

HiFi/Stereo

DECEMBER 1961 • 50 CENTS

review

**WHAT IS WRONG
AND RIGHT WITH
MODERN MUSIC**

**HOW TO BUY A
LOUDSPEAKER**

**THE MAN
BEHIND
STEREO FM**



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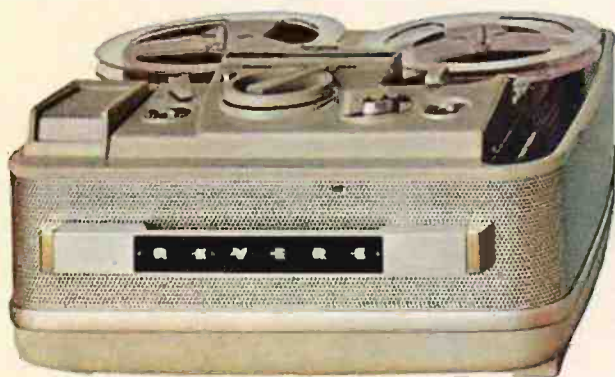


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HiFi / Stereo

review

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

by FURMAN HEBB

THE New York High Fidelity Show, the biggest hi-fi event of the year, has come and gone and left behind this puzzling question: Why do so many of the demonstrations—planned and conducted by people who are the real experts in the field—sound so bad? And is there some rule that says if the demonstration doesn't sound right, it should be played at ear-splitting volume so its faults will presumably escape notice?

It is baffling to me that a manufacturer who spends thousands of dollars to demonstrate his equipment at an audio show should then present it in an unfavorable light. At least part of the trouble is caused by poor program material, which, not infrequently, is chosen at the last minute. Of course, it's always easy to tell the other fellow how to run his business, but if I were a manufacturer I think I would select my demonstration records and tapes well in advance, and I would make sure that the entire system was functioning properly.

* * *

With Christmas being scheduled to make its annual appearance in just a few weeks, we music listeners now have an ideal excuse for buying that piece of audio equipment or those records we've been thinking about getting. One inexpensive item that I would recommend to any listener would be an ESL Dustbug, which is the most satisfactory record-cleaning device I have ever used. If you don't already have a Dustbug, I think you would be doing your records a favor by getting one. One other low-price item that is highly suitable for holiday giving or receiving is a Christmas card in the form of a 7-inch record, produced by Tony Schwartz, whose documentations on disc have appeared on the Folkways label. This is a warmly human and altogether charming record, one side of which is titled "Christmas in New York" and the other "Children and God," in which little children voice their concepts of God and Heaven. Mr. Schwartz, who is located at 425 West 57th St., New York, N.Y., has a limited number of copies available at \$1.50 each, postpaid. I think you would enjoy the recording.

Coming Next Month

In

HiFi/STEREO REVIEW

THE JAZZMAN: IMAGE AND REALITY

by Joe Goldberg

DE FALLA AND THE LOST CONTINENT

by Frederic Grunfeld

TURNTABLES: LIGHT OR HEAVY?

by Hans H. Fantel

HiFi/STEREO

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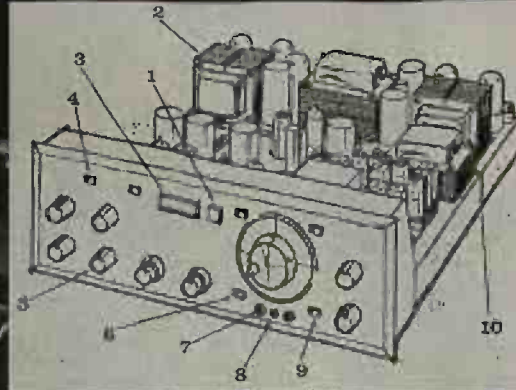
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7. Indicator lights show mode of operation.
8. Front panel tape output.
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10. Channel bracket that locks power amplifier stage in place. Can be removed for remote placement of amplifier.

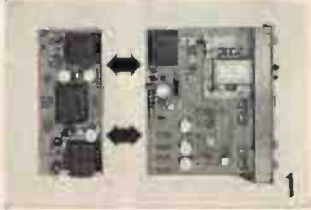


5 Amazing Advances Make New Scott Multiplex All-in-one World's Most Revolutionary Component!

Never before a component like this! The 355... a component you must actually see and live with to fully appreciate... a totally new approach to the tuner/amplifier combination. So revolutionary... so different in concept... it will influence high fidelity design for many years.

The new Scott all-in-one gives you, for the very first time, a Wide-Band FM Multiplex Tuner, a Wide-Range AM Tuner, a professional stereo control center and your choice of 50 watt or 80 watt stereo power stages.

Only the engineering laboratories of H. H. Scott... developers of the first true high fidelity amplifier... of the first successful Wide-Band FM tuner... of America's most widely accepted multiplex circuitry... could have conceived this brilliantly engineered component. Five amazing advances make the new 355 your choice as the finest all-in-one ever offered:



1. FLEX-A-UNIT POWER STAGE

The conservatively rated, heavy-duty power amplifier stage is a completely isolated section. Unique Poly-Coolant thermal barrier separates the heat producing section from sensitive FM, AM and control circuits. You actually can remove the power-stage from the main chassis for remote installations, or when space is tight. The power stage can be placed as far as fifty feet away from the main chassis without affecting the 355's superb performance. Each section is completely self-powered.

2. TIME-SWITCHING MULTIPLEX CIRCUITRY

No stripped or marginal multiplex section here! The new 355 has exactly the same "time-switching" multiplex circuitry found in the superb Scott 350 tuner (5 tubes and 11 diodes)... a far cry from the 2 or 3 tube



design found in compromise units. H. H. Scott's unique "time-switching" circuitry, hailed from coast-to-coast by leading FM stations*, gives you the best stereo separation, the lowest distortion, and outstanding performance with a tape recorder.

3. PROFESSIONAL BROADCAST-QUALITY FM SECTION

H. H. Scott is world famous for their major innovations in FM tuner design. The FM section of the 355 includes every important feature... a highly sensitive silver-plated cascode front-end, 2MC Wide-Band detector, and Wide-Band IF's. The result? A sensitivity, station separation, and lack of drift formerly associated only with separate tuners... FM performance superior to any combination unit you can buy at any price.



4. COMPLETE PROFESSIONAL CONTROL CENTER

Versatility never before possible in an all-in-one! The most discriminating perfectionist will find his requirements surpassed by this unique unit. The preamplifier/control center section includes professional features such as: provision for two low-level inputs (such as a tape deck and a phono-cartridge) switchable from the front panel; separate bass and treble controls on each channel; complete stereo balancing facilities; and complete tape recording and monitoring facilities with front panel control and output.

5. NEW LOW-COMPONENT-DENSITY DESIGN

Most all-in-one units have condensers, resistors and other parts jammed in a hodge-podge under the chassis. Scott engineers have used new production engineering techniques to spread parts out insuring adequate cooling, long component life and ready accessibility. This gives the 355 the lowest component density of any all-in-one on the market.

*Write for actual letters



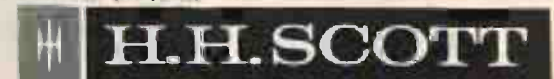
EVEN MORE PLUS FEATURES!

- Unique "stereo-eye" helps you quickly locate multiplex broadcasts. The eye closes automatically when you are tuned to FM Stereo.
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- Solid aluminum chassis with copper-bonded tuner section for lowest hum, best cooling, highest sensitivity.

IMPORTANT TECHNICAL INFORMATION:

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HiFi Soundings



by DAVID HALL

A HARVEST OF IMPORTED DISCS

FREQUENTERS OF the better record shops in our major cities may have become aware during the past year of a sharp increase in the number of classical LP discs that have been directly imported from abroad.

Side by side with the familiar RCA Victor, Columbia, Mercury, Capitol and Vanguard labels we find such exotic trademarks as Erato, Harmonia Mundi, Pye, Triola, Metronome, Danish Odeon, Cantate, Lumen, Musica Sacra, and Fona—to name only a few. Not only are quite a number of these foreign labels distributed nationally through such enterprising importers as Record Centre (41 West 8th Street) and Discophile (26 West 8th Street) in New York, but some of the American record companies are getting into the act as well. Thus where Decca used to issue most of its Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft (DGG) recordings as Decca pressings, the DGG discs are now imported directly from West Germany. Although Artia issues a large number of Iron Curtain recordings under its own Artia and Parliament trademarks, it also distributes a whole library of interesting items as direct importations on the MK (Soviet), Supraphon (Czech), and Qualiton (Hungarian) labels.

Imported record listings in Schwann were once restricted to London, Angel (of pre-Capitol days), and DGG Archive; now, in addition to these, Schwann lists Amadeo (Austria), Cantate (Germany), Cetra (Italy), Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft, Electrola (Germany) Fontana (Holland), Odeon (Denmark, Germany), MK (Russia), Oiseau-Lyre (England), Philips (Holland), Qualiton (Hungary), and Supraphon (Czechoslovakia) as having national distribution. At least three more European specialty labels, which are devoted mostly to liturgical or pre-Mozart repertoire, will be added to the list within the near future: Harmonia Mundi, Musica Sacra, and Lumen.

The result of this is choice and happy pickings for the classical-music connoisseur: first recordings of Kodály's *Háry János* (Qualiton) and Rachmaninoff's *Vesper Mass* (Musica Sacra), Mozart's half-forgotten oratorio *Betulia liberata* (Harmonia Mundi), the one and only available version of Samuel Barber's Piano Sonata (MK), Richard Strauss's *Elektra* in stereo (DGG), a first stereo recording of Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* (Oiseau-Lyre)—these are just a few of the choice items that await the alert discophile in search of a Christmas gift for someone "who has everything."

Even so, these imports represent a mere surface sampling of the unusual and interesting classical-disc repertoire to be had on European labels. France, England, and Scandinavia, in particular, have much more to offer than has found its way to these shores thus far.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that a trend seems to be gaining momentum, whereby almost every significant European classical-record catalog, particularly in the specialty field, is on the way to having its product represented in major U.S. record shops. We feel this to be a very healthy development. For one thing, the serious

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43. Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies 1, 2; Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsodies 1, 2
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44. Eileen Farrell sings Puccini Arias from: Madame Butterfly, La Boheme, etc.

45. Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1
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116. Brahms: Symphony No. 3; Haydn Variations
Walter, Columbia Symphony

118. Gabrieli; Frescobaldi: Music for Organ and Brass
E. Power Biggs, organ; Boston Brass Ensemble, Burgin

133. Beloved Choruses
Mormon Tabernacle Choir singing works by Schubert, Haydn, Sibelius, etc.

135. Beethoven: Symphony No. 7
Bernstein, NY Philharmonic

164. Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf; Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite
N. Y. Philharmonic, Bernstein narrates and conducts

165. Vivaldi: Four Concerti
Leonard Bernstein conducts the N.Y. Philharmonic

166. Bach: "Italian" Concerto; Partitas 1 and 2
Glenn Gould, piano

167. Orff: Carmina Burana
Ormandy, The Philadelphia Orch., Rutgers Univ. Choir

168. Handel: Water Music and Royal Fireworks Suites
Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch.

169. Beethoven: Quartet No. 7 (Rasoumovsky No. 3)
Budapest String Quartet

170. Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 2
Philippe Entremont, piano; Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch.

171. Liszt: Piano Works
Ivan Davis, piano

172. Sibelius: Violin Concerto; Swan of Tuonela
Oistrakh, violin; Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra

178. Mozart: Piano Concertos No. 11 and 20
Serkin, piano; Marlboro Festival Orch., Schneider

179. Borodin: Polovtsian Dances; Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or Suite
Antal Dorati, London Symphony and Chorus

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record collector is no longer confined in his choice to the offerings of domestic companies. For another, direct importation of specialty classical discs can be geared closely to actual demand. Thus, commitments of both the overseas record manufacturer and the American importer are carried out on a realistic level—something that was not always the case with the earlier licensing agreements under which American firms undertook domestic production from European tapes. In short, European record companies that want to sell their products on the American market are finally realizing that the streets of this country are not paved with gold and that the disc market here is subject to more than its share of ups and downs.



The sale of discs directly to American importers is for a European record company a "bird in the hand," free from the complications and misunderstandings that are involved in the royalty bookkeeping and in the sales guarantees called for in the usual licensing agreement.

NEEDESS to say, we are making every effort to keep our readers up to date on the latest and best in nationally distributed classical-record imports. This is not always easy, however, as some of the American importing firms have not chosen to make discs available to us for review (Electrola is a particular instance in this respect).

Should you have problems in locating any of the imported discs that are reviewed in our columns, we shall be only too happy to direct you to the proper source of supply. We hope you will regard our increased coverage of imported classical recordings as the worth while and helpful service we intend it to be.

And with that—a Merry Christmas to all!

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This entirely new ultra-compact 4-speed record changer was designed to provide reproduction of Garrard calibre in a minimum of space. It is the most economical Garrard automatic ever presented. Introducing a new standard of styling, features and performance in the low budget range, the Autoslim will grace any music system, with the precise look of engineering excellence built into it. Only **\$39⁵⁰**



Autoslim is so compact, it will fit in where other automatic players will not. Only 6½ inches in height overall ... ideal replacement unit.



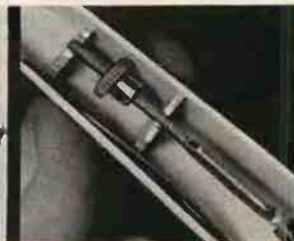
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Yugoslavia Revisited

● My own experience on a recent trip to the beautiful Dalmatian coast was certainly at variance with that described by Mr. Grunfeld in his article "How I Almost Went to the Zagreb Festival" in your October issue.

If he encountered indifference or antagonism on the part of the authorities, I encountered friendly, cooperative attitudes everywhere, and a sympathetic curiosity about the United States. I felt that, as an American, I was received with special friendliness. Surely, the conduct of one petty official is not representative of an entire country.

JOSEPH MIKLOS
Brooklyn, N.Y.

● In the past few years we have experienced a continued rise in American visitors to Yugoslavia, and I am very sorry to hear what happened to Mr. Grunfeld. I can honestly say that this is the first occurrence of this type that has been brought to my attention.

This experience of Mr. Grunfeld's shows us that we must change and improve some details in our over-all tourist development to avoid a reoccurrence of this type in the future.

STOJAN PUDAR, Director
Yugoslav State Tourist Office
New York, N.Y.

Pure and Simple

● Your record reviewers quite often use a term that I am curious about, since I do not understand its meaning. This is the word "purist." If, as your Mr. Bookspan said some time back, Ormandy's orchestrations of Bach (Columbia MS 6180) are not for the purist, I am sure that I am not one, as this is one of the most magnificent recordings I have ever heard.

I have a sneaking suspicion that a purist is very much akin to certain hi-fi listeners I have encountered who still insist that monophonic sound is the thing, who play everything with the tone controls set precisely "flat," and who rely more on an oscilloscope than on their ears.

As for me, I have been listening to recordings of good music for the past twenty-five years, and I am now rejoicing at being able to hear *all* of the music on my recently completed stereo system. If this disqualifies me as a purist, then I am happy not to be one of their number.

FELIX BURRUS
Columbus
Georgia

A musical purist is one who insists on

hearing compositions of the past performed under conditions that approximate those for which the composer wrote them. Thus, Bach composed his organ music not for a modern symphony orchestra, but for what we now know as the Baroque organ, an instrument that is capable of producing clean melodic lines that are well differentiated in tonal color. Fine recordings of Bach organ music played on this type of instrument have been made by E. Power Biggs for Columbia, Helmut Walcha for DGC Archive, and Finn Videro for Washington.

A Word For Mono

● Maybe I am just quibbling about terms, but I understand that "monophonic" means single-channel sound, as opposed to "stereophonic" sound. Yet in Edgar Villechur's article "How to Get the Most from Your Loudspeakers" (October, 1961) the term "monaural" is used in the same sense. Which is the preferred usage, "monophonic" or "monaural"?

S. K. SMITH
New York, N.Y.

Many people (and editors) have struggled with this knotty semantic problem. Some, like Mr. Villechur, object to the use of the word "monophonic" to signify one-channel reproduction on the ground that it has a special (albeit not often applied) musical sense as the antonym of "polyphonic." Others are willing to put up with this inconvenience because "monophonic" at least presents the proper idea ("one sound"), while "monaural" ("one ear") does not, and because "monophonic" is at least recognizable as a relative of "stereophonic," while "monaural" is not. Difficulties of this kind occasionally spring up in connection with new terminologies, and, as a rule, they are settled by common usage rather than by appeals to etymological reason.

Studio Equipment

● Although I often hear the phrase "broadcast standard" in describing sound equipment, I have yet to see an article recommending broadcast - designed equipment for home use. Granted the cost is higher, but I think many buffs would be willing to pay the premium if the equipment is markedly more satisfactory.

JOHN MCKAY LUDWIG
Pinchurst
North Carolina

The phrase "broadcast standard" is

HiFi/STEREO



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For the first time in your life, you see here a complete stereo home entertainment center of perfectly matching components, all by the same maker.

It is what stereophiles have been seeking for 10 years, ever since Bell introduced the world's first stereo amplifier . . . a fully integrated system consisting of the latest models of the famous Bell stereo tape transport, Bell combination stereo amplifier and stereo tuner (on one chassis), and matching Bell 3-way speakers. (Separate Bell stereo amplifiers and stereo tuners are available, if preferred or wanted to match a Bell amplifier or tuner you now own.)

Every one of these components may be had in a choice of two or more models, all in the same styling and surprisingly reasonable in price. This means you can completely plan your ideal music system and where you want to put it, make an immediate start with one or more of the components, and add the other matching components later.

Actually, you need only the components shown above, with second matching speaker, to enjoy every source of stereo with the finest sound reproduction attainable today . . . professional quality playback *and* recording with tape; FM, AM and stereo broadcasts including *multiplex reception with new Bell adapter*, and stereo and monaural records played with your present turntable or any new one you wish to add.

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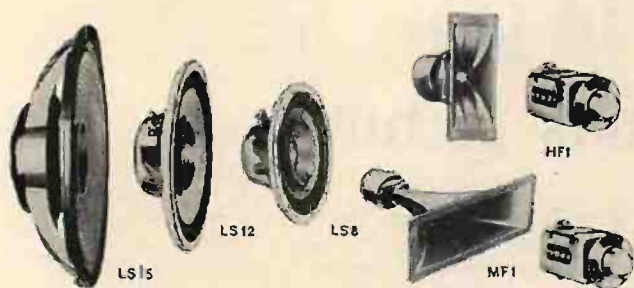
Introducing the new Wolverine LT12—the latest addition to the famous Wolverine budget-priced line of quality speakers!

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The impressive list of LT12 "high-priced" features also includes a new ceramic magnet, plus edgewise-wound voice coil for highest efficiency . . . rugged die-cast frame to ensure perfect alignment of all moving parts . . . "deep-dish" bass cone design for higher power handling . . . long-throw suspension for minimum distortion . . . 3-position tonal balance switch that matches the LT12 to your acoustics . . . and a rich, jewel-like precision finish to all vital parts.

But, best of all, the LT12 is versatile: mounts in most high fidelity speaker enclosures, in the wall, ceiling, or even in a closet. And its wide dispersion makes placement far less critical than ordinary speakers—even for stereo!

See and hear the exciting new Wolverine LT12 at your nearby Electro-Voice/Wolverine high fidelity headquarters . . . today!



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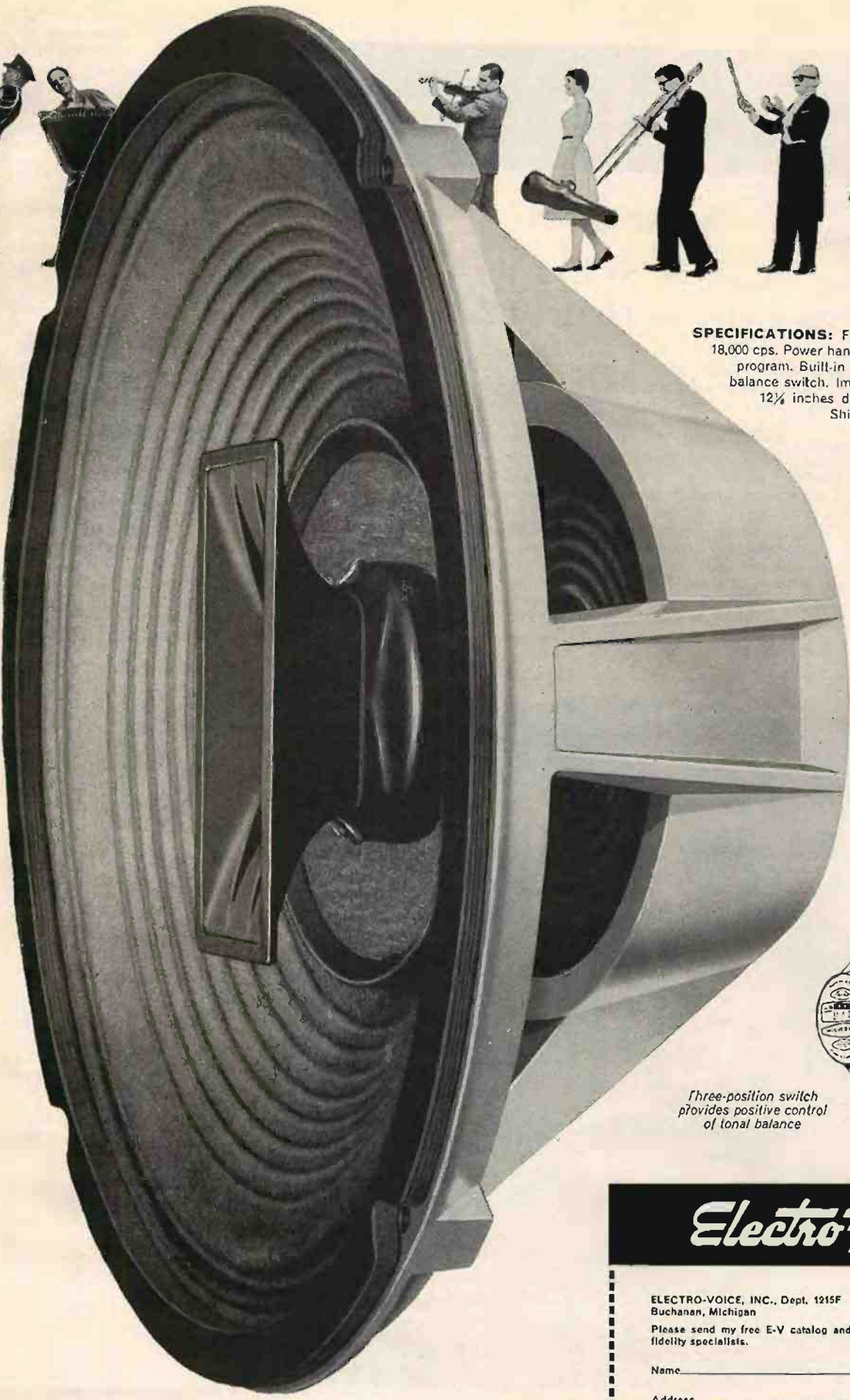
MODEL LS15 Big speaker sound at small speaker price! Radax 15" full-range speaker. Response, 35 to 13,000 cps. Power handling capacity, 20 watts. Impedance, 8 ohms. Diameter, 15½ inches. Depth, 6-11/32 inches. Shipping weight 12 pounds. Net each \$24.50.

MODEL LS12 Shallow design fits anywhere! Dual-cone 12" full-range speaker. Response, 40 to 13,000 cps. Power handling capacity, 20 watts. Impedance, 8 ohms. Diameter, 12½ inches. Depth 3½ inches. Shipping weight 6 pounds. Net each \$19.50.

MODEL LS8 Ideal for hi-fi in every room of your house! Radax 8" full-range speaker. Shallow design. Response 55 to 13,000 cps. Power handling capacity, 20 watts. Impedance, 8 ohms. Diameter, 8¾ inches. Depth, 3½ inches. Shipping weight 5 pounds. Net each \$18.00.

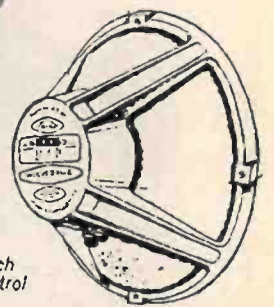
HF1 STEP-UP KIT Add sparkling brilliance to LS8, LS12, LS15 or similar speakers. Improves response from 3,500 cps to 18,000 cps. Complete with crossover-level control, wiring harness, complete instructions. Shipping weight 3 pounds. Net each \$20.00.

MF1 STEP-UP KIT Mid-range kit to complete Wolverine three-way system. Improves presence and dispersion from 1,000 cps to 3,500 cps. Complete with crossover-level control, wiring harness, instructions. Shipping weight 5 pounds. Net each \$25.00.



SPECIFICATIONS: Frequency response, 40 to 18,000 cps. Power handling capacity, 20 watts; program. Built-in crossover and 3-position balance switch. Impedance, 8 ohms. Size, 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter, 6 inches deep. Shipping weight 15 pounds.

Model LT12
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Three-position switch provides positive control of tonal balance

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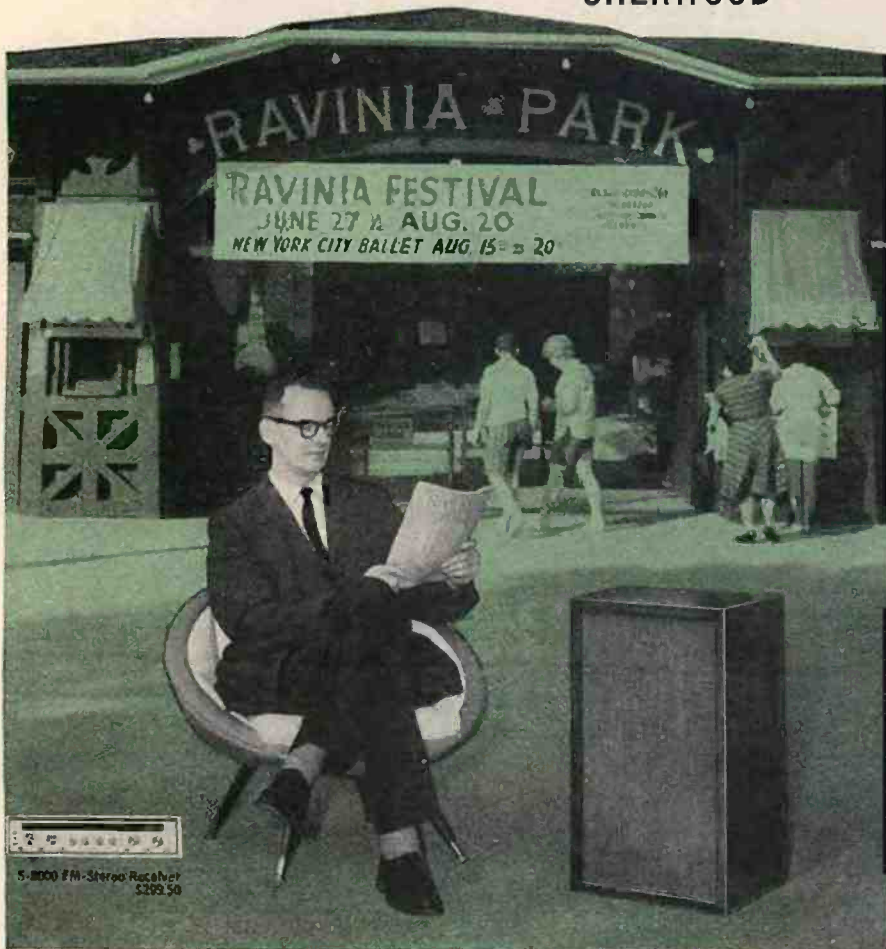
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SO, who needs a ticket?

Who, indeed! Not Mr. Edward S. Miller, General Manager of Sherwood Electronic Labs, Inc. His is a happy compromise...no picnic-oriented bugs, no crowd chatter...just splendid music by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as he relaxes in his comfy chair...an idyllic situation which anyone can duplicate by acquiring a new Sherwood Ravinia Model SR-3 3-speaker system. It's an exciting new departure for Sherwood—"most honored of them all" in the manufacture of stereo tuners, amplifiers, and receivers. Two years in the design and testing phase, the Ravinia 3-way speaker system is considered the finest of its kind for monaural or stereo reproduction. High priced? Not at all. It's \$139.50—in hand-rubbed walnut...but it's only for those who want the ultimate. 12" high-compliance woofer, 8" mid-range, and 2½" ring-radiator tweeter. The Ravinia features extremely low intermodulation distortion and unusually flat frequency response ($\pm 2\frac{1}{2}$ db) to 17 KC. Size: 26" X 15" X 13¼" deep. Hear it for yourself at your Sherwood dealer. Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc., 4300 N. California Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois. For complete technical details, write Dept. 12R.

SHERWOOD



sometimes used rather loosely to describe equipment of good quality. In the strict sense, it means that the equipment in question meets the standards of the National Association of Broadcasters. Many of the better high-fidelity home products not only meet these standards but exceed them.

One factor that makes broadcast equipment more expensive than corresponding home equipment is its rugged construction, which is necessary to assure reliable operation on a 24-hour-a-day, year-after-year basis. Turntables and tape machines, moreover, must have very high starting torques and special clutch devices to permit instant cueing. But since these requirements do not apply to home systems, there would be little point in paying extra for them.

Bravo Brubeck

● Nat Hentoff's review of Columbia's "Tonight Only!" by Dave Brubeck and Carmen McRae in your September issue contains several remarks that would have made me angry if they hadn't been too absurd to be taken seriously. To wit: "the Brubeck quartet, whose playing has recently been more and more bogged down by the dull piano work of its leader... He [Brubeck] is seldom able to improvise even on his own lines with imaginative freshness..." And finally Mr. Hentoff suggests that "somebody should record Miss McRae... with a real jazz pianist."

Please cancel my subscription and refund the remainder of my account. I will use it to buy an album of Dave Brubeck, whom I consider to be "a real jazz pianist."

BRUCE NELSON
Snohomish
Washington

As Mark Twain once said, "Difference of opinion is what makes a horse race."

Summit Meeting

● David Hall deserves credit for suggesting in his September "HiFi Soundings" column a summit meeting between members of the Music Library Association, the Music Educators National Council, and the Record Industry Association of America to find ways of keeping outstanding recordings available permanently.

But because the requirements of libraries and schools may differ from those of private collectors, I would suggest that a few record critics of the caliber of Martin Bookspan or David Hall should also be at the Summit—at least as Small-Power observers.

JOHN M. PRATT
West Chester
Penna.

A report on the progress of the summit meeting will appear in a future issue.

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ABOUT FULL-SIZE TWO-WAY SPEAKER SYSTEMS

From the birth of high fidelity in the late 40's to the present day, competitive merchandising has inspired many gimmicks, passing fads, and innovations to confuse the loudspeaker system question for serious music listeners. The last decade has seen an endless variety of "trick" speakers and countless midgets known as "compact." Most of these now have been exposed and have fallen by the wayside and serious music listeners are returning to the fact that only full-size, two-way speaker systems based on solid engineering principles are capable of providing the complete thrill of listening to good music faithfully reproduced at levels approaching the original performance; the kind of reproduction that was responsible for the spontaneous acceptance of component high fidelity at the very beginning.

Professional users of high fidelity equipment—audio engineers of the big-label recording companies, of the broadcast networks and of the theatrical world—use only time-proven, carefully-engineered full-size two-way speaker systems. Altec full-size speaker systems, shown above, are standard equipment in these critical professional applications. Several of the reasons are: *Full-size Altec speaker systems are large enough to house professional-grade two-way speaker components; big "woofers" and a separate low-crossover high-frequency horn with a compression-type driver. Altec low-frequency drivers have the size to move large volumes of air with short, effortless cone excursions. A single Altec multicellular or sectoral horn provides wide angle sound distribution over the remainder of the frequency spectrum with only one crossover. The result is natural bass freely reproduced, and both*

mid and high frequency range are reproduced without the distortion hazard of many crossovers. This is the only way that the home listener, with any certainty, can hear the same quality of playback that the musical conductor monitored and approved back in the studio.

ALTEC full-size speaker enclosures provide the air volume needed to reproduce lowest frequency without impeding or restraining cone movement.

ALTEC full-size speaker systems are efficient. Only a small amount of wattage is required to reproduce the entire dynamic range of the most complex symphonic arrangement.

ALTEC full-size speakers can be played at live-concert listening levels without generating *listener fatigue*. Their large power-handling capacity and higher efficiency allows reproduction of dynamic peaks without driving the amplifier into margins of distortion.

There is no clipping or compression. They are completely free of the mechanical "tightness" associated with the small speaker—an important factor for people who listen to music long and at times want to experience the moving thrill of sound at full live orchestra levels.

If your listening area is of average size or larger and your tastes dictate serious listening, *you will find room enough for a stereo arrangement of full-size ALTEC speaker systems.* See and hear them now at your audio specialist store.

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● **Acoustic Research**, long known for loudspeakers, is branching into turntable and tone-arm manufacture. The new AR turntable and tone arm are linked by a heavy metal yoke that helps eliminate motion between the turntable and the arm and thereby suppresses rumble. The entire assembly is suspended on shockmounts from the top plate, making it largely insensitive to accidental jolts. The 3½-pound aluminum table is belt-driven from two synchronous motors and operates at 33⅓ rpm.

As a protective device for the cartridge and stylus, the tone arm has a damping mechanism that lets it float



down to the record when it is dropped. As soon as the stylus touches the record, however, the damping action is automatically removed.

The turntable is sold with a guarantee that it will meet NAB broadcast specifications in terms of wow, flutter, and speed accuracy, and is also guaranteed against defects that occur within one year. Price: \$58.00 (complete with walnut base, transparent dust cover, and connecting cables). (Acoustic Research, Inc., 24 Thomdike Street, Cambridge 41, Mass.)

● **Altec Lansing** announces a 50-watt (music-power) all transistor, single-channel amplifier, the Model 351A. The circuit employs diffused-alloy transistors, which perform well especially in the high-frequency range.

Frequency response is from 20 to 20,000 cps ±1 db and the noise level is 90 db below full output. Output impedances are 8 and 16 ohms, in addition to a 70-volt line for use in sound-distribution systems. Dimensions: 9¾ x 4¾ x 8¼ inches. Price: \$215.00 (Altec Lansing Corp., 1515 South Manchester Ave., Anaheim, Cal.)

● **Audio Empire's** new 980 tone arm offers a number of refinements. Among them is improved distribution of the total arm mass; the pivot points are located at the precise center of the arm's mass, enabling the arm to ride more easily over warped records.

A positioning screw in the cartridge

shell allows shifting the cartridge to achieve the correct amount of "overhang." The fundamental resonance of the arm is at 8 cps, well below the audio range, and the arm's maximum tracking error is .65 degrees.

A plug-in cable harness eliminates unshielded leads and exposed terminal points. The stylus pressure is set by means of a calibrated dial. Price: \$50.00 (Dyna-Empire, Inc., 1075 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, N.Y.)

● **Benjamin** introduces the Miracord Studio record changer, which has a 12-inch, 7-pound, dynamically balanced platter, driven by a hysteresis-synchronous motor (4-pole motor optional). The tracking pressure of the springless, statically-balanced arm is adjustable between 0 and 10 grams. Dual spindles allow the Studio to be used either as a changer or as a manually operated turntable. Price: \$99.50 (with hysteresis-synchronous motor), \$79.95 (with shaded, 4-pole motor). (Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp., Box 67, Corona 68, N.Y.)

● **Eico** announces a multiplex adapter that is available as a kit and in factory-wired form. The MX-99 employs matrixing and sampling techniques to achieve stereo separation of 35 db.

The MX-99 is self-powered and automatically goes into action when the tuned-in station is broadcasting in stereo. It has a defeat switch by which mono operation can be obtained from a stereo broadcast, if desired. The adapter also includes a separation control. Price: \$39.95 (kit), \$64.95 (factory-wired). (Eico Electronic Instrument Co., Inc., 33-00 Northern Blvd., Long Island City 1, N.Y.)

● **Fisher's** line of bookshelf speaker systems is now augmented by the XP-4.



The XP-4 uses a total of four drivers, including a 12-inch woofer with a two-inch voice coil, two 5-inch mid-range units, and a 2-inch hemispheric tweeter.

HiFi / STEREO

The new T300X
Award Tuner
does not need
a multiplex
adapter



The T300X, AM/FM tuner, does not need a multiplex adapter. It has one. Right where it belongs—built-in. On the chassis and out of sight. The T300X is completely ready to receive multiplex (FM Stereo) broadcasts now.

What is the significance of multiplex? It represents a major technological advance in the technique of broadcasting. Now, for the first time, you can enjoy all of the color and genuine excitement of stereo with the fidelity that only FM can provide. And what a wonderful opportunity it presents for taping stereo selections right off the air.

The T300X is a striking example of Harman-Kardon's engineering leadership in the development of instruments for multiplex reception. It is designed with a wide-band Foster-Seeley discriminator and a 6BN6 limiter to insure freedom from distortion and noise. A total of 4 IF stages guarantee greater sensitivity. Automatic Frequency Control (AFC) with regulated voltage supply maintains oscillator stability regardless of line voltage variations. The T300X boasts superior impulse noise rejection plus uniform limiting and output at all signals. Here is a solid performer, rock stable and ideal for multiplex reception.

The T300X takes its place in the Award Series alongside the classic F500 tuner shown below. The F500 is a completely professional FM tuner designed with every provision for multiplex now or in the future. It has space on its chassis to accommodate the excellent MX500 wide-band, plug-in multiplex adapter. No spe-

cial controls are needed; no special adjustments. Just one simple connection converts the F500 into a completely integrated multiplex tuner.

Either tuner will provide outstanding performance with the new Award amplifiers. Both are beautifully finished in brushed gold.

The T300X, AM/FM stereo multiplex tuner, is \$149.95; the F500, FM/multiplex tuner—\$129.95. The MX500 multiplex adapter for use with the F500—\$39.95. Optional enclosures, which fit both, include the CX50 (metal)—\$12.95 and the WW50 (walnut)—\$29.95. Prices are slightly higher in the West.

For complete information on the Award Series and other fine Harman-Kardon products write to Dept. R-12, Harman-Kardon, Plainview, N. Y.



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Level controls permit adjustment of middle and high frequencies to complement acoustics, and the three-way crossover network employs air-core coils to eliminate distortion at the crossover frequencies. Dimensions: 24½ x 14 x 12½ inches. Price: \$199.50 in mahogany, cherry, or oiled walnut. (\$204.50 in the Far West). (Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N.Y.)

● **Lafayette's** LA-240 is a stereo amplifier that delivers 20 watts per channel at less than 1 per cent harmonic distortion at 1,000 cps. At the 14-watt level, harmonic distortion is less than 0.25 per cent. IM distortion is 0.34 per cent at 10 watts. Frequency response at full output is 50 to 70,000 cps ±1 db and 12 to



100,000 cps ±1 db at 1 watt. Hum is 50 db down on the magnetic-phono input and 78 db down on the high-level inputs.

The LA-240 has a continuously variable blend control in addition to separate bass and treble controls for each channel. A tape-head input is provided. Price: \$79.95. (Lafayette Radio, 165-08 Liberty Avenue, Jamaica 33, N.Y.)

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The M77 tracks at 3 to 6 grams. Frequency response is 20 to 17,000 cps, output 9 millivolts, and channel separation more than 20 db at 1,000 cps. A 0.7-mil stylus is provided.

Both cartridges can be supplied with a diamond stylus for playing 78-rpm records. This stylus, the N78, is quickly interchangeable. Price: \$36.50 (M33), \$27.50 (M77). (Shure Brothers, Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Ill.)

ERRATA: The Elac STS-310-D stereo cartridge, which was described as being a variable-reluctance design in the November issue, is actually a moving-magnet type, according to Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp., the importers of the cartridge.



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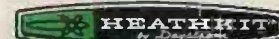
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BEGINNERS ONLY

by HANS H. FANTELE

SHORT OF outright larceny, the most economical way of acquiring a sound system is to build its components from kits. Since labor is the most expensive single ingredient in an amplifier or tuner, you can save some thirty to forty per cent of the price of comparable factory-finished equipment by doing your own assembly work. Such savings have enabled many high-fidelity fans to acquire equipment of a quality that otherwise would have been beyond their means, and many kit builders have found that, apart from saving money, they really enjoy putting their own equipment together.

In recent years, kit building has become far simpler than it used to be. In the early days of high fidelity you had to be reasonably familiar with the basic anatomy of amplifiers and tuners if you wanted to build them yourself, but most kits sold today are so designed that even those who have never before laid hold of a soldering iron can easily learn to put them together. In many modern kits all possible doubt about what goes where has been removed, and some include even such details as connecting cables that are color-coded and precut to the right length. And if you manage to make an error despite all this, a self-checking routine that is part of your instructions helps you spot and correct your mistake. Virtually nothing is left to chance or your own judgment.

Of course, previous experience is helpful, but it is no longer indispensable. The experienced kit builder may complete the job faster, but the novice, if he takes his time and works carefully, can end with a component that works just as well. This is not to say that kit building is easy for everyone. If experience is no longer a requisite, other qualifications are—namely patience, a certain degree of handiness, and the ability to do a job systematically. Possibly the greatest help of all is a temperament that will allow you to sit still for several hours and work methodically, step by step. Those kit builders who try to outsmart the instructions and invent shortcuts of their own usually wind up with some interesting-looking wire sculpture—but it won't play music.

As for your investment in tools and time, a soldering iron, a pair of pliers, and a screwdriver are all the equipment you really need; and, depending on the kind of component you are building, the job may take anywhere from eight to thirty hours. A power amplifier, which has relatively few parts, can be completed in two evenings, and some of the newer FM tuner kits have lately been simplified to the point where they take only a little more time. Projects like these are good exercises through which the beginner can gain the confidence to tackle the more intricate challenges of stereo preamplifiers or integrated amplifiers. There are also kits for loudspeaker systems, turntables, and tape recorders, so that, except for tone arms and cartridges, virtually all high-fidelity components can now be built from kits. Ample opportunity indeed exists for you to enjoy the rewards of craftsmanship as you listen to the music sounding forth from your own handiwork.

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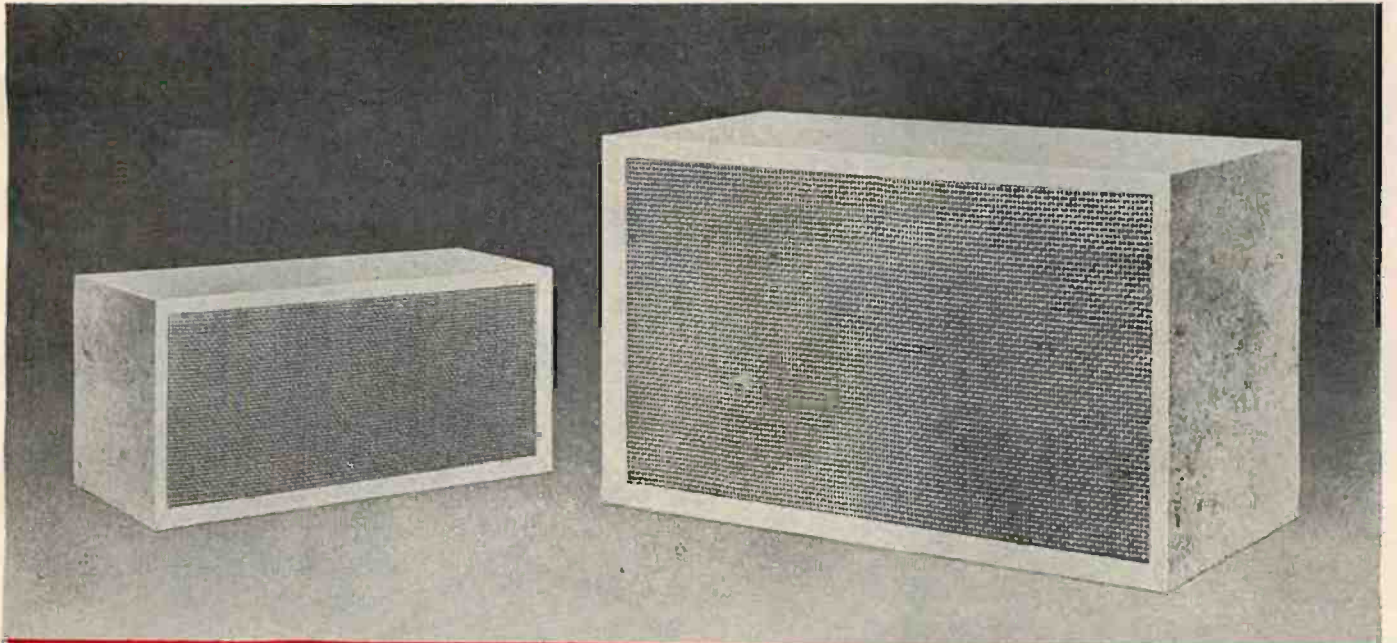
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BARTÓK'S CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA

FRANCIS Y. DUVAL

SEVENTEEN YEARS ago this month, on December 1, 1944, Serge Koussevitzky conducted the world premier of Béla Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* at Symphony Hall in Boston. Koussevitzky had commissioned the score from Bartók on behalf of the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, which the conductor had recently established in memory of his wife. Now, less than two decades later, Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* has become a genuine classic, an acknowledged masterpiece with a secure and lasting place in the international concert repertory.

For the premiere of the *Concerto for Orchestra* Bartók wrote a brief description of the music: "The general mood of the work represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from

the sternness of the first movement and the death-song of the third, to the life-assertion of the last one." Bartók had composed no music since the Sixth String Quartet in 1939, but in the *Concerto for Orchestra*, his first score written in America, he produced music of unique power and broad communicative scope: a heroic and nobly proportioned work in the victory-through-struggle tradition of so many of our most famous symphonic masterpieces. It is this heroic quality, in its Bartókian manifestations, that gives the music its essential greatness. For the 62-year-old Bartók, ill, financially harrassed, and exiled from his Hungarian homeland, the *Concerto for Orchestra* was his defiant yes to life, even when everything about it seemed to add up to a vast no.

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Audio Dynamics presents an entirely new concept in pickup design that marks a new era in record playing performance by guaranteeing the five essentials of stereo reproduction.

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Although the ADC-1 raised stereo reproduction to levels never before possible, this highly compliant cartridge has to be combined with a quality tone arm. The combination must enable the cartridge to track at a force low enough to eliminate distortions and record wear, and also preserve the linearity of the stylus tip suspension. Selecting the proper tone arm was a problem for the buyer. The new Pritchard Pickup System eliminated guesswork. It combines the ADC-1 and a newly designed tone arm that is compatible with this outstanding cartridge.

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5-12



Of all the available recordings of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, the brilliance and swagger of Ferenc Fricșay's interpretation gives the Decca mono LP a definite edge over both Reiner's early stereo for RCA Victor and Haitink's recent one with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw for Epic.

In the seventeen years since the premiere of the *Concerto for Orchestra*, more than a dozen recordings of it have been released, but Koussevitzky was never given an opportunity to record the masterpiece that he had brought into being. To Fritz Reiner fell the honor of conducting the first recording of the score; this was in 1947 for Columbia, toward the end of his tenure as music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. In 1956 another Reiner recording of the music was released, this time by RCA Victor, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The performance is one of hair-trigger precision and virtuosity, with an undeniable feeling of tension, but also with an uncommonly expert shaping of the tonal architecture of the score. Released monophonically first (LM 1934), the performance also figured in RCA Victor's initial release of stereo discs about three years ago. The microphoning is more distant than is now the custom in Chicago's Orchestra Hall, and the sound lacks some of the sensuousness of more recent RCA Victor products from that auditorium, but Reiner's authority and command still make a striking impression.

OF THE performances available in mono versions only, Dorati's with the Minneapolis Symphony (Mercury MG 50033) is a vivid, dynamic reading, but the recording overdoes the intensity as far as I'm concerned. The readings by Ormandy (Columbia ML 4973) and Karajan (Angel 35003) are carefully prepared and superbly performed, but they seem to me lacking emotional content. Decca's version (DL 9951), with Fricșay conducting the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, is a brilliant accomplishment, graced with sound of exciting color and warmth. Especially noteworthy is the swagger and uninhibited extroversion of Fricșay's finale.

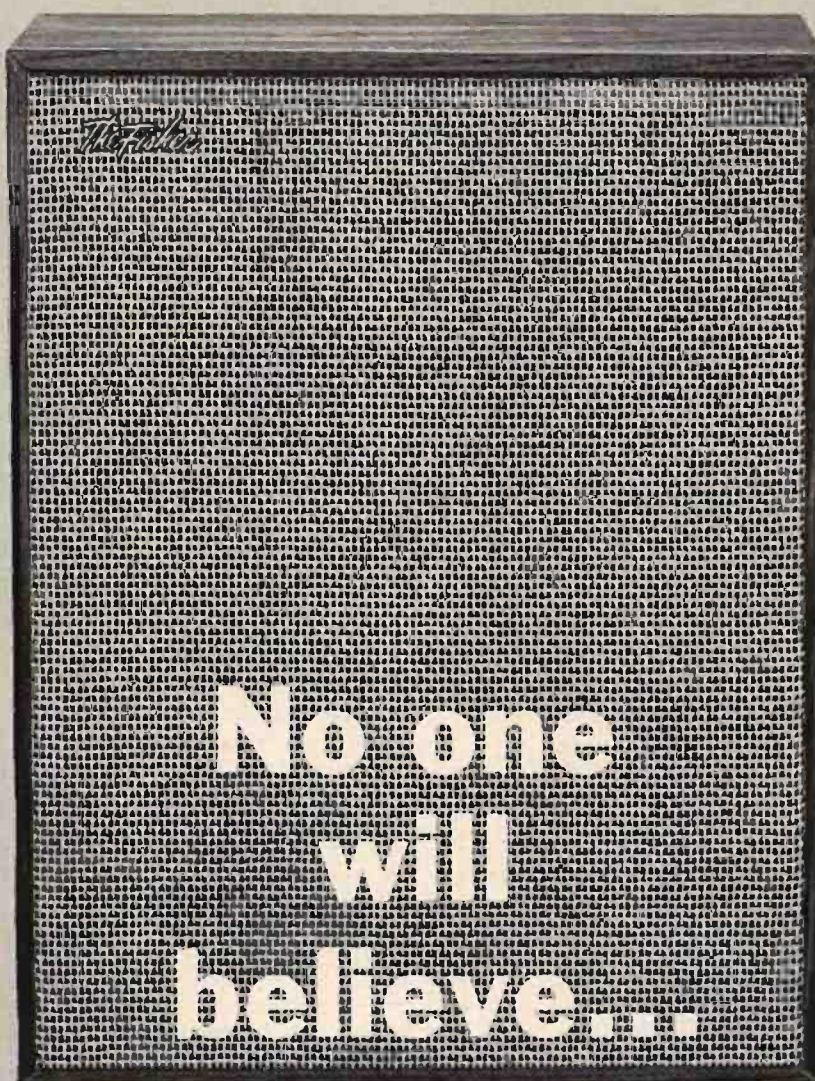
Six stereo recordings of the music are available in addition to the Reiner performance already discussed. While I remember a wonderful performance that Er-

nest Ansermet conducted in Boston about ten years ago, his recording with his own Suisse Romande Orchestra (London CS 6086, CM 9184) is restrained and too cautious. The stereo sound is fairly well spread and defined, but it is lacking in depth.

Leonard Bernstein, as might have been predicted, offers a highly personalized account of the music, with the various instrumental voices microscopically exposed. If you want to hear as much as possible of what is going on inside the music, Bernstein's is the version to get, especially as Columbia's engineers have contrived an extremely close-to yet well-balanced sound, with extraordinarily vivid bass response. Be warned, however, that the conductor lays on some of the Hungarian goulash elements with a rather lavish hand (Columbia MS 6140, ML 5471).

Haitink (Epic BC 1129, LC 3772) and Hollreiser (Vox STPL 10480, PL 10480) offer essentially straightforward, dynamic, and vigorous accounts of the music, and both are well recorded, with Haitink having the edge both for interpretation and for recorded sound. The Concertgebouw Orchestra, incidentally, plays magnificently for Haitink. Kubelik's performance, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Capitol SG/G 7186), is disappointingly pedestrian, both as to performance as well as sound. Stokowski's, on the other hand, with the Houston Symphony Orchestra (Everest SDBR 3069, LPBR 6069), is refreshingly gentle, having a chamber-music kind of intimacy. But Everest's recording for Stokowski is not as good as are some of the competing versions, and the Houston Symphony finds some of the music pretty tough going; despite all this, however, Stokowski's unique reading places his version very much in the running.

In sum, then, Fricșay's monophonic version strikes me as the best of all the available recordings of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*, with stereo honors about evenly divided between Reiner and Haitink, with Bernstein and Stokowski as intriguing alternate choices.



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The chief source of rumble is the motor itself. Most turntables are driven by motors that turn at about 1800 revolutions per minute. Any unbalance in the rotor or any eccentricity in the motor shaft will introduce vibration at the motor's revolution rate, which, when we divide it by the number of seconds in a minute, turns out to be about 30 cycles per second. Harmonics of this frequency may also be present at lower amplitudes.

Another source of rumble is the idler wheel, which is used in many turntables and in most record changers. The idler wheel turns at a speed intermediate between the motor and the turntable, and it usually produces rumble in the 2- to 7-cps region.

Rumble should be specified with respect to a standard reference of vibration amplitude. NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) standards for broadcast turntables specify a reference level of 1.4 cm/sec velocity at 100 cps, which corresponds in amplitude to velocities of 7 cm/sec at 500 cps or 10 cm/sec at 1,000 cps. The playback system must be equalized to the NAB characteristic (similar to RIAA) within plus or minus 1 db between 10 and 250 cps, with response falling off above and below these limits.

Rather than using the NAB standards, however, some manufacturers have chosen higher reference levels (such as 20 cm/sec at 1,000 cps) on the grounds that these are more typical of the peak velocities that are found on modern records. That this is done is not surprising when one considers that this technique results in a 6-db improvement in the rumble figure. Others do not specify any reference level, using instead an undefined "average recording level" as a standard.

In most cases, audible rumble consists of frequencies that are 30 cps and higher. Some manufacturers use weighting curves that take into account the insensitivity

of the human ear to very low frequencies and discount the effects of subsonic rumble. Subsonic rumble, however, although not audible by itself, can still overload the amplifier and produce intermodulation distortion, which causes a general muddiness of the sound.

Rumble measurements can be affected by the characteristics of the arm and the cartridge and by the manner in which the turntable is mounted. The most logical method, in my opinion, is to use a good arm-and-cartridge combination that has no appreciable resonance near the rumble frequencies and to mount the turntable on the manufacturer's own base whenever one is available. I use a test record that has a 1,000-cps, 7 cm/sec reference band, followed by unmodulated grooves. The unweighted rumble figures obtained from this record are corrected to conform to the NAB standard. In other respects I follow the NAB procedure, plus a rough determination of vertical rumble.

MIRACORD STUDIO RECORD CHANGER



● THE MIRACORD STUDIO record changer is a four-speed machine that is driven by a four-pole motor and has a 7-pound, 12-inch dynamically balanced aluminum turntable. The tone arm is longer than most record-changer arms and has a tracking error of 1 degree or less over most of a record; it remains nearly parallel to the record surface whether one or several records are on the turntable.

The rumble level of the Studio player was -38 db in the lateral plane and slightly less in the vertical plane, using NAB measurement standards. Wow and flutter were 0.2 per cent and 0.1 per cent. Thus, this



by JULIAN D. HIRSCH

player met NAB requirements for broadcast service. The speed of the motor varied slightly with line-voltage changes from about 1 per cent slow at 85 volts to a fraction of a per cent fast at 125 volts. From 115 to 120 volts the speed was nearly exact.

The tracking force required to operate the trip mechanism was very low, and the full capabilities of cartridges that track at as little as 2 or 3 grams of pressure can be utilized in this arm. I could find no evidence of any side thrust or rough treatment of the stylus, and the arm was completely free except during the change cycle. The tracking force is easily and accurately set, and it remains constant regardless of the height of the record stack.

I was most impressed with the excellence of finish and the general caliber of workmanship of the Studio. The pushbuttons operated with a feather touch and a completely positive action. The change action was smooth, reasonably silent, and appeared to be easy on records.

In terms of listening quality, the Studio is equal or superior to most turntable-tone-arm combinations that cost up to 50 per cent more. The Studio is priced at \$79.95; another model, the Studio H, which is identical except for the incorporation of a hysteresis synchronous motor, is available for \$99.50.

**FISHER X-1000
INTEGRATED
STEREO
AMPLIFIER**



● AS THE DE LUXE model of the Fisher line of integrated amplifiers, the X-1000 incorporates a host of unusual features. In addition to the usual control facilities, there are several less common controls. These include a reverberation control for use with the Fisher Spacexpander, a blend control (labelled "Dimension"), and a third-speaker volume control.

An array of colored lights indicates which input channel is connected to which speaker, as well as how much blending is being done. I found the indicator lights more confusing than helpful, since this amplifier is too flexible for its operation to be fully defined by five lights.

The X-1000 has an unusual method for balancing the outputs of a stereo cartridge. Each low-level input (phono or tape-head) has an individual level control. While playing a mono record, the phasing switch is set at its reverse-phase position and the level controls are adjusted for a sound null. At this point the levels are exactly equal, and when the phase is returned to normal, the system is ready to play. A similar system works on one of the auxiliary inputs. This is a useful and effective balancing means, but I would prefer to have these infrequently used controls off the front panel, where they are likely to be unwittingly misadjusted; further, they add to the apparent complexity of the amplifier's controls.

The X-1000 has a switching system that permits connecting a three-head tape recorder to the monitor jacks in the conventional way; yet by switching to one of the auxiliary inputs, the playback signal can be passed through the control and filter circuits. These filters, by the way, are among the most effective I have used, with 12 db/octave slopes and well-chosen cut-off frequencies (100 cps and 3,000 cps).

In all significant respects, the Fisher X-1000 met its specifications. At 2 per cent harmonic distortion it put out a total of 114 continuous watts, and, on an individual-channel basis, its IM distortion was 0.5 per cent at 10 watts, 1 per cent at 30 watts, and 1.2 per cent at 50 watts. At 20 cps, the X-1000 put out 30 watts at 2 per cent harmonic distortion. The hum-and-noise figure was 82 db below 10 watts on high-level inputs; on the phono inputs hum and noise was 70 db below 10 watts.

The X-1000 is large, heavy, hot (300 watts power consumption), and far from cheap, being priced at \$339.50, but it is a fitting companion to the excellent Fisher tuners, which it matches in styling and panel dimensions.

FM MULTIPLEX

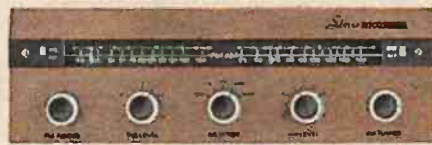
STEREO



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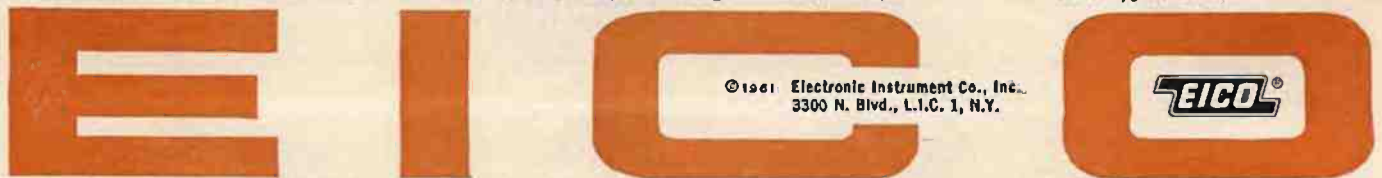
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What is wrong with contemporary music

MUSIC—more particularly the type of music known as “highbrow,” or “serious”—is today in a state of crisis from which even the salesmanship of such enthusiasts as Leonard Bernstein can scarcely hope to redeem it, and the crisis is threatening the permanence of some of our most cherished institutions, the symphony orchestra and the ceremony of the concert. The great masterpieces of the past are still being widely performed—too widely perhaps for their own good, since audiences may well become satiated by their endless repetition. But contemporary composition is failing to replace these masterpieces with anything very much worth listening to, and the natural hunger of audiences for something that is both modern and vital is simply not being satisfied.

I state this as what seems to me an indisputable fact. There are minor exceptions to it. The Russians, who have made a national policy of discouraging experimentation in music have salvaged some of the great

traditions of the nineteenth century in the symphonics of men like Shostakovich and Prokofieff, and some Americans, men like Samuel Barber and Paul Creston, have stuck close enough to these traditions to produce occasional works that arouse public interest, as have such European composers as Carl Orff and Francis Poulenc. There are also among us men who have continued to work in the style of the past—Vittorio Giannini and Randall Thompson are good examples—and who have produced some music of considerable worth. But they are not fashionable. They are referred to, disparagingly, as academicians.

By and large, the new music that is offered in our concert halls has no meaning for the public to which it is addressed. It is, as a rule, politely applauded, but most of it is quickly, and justly, forgotten, or is kept alive only by the insistent propaganda of a small minority consisting mainly of the composers and their friends. Musically, we live in an age of pygmies. Prob-

by Winthrop Sargeant

WHAT IS WRONG WITH CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

ably never before have so many people devoted themselves to writing notes down on paper. Surely never have so many people written so many notes with results of so little importance.

In seeking for the causes of this unhappy situation, it is necessary to consider the position of the composer in relation to the world he lives in as well as his position in relation to his art and its history. In our society, the composer of serious music has lost touch with the audience. He is, and considers himself to be, a member of an unappreciated fraternal minority that stands in opposition to the tastes of the majority of educated listeners. He even glories in his underdog status, telling himself that the very unintelligibility of what he writes is a virtue, that the greatest artists are usually neglected during their lifetimes (which is not true) and that posterity will vindicate him (which I consider extremely unlikely).

He himself is no longer a professional. He does not make his living by his creative art, as virtually all the great masters of the past did; he does not have to please or interest anyone but himself. His rewards come in the form of foundation grants and teaching jobs, and those in charge of handing out such rewards are almost invariably fellow composers or people advised by juries of fellow composers. He therefore writes his music not for audiences but for other composers who belong to his own group and who demand the kind of music they themselves write.

Then, as a teacher, he teaches others to write the same sort of music. It is not often pointed out nowadays that most of the composers of the past got their training not at the hands of other composers but at the hands of gifted pedagogues who were the guardians of sound technical tradition. These pedagogues have today all but disappeared, and it is notable that one of the last of them, Rosario Scalero, of the Curtis Institute of Music, has been responsible for the training of several of our more intelligible composers, among them Gian-Carlo Menotti and Samuel Barber. They have, almost everywhere, been replaced by the composer-teacher, and, I think, with catastrophic results. Curiously, a university that would not dream of making, say, Jack Kerouac the head of its English department thinks nothing of putting a comparable musical figure in charge of its music studies.

THE REASONS behind this curious, almost unprecedented, trend lie in the musical ignorance of academic authorities. Composition, to them, as to the public generally, is a mysterious art beyond understanding or criticism. It never seems to occur to them that the technical side of this art can be learned, with a little application, by almost anybody who is not tone deaf, and that it can be taught as easily as grammar, a good deal more easily than mathematics.

Where literature is concerned, the authorities are on firm ground. Nowadays nearly everybody can read and



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Twilight figures of an era when contemporary composers could still be appreciated by the public

write and have opinions about reading and writing. But not everybody can read and write music. So the composer is placed on a special pinnacle where he practices an occult art that neither the public nor its educational leaders can presume to evaluate or influence. One result has been a rather touching reverence for composers, as men who are carrying on a worthy cause no matter what they do. And composers have taken full advantage of the situation, making themselves into a sort of secret society dedicated mainly to the maintenance of its own status, and caring very little whether or not their activities contribute anything of value to the rest of the human race.

Thus the modern composer, as teacher or as creator of music, is placed above criticism and above competition. He has abolished the traditional rules of his craft and now makes his own rules—"playing tennis without a net," as Robert Frost once said of writers of free verse. He has his own secret jargon of technical terms that impress the layman without informing him. He refuses to compete with the great masters of the past; on the contrary, he spends a lot of time trying to convince others that the great masters of the past were really no good, or that their music is entirely irrelevant to the musical needs of the present. Whether he himself really has any talent at all is something beyond the judgment of his listeners.

It is their duty, as he conceives it, to listen reverently and applaud his intentions whether they like the music or not, and the prestige of his craft is such that few listeners dare express their real feelings about what they hear. The result of all this is, to my mind, the darkest of all dark ages for music in its creative aspects—an age in which, unless some correctives are applied, music will very soon cease to be considered a major art form.

HISTORICALLY, this trend is now so old that there is a certain unreality about referring to it, as is customary, by the term "modern music." It started slightly over half a century ago when Arnold Schoenberg, until then a minor composer in the Wagnerian tradition, created the first completely atonal composition, the second of his three *Klavierstücke*, Op. 11. The world was then still full of meaningful new compositions. The great Gustav Mahler had not yet died, and was still at work on the last of those apocalyptic, expressionist symphonies that were to gain an increasing hold over the musical public. The equally great, though quite different, Richard Strauss, at the peak of his powers, was shortly to produce *Der Rosenkavalier* and was to live on for nearly five decades, writing music whose eloquence and freedom from theoretical cant is still delighting new discoverers. And there were other important composers—Debussy, Jean Sibelius, and Gia-



ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

Is his serial system merely a game of musical anagrams?

como Puccini, to name only three who were still active and widely appreciated.

Nevertheless, it was Schoenberg's Op. 11 that drew a following from among the younger composers, who found in it what they took to be the key to the future of their art. It held the beginnings of a system of composition that was entirely new, and Schoenberg himself presently developed these beginnings into what has become known variously as the atonal, twelve-tone, tone-row, dodecaphonic, or serial method. To most listeners the method meant nothing, and never since has meant anything. In fact, Schoenberg's subsequent works have ever since been in the process of being gradually forgotten. Revived occasionally as curiosities, they have never been received by audiences with any enthusiasm whatever. But his system, involving the suppression of diatonic melody (that is, what the layman refers to, quite rightly, as "tunes") and of the principle of consonance and dissonance, on which virtually all Western music had been based for at least three centuries, had several attractions for composers who were seeking a complete break with the past. Above all, it rendered mediocrity indistinguishable from genius.

It was, despite the unending attempts by muddle-headed musicologists to make it look profound, almost

WHAT IS WRONG WITH CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

childishly easy to learn. It required no talent; indeed, it depersonalized its products so completely that no one could tell from listening to them whether their composers had any gift for music or not. Learned attempts were made to provide the system with precursors, and it was said that such things as the beginning of the Prelude to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, the opening bars of Liszt's *A Faust Symphony*, and Debussy's whole-tone scale verged on atonality (which was true) and that therefore those exceptional elements in past music pointed with relentless Hegelian logic towards the system's historical future (which was pure poppycock).

THE system quickly won devotees in the bleak and culturally destructive years surrounding the first World War. Some rather well-known figures, like Anton Webern, combined it with a subdued, tinkling orchestral palette that was at least a little flattering to the ears of audiences. Others, like Alban Berg, Paul Hindemith, and Béla Bartók, used it intermittently and less systematically. (You may meet people who will assure you that Berg's *Wozzeck* and Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler* are completely atonal works; they

are not, and their most inspired passages are the ones that are not atonal). By the 1930's, atonality had ceased to be in any way new or original. But the modern composers and their accompanying theoreticians already had a vested interest in it, and a fresh generation had come along that found it stimulating and gratifyingly easy to master. Today, both in Central Europe and America, it is still going great guns, at least in the secretive precincts of the music schools and composers' laboratories. True, nobody likes it or is interested in it except composers and their intimate friends. But, after all, as I have already pointed out, modern composers compose for each other—not for the musical public.

Technically, the nature of Schoenberg's twelve-tone system is somewhat difficult to describe in terms accessible to the general reader. The twelve tones on which it is based are those of the piano keyboard. There is nothing new about them. They have been used by composers at least since the time of Bach, and, as every student of elementary acoustics and every piano tuner knows, they represent a compromise known as "equal temperament," by which each note of the series is pushed slightly out of tune in order to make

LES SIX: MILHAUD, AURIC, HONEGGER, TAILLEFERRE, POULENC, AND DUREY, WITH COCTEAU AT THE PIANO
Music from an out-of-date musical millinery shop



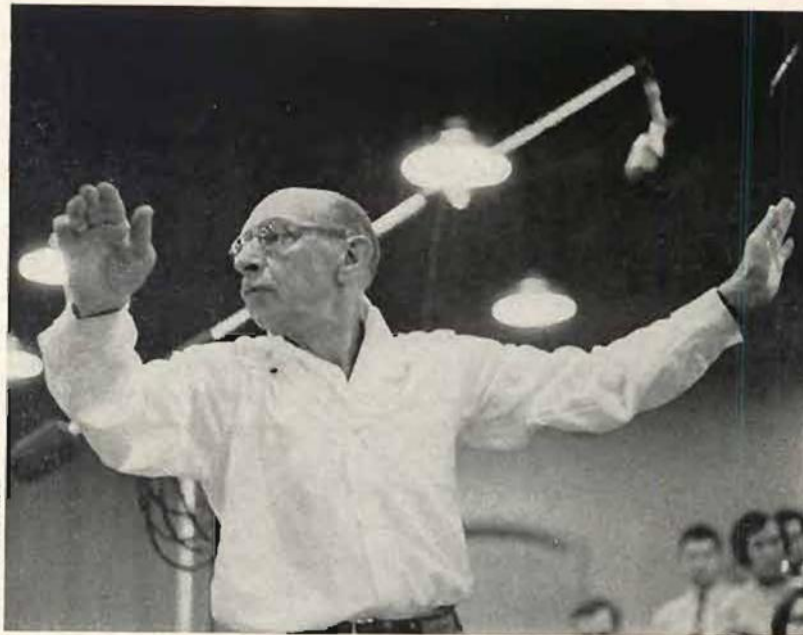
BUTTMANN ARCHIVE

the complicated organization of key relationships, which has been the glory of Classical and Romantic music, easily playable on keyboard instruments. It is rather ironic that these twelve tones should have become, with Schoenberg, a wholly arbitrary basis for a kind of composition in which key relationships do not exist.

For Schoenberg abolished tonality, and did so on the very queer assumption that the piano keyboard was the true basis of music, and that all its twelve tones were henceforth to be considered of equal importance. Not only that; he decreed that each musical theme should employ every one of the twelve tones placed in a series known originally as *Grundgestalt* and nowadays as a tone-row. A composer might not, according to his dictum, leave any of them out, however terrible the result might sound. The utter absurdity of this system, which is still followed with some elaborations in all of today's serial music, should have long ago been obvious to educated musicians, just as the unpleasantness of its fruits has always been obvious to the musical public.

I AM LED to an analogy in the field of language to describe it more graphically. The alphabet, in English, at least, contains twenty-six letters. Suppose that an experimental littérateur decided that, since sentences consist of letters of the alphabet, it was obligatory to use all twenty-six of them in every sentence, arranging them in one or another sequence without regard to sense. BAXYZPLOCKETHDIFGUVJWMNRQS would seem to be one of the more euphonious possible sentences of this sort—a perfect letter-row, without any sense but containing all the requisite characters. In this triumphant statement our littérateur would see a key to the future of his art, and solemn bookologists—or whatever the literary equivalent of a musicologist is called—would dig up its precursor, “the quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog,” noting that it was somewhat primitive, containing a few needless repetitions and having a regrettable remnant of logical meaning, but that it was nevertheless a fine early example of literary atonality. To be sure, the parallel is not exact; the alphabet is not precisely the same thing as a twelve-tone scale. But the complete arbitrariness of Schoenberg's method, its defiance of the traditions of logic, and its musical simple-mindedness are quite similar to what I have indicated. The serialists are not writing music; they are playing a game with the musical equivalent of meaningless anagrams. The listener senses the fraud, but cannot argue the point because he lacks the technical knowledge to do so. So he sits and suffers, feeling that he is hearing something too profound for him to appreciate.

But Schoenberg's revolution was not, of course, a



COLUMBIA RECORDS

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Will his music be forgotten in fifty years?

unique phenomenon. The composers of Paris—who were to be, for a time, very influential internationally, particularly in America—were soon embarked on a revolution of their own. As Frenchmen, they were, in general, gayer and less pedantic than Schoenberg, and their music was less rigorously systematic than his. They were, however, dead set on destroying the great Italo-Germanic tradition of composition that, up to then, had been the fountainhead of all good music, and they sought to replace it with something typically French.

THE TROUBLE with this move was that France had never developed an independent musical tradition on which they could lean. The important French composers of the past had been either followers of the Italo-Germanic tradition, like Bizet and Gounod, or mavericks, like Berlioz and Debussy, who created individual styles and left no significant followers. The revolutionary Parisian school, founded by the group known as Les Six and by that remarkable Russian expatriate Igor Stravinsky, had no musical ancestors, though its apologists tried to resurrect one in the genial dilettante Erik Satie. Its revolutionary object was a purely negative one: to demolish all remnants of Romanticism and to escape, at all costs, any influence of the great Richard Wagner, who promptly became the archfiend of modern French music, although his operas remained quite popular with the French public. It is amusing, and somewhat dismaying, today, to read the violent vituperation that was leveled at Wagner by French intellectuals and French and French-influenced composers during the revolutionary period and

the period that followed it. This vituperation will be found in the writings of André Gide, and also in those of Jean Cocteau, the aesthetic fop who served as publicity man for Les Six. It has been echoed by Stravinsky in his singularly silly book *The Poetics of Music* and by countless other articulate contemporary composers, including a number of Americans.

The survivors of Les Six are now all old men. In looking back over the totality of their work, one seems to be contemplating the contents of an out-of-date musical millinery shop. Everything was once very stylish, but what of lasting value remains? Only, I think, certain songs and operas by Francis Poulenc, who was never one of the movement's extremists, and who has recently shown a tendency to reform.

The biggest and most influential figure of this movement has been, of course, Igor Stravinsky, an interesting composer of wildly eclectic tendencies, a mercurially changing stylist, and a master of musical artifice. Most of his finest work has been written for the ballet and occupies somewhat the position in relation to music that the art of scenic design occupies in relation to painting. His ingenuity amounts to something approaching genius, and although I cannot find much of interest in the works that have come out of his recent conversion to the serial technique, his impact on the music of his time has made him a historically important artist. I have never, however, found him either a particularly original composer or a particularly profound one. His powers of original melodic invention have been slight; indeed most of his meaningful musical material has been borrowed—from Russian folk music, from Handel, from Bellini and Tchaikovsky, and from more exotic sources. What he has contributed lies mostly in the field of mannerism and bright orchestral effects. I strongly suspect that within fifty years most of his music will be forgotten.

WHERE DOES all this leave us today? The last waves of the revolution are still lapping feebly at our shores in the form of electronic music and of the music of calculated chance that is being produced by John Cage and others who profess to be under the influence of Zen Buddhism. The former is a development in gadgetry rather than music. As far as I can make out, it consists either of noise or of music quite indistinguishable from that which has immediately preceded it. The only thing that is new about it is the circumstance that it is recorded and played back on tape instead of being performed by live musicians. The calculated-chance music, from what I have heard of it, is beneath the serious notice of an educated listener. It seems to consist of unexpected noise rather than deliberately contrived noise, and if one has any advantages over the other I shall cheerfully leave this

distinction to the very small number of its admirers.

The fact is that technique for the sake of technique is today not only a futile and worn-out goal, but an extremely tiresome one, and the most damaging thing to be said about most of the music I have been considering is simply that it is boring. It has all been justified on the grounds that it is "experimental" and "progressive," two words that have a sacred ring nowadays in many contexts. But experiment and progress are things that happen fruitfully in science and politics. Their relevance to art seems to me quite dubious; nobody today speaks of "modern literature" as one speaks of "modern music," or pretends that the essentials of narrative have "progressed" much since the time of Homer. Literature remains a healthy art conveying something besides technique to a large and receptive audience, and its conveyance is language—an age-old and very slowly changing tradition that is universally understood and seldom meddled with experimentally.

MUSIC ALSO has its tradition, which serves it much as language serves literature. Despite all the attempts to overthrow this tradition, it is becoming increasingly obvious that there really is no such thing as an entirely new method of writing music. In fact, the contemporary composers whom I regard as significant are today occupied in the rediscovery of tradition. Most of them are working in the field of opera, where such modest craftsmen as Douglas Moore, Carlisle Floyd, Vittorio Giannini, Gian-Carlo Menotti, Marc Bucci, Poulenc, and Orff are winning an immediate public response.

Perhaps these men represent the healthy sprouts of a new musical trend. Their work is, so far, not as impressive as the masterpieces of the past, but they are not afraid to compete with them, and they write music that is comparable with them. In the compositions of this group, and in those of the gifted contemporary Russians, I see a ray of hope for the future of music as a serious art. The revolution of the first decades of the century has, to my mind, petered out, leaving nothing much of value behind it. The attempt to continue it can merely pile futility on futility.

Winthrop Sargeant has been an observer of the New York musical scene since 1926, arriving from his native San Francisco (where he played violin in the San Francisco Symphony) via Vienna and Paris (where he studied violin and composition). After playing in the New York Symphony and New York Philharmonic, Sargeant turned first to teaching, then to music criticism (for the Brooklyn Eagle, the New York American, Time, Life, and, currently, The New Yorker). In addition to several collections of essays and criticisms, Mr. Sargeant wrote the first serious American book on jazz, Jazz, Hot and Hybrid.

by Jay S. Harrison

As a point of departure I should like to quote excerpts from three reviews of a contemporary composer: "His Second Symphony is a crass monster, a hideously writhing wounded dragon that refuses to expire, and though bleeding in the Finale, furiously beats about with its tail erect."

"Recently the overture to his opera was performed and all impartial musicians and music lovers were in general agreement that never was anything as incoherent, shrill, chaotic and ear-splitting produced in music. The most piercing dissonances clash in a really atrocious harmony, and a few puny ideas only increase the disagreeable and deafening effect."

"His compositions more and more assume the character of studied eccentricity. He does not write much now, but most of what he produces is so impenetrably obscure in design and so full of unaccountable and often repulsive harmonies, that he puzzles the critics as much as he perplexes the performer."

Now the question naturally arises as to the name of the composer attacked in such scathing terms. Was it Stravinsky? Not at all. Schoenberg? Hardly. Perhaps Prokofieff? No. The preceding reviews were written respectively in 1804, 1806, and 1824. The composer they refer to was a man of extreme modern tendencies. His name was Ludwig van Beethoven.

I bring this up only to emphasize the point that it is a long-established tradition to rail at anything that is new or different in music. Since Beethoven did not write like his predecessors, the critics thought him mad. And every similar creative advance has been subjected to violent denunciations. You can find references by the pack to the "charlatan" Berlioz, the "hopelessly ungifted" Chopin, the "idiotic" Schumann, the "arch-fiend" Wagner, and so on. In each case the epithet was applied because of something the critic did not understand because there had been nothing like it before. Most people tend to regard with profound suspicion

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is right with
contemporary
music



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what is new, or untried, or different; and precisely for that reason so-called modern or contemporary music daily receives a whipping in the press. Fortunately, this has no influence on the art, since any composer worthy of the name writes exactly as he must. It is not in the nature of the creative artist to alter his aesthetic attitude merely because one critic or another disapproves of what he produces.

Now, as it happens, the aesthetic attitude of today's composer is derived from the fact and knowledge that the music he writes is simply a continuance of a centuries-old tradition. The music of our time is the logical outgrowth of everything that has taken place in the art of tone in the last thousand years. It is not arbitrary. All of it has roots. And what is right about it is the very condition that it has sprung quite naturally from the backlog of music that is our heritage. No one, I can assure you—at least no one with any talent—has sat down at his desk and said to himself, "Today I am going to write modern music." He writes modern music because it is in his blood and bone to do so. He really has no choice.

Why? Well, for very simple reasons. It is the function of all art to reflect its own age. The one in which we live is, of course, different from any other in history. It follows, therefore, that the arts of our age are also going to be unique, in so far as they have adapted themselves to the twentieth century. It would be inconceivable—except as a stunt—for a composer today to write music

like that of Mozart, or Beethoven, or Wagner. Their works are the aural sum of their eras. Our works will be the aural sum of ours.

And, as I have said, the compositions that we call contemporary do not owe their existence to chance. They are all of them the product of the inexorable path that music has taken. The point, furthermore, is demonstrable by reference to almost every major work written since 1900. As evidence, one might begin with Igor Stravinsky, who is this century's greatest master and who, I contend, is no less an important figure in the vast panorama of music than Bach, or Beethoven, or Debussy. His earliest major works, *The Fire Bird* and *Petrouchka* are, in effect, nothing but extensions of the models provided by his teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff. Indeed, it is perfectly within reason to assume that if Rimsky-Korsakoff had lived he would have produced scores much like the early scores of Stravinsky; his style was moving in that direction when he died. In a sense, then, Stravinsky really started where Rimsky-Korsakoff stopped.

IT WAS with his next masterpiece, however, that Stravinsky really shook the world. For *Le Sacre du printemps*, it need hardly be said, quite changed the course of contemporary musical thinking. Yet, looking at it now against the perspective of almost fifty years, it seems inevitable that the piece was to be written, for most of the roads of music were converging on exactly the spot that *Le Sacre* was thereafter to identify.

The classical harmonic procedure, which involves the whole matter of consonance and dissonance, had long been under attack. By the end of the nineteenth century it had almost ceased to exist, except in textbooks, and through the work of Debussy it disappeared altogether as a controlling force. (On the other hand, it is still taught in schools, since it is an excellent discipline and is invaluable in developing a good ear.) At any rate, the last remaining distinctions between consonance and dissonance were destroyed by Stravinsky when, in 1913, *Le Sacre du printemps* had its first performance. It is a work in which dissonance has far the more important role, and it once and for all destroyed the supposition that only a judicious combination of the consonant and the dissonant could result in genuinely expressive music.

But to me, at least, the significance of *Le Sacre* far transcends the technique employed in creating it. The work is—if I view it correctly—the first wholly successful reflection-in-tone of the age for which it was writ-

IGOR STRAVINSKY

As important as Bach and Beethoven?



MARTIN DRAIN

ten. For our century, despite its technological preoccupations, is a savage and brutal time, and in *Le Sacre* Stravinsky has held up a mirror to all that is frantic and feral about us.

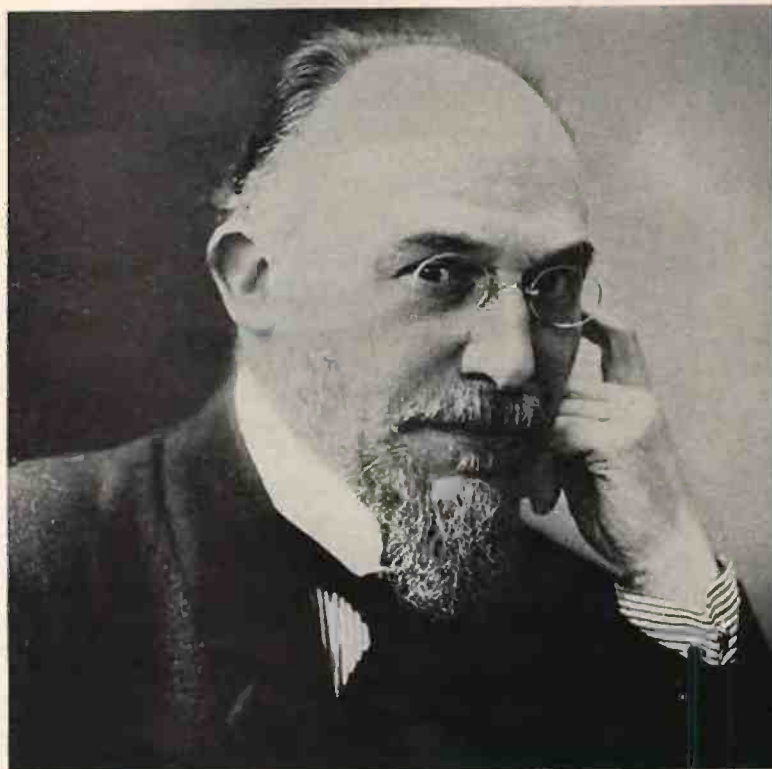
Before examining some of the subsequent directions of Stravinsky's career, it may be well to pause for a bit to examine some of the other developments that had been taking place. Just as *Le Sacre du printemps* had revolutionized man's concept of sound in its day, so also had Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* in the nineteenth century. *Tristan* is essentially a chromatic opera in that its chordal structure is based not on the seven notes of the diatonic scale but on all twelve of the tones within any given octave. There was, of course, nothing new about chromaticism, but it had never before been used so aggressively. Its ultimate function is to destroy a hidebound sense of key relationship, and in listening to *Tristan* you are rarely positive of the exact key of any given passage. And after *Tristan*, music was never to be quite the same.

It was only a question of time before the concept of Wagner's chromaticism was enriched and enlivened by other men. In its final form, as used by Arnold Schoenberg, it was to develop into what is known as atonality. This, in brief, is music that dispenses with all of the formalities of key relationships; it is anti-key music, if you will. To Schoenberg, every note of the chromatic scale was as important as any other, as differentiated from tonal music, in which certain notes of the scale are vastly more consequential than the rest. But Schoenberg was aware that atonality had its pitfalls, among which was its tendency to make music sound amorphous, directionless, at loose ends. So, to counteract this, he devised a method of giving shape to his atonality by insisting that every theme use every note of the chromatic scale and that the order of the notes remain constant throughout a piece. (The composer was allowed to vary the theme, however, by inverting it or by turning it end to end.)

Now—and this is vitally important and generally misunderstood—Schoenberg's twelve-tone system (and all of the modifications later applied to it) is simply an organizing device, not a means in itself. Throughout the history of music various organizing techniques have been adopted to insure continuity and to provide a readily accessible format into which a composer might pour his thematic ideas. The fugue, for example, is one; the sonata-form, which shaped the contours of almost every classical symphony, is another.

Thus the twelve-tone system is really no more than a handy formal rule-of-thumb for composers dealing in atonal practices. It is not, as is often thought, an arbitrary, rigid code. For in music it is not the theme, atonal or otherwise, that counts; it is what is done

with the theme. After all, the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is founded on a four-note motto that is hardly a theme at all—but what Beethoven *does* with these four notes is what accounts for the greatness of the work. And so it is with twelve-tone music. The theme is one thing, its subsequent development quite another. And in response to the oft-repeated claim that twelve-tone technique is restricting, the only thing that can be said is that if a composer has talent it will not restrict him at all, while if he



HETTMANN ARCHIVE

ERIK SATIE

The most neglected composer of our era?

has no talent it makes precious little difference what technique he employs.

Speaking only for myself, I tend to regard Schoenberg as a major theorist rather than a major composer. But without him, in any event, we could not have had an Alban Berg, an Anton Webern, or a Luigi Dallapiccola. We would also have gone without a kind of music that is peculiarly reflective of the inner temper of our society today.

For we are living, and no one denies it, in the Age of Freud, and atonal music is a perfect expressive medium for the neuroticism and inner tension that are so characteristic of the way we live. Does this mean that atonal music and all of its variants are despairing, without hope, unyieldingly bleak? Not at all, although it is true that many atonal pieces are mood

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music that seem to reflect, by means of tone, that part of man that is his inner self, his subconscious. It is music that seems to derive its substance from the restless passion of dreams.

But atonality is adaptable to the various styles of different individuals. If Igor Stravinsky, who has lately embraced the atonal technique, writes a twelve-tone piece, it emerges sounding exactly like Igor Stravinsky. And if Aaron Copland writes one, as he has, the music sounds precisely like Aaron Copland. Atonality does not flatten a man's personality. Given the basic ingredient of genius, individuality never fails to assert itself.

IF IT IS true that the two most potent influences of our time are Stravinsky's dissonance-oriented music and Schoenberg's atonality, it is also true that the twentieth century has produced a wide range of viable musical styles—notably in France. The crushing wave of nineteenth-century German Romanticism had all but inundated the world of music when, suddenly, in the teens of our time, a group of French composers revolted. They wanted music—at least *their* music—to thrive on elegance, on sophistication. So they turned their backs on Wagner and Germany and all that both stood for.

In a sense, they let light and fresh air return to French music, for Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, and Georges Auric proceeded to write composition after composition in which refinement, grace, and effervescence informed every measure. As a group, they were more or less dominated by Erik Satie, probably the most neglected important composer of our era. It is Jean Cocteau who said of Satie that he was responsible for making the most audacious move of the century—"that of being simple." And actually the whole French movement in the direction of clarity of statement and transparency of texture is traceable to Satie and his influence. It need hardly be added that the French group reflected in their works, among other things, the ambiance of twentieth-century Paris—the fun of it, the fragrance of it, the brightness and beauty of that queen among cities.

Another significant development of our century was the return of fully half of the composers in the West to the aesthetic principles of classicism. Theirs was a *new* classicism, however, not a carbon copy of the classicism of the eighteenth century. Music, like science or technology, can never retrace its steps; it must, at all cost, move ahead. In consequence, while they adopted some of the ideals of the earlier classic period, the major neoclassicists composed music that was in no really signifi-

cant sense derivative; on the contrary, it was, in essence, distinctive of the era in which it was produced.

In point of fact, the birth of the neoclassic movement was an inevitable result of many composers' disaffection with the whole nineteenth-century Romantic movement. That movement, it seemed to them, had outlived its usefulness and had grown swollen and bombastic, as indeed it had in certain works of Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler. And so, as a source of inspiration, and as a way of clearing the air, compos-



PAUL HINDEMITH
Perfector of dissonant counterpoint

ers everywhere turned for a refreshing aesthetic viewpoint to the shapely, clean-lined music of the Baroque masters and the eighteenth-century classicists. In the forefront of the movement was Igor Stravinsky, whose neoclassic works—perfectly poised, deeply expressive, and of an unsurpassed lyric richness—have no equal in the literature. At about this time, as well, Paul Hindemith honed to absolute sharpness his concept of dissonant counterpoint, in which different themes are played simultaneously; he developed a system that permitted him complete freedom in composing polyphonic works in which each strand of theme might be, and usually is, in a different key.

Hindemith, by the way, is one of the greatest composition teachers of our era—and this brings up a matter that is surely relevant to all I have said. In the twentieth century many of our leading teachers have also been top-ranking composers. Contrary to what is sometimes thought, they do not impose their particular styles on

their pupils; rather, they insist that their pupils arrive at styles of their own, but only after they have become fully conversant with the traditional disciplines that will ever be at the core of composition. This is precisely how painters have been taught through the ages—by painters, not by pedants who had never held a brush in their hands. Unfortunately, though, the fact of composers teaching composers has led to the presumption on the part of many that nowadays composers write merely to please one another. In my view, they compose to please themselves and anyone else who is interested in hearing what they have to say. Of course they want their colleagues to be impressed. And why shouldn't they? There is nothing as attractive as being told by people in your own business that they consider your

is, in my opinion, the most remarkable saga of the century in music. In less than sixty years we have caught up with the rest of the world, which has had centuries of musical tradition behind it. Through the work of men like Charles Ives, Aaron Copland, William Schuman, and Virgil Thomson we have developed a national idiom so distinctly and identifiably American that it can be recognized as such anywhere on the globe. In addition, we have produced composers whose manner of musical speech is perhaps more international, but whose music is, none the less, a select part of the domestic scene. Samuel Barber, Walter Piston, Norman Dello Joio, Roger Sessions, Douglas Moore, Paul Creston, Randall Thompson, Ned Rorem, Harold Shapero, Lukas Foss, Leonard Bernstein, Roy Harris, and espe-



BETTSMANN ARCHIVE



PHOTO REINHOLD

SERGE PROKOFIEFF

BÉLA BARTÓK

From Russia and Hungary, two twentieth-century immortals

work to be first-rate. That goes without saying not only in art but in science and commerce as well. Why should composers be excoriated for their pride of craft?

Whatever the answer, it should be obvious by now that I have not named all of the twentieth-century composers whom I believe have already attained the status of immortals. The Hungarian Béla Bartók I am sure of, and Prokofieff, too. About the other Russians it is more difficult to say. Since they are compelled by their government to compose in terms of certain outmoded formulas, their work actually has little to do with the twentieth century at all. Soviet bureaucrats who control art have convinced themselves that the newer methods of composition are either decadent or "formalistic," and, in consequence, most of today's Russian composers are writing pieces that are stale before they are half completed.

I have purposely left until the end the whole topic of contemporary American composition, since its story

cially Elliott Carter are names that are respected and admired wherever music is played.

If you, as a listener, sometimes find that their music, or the music of anyone I have mentioned, does not meet with your pleasure, remember that, in Oscar Wilde's words: "It is only an auctioneer who can equally and impartially admire all schools of art." Then remember, too, that, as Samuel Butler put it: "The only things we really hate are unfamiliar things."

Given half a chance, I am sure that the music of our century offers rewards equal to those of any era you care to name.

Jay S. Harrison, who has been closely associated with the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, both as an associate producer and as a panelist on the Metropolitan Opera Quiz, was for eight years the music editor of the New York Herald-Tribune and is presently the manager of the Reader's Digest-RCA Victor Record Club.

SOUND and the QUERY

by J. Gordon Holt

a forum for eliminating the most common—and often most exasperating—problems of stereo hi-fi

Record Life

Q. At a pickup tracking force of 3 grams, how many times can an average stereo record be played before it begins to lose its original fidelity? Also, for an equivalent amount of wear, how many plays will a disc yield when played with a 5-gram pickup?

HAROLD DE PALMA
Birmingham, Ala.

A. Measurements indicate that when a vinylite test record is played with a high-quality pickup that is tracking at 3 grams, it will show a measurable loss of high frequencies after about 40 plays. At 5 grams tracking pressure, the same loss (about 1 db at 10,000 cycles) shows up after about 25 plays.

This would be the answer to your question were it not for the fact that (1) your records are probably not kept as clean as the test records used in lab experiments, (2) you don't listen to test records anyway, and (3) you don't discard worn records because they've lost treble; you do it because they've developed intolerable distortion. And therein lies the difficulty in answering your question.

The audibility of a given amount of groove distortion depends on the high-frequency range, the smoothness of response, and the freedom from distortion of the playback system. Thus, although a pickup may cause measurable distortion after playing a highly modulated disc one or two times, the point at which this distortion becomes audible will depend on the response and distortion of the whole system. A peaky, distorting system may make records sound harsh and fuzzy after only three or four plays. An excellent system, one that has very smooth, extended highs and vanishingly low distortion, may prevent the record's distortion from becoming audible for more than 20 or 30 plays.

At 5 grams tracking force, a bad system can emit some audible tracing dis-

ortion on the first play and make a heavily cut disc sound as if it is ready for the trash can after 10 plays. On the other hand, a 1.5-gram pickup in a very smooth, low-distortion system will often keep tracing distortion below audibility for well beyond 50 plays.

In short, it isn't easy to generalize about the life of a stereo disc. Record life is certainly related to stylus force, but it is also related to just about every other aspect of the entire system.

Two-Phased Speakers

Q. A while ago, I came across a statement to the effect that loudspeaker systems should be phased acoustically instead of electrically.

What is acoustical phasing? I thought there was only electrical phasing. Can you explain?

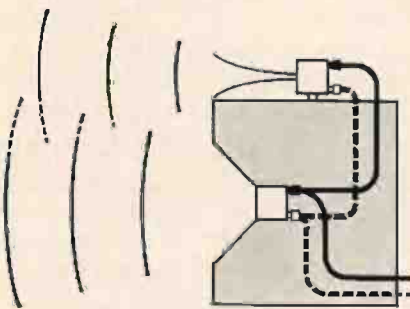
OWEN JOHNSON
Madison, Wisc.

A. An in-phase condition is one where two signals, electrical or otherwise, work in unison with one another rather than in opposition to one another.

In a two-way (woofer-tweeter) loudspeaker system, a positive electrical impulse should cause both speakers to generate compression waves in the air. If a given impulse elicits a compression wave from one speaker and a rarefaction wave from the other, the opposite impulses will tend to cancel one another, weakening the system's output throughout the overlap (crossover) range.

If both speakers are the same distance from the listener, the correct in-phase condition will be that in which both diaphragms move in the same direction on each electrical impulse. This constitutes electrical phasing.

But, if one speaker diaphragm happens to be closer to the listener than the other, as would be the case if the



Electrically in phase.
acoustically out of phase.

woofer were a cone type and the tweeter were a compression type at the rear of a long horn, sounds from the closer unit would reach the listener a fraction of a second before those from the more distant one. The resulting delay could be enough to cause a compression wave

from the tweeter to synchronize with a rarefaction wave from the woofer. In this case, it would be necessary to reverse the electrical phasing between the speakers to correct their acoustical phasing.

Sound-On-Sound

Q. I have noticed that several tape recorder manufacturers claim "sound-on-sound" recording facilities for their machines, and I am curious to know exactly what they mean by this.

Is this just a way of mixing two separate inputs together when recording, or is it actually a way of adding new sounds to an existing recording without erasing the original one?

J. WALLACE
Decatur, Ill.

A. Sound-on-sound recording, as its name implies, is the addition of new material to a previously recorded program. It is usually accomplished by using one track of a dual-track tape for the original program and then dubbing this program plus additional material onto the other track. This requires that the stereo recorder have completely independent record and playback sections, so that one channel can be used for playback while the other is used to record the composite track.

In the past, a few monophonic recorders that claimed sound-on-sound facilities simply deactivated the erase head and rerecorded over the original recording. This technique resulted in partial erasure of the original recording (because the ultrasonic bias signal passed through the record head), so it never proved very popular with critical recordists.

Test for Tape Flutter

Q. Is there any test tape, or inexpensive test equipment, that will tell a home recordist how much flutter or wow his recorder has?

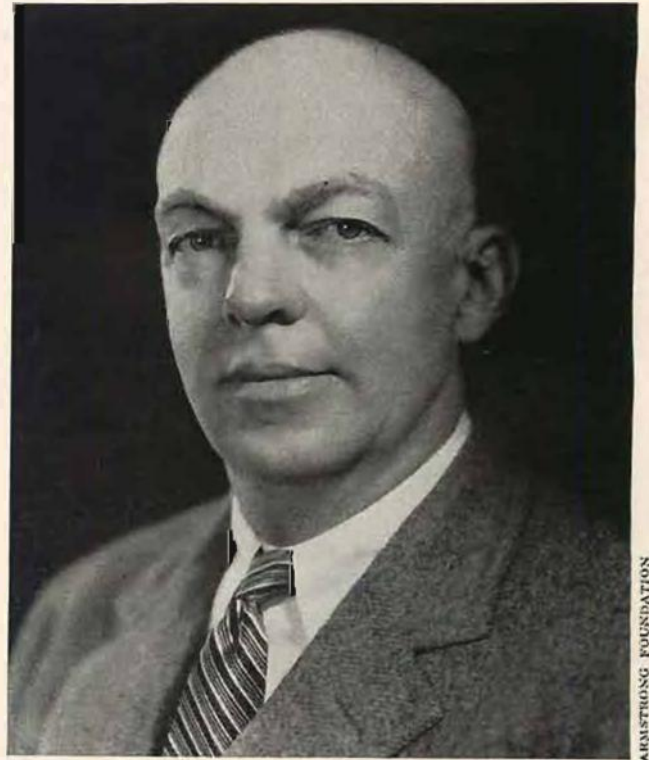
I want to check whether or not my machine is meeting its flutter specifications.

JOHN KEATLEY
San Clemente, Calif.

A. Test tapes that have a flutter-test signal (a 3,000-cycle) tone on them will allow you to tell whether your recorder has audible flutter or wow, but they won't tell you how much flutter is there. There's no dependable way of estimating flutter by ear, either, because different people have different degrees of flutter acuity.

Flutter measurement requires a flutter meter, so if you're in doubt about your machine, you'll have to take it to an agency that services professional tape or motion picture equipment and ask them to check it out.

THE MAN BEHIND STEREO FM



Edwin Howard Armstrong (1890-1954)

An account of the tumultuous and tragic life of Major Armstrong, the inventor of the circuitry on which AM, FM, and stereo FM are based

IR IS ONE of the ironies of our industrial age, so crowded with brand names of every description, that the names of so many of the men who have made possible the advances of modern life are so little known by those who benefit from their gifts. In point of fact, most of the great inventors had hard lives, full of tumult and opposition. A classic instance is that of Edwin Howard Armstrong. Of the millions who now enjoy FM radio and are about to try the adventures of stereo FM broadcasting, few associate these inventions with Armstrong's name, and fewer still know of his long, tragic struggle for their acceptance.

Now is a good time to recall something of this remarkable personality, for the Old Man, as his laboratory boys affectionately called him, would have celebrated his seventy-first birthday this month, and he would today be emerging happily victorious after years of seeming defeat.

A big, bald, soft-spoken man, the son of the director of the American office of the Oxford University Press,

Armstrong rarely strayed far from New York. For years he divided most of his time between a handsome apartment in River House, overlooking the East River, and Columbia University, from which he had graduated in electrical engineering, and where he remained for over thirty years as a research professor and head of the Marcellus Hartley Research Laboratory in electronics. For a good many of those years he was a millionaire from the royalties on his inventions.

He loved fast cars, history, tennis, fire engines, all things mechanical, good food, drink, technical talk, and mountain climbing. His first big purchase with his patent money was a huge tan Hispano-Suiza, one of the early aristocrats of European automobiles, which he kept garaged in New York for over thirty years, long beyond its usefulness. And one of his early, exuberant exploits was a hair-raising honeymoon trip to Palm Beach in the Hispano-Suiza with his bride, who had been secretary to David Sarnoff, the president of RCA.

In his later years, Armstrong had some of the English

by Lawrence Lessing

THE MAN BEHIND STEREO FM

novelist C. P. Snow's ponderous facial features, girth, and fascination with intrigues for industrial power, never failing to rise to battle for his ideas. His forceful, outspoken nature and quick temper, combined with his knack for being right in technical disputes, often put people off, and he made enemies. Yet from the age of fourteen on, he devoted himself to the "radio art," as he always called it, with great single-mindedness, pride of craft, and inspiration that amounted to genius. In the end, he accounted for three of the most significant circuit developments in the history of radio.

HIS FIRST invention was the regenerative-feedback circuit, which he designed in 1912 while he was still a junior at Columbia, studying under the great Serbian-born inventor Michael Pupin. This was the key circuit in the development of radio, the first to make full use of the amplifying power of the three-element vacuum tube that had been invented six years before by Lee de Forest. His second invention, made in 1918 while he was serving in the United States Army Signal Corps in France, was the superheterodyne circuit, which is the basis of virtually all modern radios. The sales of these two inventions, plus a less important one, to Westinghouse Electric and to RCA in the early 1920's, were the basis of his fortune.

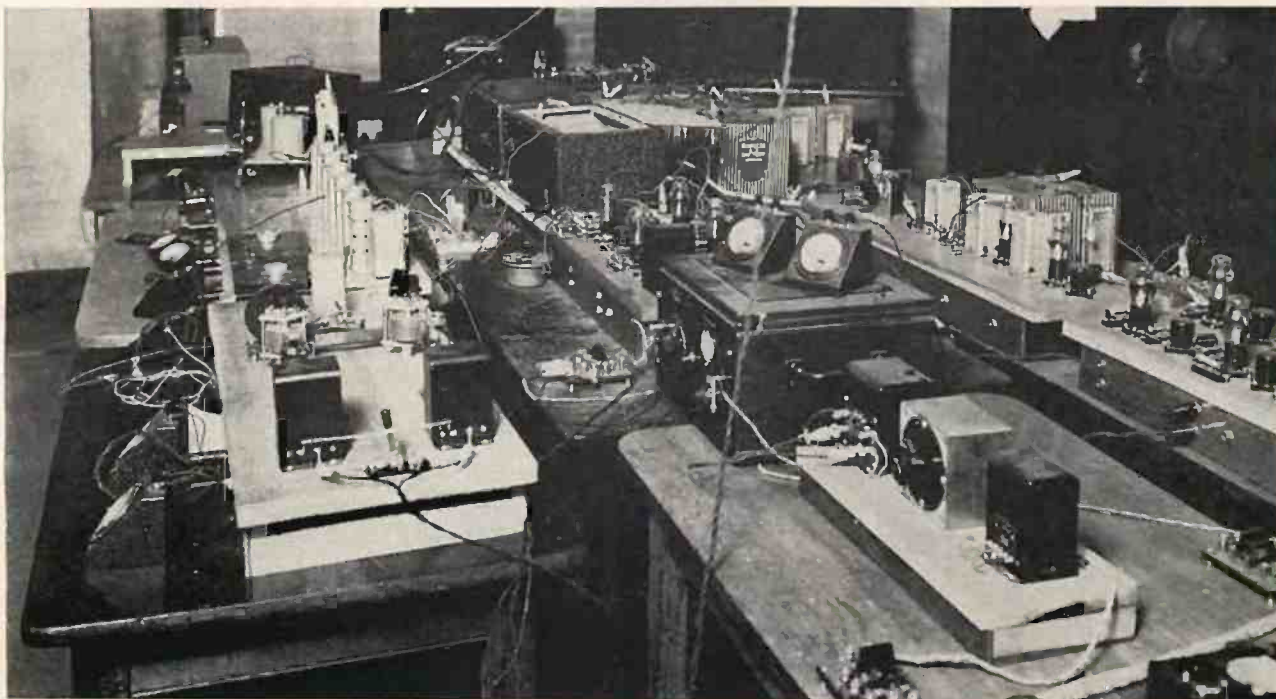
But, by great ill-luck, the patent on the feedback

circuit became the object of a fourteen-year-long legal battle between the corporations; finally, after two hearings by the Supreme Court, Armstrong was denied title to the patent. Though his claim to the feedback invention continued to be recognized by the Institute of Radio Engineers, Armstrong never really got over his bitter Supreme Court defeat.

He brought forward his third and in some respects his greatest invention in 1933, making it known with an air of defiance, as if reasserting his creative energies. This was his invention of frequency-modulation (FM) radio, an intricate piece of circuitry that overcame the problem of static. But because wide-band FM presented an entirely new radio system, requiring not only new transmitters but also different radio receivers, it promptly met with the most stubborn opposition offered to any comparable modern invention.

THE FIRST practical field demonstrations of the new FM system were made secretly in 1934-35 from an RCA experimental studio on top of the Empire State Building—secretly because Armstrong had promised, fifteen years before, to give RCA first option on his next invention, whatever it might be. Through numerous recorded tests over a period of about a year, the new FM system proved its remarkable characteristics. Chief among these was its ability to transmit with great clar-

This experimental circuitry, built by Armstrong at his Columbia University laboratory in 1936, led to some of today's most advanced communications concepts.

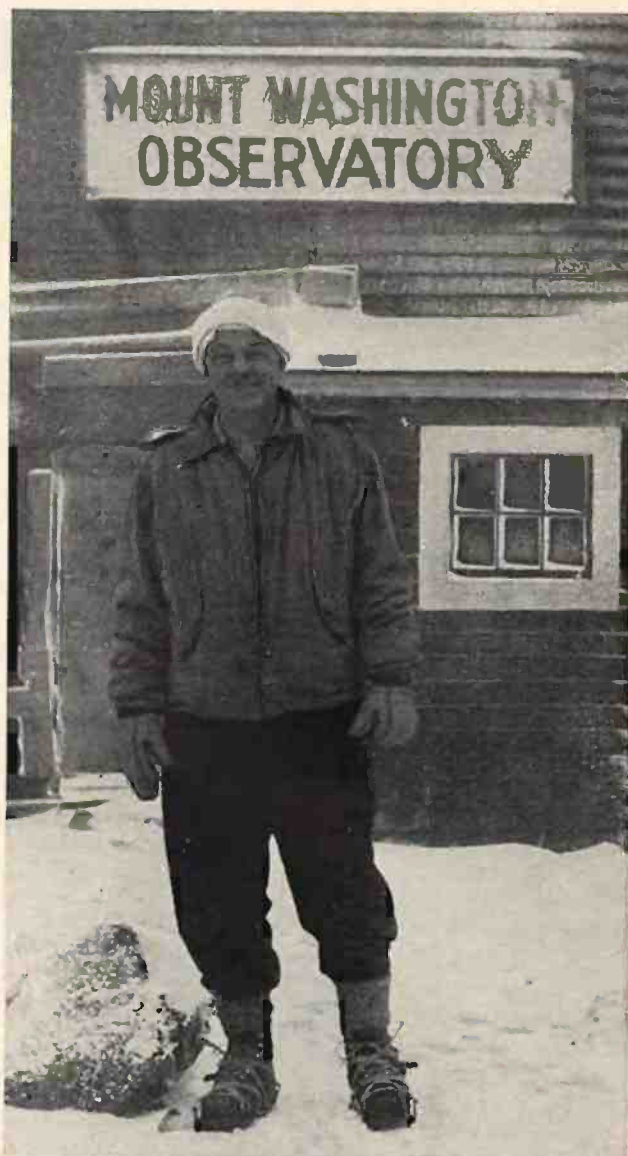


ity and fidelity to a distance of about eighty miles through the severest thunderstorms of the 1934 season.

In the same series of tests, Armstrong also demonstrated the adaptability of FM to multiplex transmission. On one occasion, in 1934, he successfully sent out four different signals simultaneously on the same carrier wave—a musical program on the main channel, a facsimile reproduction of the front page of the *New York Times* on a subchannel, a facsimile synchronizing signal on a subchannel, and a telegraph circuit on a third. Later, in April, 1935, he demonstrated transmission via a single carrier of two different music programs that were received perfectly by two differently tuned receivers. Twenty years later, this demonstration was the basis for an FCC order allowing FM stations to add a subcarrier storecasting service to their transmissions for additional revenue, and later still for an order authorizing stereo FM broadcasting. About this time, too, Armstrong predicted that wide-band FM would be useful in television, then in the throes of early development—another example of scoffed-at foresight that was to wait many years for fulfillment.

BUT by this time it was fully evident that FM radio was much more than merely an improved method of broadcasting as it had been. By being able to accommodate many more stations than the standard AM broadcast band, FM posed the threat to the networks of a possible revolution in their settled pattern of operations. As a result, in the spring of 1935, Armstrong was requested to take his equipment out of the Empire State Building. For nearly five years little more was heard of FM radio. Then, in 1939, in order to break the silence and to overcome the reluctance of big radio interests to allow FM to be heard, Armstrong spent some \$300,000 of his private fortune to build his own FM station high on a bluff of the Hudson River Palisades overlooking New York. This station, with the historic call letters W2XMN, was the first full-scale experimental FM radio station regularly broadcasting, and for it Armstrong sought out and helped develop the best high-fidelity components then obtainable. This was in a very real sense the dawn of the high-fidelity age. When W2XMN went on the air, it ended the fiction that FM would not work or that high-fidelity transmission did not bring a superior aural experience to listeners able to hear it on good equipment.

By 1941 there were over forty FM stations on the air, over 500 applications for station licenses on file, and over 500,000 FM sets in the hands of the public—little or none of this activity through the efforts of the big networks or the major radio manufacturers. At this point, America's entry into the Second World War halted the further spread of FM. However, shortly before this, the first FM relay system had been established



Celebrating the opening of the first FM network in 1941, Armstrong visits a transmitter site atop Mt. Washington.

by the Yankee Network. This chain operated through the war years, covering all of New England.

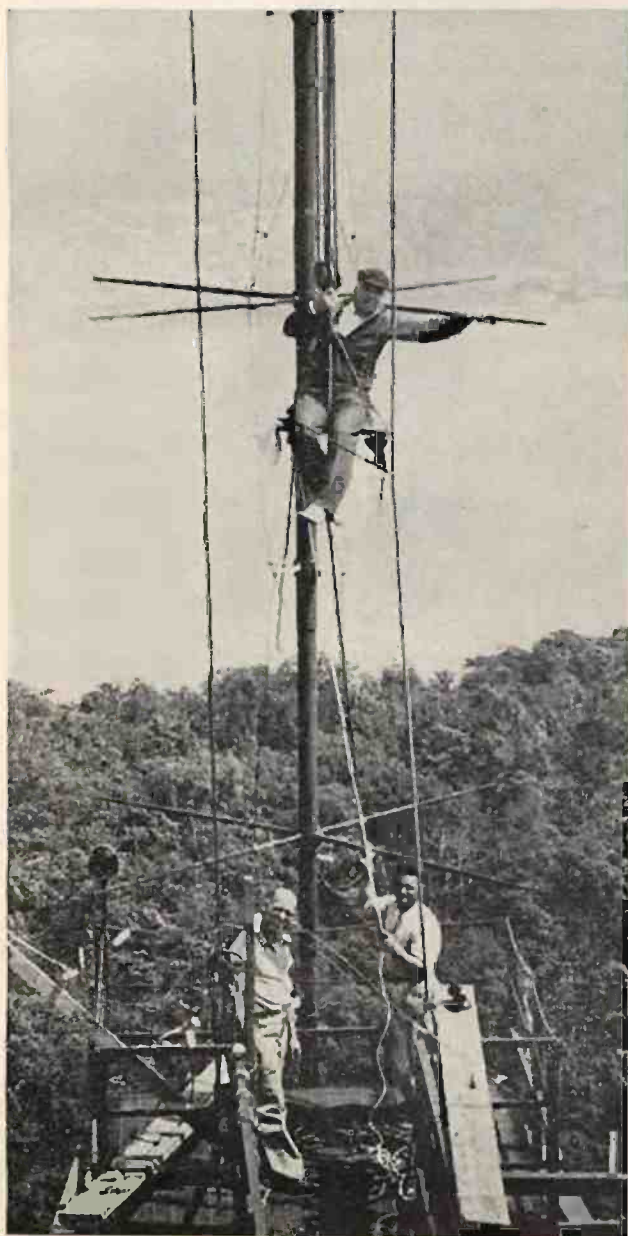
DURING the war, Armstrong's FM system was an important factor in mobile military communications, but, with the return of peace, opposition to it rose again, this time going beyond a mere dragging of feet. On technical grounds since proved to be invalid, two FCC orders were issued that hampered the spread of FM broadcasting. One was an order shifting FM transmission from its successful prewar channels to a higher frequency band, which meant that its proponents had to start all over again and develop new equipment. The second was an order cutting FM station power to a tenth of its prewar level, so as to limit stations to a "single market area," which stunted the growth of

THE MAN BEHIND STEREO FM

FM-relay networks that Armstrong had envisioned.

Yet despite these blows FM would not die. In fact, facilities reached a peak of some 700 FM stations by 1950. But expansion was greatly slowed by the excitement over the novelty of television, and Armstrong's costs of development and promotion continued to run high. The expenses of keeping his own FM radio station going had already run close to a million dollars, and he was paying out about \$10,000 a month for wire charges alone to keep live FM broadcasts of Washing-

Armstrong readies his transmitter tower, high above the Hudson River, for the first regular FM broadcasts in 1939.



ton's National Symphony Orchestra coming into the New York area over wide-range transmission lines. Furthermore, since 1948 he had been engaged in an expensive infringement suit, with no seeming end, against RCA and NBC in an attempt to collect royalties from most of the industry for the use of his FM patents in television sound channels.

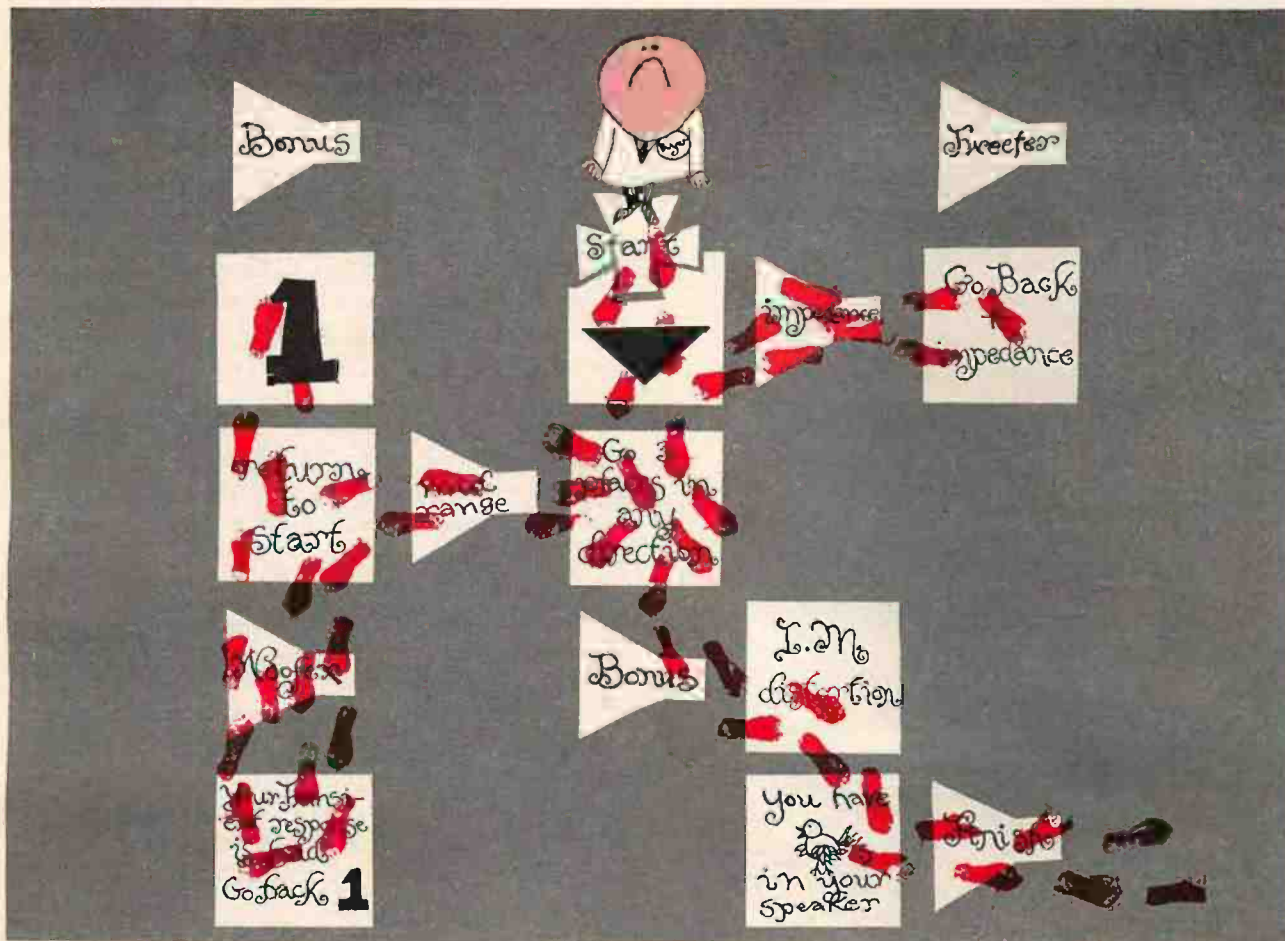
By 1954, though he had collected some FM royalties, Armstrong's wealth was exhausted, his title to the basic FM patents had run out, and he was nearly broke. Far more damaging to his spirit than lack of money, however, had been the struggle to establish FM broadcasting, a struggle that had badly undermined his health. One Sunday night in February, he jumped from a window in his River House apartment. So ended the life of a great American inventor.

Less than a year after Armstrong's death, the tide began to turn, and since then a series of settlements and court decisions totalling well over a million and a half dollars have confirmed Armstrong's claims to be the inventor of FM. But what would have heartened Armstrong more than all legal and monetary vindication was the new growth in importance of FM, stimulated by the steady growth of interest in high fidelity, the decline of AM network broadcasting, and increasing public apathy towards shabby TV programming.

This year will see more than 2,500,000 FM receivers produced, nearly 1,000 FM stations on the air, and two FM networks in budding growth. For the first time nearly half of the independent FM stations are making a profit. If the kind of commercial shortsightedness that leads to a compromise in quality can be avoided, the spread of stereo FM transmissions will bring to broadcasting a degree of musical realism never before attained. Further, the principle of stereo FM will form the basis of space-satellite communications that, in a few years, will provide unlimited transmission range and usher in world-wide radio and TV communications. The coming of that age will be the fulfillment of Armstrong's genius, the victory in his long struggle to improve the quality of broadcast sound so that radio could in truth be called an art.

Lawrence Lessing wrote the first widely circulated account of a new broadcasting method called frequency modulation in 1939. The publication of this article in Fortune led to a meeting with Major Armstrong and to a friendship that endured until the inventor's death. Mr. Lessing is the author of Man of High Fidelity, a biography of Armstrong, and is at present a member of the editorial board of Fortune.

STRATEGY FOR THE SPEAKER SHOPPER



When you know what to look and listen for in a speaker, your chances of living with it happily ever after will be greatly improved

It is always surprising to salesmen of high-fidelity components that so many people who normally are able to form their own opinions promptly lose their self-confidence when they begin to judge and choose loudspeakers. Disparaging their own critical resources, they are amazingly willing to defer to the opinions of others—a testing organization, salesmen, or merely friends. Sometimes they will buy a speaker that has been recommended by such authorities even though one speaker or another actually sounds better to them. As an occasional salesman of high-fidelity equipment, the author will swear to this from first-

hand, and frustrating, experience with customers.

With malice toward none, this article is intended to discredit the competence of anyone—its author included—to dictate which speaker someone else should buy. At the same time, it is intended to restore the confidence of anyone who has considered himself unqualified to judge a speaker.

In pursuing these aims I do not mean to imply that there are no objective criteria for judging whether one speaker is better than another. But the fact must be stressed that there is no “best” speaker for everyone. Why no “best” speaker? No matter how untrained you

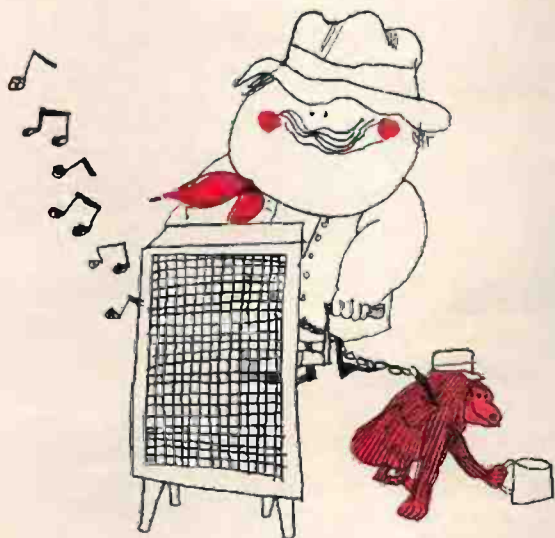
ILLUSTRATIONS: ALAN COHEN

by John Milder

STRATEGY FOR THE SPEAKER SHOPPER

may consider your ears to be, they will tell you that no two competitive speaker systems sound the same. They may be identical in price and quality, but there will still be an audible difference between them.

What is this difference? "Coloration" is the traditional word for it. Coloration exists because a speaker is essentially a kind of musical instrument. Like the



A speaker is essentially a kind of musical instrument . . .

strings of a violin or the tightly stretched skin of a drum, a speaker produces sound by vibrating. And just as everything down to glue and varnish contributes to the tone of a Stradivarius, everything in a speaker's moving system acts to determine its characteristic coloration.

But since a speaker is intended to reproduce sound rather than to create it, coloration must be kept under control. Ideally, a speaker should add nothing to the sound it reproduces. However, some coloration is inevitable as long as speakers remain partially mechanical devices, and the designers of the best systems try to make them as colorless as possible.

Excessive coloration is the product of a speaker that has abnormally uneven response through its frequency range (severe dips and peaks of ten to fifteen decibels). A speaker that has this shortcoming adds and subtracts volume at various frequencies, and its response chart resembles a bad cardiogram.

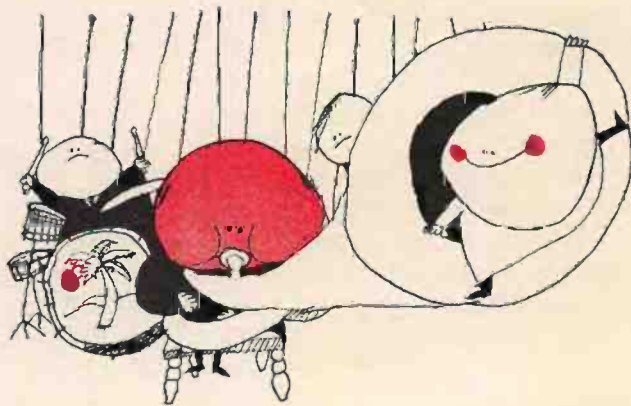
There is, however, a second matter to which an

audiophile may refer when he complains of coloration in a speaker. This is, purely and simply, a matter of our own response curves as listeners. The differences in our individual hearing capabilities can be enormous, not just (as is usually supposed) at the extremes of the audible frequency range, but all the way through it. A speaker that has a live, natural sound to some of us can seem unbearably brilliant (tinny is the usual word) to others.

IN ADDITION, many of us have developed definite listening tastes and habits. Those who are used to sitting close to the orchestra tend to like speakers that have a bright, close-to sound; those who customarily sit in the balcony usually prefer speakers with a more withdrawn quality. All of which leads straight back to the idea that there is no "best" speaker for all of us—and which effectively disqualifies anyone to judge a speaker for someone else.

But let's forget that "best" speaker for a moment. What makes a *good* speaker? What *makes one* speaker objectively better than another? The word for it—surprisingly ignored by audiophiles and engineers—is clarity. A good speaker reveals the texture of any sound it reproduces, whether the sound is that of a single violin or a ninety-piece orchestra. It allows us to pick out the individual instruments of an orchestra at will, clearly separating the sound of a bass fiddle from that of a tuba, or a violin's from a flute's.

What accounts for clarity? Several things. By now, the importance of wide-range frequency response needs



Those who are used to sitting close to the orchestra like speakers to have a bright, close-to sound . . .

no explanation. Ideally, a speaker's response should extend low enough to reproduce subterranean organ pedal notes and high enough to reveal the highest harmonics of violins. More important, though, is the need for an even response throughout the frequency range. A really uneven frequency response, with its resulting excessive coloration, forces you to listen to the speaker instead of *through* it.

ANOTHER important factor, good transient response, is not so obvious to most of us as is good frequency response. Poor transient response usually means that the speaker diaphragm has too much inertia to follow the crisp commands of the amplifier. The result is a blurred quality, particularly on sharp, percussive musical material. But most of us can tolerate transient distortion better than we can excessive coloration, since poor transient response is often translated into a juicy resonance that is offensive only when compared directly against a speaker with good, sharp articulation.

Most everyone recognizes the need for low distortion in any speaker, and we need not belabor the issue. It should suffice to say that a good speaker should not sound harsh or edgy under any normal conditions—which include the loudest levels at which you are likely to listen at home.

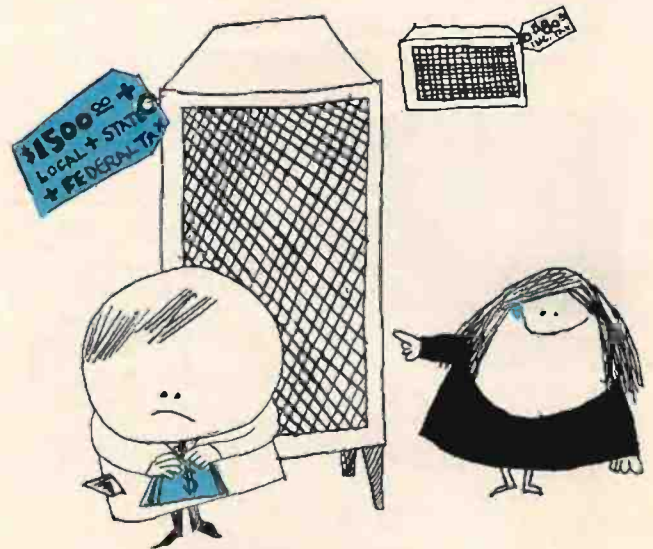
With these considerations in mind, we arrive at an important question: How does one choose a speaker at the price he is prepared to pay? Every marginal step closer to perfection in a speaker costs money—often more than most listeners feel is justified. For most of us, then, the question is what to expect from speakers below the perfectionist category. And the answer is: a great deal.

But let's get heretical for a moment. Let's forget about one sacred standard, that of full-range frequency response. The extremes of frequency response—the truly subterranean lows and cats-whisker highs—are simply not so important to most of us. But clarity *is*. And it can be present in systems that have less than ideal frequency responses. A slightly limited frequency range that is reproduced with clarity is always preferable to a wider range that is beset by distortion. And an inexpensive speaker that attempts to cover the full frequency range is likely to sound ragged.

OKAY, then, what about the various price ranges for speakers? What can you reasonably expect from each? Let's start at the bottom.

If you budget about thirty to sixty dollars for each speaker system, there are two things to keep in mind. The first is to forget about the number of speakers in the system. In the low-price range, a single speaker is likely to be a better buy than a multispeaker system; it is important to understand that multiple speakers are

not a magic formula. Once you recognize this, it's fairly easy to find a good low-price speaker (the eight- or ten-inch variety) that not only offers a great deal by itself but also permits you to build around it for better sound later on. A good eight- or ten-incher can become the mid-range speaker in a more ambitious system of the future, and, for the time being, it will supply perfectly acceptable, *clean* sound.



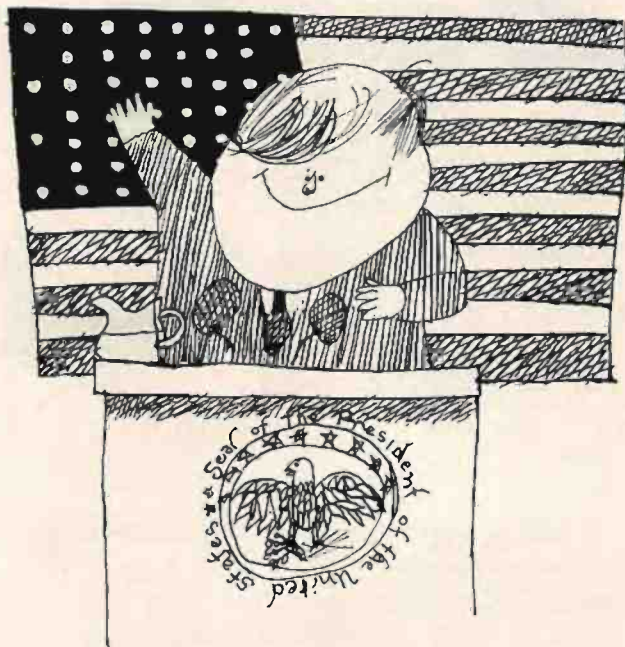
It's up to you to listen and decide on relative values . . .

Secondly, the low-price range is an important place to look for balanced, as well as even, frequency response. It's usually possible, for instance, to find a low-price system that boasts extended high-frequency response. But deep bass is harder to come by, and extended highs without a balancing bass can make for a thin over-all sound. In this case, it's best to choose a system that has a good balance over one that has impressive highs.

In the medium-price range, which extends from about sixty dollars to about a hundred and fifty, the *kind* of sound you prefer becomes more important. The frequency response, transient, and distortion characteristics of systems in this range can come very close to those of the most expensive systems; consequently, most of us find our own point of diminishing returns somewhere in this price range. The thing to watch out for here is a noticeably exaggerated response in any part of the frequency range—bass, mid-range, or highs. Any exaggeration that is apparent in a showroom demonstration will usually be far more noticeable—and annoying—at home. A speaker that seems brilliant in the showroom may sound positively raucous in your living room, and an impressively bassy system may sound tubby and dull at home. It is worth the careful listening involved to avoid systems that sound flashy rather than musical. *(continued overleaf)*

The expensive speaker systems, which can cost a thousand dollars or more, are by far the hardest to categorize. A *measurable* improvement over the medium-price system—such as an extra half-octave of bass—can cost a great deal. So can a very subtle and virtually unmeasurable reduction in coloration. The value of these marginal gains can't be measured for you. It's up to you to listen and decide on their relative values.

Which brings us to another important question: How do you listen to speakers in a showroom? First



No one else has the right to dictate what kind of speaker system you should buy . . .

off, it's always a good idea to let the salesman know the price range that fits your budget. If, in the course of listening, you come across a system that slightly exceeds your budget, you can always decide whether it's worth the added cost. But unless you plan to build an ambitious system in planned steps, don't frustrate yourself by listening to the best in the house if you know you can't afford it.

The way to compare systems is two at a time. Decide which of the two you prefer, then move on to compare it with the next speaker. To listen to three or four systems at once is only to invite confusion and convince yourself that you don't know anything about speakers. Listen primarily for clarity and detail—and try to listen *through* the speaker to the music involved. If the speaker asserts its own character at the expense of the music, drop it immediately. If you buy it, you will always be listening to a speaker and never to music. Admittedly, the speaker in question may not sound the same to someone else—the salesman, for in-

stance—but it's still not the right speaker for you.

If you notice that the two speakers you are comparing have different efficiencies, make sure that the salesman adjusts the amplifier's volume control to let you compare them at the same loudness level. This is very important. On first hearing, the louder of two speakers almost always sounds more impressive, and the comparison is completely unfair. Keep in mind that the speaker's efficiency is no index of quality; it should serve only to tell you how powerful an amplifier you will need to drive that particular speaker at sufficient volume to fill your living room.

THE most discerning judgment you will have to make in comparing speakers is that of transient response. And here the most obvious musical transients—the smashing orchestral crescendos that feature heavy amounts of percussion, such as the walloping of bass drums—are not the ones that will give the best indication of a speaker's transient response. Often, in fact, they serve to mask a speaker's deficiencies. Listen to them, by all means, for signs of distortion or tubbiness. But listen also to a recording of a solo piano for the impact of a fortissimo and the slow dying-away of a chord. Listen to the sound of plucked strings on a violin for clarity and articulation. And, while you are at it, listen to the sound of a male speaking voice—a sure way to discover a tubby bass quality that you might not have otherwise suspected.

Is any of this difficult? The answer is no. A few minutes of listening under the conditions outlined above will prove that you are a much better speaker critic than you would have predicted. And that important matter of clarity becomes surprisingly easy to distinguish as you proceed. The only tricky aspect of the showroom demonstration is to make sure that you—not the salesman—control the demonstration. It's even worth while to ask the salesman to go easy on the adjectives for his own favorite systems, or to say nothing at all.

The point is to take advantage of today's tremendous range of choice. Investigate for a while and decide what factors—including decor—are important to you. Then make your comparative listening session count as heavily as possible. With just a modicum of strategy, you will have no trouble in finding a speaker with which you can live happily ever after.

John Milder divides his time between writing about audio equipment and selling it at New York's Electronic Workshop. His retail experience thus provides him with first-hand knowledge of typical consumer problems. Among his recent articles in this magazine, "How to Choose a Hi-Fi Dealer" (May, 1961) also dealt with aspects of hi-fi shopping.



IT TAKES MORE THAN ADDING A 4-TRACK RECORD HEAD TO MAKE A 4-TRACK RECORDER

With 100% more recorded information on the same width of tape, the alignment of 4-track tape is critical. This alignment is the result of meeting two basic requirements:

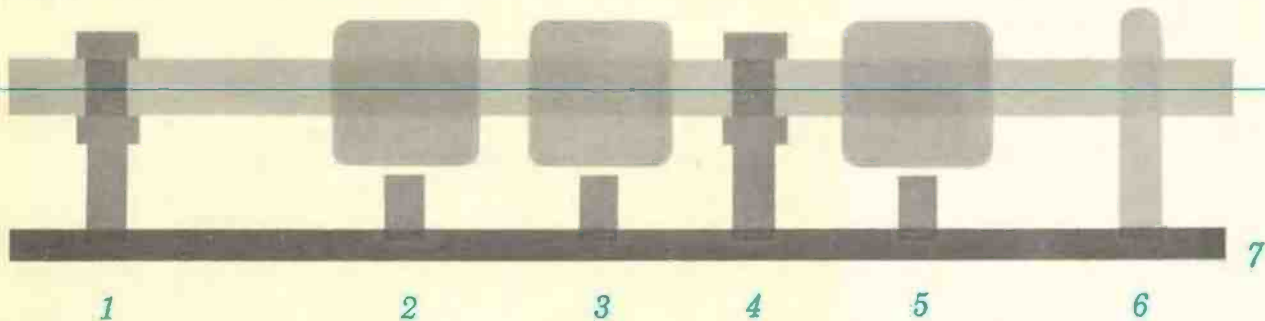
1. Precision heads that permit narrow-track recording without loss of performance of normal, wide-track recording.
2. Precision "tracking" of the tape across these heads.

Even the slightest variation (the thickness of this piece of paper, for example) represents enough misalignment to noticeably reduce frequency response and signal-to-noise ratio, and induce crosstalk between tracks — all unsuitable for true high fidelity recording and reproduction. The "4-track recorders" of non-professional design either lack this precision or can quickly lose it in simple transporting or jarring.

Two years in development, the new 1200 Series incorporates many of the precision tracking and narrow-track head techniques of Ampex Professional and Instrumentation recorders. The new 1200 Series makes possible the convenience and economy of 4-track recording/ reproduction with full professional quality previously attainable only in 2-track.

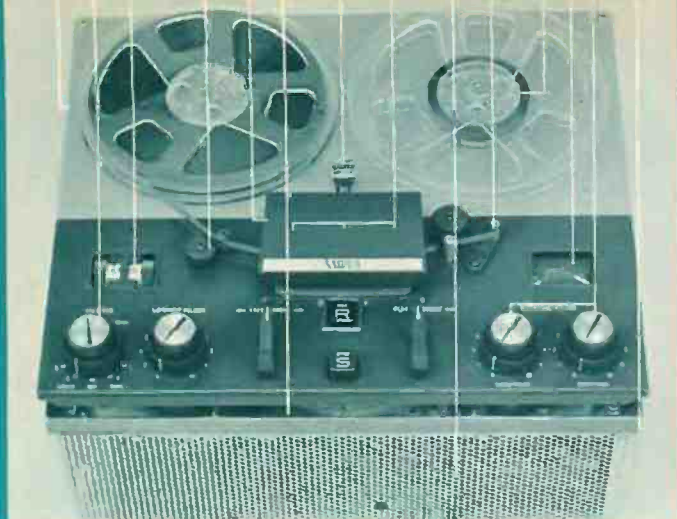


FINE-LINE alignment — the first high fidelity adaptation of tracking techniques and tape guidance principles used in computer and instrumentation tape equipment. **FINE-LINE** alignment on the 1200 Series provides full frequency response by keeping the tape track width (.043") in precision alignment with the channel width (.043") of the record and playback heads. This alignment starts the moment the tape leaves the supply reel and continues past: (1) the constant-tension holdback; (2) the new 4-track selective erase head; (3) the new 4-track record head; (4) the micro-adjusted tape guide; (5) the 4-track playback head; (6) the capstan, until the tape reaches the take-up reel. All are precision mounted on (7) a professional, micro-milled die cast frame to guarantee fine line alignment throughout the life of the recorder.



NEW PRECISION TAPE TRACKING in the 1200 Series required tracking techniques in the tape guidance system previously used and associated only with professional recorders and multi-track instrumentation tape equipment. The key to these techniques is providing perfect alignment of the tape from the time it leaves the "supply" reel until it reaches the "takeup" reel. This is lost in most 4-track recorder construction when the stamped metal plate (conventionally used in home-recorder construction) strains or warps out of alignment from the weight of the motor, clutches, flywheel, and other mechanical assemblies that hang from this top plate. The kind of alignment necessary for narrow-track recording requires the stability of a professional-type, die cast frame — micro-milled in one operation so that the tape guidance system and head assembly are mounted on the same reference plane. And that's exactly what Ampex has done in the 1200 Series. We call it **FINE-LINE** alignment. You can see it by looking under the top plate. You can hear it when you record and playback 2- and 4-track stereo tape or 4-track monophonic tape. It costs slightly more, but is lower cost in the long run. On the average, Ampex-built recorders outlive lower-cost machines two to three times.

3 NEW PRECISION HEADS — not only a 4-track record head, but a 4-track playback and a new selective erase head (essential to monophonic recording on any one track) have been added to the Ampex 1200 Series. To eliminate any possibility of track interference, all three of these new heads now have narrower channels (.043") to precisely match the track-width of the tape, while maintaining the famous wide recording range and longer life characteristic of Ampex recorders.



THE FINE LINE AMPEX 1200

The New 1200 Series includes over 170 changes in design to provide highest performance and trouble-free operation. Among the major feature and construction advantages are:

- (A) Exclusive, automatic tape take-up — eliminates the annoying problems of hand threading.
- (B) Built-in mixer — 4 inputs (2 mic, 2 line) for professional recording techniques.
- (C) Master selector switch — permits simple changes from stereo to mono, choice of individual track, A-B comparison of original and recorded program, sound-on-sound, automatic shut-off.
- (D) Constant holdback tension — provides equal tension throughout reel of tape.
- (E) Selective Erase Head — permits increased monophonic flexibility with sound-on-sound, language study, etc.
- (F) Precision recording level meter — for accurate, professional quality recording, reads both channels by simple switching — provides easy comparison and balancing of recording levels.

- (G) Exclusive "Auto-Set" shut-off — offers choice of 2 automatic shut-off positions for unattended recording or playback.
- (H) Convenient speed change (3¾-7½) — rugged, dependable.
- (I) Professional recording electronics — (similar to AmpeX 351 series broadcast recorder) insures professional recording quality.
- (J) Directional selective braking — provides quick, positive stops without stretching thin-base tapes.
- (K) Heads — New, precision, narrow-track heads eliminate reverse channel cross-talk and provide signal-to-noise ratio comparable to previous 2-track recording. Separate erase, record, and playback heads for optimum performance in each function.
- (L) Tape transport — a precision system of constant-holdback tension, powerful 4-pole uniform-speed motor, and capstan assembly provide mechanical specifications (wow & flutter) comparable to broadcast recorders.
- (M) Die cast frame.
- (N) Tape position indicator.

SPECIFICATIONS The AmpeX 1200 incorporates the widest range of abilities ever built into a single unit:

- RECORDS** 4-track stereophonic
4-track monophonic
- PLAYS** 4-track stereophonic
2-track stereophonic
4-track monophonic
- SPEEDS** records and plays at 3¾ and 7½ ips with up to 8 hours, 32 minutes of monophonic recording or playing.
- RECORDING INPUTS:** High impedance inputs (radio—phono—TV—auxiliary). Approximately 0.25 v rms for maximum normal recording level; high impedance (600μv) microphone inputs.
- PLAYBACK OUTPUTS:** Approximately 0.75 volts rms from cathode follower with tapes recorded to maximum normal recording level.
- FREQUENCY RESPONSE:** 50-15,000 cps ± 2 db at 7½ ips; 50-8,000 cps ± 2 db at 3¾ ips.
- SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO:** Better than 55 db at 7½ ips; Better than 50 db at 3¾ ips.
- FLUTTER AND WOW:** Under 0.2% rms at 7½ ips; Under 0.3% rms at 3¾ ips. (Measured according to American Standards Association.)

TIMING ACCURACY: Perfection of pitch to within ½ of a half-tone.

HEADS:

Manufactured to the same standards of precision that exist in AmpeX broadcast and recording studio equipment. Surfaces are lapped flat within 10 millionths of an inch, resulting in uniform performance characteristics throughout the life of the head. Stereo head gap alignment: the one head gap in the stack with respect to the other is held within 20 seconds of arc, equivalent to less than 10 millionths of an inch — a degree of precision achieved through use of a unique process involving micro-accurate optical measurements within a controlled environment. Head gap length is 90 millionths of an inch.

DIMENSIONS: Portable cases 9" x 15" x 17½". Unmounted recorder 13" x 6½" depth below top plate, 1¾" above. Recorder weight 36 pounds.

POWER REQUIREMENTS: 117 volts, 0.9 amperes, 60 cps (recorder); 117 volts, 0.5 amperes, 60 cps (amplifier-speaker).

SPECIFICATIONS STANDARDS:

- (1) These technical specifications accurately reflect the true performance of every unit off the production line, not a hand-picked sample.
- (2) These are professional specifications, measured by professional equipment standards and instruments and are comparable to those used in broadcast and recording industry.

As such, most of these ratings are conservative and individual units may be found to exceed these published specifications. These specifications are not comparable to "sales literature specifications" often used in consumer recorder merchandising.



Model 1250 — Without case (not shown)

Model 1270 — Portable with built-in matched pair of amplifier-speakers

Model 1260 with pair of matching AmpeX Amplifier-Speakers

Model 1260 — Portable



THE FINE LINE AMPEX 1200

AMPEX AUDIO COMPANY • Sunnyvale, California

AMPEX


PRESENTS

THE FINE LINE
AMPEX 1200

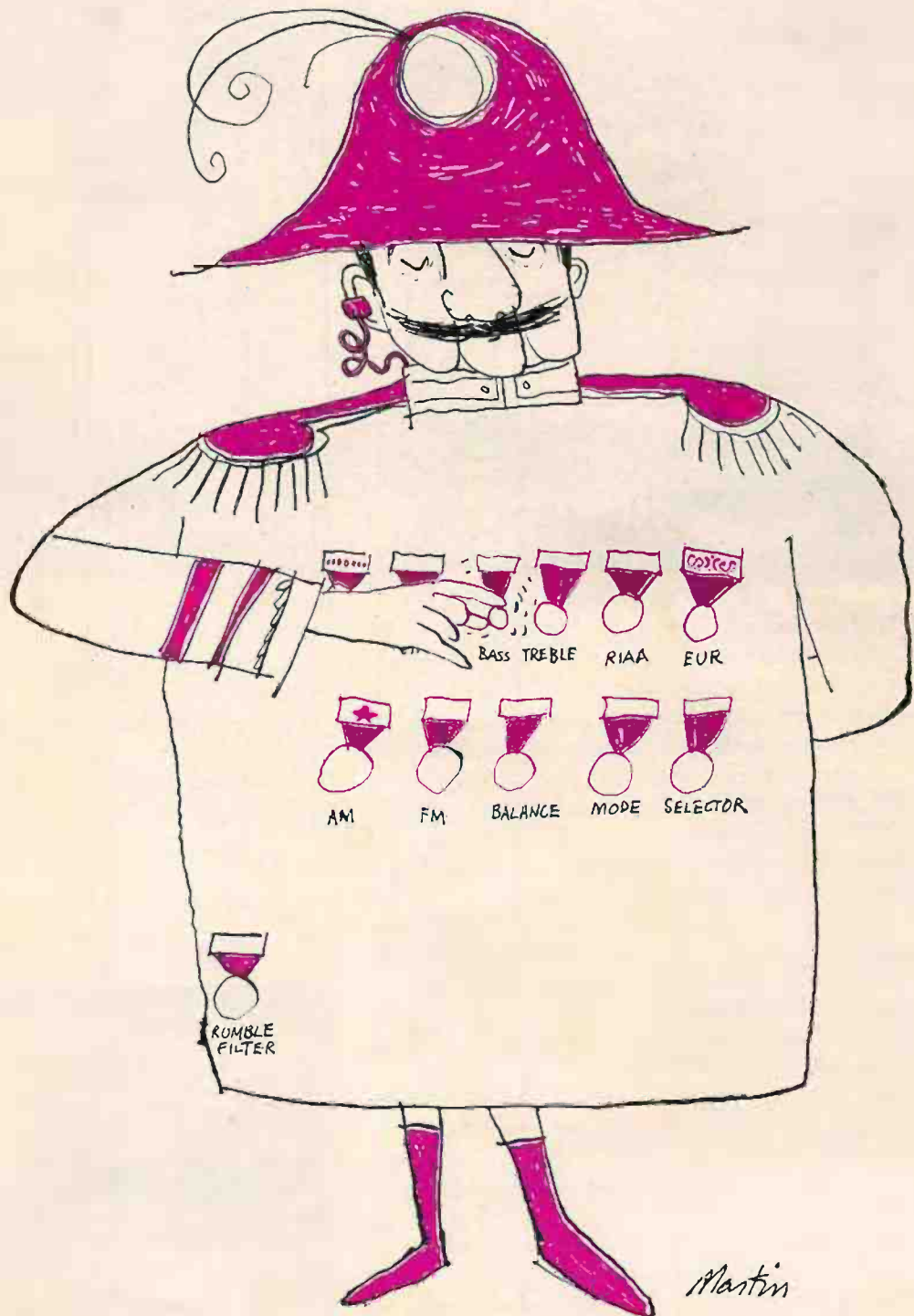
Ampex adds a major contribution to 4-track recording and reproduction with the introduction of **FINE-LINE** alignment in the 1200 series 2- and 4-track stereophonic and 4-track monophonic tape recorder / reproducers



AMPEX



THE FINE LINE
AMPEX 1200



INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH



QUESTING FOR GOOD MUSIC

EIGHT YEARS ago, the modest hi-fi system of Dr. Daniel Andriesian, a Cottage Grove, Oregon, dentist, included a tone arm he had made from the shaft of a golf club. Since that time his system has evolved to the sophisticated proportions indicated in the accompanying photographs.

Dr. Andriesian's speaker system consists of two main channels and a center channel. Each of the main channels is made up of an Altec Lansing 802D-811 tweeter and an 18-inch Cinaudagraph woofer that is mounted in a 32-cubic-foot infinite baffle. The center channel is composed of two 12-inch Electro-Voice Wolverines and a T-35 tweeter. In addition, a pair of Knight KN-2000A speakers, which are only used for background listening, are also housed with the main speaker system. Dr. Andriesian installed separate speakers for background-music purposes because he feels that a large speaker system does not sound its best at low levels. As the front grille is separate from the speakers and their enclosures, any of the speakers can be serviced easily.

Other equipment includes a Garrard 301 turntable with a Shure Studio Dynetic pickup, a Scott 130 stereo preamplifier, three Heathkit W-6A power amplifiers,

a Scott 330D tuner, and a Viking 75 tape deck.

Recently Dr. Andriesian built an Artizan organ, which plays through Heathkit W7-A and Bogen DB165 amplifiers into three Altec Lansing 803B 15-inch speakers and two 408B 8-inch speakers.

Dr. Andriesian designed and built the entire music system by himself, and he admits to being a born tinkerer. But, having studied the violin, voice, and the organ, he maintains that his prime reason for building the system was his desire to hear good music.

A musician's idea of hi-fi. The organ plays through amplifiers and speakers that are independent of the main stereo system.



BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

THE FIVE BEETHOVEN PIANO CONCERTOS

Fleisher and Szell collaborate in memorable performances

IN ASSIGNING Leon Fleisher to record the five Beethoven piano concertos with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, Epic Records entered the thirty-two-year-old American pianist into competition with such renowned pianists as Backhaus, Kempff, Gilels, Rubinstein, Serkin, and Schnabel, all of whom are currently represented on discs with performances of these monuments of the literature for piano and orchestra. Not only does Fleisher justify the faith Epic has placed in him, but he proceeds to make his way to the top of the pianistic heap.

COLUMBIA RECORDS



LEON FLEISHER

Superb in the Beethoven concertos

Fleisher plays with an assurance and inner serenity that would seem to be a result of his decade's study with Artur Schnabel. The Concerto No. 1 ripples along under Fleisher's fingers in carefree, elegant fashion, naturally and spontaneously. The bridge passage that leads the first movement back to the recapitulation section has stunning impact, and the reverie of the slow movement is exquisite. In the Concerto No. 2, Fleisher's is the finest recorded performance I have ever heard; the essential Mozartean grace of the music has beautifully conveyed, and in the last movement the playing has irresistible dash and clan. The Concerto No. 3 is given a more sober, serious reading, as

befits its darker mood, but again the finale has a disarming quality of impishness that is thoroughly delightful. The musings and dynamic contrasts of the Concerto No. 4 are impressively probed, and the "Emperor" Concerto receives a youthfully dynamic and vigorous performance.

Szell and his magnificent orchestra provide radiant performances of the orchestral parts, and the conductor sees to it that the

(continued overleaf)



vitality important woodwinds receive their just prominence in the instrumental fabric. Throughout there is a real sense of joy and exuberance in the playing.

Epic's engineers have contrived a fine-detailed, closely microphoned sound for the Concertos Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5. The Concerto No. 4 was recorded a few years earlier than the others (this is the same performance as is on Epic BC 1025, LC 3574, coupled with Mozart's Concerto No. 25), and the microphone placement is more distant, with a consequently less-detailed exposure of the instrumental texture. In the Concerto No. 5, incidentally, the Epic engineers have achieved a far more natural balance between piano and orchestra than was afforded Cliburn in his recent RCA Victor recording; in the Fleisher-Szell collaboration, the closing duet between the solo piano and timpani is more clearly delineated than in any other performance of this work I have ever heard.

It is nearly ten years now since Fleisher was catapulted to international fame as the first-prize winner of the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels. These four discs are the triumphant artistic realization of the great talents that won him that honor.

Martin Bookspan

© BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 1, in C Major, Op. 15* (Epic BC 1136); *Piano Concerto No. 2, in B-flat Major, Op. 19*; *Piano Concerto No. 4, in G Major, Op. 58* (Epic BC 1137); *Piano Concerto No. 5, in C Minor, Op. 37* (Epic BC 1138); *Piano Concerto No. 5, in E-flat Major, Op. 73* ("Emperor") (Epic BC 1139). Leon Fleisher (piano); Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell cond. \$5.98 each.

A DEFINITIVE NORMA IN STEREO

Callas provides a spectacular interpretation of the title role

THIS first stereo *Norma*, recorded by Angel with Tullio Serafin conducting the orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, is imbued with a spirit of conviction and interpretive rightness that transcends even that of its distinguished mono forerunner. The main reason for this is Callas. Even the exceptionally rich soprano harvest of recent seasons has failed to yield a *Norma* to challenge her hegemony.

But, in contrast to the older Angel set, the show this time is not *all* Callas. Christa Ludwig, who has heretofore been displayed almost exclusively in a Mozart-Mahler-Strauss frame, reveals herself to be perfectly attuned to the style of bel canto. With a voice of velvety warmth and solid technical assurance, she contributes as much as Callas to the all-important duets. Franco Corelli's ardor sometimes floods the Bellinian lines with Puccinian vehemence, but his personal magnetism and the sensuous beauty of his tones are undeniable. The rest of the cast is also strong; the always dependable Nicola Zaccaria is appropriately commanding in his priestly role, and, while he is perhaps not quite as sonorous as were Ezio Pinza and Tancredi Pasero in bygone days, he is nevertheless far superior to La Scala bass Nicola



EZIO PICCAGLIANI

MARIA CALLAS, CHRISTA LUDWIG, TULLIO SERAFIN
A Norma of authority and brilliance

Rossi-Lemeni, who sang the part of Oroveso in the earlier Angel monophonic recording that was made in 1954.

Callas, whose new recordings have regrettably dwindled to the frequency of her stage appearances, is still in full command of her unerring dramatic sense and interpretive insight. Her *Norma*, caught in the cross-currents of loyalty, jealousy, hatred, compassion, maternal love, and sacrifice, emerges here as an even more overpowering characterization than in her 1954 recording. (The subdued poignancy of her "Ah! *perche la mia costanza*" in the Adalgisa duet and the exquisite emphasis in the line "Pel tuo figlio, *pè figli tuoi*" in the fourth-act duet with Pollione are two memorable examples.)

Vocally the performance is a characteristic

blend of the famous Callas virtues (instrumental accuracy of phrasing, boldness of attack) and the equally famous Callas flaws. She seems to have greater tonal evenness over her range than was in evidence some years ago, but her sustained high notes waver more than ever. Though Callas' command of ornamentation is still awe-inspiring, the admirable results seem now to be achieved with a shade less abandon and a trifle more conscious effort. But, when all is said and done, she is still *the* Norma of our times, a portrayal that will be studied and imitated for many years to come.

Tullio Serafin guides La Scala's forces, as he did in 1954, with authority and loving regard for Bellini's graceful phrases. For this opera's limited stage action, the directional effects occasionally contrived by Angel's engineers are more than sufficient. What *Norma* has in unique abundance is sublime melody, and in this respect Bellini is served with brilliance and dedication.

Twenty potentially troublesome measures are cut from Act III, possibly to lighten the tenor's burden.

George Jellinek

⑤ **BELLINI:** *Norma*. Maria Callas (soprano), Norma; Franco Corelli (tenor), Pollione; Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano), Adalgisa; Niccola Zaccaria (bass), Oroveso; Edda Vincenzi (soprano), Clotilde; Piero de Palma (tenor), Flavio. Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala, Milan, Tullio Serafin, cond. ANGEL. S 3615 three 12-inch discs \$17.94.

***** JAZZ *****

STIMULATING, SENSITIVE MODERN JAZZ

John Lewis joins forces with the Jazztet to admirable effect

EXTRÊMELY felicitous results are produced from this meeting, recorded on an Argo disc titled "The Jazztet and John Lewis," between John Lewis, pianist and director of the Modern Jazz Quartet, and the Jazztet, co-led by trumpeter Art Farmer and tenor saxist Benny Golson. Lewis has fashioned some consistently stimulating new orchestrations of several pensive, low-key works that he initially composed for his own group. In these sensitive scores he has taken fullest advantage of the wider expressive range available with three horns, and, as a result, the writing is full-



LAWRENCE SHUSTAK

JOHN LEWIS
Really swings with the Jazztet

bodied, richly colored, yet economical. There are no gratuitous effects; the scores are graceful, perfectly balanced, and they make knowing use of contrast and shading, with never a trace of affectation.

Lewis is always completely in command, and there is a sense of rightness and inevitability to each of the pieces in this collection. If nothing else, Lewis' arresting writing prompts the well-disciplined Jazztet into some of its most adventurous playing in some time. There has been an increasing cautiousness evident in their recent work that is, happily, absent here. Highly recommended.

Peter J. Welding

⑥ **THE JAZZTET AND JOHN LEWIS:** *The Jazztet and John Lewis*. Art Farmer (trumpet), Benny Golson (tenor saxophone), Tom McIntosh (trombone), Cedar Walton (piano), Thomas Williams (bass), Albert Heath (drums), John Lewis (piano). *Bel; Milano; Django; New York 19*; and two others. ARGO LP 684 \$4.98.

A COMEBACK FOR HOWARD MCGHEE

Trumpeter McGhee shows off a mature style

WITH Contemporary Records' new collection "Together Again," Howard McGhee, a trumpeter who had fallen into relative obscurity in recent years, returns to jazz activity with all his artistry aglow—in fact, burning more brightly than ever.

One of the first of the swing-based trumpeters

rather than heard, which is exactly as it should be. Worthy of attention is the work of Phineas Newborn, Jr., whose flawless work at the piano, in both solo and supporting roles, contributes greatly to this disc's success. Still, it is McGhee's show all the way. *Peter J. Welding*

© HOWARD MCGHEE AND TEDDY EDWARDS: *Together Again*. Howard McGhee (trumpet), Teddy Edwards (tenor saxophone), Phineas Newborn, Jr. (piano), Ray Brown (bass), Ed Thigpen (drums). *Together Again; You Stepped Out of A Dream; Up There*; and three others. CONTEMPORARY M 3588 \$4.98.



METRONOME

HOWARD MCGHEE
*Honest passion, abetted by
mature discipline*

to assimilate the mid-1940's bop style in all its dizzying complexity and to mold it into a gripingly personal approach, McGhee is yet a force to be reckoned with, playing here in a discrete, gracefully modeled yet resplendently powerful style that owes much to its bop groundings, as witness his warm, lyrical work on Charlie Parker's *Perhaps* and the ballad *You Stepped Out of A Dream*. His extemporized lines on these numbers are constructed on the fleet, multinote obbligato patterns so characteristic of the bop school, to which McGhee adds a sure sense of form and a tight inner logic that imparts a flowing quality to his solos, all of which are models of thoughtful—but never constricting—organization. The honest passion of his playing is thus considerably strengthened by the ever-present control and discipline of the mature artist.

On this record McGhee shares billing with West Coast tenor saxophonist Teddy Edwards, whose full-bodied, expansive horn is a logical contrast to the trumpeter's bright, boppish fireworks displays. The rhythmic support is extraordinarily sensitive and solid throughout—it is felt

* ENTERTAINMENT *

SONGS OF THE BLUEGRASS COUNTRY

Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs perform old favorites made famous by the Carter family

IT IS WHOLLY fitting for Columbia Records to present the exciting virtuoso group of guitarist Lester Flatt and banjoist Earl Scruggs in "Songs of the Famous Carter Family," a collection of tunes that were associated with the singing family that—along with singer-guitarist Jimmy Rodgers—completely reshaped and vitalized America's country music during the late 1920's and early 1930's. Flatt, Scruggs, and the Foggy Mountain Boys were ideal choices to record this music because they represent a line of direct descent from both of these influences. Theirs is an impassioned and fervently joyous music known as Bluegrass music, a contemporary string-band music that

derives directly from the traditional mountain string-group stylings that were tempered both vocally and instrumentally by the innovations of the Carter family and Rodgers.

Eschewing electronic amplification for their instruments, the Bluegrass outfits (and there are an increasing number of them) generate an infectious syncopated pulse in their music. The approach is markedly similar to that of New Orleans jazz: both musics are primarily ensemble forms; both use a front line of solo instruments (trumpet, clarinet, and trombone in one; five-string banjo, fiddle, and guitar in the other) with others in support; there are solos and breaks in both; finally, having grown out of dance forms, they are both fiercely rhythmic. Bluegrass is, in short, the most tradition-based of the current country and western music styles.

Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, and the Foggy Mountain Boys are acknowledged the foremost exponents of the Bluegrass style. Both Flatt and Scruggs were largely instrumental in shaping the idiom, and they have brought it to a perfection of development in their present outfit. The group has never had a better showcase for its impressive talents than in this delightful collection of appealing old songs that were initially made famous by the Carter family. As an added fillip, Maybelle Carter, of the original Carter trio, is present on a number of these selections. Her autoharp lends an authentic, near-anachronistic touch. Stereo is preferred here over mono. *Peter J. Welding*

© © LESTER FLATT AND EARL SCRUGGS: *Songs of the Famous Carter Family*. Lester Flatt, Earl Scruggs, Foggy Mountain Boys, Maybelle Carter (autoharp). *Keep on the Sunny Side; Foggy Mountain Top; False-Hearted Lover; Jimmy Brown the Newsboy*; and eight others. COLUMBIA CS 8464 \$4.98, CL 1664 \$3.98.

THE EMERGENCE OF GEULA GILL

A lively, multicolored Israeli folk-music group

OF ALL the Israeli troupes that have recorded in this country and then began making concert tours, the Oranim Zabar is the most stimulating, as this Elektra recording of "A Town Hall Concert," taped in

February, 1964, demonstrates so vividly. And while accordionist Dov Seltzer and percussionist Michael Kagan are deftly accomplished, the center of the trio is Geula Gill, a singer of remarkable range, control, and expressive skills. Her dark, pliable voice is intensely forceful, and she communicates considerable grace and wit.

Miss Gill is capable of true virtuosity, as in the Yiddish sketch of a rabbi conversing with his God, *Bim Bam*, on which she improvises a long, winding melisma that is in the tradition of the most creative cantors, and few folk singers in any area can equal her skill at creating a swirling mood of joy, as in *Shaduma*, a description of a Persian wedding. She can also be tender, yearning, sensual, and fiercely proud.

The program is intriguingly varied, encompassing Israeli, Yiddish, Hebrew, Spanish, Roumanian, and Brazilian songs. For a few moments in the Roumanian medley, Miss Gill sounds uncannily like a set of panpipes. With this and other



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Sings with versatility, virtuosity, and grace

recent albums, Geula Gill is emerging as an entertaining interpreter of folk material who should enjoy much popular success in the years ahead without having to dilute the honesty of her style.

Nat Hentoff

© ORANIM ZABAR/GEULA GILL: *A Town Hall Concert*. Geula Gill (vocals), Dov Seltzer (accordionist, arranger), Michael Kagan (percussion). *Shabat Shalom; Yemanja; Tani Tani; Ta'am haman; Hava Nagila; Ki Mitzion; Hallelujah; Sheer Yayin; Bim Bam; Tambabalalayka; Shaduma; and Roumanian Medley*. ELEKTRA EKL 201 \$4.98.

THE COLLECTOR'S CHRISTMAS CHOICE



Holiday Sing Along

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Rare and joyous sounds for Christmas from the Mormon Tabernacle Choir—a bountiful holiday mixture of cherished favorites and new delights.



The Talking "Nutcracker"

Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* has three splendid new friends—Ogdan Nash, who writes special hilarious verses. Peter Ustinov, who has the fun of reciting them, and conductor Andre Kostelanetz, who leads all these merry forces.



Beethoven's Missa Solemnis

For Beethoven's glorious *Missa Solemnis*, Bernstein marshals majestic forces—distinguished soloists led by Eileen Farrell, the massive Westminster Choir and the Philharmonic. Bernstein conveys eloquently its grandeur, as well as its detail.



The Sound of Devotion

A majestic sound for Christmas is Handel's *Messiah*, magnificently performed by a devoted assembly including conductor Eugene Ormandy, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and soloists Eileen Farrell, William Warfield.



A Music Box Christmas

The astonishingly varied timbres of 19th century music boxes—some full-bodied, some delicately chime-like—recall the sound of Christmas in a gentler age.

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classics

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Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = monophonic recording
- Ⓢ = stereophonic recording

Ⓜ BARBER: *String Quartet, in B Minor, Op. 11*. WEINBERG: *String Quartet No. 7, in C Major, Op. 59*. Borodin Quartet. ARTIA MK 1563 \$5.98.

Interest: Barber from abroad
Performance: Interesting
Recording: OK

It's rather interesting to hear what a group of Russian musicians do with the neo-Brahmsian conservatism of the early Samuel Barber—especially since this is the quartet from which derives the independently famous *Adagio for Strings*. The results, taken altogether, are good, though the music emerges somehow more Russian in sound than one is accustomed to hear.

Moishe Weinberg (b. 1919 in Warsaw) is, we are told by Artia's annotator, one of the Soviet Union's more promising young composers. His talent is not in evidence here. The work is reminiscent of the least attractive aspects of the early Shostakovich. It is quite indolent rhythmically and is written most unimaginatively for the quartet medium. H. F.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concertos* (see p. 63).

Ⓢ BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 4, in G Major, Op. 58*. Glenn Gould (piano); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA MS 6262 \$5.98.

Interest: Sublime concerto
Performance: Odd
Recording: Big-sounding
Stereo Quality: OK

This performance is a curious one. Both Gould and Bernstein seem so intent upon analyzing the score that we get what amounts to a dissection of it. The performance runs to nearly 37 minutes, as opposed to the average timing of around 31 minutes (Fleisher and Szell, in their new recording, take just over 32 minutes). Phrases are pulled about and distorted in an effort to wring new meaning

out of them. Of spontaneity and flow there is precious little.

And yet there are admirable things in the playing: Gould makes more of the left-hand foundation of the solo part than any other pianist I have heard, and his technical command of his instrument is imposing. The whole affair is a curious, highly individualistic, and unorthodox—but you may like it. Columbia's engineers have achieved reproduction of impressive depth and solidity. M. B.

Ⓢ BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 3, in E-flat Major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*. Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. COLUMBIA MS 6266 \$5.98.

Interest: Towering masterpiece
Performance: Respectful
Recording: Powerful
Stereo Quality: Good

The playing here is expert, the sound is fine, and yet this is not one of the better "Eroica" recordings. What is lacking, basically, are qualities of involvement and



ZINO FRANCESCATTI

For Beethoven, intimacy and warmth

spontaneity. One senses a feeling of calculation rather than genuine inspiration in this reading, however respectful it may be toward the letter of Beethoven's monumental score. M. B.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ BEETHOVEN: *Violin Concerto, in D Major, Op. 61*. Zino Francescatti (violin); Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. COLUMBIA MS 6263 \$5.98.

Interest: The violin concerto
Performance: Affectionate
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Good

Zino Francescatti and Bruno Walter deliver an affectionate, serene account of this most beatific of all violin concertos. The tempi are relaxed, the phrases elegantly shaped, and the whole thing glows with the rapture of mature musicianship.

Francescatti plays the Kreisler cadenzas, and throughout the performance his tone has a beguiling intimacy and warmth. Walter relates the mood of the work to that of the near-contemporaneous "Pastoral" Symphony. The orchestral playing and the recorded sound are excellent. M. B.

BELLINI: *Norma* (see p. 64).

Ⓢ BOCCHERINI: *Sinfonia con più strumenti, in D Minor (La Casa del Diavolo)*; *Sinfonia a grande orchestra, in C Major, with obbligato guitar*. Angelicum Orchestra of Milan, Umberto Cattini cond. HARMONIA MUNDI HMAC 30-511 \$5.95. (Distributed by Discophile Inc., 26 W. 8th Street, New York 11, N. Y.)

Interest: Curious musical plagiarism
Performance: Enthusiastic
Recording: Satisfactory

Both Sinfonias are record premieres, but the one in D minor is most interesting as a musical curiosity: the last movement of this stormy work uses almost note for note the same thematic material as the Dance of the Furies in Gluck's *Orfeo*. The question is who stole from whom? The jacket notes shed no light on the subject. It is, of course, quite possible that the teen-aged Boccherini heard the Gluck score while touring in Italy and France as a cello virtuoso, either in *Orfeo* (1762) or in Gluck's *Don Juan* ballet, written the year previous.

The light-hearted Sinfonia in C, a sinfonia concertante for guitar, two violins, two oboes, cello, and orchestra, is a far less powerful work than the *Devil's House Sinfonia*. It was probably written toward the end of the composer's life, and the guitar part sounds as though it were originally intended for a not very skilled

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amateur. The performance of both pieces is stylish and spirited, and the recording, if not outstanding, is quite satisfactory.

J. K.

© BRAHMS: *Double Concerto, in A Minor for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra, Op. 102.* Jascha Heifetz (violin); Gregor Piatigorsky (cello); orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein cond. RCA VICTOR LDS 2513 \$6.98, LD 2513 \$5.98.

Interest: Masterpiece
Performance: Expert
Recording: Soloists too prominent
Stereo Quality: OK

Both Heifetz and Piatigorsky are at the top of their form here, and they play with remarkable assurance and command. Remarkable, too, is the unanimity of style they exhibit: when a phrase is passed from one to the other, it is identically shaped by each artist.

Wallenstein and his orchestra are rather too distantly recorded, with many an important woodwind part being obscured by the close microphoning of the violin and cello soloists, but there is a good over-all depth to the sound.

The performance conducted for Columbia by Bruno Walter, with Francescatti and Fournier as the soloists (MS 6158, ML 5493), is mellow and more serene than the Heifetz-Piatigorsky version, and it has better balance between the soloists and the orchestra. For these reasons I continue to prefer the Columbia recording, but others, I am sure, will be drawn to the invigorating, effortless playing of these two sterling virtuosi. M. B.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2* (see p. 82).

© BRAHMS: *Violin Concerto, in D Major, Op. 77.* Nathan Milstein (violin); Philharmonia Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari cond. CAPITOL SP 8560 \$5.98.

Interest: Concerto cornerstone
Performance: Elegant
Recording: Fair
Stereo Quality: Good

A pride of Capitol's classical catalog has been its monophonic recording (P 8271) of Brahms's Violin Concerto with Nathan Milstein and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under William Steinberg. Milstein brought an elegance, élan, and aristocratic quality of phrasing to that performance that made it the preferred recording of Brahms's concerto for many listeners.

This new performance—rerecorded for stereo—has many of the same qualities of Milstein's earlier one, and Fistoulari gives a good account of the orchestral part. The recorded sound leaves something to be desired in the way of brilliance, but the purity of Milstein's tone

is captured admirably and the stereo aspects are satisfactory, with fine depth.

M. B.

© BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 8, in C Minor.* Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky cond. ARTIA MK 240B two 12-inch discs \$11.96.

Interest: Bruckner colossus
Performance: Intensely dramatic
Recording: Better than USSR average

From "godless Russia," of all unexpected places, comes a striking recorded performance of the mightiest work by the most religious of nineteenth-century symphonic composers, Anton Bruckner of Austria.

This lengthy and certainly imposing score, with its evocation of apocalyptic conflict, diabolic dance, trance-like religious ecstasy, and fierce triumph ("Let God arise, and His enemies be scattered!"), has been communicated with convincing effect by only a very few conductors, of whom Bruno Walter is one.



ARTIA RECORDS

EUGENE MRVINSKY
Russia's top man for Bruckner

Herbert von Karajan in his fine stereo recording for Angel (S 3576-B) comes very close to being another. At any rate, on the basis of this Artia MK recording, we can add Leningrad's Eugene Mravinsky to the very select company of great Bruckner interpreters. His reading has everything: intensity, wide-spanned phrasing, elegance of detail in figuration, tremendous weight in sonority, and overpowering momentum. The Leningrad Philharmonic is one of the world's finest orchestras, and it has the power and stamina (in company with the Vienna Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, and Amsterdam Concertgebouw) to sustain Bruckner's vast tonal structures.

The recording has both good reverberation content and ample presence, but the climaxes emerge coarsely, and the playing surfaces are on the noisy side. Even this should not deter the confirmed Brucknerian from acquiring the album.

D. H.

© CHOPIN: *Piano Sonatas: No. 2, In B-flat Minor, Op. 35; No. 3, in*



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2. **Corelli: 12 Concerti Grossi, Op. 6.** English Baroque Orchestra; Argeo Quadri, Conductor. XWN 3301 (Monaural), complete set \$14.98. Single albums, XWN 18038, 18039, 18040.
3. **Bach: Mass in B Minor.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vienna Academy Choruses; Hermann Scherchen Conductor. Full set: WST 304 (Stereo) \$17.98; XWN 3305 (Monaural) \$14.98.
4. **Vivaldi: Gloria.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vienna

Academy Chorus and Soloists; Hermann Scherchen, Conductor. WST 14139 (Stereo) and XWN 18958 (Monaural).

5. **Bach: 6 Brandenburg Concertos.** Soloists of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra; Hermann Scherchen, Conductor. Complete Set: WST 307 (Stereo) \$17.98; XWN 3316 (Monaural) \$14.98. *Brandenburg Concertos* Numbers 1 & 2: WST 14114 (Stereo), XWN 18932 (Monaural). *Brandenburg Concertos* Numbers 3 & 4: WST 14115 (Stereo), XWN 18933 (Monaural). *Brandenburg Concertos* Numbers 5 & 6: WST 14116 (Stereo), XWN 18934 (Monaural).



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B Minor, Op. 58. Artur Rubinstein (piano). RCA Victor LDS 2554 \$6.98, LD 2554 \$5.98.

Interest: Chopin at his greatest
 Performances: Dedicated
 Recording: Good
 Stereo Quality: Solid

To one who had expected remarkable things from these performances, both come as something of a disappointment. True, Rubinstein approaches the Sonatas with a secure dedication to their musical values; his playing is amazing in its facility and articulation (the whirlwind *Presto* finale of the B-flat Minor is a case in

point); and yet the performances fail to catch fire. Rubinstein's readings are sedate and controlled rather than intense. He does not match the excitement of Novacs or Lipatti. *M. B.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© FAURÉ: *Quartet No. 1, in C Minor, Op. 15.* SCHUMANN: *Quartet, in E-flat Major, Op. 47.* Leonard Pennario (piano), Eudice Shapero (violin), Sanford Schonbach (viola), Victor Gottlieb (cello). CAPITOL SP 8558 \$5.98.

Interest: Paired chamber performance
 Performance: Excellent



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FAIRCHILD

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Recording: Fine
 Stereo Quality: Good

This disc presents two gloriously lyrical chamber works in performances that are the epitome of polished and fluent musicianship. I tend to prefer the work that the group has done with the Fauré quartet—surely one of the more somberly beautiful examples of the form. The musicians impose a moving gravity on the music while maintaining every fraction of its chiselled elegance.

The Schumann is but little less to be admired. It may seem wanting in ardor to some, but, even at that, the performance is a superior one, and the whole record is a thoroughgoing pleasure.

W. F.

© HÁBA: *Nonet No. 3, Op. 82.* NOVÁK: *Balletti for Nonet, Czech Nonet.* SUPRAPHON SUA 10031 \$5.98.

Interest: Czech contemporaries
 Performance: OK
 Recording: Fair

The interest of this particular disc lies, curiously enough, more in other directions than that of the specific music involved. It features, for one thing, music composed for what the sleeve notes claim to be the only permanently established nine-instrument ensemble (a "nonet") in the world—an interesting set-up of strings and winds. And, furthermore, the record offers interesting musico-political insights where the younger of the two composers is involved.

Of the two Czech composers, Alois Hába (b. 1893) has written the less interesting piece. It is conventional at its core, and it tends, furthermore, to treat the instrumental combination like a small orchestra. Jan Novák (b. 1921) visited the United States as a student in 1947-48 and his dance-like work bears (to the surprise of no one who remembers the era) the unmistakable influence of what was then called "late" or "neo-classic" Stravinsky—a manner frowned upon in Sovietized cultures. The piece has charm, skill, and a kind of secretive sophistication that one does not look for in music from this source. *W. F.*

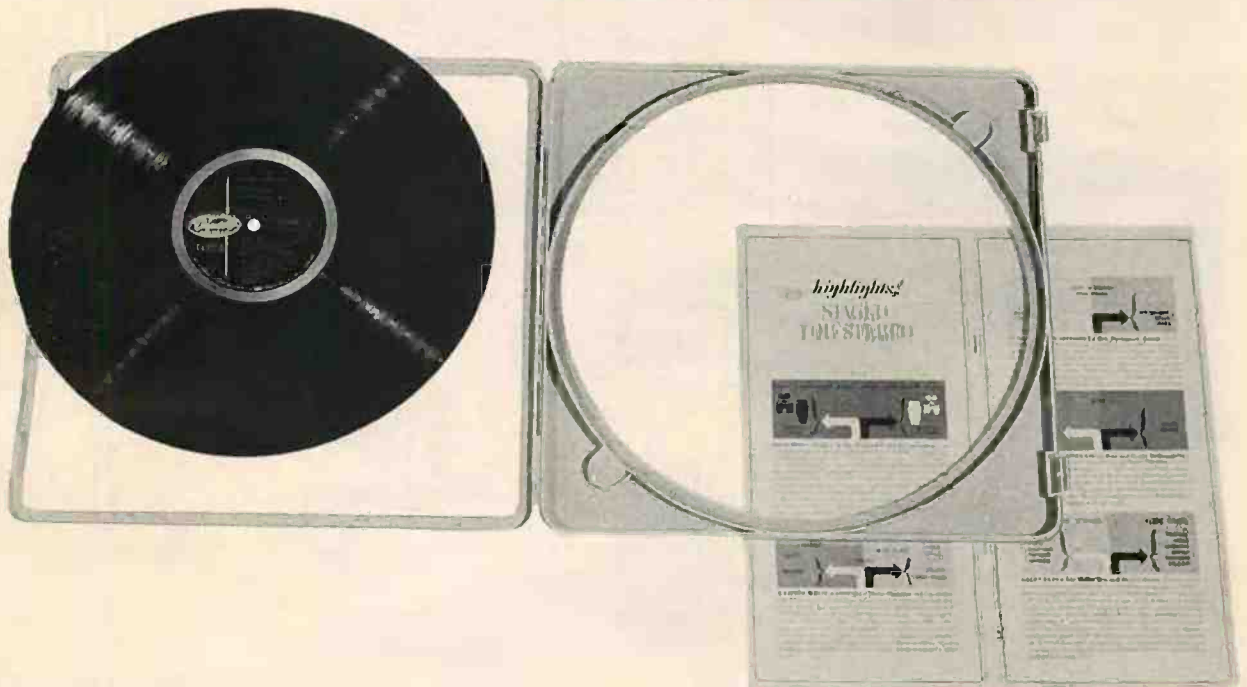
© HALÉVY: *La Juive.* Miklós Gafni (tenor), Eleazar; Frances Yeend (soprano), Rachel; William Wilderman (bass), Cardinal Brogni; Alberta Hopkins (soprano), Endoxie; Nico Feldman (tenor), Leopold; others. Orchestra and Chorus of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Erasmo Ghiglia, cond. DA VINCI DRC 100-102 three 12-inch discs \$15.00.

Interest: First recording
 Performance: Uneven
 Recording: Poor

Jacques Halévy's *La Juive* (1835) is an

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extremely long opera. The Peters score incorporates the extensive cuts introduced by the Paris *Opéra* and adopted by the Metropolitan in the days when this opera served as a triumphant vehicle for Caruso (1919/1920) and later for Martinelli (1924-1936). This recorded version, the opera's first, is allegedly identical to the Metropolitan's "authorized" abridgement (attributed to conductor Bodansky and basso Rothier) but a study of the Peters score and the Metropolitan's official libretto discloses that the recorded performance makes yet further omissions, and does so with an abruptness and lack of finesse these late operatic eminences would have never condoned.

This relatively minor flaw, however, is only the beginning of the set's many ills. The recorded sound is dull, the balances erratic; the orchestra sounds undersized and underrehearsed. There is no cohesion to the performance, no stylistic uniformity. The ensembles stumble and scramble, and most of the principal singers, an earnest and hard-working group, struggle hopelessly. The singular exception is William Wilderman, an excellent and underrated artist whose Cardinal Brogni would adorn any ensemble.

All this is a pity, for the spectacular amalgam of Scribe's terrifying tale and Halévy's considerable invention and skill is decidedly worth hearing. Evidently, a

great deal of good intention went into this ambitious project, but the end result, unfortunately, is an almost total failure.

G. J.

© **HANDEL: *Concerti for Organ and Orchestra, Op. 4, No. 1, in G Minor, No. 2, in B-flat Major, No. 4, in F Major; Op. 7, No. 1, in B-flat Major.*** Ralph Downes (organ); London Chamber Orchestra, Anthony Bernard cond. Music Guild S 3 \$4.87 to subscribers; \$6.50 to nonsubscribers. (Available from Music Guild Inc., 111 W. 57th Street, New York 19, N.Y.)

Interest: Handel gems
Performance: Lively and stylistic
Recording: Adequate
Stereo Quality: Unspectacular

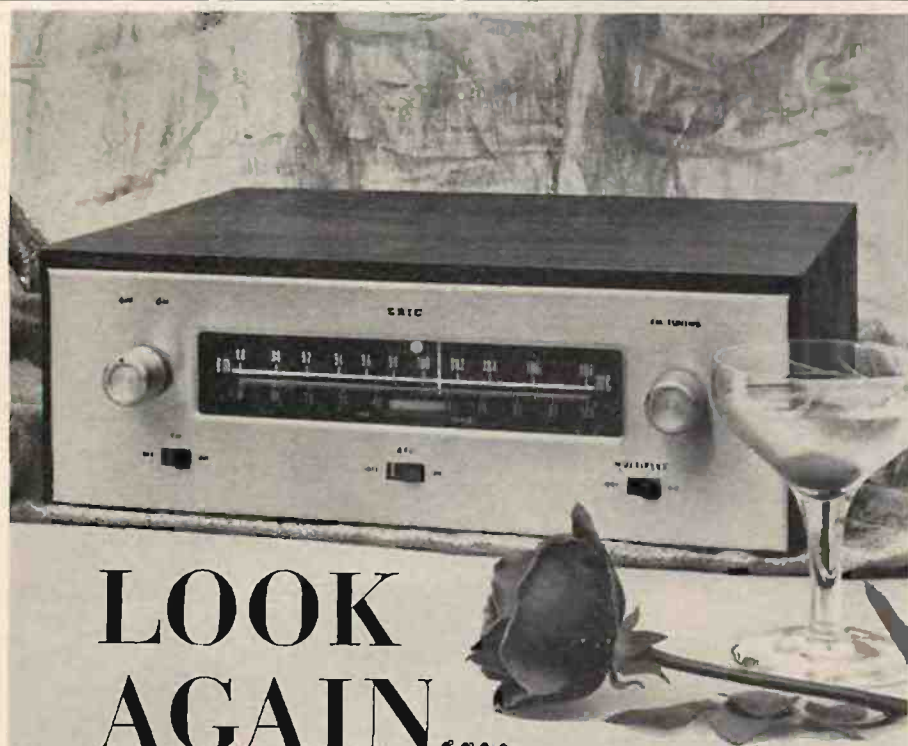
These four concerti are among the finest of those Handel himself used to play between sections of his oratorio performances. Often they were more eagerly welcomed by his audiences than the oratorios themselves. The present performances are among the very best and compare favorably in both stylistic knowledge and esprit to the superb DGG Archive recording (mono only) of the first four concerti in Opus 4. Ralph Downes, playing on a delightful-sounding but regrettably unidentified organ, is thoroughly virtuosic in his approach, as Handel himself must have been, and Anthony Bernard's accompaniments are wonderfully lively. Karl Richter's recording for London, however, has infinitely better stereo sound, and the Music Guild's disc is marred by a pressing fault at the end of Op. 4, No. 4. The program notes are also far too skimpy, with not even the keys of the concerti identified.

J. K.

© **HANDEL: *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day.*** Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano); Alexander Young (tenor); London Chamber Singers; London Chamber Orchestra, Anthony Bernard cond. Music Guild S 2 \$4.87 to subscribers; \$6.60 to nonsubscribers. (Available from Music Guild Inc., 111 W. 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.)

Interest: Rousing Handel
Performance: Thrilling
Recording: Fair
Stereo Quality: Unimpressive

Listening to this disc is an exhilarating musical experience, in spite of diffuse and sometimes muddy sound and lackluster stereo. The performance is extraordinarily vital, due principally to the conducting of Anthony Bernard. He realizes to the full Handel's setting of the Dryden ode. Both vocal soloists do their work well, although Stich-Randall does not possess the beauty of tone Adele Addison brings to the less stylish Bernstein recording on Columbia. Alexander Young, however, as



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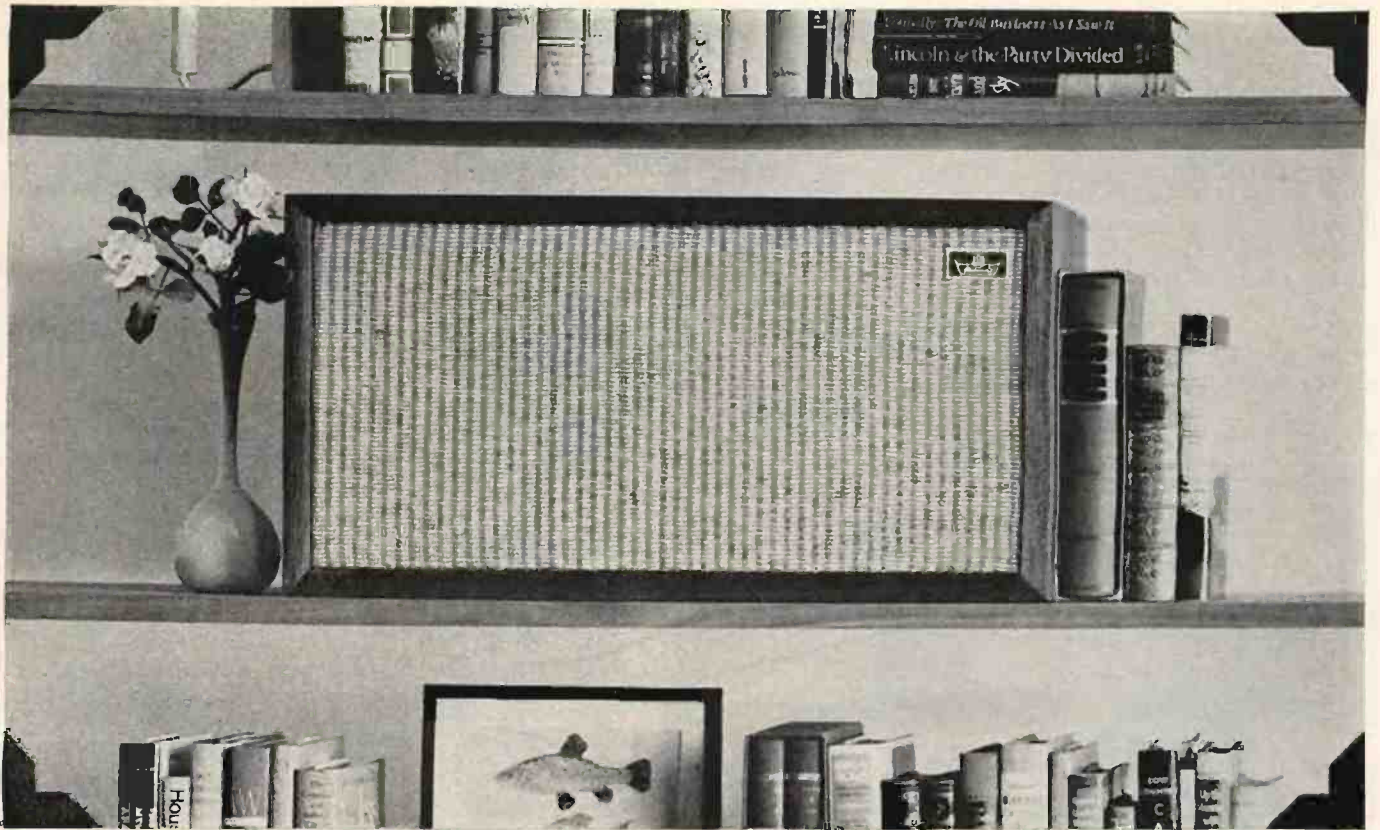
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heard in the rousing "The trumpet's loud clangour," is infinitely superior in matters of vocal refinement to his American counterpart, John McCollum. Even so, such over-all vocal excellence is marred by the singers' lack of characteristic embellishments; but Bernard's splendid direction of his small chorus and orchestra more than makes up for this deficiency. The leaflet supplied with the album includes the text but is otherwise rather sketchy.

I. K.

© HANUS: *Concertante Symphony*. SUCHON: *Balladic Suite*. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Vaclav Jiráček cond. SUPRAPHON SUA 10046 \$5.98.

Interest: New Czech orchestral music
Performance: Sounds good
Recording: OK

By our standards, both of these works are rather too bound to early-twentieth-century tradition to hold much interest, and neither demonstrates much in the way of expressive urgency that might rescue it from tedium.

Of the two pieces, I rather prefer Jan Hanus's—a work in which the sonorities are more freshly disposed and in which the featured organ-harp-timpani combination is well handled. Eugen Suchon's *Balladic Suite* is composed with a sure-enough hand, but its rhythmic structure

sags and its melodic invention is wan.
W. F.

© ISAAC: *Donna di dentro; In meinem Sinn* (wind ensemble); *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam? (Lament on Lorenzo's de' Medici's Death)*; *La Mi La Sol* (wind ensemble). OBRECHT: *Missa Fortuna Desperata*. New York Pro Musica Motet Choir and Wind Ensemble; Boys' Choir of the Church of Transfiguration, NYC, Noah Greenberg cond. DECCA DL 79413 \$5.98, DL 9413 \$4.98.

Interest: Superior Obrecht
Performance: Splendid
Recording: Good with minor reservation
Stereo Quality: Good

In this album of fifteenth-century Netherlands composers, Noah Greenberg has once again produced a record that is an absolute must for all lovers of pre-Baroque music. Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450-1517), a Dutchman who spent most of his life at the courts of Lorenzo the Magnificent in Florence and Emperor Maximilian in Vienna, is represented by a gay carnival song, an eloquent *Lament on Lorenzo de' Medici's Death*, and two instrumental pieces, played with enormous dash and brilliance by an ensemble of sackbuts, shawms, and a cornetto. Most of the record, however, is devoted to one of the greatest masses of the period, the *Missa Fortuna Desperata*, by Jacob Obrecht (c. 1450-1505). Although the composer was said to have been able to compose a mass in a single night, there is nothing facile about this intricately constructed music, and the performance, by the New York Pro Musica choir, wind ensemble, and soloists (Robert White, Charles Bressler, Gordon Myers, and Brayton Lewis), plus a first-class boys choir, is a delight to the ear. None of these works, to the best of my knowledge, has been recorded before, and the high standard of the renditions is complemented by excellent notes, complete texts, and translations. The recorded sound seems somewhat constricted to my ears in both the stereo and mono editions, but in other respects it is excellent.

I. K.

© JOSQUIN DES PRÉS: *Missa "Vercules dux Ferrarie."* OCKEGHEM: *Motets: Prenez sur moi votre exemple* (instrumental); *Intemerata Dei Mater*; *Ut Heremita solus* (instrumental). Roger Blanchard Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble, Roger Blanchard cond. Music Guild S 7 \$4.87 to subscribers; \$6.50 to nonsubscribers. (Available from Music Guild, 111 W. 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.)

Interest: Renaissance masters
Performance: Enjoyable
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Fine

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The *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae*, one of Josquin's most celebrated works, is generally considered to have been written around 1499, the year in which the composer is supposed to have entered the employ of the Duke Hercules I of Ferrara. The setting makes use of a *cantus firmus* derived from the vowels of the Duke's name and was composed in his honor. Both the mass and the motet-chansons of Josquin's Flemish teacher Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1420—c. 1495) are important examples of the then new, Netherlandish polyphonic style. In keeping with the performing tradition of the period, two of the Ockeghem pieces, including the renowned *Prenez sur moi*, are

rendered in instrumental rather than vocal settings, albeit here with modern instruments. The vocal work is very good. Although not particularly medieval-sounding, as in the manner of the New York Pro Musica or the Safford Cape recordings of music of this period, it is nonetheless enjoyable. The recording is quite clear, and the stereo placement is well gauged. Notes, but no texts, are included. I. K.

KHACHATURIAN: *Gayne Ballet Suite* (see TCHAIKOVSKY).

© **KODALY:** *Spinning Room*. Magda Tiszay (mezzo-soprano), The Hostess;

Dr. Imre Pallo (baritone), The Suito; Irén Szecsoy (soprano), Young Girl; Tibor Udvardy (tenor), Young Man; others. Chorus and Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio, János Ferencsik, cond. QUALTRON 1009/10 two 12-inch discs \$11.96.

Interest: Folklore panorama

Performance: Idiomatic and enjoyable

Recording: Fair

Like other important Kodály scores, *Spinning Room*, his second work for the stage, grew out of his pioneering folklore research. Practically its entire fabric is made up of folk songs, dressed up in the composer's characteristic harmonic idiom and grouped into an elaborate, quasi-dramatic sequence. While not an opera by any stretch of the imagination, *Spinning Room* does add up to an engaging spectacle for the opera house, with its animated songs and dances of Transylvanian rural folk. Kodály remarked shortly after the work's premiere, "If I had achieved nothing else beyond bringing the Hungarian city and the Hungarian village closer, I would not have lived in vain."

The scenes, skillfully woven into a fast-moving pageant, are of great musical diversity. The composer's mastery of choral polyphony and his talent for writing ingeniously descriptive orchestral support to the fanciful songs are amply displayed in the score. Unfortunately, the listener is deprived of their full enjoyment by the limited dynamic range and lack of resonance in the recording.

These limitations, however, cannot conceal the excellence of the chorus and orchestra. The veteran baritone Pallo (protagonist in the complete *Háry János* recording that was reviewed here in September, 1961) is in more tired voice this time, but the mezzo Tiszay is again outstanding. The singing of the other vocalists, while passable, fails to do full justice to the beautiful passages of Scenes 5 and 6 (Side 3). Good notes and full libretto are enclosed—but in Hungarian and German only. G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© © **KODALY:** *Summer Night; Concerto for Orchestra*. Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, Zoltán Kodály cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138687 \$6.98, LPM 18687 \$5.98.

Interest: Kodály in person

Performance: The composer's word

Recording: Restrained but good

Stereo Quality: Ditto

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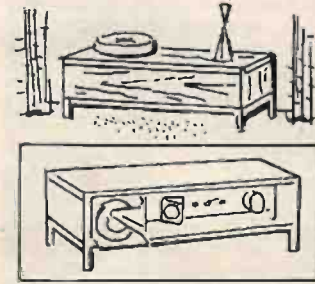
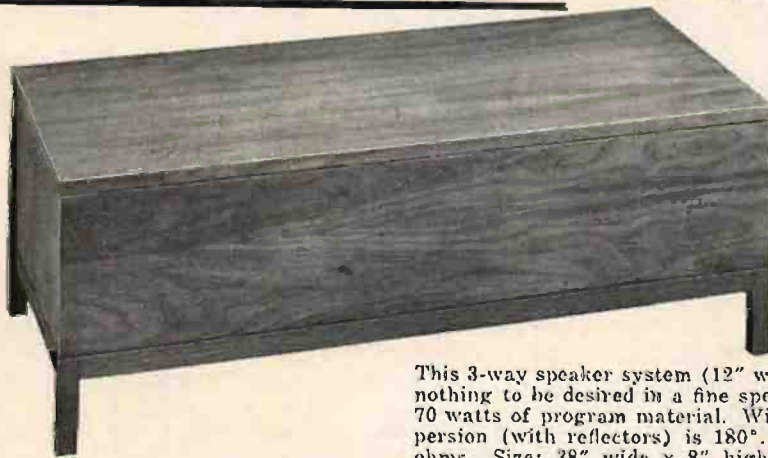


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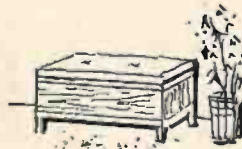
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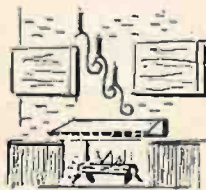
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of many similarly nonexperimental composers. The music presented here makes the point. *Summer Night*, a 1929 revision of what must have been a prodigiously talented student work composed in 1906, is a satin-smooth piece of quasi-impressionism—pure of lyric impulse, sensitively orchestrated, a pleasure on all counts. By 1939, however, with the *Concerto for Orchestra* (written for the fiftieth anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra), it is clear that neo-classicism, as a burgeoning musical aesthetic, had caught up with Kodály and suppressed, to a degree, his innate concern with musical color. This is a strong-armed, powerfully built work of clean, straight-lined logic. *W. F.*

⑤ ⑥ **LISZT:** *Mazeppa* (*Symphonic Poem No. 6*); *Hungarian Rhapsodies No. 4, in E flat, and No. 5, in E Minor*; *Hungarian Fantasia for Piano and Orchestra*. Shura Cherkassky (piano), Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138692 \$6.98, LPM 18692 \$5.98.

Interest: Enjoyable program
Performance: Polished
Recording: Warm and rich
Stereo Quality: Pronounced

This well-chosen sampling of less-familiar Liszt serves to display the rich sonorities and remarkable precision of the Berliners. Whether the music really engages their sympathies is not so easily evident. *Mazeppa* comes off stunningly, but there is a detached, unruffled air about Karajan's reading; Fiedler (RCA Victor LSC 2442) appears to have had more fun with this galloping rouser.

The two rhapsodies are exquisitely played, especially the elegiac No. 5, which is neither as Hungarian nor as rhapsodic as others in the group. Less successful is the fantasia, which, for all the considerable efforts of the participants, lacks fire and conviction. (Cziffra's inspired and thoroughly idiomatic treatment on Angel 35436 is far superior.) DGG's sound is distinguished by warmth, depth, and widespread directionality. In *Mazeppa*, however, the engineers seem to have gone overboard: the stagy effects of the finale are out of place in what is meant to approximate a concert hall. *G. J.*

MOUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (see p. 82).

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

⑤ ⑥ **MOZART:** *Sinfonia Concertante, in E-flat Major, for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra* (K. 364); *Adagio, in E Major, for Violin and Orchestra* (K. 261); *Rondo, in C Major, for Violin and Orchestra* (K. 373). Joseph Fuchs (vio-

lin); Lillian Fuchs (viola); Aeterna Chamber Orchestra, Frederic Waldman cond. DECCA DL 710037 \$5.98, DL 10037 \$4.98.

Interest: Sinfonia Concertante
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Satisfying

Joseph Fuchs's previous recording with his sister of the magnificent Mozart Sinfonia Concertante is now nearly ten years old. This new version is therefore a welcome one, and the two extra works (the *Adagio* is a substitute slow movement for the *Turkish Violin Concerto*) are added bonuses. Both soloists perform with unusual rapport and technical finish, imbuing the music with passionate intensity, especially in the deeply expressive slow movement. Frederic Waldman's accompaniments are sensitive and precise, and the recording, particularly in stereo, is quite good. Several excellent disc versions of the principal work are available—Stern and Primrose, Heifetz and Primrose, Oistrakh and Barshai being among the chief competitors. However, this is the only currently available version in stereo, and the performance can certainly be considered as among the very best. *I. K.*

NOVAK: *Bulletti for Nonet* (see HABA).

OBRECHT: *Missa Fortuna Desperata* (see ISAAC).

OCKEGHEM: *Motets* (see JOSQUIN).

⑥ **PURCELL:** *The Indian Queen*. Patricia Clark (soprano), Cynthia Glover (soprano), Sylvia Rowlands (mezzo-soprano), Bernard Baboulene (tenor), Duncan Robertson (tenor), Frederick Westcott (bass), Richard Standen (bass), John Whitworth (counter-tenor), the London Chamber Singers and Chamber Orchestra, Anthony Bernard cond. Music Guild M 1 \$4.12 to subscribers; \$5.50 to nonsubscribers (Available from Music Guild, 111 West 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.).

Interest: Late Purcell masterwork
Performance: Variable
Recording: Adequate

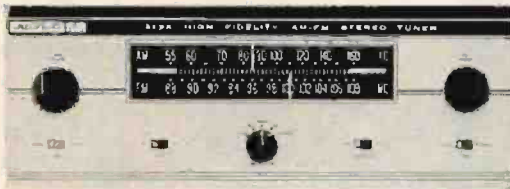
In the last year of his life (1695), Purcell produced two extended sequences of stage music, one for the play of Sir Robert Howard and John Dryden, *The Indian Queen*, the other for an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The present recording, issued some two years ago in England by the Record Society, is the first version of *The Indian Queen*.

The story might well be summed up as being Restoration skullduggery in pre-conquest Mexico; but the stage doings provided Purcell with the opportunity for some fine duets, arias, ritual scenes, and

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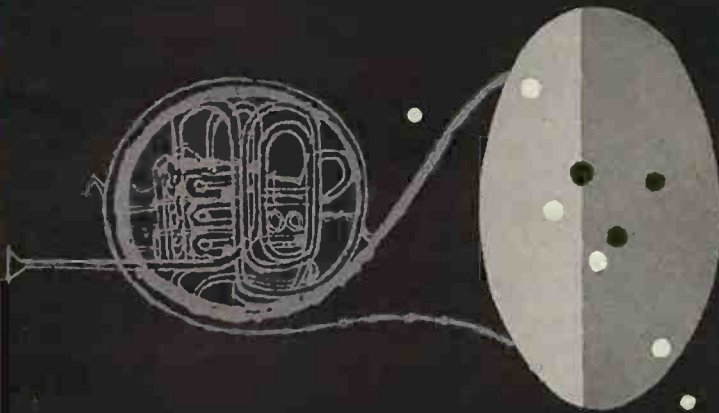
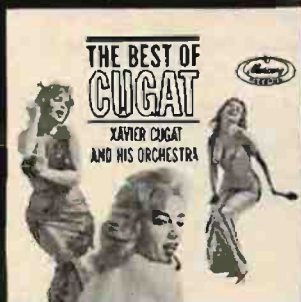


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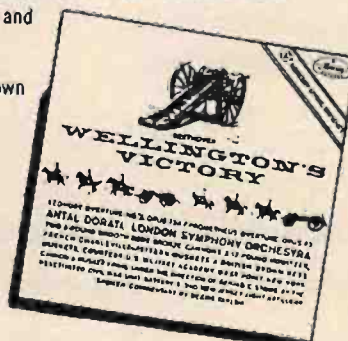
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orchestral pomp, interlarded with dance. Thus we have an overture, then a brilliant fanfare (the one used by E. Power Biggs as a "signature" for his organ broadcasts on CBS radio) that leads to a charming prologue for an Indian boy and girl: arias for tenor and soprano, concluding with a duet. There is no more music until Act Two, when we are given a processional and ceremonial fanfare to introduce an allegory of Fame (tenor) and Envy (bass), alternately praising and damning the Mexican Queen Zempoalla, with assistance from the chorus. A most amusing device is the hissing effect introduced by Purcell when Envy sings the words, "What flattering noise is this, at which my snakes all hiss." Act Three is highlighted by the famous invocation scene, in which the Queen seeks the aid of the magician Ismeron to learn her future. In this we hear the bass arias, "Ye twice ten hundred deities," an exquisite duet for counter-tenor and tenor, "Ah, how happy are we," and the celebrated aria for soprano, "I attempt from Love's sickness to fly." The fourth act has as its musical high point a noble example of Purcellian pathos, "They tell us that your mighty powers above," and the final act gives us a sacrificial scene, climaxed by a poignant chorus of farewell by the unhappy human victims. The music concludes (a happy ending having been contrived) with a chorus by Daniel Purcell.

On the whole, I find the *Indian Queen* music less imposing than that for *King Arthur* (Oiscan-Lyre SOL/60008/9; OL 50176/7) and certainly not as well integrated as *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell's only true opera); but it does have its lovely moments, and this performance is worth the acquisition by any Purcell fancier.

Richard Standen as the high priest Ismeron is the most impressive of the singers. The remainder range from good to barely adequate. The orchestral accompaniments under Anthony Bernard are stylishly done, and the recorded sound suffices without being outstanding.

Buyers should be warned, however, that the notes for this album are a disgrace: there are no text of the songs and choruses and no indication as to who is singing what. Indeed, some of the names are misspelled, and Duncan Robertson is a baritone, not a tenor, as the album would have us believe. *D. H.*

RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 2* (see p. 82).

© RAMEAU: *Pieces de Clavecin. Le Rappel des oiseaux; Musette en rondeau; Les Sauvages; La Poule; L'Enharmonique; L'Egyptienne; Les Niais de Solagne, with two Doubles; Les Cyclopes; Les Trois Mains; Tambourin; Gavotte in A Minor, with six Doubles; Prelude in A Minor; Les Tourbillons; La Villageoise.* Anton Heiller (harpsichord). BACH GUILD BG 614 \$5.95.

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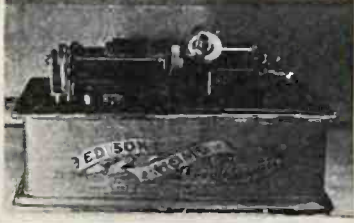
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Interest: Virtuoso harpsichord music
Performance: Technically brilliant
Recording: Emphasizes brilliance

Entitled "The Virtuoso Harpsichord, Vol. 1," this recording lives up to its name by including the most brilliant of Rameau's fifty-one harpsichord solos as well as the most popular—for example, *La Poule* and *Tambourin*—and one of the towering works of all harpsichord literature, the *Gavotte varié*. Technically, Anton Heiller's playing is first-rate. Every ornament in this ornament-studded music is in its place, immaculately produced and stylistically correct. The interpretations are rhythmically steady as a rock and very flashy. However, there is a lack of grace, humor, and delicacy that does these pieces a disservice; Heiller's *La Poule* seems to be an unsmiling hen, intent on laying her quota of eggs if it kills her. The harpsichordist, too, is very sparing in his use of rubato, certainly a necessary ingredient in the French Baroque style, and he makes little attempt at *notes inégales* (in which notes of equal value are played unequally), also an essential stylistic practice. The recording is a trifle harsh, but is manageable with treble cut. I. K.

© RAMEAU: *Six Concerts en Sextuor*. Chamber Orchestra of Toulouse, Louis Auriaud cond. Music Guild S 4 \$4.87 to members; \$6.50 to nonmembers. (Available from Music Guild, 111 W. 57th Street, New York 19, N. Y.)

Interest: French Baroque
Performance: Unstylistic
Recording: Muddy
Stereo Quality: Mediocre

These six "concerts" are the only orchestral music, other than operatic, that Rameau wrote. They consist entirely of transcriptions from his own works. The first five are from the *Pièces de Clavecin en Concert* for harpsichord, violin, and gamba, and the sixth derives from several solo harpsichord works, including the familiar *La Poule*. The music itself is typically French Baroque, and the present disc is the only available recording of the six concerts. However, there is little to recommend it other than some reasonably accurate string playing. The sound lacks clarity, and the stereophonic possibilities of separated first and second violin sections are not exploited (all the violins are situated on the left channel). More important, there is little grace, delicacy, or stylistic nuance in the performances. The orchestra, which does not even include a harpsichord, might just as well have been playing a nineteenth-century composition. I. K.

© RAVEL: *Daphnis and Chloé*. New York Philharmonic, Schola Cantorum Chorus, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUM-BIA MS 6250 \$5.98.

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Interest: Ravel's masterpiece
Performance: Hot-blooded
Recording: Spacious
Stereo Quality: Wide-spread

Charles Munch, in his recently issued RCA Victor (LSC/LM 2568) with the Boston Symphony, need play second fiddle to no one when it comes to communicating the orgiastic aspects of Ravel's wonderful score; however, if this is what you look for in such episodes as the *Danse guerrière* of the pirates or in the final pages, Leonard Bernstein makes his Boston colleague sound like a hopeless square. I don't ever remember hearing anything quite so hopped-up as this!

The nature of the musical texture, though, and Ravel's own views of his choreographic conception would seem to point toward the need for a certain staidness of pace and classic melodic line (in the opening ritual episodes, especially), which Munch contributes in full measure. Indeed, overemphasis on the dramatic and dionysiac aspects of the music, such as Bernstein gives us here, creates a glaring contrast that throws the whole work out of focus. It is for this reason that I have strong reservations about Bernstein's recorded performance.

Let it be said, in any event, that Bernstein elicits dazzling virtuosity from his players and splendid outbursts from the chorus. Columbia has captured the whole affair in fine stereo, if with somewhat compressed climaxes. But, unless you are among those who feel that Lennie can do no wrong, Munch is still the man for *Daphnis* in stereo. D. H.

RAVEL: *La Valse; Daphnis and Chloé, Suite No. 2; Alborada del gracioso* (see p. 83).

RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Capriccio Espagnol* (see p. 82).

SCHOENBERG: *Piano Pieces* (see STRAVINSKY).

© SCHUMANN: *Cello Concerto, in A Minor, Op. 129*. TCHAIKOVSKY: *Rococo Variations, Op. 33*. Mstislav Rostropovich (cello), Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138674 \$6.98, LPM 18674 \$5.98.

Interest: Cello stalwarts
Performance: Sensitive
Recording: Average
Stereo Quality: Satisfactory

There is a poetic quality in the playing of Rostropovich that explains, more than any other facet of his art, his eminence among the masters of the cello. The songful and graceful Tchaikovsky piece suits his style and temperament admirably; the result is a delicately phrased and technically assured performance. There are exquisite moments, too, in the Schumann concerto, but this is a tougher nut to

crack interpretively. While the lyricism of the work is again nobly captured, the over-all view is somewhat lacking in terms of intensity and variety of color. The orchestral rapport is good, but the balances generally favor the soloist.

This brings the stereo editions of the Schumann concerto to four, all good but none really definitive. Angel 35397 (with Fournier) offers the same coupling as the present disc, and since DGG's sound represents absolutely no improvement over Angel's, the two versions are evenly matched. G. J.

SCHUMANN: *Quartet in E-flat Major* (see FAURÉ).

© SCHÜTZ: *Historia der Auferstehung Jesu Christi* (The Resurrection). Erich Majkut (tenor), Evangelist; Karl Greisel (baritone), Jesus; Gertrud Schuster-Burgstaller (alto), Mary Magdalene; Kajetan Schmidinger (tenor), Cleophas and the Angel; Prof. Franz Sauer (organ); Dr. Ernst Reichert (harpsichord); Instrumental and Choral Ensemble of the Mozarteum, Salzburg, Ernst Hinreiner cond. Music Guild M 8 \$4.12 to members; \$5.50 to nonmembers. Music Guild, 111 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y.)

Interest: Early liturgical oratorio
Performance: Disappointing
Recording: Faulty

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Everyone knows the two Liszt piano concerti. There are stacks of fine recordings on many labels, which is only proper for such glittering showpieces. Now Angel has a new recording featuring Samson Francois and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Constantin Silvestri. The sound and the performances are so astonishing that we might be tempted to scramble up to the rooftops and indulge in a bit of shouting, cheering and tossing of caps in the air.

Were we someone other than Angel, we might trumpet this recording as "ushering in a fabulous new adventure in vivid sound!" That sort of thing. Perhaps "an utterly fantastic new era in magnificent sound;" or some such phrase. We might even invent mysterious numbers or letters to name the whole thing. But not Angel. For there's sufficient bravura in the recording itself.

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COMMAND RECORDS has made quite a reputation of late as being a highly successful producer of powerfully and cleanly recorded stereo pop spectaculars. Now the company is entering the classical-record field with an initial release of five discs. Heading the list of artists on the Command roster are William Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Symphony.

The engineering for the Command Classics series is being supervised by Bob Fine, who chose to make the master recordings on 35-mm magnetic film, a medium that has exceptional freedom from print-through, in addition to being capable of cleaner sound at high levels.

So much for background. The question is: Has Command come up with anything really special, musically or sonically?

If one were to judge only by the Steinberg-Pittsburgh Symphony recording of the Brahms D Major Symphony, the answer would have to be an emphatic yes. Mr. Steinberg, one of the most underrated of today's conductors, is a past master of the Austro-German symphonic literature. Here he turns out a Brahms Second that is equalled on stereo discs only by Beecham (Capitol) and Walter (Columbia). Steinberg's reading is extremely dramatic, in contrast to the more relaxed styles of his two chief disc competitors, and the phrasing throughout is of the highest lyrical intensity. The first two movements have a dramatic force comparable to that normally associated with the Brahms C Minor and E Minor symphonies. The charming *scherzo* is allowed to retain its delicacy, however, while its middle section moves along at a tremendous clip. The finale is played with electrifying brilliance.

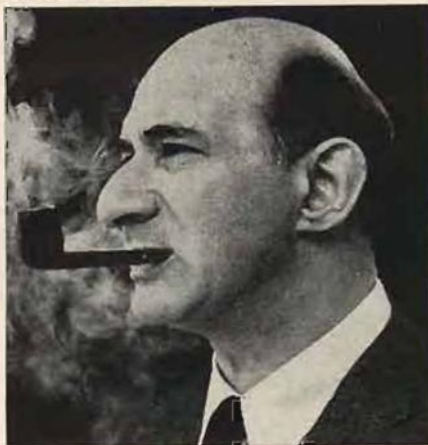
The musical effect created by Steinberg is abetted by the recording, which was made in Pittsburgh's Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial instead of in the acoustically problematical Syria Mosque where the orchestra has usually done its concerts and recordings. The presence of the orchestra, both *en masse* and in detail is almost terrifying when heard on good stereo playback equipment. The instrumental localization in terms of stereo placement is flawless, and while the microphone pickup is on the close side, it is not unnaturally so. The inner voices, particularly in the development episodes of the finale, are captured superbly, and the bass is about the cleanest and most powerful we have heard from any stereo recording.

The second of Mr. Steinberg's recordings for Command is of the Rachmaninoff Second Symphony, whose lyrical sweetness he recorded in Pittsburgh for Capitol some years ago. The performance is clean-cut and conscientious, but it is scarcely as idiomatic as those by Ormandy for Columbia (stereo and mono) or by Sanderling and the Leningrad Philharmonic for Decca (mono only, but the only complete version). Save for a slight

COMMAND ESSAYS THE CLASSICS

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A masterful touch for Brahms

lack of presence of the cymbal and bass drum, the recording compares favorably with that of the Brahms symphony. Any apparent lack of sonic intensity, comparatively speaking, would seem to lie in the performance rather than in the recording as such.

THE final three discs are all from France, being done with well-known Paris orchestras and two of the better-known younger French conductors, André Vandernoot and Pierre Dervaux. Here, however, the conducting and orchestral playing are not in the same class with that of Steinberg and his Pittsburgh ensemble.

The Ravel disc offers the best interpretation, the most skillful playing, and the most effective sound. The *Daphnis and Chloe* suite is done with a fine sense of lyrical dignity, and the final dance has been allowed to keep something of a ritual character instead of being hopped-up in Bernstein fashion. The same excellent sense of melodic line and easy flow holds for *La Valse* (but there are more exciting readings than this one), and the *Alborada del gracioso* is played with verve and a properly ironic spirit.

With the Russian repertoire—the capriccios by Rimsky-Korsakoff and Tchaikovsky and the Moussorgsky-Ravel *Pictures*—the going is rougher in more ways than one. To begin with, just about every virtuoso conductor in the world has recorded these pieces, and in stereo; and save for a nicely turned Limoges Market Place in *Pictures* and fine phrasing in the lyrical sections of the Tchaikovsky *Capriccio Italien*, these performances and interpretations are badly outclassed by their competitors. So far as recording is concerned, the tendency here is for full orchestral climaxes—in the *Pictures*, especially—to sound merely loud and blatant instead of warm and full-blooded, although this is as much a function of orchestral ensemble tone as it is of microphone placement.

In the rather spiritless *Capriccio Espagnol* performance, there were definite balance faults on our review pressing: the woodwinds were unnaturally prominent in the *Variations*, and the French horns sounded for all the world like Guy Lombardo's saxophones. There was also a fluctuation of volume level in the left channel toward the end of the second *Alborada*.

To sum up our feelings about Command's debut in the classical-recording field, there is great potential here if judgment is restricted to the work done by William Steinberg, and we hope that fullest possible advantage will be taken of this fine conductor and his excellent orchestra. It seems that here is a chance for doing some truly distinguished work on every level.

© BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 73*. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg cond. COMMAND CC 11002 SD \$5.98.

© RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 27*. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg cond. COMMAND CC 11006 SD \$5.98.

© RAVEL: *Daphnis and Chloe: Suite No. 2; Alborada del gracioso; La Valse*. Orchestra of the Concerts Colonne, Paris, Pierre Dervaux cond. COMMAND CC 11005 SD \$5.98.

© MOUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Paris Conservatory Orchestra, André Vandernoot cond. COMMAND CC 11003 SD \$5.98.

© RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34*. Paris Conservatory Orchestra, André Vandernoot cond. TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio Italien, Op. 45*. Orchestra of the Concerts Colonne, Paris, Pierre Dervaux cond. COMMAND CC 11004 SD \$5.98.

The "Historia of the cheerful and victorious resurrection of our unique Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ," written in 1623, was Heinrich Schütz's first narrative work. Although it is far simpler in form than the fully-flowered setting of the gospel texts in Bach's Passions of more than one hundred years later, Schütz's work was an innovation for its time in the use of an instrumental bass line, played on the continuo instruments and harmonized by the organ. The composer also wrote out an accompaniment to be played on gambas for the Evangelist's part. Nowhere is this music as dramatic as that of Bach, but it is moving, especially upon repeated hearings. The parts of Christ, Mary Magdalene, and the young man at the sepulchre were written as two-part choral settings in which the second voice can be rendered either by an instrument (as in the present recording) or by another singer (as is done in the DGG Archive version).

Erich Majkut sings with a good deal of operatic fervor, a general characteristic of the entire performance. (The DGG Archive rendition is much more properly objective and does not sentimentalize.) Unfortunately, the tenor's voice is plagued by a disconcerting vibrato. The viol ensemble is good, but the chorus is distinctly wobbly and muddy. The recording makes rather too much of the harpsichord continuo and not enough of the organ, which is specified for the part. It is oddly balanced throughout, and there is an alarming pitch variation near the end of the first side.

I. K.

© SHOSTAKOVICH: *Eight Preludes and Fugues from Op. 87*. Dmitri Shostakovich (piano). ARTIA MK 1565 \$5.98.

Interest: Keyboard pleasures
Performance: Presumably authentic
Recording: OK

Nothing about most of these pieces is likely to set the world on fire, but they are possessed of a resourcefulness of invention and charm that is not always to be found in Shostakovich's more recent works. For the most part, the preludes take the show; they are modest and often highly attractive, too. The fugues, on the other hand, are pretty skimpy on provocative contrapuntal workmanship, echoing the academy classroom. The pieces are probably useful as repertoire fillers and as such are engaging enough. The composer plays prettily, in spite of an inclination to whack a bit at the fugal materials. *W. F.*

© R. STRAUSS: *Ein Heldenleben* ("A Hero's Life"), Op. 40. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. CAPITOL SG 7250 \$5.98.

Interest: Beecham swan song
Performance: Free-flowing

Recording: Expansive
Stereo Quality: Well spread

If you prefer your *Heldenleben* lyrically inner-directed rather than swaggeringly extroverted, then this last major recording by Sir Thomas Beecham will be more to your liking than the recent Ormandy version on Columbia.

Every detail of the intricate Strauss score is handled with loving care by the late baronet, and Capitol has provided recorded sound of great smoothness and transparency. The notorious battle scene, in particular, profits by this treatment. Steven Stryk's violin solo work, depicting the character of Mme. Pauline

Strauss, evokes more of a personality than does the playing of Ormandy's concertmaster. However, all of Beecham's exquisite refinements of color, tempo variation, and dynamics are not enough to dissuade me from the pleasure I take in the blazing virtuosity, rhythmic momentum, and sheer weight of sound that emerges from the Philadelphia discs. As between Beecham and Ormandy, it would seem to be a case of *chaacun a son gout*.

D. H.

© STRAVINSKY: *Serenade in A for Piano; Sonata for Piano (1924)*.
SCHOENBERG: *Two Pieces for Piano, Op. 33a, Op. 33b; Suite for Piano, Op.*

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—David Hull, *HI FI STEREO REVIEW*
"The performances are both magnificent, and the recordings are sensational."

—Alfred Frankenstein, *HIGH FIDELITY*
Poulenc is generally acknowledged to be France's greatest living composer. And the "Gloria," first performed this January, has already been chosen as the best choral work of 1960-61

by the Music Critics Circle of New York. Angel's world-premiere recording has been received with phenomenal enthusiasm by the leading critics. Here are just a few of their comments:

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"This disc should qualify for anyone's 'best of the year' list and I strongly urge the listener in search of great, unacknowledged music, thrillingly performed in brilliant stereo sound, to add the *Gloria* to his collection."

Herbert Glass, *THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE*

"This new composition ranks with the finest of Poulenc's major creations..."

—Allen Hughes, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

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25. Charles Rosen (piano). Eric BC 1140
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Interest: Piano music by the Big Two
Moderns

Performance: Lucid

Recording: Good

Stereo Quality: OK

There is much to admire in Rosen's representation of this collection of piano music by two of the century's major composers. The music is performed with maximum consciousness of the technical devices involved, maximum delineation of the operative structural principles, and with first-rate digital fluidity. Mr. Rosen is an unmistakably top-notch technician as well as the possessor of a first-rate musical mind. There is little that is pretty about his playing, little that is either evocative or expressive, in the commonly understood sense of these words. Mr. Rosen is all business, all swept up in concern for what makes the music tick. His work is in sum rather more instructive than moving. *W. F.*

SUCHON: *Balladic Suite For Orchestra* (see HANUS).

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Capriccio Italien* (see p. 82).

⑤ TCHAIKOVSKY: *Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32; Capriccio Italien, Op. 45*. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA MS 6258 \$5.98.

⑤ TCHAIKOVSKY: *Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32; KHACHATURIAN: Gayne; Ballet Suite*. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138673 \$6.98, LPM 18673 \$5.98.

Interest: Display pieces

Performances: Uninhibited

Recordings: Good

Stereo Quality: OK

Both Bernstein and Rozhdestvensky are of one mind in their general attitude towards Tchaikovsky's *Francesca*; these are febrile, emotional readings of the score, with heavings and churnings, violent dynamic contrasts, and unashamed indulgence in extreme rubato. Vulgar though this approach may be, it is undeniably exciting. It is fascinating that two young conductors of presumably completely different backgrounds and musical environment should have such similar views of the music.

Bernstein gives the shopworn *Capriccio Italien* a rousing performance, pulling out all the stops and whipping up the whole to a frenzied climax. Rozhdestvensky is a little more subtle in his performance of the *Gayne* suite, finding elements of light and shading in such sections as the *Lullaby* and *Gayne's Adagio*.

From the standpoint of recorded sound, Columbia's engineers have gone all out to support Bernstein's vivid dynamism: the reproduction is brilliant, close-to, and it has fine stereo separation. Rozhdestvensky receives more distant, less clear reproduction, but here, too, the stereo separation is good. *M. B.*

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Rococo Variations* (see SCHUMANN).

⑤ TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4, in F Minor, Op. 36*. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138657 \$6.98, LPM 18657 \$5.98.

⑤ TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5, in E Minor, Op. 64*. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138658 \$6.98, LPM 18658 \$5.98.

⑤ TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6, in B Minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique")*. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138659 \$6.98, LPM 18659 \$5.98.

Interest: Tchaikovsky's "Big Three"

Performances: Routine, except for the "Pathétique"

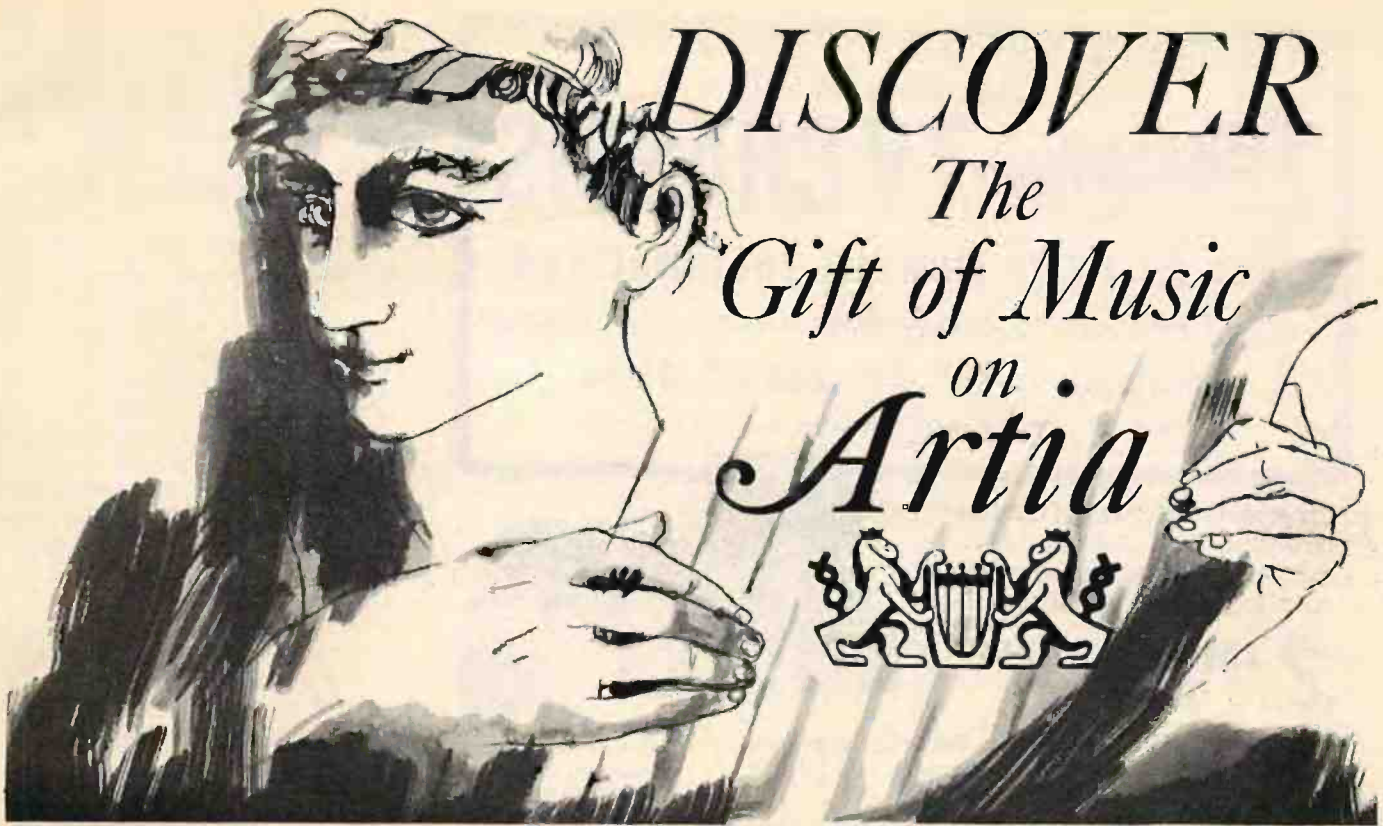
Recordings: Monos are superior

Stereo Quality: Something gone haywire

The outstanding items of the pre-stereo Decca catalog have been the three last Tchaikovsky symphonies, recorded in Germany by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra about a half-dozen years ago. The Mravinsky-conducted performances of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, especially, in the earlier series (Decca DL 9884 and 9885 respectively), have been landmarks of the disc literature. Hence, expectations were high when Deutsche Grammophon announced last year that it planned to rerecord the last three Tchaikovsky symphonies with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, this time in stereo, immediately after the orchestra's engagement at the 1960 Edinburgh Festival. The results are now at hand, and, except for the recording of the "Pathétique," they are a sad disappointment.

Mravinsky's Fourth Symphony (Sanderling, the orchestra's second conductor, had been in charge of the original Decca recording) is on a much more subdued emotional level than we are accustomed to hearing in the West. He is primarily concerned with textural colors, balances, and sharp dynamic contrasts. The net result is a performance of unusual restraint—a quality that is not exactly suited to the flamboyance and emotionalism of the music.

Mravinsky's earlier recording of the Fifth Symphony had a marvelous spring and bounce to it, and the conductor suc-



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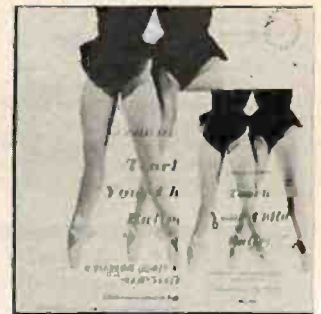
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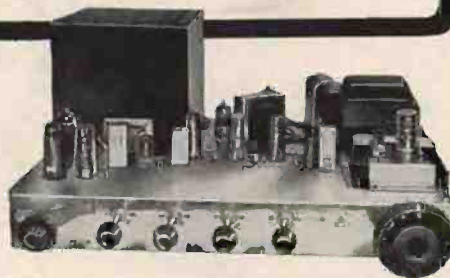
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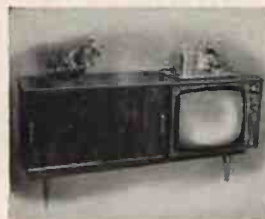
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cessfully related the score to the great *Sleeping Beauty* ballet, with which it is almost exactly contemporary. In this new performance, Mravinsky adopts a heavier style, with little of the enlivening imagination that was so stimulating a half-dozen years ago.

The "Pathétique" is quite another story. Here is a performance of devotion that bespeaks passion, heartbreak, and resignation. The brooding quality of the music is captured marvelously, but with sublime understatement.

The orchestral performance throughout the three symphonies reveals a most expert and disciplined ensemble. The orchestra's solo horn and oboe players have a more nasal sound than is common in American orchestras, but the solidity of the aggregate sound is impressive.

There are serious shortcomings in the matter of the stereo reproduction—especially in the Fifth Symphony. In general, the stereo versions suffer from restricted, blurred reproduction, with the finale of the Fifth a real disaster in this respect. The mono editions have superior clarity.

M. B.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© WALTON: *Belshazzar's Feast*. ROUSSEL: *Bacchus et Ariane, Suite No. 2*. Walter Cassel (baritone); Rutgers University Choir; The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. COLUMBIA MS 6267 \$5.98.

Interest: Rip-roaring modern oratorio
 Performance: Fabulous
 Recording: Superb
 Stereo Quality: Just right

William Walton's massive oratorio *Belshazzar's Feast*, which was first performed at Britain's Leeds Festival in 1931, is here given a stunning representation by Columbia, Mr. Ormandy's Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Rutgers University Choir. It is difficult to imagine any other musical conception so well suited to these particular instrumental and vocal forces. In consequence, it is hard to imagine a significantly better performance of the work.

The music is a rather special dish of tea—not one likely to appeal to musical traditionalists nor to those who "tun off" after Wagner. But as an example of skillful solo vocal and massed choral writing, orchestrational know-how, concerted theatricality, and general splash, the piece has few contemporary rivals of similar quality.

The Roussel *Bacchus and Ariane*, Suite No. 2, is one of the stronger works by a composer whose work has always seemed to me far more interesting than his popularity would suggest. Ormandy is very authoritative here.

W. F.

WEINBERG: *Quartet No. 7 in C Major* (see BARBER).

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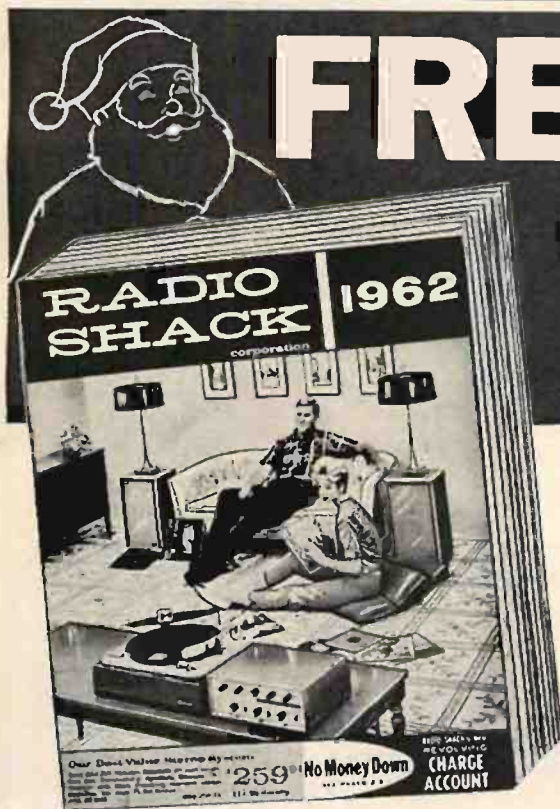
© PRAGUE WATER MUSIC FOR ST. NEPOMUK'S EVE (*Musica Navalis in honorem Sancti Joannis Nepomuceni*). Linek: *Fanfare Music I, II, III, V, VI, VIII, XIII, XIV*; *Concerto for Organ, Oboe, and Strings, in D Major*. Cernohorsky: *Fugue*. Tuma: *Partita in D Minor*. Zach: *Sonata for Three Instruments, in D Major*. Wojta: *Introduction and Aria for Viola d'amore, Descant Viol, and Viola da gamba*. Myslivecek: *Suite for Strings and Basso continuo, in A Major*. Prague Pro Musica Antiqua Ensemble with Brass and Timpani, Ladislav Vachulka (organ, harpsichord). HARMONIA MUNDI HM 30601 \$5.95. (Available from Discophile, Inc., 26 W. 8th St., New York 11, N.Y.).

Interest: Eighteenth-century festival fare
Performance: Spirited

Recording: First-rate
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Connoisseurs of Hugo Wolf songs may recall *St. Nepomuk's Vorabend*, a charming setting of the Goethe poem evocative of the festival of lights and music with which the Catholic population of Prague, on the eve of May 15th, commemorates the martyrdom of Bohemia's national saint, John of Nepomuk, at the hands of Wenceslas IV in 1383. The Catholic Habsburg rulers of Bohemia were particularly interested in fostering the St. Nepomuk celebrations during the eighteenth century as part of their program to discourage the nationalism and protestantism associated with Jan Hus. Accordingly, the water-music festivities that centered around the Charles Bridge over the Moldau reached a peak of splendor in the 1720's. The present recording on the imported Harmonia Mundi label rep-

resents a delightful attempt to recreate the atmosphere of these Prague water-music events, with a fine body of French brass players doing brilliant justice to a series of fanfares by Jiri Ignac Linek (1725-1791) and the Prague Pro Musica Antiqua Ensemble playing concertos and chamber works by five other Bohemian composers of the period. The whole was recorded in Paris during June of 1957, and the results as heard in stereo are of amazingly fine quality, especially in the brass and timpani fanfares that introduce each of the instrumental chamber works. There are no world-shaking masterpieces here, but one can take much pleasure in the lyricism of the Myslivecek suite, as well as amusement at the close resemblance of the Cernohorsky fugue subject to that used by Javonir Weinberger nearly two centuries later in *Schwanda the Bagpiper*. As eighteenth-century entertainment fare, the disc is tops. D.H.



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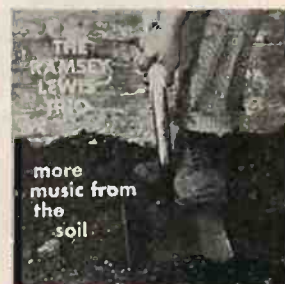
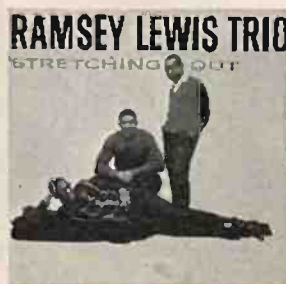


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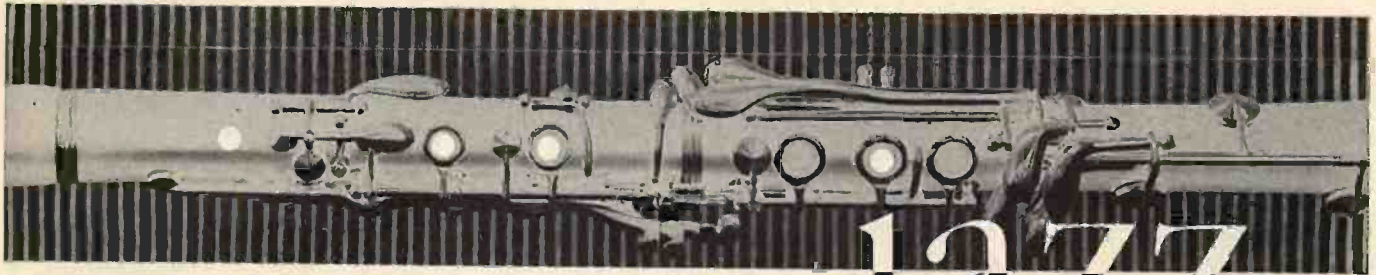
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JAZZ

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- Ⓢ = monophonic recording
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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **ART BLAKEY:** *Meet You at the Jazz Corner of the World*. Art Blakey (drums), Lee Morgan (trumpet), Wayne Shorter (tenor saxophone), Bobby Timmons (piano), Jymie Merritt (bass). *What Know; 'Round About Midnight; The Breeze and I*; and two others. BLUE NOTE 4054 \$4.98.

Interest: Hot, driving, modern jazz
 Performance: Blakey and Morgan lead
 Recording: Admirable presence

This is the first of two albums recorded at Birdland by a recent line-up of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. As in all of Blakey's steaming combos, the emphasis is on long, fiery improvisations, with Blakey's fierce drumming providing the molten center of gravity. In the front line, the most arresting soloist is Lee Morgan, who plays with wit and crackling intensity. Wayne Shorter continues to grow impressively, although he is not yet as consistent as Morgan. Although fleet, the one weak soloist is pianist Timmons, who does not have the vigor and resourcefulness to keep up with his restless colleagues. *N. H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **DONALD BYRD:** *Donald Byrd At The Half Note Cafe, Vol. 1*. Donald Byrd (trumpet), Pepper Adams (baritone saxophone), Duke Pearson (piano), Laymon Jackson (bass), Lex Humphries (drums). *My Girl Shirl; Soulful Kiddy*; and three others. BLUE NOTE 4060 \$4.98.

Interest: Superior club work
 Performance: Everyone cooks
 Recording: Sharp and clear

This quintet, which was formed by Donald Byrd and his fellow-Detroiter Pepper Adams, is most effective on the first side of the record, where it roars its way through two up-tempo pieces in the cus-

tomary hard-hop mold. But the five bog down in repetitiousness on the reverse side, which is given over to a pair of lengthy, tedious ballad performances.



BLUE NOTE RECORDS

ART BLAKEY
Fierce drumming, fiery improvisation

Byrd himself plays with limpid grace and biting passion, while Adams' dark-hued and surprisingly airy improvisations on the baritone sax provide a perfect foil. The rhythm support is impeccable.

P. J. W.

Ⓢ **MILES DAVIS:** *Friday and Saturday Nights in Person*. Miles Davis (trumpet), Hank Mobley (tenor saxophone), Wynton Kelly (piano), Paul Chambers (bass), Jimmy Cobb (drums). *Fran-Dance; Walkin'; No Blues; Oleo*; and eight others. COLUMBIA C2L 20 two 12-inch discs (also available separately) \$8.96.

Interest: Miles' natural state
 Performance: Miles is brilliant
 Recording: Very good
 Stereo Quality: Convincing

Taped during two evenings of work at the Blackhawk in San Francisco, these are the first on-location recordings by Miles Davis and his regular combo. The leader is in continually provocative form, playing with decisiveness, probing imagination, and a spectrum of colors that recall the ingenuity of Rex Stewart. Although drummer Jimmy Cobb is rather pedestrian, the rhythm section is solid,

and it contains in Wynton Kelly a buoyant soloist who complements his more introspective leader superbly. Were it not for the relatively dull solos by Hank Mobley, this could have been an outstanding addition to the Davis discography. As it is, the performances are worth having because of Davis' own contributions. Among the high points are a remarkable revitalization of *All of You* and several of Davis' sinuous originals that show his brilliance at weaving surprising but logical melodic variations over a spare harmonic base. *N. H.*

Ⓢ **DUKE ELLINGTON:** *The Best of Duke Ellington*. Duke Ellington Orchestra. *Warm Valley; Rockin' in Rhythm; Prelude To A Kiss*; and seven others. CAPITOL DT 1602 \$4.98.

Interest: Not Ellington's best
 Performance: Dull, uninspired
 Recording: Crisp
 Enhancement: Not very effective

This is surely the most expendable of Ellington collections. The tastelessness and lack of imagination that mar this disc are doubly disappointing in view of the artistic excellence the Ellington band has so often attained. The arrangements are mostly pale, contrived rehashings of some of the Duke's more exotic war-horses. The only bright spots are improvised segments in which alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges and violinist Ray Nance are particularly impressive. Equally outstanding is the Duke in his three solo numbers, especially his glowing, dulcet *Prelude To A Kiss*. The stereo effect is not very pronounced. *P. J. W.*

Ⓢ **DOC EVANS:** *Doc Evans And His Dixieland Band*. Doc Evans (cornet), Loren Helberg (clarinet), John "Knocky" Parker (piano), Bill Peer (banjo), George Tupper (uba). *Black Snake Blues; Fidgety Feet; Mr. Jelly Lord; Georgia Swing*; and four others. CONCERT-DISC CS 48 \$4.98.

Interest: Often earthbound Dixie
 Performance: Doc's great
 Recording: Excellent
 Stereo Quality: Superior



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Although Doc Evans is himself a resilient and deft player, unaccountably he too often prefers to record with his musical inferiors. In this set, recorded originally for the Audiophile label in 1958, the rhythm section is stiff and the other hornmen are routine. Even so, Doc manages to lift them into several powerful climaxes, and his cornet remains one of the nonpareil pleasures of traditional jazz. A more substantial program of Doc's playing is offered on Concert-Disc's newly released "Doc Evans + 4 = Dixie."
N. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **DOC EVANS:** *Doc Evans + 4 = Dixie*. Doc Evans (cornet), Knocky Parker (piano), Don Anderson (guitar), Biddy Bastian (bass), Red Maddock (drums). *After You've Gone; Tea for Two; Summertime*; and seven others. CONCERT-DISC CS 47 \$4.98.

Interest: Vital traditionalism
Performance: Mature
Recording: Crisp
Stereo Quality: Good

Many of the white jazz traditionalists who concentrate on what is loosely termed Dixieland have settled into a safe and often repetitive routine. A determined exception is cornetist Doc Evans, who is consistently inventive. As pianist Art Hodes observes in the notes, Evans is "a mixture of Bix, Nichols, Armstrong (just a touch), plus a generous quantity of Evans." His style is especially reminiscent of Bix's economy and silvery clarity of tone. Evans' choruses flow into each other with unhurried logic and with wholly unpretentious lyricism.

What makes this Concert-Disc re-issue from 1958 Audiophile masters superior to most of Evans' more recent albums is that he is freed from his usually wheezing colleagues in the front line who lack his resilient beat and crisp taste. Here Evans is supported only by a rhythm section, and although it could be more buoyant, it at least doesn't smother him. A particular asset is the unamplified guitar of Don Anderson. The repertoire consists of comfortable standards that Evans revitalizes through his skill at creating fresh melodic variations. Evans is neither a self-conscious revivalist nor a jaded veteran of too many requests for *When The Saints Go Marching In*. His music reveals him to be one of the very best traditionalists in jazz.
N. H.

© **FIREHOUSE FIVE PLUS TWO:** *Around The World*. Ward Kimball (trombone), Danny Alguire (trumpet), George Probert (soprano saxophone, clarinet), Frank Thomas (piano), Dick Roberts (banjo), Don Kinch or George Bruns (tube), Eddie Forrest (drums). *Isle of Capri; Japanese Sandman; Hindustan;*

Panama; and eight others. GOOD TIME JAZZ M12044 \$4.98.

Interest: Dixieland fun-fest
Performance: Minor league
Recording: Very good

The Firehouse Five have roistering fun here, but musically the disc is of limited interest. There's not a breath of freshness or original thinking to any of the tracks, all twelve of which might stand as a sort of compendium of the more obvious Dixieland clichés.
P. J. W.

© **DON GOLDIE:** *Brilliant!* Don Goldie (trumpet), Eddie Higgins (piano), Richard Evans (bass), Freddie Rundquist (guitar), Jimmy Cobb (drums). *Soon; 'Tis Autumn; They Didn't Believe Me*; and seven others. ARGO 4010 \$3.98.

Interest: Mellow, melodic horn
Performance: Relaxed
Recording: Good

A featured sideman with Jack Teagarden, Don Goldie makes his debut as a leader in this album. His style is essentially of the swing era, and his virtues are a big, bold tone and a fertile melodic imagination. Unlike many modern trumpeters, he doesn't indulge in technical exhibi-



DENTER GORDON
Makes a strong comeback.

tions or in the displays of harmonic ingenuity that often result in melodic barrenness. However, Goldie lacks some of the bitingly individual thrust that characterizes Ruby Braff, for example, who is the only other young hornman of merit in Goldie's updated mainstream category. His support is tactful and tasteful, although I expect the album would have been more stimulating if Goldie hadn't had to carry all the horn work alone.
N. H.

© **BENNY GOLSON:** *Gettin' With It*. Benny Golson (tenor saxophone), Curtis Fuller (trombone), Tommy Flanagan (piano), Doug Watkins (bass), Art Taylor (drums). *Blue Streak; Baubles, Ban-*

HiFi/STEREO

gles and Beads; April in Paris; and two others. PRESTIGE 8248 \$4.98.

Interest: Tepid modern jazz
Performance: Uninspired, sluggish
Recording: Excellent

His provocative scoring for Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davis several years ago earned tenor saxophonist Benny Golson a reputation for being one of the freshest, most inventive, and promising young composer-arrangers in modern jazz. In the past few years, however (during which he served as musical director of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers and led, jointly with trumpeter Art Farmer, the six-piece Jazztet), his music has become progressively more cautious and cliché-ridden. His work on this studio session, for example, is polished, urbane, and sleek to the point of vacuity. The arrangements are carefully contrived in his prettiest, most unexceptionable manner, but are utterly devoid of any originality or ability to stimulate the soloists (including himself) into meaningful creation. The whole date bogs down in chary glucose.

P.J.W.

Ⓜ **DEXTER GORDON:** *Doin' All-right*. Dexter Gordon (tenor saxophone), Freddie Hubbard (trumpet), Horace Parlan (piano), George Tucker (bass), Al Harewood (drums). *I Was Doing All Right; You've Changed; For Regulars Only*; and two others. BLUE NOTE 4077 \$4.98.

Interest: Thoughtful blowing date
Performance: Top-drawer
Recording: Clean and live

Tenor saxophonist Dexter Gordon, one of the brightest and most influential young soloists of the late bop years, had been relegated to the limbo of the forgotten since the early 1950's. In recent months, he has been making a strong comeback bid, and this new LP collection should do much to re-establish him. This disc is markedly superior to a previous one on the Jazzland label, the reasons being more careful preparation and the presence of a number of musicians more in harmony with Gordon's own musical thinking. Especially notable is trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, who steals the show with his flashing, vibrant, and well-constructed improvisations. Gordon, at root a blowing musician, possesses a broad, virile tone and a charging, sinewy attack. He does have a pronounced tendency to wander in his improvising, which might be because his solos are overly long. Hubbard, who gets only half the solo time allotted Gordon and must therefore be concise, fares much better.

P. J. W.

Ⓢ **THE SLIDE HAMPTON OCTET:** *Somethin' Sanctified*. Slide Hampton,



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Charlie Greenlee (trombone, baritone horn), Richard Williams, Hobart Dotson (trumpets), George Coleman (tenor saxophone), Jay Cameron (baritone saxophone, bass clarinet), Laurence Ridley (bass), Peter Sims (drums). *On the Street Where You Live; The Thrill Is Gone; Ow; and three others.* ATLANTIC SD 1362 \$5.98.

Interest: Not Hampton's best
Performance: Accomplished
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Very well balanced

If the work of the Hampton Octet here

seems disappointing, it is because its initial LP effort (on Atlantic 1339) was so stimulating. There the group achieved a remarkably big sound and telling usage of tonal coloration. But, with the exception of the exciting *Milestones*, this collection is tame, if not outright dull. Meatier arrangements might have stimulated the basically very capable players. P.J.W.

Ⓢ **AL HIRT: *Al (He's The King) Hirt and His Band.*** Al Hirt (trumpet) and sextet with ten-piece orchestra and vocal chorus on two tracks. *I Love Paris; The Old Folks at Home; Laura;* and nine others. RCA VICTOR LSO 2354 \$4.98.

Interest: Tasteless quasi-jazz
Performance: Stunt flying
Recording: Vivid
Stereo Quality: Very good

Al Hirt has perfected a prodigious technique, but he uses it as an end in itself. The solos here are consistently distorted by Hirt's penchant for bravura displays that may intrigue trumpet teachers but vulgarize the music. Mr. Hirt's regular sextet is undistinguished except for the fluency of Pee Wee Spitelara's clarinet. So far, Hirt's work on records indicates that his true *metier* is as featured performer with a circus band. N.H.

THE JAZZTET AND JOHN LEWIS
(see p. 92).

Ⓢ **THE MASTERSOUNDS: *A Date With The Mastersounds.*** Buddy Montgomery (vibraharp), Richie Crabtree (piano), Monk Montgomery (bass), Benny Barth (drums). *Whisper Not; Fink-Fank-Funk; It Could Happen to You;* and five others. FANTASY 3316 \$3.98.

Interest: Polite chamber jazz
Performance: Glib, but superficial
Recording: A bit fuzzy

A group that exists solely in the recording studio, The Mastersounds are closely patterned after the Modern Jazz Quartet. They are a light-weight version of the MJQ, however, for what they purvey so pleasantly here has nothing of the depth, solidity, passion, and rhythmic assurance of the mentor group. There is a difference between capturing surface shimmer and in penetrating to the interpretative essence of the MJQ's formidable approach. What we have here is, for the most part, merely shimmer. Although the execution is smooth and faultless, craftsmanship is no substitute for art. P. J. W.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **BILLY MAY: *The Great Jimmie Lunceford.*** Billy May with orchestra, including Willie Smith (alto saxophone), Trummie Young (trombone and vocals), Joe Thomas (tenor saxophone). *Ain't She Sweet; Blues in the Night; My Blue Heaven;* and eight others. CAPRON ST 1581 \$4.98.

Interest: Welcome reissue
Performance: Remarkably authentic
Recording: Vivid
Stereo Quality: Good

Originally issued in 1958, this uniquely successful recreation of the Jimmie Lunceford band is now packaged at a dollar less in Capitol's Star Line. The economy brings with it a complete lack of liner notes and the omission of four tracks. Nonetheless, the set is very much

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worth having. Billy May devotedly wrote out the scores from old Lunceford records and assembled a number of the key Lunceford sidemen. It is almost eerie how closely the band recaptures the Lunceford style—the 2/4 rhythmic feeling, the band's bumptious humor, and its crisp section work. Especially delightful is the revival of the Lunceford vocal trio and the impish vocals of Trummie Young, who reminds us here that Louis Armstrong doesn't take nearly enough advantage of his trombonist's eupeptic singing style. Because jazz at its best is spontaneous and personal, jazz revivals almost never succeed. This one does.

N. H.

HOWARD MCGHEE AND TEDDY EDWARDS: *Together Again* (see p. 66).

© **DUKE PEARSON:** *Tender Feelin's*. Duke Pearson (piano), Gene Taylor (bass), Lex Humphries (drums). *Bluebird of Happiness; I'm a Fool to Want You; I Love You;* and four others. **BLUE NOTE 4035 \$4.98.**

Interest: Languid trio jazz
Performance: Pretty, but cloying
Recording: Very good

Pearson is one of a group of younger pianists who have turned to graceful romanticism in reaction against the steamy, hard-driving piano approach that has been fashionable in jazz circles for the past four or five years. The owner of an extraordinarily delicate touch, Pearson is an engagingly warm pianist, and he fashions his solos with a sure sense of melodic flow and lyric charm. *P.J.W.*

© **CHARLIE SHAVERS:** *Like Charlie*. Charlie Shavers (trumpet) and unidentified rhythm section. *The Best Things in Life Are Free; Taking a Chance on Love; In A Little Spanish Town;* and nine others. **EVEREST SDBR 1127 \$3.98.**

Interest: Vapid jazz-tinged trumpet
Performance: Enervated and boring
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Sharp separation

The liner notes quite accurately describe this music as "polite jazz." Polished and urbane it surely is: but it is little else. Trumpeter Charlie Shavers, who for years was the only bright element in the orchestra of the late Tommy Dorsey, here sounds as though he has jettisoned all individuality in an attempt to emulate Capitol's highly successful Jonah Jones. Shavers' muted horn work, however, rarely possesses the warmth, witty pungency, and effortless swing of Jones' at its best. The "orchestra" backing his pleasant, though spiritless, noodling consists solely of an unidentified rhythm section. *P.J.W.*

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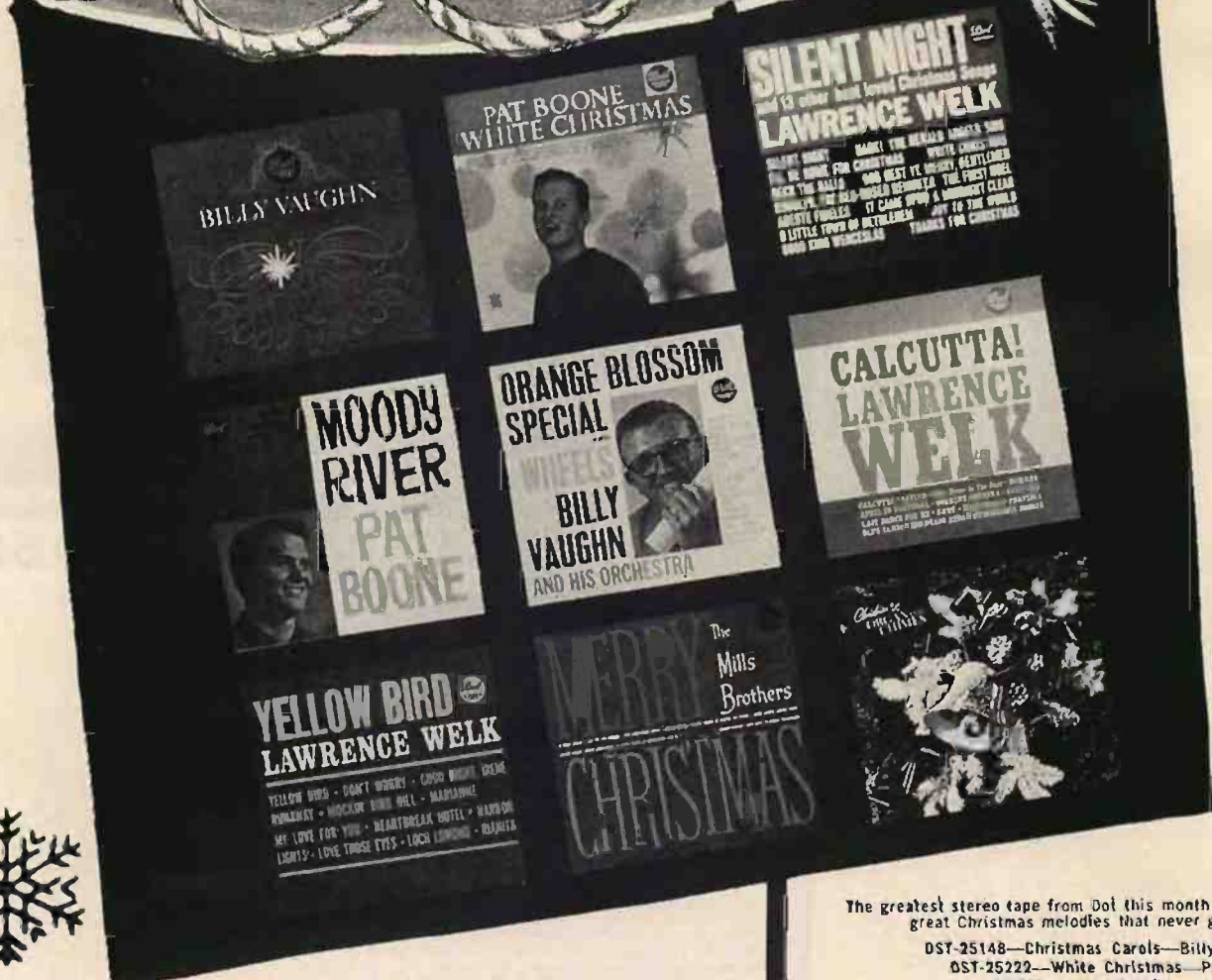
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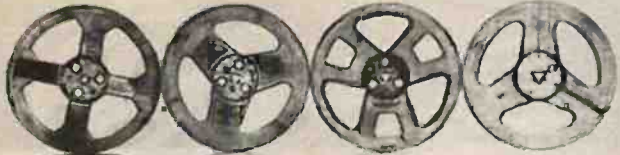
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4-TRACK CLASSICS

Ⓢ BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat Major, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*. Van Cliburn (piano); Chicago Symphony. Fritz Reiner cond. RCA Victor FTC 2081 \$8.95.

Interest: Beethoven at his best
Performance: Virile
Recording: OK
Stereo Quality: Unbalanced

A good recording and a persuasive performance are hampered here by imperfect channel balance. Everything happens left of center, where the soloist seems crowded in with most of the orchestra. During the quieter moments of the second movement the right channel adds little more than hiss. This is a pity because Cliburn's "Emperor" is a strong one, and Reiner provides him with taut orchestral backing. The technical failings of the tape are absent from the disc.

C. B.

Ⓢ SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 5 in B-flat, Symphony No. 8 in B Minor, ("Unfinished")*. Columbia Symphony and New York Philharmonic, Bruno Walter cond. COLUMBIA MQ 391 \$7.95.

Interest: Popular Schubert
Performance: Gemütlich
Recording: Bright
Stereo Quality: Suitable

Walter's way with these Schubert works is warm and relaxed, though his leisurely reading of the Fifth may seem slack to some tastes. Except for a slightly lower volume level on the side devoted to the "Unfinished" and some hiss on the right channel, the four-track edition compares favorably to the disc version but offers no substantial improvement. A Bruno Walter recording of the Fifth, with the New York Philharmonic, issued on Columbia discs some years ago, is richer in sound, than this one, done in the American Legion auditorium in Los Angeles.

C. B.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ WAGNER: *The Flying Dutchman*. George London (baritone), The Dutchman; Leonie Rysanek (soprano), Senta; Giorgio Tozzi (bass), Daland; Karl Liebl (tenor), Erik; Richard Lewis (tenor), The Steersman; Rosalind Elias (mezzo-soprano), Mary. Orchestra and Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Antal Dorati cond. RCA Victor FTC 8003 two reels \$21.95.

Interest: Young Wagner masterpiece
Performance: Superb
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very effective

A first-rate casting job and fine conductorial pacing make this recorded performance of Wagner's youthful masterpiece close to definitive. Indeed, the only weak point is the rather characterless



RCA VICTOR

GEORGE LONDON
A Dutchman of moving eloquence

reading of the overture. But from the moment the curtain rises, Antal Dorati's fine theatrical sense and feel for the musical texture as a whole combine to make this presentation a wholly irresistible experience.

George London as the Dutchman is in splendid voice and projects the essence of his tragic role with moving eloquence. Leonie Rysanek has never sounded better on records; her Senta is no mawkish figure, but a legend-obsessed, dream-struck heroine. This is brought home with particular force in the famous second-act ballad, which is sung at first as though in a trance, gradually gaining in intensity until it leaves no doubt that the girl's vision of the Dutchman's plight has become for her a stark reality. Tozzi's han-

dling of the Daland role is interesting; for the girl's father is made to seem more the complacent bourgeois rather than the money-hungry merchant sea-captain.

A particular virtue of this recording is the singing of the so-called minor roles, wherein chief honors go to Richard Lewis for his poignant portrayal of the Steersman. Karl Liebl manages to make Erik less self-pitying than usual, and Rosalind Elias is splendid in the role of Mary, who serves as a foil to Senta in the spinning scene and ballad.

Climaxing the performance, for this listener at least, are the thrilling Act III choruses between the sailors and the girls of the Norwegian town. The interruption by the ghostly crew of the Dutchman's ship in hair-raising, and it will be a mighty cool-blooded listener who doesn't raise a few goose-bumps when this episode ensues. The choral singing throughout is one of the glories of the recording.

Among the more interesting aspects of Antal Dorati's conducting is his consistent avoidance of thickening the musical texture at climactic moments of the score. As a result, one becomes more than usually aware of the debt owed by Wagner to Carl Maria von Weber.

RCA's recording is clean and brilliant, if not quite as massive as some of London's opera albums, and the stereo staging is wonderfully effective in terms of movement, depth illusion, and directionality. Excellent, too, is the use of sonic props, such as the bosun's pipe in Acts I and III and the spinning wheel in Act II.

Hiss is at a reasonable minimum, but there is some overloading in climaxes and considerable print-through.

D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger: Prelude. The Flying Dutchman: Overture. Parsifal: Prelude and Good Friday Spell*. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. COLUMBIA MQ 398 \$7.95.

Interest: Wagner favorites
Performance: To the manner born
Recording: Rich
Stereo Quality: Wide spread

Bruno Walter's readings of these Wagnerian orchestral excerpts are in the ripest Romantic tradition. The *Meistersinger* prelude is broadly lyrical, the *Dutchman* fiercely dramatic, the *Parsifal* music by

turns intense, noble, and tender. Indeed, the Walter recordings performances of the *Flying Dutchman Overture* and of the *Parsifal Good Friday Spell* impress this listener as being the best to be had today. This is due in considerable measure to the exquisite solo wind playing that Walter elicits from his musicians.

The recorded sound beautifully captures the warmth of Walter's performances. The stereo has plenty of spread and sufficient depth to give the impression of a nicely proportioned concert hall.

The tape processing is better than average, though the review copy had what sounded like microphonic tube noises throughout the first sequence. *D. H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **WAGNER: *Tannhäuser: Overture and Venusberg Music. Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries. Tristan und Isolde: Prelude to Act III. Das Rheingold: Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla.*** Martina Arroyo, Carlotta Ordassy, Doris Yarick (sopranos); Betty Allen, Doris Okerson, Regina Sarfaty, Shirley Verrett-Carter (mezzo-sopranos); Louise Parker (contralto); Henry Schuman (English horn); Symphony of the Air and Chorus, Leopold Stokowski cond. RCA Victor FTC 2071 \$8.95.

Interest: Spectacular Wagner

Performance: Effulgent
Recording: Gorgeous
Stereo Quality: Exploited

The orchestral Wagner is now represented by three Stokowski tapes under as many labels (RCA Victor, Everest, Columbia). The present collection, besides exploring new ground, differs significantly from the others in that most (but not all) of the vocal music originally scored for the *Entrance of the Gods* and the *Ride of the Valkyries* is included. So, too, is the Venusberg chorus, whose direction is credited to Margaret Hillis. Stokowski's massing of sounds, the sobbing strings and the tingling of the *Tannhäuser* overture, the roaring brasses of the *Ride*, and the weight of the basses in the *Tristan* Prelude, are glorious indeed. If overstated at times, the drama of Stokowski's readings is altogether compelling, and the recording sets it on a vast stage. *C. B.*

4-TR ENTERTAINMENT

© **CAN-CAN (Cole Porter).** Sound-track recording. Frank Sinatra, Shirley MacLaine, Maurice Chevalier, Louis Jourdan (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Nelson Riddle cond. Capitol ZW 1301 \$7.98.

Interest: Passing
Performance: Slick
Recording: OK
Stereo Quality: Unexceptional

Film musicals derived from Broadway rarely sound much like the stage versions, but this one, with Frank Sinatra and Shirley MacLaine in two of its leading roles, even manages to make turn-of-the-century Montmartre sound like a suburb of Las Vegas. *It's All Right With Me* fits easily into the Sinatra canon, but something like *C'est Magnifique* plainly causes him stylistic (not to mention linguistic) pain. Miss MacLaine seems pretty much at home, but Louis Jourdan and the durable Maurice Chevalier understandably sound like a pair of displaced Frenchmen cheerfully making the best of inscrutable surroundings. The Nelson Riddle arrangements are attractive, and the sound is good. *C. B.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **DONNYBROOK! (Johnny Burke).** Original-cast recording. Joan Fagan, Susan Johnson, Art Lund, Eddie Foy (vocals); chorus and orchestra, Clay Warnick cond. Kapp KTL 41033 \$7.95.

Interest: Erin gone B'way
Performance: Lively
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Pronounced

This show did not enjoy a long run on Broadway last season, largely for lack of

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a viable book, but the music has spirit and even some fine tunes. Art Lund's *I Have My Own Way* and Joan Fagan's fetching *He Makes Me Feel I'm Lonely* are cases in point. Susan Johnson's whiskey contralto glows dark with melancholy in the ironic lament *Sad Was the Day* and subsequently brightens in *I Wouldn't Bet One Penny*, which she sings with veteran leprechaun Eddie Foy. Considering Kapp's limited experience with original-casters (*Once Upon a Mattress* is the only other show album the company has to its credit), the engineers have worked marvels with this paddywhack musical. The editing is tasteful. C. B.

© CARMEN DRAGON: *Americana*. Capitol Symphony, Carmen Dragon cond. *Dixie; Stars and Stripes Forever; Home on the Range; Battle Hymn of the Republic*; and five others. CAPITOL ZP 8523 \$7.98.

Interest: Heritage concert
Performance: Extravagant
Recording: Almost super
Stereo Quality: Effective

This collection represents a kind of All-American Hit Parade compiled for the arm-chair patriot. The arrangements are flashy but never exceed the bounds of

good Hollywood taste. The recording is exceptionally brilliant and rich. C. B.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© ELLA FITZGERALD: *Get Happy!* Ella Fitzgerald (vocals). *Somebody Loves Me; Cheerful Little Earful; You Make Me Feel So Young; Moonlight Becomes You*; and eight others. VERVE VSTC 256 \$7.95.

Interest: Well-picked evergreens
Performance: A constant delight
Recording: Stunning
Stereo Quality: Very good

Ella Fitzgerald's uncontested mastery of the popular song is once again celebrated in this generally well-programmed collection. Perhaps Miss Fitzgerald's greatest gift resides in her ability to penetrate to the very essence of her material, to sing the song from *inside*. This enables her to point up strengths and minimize weaknesses without at any time distorting the original substance. Apropos of this, Benny Green remarks in his liner notes that "She honors the original texts on every occasion when the merits of those texts demand the honoring. When she does amend, she usually improves." This might equally apply to her handling of the melodic materials, for these she reshapes with sensitivity, taste, and musicianship. She even manages, for example, to infuse Andre Previn's treacly *Like Young* with a semblance of life—no mean feat, to be sure. The orchestral settings are adequate. P. J. W.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© LENA HORNE: *Lena at the Sands*. Lena Horne (vocals); Sands Hotel Orchestra, Lennie Hayton cond. *Maybe; The Man I Love; Jule Styne Medley; You Don't Have To Know the Language; Out of My Continental Mind*; and three others. RCA VICTOR FTP 1081 \$7.95.

Interest: Lena de luxe
Performance: Suave
Recording: Well-defined
Stereo Quality: One-sided

When Miss Horne curls her lips around a lyric, she can almost melt a microphone. The mikes at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas must have been fairly heat-resistant, for they have captured on this reel a recital that combines visceral excitement with high vocal style. Along the way, Miss Horne honors a few of the country's leading songwriters—Jule Styne, E. Y. Harburg, and Richard Rodgers—each with a medley of three or four songs. In these she displays a talent for musical characterization that few of her peers can equal. *Get Rid of Monday* and *Out of My Continental Mind* are by themselves rare examples of her art, as



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"fast" as it is fastidious. Stereo balance favors the right channel, creating a strange effect in some numbers wherein Miss Home is accompanied solely by a piano away out left, but this matters little in a recording that is so completely dominated by inexhaustible charm. C. B.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: *European Concert*. Milt Jackson (vibraharp), John Lewis (piano), Percy Heath (bass), Connie Kay (drums). *Django; Bluesology; I Should Care; La Ronde; The Cylinder*; and ten others. ATLANTIC ALP 1915 \$11.95.

Interest: Brilliant small-group jazz
Performance: Superior throughout
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: First-rate

This exhilarating concert recording stands as a sort of summing up of the considerable achievements of the Modern Jazz Quartet. They are the first pure concert ensemble in jazz and perhaps the one group to achieve a successful fusion of the discipline and formal organization derived from classical music with the improvisational freedom and rhythmic buoyancy of jazz. The formal improvisation they have brought to such perfection over the past eight years is evident throughout their glowing, limpid work on each of the fifteen selections, mostly original compositions by pianist Lewis and vibraharpist Jackson. The group's earlier performances of its standard repertoire (which is pretty much what we have here) are generally more cohesive, definitive versions. Consequently, the new numbers here—*Round Midnight* and *I Remember Clifford*, especially—are the primary interest here. P. J. W.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© FRANK SINATRA: *Come Dance With Me!* Frank Sinatra (vocals); Billy May Orchestra. *Come Dance With Me; Something's Gotta Give; Just in Time; Check to Check*; and eight others. CAPITOL ZW 1069 \$7.98.

Interest: Swinging dance fare
Performance: Sinatra in top form
Recording: Live and clean
Stereo Quality: Capitol's best

Sinatra swaggers his way with effortless verve through an appealing collection of bouncy standards, aptly described in the notes as "vocals that dance." The emphasis—in both his propulsive singing and in Billy May's buoyant orchestrations—is on the danceability of the dozen selections, all of which are taken at the same medium up-tempo clip. As usual, Sinatra's vocal wizardry is the whole show; he is apparently capable of transmuting the basest metal. P. J. W.

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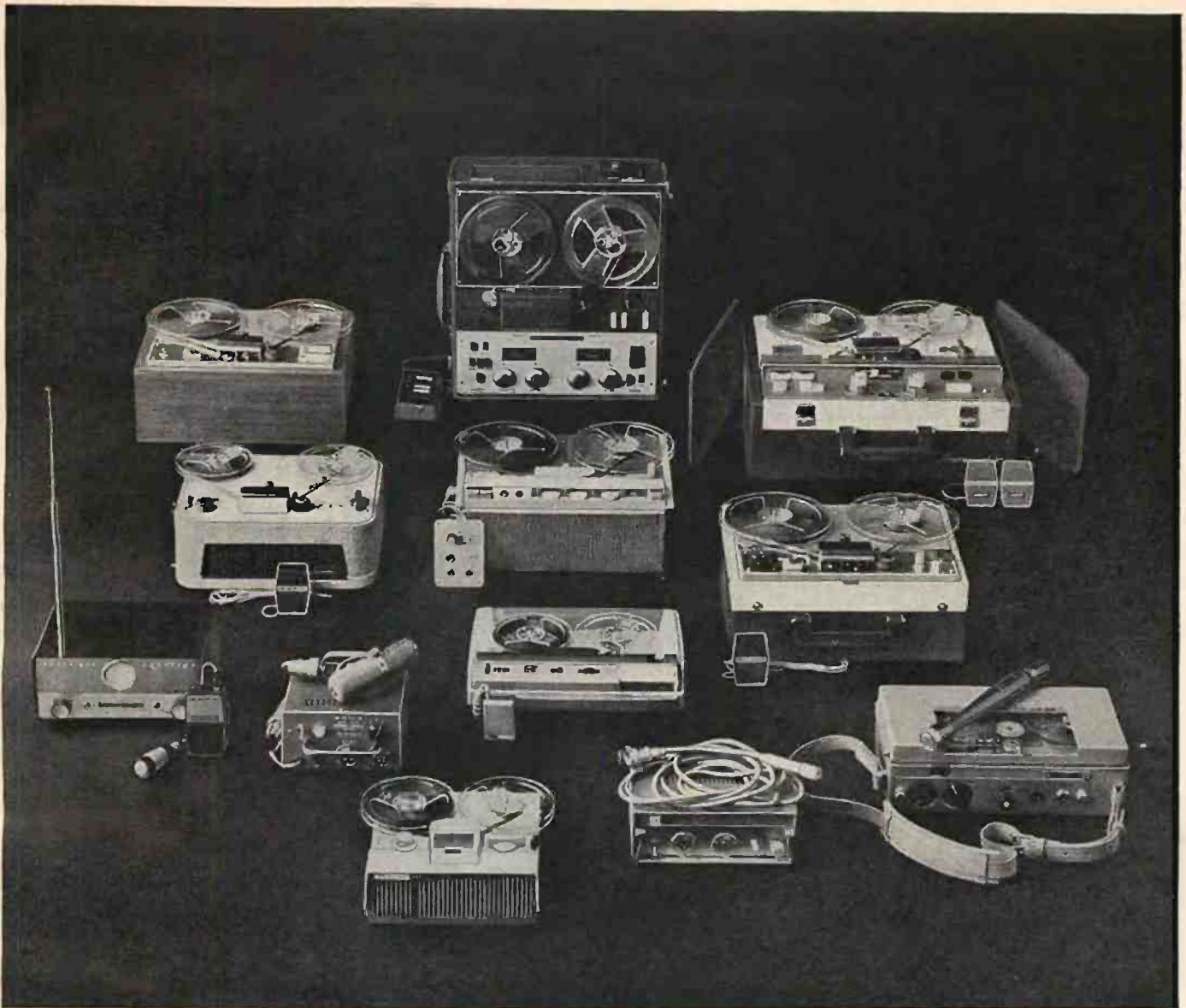
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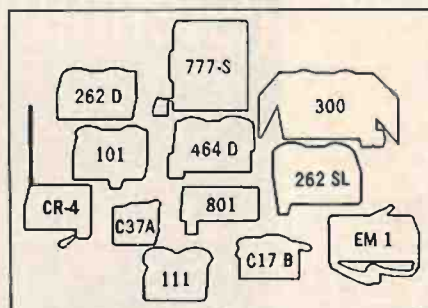
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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **TONY BENNETT:** *My Heart Sings*. Tony Bennett (vocals) with orchestra conducted by Ralph Burns. *Dancing in the Dark; It Never Was You; My Ship;* and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 8458 \$4.98.

Interest: Tony's best album yet
Performance: A marked improvement
Recording: Clear and very live
Stereo Quality: First-rate

Tony Bennett, who has long been an effective performer in night clubs, has finally learned how to temper his fervent style for recordings. Although he still projects spiraling dramatic intensity, he now seldom overemotes. His beat is more relaxed, his phrasing is more intelligent and musically coherent, and the brimming emotion seems much more genuine. Ralph Burns's arrangements are inventive while remaining tailored to Bennett's style. The sidemen have been carefully selected, and there are bonus solos by such jazzmen as Zoot Sims and Eddie Costa. Bennett, moreover, has chosen his repertoire well, basing it on standards that he reshapes to his own expansive style. With this album, Mr. Bennett can be considered more than just another of the interchangeable pop singers who rise and fall according to the vagaries of the pop sales charts. *N. H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **DORIS DAY:** *I Have Dreamed*. Doris Day (vocals) with orchestra conducted by Jim Harbert. *I'll Buy That Dream; We'll Love Again; Time to Say Goodnight; Someday I'll Find You;* and eight others. COLUMBIA CS 8460 \$4.98.

Interest: Not a nightmare in the lot
Performance: Glowing
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Quality: Tasteful

All the songs in this serenade for adults are dream-like in title or intent. For most vocalists, the temptation to drown them in sentimentality would be irresistible. Miss Day can be intimate without being coy, however, and she can convince you that she means every word. She has superb taste along with flexible musicianship and a voice that is clear, unstrained, and never lachrymose. Her rhythmic sense is relaxed and accurate, and she can make an old song sound much more meaningful than one had remembered. *N. H.*

Ⓢ **EILEEN FARRELL:** *Here I Go Again*. Eileen Farrell (vocals); Luther Henderson and his Orchestra. *Somebody Loves Me; Dreamy; The Second Time Around;* and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 8453 \$4.98.

Interest: Most of the time
Performance: Yes and no
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Quality: High

As a result of the generally warm reception given to her first LP of popular songs ("I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues" on Columbia CS 8256/CL 1465), Eileen Farrell has embarked on a second similar



TONY BENNETT
Well-tempered emotion

compilation. Again, I fear, my reaction is mixed. There is no faulting the voice, of course; its richness and power can convey almost any emotion. But this can be a drawback as well as a blessing; for there is about this recital—as there was about the first—something of an air of "I'll show 'em I can belt with the best

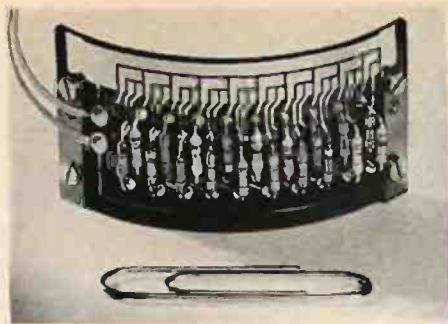
of 'em." Too much of the time I am more conscious of the singer than I am of the songs; it is as if Miss Farrell had an uncontrollable urge to pull out every vocal stop to get a simple thirty-two bar message across.

Still, some of the lesser-known pieces receive interpretations of great warmth and genuine feeling, and I hasten to commend you to Miss Farrell's versions of *In Other Words* and *To Be in Love* (both by Bart Howard), Luther Henderson's and Charles Burr's imaginative *Solitaire*, and the richly melodic *Dreamy*, by Erroll Garner and Sid Shaw. But when Miss Farrell goes after an old standard, both she and conductor-arranger Henderson seem to feel that a new interpretation demands a new distortion. What interpretive ends are served by treating *A Foggy Day* as if the sun were shining throughout? Or by providing a frenetic bongo-beat backing for the wistful *Man I Love*? Or by deliberately slowing the tempo at the beginning of *My Funny Valentine* just to emphasize the contrast when she tears through the chorus the second time around? Tempos or interpretations need not be rigid (as a Carmen McRae or an Ella Fitzgerald can so beautifully demonstrate), but there has to be a basic understanding of a song's point of view before a singer can successfully take off on her own flights of fancy. *S. G.*

Ⓢ **ENOCH LIGHT:** *Stereo 35/MM*. Enoch Light and his Orchestra. *Heat Wave; My Romance; Love for Sale;* and nine others. COMMAND RS 826 SD \$5.98.

Interest: Stereo showcase
Performance: The Light touch
Recording: Impressive
Stereo Quality: High

Disturbed by flutter and other problems of tape, Commander Enoch Light and his men have begun recording on 35-mm magnetic film. While I cannot say that the result is superior to the best tape-derived LP's I have ever heard, there is no question that the sound is excellent. There is a remarkable feeling of presence and depth, and the music that emanates from my speakers is sonically true and clearly defined. The editing, however, is unfortunately sloppy in a few places.



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The stereo-oriented wide-separation approach that has become a Command hallmark is much in evidence in the arrangements, which are generally bright and occasionally playful. S. G.

© **THE LIMELITERS: *The Slightly Fabulous Limelitters***. The Limelitters (vocals). *Western Wind; Hard Travelin'; Mount Zion; Lass from the Low Country*; and nine others. RCA Victor LSP 2393 \$4.98.

Interest: Sophisticated folk-um
Performance: Spirited and entertaining
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Fine presence

With their polished vocal delivery, their rhythmic drive, and their own brand of sophisticated topical humor, The Limelitters occupy a niche somewhere between the Kingston Trio and the Weavers. This San Francisco concert recording presents them in a beguiling program of traditional materials and specially written musical commentaries on the contemporary scene, all delivered with brisk confidence and infectious gusto. There's not a rough edge to any of the thirteen selections here, but for my taste, they're too smooth and glib to be wholly convincing. P. J. W.

© **JULIE LONDON: *Whatever Julie Wants***. Julie London (vocals); uncredited accompaniment. *Do It Again; Love for Sale; Tired*; and nine others. LIBERTY LRP 3192 \$3.98.

Interest: Predatory repertoire
Performance: Julie London
Recording: Satisfactory

The angle here, apparently, is to bring together a group of songs that deal with the fiscal side of romance, as exemplified by such gold-digging anthems as *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend, Daddy, Why Don't You Do Right?, My Heart Belongs to Daddy*, and *Always True to You in My Fashion* (the last two being antithetic variations on the same Cole Porter theme). Miss London is just the right baggage to put them across, though to find any resemblance between her breathing exercises and singing would require a far more liberal attitude on the subject than I have. S. G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR: *Songs of the North and South 1861-1865***. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Richard P. Condie cond. *Aura Lea; He's Gone Away; Sweet Evclina*; and ten others. COLUMBIA MS 6259 \$5.98.

Interest: Stirring recital
Performance: Well-drilled group
Recording: Splendid

Stereo Quality: Women left, men right

By now we are all pretty well surfeited with Civil War songs, but there is always room for a collection that is as well performed as this one. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, which was established in 1847, is able to convey both the military verve and the almost religious fervor of the songs in this splendidly recorded collection representing both the North and the South. Apart from singing the first chorus of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* with an unaccustomed, deliberate cadence, the original melodies and tempos have been preserved.

A special insert in the jacket includes complete lyrics and historical notes on the songs. S. G.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **HACHIDAI NAKAMURA: *Rainy Night in Tokyo***. Orchestra, Hachiadai Nakamura cond. *Echigo Jishi; Chidori; Yosaki Bushi*; and seven others. CAPITOL ST 10287 \$4.98.

Interest: Fascinating stuff
Performance: Highly evocative
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Well spread

This is not, as the jacket cover claims, "The modern pop music of Japan." The songs are mostly folk songs, modernized only to the extent of the inclusion of a string section to make the set more palatable to Western taste. Arranger Nakamura has succeeded well; the program reveals a wealth of rhythmic and melodic ideas that are little short of fascinating. Moreover, the authentic Japanese percussion instruments—the banjo-like *Samisen*, or the *Tsuzumi* (hand drum)—as well as the two types of flutes, the *Fue* and the *Shakuhachi*, benefit greatly from the advantages of stereo, particularly in the *Fue* and *Samisen* duet on *Haru Same*.

If you are at all interested in Japanese music, "Rainy Night in Tokyo" may turn out to be your cup of sake. S. G.

© **DOROTHY PROVINE: *The Vamp of the Roaring 20s***. Dorothy Provine (vocals); Trio; Chorus; Orchestra, Sandy Courage cond. *Baby Face; Freddy the Freshman; Hard-Hearted Hannah; Crazy Rhythm*; and twenty-six others. WARNER BROS. W 1419 \$3.98.

Interest: The cats
Performance: Peachy
Recording: The berries

A successor to "The Roaring 20s" (Warner Bros. W 1394), this album again features Dorothy Provine and chorus in fast run-throughs of some well-remembered and some long-forgotten songs. As a piece of nostalgia it is extremely well done, with the singing and the orchestral

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| ■ TCHAIKOVSKY/CAPRICCIO ITALIEN — Pierre Dervaux . . . L'orchestre des Concerts Colonne | CC 33-11004 (mono) | CC 11004 SD (stereo) | CC 4T 11004 (4-track tape) |
| ■ RAVEL/Daphnis et Chloe, Suite No. 2 — La Valse/Alborada del Gracioso — Pierre Dervaux . . . L'orchestre des Concerts Colonne | CC 33-11005 (mono) | CC 11005 SD (stereo) | CC 4T 11005 (4-track tape) |
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arrangements just about as authentic as anything being offered on vinylite today. Miss Provine continues to be a delightfully versatile performer. Her slightly metallic voice is perfectly suited for anything from a slinky *Hard-Hearted Hannah* to a boop-boop-a-dooped *Looking for a Boy* or a tender *Man I Love*. I'd still like to hear her take off on an album all by herself, but until that happens this will do just fine. S. G.

THEATER—FILMS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Ⓢ **ROCCO AND HIS BROTHERS** (Nino Rota). Sound-track recording. Un-identified orchestra. RCA Victor FSO 2 \$5.98.

Interest: Expert film score
Performance: Admirable
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Quality: High

Nino Rota's score for *Rocco and his Brothers* strikes me as being just about the most worth while sound-track album I have heard all year. The compelling themes—by turns somber, wistful, ominous, romantic, and melodramatic—seem to have a sequential unity of design that, for once, does not give the impression of having been created out of one monotonously repeated idea or of fragments pasted together from the works of others. Too bad, though, that RCA did not provide explanatory notes showing how the music relates to the story. S. G.

Ⓢ **THE VAGABOND KING** (Rudolf Friml, Brian Hooker). Mario Lanza (tenor); Judith Raskin (soprano); chorus and orchestra, Constantine Callinicos cond. RCA Victor LSC 2509 \$5.98.

Interest: Richly melodic score
Performance: Shows strain
Recording: Satisfactory
Stereo Quality: Tasteful

You'd never know it from the deplorably sparse liner notes, but, by adding four previously unrecorded numbers, this is the most nearly complete recording of *The Vagabond King* ever released. The four are the "Opening Chorus," "Drinking Song" (there's always a drinking song in scores like this), "Love for Sale" (ant-dating the Cole Porter piece on the same general subject), and "Hunting," which sounds like the same composer's "Totem Tom-Tom." Their inclusion alone may make you overlook the frequently strained sounds of Mario Lanza's voice.

Of course, in a production such as this, it is almost all Lanza, whether the songs he sings here were originally sung by the operetta's hero or not. Singing opposite him is the dependable Judith Raskin, whose lovely voice is a joy to hear in

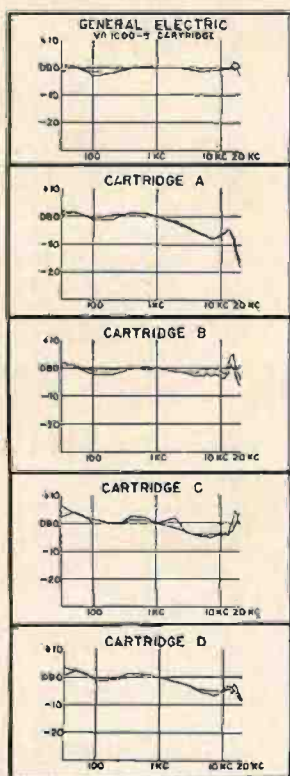


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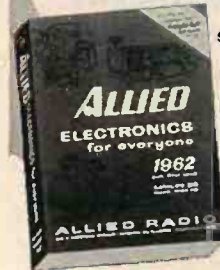
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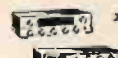


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"Some Day," "Only a Rose," "Tomorrow," and "The Huguette Waltz." S. G.

© **JOHNNY WILLIAMS: *Rhythm in Motion***. Johnny Williams and his Orchestra. *Let's Do It; An Occasional Man; Sunny Disposition*; and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 8467 \$4.98.

Interest: Holds it
Performance: Brightly swinging group
Recording: Brilliant
Stereo Quality: Very high

Eschewing ping-pong effects, "conversational" arrangements, and floating instruments, Johnny Williams here uncorks a series of deft, lightly swinging arrangements. The illusion of depth is splendidly achieved, and so is the manner in which Mr. Williams utilizes the space between speakers to convey an impressive big-band sound. Occasionally, he does add a touch of movement (such as the hoofbeats on *The Surrey with the Fringe on Top*), but these brief effects never get out of hand. S. G.

FOLK

LESTER FLATT AND EARL SCRUGGS: *Songs of the Famous Carter Family* (see p. 66).

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **LÄNDLER BANDS OF JOST RIBARY AND HEIRI MEIER: *Switzerland***. Unidentified clarinet, bass, and Schwyzer organ. *Violet of the Alps; Grandfather Dances; Gay Musicians*; and thirteen others. MONITOR MF 353 \$4.98.

Interest: High-spirited dance music
Performance: Merrily authoritative
Recording: One of Monitor's best

"Ländler music" is indigenous to the Alps and is played for festive occasions and at all-night village dances. The instrumentation in Switzerland is usually clarinet, bass, and the Schwyzer organ, which is actually a light, wooden accordion that is much warmer in sound than the conventional accordion. In addition to the waltz-like Ländlers, the two hands gambol through polkas and other dance forms. The playing is cheerful and light-fingered, although the limitations of the instrumental voicings and the relentless simplicity of the rhythms make it advisable to absorb the album piecemeal rather than at one full hearing, unless, of course, you're dancing at the same time. There are also a few tracks of yodeling. N. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **EWAN MACCOLL: *Ewan MacColl Sings British Industrial Ballads***. Ewan MacColl (vocals), Peggy Seeger (vocals, guitar, banjo). *The Wark of the Weavers; The Blantyre Explosion; Fourpence A Day; The Collier Laddie*; and eleven

others. VANGUARD VRS 9090 \$4.98.

Interest: Masterful ballad singing
Performance: Glowing, reverential
Recording: Very good

This stunningly recorded and lovingly interpreted compilation of industrial folk songs from the British Isles by the noted Scottish folk-song singer and collector Ewan MacColl is an expanded and sonically superior edition of a similar collection issued several years ago on the Stinson label. These fifteen selections are musical products of the industrial revolution—the workaday songs of miners, weavers, colliers, and railroaders, and even a number of truckers' songs composed by MacColl on traditional models. MacColl is one of the foremost British ballad interpreters, possessing a strong, virile voice and the ability to project personal involvement with his song materials. He receives admirable support, vocally and instrumentally, from Peggy Seeger. This is a lovely, evocative collection, alternately joyous and plaintive and thoroughly enjoyable throughout. P. J. M.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **MARUSIA: *Russian Gypsy Songs, Vol. 2***. Marusia (vocals), Sergei Krotkoff (guitar). *Troika; Oh, My Heart; I Remember*; and ten others. MONITOR MP 566 \$4.98.

Interest: All it needs is vodka
Performance: Wholly convincing
Recording: Good

In her second album of Russian gypsy songs, Marusia again demonstrates her penetrating command of this material. Born in Russia, Marusia left with her family at the time of the revolution and has long been living in America. Her deep, husky voice and plastic rhythmic control bring these songs into intimate relief as she alternates between brooding melancholy and euphoric abandon. Sergei Krotkoff is an exceptionally sensitive accompanist. In addition to complete English texts, Monitor supplies a booklet with the original Russian and a transcription. N. H.

ORANIM ZABAR/GEULA GILL: *A Town Hall Concert* (see p. 108).

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

© **PETE SEEGER: *Story Songs***. Pete Seeger (vocals, banjo, guitar). *Way Out There; The Half-Hitch; Hobo's Lullaby; Washington Square; Aimee McPherson; Foolish Frog*; and four others. COLUMBIA CS 8468 \$4.98.

Interest: Delightful folk-song grab-bag
Performance: Ingratiating
Recording: Very fine
Stereo Quality: Vivid presence

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After nearly two dozen albums for Folkways Records, the dean of American folk singers, Pete Seeger, makes a most impressive disc debut on the Columbia label in a program recorded at the New York folk-music club, the Village Gate. Seeger, a consummate storyteller in song, is in peak form throughout, his voice warm, compelling, and exhortatory in turn, his passionate singing underlined with vigorous folk-styled guitar and banjo accompaniments. The material is well-chosen, too, and runs a gamut from the caressing *Hobo's Lullaby* through the bitter *Buffalo Skinner* to the rousing *John Henry*. The high spot among ten other heartfelt and moving performances is his delightful *The Foolish Frog*. P. J. W.

Ⓢ SONNY TERRY AND BROWNIE MCGHEE: *Blues and Shouts*. Sonny Terry (vocal, harmonica), Brownie Mc-

Ghee (vocal, guitar). *John Henry; I'm A Stranger; Cornbread and Peas; Louise;* and eight others. FANTASY 3317 \$3.98.

Interest: Earthy folk blues
Performance: Overworked repertoire
Recording: Very good

Between them guitarist Brownie McGhee and harmonica player Sonny Terry have something like twenty-five LP collections currently available. With such a plethora of discs on the market, it is difficult to work up enthusiasm for yet another one, for this album is not appreciably different in approach or program from the pair's last several recordings. McGhee and Terry work extremely well together, with the interplay of vocal, guitar, and harmonica lines generating rough excitement. Still, nine of the dozen selections offered on this disc are available in

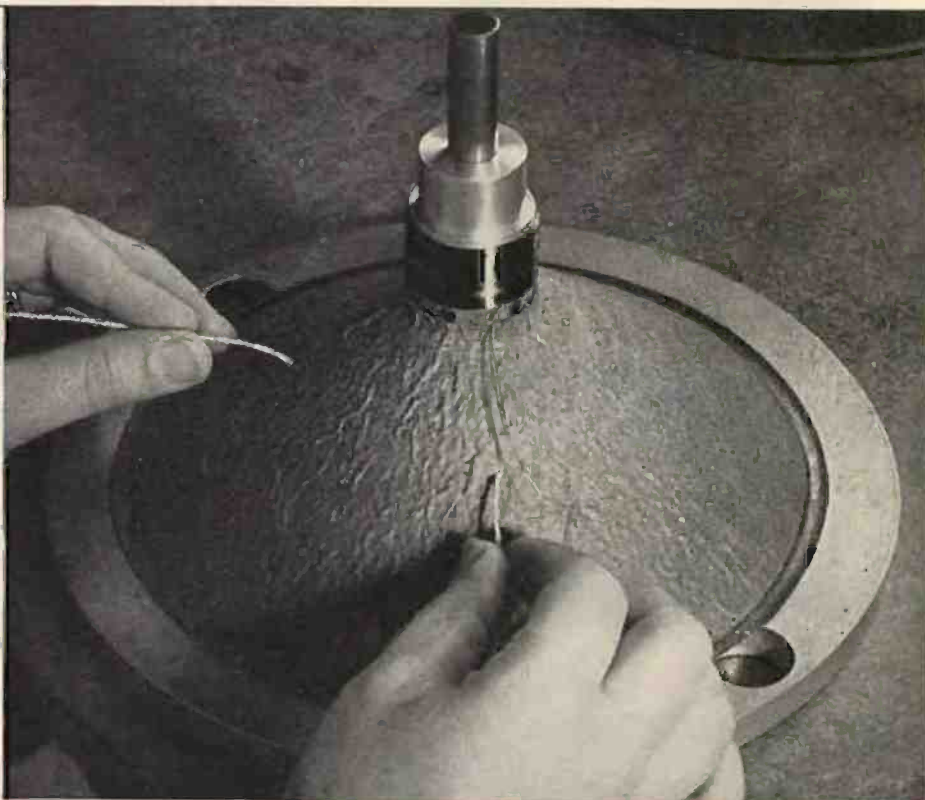
earlier recorded collections. P. J. W.

Ⓢ THE ARMENIAN SONG AND DANCE ENSEMBLE: *Armenian Festival*. Singers and dancers conducted by Tatul Altunian. MONITOR MF 352 \$4.98.

Interest: For folk-song fanciers
Performance: Vigorous
Recording: Good

Monitor has again made available a thoroughly entertaining cross-section of a regional folk music that is still productive. The choral singing is virile but also capable of softly colored lyricism, as in *Moonlit Night*. The solo voices are ringingly self-assured in these tributes to love and abundant harvests. The notes contain paraphrases of the lyrics, and the cover shot of a leaping celebrator underscores the kinetic rhythms inside. N. H.

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How to get the most out of Radio · Audio · Electronic kit building

A new plan by Milton Sleeper, noted figure in electronics

"For a long time," Milton Sleeper explains, "I felt that a society should be formed for the benefit of everyone interested in kit building. There are clubs and leagues to represent and further the interests of stamp collectors, photo fans, and radio hams. Similarly, there should be a kit builders' society, and it should have its own publication to voice the opinions of the members, for the exchange of experiences, and to provide news and information on this fascinating hobby."

Now, at last, there is such a national society. Here's how it came about:

THE R · A · E SOCIETY

Nearly two years ago, a group of kit builders in the Berkshire Hills area of Massachusetts—comprised of businessmen, lawyers, engineers, and bankers—elected Mr. Sleeper chairman of what they called the R · A · E Society, because the members were all interested in building Radio · Audio · Electronic equipment.

As news of the Society spread, people from far and wide inquired about joining. Letters came from high school and college students, and from men of many different professions. Their enthusiastic interest showed that the Society could be more useful to more people than had been anticipated.

Also, there were many requests for a Society journal to serve a membership growing to national proportions. That posed a problem, however, for it meant setting up offices for the Society, with a paid staff at a cost which could not be met from membership dues.

A SPONSOR FOR THE SOCIETY

Meanwhile, the original members had undertaken to work out their own ideas of components to be assembled from kits. Certainly there was room for many improvements, because no basic changes had been made in kits and instructions over the past 20 years.

They first made a study of the advanced designs and techniques now employed in commercial and military equipment. Then they applied their findings to the design of components to be assembled from kits, and to the preparation of error-proof instructions.

Their undertaking was successful beyond expectations, so much so, in fact, that a company—R · A · E Equipment, Inc.—was formed to produce kits from their unique designs. Then, logically, this Company assumed sponsorship for expanding the Society nationally, and for the Society's R · A · E Journal.

THE R · A · E JOURNAL

Publication of the quarterly R · A · E Journal is important to members of the Society because it provides two much-needed services. First, it is an open forum for the exchange of opinions, suggestions, and experiences. Through it, members can make their views known to the record, tape, and equipment manufacturers, the radio and TV broadcasters, and to the Federal Communications Commission.

Second, the Journal fills a growing need for more specific, less technical information on kit assembly, home workshop projects, plans for stereo and mono record, tape, and radio installations, correct operation of components, and testing methods. Also, since no advertising space is sold, the Journal can carry unprejudiced reports, free of commercial bias, on all new developments.

With Milton Sleeper as editor, you will certainly find the Journal interestingly written from cover to cover, easy to understand, elaborately illustrated, and handsomely printed on fine paper. Please note that only members of the Society will receive the Journal. No copies will be sold.

YOU ARE INVITED

You are cordially invited to become a member of the R · A · E Society, an organization that started from the activities of a dozen kit building hobbyists, and is now growing into a national institution.

Membership is open to high school and college students, to men of all professions, and to hobby-minded women, too. Whether you are a beginner, an experienced kit builder, or an advanced enthusiast, you are welcome to join the Society, and to share in the privileges of membership. By applying now

- You will take part in various group activities and opinion polls

- You will receive accurate, advance information on new radio, audio, and electronic kits

- You will qualify to serve on one of the Advance-Test Panels, and if you are selected you will receive a free R · A · E kit in return for writing a report on it

- You will receive the four annual issues of the R · A · E Journal

- You will receive an official membership card identifying you with the R · A · E Society.

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Milton Sleeper originated the idea of step-by-step kit instructions and picture wiring diagrams in the 20's. A pioneer radio engineer and manufacturer, he is an author and magazine publisher, founder of High Fidelity magazine, and a recognized authority on kit design techniques.

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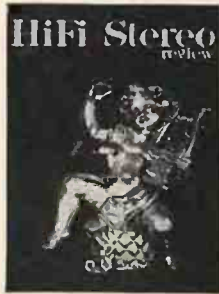
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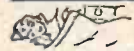
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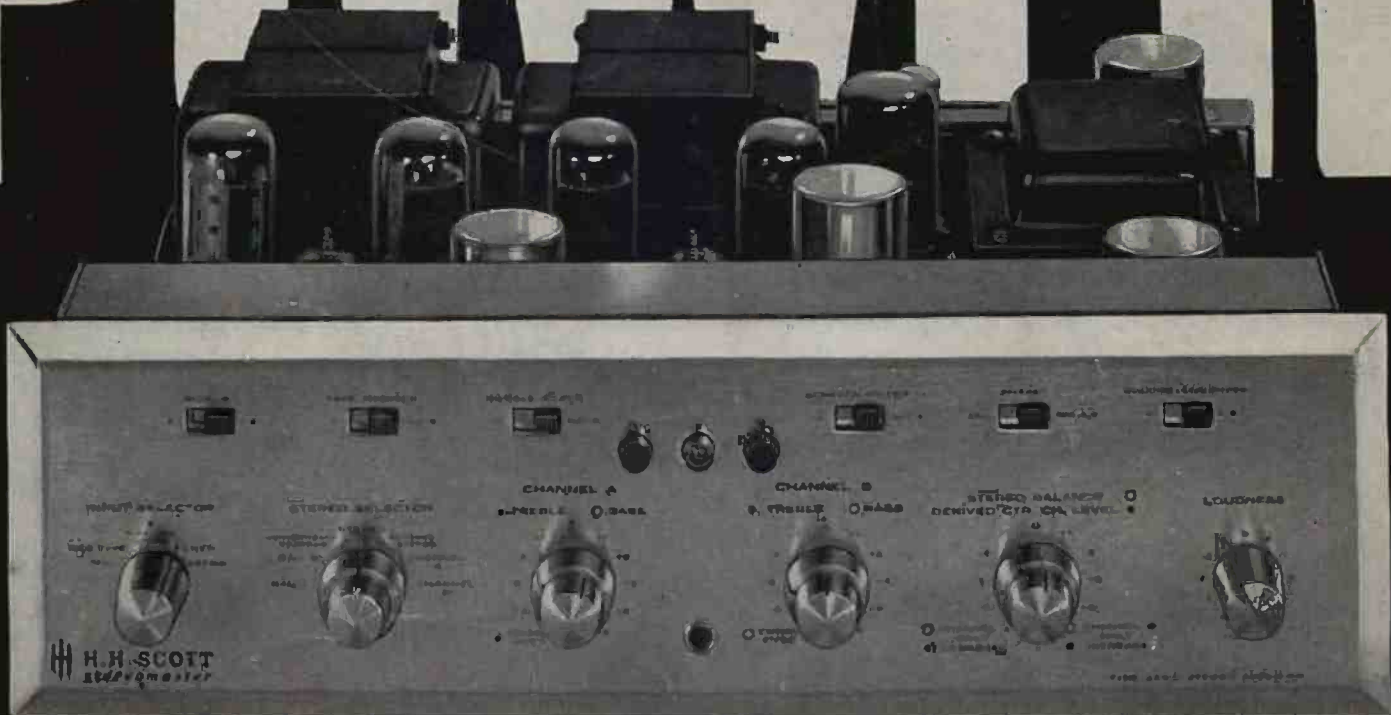
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