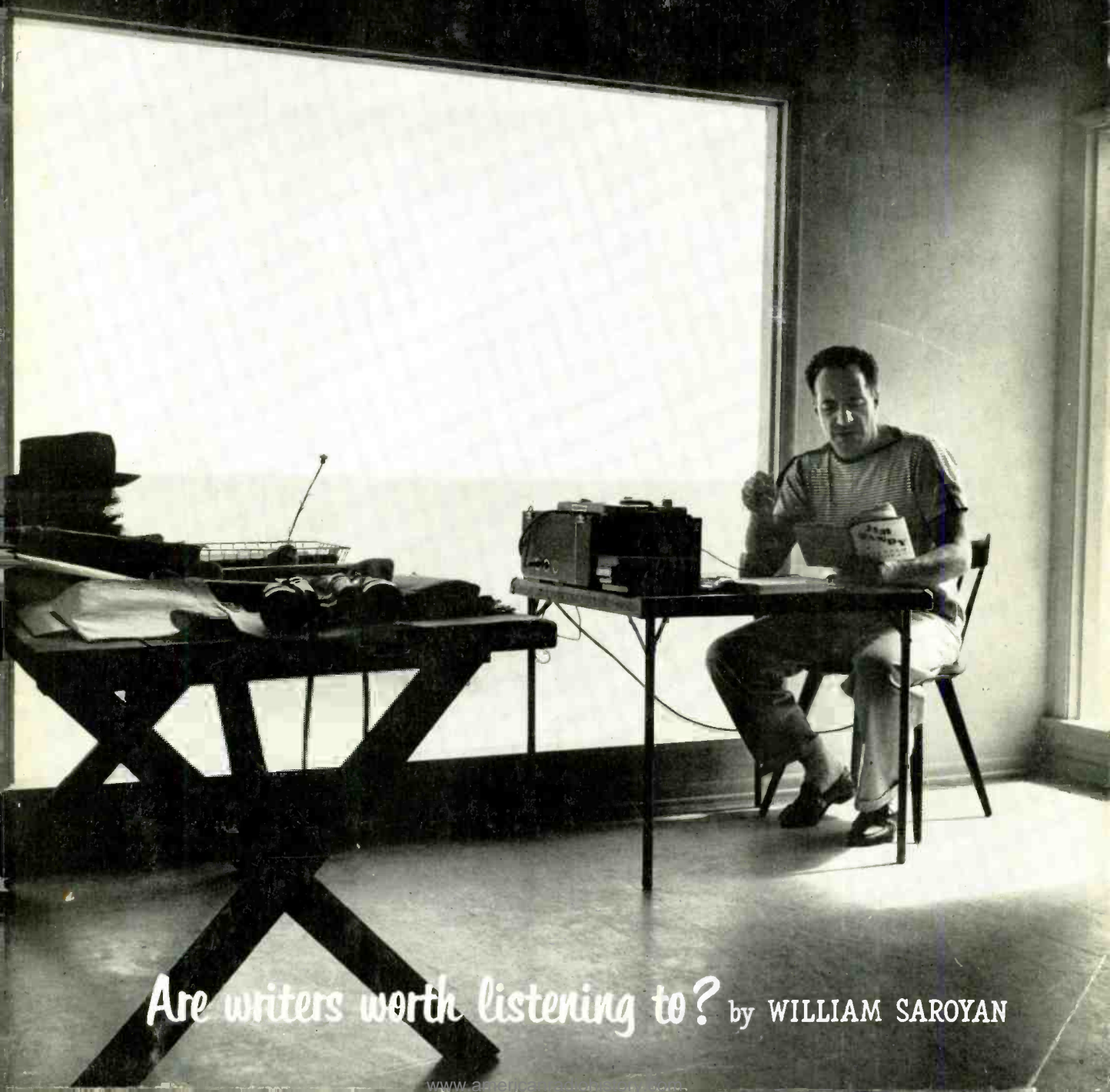


High Fidelity

JANUARY • THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS • 50 CENTS



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that's **7-WAYS** *★* **BETTER** than ever!

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Imperial



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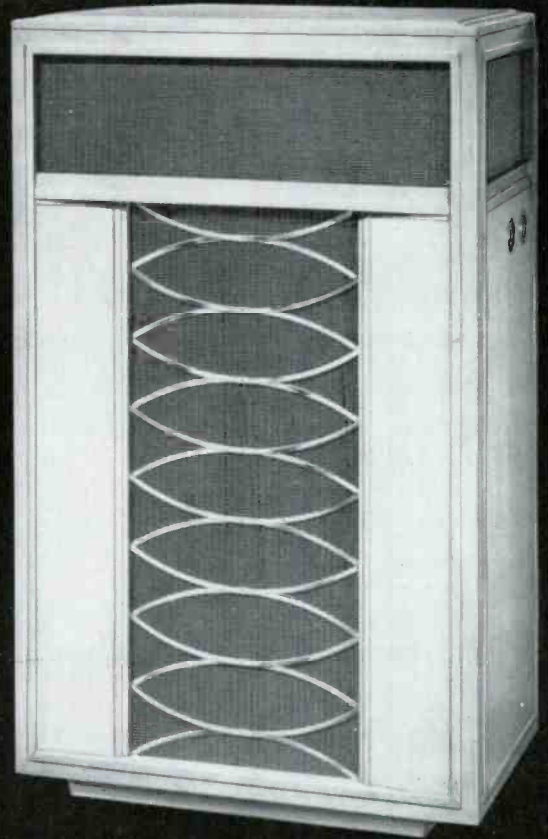
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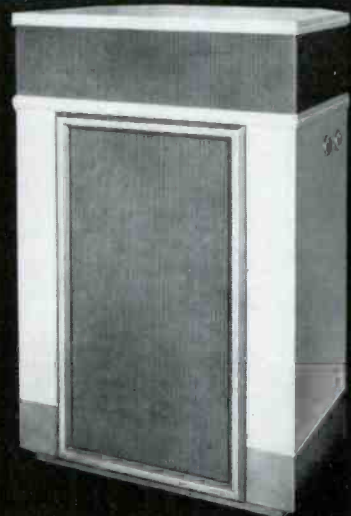
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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

The Cover. In case anyone had any doubts, the gentleman reading to the Revere recorder is Mr. Saroyan, in his house at Malibu, California. In the background: the Pacific, which looks a good deal more pacific than it sounded in his finished record. We were — as you may be — especially intrigued by the item of floral decoration on the desk, midway betwixt the binoculars and the letter-basket.

This Issue. Advancing the desirability of an article on the elements of high-fidelity shopping, Associate Editor Roy Allison generated a slight local shock by pointing out that approximately one-third of our readers have been with us less than one year. This makes it reasonable for some of them to demand a basic guide to audio componentry, so to speak, and so we've given them one (page 42). But what will they be wanting a year from now — a third *Beethoven* discography?

Next Issue. If all goes well, the February cover will depict the Philadelphia Orchestra, or as much of it as will fit comfortably into a cover-design. Inside will be a profile (to borrow an expression) of this illustrious organization by Roland Gelatt.

In February, too, Robert Marsh gets into the most currently pertinent part of his Toscanini discography — the Maestro in high-fidelity sound.

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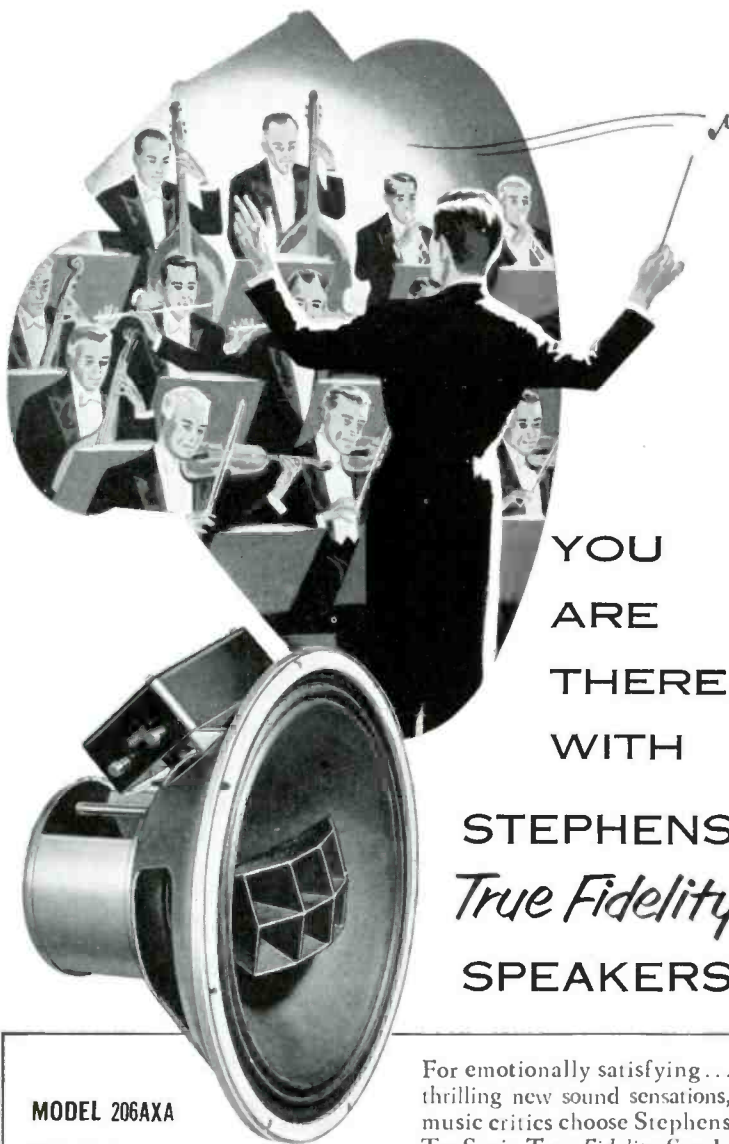
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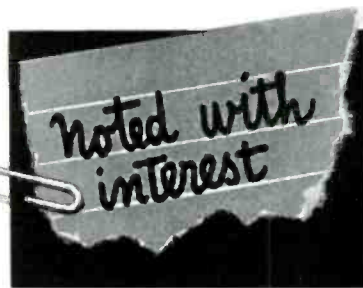
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CLI is Up

The cost of living index — even high fidelity living — is up, according to reader George Wentz, who has just completed a comparative analysis of 1951 and 1954 prices on hi-fi equipment. Here are samples of his results:

Item	1951	1954
FM-AM tuners	\$6.00	\$9.00
Amplifiers	4.00	6.25
Speakers	3.00	4.50
Spkr. Systems	2.00	3.25
Changers	2.50	4.00

He points out that, in contrast, the index for TV tuners with tube is \$6.00 for 1951 vs. \$2.75 for 1954.

We probably should leave this item right here but really tremble at the thought of the mailbag when readers start asking, "What's the index based on?" Good question; we won't tantalize you: it's the cost per pound.

Devotion

Still talking about Reader Wentz, who lives in Texas. . . he started his letter, "I have just returned from the Boston Audio Show. . ."

Boston *was* a good show, and it attracted crowds from all over, but Texas to Boston is some distance to travel! No doubt Mr. Wentz will claim he went to Boston for other reasons and just took in the show in passing; we're more inclined to believe the reverse!

Long Playing Tape

Are all of our readers aware of long-playing tape? It puts about 1,800 ft. on a 7-in. reel, instead of the usual 1,200 ft. — and what a blessing it is when recording a 35-minute symphony! Costs a bit more, but well worth it for users of machines which will not accept anything larger than 7-in. reels. How many times

Continued on page 8

You have heard *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* countless times...



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This will be sold at \$3.60, to subscribers only. The other will be an Analysis-Only Record—a *ten-inch disc*—priced at \$2.40. The latter will be made available each month for any subscriber who may already have a satisfactory long-playing record of the work being presented. (A small charge will be added to the prices above to cover postage and handling.)

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"In a few minutes, he made me understand more about Beethoven's Fifth Symphony than I learned in a month in a course at college."
—BENNETT CERF, *Saturday Review*

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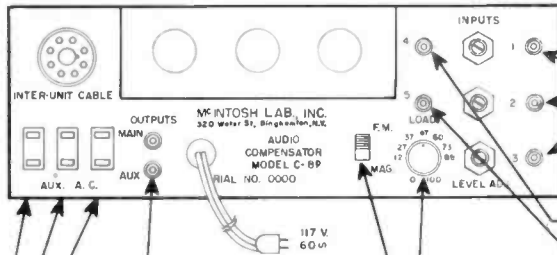
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A TYPICAL HOOK-UP OF THE McINTOSH C-8 P



Flat channels 1, 2 and 3, each with pre-set level control, for Tuner, Tape Recorder, and Microphone.

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All-purpose channel 5, for G.E., Audak, Fairchild, Weathers, Phansteil or ceramic cartridges.

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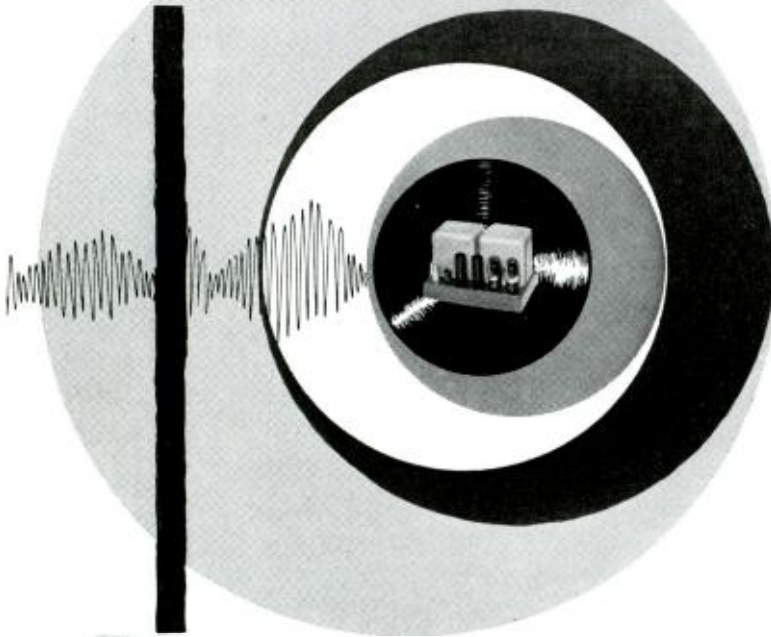
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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 4

we've frantically switched reels at 33½ minutes!!

In connection with the development of long-playing tape, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing sent out in September their Bulletin No. 30 which contained an interesting story of the development of their No. 190 tape and some very helpful hints on how to get best results. Samples: ". . . 50% greater playing time on standard size reels, and an actual increase in the fidelity of reproduction. . . A new coating was developed which made it possible to reduce the thickness of the magnetic coating to 0.0003 inches. . . The production problems attendant with coating the magnetic layer at first seemed insurmountable in view of the tolerance of approximately 9 millionths of an inch imposed by the magnetic uniformity requirements. . . For most uses, No. 190 tape can be used interchangeably with standard tape; however, in certain critical uses it may be desirable to readjust the recorder slightly to accommodate the increased sensitivity and response of the No. 190 tape. . . Bias current for optimum recording on 190 is about 20% less than that of No. 111 tape. . ."

The tape is said to have slightly higher output capabilities and therefore to alleviate the problem of high frequency overload.

As far as we're concerned, we'd like to make two comments: 7½ ips looks better and better for hi-fi. . . and we're going to lose some sleep tonight worrying over that 9 millionths of an inch. Figures like that, and the Federal debt, really make us wonder about the future of civilization!

If you'd like a copy of the 3-M bulletin, drop a line to "Sound Talk," Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co., St. Paul 6, Minnesota.

Hi-Fi Openings. . .

In Fullerton, Calif.:

The Turntable Hi-Fi, Inc., at 116 West Wilshire.

In Schenectady, N. Y.:

The General Products Co., at 1008 Helderberg Avenue. Hours, interestingly, are 6 to 9 p.m., Monday through Friday.

AUTHORitatively Speaking

William Saroyan, who eads off this issue with a discussion of the current enthusiasm over records of authors reading their own works, is certainly one of the most indefatigable of roday's American men of letters, even though he claims he spends most of his time hunting sea-shells on the beach. He has turned out at least seven volumes of short stories since his first, *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* (Random House, 1934), which pitched him promptly into fame. He has also produced several novels and eight plays, one of which (*Jim Dandy*) he is seen recording on the cover and another of which (*The Time of Your Life*) caused him to be chosen as recipient of a Pulitzer prize, which he turned down; a matter of principle.

James Hinton, Jr., who evaluates Chicago's grand opera renaissance on page 36, covered it for us while finishing a piece on the high fidelity phenomenon for *House & Garden* and a music-article for the *Book of Knowledge*. Ah, for the placid literary life! Martin Mayer (*Adventurers in Sound*, page 44) brought back with him from Europe an interview with David Oistrakh, the fabulous Russian fiddler, which we'll serve up to you soon.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 4

Budgeting Your Hi-Fi

Wonder how many hours have been spent by readers studying the 4-page University advertisement in the December issue of HIGH FIDELITY? We found it fascinating. . .and no matter how many hours were devoted to studying the various combinations possible, it was time well spent.

One of the big advantages of high fidelity systems is that they can be budgeted; you can start simple and grow as rapidly as finances permit. But, to achieve success and not waste money, the expansion program must be carefully planned.

A hearty pat on the back to University for bringing home this point so effectively and for rendering a real service to high fidelity enthusiasts.

Antiquarians Please Note

Don't think that's the word we want — antiquarians — but never mind.

Continued on page 10

JANUARY, 1955

"Best Buys" in Hi-Fi Systems

Selected from the new 308-page ALLIED 1955 CATALOG



New "Space Saver" Phono System

Now you can have authentic high fidelity performance in minimum space. No investment in cabinetry required. Components carefully selected and matched. Simple plug-in installation. System includes: quality Knight 12-Watt Amplifier (featuring 3-position record compensation, calibrated bass and treble controls, loudness-volume control, response ± 0.75 db, 20-20,000 cps at 12 watts) in black-wrinkle metal case only $3\frac{1}{2} \times 13 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ "; Webcor 1127-270 Three-Speed Changer (9 x 14 x 14") with G. E. RPX-050 triple-play magnetic cartridge (dual-tip sapphire stylus); Permo-flux "Diminnette" speaker system (3 speakers in modified bass reflex enclosure, for bass, middle range and treble reproduction), $11\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ ", choice of mahogany or blonde finish. System comes ready to plug in. Hi-fi demonstration record included. Shpg. wt., 56 lbs.
94 PA 129. Net only \$156.50
93 SX 312. Knight 12-Watt "Space Saver" Amplifier only. Shpg. wt., 14 lbs. Net only \$59.50

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"Golden Knight" Phono System

The super-value high fidelity system. Top quality matched components at a remarkably low price. Complete system includes: "Golden Knight" 24-Watt Amplifier (3-position record compensator, response ± 0.75 db, 20-40,000 cps, 4 inputs, separate bass and treble controls), satin-gold finish, 8 x 14 x 9"; famous Garrard RC-80 Record Changer; deluxe G. E. RPX-052 triple-play "Golden Treasure" magnetic cartridge with dual-tipped stylus (diamond LP tip, sapphire standard tip); Electro-Voice 12TRX 3-way speaker with 3 coaxially mounted sections (response ± 5 db, 30-15,000 cps). This superb system is complete with all plugs, cable and hardware, plus hi-fi demonstration record—ready for plug-in connection. Shpg. wt., 92 lbs.
94 PA 134. Net only \$261.75
93 SX 321. "Golden Knight" 24-Watt Hi-Fi Amplifier only. Shpg. wt., 30 lbs. Net only \$79.50

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Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

NOW! YOU SAVE UP TO \$50

WHEN YOU BUY A REALIST

HI-FI TUNER AT RADIO SHACK

1955 MODELS! HUNDREDS SOLD TO ENTHUSIASTIC USERS!



FM TUNER \$39.95

- ARMSTRONG FM WITH FOSTER-SEELEY DISCRIMINATOR!
- 5 MICROVOLT SENSITIVITY FOR 30 DB QUIETING!
- TUNED RF STAGE! DOUBLE-TUNED LIMITER! AC SUPPLY!
- AUTOMATIC FREQUENCY CONTROL (AFC)! 180kc BANDWIDTH!
- AUDIO OUTPUT 1V FOR 100% MODULATION! HUM 60 DB DOWN!
- FREQUENCY RESPONSE 20-20,000 CYCLES PLUS-MINUS 1/2 DB!
- DIRECT-FEED TAPE RECORDER JACK! AUX. PHONO INPUT!
- POWER AND TUNING CONTROLS — USE WITH ANY AMPLIFIER!
- ULTRA-COMPACT 4 1/4" H x 9 1/2" W x 6 3/8" D! COMPLETE!
- ORDER NO. 36-888M BY MAIL! ADD POSTAGE FOR 6 1/4 LBS.



AM TUNER \$29.95

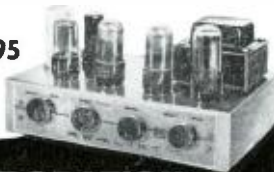
- EXACT MATCH OF REALIST FM TUNER! SAME COMPACT SIZE!
- TUNED RF STAGE! AC SUPERHET CIRCUIT! AC SUPPLY!
- 5 MICROVOLT SENSITIVITY! 8kc BANDWIDTH 6 DB DOWN!
- BUILT-IN FERRITE STICK ANTENNA! BUILT-IN TAPE JACK!
- PLUS-MINUS 3 DB 20-5000 CYCLES! HUM 60 DB DOWN!
- POWER AND TUNING CONTROLS — USE WITH ANY AMPLIFIER!
- ORDER NO. 36-887M BY MAIL! ADD POSTAGE FOR 6 1/4 LBS.



REALIST 10 WATT HI-FI AMPLIFIER!

- BUILT-IN RIAA-EQUALIZED PREAMP!
- 20-20,000 CPS ±1 DB AT 3 WATTS!
- SEPARATE BASS AND TREBLE CONTROLS!
- 5 TUBES! PUSH-PULL TWO 6V6GT!
- ORDER NO. 33-303M BY MAIL! 10 LBS.

\$29⁹⁵



RADIO SHACK CORPORATION

167 Washington Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts
and 230-234 Crown St., New Haven 10, Conn.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 9

It's something along those lines.

Anyway, it's not only gold that shines, and it's not only furniture that antique collectors collect.

Which is a confused way of leading into the fact that the Bornand Music Box Co. (139 Fourth Avenue, Pelham 65, N. Y.) sent us a mimeo'd sheet a while back which was fascinating. They collect — and sell — old music boxes (which get some walloping prices, by the way). If you're interested, drop them a line.

Tape Indexing

Ever cussed trying to find a certain selection in the middle of a reel of tape? We have, goodness knows, and so, it seems, did Hal Schwartz in California. We just cussed; Mr. Schwartz got so mad about the whole problem he finally did something about it and under the name of Halvick Industries, 189 Miller Avenue, Mill Valley, Calif., is beginning to market a clever gadget known as an "Atta-Glance" disk. It's made of cardboard, 5 or 7 in. in diameter, has three slots radiating from a center hole (spindle size), and concentrically ruled lines, whereon to write what's what in the tape. Price, for the moment, is 8 disks for \$1, including postage.

Nice idea; works well; you can hit a selection almost on the nose every time.

What's Low Fidelity?

We're not very sure about this one. If anyone asks us what high fidelity is, we assume a learned expression and start lecture No. 16-A. But when it comes to defining low fidelity, well, we'll leave that to Emory Cook whose catalog of "Road Recordings" labels the records HF (Hi-Fi), MF (Medium Fidelity) and LF (Lo-Fi).

Now, if he'll pass along his standards, maybe we'll all start to get somewhere.

Tape Forecast

Webcor predicts that recorded tape will ultimately replace disks in the home entertainment market. . . says "nearly all of the approximately one

Continued on page 13

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

CABLE: "AUDIOGERSH" NEW YORK

AUDIOGERSH



CORPORATION

23 PARK PLACE

NEW YORK 7, N.Y.

WORTH 4-8585

January 1, 1955

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MIRACORD XA100 USERS

We are pleased to report that the nation-wide acceptance given our MIRACORD XA100 has been unprecedented and, naturally, most gratifying.

This is our sincere "thank you" to each of you who has purchased a MIRACORD XA100 and written us compliments and constructive criticism.

We have heard from some of you that certain records do not always drop on the "Magic Wand" spindle furnished with the first units we delivered. The difficulty was caused, in the main, by imperfectly centered record labels projecting over the center hole and interfering with the precision action of the "Magic Wand".

This problem has been solved. We have made a slight but significant change in the "Magic Wand" dimensions - yet have maintained the critical tolerances and unique principle which prevents any of your records from developing enlarged or out-of-round center holes. As a matter of fact, you will soon see photographs of records that have been dropped 100,000 and 500,000 times on the MIRACORD XA100 with absolutely no damage to the record.

We want you to benefit from the new "Magic Wand" without delay! If you have a MIRACORD XA100 automatic record changer that does not drop records to your complete satisfaction, we will send you the newly dimensioned "Magic Wand" at no charge whatsoever in exchange for your present spindle.

We are happy to offer you this tangible evidence of our policy of "satisfaction guaranteed". Your enjoyment of the MIRACORD XA100 is truly music to our ears - and we know it is to yours.

Cordially,

Milton D. Thalberg, President

AUDIOGERSH CORPORATION

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTORS IN THE UNITED STATES FOR  RECORD PLAYERS

JANUARY, 1955

11

*"Praise... owes its value only
to its scarcity"* —Samuel Johnson



IRVING KOLODIN

**Music Editor
Saturday Review**

"Only one material really suffices—(as a phonograph needle) the diamond. Nothing else matches it . . . anything else may categorically be denied consideration as . . . high fidelity."

David Stone (As appeared in
Saturday Review)



**PLAY SAFE
PLAY DIAMOND**

TETRAD

**WORLD'S LARGEST
MANUFACTURERS
OF DIAMOND STYLI**

Ask your dealer or serviceman for a **BRAND NAME DIAMOND**.
Record-Needle Care Folders: Dept. F-1, 62 St. Mary Street, Yonkers, N. Y.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 10

million tape recorders now in use were bought primarily for business or educational uses or for such home uses as recording radio or TV programs or building an album of 'precious memories', but to all of these recorder owners, especially the educated music lovers and the high fidelity enthusiasts, recorded tape offers a new and exciting use for their instruments that in time may well overshadow all other uses."

Everett Olson, who made this statement, concluded his remarks with a statement with which we concur: "To replace the \$225,000,000 worth of records that it is estimated will be sold this year, however, it will be necessary for recorder and tape manufacturers to make their units better than the turntable phonograph in simplicity and cost. That's a large order and will take some time."

Goodmans Speakers

Goodmans makes good speakers (we hope to have some for a TITH report before long), and it's good news for Americans that they have appointed the Rockbar Corporation of New York to act as national distributors. That will help make them readily available in this market.

New in Canada

Peter Alcock, hi-fi dynamo of Toronto, now has not only his hi-fi business (Custom Sounds Reg., 23 Park Rd.) but continues to be a motivating force in what he calls the "Audio Hot Stove" — a hobbyists club and discussion group.

Wanted: No. 4

Anyone have a spare copy for Dr. Guillermo Alamilla, Edificio Horter, 40 Piso, Obispo y Oficinas, Habana, Cuba?

FM Broadcasting, cont'd.

In November we had an item about the disassociation of the Rural Radio Network from its WQXR-New York affiliations. George Hamilton, of RRN, writes as follows: "We would like to clarify the issue as to the type of programs now being broad-

Continued on page 15

still setting the standards

H. H. Scott

AMPLIFIERS, EQUALIZER-PREAMPLIFIERS

70-watt

Type 265-A

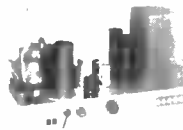
Laboratory

Power

Amplifier



121-A DYNAURAL
Equalizer-Preamplifier



The new 32-watt 232-A Laboratory Power Amplifier offers power ample for all but the most complex systems, and at an outstanding price. We believe the 232-A to be the most practical choice and the best buy among power amplifiers.



The compact new 120-CP self-powered Equalizer-Preamplifier affords exact convenient control and compensation for those who desire highest professional standards but with greater simplicity and economy than offered by the 121-A.

The new 265-A Laboratory Power Amplifier is the finest we are able to make. It provides more than ample reserve power for the most demanding applications. Features are:

variable damping for exact speaker matching, and a new design contribution — an adjustable "snubber" circuit allowing full output power on music, with maximum speaker protection.

The 265-A is a fitting companion to the 121-A DYNAURAL Equalizer-Preamplifier, which we believe to be the most versatile and complete control and compensation unit ever offered. The 121-A includes the patented DYNAURAL Noise Suppressor, continuously variable equalization for any recording curves, past, present or future, and many other features.

Self-powered, beautifully styled and constructed, the 121-A, like the 265-A, is designed for the connoisseur to whom cost is secondary to that performance possible only from units containing every refinement possible at this stage of the art.

The 214-C Remote-Control Amplifier consists of the 232-A Power Amplifier and a non-self-powered version of the 120 Equalizer-Preamplifier, obtaining power from the 232-A. The 214-C provides superb performance at lowest cost to those purchasing equalizer-preamplifier and power amplifier together.

H. H. SCOTT inc.

FREE BOOKLET

Made by one of the world's leading builders of professional sound measuring and analyzing instruments, H. H. Scott amplifiers were voted "first choice" in the "Saturday Review Home Book of Recorded Music and Sound Reproduction", and are commended as "finest on the market" by experts such as Harold Weiler, author of "High Fidelity Simplified".

385 PUTNAM AVENUE,

CAMBRIDGE 39, MASS.

SPECIAL TELEVISION REPORT

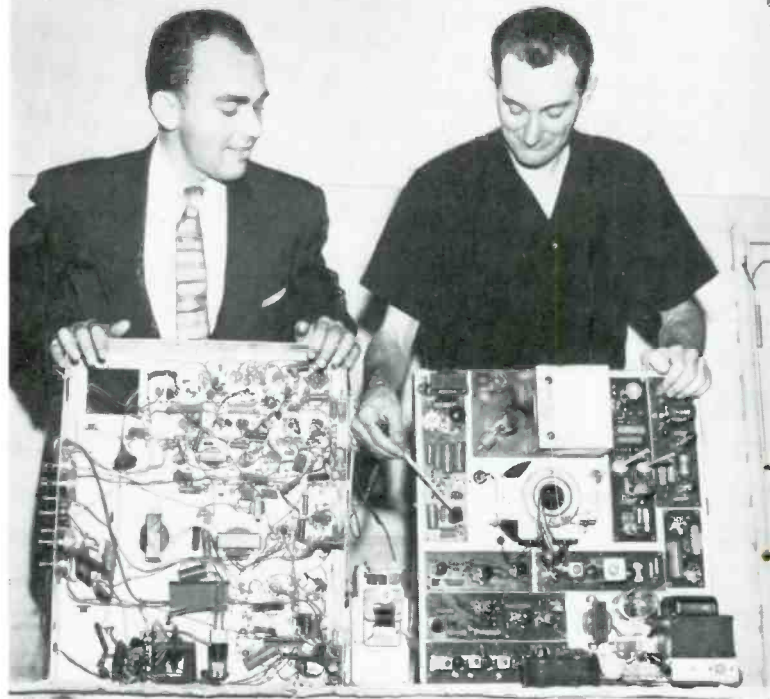
TV chassis of the future...

WALSCO PC-9 COMBINES FIRST COMPLETELY PRINTED CIRCUIT CHASSIS WITH AUTOMATIC OPERATION

The introduction of the first—and only—entirely "printed circuit" television chassis marks a dramatic departure from all present day receivers. The super-sensitive WalSCO PC-9 automatically produces the exact, crystal-clear performance found only in precision TV control room monitors.

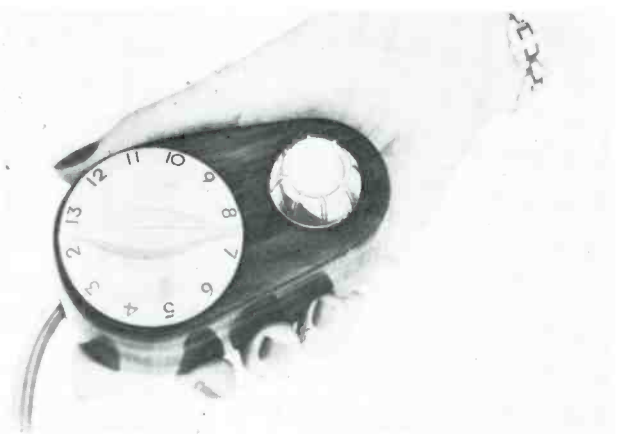
The new custom PC-9 chassis offers keyed automatic gain control, automatic brightness and contrast, automatic elimination of vertical retrace, magnetic centering, direct current restoration, inverse audio feedback for greater sound fidelity, two video amplification stages, advanced cascade turret tuner, plus twelve other future features.

Either 21, 24, or 27 inch tube (90° deflection) can be used without modifying the chassis. The PC-9 is available now at user's net of \$299, including remote control with 20 feet of cable and tube mounting kits.

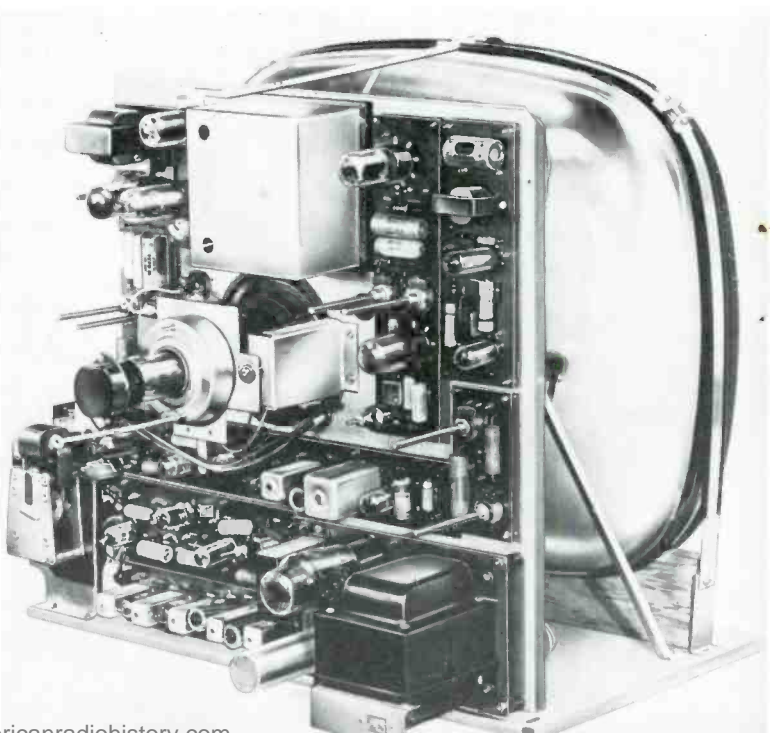


No more "jungle" of wires. Chief Engineer Fred Miller (right) makes a side-by-side comparison of a WalSCO PC-9 (right) with a conventional, complicated chassis. Bob Mueller, WalSCO Sales Manager, observes simplicity of vertically mounted, printed circuit design.

Printed circuits prevent faulty connections and production errors. Special machines and dip-soldering reduce the usual 2900 hand soldered connections to only 56 in the new PC-9 chassis. This advance circuitry provides ultra-clear reception on all channels. Each circuit strip plugs into PC-9, making servicing simple and quick.



Completely portable, hand-size remote control. Exclusive "open circuit" control automatically finds the channel...instantly locks in perfect picture and sound. Since all fine video adjusting is automatic, this remarkable, motor driven unit has only the volume (on-off) knob and the channel dial.



For information write to WalSCO Electronics Corporation, Dept. H-15—3602 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles 16, Calif.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 13

cast by Rural Radio. In discontinuing the relaying of programs from New York City, RRN has by no means abandoned classical music. Indeed, it has been our feeling that by expanding our broadcasting of upstate music to include live concerts we will more nearly reflect the cultural wealth of upstate New York A substantial portion of the current RRN schedule is made up of good music broadcasting. Many of the remaining times are taken up with high-quality dramatic programs obtained from the BBC and other similar sources of quality programs." Thanks, Mr. Hamilton, for giving us, and our readers, more complete information about your programing plans. Sounds good to us!

From another quarter, David Marxer of the University of Alabama's WUOA writes: "The continued growth and expansion of existing FM broadcasters strongly deny the statement that FM is dead. This growth is due in large part to the timely interest in high fidelity, which FM can serve best, through truly high quality transmission. It was recently announced that WUOM (FM) in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has plans under way to double their power output. WUOA (FM) has construction nearing completion on facilities to triple their power output. . . . WUOA is on the air 70 hours a week, the year round. . . . A goodly portion of the music broadcasts are live, since all music department concerts and recitals are aired."

And, as Swayze says, hopscotching the world, etc.—from Fred and Dorothy Rabell, owners and operators of KSON (FM and AM) in San Diego, comes a long letter. Wish we had the space to quote it all, but here are excerpts: "Two years ago, the Union Tribune estimated about \$50,000 had been spent (in San Diego) in high fidelity; this year, they predict \$150,000 excluding the investment we have made in KSON-FM, the coast's first strictly high fidelity radio station broadcasting a full 18 hours a day every day of the week. . . . For seven years, we have operated KSON-AM, a successful local independent and we have been interested personally for years in high fidelity in our home, so we built KSON-FM in the spring of

patented! exclusive!

H. H. Scott

DYNAURAL dynamic noise suppression



The new 210-C DYNAURAL Laboratory Amplifier with dynamic noise suppression



The 99-A Transcription Amplifier set a new styling trend by incorporating "front end" and 12-watt power amplifier, with power supply in a compact, attractive case. Like all H. H. Scott amplifiers, its clean, symmetrical clipping when overloaded affords power output audibly equal to much higher formal ratings, based on comparative listening tests. With control flexibility matched by few amplifiers at any price, we believe the 99 is preeminent in performance and value in the hundred-dollar price field.

The 114-A DYNAURAL Noise Suppressor, styled to harmonize with the 99-A Amplifier and 120 Equalizer-Preamplifier, offers the DYNAURAL feature to those wishing to add it at a later date in the development of their high fidelity systems.

The DYNAURAL Noise Suppressor virtually eliminates turntable rumble and record scratch and hiss, but without losing audible music as with fixed filters.

DYNAURAL noise suppression is almost essential if the musical response now possible with new extended-range speaker systems and program material is to be enjoyed fully — unmarred by extraneous noise.

The new 210-C DYNAURAL Laboratory Amplifier includes the best, most practical features we have developed over the years — and at a "best buy" price.

Resembling an attractive "control unit", the 210-C incorporates complete equalizer-preamplifier, 25-watt power amplifier, DYNAURAL noise suppressor operable on all input channels, versatile record equalizer and input selector, unique flexibility in tape recording and monitoring, and many other features.

In our opinion, the 210-C offers the outstanding combination of over-all features, performance, and price.

We believe there is good reason for the preeminence earned by H. H. Scott amplifiers. Outstanding technical features are but a means to an end — "best listening". H. H. Scott personally spends hundreds of hours yearly in listening tests to insure integrity in every detail.

H. H. SCOTT inc.

FREE BOOKLET

385 PUTNAM AVENUE,

CAMBRIDGE 39, MASS.



INSIST ON

National 

... DON'T

COMPROMISE!

National "Criterion" AM-FM Tuner . . . \$169.95

Make sure you get your money's worth! Before you invest another dollar in high fidelity equipment, ask yourself if you're sure you are going to be satisfied with it for years to come. When you invest in the New National Horizon line you are getting the most advanced engineering, the finest construction and the greatest versatility that audio science affords . . . truly "tuned to tomorrow". Feature for feature National high fidelity equipment is your best buy today!

Binaural

AM

FM

FM Mutamatic

FM "Mutamatic" TUNING

Exclusive circuit eliminates hiss and noise when tuning between stations found in other FM tuners. Fine tuning is unnecessary. Whenever there is sound — station is tuned perfectly.

**COMPARE THESE
OUTSTANDING
"CRITERION"
SPECIFICATIONS**

FM SECTION

Sensitivity: .5 uv for 20 db quieting. Capture ratio: rejects interfering signal up to 80% as strong as desired signal. No distortion from reflective ghosts.

Image rejection: better than 60 db I.F. pass band is flat within ± 1 db over band of 200 kc. Audio distortion: less than 0.5% from all levels of modulation.

Output: Cathode follower output. Hum & Noise level 60 db below audio signal. Full A.C.C. maintains I.F. band pass regardless of input signal level. Instantaneous limiters provide lowest impulse noise of any tuner.

Selectivity provides complete adjacent channel rejection.

AM SECTION

Sensitivity: 10 uv at antenna terminals for signal-to-noise ratio of 10 db.

Image ratio: better than 60 db.

I.F. Pass band flat within ± 1 db over a 14.5 kc range.

BINAURAL OPERATION

Individual tuning condensers, volume controls and output jacks for simultaneous operation. FM free of AM signal up to 100 times the FM signal input. AM free of FM signal up to 100 times AM signal input.

NATIONAL HORIZON 5 PLUG-IN PREAMPLIFIER CONTROL



Plugs into either Horizon 20 amplifier or "Criterion" tuner. 10 position selector switch for 3 high level inputs and phono input with 7 equalization positions. Bass boost: +25 db and bass cut -15 db at 30 cps. Treble boost +12 db and cut -25 db at 10 kc. Frequency response 20 cps -20 kc, ± 25 db loudness control switch. Distortion: Harmonic — less than .2% at 1.5 Volts out; Intermodulation — less than .3% at 1.5 Volts out. Hum & Noise: 70 db below 1.5 volts on high level inputs.

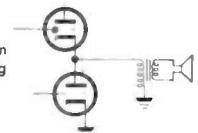
**"HORIZON 20" . . .
20 Watt amplifier \$84.95**

(At 20 watts rated output)

Harmonic distortion: less than .3% (.6% at 25 watts). Intermodulation distortion: less than 1%. Sensitivity: 1.6 volts. Hum & Noise: 80 db below 20 watts. Frequency response: 20 cps-20 kc, ± 1 db; 10 cps-100 kc, ± 1 db. Power response: 20 cps-20 kc, ± 15 db; 10 cps-60 kc, ± 1 db.

UNITY-COUPLING

Exclusive circuit eliminates impulse distortion characteristic in conventional amplifiers. Transformer supplies only matching impedance to speaker.



**"HORIZON 10" . . .
10 watt amplifier with
preamplifier control unit. \$79.95**

Harmonic distortion: .5%; Intermodulation: 1%. Frequency response: 20 cps-20 kc, ± 1 db. Power response: 20 cps-20 kc, ± 2 db. Hum & Noise: 70 db below full output on high level inputs (low level inputs - 50 db below.) Preamp Control has 2 high level inputs for tape and tuner. Record compensation positions for R.I.A.A., A.E.S. and Foreign. Treble boost: 11 db and 10 db treble cut at 10 kc. Bass boost: 15 db at 30 cps. Built-in loudness compensation.

tuned to tomorrow 

National 

For complete specifications see your dealer or write to Dept. H-155, National Company, Inc., Malden, Mass.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 15

1954. . . Our operation has been far from perfect since we went on the air in July but the bugs are gradually going and our faith in the future of high fidelity broadcasting by FM is undimmed despite the many discouragements, the far higher costs of operation as compared to its more profitable sister AM, and finally the inertia of the industry in not setting up a sound method of distribution of equipment through normal channels. Custom home installations such as we have personally in our home are certainly wonderful but from a broadcaster's viewpoint, the service can never be profitable until means are designed to put high fidelity in Mr. Average Man's home. . . . Broadcasting is a mass medium and so we must have mass response through FM receivers in homes."

As we said, the Rabell's had a lot of interesting information in their letter, including how they run on tape practically all the time — automatic operation which cuts voice announcements in and out, and so forth.

And still hopscotching. . . from F. C. Harvey of WHKW in Chilton, Wisconsin, comes this lively tale: "Re FM, and what about it? — I have the following to offer, of interest only to residents of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Minnesota. [enough right there to keep you busy, Mr. Harvey!]. There is a source of hi-fi FM out here in the wild and woolly Midwest: the FM stations of the Wisconsin State Network. Good music, and lots of it. (The music department does go astray now and again, so a bit of Berg, Schönberg, etc., sneaks in, but it's mostly all top grade listening.) [Those were your comments, brother; you'll now find out how many Bergians there are in those states you listed!]"

"A program schedule is enclosed; any reader desiring one, simply send me a self-addressed envelope. . . . The network operates 100% FM rebroadcast; distortion is about 2% at the worst, frequency response is flat from here to there, as the FCC requires — 20 cps to 22 kc, last time it was measured. . . . Anybody want to move to Wisconsin? You won't need a high-gain antenna;

Continued on page 18

**Outstanding
noise and interference rejection**
with the new

H. H. Scott



FM TUNER

**Lowest
ignition noise**

**Lowest
interference**

**Wide-band
detector
and limiters**

**Single-sweep
tuning**

**Interstation
noise
suppressor**

**2-microvolt
sensitivity**

**Tuning-signal
strength meter**

**Unique
convenience**

Quality of FM reception is determined largely by what is not heard, particularly in Metropolitan areas where noise, interference and reflection effects are high. The new 310 FM Broadcast Monitor Tuner features wide-band circuit design permitting outstanding rejection of ignition noise, image and other station interference. Multi-path fading and spurious responses (which show up as reception of the same station at many spots on the FM band) are virtually eliminated. The 2 mc wide-band detector and limiters and full 150 kc wide flat bandpass IF characteristics make tuning completely non-critical and drift-free and give essentially distortionless reproduction at all signal levels. The 2 microvolt sensitivity at 20 db quieting (4 microvolt at 40 db quieting) allows interference-free reception with full limiting action even on weakest signals. The inter-station noise suppressor is adjustable on the front panel and allows complete inter-station noise elimination but also reception of very weak stations. The fine-tuning control and combined tuning meter and signal strength indicator are useful for tuning weak signals and antenna orientation. Rejection of spurious responses resulting from cross-modulation by strong local signals is better than 85 db, an outstanding design accomplishment. We believe that the 310 provides the best overall design balance possible at this stage of the art, incorporating all significant features and refinements known today. Unique convenience of operation, attractive styling and moderate cost enhance its desirability to the serious music lover.

A pioneer in sound reproduction and instrumentation, H. H. Scott, Inc. received the **ELECTRICAL MANUFACTURING Award** for outstanding instrument design and the Medal of Merit of the International Sight and Sound Exposition. The John H. Potts Memorial Society of the Audio Engineering Society was awarded to H. H. Scott for outstanding contributions to audio science.

H. H. SCOTT inc.

FREE BOOKLET

385 PUTNAM AVENUE,

CAMBRIDGE 39, MASS.

From NEWCOMB'S Big, NEW HI-FI LINE

The two new Compacts, with amplifier, preamplifier and control unit all in one... the new Classic 200 FM-AM Tuner, the answer to years of demand... just three of the twelve all new components in the Newcomb line — a line which offers an amplifier for every hi-fi need. All twelve reflect the engineering leadership for which Newcomb has been famous since 1937. Visit your dealer... see and hear the full Newcomb line — priced from \$59.50 to \$297.50. You'll understand why Newcomb is your best buy in hi-fi!

only
\$99.50
audiophile net



HI-FI COMPLICATED? EXPENSIVE? NOT WITH NEWCOMB'S COMPACT 12!

Newcomb offers every music lover authentic high fidelity with a minimum of expense and trouble in the new Compact 12. Provides unequalled flexibility and range of sound control. Needs no cabinet. Just plug it in, connect it to a record changer and speaker. But if you prefer to use cabinetry, it includes Newcomb's exclusive "Adjusta-Panel" feature for easy installation. Simple to move — ideal for apartments! U/L approved.

Compact 10 — A simplified 10-watt version of exceptional performance at only **\$79.50**
audiophile net



Compact 12 Specifications

12-watt high fidelity amplifier — preamplifier — control unit • less than 1% distortion at 12 watts • response ± 1 db 20 to 20,000 cycles • separate crossover and rolloff controls give 36 different recording curves • input selector and rumble filter • 7 inputs • mike input • tape input • output to tape • wide range separate bass and treble tone controls, bass range —15 db to +18 db, treble range —18 db to +16 db • hum balance control • new level control • advanced design loudness control • size only 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ " high x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9"

FOR SUPERIOR RADIO RECEPTION NEW Classic 200—2 knob FM-AM Tuner

For years now, satisfied Newcomb amplifier owners have asked for a tuner by Newcomb. Here it is — the Classic 200 high fidelity tuner to deliver the utmost to a fine amplifier! It, too, is compact in size.

Designed for use with any amplifier having its own controls. Fully enclosed, beautifully finished to use as is, or the exclusive "Adjusta-Panel" makes cabinet installation simple. U/L approved. Output is 10 volts at less than $\frac{1}{4}$ %. 1 volt at less than 4/100%. Effective to 200 feet from amplifier. Many new circuit advances in both FM and AM sections. Results: 30 db of quieting with only $\frac{1}{2}$ microvolts input on FM. 1 microvolt AM sensitivity for 1 volt output. Only 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ " high x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".



\$169.50
audiophile net

NEW HI-FI GUIDEBOOK

"Hi-Fi Is For Everybody" Explains the how and why of authentic high fidelity • How to buy and install economically • Informative and thoroughly illustrated • Not a catalog



NEWCOMB® SINCE 1937

High Fidelity Amplifiers and Tuners

- Here's 25c for new book, "Hi-Fi Is For Everybody."
- Please send free catalog of Newcomb's complete line of 12 new hi-fi products, plus name of my nearest Newcomb dealer.

NEWCOMB, Dept. W 1
6824 Lexington Ave., Hollywood 38, California

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zone _____ State _____

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 17

you won't need even a sensitive FM tuner. Our signals are at good level everywhere in the state. I'll be glad to answer any questions you may have about the network; I work for it (transmitter engineer) and I'm proud of it."

There's the spirit we like!

Nertz Dept.

"New amplifier offers lifetime freedom from distortion. . ." Nertz. No one makes such perfect amplifier components that they don't wear out over a period of time, change in values, and permit distortion.

"...10-watt undistorted amplifier." (This is about another product.) Nertz. Double nertz, since two sentences later it is stated that response is within 2 db. What's "within 2 db," if it isn't distortion?

"You are invited to examine our new switching console. . .over 300,000 possible combinations." Nertz. What a way to sell high fidelity; even Univac wouldn't be able to make up its mind if confronted with this deal. What about the poor guy who's heard about hi-fi from his neighbor, who told him to drop in at the local hi-fi shop and listen to a few systems???

Oh well, all in the day's mail.

Red Face Dept.

What well known manufacturer of tape recorders sent out a release giving prices like so: "Retailing for \$235 (3 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs) and \$245 (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs)

Time must have weighed heavy indeed on this copywriter's hands. . .

Open House }

Orradio Industries of Opelika, Ala., wrote us: "We would like to issue a personal invitation to all hi-fi and tape recording enthusiasts in the states of Alabama and Georgia to visit our plant. . ."

Sounds like an interesting opportunity; we'd certainly make it a point to see the Orradio (Irish Tape) plant if we were in the vicinity; should be fascinating. And we allow as how visitors from Tennessee and Mississippi would also be welcome. — Thanks, Mr. Welch, for this invitation to HIGH FIDELITY readers.

*At the Chicago, New York and Boston High Fidelity Shows
More People Asked This Question Than Any Other:*

“Which Rek-O-Kut Turntable Shall I Buy...

the RONDINE, the RONDINE Deluxe or the RONDINE Jr.?”

*In previous years, the question was: “Shall I buy a turntable or a record changer?” And about eight months ago we released an advertised statement in answer to this question. Thus far, more than 40,000 people have requested reprint copies of this statement.**

This year, we presented the Rondine line in Chicago. At the very first showing we knew that we had passed the severest test. The acclaim was overwhelming. It exceeded our wildest hopes and expectations. And the pattern has since been the same . . . New York . . . Boston . . . everywhere. Now the one question that stands out is: “Which shall I choose: the Rondine at \$69.95, the Rondine Deluxe at \$119.95 or the Rondine Jr. at \$49.95?”

The RONDINE Deluxe (3-speed) priced at \$119.95 is powered by a hysteresis motor. The speed of a hysteresis motor is synchronous with the frequency of the line current. Like the motor of an electric clock (which it resembles in principle only) the speed is constant and accurate to the split second. It has the least vibration of any motor, and therefore, the least rumble. The Rondine Deluxe represents the very finest equipment available. It is the indicated choice where the system and speaker with which it is to be used are capable of reproducing low frequencies to below 40 cycles.

The RONDINE (3-speed) priced at \$69.95 is driven by a specially built 4-pole induction motor. Vibration and noise have been effectively reduced through the use of selected motor bearings, dynamically balanced rotors and perfectly concentric drive pulleys. Each motor is individually tested for speed under load conditions, and permanent compensations are introduced for accurate timing. Rumble content is so low that in a system capable of reproducing 40 cycles, it can be detected only with appreciable bass boost. The Rondine meets the requirements of most high quality home systems.

The RONDINE Jr. (2-speed) priced at \$49.95 is driven by the same type of motor as the Rondine, and what has been said for the Rondine is equally applicable here. Where the user can dispense with the 78 rpm record speed, the Rondine Jr. represents true economy — without the slightest sacrifice in quality over the Rondine. It is the ideal home system turntable where there is no accumulated 78 rpm library, and where future record purchases will be limited to the modern 33½ and 45 rpm types.

Select the Rek-O-Kut turntable suitable for your particular needs. For, whether you choose the Rondine, the Rondine Deluxe or Rondine Jr., you can expect rugged, reliable construction and precision performance. You can expect constant, steady motion — freedom from wow, and flutter — and you can be sure of smooth, quiet operation.

So certain are we that the speeds, once set, are critically accurate that we make no provision for external adjustments by you — except for occasional maintenance. And we include a built-in strobe disc capable of revealing as little as ¼th of 1% speed discrepancy. We know of no manufacturer who places greater reliance upon the dependability of his product.

Basically, this is all the result of specialized experience gained over many years in the service of recording and broadcast studios. It is this store of engineering ‘know-how’ which has enabled us to develop a completely simplified mechanics in turntable design; to streamline every operation with no more parts than are absolutely essential for efficient, functional performance. These efforts have been repaid in enabling us to achieve greater noise reduction, easier maintenance and added years of useful service.

No matter what turntable or record changer you now use, a Rek-O-Kut Rondine — any one of the three — will make a marked improvement in the performance of your high fidelity system.

**You may obtain a reprint of: “Shall I Buy a Turntable or Record Changer?”, plus complete Rondine specifications, by writing Dept. U.A.*



REK-O-KUT COMPANY

*Makers of Fine Recording and Playback Equipment
Engineered for the Studio • Designed for the Home
38-01 Queens Boulevard, Long Island City 1, N. Y.*

**BUY DIRECT...
SAVE MONEY!**

**HI-FI and
Binaural units...
wired or kits!**

New Imperial V-12-tube AM-FM Tuner Kit

- Band width — 200 kc • Tuned RF stage • Tuning Range 85-108 mc • Sensitivity 5-10 μV , 20-30 db
- Iron core tuned I.F. disc. trans. • 6CB6 RF amplifier • 6AB4 mixer • 6AB4 oscillator • 6AU6 1st I.F. amplifier • 6AU6 2nd I.F. amplifier • 6AU6 1st limiter • 6AU6 2nd limiter • 6AL5 detector • 6C4 cathode follower output • AM tuning range 530-1650 kc • 6BA6 RF amplifier • 6BE6 converter • 6BA6 1st I.F. amplifier • 1N34 or 1N60 crystal diode detector • Tuned RF stage • Chassis dimensions: 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " long, 5" high, 8" W.

Complete kit of parts including tubes, pictorial and schematic diagrams... **\$37.50**

Frequency Response (FM) 20 — 20,000 CPS \pm .5 DB

Frequency Response (AM) 20 — 7,500 CPS \pm 3 DB

New V-8 FM Receiver Kit

- Self-contained AC Power Supply
- 3 section variable condenser • Tuning range 88-108 mc • Band width 200 kc • Sensitivity 10 microvolts 20 db • Tuned RF stage • Iron core tuned I.F. — disc. trans. • 6CB6 R.F. amplifier • 6AB4 mixer • 6AB4 oscillator (temp. compensated) • 6AU6 1st I.F. amplifier • 6AU6 2nd I.F. amplifier • 6AU6 1st limiter • 6AU6 2nd limiter • 6AL5 detector • 6C4 cathode follower output • 2B5 selenium rectifier • Dimensions 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5" x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Complete kit of parts including AC power supply, tubes, pictorial and schematic diagrams... **\$29.50**

Frequency response 20—20,000 CPS \pm .5 DB

Wired & Tested extra... **\$5.00**

New V-5 AM Receiver Kit

- Self-contained AC power supply
- Tuning range 530-1650 kc • 6BA6 RF Amplifier • 6BE6 converter • 6BA6 1st I.F. amplifier • 6AL5 detector • 6C4 cathode follower output • 2B5 selenium rectifier • 3 section variable cond. • Tuned RF stage • Sensitivity 5 microvolts • Iron core tuned coils throughout • Dimensions 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5" x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Complete kit of parts, including AC power supply, tubes, pictorial and schematic diagrams... **\$24.50**

Frequency Response 20—7,500 CPS \pm 3 db

Wired & Tested extra... **\$4.25**

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Write today for free complete Approved catalog!

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APPROVED

ELECTRONIC INSTRUMENT CORP.

508 BROADWAY NEW YORK 10, N. Y.



SIR:

I'm afraid you're going to have some outraged readers from San Diego County. We have become sensitive about being considered a "suburb" of Los Angeles, since our smog-free paradise is more than a hundred miles south of that city. And in your October issue (Noted With Interest, page 13) of HIGH FIDELITY you have added one more bit of misinformation that is sure to cause repercussions.

You quote a Mr. Ted Shireman as saying that "San Diego has no significant FM activity of its own..." This simply isn't true. Here in San Diego we have two FM stations, neither of which is new. KSON-FM is one of the finest stations available, broadcasting music from about 6 a.m. until midnight on both FM and AM. In addition, KSON broadcasts regularly scheduled high fidelity music during the evenings, as well as conducting experiments in high fidelity that are of interest to San Diego's several thousand high fidelity devotees.

Proof of the popularity of these high fidelity programs is that they are sponsored programs, attracting a great number of listeners each evening.

In addition to KSON-AM (an independent station) there is also the local NBC outlet, KFSD-FM, which duplicates KFSD's programs during the afternoon and evening.

Interest in high fidelity is growing in San Diego. I'm sure many of the enthusiasts read your magazine and consider it authentic on matters of high fidelity. Let's keep it accurate and give full credit to San Diego's fine FM stations.

Norma Jane Pearson
San Diego, Calif.

Sir:

I think I have found the answer to "Listener's Fatigue." After a recent all-night session with Beethoven whose Fifth had given me a bad hangover, I, being in high spirits, devised an

Continued on page 22



AMPLIFIER

20 Watts Ultra-Linear
6L6 push-pull output, 40 watts peak

Push-Button Phono Equalizer
For LP, RIAA, LON and EUR curves

2729 Preamp Tube
Phono hum and noise below 1.5 μV .

Speaker Damping Factor Selector
Range includes -2 and +2

"Center-Set" Loudness Control
New contours extend useful ranges

Tape Recording Jack
Cathode follower: switched for playback

"Pivoting" Tone Controls
Calibrated: accurate flat setting

Rumble Filter Switch

Phono Scratch Filter Switch

Five Inputs and many other professional features

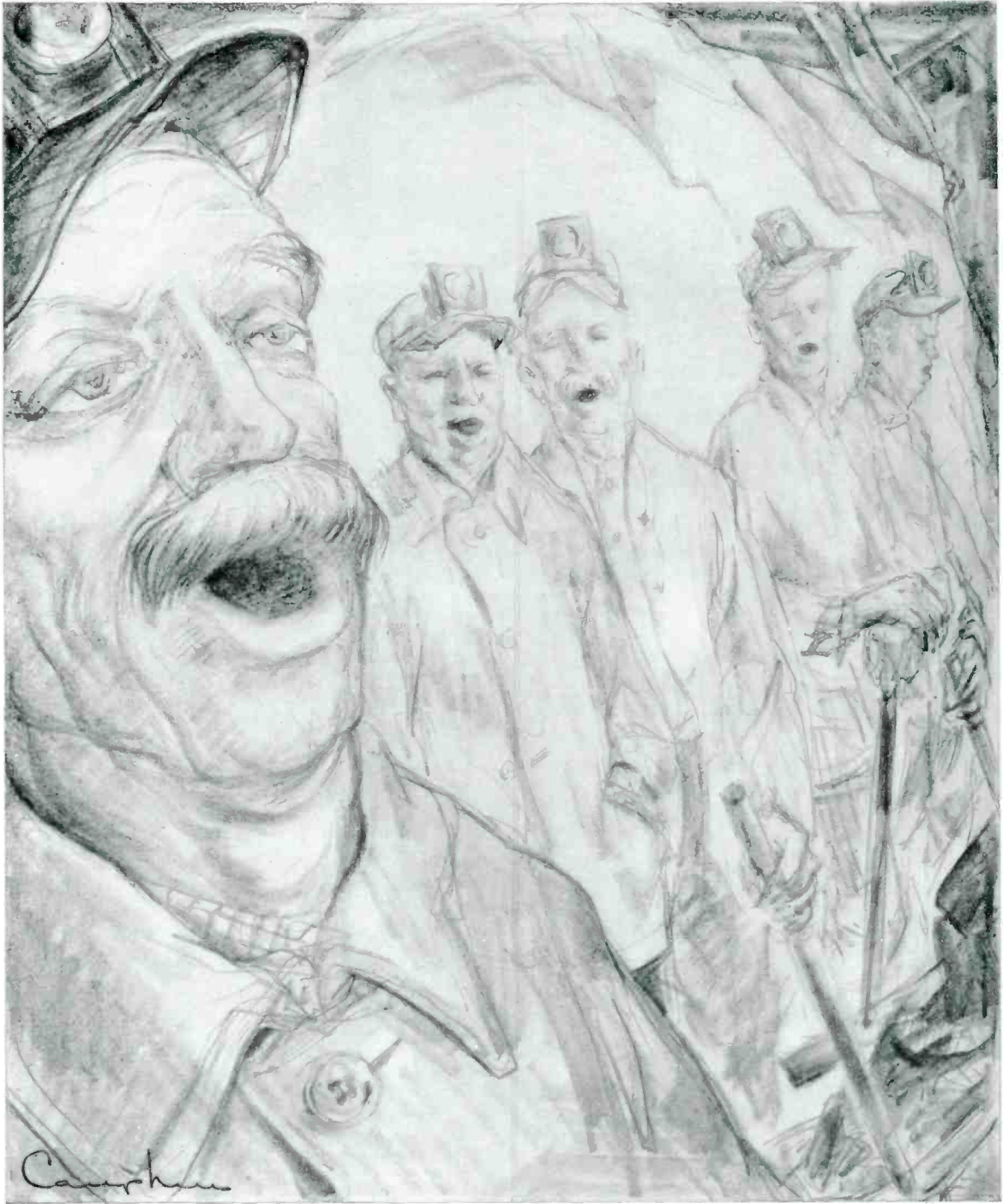
Send for detailed descriptive literature or see your local high fidelity distributor.

Model S1000B \$ 99.50 net
Black and Gold finish

Model S1000C \$104.50 net
Gold-tooled Cordovan Leatherette

Sherwood
ELECTRONIC LABORATORIES

Dept. IH, 2802 W. Cullom Ave., Chicago 18, Ill.



ALWAYS true balance in register—like golden-throated Welsh singers. A full buoyancy in the complete range whether voice or instrument timbre. That is the real joy in loudspeakers by Philips. Made in Holland of "Ticonal"—the most powerful of magnet steels, they outmode the former "woofer" and "tweeter" design. Yet give greater scope and always proper projection.

Model 9762—12" speaker with a record efficiency of 14% at 400 c/s due to use of an extra powerful "Ticonal" magnet. With this loudspeaker the acoustical output and the reproduction range

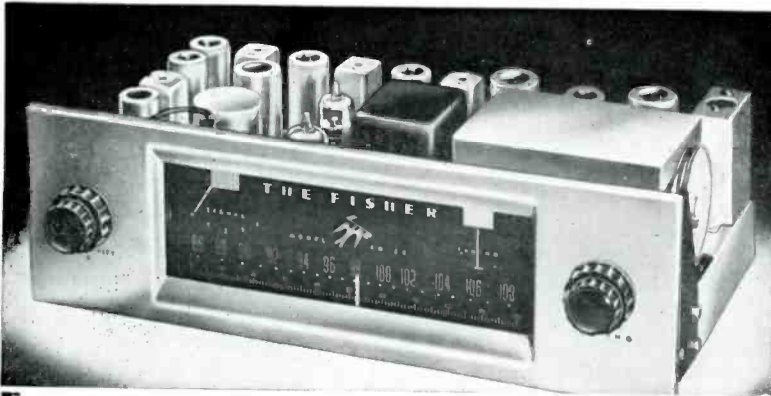
of Hi-Fi and other equipment can be raised to a level never before achieved! Frequency range is 40 to 20,000 c/s. 20 watts—8 ohms—List \$94.95

Model 9750 is an 8½" version of this speaker. 10 watts—8 ohms—List \$32.95.

Model 7010—8½" speaker. 45 to 12,000 c/s frequency range with a special feature of a magnetic system pressed into a high precision frame to avoid misalignment of the air gap even in case of heavy shocks. Voice-coil impedance at 1000 c/s. 5 watts—4 ohms—List \$16.50

List prices subject to the audiophile discounts.

DUOTONE CO., INC., Keyport, N. J.



Now! Micro-Tuning!

THE

 FISHER

FM TUNER MODEL FM-80

World's Best by I. R. E. Standards

NEVER before in the history of Frequency Modulation has there been a tuner to match the remarkable, new FISHER FM-80. Equipped with TWO meters, it will outperform any existing FM tuner, *regardless of price!* The FM-80 combines extreme sensitivity, flexibility, and micro-accurate tuning. It has an unusually *compact*, beautifully designed chassis. Like its renowned companions, the FISHER FM-AM Tuners, Models 50-R and 70-RT, we predict the FM-80 will be widely imitated, but never equalled. Be sure; buy THE FISHER. **Only \$139.50**

Outstanding Features of THE FISHER FM-80

- TWO meters; one to indicate sensitivity, one to indicate center-of-channel for micro-accurate tuning. • Armstrong system, with two IF stages, dual limiters and a cascode RF stage. • Full limiting even on signals as weak as one microvolt. • Dual antenna inputs: 72 ohms and 300 ohms balanced (*exclusive!*) • Sensitivity: 1½ microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 72-ohm input; 3 microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 300-ohm input. • Chassis *completely* shielded and shock-mounted, including tuning condenser, to eliminate microphonics, and noise from otherwise accumulated dust. • Three controls — Variable AFC/Line-Switch, Sensitivity, and Station Selector PLUS an exclusive Output Level Control. • Two bridged outputs. Low-impedance, cathode-follower type, permitting output leads up to 200 feet. • 11 tubes. • Dipole antenna supplied. Beautiful, brushed-brass front panel. • Self-powered. • WEIGHT: 15 pounds. • SIZE: 12¾" wide, 4" high, 8½" deep including control knobs.

Price Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

WRITE TODAY FOR COMPLETE SPECIFICATIONS

FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

LETTERS

Continued from page 20

excellent new form of recreation. To play, one stands 10 feet or so from an automatic changer and pitches horse-shoe fashion a number of 45 rpm disks at the spindle. The state of tranquil relaxation this brings can only be compared to the joy of listening to Varese's *Ionization* on a "super tweeter" powered by 85 watts of distortion-free (who needs distortion?) McIntosh or Fisher or what have you.

Stephen I. Abrams
 Chicago, Ill.

Sir:

Mr. Frankenstein's review of Stravinsky LP recordings was very interesting and I admire the method of presentation. However, I take great joy in pointing out the following omissions from the author's list:

Capriccio (Victor LCT 1152 — Sanroma, Boston Symphony, Koussevitzky cond.)

Le Rossignol Suite (Camden 189) Cincinnati Orchestra, Goossens, cond.

Fireworks (Camden 152) — Chicago Symphony, Defauw, cond.

The failure of catalog makers to list the works on the Camden label is a little hard to understand because they contain some very fine readings from Victor's Red Seal catalog. Apparently, even the critics seem to be unaware that they exist.

Donald A. Dove
 Arlington, Va.

Sir:

It strikes me that the writers dissenting with my views are criticizing *not* what I said, but rather certain consequences which they drew from my article. ("Are High Frequencies Necessary?" September 1954). None of these consequences, however, were implied by me, and none of them are cogent. I did not suggest that we should cut all frequencies above 8,000 cps and return to the old lo-fi models. Nor did I advocate that some of the "possible graph-like oscillations on a disk should be erased."

My article just stated a problem and posed a question. And the only consequence hinted between the lines was this: in their untiring efforts

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LETTERS

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to push sound reproduction ever closer towards realism (i.e., the sonorous and musical phenomena as they are actually perceived by the majority of listeners in life performance), engineers have gone a long way to extend the band of available frequencies. The initial success of this approach substantially increased the quality of modern records and equipment, but some time ago we crossed the point of diminishing returns: further advance in this direction appears to lead to increasing distortion, and uniform publicity begins to mislead the general public into believing that every 500 cycles added to the upper end of the band will generate an appreciable percentage of truth and realism which it decidedly does not do. Thus, a new approach to the problem will have to be found, and it may be possible — as we cautiously hinted — that better knowledge of inharmonious overtones and unexplored phenomena of tone physiology and psychology might produce the next series of improved processes and design. . .

F. A. Kuttner

Jackson Heights, L. I., N. Y.

Sir:

I was very interested in the six-odd letters discussing pro and con Mr. F. A. Kuttner's article, "Are High Frequencies Necessary?"

Actually it is a matter of balance; much of the opposition to high frequencies among the "low-fiers" in the past was brought about by beginning "hi-fiers" who extended their treble response into the stratosphere without extending the bass proportionately (we went through this stage ourselves before we availed ourselves of a loudspeaker cabinet and system that would send our basses down into the cellar). I am, of course, referring to true bass and not the artificial "boosted," boxy, cabinet-resonant bass featured in some of the recently marketed "package hi-fi" units.

The further the basses are extended into the lower frequencies, the further the treble must be extended into the higher regions; and conversely, the higher the bass is cut off, the more the highs must be trimmed.

It is important, however, as Mr.

Continued on page 24



MODEL 70-RT

World's Finest

BY I. R. E.
STANDARDS

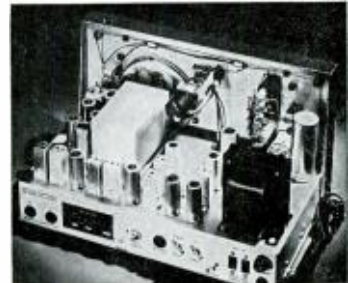
FISHER

Professional FM-AM TUNERS

THE truest index to the quality of FISHER Tuners is the roster of its exacting users. An Eastern FM station chose the FISHER to pick up selected New York and Washington programs *direct*, for rebroadcast to its own community. Reception of FM stations over 150 miles distant, terrain permitting, is a regular occurrence, if you own a FISHER Professional FM-AM Tuner, 70-RT or 50-R.

MODEL 70-RT

■ Features *extreme sensitivity* (1.5 mv for 20 db of quieting); works where others fail. Armstrong system, *adjustable* AFC on switch, *adjustable* AM selectivity, separate FM and AM front ends. Complete shielding and shock-mounting on main and subchassis. Distortion below 0.04% for 1 volt output. Hum level: better than 90 db below 2 volts output on radio, better than 62 db below output with 10 mv input on phono. Two inputs. Two cathode follower outputs. Self-powered. Exceptional phono preamplifier with enough gain for even lowest-level magnetic pickup. Full, phono equalization facilities. 15 tubes. Six controls, including Bass, Treble, Volume, Channel/Phono-Equalization, Tuning and Loudness Balance. Beautiful Control Panel. SIZE: 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep.



MASTERPIECE OF TUNER DESIGN

MODEL 50-R

■ Identical to the 70-RT but designed for use with an *external* preamplifier-equalizer, such as the FISHER Series 50-C.

MODEL 50-R



MODEL 70-RT

\$184.50

MODEL 50-R

\$164.50

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WEST OF THE ROCKIES

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WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE

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IN AMPLIFIER DESIGN
IN TWENTY YEARS!

FISHER Z-MATIC

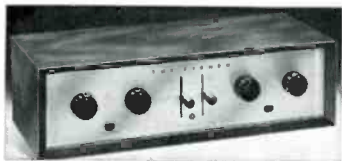
PAT. PEND.

THE unusual, the choice—both are a regular and traditional product of our engineering laboratories. But never before have we offered a technological advance so obviously needed, so long overdue, as the exclusive FISHER Z-Matic. Regardless of the speaker system, be it a modest 8" unit or a giant assembly, the vast acoustic improvement contributed by FISHER Z-Matic is instantly apparent and truly astonishing. For Z-Matic has at one stroke eliminated the energy-wasting, distortion-producing mismatch that has prevented the complete union of speaker and amplifier ever since the advent of electronic sound reproduction. Z-Matic is now standard equipment on all FISHER amplifiers.



50-Watt Amplifier • Model 50-AZ

100 watts peak! World's finest all-triode amplifier. Uniform within 1 db, 5 to 100,000 cycles. Less than 1% distortion at 50 watts. Hum and noise 96 db below full output. Oversize, quality components and finest workmanship. \$159.50



Master Audio Control • Series 50-C

"Finest unit yet offered." — *Radio and TV News*. 25 choices of record equalization, separate bass and treble tone controls, loudness balance control, 5 inputs and 5 independent input level controls, two cathode follower outputs.

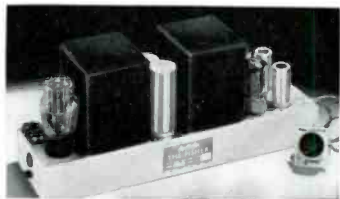
Chassis, \$89.50 • With cabinet, \$97.50

What Z-Matic Does

- Multiplies the efficiency and effective audible range of any speaker system, regardless of size.
- The continuously variable Z-Matic control permits any setting, according to personal taste or the requirements of the speaker system.
- Eliminates need for oversize speaker enclosures and automatically corrects inherent deficiencies in speaker or speaker housing.
- Z-Matic must not be confused with tone, equalization, loudness balance or damping factor controls. It is an entirely new development.
- Only FISHER amplifiers have Z-Matic.

A Word to Our Patrons

Your FISHER 50-A or 70-A amplifier can be readily equipped with Z-Matic. A complete kit of parts and easy-to-follow instructions are available at a cost of only \$2.50 to cover handling. Give serial number and model.



25-Watt Amplifier • Model 70-AZ

50-watts peak! More clean watts per dollar. Less than 1/2% distortion at 25 watts (0.05% at 10 watts.) Response within 0.1 db, 20-20,000 cycles; 1 db, 10 to 50,000 cycles. Hum and noise virtually non-measurable! \$99.50

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FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

LETTERS

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Mr. John F. Fox says, that the equipment be able to reproduce frequencies far above and below the audible band. Since no system is completely free of distortion, and distortion increases as the system's frequency limits are approached, it is necessary to build it so that the frequency response is broad enough so that the portion used is only the best part in the middle third (or so) of the spectrum.

In addition to balance, clear definition is probably the most important attribute of a hi-fi system necessary to good and pleasant listening. In the light of this, it is puzzling to read that Mr. E. R. Petrich often "breaks in" a new record by scraping away the high frequency modulations with a chisel-shaped stylus; my experience has been that in addition to scraping away the high frequency modulations, a chisel-shaped stylus also will introduce distortion which almost completely destroys the definition of the medium high frequencies which are left. It seems it would be much easier for Mr. Petrich to install in his set a high frequency "cut-off" and keep the definition of the music remaining.

In the meantime, the whole discussion is really rather fruitless, because we have compensators and audio controls so we can have the treble we want and let those who don't want it trim it off where they may.

Alan D. Dave
Portland, Ore.

Sir:

Once again, HIGH FIDELITY set the vogue (for better or worse). Since Mr. Burke's articles, we are getting innumerable calls for Schubert's *Élégie* and *Dirge*, items we ourselves had tried to push for years when they were merely Opera 100 and 163. Now, of course, we explain they are Burke's *Élégie* and *Dirge*, with music by Schubert.

Julian M. Moses
Classical Record Shop
New York, N. Y.

Sir:

Several months ago I wrote offering the use of my complete collection of all of your magazines to anyone in this area. The August issue had

Continued on page 25

LETTERS

Continued from page 24

an excerpt from that letter and since that time I have received requests to borrow No. 4 and 5 from as far away as California. It certainly is amazing, if not flabbergasting, to realize the attention which readers of HIGH FIDELITY give to every bit of material you publish. The extent of the response by your readers makes me wonder whether some of them might not be able to be of help to us here in Durham on some questions.

I am referring to a new association which has been formed in our community called "Allied Arts of Durham." This is a non-profit organization which includes the local Theater Guild, Art Guild, Civic Hall Society, Chamber Music Society, Children's Museum, Camera Club and last, but far from least, the local chapter of the North Carolina Symphony Society. The North Carolina Symphony, to the best of my knowledge, is unique in the world in that it is supported by the State Legislature (\$20,000.00) and by 30,000 N. C. adults who pay membership fees ranging from \$3.00 to \$100.00 or more. The Symphony last year gave free concerts throughout N. C. to over 142,000 school children and 55,000 adults.

Our new organization in Durham, Allied Arts, provides one membership in all organizations at a cost of only \$5.00. It is an attempt, and again I believe a unique one, to broaden the cultural activities of the community and, above all, to make participation in these activities available to people at all economic levels.

One of the fond hopes of the Durham Chapter of the N. C. Symphony is to make music readily available to the people of our area. Despite the good work of the state Symphony, we have perhaps as low level of music appreciation in the area as anywhere in the country due primarily to lack of funds. We hope that Allied Arts, in this area, may, by offering a central location, make good music continually available as it has not been before. One of the ways in which we hope to accomplish this is by establishing a record lending library for the various schools. In this connection, our problem becomes not only one of money but how to best utilize the available funds for

Continued on page 26

Fine Additions

TO COMPLETE YOUR
HOME MUSIC SYSTEM

FISHER ACCESSORIES



MIXER-FADER · Model 50-M

NEW! Electronic mixing or fading of any two signal sources (such as microphone, phono, radio, etc.) No insertion loss. Extremely low hum and noise level. High impedance input; cathode follower output. 12AX7 tube. Self-powered. Beautiful plastic cabinet. **Only \$19.95**



PREAMPLIFIER-EQUALIZER · 50-PR

Professional phono equalization. Separate switches for HF roll-off and LF turn-over; 16 combinations. Handles any magnetic cartridge. Extremely low hum. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Two triode stages. Fully shielded. Beautiful cabinet. Self-powered. **\$22.95**



PREAMPLIFIER-EQUALIZER · 50-PR-C WITH VOLUME CONTROL

50-PR-C. This unit is identical to the 50-PR but is equipped with a volume control to eliminate the need for a separate audio control chassis. It can be connected directly to a basic power amplifier and is perfect for a high quality phonograph at the lowest possible cost. **\$23.95**



HI-LO FILTER SYSTEM · Model 50-F

Electronic, sharp cut-off filter system for suppression of turntable rumble, record scratch and high frequency distortion — with absolute minimum loss of tonal range. Independent switches for high and low frequency cut-off. Use with any tuner, amplifier, etc. **\$29.95**



PREAMPLIFIER · Model PR-5

A self-powered unit of excellent quality, yet moderate cost. Can be used with any low-level magnetic cartridge, or as a microphone preamplifier. Two triode stages. High gain. Exclusive feedback circuit permits long output leads. Fully shielded. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **\$12.57**

FLASH! At the historic High Fidelity Concert given by the National Symphony Orchestra in Constitution Hall, November 13, 1954, FISHER 50-AZ Amplifiers and a FISHER Master Audio Control were used to play back the tape recordings made on the spot for the thrilled audience.

Prices Slightly Higher West of the Rockies

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The Sensation of Two Audio Fairs . . .

PERMOFLUX

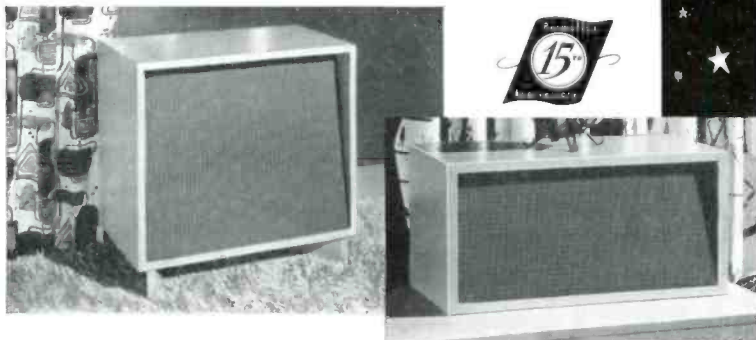
Largo and Diminutive
2-WAY SPEAKER SYSTEMS

Now Available Under

HTP*

Acclaimed at the Sight and Sound Exposition in Chicago and the Auditorium in New York, these amazing high-fidelity speaker systems are now available under HTP—an exclusive Permoflux insured plan that enables you to try a Largo or Diminutive in the quiet and comfort of your own home for 15 days. See your hi-fi dealer today!

*EXCLUSIVE PERMOFLUX 15-DAY INSURED HOME TRIAL PLAN, INTRODUCED AT THE CHICAGO AND NEW YORK AUDIO FAIRS, OCT., 1954



THE LARGO

Outstanding wide-range speaker system at moderate cost. Uses the "Super Royal Eight" speaker and Super Tweeter. Unique new-type back-loading horn enclosure is matched, octave by octave, to speakers . . . assuring undistorted reproduction from 35-16,000 cps. In selected 3/4" Mahogany or Korina veneers. Exclusive: Special connection for headset extension cord. Size: 24" W, 23" H, 14" D. Impedance, 8 ohms.

Suggested Audiophile Net . . . \$99.75

THE DIMINUTIVE

A marvel of compactness featuring "big-system" reproduction over the full audio range and low cost. Ideal for use in a bookcase or as extension speaker. With 2 "Royal 6" speakers and Super Tweeter. In Mahogany or Blonde finish 3/4" veneers. Size: 23 1/2" W, 11 1/2" H, 12" D. Impedance, 4-8 ohms.

Suggested Audiophile Net . . . \$49.50

As above, but with selected 3/4" Mahogany or Korina veneers.

Suggested Audiophile Net . . . \$64.50

HEARING IS BELIEVING! Try either system at home under HTP! Read what High-Fidelity Magazine says:

"It's best to try a speaker at home before buying."

—Audio Forum Dept., Oct. 1954 issue

FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY: Every HTP participant will receive, absolutely FREE, the new Permoflux "Maestro" Speaker-Headset Control Box. See your Permoflux-authorized HTP dealer, or write for full details, to:

Permoflux CORPORATION

4916 West Grand Avenue • Chicago 39, Illinois

West Coast Plant • 4101 San Fernando Road • Glendale 4, California
Canadian License • Campbell Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Toronto, Canada

LETTERS

Continued from page 25

the greatest good. This is where we would like to get help from you and/or your readers.

As an example, we have budgeted for the year 1955, \$200.00 for the purchase of records. We are sure that there must be some arrangement whereby non-profit organizations such as ours can obtain these records at a considerable discount. For example, do the record companies make any dispensation for such organizations. We understand that radio stations can purchase records at a very nominal price provided they mention the manufacturer's name whenever playing the records. As we plan to have a program on each of the local stations, time for which will be donated, would it be possible for us to work out a similar arrangement if such exists? Likewise, it would not seem impossible that there are various foundations which might well be interested in the work which we are attempting to do. We do not know them nor do we know the fields in which they operate.

Another problem which exists is that of equipment. Our public school systems provide playback equipment for various purposes but it is of such quality that our record library would soon be destroyed. Is there any possibility of interesting any of the manufacturers, not in giving equipment as in selling it to us at cost. We have already received offers of used equipment from individuals in the area who are interested in good reproduction of music but that will far from cover our needs. Are there not other individuals or groups who could be of aid to us if they knew of our project?

Perhaps, above all, we are interested in bringing as much live music as possible to the area. Again we are open for any suggestions as to how this might be accomplished at the most reasonable cost.

I think that I can assure you and your readers that all correspondence would be most sincerely appreciated and put to the best possible use.

Watts Hill, Jr.
Durham Bank & Trust Co.
Durham, N. C.

Continued on page 29

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

Announcing



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We had always considered the expression—high fidelity—as simply a connotation of audio quality in terms of faithful sound reproduction . . . a convenient abbreviation in a fast moving society . . . but, like the expression OK, having no substance or meaning within itself. That's what we thought—and that's what we thought everybody thought.

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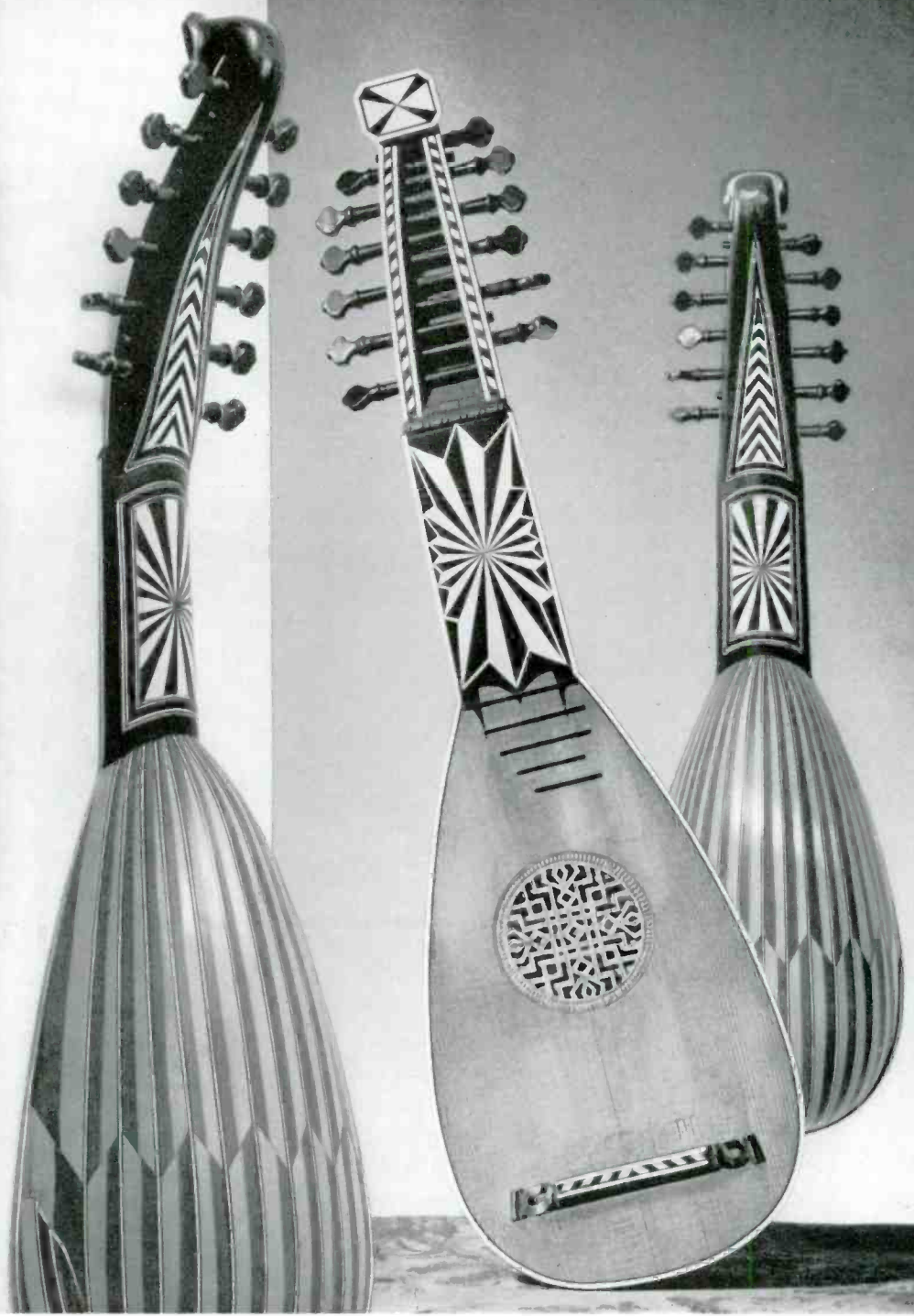
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LETTERS

Continued from page 26

Sir:

In the November issue under "Letters" appears a note of protest from Dorlé Jarmel Soria to words expressed by your critic in his reviews of the FFRR and Angel versions of *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The critic, Mr. Hinton, wrote of "there being little to choose between orchestral and choral performances since both were made in Milano and chances were that a good many of the same people perform the same functions in both sets."

Mr. Roger Degoy, a most distinguished colleague objected to the inference that he thought implied London was utilizing La Scala personnel and then went on to claim that this could not be so as the Scala management will not permit members to perform outside the Scala contract.

1) Whether Scala or Degoy like it or not, I can assure them that members of La Scala were involved in our recording. We do not now or have we ever claimed that this was a Scala production in any meaning of that term, however. We happen to like to record with whom we see foremost in a specific role and we are content to bill our recordings as London Productions, and since a fair measure of success has been ours to date, perhaps we are not wrong in this assumption.

2) La Scala like any other organization can make recording arrangements with whom they see fit. The Metropolitan operates in the same manner but I have never heard them claim that Mario del Monaco, Renata Tebaldi, Cesare Siepi, Ettore Bastianini, Guilletta Simionato, Hilde Gueden, Lisa della Casa, Fernando Corena and many more like them are not members of the Metropolitan merely because they happen to be exclusive FFRR artists.

3) La Scala, like the Metropolitan Opera, can make any arrangements they see fit with record companies but they cannot utilize (without our written permission) any artists under exclusive contract to this company such as those mentioned above.

4) *Cavalleria Rusticana*, in the London performance, features very prominently Mario del Monaco, Elena Nicolai and Aldo Protti who are

Continued on page 30

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BRAHMS

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Utrecht Symphony
Paul Hupperts, Conducting

MOZART

Piano Concerto in E Flat, K 107
Artur Balsam, piano,
Winterthur Symphony Orch.,
Otto Ackermann, Conducting

BACH

Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor,
A. Schweitzer, Organ of the
Tabernacle, Salt Lake City

WAGNER

Die Meistersinger, Prelude, Act 1,
Zurich Tonhalle Orch.,
Otto Ackermann, Conducting

DUKAS

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Utrecht Symphony,
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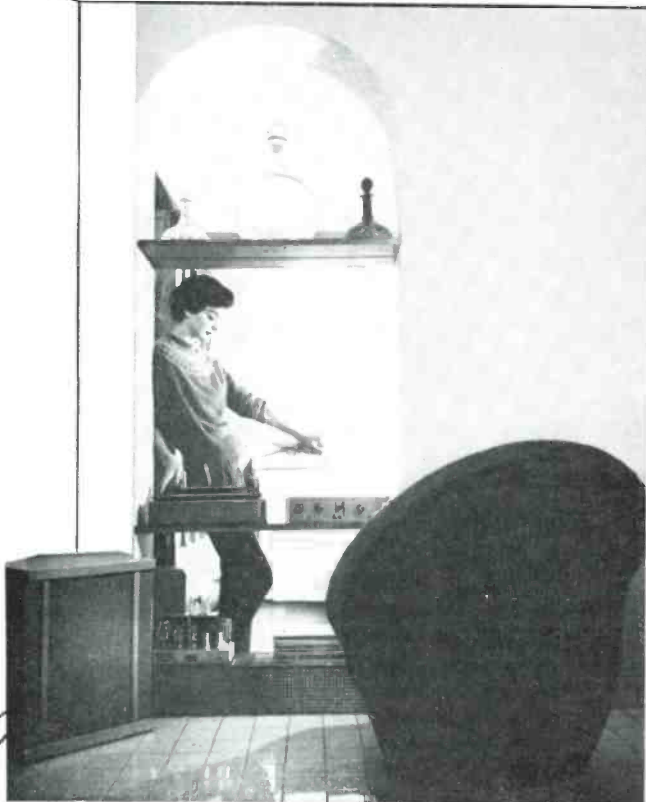
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Trade Mark

LETTERS

Continued from page 29

not only members of La Scala, they are well-beloved "top line stars of that organization." As for the orchestra and chorus, we did audition, as Mr. Hinton has stated in his reply, players from all over Milano. It happens that some of these (more than a handful) also work at La Scala but with all respect to that famed opera house, we were not in the least impressed with that aspect of their qualifications nor did we ask or consider it. Was he or she a good string player or choral singer was all we cared about.

5) It should be no news to Mr. Degoy that good professionals are always making records for all companies whether with their original association or without it. Along these lines, may I ask Mr. Degoy and Angel-EMI what players they utilized for the orchestra of the Bach B Minor Mass under Herbert von Karajan? The label states something about Musikfreunde in Vienna. I thought that the orchestra there was the Vienna Philharmonic but they couldn't use them (or could they?) since this world-famous group is under exclusive contract to FFRR!

6) Have no fears of it happening, Angel-EMI, Degoy, etc. London FFRR will never try to sell a recording on the basis other than "It was thought of by us; recorded by us; paid for by us; and sold by us under the regular FFRR warranties of good faith and honest endeavor." In a major part of a lifetime thus far. I have never come across the record buyer who bought an operatic set because it was made at (you name it). They want to know who sings it and with the top tenor, soprano, baritone, bass, contralto and buffo of Italy under exclusive contract, London FFRR needs no innuendo.

Remy Van Wyck Farkas

Director, Artists and Repertory
London FFRR

Sir:

Decca forgot to insert the original text of Orff's *Carmina Burana* in its DL 9706. I will be very grateful to the HIGH FIDELITY reader who supplies it or tells where I can get it.

Guy Faucher

163 Bosse

Chicoutimi, Canada

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

INTRODUCING

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For complete information send for bulletin 13.

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WRITE FOR BULLETIN NO. 204

Electro-Voice

BUCHANAN, MICHIGAN

Export: 13 E. 40th St., N.Y. 16, U.S.A. Cables: Arlab

An Open Letter to Record Manufacturers

GENTLEMEN:—

The year 1756 brought the first real world war, and in compensation the most wonderful of any year's children, Wolfgang Mozart. You will not celebrate the first event, but some of you have already formulated plans to commemorate the second. One at least has heralded the Epic with enthusiastic prematurity, dating his 1954 disks "Mozart Jubilee Edition 1956."

A competitive spirit intent on jumping the gun is perhaps more valuable on other occasions. On this one, which need not be solemn but which ought to be glorious, a good measure of coöperation is necessary to give proper homage to Mozart and acquire true prestige for the makers of records.

This is not to say that competition is undesirable in the Mozart Bi-Centennial. If you gentlemen all do your best to surpass each other with the best at your command, music-lovers will have a perplexing choice of magnificent records to consider, and the greater the perplexity (among magnificent things) the greater the repute of the industry. So, by all means, let your competition be based on your conviction that what is good for Mozart is good for that industry.

You owe a debt to Mozart who never had a *thaler* of royalty from any of you. Intelligent rivalry among you, each using his best players, singers and conductors and permitting some lavishness of preparation and rehearsal, will give the world great quantities of grand incarnations of the Symphonies, the Concertos, the Serenades and Divertimentos, the Sonatas, Quartets, Cassations and Masses; and will acquire for you honor and the satisfaction that honor brings to pride, with perhaps also some profits.

But if you receive honor from the results of competition, you will receive greater, in one field, from alliance with one another. This field is opera, which several among you can cultivate competently, but which demands a magnificent union of effort and of forces for a harvest all gold and no glister.

Now it cannot be proved that the greatest Mozart is the operas, but it is indisputable that some of the greatest operas are by Mozart. You gentlemen will hardly attempt to disprove that for the celebration in 1956. You are going to engrave *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *The Magic Flute*, *Die Entführung*, *Così fan tutte* (in Italian), *Idomeneo*, *Der Schauspieldirektor* and perhaps the rest. You know that the commendable recordings of the past — some very

commendable indeed — need replacement. You know that possibly only the tiny *Bastien und Bastienne* as Columbia recently recorded it is entirely good enough to represent your industry, now, in a Mozart Festival. But not one of you can produce, without help, the incomparable titans, the first six mentioned above, as they ought to be produced to proclaim what Mozart was and what the makers of records can do to fortify that proclamation.

You cannot undertake the greatest of the operas without considering all, and employing some, of these ladies: Jurinac, Schwarzkopf, Steber, Seefried, Gueden, Thebom, Felbermayer, Roon, Lipp; and of these gentlemen: Kunz, Edelmann, Weber, Corena, London, Dermota, Tucker, Christoff, Fischer-Dieskau. You must estimate the credentials of Beecham, Karajan, Kleiber, Reiner, Siedry, Solti, Münchinger, Pritchard and Krips as chiefs to lead your forces. But whatever the talents utilized — and there are others worth consideration — which of you commands enough of them to mount the best possible *Don Giovanni*?

Therefore, can you not lend your best, for the occasion, to a personnel center, a super-pool of Mozarteans?

Also, can you not all subscribe to a common code? To respect the original language? To discriminate between editions and texts, to include the *recitativo secco* (ah, *Figaro*) as Mozart composed it? Can you not commission a deft hand to abridge the spoken dialog in the *Singspiels*, keeping just enough to maintain sense and movement, to prevent a continuous confusion of irrelevant scenes from piling up a mere pageantry?

We — and many, many others of the Mozart following — should like to see you confer and appoint a responsible committee empowered to make plans and decisions, in what concerns the operas, for the industry as a whole.

In all senses this is your business. It is not an ordinary business. Is it utopian, or is it good sense, to consider a special label of alliance for disks uniting the highest abilities in the highest operas? Does not everyone share honor when Columbia's brilliance, London's robustness, Westminster's clarity, Victor's polish, Mercury's galvanism and Angel's rounded surety join to ensure the greatness of a great occasion?

We should like to see you join hands for this.

Yours most truly,

C. G. BURKE

Are writers worth listening to?

by WILLIAM SAROYAN

AS I WRITE, it is a year since Goddard Lieberson offered The Columbia Literary Series to the public: a black leather case containing 12 longplaying records, a nicely-made book with a Preface by Mr. Lieberson, an Introduction by the late Irwin Edman entitled "The Writer as Reader," and photographs of, and biographical comment about, each of the 12 writers — all for only \$100.

I didn't buy my set. I read for the series in order to get a free set, which reached me in October 1953. I dropped everything else, read the book, and listened to a little of each side of each record, and to all of both sides of my own. This work took about four hours. Had I listened to everything it would have taken 12 hours or more. I didn't listen to any of the stuff again, for a good reason, which I shall get to in a moment.

The series has been adequately reviewed, consequently this is not to be another review. I will, however, name the writers, and the pieces they read.

W. Somerset Maugham: *The Three Fat Women of Antibes*, and *Gigolo and Gigolette*.

Aldous Huxley: *Brave New World*, Introduction, and *Linda's Death*.

John Collier: *Mary, De Mortuis*, and *Back for Christmas*.

Sacheverell Sitwell: from *Spain, Mauretania*, and *Roumanian Journey*.

John Steinbeck: *The Snake*, and *Johnny Bear*.

Katherine Anne Porter: *Flowering Judas*.

Edith Sitwell: Excerpts from *A Poet's Notebook*, and *A Notebook on William Shakespeare*, and Excerpts from *The Canticle of the Rose*, and *Other Poems*.

Christopher Isherwood: From *A Berlin Diary*, *Prater Violet*, and *The Condor and the Cows*.

Truman Capote: *Children on their Birthdays*.

Edna Ferber: *The Gay Old Dog*.

Sir Osbert Sitwell, From *Left Hand, Right Hand*.

William Saroyan: Several short stories, and excerpts from various novels and plays.

One hundred dollars for the set automatically prevented it from reaching anything like even a very small portion of the people who might be interested in hearing the voices of contemporary writers, for that is what the series amounts to — the recording of speaking voices, as against singing voices, or chanting voices, although several of the writers speak with great artfulness and equal or surpass the artfulness of professional actors, and come quite near to chanting.

I believe Columbia plans to make the records separately available at regular trade prices, probably in the near future. There isn't likely to be a rush for any particular record, however, although sales are apt to pick up for all 12, at about five dollars each, I suppose. In four or five years it is not unlikely, however, that the records will be individually available for as little as half a dollar each. At that time they will sell like paperback books. Certain records will probably sell in the millions, as many popular songs of three minutes' duration now sell, at a cost of anywhere from half a dollar to a little under a dollar. When the inexpensive longplaying record is commercially profitable the voices of writers on records will be generally heard, along with the voices of singers, actors, comedians, statesmen, and speech-makers in general, who are now heard both over the radio and on records. Writers, as such, are not apt to become radio favorites, so that we may presume they will be heard on records almost exclusively.

A number of questions come up regarding the business of having the speaking voices of writers on records, in a more or less permanent form, since it is being done now on a considerable scale. There must be at least 50 long-playing records devoted to the voices of writers reading, apart from the Columbia set I have mentioned. One can hear (at about \$6 an hour) Dylan Thomas, T. S. Eliot, Conan Doyle, Sean O'Casey, Ogden Nash, Gertrude Stein, Robert Benchley, Merrill Moore, Carl Sandburg.

"If records of the voices of writers of the past were available, whom would I want to listen to ?"



Gorky



Poe



Goethe



Balzac



Ibsen

Tennessee Williams, Eudora Welty, E. E. Cummings, and quite a few others.

First, does the making of such a record add to or detract from the total impression of a writer and his work?

I think the existence of such a record, or even a series of them, does neither, strictly speaking. Reading will always be reading, and no reader hears a writer's voice when he reads, if in fact he hears any voice at all, excepting perhaps his own. Silent reading does not appear to be in any kind of danger at all. The silence of it is much too attractive.

On the other hand, listening to writers on records may very well become as appealing as listening to anything else on records — for its own sake. Such listening satisfies curiosity, it is interesting, and it can be dramatic.

Writers' records will be kept available as their books are kept available. In short, this is an inevitable and proper business, for all sorts of valid reasons. Writers who prefer not to have their voices available on records will simply not make them available, that's all.

SHOULD a writer permit his voice to be made available? Every writer will decide for himself, of course. I happen to think it is a good idea, and I have no illusions about the importance of writers in general, or about myself. I just think it is a sensible idea. First, it means royalties, and most writers can use a new source of royalties. Second, it is instructive. A writer learns a good deal about his writing by reading it aloud for others to listen to. Third, there does not appear to be any reason for a writer not to permit his voice to be heard. His friends hear it every day.

What is the probable value of this? Well, to begin with it is good for anybody at all to hear somebody else reading and talking, but I think it is especially good for writers of all kinds to hear other writers of all kinds reading and talking. Some of the writers they will have met in person and heard in conversation, but many of them they will not have met and heard. Apprentice writers (of which there are always more than anybody is likely to be able to guess) will enjoy listening to such records. And finally writers die like everybody else. If there are no records of their voices, interested parties of the future will be deprived of valuable clues to the nature of any given writer. All writers, good and bad, tend to be difficult to account for — certainly as difficult as anybody else. Having the voice of a writer

to listen to is apt to be at least a little helpful — in case it is ever worth anybody's time to want to try to account for his achievement, or his failure.

What is the probable uselessness of the business? Or the harm of it? If a writer is not simply opposed to the business for reasons of his own (which I will not try to guess), there is no possible uselessness or harm, as far as I can see. If a writer is a bad reader, if his way of speech is extra good or extra bad, if his voice seems to be unlike what his writing would impel one to believe his voice *might* be like, there is no harm in any of this, and it is useful. It is not necessary for a writer to have a good speaking voice, or to be an expert at speech, although writers as a rule tend to speak clearly, for they are concerned about communication.

Can the speech-way of a writer be annoying? Of course it can. Anything can be annoying. So what? Is it annoying to make a record? No more than it would be to do any other kind of work, for making a record is nothing more than work. It is not work as writing is work, but it is work as sending a novel to a publisher is work. Can such work be enjoyed? I don't know why it can't. If a job is to be done in any case, it might as well be done with pleasure.

My recording for Columbia was done on my own machine in my own home in Malibu. The machine isn't much, but there *are* good machines, and I am in favor of this procedure for writers, rather than the procedure which involves recording studios, technicians, signals, signals off, and all the rest of it. Technical deficiencies are balanced by naturalness. I tend to believe that the ideal record will be more than just a straight reading of a given piece of writing. It will be something of the writer himself. If this were not so, if the reading were the important thing, then it would be in order for a professional reader, or actor to attend to the matter.

Is the spoken word worth recording in the first place? The answer is yes. Anybody interesting should be heard whenever it is desirable to hear him. That can be done only by means of records. Who is interesting? Everybody is, but all artists are likely to be a little more interesting than all others. Composers, painters, sculptors, architects, artists of all kinds should be heard.

As for myself, how do I feel about future generations hearing me talk, and reading my own writing? (I have been asked the question, I may say. I am not asking it, but I *will* answer it.) First, the whole matter is unimportant. Second, there is no

Continued on page 96

" Quite a messy assortment, I know. . . . The point is that I would like to listen to very nearly any writer at all."



Tolstoy



Whitman



Twain



London



Dickens

by JAMES HINTON, JR.

COMEBACK IN CHICAGO

Chicago once had some of the grandest grand opera in America, or indeed in the world, and it may have again. Here the prospects are judged in the light of the Lyric Theatre's initial season.



EVER SINCE the first man discovered that he could amuse his fellows by standing apart from them and pretending to be someone other than himself — or, rather, since he discovered that if he amused them sufficiently they could be persuaded to contribute food and flints and skins to his support — there has been show business, and with it the eternal problem of guessing just what will engage the attention of audiences. And ever since there has been show business, very likely, its people have said, with an odd blend of wonder, pride, and glumness, that nothing is sure about success in it except that nothing is sure about success in it.

If you put on a show that people think they will enjoy, they will come to find out. If they do enjoy it, they will tell their friends, and an audience will show up next time. If they do not enjoy it, they will tell their friends that, too, and that will be the end of the show. Everything depends on what the show is like relative to the caprices of the omnipotent "they."

At this practical level, opera is in no basic way different from any other kind of show — except that it is extremely difficult and expensive to produce well. In fact, first-class opera has never really paid its own way, save for brief

periods under exceptional circumstances, since it was invented in the late Renaissance by a group of wealthy young Florentines (who were operating on the rather charmingly askew theory that they were not inventing anything at all but, rather, restoring in its primal glory the chanted and danced classic theater of Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles). The reason is simple: The human voice — even the loudest, as distinguished from the most beautiful — will carry only so far, and production costs are so high that in a sold-out theater big enough to bring in enough money to meet the outlay, the people in the seats furthest from the stage would not be able to hear the singers. Yet in a smaller theater it is only too easy to lose money on opera even if all the tickets are sold.

The solution of this problem is obviously far from simple, and many sad impresarios have failed to find it. Obviously, if not enough money can be taken in at the box-office to meet the costs of production, either the costs must be lowered or some extra-box-office source of income found. Given a capacious-enough theater, standards can be lowered and tickets sold for less money. But there is no guarantee that enough people will want

Dress rehearsal of Lucia: In bridal gown, with back turned, is star Maria Callas; Giuseppe di Stefano, as Edgardo, is at center, wearing tartan.



to hear opera on a popular-price level for safe operation. Or, first-class standards can be aimed at and first-class prices charged. Then, when the deficit is known, the company can turn to individuals of wealth, civic groups, and even the government and say, in effect: "Look here; wouldn't it be a pity for an enterprise like this to go under simply because it doesn't make money. It is cultural asset and deserves to be supported."

Since government subsidy of the arts is not a popular idea in this country, it is almost always private citizens who finally come through with enough cash to permit operations to continue—or who fail to come through and allow them to cease. The problem of any opera company is to find the balancing point at which the deficit is small enough to be met in this way and still to maintain standards high enough to make the cultural asset plea seem reasonable. It is this balancing point that the Lyric Theatre of Chicago seems to have found, after more than 20 years during which others have tried and failed.

The operatic past of Chicago is interesting, although it had no opera at all until 1850. Performances then were given in the Rice Theatre, which burned down in 1865 and was replaced by the Crosby Opera House. In 1887, the year after the Metropolitan Opera House was built in New York, a season of German opera was given in the Exposition Building, and plans were made for the construction of the Auditorium Theatre.

The really glorious days of opera in Chicago began on December 9, 1889, when Adelina Patti sang to President Benjamin Harrison as a member of the first Auditorium Theatre audience. This theater, designed by Louis Sullivan, turned out to be a masterpiece—roomy yet seemingly intimate, and blessed with acoustics that even today are spoken of in awed tones. Of all the theaters in this country used for opera, only the Philadelphia Academy of Music and the Brooklyn Academy of Music are compared with it by people who have listened or sung in all, and then only as less striking representatives of the same qualities.

Until 1910, most of the Auditorium opera was staged by touring or semi-touring companies. That year saw the formation of the first real resident group—the Chicago Opera Company, later renamed the Chicago Grand Opera Company, as if to underline the international status it had then attained. The first World War brought with it financial troubles—bankruptcy proceedings in 1915, reorganization in 1916, and finally, in 1922, collapse beneath the weight of a splendid \$800,000 deficit that all appeals failed to lift.

However, in 1923, the very next year, this company was succeeded by the Chicago Civic Opera Company, which promptly came up with a \$400,000 red figure itself. But this loss was met, and so were subsequent losses—including one of \$450,000 in 1928—and in 1929 the company moved from the Auditorium to the new 3,800-capacity, twenty-million-dollar Civic Opera House erected by Samuel Insull.

By no means everyone was pleased with the move, which meant leaving not only the intimacy and superb acoustics of the Auditorium but its tangible reminders

of the golden tradition that had been built there. But there were also apparent advantages. The old Auditorium needed extensive structural propping if it was to remain usable, and, in any case, the production resources it offered were far less imposing than those of the new Civic Opera House, whose 16-story flies and 100-foot stage depth are still awesome a quarter of a century later. Some people—including, apparently, almost all interested Chicagoans—find the almost aggressively *moderne* auditorium décor, with its long, sharply pitched orchestra floor and glassed boxes set far back, annoyingly devoid of charm. But there is no denying that the excellent sight lines converge on opera-producing plant far superior to that at the disposal of the Metropolitan and matched in this country only by that of the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House. Although some complain of the acoustics, they are clean, in most parts of the house, at least, although the total effect can scarcely be called cozy. The Civic Opera House is, essentially, a grand opera house for grand operas, and that is what was put on its stage.

But the honeymoon of Chicago and its new opera house was not to last long. The Depression came, and Insull's public utilities empire and reputation came toppling down. He had paid the bills—and with new settings to be provided for the standard repertoire, not to mention sets imported for new works that were given one or two performances and then dropped, they were pretty fabulous bills. Now he could no longer pay them, and in 1931 the Chicago Civic Opera closed the opera house doors after having run up a cool \$1,000,000 deficit.

And that, until last November, was the story of first-class, really grand opera in Chicago. The fall of Insull left the city with (1) a multi-million-dollar plant specifically

Scene from Act IV of Norma, with Callas singing the title-role and Nicola Rossi-Lemeni as Orovoso, Druid high priest.



designed to present opera, with (2) warehouses and storage racks full of operatic scenery and costumes, all tied up by litigation, and with (3) a long-cultivated taste for the very finest and most lavish and best-sung productions — but with no company to present them.

Finally, in 1934, an attempt was made. The Chicago City Opera Company was formed. But its modestly scaled and less brilliantly cast productions did not fill the artistic gap that had been left, and did not capture the imagination of audiences accustomed to the best.

For in its finest years, both in the Auditorium Theatre and the Civic Opera House, the Chicago audience had heard casts and seen productions that were among the best in the world, and certainly in no important way at all inferior to those of the Metropolitan, which most people today tend to think of — at least partly thanks to broadcasts and tours — as *the* opera company in the United States.

IN WHAT are generally regarded as the good old days, however, both Chicago and New York maintained opera companies that gave full seasons. Although in the course of their careers, many singers sang both in Chicago and at the Metropolitan, the rosters were largely different but virtually equal in strength. Singing with the Chicago Opera was a full-time proposition, and it had its own stars, its own tradition, especially in the French wing, which has never been the Metropolitan's strongest point. It was in Chicago that Mary Garden made by far the most important part of her career on this side of the Atlantic, and the same is substantially true of such great singers — to name only a few sopranos who come to mind as being especially esteemed by record collectors — as Edith Mason, Claudia Muzio, Rosa Raisa, Amelita Galli-Curci, Toti dal Monte, and Graciela Pareto, not to mention Eva Turner, the great Turandot, or Frida Leider. Tito Schipa made a large part of his American career in Chicago, and Lucien Muratore practically all of his, and in the American tenor Charles Marshall the city had an Otello when the Metropolitan had none. There were the days when Chicago had *Aida* casts with Virgilio Lazzari as Ramfis and Alexander Kipnis as the King of Egypt, and it was there that baritones like Giacomo Rimini, Giuseppe Danise, and Cesare Formichi held forth. Vanni-Marcoux sang Boris Godounoff and also Scarpia, and the German wing boasted such baritones as Joseph Schwartz and Heinrich Schlusnus. This kind of thing could go on page after page, but the point has been adequately made that in singer strength Chicago had no need to draw on the Metropolitan, any more than it needed a Tullio Serafin when it had a Giorgio Polacco to conduct. There was glory enough for both.

With this kind of background, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the Chicago City Opera — for all that many of its performances were better than reputable — had some difficulty hanging on until just before the start of the second World War. When the war ended, there was talk of reorganizing and resuming operations, but nothing came of it; the plan was abandoned before even

one performance could be given. After that, Chicago heard all of its opera from visiting companies. An attempt was made to interest the city in a working arrangement whereby it would share the New York City Opera Company, but almost all of the performances given by the company in Chicago were panned without mercy — except the production of Prokofieff's *The Love for Three Oranges*, which was originally commissioned and produced by the Chicago Opera and so had special local standing in advance — and the box office did not do enough business to keep anyone interested in going ahead with the projected bi-city company.

This, then, was the situation that Carol Fox and Lawrence Kelly, both in their twenties, both with musical training, and, probably more important still, both wealthy and well-connected socially, determined to do something about. Beginning in 1950, when the idea — or ideal — first took shape, they set about organizing the Lyric Theatre and, to see that the bills were paid, the Lyric Guild, with twin goals of 40,000 members and \$250,000. Neither goal has been reached even yet, but by last February enough had been accomplished to make it seem advisable to come forward with a calling-card production. Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was chosen — partly on artistic grounds, partly because of a perverse desire to meet the problem head on by producing a really hard work. With Eleanor Steber, Irene Jordan, Bidu Sayao, Leopold Simoneau, and Nicola Rossi-Lemeni in the main roles, and with the Lyric Theatre's gifted young musical director, Nicola Rescigno, in the pit, the production sold out two performances and received very good reviews. The Lyric Theatre announced that it had lost \$922.34 on the production, but considered this to represent financial as well as artistic success.

AT THIS POINT, Miss Fox went to Europe on a shopping tour for the fall season, returning with a roster of Italian singers calculated to arouse the interest of even the most blasé American opera-goer. It included Maria Callas, Rosanna Carteri, Giulietta Simionato, Mirto Picchi, Tito Gobbi, all well known here through recordings if not in person; Giuseppe di Stefano, whose reputation has grown since his seasons at the Metropolitan; Giacinto Prandelli; Nicola Rossi-Lemeni; Gian Giacomo Guelfi, a young baritone who has become very popular in first-class Italian houses; and the veteran buffo Carlo Badioli. In addition, some local singers were engaged, and a number of free-lance Americans, most of them specifically for the full stage premiere of Vittorio Giannini's *The Taming of the Shrew*, which Olin Downes, reviewing its television premiere in the *New York Times*, praised as perhaps the finest of American operas and recommended to the attention of the Metropolitan.

Aside from the blinding effect of Miss Callas' name, there are two notable things about the roster: First, of all the singers listed, only two — Eleanor Steber and Lorenzo Alvary — are on the current Metropolitan roster, and relatively few have sung

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Hi-Fi goes to Constitution Hall

by PAUL SAMPSON

A report on the first attempt to record a full symphony orchestra in action and play the recording back at once from the same stage — the public to judge the "fidelity."

THE PURSUIT of the elusive ideal of "concert hall realism" has been carried to its logical end. Instead of making yet another attempt to bring the concert hall into the home (advertising copywriters long since have accomplished this, anyway), Washington, D. C., sound-engineers brought a home music system to the concert hall, Constitution Hall, to be exact. That aërie of the Daughters of the American Revolution was the scene last November of what was billed as the nation's first high-fidelity concert. Sponsored by Washington's good music station, WGMS, and employing the entire National Symphony Orchestra, the event was called "Soundorama."

The concert arose from the guilt feelings of M. Robert Rogers, president of WGMS, who was disturbed by the thought that more people listen to radio and records than go to concerts. Since he was responsible, in large part, for this situation in Washington at least, Rogers wanted to do something about it. He found a willing accomplice in Howard Mitchell, conductor of the National Symphony, who is willing to lead his orchestra wherever more than half a dozen persons gather. (A couple of years ago the National Symphony played at the dedication of a cemetery fountain. Last fall, it played a brief concert during the intermission of the Washington Redskins' opening home professional football game. It was a common joke around Washington afterwards that symphony had outplayed the futile Redskins.) They devised a simple idea. Have the orchestra play a concert, record part of it on tape and play it back immediately through a superb sound system. High fidelity addicts would be lured into the hall to hear the sound system, and then, as Rogers put it, "They would hear how good a symphony orchestra sounds in person."

The concert was a commercial and, to a lesser degree, artistic success. The 4,000 seats in Constitution Hall were practically filled, and the orchestra played well, though not as well as it can. As a high-fidelity showcase, however, the concert was only tantalizing. Only a couple of

minutes of music were played through the awesome system that was assembled on stage. The sponsors tried too hard not to emphasize sound over music, thus disappointing many in the audience who expected a *little* more high fidelity show-off. What reproduced sound there was, however, was good.

The music was picked up by a Western Electric 640-AA condenser-type microphone suspended slightly behind and about 20 feet over Conductor Mitchell's head. Another condenser mike was placed on the top of a stand about 10 feet high at the edge of the woodwinds. It was opened only slightly — just enough to fill out the orchestral balance. The microphone-placement was the result of long experimentation by WGMS, which has recorded and broadcast the National Symphony in Constitution Hall.

The microphones fed into a Berlant Multichannel Mixer MCM-2 and a Berlant Broadcast Recorder BR-1, using Audiotape. The tapes were played back through a Fisher 50-C Master Audio Control, which distributed the sound to 10 Fisher Laboratory Standard 50-AZ all-triode 50-watt amplifiers, each wired to a Jensen Model PR-100 Imperial speaker system. The 10 speakers weren't just window dressing. They had to fill a million cubic feet of space in the hall. The amplifiers were on a two-step tier at the left of the stage, next to the tape recorders. (This array of components made the concert resemble an electronic votive rite.) Supervising engineers were Irwin Stein, formerly a physicist with the Bureau of Standards, and Albert Preisman, vice president of the Capitol Radio Engineering Institute.



Washington's "Soundorama." The 10 speakers spoke very briefly.

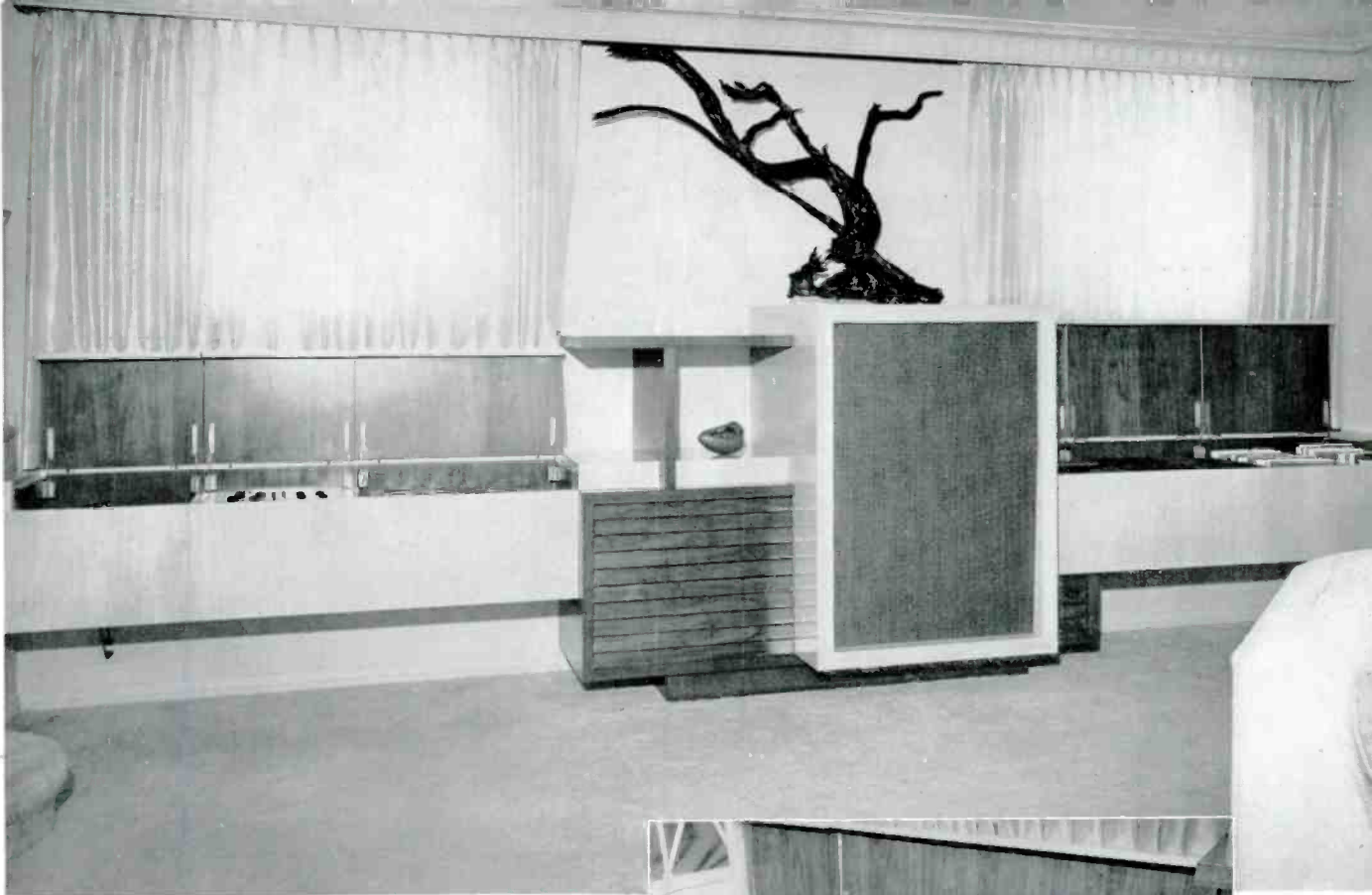
The concert opened with a brass fanfare by Paul Creston that began with a crashing cymbal and a tympani roll. Just before the end of the selection, the brass players, who had been standing, took their instruments from their lips and sat down. The music kept playing. Except for the opening tympani and cymbal, it all had been on tape. Unfortunately, though the audience emit-

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Custom INSTALLATIONS

At right is a handsome modern installation done by the Olympic Engineering Company of Seattle. Below (left) same installation is shown with cabinet doors opened; note speaker housing above television screen. Below (right) is an ingenious housing for an air coupler and a three-speaker system. It was designed and built by Louis Nodell of Patterson, New Jersey. The cabinetry is a glue and screw construction of three-quarter-inch tongue-and-groove panelling.





The elegant construction above is the work of Weingarten Electronics of Los Angeles, Calif. The chest to the right of the speaker above is a storage bin for records; the chest to the left of the speaker (pictured close-up at the right of this caption) contains changer, audio equipment and tape recorder. The system below (left), built by R. L. Happ of Pass Christian, Miss., features a folded Hypex rear loading horn reinforced with concrete. The cabinetry below (middle) was done for Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gammell of Kenmare, North Dakota. The corner housing below (right) is another design of the Olympic Engineering Co.





by ROY F. ALLISON

READ WELL BEFORE SHOPPING

Since January 1954 we have picked up approximately 20,000 new readers, of whom approximately 19,995 have expressed a yen for an article on the fundamentals of hi-shopping. Herewith we offer one which we hope will hold them until 1956.

UNLESS HE HAS a complete system installed for him by an expert, the initiate to high fidelity is faced with the formidable task of selecting the proper components for his installation. But he has a great many to choose from, and advertising in the high fidelity field cannot be charged with undue modesty. Because of his inexperience he lacks faith in his own judgment, and he is inclined to be less than completely certain of the salesman's sincerity. What could be more natural, then, than a demand for simple answers to his simple questions: What is *the best* amplifier, pickup arm, cartridge, speaker system, regardless of price or in a given price range? These questions, and variants of them, account for a substantial part of the correspondence to HIGH FIDELITY's editors.

Unfortunately, there are usually not simple answers for them, for reasons similar to those that make it meaningless to insist (without qualification) that a given automobile is "the best." Personal taste, the purposes for which the vehicle will be used, the importance of prestige, and the size of the pocketbook are only some of the factors that determine which automobile is best for a given user; so it is with high-fidelity equipment. There is one significant difference. Only one choice need be made in the case of an automobile, but several are necessary to assemble a complete high fidelity system, each choice being interrelated to some extent with the others. This increases the complexity of the procedure, certainly, but permits individual variations in system design that are impossible to most automobile buyers. The satisfaction that comes from assembling a system that may well be unique is not to be underrated.

One way to duck the multiple-choice difficulty is to buy one of the better ready-made high-fidelity consoles. Not many of these meet all the criteria for true high fidelity, so that careful comparative listening is required here too. But there are some good ones in the higher price brackets. It is advisable to get one in which the speaker system is in one enclosure and the electrical equipment in another, separate box. The advantages of a packaged system, if it has an acceptable degree of fidelity, are obvious. But the buyer must accept also the cabinets, which may not be precisely complementary with his existing furniture and which, moreover, account for a substantial part of the total cost. People who must get the most for their dollars are not advised to buy packaged high fidelity.

Another alternative is the complete or almost-complete systems, with or without cabinets, that are offered by some of the larger manufacturers. Connecting wires and cables are ordinarily furnished with these combinations, but the total price is at least equal to the sum of the individual unit prices, or slightly more. Most dealers will supply connecting cables for *any* combination of components at a small extra cost; if the purchase is large enough, some dealers don't charge for this service. The only real advantage of a "system" from one manufacturer, therefore, is that the buyer can be reasonably certain that the units will work well together. Substitutions can be made in one or more of the components, at the buyer's discretion, with no financial penalty. The inexperienced purchaser should be extremely wary of the seemingly fabulous bargain deals offered by dealers in standard composite systems of their own devising, particularly those in the lower price ranges.

For those who elect to assemble their own systems entirely, some general rules can be given. First, the components should be compatible—that is, they should work well together. Controls should not be duplicated: if you decide on an amplifier with integral bass, treble, volume and selector controls, you don't need a separate preamplifier-control unit or a tuner which also includes these. Unless you're going to start right out with a binaural setup, there should be only one preamplifier-control section—either as part of the main amplifier, part of the tuner, or a separate unit. If the control section has inadequate record compensation facilities, of course, a simple record compensator or preamplifier-equalizer can be used in addition.

Be certain that the cartridge will fit easily in the pickup arm without a major conversion job and, if a record changer is to be used, that the cartridge is physically tough enough to operate the trip mechanism without malformation of the stylus-bar. The preamplifier should have adequate sensitivity for the cartridge you're going to use, or a transformer will be required, and should have pickup-matching facilities or clear directions for installing the proper terminating resistor for the cartridge. There should be enough input plugs on the control unit to accommodate *all* the sound sources you plan for now or in the future. If you plan a really elaborate system with a tuner, TV and a tape recorder, you'll need at least three switched

high-level inputs, in addition to the preamplifier input (s) for your record player and/or turntable. And if you have a tape recorder in mind be certain that the control section has a tape-output jack.

If you buy preamplifier and amplifier of different makes, be sure the main output of the control section is adequate to drive the main amplifier — that is, if the amplifier is rated as needing 1.5 volts input to produce maximum output, then the control unit should be able to deliver that voltage with a normal input. If the amplifier is to be located more than five or six feet from the control section, it (the control unit) should have a low-impedance or cathode-follower output. The same is true of the tuner and of the tape recorder if they are to be situated at some distance from the control unit. Finally, the control unit should have AC outlets, so that the amplifier, at least, can be plugged into one of them and turned on and off by the control unit's power switch. Some of these precautions apply only to separate preamplifier-control units, as is obvious; if the control section is built into the amplifier, for instance, then the AC switch will turn both sections on or off at the same time.

An amplifier should have a choice of output impedance taps, since you may not be using a speaker of the same impedance rating indefinitely. Furthermore, the amplifier's power rating is important — a 10 or 12-watt amplifier is entirely adequate for rooms of reasonable size when used with a speaker system of good efficiency, but will not be sufficient to reproduce peaks of sound without distortion in a large room, with the volume turned well up. Inefficient speakers, although usually producing good sound, may make it necessary to use an amplifier of higher power rating. It is never a good idea, though, to use an amplifier with a power rating greatly exceeding that of your chosen speaker system

If a tape recorder is to be included in your system, try to get one with an output feed to your control-unit that is taken off *ahead* of the recorder's power output stage, when the recorder has a built-in speaker. The best high fidelity tape recorders do not have built-in power amplifiers and speakers, although some have these available as separate, optional accessories.

With the possible exception of a loudspeaker system, it's a fairly safe bet that hi-fi equipment quality — in terms of performance and dependability — will be directly proportional to its cost. In other words, you get about what you pay for, and this should be remembered when evaluating the sometimes fantastic claims made for very low-priced components. You can save some money if you are handy at kit-building, or if you chance to find some good second-hand units, but otherwise it's smart to be skeptical. And conservative.

Also, the performance of an audio system is determined not by the best element in the chain, nor by the average quality of the components, but by the *worst* unit. In any permanent system, accordingly, there should be quality consistency; as a general rule, price consistency is desirable for that reason. If you can't afford now the kind of system you'd like to have eventually, then you should, of course, buy now as many of its components as you can afford, so that you won't have to replace them all. But the ultimate goal should be a system wherein all components are utilized to their greatest capacities. Since, for equivalent quality, the loudspeaker system is far more expensive than any other part of the system, that may be the element to economize on originally. Fortunately, it is often easy to add to a loudspeaker system to improve it, rather than replace it entirely. Your initial moderate investment in this component need not be wasted, as it would be

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by MARTIN MAYER

ADVENTURERS IN *Sound*

What do you hear from Paris?

LEIBOWITZ AND CHARLIN



COMPOSERS COMPOSE, conductors conduct, critics criticize and violinists fiddle: one man, one trade, one period in which to specialize, one record company with which to sign exclusive contracts. Not always, though; and especially not for M. René Leibowitz, a Polish-born Frenchman of Russian ancestry, who took his basic musical education in Austria, polished his conducting technique under the guidance of an Italian, wrote the standard book on the greatest of modern German composers, and speaks English as if he came from Peoria, Illinois. It is hard to put one's finger on M. Leibowitz, for he is a blithe, serious spirit.

He is a unique figure in the record business, an independent conductor-contractor whose performances have appeared on at least eight different labels. The record companies for which he works do not have offices or musical directors in Paris, or large staffs to handle the planning and organization of a recording. They want a record; they can scrape up so much money for it; and will M. Leibowitz please choose his artists and his hall and his engineer and give them a tape by three weeks from Monday? Among the large vocal works he has recorded, more or less in this manner, are Mozart's *Zaide* and Schönberg's *Gurrelieder*, Bizet's *Pêcheurs de Perles* and Satie's *Socrate*, Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera*, Offenbach's *Belle Hélène* and Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnol*. Symphonies, suites, concertos, contradances have poured out from under his baton, onto tapes, across the Atlantic. Few conductors have made more recordings than Leibowitz; none except Hermann Scherchen has made so many in so short a time.

In the flesh, M. Leibowitz is a tall, thin, stooped young man obviously in his early thirties though chronology makes him 10 years older. His hair is black and his complexion very fair, producing the strange combination of a belligerent five-o'clock shadow and a look of pallid frailty. His manner is casual, and he sprawls when he sits; but he is always slightly abstracted in some deep problem. Almost alone among musicians, he seems not to know a single malicious story about anyone: if he doesn't like someone or something it makes him sad. Nevertheless, he vastly enjoys the other man's joke, treasures and practices the role of the good listener. This accomplishment, even more than the good sense of what he says, has given him a world-wide reputation as a brilliant conversationalist. For many musicians no trip to Paris

is complete without a visit to Leibowitz's apartment on the Quai Voltaire.

The apartment has been home to dozens of recordings here they have been planned, sold to the moneyed interests, rehearsed and polished before their emergence under the microphone in the Apollo Theater. The work room (also the living room) is a comfortable square with low couches, a low armchair and a low coffee table, whitewashed bookcases with books, books, books; a large concert grand with three or four music stands beside it. The windows face away from the river and the traffic on the Quai, onto the top of a large, quiet courtyard. A hired pianist pounds the piano, the young singers stand at the music stands, and Leibowitz with infinite patience smooths their phrasing and coaches their expression.

"I keep trying to convince record companies," Leibowitz says, "that good opera recordings can be made more cheaply than good orchestral recordings. What costs the money? Time with the orchestra. If you want to rehearse an orchestra four times it costs you a fortune. But singers receive a flat fee, and they always want to sound their best, so you can go over the work with them again and again, and the only cost is a dollar and a half an hour for the pianist. The orchestral parts of most operas are easy: you don't need much time with the orchestra. You can put a well-rehearsed opera before the microphone much more cheaply than a well-rehearsed symphony."

Other artists do their work and take their fees; Leibowitz must be a businessman, too.

He started, however, as a violinist, and without any waste of time. He began taking lessons when he was in his fourth year. He made his first professional appearance in Warsaw, at the age of 10. Two years later the family moved to Paris, where the boy moved smoothly on toward his expected career as a virtuoso violinist. "The doctor ended it," Leibowitz says. "He said I had heart trouble, and for a year I had to stop entirely. You can't take a year off from the violin."

Separated from his instrument, Leibowitz entered on conservatory education, and in 1931 went to Vienna to study with Anton Webern. "Elementals," he recalls. "Harmony, counterpoint, orchestration." The student atmosphere roused him to an interest in conducting.

and though largely untrained he picked up the baton for student orchestras playing contemporary scores. An operetta company, struggling along on the outskirts of Vienna, asked him to direct a production of Offenbach's *Vie Parisienne*, and almost without knowing it he had a second profession.

On his return to Paris he picked up still a third, playing piano with a jazz band. Teaching, and composing scores for unimportant films, filled in the time until Victor de Sabata came as a guest conductor to the Paris Opera, and asked Leibowitz to coach singers for him. "De Sabata," Leibowitz says, "is a very kind man. He has always been a friend. He gave me a good deal of encouragement to become a conductor, and many hints." After de Sabata's departure a small Paris radio station hired Leibowitz to lead its small orchestra, and he gave a weekly broadcast of serious music for a small, serious audience.

That job disappeared with the Occupation. Leibowitz spent the war years in Paris, then a very dangerous place for a man with his name. Staying behind his own doors as much as possible, he wrote two operas (neither as yet performed) and a book on the compositional mechanics of Arnold Schönberg. A difficult book. It was published in 1946 and almost immediately translated into English and German; today it is internationally considered the standard work on its difficult subject.

The French radio system was nationalized after the war, and the conductors of the pre-war stations absorbed into the staff of the *Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française*. Leibowitz did occasional radio concerts, conducted as a guest in Switzerland, Italy and Germany, taught and looked happily at the surprising royalties from his book. Then the LP burst in the American cosmos and fathered countless stars and comets of record companies. Dial Records, looking for someone with authority to record Schönberg, went to Leibowitz and opened up for him a new and previously unheard-of career.

WORKING FOR SMALL companies on a piece basis is a hazardous occupation. There is never enough money for adequate rehearsal or recording time. Often what money there is comes from an angel specially roped for this recording and not particularly musical. Some babe catches the angel's attention, or some artist's manager flatters him correctly, and the poor conductor finds himself saddled with a soprano or a cello soloist who must be featured — and gently treated, too, please. These problems are not peculiar to Leibowitz or to Paris or to the record companies for which he works. But Leibowitz solves them better than anyone else I know of.

He has the advantage of being in Paris, which ranks with London and New York in the number of fine orchestral musicians available for an afternoon's work. He knows great quantities of them, knows which have the solfeggio necessary to master a part without much in the line of rehearsals. As a teacher, he is regularly in touch with the Paris student population; among the young singers he has put on records for the first time are such exquisite talents as Mattawilda Dobbs, the American

coloratura, and Janine Lindenfelder, his Socrate and Belle Hélène. He is willing to work terribly hard for the pleasure of being his own boss, and the chance to record music he loves: next he wants to do Rossini's *Italiana in Algeria*, Offenbach's *Grande Duchesse*, Verdi's *Rigoletto* — "all Verdi," he says grandly. He has the light touch and the rhythmic imagination so vital in recordings. Finally, he knows an engineer.

"André Charlin. I could not do it at all without Charlin," Leibowitz said. "He made my first recording, and I think it was his first, too. Now he makes almost every record taped in Paris. Because of him I never have to worry about the technical side, and I never have to do anything over for technical reasons. Everything is set beforehand, and nothing has to be moved. You must go see Charlin."

I did.

The Centre de Régistrement des Champs Elysées occupies two floors of an eight-story building behind the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, near the Seine in one of the most pleasant residential districts in Paris. It contains two small studios for recording chamber music; an office for André Charlin, another for his assistant, and another for the office files; a tape-editing room, a disk-incising room, a storeroom and a large workshop. It is utterly unlike any other recording center.

Charlin, too, is a free-lance contractor. Although he has worked as recording engineer pure and simple for all the big companies, his particular specialty is the full job, from seating the musicians to delivering a master record, ready for pressing. Indeed, he carries the job even further back. Elsewhere the tape machines are Ampex; or EMI; here they are Charlin, hand-made in the workshop. The control equipment is Charlin-designed and patented, the amplifiers Charlin, the tape-editing machinery Charlin, the loudspeakers made to Charlin specifications and enclosed in a Charlin-patented box. The microphone (there is only one microphone) was, it is true, made by Telefunken; "but," says Charlin cheerfully, "they might not recognize it. I have adapted it."

Leibowitz speaks Russian, Polish, German, French, Italian and English; Charlin speaks French. Leibowitz is frail and has close-cropped black hair; Charlin is a big though graceful bear of a man, and his luxuriant white hair has apparently never been cut. His complexion is ruddy, his jaw prominent, his manner jovial and very



Leibowitz at a recording session. Note sound-focusing panels.

busy; but patient, too, as he explains his methods, his recording machinery, and the playback equipment he is presently selling to a very small, very rich group of French musicians and engineers.

In this *Chaîne d'Ecoute CHARLIN* (selling for roughly \$900, including tax), the maestro has allowed the inclusion of other people's designs. Instead of building his own record-player, he recommends the *Tourne-disque Garrard avec Changeur automatique et Tête G. E.* The amplifier is his own, available in 10 watts for the home or 40 watts for the theater: five tubes, with *un système de contre-reaction très poussé*, and a maximum distortion of 0.6%. The pre-amp is also a Charlin original; it has six positions, including one for microphone and one for 16-mm. sound film. It is in the speaker system, however, that M. Charlin comes most completely into his own. The housing is a pyramid with the top chopped off; the seven-inch woofer, which handles all frequencies from 40 to 7,500 c/s at a maximum distortion of 3 db, is mounted in the center with a spreading horn from the cone to the edge of the pyramid; the tweeter, a nearly flat, perforated disk which looks like an old-fashioned radio microphone, simply sits naked atop the pyramid. This tweeter, which handles all frequencies from 7,501 to 30,000 cps, is electrostatic and brand new — except that Charlin had a patent out for much the same sort of thing back in 1926.

French patents expire in 20 years, and an annual payment must be made to keep them in effect at any time. The vast majority of Charlin's patents have died one way or the other, and now he has only 240 still going in the field of acoustical engineering. (Among the patents he dropped as not worth the annual fee was one for magnetic tape recording, entered in 1936.) "I began as a flutist," Charlin says, "but I became interested in loudspeakers when I was very young, in 1921. I went to the School of Public Works, and studied in the electrical section. Almost immediately, I began taking out patents. I made the first talking movies in France, using records. I made all the equipment myself. Then I opened a factory, the Etablissement Charlin, to make sound equipment for films. After the war the company merged with another, but it still uses my inventions. It won the grand prize for projection equipment at the 1948 Venice Film Festival. Before then, Mr. Dyer of Oiseau-Lyre had come to me and asked me to make the first LP equipment in France. That is how the Centre de Régistrement was started."

ELVEN people work in the Centre, and all of them are Charlin-trained. Elsewhere tapes are processed by a team, an engineer and a musician; but Charlin's logic demands that such work be done by one mind with one pair of ears. He takes musicians and teaches them all about engineering. For the time-consuming jobs of tape-editing and disk-making he wants girls: "they have the patience, and the cleverness." Mlle. Houssin, who edits all the tapes in a large, acoustically-treated studio, is a pretty girl in her twenties who recently took first prize in the violin at the Paris Conservatoire. The work of transferring from tape to disk is done by Mme.

Martyl, equally young and trim, in a separate upstairs studio; she started with Charlin as a secretary in 1949 and was quickly trained to her present position. Charlin himself listens to everything before it goes out to be pressed. "Editing the tapes," he says, "is the most important operation. I expect that for every three hours in the studio, there will be six hours of work on the tapes."

CCHARLIN can handle anything up to a string quintet in his own small studios; for larger groups, he uses a legitimate theater, seating his subjects in a cleared space in the orchestra. When he has the chairs arranged he sets up screens, each one nine feet high and nine feet long, behind the men whose sounds he wants directed or diffused. Each screen has one hard, smooth side, to reflect sound, and one porous, rough side, to absorb sound. Sometimes Charlin will set a screen around a single musician; sometimes he will use a series of screens behind an entire section of the orchestra. When the work involves soloists and chorus, and extra drums and a doubled wind band, plus passages for solo viola, Charlin's arrangements of screens look like some mad architect's model for a city of the future.

Other people find it simpler to hang several mikes and blend the result in a control room. Almost every engineer who has tried to pick up a large orchestra on one microphone has rapidly returned to the customary three; "we find," says London FFR in England, "we lose definition with a single mike." But Charlin is not merely a lover of the one-point take; he is the high priest of the faith. He recorded Schönberg's *Gurrelieder* and Berlioz' *Trojan: at Carthage* with a single mike. And he has secured full definition even in Erik Satie's *Socrate*, work of a composer who had little experience and less interest in orchestration. Whether definition is originally dull, and becomes sharp during the long hours of tape editing, is the sort of question that does not get answered; but in the result Charlin's one mike seems to miss nothing.

At the recording session the microphone is hung on a giraffe, usually just above the conductor's right shoulder. Then the orchestra comes in and tunes up, and Charlin sets the controls for the recording. The controls will not be touched again. "It is the only way," Charlin says. "This way, the conductor hears exactly what is going into the microphone. He knows what he wants, and when he gets what he wants he has made the record. It is that simple." Charlin is not interested in binaural theories. "I gave a public demonstration of stereophonic sound back in 1942," he says. "It is a good trick, but just a trick."

Somebody mentioned that conductors often have their own ideas about seating orchestras and placing soloists. "Yes," said Charlin doubtfully. "Sometimes there are discussions. If necessary, there are ordinarily a few slight adjustments that can be made without harm." He flashed his big, hearty smile. "I remember, before we made *Les Troyens*, everyone was very worried. They said Dr. Scherchen was a very particular person, a student of engineering, a man

Continued on page 98



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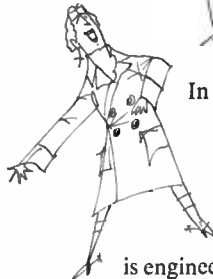
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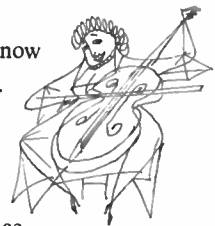
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music makers

by ROLAND GELATT

THE FIFTH EDITION of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* contains eight million words and 8,516 pages, takes up 29 inches on the shelf, and weighs 28¼ pounds. I have not counted the words; the other specifications I can vouch for. Its editor is Eric Blom, a British scholar and writer in his mid-sixties who has devoted eight years of watchful labor to hatching the nine volumes of *Grove's* the Fifth. They are now on sale in America, fresh from the presses of R. & R. Clark in Edinburgh, at \$127.50 per set — or .001594 cents per word.

When Blom went to work on this project in 1946, *Grove's* was heavy with Victorian incrustations. Although the encyclopedia (*Dictionary* is a misnomer) had been updated from time to time, its framework remained basically unaltered from the original edition of 1878-89 edited by Sir George Grove himself — a masterful compilation in its day but long due for a rigorous overhaul. Blom began by pasting up the existing material on large sheets of blank paper and then deciding — article by article — whether revision or replacement was called for. "This was not altogether easy," he concedes, "but it was fascinating. More had to be condemned than a first general consideration had indicated. For the rest, everything that could be allowed to go through had to be touched up, sometimes drastically, sometimes with new sections inserted,

but in many other cases merely for details of punctuation or typography." Most of the original subjects were retained, though not always in the same proportion. (In the Fourth Edition, for example, Jenny Lind was given twice as much space as Gabriel Fauré; they now have 1½ and 8 pages respectively.) To these Blom added some 5,000 new articles, one of them a 240-page treatment of folk music that amounts to a book in itself. Other new contributions deal with Criticism, Concrete Music, Baroque Interpretation, Harpsichord Playing, Therapy, and Postage Stamps.

The notation "Edited by Eric Blom" on the title page of each volume means exactly what it says. Blom personally edited every one of those eight million words, having decided at the outset that his responsibility could not possibly be divided or delegated. "One assistant," he asserts, "never knows precisely what the others are doing, and an editor who has to supervise them all and to coordinate their work will be so harassed that he will find it much easier to do everything himself. I, at any rate, prefer doing work to checking the work of others."

The first person to read through all of *Grove's* with a critical eye will be able to venture a competent opinion on how well Blom discharged his job. Until then, the best anyone can do is to browse at random and set down admittedly random impressions. With the completeness or readability of the new *Grove's* there should be few quibbles. I have been trying diligently to discover a subject that Blom omitted, so far without success. And I have yet to find an article that is not written in clear and usually graceful English. In his Preface to the Fifth Edition, Blom inveighs against the doughy, verbose prose employed by some German-American scholars, a language (masquerading as English)

which he irreverently dubs Musicologese. None of it appears in *Grove's*, praise be.

Of course, everyone who flips through the nine volumes will be able to find fault with individual articles. More than one eyebrow will be lifted over the piece on Richard Strauss, which dismisses his latest work as "tired" and repetitious, and makes no reference at all to his autumnal masterpieces: *Capriccio*, *Metamorphosen*, and the Four Last Songs. To my thinking, the utility of a two-page article on Toscanini that never once mentions the NBC Symphony is highly questionable. Indeed, the entries on contemporary performers are generally weak (save those written by Desmond Shawe-Taylor). I fail to understand, for instance, why a biography of Pierre Bernac should admit "It is not known where he studied," when the information could have been obtained simply by asking Mr. Bernac. And even though the School of Slavonic Studies in London University gave advice on the transliteration of Russian names, I am not at all convinced that we should be made to look up well-known musicians under brand-new spellings. Despite *Grove's* and the School of Slavonic Studies, I shall continue to prefer Koussevitzky to Kussevitsky and Rachmaninoff to Rakhmaninov, if for no other reason than that the gentlemen in question preferred the former spellings themselves. Finally, just to prove that even the most alert editor can nod, I was startled to note under the Landowska entry the following cross-reference: "See also Well-Tempered Clavichord"; startled because no such reference exists, though there is an entry for Well-Tempered Clavier which declares that "the original title 'Das wohltemperirte Clavier' should never have been translated as 'The Well-Tempered Clavichord'."

If I give the impression that the new *Grove's* is riddled with errors



and inconsistencies, forget it. Anyone with a practiced eye can pick some lint from eight million words. All in all, it's a tremendous and unique store of information. I wouldn't be without it. And I paid for it too, in coin of the realm.

ON A COLD February morning in 1948 I was chatting with Peter de Jongh in the Paris office of HMV when a fellow-employee with an ecstatic expression burst into the room brandishing a ten-inch disk. "Wait until you hear this," he cried. "We just got it from our Barcelona factory." The record bore a blue label, the legend "La Voz de Su Amo," and the number AA 340, and it contained two songs by Turina performed so bewitchingly as to make me an immediate partisan of the singer. Her name was Victoria de los Angeles. Unlike some others first heard via the phonograph, this singer turned out to be every bit as effective in person as on records. In the intervening years she has broadened her repertoire commendably. This season, for example, her Carnegie Hall recital included a group of Hugo Wolf lieder, sung with endearing simplicity and sovereign repose. But it is in Spanish music that De los Angeles best shows her mettle, and never to finer effect than in the recent *La Vida Breve* by De Falla (which also derives from HMV's Barcelona branch).

Being a pushover for this kind of music, I'm immensely pleased to see that American record companies have finally discovered Spain. More and more LPs are coming from this source. One that has given me many hours of pleasure is a Westminster issue devoted to music of Joaquín Turina played by the Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid under Pedro de Freitas Branco. Contained therein are excerpts from the atmosphere-laden *Canto a Sevilla*, sung by Lola Rodríguez de Aragón, who — I learned from *Grove's* — was a pupil and associate of the composer. Although she lacks the luscious suavity of the great Victoria, Miss Lola evokes the spirit of this music admirably, and the Madrid strings endow it with that thin, slightly acidulous twang that suits the Spanish idiom so well. Incidentally, *Grove's* article on Turina, written by Walter Starkie, shows a lively appreciation of this composer's

talents, which I hold to be considerable; it also gives a catalog of works herewith recommended to any entrepreneur who believes there is nothing left to record.

WHEN ALMOST a thousand people subscribe in advance, sound unheard, to a set of records, the phenomenon bears investigating. In the case of three Bach Guild LPs issued this month, "the phenomenon" is a pianist named James Friskin, a 68-year-old Bach specialist whose reputation among those who have heard him is, well, phenomenal. Friskin gives few recitals these days and until now has never made records. One reason for this may be that Bach on the piano has become rather *déclassé*, so much so that Friskin now feels impelled to plead for the establishment of "peaceful coexistence" between harpsichord and piano. Like his fellow student at the Royal Conservatory, the late Harold Samuel, Friskin plays Bach in an unashamedly pianistic style with all the fluid legato effects of which that instrument is capable. Seymour Solomon, the quietly knowledgeable founder and director of Bach Guild-Vanguard, searched all over New York for a hall in which to record Friskin. None of the auditoriums suggested to him had the acoustic properties he desired. One morning on his way to the subway Solomon noticed a Masonic Temple he had been passing every day for years. On a hunch he went inside and found a wood-constructed room of exactly the right degree of resonance. And there, last September, the sessions took place — deep in the heart of Brooklyn.

WHEN MUSICIANS gather to pull apart a piece of musical criticism (a favorite indoor sport), one of them is almost sure to deliver the classic plaint: "What right has he to give an opinion? He couldn't possibly do it himself." There are several good answers to this, but none more effective than that offered by Virgil Thomson, who has abandoned musical criticism — at least for the time being — and moved across to the other side of the footlights. His first New York appearance since leaving the *Herald Tribune* came in the Sunday afternoon series of the Concert Society of New York when

he conducted a chamber orchestra in music of Bach, Mozart, and Satie. Considering Thomson's predilection for Satie, it was not surprising that this composer's "symphonic drama" *Socrates* stole the show. Although its musical discourse is grave and austere, *Socrates* in an imaginatively nuanced performance can be terrifyingly moving. Under Thomson's sympathetic ministrations it had just this effect. Will some company please take note and make a recording of his interpretation?

No one in the mid-twentieth century could term Rossini's *Otello* terrifyingly moving, albeit that was the emotion its composer hoped to convey. Too many roudades and cadenzas interpose themselves for us to view it other than as a period piece. But in that context it is a highly listenable opera, as the American Opera Society demonstrated by reviving *Otello* in a concert performance at Town Hall. Jennie Tourel, as Desdemona, could not always cope with the acrobatics decreed by Rossini, but in the lyric parts of her role she sang regally. Even at an optimum performance, however, we would still have to hear Rossini's *Otello* with ears grown accustomed to Verdi's, and the earlier opera wilts under the comparison.

ONE OF MUSIC'S recurring tragedies lies in the fact that singers rarely become superlative recitalists until their vocal powers are on the wane. An apt demonstration of this came within the space of eight days when Roland Hayes and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf gave recitals in New York. Schwarzkopf, at 39, delivered an all-Wolf program with polished efficiency; however, despite her *sang-froid*, the penetrating simplicity of Wolf seldom came across. Hayes, at 67, controlled his voice by dint of obvious effort, but from this struggle emerged musical communication of great persuasion and a refinement of phrasing such as singers seldom evince. He was abetted by a sensitive accompanist, Reginald Boardman, and an appreciative audience. Miss Schwarzkopf's listeners could be termed grateful but hardly appreciative, since they insisted on applauding as soon as she had finished singing and to heck with the piano postlude. At an all-Wolf recital, that's treason.

Records in Review



Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER • C. G. BURKE • JOHN M. CONLY
 RAY ERICSON • ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN • JAMES HINTON, JR.
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CLASSICAL

BACH, C.P.E.

Concerto for Piano, in D Major

Helen Schnabel, piano. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, F. Charles Adler, cond.

Trio for Flute, Violin and Piano

Camillio Wanausek, flute; Walter Schneiderhan, violin; Helen Schnabel, piano. SPA 37. 12-in. 22, 20 min. \$5.95.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach was the second son of the great Bach, and the one destined to have the greatest effect upon the course of music. He played a leading role in the evolution of what has become known as the *style galant*.

With the publication of his "Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments" Philipp Emanuel became the leading piano teacher of his era. In 1772 he published a set of six piano concertos, of which the present work was one. It makes very fine listening indeed. This listener was quite amazed by the audacious manner in which the piano is introduced: the orchestral *tutti*, instead of coming to a complete close, suddenly ventures into a strange key, and the piano makes a surprising, "veiled" entrance during the harmonic excursion.

The trio, likewise, is a thoroughly enjoyable work. Performances and recording are fine. D. R.

BACH, J. S.

Art of Fugue

Josef and Grete Dichler, two pianos.

WESTMINSTER WAL 215. Two 12-in. 74 min. \$11.90.

Previously recorded in orchestra, organ and harpsichord performances, the Art of Fugue now appears in a handsome, persuasive two-piano version. Bach probably intended his last, great musical testament as a keyboard work, although it transcends

any one medium. Duo-pianists can hurdle its difficulties more easily than a solo performer, and Bruno Seidlhofer, the arranger, has doubled voices or shifted them up and down the keyboard for the same effect that registration on a harpsichord or organ has. This gives textural variety besides underlining and clarifying the formal treatment.

For those who care: After the first 11 contrapuncti, the subsequent sections here have their order changed as follows: Canon at the octave, Canon at the twelfth, Canon at the tenth, inverse Canon by augmentation, Contrapunctus XIII (with the *rectus after the inversus*), Contrapunctus XII, the unfinished fugue, and the chorale.

Bach scholars may reasonably question some of Seidlhofer's procedures, but as a whole this is an honest, listenable version of a work that increases in stature with each rehearing. Performance and recording are immaculate and full of life. Choice of tempos, phrasing, and dynamics seem justified, without necessarily being the only good ones. It would be interesting to know if the Dichlers' instruments are the 13-foot Bösendorfers they use in their Cook recording, for the pianos here have the same wonderfully full tone and the extra resonance in the bass.

Since two pianists were available, it would have been nice if Westminster had included Bach's own two-piano arrangement of Contrapunctus XIII, even if it is not an essential part of the whole; the free parts added by the composer make it a distinctive work, exciting to hear. But perhaps that would have been too much of a good thing. James Lyons' brief notes contain much helpful comment. R. E.

BACH, J. S.

Cantata No. 51, "Jauchzet Gott"

†Mozart: *Motet, "Exsultate, Jubilate"*
KV 165.

Lois Marshall, soprano; Chamber Orchestra (Bach); Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Mozart), Sir Ernest MacMillan, cond.

HALLMARK CS-2. 12-in. 17, 15 min. \$5.95.

Miss Marshall is admirable, Sir Ernest admirable by half. The Hallmark company, new in the experience of this reviewer, provides perhaps not by design a tricky and amusing antithesis of style in rejoicing. The strong and true soprano is ready for anything, and Sir Ernest helps her ring triumphant in the dogmatic, elevated jubilation of the Cantata, but the court-paganism of the Motet is chastened by the conductor's beat into primness, nothing pagan about it. Bright and brilliant sound for the Cantata, less distinct for Mozart's side. C. G. B.

BARTOK

Concerto for Piano No. 2

Concerto for Piano No. 3

Edith Farnadi, piano. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.

WESTMINSTER WL 5249. 12-in. 30, 28 min. \$5.95.

Masterpieces both, and both magnificently played, but the recordings are distressingly thin. This is especially deplorable because each concerto places great emphasis on pianistic and orchestral color, and the artists involved here have clearly done their best to bring it out, but the engineers have frustrated their efforts. If this were the only extant recording of the two concertos one would not labor this point, but both have been done before; Miss Farnadi's is, in fact, the fourth version of the Third Concerto listed in current catalogs. As a performance, it holds its own with the best and surpasses some, and in both cases this may be the record of choice if interpretation is all that counts. A. F.

BARTOK

Deux Images

New Symphony Orchestra, Tibor Serly, cond.

Two Rhapsodies

Emmanuel Vardi, violin. New Symphony Orchestra, Franco Autori, cond. in No. 1, Tibor Serly, cond. in No. 2.
BARTOK BR 307. 12-in. 15, 18 min. \$6.45.

The *Deux Images*, which date from 1910, sound today like pop concert material, very high-grade pop concert material, but scarcely works of a great and challenging modern master. The first is called *In Full Flower* and might well be subtitled *The Afternoon of a Flower*. The second is called *Village Dance*; it is one of Bartok's earlier ventures into the Hungarian folk idiom, and in its conventionality and timidity it makes a very interesting contrast to the flamingly brilliant *Rhapsodies* of 1928 on the other side of the disk. These, of course, are also in the Hungarian folk tradition; the first reminds one of Bartok's deceptively simple folk song transcriptions, but the second is in his grandest, most pungent and overwhelming style. Performances of Bartok issued under the Bartok label are always highly if not uniquely authoritative, and this firm's recordings are invariably worth their slightly-more-than-average price. A. F.

BARTOK

Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion and Celesta — See Schönberg.

BEETHOVEN

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in G. Op. 58

Clifford Curzon; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans Knappertsbusch, cond.
LONDON LL-1045. 12-in. 34 min. \$5.95.

This is the Concerto that players do not presume to individualize to their fancy. As a result, we have more masterly interpretations recorded than of any other concerto. This new London is one of the most masterly, and it has the most masterly sound of all, absolutely convincing in the piano at all volumes, and beautifully organized in the orchestra. The blend of horns and trumpets with strings, and the vivid crackling of the wood, the glow of the full orchestra and the absence of harshness throughout a huge dynamic sweep are all notable things. Yet this aristocratic reproduction is free of an extraneous brilliance which could distract from the performance.

The pianist balances strength with finesse in a manner recalling Gieseking's. He has an instinct for the singing phrase and never, to the knowledge of this writer, does he disturb the musical contour for display. In the most lyrical of the grand concertos he remains a substantial lyricist. Mr. Knappertsbusch is a surprise. This conductor has been a Wagnerian of traditional parts for many years: he favors slow tempos and full harmonies. Both these predilections are audible here, but unobtrusively. The deliberation is not pronounced, and it enables soloist and orchestra to make the harmonic richness sounds admirable, confirming, not weighting, the melodic line.

By now, nearly everyone must have a good Fourth Concerto, but no one has a better one than this. C. G. B.

(Since this review, Mr. Curzon has described the recording session in a CBS Radio inter-

view. Two days were devoted to painstaking, piecemeal recording and editing. Then — there being time left — he and the orchestra went through an uninterrupted play-through, half for fun. It is this which was made into the disk! — Ed.)

BEETHOVEN

Quartets, Op. 18: No. 1, in F; No. 2, in G; No. 3, in D; No. 4, in C Minor; No. 5, in A; No. 6, in B Flat

Hungarian Quartet.

ANGEL 3512C. Three 12-in. 27, 23, 23, 22, 26, 25 min. \$17.85 for disks, album, miniature scores and notes by Maurice Hewitt. Available separately, the Quartets in consecutive pairs, without album, scores or notes, at \$4.95 per disk.

Moderation and comfort are in command of this fifth complete edition of Op. 18. Its values, if not the highest, are the steadiest. The sonics nowhere slip into difficulties, and there are no excesses in the playing. The tone of the instruments, product of playing and engineering, is sweet throughout, and this is not true of any other quartet who have recorded all six Quartets. The notes by Mr. Hewitt, himself a player and conductor of note, are informative and valuable, and the thin-paper miniature scores are a help to anyone who can read them. Planning, supervision and presentation are truly excellent in the careful way we have learned is an Angelic virtue. On the basis of this virtue it would not be a mistake to own Op. 18 in the Angel edition.

Here is a high average of performance, without a single great performance. The six Quartets are in this edition unmolested by mannerism: the playing is entirely without affectation, and at least four of the slow movements are beautiful songs equal to the best of their competition. This is good; but should there not be style in the other movements, some suggestion that the most gallant of centuries was in these Quartets resisting the advance of the least gallant, that silk was fighting soot? Such implications are in the Budapest performances and in some of the Pascal performances of Op. 18: the directness of the Hungarian Quartet does not leave room for them. — It is equally true that the Hungarian honesty is at no point repellent. The records come too late; earlier, they would have resisted intrusion. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN

Sonatas for Piano: No. 2, in A, Op. 2, No. 2; No. 14, in C Sharp Minor, "Moonlight," Op. 27, No. 2; No. 26, in E Flat, "Farewell, Absence and Return," Op. 81a

Artur Schnabel.
RCA VICTOR LCT-1155. 12-in. 23, 14, 15 min. \$5.95.

This is another of the very skillful Victor LPs transferring Schnabel from his historic 78s. Perhaps none more than this makes us realize how great was our loss when the pianist died. No. 2 is intact in its scoffing re-enactment of a classicism in which Beethoven believed but which could not contain him. The tiny hesitations and accelerations of Schnabel here, the little increments of force and the trifling subtractions of emphasis, none pronounced

enough to interrupt the current — rather they embellish its charm — create a masterpiece of deeply perceptive pianism which everyone ought to own. The subdued "Moonlight" lasts longer than a brighter glare, and Op. 81a has subtleties of analysis which may not compel us to think the Schnabel version the most moving, but which decidedly make it the most interesting. — The sound is good enough to hold its own with disks much newer, the principal disadvantage coming from recorded hiss and other alien sounds in Nos. 14 and 26. Old discophiles can shut these things out of hearing; they were much worse on shellac surfaces. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN

Sonatas for Piano: No. 15, in D, "Pastoral," Op. 28; No. 19, in G Minor, Op. 49, No. 1; No. 31, in A Flat, Op. 110

Artur Schnabel.
RCA VICTOR LCT-1154. 12-in. 20, 7, 18 min. \$5.95.

No other record containing three Beethoven Sonatas occurs to the writer as comparable in the playing to the work of Schnabel here. The "Pastoral," in this poetry of subtly knowing presentation, has not its equal on records, and the little Op. 49, No. 1 was never more amiable. Op. 110, more severely involved emotionally, has a less obvious superiority of interpretation because it requires more study and offers very strong competition in recordings. But the Schnabel statement seems as moving as any can be. — The original disks were made in 1932, and the reconstruction is a marvel of care and knowledge. The piano here has not the retention of deep bass and crispness of treble that we expect from the best modern records, but it never dissatisfies, and sounds better than half the piano records made since 1950. C. G. B.

BERG

Concerto for Violin

Ivry Gitlis, violin. Pro Musica Symphony, William Strickland, cond.

Concerto for Violin, Piano and 13 Wind Instruments

Ivry Gitlis, violin; Charlotte Zelka, piano. Members of Pro Musica Symphony, Harold Byrns, cond.
VOX PL 8660. 12-in. 24, 33 min. \$5.95.

Berg's violin concerto is one of the most successful works of the 12-tone school, thanks to its noble and tragic sentiment and its relatively traditional idiom; the 12-tone system is used here as a binding force to organize a harmonic tissue into which a Bach chorale fits without the faintest incongruity. The concerto for violin, piano, and wind instruments is less obviously lyrical but it is nonetheless a work of great expressive power. It is one of the most rigorously schematic of Berg's compositions. Written as a tribute to Schönberg on his fiftieth birthday, its tone-row consists of such note-names as can be found in "Arnold Schönberg," "Anton Webern," and "Alban Berg." Its first movement is a set of variations for the piano and the winds, its second is a two-part movement for the violin and ensemble, and the third is a combination of the preceding two. This is only the beginning of the con-

certo's formal intricacy; for example, the second part of the second movement is a precise inversion of the first. But for all this, Berg remains Berg, a musician who appeals to the ear and the heart, and the concerto is no lifeless exercise in note-relationships. Performance and recording are excellent in both cases. A. F.

BERLIOZ*Harold in Italy, Op. 16*

Frederick Riddle, viola. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London; Hermann Scherchen, cond.
WESTMINSTER WL 5288. 12-in. \$5.95.

In this vigorous, vivacious reading, Scherchen has at his disposal a first-rate orchestra fully capable of carrying out his wishes, and a violist with a deep, rich tone and a full understanding of the music's possibilities. Though Westminster's full, realistic and admirably balanced recording of this work presents it with by far the best sound of any recorded version, most collectors will want to compare it with the authoritative and more suave performance on a recent Columbia disk by Beecham, with Primrose as the solo violist. It's a matter of personal preference, but no one will go wrong with this altogether splendid *Harold*. P. A.

BIZET*Carmen* — Suite for Orchestra
†Gounod: *Faust* — Ballet Music

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann, cond.
CAPITOL P 8288. 12-in. 39 min. \$5.70.

Nice, crisp, stylish but not flashy performances of two French suites, too well known to need further comment. Capitol provides a good, well defined, but not particularly mellow sound, a trifle shrill in the strings, but generally ideal for these popular scores. J. F. I.

BLOCH*String Quartet No. 3*

Griller String Quartet
LONDON LS 840. 10-in. 30 min. \$4.95.

A work of great vigor, intense concentration, vast formal ingenuity, and extremely high spirits. The prophetic declamation and Biblical lament which one expects of Bloch are totally absent, and if this score, composed in 1952, is typical of Bloch's recent output, it means that he has entered a new and very important creative phase. The performance is extremely fine and the recording is equally impressive. A. F.

BRAHMS*Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D, Op. 77*

David Oistrakh; National Saxon Orchestra, Dresden, Franz Konwitschny, cond.
DECCA DL 9754. 12-in. 39 min. \$5.85.

Deutsche Grammophon, who made this recording for Decca, give Mr. Oistrakh for once a chance to show his artistry in a concerto without making us gag at the orchestral sonics. It is the best Oistrakh record I have heard, with all the violinist's familiar qualities on clear display, and his musicianship in the best light yet. We know the supple bowing and the protean tone, but other

records were inadequate to express his easy agreement with the composer's stipulations in music of these dimensions. Mr. Konwitschny tends to gravity, to emphasis on the majestic tramp of phalanx sound. This provides a fine foil for the soloist's lilting bow, making preëminent that contrast a concerto ought to have. — Reproduction is good standard, featuring the richness of mass in the orchestra and providing fair detail, while the solo violin is excellent. C. G. B.

BRITTEN*Serenade for Tenor Solo, Horn and Strings, Op. 31; Lee Illuminations for Tenor Solo and Strings, Op. 18*

Peter Pears, tenor; Dennis Brain, horn; The New Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Goossens, cond.
LONDON LL 994. 12-in. 26, 21 min. \$5.95.

This is not a transfer of the much admired performance of Britten's lovely *Serenade* that the Pears-Brain combination made for English Decca some years back, but a brand new recording. Good though it is, it does not measure up to the older version. Pears sings with less freedom here, and the voice has taken on a tremolo that is often disturbing, and Brain does not blow with the freedom, nor produce the ravishing horn tone of the first recording. Britten's musical settings for the Rimbaud poems, catch delightfully the quick shifting moods of the verses, and there are orchestral touches throughout that could come only from his pen. The performance is most imaginative, and Pears handles the difficult vocal line, and the French texts well. The orchestral support, under Goossens, is always well paced and defined, and the recorded sound, except for a moment or two in the "Sonnet," is very agreeable. J. F. I.

CHARPENTIER, M-A*Midnight Mass* — See Valdi.**CHOPIN***Les Sylphides* — Ballet
†Offenbach: *Gaité Parisienne* — Ballet

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 4895. 12-in. 45 min. \$5.95.

A very healthy and robust performance of the Chopin ballet score, thanks to the vitality of Ormandy's direction. However, the conductor fails to project all the poetry in this romantic work, and the end result is on the prosaic side. Columbia's sound is a little overpowering for this rather fragile score. The Offenbach frolic is far more successful, with the Philadelphians giving it a thoroughly stimulating performance, that is certainly the peer of the Fiedler version recently released by Victor. The recorded sound here is as brilliant as Victor's, but rather darker in hue. J. F. I.

DEBUSSY*La Boite à Joux* — Ballet Suite
†Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*

Scarlatti Orchestra of Naples; Pietro Argento, cond.
Fedora Lazzetti and Pina Buonomo, pianists, in the *Carnival*.
COLOSSEUM CLPS 1045. 12-in. \$5.95.

Debussy's charming ballet, *The Box of Toys*, and Saint-Saëns' devastating satire on French music and musicians, *The Carnival of the Animals*, make wonderful listening, but not in this recording. Argento's tempi are too slow; there is positively no humor, and this disk deserves some sort of prize for the year's worst reproduction. *La Boite à Joux* has been well-recorded, complete, by Jonel Perlea for Remington, while *The Carnival of the Animals* is available either in its original form as a chamber work conducted by Izler Solomon (M-G-M) or in more familiar and more brightly reproduced orchestral form by Felix Slatkin (Capitol) on a disk which also includes the equally amusing Ibert *Divertissement*. P. A.

DEBUSSY*Sonata No. 3 for Violin and Piano*
†Fauré: *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 108*

Christian Ferras, violin; Pierre Barbizet, piano.
LONDON LL 909. 12-in. \$5.95.

These two sonatas, both written in 1917, represent late works by their respective composers. Both are introspective but deeply expressive. Ferras and Barbizet play them with warmth, but neither performer seems to dig very far below the surface, and the violinist's intonation is not always perfect. Reproduction is satisfactory, the sound fairly intimate. The Debussy *Sonata* has been given more sympathetic treatment by Francescatti and Casadesu (Columbia), Ginette and Jean Neveu (Angel) and Fournier and Doyen (Westminster), while the last-named team's version of the two Fauré *Sonatas* is brighter and more interesting. P. A.

DOHNANYI*Quartet in D flat Major, Op. 15*
Quintet for Piano and Strings, in E flat Minor, Op. 26

Curtis String Quartet. Vladimir Sokoloff, piano, in the *Quintet*.
WESTMINSTER WL 5301. 12-in. \$5.95.

Erno Dohnanyi was a twentieth century composer who clung to the musical principles of the nineteenth century, and yet was able to make each new work seem fresh and original. It is easy to find a good deal of Brahms in his compositions, while in the *Second Piano Quintet*, recorded here for the first time, quite a bit of César Franck crops up. What makes his music so appealing is its unusual melodic and harmonic twists and its glowing romantic fervor. All of these characteristics are brought out in the splendid readings by the Curtis Quartet, which is careful to point up the cyclical nature of the formal construction, as well as the warm melodies and harmonies. The reproduction is clear and natural, though with practically no room resonance. Now, why doesn't someone record the beautiful Brahms-like *Piano Quintet No. 1 in C Minor*, one of the most remarkable Opus 1's ever written? P. A.

DOSTAL, NICO*Die Ungarische Hochzeit* (excerpts)

(*The Hungarian Wedding*; operetta). Ex-

cerpts: part of overture; *Heimat, deine Lieder; Wir sitzen zusammen*; Hungarian march; *Am alten Brunnen; Tausendmal sag mir; Zeige, Geliebte; Kleine Eitelka; Nun ging sie von mir, zu meinem Schmerz; Czardas.*

Traute Richter (s) and Herold Kraus (t). Orchestra of the Berlin Städtische Oper; Hansgeorg Otto, cond.
TELEFUNKEN TM 68021. 10-in. \$2.95.

To judge from this potpourri-style collection of gems from it, *Die Ungarische Hochzeit* is simply another, and not specially distinctive, member of the large family of operettas that have to do with gallant men and lovely women somewhere in Central Europe. This is nothing against it, but, below the top level, tunes in shows of this kind do tend to sound pretty much alike, especially when heard in close juxtaposition. Decent enough performance, decent enough engineering, but essentially for the specialist. J. H., Jr.

DVORAK

Concerto for Piano in G Minor, Op. 33

Frantisek Maxian, piano. Czech Philharmonic Orchestra; Vaclav Talich, cond.
SUPRAPHON LPV 70. 12-in. \$5.95.

Dvorak's Piano Concerto never has achieved great popularity. Perhaps it is because the solo part is not sufficiently showy; it is too closely integrated with the orchestra to suit many keyboard virtuosos. But there is no denying the rich color and melodic beauty of this work, one of the composer's loveliest orchestral creations. Talich has always been an authoritative interpreter of his countryman's music, and in the Czech Philharmonic he has a fine ensemble. Maxian may not be the world's most brilliant pianist, but brilliance is not much in demand here, so that his sympathetic reading of the solo seems just right. Reproduction is clear, with a small amount of surface noise. P. A.

FAURE

Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19
Four Nocturnes: B Major, Op. 33, No. 2; D Flat Major, Op. 84; No. 8; B Flat Major, Op. 37; in C Sharp Minor, Op. 74.
†Francaix: *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*

Kathleen Long, piano. London Philharmonic, Jean Martinon, cond.
LONDON LL 1058. 12-in. 13, 21, 11 min.
\$5.95.

Could it be true that only good pianists are attracted to Fauré's music? I do know that when it turns up on records it is invariably superbly performed. Kathleen Long's latest disk belongs in this category. For many years a famous exponent in her native England of the French composer's music, Miss Long is not at first hearing the most seductive of pianists. She plays with a full tone most of the time, without a wide dynamic variation, although with many fine graduations. Nor does she play with the suavety or silkiness of, say, Casadesu or Johannessen. But how alive the music sounds, from the luscious individual tones through the phrasing up to the whole span. You hear everything—the voices superbly balanced and blended, the long lines sustained so as to keep the shimmering

harmonies from disintegrating. Her performances can be played time and again without ever becoming pale.

Jean Francaix's Concertino is about as engaging a musical trifle as I know, possibly comparable to some Steinberg drawings in its succinctness, wit, and simple, commonplace materials. Miss Long's performance is a shade less dry than the composer's on Capitol, but it is still wonderful and superior in sound. The collaboration of the London Philharmonic and Mr. Martinon in the Ballade and the Concertino is first-rate. I may be wrong, but pianos sound more beautiful on such London disks as this than they do on any others.

R. E.

FAURE

Requiem, Op. 48

Pierrette Alarie, soprano; C. Maurane, baritone; Choeur E. Brasseur, Orchestre Des Concerts Lamoureux, Jean Fournet, cond. M. Durufle, organ.

EPIC LC 3044. 12-in. 37:45 min. \$5.95.

Fauré's restrained and atmospheric work receives a very sympathetic and completely idiomatic treatment here. The performing forces obviously know what they are about. Since the chorus is well-drilled and sings with complete understanding, it is surprising to note a certain "amateurish" quality in their vocal production. Surprisingly, this quality increases as one ascends through the various sections of the choir; the basses sound fine; the tenors are slightly less so; the women are less gratifying, tonally, than the men, with the sopranos being least satisfactory. The same relationship exists between the two soloists, as well. However, since all involved sing with such complete awareness of the music's content, one is tempted to overlook these shortcomings.

The recording, as such, is excellent, and Hatold Lawrence's detailed jacket notes are worthy of mention. D. R.

FAURE

Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 108—See Debussy.

FRANCAIX

Quintet for Wind Instruments—See Poulenc.

FRANCK

Symphonic Variations

†D'Indy: *Symphony on a Mountain Air*

Aldo Ciccolini, piano. Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire; André Cluytens, cond.
ANGEL 35104. 12-in. 16, 27 min. \$5.95. \$4.95 (thrift pack).

Mr. Ciccolini's performances here are warmer, more mature than any I heard him give during his initial United States tour four years ago, and his return next season should prove rewarding. The tempos are on the slow side—Mr. Cluytens has a predilection for them—but the unhurried pace allows the utmost in expressivity and clarity of detail, at the cost of only a little loss in tension. Balance between soloist and ensemble is excellent; piano tone is good. The total sound has an intimate, slightly confined air. R. E.

FRANCK

Symphony in D Minor
Le Chasseur Maudit

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Artur Rodzinski, cond.
WESTMINSTER WL 5311. 12-in. \$5.95.

It is good to have Artur Rodzinski back with his clean, sensible, often vibrant readings. Both the *Symphony* and *The Accursed Huntsman* may have a few heavy spots, but the tempi are usually right, and the interpretations free of mannerisms. Paray's reading of the *Symphony* (Mercury) may still be more exciting than Rodzinski's, and Beecham's *Chasseur* (Columbia) more elegant, but the present performances will surely find plenty of enthusiastic adherents. What's more, Rodzinski has managed to draw the most cohesive and refined playing out of the overworked Vienna State Opera Orchestra that it has been my pleasure to hear. All this has been admirably transferred to microgrooves by Westminster's engineers. P. A.

FRESCOBALDI

Organ music

Giuseppe de Donà, organ.

VOX PL 8780. 12-in. 46 min. \$5.95.

Includes *Toccatas Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 9*, from *Toccatte e Partite*, Part II, Germani edition; *Variations on Aria di Baleno and Kyrie e Christe*, from *Nuptialia*, edited by Sandro dalla Libera; *Toccata cromatica per l'elevazione* and *Toccata per l'elevazione* from *Fiori Musicali*; *Gagliarda e Corrente*, *La Frescobaldia*, and *Canzone*, from *Liber Organi*, edited by Dalla Libera.

In 1608, when he was only 25, Girolamo Frescobaldi became organist at St. Peter's in Rome. Although he continued at the job intermittently, he saw service under three popes before his death in 1643. Probably the greatest organist of the seventeenth century, most certainly the greatest in Italy, Frescobaldi wielded an enormous influence on the next generation of musicians, through pupils who spread his style to Germany and through his works—Bach saw fit to copy in its entirety his *Fiori Musicali*. Frescobaldi developed a brilliant keyboard technique and enriched his harmonies by adding chromaticism to the contrapuntal style. These attributes, plus melodiousness and passion, should be apparent to anyone listening to the flowering glory of his music. Mr. De Donà plays very well on an organ that at its best is cleanly brilliant, but he has frequent recourse to a rather soggy string tone that I find unappetizing. If the rhythms seem wayward, the player is justified by Frescobaldi's own encouragement of the rubato style. Vox has given exemplary recording to the organ, at once resonant and clear. The documentation on the performing editions is gratifyingly complete. R. E.

GERSHWIN

Porgy and Bess—A symphonic Picture
†Tchaikovsky: *The Queen of Spades*, opera for orchestra

The Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York, Andre Kostelanetz, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 4904. 12-in. 18, 24 min. \$5.95.

The melodic content of Gershwin's score for *Porgy and Bess* makes an ideal basis for the sort of orchestral opera synthesis that

Kostelanetz has been recording of late. The artfully contrived Robert Russell Bennett arrangement of the better known tunes is given a rousing performance, which has a little less of the Kostelanetz touch than some previous efforts. The dramatic and bizarre story of "The Queen of Spades" gave Tchaikovsky the opportunity for some remarkable orchestral character drawing, and his score is devoured more to this than to the provision of luscious melodies. It does not have the immediate appeal of its companion, but there are many moments of genuine melodic pleasure in this score, which is not too well known. Exuberant performance and very fine sound. J. F. I.

GIORDANO

Andrea Chénier (excerpts)

Opera in four acts, libretto in Italian by Luigi Illica. Excerpts: Act I: *O pastore* (chorus). Act II: *Io credo! Credo a una possanza arcana* (Chénier and Roucher); *Ervate possente* through *Ora soave*, etc. Chénier and Maddalena. Act III: *Nemico della patria?* Gerard; *La mamma morta* (Maddalena); *Sì, fui soldato* (Chénier). Act IV: *Come un bel dì di maggio* (Chénier); *Vicino a te*, through finale (Maddalena, Chénier, Schmidt).

Renata Tebaldi (s), Maddalena; José Soler (t), Chénier; Ugo Savarese (b), Gerard; Guilio Ferrein (bs), Roucher; Ernesto Panizza (bs), Schmidt. Orchestra of Radio Italiana, Torino, and Cerra Chorus; Arturo Basile, cond.
CETRA A-50169. 12-in. \$5.95.

Apart from some fine-sounding, if not always very dynamic, singing by Renata Tebaldi as Maddalena, this is among the least satisfactory excerpts by Capitol from the complete operas in its Cetra catalog—and that, without pounding the point into the ground, is saying a good deal. Carelessly specified as to content and casting, with no text and unhelpful notes, the excerpts are neither brightly enough chosen nor well enough sung to rate being called "highlights." The first-act chorus is a decidedly gratuitous inclusion, and the omission of the *Improvviso*, even if it is not well sung in the parent set, leaves a hole that is really inexcusable. It is much as if *Celeste Aida* were left out of a highlights-from-*Aida* disk. This is symptomatic of the basic trouble, for while *Andrea Chénier* is essentially a tenor opera, this performance has a tenor who is badly worn and not interesting anyway, backed by an unimaginative, underemphatic baritone. Those interested in the opera itself, because it is enjoying a successful Metropolitan revival, would do better to spend a penny more for the excellent middle-fif complete Entré performance, or twice as much for the RCA Victor set, which has Maria Caniglia and Beniamino Gigli. Both of these are bargains; this is a lemon. J. H., Jr.

GLAZUNOFF

Stenka Razin, Op. 13 — See Rimsky-Korsakoff.

GOUNOD

Faust — Ballet Music — See Bizet.

GREIG

Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 and 2
†Tchaikovsky: *Nutcracker Suite*.

Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg, Hans-Jürgen Walther, cond.
M-G-M E 3139. 12-in. 53 min. \$4.85.

The proper continuity of the Grieg suites has been annoyingly broken by placing "Morning" at the end of the side devoted to "The Nutcracker," with the balance of the score endisked on the obverse side. Surely this could have been obviated today, when companies are able to record, when they wish, 30 minutes or more to a side. Nothing very spectacular about these performances or their direction. Acceptable sound from M-G-M. J. F. I.

HAYDN

Quartets No. 71, in C, "Emperor," and No. 72, in B Flat, "Sunrise," Op. 76, Nos. 3 and 4

Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet.
WESTMINSTER WL 5323. 12-in. 27, 24 min. \$5.95.

The slow movements wind in slow lusciousness and the majority of the quicker movements are diffuse, a little heavy harmonically, a little contrived. When loud the violins are too harsh to give pleasure. C. G. B.

HINDEMITH

Quartet for Clarinet, Violin, Cello and Piano
†Piston: *Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano*

New York Trio, Alexander Williams, clarinet.
PERSPECTIVE 2004. 12-in. 26, 20 min. \$5.95.

Hindemith can write a flawless charm-piece when he wants to do so, and that is what he did when he composed the quartet for clarinet, violin, cello and piano, which dates from 1938. It is in the tradition of the Brahms Clarinet Trio, and would go wonderfully on a program with that work. The Piston is also a charm-piece, but rather more dramatic and dynamic in its character. Performances are extremely able, and the recording is remarkable for its pin-point precision. A. F.

HINDEMITH

Trio for Strings No. 1
Trio for Strings No. 2

Jean Pougnet, violin; Frederick Riddle, viola; Anthony Pini, cello.
WESTMINSTER WL 5299. 12-in. 20, 22 min. \$5.95.

Hindemith wrote his first string trio in 1926, when he was still active as a chamber-music player and still took great delight in virtuosic effect for its own sake—albeit it was the virtuoso effect of a great craftsman in the Bach tradition. Hence the spirited toccata with which this trio opens, and the extremely elaborate fugue with which it concludes. The slow movement is one of Hindemith's most songful and moving. The second trio exploits a more open, gracious, and lightly balanced polyphony; the virtuoso emphasis is lacking.

but the music has greater breadth and structural integrity. Performances are excellent and recordings good. A. F.

D'INDY

Symphony on a Mountain Air — See Franck.

KHACHATURIAN

Violin Concerto

David Oistrakh, violin. National Philharmonic Orchestra, Aram Khachaturian, cond.
COLOSSEUM CRLPX-001. 12-in. \$5.45.

According to an imprint on the sleeve, this is a "new edition technically superior." If so, the old one certainly must have been a horror. Oistrakh's performance is, of course, very lush, as befits the commonplace, overblown composition with which he is here involved. A. F.

LISZT

19 Hungarian Rhapsodies, Vol. I, Nos. 1-7

Alexander Borovsky, piano.
VOX PL 8900. 12-in. 52 min. \$5.95.

In Mr. Borovsky's three-disk series of Hungarian Rhapsodies, Vol. II will include Nos. 8-13; Vol. III, Nos. 14-19 and the Spanish Rhapsody. In a similar project for Westminster, Edith Farnadi has recorded the first 15 rhapsodies on two disks and a third is being devoted to Nos. 16-19, the Consolations, and the Spanish Rhapsody. For its individualistic details and musical intelligence, Mr. Borovsky's pianism is consistently interesting, if not always convincing. It has a dryness verging on delicacy, with an almost perfuntoriness in some of the dramatic opening passages. Some might find this preferable to more bombastic treatments or as a possible approximation of nineteenth-century performances. However, Miss Farnadi seems to me to be all things to this music—delicate, dramatic, poetic, brilliant, and I find her versions preferable in every way. The acoustical aspects of the Vox record could not be better. R. E.

LISZT

Rhapsodie Espagnole; Three Paganini Etudes — See Mussorgsky

MENDELSSOHN

The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave) — Overture Ruy Blas — Overture

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York; Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond.
COLUMBIA AL 52. 10-in. \$2.85.

Warm, vibrant reproduction takes precedence over quality of performance on this disk. Mitropoulos has a few strange ideas about retards in the *Hebrides*, while his excessive speed in the *Ruy Blas* not only spoils the lyrical and dramatic spirit of the music but also forces some ragged playing from the orchestra. P. A.

MOZART

Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, in B Flat, KV 191
Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, in A, KV 622

Leo Cermak, bassoon; Rudolf Jettel, clari-

net; Pro Musica Orchestra, Vienna, Leopold Emmer, cond.

VOX PL 8870. 12-in. 17, 28 min. \$5.95.

Westminster produced the only other disk of this reasonable and attractive combination just a month ago, and comparison indicates a stand-off. Most tastes would favor this Bassoon Concerto and the Westminster Clarinet Concerto. The Vox bassoon has been allowed more substance, to the benefit of the marriage of lugubriousness and gaiety that gives savor to the work, and Mr. Emmer has a decidedly persuasive way of letting phrases

sing fully. The Clarinet Concerto is well done but more eloquent soloists have already done it, and the violins are troublesome in reproduction. None of this in the tidy sound of the Bassoon Concerto, where the strings are sweet and the rest in order. If KV 191 is the music sought, this is the disk. C. G. B.

MOZART

Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: No. 3, in G, KV 216; No. 4, in D, KV 218

Arthur Grumiaux; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bernhard Paumgartner, cond.
EPIC LC 3060. 12-in. 22, 23 min. \$5.95.

Delightful stylizations, without effrontery or apparent effort, by soloist and orchestra in nicest accord. Giving a lesson in urbanity of line and accent, the players offer their restraint with a natural elegance, particularly in KV 316, more convincing by far than greater displays of brilliance. Some other recent Mozart by Epic supports the evidence implicit in these Concertos that the company is making a strong effort to allot only the most susceptible musicians to the music scheduled for recording. —The engineering is good to violinist and orchestra. The strings are easy, the horns and oboes clear. C. G. B.

Giesecking Traverses the Mozart Keyboard, from End to End

WHAT A TREASURE of music is here! This set is a kind of musical biography of Mozart. It begins with the tiny minuets that his father helped him to write down when he was six years old. It proceeds through the pieces he wrote in his teens, when he was finding his own style in the maze of influences to which he was subjected. It illustrates the experiments in counterpoint stimulated by his contact with the works of Bach and Handel in the early days in Vienna. It gains vital impetus in the mature works, embodying that unique combination of feeling, grace, inexhaustible invention and perfect craftsmanship which we designate by the great and shining adjective "Mozartean."

But here we have more than a musical biography of an individual genius; it is a panorama of the development of keyboard music during the second half of the 18th century, beginning with the *galanterie*, on the harpsichord and clavichord, that had just replaced the grave style of the late Baroque and ending with an incipient Romanticism, on the piano, that was to become a basic element of Beethoven's style. This, after all, is (with some works by C. P. E. Bach and Haydn) the finest solo clavier music that was written anywhere in the world during those crucial 50 years.

Of course, not even the most enthusiastic admirers of Mozart would claim that everything here is up to his unsurpassable best; there is a good deal of run-of-the-mill material. But the remarkable thing is the amazing amount of pure gold that assays out of all this ore.

Here we have not only the familiar sonatas and fantasies but also such relatively little-known masterpieces as the Allegro and Andante, K. 533, which Mozart himself combined with the Rondo, K. 494, as a sonata. And among the pieces that are practically unknown, although they have been available for a century and a half, are such gems as the Minuet in D, K. 355; the Adagio in B minor, K. 540; the Allegro in B-flat, K. 400; the Allegro in G minor, K. 312. The variations include such splendid sets as those on an Allegretto, K. 500; on Paisiello's *Salve tu, Domine*, K. 398; on Gluck's *Unser dummer Pöbel meint*, K. 455; on Sarti's *Come un'agnello*, K. 460, all of which, like the fantasies, indicate what Mozart's celebrated

improvisation at the piano must have been like. To be sure, this album is not really "complete." It lacks a few of Mozart's early pieces, principally a series of short things that he wrote when he was about eight. This is not a serious loss, since the pieces are of interest mainly to Mozart specialists. Angel more than makes up for them by including some fine works that were not originally written for the clavier at all—the Andante in F for a mechanical clock, K. 616; the Adagio in C for glass harmonica, K. 356; and the six German Dances for orchestra, K. 509.

The compositions are not recorded in chronological order. They are judiciously mingled and juxtaposed, so that any side you may choose to play will contain something of value.

All of this treasure comes in a handsome package, in every way worthy of its magnificent contents. The envelope for each of the 11 disks bears a reproduction of one of the lovely engravings from the title-pages of the "complete" edition of Mozart's works that Breitkopf and Härtel began to publish in 1798. The excellent notes by William Glock, a British critic, are printed in a large, nicely illustrated pamphlet. And the whole is encased in a sturdy wooden box bound in dark blue moiré silk with gold stamping.

So much for the music and its outer dress. How is it performed and recorded? Here the reviewer's enthusiasm, alas, begins to evaporate. Technically, of course, the music offers no problems to Giesecking.



Rapid scale passages and arpeggios flow like oil, as Mozart said they should. There is a beautiful balance between the two hands, so that each is always in the proper relation to the other. The tempos are almost always justly chosen; the *Rondo alla turca*, for example, is not raced through but played, for once, at a real allegretto. But most of these performances are something just out of a deep freeze. In his anxiety to avoid the over-romanticizing that many pianists still inflict on Mozart, Giesecking just plays the notes. Certainly a *sforzando* in Mozart should not crash, like one in a late Beethoven sonata; but Giesecking goes to the other extreme and keeps everything within a narrow dynamic frame—there are few pianissimos and seldom anything louder than mezzo-forte. Frequently no distinction at all is made between soft and loud where it is called for in the music. The consequent monochromatic nature of his playing is emphasized by the low dynamic level at which these disks were recorded. There is scarcely any flexibility here, a minimum of nuance in the phrasing. The result of all this is that the music seldom comes to life. The theme of the great A-minor Rondo, K. 511, for example, with its deep feeling and dark chromaticism, comes out as a trivial little dance tune.

Mozart's keyboard style was largely determined by the properties and capacities of the clavichord. And one of the outstanding traits of the clavichord and the kind of piano Mozart preferred to play on was their ability to sing. His music must always sing, even on the keyboard. All of the contemporary accounts of his playing stress its extraordinary "taste," its feeling, "which strikes directly to the heart." We know from one of his own letters that he employed rubato in slow movements. In short, he must have played his music with unusual expressiveness, and this is just the quality, it seems to me, that is lacking in most of Giesecking's performances here. Still, if you like your Mozart *triple sec*, then these disks are for you. NATHAN BRODER

MOZART: The Complete Works for Piano Solo.

Walter Giesecking.

ANGEL 3511K. Limited Edition. Eleven 12-in. in album. \$75.

MOZART

Masonic Music: Funeral Music, KV 477 and three Cantatas, "Dir Seele des Weltalls," KV 429, "Masons' Joy," KV 471; *A Little Masonic Cantata*, KV 623

Vienna Symphony Orchestra and Vienna Chamber Choir, with Rudolf Christ and Erich Majkut, tenors, and Walter Berry, bass; Bernhard Paumgartner, cond.

EPIC LC-3062. 12-in. 8, 14, 7, 13 min. \$5.95.

Valuable and characteristic Mozart, even if in the regalia of fashionable freemasonry. First-class singing by the two tenors here, and the conductor has an authoritative way with the orchestra and chorus in such matters as phrasing and stress, less command over his instrumentalists' unity of delivery. Sonically the record is gently persuasive after the edge of the violins has been blunted, estimable in the general equilibrium of all involved, with an easy blend of color and good if not startling distinctness. C. G. B.

MOZART

Motet "Exsultate. Jubilate," KV 165 — See Bach.

MOZART

Sonatas for Piano: No. 11, in A, KV 331; *No. 14, in C Minor*, KV 457; and *Fantasy in C Minor*, KV 475

Paul Badura-Skoda.

WESTMINSTER WL 5317. 12-in. 22, 18, 11 min. \$5.95.

The challenge to a young pianist is that these three are the works for piano solo by Mozart most frequently played. I do not know a more presentable Mozart pianist among young pianists than Mr. Badura-Skoda today. He has feeling, insight and technique, the three essentials. He is modest in apparent virtuosity, always a virtue when music is opposed to athletics, and he seems disinclined to play what he does not understand. His response to the challenge of the titles on this disk is another attestation of his surety and poise in Mozart. The stylization is so natural that it is not immediately apparent that there was a style to be assimilated. The piano sound is exact at low volume, with some tendency to harshness in the treble as output is increased. C. G. B.

MOZART

Symphony No. 25, in G Minor, KV 183, *Symphony No. 38, in D*, "Prague," KV 504

London Symphony Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.

LONDON LL-1034. 12-in. 17, 25 min. \$5.95.

No other record with a pair of Mozart symphonies is such an all-around success, and Mr. Solti, with these opposites, continues to demonstrate salient qualities of understanding, vigor and grace. He has not made many records, but his small list includes no bad ones. Here the orchestra is larger than we usually find in these works, much to the advantage of No. 25 whose brusqueness is the more imposing the larger its voice. Resonant, decisive, big, easy and unified sound, strident in

the violins at *ff* in No. 38, the violins bland elsewhere. C. G. B.

MUSSORGSKY

Pictures at an Exhibition

†Liszt: *Rhapsodie Espagnole*; *Three Paganini Etudes: No. 2, in E Flat Major*; *No. 3, in G Sharp Minor (La Campanella)*; *No. 5, in E Major (La Chasse)*.

Alexander Uninsky, piano.

EPIC LC 3066. 12-in. 30, 12, 11 min. \$5.95.

More of Mr. Uninsky's brilliantly orthodox performances — that of the Mussorgsky possibly the best available on piano. The tempos are slower, the phrasing more meaningful than in Leonard Pennario's recent, mechanically perfect account for Capitol. It is also the only single-sided version, and if more expensive than Capitol's 10-inch disk, it also offers additional music. The piano tone is again bright, perhaps a little strident. Liszt's rhapsody on some familiar Spanish themes, in its solo version, and the three études on Paganini themes are fun in their exhibitionistic way, and Mr. Uninsky does right by all their splashiness without becoming tasteless. The version of *La Campanella* used here is not from the same, final, edition of the études from which the other two are drawn — it sounds like one of the earlier, more elaborate and tricky versions. Apparently Mr. Uninsky thrives on technical difficulties. R. E.

OFFENBACH

Suites from Bluebeard and Helen of Troy

Ballet Theatre Orchestra, Joseph Levine, cond.

CAPITOL P 8277. 12-in. 49 min. \$5.70.

Although neither of these ballet scores has achieved the success of their predecessor, *Gaité Parisienne*, each has managed to retain its popularity in the repertoire on the basis of Antal Dorati's skillful arrangement of more jaunty Offenbach music. Voluminous as the Franco-German composers work was, it is understandable that there should be some duplication of numbers to be found in "Gaité," though this does not lessen one's pleasure in two scores that offer a pleasant variation from the most popular of all modern ballets. Joseph Levine leads the Ballet Theatre Orchestra in nicely scaled performances, designed to follow those to be encountered in the theater, and Capitol has given them a satisfactory, but rather contained, sound. J. F. I.

OFFENBACH

Gaité Parisienne, Ballet — See Chopin.

PERGOLESI

La Contadina Astuta

(Farce in two parts; text by T. Mariani): Angelica Tuccari (s), Andrea Mineo (b); Orchestra of the Societa del Quartetto, Rome; Giuseppe Morelli, cond.

PERIOD SPL 592. 12-in. \$5.95.

Pegolesi's *La Contadina Astuta* ("The Shrewd Peasant Girl"), like his more famous *La Serva Padrona*, are of the family of two-part *buffa* interludes which eventually proved so much more to the public taste

than the grandiose examples *opera seria* they were designed to brighten that they led to the decline of the *seria* form entirely and, hence, to the development of the line of composers of operatic comedies that includes Cimarosa, Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti. It first appeared in 1734, and has been turning up regularly ever since under various titles; some listeners may have heard it in workshop performances as *Livettiae Tracollo*. It is charming music, always fresh and cheeky, sometimes meltingly lovely as well. The performance recorded here (the only one to be had) is far from perfect, but much better than most of its companion Rome recordings of Rossini one-act comedies. Notes and libretto. J. H., Jr.

PERGOLESI

Concertos for Orchestra: No. 1, in G Major; *No. 3, in A Major*; *No. 4, in F Minor*; *No. 5, in E Flat Major*

Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Angelo Ephrikian, cond.

WESTMINSTER WL 5295. 12-in. 46:18 min. \$5.95.

My recollections impelled me to refer to an earlier release by this same company, and to confirm the fact that this is a reissue, on a single 12-inch disk, of the same four concertos that previously appeared on two 10-inch records (WL 4001-2).

The concertos are beautiful, and should be a welcome surprise to those whose knowledge of Pergolesi's music has been limited to *Le Serva Padrona* and the *Stabat Mater*. The slow movements are particularly outstanding for their expressivity.

The performances, which seem to have been done with a rather large string orchestra, are full-bodied, yet done with sufficient sensitivity so that the contrapuntal texture is never overshadowed by the quantity of sound.

The recording itself does not quite come up to the most recent standards of this company; however, it is still more than satisfactory. In the process of remastering the tapes at a higher level for the present disk, the level of the original tape hiss has also been raised. D. R.

PISTON

Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano — See Hindemith.

POULENC

Sextet for Piano and Wind Instruments †Francaix: *Quintet for Wind Instruments*

Jean Francaix, piano. Wind Quintet of the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Francaise.

ANGEL 35133. 12-in. 18, 18 min. \$5.95.

Poulenc is a past master of the tuneful, witty, and elegant, and this sextet is in his finest, subtlest vein. The Francaix, on the other hand, reminds one drearily of the wind quintets of Carl Reinecke and other 19th century academicians. Wind instruments always record well, but this recording is something extra special. A. F.

RAVEL

Boléro: Le Tombeau de Couperin; Pavane pour une infante defunte

Dialing Your Disks

Records are made with the treble range boosted to mask surface noise, and the bass range reduced in volume to conserve groove space and reduce distortion. When the records are played, therefore, treble must be

reduced and bass increased to restore the original balance. Control positions on equalizers are identified in different ways, but equivalent markings are listed at the top of each column in the table below. This table covers most of the records sold in America during the past few years, with the emphasis on LP. Some older LPs and 78s

required 800-cycle turnover; some foreign 78s are recorded with 300-cycle turnover and zero or 5-db treble boost. One-knob equalizers should be set for proper turnover, and the treble tone control used for further correction if required. In all cases, the proper settings of controls are those that sound best.

RECORD LABEL	TURNOVER			ROLLOFF AT 10KC.	
	400	500	500 (MOD.)	10.5-13.5 db	16 db
	AES (old)	RIAA RCA ORTHO NAB NARTB AES (new)	LP COL ORIG. LP LON	AES NARTB RCA ORTHO RIAA LON	NAB (old) COL LP ORIG. LP
Allied		•		•	
Angel		•		•	
Atlantic* ¹		•			•
Amer. Rec. Soc.*		•		•	
Bartok		•			•
Blue Note Jazz*	•			•	
Boston*			•		•
Caedmon		•		•	
Canyon*	•			•	
Capitol*	•			•	
Capitol-Cetra	•			•	
Cetra-Soria			•		•
Colosseum*			•		•
Columbia*			•		•
Concert Hall*	•			•	
Contemporary*	•			•	
Cook (SOOT) ¹		•		•	
Decca*			•		•
EMS*	•			•	
Elektra		•			•
Epic*			•		•
Esoteric		•		•	
Folkways (most)		•			•
Good-Time Jazz*	•			•	
Haydn Soc.*			•		•
L'Oiseau-Lyre*			•	•	
London*			•	•	
Lyrichord, new* ²		•			•
Mercury*	•			•	
MGM		•		•	
Oceanic*		•			•
Pacific Jazz		•		•	
Philharmonia*	•			•	
Polymusic* ¹		•			•
RCA Victor		•		•	
Remington*		•			•
Riverside		•		•	
Romany		•		•	
Savoy		•		•	
Tempo		•		•	
Urania, most*		•			•
Urania, some	•			•	
Vanguard*			•		•
Bach Guild*			•		•
Vox*			•		•
Walden		•		•	
Westminster		•			•

*Beginning sometime in 1954, records made from new masters require RIAA equalization for both bass and treble.
¹Binaural records produced on this label are recorded to NARTB standards on the outside band. On the inside band, NARTB is used for low frequencies but the treble is recorded flat, without pre-emphasis.
²Some older releases used the old Columbia curve, others old AES.

Continued from page 57

Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Francaise, André Cluytens, cond.
 ANGEL 35102. 12-in. \$5.95, \$4.95 thrift pack.

Boléro; La Valse; Valses nobles et sentimentales; Alborada del Gracioso; Pavane pour une infante defunte

Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Pedro de Freitas-Branco, cond.
 WESTMINSTER WL 5297. 12-in. \$5.95.

Boléro; La Valse

Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, Charles Munch, cond. in *Boléro*, Ernest Ansermet in *La Valse*.
 LONDON LI 22. 12-in. \$5.95.

These are, respectively, the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth versions of the *Boléro* to enter current American LP catalogs, the twelfth and thirteenth *Pavane*, the fifteenth and sixteenth *La Valse*, the ninth *Tombeau de Couperin*, the eighth *Alborada del Gracioso*, and the fourth *Valses nobles et sentimentales*. To compare these three disks with each other at every point where they overlap would be enough to drive anyone out of his mind, to say nothing of comparing them with the other existing records of the same works. Suffice it here to say that, in general, the Angel is the best recording of the three and that Freitas-Branco provides the best performance of the one work — *Boléro* — which all three have in common. A. F.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF

Antar — Symphonic Suite, Op. 9

†Glazunoff: *Stenka Razin, Op. 13*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande; Ernest Ansermet, cond.
 LONDON LI 1060. 12-in. \$5.95.

Considering its infrequent appearance on concert programs, *Antar* is rather well represented on disks. Originally conceived by Rimsky-Korsakoff as his second symphony, it was revised five times, and was ultimately retitled "symphonic suite" because the composer felt that it did not adhere closely enough to the basic outline of a symphony. Like *Scheherazade*, it has an oriental flavor and is colorfully orchestrated. Ansermet's treatment of the score seems to me the broadest, clearest and sanest of those which have thus far been recorded, and it is matched by equally clear reproduction. Glazunoff's *Stenka Razin*, a tone poem about a ruthless seventeenth century Cossack pirate, is also colorful, but far less important music. Its chief interest lies in its extensive development of the familiar *Song of the Volga Boatmen*. Performance and recording here are also of top quality. P. A.



**C. G. BURKE SUGGESTS TEN
BASIC BEETHOVEN ORCHESTRAL WORKS**

building your record library

number sixteen



IT IS the function of this department to choose a small number of records outstanding in a certain category, and I have been asked to find in the Beethoven abundance such a small number, representing the incontrovertibly best realizations of Beethoven's greatest music. Say 10 records.

I do not think that this can be done to anyone's satisfaction. If the very highest standards are maintained, according to the best of what the phonograph has given in the formula music-times-performance-times-reproduction, I do not think we can find more than three or four Beethoven editions qualifying. (Nor do I think we could in the recorded editions of any other composer.) There are no absolute values in aesthetics and all aesthetic values are disputed anyway, but the difficulty is not in the uncertainty of standards—which no matter what they are must be proclaimed for purposes of criticism as fiat—but in the dubious coincidence, governed by the law of chance, of all three factors at the highest degree of excellence. It is *a priori* unlikely and in experience rare.

In this little survey I do not intend to degrade standards. I purpose to maintain the best present criterions without compromise, but to include the two highest grades of record rather than the first exclusively, this being indeed too exclusive. However, when several records of the same composition qualify, only that which seems as a whole the best will be cited.

Records may conveniently be allotted to the following classes of merit: those with

I. Performances free of noticeable affront to taste, point, line and technique; and sonics not inferior to the very best so far attained on records. ("Superb.")

II. Memorable performances and very accurate sound, but clearly without a challenge to the most thorough realizations. ("Outstanding.")

III. Obvious faults less compulsive than obvious merits. ("Desirable.")

IV. Faults and merits in approximate balance. ("Satisfactory.")

V. Faults severe enough to banish merits in memory after hearing. ("Unsatisfactory.")

VI. Faults so corrosive that nothing else is remembered. ("Atrocious.")

Now let's see how much Beethoven can be found in the first two classes. (Restriction of space restricts us to the music for orchestra.)

Symphony No. 1 by Hermann Scherchen conducting the National Opera Orchestra, Vienna. Westminster WAL 208. Benign, easygoing performance in excellent reproduction of an orchestration which cannot overwhelm, but whose nuances are admirably captured.

Symphony No. 3 by Erich Leinsdorf and the Rochester Orchestra. Columbia-Entrée(e) RL 3069. Undeviating and noble in the strongest and purest illustration of this union of classic contour and romantic content, miraculously emphasized by the best sound accorded an "Eroica."

Symphony No. 4 by Josef Krips and the Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam (London LL 915) or by Georg Solti and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (London LL 316). The latter is a performance of cumulative force with an unforgettable finale and soberly accurate sound throughout with the strings always agreeable, while the more lyrical Krips version lacking the breathlessness of the Solti finale is crisper in reproduction, notable in the winds. Both "outstanding," and neither better, in sum, than the other.

Symphony No. 6. Two editions qualify, not without difficulty: Willem van Otterloo and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra on Epic 3011, and Herbert von Karajan and the Philharmonia Orchestra

on Angel 35080. The first is honest and able if unremarkable in interpretation, the second convincingly powerful in the last three movements after skillful glibness in the first two. Rougher play in the first, finer detail in the reproduction. Excellent mass in both, and in sum it is hard to choose between them. — Here the concept of fixed criterions takes a beating, for the Vox record (PL 6960) of the Klemperer interpretation, which on a combination of all counts cannot test so high as these newer disks, has a pastoral seductiveness not heard anywhere else.

Symphony No. 9, by Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Orchestra. RCA Victor LM 6009. A performance amazing in its consummate union of intrepidity and geometry, captured in a recording of scintillating inclusiveness, with everything there and vital. Some will not like Mr. Toscanini's precipitation in the first movement, which is marvelously apt to my ears, but they are lucky in having other excellent editions in more conventional tempo. But this one is Class I

Concerto No. 1, by Walter Gieseking with the Philharmonia Orchestra, conductor unidentified. Columbia ML 4307. Old but exact and untroublesome reproduction of a performance of fastidious flipness marked by pianism without stress and matching orchestral fluency.

Concerto No. 4. This music has been favored by three "outstanding" editions and five others of considerable merit. My favorite is Backhaus-Krauss on London LL 417, followed by Gieseking-Karajan on Columbia ML 4535 and Solomon-Cluytens on RCA Victor LHMV 1056, but I could not defend the first choice with great conviction, and the difference between the eighth in order and the first does not seem great enough to distress owners of the former.

Concerto No. 5. It is hard to compare disparate presentations like those of Backhaus-Krauss on London LL 879 and Gieseking-Karajan on Columbia ML 4623, since the solid staleness of the first is not in itself more admirable or more correct than the tauter animation of the second. A warmer tonal environment makes me prefer the London. A good performance on Westminster WT 5114 has received the best reproduction of all.

Violin Concerto, by Ruggiero Ricci with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. London LL 562. Really in a class by itself aloof from the competing editions. Persuasive lyricism from the soloist, very sensitive orchestral leadership, and gracious sound at all points of its range.

Egmont, by the Vienna National Opera Orchestra with Magda Laszlo, soprano, conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster WT 5281. This is a Class I record. A lucid, honorable and demanding plan realized by all participants under Dr. Scherchen's sometimes hypnotic dominion. A triumph of smooth but vehement clarity by the players, and of rich, beautifully distributed timbres by the engineers.

Two of Class I and 13 of Class II are all that I can find in the Beethoven orchestral discography. There are adequate disks representative of all the major works, but it would be invidious to progress if London's superb recording of the stolid Kleiber Fifth Symphony, or Vox's fading sound of Klemperer's Fifth so perceptively dramatic, were to be overclassed in response to their preëminence in one aspect. The *Missa Solemnis* in the most fiery of Toscanini thrusts and the (general) mastery of the Victor engineers is not to be slighted, but with the solo voices throttled as they are Classes I or II would be degraded by the inclusion of this edition.

Fifteen "outstanding" editions. Some will be shocked at the paucity, others at the generosity, of the number. It explains why we have duplications. C.G.B.

ROSSINI

Il Barbiere di Siviglia (excerpts)

Act I: *Piano, pianissimo* through *Ecco ridente*: entrance and *Largo al factotum*; *Una voce poco fa*; from *Eh, voi dite benissimo* through *La calunnia*; *Dunque io son*. Act II: from *Ma vedi il mio destino* through *Pace, gioia* etc., from *Don Basilio!* through *Buona sera!* etc., from *Stringi*; *bravissimo* through *La testa vi gira*, etc., *Il vecchiotto cerca moglie* and storm intermezzo; from *Ab! qual colpo* through finale.

Hilde Reggiani (s), Rosina; Lucielle Brown-ing (ms), Berta; Bruno Landi (t), Almaviva; Carlos Ramirez (b), Figaro; Wilfred Engel-mann (b), Fiorello; John Gurney (bs), Don Basilio; Lorenzo Alvary (bs), Dr. Bartolo. RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus; Giuseppe Bamboschek, cond. RCA VICTOR (Bluebird) LBC-1083. 12-in. \$2.98.

In spite of what may not look to the LP-educated opera listener like precisely a star-studded cast, this set of excerpts from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* is decidedly worth owning, especially at the modest Bluebird price. For one thing, in its 78-rpm form it enjoyed high technical distinction, and still sounds remarkably good. For another, it is a better representation of the opera as a whole than are many tape-snipped LP highlights disks. For a third, it is extremely well conducted by Giuseppe Bamboschek and is, in general, very brightly sung. Having made it, Carlos Ramirez wandered away, Lord knows where, but left behind a vigorous, engaging, often brilliantly-sung Figaro as a memento; his *Largo al factotum* is really stunning. Bruno Landi, one of the best of Almavivas stylistically, is in excellent form, as is his wife, Hilde Reggiani, who sings Rosina with real brightness of tone and firmness of attack. The other soloists are competent, and the orchestra plays quite snappily. Recommended. J. H., JR.

SAINT-SAENS

Carnival of the Animals — See Debussy.

SCHONBERG

Five Orchestral Pieces

†Bartok: *Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion and Celesta*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Rafael Ku-belik, cond. MERCURY MG 50026. 12-in. 22, 28 min. \$5.95.

The *Five Orchestral Pieces*, composed in 1909, stand at a half-way point between the romanticism of Schönberg's early idiom and the atonality of his later style. I find them particularly fascinating for the special orchestral technique they exploit, a technique derived from Mahler's method of using a vast orchestra as if it were a chamber ensemble, but it is actually impossible here to dissociate instrumental thinking from other aspects of the musical content. Schönberg underlines this point in the third movement, *The Changing Chord*, wherein a single unchanging chord is completely transformed in character through different orchestral treatments. *Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta* is, of course, one of Bartok's most important orchestral works, and one

wherein he displays at its height his unique genius for combining folklore material with musical forms of the most complex and rarefied kind. It has been recorded several times before, but never more successfully than in this version. However, no recording can do it full justice, for part of Bartok's idea in this case is to exploit effects of spatial relationship, and the score provides meticulous directions for the placement of the instruments on the stage. These really mean something in the concert hall, but not on disks — failing stereophonic reproduction. A. F.

SCHUBERT

Octet for String Quartet with String Bass, Clarinet, Bassoon and Horn, in F, Op. 166

Vienna Octet.

LONDON LL-1049. 12-in. 51 min. \$5.95.

The delicate *expertise* of these polished musicians may defeat their purpose in this essentially rustic music. Perhaps not: it is nowhere played with more obvious skill, and it has the advantage of keeping the violins in place. In the third and sixth movements a good energy of bounce is inserted to show that the Vienna Octet are aware of all facets. Excellent recording, with a fine distinctness of the instruments. It would be wise to compare this with Westminster 5094, a performance of greater jocularity and lower social estate. C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

*Quartet No. 14, in D Minor, "Death and the Maiden"**Quartet (Movement) No. 12, in C Minor*

Barchet Quartet.

VOX PL 8810. 12-in. 38, 6 min. \$5.95.

Huge, artificial sound of disagreeable penetration spoils a well played "Death and the Maiden," and is as uncomely, if less regrettable, in the surprising hustle of the *Quartettstanz*. C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Die Schöne Müllerin

Anton Dermota, tenor; Hilde Dermota, piano.

LONDON LL-971. 12-in. 1 hr. 4 min. \$5.95.

A month ago, in considering two other versions of the song-cycle, I speculated on the amount of ham admissible. Mr. Dermota provides none: this is straight to the point without vocal affectation. In such a warm voice as this tenor's perhaps this is the way to make the songs most affecting. We have no sense of embarrassment of the singer at exaggerating an uncomfortable kind of emotionalism. Here the vocal line as Schubert wrote it is purer than on any other record. Mme. Dermota is better than adequate in the wonderful accompaniments, if hardly the equal of Mr. Gerald Moore on the HMV version, that costs more than twice as much as this, and offers some superb singing by Mr. Fischer-Dieskau and a contribution of ham. — Unimpeachable sound on the new London, the subdued piano-bass being the pianist's doing. C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Sonata for Piano, in D, Op. 53

Webster Aicken.

EMS 108. 12-in. 39 min. \$5.95.

Another version has been announced, but this is the only LP of a Sonata swollen beyond its material, fascinating just the same and famous for its rondo quarreling over "Sing a Song of Sixpence." Mr. Aitken's love of Schubert is known and is apparent throughout the Sonata, his affection always ahead of his hands, though always to be preferred to the acrobat whose hands displace his heart. — The sound of the piano is true but raw, the instrument itself, without help from environment and needing little help from the compensator. C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Trio No. 1, in B Flat, Op. 99 — See Schumann.

SCHUMANN

Trio for Piano, Violin and Violoncello, No. 1, in D Minor, Op. 63

†Schubert: *Trio No. 1, in B Flat, Op. 99*

Alfred Cortot, Jacques Thibaud, Pablo Casals.

RCA VICTOR LCT 1141. 12-in. 30, 31 min. \$5.95.

The original recordings were made long ago, the Schumann in 1928 and the Schubert in 1926, soon after the introduction of electrical recording. It is to be expected then that the sound of the latter is muffled and lifeless. One will cherish it for the sunny pleasure of the deft, light-hearted playing, apparent through the sonic veils. The Schumann, as well played, emerges from the groove in comparatively vital reproduction, the sympathetic romanticism of the playing intact and memorable after 26 years. C. G. B.

SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 4 in A Minor, Op. 63

Pohjola's Daughter — *Symphonic Fantasia, Op. 49*

London Symphony Orchestra; Anthony Collins, cond.

LONDON LL 1059. 12-in. \$5.95.

Anthony Collins is emerging as an important and understanding interpreter of the music of Jean Sibelius. His clear-headed account of the dark, brooding Fourth Symphony is remarkably revealing, as is his traversal of *Pohjola's Daughter*. London's reproduction, while completely satisfactory, may not be quite as warmed as that provided by Angel for Herbert von Karajan's recent performance of the Symphony, but Collins' approach gets much closer to the spirit of this stark music from the Northland. P. A.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Nutcracker Suite — See Greig.

TCHAIKOVSKY

The Queen of Spades (for orchestra) — See Gershwin.

THOMSON

Three Pictures for Orchestra

Philadelphia Orchestra, Virgil Thomson, cond.

Continued on page 64

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Critique of Three Requiems, with a Surprise Ending

OF THE GREAT master compositions that have grown out of and around the liturgy of the Catholic Church, Giuseppe Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* in memory of Alessandro Manzoni has perhaps been the subject of more misunderstanding, than any other. Especially in non-Catholic, Anglo-Saxon countries, it was denounced, dismissed, condescended to. It was called "operatic" or "theatrical," with the clear implication in its religiosity to be worthy of its text and subject. People call it "the greatest opera Verdi wrote," meaning by this a curious mixture of tribute and depreciation.

To call the Manzoni *Requiem* "operatic" does have a certain descriptive relevance.

As a man whose life was the theater, Verdi was certainly concerned with the human drama of the Mass rather than with any abstract theological-musicological investigation of its meaning. However, the people in his operas are notable because they are individuals who touch universality, while the singers in his *Requiem* are not individuals at all, but mankind itself, face to face with the Eternal—their relationship to God, their fear of death and their eventual reconciliation to it. The fears, the consuming doubts in the face of Judgment, are terribly, almost graphically, presented, but what is most moving is the sweetness, the greatness of soul, the purity of resignation, that are the composer's when he writes of death. In a very real sense, this may be the greatest Verdi of all.

In view of the circumstances of composition, it is hardly surprising that it should be. The idea of writing a Requiem Mass came to Verdi first when Rossini died, in 1868. Then he began the project of a Mass to which all the leading Italian composers would contribute, each writing one movement. He composed his own—the *Libera me*—and some others composed theirs, but for various reasons of personalities the plans were never realized. It was not until 1873 that Verdi returned to the liturgical text.

In that year, Alessandro Manzoni, author of the greatest of nineteenth-century Italian novels, *I Promessi Sposi*, and, like Verdi, a great liberal leader of the forces that unified Italy, died. Verdi was not a man of many personal attachments, but those he held to—Manzoni among them—he held to with a depth and warmth of feeling that only the great are fortunate enough to be able to express. It was in May, 1874, roughly two years after the premiere of *Aida*, that the Mass in honor of Manzoni was first heard, in the Church of Saint Mark, Milan. Visitors came from all over Europe, and to satisfy the demand for seats three extra performances were given in the opera house of La Scala. The work had started on its way.

There are now eight recordings in all of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, the three under consideration being the best as well as the most recent, although the old Victor set conducted by Tullio Serafin, with Maria Caniglia, Ebe Stignani, Beniamino Gigli,

and Ezio Pinza, was a classic on 78's and remains a somewhat faded classic today. The more recent Victor set, an audience-present (and occasionally audible) memento of the memorable occasion when Arturo Toscanini conducted the work in Carnegie Hall three years ago, has not the vocal merits of its older catalog companion, but it is recorded on wide-range equipment, and the orchestral parts are superbly played by the NBC Symphony men. At the time of the performance, it seemed that this might be very close to Mr. Toscanini's farewell, and there was about the occasion a kind of unforgettable excitement that is echoed in the recording. It was, and is, a performance vast in conception and conducted with great concentration and vigor. If the soloists had been able to respond, or even to operate with any kind of ease within the framework they were set, it might have been a great one. Unhappily, they were not. Only the devoted NBC players really succeed in making their parts sound, all the time, within the forceful, unyielding Toscanini beat. It is a tremendous *idea* of the work, but one whose superhumanity keeps exposing the human shortcomings of some of the main participants. The engineering has the credits and debits of most live-performance tapes that have been slightly echo-chambered to add luster to the sound.

The Angel set makes an interesting comparison, not only because it presents Victor de Sabata's conception of the work, but because he has, in Mr. Di Stefano and Mr. Siepi, two of the Toscanini soloists. The performance as a whole, is not as fast and not as rigid as the Toscanini, but it is no less vital, no less propulsive, no less dynamic, and the engineering balance between voices and orchestra, and within the orchestra itself, is more natural. The Teatro alla Scala orchestra may not be the true equal of the NBC Symphony, but it is a very good orchestra indeed as it plays for Mr. De Sabata, and although the Scala chorus does not invariably have the poise and balance of the Robert Shaw Chorale, it has a somewhat more flexible beat to contend with, and its members



Ferenc Fricsay

sing words with more dramatic awareness. The differences between Mr. Di Stefano and Mr. Siepi in the two performances are remarkable; both are far more sure and sensitive in their phrasing in the Angel set, partly simply because both are more mature now and know more than they did when the Victor set was made, partly because they are directed rather than proscribed by Mr. De Sabata.

The Decca version, not Italian at all, is in some ways the most ingratiating, the most finally satisfying of all, for although it does not have name soloists or the Latin glamour of a Toscanini or a De Sabata, it does have a kind of unity of feeling and devotional quality, which in both other versions is sacrificed somewhat to brilliance and drama, an exceptional sense of musicality dedicated rather than musicianship used. Ferenc Fricsay shapes everything as if this really were the performance of a Requiem, always reverent and devoted and meaningful. The recording, which sounds as if it might actually have been done in a church, is resonant and well balanced.

With a vast work like the Manzoni *Requiem*, it is foolhardy for one person to venture categorization of three performances of such quality. It all depends on what an individual wants, on how *he* feels about the work. Here are three fine conductors, each of whom feels differently. Who is to say, except on the level of preference pure and simple? Devotees of Mr. Toscanini have the problem already solved. Most non-idolaters whose primary interest is in vocal quality may well prefer the Angel, as may many who prefer the big-opera-house impact of De Sabata; it is a very exciting performance. For others, the Decca may be best. I myself prefer it as an experience of the whole work, but the choice is not easy.

JAMES HINTON, JR.

VERDI: *Messa da Requiem*

Giuseppe Verdi: *Messa da Requiem* (written for the anniversary of the death of Alessandro Manzoni).

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s); Oralia Dominguez (ms); Giuseppe di Stefano (t); Cesare Siepi (bs). Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatro alla Scala, Milan; Victor de Sabata, cond.

ANGEL 3520 B (35158-9). Two 12-in. \$11.90.

Maria Stader (s); Marianna Radev (ms); Helmut Krebs (t); Kim Borg (bs). Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, Berlin, and RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Berlin; Ferenc Fricsay, cond.

DECCA DX-118. Two 12-in. \$11.70.

Herva Nelli (s); Fedora Barbieri (ms); Giuseppe di Stefano (t); Cesare Siepi (bs). Robert Shaw Chorale and NBC Symphony Orchestra; Arturo Toscanini, cond.

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IRVING KOLODIN
 —Saturday Review

LONDON
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Five Songs from William Blake

Mack Harrell, bar.; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 4919. 12-in. 18, 15 min.
\$5.95.

The three orchestral pictures are *The Seine at Night*, *Wheatfield at Noon*, and *Sea Picture with Birds*. The first is a superbly effective, magnificently orchestrated nocturne. The second is a study in harmonic intensity. *Wheatfield at Noon* is an ingenious title for it, but it is the least specifically descriptive of the three pictures; by the same token, it may be the best piece of music. *Sea Picture with Birds* is rather too heavily pictorial, with its waves and gull-cries. The Blake songs are beauties. Thomson's gift for writing simple, hymn-like or folk-like melodies is at its best in these deft underlinings of the poet's noble naïveté, but the whole thing has a touch of grandeur about it, too, and this is also completely right for Blake. Performances are excellent and recordings good, but the songs are a bit more powerfully registered. A. F.

VERDI**La Traviata (excerpts)**

Prelude. Act I: From *E strano* to end of act. Act II: recitative and *De' miei bollenti spiriti*; *Di Provenza*. Act IV: Prelude; recitative and *Addio del passato*; recitative and *Parigi, O cara*.

Maria Callas (s), Violetta; Francesco Albanese (t), Alfredo; Ugo Savarese (b), Germont. Orchestra of Radio Italiana, Turin, and Cetra Chorus; Gabriele Santini, cond.

CETRA A 51067. 12-in. \$5.95.

The full-length recording from which this disk was made is one of Maria Callas' least impressive efforts on records, and this highlights-presentation does nothing but emphasize her air of detachment and frequently flawed singing. Francesco Albanese and Ugo Savarese are both the kind of singers who if they were baseball players would forever find themselves being traded to Baltimore in a deal for a promising junior pitcher. Why bother? J. H., JR.

VIVALDI**Gloria in D**

†M.-A. Charpentier: *Midnight Mass*

Ensemble Vocal de Paris and Orchestra of the Société des Concerts (du Conservatoire?); André Jouve, cond.

WESTMINSTER WL 5287. 12-in. 29, 31 min. \$5.95.

One of the Okies in "The Grapes of Wrath" attests his awe at an obsolescent sonorous passage in the Authorized Version by affirming it "chockfull of religion": so are these equally wonderful exhumations of tolerant catholicity in tones. The aspects of God are infinite; and the late Billy Sunday, the late Alexander VI, the quick Rev. N. V. Peale and the quick Aga Kahn can all find (the first two being immortal) some aspects here to please them. The disarming jollity, the facile lip-worship, the simple abasement and the sweet glibness of Charpentier offer a lighter assortment than the demanding rhythmic ex-

hortations, the brooding *mea culpas* and the triumphant encyclicals of Vivaldi, but both will make converts to their music and to facets of their belief. In fewer words, exciting, engaging and imaginative music to a standardized religious text, performed in knowing style heretical to none of the musical implications and compelling in matters of faith. The unnamed solo voices are not great but they are well guided, the small chorus is of high order, and the sound is very effective in a chiseled way of distinctness over mass. The sopranos and violins interpose difficulties of reproduction for mid-fidelity equipment, little trouble for the best equipment, and none for an ordinary record-player. C. G. B.

WOLPE**Sonata for Violin and Piano**

Frances Magnes, violin; David Tudor, piano.

Quartet for Trumpet, Saxophone, Piano and Percussion**Passacaglia**

Bob Nagel, trombone; Al Cohn, saxophone; Jack Maxin, piano; Al Howard, percussion. David Tudor, piano.

ESOTERIC 530. 12-in. 26, 18, 12 min. \$5.95.

Stefan Wolpe, head of the Contemporary Music Center in New York, is a pupil of Busoni and Webern and an atonalist with many theoretical ideas of his own; he is by no means an orthodox Schönbergian, although his work leans toward the Schönbergian school. As revealed in these records, I find it relentlessly academic and uninteresting. A. F.

COLLECTIONS AND MISCELLANY

ON YOUR TOES

Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, based on a book by Rodgers and Hart and George Abbott. Original cast recording, featuring Bobby Van, Elaine Stritch, Kay Coulter, Ben Astar and Joshua Shelley. Chorus and Orchestra under the direction of Salvatore Dell'Isola.

DECCA DL 9015. 12-in. 55 min. \$5.85.

Two years ago, Columbia issued a fine recording (ML 4645) of the attractive score Rodgers provided for the 1936 musical "On Your Toes." It had a pick up cast, who obviously enjoyed their work, knew how to sing these songs "for the record," and the additional benefit of superb Columbia sound. It is reasonable to suppose that any Original Cast Recording of the work should be its superior, but it doesn't work out that way. Decca's artists, from the current New York revival, may all be highly proficient in the theater, but they seem ill at ease in front of the microphone, singing without distinction or much enthusiasm such inextricable songs as "There's a small hotel" or "It's gotta be love." Decca's engineers have not been too considerate in their mike placements, and the sound is several decibels below Columbia's.

The songs are the same on each recording, but Decca has added "You took advantage of me," extracted from the 1926 Rodgers musical "Present Arms," as a show case for the talents of Elaine Stritch. She does well with it, in a highly individual way, and it's about the most rewarding number on the record. J. F. I.

HYMNS AND ANTHEMS

University of Redlands Choir, J. William Jones, cond., Charles D. Smith, Organ.
COLUMBIA ML-4866. 12-in. 44:08 min.
\$5.95.

ANTHOLOGY OF RENAISSANCE MUSIC

Sacred Music by: Dufay, Prés, Lassus, Morely, Victoria, Palestrina, Berchem, Mouton.

The Primavera Singers of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua, Noah Greenberg, dir.
PERIOD SPL-597. 12-in. 44:19 min. \$5.95.

Sacred music of two widely differing types are presented on these two disks. Each should be appealing to its respective devotees. The Columbia disk offers 16 hymns and anthems of the conventional sort, sung with devotion and care by a chorus of 97 voices (to judge by the photograph on the cover). While the voices have the sound of a college chorus, the conductor has seen to it that they are not pushed beyond the point of their optimum volume; thus the results are at all times pleasing to the ear.

The music on the other disk is more sophisticated and complex; the relatively four-square harmonization of the hymns is replaced here by the involved contrapuntal style of the earlier composers. Particularly impressive is the "Tu Solus" of Josquin des Prés, with its inherent drama. The six-voice group sings with conviction and taste (despite some insecurity in the high soprano voice in Morley's "Agnus Dei," and some bad intonation in Victoria's "O Vos Omnes"), under a hand that is obviously sensitive to the music's expressive and stylistic needs.

Both recordings are technically good, and each is apposite to the demands of the music. Columbia supplied its chorus with a big echo, suggesting the acoustics of a church; Period used a smaller hall, so that there is more clarity of line, as befits the contrapuntal style. However, there is one bad tape splice in the final work on the Period disk.

The records differ in the matter of annotation. Columbia's jacket contains a discussion of the history of hymns in general, but no texts; Period's supplies no historical notes whatsoever, but gives the texts of the works in both Latin and English. D. R.

A VIOLIN RECITAL BY NORMAN CAROL

Tartini: *Presto* (arr. Bridgewater); Chopin: *Nocturne in C sharp Minor* (arr. Milstein); Fiocco: *Allegro* (arr. Bent and O'Neill); Sarasate: *Zigeunerweisen*; Kreisler: *Liebesleid*; *Liebesfreud*; *Tambourin Chinois*; *Schön Rosmarin*; *The Old Refrain*; Tartini: *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* (arr. Kreisler); Chopin: *Mazurka in A Minor* (arr. Kreisler).



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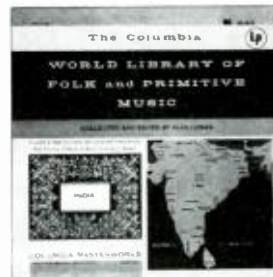
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Norman Carol, violin; Julius Levine, piano.
RCA VICTOR LBC 1055. 12-in. \$2.98.

The young American violinist, Norman Carol, shows that he has ample technique for these little encore pieces, and his tone is full and pleasant; but on the whole, these are routine performances, reasonably well recorded, nothing more. P. A.

DOHNANYI
Serenade in C Major

BERKELEY
Trio for Strings

FRANCAIX
Trio for Strings, in C Major

Jean Pougnet, violin; Frederick Riddle, viola; Anthony Pini, cello.
WESTMINSTER WL 5316. 12-in. 22, 15, 20 min. \$5.95.

This disk introduces the contemporary English composer, Lennox Berkeley, to the American record public. (This is the composer of the much-discussed new opera, *Nelson*). It is a pleasant introduction, for the trio is very melodious and skillfully made, although it presents no strikingly individual features. The Francaix is, as usual, an amusing bit of fluff, but with a longish slow movement of more than ordinary expressivity, at least for this composer. The Dohnanyi is in the tradition of Mozart so far as its form is concerned and in the tradition of Brahms in every other respect, but Dohnanyi's Brahmsianism is not of the heavy, doctoral variety; this composer follows faithfully in the footsteps of the master but nevertheless manages to say something quite worth while. Performances are magnificent, but the recording is only adequate. A. F.

FAURE
Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19

FRANCK
Variations Symphoniques for Piano and Orchestra

SAINT-SAËNS
Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Major, Op. 103
Jean Doyen, piano, in the *Ballade* and *Variations*; Magda Tagliaferro, piano, in the *Concerto*. Orchestra des Concerts Lamoureux; Jean Fournet, cond.
EPIC LC 3057. 12-in. \$5.95.

The best interpreted of these three late romantic French works for piano and orchestra is the lovely Fauré *Ballade*, lyrically and sensitively treated by Jean Doyen. He also does well by the Franck *Symphonic Variations*, but either the engineers or Fournet—probably the latter—have allowed the orchestra too much prominence. Magda Tagliaferro gives a facile account of the Saint-Saëns *Concerto*, though this is scarcely an outstanding work. Reproduction throughout is fine. P. A.

KATHLEEN FERRIER
"A Broadcast Recital"

Songs by English composers: Charles Villiers Stanford: *The Fairy Lough; A Soft Day*. Hubert Parry: *Love Is a Bable*. Ralph Vaughan Williams: *Silent Noon*. Frank Bridge: *Go Not, Happy Day*. Peter Warlock: *Sleep; Pretty Ring-time*. Tra-

ditional: *Waly, Waly* and *Come You Not From Newcastle?* (arr. Benjamin Britten); *Kitty My Love* (arr. Herbert Hughes).

Kathleen Ferrier (c). Frederick Stone, piano.
LONDON LS-1032. 10-in. \$4.95.

The late Kathleen Ferrier was an artist whose great honesty lent a kind of distinction to everything she undertook. There is no doubt at all that many people will want this recital, taken from a BBC broadcast tape, simply because it is she singing. However, she was not a creative magic-worker to the extent that she could vitalize anything at all, and although all of the songs here are respectable—very respectable—by no means all are interesting. *Silent Noon* is a fine song; so is *Sleep*; and the Britten arrangements of traditional tunes are pleasant—but that's about it. Neither was Miss Ferrier's voice in its best condition; nor is the recording very satisfying. J. H., JR.

MUSIC FOR HARP

Casella: *Sonata for Harp, Op. 68*. Respighi: *Notturmo; Villanella, Siciliana, and Italiana, from Antiche Danze ed arie*. Donizetti: *Entr'acte from Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Laura Newell, harp.
PHILHARMONIA PH 109. 12-in. 35 min. \$5.95.

Like most of his works, Alfred Casella's Harp Sonata is sophisticated on the surface, avoids the commonplace, has no great depth. The workmanship is highly polished; the music always "sounds." The three-movement 16 minute sonata will offend no one with its mildly modern harmonies, yet will delight many with its charming ideas. Miss Newell, a gracious performer, understands the score and makes the most of it. The rest of the disk is devoted to transcriptions of works that lend themselves well enough to performance on the harp. Particularly successful are the three *Antiche Danze ed Arie*—they were once lute pieces anyway. The *Lucia* interlude, which involves a harp solo with orchestra, as arranged for solo harp by Albert Zabel sounds pale by comparison with the original, even with considerable extension of the harp cadenzas. Extremely realistic reproduction. R. E.

MUSIC OF THE BAROQUE ERA FOR HARPSICHORD AND CLAVICHORD

Weckmann: *Toccata in E Minor*. Pachelbel: *Aria Sebaldina with variations*. Böhm: *Praeludium-Fuga-Postludium in G Minor*. Rathgeber: *Four Pastorellas for Christmas Time*. Fischer: *Prelude and Chaconne in G Major*. Scheidt: *Variations on the Cantio Belgica: Ab, you fine horseman*.

Erwin Bodky, harpsichord and clavichord.
UNICORN UN 1002. 12-in. 47 min. \$5.95.

Erwin Bodky, associate professor of music at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., and founder and director of the Cambridge Society of Early Music, which gives a valuable annual series of concerts in the Boston suburb, has produced one of the most satisfactory records devoted to baroque keyboard music. The music was chosen to illustrate two things, the contrast between

harpsichord and clavichord and the contrast between northern and southern German music in the seventeenth century. Mr. Bodky makes his points clearly with six works of equal fascination, from the beguiling Christmas Pastorellas of Johan Valentin Rathgeber to the Georg Böhm piece, considered by many as "perhaps the greatest keyboard composition before Bach." Johann Kaspar Ferdinand Fischer's *Prelude and Chaconne* is tender music for the delicate ears of a new-born prince "to be played only on the clavichord." The variations of Johann Pachelbel and Samuel Scheidt abound with ingenious ideas, and Matthias Weckmann's *Toccata* is powerful and harmonically striking. Mr. Bodky's performances in this high-fidelity recording sound ever so slightly rigid and overemphatic; they are also noble and virile, and excellently registered on the harpsichord. A distinguished achievement all around. R. E.

ROLAND HAYES

"The Art of Roland Hayes"

Vol. I: Guillaume de Machaut: *Douce dame jolie*. Anon.: *L'Amour de moi and Le tambourin* (arr. Julien Tiersot). Claudio Monteverdi: *Maledetto sia l'aspetto*. Giulio Caccini: *Amarilli*. Antonio Caldara: *Alma del core*. Anon. English: *Alone I Live* (arr. Cooper W. Pearce). Anon.: *Mein freud mocht sich wohl meren* (arr. from Lochamer Liederbuch). Georg Philipp Telemann: *Die rechte Stimmung*. J. S. Bach: *Du bist bei mir*. Trad. African: *Xango* (arr. Heitor Villa-Lobos). Trad. Aframerican (arr. Roland Hayes): *Lit'l Girl, Lit'l Girl!; Roun' About de Mountain; Lit'l Boy; He Never Said a Mumberlin' Word; Plenty Good Room; Were You There?; Swing Low Sweet Chariot*.

Vol. II. Franz Schubert: *Der Jungling an der Quelle*. L. van Beethoven: *Sehnsucht*. Franz Schubert: *Die Liebe hat gelogen; Der Musensohn*. Hector Berlioz: *Absence*. Claude Debussy: *Le Faune*. Modest Musorgsky: *Song of Solomon*. Trad. Aframerican and other: *Pity a Po' Boy* (arr. Willis L. James); *O Le' Me Shine* (arr. Percival Parham); *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* (arr. Lawrence Brown). Trad. Aframerican and other (arr. Roland Hayes): *Too Late; Ezekiel Saw de Wheel; O Mary, Don't You Weep; Good News; Po' Pilgrim; As One People*.

Roland Hayes (t). Reginald Boardman, piano.
VANGUARD VRS 448-9. Two 12-in. (boxed) \$11.95.

The line of type that is framed, motto-like, by the Vanguard label—"Recordings for the Connoisseur"—is specially appropriate to this handsome tribute to Roland Hayes, and of course, that connoisseurship is not equated with arrogance or preciosity. For this is the singing of a truly distinguished re-creative artist, informed with the outgoing warmth and intense humanity of a great but humble spirit. But, it is also the singing of a voice no longer young, and to be valued as highly as it should be it needs listening that is aware, sensitive, and, in a way, itself re-creative.

Roland Hayes is now 67 years old.



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Houston Post

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For the greater part of his life he has sung, and for more than 35 years his name has been a virtual synonym for gleaming vocal skill, interpretative polish, musician-ship that is eclectic in the best sense, and, perhaps above all, for the loftiest artistic and personal integrity. It was these qual-

ities, unalloyed by any merely superficial appeal, that made him the first Negro singer of modern times to gain unquestioned international acceptance as a serious artist. Another great singer, Marion Anderson, was to illuminate further the dark corners of ignorance and prejudice in this country,

but Roland Hayes had carried the torch before her.

His voice, a pure, sweet tenor, not large, but so beautifully focussed that it seemed to come straight to each listener, seemed to have infinite flexibility and expressive variety. There seemed to be for him no mechanism of singing at all. He simply opened his mouth, and out it came. This, of course, was at least partly illusion, for he was, and is, an educated, sophisticated musician. But the defining thing about his recitals was their directness and supreme honesty of communication. When he sang a song, there was no doubting at the moment that his way of singing it was the way it went.

As he sounds now, on these records, the capacity for communicating is still strong, but the voice itself is thin and less sure of intonation, strained when the tessitura is high, spready when power is called for. This encroachment of age not infrequently frustrates realization of his intentions, but it seldom obscures them. Once the listener has accepted fully the fact that this is not a young man singing, the seriousness and aristocratic taste—and, still, the beauty of tone when phrases lie well—repay attention with a kind of deep satisfaction that few artists of any age have it in their power to give. Reginald Boardman's accompaniments are very fine, and the recording is intimate and natural in sound. Recommended to anyone whose interest in singers and singing is humane and genuine. J. H. Jr.

Noel and Gertie—Still Inseparable

TO MOST PEOPLE, the association of Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence has the sort of inseparable quality, usually reserved for the Lunts. Yet oddly enough, in spite of their close friendship, they appeared together, on the stage, in no more than three shows, if we except those early, brief contacts, when, as children, they both attended Miss Italia Conti's Academy of Stage Deportment and Dancing. In 1924, they appeared as the stars of Coward's revue "London Calling," in 1931/32 in "Private Lives" (especially written for Miss Lawrence) and in 1936 they were together for the last time in the nine short playlets that made up "Tonight at 8:30." But those three engagements created an artistic rapprochement that was unique in the theater. Coward never appeared to such advantage, in this country, as when he worked vis-a-vis Miss Lawrence, and anyone who ever saw them together could not fail to feel the intangible, delicate communication that existed between them. No other actress has had such a feeling for Coward's brittle dialogue, nor the ability to project it with the same acidulous, yet gay, touch. In this recording we can relive some of those memorable moments when they played together. Here is the short love scene from Act one of "Private Lives," in which the slow break down from cool indifference to melting warmth is magically conveyed by both artists, and by Lawrence in particular. The gay chaff that conceals the hungry heart, how beautifully she could do it. Or the give and take in the rowdy "Red Peppers" sketch from "Tonight at 8:30," where the carefully controlled playing of both artists never allows the scene to get out of hand, as it so easily might in less sympathetic hands. Perhaps the excerpt from "Shadow Play" isn't quite successful on records, mainly because the playlet depended so strongly on Miss Lawrence's visual appeal, and unfortunately that wasn't recordable. These three short scenes are all we have to remember of this matchless team, but we can be grateful for them as mementoes of a charming, occasionally difficult, but always human lady of the theater, and her gifted partner, the actor, writer, composer and director, Noel Coward. The brief scene from "Conversation Piece" is particularly welcome, since it brings to LP records, for the first time, that incomparable artist Yvonne Printemps, with her lovely voice, the most captivating of French accents, and



Noel Coward: gay chaff, heart hungry.

her unique way of handling a song. Could Victor be persuaded to re-issue those charming excerpts from Reynaldo Hahn's "Mozart," or the delicious songs from Oscar Straus' operetta "Les Trois Valses"?

The rest is all Coward, some of it good, the balance inferior. "Zigeuner," originally written for Peggy Wood, for the London production of "Bitter Sweet" is altogether beyond him, and "Half Caste Woman" is not the type of song that shows the limited capacities of the adenoidal Coward voice to advantage, even though he says he likes the song. "Parisian Pierrot," which he wrote for Miss Lawrence to sing in "London Calling" is much better, and those two Coward standbys, "Mrs. Worthington" and "Mad Dogs and Englishmen," are raucously and rousingly sung.

The recordings date from 1929 through 1938, they are pretty uneven as to sound, mostly on the poorish side, but this will be a minor detail for those who wish to have a memento of this unique theatrical combination. J. F. INDCOX

NOEL AND GERTIE

Scenes from *Private Lives*, *Shadow Play*, *Red Peppers*, *Conversation Piece*: Noel Coward Sings: *Zigeuner*, *Mrs. Worthington*, *Half Caste Woman*, *Parisian Pierrot*, *I'll See You Again*, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*.

Noel Coward, Gertrude Lawrence, Yvonne Printemps, orchestra.
RCA VICTOR LCT 1156. 12-in. 45 min. \$5.95.

PEDAL HARPSICHORD

Bach: *Concerto No. 2, in A Minor* (Vivaldi); *Great Prelude in G Major*; *Bourrée II, from English Suite No. 2, in A Minor*. Mozart: *Sonata in C Major, K. 545*.

Bruce Prince-Joseph, pedal harpsichord.
COOK/SOOT 1131 10-in. 25 min. \$4.00.

In both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, keyboard instruments other than the organ sometimes had pedal attachments. Bach used a harpsichord with two manuals and pedal boards; later on, Schumann, Gounod, and others wrote for pianos equipped with pedal boards. Whether Bach wrote anything specifically for the pedal harpsichord is debatable, but the instrument is obviously well adapted for many compositions usually played on the organ. A case in point, the Vivaldi-Bach concerto has an ideal contrapuntal clarity here. Mr. Prince-Joseph, harpsichordist and organist who teaches at Hunter College, plays this and the other Bach works with a kind of joyless precision. The Mozart sonata, whose inclusion is something of a mystery, is not so bad in the fast corner movements, but in its metronomic rigidity the Andante sounds like a satire on a student plucking away at an exercise. (I am mindful of the fact that the sonata was written for teaching purposes.) The acoustics are the superlative ones expected from Cook Laboratories. No complaints on that score! R. E.

GLAZUNOFF

Sonata No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 75

PROKOFIEFF

Sonata No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 14

TCHAIKOVSKY

Scherzo Humoristique, Nocturne and Capriccioso, from Op. 19

Emil Gilels, piano.

CONCERT HALL CHS 1311. 12-in. 23, 17, 10 min. \$5.95.

Emil Gilels is such a naturally gifted pianist that it is a pleasure to hear him play almost anything. Since the chances are slim of hearing the 38-year-old Russian in the United States in person, his recordings are doubly welcome, even when the content is as variable as it is here. Glazunoff's sonata, rarely if ever played here, is the second of two written in 1901. Long, largely Brahmsian and Chopinesque in material and manner, it is effectively written for the piano, and there are almost enough original touches, largely of Russian flavor, to sustain one's interest throughout—but not quite. The second movement, a tinkling, bell-like Scherzo, resembling Chopin's étude in sixths, could be excerpted for recital purposes; and Mr. Gilels makes the most of it here in a stunning performance. Prokofieff's excellent Second Sonata has previously been recorded for London by Robert Cornman, whose performance is more intellectual and modern than the Russian's, which is richly colored, tonally beautiful, and mercurial. The Tchaikovsky pieces are quite dull. The piano sound is rather thin, but better than on many other disks involving Russian artists. R. E.

PIANO RECITAL

Castelnuovo-Tedesco: *Le Danze del Re David* (Hebrew Rhapsody on traditional themes). Saint-Saëns: *Toccata in F Major, Op. 11, No. 6*. Casella: *Toccata, Op. 59*. Granados: *The Maiden and the Nightingale*. Albéniz: *El Albaicin, from Iberia*. Píck-Mangiagalli: *La Danza di Olaf, Op. 33, No. 2, from Deux Lunaires*.

Dario Rauceca, piano.

LONDON LL 1033. 12-in. 47 min. \$5.95.

PIANO RECITAL

Granados: *Andaluza (Playera); The Maiden and the Nightingale*. Albéniz: *Seguidillas*. Falla: *Fantasia Baetica*. Liadoff: *The Musical Snuff Box, Op. 32*. Siciliani: *Three Argentine Dances*. Aguirre: *Three Argentine Songs*. Mignone: *Sonatina No. 4 (Braziliana)*. Toch: *Burlesque, Op. 31, No. 2*.

Paolo Spagnolo, piano.

LONDON LL 1040. 12-in. 46 min. \$5.95.

With these disks London introduces two Italian pianists. Forty-two-year-old Dario Rauceca had an active career interrupted by World War II, but is now busily touring Europe again. Just 21, Paolo Spagnolo recently won first prize in the Geneva International Contest for Performers. Both pianists fortunately make their recording debuts in music that is not all standard.

Being twice as old, Mr. Rauceca turns out, not surprisingly, to be more interesting than his colleague. His playing is not the smoothest or most poised in the world, but it has a kind of nervous vitality; even when he is spinning something out with great deliberation there is no break in the musical thought. His version of *The Maiden and the Nightingale* is the slowest



DECCA Playbacks

Apart from being the year of our twentieth anniversary, 1954 stands out as a year of more Decca "discoveries" of new talent and artistry from all over the world. Here are just a few:

Excitement and delight have greeted the work of contemporary German composer Carl Orff. Naturally, we're proud to have been the first to bring America a recording of the cantata, "*Carmina Burana*," his spirited settings for a group of rollicking, raucous 13th Century poems (DL 9706). It is performed superbly in high fidelity that captures all the rousing vigor and color.

Conductor Ferenc Fricsay, too, is now captivating American audiences. His "*Verdi's Requiem*" with the RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (DX 118) is the outstanding interpretation of this revered work. As further testament to Fricsay's gifted versatility there is another volume now in the successful series "*Show Pieces for Orchestra*" Vol. 3 (DL 9738). Fricsay demonstrates what a modern orchestra can do with such exciting "show pieces" as Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture and Verdi's Overture to "*La Forza Del Destino*."

Heelbeats and hand-clapping make the Spanish dance something to hear, enhancing the fiery brilliance of the music. Stunning high fidelity creates a mood of "actual performance" in both the albums made by José Greco and his Ballet Company last year. "*José Greco Ballet*" (DL 9757) and "*Danzas Flamenca*" (DL 9758). Also, the great *Orquesta Zarzuela of Madrid* has made two new albums of Zarzuela medleys for Decca, "*Fiesta In Madrid*" (DL 9735), and "*Ole! Ole!*" (DL 9736), that really make the decibels ring!

No European artist has enchanted America quite as much lately as Irmgard Seefried, the Austrian soprano. Our Decca recording of Miss Seefried singing twenty-two songs by Wolf from the "*Italienisches Liederbuch*" and Brahms' "*Lieder Und Volkslieder*" (DL 9743) will certainly prove to you that she is without doubt "the greatest Lieder singer of our day."

With release of Brahms' "*Concerto in D Major*," Op. 77 (DL 9754), and Tchaikovsky's "*Concerto in D Major*," Op. 35 (DL 9755), both violin landmarks, you now can hear and understand why the mysterious genius, David Oistrakh has been called the world's foremost violinist.

You'll cherish Bach as he sounds on the classical guitar. We'd advise you to lis-

ten to Andrés Segovia's Bach "*Chaconne*" (DL 9751). Written originally for the lute, this music takes on a new and thrilling depth of feeling when performed by the world's most eminent guitarist. Works of Sors, Mendelssohn, Villa-Lobos and Rodrigo are on the reverse. Don't forget Segovia's other recent release, "*An Evening with Andrés Segovia*" (DL 9733).

The distinguished instrumentalist, Reginald Kell has an album which certainly ranks among the best. You're bound to enjoy Mozart's "*Concerto in A Major for Clarinet and Orchestra*" as well as the reverse side, Brahms' "*Trio in A Minor for Clarinet, Cello and Piano*" (DL 9732). Now ready on a 12 inch Long Play Decca record.

Like most of our countrymen, we've found that Leroy Anderson's musical impressions can carry our weary imaginations on wonderful journeys through picturesque landscapes. One of our favorite albums is the new collection of Anderson's works "*A Leroy Anderson 'Pops Concert'*" (DL 9749, ED 1201) with Leroy himself holding the baton.

On the jazz front, there were two Decca milestones in '54. "*Jazz Studio 1*" represents the modern trend in East Coast jazz (DL 8058, ED 634, 2130), while the "cooler" aspect of the Pacific Coast is to be found in "*Jazz Studio 2*" (DL 8079, ED 2157-58-59).

If you have moments when you just want "*Music for Relaxation*" to set your mind at ease, then any one of the five Decca albums by Van Lynn, the Dutch composer-conductor, will be to your taste. (DL 8062-66, ED 820-24).

The mighty masterpiece of all for '54 was of course, "*BING*," and we're pleased to report it's still selling like a house afire and probably will for eons to come. We became pretty ecstatic when the album was first released... but what we said certainly looks modest next to the reports we've been getting from YOU. No need to tell you it has 89 songs and lasts four hours, the musical life of Bing Crosby in song and history (DX 151, ED 1700).

In fact, as we look back the only thing we can see that will beat Decca for '54 will be Decca for '55, because we're starting off with a rousing "*There's No Business Like Show Business*" (DL 8091, ED 828, DAU 957), featuring the splendid Berlin music and stars from the great new film. There's really...

A NEW WORLD OF SOUND ON



of several recent recordings, yet it is the most absorbing. Of the three Italian novelties he offers, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *The Dances of King David* (1925) carries most weight. Lasting 13 minutes, involving seven movements and a musical motto, it is couched in a hybrid, gaudy, pseudo-modern style that seems old-fashioned now. Casella's *Toccata* (1904) is showy and dull, even though harmonically advanced for its time. The Pick-Mangiagalli might be a 1906 version of Liszt's *Gnomenszenen*.

"Spanish" in Italian is "spagnuolo." Could the similarity between this word and Mr. Spagnolo's name have anything to do with the Spanish-Latin American cast of his recorded recital? His pianism is admirable—intimate, subtly colored, suave—but without distinctive character as yet. His performance of the Falla fantasy may be the best on records, but rhythmic oddities keep it from being really satisfactory. The South American works are all of piece, with the sole merit of local color. José Siciliani, born in Argentina in 1910, writes conventionally, even plainly; Julian Aguirre, who was born in Buenos Aires in 1868 and died there in 1924, has a more romanticized, richer style; Francisco Mignone, born at Sao Paulo in 1897, reveals the most sophisticated and complex style, in his *Sonatina*.

Luscious piano sound on both disks. R. E.

FOLK MUSIC

By Howard Lafay

IRISH STREET SONGS

Sung By Robin Roberts, with guitar accompaniment

STINSON SLP 63 10-in. \$3.00

The Old Man Rocking The Cradle; The Banks of the Roses; The Tri-colored Ribbon; Molly Brannigan; When Pat Comes Over the Hill; Eileen Aroon; Mrs. McGrath; Shule Aroon; Kelly of Killarne; The Garden Where the Praeties Grow; Brian O'Linn; The Foggy Dew; Cuc-a-nandy.

Robin Roberts learned most of these songs on a swing through Ireland with folk-scholar Alan Lomax, although she admits she collected one from a juke box in a Third Avenue bar. Ranging from music-hall hits to the old and lovely Gaelic ballad *Eileen Aroon*, they have one thing in common: all have been hawked on Irish streets for a "pennyeach." Interspersed with the love songs and nonsense songs are poignant ballads of dead heroes, lost battles and the long, heartbreaking fight for Irish freedom.

This is Miss Roberts' debut on disks. Her vocal resources are not outstanding, but she obviously knows this material and handles it with affection. She is at her best in a latterday version of *The Foggy Dew* that captures all the darkling tragedy of the 1916 Rebellion and "the lads who died that Eastertide in the springing of the year."

Miss Roberts' jacket notes are copious and illuminating, but no texts are included.

The Stinson engineering is a good cut below the current norm; a blurring of all the loud passages seriously mars an otherwise well-conceived recording.

A WILL HOLT CONCERT Songs and Ballads

STINSON SLP 64 10-in. \$3.00.

(Bye-Bye; The Ash Grove; Three Jovial Huntsmen; The Streets of Laredo; Miss Bailey's Ghost; Kesailta; Pretty Polly; The Haying Song; The Lass of Galilee)

Will Holt is a young (25) singer making his bow under the Stinson label. His pleasant baritone polishes all the rough edges off the folksongs in this collection, transforming them into something quite different and quite sophisticated. Purists will recoil, but the results are not unpleasant. However, Stinson's engineers have missed the boat. Holt's best efforts are nullified by an inexcusable distortion in the loud passages.

HILLEL AND AVIVA SING BY THE POMEGRANATE TREE

CONCERT HALL SOCIETY CHS 1228. 10-in. \$4.67.

Love Song; Shepherd's Song; Shepherd's Prayer; Mountain Love Song; Spiritual; Beautiful City; Song of Deborah; Shepherd's Dance; The Pomegranate Tree; To the South.

We are apt to forget that Israel is—geographically and historically—a part of Asia. But Hillel and Aviva, singing to a sensuous flute and drum accompaniment, dispel any doubts as to the new nation's inherent easternness.

With one exception, these songs are of contemporary composition, but all hark to the Old Testament for their themes. Apparently the Israelis—with their customary diligence—are trying to erase 2,000 years of exile by extrapolating a national folk-heritage. However it is disconcerting to hear a favorite war song of the lethally-modern Israeli Army sung to the atavistic accompaniment of Aviva's *Miriam drum*. How ethnic can you get?

The songs are in Hebrew. Unfortunately, only fragmentary translations are supplied. Concert Hall's sound is excellent; occasionally it brings that pomegranate tree right through the speaker.

BLIND BLAKE

ART AL 3 12-in. \$5.95.

J. P. Morgan; Jones; Yes, Yes, Yes; Pretty Boy; Run Come See; Love Alone; Lord Got Tomatoes; Pigeon; Watermelon Spoilin' on the Vine; Never Interfere With Man and Wife.

ART ALP 4 10-in. \$4.25.

Foolish Frog; Little Nassau; Hold 'im, Joe; Peas and Rice; Jump in the Line; Wheel and Turn Me; Consumptive Sara Jane; Gin and Coconut Water; Conch Ain't Got no Bone; The John B. Sail; Eighteen Hundred and Ninety One.

ART ALP 6 10-in. \$4.25.

Run Joe; Mary Ann; Curley Cay; Delia Gone; Bahama Mama; Eight Babies; Boat Pull Out; Brown Skin Gal; Goombay Drum; Never Mind the Noise in the Market.

Most Americans know calypso songs only through such Tin Pan Alley aberrations as *Rum and Coca Cola* and *Stone Cold Dead in the Market*. Yet calypso is, in the words of one authority, "the only living folk music . . . in the British Empire."

Tourists who put in at Nassau, the sunswept capital of the Bahama Islands, generally make a bee-line for the Royal Victoria Hotel to (1) partake of the tax-free scotch, (2) listen to the calypso refrains of one Blake Alphonso Higgs, better known as Blind Blake. In a set of three disks, Art Records has now committed 31 of Blake's songs to vinylite. Most have been necessarily bowdlerized, but the vocalist sneaks in an occasional ribaldry in the interests of authenticity.

While Blind Blake lacks the florid delivery of the famous Iron Duke, laureled veteran of Port-of-Spain's annual Calypso Wars, he has an easy way with these songs. His style is not pristine; one suspects that too many American ships—with cargoes of jazz records—have dropped anchor in Nassau. But he preserves all the basic elements, including a wondrous West Indian accent which sounds like something born of a *mésalliance* between Brooklyn and Piccadilly.

The finest and most typically calypso of his efforts is *Love Alone*, a frenzied account of King Edward VIII's "abdication" for the love of Wallis Simpson. Easily the best of the records, and an excellent introduction to the calypso form, is the 12-inch, AL 3.

The sound throughout is adequate, but not distinguished.

LOU ADAMS PLAYS BAHAMIANA CALYPSO

Featuring Vocals By Blind Blake

ART ALP 12 10-in. \$4.25.

(Over So; Tanneray; Bad Woman; Monkey Song; Oh Look Misery; Coconut Man; Barnyard Calypso; Better Be Safe Than Sorry)

Lou Adams' band, abetted by Blind Blake, runs some Bahaman tunes through a ragtime wringer. What comes out is very noisy, but it isn't calypso, it isn't jazz—and it isn't very interesting.

THE MUSIC BETWEEN

By Robert Kotlowitz

VERSE AND CHORUS

Larry Carr and Bethe Douglas

ESOTERIC ES-534 12-in. 47 min. \$5.95.

I See Your Face Before Me; Girls Were Made to Take Care of Boys; True Blue Lou; Let's Misbehave; I Cover the Waterfront; You Never Knew About Me; Don't Ever Leave Me; Isn't This a Lovely Day; Island in the West Indies; I Was Doing All Right; Ten Cents a Dance; Exactly Like You; That Certain Feeling.

Bill Fox of Esoteric and Larry Carr, a young Texan baritone, had the laudable idea of recording good, solid songs complete with chorus and verse. In general, the results were worth the effort, for the lyricists at work here—including Howard Dietz, Cole Porter and Lorenz Hart,

among others — were and are all men very much at home with words. Nevertheless, the real excitement all derives from the superlative accompaniments provided by a quintet of gentlemen whose names deserve listing; they are Dick Hyman, piano, Mundell Lowe, guitar, Eddie Safran-ski, bass, Don Lamond, drums, and Rusty Dedrick, trumpet. Their relaxed but always interesting arrangements do enough for the music to make anybody forget the lyrics. Esoteric has supported everyone very well with excellent sound.

DEEP IN MY HEART, DEAR
Sigmund Romberg Conducts

RCA VICTOR LM-1862. 12-in. 54 min.
\$5.95.

Deep in my Heart, Dear: Will You Remember; Wanting You; The Desert Song; Lover, Come Back to Me; One Alone; Blossom Time Waltzes; Riff Song; Softly as in a Morning Sunrise; Drinking Song; When I Grow too Old to Dream; Stout-hearted Men; One Kiss; Close as Pages in a Book; Serenade.

A generous and agreeable tribute to Sigmund Romberg here, with most of the recordings transferred from 78s, and brilliantly, too. Romberg himself leads the orchestra and he is helped by such experienced operetta singers as Genevieve Rowe, Lawrence Brooks, Eric Mattson, and Larry Douglas. The Robert Shaw Chorale is also available to supply invaluable assistance on background material. RCA has grooved 4 minutes of playing time on the record, and they have included in the package a narrative-summary of Romberg's career, written by *Variety's* editor, Abel Green. This is just about the best that can be done by one of America's leading composers of light operatic music.

PARIS MIDNIGHT
Liane and the Bar Bohème Trio

VANGUARD VRS 7014. 32 min. 10-in.
\$4.00.

Clair de Lune; La Vie en Rose; Sous le Ciel de Paris; Les Feuilles Mortes; Si Petite; Parle Moi-d'amour; La Seine; C'est ma faute a moi; Domino; Cancan; La Mer; La Ronde; Tu Voulais; An American in Paris; Je suis seule ce soir; J'Attendrais; La Petite Valse; Printemps au Rio.

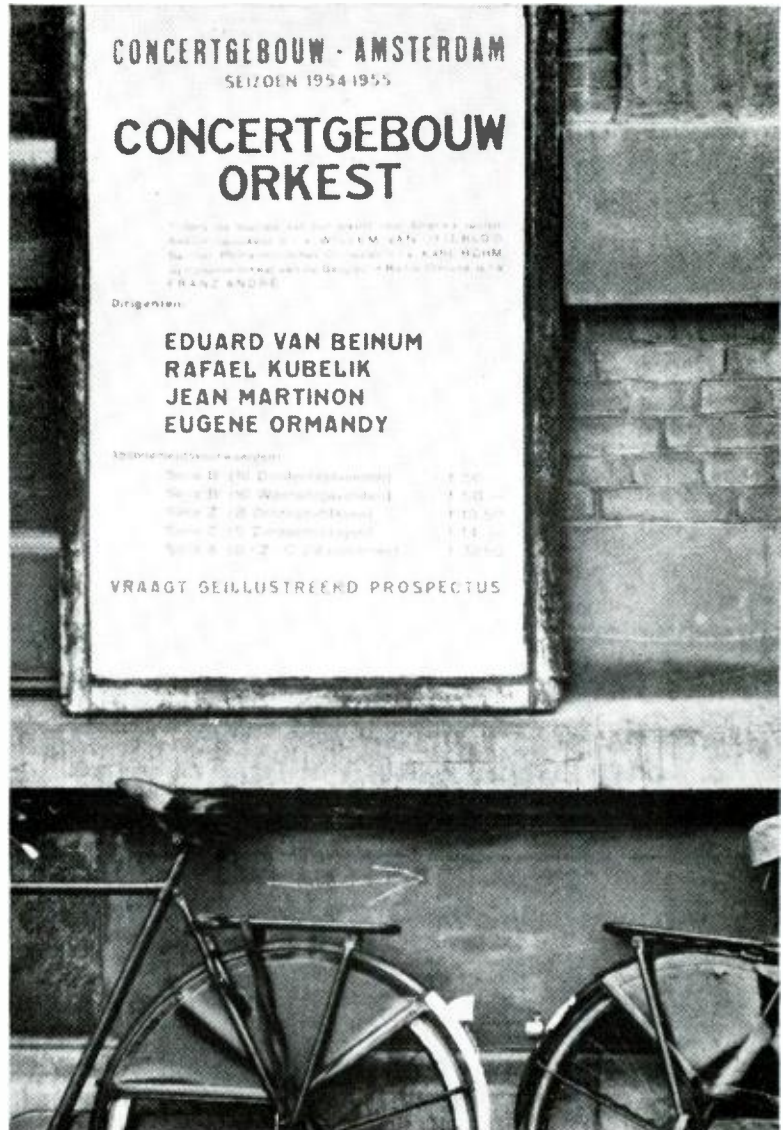
Another recording from the hard-working Liane and her Bar Bohème pals, their fourth this time. It's also their best to date, highlighted by top-notch sound, tuneful, appealing material, all honoring Paris, and suave performances.

A STAR IS BORN
Judy Garland

COLUMBIA BL 1201. 12-in. 38 min. \$6.95.

Here's What I'm Here For; It's a New World; Someone at Last; Lose that Long Face; Gotta Have me to Go With You; The Man that Got Away; Born in a Trunk.

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HENKEMANS: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra—Theo Olof, Violin; **PIJPER:** Concerto for Piano and Orchestra—Hans Henkemans, piano; and Six Epigrams—Eduard Van Beinum, Conductor. LC 3093

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Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B Minor ("Pathétique")—Paul van Kempen, conductor. LC 3003

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet—Overture Fantasia, Paul van Kempen, conductor. LC 3008

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she can make it sound great. With adequate material, or the kind she has in *A Star Is Born*, she has to work a little harder, but the results, nevertheless, are charged with a sincerity and emotion rarely to be heard from any contemporary popular singer. She takes a little song called "It's a New World," and colors it with a poignancy and longing that never cloy. She hauls off on "Lose that Long Face," and for a moment makes you think the song might last forever. Garland's the best around; any record from her is a pleasure.

Columbia has packaged this one with a lengthy booklet, telling the story of both *A Star Is Born* and Miss Garland's career. Fortunately, its transcription of the sound track score is big, loud and clear.

THE MAGICAL MELODIES OF SAVINO

Roma "Sympho-Pop" Orchestra, directed by Ernest Clemont.

KAPP KL 1001. 12-in. 35 min. \$5.95.

Blue Parakeet; A Star Will Fall; Holiday Express; Flying Carpet; Sabia; Blue Starlight; Bayou Pom Pom; Magic Slippers; Peruvian Pinwheel; For Dreamers Only; Jo Anne; Love is a Rose.

Domenico Savino is apparently Italy's Leroy Anderson, although, from the evidence here, he is not quite so prolific a melodist. He is obviously skilled, however, at writing movie background music to point up fairly light moods, and his com-

positions here will serve that purpose nicely. The tunes, it should be added, have little to do with their titles, but they are well-played and the recorded sound all the way through is highly satisfactory.

MUSIC FOR A RAINY NIGHT
Vic Schoen and his Orchestra

DECCA DL 8081. 12-in. 33 min. \$4.85.

Come Rain or Come Shine; I Cover the Waterfront; It Never Entered My Mind; September in the Rain; Candlelight; With the Wind and the Rain in Your Hair; Too Much Tequila; Make Love my Love; La Vie en Rose; Rain on the Roof; I Remember When; Goodnight Now.

This is one of the most satisfying recordings Decca has issued in the Music for Your Mood series. Using the Vic Schoen orchestra, a vocal group called the Notables, and Ray Kellogg, Sue Allen and Bill Thomson as soloists, it dispatches an extremely pleasant group of popular songs with neatness and a quiet comprehension of their needs. Among the choicer items are the precise, spirited arrangements of *Rain on the Roof* and *Goodnight Now*, a duet with just the right amount of breathless haste to keep it from getting too sentimental. The sound is Decca's best, which is very good indeed.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

By John S. Wilson

MEL POWELL TRIO
Borderline

VANGUARD VRS 8501. 12-in. 46 min. \$5.95.

Paul Quinichette, tenor saxophone; Mel Powell, piano; Bobby Donaldson, drums.

Borderline; Makin' Whoopee; What's New; Quin and Sonic; If Dreams Come True; Cross Your Heart; Avalon.

MEL POWELL TRIO
Thigamagig

VANGUARD VRS 8502. 12-in. 31 min. \$5.95.

Ruby Braff, trumpet; Mel Powell, piano; Bobby Donaldson, drums.

Thigamagig; You're My Thrill; Buston Up Your Overcoat; Don-Que-Dee; Bouquet; Ain't She Sweet; Take Me In Your Arms; California, Here I Come.

Mel Powell's return to jazz after several years devoted to serious music is taking on unexpected significance. His first releases, a few months ago, on Vanguard and Columbia, showed him as still the facile pianist who once worked with Benny Goodman with a few new ideas thrown into his playing to show where he'd been all these years. He came back much as he had left and it was nice to have him back and that seemed to be that.

But with these two disks the outlook changes. Powell has evidently found that things have been happening in jazz

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while he wasn't looking and that there is now an opportunity for him to apply his present musical interests to jazz.

It is a very happy meeting as recorded on these two LPs. Four of the selections (two on each LP) are originals by Powell which permit an unusual (for jazz) interplay between his piano and either Paul Quinichette's saxophone or Ruby Braff's trumpet over a basic, swinging jazz beat. Although his compositions have the loose feeling of completely improvised jazz, they are tightly written and are almost devoid of the I-solo-you-solo approach. The playing of both the originals and the standards bears directly in the direction that Dave Brubeck has been traveling. However, on the basis of these selections, Powell would seem to be more disciplined than Brubeck. He is more compactly exciting. At this point, he appears to be more widely creative and, with his solid grounding in the easily assimilable earlier jazz, his playing may satisfy a wider audience than Brubeck's does. It is, in any event, almost constantly intriguing and provocative where Brubeck's is sporadically intriguing and provocative.

In Quinichette and Braff, Powell is working with a pair of unusually mature and well-balanced jazzmen, musicians who are warmly creative and such masters of their instruments that they are beyond feeling any need to disgorge all their technical craft on every number. The recording is up to the extremely high standard which has always characterized Vanguard's jazz series.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG PLAYS W. C. HANDY

COLUMBIA CL 591. 12-in. 54 min. \$3.95.

Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Trummy Young, trombone; Barney Bigard, clarinet; Billy Kyle, piano; Arvell Shaw, bass; Barrett Deems, drums; Velma Middleton, vocals.

St. Louis Blues; Yellow Dog Blues; Loveless Love; Aunt Hagar's Blues; Long Gone; Memphis Blues; Beale Street Blues; Ole Miss; Chantez-Les Bas; Hesitating Blues; Atlanta Blues.

It is apparently no happenstance that Louis Armstrong's happiest recording experiences have been with that forebear of the present Columbia label, Okeh. Released temporarily from his current Decca bondage to make this one-shot LP for Columbia, Louis has produced some of his finest recordings since his Okeh days.

For one thing, he has never been recorded with the presence and range that he receives on these selections. This is one more in the growing series of excellently engineered jazz LPs coming from Columbia.

The numbers are almost all Armstrong and very legitimate Armstrong. To find any comparable group of releases, it is necessary to go back to the days of his Hot Five and Hot Seven. His trumpet work on this LP may not have the emotional impact that he was capable of generating with his cornet at that time but it gleams with the clean development and polished assurance of the skilled craftsman. His singing, on the other hand, is more deliberately and fully projected than in his exuberant younger days and, on these compositions by W. C. Handy, it is re-

markably effective. Louis has rarely sung more warmly or more expressively. Even Velma Middleton, who normally engages in tasteless vaudeville with Louis, is straightforward in most of her singing and proves to be a capable, if not a remarkable, blues singer.

Armstrong's group has little opportunity to take off on its own but Trummy Young is brought forward on almost every number to challenge Armstrong with his big, raucous trombone. Their playing is very vigorous but sufficiently to the point so that they commit only one or two screamer endings. But almost all the great moments are Louis', particularly his long opening trumpet solo on *St. Louis Blues*, his playing and singing of *Memphis Blues*, and the unusual opportunity of hearing one of the great blues accompanists of the Twenties accompany his own blues

singing (thanks to multiple tape) on *Atlanta Blues*.

From every aspect, this is one of the great recordings of traditional jazz.

KONITZ

STORYVILLE LP 313. 10-in. 28 min. \$3.85.

Lee Konitz, alto saxophone; Ronnie Ball, piano; Peter Ind, bass; Jeff Morton, drums. *Easy Livin'; Nursery Rhyme; Limehouse Blues; I'll Remember April; Skylark; Mean to Me; 317 East 32nd; Bop Goes the Leasel.*

Lee Konitz appears to be moving in off the limb on which he has been perched for many years. The one time disciple of Tristano iconoclasm seems to be reaching out for a wider audience on this LP. On these numbers, Konitz is determinedly melodic instead of rolling out a dazzling display of technique. There is no question

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VARIETY—"stirring performance . . ."
AUDIENCE—"a very well-paced performance supported by an excellent recording . . ."

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that he has the technique down cold but here he shows that he can use it in a less restricted vein than he has in the past. The transition is not being made easily, however. Given an uptempo or even a moderately swinging beat, Konitz plays with ease and inventive grace. But on a slow ballad he plods along with more determination than creative lift. Thus, his *Skylark* is an earthbound bird but on the fast *Nursery Rhyme* his solo work is strong and deft while the medium-tempoed *Easy Livin'* reveals a lovely, full-toned lyric style. There is more varied and, on the whole, more interesting Konitz on this disk than is normally encountered. The recording engineers have caught his horn with an appropriate richness and depth but there was a slight miscalculation in balancing the bass behind him.

DAVE BRUBECK AT STORYVILLE
1954

COLUMBIA CL 590. 12-in. 48 min. \$3.95.

Dave Brubeck, piano; Paul Desmond, alto saxophone; Ron Crotty, Bob Bates, bass; Joe Dodge, drums.

On the Alamo; Don't Worry 'Bout Me; Here Lies Love; Gone with the Wind; When You're Smiling; Back Bay Blues.

Dave Brubeck's insistence on doing his recording on the job, at the night clubs or concerts where he is performing, can scarcely be carried on much longer in the face of the musical and technical quality of the jazz coming out of studios, particularly the studios of Brubeck's own label, Columbia. There is certainly little excuse for the shabby sound on portions

of this disk. *On the Alamo*, which Brubeck touts on the liner as "the greatest thing I've put on record so far," was recorded on a small tape machine "of dubious fidelity" (to quote the liner again). This is commendable frankness but it doesn't alter the fact that the machine's dubious fidelity blurs Brubeck's playing needlessly, although in this particular instance it doesn't really matter much since his contribution consists largely of an almost endless series of block chords marching up and down toward no particular goal. Far from being the greatest thing Brubeck has put on records, it is one of his most pretentious and pointless performances.

He atones, however, for the remainder of the disk reveals him in his most felicitous form, swinging gently, even conjuring up some very real blues piano on *Back Bay Blues*, and occasionally joining forces with Paul Desmond for a little of their bright, imaginative dueting. It is a help, too, that the rest of the numbers—except *Don't Worry 'Bout Me*—were taken from a radio broadcast from Storyville, the Boston night club, and have some presence and depth along with a background of subdued chatter and clatter. Desmond is less inspired in his solo work than he was on the previous Brubeck release, *Jazz Goes to College*, but he responds brilliantly to Brubeck's presence in their duets.



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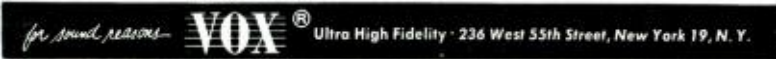
BUCK MEETS RUBY

VANGUARD VRS 8008. 10-in. 30 min. \$4.00.

Ruby Braff, Buck Clayton, trumpets; Benny Morton, trombone; Buddy Tate, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Jones, piano; Steve Jordan, guitar; Aaren Bell, bass; Bobby Donaldson, drums.

Just a Groove; Kandee; I Can't Get Started; Love Is Just Around the Corner.

It's sort of a dirty trick when a trumpet player undertakes a number which is another trumpet player's main claim to fame and plays rings around the famous one. It's an even dirtier trick when two trumpet players do it simultaneously. But that is unquestionably what happens on this disk as two of the most vital and accomplished trumpet men working today produce a glorious version of Bunny Berigan's old standby, *I Can't Get Started*. Buck Clayton, the veteran of Basie's great band of the Thirties, has shown recently that he responds to a challenge and he is challenged admirably on these numbers by young Ruby Braff. Braff has a big, rough tone, a brooding, searching manner of playing. It is a perfect complement to the neat, polished and wide-ranging style of Clayton, a style that is tinged with the placidity of pleasant memories in contrast to Braff's restless rooting about. Although most of this disk is devoted to the two trumpet men, Benny Morton and Buddy Tate, two more Basie alumni, have an occasional moment on their own and Jimmy Jones, usually an interesting pianist, has several solo spots which are less effective than they might be because they are buried under Steve Jordan's guitar. Aside from this unfortunate bit of balancing, the recording is clean, full and sharply defined.





TOSCANINI ON RECORDS

by Robert Charles Marsh

Part II: With the NBC Symphony - 1944/47

THE GREAT recording ban of 1942-44 prevented Toscanini from making new records for RCA Victor, though his performances during the period are represented by 16 items on noncommercial V-Disks (see *Toscanini on Records*, Part I, in HIGH FIDELITY, December 1954). These were a by-product of radio concerts, as were the first issues done for Victor after the ban was raised.

With the resumption of recording, a new period in Toscanini's work on disks can be distinguished. The

seven lean years of Studio 8-H had passed, techniques necessary to increase fidelity were known, and the work of the engineers improved with only occasional variations in quality. I am inclined to call this 1944-47 era the "medium-fi" period. The disks with which we are concerned in this period were made for release as 78-rpm records, and most of them appeared in that form. An asterisk before a record number means that the issue has been deleted. All recordings are with the NBC Symphony.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 3*, recorded during a broadcast, October 29, 1944 — *M-1016 & LCT-1009. Artur Rubinstein, pianist.
— Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Technically this is among the poorest of the conductor's recordings, and the performance is ruined for me by the conflict in style between Rubinstein's romanticism and Toscanini's reserved, classical approach. None the less, Toscanini suggested this collaboration and showed unusual interest in having a recording made. The sound is thin, distorted and unpleasant. Many details of the orchestra part are obscured or lost entirely.

BEETHOVEN: *The Creatures of Prometheus: Overture*, recorded December 18, 1944 — in *M-1098 & LCT-1041.
— Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Opus 43 is one of the early masterpieces of the composer and is filled with the sort of things that Toscanini does superlatively well. For example, the way in which the opening chords establish a feeling of tension and a sense of continuity and rhythm, so that in the course of six chords and a fanfare the tempo has been established. We do not lose that sense of tempo in the quiet introduction that follows, and we have the feeling that we are still in time during the fast section, where the Maestro's sweeping motor energy carries us along with authority and strength. Beethoven used a similar introduction in his *Consecration of the House Overture*, which Toscanini recorded two years later.

As if to show us that a new day had arrived, Victor here made a very decent recording in Studio 8-H, proving to all doubters that it *was* possible (just as it was equally possible to make poor records in Carnegie Hall).

BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio*, recorded during broadcasts (in Studio 8-H) December 10 and 17, 1944, and incorporating other recordings made December 19, 1944 (in Carnegie Hall) and June 1, 1945 (in Studio 8-H) — LM-6025. Two 12-in. with libretto and translation. Principals: Rose Bampton, soprano, Eleanor Steber, soprano, Jan Peerce, tenor, Herbert Janssen, bass, Nicola Moscona, bass, and others, with chorus under Peter Wilhousky.
— Recorded in Studio 8-H and Carnegie Hall.

This is the first of the seven operas Toscanini prepared with the NBC Symphony. It would be best, I feel, to regard the issue as something of a *tour de force*, recognizing that the original transcription is 10 years old and accepting it on the basis that it is better to have an imperfect replica of a great performance than none at all. Those who demand the highest

level of modern technical elegance should be forewarned. It has the usual faults of recordings made under concert conditions, and the acetates that were its source can hardly be compared to a modern tape.

Fortunately, a recording of Leonore's great aria, *Komm Hoffnung*, and the recitative that precedes it was made (two days after the final broadcast) under studio conditions. The sound is considerably improved and Bampton's voice is better controlled. (This recording was available separately for a time as *11-9110.) The 1945 *Leonore Overture No. 3* is used to fill out the two-disk set, a wise addition.

SOUSA: *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, recorded May 18, 1945 — *11-9188 & 49-1082.

— Recorded in Studio 8-H.

The 1943 performance on V-Disk No. 31 was more relaxed, somewhat broader and more spontaneously expressive, particularly in the final section. The recording ban prevented a commercial disk being made at that time; when this one was cut, a little more than two years later, Toscanini's performance had tightened up, with metronomic rigidity substituted for spontaneity in feeling. Even so, it is an exceptional reading of a score that is rarely given such careful attention to balance and detail. In the loud passages the sound is somewhat cramped; otherwise it is quite acceptable.

GERSHWIN: *An American in Paris*, recorded May 18, 1945 — LM-9020.
— Recorded in Studio 8-H.

At the time it was made, this was technically the finest Toscanini recording in existence, and I nominate the engineer in charge for the Star and Sash of the Grand Prix de Nipper, First Class. The fact that this was done in Studio 8-H only adds to his glory: a victory on a field where many battles had been lost.



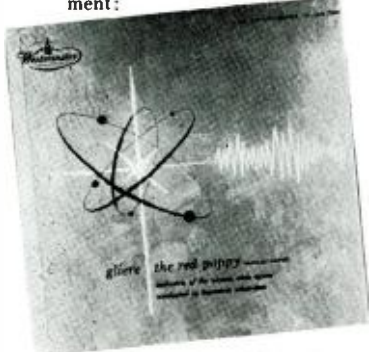
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The sound is spacious and well balanced—a faithful replica of the playing of a great orchestra. I have been told that the new technique used for some of the later (and better) 8-H recordings was to take the orchestra off the stage and put it on the floor, thus making use of the full resonance of what was, in fact, a fairly ample concert room.

The performance has the fine plastic qualities one expects from the Maestro; its only questionable aspect is that of style. This is Gershwin's finest work for symphony orchestra and a first-class piece of picture music. In its idiom it employs devices of both French and American popular music, and the question is whether symphonic jazz should be played as jazz or symphonic music. Specifically, should the blues sections in this work be given the traditional expressive inflections of blues style or not? Toscanini's performance implies not, for either he has no feeling for the blues style (I wonder, in fact, if he has any feeling for American popular music) or he rejects it. This performance gives a "straight" reading of the French episodes, the blues section, the Charleston theme and the rest. Those who want to hear the work on purely musical terms will probably enjoy the freshness of Toscanini's approach. But is that what Gershwin intended?

In spite of the date, this recording never appeared on shellac. One had to wait until the Fifties to find what could be done in 1945.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 98*, recorded May 25, 1945—*M-1025.

WEBER: *Der Freischütz: Overture*, recorded May 25, 1945—*11-9172 & 49-1228.

BEETHOVEN: *Coriolan Overture*, recorded June 1, 1945—*11-9023 & ERA-91.

BEETHOVEN: *Leonore Overture No. 3*, recorded June 1, 1945—*M-1098 & LRM-7023 & LM-1043.

MEYER: *Octet (Op. 20): Scherzo*, recorded June 1, 1945—in *M-1025.
—Recorded in Studio 8-H.

This is a group of good workmanlike recordings. The majestic opening of the Haydn symphony is powerfully stated, and the slow movement—with its theme that suggests "God Save the King"—is played with a growing intensity that other conductors rarely give Haydn. The minuet is a good *allegro*, fast but not rushed (as in the 1953 version of No. 94), and the finale is played with the greatest gusto. Haydn's No. 98 ought to be coupled on long play with the 1947 Mozart *Divertimento*, K. 287, thus restoring two fine performances to the catalog.

The Weber is to be preferred in its 1952 version, on the basis of greater fidelity. The *Coriolan* suffers from a lack of contrast between its two main themes, attributable perhaps to excessive intensity on the part of the Maestro. The 1953 broadcast performance was the greatest reading of this score I have ever heard and should be made available on disks. Meanwhile, this will do. *Leonore No. 3* is published in two forms, of which the newer 10-inch transfer is by far the better; in this form the sound is limited on top and somewhat dry and hard at times, but otherwise sat-

isfactory. Here intensity yields a thrilling performance.

The Mendelssohn is all quicksilver and froth, agreeably recorded. Victor ought to let us buy it again.

ROSSINI: *The Barber of Seville: Overture; La Cenerentola: Overture; La Gazza Ladra: Overture; Il Signore Bruschino: Overture; William Tell: Passo a Sei*, recorded June 8 & 28, 1945—*M-1037. The four overtures are now LM-1044, the *Passo* is on LRM-7005.

—Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Here the Maestro is completely in his element. These performances are unlikely to be matched by any of the next decade or so. Rossini is not Beethoven, of course, but these overtures present music worth our attention. The recorded sound is good, agreeably bright on top and full below, well balanced except for a tendency of the strings to dominate the loud passages.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 41 (Jupiter)*, recorded June 22, 1945 & March 11, 1946—*M-1080 & LM-1030.
—Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Not a success: the performance is extremely tight and far too intense, particularly in the slow movement; the final fugue is driven very hard and loses power as a result. Recorded sound is distorted and unpleasant, with weak and rumbling bass and coarse highs. Some passages for full orchestra are hopelessly scrambled.

VERDI: *La Forza del Destino: Overture*, recorded June 28, 1945—*11-9010 & 49-1175.

WALDTEUFEL: *The Skaters Waltz*, recorded June 28, 1945—*11-8949 & LRY-9000 & LM-14.

—Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

The overture to *Forza del Destino* is quite acceptable, but there is a 1952 version with better sound. In the Waldteufel, Toscanini takes a pleasant old-fashioned waltz and turns it into a stunning concert piece by the apparently simple device of giving it an incisive performance, in distinction to the slack and rhythmically inexact run-throughs one is accustomed to hearing on pop nights. The simplicity and beauty of the opening pages are quite striking. The recording is good, but avoid the LM-14 coupling with the 1939 version of *William Tell*.

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Concerto No. 1*, recorded August 9, 1945—*M-1036 & LM-1039. Ania Dorfmann, pianist.

—Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

In the opening bars the orchestra creates a lively, flowing musical line made expressive by changes in coloring and accent: into this framework the piano enters, blandly moving along without the qualities of color, accent and continuity which Toscanini is exhibiting and which one would expect a perceptive soloist to duplicate. What is exciting about this performance, then, is the manner in which the orchestral part is played. But if one rightfully expects a concerto to reveal a unity of feeling on the part of soloist and conductor, this will not do. Although Miss Dorfmann is stylistically closer to

the Maestro than Rubinstein, Toscanini is still too much for her.

GROFE: *Grand Canyon Suite*, recorded September 11, 1945 — *M-1038 & LM-1004.
— Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Toscanini played this work in 1943 during the recording ban and was persuaded to repeat it in 1945. If RCA Victor had been interested in giving us a first-rate example of contemporary American music as interpreted by Toscanini, this work would not have been chosen, but it seems obvious that such were not its intentions. (Note the short life of Barber's *Adagio for Strings* in the RCA catalog, an item which survived in the British catalog until this year!) Toscanini gives the music a dazzling performance such as it will probably never get again.

PUCCINI: *La Bohème*, recorded during broadcasts, February 3 and 10, 1946 — LM-6006. Principals: Licia Albanese, soprano, Anne McKnight, soprano, Jan Peerce, tenor, Francesco Valentino, baritone, and others, with chorus under Peter Wilhousky.
— Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Seldom have the musical and dramatic qualities of this work been realized as well as they were in these broadcasts, and the integration of the fine singing and splendid orchestral playing makes this as enjoyable a performance of the score as one is likely to hear. However simple and direct its appeal to the ears and the tear ducts, *Bohème* is at its best in its gayest and least

pretentious moments. As soon as Puccini attempts to be tragic or enlarge the scale of the drama, the weakness of his musical powers is betrayed.

The recordings from the broadcast line are good and have been well processed. The effect of *Che gelida manina* as a duet between Peerce and the Maestro is quite beyond description.

WAGNER: *A Faust Overture* — in *M-1135 & LRM-7023; *Die Meistersinger: Prelude* — *11-9385 & 49-0297; *Siegfried Idyll* — in *M-1135 & LCT-1116; *Die Walküre: Prelude to Act 3 [The Ride of the Valkyries]* — in *M-1135 & *WDM-1564.
— Recorded March 11, 1946, in Carnegie Hall.

Toscanini played the *Meistersinger* Prelude 52 times during his American and English concerts in the seasons 1925-54. It vies with the *Eroica* and *La Mer* (with 52 and 53 performances respectively) for the top place in his repertory, and it closed his final program with the NBC Symphony in April 1954. I think that this disk, rather than the faster 1951 recording, should be taken as the definitive version of his great performance. The *Faust Overture* is early Wagner and was to have been part of a *Faust* Symphony, an idea that also appealed to Liszt. In comparing the two composers' approach to *Faust*-insolitude, the superior taste and musicianship of Wagner becomes apparent. The performance is a fine one, recorded in a satisfactory manner. Of the three *Siegfried Idylls* Toscanini has recorded, this is my choice. It is better paced, warmer, and



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shows more feeling than the others; and the recording, though lacking the lustre of high overtones from the strings, is entirely adequate. *The Ride of the Valkyries* is a dreadful piece outside its proper context in the opera. Since this recording is no longer available, those who want the work will have to wait until the 1952 version is released.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasia*, recorded April 8, 1946 — *M-1178 & LM-1019.
— Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

This is not traditional Tchaikovsky if one implies by that term the retention of the excesses and distortions that some people believe are essential to the performance of his music. The Toscanini recording of *Romeo and Juliet* is surely the most powerful statement of that music I have ever heard, and yet the lyric passages sing freely. The recorded sound has a shrill, unpleasant character on top, particularly in loud passages, but a filter removes this and gives one a full, bright quality that is quite acceptable.

BERLIOZ: *Romeo and Juliet, Dramatic Symphony: Part II, Romeo Alone & Great Festivities at the Home of Capulet; Love Scene*, recorded April 8, 1946 — *DM-1160 & LM-1019.
— Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Toscanini prepared this work *in toto* with the Philharmonic in 1942 and with the NBC in 1947. The 1942 performances

were not recorded or broadcast, because by that time the Philharmonic had become the exclusive property of CBS and Columbia, but there are acetates of the 1947 performance, and if Toscanini loves us at all he will allow them to be released, as he has the operas. The *Queen Mab Scherzo*, a basic item in his repertory, has finally been recorded to his satisfaction (though it has not yet been issued); apart from that, all we have of this wonderful score are the excerpts listed above. Happily they give us two of the finest sections and a fair sample of one of the greatest triumphs of orchestral playing in our time. The recording needs some filtering on top, but otherwise it is acceptable and provides a good feeling of what the original must have been like.

BACH: *Suite No. 3: Air (Air on the G String)*, recorded April 8, 1946 — in *M-1080 & 49-3301.

KABALEVSKY: *Colas Breugnon: Overture*, recorded April 8, 1946 — in *M-1178 & 49-3156.
— Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

These were two fillers. The only Toscanini recording of anything by Bach has admirable clarity but is taken too fast. (In recent years Toscanini seems to be fearful about taking any melody at a *really* slow tempo, as if afraid that it cannot retain its continuity. This famous air is strong enough to hold up a battleship.) The Kabalevsky is an ugly piece of synthetic music in which clichés of romanticism are distorted to produce "modern" effects. Toscanini has feeling for the rhythmic vitality of the work and shapes it accordingly. The recording of both pieces is satisfactory.

GLUCK: *Orfeo: Dance of the Spirits*, recorded November 4, 1946 — in *M-1172 & 49-3301.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 35 (Haffner)*, recorded November 4, 1946 — *M-1172 & LM-1038.

— Recorded in Studio 3-A, Rockefeller Center.

A rerecording of a set (M-65) made with the Philharmonic 17 years before. The 1929 performance is more relaxed, and the intensity of this one, though not excessive, may be more than some feel is appropriate. (I prefer the older version myself.) The studio sound has been reinforced by a number of echo chambers, and the artificial resonance is very pronounced and, for me, unpleasant. The Gluck lacks clean definition, the sound of the solo flute being particularly undistinguished. The Mozart is hard and cold, with the sound never quite in focus, as if one were hearing a concert played in a subway tube.

MEYERBEER: *Incidental Music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream": Scherzo*, recorded November 6, 1946 — in *M-1368 & in *M-1167 & 49-3156. — Recorded in Studio 3-A.

Those who repeat the myth that Toscanini always plays the same work the same way would do well to listen to his five recordings of this piece. The 1947

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version, made exactly a year later, is lightness itself, swiftly flowing, and wonderfully delicate and expressive. This one, and the 1921 and 1929 versions (which are essentially the same), appears in contrast to be much slower and rather heavily inflected, though played by itself it is somewhat more magical. The sound of the disk is not particularly clean or brilliant, but acceptable.

BEETHOVEN: *Overture for the Consecration of the House*, recorded November 11, 1946 — *M-1287 & LM-9022 & *LM-6. — Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

One of Beethoven's finest works that deserves to be played much more frequently. One reason for its neglect is a degree of uncertainty about the proper style for the piece. The traditional German approach is shown in the fine old Weingartner recording, based upon the premise that even though the writing is not "Beethoven style" it must be given a properly solid, four-square performance. Toscanini is able to recognize that the acknowledged influence on the work is Handel (who is not too dull and solid an individual, once we rescue him from the nineteenth-century school of oratorio conductors) and that "Rossini fever" had reached epidemic proportions in Vienna at the time Beethoven was putting this work on paper. The Maestro's performance is not in the German tradition at all, therefore, and both Handel and Rossini have their say without having to don false, solemn faces. The effect is stunning and, for me, completely convincing.

The recording, unfortunately, was monitored too much, so that the actual range from *pp* to *ff* is not nearly as great as it should be. The loud passages lack some brilliance, some of the inner voices sound cramped, and the full effect of the disk can only be had if one tries to undo these faults in reproducing it.

VERDI: *La Traviata*, recorded during broadcasts, December 1 and 8, 1946 — LM-6003. Principals: Licia Albanese, soprano, Jan Peerce, tenor, Robert Merrill, baritone, and others, with chorus under Peter Wilhousky. — Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Toscanini's *Traviata* is to be taken on the same basis as his *Fidelio*, that an imperfect recording of a great performance is better than none at all. It is a great performance, even though Toscanini is too tense during the portion that represents the first broadcast (fearful, perhaps, that he would not finish on time). No one could possibly do *Traviata* at this pace in an opera house with stage action taking place, but listening to a record is not going to the opera, and the fault is not too serious. Of greater concern is the fact that the sound from the acetate originals is hard and cold, that the orchestral accompaniments are sometimes thin, and that the singing is not always the best—Merrill being quite unpleasant to hear at times when his own faults are increased by the shortcomings of the recording.

Great performances of opera being as scarce as they are in this country, the thing to do with this set is turn on the

filters (it responds well to such treatment), be as patient as possible, and enjoy the beautiful things that, after all, are still preserved here.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 9* [sometimes called No. 7], recorded February 25, 1947 — *M-1167 & LM-1040. — Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Although this is one of the great Toscanini performances, and well recorded, the 1953 version is superior on all counts, thus making the above disk obsolete. It will probably be withdrawn shortly.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 101* [Clock], recorded June 12, 1947 — *M-1368 & LM-1038. — Recorded in Studio 3-A.

Like the Mozart *Haffner*, this constituted a rerecording of a 1929 set, complete to the original filler. After playing the old records (Victor M-57) one may debate whether the spacious, relaxed quality of the 1929 performance is more or less effective than the faster and more intense reading of 1947. I am inclined to prefer the slow movement in the 1929 version and the fast movements as they are given here.

The recording is better than the *Haffner*, though still cold, hard, and shrill on top. A filter takes the shrillness out, fortunately, leaving sound that lacks bass and warmth and is artificially resonant.

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No. 5 Intermezzo, No. 7 Nocturne, No. 1 Scherzo, No. 10 Wedding March, No. 12 Finale (with Edna Phillips, soprano, and female chorus), recorded November 4, 1947 — *M-1280 & LM-1221.
 — Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Toscanini has always had special affection for this music, and it is fortunate that when he came to record it in its entirety (the numbers omitted are almost never played in concert) he had the benefit of good recording and was prepared to relax and sing. What one hears, then, is incandescent tonal brilliance and playing of delicate inflection and plastic distinction such as to make one gasp as wonder follows wonder. If the volume is boosted slightly, the recorded sound is first rate.

MOZART: *Divertimento for Strings and Two Horns* (K. 287), recorded November 18, 1947 — *DM-1355 & *LM-13.
 — Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Both Toscanini and Koussevitzky were particularly fond of this work. Toscanini's grasp of its form gave him the means to overcome what B. H. Haggin has identified as "the difficulty of knowing what to do between the mere *p* here and the *f* eight bars later." For Koussevitzky, the thing to do with this or any doubtful situation was to submerge the music in a flowing gorgeousness of sound that dazzled the ear, hoping thereby to conceal the essential lack of intensity in the music. That the sound was gorgeous, no one will deny, but if one asked for more than this Koussevitzky was often unable to provide it.

In his book *The Maestro*, Howard Taubman tells us that Toscanini made this recording for other conductors as a demonstration of how Mozart should be played. Among other things it demonstrated that in the slow movement Mozart had clearly indicated a cadenza for the first violin by writing a six-four chord, a rest, and a trill leading back into the melodic line. Haggin reports that when Toscanini heard the Koussevitzky performance, in which the chord, the rest, and the trill were played through exactly as marked, he exclaimed, "This man is no musician. He is ignorant!"

What we have here is a simple, clear line of sound, moving at a speed appropriate to its melodic flow and expanding

to *f* and *ff* and contracting to *p* and *pp* without changing the tempo of that flow or its plastic continuity. Whatever reservations one may have about Toscanini's other Mozart recordings, this one is very beautiful and technically satisfactory. It is, indeed, one of the great disks of all time, and it would be very good of Victor to let us have it again.

MOZART: *Bassoon Concerto No. 1* (K. 191), recorded November 18, 1947 — *M-1304 & LM-1030. Leonard Sharrow, bassoonist.
 — Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Mozart's only bassoon concerto (No. 2 being considered spurious) is a pleasant work of no great weight with a number of fine passages that are beautifully realized in this performance. The recording is quite good.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)*, recorded November 24, 1947 — *M-1281 & LM-1036.
 — Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Two reactions are engendered by this performance. The first, which I share, is that it is a definitive version of a much abused score. The second is that Toscanini's approach to the music is unsympathetic to an extreme, that he forces upon it a style quite unsuited to it.

Toscanini gave the first Italian performance of this work a little less than 60 years ago, and though it is true that he has never played another Tchaikovsky symphony in either Britain or the United States (indeed, that he never even played the *Pathétique* while with the Philharmonic), I do not subscribe to the suggestion that Toscanini really dislikes the music and has played it in recent seasons only in deference to popular taste. A part of his great honesty as a musician, reflected again and again in his programs, is that when he has no real feeling for a work he does not play it at all.

What one hears on this record is an effort to play the score with the same respect for the composer's markings that one normally gives, say, to a symphony by Beethoven. The traditional banalities, the excesses, the exaggerations, the departures from the spirit of the printed music heard in the performances of other conductors are not reproduced here. In

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their place is the disciplined intensity of Toscanini. If one is so accustomed to hearing this music "interpreted" that he cannot appreciate it in an honest, musician-like performance, then this is not for him.

The first movement is played with great power and beauty, the second (always an irresistible temptation to any flaw in a conductor's morals) is played with muted restraint, perhaps too much. The march is dazzling and the final movement reveals its stature and tragic grandeur without falling to the level of tub-thumping bathos and glycerine tears. The recorded sound is good except for some unpleasantness in the sound of the strings in a few loud passages. The bass should be boosted.

VERDI: *Otello*, recorded during broadcasts December 6 & 13, 1947 — LM-6107. Principals: Herva Nelli, soprano, Nan Merriman, mezzo-soprano, Ramon Vinay, tenor, Giuseppe Valdengo, baritone, and others, with choruses under Peter Wilhousky and Eduardo Petri. — Recorded in Studio 8-H.

Bernard Shaw remarks that *Otello* is Shakespeare writing an opera libretto, a tragedy based upon a farce plot in which, by sheer chance, the coincidences all work out and the rickety structure does not fall down until it is dramatically necessary for the denouement to take place. The Boito adaptation of the play for Verdi puts even greater stress on the flimsy construction; for me, this is a work of enchanting beauty, revealing Verdi's powers at their highest level (and a very high level it is), but unconvincing as a tragedy.

Toscanini plays the score with clarity, force, and a lovely singing quality that is always compelling. The singers are equal to the Maestro's demands and obviously give the performance of their lives in these roles. The recording is not perfection; there is a coarse, hard quality, particularly in the loud passages, but filtering helps some, and the merits of the performance are such that one ought to be willing to tolerate a few imperfections to hear them.

SCHUMANN: *Manfred Overture*, recorded December 16, 1947 — *M-1287 & LM-9022 & *LM-6. — Recorded in Carnegie Hall.

Schumann has appeared regularly in Toscanini's programs, yet this is the only Toscanini recording to date of any of his music. The Maestro shows a special sympathy for the early romantics, and he plays this fine work so that its power and beauty are fully realized without sentimentality and distortion. The recording is over-monitored; the dynamic range is too shallow and the orchestra appears to be somewhat confined.

Although it is unlikely that anyone knew it at the time, Toscanini was not to lead another recording session for nearly two years. When he resumed, he would be recording on a new medium for a revolutionized industry.

Part III of the Toscanini Discography will appear in February.



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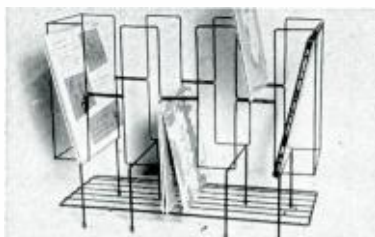
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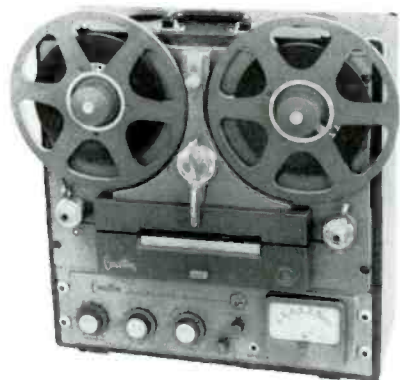
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Audiogersh Record Changer and Turntable

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): Miracord XA 100 record changer and Miraphon XM 110 manual turntable and arm combination. **CHANGER** — Three-speed automatic player, intermixes 10 and 12-inch records of same speed. Plays 45s automatically with special spindle; plays 7-in. LPs manually. Plug-in heads. Both automatic and manual spindles furnished. **Controls:** speed selector with off positions between speed settings; start, pause, filter and repeat push buttons (see text below); adjustments for stylus pressure and set-down height. **Dimensions:** 12½ in. wide by 10¼ deep; clearance required above mounting board, 4 1/3 in.; below mounting board, 2¾. **Weight:** 11 lb. **TURNTABLE** — Basically same drive mechanism and arm; turntable proper is raised higher above base. Three speeds, but push-button controls are eliminated. To start table, arm is raised off rest and moved to right. [Arm returns to rest and motor shuts off after record is finished. Same overall dimensions. **Weight:** 7 lb. **Prices:** XA 100 changer, \$67.50; XM 110 turntable, \$37.50. **Distributor:** Audiogersh Corporation, 23 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.

Right nice changer, this — with more features than you can shake a stick at. Running comments: well-packed; save the carton and no problems figuring out which piece goes where (blessings be) because the odd-shaped pieces are numbered to match sides they go with. First changer we ever saw with legs on it so you could put it down on a table or bench without a base*. Good instruction book; the English will bring an occasional smile (this is a product of Western Germany), but details and sketches are clear and complete. Delivered ready-wired to plug into 110 volts AC and with a standard-type connector at the end of the pickup wire. Changer is very compact; base measures only 10½ by 12¾ and requires a baseboard 12¾ by 14½-in. Mounting very simple (again, blessings be!): make a cut-out as indicated on the template and drill four ⅜-in. holes; no countersinking for springs, etc., no bolts or nuts. The four legs go through the holes and the metal baseplate rests on large rubber grommets. Spring clips slide over the legs to hold everything secure.

The cartridge shell will accept almost any cartridge; has knock-outs for Pickering turnover and G-E duals, with a special knob for the latter. There's a speed control knob on the base, and four function control buttons

(start, filter, pause, and repeat). We'll explain them later.

Pickup weight is controlled by a spring; a knurled knob (easily accessible) controls tension. Here's a neat one: under the arm there's a little post which can be adjusted so that the cartridge won't drop down too far and hit the surface of the turntable, as the result of an accidental knock.

The "Filter" cuts in a resistor to reduce high frequency response and thus, surface noise and scratch. We wouldn't pay extra for the filtering action, since we expect this to be accomplished by the preamp-control unit, but we can think of several uses for that switch. For example, wire it so it will mute the sound while answering the phone; or, if different cartridges are to be used, connect a load-matching resistor to it; or fix it so it will drop the level of high-output 78s to match that of LPs.

Motor is a four-pole induction unit, loosely mounted via rubber bushings to the metal base; can't feel any vibration on base anywhere. Rumble seems very low; not audible even at high volume level on a wide-range system. Turntable runs just a mite fast; a bit of use should take care of that. No observable (to the ears) wow.

There are no "pops" or "clicks" in the loudspeaker when the motor goes on or off, thanks to the use of a mercury switch. Pickup arm raises almost to vertical; this is good . . . makes pickup cleaning easy.

We had occasional trouble getting records to drop, particularly when new ones were on the top of the pile. This occurs because small bits of the label project sometimes into the spindle hole; not the fault of the changer.

Speed selector switch is marked 33-0-45-0-78; zero position stops motor and retracts idler to prevent flats.



Miracord XA 100 reflects design skill and engineering know-how.

*And does the TITH staff like that! We have cut dozens of pieces of plywood in order to try out changers and turntables. — Ed.

Normal operation is to set speed selector, pile up a stack of records, and push the start button. Arm comes to rest after last record and turns off motor, then you turn speed selector knob to zero. In addition to the regular changer spindle a special one for large-hole (45 rpm) records is available as an accessory; a small-hole short spindle for manual operation is provided as regular equipment along with a bushing to take 45s. So much for regular operation; the XA-100 is highly flexible and will perform all sorts of "tricks." Briefly:

While a record is playing, you can: 1) push the repeat button; record will play out and then repeat, without dropping a new record; 2) push the start button; pickup will lift and a new record will be dropped; 3) push repeat and then the start button; pickup will lift but will come down again on the same record; and 4) pick up the arm manually and put it down on the rest; motor will stop, but as soon as you put the pickup back on the record, the turntable will start and the change cycle will continue.

With the manual spindle in place, you can operate just like a turntable, putting down and picking up the arm by hand, or you can push the start button for automatic set-down. When the pickup gets to the end of the record, it will automatically return to rest and turn off the motor. It should be pointed out that when a 12-in. record is dropped over the manual spindle, it will touch the "set down feeler" and so the pickup will drop in the right spot when the start button is depressed. If, for some reason, the feeler is not touched, the arm sets down automatically as for a 10-in. disk.

If the manual spindle is inserted in the center hole upside down, the record will repeat over and over again. Since the set-down feeler will not have been actuated, the cartridge will go down in the 10-in. position.

The pause control stalls the works, if we may put it that way, between records. At 78 rpm the pause is from 5 to 140 seconds; at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, it is from 12 seconds to about 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes.

The instructions make this point quite clear, but we would like to re-emphasize it: the speed control knob should be returned to zero when the changer is not in use. When the arm is in its rest position, the motor turns off but the idler is not retracted (facilitating creation of flats) unless the speed control knob is turned to zero.

Incidentally, the speed control knob is tied up with the set-down mechanism: in the 33 and 78 position, the arm drops for 10 and 12-in. disks, but in the 45 position, it drops for 7-in. records. Small-hole 7-in. LPs require manual set down.



XM 110 manual player, priced under \$40, has automatic shutoff.

Odds and ends: clips are provided to hold extra spindles and the 45 rpm bushing. — You can mix 10 and 12-in. records in a stack, and there are red marks to indicate maximum height of stack. — Records can be put on or taken off the stack while the changer is playing. — There doesn't seem to be anything you can do to "confuse" this changer, which is unusual. Some changers go into spasms if you interrupt a cycle by doing something manually at the wrong moment.

Someone put a lot of design skill and engineering knowhow into this unit; it is, as we said at the beginning, mighty nice — mechanically sound, simple to use, yet very flexible.

The manual player is a stripped-down version of the changer and very little need be said. It is turned on by pulling the arm slightly to the right for a moment; at the end of a record, the arm is automatically picked up and returned to rest position, and the motor is turned off. The same warning about returning the speed selector knob to zero, to disengage the idler, applies. — C. F.

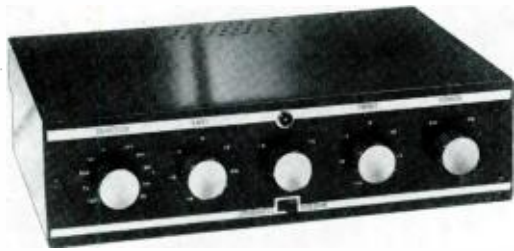
MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Occasional "dropping" difficulty was experienced with some Miracord changers in the first lots imported. Actually, this trouble was caused by variations in spindle-hole size and record thickness. We have increased tolerances on the Magic Wand spindle so that no further difficulty will be experienced. If you have any trouble with record dropping, send your spindle to Audiogersh Corp., 23 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y.; it will be replaced immediately and without charge.

Craftsmen C350 Control

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): Self-powered pre-amplifier-equalizer-control unit. **Inputs:** three high-level, for tape, TV, and radio inputs; one low-level, equalized for magnetic phono cartridges. **Controls:** combined selector and equalization switch (Tape, TV, Radio, seven phono positions with Bartok, LP, RIAA, AES, Lon, Eur, and British 78 equalization); Bass (+15 to -15 db, 50 cycles); Loudness or volume; Treble (+12 to -16 db, 10,000 cycles); loudness compensation on-off switch; Power on-off switch. On back panel: hum balance control; individual level controls for each input channel. **Outputs:** low impedance output to amplifier; low impedance output, unaffected by tone and volume controls, to recorder. Two switched AC outlets, maximum capacity 600 watts. **Distortion:** at 1.5 volts output, less than .1% harmonic, less than .5% IM (40 and 12,000 cycles, 4:1). **Hum and noise:** better than 75 db below 1.5 volts output on high-level inputs; better than 60 db on phono channel in RIAA position. **Tubes:** 2729, 3-12AX7, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 3 7/32 in. high by 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ wide by 7 1/32 deep (plus knobs). **Weight:** 11 lb. **Price:** \$129.50. **Manufacturer:** The Radio Craftsmen, Inc., 4401 North Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago 40, Ill.

In the model C350, Craftsmen has achieved a satisfactory solution to what must be an extremely difficult problem, since few others have solved it. The problem: how to get maximum performance and reasonable control flexibility, while retaining control simplicity.

The "maximum performance" part of the problem was licked by uncompromising conservative electrical design and layout, and by backing this up in its assembly with the best parts that are available for such purposes. For instance: four tubes and a rectifier are used, rather than the three or two normally employed in such units; 1% or 5% deposited-carbon resistors and low-leakage capacitors are used in critical circuits; large rather than miniature components are employed profusely. The result is that the C350 meets its rigid specifications for low distortion



The C350 preamp is intended for highest-quality sound systems.

and noise; more important, it will probably continue to do so for a long time after it is put to use.

Control simplicity and flexibility has been obtained by combining a number of good ideas, both old and new; by eliminating as operating controls those adjustments that would not ordinarily be changed, once set; by eliminating superfluous knobs; and by providing an excellent set of instructions for getting the most out of those knobs remaining. For example, there is a rumble filter with a 40-cycle cutoff built into the C350, but it is shorted out with a bare wire as supplied. If the buyer wants the filter to be effective he simply cuts that wire, or asks the salesman to do it for him. There is no pickup matching adjustment — the phono input resistor supplied matches GE, Fairchild (with transformer) and Audak cartridges; if you want to match a Pickering cartridge you add a resistor

(supplied). The circuit has enough gain, incidentally, (and the noise is low enough) to take a Fairchild cartridge without a transformer. The input selector and phono equalization control are combined in one switch, which is common enough; not common, however, is the number of equalization choices with a single control: seven.

Bass and treble controls have adequate ranges and are well designed. They don't make the sound muddy when held within reasonable bounds, and on our test unit the true flat positions were quite close to the indicated marks. Finally, they don't introduce ringing on transients.

Loudness compensation is effective but not excessive on the bass end when the input level controls are set according to instructions, and for those who don't want it at all there's a front-panel switch that cuts it out. We believe that some users will find the treble compensation a little heavy, particularly at higher listening levels, but that's a matter of opinion.

To sum up — this may not appeal to the technically sophisticated, who know how to use multifarious controls to best advantage; but if a simple, flexible, and high-quality preamplifier-control unit is required, the C350 should be placed high on the list of those considered. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENTS: We are extremely pleased that you commented on the components and construction of the C350, since these factors result in satisfaction on the part of the consumer, yet are the most difficult features to demonstrate. On the C350, Craftsmen spared no effort in making a deluxe preamplifier, since it would be sold only to the most critical customers.

We do take issue, however, with the implicit assumption that a unit that is simple to operate must be deficient in flexibility. We feel that the trend of substituting three controls where one would do the work is unsound, if no more real flexibility is gained. The only purpose of this sort of pseudo-flexibility is as a basis for sales persuasion. In actual practice, it means only that the audiophile's wife will take an extra six months to learn how to play records on her husband's high fidelity system.

Audax Micro-Balance

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a precision balance of soft aluminum, with 6 and 2¾-gram counterweights, for adjusting stylus pressure accurately. Price: \$4.80. Manufacturer: Audak Company, 500 Fifth Avenue, New York 36, N. Y.

Properly made, balances are capable of better long-term accuracy than spring scales. That's why balances are used wherever precise measurements (particularly of small quantities) are involved. Because correct stylus pressure is important to good sound as well as minimum stylus and record wear, and because it is a relatively small quantity to measure, Audak has recently marketed the balance-type stylus pressure gauge shown here. It's easy to use, and without doubt is potentially the most accurate gauge available for home use. Furthermore, as pointed out in the instructions, it will tell you if there is any appreciable arm resistance to vertical movement. If there is, the movement of the balance will be sluggish; such a condition isn't good for records or stylus.

There's only one disadvantage to the Micro-Balance, so far as we can see: you have to have a counterweight or a combination of counterweights equal to the desired stylus pressure in order to adjust the arm properly. Audak supplies a six-gram weight and a 2¾-gram weight that can be set on top of the larger one. The instructions say that six grams is correct for playing LPs and 45s with any

hi-fi cartridge, and that 8¾ grams (the combination of the two weights) is a good compromise for a triple-play cartridge. If you subscribe to this, there is no problem; the two weights are all you need. But there is honest difference of opinion on the matter, and if you want to



Micro-Balance is "potentially the most accurate" for home use.

obtain a stylus pressure other than 6 or 8¾ grams with this balance, you'll have to guess or procure the proper counterweights somewhere. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Ideally, the stylus should be welded to the groove. That being impossible, it slides in the groove with as much pressure as possible, to overcome the loose mechanical contact between stylus and groove. Two ounces would make a good groove contact but it would destroy the record. Today's stylus compliance makes it unnecessary to subject the delicate Vinyl surface to more than 6 grams. When LPs were first introduced technical information released by Columbia expressly stated 6 grams as the optimum stylus pressure. When 45s were introduced, RCA issued the same information.

Contrary to general belief, stylus and records suffer with below-optimum pressure. At 2½ grams, the stylus and record wear is about 3 times normal. This is due to the stylus fluttering in the groove from side to side and up and down — especially on fortissimo passages. Too little stylus pressure is worse than too much.

We recommend against this, but if asked we will supply an additional weight of 6 grams or $1\frac{1}{4}$ grams, or both. This would give: $1\frac{1}{4}$, $2\frac{3}{4}$, 4, 6, $7\frac{1}{4}$, $8\frac{3}{4}$, 10, 12, $13\frac{1}{4}$, $14\frac{3}{4}$, and 16 grams.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Without expressing any opinion, we merely point out that other manufacturers of hi-fi cartridges specify for their products stylus pressures ranging from one gram upward. And with the extra weights, any recommended value can be approximated closely.

Newcomb Compact 10

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): self-contained 10-watt preamplifier and power amplifier requiring a minimum of space. **Frequency response:** ± 1 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Distortion:** less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1% at average listening levels; less than 1% at 10 watts. **Inputs:** six — low level magnetic pickup; high level magnetic pickup; crystal pickup; radio or TV; tape recorder; high impedance microphone. **Outputs:** two — one to tape recorder; one to speaker, 8 or 16 ohms. **Size:** 3 7/8 by 7 3/4 by 9 3/8-in. **Price:** \$79.50. **Address:** Newcomb Audio Products Co., 6824 Lexington Avenue, Hollywood 38, Calif.

A recent Newcomb advertisement in the pages of this magazine showed a total of eleven different amplifiers, ranging in price from \$59.50 to \$297.50. The Compact 10 is, as its name implies, the most compact unit in the line and is next to the least expensive. It is, as the specifications above show, very small. Into that space has been packed a fine measure of quality, lots of flexibility, many features, and nicely balanced sound. It will not stand up in comparison with Newcomb's \$297.50 job, driving a two-ton, umpteen-speaker corner system. It is not intended to. While it will hold its own in big systems, we might say that it is intended for the apartment hi-fi system, mating nicely with the new, small-size speaker systems.

Frequency response is good; distortion low at normal listening levels, but climbs a bit as the 10-watt rating is approached; overall sound excellent, comparing favorably with "full-size" units in the same price class. Obviously, plenty of care has been exercised in designing and producing this unit; otherwise quality would have been sacrificed on the altar of compactness.

Controls are five: bass, treble, equalization, input selection, and loudness. The bass, treble and loudness controls



Newcomb's Compact 10 has many features, nicely balanced sound.

are "interlocked" electronically in such a way that a wide range of tonal effect is possible. The loudness feature cannot be defeated. The bass control is flat in its extreme counter-clockwise position; no real droop is provided (bear in mind here that this amplifier is most likely to be used in conjunction with small speaker systems which are far more apt to require boost than droop). Six equalization positions are provided. The input selector is a two-position control, one position being for phono or mike, the other for high-level inputs. In this connection, it should be pointed out that though there are three low-level input jacks on the back of the chassis, only one can be used at a time. Similarly, if more than one high-level channel is connected at one time, they must be externally isolated from one another (turning down the volume control on the tuner when using the tape recorder would have this effect).

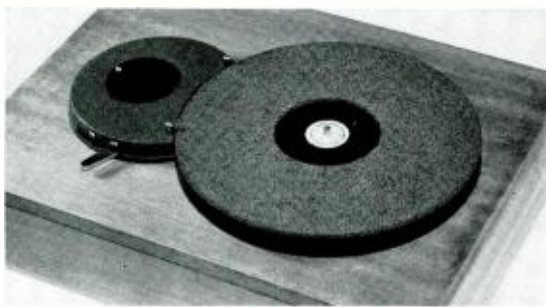
This unit fits a definite spot in the list of requirements for hi-fi systems; however, we would suggest careful study of the Newcomb catalog to find just the model which will serve your purposes best. — C. F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Let your term "externally isolated" lead to confusion in discussing the high-level inputs. I would like to make it clear that electrical isolation is provided internally, so that cutting the volume on one high-level input by an external volume control will not short out the other high-level input.

The presence of one high-level input in no way interferes with the proper operation of the other high-level input. Once the volume controls on the tuner and tape recorder have been set, you need only turn on the power switch of the tuner or tape recorder to play that instrument through the high-level input selector position on the amplifier. To avoid the tuner being heard while the tape recorder is operating, you would do only what comes naturally — turn off the tuner power switch.

D & R Turntable

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): Three-speed manual turntable with 12-in. non-metallic table. **Speed accuracy:** 33 1/3, 45 or 78.26 rpm, $\pm 1\%$. **Speed change:** accomplished



D & R turntable: high precision, simplicity, and quiet efficiency.

manually by changing pulley sleeves. **Drive:** outside idler drive, disengaged automatically when turntable is stopped by lever switch. **Idler diameter** 3 in. **Noise:** 60 db below 8 cm./sec. recording level at 1,000 cycles. **Flutter:** less than .1% RMS. **Wow:** negligible. **Motor:** 4-pole induction motor with special balancing and vibration mount. **Prices:** on plain plywood mounting board $20\frac{1}{2}$ by $15\frac{3}{4}$ in., \$87.00. Finished mahogany mounting box, 4 in. high, \$15.00. **Manufacturer:** D & R Ltd., Audio Equipment Division, 402 East Gutierrez Street, Santa Barbara, Calif.

One of the virtues of a simple machine is that there are few things that can go wrong; another is that, for equivalent selling prices, more care can be devoted to obtaining precision tolerances in the machine having fewer parts. The advantages of simplicity have been realized in the D & R 12A turntable; this is a high-precision table with amazing specifications that are, in essence, met successfully.

The table itself is machined from solid Masonite Benelex

70, a non-metallic hard and heavy material with good dimensional stability, and the journal or shaft is one-inch hardened steel. This rotates in a nickel alloy bearing, at the bottom of which is a hardened steel ball that takes the thrust load. The motor is suspended on aircraft-type vibration mounts; its shaft drives the idler directly, and is ground to the correct size for 33 1/3 records. There are sleeves that slip over the shaft for 45 and 78 speeds. The three-inch idler, which drives the turntable on its *outside* rim, is on a "floating" mount that acts as another mechanical vibration filter. A mercury switch, controlled by the lever visible in the photograph, turns the motor on and off silently and without generating explosions in the loudspeaker; the same lever moves the idler out of engagement in the OFF position. Very neat, simple and productive of quiet efficiency.

Cemented to the turntable is a 1/8-in. cork-latex covering that prevents record slippage but also constitutes a fine dust-collector. Careful wiping of the table before playing records is indicated (as it is with any turntable). The speed accuracy and consistency of our test unit was exceptionally good. There are only three points that require oiling, and they can all be reached from the top without disassembly. Finally, the mounting box was large enough to take any playing arm, and the overall appearance was esthetically pleasing. — A well-engineered turntable that should give long trouble-free service. — R. A.

Gibson Girl Tape Splicer

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a compact splicer with snap-arms to hold tape in position and a double cutting mechanism, one blade to cut a diagonal splice, a second (pair of blades) to trim a "waist" along the sides of the tape at the splice. **Size:** (of board on which mounted): 2 1/2 by 4 in. **Price:** \$8.50. **Address:** Robins Industries Corp., 82-09 251st Street, Bellerose 26, N. Y.

I doubt that anyone who has used tape for more than a couple of hours has not encountered the matter of splicing. And while splices can be made with the help of scissors, razor blades, and steady hands, splicing remains a problem under those circumstances. With a splicer such as this one near at hand, splicing becomes fun . . . one member of our staff, who had a major splicing job ahead of him, used it and got his time down to 8 seconds per splice.



With this tape splicer you make fast and waist-full joints.

The unit consists of a channel into which the tape fits; two small side levers or arms which snap down and hold down via spring tension, one on each piece of tape; and a central arm with two sets of blades and a plastic knob on top. With the knob to the rear, a diagonal blade is brought into position so that the cut is made when the arm is brought down onto the tape. With the knob slipped forward, a pair of blades cut a slight "waist" in the sides of the tape (hence the name, Gibson-girl splicer). This precludes the chance of the stickum on the tape from oozing out under pressure and gumming up adjacent layers of tape on the reel. A pressure pad between the blades sticks the splice.

Two suggestions to users: keep a pair of tweezers handy when you're splicing, to pull the bits of tape out of the splicer after cutting and trimming; and — watch the waist cuts to be sure they're clean and that the little pieces cut out for the waist are detached completely from the tape. Possibly slightly longer waist blades would be an improvement; they are OK now if the tape is perfectly straight in the channel, but sometimes, in haste, the user permits it to skew a little and the ends of the blades don't cut off the edges of the tape completely.

In spite of these two minor suggestions, this unit is neat, inexpensive, and a very real blessing if you have any splicing to do — and what tape user doesn't! — C. F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We find that it is not necessary to use tweezers to remove the bits of tape left behind. The trick is to let them collect (two or three layers) and then it is simple to pick them off with the fingers. After a few splices the novice becomes quite adept, we think, at placing the splicing tape in the center of the machine.

We think that the case with which the splicer can be removed from its base and mounted directly on a tape recorder might be of interest to your readers.

Leak TL/10 Amplifier-Preamp

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): TL/10 amplifier and separate "point one" control preamplifier. **CONTROL PRE-AMP** — **Inputs:** on back panel, phono-type receptacles for tuner and magnetic pickup, with binding posts for external pickup-matching resistor. On front panel, phono jack for input from tape recorder, another jack for output to tape recorder. **Controls:** combined equalization and selector switch; with equalization for AES (and RCA), COL LP (and LON), NARTB, and FFRR 78; Treble (+10 to -14 db); Bass (+10 to -13 db at 40 cycles); combined AC on-off and volume control. On back of chassis, level controls for tuner and pickup inputs. **Power:** furnished by amplifier. **Tubes:** 2-EF86 or Z729. **Dimensions:** 9 1/2 in. wide by 2 3/4 high by 3 3/4 deep. **AMPLIFIER** — **Power output:** 10 watts, "ultra-linear" circuit. **Connections:** 3-ft. multi-wire cable carries power to preamp and audio to amplifier. Separate cord furnished to use external AC switch, usually connected to AC switch in preamp unit. Unswitched AC outlet on amplifier furnishes 60 watts. **Output impedances:** 8 and 16 ohms; can be converted for 4 ohms. **Damping factor:** 25 at 1000 cycles. **Hum level:** -76 db. **Distortion:** .1% harmonic, 1,000 cycles, 8 watts. **Tubes:** EF86 or Z729, 6SN7, 2-KT61 or 6AS6G. **Dimensions:** 11 in. wide by 9 deep by 6 1/2 high. **Price:** \$109.50, net, complete. **Manufacturer:** H. J. Leak & Co., Ltd. U. S. Representatives: British Industries Corp., 164 Duane Street, New York 15, N. Y.

There's nothing we like so much as shimmeringly clean glassware . . . and when we listen to this little amplifier, we're reminded of just that. Sound is exceptionally clean and crystal-clear. We are tempted to say "magnificent"; bell-like will do.

We said "little amplifier." It is — in two ways. It's

compact in size, and has 10 watts output. Which, by today's standards, is little — but it's entirely ample for a room of reasonable size, say up to 20 by 30 ft. or so, when used with any conventional speaker system. Just why automobile and amplifier manufacturers have joined forces in a horsepower race, we're not certain. True, lots of horsepower (and watts) is nice to have; you'll get away from the stop-lights better (transient response) and climb the hills (geographic and sonic) more easily. But you can have a very enjoyable ride with fewer horsepower, and watts.

So put the TL-10 as a mighty nice unit for budget-conscious but high-quality home installations.

Gain on all input channels is sufficiently high, without hum, for standard tuners, tape recorders, and magnetic phonograph cartridges. Low output cartridges (such as the Fairchild) are likely to require their transformers. Equalization facilities are quite good, but on the conservative side, as is tone control range.

A couple of minor quirks on the unit submitted to us: we had to furnish our own power cord, and it had to be soldered in place; also had to solder the connecting cord from the amplifier to the AC switch.

Second, input channels (compared to more elaborate equipment) may not provide sufficient flexibility for some installations. The phono and one high level input are on the back of the chassis; a third channel (for high level input) is on the front of the panel, intended for use with tape recorders. The tape output jack is also on the front panel. Only the ultimate user can decide whether this arrangement is a blessing or a nuisance. If a portable



Leak TL-10 combination sounds like shimmering-clean glassware.

tape recorder is to be connected to the hi-fi system occasionally, those front-panel jacks will be a blessing; if the installation is entirely permanent, they may be an inconvenience.

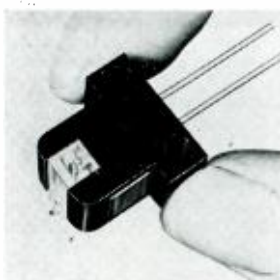
Minor matters, these, to many — particularly in view of the amplifier's excellent performance at its primary business: reproducing sound. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: While it is true that it is necessary for the consumer to furnish his own power cord, this cord need not — and should not — be soldered in place. There are screw terminals provided for the connection which is made quite simply. The same comment holds true with regard to the connecting cord which is supplied with the amplifier. This, too, simply connects to screw terminals and should not be soldered.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Sorry, but there were no screw terminals on the amplifier we had for testing. They were solder lugs. Undoubtedly, we had a unit made before production got into full swing, and current models have the convenient screw terminals.

Electro-Sonic Cartridge

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): A dynamic (moving-coil) cartridge with integral stylus assembly. **Response:** 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Impedance:** 1.5 ohms. **Output:** 1 millivolt; transformer required with most preamplifiers. **Tracking pressure:** 5 grams with record changers; 3 grams with professional arms. **Prices:** model ESL-101 (sapphire 3-mil stylus), \$14.95; ESL-111 (sapphire 1-mil stylus), \$14.95; ESL-121 (diamond 1-mil stylus), \$29.95; ESL-131 (diamond 3-mil stylus), \$29.95. ESL-201 transformer (1.5 to 50 or 200 ohms), \$7.50; ESL-211 transformer (1.5 to 90,000 ohms), \$6.25. **Manufacturer:** Electro-Sonic Laboratories, 35-54 36th St., Long Island City, New York.



Electro-Sonic pickup cartridge.

operates on a principle somewhat different from those with which high-fidelity enthusiasts have become familiar during recent years. A shaft, on which are wound two longitudinal coils of wire, rotates within a magnetic field; the stylus is attached to one end of a small, lever-like protuberance at one end of the shaft. Lateral motion of the stylus produces rotational motion in the shaft. A patent has been applied for in the United States on this development; a similar device (with a very fine

reputation among professional users) has already been patented in Denmark. The advantages of the system are the always-sought-after smoother frequency response; very high compliance; very low impedance (1.5 ohms); low mass; and insusceptibility to vertical motion of the stylus.

For professional users, both the Danish product (now being imported by Electro-Sonic) and the domestic product will be of considerable interest. In considering the cartridge for use under average home conditions, we must proceed with caution. Like certain other products in the hi-fi field, when properly installed and handled they give outstanding results. In the case of the Electro-Sonic, "properly" means an absolutely level turntable and a pickup arm with a minimum of resistance to lateral motion. Either flaw in equipment set-up will cause the stylus-tipped lever to lean to one side, with resultant detriment to sound reproduction.

A question which we can't answer is: how will the Electro-Sonic work six months from now? We don't know; careful examination of the unit in production reassured us that long life could be expected — but the only positive way of knowing is to check units after months of battering under average home-use conditions.

We do not wish this report to seem highly critical. We levelled our turntable, picked a good arm, and were rewarded with delicately clean sound which went way out with only a slight rise or bump around 12,000 cycles. We had no difficulty connecting the recommended trans-

former; with it, output was entirely adequate for average preamplifier phono input channels. We were very pleased with the results; if we have sounded critical, it is because to achieve such pleasure with the Electro-Sonic, certain precautions must be taken, and we do not want the pickup to be criticized when the criticism should be aimed at the conditions under which it must operate. If you care enough about excellent sound to take the precautions necessary for this cartridge, your time will not be wasted.

Incidentally, one very critical audiophile we know has been using this cartridge for several weeks (at time of

writing this report) with genuine satisfaction; he had it set up just right and had gone so far as to soup up his preamplifier gain so that he did not need to use the transformer. — C. F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: With regard to durability, the Guide-A-Phone system at the American Museum of Natural History employs ESL cartridges in record changers to play the phonograph records which comprise the lecture source. The system has been operated continuously approximately 45 hours a week since last April. A recent checkup found the cartridges as good as new despite the severe operating conditions.

A word of caution concerning certain records. The ESL cartridge is a true velocity-type device with a very wide frequency range. High-frequency record noise up to 40,000 cycles can be reproduced and will appear at high level at the input to the preamplifier. This has caused overloading of the preamplifier and subsequent sound deterioration in some instances. A low-pass filter, our ESL 201F, has been developed to eliminate these effects without deterioration of the music.

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Rauland-Borg 1811 Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): A power amplifier with built-in preamplifier, equalizer and control sections. **Inputs:** two high-level, marked for Tuner and Tape; one Microphone; dual inputs (one to be used) for Magnetic phono, marked for GE and Pickering impedances. **Controls:** combined selector and equalization switch (Tuner, Tape, Microphone, phono positions with frr, RIAA, Quiet equalization curves); Bass (+16 to -16 db, 40 cycles); Treble (+16 to -16 db, 10,000 cycles); combined AC on-off switch and Volume/Loudness. Loudness compensation on-off switch on top of chassis; Hum balance control on rear of chassis. **Response:** $\pm .5$ db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Distortion:** not more than .6% harmonic; not more than 2% IM (60 and 7,000 cycles, 4:1). **Rated output:** 12 watts at 8 or 16 ohms. Two switched AC power outlets at rear of chassis. **Hum and noise:** 75 db below 12 watts on high-level inputs; 55 db on phono and microphone inputs. **Tubes:** 3-12AX7, 2-6V6GT, 5Y3GT. **Dimensions:** 12½ in. wide by 7½ deep by 6 high. **Price:** \$65.70. **Manufacturer:** Rauland-Borg Corp., 3515 West Addison Street, Chicago 18, Illinois.

Here is a good all-in-one amplifier combination that per-



Low-cost Rauland amplifier includes preamp and control sections.

Walsco Window-Thru Bushing

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): A set of four (two for each side of the line) capacitor disks which attach to window, permitting entry of FM or TV signals into house without drilling hole for antenna lead-in wire. Disks are of medium-gauge aluminum, 2 in. diameter, with strain-relief solderless terminals and wing nuts for attachment of lead-in wires. Recommended spacing between pairs of disks, ½ to ¾ in. Weather-proof adhesive is supplied for attaching disks to windows. No measurable loss in signal strength. **Price:** \$0.99 per set, list. **Manufacturer:** Walsco Electronics Corp., 3602 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles 16, Calif.

This is one of those marvelously ingenious gadgets that should have been thought of long ago. Unfortunately, it appeared too late to prevent the several million holes already drilled through outside walls for antenna lead-in, but it should help to avoid them in the future.

The kit contains four 2-in. disks of aluminum to which machine screws are attached, four solderless terminal lugs that are easily secured to the antenna line (inside and outside), four wing nuts to hold the terminal lugs on the machine screws, and a tube of adhesive that really sticks. You stick two of the disks, spaced about ¼ in. apart, to the outside of a window, and attach the lead-in from the antenna to them by means of the terminals and wing nuts. Then you stick the two other disks on the inside of the window directly opposite the outside pair,

forms quite creditably — better by a substantial margin than its price would indicate. It has some little conveniences not found even in much more expensive combinations: the control shafts are long enough, for example, to go through a panel of any reasonable thickness, and the tone controls are calibrated (accurately, according to our checks) directly in db boost and cut.

Among the other desirable features are double magnetic phono input plugs, matched for high and low-level cartridges; switched AC outlets on the rear apron; a switch to cut out the loudness compensation on the volume control, if it is so desired (although the switch isn't on the front panel); and surprisingly good sound, which is probably due in large measure to the husky output transformer.

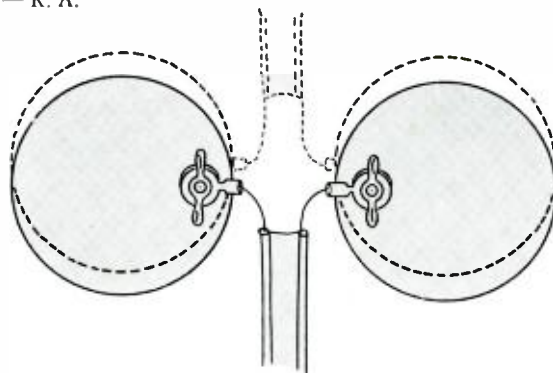
There are some not-so-good characteristics to consider, too. There isn't any output taken off ahead of tone and volume controls to feed a recorder. There are no input level controls and, of course, only one magnetic phono channel. The equalization is somewhat limited; none of the older curves is furnished and, on our test unit, the RIAA curve had extra rolloff (to be fair, this may have been an exception, for in all other ways the 1811 met specifications or exceeded them). Whether or not these should be considered shortcomings, in view of the price tag and the amplifier's performance in other respects, is for the prospective purchaser to decide, being guided by his needs. It impressed us as a singularly good buy. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The RIAA curve (in the 1811) runs within a fraction of a db of the standard, but of course it is possible that a feedback capacitor might have been enough off tolerance to give the effect you refer to. Future production of both our 1811 12-watt amplifier and the 1826 deluxe 20-watt amplifier with the Libretto control unit will include tape outputs taken off ahead of the volume controls.

and attach the twin lead from your tuner to them. Directions given with the kit are easy to follow. If the window you use is going to be raised or lowered, remember to allow the necessary slack in the line; also, you'll probably get better disk-sticking if the window is washed just before they are put on.

Our checks showed insignificant signal-strength loss compared to a through-the-wall installation. In six weeks of use the outside disks have been subjected to plenty of rain, sun and frost, and are still stuck solidly. We can recommend this product heartily and without reservation.

— R. A.



How to get antenna signals inside without a hole in the wall.

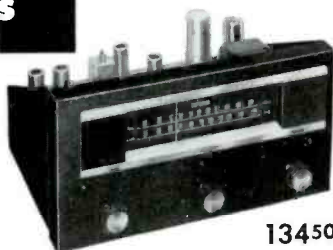
for those who want the best . . .

We have been asked over and over again at audio shows, "What Craftsmen units should I buy to assemble the finest home music system possible?"

For those who want the best components that money can buy, we recommend the Craftsmen basic units shown below. Each of these components is built with only one purpose in mind—to make the most perfect unit that engineering skill and quality parts can produce. They are built without any of the short-cuts normally used to hold prices down. They are designed to include every feature the most hard-shelled audiophile could desire. They are built to give continuous service, year after year, at the same peak of audio quality. Each component is specialized-designed to do a specific job without any sort of compromise.

And all of these features pay off in pleasure the day you play your first concert in your own living room.

this



13450 net

C810 BASIC FM-AM TUNER

Designed for Sensitive FM and wide band AM reception with flat audio output.

or this



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C900 BASIC FM TUNER

Designed for operation in extreme fringe areas and broadcast monitoring. Flat audio output. Virtually unmeasurable distortion.

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The highest quality pre-amplifier built. Features hinged action tone controls, virtually unmeasurable hum and distortion.

C375 FILTER SYSTEM

Broadcast type cut-off filter. Used to remove distorted portions of source material, such as hiss and scratch on old 78 RPM records.



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C375

3950 net

Prices slightly higher on West Coast

and this



10950 net

C550 BASIC POWER AMPLIFIER

30 watts of audio with only 1/10 of 1% harmonic and 1/2 of 1% IM distortion. Frequency response ± 1 db 10-20,000cps.

For complete information, see your high fidelity dealer or write

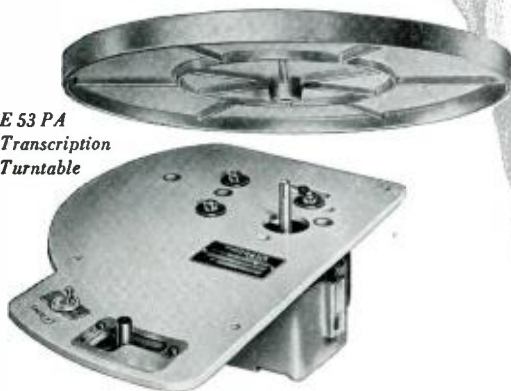
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give you the finest system money can buy!

in **THORENS**
 exclusive
 direct-drive...
 the difference
 to the ear
 is here...

*E 53 PA
 Transcription
 Turntable*



Rubber belts, pulleys, idler wheels and other wearable elements of friction-drive turntables contribute to unwanted noise and pitch variation. There are none of these in a Thorens . . . instead the ideals of silence and speed regularity are realized by a *direct-drive motor* whose speed is perfectly controlled by a governor. You can manually adjust the speed for "exact pitch" on 78, 45 and 33-1/3 rpm records. Furthermore, speed is not affected by heat or load conditions!

Acting through an electronically balanced rotor shaft further silenced by a mechanical filter, the turntable is kept free of wow or waver. Only direct-drive permits better positioning and machining of fast-rotating parts, as well as better vibration dampening — thus primary sources of rumble are eliminated. In test, a Thorens turntable maintains a noise level of —48db . . . truly unparalleled performance indeed.

For first installation or replacement, it is certainly worth your while to hear the quality of Thorens turntables, players and changers before you make your choice. You will agree, we know, that at last . . . the difference to the ear is here!

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THORENS COMPANY, DEPT. A, NEW HYDE PARK, N. Y.

CONSTITUTION HALL

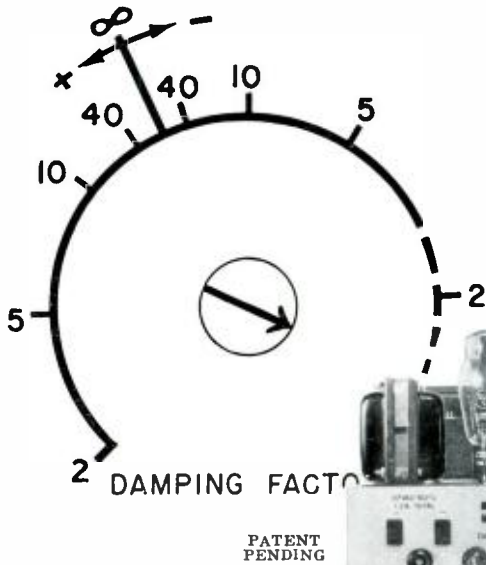
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ted a few dutiful "oohs" and "ahs," not too many actually were deceived.

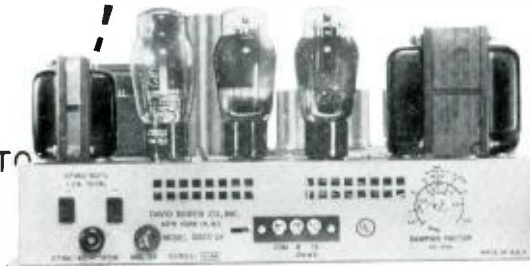
What followed resembled the Tiny Tot concerts that are a regular feature of the symphony's season. Instruments were introduced and explained and orchestra members played brief solo passages. Instrumental families were demonstrated in short ensemble pieces. The real hi-fi fans leaned forward eagerly as the percussion section banged through its showpiece, but it was not recorded. All those highs from the triangle and glockenspiel, and those lows from the kettledrum — wasted! Rogers tried valiantly to dispel the disappointment with an urbane, witty running commentary. ("Until modern times, oboe playing was a time-killing hobby for shepherds.") The "educational" portion of the concert also was notable for the most effective plug for high fidelity. The orchestra played parts of the slow movement and the scherzo of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony without the bass parts. Rogers then commented, "Howard Mitchell would not dream of dropping the basses out of Beethoven's Fifth, aside from this demonstration. But there are too many radios and phonographs still in use that will drop them out for you."

After intermission the sound addicts had their (very brief) moment. The first movement of *Capriccio Espagnol* by Rimsky-Korsakoff was given a foot-stomping performance. The engineers then got in a few blows for the single microphone technique by playing back the performance as recorded by several microphones in different locations. The drums boomed and the tambourine and castanets rattled over everything else. Rogers, with some nervousness, announced that *now* they would play the tape that was properly recorded. (He admitted after the concert that they had been tempted to pre-record this section to insure getting it right.) It sounded fine. The balance was good and the sound was rich and full. There was no doubt that it was recorded sound, but it was good recorded sound. And that was the end of the recording demonstration. Orchestral selections by Berlioz, Richard Strauss, Wagner and Copland followed. In the lobby afterwards, the owner of a local hi-fi shop talked earnestly to

Continued on page 94



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Now you can enjoy more hours of perfect listening without fatigue. The famous Bogen DB20 and DO30 amplifiers are now available with the exclusive BOGEN VARIABLE DAMPING FACTOR CONTROL (VDFC) which permits you to minimize speaker distortion and eliminate system resonances.

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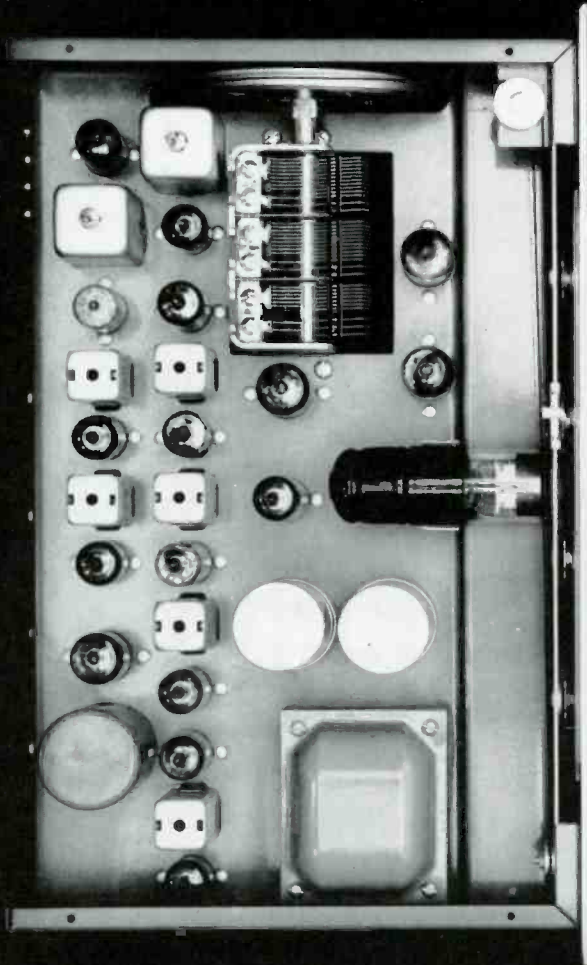
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CONSTITUTION HALL

Continued from page 92

Avery Fisher. People crowded around the component displays. A young man patiently explained to two elderly ladies what an amplifier is. Someone said: "Sure, the orchestra sounded better, but I came to hear the loudspeakers."

READ WELL

Continued from page 43

if you were to replace a power amplifier (for instance).

In a permanent system including a tuner, the following breakdown represents a reasonably well-balanced expense relationship:

Amplifier, preamplifier-control sections	20 to 30%
Turntable	10 to 15%
Pickup arm and cartridge	7 to 15%
Tuner	10 to 15%
Speaker system	30 to 60%

If the preamplifier and control sections are included in the tuner, then part of the allocation for the first item should be transferred to that for the tuner. Note that the speaker system expense varies over a wide range; this is because personal preferences have so much to do with speaker assessment. Subjective judgment is all-important in this category.

The necessity for listening, long and attentively, to the system of your choice *before* buying cannot be overemphasized. It was pointed out that electrical components in the same price class are likely to be of similar objective quality; the differences lie mostly in appearance and flexibility. The proper components for you must be determined by your ideas as to the manufacturer's reliability; your requirements for size, control setup, and mounting methods; the emphasis you will place on records, radio, or tape; the room in which listening will be done (in the case of a speaker system and the power amplifier); and your budget. You can choose a tentative system and some alternative components from the various distributor catalogs, from advertisements and the "Tested-in-the-Home" section in HIGH FIDELITY, and from personal advice if that is available. Then, if it is possible at all, go to a dealer who is equipped

Continued on page 96



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For copies of "High Fidelity Magazine" reports on CRESTWOOD, plus complete specifications on all CRESTWOOD models, clip and send coupon.



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READ WELL

Continued from page 94

to demonstrate these units comparatively. Listen carefully, particularly to the speaker systems, at both high and low volume levels. If you can, take the components home and set them up as they will be installed permanently, and listen some more; some dealers permit this. If you can't take them home to try, make certain that all the equipment is in working order—ask the salesman to open the boxes and test the units you've bought. Such care will be repaid many times over in satisfaction.

AUTHORS

Continued from page 35

reason for me to believe or to wish that future generations will in fact wish to listen to me talking and reading. Why should they? Third, if it turns out that somebody in the future *does* wish to do so, I feel fine about it. I feel fine about the idea of listening to my own voice 10 years from now, too. I don't want to listen to it just now, though. It's there and it'll keep, which is the whole point of such records, and the reason I haven't listened to the Columbia Series again.

If records of the voices of writers of the past were available, whom would I want to listen to? Well, I would especially like to hear the voices of Guy de Maupassant, Leo Tolstoy, Jack London, Mark Twain, Anton Chekhov, Charles Dickens, Goethe, Strindberg, Ibsen, Hamsun, Ambrose Bierce, Joaquin Miller, Maxim Gorky, Balzac, Walt Whitman, Poe, and O. Henry. Quite a messy assortment, I know, but I didn't want to think about the matter methodically. The point is that I would like to hear very nearly any writer at all.

Now, most of the names I have mentioned belong to men who were alive when recordings of one sort or another could have been made. The fact that they weren't, with the result that there is (for me at any rate) a great void, suggests the rightness of such recordings. I have not mentioned others than writers, but suppose it were possible to hear the voices of Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, Tchaikovsky? And just run down a list

Continued on page 98

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AUTHORS

Continued from page 96

of the interesting people who are still alive, whose voices have not yet been recorded. Better get to them while the getting's good.

Finally, Columbia or one of the other companies might think about the recording of conversations — not necessarily big stuff, probably small stuff, between a writer, a composer, a painter, and anybody else they might know and care to have in the conversation, for instance.

In the end small talk is likely to be the most entertaining, the most useful, the most revealing, and the most important.

To sum up, writers are worth listening to.

If writers are worth listening to, are they *more* worth listening to than those we hear all the time? In my opinion writers are the most worth listening to, far more worth listening to than those we have hardly ever been able *not* to listen to: who may be lumped together as those who have something to sell. Writers either have nothing to sell, or truth alone, which in the present market is very difficult to give away. But it can be done, and if anybody can do it writers can.

ADVENTURERS

Continued from page 46

who sometimes becomes angry. I made my dispositions. When everything was ready Dr. Scherchen came in and looked at them. Everyone was very nervous. Dr. Scherchen nodded and said, 'Very reasonable,' and we went right to work."

Charlin thought back on that moment. "I don't know what would have happened if he had *not* liked my arrangements." Then he cheered up. "I was relieved," he said, simply.

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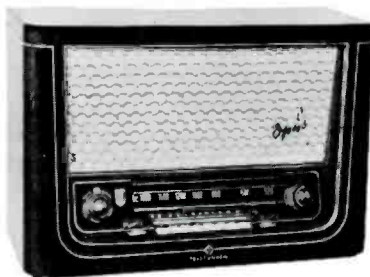
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CIRCUITS: 17 circuits including 9 for FM (Armstrong circuitry).
ANTENNAE: Built-in FM dipole antenna and rotating ferrite antenna for standard band (operated from front of cabinet).
AUTOMATIC VOLUME CONTROL: On two stages backwards.
CABINET DIMENSIONS: 23 1/4" x 15 1/4" x 10 1/4".
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 30 to 18,000 cycles.
POWER OUTPUT: Approx. 8 watts.

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specifications:

SPEAKERS: Oval shaped woofer, 10 1/4" x 7 1/4"; permanent-dynamic tweeter.
WAVE RANGES: FM: 88-108 Mc.; Short Wave: 5.5-18 Mc.; Std.: 515-1620 kc.; Special: 150-330 kc.
CIRCUITS: 15 circuits, including 9 for FM (Armstrong circuitry).
ANTENNA: Built-in FM dipole antenna.
AUTOMATIC VOLUME CONTROL: On two stages backwards.
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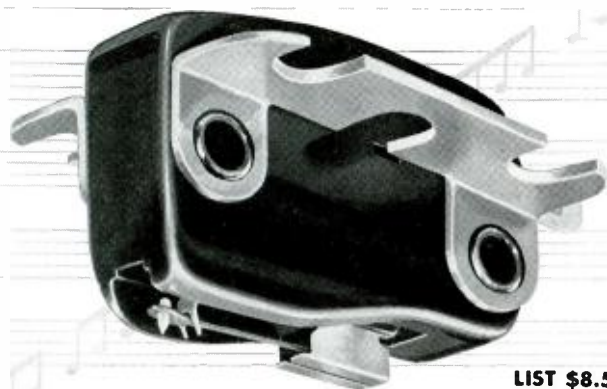
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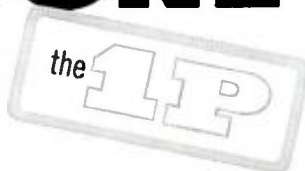


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CHICAGO COMEBACK

Continued from page 38

there at all; and although more have sung in San Francisco, the list of principals looks more like La Scala than it does like any other American company. Second, whether by design or otherwise, most of the Italian importations came here with ready-made reputations, thanks to the tremendous growth in the catalog of complete recorded operas since LP was introduced six years ago. It would be quite impossible to estimate the effect of these record reputations on ticket sales — and on audience temper — but it must have been tremendous. Conversely, it would be very interesting to know the effect of appearances by these artists on sales of their recordings in the Chicago area, for that could be tremendous, too.

Certainly it is almost impossible to imagine that anyone who had both heard and seen Maria Callas' performances in *Norma* and in *Lucia di Lammermoor* would not want the recordings, as a stimulant to the memory, if nothing else. And certainly there must be a great many people who, having heard her on records, wonder what she is like in person. The answer to the last is that records only just begin to give a sense of the total Callas theatrical personality, for she — having reduced before coming to make her debut on her home shores, if not in her home city of New York, from something in the neighborhood of 200 pounds to something in the neighborhood of a 140 — is a magnificently lithe and commanding figure on the stage, and her movement has about it all the expressive nuance that can be heard in her singing.

From the purely vocal standpoint, her *Norma* was — with faster tempos from Mr. Rescigno than from Tullio Serafin — much as it sounds on records, which is to say: flawed. In quality, the voice was precisely as it sounds on her Angel records, played through good equipment. There is the same veiled, bottled-up feel to some tones, the same unsteadiness to others. The real point was that these blemishes seemed extremely unimportant in the total theatrical context, for she is a personality of such authority and such unbending will that in the theater

Continued on page 102



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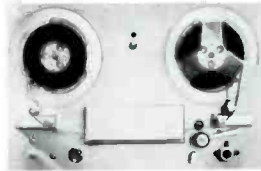
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CHICAGO COMEBACK

Continued from page 100

all ordinary scales of value are useless as measures of her achievement. Very likely this is not very helpful, but — without intending to push the ante any higher than the \$3,000-plus-expenses figure it has now reached — it is easy to understand after an experience of Miss Callas in the opera house how she commands the fees and the public she does.

Even more impressive, on the whole, than her Norma was her Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, for here the tone was free and clean almost always, and the brooding, tragic side of the character, so seldom more than hinted at by most Lucias, was completely projected. In the opera house, the voice did not sound as strong in decibels as its sound on records implies that it is, and much of the coloratura was actually dealt with quite lightly. What was unique, though, was the constant play of color and the sense of immense reserve power pent up and about to be released. As for the audience, it broke the mad scene in two with a spontaneous three-minute ovation and then stayed far into the intermission period to bring her back for curtain call after curtain call.

But Miss Callas is strictly a one-of-a-kind, and although it was she who provided the initial spark of interest and lit it and kept it blazing, a single soprano, even a great one, does not make a season. Or perhaps she does, for although the other performances had their share of flaws, with a Callas performance in memory and others in prospect, no one seemed willing to be picky about anything at all.

However, even the most skeptical would have had to work hard to find fault with Giulietta Simionato's Adalgisa, for it was, in its way, quite as impressive as Miss Callas' Norma. A slight, dark, extremely attractive young woman, Miss Simionato has a voice that is firm, rock-like in its anchoring, and at least a size bigger, when she uses it all, than it sounds on her recordings. And she is an exceptionally capable actress. She went on to sing an energetic, bright-as-a-button Rosina and a highly individual, Italianate Carmen. The last opera to be chosen for the repertoire brought one of the most charming singers of all — Rosanna

Carteri, fresh from her conquest of San Francisco — as Mimi. Tall for a singer, and on the stage exquisitely beautiful, she sang with the most delicate sensitive musicality and awareness of word values, in a lovely, warm, lyric voice.

To be perfectly frank, the effect on any opera enthusiast of coming almost at once on three unfamiliar artists so undebatably of the absolutely top rank as Miss Callas, Miss Carteri, and Miss Simionato is somewhat unbinging. And these three did not sing alone. Mirto Picchi sang Pollione with a bright, ringing, soundly produced voice and acted quite dependably, and as Don José in *Carmen* reinforced the impression he had made earlier. As Almaviva in *Il Barbiere* and Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Leopold Simoneau phrased most tastefully and looked well on the stage, and as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* Giacinto Prandelli proved as reliably worthy as ever. The tenor of the season, though, was Giuseppe di Stefano, improved as an actor, and as a specifically operatic singer, out of all recognition since his early, careless Metropolitan days. He sang extraordinarily well, especially in the last act of *Lucia* and the last act of *Tosca*, which had Eleanor Steber giving her impressive all in the title role.

The two principal baritones were Tito Gobbi, who sang Figaro, Germont, and Scarpia, and Gian Giacomo Guelfi, who sang Marcello, Ashton, and Escamillo. Mr. Gobbi made a great impression as both stylist and actor. Mr. Guelfi, whose voice must be one of the hugest since Titta Ruffo, used it all with a kind of happy enthusiasm over the sound that submerged any possibility of subtlety but was enormously impressive.

The American novelty, Vittorio Giannini's *The Taming of the Shrew*, could hardly have had a test more acid than that of being presented in conjunction with such a repertoire, so cast, but it came out very well. The Shakespeare text may not make an ideal libretto, but it does provide beautiful words, and the composer has set them expertly. The score is neither hyper-conservative nor defiantly modern, and its full-bodied harmonies sound out freely and confidently in a big opera house. It had a very real success with its

Continued on page 104



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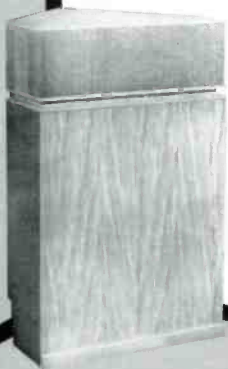
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CHICAGO COMEBACK

Continued from page 103

first audience, and, on the strength of good reviews, the second performance did rather well at the box office.

The leading *Shrew* singers were Hugh Thompson, a vigorous, stage-wise Petruccio, and Irene Jordan, a handsome Kate. Lawrence White and Gloria Lind were less impressive as Lucentio and Bianca, but Donald Gramm sang with exemplary musicality as Hortensio, and so did Andrew McKinley, convincingly comical as Grumio.

Throughout the season, Nicola Rescigno was very satisfactory in the blend of authority and permissiveness with which he conducted. Given a free hand to do his best, he came into his own. Both orchestra and chorus were assembled almost entirely in Chicago and rehearsed intensively to prepare for the season. There were ups and downs of ensemble, to be sure, and some persistent weak spots, but by the end of the season both groups were on their ways to becoming cohesive units,

Continued on page 105

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CHICAGO COMEBACK

Continued from page 104

and it would be hard to praise Mr. Rescigno too much for the energy and intelligence with which he went about making the most of the resources at hand.

To spell him, Jonel Perlea conducted *La Bohème* and *Carmen*, with authority but with a leaning towards tempos somewhat slower than suited many of the singers, and than some sections of the ensemble could sustain with grace.

Settings and costumes were all drawn from the rich storehouse left behind by the Chicago Civic Opera, and although they looked their 25 years from the design standpoint, they were mostly so good of their kind, and had been so well made, that there was far more applause than complaint as they were revealed by the rising curtains. One of the most attractive décors of all was that for the Giannini opera, assembled from odd units of the old *Mignon*, *Il Trovatore*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Don Pasquale*, *Lorenzaccio*, and even *Boris*

Continued on page 107

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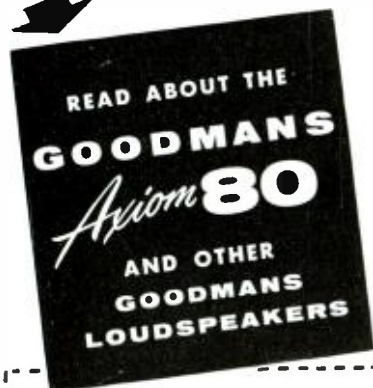
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CHICAGO COMEBACK

Continued from page 105

Godounoff (a fountain that ran real water) by Gerald Ritholz, a young Goodman Theatre designer. All of the staging save that of the Gianini opera was done by William Wy-metal, who arranged the chorus in the old, tidy V-formation and kept them fairly well out of the way of the principals. The *Shrew* staging was by Rexford Harrower, who kept groupings attractive and most of the movement sensible.

All told, then, the first real Lyric Theatre season—based squarely on the assumption that big-scale personalities will draw big-scale public support—got off to a fast start with Miss Callas' *Norma* and was never headed. From now on the problem of raising funds should be vastly simplified, for, whatever the aesthetic rights and wrongs of the star system may be, it turned out that a real, old-fashioned star-lit grand opera season was what Chicago needed to fire its civic imagination. At this point, there seems no reason in the world why the Lyric Theatre should not grow and Chicago become once again the great operatic center it has been in the past.

If this does happen, the operatic prestige of the United States as a whole should be enormously enhanced, for with top-grade opera houses in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco we would have a kind of backbone not unlike the Milan-Rome-Naples backbone of Italian opera.

More important still, success for the Lyric Theatre experiment could stimulate interest in similar projects in smaller cities—if not on the major-league, Callas level, then on the AA- and A-league level that is needed to give the country a balanced, healthy operatic economy. For Miss Callas, born in Brooklyn, would still be Miss Callas whether she came to Chicago from La Scala or from the non-existent civic opera company of Wheeling, W. Va., via a season with the non-existent municipal opera company of Houston, Tex. It was exciting to have her back, but why did she have to make her way to the top in Italy instead of in the United States? Answer that question, and you will have the answer to all the problems of opera in this country—and of opera singers.



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AUDIO FORUM



SIR:

Like another reader, who recently wrote in, the only weak link in my otherwise fine audio system is my turntable, a cheap one, which I hope to replace before long. I made the rumble filter which was described in the May, 1954 issue, and it works fine.

Am I correct in thinking that turntable rumble (vibrations) would also make reproduction of the highs rather edgy? My thought is that the rumble may tend to make it more difficult for the stylus to properly track high-frequency grooving, though I've never read anything on this.

What are the principal advantages (exclusive of tone control and equalization) of a multi-tube preamplifier over a single-tube one?

George H. McClellon
89 Broad Street, Room 440
Boston 10, Mass.

You are quite correct in your assumption that excessive turntable vibration can affect high frequencies too — not directly, but through shaking the arm and stylus enough to cause poor tracking.

There are many advantages in using more than one tube in a pre-amplifier. The entire design can be made more conservative: tubes can be operated in the minimum-distortion region rather than the maximum-gain condition, for instance; the input tube of the phono-preamp section can be designed for minimum noise rather than maximum gain; the outputs can be low-impedance rather than high-impedance, thus minimizing hum pickup and high-frequency losses; circuit operation conditions can be adjusted for maximum tube life. These are, or course, in addition to the flexibility advantages you mentioned in your letter.

SIR:

To date your magazine has ignored completely the subject of television, yet it seems to me there is one angle which would interest and would be helpful to your readers.

TV finally has arrived in Vermont; most of the programs I can do without very nicely, but now and then there

is something worth looking at — and listening to. I have a pretty good audio layout: Fisher 70-A amplifier, University woofer and tweeter with crossover network mounted in the living room wall, backed up by a clothes closet.

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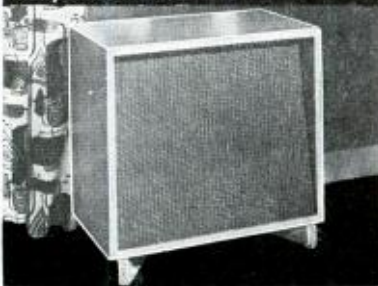
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bookcase which is also built into the closet wall, this built-in cabinet being mounted between two shelves of the bookcase. There is an empty shelf between the 8-in. speaker enclosure and the large enclosure at the bottom, which includes the tweeter and air coupler.

I would very much appreciate receiving your advice as to what Doppler distortion is and whether you think I have any need to fear such distortion in my system.

J. Foy Guin, Jr.
Russellville, Ala.

Doppler distortion is that caused by a speaker vibrating with large amplitude at a low frequency and, at the same time, reproducing a treble tone. During an "outward" low-frequency movement the pitch of the treble tone is increased, and during an "inward" low-frequency movement the pitch is decreased. This is the same phenomenon that causes the pitch of a train whistle to be raised when it is approaching and lowered as the train is receding from the listener. In an audio system the effect is that of an intermittent vibrato.

However, as pointed out, the effect occurs in loudspeakers only when a cone is producing highs and lows at the same time, or is producing highs and is being driven by a low-frequency speaker nearby. You needn't worry about this in your present speaker system, with a horn tweeter, since the driver is sealed.

SIR:

A few things which may be of interest to you and your readers.

First—an inexpensive grille cloth. Recently, I put together a bass-reflex speaker enclosure containing 12 cubic feet of air space. Necessarily, it was quite large—the front being three feet wide and four feet high. A piece of plastic grille cloth that size costs about \$13.00. I therefore began to look for something less expensive, and after about two months of hunting I found a material which just about fits all the requirements. It is a product of the Bemis Bag Company (with offices in most major cities). The material is called "Osnaberg." Its color is about the same shade as coffee with twice the usual amount of cream added, an excellent match for blond cabinets. It is thick enough to almost hide the black of the speaker cone, but still porous enough to allow the highest tweeter note

Continued on page 110

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 109

to pass. It can be dyed to any color and is 40 in. wide. There is a 10% shrinkage, so that you still end up with material 36 in. wide after dying. The price—45¢ a yard, plus a cutting charge of \$1.00 for an amount less than 100 yards. I experienced no difficulty with sag, after stretching the material over a three by four-foot plywood frame.

Second—an idea I came up with to insure that the speaker enclosure was completely air-tight. My neighbor, one T. C. Curry, is the Industrial Salesman for Minnesota Mining in the Seattle area. I was quite surprised at the extent of their line of Scotch brand tape. In addition to the type with which we are all familiar, they produce about 300 other varieties for industrial usage. I promoted from him a roll of their type 300. This is a very thick paper-base tape with super strength adhesive. I used a roll of three-in. wide material. My enclosure is edge-mitered, screwed and glued. I covered all inside seams with this tape, and then L-braced each inside 90° angle. It is completely air-tight, and the improvement in bass response is very noticeable.

Robert Young
P.O. Box 206
Mercer Island, Wash.

SIR:

I recently purchased and assembled Tech-Master TM-15A and TM-15PM kits. Listening tests show good response except for distortion on certain high-frequency passages, particularly in the brass. I wrote Tech-Master about it and as yet have not received a reply. Associated equipment consists of a Garrard RC 80 changer with G.E. RPX-041 cartridge, and a Jensen K-310 15-in. speaker, mounted in a bass reflex cabinet. All operating voltages in the preamp and main amplifier check with those as listed in the construction manual.

I should have cleaner high-frequency response than I'm getting. Any suggestions as to what can be done to help will be appreciated.

Dale Bradley
P.O. Box 1088
Ely, Nevada

Although not familiar with the Tech-Master kits we know that there have



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD BEATTIE

What are the facts about cancer of the lung—?

JUST 20 YEARS AGO, in 1933, cancer of the lung killed 2,252 American men. Last year, it killed some 18,500.

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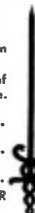
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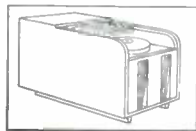
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been many sold, and yours is the first letter we've received with a complaint about them.

This leads us to suspect that there's a good chance that the amplifier and preamplifier may not be to blame. The same symptoms could be caused by a faulty record-playing setup. The turntable may not be level, or the stylus pressure could be too light or too heavy, or the arm pivot may not be perfectly free. The stylus may be worn, or not centered exactly between the cartridge pole pieces (if it isn't, you can bend the stylus bar carefully to re-center the stylus). Finally, the little stylus-bar rubber damping blocks may be detached or stiffened. Any of these faults could cause high-frequency distortion; the easiest way to make sure, of course, is to borrow a friend's amplifier and preamp or persuade him to let you try the Tech-Master equipment on his sound system.

SIR:

I propose mounting my 15-in. coaxial speaker in the wall of my living room, with the back of the cone facing out into the garden. Which brings up a hypothetical ques-

Continued on page 112

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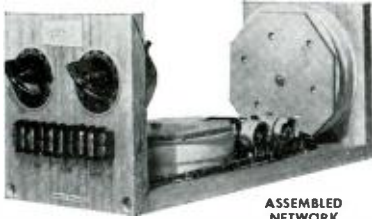
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 111

tion: assuming one has a good coaxial speaker, say in the \$100 class, and mounts it in a properly-matched cabinet enclosure, whether reflex, folded horn, or whatever, how are the results likely to compare with the true infinite-baffle mounting?

I would also appreciate your comments on location. The room is a little on the under-draped side, 13 by 19. The speaker will be mounted in the 13-ft. wall. I could put it in a junction of floor or ceiling and two walls, but it would be a lot more convenient to slightly off-center it in the wall close to either floor or ceiling. Is the extra bass likely to be worth the extra effort, and would it be best near floor or ceiling in either case?

Frederic W. Norton
Box 209 R D 5
Lancaster, Pa.

Infinite-baffle mounting such as you propose in your recent letter will produce the cleanest overall sound of any mounting method, although the bass end is generally not as efficient as it would be if the

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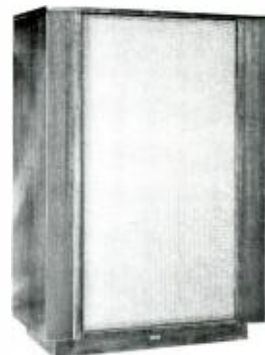
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speaker were mounted in a good baffle of one of the more conventional types. This loss can be circumvented to some extent by using electrical bass boost, since it is possible to use more boost with an infinite baffle (if the speaker is a good one, of course) before the sound turns muddy.

Off-center wall mounting will produce a noticeable loss of bass compared to corner mounting; on the other hand, the sound distribution may be somewhat better. I should think it would be better to mount the speaker near the ceiling than near the floor, again for the sake of high-frequency distribution.

The trouble with a through-the-wall installation is that you can't be absolutely sure how it will sound until you try it, and after you try it it's too late to change your mind! You can get a reasonably good idea by putting the speaker on a large flat baffle board—say four or five feet square—and trying this in various locations against the wall. This will approximate the final results so far as middle and high frequencies are concerned, but not the lows.

SIR:

For some time, I have been plagued

Continued on page 115

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 113

by dust pick-up from my turntable. Since the turntable has an undustable cork surface, and my records are liberally greased with anti-static compound, side two of a record attracted a remarkable amount of dust while side one was being played. But no more. A 4-in. square of tire-patching rubber was purchased at a local auto-parts store, and a center hole punched with the metal eraser-holder from a pencil. The backing was stripped from the square, which was then laid on a spinning turntable, and a 4-in. circle scribed with a sharp pencil. Carefully cutting out the circle with a pair of scissors completed the job, and my records now ride proudly a twentieth of an inch above the turntable and its dust, supported by their labels and runout grooves. It's also much easier to pick up 10-in. records than previously. Total cost: 10¢. for the rubber. The pencil was free.

Malcolm R. A. Chisbalm
1912 North Clark Street
Chicago 14, Illinois

SIR:

My system consists mainly of a 15-in. coaxial speaker, a 20-watt amplifier and a Pickering cartridge. With the volume set midway I get overloading distortion in the higher ranges, yet beautiful results in the middle and lower ranges. I tried the treble control at zero and lower volume contours but the strain in the upper ranges is still noticeable, although to a lesser degree.

Do you think a separate tweeter with an input control would remedy this or does the fault lie elsewhere?

James Michlouch
P. O. Box 665
Monessen, Pa.

The treble-trouble you speak of could be caused by many things, unfortunately. Here are some of them:

Cartridge not terminated properly in preamplifier input. The preamp input resistance should be 27,000 ohms.

Damping goo in Pickering has been displaced or has leaked out; requires factory reconditioning.

Weak preamplifier tube or off-value circuit element in preamplifier.

One side of push-pull amplifier circuit inoperative because of bad output tube or other circuit element.

Bad tweeter section in coaxial speaker.



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— 1954 —

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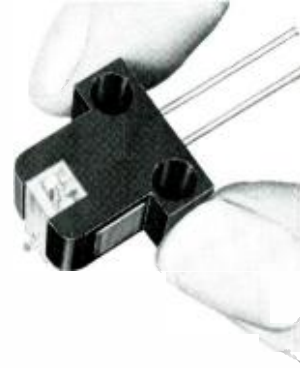
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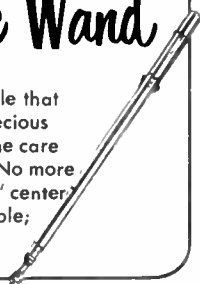
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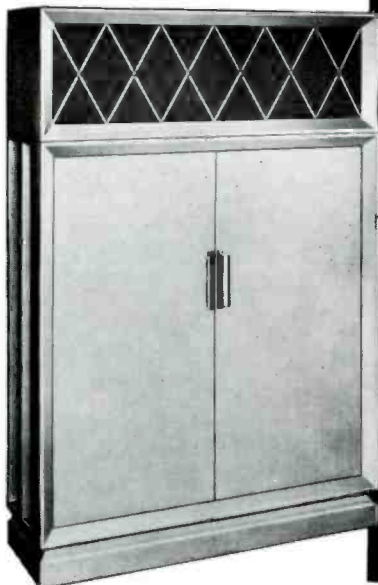
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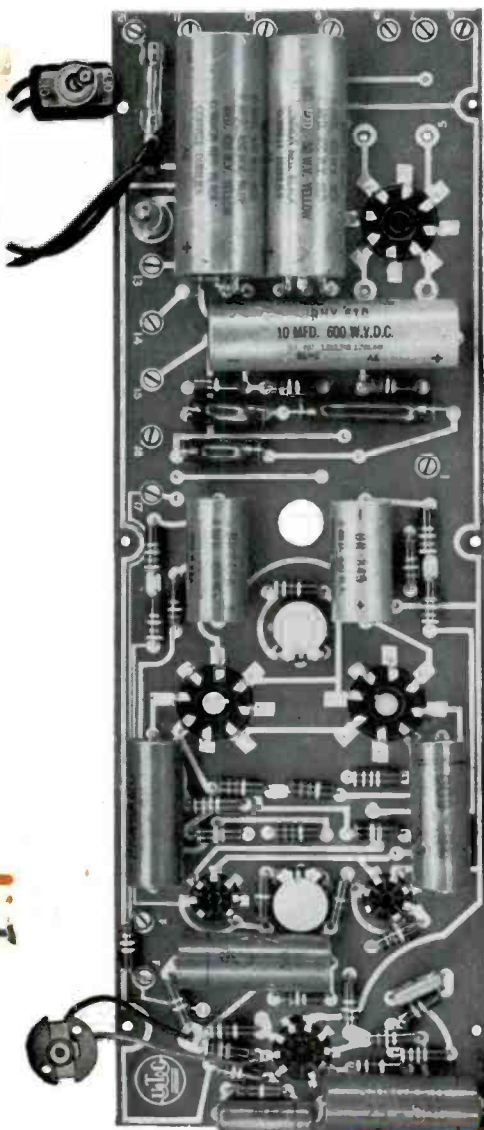
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