competent but, fortunately, never less than that either. The magnetic personality of Webster should call for an American Chaliapin—and where are you going to find one?

The benefits of stereo are added to the fine recorded sound with singularly happy results—the two channels are buzzing with activity. One minor complaint—the faint vocal presence allotted to the satanic Mr. Scratch. Otherwise—an excellent production job and decidedly fun to listen to. G. J.

● **MOZART:** *Così fan tutte* (highlights). Lisa della Casa (soprano)—Fiordiligi; Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano)—Dorabella; Anton Dermota (tenor)—Ferrando; Erich Kunz (baritone)—Guglielmo; Paul Schöffler (baritone)—Don Alfonso; Emmy Loose (soprano)—Despina, and others. The Vienna State Opera Chorus and The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. London OS 25047 \$5.98

Musical Interest: High
Performance: Outstanding ensemble
Recording: Clear and well balanced
Stereo Directionality: Realistic
Stereo Depth: Good

The cast of this performance features Vienna's finest singers, who happen to be outstanding Mozart specialists to boot. So is conductor Böhm, and it naturally follows that the ensemble work so essential in this opera is of the highest order. Not that this record lacks demonstration of shining individual talents: Lisa della Casa is a bewitching Fiordiligi and Christa Ludwig (a comparative newcomer when this recording was made about two years ago) is her worthy peer. Dermota endows his characterization with a manliness not always suggested by Mozartians of similar vocal assurance, and Kunz performs with the expertness and *bonhomie* that are his trademark. Finally, though Schöffler's contribution is all too brief, every moment of it is filled with authority. Come to think of it, my only reservation is non-musical. It concerns the Italian diction which, while not exactly hard to take, does suggest a certain amount of uneasiness for all principals except Miss della Casa.

The recorded sound is excellent. The nature of the selections chosen (arias and close ensembles) places a limit on directionality—an aspect which will be more discernible when the complete set is issued. Meantime, should you hold the opinion that one LP of *Così fan tutte's* music is all you need (you are wrong, of course) this is the record for you. It is, at the present time, the only abridged "*Così*" available. G. J.

MOZART: Eine kleine Nachtmusik (see TCHAIKOVSKY)

● **MOZART:** *The Magic Flute* (highlights). Wilma Lipp (soprano)—Queen of the Night; Hilde Gueden (soprano)—Pamina; Leopold Simoneau (tenor)—Tamino; Kurt Boehme (bass)—Sarastro; Emmy Loose (soprano)—Papagena; Walter Berry (baritone)—Papageno, and others. The Vienna State Opera Chorus and The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. London OS 25045 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Masterpiece-streamlined
Performance: Above average
Recording: Just about average
Stereo Directionality: Slight
Stereo Depth: Satisfactory

London's complete *Magic Flute* dates back to 1955—it must have been one of the first operas recorded stereophonically. Nothing startling is revealed in the two channels—in fact the definition of choral voices leaves something to be desired. The over-all sound, however, is entirely satisfying.

The excerpts have been reasonably well chosen—you just cannot condense this opera on a single disc and hope to satisfy all listeners. This particular listener would gladly reduce in this instance the generous representation allotted to Walter Berry's unsteady Papageno in favor of, say, "*O Isis und Osiris*," which is omitted. Sarastro, sung by Boehme with imposing if not mellifluous sonority, gets decidedly shortchanged here—only one verse is given of "*In diesen heil'gen Hallen*."

The remainder of the distinguished group of singers comes through in fine style, with Gueden's tender and sensitive Pamina taking the vocal honors. The orchestral account is above reproach, if hardly sparkling. For the time being this is all there is to "*Zauberflöte*" in stereo—doubtless a temporary state of affairs which, nevertheless, should heighten the appeal of this abridgement. G. J.

OFFENBACH: Tales of Hoffmann (see page 69)

ORFF: *Cantata Carmina* (see COLLECTIONS)

● **PROKOFIEV:** *Violin Concertos*—No. 1 in D Major, Op. 19; No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 63. Ruggiero Ricci, with the Suisse Romande Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. London CS 6059 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Considerable
Performance: Fine
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: Fair

This coupling represents two Prokofiev works in the same form, composed twenty years apart; yet each bears an unmistakable stamp. Although the G Minor is a warmer work, cast in a more lyrical pattern, it is still filled in with those characteristic Prokofievian compositional traits. Flashing changes of mood, sudden key transitions, teasers of exquisite melodic phrases interrupted by harsh dissonances—those things that were so much a part of his brilliant technique all his life, are scattered throughout both concertos in delightful profusion.

The newcomer to music, on first hearing these concertos, will be puzzled, and even repelled by Prokofiev's unexpected changes of mood. But after a few repetitions, you hear sounds emerge not heard before, and before you can say Serge, you begin to appreciate what Prokofiev has been telling you all along.

Ricci in these performances displays a rather wiry tone at times, but his virtuosity overcomes all of the technical obstacles that appear with frightening regularity on every page. Ansermet is careful not to let his marvelous orchestra sound too big, but keeps the dynamics transparent and clear-cut. Ricci seems more comfortable in the youthful D Major Concerto, and London has issued better engineered stereos. But even so, the standard throughout is high, and the record is well worth the having. A little tip . . . listen *underneath* the solo parts to what is going on in the orchestra, especially the woodwinds, to appreciate right away the special brilliance of Prokofiev's way with instrumentation. J. T.

PURCELL: Trumpet pieces (see COLLECTIONS)

RAVEL: *Bolero* (see BIZET)

● **RAVEL:** *La Valse; Bolero; Rapsodie Espagnole*. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. MS 6011 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Great Ravel
Performance: Routine
Recording: Substandard
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Shallow

The stereo release of Bernstein's all Ravel album is no different in essence than the monophonic version reviewed by the writer in a recent issue. The performances are slick, pat, routine, and with a less competent orchestra could be considered quite ordinary. Perhaps one of the dangers of so much abundance of releases is that mediocre performances are bound to crop up with disappointing frequency, especially where the familiar scores are concerned. *La Valse* appears the best of the offerings, but it is a poor winner, and the stereo version makes it even plainer than on the mono recording. J. T.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Russian Easter Overture* (see COLLECTIONS)

ROSSINI: *William Tell Overture* (see COLLECTIONS)

● **SHOSTAKOVICH:** *Symphony No. 5 in D Major, Op. 47*. Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York, Leopold Stokowski cond. Everest SDBR 3010 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Considered by many the best of Shostakovich
Performance: Variably good
Recording: Spotty in # parts
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Balanced well

If an impossible speculation could be indulged for a moment, this music as recorded in stereo with the Philadelphia Orchestra in its great Stokowskian era with present day techniques, would have resulted

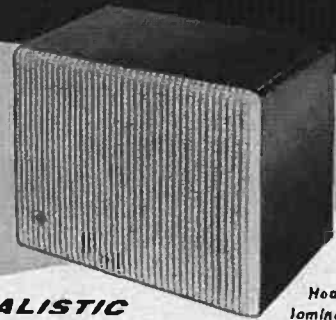
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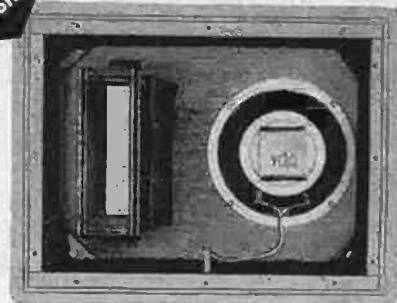
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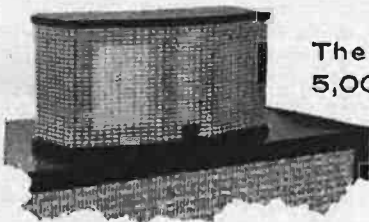
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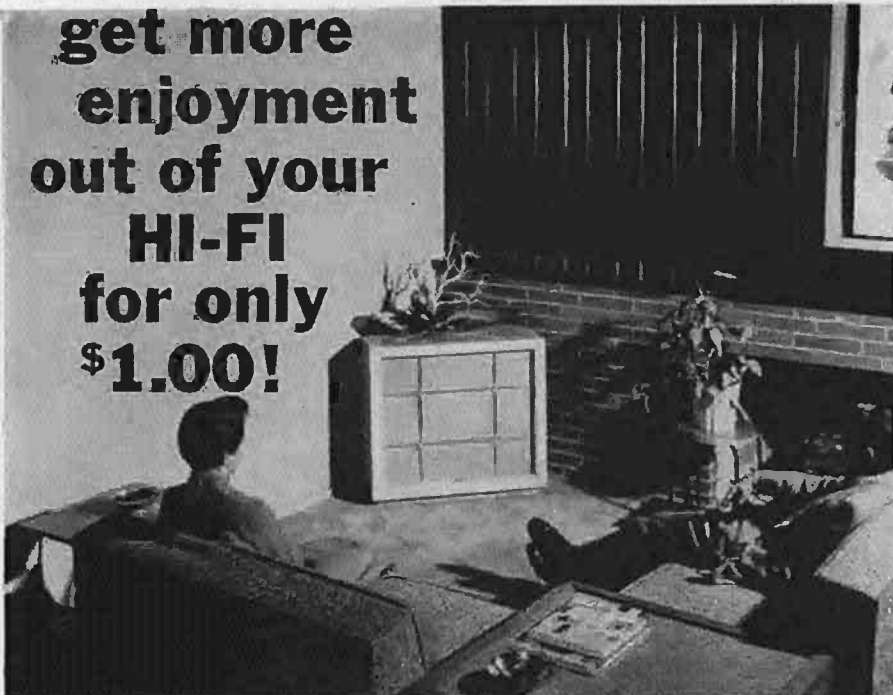


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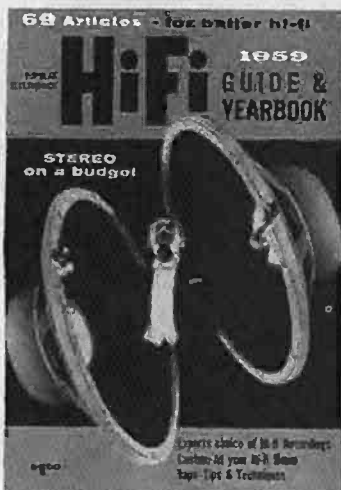
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in a terrific release. Stokowski has a special way with the Shostakovich "Fifth," and even with the Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York, there are some great moments. One does miss, though, the opulence of tone, that glowing gorgeous color that Stokowski achieved with the Philadelphia strings, so right for the long drawn-out lyricism of the slow movement. The electrical energy of the Finale, with its hair-raising percussion in the first measures sounds rather flat compared to existing mono versions, partly a fault of microphoning, partly because the percussion lacks real presence. Some formidable break-up also occurs in middle and high frequencies at climactic points—an obvious reminder that not too much can be crowded onto a stereo-cut groove at this stage of the art. The recording has some magnificent moments, especially in the first and third movements, and the bass work in the Scherzo is well reproduced. But, over-all, this disc is a disappointment. J. T.

● **STRAUSS WALTZES—Emperor; Vienna Blood; Blue Danube; Tales From the Vienna Woods.** Virtuoso Symphony Orchestra of London, Emanuel Vardi cond. Audio Fidelity FCS-50,013 \$6.95

Musical Interest: Masterpieces all
Performance: Not bad for non-Viennese
Recording: Big and resonant
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Fine

This disc and Wallenstein's recording of the Tchaikovsky "Pathétique" reviewed below are two of the initial releases in Audio Fidelity's entry into the field of recorded serious music. Since its creation about four years ago the company has made rather a fetish of sound and the initial release of recorded classical music has been accompanied by extravagant claims in this area. I've heard all five items in the initial release and can report that the sound on all of them is full and bold and very impressive—but so is the work of almost every significant company in the business today, when you come right down to it. It is along musical lines that Audio Fidelity will either "make it or break it" in serious music, and along these lines the company's initial venture is solid and promising.

Vardi, the conductor of these Strauss Waltzes, is Audio Fidelity's Director of classical artists and repertoire. He is a well-known viola player and has appeared with increasing frequency as a conductor in the New York area in the past decade. These performances of the Strauss Waltzes don't have the matchless style nor the irresistible appeal that someone like the late Clemens Krauss brought to them in his series of Johann Strauss recording for London, but for non-Viennese performances these are quite good. *Vienna Blood* and *Tales From the Vienna Woods* fare best of all, with an especially successful zither soloist in the latter. The recorded sound is big and bold, with fine spaciousness and depth. M. B.

● **R. STRAUSS:** Also Sprach Zarathustra—Tone Poem, Op. 30. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. Decca DL 79999 \$5.98. Mono—Decca DL 9999 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Controversial Strauss
HiFi REVIEW

Performance: Immense!
 Recording: Superlative
 Stereo Directionality: Perfect
 Stereo Depth: Full and round

For splendid sound, for the summoning of overwhelming orchestral forces, "Zarathustra" has no competition among the Strauss tone poems except for moments of *Ein Heldenleben*. Inspired by the writings of Nietzsche, the music is magnificently contrived. In the full romantic sense of musical expression for its own sake, "Zarathustra" is an impressive example of musical architecture, conceived by a man who second-to-none understood the art of instrumentation.

Karl Böhm takes this impressive score and makes the most of it. The result is a magnificent addition to the recorded Strauss catalog. Engineering aids and abets a vivid reading that bristles with energy adding up to one of the most thrilling issues in the whole Decca line. If the work fails to overwhelm you in the earth-shaking opening measures, such as is achieved by Reiner on the RCA Victor stereo tape, do not be disappointed, for what follows the rest of the way is sheer orchestral magic. Strangely enough, the stereo version is superior to the monophonic in respect to solid bass line. This is certainly the best stereo LP the writer has yet heard on the Decca label.

J. T.

● **STRAVINSKY:** *Ebony Concerto*; *Symphony in Three Movements*. London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens cond.; Woody Herman and his Orchestra. Everest SDBR-3009 \$5.98. Mono—Everest LPBR-6009 \$3.98

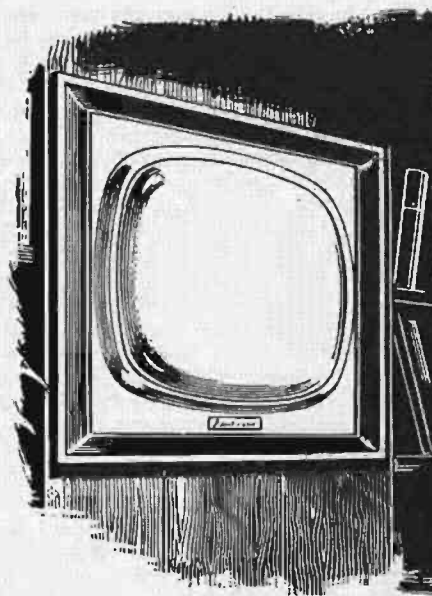
Musical Interest: Echt Stravinsky
 Performance: Exemplary on both
 Recording: Overmodulated at times
 Stereo Directionality: Perfect
 Stereo Depth: Also

If all the devotees of modern and so-called "progressive" jazz, could listen intelligently and closely to *Ebony Concerto*, and the lovers of contemporary music for large ensemble give repeated listenings to *Symphony in Three Movements*, then I'm sure there would be a remarkable meeting of the minds. A great master, writing in any form, and choosing to express musical thought influenced by the changing times, will almost always manage to create something that will outlive the birth pangs. Stravinsky composed *Ebony Concerto* as a short composition, and says more in this minor piece, than a thousand "Progressive" jazz bits that have come and gone since 1946, when Woody Herman *et al* (for whom it was dedicated) performed it first at Carnegie Hall.

Symphony in Three Movements dating from 1936 is a much larger and more serious composition. Every bar has the stamp of a master at this trade, and it is musically and intellectually fascinating from beginning to end.

The coupling provides a fascinating study in contrast, with the chamber sound of Woody Herman and his ensemble on the opening bands, and the large forces of the *Symphony* on the remainder. In both, a great master, probably the greatest composer of our time, says so well what he must

MAY 1959



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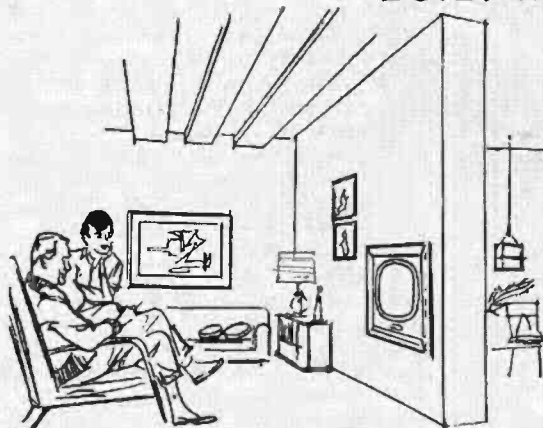
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that you wonder what he can possibly "explore" next.

The performances are splendid, but the recording is somewhat overmodulated. This is not the usual thing for Everest, and the overloads occurred only in *fff* passages, despite the use of three different cartridges, several equalization changes, and a close check of stylus.

The mono recording was the lesser offender, and the *Ebony* Concerto was technically almost flawless. Stereo spread gives added meaning to the Symphony, and lends a fascinating new dimension to the Concerto. J. T.

SUPPÉ: Overtures (see COLLECTIONS)

● **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Nutcracker Suite*, Op. 71a; **MENDELSSOHN:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream—Incidental music*. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Felix Slatkin cond. Capitol SP 8404 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Masterpieces both
Performance: Excellent *Nutcracker*
Recording: Well above par
Stereo Directionality: Well divided
Stereo Depth: Just right

There are now about thirty versions of *Nutcracker* available to the collector in various versions from the complete score to the familiar Suite recorded here. Slatkin enjoys the distinction of being one of a very few worthy stereo issues of the Suite, and unless future releases are topnotch, then the Capitol LP should hold its own, the finest for some time to come. The Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra performs the Suite with elegant precision, and Mr. Slatkin presents a reading notable for exquisite detail. Capitol engineering has produced one of the best stereo discs in its catalog to date, with a noticeable lack of distortion in transients, and with all the lines beautifully balanced. A well articulated and resonant sounding "*Nutcracker*," and one to own. The reading of Mendelssohn's Incidental music does not match the Tchaikovsky, but it is well played throughout, and the engineering is just as fine. The *scherzo* emerges as a real miracle, for stereo sound gives to this little masterpiece the dimension it needs for perfect recorded realization. J. T.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Overture 1812 (see COLLECTIONS)

● **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Overture 1812*, Op. 49; *Capriccio Italien*, Op. 45. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, University of Minnesota Brass Band, West Point cannon, Riverside Church Carillon, Antal Dorati cond. Mercury 90054 \$5.95

Musical Interest: His most familiar overture
Performance: Good musically, not so good for cannon sonics
Recording: Varied
Stereo Directionality: Very good
Stereo Depth: Good but a little close

Back in 1954 Mercury released its now famous recording of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Festival Overture. It was Mercury's intention that the music be played as nearly as it was originally conceived, complete with church bells, and cannon. Whether the

majority of collectors purchased the album for the music, or to hear the cannon, cannot be accurately determined, but the fact remains, the public did buy this particular Mercury release, in fabulous quantity, although the 1812 Overture had already been recorded in some depth on other labels.

With the advent of stereophonic recording, it must have become immediately evident that the "1812" should be re-recorded, bells and all. Therefore, on April 5, 1958, at Northrop Memorial Auditorium, the project was accomplished for the second time, in full stereo fashion. Mercury's technique placed the Minnesota Brass Band players behind the brasses of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra itself was spread in normal classical fashion, with percussion right center, and double basses on the left. Although the liner does not include microphone information, I assume the newest Telefunken stereo mikes were used, and of course three-channel tape machines.

In order to achieve the spectacular effect indicated in the original score, Mercury engineer's previously made a stereo-tape of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon at Riverside Church, which contains 74 bells. Bass bells are quite impressive, weighing more than 40,000 pounds, and the whole of the galaxy is housed atop the 392 foot church tower. Its total weight, if you are interested in that sort of thing is more than a half-million pounds! Bells were recorded through the cooperation of Carrol B. Fitch and carillonneur Dr. Kamiel Lefévere of Riverside Church. In order to preserve the sound of the carillon, Mercury's technicians hung three mikes, left channel for the low pitch bells, right channel near the medium pitch, and center microphone for the brilliant high-pitched bells.

In order to capture the cannon shots, the recording team visited West Point again, and through the cooperation of Museum Curator Gerald C. Stowe, chose Cannon No. 87, a venerable beauty weighing 3,180 pounds. By ancient formula, this bronze beauty was loaded with black powder, rammed tight with wet wadding.

Now, all this information is to let you know the enormous amount of trouble that Mercury executives and other personnel had to go through for this project. After the music was recorded, and the carillon tape and the cannon-shot tape integrated into a first "composite" master, the metal parts made, the tests finally okayed, the presses began their production run.

The result, musically, technically, and "dramatically?"—Dorati and the Minneapolis Orchestra and University of Minnesota Brass Band players combine to render a very exciting and sonically superior stereo recording. The percussion section acquits itself nobly, and the carillon effects are good. Lamentably, though, the cannon sounds like two sticks being hit together, and is a very large disappointment. The cannon used in the 1954 monophonic version was a great deal better. *That piece did* have a satisfactory reverberatory bang, and added a vital bit of excitement to the old "1812." What is lacking, quite obviously, is a low frequency impact, a series of dissipating reverberations as the sound decays. No matter how you explain it, the cannon sounds harsh, loud, and too close.

Comparison of two recent issues of the same score would place either competitive recording on a superior platform if you consider only the sonics of the finale. Slatkin uses only percussion, and to great advantage in the Capitol stereo disc reviewed elsewhere in this issue. London's recording to my ears is still the best, and Alwyn uses some sort of cannon, or cannons. Compare the solid impact of the London stereo to the Mercury, and the difference will be quite noticeable. Both readings are good, on a par, although I slightly prefer the London LP. From the viewpoint of well balanced stereo sound, and wide frequency response well contained in the grooves, Alwyn's effort is by far the more desirable.

Perhaps if Mercury had not spent so much of an effort for authenticity and had just used its very talented engineering staff to record a full-throated reverberant cannon roar that would sound with overtones for five or six seconds, a sound that you could feel in the low, low frequencies instead of capturing the sharp *whap* of the vintage bronze at West Point, a much happier result might have been obtained. J. T.

● **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *String Serenade in C Major*, Op. 48; **MOZART:** *Serenade—Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (K. 525)*. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti cond. London CS 6066 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Lasting favorites
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Tchaikovsky fares better
Stereo Directionality: See above
Stereo Depth: Good

First, let it be said that this is excellent playing. There is remarkable technical address and tonal richness. Both performances, moreover, are finely suited to the stylistic needs of the respective works.

Tchaikovsky's familiar music brings new thrills, thanks to the spirited conception and "close to" recording. One has the feeling of being right on the conductor's podium. True, the strings do not benefit from the sheen that might have resulted from a more distant placement. However, one can hear the inner parts as never before, even if, as a consequence of this proximity to the players, one also occasionally hears the sound of the bow against the strings. If you like to follow the score while listening, this recording will put you right among the players.

The Mozart, on the other hand, emerges with a shallower quality. Moreover, the directionality which was so fine in the case of the Tchaikovsky seems to be not as much in evidence here. Most of the players seem to be concentrated on the left channel.

D. R.

● **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Symphony No. 6 in B Minor*, Op. 74 ("*Pathétique*"). Virtuoso Symphony of London, Alfred Wallenstein cond. Audio Fidelity FCS-50,002 \$6.95

Musical Interest: A classic
Performance: Respectable
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

Wallenstein's is a respectable performance.
HiFi REVIEW

ance of the "Pathétique," if lacking a bit in personal profile. But this seems to be the prevailing style in Tchaikovsky performance these days. You can enumerate on the fingers of one hand the poet-conductors of 1959—and Wallenstein is certainly not one of them. But within its own aesthetic framework this is a valid performance. The recorded sound is on the thick side, with a resultant muddiness in some passages, especially the very end of the symphony with its divided low strings. The clarity and articulation here are not all they should be.

M. B.

VIVALDI: Concerto for 2 Trumpets (see COLLECTIONS)

COLLECTIONS

• **MARCHES FROM OPERAS**—Marches from *Aida* (VERDI); *The Marriage of Figaro* (MOZART); *The Damnation of Faust* (BERLIOZ); *Tannhäuser, Die Meistersinger* (WAGNER); *Carmen* (BIZET); *Coq d'Or* (RIMSKY-KORSAKOV); *Russlan and Ludmilla* (GLINKA); *Prince Igor* (BORODIN); *Le Prophète* (MEYERBEER). Virtuoso Symphony of London, Arthur Winograd cond. Audio Fidelity FDS 50,008 \$6.95

Musical Interest: Moderate
Performance: Variable
Recording: Supercharged
Stereo Directionality: Impressive
Stereo Depth: Perfect

The idea of programming operatic marches is appealingly unconventional, and the excerpts here have been well chosen for variety of color and spirit. Of course, certain marches are very effective outside of the dramatic context (the *Rákóczy March* and the *Fest March* from *Tannhäuser*) while others suffer by the loss of pageantry or stage action (*Aida*, *Carmen*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Die Meistersinger*). The relatively seldom heard Russian excerpts are welcome choices in any case.

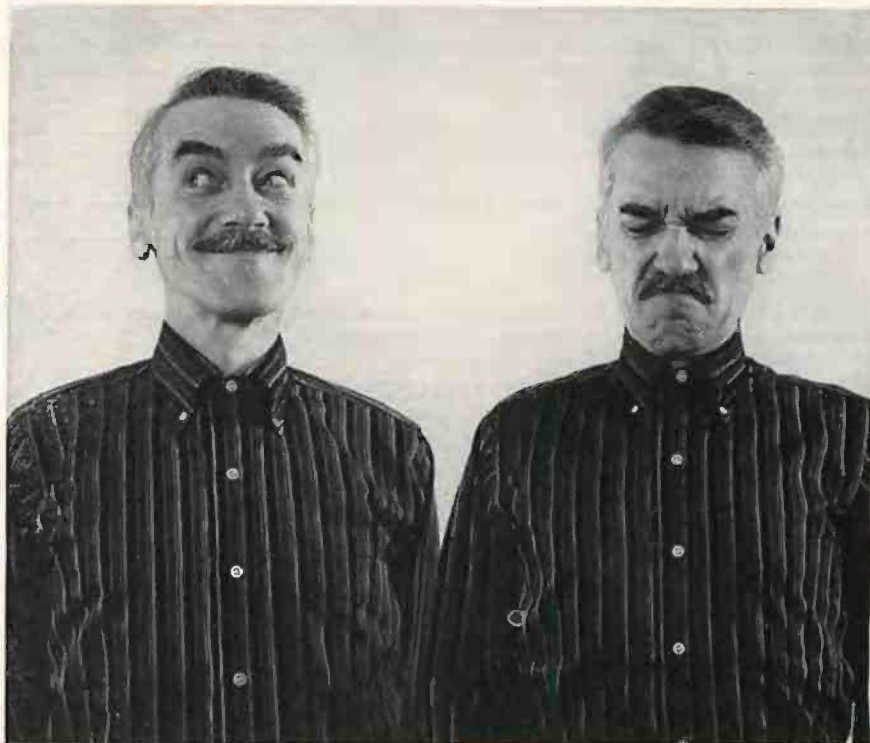
According to the rumors that have reached us the individual talents which make up The Virtuoso Symphony of London are of the caliber to justify the extravagant designation. But the performances are several degrees short of virtuosity. Some of the marches come off creditably but the "Rákóczy" is singularly unexciting at such a slow tempo, the Coronation March of Meyerbeer suffers from poor ensemble and Borodin's Polovetsi March needs more conviction and fire to save it from its inherent dullness.

There are some stunning moments on this disc—the reproduction of the trumpet sound and the sense of directionality attendant to the contrapuntal string passages in the *Aida* Grand March, and the clear definition of instrumental nuances in the Mozart excerpt, for example. Also I do not recall the cello passages so clearly revealed in other renditions of the Berlioz march (is the conductor's cellist background responsible for this?). However, in the portions requiring full instrumentation and heightened dynamics the grooves are evidently taxed to the limit of endurance and the excessive reverberation hampers the desired clarity.

G. J.

• **MUSIC FOR STRINGS**—BACH-STOKOWSKI: *Mein Jesu, Was Für Seelen*—MAY 1959

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STEREO DISC MISCELLANY

MORE NEW ITEMS RATED AT A GLANCE

Title	Musical Interest	Performance	Stereo Direction	Stereo Depth	Score
CHOPIN HITS IN STEREO HI-FI —Badura-Skoda, Boukoff, Lewenthal, Reisenberg Polonaise No. 6; Waltz No. 6; Fantaisie-Impromptu; Mazurka No. 5 & 6 others. Westminster WST 14055 \$5.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	16
YOUNG IDEAS —Ray Anthony and His Band Moon Glow; Why Do I Love You?; Lonely Night In Paris; Coquette & 8 others. Capitol ST 866 \$4.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	14
CONCERTOS UNDER THE STARS —Leonard Pennario with Dragon cond. the Hollywood Bowl Sym. Liszt: Liebestraum; Bath; Cornish Rhapsody; Addinsell; Warsaw Concerto & 4 others. Capitol SP 8326 \$5.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	13
LEIBERT TAKES A HOLIDAY —Dick Leibert playing Byrd Theater organ All The Things You Are; Donkey Serenade; Laura; September Song & 8 others. Westminster WST 15034 \$5.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	13
MITCHELL AYRES PLAYS ROMANTIC BALLADS FOR YOU —with Orchestra Embraceable You; I Love You; There's A Small Hotel; Dearly Beloved & 8 others. Everest SDBR 1016 \$5.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	12
STRINGS BY STARLIGHT —Hollywood Bowl Sym. Orch., Felix Slatkin cond. Borodin: Nocturne; Bach: Air for G String; Tchaikovsky: Waltz & 3 others. Capitol SP 8444 \$5.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	12
CHOPIN BY STARLIGHT —Hollywood Bowl Sym. Orch., Carmen Dragon cond. Polonaise In A-flat Major; Fantaisie-Impromptu; Prelude In A Major & 7 others. Capitol SP 8371 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	11
MUSIC OF JOHANN STRAUSS —Musical Arts Sym. Orch., Leonard Sorkin cond. Die Fledermaus; Pizzicato Polka; Blue Danube Waltz; Perpetual Motion & 2 others. Concert-Disc CS 28 \$6.95	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	11
ON WINGS OF SONG —Mishel Piastro and His Concert Orchestra Spanish Serenade; Zapateado; Hungarian Dance No. 6; Vocalise & 6 others. Decca DL 78675 \$5.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	11
THE ORCHESTRA SINGS —Capitol Symphony Orchestra, Carmen Dragon cond. Largo al factotum; Toreado Song; Amami Alfredo; Vesti la giubba & 6 others. Capitol SP 8440 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	11
VOICES FROM THE VIENNA WOODS —The Boys Choir of Vienna, Carl Etti cond. Songs of Johann Strauss, Beethoven, Schubert, Haydn and Mozart. Omega OSL 28 \$5.95	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	11
CONCERTO —Freddy Martin and His Orchestra We Live For Love Tonight; Cornish Rhapsody; Our Love; My Reverie & 11 others. Capitol SW 1066 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	10
SWINGIN' SCHOOL SONGS —Dave Pell and His Octet On Wisconsin; The Victors; Iowa Corn Song; The Eyes of Texas & 12 others. Coral CRL 757248 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	10
GOSPEL SINGING IN WASHINGTON TEMPLE —Ernestine Washington I Thank You Lord; Wipe All Tears; I'm Tired And Weary; Holdin' On & others. Westminster WST 15032 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	9
MUSIC FROM THE BLUEROOM —Jan Garber at the Roosevelt Hotel (New Orleans) Cheek To Cheek; Swingin' Shepherd Blues; Lonesome And Sorry and Medleys. Decca DL 78793 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	9
CHA CHA CHAS AND MAMBOS —Socarras and His Orchestra Tea For Two Cha Cha; Sixty Second Mamba; Nervous Gavotte Mamba & 9 others. Decca DL 78936 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	8
OPERA WITHOUT WORDS —Rome Symphony Orchestra, Domenico Savino cond. Tosca. Kapp KCL 9022 \$5.98	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	8
MOST HAPPY HAMMOND —Jackie Davis, organ Standing On The Corner; Surprise; Push de Button; All Of You & 8 others. Capitol ST 1046 \$4.98	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	7

Musical Interest:	Excellent	✓✓✓✓	Pleasing	✓✓✓	Fair	✓✓	Dull	✓
Performance:	Superb	✓✓✓✓	Good	✓✓✓	Adequate	✓✓	Disappointing	✓
Stereo Direction:	Tasteful	✓✓✓✓	Adequate	✓✓✓	Exaggerated	✓✓	Poor	✓
Stereo Depth:	Outstanding	✓✓✓✓	Good	✓✓✓	Fair	✓✓	Minimal	✓

wah Befällt Dich in Gethsemane; Preludio; GLUCK: Suite; BORODIN: Nocturne; PAGANINI: Moto Perpetuo; RACHMANINOFF: Vocalise. Leopold Stokowski with Symphony Orchestra. Capitol SP 8415 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Exceptional transcriptions

Performance: Superb

Recording: Likewise

Stereo Directionality: Classic seating

Stereo Depth: Just right

At last! Of all the Stokowski recordings of recent years, this is the one that most closely resembles the very best that this controversial conductor can offer, and that is considerable. Stokowski somewhat astonished the musical world by his introduction of non-unison bowing with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and this, plus other techniques, made for an unearthly beauty of string tone. During the 78 rpm era, between 1929 and 1940, Stokowski made many RCA Victor albums, and in almost every one the startlingly rich sound of the Philadelphia is etched for posterity. Old-fashioned sound by modern day standards, but within the dynamic and frequency response limitations of that day, one can still make a definite critical evaluation of the peculiar glowing opulence of the Philadelphia strings. Stokowski has made many recordings with "His" orchestra since that time and they all fall far below the magnificence achieved with his previous RCA Victor shellacs. That is until now. *Music for Strings* is breathtaking in some moments, and from start to finish commands attention for the plastic beauty of the string choirs.

Stokowski's restraint in these transcriptions and in his conducting adds much to the success of this release. "Mein Jesu" is a moving experience and is read with touching tenderness, a reminder of the Stokowskian miracle achieved with the Philadelphia in his lovely transcription of *Komm süßer Tod*. *Preludio* is given a stirring performance, and contrast nicely with the Gluck Suite which follows. The *Musette* is played with unusual verve. Borodin's *Nocturne* fails to come up to the standard of the other repertoire here, and *Moto Perpetuo* is merely good. *Vocalise* emerges with restraint—all the better for the almost chamber atmosphere created thereby. An altogether admirable release, one to own and a credit to a conductor to whom all of us owe a great debt. J. T.

● **OVERTURE! TCHAIKOVSKY: 1812 Overture; ROSSINI: William Tell—Overture; SUPPÉ: Post and Peasant, Light Cavalry Overtures.** Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra, Felix Slatkin cond. Capitol SP 8380 \$5.98

Musical Interest: The pots boil

Performance: Energetic

Recording: Excellent

Stereo Directionality: Good

Stereo Depth: Brasses shallow

The only thing missing from this album of energetic pot-boilers is some antique Hollywood cannons for use in Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*. We must be content to rely on Mercury and London to satisfy those who will tolerate nothing less than a reverberatory roar that will make the house reek of cordite fumes (there's an idea . . . a five-inch firecracker with each album, to

MAY 1959

be lit on cue, score excerpt furnished in deluxe issues). Mr. Slatkin uses a big bass drum, with a fundamental of below 40 cycles, and it sounds real fine. A fine sheen is imparted to the strings, especially in the "William Tell," where they manage to mask the trombones in the storm scene. The "Lone Ranger" finale is a shade slow in tempo. Suppé's wonderful overtures are given slick treatment too, but "1812" is the real solid effort here, and worth the price of the whole album. The superlative London stereo of "1812" (CS 6038) with the London Symphony and Grenadier Guards Band offers high powered competition, but the Capitol disc has the advantage of including a more varied program. For those of you who want cannons, London has 'em, and if you want it performed more realistically, the only choice left is to join the Army. *Overture!* is recommended with only slight reservation. High brasses are over-brilliant and tend to "fry" in loud parts. J. T.

● **RUSSIAN COMPOSER MASTERPIECES—BORODIN: Polovtsian Dances; RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Russian Easter Overture; Dance of the Buffoons; GLIÈRE: Russian Sailor's Dance; MOUSSORGSKY: Polonaise from Boris Godounov.** Audio Fidelity. FCS 50,009 \$6.95

Musical Interest: Familiar Russian dressing

Performance: Straightforward

Recording: Very, very good

Stereo Directionality: Superlative

Stereo Depth: Warm and full

After a great deal of cleverly planned and skilled advance publicity, Audio Fidelity has released its first batch of serious music stereo recordings. At the outset, let it be said that this young company has achieved a notable success in engineering. Here is some of the smoothest stereo I've yet listened to. The orchestra is microphoned magnificently, resulting in clean lined articulation, all the way from the lowest fundamental to the high frequencies and their overtones. Despite the claim of absolute lack of distortion, there is some in the final grooves of each side. But, that is a minor fault, and one that will be with us on flat disc recording for some time to come. Audio Fidelity is to be congratulated on some magnificently reproduced sound in what appears to be an intelligent result of very careful engineering. The sound does not "drift"; directionality is razor sharp and well balanced, the hall has good acoustics, and the orchestra is well positioned for microphone pickup. The newest Neuman stereo mikes were used I am sure, for there are no cancellation effects. The orchestra itself plays very well indeed—surprisingly well for a hastily organized ensemble.

It takes a deal of time for any orchestra to begin to develop real unity and character, and that little fact poses a serious problem to a company which wants the best but cannot have it for the simple reason "the best" is under contract. Audio Fidelity spared neither money nor effort to put together the best it could, and the ensemble is very good. In due course, it will become much better if it plays together long enough. We have on these first discs some stunning sound, with straightforward, carefully contrived performances. Sound is

LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S MIRACLE ON 57th STREET



The New York Philharmonic is currently having the finest season it has had in years. The Carnegie Hall box office has dusted off its SRO sign. Critics are digging for their most commendatory adjectives. And life is great for the nation's oldest symphony orchestra. Credit for this goes to Leonard Bernstein, the supremely gifted young conductor who became permanent musical director of the Philharmonic this season.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN SHOSTAKOVITCH: PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 RAVEL: PIANO CONCERTO IN G MAJOR



Leonard Bernstein at the piano and conducting the New York Philharmonic

Among Mr. Bernstein's most impressive performances are those in which he doubles as piano soloist and conductor. Two such performances are found in this new Columbia Masterworks recording—the delightful and very appealing Shostakovich Concerto No. 2 and the brilliant, exacting Concerto in G of Ravel.

SHOSTAKOVITCH: Piano Concerto No. 2—Leonard Bernstein at the piano and conducting the New York Philharmonic. RAVEL: Concerto in G Major—Leonard Bernstein at the piano and conducting. ML 5337 MS 6043 (stereo)

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Sound Talk

by John K. Hilliard

Director of Advanced Engineering



WHAT SPEAKERS FOR STEREO?

Sound engineers agree that the finest stereo reproduction can be achieved only by two identical speaker systems of exceptional quality. Short of this ideal, however, the premise is muddled by an ever-increasing number of unfounded claims... most of them based on sales philosophy rather than scientific fact.

Actually, the proper selection of stereo speakers is quite clear. Due to certain psycho-acoustic effects, one exceptional speaker system and one of moderate abilities will provide better stereo than matched speakers of intermediate quality. This is only true, however, if the lesser speaker meets certain requisites.

The two speakers must be similar in frequency response and character. In the high end of the spectrum they must have the same limits. At the low end, they must be similar down to 100 cycles. Below that point, the performance of the lesser speaker is relatively unimportant.

If the lesser speaker goes down to only 300 cycles or has major irregularities in its response, a phenomenon called the "orchestral shift" will occur. This shift results from the fact that the sound from any given instrument is reproduced from both speaker systems. The comparative loudness determines the auditory location. If an instrument is "placed" in the lesser speaker and then plays into a frequency range where that speaker is inefficient, it will then be louder in the better system and will appear to shift to that better system.

Speakers that are inefficient below the 300 cycle point will not provide true stereo. This is obvious because the 300 cycle point is above middle C on the piano, 70 cycles above the primary pitch of the female voice and nearly 200 cycles above primary male pitch. For full stereo it is therefore imperative that the lesser speaker efficiently reach at least 100 cycles.

All ALTEC speaker systems are similar in their exceptional smoothness of frequency response, have a high frequency limit of 22,000 cycles, and are efficient below 100 cycles in the lower range. This regularity in response, range, efficiency and quality is the reason why ALTEC speaker systems are noticeably superior for stereo reproduction.

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King here, however, and Audio Fidelity will dazzle ears from one coast to the other.

J. T.

● **HAYDN:** Trumpet Concerto in E-flat; **VIVALDI:** Concerto for Two Trumpets and Orchestra in C; **PURCELL:** Tune and Air for Trumpet and Orchestra in D; Voluntary for Two Trumpets in C; Trumpet Voluntary in D; Sonata for Trumpet and Strings in D. Roger Voisin and Armando Ghisalla (trumpeters) with Unicorn Concert Orchestra, Harry Ellis Dickson cond. Kapp KCL 9017 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Unusual
Performance: Full blown
Recording: Resonant
Stereo Directionality: Much in evidence
Stereo Depth: Good

When the monophonic version of this disc appeared, my review for HFR noted that the performances were nothing short of "brilliant." This opinion is now further substantiated by the stereo version. It would be difficult to imagine more skillful performances, from either soloists or orchestra.

Curiously, the trumpets seem to emerge from the left hand channel, with the first violins of the orchestra grouped on the right. Although one might have expected the soloists to be located in the center, the ear has no trouble in adjusting to this placement.

In the Purcell Trumpet Voluntary in D, the balance leaves much to be desired. The strings are much too far back, so that if the level is raised to the point where they are sufficiently audible, the trumpet solo is piercing. Also, in the same composer's Tune and Air in D, the studio sound drops out during the splice just preceding the return to the opening section.

Aside from these two minor complaints, however, the recording is very satisfactory. As in the case of the mono version, the spacious acoustics are nicely matched to the nature of the music.

The final Purcell work on Side 2, although it is perhaps the least spectacular sounding on the entire disc, is nevertheless a gem. It has an exquisite quality, especially in the writing for strings, reminiscent of moments in his masterful work, *The Fairy Queen*. D. R.

● **HANDEL:** Hallelujah Chorus from *Messiah*; **LISSO:** Echo Song; **MOZART:** *Alleluia* from *Exultate Jubilate* (K.165); **BORODIN:** Dance of the Polovetsian Maidens from *Prince Igor*; *Soon I Will Be Done* (arr. William Levi Dawson) *Polly Wolly Doodle* (Arr. Gail Kubik); **ORFF:** *Praelusio* from *Catulli Carmina*. Roger Wagner Chorale, Capitol Stereo SP 8431 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Variable
Performance: From magnificent to superficial
Recording: Spectacular, not always well-balanced
Stereo Directionality: Mostly satisfactory
Stereo Depth: Good

At first listening, this is a spectacular disc. Mr. Wagner obviously knows his way around with a chorus, and this group sounds like an aggregate of singers of solo calibre, so polished is the tone.

Under more careful scrutiny, however, there is something to be desired. Herewith my running notes:

Hallelujah Chorus: Beautiful tempo, but

orchestra is far too distant; chorus is prominent beyond all proportion, so that timpani and orchestral basses are all but missing. Almost everything seems to be left channel.

Echo Song: The main body of the chorus is "close up," and the good stereo recording clearly places the echo group in the distance and to the left, giving an excellent spatial effect. However, there is one psychologically disturbing factor; the main group does not seem to be singing loud enough to call forth an echo from such a great distance! Moreover, why does a professional chorus that prides itself on its virtuoso calibre sing this work in English, when amateur groups with much less skill have sung it in the Italian original? Shouldn't a professional chorus set an example for others?

"Alleluia": quite a virtuoso feat, having all the women sing the solo coloratura lines! They carry it off very well.

Dances from *Prince Igor*. Again the chorus is so prominent that the orchestra is sadly lacking in presence. Seems to be sung in Russian. However, here is where a professional chorus leaves something to be desired. The tone is so polished that one misses the earthy, folk quality that lies at the root of this magnificently exciting music. Its latent harshness is vitiated by too-sophisticated tone quality.

Soon I Will Be Done: Excellent ensemble, but the rhythm is so metronomic that the music lacks the "insinuating" quality it should have.

Polly Wolly Doodle: A well-performed "novelty" number, but what a strange bed-fellow for Handel and Mozart!

Orff's *Praelusio:* This is indeed a fine performance on the part of all concerned, including the anonymous instrumentalists. The recording, too, is spectacular, in its ability to reproduce the sounds of the four pianos and the battery of percussion instruments. However, to my ears, this music is no more than a series of cleverly put-together rhythmic effects. Despite the furor that Orff's works have been creating, I find that the music loses its interest after first hearing. If you like Orff, get this disc, by all means. The performance is virtuosic with a vengeance. D. R.

● **CHARLES K. L. DAVIS SINGS ROMANTIC ARIAS FROM FAVORITE OPERAS**—with the Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York, Wilfred Pelletier cond. Everest SDBR 3012 \$5.98. Mono—LPBR 6012 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Operatic hit-parade
Performance: Promising talent
Recording: Near perfection
Stereo Directionality: Natural
Stereo Depth: Good

Davis, winner of the 1958 Metropolitan Auditions of the Air, has been heard previously in popular collections and now makes his bow in an operatic program. Aside from generous vocal endowments he also exhibits the results of sound musical training. His voice is bright, his delivery confident, he has a good legato and phrases sensitively. Still one cannot help thinking that this is a somewhat premature exposure of a yet unformed artist in a program which automatically invites the most formidable comparisons. G. J.

MONO HI-FI CONCERT

Reviewed by

MARTIN BOOKSPAN

GEORGE JELLINEK

DAVID RANDOLPH

JOHN THORNTON

● **BACH:** Prelude and Fugue in C Minor (BWV 546), Prelude and Fugue in C major (BWV 547); Fantasia in C Minor (BWV 562); Toccata and Fugue in F Major (BWV 540). Finn Viderø (Organ of St. Johannis, Vejle, Denmark). Bach Guild BG-580 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Tops
Performance: Expert
Recording: Resonant

These are skilled performances of fine music, with recording that captures the sound of the organ with complete success. My only slight complaint would be about lack of variety in registration. In other words, here is a well-played conventional conception of Bach's organ music that can readily be recommended—provided that one enjoys that "conventional conception."

But, as I have stated in the past, I would prefer to hear Bach played on an organ in a room that offers great clarity of line, instead of a blur that obscures the music.

D. R.

● **BEETHOVEN:** Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Paul Badura-Skoda, with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen cond. Westminster XWN-18799 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Yes, yes
Performance: Fine
Recording: Good

An element of exhilaration is lacking in the finale, but otherwise this is a first-class recording. Badura-Skoda plays the solo beautifully and Scherchen gets the proper strength and sensitivity into the over-all presentation. The recorded sound is good, with fine balance between the solo instrument and orchestra. This version automatically takes a place near the top of available recordings of this Concerto.

M. B.

BEETHOVEN: Leonore Overture No. 3 (see COLLECTIONS)

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat ("Eroica") (see p. 53)

BIZET: L'Arlésienne; Carmen Suites (see p. 53)

BRUCH: Violin Concerto No. 1 (see MENDELSSOHN)

CHARLES K. L. DAVIS SINGS ROMANTIC ARIAS FROM FAVORITE OPERAS (see p. 66)

MAY 1959

BEST OF THE MONTH

- Westminster has a real "sleeper" in its anthology of **Debussy** masterpieces conducted by Manuel Rosenthal — "combining breathtaking performance with fabulous engineering. . . . There are no weaknesses . . . not anywhere." (see below)
- Monitor's disc of Schubert's **A Minor Piano Sonata** reveals in its good sonics the real greatness of Russia's Sviatoslav Richter. — "Here is nobility and power, mated to instinctive feeling for the music's ebb and flow." (see p. 72)
- Columbia's coupling of Richard Strauss's almost unknown **Frau ohne Schatten Suite** with the familiar **Rosenkavalier** music, as led by Eugene Ormandy, is a masterstroke — "the full Philadelphia treatment . . . sound is gorgeous." (see p. 72)

CHOPIN: Piano pieces (see COLLECTIONS)

CORELLI: Concerti Grossi (see p. 54)

DEBUSSY: Ibéria (see COLLECTIONS)

● **DEBUSSY:** Joux—Poème Dansé; Prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun; Fêtes, Nuages for Nocturnes for Orchestra. Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris, Manuel Rosenthal cond. Westminster XWN 18771 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Joux is magnificent!
Performance: Worth an award
Recording: Westminster's best

One of the most perfect Debussy recordings in the disc repertoire, combining breathtaking performance with fabulous engineering, has been issued by Westminster here in this monophonic issue. Of all the Rosenthal releases on Westminster, this one by far is the best. There are no weaknesses. Not anywhere. *Joux* comes forth in jewel-like splendor with every facet glistening, with every delicate nuance of tone placed with shimmering perfection in just the right place. Virtuoso playing under a man who has a superb sense of dynamics, and who never loses the long line, adds up to a recording you must own.

So many times the music of Debussy suffers from over-transparency, resulting in a clear, but brittle sound. Rosenthal manages to obtain this ice-clear articulation without losing warmth of tone, and the result is intoxicating. *Joux* is the prize-winning effort, and worth the price of the recording many times. "*Afternoon of a Faun*" is very well done, and *Fêtes* is most notable because of the steady beat that Rosenthal maintains in the middle section. *Nuages* is very good too, and the orchestral tone never becomes

too heavy. Altogether a tremendous release, and one that this reviewer, for one, will enjoy for many, many playings. J. T.

DEBUSSY: Reflets dans l'eau (see COLLECTIONS)

● **FRANCO:** The Virgin Queen's Dream Monologue (with Paula Lenchner, soprano); Fantasy for cello and orchestra (with Samuel Brill, cello). Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Eduard Flipse cond. **HOWE:** Castellana for two pianos and orchestra (with Celius Dougherty, Vincenz Ruzicka, pianists); Stars; Sand. Vienna Orchestra, William Strickland cond. Composers Recordings CRI 124 \$5.95

Musical Interest: Moderate
Performance: Sympathetic
Recording: Good average

The program of this LP is evenly divided between two contemporary composers, Holland-American John Franco (b. 1908) and Virginia-born Mary Howe (b. 1882). The monologue for dramatic soprano and orchestra from Franco's uncompleted opera about Sir Francis Bacon is the most impressively individual entry on the record—a scene of considerable dramatic impact heightened by the imaginatively eerie use of celesta and percussion in the accompaniment. Paula Lenchner performs the music admirably. The Fantasy, in which a germinal motive is treated to an elaborate "cyclic" development is, apart from exhibiting the composer's contrapuntal skill, decidedly less interesting.

Mary Howe's *Castellana* is an effective virtuoso showpiece for two pianos and orchestra whose openly romantic appeal makes one wonder why it is not better known. *Stars* and *Sand* are miniature tone poems of considerable skill and expressiveness and just as easily accessible. The per-

67

Olympia and Antonia to the same singer is quite permissible—the adventurous history of this opera provides handy precedents for all kinds of productional twists. Mattiwilda Dobbs is an unusually agile Olympia—her *Doll Song* exhibits, aside from two firmly anchored E flats, a dazzling interpolated F—also scale passages of almost impeccable purity and accuracy. For the part of Antonia a warmer, fuller sound would be conducive to better results, but her portrayal is touching and agreeably musical. Uta Graf, on the other hand, is a rather colorless Giulietta, a part that requires more vocal allure. Weakest of the entire cast is Nata Tuescher who appears in the entirely unrelated parts of Nicklausse and the Voice of Antonia's mother (for this I don't recall a precedent). Her singing is a distinct handicap to the performance and, to make matters worse, by maintaining a respectful distance from true pitch she turns the *Barcarolle* into a real trial.

Similar expediency—or economy—has evidently ruled that the interpreter of Crespel should also assume the roles of Schlemihl and the student Hermann. The singer in question, Bernard Lafort, fortunately comes through handily. Aimé Donat, however, who is called upon to add the parts of Nathanael and Spalanzani to the quartet of tenor buffo roles, sports a frail, tremulous voice that is tailor-made for the feeble Frantz, but not quite so for the vigorous student Nathanael.

This is, for all purposes, a complete version, although a somewhat baffling one. Both the Prologue and Epilogue offer more music than found in the Schirmer score.

On the other hand, the Entr'acte to Act I, the interlude before the Waltz Scene and the finale of Act I are abbreviated. The *Barcarolle Entr'acte*, also unaccountably shortened, is placed after Act III, which seems rather illogical. Definitely on the credit side is Epic's smartly designed package (Hollywood, rather than Paris-influenced) with full libretto but no information on the performers.

Hats off to the recorded sound—plush, spacious, cleanly articulated. Stereo adds mixed blessings—sharper definition of orchestral detail and vocal ensembles (particularly the two trios of Act III). On the other hand, Hoffman and Nicklausse, who enter the stage side by side in the first scene, reach your ears through separate speakers. It's separate speakers, too, for the *Barcarolle*, supposedly an intimate duet sung in a clinch.

Faults aplenty, this is still an enjoyable performance. It may be a while until a better one comes along, so the set is well worth considering if you want Offenbach's weird but brilliant masterpiece in your collection.

G. J.

● **PALESTRINA:** *Sicut cervus; Soave fia il morir; O beata et benedicta et gloriosa; Adoramus te Christe, Stabat mater*; **MONTEVERDI:** *Lamento d'Arianna; Ch'lo t'ami.* Netherlands Chamber Choir; Felix de Nobel cond. Angel 35667 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Masterpieces
Performance: Sensitive
Recording: Excellent

This is an admirable disc. On the one

side, Palestrina's relatively reserved music; on the other, Monteverdi's emotional outbursts, including the famous *Lasciatemi morire*.

It is to the credit of the conductor that he is so sensitive to the needs of both kinds of music, and to the credit of his singers—apparently eighteen in number—that they respond completely to his demands. The recording, likewise, leaves nothing to be desired in tonal beauty, balance, and acoustics.

A comparison of the Monteverdi side with the Vox version of a few years ago, by the Couraud Vocal Ensemble reveals the fact that the earlier conception is somewhat more emotional, while the present disc has greater tonal warmth.

D. R.

● **POULENC:** *Dialogues des Carmelites* (complete opera). Denise Duval (soprano)—Blanche de la Force; Denise Scharley (mezzo-soprano)—The Prioress; Régine Crespin (soprano)—Madame Lidoine; Rita Gorr (soprano)—Mother Marie; Xavier Depraz (baritone)—The Marquis; Paul Finel (tenor)—The Chevalier de la Force; and others. Orchestra and Chorus of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris, Pierre Dervaux cond. Angel 3585 3 12" \$15.94

Musical Interest: Major contemporary opera
Performance: Very good
Recording: Good—with some reservations

Francis Poulenc has written three operas. The first one, a youthful work (*Le genévrier incompris*, 1920) is hardly known. *Les mamelles de Tirésias* followed in 1947 and quickly ascended to fame (or notori-

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ety) by virtue of its daring subject matter. Then, in 1953, Poulenc accepted a commission for La Scala, choosing for his libretto the moving *Dialogues des Carmelites*, a play of Georges Bernanos based on a historical fact. La Scala introduced the "Dialogues" on January 26, 1957, and the NBC Opera made a memorable television production of it a year later. The Paris premiere by the Opéra took place on June 21, 1957, presided over by the conductor of Angel's performance, Pierre Dervaux.

The fervor of religious faith is the only emotion manifested in this opera. The story begins in 1789. Blanche de la Force, the central figure, is a creature of Méliand-like fragility. Unable to adjust herself to life's turmoil she seeks escape—against the wishes of her father and brother—as a Carmelite nun. But convent life, with its unquestioning acceptance of rigid discipline, proves equally harrowing. The storm of the Revolution soon overtakes the sheltered world of the convent. The Carmelite order is disbanded by the government and the nuns are expelled. They are joined in a vow of martyrdom, but Blanche, finding herself incapable to meet this new crisis, escapes. The Revolutionary Tribunal finds the entire order guilty of forbidden activities and the death sentence is summarily pronounced on the nuns. In the last scene, as the tragic procession moves toward the guillotine, Blanche appears in the crowd in time to join her sisters in their last moment of martyrdom.

We might pause a moment here, for this is an unforgettable scene—the implacable climax toward which the entire opera grav-

itates slowly and inexorably. The nuns approach the seafront singing "Salve Regina" in steady tones of celestial purity over vaguely defined choral voices emerging from the crowd. The grisly and terrifying noise of the falling blade is heard at irregular intervals, and each time it is heard the singing diminishes in strength until the melody is sustained by a single voice. As the last nun is silenced Blanche lifts her voice in the last verses of *Veni Creator*—then her voice dies out suddenly and—*curtain*.

The chilling drama of the opera's last scene is all the more electrifying since it is preceded by a series of episodes in which dramatic elements are understated or completely absent. Through most of the opera the characters express themselves in a natural, conversational tone—theatricalism is pointedly avoided and the music runs a delicate course of restraint. To be sure, Poulenc displays a mastery of the flowing song-speech that is reminiscent of Debussy and Moussorgsky at their most inspired. But the predominance of feminine voices, which inhibited Puccini's exquisite *Suor Angelica*, proves even more formidable for Poulenc's subtler, less demonstrative talents. Where Puccini made us constantly aware of the undercurrent of hidden emotions, Poulenc offers only brief moments of contrast and relief—the gripping death scene of the Prioress, the poignant duet between Blanche and her brother—which seem like isolated ripples in a sea of undisturbed placidity. But then comes the final scene with an impact to make one momentarily forget the dramatic shortcom-

ings of the preceding two hours.

Here a word may also be added about the orchestral writing which, though full-textured and abundant in vivid harmonies, is always transparent and sensitively shaded to the all-important vocal design. The deserved world recognition of the "Dialogues" should inspire other operas from Poulenc's pen—few indeed are the skills today comparable to his.

The cast presented here discloses only one singer of renown, Denise Duval, in the role of Blanche. This is a difficult part, too demanding vocally to allow full concentration on the considerable variety of shadings that make up this fragile and pitiful figure. Miss Duval falls humanly short of perfection, which makes her characterization all the more human. My recollection of Patricia Neway's television performance finds Denise Scharley's Prioress a little paler in dramatic strength by comparison, but Régine Crespin is very impressive in the part of Madame Lidoine and Rita Gorr is appropriately stern as the determined Mother Marie. In the all too brief role of the Marquis, Xavier Depraz is excellent, while Paul Finel displays a rather light and not too expressive tenor voice as Blanche's brother. Dervaux's direction may be accepted as absolutely authoritative and the balances he maintains between voices and orchestra most happily reveals both elements in a complimentary light.

For the most part the performance is blessed with luminous sound. The overabundance of high soprano tones is fraught with engineering difficulties which are not always solved to satisfaction—there's quite

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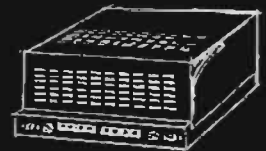
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a bit of shrill singing, some of which, of course, cannot be blamed on the engineering. Still—more care should have been taken in this area. **G. J.**

RAVEL: Alborada del gracioso (see COLLECTIONS)

ROSSINI: L'Italiana in Algeri—Overture (see COLLECTIONS)

● **SAINT-SAËNS:** Piano Concerto No. 4 in C Minor, Op. 44; **MILHAUD:** Le Carnaval d'Aix for Piano and Orchestra. Grant Johannesen with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Georges Tzipine cond. Capitol EMI G 7151 \$4.98

Musical Interest: For French pastry fanciers

Performance: Saint Saëns—Lacking a little in seasoning; Milhaud—Just right
Recording: Slightly boomy

Johannesen doesn't bring to his performance of the Saint-Saëns quite the degree of sophisticated élan which characterized the pre-war recording of the score by Alfred Cortot with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under the direction of a then obscure conductor named Charles Münch. Nor does Tzipine illuminate the orchestral part with any great insight. This, in short, is a serviceable but by no means exceptional performance.

The saucy Milhaud score, on the other hand, fares very well in this, its first recorded performance. This is a product of the 1920's and is a re-working by the composer of some of the material he used in his ballet, *Satade*. There are twelve sections to the *Carnaval*, each one perkier than its predecessor. Johannesen and Tzipine combine to give us a pert and zestful performance, with expert collaboration from the orchestra. The recorded sound tends to get boomy. **M. B.**

SCHUBERT: Impromptu in B-flat (see COLLECTIONS)

● **SCHUBERT:** Sonata in A Minor, Opus 42; Impromptus in E Flat, Opus 90, No. 2 and A Flat, Opus 142, No. 2. Sviatoslav Richter (piano). Monitor MC-2027 \$4.98

Musical Interest: A strong Sonata and engaging Impromptus
Performance: Extraordinary
Recording: One of Russia's best-sounding exports

In case you've been wondering whether or not all the talk about the greatness of Richter has been exaggerated, just listen to these performances. Here is nobility and power, mated to an instinctive feeling for the music's ebb and flow. The Sonata itself is one of the great ones of the literature and Richter's reading is remarkable.

He is equally successful with the two Impromptus, neatly capturing the casual charm of the music.

The sound is resonant and hold, among the best I've yet heard from the Soviet. **M. B.**

● **SCHUBERT:** String Quartets and Quintets—complete (15 quartets and 2 quintets). Endres Quartet, with Rolf Reinhardt (piano) and Fritz Kiskelt (cello). Vox VBX-4 3 12"; VBX-5 3 12"; VBX-6 3 12" \$6.95-per album

Musical Interest: Unquestioned
Performance: Splendid
Recording: Good

Even if these performances were not as good as they are, we should be in debt to the Endres Quartet and to Vox for this tremendous undertaking. As it happens, the players are fully equal to the demands of Schubert's music, with the result that these are rich, technically secure and expressive interpretations. In view of the great number of works included, it would be pointless to dwell on the interpretations accorded individual movements. Suffice it to say that these are searching readings, and that the recording is tonally faithful and well-balanced.

My enthusiasm for this undertaking—especially at the asking price!—is as great as this review is brief. **D. R.**

R. STRAUSS: Also sprach Zarathustra (see p. 60)

● **R. STRAUSS:** Death and Transfiguration; Dance of the Seven Veils from Salome; Dance Suite After Couperin. Philharmonia Orchestra, Artur Rodzinski cond. Capitol EMI G 7147 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Variable
Performance: Clean
Recording: Fine

The most impressive thing about this *Death and Transfiguration* is the enormous dynamic range contained within the grooves of the disc, from the whispered opening to the *fff* of the apocalyptic pages. The performance is steady, if a bit antiseptic. I want more passion and drive here than Rodzinski summons.

Similarly, others have made a more voluptuously sensuous thing of Salome's Dance. In the *Dance Suite After Couperin* Rodzinski omits two of the eight sections; the six that he does give us have a period charm, but as a whole the score is not up to the composer's earlier evocation of the spirit of Lully in the "*Bourgeois Gentleman*" music. Performances and recording are uniformly fine, however. **M. B.**

● **R. STRAUSS:** Suite from Der Rosenkavalier; Suite from Die Frau ohne Schatten. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. Columbia ML 5333 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Grand coupling!
Performance: Luxuriant
Recording: Deluxe

Pairing the familiar, though not over-recorded "*Rosenkavalier*" score with the first recording of the suite from *Die Frau ohne Schatten* rates as "A & R" inspiration of the highest order. We have had several excellent readings of the former—all, with slight alterations, following the sequence laid out by the composer himself decades ago—and only recently Capitol gave us a beautifully recorded one with Steinberg and the Philharmonia (PAO 8423). But Ormandy is a masterful hand with this music, and his treatment is all one can ask for. Avoiding both fussiness and over-dramatization he guides his unique ensemble through familiar episodes with tempi that are relaxed and logical, and builds to a stunning climax in the *ecstatic music of the third act trio*.

But what makes this an irresistible disc is the revelation offered overside. Although the mystically perplexing story of *Die Frau*

HiFi REVIEW

ohne Schatten is leagues apart from the humanly engaging one the same von Hofmannsthal fashioned for *Der Rosenkavalier*, this juxtaposition clearly proves that both have sprung from the same rich fountain of musical inspiration. One might add that the massive colors, bold orchestrating strokes and sweeping waves of sensuous melody never again returned into Strauss's operatic writing with the magical effect present in these two scores.

Columbia has come through with the full Philadelphia treatment—the recorded sound is gorgeous from the first note to . . . not exactly the last, for the sustained chords at the very end are marred by sagging pitch. **G. J.**

STRAVINSKY: *Ebony Concerto; Symphony in Three Movements* (see p. 61)

• **TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36.* New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. Columbia ML-5332 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Repertoire cornerstone
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Excellent

Here is a performance of the Tchaikovsky "Fourth" that has real personality. This doesn't necessarily mean that the conductor distorts the music to fit it into his own personal conception; what it does mean is that one can feel an overwhelming involvement on the conductor's part with the music—he feels it deeply and passionately and it is these qualities which he conveys in his performance.

Not everybody will agree with Bernstein's ideas; for one thing, he favors generally slow tempi and he indulges in an occasional *rubato* which may be questionable. And sometimes he will draw out an inner voice and give it an exaggerated prominence. As for me, however, I find the reading always an absorbing and often an exciting one.

Columbia has captured an admirably transparent and vibrant orchestral sound—and how well the Philharmonic plays in this recording! **M. B.**

VERDI: *La Forza del Destino—Overture* (see COLLECTIONS)

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger—Prelude* (see COLLECTIONS)

• **WALTON:** *Belshazzar's Feast*, **HANDEL:** *Coronation Anthem—Zadok the Priest; From the Censer Curling Rite, from Solomon.* Huddersfield Choral Society, with James Milligan (baritone) and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. Capitol-EMI G 7141 \$4.98

Musical Interest: "Must" for choral fans
Performance: Excellent!
Recording: Good, but too distant

Belshazzar's Feast, a work that has been popular in England since its premiere in 1931, calls for an exceptionally large orchestra, which is probably the reason why amateur choral organizations do not perform it with any frequency in the United States. The score presents no serious musical problems for the chorus, and the solo part can be handled with ease by any competent and robust baritone. The real impact of the work is furnished by the instrumental ensemble, aided by extra brass choirs and

an impressive percussion section. In this new Capitol-EMI recording Sir Malcolm Sargent makes the most of the considerable forces at his command.

Capitol falls short of a stunning release only because the pick-up is too distant, and while the chorus acquits itself magnificently, the ear keeps "reaching" to understand the English text. The old Westminster set (WL 5248) has a much closer sound, and as a result, has a more intelligible, cleaner articulation.

However the Huddersfield choir is much the better group, and Sir Malcolm, who also conducted the premiere, leads his combined forces in a warmer, more vital reading. Bouli's performance is sonically ex-

cellent, and the words can be understood, but the soloist, Dennis Noble, is not as vocally sure as Milligan.

This new recording also offers us a plus the most famous of Handel's Coronation anthems which is stirringly performed, as well as the excerpt from *Solomon*, a teaser that will make you want to own the whole set. (You won't be sorry, either, for it's on Angel with Beecham conducting.) **J. T.**

WEBER: *Oberon—Overture* (see COLLECTIONS)

COLLECTIONS

• **DEBUSSY:** *Idéala.* **RAVEL:** *Alborado*

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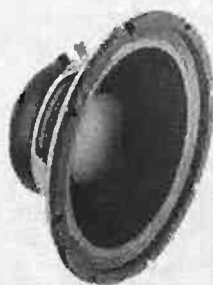
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del Gracioso. **IBERT:** Escalas. Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française, Leopold Stokowski cond. Capitol P8463 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Standard impressionist fare
Performance: Fair
Recording: Good

Mr. Stokowski, who has been very busy on the Capitol label, conducts still another orchestra, that of the French Radio, one of the best ensembles in France, but what he exacts is not one of the better performances of any of the trio of selections he has chosen. He has conducted these in much better fashion before, notably *Escalas* on RCA-Victor LM9029. None of the excitement that runs through the "*Alborado*" is conveyed to the orchestra by the conductor, and the one major piece on the record, *Iberia*, is taut, unrelaxed, and wiry throughout. For the best performances of this last work, turn to Mercury, Victor, or to the London disc where the late Ataulfo Argenta conducts the complete *Images* in the best effort of them all. Reiner does an electrifying "*Alborado*" on the Victor LP. It is unfortunate that neither the recording quality nor the performance has any substance, for Mr. Stokowski can usually be counted on to work miracles with this kind of music.

J. T.

● **OPERA OVERTURES—WAGNER:** Die Meistersinger—Prelude; **ROSSINI:** L'italiana in Algeri—Overture; **WEBER:** Oberon—Overture; **MOZART:** The Marriage of Figaro—Overture; **BEETHOVEN:** Leonore Overture No. 3; **VERDI:** La Forza del Destino—Overture. Philharmonia Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf cond. Capitol P 8465 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Tops in their class
Performance: Export
Recording: Good

No mere curtainraisers, these, but a collection of overtures one is likely to encounter in concert halls as frequently as in the opera house. They follow a well-contrasted sequence and receive, not unexpectedly, excellent performances from a conductor who is equally at home in symphony and opera. Credit must also be given to the top-notch Philharmonia Orchestra, whose members perform brilliantly—with special recognition due the flute and oboe soloists in the Rossini overture.

Leinsdorf renders all there's due to Rossini's lighthearted humor, Verdi's grandeur, and Weber's glowing romanticism with equal aptness. Only the "*Meistersinger*" Prelude disappoints slightly with a reading that is careful, correct, but a bit mechanical and lacking the full measure of expressiveness.

Aside from treating the brasses as stepchildren of the instrumental family in the "*Meistersinger*" Prelude, the engineering successfully preserves the likeness of these attractive performances, bringing the inner voices, particularly in the Beethoven and Verdi excerpts, into clear focus. The overall sound is slightly under the level of Capitol's best, but still considerably better than "good enough."

G. J.

● **DEBUT RECITAL—CHOPIN:** "Black Key" Etude; Nocturne in D-flat; Grande Valse Brillante; **LISZT:** Mephisto Waltz; **BACH:** Nun Komm' der Heiden Heiland; In

dir ist Freude; **SCHUBERT:** Impromptu in B-flat; **DEBUSSY:** Reflets dans l'eau; **RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF-RACHMANINOFF:** Flight of the Bumble Bee. John Browning (piano). Capitol P-8464 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Consistently high
Performance: Poetic and sensitive
Recording: Excellent

In 1954, John Browning was one of the two top winners in the Queen Elizabeth of Belgium International Competition—the same contest which Leon Fleisher had walked off with two years earlier. Upon his return to this country Browning appeared in many of our leading cities in recital and with orchestra, and then in 1956 he went into the army. He was released a little more than a year ago and since that time has returned to the concert stage. This disc marks his recording debut.

It is a very impressive one, for Browning has a poet's soul and it is in the more introspective pieces, like the Chopin *Nocturne* and the first of the Bach *Chorale Preludes* (in the Busoni arrangement) that he is most successful. He displays the greatest refinement and sensitivity and his ear for delicate tonal shading is a joy. And yet at the same time these very qualities would seem to contribute to a certain weakness in some of the more virtuosic pieces of this recital. The *Mephisto Waltz*, for example, is lacking in the demonic drive and kaleidoscopic fireworks display which other pianists have brought to the music.

If Browning is able to develop the power to go along with his poetry, he is certain to become one of our most important pianists.

M. B.

● **RENATA SCOTTO—OPERATIC ARIAS—VERDI:** La Traviata—Ah fors'è lui; **BELLINI:** I Puritani—Qui la voce; **DONIZETTI:** Lucia di Lammermoor—Il dolce suono (Mad Scene); **ROSSINI:** Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Una voce poco fa; **PUCCINI:** Turandot—Signore ascolta; Tu che di gel sei cinta; *Madama Butterfly*—Un bel dì, vedremo; *Gianni Schicchi*—O mio babbino caro; **BOITO:** Mefistofele—L'altra notte; with Philharmonia Orchestra, Manno Wolf-Ferrari cond. Angel 35635 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Standard arias
Performance: Pleasing
Recording: Just right

In addition to a fetching physiognomy and a promising first name, Renata Scotto also possesses a very agreeable voice and impressive technique. This is her debut disc recital and, in all aspects, an auspicious one. Minor and momentary lapses of intonation and an occasional explosive phrase will not alter the fact that she can meet the florid challenges of Donizetti and Bellini with agility and accuracy (her chromatic runs in the Bellini *cabaletta* are particularly expert), can hit a strong and confident high C at will, as well as negotiate the E-flat of the *Mad Scene* without undue effort.

The Boito and Puccini excerpts are also well vocalized, though without revealing striking individual qualities and without full exploitation of the dramatic subtleties. These, too, will come in time. Miss Scotto is only 25 years old and will undoubtedly go places. Here she benefits from excellent orchestral background and faultless reproduction.

G. J.

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● **MOVIESVILLE JAZZ—HEINIE BEAU AND HIS HOLLYWOOD JAZZ STARS—**Heinie Beau (clarinet, alto saxophone, flute), Don Fagerquist (trumpet), Ted Nash (flute, alto, clarinet) or Buddy Collette (flute, tenor, clarinet), Bill Ulyate (bass sax, baritone sax, bass clarinet), or Chuck Gentry (bass sax, baritone sax, bass clarinet), Jack Sperling or Bill Richmond (drums), Red Callender or Red Mitchell (bass), Jack Cave or John Graas (French horn), Tony Rizzi or Howard Roberts (guitar), Frank Flynn (percussion). In *Your Private Eye*; *Gullible Travels*; *Moonset Boulevard* and 9 others. Coral Stereo CRL 757247 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Unusual if thin
Performance: Well integrated
Recording: A little distant
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Very good

This is a collection of parodies and some relatively serious "impressions" of movie scores by a jazz-oriented arranger. Not intended to be taken too solemnly, the album contains a fair portion of effective satire. The "mood" tracks are attractive if not memorable. The playing is skilful, and the solos are quite competent. The basic idea, however, wears thin fairly soon and Beau might be encouraged to work on a more substantial thematic premise in his next album. As jazz, the album is unimportant. As a pointed look at film scoring, it's interesting enough. N. H.

● **DICK CARY HOT AND COOL.** Rose-room; You Do Something To Me; More Than You Know and 5 others. Stere-O-Craft RTN 106 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Unusual
Performance: Topnotch
Recording: Crisp
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Just right

A group of men mostly associated with so-called "dixieland" jazz in a collection of standards and originals in a modern jazz style that is quite surprising. They play with facility, feeling and fine emotional concept and the ears of this veteran reviewer were consistently surprised and delighted at the result. The stereo has proper depth, the
MAY 1959

BEST OF THE MONTH

- The new Stere-O-Craft label made "The Best" last month and does it again with **Dick Cary Hot and Cool**—a fine collection of modern jazz stylings . . . "the ears of this veteran reviewer were consistently surprised and delighted . . . definitely recommended for all schools of jazz fans." (see below)
- Capitol's stereo version of **The New James** displays the trumpeter in great form. "Like his band, his trumpet playing is clean, economical, and hits with sharp impact . . . engineers are to be congratulated for their tasteful use of stereo." (see below)
- London scores a major coup in stereo theater with its drama production of **Alice in Wonderland**—"a treat for the ears and—almost—the eyes . . . the illusion of actually taking part in the mad tea party . . . is little short of startling." (see p. 78)

solos (which are excellent, musically) are just off dead center. This one is definitely recommended for all schools of jazz fans.

R. J. G.

● **DIXIELAND FROM ST. LOUIS** with Sammy Gardner and his Mound City Six. Jazzy Me Blues; Tiger Rag; Tin Roof Blues; Hindustan and 8 others. Everest Stereo SDBR 1002 \$5.98
Mono LPBR 5002 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Nil
Performance: Uneven
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Adequate

The trouble is with the music, not the recording, here. Dixieland as drab and dull as this is little better than amateur and not as good as some amateurs, at that. Despite the competent recording, there is little of interest. Groups of this size and makeup don't lend themselves particularly well to stereo; thus, for once, the monophonic is just as good. R. J. G.

● **THE NEW JAMES—HARRY JAMES AND HIS ORCHESTRA.** Fair And Warmer; Just Lucky; Bells and 6 others. Capitol Stereo ST 1037 \$4.98

Musical Interest: A delightful band
Performance: Consistent verve
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Very convincing

This stereophonic version of *The New James* underlines even more clearly how valuable and stimulating a band James now leads. It's easily the best he's ever had,

and it's characterized by functional, swinging arrangements (by Ernie Wilkins and J. Hill in this set). The feeling communicated is that of the better swing era units in terms of directness of approach. There are modern overtones as well. The section work is exact without seeming mechanical, and there is a superior use of dynamics. The rhythm section is admirably crisp and consistent, and there are good soloists in tenor saxophonist Sam Firmature, altoist Willie Smith, and James himself.

The "new" James has abandoned nearly all of the neighing sound that used to mar his work. Like his band, his trumpet playing is clean, economical, and hits with sharp impact. Capitol engineers are to be congratulated for their tasteful use of stereo and the clarity of the balance. Monophonic version reviewed November, 1958. N. H.

● **JUMPIN' WITH JONAH—THE JONAH JONES QUARTET—**Jonah Jones (trumpet), Hank Jones (piano), Harold Austin (drums), John Brown (bass). No Moon At All; Night Train; That's A Plenty and 9 others. Capitol Stereo ST 1039 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Pleasant
Performance: Good cooking by Jonah
Recording: Very alive
Stereo Directionality: Tasteful
Stereo Depth: Well done

It is questionable how much a jazz quartet benefits from stereo, unless its arrangements are specifically geared for it or are unusually intricate. In this case, since Jones is the focal point of the set, I find the greater cohesion of the monophonic version more satisfying.

SERKIN CONCERTOS



When it comes to the piano concertos of Mozart, probably no man's performances of them are as close to ideal as those of Rudolf Serkin. His pianistic equipment is just the rare blend of agility, eloquence, control and poetry this music demands. Here are two examples of Serkin perfection—the aimable F Major and the passionate D Minor both on a single © Record.

MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor, K. 456; Piano Concerto No. 11 in F Major, K. 413—Rudolf Serkin, Pianist, with the Marlboro Festival Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. ML 5367 MS 6049 (stereo)

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Musically, Jones' straightforward, swinging trumpet with its full tone is enjoyable. His casual vocals are pleasant but not distinctive. The occasional shuffle rhythm background is irritating. **N. H.**

● **RENDEZVOUS WITH KENTON.** Memories Of You; Two Shades Of Autumn; High On A Windy Hill; I See Your Face Before Me and 8 others. Capitol ST 932 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Modern big band jazz
Performance: Slick
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good ballroom sound

This is one of Kenton's best bands of recent years. The LP was recorded on location at Balboa Beach in California, in 1957 and the sound is quite good. The soloists are flexible and competent and are featured prominently. Even though this reviewer feels little warmth for the Kentonian brass and bluster, this is one of The Great White Father's more easily digestible LPs. Even so, there is more frenzy than seems quite justified. Kenton no longer holds the attention of the young jazz fans: this is an interesting postscript to his decade of "forwardism." **R. J. G.**

● **CHICAGO JAZZ—JOE MARSALA—**Joe Marsala (clarinet), Adele Girard (harp), Dick Cary (piano), Carmen Mastren (guitar), Rex Stewart (trumpet), Johnny Blowers (drums), Pat Merola (bass), Wolverine Blues; Singin' The Blues; Mandy and 4 others. Stereo-O-Craft RTN 102 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Joe's been missed
Performance: Mostly spirited and warm
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Competent
Stereo Depth: OK for small combo

This is the first record by veteran clarinetist Joe Marsala and his jazz harpist wife, Adele Girard, in some time. Despite the fact that some of the performances are uneven and *Night Train* could have been omitted, the record brings pleasure. Marsala's solos are personal, logical and emotional; Adele continues to be one of the few harpists who somehow manage the illusion of making that cumbersome instrument swing. Rex Stewart contributes some of his most consistent playing in years. The rhythm section could have been more supple. The balance on *Wolverine Blues* is bad. **N. H.**

● **PARADE OF THE PENNIES—RED NICHOLS AND HIS FIVE PENNIES—**Red Nichols (cornet), Moe Schneider (trombone), Jackie Coon (mellophone), Wayne Songer (clarinet, alto and baritone sax), Heinie Beau (clarinet and tenor), Jerry Kasper or Joe Rushton (bass sax), Bobby Ham-mack or Bobby Van Eps (piano), Allan Reuss (guitar), Morty Corb (bass), Jack Spurling or Rollie Culver (drums), Ralph Hansell (percussion). Capitol ST 1051 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Mostly nostalgic
Performance: Highly professional
Recording: Well balanced
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Very convincing

"The idea for this session," writes annotator-musician Heinie Beau, "was to recreate some of the classic renditions by Red and the 'Five Pennies.'" There are also three originals by Red and Heinie in

The Pennies' vein. All the playing is very competent, but these Pennies' performances—like most of the originals—are stiff rhythmically. And the arrangements (called "models of imagination, color, and good taste" by Beau) are like slick magazine fiction. They're well-made but shallow in content. There's often enthusiasm in the playing, but most of its effect is dated by the over-all context.

The stereo version is preferable to the mono because the band is big enough for sections to play against soloists and there are other parts of the arrangements as well that are apt for stereo's spaciousness. **N. H.**

● **GEORGE WETTLING AND HIS WINDY CITY SEVEN.** Four Or Five Times; Hindustan; Moritat; I Found A New Baby and 3 others. Stereo-O-Craft RTN 107 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Unusual
Performance: Topnotch
Recording: Tops
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Adequate

This is a rewarding LP of dixieland-type music, with a fine clarinetist, Herb Hall (brother of Edmund), and an excellent trombonist, Vic Dickenson, featured throughout. The mood, feeling and vitality of this music is surprising when played by ranking artists such as these. The stereo sound is quite good, though there is a bit too much separation for my taste. **R. J. G.**

POPS

● **REPERCUSSION** featuring David Carroll and his Orchestra. La Paloma; Dizzy Fingers; The Bells Of St. Mary's; The Peanut Vendor and 6 others. Mercury SR 60029 \$5.95

Musical Interest: Sound bug special
Performance: Outstanding
Recording: Topnotch
Stereo Directionality: Sharp
Stereo Depth: Excellent

As with the monophonic version, the tweeter-woofer set will have a field day with this one. It's made for sound bugs and almost every conceivable percussion instrument is utilized, as well as strings and wind instruments. The music itself is more an excuse to show off than to communicate, but it makes a fine forty minutes of fun. The stereo version is better than the mono, as the possibilities in stereo have been utilized quite well. The recording is crisp and clean. **R. J. G.**

● **SAMMY DAVIS, JR. AT TOWN HALL** with Orchestra Conducted by Morty Stevens. Hey Thera; Ethel, Baby; Chicago and 11 others. Decca DY 78841 \$5.98. Mono-DL 8841 \$3.98

Musical Interest: It's better seen
Performance: Aggressive
Recording: Good location engineering
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Very good

This is part of a Town Hall concert given by Davis for the Children's Asthma Research Institute and Hospital on May 4, 1958. Although Davis is a remarkable performer, his effectiveness is much more visual than aural. When you see him, his tornado-like energy often makes what he's doing seem better than it is. In stereo, more of that force comes through than in the mono-

HIFI REVIEW

phonic version. There is, for example, a tap dancing number that becomes quite realistic as Davis moves from speaker to speaker; and in general, the greater space made possible by stereo makes it appear at times as if your living room has become Davis' stage.

Without visual aid, however, a Davis song recital fails to impress. He's simply not that perceptive a musician. He adds little to most of his material but volume or obvious sentimentality. He gives a reading of *Old Man River*, for instance, that could almost be taken as a parody, but I'm afraid he didn't mean it that way. The audience, it should be noted, clearly had a good time. I did only during his impersonations. N. H.

• **JULIE IS HER NAME Vol. II**—featuring Julie London. Blue Moon; Spring Is Here; Little White Lies; I Guess I'll Have To Change My Plans and 8 others. Liberty LST 7100 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Pleasant Pop
Performance: Good
Recording: Warm, intimate
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Adequate

Miss London is a warm singer with a small voice and great ability to transmit emotion in numbers such as *Little White Lies*. The usual guitar accompaniment helps keep the sound intimate. The recording is good, the voice is handled nicely and the guitar does not intrude. There is no spork to the LP, however, either technically or in the performance. R. J. G.

STAGE

• **FLOWER DRUM SONG** (Richard Rodgers-Oscar Hammerstein II). Original cast recording with Miyoshi Umeki, Pat Suzuki, Larry Blyden, Ed Kenney, Juanita Hall, Arabella Hong, Keye Luke and others, with Orchestra and Chorus, Salvatore D'Alisa cond., Columbia OS 2009 \$5.98

Musical Interest: Considerable
Performance: Admirable company
Recording: Slight surface noise
Stereo Directionality: Little needed
Stereo Depth: Excellent

Each soloist is beautifully spotlighted in this stereo version of the original cast release (reviewed in the March issue), but there is still little feeling of dramatic movement, even in the few cases in which it seems called for. *Don't Marry Me* fixes Miyoshi Umeki at the left and Larry Blyden at center stage although some action is indicated from the song, and the same is true of *Sunday* which puts Pat Suzuki and Mr. Blyden between the speakers. During *A Hundred Million Miracles*, however, stereo does manage the dubious miracle of stretching poor Miss Umeki's arms; while her voice comes from the center, the flower drum she is supposed to beat is heard clearly from the left. S. G.

SCREEN

• **SLEEPING BEAUTY** (Peter Tchaikovsky-George Bruns). Soundtrack recording with Orchestra and Chorus, George Bruns cond.; Mary Costa and Bill Shirley (vocals). Disneyland STER-4018 \$4.98. Mono—WDL-4018 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Tchaikovskyland

MAY 1959

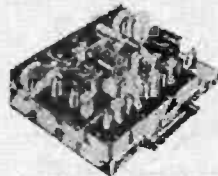
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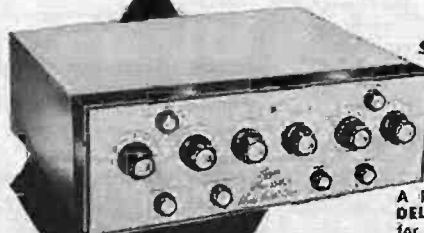
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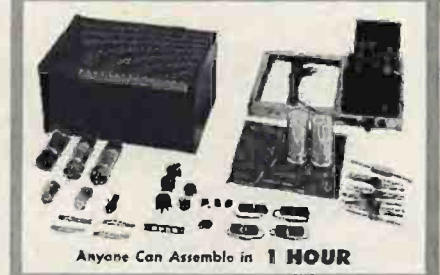
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Performance: Suitably spacious
Recording: A bit sharp (stereo); tops (mono)
Stereo Directionality: Always tasteful
Stereo Depth: Impressive

Adapting the Tchaikovsky *Sleeping Beauty* ballet score to fit the requirements of the latest Disney dream has been splendidly accomplished by George Bruns, plus a retinue of others including Sammy Fain. The stereo effects are done in good taste, and in view of the fact that the price is the same for both versions, might be given the edge in preference. S. G.

SPOKEN WORD

● **ALICE IN WONDERLAND** (Lewis Carroll). Jane Asher, Margaretta Scott, Vivienne Chatterton, Ian Wallace and others. London OSA 1206 2 12" \$11.96

Interest: For everyone
Performance: Superb company
Recording: Crystal clear
Stereo Directionality: Outstanding
Stereo Depth: Brilliant

Already hailed for its splendid stereo releases of operas and operettas, London has now entered the field of straight theater. The results couldn't be more impressive. Using an acting version prepared by Douglas Cleverdon and with Margaretta Scott as narrator, a group of topnotch English actors performs the classic story in a manner that is a treat for the ears and—almost—the eyes.

All the familiar scenes take on a dramatic clarity that would be impossible to achieve on a monophonic release, or even, in some cases, on the stage. For example, when Alice swims around in her own tears, not only does the very room seem to be flooded but her voice has even been given an appropriately hollow sound. The sequence at the Duchess' house may well have you ducking the flying pots and pans, while the illusion of actually taking part in the mad tea party or the Queen's croquet game is little short of startling. S. G.

● **MIKE NICHOLS AND ELAINE MAY** —IMPROVISATIONS TO MUSIC with Marty Rubenstein (piano). Mercury SR 60040 \$5.95. Mono MG 20376 \$3.98

Interest: Considerable
Performance: Remarkable
Recording: Tops
Stereo Directionality: Who needs it?
Stereo Depth: Ditto

Mike Nichols and Elaine May are two bright, observant and extremely gifted performers whose special forte is improvising a humorous situation around a given theme, and in this release they offer a superb sampling of their special art.

Nothing is added, however, and quite a bit is lost by the use of a sort of "spurio stereo" in which Mr. Nichols is heard from the left speaker and Miss May from the right—even, as in one routine, when they are supposed to be dancing together! The monophonic release is certainly the preferred one here. Incidentally, the take used for the stereo version of the bit called *Cocktail Piano* is different from the monophonic. S. G.

Mono Entertainment

Jazz, Pops, Stage and Screen

Reviewed by

RALPH J. GLEASON

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NAT HENTOFF

JAZZ

● **THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER—CANNONBALL ADDERLEY WITH MILT JACKSON.** Julian Adderley (alto saxophone); Milt Jackson (vibes); Wynton Kelly (piano); Percy Heath (bass); Art Blakey (drums). *Blues Oriental; Groovin' High; Just One Of Those Things* and 3 others. Riverside RLP 12-286 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Hot modern jazz
Performance: The growing cannonball
Recording: Good

A wholly unpretentious and infectiously relaxed album, this is a successful first pairing of Milt Jackson, the best of the modern jazz vibists, and Cannonball Adderley of the Miles Davis unit. As has been mentioned in these pages in recent months, Cannonball's growth in the past year has been impressive, and this album is further proof that he has not only found his own style but is becoming sufficiently at ease in it to be able to edit his solos more and more effectively.

Cannonball is convincing in a variety of roles here—the shouting blues of *Sounds for Sid*; the thoughtful tenderness of *Serves Me Right*; and the gospel-like jauntiness of *Things Are Getting Better*. Jackson is in characteristically fluent, flowing form; and there is excellent rhythm section support. N. H.

● **ALL ABOUT MEMPHIS—BUSTER BAILEY.** Buster Bailey (clarinet), Red Richards (piano), Gene Ramey (bass), Jimmie Crawford (drums) on four numbers. On three, Herman Autrey (trumpet), Vic Dickenson (trombone) and Hilton Jefferson (alto saxophone) are added. *Bear Wallow; Beale St. Blues; Hot Water Bayou* and 4 others. Felsted FAJ 7003 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Full-bodied swing
Performance: Solid jazz elders
Recording: Well balanced

This is one of seven historically valuable albums British critic Stanley Dance supervised in this country last year for British Decca and American London Records. They're being released here on Felsted, a London subsidiary label. It was Dance's contention that a substantial number of older jazzmen—mostly swing era players—still had much to say but were being largely ignored by most American labels.

MAY 1959

BEST OF THE MONTH

- Capitol's Nat "King" Cole in Welcome to the Club comes through with "his best LP in a long time. . . . The whole LP swings beautifully, but *Wee Baby Blues* has classic proportions and seems destined to endure." (see below)
- United Artists makes a major contribution with Hard Driving Jazz starring the Cecil Taylor Quintet. "Taylor, a furiously personal modern jazz pianist . . . impresses almost by his fire alone . . . draws on the whole jazz tradition, gospel music, and his studies of Bartók and Stravinsky." (see p. 81)
- Capitol's presentation of film star Judy Garland At the Grove "is a striking set of interpretations. . . . She can hurl herself into a song much as Al Jolson did. An album that can be replayed often, and there's no cover charge." (see p. 83)

In this set, clarinetist Buster Bailey contributes his best playing on records so far. As always, he is technically expert but he uses the technique much less as an end in itself than he has usually done. His playing—as in the long *Memphis Blues*—often has considerable emotional impact and he receives fully swinging aid from the sidemen. His original themes are also attractive. There are rough spots, but the album as a whole is refreshingly enjoyable and Mr. Dance and London Records are to be commended. N. H.

● **BASIE REUNION**—Paul Quinichette (tenor saxophone), Buck Clayton, Shad Collins (trumpets), Jack Washington (baritone saxophone), Nat Pierce (piano), Freddie Greene (guitar), Eddie Jones (bass), Jo Jones (drums). *Blues I Like To Hear; Love Jumped Out; John's Idea; Baby Don't Tell On Me; Roseland Shuffle.* Prestige 7147 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Valuable memories
Performance: Virile, swinging
Recording: Very strong presence

Six former Basie sidemen and two present members play tunes originally recorded by the full band between 1937-40. Baritone saxophonist Jack Washington hasn't been recorded since the late 1940's, and while he's a little rusty, as the notes honestly admit, he plays with such robust spirit and swing that he's very invigorating to hear again.

The best solos are by Buck Clayton, who continues to grow with the years. Also generally effective is trumpeter Shad Collins. Paul Quinichette plays with much emotional power but his conception is sometimes debatable and his tone occasionally wavers. Yet he certainly swings. The

rhythm section is sturdy, based confidently, as have been all Basie units since 1937, on Freddie Greene's guitar.

These men play with so much outgoing intensity and collective exhilaration that the album should wear very well. N. H.

● **BENNY CARTER, JAZZ GIANT.** Blue Lou; *Old Fashioned Love; Ain't She Sweet* and 4 others. Contemporary C3555 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Mainstream jazz
Performance: Good all around
Recording: Excellent

Two of the very best jazz musicians of the '30's join forces here; Benny Carter, who is heard on alto sax and trumpet and Ben Webster on tenor. It is Carter's trumpet work that is the most interesting because, despite his technical proficiency on the alto, he has never really communicated very broadly on that instrument. Webster, who is great ballad interpreter, shines on *I'm Coming Virginia* and there is good support throughout from the rhythm. All in all, this is a pleasant, if not historic, LP.

R. J. G.

● **WELCOME TO THE CLUB**—Nat "King" Cole with orchestra conducted by Dave Cavanaugh. *Mood Indigo; The Late, Late Show; I Want A Little Girl; Wee Baby Blues* and 6 others. Capitol W 1120 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Almost universal
Performance: Scintillating
Recording: Brilliant

This is the best Nat Cole LP in a long, long time and the best accompaniment he has ever had by a big band. That's because it's really the Count Basie band (with Gerald Wiggins sitting in for Count) playing behind Nat and it makes him sound

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80

like the jazz singer he is, basically. The whole LP swings beautifully, but *Wee Baby Blues* is the outstanding track, a blues vocal that has classic proportions and seems destined to endure. *Any Time, Any Place, Anywhere* is another gem. Interestingly enough, this LP shows what can be done when a big band is a truly cohesive unit. It is better backing for swing vocals than any of the studio groups extant, not excluding the highly publicized ones. While there are occasional solo spots, it is the ensemble sound of the Basie band and its irresistible rhythm that pushes this album into the top rank of vocal efforts. **R. J. G.**

● **SONGS FOR DISTINGUÉ LOVERS**—Billie Holiday (vocals). Day In Day Out; Stars Fell On Alabama; I Didn't Know What Time It Was and 3 others. Verve MF Y-8257 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Billie is nonpareil
Performance: Generally consistent
Recording: Competent

Most critics continue to dismiss the current Billie Holiday as a cracked shell of her former uniquely penetrating self. She may well be uneven these days, but to this reviewer she is capable at her best of eclipsing every other jazz singer. She has several eloquent moments in this set, and no bad ones. There are long solos for the relaxed accompanists; the tempos are right for her; and throughout, she gives the lyrics more meaning than anyone else now singing.

Norman Granz strangely doesn't list a single supporting player. They sound like Ben Webster (tenor saxophone), Harry Edison (trumpet), Barney Kessel (guitar) and perhaps Alvin Stoller (drums) and Jimmy Rowles (piano). Even Billie, by the way, can't make the lachrymose *One for the Road* come alive for me. **N. H.**

● **KEEPIN' UP WITH THE JONESES** featuring the Jones Brothers playing the music of Thad Jones and Isham Jones. Thad Jones (trumpet and flugelhorn), Hank Jones (piano and organ), Elvin Jones (drums), Eddie Jones (bass). Nice And Nasty; Three And One; It Had To Be You and 4 others. Metrojazz EI003 \$3.98

Musical Interest: A major jazz family
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Superior

Three of the best contemporary jazzmen are brothers. Thad Jones is a trumpeter and arranger for the Count Basie band. Hank Jones is one of the most active freelance pianists in New York; and drummer Elvin Jones works with Tyree Glenn and is in increasing demand in the recording studios. Each has a clearly identifiable style, and each is consistently inventive. In this album, they're joined by bassist Eddie Jones (no relation) of the Basie band.

The result is an unusually warm, continuously satisfying session. The star is Thad. Since he's more or less buried in the Basie brass section, Thad isn't as widely appreciated a modern trumpet soloist as he deserves to be. He has a real brass sound that can be assertively ringing and also touchingly lyrical. He constructs choruses with logic and taste, and he has a superb rhythmic sense. His accompaniment is excellent, and there are characteristically crystalline solos by Hank. **N. H.**

● **JONAH JUMPS AGAIN**—The Jonah Jones Quartet. Pennies From Heaven; Any Time; They Can't Take That Away From Me; Poor Butterfly and 8 others. Capitol T 1115 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Good pop jazz
Performance: Excellent
Recording: The best

The formula is the same. It will probably always remain so. But it is still pleasant, firmly swinging, melodic and thoroughly good jazz. Jones plays open and muted trumpet and occasionally sings. His ballad work is reminiscent of Eldridge, but it makes no difference what type of tune he selects; the result is tasteful, mainstream jazz that fits into everyone's taste categories. **R. J. G.**

● **THE POLL WINNERS RIDE AGAIN!** Barney Kessel with Shelly Manne and Ray Brown. Volare; Spring Is Here; Angel Eyes; The Merry Go Round Broke Down and 5 others. Contemporary C 3556 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Broad jazz
Performance: Tops
Recording: The best

This is a wonderful trio with a fine beat, good solos, fascinating interplay between the musicians and at least two major jazz solo voices in Kessel and Brown. Their superiority is evident in their treatment of the banal *Volare* and the novelty *The Merry Go Round Broke Down*, as well as in the beautiful ballad *Angel Eyes*. This album is well worth space on any LP shelf. The transcribed comments of the participants make fascinating liner notes. **R. J. G.**

● **LEGRAND JAZZ** with Michel Legrand (conductor-arranger), Miles Davis (trumpet) on four numbers, Ben Webster (tenor saxophone) on four numbers, and others. Django; Round Midnight; In A Mist and 8 others. Columbia CL 1250 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Mostly for soloists
Performance: Fine despite the paper
Recording: Clear and clean

This is Michel Legrand's first all-jazz album. In his previous sets (Cole Porter, French and Italian music, etc.), Legrand indicated he was a technically brilliant arranger who could rarely resist the temptation of using bravura effects for their own sake. He would seldom let a line unfold or a mood develop without letting gratuitous cleverness intrude. The same fault is evident here.

That the album is worth having is due almost entirely to the caliber of the soloists, especially Miles Davis and Ben Webster. The arrangements are best when they're most economical, as in *Blue and Sentimental* and *Night in Tunisia*. They are worst when overly cluttered as in *In a Mist*, *Wild Man Blues*, the background figures to *'Round Midnight* and several other passages. Some of the figures are, in fact, surprisingly corny. There is little evidence in this album that Legrand has much to contribute to jazz although he does know which soloists to use. **N. H.**

● **THE GAMBIT, Vol. 7**—Shelly Manne & His Men. The Gambit; Blu Gnu; Tom Brown's Buddy & Hugo Hurwhay. Contemporary C 3557 \$4.98

HIFI REVIEW

Musical Interest: Good modern jazz
Performance: Competent-to-excellent
Recording: Topnotch

This group, which varies between a sort of reprise of the bebop concept and an escapade in the Hollywood far-out writing school, produces some very good jazz when it essays numbers like *Blu Gnu* and *Tom Brown's Buddy*, in which the jazz freedom can help out the dullness inherent in the horn soloists. But on the title suite, the whole thing hogs down completely and sounds pompous. Even the excellent drumming of the leader and the bass playing of Monty Budwig cannot move it. **R. J. G.**

● **SHELLY MANNE & HIS MEN PLAY PETER GUNN.** Peter Gunn; The Floater; Slow And Easy; Dreamville; A Profound Bass and 5 others. Contemporary C 3560 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Commercial jazz
Performance: Excellent
Recording: First rate

Aided by the excellent recording techniques of the Contemporary studio, drummer Manne has produced an LP that should be a big seller, even though its actual value, jazz-wise, is questionable. The tunes are all from the pen of Hank Mancini, who does the Peter Gunn TV show, and include several quite familiar to TV audiences. The best solos occur when Victor Feldman plays marimba and when Herb Geller takes a blues chorus on *Slow and Easy*. **R. J. G.**

● **HARD DRIVING JAZZ—THE CECIL TAYLOR QUINTET—Cecil Taylor** (piano), "Blue Train" (tenor saxophone), Kenny Dorham (trumpet), Chuck Israels (bass), Louis Hayes (drums). United Artists UAL 4014 \$4.98

Musical Interest: High and intense
Performance: Rewardingly individual
Recording: Good

A fascinating album. This is the first time Cecil Taylor, a furiously personal modern jazz pianist, has recorded with already established contemporaries. The tenor saxophone is actually John Coltrane, playing under a pseudonym. Taylor, the most absorbingly original jazz pianist since Bill Evans, draws on the whole jazz tradition, gospel music, and his studies of Bartók and Stravinsky, among other classical musicians. His burning personal style is not, however, a pastiche. He has managed to assimilate these influences without being restricted by any of them. He is of particular interest harmonically, and is also working toward freer rhythmic practices, but so far he has not found a rhythm section that can play with ease within his rhythmic concepts.

So intense is Taylor's emotional energy that he impresses almost by his fire alone, although he has much besides to offer. Coltrane, one of the most daring of the modern tenor players, is an appropriate companion for Taylor because he welcomes any musical challenge. He plays with consistent invention here. This quality of company spurs Kenny Dorham into some of his best trumpet playing on records.

The rhythm section is steady. There are interesting solos by young bassist, Chuck Israels, a Brandeis music student, who has both imagination and good tone. The album
MAY 1959

was produced by Tom Wilson, who gave Taylor his first chance to record a few years ago when Wilson owned the now defunct Transition label. The liner note writer means Brandeis composer-teacher, Harold Shapero, not Shapiro. **N. H.**

● **THE REAL FATS WALLER.** Carolina Shout; Rosette; Harlem Fuss and 8 others. Camden CAL-473 \$1.98

Musical Interest: Some of the best Fats
Performance: Superior piano and wit
Recording: Good transfer

John Wilson has assembled one of Camden's best reissue sets. Included are not



only several of Waller's most exuberant (and often irreverent) vocals, but also the piano solo on *Carolina Shout* and an excellent instrumental small band blues. Unfortunately, however, two essentials for any reissue album are missing—complete information on personnel and dates. The latter omissions aside, this is a fine bargain. **N. H.**

POPS

● **LES BAXTER'S AFRICAN JAZZ.** Congo Train; Elephant Trail; Walkin' Watusi; Balinese Bongos and 8 others. Capitol T 1117 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Exotica
Performance: Competent
Recording: Fine

This is a compendium of blues clichés with phrases and paraphrases from *Every Day* to *Similu* running through the "original" compositions. Emotionally, it is empty music; highly derivative and though pleasant enough as a background for conversation, even the presence of some jazz men (Larry Bunker and so on) doesn't give it enough content to warrant serious listening. However, it is excellently recorded and for this alone it will gain some acceptance. The liner notes infer that Mr. Baxter rivals Martin Johnson as an explorer. The music sounds more like he went only as far as the nearest record shop. **R. J. G.**

● **François Charpin Trio—Chamagne Cocktail.** Lazarella; C'était hier; Cho Cho Cha des Thons and 13 others. Kapp KL-1111 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Aimable
Performance: Beaucoup de charme
Recording: Réaliste

This is very pleasant listening. **M. Char-**

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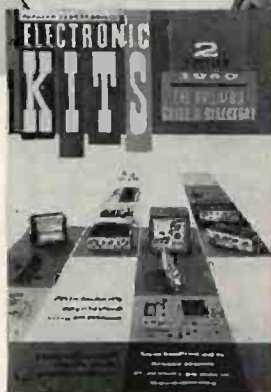
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pin breathes the Parisian airs in an intimate cocktail lounge fashion, backed by his own piano, plus guitar and drums. Four of the numbers were written by the singer, while two are the inspirations of the prolific Domenico Modugno. No translations are on the jacket. S. G.

● **MAURICE CHEVALIER SINGS BROADWAY** with Orchestra, Glenn Osser cond. Give My Regards To Broadway; Just In Time; Do It Again and 9 others. MGM E3738 \$3.98

Musical Interest: For Shubert Alley cats
Performance: In the Chevalier manner
Recording: A bit echoey

Broadway, as sung by Maurice Chevalier, easily turns into a gay Parisian boulevard—no matter what the tune may be. With his own very special juttled-lip personality, he gives a bright new sheen to even the most familiar musical fare, from *Give My Regards to Broadway* all the way to *I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face*. S. G.

● **A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BING (1934-1941)**—with BUDDY COLE AND HIS TRIO. June In January; Small Fry; Yes Indeed and 23 others. Decca DL 9064 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Still dean of men
Performance: Contagiously relaxed
Recording: Good

This single album is taken from the previously released five-volume Crosby package (DXK-151). There are brief versions of 26 songs with which Crosby had success between 1934 and 1941. The accompaniment by Buddy Cole and his trio is unobtrusive, but I would have preferred the original recordings (only two originals are included, the duets with Johnny Mercer in *Small Fry* and with Connee Boswell in *Yes Indeed*).

Crosby sings with mellow consistency and his spoken introductions are warm, concise, informative, and never arch. For many, these performances will bring back memories of those crowded years. Bing's singing demonstrates once again that, as Dean Martin said recently, "Bing set the pattern for the whole present style of casualness, of being yourself, not only in singing but in acting." N. H.

● **SOPHISTICATED SAVAGE** featuring the Savage Beat of AUGIE COLON. I'll Always Be In Love With You; El Doctor; Tambo; The Peanut Vendor and 7 others. Liberty LRP 3101 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Exotica
Performance: Good
Recording: Excellent

Mr. Colon seems to be more sophisticated than savage throughout this LP, but on occasion manages to sound a bit like Miguelito Valdes. There's a fine drummer (apparently Mr. Colon) spotted throughout; some of the songs have considerable humor and occasionally a marvelously heterogeneous mixture of musical elements from Hawaiian to hop! The latter is especially flavorsome in *I'll Always Be In Love With You*. By no means a dull LP; the sound alone makes it attractive to hi-fi fans.

R. J. G.

● **SENTIMENTAL AND SWINGING**—TOMMY DORSEY AND HIS ORCHESTRA featuring JIMMY DORSEY. Ruby; Let's Have A Party; Just Swinging and 9 others. Columbia CL 1240 \$3.98

HiFi REVIEW

Musical Interest: Moderate
Performance: Not the best Dorsey band
Recording: Competent

This is a collection of performances recorded by Tommy Dorsey in 1955 and later sold to Columbia. Among the sidemen are trumpeters Charlie Shavers, Lee Castle, and the late Andy Ferretti; and drummers Louis Ballson and Buddy Rich. The program is similar to what one could have heard around that time during an evening at the Hotel Statler in New York. The band is well drilled, at its best on ballads and medium tempo dance numbers, and rather strained on up tempo swingers. The leading soloist was Tommy, but he didn't give himself nearly as many solos as he should have. **N. H.**

● **DEANNA DURBIN** with Orchestras, Edgar Fairchild, Charles Provin, Victor Young and Johnny Green cond. Spring Will Be A Little Late This Year; Amapula; Always and 9 others. Decca DL 8785 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Quite a mixture
Performance: Rather bland
Recording: Shows age

Decca has dusted off some of the singles made by Deanna Durbin over ten years ago, and while the dubbing may leave much to be desired, there is no doubt that her fans will enjoy hearing her again. She seems to have had little vocal projection, but there is an attractively serene quality present on most of the less-demanding songs. **S. G.**

● **JUDY GARLAND AT THE GROVE.** You Made Me Love You; When The Sun Comes Out; Swanee and 10 others. Capitol T 1118 \$3.98

Musical Interest: This is show biz
Performance: An unforgettable stylist
Recording: Vivid

Recorded at the Coconut Grove, this is a striking set of interpretations by Judy Garland. It's difficult enough to verbalize musical experiences; it's all the harder to try to define the "star" quality Miss Garland possesses, and has had since she was quite small. Part of it is her controlled abandon. This seeming paradox simply means she can hurl herself into a song, much as Al Jolson did, while part of her remains keenly aware of the audience's reactions and knows exactly when to alter speed and dynamics. Her timing, then, is superb. Her sense of drama, which might seem overblown in a lesser artist, is just right for her naturally

expansive style and voice and her huge capacity for communicating emotion.

The material includes several songs long identified with her; a few Jolson specialties; and even a *Purple People Eater* that becomes her own "special material" by the time she's through with it. This is an album than can be replayed often, and there's no cover charge. **N. H.**

● **LISA KIRK SINGS AT THE PLAZA** with Orchestra, Don Pippin cond. Travel Light; Anything Goes; Good Little Girls and 8 others. MGM E3737 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Well maintained
Performance: Full of razzle-dazzle
Recording: All right

Lest the album title lead you to assume that this is an on-the-spot recording at a night club, the liner notes set you straight by allowing that the recital is "based" upon Miss Kirk's night club act. To provide the proper atmosphere, however, she is accompanied by four male singers, and every now and then a can is pried open to let out the applause and laughs. Miss Kirk's routines are apparently elaborately staged affairs, but even without visual aids she is impressively slick and slinky throughout her assortment of standards and specialty numbers. **S. G.**

● **I LIKE MEN!** featuring Peggy Lee. Good For Nothing Joe; I'm Just Wild About Harry; My Man; Bill and 8 others. Capitol T 1131 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Medium
Performance: Good
Recording: Excellent

Miss Lee can be one of the very best jazz-oriented pop singers on occasion, but this is not one of the occasions. Here she concerns herself with an attempt to be bold and almost brazen in her implementation of the album title and loses a few points by so doing. Some of the tunes, though, are quite well done; *I'm Just Wild about Harry*, *Jim* and *When a Woman Loves a Man*. There are good jazz solos spotted here and there and the recording is really excellent. **R. J. G.**

● **JEANETTE MACDONALD and NELSON EDDY—FAVORITES IN HI-FI** with Orchestras, Lehman Engel and David Rose cond. Rose Marie; Italian Street Song; Wanting You and 9 others. RCA Victor LPM-1738 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Ah, romance!
Performance: Rather well preserved
Recording: Splendid

Offering gobs of Herbert, Romberg and Friml, the fondly-remembered movie team has finally been recorded in high fidelity sound, and there is little question that members of the Eddy-Mae cult will lap it up. Mr. Eddy's nasal baritone seems to be better preserved than Miss MacDonald's rather Schraffy soprano, but together they do manage to recapture those dear, dead, romantic days when hearts were always happy in May. **S. G.**

● **MATTY MALNECK ORCHESTRA — WILLIAM HOLDEN: AS I HEAR IT.** La vie en rose; Diane; Tangerino; My Silent Love and 8 others. Warner Bros. B 1247 \$4.98

Musical Interest: For Holden fans
Performance: For Holden
Recording: Four stars

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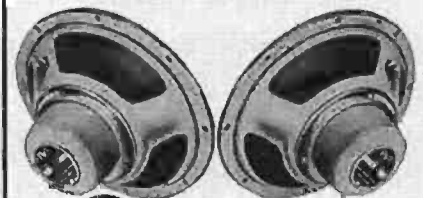
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Entertainment Music Miscellany

MORE NEW ITEMS RATED AT A GLANCE

Title	Musical Interest	Performance	Recorded Sound	Score
BE GENTLE PLEASE —Ernie Coleman Trio Stella By Starlight, April In Paris, So In Love, Say It Isn't So & 8 others. Warner Brothers W 1261 \$3.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	11
DANCING AT THE MARDI GRAS —Lester Lanin Orchestra Medley of 43 dance tunes. Epic LN 3547 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	11
FOR LOVERS —Ray Hartley (piano) and Ray Walker Orchestra Heart of Paris, Secret Love, A Certain Smile, Shadow of love & 8 others. RCA Victor LPM 1870	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	11
SONGS OF OLD NAPOLI —Roberto Murolo and Guitar Marianni, Lu cardillo, La zoccolaro, Ciceranello & 8 others. Epic LC 3544 \$3.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	11
STILL MORE —Sing Along with Mitch Miller and the gang Smiles, When Day Is Done, Beer Barrel Polka, Good Night Sweetheart & 9 others. Columbia CL 1283 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	11
AROUND THE SAMOVAR —Leonid Bolotine and Orchestra Curly Haired Catherine, Song of the Volga Boatmen, Lesginka, Moscow & 8 others. Warner Brothers W 1255 \$3.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	10
COCKTAIL DANCING —Lester Lanin Trio Medley of 56 dance tunes. Epic LN 3531 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	10
DANCING ROOM ONLY —Guy Lombardo Orchestra Arrivederci Roma, Stardust, Autumn Leaves, Fascination & 8 others. Capitol T 1121 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	10
PLAY FOR KEEPS —Jerri Adams (Ray Ellis Orchestra) For All We Know, Every Night About This Time, But Not For Me & 9 others. Columbia CL 1258 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	10
THE FRANK MOORE FOUR Take The "A" Train, Frenesi, Manhattan, Night Train & 8 others. Capitol T 1127 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	10
THE GYPSY AND HIS VIOLIN —Antal Kocze and his Band Magyar Dance, Balaton Czardas, Temesvar Czardas & 3 others. Westminster WP 6103 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	10
EXCITING SOUNDS FROM ROMANTIC PLACES —Leo Diamond (Harmonica) and Orchestra La Vie En Rose, Arrivederci Roma, Sleepy Lagoon, Lili Marlene & 8 others. ABC-Paramount ABC 268 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	9
MISTER PIPE ORGAN —Eddie Dunsfetter at Morton Pipe Organ Serenade In Blue, Poinclano, Brazil, Deep Purple & 7 others. Capitol T 1128 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	9
WORLD'S GREATEST LOVE THEMES —Joe Harnell (Piano) and Orchestra Medley of 12 themes from Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Grieg, Brahms, etc. Epic LN 3548 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	9
DRINKING SONGS SUNG UNDER THE TABLE —The Blazers Father Dear Father, Rye Whiskey, Show Me The Way To Go Home & 8 others. ABC-Paramount ABC 270 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	8
INFORMALLY YOURS —The Smart Set with Orchestra Careless, Mean To Me, Lover Come Back To Me, Hooray For Love & 8 others. Warner Brothers W 1258 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	8
SING ALONG AROUND THE CAMPFIRE —The Four Counselors Clementine, Alouette, Good Night Ladies, Red River Valley & 7 others. ABC-Paramount ABC 266 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	8
CHANTILLY LACE —The Big Bopper The Clock, Pink Petticoats, White Lightning, Strange Kisses & 8 others. Mercury MG 20402 \$3.98	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	6

Musical Interest:	Excellent	✓✓✓✓	Pleasant	✓✓✓	Fair	✓✓	Disappointing	✓
Performance:	Superb	✓✓✓✓	Good	✓✓✓	Adequate	✓✓	Dull	✓
Recorded Sound:	Brilliant	✓✓✓✓	OK	✓✓✓	Fair	✓✓	Poor	✓

Golly, gang, here's an album of songs that were taken just from Bill Holden's movies! Not only that, but each one was picked by Bill himself, no foolin', and they're all played just the way he likes to hear them. And you know something, Bill doesn't always hear them the way they were played in the pictures. No sirree, not Bill. Like, take for instance, you remember how *Isn't It Romantic?* was always played sorta gooeey-like every time he and Audrey got together in *Sabrina*? Well, Bill hears that one real fast. And that *River Kwai March*—man, you should hear the way they swing out on that one now. Gee, that Bill Holden!
S. G.

• **UMBERTO MARCATO—THE ROMANTIC VOICE OF UMBERTO MARCATO.** Anema e core; Arrivederci Roma; Piccolissima serenata and 9 others. Kapp KL-1114 \$3.98

Musical Interest: For the heart
Performance: From the heart
Recording: A bit close

Unlike the French, whose interpreters of musical romances seem to be mostly women, the Italian singers of *amore* are usually men. One of the newest is Umberto Marcato, who whispers his emotions with appropriate fervor in both Italian and English, no matter if the origins of the songs are Viennese (*Fascination*), American (*Che Sera Sera*, *Around the World*) or French (*Autumn Leaves*).
S. G.

• **SALUTE TO THE SMOOTH BANDS—FREDDY MARTIN AND HIS ORCHESTRA.** Does Your Heart Beat For Me?; Accent On Youth; Moonlight Sorenade and 9 others. Capitol T 1116 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Excellent concept
Performance: Fine, loving replicas
Recording: Superior

Historically, this is an intriguing record. Freddy Martin has recreated the styles of twelve of the best known "sweet bands" of the Thirties and Forties, even unto the "Here's the band again" introduction to Dick Jurgens. It's the only available anthology I know of that allows immediately available comparisons between these leaders, who certainly did establish strongly individual styles.

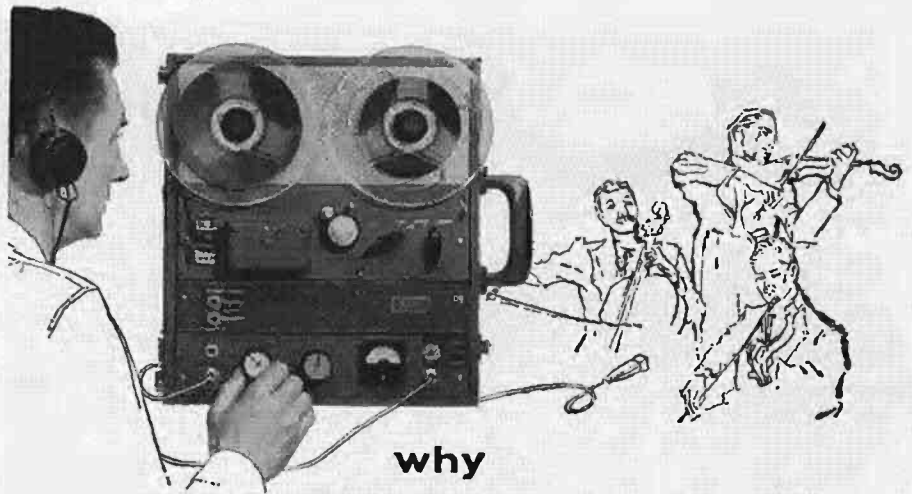
Although this kind of music is not my area of preference or specialization, I did enjoy hearing all these styles come alive again, because it also reanimated some recollections of the era with which these "sweet" bands were connected. Very good notes by Martin.

The bands saluted are Lawrence Welk, Russ Morgan, Ambrose, Henry King, Hal Kemp, Clyde McCoy, Dick Jurgens, Guy Lombardo, Orville Knapp, Wayne King, Glenn Miller, and Ray Noble.
N. H.

• **OPEN FIRE, TWO GUITARS** featuring JOHNNY MATHIS. Tenderly; I Concentrate On You; Please Be Kind; My Funny Valentine and 8 others. Columbia CL 1270 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Middling
Performance: Uneven
Recording: Elegant

This is not Mathis's best LP, though anything by him these days has the Midas touch. He is more excitable than usual;
MAY 1959



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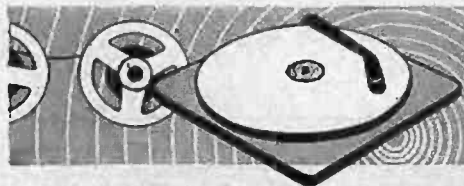
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there are times when he strains and all his unsure intonation is exposed. He is almost cloying in his sweetness on *Bye Bye Blackbird*. But Columbia has given him the best of recording and some sympathetic accompaniment by guitars and bass. R. J. G.

• **CARMEN McRAE BOOK OF BAL-LADS** with Orchestra directed by Frank Hunter. The Thrill Is Gone; My Romance; Please Be Kind; Angel Eyes and 8 others. Kapp KL 1117 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Popular ballads
Performance: Not her best
Recording: Good

Despite the fact that this is superior pop singing, it is by no means the best of Carmen McRae, who is one of the very top girl singers around. The selection of songs is first class and the accompaniment is quite sympathetic, but Carmen is basically a *rhythm* singer and these songs are all taken straight and sometimes a bit blandly.
R. J. G.

• **GARRY MOORE—THAT WONDER-FUL YEAR—1940** with Orchestra and Chorus, Irwin Kostal and Keith Textor cond. You Are My Sunshine; Intermezzo; Johnson Rag and 10 others. Warner Bros. W 1282 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Nostalgia stuff
Performance: In the right mood
Recording: Up-to-date

Under the over-all title of *That Wonderful Year*, Garry Moore devotes a portion of his weekly television program to the songs and the fads of a particular year. With a vocal group singing some pleasantly unobtrusive arrangements, this is an acceptable enough formula for rounding up a group of numbers that were either written or popularized during 1940. Mr. Moore is on hand to sing occasionally, while the theme song is used to bridge the selections by inquiring, somewhat redundantly, "Do you recall—remember at all. . . ?" Of course, whether 1940 was such a "wonderful year" has a lot to do with geography, as the inclusion of *The Last Time I Saw Paris* all too painfully attests.
S. G.

• **I'VE HEARD THAT SONG BEFORE** featuring **PATTI PAGE**. Let Me Call You Sweetheart; Tenderly; Memories Of You; It Had To Be You and 8 others. Mercury MG 20388 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Tops in pops
Performance: Good
Recording: Excellent

There's a fine selection of material here designed to give Miss Page's voice a favorable showcase. *It Had To Be You* is one of the best (and swingiest) and *Sunday Kind of Love* gets a good, intimate feeling to it. She is not a great singer, but an exceedingly pleasant one and the recording is topnotch, live and vibrant.
R. J. G.

• **BLUE CHIFFON—THE GEORGE SHEARING QUINTET AND ORCHESTRA**. Nocturne; Kinda Cute; My One And Only Love and 8 others. Capitol TI124 \$3.98

Musical Interest: To read Mary Worth by
Performance: All the notes are right
Recording: Very good

George Shearing and his quintet are heard with a string orchestra in an innocuous mood album. Shearing's piano is the

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Here is some unusual music—a concerto, a large one, with not one soloist but three. Listening to it is a little like hearing a Beethoven trio and one of his symphonies at the same time—a musical banquet in terms of sheer sound! Bruno Walter conducts this fine performance.

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● **LOVE IS A KICK** featuring FRANK SINATRA. You Do Something To Me; Saturday Night; Deep Night; Five Minutes More and 8 others. Columbia CL 1241 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Broad
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Early hi-fi

These are re-issues from the last time Sinatra was with Columbia and, although he sings very well on some of them, such as *Deep Night* and *Saturday Night*, they are not up to what he is doing right now, nor is the sound as good as what is produced today. However, Sinatra fans (in other words, 9/10ths of the world's population) will dig them as much as I do, which is a lot. R. J. G.

THEATER & FILMS

● **THE INN OF THE SIXTH HAPPINESS** (Malcolm Arnold). Soundtrack recording with the London Royal Philharmonic, Malcolm Arnold cond. 20th Fox FOX-3011 \$3.98

Musical Interest: The "Nick-Nack" score
Performance: Cinematic
Recording: Tops for music portions.

Following up his own lead of incorporating the *Colonel Bogey March* into the score for *The Bridge On the River Kwai*, Malcolm Arnold has done much the same thing by utilizing the ancient children's marching song, *This Old Man*, for the most dramatic moment in *The Inn Of the Sixth Happiness*. The emotional impact of this song easily transcends musical values, and is especially effective as the voices are first heard in the distance and then seem to come closer and closer. Otherwise, the film's main theme, which starts out with the first four notes of *Almost Like Being In Love*, gets quite a workout, and there is the added attraction of transitional dialogue inserted between musical sequences. S. G.

● **PORGY AND BESS** (George Gershwin). Cootie Williams, Rex Stewart, Hilton Jefferson, Lawrence Brown, Pinky Williams, with Orchestra, Jim Timmens cond. Warner Bros. W 1260 \$3.98

Musical Interest: Gershwin's masterpiece
Performance: Imaginative
Recording: One of the best

The score for *Porgy and Bess* lends itself admirably to jazz treatment, and this release is highly recommended for its taste, imagination, musicianship, and, above all, its fidelity to its source. Instead of approaching the numbers individually, the concept of this package has been to treat the opera as a whole, with each of the instruments taking the part of a specific character in the story. Thus, Cootie Williams' tender trumpet is heard as Porgy, Hilton Jefferson's lyrical alto saxophone is Bess, Rex Stewart's driving wa-wa cornet is Sportin' Life, and Lawrence Brown's eloquent trombone soars high as Clara in an especially affecting *Summertime*. Altogether, it is one of the best planned and most successfully realized jazz versions of a Broadway musical. S. G.

● **REDHEAD** (Albert Hague-Dorothy Fields). Original cast recording with Gwen

Verdon, Richard Kiley, Leonard Stone, Cynthia Latham, Doris Rich and others, with Orchestra and Chorus, Jay S. Blackton cond. RCA Victor LOC-1048 \$4.98

Musical Interest: Infrequent
Performance: Fabulous
Recording: First-rate

That *Redhead* is New York's latest hit is unquestionably due to the performance of Gwen Verdon, and the recording of the score does little to change the general verdict. Miss Verdon's numbers are all infused with an altogether winning quality of plaintiveness; even when she is at her most joyous, as in *Look Who's In Love*, or amusing, as in *'Ernie Fitch's Twitch*, she is still the shy little kid trying her darnedest to enjoy herself and also to please others. What is also revealed on the recording, possibly even more than in the theatre, is that Richard Kiley is one of the best musical comedy leading men around, with a rich, masculine voice that can do wonders even with the most ordinary lyric.

The above preoccupation with the stars of the offering may lead you to believe that the songs are less than inspired. And you would be right. Albert Hague's music does little to capture the turn-of-the-century flavor of the story, but even on its own terms there is a dearth of melodic inventiveness or wit. Dorothy Fields' lyrical muse (a most cooperative one in the past) seems to have temporarily deserted her, except in the music hall turn *'Ernie Fitch's Twitch* or the funny piece of jumbled advice called *Behave Yourself*.

The score contains many patter numbers, but such items as *Just For Once* and *The Uncle Sam Rag* lack the gaiety implied in their lyrics. Possibly the most original idea, as well as the most attractive melody, is to be found in *She's Just Not Enough Woman for Me*, in which Mr. Kiley, kidded along by Leonard Stone, reveals his true feelings for Miss Verdon while still protesting, "she's not enough woman for me." Later, with an affirmative title, the same tune is mated to an almost aggressively dactylic rhythm scheme, but Mr. Kiley's delivery makes it easy to forgive combining "unbeatable" with "meet-able," and when he comes to "posterior" and "superior," the sentiment is positively lofty. After all, he's describing Gwen Verdon. S. G.

● **SOME CAME RUNNING** (Elmer Bernstein). Soundtrack recording with Orchestra, Elmer Bernstein cond. Capitol W-1109 \$4.98

Musical Interest: More than most
Performance: Doubtlessly definitive
Recording: Capital

By virtue of his having composed and conducted three film scores for Frank Sinatra (the first two were *The Man With the Golden Arm* and *Kings Go Forth*), Elmer Bernstein most certainly merits the title of official *Kapellmeister* to the court. Also in attendance to lend their omnipresent hands are those royal balladeers, Jimmy Van Heusen and Sammy Cahn, who have contributed the main theme. The combined talents have put together a frequently bright and entertaining score, which includes, of course, the almost inevitable jazz sequences to contrast with the fairly heavy dramatic goings on. S. G.

Hi Fi Review
Index of Advertisers

MAY 1959

CODE NO.	ADVERTISER	PAGE NO.
69	Airex Radio Corporation.....	30
3	Allied Radio	20
2	Altec Lansing Corporation.....13,	66
	American Cancer Society.....	87
100	Apparatus Development Co.	88
156	Argo Record Corporation.....	74
5	Audio Devices, Inc.	63
83	Audio Fidelity, Inc.	3
161	Bigg of California.....	78
143	Blonder-Tongue Laboratories, Inc.	28
7	Bogen-Presto Company	22
9	British Industries Corp.	4
104	Cletron Inc.	73
111	Columbia LP Record Club.....	7
151	Columbia.....65, 72, 76, 78, 81, 83,	87
157	Conrac, Inc.	61
146	Dynaco Inc.	8
10	EICO	30
	Electronic Kits #2.....	82
115	Electro-Sonic Laboratories, Inc.	81
11	Electro-Voice Inc.4th Cover	
62	Ercona Corporation	83
153	Erie Resistor Corporation.....	85
13	Fisher Radio Corporation.....10, 11,	29
9	Garrard Sales Corporation.....	4
14	Glaser-Steers Corporation	68
99	Harmon-Kardon Inc.	15
41	Heath Company.....23, 24, 25, 26,	27
	Hi Fi Guide & Yearbook.....	60
	Hi Fi Review Classified	87
	Hi Fi Review Dealers	88
	Hi Fi Review Subscriptions	72
77	JansZen Loudspeakers	6
	Jones Box Corp., Jesse.....	87
86	Key Electronics Co.	87
45	Lafayette Radio	77
20	Lansing Sound, Inc., James B.	9
88	Leslie Creations	88
77	Meshaminy Electronic Corp.	6
16	Omegatape	76
53	ORRadio Industries Inc.	12
25	Pickering & Company, Inc.	78
62	R & A Speakers.....	83
109	Radio Shack Corporation.....	59
79	Reeves Soundcraft Corp.2nd Cover	
66	Rek-O-Kut Co., Inc.	21
91	Roberts Electronics Inc.	85
105	Rockbar Corporation.....3rd Cover	
29	Scott Inc., H. H.	19
30	Sherwood Electronics Laboratories, Inc.	51
56	Stereophonic Music Society.....	55
98	Stromberg-Carlson	70, 71
121	Sun Radio & Electronics Co., Inc.	88
140	United Audio	57
34	University Loudspeaker, Inc.	18
101	Weathers Industries	17
68	Westminster	52
	Ziff-Davis Photographic Annuals.....	80

MAY 1959

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THE FLIP SIDE



Oliver P. Ferrell, Editor

Why Don't They

• Several members of my staff have recently spent considerable time working with stereo AM/FM tuners. A part of their work is published on page 45.

Getting so close to such a variety of stereo tuners, we were all impressed by the occasional lack of "human engineering" that went into functional designs. While oftentimes the electronic circuitry is superb, the manufacturer seemingly has given little thought to the possible use of his equipment. For example, we would earnestly recommend that all AM tuner manufacturers (stereo or mono) keep those ferrite rod antennas away from the vicinity of power transformers. One tuner—which we tested at considerable length—had a tunable hum due solely to the proximity of the ferrite AM antenna rod and the power transformer. Also, more manufacturers should go in for mounting the ferrite rods on pivots. Such AM antennas are directional and there is always a good chance that your favorite AM station may be off a null point of the antenna.

For the past few months we have been agitating for more constructive thinking relative to mounting the primary hi-fi equipment off-on switch on the tuner. A surprising number of amplifiers still are turned off and on by rotating the volume control. We think that the volume control should be left fixed and that either a push-button off-on switch can be installed in the amplifier (or a rotary switch) or that the equipment be turned on from the tuner. A possible solution to this dilemma might be putting in a two-way, three-position a.c. switch on the tuner panel. In one position, the tuner and amplifier can be turned on simultaneously. In the second position the amplifier can be turned on but the tuner stays off—permitting the amplifier to be used for playing records while not using up electricity to heat up the tuner. In the third position, the whole hi-fi rig would be turned off.

Stereo tuner manufacturers should also realize that such equipment will often be used to listen to straight AM or FM broadcasts. Thus, the audiophile needs a visual indicator to tell him quickly whether he is listening to AM or FM. Practically every stereo tuner that we have tested to date seems to be predicated upon the assumption that all audiophiles have a long memory. Bull's-eye lamps or an additional tuning indicator could be used to signify AM versus FM inputs. Certainly the solution is not as difficult as a few manufacturers make it appear.

Multiplex—How Soon, If Ever?

• Proponents of stereo broadcasting—especially those using AM/FM or AM/AM equipment—refuse to roll over and play dead now that FM multiplex is on the horizon. In fact, the first optimistic estimates regarding multiplex are rapidly being re-evaluated, as storm clouds press in on the supposedly bright future of FM multiplex from all sides.

At this writing, there are at least nine mutations of the FM sub-carrier multiplex idea—all slightly different and all claiming to be superior to any other system. To

confuse the whole picture, a variety of new methods to achieve the stereophonic effect has been proposed by the "Big Boys." Bell Telephone has tested a compatible system via AM/FM/TV that left listeners and viewers wondering what it was all about. RCA, meanwhile, carries out mysterious AM/AM stereo broadcasts—not using their originally proposed single sideband technique—in the wee hours of the morning. Practically all manufacturers with Crosby multiplex adapters are reluctant to sell them until the Federal Communications Commission decides on a standard FM multiplex system. Meanwhile, sales of stereo AM/FM tuners scramble toward new heights. The audiophile may well ask, "Where will it all end?"

Those in the know, and capable of objective views, feel that stereo broadcasting is more desired by the listener than it is by the stations themselves. This is in sharp contrast to color TV, where the shoe has been on the other foot. Most broadcasting stations are still leery of stereo discs. Quality is a major problem. Discs seem to be okay in the home, but lack the quality—required by broadcasting stations—of good stereo tapes which are now in extremely short supply.

FM multiplex enthusiasts privately admit that the FCC has good reason for dragging its feet and not making a hasty decision. Rather than subject itself to possible avenues of criticism, the FCC may well let 1959 go by without okaying FM multiplex. Simultaneously, it is even more doubtful that it will approve various "compatible" AM methods now being offered to the public as being as good as straight FM multiplex.

... And Now Stereo Cartridges and Tone Arms

• CU's man in the white coat recently introduced some new terms ("shatter," motional impedance, etc.) into the lexicon of the hi-fi enthusiast. In the March issue of "Consumer Reports" he claims to have thoroughly tested stereo cartridges and tone arms. Once again he went out on a limb, recommending certain units and damning others. Fortunately—at least on this occasion—there appears to have been a somewhat greater sampling of available consumer items. Few knowledgeable audiophiles question the "check-rated" Shure cartridge/ESL tone arm combination and much to my surprise, there was no touting of a "bargain" stereo cartridge and tone arm. Oddly enough, some six samples of the Shure cartridge were tested but as far as we can determine, only one sample of each of the remaining 21 cartridges was evaluated. The purpose of this shenanigan remains a mystery as does CU's continued recommendation of equipment long since discontinued—D&R turntables, Bogen DB130 amplifiers, etc. Also, I cannot help but wonder why Consumers Union refuses to test hi-fi equipment in the same manner as most manufacturers—in this case, measuring frequency response of the individual channels vs. channel-to-channel separation. If Consumers Union would recognize that the hi-fi component manufacturers are little people, not multi-million-dollar concerns ready and eager to hilk the public, I could personally have more credence in their test procedures.



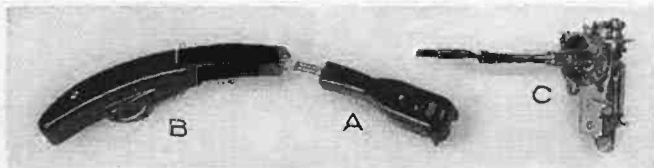
Ralph Bellamy, starring in "Sunrise At Campobello", listens to stereo on his Collaro changer and Goodman's Triaxonal Speaker System.

Collaro—your silent partner for Stereo

Listen to stereo records and discover the most exciting way of listening to music in your home. Listen to the new Collaro stereo changer and discover *the* changer which provides truly *silent* performance to meet the rigid quality demands of stereo. Here's why Collaro is your best buy:

A. Five-terminal plug-in head: Exclusive with Collaro. Provides two completely independent circuits thus guaranteeing the ultimate in noise-reduction circuitry.

B. Transcription-type tone arm: As records pile up on a changer, tracking pressure tends to increase. Result may be damage to records or sensitive stereo cartridge. This can't happen with the Collaro counter-balanced arm which varies less than 1 gram in pressure between the top and bottom of a stack of records. Arm accepts any standard stereo or monaural cartridge.



C. Spindle assembly: Typical of Collaro precision quality is the spindle shaft which is micro-polished to .000006 (6 millionths of an inch) for smoothness—insuring no injury to records.

There are three Collaro changers priced from \$38.50 to \$49.50. The changer illustrated here is the new Continental, Model TSC-840.

For full information write to Dept. MR5 Rockbar Corporation, Mamaroneck, N. Y.



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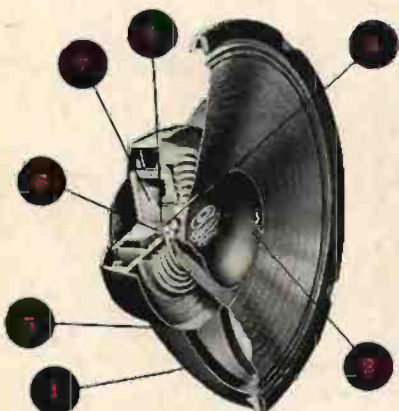
Response 30 to 13,000 cps; EIA sensitivity rating 43 db. Power-handling capacity 20 watts program, 40 watts peak. Impedance 8 ohms. Mechanical crossover 1800 cps, 1 1/4" dia., 3 1/2" deep; 11" baffle opening. Net wgt. 5 1/2 lbs. Audiophile net, \$19.50.



Model LS8 8-inch

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2	Radax Cone	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
3	Edgewire-Wound Voice Coil	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
4	Glass Coil Form	Yes	No	No	No	No
5	Low-Silhouette Frame	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
6	Long-Throw Voice Coil	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
7	Slug-Type Magnet	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
	NET PRICE	LS 12 \$19.50 LS 8 \$18.00	\$23.75	\$19.30	\$33.00	\$59.40

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THE LORAINE

A corner-horn enclosure, the Loraine employs a corner of the room to reinforce and extend the bass range. For 12" speakers. Has pre-cut ports for adding HFI and MFI Step-Up-Kits...
HWD 27" X 20" X 14"
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STEP 1... Add the Model HF-1 High-Frequency Step-Up Kit. Can be added to all Wolverine full-range loudspeakers. Extends high-frequency performance beyond the limits of audibility, for silky, precise definition of string and woodwind instruments. Consists of VHF driver and crossover network with built-in level control. Complete with all wiring, mounting hardware and instructions for simple, 5-minute installation.
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Edgewire-Wound Voice Coil—Voice coils are edge-wound from precision, flattened-ribbon conductor; efficiency is increased 18% over conventional round-wire coils, gaining the equivalent of five extra watts from a typical amplifier.

Glass Coil Form—The voice coil is wound on a fiberglass form into a rigid, concentric assembly. This exclusive assembly maintains shape for the life of the speaker system, permanently preventing shorts and distortion-causing rubs.

Long-Throw Voice Coil—Wolverine speakers contain deep, medium-diameter voice coils. Conductor remains in the air gap even on longest excursions, preventing nonlinear operation characteristic of wide-diameter, short-throw coils.

Slug-Type Magnet—Long accepted as the most efficient, slug-type magnets have the lowest leakage and greatest structural strength.

Low-Silhouette Frame—Wolverine speakers are only 3 1/2" deep for easy mounting in walls or ceilings. Ideal for "built-in sound" throughout the home.

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