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HiFi/Stereo

DECEMBER 1960 • 50 Cents

review

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RECORDS
OF 1960**

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**OPERA IN
ENGLISH**

How to Choose
**CHILDREN'S
RECORDS**



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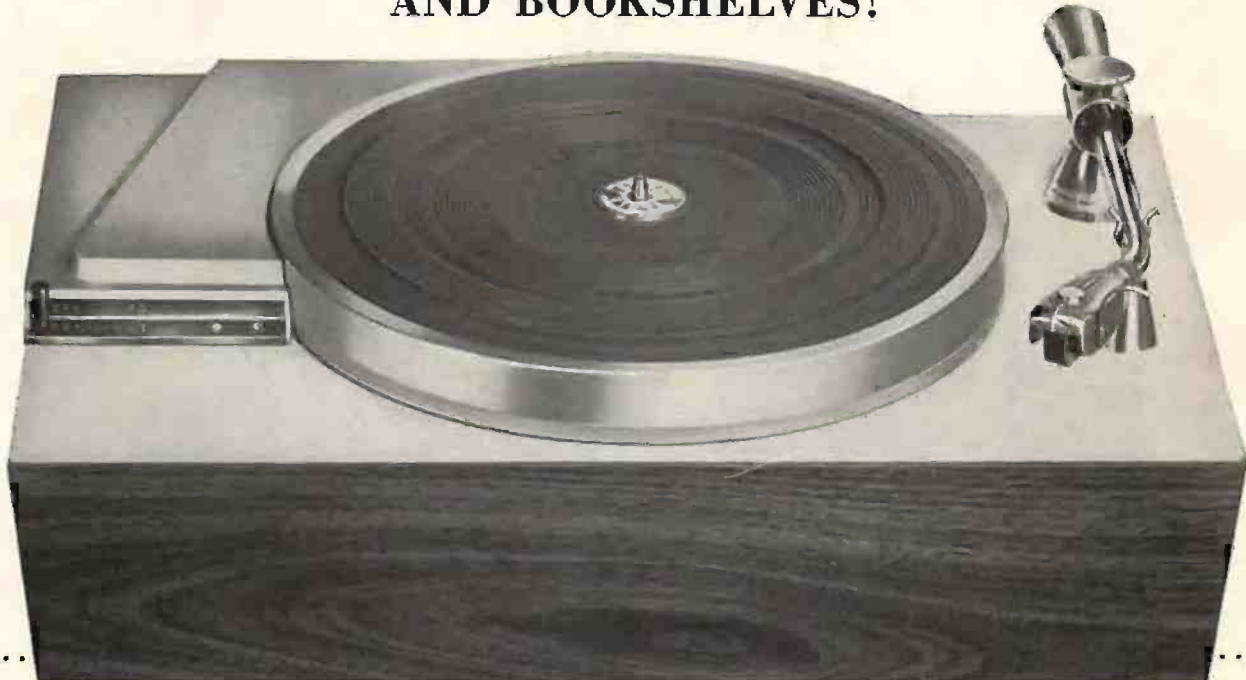
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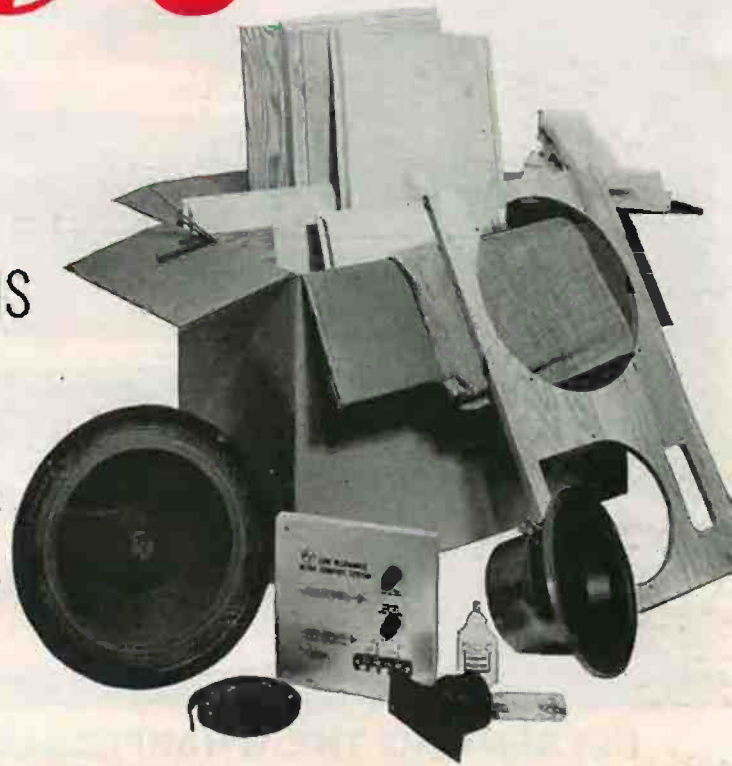
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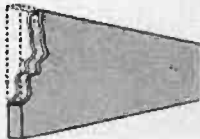
ing triumph of the W60, 74% of the new owners who returned the cards which register the Wharfedale guarantee, said that they had purchased their W60 upon the enthusiastic recommendation of a friend who had experience and knowledge of fine audio equipment.

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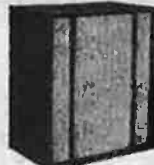
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Cover: Leaf from a XIV century Florentine choir book in The Morgan Library Collection.

HiFi Soundings



by DAVID HALL

DISHEARTENING BIRTHDAY YEAR

THE year now drawing to a close has been one of anniversary milestones for no less than five of our most distinguished American composers. Wallingford Riegger and Paris-born Edgar Varèse have both attained to the "grand old man" stage of 75; Aaron Copland celebrated his 60th year this past month; and Samuel Barber and William Schuman are now at the half-century mark.

Since these men, between them, have produced something like half of the viable repertoire of serious American music, it is interesting to see what our record companies have done—and not done—to mark their current anniversary years.

In February of 1959, we used this space to show how record companies had issued something like 1000 compositions by about 300 American composers during the first decade of LP. We implied that a possible reason most of these records failed to become commercial successes was because the sheer profusion of composers and works on LP tended to blind the awareness of record buyers to the existence of a *basic American concert music repertoire*. We suggested at that time that the advent of the stereo disc provided record producers with the opportunity to attack anew the problem of bringing American concert music to the record-buying public, and in a way that would make them thoroughly aware of our finest composers and their best works. To this end, we proposed a series of recorded studies in depth that would encompass the best works of our most significant 20th-century composers.

Our suggested composer list included fourteen names: Charles Ives, Carl Ruggles, Edgar Varèse, Wallingford Riegger, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, Virgil Thomson, Henry Cowell, Roy Harris, Aaron Copland, Elliott Carter, William Schuman, Samuel Barber, and Lou Harrison. The list was compiled with an eye to a body of creative work of consistent and proven worth, covering all major 20th-century musical styles from the conservative-romantic to the most extreme experimentalism.

We had hoped, two years ago, that the forthcoming combined anniversaries of Barber, Copland, Riegger, Varèse, and Schuman during 1960 would provide a spur toward the "recording-in-depth" project. From where we sit now, however, the results have been distinctly disappointing. For, with the single exception of Aaron Copland, our American composers have gotten pretty short shrift with respect to major new recordings.

Samuel Barber, for example, a gifted lyrical writer *par excellence* among our composers, enjoyed only one major 1960 recording—that by Mercury of his *Capricorn Concerto* and *Medea*. Still missing from the recorded repertoire of Barber's music are the rugged, rigorous, and powerful Piano Sonata (1949), the soprano-and-orchestra setting of James Agee's poignant *Knoxville—Summer of 1915*, the beautifully crafted Cello Concerto, and the profoundly moving *Prayers of Kierkegaard* for chorus, soprano, and orchestra. Slight consolation for Barber fans will be the CRI disc of the Violin Concerto and a Vanguard LP scheduled for release about Christmas; the latter includes the stirring *Stopwatch and Ordnance Map* for male chorus and timpani, the Second Essay for Orchestra, and Music for a Scene from Shelley.

Nor has Wallingford Riegger fared much better. While his opus numbers have just about kept pace with his age, the same can hardly be said for the recordings of his music. Riegger's 75th year has thus far brought forth only the Concerto for Piano and Wind Quintet (1954)

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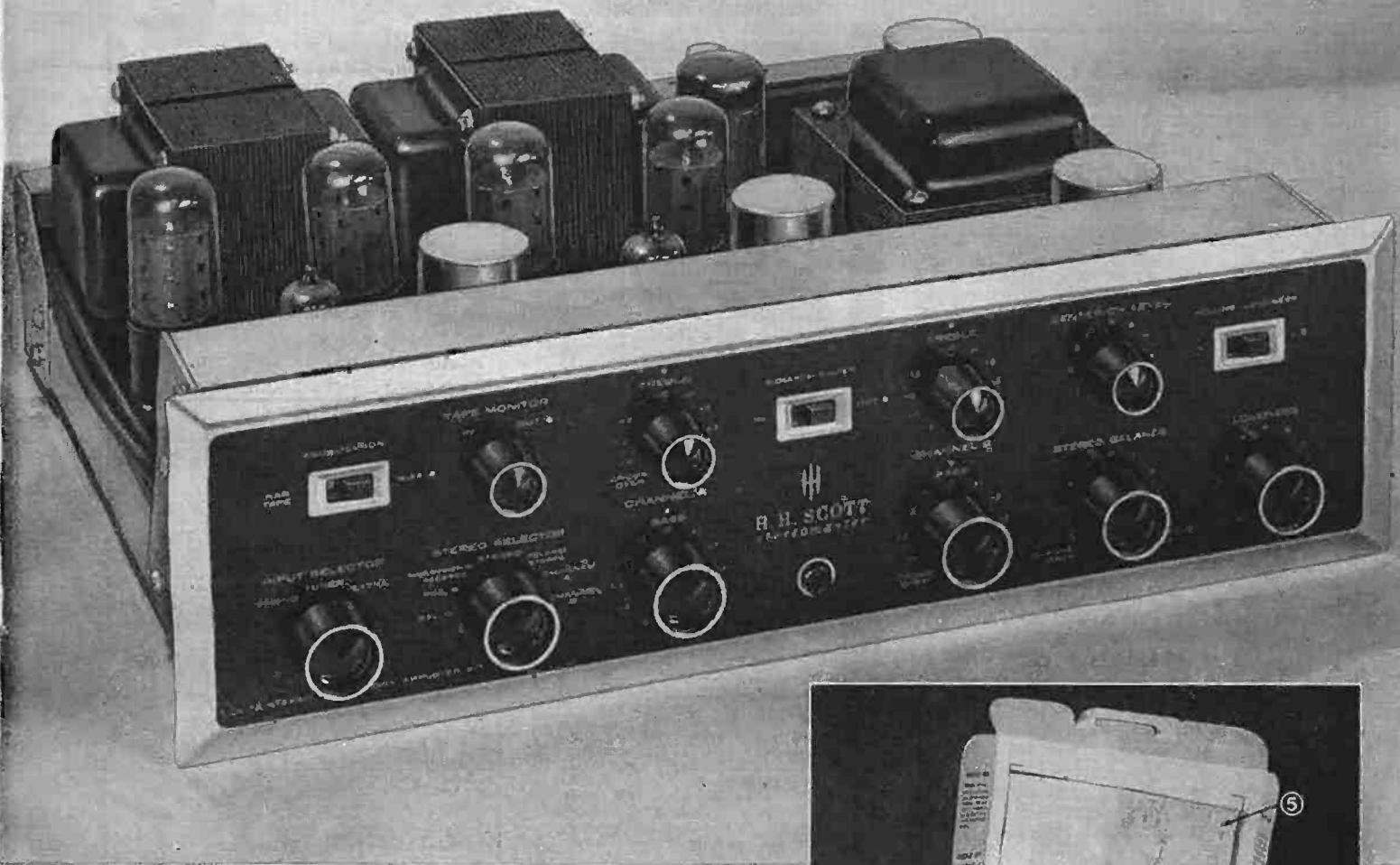


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HiFi/STEREO



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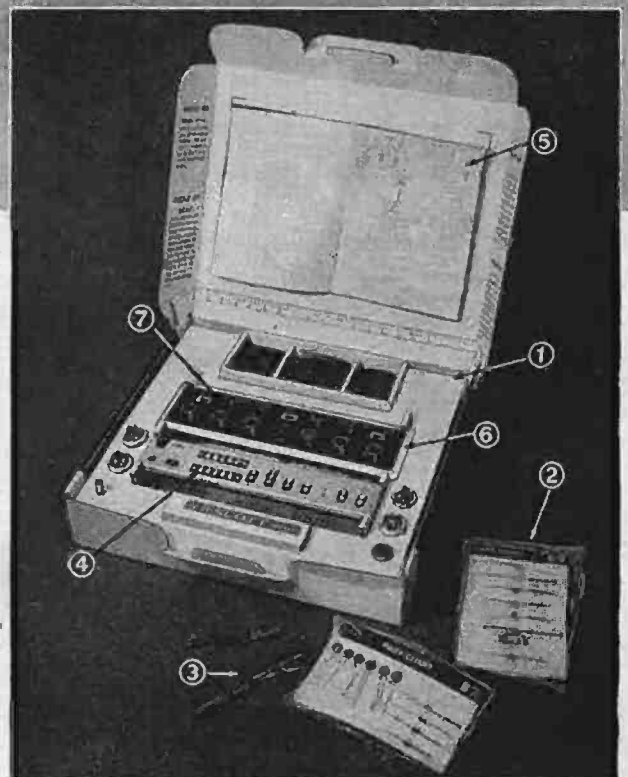
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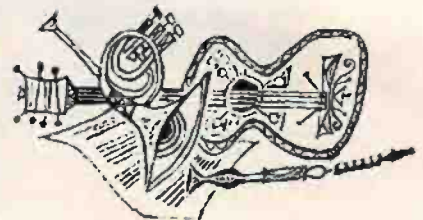


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MODEL L-1U—sanded (unfinished) walnut \$24.95

from CRI, and the wryly humorous Variations for Violin and Orchestra (1959) from Louisville. We wonder when we'll be hearing the fascinating Study in Sonority for Violins (1927), the impressive *Dichotomy* for chamber orchestra (1931-32), or the overwhelming Music for Brass Choir from 1948.

The case of William Schuman verges on the disgraceful, especially when the passion, technical brilliance and intensely communicative quality of his best compositions are taken into account. Not one major William Schuman score is to be had in stereo recording, despite the fact that his symphonies, dance scores, and choral works are made to order for the medium. Indeed, the only William Schuman work to be issued in the year of his 50th birthday was a new Louisville mono recording of his *Judith*, his 1949 choreographic poem for Martha Graham. Still among the prissing are the stunningly power-



ful and virtuosic Third, Fourth, and Fifth Symphonies, the impassioned score for Antony Tudor's ballet *Under-tow*, the electrifying Violin Concerto, and the exhilarating *Free Song* for chorus and orchestra.

Even Edgar Varèse, whose music fared reasonably well on records in 1960, is not really adequately represented. Of course, Columbia's new stereo disc of *Hyperprism*, *Integrales*, *Octandre*, *Density 21.5*, *Ionisation*, and *Poème électronique* was a fine 75th birthday remembrance for the founding father of experimental percussion music. And Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic are supposed to have recorded one of the big Varèse orchestral scores, *Arcana*. But where are *Espace*, *Ameriques*, *Equatorial*, and *Deserts*? Dare we hope that the time will come when at least one of these will find its way into the record repertoire?

We are not happy with what has been done for this year's anniversary celebrants. Next year, let's hope things will be different. Virgil Thomson and Roger Sessions will be 65, with Henry Cowell and Roy Harris reaching that age bracket in 1962 and 1963, respectively. Perhaps, so far as recording is concerned, the age of retirement should also be the age of recognition, at least for our major composers.

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Letters

Art Vs. Science

I read with interest Mr. Canby's article on "Hi-Fi and the Universal Man" in your October issue, which seems to imply that high fidelity, being the conjuncture of the musical arts with the science of electronics, is likely to reconcile the opposed temperaments of the artist and the engineer and bring about the birth of a new Universal Man.

I do not believe that the intrusion of technology on art is likely to beget a new breed of Universal Men equally at home in both the arts and the sciences. On the contrary, the trend seems to be for technology to usurp the creative imagination of modern man. The arts cannot flourish in such a mental climate, and pure science itself—which requires an essentially artistic and reflective temperament—suffers when the individual sees in the machine an ideal concept of ultimate perfection and value.

In the increasing mechanization of life, we defer more and more to the dictates of machines. We see this in every department of human activity: in the snarled traffic and soot-laden air of our cities, the ravaged forest, the polluted streams, the spiritless and almost mechanical formulas of modern "entertainment." Even in musical performance there is a trend toward machine-like discipline rather than toward the spontaneous rhapsodic element that is the essence of any music. The idolization of the machine in our time is throttling the conditions which give rise to spontaneity, the free unfolding of personality, and the joy of living.

I believe that Mr. Canby is proposing a dangerous course when he suggests that the artist take science to his bosom. On the contrary, he should keep it at arm's length!

Martin Werner
Salzburg, Austria

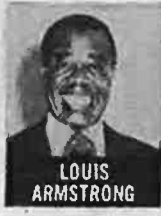
We are inclined to think that science and technology—partly in the form of record players, amplifiers, and loudspeakers—are bringing artistic experience to more people than ever before in history. Far from fearing science, we are profoundly grateful to the scientists and engineers that have made this possible.

Power Politics Praised

I very much enjoyed Mr. Fantel's article on *Power Politics* in the September issue of your magazine. It is a lucid treatment

HiFi/STEREO

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GENE KRUPA



LIONEL HAMPTON



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5. DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET — At Newport, 1958. Jump for Joy, The Duke, C Jam Blues, Perdido, Flamingo, etc.

6. DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET — Jazz Goes to College, Out of Nowhere, Take the "A" Train, Baloney Rock, The Song is You, Le Souk, etc.

7. LESTER YOUNG — "The President" Plays, With the Oscar Peterson Trio, Ad Lib Blues, Tea for Two, 8 others

8. EDDIE CONDON — The Roaring Twenties, Eddie and the All-Stars play China Boy, Wolverine Blues, Apex Blues, Minor Drag, plus 8 others

9. AHMAD JAMAL TRIO, Love for Sale, Perdida, Rica Pulp, Donkey Serenade, Autumn Leaves, 5 others

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11. LIONEL HAMPTON — Apollo Hall Concert, 1954, "Hamp" plays How High the Moon, Stardust, Lover Man, Midnight Sun, 4 others

12. TEDDY WILSON & HIS TRIO — "Gypsy" in Jazz, Everything's Coming Up Roses, Together Wherever We Go, Some People, 9 others

13. TURK MURPHY — When the Saints Go Marching In, Roll Jordan, Roll, Down in Jungle Town, Evolution Mama, etc.

14. COUNT BASIE — One D'Clock Jump, Muffon-Leg, Beaver Junction, I'm Confessin', Patience and Fortitude, I Ain't Got Nobody, etc.

15. COUNT BASIE — April in Paris, Sweetie Cakes, Shiny Stockings, Corner Pocket, Mambo Inn, Midgits, 5 more

16. BENNY GOODMAN — The Great Benny Goodman, Let's Dance; King Porter Stamp; Avalon; Sing, Sing, Sing; etc.

17. ELLA FITZGERALD — Gershwin Song Book, Vol. 1, But Not For Me, Clap Yo' Hands, Fascinating Rhythm, Love is Here to Stay, plus 8 more

22. SARAH VAUGHAN — After Hours, Street of Dreams, You're Mine, You; Black Coffee; Deep Purple; 8 more

23. BILLIE HOLIDAY — Lady Day, Miss Brown to You; Billie's Blues; Me, Myself and I; Easy Living; 8 more

24. BESSIE SMITH — The Bessie Smith Story, Vol. 1, With Louis Armstrong, St. Louis Blues, Jailhouse Blues, Down-Hearted Blues, 9 more

29. DUKE ELLINGTON — Indigos, Solitude, Where or When, Mood Indigo, Prelude to a Kiss, Willow Weep for Me, Tenderly, plus 3 more

30. DUKE ELLINGTON — At Newport, Blues to Be There, Festival Junction, Newport Up, Jeep's Blues, etc.

31. THE JAZZ MESSENGERS — Drum Suite, With the Art Blakey Percussion Ensemble, Nica's Tempo, Cubano Chant, Just for Marty, etc.

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21. TOMMY & JIMMY DORSEY — Sentimental & Swingin', Ruby, Sweet Sue, Just You; Dixieland Mambo; 9 more

25. MAHALIA JACKSON — Newport 1958, I'm On My Way, Walk Over God's Heaven, Didn't It Rain, 9 others

26. MILES DAVIS — Porgy and Bess, It Ain't Necessarily So; Bess, You Is My Woman Now; Summertime; 10 others

27. MILES DAVIS — 'Round About Midnight, All of You, Bye Bye Blackbird, Dear, Old Stockholm, Ah-Leu-Cha, etc.

28. BILLY BEIDERBECKE — The Bil Beiderbecke Story, Vol. 1, Thou Swell, Louisiana, Sorry, Goose Pimples, 8 more

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"... a single speed (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm) turntable with an integrally mounted arm . . . employs a somewhat unconventional drive system which results in a totally inaudible rumble level, and low wow and flutter. The arm is simple yet effective, with a mounting system which makes the unit relatively insensitive to shock and vibration."

"The arm tracks well at the lowest stylus forces recommended by the cartridge manufacturer."

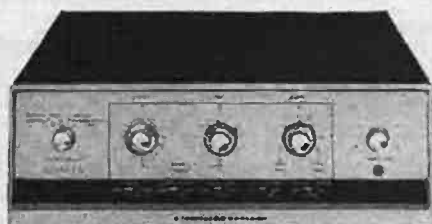
"The hum field surrounding the PR-500 is very low, and no difficulty should be experienced from this source even with poorly shielded cartridges."

"... the Stromberg-Carlson PR-500 performs in a manner comparable to that of the most expensive turntables and arms, yet sells for much less."

"The PR-500 is an excellent value at \$69.95."

Hirsch-Bonek Laboratory
High Fidelity Magazine, March '68

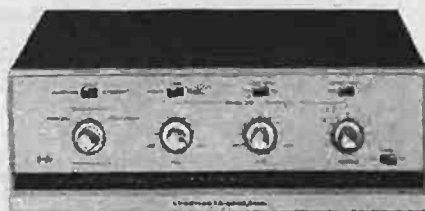
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ASR 660—an extremely clean, beautifully designed stereo amplifier • **Continuous power:** 36 watts (18 watts per channel) • **Music power:** (IHFM standard): 44 watts (22 watts per channel) • **Total harmonic distortion:** 0.6% at 18 watts per channel • **Intermodulation distortion:** 1% at rated output (4:1 ratio, 60 and 7,000 cps) • **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db, 20-20,000 cps • **Separate channel, clutch-type bass and treble controls** • **Scratch filter** (18 db/oct); **Rumble filter "Twin T" filter**, null at 20 cps • **Loudness contour switch;** **Balance control;** **Channel reverse switch;** **Program selector;** **Master gain control** • DC on pre-amp heaters for low noise; A plus B center speaker terminals.

Suggested Audiophile net: \$149.95



ASR 220C—an unusually versatile medium power stereo amplifier • **Continuous power:** 24 watts (12 watts per channel) • **Music power:** (IHFM standard) 28 watts (14 watts per channel) • **Total harmonic distortion:** 0.7% at 12 watts per channel • **Intermodulation distortion:** 2% at rated output (4:1 ratio, 60 and 7,000 cps) • **Frequency response:** ± 0.5 db, 20-20,000 cps • **Separate channel clutch-type bass and treble controls** • **Scratch filter** (18 db/oct); **Rumble filter "Twin T" filter**, null at 20 cps • **Magnetic phono pre-amp** with new, low noise tubes • A plus B center-speaker terminals.

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"The sensitivity measurement of the FM-443, according to IHFM standards, is amazing. Its usable sensitivity is 3 microvolts, a figure not usually found in tuners in this price range. This high sensitivity has not been obtained at the expense of IF bandwidth."

"The tuner sells for \$79.96."

Hirsch-Hoock Laboratory —
High Fidelity Magazine, June '60

The ASR-880 Amplifier . . .

"... a compact integrated stereo amplifier rated at 32 watts per channel. Noteworthy . . . it exceeds its rated power substantially over most of the audio range, has excellent power-handling capabilities at both ends of the spectrum."

"Each channel delivered 50 watts at 2% harmonic distortion, or 48 watts at 1% distortion. This is unusual in an amplifier rated at 32 watts . . ."

"The distortion of the ASR-880 is very low at usual listening levels when correctly operated . . . it has a rare combination of very high gain and very low hum. The amplifier has a number of special features, such as center channel output and a very effective channel-balancing system, as well as the usual stereo control functions found in all good amplifiers."

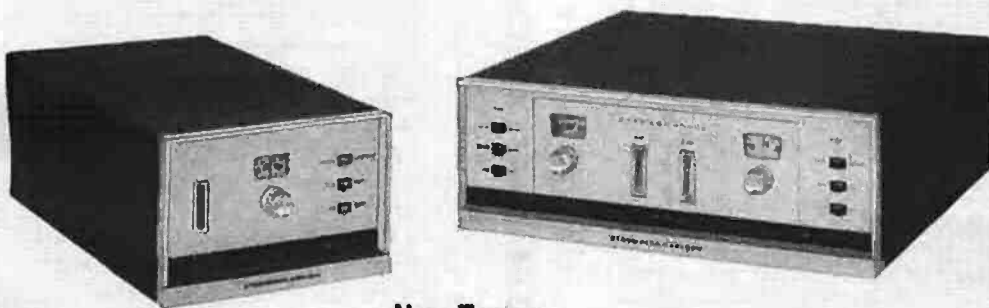
"Only 0.6 or 0.7 millivolts at the phono inputs will drive the amplifier to 10 watts output per channel. At normal gain settings . . . the hum level is better than 70 db below 10 watts even on phono input. This is completely inaudible."

"With a listening quality matching its laboratory response, the Stromberg-Carlson ASR-880 must be considered a very good value at its \$199.95 price."

Hirsch-Hoock Laboratory —
High Fidelity Magazine, Sept. '60



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SR-445A—a combination of the FM-443A and an entirely new, wide-band AM section. FM specifications: Identical to FM-443A • AM frequency response: Broad: 25 to 9,000 $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ db • Sharp: 25 to 2,500 cps $\pm 1\frac{1}{2}$ db • AM noise level: 60 db below 1 volt output • AM harmonic distortion: less than 1% at 100% modulation • Separate tuning indicators for AM and FM.

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Don Giovanni (*Complete*) • Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone • Sena Jurinac, soprano • Maria Stader, soprano • Irmgard Seefried, soprano • Ernst Haefliger, tenor • other soloists • RIAS Chamber Choir • Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra • Ferenc Fricsay, conductor
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DGSO-7302*

STRAUSS, R.:

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WEBER:

Der Freischütz (*Complete*) • Richard Holm, tenor • Irmgard Seefried, soprano • Rita Streich, soprano • Eberhard Waechter, baritone • Kurt Böhme, bass • other soloists • Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio • Eugen Jochum, conductor
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MOZART:

Mass in C Minor, K. 427 ("Great") • Maria Stader, soprano • Hertha Toepper, alto • Ernst Haefliger, tenor • Ivan Sardi, bass • Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral • Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra • Ferenc Fricsay, conductor
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*Denotes Stereo

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of the question of necessary wattage and should greatly help those who are in doubt about their amplifier requirements.

It also points up, by implication, that figures claimed in specifications can be misleading unless the exact test conditions are stated under which these figures are obtained. Your magazine is doing the audiophile a great service by making him aware of this fact.

W. R. Pendleton
Palo Alto, Calif.

Call for Kipnis

• At a time when so many older recordings of enduring artistic merit are being re-issued in LP format, it is distressing that the great *Lieder* recordings (Brahms and Wolf) of Alexander Kipnis have not yet found their way into the Recordings of the Century Series. Particularly the Brahms Society Volume I includes some of the most surpassingly profound performances ever recorded, and the technical quality of these discs, with their rich piano sound, is still exemplary. When will Angel Records share their hidden treasures with us?

Axel Sorensen
Minneapolis, Minn.

Memo to Collectors

• As one who enjoys reading letters to the editor, I did not fail to discover the letter of Mr. Ellis W. Schoner in your October issue, regarding the "unavailability" of a number of fine music labels, including ours.

In too many cases, "unavailability" is a word used by the record dealer to conceal his unwillingness to order any record that he cannot obtain from the few distributors with whom he normally deals. Unfortunately, the impression created in the mind of the consumer is that the record company is no longer in business or does not maintain a stock of its catalogued items.

If any of your readers have been frustrated in their attempts to buy Overtone recordings, they can be ordered directly from our plant.

Richard C. Burns
Overtone Records
139 Shelton Ave.
New Haven 11, Conn.

Turandot Disputed

• David Hall's review of the new recording of RCA's *Turandot* came as a shock to me. I suppose Mr. Hall calls them as he sees them, but it seems to me he is off base when he says that Victor's set leaves the others far in the shade. Perhaps this is true of the London set, which had anything but a "dream" cast, but in my opinion the Angel *Turandot* is every bit as good as the Victor. With the certainly incomparable

Hi Fi / STEREO

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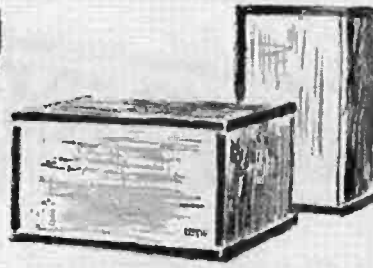
Other manufacturers, either by recommendation of independent research organizations or by their own choice, advocate or include the Janszen* as an integral part of their best speaker systems.

The Z-400, however, integrates the Janszen* Electrostatic with our own complementary woofer. Result...the best possible speaker system, already assembled and, naturally, at a far better price -- from **\$ 134.50**

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NESHAMINY ELECTRONIC CORP.
Neshaminy, Pennsylvania.



Callas as Turandot and with the absolutely magnificent Serafin conducting, it is *the Turandot* of our decade.

Nilsson sings well enough it is true, but she does not get under the skin of the character. And while she manages all the tessitura passages with security, her voice lacks that "clarion" quality that Callas brings to the role. Also, she does not seem cruel enough in the early part of the opera. Thus, the final scene lacks the contrast that it should have.

As for Tebaldi, she is always Tebaldi. She is rock-steady in her tones, careful in her phrasing, and uninspired in her interpretation. Schwarzkopf may have a curious, unidiomatic Italian accent, but she is the character of Liù to the letter.

The late Jussi Bjoerling is hard to fault. He is just about perfect in every respect, musically and dramatically, and is the prime asset of the RCA set.

I feel that Maestro Serafin (on Angel) is so superior to Leinsdorf that I cannot even bring myself to compare their wholly different approaches. Leinsdorf can wring drama from the score, but it leaves no effect. Serafin blends the drama with a humanism I can only describe as astonishing. Also, he makes us believe we are in Cathay, rather than in Italy. No small feat! All in all, I choose to dissent with Mr. Hall, and I, for one, will live with the Angel set.

Walter Klus
Philadelphia, Pa.

Although our Mr. Hall respects reader Klus's opinions, he says that he still prefers to live with the RCA set, especially as he believes it to be a superior example of stereo recording.

No True Faith

• Why won't Columbia ever learn that their miking of Percy Faith's high violins makes the sound so penetrating that the listener gets an earache after only a few minutes?

Frank Brotherton
Jasper, Alabama

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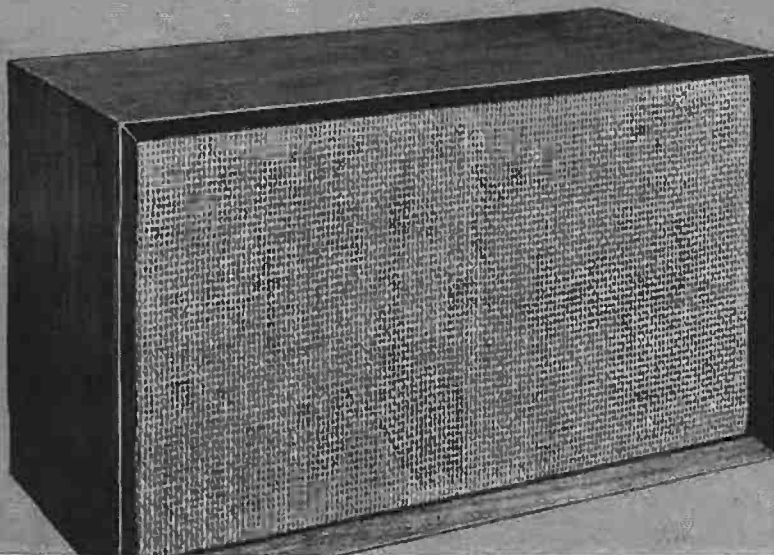


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TCHAIKOVSKY'S FIFTH SYMPHONY

THE FIFTH Symphony was an extremely crucial one for Tchaikovsky. Six years earlier, at a Moscow performance of his Violin Concerto, one of the critics had suggested that Tchaikovsky was "written out"; that his music was tired and uninspired and generally the work of a man past his creative prime. Tchaikovsky was especially sensitive to this sort of criticism, for, during the ten years that separated the Violin Concerto (1878) and the Fifth Symphony, he produced no symphonic work of major importance.

During the summer of 1888, Tchaikovsky wrote to his benefactress, Mme. Nadejda von Meck: "I am exceedingly anxious to prove to myself, as to others, that I am not played out as a composer . . . Have I told you that I intend to write a symphony? The beginning was difficult; but now inspiration seems to have come. However, we shall see."

The symphony was performed for the first time at St. Petersburg in November, and a month later, after a repetition in St. Petersburg and a performance in Prague, Tchaikovsky wrote to Mme. von Meck: "I have come to the conclusion that it is a failure. There is something repellent, something superfluous, patchy, and insincere, which the public instinctively recognizes. It was obvious to me that the ovations I received were prompted more by my earlier

work, and that the symphony itself did not really please the audience."

Time, of course, has negated the harshness of Tchaikovsky's appraisal of his score. The Fifth Symphony is one of the cornerstones of the repertory and is yet another work in the "victory-through-struggle" tradition of Beethoven's Fifth. And yet Tchaikovsky's words are not as unduly self-deprecating as they might seem at first blush. If he was unhappy with the architectural structure of the symphony, one must agree that he had sufficient cause for his unhappiness: the Fifth Symphony is certainly the most episodic and least organically-unified of his last three symphonies. Much of the music is balletic in character, and indeed it has been treated choreographically by Massine in a work called *Les Presages* ("Destiny") presented in 1933 by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the Fifth Symphony is Tchaikovsky's Op. 64, while his ballet masterpiece, *The Sleeping Beauty*, is Op. 66.

No matter what weaknesses one may find in its construction, however, Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony seems assured of enjoying eternal popularity. The reasons are not hard to find: First, there is the impact of the aforementioned

(Continued on page 20)

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AVALON - 837A... a two-way system with a guaranteed frequency range of 35-22,000 cps. Enclosure houses one 12" 414A low resonance, high compliance bass speaker and an 804A high frequency driver on an 811B sectoral horn \$246.00

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THE TRUE SOUND OF MUSIC



(Continued from page 16)

victory-through-struggle concept. The motto theme in E minor, stated at the very outset of the symphony by the clarinets in a subdued, reflective manner, recurs in the succeeding movements as a kind of sinister *idée fixe*. At the beginning of the last movement, and with startling but masterful psychological effect, Tchaikovsky shifts the tonality of the motto theme from the minor to the major. It thus assumes a completely new, heroic aspect and the symphony comes to a triumphant conclusion in E major. Tchaikovsky also endowed the symphony with some of his most effulgent melodic inspiration. It is small wonder that during the discovery of Tchaikovsky by Tin Pan Alley a couple of decades ago the French horn solo in the slow movement of the Fifth Symphony took on a new identity in juke boxes around the country as *Moon Love*.

Like the other Tchaikovsky symphonies, the Fifth admits of several different performance styles and attitudes. As with the *Pathétique* Symphony, discussed in this space last May, let's first group the most important recordings of the symphony according to their interpretive characteristics:

PRIM AND ESSENTIALLY ANTISEPTIC—

Dorati with the Minneapolis Symphony (*Mercury MG 50008*), Grüner-Hegge with the Oslo Philharmonic (*Camden S 489*), Sargent with the London Symphony (*Everest SDBR 3039; Mono LPBR 6039*)

Solti with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (*London CS 6117; Mono CM 9165*)

LITERAL AND PREDICTABLE—

Krips with the Vienna Philharmonic (*London CS 6095*)
Monteux with the Boston Symphony (*RCA Victor LSC/LM 2239*)

Rodzinski with the London Philharmonic Symphony (*Westminster XWN 18355*)

Van Kempen with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra (*Epic LC 3013*)

"PERSONAL" AND EMOTION-WRUNG

Mitropoulos with the New York Philharmonic (*Columbia ML 5075*)

Silvestri with the Philharmonia Orchestra (*Angel S 35566*)

WAYWARD, WITH STYLISTIC INCONSISTENCIES—

Szell with the Cleveland Orchestra (*Epic BC 1064; Mono LC 3647*)

INTENSELY FELT AND EXPRESSIVELY COMMUNICATED—

Ormandy with the "Philadelphia Orchestra" (*Columbia MS 6109; Mono ML 5435*)

IN A CLASS BY ITSELF—

Mravinsky with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra (*Decca DL 9884*)

One version listed in the catalog—Kempe with the Berlin Philharmonic (*Capitol SG/G 7219*)—was never received for review, but it might have some interesting things to offer (if it actually exists!).

Now to some specifics:

The four versions under the "Prim and essentially antiseptic" heading can be dismissed readily as pedestrian, uninspired readings. Krips and Monteux under the next heading give straightforward, unencumbered accounts of the music which can be safely recommended to anyone who prefers his Tchaikovsky lean and de-personalized. Each conductor has a glorious orchestra to work with, but the special glow of the Vienna Philharmonic in this music is as pertinent as it is unexpected.



Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony comes off best in stereo in the version by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In mono, Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic lead the field.

The Mitropoulos and Silvestri performances are far and away the most controversial of the whole lot. Both conductors revel in the opportunities for self-display which the music affords, and their readings are replete with dramatic emphasis, *rubato*, and sudden shifts in dynamic stress. The character of the music is such, however, that it really is not violated by this treatment—and some listeners will undoubtedly prefer to hear it done this way. Of the two "personal" treatments, the Silvestri is the newer and better-sounding.

Szell's recent version for Epic with the Cleveland Orchestra is a surprising one. The conductor seems to gravitate between two different poles—one, the literal, the other, wayward. He favors rather brisk tempi and the orchestra plays well for him—as always—but in the end it is a disappointment, as the finale just seems to fall apart under Szell's completely unsettled and episodic treatment.

Ormandy's recent recordings reveal amazing growth in intellectual depth and maturity. Now in his 25th anniversary season as the conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Ormandy seems to be coming truly into his own. As an example of what I mean, just compare his earlier Columbia LP of the Tchaikovsky Fifth (*Columbia ML 4400*) of nearly a decade ago with the one issued late last year. The new one has a breadth and nobility far surpassing the earlier one; indeed, in our opinion, the new Ormandy recording outclasses all the other competing versions but one.

That one is the performance Deutsche Grammophon recorded in Vienna a few years ago with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra when that organization first journeyed into the "West." One would imagine that Tchaikovsky's own countrymen would give the Fifth Symphony a real Slavic going-over, with heavy emphasis on the brooding melancholy and dark coloration of the music. Actually, the Mravinsky-Leningrad Philharmonic recording is the least "Slavic" of all the versions in this respect. The symphony has a lightness and transparency of texture, as Mravinsky interprets it, which casts it in a most attractive and thoroughly different light. Also, the conductor endows the score with subtle dynamic shadings and nuances—especially in the first movement—so that it is a constantly new and surprising experience. The conclusion has a triumphant ring which caps the whole in most satisfying fashion. The recorded sound is excellent and the orchestra is superb—except for a nervous solo oboe and a French horn soloist in the slow movement with a tone straight out of the reed section of the old Glenn Miller Orchestra.

Mravinsky, then, is my overall choice in Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, with Ormandy's new stereo version the leader in the stereo department.

M. B.

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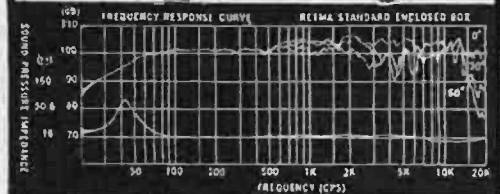
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THE
spectrum NEWS AND COMMENT

BY THE EDITORS

IMMEDIATELY following the introduction of the stereo disc, many manufacturers were beguiled into believing that the stereo effect would mask certain tonal shortcomings. Consequently, there was a tendency to slacken quality standards during the industry's high-speed conversion to stereo.

Since then, however, it has become quite evident that the serious listener demands from stereo precisely the same linear frequency response and low distortion that identify good mono sound.

This year's audio designs are, for the most part, eloquent testimony that the industry as a whole is satisfying this demand. For the first time since the introduction of stereo, concern with quality rather than compromise seems to be the rule rather than the exception at all price levels.

Some firms, of course, never swerved from their standards of quality even during the transition from mono to stereo. Others, however, allowed a relaxation of standards during the interregnum. If this resulted in a partial loss of confidence on the part of the buying public, now the industry is certainly bending over backwards to rectify the situation.

The majority of design changes are introduced for the benefit of the low-priced or medium-quality categories of high-fidelity equipment. These changes may bring to such components operating features previously found only in more expensive models, or they may render more palatable the compromise that is inevitable whenever equipment must be designed to a given price limit. On the other hand, if a major design change occurs in top-rated audio components, chances are that it represents a basic advance in the art of sound reproduction.

The current swing to higher quality norms in audio equipment was evidently set in motion by the same sincere quest for "something better" that originally led the audio pioneers to "secede" from the mediocrities of the radio and phonograph industry and establish high fidelity as a separate field. Once again, this same spirit of restless perfectionism seems to be broadly operative throughout the industry.

That this type of motivation can find expression in the final product must be credited to the fact that audio today is one of the last surviving craft industries. As such, it still bears the personal imprint of the handful of devoted hobbyists who started the whole high-fidelity movement. Here is one of

the few fields where individual invention still shapes the total product.

In such historical perspective, it appears clear, as 1960 draws to a close, that the art of sound reproduction has entered a new phase in which the relation of stereo and high fidelity is at last clearly defined. Stereo has become the standard of high fidelity, and high fidelity, in the strict and uncompromising meaning of the term, has been accepted as the indispensable condition for good stereo.

BALDNESS surely must be endemic among kit manufacturers because they always seem to be tearing their hair out over their customer mail. First they have to catch up with it, which is a problem in itself and often takes quite a few weeks. Engineering personnel qualified to answer technical questions can't take out too much time for letter writing.

Dynaco's sales director, Bob Tucker, suggests the following rules for inquirers to get fast and accurate replies:

1. Before writing to a manufacturer, talk over your problem with your local high-fidelity dealer. Two minutes of direct conversation can often pinpoint a problem that might require two months of correspondence.
2. Use postcards, if possible. They are easier to handle than letters.
3. Phrase your questions so they can be answered with short, simple phrases—preferably just yes or no.
4. Be specific in your questions. Describe the technical problems involved clearly. Identify all equipment used. Try not to leave any possibility open; long-distance diagnosis is difficult at best—and you can cooperate by providing a clear description of the case and its symptoms.

5. If you must send a letter, put your name and address on the letter as well as the envelope. The envelope may be lost and your letter never answered.

6. Don't refer to previous letters. You'll get better service if you repeat the information in each letter.

7. Don't send telegrams. Phone if you're in a hurry.

8. When returning equipment for factory service, always include a letter explaining the difficulty. Then send a copy of the letter by separate mail, stating when and how the equipment was shipped. This is a double-checking measure that can forestall possible confusion at the factory when your equipment is received.

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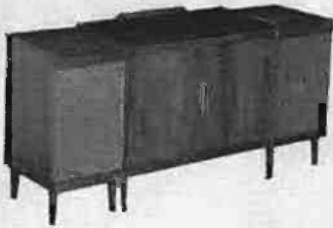
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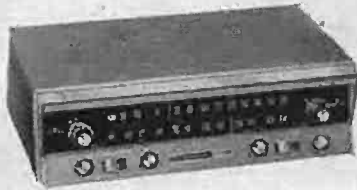
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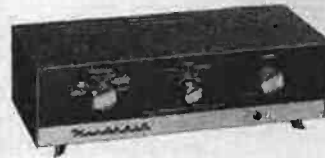
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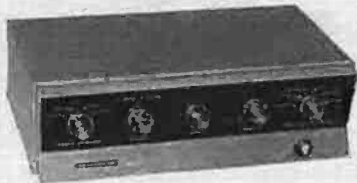
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A nostalgic look
to the days when
sheet music outsold records

THE GOLDEN DAYS



OF POPULAR SONGS

by Doron Antrim

into homes all over the land, publishers expected orders for sheet music and royalties from records to start pouring in. But nothing happened. Slowly it dawned on them with a dull and deadly impact: radio, the perfect plug, was a dud. It was not a means to an end; it was an end in itself. The sound of radio was the swan song of the good old days in Tin Pan Alley.

Though in pre-radio 1925, a characteristic tune—the *Prisoner's Song*, for example—would sell 3¼ million records, after radio had become established, a hit tune such as *The Music Goes Round and Round*—published in 1936—would barely sell ½ million in sheet music copies and records combined. To this day, pop sheet music has retained only marginal appeal, when compared to its earlier glories. Records, however, climb continuously in sales appeal, and a hit tune, if it lasts any time at all, will almost certainly rack up more than a million sales.

In the old days, fortunes were made on a single hit song. Two boys fresh from the farm, Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne, made their appearance on Broadway one day with a sweetly simple pastoral, *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*, and pocketed \$28,000. Frederick Knight Logan heard an old dandy from the deep south strumming an air on the guitar, went home and wrote *Missouri Waltz*, which enriched him by \$100,000. Remick sold copies of *Hiawatha* in 100,000 lots to Woolworth. Guy Massey wrote a song from a prison cell, *Prisoner's Song*, which turned in a neat \$85,000 in royalties. Willard Robison lost his home, wrote *Cottage for Sale*, and bought it back. The list could go on and on.

Song writers of the old days, good ones particularly, were rugged individualists, a law unto themselves. When the late Zieg-

HiFi/STEREO



NEW RELEASE

Mozart: SYMPHONY NO. 41 "Jupiter"
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The Bamberg Symphony Orchestra—J. Keilberth
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Beethoven: SYMPHONY NO. 3 (Eroica)
Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra—Joseph Keilberth
Stereo: TCS 18003

Beethoven: SYMPHONY NO. 1
The Bamberg Symphony Orch.—Joseph Keilberth

Beethoven: SYMPHONY NO. 8
Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch.—J. Keilberth
Stereo: TCS 18004

Beethoven: SYMPHONY NO. 6
Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch.—J. Keilberth
Stereo: TCS 18005

Beethoven: SYMPHONY NO. 4
Hamburg State Philharmonic Orch.—J. Keilberth
Stereo: TCS 18024

STEREO SPECTACULAR

GALLOP IN STEREO—Overtures
Suppé—Light Cavalry, Poet and Peasant, The Beautiful Galatea. Offenbach—Orpheus In The Underworld. *Symphony Orchestra of The Belgian Natl. Radio—Franz Andre*
Stereo: TCS 18035

ORCHESTRAL

Mendelssohn: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM—Incidental Music
Schubert: ROSAMUNDE—Incidental Music
Orchestra of The Berlin Municipal Opera—Arthur Rother
Stereo: TCS 18017

OPERETTA ORCHESTRAL

OPERETTA IN HI-FI
Offenbach: La Belle Helene—Overture; La Vie Parisienne—Overture; Suppé: Banditenstreich (Jolly Robbers)—Overture; Kunneke: Herz Ober Bord—Intermezzo. *Orch. of The Berlin Municipal Opera—Hansgeorg Otto*
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The good old days in Tin Pan Alley—that period roughly from the Gay Nineties to the late Twenties—were just that. The Alley was a fabulous place that trafficked in moons, mammys, nostalgia, Alabam', and love lore. A song hit was something to get excited about. Once a hit got up steam, it would ride along for several years, and it would sell over a million copies of sheet music. One perennial favorite, *Hearts and Flowers*, topped the eight-million mark.

Today the picture has changed. If a hit sells over a hundred thousand copies of sheet music, it is doing well. And if it stays in the running for six months, it has exceptional vitality.

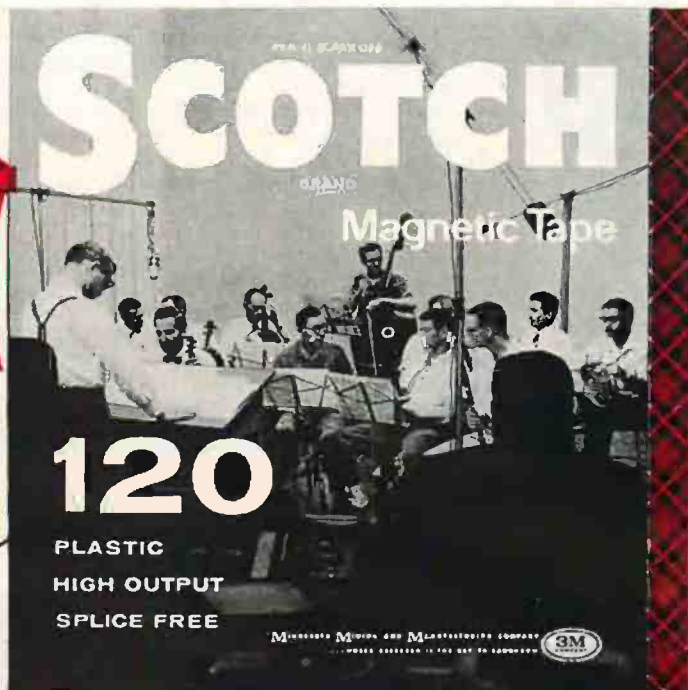
Strangely enough, what caused Tin Pan Alley's fall from greatness was something the Alley had long dreamed of—the perfect plug. Imagine, if you can, a time when radio and TV didn't exist. To make a song hit in the old days took plenty of push and pelf. An army of song pluggers labored for months persuading pros to put a song on the bill. Enough pros could swell it into a hit. Song publishers dreamed of a time when one plug would reach a mass audience. That dream, when realized, was to become a nightmare.

In 1927, Al Jolson made a picture called *The Jazz Singer* in which he could be heard as well as seen. This was like a shot in the arm to the silent movie industry. But it was anathema to music publishers. It meant that people could get their music by going to the movies instead of to the music stores.

To complicate the situation further, a year later some bright song pluggers persuaded Rudy Vallee to put their latest on the air. "Jeepers," they whooped, "this is it. A hit overnight."

There followed a stampede to get new songs on the air. With their songs going

*Christmas
Shopper
Stopper*



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THIS

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feld was rehearsing *The Three Musketeers*, he had to keep his entire cast waiting three days for Rudolf Friml to deliver the music for the closing number.

On the first day, Friml had phoned Ziegfeld he was on his way to the theater with the opus just composed. While driving down Fifth Avenue, Friml sighted a blonde of his acquaintance and forgot everything else, taking her to the races for three successive days while Ziegfeld kept the wives hot trying to locate him. When Friml finally appeared, he produced that spine-tingling *March Of The Musketeers*, and all was forgiven.

Following the traditions of Stephen Foster, the old song scribes staked their claim for the most part on the starkly simple and sentimental. Choruses often went only to eight bars and the words were easy to remember. Typical American harmonizations sprang up in the nation's barber shops, and are still perpetuated by the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America. These songs somehow wove their way into the very warp and woof of American life.

For instance, what hit of the past decade has become anything like such a universal accompaniment to conviviality as *Sweet Adeline*? John F. (Honey) Fitzgerald used it as a theme song in his two successful campaigns for the mayoralty of Boston in 1906-07 and in 1910-11. "Honey Fitz" claimed he was elected both times on a "Straight *Sweet Adeline* ticket." The song was the favorite of President Wilson and Maj. Gen. Smedley P. Butler. In the 20s, a citizen of Flint, Michigan, was arraigned for singing the song while coming home from a party at 3 A. M. In reporting the event, a local newspaper attributed weird power to the song:

"It acts on the human system like moonshine whiskey on an Indian. It is a sort of loco weed which drives its perpetrators crazy. There is scarcely a note in it that cannot be held, tortured, garroted. It is the only song in existence that can be rendered in all keys at once, both major and minor, and usually is. One has only to look upon its executioners, their vacant, expressionless faces raised to the sky, their glazed eyes fixed on nothing, to know that they are intoxicated by a drug more powerful than hashish, bhong or rajoon. In our opinion it violates the Volstead Act and should be suppressed with the utmost vigor of the law."

THERE was something about the old songs that stamped them on the minds of the people. Compare the songs of World War I—pre-radio—with those of World War II—after radio. Here are some of the former: *Hinky Dinky Parley Foo*, *Tipperary*, *Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag*, *Keep The Home Fires Burning*, *There's A Long, Long Trail Awaiting*, to name a few.

Moreover, some of these songs exhibited a typical American humor, not shown in the songs of any other nationality, and somewhat baffling to the enemy in World War I. Witness: *Would You Rather Be A Colonel With An Eagle On His Shoulder Or A Private With A Chicken On His*

Knee? Oh, How I Hate To Get Up In The Morning; All Dressed Up And No Place To Go.

But the big song of World War I, the one which brought words of praise from Gen. Pershing no less, was *Over There*. George M. Cohan wrote it in a white heat of patriotism and had it published by his old friend, Billy Jerome, who had a small publishing enterprise. Before it began to catch on big, Phil Kornheiser, song plugger for Leo Feist, heard the number and got a strong yen to work on it. Kornheiser believed it would do more to win



CULVER SERVICE

Friml wrote "*March Of The Musketeers*" while on a unique and diverting vacation.

the war than all the official preachments, pronouncements, and manifestoes put together. So he began selling the idea to Ed Bitner, general manager.

Bitner discounted Kornheiser's ravings as being characteristic of a song plugger until he heard the song cheered to the roof in Jenness's Hofbrau one evening. Then he got the bug. Seeking out Jerome, he offered \$10,000 for it. No go. That night he couldn't sleep thinking about the song. Next morning he burst in on Jerome with, "Billy, I've got to have that song. I'll give you fifteen."

"Nope."

"Twenty."

"Nope."

"Twenty-five."

"Sold. But it's gotta be cash."

Up to that time, that was the highest price paid outright for a song, \$25,000, which would be equivalent to about \$65,000 today. The newspaper publicity probably exceeded that of any other song in history. Columnists computed how much each word of the song cost. A staff of pluggers started in the day the check was signed. A month later, the song had already grossed \$30,000. Then it sold into the millions of copies and records.

Another reason the old Alley days were exciting was because they outlined the beginnings of America's unique contribution

HiFi/STEREO

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No sales are made or initiated at the Music Room, but AR speakers are played continuously in stereo, from 10:30 to 7:00 on weekdays, 11:30 to 5:30 on Saturday.

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to the world: jazz. The granddaddy of this new music was, strangely enough, a white man from Detroit, Kerry Mills.

His first cakewalk, *Rastus On Parade*, brought him to New York. His next was *Happy Days In Dixie*, and on his third, *Georgia Camp Meetin'*, he hit a home run.

This piece was revolutionary in its day. It broke in on the plethora of sweet simplicities and set the minstrel folks to cakewalking, more of a strut and body contortion than a dance. It opened the way to ragtime which followed soon after.

Along in 1899, a colored man, Scott Joplin, wrote *Maple Leaf Rag*, probably the greatest rag ever, and some thirty years ahead of its time. This was at first an instrumental number and was beyond the technical prowess of the average piano player. Despite that, it enjoyed many years of popularity.

In 1903, *Hiawatha* by Neil Moret (Chas. Daniels), hit the music stands. This prize winner, first published in Kansas City, of all places, had collected dust on the shelves of music stores for five years. Then it was acquired by Jerome H. Remick of Detroit for what was considered a hefty advance in those days, \$5,000. The firm got behind it with a big ballyhoo.

Hiawatha started an Indian trend, but more than that, it emancipated the bass in the piano accompaniment choruses from the um-pa, um-pa which had gone before. The bass exhibited a strain of counterpoint against a main theme. Pop music was finally getting away from the I, IV and V chords.

Then the cry was back to ballads. Ragtime, it was said, had played itself out. Berlin bridged the transition period with *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, which, strangely enough, is not in ragtime. It has only a few minor syncopations and is otherwise in straight march tempo. But it revived interest in a waning cause and prepared the ground for jazz. It shows interesting harmonic treatment, especially the descending bass in the refrain.

ALTHOUGH I admit to a certain amount of prejudice for the old days, this is not to imply that better songs were written then. A number of great songs are appearing today, but they don't get the same chance. They're lost in the shuffle. The home folks don't gather around the parlor upright any more. And that, I feel, is one of several reasons why the old favorites go on and on.

On a trip west last summer, I stopped overnight at the Lake Hotel in Yellowstone Park. Spotting a piano in an alcove off the lobby, I started playing *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*. A white-haired lady came up to the piano all starry-eyed and said, "I just love that song. I sang it when I was a girl." Soon others began collecting around the piano. About twenty-five people gathered eventually, young and old. We sang the old songs long into the night. Next morning, one member of the party said, "Didn't we have fun last night?"

Yes indeed. People do warm up to the old songs. Witness the success of Mitch Miller's *"Sing Along."* Somehow those melodies just linger on as mellow reminders of the good old days of Tin Pan Alley.

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he loves the sound... she loves the styles



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It is available in walnut, oiled walnut, fruitwood, mahogany and unfinished. Net prices: System only, \$139.95. Grilles: Contemporary, \$9.95; Traditional, \$19.95. Base: \$14.95. (Even less unfinished.)

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For complete flexibility of placement, both RRL models are finished on all four sides. And as an added feature, the grilles are easily removable to permit a change of fabric whenever desired.

Both are available in mahogany, walnut, oiled walnut, limed oak and unfinished. Model RRL-8 is 22 1/4" x 12 1/4" x 10 5/8" deep. Net prices from \$95.50 unfinished. Model RRL-12 is 25" x 15 5/8" x 12 1/2" deep. Net prices from \$114.95 unfinished.

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HF55 2-Way Speaker System Semi-Kit complete with factory-built 34" veneered plywood (4 sides) cabinet. Bellows-suspension. 5 1/2" excursion, 8" woofer (45 cps. res.) & 3 1/2" cone tweeter. 1 1/4" cu. ft. ducted-port enclosure. System Q of 1/2 for smoothest freq. & best transient resp. 45-14,000 cps clean, useful resp. 16 ohms.

HWD: 24" x 12 1/2" x 10 1/2". Unfinished birch. Kit \$47.50. Wired \$56.50. Walnut or mahogany. Kit \$59.50. Wired \$69.50.

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††Shown in optional Furniture Wood Cabinet WE7D: Unfinished Birch, \$9.95; Walnut or Mahogany, \$12.50.

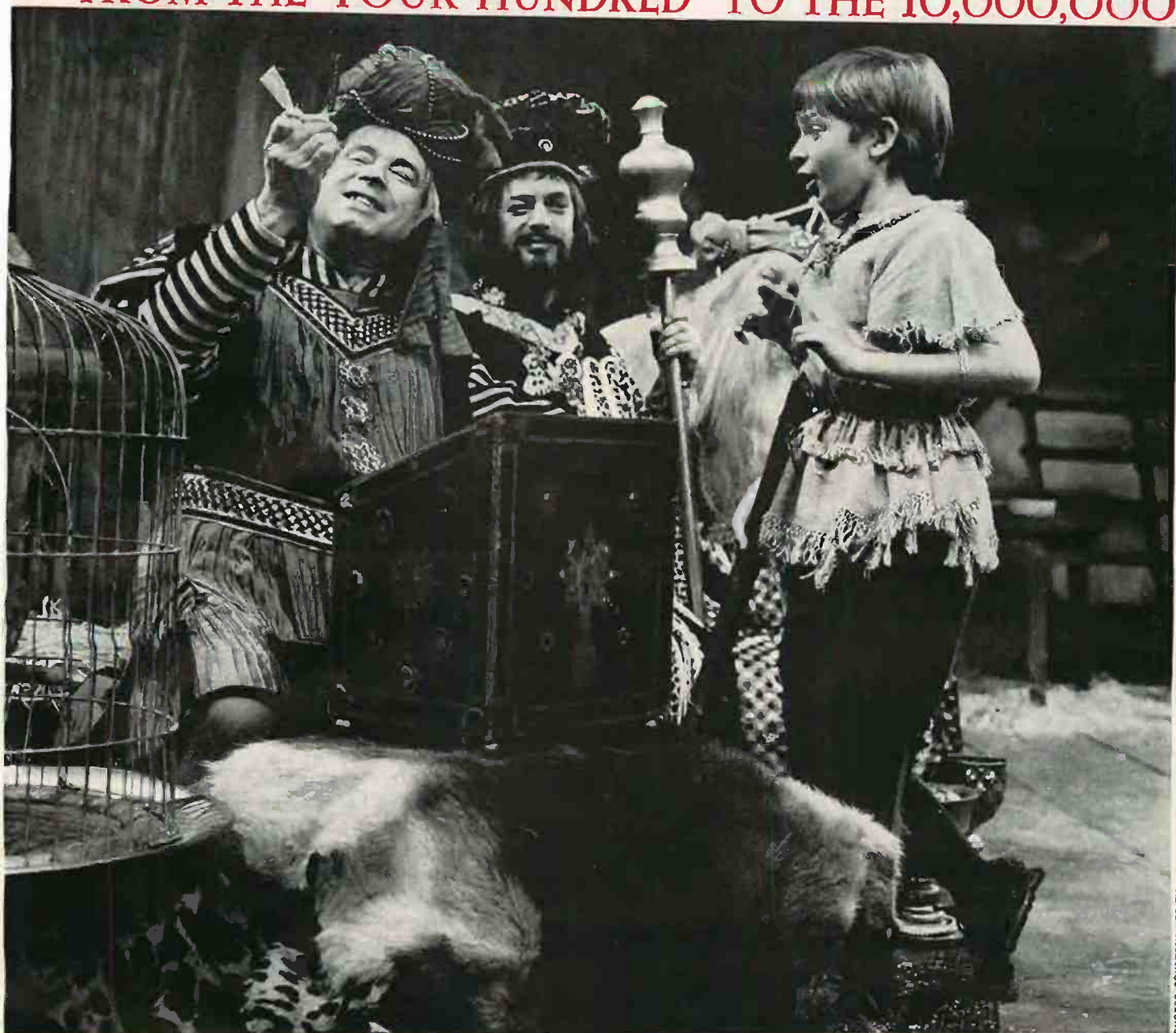
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FROM THE "FOUR HUNDRED" TO THE 10,000,000



PHOTOS COURTESY NBC-TV

THE TRIUMPH OF OPERA IN ENGLISH

by Samuel Chotzinoff

The story of how one man's life-long dreams culminated in the creation of the NBC Opera Company

WHEN I was a "beatnik" in New York half a century ago, my consuming passion was music, opera especially. Three or four nights a week I would attend performances at the Metropolitan, gaining admission by slipping an usher a twenty-five-cent piece. Towards midnight, walking home to save carfare, I would sometimes encounter a strange figure on Broadway. This man, clad in an Inverness cape and slouched hat, looked haunted, and was obviously shunned; for he was always alone. After a

time, I learned that he was the music critic of *The New York American*, Charles Henry Meltzer. The reason for his separation from his colleagues was that he espoused the ludicrous idea that opera should be sung in English.

To advocate in those days that opera should be presented in a language one could understand was rash indeed. Yet I could not help admiring Mr. Meltzer's temerity, and I began reading his column to discover what underlay his single-minded propagation of so outlandish a cause. And



Samuel Chotzinoff listens while special advisor Lincoln Kirstein clears up a fine point in the 1956 *Magie Flute* production.



The camera moves in for a closeup of William Lewis as Tamino and Leontyne Price as Pamina.

somewhat to my surprise, his crusade seemed to make sense.

Mr. Meltzer posed a rhetorical question that went something like this: How was it that in every country in Europe, all operas were given in the *language of the audience*? In Berlin, *Carmen* was sung in German. In Rome, it was sung in Italian. Only in America and in France was *Carmen* given in the original French. The reason for this, Mr. Meltzer wrote, was clear. Snobbery, pure and simple.

Opera in America was a hobby of the rich, the "Four Hundred," and of a few poor music-lovers like myself. The "Four Hundred" who ruled the Metropolitan and owned the glittering boxes knew little about opera and cared less. They arrived late and left early, and apparently took no interest whatever in the stories or plots of the operas. Probably most of these wealthy patrons would have been surprised to find out Aïda and Rhadames are entombed in the last scene! As for those of us who heard our operas standing up and had a better acquaintance with plot and music, we were too grateful for what we were getting to dare ask for anything more. And what we were getting, said Mr. Meltzer, were concerts in costume. What we were not getting was intelligibility.

Since an opera, unlike an orchestral concert, is based on language, which the music adorns, heightens, and interprets, the opera-going public was missing at least a third of what the composer had wrought. This, Mr. Meltzer maintained, accounted for America's indifference to opera.

I WAS impressed with Mr. Meltzer's fervor, sincerity, and rationality, so I put the case for opera in English to my fellow musicians. And then I came smack up against the snobbery that Mr. Meltzer had put his finger on as being the cause of the opposition to opera in English. They pointed to the English translations of the opera librettos sold nightly in the lobby of the Metropolitan. I read them and was appalled. In *Aida*, Amneris addressed the Ethiopian Princess:

*Come hither, thou I dearly prize,
A slave art thou none, nor menial,
Here have I made by fondest ties
Sister, a name more genial.*

Furthermore, my musical friends went on, since the music expressed the essence of the words, it wasn't really necessary

to understand the words. In any case, the diction of opera singers was generally so poor that one couldn't understand them even if one knew the language they were singing in. And the final argument seemed to them a clincher. The word, they said, inspires the composer to set it to the kind of music that brings out its meaning, its poetry, and its emotion. Any translation, therefore, can only serve as a makeshift, running, as it must, counter to music inspired by completely different words in a different language. Hence, to appreciate fully the music of an opera, one must hear it in its original language.

This persuasive argument sent me to the original librettos for confirmation. It was then that I made a curious discovery. I found that the original librettos of most of the standard operas were anything but literary gems or poetic effusions calculated to inspire composers to enshrine them in beautiful music. They were, in fact, almost as ordinary, and often as ridiculous, as the English translations sold in the lobbies of opera houses. Moreover, in setting them to music, composers frequently imposed wrong accents on words, and quite often saddled singers with throat-constricting vowels in the upper registers. Even Puccini sometimes failed to take the capabilities and limitations of the human voice into account. That master of the operatic idiom set the word "Un" in the aria "Un bel di" from *Madama Butterfly* to a high G-flat. But a high G-flat calls for an open throat. Yet Puccini, at this most important moment of his opera, closed the throats of all the *Madama Butterflies* of the past and of all those to come. No soprano I have ever heard has been able to make a beautiful or even an agreeable sound with the word "Un" in "Un bel di." So, too, in the opening of "Vissi d'arte" from *Tosca*, the "Vi" of "Vissi" always sounds either pinched or strident. There are countless examples of such indifference to vocal limitations on the part of the finest composers. They occur even in operas by such masters of *bel canto* as Bellini.

So much for the claim that the original words are uniquely wedded to the music. The fact is that the relationship of words and music is as often unhappy as it is congenial. Dubious, too, is the claim that the natural accents in words have been preserved in the music and that these natural accents are often disregarded in translations. In the opening of the Flower Song in *Carmen*, for example, the musical accent falls on the "La" in "La Fleur" instead of on the



Three views of the American premiere of Prokofiev's *War and Peace* in the NBC-TV production—(left to right) the camera focuses on Linda McNaughten as Sonia, and Helena Scott as Natasha in the opening scene; Helena Scott checks a final detail of gesture with musical director Peter Herman Adler; Leon Lishner as Napoleon disposes battle plans.

more natural "Fleur." A Frenchman says "La FLEUR," not "LA Fleur." Yet in the aria, Bizet gives the accent to "La" and nobody objects. In the quartet "Mir ist so wunderbar" in *Fidelio*, Beethoven sets "wunderbar" in a way that shifts the accent to the last syllable. A German, of course, would accent the first syllable. While I have never heard anyone take Beethoven to task, if such a thing should occur in an English translation, people would rush into print to denounce the artistic perversion.

As to the alleged fine quality of operatic prose, is "Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin?" beautiful or poetic? It isn't. Is it any better than the English version: "You torturer, what evil deed . . ." It isn't. And what is treasurable or inimitable in the phrase "Toreador, en gu-ah-a-er-de" (that's the way Bizet set it to music)? Could any decent English equivalent sound worse? I doubt it.

Finally, there is the assertion that composers frown on translations of their operas. This theory is, of course, absolute nonsense. Verdi, for example, protested strongly when he discovered that one of his operas was going to be performed in Paris in the original Italian.

In America, however, at the turn of the century, there were no adequate English translations available. And since very few Americans understood Italian, French, or German and were unable to spot the imperfections in the originals, the future of opera in English looked dim indeed.

WHEN I succeeded Deems Taylor as music critic of *The World* in 1925, I was, for the first time, in a position to see and hear opera from very select seats in the parterre of the Met. Mr. Meltzer, having spent a lifetime as a lonely crusader for opera in English, was no longer on the journalistic scene. Not anxious to share his fate as a pariah among my colleagues, I did not openly espouse his futile cause. But I was determined to observe the behavior of opera audiences and to build up over the years a valid case for opera in English, and when the appropriate moment arrived, to do what I could towards its realization.

During my adventures at the Met, I was especially struck by the ineffectiveness of operatic comedies. The tragedies fared better. The plots of most serious operas are simple melodramas of the ancient type, generally dealing with the substitution of a foundling for the heir to the throne

or a fortune, the treachery of evil persons, monumental jealousies and connivings, and the liberal use of poison, dagger, and gun. If the listener could catch an occasional *amore* or *traditore*, he could gather enough of the plot to keep him in his seat.

But the comedies rely a good deal on "recitative," a type of conversation in sing-song fashion. These recitatives carry along the plot and prepare for the solos, duets, trios, etc. In total, they may account for half the duration of an opera. Therefore, in order to follow the story, it is essential to understand the recitatives. Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is an excellent example of the makeup of an operatic comedy. The Don talks at great length to Leporello. The two plan seductions, outline stratagems, characterize the other personages in the opera, abuse each other. In short, they keep the action in perspective by means of recitative. And if you don't understand what they are saying, you miss not only the unfolding of the story, but you also miss the sophisticated wit of the Don and Leporello.

In my sixteen years as music critic of *The World* and *The New York Post*, I watched and noted down the reaction of American audiences to *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Barber of Seville*, and other operatic comedies. The audiences sat in stony silence, emitting self-conscious guffaws only when one character kicked another in the behind. On the other hand, at the performances of these operas that I witnessed in Milan, Paris, Copenhagen, and Moscow, I heard the hearty, spontaneous laughter of audiences who understood the words and appreciated the jokes, sarcasms, innuendos, and verbal tiffs in the recitatives.

My days as a newspaper critic came to an end in 1941 when I became the General Musical Director at the National Broadcasting Company. It was in the course of my work there that the time came when I saw my way to do something about opera in English. In 1949, I met Dr. Peter Herman Adler, a conductor and musician who not only shared my enthusiasm for opera in our own language but who was already successfully experimenting with it. Dr. Adler had obtained some decent translations of scenes from the standard operas and had coached a number of young American singers in their parts. Among these youngsters, incidentally, were two unknowns, Mario Lanza and George London. Dr. Adler put his singers through some scenes from *The Bar-*



Herod (played by Andrew McKinly) commands Salome to dance, as Herodias (Lorna Sydney) looks on.



Britten's Billy Budd, in its American premiere, featured Theodor Uppman in the title role.

lved *Bride*, *The Barber of Seville*, and *La Bohème*. Without benefit of scenery, costumes and props, the singers managed to create the illusion of comedy and drama, and in language that was understandable. A week later, the scenes were repeated before a small assembly of musicians and music lovers. Among those present were Artur Schnabel, Jascha Heifetz, and General David Sarnoff. I saw that they were as moved and impressed as I had been. Indeed, they agreed that the new and rapidly developing medium of television would provide an ideal stage for opera in English. I obtained General Sarnoff's consent to experiment with TV presentations of excerpts in English from the standard repertoire. This was the beginning of a movement that was to build a great new opera audience of ten million viewers on television and to spur as never before the production of opera in English throughout the country.

We began at NBC with fifteen-minute segments of the more popular operas. Television was then in its infancy, and our little excerpts were, by our present standards, poor indeed. Yet, they interested people, and we began to get congratulatory letters. Encouraged by this appreciation, we stretched the fifteen minutes to half an hour. At that point, we paused to take a good look at our past accomplishments and at our future hopes. And after we examined our old kinescopes, we realized that our presentations suffered from old-fashioned acting, staging, and scenery. We could see that before opera could become as popular in America as it was in Europe, a completely new approach would be required. Because the TV camera brought the story and the cast right into the living room, a new type of opera singer—one who at once looked more attractive and authentic—was necessary. The close-up is the destroyer of illusion, and casting for television is most unlike casting for the stage.

WE THEREFORE began to seek out good-looking people who also had good voices. It was a most unrewarding effort at first, and once or twice we were driven to dub in the voices of singers behind suitably cast actors. In 1954, we did Strauss' *Salome*, which called for a thin, emaciated John the Baptist and a slender, emotionally charged princess. The usual ponderous baritone and iron-lunged percheron-like soprano of the opera house would not do for TV. After a long search for a qualified baritone, we gave up and settled

for a dubbing. We showed on the TV screen the slender, attractive young movie actor John Cassavetes as John the Baptist, but dubbed in the voice of Norman Atkins. In Elaine Malbin, however, we had the ideal singing-acting *Salome*. Our production of the lurid one-acter was a considerable success, eliciting enthusiastic praise from press and public.

In our 1957 production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*—the only production of this notable work in America—we had to wait till the very week of our first stage rehearsal before we found the ideal singer for the part of Natasha. For weeks we had looked at and listened to many aspirants for the role. Then, when we were about to give up, a totally unknown young woman walked in to apply for an audition, and I saw in her face and figure the Natasha of the opera and of Tolstoy's novel. If only she could sing! We gave her the score and she sang a few pages at sight beautifully. Helena Scott was her name, and we engaged her for the role then and there.

Because of casting difficulties such as these, we are sometimes obliged to postpone or even shelve an announced opera production. But these difficulties are becoming less each year. As if in answer to the exacting demands of television, a new kind of opera singer has been emerging: young, comely, conscious of the emotional exactions of opera, and willing to work hard to achieve believable characterizations. Although it is true that the Metropolitan Opera House is always filled, the era of old-fashioned opera, with its accent on vocalism and its reliance on the large, vague gesture and pompous stride, will presently be ushered out.

Not casting alone, but stage décor for television opera presented special problems, and there were sometimes errors of judgment that had to be rectified at considerable trouble and expense. To cite an instance: on the day before we televised Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti*, we realized that some of the sets were not just right for this ironic little satire on Suburbia. A crew of painters worked through the night, and by morning, we had scenery to our satisfaction. When we set out to do Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, our first decision was to create a realistic replica of an ancient Florentine house. But after the plans were drawn, I felt that realistic scenery would not provide the medieval atmosphere we were after. So the drawings were scrapped, and the



Andrew McKinly, playing Captain Vere in *Billy Budd*, discovers the villainous Claggert (Leon Lishner), struck down by Billy.



Director Kirk Browning gives last-minute instructions to the prisoners in *Fidelio*.

comedy was televised with no scenery at all. This left the Florentine house and Florence itself to the imagination of our viewers, many of whom wrote to congratulate us on our having left the décor to them.

In the eleven years of the existence of the NBC Opera, we have televised forty-two works. Six were world premieres, two were American "firsts." Five were commissioned by NBC. Twelve were original works to English text, while thirty were English translations from Italian, German, French, and Russian. In Joseph Machlis, we found an adept translator. John Gutman and the team of Ruth and Thomas Martin gave us, respectively, translations of *Tosca* and *Così fan Tutte*, while the poets W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman contributed versions, rather than translations, of *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*. In Kirk Browning, we have had an unusually sensitive and truly imaginative stage and camera director.

NBC's opera department, with its inflexible emphasis on diction, musicality and naturalistic stage deportment, has served, and is serving, as a school for young singers. It gave Leontyne Price her first chance at opera, and has seen fit to engage a popular opera star only once, when it invited Cesare Siepi to appear in *Don Giovanni*.

We are among the few organizations (perhaps we are the only organization) which have literally adopted Hamlet's advice to the players. Opera is music-drama or music-comedy; at its finest, words and music in opera are indivisible. No aria was ever created in terms of music alone, not the noble "*Che farò senza Euridice*" in Gluck's *Orfeo*, nor the "*Un bel dì*" in *Madama Butterfly*. They were designed to advance the action, to highlight the story. When they are sung unmusically, that is, for effect or display, they retard the story. When artists take liberties with the music, when their diction is bad or hazy, and when they sing in a language that is incomprehensible to their audience, they mar and sometimes even destroy the composer's design.

TELEVISION, which has had and is having a powerful influence on our civilization, has not been without effect on the production of opera. The TV camera has destroyed the old, sentimental image of grand opera as a vocal bout between celebrated singers. The camera is merciless; it detects false sentiment, grandiloquence, histrionic deficiencies, as

DECEMBER 1960

Ralph Herbert as Gianni Schicchi relishes the mock pathos of his "kinfolk."



Virginia Haskins and Ralph Herbert in *The Marriage of Figaro*.





Florestan (John Alexander) sings of hopes for freedom and reunion with Leonora in the 1959 production of *Fidelio*.

well as vocal blemishes. Because of TV's all-seeing eye, we are obliged to select our casts on the basis of vocal, physical, and histrionic endowment. And our style of staging and décor, added to English translations, are restoring the old operas to their original effectiveness and giving to new operas the fluidity and flexibility of cinematic productions.

The National Broadcasting Company has generously footed the ever-mounting bills for our modern TV opera "spectaculars." Even more important has been the completely free hand the Company has given us to do what we

considered best in the choice of repertoire, the commissioning of networks, the casting, décor, direction and whatever else goes into the presentation of music-drama.

Divorced from the snob appeal of foreign tongues, operas on TV have the direct appeal of a first-rate Broadway show. Our audience no longer has to wonder what Tosca says to Scarpia or what Don Giovanni confides to Leporello; and they hear these things sung exactly as the composers wished to have them sung, by a cast whose members are suited to their roles both vocally and physically.

With television pointing the way, live opera will have to become as natural, as convincing as we in the television studio have labored to make it. Towards that desirable end, live opera must accept the inevitability of English translations or versions, and it must even attempt to create an intimacy similar to that which television has brought to opera—by building smaller, rather than larger, opera houses. Then, and then only, will opera become an integral part of the American scene.

Samuel Chotzinoff turned his attentions from the concert violin to music journalism more than three decades ago. He first wrote magazine articles and ultimately became a music critic for *The New York World*, and later, for *The New York Post*. His success, in 1936, in persuading Maestro Toscanini to return from retirement to lead the NBC Symphony led to his full-time career in broadcasting, and he was appointed General Music Director of NBC in 1941. His role in establishing and developing the NBC TV Opera Company represents the major portion of his professional life.

THE NBC TV OPERA PRODUCTIONS

1949-50 (experimental season)

Scenes from: *The Barber of Seville*—Rossini
The Bartered Bride—Smetana
La Bohème (Act IV)—Puccini
The Old Maid and the Thief—Menotti
 (NBC Radio Commission)

1950-51

Down in the Valley—Weill
 (Recorded—RCA Victor, collector's item)
Madama Butterfly—Puccini
The Bat—J. Strauss
Tales of Hoffmann—Offenbach
Carmen—Bizet
Hansel and Gretel—Humperdinck
Gianni Schicchi—Puccini

1951-52

Pagliacci—Leoncavallo
R.S.V.P. (Monsieur Choufleuri)—Offenbach
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
 (NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
 (Recorded—RCA Victor)
Pique-Dame—Tchaikovsky
Il Tabarro—Puccini
The Barber of Seville—Rossini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Gianni Schicchi—Puccini

1952-53

Billy Budd—Britten
 (American Premiere)

Trouble in Tahiti—Bernstein
 (Recorded—MGM)
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
The Marriage—Martinu
 (NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
Sister Angelica—Puccini
Der Rosenkavalier—R. Strauss

1953-54

Carmen—Bizet
Macbeth—Verdi
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
The Marriage of Figaro—Mozart
The Taming of the Shrew—Giannini
Pelléas and Mélisande—Debussy
Salome—R. Strauss

1954-55

Abduction from the Seraglio—Mozart
Sister Angelica—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Tosca—Puccini
The Would-Be Gentleman (from *Ariadne auf Naxos*)—R. Strauss
The Saint of Bleecker Street—Menotti
 (Recorded—RCA Victor)

1955-56

Griffelkin—Foss
 (NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
Madama Butterfly—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
The Magic Flute—Mozart
The Trial at Rouen—Dello Joia
 (World Premiere)

1956-57

La Bohème—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
War and Peace—Prokofiev
 (American Premiere)
La Grande Breteche—Hollingsworth
 (NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
La Traviata—Verdi

1957-58

Dialogues of the Carmelites—Poulenc
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Rigoletto—Verdi
Così fan Tutte—Mozart

1959-60

Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Maria Golovin—Menotti
 (NBC TV Commission—Brussels Fair
 World Premiere)
 (Recorded—RCA Victor)

1959-60

Fidelio—Beethoven
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Cavalleria Rusticana—Mascagni
Don Giovanni—Mozart

1960-61 (tentative schedule)

Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
 (Dec. 25, 1960)
Deseret—Kastle
 (World Premiere Jan. 1, 1961)
Boris Godounov—Moussorgsky
 (Mar. 26, 1961)

THREE ON A BUDGET



In October, HI-FI/STEREO REVIEW began a new series designed to help those of our readers who lack specialized technical backgrounds to get the best value for their hi-fi dollars. The first article dealt with complete stereo systems costing in the vicinity of \$550. Those considered here run some \$200 less. They do not, of course, attain the naturalness of sound that is the hallmark of more expensive systems, but they do produce musically satisfying results. Each of the three systems presented here proves that good stereo is possible on a budget. Since there are few absolutes in describing the texture and color of musical sound, individual preference plays an important part in any choice of components. We have therefore not attempted to designate any one system as "the best." Instead, we confine ourselves to selecting three component combinations within a given price range which meet the requirements of musically commendable reproduction.



Carefully pre-matched economy components to give you more sound for the money

IF you have a thousand dollars to spend, getting good stereo is no trick at all. But those with limited budgets will be encouraged to learn that satisfying sound can be had for considerably less, though the success of an "economy system" hinges on matching up just the right components. Many relatively inexpensive amplifiers, speakers, and cartridges, in spite of necessary economies in their manufacture, have some particular virtues in which they excel. By carefully selecting components with the right combination of characteristics, one can achieve an overall level of reproduction approaching that usually expected of more expensive equipment.

per channel can produce excellent sound providing they are teamed up with high-efficiency loudspeakers. Another example: while budget speaker X may have fine, smooth highs, it may be somewhat weak in the bass. Pickup Y, conversely, may have mediocre highs but a sturdy bass response. But these two in combination will complement each other, and the result can be good overall sound. On the other hand, had you teamed speaker X with a cartridge that had strong highs and weak lows, the resultant sound would be very unpleasant: shrill highs and thin bass.

The three systems suggested here are the result of many hours of mixing and matching in an attempt to fit every component into a complete system which brings out its best;



System No. 1. Components: Altec Lansing 835-A speakers, EICO HF-81 stereo amplifier, Glaser-Steers GS-77 record changer with Electro-Voice 31-MD cartridge. Total system price: \$372.45.

PHOTOS BY BRUCE PENDLETON

in System No. 1, for example, the Altec Lansing 835A loudspeakers have plenty of treble but are a bit bass-shy. The Electro-Voice Model 31-MD cartridge, on the other hand, has extremely good bass response and moderate highs. Separately, each has limitations; together they provide good coverage of the entire audio spectrum.

To go further, which amplifier would best suit this speaker-cartridge combination? Logically, an amplifier with an exceptional bass response to reinforce the lows. Following this line of thought, the Heath WSA-2 was tried with these two units since our lab tests had shown it to have good low-frequency performance. But this amplifier, in combination with the other two components, didn't sound quite right. The particular *shape* of the curve of its bass-boost circuit did not fit with the response curve produced by the cartridge-speaker combination. Another amplifier, however, the EICO HF-81, turned out to be just about perfect in this context because of its slightly different tone-control action.

Thus, careful matching of components in the budget field becomes vitally important. But while the job of selecting a truly well-sounding system of low-cost components is difficult, it is by no means impossible.

The three systems presented here are, as mentioned, the result of painstaking matching, mixing, and selecting of components by the HiFi/STEREO REVIEW staff. In addition, a listening panel of four distinguished judges has evaluated the overall quality of each of the three complete systems.

(Continued on page 44)

PRICE TAGS

SYSTEM No. 1 includes an Electro-Voice 31-MD cartridge (\$24.00) installed in a Glaser-Steers GS-77 record changer (\$59.50), an EICO HF-81 stereo amplifier (\$109.95), and two Altec Lansing 835-A speakers (\$179.00). The entire system costs \$372.45.

System No. 2 is made up of a Pickering Stereo 90 cartridge (\$16.50) mounted in a Dual-1006 record changer (\$79.95), a Heath WSA-2 stereo amplifier (\$99.95), and two Jensen TF-3 speakers in unfinished birch (\$159.00). The total cost is \$355.40.

System No. 3 contains a GE VR-227 cartridge (\$24.95) in a Thorens TD-134 manual player (\$59.95), a Bell 2418 amplifier (\$109.95), and a pair of Wharfedale '60 speakers in unfinished birch (\$189.00). Total tab: \$383.85.

The three complete systems are similar in overall size and in their basic operation. The only really notable operating differences exist between the record changers and the Thorens TD-134 manual table used in System 3. The Dual-1006 changer, for example, plays *any* size record, standard or not. It performs



System No. 2. Components: Jensen TF-3 speakers, Heath WSA-2 stereo amplifier, Dual-1006 record changer with Pickering Stereo 90 cartridge. Total system price: \$355.40.

AND PARTICULARS . . .

this bit of trickery with a unique indexing device which is a little startling when you see it work. The arm sets down near the center of the disc, then rolls toward the outer edge on a pair of small wheels. When it hits the outer edge it falls off, stops, picks itself up, and lowers itself gently into the first groove.

The Glaser-Steers GS-77 changer can also play intermixed records of various sizes; but for automatic operation, the records must be of standard size. A unique feature of this unit is that it automatically selects the proper speed for playing either 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm or 45-rpm records.

The Thorens TD-134—the only manual player in the lineup—does have one automatic feature: it stops automatically at the end of each record. This player, by the way, is the only one of the group that has a speed-adjustment control to compensate for line-voltage variations and other factors that cause records to turn slightly off-speed.

Although all the amplifiers are rated at 14 watts per channel, each has operating features not offered

by the other two units. The Heath WSA-2, for example, is the only one that has a phasing switch. On the others, to change phase, it is necessary to disconnect and reverse the speaker leads. The WSA-2 is also the only unit that has filament balance controls, usually helpful in reducing hum. The EICO HF-81's main operational virtue is its multiplicity of inputs: three sets of high-level inputs, and three sets of low-level inputs—equalized for microphone, tape heads, and magnetic phono cartridges.

The Bell 2418 amplifier has the simplest control panel and it is also the only amplifier with a separate on-off switch, a very desirable feature. The other two amplifiers have the on-off switch ganged with the treble control, making it necessary to re-set the treble control each time the units are turned on.

Of the speakers used, the Jensen is a three-way system, the others are two-way speakers. Both the Wharfedale '60 and Jensen TF-3 have tweeter level controls at the back of their cabinets. These allow you to increase or decrease the treble output.

The Listening Jury's Verdict

THE ultimate test of any sound system lies in its listening quality. Consequently, the systems were presented under home-like listening conditions to the judgment of an expert listening jury.

The records played were chosen to reveal the ability of the three systems to reproduce different types of music. Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, in the new recording by the Chicago Symphony under Fritz Reiner (RCA Victor LSC 2395), gave an indication of the systems' behavior under the onslaught of massive orchestral and choral combinations. Haydn's Symphony No. 94, played by the Vienna Philharmonic (London CS 6027), revealed the systems' ability to render lighter textures with sufficient clarity and definition of individual instruments. Brahms' Quartet for Piano and Strings Op. 60 (RCA Victor LSC 6068) put the spotlight on solo strings and the transient characteristics of piano sound.

Of the three systems auditioned, the jury members generally agreed that System No. 1 was the most brilliant. Goodfriend called it a "demonstration" type sound. "Bright" was another word used to describe it. Said DeMotte, "[It] will appeal to the listener who enjoys a lively 'zingy' type of sound." Cohn felt it furnished reasonable fidelity, but the sound was a little *too* bright for him. He did point out, however, that the brasses registered particularly well. Snitzer agreed about the system's bright quality. As to what type of music sounded best on System No. 1, there was no unanimity of opinion. Snitzer reported that the orchestral texture of the Haydn symphony showed the system at its best. Goodfriend, on the other hand, felt that the overall brilliance was best suited for the full orchestral and choral passages of *Alexander Nevsky*.

System No. 3 represented the other extreme in the fairly unanimous opinions of the judges. Terms like "full" and "rich" typified the reactions to this system. Although System No. 3 did not have the brightness of the first system, it had a very satisfying sound. Said Snitzer, who had been somewhat critical of the brilliance of System No. 1, "For those who want a sweet, pleasant-to-listen-to system, this would fill the bill." The strings, he said, were sweet, not edgy. Goodfriend commented, "Not brilliant, but solid. Sounds better than one would expect for the size and money." Cohn commented particularly on the piano sound, which he found had "good quality" and sounded "acceptably real." "This system," he continued, "is well balanced and it affords a logical, representative picture of various types of music." DeMotte called it "well balanced," with "excellent depth."

System No. 2 was somewhere between No. 1 and No. 3 in "sound personality." It was neither as bright as No. 1, nor as rich as No. 3, being perhaps the most neutral system, adding less of its own particular color to the music than either of the other two. Cohn said, "The orchestral sound is well distributed. Both orchestra and chorus [are] full and resonant." Snitzer found that it had "good overall balance

and separation." The quartet, he felt, had particularly good presence. "Generally," he said, "[the system provides] acceptable sound for the money." Goodfriend, who had been most impressed by the brilliance of System No. 1, found System No. 2 less brilliant. He characterized the sound as having a "mellow" feeling. "Strings," he said, "are smooth and listenable." DeMotte also noted the system's "mellow" sound and remarked on its good balance.

DeMotte, in addition to his comments on the individual systems, made these general observations. "Each of the three systems delivers sound that is basically realistic. A violin sounds like a violin, a piano like a piano, an oboe like an oboe. But each of the systems has its own 'personality,' just as every piano has an individual sound and every concert hall an individual coloration.

"At normal listening levels, none of the systems developed any objectionable distortion. However, when the chorus and orchestra of *Alexander Nevsky* reached climatic moments, a sense of constriction did become evident. As these moments of massed sound are relatively infrequent, this is not a serious flaw, particularly as the remainder of the music had admirable clarity and transparency.

"It would take a commercial 'package' console costing at least \$600 or \$700 to equal the fidelity of any of these systems. Even then, the 'package' would not have as much operational flexibility, and undoubtedly the stereo spread and separation would be decidedly inferior."

In summary, the following facts can be drawn from the jury members' comments. Though each system was considered acceptable, the three were clearly different in tonal character. No. 1 was by a good margin the brightest, No. 3 the richest or fullest, and No. 2 pretty well taking the middle ground. It might be well to point out here that the tone controls of the various amplifiers were *not*, for the most part, in their neutral positions during the listening tests. They were, instead, adjusted to give the most natural sound in the room in which the tests took place. This means, for example, that in System No. 1, the treble control was turned down slightly. In System No. 2, the bass control was turned up slightly and the treble was adjusted to about the 3 o'clock position. System No. 3 had both highs and lows turned up to about the 3 o'clock position.

If you purchase one of these systems, the tone-control settings as outlined above can be used as rough guides for preliminary adjustment. Remember, though, that personal preference plays a large part in determining the "correct" settings. In addition, the acoustical character of the room in which the equipment is installed and even the equipment placement within the room affect the sound quality and balance to a far larger extent than is usually appreciated. So start out, if you wish, by setting the tone controls as outlined above, but make the final adjustments to your own taste.

ANALYSIS OF LISTENING COMMENTS

	Cohn	DeMotte	Goodfriend	Snitzer
SYSTEM NO. 1				
General	A reasonable amount of fidelity, a little lacking in total balance, a little too bright.	Will appeal to the listener who enjoys a lively "zingy" type of sound.	Quite brilliant. "Demonstration" type sound. Fair separation.	Very bright, occasionally edgy. Little separation.
Chorus & Orchestra	Quality fairly good. Brass instruments register well, the woodwinds less so.	Snare drum peppery. Strings vivid. Not very clear separation.	Dramatic sound. Good separation. "Brilliant" or "bright" sound. Good definition of voices in a complex sound.	Little low bass. Sounds best in orchestral passages.
Quartet	Fair to good. Piano lacks richness and depth.	String and piano tone very bright.	Strings rather thin. The brightness of the system shows up to least advantage here.	Strings somewhat wiry.
SYSTEM NO. 2				
General	Sonorous, rather neutral.	Mellow. Good balance between treble and bass.	Good sound, Not shrill. Good but not complete stereo separation.	• Good overall balance and separation. Generally, acceptable sound for the money.
Chorus & Orchestra	The orchestral sound is well distributed. Voices sound natural. Both orchestra and chorus full and resonant. Cymbals have fair sparkle.	Remarkable depth and good separation.	Mellow sound. Strings smooth and listenable. Bass adequate.	Good, clean bass. Adequate separation. Good balance.
Quartet	A little rough in the low register.	Piano tone solid.	Good piano sound and good separation.	Good presence and violin tone.
SYSTEM NO. 3				
General	This system is well balanced and it affords a logical, representative picture of the various types of music.	Satisfying fullness. Well-balanced bass and treble. Excellent depth.	Not brilliant but solid. Sounds better than one would expect for the size and money. Good separation. Good middle bass and fair low bass.	For those who want a sweet, pleasant-to-listen-to system, this would fill the bill. Rich and full sound.
Chorus & Orchestra	General sound of rich quality.	Nice blending of instruments. Excellent separation.	Excellent separation. Highs a little subdued but adequate. Instrumental color excellent.	Smooth and rich-sounding, but a feeling of heaviness in the low bass.
Quartet	Reasonable balance. Piano has good quality, sounds acceptably real.	Piano tone rounded and resonant.	Generally quite good. Strings nicely full, not edgy. Good "body" in piano sound.	Sweet violin tone, piano a little heavy.

Milton S. Snitzer is presently Technical Editor of our associate publication, *Electronics World*. He has designed many hi-fi systems, and he continues to maintain an active interest in the field. Arthur Cohn looks back on a multi-faceted career as composer, violinist, and music educator. As the organizer and first violinist of the Dorian Quartet, he toured the country for many years until he traded concert life for the equally hectic job of a music-publishing executive. James Goodfriend is a composer, arranger,

and music editor. His professional work ranges from editing and restoring obscure Baroque scores to writing special music for the concert tours of TV's Captain Kangaroo. He is currently the recording director for Bourée Productions, Inc. Warren DeMotte is a member of HiFi/STEREO REVIEW's record review staff, and author/editor of the Long Playing Record Guide. Married to a concert pianist, Ida Hartman, he has ample opportunity to compare "live" and recorded music.



Members of the jury (from left to right): Warren DeMotte, Arthur Cohn, Milton S. Snitzer, and James Goodfriend.



System No. 3. Components: Wharfedale '60 speakers, Bell 2418 stereo amplifier, Thorens TD-134 manual record player with General Electric VR-227 cartridge. Total system price: \$383.85.

Thus, each of the systems has passed the stiffest test possible: that of pleasing the educated ear. This is not to say that all three systems sound alike. They do not. Each has its own characteristic sound, or flavor. Our judges, for example, while agreeing that all were musically acceptable, disagreed in many details.

If you are preparing to purchase equipment in this general price range, the best procedure would obviously be for you to hear all the systems for yourself. If you live in a large city where a high-fidelity dealer has the proper demonstration equipment in his showroom, by all means avail yourself of his services. Since this will not be possible for many of our readers, we hope that our jurors' remarks on page 43 may furnish some guidance. While reading these comments can't take the place of hearing the equipment yourself, they may convey some idea of the differences between the three systems and help you decide which one is most likely to satisfy your personal taste.

In high-fidelity equipment—as in most fields—it is belaboring the point to say that, in general, you get what you pay for. Naturally, no economy system is capable of the unobtrusive naturalness that is characteristic of higher-priced audio systems. But we believe that stereo systems costing about \$350 are capable of musically pleasing sound.

A word of caution is in order. The three systems discussed here are the result of considerable experimentation, as mentioned earlier. Of course, these may not be the *only* possible combinations to result in good sound. Others that would

sound equally good could perhaps be found. But any change in the recommended groupings should be undertaken with extreme care so that the overall result will not suffer.

The one component in the lineup that can be substituted more or less at will is the turntable. Of the three recommended units, two are changers and one is a manual table with an automatic turn-off that stops the motor at the end of the record. All are quality units with reasonably low rumble. However, compared to the costlier "professional-type" tone-arm and turntable combinations, their rumble level is generally higher, and more stylus pressure is necessary for good tracking. Although the specifications of some of the record players indicated that they would track at less than two grams stylus pressure, none of the three units demonstrated at their best when adjusted for this extremely light pressure. While the stylus would stay in the groove and the automatic mechanisms would trip at a gram and a half, distortion appeared and the sound was erratic in loud passages. For really adequate tracking of heavily modulated passages, all of the units required stylus pressures from 4 to 5 grams.

Since all three units have convenient stylus-pressure adjustments, there is no difficulty in obtaining the optimum setting. The Dual changer has a built-in stylus-pressure gauge which is quite accurate. For the adjustment of the other units, the use of an accessory stylus-pressure gauge is recommended to insure that the tracking pressure never exceeds 6 grams. Pressure beyond this point would unduly hasten stylus and record wear.

SOUND and the QUERY

a forum for dispensing
with the most common—and
often the most unique—
problems of stereo hi fi

by J. Gordon Holt

Terribly Old Speeds

A record collector friend of mine descended upon me yesterday with a pile of ancient acoustic discs and a request that I put them all on tape for him. Some of them seem to be in pretty good condition—which is to say I can hear the music through the scratch—but they all seem to be off pitch.

I have a vernier speed control on my turntable, so I can adjust the speed of each record, but I can't figure out what speed they were recorded at. Any ideas about this?

W. D. Temmer
Baltimore, Md.

There was no standard speed for disc records until around 1925, at which time the 78-rpm speed was adopted by practically everybody. Prior to that time, a disc was likely to be cut at any speed from 70 to 82 rpm, and it was anybody's guess as to which disc was cut at what speed.

If you want to do the job right, your best bet would be to find out the correct musical pitch of each piece of music and adjust the record's speed until it plays in that pitch. You can only cross your fingers and hope that not too many of them were transposed into keys other than those in which they were written.

If you don't read music, you might be able to locate some modern recordings of some of the musical works, and match the pitch of the old discs to these.

FM and Static

How does an FM radio transmission manage to filter out static and electrical interference without also filtering out the treble tones of the program material?

John Watters
Los Angeles, Calif.

No such filtering is involved. By its very nature, FM is, in theory, immune to static. The reasons for this can be outlined as follows:

A conventional amplitude-modulation (AM) transmission consists of a carrier signal of fixed frequency, which varies in intensity in accordance to the audio impulses superimposed on it at the broadcast station. The AM receiver, when tuned to this frequency, picks up the carrier wave, separates its intensity changes from it, and reproduces them as audible vibrations, or sound.

An FM signal, however, is of constant frequency only when no audio signal is being transmitted. When a program is transmitted, the carrier shifts back and forth across its central frequency, increasing and decreasing in frequency with each audio impulse. The FM receiver, tuned to the carrier's center frequency, converts its frequency shifts into electrical impulses which correspond to the original audio signals, and reproduces them.

Lightning, electric motor interference, and the other sources of noise on AM radio consist of electrical impulses which are variations in intensity rather than in frequency. While the intensity-sensitive AM receiver picks them up and reproduces them as noise, a good FM tuner simply doesn't respond to them at all.

Heavy Noises

A catalogue sheet I picked up at a recent audio show lists two sets of specifications for the signal-to-noise ratio of a tape recorder. One column is headed "Unweighted Noise" and the other "Weighted Noise," and there's almost 10 db difference between the figures. Which measurement should be followed when shopping for a tape recorder?

Gary Wallace
Chicago, Ill.

To determine the unweighted noise figure, the recorder's background noise—high-pitched noises, low-pitched noises, and middle-range noises—is measured in the absence of a recorded signal. The combined value of these noises is then compared with the maximum volume that can be recorded and reproduced from the tape. The resulting figure, expressed in decibels, is the unweighted signal-to-noise ratio.

We know, however, that the human ear has quite bad frequency-response characteristics at low volume levels, being less sensitive to bass and treble tones than it is to mid-range ones. So if a recorder's noise is concentrated in the bass and treble ranges (as it generally is), its audible noise will be lower than the measurements would indicate. For this reason, noise measurements are sometimes "weighted" by applying hearing-characteristics curves to them, to give a figure which is more representative of how loud the noise will seem to the human ear. This, incidentally, makes the signal-to-noise ratio figures look better.

If you're in the habit of shopping from specification sheets, remember that while unweighted signal-to-noise ratio specifications are directly comparable, weighted ones may not be, because different manufacturers may apply different weighting corrections.

Hop, Skip and Stop

Whenever the tone arm of my record player lands on the record, it skips a few grooves, comes to a stop, skips again, and by the time it has settled down, I've missed the first five minutes or so of music.

The problem doesn't appear to be due to record warpage. Do you have any other suggestions?

Philip H. Balinghoff
Camden, N. J.

It sounds as if you might be trying to play your microgroove discs with a standard 78-rpm stylus, a badly worn stylus, or no stylus at all. (The last suggestion isn't as unlikely as it sounds; a detached stylus will often leave behind it a small hunk of glue that is enough to hold the armature in the groove occasionally.)

Other possibilities include a badly tilted phono unit, twisted or tight arm cables, or, in the case of a record changer, failure of the mechanism to release the tone arm when it should.

We will assume that you have already checked to make sure your trouble isn't simply due to a large accumulation of dust on the stylus.

Acoustic-Suspension Speakers

What is the principle behind the so-called acoustic-suspension loudspeaker system?

Bill Tollant
St. Louis, Mo.

Every loudspeaker cone must have some provision for returning it to its at-rest position between in-and-out movements. In most loudspeakers, most of this restoring force is supplied by a mechanical suspension. The remainder of the restoring force is contributed by compression of air inside the speaker's enclosure.

In the acoustic-suspension system, however, the cone has a very light mechanical suspension which supplies only a small amount of the necessary restoring force. Most of the restoring force comes from the elasticity of the air trapped inside the speaker's small, airtight enclosure.

This technique has two main advantages: First, the air's elasticity is much more uniform than is the elasticity of the materials generally used for suspending the cone in its frame, so the acoustic-suspension speaker's response is linear when the cone is making long excursions. And second, the small enclosure made feasible by the acoustic-suspension system happens to be easier to fit into the average living room than is the much larger enclosure required by other systems of comparable low-frequency performance.



TOP RECORDS

TIME, it has often been noted, has a habit of changing one's perspectives. Record reviewing is a case in point. Records that seem to be outstanding when they are first heard may come down a notch or two when judged over a span of time. Conversely, a longer perspective may cause other records to assume more striking stature.

This is why the record critics for *HiFi/STEREO REVIEW* were asked to pick their favorites from the records they have listened to during the past year for their own pleasure and curiosity. Accordingly, each reviewer has listed the recordings released in 1960 he has most enjoyed, regardless of whether they were reviewed in *HiFi/STEREO REVIEW*.

From the 1960 crop of symphonies, only three albums turned up as critics' choices. David Randolph selects as one of his favorite releases of the year Capitol's SGR/GCR 7198, with its three discs of Haydn's last six symphonies done by Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Martin Bookspan's one symphonic choice is also a Beecham achievement: the rarely performed Liszt *Faust* Symphony on Capitol SGBR/GBR 7197, which he sums up as being "... a fine Beecham pulmotor job that breathes new life into a rather faded old 19th-century relic." David Hall's symphonic choice is an offbeat item from CRI (Composers Recordings Inc.), Roger Sessions' *Symphony No. 1*, "... music of great vitality and surprising humor, and well played by the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra under Akeo Watanabe" (CRI 131).

Oddly enough, while no symphony rated more than a single vote from *HiFi/STEREO REVIEW*'s critics, two concerto discs did. Both Martin Bookspan and John Thornton put the new Serkin-Ormandy Brahms B-flat Piano Concerto (Columbia MS 6156; ML 5491) on their lists (see also, however, the somewhat dissenting review by Warren DeMotte in this issue). "Serkin in his finest recording," is

Mr. Thornton's evaluation, to which Bookspan adds special kudos in the interpretive department. "... a masterful account of this massive work ... combining melting lyricism with heroic grandeur."

Bookspan and Thornton are also of one mind in their pick of London's recording of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and a pair of horn concertos with Peter Maag conducting London Symphony soloists and orchestra (CS 6178; CM 9247). "Peter Maag continues to impress me as the leading young Mozart conductor of the day," is reviewer Bookspan's summing-up.

The Sibelius Violin Concerto is yet another Bookspan-Thornton pick, although they disagree as to the ultimate choice. Bookspan prefers Heifetz with Walter Hendl and the Chicago Symphony (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2435), and Thornton's choice is Oistrakh with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6157; ML 5492).

Additional pickings in the concerto field come from Mr. Thornton, who calls the new Isaac Stern-Eugene Ormandy version of the Brahms Violin Concerto "a dream performance, stunningly recorded" (Columbia MS 6153; ML 5486), and from David Hall, who has received pleasure from Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 1 (Bartók 313), with Leonid Hambro doing a stunning solo job and Robert Mann (of Juilliard Quartet fame) conducting the Zimble Sinfonietta of Boston Symphony players.

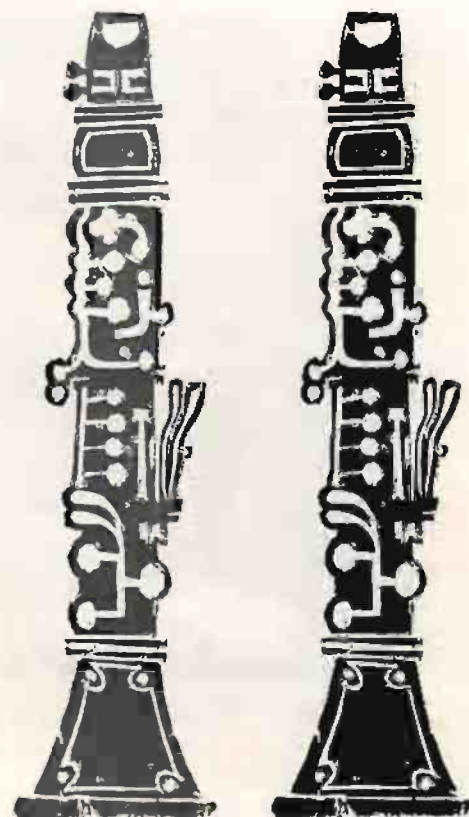
Other orchestral recordings that rated high with the reviewers included Thurston Dart's recording for Oiseau-Lyre of the complete Handel *Water Music* (SOL 60010 OL 50178), Fritz Reiner's brilliant reading of the "stereoscored" Bartók Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2374), and Mercury's second volume of British Band Classics, in which Frederick Fennell's Eastman Wind Ensemble offers a superb concert of music by

A year-end roundup of opinion

from HIFI/STEREO REVIEW'S

record critics

OF 1960



William Byrd, Gustav Holst, and William Walton (SR 90197; MG 50197). Not to be forgotten is the marvelous Arthur Fiedler-Boston Pops collection of favorites titled *Everything but the Beer* (complete with beer mugs) on RCA Victor LSC/LM 6082. John Thornton calls this "the best recording, technically, ever realized by Fiedler."

In the realm of solo instrumental recordings, Artur Rubinstein's album of Chopin Ballades impresses both Warren DeMotte and David Hall as being in a class alone. The 73-year-old virtuoso plays these romantic masterworks with youthful fervor on RCA Victor LSC/LM 2370.

Excepting the Rubinstein recording, the solo instrumental scene was dominated by the Bach keyboard repertoire. Warren DeMotte selected the Six Partitas done on the harpsichord by Ralph Kirkpatrick for DGG Archive (ARC 73129/31; Mono 3129/31), while Mr. Thornton preferred pianist Glenn Gould doing the Partitas Nos. 1 & 2 and the Italian Concerto (Columbia MS 6141; ML 5472).

Other classical "bests" included two selections from the low-priced catalog: the Schubert piano sonatas recorded by Friedrich Wührer (Warren DeMotte's selection), issued as three-disc Vox Boxes VBX 9 and VBX 10, and the famous Vaclav Talich readings of the complete Dvořák Slavonic Dances, released as a two-record Parliament set (album 121—picked by David Hall). Thus, it is clear that careful selection will enable the knowledgeable collector to assemble a library of remarkable items from \$1.98 catalogs, particularly re-issues of pre-stereo recordings.

The potency of stereophonic sound when applied to opera is demonstrated by the fact that four out of the seven best concert-music recordings that received more than one critical vote were operas in stereo. The roster is headed by RCA Victor's presentation of Puccini's unfinished masterpiece, *Turandot* (LSC/LM 6149), with its fabulous cast

of Nilsson, Tebaldi, the late Jussi Bjoerling, and Giorgio Tozzi, plus Erich Leinsdorf conducting the Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra. "Exemplary in every respect. Perfect cast, exciting direction, fine recording and production," is the comment of opera expert George Jellinek. Martin Bookspan, David Randolph, and David Hall also put the RCA *Turandot* on their "year's-best" lists. David Hall and Martin Bookspan also singled out London's vivid stereo recording of *Peter Grimes*, Benjamin Britten's tale of life and death in an Anglian fishing village (OSA 1305; A 4342). Mr. Bookspan describes it as being "... a masterpiece of the contemporary operatic literature. And the recording under the composer's direction is magnificent."

On Mr. Jellinek's list of 1960 operatic "bests" is another London album, OSA 1313; A 1313, the complete Verdi *Aida*, starring Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Simionato, and MacNeil, with Herbert von Karajan directing the Vienna Philharmonic. "A stereo *tour de force*. Karajan's conducting is individual but very impressive. Tebaldi, Simionato, Bergonzi, and MacNeil are in exceptionally fine form." David Hall is in agreement with Jellinek's evaluation and adds that the London 4-track tape (LOR 90015), from which he heard this recorded performance, is superb.

An unexpected multiple choice (by Jellinek and Bookspan) from the year's recorded operas is Giovanni Paisiello's *Barber of Seville* in its recording premiere by Mercury (SR 2-9010; OL 2-110). Paisiello's score, which antedated Rossini's more famous one by nearly 35 years, is a delight and is reviewed in detail by George Jellinek in this issue. Mr. Bookspan notes it as "a sparkling pre-Marriage of Figaro opera which seems to have influenced Mozart profoundly. Its disc debut is stunning."

Other operatic recordings deserving of special praise, in the estimation of David Hall, were Purcell's *King Arthur*



Miles Davis—*Sketches of Spain* . . . "I doubt that any jazz musician has produced work of more lasting value . . ."

Critic's Choices for 1960

MARTIN BOOKSPAN

- Dvořák: *Requiem*—Soloists, Chorus, Czech Philharmonic, Karel Ancerl cond. (DGG 138026/7; mono 18547/8)
- Puccini: *Turandot*—Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, Tozzi, Rome Opera, Erich Leinsdorf cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6149)
- Sibelius: *Violin Concerto*—Jascha Heifetz, Chicago Symphony, Walter Hendl cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2435)
- Brahms: *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat*—Rudolf Serkin, Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6156; ML 5491)
- Paisiello: *The Barber of Seville*—Sciutti, Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano cond. (Mercury SR 2-9110; OL 2-110)
- I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues*—Eileen Farrell (Columbia CS 8256; CL 1465)
- Mozart: *Clarinet Concerto; Horn Concerti Nos. 1 & 3*—Soloists, London Symphony, Peter Maag cond. (London CS 6178; mono CM 9247)
- Britten: *Peter Grimes*—Peter Pears, Covent Garden Opera, Benjamin Britten cond. (London OSA 1305; mono A 4342)
- Mahler: *Das Lied von der Erde*—Forrester, Lewis, Chicago Symphony, Fritz Reiner cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6087)
- Liszt: *A Faust Symphony*—Royal Philharmonic, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. (Capitol SGBR/GBR 7197)

on Oiseau-Lyre (SOL 60008/9; OL 50976/7) and the sparkling Prague National Theater performance of Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* (Artia S 82; mono 82). Warren DeMotte particularly liked the Birgit Nilsson excerpts from Wagner's "*Tristan*" (London OS 25138; mono 5537).

TURNING now to the field of jazz, only one recording got the nod from two or more of HiFi/STEREO REVIEW's critics. Both Nat Hentoff and Ralph J. Gleason singled out *Sketches of Spain*, the remarkable collaboration on Columbia CS 8271; CL 1480 between trumpeter Miles Davis and arranger Gil Evans. "I doubt that any jazz musician has produced work of more lasting value than this," was the way Gleason hailed the album in his November review, to which Hentoff adds his comment that the recording represents "an unprecedented blending of Spanish timbres and melismatic phrasing with the jazz language."

As for some of their other picks, Hentoff put in a bid for the controversial Ornette Coleman's *Change of the Century* (Atlantic S 1327—stereo and mono). "For all his unorthodox ideas," says Hentoff, "Coleman is a fiercely emotional musician, and this album indicates a further stage of growth and assurance both in his speech-like playing and in his dramatic writing."

Despite a violent dissent from Hentoff in the August HiFi/STEREO REVIEW, Ralph Gleason stuck by his guns in selecting *The Incredible Guitar of Wes Montgomery* (Riverside RLP 12-320). "Wes Montgomery is the new star of the guitar," observed Gleason. "His work is of sufficient stature to transcend all jazz styles and find appreciation from fans of all divisions of jazz."

Other Gleason choices for 1960 include *Earl's Pearls* with the veteran pianoman, Earl Hines, on MGM S 3832 (stereo and mono); Mercury's *Fascinating Ernestine* album with the young jazz vocal star, Ernestine Anderson (SR 60171/MG 20492); Verve's *Side by Side*, with Duke Ellington and Johnny Hodges (6149; mono 8345); *Thelonius Alone in San Francisco* (Riverside 1138/12-312); and Prestige PRLP 7166, *Workin' with the Miles Davis Quintet*, which, in Gleason's estimation, is "an example of jazz music produced but rarely today."

High points of the Nat Hentoff jazz roster for 1960 are *Jazz Contemporary*, with trumpeter Kenny Dorham on Time 2004/52004; the fine Billie Holiday collection on Verve 8332-2, *The Unforgettable Lady Day*; and *Mingus Dynasty* (Columbia CS 8236; CL 1440). Commented Hentoff, "It is increasingly clear that Mingus has become the most explosively original of modern jazz composers."

As might be expected, "pops" LP's of more than fleeting interest come but rarely in the course of a year's disc output. But Ralph J. Gleason rates Frank Sinatra's *Nice 'n' Easy* album (Capitol SW 1417) as one of the best pop songs collections ever to come along: "Given such good material as he has in this album, Sinatra can and does make the definitive recordings of each song."

Stanley Green's choices included singer Anita Darian in her *East of the Sun* album for Kapp (KS 3052; KL 1168), and the latest Yves Montand album for Columbia, *An Evening with Yves Montand* (WL 167).

The Broadway show harvest was not as rich this year as in the immediate past, but Mr. Green highly recommends Capitol's original-cast Fiorello (SWAW/WAO 1321). He

Critic's Choices for 1960

JOHN THORNTON

Handel: *Organ Concerti, Op. 4 & 7*—Karl Richter with Orchestra (London CSA 2302; mono CMA 7302)

Mozart: *Clarinet Concerto; Horn Concerti Nos. 1 & 3*—Soloists with London Symphony, Peter Maag cond. (London CS 6178; mono CM 9247)

Sibelius: *Violin Concerto*—David Oistrakh, Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6157; mono ML 5492)

Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 9*; Prokofiev: *Lt. Kije*—London Symphony, Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. (Everest SDBR 3054; mono LPBR 5054)

Handel: *Water Music*—Philomusica Orch., Thurston Dart cond. (Oiseau-Lyre SOL 60010; mono OL 50178)

Brahms: *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat*—Rudolf Serkin, Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6156; mono ML 5486)

Everything but the Beer—Boston Pops, Arthur Fiedler cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6082)

Bach: *Italian Concerto & Other Works*—Glenn Gould (Columbia MS 6141; mono ML 5472)

Brahms: *Violin Concerto*—Isaac Stern, Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6153; ML 5486)



Sir Thomas Beecham—breathes new life into Haydn and Liszt symphonies.

CAPITOL RECORDS

Critic's Choices for 1960

DAVID RANDOLPH

Beethoven: *Cello Sonatas*—Fournier & Gulda (DGG 138081/3; mono 18601/3)

Mozart: *String Quintets Nos. 3-7*—Griller Quartet & Primrose (Vanguard VSD 2060/2; mono VRS 1053/4)

Bach: *Cantata Arias*—Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. (Angel S 35698; mono 35698)

Puccini: *Turandot*—Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, Tozzi, Rome Opera, Erich Leinsdorf cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6149)

Prokofiev: *Alexander Nevsky*—Chorus & Chicago Symphony, Fritz Reiner cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2395)

18th Century Flute Duets—Baker & Rampal (Washington 419)

Schubert: *"Death and the Maiden" String Quartet*—Juilliard Quartet (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2378)

Haydn: *Symphonies 99-104*—Royal Philharmonic, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. (Capitol SCGR 7198; mono CGR 7198)

Critic's Choices for 1960

DAVID HALL

Purcell: *King Arthur*—Soloists, Chorus, Anthony Lewis cond. (Oiseau-Lyre SOL 60009/9; mono OL 50176/7)

Britten: *Peter Grimes*—Peter Pears, Covent Garden Royal Opera, Benjamin Britten cond. (London OSA 1305; mono A 4342)

Sessions: *Symphony No. 1*; Smith: *Tetrameron*—Japan Philharmonic, Akeo Watanabe cond. (CRI 131)

Chopin: *Ballades*—Artur Schnabel (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2370)

The Art of Aksel Schiøtz (Scandinavian Odeon MOAK 1/5)

Bartók: *Piano Concerto No. 1*—Leonid Hambro, Zimmler Sinfonietta, Robert Mann cond. (Bartók 313)

Bach: *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue & Other Works*—Wanda Landowska (Angel COLH 71)

Smetana: *The Bartered Bride*—Prague National Opera (Artia S82; mono 82)

Dvorak: *Slavonic Dances*—Czech Philharmonic, Vaclav Talich cond. (Parliament 121)

Puccini: *Turandot*—Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, Tozzi, Rome Opera, Erich Leinsdorf cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6149)

Charlie Mingus—"the most explosively original of modern jazz composers,"



COLUMBIA RECORDS

Critic's Choices for 1960

RALPH J. GLEASON

Sketches of Spain—Miles Davis
(Columbia CS 8271; mono CL 1480)

Nice 'n' Easy—Frank Sinatra
(Capitol SW/W 1417)

Earl's Pearls—Earl Hines
(MGM S 3832; mono E 3832)

The Fascinating Ernestine—Ernestine Anderson
(Mercury SR 60171; mono MG 20492)

The Incredible Guitar of Wes Montgomery
(Riverside 1169; mono RLP 12-320)

Thelonious Alone in San Francisco—
(Riverside 1158; mono 12-312)

Workin' with the Miles Davis Quintet
(Prestige 7166)

Side by Side—Johnny Hodges-Duke Ellington
(Verve 6109; mono 8345)

Critic's Choices for 1960

STANLEY GREEN

The Exciting Artistry of Will Holt
(Elektra 7181; mono 181)

Fiorello! (Capitol SWAO/WAO 1321)

East of the Sun—Anita Darian
(Kapp KS 3052; mono KL 1168)

Leave it to Jane (Strand SLS 1002; mono LS 1002)

How the West Was Won—Jimmy Driftwood,
Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney,
(RCA Victor LSO/LOP 6070)

The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart
(Warner Bros. WS/W 1379)

The Andersonville Trial (20th Fox SFX/FOX 4000)

F.D.R. Speaks (Washington W FDR 6)

An Evening with Yves Montand (Columbia WL 167)

Finian's Rainbow (RCA Victor LSO/LOP 1057)



Teresa Berganza—
Her album of
Rossini arias is a
highlight of the year

LONDON RECORDS

adds that it definitely should be gotten in the stereo version. He was delighted, too, with the spirited revival by RCA Victor of *Finian's Rainbow* on LSO/LOC 1057. In the show field, he voted for the Strand SLS 1002 album, with its neatly turned version of an early Jerome Kern gem, *Leave it to Jane*—a "sunny, youthful score . . . as infectious today as it was when first heard 43 years ago."

THE folk music repertoire continues to burgeon in all directions. Nat Hentoff's preferences lean definitely toward the grass roots, in that his "best" list includes *Lightnin' Hopkins* (Tradition 1040, 1035) and the Folkways two-disc anthology of Country Blues (RF 1, RF 201) assembled by author-researcher Sam Charteris from old recordings. Hentoff also pays tribute to singer Olga Coelho, whose collection under the title *Xango!* (Decca 710018; mono 10018) he acclaims as being "a brilliantly colored survey of Latin-American folk music by an extraordinary singer." Stanley Green also picked a quasi-folk album as one of his favorites: *The Exciting Artistry of Will Holt* (Elektra EKL 181). He observes, "The bright repertory and intelligent approach mark Holt as an arresting young balladeer."

Both Nat Hentoff and Stanley Green included spoken-word LP's among their year's best choices. Hentoff calls Germaine Montero's *Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems and Songs of Federico Garcia Lorca* (Vanguard VRS 9055) "the most powerful spoken-word record I have ever heard. Miss Montero animates the tender, tragic, terrifying poems of the implacably direct Span-

Critic's Choices for 1960

WARREN DeMOTTE

Bach: *6 Partitas for Harpsichord*—Ralph Kirkpatrick (DGG Archive ARC 73129/31; mono 3129/31)

Barber: *Medea; Capricorn Concerto*—Eastman-Rochester Symphony, Howard Hanson cond. (Mercury SR 90224; mono MG 50224)

Bizet: *Carmen*—de los Angeles, Gedda, Paris Radio, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. (Capitol SGCR/GCR 7207)

Boulanger: *Choral Works*—Lamoureux Orch. & Chorus, Igor Markevitch cond. (Everest SDBR 3059; LPBR 5059)

Brahms: *Viola Quintets*—Budapest Quartet & Trampler (Columbia MS 6025; mono ML 5281)

Chopin: *Ballades*—Artur Rubinstein (piano) (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2370)

Copland: *Dance Symphony*—Japan Philharmonic, Akeo Watanabe cond. (CRI 129)

Schubert: *Piano Sonatas*—Friedrich Wührer (Vox Box VBX 9/10)

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde—Excerpts*—Birgit Nilsson, Vienna Philharmonic, Hans Knappertsbusch cond. (London OS 25138; mono 5537)

Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast*—Philharmonic Chorus & Orch., Sir William Walton cond. (Angel S 35681; mono 35681)



Sinatra—He "can and does make the definitive recordings of each song."

Critico's Choices for 1960

GEORGE JELLINEK

Puccini: *Turandot*—Nilsson, Tebaldi, Bjoerling, Tozzi, Rome Opera, Erich Leinsdorf cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6149)

Paisiello: *The Barber of Seville*—Sciutti, Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano cond. (Mercury SR 2-9110; OL 2-110)

Rossini Arias—Teresa Berganza (London 25106; mono 5514)

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Scotto, di Stefano, Bastianini, La Scala Orch., Nino Sanzongo cond. (Mercury SR 2-9008; mono 2-108)

Verdi: *Aida*—Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Simonato, Vienna Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan cond. (London OSA 1313; mono A 4145)

Arias in the Great Tradition—Eileen Farrell (Columbia MS 6086; mono ML 5408)

Mad Scenes—Maria Callas (Angel S 35764; mono 35764)

Puccini: *La Bohème*—Tebaldi, Bergonzi,

Tullio Serafin cond.

(London OSA 1208; mono A 4236)

ish poet with great artistry and unmistakably honest emotion." Stanley Green's choices are the *The Andersonville Trial* (20th Fox SFX/FOX 4000) with the original Broadway cast and the stirring historical documentation, *F.D.R. Speaks* (Washington—FDR); this is a fine collection of Franklin Roosevelt's major speeches from the advent of the New Deal through the harrowing days of World War II.

All told, 1960 brought major additions to the stereo disc repertoire, and it also brought the four-track tape catalog to a point where it can begin to compete with the offerings available on disc. Most important of all, however, has been the general improvement of stereo sound quality all along the line. But let us hope that the coming year will see more qualitative gains, as well as a filling in of the major gaps in the stereo repertoire of concert music, opera, and major Broadway shows.

DECEMBER 1960

Critico's Choices for 1960

NAT HENTOFF

Change of the Century—Ornette Coleman (Atlantic S 1327; mono 1327)

Sketches of Spain—Miles Davis (Columbia CS 8271; mono CL 1480)

Jazz Contemporary—Kenny Dorham (Time 2004; mono 52004)

Unforgettable Lady Day—Billie Holiday (Verve 8338-2)

Kelley Great—Wynton Kelly (Vee Jay 1016)

Mingus Dynasty—Charlie Mingus (Columbia CS 8236; mono CL 8236)

Country Blues (Folkways RF 1; RF 202)

Xango—Olga Coelho (Decca 710018; mono 10018)

Autobiography in Blues—Lightnin' Hopkins (Tradition 1040, 1035)

Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems and Songs of Federico Garcia Lorca—Germaine Montero (Vanguard VRS 9055)

RCA VICTOR



Arthur Schnitger—At 73, the supreme Chopinist in the Ballades.

BEST TAPES: A BASIC SAMPLING

The year 1960 was not only a good year for discs, it was also the time of the great tape comeback via four-track pre-recorded stereo tape. Nearly fifty producers are in the field now, including all the big major labels. Most are distributing through United Stereo Tapes (UST), but some, like RCA Victor, Capitol, Columbia, and Bel Canto, are working through their own channels. Thanks to the entry into the field of London, the repertoire of pre-recorded four-track stereo tape is broadening in the classical field, as well as in the realm of the Broadway show, jazz, and folk music. Here, then, are a half-dozen 1960 four-track tape releases that HiFi/STEREO REVIEW regards as indispensable for both musical content and imposing sound:

Gilbert & Sullivan: *H.M.S. Pinafore* (London LOH 90024)
 Verdi: *Aida* (complete opera) (London LOR 90015)
 Mendelssohn: *Piano Concertos 1 & 2* (Columbia MQ 308)
 Vaughan Williams: *Symphony No. 9* (Everest T4 3006)
 Prince: *U.S. Export—Opus Jazz* (Warner Bros. BST 1240)
 Soviet Army Chorus and Band (Angel ZS 35411)

A Christmas garland for audiophiles



Fisher's Model 202R AM/FM stereo tuner boasts six IF stages and 0.5-micro-volt FM sensitivity. (\$329.50)



Adeste

This is indeed a season for sound. The thought of leisurely winter evenings at home, listening to the splendid variety of music that only a high-fidelity system can offer, is sufficient inducement for many to take their first plunge into the delectable realm of stereophonic sound. And veteran audio fans are usually only too happy to seize upon the occasion of the holidays to augment their sound systems with new components.

Something adventurous and festive surrounds the acquisition of new audio gear, be it a speaker, an amplifier, a cartridge, or perhaps an entire system. An anticipatory excitement quickens the senses of the hi-fi fan as he surveys the equipment that holds the promise of new sonic splendors and of more complete enjoyment of familiar, long-loved sounds.

Music-reproducing equipment is particularly appropriate for the Yule Season because music, the most exuberant of all forms of human expression, has always



The Roberts "990" stereo tape recorder features 4-track record and playback facilities (\$399.50)

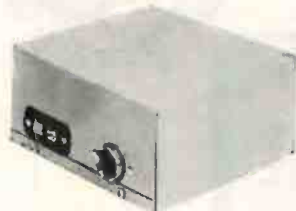


Harman-Kardon introduces the Citation IV stereo preamplifier, available as a kit or factory-wired. (\$119.95, kit; \$189.95, wired)





DuKane's Ionovac tweeter utilizes ionized air to create sound. (\$79.00 with cabinet)



Hi-Fideles

contributed to the joyousness of Christmas. Thus, the traditional caroling and bells are now joined in many homes by amplifiers, speakers, and turntables—the electronic minstrels of our age.

In his quest for music, the Christmas shopper has an abundance of new audio components to choose from. For this is the time of year when audio manufacturers, still pursuing their ever-elusive goal of perfection, hopefully trot out their latest designs. Our pictorial sampling of the newest equipment available is a miniature panorama of the most exciting current developments in the field.

Because mere print cannot convey the essence of these instruments—their sound—we can only invite you to window-shop in these mute pages. We are certain that these electronic minstrels will enrich the holiday seasons of thousands of listeners and will continue to bring them the beauty of lifelike music for many years to come.

Grado introduces an elegant new Lab Series tone arm that is constructed of wood to reduce resonance. (\$39.50)

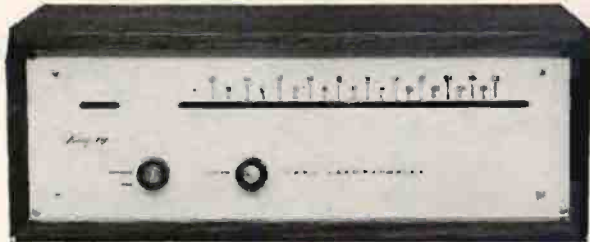


Garrard's Type A record changer is the first to offer a statically balanced arm. (\$69.50)

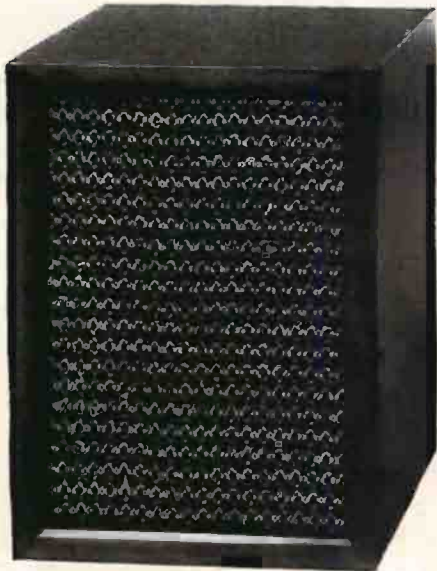




H. H. Scott ventures into the kit field with the Model LT-10, an FM tuner that can be aligned without test instruments. (\$89.95)



Karg, known for deluxe designs, enters the medium-price field with the new "Primata" CT-3 FM tuner. (\$99.50)

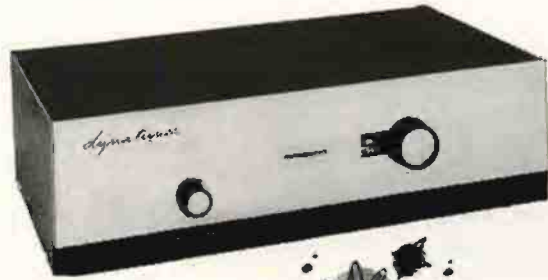


Stromberg-Carlson's Model RS-511 is a compact two-way speaker system with a highly effective 8" woofer. (\$79.95)

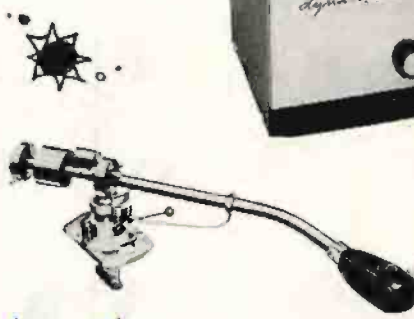


Tandberg of Norway is featuring the Model 6, the firm's first 4-track tape deck. (\$498.00)

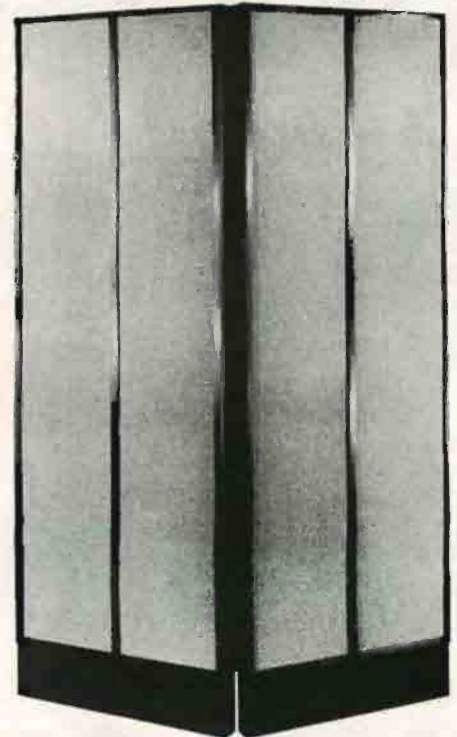
Dynaco's new FM tuner kit, the "Dynatuner," is aligned by using its own tuning meter. (\$79.95)



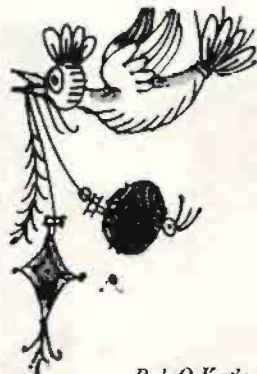
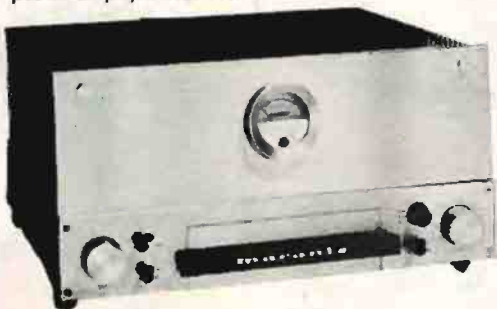
EMI of Great Britain puts an aluminum cone in the driver of the Model DLS bookshelf loudspeaker. (\$150.00)



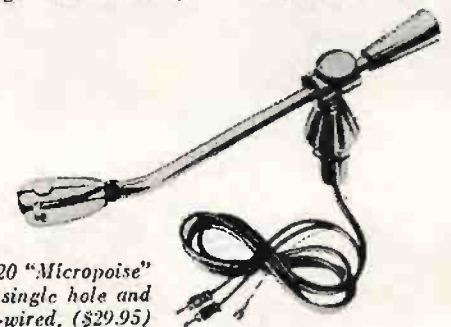
SME's tone arm has minimal bearing friction, every conceivable adjustment, and built-in automatic positioning. (\$87.00)



Marantz maintains its place in the top-quality bracket with its Model 9, a 70-watt power amplifier. (\$285.00)



KLH becomes the first major American firm to offer full-range electrostatic speakers. (\$1030.00 a pair)



Rek-O-Kut's new S-220 "Micropoise" tone arm mounts in a single hole and comes fully pre-wired. (\$29.95)



A Parents' Guide to Children's Records



Worthwhile children's records can give a child an appreciation of good



music. But parents must learn to separate the wheat from the chaff.



by LEWIS POTTER



MY YOUNGEST daughter, Kathy, is five. She loves Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony*.

Kathy is not a budding child prodigy. She is a normal, active child, and the fact that she likes to play Mozart on our family phonograph is not the least bit extraordinary.

A few months back, Kathy heard me playing the *Jupiter Symphony*, and she fell in love with one section in the first movement. She doesn't want to hear the full symphony. She wouldn't have the patience to listen to it. She just likes to have me play her own special part for her. She has now reached the point where she can hum fragments of the section to herself.

My point in telling this anecdote is that Kathy's experience with Mozart is not unusual. Nearly all young children have a unique capacity for understanding and appreciating good music. Love of music is as natural in little children as is their love of play. This capacity for appreciation should be a prime consideration with any parent when he goes out to buy a children's record.

Unfortunately, this innate good taste is too often debased. First, by parents who let their own lack of taste shape the child's concept of good music, and second, by record manufacturers who sacrifice taste and responsibility in their rapacious hunt for a fast sale. The youngster who at ten can sneer at concert music as music for "sissies" did not come by these prejudices naturally. They were drilled into him, perhaps unconsciously, by a generation of irresponsible adults.

Certainly, there is a large group of record companies today devoted to making so-called "kiddie records" who have harmed and will continue to harm our children. The companies that manufacture these records are often run by men who are noisy, vulgar, and cheap. Many show no awareness of what children really need. The only reason their records sell is that often they are the only children's records available in stores and supermarkets. Often the manufacturer makes up for his vague grasp of how to make a good children's record by his superior knowledge of how to promote and merchandise it.

But ultimately the blame for these records must rest with the parents. Until recently, parents showed little or no interest in the records they bought for their youngsters. They walked into the nearest record shop or record department, picked the disc with the "cutest" title and the most attractive album cover, and brought it home. The same parents who would scream in indignation if they saw their children reading trashy comic books or watching mediocre television had no qualms about handing out the very worst "kiddie records" as gifts.

Fortunately, more and more parents are becoming aware that the records their youngsters hear are as important as the books they read and the TV shows they see. They are beginning to realize that there are few limits to a child's

taste and that they, as adults, have a duty to expose the children to all sorts of music and records—many of them well outside the area generally classified as children's records. Kathy's Mozart is a case in point.

We have a neighbor who has made a point of surrounding his children with all sorts of music. After dinner in the evening, the living room hi-fi set may be playing Prokofiev, but it is as likely to be playing Cole Porter or Patti Page. The children have complete freedom to pick any record out of the family record collection and play it. Barring sudden urges at 3 o'clock in the morning, they can play the records any time they want. The children are growing up by themselves in the world of music, and they are doing it alone, guided primarily by their own intense excitement and curiosity over music and records.

This, of course, is musical education at its most ideal. The child is simply surrounded by the musical good taste of his parents. In this environment, it is practically impossible for the child not to develop an intense awareness of the beauty of music.

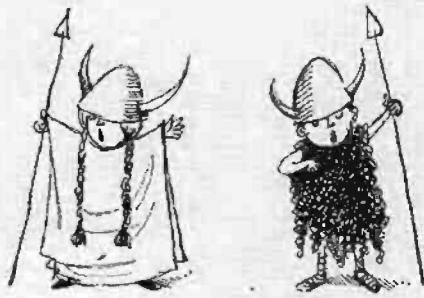
While most homes may not be able to carry music education through records this far, parents should recognize that they have a responsibility for at least checking the music and story records they buy for their youngsters. Whenever possible, the parent should listen to the record. If this is not possible, a simple precaution would be at least to read the record jacket for information about the record.

WHAT criteria can you use in selecting a good album for the children in your family this holiday season? First, a good children's record should not just entertain. It should also add to the child's knowledge. This is a delicate balance to strike, and, unfortunately, there are few records today that can meet this requirement. A number of LP's, however, do qualify.

For older children, for example, Caedmon has a truly beautiful album of poet Carl Sandburg reading *A Lincoln Album* (Caed. 2015). Claude Rains has a gently sensitive album called *The Bible Speaks To Children* (Bronze 1205), and Charles Laughton puts all his dramatic ability into play in another memorable Bible disc called *Bible Readings* (Decca 8031). For younger children, Columbia has an excellent LP with Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp called *Songs To Learn By* (Col. CL 670) which offers delightful song-answers to questions like "How Does The Bee Bzz" and "Why Do Stars Twinkle."

One word of warning: In an effort to bring Bach to babes, some record companies have turned out albums which while they might be quite sincere, also are quite dull. Children can understand and appreciate Beethoven or Brahms, but if the music is presented like a lecture in a college seminar, they will never touch the record again.

(Continued overleaf)



A second criterion in choosing a children's record is that it should be geared to a child's mind. Many of the records supposedly aimed at the pre-school and elementary-school child contain complicated stories that carry over onto both sides of the LP. These records are not conceivably acceptable to young children, since youngsters have very short attention spans.

A third criterion in selecting a record is performance. Children's records offer a strange variety of performers. There are actors and singers like Charles Laughton and Rosemary Clooney who perform wonderfully for either adults or children. On the opposite end of the scale, you have performers who can only perform for children (and this is probably the very worst sort of entertainer). Good entertainment is a universal thing limited only by the human capacity to appreciate.

Your safest course, then, is to choose records by performers who have proven their ability to entertain. Few records can equal the charm of Julie Andrews and Martyn Green with their songs of sense and nonsense in the LP, *Tell It Again* (Angel 65041), or Boris Karloff and his *Just-So Stories* (Caedmon 1038). And Charles Laughton is superb in his readings of the Bible, *Mr. Pickwick*, or *Moby Dick*.

In the area of folk songs, which has always been immensely popular with children, there are few performers to match Richard Dyer-Bennet and his *Songs With Young People In Mind* (Dyer-Bennet 6000), Pete Seeger singing *Folk Songs for Young People* (Folkways 7532), or Burl Ives' *Little White Duck* (Harmony 9507).

ANOTHER word of warning. Along with outstanding performers like Laughton, Karloff, Ronald Coleman, Basil Rathbone, and Burl Ives, you will find a number of children's records by comedians and television comics. These comedians frequently take a four-minute idea and stretch it into an hour. Once they have launched the idea, they seem to feel that screams, noise, and loud background sounds can be the easiest and best substitute for entertainment. Some of them also have an offensively patronizing attitude towards children. Children who listen to records are not imbeciles.

and there is no reason why they should be treated as such.

And this, therefore, is a final criterion for selecting a suitable children's record: try for the imaginative. Children themselves are usually blessed with wonderful imaginations, and these should be encouraged. Some youngsters, for example, get enormous pleasure from listening to records from the Folkways "Sounds" series (*Sounds of a South American Rain Forest*, Folkways 6120; *Sounds of the Sea*, Folkways 6121). One of the most imaginative children's records is *Music For Children* (Angel 3582-B) prepared by, of all people, one of Europe's most famous composers, Carl Orff, during his pre-*Carmina Burana* days. This delightful album offers children an opportunity to hum, clap, sing, and make other forms of homestyle impromptu music with the children on the record.

There are, by the way, a number of other excellent participation records now available. Riverside has just come out with an album called *Everybody Sing*, (1418/21) with folk songs done in a sing-along style by Oscar Brand, Peggy Seeger, Jean Ritchie, Cynthia Gooding, and others. The Young People's Record Guild also offers some fine participation records of similar character.

Among the other rather off-beat records you might consider: *1, 2, 3 and A Zing, Zing, Zing—Street Songs and Games of the Children of New York* by Tony Schwartz on Folkways; *Children's Songs of Shakespeare's Time* by the New York Pro Musica Antiqua on the Counterpoint label; *Pueblo Indians in Story, Song and Dance* on Caedmon, *Civil War Stories and Songs* on RCA Victor; *A Dog's Life*, on Folkways, and *I Can Hear It Now* on Columbia.

None of these records are the sort you would ordinarily buy in a supermarket or a drug store. They cost more and they are harder to find. And yet their value to a child could be immeasurable.

Children love music because the world of sound is still quite fresh and new to them, and they have an intense curiosity about what can be done with sound. As parents and as adults responsible for these children and their development, it is our obligation to expose this curiosity to the worthwhile sounds of good music and fine literature.





Top Children's Records For Christmas

One of the most difficult tasks that can face any parent at Christmas time is the chore of walking into a record shop and somehow selecting a good children's record from the massive array of LP's that line the racks. Here is HiFi/STEREO REVIEW's choice of the current releases. Some of the records selected would not ordinarily be called "children's records," but they are still LP's that any child would enjoy.

A Dog's Life with Tony Schwartz. Folkways 5580

A Child's Introduction To Jazz featuring Bob Keeshan ("Captain Kangaroo.") Golden GLP 29

Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana. Folkways 7110

Bambi. Disneyland 4010

Bible Readings with Charles Loughton. Decca 8031

Captain Kangaroo's Introduction To The Nutcracker Suite. Golden GLP 40

Carl Sandburg reads from A Lincoln Album. Caedmon 2015

Carnival Of The Animals—Saint-Saëns; Peter And The Wolf—Prokofiev. Noel Coward with the André Kostelanetz Orchestra. Columbia CL 720

Children's Songs Of Shakespeare's Time. New York Pro Musica Antiqua. Counterpoint 540

Civil War Stories And Songs. RCA Victor LBY 1032

Cyril Ritchard reads Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland. Riverside RLP 1406

Everybody Sing with Pete Seeger, Cynthia Gooding & others. Riverside 1418/21

Folk Songs For Young People with Pete Seeger. Folkways 7532

Grand Canyon Suite—Grofé. Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler cond. RCA Victor LM 1928

I Can Hear It Now. Columbia ML 4095

Just-So Stories with Boris Karloff. Caedmon 1038

Little White Duck And Other Stories told and sung by Burl Ives. Harmony 9507

Lonesome Train—Earl Robinson. Decca 9065

Mark Twain And Folk Favorites with Harry Belafonte. RCA Victor LPM 1022

Mother Goose Songs with Frank Luther. Decca 8357

Music For Children—Carl Orff. Angel 3582 B

Peter Pan with Mary Martin. RCA Victor LOC 1019

Pueblo Indians In Story, Song & Dance. Caedmon 3

Songs With Young People In Mind. Richard Dyer-Bennet. Dyer-Bennet 6000

Songs To Learn By featuring Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp. Columbia CL 670

Sounds Of My City with Tony Schwartz. Folkways 7341

Sounds Of A South American Rain Forest. Folkways 6120

Sounds Of The Sea. Folkways 6121

The Bible Speaks To Children with Claude Rains. Bronze 1205

The Compleat In Fydelytie. Cook 1044

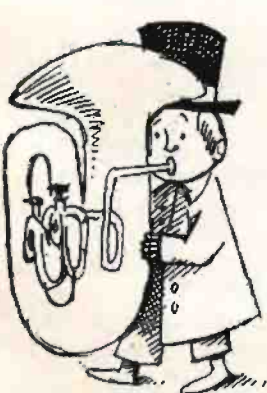
The Reluctant Dragon with Boris Karloff. Caedmon 1074

The Wizard Of Oz with Judy Garland. Decca 8387

The Young Person's Guide To The Orchestra—Benjamin Britten; Nutcracker Suite—Tchaikovsky. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. (Deems Taylor, narration) Mercury 50055

Tubby The Tuba and Peter And The Wolf. Columbia CL 671

Winnie The Pooh with James Stewart. Camden 1008



OPERA IN STEREO: PART II



by David Hall

VERDI'S may have been the dominant creative voice in Italian opera during the latter half of the century, but his was by no means the only one. Arrigo Boito, who in later years was to prepare the magnificent *Otello* and *Falstaff* libretti for Verdi, composed an impressive if sprawling treatment of Goethe's *Faust* in his *Mefistofele* when he was still in his twenties. London's recording, starring Cesare Siepi, Mario del Monaco, and Renata Tebaldi, with Serafin conducting (London OSA 1307), ranks with *Aida* as its most impressive stereo effort in the Italian operatic field, and is, in addition, a performance that emphatically underlines all that is best in Boito's near-masterpiece of 1868.

Save for the fact that *La Gioconda* is a star vehicle of the first water, it is hard to fathom why Amilcare Ponchielli's blood-and-thunder work should have received no less than three stereo recordings, and each of them is quite good in its own way. Callas fanciers, of course, will prefer her ultra-dramatic interpretation of the title role on Angel S 3606 C/L. London's OSA 1302 with Cerquetti, Simionato, del Monaco, Bastianini, and Siepi has good sound and good stereo "stage" production, but it is no match for the stunning RCA Victor version (LSC 6139), in which Zinka Milanov and the late Leonard Warren are both at the top of their form and are abetted by the baton of Fernando Previtali.

The 1890's in Italy witnessed the rise of Giacomo Puccini, who for a quarter-century thereafter was to be pretty much the cynosure of operatic audiences; but there were also the young firebrands of *verismo*—the "slice of life" boys—Mascagni with *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890), Leoncavallo with

Pagliacci (1892), and Umberto Giordano with *Andrea Chenier* (1896).

"*Cav*" and "*Pag*," those venerable "gold-dust twins" of the repertoire, are currently available in one stereo recording apiece. Unfortunately, the splendid singing team of Bjoerling, Tebaldi, and Bastianini on RCA Victor LSC 6059 is hampered by the sluggish conducting of Alberto Erede. Let's hope that the situation will be remedied by Tullio Serafin on the forthcoming London OSA 1213, starring Giulietta Simionato, Mario del Monaco, and Cornell MacNeil. *Pagliacci* fares better; for del Monaco and Gabrielle Tucci, under the direction of Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, turn out a highly dramatic account of this particular "slice of life," and are assisted by vivid stereo staging.

Compared with "*Cavalleria*" and *Pagliacci*, Giordano's *Andrea Chenier* may seem a bit drawn out for its actual musical substance, but it can take the rugged dramatics of del Monaco and Bastianini, who are starred with Tebaldi in the London stereo re-issue (OSA 1303) of its spiritedly done 1957 recording.

THE 1958 Puccini centenary was probably the reason why all of that master's major operas have found their way to the stereophonic medium, in most instances well ahead of Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi. *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Girl of the Golden West*, and *Turandot* are to be had in two or more stereo versions each.

London has just announced a stereo re-issue of its 1954 *Manon Lescaut* (OSA 1317), and this product of the youthful Puccini pen boasts the formidable vocalism of Tebaldi



and del Monaco. But even in its stereo version, this recording hardly matches the extraordinary vividness of the 1959 *La Bohème*, which has Tebaldi paired with the lyrically gifted Carlo Bergonzi, and with Serafin at the conductorial helm (London OSA 1208). This is the only currently available stereo *Bohème*, but it is doubtful whether any future version will surpass this splendid combination of vocalism and stereo sonics for sheer beauty.

Neither the recent Tebaldi-del Monaco-London *Tosca* (London OSA 1210), nor the 1957 RCA album (LSC 6052) with Milanov, Bjoerling, and Warren represents a conclusive treatment of either the music or the drama of this passionate score; but the London recording does have a distinct edge in overall sound and stereo staging.

The presently available two stereo recordings of *Madama Butterfly* will become three with the release of Capitol's SGCR 7232, starring Victoria de los Angeles and the late Jussi Bjoerling. Meanwhile, one has the choice between the sumptuous vocalism of Tebaldi and Bergonzi on London OSA 1314 with excellent stereo "production," and the wonderfully effective characterization of Anna Moffo with Cesare Valletti on RCA Victor LSC 6135, in which Erich Leinsdorf does a fine conducting job, but where the stereophony is rather static. Both recordings as such are sonically tops.

Largely because the Puccinian idiom is incompatible with the American "Western," *La Fanciulla del West* is something less than a masterpiece. Yet this setting of Belasco's *Girl of the Golden West* has gotten not one, but two stereo recordings, and with stellar casts—Tebaldi, del Monaco, MacNeil, and Tozzi on London OSA 13061, while Angel's S 3593

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C/L has Birgit Nilsson in the title role. The London album wins hands down, not by superior vocalism alone, but more particularly by virtue of extraordinarily fine stereo staging—notably in the card-game scene.

Gianni Schicchi has long been the most popular of the three one-acters that Puccini completed during World War I; for here he captured the spirit of 18th-century *opera buffa*. The Capitol stereo recording (SGAR 7179) with Tito Gobbi and Victoria de los Angeles is a gem in every way, and with London's *Bohème* and RCA's *Turandot*, it is a "must" for any stereo disc library of Italian opera.

Death claimed Puccini before he could add the final touches to his most ambitious work, *Turandot*. Yet, even without the polish that Puccini would have given it had he lived, *Turandot* offers some of the composer's most impassioned melody, and in its scenes of oriental pageantry, pages of blazing spender. The finest of stereo sound is none too good for this score, and RCA Victor has given it just that on LSC 6149, plus a powerhouse cast headed by Birgit Nilsson, Renata Tebaldi, Jussi Bjoerling, and Giorgio Tozzi.

WHILE Verdi and Wagner were achieving their special ascendancy in the realm of Italian and German opera, major repertoire masterpieces were coming into being in unexpected places, such as Russia and Czechoslovakia. Bedřich Smetana's 1866 opera-comedy, *The Bartered Bride*, has become an international classic, as have Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* from the Russian repertoire. Regrettably, only Smetana's delightful score has found its way to stereo, performed by the Prague Na-

tional Opera and issued on Artia S 82. The performance is first-rate and the stereo staging is superbly effective. Since Artia has exclusive American rights for recordings done in the U.S.S.R., it is perhaps not too far-fetched to hope for authentic Russian performances in stereo from this source, of "Boris," *Khovanchina*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *Pique-Dame*, especially, and perhaps Glinka's *Life for the Tsar* and *Russian and Ludmilla*, as well as Rimsky-Korsakov's *Golden Cockerel*. Borodin's sprawling, but often strikingly impressive *Prince Igor* is the only major Russian opera represented in stereo for the present—and this from London's 1955 Belgrade recording. The solo work is so-so, but the sound of the choruses alone is worth the price of the album (OSA 1501).

Post-Carmen French opera is even more poorly represented on stereo than the product of the preceding generation. A serviceable but by no means outstanding version of Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffman* (Epic BSC 101) with Mattiwilda Dobbs and Léopold Simoneau just about sums up a pretty parlous situation. Massenet's *Manon*, Charpentier's *Louise*, and above all, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* await their due on stereo, not to speak of Delibes' *Lakmé* and Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalilah*.

Save for Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (still among the missing on stereo), German opera of the post-Wagnerian era is dominated almost wholly by the brilliant and lush works of Richard Strauss. Although *Salome* and *Elektra* have yet to make the stereo opera roster, there are two fine sets of *Der Rosenkavalier*. The recent Decca recording (Decca 7301) boasts a well-matched cast of Irmgaard Seefried, Marianne Schech, Rita Streich, and Kurt Böhme, with Karl Böhm conducting, as well as generally effective stereo stage production; but the 1957 Angel album (S 3563 D/L) offers the powerful attraction of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as the Marschallin, as well as the more volatile conducting of Herbert von Karajan with the Philharmonia Orchestra. The choice here lies between Angel's virtuosity and Decca's overall good stereo "team".

Since we have no stereophonic *Salome* or *Elektra*, it is somewhat surprising to find two relatively esoteric Strauss operas available in stereo: the 1912 *Ariadne auf Naxos*, announced for release in RCA's Soria Series—LDS 6152, with Leonie Rysanek, Roberta Peters, Sena Jurinac, and Jan Peerce, plus Leinsdorf and the Vienna Philharmonic; and a full-blown score from the 1930's, *Arabella*. This was recorded by London in 1957 with Georg Solti conducting the Vienna Philharmonic and a star-studded cast graced by such names as Lisa della Casa, George London, Hilde Gueden, Otto Edelmann, and Anton Dermota (OSA 1404). This remains music for dyed-in-the-wool Strauss fans, however.

THE modern operatic repertoire is spottily represented on stereo disc; but there are a few outstanding recordings to be noted. Most spectacular is Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*, magnificently done for London (OSA 1305) under the composer's direction with topnotch English singers, and with the stereo dramatics being handled with extraordinary

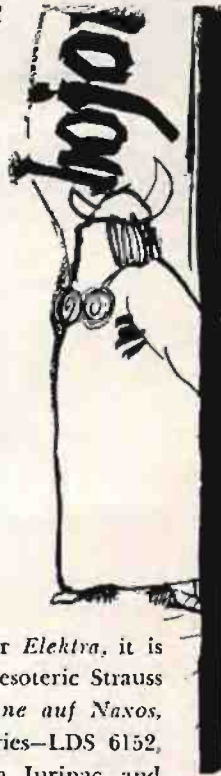
vividness. Fascinating, but more difficult to grasp and more inward in its expression, is *Katya Kabanova*, a setting of a grim Russian small-town tale by the Moravian-Czech master, Leoš Janáček, done in authentic style by the Prague National Opera on Artia (S 85 B/L). Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* is the one other modern masterpiece in the grand manner to be represented on stereo (Deutsche Grammophon SLPM 138030), and Fischer-Dieskau's characterization of the terrifying yet melancholy Bluebeard is most moving. It even manages to overcome the drawbacks of using the German language, instead of the original Hungarian, and small cuts made in the performance. Prokofiev's *War and Peace* (MGM S3-GC 2), Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* (RCA Victor LSC 6138), Douglas Moore's *Ballad of Baby Doe* (MGM S3-GC 1), and Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* (Columbia O3S 202) are variable both in musical merit and in effectiveness of stereo sonics. By and large, the New York City Center Opera performance of *Regina* fares best.

The repertoire of modern intimate opera in stereo is highlighted, I feel, by Manuel de Falla's wonderful puppet episode from Cervantes, *Master Peter's Puppet Show*. The late Ataúlfo Argenta did an ideal performance for London (CS 6028) with a fine cast of Spanish soloists, and the stereo sound is splendid from every point of view.

Carl Orff's *Der Mond* (Angel S 3567 B/L) and *Die Kluge* (Angel S 3551 B/L) strike me as being music strictly for confirmed Orffians, despite the delightful characterization by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in *Die Kluge*. Likewise, Weill's original-German version of *The Three-Penny Opera* starring the composer's widow, Lotte Lenya, on Columbia (02S 201) seems more dated than Marc Blitzstein's American adaptation of the libretto—not yet on stereo.

IF a modern-music aficionado reads these lines and tends to fill the repertoire gaps in his own mind, it seems plain that the plight of 20th-century opera in stereo is about the same as that which presently obtains for the French and Russian repertoire. Columbia promises us the exciting and spectacular space opera, *Aniara*, by Sweden's Karl-Birger Blomdahl; but we'd like to feel that we might someday get in stereo Berg's *Wozzeck*, Britten's *Billy Budd*, the better Menotti operas (not even "Amahl" is on stereo!)—at least *The Medium*, *The Consul*, and *The Old Maid and the Thief*, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (in its entirety), Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* and *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*, *Le Rossignol*, and *The Rake's Progress*, Dallapiccola's *The Prisoner*, Martinů's *Comedy on the Bridge*—the list could be extended for another dozen items or so. Yet, for all the worth of these fine works, it must be agreed what a higher priority should go to masterpieces like *The Magic Flute*, *Fidelio*, and *Pelléas et Mélisande*, to say nothing of *Die Meistersinger*, *Lohengrin*, *Parsifal*, and *Die Götterdämmerung*.

What has been done well in stereo opera has been done superlatively well—notably by London and RCA Victor—but it should be clear from the foregoing that much remains to be done by those record companies who have the financial means and the technical know-how to give us great operatic productions in the stereo medium. It is a job worth doing, not merely for "cultural prestige," but also because it is in the realm of opera that the stereo medium has proven its special worth in bringing vital musical theater into the living rooms of thousands who seldom have the chance to hear opera in the opera house.



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Hirsch-Houck Labs, High Fidelity Magazine

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Herbert Reid—Hi Fi Stereo Review

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DECEMBER 1960



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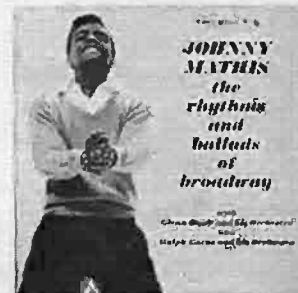
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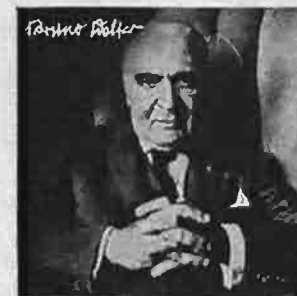
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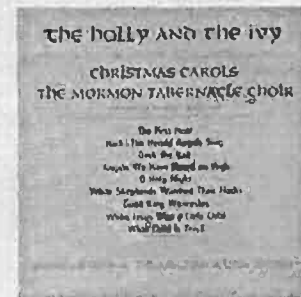


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CAMELOT/ORIGINAL CAST RECORDING/KOL 5520/KOS 2051*



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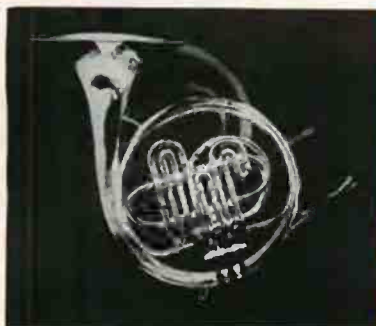
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Reviewed by MARTIN BOOKSPAN WARREN DeMOTTE DAVID HALL

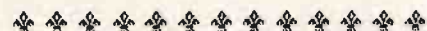
GEORGE JELLINEK DAVID RANDOLPH JOHN THORNTON

BEST OF THE MONTH . . .

▲ Capitol has issued one of its finest discs by Stokowski—Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* coupled with Loeffler's *A Pagan Poem*. . . "This is impassioned, voluptuous music, and Stokowski is in his element. . . . The playing is marvelous, and both works are splendid in their stereo richness and depth. (see p. 79)



Records reviewed in this section are both stereo and monophonic. Versions received for review are identified by closed (▲) and open (△) triangles respectively. All records are 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm and should be played with the RIAA amplifier setting or its equivalent. Monophonic recordings (△) may be played also on stereo equipment with resulting improvement in sound distribution quality. Stereo recordings (▲), however, must not be played on monophonic phonographs and hi-fi systems.



Borders denote recordings of special merit

▲ Mercury's opera recordings continue to score bullseyes. This time it's the half-forgotten but delightful *Barber of Seville* by Paisiello. . . . "There can be nothing but high praise for the singers. . . . Fasano's reading is precise, vigorous, and thoroughly delightful. . . . A notable contribution . . . for which Mercury deserves the highest encomiums." (see p. 82)



▲ BACH: Keyboard Concerti—Vol. 1—Concerto in D Minor; Concerto in E Major—Vol. 2—Concerto in C Major for two Keyboard Instruments; Concerto in C Minor for two Keyboard Instruments; Concerto in F Minor; Concerto in A Major. Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus (pianos) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Kurt Redel cond. Westminster WST 14109/10 2 12" \$5.98 each.

Interest: Very high
Performance: Adroit
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

The devotees of Bach's keyboard music should be well served by these discs, since so many of that composer's concerti are gathered in one place. However, the listener will have to decide whether he prefers these works with the harpsichord or the more modern piano. I prefer the authentic instrument. But these performances are certainly sufficiently idiomatic in their conception to be accepted on their own terms.

These discs contain much that is of interest, aside from pleasures that the compositions themselves afford: many of the movements were used by Bach in his other works, and some of these concerti were originally conceived for other instruments. The opening movement of the D Minor Solo Concerto was used *in toto* as the introduction to the Cantata No. 188, with the keyboard solo part assigned to the organ. Similarly, the C Minor Concerto for two keyboard instruments has become known in its other version, in which the solo roles are taken by the violin and the oboe.

A more unusual substitution is represented by the E Major Keyboard Concerto;

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whose *Siciliana* was used in the Cantata No. 169, with the *voice* featured in a solo role! The above listings do not represent all the instances in which Bach has re-used the material contained in these concerti.

Comparison of the performance of the D Minor solo concerto with the Glenn Gould-Bernstein version on Columbia reveals, I think, that while the Columbia team has the edge in the quieter, more introspective sections of the work, the Westminster artists get the nod in the faster portions.

All these performances leave nothing to be desired in matters of technical competence. Both Westminster soloists are fully equal to the stylistic demands of the music as well, and in those works in which they play together, their sense of ensemble is entirely admirable. Aside from a momentary brittleness of piano tone, especially in the opening movement of the D Minor Concerto, the recording is fine. The Westminster version of that work, incidentally, gives slightly greater prominence to the piano than does its Columbia counterpart.

In the concerti for two keyboard instruments, there is nice separation of the two pianos. Thus, the stereo recording is definitely desirable. *D. R.*

▲ **BACH:** Clavier Concertos—No. 1 in D Minor; No. 2 in E Major. Christopher Wood (harpsichord), with the Goldsbrough Orchestra, Lawrence Leonard cond. Forum SF 70003 \$2.98

Interest: Certainly
Performance: Idiomatic
Recording: Varied
Stereo Directionality: Varied
Stereo Depth: Limited

There are some very fine things about these performances, particularly in the familiar D Minor Concerto. The slow movement emerges at a nicely poised tempo, and there is excellent articulation in the strings in the closing movement. Generally speaking, all the performances are quite admirable.

The recording has both good and bad characteristics. The setting places the listener up close—almost in the orchestra. Despite the lack of room sound, this close placement is, to my ears, a distinct advantage, especially in music of this sort, where one wants to hear the lines with maximum clarity. Although stereo is somewhat lacking, the directionality is satisfactory, except for the fact that the harpsichord seems to be located on the left in the fast movements of the D Minor Concerto, and in the center for the slow movement!

Curiously, the recording seems to be more limited, from the tonal standpoint, in the Concerto No. 2. The overall sound here lacks the realism it has in the Concerto No. 1. *D. R.*

BARTOK: Divertimento (see p. 84)

▲ **BEETHOVEN:** The Nine Symphonies; Overtures—Leonore No. 3; Egmont. London Symphony Orchestra, Josef Krips cond. Everest SDBR 3065/8 12" \$39.84

Interest: Nine symphonic cornerstones
Performance: All full of insight

Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

During the past several summers at the Lewisohn Stadium in New York, Krips has been offering Beethoven Festivals with the Stadium Symphony Orchestra that have been welcomed enthusiastically by audiences and critics alike. Similarly, Krips has done Beethoven cycles in London in recent years and there, too, he has been hailed as a Beethoven conductor of perception and power. Hence, Everest, in this set, has felt it worthwhile to preserve the Krips conceptions of the Beethoven Symphonies which have given such enormous satisfaction to countless thousands of listeners on both sides of the Atlantic. Further, it has afforded to the performances a sonic backdrop of clear resonance and finely detailed definition.

In general, the orchestral balances are extremely well adjusted, with only now and then, perhaps, an occasional reticence of woodwind sound—as in the Finale of the Seventh—to cause regrets. More disturbing, however, is the fact that in the set sent for review there was a surprisingly high incidence of crackly, swishy surface noise. Hopefully, this is not true of all the pressings, but I'd advise you to check the surfaces before you buy.

Now, a brief description of each performance:

Symphony No. 1—Bumptious joviality is the chief element of Krips' performance. Tempi are very well chosen to fall within the framework of such an approach, for they have an easy, unforced lilt. The final movement caps the whole in a civilized, nicely controlled romp.

Symphony No. 2—A similarly effective attitude is adopted for the performance of the Second. The drama of the first movement, lyricism of the second, swagger of the third, and exuberance of the finale are all tellingly conveyed, if without the full measure of heartiness to be heard in the rival Klemperer or Beecham versions for Angel.

Symphony No. 3—A sense of momentum is conveyed by Krips in his adoption of tempi that are on the brisk side. This is true of the Funeral March especially. The interesting thing, however, is that the tempi are brisk without sounding hurried; in short, they work. Especially noteworthy is the playing of the horn section—full toned and superbly inflected—in the trio of the Scherzo.

Symphony No. 4—Here again the dominating impression is one of briskness but not haste. In the final movement there is really superlative woodwind playing and marvelous definition in the recorded sound.

Symphony No. 5—This is for me the surprise of the set. Not from Krips did I anticipate such powerful drive as we get here. The plunging ahead into the second half of the opening phrase after the *fermata* on the fourth note reminds me of Kleiber's way with this music in his memorable mono recording with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra (London CM 9080) of about 8 years ago. Also, Krips contrives a strong momentum for the eruption of the fourth movement out of the bridge passage from the Scherzo.

Symphony No. 6—Again one has a feeling of well-sustained forward motion. The most impressive section, perhaps, is the Storm of the fourth movement, with sharp, percussive, and altogether right claps of thunder from the timpani. The Finale is a truly satisfying conclusion.

Symphony No. 7—In this winged Symphony, Krips gives us a reading of surge and propulsion, and again without creating an effect of breathlessness. This is not as easy to accomplish as one might think. Witness Toscanini's headlong plunge to disaster in his 1951 recording of the music with the NBC Symphony Orchestra (RCA Victor LM 1756), as contrasted with the contained momentum of his 1936 recording with the New York Philharmonic (Caenden 352). Krips' basic tempo in the final movement is about as fast as Toscanini's NBC performance, but in character it is far less tense and hurried than that of the Italian *Maestro*.

Symphony No. 8—In the performance of this music, Krips reverts to the grace and charm which characterized his readings of the first two symphonies. At the same time, he underlines the robust nature of the *Allegretto* and *Minuet*.

Symphony No. 9—A deep feeling of strength and solidity pervades this entire performance. There is power in the first movement, muscularity in the scherzo, serenity in the slow movement, and exalted catharsis in the Finale. In this Finale, Krips has the benefit of a superb chorus (that of the BBC) and four well-matched soloists (Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Shirley Verrett-Carter, mezzo; Rudolf Petrak, tenor; and Donald Bell, bass). If this performance doesn't have quite the monolithic nobility of Klemperer's Angel recording (S 3577 B), it is head and shoulders above it in engineering and impact of recorded sound. When Krips' chorus sings out, it makes a thrilling and vibrant sound.

Everest has scrupulously adhered to a maximum playing time of about twenty-five minutes per side in the interest of maintaining as wide a dynamic range as possible in the mastering. Room is also found to fill out two of the sides with fine performances of the Third *Leonore* and *Egmont* Overtures.

As a totality, this eight-record set presents unusually satisfying accounts of the nine cornerstones of the symphonic repertory. Krips is now the third conductor to be represented in the catalogs with a one-album collection of the Beethoven Symphonies—Toscanini (RCA Victor LM 6901) and Walter (Columbia D7S 610; D7L 265) having preceded him. Curiously, though, Krips does not give us a single *great* performance—as does Walter, for example, in the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies. However, I find the overall quality of Krips' accomplishment more consistently rewarding than that of either of the two rival integral sets. *M. B.*

▲ **BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60; Consecration of the House Overture, Op. 124. Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer cond. Angel S 35661 \$5.98

Interest: A jovial romp
(Continued on page 72)

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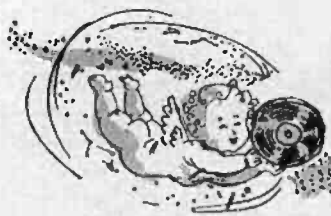
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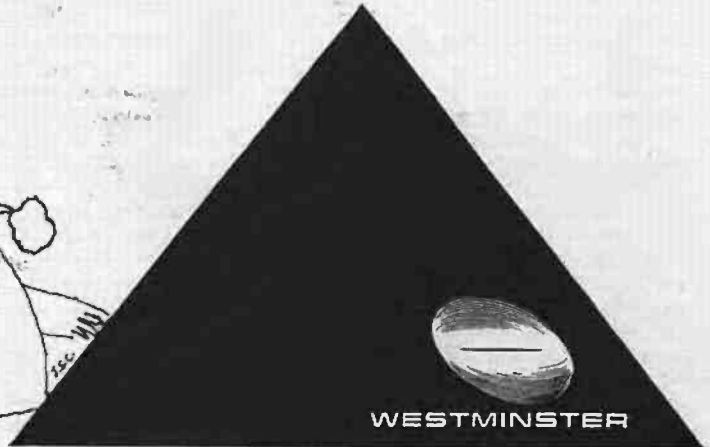
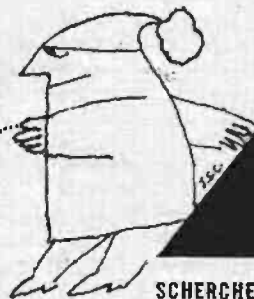
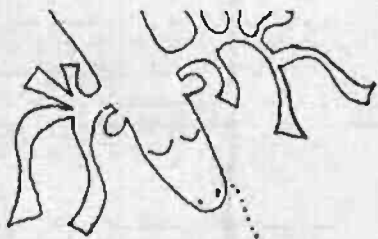
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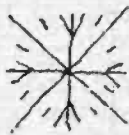
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ing here, while the middle movements are endowed with poignant lyrical beauty. The more episodic finale, which most conductors turn into a dramatic show piece, fails to hold together under the 84-year-old Walter's baton, save for the final third of its course.

The predominantly sunny D Major Symphony gets a rather low-pressure, easy-going treatment throughout; but the surging pages of the F Major turn out in better shape. Indeed, in this and in the *Tragic Overture*, Walter gives the most satisfying performances of this particular set—second only to those by Klemperer on Angel.

The magnificent Fourth Symphony, which Walter played so well on the old N. Y. Philharmonic records, comes off splendidly for its first three movements, but a disturbing tempo shift at Variation 4 robs the great passacaglia movement of its cumulative impact.

As for the shorter pieces, the *Tragic Overture*, as we have already indicated, is made to convey a full measure of its somber impact; but we wish the carefree *Academic Festival* had been given more zip, precision, and brightness in both performance and recording. The so-called Haydn Variations proceed in leisurely fashion under Walter's hands until the ground-bass finale, which he proceeds to build to a splendid climax.

The recorded sound from Columbia's engineering staff and the level of performance by Walter's picked West Coast players is, for the most part, very good. The out-sized solo flute in the finale of the First Symphony and a certain lack of sonic impact in the *Academic Festival Overture* are the only technical aspects with which we would take issue. Stereo frontal spread and depth illusion are generally satisfactory.

So far as Brahms in stereo is concerned, I find myself most fully satisfied with Otto Klemperer's dramatic monolithic approach to the four Brahms symphonies, despite the less-rich sound of his recordings as compared to Walter's. So far as mono goes, Toscanini (RCA Victor), Eduard van Beinum (Epic), Felix Weingartner (Harmony), and Walter himself with the N. Y. Philharmonic have done the whole series to at least as good, and in most instances, better, interpretive effect.

Over more than 25 years of listening to Bruno Walter's conducting in the flesh, as well as on records and radio, I have been given many cherishable musical experiences. If I should want a recorded memento of the Bruno Walter way with Brahms, the N. Y. Philharmonic discs would still be my choice, and I trust that Columbia will keep them available as a permanent documentation of Walter at his interpretive prime. *D. H.*

▲ **BRAMHMS:** Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73. Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Wolfgang Sawallisch cond. Epic BC 1093 \$5.98

Interest: Repertoire staple
Performance: Variable
Recording: OK
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: Good

This disc marks the debut on Epic of one of the fastest-rising young conductors in

Europe (his previous American representation was on the Angel label). Sawallisch has not yet reached his 40th birthday, but already he has received signal honors in most of the leading musical centers of Europe and is currently principal conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. He has not yet conducted in this country—not because he has not been asked, I hasten to add, but because he has been immersed in commitments in Europe and elsewhere.

This is a young man's performance of the Brahms Second: carefully studied, intense and rather obvious in its stress upon the dramatic elements of the music. The overall tempi are a bit on the slow side, but the performance never drags. What one misses here is the feeling of absolute assurance and authority found in versions by Klemperer (Angel 35532), Toscanini (RCA Victor LM 1731) or the quixotic but fascinating performance Furtwangler recorded with the London Philharmonic (Richmond 19020).

Recorded sound is adequate. *M. B.*

▲ **BRUCKNER:** Symphony No. 9 in D Minor. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. Columbia MS 6171 \$5.98

Interest: Bruckner's greatest
Performance: Devoted
Recording: Warm, but lacks impact
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Adequate

Bruno Walter and the apocalyptic, visionary Bruckner—for how many years have we pleaded in and out of print for Columbia to record Bruno Walter and the N. Y. Philharmonic in the Fourth, Eighth, and Ninth symphonies?

At last we receive a stereo recording of the Austrian master's unfinished Ninth (he worked on it from 1887 till his death in 1896)—by Bruno Walter, indeed, but with his pick-up West Coast orchestra rather than the N. Y. Philharmonic which has the full string body and brassy lung power that this mighty score needs.

The first movement is music of Judgment Day; the scherzo bespeaks a near-Satanic *danse macabre*; while the slow movement is a paean of passionate aspiration for heaven itself. The span of Bruckner's melodic line is unfolded superbly in this recorded performance, as is the inner detail of his instrumental texture. What is missing—almost entirely is the shattering impact of the climaxes that Bruckner wrote into the score.

As a reading, the first movement comes off best here. The scherzo sounds a bit tame, while the *Adagio* is curiously lacking in cohesion despite the entrancingly beautiful phrasing of its melodic content.

I fear that with this Bruckner "Ninth" under Walter, it's a case of too little (the orchestra) and too late. As a first and presently only stereo version of this music, this disc is well worth the owning; but I'd supplement it with one of the good mono performances by Jochum (Decca), Horenstein (Vox), or the late Eduard van Beinum (Epic). *D. H.*

▲ **CHOPIN:** Ballade No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 52; Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp Minor, Op. 39; Polonaise in A-flat, Op. 53; Mazurkas—C-sharp Minor, Op. 6, No. 2; A-flat, Op. 50, No. 2; C-sharp Minor, Op. 50, No. 3; Noc-

turnes—D-flat, Op. 27, No. 2; F-sharp, Op. 16, No. 2; B Major, Op. 62, No. 1. Charles Rosen (piano). Epic BC 1090 \$5.98

Interest: Chopin cross-section
Performance: Uncharacteristic
Recording: Fair
Stereo Directionality: Not needed
Stereo Depth: Fair

Neither the poise he exhibited in his recordings of music of the classic period nor the coloristic abilities he displayed in his recordings of impressionistic music comes to Rosen's aid in this program. His playing is correct and energetic, but with none of the stylistic insight required by Chopin's music. The performances are square, without grace or flavor, and are hardly representative of Rosen at his best. *W. D.*

▲ **CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11. Orazio Frugoni (piano) with Vienna Volksoperorchester, Michael Gielen cond. Vox STPL 511.460 \$5.95

▲ **CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21. Orazio Frugoni (piano) with Vienna Volksoperorchester, Michael Gielen cond. Vox STPL 511.470 \$5.95

Interest: Concerto favorites
Performance: Not characteristic
Recording: Unappealing
Stereo Directionality: Yes
Stereo Depth: Yes

Gradually, the lesson is being learned that stereo, of itself, cannot substitute for basically poor recording or an inferior performance. In some instances, the lesson is a hard one. Unfortunately, this is one of those instances. The sonics here are cavernous. Neither Frugoni nor Gielen shows any special aptitude for the music of Chopin. Can't Vox get Novaes before a microphone again for new recordings of these compositions? It will be a crying shame if she is not prevailed upon to do them once more. And please—recording techniques such as these do demand serious re-study. *W. D.*

▲ **CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21; **SCHUMANN:** Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54. Eugene Istomin with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. (Chopin) and the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. (Schumann). Columbia MS 6159 \$5.98

Interest: Romantic staples
Performance: Communicative
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Reasonable
Stereo Depth: Good

Istomin made his professional debut in 1943 when he was eighteen, playing the Chopin F Minor Concerto with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. This recording, then, marks the resumption of an old association in a familiar work. The orchestra is more sumptuous than the music demands, but sumptuousness is, of course, pith and substance of the Philadelphia way. Istomin's way is sensitive and alert, with here and there an extra flash of color and spirit to personalize the performance.

In the Schumann, the pianist enjoys the collaboration of perhaps the Number One romantic conductor of our times. This is all to the good, of course, and the performance that Bruno Walter elicits from

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the Columbia house orchestra is lyrical, warm and spontaneous.

The Istomin-Walter is not as dramatic a performance as the Fleisher-Szell (Epic BC 1080) nor as broad as the Cliburn-Reiner (RCA Victor LSC 2455), but it has more charm than the Richter-Rowicki (Deutsche Grammophon 138077) or the Rubinstein-Krips (RCA Victor LSC 2256). Cloaked in recorded sound that is rich and well-balanced, this is quite the most attractive of the stereo versions of the Schumann Piano Concerto. *W. D.*

△ **CHOPIN:** Piano Sonata No. 2 in B Flat Minor, Op. 35; Nocturne in F Sharp Major, Op. 15, No. 2; Nocturne in D-flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2; Etude in C Major, Op. 10, No. 1; Etude in C Minor, Op. 10, No. 12 ("Revolutionary"); Mazurkas in B Minor, Op. 33, No. 4; F Minor, Op. 63, No. 2; F Sharp Minor, Op. 59, No. 3; C Sharp Minor, Op. 41, No. 1. Adam Harasiewicz. Epic LC 3633 \$4.98

Interest: Classic Chopiniana
Performance: Nothing special
Recording: Could be better

In my review last October of the recordings made by the winners of the 5th Concours International, Warsaw, 1955 (Pathé DTX 171-175), I wrote "I would be inclined to rate Ashkenazy over Harasiewicz. They both play with poise and polish, but Ashkenazy has more temperament." Harasiewicz was first in that competition and Vladimir Ashkenazy was second.

This record bears me out, at least insofar as their current abilities may be judged. Ashkenazy has grown considerably in musical stature; he is universally acknowledged as a front-rank pianist destined for pre-eminence. Harasiewicz does not indicate that he will attain such rare heights. He is a dependable executant rather than a brilliant re-creator, saying nothing that is distinctly personal in these performances. Epic has recorded the piano more effectively on other occasions. *W. D.*

△ **CHOPIN:** 26 Preludes—Op. 28, Nos. 1-24; C-sharp Minor, Op. 45; A-flat, Op. Posthumous. Sergio Fiorentino (piano). Roulette R 75004 \$4.98

Interest: Piano cornerstone
Performance: Imaginative
Recording: Good

Although the liner notes refer to Fiorentino as "the renowned Italian pianist," that is all the annotator seems to know about him, and a phone call to Roulette brought me no further biographical information. However, he recorded a splendid performance of Schumann's *Carnaval* (Forum 70007) not long ago, and this disc discloses further evidence of his superior and individual pianism.

These are not ordinary interpretations of the Preludes. Fiorentino plays many of them with a freedom few pianists would attempt, but he has such a grasp of the music and its style that the liberties he takes do not detract from the merit of his performances. For instance, he plays the familiar seventh Prelude, in A Major, as a light waltz, a variation from the interpretive norm that comes off only because of its bold imaginativeness.

The two Preludes not in Opus 28 are relatively minor additions to the Chopin

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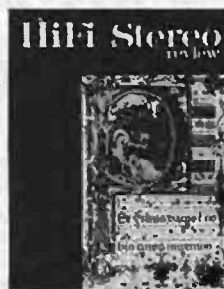
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repertoire, but they are characteristic of the composer. The recorded sound of the piano is bright and clear. *W. D.*

▲ **CHOPIN:** Fourteen Waltzes. Witold Malczuzynski (piano). Angel S 35726 \$5.98

Interest: Much
Performance: Romantic
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Not needed
Stereo Depth: Good

There are times when this Paderewski disciple can be maddening in his adherence to an ultra-romantic, devil-take-the-printed-score style. In these pieces in three-quarter time, his waywardness is neither extreme nor objectionable. He imbues the music with vitality and variety without fetching for these qualities. His tone is pleasing and his phrasing stylish. Angel's fine recording is an asset. *W. D.*

▲ **CUSHING:** Clarinet Sonata (see p. 85)

▲ **DALLAPICCOLA:** Five Fragments of Sappho; Two Anacreon Songs; Five Songs; Goethe Songs; Christmas Concerto for the Year 1956. Elisabeth Soederstroem (soprano), and Frederick Fuller (baritone) with Instrumental Ensembles, Luigi Dallapiccola, Frederick Prausnitz cond. Epic BC 1088 \$5.98

Interest: Decidedly specialized!
Performance: Seems idiomatic
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

Luigi Dallapiccola, born in 1904, has been an important figure on the contemporary musical scene since the early 1930's when he became the Italian delegate to the International Society for Contemporary Music. His *Songs of Prison* of 1938-41 for mixed chorus and orchestra (once available on Angel 35228) is probably his best-known work to record collectors. It is a powerfully moving score of a hypnotic intensity. The present disc gives us five works that cover Dallapiccola's progress from 1942 to 1956.

In the brief notes that accompany these performances, Dallapiccola informs us that the *Five Fragments of Sappho* and the *Two Anacreon Songs* are two-thirds of a trilogy composed between 1942 and 1945. They represent, in Dallapiccola's own words, "my first step on the road to dodecaphony." The *Goethe Songs* were written in 1953 and the other two works on the disc in 1956.

I find my interest in the music running inversely proportional to its newness. The vocal writing throughout is reminiscent of the wide interval skips and the declamatory style of Berg's *Wozzeck*, but what strikes me as bold and inventive in the 12-tone writing of the two earliest cycles emerges as artificial, sterile and affected in the three later ones. I must say that I find it strange for a composer of Italian heritage to be writing in the abstruse and unpleasant 12-tone idiom—light-years away from the cultural tradition of Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi and Puccini. If I felt that dodecaphonism was the natural musical speech of Dallapiccola, I'd be less disturbed by it. As it is, however, I cannot escape the feeling that he has merely subscribed to a currently fashionable fad and is doing the best he can in an effort to conform

to it. Like nearly all the other 12-toners around, Dallapiccola seems to have forgotten that it is substance, not style, which lends distinction to a musical work; craftsmanship is no substitute for creativity.

The performances seem to do for the music all that can be done for it. Miss Soederstroem reveals a surprising affinity for the idiom, and the recorded sound is exceedingly clear and well-balanced. *M. B.*

▲ **DAQUIN:** 12 Noël's. E. Power Biggs (organ). Columbia MS 6167 \$5.98

Interest: Christmas delights
Performance: Elegant
Recording: Crystal clear
Stereo Directionality: Minimal
Stereo Depth: Good

Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772), a younger contemporary of Rameau and Organist of the Chapel Royal from 1739, is justly remembered today for his delectable organ settings of French Christmas choral melodies—the *Noël's*.

His variation treatments are by turns of naïve simplicity, of enchanting color, and sometimes of genuine poignance; and so varied are they that hearing twelve in a row, as on this E. Power Biggs disc, affords a full measure of listening enjoyment without a trace of monotony.

This experience is abetted by the lovely classic-style tracker action instrument used by Biggs—the one recently built by D. A. Flentrop at the Harvard University Busch-Reisinger Museum. The choice of registration comes out as a joy to the ear; Biggs plays superlatively well; and the recorded sound is perfection itself. A delightful disc, not only for Christmas, but for any season of the year! *D. H.*

▲ **DEBUSSY:** The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian. Philadelphia Orchestra and Chorus, with Vera Zorina (narrator); Hilde Gueden (soprano); Ethelwyn Whitmore and Natalia Moekkel (mezzo-sopranos); and Musical Art Society of Camden, Eugene Ormandy cond. Columbia M25 609 2 12" \$11.96

Interest: Mixed, at best
Performance: Variable
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: Good

The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian continues to be one of Debussy's most puzzling scores. It was composed in 1911 to a Mystery Play of the Italian dramatist, Gabriele D'Annunzio, on commission from the dancer, Ida Rubinstein, who nearly twenty years later was also responsible for commissioning Ravel's *Bolero*. The story deals with the conversion to Christianity of Sebastian, captain of the archers of the Emperor of Rome, and his eventual martyrdom by the arrows of his own men.

The score is in five acts, or "mansions," as they are called, each one introduced by a prelude. There is an extended spoken commentary as well as solos for a soprano and two contraltos, with chorus and orchestra. The whole has a curiously quasi-mystical, quasi-erotic flavor, closing with a Hollywood kind of rainbow glow—antiphonal choruses of Heavenly hosts as the spirit of the martyred saint is received.

A previous stereo release by Ansermet (London OSA 1104) omitted the role of the narrator, although two earlier mono-releases—by Inghelbrecht for Ducretet-Thomson and Munch for RCA Victor (LM 2030)—did include narration. The Munch version is doubly interesting, for the conductor was his own narrator in the recording and he infused a reverent, passionate intensity into his performance which Vera Zorina does not approach in this new one.

Ormandy does very well, but again Munch's performance had a special aura about it which one does not quite find here. The choral parts are sensitively sung by the combined Philadelphia Orchestra Chorus and Musical Art Society of Camden, and the vocal soloists sound fine.

The recorded sound is excellent. *M. B.*

▲ **DENNEY:** Partita for Organ (see p. 85)

▲ **DYORAK:** Symphony No. 4 in G Major, Op. 88; Carnival Overture, Op. 92. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. Mercury SR 90236 \$5.98

Interest: Masterful Czech symphony
Performance: Better than expected
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

Mercury's stereo sound shows continuing improvement. The harsh, tearing string sound of so many of the company's early releases is by and large a thing of the past, and the brass reproduction is now a good deal warmer and less shrill.

Mercury has had in its catalog a splendid account of Dvořák's Fourth Symphony by Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra but in mono only (50162). Barbirolli gives a glowing performance, at once heroic and poetic. If Dorati, in this new version, fails to equal Barbirolli's very personal involvement with this music, he nevertheless does turn in a reading of surprising suppleness and charm—attributes not normally associated with a Dorati performance. The tempi throughout are on the brisk side and the orchestra plays extremely well for him. I continue to prefer the greater freedom and mood-painting of Barbirolli and Silvestri (Angel 35622) in mono and of Szell (Epic BC 1015) in stereo, but this Dorati version deserves to be heard also.

The *Carnaval Overture*, which fills out the second side, is given a really virtuoso performance and is quite a dazzler. *M. B.*

▲ **FINNEY:** Piano Quintet (see p. 85)

▲ **FOSS:** Quartet No. 1 (see p. 85)

▲ **GERSHWIN:** Rhapsody In Blue; Concerto in F. André Previn (piano), with André Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. Columbia CS 8286 \$5.98

▲ **GERSHWIN:** Rhapsody In Blue; An American In Paris. Jesús María Sanromá (piano), with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg cond. Everest SDBR 3067 \$4.98; Mono LPBR 6067 \$4.98

Interest: Familiar and favorite couplings.
Performance: Sanromá superb, Previn aloof
Recording: Everest has it
Stereo Directionality: On all counts, good
Stereo Depth: Everest has it

Given some of Everest's best engineering,

Jesús María Sanromá, who can probably play the *Rhapsody In Blue* at the drop of a hat anywhere, anytime, gives a brilliant account of this time-worn score, aided by the polished playing of the Pittsburgh Orchestra. With years of Gershwin playing behind him at Boston's Symphony Hall, Sanromá whirls through the piece in wizard style, letting up at the right moments to give this music the sentimental blues touch it needs.

Columbia's pairing gives its bright star, André Previn, ample opportunity to display his technique, which is every bit as sure as Sanromá's, but the difference in their performances is instantly obvious. Previn goes right to work and puts both the *Rhapsody* and the *Concerto* away with cool dispassionate ease. Gershwin's works pose no problems for the piano virtuosi, but the stylistic pitfalls are there just the same: if style and manner are not right, the performance can emerge as routine. Where Sanromá injects the right amounts of swagger and rhythm, Previn sails past, intellectually and technically perfect, but emotionally aloof.

Steinberg's conducting leaves nothing to be desired where transparency and detail are concerned. His performance of *An American In Paris* is crystal bright, especially interesting in the opening pages. But here, too, sentiment is lacking.

The saucy, hip-swinging, smoky blues character so necessary for these Gershwin period pieces is just not there. The Everest sound is slightly better than Columbia's, and spatial spread is well realized on both stereo issues, while the mono Steinberg-Sanromá recording is a real stunner of its kind.

J. T.

▲ △ **GROFÉ: Grand Canyon Suite; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.** Jesús María Sanromá (piano) with the Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferde Grofé cond. Everest SDBR 3044 \$4.98; Mono LPBR 6044 \$4.98

Interest: Grofé premiere
Recording: Good

Performance: Adequate

Stereo Directionality: Nicely balanced
Stereo Depth: Good

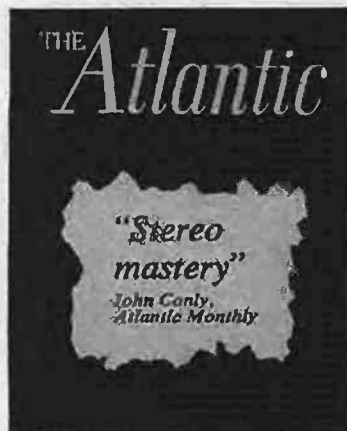
Grofé began his *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* while he was with Paul Whiteman in the early 1930's, but he put the score aside and didn't finish it until 1960. It is a one-movement affair, with two subjects, two main themes and subordinates. He dedicates the music to the soloist, who records it for the first time with Grofé leading the Rochester Philharmonic.

A relatively short work (14:55), the *Concerto* is old-fashioned by modern standards—music from the same piece of cloth as the *Warsaw Concerto*. It is a commercial-sounding vehicle splashed with billowing orchestral climaxes that will have mass appeal; but it is certainly not music to be taken seriously. Sanromá plays it well, and easily, for this is not a technique-taxing score.

Grofé directs a surprisingly weak account of his celebrated "*Grand Canyon*," choosing a slow tempo for *On the Trail* and reading his most successful score without a shred of vitality. Everest engineering is good, as usual, but here the music falls far short of the engineering effort. If you want a "*Grand Canyon*" to command attention, either the Mercury disc with

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programming gives Fiedler a very thorough knowledge of the Liszt scores, favorites with decades of Pops visitors, and he conducts most of the repertoire here with an ear sympathetic to inherent dramatics. But even the Boston Pops brilliant sound cannot always overcome those black thundercloud bars, as waves of billowing tumult splash with free abandon in *Les Préludes* and *Mazepka*. Great climaxes shiver and groan, seem to call forth the Wolf Man from under the bed, summon Dracula from a cobwebbed lined casket, sounding humorless and rigid, old fashioned and dull. There are a few bright moments of sensitive beauty in the familiar Hungarian Rhapsody, but sunlight is hard to find in these gloomy valleys of sound. Good engineering captures the admirable acoustics of Symphony Hall at Boston. *J.T.*



▲ **LOEFFLER:** A Pagan Poem; **SCHÖNBERG:** Verklärte Nacht. Leopold Stokowski conducting his Orchestra; Robert Hunter (piano) and William Kosinski (English horn) in the Loeffler. Capitol SP 8433 \$5.98

Interest: Fascinating Stokowskiana
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Fine
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Excellent

A couple of generations ago, Charles Martin Loeffler was one of the most prominent men of music in this country. A native of Mulhouse in Alsace, he came to this country as a violinist in his early twenties, became an American citizen in 1887 when he was 26, and lived in the environs of Boston for nearly a half century afterwards (he died in 1935).

A Pagan Poem, composed in 1906, is probably his best-known work today, but even this is relative: for all practical purposes Loeffler's music has passed into oblivion. This is a pity, for he was a brilliantly colorful orchestrator and a man of ideas. If *A Pagan Poem* is reminiscent of d'Indy's *Symphony on a French Mountain Air* in its texture and harmonies, it is nevertheless a colorful and articulate work that deserves to be heard. It has a literary program based upon verses from the Eighth Eclogue of Virgil, telling of a faithless lover who is finally brought back to the side of the sweetheart he has forsaken by the magic spell of a sorceress. Roger Sessions' *Idyll of Theocritus* (Louisville 57-4) sets the Greek version of the same tale for voice and orchestra.

If the mere recitation of this program suggests to you that the music would be tailor-made for the conducting talents of Leopold Stokowski, you're absolutely right! This is impassioned, voluptuous music and Stokowski is in his element. Furthermore, the orchestra assembled for the recording—made on the West Coast—is superb and responds to his conducting with enthusiasm and excitement. Whoever thought of uniting Stokowski and this score deserves a vote of gratitude.

As to the much more familiar Schönberg score, a comparison with Stokowski's RCA Victor recording of the music made about a decade ago reveals the extent to which Stokowski has refined and polished his art in recent years. The earlier performance

abounds in the lush, over-ripe sonorities which used to be an obsession with the conductor. In the new performance, the sound is still gorgeous, but the heavings, chummings, and exaggerations of the Stokowski of ten years ago are gone. In their place, one gets a free-flowing, spontaneously felt account of the music. As in the Loeffler, the playing is marvelous, and both works are splendid in their stereo richness and depth.

This disc is a major addition to the record catalogs. *M.B.*

▲ △ **MENDELSSOHN:** Sonatas for Cello and Piano—No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 45; No. 2 in D Major, Op. 58. David Soyer and Harriet Wingreen. Monitor MCS 2045 \$4.98; Mono MC 2045 \$4.98

Interest: Melodious and charming
Performance: Sensitive

Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Reasonable
Stereo Depth: Good

It is easy to be beguiled by the sheer melodiousness of Felix Mendelssohn's chamber music. The profundities in the music are few and the conflicts even fewer. There is little drama and less sorrow. But there is a wealth of charm, elegance, and spontaneity.

These sonatas are among the loveliest for the cello. The composer does not grapple with the instrument. Cumber-some for others, it is as graceful for him as a violin. The music radiates well-being and graciousness, dignity and sparkle. What it says is said with aptness and wit. Soyer's tone is pleasing and the ensemble is nicely balanced. Stereo adds to the illusion of realism. *W.D.*

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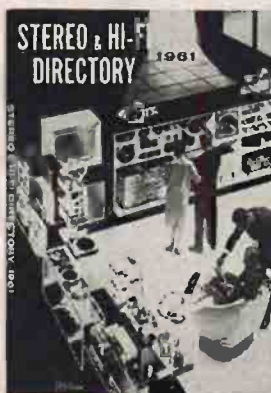
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MILHAUD: Little Symphony No. 4 (see p. 84)

△ **MOUSSORGSKY:** Pictures at an Exhibition; **PROKOFIEV:** Piano Sonata No. 7 in B-flat, Op. 83. Sviatoslav Richter. Arta ALP 154 \$4.98

Interest: Caviar
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Very good

The Moussorgsky presents the enigmatic Richter, who alternates moments of real inspiration with moments of frustration. It is a beautifully played performance, with a sparkling *Tuileries*, a vivacious *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks*, a scintillating *Limoges* and an eerie, unearthly *Catacombs*.

However, the opening *Promenade* is played very fast, portraying poor Moussorgsky rushing about hither and yon among the water colors and architectural drawings of his dear departed friend's memorial exhibition. *Bydlo* is also played fast. I cannot imagine oxen pulling a clumsy cart at a smart gallop. Also, I much prefer the soft opening and gradual crescendo usually heard in this section to the unvaried loudness of Richter's opening, even though he plays it as the composer was supposed to have played it and did mark it. I do feel the *crescendo* is more imaginative and interesting.

Unfortunately, the otherwise very good recording does not permit the full power of Richter's playing to be heard in the closing *Great Gate of Kiev*. Undoubtedly, Richter's tone in that section was larger than the record grooves could convey. The recording engineers have resorted to monitoring and the final pages are compressed in sound. This is a pity, for instead of an exciting aural climax, we are left with rather monotonously level sound.

The Prokofiev is a joy from beginning to end. This is a splendid performance, rivaling the deleted Horowitz recording for RCA in excitement and insight. Richter makes more of the lyrical slow movement than Horowitz did and plays the intense finale just a shade faster, but not quite as dynamically. In this piece, the recording throughout is superior to that in the Moussorgsky. *W.D.*



▲ **MOZART:** Clarinet Concerto in A Major (K. 622); Horn Concerto No. 1 in D Major (K. 412); Horn Concerto No. 3 in E-flat Major (K. 447). Gervaise De Peyer (clarinet); Barry Tuckwell (horn). The London Symphony Orchestra, Peier Maag cond. London CS 6178 \$5.98

Interest: Certainly
Performance: Exemplary
Recording: Rich
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: OK

Mozart's two-movement Horn Concerto No. 1 is a wonderful work, despite its lightness. This is one of four concertos that Mozart wrote for Ignaz Leutgeb, a member of the Salzburg Orchestra. Throughout the score, he included a number of mock instructions for "that ass, ox and fool" (Leutgeb)!

The other two works on the disc are acknowledged masterpieces. The less familiar of the two, the E-flat Horn Con-

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fremendous technical and interpretive problems in performance.

Ricci recorded the whole set for London on two discs (LL 252 and LL 264) almost ten years ago. This new version is more refined in sound. It also presents a subtler, more assured artist.

The passage of time and technology has enabled London to put all 24 Caprices on one disc, although they cannot be individually banded in this economical format. However, they are divided in groups of three, with bands between the groups, so finding an individual Caprice is not too difficult. W. D.



▲ **PAISIELLO:** *The Barber of Seville* (complete opera). Graziella Sciutti (soprano)—Rosina; Nicola Monti (tenor)—Count Almaviva; Rolando Panerai (baritone)—Figaro; Renato Capocchi (bass)—Dr. Bartolo; Mario Petri (bass)—Basilio & others. Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano cond. Mercury SR 2-9010 \$11.96

Interest: Comic opera landmark
Performance: Expert
Recording: Outstanding
Stereo Directionality: Restrained
Stereo Depth: Excellent

Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816) composed his *Barber of Seville* to a text the Roman poet Giuseppe Petrosellini fashioned from Beaumarchais' comedy in 1782. The opera was first presented in the same year in St. Petersburg, under the patronage of Catherine the Great, to whom it was dedicated. Mozart saw it in Vienna a year later—a circumstance that propelled him toward the composing of *The Marriage of Figaro*, based on Beaumarchais' sequel to "*The Barber*." Thanks to this welcome and beautifully recorded documentation, we can now simultaneously discover both the magnitude of Paisiello's skills and the extent of his influence on Mozart.

Petrosellini's book, which follows Beaumarchais very closely, parallels the better-known Sterbini-Rossini version. The stage action is a bit more restrained, less suitable for slapstick, although there is a hilarious bit involving Dr. Bartolo's two endearingly moronic servants who alternately sneeze and yawn their master to distraction.

Paisiello was a marvelous craftsman. His treatment of the orchestra was vivid and bold, as witnessed by the second act's storm scene and the orchestral background to Basilio's "*La Calunnia*." As for his command of the vocal ensembles, it was probably unparalleled in *opera buffa* until the "mature" works of Mozart. There are several instances which prove Mozart's indebtedness, and none better than Rosina's aria "*Già riede primavera*" which foreshadows the mood in the "*Figaro*" garden scene, recalling as it does the music of both Barbarina and the Countess.

The inevitable comparison with Rossini cannot, of course, turn out in the older composer's favor. For all his expert ensembles and pleasant arias, Paisiello possessed neither the sparkle nor the flair of Rossini's less inhibited comic genius.

The performance recorded here by Mercury is exceptionally fine, due largely to the presence of Renato Fasano and his Virtuosi di Roma (evidently enlarged for the occasion). As befits a musician of his

proven authority, Fasano's reading is precise, vigorous and thoroughly delightful.

There can be nothing but high praise for the singers who are all from the front rank of Milan's Piccola Scala. Sciutti and Panerai are among Italy's leading Mozartians. Monti has few equals in similar repertoire, and Capocchi is a remarkably expressive and versatile buffo artist. Petri is not quite their equal, but he is always competent.

The warm, luminous sound results in velvety reproduction for the strings, and fine balances. Stereo gives us clear articulation in the important vocal ensembles, otherwise directionality is not emphasized until we reach Side 4.

This album is a notable contribution, for which Mercury deserves the highest encomiums. Harold Lawrence's illuminating essay, which comes with the sets, adds the finishing touch to an excellent production. G. F.

PROKOFIEV: Lieutenant Kije (see **SHOSTAKOVICH**)

PROKOFIEV: Piano Sonata No. 7 (see **MOUSSORGSKY**)

△ **PROKOFIEV:** Symphony No. 6 in E-flat, Op. 111. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky cond. Artia ALP 158 \$4.98

Interest: Late and lyrical Prokofiev
Performance: Intense
Recording: Better than USSR average

Only in his Fifth Symphony did Serge Prokofiev achieve a grand synthesis of the lyric and heroic. In his Sixth Symphony of 1947, Prokofiev has given us music less impressive in structure, but very intense in its lyrical introspection. The lyrical strain holds throughout almost all of the long first movement and somewhat shorter *Largo*. Only in the finale does the special Prokofiev brand of rhythmic dynamism manifest itself.

At one time, both Eugene Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Ernest Ansermet with the Suisse Romande ensemble were represented by LP discs of the Prokofiev Sixth Symphony; but both have fallen into the "deleted" category, leaving the field wholly to Mravinsky and his Leningraders.

Mravinsky emphasizes the lyrical-expressive aspect of the music throughout, and to impressive effect—thanks to the Leningrad Philharmonic's superb string section. The recorded sound lacks very slightly in bass; but the room acoustics are good and the overall sound is the best we have heard on any large-scale orchestral disc originating in the Soviet Union. D. H.

ROSEN: Clarinet-and-Cello Sonata (p. 85)

SCHÖNBERG: Verklärte Nacht (see **LOEFFLER**)

SCHUMANN: Piano Concerto (see **CHOPIN**)

▲ △ **SHOSTAKOVICH:** Symphony No. 9, Op. 70; **PROKOFIEV:** Lieutenant Kije—Suite, Op. 60. London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. Everest SDBR 3054 \$4.98; Mono LPBR 6054 \$4.98

Interest: Modern and tuneful
Performance: Lyrical
Recording: Brilliant
Stereo Directionality: Proper
Stereo Depth: Good

The Shostakovich Ninth Symphony is a cheerful, lyrical composition, and perhaps that is why it is not accorded much critical consideration. In this age when the labor pains of symphonic creation are deeply traumatic, it seems almost like sacrilege to write a symphony that is not wholly serious.

About a year after its successful 1945 premiere, the symphony and its composer were attacked by the artistic pundits of the Russian Communist Party for having "failed to reflect the true spirit of the Soviet people." It may be well to remark that the composers who jumped on Shostakovich have yet to write a successful symphony.

Sargent's performance is virile and communicative. The work is tuneful and the melodies are given full play.

The more subtle Prokofiev masterpiece is also performed with spirit and geniality. Sargent is not the most searching of conductors, but he knows how to make an orchestra sing. The players respond enthusiastically to his beat and the Everest recording is a model of clarity and balance, with no thickness of texture in the mono, and fine spread in the stereo. W. D.

SKALKOTTAS: Little Suite (see p. 84)

SMITH: String Trio (see p. 85)

▲ **J. STRAUSS:** *Die Fledermaus* (complete operetta). Karl Terkel (tenor)—Von Eisenstein; Fred Liewehr (dialogue only)—Von Eisenstein; Gerda Scheyrer (soprano)—Rosalinga; Anton Dermota (tenor)—Alfred; Wilma Lipp (soprano)—Adele; Walter Berry (baritone)—Frank; Eberhard Wächter (baritone)—Dr. Falke; Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano)—Prince Orlofsky; Erich Majkut (tenor)—Dr. Blind; Erich Kunz (speaking only)—Frosch; Luise Martini (speaking only)—Ida; Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus, Otto Ackermann cond. Angel S 3581 B/L 2 12" \$12.96

Interest: Champagne operetta
Performance: Not bubbly enough
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

There is no doubt that this is an opera with a plot, even a philosophy. We seem to have all of the dialogue in this recording to assure us of this, but it almost smothers the gaiety of this gay masterpiece. Instead of lending continuity to the story, it merely slows the flow of the proceedings.

The late Otto Ackermann leads a competent musical performance. He does not have the subtlety of the late Clemens Krauss, and this new version of *Die Fledermaus* does not challenge the pre-eminence of the old one, without spoken dialogue, that Krauss conducted for London (LL 281/282). That one was a classic. The little retards, hesitations and accents that mark the true Viennese style were there to enjoy; they are not to be found in such full measure in this new rendition. The singing and playing here are correct and accurate. In the Krauss set, they were joined by genius.

Anton Dermota, as Alfred, is the star of this show, just as he was in the old one. He sings with style and vitality. Wilma Lipp is not quite the Adele here that she

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Was in the Krauss performance. Her coloratura lacks some of its former crispness, although her singing in general is still beautiful.

Of the new singers, Eberhard Wächter and Walter Berry do their parts very well. Christa Ludwig rather overdoes the boredom that characterizes Prince Orlofsky, while Karl Terkal and Gerda Scheyrer do not, unfortunately, seem to be in the same class as Julius Patzak and Hilde Gueden of the old album.

I think Angel gave us too much of a good thing with the spoken dialogue. Judicious cutting would still preserve continuity, while the action would be speeded up advantageously, and musical numbers would not have to suffer cuts. Some charming music had to go in order to make room for so much talk. Frösch's drunken scene at the beginning of Act 3 seems endless; one-third of it would be sufficient and more effective.

Stereo effects aid in "seeing" the action and the recording is rich in sound and very well balanced. However, the dialogue at Prince Orlofsky's party has no sounds of revelry behind it. There is much talk in this opera of champagne and the joy of living, but the bubbles and sparkle are found in rather small quantity in this performance. We shall be interested to hear the forthcoming London stereo recording under the formidable baton of Herbert von Karajan.

W. D.



▲ **TCHAIKOVSKY:** Symphony No. 6 in B Minor, Op. 74. ("Pathétique.") Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. Columbia MS 6160 \$5.98

Interest: Certainly
Performance: Superb
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Fine

If I remember correctly, the "Pathétique" was the first music Ormandy ever recorded with the Philadelphia Orchestra back in the 1930's (Victor 78-rpm set M 337). As an indication of Ormandy's growth as a conductor in this, his 25th anniversary season in Philadelphia, this new "Pathétique" is startling. This is a superb performance, one that approaches the score with dignity and devotion. For once, the finale, instead of the more obvious and militant third movement March, emerges as the true emotional climax of the music. Without slighting the earlier movements, Ormandy builds his entire performance to an *Adagio lamentoso* of rare spirituality.

It is probably superfluous to say so, but the playing of the orchestra and the engineers' reproduction of the whole are models. This is the recording of the "Pathétique" I now would recommend above all others.

M. B.

▲ **VERDI:** La Traviata (complete opera). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano)—Violetta Valéry; Carlo del Monte (tenor)—Alfredo Germont; Mario Sereni (baritone)—Giorgio Germont; Santa Chissari (soprano)—Flora; Sergio Tedesco (tenor)—Gastone; Vico Polotto (baritone)—Doughol; Silvio Maionica (bass)—d'Obigny, & others. Orchestra and Chorus of the Rome Opera. Tullio Serafin cond. Capitol SGCR 7221 3 12" \$17.94

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Interest: Always
Performance: Very good
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Directionality: Very slight
Stereo Depth: Good

Capitol's new *La Traviata* rates very highly on performance values, quite apart from the advantages deriving from its presently unique position as the only stereo version of the opera now in existence. It is extremely fortunate that this is so, for while the recorded sound is warm and brilliant, the stereophonic results are generally undistinguished.

No need to dwell on the negative side, however. The musical performance is excellent, in many ways the best of all available choices. Victoria de los Angeles, after a moment of edginess in "*Ah! fors' è lui*," disposes of the florid requirements of "*Sempre libera*" in impeccable style and sings with effortless purity and exquisite phrasing to the end. Even if she does not exploit the dramatic possibilities of the role to the fullest, and seldom if ever allows herself a real *pianissimo* (most noticeable is her slighting the *ppp* marking in "*Alfredo, di questo cuore*"), one must rank her Violetta with the best to be heard today.

The admirable soprano receives outstanding support from Carlo del Monte, an ardent and strong-voiced, yet reasonably pliant, tenor and Mario Sereni, a Germont of dignity, tenderness, and good vocal resources. While neither commands a luxuriant vocal quality, both are intelligent, laudably musical artists. The Act II duet between de los Angeles and Sereni is exceptionally fine.

It would hardly suffice to dismiss Tullio Serafin's contribution with two or three standard laudatory adjectives. A remarkable conductor when he first conducted *La Traviata* at the Met thirty-six years ago, now, at 82, he displays an undimmed mastery of the best Italian traditions—crispness and rhythmic vitality, a natural sense of balance, discipline without rigidity, *rubato* without disturbing excesses and masterful pacing and support for his singers. Capitol has included a highly entertaining bonus disc with the set, taken at one of the orchestral rehearsals. Here Serafin shows not only his amazing authority and quicksilver alertness but also a somewhat worn but indomitable coloratura-baritone with which he places before us all personalities of the opera, from Violetta to the servant Giuseppe.

The Rome Opera's *comprimarii* are a well-routined lot, the chorus outstandingly good. The unimaginative use of stereo, with practically no illusion of space and movement, is the only disappointment. Surely, *something* could have been made of the stage business in Act III simply by following the libretto's instructions concerning the card game on the right, Violetta's withdrawal and subsequent return, and, particularly, Germont's sudden and dramatic appearance with "*Di sprezzo sdegno . . .*"

Well, anyway, it is a fine performance, and on that level it can be wholeheartedly recommended.

G. J.

WILDER: Suite for Brass Quintet (see p. 86)

COLLECTIONS



▲ **BARTÓK:** Divertimento for Strings (1939); **IVES:** The Unanswered Question (1908); **MILHAUD:** Little Symphony No. 4, for Strings (1921); **SKALKOTTAS:** Little Suite for Strings (1942). Zimmler Sinfonietta, Lukas Foss cond. Siena S 100-2 \$4.98

Interest: Modern varieties
Performance: Precise
Recording: First-rate

One of my favorite discs on the now defunct Unicorn label was this fine collection of 20th century music for chamber orchestra; and its resurrection under the Siena aegis (P.O. Box 91, Boston 12, Mass.) is most welcome.

The Zimmler Sinfonietta is made up of Boston Symphony Orchestra players; Lukas Foss is not only a skillful composer but a fine conductor of modern music; and the engineering was done in Boston's Symphony Hall by that redoubtable genius in the field, Peter Bartók, son of Béla Bartók. The recording sounded fresh and clean when first issued in 1956 and it has not lost one whit of its freshness and clarity since. Until we get a stereo version, this recorded performance of Charles Ives' mystical colloquy is likely to remain unequalled in both precision of utterance and evocative power. The Milhaud "Symphony" is, save for its slow movement, a fairly inconsequential essay in polytonality; but the Little Suite by the gifted Greek composer, Nikos Skalkottas (1904-1949), is quite another matter. Its intensity of expression and terseness of structure produce a combined impact in the hearing that makes immaterial such considerations as its being composed in 12-tone idiom.

The Béla Bartók "Divertimento" is an altogether splendid work, when played with precision and intensity. Some may find this performance a trifle icy; but it does have power, lots of it. Only Dorati and the Philharmonia Hungarica (Epic LC 3513) and the Angel stereo disc of Silvestri and the Philharmonia (S 35643) are in the same league.

D. H.

▲ **MOZART:** Adagio in G Major (K. 261); Rondo in C Major (K. 373); **BEETHOVEN:** Romance No. 2 in F, Op. 50; **WIENIAWSKI:** Légende, Op. 17; **NOVÁČEK:** Perpetuum Mobile; **STRAVINSKY:** Borceuse from the Firebird; **SAINT-SAËNS:** Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28, Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Concert Arts Orchestra, Walter Susskind cond. Capitol SP 8528 \$5.98

Interest: Fiddle-orchestra grab-bag
Performance: Stimulating
Recording: Good, but lacks bass
Stereo Directionality: Perfect
Stereo Depth: A mite shallow

On this release, ambiguously entitled "Milstein Masterpieces," Capitol presents one of the greatest living artists playing a scattering of pleasant, somewhat neglected scores (except for the Saint-Saëns) and he dashes them off with a fine display of technical proficiency, but without much vivacity of tonal character. His account of the Mozart pieces, for example, sounds in style and manner like his playing of the Beethoven *Romance*, and the only per-

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ceptible broadcasting of tone comes in the Stravinsky *Berceuse*.

Elsewhere, Milstein's playing leaves nothing to be desired (he is a magician in the delicate *spiccato* bowing of *Perpetuum Mobile*).

Perhaps the general sound of this Capitol disc can be held partly responsible for the seeming lack of warmth in Milstein's playing. The engineering results in an exceedingly clear sound filled with crisp detail, but lack of bass makes also for lack of tonal warmth. J. T.

△ **BERGSMA:** Quartet No. 3; **FOSS:** Quartet No. 1. The Juilliard String Quartet (Bergsma), The American Art Quartet (Foss). Columbia ML 5476 \$4.98

▲ **FINNEY:** Piano Quintet; **SEEGER:** Quartet (1931). Stanley Quartet of the University of Michigan with Beveridge Webster, Amati String Quartet. Columbia MS 6142 \$5.98

Interest: Major American chamber music
Performance: Excellent, authoritative
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Sufficient
Stereo Depth: Good

These releases are products of the Modern American Music Series sponsored by Columbia Records. The works recorded are chosen by a committee consisting of Virgil Thomson, Chairman, with Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, Goddard Lieberson and William Schuman. The performances are by artists selected by the composers, who are also given the opportunity to supervise the recording sessions.

Ruth Crawford Seeger was born in 1901 and died in 1953. Ross Lee Finney was born in 1906, William Bergsma in 1921 and Lukas Foss in 1922. Their music is strong in character, and in the case of the Bergsma and the Finney, decidedly significant in style and content. Virgil Thomson's committee has chosen composers and compositions characteristically modern and important. The performances are brilliant as well as authentic, and Columbia, of course, is according the project superior engineering. W. D.

△ **ELKUS:** After Their Kind; **CYR:** Peter Quince at the Clavier; **CUSHING:** Sonata for Clarinet and Piano. Edgar Jones (baritone), Jerome Rosen (clarinet), Nathan Schwartz (piano), Helen Cyr (piano). Fantasy 5008 \$4.98

△ **IMBRIE:** Piano Sonata; **ROSEN:** Sonata for Clarinet and Violoncello; **NIXON:** Six Moods of Love. Dorothy Renzi (soprano), Jerome Rosen (clarinet), Helen Stross (violoncello), Raylene Pierce (piano), Andrew Imbrie (piano). Fantasy 5009 \$4.98

△ **CLARKE:** Chamber Music; **DENNY:** Partita for Organ; **SMITH:** String Trio. Dorothy Renzi (soprano), Nathan Rubin (violin), Mary James (viola), Bonnie Hampton (violoncello), Nathan Schwartz (piano), Lawrence Moe (organ). Fantasy 5010 \$4.98

Interest: Representative American chamber music
Performance: Dedicated and authoritative
Recording: Very good

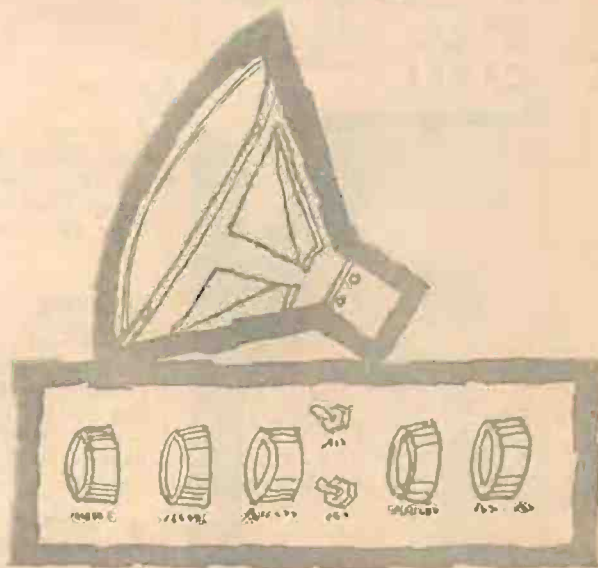
If few American composers are recorded in depth, it must nevertheless be admitted that more and more of them are at least—and at last—appearing on records. Of the nine composers here represented, five (Jonathan Elkus, Gordon Cyr, Charles Cushing, Laurence Clarke, Leland Smith)

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make their initial appearance in the current Schwann catalog, and of the other four (Andrew Imbrie, Jerome Rosen, Roger Nixon, William Denny), only the first has more than one previous listing. Imbrie has two.

This series of records is an outgrowth of the Composers' Forum, which was organized in San Francisco fourteen years ago for the encouragement and performance of contemporary music. Chamber music concerts are regularly sponsored by the Forum, and it may be assumed that the compositions which are recorded are the pick of those concerts.

The level of composition exhibited here is high. There is creative competence aplenty; these composers know their craft. Of course, not all of the works are outstandingly individualistic, but they do maintain listening interest.

The dedicated performances do much to project the maximum effectiveness of these pieces. All of the performers give the impression of utmost belief in this music. This is as it should be, and the clear, well-balanced recording also is an asset. *W. D.*

▲ **PEZEL:** Suite for Brass; **ANON.:** Ich sag' ade; Als ich anschau das frölich Gesicht; **SENFL:** Carmen in La; **FINCK:** Greiner zanner; **HOLBORNE:** Muy Linda; Pavan; Gailliard; **G. GABRIELI:** Canzona per sonata No. 1 ("La Spiritata"); **HAINES:** Toccata; **A. HARRIS:** Four Moods; **BOZZA:** Sonatine for Brass. New York Brass Quintet. Golden Crest CR 4023 \$4.98

▲ **WILDER:** Suite for Brass Quintet; **HAMMOND:** Quintet for Brass. New York Brass Quintet. Golden Crest CR 4017 \$4.98

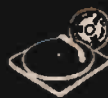
Interest: For brass buffs
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Mostly good
Stereo Directionality: Moderately defined
Stereo Depth: OK

Golden Crest has made something of a minor specialty of recording brass and percussion repertoire; for these two discs bring up to four the number of chamber brass discs in their catalog, while the recent percussion LP with Warren Benson allows the label to boast of two rather interesting discs in this medium.

The New York Brass Quintet, made up of gifted young players trained in or near Manhattan, plays with brilliance and vitality throughout both of these discs and has the benefit of clean and bright recorded sound. However, it is the anthology of early (Pezel, Gabrieli, Holborne) and modern (Haines, Harris, Bozza) pieces which is the one worth getting, especially for the charming dances by the Elizabethan, Anthony Holborne (d. 1602), and for the spicy Sonatine by the Frenchman, Eugene Bozza (b. 1905).

Alec Wilder, who has a nice flair for lyrical miniatures, is dull as dishwater throughout the six movements of his Brass Suite. His younger confrere, Don Hammond, displays more competence in conservative-modern vein than originality in his Quintet, though the *Hymn and Variations* movement does make one prick up the ears to some extent.

The "compatible" stereo is adequate, but hardly outstanding as such, though the overall sound is quite good. *D. H.*



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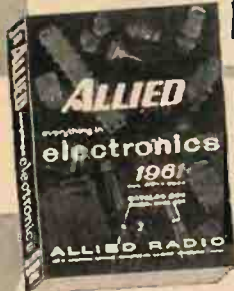
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Jazzland, the Riverside subsidiary, deserves credit for giving Cleveland-based Joe Alexander a debut album. It's a loosely arranged "blowing" session in which Alexander swings hard in a shouting, emotional style characterized by a tanga, vigorous tone. John Hunt, a regular member of Ray Charles' band, is not as powerful as Alexander but he's also worth keeping track of. Both are quite affecting in the ballad *I'll Close My Eyes*. There is good, full-strength rhythm section support. N. H.

△ **COUNT BASIE—"NOT NOW, I'LL TELL YOU WHEN."** Count Basie (piano) and his Band. Rare Butterfly: *Swinging at the Waldorf* & 7 others. Roulette R 52044 \$4.98

Interest: Precision swing
Performance: Predictable
Recording: Good

The current Count Basie band loses flexibility and freshness as it increases the massiveness of its attack. The arrangements here are all of a piece—functional blueprints with only limited challenges for the band and soloists. The solos are short and although occasionally vivid, are too quickly swallowed up in the mechanical ensemble. The nadir of Basie on record in the past decade is the ridiculously shallow treatment of *Old Man River* which most assuredly does not deserve to be in a jazz album.

Basie has finally achieved financial success; but twenty years from now, collectors will be listening to the Basie of the Thirties and Forties when the band could still surprise. In customary Roulette fashion, the notes fail to list full personnel and to identify all the soloists. N. H.



△ **PARIS CONCERT—ART BLAKEY'S JAZZ MESSENGERS.** Art Blakey (drums), Benny Golson (tenor), Lee Morgan (trumpet), Bobby Timmons (piano), and Jimmy Merritt (bass). *Just By Myself; I Remember Clifford; Are You Real; Moanin'; Justice*. Epic LA 16009 \$3.98

Interest: Furious modern jazz
Performance: Intense
Recording: First-rate

This is an unusual album, a concert by the Jazz Messengers recorded in Paris. It was during the period of the best of the Messengers' work and includes versions of two great numbers, *I Remember Clifford* and *Moanin'*. The music is strong, vibrant, and exciting and the soloists are so immediate in their impact that this strikes me as one of the very best examples of this group's work. They are, one might as well say, as far from the cool sound of some modern jazz as Bessie Smith was. This music is modern jazz all right, but it is also hot music in the good old-fashioned sense. R. J. G.

▲ △ **JAZZ SONG BOOK — LES BROWN.** Buddy DeFranco (clarinet), Frank Rosolino (trombone), Terry Gibbs (vibraphonist), Don Fagerquist (trumpet), Ronnie Lang (alto and baritone saxophone), Zoot Sims (tenor saxophone). *I Remember You; Apple Honey; The Claw; Willow Weep For Me* & 8 others. Coral CRL 7 57311 \$4.98; Mono Coral CRL 57311 \$3.98

Interest: Good dance band
Performance: Slick
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

The device here is to have the usual Les Brown band augmented by some players with a more solid jazz background, such as Mel Lewis (drums) and then to feature soloists brought in for various tracks. The soloists, all of whom were from outside the current band, exhibit a higher level of jazz performance than the Brown band usually offers and thus makes it one of the most interesting of his packages in some time. Zoot Sims plays absolutely beautifully on *Willow Weep For Me*, and Frank Rosolino contributes an excitement in his trombone solos that has never been present in the Brown band before. Quite frankly, if I were Les Brown, I wouldn't take a shot at albums under the label of jazz. As a dance band, and a better than average one, Les Brown always makes it. As a jazz band, there are more exciting rehearsal bands in half a dozen cities right now. R. J. G.

▲ **THE BROTHERS CANDOLI SEXTET.** Pete and Conte Candoli (trumpets), Jimmy Rowles (piano), Max Bennett (bass), Frank Capp (drums), Howard Roberts (guitar). *Caravan; Richard Diamond's Blues* & 8 others. Mercury SR 60191 \$4.98

Interest: Good fraternal jazz
Performance: Tasteful
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Adequate

Considering the color limitations inherent in a two-trumpets-plus-rhythm combination, this is a surprisingly varied album. The brothers Candoli imaginatively change moods and timbres, using various shades of muted and open horn playing. They are sustained by a flowing rhythm section, fused by the continually underrated Jimmy Rowles. All in all, however, the two-trumpet interplay becomes a bit wearisome over an entire album. The brothers would have been wiser to have incorporated for contrast a non-familial reed player. N. H.

▲ **THE COOL SCHOOL — JUNE CHRISTY.** *Baby's Birthday Party; Small Fry; When You Wish Upon A Star* & 8 others. Capitol ST 1398 \$4.98

Interest: Hip kiddie songs for adults
Performance: Spotty
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

On some of these tunes, Miss Christy gets that lovely, lost-in-the-fog sound that she has made famous—with all its flat, bittersweet overtones. On these she successfully communicates the poignancy of reluctant adulthood. On some others, though, she suffers from the insecurity and uncertainty that has plagued her in recent years and the all too faithful reproduction of it by Capitol's engineers does her no service. R. J. G.

▲ **AL "JAZZBO" COLLINS presents SWINGING AT THE OPERA.** Arrangements and Orchestra conducted by Fred Karlin. *Woman Is Fickle; Grand March* & 8 others. Everest SDBR 1097 \$3.98

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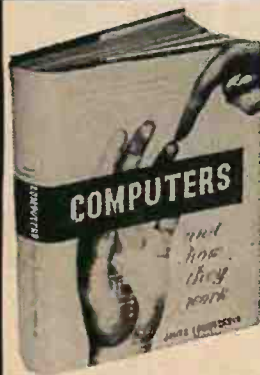
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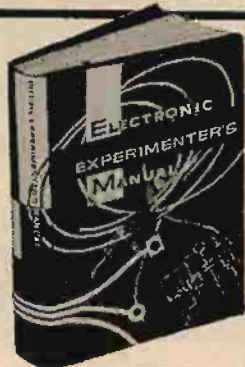
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△ **VAMP 'TIL READY—JO JONES AND HIS ORCHESTRA.** Thou Swell; Liza; But Not For Me; Should I; Show Time & 8 others. Everest LPBR 5099 \$3.98

Interest: Moderate

Performance: Swinging but dull

Recording: Good

Drummer "Papa" Jo Jones (who starred for years with Count Basie) has assembled a group here which includes Harry Edison, trumpet; Jimmy Forrest, tenor; Benny Greene, trombone; Tommy Flanagan, piano; and Tommy Potter, bass. Forrest does not sound at his best; he has a shrill overtone on this disc that is annoying. The long solos by all the horns and the piano and bass tend to become boring, even though the whole thing has a nice swing to it. There doesn't seem to be much happening on this one from any point of view. **R. J. G.**

▲ **BOOKER LITTLE.** Wynton Kelly, Tommy Flanagan (pianos), Scott La Faro (bass), Roy Haynes (drums). Opening Statement; Minor Sweet; Life's A Little Blue; The Grand' Valse & 2 others. Time S/2011 \$5.98

Interest: Taut modern jazz

Performance: Slick

Recording: Bright

Stereo Directionality: Pronounced

Stereo Depth: OK

The soloists here are completely isolated on right or left channels. It is not an unnatural sound, particularly since small groups in jazz frequently get this isolation even in clubs. The trouble here is that the music itself is a little too stretched out and without any feeling of real involvement. Little is one of those young trumpet players who has at his disposal the speed of a clarinetist. This in itself is not enough, even if he may tend to think so now and then. **R. J. G.**

△ **BLUE VIBES—JOHNNY LYTLE TRIO.** Johnny Lytle (vibes), Albert Heath (drums), Milton Harris (organ). Blue Vibes; Mister Strudel & 5 others. Jazzland JLP 22 \$4.98

Interest: Visceral vibes

Performance: Swinging

Recording: Competent

This is the first album by Lytle, a vibist who has headed various small combos in the East. His primary assets are a fully relaxed beat and fluent conception. Unfortunately, Jazzland has not chosen a particularly favorable context for his debut. For this listener, the Hammond organ is dispensable in any situation. Its heavy breathing limpishness is particularly inapposite as complementary sound for crisp, metallic vibes. On the ballads, particularly, listening begins to feel like walking through quicksand. Lytle, however, is a solid performer, and I hope Jazzland will provide a couple of horns to set him off next time. **N. H.**

△ **SHELLY MANNE & HIS MEN AT THE BLACK HAWK—VOL. 2.** Shelly Manne (drums), Joe Gordon (trumpet), Richie Kamuca (tenor saxophone), Victor Feldman (piano), Monty Budwig (bass). Step Lightly; Vamp's Blues & 2 others. Contemporary M 3578 \$4.98

Interest: Moderate

Performance: Average

Recording: Very good for location

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Stereo Directionality: Well-balanced
Stereo Depth: Good

Writing for large bands is the most stagnant area of contemporary jazz. Accordingly, Decca merits appreciation for having commissioned another album by composer George Russell, one of the few jazzmen currently working on enlarging the manifold possibilities and challenges of big band scoring.

Russell does not believe jazz will go through an atonal stage. "It's going," he predicts, "to be a pan-rhythmic, pan-tonal age. I think that jazz will by-pass atonality because jazz actually has roots in folk music, and folk music is scale-based music; and atonality negates the scale. I think that jazz will be intensely chromatic; but you can be chromatic and not be atonal."

My own feeling is that both atonality and pan-tonality will co-exist for a time in jazz. This is to a degree attested by the fact that in Russell's Greenwich Village bailiwick, John Brooks is currently rehearsing an atonal jazz unit.

In any case, Russell's intense chromaticism results in a much more diversified tonal spectrum than exists in customary jazz writing. The soloists, moreover, are challenged by the increase in freedom demanded by Russell's writing. In the first part of *Chromatic Universe*, for example, the soloists, according to Russell, "were not victim to the tyranny of the chord or a particular meter. In essence, this is musical relativism. Everything can be right. The idea takes over. They worked in ideas, projecting one upon another. This is pan-chromatic improvisation."

It's all absorbing, although I would have wished for a more imaginative tenor saxophonist than Dave Young. The other soloists, particularly Bill Evans, are excellent. Russell, by the way, might give more thought to some of his titles next time. These would be better adapted to science fiction. N. H.



▲ ▲ THE BEAT FOR THE GENERATION—SAL SALVADOR AND HIS ORCHESTRA. That Old Feeling; Satin Doll; The Mad Pad; The Continental & 8 others. Decca DL 74026 \$4.98; Mono DL 4026 \$3.98

Interest: Swinging modern jazz
Performance: Spirited
Recording: Bright
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

Once again Decca has brought out a good jazz package with Sal Salvador. The stereo is good and doesn't disturb the natural sound of the band. The mono version is quite satisfactory also. The arrangements, by such men as Hank Levy, Ray Wilcox, and George Roumanis, are first-rate. The soloists, especially Eddie Bert (trombone) who has a fine statement on *That Old Feeling*, are all good men whose personal enthusiasm comes through in their playing. The band is apparently one of the big rehearsal groups that musicians periodically assemble. One might hope this group will pass the occasional playing-recording stage and become a permanent part of the jazz scene. They are really that good. R. J. G.

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these works exist on the London and Vox labels, this recording is the only one available on 4-track tape, and it's a very good one so far as sound is concerned.

The performances of these pleasing minor masterpieces by the mature Mozart and young Beethoven come off nicely here; but they lack something of the coloristic subtlety and humor necessary to relieve the prevailing monochromatic instrumental timbre that begins to pall on the ear after awhile. *D.H.*

▲ **RESPIGHI:** *The Pines of Rome; The Fountains of Rome.* Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Fritz Reiner cond. RCA Victor FTC 2012 \$8.95

Interest: Hi-fi show pieces
Performance: The end!
Recording: Brilliant but overloaded
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Impressive

The end of the *Pines of Rome* in this recording is a real window-rattler; but it overloads badly on my review tape. Presumably, later tape copies will be free from this defect.

Otherwise, it must be said that Reiner gets not only huge sonorities from his massive orchestral forces, he also extracts a wealth of musical poetry from the middle movements of "*The Pines*" and from the opening and closing of "*The Fountains*."

If possible, you should check the ending of *The Pines of Rome* for overload distortion before purchasing this tape. If you get a clean copy, you're in for quite a listening experience! *D.H.*

▲ **STRAVINSKY:** *Petrouchka* (complete ballet). Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux cond. RCA Victor FTC 2007 \$8.95

Interest: Stravinsky masterpiece
Performance: Conscientious
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: Good

This is the third complete *Petrouchka* on tape, done this time by the conductor who gave the work its world premiere nearly fifty years ago. Nevertheless, a choice between Ansermet (London), Goossens (Everest), and Monteux is not as easy as it might seem.

Monteux has the finest orchestra and splendid engineering, but his reading has neither the drama of Ansermet's nor the color sense of Goossens'. The Ansermet tape, however, is troubled by "crosstalk" from its *Sacre du printemps* coupling.

So far as I am concerned, it's a toss-up between Goossens and Monteux for sound; but my preference is still with Ansermet for the fullest realization of musical and dramatic values. *D.H.*

▲ **VIVALDI:** *The Four Seasons* (Concerti Nos. 1-4 of Op. 8). Società Corelli with Vittorio Emanuele (solo violin). RCA Victor FTC 2008 \$8.95

Interest: Baroque nature painting
Performance: Precise
Recording: Close-up
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Not much

Rhythmic vitality and precision are the hallmarks of this performance of Vivaldi's once esoteric but now immensely popular

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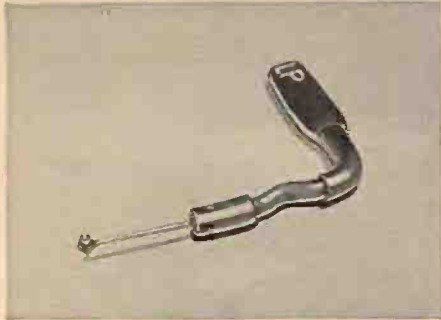
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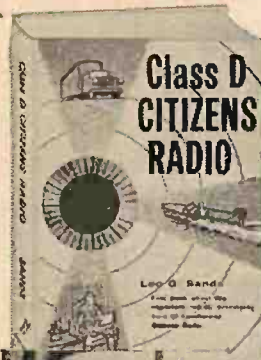
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score (there are at least a dozen disc recordings now extant!). The recording was evidently done in a small room or studio; for everything sounds close-miked with little or no room reverberation.

By contrast, the rival Vanguard tape with the Solisti di Zagreb offers both a warmer sound and a more graciously contoured interpretation. If your tastes in baroque musical performance run toward the severely classical, however, then the RCA tape is for you. D. H.

4-TR. ENTERTAINMENT

▲ **HELLO LOVE—ELLA FITZGERALD.** You Go To My Head; So Rare; Tenderly; I'll Never Be The Same & 8 others. Verve VSTC 239 \$7.95

Interest: Lovely pop songs
Performance: With feeling
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

Given a program such as this—superior pop songs from the hit lists of the 30's and 40's—Miss Fitzgerald immediately displays an empathy with the material that makes her performance one of the outstanding vocal efforts in the tape catalogs. Frank DeVol, whose arrangements and orchestra are responsible for the accompaniment, has a rare ability to enhance a singer's work. He never gets in the way; instead, he gently supports the singer, makes a setting for her voice which brings out its best qualities and in general adds to the presentation. R. J. G.

▲ **ELLA FITZGERALD—SINGS SWEET SONGS FOR SWINGERS.** That Old Feeling; My Old Flame; East Of The Sun; Gone With The Wind & 8 others. Verve VSTC 240 \$7.95

Interest: Fine pop music
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

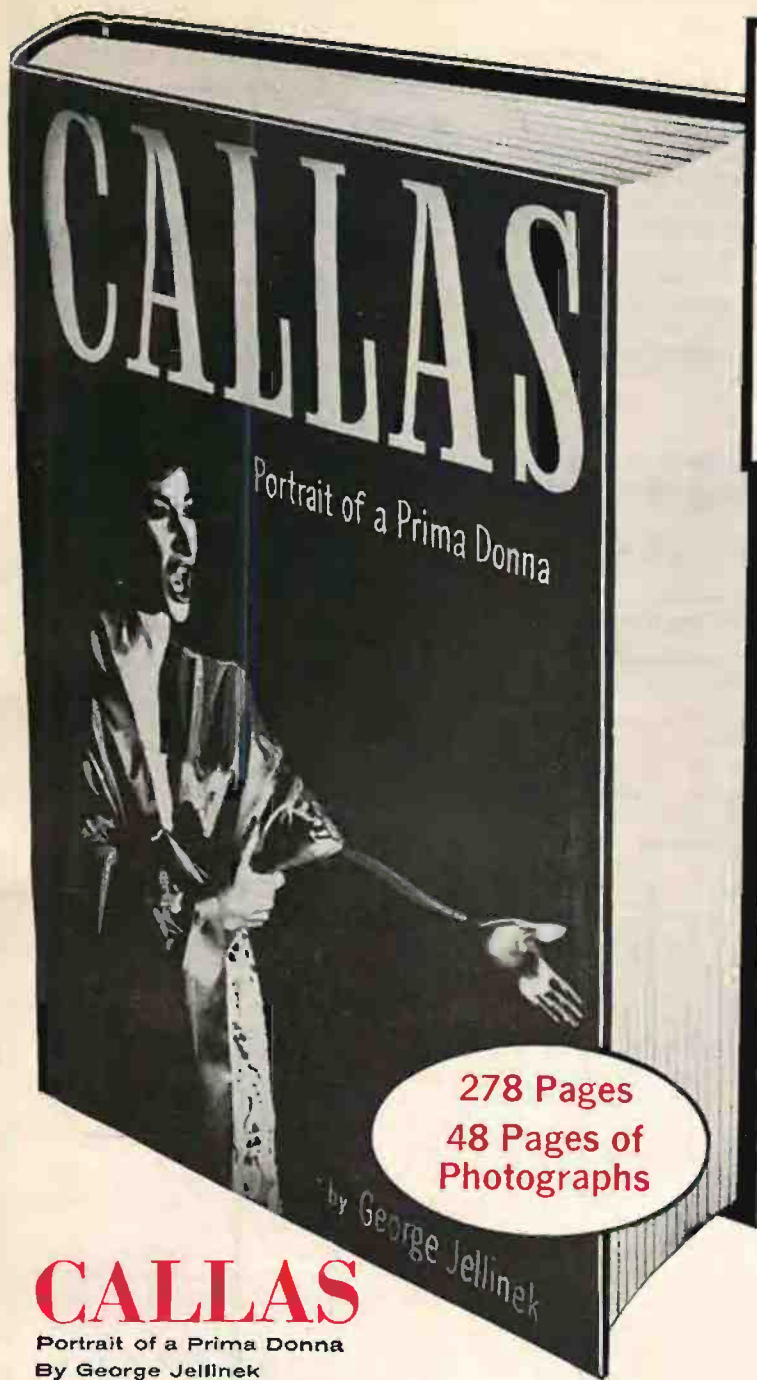
Another collection of popular songs from the 30's sung by Ella and accompanied by Frank DeVol. It's a beautiful collection. She sings even the most banal of lyrics with warmth and conviction, and the band of DeVol has just the right combination of schmaltz and swing to make it all come off first rate. *That Old Feeling*, one of the grand tunes of yesteryear, is done particularly well. The voice is in the middle and the band spread nicely throughout. A good trumpet player makes brief appearances here and there to add a touch of jazz flavor to the package. R. J. G.

▲ **HAMP'S BIG BAND.** Flying Home; Airmail Special; Night Train; Le Chat Noir & 8 others. Audio Fidelity AFST 1913-4 \$8.95

Interest: Rather raucous jazz
Performance: Spotty
Recording: Bright
Stereo Directionality: Pronounced
Stereo Depth: OK

This bright-sounding tape seems rather gimmicky. Hampton's vibes are on the left but when he puts down the mallets to sing

Hi Fi / STEREO



CALLAS

Portrait of a Prima Donna
By George Jellinek

About the Author . . .

George Jellinek, who has written for Opera News, The Metropolitan Opera Program, High Fidelity and Saturday Review, and is a contributing editor to Hi Fi/Stereo Review, has brought to this work his vast knowledge of the world of opera and of music.

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(a practice which should be discouraged anyway) all of a sudden he turns out to be smack-dab in the middle. There's an unidentified singer present who is not bad and the big band is a good one. However, the illogical commitment to a strong after-beat makes the whole thing sound more like rhythm-and-blues than jazz. At that, there are some good solo spots by trumpeters Cat Anderson and Donald Byrd. Hampton, himself, is still one of the most thrilling of all vibraphone players. When he is soloing, everything's all right. And for this alone the tape is well worth owning.

R. J. G.



▲ **THE INCOMPARABLE HILDEGARDE.** Lili Marlene; I Love You In Any Language; Cheek To Cheek; Mademoiselle de Paris & 8 others. Livingston 4T 27 \$5.95

Interest: Great performer
Performance: Unique, charming
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Fine

Hildegard is like Chevalier. The more seasoned she becomes as a performer, the better she delivers. Her voice is somewhat limited in range, but it has a pleasant quality, and she uses it intelligently. With her flair for languages, she uses a half dozen or so in one number (including Chinese). Her way is to put over a song intimately, sophisticatedly, cleverly, and musically. The accompaniment on this tape is adequate but hardly imaginative. The sound is good.

J. T.

▲ **THE KINGSTON TRIO—HERE WE GO AGAIN.** Molly Dae; Haul Away; Oleanna; San Miguel & 8 others. Capitol 2T 1258 \$6.98

Interest: Broad interest pops
Performance: Slick
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

A pleasant collection of folk songs and folk-flavored songs sung in ice-cream-and-cookies style by the Kingstons. It's rhythmic, slick, and mass-produced, and should serve well for community singing and entertaining teen-agers. The voices are split neatly, and the background is spread out evenly. Not a vital listening package, but pleasant enough.

R. J. G.

▲ **ALL AMERICAN SHOWCASE—SIGMUND ROMBERG, IRVING BERLIN, VICTOR HERBERT, RUDOLF FRIML.** Mantovani and his Orchestra. London LPK 70004 \$11.95

Interest: Variety of favorites
Performance: The Mantovani standard
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Excellent

A glance at the list of composers and the nearly two hours of playing time makes this Mantovani offer one of the best bargains so far issued on 4-track tape. Two dozen selections representing some of the best tunes by four top showtune composers all add up to over an hour's entertainment. The engineering is well-nigh per-

fect: no crosstalk, plenty of dynamic range, and a good stereo spread.

J. T.

▲ **FRED WARING AND HIS PENNSYLVANIANS IN HI-FI:** I Hear Music; Dry Bones; In The Still Of The Night; Ol' Man River; Hit The Road To Dreamland; Smoke Gets In Your Eyes & 9 others. Capitol ZW 845 \$7.98

Interest: Fine choral pops
Performance: Commercially sleek
Recording: Good with exceptions
Stereo Directionality: Well-balanced
Stereo Depth: Warm acoustics

Waring mixes fifteen numbers—some popular "classics," some clever novelties. All are delivered with the sentiment that has made Mr. Waring and his Pennsylvanians a trademark and a commercial success. When the chorus sings without too much obvious instrumental support, it makes for some really goose-pimply listening. There is a tendency to over-arranging in *Battle Hymn Of The Republic* and *Ol' Man River*, but the music can survive even these superfluous trappings. Altogether a very satisfactory issue with exceptions as noted.

J. T.

▲ **THE WEAVERS AT HOME.** Come Little Donkey; Tina; All Night Long; Bury Me & 13 others. Vanguard VTC 1624 \$7.95

Interest: Rousing folk songs
Performance: Slickly spirited
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

This is quite a good tape of the sort of rollicking-good-fun folk singing that is becoming more and more popular these days. The program is varied and interesting and the performance, while slick, is spirited.

The voices are split left and right and some of the accompanying instruments likewise. The set-up apparently changes, however, because on *Come Little Donkey* there's an excellent, even spread of sound for the best balance achieved on the tape. There's a slight tape hiss audible over the guitar passages, unfortunately.

R. J. G.



▲ **BEN WEBSTER AND ASSOCIATES.** In A Mellow Tone; Young Bean; Budd Johnson; Time After Time; De-Dar. Verve VSTC 233 \$7.95

Interest: Good "middle-period" jazz
Performance: Good to excellent
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

The performance is warm, sometimes inspired and, since the musicians are all major league professionals, even its lowest level is always good. There are moments, such as on *Time After Time* when tenor man Ben Webster is simply magnificent. There is also some beautiful trumpet work by Roy Eldridge on *De-Dar*. Star of the date, however, is Webster whose personal sound is so pronounced that it is almost as if he talked directly to you rather than played.

The band is split between the channels decently but without much spread and with the solo spots isolated.

R. J. G.

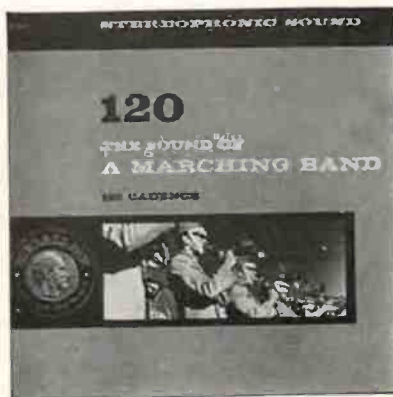
HiFi/STEREO

BEST OF THE MONTH . . .

△ Elektra, that enterprising specialty label, has a fascinating satire album in its *Presenting Joyce Grenfell*. "I love Joyce Grenfell! There is no more charming or versatile comedienne . . . Miss Grenfell . . . has a particularly engaging manner with American folk songs, and does a beautiful job here." (see p. 105)



▲ Kapp's Medallion series has a real winner in *The Sound Of A Marching Band*. "There is an unquenchable feeling of excitement all through . . . but what really gives it a unique flavor is the lack of pause between selections . . . there is a brisk roll on the drums, the crowd cheers, and with a fanfare the boys are off again." (see p. 107)



△ Monitor's disc survey of national songs the world over does especially well with *Scandinavian Folk Songs Of Sweden, Norway, Finland* featuring two top singers, Saga Sjöberg and Arne Dørumsgaard. "Both performers sing with warmth, accuracy, and intelligence. . . . Monitor is to be congratulated for an exceptionally attractive program . . ." (see p. 107)



Reviewed by

RALPH J. GLEASON
STANLEY GREEN
NAT HENTOFF

Records reviewed in this section are both stereo and monophonic. Versions received for review are identified by closed (▲) and open (△) triangles respectively. All records are 33 1/3 rpm and should be played with the RIAA amplifier setting or its equivalent. Monophonic recordings (△) may be played also on stereo equipment with resulting improvement in sound distribution quality. Stereo recordings (▲), however, must not be played on monophonic phonographs and hi-fi systems.



Borders denote recordings of special merit.

POPS


▲ △ **VICKI BENET** ▲ **PARIS**—with Orchestra, Nick Perito cond. Under Paris Skies; La Parisienne; I Wish You Love & 9 others. Decca DL 78987 \$4.98; Mono DL 8987 \$3.98

Interest: Absolument
 Performance: Charmante
 Recording: Bien
 Stereo Directionality: Pas nécessaire
 Stereo Depth: Assez

Though it required no great programming gifts to round up a dozen songs about Paris for a French singer, there are enough original touches to make Mlle. Benet's recital an altogether delightful one. Although most of her pieces are by French composers, the young lady has included two by Americans—an affecting French version of Jerome Kern's *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, and Cole Porter's rather tender little torch ballad, *You Don't Know Paree*. Most of the authentic Parisian items are sung in both French and English, and they are quite charming. S. G.

▲ **DARIN AT THE COPA**. Bobby Darin (vocals) with Orchestra conducted by Richard Behrke. Love For Sale; Bill Bailey & 14 others. Atco SD 33-122 \$4.98

Interest: Making the big time
 Performance: Very self-assured
 Recording: Fair
 Stereo Directionality: Adequate
 Stereo Depth: The band is distant

Bobby Darin is a success by all the hard, tangible criteria of show-biz. He wows them at the Copa; he's signed for a series of TV spectacles; he sells large quantities (Continued on page 104)

Entertainment Music Miscellany

MORE NEW MONO ITEMS RATED AT A GLANCE

Title	Musical Interest	Performance	Recorded Sound	Score
LET'S GET LOST —Johnny Nash (arranged & conducted by Sid Feller) _____ Let's Get Lost, That's My Desire, Together, The Love Nest & 8 others. ABC-Paramount ABC 334 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	11
POPS A LA RUSSE —Various Russian Soloists and Orchestras _____ Clouds Are Flying, Song Of First Love, Our Street, Spring Rain & 12 others. Monitor MP 591 \$4.98	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	10
OPENING NIGHT —Starlight Symphony Orch. conducted by Ornel _____ The Music Man, Guys And Dolls, Damn Yankees, Kismet & 2 others. MGM Records MGM E 3816 \$3.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	9
PLEASE SAY YOU WANT ME —Various Vocalists and Vocal Groups _____ Shirley, Row-Hide, Gabbin' Blues, I Put A Spell On You & 8 others. Epic LN 3702 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	9
ROY HAMILTON AT HIS BEST —Roy Hamilton _____ You'll Never Walk Alone, If I Loved You, Ebb Tide & 9 others. Epic LN 3628 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	9
SUBWAYS OF BOSTON —The Coachmen _____ Subways Of Boston, Little Land, Roger Young, Delia & 8 others. HiFiRecord R 420 \$4.95	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	9
JOHNNY SMITH/GUITAR AND STRINGS —Johnny Smith _____ The Things We Did Last Summer, The Inch Worm, Stormy Weather & 5 others. Roost 2242 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	8
LATIN CAMEOS —The Knightsbridge Strings _____ Besame Mucho, Amor, Granada, Perfidia & 8 others. Top Rank RM 315 \$3.98	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	8
PLEASE HELP ME, I'M FALLING —Hank Locklin _____ Livin' Alone, Foreign Car, My Old Home Town & 9 others. RCA Victor LPM 2291 \$3.98	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	8
SONGS OF LOVE —Jesse Crawford at the Pipe Organ _____ Serenade, One Kiss, Silver Moon, One Alone & 8 others. Decca DL 8941 \$3.98	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	8
FLIVVERS, FLAPPERS & FOX TROTS —Del Wood and Accompanists _____ Speakeasy, Varsity Trot, Ridin' High, Bye Bye Blackbird & 8 others. RCA Victor LPM 2203 \$3.98	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	7
"GONE" —Ferlin Husky _____ Gone, Missing Persons, My Reason For Living & 9 others. Capitol T 1383 \$3.98	✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	7
A GUITAR TO REMEMBER —Bill Faith and Accompaniment _____ Holiday For Strings, Evening Rain, Mimi, Secret Love & 8 others. Chancellor CHL 5007 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	6
OUR LEADER —Paul Miller (banjo) and Accompanists _____ Swanee, Under The Bamboo Tree, Varsity Drag, If You Knew Susie & 13 others. Fantasy 3287 \$3.98	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	6
HAWAIIANNETTE —Annette and Accompanists _____ Hawaiiannette, Hukilau, Date Night In Hawaii, Oloha Oe & 8 others. Buena Vista BV 3303 \$3.98	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	6
THE MAGIC PIANOS OF LIBERACE AND GORDON ROBINSON _____ April In Portugal, Ol' Man River, My Bill, I Love Paris, Con-Can & 19 others. Coral CRL 57305 \$3.98	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	6
DANCING ON THE RIVIERA —Bob Azzam and his Orchestra _____ Abububu, Pimpollo, The Proposal, Love In Porto Fino & 8 others. Everest LPBR 5091 \$3.98	✓	✓✓✓	✓	5

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

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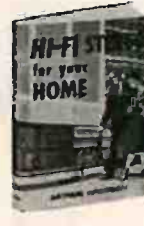
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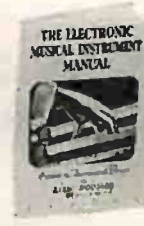
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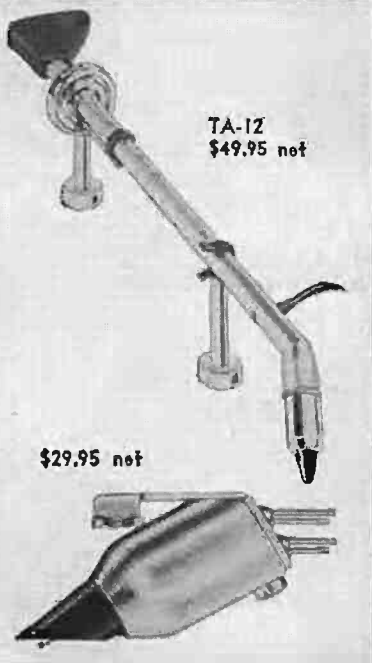
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(Continued from page 99)

ties of records; he's in the movies; and he's beginning to care less about music as such. This set, recorded "live" at New York's Copa, is a semi-documentary in "making it."

Darin has considerable talent. He possesses a strong beat, a keen comprehension of what can be done with lyrics, real musicianship, and the capacity to project large-sized emotion. But now that he's a step away from the top, there's also a touch of arrogance in some of his work, a feeling of "I can grab this audience any time I want to." This is reflected on occasion in gratuitously clever phrasing, and in the lame by-play between Darin and the audience, preserved here for future sociologists.

Yet the man certainly sings effectively, especially when he's not admiring himself in a mirror of his audience. As noted here before, Darin should prosper for a long time, but more and more as a "personality," I fear, than as the uniquely musical pop singer he might have become. *N. H.*

▲ ▲ I GOTTA RIGHT TO SWING!

Sammy Davis, Jr. (vocals) with Orchestras directed by Morty Stevens, Jack Pleis, Sy Oliver. The Lady Is A Tramp; I Got A Woman & 10 others. Decca DL 78981 \$4.98; Mono DL 8981 \$3.98

Interest: A costume party
Performance: Varied
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Clear
Stereo Depth: Adequate

I become increasingly convinced that Sammy Davis' most productive future role will be as an actor rather than as a singer-dancer-entertainer. Visually, he is certainly a furiously energetic performer, but the cutting depths of intelligence and emotion of which he is certainly capable are most effective in his straight acting roles.

As a singer, Davis remains diffuse in his impact. In this album, for example, he plays several roles, but there is no basic Sammy Davis singing style. He interprets, for instance, four numbers associated with Ray Charles and he turns in a perceptive imitation of Charles, but little of himself shows. On the other tracks, he belts out the production numbers in an eclectic style that ranges from the singer behind the dancing line at the Copa to an emulation of Frank Sinatra. On ballads, Davis overnotes as egregiously as the lover in a silent film. Most of his supporting personnel is from the Basie band. *N. H.*

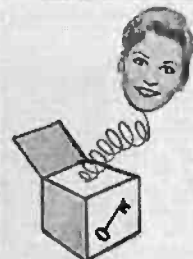
▲ ▲ NELSON EDDY AND GALE

SHERWOOD with Harry Sosnik and his Orchestra. One Night Of Love; Shall We Dance?; One Alone & 9 others. Everest SDBR 8002 \$3.98; Mono LPBR 9002 \$3.98

Interest: Square-shaped recital
Performance: Pear-shaped tones
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Directionality: They're center
Stereo Depth: Slight

Nelson Eddy and Gale Sherwood have become a top attraction in night clubs throughout the country, but if this recording is to be taken as any criterion, their success must depend on factors other than their singing. For this is a completely soporific program of standard pop tunes, sung in a tense, unfeeling manner, accompanied by stodgy arrangements. Bring back Jeanette! *S. G.*

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△ PRESENTING JOYCE GRENFELL, with George Bauer (piano). Hello Song; Life And Literature; Thought For Today; Two Songs My Mother Taught Me; Nursery School; Life Story; I Like Life; Time To Waste; Three Brothers; Artist's Room; Mediocre Waltz; Committee. Elektra EKL 184 \$4.98

Interest: Quite a bit
Performance: Delightful
Recording: Good

I love Joyce Grenfell! There is no more charming or versatile comedienne currently performing on either side of the Atlantic than this gifted English actress. The program is composed of both songs and monologues, and there are some wonderful things in it. Miss Grenfell, whose mother was a Southern belle, has a particularly engaging manner with American folk songs, and does a beautiful job here on *Hand Me Down My Bonnet* and *Goodbye, Miss Liza Jane*. (I'm sorry she did not include *The Yellow Rose Of Texas*, which she does in a different version from the one Mitch Miller uses). Of the four other songs on the record (all with music by Richard Addinsell and lyrics by Miss Grenfell), the best is probably *Three Brothers*, a rather pathetic saga of the compensations of spinsterhood.

The most fully developed monologue, is a wonderful bit about a lady interviewer on a small Southern radio station who is far more concerned with selling the products of her sponsor, a local paint company (with their "Cathedral Stained Glass Window Colors"), than in talking to her guest. S. G.



△ EARTHA KITT REVISITED—with Orchestra, Maurice Levine cond. Uska Dara; Après Moi; I Want To Be Evil & 9 others. Kapp KL 1192 \$3.98

Interest: Superior specialty stuff
Performance: Good Eartha
Recording: Fine

In *Just An Old Fashioned Girl*, Miss Kitt expresses her longing for a cerise Cadillac, Tiffany diamonds, two apartment buildings, oil wells, and wall-to-wall money; in *C'est Si Bon*, it's a Mercedes-Benz, mink coats, and *les bijoux*; in *Santa Baby*, she wants a sable coat, an outerspace convertible, a yacht, a duplex apartment, and some more items from Tiffany's. She is, in short, a pretty mercenary dame; but with her slinky, "purr-suasive" voice and her quite inimitable technique, she manages to make all such desires seem rightfully hers.

Of course, Miss Kitt is not limited in repertory. This collection goes back to a dozen of her most famous numbers, including the tantalizing *Uska Dara* and James Shelton's delicate *Lilac Wine*. All of them benefit from their long association with the singer. S. G.

△ CAROL LAWRENCE—TONIGHT AT 8:30—with Orchestra, Peter Matz cond. It's Good To Be Alive; Tonight; Lazy Afternoon; Do It Again & 9 others. Chancellor CHL 5015 \$3.98

Interest: Show tune gems
Performance: Pleasant voice

DECEMBER 1960

Recording: Very nice

With her performances in *West Side Story* and *Saratoga*, Miss Carol Lawrence has established herself as one of the most talented young actresses on the musical stage. In this first album all to herself, she reveals an attractive, "legit" singing voice that she uses intelligently. The songs in her repertory have all been culled from works of the masters (Gershwin, Bernstein, Arlen, Weill, etc.), and while I have some reservations about one or two interpretations, it is, on the whole, a tasty package. S. G.

△ THE BEST OF PEGGY LEE. Peggy Lee (vocals) with Orchestras directed by Hal Mooney, Sy Oliver, Sonny Burke, and others. Lover; Black Coffee; Never Mind; Love Letters & 20 others. Decca DXB 164, 2 12" \$7.96

Interest: Major pop stylist
Performance: Best on ballads
Recording: Competent

Decca has taken 24 Peggy Lee sides from previously released material to make this two-disc set. Miss Lee has worked for years to perfect a consistent, personal style, and she has succeeded.

This, however, is a mixed collection. There are a number of transitory novelties that no one could save from deserved oblivion; but there are also a number of ballads which Miss Lee performs with consummate taste and affecting poignancy. She's also delightful on several medium-tempo swingers. It's too bad Decca didn't trim this package into one substantial album; but if you don't own such performances as *Black Coffee* and *Love Me Or Leave Me*, the set is worth investigating. N. H.

△ JOHNNY MATHIS—THE RHYTHMS AND BALLADS OF BROADWAY—with Glenn Osser and his Orchestra & Ralph Burns and his Orchestra. Moanin' Low; I Have Dreamed; I Married An Angel; Spring Is Here; Don't Blame Me & 19 others. Columbia C2L 17 2 12" \$7.98

Interest: The songs are fine
Performance: Mannered
Recording: Needs bass

The wispy, tissue paper voice of Johnny Mathis has won him a wide following within a relatively short period. Such popularity must be deserved, I guess, but I fail to find any reason for it. Mr. Mathis' approach to ballads is one of oozy tenderness, sounding more as if his notes had been squeezed from a tube rather than sung. On the rhythm numbers, he is more nervous than rhythmic and, at times, even gives the impression of frothing at the mouth.

In this current two-record set, the ballads are on one record (backed by the Glenn Osser Orchestra) and the rhythms (this is their name for the up-tempo numbers) on the second (backed by the Ralph Burns Orchestra). What constitutes a ballad or a rhythm seems to be in the hands of the arranger; *On The Sunny Side Of The Street* falls into the category of the former while *I Am In Love* is speeded up to qualify for the latter category. I'm not even sure what all these songs have to do with Broadway. *Dancing On The Ceiling* was in an English show; *Don't Blame Me*

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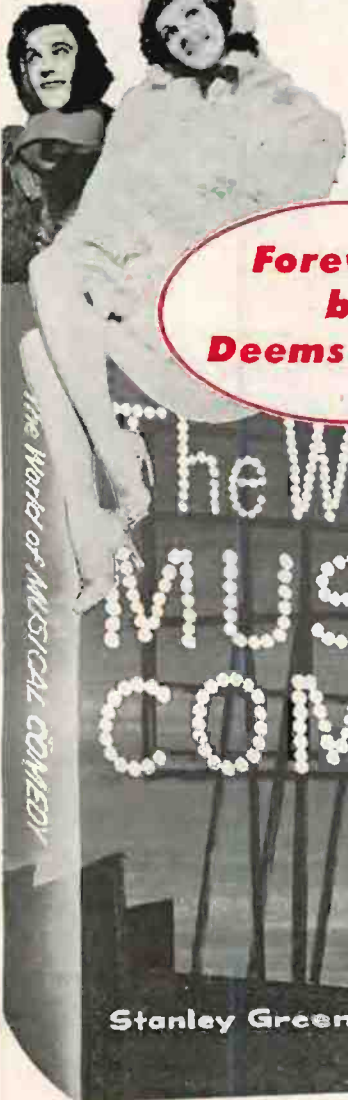
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About the author: **STANLEY GREEN**, a native New Yorker, has spent most of his career in or near the world of the Broadway theatre as a critical reviewer and writer of music appreciation. He is a contributor to major publications in the field of popular music and related subjects and is a contributing editor to HiFi/Stereo Review.

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review

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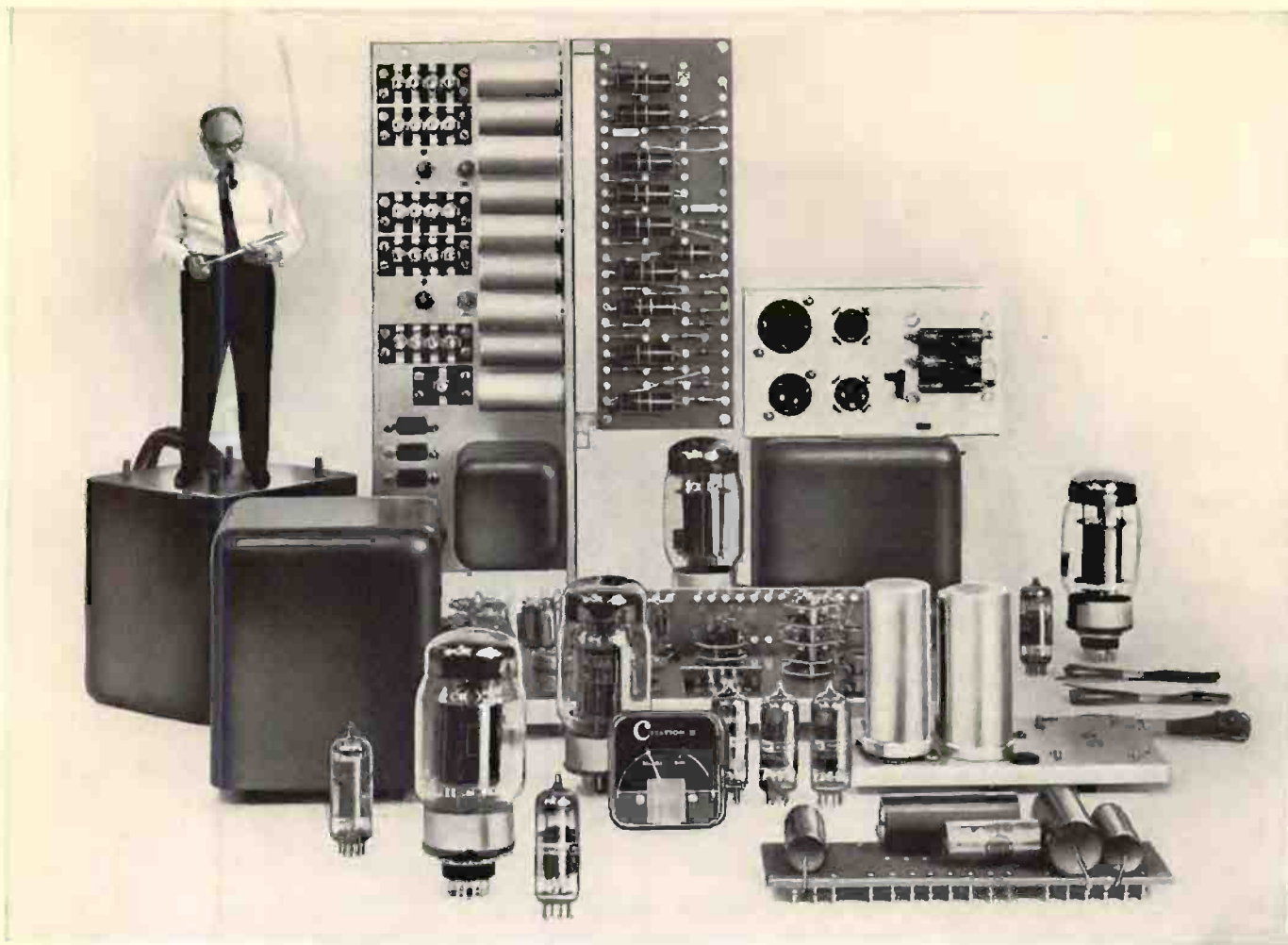
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