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Stereo Review

MARCH 1969 • 60 CENTS

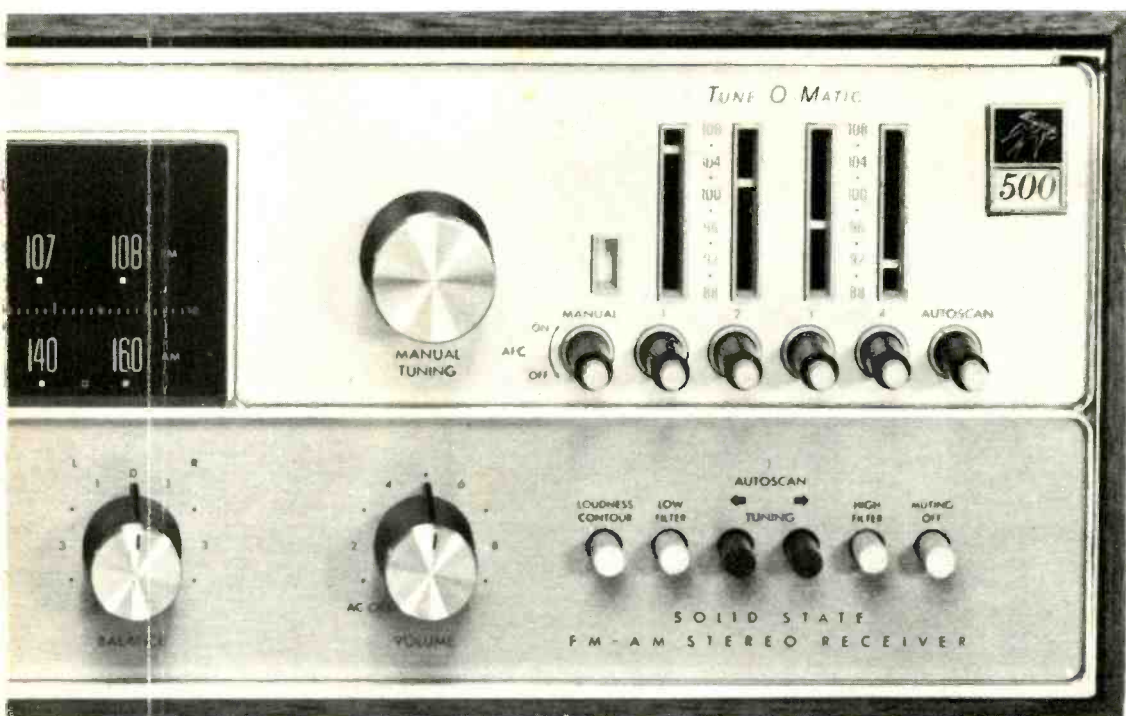
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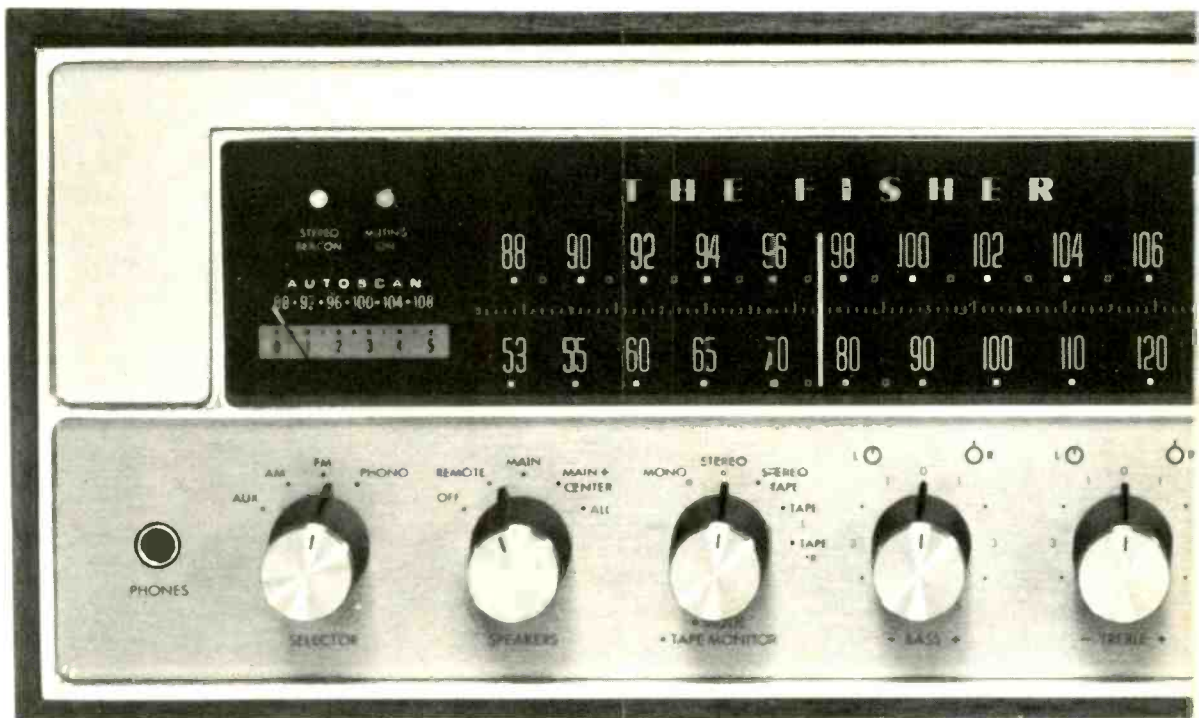
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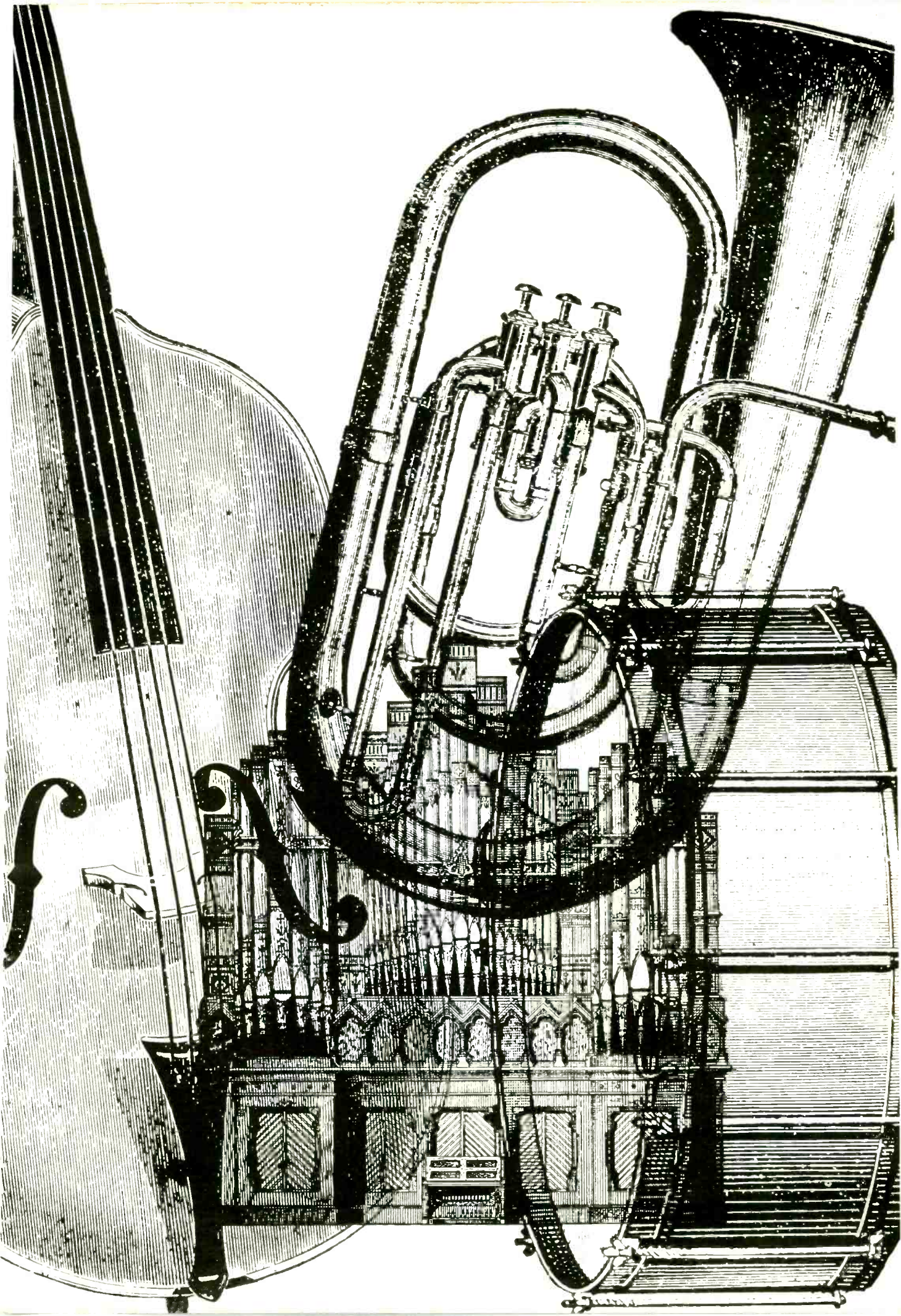
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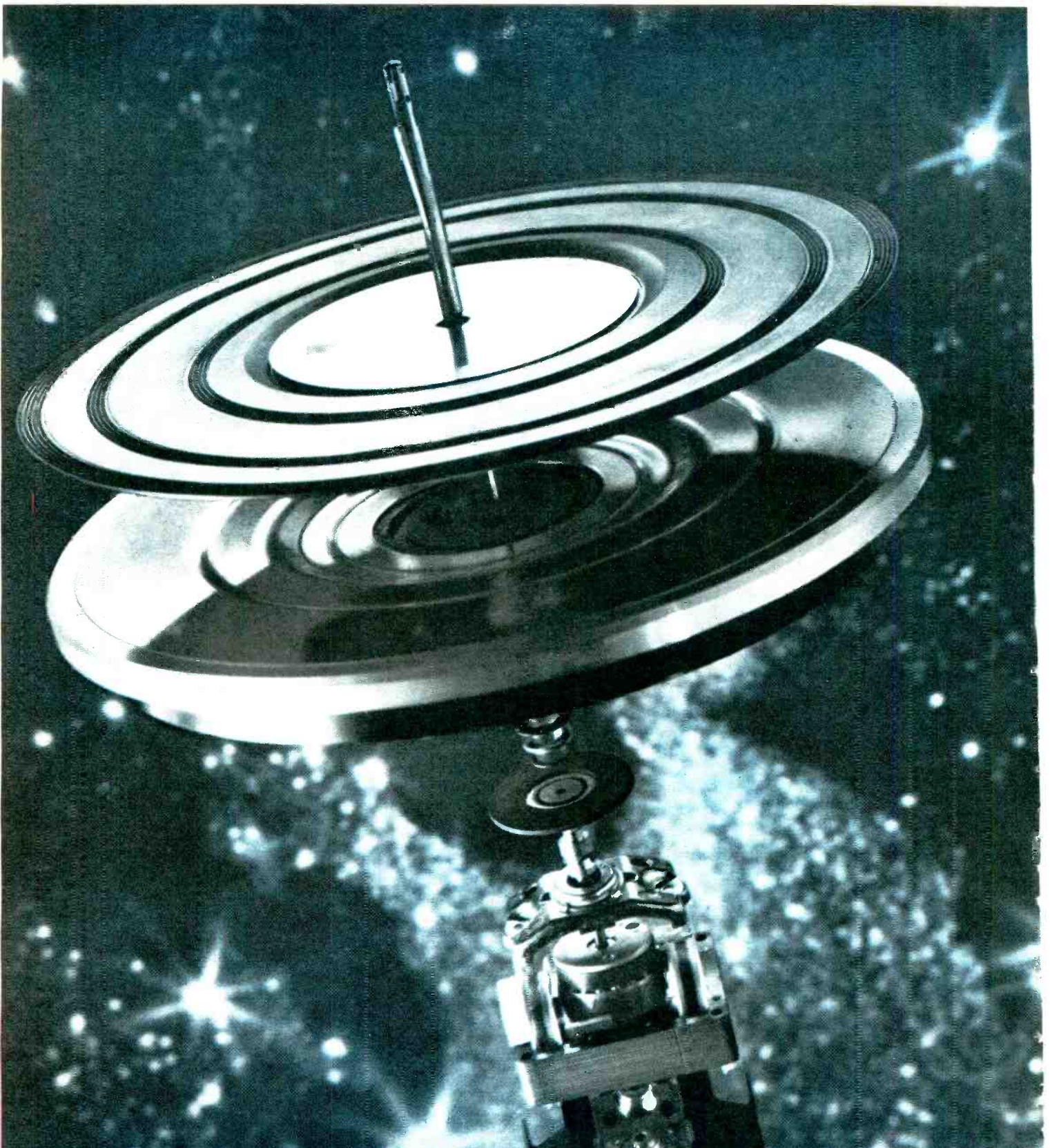
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STEREO REVIEW

FORMERLY HI-FI/STEREO REVIEW

MARCH 1969 • VOLUME 22 • NUMBER 3

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COVER: PHOTO BY BRUCE PENDLETON; DESIGN BY BORYS PATUCHOWSKY
 Copyright © 1969 by Ziff-Davis Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Stereo Review, March, 1969, Volume 22, Number 3. Published monthly at 307 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60601, by Ziff-Davis Publishing Company—also the publishers of Airline Management and Marketing, Boating, Business & Commercial Aviation, Car and Driver, Cycle, Electronics World, Flying, Modern Bride, Popular Electronics, Popular Photography, Skiing, Skiing Area News, and Skiing Trade News (Travel Weekly is published by Robinson Publications, Inc., a subsidiary of Ziff-Davis Publishing Company.) One year subscription rate for U.S., U.S. Possessions and Canada, \$6.00; all other countries, \$7.00. Second class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE: Form 3579 and all subscription correspondence should be addressed to Stereo Review, Circulation Department, Portland Place, Boulder, Colorado 80302. Please allow at least six weeks for change of address. Include your old address, as well as new—enclosing if possible an address label from a recent issue.

Stereo Review

FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

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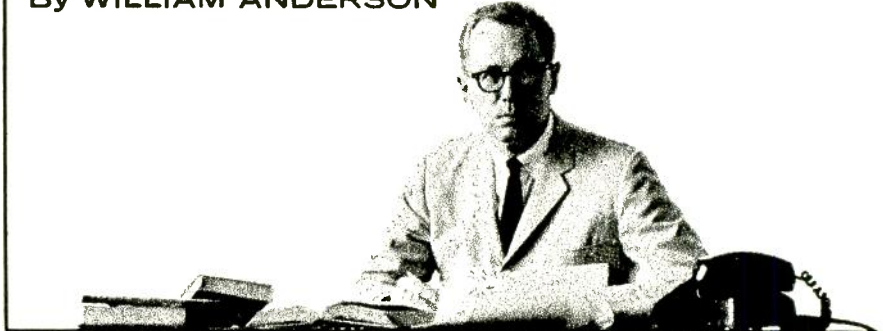
Editorial and Executive Offices
Ziff-Davis Publishing Company
One Park Avenue, New York, New York 10016
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Telephone: 432-2911-3
Circulation Office
Portland Place, Boulder, Colorado 80302
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By WILLIAM ANDERSON



EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

A LICENSE TO STEAL

VICTOR HUGO's statement that "no army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time has come" has ever since been used to justify no end of harebrained notions, but it nonetheless kept coming back to me during the planning and execution of this Tenth Annual Tape Recorder issue of STEREO REVIEW. Future historians may not dub this the Age of Tape, but we do seem to be all but strangled in it. Tape twines invisibly behind all the productions of our radio, TV, and recording industries, it is the limp but effective backbone of the computer industry, it is becoming the repository of records of all kinds, including the circulation lists of this magazine—and we are as yet nowhere near the end of the reel.

Despite recent and significant developments, however, there remains some question in my mind whether tape's time has indeed come for music reproduction in (or out) of the home. Valdemar Poulsen's startlingly original idea for the tape recorder occurred to him in 1898, but it was not until the mid-Fifties that the machines really entered the market. Eager millenarians danced a premature jig at the time—"ding, dong, the disc is dead"—but it didn't turn out quite that way. Disc technology quickly caught up—and kept up—with tape's superior sound, pre-recorded tape never caught on, and the recorder moved comfortably into its present groove—a hobbyist's instrument used for dubbing records, taping off the air, tapespondence, and a myriad other interesting but sporadic activities. Though tape recorders' reasonable prices and the facilities they offer add up, in effect, to a license to steal, the recording industry has been able to live with the minor pilfering that has resulted; the disc remains supreme.

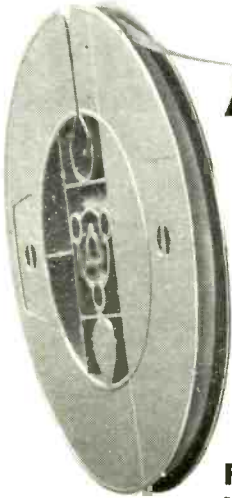
The picture changed somewhat, however, with the advent of tape cartridges—and particularly the cartridge (cassette) recorder. Their growth in the past few years has been, quite simply, a phenomenon, resulting, among other things, in considerable soul-searching in the executive suites of the major record companies. A four-track, eight-track, or cassette *playback* unit in every dashboard in the country is one thing, but a spate of cheap, efficient, portable *recorders* practically everywhere is another. Imagine the consternation generated in those executive suites by the headline on a full-page ad in the *New York Times* about a year ago: "You may never buy a record again." This was Harman-Kardon's way of introducing its SC2520 stereo compact, which includes a cassette recorder. And such units have since been making "piggyback" appearances on an increasing number of receivers, compacts, and even consoles. From the record-producing point of view, the logical result is agonizingly simple: a company could conceivably go to all the expensive trouble of turning out a recording, make it available for air-play, and then find that taped-off-the-air copies have completely cut the ground from under their sales—"you may never buy a record again."

What this would mean for the whole record economy is also agonizingly simple: no record sales, no money for further recording. And so there has developed of late a seeming polarization between two similar, but incompatible (in more ways than one) systems: the (essentially) non-recording eight-track cartridge and the recording cassette. The recording division of RCA, among others, decided that it would rather be murdered, if must be, than commit suicide, and endorsed the eight-track concept. Some companies are currently releasing recordings in both formats, and still others in cassette form only.

It is much too early to predict where it will all end, but I believe that the idea of tape recording has not yet arrived for the larger public because of one simple factor—human laziness. As long as they remain cheaper and simpler, the pre-recorded media have the edge. Further, the continuing spread of the benevolent gospel of quality sound reproduction is an ideological challenge that no cartridge concept is as yet prepared to meet. When it does, it will find me still, logic be damned, a staunch defender of the "safer," more "permanent" disc format.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Covering the Election?

● It pains me to have to complain to my favorite music magazine, but your December cover was just too much. Really, gentlemen, I know we've just had an intensely political year, what with national elections and all, but I do think you should keep partisan feelings out of the magazine, and certainly off the cover. Maybe it's because I was a Humphrey man, but that profile view of President Nixon—ski-slope nose, dark jowls, and the rest—irked me no end. "Illuminated initial from the Codex Squarcialuppe" indeed!

ROB CUSCADEN
Geneva, Ill.

We assure Mr. Cuscaden that any resemblance was coincidental: it just goes to show that, even where the human physiognomy is concerned, there is nothing new under the sun. Furthermore, our own straw vote reveals that the staff was almost solidly in the Humphrey camp.

Test-Report Policy

● I would like to express my support for your test-report policy as set forth by Larry Klein ("Hi-Fi Q & A," December 1968 and January 1969)—particularly regarding the policy of reporting only on good equipment. If a widely advertised product doesn't find a place in your published reports sooner or later, I assume you didn't approve of it. You are also correct in assuming that many readers would like to see some piece of equipment "blasted" in a report. I don't understand what this would prove myself. There are publications in which they can see this kind of thing if they want it. But even *Consumer Reports* gives only a few scant lines to the bad stuff and devotes the bulk of its space to the good.

ROBERT SUTCLIFFE
E. Lansing, Mich.

Mr. Klein replies: "Thank you, Mr. Sutcliffe, for your support, but one point you raise requires clarification. The fact that a well-known product—or the product of a well-known manufacturer—does not appear in our test reports may mean only that the company has a standing policy against submitting products for reports, or perhaps that it cannot keep up with the orders for its product, and a good review in a magazine would only aggravate the situation—or perhaps that the company was unhappy with one

of our reviews five or so years ago and vowed never again to send anything in. Since there are so many manufacturers who are interested in having their products tested, we don't go out of our way to pursue those who, for one reason or another, are not."

Beethoven and the Critics

● Although I agree for the most part with Henry Pleasants' points in his article "Beethoven as Seen by His Contemporaries" (December), there are some facts that need to be added to put the article in proper perspective. Mr. Pleasants' statement that Beethoven never acknowledged the reviews of such men as E. T. A. Hoffmann and Johann Rochlitz is wrong. I quote from a letter Beethoven wrote to Hoffmann, dated March 23, 1820: "Our feeble Herr Stark, too, showed me some lines in his album by you about myself. I therefore have reason to believe that you take some interest in me. Permit me to say that, from a man endowed with such excellent qualities as your own, this interest is most gratifying to me." As for Rochlitz, we have his account of a meeting with Beethoven at which the latter (who must have been in a good mood) treated Rochlitz very fairly.

On the whole, however, I thought the article was excellent.

DAVID BURGE
Forsythe, Mo.

Mr. Pleasants replies: "I am not wrong, not, at least, on the basis of Mr. Burge's evidence. Beethoven's letter to Hoffmann does not acknowledge a review; indeed, it rather suggests that Beethoven was unaware of Hoffmann's eulogy of 1810. As for the meeting with Rochlitz, I would merely call attention to the fact that Rochlitz considered Beethoven's civility noteworthy."

Opera Library

● Is George Jellinek a pseudonym for Rudolf Bing? Is there a purpose to his basic list of opera recordings (December) other than to perpetuate the Metropolitan's drab repertoire policies? His list is not international, it is Metropolitan. His list is not "a fairly comprehensive view of two centuries of opera." It covers 350 years or so since Monteverdi. It excludes the past fifty years. If he couldn't find a decent recording of *Rigoletto*, how does he put up with the one of *Boris Godunov*? I am an unfortunate

(Continued on page 8)

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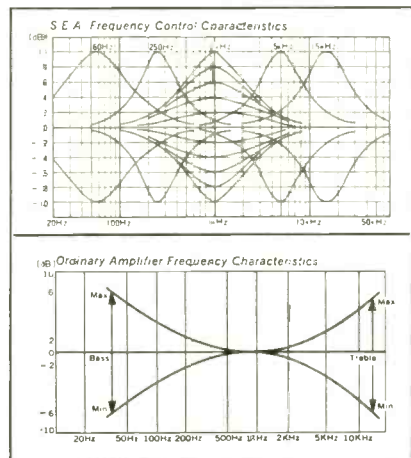
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How the SEA System Works

Glance at the two charts appearing on this page. In looking at the ordinary amplifier frequency characteristics where only bass and treble tone controls are provided, you can see how response in all frequency ranges at the low and high levels is clipped off. Compare this chart with the one showing the SEA frequency response characteristics, and the difference is obvious. No clipping occurs in the SEA system. It offers full control of sound in 60, 250, 1,000, 5,000 and 15,000Hz frequency ranges from -10 to +10db. For the first time ever, you have the power to determine the kind of sound you want to hear.



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CIRCLE NO. 3 ON READER SERVICE CARD

nate owner of that Rimsky abortion, and I couldn't recommend it to anyone. There are acceptable recordings around of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Handel's *Julius Caesar*, Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, and Berg's operas, to name a few Mr. Jellinek omitted. Why perpetuate petrification?

R. J. MAHONY
New York, N. Y.

Come, come, Mr. Mahoney! Are Orfeo, Julius Caesar, and Hippolyte et Aricie basic, in the sense so carefully defined by Mr. Jellinek in the introduction to his article? There are also recordings of Lortzing's Zar and Zimmermann, Verdi's Luisa Miller, Puccini's La Rondine, and Bartók's Bluebeard's Castle, but that fact won't make them any more basic than Haydn's Man in the Moon. The notion that opera audiences should be given not what they want but what someone has decided is good for them sounds rather authoritarian to us.

● For the past two years I have been unsuccessfully trying to purchase the recording of *Manon* that Mr. Jellinek recommended. Record stores both here in Albany and in New York City have told me that this recording is no longer in print, although it is still listed in the Schwann catalog. Why recommend a recording that is impossible to get?

JOHN W. SAUPE
Albany, N. Y.

We are told by Capitol representatives that the Manon recording will no longer be pressed after present stocks are depleted. Hard to find as it is now, it will soon be even harder—fair warning for those who have postponed searching for the album.

Tyranny of Technology

● I am always delighted to see someone take a shot at the tyranny of technology as Martin Bookspan did in response to Mr. Charles Margolis' letter to the editor about Jascha Heifetz and the "Basic Repertoire" (December). American society seems to be programming out human values and inserting the shrill voice of unmodulated, uncontrolled technology, which continues to assert that its own laws are superior to those of men.

CHARLES WITTER
Staff Administrator
Special Committee on
Invasion of Privacy
U. S. Congress
Washington, D. C.

● I want to take this opportunity to rise to Martin Bookspan's defense against the attack of Mr. Margolis. Mr. Bookspan has surely hit the nail on the head in his reply, and I shudder to think of a musical world which could not appreciate its Klemperers and Walters. As to Jascha Heifetz, I feel that Mr. Bookspan was perhaps too kind: Heifetz all too often fails to display the "human element" in his recordings, as Mr. Bookspan's column devoted to Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* (December) perhaps inadvertently suggests: "the Heifetz [recording] is another of that artist's astonishingly virtuosic performances . . . tossed off with supreme nonchalance." The technical wizard is not automatically a great artist.

Speaking more generally, Mr. Bookspan's
(Continued on page 10)



1. RCA VICTROLA. Rimsky-Korsakoff. Scheherazade. Pierre Monteux—London Symphony Orchestra.



2. RCA VIC. Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture. Liszt-Mephisto Waltz. Debussy-Iberia. Reiner-Chicago Symp.



3. RCA VIC. Beethoven—Symphony No. 5. Schubert—Symphony No. 8. Munch and Boston Symphony.



4. RCA VIC. Beethoven—'Eroica' Symphony. Pierre Monteux—the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.



5. RCA VIC. Beethoven—Symphony No. 6 'Pastoral'. Pierre Monteux—the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.



6. RCA VIC. Bartok—Concerto for Orchestra. Reiner—Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



7. RCA VIC. Mendelssohn-Midsummer Night's Dream. Schumann—Symphony No. 3. Toscanini—NBC Symphony Orch.



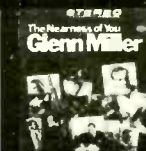
8. RCA VIC. Mozart—Symphonies No. 39 & 40. Toscanini—NBC Symphony Orch.



9. RCA VIC. Ravel—Bolero, La Valse. Debussy—Afternoon of a Faun. Munch—Boston Symphony.



10. RCA VIC. Sibelius—Finlandia. Grieg—The Last Spring—Others. London Proms Symphony.



11. RCA CAMDEN. Glenn Miller original recordings. The Nearness of You, My Blue Heaven, Fools Rush in.



12. RCA CAM. Music from Doctor Zhivago. Alfie, A Man and a Woman, others. Living Strings.



13. RCA CAM. Music of Irving Berlin. Blue Skies, How Deep is the Ocean, Always. Melachrino Strings.



14. RCA CAM. The Sound of Music. My Favorite Things, Do-Re-Mi, Climb Every Mountain. Living Strings.



15. RCA CAM. The Magic of Hawaii. My Little Grass Shack, The Reef, Lovely Hula Hands, others. Leo Addeo—Orch. & Chor.



16. RCA CAM. Chet Atkins. Music from Nashville My Home Town. Summer Sunday, Love Offering, Lonesome Road.

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18. RCA CAM. Side By Side. Norman Luboff Choir. Oh What a Beautiful Mornin', All the Things You Are.



19. RCA CAM. Peter Nero. If Ever I Would Leave You, A Certain Smile, Scarlet Ribbons, Tangerine.



20. RCA CAM. Perry Como. Hello Young Lovers, Vaya Con Dios, I've Got You Under My Skin, Tomboy.

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entire "Basic Repertoire" series is highly commendable. I am constantly impressed by his perception of the true musical values of the various recordings over such a wide-ranging repertoire.

MICHAEL McDANIEL
Wichita, Kansas

Mono and the Manufacturers

● On the subject of the record manufacturers' decision to eliminate their mono records, your December issue includes a letter which says, in part, "I for one just can't buy up these treasures fast enough. . . ." Why, if the records the writer refers to are such treasures, is he only buying them now when they are threatened? Do he and the others who are so quick to condemn the manufacturers really feel that it is the responsibility of record companies to continue to stock all old discs until everyone who wants them finally gets around to buying them? Do rational people actually expect the companies to lose money simply to suit the minority of buyers who will, perhaps, eventually purchase some beloved but slow-selling record? Even the largest companies have just so much money, and I think I am not alone in preferring that they use it to expand their offerings of new releases rather than to tie it up in idle inventory for the benefit of a few collectors.

If you really want classical "oldies," why not tape a friend's copy, and stop attacking the manufacturers for doing what is expected of them—making money?

RICHARD R. MOUK
New York, N.Y.

Pseudo-Stereo

● When I read William Anderson's August editorial about RCA's policy of putting old mono discs on their Victrola label into electronic stereo, I was so infuriated that I wrote RCA a letter. I had not been able to obtain mono copies of any of the Victrola-series Toscanini discs which had been issued in ersatz stereo. I received a very welcome reply from RCA saying that mono copies of these discs were still being pressed, and giving me advice on how to obtain them. In the next month's issue of the Schwann catalog, however, I noticed that Columbia was withdrawing the mono-only issues in its Odyssey line in favor of pseudo-stereo counterparts. The praise that Columbia drew from you when that company first announced the intentions of its Odyssey line should now be rescinded.

SIDNEY KEYWOOD
Birmingham, Ala.

"J. Eddy Fink"

● With respect to Don Heckman's review of Janis Ian's "The Secret Life of J. Eddy Fink" (January), I would wager that if Mr. Heckman checked, he would find only one instrumentalist unlisted in the credits: Miss Ian herself, on the keyboards as well as acoustic guitar.

PAUL BECK
Baltimore, Md.

Mr. Heckman replies: "Miss Ian may—just may—be playing, through overdubbing, the unlisted organ, piano, and celeste; I doubt it. But I hope Mr. Beck isn't suggesting that she is also playing all those trumpets on What Do You Think of the Dead?"

(Continued on page 12)

STEREO REVIEW

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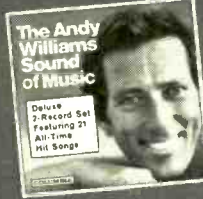
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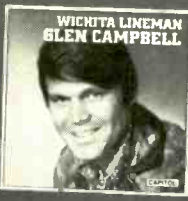
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CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Streisand

● A great big bravo for Peter Reilly's re-
 view of *Fanny Girl* (December). In the
 past, STEREO REVIEW's treatment of Barbra
 Streisand has been largely unfair, bordering
 on nit-picking in the extreme, and sometimes
 overlooking her sizable talent and consider-
 able contributions to popular music. These
 reviews have distressed those of us who are
 not only dazzled by her charisma, but also
 entranced by her overwhelming musical and
 artistic integrity.

Although saying, as Mr. Reilly did, that
 her stupefying performance of *Don't Rain on
 My Parade* "is punctuated by . . . exaltation
 that rivals any great actress' climactic speech
 in a Greek tragedy" might be stretching it
 a bit, I am completely captivated by Mr.
 Reilly's intelligent and perceptive review of
 a remarkable talent's greatest moment.

GERALD W. CARRIGER, JR.
 Milligan, Tenn.

"Blumine"

● I would like to answer the questions
 about Mahler's "*Blumine*" movement raised
 by David Hall in his December review of
 Odyssey's new recording of the First Sym-
 phony. Mr. Hall cites H. F. Redlich (in
 the Master Musicians Series book *Bruckner
 and Mahler*) to the effect that "*Blumine*"
 was replaced in the First by the "*Frère
 Jacques*" funeral march, and he rightly com-
 plains that this does not jibe with John N.
 Burk's reference to no fewer than three five-
 movement performances of the symphony
 under Mahler's direction. He also complains
 that my liner notes are unclear on this point.

I think my initial statement is actually
 quite clear, if one's mind has not already
 been confused by Redlich. "Mahler's Sym-
 phony No. 1," I wrote, "was first presented
 in November 1889 as a 'Symphonic Poem in
 Two Parts (Five Movements)'. The chief
 source of our information about this Buda-
 pest premiere and the subsequent Hamburg
 and Weimar performances (all under Mah-
 ler, and all with five movements) is the bio-
 grapher Paul Stefan. Mahler first deleted the
 "*Blumine*" in performance in Berlin in
 March 1896, and that is the only change he
 made involving an entire movement.

Since I was restricted to nine hundred
 words on the Odyssey liner, I could not go
 into the fascinating history and the complex
 relationship of "*Blumine*" to the First Sym-
 phony nearly as fully as I would have
 wished. I have done so in full for the coming
 issue (the first since 1963) of *Chord and
 Discord*, the occasional journal of the Bruck-
 ner Society of America (Box 246, Iowa City,
 Iowa).

JACK DIETHER
 New York, N. Y.

Meistersinger

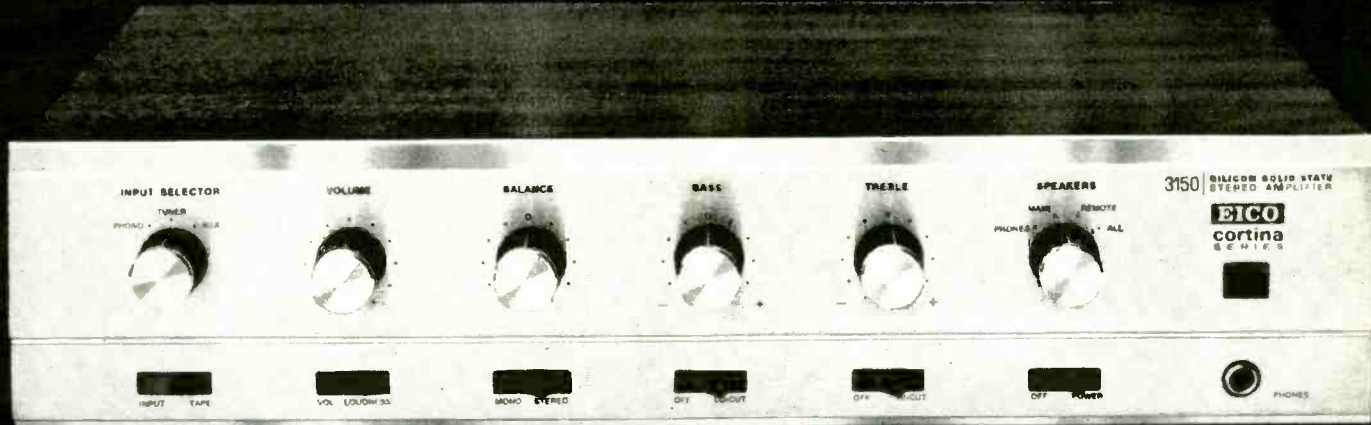
● For the most part, I agree with Robert S.
 Clark's evaluation of the two recent releases
 of *Die Meistersinger*, those on Seraphim and
 Richmond (December). However, I must in-
 sist that Otto Edelmann's rendition of Pog-
 ner's first-act monologue "*Das schöne Fest,
 Johannstag*" in the Richmond recording is
 as beautiful and serene as one could ever
 hope it to be. And while Paul Schoeffler
 (Richmond) is indeed a finer Hans Sachs
 than Edelmann in every respect, the latter's
 portrayal on the Seraphim recording is quite
 good also—certainly better than Ferdinand

(Continued on page 16)

CIRCLE NO. 25 ON READER SERVICE CARD →

This is more amplifier than you may think you need.

But after you see the price, why settle for less.



The EICO "Cortina 3150" all-silicon solid-state 150 watt stereo amplifier is truly a lot of amplifier. It combines wide-range preamplifiers, controls, and power amplifiers, all on one uniquely compact chassis. It delivers clean power to two sets of speaker systems, stereo headphones (for which there is a jack on the front panel) and a tape recorder. The Cortina "3150" gives you complete control facilities.

Most people think that, while all this would be very nice to have they don't want to pay a lot of extra money for it.

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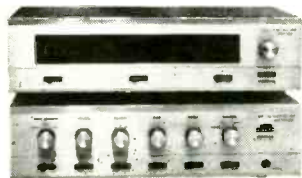
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Sound n' Color is an exciting innovation in the home entertainment field. It adds a new dimension to your musical enjoyment. See the music you hear spring to life as a vibrant, ever shifting interplay of colors.

See every tone, every note, every combination of instruments create its own vivid pattern. EICO Model 3440—Kit \$49.95, Wired \$79.95.



Cortina 3570 70-Watt All Solid-State FM Stereo Receiver for \$169.95 kit, \$259.95 wired, including cabinet.

Pre-assembled and pre-aligned front end, multiplex, and IF circuits speed and simplify assembly — you'll enjoy building this deluxe kit.



New Cortina 3770 70-Watt All Solid-State AM/FM Stereo Receiver for \$189.95 kit, \$279.95 wired, including cabinet.

EICO Electronic Instrument Co., Inc.
283 Malta Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207

Tell me where I can have a free Cortina demonstration

Send me free 32-page catalog on EICO's 200 "best-buy"

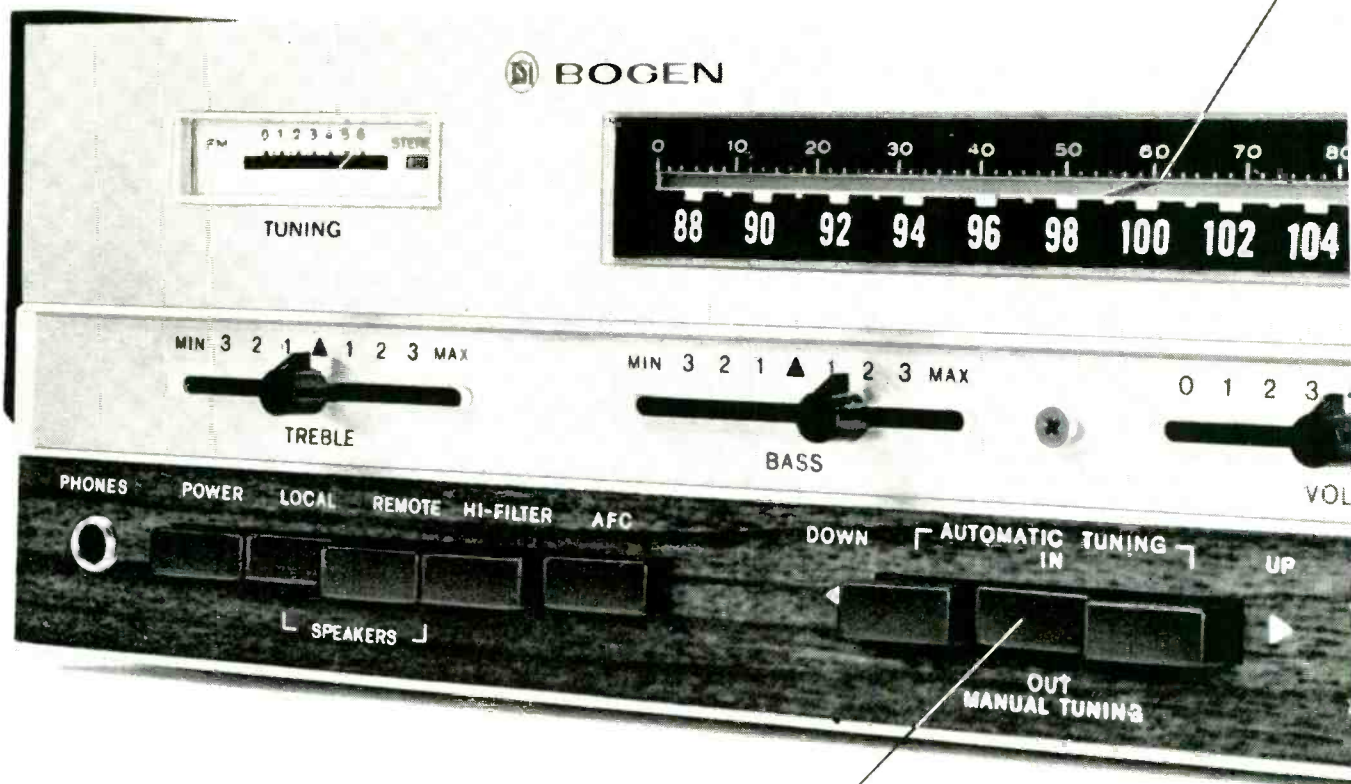
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BOGEN ANNOUNCES THE END OF DIAL-TWISTING.



This is the receiver that tunes itself. Touch one button to tune stations to the left; touch the other to tune to the right. Raise your finger, and the DB240 *stops at the next station on the dial and locks it in perfectly*—better than you can tune by hand. No knob-twiddling or meter-watching needed. Another “first” from Bogen in a receiver that anyone can afford.

Now—an all-electronic tuning system, including the dial. No dial cord to slip or tear, no gears to wear. A state-of-the-art breakthrough offers you this extra measure of precision in this price range—exclusive with Bogen.

Get stations you never got before: Strong stations. Weak stations. Stations crowded together on the dial. Because the new DB240 has an FET front end, for wide sensitivity range... an Integrated Circuit IF section for exceptional interference rejection and capture ratio... *revolutionary solid-state resonant ceramic IF filters* that give the DB240 its whopping 60 db selectivity—without realignment, ever.

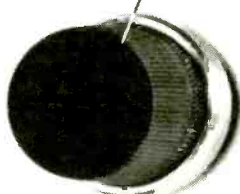
Manual tuning, too—with a difference: the tuning knob controls an electronic tuning circuit, not a tangle of mechanical parts. And if you leave the manual knob pre-tuned to your favorite station, that station will pop right in as soon as you switch from auto-matic back to manual tuning.

Electronic remote control unit provides volume controls for each channel and perfect control of balance, push-button tuning right and left, even a synchronous station-selector dial. WR-1 optional, extra.



DB 240

MANUAL TUNING



6 7 MAX

LEFT 3 2 1 1 2 3 RIGHT



BALANCE

STEREO LOUDNESS AUX PHONO FM



MONO OUT

Professionally precise control: Professional recording consoles use linear controls that slide instead of turn. So does the DB240. You can adjust them more precisely—and their positions indicate their settings graphically, even from across the room.

No accessory cabinets to buy: The Bogen DB240 FM Stereo Receiver comes complete in cabinet with walnut side panels for only \$279.95.

55 watts of power (IHF) Music Power ± 1 db into 8 ohm speaker load. RMS: 18 watts per channel at 0.7% harmonic distortion. Electronic protection circuit provides full protection without need for bothersome replacement of speaker fuses.

BOGEN

First name in high fidelity... dedicated to dependability

LEAR SIEGLER, INC.



The team: LSI stands for Lear Siegler, Inc.—and the latest in electronic research. Bogen stands for 36 years in pioneering sound experience. The DB240 is the result.

Frantz in the Vox and the Angel recordings, or Otto Wiener in the RCA recording.

ROBERT B. MERTEN
Coudersport, Pa.

Where's Da Ponte?

● Your Letters to the Editor columns in the December and January issues tell of your attempt, and that of a reader, to locate Louis Moreau Gottschalk's grave. I would suggest that another grave your researchers might try to find would be that of Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart's librettist. In April Fitzlyon's *The Libertine Librettist* there are these words: "The Americans stood around his grave in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in New York . . ."

CHARLES L. ANDERSON
Sacramento, Cal.

Spanky

● My thanks to reader Jere Real for pointing out, in your December issue, that the young lady—Elaine McFarland—whom I recorded with Little Brother Montgomery back in 1961 has since become "Spanky" of Spanky and Our Gang.

I remember, when producing that album, the shy young lady whom Little Brother recommended to me, and I have subsequently met "Spanky," but we didn't recognize each other, and, until I read Mr. Real's letter, I never knew these two were the same person.

CHRIS ALBERTSON
New York, N. Y.

What, Never?

● I couldn't agree more with James Goodfriend's November "Going on Record" col-

umn about records that are scheduled never to be made. But there *is* (or *was*) a recording of the Dukas Piano Sonata—Ducretet-Thomson 320 C 109, played by Rachel Blanquer. It appears to date from 1957—I own a copy of the disc.

SAMUEL RANDETT
Wilmette, Ill.

Mr. Goodfriend replies: "Mr. Randlett is perfectly correct: such a disc was listed for some years in the French catalog. Having tried unsuccessfully to obtain it on several occasions, I began to doubt that it actually existed, and, in writing my column, simply forgot about it. It now seems to have been deleted."

Donovan

● A couple of comments about Peter Reilly's review of "Donovan in Concert" (November): first, he is correct that it is a great album, and that Donovan is, as he says, ". . . an immensely gifted balladeer." But why has it taken him so long to recognize Donovan's gifts? Earlier albums are also excellent, and in fact many of the songs on the "In Concert" album are to be heard on earlier sets.

Mr. Reilly says that Donovan does not need the "psychedelic trappings" he feels the singer uses. I assume Mr. Reilly refers to the album package designs, but what does packaging have to do with "psychedelic trappings"? I ask this because Donovan has publicly urged young people to stop using drugs. He himself has stopped, and thus "psychedelic trappings" seems an inappropriate label.

NEIL SCHEININ
Middlebury, Vt.

Did Mr. Scheinin take a good look at Donovan's costume?

Sutherland's Operetta

● Upon reading the letters to the editor in your October (1968) issue concerning Joan Sutherland's recording "The Golden Age of Operetta," I was very annoyed to think that people should have so little regard for the musical theater that they praised this set.

Miss Sutherland's "glorious tone," as one reader described it, can be heard to better advantage in her operatic recordings. It was a waste of her time making this record and a waste of the public's time listening to it. She murders—or should I say strangles—the grace and charm these melodies have.

I suggest Miss Sutherland stick in future to her operatic repertoire, in which she excels, and leave the light-music repertoire to those who know what they are doing.

RODGER L. STEPHENSON
Auckland, New Zealand

Multiple-Disc Protest

● I write in protest against the major recording companies that release multiple-record sets such as the complete Brahms Symphonies or the complete Beethoven piano concertos without making the individual discs available singly. It would seem to me that if a company insists on releasing multiple-disc packages, it should charge a discount price that would appeal to a wider market than otherwise. But many such sets are sold at the full manufacturer's list price of \$5.79 per disc. Is this fair to the prospective buyer? Is it even good business?

MICHAEL J. MORAN
Palmer, Mass.

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7. FASTEST SERVICE ANYWHERE

Your orders are not only processed but shipped the same day we receive them. This unique service is possible because your orders are picked from an inventory of over 250,000 LP's & tapes. You get factory-new sealed albums and tapes only. Defects are fully returnable at no charge.

8. SAVE UP TO 50% ON STEREO GEAR

Individual components or complete systems—

uniCLUB supplies hi-fidelity equipment of virtually every manufacturer at tremendous savings. This month's "Hi-Fi Special" is a Garrard SL95 turntable; List \$129.50, to members only \$83.00.

9. BOOKS OF ALL PUBLISHERS

The Book Division—only uniCLUB has it—offers members at least 25% off on any book in print.* You get only original publishers' editions. uniGUIDE lists best-sellers, just-published works and book "Specials."

*Texts are reduced 10%.

10. FOUR CLUBS IN ONE

uniCLUB is really a time-saver. It makes joining many clubs unnecessary. Now you can buy all your records, tapes, auto-cartridges, books and stereo-gear from one convenient source. We hope you'll join today!

SAVE MONEY EVEN ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEE

Give gift memberships with full lifetime privileges for only \$2.50 each. Splitting the cost with one other person lowers cost to \$3.75; enrolling five at a time brings cost down to only \$3 each.

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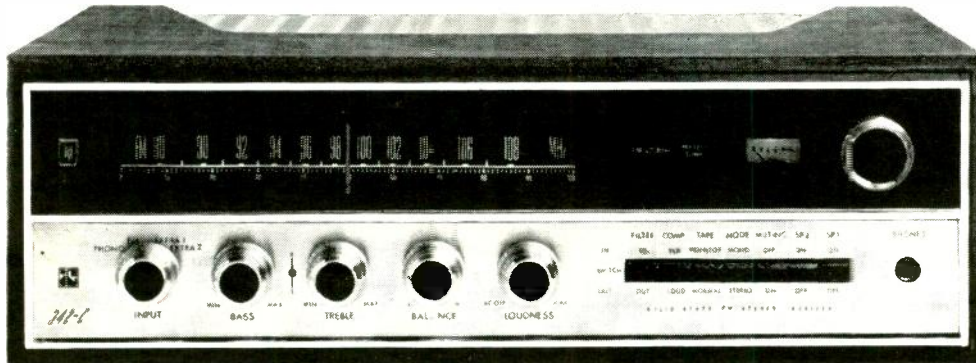
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- Send gift memberships at \$2.50 each to names and addresses listed on attached sheet.
- I am also interested in pre-recorded tapes.

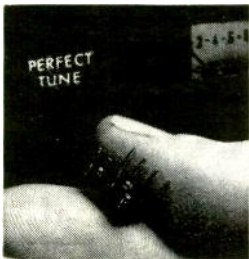
CIRCLE NO. 69 ON READER SERVICE CARD

You've seen yesterday's receivers

here is tomorrow's!

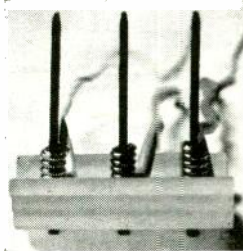


NEW 100-WATT SCOTT 342C...THE WORLD'S MOST INCREDIBLY ADVANCED RECEIVER!



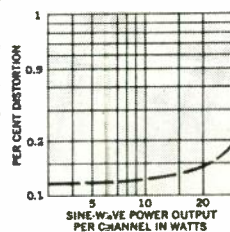
A light that snaps on automatically when you're perfectly tuned:

Perfectune® is a miniature computer . . . the most effective way to tune for lowest distortion and best reception.



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No more solder-joint failures! Reliability-proven in demanding aerospace applications.



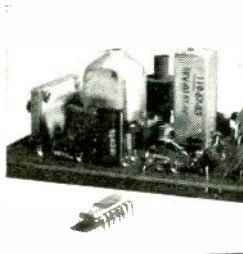
New F/C/O circuitry gives virtually distortion-free listening, even at low volume levels:

Scott's new Full Complementary Output means perfect sound at all volume levels. And . . . extra power is available at 4 Ohms output, vital when you want to connect extra speakers.



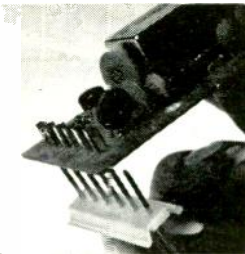
A quartz crystal lattice filter IF section:

Regardless of age or operating temperature, your 342C IF amplifier will never need re-alignment.



New IC Multiplex section gives better performance and reliability in FM stereo:

No larger than a cigarette filter, Scott's exclusive Integrated Circuit contains 40 transistors and 27 resistors.



Printed circuit modules snap into main chassis:

Eliminates solder joints and provides for instant servicing.

PLUS THESE FAMOUS SCOTT FEATURES:

- Silver-plated Field Effect Transistor front end
- Integrated Circuit IF strip
- Integrated Circuit preamplifier
- Field Effect Transistor tone control
- All-silicon output circuitry.

CHECK THIS UNBELIEVABLE PRICE:

342C 100-Watt FM Stereo Receiver only \$259.95!

342C Specifications:

Power: IHF ± 1 dB @ 4 Ohms, 100 Watts; IHF ± 1 dB @ 8 Ohms, 80 Watts; Cont. Output, single channel, 8 Ohms, 30 Watts; IHF Sensitivity, 1.9 μ V; Frequency response ± 1 dB, 20-20,000 Hz; Cross modulation rejection, 80 dB; Selectivity, 40 dB; Capture ratio, 2.5 dB. Prices and specifications subject to change without notice. Walnut-finish case optional.

SCOTT®

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NEW PRODUCTS

A ROUNDUP OF THE LATEST HIGH-FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



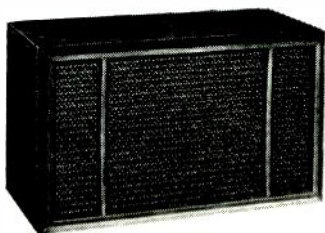
● **Harman-Kardon** has introduced its first cassette deck, the Model CAD4. The deck, which is meant to be used with an external stereo system, has a frequency response of 30 to 12,500 Hz \pm 2 dB. Other specifications include wow and flutter of 0.25 per cent, a signal-to-noise ratio of 19 dB, and record-amplifier distortion of 0.5 per cent at 0 VU. Six pushbuttons control the transport. Other controls include power, mono or stereo mode, and individual record-level adjustments for each channel. There is a dual record-level meter on the front panel and an overmodulation-indicator that lights when the recording level on either channel exceeds +2 VU. The deck has a steel case with walnut sides. Overall dimensions are 12½ x 9 x 3¼ inches. Price, \$159.50.

Circle 145 on reader service card

● **Crown International** has introduced the DC 300 solid-state stereo power amplifier, rated at 300 watts per channel rms power output into 4 ohms, and 170 watts rms per channel into 8 ohms. Frequency response at a 1-watt output level is 0 to 100,000 Hz \pm 0.6 dB. Other specifications include a damping factor of over 200, a signal-to-noise ratio of 110 dB, and intermodulation distortion of less than 0.1 per cent over a power-output range of 0.01 to 150 watts into 8 ohms. The output transistors are protected against overloads and short circuits by an automatic circuit. On the front panel, there are separate input-level controls for each channel, a power on/off switch, and a pilot light. Overall dimensions of the amplifier are 7 x 9¾ x 19 inches. Price: \$685.



Circle 146 on reader service card



● **Heathkit** has introduced two new bookshelf speaker-system kits, both using special drivers built by JBL. The AS-38 kit (shown) has a 12-inch woofer and a 2-inch tweeter and a frequency response of 45 to

20,000 Hz. Power-handling capacity is 40 watts and impedance is 8 ohms. There is a tweeter-level control on the rear of the pre-assembled oiled-walnut enclosure. Overall dimensions are 11 x 23 x 11¾ inches. Price: \$144.95.

The AS-48 bookshelf speaker system uses a tube-ported bass-reflex enclosure and has a frequency response of 40 to 20,000 Hz. The drivers are a 14-inch woofer, which has an 11½-pound magnet assembly, and a 2-inch tweeter. The crossover frequency is 2,000 Hz. Power-handling capacity is 50 watts. Minimum recommended amplifier power is 10 watts. The speakers, crossover network, and tweeter-level

control are mounted from the front of the pecan-wood enclosure, which has a removable grille cloth. Price: \$169.95.

Circle 147 on reader service card

● **Rabco** has introduced its first audio component, the SL-8 straight-line-tracking tone arm. The SL-8 uses a short, light arm to hold the pickup cartridge. This arm is mounted on a servo-controlled carriage that rides along a track. The frictional forces between the arm and the track are overcome by a small servo motor driven by a one-



transistor amplifier. Power is supplied by one "C" cell. The arm accepts any standard phono cartridge and can track at forces as low as ¼ gram. Tracking force is set by an adjustable counterweight. The arm is available with a Shure V-15 Type II cartridge factory-installed, and is also available mounted on a Thorens TD-150 turntable. Price of the arm alone: \$149.50.

Circle 148 on reader service card



● **Sterling** is importing the Nordmende Model 8001/T solid-state, quarter-track stereo tape deck. The three-head, three-speed (7½, 3¾, 1⅞ ips) machine has a frequency response at 7½ ips of 40 to

18,000 Hz, and a signal-to-noise ratio of 54 dB. The deck has a built-in solid-state stereo amplifier rated at 3 watts rms per channel that can be used to drive a pair of external speakers. The three-motor transport is pushbutton operated and can be remote controlled. The playback controls include volume, balance, bass, and treble. A slide switch permits monitoring either the input signal or the tape. Jacks are provided for stereo microphones, phono, and auxiliary inputs. A built-in mixer for all inputs uses four slide controls to adjust the relative recording levels. Price, including a snap-on dust cover: \$129.95.

Circle 149 on reader service card

● **Sansui** has introduced the Model 800 AM/stereo FM receiver, rated at 22 watts rms per channel into 8 ohms. Other amplifier-section specifications include an IHF music-power rating of 35 watts per channel with a 4-ohm load (27 watts at 8 ohms) and less than 1 per cent harmonic distortion at full power output. The IHF power bandwidth is 20 to 10,000 Hz, and the signal-to-noise ratios are 70 dB at the low-level phono inputs and 80 dB at the auxiliary inputs. The power transistors are fuse-protected against overloads and short circuits. An indi-

(Continued on page 24)

When this little eighty-dollar speaker speaks, the Establishment trembles.

Our new Mini-III speaker system has nothing to do with revolutionary politics. But, among loudspeakers, it's shaking up the established hierarchy quite radically.

Everybody who cares about speakers knows the Establishment. It consists of the top systems of perhaps half a dozen major manufacturers, mostly of the larger bookshelf size but a few of them floor models, nearly all with acoustic-suspension woofers plus one to four other drivers, and ranging in price anywhere from \$134 to \$330. It's a strong and distinguished ruling class, capable of a far more natural sound than the giant horn-type systems and other dinosaurs it originally succeeded (and which, incidentally, are still being sold to reactionaries at prices up to \$2250).

Now, into this exclusive group steps an upstart, measuring a puny 19" by 12" by 9½" and with a ridiculous \$79.50 price tag, and has the temerity to sound better than the whole lot of them. (Not just *different*, like certain interesting novelty speakers you may have heard lately, but *better* in the Establishment sense: smoother, clearer, lower in distortion, more natural.)

Of course, just because a manufacturer claims his product is better, you don't necessarily have to believe him. However, we feel quite secure against the skeptics because the superiority we're talking about isn't so subtle. Music lovers will hear it all right.

For one thing, the Rectilinear Mini-III

is the first box-type speaker system that doesn't sound like one. It has none of the boxy coloration you can hear, either a little or a lot, in the output of all other completely enclosed systems. In this respect, it's comparable to the large and murderously expensive full-range electrostatic speakers.

Also, the sweet-sounding top end of the Mini-III isn't the kind that comes from rolling off the high-frequency response. The highest highs are all there, just about flat. But they're nice and peak-free, so the result is realism instead of spitty "crispness."

Finally, bass distortion in the Mini-III is so low that the bass is much more

natural and impressive than the typical Establishment speaker's, whose larger woofer may go a few (just a few) cycles lower.

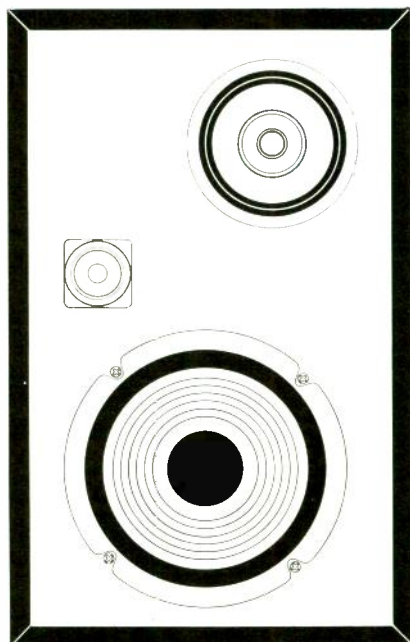
These easily audible differences are the result of some strictly non-Establishment engineering.

Wide-eyed audio enthusiasts are generally unaware that the typical hi-fi manufacturer can't attract the same caliber of engineers as, say, Boeing or NASA. We at Rectilinear try to be an exception to the rule. So far we've been able to provide the kind of unorthodox engineering environment that keeps a few music-loving NASA-type brains happy. When they make three cone speakers in a one-cubic-foot box sound better than some of the world's most elaborate systems, they feel as creative as the space capsule boys.

But now they're beginning to worry. What if their little avant-garde loudspeaker becomes the new Establishment?

(For further information, see your audio dealer or write directly to Rectilinear Research Corporation, 30 Main St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.)

MINI-III
by Rectilinear



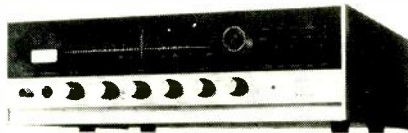
CIRCLE NO. 53 ON READER SERVICE CARD

NEW PRODUCTS

A ROUNDUP OF THE LATEST HIGH-FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

cator on the front panel lights in the event of a short circuit.

The FM-tuner section uses field-effect transistors in its front end and has a sensitivity of 2.5 microvolts (IHF). Among the other FM-tuner specifications are a capture ratio of 3.5 dB, a signal-to-noise ratio of 50 dB, and stereo separation of 35 dB. The AM tuner uses a ceramic filter as part of its i.f. section and has a sensitivity of 20 microvolts (IHF). An AM ferrite bar antenna is built



into the receiver. There are rear-panel input terminals for both 75- and 300-ohm FM antennas. There is a front-panel signal-strength tuning meter and a stereo-broadcast indicator light.

The controls include volume, balance, and separate bass and treble controls for each channel. A row of flip switches controls interstation-noise muting, tape monitoring, stereo or mono mode, loudness compensation, high-frequency filter, and a multiplex-noise canceler. There is a four-position speaker-selector switch. Overall dimensions of the Model 800 are 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{16}$ inches. Price: \$259.95.

Circle 150 on reader service card



● **Olson Electronics** has introduced the Model X-81 solid-state Rhythm Instrument. The unit is plugged into a music amplifier's high-level input and is used to

supply any of nine different rhythms with the sound of seven different instruments. The rhythms, which are push-button-selected and can be used individually or mixed, include waltz, rumba, bossa nova, twist, and mambo. The instrument sounds, which are selected automatically to match the rhythm, include bass drum, tom-tom, cymbal, maracas, and snare drum. There are separate snare-drum and cymbal level controls in addition to controls for volume and tempo. A jack on the rear of the unit permits plugging in a foot-pedal remote control. Overall dimensions of the unit are 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 14 x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Price: \$150.

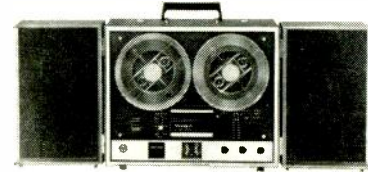
Circle 151 on reader service card

● **Ampex** is offering free a twelve-page pocket brochure entitled "A Head Start to Better Tape Recording." It includes hints on how to use microphones, how to set record levels, and how to splice tape. The brochure also contains information on the proper care and handling of tape and suggestions for tape-recording filing systems.

Circle 152 on reader service card

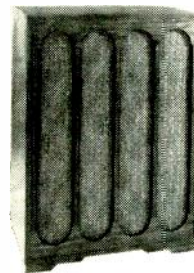
● **Craig's** Model 2408 three-speed (7 $\frac{1}{2}$, 3 $\frac{3}{4}$, 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ ips) solid-state stereo tape recorder has a built-in stereo amplifier rated at 8 watts "total peak" output and a pair of side-hinged removable speaker systems. The specifications at 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ips include a frequency response of 50 to 15,000 Hz, wow and flutter of 0.2 per cent, and a signal-to-noise

ratio of 40 dB. Each channel has a record switch and an individual record/playback level control. There is also a playback tone control. The dual record-level meter is illuminated. With the exception of a front-panel head-



phone jack, all input and output jacks are located on a side panel. Overall dimensions of the recorder, with the hinged speakers in their closed position, are 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The recorder weighs 28 pounds. Price: \$199.95.

Circle 153 on reader service card

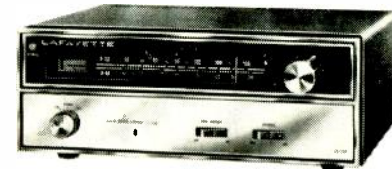


● **Hartley** has added the Model VI to its line of Concertmaster speaker systems. The floor-standing Model VI has a frequency response of 20 to 25,000 Hz \pm 3 dB. Three drivers are used, a 24-inch woofer, a 10-inch mid-range, and a 7-inch tweeter, with crossover frequencies of 300 and 3,000 Hz. The impedance of the system is 16 ohms. The enclosure is of oiled walnut and

is acoustically treated with seventy square feet of "Sound-sorber" acoustic material. It measures 40 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 29 x 18 inches. Price: \$760.

Circle 154 on reader service card

● **Lafayette's** new Model LT-225T AM/stereo FM tuner uses a field-effect-transistor front-end tuning section and has an FM sensitivity of 3 microvolts (IHF). Other specifications include a capture ratio of 3 dB, image rejection of 55 dB, a signal-to-noise ratio of 55 dB, and stereo-channel separation of 30 dB. The tuner has built-in FM and AM antennas and terminal screws for connecting



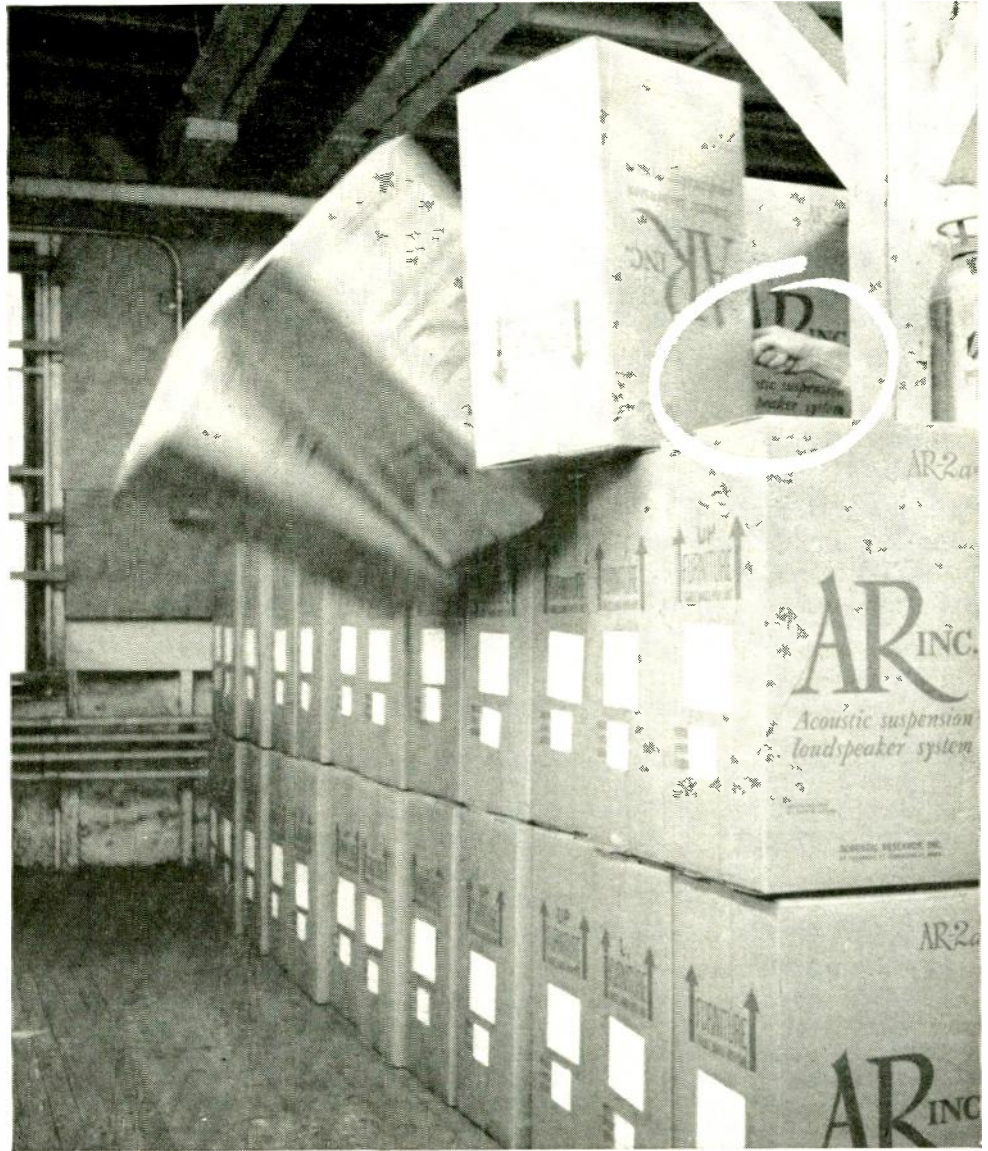
an external 300-ohm FM antenna if desired. The controls include tuning, power, a multiplex-noise filter, and a three-position selector switch for FM, stereo FM, or AM operation. There is a stereo-broadcast indicator light and a signal-strength tuning meter. Overall dimensions of the tuner are 11 x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Price, including case: \$79.95.

Circle 155 on reader service card

● **Ercona Corporation** is offering a free folder containing information on the PML line of audio equipment. Included are specifications for PML headphones and condenser and dynamic microphones. Polar-response and frequency-response graphs are given for each of the microphones. The folder also covers microphone accessories such as windscreens and mixers.

Circle 156 on reader service card

DROP TEST



The return rate of AR speakers over the five-year life of the guarantee is comparable to the percentages usually projected by carton manufacturers for shipping damage alone.

This low return rate reflects heavy, over-designed shipping cartons and a quality control at AR which borders on the fanatical. We test and retest everything, including the carton.

It is this over-all care in manufacture, up to and including the packing, which makes possible AR's five-year speaker guarantee. The guarantee covers all costs of repair, shipping both ways, and even a new carton when necessary.

AR speakers are \$51 to \$250. The AR turntable, which is guaranteed for three years under the same conditions, is \$78. Our catalog is available on request.

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Overseas Inquiries: Write to AR International at above address

Two of today's speaker systems have

Well, hardly. It's a matter of relativity. Whether you want a compact with all the attributes for great listening. Or a big impressive unit that gives you serious listening with the grace of a master-crafted piece of furniture. You have the choice. Just as when you buy a car. Will it be a Cougar or a Rolls Royce.

The Speaker Systems shown here are made to appeal to different tastes, fit different situations, serve different attitudes, fill different music rooms. The choice is yours. But perhaps we can offer you a little help.

Take the ADC 404. It's "top-rated" by the leading independent consumer study. An ideal bookshelf system. One that accommodates itself practically anywhere.

On the other side, the ADC 18A. It's not a bookshelf operator. It's a floor sitter. Made that way. Big. Imposing. Majestic.

With the ADC 404 you can make your own little

ivory tower music room. It's designed for just that. The smallest room is lifted into musical suspension. Everything is expanded...including your listening pleasure.

With the ADC 18A, you have true sound that will fill any size room. It gives you just what you would ideally expect from a great speaker. No loss...whatever the area. A beautiful combination of extremely smooth response, low distortion. It's a master of accurate musical reproduction.

Back to the ADC 404. You have the adaptability of its use as an auxiliary quality system for bedroom, den, patio. With the ADC 18A you want to give it its rightful place since it's a master and top of the class.

Now down to the specifics.

ADC 404 combines a high flux mylar dome tweeter with a high compliance 6" linear travel piston cone to provide firm extended bass performance



The ADC 404 compact that baffles the experts. \$56

most outstanding nothing in common.

out of all proportion to its compact size. The versatility is limitless. And it will match the capabilities of the newest in amplifiers.

ADC 18A is something else again. Its massive 15" woofer presents the extreme bass in perfect proportion.

A high linearity 5 1/4" driver carries the upper bass and midrange, while the treble is handled brilliantly by two of ADC's exclusive high flux mylar dome tweeters, angled to give optimum dispersion.

No coloration, unwanted resonances, boom, hang-over, distortion or any of the sound annoyances that result in listener fatigue.

In addition, the ADC 18A provides a rear mid-range and treble control. Allowing you to adjust the sound to fit your individual room acoustics.

You may want to go with the power packed compact model that charms with easy accommo-

dation. Or you may choose the graceful floor speaker that is the ultimate in musical entertainment. With either one you have the common quality and uncommon sound of ADC. That's the payoff. Some of you will want both, for the same reasons that some of you own a compact car and another as well.

See and listen to the ADC story at any of our authorized dealers. While you're there ask them for a copy of our free 'Play it Safe' brochure. Or write to Audio Dynamics Corporation: Pickett District Road, New Milford, Connecticut 06776.

 ADC. The uncommon speaker systems.



*The bigger than life ADC 18A
speaker sys. em. \$300*

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you don't
make the
number-two
tape.**

It costs a few pennies more. But Sony professional-quality recording tape makes a world of difference in how much better your recorder sounds—and keeps on sounding. That's because Sony tape is permanently lubricated by an exclusive Lubri-Cushion process. Plus, its extra-heavy Oxi-Coating won't shed or sliver. Sony tape is available in all sizes of reels and cassettes. And remember, Sony professional-quality recording tape is made by the world's most respected manufacturer of recording equipment.



You never heard it so good.

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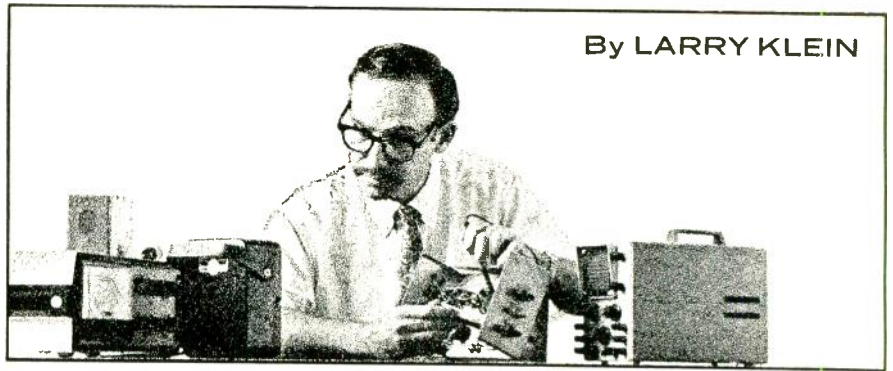
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28

By LARRY KLEIN



HIFI QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

More on Home-Built Speaker Systems

Q. I'm surprised that you have had a change of heart on home-built speaker systems as you stated in the August 1968 issue. I built two of the larger bookshelf units you designed for the August 1963 HiFi/STEREO REVIEW. While I would have preferred to buy a pair of manufactured systems, I was quite poor at the time. Besides, I had a lot of fun and came up with some units that look different and reflect my particular taste in decor. I agree that in general it is difficult for the individual hobbyist to come up with a speaker system that competes sonically with the professionally manufactured unit. But isn't it a part of the component philosophy to do things in one's own way, so as to complement particular circumstances (in my case, limited budget)?

Moreover, is it really true, as you stated, that an individual can't buy drivers cheaply? I notice in current catalogs that one can buy a 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer for \$10, and a tweeter with a 10-ounce magnet for \$4. The two of them together would make up a system similar to the AR-2 and could be assembled for less than \$20. Of course, the sound would not be as good, but for many I'm sure it would be acceptable—particularly in view of the price. There are other good buys if one shops around. Now, this does not contradict the letter of what you said—since you mention that the enterprise is feasible if one keeps costs below \$35. However, I think that in some instances, one can also put together a very good system using high-priced drivers. Could I have your comment on this?

LEIGH WHITCHER
Erie, Pa.

A. Certainly, it is part of the component philosophy to do things in one's own way: to choose the components that best tickle one's fancy and to set them up in the way most in accord with one's notions of utility and aesthetics. We all do that, and take a great deal of joy in the doing. But the specific point I was trying to make was

that it would be wise to curb your creative urge insofar as building speaker systems is concerned, simply because it is much too easy for the novice to "design" a second-rate system at a first-rate price.

I'm aware that cheap raw speakers are available, but using two drivers whose superficial descriptions resemble those in a commercial speaker system will not necessarily make up a system "similar" to that commercial system. Certainly it is unlikely to be "similar" in sound quality. Frankly, I find it impossible to guess how a raw speaker installed in a box (or a complete speaker system for that matter) is going to sound from its catalog description—or its price.

Tapes for Europe

Q. A friend in Europe has asked me to send him some recorded-off-the-air tapes of U.S. radio programs. He has a two-track (half-track) mono recorder, and mine is a four-track stereo unit. What is the best way to make tapes that would be playable on his machine? Would the quality of music so recorded and reproduced be seriously degraded? Would the differences in line voltage and frequency have any effect? I'd appreciate your suggestions.

L. J. REGENT
Los Angeles, Calif.

A. First of all, use a new or bulk-erased tape for your recording, since you are going to be using only two of the available four tracks on your machine. If the other two tracks have anything recorded on them, it will be heard along with the desired tracks during half-track playback. Your recordings should be done at 7½ ips (for the best possible signal-to-noise ratio) and only on track 1. When track 1 is completely run through, reverse the reels. With the same control settings on your machine you will then be recording track 2. All things being equal, there will be perhaps a 3 to 6 dB worsening of the signal-to-noise ratio, but with two reasonably

(Continued on page 30)

The Fisher \$199.95 (no, not two hundred dollar) stereo receiver.



Perhaps you've noticed that Fisher prices aren't rounded off to the nearest dollar. But you probably didn't know why not.

Ever since the invention of solid-state stereo receivers, Fisher engineers have been working to bring down the price. Down to less than \$400. Less than \$300. And, recently, less than \$200.

So when you see a price a nickel short of \$200, you know it represents a major breakthrough.

Without the Integrated Circuit, a \$199.95 Fisher-quality stereo receiver would have been impossible.

The 3 IC's in the Fisher 160-T perform the same function as 9 transistors and 6 diodes. So there is the performance equivalent of 32 transistors and 21 diodes in the new receiver. But not the cost equivalent.

In case you think we've left something important out of the 160-T, here are the details to reassure you.

The receiver has an FM-stereo tuner section with an FET front end. It will bring in almost as many stations as the most expensive receiver we make, and just as clearly. And we didn't leave out our patented Stereo Beacon* for automatic mono-stereo switching.

The 160-T has Tune-O-Matic™

pushbutton memory tuning, the same feature we include in our new \$300 receiver. Tuning is accomplished electronically, and is dead accurate. You can pre-set the tuner to any five FM stations and tune to any one, instantly, at the touch of a button. (Tuning across the FM dial is, of course, also provided.)

The amplifier section has 40 watts music power, IHF. Which is enough power to drive a pair of medium to high-efficiency speaker systems at full volume without distortion. Fisher's Transist-O-Gard® overload protection circuit prevents possible short-circuiting from overload.

The controls are versatile enough to please any audiophile, and they include the same Baxandall tone controls our more expensive receivers have.

And for those of you who are buying stereo systems, and need speakers to go with the Fisher 160-T, here's our recommendation.

The Fisher XP-55B's, which sell for \$99.95 (no, not one hundred dollars), the pair.

(For more information, plus a free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1969 edition, an authoritative 72-page guide to hi-fi and stereo, use coupon on magazine's front cover flap.)

The Fisher 160-T

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This is a tape deck.

This is a stereo portable tape recorder.

This is the most versatile instrument you have ever seen.

This is the **Concord** F-400

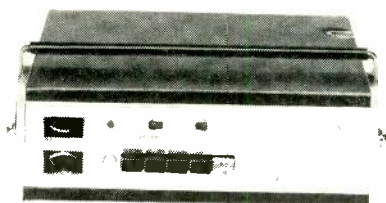


monaural tape recorder. Plays your own or pre-recorded stereo music cassettes. Goes anywhere you do because it's portable—operates on both batteries and house current.

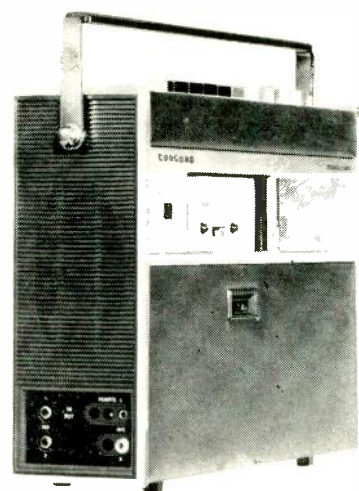
And its superb recorded sound is reproduced by its two high-power stereo am-

Every ounce of ingenuity Concord could muster—and we've got considerable—went into the design of the F-400. We've built a one-of-a-kind instrument for you: a portable **stereo** tape recorder **and** a cassette stereo tape deck you can plug into your hi-fidelity music system for recording off-the-air and from your stereo phonograph.

Versatility is this one's trademark. Records, with superb high fidelity, live from its own microphone: off-the-air from



AM, FM, or FM stereo radio; directly from a stereo phonograph or any other stereo or



plifiers and acoustically matched speakers. Solid state electronics throughout. Another excellent example of Concord's electronic ingenuity at work. The F-400—for less than \$180. Hear the F-400 and the other 17 Concord models now at your department store, high fidelity dealer, or photo dealer.

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the tape recorder people

Audio Tape Recorders Video Tape Recorders

For the name of your nearest Concord dealer write:

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good machines, this should not cause difficulties.

There will be no problem with the line voltage and frequency since each machine will be operating at 7½ ips. and the tape has no way of knowing the frequency and voltage characteristics of the a.c. power line.

Small Speakers, Big Rooms

Q. I recently read in an audio publication that a particular speaker system was better for small rooms than another speaker system made by the same manufacturer. The slightly larger and more expensive system was preferred for larger rooms. The essential difference between the two systems is in their bass response. Can you explain the reasoning behind the big-*vs.*-little-room approach to speakers for me?

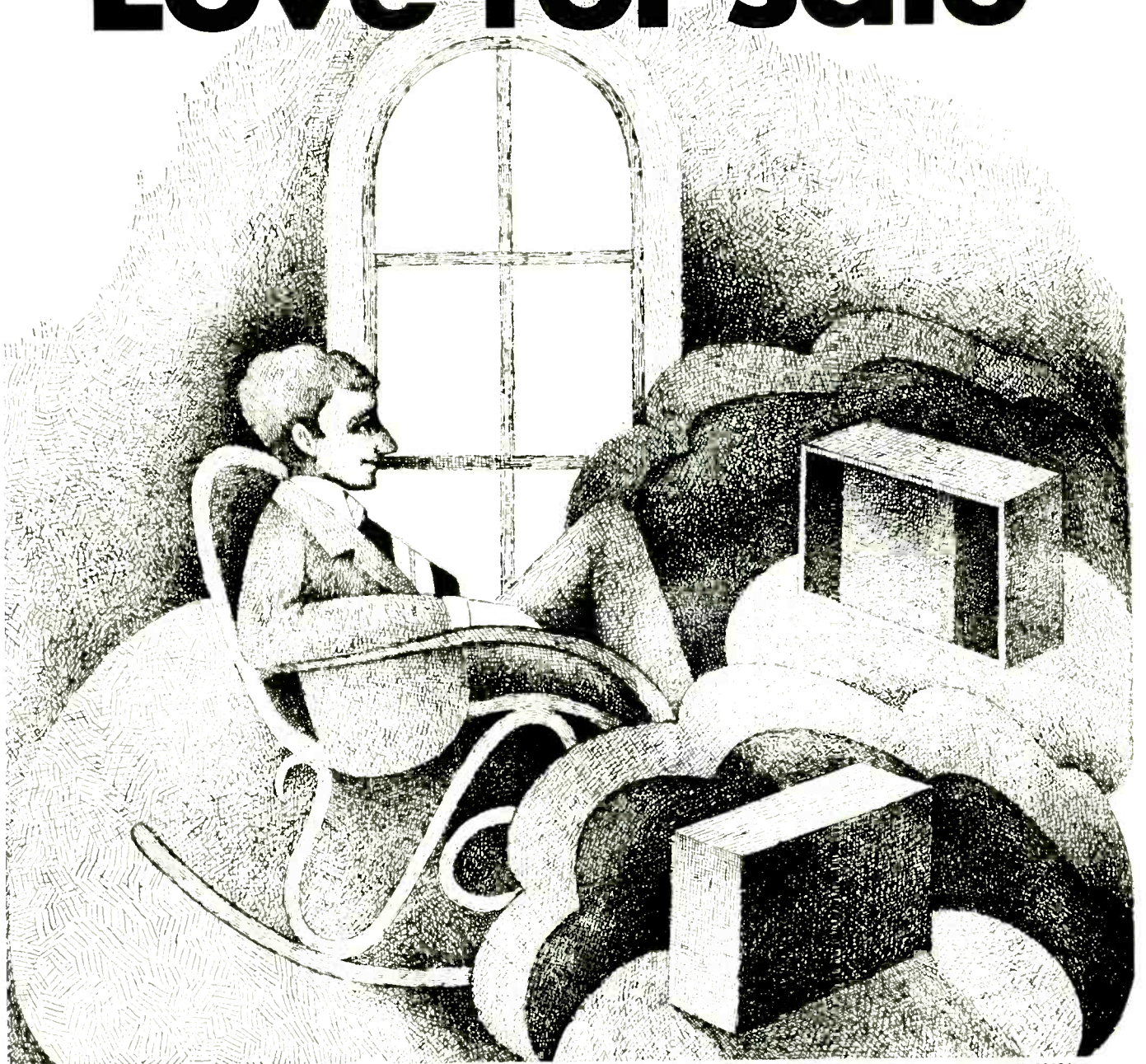
ED BUXBAUM
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A. No, I can't. Let's look at the matter from a room-acoustics point of view. In respect to room size, there are perhaps four factors involved: (1) a small room is more likely to be troubled with standing waves in the upper bass range. This would tend to make any system's bass response sound rather boomy. (2) For complicated acoustic reasons, small rooms make it difficult for speakers to radiate very low frequencies successfully. Although, if the room is very small (such as inside an automobile), tremendous bass pressures can be developed if the conditions are right. (3) Another possible problem with small rooms—and this has nothing to do with bass—is the fact that you may not be able to get sufficient physical separation between your speakers to realize the stereo effect properly. (4) A greater acoustical output is required from speakers in large rooms in order to achieve the same loudness level as in small rooms. However, if the room size is within the limits of those normally found in homes, if the amplifier has enough power to drive the speaker to loud levels, and if the speakers reproduce the loud levels without distortion, then I don't see how this could be a significant factor either.

In short, after much thought, I still can't see any technical justification for the theory that larger rooms are happier with larger speakers, and smaller rooms with smaller speakers. I would suggest that what would sound best in any size room is the best speaker—whatever its size—that you can afford to put into it.

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those questions selected for this column can be answered. Sorry!

Love for sale



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Like a lot of guys, you're probably having a passionate affair with your pet stereo album. And some groovy 45's. Right.

You keep them in top shape. No dust. No static. Not one little scratch. And they sound great. That's beautiful.

And if you were rich, you'd probably buy the most expensive speaker system you could.

But you're not. So what do you do?

That's where we come in. We've built two completely new speakers. The TF-25. And the smaller TF-15.

We put a ten-inch FLEXAIR® woofer plus a horn-loaded tweeter in the

TF-25. And in the TF-15, we put a special eight-inch woofer and a dynamic cone tweeter.

We built them to sound like a million bucks. And they do.

No distortion. No break-up. No coloration. The brass sounds like brass. And the strings like strings. True fidelity. That's beautiful.

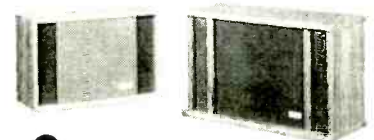
This weekend. Take your favorite side to anyone of our dealers. Listen to it through the TF-25. Or the TF-15. You'll hear exactly what we mean.

There's something else that's beautiful about our two new speakers. The price.

CIRCLE NO. 34 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The TF-25 sells for only 89.50. And the smaller TF-15 for 44.40. That's beautiful. Right.

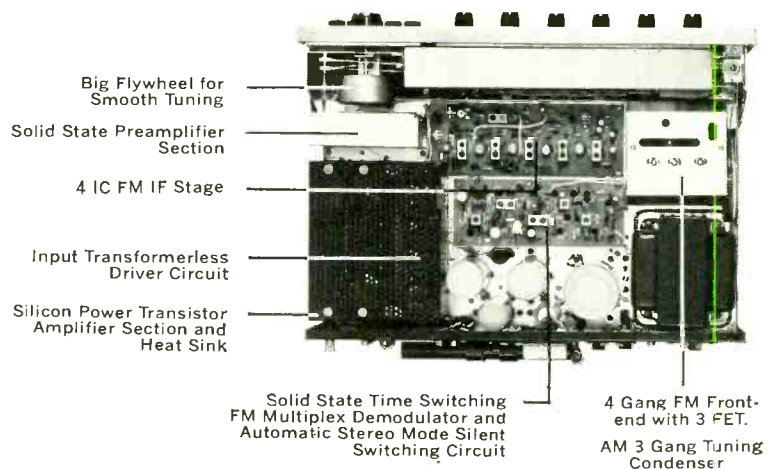
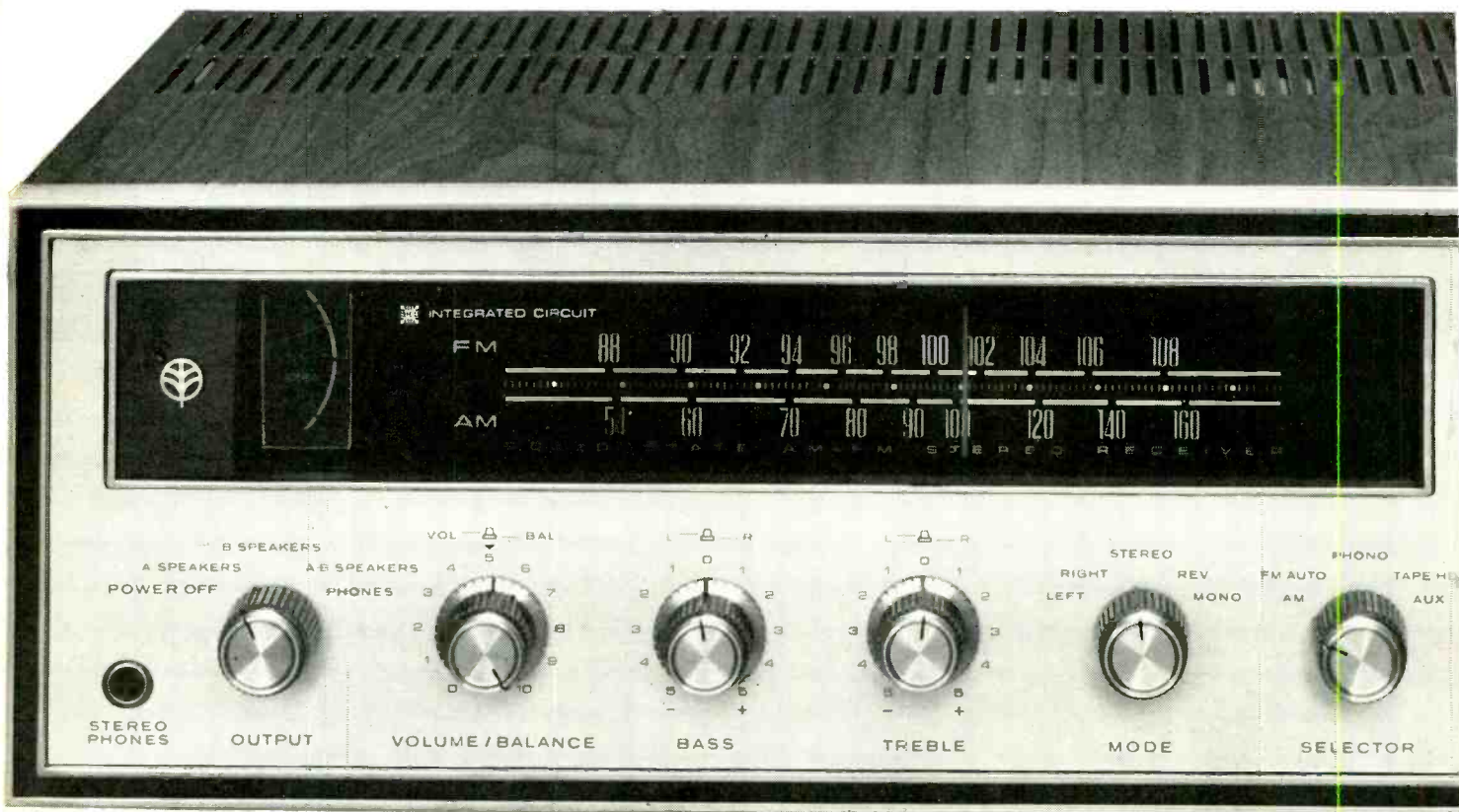
Who knows. This could be the start of another love affair.



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Big Flywheel for Smooth Tuning

Solid State Preamplifier Section

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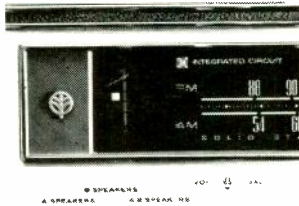
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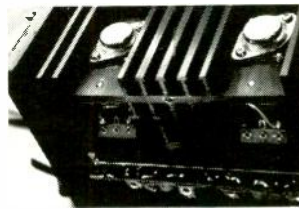
TK-140x

Receiver....

● NEW FEATURES...



Brilliant "Luminous Dial" that glows blue when set is "on"... disappears to an opaque panel when set is "off". Also, new Tuning Meter with FM Stereo Light Indicator

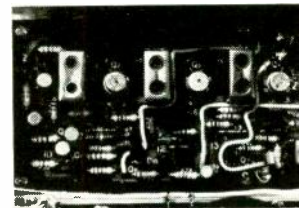


200 watts (4 ohms) music power plus special circuits and heavy-duty silicon transistors both in driver and main amplifier

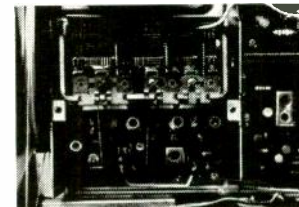


"Feather-Touch Control" to regulate Muting, Loudness (bass, treble boost at low listening levels), Tape Recorder Modes and Low and High Filters

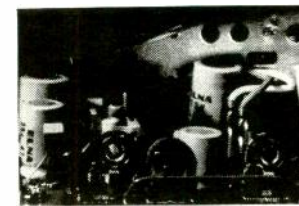
● NEW PERFORMANCE...



High-gain Integrated Circuits (IC) in all four IF Amplifiers to provide a mere 1 dB difference to capture one station and reject another on the same frequency



4-gang Tuning Condenser super-sensitive FM Front End with 3 FETs provides an exceptionally outstanding 1.7 μ V sensitivity.



Exclusive Electronic Protection Circuit (U.S. Pat.) guards against blow-up of power transistor. Another example of KENWOOD's quality and dependability.

● NEW VALUES...

Visit your nearest KENWOOD dealer and compare the TK-140x point for point with more expensive receivers. Check the features. Listen critically to the sound. Then compare the price. Hard to believe, but it is true. It's only \$349.95 and even includes the cabinet!



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You'll carry it everywhere! Not much bigger than a pack of cigarettes, the great little Rollei 35 fits pocket or purse, yet it takes full-sized, full frame 35mm pictures. The results are magnificent—razor-sharp color slides or sparkling prints—because this is a Rollei, built in the famous Rollei quality tradition.

Big-camera features include a superb f/3.5 Zeiss Tessar lens, a highly accurate exposure meter by Gossen, and a Compur shutter with 9 speeds up to an action-stopping 1/500 second. It's easy to use, too, even for beginners.

Beautifully made and meticulously finished, the jewel-like Rollei 35 costs about \$190, depending upon accessories. See it at your Honeywell dealer's soon, or mail the coupon for free literature.

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CIRCLE NO. 32 ON READER SERVICE CARD

By HANS H. FANTEL



AUDIO BASICS

RECEIVERS VS. SEPARATE COMPONENTS

IN THE "old" days, component sound systems almost invariably consisted of separate units: a preamplifier, a power amplifier, and an FM tuner. In the past several years, this concept has been challenged by the one-piece tuner-amplifier combinations that are called receivers. Since the audiophile still has to make the choice between totally separate components and the togetherness of receivers, the merits of each approach are worth discussing.

Although some stereo receivers were built in the pre-transistor age, their present ascendancy rests on bulk-shrinking solid-state circuitry, which enabled engineers to cram all the electronics of a stereo system into a single compact package without strain or overheating problems. Thanks to the miniaturization methods of present-day technology, today's shoebox-size receiver can frequently do a better job of sound reproduction than a shelf-full of pre-transistor gadgetry.

Aside from the obvious advantage of compactness, there are other attractive aspects that account for the receiver's rising popularity. One is the ease of installation: you plug in the turntable, hook up the speakers, and your stereo system is ready to play. Also, with just one unit instead of three, and with no connecting cables dangling between separate components, the electronic-equipment display on your shelf is less overwhelming and usually more attractive. One other advantage of receivers is economic. As a rule, receivers cost a little less than separate components with similar specifications. This saving stems from the fact that only a single chassis and a single power-supply section (not three) are needed.

Separate components offer a different set of advantages. One obvious plus factor is that they may be repaired separately. If your tuner needs fixing, you can take it to a repair shop and still be able to play records, thus avoiding total music deprivation. Separate units also permit you to assemble a system that fits your specific needs. Suppose, for example, you live on the outer fringe area for good FM reception. You'll need a very sensitive tuner to pull in FM, but your amplifier requirements may be far less stringent. Conversely, you may need a high-power amplifier for playing your tapes and records loudly through low-efficiency speakers, but your location enables you to pick up quality FM on a relatively inexpensive tuner. In either case, separate components let you pair a tuner with an amplifier to come up with a combination to fit your special requirements. Moreover, whenever you want to make a change, you can trade in one unit at a time, giving you a greater range of choice (and possibly lower cost) in updating your stereo system.

Separate components have two advantages of a more technical nature. Amplifiers with very high power output at the very low frequencies are rarely found in receivers. Full-power operation at frequencies below 50 or 60 Hz requires bulky power-supply stages, making very compact packaging impossible. Separate preamplifiers also tend to have more complex and versatile controls, offering the knowledgeable audiophile more exact control over what his sound system is doing. And the separate units, by making it easier to break into the signal path at any point to insert such devices as reverberation units and electronic crossovers, allow for all sorts of sonic experimentation.

The first cassette deck with the guts to talk specs.

Most high fidelity buffs have been, at best, amused by the notion of a fine quality cassette deck. And perhaps with good reason. Many cassette recorders have been little more than toys. We, on the other hand, have always felt that a *component* quality cassette deck was a totally viable product.

And we've proved it. Conclusively.

The CAD4 has a frequency response of ± 2 db 30-12,500 Hz with less than 0.25 RMS wow and flutter. Signal to noise is better than 49 db. And record and playback amplifier distortion is less than 0.5% THD @ zero VU. Cross talk is better than 35 db.

These specifications compare favorably with those of the most popular reel-to-reel recorders. They were achieved by developing a revolutionary new

narrow gap head with four laminations per stack. This head, combined with specially designed low-noise solid state electronics makes it possible for the CAD4 to deliver wideband frequency response and virtually distortion-free performance.

The CAD4 also features electronic speed control and carefully balanced capstan drive with precision mechanism for precise tape handling and minimum wow and flutter.

It has two large illuminated professional type VU meters; over-modulation indicator light on the front panel that ignites at +2 VU on either channel;

unique electronic automatic shutoff and pushbutton switches for recording and shuttling functions.

Unlike most other cassette decks on the market, the CAD4 is solidly crafted in steel (walnut end caps) to assure rigidity and mechanical alignment of all moving parts. It weighs 10 pounds and is 12½" W, 9" D, 3¼" H.

The CAD4 is at your Harman-Kardon dealer now. It's only \$159.50. And we guarantee it will change your mind about tape cassette recorders.

For detailed technical information on the CAD4, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Dept. SR-3.



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If you're impressed by favorable equipment reviews, by independent laboratories, we urge you to send for our free literature.

When you send back the reader service card with our number circled you'll receive a nice fat package.

Along with our full color brochures you'll get a collection of complete, reprinted reviews that first appeared in this magazine and others.

Reviews of the 1019, and all the other Duals it has inspired.

The Dual 1019, at \$139.50, has received more praise, from reviewers and audiophiles alike, than any other audio equipment we know of.

It's the turntable the experts invariably choose for their own systems. (And we're including the independent reviewers whose

reviews you'll be reading in our literature. Most of them decided to buy a 1019 after they'd put it through their tests.)

People who know about all available hi-fi products appreciate the Dual brand of precision. These experts confirm that the Dual 1019 can track flawlessly as low as 1/2 gram. That the 1019's constant-speed motor is quieter and more powerful than comparable synchronous types.

And they've found that rumble, wow and flutter is actually lower in the Dual 1019 than in professional broadcast turntables.

But send for their exact words.

They tell the Dual story in a much more convincing way than we ever could.

(You know we're prejudiced.)

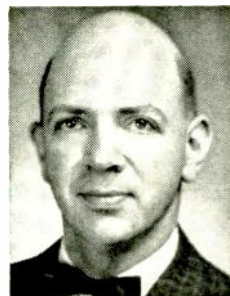
United Audio Products, Inc., 535 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022



CIRCLE NO. 70 ON READER SERVICE CARD

TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH



● **INTERPRETING EQUIPMENT REVIEWS:** The following letter was written by the representative of a well-known manufacturer of high-fidelity equipment in answer to a customer who felt that he had been led astray by a published audio-product review. Its author was kind enough to share it with me, and has also kindly agreed to my sharing it in turn with the readers of *STEREO REVIEW*. I am in complete accord with the sentiments expressed in it, and have often presented similar views in this column.

Dear Sir: I was very interested in your attitude concerning product reviews by audio and consumer magazines. Usually it's the manufacturer who feels he has been mistreated if his product is not reviewed favorably. Your feelings apparently stem from an unfortunate experience with some highly rated high-fidelity equipment. I'm sure everyone has purchased a new car, home appliance, or other product on the advice of friends, relatives, or even the dealer and then found the product to be a lemon. Unfortunately, this happens occasionally.

I have worked for several electronics manufacturers and have found that publications such as *Consumer Reports*, *STEREO REVIEW*, *Audio*, *High Fidelity*, and others give as honest a review of each product as they possibly can. All the major review organizations are extremely well outfitted with test equipment, and qualified audiophiles help them in their judgments. In many cases, they are as well (if not better) equipped as the manufacturer producing the equipment.

Occasionally, a "fault" the test labs find in a unit may be of no importance to some consumers. For instance, they may downgrade an amplifier for having insufficient gain at the tape input, although every other aspect of performance is excellent. A consumer who just plays records or listens to FM couldn't care less.

In other cases, the consumer misinterprets the review. Consumers Union, for example, gives a "best buy" rating to a product they feel represents the *best value for the money*. Being a rather sophisticated audiophile, I certainly would not be happy with many of the "best buy" products. I might want the best at *any* price—so their reviews would be no guide for me when buying hi-fi. If, however, I intended to buy a lawnmower, which I know virtually nothing about, I would be very much interested in their comment on performance and durability of the models available. In short, I feel that if you are capable of

making your own evaluation of a high-fidelity product by listening, turning knobs, or employing your own test equipment, by all means do so. It's the people who can't tell in 10 or 15 minutes if a speaker system will tire them out after a couple of hours of listening or if the knobs will fall off a receiver in a few weeks that benefit most from these publications.

I have found (almost without fail) that a product given a good review by the various magazines turns out to be a pretty good product well worth the dollars invested. Each consumer must combine his own personal taste and experience with the results of professional evaluation when making a purchase. In other words, use the review as a guide, *not* a bible.

JAMES GARDNER

Bogen Communications Division

As readers may have suspected, product evaluation in a special-interest, hobbyist field such as high fidelity can be a sticky, tricky business. Our job, as we see it, is to avoid being picayune or arbitrary, and to "tell it like it is." Unfortunately, our judgment of "the way it is" may not agree with yours, or with that of another reviewer or, as frequently happens, with that of the manufacturer of the product undergoing review.

The trouble, is, I suppose, that we are prejudiced in our reporting. Try as we may, we simply cannot remain coldly objective—and I'm not sure it would be a good idea if we could. A purely objective numerical-presentation report on a stereo component would surely be dull reading, and would probably be misleading to a large number of readers. So, in order to clarify matters that are inadequately defined in numerical terms (and to help the reader to stay awake), we try to inject into the reports a certain amount of personal reaction.

As an example of the way we at Hirsch-Houck Labs look at things, we are totally unimpressed by "gimmicks" or "features" that add nothing to a product's utility even if they do work. A \$100 amplifier cannot be expected to be as powerful, or to have as low distortion, as one costing \$300, but it *can* (and should) sound almost as good at moderate listening levels. All too often, this is not the case. Somehow, no matter what sacrifices in performance are

REVIEWED THIS MONTH



Heath AJ-15 Tuner
and AA-15 Amplifier Kits

Tannoy "Monitor Gold" Speaker

made to reduce costs, equipment designers seem reluctant to omit such frills as worthless noise and rumble filters, muddy-sounding loudness compensation, and similar features that give the salesman something to talk about but have no place in any product built to sell at a low price. In my view, there is no engineering excuse for an amplifier that cannot deliver more than 2 or 3 watts per channel at 20 Hz or 20,000 Hz, yet is rated (perhaps honestly) as a 65-watt amplifier when measured according to the IHF music-power system. However, such products appear with depressing regularity.

A parallel situation exists in other areas, such as tuners and record players (when was the last time *you* played a 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ -rpm record, or even a 78-rpm record?). We are told that these features really cost very little, and help to increase sales. Individually, they may cost little at the manufacturing end, but the total effect is to add dollars to the selling price, which could be lowered to everyone's benefit if they were eliminated. Certainly the money and

the design effort might be better devoted to improving performance.

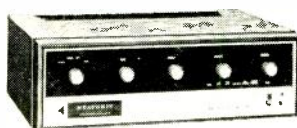
I will not seriously downgrade an instrument in my reports, no matter how replete with useless and trivial features it may be, if it does its basic job properly. On the other hand, if I see obvious evidence of honesty and integrity in its design, I do not conceal my enthusiasm.

The last two sentences of the manufacturer's letter restate a point that I have made several times in this column. Please don't take our word for *anything* that you can verify (or disprove) with your own ears. If you are unable to hear the equipment yourself, you must rely on the judgment of someone whose integrity and competence you trust, whether it be a friend or a magazine reviewer. Either approach is preferable to making a purchase solely on the basis of an advertisement or catalog listing. You'll find that there is often a staggering gap between an ad writer's copy and a product's performance in your home.

≈ EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS ≈

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

**HEATH
AJ-15 TUNER KIT**



**HEATH AA-15
AMPLIFIER KIT**

● THE HEATH AR-15 receiver, which we reviewed in May, 1967, has since been widely acclaimed by both critics and the public. As we noted at the time, its FM-tuner section outperformed any separate tuner we had seen. The combination of this tuner section with a very powerful, clean audio amplifier made the AR-15 stand out among its contemporaries then, and it still does.

Recognizing that many audio enthusiasts already have a good tuner (or amplifier) and would like to upgrade their systems by replacing only one component, Heath has now made the FM tuner and audio amplifier sections of the AR-15 available separately as the AJ-15 and the AA-15.

Each unit has the same panel dimensions as the AR-15, but is only 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep (compared with the 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches of the AR-15), and has a full-width opaque plastic panel that conceals all dial markings and control identifications until the power is turned on. Controls that are used less frequently are located along the brushed-aluminum strip below the plastic panel and (in the case of the AA-15 amplifier) behind the hinged door in the lower left corner of the panel.

The AJ-15 FM tuner has an all-FET front end, with two r.f. amplifier stages and an integrated-circuit i.f. amplifier. Heath, in the AR-15, was one of the first manufacturers to use IC's in an FM tuner. Since then, many manufacturers have followed suit, but none has provided the two crystal filters that give the AJ-15 its (as yet) unsurpassed selectivity and ideal bandpass characteristics. The AJ-15 also includes the rather complex muting circuit of the AR-15,

which uses eleven transistors and six diodes. In theory, by having the circuit sense not only interstation noise, but mis-tuning, to operate the muting circuit, the noise bursts that accompany the operation of many muting circuits can be eliminated. The Heath system works very well for normal tuning rates, but cannot cope with a very fast scan across the dial.

The AJ-15 has three pairs of audio-output terminals in the rear. Two operate at a fixed level of about 1.3 volts (for a fully modulated FM signal) and the third has a variable-output level up to about 4 volts maximum. Since there are level and balance controls on its front panel, the AJ-15 can be connected to drive a power amplifier directly—if such operation is desired. Also on the AJ-15 front panel are two stereo headphone jacks, effectively in parallel with the variable outputs. The built-in low-level audio amplifiers supply more than enough power to operate low-impedance phones, so that the tuner by itself can serve as a complete receiver for two persons using headphones.

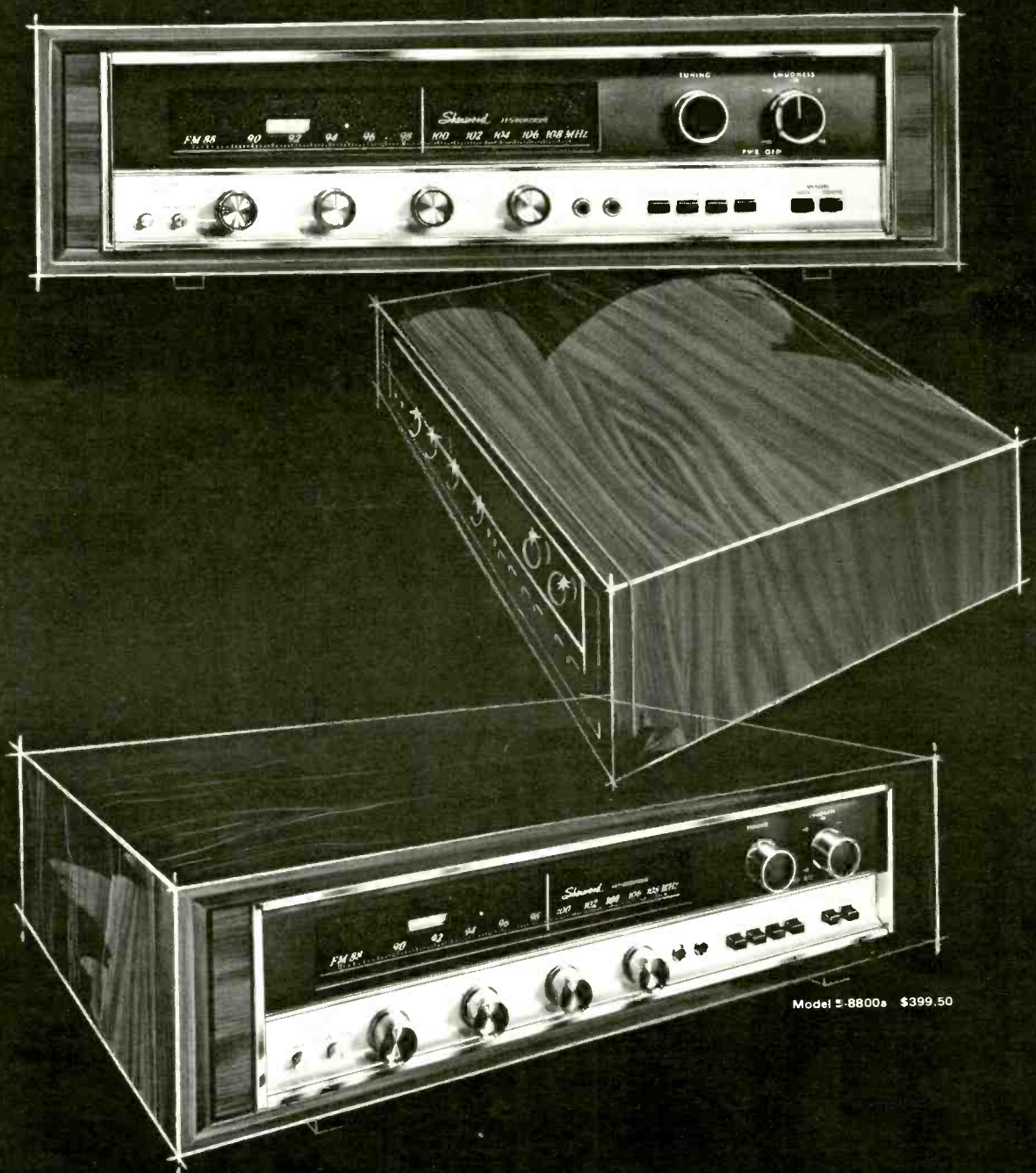
Other front-panel controls include tuning, mode selector (auto, mono, and stereo—the latter permitting only stereo broadcasts to be heard), interstation-muting level, and phasing. The phasing control enables the user to adjust the multiplex circuits to match the broadcast transmissions using aural-null indication. It really works, and is probably responsible in good measure for the excellent stereo separation we measured on the AJ-15 (37 dB at mid-frequencies, and better than 25 dB from 30 Hz to over 10,000 Hz).

Two rocker-switch controls reduce noise on weak stereo signals and vary the mono-stereo switching point for automatic stereo reception. The latter, in its MAX position, inserts an adjustable threshold control which for some reason is located inaccessibly within the receiver. Finally, the AJ-15 has two tuning meters, one reading relative signal strength and the other center-of-channel tuning. Unfortunately, there is no provision for multipath indication either by use of one of the meters or through external means.

When we tested the original AR-15 we were impressed
(Continued on page 40)

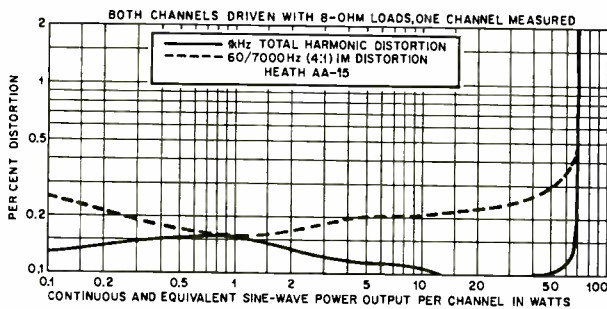
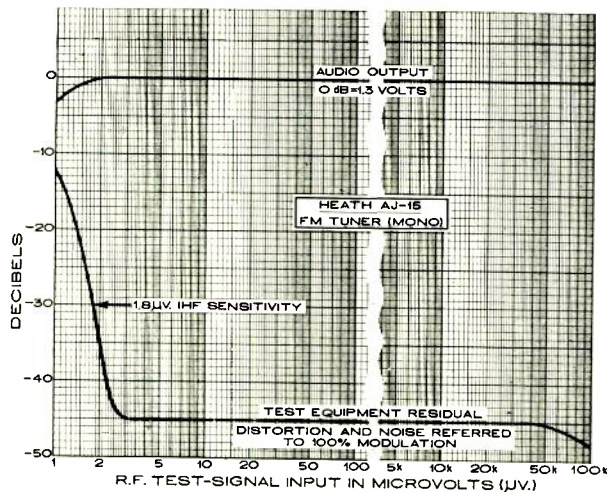
**First of a
new breed
—from
Sherwood**

This is what high performance is all about. A bold and beautiful new FM Stereo Receiver bred to leave the others behind. 160 crisp, clean watts—power in reserve. Up-front, ultra-now circuitry featuring Field-Effect Transistors and microcircuitry. Front-panel, push-button command of main, remote, or mono extension speakers and loudness contour. Sherwood high-fidelity—where the action is—long on reliability with a three-year warranty.



Sherwood

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by its steep limiting curve on FM reception, which showed an IHF sensitivity of 1.45 microvolts and full limiting at 3 microvolts. The AJ-15 tuner, built from a kit almost two years later, had identical limiting characteristics, with an IHF sensitivity of 1.8 microvolts (the Heath published rating). We can still report that no other tuner that has passed through our laboratory has exhibited *full* limiting at a 3-microvolt level. The marginal reception of some stations that occurs with almost any tuner is most unlikely to occur with the AJ-15.

THE AA-15 amplifier is rated, with considerable conservatism, at 50 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads. For any output up to 50 watts per channel (both channels driven), the distortion was less than 0.15 per cent at any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz, and in general was about 0.1 per cent. This is one of the few amplifiers that are as clean when delivering full power at 20 and 20,000 Hz as at 1,000 Hz. At a fixed 1000-Hz frequency, the harmonic distortion was under 0.15 per cent from 0.1 watt to 65 watts per channel. IM distortion was under 0.3 per cent up to 50 watts. Power output into 4-ohm loads was about 5 per cent less than at the 8-ohm level; into 16-ohm loads, the output was about two-thirds of the 8-ohm level.

The AA-15 output transistors are protected by current-limiting circuits and by thermal circuit breakers that shut off the power when the transistors become too hot. The breakers tripped regularly during our tests, even though the heat sinks did not become too hot to touch. It should be well-nigh impossible to damage this amplifier in normal use.

The bass and treble tone-control circuits can be completely bypassed by using one of the six rocker-switch controls on the panel. This provides completely flat response (we measured it as ± 0.25 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz, which is within the limits of our measurement error). Loudness compensation, affecting both low and high frequencies, can be switched in or out as desired. Two rocker switches connect in either or both of the two pairs of

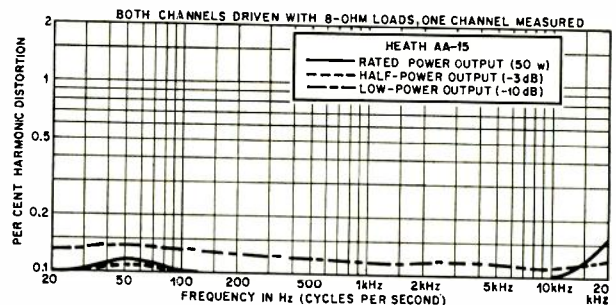
speaker outputs. A pair of front-panel stereo phone jacks are always energized. Tape monitoring is available when a three-head tape machine is connected to the amplifier. Finally, a mode switch selects mono or stereo operation on any input.

Four inputs are provided: PHONO, TUNER, TAPE and AUX. Behind the hinged door on the front panel are ten slotted adjustment controls that set the relative levels on each channel of each input (including the tape-monitoring input). This valuable feature makes it possible for all inputs to be matched in level and balance and to be set for proper operation of the loudness compensation (very few amplifiers offer this adjustment, which is vital for proper operation of any loudness-compensation circuit). When all inputs have been properly balanced, it will rarely be necessary to use the main balance control.

The hum and noise level of the AA-15 (referred to 10 watts) was -75 dB on AUX and -60 dB on PHONO. Though not quite as low as those of some amplifiers we have tested, these figures are within the Heath specifications, and the hum and noise are certainly not audible in use.

Although the AA-15 obviously has a healthy complement of operating features, it lacks low- and high-frequency filters and tape-head equalization. By way of compensation for these minor omissions, the AA-15 has the most accurate phono equalization we have ever measured, within ± 0.3 dB of the RIAA curve, extrapolated to 20 and 20,000 Hz.

Our laboratory and on-the-air listening tests confirm that the Heath AJ-15 and AA-15 are very fine components indeed. No competing tuner will do a better job (few can



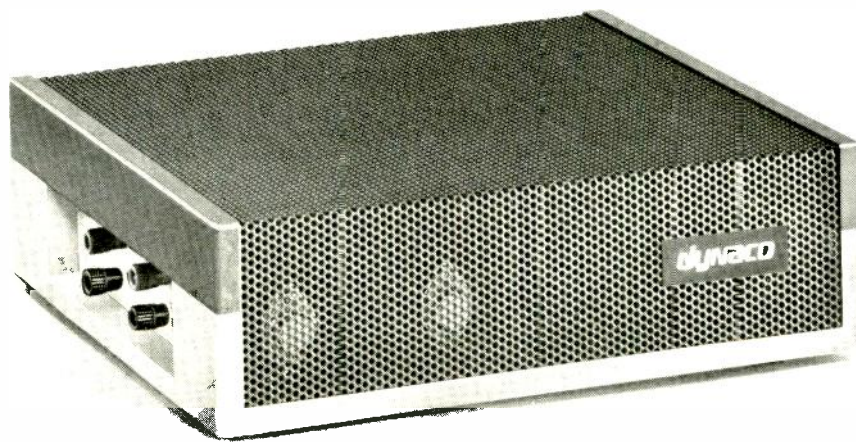
even approach it), and most amplifiers with comparable performance are considerably more expensive. A natural question if you are putting together your system is "Should I buy the separate AJ-15 and AA-15 or an AR-15 receiver?" Given that choice, our vote goes to the AR-15. In every respect it is the equal of the separate components, and it is more compact and less expensive than the pair. In addition, it includes an AM tuner of fair quality, and can be bought factory wired.

However, if you are satisfied with either your present tuner or amplifier and wish to improve the other one, it is hard to imagine a better value than either of the separate components. Another consideration is that by buying them individually, one can avoid spending the full price of the receiver at one time. Our kit builders report that each of the kits took about a week of evenings to wire. Assembly should be done in slow and easy stages since there are a lot of parts to wire and many opportunities to go wrong if you are not careful. The construction manuals, as usual, are up to Heath's very high standards.

The Heath AJ-15 FM tuner kit is \$189.95, and the AA-15 amplifier kit is \$169.95. A walnut cabinet for either is \$19.95.

For more information, circle 157 on reader service card

(Continued on page 42)



OUR NEWEST AMPLIFIER

The transistorized Stereo 120 was introduced in 1966, and the demand still exceeds the supply.

Our newest power amplifier doesn't replace our earlier ones, so you can now have Dynaco performance with either tubes or transistors. The mono 60 watt Mark III is still current and a classic after twelve years. The \$99 Stereo 70 remains the most widely accepted amplifier ever made, even after ten years.

This unprecedented longevity is explained by Dynaco's unswerving devotion to perform-

ance, reliability, and unmatched low cost. The Stereo 120 kit is only \$159.95 or \$199.95 factory assembled. It is easily the most desired of all solid state power amplifiers. At less than half the cost of comparable amplifiers, such consummate value just naturally gets around.

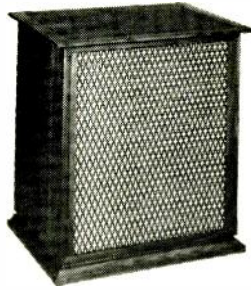
Dynaco introduces new products only when they fill a real need. They never render previous models obsolete.

We can't promise that the Stereo 120 will still be our newest amplifier in 1979.

But we do know it won't be out of date.

DYNACO, INC., 3060 JEFFERSON ST., PHILA., PA. 19121

**TANNOY
"MONITOR GOLD"
SPEAKER SYSTEM**



● DURING the early days of high fidelity, about twenty years ago, coaxial speakers enjoyed great popularity. It was—and is—generally recognized that a single cone was not capable of optimum reproduction over the full audible range. The simple expedient of mounting a small tweeter concentrically with the woofer appeared to be an attractive solution to the problem.

The coaxial speakers of that day spanned a range from flimsy combinations of two cheap cone speakers of doubtful quality to massive and costly giants with heavy-duty woofers and horn-loaded tweeters. Even in those days, the British-made Tannoy "Dual Concentric" speakers were among the elite of their type. We heard them at Audio Fairs (as the annual audio shows were then called) and were duly impressed. Unfortunately, our limited budgets did not then permit our developing a closer acquaintance with the Tannoy speakers.

It was, therefore, with more than casual interest that we approached this test of the Tannoy Monitor Gold, the direct descendent of those early coaxial speakers. With all the intervening advances in the loudspeaker art, such as acoustic suspension, high-energy magnets, and electrostatic elements, could the venerable Tannoy design compete effectively in today's market? Read on and see.

While the basic structure of the present-day Monitor Gold series of drivers (made in 10-, 12- and 15-inch sizes) is similar to that of the 1945 Dual Concentric, there have been many changes that may not be immediately obvious to the eye, but that are certainly audible to the ear. The multiple-throat, horn-loaded tweeter diaphragm is still located at the rear of the magnet structure, its flared horn tapering smoothly into the curved woofer cone, which serves as a flared extension of the high-frequency driver's built-in horn.

An acoustically transparent dome over the opening of the tweeter horn seals it against dust and foreign particles. The high-frequency driver's voice coil, 2 inches in diameter, is wound with aluminum wire for low mass. The 12-inch model, which is the one we tested, has a 7½-pound magnet structure. The woofer cone, also driven by a 2-inch voice coil, has a high-compliance, large-exursion plastic surround that results in a 28-Hz free-air resonance. Crossover frequency is 1,000 Hz.

An integral part of the Tannoy Monitor Gold speaker is the physically separate crossover network and the two controls usually installed on the rear panel of the cabinet. One control, labeled ENERGY, is designed to raise or lower the relative output of the system above about 1,000 Hz without changing the slope of the curve. A variation of about ±2.5 dB around the normal level is available. The other control, ROLLOFF, is a four-position switch that affects the slope and frequency response above 2,000 Hz, with a

total reduction of about 5 or 6 dB above 10,000 Hz. These controls, relatively subtle in their effect, permit the speaker's response to be trimmed over a moderate range to suit room acoustics or personal preferences.

To make the Monitor Gold speaker compatible with modern solid-state amplifiers, the nominal impedance has been reduced to 8 ohms from its former value of 16 ohms, and it is held to a minimum of 5 ohms throughout the audio-frequency range. The new crossover network is also designed to maintain a uniform impedance over the mid- and high-frequency range.

The speaker was supplied for testing installed in Tannoy's Stuart enclosure. This is a floor-standing low-boy with exceptionally attractive styling, and a black wooden filigree covering the grille cloth. The finish is a light-grained walnut, resembling teak, and it is one of the handsomest pieces of loudspeaker furniture we have seen in years. The Stuart is a ducted-port bass-reflex enclosure, standing 25½ inches high, 24¾ inches wide, and 16⅞ inches deep.

The averaged frequency response from ten microphone positions, with the "normal" setting of the ENERGY control and maximum setting of the ROLLOFF control, was ±4.5 dB from 65 to 15,000 Hz. Between 1,000 and 10,000 Hz the response was extremely smooth, varying only ±1.5 dB. The low-frequency response was very uniform down to 70 Hz, but fell off rapidly below that frequency.

The harmonic distortion at 1-watt input was less than 2.5 per cent down to 50 Hz, rising smoothly to 5 per cent at 40 Hz and 10 per cent at 35 Hz. The low-bass distortion suggests that the effective lower limit of the speaker's response in the Stuart enclosure might be in the 40-Hz region if the enclosure is situated properly in the listening room.

The tone-burst response was generally good, although we observed a secondary burst, or echo, about 0.5 to 1 millisecond after the cessation of the main burst. This appeared to be a property of the system (though not necessarily of the speaker itself); however, its amplitude was sufficiently low that the effect was not audible.

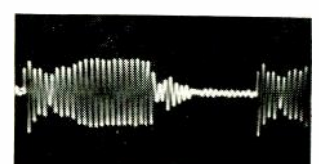
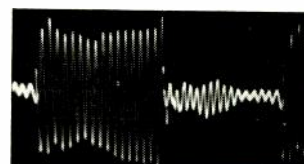
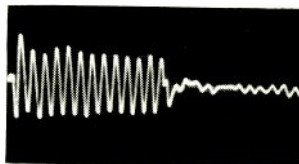
The sound of the Tannoy Monitor Gold was very sweet, smooth, and balanced. It had a strong lower mid-range response that imparted warmth and body to the sound without ever becoming boomy or unnatural. To our ears, the overall sound was best with both high-frequency controls at maximum. The speaker never spits or screams, and even at the highest volume levels showed no trace of breakup or harshness.

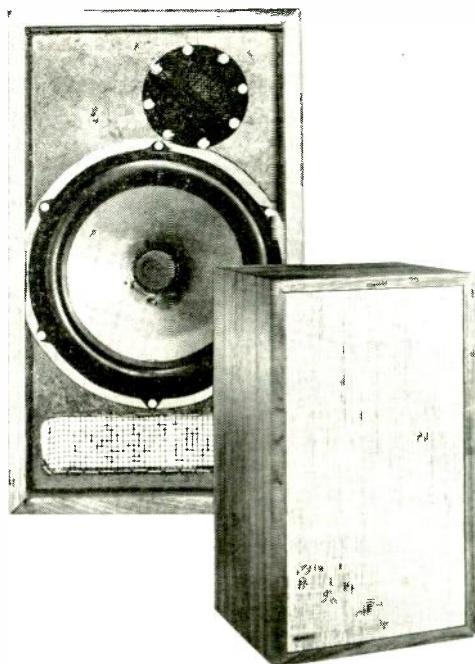
To leave no doubt in anyone's mind, we must emphasize that the Tannoy 12-inch Monitor Gold speaker, in the Stuart enclosure, is a truly contemporary speaker, both sonically and aesthetically, and it bears favorable comparison with any other speaker in its price class. If it had existed in this form in 1948, it would have been nothing less than sensational.

The Tannoy Monitor Gold 12-inch speaker alone, complete with crossover network and level controls, sells for \$147. The Stuart enclosure, available separately, is \$125, and the two combined as a system are \$272. The similarly designed 10-inch and 15-inch coaxial speakers are priced at \$127 and \$195, respectively. A variety of enclosures, in several different styles and sizes, are offered for all the speaker models.

For more information, circle 158 on reader service card

The tone-burst response of the Tannoy 12-inch Monitor Gold speaker installed in the Stuart enclosure is shown for bursts of (left to right) 270, 2,100, and 5,700 Hz.





\$80 FOR A \$250 SPEAKER ?

Dynaco electronic components have gained wide acceptance because people recognize that Dynaco offers remarkable value—like the quality of a \$300 preamplifier for only \$90. And now we have a loudspeaker system of comparable value—the Dynaco A-25.

This new **aperiodic** loudspeaker system is just \$79.95, compact (20"x11½"x10" deep), and particularly easy to drive. We call it **aperiodic** because the Dynaco A-25 is almost literally without resonance, thanks to an acoustic impedance system which provides variable volume action rather than the sealed acoustic suspension box. The aperiodic design contributes markedly improved low frequency

transient response, reduced Doppler effects, and a substantial improvement in effective coupling of the speaker to the amplifier. The A-25's ten-inch extended excursion woofer crosses over at 1500 Hz to a new dome tweeter with a five-step level control.

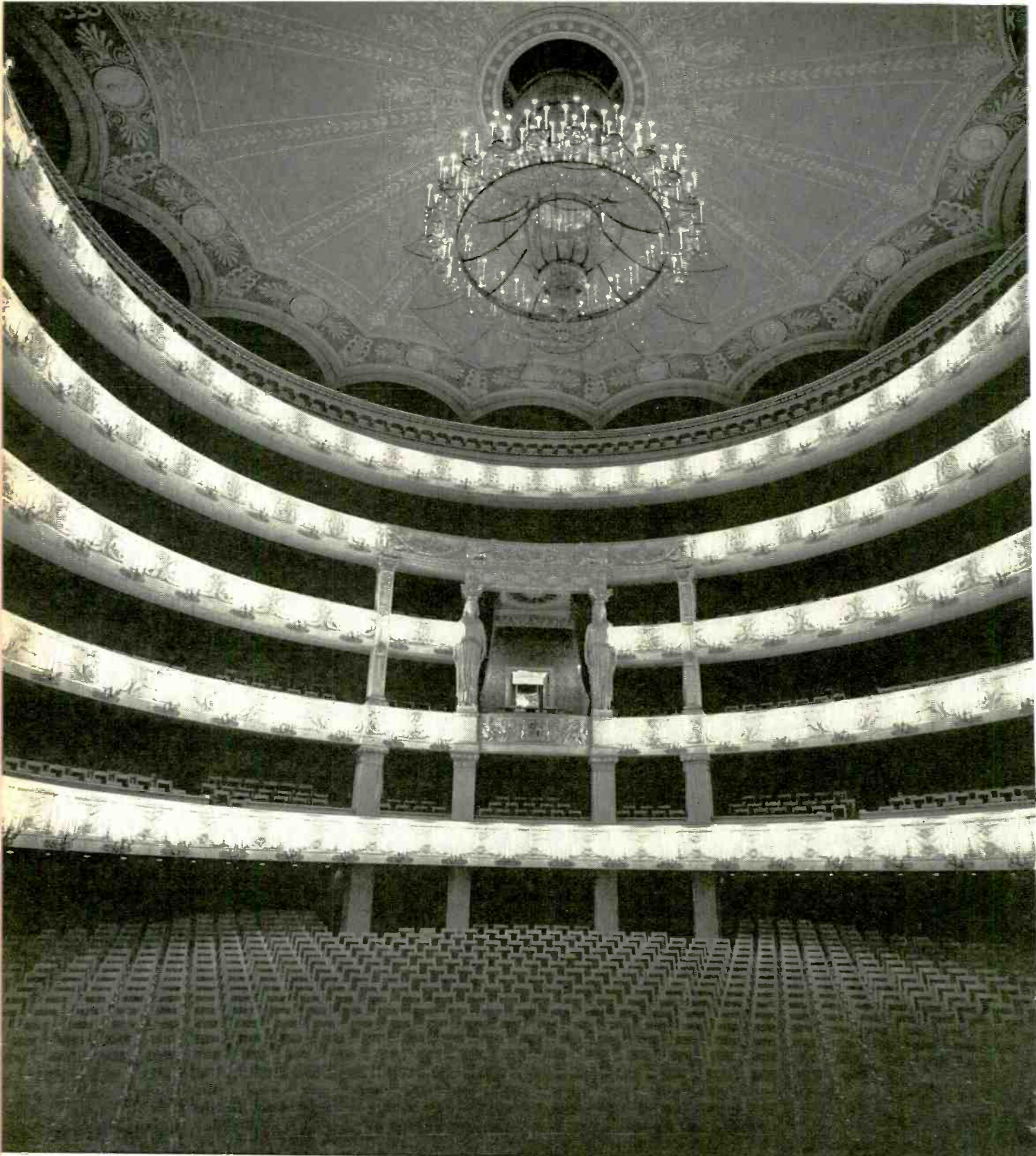
We suggest an appraisal at your Dynaco dealer. When you hear a solo voice—one of the most critical tests—the articulate naturalness of this speaker will be apparent. When listening to choral groups or orchestras, you will be impressed by the feeling that this is a "big" speaker thanks to its outstanding dispersion.

Listen—and you will agree that the A-25 has all the qualities of a \$250 speaker.

DYNACO INC.

3060 JEFFERSON ST., PHILA., PA. 19121

CABLE ADDRESS: DYNACO PHILADELPHIA, USA



The reconstructed Nationaltheater in Munich, originally built 1811-18, scene of the world premieres of "Tristan" and "Meistersinger."

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ

You can tell it's the Münchner Nationaltheater

The ultimate test of a stereo cartridge isn't the sound of the music.

It's the sound of the hall.

Many of today's smoother, better-tracking cartridges can reproduce instrumental and vocal timbres with considerable naturalism. But something is often missing. That nice, undistorted sound seems to be coming from the speakers, or from nowhere in particular, rather than from the concert hall or opera stage.

It's easy to blame the recording, but often it's the cartridge.

The acoustical characteristics that distinguish one hall from another, or any hall from your listening room, represent the subtlest frequency and phase components of the recorded waveform. They end up as extremely fine undulations of the record groove, even finer than the higher harmonics of most instruments.

When a cartridge reproduces these undulations with the utmost precision, you can hear the specific acoustics of the Nationaltheater in Munich, or of any other hall. If it doesn't, you can't. The Stanton does.

"The tracking was excellent and distinctly better in this respect than any other cartridge we have tested... The frequency response of the Stanton 681EE was the flattest of the cartridges tested, within ± 1 dB over most of the audio range." Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, HiFi/Stereo Review, July, 1968.



The specifications.*
 Frequency response, from 10 Hz to 10kHz, $\pm 1/2$ dB.
 From 10kHz to 20kHz, individually calibrated.
 Nominal output, 0.7mV/cm/sec.
 Nominal channel separation, 35dB.
 Load resistance, 47K ohms.
 Cable capacitance, 275 pF.
 DC resistance, 1K ohms.
 Inductance, 500mH.
 Stylus tip, .0002" x .0009" elliptical.
 Tracking force, $3/4$ to 1 $1/2$ gm.
 Cartridge weight, 5.5 gm.
 Brush weight (self-supporting), 1gm.

*Each Stanton 681 is tested and measured against the laboratory standard for frequency response, channel separation, output, etc. The results are written by hand on the specifications enclosed with every cartridge.

The 681EE, with elliptical stylus and the "Longhair" brush that cleans record grooves before they reach the stylus, costs \$60. The 681T, identical but with interchangeable elliptical and conical styli both included, costs \$75.

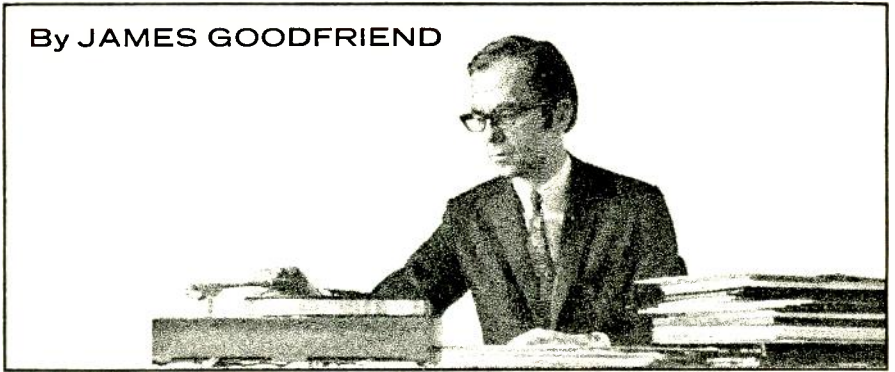
For free literature, write to Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Plainview, L.I., N.Y. 11803.

when you
 listen with a
 Stanton.



CIRCLE NO. 65 ON READER SERVICE CARD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND



GOING ON RECORD

BOOKS TO LISTEN TO MUSIC BY

It has often been remarked upon that the important musical renaissance of our time, that of the music listener, has developed purely from recordings and quite independently of the concert hall. But what has not been so assiduously noted is that it has been independent also of musicology and in general of the literature of music. So much so that the record collector whose treasures might include works by Machaut, Hummel, Boismortier, and de Severac may have no real idea where those composers fit, historically and aesthetically, in the overall view of the musical art. Furthermore, the field of record collecting has not developed a real literature of its own; I mean the sort of books that a beginning collector in any artistic field would acquire and devour before he spent more than cigarette money on any collectible item. The typical record collector's book is neither a history nor a commentary, but merely a discography. Too bad.

Despite the unfortunate fact that the art of music has inspired more bad prose and silly opinions than most fields of human endeavor, there is still much to be gained from exploring the literature. By this I don't mean purchasing *en masse* a complete working musicologist's library (if there were such a thing) or even acquiring one of the standard, or not so standard, encyclopedias of the subject; but rather, choosing an area of music that interests you and finding a book that will tell a little more about it generally than the average record liner note. The following are some of the more recently published of such books.

The Victor Book of the Opera was one of the first books to be published specifically for the record collector. It began life in 1912 as a sales promotion project for the Victor Talking Machine Company, and concentrated on pushing those operas that were in some way represented in the Victor record catalog (the whole story is entertainingly told in the publisher's preface to the new edition). The new edition, published this

past November (Simon and Schuster, New York, \$8.50), is the thirteenth, and it has been completely revised and edited by Henry W. Simon.

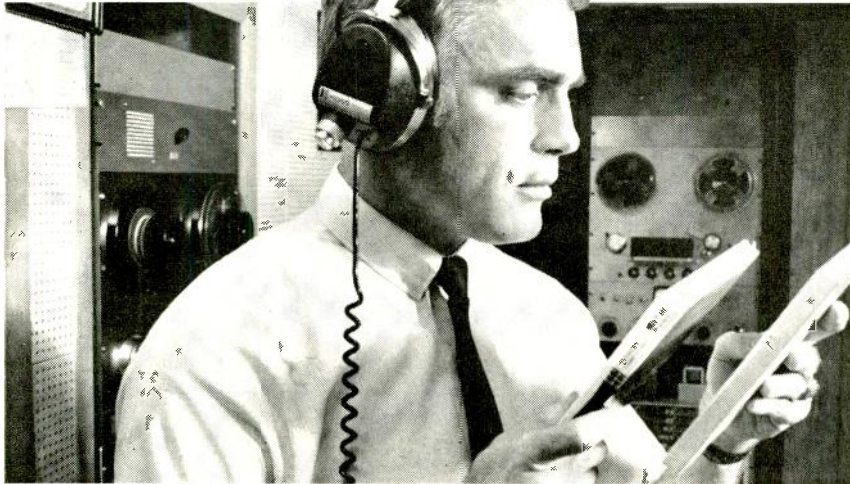
In its present form, *The Victor Book of the Opera* contains a very brief outline history of opera, and act-by-act plot summaries of 120 operas, plus some good background information on each. It is also loaded with pictures. It shows its conversance with the current state of affairs by including such operas as Berg's *Lulu* (and, of course, *Wozzeck*), Ginastera's *Bommarzo*, Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Janáček's *Jenufa* (though no *Katya Kabanova* or *Cunning Little Vixen*), and Monteverdi's *Poppea* and *Orfeo*, and by omitting such favorites of the earlier editions as Hageman's *Caponsacchi*, Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*, and Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl*. It is a useful and enjoyable book, and if it has some failings (the summaries are quite uneven both in length and quality, that of *Bommarzo*, supplied courtesy of Boosey and Hawkes, being quite incomprehensible; the reproductions and layout are not what they might be, and more than one pictured personage has the top of his head cut off through careless production), they are minor when one considers that the asking price is less than two cents per page.

Also in a reasonable price category (\$2.95, paperback; \$5.95, cloth-bound) are the volumes of the Prentice-Hall History of Music Series, under the general editorship of H. Wiley Hitchcock. Nine volumes have been published or projected so far, and I have seen two of them: *Baroque Music*, by Claude V. Palisca; and *Twentieth-Century Music: An Introduction*, by Eric Salzman, a name that should be most familiar to all who read STEREO REVIEW.

I should make it clear right away that while both of these books are packed with factual information, they are meant primarily for reading and not for reference. If one is trying to check a specific point of information or learn something about an obscure piece, there are

(Continued on page 46)

where fine recordings are made,



you'll find
Koss esp-6
electrostatic
stereophones*

Now that Koss Electronics has developed Electrostatic Stereophones, it would be silly for recording studios, broadcasting stations, and sound stages to use anything else to monitor recordings. It's as simple as this: the new Koss ESP-6 Electrostatic Stereophones reproduce 9 of a possible 10 octaves the human ear can hear. That's twice as much sound as any other sound reproduction system.

How? That's simple, too. The ESP-6 employs principles of electrostatics formerly limited to very large, high-priced speaker systems like the impeccable Koss-Acoustech X system. Only now, since Koss engineers developed a method of self energizing elements, is it possible to employ electrostatics in tiny units. If you're interested in details on "the only practical way" for professionals to monitor recordings, write for complete specifications and free technical article, "An Adventure in Headphone Design."



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other, larger references to go to. But as introductions to musical periods, to the basic stylistic trends, to the major composers and the more important minor ones, these volumes will not easily be surpassed. Furthermore, both supply excellent bibliographies at the end of each chapter for further reading or research.

Palisca's book is the more technical of the two, though one can get a good deal from it without ever looking at one of his musical examples. Salzman's is the more readable, though neither will make you think you've picked up a novel. But the value of these books to someone who already knows the music aurally is fantastic. One can sit down with a favorite record, read a few pages on the general background and style of the music being listened to, and suddenly hear in it a dozen things one never noticed before: a hint of where the music came from, where it was going, where and under what circumstances it might first have been heard, and what there is in it that is not so much of its time as of its composer. In short, one can get to *know* the piece rather than being merely familiar with it. That is a lot for any book to offer.

A music book that very well *might* make you think you were reading a novel is the *Reminiscences of Michael Kelly*, recently republished by Da Capo Press in a photo-offset facsimile of the second edition of 1826, together with a new introduction by A. Hyatt King. Kelly, if the name is unfamiliar, was a leading operatic tenor of his time, a friend of Mozart, and the first Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and his reminiscences are full of the chitchat, opinions, and comings and goings of the time. It all makes fascinating reading if you can get past a single obstacle: the price, which is \$32.50 for the two volumes. Frankly, I think this is scandalous and inexcusable. About a year ago I bought a copy of the 1826 edition, nicely bound in three-quarter leather, and I paid only \$25 for that. If other reprint houses, such as Dover Publications (and more about them at a later time), can put out this sort of thing at a reasonable price, I don't see what Da Capo's problem is. At any rate, I don't see encouraging them in their ways.

No longer new (first published 1964), but still probably the best "first book" on music presently available, is David Randolph's *This Is Music* (McGraw-Hill hardcover edition \$6.50, Mentor paperback 60¢). It is the sort of book a beginner can feel at ease with, knowing that its author is on *his* side and not trying to snow him with a lot of esoteric jargon. The book is quite as valuable for the myths it demolishes as for the information it provides; reading it thoroughly provides a sturdy foundation for growing musical enjoyment.

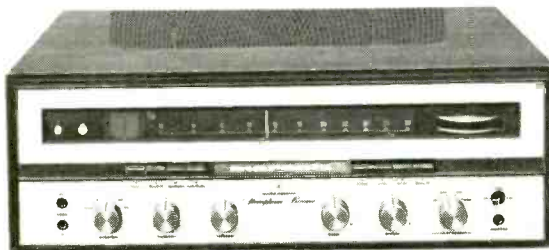
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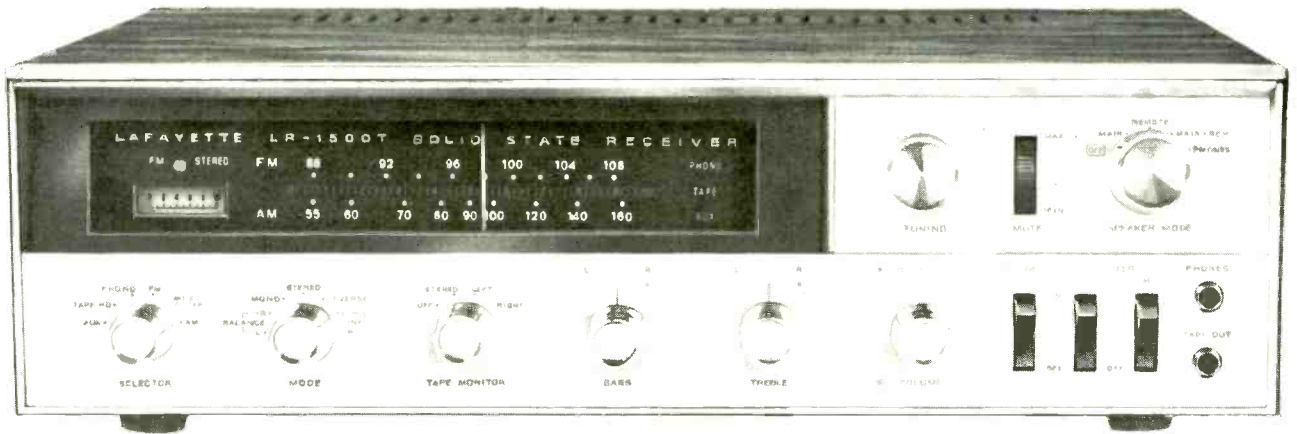
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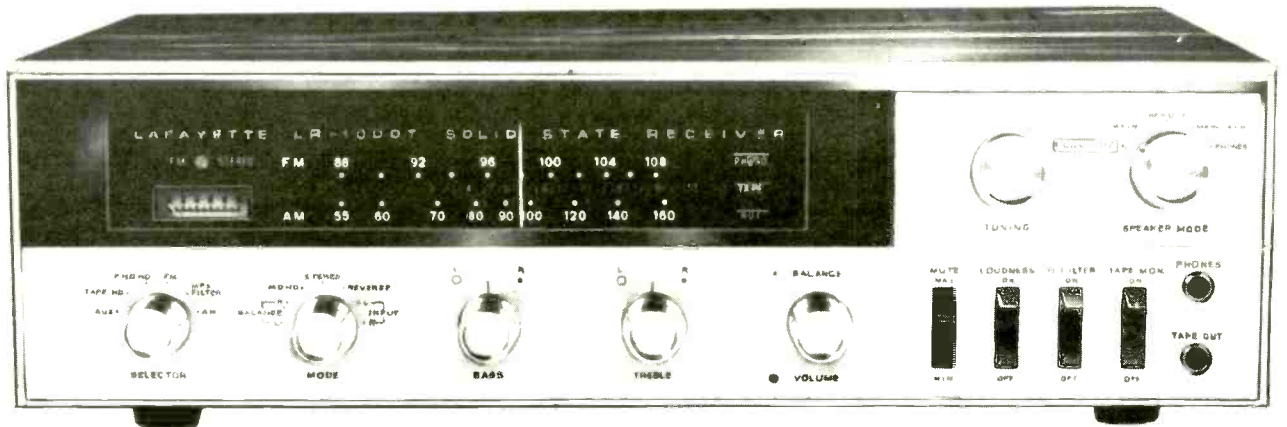
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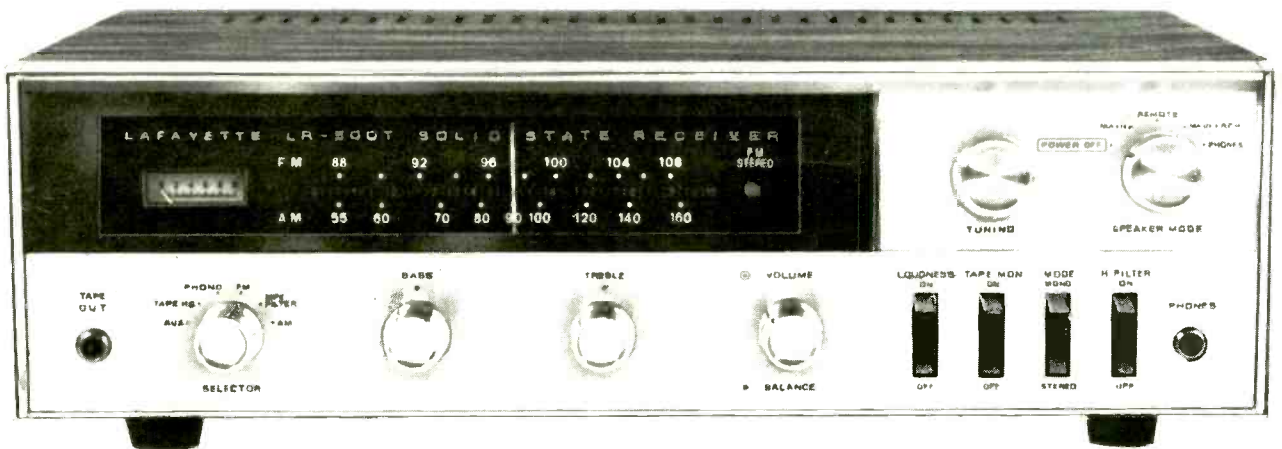
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Wagner reading of the death of Ludwig I.

BOOK REVIEW

WAGNER THE ARSONIST

By Henry Pleasants

“THERE are some things in Wagner’s career,” said Ernest Newman in his celebrated *Life of Richard Wagner*, “that it is not a pleasure to dwell on.” Newman was putting it mildly. There are, in fact, a great many. And Robert W. Gutman, in *Richard Wagner, the Man, his Mind and his Music*, dwells on them at length and in depth. And precisely because he has met the problem of Wagner’s character both head-on and intelligently, he has given us a marvelously instructive and provocative assessment.

Notices of this book that have come my way, both American and British, have tended to the view that Gutman is flogging a dead horse. Everyone knows by now, the argument runs, that Wagner was a monster—an unprincipled egocentric who mulcted his friends of their talent, their money, and sometimes their wives, a vicious anti-Semite whose racist rantings would later nourish Hitler’s villainy, a man who proceeded on the assumption that the world owed him a living on his own terms, and so on. But the *works* are there, and so what?

Gutman’s answer is that with Wagner, more than with any other composer, man and works are inseparable. Wagner, he says in his preface, “fed on himself and is to be found on nearly every page of his operas. If nothing were known of his personality, its basic traits could be reconstructed from their evidence.” The life, in other words, is the key to the works. Fortunately, a great

deal is known not only of Wagner’s personality but also of his day-to-day activity and his relationships with others. And Gutman, in revealing the works as a series of overlays for the life, has accomplished a literary and psychological tour de force.

Inevitably, he is more persistently concerned with plots than with music. And as the reader follows him from the embryonic *Leubald*, *Die Hochzeit*, *Die Feen*, and *Rienzi* through the familiar masterpieces, noting certain themes that are common to all, the conclusion is inescapable that Wagner carried with him throughout his life a basic cast of characters and a basic set of situations, all easily recognizable in his own life and environment.

One would have expected cast and situations to change as life went on, but Wagner was their slave, not their master. “My poetic conceptions,” he once told the long-suffering Minna, the wife he later discarded, “have always been so far ahead of my experiences that I can only consider these conceptions as determining and ordering my moral development.” His life, in other words, was governed largely by his poetic fancy, and since the latter was governed in turn by a profoundly disturbed psyche, certain patterns of reaction and behavior became constant and, in retrospect, predictable. The consequences were severe for those who chanced to cross his path at a time when their special characteristics and circumstances qualified them for casting as the real-life prototypes of a developing scenario.

(Continued on page 52)

Richard Wagner, the Man, his Mind and his Music, by Robert W. Gutman, Harcourt, Brace and World, New York (1968), \$12.50.

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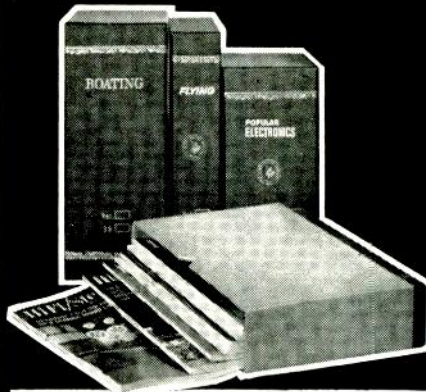
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Gutman, for example, recounting Wagner's adolescent love affair with Jenny Pacht in Prague in 1832, an event which inspired *Die Hochzeit*, suddenly asks: "Or was it the other way around? Perhaps he found in Jenny someone with whom to act out dramatic ideas within him. In later years his famous affair with Mathilde Wesendonck was the result, not the cause, of the *Tristan* theme coursing through him."

But although certain aspects of a basic scenario remained constant—shielded identity, curse, guilty love, incest, journey, renunciation, redemption, *etc.*—the dramaturgic philosophy passed through many phases as Wagner wrestled with the fundamental problem of the relationship of music to text in the theater. And one of Gutman's most brilliant insights identifies *Die Walküre* as ending the *Gesamtkunst* procedures enunciated in Wagner's treatise *Opera and Drama*.

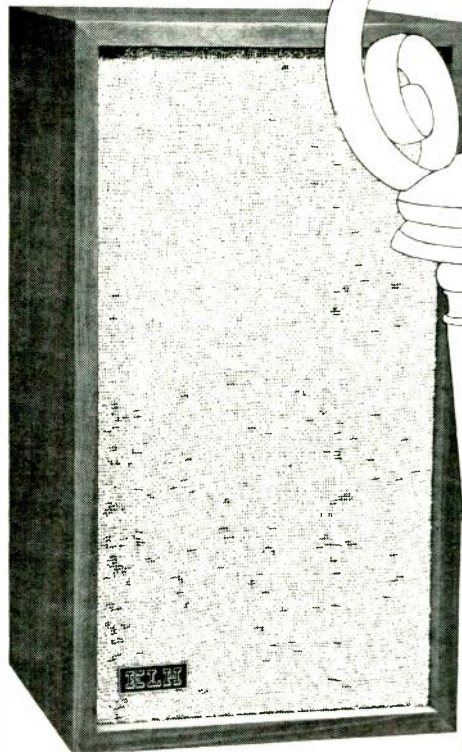
Work on the *Ring* was interrupted with the completion of the first two acts of *Siegfried*, and, in Gutman's view, Wagner worked his way back to grand opera by way of *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger*. The latter Gutman boldly describes as "historical opera in the manner of Meyerbeer." And he echoes approvingly Shaw's pronouncement that the *Ring*, beginning with the last act of *Siegfried*, "is opera and nothing but opera."

BECAUSE he is more deeply concerned with the man than with the music, Gutman slights what has struck me as the ultimate climax of the Wagnerian saga. Wagner was an arsonist at heart. As a young revolutionary he had thought of a corrupt world as conceivably salvageable by purifying fire. And in *Götterdämmerung* he pictured its redemption accordingly. What he could not have known—but what the Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick sensed and Richard Strauss subsequently confirmed—was that into the flame of that stupendous tonal conflagration went also the *Rheingold* of European music: its treasure of harmonic and instrumental resource. Wagner, during his lifetime, could countenance no rivals; and with the immolation, this most jealous of Wotans made certain that no Siegfried would successfully challenge his supremacy even when he was gone. Strauss, the likeliest of his heirs, acknowledged the debacle. The great cycle of European music, he said, had ended with Wagner.

Among Wagner's biographers, Newman is a less invulnerable Wotan. With a *Nothing* forged in a Freudian smithy, Gutman has slashed a way past him to the core of the enigma that was Wagner, to that improbable Brünnhilde who was, for Wagner, mother, sister, daughter, lover, hero—and redeemer!

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Rimsky-Korsakov's
*Capriccio
 Espagnol*

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV
 Sketch (1888) by
 Ilya Yefimovich Repin (1844-1930)

ON the 27th of February, 1887, the Russian composer Alexander Borodin died, leaving the orchestration of his opera *Prince Igor* incomplete. Two of Borodin's closest friends and greatest admirers were his colleagues Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov, who determined that, in collaboration, they would prepare a fully orchestrated edition of Borodin's opera. The following summer Rimsky-Korsakov rented a villa on a Russian lake shore and plunged into work on *Prince Igor*. But in the back of his mind there was a plan for the composition of a work of his own: a virtuoso fantasy on Spanish themes scored for violin and orchestra.

Work on the *Prince Igor* project proceeded at an intense pace, but in the middle of the summer Rimsky-Korsakov interrupted it: the fantasy on Spanish themes could no longer be delayed. In the space of a few weeks the *Capriccio espagnol* came into being, no longer as a work for violin and orchestra, but rather as a full-fledged display piece for orchestra. The solo violin plays an important role in the unfolding of the musical design, but there are also many important solos for the principal players in nearly every section of the orchestra. After hearing a performance of the score, Tchaikovsky wrote effusively to Rimsky-Korsakov: "I must add that your Spanish *Capriccio* is a *colossal masterpiece of instrumentation* [these last four words were underscored by Tchaikovsky] and you may regard yourself as the greatest master of the present day."

That the *Capriccio espagnol* is one of the most vivid and colorful scores in all music cannot be denied. And yet Rimsky-Korsakov himself was troubled by the universal opinion that the score is a "magnificently orches-

trated piece." In his autobiography, *My Musical Life*, he wrote:

The *Capriccio* is a brilliant *composition* for the orchestra. The change of timbres, the felicitous choice of melodic designs and figuration patterns, exactly suiting each kind of instrument, brief virtuoso cadenzas for instruments solo, the rhythm of the percussion instruments, *etc.*, constitute here the very *essence* of the composition and not its garb or orchestration. The Spanish themes, of dance character, furnished me with rich material for putting in use multiform orchestral effects. All in all, the *Capriccio* is undoubtedly a purely external piece, but vividly brilliant for all that.

There are five separate sections, played without pause. They are:

(1) *Alborada*. An *alborada* (*aubade* in French) is a morning serenade. This opening movement consists of two main themes given to the full orchestra and repeated by the solo clarinet. There is also an elaborate cadenza for the solo violin, with a *pianissimo* ending.

(2) *Variations*. A horn theme, over string arpeggios, forms the basis for a series of five variations.

(3) *Alborada*. The opening *alborada* is repeated, but with subtle differences: the key is now transposed from A Major to B-flat, and the orchestration is not quite the same—clarinets and violins exchange roles, with the solo violin assuming the solo that was the clarinet's earlier, and the original solo-violin cadenza now being assigned to the solo clarinet.

(4) *Scene and Gypsy Song*. A sharp roll on the side-drum serves to introduce this dramatic scene, along with a cadenza-like fanfare for horns and trumpets. Four more cadenzas follow—the first, for the solo violin, introduces the principal theme, which is repeated by flute and clari-



Among stereo recordings of Rimsky-Korsakov's popular *Capriccio espagnol*, two stand out: those by the London Symphony led by Ataulfo Argenta (London—early stereo but very good), and the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra led by Kiril Kondrashin (RCA—also available on tape). Pierre Monteux's reading for Vanguard Everyman is a worthy budget alternative.

net. The second cadenza, in very free form, is for flute over a kettledrum roll; the third, also in very free improvisational style, is for clarinet over a cymbal roll; and the last one is for harp with triangle. A shimmering harp *glissando* serves to introduce the "gypsy song," first stated in furious fashion by the first violins over chords in the trombones and tuba, with punctuation from the cymbals. The pace grows increasingly animated as the music progresses through a series of elegant and vivacious thematic combinations. At the height of the excitement we arrive at the finale.

(5) *Fandango of the Asturias*. Trombones, with full orchestra accompaniment, announce the principal theme of the *fandango*, a traditional Andalusian dance with guitar and castanet accompaniment. Woodwinds follow the trombone theme with one related to it, and then both themes are repeated and varied. The music grows constantly wilder until the chief theme is heard again in the trombones. Suddenly the *fandango* becomes transformed into the *alborada* of the first movement and the piece ends in a frenzy of color and excitement.

NEXT to *Scheherazade*, the *Capriccio espagnol* is the most-recorded of Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestral scores, some thirteen performances being available at last count, and five of them also available in tape versions. There is not an out-and-out failure among this baker's dozen—but some, of course, are more successful than others. My own favorites among them are the performances conducted by Karel Ančerl (Crossroads 22 16 0106, 22 16 0105), Ataulfo Argenta (London CS 6006), Leonard Bernstein (Columbia MS 6080), Kiril Kondrashin (RCA LCS 2323), Pierre Monteux (Vanguard Everyman SD 257), and Eugene Ormandy (Columbia MS 6917).

Ančerl, Bernstein, and Ormandy all deliver readings that concentrate on virtuosity for its own sake—certainly a valid approach in this score. And since the three of them are leading orchestras of great brilliance and polish (the Czech Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, and Philadelphia Orchestra, respectively), the results are what one would expect. Bernstein's is at a disadvantage, however, because the recorded sound—a product of very early

stereo technology—spotlights solo instruments far out of proportion. Ančerl and Ormandy get more natural recorded sound.

The Monteux performance, in Vanguard's low-priced Everyman line, shares the disc with this conductor's performance of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, one of my preferences in my discussion of that work. The *Capriccio espagnol* performance has the same virtues of lucidity,

"Basic Repertoire" in Book Form

Old and new friends of the "Basic Repertoire" series will be interested to learn that Doubleday & Co. has recently published Martin Bookspan's *101 Masterpieces of Music and their Composers*, a book based upon his columns for this magazine. For this compilation, the author expanded the original material, amplifying the biographical, historical, and analytical information about each selection and its composer, and re-evaluating the available recordings of each of the works. The book is now in bookstores at \$7.95.

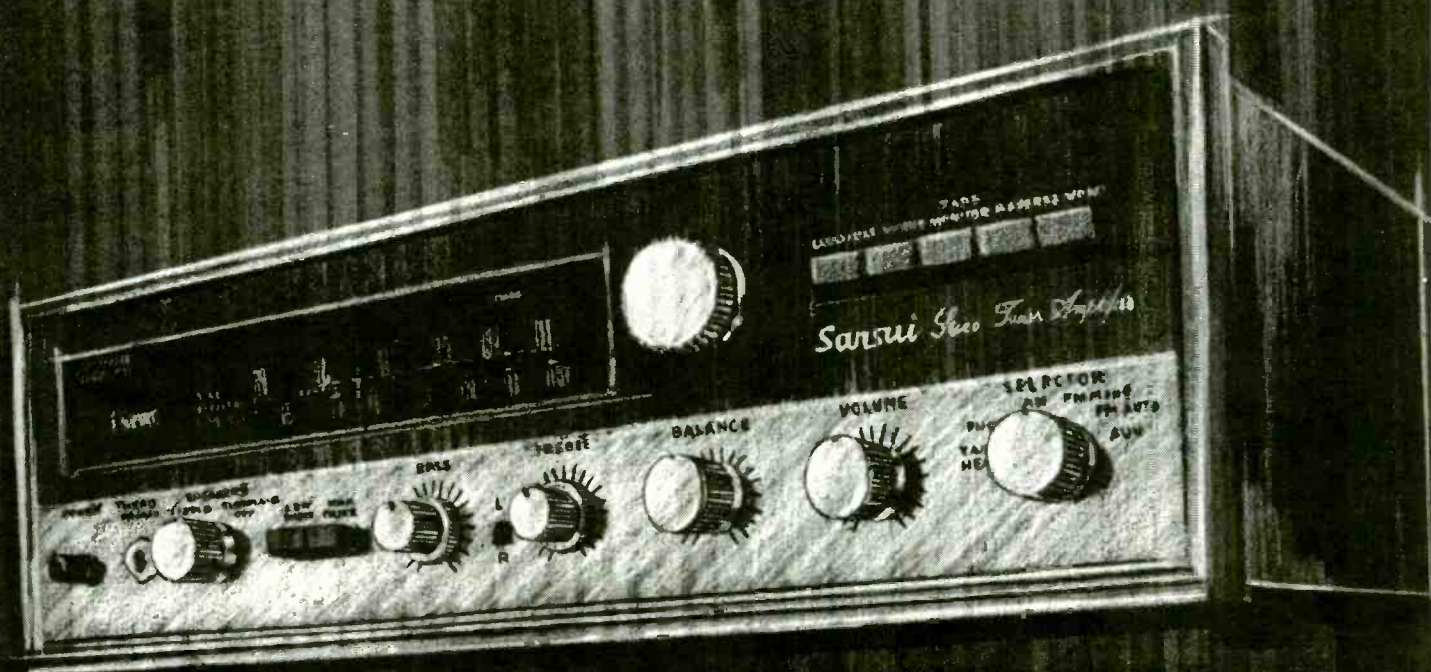
elegance, and passion. The NDR Symphony Orchestra of Hamburg may not be quite the equal of the three mentioned above, but the recorded sound is quite lifelike.

The Argenta and Kondrashin recordings seem to me to be the pick of the crop. Both conductors bring a special flair to their performance that endows the music with an extra element, and both are extremely well recorded. Argenta's, like Bernstein's, is a product of the very beginning of the stereo age, but the sound is miles ahead of Bernstein's; indeed, this early London disc remains one of the finest available examples of full-bodied and well-balanced stereo recording. Kondrashin's reading receives rather wide channel separation, but it is none the less effective because of it. And here again both conductors are working with instrumentalists of great virtuosity—Argenta with the players of the London Symphony, Kondrashin with an orchestra made up of the finest free-lance musicians in New York.

Argenta's performance does not exist in the tape medium, but Kondrashin's does (RCA FTC 2009). The tape processing is excellent, and the RCA reel would be my number one recommendation.

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THE CASSETTE AT HOME AND ABROAD

A user's report

By IGOR KIPNIS

Do you remember what a furor was created in the late Forties with the all but simultaneous announcement of not one but *two* new phono-disc systems—the long-playing record and the forty-five? Which was the public to accept? And then, rather more recently, there was the advent of the stereo disc, and once again the consumer was put on the spot. Was it just a gimmick to promote sales of new records and equipment, or was this a justified technological advance? Time, of course, has given us the answers, as it always does. But during the interim, when a new product

The author, with his harpsichord ingeniously perched about '60 hit the road on one of his cross-country concert tours.

is in the process of being exposed to curious (and often skeptical) scrutiny, the potential buyer is more often than not perplexed about where he should spend his money. That certainly seems to be the current reaction to tape cartridges and cassettes.

My own interest in the subject developed a little over a year ago, and it came about through a vocational "necessity." Since I am a harpsichordist, it is necessary for me to pack up my instrument and drive it and myself to wherever I am engaged to perform. This often entails traveling vast distances, and the tedium of driving has to be overcome by some means. For quite a few years, I fought off boredom and sleep by listening to the car radio, an AM/FM model, but in the hinterlands the opportunities of hearing good classical fare (I'm not much for the pop field) are rather limited. There is almost nothing on AM, and, so far as FM is concerned, you've got something to listen to only if you're within about a forty-mile range of a culturally minded city. On the Kansas plains, you're strictly out of luck. In fact, even AM reception tends to fade away in some of the longer stretches, and without even the warm, friendly voices of Arthur Godfrey, Art Linkletter, or Paul Harvey for company and comfort, frustration can get high indeed. Many is the long mile I have suffered in silence—or with static, rock, c-&-w, gospel, or what have you, depending on location—as my harpsichord-laden wagon hurtled along the highway.

Something had to be done, and though I would not like to claim that the invention of car-cartridge machines was mothered by my necessity, they did come into prominence—and my delighted attention—at just the right time. The multiplicity of these units on the market, however, quickly put me in a quandary when I went out to buy one. Lacking the time to spare for a full-scale market-research project, I simply put in a phone call to STEREO REVIEW's Technical Editor, Larry Klein. "Larry," I asked after explaining my dilemma, "which system should I get for my car—four-track, eight-track, or cassette?" He replied with a couple of questions that got right to the heart of the matter: "Will you be doing any recording? What will you be playing back—prerecorded tapes or your own transfers?" Since the catalog of prerecorded classical tapes was at that time rather limited, I said I would in all likelihood be making some of my own. "In that case," he suggested, "try one of the cassette machines."

I had just purchased a new car, and instead of adding one of the more common eight-track players, I had a cassette machine installed. It included two speakers in the side doors for stereo playback, plus a microphone for monophonic recording. The next step was the tapes themselves, and a glance at the tape catalog revealed that classical material was, indeed, extremely limited. I didn't particularly care what the repertoire was so

long as it was classical, and after a few minutes of deliberation I selected a *Scheherazade* with Stokowski, a Rachmaninoff Second Concerto with Byron Janis, and excerpts from *Swan Lake* with Monteux. Armed with these, plus a blank tape cassette, I set out on my next tour, one that was to take me all the way from New York City to the West Coast and back.

MY first concert was in Fort Wayne, and, having now heard my new tape acquisitions at least four times apiece, I felt it was time to expand my car's library. Did the local department store carry cassettes (the system was, after all, still quite a new one)? Indeed it did; but the most classical item they had, in the midst of a great deal of popular music, was a Mantovani collection. I left Mantovani in Fort Wayne and continued on my expedition, which was gradually becoming less of a concert tour than a fact-finding investigation on the availability of cassettes coast-to-coast.

By the time I reached Los Angeles, I was rapidly becoming an expert on the subject, and I could now drive to the accompaniment of a selection of Brahms and Dvořák dances plus the Prokofiev Third and Rachmaninoff First piano concertos. In Wallachs, one of Los Angeles' largest record stores, I was delighted to discover, amid a bevy of flower-children customers, a few additional items: the famed Antal Dorati recording of the *1812 Overture*, with its car-shaking cannons, as well as a rather less power-packed "Champagne, Roses, and Bonbons" collection (Johann Strauss *et al.*) with the same conductor. Strauss seemed to go particularly well with the arid Arizona highways, while my old standby, *Scheherazade*, took on entirely new dimensions when I was winding my way through the snowy vistas of the Colorado Rockies—"The Sea and Sinbad's Ship" never sounded so grand at water level as it did at that awe-inspiring altitude.

"All right," you may object, "tape kept you on the road and in good spirits, but what was the sound reproduction like?" Well, it wasn't exactly like my living room. It also wasn't *quite* as good as car FM reception at its best. Still, it wasn't half bad, considering the problems of listening to music in a moving vehicle. I soon discovered that what sounds magnificently full-blown in slow-moving city traffic, and even at faster speeds up to fifty miles an hour, begins to deteriorate rapidly in quality past sixty. Cruising along at seventy (in a Microbus) you find that you have to use your imagination a lot—soft passages and both high and low tones are masked by wind and road noise. Had I not known better, for instance, I would have thought that the Rachmaninoff Second Concerto commenced with the orchestral entrance rather than with the quiet introductory piano chords.

What about the sound quality at the cassette's 17/8-

ips speed? Adherents of the four- and eight-track systems, which run at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips, claim that the cassette's slower speed inevitably leads to flutter and generally poor quality. I remember my own reaction several years ago to the emergence of $3\frac{3}{4}$ -ips open-reel prerecorded tapes; most of them (in my opinion at that time) were inferior to $7\frac{1}{2}$ -ips tapes. Gradually, however, considerable improvement took place, and I now hear no difference between the best examples of each speed. The cassette medium, I believe, will also improve (they already have) over the next year or so. In any event, cassettes even now sound quite acceptable to most listeners, particularly in special listening situations, and only the most intransigent fidelity buff will take exception. On some of the earlier prerecorded cassettes I have heard an occasional moment of obvious flutter—for example, on a sustained clarinet note—and several less-than-ideal piano recordings. The piano is especially difficult to capture in this medium; there is a tendency for the instrument to sound hard and glassy in tone. But then I have also heard some late Deutsche Grammophon cassettes of piano concertos in which the solo instrument sounded surprisingly natural, so the problems are apparently neither inherent nor inevitable.

But to get back to my transcontinental trip. By the time I reached Denver (March of last year) I was thoroughly enjoying my private world of music in the car, but I was also beginning to suspect from my researches that the catalog of classical cassettes was never going to catch up with my appetite. In Denver I found Music For All, a record shop specializing in cassettes (they were even importing cassettes directly from Europe, where the whole concept got started), but all I bought was a really splendid-sounding Schumann Rhenish Symphony and a head-cleaning cassette.

Back in New York, I decided that though the situation in classical music was starting to look up, repertoire was still too slow in coming, and waiting for new releases by the principal manufacturers (DGG, Mercury/Philips, and Ampex) was not going to be as satisfactory as making my own transfers. My car recorder did have recording facilities, but in mono only.

(I did make some use of it on my trip by recording, while driving, a list of items that had to be checked on my new car's next inspection. When I reached the auto service center I found it easier to let the mechanic listen to the tape, but I must admit to feeling a bit foolish playing the tape back for him. Then, too, I used the microphone for recording conversations with my three-year-old son in the car: "Well, Jeremy, how are you today?" "Just fine, Daddy." He feels little of my embarrassment listening to himself in playback.)

The car unit was fine for recording voice, but for dubbing my own musical cassettes at home I bought a stereo cassette deck, which hooked very nicely into the rest of my home stereo system—and promptly went to work polishing up my dubbing techniques. Quite by accident, I discovered that 78's transfer very well, and since I still have a large library of these, I proceeded to record a number of old favorites onto blank tape cassettes. Perhaps because of the slightly more limited frequency response of the 78's, coupled with a certain amount of gain compression in the original recording, the sound quality I obtained was surprisingly similar to the disc, even on piano. Furthermore, there seemed to be a great deal of presence in the transfers. Although I am deeply involved in Baroque music, both in my performing and in my critical writing, I find that for sheer relaxation I want no busman's holiday: I prefer works of the nineteenth century, especially piano performances. And that is mainly what I put on cassettes—hours of Chopin being played by Cortot, Moiseiwitsch, Horowitz, and Lipatti. I am an avid collector of "underground" tapes (material recorded off the air and in poorly policed concert halls, then privately circulated), so I tried some of them as well: Toscanini broadcasts, old Met performances, and the like. Here again, perhaps because the quality of the originals was not terribly good, the cassettes emerged quite faithful to the original tapes. And, for the sake of curiosity, I tried recording a brand-new LP disc and compared the quality with a prerecorded cassette: they were quite close, although my version, made with a slightly higher recording level, had less tape hiss.

From a mechanical standpoint, making transfers is extraordinarily easy. Playback, of course, is even easier, and this is one of the greatest attractions of the cassette or, for that matter, of any cartridge system. With the cassette, however, fast forward and reverse are possible, something you don't get in the other systems. And the unit itself is virtually child-proof—even my son can flip the cassette over to play the next pair of stereo tracks in something under five seconds.

This is not to say that things cannot go wrong either with the cassettes themselves or the playing and recording units. It has happened to me only twice, but the tape can somehow become entangled in the machine's



"Of course, his father was very musical."

(Drawing by B. Petty; © 1966 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.)

innards while playing. But extrication is not difficult, and you can sometimes open the plastic cassette by unscrewing five screws to get at the two miniscule tape hubs inside if you must unspool the tape. When something goes wrong with the recorder itself, however, you must deliver yourself into the mercies of a service center, and in the case of car units this can be a small nuisance—they are not yet set up to service the machine inside the car; it must be removed (by you) and taken to the service center for repair.

At the present moment, there are relatively few car-cassette playback units available. There is every reason to believe, however, that this situation will change as more and more interest accumulates. And sound quality will continue to improve, mainly through better head design and quality control in reproduction of prerecorded material. (I had the opportunity of demonstrating this in my home to a recording-company executive not long ago; he was surprised that the sound was as good as it was.) You may also hear from some that cassettes are "fine for dictation, but not for music." My own experience contradicts this, although I would not claim that the quality is to be compared with a really good stereo-disc or open-reel system. As a second system, however—for a summer cottage, for the beach, for youngsters (the portable mono-only units are especially popular now), and definitely for the car—I firmly believe cassettes have a bright audio future.

The list of prerecorded cassettes has grown surprisingly large by now, even in the classical category—I would hazard a guess that there are just over 200 at this point. Since the tape catalogs have not yet, to my knowledge, licked the problem of keeping up with new issues (and old), there may be even more, and they will be delightful surprises. Both cassettes and cartridges are marketed in places other than record stores—photo shops, for instance, and perhaps even a filling station or two. In the area of classical music, the biggest producer thus far has been Deutsche Grammophon, and, generally speaking, their eighty-odd classical issues are of very high quality. Mercury/Philips also has an impressive catalog, as does Ampex (slow in the classics until just recently, when they brought out twenty-four new issues). Mercury has also begun a reversal of a somewhat annoying policy of making the turnover point of any single cassette come at exactly the middle of the total program time. This was undoubtedly necessitated by the cartridge system (in which no fast forward or reverse is possible), but it is rather irritating to have to turn a cassette over for the last minute of a Prokofiev concerto when that much extra tape could easily have been accommodated to complete the first side.

Inevitably, perhaps, there are already some duplications in the classics: three Vivaldi *Four Seasons*; as many *1812 Overtures*, *Scheherazades*, and "New World"

Symphonies; a couple each of Moussorgsky's *Pictures*, Brahms' Second Piano Concerto, *Swan Lake* excerpts, Baroque brass collections, and the like. But there are some great curiosities, too—the Ives First Piano Sonata, Irish songs by John McCormack, and guitar concertos by Rodrigo and Castelnuovo-Tedesco. There are no complete operas available as yet, but there are excerpts from *Aida*, *Cavalleria*, *Pagliacci*, *Carmen*, *Fidelio*, *Magic Flute*, *Rigoletto*, and *Traviata*.

If I were asked to recommend a few cassettes for those just starting a collection, they would be these I've particularly enjoyed: Deutsche Grammophon's Sibelius Fourth Symphony with Karajan, Stokowski's *Firebird Suite* on Ampex, and Philips' *Symphonie fantastique* with Colin Davis. There are others, of course, but these sound particularly good to me. Capitol has released some excellent-sounding pop material, and are just now entering the classical cassette field. Columbia and RCA are still maintaining a "let's wait and see" attitude as of this writing.

Outside the musical area, spoken-word material is also beginning to appear in the cassette format, and justly so, for it lends itself not only to entertainment but to education. Spoken Arts has fifty items available, ranging from fairy tales through poetry readings. (These, incidentally, are in mono only, the same signal going on both stereo tracks.) One of the earliest producers of prerecorded cassettes was Berlitz, who found that the combination of playback, fast reverse, and repeat was ideally suited to language learning. Berlitz has set up their regular courses in cassette form, offering French, German, Spanish, or Italian lessons on five cassettes plus textbook and a portable cassette recorder.

Then, of course, there is do-it-yourself—blank cassettes. Prerecorded material in cassette form costs between five and seven dollars (roughly comparable to discs); blanks cost from about \$1 to just over \$5, depending on the time the cassette will play.

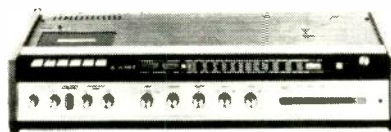
FINALLY, if the idea of cassettes and their possibilities intrigues you as much as it does me, I would suggest that you not try to save money by buying a rock-bottom-priced record or playback unit. Unless the transport mechanism is a good one, you're likely after a certain period to have slight tape slippage, and the resulting pitch deviations can be extremely unsettling. At their best, however, hooked up to a good home system or played back in your car at a leisurely forty miles per hour, cassettes can sound highly impressive. There's also the space you save in storage (each cassette measures only 4 x 2½ inches). And, because of knockout tabs in the back of each cassette, you can't accidentally erase your recordings. Taken all in all, with their ease and flexibility of handling, fast forward, and reverse, these ingenious little gadgets are hard to beat.

CASSETTE HYBRIDS

THE rapid growth of the cassette concept has not caught component manufacturers napping, and the result is a number of hybrid units—cassette recorder/players integrated into compacts and receivers—that offer this useful facility as an adjunct to conventional audio units. There are already enough of them around to establish a trend, and we present herewith a selective pictorial sampling of a few examples of the breed.—*Editor.*



Fisher 127, \$449.95



Scott 3600, \$369.95



Radio Shack Realistic
MC-1000, \$399.95



Scott 2560, \$370 (approx.)



Benjamin 1050, \$689



Harman-Kardon SC-2520, \$479



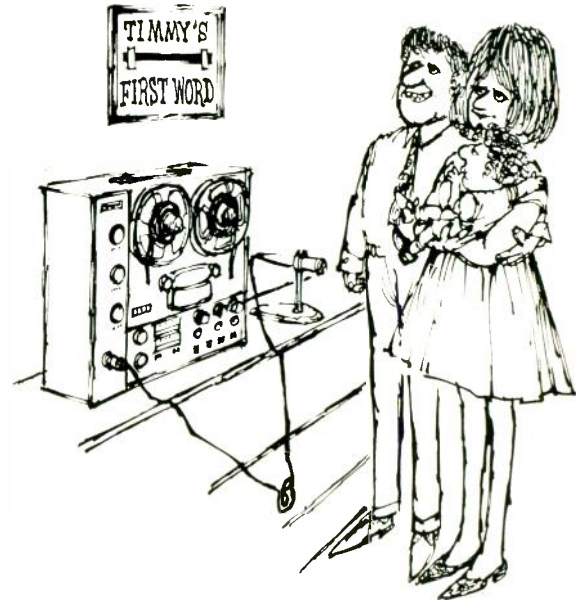
Panasonic RS280S, \$269.95



Lafayette RK-570, \$249.95

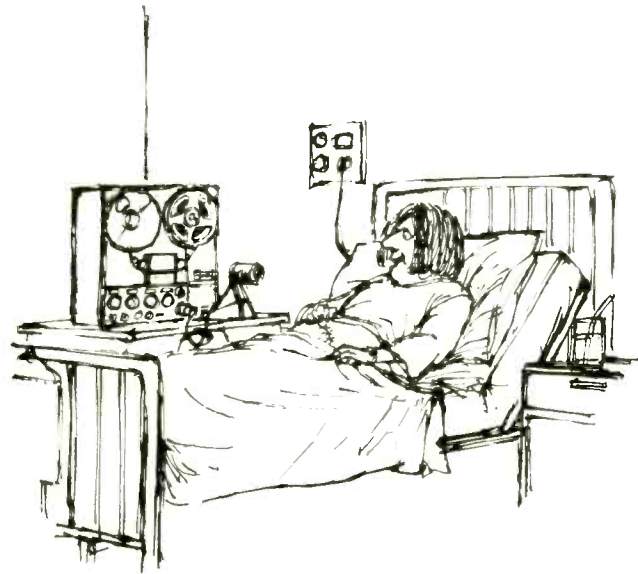


Lafayette RK-580, \$299.95



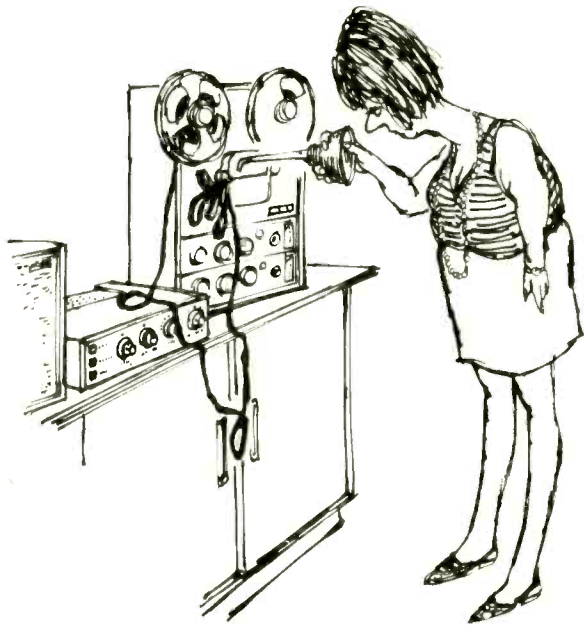
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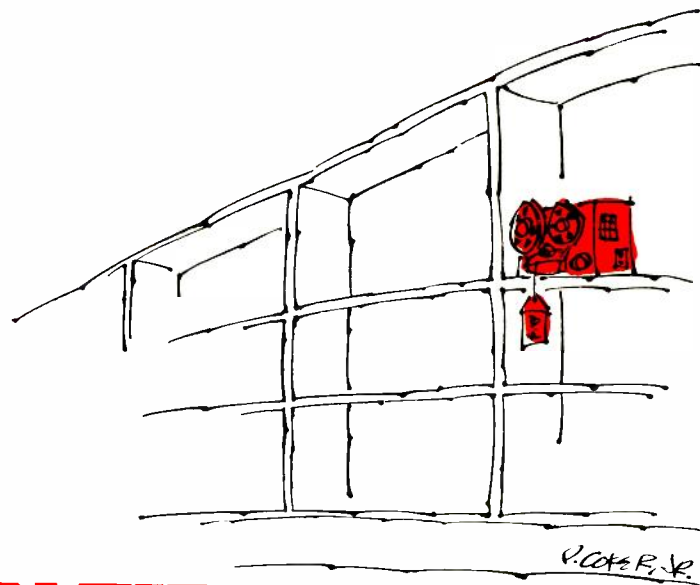




Mind

By Charles Rodrigues





TEN TIPS FOR TAPE-RECORDER BUYERS

By DRUMMOND McINNIS

CHOOSING the right tape recorder is probably the single most difficult audio purchasing decision any of us is ever going to be called on to make. For various reasons, these complicated combinations of mechanics and electronics can unsettle even the most experienced audiophile. And with the proliferation and ever-increasing sophistication of tape-playing equipment, some degree of indecision and even anxiety is understandable. As is true of all decision-making situations, however, that of zeroing in on the one tape recorder most suitable in a given case can be simplified if we keep our wits about us and establish a few preliminary criteria that will narrow the field of choice.

My experience has taught me that there are perhaps ten basic points to consider when buying a tape recorder. Getting them firmly in mind before going out shopping will enable any buyer to keep his cool when faced with a bewilderment of possibilities. The first two points, and the most important, can be stated as questions:

1. How much do you want to spend?

2. What will be the principal use for your recorder? The two questions are not entirely unrelated—as we shall see, one does affect the other. First, all tape recorders worthy of the name can be divided into roughly three price ranges: \$100 to \$200, moderate quality; \$200 to \$300, good quality; and \$300 and up, excellent semi-professional quality. Clearly, if you will accept nothing but the best, you are going to have to pay for it. But conversely, if your requirements are less demanding, it is still possible to satisfy them amply with-

out the necessity of turning yourself into a big spender.

"Requirements," of course, brings us to the second question: what will you be using your recorder for? For most music listeners, a recorder will be used to make tapes from either FM radio or discs. In addition, these same listeners will be using their recorders to play back not only their home-made tapes, but commercial prerecorded tapes as well. And beyond these primary uses, the tape medium may be the answer to personal or business correspondence, learning a language, family fun, and a host of other unusual uses such as those described in this magazine's *Tape Horizons* column each month.

3. Type of machine. Depending on the use you plan to make of it, your recorder will be chosen from the following:

- *The completely self-contained unit:* this, the most conventional type of recorder, can usually record and play back in either mono or stereo and is designed to be used all by itself. With built-in (or detachable) speakers, and its own amplifier, it can be used to record and play back anywhere. Machines in this category are not always capable of the highest fidelity when playing by themselves, but when connected to play through a good home audio system they acquit themselves nobly.

- *The tape transport:* this unit is used exclusively for playback, and cannot record. It may or may not possess playback preamplifiers, and it plugs directly into an existing stereo system. The connection is made via the tape-head jacks when the transport lacks its own

preamplifier or (more commonly) through the tape inputs of your regular system's amplifier when it has its own preamplifier. Since it doesn't have the capability of recording, it has rather limited appeal—it may not be around much longer.

- *The tape deck*: for most serious recordists, this is usually the instrument of choice. It contains both record and playback preamplifiers and must be used in conjunction with a stereo system (power amplifier and stereo speakers). It is generally equal in sound quality to the best home audio components and is capable of near-professional results when recording.

- *The battery-operated "open-reel" recorder*: this special-purpose machine offers convenience and portability. In the lower price ranges it is not usually capable of the highest fidelity, but in the \$100 and up machines the sound is quite acceptable for most non-critical music recording—and there are a couple of real wizards in this category also.

- *The cassette recorder*: similar in capability and function to the battery-operated reel-to-reel recorder just cited, the cassette (cartridge) machine, with its plastic-encased tape-feed system, offers extreme simplicity of operation. The cassette is really a totally enclosed reel-to-reel system. With a few exceptions, the better cassette machines both record and play back—the home machines usually in stereo and the portables in mono.

All these basic recorder types have their own advantages and disadvantages, and are capable of good to excellent results. If you have answered Question 2 to your satisfaction, then you are in a position to decide which of the above five configurations best suits your needs, and we can move on to Points 4 through 7, which concern the most important performance specifications or "specs."

4. Frequency response: this is the measure of the recorder's ability to record and play back evenly the full range of sound from bass to treble. If the recorder has any marked peaks or dips in its frequency response, it will degrade the tone quality and produce a poor replica of the original sound.

5. Wow and flutter: these describe minute (and undesirable) variations in the speed of the tape. Wow creates a wavering in pitch; flutter a gargly or rasping variation in the sound. Though these cannot be eliminated entirely, good performance demands very low wow and flutter figures; the ear is acutely sensitive to even minor speed variations, and in a good machine you will not be conscious of any.

6. Signal-to-noise ratio: the S/N ratio is a comparison of the strength of the recorded signal with the amount of noise (mostly hiss) in the recording. All machines produce some hum and hiss, but the higher the absolute value of the signal-to-noise ratio, the better the sound reproduction will be.

7. Distortion: this is a "wrap-up" term used to characterize the harshness, graininess, or lack of clarity in the recorded sound. There are several kinds of distortion that plague tape recorders, but, stated as simply as possible, if you can *hear* distortion in a given machine being played back through a good stereo system, you had better give the machine a thumbs down—the sound will in time begin to irritate.

The last three points concern recorder *features* rather than *specifications*, though you may occasionally find the two run together in descriptive sheets.

8. Recording-level indicators: these are devices that indicate the maximum strength of the signal that can be recorded on a tape with a given recorder without severe distortion. The signal must be strong enough to override the noise inherent in the machine (see "signal-to-noise ratio" above), but not so strong that it overloads the tape and produces distortion. The two most common indicators are the "magic eye" (only a few machines still have them) and the recording-level meter. Either type, properly interpreted by the recordist, is capable of guaranteeing good recording results provided they are properly calibrated and respond accurately to the signal.

9. Number of heads: most tape recorders have two heads, one to erase the tape (thus preparing it for recording by removing any prior signals) and another that serves for both recording and playback functions. Three-head machines delegate these last two operations to separate heads. Separate record and playback heads have certain theoretical advantages, but in practice there is frequently very little audible difference. A three-head machine does have other benefits, however. It can, for example, monitor what is being put on the tape while a recording is being made, thus providing an instantaneous check on what is being recorded. In addition, a three-head machine permits the recordist to introduce echo effects or to make sound-on-sound recordings (multiple recordings on a single track).

10. Automatic reverse: this feature is a boon for those with a large prerecorded tape library. Most recorders require that the user turn the tape over at the end of a reel in order to play the other two stereo tracks. But there are certain machines that can play in both directions—without switching reels. A special signal recorded at the end of the tape (or a foil strip, or simply the absence of a recorded signal) activates a mechanism in the recorder and automatically reverses the tape-play direction.

Regardless of what recorder you eventually do buy, read the instruction manual very carefully. Many people are discouraged with the results they obtain with their new recorder only because they didn't take the trouble to familiarize themselves with its operation. Do so, and teach yourself to operate your machine efficiently and properly—it will pay off.



New York's Empire State Building disseminates a multiplicity of FM and TV programs.

A beginner's
guide to

TAPING OFF THE AIR

By JUDY RASKIN

IT HAS BEEN estimated by those who try to keep track of America's airwaves that, by the end of 1969, there will be close to 1,000 FM stations broadcasting in stereo in this country. Stereo FM broadcasts are now available nationwide with a program range extending from shaggy-haired rock on the one hand to long-haired classical on the other—though it must be admitted that the latter tends to be localized around the larger urban cen-

ters. With the airwaves chock full of free, high-quality stereo sound, and the price of good stereo tape recorders tumbling almost daily, building a tape library of whatever kind of music turns you on is a natural.

How difficult is it to capture all those broadcast goodies on tape? Not at all difficult—if you are to believe the instruction manuals that come with most tape recorders. And it is true that it is *not* difficult if all you want to do is get the mere *sound* of a broadcast on the tape. But most people want something better; they would like to make tapes that not only have a full frequency range, but that are also relatively unmarred by distortion, interruptions, or extraneous sounds. Professional results in taping are not beyond the amateur's reach—provided he is willing to take the time and the trouble necessary to do a first-class job.

Logically, the first step in taping off the air is to make sure that all your equipment is in perfect working order. The few special problems that can afflict off-the-air taping are all traceable to malfunctioning or mismatched audio components. If you already own an old tape recorder and are about to buy a new stereo tuner or receiver—or if you own an old receiver and are about to buy a tape recorder—you should watch out for a problem that affects many of the older (and particularly the inexpensive) units. For complicated technical reasons that are beyond the scope of this article, the internal bias oscillator of some tape recorders interacts with the "pilot" tone that is part of all stereo broadcast signals. The result is a continuous whistle that will appear on all your tapes right along with the desired program material. And the whistle may appear on the tape despite the fact that it is not heard during the broadcast. Once the whistle is on the tape, there's nothing you can do except erase and start all over again. The trick, of course, is to avoid whistle problems in the first place, and the only way to do that is to try out the recorder and receiver together *before* you buy. Since a particular recorder model may cause whistles with one receiver and not with another, and a particular receiver may cause whistles with a particular recorder and not with another, it is necessary to check out the specific units as a team before putting your cash on the line. If, through no fault of your own, you already have a whistling duo, there's a chance that one of the manufacturers can make or suggest circuit modifications that will eliminate the problem. To repeat a point made earlier, you will seldom encounter whistle with late-model, quality equipment.

Once you have bought your recorder (assuming that you already have a component stereo system and know how to operate it), the next step is to hook it up for off-the-air recording. Is it necessary to say that putting microphones in front of the speakers is *not* the way to do it? Every modern component receiver and amplifier has a pair of jacks (receptacles) labeled "tape output."

A pair of shielded audio cables are plugged into the recorder's output jacks (labeled "line," "ext. amp.," or "monitor"), and the other ends of the cables are plugged into the receiver jacks labeled "tape input." This permits the recorder to play back through your stereo system. If your recorder has its own built-in speakers, you will have to check its instruction book for information on the best way to make the connections.

To play tapes through your stereo system, you merely switch your receiver to "tape." (This may mean setting a separate tape-monitor switch to its monitor position or setting the main selector switch to the "tape" position.) Check the receiver's instruction book if you are in doubt. But in any case, don't plug anything into the "tape-head" jacks if your receiver or amplifier happens to have them. If your tape machine has recording capability, then it also has playback preamplifiers, which eliminates the need for using the "tape-head" jacks on your receiver. Another pair of audio cables must be installed between the recorder and the receiver to enable it to record whatever the receiver might be playing—discs or FM. These cables go between the "tape-out" jack on the receiver and the "aux.," "line," or "radio" inputs on the recorder. (In case your receiver's instruction manual doesn't make it clear, the volume control on the receiver does not affect the strength of the audio signal going to your tape recorder from the receiver's tape-output jacks.)

Now that your recorder and receiver are hooked together, there are further questions to answer. Most taping beginners are quite confused about which taping speed to use. They pore over the frequency-response figures for their recorder and wonder whether a response of 50 to 9,000 Hz at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips is good enough for music, or if they should go to the higher $7\frac{1}{2}$ -ips speed and use up twice the tape for a given recording time. If all other things are equal, the higher the speed, the better the sonic results. However, since all other things are *not* equal, the best recorders will give better results at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips than lesser ones will at $7\frac{1}{2}$ ips. The answer, then, is to try recording a given selection (say, from a phono disc) first at $7\frac{1}{2}$ and then at $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips. Note the differences in quality, if any, between the tape recording and the original disc. Listen for an increase in hiss and a drop-off of the higher frequencies. Also, in this test, carefully observe the behavior of the tape machine's recording-level meter. The instruction manuals for most machines simply tell you to set the controls so that the meters will hit "0" or go into the red areas only on volume peaks. You will find, however, that it's very much worthwhile to experiment to determine exactly how your machine reacts to excessive signal levels. Again, the better machines will permit you to drive the meter needle all the way to the right side of the meter face without causing excessive distortion of

the taped signal. Other, less expensive, machines will distort badly whenever the meter needle even slightly exceeds the recording-level meter's warning mark. For two reasons (and particularly with inexpensive recorders) it is vital to determine the optimum recording level. If you record at too low a level, your tapes will be hissy; if you record at too high a level, your taped sound will be distorted.

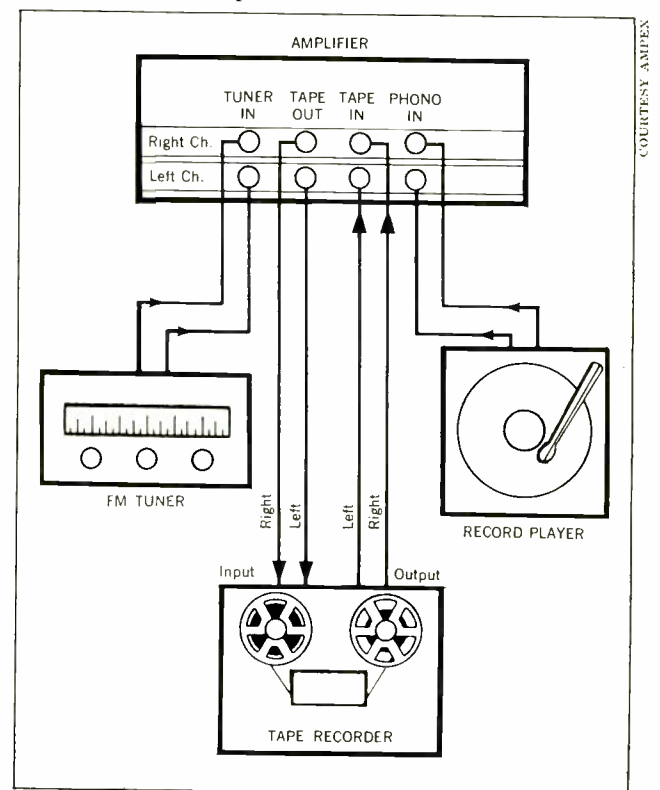
The fact that most FM broadcast stations use dynamic-range "limiters" to help keep their audio signal at a reasonably constant level eases the problem of finding the right setting for your tape machine's record-level control. However, you should be aware that the audio level (modulation) varies somewhat from station to station. Perhaps twenty to thirty minutes before the program you want to record goes on the air, turn on all your equipment and make some trial recordings. Establish as best you can what the peak levels are likely to be while you are tuned to the same station that you are going to record from later. Set your record-level control so that the meters peak at the previously determined optimum recording level for your particular machine.

The more important the recording is to you, the more careful you should be to insure that everything goes just right. For instance, every recorder owner should have a tape-head demagnetizer. You should use it before every important taping session. All you need do with this handy gadget is plug it in, switch it on (if it *has* a switch—some don't), and bring its probe(s) into contact with the recording-head gaps. (It's a good idea to cover the probe end of the demagnetizer with cellophane tape to prevent scratching the tape-head faces.) Move the probe over the head faces and other metal parts that come into contact with the tape and then, without turning off the demagnetizer, pull it back slowly until it is a foot or so away from the recorder before turning it off. This last is very important: if you switch the demagnetizer off while it is still close to the heads, it may leave a residual magnetic field on the heads that is stronger than the one you were trying to remove. You might think of this operation as being just as essential as removing the dust and lint from a phono-cartridge stylus. Demagnetizers come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and prices. One works as well as another, however, except that the probe ends of some types are too thick to fit into the tape-loading slots of a few machines. Buy the cheapest one that fits your recorder—most recorders will take any of them.

Another vital taping preliminary is the simple matter of tape-head cleaning. An almost microscopic chip of loose tape oxide on a head face can cause an audible loss of high frequencies and, in severe cases, even a loss of volume. The instruction book for your recorder will have some suggestions on head-cleaning fluids. Alcohol is almost always safe, but—at the risk of ruining the heads on your machine—avoid any type of dry-cleaning fluid,

including carbon tetrachloride. Such fluids may dissolve the plastic parts of the tape heads. Alcohol on a cotton swab will take care of most head-cleaning problems. It is best also to clean the capstan drive shaft and the rubber "idler" wheel that rides against it. This will help avoid tape slippage during taping operations.

You will find different problems in taping pop material than you will in taping classical music. Let us take pop first. Suppose you want to keep an up-to-date collection of top-40 singles. Try to find a pop station in your area (assuming there's more than one) whose disc jockeys do not talk over the beginning and end (or even right in the middle) of every selection. Since even the best of the DJ's usually give no preliminary warning when they are about to play a selection, you will have to be able to move fast. Of course, you can always keep your machine running throughout the program and edit out the between-selection chatter later, but this type of editing is tedious and time-consuming. I prefer to keep the machine set to record—in the "pause" position—but with the record-level control set to zero. When the music begins, I start the tape and slowly fade in the control, waiting for the DJ to shut up before I reach the recording level established earlier. At the end of the selection, I stop the machine, rewind back to the last 10 seconds or so of the selection, and play it through to the end, keeping my eye on the tape counter. I note the number on the



Above is a typical hookup of a stereo FM tuner, turntable, amplifier, and tape deck. In installations using a receiver, the difference is that the tuner and amplifier are together on one chassis and the connection between them is not made externally.

RECORDING TIMES AND TAPE LENGTHS

Tape length, feet	Recording time (for single pass in one direction, mono or stereo)		
	1 7/8 ips	3 3/4 ips	7 1/2 ips
150	16 min	8 min	4 min
300	32 min	16 min	8 min
400	42 min	21 min	10 1/2 min
600	1 hr 4 min	32 min	16 min
900	1 hr 36 min	48 min	24 min
1200	2 hr 8 min	1 hr 4 min	32 min
1250	2 hr 13 min	1 hr 6 min	33 min
1500	2 hr 40 min	1 hr 20 min	40 min
1800	3 hr 12 min	1 hr 36 min	48 min
2300	4 hr 5 min	2 hr 2 min	1 hr 1 min
2400	4 hr 16 min	2 hr 8 min	1 hr 4 min
2500	4 hr 26 min	2 hr 13 min	1 hr 6 min
3000	5 hr 20 min	2 hr 40 min	1 hr 20 min
3280	5 hr 49 min	2 hr 55 min	1 hr 27 min
3600	6 hr 24 min	3 hr 12 min	1 hr 36 min
4800	8 hr 32 min	4 hr 16 min	2 hr 8 min

counter at the moment the DJ starts to talk over the music. I rewind the tape to the noted number—and then rewind an additional couple of inches to compensate for the space between the erase and playback heads. Then I turn the record-level control to zero, press the "record" button to put the tape in motion, and record some silence. The amount of silence you want is a matter of taste. If you are going to use the fade-in technique I have just described, a second or so of blank time will be fine.

It is of course important to know just what it is you have in your tape boxes, but you may find it easier to label the box after all the taping is done rather than during the process. However, keep a pencil and paper handy to make notes on the titles and performers; you will have no difficulty matching them to the proper index numbers later. When you are labeling the box, that is also the time for correlating the tape counter on your machine with the taped selections. Make sure that you set the tape counter at zero at the very beginning of the first selection and *not* at the beginning of the reel.

When recording classical material, it is obviously necessary to know the playing times of the compositions you will be recording. Martel Electronics has a classical-music timing booklet that lists the times of most of the major "basic" works. The *Time Table for the Classical Repertoire* is available for 25¢ from Martel Electronics (attn: Time Table), 2339 S. Cotner Ave., West Los Angeles, California 90064. Once you know your playing time, simply match it against the tape-timing chart that appears at the top of this column.

A number of manufacturers put out "high-performance" tape that provides much improved results (less

tape noise and more high-frequency response) at 3 3/4 ips—particularly important for the usually more sensitively recorded classical music. For some longer compositions, the 3 3/4-ips speed becomes mandatory, and so should high-performance tape; taken together, they will provide entirely satisfactory results with most modern machines.

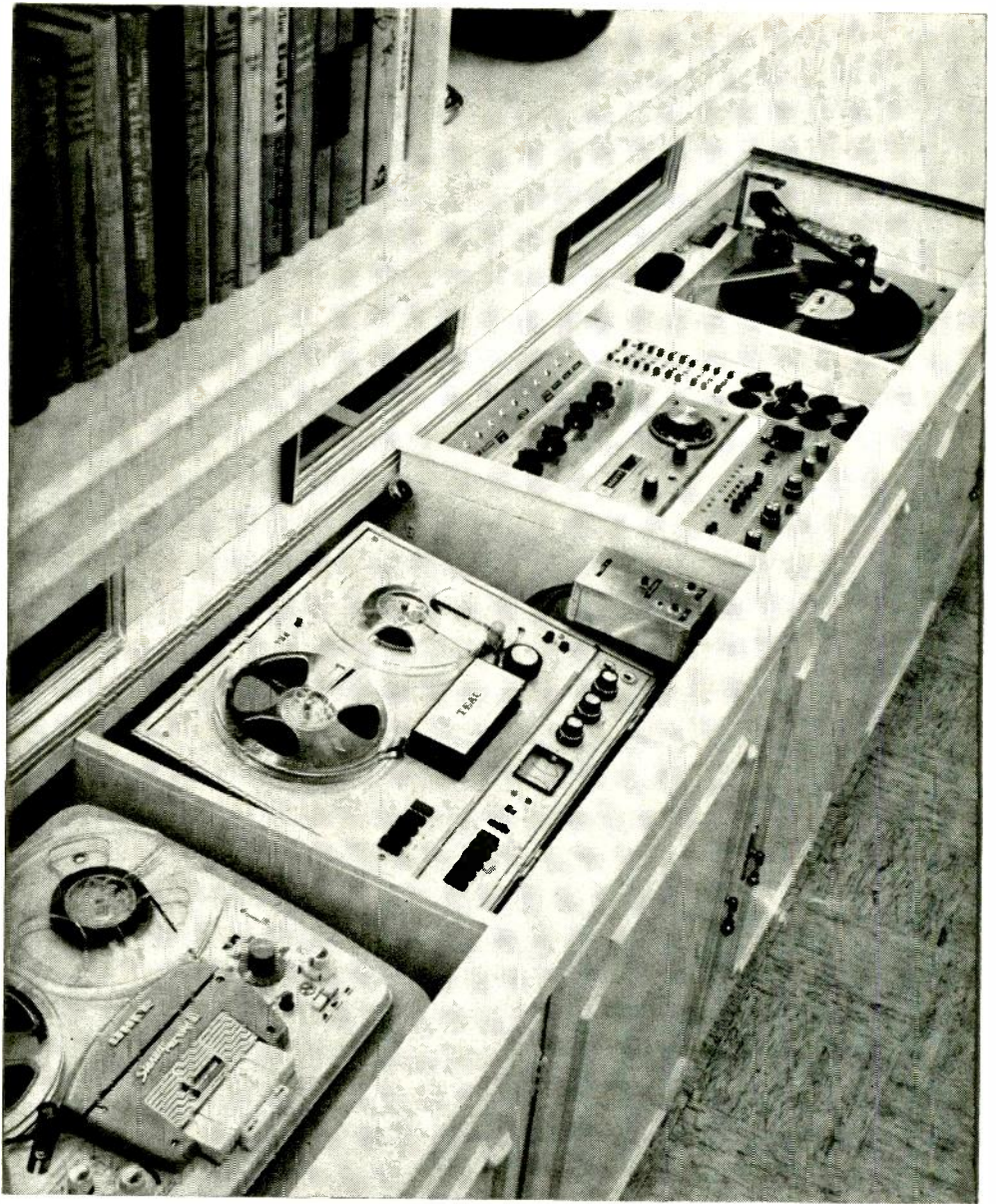
You will find in recording a series of short selections that it is better to use the 1,200-foot, 7-inch reels (or even 5-inch reels) rather than the longer tape lengths. Winding or rewinding through 2,400 feet of tape in order to locate one selection (particularly if your machine is not very fast in those modes) can be a drag. The same back-tracking technique described earlier for pop music can be used to eliminate station breaks and intermissions between the acts of operas. The difference, however, is that no fade-in or fade-out will be required, since no announcer would dream of talking over "good" music. These techniques may sound complicated in the reading, but you will find them both quick and simple when actually working with your machine.

A few words about what type of tape to use are also in order. Acetate tapes are the least expensive, and (in the 1.5-mil thickness) are quite adequate for recording. However, when it comes to thinner tapes and longer lengths, such as 1,800 feet or more, polyester (Mylar), at somewhat greater cost, has the advantage. It not only has greater strength, but its long-term storage properties, particularly under adverse climatic conditions, is far superior to acetate. Polyester tapes are not as likely to flake at the ends, nor are they as likely to suffer oxide flaking because of changes in humidity and temperature.

FEW amateur recordists bother with leader tape, yet I find it very helpful. If you use different colors at the beginning and end of a reel, you have an automatic indication that a reel has been played through. This can be useful, because if you are interrupted in your listening and leave a played-through reel on the machine, you may later accidentally record over material you wanted to save because the identifying label for the recording was on the empty reel. In addition, leader tape can be written on, using a fine-tip marking pen, and this will also help prevent mixups. You will find many kinds of smooth-surface masking tape and self-stick labels in stationery stores that will prove ideal for labeling the tape reels themselves.

One last word: attention to detail and a few simple preparatory techniques are all that's required to produce first-class tapes. You have the know-how and the recorder—why not start now?

Judy Raskin, by occupation a publicist, accumulated her taping-off-the-air know-how mostly by trial and error. She does admit, however, that manufacturers' literature has helped considerably.



INSTALLATION OF THE MONTH

DREAM-OF-GLORY STEREO

STEREO REVIEW's Installation of the Month feature usually presents a one-page description of a component setup that is likely to provide maximum inspiration and equipment-housing ideas for our readers. However, when faced with an example of an installation that combines outstanding build-it-yourself electronics ingenuity and simple good taste in cabinetry, we have to break our one-page rule and share our admiration and envy with everybody. The installation case-in-point is that of J. Ross Macdonald of Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Macdonald, the director of research of a large electronics company, writes that he has maintained a deep interest in audio and classical music since the 1930's. His audio-oriented extracurricular activities include serving as one of Dallas' five radio commissioners,

who have responsibility for the two city-owned radio stations—WRR and WRR-FM.

In light of Mr. Macdonald's impressive credentials, it is not surprising that for him the purchase and installation of the high fidelity components was just the starting point. Many of the units have been modified, some were specially designed and built from scratch, and all are connected through a complex relay-operated switching system designed and built by Mr. Macdonald himself. In the photo above, four of the program sources are visible. From left to right, they are a Uher Stereo Record III tape recorder, a Teac R-1000 stereo tape deck, a Scott 310E stereo FM tuner, and a Weathers turntable and tone arm using a mono FM pickup cartridge.

The equipment cabinet is topped with four translucent

glass panels that slide shut to conceal the equipment. A fluorescent light fixture installed under the shelf above the equipment provides lighting for the system. Two additional program sources are located inside the base of the cabinet. Immediately beneath the Uher tape recorder there is a Radio Craftsmen AM/FM tuner, and, at the other end of the cabinet, there is a Dual 1019 automatic turntable equipped with an ADC 10/E cartridge (see photo below).

The main speaker systems are AR-3's (there are other speakers in other rooms and at the pool) installed about 9 feet apart at the ends of the cabinet. The only other "store-bought" component in the system is a Fisher 400-CX stereo preamplifier, located in the same compartment as the Scott tuner. Both the volume and balance controls of the preamp are connected to a complex remote-control system, about which more later. The conventional volume control has been replaced by Mr. Macdonald with a step-type control that has twenty-one 2-decibel steps.

Filling out the complement of electronics are several units designed and built by Mr. Macdonald. At the left, beneath the Craftsmen tuner, is a heavy-duty regulated power supply that serves the two mono power amplifiers located below the Teac tape deck. The amplifiers are each rated at 50 watts output. On the shelf below the amplifiers is a box containing the a.c.-power switching relays.

In the next compartment to the right are two more relay boxes and a home-brew instrument with two VU meters that can be switched to read signal levels at various points in the system. In the compartment at far right, beneath the Dual turntable, is a combined clock and 24-hour timer that can be set to switch components on or off at 15-minute intervals throughout the day.

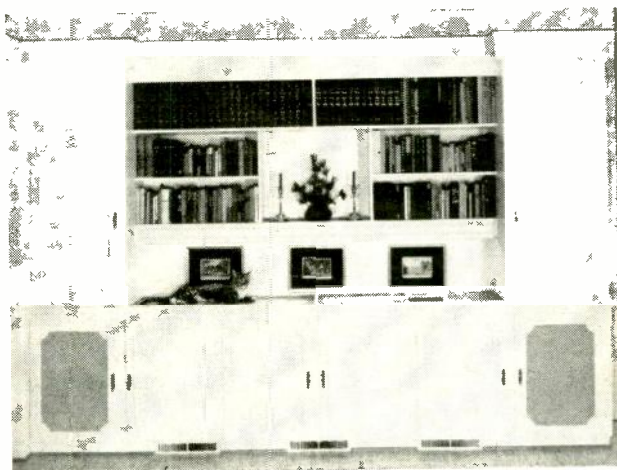
Much of the tube equipment gives off heat, and Mr. Macdonald used two approaches to the ventilation problem. The regulated power supply has a Rotron Whisper Fan of its own; the rest of the components are cooled by the house air-conditioning system. Cool air, drawn in through the three vents near the floor, passes through the

equipment compartments and then into an exhaust outlet at the rear of the cabinet.

As mentioned earlier, the commercial components were only a starting point for Mr. Macdonald. A home-built remote-control unit for the Teac deck can be seen next to the unit. The Weathers turntable was partly automated several years ago. A momentary-press button turns it on, but the turntable revolves only when the arm is lifted to be placed on a record. At the end of the record, the tone arm breaks a beam of light and photoelectrically switches off the turntable motor. If no new record is played within the next two minutes, the entire system then shuts off.

The system has two remote-control stations—one at Mr. Macdonald's listening position in the living room and the other in the bedroom. At either station, the push of a button turns on any desired component, together with the preamplifier and power amplifiers. The output signal from the selected component is automatically switched into the preamplifier input. Volume and channel balance can also be controlled remotely. In addition, both recorders have remote pause controls and the Teac has remote-control reverse. The speakers can also be turned off to eliminate commercials. They are switched back on automatically after about three minutes (they can be switched on manually before that time, of course). One last push-button permits switching from mono to stereo.

The two remaining home-built units can be seen in the same compartment as the preamplifier and tuner. In the rear is a high- and low-frequency filter with a total of seventy-two positions and a 42-dB-per-octave slope. The inclined panel at the rear of the tuner/preamplifier compartment contains a row of pilot lamps to show which equipment is on. The two rows of slide switches control relays that route the audio signals throughout the system. Two of the large rotary switches control which speakers are used and what signal they get. The other two switches control the tape-recorder inputs, permitting the signal to be taken from any point in the system. Who could ask for anything more?
—W. W.



Using an OSCILLOSCOPE as a RECORD-LEVEL METER

ANYONE who has done more than fifteen minutes of tape recording knows that proper recording levels are essential to achieving high-quality tape reproduction. If the recording level is set too high, distortion will be obtrusive on *fortissimo* passages; if it is set too low, tape hiss will mar the *pianissimos*. To help prevent both of these faults, every tape recorder intended for recording music has some kind of record-level indicator. Being aware of the differences in the characteristics of these devices, and perhaps supplementing them in a manner to be described below, will aid the recordist in achieving optimum results.

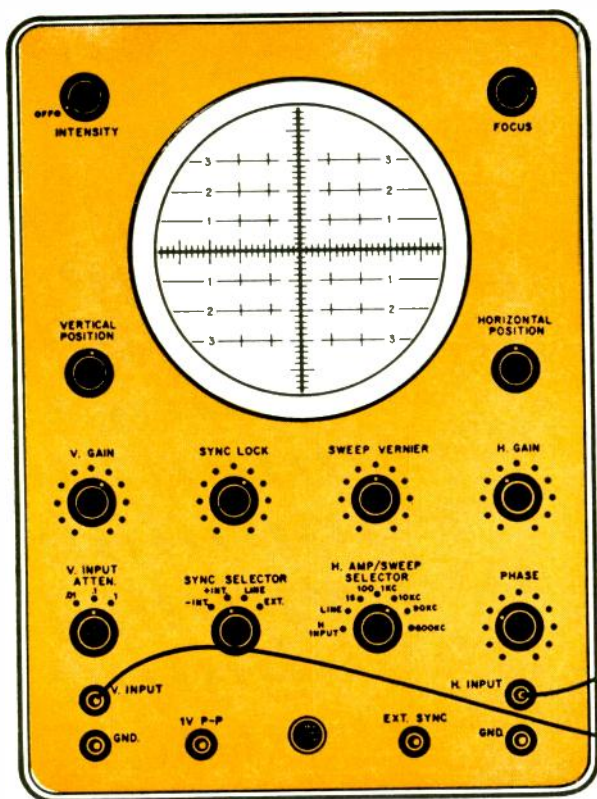
There are two basic kinds of record-level indicators: those that indicate *peak* signal voltage and those that indicate *average* variations in intensity. The ubiquitous "VU meter" (see Figure 1) is an average-reading indicator. A VU (volume unit) is simply a decibel, and the scale normally used for tape machines is calibrated from -20 to $+3$, with the 0 VU indication located at a point about three-quarters of the way up on the meter scale. Below the decibel scale there is usually a 0-100 per cent scale, with 100 per cent corresponding to 0 VU. VU meters operate by rectifying a portion of the a.c. audio signal into a proportional direct current, which is then registered on a d.c. meter movement.

Actually, very few recorders intended for home use are equipped with real VU meters, no matter how authentic their dial faces may look. Standard VU meters have an internal impedance of 3,900 ohms, and their ballistic characteristics (the relative speed with which the needle

responds to an input signal) are carefully controlled. The sudden imposition of a 0-VU-level signal will cause the needle to reach 99 per cent of the full reading within 0.3 second with a maximum permissible overshoot of 1.5 per cent. Overall frequency response of the meter must be within 0.5 dB from 35 to 16,000 Hz, and the maximum harmonic distortion caused by placing the meter across standard professional 600-ohm audio lines must not exceed 0.3 per cent. So connected, the VU meter dissipates exactly one milliwatt of power when indicating 0 VU, and the voltage required (0.775) is known as "0 dBm." Standard professional practice is to wire an external 3,600-ohm resistor in series with the meter, in which case 0 VU equals the normal "line level" of $+4$ dBm (1.23 volts).

Meters that have these standard characteristics sell for about \$25 each, so it is understandable that the "VU meters" found in most home tape recorders are not so tightly specified. Their frequency response and ballistic characteristics are unknown, but for the purposes of the home recordist these are of little consequence, so long as the needle responds quickly to a signal. The average audiophile certainly has no need to maintain absolute signal-voltage levels through a series of studio lines, consoles, attenuators, and line amplifiers. His sole concern is the relative strength of the signals from his microphone or preamplifier, and therefore a nonstandard indicator will suffice.

The chief difficulty with *any* kind of VU meter, however, is that its needle cannot respond quickly enough



By Craig Stark

to indicate the true peak level of brief transient signals—which may exceed “average” levels by as much as 20 dB. Distortion is a function of *peak*, not *average*, signal levels, and for this reason, when VU meters are used to set record levels, they are usually given a 6- to 8-dB “safety margin.” If a 400-Hz sine wave produces 3 per cent total harmonic distortion at a level 6 to 8 dB above 0 VU, it will usually produce about 1 per cent harmonic distortion at 0 VU, and this is the normal calibration point for most high-quality recorders.

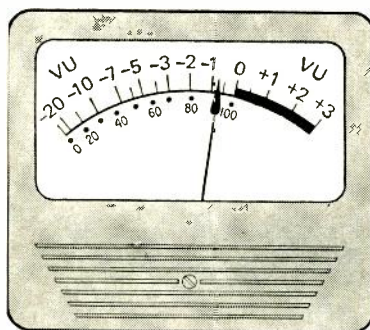
THE great advantage of the VU meter lies in its standardization, which is of vital importance to the recording and broadcasting industries. Using a genuine VU meter as a record-level indicator, a *practiced* operator can adjust the signal within a decibel or so of the optimum level. But part of becoming a “practiced” operator lies in learning how to interpret VU-meter indications. Brass and percussion instruments, for example, often produce transients that would exceed the built-in 6- to 8-dB safety margin, and so their sound should never be allowed to drive the meter to a 0-VU indication. On the other hand, most organ stops (particularly the powerful pedals) produce a signal whose peaks are less than 8 dB above “average” reading, permitting the operator to let the *fortissimo* climaxes of this kind of music to go 1 to 2 dB above 0 “into the red.” (Since a good organ has a dynamic range almost equal to that of a full symphony orchestra, every decibel thus gained means less audible hiss on the very quiet sections). Female

choruses, on the other hand, must be recorded at lower than 0-VU levels. This is true because the large high-frequency content of the voices combined with the high-frequency pre-emphasis (equalization) curve built into the record circuits will often drive the recorder into distortion.

While such considerations are taken into account by the professional recording engineer in setting standard VU meter levels, the average home recordist is much better off with an indicator which registers not “average” but “peak” levels directly. On some inexpensive older recorders neon bulbs were used that were adjusted so that they just turned “on” at peak undistorted levels. The chief drawback of neon lamps lies in the fact that one cannot tell how close he is, one way or the other, to maximum permissible level. A step up from this is the familiar “magic eye” indicator, which indicates maximum permissible level when its shadow just closes.

The major problem with all such “peak-indicating” devices, however, is that their very short scale (normally less than one inch) makes reliable calibration impossible. Using a VU meter, an experienced recordist can raise or lower the maximum level by a couple of decibels to compensate for this or that kind of music, and the standardization of the meter permits him to check levels with absolute accuracy—he knows that the studio’s compressor or limiter cuts in at such-and-such a level, and so forth. The ideal record-level indicator, then, would (a) indicate peak rather than average level, and (b) permit at least rough calibration of actual signal levels.

Figure 1. A standard professional VU meter. The scale reading from 0 to 100 is used by broadcast stations to indicate the percentage of modulation of the broadcast signal.



Both of these requirements can be achieved by using an oscilloscope as a level indicator. And fortunately, an oscilloscope can be added to almost every recorder, usually without soldering a single wire!

The general usefulness of a scope in testing and servicing normally makes it one of the first pieces of test equipment purchased by the advanced audiophile. Excellent kit instruments are available at moderate prices, and there is a fairly large supply of "military surplus" scopes. For audio purposes one does not require the 5-megahertz bandwidth needed for TV servicing, and the most inexpensive general-purpose scope will be completely adequate. If space and budget permit, a 5-inch scope makes for easiest viewing, but the smaller 3-inch versions will suffice. While details for connecting and calibrating the scope will be given later, the principle involved in using it as a record-level indicator is to feed the signal from the left channel of the recorder to the vertical input of the scope and the right channel to the horizontal input. Connected this way, a stereo signal will result in a "scrambled-egg" pattern (Figure 2E) on the scope, the size of the pattern varying with signal strength. A monophonic signal will appear as a diagonal line whose length will indicate peak signal level. Some of the advantages of using a scope as a record-level indicator are the following:

1. The relative "roundness" of the scope pattern is an index of stereo channel separation. The more closely the "scrambled-egg" pattern approximates a thin diagonal line (Figure 2A), the less the separation.
2. The height (left channel) and width (right channel) of the scope pattern provide an easier indication of channel balance than is possible with most recorder indicators.

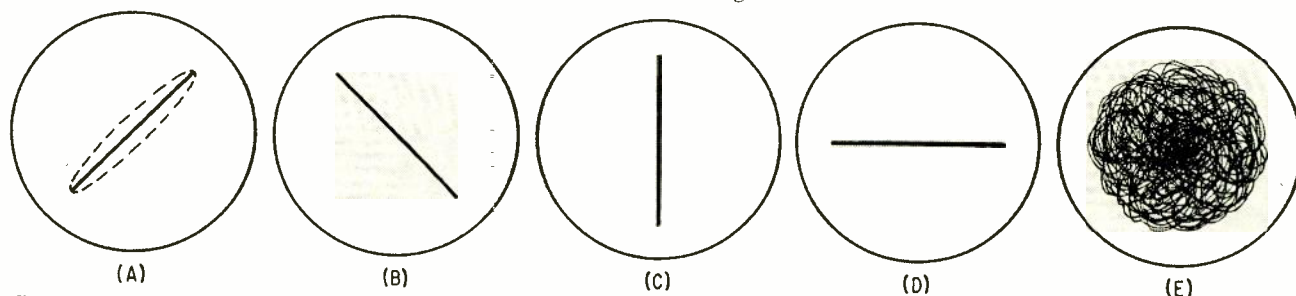


Figure 2. The drawings above show some typical patterns that appear on an oscilloscope screen when it is used as a record-level indicator. (A) shows a mono signal or an in-phase stereo signal with very little separation; (B) is an out-of-phase stereo signal; (C) is a left-channel-only signal; (D) a right-channel-only signal; and (E) is a typical stereo pattern, which varies continuously.

Unless conventional VU meters are arranged for pointer-to-pointer deflection, it is difficult to watch them both at once to ensure that the signal going into both channels is equal.

3. Excessive recording levels give visible evidence of distortion, not only by their size, but by a "flattening" of the outer edges of the pattern.

4. A scope indicates peaks, yet its screen can be calibrated in decibels (at least to the accuracy with which a moving VU meter needle can be read). If a given signal, corresponding to 0 VU, deflects the scope pattern by 4 centimeters, an 8-centimeter deflection will be precisely +6 VU, the minimum "safety margin" built into VU-meter calibration.

5. While the VU circuits built into most home recorders may be quite frequency-sensitive (dropping off in response above 10,000 Hz), almost any general-purpose scope will be accurate from 20 to 100,000 Hz.

6. Scope indication alone will provide graphic evidence of unwanted phase reversal between microphones (or tape heads). Just as speakers must be in phase for optimum stereo reproduction, so must every other link in the recording chain.

7. Bias voltage sometimes "leaks" into record and playback circuits, where its presence drives the amplifiers into distortion. This cannot be detected with conventional indicators, but shows itself clearly on a scope by severely blurring the trace.

8. Even when recording at slightly below 0-VU level, distortion can be generated by music that contains loud high-frequency sounds. A scope makes calibration of playback level possible (on machines that permit simultaneous record and playback), which then permits visual monitoring of the recorded product, this distortion being detected by the "flattening" of the outer edges of the trace.

9. Drop-outs, caused by poor tape or poor tape-to-head contact, become visible when using a scope for monitoring by a sudden collapse of the pattern (usually on only one channel). I once detected a slightly misaligned tape guide that was causing drop-outs only when tape width became slightly greater than normal (but still within NAB permissible tolerances) because the scope showed up the problem.

10. In making copies of slow-speed voice recordings it is frequently desirable to cut the duplicating time in half by running both the playback and the record machine at double speed. VU meters, however, cannot follow the very short transient bursts that result from double-speed operation. Since any tape copy will contain twice the hiss of the original, it is desirable to record the copy at as high a level as possible. The scope shows peak levels directly, thus permitting high-speed duplication with accurate monitoring of level.

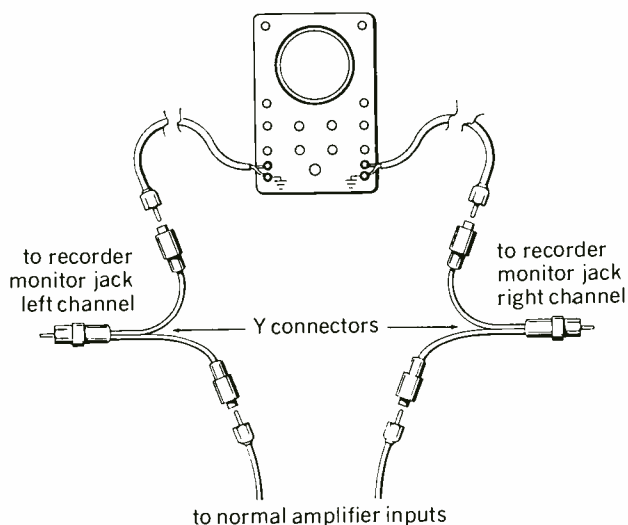


Figure 3. Only two "Y" connectors are needed to connect an oscilloscope as a record-level indicator. Because of the scope's high input impedance, the recorder's performance is unaffected. The shielded phono cables used should not be over six feet long.

As stated before, oscilloscope monitoring can be added to any recorder without making internal connections or modifications. Since all scopes have a high impedance both on vertical and horizontal inputs, they can be connected in parallel (using Y-adaptors and shielded cable) with the normal monitor/playback outputs of any machine without adversely affecting its performance (see Figure 3).

A reasonably steady sine-wave signal is necessary for calibration of the scope screen. If available, a standard audio generator is best, but a calibration signal can be obtained from a small, inexpensive single-frequency 1-kHz audio generator such as Lafayette's 99 T 5030 at \$7.95 or the more elaborate dual-frequency (1-kHz and 10-kHz) unit that is also suitable for use in tape-head alignment. The dual-frequency unit sells for \$14.95, and the Lafayette stock number is 99 T 1549. The first thing to check is the scope display for a normal, in-phase signal. Nearly all scopes will display a line that slopes from the lower left to the upper right quadrant of the screen (as in Figure 2A) when both their vertical and horizontal inputs are fed by an in-phase signal (e.g., one channel of an FM tuner or preamp, if no audio generator is available). To check this, connect a wire between the vertical and horizontal inputs of the scope and feed any signal source whatever into it. Set the scope sweep or horizontal-input control to EXTERNAL HORIZONTAL INPUT. If the resulting line deflects from lower left to upper right, fine; if it deflects from upper left to lower right (Figure 2B) the scope itself has phase reversal between vertical and horizontal plates. This can be taken as that scope's "normal" pattern for a mono signal.

To calibrate the scope screen, feed a sine-wave signal into both channels of the recorder and adjust for 0-VU

readings. If the recorder uses VU meters as indicators, adjust the deflection on a 5-inch scope face so that it diagonally crosses an imaginary box of 4 x 4 centimeters or 2 x 2 inches. (The trace on a 3-inch scope must be reduced proportionately.) This means that musical peaks of +6 VU, the safety margin built into the VU-meter calibration, will cause a trace deflection exactly 8 centimeters (or 4 inches) long. This will represent the maximum level for essentially distortionless recording. Recorders which use peak-level indicators should be set so that the scope-deflection pattern, using the calibrating signal, deflects the *full* permissible size. On machines that have monitor heads that permit simultaneous record and playback, a tape of the type normally used should then be threaded, and the machine set for playback of the recorded calibrating signal. Playback controls should be set to yield the same size pattern, and thereafter can be left permanently in the same position. Since playback and record levels are now the same, the scope indication of playback will now also indicate record level.

WITH the scope connected and calibrated, a check for proper phasing in the recorder and microphones is in order. The easiest way to test for proper overall phasing is to place both microphones as close together as possible and record and play back a few seconds of speech. This should appear on the scope as a mono signal with the normal mono diagonal pattern. If the resulting trace runs diagonally opposite from that in the phase test, there is phase reversal somewhere in the system. Playback heads can be checked for proper phase by putting the recorder in playback mode and bringing a tape-head demagnetizer within a foot or two of the head face. (Don't bring it too near, or the playback circuit will be overloaded.) The direction of the slant shown on the scope will show whether or not the playback-head coils are wired in correct phase. If not, reverse the connections to one of them. If the playback checks out correctly, connect a monophonic signal (or one channel from a tuner or preamplifier output) to both high-level inputs on the tape deck. Record and play-back a few seconds, and again the scope will show by the direction of the slant whether the record heads are in or out of phase. If this is cleared and the microphone recording made earlier is out of phase, the internal connections of one of the microphones must be reversed.

The ease and accuracy of scope monitoring of record levels must, of course, be experienced to be appreciated fully. No one who has ever used a scope for this purpose will ever again want to settle for anything less.

Craig Stark is a college instructor in philosophy, a long-time audiophile, and a devoted tape recordist as well. His article "The Dynamic Range of Music" appeared in the June, 1968, issue.



The Jefferson Airplane in performance.

A Short and Happy History of Rock

AMID THE MAWKISHNESS, BANALITY, AND SELF-INDULGENCE
THERE IS STILL MUCH GOOD MUSIC TO LISTEN TO

By **ROBERT CHRISTGAU**

EARLY in 1967, Leonard Bernstein, Sgt. Pepper, the Monterey Pop Festival, and (especially) all those whatchamacallits—hippies, I mean—combined in a sudden rush to turn pop music into the hottest item since the Lindbergh kidnapping, and ever after it has been easy riding and I-told-you-so for all us mid-twentyish fans who *always* loved the music. But this too shall pass. The canonization of rock is no longer news; in fact, it is getting to be something of a drag, and the communications media, in their collective capacity as Indian giver, may well decanonize it in a year or two. Meanwhile, a lot of good music goes along with the hype, and there seems to be at least a good chance that it will be worth listening to after the hype has subsided. That, roughly, is the rationale of this rock "library."

Since the history of rock—and of its more primitive forerunner, rock-and-roll—stretches all the way back to 1953, it obviously must be approached with a reverent sense of the past. Admittedly, this is obvious to me because I'm prejudiced: I was there. In fact, at my most detached, I suspect that it is only with the aid of such a perspective that the irresistible attractiveness of much early rock-and-roll can be understood at all. It is much easier to dig Bill Haley or Fats Domino after listening to fifteen minutes of the Ames Brothers. The success of rock-and-roll was as much a rejection of contemporary

popular music as it was an affirmation of the inherent values of the blues and the country-and-western music in which rock is rooted. Too much is made of these roots. The vitality of rock-and-roll, and of rock, was the vitality of an oppressed subculture, all right—not that of urban blacks or hillbillies, but of the young, particularly the white young.

This is not to gainsay the close interrelation of rock and black popular music—over half this library is black, and rightly so. But a direct, primary appeal to the young is rock's sole unifying factor. This appeal is so strong that I am forced to wonder whether some of the records on this list are accessible to the average white middle-class listener at all. This is a sensitive issue, I know, but it is impossible to dig rock secondhand. It requires *a priori* commitment. In this regard, rock is closer to country-and-western than to blues or jazz, because, like country-and-western, much of it is bad music—not just chi-chi, like bad jazz, or rough, like bad blues, but downright vulgar awful. This was truer in the Fifties, but it continues to hold today, and there is no question that older listeners—and a distressing number of younger ones, too—tend to gloss over the mawkishness, banality, and all-around self-indulgence that characterize even good rock, or (worse still) dismiss the music whole when they perceive such flaws.

The other problem with secondhand appreciation is its dependence on the phonograph record, for until recently rock was designed specifically to be heard on AM radio, its aesthetic geared to the yawping "Top 40" format. That is why this collection includes five hit samplers. There is no reason, however, to dismiss the

Five Satins, say, because they produced—or had their name on—only eight minutes of decent music in their career. On the contrary, pre-Beatles rock-and-roll *was* dozens of performers like the Five Satins, and a selection of them affords a variety that is more pleasurable than the fuller persona of a not-quite-first-rate stylist.

18 King-Size Rhythm and Blues Hits. COLUMBIA © CS 9467, (M) CL 2667.

Rock-and-roll was essentially a commercialization and bowdlerization of the "race music" of the late Forties. Under founder Sydney Nathan, King Records of Cincinnati—now owned by the late Nathan's greatest discovery, James Brown—recorded a remarkably pure and broad range of Negro popular music, a portion of which is collected on this Columbia album. Very few of these selections succeeded in white markets—the Platters' *Only You*, featuring the gospel-pop tenor of Tony Williams, and Bill Doggett's classic rock-and-roll instrumental *Honky Tonk* were the biggest hits—but they do suggest where rock-and-roll came from: the easy-going ballads of Lonnie Johnson and Bullmoose Jackson, the frantic soul-shouting of Otis Redding (on a marvelous early recording called *Shout Bamalama*), and Brown himself. This collection also includes the original version of the first rock standard, Little Willie John's *Fever*, and two underground best-sellers (Hank Ballard's *Work with Me, Annie* and Billy Ward's *Sixty Minute Man*) which were banned on many radio stations because of their suggestive lyrics.

History of Rhythm and Blues, Volume 3: Rock & Roll 1956-57. ATLANTIC © SD 8163; tape F 8164. 3¾ ips.

Perhaps the King Records music remained relatively pure because it was produced away from the center of the rock-and-roll industry, New York. In that city Atlantic Records, under the Ertegun brothers and Jerry Wexler, dominated. This record, which does not include a mediocre song, contains several excellent examples of the simplified blues that were the basis of rock-and-roll. It also features three of the most durable rhythm-and-blues groups, the Drifters, the Clovers, and the Coasters, the latter the creatures of the greatest

songwriting-producing team of the Fifties, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. Contents include *Searchin'* (The Coasters), *C. C. Rider* (Chuck Willis), *Jim Dandy* (La Vern Baker), *Devil or Angel* (The Clovers), and others.

Oldies but Goodies in Hi-Fi, Volume 1. ORIGINAL SOUND © OSR-LPS 8850; tape 4T 8850, 3¾ ips.

For every solid rock-and-roll label (Atlantic, King, Chess, Roulette) there were ten fly-by-night "indies," now long gone except for a few masters. Collected albums of these masters used to contain as many as twenty songs—the first volume of Roulette's "20 Original Winners" series is the best—but now the number seems to have dropped to twelve. My choice among the items included in this Original Sound collection includes the Penguins' *Earth Angel*, the first record to travel from Harlem jukes to proms in Iowa; Shirley & Lee's *Let the Good Times Roll*, the most widely disseminated sex song of the decade; and *Eddie My Love*, a featureless song by an anonymous girl group (the Teen Queens) aimed directly at white high-schoolers, as perfect of its kind as a Campbell soup can. Note the basic formula: slightly interesting voice, lugubrious theme, a gimmick or two, and The Beat, slow for the Fish, fast for the Lindy. In other words, two minutes of dynamite. (A good source for Oldies albums, by the way, is the House of Oldies, 147 Bleeker Street, New York, which stocks many out-of-print items and sells by mail.)

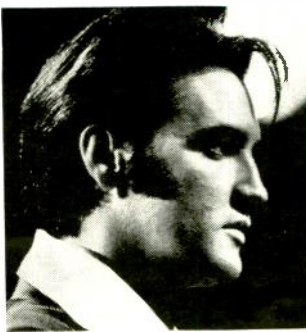
ELVIS PRESLEY: Elvis Golden Records, Volume 1. *Heartbreak Hotel; Don't Be Cruel; Loving You; All Shook Up*; others. RCA VICTOR © LSP 1707.

It is ironic that Elvis, who served as an easy symbol of the debasement of popular culture for social critics of the Fifties, had in fact arrived at a brilliant and important stylistic synthesis, uniting hillbilly and blues

Ray Charles



Elvis Presley



Otis Redding



Bob Dylan



music to become the first sexually admissible (read Caucasian) rock-and-roll superstar. This album contains the songs that made him famous, including great rockers like Leiber-Stoller's *Hound Dog* and the pablum-like *Love Me Tender*. Both are important. Elvis was a natural, and not as feckless as everyone liked to think. But his genius was "packaged," the perfect symbol of it being the echo with which his strong blues voice was characteristically obscured. Remember, though, that packaging can broaden impact. Who knows, without that echo chamber, he might never have changed the lives of two boys in Liverpool named John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

RAY CHARLES: *The Ray Charles Story, Volume 2.* ATLANTIC © SD 8063, (M) 8063. *Rockhouse; Let the Good Times Roll; Yes Indeed; Swanee River Rock;* others.

Ray Charles demonstrated conclusively that jazz was not the only great and adult black popular music. He made his name by hitting with kids, then worked to expand his audience. The final songs on his record, especially *Come Rain or Come Shine* and *Movin' On*, document his success. Their vocal stylization proceeded logically from the emotive possibilities of early rhythm and blues, and of course from gospel as well. Before attempting standards, Charles had learned how to graft gospel progressions and chorus effects onto hard rock to produce such hits as *Yes Indeed* and *What'd I Say?* Taken all together, this is called soul music. Charles invented it.

A Package of 16 Original Big Hits. You Beat Me to the Punch (Mary Wells); *You've Really Got a Hold on Me* (The Miracles); *Beachwood 4-5789* (The Marvelettes); *Aloney* (Barrett Strong); *Do You Love Me* (The Contours); others. MOTOWN © 614.

A Collection of 16 Original Big Hits, Volume 5. Where Did Our Love Go (The Supremes); *It's Growing* (The Temptations); *I'll Be Doggone* (Marvin Gaye); *When I'm Gone* (Brenda Holloway); *Shot Gun* (Jr. Walker and the All-Stars); others. MOTOWN © 651, 7½ ips tape MTC 651.

Berry Gordy of Motown Records rivaled Phil Spector as an r-&-b innovator. Around the turn of this decade, when r-&-b was foundering and schlock music (both black and white) appeared to be taking over, Gordy was a bastion of taste, insisting on simple arrangements and a strong, danceable beat. He also had a great ear for talent, discovering the Supremes, the Temptations, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson, and the Holland-Dozier-Holland songwriting team. The Beatles later recorded three of the songs on the first LP listed above. It is instructive to compare the earlier record with "Volume 5" to hear how Gordy and his staff gradually learned to weave in extra instrumentation and uncover distinctive styles for the Supremes and Marvin Gaye—in each case

a half-step away from true r-&-b and toward the white market. Yet, despite the decrease in grit, the style is definitely black, not so much a sell-out as a measure of the assimilation into (or aspiration toward) mainstream America by one sort of Negro.

THE SHIRELLES: *Greatest Hits. Tonight's the Night; A Thing of the Past; Mama Said; Will You Love Me Tomorrow;* others. SCEPTER © S 507, (M) 507; tape X 507, 3¾ ips.

DIONNE WARWICK: *Golden Hits, Volume 1. Don't Make Me Over; Walk On By; Reach Out for Me; Anyone Who Had a Heart;* others. SCEPTER © S 565, (M) 565; tape X 565, 3¾ ips.

Another bright spot around 1960 was Shirley Alston of the Shirelles, the first of the sexy black chicks—Mary Wells, Diana Ross, Aretha Franklin—who have since enhanced the music. Discovered in high school, Shirley's basic charm was simplicity—she was, well, a little dumb, unable to quite control her emotions or her hormones, yet proud enough to resist being pushed around. Her miss on the high note of "This is the moment" in *A Thing of the Past* is the most sublime single stroke in rock-and-roll. In contrast, Dionne Warwick's gospel-trained voice, like the shifting rhythms and skewed harmonies of the songs Burt Bacharach composed for it, was too idiosyncratic to win immediate acceptance in the world of straight pop, though this is where both the voice and the songs really belonged. The result: a legacy of big-beat musical sophistication that preceded the Beatles, rock songs for a miraculous alloy of a voice, one with the warmth of old silver and the tensile strength of steel.

THE BEATLES: *Second Album. She Loves You; I Call Your Name; Roll Over Beethoven; You've Really Got a Hold on Me;* others. CAPITOL © ST 2080, (M) T 2080; tape Y2T 2467, 3¾ ips.

THE BEATLES: *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. With a Little Help from My Friends; Fixing a Hole; Lovely Rita; A Day in the Life;* others. CAPITOL © SMAS 2653, (M) MAS 2653; tape Y1T 2653, 3¾ ips.

I have chosen two Beatles albums to correct a major flaw in Beatles scholarship, especially on the part of those *Nouveau Rocks* who have turned on to the music in the past couple of years; namely, that at about the time of "Rubber Soul" or "Revolver" the Beatles turned from their sins and began to write good songs, or (a less pernicious corollary) that the Beatles' immense success is owing mostly to their ability in melodic composition. Unh-unh. The Beatles were always wonderful. It was their ebullience as performers—as a musical group and as actors on the stage of the world—that turned them into demigods. Their copies of black rock-and-roll songs were touched with soul (compare their *Money* to the Beach Boys' *Barbara Ann*) but avoided the sod-

den seriousness of other white imitators. For the envy of the direct competitor they substituted the loving admiration of the fan. Let me add, though, that listing two albums encourages another fallacy: that the Beatles are twice as good as anyone else in rock. Not true, musically. But as evangelists they are triple-supreme.

BOB DYLAN: *Highway 61 Revisited. Like a Rolling Stone; Highway 61 Revisited; Desolation Row; Ballad of a Thin Man; Tombstone Blues; others.* COLUMBIA © SC 9189, Ⓜ CL 2389.

One of the Beatles' converts was the *de facto* leader of the American folk movement, Bob Dylan, who visited England in 1964, then recorded an album of half-rock, half-folk called "Bringing It All Back Home." "Highway 61," all rock, followed. Despite Dylan's ear for good musicians—Mike Bloomfield, Al Kooper, Charlie McCoy—his rock had a loose feel, almost tacked on, in contrast to the tight arrangements which had become typical. Nevertheless, like his lyrics, the music was great in spite of its defects; and, also like his lyrics, it would have been healthy regardless. When Dylan started writing "poetic" songs in the early Sixties, he inspired a lot of awful verbalizing, but he also inspired a song-writing revival that still flourishes. When he sang rock, he legitimized it in the folk community. The skilled

guitarists and demanding fans of that community inevitably raised the quality—if also the pretensions—of the music.

THE BYRDS: *The Notorious Byrd Brothers. Artificial Energy; Goin' Back; Draft Morning; Get to You; others.* COLUMBIA © CS 9575, Ⓜ CL 2775; tape CQ 980, 7½ ips.

THE MAMAS AND THE PAPAS: *If You Can Believe Your Eyes and Ears. Monday, Monday; California Dreamin'; Straight Shooter; I Call Your Name; others.* DUNHILL © S 50006, Ⓜ 50006; tape X 5006, 3¾ ips.

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE: *Surrealistic Pillow. Somebody to Love; White Rabbit; My Best Friend; She Has Funny Cars; others.* RCA VICTOR © LSP 3766; tape TP 3-502, 3¾ ips.

Each of these "folk-rock" groups was into rock before Dylan gave it his imprimatur, yet none of them would have been heard had not Dylan—and of course the Beatles—prepared the way. The Byrds, from Los Angeles, first hit with a song Dylan gave them, *Mr. Tambourine Man*. For four years they have produced the most consistent white American rock. "Notorious," released as their popularity began to wane, is an unquestionable triumph of taste, stamped with their old sound but hinting of the country feeling that was to follow. John Phillips of the now-defunct Mamas and Papas was a regular on the New York folk circuit before



The Mamas and the Papas



The Beatles

The Coasters



ATLANTIC RECORDS
LONDON RECORDS

The Rolling Stones



COLUMBIA RECORDS

The Byrds



he conceived this "good-time" group early in 1965. The production, by Lou Adler, is as intricate as a Busby Berkeley dance number, and may seem just as campy in twenty more years. Meanwhile, the force of the vocals—especially those of Cass Elliott—and the general spirit of fun that informs the arrangements overbalances such quibbles, and Phillips' songs show a feel for pop truth that is almost fey. The Airplane was the commercial avatar of "head" music and the San Francisco sound, which isn't so much a sound as a feeling. The Byrds and the Mamas and the Papas were essentially studio groups; the Airplane and the Grateful Dead got it together for years at dances around the Bay Area. The emphasis on controlled spontaneity has been a hallmark of San Francisco rock ever since.



Aretha Franklin



Dionne Warwick

THE ROLLING STONES: *Aftermath*, *Paint It Black*; *Flight 505*; *Goin' Home*; *Under My Thumb*; others. LONDON © 476; tape LPX 70114, 3¾ ips.

The Beatles are a collective entity. The Rolling Stones are one person—Mick Jagger, a singer whose power, subtlety, and wit are unparalleled in contemporary popular music, who is also (with fellow Stone Keith Richard) the second-best rock composer in the world. Rock aficionados class the Stones with the Beatles, but perhaps they haven't impressed a wider audience because their devotion to the music is pure: the Hollyridge Strings will *never* record an album of Jagger-Richard melodies. But for anyone willing to discard his preconceptions, "Aftermath" is a great experience, a distillation of everything that rock and blues are about. I think it is the best album of its kind ever made.

OTIS REDDING: *Live in Europe*, *Respect*; *Can't Turn You Loose*; *Day Tripper*; *Try a Little Tenderness*; others. VOLT © S 416, (M) 416; tape 10-416, 3¾ ips.

Meanwhile, back where it all started, black music was becoming self-consciously black, returning to blues and gospel, and the late Otis Redding was king. Despite the limitations of in-concert recording, this album is his best because Redding's stage presence was integral to his popularity, and because it contains most of his best songs. Remember that the audience is white. No

other black performer has ever been able to bridge the racial barrier so completely while remaining so true to himself and his skin. That's why we miss him so much.

BIG BROTHER AND THE HOLDING CO.: *Cheap Thrills*, *Ball and Chain*; *Piece of My Heart*; *Turtle Blues*; others. COLUMBIA © KCS 9700; tape CQ 1010, 7½ ips.

ARETHA FRANKLIN: *I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You*, *I Never Loved a Man*; *Respect*; *Dr. Feelgood*; *Soul Serenade*; others. ATLANTIC © S 8139, (M) 8139; tape X 8139, 3¾ ips.

In place of King Otis now reign two queens. In the consummation we have all devoutly wished for, one is black, one white. Janis Joplin is simply the best white blues singer ever. A Texas girl with a strong dose of country in her voice, she is also the most incredible live performer in the music, a screaming, stomping dervish who seems destined to expire on stage out of sheer intensity. She has left Big Brother to form her own band. This album lacks cachet among rock critics because of its crude musicianship—producer John Simon wouldn't even put his name on it—but I go along with the guy in Detroit, home town of band member Jim Gurley, who told me: "Gurley is the best bad guitarist in the world." Aretha Franklin comes to rock out of gospel and jazz; she languished in the land of the chic (Columbia Records) for years before Jerry Wexler and Atlantic induced her to go with some electric bass and straight-ahead drumming. I favor this album because it is her funkier, especially since she seems to be returning to jazz again.

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE: *Electric Ladyland*, *Crosstown Traffic*; *Voodoo Chile*; *Little Miss Strange*; *All Along the Watchtower*; others. REPRISE © 6307 (two discs); tape C6307-1, C6307-2, 7½ ips.

The most important recent innovation in rock has been the "heavy" guitar sound, revved up with fuzztone and other artificial stimulants. I mistrusted the technique at first, but there's no question that this two-record set is pure plutonium, an integrated work-in-itself in more ways than one (Hendrix is the modern version of the white Negro). The production (by Hendrix) is especially superb, the best job of stereo for its own sake I know, and even the lyrics are good. In addition, the improvisations, especially on *Voodoo Chile*, are among the few in rock worthy of the name. Most rock guitarists seem so intoxicated with the idea that you *can* improvise that they just go ahead and . . . do their thing. But Hendrix achieves unique effects, effects you'll never get from Kenny Burrell.

Robert Christgau has been a keen observer of the rock scene since its beginnings, and his writings about it have been published frequently in Esquire, New York magazine, and elsewhere.

STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



CLASSICAL

ONE WARHORSE AND FOUR RARITIES

Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture and Rachmaninoff vocal works in a splendid coupling by RCA

AS THE producer and tape editor of a 1955 Mercury recording of Tchaikovsky's popular *1812 Overture* that included tracked-in cannon and church bells, I am, perhaps, in a rather special position to appreciate the one-upmanship displayed in the latest incarnation of this festive patriotic warhorse. In a new release featuring London's New Philharmonia Orchestra and a host of others, RCA has given us not only the cannon, the brass band, and the bells, but also the old church chants and folk songs, as they occur throughout the work, done most impressively in Russian by large chorus and children's voices.

Presumably, had Tchaikovsky wanted the folk and church themes sung, he would have scored them that way in the first place. But never mind. Conductor Igor Buketoff's performance is powerful and spirited, the choral presentations are most effective, and the use of cathedral reverberation in the somber *a cappella* opening is quite overwhelming. For those who crave the "ultimate" *1812*, this one will do the job very nicely, thank you.

Enjoyable as the Tchaikovsky is, however, the genuine musical substance of the album is contained on the Rachmaninoff side, which gives us the youthful *Spring* Cantata and the Three Russian Folk Songs, Op. 41, neither recorded heretofore outside the U.S.S.R.

Spring is a setting for chorus and orchestra, with baritone solo, of a Nekrassov poem that tells of a long winter in the isolated Russian countryside, of a peas-

ant and his unfaithful wife, and how with the coming of spring (which in Russia is heralded by the roar of breaking river ice) the husband's impulse to murder his erring spouse becomes transformed into a more philosophical resolve:

*Love while it is yet possible to love,
Bear while it is yet possible to bear,
Forgive while it is yet possible to forgive,
And God will be your judge.*

Though much of Rachmaninoff's setting underlines the somber aspects of the poem: (the husband's brooding soliloquies are eloquently sung by John Shaw), the final resolution is redemptive, and so much the more moving by contrast.

The Three Russian Folk Songs are masterpieces of their kind, dating from 1926 and dedicated to Leopold Stokowski. They were first performed under Stokowski's direction in the spring of 1927. The first song, *Over the Little River*, tells of a frustrated courtship between a duck and a drake. *Oh Vanka, You Bold Fellow* was a favorite of the great Russian bass Feodor Chaliapin (and recorded by him under the title *Crazy-headed John*). The last of the set is *Quickly, Quickly from My Cheeks*, a song of guilty rural flirtation which Rachmaninoff learned from the concert folk singer Nadezhda Plevitzkaya. Collectors lucky enough to get their hands on the record (RS 6) issued in 1952 by the now-defunct Rachmaninoff Society will find a track of Plevitzkaya singing the



IGOR BUKETOFF
The "ultimate" *1812*

solo version of the song arranged for her by Rachmaninoff and recorded on February 22, 1926, with the composer at the piano.

Rachmaninoff's handling of the vocal line in these songs is a masterpiece of elegant simplicity: unison basses in the first, unison contraltos in the second, and unison basses *and* contraltos in the third, gradually expanding into two- and three-part texture. Rachmaninoff's orchestration is, in contrast, richly elaborated, yet as delicate as the Mahler of *Das Lied von der Erde*. I found these pieces utterly entrancing, the performances excellent, and the recording quality splendid.

David Hall

TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture, Op. 49.* **RACHMANINOFF:** *Three Russian Folk Songs, Op. 41; Spring, Cantata, Op. 20.* John Shaw (bass-baritone); St. Ambrose Cathedral Choir and Children's Choir; Royal Air Force Central Band; Royal Horse Artillery Guns of the King's Troop; New Philharmonia Orchestra; Igor Buketoff cond. RCA © LSC 3051 \$5.98.

SZYMANOWSKI-WIENIAWSKI: BETWEEN TWO POLES

Two violin concertos offer a contrast of subtle modernism with gypsy sentimentality

IT WOULD be somewhat unfair to say that the two violin concertos included in Heliodor's recent Szymanowski-Wieniawski album just about sum up the accomplishments of Polish music for a period of a century (from the middle of the last to the middle of this). *Somewhat* unfair, but not very. For, aside from his two violin concertos, Karol Szymanowski's music remains (unfortunately) little known outside Poland, and, aside from one concerto and a couple of faded fiddle solos, Henryk Wieniawski's output is totally forgotten (if there's a Second Violin Concerto, there must at least be a First). And, barring an unlikely surge of international interest in Moniusko's opera *Halka*, if it isn't Wieniawski or Szymanowski for this period in Polish music, it isn't anybody.

Why, between Chopin and the younger avant-garde of today, has a people so obviously gifted in music produced so little creatively? The careers and music of Wieniawski and Szymanowski suggest a few answers. Wieniawski was an international virtuoso, trained in Paris and resident in Russia; his concerto is an obvious attempt to trade off synthetic Slavic sentimentality (complete with a gypsy finale) as a vehicle for his own performing talents. The piece "works"—in the sense that all those late nineteenth-century wood engravings of gypsies around their campfires can be said to "work"—but it is, of course, the short-

age of violin concertos that keeps this delightful piece of cheese ("a good cheese, but not a great one") around for our delectation.

Szymanowski is a more complicated case. Born of a landed Polish family in the Ukraine, he spent much of his life (and earned much of his success) in the West. The small Polish elite of his day was simply not ready to accept so independent a spirit, though today he is revered as the founder of Polish modernism. This modernism no longer seems particularly extreme, but it always has a flavor of its own. The First Violin Concerto, written during World War I, is basically a late-Romantic work with strong, imaginative Impressionistic elements and a few Bartók-Stravinsky-type touches. Its marvelous opening is one of those transportations to a fantasy world that set up expectations just a bit higher than the rest of the work realizes. Still, in spite of all its inconsistencies, this is likely to remain the composer's most popular work, and the appeal of its imaginative fantasy and its warm sensuousness are particularly great in this excellent performance. Wanda Wilkomirska is Poland's leading violinist today, and her performances of both the warm, subtle Szymanowski and the campy, schmaltzy Wieniawski (played, as it should be, as if it were a serious major work) are impressive. The Warsaw orchestra under the very capable Witold Rowicki is easily at top European level, and the recorded sound is first-rate. *Eric Salzman*

SZYMANOWSKI: *Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 35.* **WIENIAWSKI:** *Violin Concerto No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 22.* Wanda Wilkomirska (violin); Warsaw Philharmonic, Witold Rowicki cond. HELIODOR © HS 25087 \$2.49.

ENTERTAINMENT

W. C. FIELDS' MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS

Decca's film-soundtrack anthology is an aural portrait of an outrageously endearing rascal

AFTER a suitable opening fanfare, Gary Owens, the master of ceremonies of Decca's immaculately edited anthology of memorable moments from W. C. Fields film soundtracks, gets right down to business, listing with some care the virtues of his subject: he was mean; he hated children; he was a drunkard; he told outrageous lies; he was lecherous; he was dishonest. We are then treated to a generous sampling of episodes, single lines, and grunts from the soundtracks of various Paramount and Universal pictures in which these winning attributes are illustrated, beautifully framed by bridge music and with the sound spruced up by the magic of modern engineering. What more could a comedy record—and this one

arrives complete with a giant poster of the Master—possibly offer?

Here is that delirious scene in which the bulbous-nosed charlatan is conducting a shell-game at a carnival; here he is selling "purple-bark sarsaparilla" to a crowd of willing victims; here he barges through a game of croquet ("What lazy lout left these wires all over the lawn?"); here he slays the redskins ("I cut a shaft through the wall of human flesh with this Bowie knife. . ."). And here, when asked "Do you like children?", he replies, "I do if they're properly cooked"; he sings his yodelling song; he recounts how, as a bartender in Chicago, he beat up a moll he loathed (" . . . she dips her mitt down into this me-lange . . ."); he warns against giving even breaks to suckers; he circumlocutes and cackles and coaxes his lady love ("Come down, my phlox, my flower . . ."). But suffering sciatica! Must I stand here all day enumerating the hilarities of the funniest record ever made? Put up your \$5.79 or move along! Only five to a customer. You're blocking traffic, boy!

Paul Kresh

W. C. FIELDS: The original voice tracks from his greatest movies. *The Philosophy of W. C. Fields*; *The "Sound" of W. C. Fields*; *The Rascality of W. C. Fields*; *The Chicanery of W. C. Fields*; and four others. DECCA © DL 79164 \$5.79.

CARMEN MCRAE OVERACHIEVES AGAIN

"Sound of Silence," her latest Atlantic album, proves that she is still ahead of the game

ONE OF the best songs of the decade, Paul Simon's *The Sound of Silence*, gives Atlantic's latest Carmen McRae album its title and offers that really *big* kick that only Carmen can deliver. A perfect arrangement by Shorty Rogers backs Carmen's faultless musicality and phrasing on this and seven other songs, and oh, boy, it sounds like music's back in style again!

Jimmy Jones does the four remaining tunes, including *I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good*—but it is, it is good. In fact, it's the best! For no matter what Carmen sings, she is almost always great, and when she rubs down old chestnuts with her very own caressing charm, they are just never the same again. For this one she does a complete reverse and delivers a long, loving pass that is deliciously reminiscent of the Carmen of, say, ten years ago—yet she is always so ahead of the game that even her yesterdays are very much today. Again, she puts her towering strength under the armpits of the poetic but weak *MacArthur Park* (with Shorty Rogers taking another inventive trip over the bridge), then polishes it off with



DECCA RECORDS

W. C. FIELDS: a host of winning attributes

that vocal magic marker of hers. When Carmen sings the word "passion," it stays sung for days. *Watch What Happens* is always a lovely song, but here it is bliss.

It is with *Stardust*, however, that Miss McRae overachieves with ultimate genius. I wonder just how many artists and near-artists have sung this Hoagy Carmichael classic? How many orchestras have played it? How many small bands, string quartets behind the potted palms, lonely uke players, and parlor pianists? How many times have you said, "Oh, no, not *that* again!"? I wasn't particularly looking forward to *Stardust* as side one of this disc came majestically to a close, but the moment Carmen started to slide around inside those rosy-ningingale, purple-paradise lyrics, she brought back the *Stardust* of long ago, when love was the only important thing people wrote songs about.

Perfection is obviously Carmen's ultimate musical goal, and she comes *that* close to achieving it on this disc. I do wish *Gloomy Sunday* and *I Sold My Heart to the Junkman* hadn't been part of the plan. The first is a breast-beating burst of paranoia out of the Depression, and the second is sadly undistinguished. But the remainder is good listening, taking me back to her old and out-of-print Noel Coward disc, of which I have three copies—one still in its plastic wrapper, to be saved for the later years of a slap-hap-happy Carmen McRae mania that I know I'll never outgrow.

Rex Reed

CARMEN MCRAE: *The Sound of Silence*. Carmen McRae (vocals); orchestra, Shorty Rogers and Jimmy Jones arr. and cond. *The Sound of Silence*; *I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good*; *MacArthur Park*; *Watch What Happens*; *Stardust*; *Don't Go Away*; *Gloomy Sunday*; *The Folks Who Live on the Hill*; *I Sold My Heart to the Junkman*; *Poor Butterfly*; *My Heart Reminds Me*; *Can You Tell*. ATLANTIC © SD 8200 \$4.79.

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All wrong.

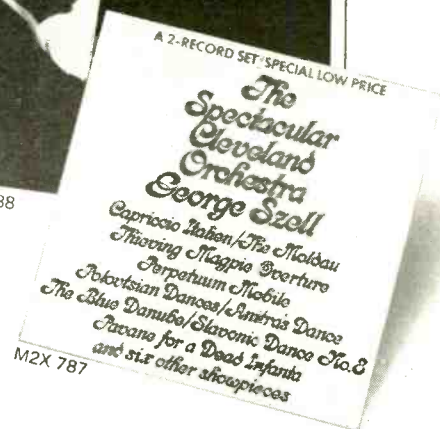
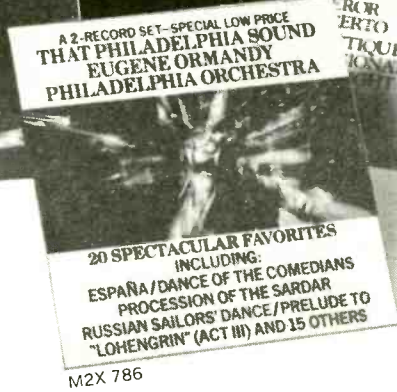
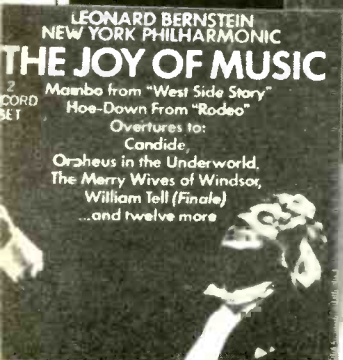
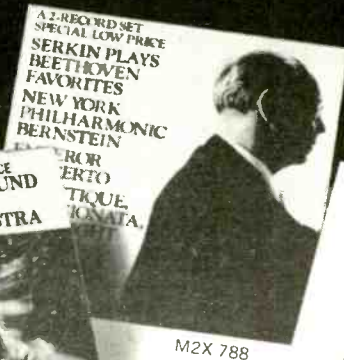
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CLASSICAL

Reviewed by WILLIAM FLANAGAN • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS • ERIC SALZMAN

C. P. E. BACH: *Magnificat*. Elly Ameling (soprano); Maureen Lehane (contralto); Theo Altmeyer (tenor); Roland Hermann (bass); Tölzer Boychoir; Collegium Aureum, Kurt Thomas cond. RCA VICTROLA (S) VICS 1368 \$2.50.

Performance: **Worthy**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **All right**

This *Magnificat* was written in 1747, three years before the death of Carl Philipp Emanuel's father; it is a far more *galant* work, however, than the elder Bach's composition on the same text. The present performance, in all respects—the quality of the soloists, the orchestra, the all-male choir—is a good rendition, but in *galant* spirit I feel it falls short. The music requires more concentration, especially in the slower movements, on finer dynamic shadings, on sensibilities—in short, on "affect." The present performance, unlike Geraint Jones' interpretation on an imported Odeon, takes a more energetic approach. The opening and closing sections, however, are very brilliantly done. The recording is fine, except for some pressing faults. Texts and translations are included. I. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

J. S. BACH: *Violin Concerto; E Major (BWV 1042); A Minor (BWV 1041); in D Minor for Two Violins (BWV 1043)*. Alice Harnoncourt (violin); Walter Pfeiffer (violin, in Double Concerto); Concentus Musicus of Vienna, Nikolaus Harnoncourt cond. TELEFUNKEN (S) SAWT 9508-A EX \$5.95.

Performance: **Exceptionally interesting**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**

It seems to me that almost every recording of the Bach violin concertos that I have been called upon to review lately has elicited some statement or other that the basic playing style—no matter any other fine qualities—was Romantically inclined. Here, for the first time, I need not make such a statement. This is a disc in which the performance on the part of all participants is totally Baroque in orientation. The instruments used are originals or reproductions, and that means, in

Explanation of symbols:

- (S) = stereophonic recording
- (M) = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

addition to a slightly lower pitch, that gut strings are used, the violins have short necks and flatter bridges, a much greater degree of articulation and detailed (not long-line) phrasing is heard, and the polyphonic lines emerge with unusual definition. The forces are quite small—one person to a part—although, owing to the resonant acoustics, the overall orchestral sound is not thin. The playing style is extremely lyric; excitement, contrary to what one would expect from a modern virtuoso fiddler, is here to be found more in the writing than in the solo execution. Musical values are foremost, and al-



HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ BIBER (1611-1701)

Engraving by Paul Seel (1681) from the composer's "Sonatae Violino solo"

though these performances may not be to everyone's liking, I recommend them highly; they may indeed be quite a revelation for some. I. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BIBER: *Fifteen Mystery Sonatas; Passacaglia in G Minor for Unaccompanied Violin*. Eduard Melkus (violin); Huguette Dreyfus (harpsichord); Lionel Rogg (positive organ); Karl Scheit (lute); Gerald Sonneck (cello and gamba); Alfred Planyavsky (violone); Hans-Jürg Lange (bassoon). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIVE (S) 198422, 23 two discs \$11.58.

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Superior**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**

These sonatas, composed about 1674 as programmatic works describing the fifteen

Mysteries in the life of the Virgin (they are also called Rosary Sonatas), have been recorded in their entirety twice before. They have considerable interest, not only because of their descriptive writing, but also because of their technical demands and because they call for the deliberate mistuning of the violin strings to achieve unusual sonorities (*scordatura*). The present performance is an exceedingly brilliant accomplishment, and although the sonatas have sometimes tended to sound harmonically and rhythmically repetitious in extended hearings, no such effect is felt here. This is a result not only of a vast array of continuo instruments (with no one combination ever being used twice) but also of the singularly stylish and virtuosic playing of violinist Eduard Melkus, who brings to the music a profound degree of dramatic understanding.

This is both a brilliant and a subtle performance; dance rhythms are always made apparent, and the musical symbolism is delineated with clarity. The recording, beautifully balanced in not too dry an acoustic, is equally noteworthy. Finally, it remains to be noted only that not all repeats are taken, thereby enabling the music to fit onto two discs. Highly recommended. I. K.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4, in E Minor, Op. 98*. Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf cond. RCA (S) LSC 3010 \$5.98.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 4, in E Minor, Op. 98; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80*. London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond. MERCURY (S) SR 90503 \$5.79.

Performance: **Both strong—Leinsdorf beefy, Dorati lean**
Recording: **Both good**
Stereo Quality: **Both good**

As with so many symphonies of the standard repertoire, there are interpretations of the Brahms Fourth for every taste among the two dozen or so currently listed in the catalog. (The new Leinsdorf reading, by the way, is also available as part of a three-disc set of all four Brahms symphonies.) In the capsule citation of the differences between the Leinsdorf and Dorati readings above, the characterizations apply to texture and balance rather than to tempo, for in this area both conductors hew pretty much to the standard line. One thing in the Leinsdorf will raise some eyebrows, and that is the great ritard he brings to the next-to-last bar of the first movement in order to gain maximum dramatic emphasis from the four mighty timpani strokes at that spot. I have not heard this done since the late Twenties on the Victor (London Symphony) and



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The English Chamber Orchestra — Benjamin Britten

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Berwald: SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR ("Singulière"), SYMPHONY IN E FLAT MAJOR

The London Symphony Orchestra — Sixten Ehrling

CS-6602

twelve-tone framework with a kind of embellished, virtuoso content—not a superficial or purely ornamental virtuosity, but one that shapes fundamental form and expressive content as well.

The Double Concerto is a key work in Carter's most recent and mature phase. Here is a remarkable, virtuosic, antiphonal work in which the two solo keyboard instruments, each with its own tiny tutti, vie with one another, mix together and separate, criss-cross, interweave, and answer one another in a long dialog of flashing, changing, differentiated color, line, rhythm, meter, and tempo. The piece is born out of and returns to percussive noise and rhythm; the harpsichord and piano—half percussion instruments, after all—mediate between non-pitched and pitched instruments. Like the Variations, the piece is built in a great symmetrical arch—a rise and fall made up of accumulations of density spun out in flashes of line and arabesque.

The ensemble parts are not exactly easy and the virtuoso keyboard parts are of an extraordinary difficulty. Again, the advantage of this new recording is clarity; what emerged before as masses of sound—fascinating but impenetrable—are here fragile, sparkling, many-faceted, crystalline. The whole has a kind of crackling vigor that sustains the almost twenty-five-minute length of the piece without a moment's loss of tension. The rather close-up, dry recording is not sonically beautiful in the conventional way, but it reveals the brilliance of the performance. The Variations are more traditionally mellow in recorded sound. E. S.

DONIZETTI: *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Maria Callas (soprano), Lucia; Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor), Edgardo; Tito Gobbi (baritone), Enrico; Raffaele Arié (bass), Raimondo; Valiano Natali (tenor), Arturo; Anna Maria Canali (mezzo-soprano), Alisa; Gino Sarri (tenor), Normanno. Orchestra and Chorus of the Florence May Festival, Tullio Serafin cond. SERAPHIM Ⓜ IB 6032 two discs \$4.98.

Performance: Good

Recording: A bit dated

This is, of course, the well-remembered 1955 Angel recording (3503) in which the then Maria Meneghini Callas first demonstrated that even the cardboard figure of Lucia can be turned into a memorable portrayal. It is still an absorbing interpretation—surpassed by some, perhaps, in a technical sense, but far ahead of the competition in terms of dramatic force and musicality. Despite occasional flaws—a few acidulous tones here, a waver or two there—Callas still serves as an object lesson of meaningfully shaded, musically accurate singing, and of a true understanding of the art of embellishment. Giuseppe di Stefano is not her match in musical exactitude, but in 1953 his voice still exuded strength and sensuousness, and he could make Edgardo's ardor and impulsiveness believable. Gobbi is a forceful and secure Enrico and Arié a good Raimondo; the minor singers are adequate. This is an abbreviated *Lucia* cut along the customary lines. In this respect, several stereo versions are preferable, and, of course, the 1955 sound is no longer impressive. Moreover, the choral and orchestral execution are not first-rate. And yet the Callas-Di Stefano-Gobbi combination

(Continued on page 94)



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shines with undiminished strength, and so does Tullio Serafin's way with this indestructible opera. At the reissue price, the set is a genuine bargain. *G. J.*

FLANAGAN: *Songs and Cycles. Time's Long Ago* (text by Melville). *The Weeping Pleiads* (A. E. Housman); *Good-bye, my fancy* (Whitman); *If you can; See how they love me; Horror movie; Plants cannot travel; Upside-down man* (Moss). Carole Bogard (soprano); Herbert Beattie (bass-baritone); David del Tredici (piano); instrumental group. DESTO © DC 6468 \$5.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

Here is a disc that amounts to a thoroughgoing artistic document: it embraces a considerable number of William Flanagan's vocal works performed by artists chosen by him. Mr. Flanagan supervised the recording and has supplied detailed and candid jacket notes that reveal much of the composer as well as his songs.

Flanagan is a fastidious composer: his word settings show skill and refinement without affectation, and the vocal line has a natural flow. Voice and accompaniment blend harmoniously—at times the role of the latter is reduced to sparse yet meaningful contributions, at other times it is raised to equal partnership. The vocal writing is full of understanding, demanding yet quite rewarding. Flanagan's style is predominantly calm, reflective, and lyrical. He cites Copland and Diamond as the major influences on his music; looking further back, the lineage may be extended to Fauré and Ravel. As in the case of Ravel, there is an overriding lyricism that lends total shape to passing angularities. The idiom is modern, but rejects harshness for its own sake—*Upside-down man*, for all its "quasi-serialism," falls easily on the ear—and is unafraid of smooth diatonic resolutions. In short, Flanagan knows how to write for the voice.

The Housman cycle, for voice accompanied by five instruments (violin, cello, flute, clarinet, and piano), is to my ears the most impressive item on the program. *Good-bye, my fancy* calls for the accompaniment of flute and guitar. Flanagan calls this an *outré* combination; I find it lovely and worthy of further exploration. I found less to enjoy in the settings of Howard Moss, mainly because the poems themselves are a bit too precious for my taste.

Texts of the Melville and Whitman poems were not enclosed with the review copy, and I cannot say that I could reconstruct them from the singing. Both singers, however, deserve praise, particularly Miss Bogard, who copes with some exposed high notes and difficult intervals very skillfully. The accompaniments are fine, and there is good stereo depth in the Housman cycle. *G. J.*

GERSHWIN: *Concerto in F. NERO: Fantasy and Improvisations*. Peter Nero (piano); Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler cond. RCA © LSC 3025 \$5.98.

Performance: **Nightclubby**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

For those who grew up in New York when a trip was something you took on the Hudson River Day Line, the Gershwin piano con-

certo was a musical promissory note on the American Dream. In ill-combed adolescent heads, it conjured up pictures of penthouse terraces with "hinges on chimneys for stars to go by," and one's smug self, in black tie, gazing with rueful nostalgia on the slums in the distance downtown.

To watch Gershwin himself or Oscar Levant strutting his stuff at the keyboard in a packed Lewisohn Stadium while the New York Philharmonic breathed hard through those glittering passages of "symphonic jazz" was an exhilarating, reassuring experience in Depression days. On records, it took a long time for the Concerto to come to us whole. There were those saxophone-heavy abridgements by Paul Whiteman and his orchestra, with such lightweight pianists as Roy Bargy making much of the jazz tunes but little of the counterpoint and nervosity. Finally, in the Forties, we got the work

Next Month in
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more or less in one piece with Levant and the New York Philharmonic on Columbia, while Fiedler and his athletic Bostonians turned in a strong, raucous, high-strung version with Jesús María Sanromá doing the virtuoso honors for RCA Victor.

Since then, many a respectable pianist has added the concerto to his repertoire, and a few years ago Fiedler and his forces teamed up with pianist Earl Wild for an idiomatically correct, if less urgent, version than Sanromá's for the stereo age. More sumptuous, but in a style more appropriate to, say, the Ravel Concerto in G, was Entremont's recent attempt with Ormandy—it sure was "symphonic."

Now we seem to be coming full circle, back to the Bargy-Whiteman days. Peter Nero is a competent entertainer and has done all his homework on those Lisztian arpeggios, but his attempt to coax a "swinging" statement from himself and the Fiedler crowd, who are once more on hand here for RCA, fails to soar to the necessary skyscraper heights. There seem to be a couple of wanton cuts, too—perhaps so the piece would

fit on a single side. By the last movement, when Nero deliberately slows things down in the midst of that headlong subway charge of the finale to focus attention on a few minor gibbering piano measures, the structure is wrecked irrevocably.

On the other side of the record is a prolonged piece of glorified cocktail music (by Nero himself) of the kind the promising young American composer used to play at his Carnegie Hall debut in Hollywood movies—but in those movies the camera would soon cut mercifully away to the joyfully tear-stained face of the loyal girl-friend, or mother, and you never had to hear the rest of it. *Paul Kresh*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GLUCK: *Orphée*. Léopold Simoneau (tenor), Orphée; Suzanne Danco (soprano), Euridice; Pierrette Alarie (soprano), Amour. Roger Blanchard Vocal Ensemble; Lamoureux Concert Orchestra, Hans Rosbaud cond. WORLD SERIES PHC © 2-014 two discs \$5.00.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Not new, but good**
Stereo Quality: **Synthetic**

The relative merits of Gluck's *Orfeo* (1762) and *Orphée* (1774) may be argued at length, but eventually the discovery will be made that both are masterpieces, and a well-rounded library should include both. This welcome reissue of Epic 6019, first released about a dozen years ago, should neatly and inexpensively provide an alternate to the listener's favorite *Orfeo*. In the title role, Léopold Simoneau sings with a clarity and elegance of phrasing that triumphs over the cruel *testitura* in much the same way that Orpheus tames the Furies. Suzanne Danco is as good an Euridice as one can find on records, and Pierrette Alarie is a sweet-voiced Amour. (In the traditional fashion, Miss Danco also sings the air of the Happy Shade.)

The conducting of Hans Rosbaud is exemplary, offering clarity and delicacy when needed, and sufficient thrust and fire in the scene with the Furies and in some of the ballet episodes. The recording is quite acceptable in sound, but there are some odd effects here and there, suggesting that honest mono would have been preferable to "enhanced" ("fake" is the proper word) stereo. *G. J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HANDEL: *Arias. Alexander's Feast: Revenge, Timotheus cries. Ezio: Se un bell ardire. Susanna: Peace crown'd with roses. Hercules: The God of battle. Acis and Galatea: O ruddier than the cherry. Theodora: Wide spread his name. Judas Maccabaeus: Arm, arm ye brave. Berenice: Si, tra i ceppi. Semele: Leave me, loathsome light. Alcina: Pensa a chi geme. Samson: Honour and arms.* Forbes Robinson (bass); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields; Philip Ledger, harpsichord and cond. ARGO © ZRG 504 \$5.95.

Performance: **Expert and colorful**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

Considering the growing but still far from
(Continued on page 96)

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adequate representation of Handel's opera and oratorio on records, it is safe to assume that this release will introduce much unfamiliar music to listeners. It will also introduce the art of Forbes Robinson, a quite remarkable singer about whom not much is known in this country—and about whom nothing is said in the otherwise informative annotations.

"*Si, tra i ceppi*" is, of course, one of the best known florid arias for a Handelian bass, and the excerpts from *Acis and Galatea*, *Samson*, and *Judas Maccabaeanus* are accessible on discs, though certainly not familiar. *Susanna*, *Ezio*, and *Theodora*, on the other hand, had been just so may euphonious names for me before I heard this recital, and, though I had known two other arias from *Semele*, I was totally unprepared for so breathtakingly beautiful a discovery as "Leave me, loathsome light." It is sung in the opera by Somnus, the god of sleep, and is a setting of Congreve's words; it makes a powerfully persuasive case for slumber in preference to waking. Throughout, the program's joys are many, the vocal felicities as well as the infinite varieties in Handel's scoring that range from martial snap (*Alexander's Feast*) to lyricism (*Hercules*).

Robinson is gifted with wide-ranging equipment vocally as well as dramatically. He is a bass-baritone in the more fortuitous sense of the word. This means that he can skillfully manipulate the occasional descents into the *profundo* range but can rise just as reliably up to a high G when the part calls for it. (Many bass-baritones, something like Edna St. Vincent Millay's candle, get burned at both ends.) I suspect that he is an oratorio specialist. The voice is lacking in sensuous quality, but is capable of lovely effects in the subdued lyric passages, and, supported by a reliable technique, can cope with the florid runs in a satisfying manner. Most important, Mr. Robinson is an intelligent and colorful interpreter who makes the most of the comic and villainous points inherent in these arias without interfering with the smooth flow of their delivery. In sum, a fine bravura performance, supported by lively and transparently recorded orchestral realizations. G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 93, in D Major*; *Symphony No. 94, in G Major* ("Surprise"). Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell cond. COLUMBIA © MS 7006 \$5.98.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

One might hope that George Szell, who has been disappointingly sporadic in his recorded output of Haydn, is planning on a complete set of the "London" symphonies. If so, it promises to be something worth waiting for. These two symphonies are splendidly done in almost all respects, though I found the opening movement of the "Surprise" a little stodgy, and I do wish that all conductors would, as Leslie Jones does, use a keyboard instrument—not because the continuo role is necessary but only because its sound is part of the sound of the orchestra of Haydn's time. The orchestral playing is magnificent, with beautiful balances. The minuets, in particular, have a foot-stomping vivacity about them, and the finales of both works here are brilliantly realized. For ei-

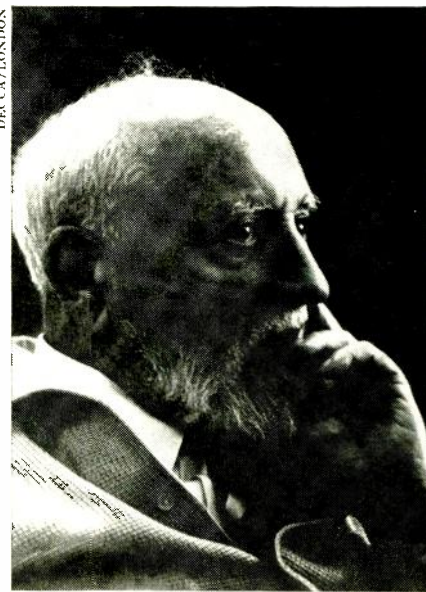
ther an introduction to Haydn or an addition to a well-stocked Haydn library, one could not do better than to acquire this beautifully played and recorded disc. I. K.

JANÁČEK: *Sinfonietta*. HINDEMITH: *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*. Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell cond. COLUMBIA © MS 7166 \$5.98.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JANÁČEK: *Sinfonietta*; *Taras Bulba*. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ančerl cond. TURNABOUT © TV 34267 \$2.50.

JANÁČEK *Sinfonietta*. PROKOFIEV: *Waltzes (Suite for Orchestra)*, Op. 110. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, Gen-



ERNEST ANSERMET
For Liszt, a maximum of lyrical passion

nady Rozhdestvensky cond. MELODIYA/
ANGEL © SR 40075 \$5.79.

Performance: I like Ančerl
Recording: None great; Columbia best
Stereo Quality: Columbia best

It is impossible not to reflect a moment on the irony of the virtually simultaneous release of a work inextricably associated with Czech freedom in three recordings: one by Russians, one by the Czech-born conductor of an American orchestra, and one by Prague's leading conductor now in exile in Canada.

The Janáček *Sinfonietta* was commissioned for a gymnastic festival in 1926, but for Janáček it was a celebration of the liberation of his country in 1918—the real reason for the huge brass section. The work has Janáček's remarkable combination of naïveté and amazing strength and originality. Nothing is said but it is said twice—at least. Yet the constant static repetition, the blocked-out figurations and motifs repeated and stacked up on level after level—these are Janáček trademarks—never falter or wear thin, but build up cumulative forms of great power and impact. Although some of the materials of this piece may seem to come out of tradition, they are used in a way that owes little to the past; indeed, Janáček is closer to Stravinskian block form than to anything in the

nineteenth century. Janáček's mature music is most definitely part of the post-Romantic era, although it occupies a lonely wooded corner of our century.

The *Sinfonietta* is said to have been performed often in Prague in recent months! It is by no means an obscure work, and has been recorded several times before. The recording released by Turnabout is almost certainly the same one formerly available on Parliament. It is, in spite of its older East European origin, quite a respectable recording, and I find Ančerl an extremely convincing interpreter of the work. There are rough spots, no doubt, but the vigor, drive, shape and, yes, sincerity turn me on. Its very logical pairing is a somewhat earlier orchestral tone poem—with a heroic Russian subject—which I recall having once put down as an early, late-Romantic, and uncharacteristic work. This was definitely unfair and superficial; *Taras Bulba* is a powerful, somewhat incoherent, but immensely colorful and driving work with many of the characteristics of late Janáček. All in all, I vote for this disc; at the price it's unbeatable.

Szell's Janáček is solid; in sheer technical terms it is better played and recorded than Ančerl's, but I find it lacks the fire and visionary quality that the Czech musicians seem to capture. The rather amusing Hindemith "pop" piece on the overture is not particularly a bonus for me, although some may fancy it. Rozhdestvensky and the Moscow orchestra are out of contention. This is not politics, but purely a matter of music and recorded sound. The Czech sound is a little resonant but nothing is lost; the Russians bury the music under masses of vibrating acoustics, and the performance is also rather rough hewn. And the corn-ball Prokofiev—waltzes plucked from ballet, opera, and movie scores and ensuited—brings out depths of indifference I didn't even know I possessed. Maybe the vision of Stalinist bureaucrats whistling Prokofiev *Kitsch* while the troops occupy Prague has overwhelmed me. I don't think so, though; it's just that the situation is intensified by the kind of bitter, tragic irony that no one who put out these records could have foreseen. E. S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LISZT: *A Faust Symphony (after Goethe)*; *Two Episodes from Lenau's Faust: The Nocturnal Procession; Mephisto Waltz (Dance in the Village Inn)*. Lausanne Pro Arte Choir; Werner Krenn (tenor, in *Lenau's Faust*); Suisse Romande Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON © CSA 2221 two discs \$11.58.

Performance: Highly convincing
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Quality: Good

The Liszt *Faust* Symphony has for me been one of a number of pieces in the orchestral repertoire made up of great moments (chiefly the opening pages depicting Faust's discontent) and bad half-hours. But conductorial alchemy on the order of Sir Thomas Beecham's (Seraphim S 6017) has forced me to second thoughts. So, too, with this latest version by Ernest Ansermet and the Suisse Romande forces, which offers for good measure both of the orchestral episodes inspired by Nicolaus Lenau's poetic *Faust* cycle in-

(Continued on page 98)



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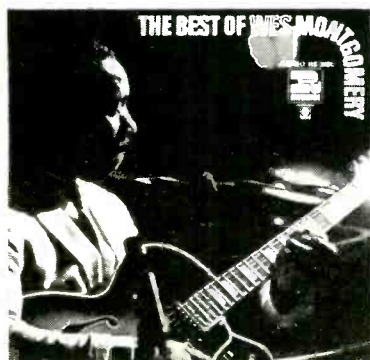
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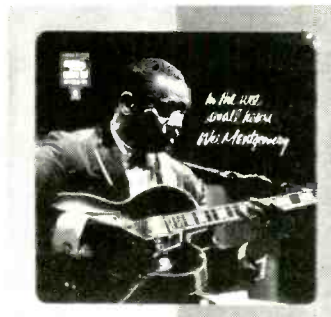


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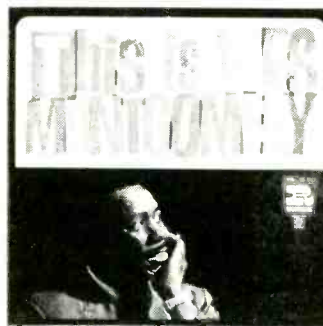


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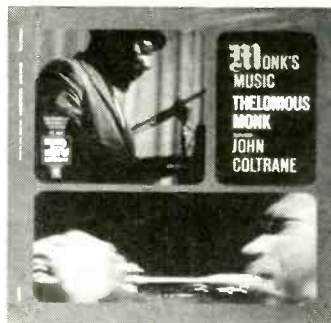
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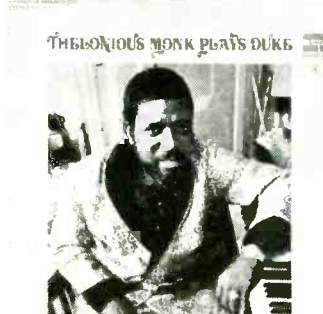
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stead of just the usual Mephisto Waltz episode. Furthermore, Ansermet gives us the far more dramatically apposite "dying fall" alternate ending indicated by Liszt instead of the customary superficially demonic closing some conductors favor.

The "three character pictures" of Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles (a perverse treatment of the Faust thematic material), are communicated by Ansermet and his players with a maximum of lyrical passion and a minimum of vulgarity. While the final Chorus Mysticus on the Eternal Feminine requires some suspension of disbelief in Liszt's treatment (as opposed to Mahler's at the end of the Eighth Symphony), the fine solo work of tenor Werner Krenn and the effective stereo ambiance achieved between the soloist and the male choir help things immeasurably.

Like the fascinating last of the tone poems, *From the Cradle to the Grave*, the first of the *Two Episodes from Lenau's Faust*, *The Nocturnal Procession*, has been virtually unheard within living memory and certainly unrecorded. It is an evocation of Faust in a dark mood riding through a woodland by night, encountering a religious procession singing the *Pange lingua*, thereafter bitterly weeping over his inability to share in the unquestioning trust of the faithful. Liszt's music is here both poetic and convincing, thanks to splendid performance and recording. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that Ansermet and the London artist-and-repertoire staff will explore in similarly fruitful fashion some more of the significant and lesser-known orchestral repertoire of Franz Liszt. *D. H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G Major*. Elsie Morison (soprano); Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Rafael Kubelik cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © SLP 139539 \$5.79.

Performance: Warm
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

Mahler's tenderly lyrical Fourth Symphony has fared generally well in its recorded performances. To the four most worthy versions currently available (Szell, Bernstein, and Klemperer in stereo, and Bruno Walter's intensely poetic reading on rechanneled mono), we can now add a fifth. Here Rafael Kubelik steers an interesting and often convincing middle course between the lyrical warmth of Walter's approach and the dramatic emphasis of Bernstein's. Elsie Morison, one of England's best known oratorio singers during the Forties and Fifties, and now Mrs. Kubelik in private life, sings beautifully of the heavenly delights evoked by Mahler in the final movement. There is no attempt at forced naïveté, just a beautiful and tender simplicity. The recorded sound of the whole is warm and natural, like the performance.

If my current preference among the five top recordings still remains the wonderfully proportioned George Szell reading, that is a matter of personal taste rather than the result of any serious reservations concerning this newest recording. *D. H.*

(Continued on page 100)



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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MENDELSSOHN: Piano Trio No. 2, in C Minor, Op. 66. Leonard Pennario (piano); Jascha Heifetz (violin); Gregor Piatigorsky (cello). **MOZART: Quintet in C Major (K. 515).** Jascha Heifetz and Israel Baker (violins); William Primrose and Virginia Majewski (violas); Gregor Piatigorsky (cello). RCA Ⓢ LSC 3048 \$5.98.

Performance: **Outstanding**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **All right**

These performances of Mendelssohn and Mozart are typical of the Heifetz approach: considerable personality (especially that of Heifetz as leader), close-up and slightly dry sound, superior ensemble, and the general impression, through all of these elements, of a home chamber-music performance by the best professionals one could ever hope to hear. Both works are brilliantly and sensitively performed by all the participants. The recording, as I noted, is immediate and unreverberant, of overall good quality except for the somewhat muffled sound of the piano in the Mendelssohn—it sounds almost as though the lid were completely down.

I. K.

MOZART: Epistle Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra: No. 1, in E-flat (K. 67); No. 2, in B-flat (K. 68); No. 4, in D Major (K. 144); No. 8, in A Major (K. 225); No. 11, in D Major (K. 245); No. 12, in C Major (K. 263); No. 14, in C Major (K. 278); No. 15, in C Major (K. 328); No. 16, in C Major (K. 329); No. 17, in C Major (K. 336). Pierre Cochereau (organ); Lamoureux Orchestra, Kurt Redel cond. PHILIPS Ⓢ PHS 900185 \$5.79.

Performance: **Pleasing**
Recording: **Reverberant**
Stereo Quality: **Adequate**

For those who feel no urge to hear all seventeen of the little one-movement sonatas written by Mozart between 1771 and 1780 for performance between the *Gloria* and *Credo* of the Mass as sung at Salzburg, this selection of ten may represent a good alternative. Included are festive pieces with trumpets and drums (K. 278 and K. 329), the early and fascinating pensive K. 67, and the highly effective genuine concerto-styled K. 336.

While the performances, especially those of the orchestra under Kurt Redel, seem stylish enough, the very reverberant sonics are no help to the cleanness of the organ texture or to a well defined stereo ambience either.

D. H.

MOZART: Mass in C Minor, "The Great" (K. 27). Maria Stader (soprano); Nedda Casei (soprano); Waldemar Kmentt (tenor); Heinz Rehfuss (bass). Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Jean-Marie Auberson cond. VANGUARD EVERYMAN Ⓢ SRV 258/9 SD two discs \$5.00.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

Mozart completed only the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sanctus*, and *Benedictus* of his C Minor Mass. He left sketches for some additional sections (including the familiar *Et incarnatus est*) and never even began others, for his

mind was busy with other, especially operatic, matters in these years (1782-1785). The operatic influence, in fact, is noteworthy in the Mass, particularly in the soprano arias, but so is the influence of Bach in the monumental, intricately written choral sections.

The recordings in the current catalog offer, on one disc, only the sections fully or at least partially completed by Mozart. The present version uses the scholarly and respectable realization of the whole by Alois Schmitt, dating from 1901. Two sections utilize authentic Mozart materials from previous sources: the *Crucifixus* from the C Major Mass, K. 66 (written in Mozart's thirteenth year), and the *Credo in unam*, which comes from the K. 262 Mass in the same key.

Auberson wisely understates the theatrical element to present the long work in a unified devotional spirit. The performance is not



ALFRED BRENDL
Mozart rendered with shape and sensitivity

very exciting, and there are few rough spots (the choral section in *Gratias*, for one), but it is sensible and, in the main, satisfying. Maria Stader dominates the vocal quartet: though she does not manage the long-breathed lines with the effortless ease and security she displayed in her other recording of the work (DGG 138124), her tone is pure and radiant, and she is a mistress of the style. Her partners are good, but somewhat unassertive, though Miss Casei's work in *Laudamus Te* is most commendable.

The recording is cleanly detailed, and there are fine examples of stereo utilization to good dramatic effect. The choral and instrumental detail in *Et resurrexit* (side three, is particularly praiseworthy, and so is the effect achieved as the two sopranos are heard on different channels in the *Domine*. Here, however, there is a curious sensation as they reach the point where they trade high B-flats: unless I am mistaken, these notes are all sung by Miss Stader.

G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: Sonata No. 8, in A Minor (K. 310); Fantasy in C Minor (K. 396); Rondo in A Minor (K. 511); Variations in D Major on a Minuet by Duport (K. 573).

Alfred Brendel (piano). VANGUARD CARDINAL Ⓢ VCS 10043 \$3.50.

MOZART: Piano Sonatas: No. 12, in F Major (K. 332); No. 10, in C Major (K. 330); No. 4, in E-flat Major (K. 282); No. 5, in G Major (K. 283); Rondo in A Minor (K. 511). Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). LONDON Ⓢ CS 6534 \$5.79.

Performance: **Backhaus—unidiomatic; Brendel—the classic ideal**
Recording: **Backhaus poor, Brendel excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Brendel superior**

I have a very favorable and a very unfavorable report to turn in, and just for once I'm going to start with the latter. Backhaus is something of a name, and though Brendel is hardly an obscure pianist anymore, there may be some who will be tempted to seek security under the shelter of what is presumably an older and more safely respectable name. Well, don't. The Backhaus-Mozart performances listed above have virtually nothing to offer except tubby sound, tape hiss, ugly forced tone, a total lack of style, arbitrary dynamics, incorrect appoggiaturas, meaningless little speed-ups and slow-downs from one bar to another, a small sense of classical architecture, and no sense at all of inner dynamic or outward gesture.

What a relief to turn to Brendel. Let us compare A Minor Rondos. This is Backhaus' best; at least he can apply a kind of mild, stereotyped Romantic treatment that projects *something*. But then listen to Brendel: twice as expressive and yet never misled into a facile romanticism; this is the classic ideal of grief—calm, controlled, penetrating. The rest is on the same high level. The point about classical style is that it does not mean "no expression"—"just play the notes," as they used to say. Quite the contrary, it means "as expressively as possible" but always within the firm, strong framework of the style and the architecture. Good phrasing, shaped detail, long-range goals, and all the rest are twice as important in this music as in later works, where it is all much more obvious—and much less structural! Brendel meets virtually all these crucial tests with great sensitivity to both the shape and the poetry of these works. Of particular value and beauty are the performances of the early C Minor Fantasy and the late A Minor Rondo and Duport Variations. Excellent, quiet sound, and an exceptional buy.

E. S.

MOZART: Quintet in C Major, K. 515 (see MENDELSSOHN)

NERO: Fantasy and Improvisations (see GERSHWIN)

POULENC: Sinfonietta; Suite Française: Two Marches and an Intermezzo; Music for "Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel." Orchestre de Paris, Georges Prêtre cond. ANGEL Ⓢ 36519 \$5.79.

Performance: **À la mode**
Recording: **Handsome**
Stereo Quality: **Fine**

I'm not one of those who examine polls on public performances of modern composers' works by major symphony orchestras. If the recording industry is any reflection of them, however, Francis Poulenc (assuming a happy

(Continued on page 102)

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afterlife) ought to be taking a curious pleasure in the fact of his death. For, since that sad day, the record industry has taken note of his creative legacy with an almost ritualistically regular and fecund enthusiasm.

This newest release from Angel (one of three that mark the recording debut of the accomplished Orchestre de Paris) appears, at first glance, to be a rather arbitrary selection of Poulenc material. But even before I'd read Angel's instructive sleeve annotation, I realized that it is quite the opposite. I have written before, in these columns, of the Two Poulencs. And of the fact that the second of the two made mystifying use of the first's musical techniques to uncannily different effect. The first was the impish, Satiesque leg-puller of *Les Six*; the second the all-but-profoundly serious composer of, say, *Les*

Dialogues des Carmélites. Well, this recording takes us through certain manifestations and works of the imp to the pivotal work (the *Sinfonietta*) from which emerged the music composed by whatever an imp's opposite number is called.

Suite Française (1935) is one of those evocations of pre-Classical "antiquity" that French composers of the Twenties and Thirties seemed compelled to have a go at. It is by no means the masterpiece that Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is (although Poulenc's piece will make you think of Ravel's on occasion), but it's perfectly attractive and charming. Expressively, the Ravel piece cuts much deeper; Poulenc, I judge, was either uninterested in or still disdainful of such subtleties. And I don't care much for either the incidental music to *Les Mariés*

de la Tour Eiffel (1921) or the mildly insolent *Two Marches* and an *Intermezzo* (1937). Satie played these particular games with such authority that he really can't be followed.

But the *Sinfonietta* (1947) is a curious beautiful work, and it is also a somewhat mixed-up one. Angel's sleeve comment tells us a strangely poignant anecdote with regard to it. It seems that at this point in his life Poulenc suddenly felt that his manner of dress was too young for his chronological age and, concomitantly, that the first Poulenc (musically speaking) was now to be similarly regarded. I gather that the composer viewed the *Sinfonietta* as a belated, symbolic farewell to youth and, during the ensuing years, felt a certain discomfort about its existence.

If he in fact *did*, he shouldn't have. For one thing, it is structurally more ambitious and subtle than any extended non-vocal work by him that I can think of off hand. And if there are unmistakable bars composed by the imp, I'm not certain that his presence is as evident and prevailing as the composer may have thought. Certainly the ravishing pastoral third movement of the piece is, at its best, Poulenc at his best. For me, the *Sinfonietta* is one of Poulenc's most winning instrumental works.

Prêtre's readings are stylishly executed and idiomatic in concept. I have no quarrel with any aspect of the engineering. W.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Waltzes for Orchestra* (see JANÁČEK)

RACHMANINOFF: *Russian Folk Songs; Spring Cantata* (see Best of the Month, p. 85)

TERRY RILEY: *In C*. Terry Riley (saxophone) with members of the Center of the Creative and Performing Arts in the State University of New York at Buffalo. COLUMBIA © MS 7178 \$5.98.

Performance: Worthy
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

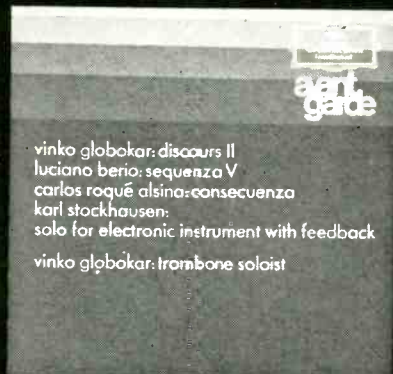
Composer/performer Terry Riley's work is concerned with the creative potential of semi-improvisational musical environments. *In C* sets up a situation in which musical densities, rhythms, and interrelationships are determined aleatorically by the players.

Specifically, fifty-three different melodic fragments are provided by Riley. Each performer plays all the fragments in consecutive order, repeating each as often as he likes, and resting or not resting between each figure as he chooses. A piano part, called "The Pulse," repeats even octave eighth notes steadily throughout the piece. The performer's only obligation is to play their melodic phrases in synchronization with the Pulse. How they choose to synchronize their phrases—on up-beat or down-beat, in expanded or compressed meter—is up to the individual players. The composition is finished when each player has gone through the fifty-three melodic fragments. Despite the title of the piece, there is a feeling of change in the tonal fabric, attributable to the introduction of B-flats and F-sharps into the fragments, and resulting in a gradual change of tonal center from C to E to C to G Minor.

Heard subjectively, *In C* produces, over the course of its forty-three minutes, a vague-
(Continued on page 104)

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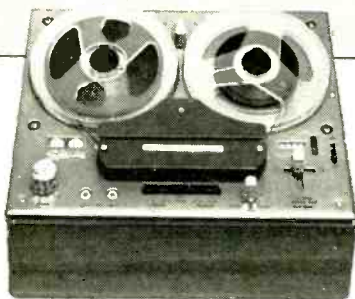
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ly hypnotic effect that is doubtless related to the repetitive Pulse, with its drone-like repeated C, hammering away incessantly through the dense musical fabric. Isolated motives, bits and snatches of themes, and a kind of *Klangfarbenmelodie* of individual pitches drift in and out of one's consciousness. Very nice, for a while, but ultimately rather wearing. Riley's work, much of which consists of similar procedural methods, is usually more effective in concert performance. A visual environment of players, audience, and concert hall seems to provide a focus for the music that is missing in the generally distracting environment of a living room.

The recording has been made in the form of three successive over-dubs. Superficially, this raises no particular problem, since the piece is not conceived in terms of specific instrumentation or players. However, with each successive re-recording, the players—given the opportunity to add to what they have previously recorded—can (and do) create thematic relationships and structural patterns that strike me as inconsistent with the intentions of the composition. Had the over-dubs been made "blind," so to speak, with the players unable to hear the previous recordings, such a method would be more consistent with the music's stated procedures. But, since Riley participated in the recording, it must be considered a definitive performance, despite the inconsistencies.

Pieces like *In C* are truly experimental works. As such, they are necessary efforts because they explore methods, procedures, and formal structures that are difficult to examine in larger works. But they cannot be considered total artistic experiences because their limits have been too closely defined by restrictions that are prohibitive of total emotional or aesthetic reaction. They provide a first encounter with elements and concepts that need to be examined further, in more extensive fashion.

Don Heckman

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROREM: *Water Music; Ideas for Orchestra*. Oakland Youth Orchestra, Robert Hughes cond. *Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano*. New York Camarata. DESTO (S) DC 6462 \$4.79.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Good

No one in the least familiar with the American compositional scene—least of all the composer himself—would question the statement that Ned Rorem's substantial reputation at forty-five has been carefully built on his ability to write for the human voice felicitously and with ease. But I suspect that fewer know that he has composed in just about every imaginable traditional medium—and copiously! So it's good and, as it turns out, instructive to encounter an all-Rorem release from Desto without a vocalist within earshot; and also that, in doing so, we are ear-to-speakers with perhaps the most uncompromising, brave work Rorem has ever composed—the *Trio* (1960).

Pondering the matter, I conclude that perhaps Rorem's prime achievement in composing for non-vocal instrumental media is the ingenuity with which he has dealt with the cold facts of performance problems facing

(Continued on page 106)

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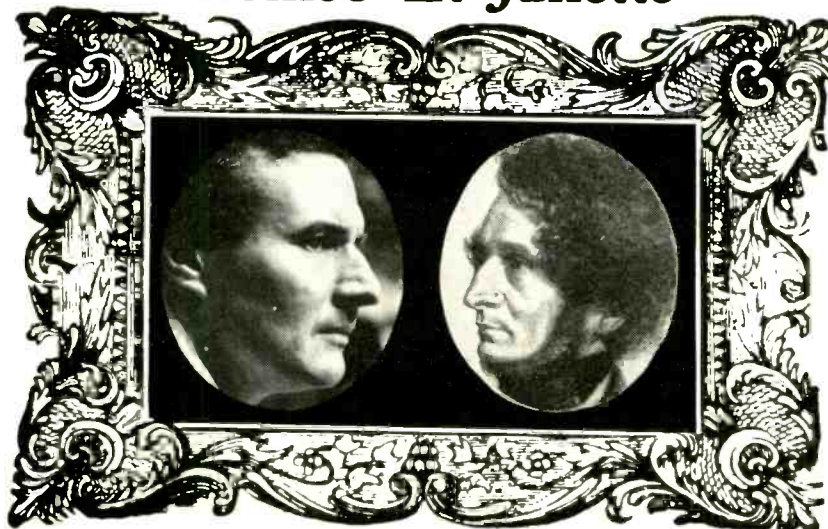
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CIRCLE NO. 49 ON READER SERVICE CARD

living composers in this country. *Water Music*, at least, seems to be a continuation of Rorem's recent trend toward either disdain for or wariness of the big symphonic or chamber gesture. Written in 1966 on a commission from the Oakland Youth Orchestra, it is another manifestation of his skill in dealing with essentially brief musical statements, making a large work that is, in essence, a beautifully linked chain of small vignettes. *Water Music* may be uninterrupted by a notated pause during its not insubstantial length, and it very probably is the "tune" and nine variations its composer describes it to be. But, if the piece is episodic structurally, the fact that it is almost free-associatively so relates it more to his own recent work than to any "theme and variations" in the classical sense.

I do not mean by this to denigrate the work; I both admire and enjoy it. Incorrectly or otherwise, what I am trying to do is to put a finger on the source of Rorem's sharply imagined and adroitly personalized structural procedures. The piece, as luck and Rorem's talent would have it, is an almost unqualified pleasure. Conceived in *concerto grosso* style, it has brilliance, invention, fluency, and quite as much elegance as a piece so aimed to please can hope for. I should hope that orchestras—"youth" and otherwise—will find it viable, skillful, and, in its conservative way, thoroughly contemporary.

I am less taken with *Ideas for Orchestra*, formerly titled *Ideas for Easy Orchestra* (1961). Here the chain-of-vignettes form I have tried to describe verges on the simplistic, though Rorem writes of dropping the inoffensively unsyntactical (or at least inapplicable) adjective "easy" from the title because the piece wasn't "all that easy."

With the possible—even probable—exception of such ambitious vocal works as the underrated opera *Miss Julie*, my guess is that Rorem's Trio is easily his most sophisticated, and possibly his best, work to date. Certainly, it is his finest chamber work. Discount even its occasional unanticipated ferocity, wildness, and wooliness or its surprisingly bold harmonic techniques—all of that, after all, is a dime a dozen these days. But Rorem's flexibility with his instruments, his startlingly functional and brave formal design, the (again) surprising attention to complex detail all lend an impression of genuine seriousness of intention for which I know few precedents in his work. The piece may be a little on the gloomy side, but the characteristic lyricism is there when we want it—with all manner of musical detail to set it off in bold relief.

I'm an unabashed Missourian about youth orchestras, their activities, and their comparative skills, but Mr. Hughes' crowd sounds to me like a pretty good one. And the New York Camarata does distinguished work on the difficult, elusive Trio.

In sum, look into Rorem's non-vocal music if you haven't already. With superior recorded sound and good stereo effects, Desto has given you an excellent opportunity to do so. W. F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SAINT-SAËNS: *Piano Concerto No. 2, in G Minor, Op. 22*. SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9*. Grigory Sokolov (piano); U.S.S.R. Symphony Orchestra, Neimye
(Continued on page 108)

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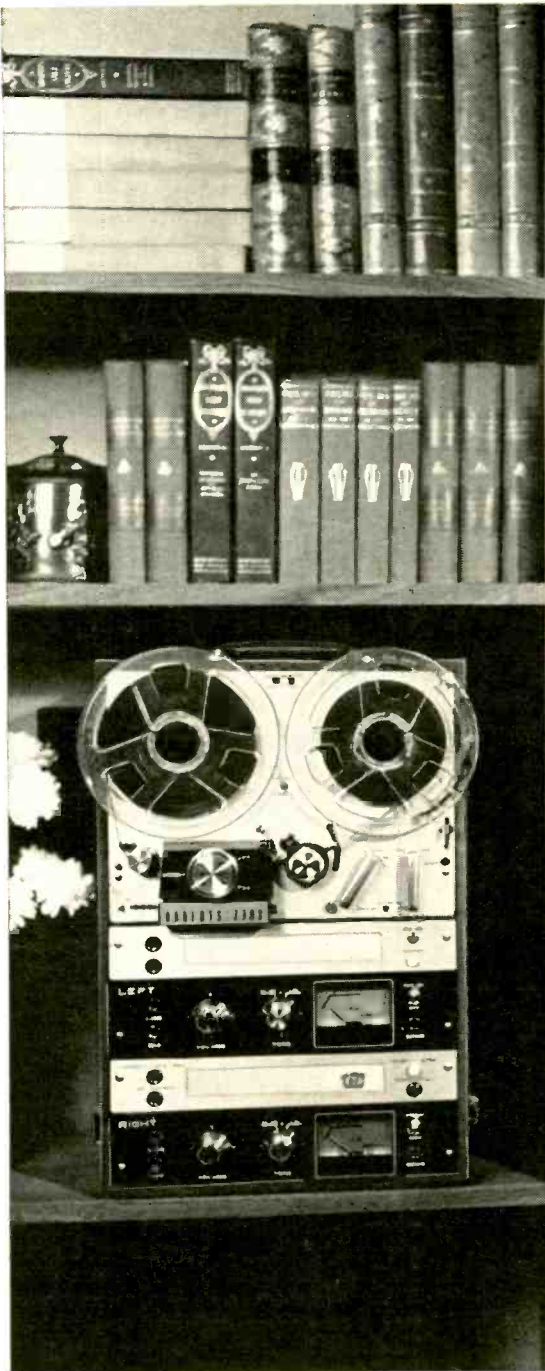
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Performance: **Terrific Saint-Saëns**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **All right**

Every time one turns around, the Soviets come up with another pianist. The latest, Grigory Sokolov, an eighteen-year-old who is still studying at the Leningrad State Conservatory, won first prize in the Third International Tchaikovsky Competition (1966), and has been previously represented on Melodiya/Angel by a recording of the Tchaikovsky First Concerto.

On the basis of the present Saint-Saëns Concerto, by far the finest account of the work I have heard since Darré's, Sokolov should be considered a major talent. He is a

thunderer at the keyboard, a first-rate technician, and a definite personality. On the debit side, he has still to acquire a sense of gracefulness and poetic poise. He is still in too much of a hurry when it comes to niceties of phrasing, as the Schumann clearly indicates. This is not a bad *Cameral*, but Sokolov does not yet command the subtleties this piece requires. Do hear the Saint-Saëns, though. The reproduction is a little distant and somewhat over reverberant, with a glassy piano tone.

I. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCHOENBERG: *Piano Concerto, Op. 42*; *Five Piano Pieces, Op. 23*; *Fantasy for Violin and Piano, Op. 47*. Peter Serkin (piano); Arnold Steinhardt (violin); Chi-

cago Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa cond.
RCA © LSC 3050 \$5.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Low level**
Stereo Quality: **Fair**

It has seemed clear to me for some time that Schoenberg's music will eventually enter that repertoire of which it so obviously forms one of the final chapters. This is the last phase of the great Classic-Romantic tradition, and, all the punditry to the contrary, the traditional musical public will accept it before long as a particularly rich and masterly part of the Romantic musical culture they love so well. And performances like these will play a major role in helping to bring about that acceptance.

The idea of writing a piano concerto is said to have been suggested to Schoenberg by (hold your breath) Oscar Levant, though he does not seem to have performed it. Schoenberg's old friend and colleague Edward Steuermann played it in 1944 with the NBC Symphony under Stokowski, and the piece had the honor of being heard and detested by millions; as a result, Stokowski's broadcasting contract was cancelled. Well, here it is, twenty-five years later, and the Schoenberg concerto is still not a repertoire piece, so maybe Schoenberg, Stokowski, and Salzman are wrong and the NBC hatchet men were right—just merely exercising their common sense and good taste! Nevertheless I still stubbornly insist that this is big-scale Romantic music in the great tradition and that sooner or later—it will be another decade or so, I would guess—audiences will lap it up.

Performers already take to it. This is the fourth or fifth recording of the work, and Peter Serkin has such formidable competition as Glenn Gould. Nevertheless, I think this is the most impressive performance of the work I have yet heard. Serkin is just perfectly placed to do this piece up right. It is not often remembered, but his father came out of the Schoenberg circle (although in later years he has practically never played Schoenberg's music), and the younger Serkin seems to bridge the gap between the concerns of a younger generation and the great tradition. He, Ozawa, and the magnificent Chicago Orchestra do this piece in the only way it should be done: in the grand style. That means *Schwung*, *expressivo*, big phrase and line, forward motion, rubato, and all the rest.

The same kind of expressive style goes into the overture. The Opus 23 pieces are among Schoenberg's most attractive works, combining the fantasy of his early period with the germ of later formal ideas. Unlike the contemporary piano Suite, this is not yet "neo-classical" music, and it is twelve-tone just in its finale—generally considered to be the first piece of twelve-tone music (at least the first published) and, oddly enough, a waltz! The Violin Fantasy is one of his last works and one of his most imaginative—dense, elliptical, but still highly expressive in a knotty, dissonant way. The Fantasy performance with the excellent Arnold Steinhardt (first violinist of the Guarneri Quartet) is good, although perhaps a little under-rehearsed. Op. 23 is played like the best Brahms, which is just as it should be. The drawback is the uneven quality of the recording—a truck through the middle of the

(Continued on page 112)

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WAITING FOR SIBELIUS

By DAVID HALL

THE Sibelius centennial year of 1965 brought indications of at least three recorded Sibelius symphony cycles in the making with major conductors and orchestras: Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic; Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic; and Maazel and the Vienna Philharmonic. Maazel's performances of Nos. 3 and 6 have been released in England, thus leaving only the redoubtable Fourth to complete his cycle. Karajan still has the first three to do in his current traversal for Deutsche Grammophon. Meanwhile, Epic stole a march on everybody in the fall of 1967 by issuing a remarkably fine reading of the complete cycle as recorded in 1962 by the Japan Philharmonic under the Japanese-Finnish conductor Akeo Watanabe.

For some strange reason, no record company saw fit to bring such capable native-born Finnish conductors as the late Tauno Hannikainen and Jussi Jalas (Sibelius' son-in-law and conductor of the Helsinki opera) together with top-flight orchestras to undertake a comprehensive survey of Sibelius symphonic works. This is all the more to be regretted because of the distressingly uneven readings of the seven symphonies just released as an integral set on the Columbia label. The orchestra is, of course, the New York Philharmonic, the conductor Leonard Bernstein. Of the set, the Fifth has already been issued separately (November, 1965) for the Sibelius anniversary; all the others are first releases.

Bernstein was a protégé of Serge Koussevitzky, whose Sibelius readings were nonpareil on this side of the Atlantic, and one might have hoped that some of the elder maestro's ways of making the Sixth and the Seventh flow effortlessly would have been passed on. Not so; for the joints show all too clearly here in music that, when properly performed, has the flawless unity of a seamless garment. Horns, for example, tend toward over-balance in the early pages of No. 7; the scherzo section is heavy-handed and slow-paced; and the "pull-ups" of pacing in the later dance section are most unfortunate.

The Fifth is one of the better Bernstein readings, most especially in the power and rhythmic exactitude achieved in the very difficult first-movement coda. But the Fourth is an unmitigated disaster: where the music should be lean and understated (as at the close of the first and last move-

ments), Bernstein sentimentalizes it with slow tempos and long, drawn-out phrasing. The scherzo simply does not get off the ground.

The Third is another of the more successful efforts: the first movement in particular sounds fresh, vernal, clear-textured, and rhythmically vital. The slow movement comes off well, if rather a shade *too con moto* for my taste. The last movement is no better and no worse in its way than most of the other performances I've heard, with perhaps a bit too much stress on detail in the first half—but then this is one of the knottiest of all Sibelius symphonic movements to bring off. Sixten Ehrling and the Stockholm Radio Orchestra in the long-deleted Mercury recording did it as well as any, and better than most.

With the first two symphonies, we are back in the good old Romantic tradition of Tchaikovsky and Dvořák, although proper emphasis on clarity and rhythmic thrust in No. 2 will display its points of kinship with the later Sibelius. Bernstein's readings of both are broadly dramatic, the moderate pacing of the opening of No. 2 recalling that of Koussevitzky.

The recorded sound of the set as a whole is generally clean and full bodied, though I sense some artificial reverberation in the bigger works, and there are moments of what seems to be miscalculated balance in No. 7. The Sixth is recorded with a considerably more intimate acoustic ambience, which to my ear makes the texture seem more dry and less truly transparent than is perhaps actually the case.

CROSSROADS' issue of the 1959 recording of the Second Symphony by Tauno Hannikainen, who died in early December at the age of seventy-two, provides an object lesson in Sibelius interpretation. Even though the Sinfonia of London is not the equal of the New York, Berlin, or Vienna Philharmonic, nor the recorded sound as vivid as that achieved by London, Mr. Hannikainen's interpretive points come across quite clearly. First and foremost, there are properly proportioned tempo relationships, so that the music emerges as a cohesive whole rather than as a series of disjunct dramatic episodes. A sinewy rhythmic strength and tension of phrasing are evident from first page to last; the whole reading communicates a sense of inevitability and final fulfillment. At \$2.49, this

record is a best buy, with only the Dorati-Stockholm Philharmonic performance (almost as good) offering serious competition in that price bracket. Of the full-price readings, I lean toward George Szell's fine performance with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw on Philips. Perhaps he will one day do a Fourth Symphony with his fine Cleveland ensemble.

A NOTE on Hannikainen's other Sibelius symphony recordings, which include the Fifth with the Sinfonia of London, issued some years ago as part of a Capitol "Treasury of World Classics" package, and the Fourth with the U.S.S.R. State Symphony Orchestra, a copy of which I found in Helsinki in 1963 on a Soviet label: both readings display the lean, sinewy texture and beautifully proportioned tempo relationships that I look for in a Sibelius reading—but again, neither orchestra is top-flight, nor is the recorded sound comparable to the best London or DGG. Then there is the long-gone (but not forgotten—by some of us, at any rate) Jussi Jalas performance of the Fifth Symphony with the Berlin RIAS Orchestra issued on Remington 199-204 in the middle Fifties. Here was a fine example of what Sibelius meant when he wired Koussevitzky in response to the conductor's query about proper tempo: "The right tempo is as you feel it." The Jalas reading of the Fifth Symphony is considerably broader than, say, Alexander Gibson's on the Victrola label. Yet they are, to my mind, equally valid and effective interpretations because, within the basic tempo framework chosen by each conductor, proportional relationships of pacing and dynamic contrast are perfectly maintained. Given such maintenance of proportion, there can be considerable latitude of choice as to basic tempo or pulse.

Strange as it may seem, no Finnish conductor has recorded the Seventh Symphony, and only Sibelius' close friend Robert Kajanus has done the First and the Third (plus the Second—all on pre-war 78's). The nearest thing we have had to an integral recording of the seven Sibelius symphonies under one conductor within the Scandinavian-Finnish cultural orbit was the 1953-1955 Mercury series with Sixten Ehrling and the Stockholm Radio Orchestra. The five later symphonies fared very well indeed in those recordings. There has been talk of a Philips World Series budget re-issue, but talk seems to be about as far as it has gone thus far. Meanwhile, prospects for a definitive Sibelius cycle in stereo, ideally recorded, and with a first-rate orchestra under a Finnish conductor, look exceedingly dim.

SIBELIUS: Symphonies: No. 1, in E Minor, Op. 39; No. 2, in D Major, Op. 43; No. 3, in C Major, Op. 52; No. 4, in A Minor, Op. 63; No. 5, in E-flat Major, Op. 82; No. 6, in D Minor, Op. 104; No. 7, in C Major, Op. 105. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. COLUMBIA © M55 784 five discs \$28.99.

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Fantasy, and absurdly low levels everywhere. Even so, it's a worthwhile disc. E. S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCHUBERT: *Piano Sonata, in F-sharp Minor (D. 571, D. 570); Fantasie, in C Major (D. 605); Minuet, in D Major (D. 336); Adagio, in G Major (D. 178); Allegretto, in C Major (D. 346)*. Frederick Marvin (piano). SOCIETY FOR FORGOTTEN MUSIC (8481 Melrose Pl., Los Angeles, Cal. 90069) © 2011 \$5.95.

Performance: Lovingly stylish
Recording: Intimate
Stereo Quality: Good

This is no collection of second-rate works by a great master, but a sheaf of genuine treasures neglected by dint of being left either in a less than definitively complete state (the *Fantasie* and the second version of the *Adagio*) or being improperly edited for performance purposes (the first movement of the *F-sharp Minor Sonata* and the two other movements are catalogued as separate works by Otto Erich Deutsch despite his indication that they belong together). The whole story is well told in the liner notes by pianist Frederick Marvin and by the editor of the *Sonata*, Vernon Duke.

The wonderfully moody first movement of the *Sonata*, the uncannily haunting *Fantasie*, and the poignant *Adagio* are for me the high points of this fascinating album. Frederick Marvin, a pianist-musicologist whose name has been associated in recent years with re-discovery of the works of Antonio Soler, re-

veals himself here as a Schubertian to the core, for he communicates just the right blend of romantic passion and classically styled phrasing that this music calls for. The recorded sound is in proper style, too, suggesting as it does the intimate home surroundings within which Schubert meant most of his keyboard works to be played.

Mr. Marvin and Mr. Duke (who is also the guiding genius of the Society for Forgotten Music) deserve a resounding vote of gratitude from all Schubert fanciers. This record is indeed a thing of beauty and a joy forever! D. H.

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9* (see SAINT-SAËNS)

SCHUMANN: *Liederkreis, Op. 39; Romanze, Op. 138, No. 5; Der Spielmann, Op. 40, No. 4; Der Schatzgräber, Op. 45, No. 1; Ständchen, Op. 36, No. 2; Nichts Schöneres, Op. 36, No. 3; An den Sonnenschein, Op. 36, No. 4; Des Senners Abschied, Op. 79, No. 22; Dein Angesicht, Op. 127, No. 2*. Gérard Souzay (baritone); Dalton Baldwin (piano). PHILIPS © PHS 900180 \$5.79.

Performance: Sensitive and polished
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Appropriate

The largely introspective and intimately scaled Eichendorff songs of the *Liederkreis*, Op. 39, are ideally suited to Souzay's evocative art. The French baritone responds to them with thoughtful, finely controlled mastery, turning out his most satisfying re-

cording in several years. He exhibits an equally impressive form in the eight songs that take up the second side—an interesting and rarely heard group, particularly the three of Opus 36. The tense narrative of *Der Schatzgräber* taxes Souzay's slender vocal resources, but with skill and imagination he manages to get around the climaxes.

As always, the baritone gets exemplary accompaniments from his long-time partner Dalton Baldwin, and the recorded sound is fine. There were no texts for the eight songs supplied with the review copy. And in what appears to be an excessively zealous endorsement of the decimal system, the total timing of Side B on the label is given as "15:79." G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STOCKHAUSEN: *Gruppen for three orchestras: Carrée for four orchestras and four choruses*. Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of the North German Radio, Hamburg, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Bruno Maderna, Michael Gielen, Mauricio Kagel, and Andrzej Markowski cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON © 10-4989 \$5.79.

Performance: As good as you'll get
Recording: Gruppen better
Stereo Quality: Effective in Gruppen

These are Stockhausen's two hugest compositions, not just in terms of length—half an hour is moderate size in the German composer's lengthy output—but in terms of performing forces. Works of such magnitude (Continued on page 114)

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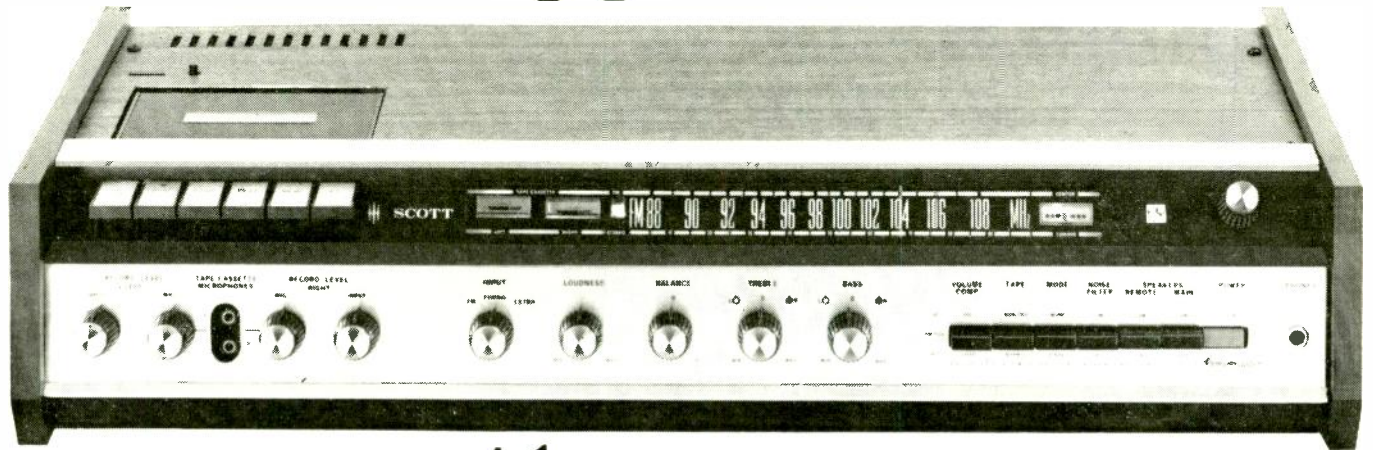
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written in this country would (said he sadly) simply never be performed. Period. It is, of course, the German subsidy system and, in particular, the non-commercial publicly supported radio which makes these things possible; both these performances are from North German Radio tapes.

I suppose there's no inherent virtue in gigantism (or is it "gigantism"?) for its own sake; but what healthy, red-blooded composer wouldn't sacrifice every one of his solo oboe sonatas for the chance to get his hands on the resources here displayed? In fact, the very use of the resources—huge arrays of instrumental and vocal color, sound in space, time antiphonies and counterpoints—is at the heart of these remarkable conceptions, impressively conveyed in one case, a little less so in the other.

Gruppen was written between 1955 and 1957 and represents one of the first attempts in Europe to use the techniques of multiple ensemble, multiple time tracks, and spatial-directional sound (earlier used in this country by Ives, Cowell, Brant, and others although never on such a Wagnerian scale). All the possibilities, ranging from unity to variety and variability, from simplicity to maximum complexity, from fragmented sound and silence to huge densities of sound, from uniform colors of percussion and brass traveling across the three orchestras to maximum differentiation of timbre, from static, rippling textures to fast-moving, fast-traveling impulses—all are composed out in the most extraordinary, fanatical detail; there must be more notes in this score than in the *Ring of the Nibelung*. The power of this is undeniable; it is one of the landmarks of postwar music. The impact is well preserved in this recording, which uses stereo to "place" the three orchestras with great effect. And, in spite of much glossing over of detail (much of it virtually impossible to realize anyway), the performance is quite impressive.

Carrée makes less of an impression for several reasons. For one thing, the recording is simply not as good. This sounds to me like the original radio performance of the early Sixties (has the piece ever been performed anywhere else since?). Although the music has a certain dry presence, the recording lacks the sense of space that is so well conveyed on the overside and should be no less important here. Another point has to do with the nature of the work itself. Stockhausen had just discovered what he calls "moment form." Now, I am certainly not going to expound on "moment form" here, but let it suffice to say that it can result in music composed in bits, fits, and starts. At least that's what happens here, and the rather restricted stop-and-go chunks that constitute the first half of *Carrée* set up a certain squeezed, up-tight dynamic (amusingly enough, "carrée" means "square," but let it pass). Finally, it is a fact that great portions of this work were "realized" by an assistant (Stockhausen, like a medieval master, is always surrounded by great crowds of pupils, disciples, and apprentices who often do much of the work—even including the actual composition!).

But this is hardly the end of the story. Stockhausen himself says that you can tune in and out of a "moment-form" piece. So you can presumably pay less attention when the music is less interesting and tune in again when it gets more so. In fact, the piece picks

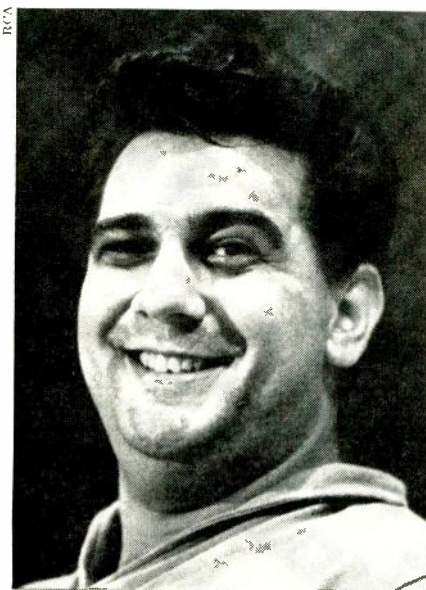
up considerably as it goes on—both in terms of the intrinsic interest of the material and in the handling of the "moments." The piece moves out of the maddeningly regular curve of stop-and-start that characterizes the first part and its impact grows—from "moment" to "moment," so to speak. Some of the last part—whether by Stockhausen, by his assistant, or both—is deeply impressive and makes the whole trip worthwhile. Anyway, an important record and an important experience. E. S.

SZYMANOWSKI: *Violin Concerto No. 1* (see Best of the Month, page 86)

TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture* (see Best of the Month, page 85)

WIENIAWSKI: *Violin Concerto No. 2* (see Best of the Month, page 86)

COLLECTIONS



PLÁCIDO DOMINGO
A commendable debut recital

VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES: *Zarzuela Arias*. Arias from Giménez: *La tempranica*. Chapí: *La Catedral*; *La Patria chica*. Chueca & Valverde: *La Gran vía*. Serrano: *Lov de Aragón*; *La Alegría del batallón*; *Lov Claveles*. Lleó: *La Corte de Fernán*. Caballero: *Gigantes y cabezudos*. Barbieri: *El Barberillo de Lavapiés*. Victoria de los Angeles (soprano); members of the Spanish National Orchestra, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos cond. ANGEL © S 36556 \$5.79.

Performance: **Sumptuous**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

The irresistibly lilting and joyous *Zapateado* from *La tempranica* which starts off this program raises hopes of enjoyment that the remainder of the disc can only partially fulfill. This is due not to any lack of performing artistry, but to the fact that some of the material offered is of slender value musically. Best are the Serrano and Valverde excerpts; the rest of the pieces combine elements of the continental operetta (Offenbach and Lehár are the composers most frequently called to mind) and pleasant but predictable Spanish patterns. Victoria de los Angeles is,

of course, an absolute mistress of the idiom. In the midrange her singing is flawless, but a few sallies into the higher regions expose her current limitations. Still, there is plenty of zip and an inestimable amount of charm in her presentation, and the disc will certainly delight the *aficionado*. The recorded sound is somewhat over-reverberant. G. J.

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO: *Italian Operatic Arias*. Mascagni: *Caravaggio Rusticoma*: *Adagio alla madre*. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*: *Vesti la giubba*. Verdi: *Un ballo in maschera*: *Ma se m'è forza perdeti*. *Aida*: *Celeste Aida*. *Il Trovatore*: *Ab, si, ben mio*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda*: *Cielo e mar*. Cilèa: *Adriana Lecouvreur*: *La dolcissima effigie*. Puccini: *Turandot*: *Nessun dorma*. Giordano: *Fedora*: *Amor ti vieta*. *Andrea Chénier*: *Un dì all'azzurro spazio*. Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*: *Tombe degli avi miei*... *Fra poco a me ricovero*. Plácido Domingo (tenor); Orchestra of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Nello Santi cond. LONDON © OS 26080 \$5.79.

Performance: **Impressive**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Plácido Domingo, the Met's new Hispano-Mexican tenor, passes the conventional debut-recital test commendably here. His voice is a sturdy *spinto* of agreeable quality, capable in dramatic challenges but decidedly more comfortable in the lyric-dramatic area of *Fedora*, *La Gioconda*, and *Adriana Lecouvreur*. His technique is good—extending to a respectable trill in "Ab, si, ben mio"—his tone is properly equalized, and his style is entirely idiomatic. There are no serious reservations here. Señor Domingo is a fine singer, destined for big things. Right now, he has a tendency (occasionally) to sing sharp, but so did Bjorling. The orchestral accompaniments are at times lethargically paced and not very polished. There is no problem with the rich sound *per se*, but the surfaces are noisy at times, and the jacket listing is at odds with the labels. G. J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ENGLISH CONSORT MUSIC AROUND 1600-1640. Byrd: *Pavan and Galliard* a 6; *Fantasia No. 3* a 3; *Miserere* a 4 "Gloria tibi trinitatis"; *Fantasia No. 2* a 6. Lawes: *Suite No. 2, in F Major*; *Sonata No. 7, in D Minor*; *In Nomine from Suite No. 3, in B Major*. Tomkins: *A sad Pavan for these distracted times*. Leonhardt Consort; Veronika Hampe (gamba); Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord, in Tomkins); organ in Byrd *Miserere*. TELEFUNKEN © SAWT 9481 A Ex \$5.95.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Superior**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

There is an interesting contrast between the music of the two principal composers featured here: the basically cheerful consort music of Byrd representing the closing years of the Renaissance, and Lawes' pieces, which have a distinctly disturbed feeling, from the disquieting years of the civil war in England. William Lawes was born in 1602 and died in battle in 1645, and Gustav Leonhardt, perhaps to emphasize the feeling of tragedy during those times, also includes a pavan by Thomas Tomkins, written in 1649 as a memorial on the death of Charles I.

(Continued on page 118)

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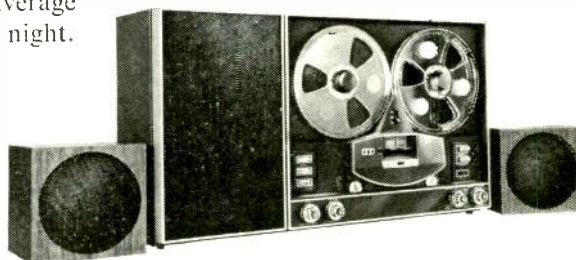


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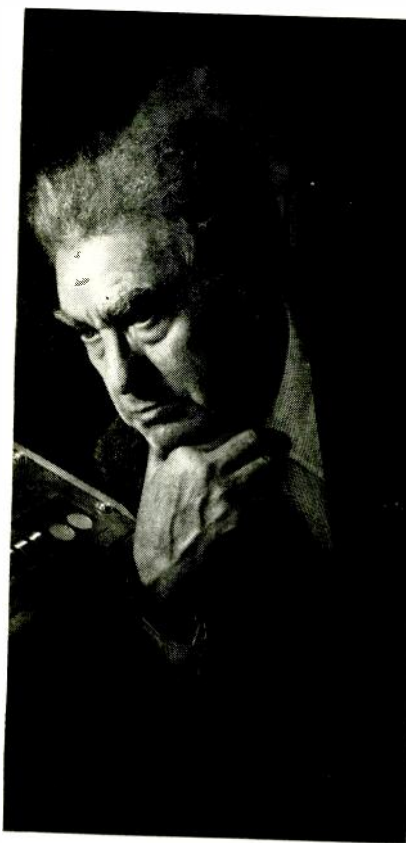


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VALID VARESE, LOUD LAZAROF

By Eric Salzman



EDGARD VARÈSE (1885-1965)

AS A composer, Edgard Varèse had such a great impact on instrumental sound and on the use of tape and electronics in music that his abiding interest in the human voice has often been overlooked. But from his student days in Paris, when he conducted a workers' chorus and studied and performed early choral music, to his later years in New York, when he formed and directed a chorus at the New School, Varèse was always deeply involved with the human voice as an expressive resource. Many of his vocal-choral-theater projects, such as the opera *Astronome* with Artaud, a choral-electronic symphony with Malraux, and a major work to be called *Espace* or *Space, Nuit* on a text of St. John Perse, never materialized. But what we do have (besides the vocal elements in the late tape scores) includes the monumental *Ecuatorial* and the unfinished but tremendously evocative *Nocturnal*, both now recorded by Vanguard Cardinal for the first time.

Ecuatorial was written in 1933-1934, at the very time interest in Varèse's work was beginning to wane under the double impact of anti-avant-gardism and the musical populism that came to be the dominant aesthetic of the Depression years. It was probably not even performed for more than a quarter of a century, and thus it had less chance than other Varèse works to become known and influential. Yet it is no less remarkable than its predecessors or successors. It was his first work since the early Twenties to use the voice (it employs an ensemble of low basses), and perhaps the first work anywhere to make notable use of electronic sound (the theremin originally,

later changed to ondes Martenot). The text is an early Spanish translation of a pre-Columbian invocation. Varèse said that he wanted the work to have something of the "elemental rude intensity" of pre-Columbian art. The choral sound, born out of chant and magic ritual, is framed in Varésian percussion and big block brass sound of an almost terrifying intensity; around all this is the sweep of electronic sound, an unexpected and unearthly curve of magic around the powerful, earth-hugging vocal and instrumental incantation. This is perhaps the only Varèse work in which tension is not merely created through the superimposition of huge block structures, but actually released in the form of forward rhythmic pulses of extraordinary thrust and carry. *Ecuatorial* is, without a doubt, one of the most powerful pieces of the first half of our century and as vitally alive today as it was at the time it was written.

Nocturnal was Varèse's last work. The completed portion was performed at a concert in New York in 1961, but Varèse apparently regarded it only as a work in progress and intended to add to it. This project, which started as *Dans la Nuit* on a text by Anaïs Nin, turned into another concept, *Nuit*, with a text by St. John Perse, a Nobel prize poet and Varèse's long-time friend. Varèse died in 1965 with none of these projects realized. *Nocturnal* was obviously a major fragment and well worth performing, but its equally obvious incompleteness seemed too great a barrier to a satisfactory realization. So Varèse's pupil, the Chinese-American composer Chou Wen-chung, working from the com-

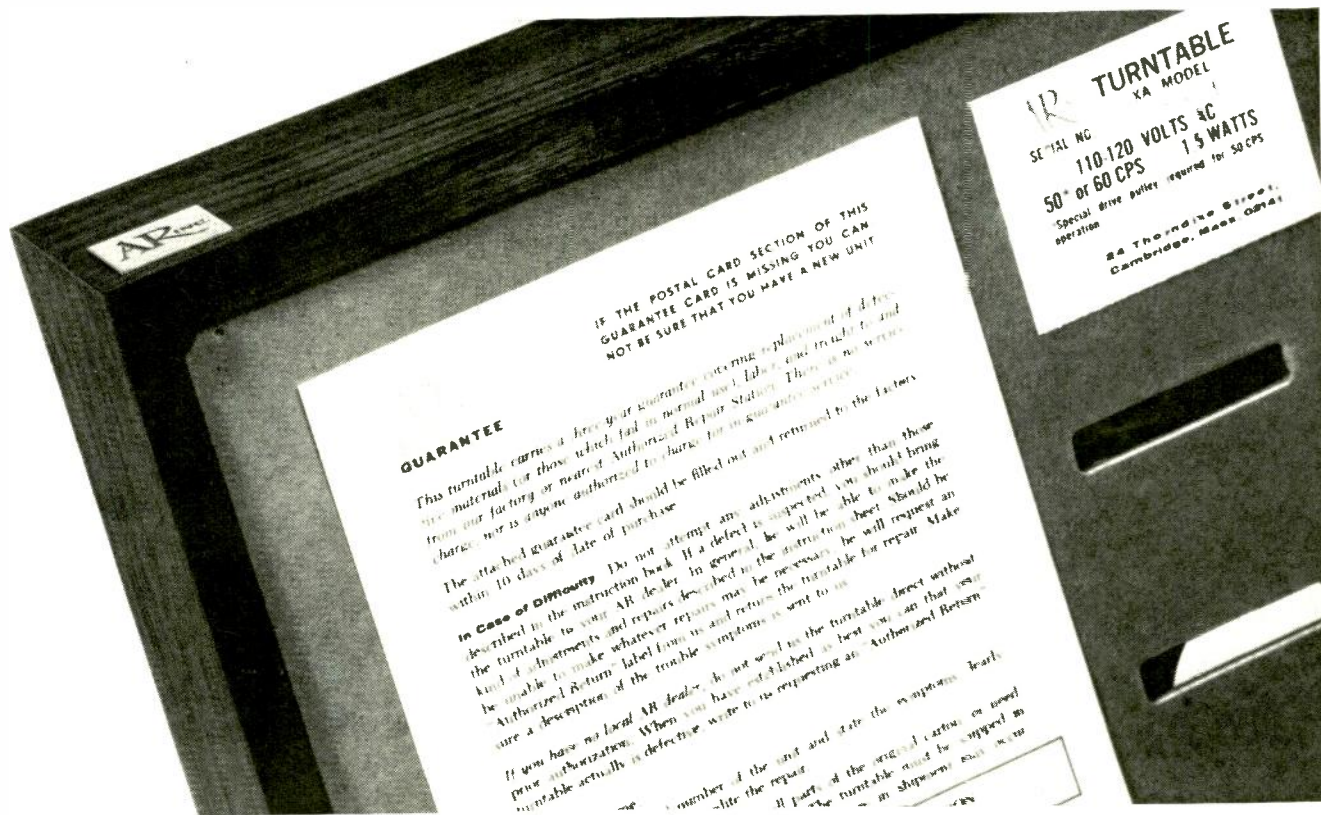
poser's notes and sketches, extended the existing material and added whatever new material in the sketches seemed appropriate. These additions certainly involve the very real presence of a second hand and a second mind, but they survive two very crucial tests: (1) they give us more of Varèse's thought than we previously had, and without serious damage or deformation, and (2) they provide a greater, not a lesser, coherence than we started out with. They are not only "in style," they are "in spirit." They also successfully extend—working out of Varèse's own notes—the extraordinary development of vocal sound and color already present in *Ecuatorial* and in the completed portions of *Nocturnal*.

HENRI LAZAROF is a Bulgarian-born composer, educated in Israel, Italy, and America and now living and teaching in Los Angeles. He is an energetic eclectic who works on a big scale. Eclecticism is not necessarily a bad word nowadays—there are many reasons for thinking that the alternative to purism and minimalism in contemporary art is a kind of "maximal," multi-layer approach that could be called eclectic. But Lazarof's direct borrowing of titles ("Tempi Concertati" after Berio, "Structures Sonores" after François Bachellet) and musical ideas from a variety of sources suggests not multi-layer form but pastiche. *Structures Sonores* is effectively managed in detail—the orchestration is invariably smashing brilliant. But it goes on with this and that for over half an hour and one never really knows why. Why this instead of that? Why those Bartókian bits next to Boulez and Berg? Why "polyphony" next to post-polyphonic serialism next to block or "moment" forms? Why thirty-two minutes instead of twenty-two or twelve? Mere continuous brilliance wears thin very quickly. One follows block sound and filigree texture for a while; then merely loud and soft; then, finally, attention is gone and no amount of effort can bring it back.

Well, it makes an excellent modern-music-type background anyway! And, like the Varèse, it is very well played and recorded. Varèse asks that *Ecuatorial* be "dramatic and incantatory, guided by the imploring fervor of the text," and Abravanel and his forces achieve just those qualities. I would fault only the ensemble of basses—they sometimes appear to be straining and casting up their prayers not quite in unison. But this is a minor matter compared with the overall accuracy, richness, and impact of this performance. A more serious problem was inherent in putting over thirty minutes of loud Lazarof on a single side, a tight and not entirely distortion-free squeeze. Otherwise, good sound.

VARESE: *Nocturnal*; *Ecuatorial*. LAZAROF: *Structures Sonores*. Ariel Bybee (soprano); Bass Ensemble of the University-Civic Chorale; Salt Lake City; Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel cond. VANGUARD CARDINAL © VCS 10047 \$3.50.

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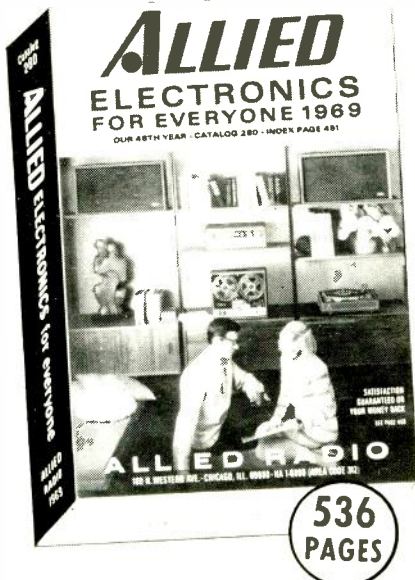


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The performers throughout are splendid, though I found some of the galliards to be a little too rapid in tempo. The blend of the string instruments is exceptionally well captured in this recording, and, both in performance and reproduction, the two organ and harpsichord solos are equally well done.

I. K.

FRITZ KREISLER: *Souvenirs*. Kreisler: *Tambourin chinois; Caprice viennois; Gypsy Caprice; Shepherd's Madrigal; Schön Rosmarin; Liebesleid; Liebesfreud; The Old Refrain; Chanson Louis XIII and Purane.* Dohnányi: *Rhapsodia Hungarica; Gypsy Andante.* Dvořák: *Humoresque; Slavonic Dances: No. 1 in G Minor and No. 3 in G Major.* Fritz Kreisler (violin); Carl Lamson (piano). RCA VICTROLA Ⓜ VIC 1372 \$2.50.

Performance: Unique
Recording: Good for its age (1924-1929)

Included in this collection of "Fritz Kreisler Souvenirs" are some of the top sellers of forty years ago, when the inimitable Kreisler was able to delight the masses and connoisseurs alike with this kind of aristocratic salon music. These are all Kreisler compositions and transcriptions, which means that the effortless artistry conceals the subtle technical difficulties inherent in their writing. But then, Kreisler did have a formidable technique—a fact sometimes obscured by the glowing praise usually bestowed on his style and tone.

Kreisler exuded charm in his playing; in communicating music, heart to heart, he was unsurpassed. His phrasing was superbly expressive, and always enriched with a sense of spontaneity that made it seem as though he improvised his bowing and accentuation on the spot (and he often did just that). Violinists will cherish the disc, delighting in the evenness of the Kreisler staccato in *Schön Rosmarin*, in the clarity and absolute security of his double stops, and in the immaculate lyricism of his *Gypsy Andante*—to mention only a few examples. Of course, the leisurely slides from one note to another would not be permissible to today's tastes. They belong to another period, a world dimly remembered with mixed nostalgia and envy. It was a world that was lucky in many ways, one of them being the fact that it could call Fritz Kreisler its own.

G. J.

THE ORIGINAL UDAY SHANKAR COMPANY: *Ragas and Dances*. Ensemble of Indian Musicians, Vishnudass Shirali, dir. RCA VICTROLA Ⓜ VIC 1361 \$2.50.

Performance: The original
Recording: 1937

Probably no person has done as much for Indian art in the West as Ravi Shankar's brother Uday. Uday Shankar's school of dance and music in Bombay has been a center for the preservation and continuity of Indian arts, and the American visits of his dance company—of which he was the premier performer—began as early as 1931. These recordings, made in 1937, were among the first to introduce Indian music to the West; they are reissued on the occasion of Uday Shankar's recent revisits to these shores.

The material in these bands can be considered modern compositions, using a wide variety of Indian materials in a popular man-

ner—all of it clearly adapted to the needs of the dance and the requirements of four-minute short-playing sides as well. All of this does not necessarily go against the musical results (Stravinsky, after all, also wrote modern works using traditional materials for the purposes of the dance and even adapted for short-playing records!). Since the school and the company are still very much in existence, it would certainly have been more meaningful to make new recordings with modern techniques. But then, RCA wouldn't have been able to point out that one of the performing musicians was a certain Ravi Shankar.

E. S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHRISTOPHER PARKENING: *In the Classic Style*. Bach-Segovia: *Fugue from Violin Sonata No. 1, BWV 1001; Chaconne from Violin Partita No. 2, BWV 1004; Courante from Cello Suite No. 3, BWV*

WESTMINSTER



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Range, agility, and a good sense of style

1009; *Prelude for Lute, BWV 999.* Negri-Segovia: *Bianco fiore; Saltarello (sic).* Weiss-Ponce: *Preludio.* Bach-Segovia-Ponce: *Prelude from Cello Suite No. 1, BWV 1007.* Tansman: *Scherzino; Danza pomposa from Caratina.* Christopher Parkening (guitar). ANGEL Ⓢ S 36019 \$5.79.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: A little artificial

Records titled "In the Classic Style" with good-looking young men dreaming over their guitars on the sleeve turn me off, but I must say that Parkening's playing turned me back on again. He is a Segovia pupil and a worthy heir to the musical tradition of his master. His delivery is graceful, sensitive, and musical, and he makes convincing lines and phrases without the great rhythmic distortions that some guitarists seem to find necessary to keep things moving along. Close-up sound weighted on the right channel. And what the dickens is a "Saltarello?" Odds on it's a four-hundred-year-old error for "Saltarello."

E. S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEVERLY SILIS: *Bellini and Donizetti Heroines*. Bellini: *I Capuleti ed i Montec-*

chi: *Eccomi in lieta veste . . . Ob! quante volte. La Sonnambula: Care compagne . . . Come per me sereno. Donizetti: Linda di Chamounix: Ah! tardai troppo . . . O luce di quest'anima. Lucia di Lammermoor: Regnava nel silenzio. Roberto Devereux: E Sana in questi orribili momenti . . . Vivi, ingrato, a lei d'accanto. Rosmonda d'Inghilterra: Ancor non giunse . . . Perché non ho del vento.*
 Beverly Sills (soprano); Vienna Volksoper Orchestra and Vienna Akademie Chorus, Jussi Jalas cond. WESTMINSTER © WST 17143 \$4.79.

Performance: Excellent
 Recording: Very good
 Stereo Quality: Very good

Followers of the operatic scene and, specifically, the current activities of the highly versatile Beverly Sills will hardly be surprised to discover that this is an outstanding recital. The program has been wisely chosen to encompass a considerable range of interpretive variety—from the plaintive gentility of Bellini's Juliet (*I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*) to the injured passion of Donizetti's Queen Elizabeth I (*Roberto Devereux*). The excerpt from *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* is a real novelty, and though the *Linda di Chamounix* aria is not quite that, it is given here with its rarely-heard recitative.

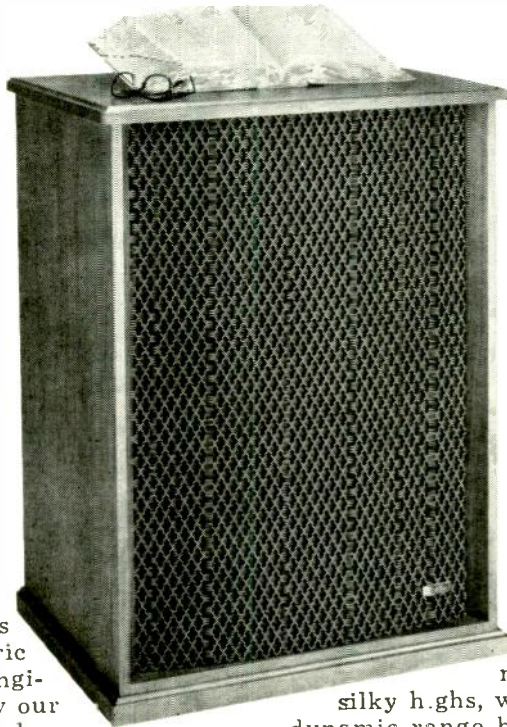
Miss Sills has everything a singer needs: range, agility, a good sense of style, and a reliable and quite spectacular technique. Her intonation is as close to perfection as can be expected in this kind of repertoire. She uses her voice intelligently, with the proper expressive nuances and shadings of phrases, and she knows how to extract the maximum meaning from recitatives that less artistic and less knowing singers gloss over or leave unexploited. What this artist lacks is true individuality—a uniqueness of timbre or certain distinctive personal qualities in her singing. Although this is no major liability—for on the other side of the coin she has no intrusive mannerisms, either—it does create what might be called an "identity crisis" for a performer.

I am really more concerned about the fact that Miss Sills—perhaps following the Sutherland-Caballé example—is addicted to the current fad of over-embellishment. Embellishing repeats in the *bel canto* repertoire is, of course, entirely proper and justified by tradition, for this gives the singer an opportunity to display the kind of musicality involved in improvising—or in *pretending* to improvise—ornamentations on the composer's design. But the kind of over-ornate embroideries superimposed on the *Sonnambula* aria in the present instance represents a tendency that was discredited a hundred years ago, and for very good reasons. By then, audiences had become sophisticated enough—and artists disciplined enough—to realize that there is a limit beyond which performers should not go with the composer's notated score. Beverly Sills, a singer of intelligence and extraordinary aptitude, needs no "middle man" between her art and that of Bellini and Donizetti.

Among other things, excessive vocal fidgety work tends to encroach on the conductor's domain. When allowed to lead without such interference, Jussi Jalas achieves very good results with the fine Viennese orchestra and chorus. Herbert Weinstock has supplied unusually informative liner notes for the disc.

G. J.

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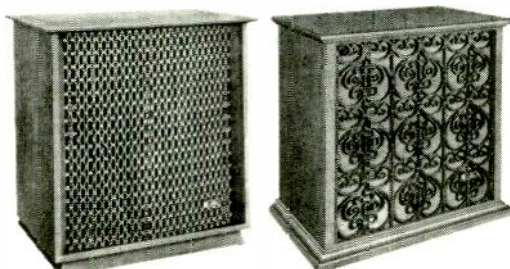
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CIRCLE NO. 79 ON READER SERVICE CARD



PHOTO: FAITH FRENZ

Ninth in a series of short biographical sketches of our regular staff and contributing editors, the "men behind the magazine"—who they are and how they got that way. In this issue, composer, performer, critic

DON HECKMAN

By PETER REILLY

"MUSICALLY SPEAKING, I work in performance, composition, and commentary because each satisfies a special area of my interests and because I believe Hindemith's dictum that a complete musician is one who performs all these activities," says Don Heckman, who, in addition to being a contributing editor and record critic for STEREO REVIEW, also contributes articles to a number of other music publications.

Born in Pennsylvania, Don Heckman moved to Florida with his family in his childhood. Music became an important part of his life while he was still very young. "I suppose it was all the opera recordings that my Italian grandfather used to play," he says. "Verdi was my favorite—all those melodies." Later he entered Florida State University, where he studied composition with the great Hungarian composer Ernst von Dohnányi. "I can't say I learned much about composition from him, but at the age of nineteen or twenty, any contact with an aura of greatness can be important."

At the same time that he was attending college, Heckman played for fraternity dances, proms, and all sorts of night clubs to supplement his income. "I even played the Miami Beach strip-club circuit when I was in high school. The hours were pretty rough, but I got an early look at the seamier side of the entertainment business.

"I also played throughout the Caribbean and in South America. We played at some oil camps in Venezuela once that were so far into the jungle that it

was a three-hour jeep ride to the camp—after a flight in an old DC-3 from Caracas."

Heckman later came to New York, where he studied with John Cage at the New School. "Cage doesn't teach you how to compose, but he sure turns your mind around," he says. "One thing for sure—I was never able to listen to music, or to write music, in quite the same way after I studied with him. And maybe that's what good teaching is all about."

THE impressive list of Heckman's composing credits includes film scores for Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, for documentaries about Henri Cartier-Bresson, Pablo Neruda, Thornton Wilder, and Hans Christian Andersen, and for several children's features. The Dylan Thomas film has been shown throughout the world and was described by the New York *Herald Tribune* as "... a fond remembrance of ordinary activities, things and familial ritual splendidly transmuted into poetry for ear and eye."

Heckman also composed the theme music for the Peabody Award-winning television show, *The CBS Children's Film Festival*. He has also provided incidental music and songs for *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Heartbreak House*, and *Pinocchio* on Caedmon Records. For the theater he has written music for numerous off-Broadway shows, including a full score, with twenty-eight songs, for *War, A Retelling of the Nibelungenlied*.

In addition to composing, Heckman

has been deeply involved in the performing aspect of his career. A few years ago he appeared with the John Benson Brooks Trio in a program of improvisations based on twelve-tone rows for the International Jazz Festival in Washington. A recording of that performance has just been issued by Decca under the title "Avant Slant (One Plus 1 = II?)." Another of his recorded performances, "The Don Heckman-Ed Summerlin Improvisational Jazz Workshop," the result of his work in a jazz laboratory for the continuing exploration of new music, is available on Ictus Records. Heckman and the Jazz Workshop have appeared at colleges and music festivals, and on numerous television shows.

HIS work as an alto saxophonist has brought forth such praise from *Down Beat* as: "Heckman plays with a searing force and brusqueness and does some mighty things indeed." And in reviewing his contribution to an avant-garde program of serious music, the New York *Times* commented, "Don Heckman, known first as a jazzman, moves freely back and forth between the avant-garde of both worlds."

Anxious to do more work in the theater, Heckman says: "I'm moving in the direction of an increased use of ritual and drama in my music. In recent compositions I have tried to incorporate elements of dance, music, and theater in a controlled framework of free improvisation. The unpredictable encounters which take place in such situations are especially stimulating, and represent—for me—yet another step toward the return of a more personal kind of music. I would like to see the tyranny of the detached, non-performing composer replaced by the more musical concept of the composer-performer."

As far as record reviewing is concerned, he says, "There's one cardinal rule about reviewing popular music: don't patronize the young. They usually are quite aware of what they are doing.

"As far as jazz is concerned, it seems to be due for a resurgence, but I doubt that it will ever again be what it was in the Fifties."

In a more general sense, Don Heckman's attitude about musical commentary reflects his deepest feelings about the art itself. "The fascinating thing about both pop and jazz—and, for that matter, about any kind of fresh, alive music—is that no one can tell exactly where it's going to go. That's what makes all the listening I do worthwhile. It's like Ornette Coleman once said, 'How can I know what I'm going to play before I play it?'"

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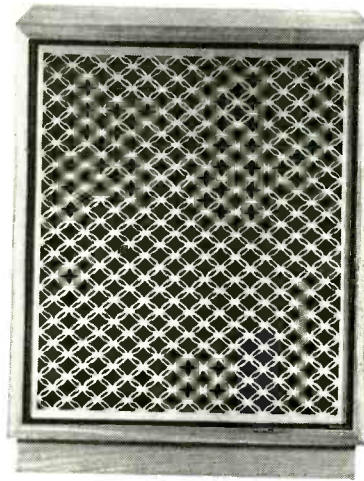
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ENTERTAINMENT

POPS • JAZZ • FILMS • THEATER • FOLK • SPOKEN WORD

Reviewed by DON HECKMAN • PAUL KRESH • REX REED • PETER REILLY

STEVE ADDISS AND BILL CROFUT: *Eastern Ferris Wheel*. Steve Addiss and Bill Crofut (vocals), various ensembles. *The Jimmy Song*; *In Just Spring*; *Flowers Fall Away*; *Softly*; *Down By The Meadow*; *He Is There*; *Forty Days* (with the Dave Brubeck Quartet); and six others. COLUMBIA Ⓢ CS 9746 \$4.98.

Performance: They set a velly fine table
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Fine

Steve Addiss and Bill Crofut are obviously scholarly and serious students of Oriental music, for they have put together a delicately balanced potpourri (*vijstafel*, one might call it, to be more precisely Indonesian) of sounds, stories, and savvy to make a really appealing musical repast. The lyrics are often as inscrutable as Japanese or Chinese ancestors, yet they are attractive in their mysteriousness. The instruments involved include harpsichord, calliope, tabla, mridangam, koto, tranh, kalimba, and anklung, played by Messrs. Addiss and Crofut and a dozen others, including—of all people—Dave Brubeck.

There are two enigmas wrapped up in this Oriental mystery hash, and one is *Forty Days*, from Brubeck's oratorio *Light in the Wilderness*, with the man himself on the piano. It's a great piece of showmanship, but unfortunately for Addiss and Crofut, Dave's pure professionalism shows them up as precocious amateurs—though amateurs with great promise. The other enigma doesn't come off. It's the American composer Charles Ives' *He Is There*, and it is a protest song combining lines of melody and lyrics from old war songs. *Marching Through Georgia*, *Dixie*, *Rally Round the Flag*, *Tenting Tonight*, *Yankee Doodle*, and others of the genre are employed to little effect. This is more boring than listening to the local firemen's band play the originals on the Fourth of July. But the rest of the album is rather beautiful. I especially liked *Softly*, *Willow Rustling in the Breeze*, and *Gentle Robyn*. Addiss and Crofut are American mystics to be admired for their musical taste and also for their taste in art, which is seen on the cover with a beautiful screen painting by Soga Shohaku from Mr. Addiss' collection. R. R.

ERIC ANDERSEN: *Avalanche*. Eric Andersen (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Think about It*; *An Old Song*; *Louise*; *So Hard to Fall*; *We Were Foolish Like the Flowers*; *Avalanche*; and three others. WARNER BROS. Ⓢ WS 1748 \$4.79.

Performance: Common and unoriginal
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

Eric Andersen is just one more example of why some composers should never sing their own material. His small, twangy sound does not enhance his work, but then I wonder if



THE BAG

Raw vitality and raucous abandon

anyone could do justice to the draft in this album that just lies there like unwashed grapes. The music is routine and similar to tunes heard every hour on the hour for the past few years. The lyrics are sophomoric. There are several anti-establishment songs, such as *It's Comin' and It Won't Be Long*, which left me decidedly cold, an anti-war song (*For What Was Gained*) that runs for over eight minutes and sounds like warmed over Pete Seeger, and one other song that just has to be heard to be believed. It's called *An Old Song*, and it takes place just prior to and during sexual intercourse, with the constant giggles of the singer's female partner in the background. I don't know where trash like this or singers like Eric Andersen are heading, but I can think of some recommendations—none of them printable. R. R.

THE BAG: *Real*. The Bag (vocals and instrumentals). *Up in the Morning*; *Bide My Time*; *Nickels 'n' Dimes*; *Down and Out*; *I Don't Want To*; *Got Away*; and five others. DECCA Ⓢ DL 75057 \$4.79.

Performance: Raw but good
Recording: Loud
Stereo Quality: Good

If it is true that rock is headed back toward the early Presley sound, then the Bag seems to be taking it even further back—to the days of Bill Haley's Comets. The first band here, *Up in the Morning*, might almost be an updated version of the Comets' sound, and aside from the nostalgia that it summons up, it also has a lot of raw vitality and the kind of raucous abandon that characterized so much early rock. The Bag does ring changes on its material, but in the main it sticks close to a rugged beat and a frenetic vocal delivery. This disc is very enjoyable, and recommended. P. R.

BREWER & SHIPLEY: *Brewer & Shipley down in L.A.* Michael Brewer and Tom Shipley (vocals and guitars); instrumental accompaniment. *Truly Right*; *She Thinks She's a Woman*; *Time and Changes*; *Small Town Girl*; *I Can't See Her*; *Green Bamboo*; and five others. A&M Ⓢ SP-1154 \$4.98.

Performance: Better than average
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Okay

Truly Right, the first song on this album, firmly establishes that Brewer & Shipley are right as rain (truly) and better than average in all their accomplishments. Their two figures are silhouetted on the front cover, but they are revealed on the reverse side as two lean, intellectual types dressed *à la Vieille Russie*. Musically, however, they start out intellectually promising and slowly record themselves into the selfsame noisome nonsense so prevalent today.

She Thinks She's a Woman is all about a girl with a hair fetish. *Time and Changes* inevitably made me think of Whittier's lines: "Oh time and change/With hair as gray as was my sire's that winter day/How strange it seems with so much gone/Of life and love to still live on." And on, and on, and on—through endless folk-rock records. They keep coming on me as wave upon wave. And, like waves, they become common despite the merits of each.

Small Town Girl sets the album's pattern lyrically. These gentlemen are hung up on women; well, actually not women, but girls—girls who are virgin queens, small town girls, girls who think the boys can't see them girls in politics. And then in *Green*

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓢ = stereophonic recording
- Ⓜ = monophonic recording
- * = mono or stereo version not received for review

Bamboo, high on a hill, what do you find? Just another mippy girl.

The remainder of the album resorts to the usual protests. And again, how boring. It's too bad because there are interesting sounds on this disc, and I hope for better material from Brewer & Shipley next time. R. R.

JEANNIE BRITTAN: *Gentle Explosion*. Jeannie Brittan (vocals); orchestra. *If This Is Love; If I Could Only See You Once Again; Look at You; The Next Sound You Hear; Light of Love; I'm Needing Your Love*; and five others. DECCA (S) DL 75054 \$4.79.

Performance: Very promising
Recording: Fine
Stereo Quality: Good, sometimes uneven

I like this young lady very much. She is reminiscent of many others—Pet Clark, Dionne Warwick, Laura Nyro—but that's not bad company to keep. Sometimes her voice is a little thin and fever-pitched, but then she's only eighteen and has lots of time to fill out and slow down. On sustained notes, however, she has a tendency to disappear vocally behind the drums.

In the song *Look at You*, she is delightful and styles herself in the sometimes-forgotten supper-club manner. I admire her for attempting this ballad in today's frenetic, sound-deafening, message-ridden world. (I hope in time to hear Miss Brittan apply her lovely talents to some old standards—I'd like to hear what she would do with Cole Porter lyrics, for example.)

The songs on this disc are all originals, with Marcia Hillman's name showing up consistently (on seven out of the eleven bands), mostly as a lyricist. She is evidently prolific and might well be only about eighteen herself, since she leans naively on repeating such phrases as "Look at him."

I'm Needing Your Love is an almost out-and-out copy of any product of the Burt Bacharach-Dionne Warwick school of current music. And from then on, we are stuck in that groove—a good one, though imitative. Since I like this album so much, perhaps I should say instead that Miss Brittan is "influenced" by a number of current popular artists.

Oddly enough, the title song, *Gentle Explosion*, ends the album. It is a sure bet to become popular. Very, very good listening here. More! More! R. R.

GLEN CAMPBELL: *Wichita Lineman*. Glen Campbell (vocals); orchestra. Al de Lory arr. and cond. *Wichita Lineman; The Dock of the Bay; If You Go Away; Ann; Words; Fate of M.M.; Dreams of the Everyday Housewife*; and four others. CAPITOL (S) ST 103 \$4.79.

Performance: Agreeable
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

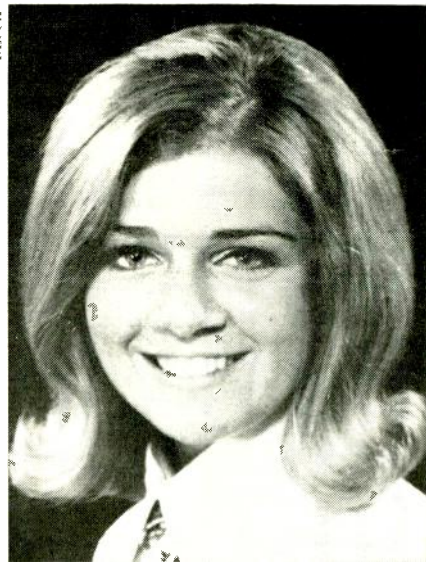
In the country-music landscape, no personality continues to come across as likably as Glen Campbell. Even the expensive sound of those big accompaniments on his records cannot corrupt his essential agreeableness and simplicity. Here he sings of a telephone lineman in Wichita who falls in love with a subscriber, of a lost boy from Georgia brooding on a San Francisco dock, of an old man reliving the past, of a fellow thinking of leaving his girl and letting her make her own

way so she'll appreciate what she had when he was around. All simple stuff, and much of it shamelessly sentimental, but Campbell makes these songs sound far more plausible and poignant than his competitors do. When he seeks to cope with the five-and-dime bathos of a father telling his kids he's getting a divorce, though, or that housewife's dreams, the results are simply embarrassing. And even the affecting innocence he tries to bring to it gets nowhere with Rod McKuen's translation of Jacques Brel's *If You Go Away*; the English lyrics are just too terrible.

P. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE CARAVANS: *The Caravans*. The Caravans (vocals with instrumental accompaniment). *Lord, Don't Leave Us Now; Jesus and Me; It Must Not Suffer Loss; A*



DECCA

JEANNIE BRITTAN

A disc debut that's very good listening

Place Like That; Amazing Grace; and five others. EVEREST (S) GS 61 \$5.79.

Performance: Non-commercial gospel
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Electronic only

Everest just doesn't have enough confidence in its reissue program. Despite the fact that the company has carefully avoided providing any specific information about this material, it's a pretty good collection. It dates from 1962-63 and was culled from two Vee Jay recordings, "Seek Ye the Lord" (5026) and "The Soul of the Caravans" (5038). (I am indebted to gospel expert Tony Heilbut for specifics.) Among the featured singers are some of the best of the many fine people who have worked in this influential gospel group—Cassietta George, Shirley Caesar, pianist James Herndon, and the group's leader, Albertina Walker. Gospel music has never had much impact outside the black community. Perhaps the growing interest in blues and "soul music" will now spill over to the religious singing which lies at the heart of so much black music. If the only gospel you've heard is from such relatively commercial groups as the Staple Singers and the Clara Ward Singers, you will be pleasantly surprised to hear how much better a group like the Caravans can really be. Try this one. D. H.

JUDY COLLINS: *Who Knows Where the Time Goes*. Judy Collins (vocals); orchestra. *Hello, Hooray; Story of Isaac; My Father; Someday Soon; First Boy I Loved; Pretty Polly*; and three others. ELEKTRA (S) EKS 74033 \$4.79.

Performance: Stylish
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Good

One nice thing about Miss Collins' albums: they always have a variety of pictures of her. Since she is an exceedingly good-looking woman, these, at least, provide me with a modicum of pleasure. (I will say that I have my doubts about the full-length shot of her on the back of this duofold album. In it she wears what looks to be a shower curtain with a hole torn in it for her head, is in her bare feet, and has adorned herself with a hat that suggests a mountain-style Garbo and a facial expression comparable to that of Stella Dallas at the gates of the mansion where her baby has gone after adoption.) Miss Collins' recordings, however, still continue to elude me: they just do not entertain me very much. She has a nice voice, sweet and reasonably musical. She not only seems to understand her lyrics, she seems to have parsed them, studied them, and tormented them for every last ounce of meaning. And finally, her material is usually among the best being written in the contemporary idiom. Then why don't I like her very much? For several reasons: her voice never really has the power to move me; in her efforts at severe simplicity she strikes me as often insincere; in her constant striving to keep up and be "in," she often seems superficial; in her absolute humorlessness she flirts with pretentiousness; and her aura of "sensitivity" has a commercial taint to it.

But if you like her you will like this album. It has a nice *Someday Soon* by Ian Tyson and a country-and-western-flavored *Bird on the Wire* by Leonard Cohen, and Miss Collins performs them both expertly and professionally. On the other hand, *Poor Immigrant* by Bob Dylan seems to me to draw into focus all of the reservations that I have about her work, and to a lesser extent so does *Pretty Polly*. A good album but, for me, not a satisfying one. P. R.

EDEN'S CHILDREN: *Sure Looks Real*. Eden's Children (Jim Sturman, Richard "Sham" Shamach, and Larry Kiely, Jr., vocals and instrumentals). *Sure Looks Real; Toasted; Spirit Call; Echoes; Call It Design*; and six others. ABC (S) ABCS 652 \$4.79.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Not bad. Not bad at all. Eden's Children, to their credit, are one of the few new groups around who seem to be trying for a sound that is authentically their own. As yet it still seems pretty much in the formative stage, but when they get close to a real style, as they do in the title song and in *The Clock's Imagination*, it comes out tough, raw rock with a real bite to it. There are stretches of formlessness in such things as *Toasted* or *Wings*, but at least it results from a failure to solve a problem and not from general aimlessness.

An interesting group to watch. P. R.

(Continued on page 126)

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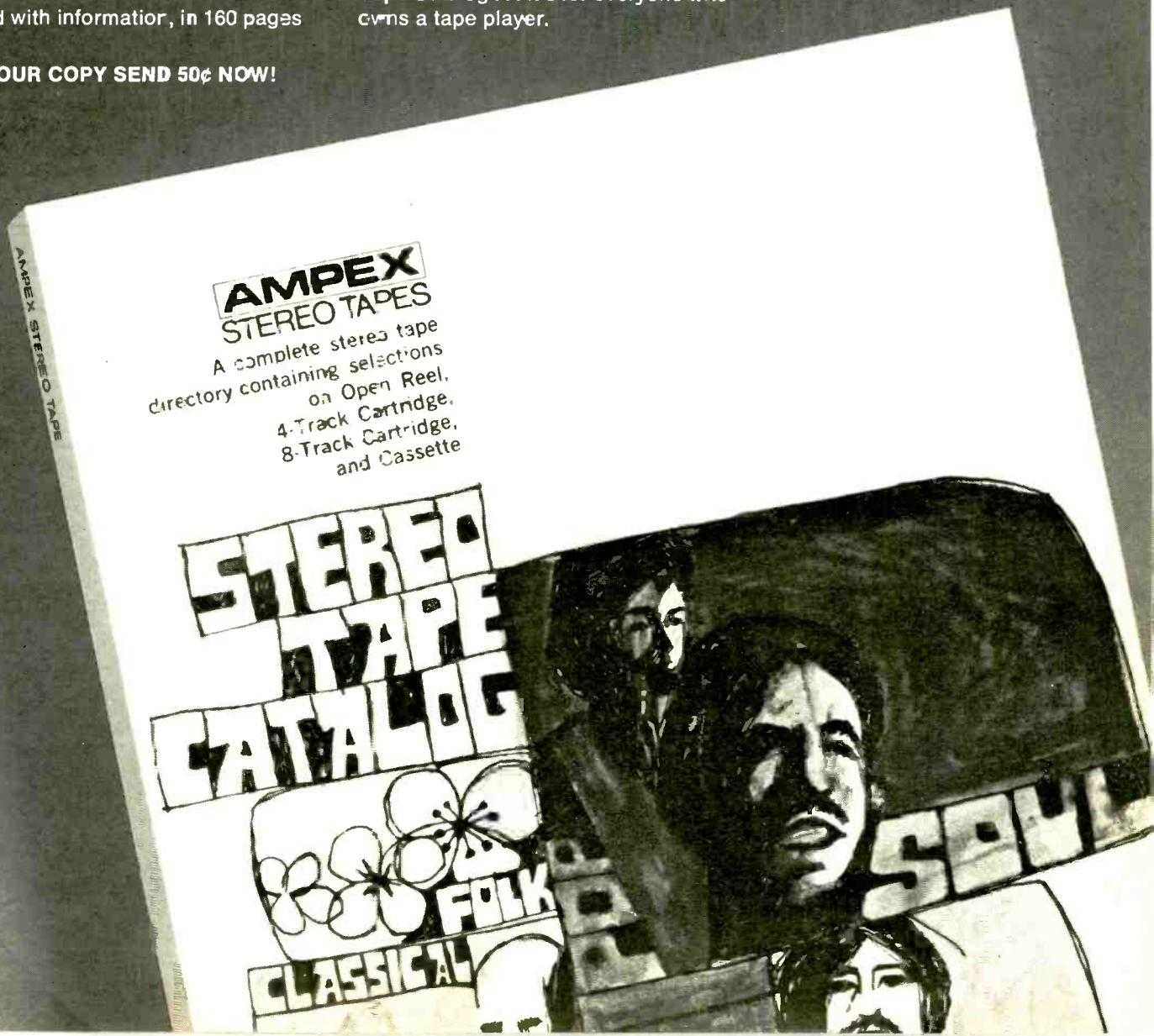
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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOSÉ FELICIANO: *Souled*. José Feliciano (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Younger Generation*; *And the Sun Will Shine*; *She's Too Good to Me*; *Hey! Baby*; *Hitchcock Railway*; *Hi-Heel Sneakers*; *The Sad Gypsy*; and four others. RCA Ⓢ LSP 4045 \$4.98.

Performance: **Fine**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

I think José Feliciano is the best new pop star to emerge since Diana Ross and her duo of vamps shimmered out of Motown. Feliciano has style, intensity, musicianship, excitement, and performing gutsiness. He is also one of those artists of truly broad appeal who already shows marked signs of staying power. His voice, unremarkable in itself, is handled with such sureness and such dexterity that it spans several listening age groups and communicates with an economical directness that one finds more and more rarely in pop music. If you have not heard him as yet, I suggest that this would be as good a starting place as any. Listen to the drive and energy he puts into something like *Hitchcock Railway*, or the teasing high spirits of *Hi-Heel Sneakers*. His performing style is a mixture of soul, blues, and an almost flamenco-like urgency. Feliciano is a totally musical singer, and this album is totally entertaining listening. Highly recommended for all. P. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

EYDIE GORMÉ: *Eydie*. Eydie Gormé (vocals); orchestra, Peter Matz, Marty Manning, and Pat Williams arrs. and conds. *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*; *It Had to Be You*; *You Can Have Him*; *I Should Care*; *What Am I Doing Here?*; *When You Gonna Learn?*; *Kiss Him Now*; *It's You Again*; and three others. RCA Ⓢ LSP 4093 \$4.98.

Performance: **Eydie flawless**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Eydie Gormé has been shining like a new flashlight lately, and I think it has something to do with her new recording contract at RCA. The Columbia discs she recorded in the past year all sounded like vinyl worn thin. It was quality stuff (which is the only thing I ever expect from Eydie), but it sounded like part of the heart was missing. Eydie sounded tired around the edges, and ultimately lackadaisical. Under her new contract with RCA, she has approval of all material, arrangers, packaging, publicity, the whole enchilada. And Eydie sounds once again like her former self on this "debut" album. It has been produced with unerring good taste, and Eydie sounds better, more relaxed, more on top of her material than she has sounded in a long time.

By the *Time I Get to Phoenix* and *This Girl's in Love with You* are wearing on my nerves, but Eydie injects new B-12 into their overworked blood cells. I like her inclusion of the seldom-sung verse to *It Had to Be You*. For schmaltz, there's *You Can Have Him*, another contender (along with *Chicago* and *Birth of the Blues*) for my list of songs I hope never to hear again. It's a real tribute to Eydie that I listened to it twice on this disc. *Black Dress* is infectiously amusing, as Eydie scoops up a high glissando line echoed

by violins, with a bass thumping its way to the front from behind her.

The best band on the album is a perky song from Richard Adler's score for *A Mother's Kisses*, an intended-for-Broadway show which closed in Baltimore. The song is called *When You Gonna Learn?*, and it once again demonstrates the Gormé ability to do everything right. She changes keys in the middle of a line, and she can still belt her way to the top notes as beautifully as ever.

Unfortunately, by the end of the second side I was beginning to feel that all of this jump and polish was sounding like a rehearsal for a three-week booking at the Copa. The great big band full of brass, both brazenly bare and softly muted, kept rebuilding the kind of crescendos that are the signature of the star leaving the stage only to be called back for one more encore. Eydie is singing better than ever, but the formula is



ENRICO MACIAS
A singer of overwhelming "aliveness"

too tried and true. I'd like to see her break wide open and run with her extraordinary gifts like a new colt. The freedom granted her by her new RCA contract provides the opportunity to try new things. She still warms the teacakes and sweetens the tea, though at times I suspect it's all done with artificial additives. R. R.

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE: *Electric Ladyland*. Jimi Hendrix Experience (vocals and instruments); with various other musicians. . . . *And the Gods Made Love*; *Crosstown Traffic*; *Voodoo Chile*; *Little Miss Strange*; *Long Hot Summer Night*; and eleven others. REPRISÉ Ⓢ 2RS 6307 two discs \$4.79 each.

Performance: **Tedious**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

Hendrix has chosen, presumably without malice aforethought, to make himself into a provocative visual performer rather than the creative musician that he might otherwise have become. O.K. All well and good. You can't blame a musician for becoming intoxicated by the heady fumes of success. I don't doubt that Hendrix paid plenty of unhappy dues in this country before he took the

English route to stardom. I only miss the musical achievement that constantly simmers beneath the surface of his wah-wah sounds, sonic distortion effects, and single-chord improvisations.

The problem with hearing Hendrix's recordings is that they reproduce only one aspect of his remarkable performances. And even that aspect—sound—cannot approach the sheer intensity of acoustical wattage that turns a Hendrix program into a virtual physical assault upon one's eardrums. The equally important visual element—Hendrix's rampant and sometimes humorous eroticism, his jiving of the audience, his destructive forays against his electrical equipment—is simply nonexistent on the recordings.

What we have here, therefore, is only one part of the Hendrix Experience. For my tastes it isn't enough. I would like to see Hendrix approach the recording art with the same sense of personal image that he brings to his "live" programs, but he hasn't managed to do it yet. The intermittent appearances of drummer Buddy Miles, organist Steve Winwood, bassist Jack Cassidy, and pianist Al Kooper add an all-star element to the proceedings, but their presence fails to minimize the tedium of too-long improvisations and songs that are too much alike.

D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ENRICO MACIAS. *Live at the Olympia*. Enrico Macias (vocals and guitar); orchestra, Jean Claudric cond. *Les Gens du nord*; *La Vie dans la vie*; *Prélude*; *Je t'aimerai pour deux*; *Quand on a un frère*; and eight others. MERCURY Ⓢ SR 61202 \$4.79.

Recording: **Excellent**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Okay**

Here is another opportunity to hear the formidably talented M. Enrico Macias as he breaks it up before a wildly enthusiastic audience at the Olympia in Paris. (If you, by the way, are as tired as I am of these "live at the Olympia" albums, then you may be pleased to know that I am now at work on an album of my own to be titled "Dead at the Marigny," which will feature me in a recitation of the Lizzie Borden-Ambrose Bierce correspondence with incidental music by Warden Lawes and a personal appearance in the lobby by the Mad Butcher of Düsseldorf.) It is certainly true, however, that one of the most engaging things about Macias as an artist is his overwhelming "aliveness." He has the audience securely in the palm of his hand here, and easily brings them to fever pitch with such things as his own *Les Gens du nord* (*The Northeners*) and the stirring Israeli ballad *Yerushalaim Shel Zahav* (*Jerusalem of Gold*). I hadn't noticed it before, but there is a touch of the old Jolson *brio* in Macias, and the rapport between him and his listeners, even on a recording, is quite tangible. An altogether excellent disc by a young man who cannot fail to become an important star. P. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '66: *Fool on the Hill*. Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66 (vocals); orchestra, Dave Grusin arr. and (Continued on page 128)

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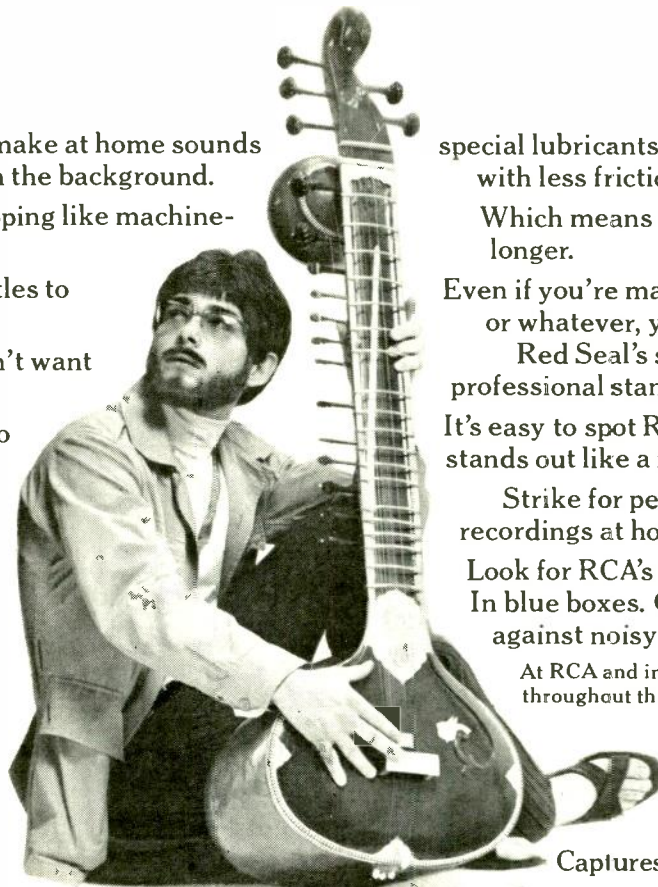
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cond. *Fool on the Hill*; *Festa*; *Casa Forte*; *Canto Triste*; *Upa*, *Neguinho*; and four others. A & M © SPX 4160 \$4.98.

Performance: **Magical**
Recording: **Outstanding**
Stereo Quality: **Intelligent**

This new album by Sergio Mendes & Brasil '66 is the best thing they have done so far, revealing them to be a contemporary equivalent of the Swingle Singers. And the engineering on this new A & M release, to jump the gun a bit, is so superlative that it will probably make even that little transistor job you bought for the beach sound like something at the audio show. Enumerating the excellences of this group is fairly simple: they have a sophisticated, modern, and lovely vocal sound; the vocal arrangements by Mendes are models of musicianship; the orchestra, arranged and conducted here by Dave Grusin, is as smooth and crystalline as a southern sea; most of the songs of Brazilian origin have been provided with intelligent and literate English lyrics by Lani Hall (a member of the group); and, finally, the group's professionalism is absolute.

Yet all that does not really explain their attraction. It lies, at least to me, in their ability to sustain mood. They sing a *Scarborough Fair* here that is a minor masterpiece of changing shapes, like clouds passing through the sky, and yet it retains an inner form that is both delicate and precise. The Lennon-McCartney *Fool on the Hill*, in their hands, becomes a poem of tones, textures, and impressionistic pastel blurs. Nowhere is their avoidance of the chiaroscuro approach put to better advantage than in their Brazilian repertoire. In such things as *Canto Triste* or *Festa*, they can weave subtle variations in phrasing, intonation, and musical ideas with the hypnotic skill of a magic spinning wheel.

As I have said, the album is superbly produced and engineered. Herb Alpert is listed as one of the engineers (along with Larry Levine and Henry Lewy), and lavish care seems to have been taken with every aspect of the sonic reproduction. The whole album reflects real taste and intelligence at work on modern pop music. Congratulations to everyone involved.

P. R.

THE STEVE MILLER BAND: *Sailor*. The Steve Miller Band (vocals and instrumental accompaniment). *Song for Our Ancestors*; *Dear Mary*; *My Friend*; *Living in the U.S.A.*; *Lucky Man*; and five others. CAPITOL © ST 2984 \$4.98.

Performance: **Fine start, but finishes last**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Song for Our Ancestors, the first band on this album, is so groovy I can't say enough about it. It's fantastic and should turn you on in a matter of seconds. The band creates the feeling of an old whaling port in which you can almost smell the salt in the air. Unfortunately, there is very little to be said for the remaining nine numbers. They are tuneless and monotonous, and the band's style is much too light and frivolous to perform blues. Vocally, the group is a conglomeration of voices too young for their material, instruments too underdeveloped for their charts, and noises too dissonant to listen to without pain. It all comes across as hopeless confusion. These days there is a new rock group

born every minute. There is such a sameness about them that they are spoiling the chances of survival for the few quality groups that do emerge. The Steve Miller Band does display interest on *Song for Our Ancestors*, but I can't recommend this album because of one song of merit when the remainder is made up of unlistenable losers.

R. R.

RANDY NEWMAN: *Randy Newman Creates Something New Under the Sun*. Randy Newman (vocals); orchestra. *Love Story*; *Bet No One Ever Hurt This Bad*; *Living Without You*; *So Long, Dad*; *I Think He's Hiding*; *Linda*; *Davy the Fat Boy*; and four others. REPRISE © RS 6286 \$4.98.

Performance: **Strange and intriguing**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Randy Newman is either an outrageous put-on or he is really that something new under



RANDY NEWMAN
Telling it like it is about today

the sun to which we should all pay very close attention. If you have the patience to listen to this album more than once, you may agree that he is not putting us on. It is a measure of Randy's talent that I once reviewed *Love Story* when performed by the Limelighters and made fun of it as a song. Yet here, with Newman singing his own creation, *Love Story* gets through to me. In retrospect, it was the Limelighters I was putting down, and deservedly, for they were not interpreting Newman to the best of his very considerable ability.

Since Randy wrote and arranged all the songs involved, there are many facets to examine. Let's take the heart of him first, his prose. No longer can we automatically call words set to music "lyrics." Words today are often no longer lyrical, but heavy with the weight of their message. Newman's are so heavy they become burdensome, but they carry weight, the weight of the toilsome world of tedium that has been the millstone inheritance of the young. Or a love story that bitingly mocks a couple's hopes that their son might be President, but only if things loosen up some. Or romantic nights watching the Late Show, and a Florida retirement community where folks play checkers until they pass away.

So Long, Dad is a masterpiece of disillusion, the downhill phase of a child's sentimental memories, and possibly, yours. In *Davy the Fat Boy*, we find a compassion that is rarely heard in today's crop of composers. In fact, the ability to tell a dramatic and sympathetic story is so distinct in this young man that I would sincerely like to learn that he has taken his talents into the theater. Musically he is reminiscent of Bernstein and Blitzstein. I suspect there is the making of another *West Side Story* in Randy Newman—only this time it won't have to be based on some old story by Shakespeare. He has the guts to tell it like it is about today.

R. R.

ROBERTHA: *La Voz del Amor*. Robertha (vocals); orchestra, Alfredo Marcelo Gil arr. and cond. *Amor no llores*; *Ayer y hoy*; *Aún*; *Mi verdad*; *Algo*; *Olvidate*; and five others. CAPITOL © ST 19000 \$4.98.

Performance: **Tearful**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

On the cover of this album, aside from several pictures of Robertha, who is a very pretty young girl, there is a drawing. It is about the same size as the album title, and it shows a large eye weeping two fat tears. After listening to several bands of the record I quite understand why. They should have packaged the album with a handkerchief. Obviously, although my Spanish is limited to an occasional "caramba" or "por favor," someone is giving Robertha a terrible time. At the end of band one, *Amor no llores*, she already sounds ready to throw in the towel, but she valiantly weeps and wails her way through ten more songs. She has one of those Spanish pop voices with a built-in sob and swoop that could make even *I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts* sound like *Gloomy Sunday*, but Latins seem to like it that way.

THE THREE RING CIRCUS: *Groovin' on the Sunshine*. The Three Ring Circus (vocals and instrumentals.) *So True*; *I Can't Be Trusted*; *Lovin' Machine*; *Fantastic Voyage*; *Give Me Tomorrow*; *Groovin' on the Sunshine*; and five others. RCA © LSP 4021 \$4.98.

Performance: **Fair**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

The Three Ring Circus is a new group with little new to offer. Mercifully it seems to lack the pretentiousness of many new groups, but it has a slick pre-packaged commercial approach which, I would suppose, is the contribution of the producers and arrangers, Robert Allen and Ray Ellis. The record is divided between vocals and instrumentals. On side one are the vocals, which are performed well but a trifle perfunctorily; the second side is devoted to instrumental versions of many of the same songs. The instrumental side is to be preferred: it is a highly competent job. However, I have more than a sneaking suspicion that the instrumentals are played by studio musicians brought in for the occasion. The title song is good enough, and *Lovin' Machine* has its moments in both its vocal and instrumental versions, but the album as a whole has all the spontaneity of a twice-defrosted TV dinner.

P. R.

(Continued on page 130)

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JAZZ



RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PAUL BLEY: *Mr. Joy*. Paul Bley (piano); Gary Peacock (bass); Billy Elgart (drums). *Only Lovely; Kid Dynamite; Nothing Ever Was, Anyway; El Cordobes*; and four others. LIMELIGHT © LS 86060 \$5.79.

Performance: **Fine contemporary jazz piano**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Paul Bley has had an unusual career. In the 1950's, he was the recipient of rare praise from Charles Mingus; in California he was the leader of a group that included Ornette Coleman—before Coleman became a controversial national figure; he has played, at important points in their careers, with Sonny Rollins, Don Ellis, Jimmy Giuffre, and a virtually endless list of important musicians. Throughout his career, the Bley musical personality has been a powerful, if elusive, force. His work with Giuffre, for example, was a critical element in the growth of a fragmented, pointillistic, highly original style of free improvisation.

Yet Bley rarely has made a really satisfying record of his own. The implication is that he is a better sideman than a leader, but I suspect that is much too hasty an evaluation. Two factors seem to have worked against him. First, Bley is very much his own man, and his recordings generally have been directly reflective of his musical viewpoints. Unfortunately, Bley has not always chosen to emphasize his best skills, staying too long with musical attitudes that are not his strongest suit, at the sacrifice of his musical trump cards.

Second, and this can hardly be blamed upon Bley, his great aesthetic discipline has been mistaken for emotional coldness—a shame, since so many of the observers who criticize Bley's "detachment" have been quick to accept Bill Evans' forays into sentimentalism as a more meaningful form of emotional expression.

Both these elements are at work here, producing a typically uneven set of performances. In addition, Bley has chosen to use six pieces by Annette Peacock as starting points for his improvisations. Some are good, others are not. Since Bley's performances have an interlocking of thematic and rhythmic material that makes the choice of opening theme particularly significant, his improvisations are hampered by inadequate opening melodies. Miss Peacock's lines have the virtue of a kind of naked musicality, but they can also be distractingly ingenuous.

These reservations aside, "Mr. Joy," in its best moments, is one of Bley's more intriguing outings. The assistance he receives from Gary Peacock (in particular) and Billy Elgart is sympathetic and—misunderstood word—reasonable. With the emphasis that lately has been placed upon hyperemotion-

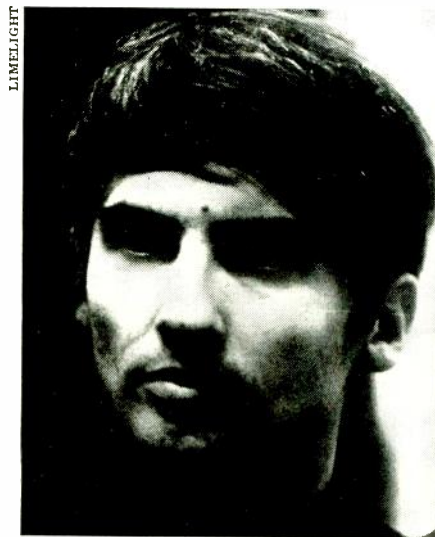
alism and aggressive indeterminacy, it's good to find that the avant garde still has room for technical control and aesthetic focus.

D. H.

WOODY HERMAN: *Concerto for Herd*. The Woody Herman Herd. *Concerto for Herd; Big Sur Echo; The Horn of the Fish; Woody's Boogaloo*. VERVE © V6 8764 \$5.79.

Performance: **The Thundering Herd "live"**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

Woody Herman continues to trudge along, adapting here, adding there, expanding and diluting new ideas as they enter the musical mainstream, and somehow managing to keep a youthful band together year after year. These tracks were recorded at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1967, and reveal a competent, if not particularly extraordinary, group of young musicians. The *pièce de résistance*



PAUL BLEY
Technical control and aesthetic focus

is Bill Holman's *Concerto for Herd*, an extended, three-part composition which is filled with the rolling counterpoint and crackling ensemble voicings characteristic of his best work. Holman is no giant, but he writes well in a style that has become one of the most utilitarian scoring methods for large jazz bands. I am less enthusiastic about the balance of the record. For all its cohesion and rhythmic mobility, this version of the Herd is a faceless unit that lacks the brilliant soloists and novel ensemble textures of past Herman groups. Woody's fans tend to be painfully loyal, so if you are one of the old-time Herd followers, you'll probably find something here that will grab you. But another Four Brothers band? Afraid not.

D. H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LEE KONITZ: *The Lee Konitz Duets*. Lee Konitz (alto, tenor, baritone, and Varitone saxes); with various musicians. *Struttin' with Some Banjo; You Don't Know What Love Is; Alone Together; Checkerboard*; and four others. MILESTONE © MSP 9013 \$4.79.

Performance: **Konitz—with a little help from his friends**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Excellent**

The idea here was to place saxophonist Lee Konitz in a series of challenging duet situations (with a few full ensembles added for contrast). A good idea, I would say, and one that succeeds more often than not. Especially fascinating is Konitz's reaction to the markedly different styles of his various partners—the cool contrapuntalism of Dick Katz and Jim Hall, Richie Kamuca's bouncing Lester Youngish lines, the two-beat boisterousness of Marshall Brown's trombone, the stunning rhythmic complexities of Elvin Jones and Eddie Gomez, Karl Birger's dazzling vibes, and the notably personal expressions of Ray Nance and Joe Henderson. Obviously, such a range of musical *provocateurs* can hardly be expected to produce consistently good results, and the quality—although generally high—varies accordingly.

Konitz has had an unusual career. Twenty years after he first worked with Lennie Tristano's experimental groups—twenty years that have included too many empty days—Konitz continues to be a dedicated improvisational artist who has rarely received the attention his artistry deserves. I suspect he is one of the prime victims of the fact that stylistic development in jazz has been determined by elements peculiar to the energies of black musicians. In any kind of objective definition, Konitz must be considered a brilliant improviser and a strong rhythmic player. But he always has been his own man, refusing to incorporate into his playing the blues licks, bent notes, and artificial mannerisms that so many lesser white players have adapted in their ride to success. To his credit, Konitz has chosen to be an artist rather than a popularizer, but I'm afraid his choice has denied him the economic fruits that have come to those who have assumed a musical coloration which is not necessarily their own. When jazz discovers that it can handle a wider array of influences and styles than it now does, players like Konitz will receive the recognition they deserve. In the meantime, don't overlook this well-crafted program from the horn of one of the fine creative artists of our time.

D. H.

MICHEL LEGRAND: *At Shelly's Manne-Hole*. Michel Legrand (piano); Ray Brown (bass); Shelly Manne (drums). *The Grand Brown Man; A Time for Love; Ray's Riff; Watch What Happens*; and four others. VERVE © V6 8760 \$5.79.

Performance: **Lively, entertainment-style jazz**
Recording: **Very good**
Stereo Quality: **Very good**

Summit meetings between major performing artists have a way of coming out like fallen soufflés. Individual egos which function just fine as soloists can become rather testy when confronted with equally independent personalities. It is a distinct pleasure, therefore, to report that the musical encounter between French pianist-composer Michel Legrand, drummer Shelly Manne, and bassist Ray Brown was a happy one. Legrand will never be a heavyweight jazz performer, but his good taste, stunning technique, and great affection for the music ring through every enthusiastic note he plays. Brown has rarely been heard to better advantage, even in his many outings with Oscar Peterson. He is given plenty of space to demonstrate how a creative bassist can slyly mold and shape the

(Continued on page 132)

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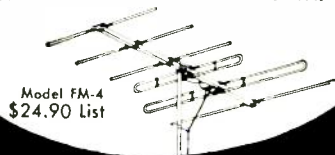
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form of an ensemble improvisation. Manne plays a self-effacing role, content to lay down a deceptively subtle underpinning for the sparkling interchanges between Legrand and Brown.

Understand, however, that I am not recommending this set as a landmark in jazz improvisation—far from it. I suspect it will be a popular record for much the same reasons that the Manne-André Previn collaboration of some years ago was a success: it is melodic, uncomplicated, and musically accessible. But Legrand is far superior to Previn, both in his firm rhythmic control and in his vastly more inventive improvisational ideas. *D. H.*

CARMEN McRAE: *The Sound of Silence* (see Best of the Month, page 87)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ARTIE SHAW: *Artie Shaw Re-Creates His Great '38 Band.* Artie Shaw and orchestra. *Traffic Jam; Begin the Beguine; Lover Come Back to Me; Zigeuner; What Is This Thing Called Love; It Had to Be You;* and six others. CAPITOL © ST 2992 \$4.79.

Performance: **Glorious**
Recording: **Just great**
Stereo Quality: **Sensational**

It's thirty years later and Artie Shaw has done it again! No, no, Virginia, not remarried Lana Turner, Ava Gardner, Doris Dowling, or Kathleen Winsor. Just played his fabulous clarinet again, and he is just as great as ever.

This incredible disc is a complete recreation, with the same arrangements, of numbers made famous by Shaw and his big band of 1938. The master assembled as many of the same musicians as possible, and when it wasn't possible, he got the best possible substitutes (Buddy Morrow on trombone in place of George Arus, for instance).

This thing really swings—it was meant to—just as Shaw and his big band did originally. Yet, if you had to listen to some of the 1938 Shaw recordings the music would probably drag a bit and seem slightly off and slow. Not here—this is as current as a yippie sassing a cop.

Every one of the numbers here is a classic gem. There are some near-perfect reproductions of original performances—A! Klink making us believe it's Tony Pastor doing the tenor solo, Don Lamond drumming instead of Buddy Rich. The collective ensemble playing is so perfect I doubt if it has ever been equalled.

Well, a rave is a rave is a rave. And for all of you who thought Artie Shaw was a relic of the Thirties and Forties, a balding ladies' man who writes occasional books and produces occasional films, just slap this on your turntable and remind yourself he was and is a unique musician.

One tiny little carp—the jacket interview never tells us who is interviewing Mr. Shaw, and it's annoying because whoever he is he isn't very good. I wouldn't really care, though, if they had printed the liner notes in Sanskrit, so long as Artie Shaw brought his Big Band sound of 1938 back to life. Now if he will only continue to revive and re-record some of those other great arrangements, I can twirl around my living room pretending I'm cutting in on Ann Miller indefinitely. *R. R.*



THEATER • FILMS

INTERLUDE (Georges Delerue). Original-soundtrack recording. Orchestra, Georges Delerue cond. Excerpts from symphonic works by Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, and Rachmaninoff. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Ernest Fleischmann cond. COLGEMS © COSO 5007 \$4.79.

Performance: **Teary**
Recording: **So-so**
Stereo Quality: **Undistinguished**

Interlude is the story of a glamorous young orchestra conductor (Oskar Werner) torn between his love for his elegant wife (Virginia Maskell) and for a winsome girl reporter (Barbara Ferris)—in short, a woman's picture. Since it's about an orchestra conductor, there is plenty of room between teary confrontations for music. The original interludes supplied by Georges Delerue for the soundtrack are delicate and charming, spun out with a deft Gallic winsomeness, neither sugary nor obtrusive. The excerpts from the various masterpieces out of the Romantic musical literature are something else again. Under Mr. Fleischmann's wavering baton, the finale from Beethoven's Fifth is more likely to empty a concert hall than to fill it with tumultuous applause. Although it's the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra playing, that exalted group has never sounded flabbier. The second movement from Tchaikovsky's perhaps deservedly neglected First Symphony emerges with a certain charm, and Dvořák's *Carnival Overture* is played with acceptable vigor if no particular distinction, but the excerpts from the symphonies of Brahms and Rachmaninoff sing with greater poignancy on almost any standard version in the catalog. If the limit of her musical attention span is about five minutes, however, these child-sized portions of the classics may be just the answer to some niece's musical needs. *P. K.*

MAGGIE FLYNN (Hugo Peretti-Luigi Creatore-George David Weiss). Original-cast recording. Shirley Jones, Jack Cassidy, others (vocals); orchestra, Woody Kessler cond. RCA © LSOD 2009 \$6.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Good**
Stereo Quality: **Good**

From the moment the orchestra begins to blare its way through the overture in a tempo that is strictly anachronistic Broadway, *Maggie Flynn* points up why the theater—in this case, the musical theater—is referred to as the Fabulous Invalid. For *Maggie Flynn* has fabulous flights of vocal fancy via its two talented stars, Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy, but deep within its corporeal self, it is suffering a terminal disease known as old age. Though the two stars sing the score at the top of their own personal exuberant scale (as if it were the

(Continued on page 134)

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opening night of *My Fair Lady*), their fervor's foundation is in good old-fashioned sentimentality. And sentimentality can only be carried on the wings of a great lyrical score—which, sad to note, is lacking here. The word "schmalz" is more like it.

It's marvelous that Hugo Peretti, Luigi Creatore, and George David Weiss have written an original musical in this day of constant adaptation and readaptation. Yet it is as if the creators took a large piece of tracing paper, placed it over a combination of *Oliver!* and *The Sound of Music*, and followed the pattern. Where those hits zigged and zagged, however, *Maggie* just squirms. As a result, it has all of the iron-bound tradition and none of the creative departures of the earlier hits.

Sorry about that, too, for Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy are simply wonderful. They have the big, big beautiful voices so suited to the theater, and what's more, they have good diction (do you hear that, all you modern mumblers, *diction!*). Cassidy's voice is so infectious that, even unseen, he makes you smile and warm to him. Miss Jones has the typical musical comedy voice (much like Barbara Cook's), and it just makes you flip to hear her.

Maggie Flynn is set in Civil War New York, and the possibilities were endless for musical exploitation, what with orphaned children, spies, Irish charm, ne'er-do-wells, clowns, the slavery issue, and protest songs all glooped over with romance. But what you get are mostly sticky sentimental pastiches and marching tunes. So unless you're the type who must own every Broadway show album, you can safely pass up *Maggie Flynn*.
R. R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MAN OF LA MANCHA (Dale Wasserman-Mitch Leigh-Joe Darion). London original-cast recording. Keith Michell, Joan Diener, Bernard Spear, Olive Gilbert, Alan Crofoot, others (vocals and dialogue). Orchestra and chorus, Mitch Leigh cond. DECCA (S) DXSA 7203 two discs \$11.58.

Performance: Soft-sell Cervantes
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Believable

Miguel de Cervantes' novel about the aging country gentleman Alonso Quijana, who goes forth into sixteenth-century Spain to right the world's wrongs under the impression that he is a dauntless knight named Don Quixote de la Mancha, has inspired enough plays, ballets, operas, and symphonic works to keep a whole Lincoln Center occupied for a season. Surely one of the most ingratiating of these adaptations is Dale Wasserman's musical *Man of La Mancha*, which has been delighting audiences all over the world since its New York opening in 1965. In this spectacular version of the old tale, the proceedings open in a Seville dungeon. Cervantes himself has been tossed into the place along with his faithful manservant: after failing as a playwright, poet, and actor, he has just botched up his latest career of tax-collector by demanding revenue from a monastery. To present his case to a "jury" of criminals and cutthroats, the author transforms himself into Don Quixote, his servant becomes his squire Sancho Panza, and the novel springs to life to the accompani-

(Continued on page 136)

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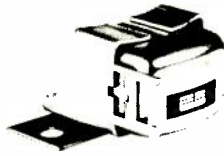
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ment of a tune-studded score, with ravishing costumes and magical staging as the hero's imagination transforms windmills into monsters, country inns into glittering castles, and the kitchen-maid Aldonza into the high-born, beautiful Dulcinea.

By this time, just about every able-bodied man in show business, from Hal Holbrook in New York to Jacques Brel in Paris, has tried his hand at the leading role, but for those who saw the original production in Greenwich Village with Richard Kiley as Cervantes-Quixote, they all seem so many impertinent imposters. Even so, the original-cast recording has always struck me as a bit too feverish, driving, and relentless. There is singing far beyond the usual Broadway standards by Robert Rounseville as the padre who tries to bring the bemused hero to his senses, by Ray Middleton as the exasperated innkeeper, and by Kiley himself, making the rafters ring with *The Impossible Dream*, *I, Don Quixote*, *The Golden Helmet*, and the other vigorous ballads of Mitch Leigh's generous supply. Musically, however, the pace never relaxes. Nothing seems to just happen—everybody's all keyed up putting a good thing over.

This new London-cast recording comes complete with the dialogue. With all our multi-media conditioning, listening to an entire play on records—even a musical, and even in stereo—strikes us like being set down before our TV sets blindfolded. And yet—and although so much of the show's appeal is visual—it works well in this case. Perhaps it's because the score for once is so appropriate, so linked to the action and the atmosphere, with its light seasoning of Spanish effects and the relevant lyrics Joe Darion has supplied, that it's far more effective when wedded to the book than when divorced from it. Albert Marre, who directed the London and New York productions and supervised both recordings, has rushed the dialogue a bit, particularly in the early episodes, but balancing this are the relaxed, genial performances by all concerned, from Keith Michell's Quixote to Bernard Spear's Sancho—a mellower, if less comic, portrayal than the one turned in on the Kapp label by Irving Jacobson, who sounds at times as though he has wandered in by mistake from *Fiddler on the Roof*. David King's innkeeper, Alan Crofoot's padre, and Peter Arne's Dr. Carrasco cannot compete vocally in musical terms with their opera-trained New York counterparts, but they make up for much with the wit and quiet skill of their British approaches to their respective roles. Even Joan Diener, who appears in all her glory as Aldonza-Dulcinea in both recordings, sounds relatively subdued and serene in the English production, in keeping with the prevailing climate. The vulgar "rape ballet" that cheapened the original, in which Aldonza is abducted by the muleteers, is omitted from this version. All in all, though the songs do not glow with anything like the fire that heats up the original-cast version on Kapp, this beautifully recorded set from Decca provides a satisfying evening's entertainment and a subtler sort of enjoyment. P. K.



SPOKEN WORD



RON CAREY: *The Slightly Irreverent Comedy of Ron Carey*. Ron Carey (comedian). RSVP © ES 8003 \$4.79.

Performance: **Church-supper humor**

Recording: **Good**

Stereo Quality: **Standard**

Ron Carey, after kicking around in various Greenwich Village night-clubs and finding his audiences sluggish and unresponsive, finally located his niche and a certain popularity as a humorist in, of all places, the Catholic Church. He is introduced as "the foremost Catholic comedian in the world," and the humor he projects nowadays, is, in more ways than one, parochial. His approach is irreverent and impudent, but at the same time guarded enough not to offend any but the most orthodox believers. Even when he is vending his "Petty-the-Priest Kit" containing a complete set of prayer beads, a plastic altar, and a chalice full of Koolaid, all for the bargain price of thirty pieces of silver, or describing an army-style Head Monk indoctrinating a parcel of "praying seventy-fives" just arrived at a monastery, he manages to deliver his jibes with a disarming air of innocence. Carey's impersonations of various priests, especially in Father Murphy's reading of announcements from the altar, have a ring of utter authenticity. His fans will also recognize that swinging disc jockey, Father Bop, as he reviews the liturgical "top ten" headed by a song called *Sinners in the Night*, and his late-night sermonette is as unctuous as any religious close-out to be seen on the tube. There are, alas, dull stretches, and many a joke all too entirely "in." You don't have to be Catholic to enjoy "The Slightly Irreverent Comedy of Ron Carey," but I imagine it helps! P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

T. S. ELIOT: *Murder in the Cathedral*. Paul Scofield, Cyril Cusack, Cathleen Nesbitt, Wendy Hiller, Alec McCowen, Patrick Magee (players); Howard Sackler, director. CAEDMON © TRS 330 two discs \$12.90.

Performance: **Unsurpassable**

Recording: **Outstanding**

Stereo Quality: **Realistic**

Of all T. S. Eliot's plays, *Murder in the Cathedral* is the most evidently poetic, and perhaps for that very reason the most profoundly satisfying. Here Eliot was not concerned with embedding contemporary speech into a poetic tissue, as he was in his two last plays. His business is much more open—the poetry sits naturally on the speakers, and the form of the play, half Christian pageant-ritual and half—most imaginatively—Greek tragedy, is perfect for Eliot's purpose, the revelation of a Christian hero. Eliot's love of iteration, his use of Greek chorus, even the dense yet simple-seeming poetic imagery

STEREO REVIEW

are all ideal for the play. Also, and this must never be forgotten, the play is wonderfully theatrical. The very story of Archbishop Thomas à Becket, contemplating martyrdom, finding salvation, and being struck down in his own cathedral, has its own powerful drama that is increased, as in Greek tragedy, by the audience's preknowledge of the ultimate outcome. It is a wonderful part for an actor, particularly for an actor used to the heroics of the classic theater.

In this Caedmon recording the Becket is one of the great actors of our time. Paul Scofield. So far as I am aware, Scofield has never played Becket in the theater, and this is clearly the theater's loss, for few actors have come to the role so splendidly equipped. To be honest, while it is a wonderful part, it is not a part usually very wonderfully played. The actor is easily lured into churchlike tones and such smug piety that, all too often, one misses the man under the golden robes of the saint. Scofield makes no such mistake. Whether facing temptation or death, his humanity—and this is his view of the tragedy—is always paramount. It is as a man that he faces his tragic destiny. Scofield's voice is an instrument not so much beautiful—for there is much of harshness there—but rich, and here it seems to capture every nuance of character.

Scofield is remarkable enough, but Caedmon has here gathered together a most remarkable cast that is strong throughout. The empters, beautifully contrasted and vividly realized, are played by no less than Alec McCowen, Patrick Magee, Geoffrey Dunn, and Anthony Nicholls. Others in the cast include Cyril Cusack, Harry Andrews, Cathleen Nesbitt, and Wendy Hiller. And the actors not mentioned in this list are as good as those who are.

The director, Howard Sackler, is probably our most experienced with plays for recordings, and he knows exquisitely how to counterbalance voices and how to conceive a play when there are no visual aids to comprehension. Also, over the years, Mr. Sackler has become a master at evoking atmosphere, and here he really captures (much helped by the recording engineers) the sound, even the feel and the smell, of a medieval English cathedral.

By any reckoning you care to make this is an outstanding recording. I warmly recommend it.

C. B.

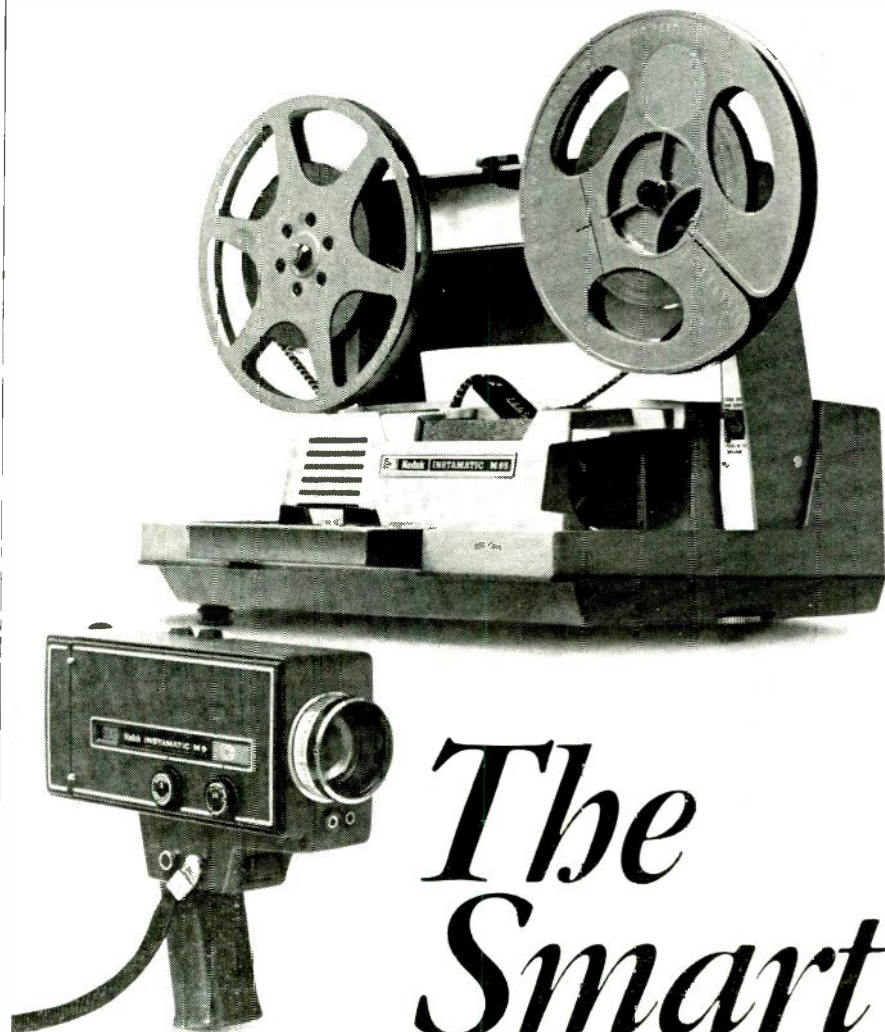
W. C. FIELDS: Original voice tracks from his movies (see Best of the Month, page 86)

RUDYARD KIPLING: *Just So Stories*. Sterling Holloway (narrator). *The Cat that Walked by Himself*; *The Elephant's Child*; others. DISNEYLAND (M) ST 3950 \$3.79.

Performance: Good
Recording: Excellent

Presumably like most parents, I tend to judge children's records not by *their* standards but rather by my own. Here we have a typical Disneyesque treatment of some of Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*, camped up with cinematic-style music by Camarata, read in a rather smart-alecky way by Sterling Holloway, and plumped down in an illustrative booklet that clearly owes a lot more to Disney than to Kipling. And yet my kids loved it. There is no accounting for tastes—especially children's tastes.

C. B.



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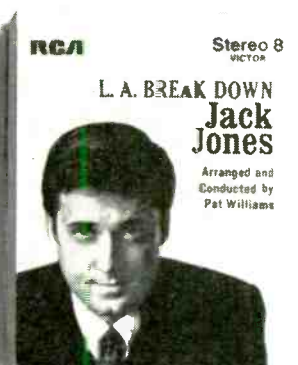
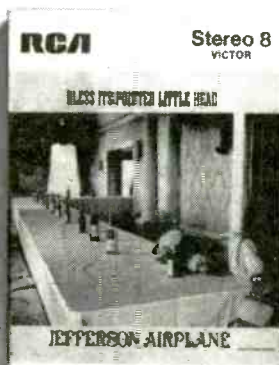
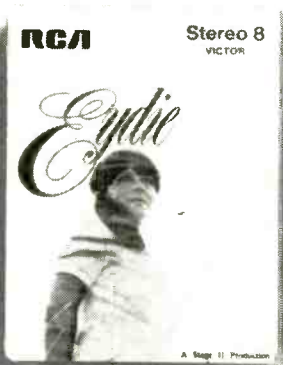
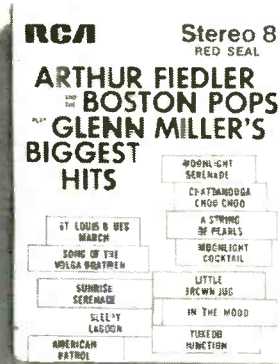
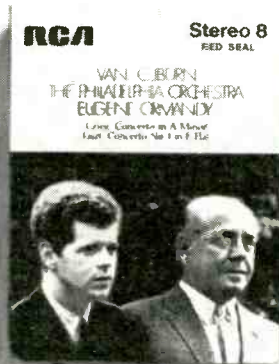
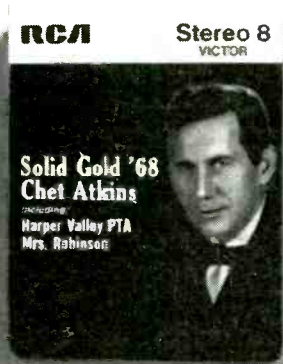
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STEREO TAPE

Reviewed by WILLIAM FLANAGAN • DAVID HALL
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BACH: *Prelude and Fugue, in G Major (BWV 550); Toccata and Fugue, in F Major (BWV 540); Prelude and Fugue, in D Minor (BWV 554); Prelude and Fugue, in A Minor (BWV 543); Fantasia and Fugue, in A Minor (BWV 561); Prelude and Fugue, in B-flat Major (BWV 560).* Maurice and Marie-Madeleine Duruffé (organ). ANGEL Ⓢ Y1S 36507 \$7.98.

Performance: **Romantic**
Recording: **Not good enough**
Stereo Quality: **Murky**
Speed and Playing Time: **3¾ ips; 47'51"**

M. and Mme. Duruffé are not a two-key-board team but soloists in their own right. One side goes to the missus, the other to her more famous husband; both are played on the organ of Soissons Cathedral. My *Guide Bleu* tells me that this thirteenth-century edifice is one of the masterpieces of early Gothic architecture; my ears tell me that its organ is a massive blow-hard of late nineteenth-century origin. Historical purism aside, the test of an organ like this (and, even more to the point, of a recording of an organ like this) is quite simple: how much of what is going on can you actually hear. The answer here is something like fifty per cent—never more than seventy-five per cent and sometimes as little as twenty-five per cent or thirty per cent; the rest is simply lost in the Gothic murk. Not good enough. Cathedral atmosphere is nice, but Bach is nicer. I'm not sure that I altogether care for what I can make out of the playing—it all seems very rub-a-dub, work-a-day; in any case the organ and the acoustics rule this one out long before one arrives at the questions of performance and interpretation. E. S.

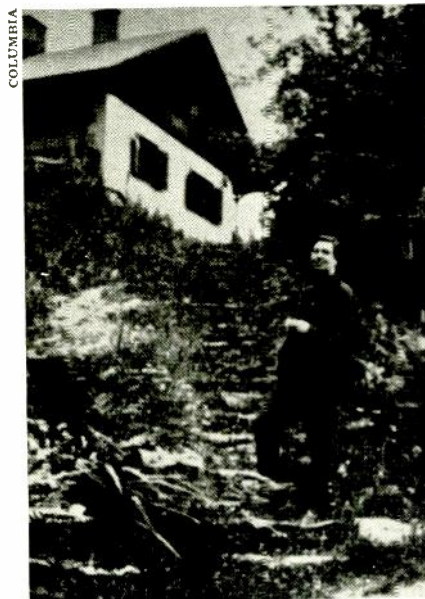
BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concertos: No. 1, in C Major, Op. 15; No. 3, in C Minor, Op. 37.* Artur Rubinstein (piano); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf cond. RCA Ⓢ TR3 5038 \$10.95.

Performance: **Fluent**
Recording: **Solid**
Stereo Quality: **Good**
Speed and Playing Time: **3¾ ips; 71'56"**

Only the Second Concerto is now needed to complete Artur Rubinstein's four-track tape traversal of the five Beethoven piano concertos with Leinsdorf and the Boston Symphony. Unless the Harrison catalog of stereo tapes has misprinted the information, Leon

Fleisher and George Szell with the Cleveland Orchestra offer all five on two 3¾-ips reels at \$17.39. Otherwise, Mr. Rubinstein has no other 3¾-ips tape competition, though performances of Nos. 1 and 3 by such renowned Beethovenists as Backhaus and Serkin can be had in 7½-ips format.

Rubinstein's way with Beethoven is that of the intensely musical and thoroughly seasoned non-specialist. He does not linger over the slow movements, and he tends to favor slightly slower pacing of the opening movements, chiefly in the interest of lyrical detail. Piano-orchestra balance is excellent through-



A photograph of Alban Berg (1933) in front of the Waldhaus where he composed *Lulu*

out both sequences of the RCA tape, with the microphoning tending to be from the vantage point of the conductor's podium rather than that of, say, a first-row balcony seat. D. H.

BERG: *Lulu.* Anneliese Rothenberger (soprano), Lulu; Gerhard Unger (tenor), Alwa; Toni Blankenheim (baritone), Dr. Schön; Erwin Wohlfahrt (tenor), the Painter; Kerstin Meyer (mezzo-soprano), Countess Geschwitz; Kim Borg (bass), Schigolch; Maria von Ilosvay (contralto), Schoolboy and Theater Dresser; Benno Kusche (bass), Animal Trainer and Rodrigo, an Acrobat. Hamburg State Opera Orchestra, Leopold Ludwig cond. ANGEL Ⓢ Y3S 3726 \$17.95.

Performance: **Lackluster**
Recording: **Good, with bad moments**
Stereo Quality: **Mannered**
Speed and Playing Time: **3¾ ips; 127'48"**

Some years back, the American composer George Perle disabused us all, with a scrupulous documentation reported in this magazine, of the notion that Alban Berg's *Lulu* was incomplete (the Masterpiece-Interrupted-by-Death syndrome). Because of a hung-up widow who refuses its release, and the minimal orchestrational job left to be realized in Act III, we are to be denied access to the full score of what is very probably Berg's masterpiece until the all-but-criminal restraints are removed.

I write "all-but-criminal" advisedly, because this century's more recent decades have produced a frightening dearth of significant opera. That we should be denied access to an authentic version of what may be its best and most influential opera is unthinkable, for the influence of Berg's operas (*Wozzeck* of course, is the other) is being felt in the international operatic theater: the Back-to-Berg movement is in strong current evidence. With the ebbing of post-Webernite power, composers such as Ginastera have enjoyed remarkable public success by working from Berg's example: the use of twelve-tone, tonal, and diverse musical techniques to suit the theatrical moment and (what is more important) to provide the contrast and variety of musical method that opera so demands. Ginastera and even the American Samuel Barber have both recently turned to Bergian structural continuity—the episodic unfolding of the libretto in short scenes held together by an unbroken orchestral fabric in the form of inter-scene interludes cast in various forms. (In Barber's case the results were uniquely unsuccessful.)

If I stress the reconciliation of what once would have been regarded as opposites, it is because Berg for too long has been regarded as low man on the twelve-tone totem pole, although it now appears that he alone envisioned the less rigid but very real contribution Schoenberg's innovations would make to the musical mainstream. For this is a key to the genuinely contemporary opera with which not only Berg and Ginastera but, in a freer way, the young German Hans Werner Henze and the American Jack Beeson have had public success.

That Berg remains the champion in reconciling these diverse techniques, *Wozzeck* will tell you. That his was also a musical "direction" with a far longer-reaching future is strongly suggested by the assaulting power of *Lulu*, *Lulu*, even in what Eric Salzman describes as its "stop-gap" version, is an aural experience so overpowering that, even with coffee breaks, I found myself literally shaky as I crossed the room to push the stop-button after its final sound. In the best sense of the phrase, the piece is simply "too

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much." The unabating lyric passion of the opera, the commanding—even hypnotic—richness of musical detail, provide the rare experience of encountering a work in *this* century from *this* particular school whose demonic complexities are not born of exhibitionism but of musical "rightness." More than any listening experience I've had in ages, *Lulu* proves my contention that complexity of even the most outrageous extreme is simply a form of clarity in the work of a composer whose musical identity can be established in no other way. What is scope and command in such a composer is merely pretentiousness in another who, consciously or otherwise, affects complexity because it is *à la mode* or who believes (wrongly) that all music worth writing must reach for "greatness" and that all really "great" music is by definition enormously complicated.

Claiming no authority on the performance style of music of this school (but with a vocal score in hand), I admit openly to having consulted Eric Salzman's evaluation of the performance in its original disc release for guidance in the formation of my own. But I heard no evidence to support his dismissal of the performance as "utterly inadequate in virtually every way." And I will concede a personal frustration owing to his omission of amplifying reasons for his statement, because I quite frankly value his opinion of performance in this area. Although Angel's *Lulu* is clearly no match for DGG's recent version, nor even for the old Columbia version, the raw power and urgency of the work emerge even here—granting that it would take a man both blind (to the score) and deaf to the recorded discrepancies, shortcomings, and comparative "apathy" (a word I prefer to Salzman's "mediocrity") to believe it a complete success. The recorded sound strikes me as vivid and live if unfocused at times: the stereo treatment is a bit exhibitionistic. W. F.

COLLECTIONS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

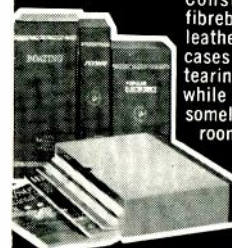
JULIAN BREAM: *Julian Bream and His Friends; The Golden Age of English Lute Music.* **Boccherini:** *Quintet in E Minor.* **Boccherini-Bream:** *Introduction and Fandango.* **Haydn:** *Quartet in E Major, Op. 2, No. 2.* **R. Johnson:** *Two Almains; Carman's Whistle.* **J. Johnson:** *Fantasia.* **Cutting:** *Walsingham; Almains; Greensleeves.* **Dowland:** *Mignard; Galliard upon a Galliard of Daniel Bachelar; Butell Galliard.* **Rosseter:** *Galliard.* Five others. Julian Bream (guitar and lute); George Malcolm (harp-sichord); Cremona String Quartet. RCA © TR3 5037 \$10.95.

Performance: **Breamish**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Superior**
Speed and Playing Time: **3 3/4 ips; 82'79"**

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay! Here is a pair of albums on a single tape that can only be described as Breamish—which means, of course, peerless. Only a churlish fellow would complain about an inaccurate label that omits mention of two of the lute pieces. Or about a piece for guitar and harp-sichord attributed to Boccherini on the rather slim basis that it is based on a Boccherini tune (it is really "composed," not just "arranged," by Bream). Or about playing one of Haydn's

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STEREO REVIEW

early "symphonies or quartets" for bowed strings with the guitar taking the first violin part (and, if I am not mistaken, with one minuet omitted). Such practices were not unknown in the eighteenth century, and the test of their worth is always how they come out. For me, if it's by Bream I'll buy it.

The eighteenth-century side is the guitar side. Even more delicious are the Elizabethan lute tracks on the reverse. The lute recordings are very high-level and close; otherwise this is excellent sound well-captured in the 3 3/4-ips speed. E. S.

ENTERTAINMENT

HARRY BELAFONTE: *Sings the Blues; Sings of Love.* Harry Belafonte (vocals); orchestra, various cond. *A Fool for You; Losing Hand; One for My Baby; In the Evenin', Mamma; Hallelujah, I Love Her So; The Way That I Feel; Cotton Fields; God Bless the Child; May Ann; Sinner's Prayer; Fare Thee Well; By the Time I Get to Phoenix; Annie-Love;* and nine others. RCA (S) TP3 5063 \$9.95.

Performance: **Lithe** and leisurely
Recording: **Superb**
Stereo Quality: **Proper**
Speed and Playing Time: **3 3/4 ips; 80'**

Belafonte—the very sound of whose name is enough to make the palest maidens, as it were, change color—regards the blues as "the area . . . with which I have the closest identification." Confronted with a chance to sing the blues, he says, "I can just step out



HARRY BELAFONTE
Singing the way he feels

and sing wholly the way I feel." He gets plenty of opportunity on this tape, and that easy, velvety voice certainly sounds at home sailing sensuously through eleven items that cover blues in the mornin', blues in the evenin', blues over holding "a losing hand," and even blues contracted picking cotton ("When the cotton fields are rotten, you can't pick very much cotton"). The slow pace favored by the singer is entirely appropriate to this program, and every word

and no'e are infused with the kind of intelligence and grace that have helped to sustain his fame. On the other hand, in the second sequence, "Belafonte Sings of Love," this listener for one wished the man would rev up that dogged beat once in a while. It takes him two minutes and forty-six seconds to get to Phoenix in *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*, but it sounded more like a week to these weary ears. Once only, for a not entirely memorable item called *In the Name of Love*, things liven up a bit. Through the rest of the sequence you're liable to be tempted to switch from 3 3/4 to 7 1/2 ips just to break out of the gloomy pace Belafonte sets for almost everything he sings here, from ballads about late-sleeping ladies to *The First Day of Forever*—which at times I thought it was getting to be. P. K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE: *After Bathing at Baxter's; Crown of Creation.* Jefferson Airplane (vocals and instrumentals). *Street-Scene; The War Is Over; How Suite It Is; Schizoforest Love Suite; Lather; In Time; If You Feel;* and nine others. RCA (S) TP3 5060 \$9.95.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**
Stereo Quality: **Good**
Speed and Playing Time: **3 3/4 ips; 77'58"**

This new double tape contains the last two albums by the Jefferson Airplane. There is an enormous amount of music, and most of it is on a very high level. The Airplane

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is probably the best rock group in America; it is inventive, adventurous, and fun to listen to. I did have reservations about the "After Bathing at Baxter's" album when it first appeared, but on subsequent listenings it proved a lot more solid than I had first thought. In "Crown of Creation" I like the Airplane best; it is impertinent, amusing, and not too cerebral. I don't think it is necessary to go on at great length in print about what this group is doing. If you listen to this tape you will find that they are getting across what they have to say very well all by themselves. P. R.

LOU RAWLS, MAXINE BROWN, THE RAMSEY LEWIS TRIO: *Central Park Music Festival*. Lou Rawls, Maxine Brown, (vocals); Ramsey Lewis (piano); various other musicians. *On Broadway*; *Love Is a Hustin' Thing*; *In the Midnight Hour*; *Hang On, Sloopy*; and five others. MUSIC IMAGES © YIT 2933 \$7.98.

Performance: Lightweight music in the Park
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Good
Speed and Playing Time: 3¾ ips; 40'37"

Central Park in New York City has been filled with so much music and activity in the past few summers that it is easy to forget that only a few years ago most Manhattanites were fearful of entering the park, even in the benign glare of a hot Sunday afternoon. Much of the relaxation in tension can be attributed to events like the various Central Park music and theater festivals, of which the mixed bag of tracks here is typical.

Since the audiences are large and heterogeneous, the music is often relatively superficial, but entertaining. Lou Rawls, Maxine Brown, and Ramsey Lewis are not exactly part of what one might call the "art" category of popular music (if such a categorization isn't a contradiction in terms), as the gutsy audience response soon makes evident. For my tastes, Lewis' repetitious ostinatos quickly become dull, and Miss Brown's stridency injures her otherwise attractive interpretations. Rawls, however, is a gifted entertainer who is usually worth hearing. *Don H.*

SPIRIT: *Spirit*. Spirit (vocals and instrumentals). *Fresh Garbage*; *Uncle Jack*; *Mechanical World*; *Taurus*; *Girl in Your Eye*; *Straight Arrow*; and six others. ODE © ZQ 1041 \$7.95.

Performance: Pleasant jazz-rock group
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Very good
Speed and Playing Time: 7½ ips; 43'56"

Spirit treads carefully along the line separating jazz and rock, leaning at times to one side, at times to the other. The result is a kind of performance schizophrenia, with some pieces starting as rock music, moving abruptly to jazz improvisation, and then switching back to rock again. Now, there is nothing wrong with mixing jazz and rock, since the group is good enough to handle both musical styles well, but I would be happier if there had been a better job of integration. Regardless, Spirit will at the very least entertain you, and in its better moments is capable of producing exceedingly pleasant music. Be sure to listen, by the way, for the fine drumming provided by one of the older generation of rock players—a be-bopper named Cassidy. *Don H.*

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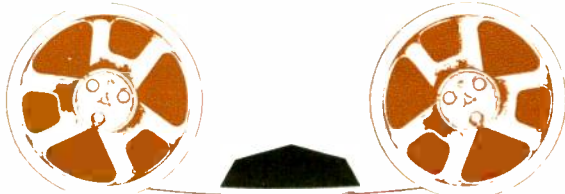
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STEREO REVIEW



TAPE HORIZONS

By DRUMMOND McINNIS

ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITIES

THE MORAL of this month's tape story is this: if you wish afterwards that you *had* recorded something, chances are good that you *could* have—if you had prepared in advance to make it part of an effortless routine. For example, I failed to record the hours of dramatic on-the-spot radio reporting when Hurricane Diane devastated the New England coast line a few years ago. I became so engrossed while listening to the broadcast reports that I just didn't stop to think that here was history in the making—and certainly worth preserving on tape.

In the same vein, I also failed to have my recorder going during the live broadcast of the Brahms Second Piano Concerto when Rudolf Serkin broke the pedal with his vigorous playing of the ending of the first movement. They led on a blind piano tuner who happened to be backstage and guided him under the piano; he repaired the pedal while Serkin and the Boston Orchestra waited to start the most inspired performance of the second movement that I have ever heard. Again I was engrossed in listening, and my recorder was sitting silently on the shelf, pilot light out, the reels unmoving, missing music history in the making.

And then there was the time I failed to record the memorable broadcast of the duet performance of Ravi Shankar and Yehudi Menuhin at the United Nations. The reason was the same, of course. One day, as a chiding reminder to myself, I may buy a dozen or so empty tape boxes and label them with the events and performances I missed. With a little non-effort, I could probably build up over the years an enormous collection of non-recordings of once-in-a-lifetime events.

After many disappointments like these, I looked for a technique to prevent more of them—and found it.

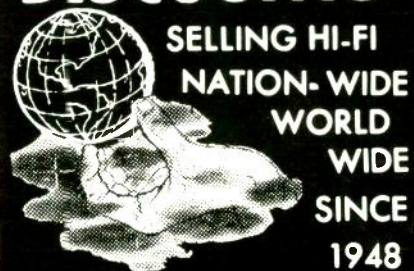
1. I now record from TV or FM or AM anything that I *really* want to hear or see on a one-time basis. When in doubt about whether I should, I record it anyway. The program I am recording on tape may possibly never be played back. After all, if I don't want it, I can always erase the tape and use it again.

2. I always keep a fresh reel loaded on the recorder, so that starting a recording is just a couple of routine operations added to whatever is needed to get the program coming in.

The only catch is how to keep the recorder ready to pick up TV audio without all the technical (and safety) problems of hooking into the TV wiring. I solved the difficulty myself by using a portable radio that picks up TV sound. The one I use is Olson Electronics' Model RA-116, and it picks up FM and police broadcasts in addition to TV. It costs \$79.98, but a cheaper version, without the police band (RA-23) is available for \$39.98.

Since I started my private "be-prepared" campaign, I've missed very few opportunities for recordings of history being made. The flight of Apollo 8, for instance, is now securely tucked away in my collection. The "keepers" that materialize from my project of promiscuous and effortless recording may average less than one out of twenty, but these recordings will one day be among the most prized possessions in my tape library.

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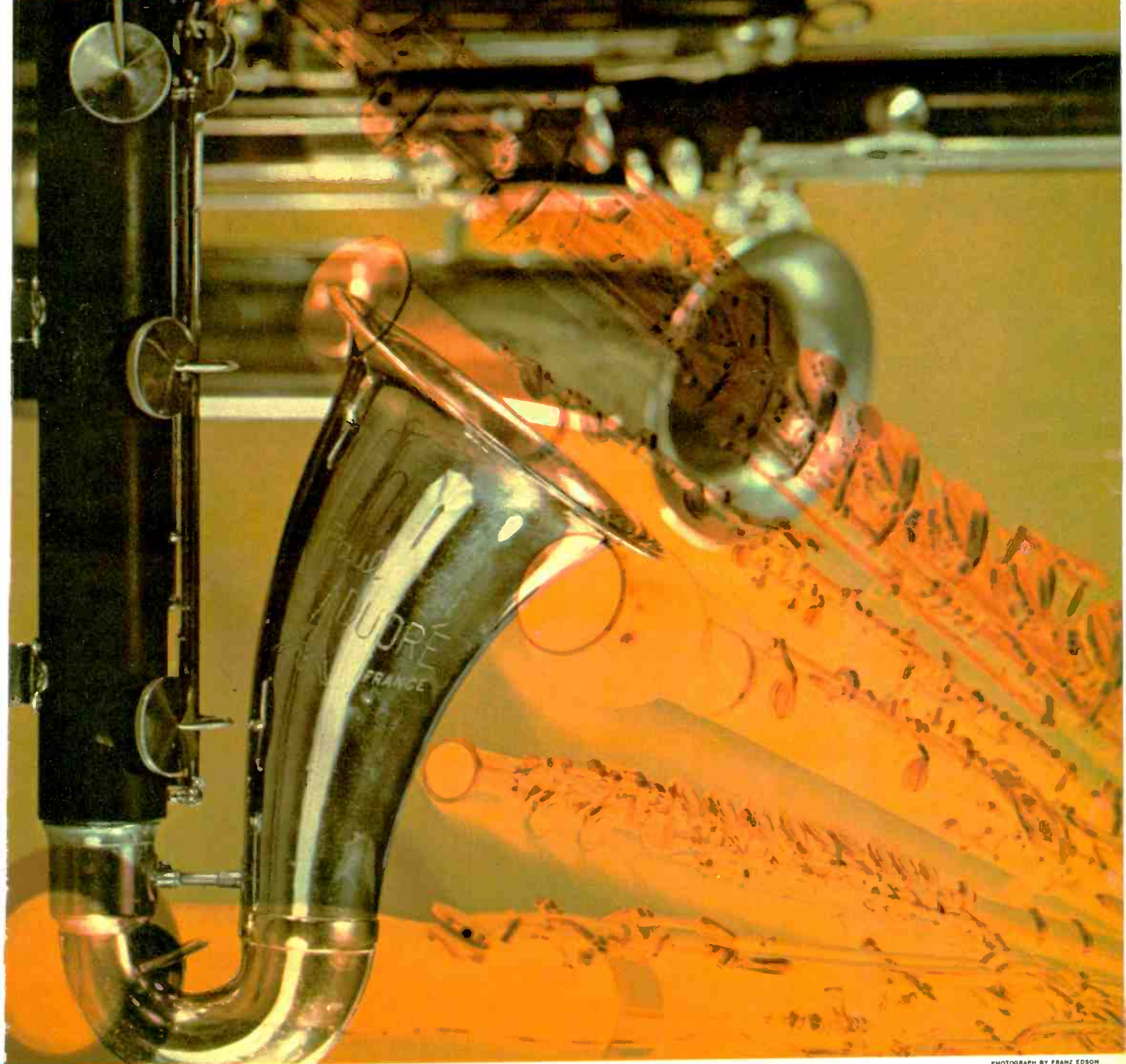
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PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ EDSON

Words are inherently limited in stimulating the emotions aroused by music. This is especially so in describing how high fidelity components perform.

With cartridges, for example, we speak of flat frequency response, high compliance, low mass, stereo separation. Words like these enlighten the technically minded. But they do little or nothing for those who seek only the sheer pleasure of listening.

We kept both aspects in mind when developing the XV-15 series of cartridges. We made the technical measurements. And we listened.

We listened especially for the ability of these cartridges to reproduce the entire range

of every instrument. With no loss of power. In the case of woodwinds, this meant a cartridge that could recreate the exact nuances that distinguish an oboe from an English horn. A clarinet from a bass clarinet. A bassoon in its lower register from a contrabassoon in its higher register.

We call this achievement "100% woodwind power."

When you play your records with an XV-15, you won't be concerned with even that simple phrase.

Instead, you'll just feel and enjoy the renewed experience of what high fidelity is really all about.

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THE NEW PICKERING XV-15/750E. PREMIER MODEL OF THE XV-15 SERIES. TRACKS AT 1/2 TO 1 GRAM. DYNAMIC COUPLING FACTOR OF 750 FOR USE IN FINEST TONEARMS. \$60.00. OTHER XV-15 CARTRIDGES FROM \$29.95. PICKERING & CO., PLAINVIEW, L.I., N.Y.

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The introduction of the new E-V FOUR•A is a case in point. These key dealers remained skeptical until they could hear the system. They compared it exhaustively against earlier "standards". They judged the E-V FOUR•A on the basis of their own ultimate criteria for good sound.

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number of speakers in the E-V FOUR•A (one 12", one 6" and one 2½"). Nor were they particularly swayed by the news that this was the first system to be designed with the extensive aid of a computer.

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