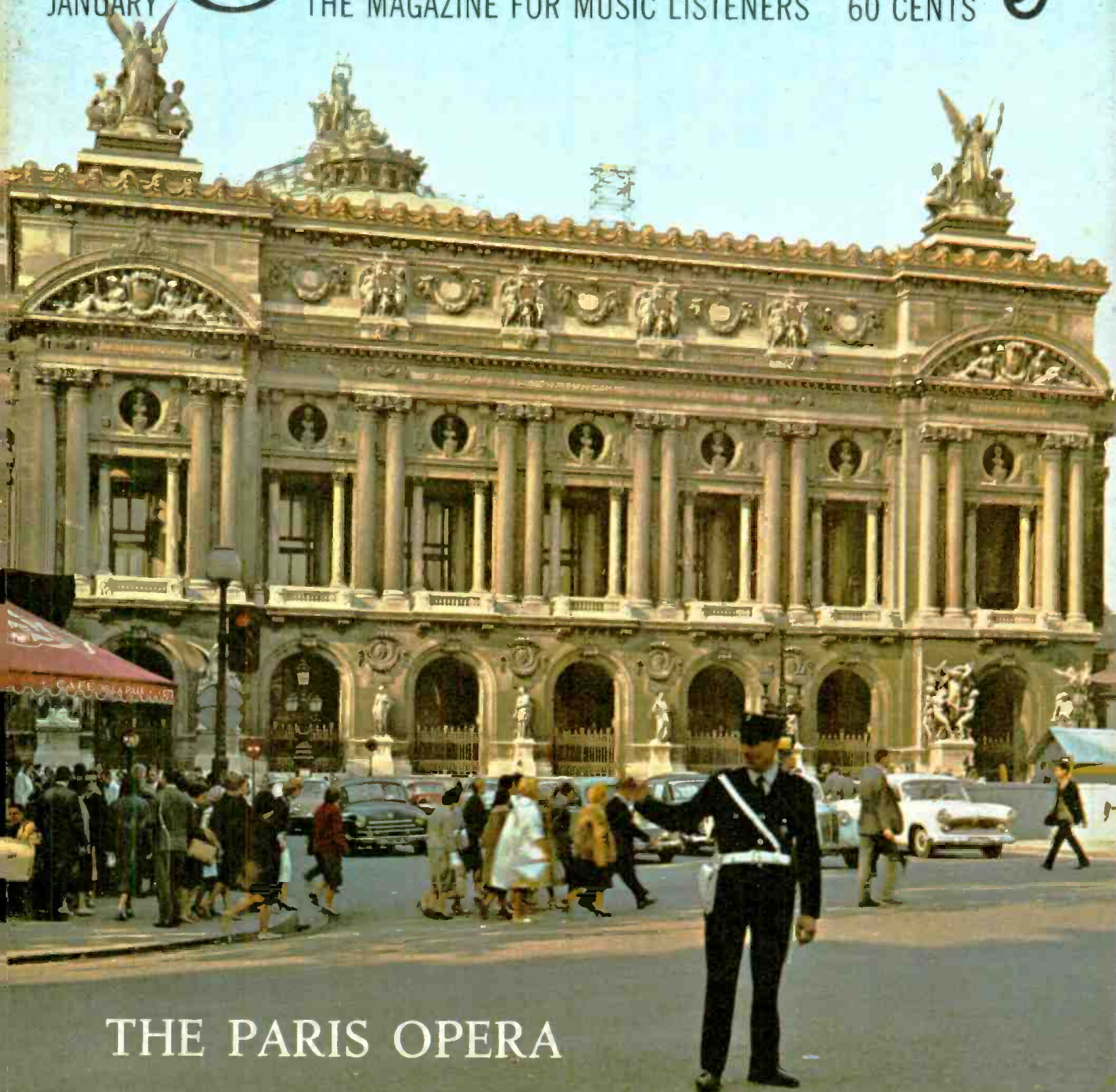


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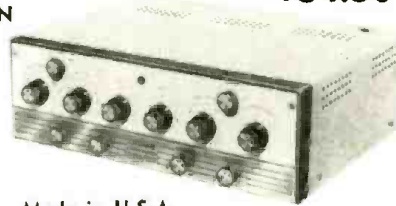
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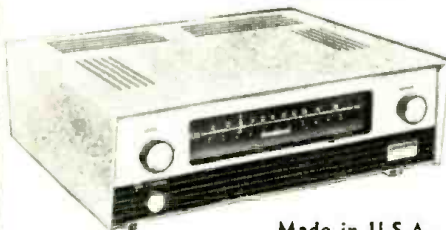
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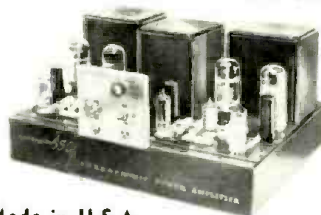
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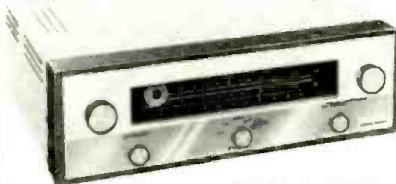
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

The name of Roy McMullen is well known to HIGH FIDELITY readers as contributor of the communiqués from Paris that often appear in our "Notes from Abroad" column. This month we present him as guide to the Paris Opéra (see p. 34), at which, in the Gallic sense, he frequently assists. Mr. McMullen was a teaching fellow in English literature at the University of California (Berkeley) when the War took him to Europe. There he now edits the editorial page and heads the copy desk of the European Edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*. Mr. McMullen lives in Montmartre, has a French wife (the abstract painter Simone Bellet), and writes on French politics, art, and architecture. In addition to the charms of things French, he confesses to having fallen under the very different spell of Venice and the islands of Greece.

Born in Holland (The Hague, 1902), Frederick Goldbeck has been closely associated with French music since 1925 when, after study in various European countries, he settled in Paris as a music critic. He has written numerous articles for the *Revue Musicale* and other journals, for several years edited the music magazine *Contrepoints*, and has published a book entitled *The Perfect Conductor*. He was, naturally, one of the circle that surrounded Les Six and has maintained close ties, professional and otherwise, with their successors. On p. 39 we are privileged to offer Mr. Goldbeck's account of their work.

John F. Indcox, regular contributor to this magazine almost since its inception, claims (rightly, we expect) that he doesn't need any further identification in this column. We therefore confine ourselves to saying that he has had a lifelong interest in the theatre, and has himself trodden the boards on frequent occasions. One of his favorite plays is Sartre's *No Exit*, in a little theatre production of which he both took the male role and served as director. Mr. Indcox is not dedicated solely to Existentialist profundities, however; he has an equally lively enthusiasm for the musical stage and popular entertainers, especially those of France. Recent trips abroad enabled him to see many of these *artistes*, and that opportunity, combined with avid record listening, resulted in "Latest Word from the Left Bank." Turn to p. 48.

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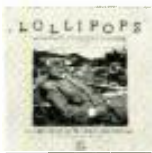
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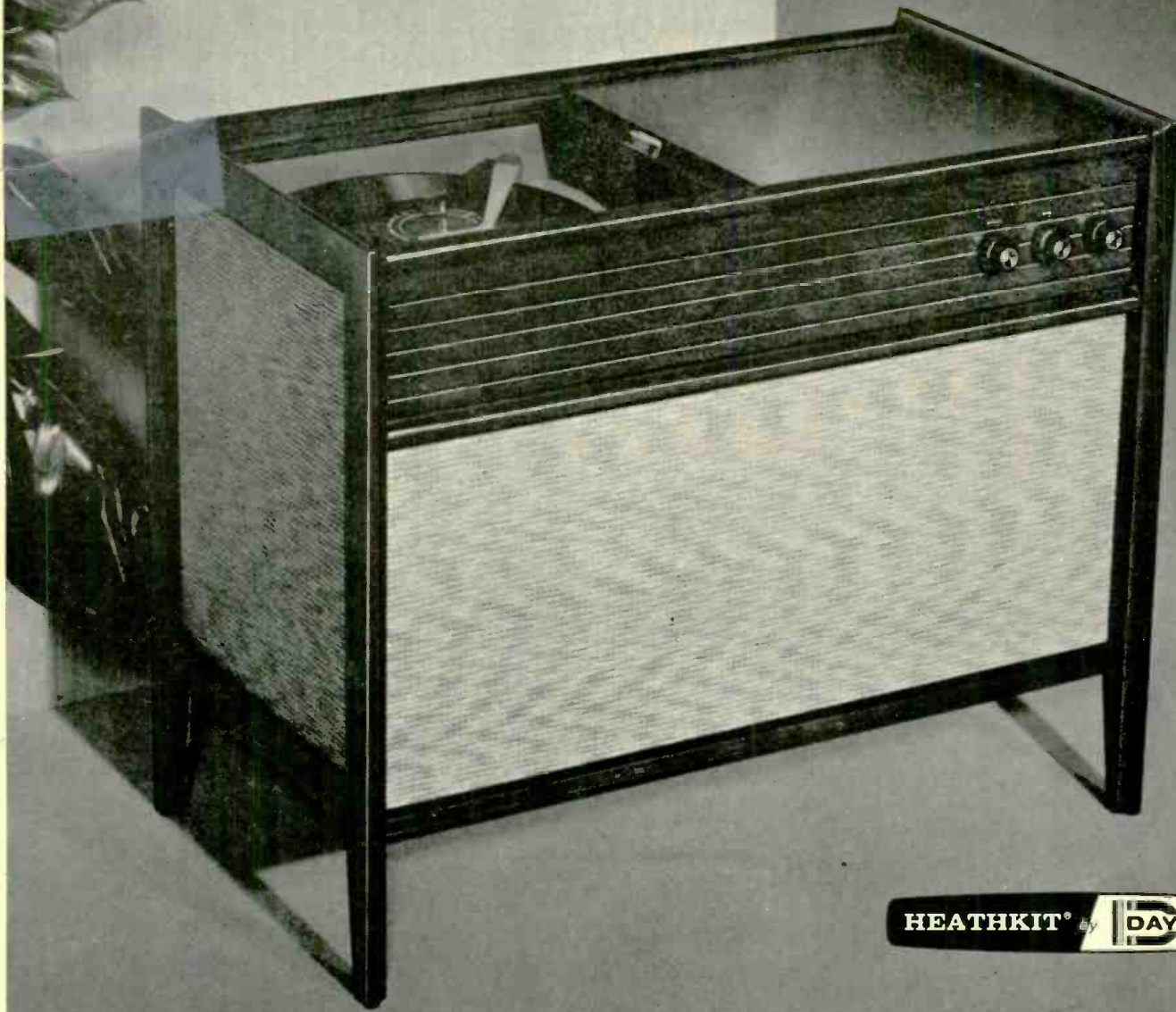
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EQUIPMENT ACCOMMODATIONS AND SIZES—Cabinet, overall: 36" W x 32 1/2" H x 19" D. Changer compartment: 17" W x 15 1/2" D, mounting board accepts any Heath record changer or player or Heath AD-70, TR-1A, -AH, -AO tape recorders; lid has adjustable, friction-loaded support. Record/tape recorder compartment: 14 1/2" H x 17" W x 17" D for record storage; space converts with accessory drawer to hold Heath AD-70, TR-1A, TR-1E, AD-40 tape decks. Shelf compartments (2); each 17" W x 6" H x 17" D inside (shelf 14" deep); either shelf accepts any Heath Stereo or Mono tuner, Stereo or Mono preamplifiers, AA-100 or SA-2 Stereo amplifier, Power amplifier compartment: 8 1/2" H x 17" W x 15 1/2" D inside; accepts two Heath UA-2's, and AA-30 or AA-40 for stereo power, or any Heath mono. power amplifier, 81 lbs.

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MODEL AE-20W ... Walnut	... \$9.45 dn., \$9 mo.	\$94.50
MODEL AE-20M ... Mahogany	... \$9.45 dn., \$9 mo.	\$94.50

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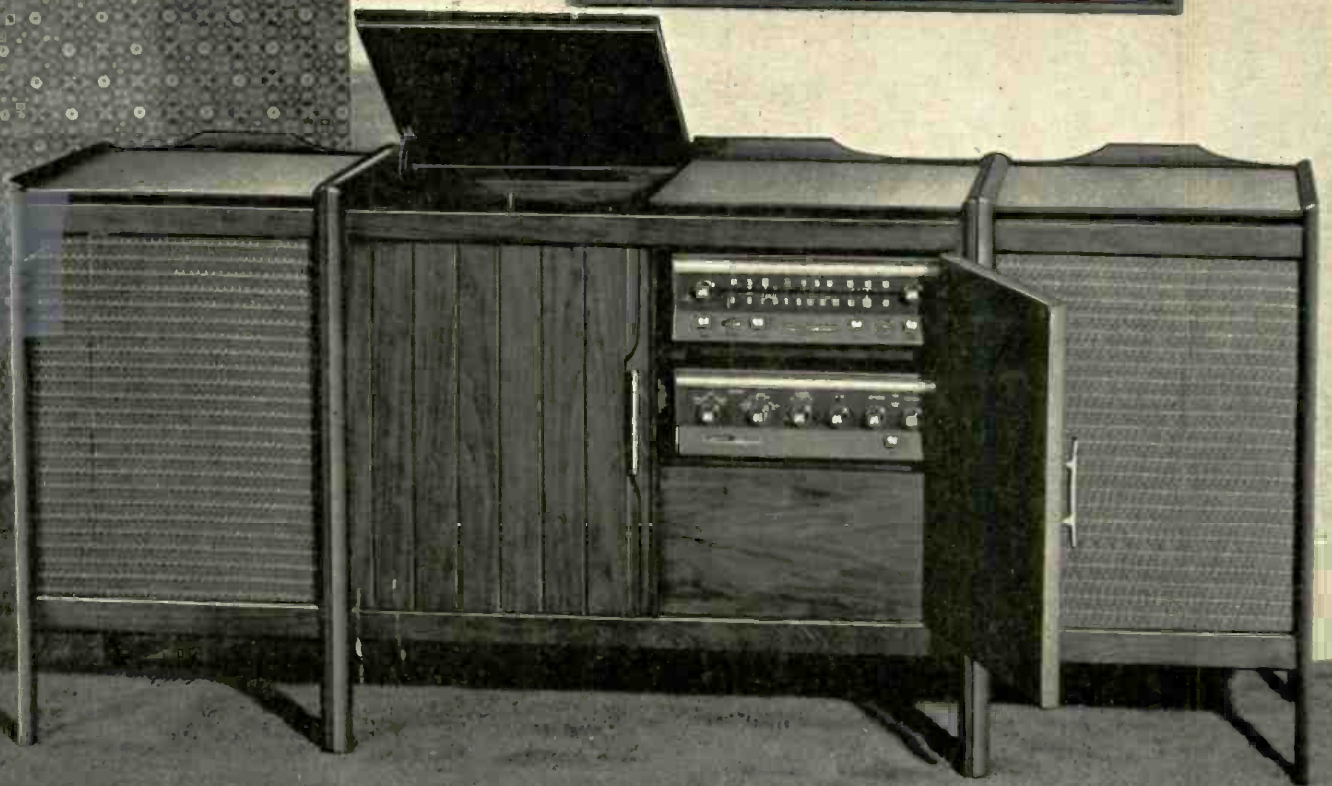
Model AEA-20U	Unfinished	\$12.95
Model AEA-20W	Walnut	14.95
Model AEA-20M	Mahogany	14.95

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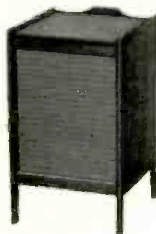
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AR-3's (and other models of AR speakers) are on demonstration at AR Music Rooms, at Grand Central Terminal in New York City, and at 52 Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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Notes from Abroad



LONDON—Walter Legge spent what he describes in his exuberant way as three enchanting, marvelous days in Milan with Maria Callas. His purpose was to negotiate further EMI-Angel recordings. Back in London he did not reveal specific plans but assured me that Mme. Callas would be very active artistically this year and still on EMI's side. He hoped for two operas and two or three collections of arias from her. She would record the lot in London.

"What?" I challenged, "in humid London, with a one-in-ten chance of smog?"

But yes. Like Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Mrs. Walter Legge), Maria Callas has nothing against rain in reason, likes to breathe moist air, and is wary of brash skies and glaring suns that dry the throat. So, at any rate, I gather from Mr. Legge.

Klemperer and Bruckner. At Kingsway Hall the veteran Otto Klemperer has been busy off and on for months in Angel's cause. His schedule with the Philharmonia Orchestra reaches well into spring.

On the day this was written he rehearsed the slow and final movements of Bruckner's Symphony No. 7. Although after the test playback the conductor had much to say about the miracles



Klemperer

Bruckner could work with basically Beethovenian or even pre-Beethoven orchestral specifications, the Seventh departs here and there from these sublime simplicities. Its Adagio and finale, for instance, have parts for four Wagner tubas. The tubas used at Kingsway were specially built in Germany to English pitch, and on this occasion were played by a quartet led by a handsome young blonde, Shirley Hopkins, member of the Philharmonia horn section and known to her colleagues as "the Valkyrie." Not unexpectedly, the playing was a pleasure

to the ears; most unexpectedly, it was also a delight to the eyes.

Klemperer, Bach, Mozart, et al. Klemperer has also conducted the four Mozart horn concertos, with the leader of the Philharmonia horn section, Alan Civil (on whom, in some opinions, the mantle of the late Dennis Brain has fallen) as soloist. For the rest, Klemperer's schedule includes the following recordings which are either completed, in progress, or in prospect:

Bach's *Brandenburg* Concertos—The high-flying trumpet solos in No. 2 have long been a thorn in the lip. In 1909 Richard Strauss had the "ceiling" of this part played by a piccolo heckelphone. At Kingsway it was given to a guest trumpeter, Adolf Scheerbaum of the Hamburg Radio Orchestra. I was unable to listen in to the playback but am told that Scheerbaum's playing had flutelike suppleness and delicacy. . . . "German Romantic Overtures"—a bouquet of Mozart, Gluck, Weber, and Humperdinck. The latter's *Hänsel und Gretel* Overture went so well that after the playback Klemperer said, "Let us have more *Hänsel*." Accordingly room is being found for the Dream Pantomime as well.

. . . Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*—Postponed for two years because of the accident in which Klemperer was badly burned, this recording will be done sectionally and spread over two months according to when this singer or that is available in London. The singers involved are Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Christa Ludwig, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Peter Pears, Nicolai Gedda, and Walter Berry. The small professional chorus was hand-picked and trained by Wilhelm Pitz of Bayreuth. . . . Brahms's *German Requiem* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 4*—These are the core of Klemperer's studio program for this spring. Schwarzkopf sings in both and is joined by Fischer-Dieskau in the Brahms.

Guessing Games. At Decca-London headquarters they were so busy digesting, editing, and sleeving what they recorded during the summer-autumn of 1960, that the studios at this writing are relatively becalmed. The only big immediate project of which I heard was the *Spring* Symphony of Benjamin Britten. Britten himself was due to start conducting this at Walthamstow studio on the morrow of his forty-seventh birthday under joint Decca-British Council auspices.

What happened at the company's annual repertory conference, held during the fall? Mr. E. R. Lewis, chairman of

Continued on page 16

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



Pictures at an exhibition and the new ADC-1 Stereo Cartridge

What gives some people a special sensitivity to the world around them—to the things they see, feel and hear? What makes them respond to subtleties of sound that escape all but the most sensitive ears and feelings? Whatever the explanation, the new ADC-1 stereo cartridge was specifically designed for them.

For such people, the promise inherent in the ADC-1's physical features is impressive—minimum compliance of 10×10^{-6} cms./dyne, .5 milligram dynamic mass, ability to track at less than 1 gram. But the feature that makes people want to *own* the ADC-1 is its ability to reproduce sounds that escape less sensitive ears.

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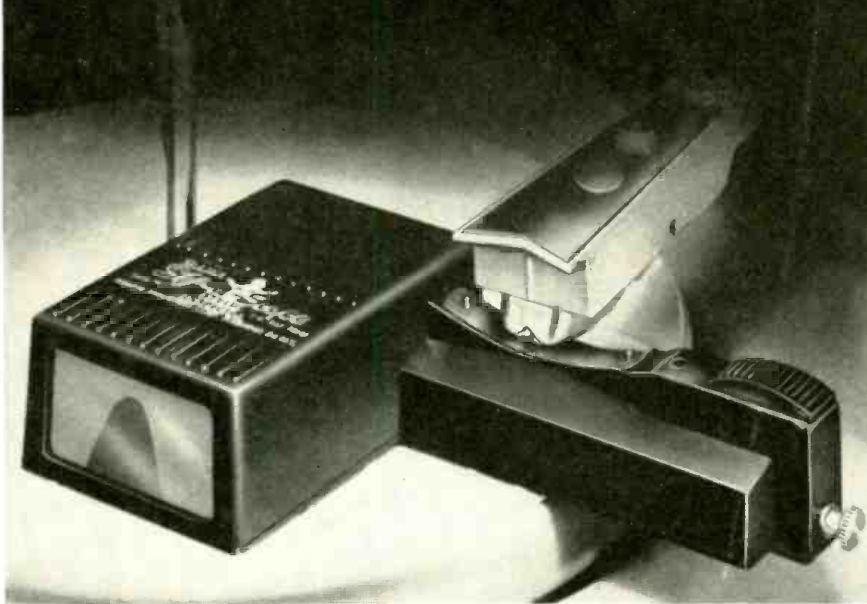
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In seconds, the Robins SYL-A-SCOPE provides a magnified, illuminated image showing the detailed contour of your stylus . . . and, in most record changers and turntables you don't have to remove the stylus from the cartridge, or the cartridge from the arm. This precision instrument, based on the same principle as optical equipment used by industry for small parts quality control, is now available to every record collector—high fidelity enthusiast—to anyone who wants to protect their treasured records and retain the high standard of performance of their hi-fi system. The cost of this protection is about equal to a stereo record album—only \$6.75!

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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 14

the firm, presided. Among others who attended were Mr. Rosengarten, who usually sits in Zurich, Switzerland, and is now a director; Mr. Haddy, chief engineer; and Mr. Culshaw, classical a & r manager. As a matter of routine, everybody came out of the meeting with sealed lips. Impossible. I was assured, for any statement on 1961 schedules to be made until artist-bookings had been coordinated and contracts blessed. A day or two later, however, I pried the following from Mr. Lewis:

"Decca's [in the States read "London's"] policy remains unchanged. I cannot say there will be any numerical increase in classical recordings during 1961, but the year is likely to be heavier in quality. I think it is going to mean more operas, which in turn means that we are going to spend a lot of money. We have the top artists, I think. And the market's still there."

The Versatile Victoria. In HMV's Barcelona studios, while Victor Olof sweltered and supervised, Victoria de los Angeles reveled in the heat and turned recording sessions into homey, familial affairs, with Mama popping in and out as the spirit moved her and Enrique Magrina, her husband, on hand from first to last.

She made two discs, both expected out on the Capitol label early this summer. One is of Spanish Renaissance songs. With an apologetically small baton, Miss De los A. conducted her own accompaniments (by the Ars Musica Ensemble), thus confirming the "Lady Toscanini" nickname good humoredly conferred upon her in Catalanian bandrooms. Señor Lamaña, director of the Ensemble, sat back admiringly and kept an ear on balance. The accompanying instruments were all copies of seventeenth-century originals: lutes, recorders, fidulas, lira de braccio, vihuela de mano. To get these in the right aural perspective for the microphone is by no means an easy thing.

After the Renaissance group, De los Angeles did one of her standard recitals: Monteverdi, Schubert, Brahms, Granados, Fauré, Nin, and Turina. I was dismayed to hear that the title of this album will be "The Fabulous Victoria de los Angeles." "Rather showbiz, no?" I suggested. "Perhaps," conceded one of the company's publicity men, "but that's the line under which she's presented in America."

The last number of the album is *Adiós Granada*, by Barrera y Colleja. In this she accompanies herself on the guitar, a thing she does reluctantly—"Don't you think it may cheapen my recitals?" she has been known to ask—but to the immense excitement of audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. On tape the *Adiós* lasts for 2 minutes 4 seconds. Owing to guitar-tuning snags (for which the heat was blamed) and Victoria's fastidiousness over some of her improvised phrases, it took 105 minutes to make.

CHARLES REID

Continued on page 18

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE



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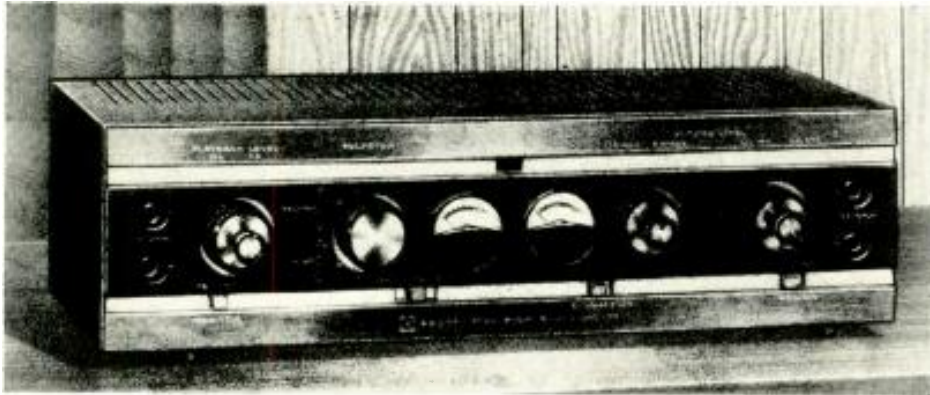
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NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 16

STOCKHOLM—The death of Jussi Bjoerling was deeply felt in Sweden. He always enjoyed greater popularity here than any other singer, past or present. In spite of his many tours and engagements abroad, he remained a Swede, simple and unaffected, and his many encores during his annual concerts here always included a number of Swedish songs of patriotic character. The morning his death was announced over the radio, RCA sold out the entire stock of his records within a matter of hours. For a few weeks thereafter he headed the best-seller lists, even surpassing Elvis Presley, a feat no other Swedish singer has achieved during recent years.

Sweden's Serious Music on Disc. On the whole, 1960 was a disappointing year in the record trade here, and it is therefore all the more remarkable and commendable that some of the recording companies have taken a chance on our national music. RCA, at long last, has turned its attention to serious Swedish music; hitherto this company's Swedish subsidiary has mainly favored the pop trade. The first RCA release turns out to be one of the best orchestral records ever made in Sweden: Wilhelm Stenhammar's Symphony No. 2, a romantic work, completed in 1915, which reflects better than anything else this composer's sensitive approach to music and his intelligent craftsmanship. The symphony is brilliantly performed by the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra under the veteran conductor Tor Mann.

Swedish Society Discofil has recently recorded Gösta Nystroem's *Sinfonia del mare*, also with the Stockholm Philharmonic but conducted this time by Stig Westerberg. The soloist is Elisabeth Söderstrom, who is already well known to Metropolitan Opera patrons. Discofil is now associated with the Telefunken-Decca group, and it is possible that part of its catalogue will be distributed in the United States through London Records.

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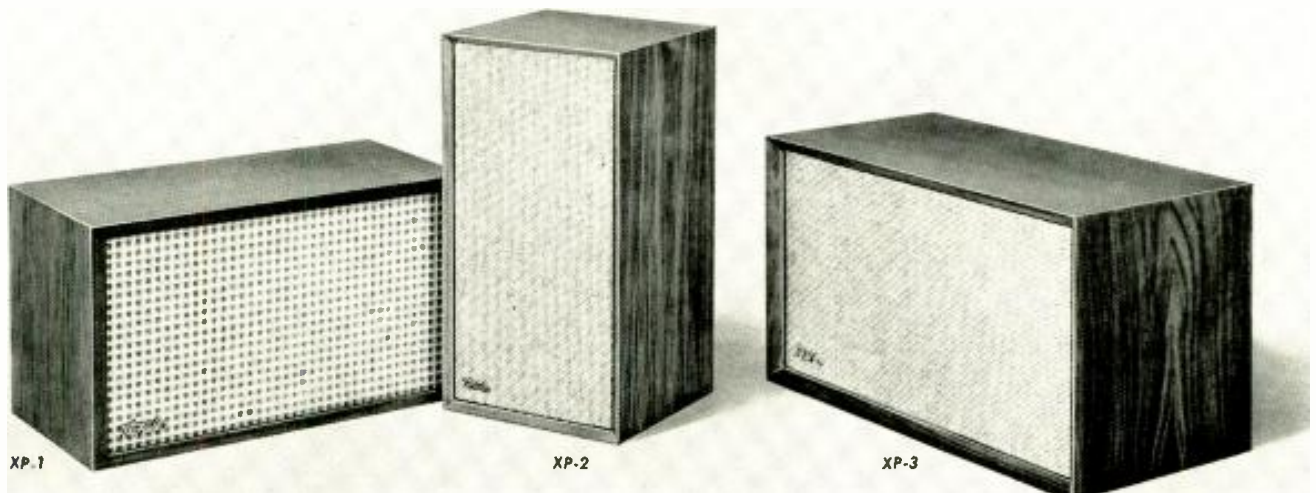
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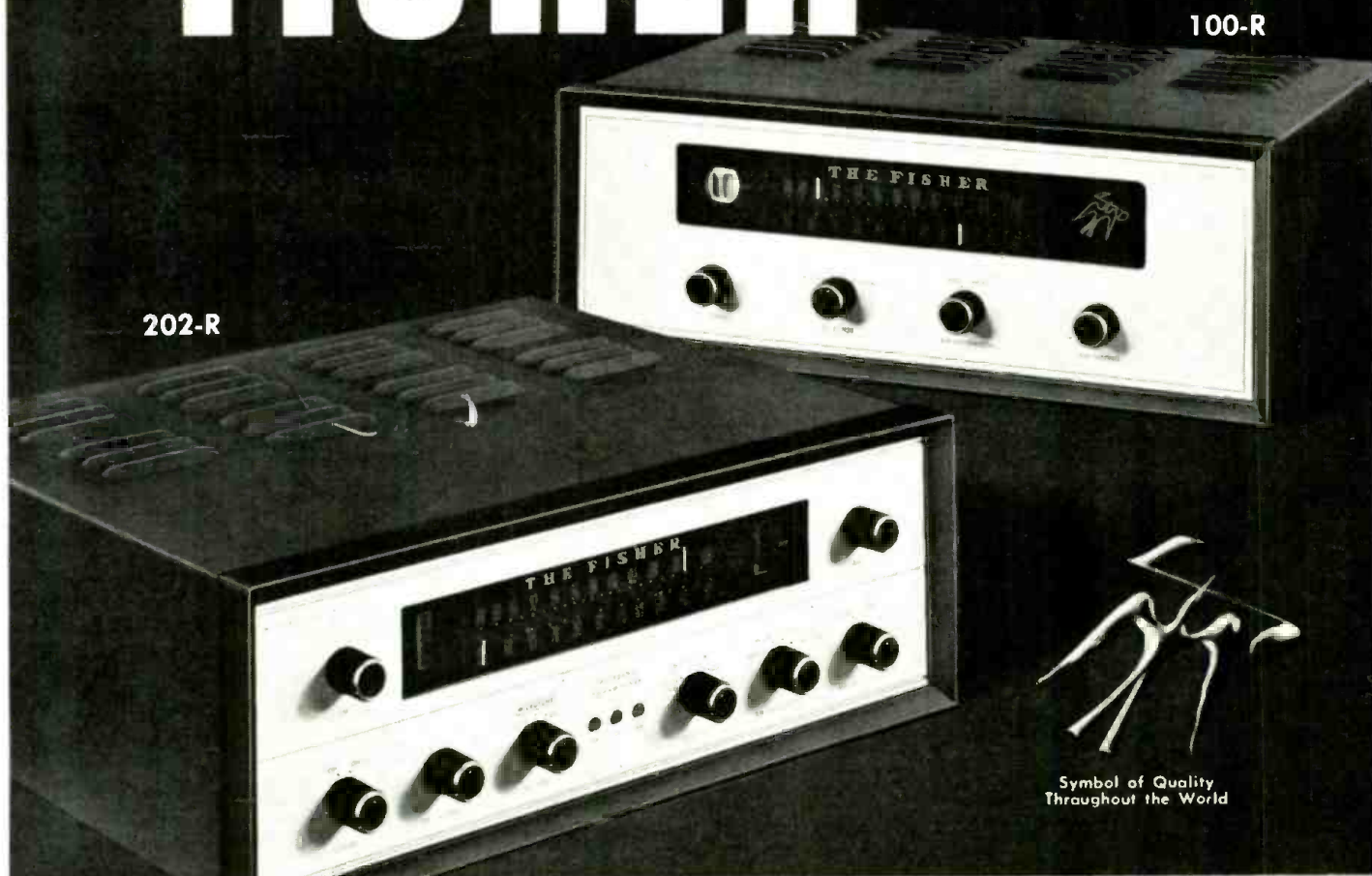
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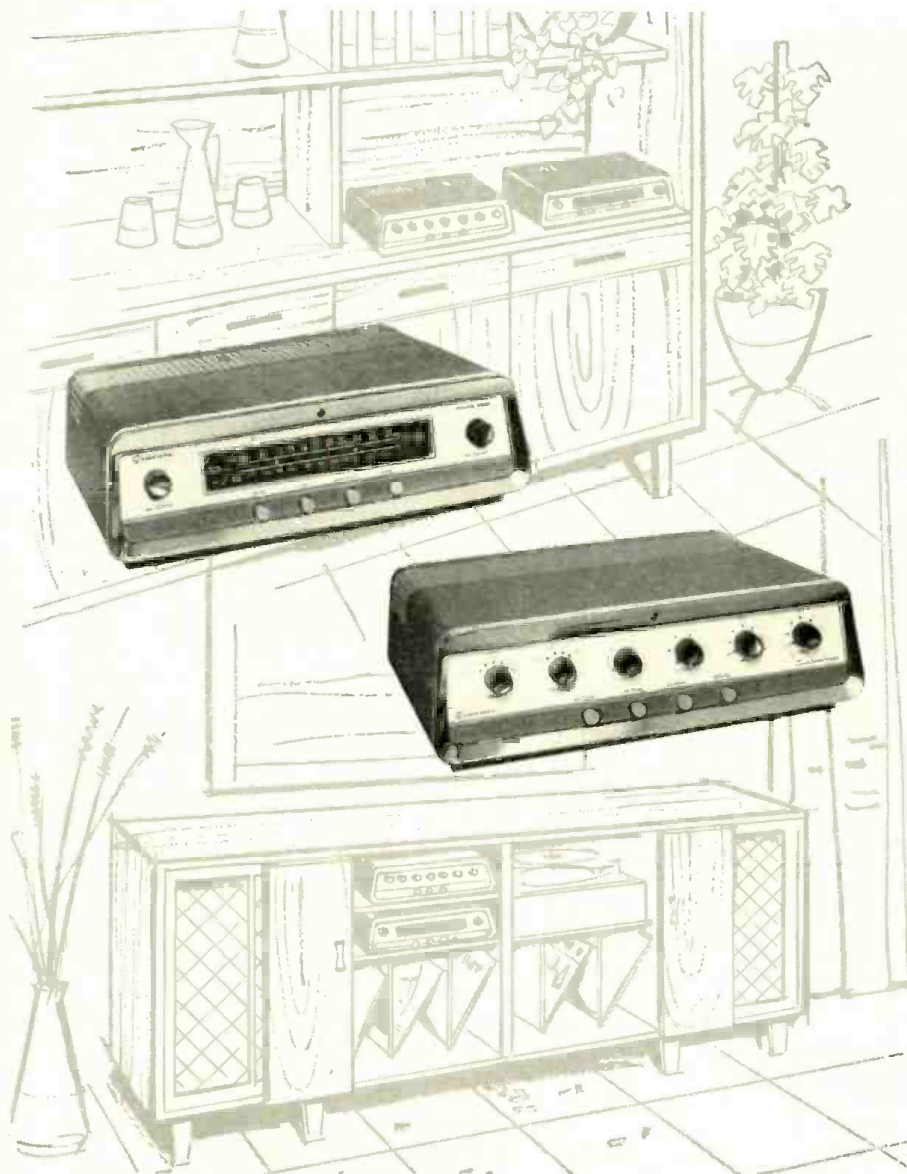
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LETTERS



First-Rate Bloch?

SIR:

The function of a critic, it would seem to us, is to inform the public as to the nature of a composition, to evaluate that composition, and to appraise its merit and that of the performance. It would seem to us that these criteria have been blatantly ignored in Alfred Frankenstein's review of Bloch's *America* (*HIGH FIDELITY*, November 1960, p. 80) in favor of a diatribe which neither informs nor appraises. Mr. Frankenstein's sole attempt at serious criticism in this review has been to describe the voice of Ernest Bloch as "high-pitched." There is no discussion of Bloch's intent in composing the work, of its nature, its content, or of the performance itself. Mr. Frankenstein queries: "What ghastly corruption of taste was at work on all sides of this performance?"—thus setting himself up as the final arbiter of taste and accusing the eminent judges of the original competition which produced this work (namely, Stokowski, Koussevitzky, Stock, Damrosch, and Hertz) of "corruption of taste." It is sad that such terms should be used for a work in which a great composer tried to express his love for his country and its traditions. The work may or may not have been successful, but we think every work of major proportions by a great composer deserves to be put on records, so that the public may appraise it for itself.

Mr. Frankenstein's ire at this recording project leads him to perpetrate errors of fact. He says of *America* that it was a score at which "at the time everyone was disposed to laugh, wish Bloch well, and forget the whole thing as speedily as possible." Olin Downes didn't feel that way at the time. He was deeply moved by it, calling it "an important contribution by a great composer."

Contrary to what Mr. Frankenstein says, the work has been performed a number of times since its first appearance, and in countries other than the United States. Mr. Frankenstein asks, "How did it happen that a composer who had done great things and was to do many more turned out a piece so totally lacking in creative spark as soon as he started working for a prize?" A little search for truth would have disclosed that the work was germinating in Ernest Bloch's mind before any question of a prize contest came up. Mr. Frankenstein might have taken the composer's word as to how he came to write the work, and the deep feelings which engendered it. These words, movingly spoken by Bloch, come at the close of the recording. We think that anyone familiar with Bloch as an artist knows

that never did he approach writing a work with anything but the utmost integrity.

Seymour Solomon
Vanguard Recording Society, Inc.
New York 11, N. Y.

Mr. Frankenstein Replies:

The argument that unfavorable criticism is not criticism at all cannot be maintained, because it does not proceed from a logical basis; it is merely an unreasoned, emotional reaction. I should like to inquire when, where, and in what context Olin Downes made the observations attributed to him in Mr. Solomon's letter. He said nothing of the sort in his review of the first performance of America (New York Times, December 21, 1928, p. 30). His attitude then was most unenthusiastic.

Mr. Solomon claims to be deeply shocked at my suggestion that Bloch wrote the piece for the contest, but that is the only theory that makes any sense. The history of prize competitions for composers in America, especially in the Twenties, is a melancholy tale of compromises with integrity in order to produce a piece that shall be immediately impressive and bring forth much applause. That the judges in this case committed such a compromise is evident from the fact that none of them ever played the work again, if the performance data available to me can be believed.

I sincerely applaud Vanguard's idea that all the works of a great composer like Bloch should be recorded, but the work should begin with strong pieces, not weak ones. So far as the present-day repertoire is concerned, Bloch is the composer of one orchestral piece—Schelomo. Vanguard is to be congratulated on having recorded his Israel. What about the Symphony in C sharp minor, Hiver-Printemps, the Jewish Poems, the Violin Concerto, and the Sinfonietta? Vanguard, and everybody else, is awfully slow about getting around to these works, which are surely more representative of Bloch's genius.

Snap, Crackle, Pop

SIR:

I was most interested in a recent letter in HIGH FIDELITY regarding the excessive surface noise on so many of the new stereo and monophonic LP records. There was some satisfaction to learn that others are having the same trouble I am having. It was a great shock to me and to my ears to hear how noisy most of my new records are; in addition, several are warped.

The most serious trouble is the noise. This "snap, crackle, pop" is most disturbing and annoying. I have a new Pilot (bought upon your recommendation), and I know all about dust and keeping records clean. Some records were so bad that I returned them. The replacement discs were no better.

Cyrus B. Follmer
Watson town, Pa.

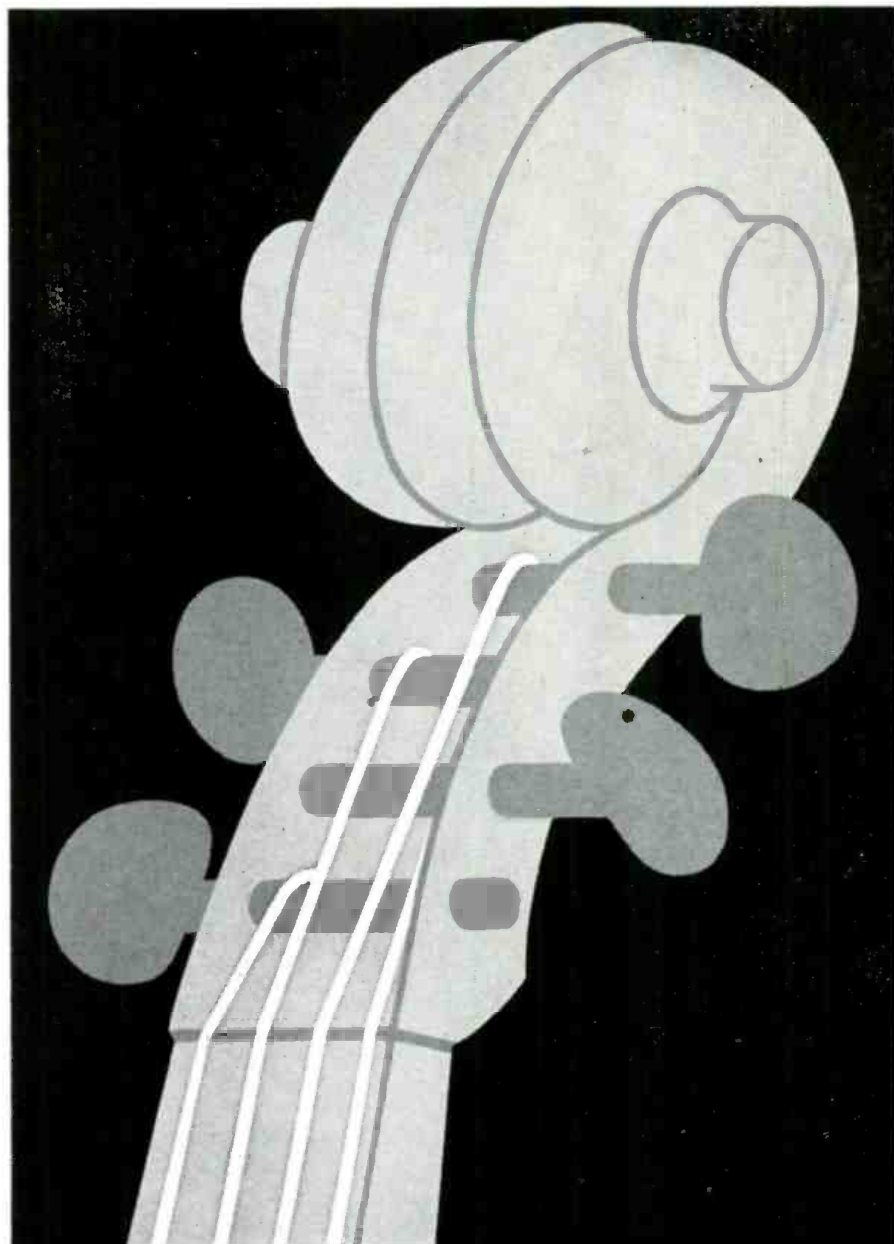
Classical 45s

SIR:

Aren't the American record companies missing a good bet by not recording any

Continued on page 25

JANUARY 1961



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HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

LETTERS

Continued from page 23

classical selections on 45-rpm discs? In Europe, the 45 has an honorable place in the classical repertory. It allows music lovers to purchase short selections or single arias without investing in an LP containing eight or ten numbers they may not want. It also serves to introduce young artists whose reputations do not yet justify an LP recital. Many of us will be slow to lay out \$4.98 or \$5.98 for a record containing only one or two selections of any great appeal, but would happily buy the same selections on 45 for \$1.00 or \$1.50. European 45s, even at high import prices, are among the best bargains in the American stores that carry them.

Gladys Blunt
Cos Cob, N. Y.

Separate Components?

SIR:

Does it make any difference, as far as fidelity is concerned, whether amplifiers and preamplifiers are combined on a single chassis in a stereo system? What is the minimum total wattage for best fidelity (40, 60, or more)?

Lionel Rossman, M. D.
Bronx, N. Y.

Our Audio Editor Replies:

The difference in fidelity between separate and combined components is negligible. A more important consideration is that of convenience. Regarding "total wattage," the power output, considered by itself, has little meaning. It does indicate whether the amplifier has sufficient power to drive a given speaker (they vary in efficiency) but little else. Have a look at "Amplifier Ratings—Fact and Fantasy" in the September 1960 issue for fuller treatment of this subject.

Support for La Juive

SIR:

I read with great interest Roland Gelatt's "Music Makers" column in the November 1960 issue of HIGH FIDELITY. Especially intriguing are the plans of Columbia Records to record operas that are not staples of the repertoire, but which have much aesthetic value—operas such as *La Juive*. The problem, as stated in the column, is a financial one. I feel that the public should let Columbia know that efforts such as these would be supported. If Columbia were to learn that this very worthy venture would be actively supported by the record-buying operaphiles, some of their fears might be dispelled.

If there are opera lovers interested in seeing some neglected works recorded with established singers and orchestras, I would very much appreciate their getting in touch with me at the address below. I will, when I get a fairly large number of letters, forward them, along with a list of signatures that I am collecting on a letter, to Columbia Records' artists and repertoire chief, Schuyler Chapin. The letters need not obligate

Continued on page 27



For those who love *live* music!



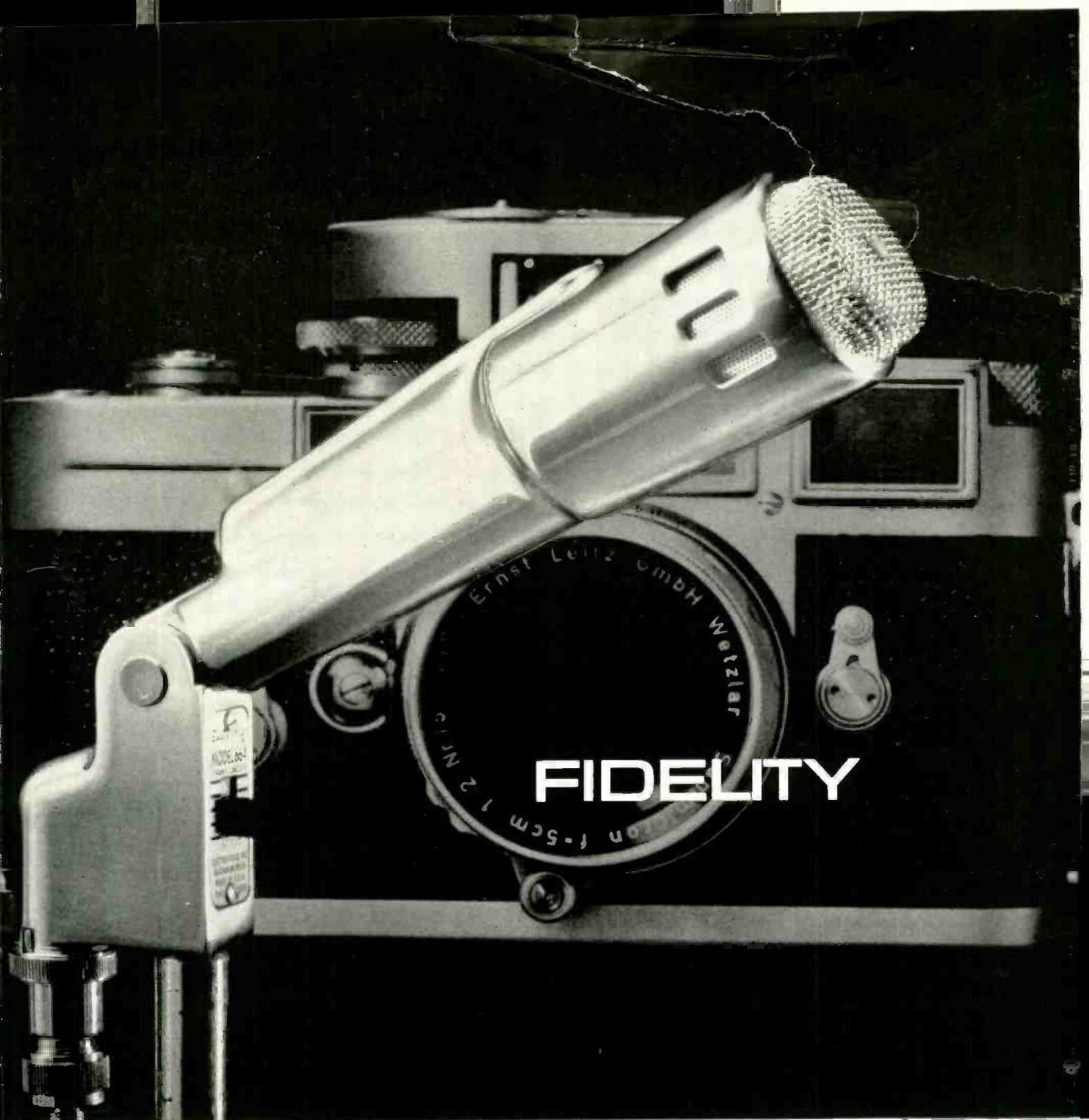
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CIRCLE 35 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 25

the writer to purchase every single recording to come out in the series, but should simply state his appreciation and a certain amount of support for the project. There are many operas which deserve a decent recording, and *Le Rossignol* and *La Juive* are certainly at the top of that list.

Henry Fogel
Box 775, Marion Dormitory
305 Waverly Avenue
Syracuse 10, N. Y.

They Came to San Francisco

SIR:
As the author of a book tracing the history of the San Francisco Opera, I would like to point out a couple of small errors in William Weaver's fine article about Palermo's Teatro Massimo in the November 1960 issue. Eugenia Ratti, who, according to Mr. Weaver, "was flown to Texas last year to make her United States debut," actually made her United States debut September 13, 1958, in San Francisco. That night she sang Rosina, and she subsequently appeared as Musetta and Susanna. Mr. Weaver also states that *La Figlia del reggimento* has not been heard in America since "the days when Lily Pons sang it at the Met." According to *Metropolitan Opera Annals* it was last performed at the Met in 1943; Lily Pons sang it in San Francisco in 1952.

To modulate to Mr. Moor's article and his remark, "I also wonder how many American readers have even yet heard of Frau (Edith) Lang." I might mention that Miss Lang replaced Leonie Rysanek as the Empress in the American premiere performances of *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* in San Francisco in 1959.

Sorry to carp so. I'm a faithful and admiring reader of HIGH FIDELITY.

Arthur Bloomfield
San Francisco, Calif.

Staunchly for Zinka

SIR:
I am writing as a staunch Milanov fan, and can safely assume that my following remarks will be met with approval by other music lovers who have been thrilled by the superb artistry of Zinka Milanov.

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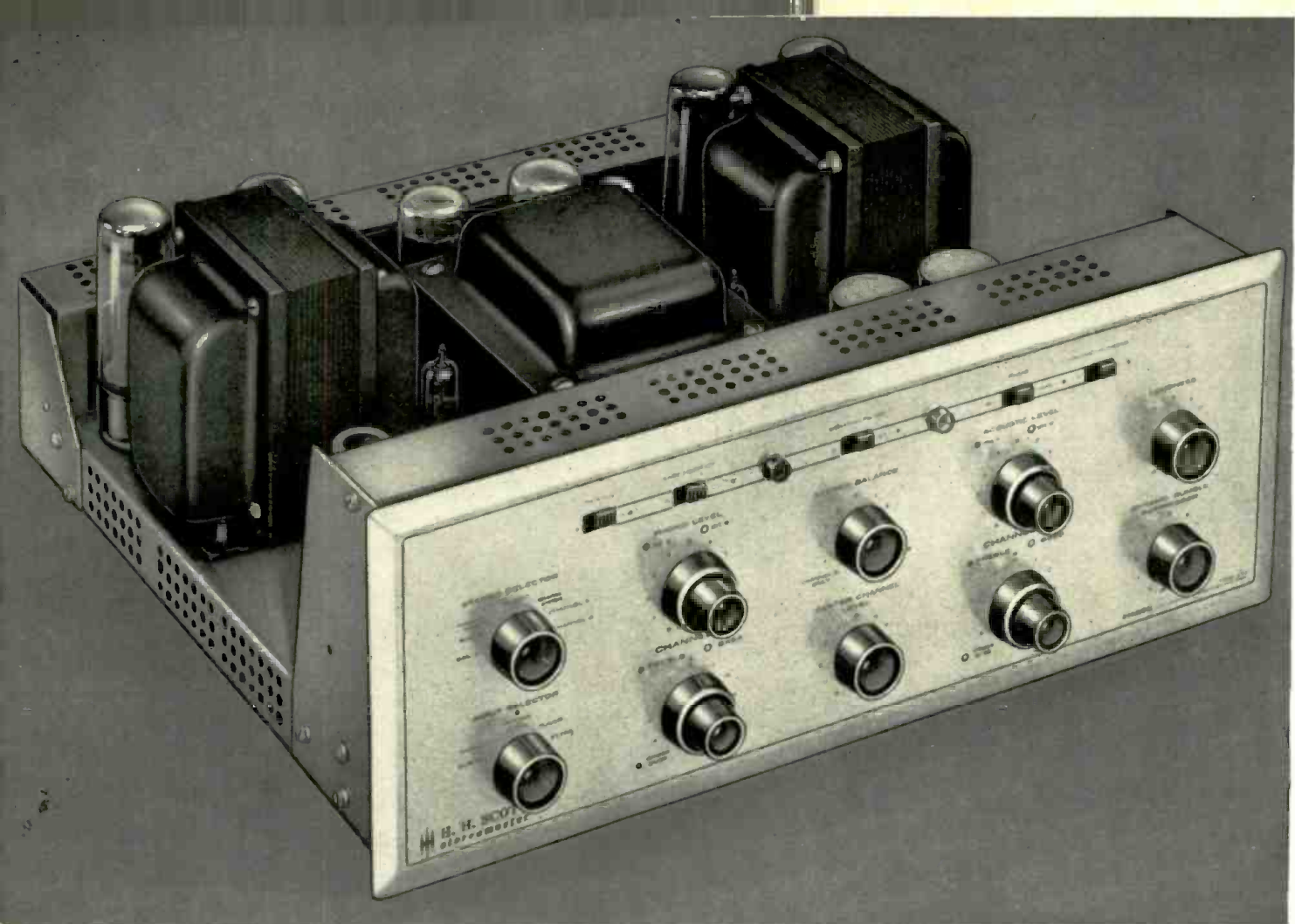


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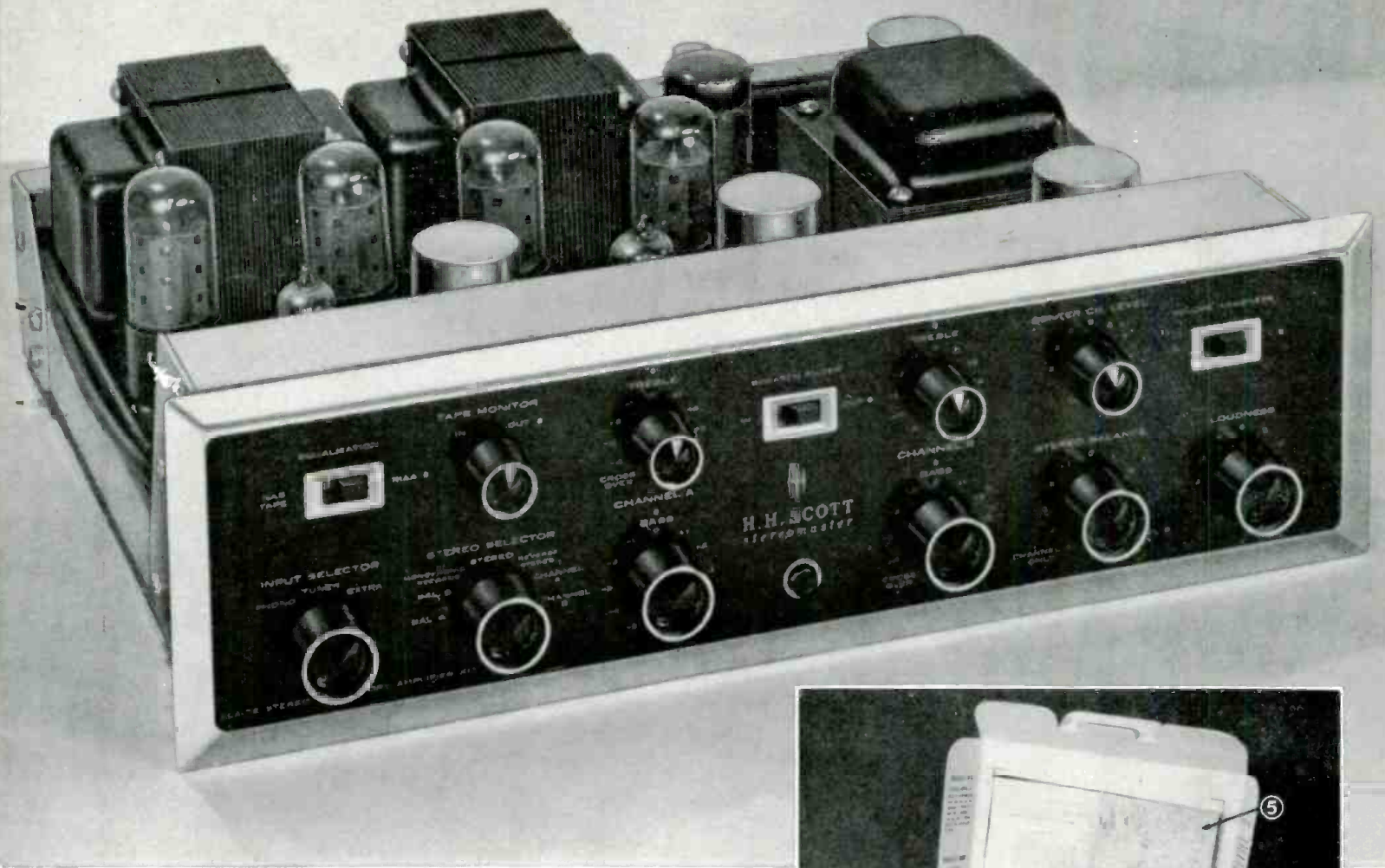
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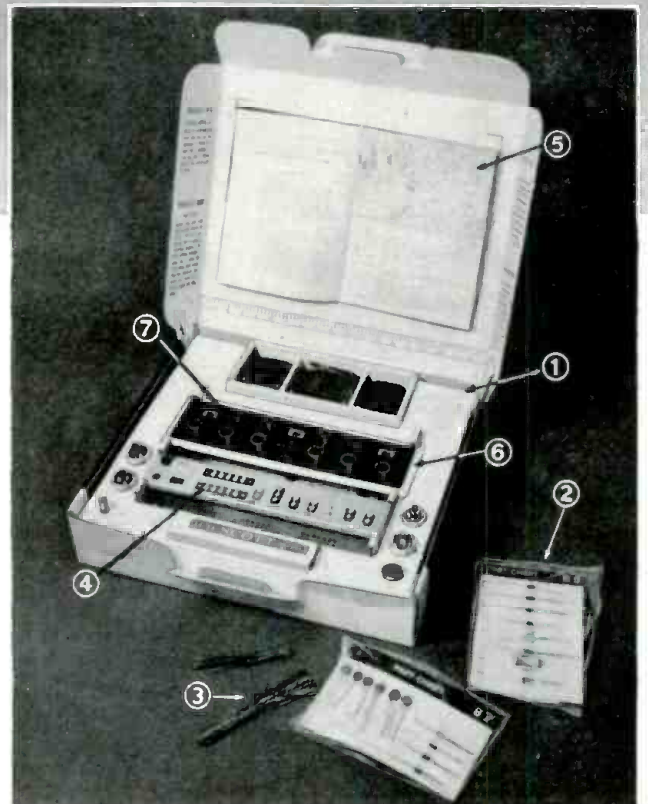
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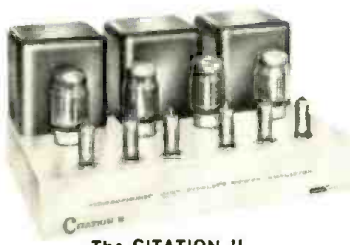
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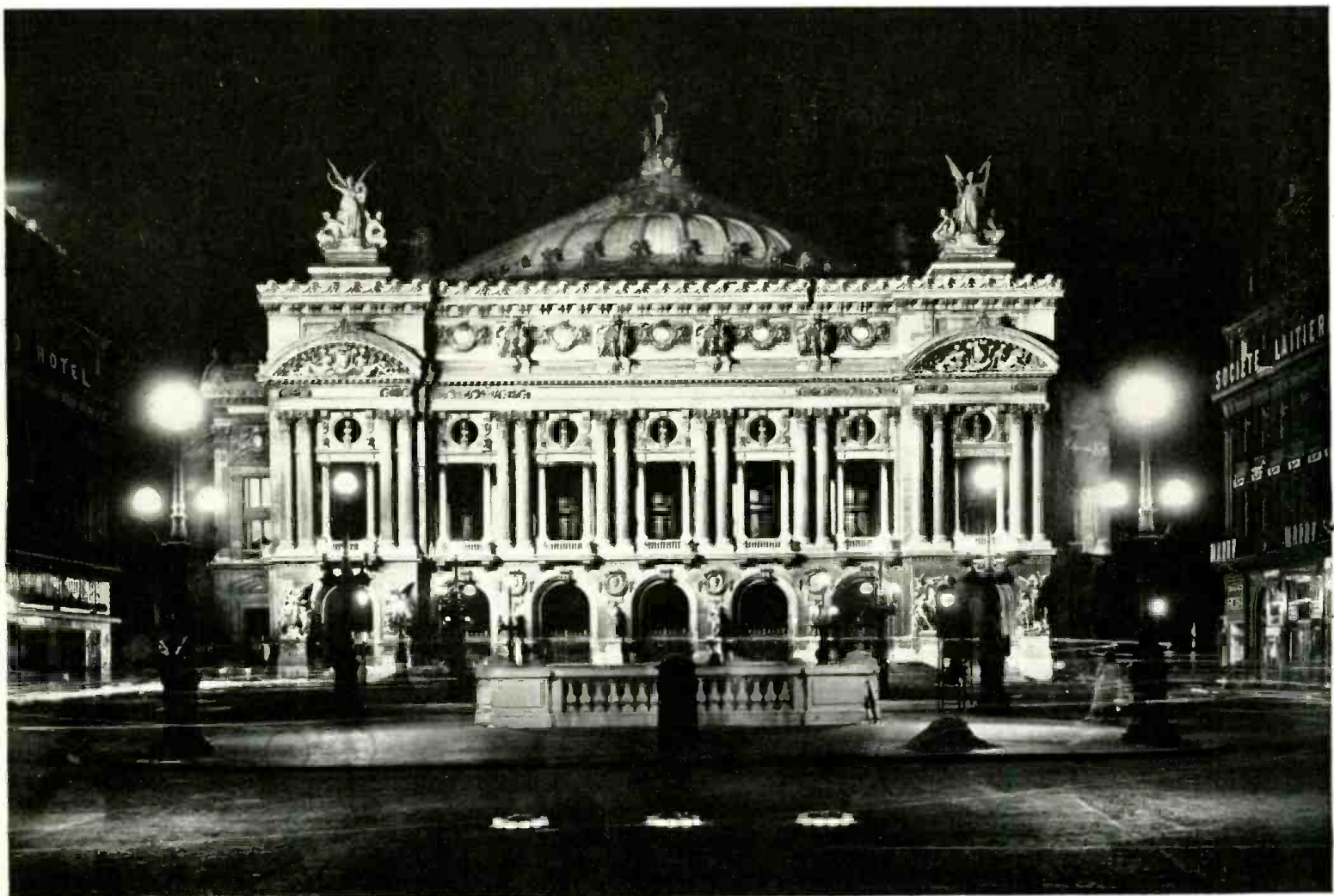
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by Roy McMullen

New Deal

at the

PARIS OPERA



A revolution is brewing in the Paris Opéra, biggest, most ornate, most romantically famous opera house in the world.

NAPOLÉON III's Imperial Academy of Music and the Dance, known to republicans as the Palais Garnier or simply the Paris Opéra, is the largest theatre on earth. It is the most marbled, the most mechanized, and the most operatic (in the grand Romantic manner) of the world's opera houses. It runs full blast eleven months a year. Even in ordinary times it would merit a big pin on a musical traveler's map, and these are Gaullist times in France. Two years ago Cultural Minister André Malraux decided that a state institution devoted to the most international of the arts was a destined instrument for his *politique de grandeur*. This winter the results of that decision are audible and, in particular, visible.

A revolution is—well, burgeoning, at least—in Garnier's palace. This surge of vitality is worth emphasizing at the start of this special issue of HIGH FIDELITY, for it may prove the most significant of the many signs that French music is moving into a new period of splendor. As opera goes, so goes a musical nation. Often, anyway.

The revolution is being led by a general whose experience includes a dozen different theatrical strategies, from Sophocles to Ionesco and from Bali to Berlin. He is fifty-seven-year-old A.-M. Julien, an eloquent, granitic native of Toulon who has made a reputation in Paris as the director of the mammoth international drama festival at the Théâtre des Nations. Since April 1959 he has been Administrator General of La Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux, which means that he is boss of both the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique and can take works like *Carmen* away from the smaller house for the greater glory of the larger—and of France and Bizet. At the Palais Garnier his chief lieutenants are the veteran composer Emmanuel Bondeville, Director of Music, and Gabriel Dussurget, animator of the Aix Festival (see page 42), who has the title of Artistic Counselor and a good deal more influence than that title may imply.

"I have a feeling," Julien told me recently, "that we are heading into an operatic renaissance." Dussurget, who is responsible for some long overdue reassignments of sopranos, was in cautious agreement. "We don't want to exaggerate," he said, "but *ça bouge*."

How much "it is budging" can be seen in the balance sheet for the new administration's first full season, from September 1959 to the August 1960 vacation. Box-office receipts at the Opéra were up a thumping 37 per cent over the previous season. Twenty-three operas were performed, seven of them in sparkling new productions: *Carmen*, *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and *L'Heure espagnole* (with *Daphnis*

et *Chloe* as part of a Ravel evening); *Lucia di Lammermoor*; *Fidelio*; *Tosca*; and *Samson et Dalila*. Twenty-two ballets were presented, six of them brand-new. The dancers, who are traditional enough to have much impressed even a Bolshoi audience, showed their versatility—and Julien's willingness to experiment—in the Broadwayesque *Pas de Dieux*, choreography and pun by Gene Kelly, music by Gershwin. For his gala evenings Julien imported Tebaldi, Sutherland, Del Monaco, and Changelovich.

Dussurget is right. One shouldn't exaggerate. There are still some distressing voices to be heard at the Paris Opéra. Malraux, accustomed to a novelist's control over people and events, may have underestimated operatic inertia. But *ça bouge*. Roughly a quarter of the older singers have not had their contracts renewed. Roles long regarded as personal property are being filled by fresh talent, and a surprising amount of this talent is being uncovered in the Palais Garnier itself. Mady Mesplé, for example, a lovely young woman with strange eyes and a brilliant coloratura technique, has suddenly emerged as a sensational Lucia. I asked Julien where he had found her. "In there," he said, opening one of his desk drawers, "and she is still learning. Come and hear her five years from now." I haven't space for a full list of this newly revealed talent, but here are some performances worth jotting down for your next trip to Paris: the Dalila of Denise Scharley, the Scarpia of Gabriel Bacquier, the Don José and the Mario Cavaradossi of Albert Lance, the Carmen of Jane Rhodes, the Giorgio Germont of Robert Massard, the Edgardo of Alain Vanzo, and whatever role Rita Gorr happens to be singing. Conductors, of course, have never been a problem; Julien can count on Pierre Dervaux, Louis Fourestier, Manuel Rosenthal, and the gifted young Georges Prêtre.

The most shining stars at the Opéra these nights are, however, the stage directors and designers responsible for the new productions. It has become quite customary for the audience to applaud the scenery. Julien has reminded the French that they are, after all, a race of painters, couturiers, and decorators and that the operatic ideal is a synthesis—or at least a compromise—in which all the arts are glorified. Forced by budget considerations (ticket sales covered only 26 per cent of his expenses last year) to make a choice, he has decided to risk visual rather than vocal heresy. "Music," he says, "is certainly the most important element in opera, but it isn't the only one. Furthermore, the young people we must appeal to have been brought up on the sort of spectacles the movies provide. They won't put up with sets that have been around since Bizet's day."

FRENCH OPERA ON DISCS

THE PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER of French opera recordings will not find the wide selection available in the field of Italian opera. Many French operas of some significance have received only one complete recording; of these, some were never accorded LP pressings, and others have since dropped from circulation. Thus, such works as *Samson et Dalila*, *Mignon*, and *Thaïs* are currently represented only by excerpts. The Columbia Entré and the RCA Camden entries are no longer on the market, but mention should be made of the French Odéon "Bel Canto" series—repressings of 78s which form potted versions of many operas. The sound is quite uneven throughout this series, and is never the best by present standards, but these records present such artists as Pons, Miguel Villabella, Gaston Micheletti, André Pernet, Endrèze, Supervia, and Vallin—a group to be reckoned with. Of particular interest from this point of view are the records devoted to *Faust*, *Carmen*, and *Lakmé*.

Collectors of complete operas will probably find the albums discussed below well worth their investigation.

Francis Poulenc's two most recent operas account for a pair of the most carefully prepared albums in the catalogue. Even if this were not the case, *Les Dialogues des Carmélites* would be a "must" for the collector of recorded operas. Poulenc has taken Georges Bernanos's play on its own terms, and has created an opera which announces itself as a grand piece of musical theatre, whose "big" effects never obscure a clearly drawn line of psychological development. Angel's production is magnificent. If it is true that there are few significant voices in France, then all of them must be here, in the persons of Mes. Régine Crespin, Liliane Berton, and Rita Gorr. Denise Duval as the heroine is not quite on a vocal level with these three, but she is a remarkably sensitive artist, and the color of her instrument happens to suit the part exactly. Denise Scharley has a chesty, rather raw-sounding voice, with which she makes a harrowing effect in her death scene at the end of the first act. Orchestra and chorus, under Dervaux's sympathetic direction, do excellent work, and the sound (monophonic only) is of the highest quality.

Poulenc's most recent opera is Jean Cocteau's single-character telephone drama concerning a woman's farewell conversation with her lover, *La Voix humaine*. Since both the opera and Victor's wonderful Soria series performance of it have recently been discussed at length in these pages, perhaps it will be enough here to say that the score seems to me an almost perfect one of its kind and that the performance by Mlle. Duval, supported by the Opéra-Comique orchestra under Georges Prêtre, is heartbreaking.

There is no longer room for much debate over which of the four available *Carmen* sets to choose, for Capitol's production under Beecham leaves the competition at the paddock. It represents a triumph for Sir Thomas, whose reading, meticulous yet filled with grandeur, restores to the opera the power and intensity of which it has been vitiated through repetition. And it is a triumph for De los Angeles, whose familiar musical intelligence and vocal prowess are mated to the sort of committed interpretation which has sometimes escaped her in other roles. Orchestra and chorus do superb work, and the remaining principals are all

superior or equal to the best in any of the other sets, except for Micheau, whose Micaela has aged perceptibly since her earlier (London) recording of the role. Bizet's other oft-performed opera, the melodious *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, has received three recordings, all of them due some respect. Probably the best-balanced performance is Epic's. It gets forceful leadership from Jean Fournet, and a superbly sung Nadir from Léopold Simoneau. Pierette Alarie, the Leila, has occasional pitch trouble above the staff, but offers a nice trill; a floating, heady quality sometimes reminiscent of Pons's; and excellent control in the piano passages. René Bianco's Zurga is somewhat labored, but competent. The sound is good, though inclined to harshness.

Truth to tell, there is no outstanding performance of *Faust* currently available on records. The one that can be endorsed for reasonably pleasant home listening is Capitol's, excellently recorded in both mono and stereo. It runs to four records, but is complete—that is, including the ballet, but not the scene between Marguerite and Siebel, traditionally dropped. Cluytens' leadership is a little lopy, though it picks up after the Garden Scene. De los Angeles, probably the best contemporary Marguerite, is in good form: she is abetted by a steady, if unexciting, Faust (Nicolai Gedda) and a sturdy Valentin (Ernest Blanc). Unfortunately, Boris Christoff's Mephistophélès, though imposing enough for its all-stops-pulled vocalism, is so unidiomatic as to make the character nearly unrecognizable.

Three editions of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* are listed in the catalogue, but the London version under Ansermet is generally unobtainable. Of the two remaining, Epic's seems to me the better, though Angel's boasts fine performances by De los Angeles and Gerard Souzay. Epic's conductor, Fournet, leads an outspokenly passionate performance, swelling the wonderful transitional interludes yet capturing nearly all the incredible detail of little dynamic and rhythmic changes. He is assisted by the powerful Golaud of Michel Roux. This role is the opera's dramatic fulcrum, and Roux's full-voiced singing and penetrating acting constitute one of the finest individual characterizations in all recorded opera. Micheau is a sensitive Mélisande, perhaps a little more at ease than De los Angeles, and Camille Mauranne a fresh-sounding Pelléas. Excellent, too, are Gorr as Geneviève and Depraz as Arkel. The sound tends towards edginess, with some unpleasantly hissed sibilants near the end of Side 1, but is perfectly listenable most of the time.

A word should be put in for Gluck's *Orfeo*. Of the five complete recordings of the work, two use the Paris version. Neither of these is really at the top of the list, but for those who enjoy the opera as *Orphée*—in French, with the title role sung by a tenor, and the score embodying certain changes from the Vienna edition—the Epic recording can be recommended. The dynamic conducting of Fournet and some beautiful singing by Simoneau are its chief assets, and make it preferable to the Angel version, though the latter is interesting for its use of a brutally high tessitura for the tenor (presumably these are the keys used by Legros in the original Parisian production). Gedda scales these vocal peaks with assurance, if not exactly with joy.

CONRAD L. OSBORNE

This emphasis on the spectacle, combined with an emphasis on the balletic *divertissements* traditional in French opera (even Verdi was forced to write ballet numbers for his Paris productions), is not always successful. *La Traviata*, for example, suffers from visual amplification and from too many people dancing too well at Flora's party. But when it succeeds, it succeeds wonderfully. The new *Carmen* comes close to being a total work of art, and thousands of Parisians have rediscovered Bizet's music while oh-ing and ah-ing at a giant set that recalls Velasquez, Manet, and Constantin Guys. The new *Lucia* is the lavish, full-blown romantic production Franco Zeffirelli worked out for Joan Sutherland at Covent Garden—although Julien imported the scenery itself from Palermo. "Italian artisans," he says, "are the best in the world at painting *trompe-l'oeil* sets." The new *Daphnis et Chloe* has stunning backdrops and costumes designed by Marc Chagall. The new *Samson* has terrifying columns that seem to disappear in the sky; when they topple you feel that the heavens are falling on the Philistines. By the time you read this article, there will be new productions of Honegger's *Le Roi David* and Cherubini's *Medée*, and both promise plenty of visual excitement. I think I know the objections to this sort of thing, and all I can say is that they do not correspond to my actual experience. The apartment of Scarpia in the Farnese Palace may be a claustrophobia-inducing little place in theory, but the theory does not last long when you are looking at the big, black and blood-red suite he now occupies in the Palais Garnier.

All this brings me to Charles Garnier himself, a scrawny, beak-nosed, stammering genius who is the only great architect in history to have taken opera seriously, and who had the misfortune to take it seriously during one of its more meretricious periods. He is worth considering at some length, for the wickedly magnificent theatre he built is playing a very active role in—and posing some problems for—Julien's revolution.

Garnier was born in Paris in 1825, and won the Emperor's competition for a design for a new academy of music in 1860. During those thirty-five years the French were gratifying an enormous appetite for historical operas, massive scenery, and stages full of soldiers, horses, skaters, and live volcanoes. Meyerbeer was the object of popular worship and critical fatuousness. George Sand was saying she had learned philosophy from his music, and as late as 1853 Delacroix was still praising *Robert le Diable*, that opera in which the bodies of excommunicated nuns rose from their graves to dance a moonlit ballet. In 1858 the Opéra, then located in the Rue Le Peletier, rejected *Faust* for a reason that reveals clearly the



A.-M. Julien.

taste of the period: the music, the administration felt, "lacked pomp."

Today an aesthetic moralist can observe that Meyerbeer's pomp is with Nineveh and Tyre, while *Faust* goes on and on, breaking the local record for total performances every time it is produced, which is often. "*Salut! demeure chaste et pure.*" But this sort of superiority-after-the-fact can be a trap. Anyone who enjoys an evening surrounded by the splendor of the Paris Opéra pays an unconscious tribute to Meyerbeer, Auber, Halévy, and Scribe, for it was their kind of musical drama which the architect had in mind. Perhaps I am wrong

in saying that Garnier had the "misfortune" to live in a bad operatic time, perhaps it is gratuitous to regret that he was not influenced by Mozart or Debussy, when he succeeded so well in his own neobaroque style *Napoléon III*.

The interior decoration, the most questionable part of the design from the purist point of view, has a great merit: it works. At the Palais Garnier you do not have to wait for the lights to be dimmed; you are caught up in a powerful theatrical illusion as soon as you enter and look up towards the Grand Staircase. The magic continues as you take your seat under the Grand Chandelier (everything is "grand") and grows even stronger during the intermission as you join the ritual promenade in the Grand Foyer under the level gaze of golden gods and goddesses, two of which are said to be idealized portraits of M. and Mme. Garnier. The windows open on a vast and very Italian loggia, which in turn opens on the perspective of the Avenue de l'Opéra, glittering in the winter night. You find your way back to the amphitheatre under a ceiling that shifts from painted nymphs to Byzantine mosaic to painted nymphs, and across and through pink, green, blue, red, and white marble from Spain, Finland, Belgium, Switzerland, Scotland, Sweden, Italy, and all the quarries of France. Frozen Meyerbeer is different.

If art is the enhancement of life, the Palais Garnier qualifies. It qualifies also as authentic architecture, for it makes sense in both an abstract and a functional way. Baroque has never been more than an exotic vocabulary to the French, never a substitute for a classical syntax, and Garnier was a thoroughly French designer, a product of the full treatment: Ecole des Beaux Arts, Prix de Rome, measured drawings of the Forum of Trajan, restoration work on Greek temples, and then a job at home as surveyor of public buildings. Seen from the proper distance and angle, his opera house rises with rhythmic clarity from arcades to loggia to attic to dome to the gabled mass that contains the stage and its machinery. The design is functional in a symbolic fashion; it looks, not like a palazzo or a temple, but

exactly like an opera house. This is not the classicism of pasted-on façades: the inside can be read on the outside, in the approved modern way. Behind the loggia runs the reality of the Grand Foyer, and beneath the dome and the high roof lie respectively the amphitheatre and the stage—the forms follow functions without cheating. Even the queer ramp leading up to the pavilion on the left has meaning; it was designed for the imperial carriage and linked to the private passage to the Emperor's box (you can still see the Ns and Es on the lampposts). Garnier did not foresee that Napoléon and Eugénie would not be present for the inauguration in 1875, and that presidents of the Republic, not being afraid of assassins, would use the front entrance.

I could go on. On the façade there is Carpeaux's *La Danse*, the best piece of nonreligious public sculpture in Paris. If you are a connoisseur of architectural space, try an expedition during an entr'acte up and down the stairs that flank the Grand Staircase. You will discover plunging and soaring perspectives of oval, cubic, round, Roman, Byzantine, Gothic, and Second Empire space, linked in a harmony comparable to the open plans of certain twentieth-century architects. Add the red and gold sweep of the amphitheatre, the strange round halls directly below it, and the immense stage. It is hard to believe that this great edifice was actually conceived in the second half of the nineteenth century, at a time when Ruskin had already begun to make people ashamed of "the architecture of pride." It is full of the confidence of the Renaissance.

Here, however, we encounter an odd fact—and

Julien. He is proud of the size of his building. There are 6,319 steps; 1,606 doors; 450 chimneys. Most of La Scala could be hidden in the backstage section. But there are only 2,156 seats, while La Scala has some 3,600. "And," Julien adds, "Ghiringhelli can charge more than twice as much as I do for tickets."

In short, the palace that Garnier built is primarily a machine for effects, and Julien is never allowed to forget that fact. The theatre proper is a relatively minor part of a group of public rooms designed for imperial and bourgeois galas, and the rest of the building is a huge apparatus for Meyerbeerian productions. It is not surprising, in such surroundings, to find the French visual tradition in opera still flourishing. The acoustics are good, except for a slight tendency to favor the orchestra over voices, but you are not encouraged to think about such matters. You are too busy looking. Here you are, squarely in the succession of the Hall of the Machines, which is what the Opéra was called in the eighteenth century, when it was in the Tuileries. (Incidentally, that hall was between the gardens and a courtyard, which is why, it is said, the part of a French theatre on the left of the spectators is called *côté jardin* and the other side *côté cour*.)

Recently, conducted by René Monge, the Opéra's building superintendent, I visited the part of the machine hidden from the public, and emerged as from a sea voyage spent mostly in the hold. We began far below ground with a look at the mysterious lake on or over which legend says the theatre floats; there is in fact a large, gloomy pool down there, now cribbed by masonry and

Continued on page 110



Far up in the dome over the Grand Chandelier of the amphitheatre is the newest rehearsal room.

Successors to The Six

by Frederick Goldbeck



“LES SIX,” said Cocteau, “are not a school; they have no common creed. It is friendship, if anything, that holds the group together.” A very surprising fact, he should have added: for friendship between composers of the same age is a most improbable feeling. They are not necessarily enemies, nor need it be jealousy or other pettiness that keeps them apart. But composing is unavoidably an egotistic, absorbing, and exclusive job. Every composer cultivates his own differentness; and even when too generous to rejoice at his neighbors’ failures or resent their successes, he cannot help being disturbed and irritated by their methods and endeavors, whether parallel or opposed to his own. The best he can do is to ignore them. Only a very compelling bond can mitigate this natural lack of mutual sympathy: César Franck’s pupils were friends, and so were Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern; but Schoenberg and Stravinsky were not, nor Debussy and Ravel. What, then, cemented the friendship of the five men and one woman—Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc, and Germaine Tailleferre—who became Les Six? It is not mere curiosity that prompts this question. To answer it may well throw a light on the situation of music in France, and elsewhere, in The Six’s day and after.

It was not, indeed, a “common creed” that provided the link, but a common fear, a common terror, unconscious and repressed—an ideal case for the school of psychology that had just come into fashion: a collective Oedipus complex. Debussy, the father-figure, was indeed awe-inspiring. For apart from representing his own genius, he embodied the renaissance of French music: i.e., both a brilliant revolution (against Romanticism) and a triumphant

classic tradition of mastery in harmony, counterpoint, and scoring—a tradition of charm and gusto within academicism. To possess and respect the techniques and achievements of this tradition made great composers of Fauré, Ravel, Roussel. To possess and not to respect them made Debussy the greatest of all. With his work completed, everything seemed to have been said and done. The masterpieces wherein all the rules had been obeyed with perfect ease had all been written, and so had the

After the gay impertinences of the “dangerous young men” – Les Six – in the Twenties, came a reversion to seriousness, even seriousness in adventure, among French composers. The process continues. . . .

masterpieces wherein all the rules had been broken with perfect elegance. It was no joke to be a young French composer in 1920.

Les Six, and Cocteau, their adviser, decided to face the situation by not facing it. They denied the difficulties of composition. Mastery, the craving after perfection, the pangs of the creative struggle with the rebellious material—all this they contrived to regard as romantic and *vieux jeu*, mere moonlight and metaphysics. “We do not want our music to be, like Wagner’s, and even Debussy’s, of the sort that expects the listener to bury his face in his hands.” They turned to Satie, the one non-master available among great French and modern composers, to ballet nights and night clubs, to French and South American folklore. They proclaimed that musicians should not be presumptuous “creators” but lighthearted and matter-of-fact

craftsmen. No problems involved—neither for composers, nor for listeners: no faces buried in hands for music whose makers would devise it with their hands in their pockets.

The most unaccountable thing about this unaccountable scheme was how well it succeeded. With their lazy and busy hands, Les Six made exactly the music that suited the lazy and busy Twenties. They achieved style, even technically—for example with polytonality, Milhaud's favorite device. Polytonality had been tried out long before, by Debussy, by Berlioz, by Beethoven. But then the sudden appearance of a nonblending chord or line had always evoked the strange or the ghostlike. With Milhaud, quite to the contrary, it became two (or more) naïvetés combining into sophistication: one improvising minstrel (or craftsman) piping in E flat, another fiddling in G, and the spirit of improvisation enjoying the oddness and chic of the result. And this style and this chic proved irresistible. Stravinsky and Ravel applied their mastery to falling in with its tentative charm.

But tentative though it was, it could not be improved upon. The Six themselves, later on, matured, and willy-nilly became experienced: Honegger even became respectable and a member of several academies. But, with the exception of Auric, as Les Six grew wiser, their music lost its *beauté du Diable* without gaining much on the side of the angels. Yet in retrospect the best among their early works *have* gained something: they have grown into period pieces, freed of their rather heartless up-to-date heartiness. We enjoy them as we enjoy a René Clair film. We now discover a poetic quality in their brittleness, their pathetic, because short-lived, impertinence.

ONE more paradox with Les Six: their methods screamed for opposition—and made the potential opponent's part very uncomfortable to play. Who among the young was going to oppose youthfulness, charm, and chic? Who was going to reassert the values of planning, of mastery, of gravity, at the risk of looking a prig and a *ci-devant*? The thing was done, without ostentation, without polemics (and with hardly anybody noticing what was happening) by another alliance of friends: *Jeune France*. Again a heterogeneous batch. Two were organists, Olivier Messiaen and Daniel Lesur; one a Breton and a sailor, Yves Baudrier; and the fourth, André Jolivet, simply a young composer, but a singularly strong-headed one, the disciple of a French master whom very few knew to be French (since Varèse lived in America), and fewer still took to be a master, since his methods were of an almost forgotten and seemingly antediluvian species: scandalous, fanatical, revolutionary, and not at all unromantic.

There was nothing of eighteenth-century elegance about Varèse, who preferred to pitch his tent in a

virgin forest rather than in the gardens of Versailles; nothing of the ballet—for to him dancing was not an entertainment but a rite; nothing craftsmanlike—except perhaps in the way of the savage, decorating his shield and bow with the magical runes of the tribe. Again, Varèse had little reason to be afraid of the father-figure—because his hunting ground lay beyond Debussy's. For if Debussy had dined with fauns and nymphs, and with Gregorian and other ghosts of bygone ages, Varèse made bold to sup with great Pan himself: i.e., to conjure up primeval magic, rhythm undomesticated by meter, and sound not yet shaped into tonal symmetries. Withal, Varèse's intentions were something more than a mere primitivist's and archaizer's. Precivilized purity and magic were his ends, but his means and his techniques were always of the most civilized, modern, scientific order—so much so, that today we know of hardly any invention or discovery put forth by *musique concrète*, or by the experts in electronic distortion of sound, which had not, as early as 1925, been foreseen or postulated by Varèse. His influence on contemporary French (and other) music has been second to none—not even to Schoenberg's or Webern's—a fact which it is perhaps not superfluous to emphasize. For, very unlike Schoenberg's, this influence has more than once passed unnoticed and unacknowledged.

Jolivet (b. 1905), Varèse's disciple, made a theory, inchoate and hazy to all but himself, out of Varèse's practice. But he also wrote, in the Varèsian manner, *Mana* (the most original and imaginative piece of piano writing since Debussy), the *5 Incantations* for solo flute, the *5 Danses rituelles* for orchestra, and the String Quartet. And this manner of writing—these compact and stubborn chords and *ostinati* alternating with eerie one-voiced *recitativos*; this summoning up, not, Debussy fashion, of elusive phantoms but of massive poltergeists—all this is today the stock in trade of nine contemporary composers out of ten. But the most brilliant and elaborate works of the followers, or even Jolivet's own later scores, have by no means paled the comparatively naïve prototypes set by Varèse and early Jolivet. On the contrary, the prototypes have in advance outshone the imitations.

Olivier Messiaen (b. 1908) came from academic quarters. A brilliant pupil of the Paris Conservatoire, his beginnings were a Debussyist's and a Romanticist's. Compared with Jolivet, he is a composer of less imagination and greater ingenuity. And he owes his place in contemporary music—an important one—to his aesthetically most doubtful leanings as much as to his most admirable qualities. The work that has been his greatest success, *Trois Petites Liturgies de la présence divine*, recalls Bernini's Santa Teresa in its irresistibly effective mixture of mysticism and sensuality. Messiaen's melody is meretricious enough to win the applause of those who have succumbed to *Toxica* the night

before; his harmony and scoring are sophisticated enough to reassure more fastidious minds. Moreover, it must be admitted that this marvelous method of making the best of two worlds is rooted in Messiaen's particular virtue, his exceptional awareness of the twentieth-century composer's special situation and ordeal.

Like Ravel and Stravinsky, and unlike Schoenberg, Messiaen knows that this is a time not of innovation, but of summing up; and that, today, a composer's very originality springs from his debate with the whole history of music. But Messiaen rejected, as too obvious, the neoclassicist's way of taking the eighteenth-century masters for partners in this debate; he turned, instead, to less familiar periods, to half-forgotten and ill-defined traditions, to the venerable doctrines (real or imaginary) of Hindu music, and even to the oldest, prehistoric and prehuman, masters of music: the birds. In his arresting treatise *Technique de mon Langage*, he has very candidly explained his technique of applying his "distorting lenses" to Guillaume de Machault or Bartók, of shaping distorted meter into "delightfully limping" rhythm, of enlivening his counterpoint with "harmonic rainbows," "tone clusters," and chirps fresh from the bird's beak, of obtaining new scales by picking holes in the old ones, and so forth. Small wonder that Varèse and Jolivet appealed to Messiaen. But for Varèse, the act of looking back to the primitive and looking ahead to the experimental was an adventure; for Messiaen it became a system.

Daniel Lesur (b. 1908), the third of the *Jeune France* composers, is neither systematic nor adventurous, but urbane, relaxed, unpretentious, and, as a composer, both serious and playful. His seriousness, though an organist's rather than a reformer's, has made him a worthy member of the present group. But his playfulness, though an organist's rather than a man of the world's, could have made him an excellent seventh among Les Six.

Yves Baudrier (b. 1906) is, on the other hand, emphatically *Jeune France*: he is an Old Celt. But if Varèse turned a sense of tragedy, mystery, and magic, and a complementary sense of humor, into experiments and technical innovations, Baudrier has contrived to put his vision mainly into the expression of his music, often letting form and technique take care of themselves. His Symphony, therefore, is not a perfect score, nor is his String Quartet. But both works are singularly convincing and moving, for Baudrier could not help installing the genuine symphonic surge and drive into his orchestra, and into his strings the appropriate Beethovenish inwardness. Baudrier's music for films, too, is exceptional. Visual motifs, whether realistic or poetic, seem to have fired his musical imagination. Footsteps, heavy or light, treading the pavement; leaking taps in squalid kitchens with erime next door; the conjuring ritual of a crystal-gazer—these are occasions for Baudrier to turn visual rhythm *Continued on page 114*

The Music on Records

Contemporary French music is very meagerly represented just now on American records. The situation was considerably better several years ago, when Westminster was issuing material from the Véga and Erato catalogues and when London was importing discs from its French associate Ducretet-Thomson. Today all these recordings of French origin have disappeared from Schwann. It is shocking to note that not one work by Olivier Messiaen is currently available in an American pressing. (In fairness it should also be noted that the French LP catalogue shows a similar disregard for contemporary American music.)

Only two of the composers dealt with in Mr. Goldbeck's article are currently represented on discs in general circulation. Henry Barraud's *Offrande à une ombre*, recorded by the Detroit Symphony under Paul Paray, is available from Mercury (50145), and Pierre Boulez's *Marteau sans maître*, played by an ensemble conducted by Robert Craft, from Columbia (ML 5275). Fortunately, the fine Louisville Symphony series (available by mail from the Louisville Philharmonic Society, 830 South Fourth St., Louisville, Ky.) helps to right the balance with André Jolivet's *Suite Transocéane* (Lou 57-2) and Henri Sauguet's *Trois lys* (Lou 545-10).

To get a truly representative sampling of contemporary French music, however, the record listener must rely principally on imported French pressings. The Véga catalogue is particularly rich. Among its major offerings are Messiaen's *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*, Jolivet's Concerto for Ondes Martenot and *Mana*, Dutilleux's Symphony No. 1, Lesur's *Cantique des Cantiques*, and Boulez's *Marteau sans maître*. Ducretet-Thomson publishes recordings of the complete organ works of Messiaen on eight LPs, Jolivet's Piano Concerto, and Dutilleux's ballet *Le Loup*. And on other French labels can be found works by Charles Koechlin, Jehan Alain, Jean Langlais, and Roland-Manuel. These French records can either be obtained through United States dealers specializing in imports or directly from French dealers. HIGH FIDELITY will provide details on request.



By Roland Gelatt



FESTIVAL AT AIX



FRANCE'S most important music festival begins with the potent advantage of its physical setting. It is impossible not to love Aix. The old capital of Provence has changed remarkably little since the close of the eighteenth century, when history and the march of progress suddenly passed it by, and its spell is irresistible. "The sober elegance of its mansions, the quiet grace of its public squares, the charm of its fountains make a strong impression," says the *Guide Michelin*. But no prose can convey the enchantment of Aix—the sun-baked orange roofs and cool, leafy avenues, the narrow cobblestoned alleys, the animation of open markets, the serenity of medieval cloisters. And in July, when the festival takes place, Aix is blessed with a miraculously dependable climate; the visitor can be certain that the Provençal skies will remain a brilliant blue day after day.



Richard De Grab

Music in the court of a Renaissance town house.



As in the eighteenth century, Aix rests serene under blue Provençal skies.



The sun-baked roofs of Aix.

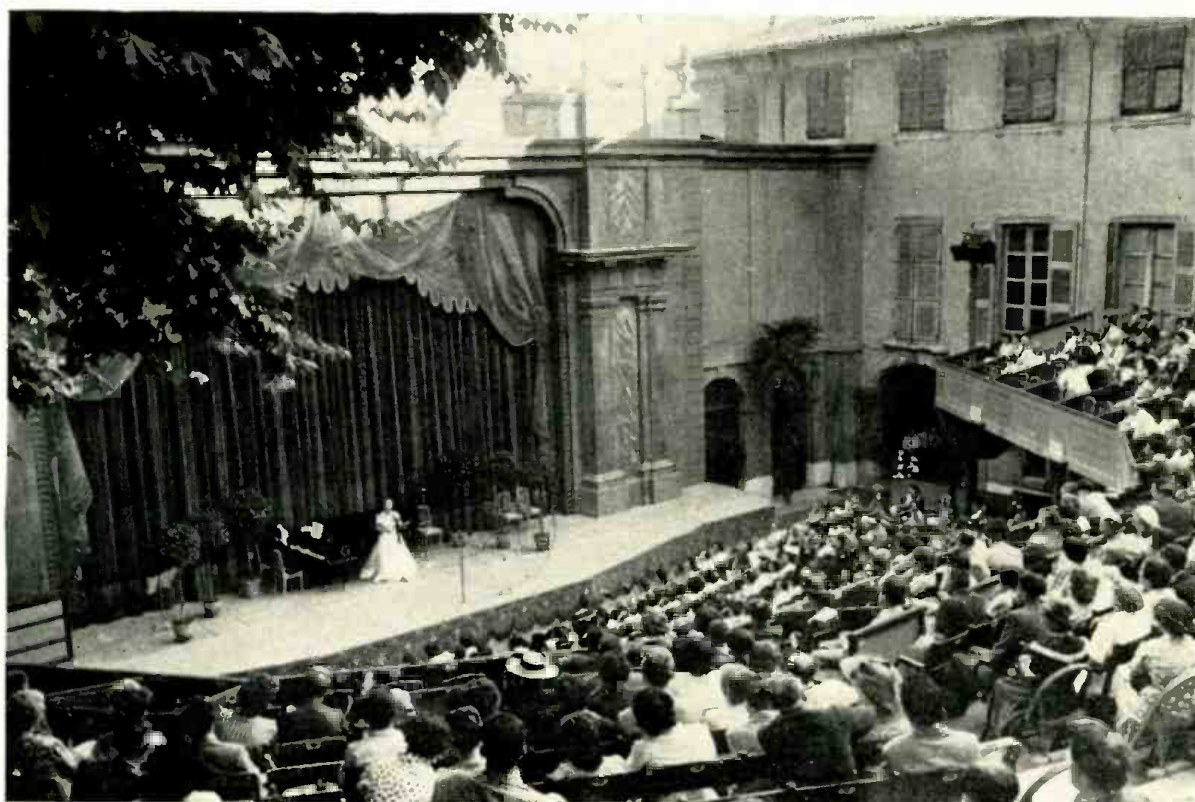
The charm of the architecture and the gentleness of the climate are not merely incidental to the Aix Festival, they are its indispensable ingredients. At Aix, operas and concerts are given almost without exception under the open sky (in thirteen years only four performances have had to be canceled because of poor weather). And instead of relying on conventional theatres and concert halls, the Aix Festival utilizes the city's chief architectural adornments for its presentations. Operas are staged in a temporary theatre set up within the courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace (fourteenth to seventeenth centuries), instrumental concerts are given in the court of a Renaissance town house, and choral works are sung in the Cathédrale St. Sauveur (fifth to sixteenth centuries).

Architecture and climate thus set a splendid stage at Aix, but a music festival

The Festival owes much to the sweated figure at right—onetime tenor, now Artistic Director Gabriel Dussurget. It is also indebted to Aix itself: below, a performance in the courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace, where operas too are often staged; opposite, intermission time.



Richard De Grab



Henry Ely

—no matter how amenably situated—must stand or fall by the quality of its music. It is risky to generalize about any festival. They vary from year to year, from performance to performance. But of the Aix Festival this much at least can be said without contradiction: it has a distinct character of its own. It is not just a pleasant shop window for the standard musical merchandise that is to be sampled in any large city. The performances at Aix are created for Aix, and by and large they have a style and finish that make a trip to Provence well worth the music lover's while.

Unlike Salzburg or Bayreuth, Aix-en-Provence has no strong ties to musical history. Its position

today as the site of a major international music festival is a happenstance, the result of a chance visit shortly after the war by a young impresario (and onetime tenor) named Gabriel Dussurget. Impressed by the calm beauty of the city and its suitability for a festival, he approached the director of the Aix casino and thermal establishment, Roger Bigonnet. Fortunately, Bigonnet was not only an influential man of affairs but a devoted music lover, and he agreed to underwrite a one-week festival in the summer of 1948.

From the beginning the emphasis was weighted heavily in the direction of Mozart. "The spell of Mozart and of Aix are alike," announced the first

program. "In the city as in the music we perceive a harmony of proportion and fantasy, nobility and familiarity, clarity and mystery, gaiety and melancholy, dream and reality." The presence in Aix of the famous Mozartean scholar Georges Saint-Foix had something to do with this orientation, but the emphasis on Mozart stemmed principally from the enthusiasm of Dussurget and Bigonnet. Devotees of Mozart, they were eager to render him full homage. But it was to be Mozart with a difference. "Here," explains Bigonnet, "we perform Mozart in the spirit of Aix. Modern civilization has bypassed Provence; we have no industry to speak of; and the classical spirit is still very much alive. We have tried to adapt our Mozart interpretations to the architecture and



Henry Ely

ambience of Aix. Don Giovanni, for example, is usually portrayed in Germany and Austria as a demonic being, but here we consider him more debonaire, more Latin in character. In general, we favor restraint and are opposed to anything that approaches grandiloquence."

Mozart in the style of Aix proved to be both an artistic and commercial success, and since 1948 the festival has grown in length, scope, and importance. Following the first season's *Così fan tutte*, the Mozart opera repertoire rapidly expanded to include *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *Zauberflöte*, and *Seraglio* (the latter staged by Pierre Bertin with sets and costumes by André Derain). Before long, operas by other

composers were being offered—Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, Gounod's *Mireille*, Haydn's *Il Mondo della Luna* among them. And at the orchestral concerts Aix began to chalk up a list of first performances: Poulenc's Piano Concerto, Messiaen's *Turangalila* Symphony, Milhaud's *Concertino d'été*.

Although Artistic Director Dussurget does not entirely disdain famous names when engaging musicians for Aix, he prefers—particularly in casting operas—to work with young talent and mold them into a uniquely Aixian ensemble. Graziella Sciutti, Pilar Lorengar, Consuelo Rubio, Teresa Berganza, Léopold Simoneau, Renato Capecchi, and Rolando Panerai can be numbered among Dussurget's "discoveries." The quotation marks are necessary, for these artists had already achieved local reputations before performing at Aix. It was in Provence, however, that they first came to international attention. The American soprano Teresa Stich-Randall, who has sung regularly at Aix for ten years, has a high regard for Dussurget's faith in unknown singers. "I arrived in Europe with high hopes and a letter of recommendation from Toscanini," she relates. "I was given a lot of advice from all sides, but it was Gabriel who actually took a risk and gave me my first big chance." Today music critics make a point of going to Aix to keep themselves informed on Europe's best young singers.

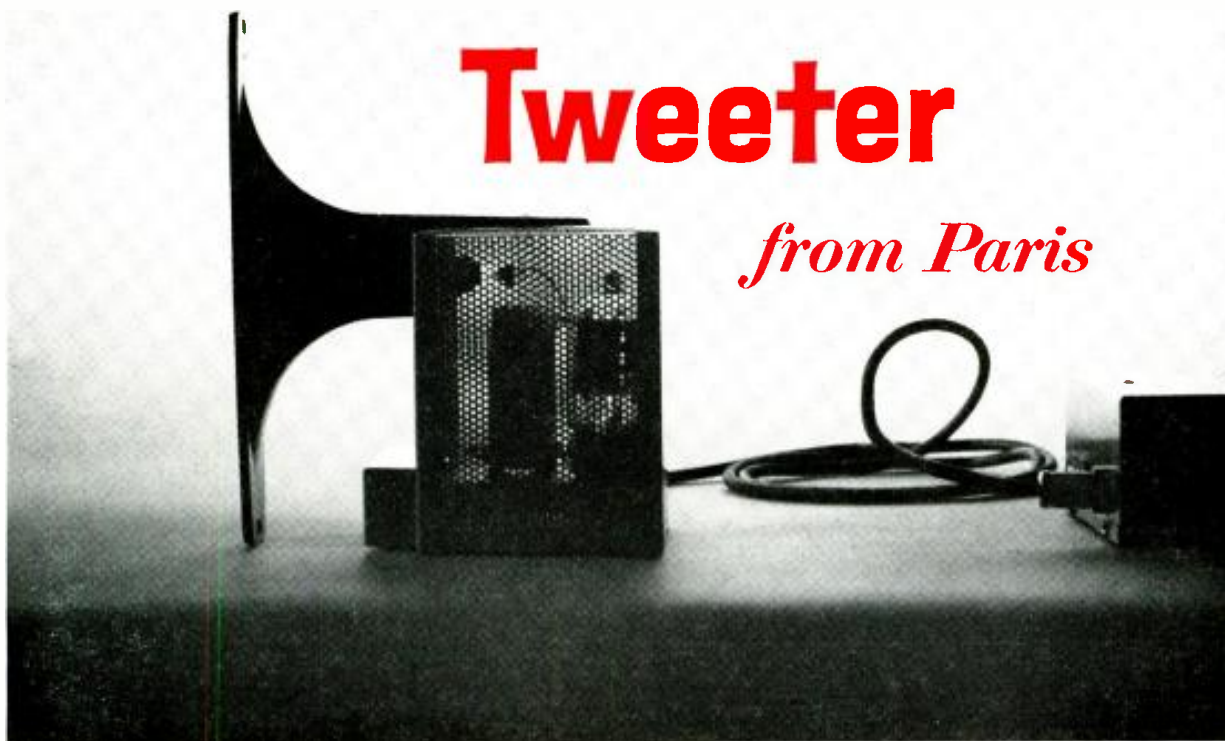
Talented artists, carefully rehearsed ensemble, a consistent Mediterranean style combine to assure the festival's musical reputation, but without the architecture and the climate they might well seem rather less prepossessing. It is impossible to divorce the music at Aix from Aix itself, to disentangle the presentation from its surroundings—the quiet winding streets that lead to the Archbishop's Palace Theatre or the soft, starry Provençal sky above (never defiled, be it noted, by passing airplanes during performances) or the gentle rustle of the great plane tree within the courtyard. During intermission time, as you stroll about within the twelfth-century St. Sauveur Cloister (beautifully spotlighted for the occasion), you ask yourself whether the evening's *Figaro* would seem quite so magical under other conditions. But the question is really irrelevant. Mozart and Aix form an indissoluble harmony.

AIX FESTIVAL—1961

Details of this year's Aix Festival, which runs from July 9 to 31, have just been announced. Five operas will be produced: Monteverdi's *Coronation of Poppea*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and *Zauberflöte*, and Henry Barraud's *Lavinia* (world premiere). In addition to fourteen opera performances, there will be thirteen instrumental and solo concerts. Further details regarding specific dates and casts can be obtained by writing directly to the Aix Festival, 3 rue Frédéric-Mistral, Aix-en-Provence, France.

The Driverless Tweeter

from Paris



Peter Eco

The French-designed ionic speaker—which you can buy here now—has no moving parts other than energized gas molecules.

By NORMAN EISENBERG

THE ROLE OF FRANCE in the international drama which is the history of the phonograph often has been played down by other members of the cast. Reasons are various, but as the historian F. C. Roe points out, “. . . it may be because France, satisfied with the glory of making the discovery or invention, often apparently lost interest in it, and left others to work out its practical application, and push forward its commercial or industrial exploitation.”

Certainly this conclusion seems reasonable when one recalls a few historical facts: Parisian poet-scientist Charles Cros designing, at least on paper, a phonograph (the very name, incidentally, was be-

stowed on the device by a French writer, Abbé Lenoir) before Edison's actual invention of a working model; experimenter Edouard-Léon Scott de Martinville first using a lateral stylus in 1857 for his phonograph (“sound writer”), only to help inspire Emile Berliner, some thirty years later, to adapt the idea to disc recording; or the French government, in 1880, awarding \$10,000 to Alexander Graham Bell for inventing the telephone—which money found its way into research for improving the phonograph.

A similar offering from the wings may be seen in France's most recent contribution to *l'haute*

fidélité: the ionic loudspeaker, known in this country as the Ionovac produced by the DuKane Corporation, St. Charles, Illinois.

Unlike any speaker ever made, the Ionovac uses no moving parts to fan the air, yet it produces very creditable—some would say superior—sound. The method employed is technically sophisticated, something of an engineer's dream, since it acts as a transducer without mass or inertia. And while the Ionovac's uses may eventually extend into the relatively uncharted area of ultrasonics, its importance to high-fidelity sound reproduction is immediately apparent in its performance in the upper reaches of the treble region. After listening to several models, teamed with different combinations of woofers and midrange speakers and set up in different rooms, one can safely say that the Ionovac's response from 3,500 cycles upward has the smoothness, clarity, and excellence of transient response characteristic of the better high-fidelity tweeters. It perks up the overall response of a speaker system to which it is mated, and enhances the overtones that help define the timbres of individual musical sounds whose fundamental tones originate much lower on the frequency scale. And it does this without harshness, without screeching.

These virtues were recognized in an earlier model of the Ionovac that appeared about two and a half years ago. Unfortunately, the deficiencies of its material permitted that model (then marketed by Electro-Voice under a temporary arrangement with DuKane) a life span of only two hundred to three hundred hours of use. The present Ionovac uses a new material for its sound generating element which is guaranteed for twelve hundred hours; in any case a replacement cell costs only \$6.25—and this price may be reduced in the near future. Furthermore, the system has been reduced in bulk, weight—and cost: \$79 for the present tweeter (without enclosure) as compared with \$147 for the older version.

The Ionovac (originally the Ionophone) was developed in the early 1950s by Parisian Siegfried Klein who, judging from reports, probably did so because someone had told him that such a *haut-parleur* was impossible. Equally articulate in French, English, and German, inventor Klein is known to move from argument to working model to patent office with a swiftness and sureness of purpose that are truly *formidable*. But the further road, from patent No. 2,768,246 to the present Ionovac (and full-range systems incorporating it), was not quite as swift and sure. Longevity and durability was one problem; financial and organizational backing to develop, produce, and market the device was another. To clear these hurdles Klein sought the help of leading electronics manufacturers here and abroad.

Among the United States companies he approached was DuKane. One of the five top-ranking electronics firms in this country, DuKane was known up to 1951 as Operadio, with an enviable record

that included having built the world's first portable radio, a major share of the amplifiers and loudspeakers used in sets marketed under more familiar names, and many specialized devices for industrial and military use.

Klein reached DuKane one day in 1954 when company executive William R. Torn, on a happy second thought, fished from his wastebasket a letter tossed in a half hour before. The letter, from Klein, described the ionic speaker and asked if DuKane would be interested in North American rights to its manufacture. Torn decided DuKane might be interested and invited Klein to the plant. He arrived, recalls Torn, "a wiry, intense man with a shock of red hair, and with an old bowling-ball bag among his luggage." That bag contained two models of the Ionophone. Klein rarely let this package out of sight, yet when he left St. Charles on a business trip he entrusted its safekeeping, in typical avuncular fashion, to Torn's twelve-year-old daughter.

The name Ionovac was given the speaker in 1956. Revamping the ill-fated 1958 version has been largely DuKane's work; but although the current model is essentially a DuKane product, it is based completely on Klein's revolutionary principles. All other loudspeakers generate sound with a vibrating member, or diaphragm, which has mass and inertia. Consequently a time lag develops between signals applied to the speaker, and its response to them. Because the diaphragm does not respond fully at the instant a signal is fed to the speaker (or come to a dead halt the moment the signal ends or is removed), it develops transient distortion—a kind of unnatural extending of sounds, especially of high frequency tones of short, defined duration such as pizzicati and percussives. Some listeners point out that since the "extended" tones linger and must decay in the presence of ensuing tones, the conventional loudspeaker inevitably generates intermodulation distortion as well. Many people, however, have accepted the mass-and-inertia limitation of loudspeakers as a "necessary evil" and even have become partisans of the particular coloration different types impart to the sounds they reproduce.

Good, bad, or indifferent, a diaphragm simply does not exist in the ionic loudspeaker. Instead of fanning the air with a physical member, the Ionovac electrically charges, or ionizes, the air. That is to say, the gas molecules or atoms that comprise air lose one or more electrons each. This loss gives them an electrical charge and makes them responsive to the alternating signal fed to the electrode by the amplifier.

Ionization is produced in a small, open-end quartz chamber, about the size of the eraser on a pencil. The air confined in this cell is "bombarded" with a high frequency, high voltage current supplied from an RF oscillator via a tiny electrode that projects into the chamber. What results is an "ionic cloud," visible as a tiny

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Latest Word from the Left Bank

A poll of the people who have been educating us, most delightfully, in the *chanson Parisienne*.

by **John F. Indcox**

YEARS AGO, browsing through a pile of old 78s in a Brooklyn record store, I came across a disc of Maurice Yvain's *J'ai pas su y faire* sung by Yvonne George, which must have unaccountably strayed from an old Gramophone Shop album. The singer was known to me only vaguely, the song not at all, but sensing that the record was something of a find, I bought it—for 25¢. That purchase introduced me to the fascinating and wonderful world of the *Chanson Populaire*. Today, thousands of American record listeners are discovering the wonders of this marvelous world of French song. Some



slight idea of the rapidly growing public interest in this art form can be judged from the latest issue of the Schwann catalogue. Its special section devoted to "Popular Music of Other Countries" (which, incidentally, was not considered worthy of special notice prior to January 1958) contains eleven full pages, one fifth of them given over to French music.

Many people, of course, are succumbing to the charm of this previously undiscovered musical genre through the personal appearances in this country of some of the great contemporary French minstrels. These appearances are, in themselves, something of a postwar innovation, since before 1940 it was virtually impossible to lure any of the great French entertainers from the security offered by the Parisian music halls and night clubs. But times have changed, and today's French artists are as happy to appear in the smart supper clubs of Manhattan as in the *boîtes* of Montmartre or the *caves* of St. Germain-des-Prés.

It is an old axiom of show business that no performer is better than his material, and in this respect French singers are exceptionally well equipped.

The *Chanson Populaire* is a far more literate and artistic composition than the American popular song. Where American lyricists confine themselves almost exclusively to the subject of love, and usually only in its pleasantest form, French song makers, among them some of the foremost authors in the country, are probing and adventurous. The many sides of *l'amour*, even the most sordid and depraved, quite naturally figure in French lyrics, which include also keen observations of the *numéros* and *types* that abound in the French social structure. Again there are songs that conjure up a picture of some tawdry Parisian street, or take you on a stroll along the wide boulevards or out to the Vel' D'Hiv' at Grenelle. In all these vignettes of French life, it is the lyrics that give them strength. One thinks of a song like *Les Feuilles mortes* as being a Prévert song, because he wrote the lyrics, rather than one by Kosma, who wrote the fine tune. This is exactly the reverse of how we think of American songs; here it is always Kern's *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* or Rodgers' *Some Enchanted Evening*, with Otto Harbach or Oscar Hammerstein getting little credit for their lyrics. In the last fifteen years the *Chanson Populaire* has attained a level of excellence it had not known since the late Nineties and the days of Yvette Guilbert. Simultaneously with this attainment has come a whole new group of interpreters whose accomplishments rank with the best of the past. Because limitations of space preclude a discussion of all *chanteurs* and *chanteuses* at present in the limelight, this survey confines itself to those artists whose work is well-known in this country, at least through recordings. Natural gallantry accounts for the precedence given female singers over their male compatriots, although it's also a fact that the ladies outnumber the men by almost two to one. To simplify matters further, both female and male artists are listed in alphabetical order.

One of the rising stars in the Parisian firmament is **Vicky Autier**, a young, talented, and versatile performer much admired by a select public. Miss Autier uses her small, but very appealing voice in a very, very French manner on the gay, romantic songs which are the mainstay of her repertoire. The sad songs she leaves to the *larmoyantes*, headed by Edith Piaf, but she is not averse to tackling a number that might be called wistful. If she sometimes sounds like the very early Jacqueline François, her later records show her developing a very personal style, in which pertness and *gaminerie* predominate. In addition to her vocal accomplishments (she sings with equal facility in German, Spanish, English, Italian, and Portuguese), Miss Autier is an excellent pianist and conductor. A splendid presentation of Autier in this triple role is "Paris After Hours" (Capitol T 10179), highlighted by seductive performances of two old favorites, *Goodnight, Sweetheart* and *I Kiss Your Hand, Madame*. Even more

enjoyable is "Vive Paris" (Capitol T 10245), which finds the singer positively radiating *joie de vivre* in sparkling performances of some charmingly carefree numbers. These are all particularly well suited to her present style, and since, to my knowledge, none of them is to be found on other records, this disc is a real prize.

For the past year or so, **Jacqueline François** has been a serious challenger for the position long held by Edith Piaf as America's favorite French singer. With Piaf in temporary retirement, this claim has now become a *fait accompli*. In her transition from Mademoiselle de Paris to Mademoiselle de New York, François has worked hard to make herself into a singer designed to appeal primarily to American tastes. Compared with her early recordings, issued here on Vox, her present work shows greater awareness of the importance of phrasing, a refinement of vocal style, and perhaps most of all, an added sense of showmanship. It is almost impossible to imagine the François of 1948 tackling Rodgers and Hart's *The Lady Is a Tramp* (*La Vie mondaine*) and making anything of it. Yet, thanks to her mastery of the idiom of American song presentation, this song was one of her hit numbers at the opening of the Persian Room this year. François's voice has been described as "*la plus phonogénique du monde*," and though one may disagree with that sweeping opinion, it is undoubtedly among the most musical sounding voices on records, and one always handled with superb artistry.

François has been prolifically recorded and at present can be heard on no fewer than six LP records in the American catalogue. For a number of reasons, I find "Mademoiselle de Paris" (Columbia CL 570) the most appealing. This is François in her best Gallic manner, in a superb collection of lilting *chansons*, including the lovely title song, the moody little vignette *Utrillo*, and the slightly sentimental *La Complainte des infidèles*, plus nine other equally delectable bonbons. "April in Paris" (Columbia ML 5091), though it lacks Vernon Duke's salute to *La Ville Lumière*, is almost as attractive, and is worth having just to hear François's version of George Shearing's *Lullaby of Birdland* masquerading under the title of *Lola* (*La Légende du pays aux oiseaux*).

If **Juliette Greco**, who recently defected to the films, has permanently abandoned her singing career, we have lost one of the most interesting and intelligent of all French *chansonnières*. A friend and follower of Jean-Paul Sartre, Greco was for some time the darling of the Existentialists, as well as undisputed queen of the Left Bank *boîtes*. The ordinary *Chanson Populaire* seldom figures in her repertoire, which is built around the special material written for her by some of France's foremost writers. These include Sartre himself, François Mauriac, Leo Ferré, Jacques Prévert, and Georges Brassens; and though these numbers usually take a typically

dim Existentialist view of life and love, they also provide Greco with some of her most powerfully moving *chansons*.

This singer does not confine herself exclusively to songs of despair, however. She can be pensive or provocative, earthy or sophisticated, with equal success and uses her warm and pliant voice (of darker coloration than that of most French female singers) with the greatest intelligence and insight. If you wish to sample the best of Greco, try "Juliette" (Columbia WL 138)—a fascinating assortment of first-rate songs in which Greco's hilarious performance of *La Valse des si*, a monosyllabic song of acquiescence, and her disarmingly simple account of *Chandernagor*, a little gem of *double-entendre*, are the highlights. There are good things too on "Juliette Greco" (Columbia ML 5088), notably a savage version of *Dieu est nègre*, a rousing one of *Ca va "Le Diable,"* and an amusing Existentialist fable, *La Fourmi*. The drawback of this disc is Michel Legrand's orchestral accompaniment to four songs, extracted from a recorded performance at the Olympia Music Hall in Paris, which seem inappropriate to Greco's intimate style.

In spite of her Spanish-sounding name and the fact that she has had a long and successful career in the Spanish theatre, **Germaine Montero** is French by birth. Ten years ago she returned to the Parisian musical stage, and in 1952 scored a tremendous personal success in the French production of Bertolt Brecht's chronicle play of the Thirty Years War, *Mère Courage*. From Paul Dessau's wry-sounding score for this astringently satiric play, Montero has recorded seven songs and coupled them with nine "Songs of Parisian Nights" (Vanguard VRS 9022). Two of these were specially created for her by Pierre MacOrlan, five are from the pen of that most Brechtian of French poets, Jacques Prévert, with Bruant's *Belleville-Menilmontant* and that old Gay Nineties favorite *Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-Ay* completing the program. These are all given engrossing performances by a singer capable of penetrating to the core of the songs, with her rather harsh-sounding, powerful voice creating unforgettable vocal cameos.

Born Henriette Ragon, **Patachou** is a true Montmartoise, who started her career as the owner-entertainer of a pâtisserie-bistro just off the Place du Tertre in the shadow of Sacré Coeur. Under the paternal sponsorship of Maurice Chevalier she soon graduated to a larger Montmartre night club, Chez Patachou, since when it has been a case of roses, roses, all the way. Patachou is a singer of dynamic personality, excellent voice, and a style as varied as it is fascinating. She can, and does, flit with consummate ease from *Eh Bien*, a Gallic version of *Hey There* from the American musical *The Pajama Game*, to *Les Mandrins de Grenoble*, a traditional ballad attributed to François Villon. And the drolleries of Ferré's *Le Temps du plastique* or of Xanrof's *Le Fiacre* are as successfully conveyed as the nos-

talgia that drenches Mouloudji's *Le Mal de Paris*. Patachou's two Audio Fidelity recordings ("Hit Shows," 1814; "International Soirée," 1881) are excellently recorded, but her determination here to make the audience get the drift of her songs leads her to tedious overemphasis and stylistic exaggeration. Columbia's "Montmartre" (CL 571) includes several numbers well off the beaten path, yet on the whole it remains a somewhat stereotyped concert. Easily the most absorbing Patachou disc is "La Belle Epoque" (Columbia WL 140), which contains truly superb performances of eighteen of Aristide Bruant's turn-of-the-century *verismo* songs. All these songs were closely identified with the great French *diseuse* Yvette Guilbert; few contemporary singers could match Patachou's haunting and beautifully realized versions of these deeply poignant numbers.

Of all the postwar generation of French singers who have appeared in this country, none has received a more rapturous welcome than that given **Edith Piaf** on the occasion of her New York debut in 1947. Until about a year ago, when illness prevented her coming to America, Piaf was unquestionably the most popular of all French female singers. The really extraordinary feature of her initial success was that neither she nor her material was calculated to impress American audiences. Here was no chic Parisienne, beautiful of face or figure, handsomely gowned and elegantly coiffured. On the contrary, she was a small, waiflike woman, with frizzy hair, dark luminous eyes, expressive hands, who persisted in appearing at every performance in a plain black satin gown. And her songs—pathetic, even heart-breakingly tragic cameos—were the direct opposite of the bouncy, brittle numbers served up by most night club singers. But Piaf's dynamic personality, the extraordinary fervor and passion that she injected into her performances, her marvelous ability



to involve the individual listener directly in her subject matter—these qualities transcended the trivia of a pretty appearance and conventional charm. Piaf has never deviated from her grim little sung scenarios, and probably no one would wish her to.

When she first arrived here Piaf spoke little if any English, but later mastered enough to record some of her songs in our language. The experiment was not very successful, and for that reason "La Vie en Rose" (Columbia CL 898) should be passed over in favor of "Edith Piaf" (Columbia ML 4779), an extremely fine collection of songs Piaf was singing in the early Thirties. A more recent recording, though the songs themselves are less interesting than Piaf's treatment of them, is "Piaf" (Capitol T 10210). Only *La Foule* and *Les Grogards* (this slightly reminiscent of *Le Rêve passé*) seem to me to be the true Piaf; the remainder, several of them from a recent film, are very ordinary fare indeed. "Piaf Tonight" (Angel 65024) is decidedly worth investigating, if only for the singer's great performance of *C'est à Hambourg* and a magnificent version of *Bravo pour le clown*.

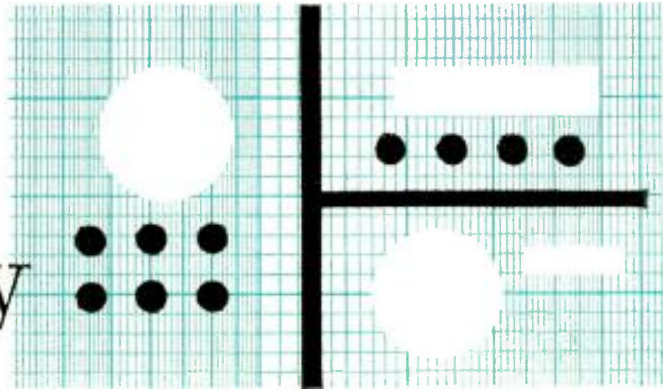
One of the most delightful of the current crop of *vedettes* is **Line Renaud**, an artist as popular in Lisbon and Geneva as she is on the Place Blanche. Renaud has much of the bounce and vitality typical of the older generation of French music hall stars, and sometimes her work shows a certain amount of old-time technique. A very attractive musical voice (the slight suggestion of huskiness only adds to its appeal), an ebullient manner, and the care with which she selects her material have all contributed to her great popularity. Few French singers can handle an American song with more success; and since she so often appears in clubs and music halls frequented by tourists, she is probably the most admired French singer of the day by visiting firemen. Pathé AT 1099, an on-the-spot recording of a Renaud performance at the Moulin Rouge, contains her unique versions of *Mister Banjo*, *Que Será Será*, and *Les Enchainées* ("Unchained Melody"), plus a number of French songs. This is a more relaxed performance, perhaps because Renaud was on home territory, than that on Pathé ATX 130, recorded at the Estoril Club in Portugal, which duplicates some of the numbers in the previous concert but less happily. My own favorite Renaud recording is Pathé ATX 115, a program of fourteen great songs from the Thirties, including *Sous les toits de Paris*, *Vous qui passez sans me voir*, *Je veux ta main*, and the old Lys Gauty favorite, *En écoutant mon cœur chanter*. A fine, nostalgic disc, this.

Some years ago, **Catherine Sauvage** jumped from the comparative obscurity of the Montparnasse night clubs to international fame with an electrifying performance of Leo Ferré's *Paris Canaille*. This extraordinary song is a vivid catalogue of the idiom, the places, and the characters of the Parisian underworld. Sauvage gave it a

Continued on page 112

*The consumer's guide
to new and important
high-fidelity equipment*

high fidelity



EQUIPMENT REPORTS

AT A GLANCE: The Radio Frequency Laboratories' "Suburban" is a complete stereo speaker system in a single cabinet. The two speaker systems are separated by a partition and radiate from the sides, angled to the rear.

Although performance measurements of individual sides of the RFL system show it to be an undistinguished performer, similar to many budget-priced systems, the two sides in combination proved in listening tests to produce unusually successful stereo. An exceptionally fine effect was produced, regardless of the listener's or speaker's position in the room.

In terms of listening effect, the RFL system matches or surpasses a great many stereo speaker systems we have heard in which the speaker units are demonstrably superior to those of the RFL (and in many cases more expensive as well). The attractive cabinetry and ease of installation make this a good choice for the listener who wants good stereo sound with a minimum of complication. The unit measures 35½ in. wide, 27¾ in. high, and 15¾ in. deep. It is available in walnut or brown mahogany at \$375.

IN DETAIL: Each side of the RFL system contains a 10-in. woofer and a cone tweeter of about 5-in. diameter. Each side is a fully enclosed box, and the speaker boards angle backwards at an angle of 15 degrees. The front of the cabinet is solid. Each side contains an 8-ohm system, and instructions show how to connect them for mono operation as a 4- or 16-ohm system. It has no level or balancing controls.

The sound from this system does not come from two holes, but rather from a wide, high, deep format like the original performance. One can sit or stand anywhere in the room and fully enjoy the music without beaming or loss of over-all stereo balance. There is no "hole in the middle." The sound level is uniform and does not get louder as one approaches the speaker. The speaker's position in the room is noncritical.

As a room divider (located some six to eight feet from a wall) the system sprayed the sound rearward, and the whole wall seemed to come alive with music. There was absolutely no sense of the sound coming from the cabinet in the middle of the room. Most surprising, one could walk all around the speaker without clearly localizing the sound or losing the broad spatial effect.

Listening quality, apart from the spatial characteristics, was very pleasant. It is definitely *not* a "hi-fi" type of sound. The highs are not crisp and sizzling, but neither are they strident or unpleasant. The bass is by no means awesome, or even particularly noticeable most of the time. On the other hand, there is no boom or tubbiness. The middles do not thrust themselves on the listener, and there is no presence in the usual sense of that much abused term.

In testing this speaker, we measured the performance of one side only. No polar measurements were made, since the system's design produces a diffuse, reflected sound. Frequency response, in free space, shows a fall-off of lows starting at about 100 cycles. There is a broad rise in the 300- to 600-cps region, followed by a depression between 1 and 5 kc. Above 5 kc the response rises, with a large peak, or plateau, extending from 5 to 11 kc. Above 12 kc the response falls rapidly. Throughout much of the frequency range there is roughness, particularly in the 2- to 4-kc region where the ear is especially sensitive. The apparent roughness below 300 cps is probably due to diffraction effect around the edge of the cabinet and to ground reflections, with the true response line passing through the centers of the peaks and holes.

RFL "Suburban" Speaker System



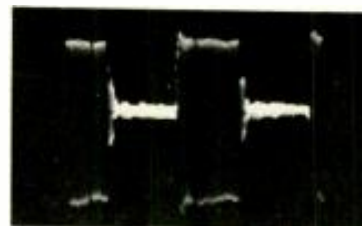
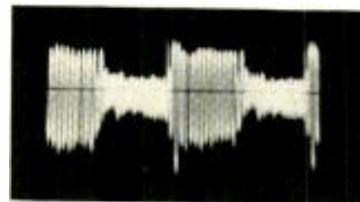
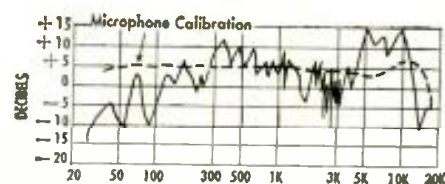
Harmonic distortion is reasonably low down to 70 cps, and does not exceed 15 per cent until 30 cps is reached. This is quite good considering that measurements were taken with approximately 12 watts driving the speaker.

If one judged a speaker solely by frequency response measurements, this system would be singularly unspectacular. The tone bursts pictured in the scope photos give a clue to this speaker's pleasant sound. The 5-kc tone burst response is typical of most of the frequency range. This is excellent transient performance. The 2.35-kc response, located in the roughest part of the speaker's response, was the worst we found, and this is better than some highly touted speakers at their best.

The efficiency of the RFL system is moderately high, and high-powered amplifiers are not needed to drive it. This, together with the absence of installation and placement problems, makes it an obvious choice for someone who simply wants good highly listenable sound. No technical knowledge is needed for installation. Use with one of the better complete stereo receivers results in a stereo system with minimum wiring (speaker wires and phono cables) and no cabinet worries. Monophonic programs played through the RFL system assume spatial properties difficult to distinguish from stereo.

The other discrepancy between how this system sounded and how it measured raises some interesting questions beyond the scope of this report to answer. One conclusion that seems apparent is that the factor of a relatively high ratio of reflected to direct sound dispersal, combined with very good transient response, is very important to good sound, or at least to reproduction that "listens" better than it tests.

H. H. LABS.



AT A GLANCE: The Heathkit AA-40 is a basic stereo power amplifier rated at 40 watts output per channel, or 80 watts monophonically. It contains bias voltage and balancing adjustments, requiring the use of an external voltmeter.

The AA-40 met or exceeded its specifications in every important respect. It proved to be rock-stable under a variety of load conditions, with a clean, solid sound that places it in a select but widening group of outstanding power amplifiers. Its price, in kit form, is \$79.95.

IN DETAIL: The Heathkit AA-40 consists of a pair of power amplifiers, each of which uses a pair of EL-34 output tubes driven by a 6AN8. The power supply uses four silicon diodes in a voltage-doubling rectifier circuit, and a selenium rectifier to supply bias to the output tubes. The components are assembled and unwired in an uncrowded manner, but the over-all dimensions of 11 in. deep by 15 in. wide by 7¼ in. high permit much leeway in installing the amplifier.

Each channel has a pair of meter jacks for bias and balance adjustment. To use them you connect a voltmeter across terminals and set the balance adjustment for zero reading. The voltmeter is then connected from one terminal to ground and the bias adjusted for a 1.5 volt reading. The two adjustments interact slightly, so they must be repeated once or twice until the correct settings have been obtained. Protective caps are provided to prevent accidental changes of these adjustments.

Each channel has its own level control. A slide switch marked STEREO-MON connects both channel inputs together for mono operation, with the channel A volume control affecting both channels. A phase-reversing switch in channel A assists in setting phase relations when the system is installed.

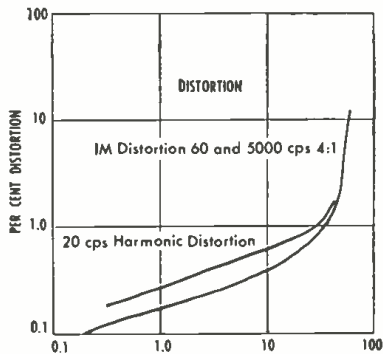
The output impedances are 4, 8, 16, and 32 ohms. When mono operation of the amplifier is desired, the two outputs are paralleled, with resulting impedances of 2, 4, 8, and 16 ohms. The unit also has a center channel output with the sum of the two channel signals fed to these terminals. This output may be used for a center-fill speaker. If so, an external L-pad is needed to adjust the volume on the center speaker.

A common problem in power amplifiers, particularly those with silicon rectifiers, is the high surge voltage which can appear on the filter capacitors and other components before the tubes have warmed up fully. This problem is solved in the Heath AA-40 with "surgistor," or current-limiting resistor, used in the primary power lead to the amplifier. The surgistor acts as a time-delay relay, which applies reduced voltage to the amplifier until sufficient current is drawn by the amplifier tubes, after which the relay closes and applies full voltage. Thus, full ratings of tubes and components can be utilized, without danger of shortening their lives by overload during warm-up.

In our tests, both channels proved identical in performance. Power output at mid-frequencies was 48 watts per channel at 1% harmonic distortion.

Heathkit AA-40 Stereo Power Amplifier





Power bandwidth (the frequency limits at which half power, or 24 watts, could be obtained with 1% distortion) was from below 20 cps to over 20 kc. Inter-modulation distortion, only a few tenths of a per cent at listening levels under 10 watts, reached 1% at 40 watts. A hint of the high quality of this amplifier can be seen in the 20-cycle harmonic distortion curve, which closely parallels the IM curve. Some 30 watts can be obtained at 20 cps with only 1% distortion, and the distortion at normal levels is very low. The frequency response of the AA-40 is within a few tenths of a db from 20 cps to 10 kc, and drops off slightly to about -2.5 db at 20 kc.

The hum level of this amplifier is entirely inaudible, being in the vicinity of 75 to 80 db below 10 watts. The amplifier is completely stable under any type of capacitive load we could devise. One rather severe test we apply to amplifiers is a measurement of output power at 10 kc with a 3-mfd capacitive load on their 8-ohm output terminals. This is a far more severe load condition than driving any commercial electrostatic speaker. As a rule, power amplifiers cannot deliver more than 20 or 30% of their normal output under this condition. The Heath AA-40 set a new record, with 37 to 38 watts output.

In listening tests, the amplifier sounded as good as it tested, clean and effortless at any level. One property it shares with a very few fine amplifiers is that of refusing to break up or sound mushy at the highest levels our ears could stand. This requires not only high power output, but a freedom from transient overload effects not found in all high-powered amplifiers. Much of the distortion commonly attributed to speakers at very high volume levels is actually caused by the amplifier. With the AA-40, even moderately rated speaker systems can give very clean sound at high levels. H. H. LABS.

Building the AA-40 — *Although this kit, with its approximately 470 parts, poses something of a challenge to the novice at assembling electronic components, the process should present no insurmountable obstacles. The instruction booklet is extremely easy to follow, and the large pictorials, each devoted to a single stage of construction, guide the builder from beginning to end. With careful reading of the manual and unhurried attention to each step, construction time should run about twelve hours.*

Pilot 602 Stereo Receiver



AT A GLANCE: The Pilot 602 is a relatively low-priced complete stereo receiver, containing separate AM and FM tuners and a pair of 15-watt stereo amplifiers with all necessary control functions in an attractively compact package. The FM tuner, while not overly sensitive, is very stable and drift-free, and has low distortion. The AM tuner is adequate and pleasant-sounding. The amplifiers, limited in power-handling ability, will drive moderately efficient speakers at reasonable volume levels. The 602, with enclosure, is \$249.50.

IN DETAIL: The first impression one receives of the Pilot 602 is of its relatively simple, logical panel styling and of its small size. It is no larger than many stereo integrated amplifiers, yet contains separate AM and FM tuners as well as the amplifiers. The compact styling has not been achieved at the expense of crowding of parts, and the unit runs relatively cool.

The FM tuner is just about as simple and basic as it can be, yet has many features usually associated with more expensive tuners. For example, it has a wide-band discriminator (our measurements indicate a bandwidth in excess of 600 kc). This makes tuning quite noncritical for low distortion, and minimizes the effects of frequency drift in the oscillator. The oscillator, furthermore, is one of the most stable we have encountered, with warm-up drift too small to measure with any reliability. As a result, a station can be tuned in as soon as the set has warmed up to the operating point, and no further retuning will be required. AFC is not provided but it is not missed.

The chief price one pays for the simplicity of the FM tuner is its relatively low sensitivity. It has a usable sensitivity, by IHFM standards, of 8 micro-

REPORT POLICY

Equipment tested by High Fidelity is taken directly from dealers' shelves. We report only on regular production-line models. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with High Fidelity's editorial department. Most equipment reports appearing here are prepared for us by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories, a completely independent organization whose staff was responsible for the original Audio League Reports. A few reports are prepared by members of the High Fidelity staff or by other independent testing organizations working under the general supervision of Hirsch-Houck Laboratories. All reports are signed.

volts, which is adequate for the vast majority of listening locations. In the New York metropolitan area the built-in line cord antenna suffices to pull in a dialful of FM stations. In more remote areas, an external antenna probably would be required.

FM tuner distortion, at 100% modulation, is less than 1% for signal strengths between 20 microvolts and 25,000 microvolts, which encompasses the majority of signals one is likely to tune in. It rises somewhat at very high signal levels. This is impressive performance from 4 tubes and 2 diodes.

Lack of adjacent channel selectivity and the excessive high frequency response are two faults. In at least one case where a strong local station was located two channels (400 kc) away from a weaker station, it rode through on the programs of the weaker station. This situation may not exist in most locations, but is more likely to be encountered in urban areas. The high frequency de-emphasis is not sufficient to give flat frequency response from FM broadcast stations, with a rise in response commencing at 1,000 cps and rising to 5 db in the 7- to 12-kc region. As a result, the sound of the FM receiver is rather bright, accentuating the higher frequencies. The effect is somewhat similar to that of detuning the receiver slightly. However, it adjusts fairly well with moderate use of the tone controls.

The AM tuner, also a simple unit with 3 tubes and a diode detector, performs as well as most such devices. It has adequate sensitivity with the built-in ferrite antenna, a low noise level, and low distortion. The frequency response is limited on the high end, and the tone controls bring no significant change. Although the AM sound is pleasant and listenable, there is never any doubt in the listener's mind as to whether he is listening to AM or FM.

A single tuning eye tube is used for both tuners. It is switched between them by the input selector switch, and remains on the FM tuner in stereo reception.

The power amplifiers of the Pilot 602 are rated at 15 watts each (music power rating), at 1% distortion. We do not use the music power rating system, about which opinions differ in the audio industry. All our measurements are on a steady state power output basis, and normally this will yield somewhat lower power figures than the music power rating for a given amplifier. In this case, the maximum steady state power at 1,000 cps was 13 watts at 2% distortion, or 8.5 watts at 1% distortion. The power bandwidth (frequency limits for half power output at a given distortion level) was 40 to 9,000 cps at 2% distortion and 42 to 8,000 cps at 1% distortion. These results indicate that the amplifiers are quite low-powered as these things go nowadays. The distortion curves confirm this. There were differences between the two channels, with one delivering 3.75 watts at 2% IM and the other delivering 7.5 watts at the same distortion level. Both channels were capable of about 1 watt output at 20 cps for 2% harmonic distortion.

The amplifiers none the less are stable and do sound good with speakers of moderate or higher efficiency. As a matter of fact, they sound perfectly good at levels far in excess of what one would expect to obtain from low-powered units and suggests the 15 watts music power rating is realistic.

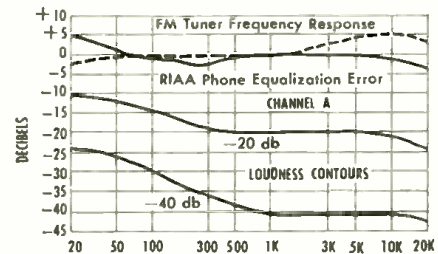
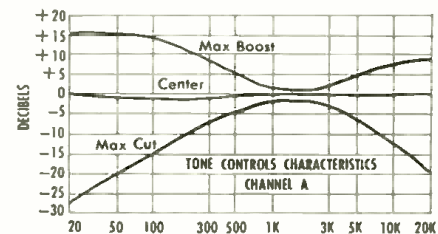
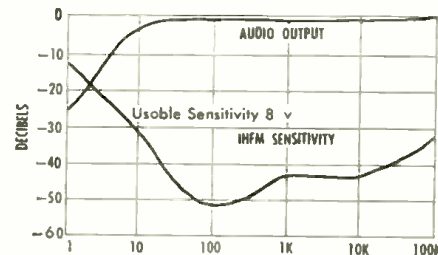
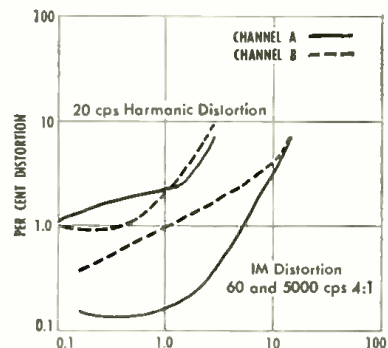
The tone controls have adequate range, though the bass control in particular must be used with moderation to avoid tubbiness. The loudness compensation (which may be switched on or off as desired) boosts the low frequencies only. The RIAA phono equalization is good over most of its range, having a rise at very low frequencies. This is usually beneficial since most speakers tend to lose response below 50 or 60 cps where the rise becomes effective.

The tone controls are ganged with the two treble controls for both channels on one shaft, and bass controls similarly arranged. To operate them independently the two concentric knobs are slipped off and a locking key removed. This makes all four tone controls independent of each other. The master volume control is also a ganged unit with excellent tracking between channels. The balance control reduces either to zero with no effect on the other.

The input selector switch has positions for stereo or mono phono cartridges (only one pair of inputs, but they are paralleled in the mono position), AM, FM, AM FM stereo, multiplex (with an external adapter), and stereo and mono tape recorder inputs. These last resemble the phono inputs, with a single pair of input connectors. They are high level inputs and must take tape signals from a tape preamp rather than directly from the tape heads. It is expected that the speaker phasing will be done by cut-and-try methods at the time of installation, but the designers of the Pilot 602 have recognized that there is no standardization of phasing in AM/FM stereo broadcasts. Thus, a front panel switch is provided to reverse phase on the AM tuner output only.

A useful feature of the Pilot 602 is a combined or "blend" channel output for a third speaker, which receives an (A + B) signal. This speaker therefore produces a mono output from mono as well as stereo programs. A resistor panel for regulating the volume of the third speaker also is provided. Another feature of this receiver is its automatic shut-off for use with record changers marketed by Pilot. It shuts off the amplifier as well as the changer.

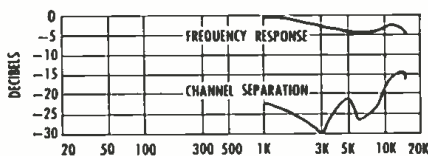
A final useful feature is the balancing adjustment for the output stages. Two small push buttons on the rear of the chassis are provided for this purpose.



With no program material, a button is pushed and released. If a click or thump is heard, the output tubes are not balanced. To balance them, the control is adjusted, while pressing and releasing the button, until no sound is heard. This procedure balanced the output stages as accurately as we were able to do with a distortion analyzer.

To sum up, the Pilot 602 is a very satisfactory stereo receiver for its price. It may not satisfy the "blast and blare" school of hi-fi enthusiasts, but it is capable of good sound and good over-all performance at an attractive price and in an attractive package that eliminates the problem of installing separate tuners, preamplifier, and power amplifier. The higher power, greater sensitivity, and other advantages of stereo receivers on the market inflict a considerable financial penalty on the buyer. Many people find the minor advantages unwarranted by the higher cost. H. H. LABS.

Audio Empire 108 Stereo Cartridge



AT A GLANCE: The Empire 108 is an improved version of the older Empire 88 stereo cartridge. Similar to the 88 in principle and general construction, it features better shielding, higher stylus compliance, and smoother, extended frequency response.

The 108 showed superior tracking ability, coupled with very close matching of the performance of the two channels. Listening tests showed it to be as good as our measurements indicated, marking it as an outstandingly good stereo cartridge. With a .7-mil diamond stylus, the 108 sells at \$34.50.

IN DETAIL: The Empire 108 is a moving magnet cartridge, with a stylus assembly easily replaced by the user. The only tool required is a small screwdriver, which is supplied with each cartridge (it comes in handy when installing the cartridge in the arm, too). The entire cartridge is enclosed in a metal shield, and has standard mounting dimensions which permit it to be installed in practically any arm.

Comparison is inevitable between this and the Empire 88, which it resembles so greatly. The frequency response curves of the two cartridges do not differ greatly, though the newer 108 is somewhat smoother above 10 kc. The "swayback" curve is typical of the Westrex 1A test record, and indicates that the response of the cartridge is very smooth over its entire range. The absence of peaks or holes is notable.

Channel separation is excellent, being better than 20 db all the way to 10 kc, and never getting worse than 14 db up to 15 kc. The most remarkable thing about these curves is the fact that the frequency response and channel separation of the two channels were identical over the entire range, within 0.3 db. This is within the normal measurement error of our instruments and techniques, and is the closest matching found in our tests of stereo cartridges to date.

These tests were performed with the cartridge mounted in an Empire 98 arm, and tracking at 2 grams. Arm resonance occurred at 9 cps, confirming the manufacturer's claim of a compliance of 6×10^{-6} cm/dyne. The resonance of the Empire 88 cartridge under the same conditions was in the 15- to 20-cps region, with an amplitude of 2.5 db, while the 108 resonance resulted in only 0.5 db rise in response.

The output of the 108 is identical to that of the 88, approximately 7 millivolts per channel at 5 cm/sec stylus velocity at 1,000 cps. The added shielding is quite effective, with the sensitivity to induced hum being 11 db less than the 88. The needle talk of the 108 is moderate, being audible with the playing volume low but not at any reasonable listening level.

Finally, the 108 passed the most severe tracking test we apply to a cartridge, which is playing the Cook Series 60 test record with its extremely large recorded amplitudes in the 30-cps region. This shows the ability of the stylus to follow large groove modulations without leaving its region of linear compliance. It is a small factor but one to be considered in the over-all evaluation of the cartridge's performance. The 108 tracked it at 3.5 grams.

The listening quality of the 108 is easy and unstrained, with no particular feature or coloration to set it apart from a number of other cartridges in sound characteristics. Its true caliber cannot be appreciated when playing most records, which can be tracked well by almost any cartridge. However, most people have some records which are cut so heavily that they sound distorted, or "blast," when the louder passages are played. We were pleased to find that many of these supposedly unplayable passages emerged relatively clean from our speaker system when played with the 108. Although most records can be played with as little as 2 grams tracking force, we stayed with the 3.5 gram force to get top benefit from the cartridge's tracking ability. H. H. LABS.

AT A GLANCE: The H. H. Scott Model 314 is an FM tuner replacing the well-known 311 series. Basically similar in circuitry and performance, the 314 sells for more than the 311 because of a simplified audio section and its use of a tuning eye tube instead of a meter.

The 314 has the wide-band detector circuit which has been used on all H. H. Scott tuners for some years. It is very sensitive and stable, and meets or exceeds the manufacturer's specifications in every respect. Price: \$114.95 (case extra).

IN DETAIL: The Scott FM tuners, after six years on the high fidelity scene, need little introduction. They differ from most FM tuners in their use of wide-band detector and limiter circuits. This type of circuit results in a good capture ratio, which means that the stronger of two signals on the same channel will take over and that the weaker will not cause any interference, even if both signals are very nearly the same strength. The most important benefit of a good capture ratio is the reduction of distortion due to multipath reception of the same signal. In certain areas, a signal arrives at the receiver by several paths of different lengths. The result can be similar to interference by another station on the same channel, with distortion of the received signal.

Another characteristic of wide-band detectors is the ease of tuning. A station appears at only one point on the dial, instead of three as is the case with narrow-band discriminators. Tuning is relatively noncritical for low distortion, and the tuner has little need for retuning during warm-up drift. For all practical purposes, drift is eliminated in Scott tuners. AFC is not really needed and is not provided.

A wide-band detector has low audio output, and some amplification is required. In the 314, a single tube (6U8) serves as limiter and audio amplifier, whereas two tubes were used in the 311 tuners. The output impedance is low enough, by virtue of negative feedback in the audio stage, so that cable capacitances of long shielded cables (up to 70 feet) have negligible effect on the tuner's high frequency response.

Its sensitivity, rated by IHFM standards, is 2.5 microvolts according to Scott, and 2.2 microvolts by our measurements. Scott is one of the few manufacturers to use the IHFM method of tuner sensitivity measurement, which we use in our tests, and which is far more meaningful than the often misleading "quieting sensitivity" figures one sees in advertisements.

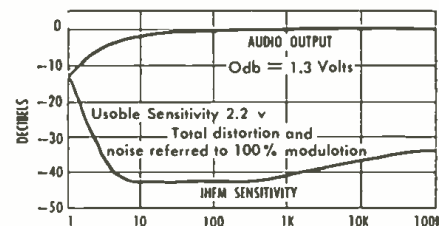
The distortion of the tuner, at 100% modulation, is less than 1% for signal strengths between 5 microvolts and 1,000 microvolts. The distortion rose slightly at higher signal strengths. In the service instructions accompanying the tuner (one of the few equipments we have tested which came with complete service and alignment instructions) there are complete specifications for practically every aspect of the tuner's performance. We tested for most of these characteristics and found that the 314 met or exceeded the specifications in every case but one. We could not duplicate Scott's figure of 55 db AM suppression, but came up with 30 db, a very respectable amount and not exceeded by many tuners we have tested.

The audio output of the 314 is 1.3 volts for 100% modulation, and does not change significantly for all signal strengths above 5 microvolts. Once the volume of the tuner is adjusted (by a control at the rear of the chassis) to match the level of one's phono cartridge, all stations came in at exactly the same volume (assuming equal modulation percentages). The frequency response is rated at 20 to 20,000 cps plus or minus 1 db, and we measured exactly that.

Since the front end of the 314 is identical to that of the other Scott FM tuners, we expected to find it drift free and noncritical in tuning, and we were not disappointed. We were unable to detect any drift, either from a cold start or under varying line voltage conditions. A station can be tuned in as soon as the tubes warm up and no further retuning will be required.

To summarize, the Scott 314 is for all practical purposes as sensitive as any FM tuner we have yet tested, as well as being drift-free and easy to tune. A few tuners have slightly lower distortion, but these are for the most part more expensive than the 314. In its price range it is hard to beat. H. H. LABS.

H H. Scott 314 FM Tuner



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Records in Review



Landowska's Tribute to Haydn

by H. C. Robbins Landon

THE TWO RECORDS in this set—taped in the spring of 1958, in connection with the 150th anniversary of Haydn's death—turned out to be Wanda Landowska's artistic last will and testament. Obviously the project was a venture on which considerable time and effort was spent, and RCA Victor has presented the album handsomely. Ideally, it would have represented the perfect cross section of Haydn the piano composer, perfectly interpreted. If I feel that the set does not attain this lofty end, I offer my opinion in deep humility before Landowska the artist and in gratitude to RCA Victor for having sponsored the endeavor.

The basic trouble lies, it seems to me, in Landowska's choice of music. Haydn composed about sixty piano sonatas, of which eight are lost (we have their thematic beginnings in an old catalogue). Like his symphonies and quartets, they range from the earliest period, when Haydn was a penniless student in Vienna, to the London period, when the composer was at the height of his creative powers.

The works chosen for this album are as follows: Sonatas Nos. 34, 35, 37, and 40, all from the late 1770s and early 1780s; Sonata No. 49, a fine late work written for Haydn's aristocratic friend Marianna von Genzinger; and the *Andante con variazioni* in F minor, written in 1793 shortly after Marianna's death. The selection of six works from about fifty-two sonatas and a dozen smaller pieces could, and I think should, have been made more judiciously.

The Sonatas 34 and 35, in E minor and C major, are ones played by piano students the world over; this fact does not alter their basic musical quality, which is not up to Haydn's best. The C major piece, in particular, is very thin; and, like Mozart's Sonata in C, K. 545, it scarcely suggests the strength and power of its composer. Sonata No. 40 is a pleasant, pastoral piece, but it too does not measure up to the level of the really impressive Haydn piano pieces. Fortunately, we are given the magnificent *Andante and Variations* with its amazingly modern coda.

But it is still a matter for regret that Landowska did not turn her attention to the three greatest piano sonatas—Nos. 50-52, written in London in 1794—or to the Sonata in C minor No. 20, which, early (1771) though it is, places Haydn in the ranks of the great.

The second drawback, I think, lies in Landowska's interpretation. Some of the works (Nos. 35, 37, 40) are played on the harpsichord, the others on the piano. Students of Haydn know that with the exception of the sonatas written before 1760—which are probably clavichord works—his keyboard works were composed primarily with the pianoforte, not the harpsichord, in mind. The above mentioned Sonata No. 20, for example, contains dynamic marks impossible to execute on a harpsichord. Ah, clever readers will say, what about that Haydn harpsichord in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde to which Landowska refers in the annotations? It is quite true that Haydn owned a clavicembalo and played it almost every day while in the service

of Prince Esterházy; but he did not play sonatas on it. The harpsichord...

G major Nocturne, Op. 37, her exquisite shifts of tonal hue come particularly to the fore, and it is only after one has compared her version with the new Moiseiwitsch (a most unfair thing to do, of course!) that her tendency to over-interpret becomes apparent. There is too much sentiment in her account, and it rather upsets the symmetry of the piece. She has not yet learned how to rein in her feelings without throttling them—a common and quite understandable short-coming. On the other hand, her Prelude No. 8 is very successful. Here the slower than usual tempo permits all the little grouplets of notes for once to count for

something in the total design.

On an Epic disc Werner Haas, another young pianist who has not as yet performed in this country, can be heard in a complete rendition of the fourteen Waltzes. In this performance one high spot succeeds another in a breath-taking display of incandescence. This artist is a Gieseking pupil and he plays in a manner one would associate with that master. These are altogether patrician readings; facile, elegant, and poetic. The tempos tend to the mercurial and some of them may surprise a bit (Waltz No. 3 for instance). The rubato is tasteful, the pedaling judicious. Haas has, in addition

to all these virtues, a splendid probity and rhythmic exactitude. This is the most exciting set of the Waltzes since Lipatti's Angel issue.

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Werner Haas, piano.
 • EPIC LC 3738. LP, \$4.98.
 • • EPIC BC 1104. SD, \$5.98.

A Butterfly with an All-Star Cast

by Conrad L. Osborne



Victoria de los Angeles

AS MUCH as any opera in the repertory, *Madama Butterfly* is the leading lady's show. With the repellent Pinkerton absent from the close of Act I onward except for his brief emergence for "Addio, fiorito asil," and with the role of Sharpless amounting to very little in the way of musical interest or emotional impact, the work can be—and often is—carried almost entirely by its hard-working soprano heroine. Since the role responds to a wide range of interpretative approaches, from that of a Dal Monte to that of a Tebaldi, the natural cycle of a soprano turnover is sufficient to maintain the opera's box-office status from season to season. The doleful fact is that the simplicity of this casting formula usually operates to the audience's disadvantage, for a company will seldom waste three stars on an opera that can be carried by one. This is why Capitol's new version of *Butterfly* is especially welcome, for it offers not only Victoria de los Angeles as Cio-Cio-San, but Jussi Bjoerling as Pinkerton and Mario Sereni as Sharpless, making this the best-sung *Butterfly* in the catalogue.

Mme. de los Angeles' singing is carefully controlled, and while it is most beautiful, it might benefit from just a shade less control. The frequent sensation that the singer is holding back when one would like her to let go leads to an impression that perhaps the voice is not as rock secure as its user would like it to be—else why the necessity of keeping such tight rein on it? Yet the quality is consistently pure and lovely, and when the soprano does unleash the voice, as in

parts of the Act I love duet, "un bel di," or particularly in a splendid "Tu, tu, piccolo lddio," she is very impressive and the general restraint makes the effect of her sudden outburst at "Ah! Scordarmi!" (to Sharpless in Act II) all the more piercing. Lovers of fine singing will find little to complain of in De los Angeles' work; and unless their standards are superhuman, they will find nothing whatever to complain of in the work of Bjoerling. It would have been conspicuous consumption of the most wreckless sort to have cast him in this part in the opera house, but what a difference it makes to have Pinkerton's role sung this way! The last year of the tenor's life found him at vocal flood tide—the last time I saw him, in December 1959, was in a *Tosca*, which, except for one strangled tone on "Vittoria!", was as smooth and glowing as one could hope for. This *Butterfly* is his last complete recording, and he gives us a liquid outpouring of ringing, bronzed tone, phrased and shaped with consummate taste and musicianship. This is genuinely great singing, and constitutes, I think, an even better Pinkerton than Gigli's. Sereni, too, is a very positive element in this production. He may not be a choice interpreter of the major Verdi roles, but he is an excellent Sharpless, being possessor of a mellow, round baritone which he uses well. Miriam Pirazzini's Azucena sound is a trifle gusty for Suzuki's music, and I do wish a more imposing Bonze might have been found, but the other small roles are nicely cast. Santini's reading is a low-pressure one and sometimes seems in need of a pickup.

but it is affectionate, and should prove easy to live with.

There are now three stereo editions of *Butterfly* available, each having its distinct virtues. London's well-recorded set features the effulgent, dramatic Cio-Cio-San of Tebaldi; a sturdy, if slightly stodgy Pinkerton from Bergonzi; and a very disappointing Sharpless in Enzo Sordello. It also has Serafin, a Puccini conductor *par excellence*. Victor's performance is intimately scaled, with Anna Moffo in a delicate, sensitive portrayal. Cesare Valletti as a small-scaled, fine-grained Pinkerton. Renato Cesari as a solid Sharpless, and Erich Leinsdorf in an interpretation that is clean and clear, if not very powerful. It is an interesting version, but I cannot escape the feeling that the singers are, through intelligence and care, "getting away with it," and Valletti's aristocratic *tenore leggero* seems to me utterly wrong for Pinkerton. On balance, the best of the three stereo sets is Capitol's, which also has bright, broad sound to commend it.

PUCCHINI: Madama Butterfly

Victoria de los Angeles (s), Cio-Cio-San; Miriam Pirazzini (ms), Suzuki; Silvia Bertona (ms), Kate Pinkerton; Jussi Bjoerling (t), B. F. Pinkerton; Piero de Palma (t), Goro; Mario Sereni (b), Sharpless; Arturo La Porta (b), Yamadori; Paolo Montarsolo (bs), Lo Zio Bonzo. Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, Gabriele Santini, cond.
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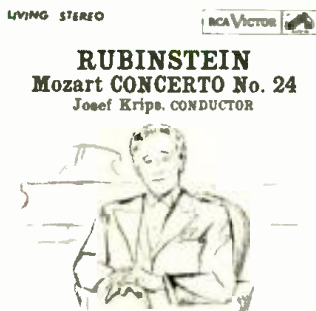
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 • VANGUARD VRS 1059. LP. \$4.98.
 • • VANGUARD VSD 2073. SD. \$5.95.

The world does move. It seems to me that a performance like this of the Bach would have been impossible for Elman (and for Golschmann too, for that matter) twenty-five or thirty years ago. For the violinist to compress the famous vibrant, velvety tone into a steady, less juicy one, for him to abjure the glides and slides and honeyed G string that sent shivers down the spine when he played Sarasate and Lalo, would have been unheard of. So too would it have been for Golschmann to accompany a Bach concerto with a harpsichord and with less than sixty strings. Yet here are both of these artists doing just these things. Moreover, in the first movement, when the theme is worked out in the orchestra under decorative figures in the solo violin, the orchestral portion is clearly heard.

Lest the scholars and historians throw out their chests too far over their influence on performing style, however, it must be reported that there is some backsliding on Side 2. Here the lovely lines of the Nardini are pulled a little out of shape in the first movement by slowings-up and accelerations, and in the Vivaldi no continuo instrument is audible. Nevertheless, if only for the Bach, this is a worthwhile disc. N.B.

BACH: *Suite for Flute and Strings, No. 2, in B minor, S. 1067; Brandenburg Concerto, No. 5, in D, S. 1050*

Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.
 • RCA VICTOR LM 2460. LP. \$4.98.
 • • RCA VICTOR LSC 2460. SD. \$5.98.

The high spot on this record, to me, is the slow movement of the *Brandenburg*. Here Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute; Jelka Stanic, violin; and Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord, hit the right mood at once and sustain it to the end. The music flows along with a kind of grave serenity; in this thoughtful and poetic conversation among three equals each voice is given the proper weight as it contributes to the discourse alone or together with others. The rest of the Concerto is not up to this level, mainly because the harpsichord, when it is a solo instrument, can scarcely be heard, except in its first-movement cadenza.

In the Suite, Janigro has interesting ideas, some of which come off better than others. Among the successful ones, I would place the notion of playing each

half of the Sarabande first without the flute and then with it. Not so convincing is the dynamic curve in the Polonaise—*forte* suddenly sinking to *piano* and then just as suddenly rising to *forte* again. In the Double of this movement the weakness of the harpsichord leaves a hole between the flute and the bass. The rest of the Suite is nicely done, on the whole. If the introductory Grave seems metronomic, the final Badinerie is taken at just the right speed—animated but not breathless. As usual with Janigro, a cellist, the bass line is never neglected, and since Bach's basses are always alive and meaningful, this is a particular advantage of the present performances. The sound in general is good; the mono version requires more volume than the stereo. N.B.

BARBER: *Sonata for Piano, Op. 26*—

See Prokofiev: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 3, in A minor, Op. 28; No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83.*

BARTOK: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 2; No. 3*

Géza Anda, piano; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18611. LP. \$5.98.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138111. SD. \$6.98.

Two eminent Bartókians here join forces for a magnificent pair of performances in a recording of marvelous clarity and fidelity well worth its premium price. The contrast between the waspish Second Concerto and the richly symphonic Third is fascinatingly wrought. It would be difficult to imagine a finer achievement so far as these two works are concerned. A.F.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 61*

Yehudi Menuhin, violin; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Constantin Silvestri, cond.
 • CAPITOL G 7229. LP. \$4.98.
 • • CAPITOL SG 7229. SD. \$5.98.

The Beethoven Violin Concerto is probably the most perfectly classical piece of writing in the entire concerto literature. But has there ever been a more intensely romantic musical creation? Menuhin's subtly reflective playing does justice to both aspects of the score, and of course in doing so, it does justice to him. Such masterful, purposeful, and heartfelt musicianship speaks volumes for the violinist's dedication and intelligence. The performance, to be sure, is not letter-perfect from a technical standpoint, but what wonderful inwardness and nobility it has! The tempos are broadish throughout (one might even find that of the third movement a bit heavy), but impetus is maintained at all times. To his credit, Menuhin doesn't find it necessary to slow down for the G minor section in the first movement as most players do.

In the violinist's two earlier versions of the work, the conductor was Wilhelm Furtwängler (No. 2 of these is still listed in the catalogue under an import label), Silvestri and the Vienna Philharmonic were an inspired choice for the stereo remake. There is less emphasis on technical precision and more on detailed

phrasing in the present orchestral support, but in general it is very similar to that provided by the late German maestro. The soloist is a bit too close to the microphone in the third movement, but otherwise the sound is notable for its honeyed luster and burnished spread. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartets for Strings, No. 7, in F, Op. 59, No. 1; No. 8, in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2; No. 9, in C, Op. 59, No. 3; No. 10, in E flat, Op. 74; No. 11, in F minor, Op. 95*

Budapest Quartet.

• COLUMBIA M4L 254. Four LP. \$19.92.
 • • COLUMBIA M4S 616. Four SD. \$23.92.

BEETHOVEN: *Quartet for Strings, No. 8, in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2*

Janáček Quartet.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 18936. LP. \$4.98.
 • • WESTMINSTER WST 14118. SD. \$5.98.

The Budapest offers here a good set which should have been better. To start with my primary objection, after several weeks I still have been unable to assemble these four stereo discs so as to have an album in which all eight sides are properly centered. The customer who lays down some twenty dollars ought to receive better than a *Harp* (say) in which every sustained note goes sour, as happens in the copies at hand. Wobbly pitches in chamber music are a torture for the damned, not something to accept without protest through an album as long as this.

When my records were good (about forty per cent of the time), the stereo effects made it possible to position the four men and provided the free exchange between voices Beethoven intended. My mono set (which was right on center throughout) could not duplicate that, although the sound quality was admirable. On the other hand, if mono suits you, you may prefer to stay with your older Budapest versions of these works, some of which are musically superior to these new ones. (This group has never, for example, surpassed its original edition of the Op. 59, No. 2, issued here as Victor 78s.)

The paramount thing, of course, is that all five of these quartets are masterpieces of the highest order and that the Budapest is able to convey them with an immediacy of communicative force that remains altogether remarkable. There is nothing to exceed it, for example, in the playing of the Janáček Quartet. Recorded in a dreadful barn of a place, their sound suffers from echo elephantiasis of an especially disturbing sort. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN *Sonata for Horn and Piano, in F, Op. 17*—See Brahms: *Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano, in E flat, Op. 40.*

BEETHOVEN: *Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral")*

Ingeborg Wenglor, soprano; Ursula Zollenkopf, contralto; Hans-Joachim Rotzsch, tenor; Theo Adam, bass; Leipzig Broadcast Chorus (in the Ninth); Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Franz Konwitschny, cond.

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- • EPIC BSC 107. Two SD. \$11.96.

Both of these are soundly conceived and well-executed performances in the German tradition. If they make no claims to greatness, they nonetheless hold attention and reward the listener with a variety of commendable features—from the firm registration of the woodwind to the lyric sensitivity that seems to be Konwitschny's primary asset. The most completely ingratiating thing about these records, however, is the open, natural quality of the stereo (which the mono versions suggest but, naturally, cannot duplicate). The effect of presence is very strong, growing rather than diminishing with re-hearing, and it is achieved by underplaying all the engineering devices usually employed to underline stereophony. It is not hard to believe that one really is midway back in a fine hall, and there is never a slip in microphone placement or sonic perspective to shatter that mood.

Among presently available Ninths, such an achievement is enough to recommend this edition to many people; but the listener will have to judge for himself how successfully it compensates for soloists of less than top capabilities and an approach that suggests rather than

states the full majesty of the score. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Mravinsky, cond.

- MK-ARTIA 1505. LP. \$5.95.

Those who have attended concerts in Leningrad and been record shopping in Moscow's GUM department store will find both this disc and the sounds it contains familiar. Among the first of a series of "cultural exchange" releases to make use of actual Soviet-made records, this one is slightly superior in quality to those the tourist can buy in the Russian shops for a dollar. A solid piece of warp-resisting vinyl, it is notable for its excellent surfaces, good centering, and first-class sound. (Both the frequency response and dynamic range are up to international standards—or better—despite the absence of high fidelity from the Soviet home market.) The label—need one say that it is red?—is printed in a mixture of Russian and English. Encasing the disc is a British-made plastic-lined envelope, and there is a sturdy outer sleeve.

Records bought in the U.S.S.R. come

in cellophane-lined envelopes of heavy, decorated paper. (Kremlin towers and folk dancers are favorite motifs.) Artia's superior packaging may have its effects in Moscow, just as our record makers could well take a look at the quality standards in evidence here, particularly in the light of the cost in the country of origin.

The sound is an admirable likeness of the finest of the Soviet orchestras under its permanent conductor. There is an impressive feeling of solidity that makes the climactic passages ring out, but is never lost in even the quietest moments. Even though I do not share Mravinsky's approach to this score, I have great respect for conductor Mravinsky as a musician. His is a very dramatic reading, placing first emphasis on nuance and phrase rather than rhythmic continuity. Even in the final two movements, where rhythmic drive is given greater prominence, it is sacrificed to produce a vivid contrast. The finest moments, therefore, have the majesty of lightning flashing against a dark sky, but this is no "apotheosis of the dance." Indeed, if you did not recall other versions, you might even forget that the score had been so characterized.

If you collect Sevenths, or prefer the work in a deeply inflected performance, this is a version to acquire. Indeed, it's an interesting record on many counts, and well worth your investigation.

R.C.M.

BERG: *Concerto for Violin, Piano, and Thirteen Wind Instruments; Four Songs, Op. 2; Seven Early Songs*

Ivry Gitlis, violin; Charlotte Zelka, piano; Viennese Wind Ensemble, Harold Byrns, cond. (in the Concerto); Catherine Rowe, soprano; Benjamin Tupas, piano (in the Songs).

- LYRICHORD LL 94. LP. \$4.98.

This version of the Chamber Concerto was originally issued on Vox some years ago (with the Violin Concerto overface), but has not been available for a long time. Its reissue is very welcome, for the Chamber Concerto is to instrumental music what *Wozzeck* is to opera: one of the supreme lyrical statements of the twentieth century. It is beautifully performed here, and the recording sounds as if it had been made yesterday. So does the recording of the songs so finely sung by Miss Rowe and so well played by Mr. Tupas. The Seven Early Songs sound like Strauss, but those of Op. 2 are all-but-full-blown Berg. The texts of the latter are given, but not of the others.

A.F.

BINKERD: *Symphony No. 2—See Kay: *Sinfonia in E**

BRAHMS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in B flat, Op. 83*

Sviatoslav Richter, piano; Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.

- RCA VICTOR LM 2466. LP. \$4.98.
- • RCA VICTOR LSC 2466. SD. \$5.98.

Richter recorded this work on October 17, 1960, two days after his American concert debut. Barely more than a fortnight later, the disc was in the record shops. It is my own opinion that RCA should have allowed the artists more rehearsal time. The disc was obviously

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made under confused circumstances, for Fritz Reiner, the orchestra's permanent conductor who was scheduled to conduct the concert and the recording, was taken ill at the last moment and Leinsdorf's substitution was a hasty one. The conductor is bent on a heroic performance of the score in the Toscanini manner, but he doesn't appear to have imposed his ideas upon the orchestral musicians with enough conviction to convey the grand architecture of the music. To be quite blunt about it, he doesn't even seem to be disciplining his players from a technical standpoint and there are many places where the orchestral attacks are slipshod and coarsely balanced.

But while the orchestral performance could well have turned out better than it did, the sweeping canvas of this composition does not seem to jibe with Richter's kind of piano playing. The pianist is a delicate water-colorist and this music demands that the interpreter apply oils thickly with a palette knife. Richter of course realizes this; but although he strives for the big line, it eludes him. The heavily scored passages tempt him to force his tone beyond its "good-quality zone" and he thus coarsens his own interpretative inclinations. (In the first movement, for example, he begins very slowly, and a bit unsteadily. A few bars later, he has pulled out all the stops and is coasting full speed ahead, on the verge of a crack-up.) In the scherzo, his exaggeratedly accented pace stalks the music like a praying mantis. There are all sorts of gear shifts and fluctuations in accent, tempo, and phrasing. The more genial music in the end movements doesn't tax the artist's sense of the heroic to such a degree, and consequently, he does his best playing there. But even so, it is not enough; this music should convey more than daintiness.

Glossy and distant sonics add to the total effect of superficiality. Here's hoping that Richter's subsequent recording dates in this country yield more satisfying results. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Ernte Gesänge, Op. 21 (4)*
 †Dvořák: *Biblical Songs, Op. 99 (6)*

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Jörg Demus, piano.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18644. LP. \$5.98.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138644. SD. \$6.98.

Fischer-Dieskau has the Lieder machine going at high speed again, this time on songs of a scriptural nature. Since this is his second recorded version of the *Vier ernste Gesänge* (the former being with Herta Klust for Decca), we are faced with the rather terrifying possibility that we may eventually have two F-D renditions of every song ever written. For all his oft-demonstrated skill, he is not entirely successful with the *Serious Songs*. I suspect that most listeners share my preference for a darker timbre in these works. Moreover, a couple of the declamatory passages elicit somewhat unmusical barking from the baritone—the most conspicuous example being the middle section of the first song, from the words "Es fährt alles an einen Ort" through "... unterwärts unter die Erde." This criticism must be taken within the context that Fischer-Dieskau's performance of the cycle is still probably the most interesting on LP. He is a master



Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau

of the kind of extreme dynamic and coloristic change that occurs frequently in the songs, and of the sustained lyric expression demanded by *O Tod, wie bitter bist du* or the cycle's concluding statements.

For many collectors, the real prize on this disc will be the six selections from Dvořák's *Biblical Songs* on Side 2. These are fascinating, sensitive settings—romantic, but simple and controlled. They deserve much more attention as concert pieces than they are given; fortunately, Fischer-Dieskau is at the top of his form, and does them full justice. Demus' collaboration is very fine in both groups, and I am happy to note that DGG has included at least English paraphrases with the German texts, though they have still not given us any critical notes on the songs. The sound is top quality in both editions. C.L.O.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 73*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
 • EMI-CAPITOL G 7228. LP. \$4.98.
 • • EMI-CAPITOL SG 7228. SD. \$5.98.

Whatever Beecham is conducting, he insists upon—and almost always gets—immaculate performances from the orchestra, performances which bring out the inner voices with unusual clarity. Such is the case in this reading of the Brahms Second, though clarity is never achieved at the expense of a warmly sung phrase. This, in fact, belongs among Sir Thomas' most glowing interpretations. It has only one inconsistency: at the end of a rather conservatively paced finale, the conductor suddenly accelerates the tempo in order to produce a more brilliant conclusion. This, however, is a relatively minor flaw in an otherwise highly commendable presentation. What is less satisfying is the sound. Evidently in an attempt to achieve concert hall perspective, both the mono and stereo versions were recorded at some distance from the orchestra. This procedure tends to deemphasize the strings; the violins, in particular, lack presence. I do not find that matters are improved in the two-channel edition, though that version is marked by a pleasing and natural degree of stereo separation. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a*—See Elgar: *Enigma Variations, Op. 36*.

BUSONI: *Six Elegies, Sonatinas: No. 1; No. 6 ("Carmen Fantasy"). Toccata*

Edward Steuermann, piano.
 • CONTEMPORARY M 6501. LP. \$4.98.

Busoni was one of the cleverest chord jugglers who ever lived—his music simply cannot be looked squarely in the eye. Try to focus on any given chord progression and it will suddenly wrangle itself into another—often totally unrelated—key with perplexing facility. The occasionally fanciful, often merely fancy, compositions here recorded are baffling and rather frustrating. Plentiful ideas they have, but most of them, unfortunately, belong to other men. The Toccata is a neurotic display of garish spirituality. Elsewhere the idiom looks backward to Liszt and forward to Scriabin and Prokofiev, with more than a few furtive glances thrown at Carmen!

It is rather pathetic to see a giant musical intellect of Steuermann's stature expounding such vital energy on this chromatically dissonant cocktail music (he also wrote the program notes), when he could, at seventy-eight, be conserving it for worthier material. The recording is brilliantly lifelike, but a bit lacking in resonance. H.G.

CARTER: *Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord*—See Shapiro: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1*.

CHOPIN: *Piano Music*

Tania Achot-Haroutounian, Michel Block, Maurizio Pollini, Irina Zarickaja, piano.
 • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 19218/19. Two LP. \$5.98 each.
 • • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 136218/19. Two SD. \$6.98 each.

For a feature review of these recordings see p. 61.

CHOPIN: *Waltzes (14)*

Werner Haas, piano.
 • EPIC LC 3738. LP. \$4.98.
 • • EPIC BC 1104. SD. \$5.98.

For a feature review including this recording see p. 61.

COPLAND: *Billy the Kid; Rodeo*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
 • COLUMBIA ML 5575. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6175. SD. \$5.98.

Aaron Copland and the twentieth century are of an age, and there was nothing more natural than that the most popular of American conductors record the most popular of Copland's orchestral pieces in tribute to the composer's sixtieth birthday last year. The two works have, of course, been recorded countless times before, both together and in other couplings, but this is their finest tandem appearance, both as to performance and recording. A.F.

COUPERIN: *Concerto for Two Cellos*
 —See Hindemith: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*.

DEBUSSY: *Preludes for Piano, Books I and II (complete)*

Daniel Ericourt, piano.
• • KAPP KDX 6501S. Two SD. \$11.96.

Taken as an entity, these are educational performances. This is to say that the total effect of Ericourt's finely judged playing appeals more to the intellect than to the emotions. The pianist is a fine purposeful artist, whose scrupulous integrity and pianistic command are equaled by his sure-handed grasp over this particular idiom. The outlines are clearly presented; the rhythmic pulse is firm; and the character of the music is in no way misrepresented. *La fille aux cheveux de lin* has deft simplicity and beauty; *Danseuses de Delphes* and *La Cathédral engloutie* both have appropriate solemnity; *La Puerta del vino* has sensuousness and warmth; *General Lavine* emerges with its witty good fun intact. So it is with all of the pieces except, possibly, *Voiles*, which is in this playing more suggestive of burlap than of delicate silk. What is missing from these otherwise splendid readings is the multicolored hue which would have raised them to incandescent heights. Ericourt's rather *sec* approach leaves him short of truly great Debussy playing. Powerful, ringing piano tone throughout the set. H.G.

DVORAK: *Biblical Songs, Op. 99*
(6)—See Brahms: *Ernste Gesänge, Op. 21* (4).

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor, Op. 95* ("From the New World")

Hamburg International Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm von Luden, cond.
• • Tops 6002. SD. \$3.85.

The symphony receives here a straightforward, eminently acceptable reading from Von Luden, the first conductor I have ever encountered who repeats the exposition of the first movement. Surfaces on the honey-colored disc are extremely quiet, and the stereo effect is satisfactory; but the instrumental presence is not all it should be, particularly because the upper frequencies do not come through clearly, making it impossible, for example, to hear the triangle in the Scherzo. P.A.

ELGAR: *Enigma Variations, Op. 36*
†Brahms: *Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a*

London Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, cond.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2418. LP. \$4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2418. SD. \$5.98.

Sensibility and sensitivity mark Monteux's interpretations of these two great sets of orchestral variations. For me, the high point of his *Enigma* comes not in the towering climaxes, which he builds very well indeed, but in Variation 9 (*Nimrod*), where the composer's *ppp* is strictly observed in a hushed, almost mysterious beginning, followed by a prolonged drawn-out crescendo that rises to an *ff*, then suddenly subsides to a *pp*. Clarity and brightness characterize Monteux's handling of the Brahms *Haydn Variations*. The London Symphony plays in peak form in both works, and the recorded sound is natural—in stereo, well distributed. P.A.

GIARDINI: *Tamborino and Gigue*—
See Hindemith: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*.

GOULD: *Quartet for Strings, Op. 1*

Symphonia Quartet.
• COLUMBIA ML 5578. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6178. SD. \$5.98.

This first composition by pianist Glenn Gould to be recorded is in one enormous movement lasting thirty-six minutes. Its basic idea is set forth by the composer as follows: "For some time [prior to 1953, when the work was begun] I had had the urge to write a work in which the achievement of Schoenberg in unifying motivic concepts would be applied to an idiom in which the firm harmonic hand of key relationship would be invited, its discipline acknowledged, and the motivic manipulation controlled thereby."

The entire vast structure is based upon a four-note motif, and, to my taste, it is often worked to exhaustion. This is especially true of the fugal sections; the slow sections are pleasantly reminiscent of late Beethoven, middle Brahms, and early Schoenberg. The performance presumably has the composer's sanction. The recording, strangely enough, is mediocre. A.F.



HANDEL: *Concertos for Oboe and Orchestra: No. 8, in B flat; No. 9, in B flat*—See Mozart: *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, in C, K. 314*.

HAYDN: "Landowska Plays Haydn"

Sonatas for Piano: No. 34, in E minor; No. 35, in C; No. 37, in D; No. 40, in G; No. 49, in E flat. Andante con variazioni, in F minor.

Wanda Landowska, piano and harpsichord.
• RCA VICTOR LM 6073. Two LP. \$9.98.

For a feature review of this album, see p. 59.

HAYDN: *Lo Speciale*

Elisabeth Schönauer, soprano; Eva Brinck, soprano; Erich Zur Eck, tenor; Wladimir Smid-kowar, baritone; Camerata Academica des Salzburger Mozarteums, Rolf Maedel, cond.
• EPIC LC 3739. LP. \$4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1105. SD. \$5.98.

Haydn's *The Apothecary* is a three-act comic opera which he wrote in 1768 for the theatre on the Esterházy estate. It is a mildly amusing piece based on a play

by Goldoni using comedy plot 3B, the one about the old man who wants to marry his pretty young ward but is outwitted by a young man (in this case two young men, one of whom wins the girl). The music, which is not out of Haydn's top drawer, includes several numbers that are well worth hearing, and all of it is put together with that master's wonted skill. The work must have made a diverting evening for the Prince; it evidently still does for ordinary folk, because performances by opera workshops and other small companies have been taking place in recent years after about two centuries of neglect. These performances have been based on a German version dating from 1895, which telescoped Haydn's original into one act and made some other drastic changes. Last year, however, the full score was published after Haydn's original (and somewhat incomplete) manuscript. The present recording follows Haydn in some respects and the old German edition in others. It presents each number of the original and does not attempt to find a substitute for the missing numbers. On the other hand, it omits the overture and a good deal of the recitative, cuts almost every number, and changes Sempronio, the apothecary, from a tenor to a baritone, which means that his solo numbers are transposed and in concerted numbers he often drops an octave below where he is supposed to be. In the amusing "Turkish" nonsense aria, "*Salamelica, Semprugna cara*," Miss Brinck sometimes sings an octave higher than she should.

All four of the singers are acceptable, the ladies supplying some especially attractive work. Miss Schönauer in "*A fatti tuoi badar tu puoi*," Miss Brinck in the coloratura of "*Un certo tutore in Francia vi fu*." Except for a moment in the opening aria when singer and orchestra are not together, Mr. Maedel keeps his forces well in hand, and the sound is good. N.B.

HINDEMITH: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*

†Couperin: *Concerto for Two Cellos*
†Giardini: *Tamborino and Gigue*

Paul Tortelier, cello; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.
• SUPRAPHON LPV 474. LP. \$5.98.

Good cello concertos are rare and great ones are almost nonexistent. Here, however, is a good concerto that bids fair to rank as great. It is full of the fantasy, impish humor, and strength of texture so characteristic of Hindemith, and it exhibits his special mastery in writing virtuosic music for strings. The performance is first-class, the recording passable.

The so-called concerto by Couperin on the other side turns out to be no concerto at all but a transcription, by one Paul Bazelaire, of short harpsichord pieces by that master. They do not suit the two-cello medium at all well, but the delightful dance movements by the forgotten Felice de' Giardini (1716-96) fit it very well. A.F.

HINDEMITH: *Octet for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Violin, Two Violas, and Double Bass: Sonata for Viola Unaccompanied, Op. 25, No. 1*

Irving Ilmer, viola (in the Sonata); Fine Arts Quartet; members of the New York

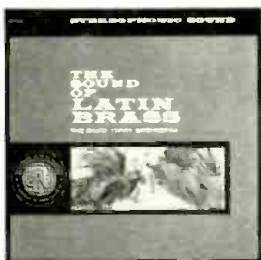
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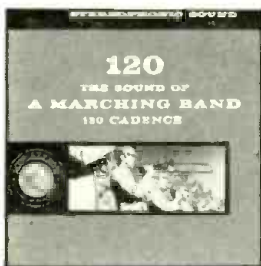
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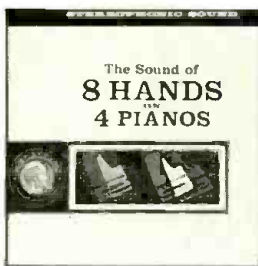
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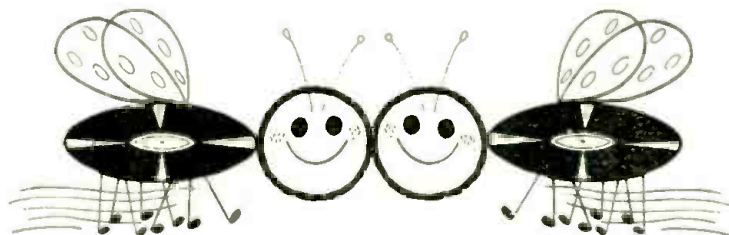
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- Woodwind Quintet (in the Octet).
 • CONCERTDISC M 1218. LP. \$4.98.
 • • CONCERTDISC CS 218. SD. \$4.98.

The Octet is a very recent work and sounds as if Hindemith had set out to prove that one can be as dry within a tonal framework as one can within the framework of the 12-tone system. The Sonata for Viola is a very early work, reflecting Hindemith's preoccupations as a virtuoso on that instrument and likewise his fascination with Bach. It is like a Bach solo sonata brought up to date.

My critical observations about both these compositions are, I realize, clichés. But there is no quality of cliché about the elegant performances and recordings provided here.

A. F.

JANACEK: *Slavonic Mass*

Soloists; Chorus; Organ; Brno Radio Symphony Orchestra, Břetislava Bakala, cond.

- SUPRAPHON LPV 251. LP. \$5.98.

A folk-song mass which its composer quite rightly said was more suited to performance in the open air than in church. It is all very tuneful, at times quite operatic, at brief moments decidedly on the sentimental side. In short, a typical production of that strange genius, Leoš Janáček, who is only now, a quarter of a century after his death, beginning to emerge from obscurity. The performance is obviously authoritative and the recording is passable.

A.F.

KAY: *Sinfonia in E*

†Binkerd: *Symphony No. 2*

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, George Barati, cond.

- COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 139. LP. \$5.95.

The Sinfonia in E is the most important work of Ulysses Kay to be recorded to date. It is short—its four movements last only eighteen minutes—but its brevity is the sign of great compactness, clarity, and fine workmanship; Kay wastes no one's time. The work is very tuneful, beautifully orchestrated, well contrasted, and a genuine enrichment to one's musical experience.

As to the symphony by Gordon Binkerd on the other side, I am not so sure. Its two movements are on the long side; it maunders, and I lost interest in it well before it was over.

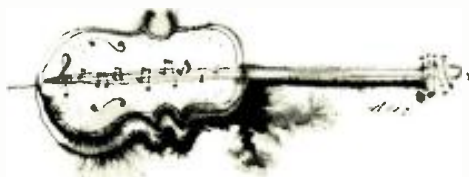
Performances of both pieces seem to be excellent, but the recording is rather harsh and stringy. The labels on the disc have been reversed, but it is not difficult to tell what's what.

A.F.

LALO: *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21* —See Wieniawski: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22.*

LEKEU: *Quartet for Piano and Strings (Unfinished); Sonata for Cello and Piano: Third Movement, "Confessions of an English Opium Eater"; Poèmes (Three Songs)*

Natalie Ryshna, piano; Israel Baker, violin; Alexander Neiman, viola; Armand Kaproff, cello (in the Quartet). William Van Den Burg, cello; Vernon Duke, pi-



ano (in the Sonata). Kay McCracken, soprano; Vernon Duke, piano (in *Poèmes*).

- SOCIETY FOR FORGOTTEN MUSIC M 1008. LP. \$4.98.

- • SOCIETY FOR FORGOTTEN MUSIC S 2008. SD. \$5.95.

When the Belgian composer Guillaume Lekeu died in 1894 at the age of twenty-four, he left behind a number of interesting works. Of these, only the Violin Sonata is in any way familiar to present-day audiences. In an attempt to resuscitate Lekeu's worthwhile compositions, the Society for Forgotten Music has recorded his Trio in C minor, as well as the three works on the present disc. Most rewarding are the songs, carefully wrought little gems with especially appealing piano parts. The Chaussonesque Piano Quartet, of which only two movements were completed, contains some fine thematic material; but the movements are inordinately long and repetitious, though they make pleasant enough listening. According to Vernon Duke's notes, the Cello Sonata, written when Lekeu was only eighteen, is poorly devised. Duke feels, however, that the third movement, subtitled *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, is worth a hearing.

The performances, while adequate, are not distinguished. The reproduction, in both mono and stereo, appears to be lacking in sufficient highs; as a result, the strings sound rather lifeless and the piano quite wooden. In stereo, the piano is consistently at the left, the strings at the center and right, and the voice in the middle. The over-all sound is fairly close up, a characteristic more noticeable in the monophonic edition than in stereo.

P.A.

MOZART: *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra, in C, K. 314; Quintet for Oboe and Strings, in F, K. 370*

†Handel: *Concertos for Oboe and Orchestra: No. 8, in B flat; No. 9, in B flat*

†Albinoni: *Concerto for Oboe and Strings, in D, Op. 7, No. 6*

André Lardrot, oboe; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska, cond.

- VANGUARD VRS 1060. LP. \$4.98.
 • • VANGUARD VSD 2074. SD. \$5.95.

Mr. Lardrot, who has on several previous records shown himself to be a first-class artist, continues in this album (entitled "The Virtuoso Oboe, Vol. 2") his pleasant journey through eighteenth-century compositions that feature his instrument. The Handel concertos (the oboe has little to say for itself in No. 9) are early pieces of some interest but no particular importance; Albinoni's work is sunny and cheerful; and the Mozart Concerto (also well known as a Flute Concerto in D) has a lighthearted, charming finale. It is the Mozart Quintet, however, that raises the level of quality above that of mere entertainment. This work is a little masterpiece. In its Rondo's long chains of

rapid figures Mr. Lardrot makes it seem that he never has to breathe. While the first movement of the Mozart Concerto is a little nervous, Prohaska and his orchestra settle down thereafter and provide competent support. The sound is excellent in both versions.

N.B.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 21, in C, K. 467*

Rosina Lhevinne, piano; Juilliard Orchestra, Jean Morel, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5582. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6182. SD. \$5.98.

Although Rosina Lhevinne reached the age of eighty last spring, opportunities to hear her play in public have been rare. I remember attending a series of Bach concerts directed by Albert Stoessel at the Juilliard School of Music years ago. At one of these a little lady came out with the great Josef Lhevinne to play a concerto for two claviers. She proceeded timorously to one of the pianos, apparently unaccustomed to facing a large audience. Mme. Lhevinne had left the limelight to her celebrated husband, but there was nothing subservient about her playing that night. She has been teaching at Juilliard for almost forty years and, together with the late Olga Samaroff and Isabelle Vengerova at Curtis, is responsible for many of the most gifted young American pianists now performing in public.

That Mme. Lhevinne can still do, as well as teach, is amply demonstrated here. The solo part sparkles, the scales are even and pearly, the tone sings. She receives expert support from Morel and his orchestra, and the sound, except for a touch of dryness in the bass, is good. A fine souvenir of one of the important figures in American piano pedagogy.

N.B.

MOZART: *Le Nozze di Figaro*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Countess; Anna Moffo (s), Susanna; Fiorenza Cossotto (s), Cherubino; Eberhard Waechter (bs), Count; Giuseppe Taddei (bs), Figaro. Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.

- ANGL 3608 D/L. Four LP. \$19.98.
 • • ANGEL S 3608 D/L. Four SD. \$23.98.

There are many fine qualities in this performance and very little that is seriously wrong. Giulini has spent some twenty years in the opera house, and this recording, like his recent *Don Giovanni*, shows the mark of that experience. For instance, he conveys the over-all spirit of each number without neglecting detail. To cite only one such detail: in the second-act finale, immediately before Antonio's entrance, basses and horns twice anticipate by one beat a forte entrance of the vocal quartet. The basses here really dig into their sustained note, giving a forte that is not coarse but rich, wonderfully enhancing the beauty of this section.

Taddei, as Figaro, sings quite pleasantly in the main, sometimes achieving variety of color, as in "Aprite un po'"; at other times he is a little rough-edged ("Se vuol ballare") or reveals a tendency to ham it up ("Non più andrai"). Waechter's Count is much superior to his recent *Don Giovanni*: his singing is attractive most of the time; only in some moments of stress does he tend to shout.

Anna Moffo's Susanna seems uneven. In the opening duets her voice sounds a bit metallic, but then it clears up. Sometimes ("Deh vieni non tardar") she spins out a long legato phrase, but at other times ("Venite, inginocchiatevi," "Crudel! perchè finora?") she seems so intent on giving each tone a special color that she fragments the line, present or implied. Miss Schwarzkopf's Countess is moving and human and is sung with much skill. Curiously enough, the signs of vocal wear and tear noticeable in her secco recitative practically disappear in the arias. The Cherubino, Fiorenza Cossotto, whom I do not remember encountering before, is charming. Her voice has a silvery, sensuous, and slightly boyish quality that seems just right for the role.

Except for a moment or two when the violins are not strong enough, the balances are excellent. The sound in general is first-class, and the stereo has been well handled, giving the unmistakable impression of movement in some scenes and of characters separated in space in others. Perhaps the most effective touch of this kind is in the finale, when the voices of Figaro and Susanna, who are supposed to be concealed at opposite sides of the stage, seem to come from the far sides of the speakers, with the other voices sounding between these extremities. N.B.

MOZART: *Symphonies: No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"); No. 39, in E flat, K. 543*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.

- EPIC LC 3740. LP. \$4.98.
- • EPIC BC 1106. SD. \$5.98.

The orchestra has a full, rich sound, maybe a little weighty in some moments of the finale of the E flat Symphony. But the music flows, with warmth and precision. These masterpieces conceal no secrets from Szell; and they have for him no dead spots. Without exaggeration, with no attempt at a personal "interpretation," he helps the Mozartean song pour forth as he scrupulously observes every mark in the score. A few added grace notes in the finale of the *Haffner* are sheer exuberance and quite unobjectionable; the repetition of the exposition in the first movement of the same symphony is not indicated in the printed score, but it is certainly characteristic of the form. (What does Mozart's manuscript say? Very hard to tell; it is hidden away in a New York vault and no one is permitted to make a photostat or microfilm of it.) The Andante con moto of the E flat Symphony really moves, with ineffable grace.

All the winds are plainly audible when they should be (with clearer definition, naturally, in the stereo version), and when a theme is split between strings and woodwinds, it is a delight to hear the smoothness with which the join is made. The Cleveland Orchestra may sound rather large for this music at times, but it leaves no doubt that it is an orchestra of the first rank. N.B.

NARDINI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor*—See Bach: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in E, S. 1042.*

PAGANINI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in D, Op. 6*—See Wieniawski: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22.*

PFITZNER: *Symphony in C, Op. 46; Three Preludes to Palestrina*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferdinand Leitner, cond.

- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 19176. LP. \$5.98.
- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 136022. SD. \$6.98.

This is a symphony in the Bruckner-Mahler tradition which was completed only twenty years ago. If you can forget the anachronism, it is an interesting work, thoroughly representative of one of the important secondary figures in twentieth-century German music. Pfitzner spans more than eighty years, 1867-1949, and Mahler (among others) regarded him as an honored colleague. We see now that his idiom never grew and that he had only a few things to say, but they are still worth hearing.

Palestrina, which dates from 1917, is Pfitzner's best-known work, and the meditative quality of the prelude to the final act is impressive. If you enjoy *Parsifal*, you ought to enjoy this.

Leitner's performances are consistently sympathetic and aware of the distinctive features of the composer's vocabulary. R.C.M.

POULENC: *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*

†Saint-Saens: *Carnaval des animaux*

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Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe, duo-pianos; Philharmonia Orchestra, Pierre Dervaux, cond.

- CAPITOL P 8537. LP. \$4.98.
- • CAPITOL SP 8537. SD. \$5.98.

Rather strangely, this seems to be the first 33-rpm recording of the spiffy little concerto by Poulenc, with its music hall tunes, its wide-eyed naïveté, and its delicate gamelan effects. Certainly it is the only stereo version. It is very neatly and deftly done by all concerned, including the recording engineers. The Saint-Saëns on the other side has, of course, been recorded dozens of times, but this is one of its better versions.

A.F.

PROKOFIEV: *Peter and the Wolf*, Op. 67

†Saint-Saëns: *Carnaval des animaux*

Beatrice Lillie, narrator; Julius Katchen and Gary Graffman, piano (in Saint-Saëns); London Symphony Orchestra, Skitch Henderson, cond.

- LONDON CM 9248. LP. \$4.98.
- • LONDON CS 6187. SD. \$5.98.

In tackling the role of narrator for Prokofiev's fanciful tale, Miss Lillie ventures into terrain long dominated by male performers. Of course, there is no reason why a woman reader should not handle the task successfully, although the only previous recording using a female narrator (the Eleanor Roosevelt-Koussevitzky version of the late Forties) was a pretty dull affair. Miss Lillie's reading is anything but dull—if anything it suffers from an excess of high spirits, a good

deal of archness, and a generous slather of sophistication. It is not a performance likely to appeal to the kiddies (it obviously wasn't intended to), and in fact the comedienne's most devoted admirers might well prefer, as I do, a less theatrical account of the story. Miss Lillie is more at home in the sophisticated Ogden Nash rhymes for Saint-Saëns's zoological excursion, although there is a tendency to underline Nash's witticisms too heavily.

On the brighter side are the splendid orchestral performances Skitch Henderson has obtained from the London musicians. The Prokofiev has tremendous *élan*, the Saint-Saëns considerable subtlety and charm. The duo-pianists turn in good efforts too, although I don't think that they quite capture all the humor the composer wrote into his music. Both scores benefit greatly from the excellence of London's stereo sound, and the stereoisitic effects in the French score, which have Miss Lillie nimbly nipping from one speaker to the other without missing a line, are most amusing.

J.F.I.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 3, in A minor, Op. 28; No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83*

†Barber: *Sonata for Piano, Op. 26*

Daniel Pollack, piano.
• MK-ARTIA 1513. LP. \$5.98.

When a Sviatoslav Richter comes to the United States, you expect the American recording firms to record him the minute he lands, but you do not expect American pianists in Russia to be recorded in that country. That, however, is what has happened here. Daniel Pollack is a young man from Los Angeles who was one of the runners-up when Van Cliburn knocked 'em dead in winning the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow in 1958. Pollack seems to have made some impression on his own since that occasion, and he is certainly the first American to record American music in the Soviet Union. His performances of all three sonatas are very brilliant, but the tinny recording makes them sound shallow. So interesting a departure deserves better luck, mechanically speaking.

A.F.

PUCCINI: *Madama Butterfly*

Victoria de los Angeles (s). Cio-Cio-San: Miriam Pirazzini (ms). Suzuki; Silvia Bertona (ms). Kate Pinkerton; Jussi Bjoerling (t), B. F. Pinkerton; Piero de Palma (t), Goro; Mario Sereni (b), Sharpless; Arturo La Porta (b), Yamadori; Paolo Montarsolo (bs). Lo Zio Bonzo. Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera, Gabriele Santini, cond.
• CAPITOL GCR. 7232. Three LP. \$14.94.
• • CAPITOL SGCR 7232. Three SD. \$17.94.

For a feature review of this album, see page 62.

RAVEL: *Alborado del gracioso; Bolero; Le Tombeau de Couperin*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5569. LP. \$4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6169. SD. \$5.98.

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CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

slow (15:06) readings of that work and is perhaps a shade lacking in dramatic intensity, yet what a pleasure to hear it handled so straightforwardly, in rock-steady tempo, precisely controlled dynamic gradations, and expressive coloristic nuances. The *Tombeau* suite and *Alborado*, however, are transcendental, seeming to evoke a special sense of personal involvement on the part of both Ormandy and his players, whose galvanic verve as well as magisterial authority endow these pieces with a distinction that immediately obliterates one's memory of any others, on or off records.

Columbia's engineers too have realized that such superlative interpretative and executant virtuosity (in the finest sense of that often misused term) warranted comparably flawless recording—stereo so luminous, sweet, and yet powerful that it loses or blurs no detail of the Philadelphians' uniquely plastic and vari-colored tone. Judging from the *Bolero* side only, the monophonic edition is harder as well as less spacious in sonic quality, but since the "B" side of my review copy is obviously a defective pressing, I can't judge the LP fairly. No matter: it's the SD which reveals the full beauties of what must surely rank as one of the most precious jewels in Ormandy's—and the whole stereo—discography. R.D.D.

RAVEL: Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: in D (for the left hand); in G

Samson François, piano; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, André Cluytens, cond.
 • ANGEL 35874. LP. \$4.98.
 • • ANGEL S 35874. SD. \$5.98.

The G major Concerto here receives a performance that, in the jazz vernacular, could be termed "real crazy"; since the music itself is real jazzy, this is all to its good. François's playing is full of character, slightly dogmatic and mannered at times, but laden with brilliance and personality. The idiomatic orchestral playing is a big asset, too. The trumpets have a characteristically Gallic frizziness, and the woodwinds are pungent and firm in texture. Everyone sounds as if he is having great fun, and the excellent microphone placement allows the witty orchestral comments to be heard clearly.

In the left-hand Concerto, a curious balance is immediately felt: the orchestra is very distant, seemingly almost in the next room, in relation to the solo instrument. This fault of engineering (if it be deemed a fault) is not at all unpleasant, however; one quickly gets used to it. This remote orchestral placement allied with the quicker than usual tempo prevents the beginning of the piece from sounding like a cauldron bubbling over as it usually does. The soloist's performance is a thriller. François grips the attention from his first entrance, and holds it. He has style, brilliant technique, and stunning authority.

Both pressings have the same quirks of balance which I have mentioned. The stereo is fuller, the LP cleaner. H.G.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Scheherazade, Op. 35

Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, Alexei Melik-Pashayev, cond.
 • MK-ARTIA 1512. LP. \$5.98.

It is not likely that this performance of *Scheherazade* will prove very stiff competition for the better versions now in the catalogue. It is an acceptable reading, a bit on the broad side—somewhat too broad in portions of the second movement—and the playing is generally of a high order. Chief interest will probably lie in the quality of the sound in this, among the first Soviet MK discs to be distributed in the United States. As represented by this example, that quality is very good, with a fairly wide, even, natural range of sonics, optimum microphone placement, and generally quiet surfaces. These MK releases are a truly international effort. The discs are pressed in Russia, the inner sleeves are made in England, and the outer jackets are manufactured here. P.A.

SAINT-SAENS: Carnival des animaux
 —See Poulenc: *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*.

SAINT-SAENS: Carnival des animaux
 —See Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67*.

SCHUBERT: Goethe Lieder

Wandlers Nachtlied (I and II); Gany-med; Jägers Abendlied; An Schwager Kronos; Meeres Stille; Prometheus; Gesänge des Harfners; An den Mond; Auf dem See; Erster Verlust; Der Musensohn.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Jörg Demus, piano.

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- • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138117. SD. \$6.98.

In the sustained phrases of the *Gesänge des Hufners*, Fischer-Dieskau's voice displays just the beginning of a slow quaver—not enough to ruffle the silky tonal surface, but enough to make one hope it is the result of only a temporary indisposition. Not that these songs are poorly sung, for here—and throughout the rest of the recital—the baritone sings with the same ease of attack, pinpoint dynamic control, and sensitivity to text that characterize his singing at its best. *Prometheus* is very imposing. *Der Musensohn* delightfully bouncy. Demus' accompaniments are helpful as is the

DGG sound in both versions. C.L.O.

SCHUBERT: *Trio for Piano and Strings, No. 2, in E flat, Op. 100*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; Adolf Busch, violin; Hermann Busch, cello.
• ANGEL COLH 43. LP. \$5.98.

It is doubtful if anyone ever performed the Schubert Trio in E flat with more interpretative insight than Rudolf Serkin and the two brothers Busch, Adolf and Hermann. Angel may be justified in reissuing this 1936 performance in its "Great Recordings of the Century" series, if only to make sure that one of the Busch-Serkin versions of this work remains in the catalogue. There is a newer, better one by these same artists, recorded

some fifteen years later and released on Columbia ML 4654. The sound, especially of the piano, was far superior to that on the present disc, and the interpretation was generally more thoughtful and more intense. Columbia's LP has, however, been deleted, and the Angel reissue is more than satisfactory from both the musical and engineering standpoints. P.A.

SCHUETZ: *Die sieben Worte Jesu Christi; Five Motets*

Soloists; Akademie Kammerchor; String Ensemble of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Ferdinand Grossmann, cond.
• LYRICHORD LL 91. LP. \$4.98.

This is a reissue of a Vox disc first released about ten years ago. It is not a shining example of Schütz performance, but the music is so beautiful that I find I can overlook the lugubrious and rather annoying sound of the organ in *The Seven Words*, the occasional lack of firmness in one or another of the choral lines in the motets, and the distortion in the sound of some of the choral portions. The unnamed tenor in *The Seven Words* is particularly good; with respect to the other soloists and the chorus in general, this is one case where even a merely adequate performance seems to me better than none at all. An English translation of the text of the cantata is provided, but no texts are printed for the motets. N.B.

SCHUMANN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 54; Waldszenen, Op. 82*

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Gunther Wand, cond.
• LONDON CM 9260. LP. \$4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6181. SD. \$5.98.

This is, strangely enough, the only recording Backhaus has made of the Schumann Piano Concerto. He plays it with massiveness and frowning authority. His style has never been particularly emotional or coloristic and the years have, if anything, cooled his ardor still further. There is something rather admirable about the pianist's granitelike integrity, but many listeners will prefer more poetic grace and temperamental brio in this highly romantic work. The same comments apply even more strongly to the *Waldszenen*. Backhaus' didactic (but not infallible) fingers and drily old-fashioned style impale Schumann's little tone poems like butterflies on a mounting-board. All told, then, this is a record to *respect*, a tribute to a dedicated artist who has passed his seventy-fifth year. My own preference is for Fleisher, Istomin, and Lipatti in the Concerto, and Richter in the *Waldszenen*.

The Vienna Philharmonic is more notable for spirit than for precision on this disc, and the sound is good but slightly muffled in the Concerto, brighter and more cleanly focused on the solo side. H.G.

SHAPERO: *Quartet for Strings, No. 1*
†Carter: *Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord*

Walter Trampler, viola; Charles McCracken, cello (in the Shapero). Anabel



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Brief, flute; Joseph Marx, oboe; Lorin Bernsohn, cello; Robert Conant, harpsichord (in the Carter).

• COLUMBIA ML 5566. LP. \$4.98.
 • • COLUMBIA MS 6176. SD. \$5.98.

It is a trifle embarrassing for me to review this record, since I was the chairman of the Naumburg Foundation jury which selected these pieces for recording. That, however, was long years ago. Columbia has been very leisurely about making these discs, and in the meantime I had forgotten entirely what the pieces sounded like. Coming back to them afresh is a rather fascinating experience.

The music of Harold Shapero possesses a very rare quality: it has a completely personal profile within the confines of a conservative idiom. Harmonically and rhythmically there is nothing here to startle anyone, but the music flows with a cool, gracious fluency all but unique in modern American chamber music. This work exemplifies very well what Virgil Thomson had in mind when he said the music of the next decades may well seek originality through expressiveness rather than expressiveness through originality. But it was written twenty years ago.

Elliott Carter's sonata is a very different affair. Here the idiom is far from traditional, but bristles with complexities of harmony and rhythm alike. The handling of the colors and resonances of harpsichord, flute, oboe, and cello is extraordinarily brilliant, but above everything the work exemplifies Carter's own statement: "I regard my scores as scenarios for performers to act out on their instruments, dramatizing the players as individuals and participants in the ensemble. To me the special teamwork of ensemble playing is very wonderful and moving, and this feeling is always an important expressive consideration in my chamber music."

Performance and recording in both instances leave nothing to be desired.

A.F.

STRAUSS, JOHANN: *Die Fledermaus*

Hilde Gueden (s), Rosalinde; Erika Köth (s), Adele; Regina Resnik (ms), Orlofsky; Hedwig Schubert (speaker), Ida; Giuseppe Zampieri (t), Alfred; Waldemar Kmentt (t), Von Eisenstein; Peter Klein (t), Dr. Blind; Walter Berry (b), Falke; Eberhard Waechter (b), Frank; Erich Kunz (speaker), Frosch; Omar Godknow (speaker), Lord Barrymore; B. Fasolt (speaker), Ivan; Andre von Mattoni (speaker), Carikoni. Guests at Orlofsky's ball: Renata Tebaldi, Birgit Nilsson, Leontyne Price, Joan Sutherland. Ljuba Welitsch, Giulietta Simionato, Teresa Berganza, Mario del Monaco, Jussi Bjöerling, Ettore Bastianini, Fernando Corena. Vienna State Opera Chorus. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

• • LONDON OSA 1319. Three SD. \$17.94.

The most striking feature of this performance is, obviously, the "gala" concert held at Orlofsky's in the Second Act. It is a lot of fun, and will probably be enough to attract many buyers for the release, but I imagine some collectors will be influenced at least in part by the performance of *Die Fledermaus* that surrounds it. From the start, the produc-

tion has two important advantages in the conducting of Karajan and the technical work of London's engineers. The conductor elicits playing of tremendous dash and precision from his magnificent orchestra, and at several points gets his singers to maintain an unflagging tempo in ensemble I should have thought impossible. And London's sound men have, once again, done their work to perfection.

Some really remarkable effects of distance and direction are achieved, and the whole performance sits on a cushion of air, just as it would in an acoustically excellent auditorium. The effect in the "Dui-du" ensemble is unforgettable. Indeed, the whole party scene is, if anything, a bit too realistic—after all, I want the sensation of listening to a carefully prepared performance, not of hav-

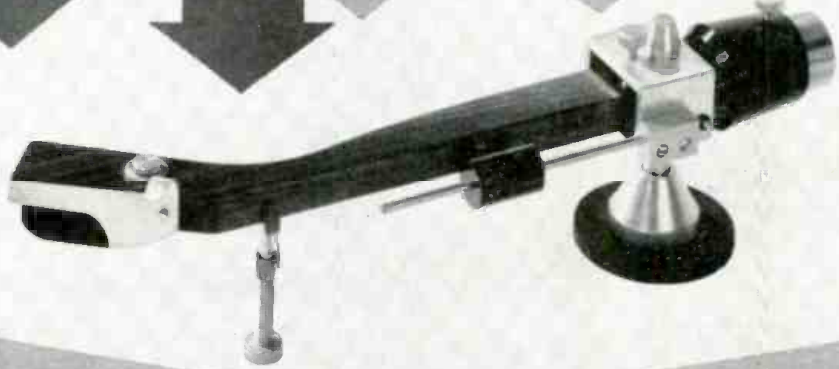
ing sneaked into the Beaux Arts Ball for an evening of eavesdropping.

The cast is in general quite strong. One could cavil at the condition of Hilde Gueden's low voice, but her sophisticated Rosalinde is so charmingly done as to make such criticism seem rather beside the point. Both Zampieri and Köth are beset by a rapid tremolo that is none too appealing, and Miss Köth's "Mein Herr Marquis" falls somewhat flat, though her verses to champagne are piquant enough. Resnik is a languorous Orlofsky, and Messrs. Kmentt, Berry, and Waechter (the latter two reversing the roles they took in the recent Angel release) are all in top form. Kunz's Frosch, repeated from the Angel set, is a small masterpiece of slapstick. As for the party turns by Orlofsky's "guests," one or two of them, such as the Simionato/

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Bastianini version of "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better," are strictly for laughs, but most of them have a perfectly legitimate claim to interest. Certainly Berganza, Price, and Del Monaco are in their respective elements. Corena brings real stylistic flair to his rendition of "Domino"; Sutherland sings a stunning "Il bacio"; Nilsson is not at all ludicrous in "I Could Have Danced All Night"; Tebaldi does the "Wiljalied" ravishingly; and Bjoerling turns in a "Dein ist mein ganzes Herz"—the first verse in Swedish, the second in German—that ranks with Tauber's. Ljuba Welitsch sings "Wien, Wien, nur du allein" with approximately the same quality as of old, reduced to sadly small dimensions. Miss Resnik acts as a sort of Viennese Ed Sullivan throughout the sequence.

Somebody has done some minor re-

writing and amending of the dialogue in order to work in a few topical jests, depressingly undergraduate or amusingly corny, according to your mood. C.L.O.

STRAVINSKY: *Pétrouchka; The Rite of Spring*

Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond.
 ● COLUMBIA D3L 300. Three LP. \$12.50.
 ● COLUMBIA D3S 614. Three SD. \$14.50.

For a feature review of this album, see p. 60.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 23*

Byron Janis, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Menges, cond.
 ● ● MERCURY SR 90266. SD. \$5.98.

This is a finely paced, well-controlled version of the Concerto. Although the interpretation is rather reserved, it is not at all cold or antiseptic. Janis has always, of course, been a formidable technician, but on this disc he dispatches bravura passages with more abandon and less inhibition than he did previously. His playing is strong, forceful, and honest. Of the fine details throughout the performance, one might note: the properly accented playing of the first subject in the opening movement (Janis correctly stresses the first note and not the second as most pianists do); the brilliantly elf-like precision in the second movement *prestissimo*; and the effectively placed *tenuto* following the double octave run at the end of the last movement. (Here, less poised performers tend to rush into the final climax without letting the octaves make their maximum effect.)

Menges has ironclad control over the orchestral forces at all times, but this iron never turns to steeliness. I also like the acoustics of the hall in which the recording was made; the sound is very pure but without the bleak hardness that sometimes characterizes Mercury's engineering. H.G.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35*

Valery Klimov, violin; Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Eliasberg, cond.
 ● MK-ARTIA 1502. LP. \$5.98.

The only distinguishing feature of this disc is that it presents the Concerto uncut, a rarity these days. Klimov's performance, however, has little personality, and the playing is sometimes out of tune. Besides, there is considerable distortion in the sound of the upper violin register, making it appear mushy. The best uncut version, available only in mono, is by Grumiaux; the preferred stereo editions, though with the usual cuts, are by Heifetz and Stern. P.A.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 1, in G minor, Op. 13 ("Winter Dreams")*

U.S.S.R. State Symphony Orchestra, Konstantin Ivanov, cond.
 ● MK-ARTIA 1508. LP. \$5.98.

Tchaikovsky's First Symphony, which dates from his twenty-seventh year, is surely his weakest effort in this form. He had not yet learned to concentrate and organize his ideas as he did in the later symphonies, but there are nevertheless some pleasant ideas here. Ivanov and his Soviet forces give the music a broad, glowing performance. The orchestra, particularly the strings, sounds very good; only the solo oboe has a thin, uneven quality. The quality of the Russian MK recording is also good—full, well rounded, and rather wide-range. P.A.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.

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Von Karajan is a man inclined to work a composition up to a high polish and to round off its edges. That is precisely what he does with this symphony. The result is a sonorous but rather too gentle interpretation. The reproduction is of a high quality, especially in stereo, where the orchestra is equitably dispersed between the two channels. P.A.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique")*

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Furtwängler's *Pathétique* evidently enjoys some renown among disc collectors, for it has been reissued in Angel's "Great Recordings of the Century" series. There is no denying that his was an admirably thought-out conception, carefully proportioned in the gradual build-up of the first and third movements, but I fail to find it the towering interpretation that the accompanying booklet claims it to be. The second movement is quite unexceptional, and the final lament is far too fast to be convincing. The sound is still remarkably good, but there are several places where the nature of the breaks between 78-rpm sides made awkward splices unavoidable.

One of the most effective recent recordings is that by Leinsdorf. It is a fairly straightforward account, one that allows the music to speak for itself. The tempos are sensible, the playing first-rate, and the sonics superb, especially in stereo, where the panorama of sound has a distinctly lifelike quality. P.A.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Mass in G minor*

†Bach: *Cantata No. 4, Christ Lag in Todesbanden*

Roger Wagner Chorale; Concert Arts Orchestra (in the Bach).

- CAPITOL P 8535. LP. \$4.98.
- • CAPITOL SP 8535. SD. \$5.98.

In his jacket notes, Alan Rich calls the Vaughan Williams "the unchallenged masterpiece of English church music in our time." and Rich, as usual, is right. The work was composed in 1923, but it had to wait for stereo to come into its own so far as the phonograph record is concerned.

As in the instrumental *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, Vaughan Williams here contrasts two widely spaced choirs with each other and with a solo quartet. The spatial effect is of the essence of the composition. It suggests the depths and echoing resonances of the great English cathedrals; and the model polyphony of the English Renaissance composers and their predecessors colors the music at every point. The result is a work of the highest nobility and the deepest mysticism—this, in short, is major Vaughan Williams. Except for a certain paleness in the solo voices here and there, the performance is superb, and the recording, which captures the antiphony

of the music without exaggerating it, is of the finest.

For many years *Christ Lag in Todesbanden*, sung, rather oddly, in Catalan, was the only Bach cantata on records. Now there are fifty-six in the American lists, but No. 4 is the most frequently recorded of them all; this is the seventh disc version of it to appear in this country. The work fascinates conductors and commentators because of its form: the seven stanzas of the chorale are set in seven movements of approximately equal length, all employing the same melody, but each as different from the others as the genius of Bach could make it be.

The performance here is firm and strong, and stereo helps it, too, although no spatial effects are involved; but monophonic recording tends to choke a chorus.

and the more speakers there are, the more massed voices are liberated. A.F.

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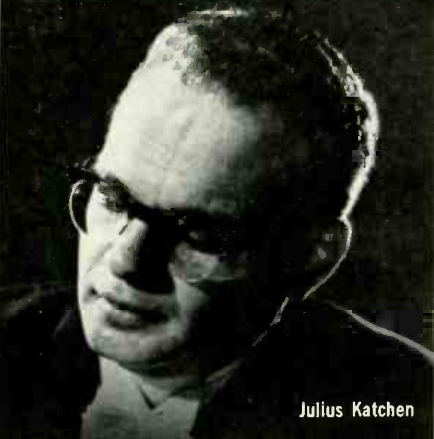
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CIRCLE 62 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Until now, honors for recorded performances of the *Manzoni* Requiem have been shared by two Victor sets of not too recent origin—Serafin's and Toscanini's. The former boasts a quartet of great soloists: Maria Caniglia, Ebe Stignani, Beniamino Gigli, and Ezio Pinza. They do not sing perfectly (Caniglia is sometimes flat and Gigli often annoyingly tearful or "white"), but they bring big beautiful voices, fiery temperaments, and an authoritative Verdian approach to the work. Serafin's conducting has those qualities, too. Originally released on 78 rpm and later reissued on LP, this sonically dated set is no longer available, though it is rumored to be intended for Angel's "Great Recordings of the Century" series. Toscanini's version has, of course, Toscanini, and it is one of his greatest recordings; everyone should own a copy. None of its soloists, however, is up to the standard set by his or her competitor on the old Serafin recording, and the off-the-line sound, though lively enough, isn't very well balanced.

In view of these shortcomings in the finest editions we have yet had, the arrival of two brand-new stereo recordings, under such talented and experienced conductors as Serafin (for Capitol this time) and Reiner (for Victor), is an event of considerable moment. Victor's performance has been accorded the full Soria Series treatment, with an elaborate Skira booklet; Capitol's presentation, though more modest, is handsome enough.

Serafin has an expansive, flexible way with the score—he is never in a great hurry, and gives his singers ample breathing space. Sometimes this works extremely well; the *Lacrymosa*, for example, lopes along at a pace that seems just right. At other places in the score, the effect is to spread out the music too much, and to extend the singers to a point where momentum is lost—the Offertorium suffers in this fashion. The maestro gets excellent playing from his orchestra—particularly from the brass, which are uncommonly crisp—but a second-rate job from the chorus, which is quite raw at "Te decet hymnus," "Tuba mirum," and other similar bars. But the real weakness of the production is in the singing of the soloists. Neither of the women impresses me as being a front-rank Verdi singer. Shakeh Vartenissian has a four-square approach to the music that encompasses none of the sweep or dynamism it should have, and Fiorenza Cossotto spends much energy trying to make her voice sound darker and richer than it is; the Requiem calls for an Anneris, not a Cherubino. Some listeners may find Boris Christoff's rendering of the bass part stirring, and few will fail to respond to his fine moments in mezza-voce. To me, however, his singing in this performance shows murky articulation of vowels, an incessantly wide-open attack, occasional haminess, and a voice often gravel-textured. Eugenio Fernandi is the most satisfactory of these soloists, singing with a bright fat tone, considerable lyrical feeling, and unusual dignity. All of this is recorded in full-bodied, slightly muddy sound, with the stereo version offering greater clarity than the mono.

Victor's new Soria Series effort is much more interesting. Reiner gives us a reading of uncanny precision; more than that, he has some truly individual

ideas about the score, most of which come off impressively. His command of the performance is evident from the start, with the slowest Requiem I have ever heard. The section almost stands still, yet it never droops. A sense of deep repose is invoked, and when the theme and mood return near the end of the "Libera me," the effect is profound and moving. Most of the sections benefit from the lucidity and accuracy of Reiner's reading—only in the fugato of the "Libera me" does the sharp angularity produce a somewhat academic effect.

Reiner's soloists are brilliant, and constitute the best quartet since the Caniglia-Stignani *et al.* quadumvirate. The men are particularly fine. Bjoerling brings to bear his combination of melting softness and virile ring, as well as clean enunciation and wonderful legato phrasing, though it must be admitted that his excitingly sung "Ingemisco" is not very suppliant-sounding. Tozzi approaches Pinza in this music, with his easy, even vocalism and firm grasp of the Verdi style. His voice is a shade lighter than the great Italian basso's, and it is a pity that he finds it expedient to insert aspirate "h's" into his otherwise smooth rendition; this is especially obtrusive in the "Requiem aeternam." Leontyne Price sends her voice sailing through the higher reaches of her part, and outdistances her post-war recorded competitors with room to spare. In the lower passages, she sometimes sounds dry and limited, and as a consequence her rendition of the lines "Tremens, factus, sum ego" (a pitfall for nearly all sopranos) is not very satisfactory. Rosalind Elias is a capable mezzo, and is in excellent voice here, but while she handles the music knowingly, she is not quite on a vocal level with her colleagues—it would take Simionato to balance the quartet. Orchestra and chorus are topflight.

The job of recording seems to have been done well enough; the stereo version has good separation and breadth, and both editions sound clean and full. Victor was apparently dissatisfied with the first pressings, for they were withdrawn immediately, and fresh review copies shipped out. One of the two review albums which reached me was well-processed throughout. The other had defective Sides 2 and 3. Spot checking before buying would seem to be indicated. Certainly, a well processed copy belongs in the collection of any lover of Verdi. C.L.O.

VINCENT: Symphony in D; Symphonic Poem After Descartes

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

- COLUMBIA ML 5579. LP. \$4.98.
- • COLUMBIA MS 6179. SD. \$5.98.

John Vincent, professor of music at the University of California in Los Angeles, is an academician with a soul. He believes in tunes, and he knows how to write them. He also believes in formal clarity and orchestral brilliance, and all of these qualities are exhilaratingly to the fore in his *Symphony in D*, which is subtitled "A festival piece in one movement." The *Symphonic Poem After Descartes* on the other side is less successful both as music and as an expression of its pretentious "program." The recording, unfortunately, is below the

standard one expects of Columbia and of the Philadelphia Orchestra. A.F.

VIVALDI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 12, No. 1*—See Bach: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in E, S. 1042.*

WIENIAWSKI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22*

†Lalo: *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21*

Julian Olevsky, violin; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Julius Rudel, cond.
 • WESTMINSTER XWN 18938. LP. \$4.98.
 • • WESTMINSTER WST 14121. SD. \$5.98.

WIENIAWSKI: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 22*

†Paganini: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in D, Op. 6*

Michael Rabin, violin; Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Eugene Goossens, cond.
 • CAPITOL P 8534. LP. \$4.98.
 • • CAPITOL SP 8534. SD. \$5.98.

The first two stereo recordings of the Wieniawski D minor Concerto, these are both excellent performances. Olevsky plays with a firmer, fatter tone, to which Rabin counters with a tone that is sweeter. Both violinists are technically above reproach, and both interpret the music with a combination of nobility, warmth, and bravura. The same may be said of their respective interpretations of the Lalo and Paganini. Olevsky, however, offers only four movements of the Lalo, while Goossens makes some cuts in the orchestral accompaniment of the Paganini.

Monophonically, the two discs are about on a par; stereophonically, they have somewhat different characteristics. Rabin is in the center of a generally well-distributed stereo setup. Olevsky, on the other hand, is placed quite a bit to the left, and Westminster's reproduction is exceptionally clean and bright. But there is one sonic miscalculation here. In the last movement of the *Symphonie espagnole*, the triangle and snare drum are so close to the right-hand microphone that they overbalance everything else in the right speaker. This imbalance, however, is not bad enough to spoil an otherwise exemplary recording, and is not present in the monophonic edition. P.A.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

KURT BAUER and HEIDI BUNG:
Music for Two Pianos

Chopin: *Rondo in C, Op. 73.* Busoni: *Duetto concertante after Mozart.* Saint-Saëns: *Variations on a Theme by Beethoven, Op. 35.* Schumann: *Andante and Variations, Op. 46.*

Kurt Bauer and Heidi Bung, duo-pianos.
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• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138018. SD. \$6.98.

Although the music on this record does not represent the composers at their most profound, it makes buoyant listening as played by this splendid man-wife team. Both artists reflect their Gieseking training with interpretations that put more emphasis on line, accent, and color than on breadth and mass. In the Germanic Schumann, however, their combined sonority has adequate weight, and each composition evokes a different tonal response from the players. In contrast to the warmly caressing sound of the Schumann, the Busoni is pointed and snappy, while the Chopin and Saint-Saëns works are brighter, more tinselly.

The recorded sound is very live and satisfying. H.G.

LUCREZIA BORI: "A Bouquet for Lucrezia Bori"

Bori's Greeting and Farewell Speech. Puccini: *Manon Lescaut: In quelle trine morbide*. Bellini: *La Sonnambula: Ah! non credea mirarti*. Puccini: *La Bohème: Mi chiamano Mimì*. Donizetti: *Don Pasquale: So anch'io la virtù*. Serrano: *Gitana*. Pagans: *Malagueñas*. Massenet: *Manon: St. Sulpice Scene*.

Richard Crooks, tenor and Léon Rother, bass (in *Manon*); Lucrezia Bori, soprano. • INTERNATIONAL RECORD COLLECTORS' CLUB IRCC L 7017. LP. \$5.95.

This is an interesting and enjoyable memorial to the Met's great lyric soprano, who died last May 14 after a long career of service to the house on and off the stage. The early recordings are good enough to display her even, pearly tone; the most interesting of these are her fragile "*Ah! non credea mirarti*" and her idiomatic, dashing renditions of the Serrano and Pagans songs. Side 2 presents a section of her Farewell Concert of May 29, 1936, including the St. Sulpice Scene from *Manon* (with Crooks and Rother), and her farewell speech. While Bori's voice had of course aged by 1936, it still possessed its clean scale and delicate feminine quality, and its user was still an artist with plenty of temperament. Crooks throws himself full tilt into a characteristically wide-open attack on Des Grieux's music, and though Rother was far past his prime at the time of this concert, he too is still an expressive singer.

A royalty from the sale of each disc (available from 318 Reservoir Ave., Bridgeport 6, Conn.) goes to the Bagby Music Lovers' Foundation, in accordance with Miss Bori's wish. C.I.O.

MANUEL GAYOL: "Guitar Masterpieces"

Manuel Gayol, guitar. • • KAPP KC 9052S. SD. \$5.98.

In contrast to most discs of this kind, there are no transcriptions or arrangements here. With the exception of Robert de Visée, a seventeenth-century composer of whom little is known, all of the music on this record (Mauro Giuliani, Fernando Carulli, Fernando Sors, Luigi Legnani—the Paganini of the guitar incidentally—Ernest Shand, Francesco Molino, and Napoleon Coste) belongs to the

nineteenth century, with content that is lightweight classicism bordering on the early romantic. Gayol is an extremely cultured player; his is not a large sound. Finely drawn pianissimos prevail, and extreme musicality. He makes everything sound natural and effortless, his rhythm is mobile, and he commands an unusually fluid legato. Very fine playing and recording; pleasing music. H.G.

SANDOR KONYA: Operatic Recital

Wagner: *Die Meistersinger: Am stillen Herd; Morgenlich leuchtend*. Lohengrin: *In fernem Land; Mein lieber Schwan*. Verdi: *Il Trovatore: Ah si, ben mio coll'essere; Di quella pira*. Aida: *Celeste Aida. Rigoletto: Parmi veder le lagrime; La donna è mobile*. Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'amore: Una furtiva lagrima*. Meyerbeer: *L'Africana: O paradiso*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Cielo e mar*. Flotow: *Martha: Ach so fromm*.

Sándor Kónya, tenor; Berlin Philharmonic, Richard Kraus, cond.; Bamberg Symphony, Janos Kulka, cond. • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPEM 19214. LP. \$5.98. • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPEM 136214. SD. \$6.98.

This recital serves to introduce a tenor who—if the evidence here is not too misleading—will occupy a very significant position in the coming years. Sándor Kónya's voice is warm and round, basically dark in color, and possessed of an exciting ring in the upper reaches. Since it is evenly produced, with the resonances well blended, this ring informs the lower tones as well, lifting them and keeping the instrument in line. His intonation does not do a sudden flipover in the vicinity of E-F, and the tone throughout his apparently wide range is open-throated without becoming "open" in the unpleasant sense—blatty or white. In all this he resembles the great tenors of the past, and on certain phrases—entire selections, even—he can already stand with the best of them.

The most successful numbers on this disc, interestingly, are some of the Italian ones. His "*Di quella pira*" (or really, "*Lodern zum Himmel!*") is superb; the staccato sixteenths that are so often slurred are cleanly sung, and the Cs, though not clung to for twelve or sixteen beats in the fashion of most tenors who can sing them at all, are thrillingly vibrant in quality. He sings four of the arias in Italian. Here the pronunciation is not perfect ("*si puo morir*," for instance, is carefully rendered as "*si pu-o morir*"), and certain musical peculiarities are in evidence. Phrase-ending notes are sometimes slighted, and Kónya seems to incline towards rushing through climaxes on one breath—the final bars of "*O paradiso*" are taken this way, rather than with a release after the high note. But these are small things. He sings these arias splendidly, with an excellent grasp of style (in some lachrymose moments, he is too Italian), and without the vocal compromises required by most of his colleagues. It's amazing just how incisive the recitative before "*Celeste Aida*" can sound when real voice and temperament are brought to bear.

The Wagner excerpts are, to me, the least satisfying, though even so his Lohengrin and Walther would appear to be better than any we have heard since the departure of Melchior. "*Am stillen*

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

Herd is excellent, but in the "Morgenlich leuchtend" and the *Lohengrin* selections, his efforts to lighten tone for some attacks result in a vapid, precious sound. His determination to sing these arias lyrically is laudable, but an artificial lightening of tone is in the long run no better than the overloading resorted to by less gifted singers, and as Melchior demonstrated for about three decades, a lyrical molding of the line counts for more than a light tone.

The stereo edition places the singer rather far back, and tends towards a hollow sound; I prefer the sharper, more forward, focus of the monophonic version. C.L.O.

LOTTE LEHMANN: *Opera Recital*

Weber: *Der Freischütz*: *Leise, leise*. Beethoven: *Fidelio*: *Komm' Hoffnung*. Nicolai: *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*: *Nun eilt herbei*. Massenet: *Werther*: *Letter Scene*. Richard Strauss: *Ariadne auf Naxos*: *Es gibt ein Reich*. D'Albert: *Die Toten Augen*: *Psyche wandelt durch Säulenhallen*. Johann Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*: *Mein Herr, was dächten Sie*. Korngold: *Das Wunder der Heliane*: *Ich ging zu Ihm*. Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde*: *Liebestod*.

Lotte Lehmann, soprano; various orchestras and conductors.

• ANGEL COLO 112. LP. \$5.98.

The Lehmann discs re-pressed for release in the "Great Recordings of the Century" series date from the 1927-33 period, when the soprano was at her vocal peak. Her unique projection of the music of Strauss (both Richard and Johann), Weber, and Nicolai is universally recognized, and needs no comment from this quarter. I should like, however, to put in a word for her magnificent portrayal of Massenet's *Charlotte*. The anguish of her "Die Briefe! Die Briefe!," or the altered tone with which she reads from each of the three letters, makes her performance of this scene (despite its being in German) superior to any other I know of—including Vallin's. Another excellent example of her art is the little narrative from *Die Toten Augen*, particularly the descending phrase "Arme kleine Psyche!" which ends each verse. It is hard to keep the phrase from sounding lugubrious; Lehmann makes it heart-melting.

The restored sound is quite good, and the accompanying booklet includes—besides complete texts with translations—notes by Leo Riemens, Alec Robertson, and *Die Lehmann* herself. C.L.O.

JOHN McCORMACK: "John McCormack Sings Sacred Music"

Walworth: *Holy God, We Praise Thy Name*. Rogers-Nevin: *The Rosary*. Bach-Gounod: *Ave Maria*. Beethoven: *Mount of Olives: Recitative and Aria*. Franck: *Panis Angelicus*. Adams-Hageman: *Christ Went Up Into the Hills*. Schubert: *Ave Maria*. Allitsen: *The Lord Is My Light*. Adams-Mason: *Nearer, My God, to Thee*. Martin: *The Holy Child*. Partridge-Seaver: *Just for Today*. O'Reilly-Dickson: *Thanks Be To God*.

John McCormack, tenor; orchestra.

• RCA CAMDEN CAL 635. LP. \$1.98.

While some of the selections in this program have no serious musical interest, John McCormack's clean, bright tone, perfect vowel articulation, and—most of

all—seriousness of approach give each of the songs the same dignity possessed by the Schubert *Ave Maria*, and make each of them a cherishable experience. In view of the beauty of McCormack's singing, it's a pity that the sound should be below the level of most Camdens. While the voice is well forward, there is an unfortunate amount of scratch and burble left from what must have been quite noisy originals. C.L.O.

SAYARD STONE: "High Fidelity Brass—Ancient and Modern"

Buxtehude: *Fanfare* (from *Sinfonia No. 2*) and *Chorus* ("Ei lieber Herr"). Schein: *Paduana and Gaillard* (from "Banchetto Musicale"). Fux: *Two Serenades* (from "Concentus Musico-Instrumentalis"). Altenburg: *Concerto for Clarini and Timpani*. Shahan: *Leipzig Towers* (1955).

Members of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Sayard Stone, cond.

• WESTMINSTER XWN 18931. LP. \$4.98.
• • WESTMINSTER WST 14113. SD. \$5.98.

Baroque specialists well may rub their eyes in disbelief after glancing at the contents list above. Except for the always delectable little Johann Schein (1586-1630) pieces for brass ensemble, these are all phonographic firsts as far as I have been able to check. Johann Fux's two long serenades (for strings, oboes, bassoons, and two high trumpets—originally *clarini*) are the first nonkeyboard works I've ever encountered by the high priest of contrapuntal dogma and they throw an entirely new light on that notoriously dry academician, revealing here a tunefully inventive personality one would never suspect in the pedagogue-author of *Gradus ad Parnassum* (written 1725). Another discovery is the slighter but amusingly bouncy concerto by Johann Ernst Altenburg (1734-1801), which has genuine musical interest along with historical importance as the first recorded representation of the composer-author of a celebrated treatise on baroque trumpet and percussion playing, *Versuch einer Einleitung zur heroisch-musikalischen Trompeter- und Paukerkunst* (Halle, 1795), in which the present work appeared as an illustrative appendix. A present-day American teacher-composer, Paul Strahan, also makes a phonographic debut here, less incongruously than one might think, since his darkly powerful *Leipzig Towers*, for all its modern idioms, is a sonically effective if somewhat synthetically contrived evocation of the big brass and percussion timbres which high-baroque-era listeners relished no less avidly than do audiophiles of our own day.

As in his recent Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli program, young conductor Stone may be a bit heavy-handed at times, but he succeeds admirably in communicating his own enthusiasm for this mostly long-forgotten but still superbly vital music. His modern trumpeters cope nobly with the oftentimes fiendishly high and florid *clarino* parts, and the recording of both the ringing brass and thunderous percussion sonorities here is bold and clean, if occasionally a trifle boomy, in monophony—impressively spacious and auditorium-authentic in stereo. A noble record in every respect, this warrants a special award for its inspired choice of repertoire. R.D.D.



5

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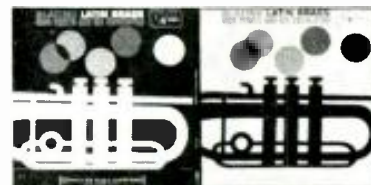
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"*Irma La Douce.*" Original cast recording. Orchestra, Stanley Lebowsky, cond. Columbia OL 5560, \$4.98 (LP); OS 2029, \$5.98 (SD).



Elizabeth Seal

THE BROADWAY SEASON got off to a running start last fall with a delightfully raffish, rowdy, down-to-earth Gallic musical, *Irma La Douce*. It's likely to be around for a long time, as it has been in Paris, where it was first presented in 1956 (it is still running), and in London, where it turned up in mid-1958 (it is still running there too). Although Parisian musicals are not usually very exportable commodities, as anyone who has sat through one of the tired spectacles on display at the Mogador or Chatelet will agree, this import has a new French look, some of which seems to have been acquired from films supervised by the so-called *Nouvelle Vague* of directors. Ex-taxi-driver Alexandre Breffort's original book is peopled by characters common to all countries—after all, the French have no corner on *poules* (prostitutes) or *mecs* (pimps), and *le*

grisbi (filthy lucre) is an international currency—and there is an undeniable cosmopolitan appeal to his tale. At the same time the *louche* Parisian neighborhood in which it is laid is unmistakably the 18th Arrondissement.

Marguerite Monnot's music epitomizes in an extraordinary way the sordid milieu and its inhabitants' cynical view of the social scene. *That's a Crime*, a vocal homily that inveighs against being caught committing one, is a case in point, although *Sons of France* is equally ironical in its implications. Other ear-catching melodies you will have difficulty in getting out of your head include *Our Language of Love*, which some people think is the hit of the show, and the lively (and very French) *Dis-Donc*, *Dis-Donc*, which Elizabeth Seal sings with extraordinary verve. The one false note in the entire

production is the final chorale *Christmas Child*, in my opinion nothing more or less than a sop to musical comedy convention rather than a realistic resolving of the dramatic situation.

Columbia's recording stars the performers who were in the original London production and who have now moved on to appear here. Elizabeth Seal, the only female member of the cast, is superb as Irma, singing with a sort of Carol Haney abandon in her livelier numbers yet managing to bring a great deal of pathos to *The Bridge of Caulaincourt* and *Irma La Douce*. Australian Keith Michell sounds like an unusually virile *mec*, which somehow lessens the impact of his solo *The Wreck of a Mec*, although elsewhere his performance is excellent. As the *compère* or raconteur of these strange proceedings, Clive Revill has little to do except set the scene and sing one number *Valse milieu*, both of which he does quite acceptably. Miss Monnot's score has been orchestrated by her compatriot André Popp, who deserves a special commendation for his efforts.

The Columbia sound, good though it is, does not seem to me to be up to the usual level of that company's show albums. The mono version suffers from lack of clarity; and although the stereo issue

doesn't suffer in this respect, it suggests that little effort has been made to take advantage of the possibilities of stereoisitic effects offered by the libretto.

Columbia also has released a French version of the musical (Columbia WL 177) starring Zizi Jeanmaire, with Roland Petit, Luc Davis, and Les Quatre Barbus. Except for Jeanmaire's version of *Dis-Donc, Dis-Donc*, I found this issue disappointing. In any case it is only recommended to those with a pretty thorough knowledge of French, and even they may well be puzzled by the argot employed—as a matter of fact, it baffled even Parisians. I have also listened to the original cast recording of the London production, issued as Philips BBL 7274. Compared to the American recording, this entire performance is more relaxed and in lower gear. This version includes more dialogue, tending to slow things down slightly but well done. For the American performance some lyrics have been changed, sometimes for the better, other times for the worse. One very odd turnabout occurs in *Freedom of the Seas* and the ensuing ballet. In the English version this is called *Fever Dance*; in the American it's *Arctic Ballet*, only because the American cast, having passed Martinique, suddenly sight penguins. A neat trick if they could do it. J.F.I.



Saul Goodman

For Propagandists of Percussion

"Mallets, Melody and Mayhem." *Saul Goodman and His Percussion Ensemble. Columbia CL 1533, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8333, \$4.98 (SD).*

"Wild Percussion and Horns A-Plenty." *Dick Schory's New Percussion Ensemble. RCA Victor LPM 2289, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2289, \$4.98 (SD).*



Dick Schory

IN WELCOMING the current vogue of percussive and concussive timbres of all kinds, old-time propagandists of the once disdained battery instruments regret only that so much emphasis has been laid on sheerly decorative functions. Such purist *aficionados* will find solid satisfaction in Saul Goodman's presentation of works conceived primarily in percussive idioms instead of standard pop tunes given novelty-embellishment scorings. They will esteem too the magisterial authority of Goodman's own playing, displayed even more extensively and vividly in this recording than in his memorable "Bell, Drum, and Cymbal" demonstration (Angel

35269) of 1956, and happily free from the earlier release's somewhat superfluous narration.

Several of Goodman's own compositions are featured here (a declamatory Scherzo and *Ballad for the Dance*, a bouncy Timpiana with Joe Jones's traps accompaniment, and an intricately Bachian Canon), but even more eloquent in their exploitation of the battery instruments' expressive resources are Harold Faberman's Theme and Variations, William Russo's Music for Percussion, and above all the richly poetic (and quiet) *Night Music* by Robert Starer. There are also some more usual *jeux d'esprit*, of course, including Rudolph Ganz's amusing tune-

up *Mêlée* and—just to show that the “decorators” can be matched on their own ground—a virtuosic *Hora Staccato* and Adolph Schreiner’s engaging *Worried Drummer* in which a catchy old German piano polka is never submerged in its lavish ornamentations.

At first glance, Schory’s program conforms more closely to current trends (in which he pioneered long before the now dominant “Persuasive” and “Provocative” series), but he consistently transcends them in musical taste, verve, unflinching wit, and superb sense of dramatic stereogenics. Notable examples of the last-named are the stage-swooping tap dancing of Lou Willis, Jr., in *Dancing on the Ceiling* and (as extramusical climax of *Stumbling*) the staggering dash of a broken-field runner through a stageful of overthrown instruments straight into a surely demolished bass drum. And in welcome contrast to such sonic high jinks, there is a sheerly magical *Beyond the Sea* with its enchantingly floating French horn and trumpet solos over the opalescent surge of evocative cymbal rolls.

Characteristic too of Schory’s light-hearted yet fundamentally serious approach are his producer’s technical annotations: “We used the same top equipment everyone else uses. . . . [But] this sound has *not* been homogenized. We threw out the traditional array of equalizers, limiters, echo chambers, compressors, filters, pitch generators, and dirty ashtrays. It’s not that we wish to attach any moral virtue to purity. It’s just that these are the real sounds that happened for two days and two nights in the fabulous [Chicago] Orchestral Hall’s acoustics.” They are that indeed, even in the less authentically expansive and dramatic mono edition. And they testify as impressively to the merits of big-hall ambience and relatively distant miking as the engineering of the Goodman disc (in both LP and SD) bolsters the contrasting—but no less effective in a different way and for different materials—case for closer-focused, ultrarealistic miking in a relatively small studio. There can be no comparative evaluation of two technological philosophies when each of them is ideal for its specific purpose. R.D.D.



Folk Singers of the Virile School

“Bud and Travis . . . In Concert.” Liberty LDM 11001, \$7.96 (Two LP); LDS 12001, \$9.96 (Two SD).

BUD DASHIELL and Travis Edmonson, two young men who have a dynamic, catchy way with a song, recently graduated from the supper club to the concert circuit where, in appearance after appearance, they have played to Standing Room Only. In this two-disc album, Liberty has preserved in its entirety one such concert—at Santa Monica’s Civic Auditorium. In preface, let me assure all Bud and Travis buffs that this set represents the next best thing to hearing the duo in person.

The two singers (they generally accompany themselves on guitars) bring rather intellectual backgrounds to their singing. Bud, born in Paris, has dabbled in art; Travis, a onetime anthropologist, has written the only extant dictionary of a certain Mexican Indian dialect. Their material is primarily folksong or folksong-once-removed. In this they resemble the Kingston Trio, but their approach tends to be less bland, detached, and light-hearted than that of the better-known group.

Stylistically, Bud and Travis are virile performers, placing an extremely strong emphasis upon rhythm; there is also a sharply focused intensity upon the emotional burden of a given ballad. The Mexican *Malagueña Salerosa* probably displays the quintessence of their art. At one moment they can shape *Carmen Carmella* into a thing of haunting

loveliness; with a shift of gears, Bud can bring to a solo of *Johnny I Hardly Knew Ye* a devastatingly controlled bitterness.

In the course of their concerts—as in the album—the two singers interlard their songs with patter that you may or may not find comic. On the whole, it strikes me as quite effective if somewhat collegiate. Samples: “We’d like to do a medley of our hit”; “Sing Along with Yma Sumac”; “This Mexican wedding song, *LaBamba*, means ‘Lot’s of luck with your Rh factor.’” In any case, their delivery is sharp, their timing superb.

One cannot help speculating as to why these gifted singers—and much of their competition as well—feel compelled to inject interludes of self-mockery. Perhaps it is a symptom of our times; reality surely finds reflection in the many characters of contemporary literature who conceal inner sensitivity with exterior hardness. Ours is an age when poets must write prose in order to communicate, and when artists must depreciate artistry to succeed. Perhaps this is why such as Bud and Travis needle their own material—material that clearly engages them profoundly.

On the engineering front, the mono edition cannot be faulted, but the stereo version goes it even one better. O.B.B.

"Songs for Swinging Losers." Buddy Greco; Chuck Sagle and His Orchestra. Epic LN 3746, \$3.98 (LP); BN 585, \$4.98 (SD).

These are outstanding performances of a batch of melancholy roundelays, intended to console those unfortunate in love, by one of the best (though still not fully appreciated) singers of the day. Greco is just as expert in his handling of these ballads as he was in the up-tempo numbers of his earlier album "My Buddy" (Epic LN 3660). Particularly engrossing are his versions of *These Foolish Things, Don't Worry 'Bout Me*, and *I Got It Bad*, all sung with warmth but without maudlin sentimentality. These are merely the highlights of an excellent program of which the only fault is lack of change of pace. But it's hard to be gay about disappointment in love.

J.F.I.

"Bonbons aus Wien." The Boskovsky Ensemble, Willi Boskovsky, violin and cond. Vanguard VRS 1057, \$4.98 (LP); VSD 2068, \$5.95 (SD).

There is some ravishingly beautiful playing by the Boskovsky Ensemble in the present delectable assortment of Viennese bonbons conected by Mozart, Schubert, Joseph Lanner, and the two Strausses, Johanns Sr. and Jr. This should occasion no great surprise since each member of the Octet is a first-desk man of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. I can't imagine this marvelous playing, light as spun sugar and airy as a bubble, being easily surpassed. The eight waltzes and Ländler of Schubert are, to my mind, the high spots of this lovely disc, although Lanner's *Styrian Dances*, played in their original scoring for two violins, viola, and double bass, give them very strong competition. Vanguard has provided superbly clean sound, with the stereo version having just a slight edge.

J.F.I.

"The Sound of Eight Hands on Four Pianos." Medallion Piano Quartet. Medallion MS 7510, \$5.98 (SD).

"The Sound of Latin Brass." Tarragano and His Orchestra. Medallion MS 7511, \$5.98 (SD).

The brilliant Medallion series of spectaculars continues to present fresh sonic materials. Its multiple-piano album will remind veteran discophiles of the once highly popular First Piano Quartet performances, but the latter discs never enjoyed such tonally authentic yet dazzling recording or the unique advantage of stereo both in spacing out the piano pairs and resolving their individual roles, while still achieving a well-blended ensemble effect. Bernie Leighton and Moe Wechsler (left), Buddy Weed and Warner Shilkret (right), and their centered rhythm-and-percussion section are particularly impressive in a powerful *Ritual Fire Dance*, rowdy *Wrong Note Rag*, and blazing *Sabre Dance*, but David Terry's transcriptions of pop hits are also imaginatively ingenious.

It is Terry's deft scoring too which, scarcely less than the Tarragano Orchestra's buoyancy and vivid tonal coloring, endows the more conventional Latin-American program with exceptional freshness. Tops here are the atmospheric *Tabu* and *Baia*, yet the bouncing *Anna samba* and *Fascination cha-cha*, and indeed all the other eight well-varied dances, are not far behind in their delectable stereogenics and magnificently recorded featured soloists.

R.D.D.

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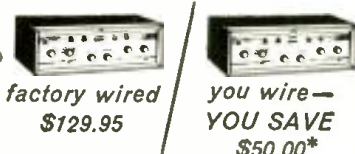
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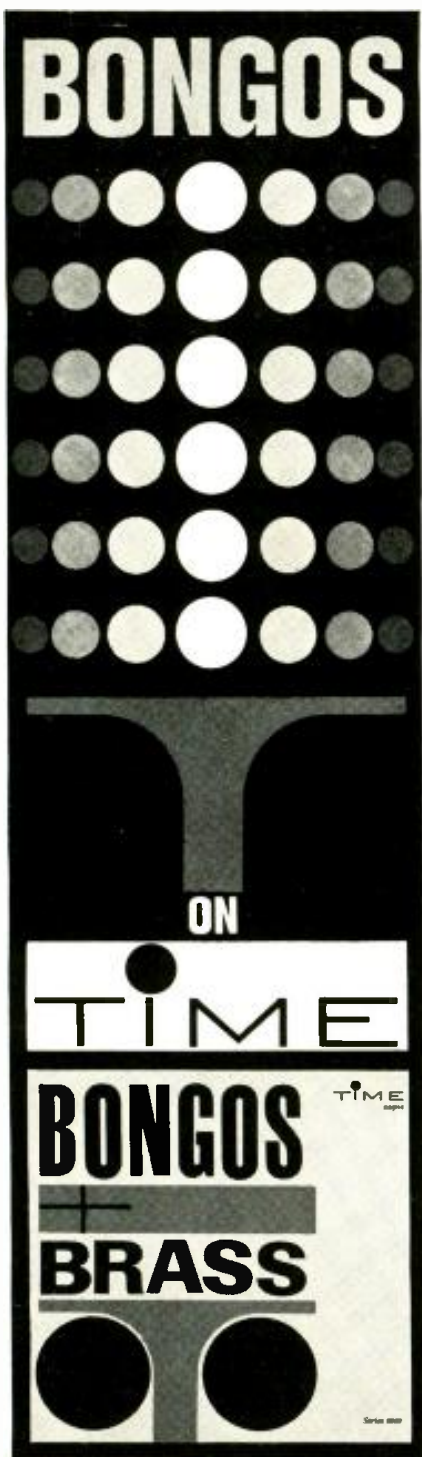


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"Songs of the Cowboy." Norman Luboff Choir. Columbia CL 1487, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8278, \$4.98 (SD).

The Norman Luboff Choir, whose earlier *Songs of the West* (CL 657) have worn remarkably well, displays its customary expertise in a new program of cowboy ballads. As ever, Mr. Luboff and his singers have steeped themselves in their material: no cowboy chorus could ever have sounded so smoothly professional, yet the singers preserve the essential integrity of the songs. They sing them, I think, the way cowboys would have if they could have. Save for such modern clichés as *The Last Round-up* and *Riders in the Sky*, the program is well chosen. Among the high spots are a carefree, rollicking *Railroad Corral*, which wraps up all the promise of Saturday nights everywhere, and a *Red River Shore*, which points up the basic frustration of life on the range. Magnificent recorded sound with the handsomely realized stereo version ahead by a wide margin. O.B.B.

"Sleighride." Randy Van Horne Singers. Everest 5112, \$4.98 (LP); SDBR 1112, \$4.98 (SD).

Keeping Leroy Anderson's *Sleighride* company in this well-sung program of frosty favorites are such seasonal numbers as *Winter Weather*, *The Skater's Waltz*, *Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow*, and *Wintertime*. It's a bracing musical excursion, thanks to Van Horne's uncomplicated but interesting arrangements and the fine performances they receive. The absence of any vocal gimmicks in these straightforward treatments makes them as refreshing as they are rare. The stereo sound is attractive, and excellent use of stereo effect is made throughout, being particularly effective in Loesser's popular song *Baby, It's Cold Outside*. J.F.I.

"Joan Baez." Vanguard VRS 9078, \$4.98 (LP); VSD 2077, \$5.95 (SD).

Once they strike a good thing, the directors of Vanguard clearly have the wit to hold on to it. Joan Baez, a nineteen-year-old girl of Mexican-Irish parentage, appeared unheralded at the 1959 Newport Folk Festival, sang two brief but memorable duets with Bob Gibson that duly appeared in Vanguard's three-disc album of the proceedings, and then slipped away. But not for long. Here she is once more, this time with a release of her own that can compare with the finest of its kind in the catalogue.

In addition to an achingly pure soprano voice, Miss Baez brings to a ballad a profound emotional involvement that seems to envelop the listener in spite of himself. Hers is a distinctively American, distinctively contemporary style. She draws upon the techniques of both the ethnic singer and the art singer, fusing elements of each to form her own individualistic concept: *East Virginia*, for example, splendidly exemplifies this syncretistic approach. *Mary Hamilton* and *Fare Thee Well* display her command of the traditional English ballad form, while she invests *The House of the Rising Sun* with a searing, low-down bitterness. Incidentally, the perceptive notes of Maynard Solomon will add substantially to your enjoyment of this outstanding disc. Both versions, stereo and mono, are impeccably recorded, with the former offering no discernible advantage to my ear.

O.B.B.

"Spartacus." Recording from the sound track of the film. Decca DL 79092, \$5.98 (SD).

With its lavishly color-illustrated double-fold and interleaved album, this disc makes a handsome souvenir for everyone who has enjoyed the colossal Bryna film epic. And if the salient musical excerpts (conducted by composer Alex North but here reordered for more varied concert suite presentation) often seem just sound and fury without the visual action they were designed to enhance, they do clearly reveal North's considerable musical-dramatic powers of invention. It is the lighter moments which stand up best as music for its own sake, but even the more turbulent episodes are rich in unusually imaginative and dramatic orchestral effects, featuring such novel—to Hollywood at least—instruments as the sarrusophone, kythera, Israeli recorder, Chinese oboe, Yugoslav flute, and Ondoline. R.D.D.

"In the Still of the Night." Ray Vasquez; Orchestra, George Hernandez, cond. Tropicana 2212, \$4.98 (SD).

In the current spate of Latin-American releases, most making up in *frenesi* what they lack in finesse, this stands out like a full moon at midnight. Ray Vasquez—who sings both in English and in Spanish—combines a voice as rich as *crème de cacao* with impeccable musicianship. Abetted by the tasteful arrangements of conductor George Hernandez, he manages a smoothly sophisticated style that at the same time packs an earthy wallop. *Maria Dolores* and *Fandango* display Vasquez at his best, while Hernandez's arrangement of *In the Still of the Night* is all shifting, controlled excitement. Stunning stereo sound. O.B.B.

"The Roaring Twenties." Dorothy Provine; Pinky and Her Playboys. Warner Bros. WS 1394, \$4.98 (SD).

The current fascination with the so-called Roaring Twenties has been productive of innumerable recordings that attempt to re-create the period musically. Many defeat their purpose by exaggeration, while others are out-and-out burlesques. Put this disc down as one of the more authentic reminders of an era when girl singers graduated from *Doo Wacka Doo* to *Vo De O Do*, when trios drooled out close harmony versions of *Just a Memory*, and cabaret bands plunked out heavily syncopated performances of *Tea for Two* and *Bye, Bye, Blackbird*. The performers, both vocal and orchestral, have caught the spirit and style of the period wonderfully well, with Dorothy Provine suggesting the squeaking, nasal style of the flapper singer right down to the last bead. Nearly all the songs will be readily recalled by old-timers, though it is no pleasure to be reminded of so banal a number as *When the Pussywillow Whispers to the Catnip*. J.F.I.

"Flamenco Fantasy." Sabicas, guitar. M-G-M E 3859, \$3.98 (LP).

With some nineteen releases upon almost as many labels under his belt, Sabicas has made almost as many discs as Mantovani. Nonetheless, so profound is the art of this flamenco guitarist that each recording emerges as a fresh and different musical experience. Here, in a brilliantly engineered program, his fan-

Continued on page 88











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tastic fingers weave *Alegrías*, *Bulerías*, and *Granadinas* as of yore, but he also pursues a recent fancy—multitrack tapings that enable him to play all parts of three-guitar arrangements. Flashiness but no cheapness mark the results. For the not-so-old master; another *Ole!* O.B.B.

"Anyone Can Play Bongos." Willie Rodriguez, bongos and narration; Chuck Sagle and His Orchestra. Epic LN 3741, \$3.98; BN 583, \$4.98 (SD).

Another invaluable instruction record for beginner-students on Latin-American drums. The noted bongoist Rodriguez covers somewhat less ground than Jack Costanzo (in Liberty LRP 3177) but goes more thoroughly into basic rhythm left-and-right-hand technique, and his detailed spoken lessons are effectively illustrated both by sonic examples and by pictorial diagrams in the double-folder album liners. Side A also contains Sagle's three brief play-along accompaniments in slow, medium, and fast tempos; Side B presents fuller versions of these and four other dance pieces, including a *Bongo Scheherazade* in which Rodriguez demonstrates more advanced drum virtuosity. It is only here, of course, that the stereo edition is significantly superior, particularly in more lucidly differentiating—without spotlighting—the bongo contributions to the big band's over-all sonorities. R.D.D.

"The Ames Brothers Sing the Best of the Bands." The Ames Brothers; Sid Ramin and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2273, \$3.98 (LP); LSP 2273, \$4.98 (SD).

The Ames Brothers have been musically doodling with inconsequential pop songs for so long that it is a relief to find them getting back to more substantial musical fare. This time they sink their collective vocal cords into a program of established big-band favorites, and their robust yet always musical performances of these old numbers more than justify their right to be called the best vocal quartet now to be heard on records. I particularly liked their versions of Ray Noble's *Cherokee*, Ellington's *In My Solitude*, and Glenn Miller's *Moonlight Serenade*, although in a program so consistently well presented you may well find other favorites. Additional plus values are the valuable assistance provided by the Sid Ramin Orchestra, and RCA Victor's excellent sound which, on the mono version, is particularly ingratiating. J.F.I.

"Tavern Songs, Vol. Two." Alfred Deller; The Deller Consort. Bach Guild BG 602, \$4.98 (LP); BGS 5030, \$5.95 (SD).

Famed countertenor Alfred Deller and the five hale fellows of his Consort weave in tight-knit harmony and counterpoint a flashing musical tapestry of Restoration England. Here are bawdy ballads by Purcell and Blow alternating with the haunting tenderness of *The Self Banished* and *She Weepeth Sore in the Night*. Academic types will find a particular treat in the Consort's mellow rendition of that most ancient of English lays *Sumer Is Icoumen In*. This disc offers entertainment of a high order along with a solid contribution to musicology. Stereo is the vehicle of choice, although a mild *preêcho* bedevils Side 1: I could detect no fault at all in the monophonic edition, however. O.B.B.

"Paradise Found." The Fantastic Strings of Felix Slatkin. Liberty LMM 13001, \$3.98 (LP); LSS 14001, \$4.98 (SD).

Among other blessings, Hawaiian statehood has brought a new wave of prosperity to owners of color presses. Happily, and almost uniquely, Liberty's lavishly illustrated brochure also encloses worthwhile musical fare. Felix Slatkin, a languorous hand with an arpeggio, leads a string ensemble through a dozen gleamingly arranged Hawaiian standards. A repertory running from *Moon of Manakooa* to *Aloha Oe* generates little excitement, to be sure; but Slatkin imparts to each selection a full sweetness like that of a ripe mango. Sometimes the strings grow overripe and the mango cloy, but not too often. Excellent engineering, with the stereo edition sweeping Slatkin's *ritardandos* clear across your wall. O.B.B.

"Bing and Satchmo." Orchestra, Billy May, cond. M-G-M E 3882P, \$4.98 (LP).

The two old pros celebrate their reunion as a team by whipping up a delightfully breezy session of what might best be called vocal Dixieland. With "Pops" in better voice than I have heard him in some time and Crosby in good vocal form, they strut through *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*, *At the Jazz Band Ball*, or *Muskrat Ramble* in rare high spirits. It is no news, of course, that the Crosby voice is not what it was, but it is still capable of handling a pretty ballad like *Rocky Mountain Moon* to good effect. A couple of numbers from this album have been issued as singles and have made the "Hit Parade." J.F.I.

"Sounds from the Alps." Inge and Rudi Meixner, yodelers; Nussdorfer Schrammeln Ensemble. Westminster WP 6123, \$3.98 (LP); WST 15057, \$5.98 (SD).

If the Meixners are perhaps too sophisticated to be considered authentic folk singers, as minstrel-entertainers they have much of Marais and Miranda's engaging grace and charm. Ranging deftly from the frank sentiment of *Verlassen* and *Wann der Auerhahn balzt* to a catchily foot-stamping *Wachauer Ländler* and cackling *Mei Bibihendi*, they sing as well as yodel zestfully to light yet bright zither, accordion, and bass accompaniments. All these qualities and the occasional haunting echo effect are admirably captured in monophony; the stereo edition has the added attractions of cross-channel responsiveness and more appropriately open-air atmosphere. R.D.D.

"Portugal." Maria Marques; Manuel Fernandes. Monitor MFS 340, \$4.98 (SD).

A preoccupation with things past and lost characterizes Portugal's national song form, the *fado*, and perhaps because of its aching sadness record impresarios have largely passed it by. Now Monitor presents two singers, Maria Marques and Manuel Fernandes, who etch beautifully the tragic overtones of *fados* such as *Tristeza* (Sadness), *Roshina Dos Limoes* (Little Rose of the Lemons), and *Destino* (Destiny). The Portuguese language itself—like a nasalized love child of French

Continued on page 90

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and Spanish—adds its own peculiar charm. Neatly defined stereo sound, plus Portuguese and English texts. O.B.B.

"Songs from Viennese Operettas." Friederike Sailer; Fritz Wunderlich; Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Maraczek, cond. Vox VX 26230, \$3.98 (LP).

This interesting potpourri of operetta music by Lehár, Johann Strauss, Millocker, and Zeller avoids the standard excerpts usually encountered in similar collections. Probably only two numbers in the entire program could be called even fairly familiar, the big duet from Lehár's *Der Zarewitsch*, "*Hab Nur Dich Allein*," and the little song from Zeller's operetta *Der Ohersteiger Sei Nicht Boes*, which Elisabeth Schumann once recorded so entrancingly. There are also songs by Dostal and Künnecke, whose operettas are almost unknown outside of Central Europe. If these do not quite measure up to other works presented here, they are representative of each composer and of Viennese operetta of the mid-Thirties. The vocal performances, if not particularly long on charm, are stylish and forceful, and have the benefit of excellent orchestral support from the Stuttgart men, who themselves contribute sturdy accounts of two orchestral excerpts by Von Suppé and Jessel. J.F.I.

"The Hungarian National Ballet Company." Epic LC 3735, \$4.98 (LP); BC 1102, \$5.98 (SD).

Here is a dynamic, state-supported troupe—comprising autonomous orchestra, chorus, and dancers—attempting to continue on the performing level the pioneering work of Bartók and Kodály in preserving Hungarian traditional music. The chorus, happily, forsakes the usual array of gypsy airs that choke most recordings of this type and provides a beautifully sung program of folk ballads. Less happily, the orchestral contributions hew to the tired gypsy line; only a few short Bartók and Kodály tunes brighten the proceedings. On the whole, however, this program surpasses any of the copious competition, and the vital, glittering performances must rank as near definitive. Epic's bright stereo edition provides the broad sonic canvas that this highly chromatic music cries out for. O.B.B.

"Sixty Years of Music America Loves Best, Vol. Two." RCA Victor LM 6088, \$4.98 (Two LP).

It may be impolite to look a gift horse in the mouth, and at \$4.98 (a special price for a limited time) RCA Victor's second volume of "Sixty Years of Music America Loves Best" is certainly a bargain. I feel I should point out, however, that it is as much of a musical grab bag as its predecessor. The lover of classical music will prize the recordings by Rachmaninoff, Kreisler, Elman, Toscanini, and Caruso, but along with these he will have to accept songs by Eddie Fisher, Vaughn Monroe, Spike Jones, and Harry Belafonte. Of course, he will be no worse off than the person who has a predilection for the Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, or Larry Clinton Bands, and who to enjoy them must sit through performances by Risé Stevens, Leonard Warren, or Pablo Casals. In their original 78 issues, these thirty selections would have cost in the neighborhood of \$45. Superior engineering

processes have eliminated surface noise and greatly enhanced the recorded sound, making this an album for which many should be properly grateful. J.F.I.

"Scottish Dances." Jimmy Blair and His Scottish Dance Band. Epic LF 18003, \$3.98 (LP).

Variety is not the forte of Scottish dance music, and a whole program of jigs and reels from the land of the heather can easily become monotonous to Sassenach ears. But any Mac or Mc will find these brisk and lively performances of Scottish airs appealing, and doubtless many will want to don a kilt and sporran and cut a caper. For those not up to the sprightly jigs and reels, there are waltzes and two-steps, though these are played at a tempo that only the most athletic terpsichorean will be able to manage with ease. J.F.I.

"Ports of Paradise." Capitol STAO 1447, \$5.98 (SD).

A big, lush album that shines like the incarnation of some public relations man's dream. The Matson Line has joined forces with Capitol to issue a ravishing four-color booklet with pictures that will break your heart if you've ever been in Polynesia; it might just also send you racing to your nearest Matson office to make a reservation. On the musical front, two Hollywood talents, Alfred Newman and Ken Darby, have collaborated on overblown, pretentious arrangements of island and pseudo-island songs, e.g., *Isla Lei*, *Blue Tahitian Moon*, *My Little Grass Shack*: massed musicians play them with all the emotional intimacy of a Cecil B. DeMille chariot race. Put these rich elements together, spice with brilliant stereo sound, and you get a product that barely scratches the surface of a rich and lovely musical culture. O.B.B.

"A Garland of Love Songs." Shirley Abicair; Julius Baker, flute; Jimmy Carroll and His Orchestra. Columbia CL 1531, \$3.98 (LP); CS 8331, \$4.98 (SD).

Whether this young Australian artist is really a folk singer or not is difficult to decide from the evidence of this, her initial American recording. Her program ranges from such traditional folk songs as *The Skye Boat Song*, *I Know Where I'm Going*, and *Turtle Dove* to such pseudo-folk material as *Kisses Sweeter Than Wine*, *If I Had a Ribbon Bow*, and *Waltzing Matilda*. In some numbers her unaffected style recalls Susan Reed; in others her pop-folk style is closer to the commercial approach of Evelyn Knight. The Jimmy Carroll arrangements show considerable consideration for the singer's delicate voice, and also provide a delightful "period" atmosphere. J.F.I.

"Sing Along in French." Ray Ventura Singers. Everest SDBR 1107, \$3.98 (SD).

A fatuous release that invites you on the album face to sing along in French, but then tells you on the back (1) to give it a go in English instead or (2) if you don't even know the English versions, just listen. Reason: Everest provides no lyrics—not French, English, or Esperanto. Frustrated vocalists can, however, be grateful for a list of titles, although even these do not appear in correct order. Bitter-enders will find that the chorus, like the sound, is adequate. O.B.B.



"Bunny Berigan and His Boys." Epic 16004, \$3.98 (LP).

Epic first released this Berigan collection (all 1936 recordings) early in the 12-inch LP period. At that time it was distinguished by bad surfaces and useless notes. Both have been improved in this current repackaging. One can't afford to be too selective about Berigan's recorded work—most of it was done in even worse surroundings, if possible, than Beiderbecke's. In that sense, this is a fairly representative set. Side A is actually quite presentable: its six entries include one undoubted classic (the long version of *I Can't Get Started*), a good piece recorded by Glenn Miller in 1935 (*Solo Hop*), and a pair of well-played economy-sized band performances (*Dixieland Shuffle* and *Let's Do It*). But the second side is a succession of deadpan treatments of dreary tunes by small groups, utterly commercial except for Berigan who, like Beiderbecke before him, cuts through the surrounding treacle with strong, clean lines. Any Berigan collection is liable to be something of a mixed salad, but this one at least has the merit of offering a consistent display of his vibrant, dark-timbred trumpet.

"Johnny Dodds and Kid Ory." Epic 16004, \$3.98 (LP).

The first side of this disc (a newly packaged and remastered version of a collection first issued by Epic several years ago) brings together performances that are an essential part of any adequate jazz collection. They are the 1926 recordings made by the groups identified as "The New Orleans Wanderers" and "The New Orleans Bootblacks" which were, in actuality, Louis Armstrong's Hot Five. George Mitchell played cornet in Armstrong's place so effectively that for many years collectors thought Armstrong himself was on these discs. This is a magnificent ensemble band—*Gate Mouth* and *Papa Dip* are particularly brilliant—and Mitchell and Dodds contribute excellent solos to all the selections. The second side has a pair of lesser works by this same group and several by groups colored by Natty Dominique's pinched sour-toned trumpet.

Dizzy Gillespie and His Orchestra: "A Portrait of Duke Ellington." Verve 68386, \$5.98 (SD).

Gillespie's portrait of Ellington is done with the assistance (so-called) of an unwieldy big band in which woodwinds flutter nervously while tuba, trombones, and French horns lumber around des-

ultorily. Pale, awkward writing is a constant stumbling block. What the set might have been is suggested by *Chelsea Bridge*, in which the background is—for once—felicitous and in which Gillespie plays a lovely, full-toned, open horn solo. Gillespie, in fact, is excellent throughout the disc, giving the Ellington ballads a rich, singing treatment and bringing his own musical personality strongly to bear on a varied assortment of the Duke's works (including some choices that get away from the expected—*Serenade to Sweden*, *Upper Manhattan Medical Group*, *Johnny Come Lately*, and *Come Sunday*). But much of his good work is vitiated by the vague, inappropriate accompaniment.

Benny Goodman: "The Kingdom of Swing." RCA Victor LPM 2247, \$3.98 (LP); "The Swingin' Benny Goodman Sextet." Harmony 7278, \$1.98 (LP).

The Kingdom of Swing is largely devoted to pop tunes done by the Goodman band of 1935 and 1936, the early years of Goodman's success. Even today, the reason for this band's popularity is still apparent. It had a rough, exultant drive and vitality that later became smoother but more mechanical (as shown in a pair of 1938 and 1939 recordings on this disc). The program includes three 1936 performances with Ella Fitzgerald which have previously had only limited circulation—minor band pieces but pleasant mementos of the young Ella. Jimmy Rushing, Helen Ward, and Martha Tilton also contribute vocals. And to lend a champagne touch to an otherwise pleasant but low-keyed collection, there is one of the most exciting of the Goodman trio pieces, *Nobody's Sweetheart*, and the guttiest of his quartet recordings, *Vibraphone Blues*.

The Harmony disc is a monstrosity centered around selections in which a latter-day Goodman sextet accompanies an assortment of dismal singers.

Erskine Hawkins and His Orchestra: "After Hours." RCA Victor LPM 2227, \$3.98 (LP).

Hawkins never broke through into the front ranks in the late Thirties and early Forties. In that hallowed day of big-band jazz, the Hawkins band, capable though it was, was an also-ran—so also-ran, in fact, that one of its major hits, *Tuxedo Junction*, was appropriated by Glenn Miller without most listeners being aware that it had been one of Hawkins' big numbers. Hawkins might have slipped off into limbo if this collection

of recordings, made between 1938 and 1945, had not come along to remind us what a good band this was. It had a sound, driving, unstylized attack, although a strong Lunceford influence is apparent in such pieces as *Cherry*, *Song of the Wanderer*, and *Bear Mash Blues*. Along with *Tuxedo Junction*, the set includes Avery Parrish's now classic piano feature, *After Hours*, the swinging *Tippin' In*, and a sinuous, biting arrangement of *Weary Blues*. It is an indication of what has happened to big bands that this also-ran of twenty years ago can rate with the very best ensembles of today.

Johnny Hodges and His Orchestra: "Blues A-Plenty." Verve 68358, \$5.98 (SD).

A mixture of ballads by Hodges with rhythm section and blues by the same group augmented by Roy Eldridge, Ben Webster, and Vic Dickenson, this disc has its good points, although the performances in both areas are, for the most part, only adequate. On the ballads, Hodges has been so closely miked that he seems to play with a breathy rasp and his normally silken tone is turned to burlap. The blues by the larger group are notable for some excellent Eldridge trumpet work—relaxed, controlled, and full of warm vitality. Webster and Dickenson have a tendency to push too obviously, making Hodges seem particularly clean and unruffled when he rides in after their ponderous huffing. Aside from the work of Eldridge and the Hodges blues solos, this collection is scarcely compelling.

Max Kaminsky and His Orchestra: "Ambassador of Jazz." Westminster 6125, \$3.98 (LP).

There is an interesting indication here of the expanded scope possible for men such as Kaminsky who are normally limited to the well-worn traditional jazz repertory. That repertory is represented in this set by *Eccentric Rag* and *I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None of This Jelly Roll*, but the rest is pure adventure: *Henderson Stomp* from the old Fletcher Henderson repertory, Horace Silver's *The Preacher*, some old established pops (*The Song Is Ended* and *Bye, Bye Blackbird*), and several originals by Kaminsky and Dick Cary. One suspects Cary's hand in the arrangements (not credited): they have the mainstream-modernity typical of his work. The band (unidentified) is a lusty, swinging group, aptly suited to Kaminsky's clean, punching trumpet. The result is a happy, unhackneyed disc. The



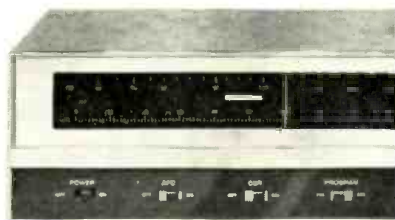
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liner notes, incidentally, list credits for production, engineering, editing, and mastering, but there's not a word about who plays on the disc (aside from Kaminsky) or about the tunes or the performances.

Stan Kenton: "Standards in Silhouette."
Capitol 1354, \$3.98 (LP).

The hushed, echoing, cathedral-toned arrangements of ballads which make up this set are a cut above Kenton's normally leaden approach to such tunes because this time there is a little air rustling through them. But this is still appallingly pretentious pap.

John Mehegan: "The Act of Jazz."
Epic 17007, \$4.98 (SD).

Mehegan, a jazz pianist, teacher, and critic, has undertaken here to describe and illustrate the elements that go into the playing of jazz, using *100 Rhythms* as a point of departure. He goes on various types of beats used in jazz improvisation and discusses and demonstrates the difference between improvising on the melody and improvising on chords. The purpose of the disc is to explain to lay listeners what is involved in "the act of jazz." It should be helpful towards that end, even though Mehegan is far better at the piano than when he is reading a script. The disc scarcely prompts repeated playing, however. It contains one piano improvisation by Mehegan which is interesting for a while but far too long, and for the rest there is little reason for repeated listening to Mehegan's direct, simplified comments.

"King Oliver and His Orchestra."
Epic 16003, \$3.98 (LP).

These are jazz classics which, despite the limitations of acoustical recording, belong in even the most limited jazz collection along with the Armstrong Hot Fives, the Morton Red Hot Peppers, the Ellington 1940-42 recordings, and the Parker-Gillespie quintets. Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, with Louis Armstrong on second cornet, made Chicago—and through Chicago, the world—jazz conscious. These 1923 recordings are not uniformly successful, but the ensemble fire, the two cornet breaks by Armstrong and Oliver, and the prowess of Oliver and Johnny Dodds as soloists streak through all of them, giving us the closest approximation most of us will know of the sound of one of the greatest of jazz bands.

Kid Ory and His Orchestra: "The Original Jazz." Verve 1023, \$4.98 (LP).

They must be aging Kid Ory in wood out in San Francisco. The veteran trombonist seems to improve as he gets further into his seventies. After a couple of splendid albums with Red Allen, Ory is heard this time with a fine group that includes Marty Marsala, trumpet, and Darnell Howard, clarinet. Ory plays several really lovely solos ("lovely" would hardly have applied to Ory's playing until recently), in particular, a delightful muted passage on *Baby Face*. Marsala's bright, gutty trumpet serves as a strong ensemble lead and rips through solos, but Howard is not as fluently swinging as one expects him to be. The tunes follow the pattern of Ory's recent albums—a blend of the expected (*Down by the Riverside*) and the unacknowledged but familiar (*Baby Face, Ida*).

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Pell's attempts to re-create the sounds and styles of Artie Shaw, Harry James, and the brothers Dorsey are extremely good, thanks to bands made up of sympathetic West Coast studio men and to the solo work of clarinetist Ed Rosa (as Shaw), trumpeter Frank Beach (as James), and trombonist Joe Howard (as Tommy Dorsey). The unidentified alto saxophonist who takes Jimmy Dorsey's role misses the essential suaveness of his style, but Jimmy's clarinet parts are much closer—played, one presumes, by Rosa.

The Ellington set, however, is an almost complete miss. This is partially understandable, since the Ellington band has much more individuality than the bands of the Dorseys, Shaw, or James. But the performances here reveal little understanding of the Ellington mode. The Goodman set is also a failure but a much more mysterious one; the Goodman style is no more difficult to ape than that of Shaw or James. Not only is there almost no evidence that this band is trying to play like Goodman, but many of the selections have no relation to Goodman (*The Saints*, for instance, or *Clementine*, *Friday at Five*, and something called *Don't Swing That Way*). This disc, in fact, is a very fishy proposition: the featured clarinetist is Henry Mackenzie of Ted Heath's English band, no band personnel is listed (as it is on the other discs), and the recording is muffled and fuzzy compared to the others. It seems doubtful if Pell actually had anything to do with this concoction.

These inexpensive discs, incidentally, are allegedly compatible for either mono or stereo playing. They sound good either way (the Goodman disc excepted), but there is no indication of what repeated monophonic playing will do to the stereo grooves.

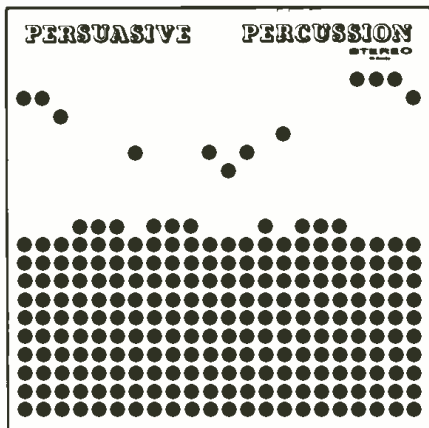
Mal Waldron Trio: "Left Alone." Bethlehem 6045, \$4.98 (LP).

Waldron, who served as Billie Holiday's accompanist during her last years, has dedicated this album to "the moods" of Miss Holiday. The title tune, written by Waldron and Miss Holiday on a plane trip to San Francisco, is a brooding, haunting song typifying the bristling despair in which the singer lived much of her life. Alto saxophonist Jackie McLean, who joins the Waldron Trio on this number, projects her inflections so well that one can almost hear her singing it. On the rest of the disc, Miss Holiday is only peripherally present. On one track, Waldron reminisces in pleasant but rambling fashion on his relationship with her, and plays a dismally slow ballad which, he says, shows her influence on his phrasing. But he displays his true mettle as a musician on three unusual and varied selections that seem to have no connection with Miss Holiday—a driving, digging piece called *Minor Pulsation*, a very original piano version of Sonny Rollins' *Airegin*, and a slow, dark tune, *Catwalk*, which demonstrates his capacity for creating oddly fascinating melodies.

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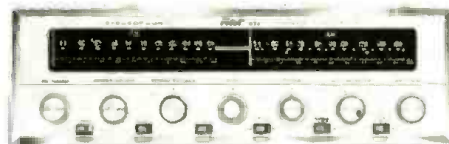
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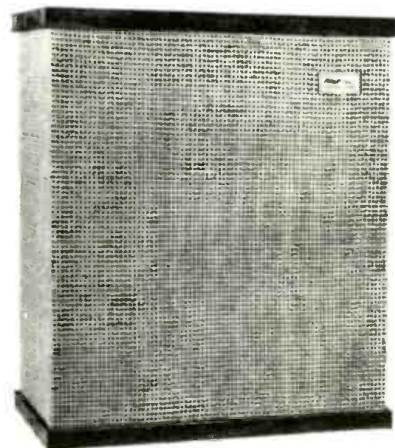
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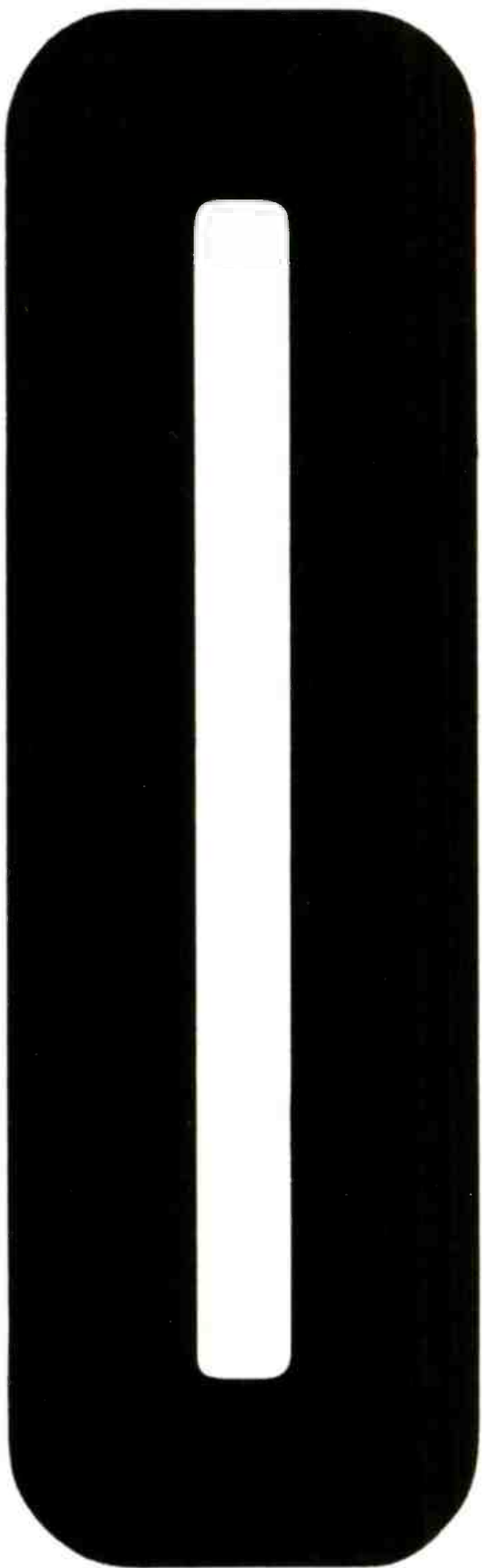
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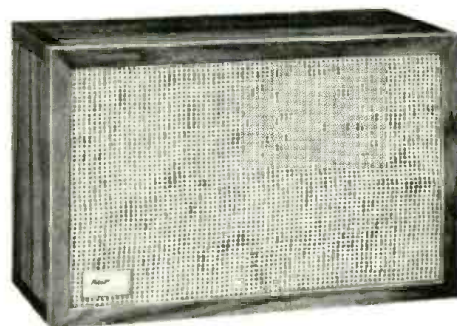
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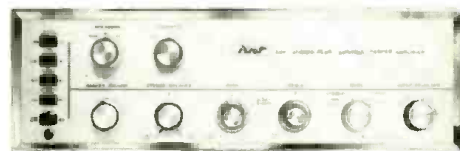
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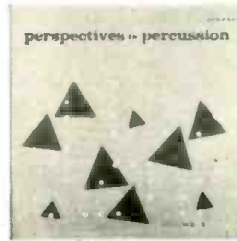
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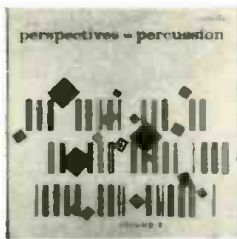
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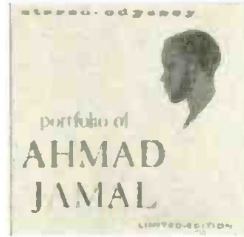


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the **Tape Deck**

Reviewed by R. D. DARRELL.

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BARBER: *Summer Music for Woodwind Quintet*

†Dahl: *Allegro and Arioso for Five Wind Instruments*

†Etler: *Quintet for Winds*

New York Woodwind Quintet.

• • CONCERTAPLS 4T 4009. 38 min. \$7.95.

Here is a contemporary American music taping which should gain these composers a wider audience by the sheer sonic appeal of matchlessly varicolored performances captured in transparent, markedly stereoisitic recording. New listeners probably will like best, at first, the nostalgically impressionist *Summer Music* by Barber; but with greater familiarity they are likely to esteem more highly the pungent and incisive Dahl work; and eventually they are sure to be most rewarded by the still more substantial, kaleidoscopically varied, and distinctively individual, if prickly, quintet by Alvin Etler—one of the most striking native works to date in this medium.

BARTOK: *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta; Hungarian Sketches*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2024. 39 min. \$8.95.

BARTOK: *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*

†Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (orch. Ravel)

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

• • LONDON LCK 80054 (twin-pack). 60 min. \$11.95.

Ideally designed for stereo reproduction, both in its specific orchestra layout (calling for string choirs on either side of the stage and percussion instruments arranged between them) and in its intricate musical textures (which can be properly differentiated and air-spaced only in the dual-channel medium), it is strange that the major Bartók work here has had to wait so long for stereo recordings. But the tape repertory, at least, has lost little time in seizing the best two of the three very recent stereo disc versions. Between these, Bartókians will unhesitatingly choose Reiner's for its greater interpretative authority, as well as for an intenser dynamic impact and more boldly stereo-

istic recording—and perhaps also for the more pertinent coupling of the simpler but charming *Hungarian Sketches* which the composer himself orchestrated from his earlier piano pieces.

The Ansermet version, generally slower and more lyrical, has, however, a distinctive appeal of its own, which, while undoubtedly different from what the composer intended, well may make the singular *Music* easier to "take" on first acquaintance. In any case, this reel is a "must" addition to every library for its version of Mussorgsky's *Pictures*. Uninflated, poetic rather than dramatic, vivacious, and recorded with uncommon warmth and delicacy of coloristic nuance, this reinterpretation miraculously restores this work's original freshness.

FALLA: *El Amor brujo; Noches en los jardines de España*

Amparita Peris de Prulière, mezzo (in *Amor*); Yvonne Loriot, piano (in *Noches*); Orchestra du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris, Manuel Rosenthal, cond.

• • WESTMINSTER WTC 127. 50 min. \$7.95.

The mid-1959 stereo disc edition of this coupling elicited exceptionally varied and contradictory reviews. Reluctantly, I must align myself in the "con" camp, for, colorful and powerful as the recording is, it is too close and dry to sustain the atmospheric magic I expect in these works. Moreover, Rosenthal's intensely sinister *Amor brujo* is marred by a wobbly voiced soloist, while his somberly dramatic *Noches* lacks the delicate lyricism of the Soriano/Argenta and Novaes/Swarowsky versions I have enjoyed most. Yet the ending of this work came close to unmaking my mind completely, since it concludes in such an outburst of passion and expansiveness that no one can possibly hear it unmoved or unshaken.

GERSHWIN: *Rhapsody in Blue; An American in Paris*

Leonard Bernstein, piano, and Columbia Symphony Orchestra (in the *Rhapsody*); New York Philharmonic (in *An American in Paris*); Leonard Bernstein, cond.

• • COLUMBIA MQ 322. 35 min. \$7.95.

If you consider Gershwin's best-known larger works to be "symphonic jazz," inviting the freest of individual improvisatory treatment, Bernstein's extremes of languishing expressiveness and slapdash virtuosity may not seem inappropriate here. In any case, his performances are no less spectacular sonically than they are interpretatively, for this closely miked, broad-spread recording is vividly

dramatic. Liberties are taken, to be sure, but many of the felicities of Gershwin's (and Grofé's) scoring, usually obscured, are projected here in microscopic detail.

LALO: *Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21*
†Sibelius: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D minor, Op. 47*

Ruggiero Ricci, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Oivin Fjeldstad, cond.
• • LONDON LCT 80046 (twin-pack). 62 min. \$11.95.

MENDELSSOHN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in E minor, Op. 64*

†Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 26*

Ruggiero Ricci, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond.
• • LONDON LCL 80003. 50 min. \$7.95.

Ricci is primarily a fiddler's fiddler who may make a less powerful appeal to the general listener than will more extroverted interpreters, particularly in the Mendelssohn Concerto, which here is somewhat lacking in éclat and breadth. It is, too, overreticently accompanied by Gamba. The Bruch is tonally richer and more expressive, but even it is less distinctively magnetic than Ricci's vibrant if not ultradazzling *Symphonie espagnole* (which properly includes the conventionally omitted Intermezzo) and his darkly atmospheric, intense, yet beautifully controlled Sibelius Concerto. These last two works benefit also by richer and tauter orchestral playing (especially good in the Sibelius), finer-grained recording, markedly superior tape processing, and freedom from background noise.

MOZART: *Così fan tutte* (excerpts); *Die Zauberflöte* (excerpts)

Various soloists; Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond.
• • LONDON LOH 90012 (twin-pack). 98 min. \$12.95.

Although few of us would select as ideal the (apparently) only available complete stereo versions of these operas, they do have such a wealth of interpretative and musical attractions that the present tape release of highlights is very welcome. Moreover, both programs here are better processed than in their stereo disc equivalents of nearly two years ago. The sound is obviously not of current vintage, but the intimate chamber-opera spirit and delicately stereoisitic warmth are entirely suited to the restrained but gracious performances. There is a general selection



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of materials too: thirteen solo and ensemble scenes from *Così fan tutte* (featuring Lisa della Casa, Christa Ludwig, Emmy Loose, Anton Dermota, Erich Kunz, and Paul Schoeffler), and twelve from *Die Zauberflöte* (featuring Hilde Gueden, Wilma Lipp, Emmy Loose, Léopold Simoneau, Walter Berry, and Kurt Böhme).

ROSSINI: *Overtures (6)*

Guillaume Tell; La Scala di seta; Il Signor Bruschino; Il Barbiere di Siviglia; La Gazza ladra; Le Cenerentola.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2021. 47 min. \$8.95.

Enthusiastic as I was about the stereo disc edition of this program, I find the tape version even finer. Indeed, the sonics here are more immaculately clean in tape's more precise channel differentiation and more impressive in sudden and extreme dynamic changes. And except for a somewhat hesitant start in *The Barber of Seville*, these high-stepping performances are superbly vital and assured—as close to the definitive for our era as Toscanini's were for a previous one.

VIVALDI: *Concertos for Strings, Op. 8, Nos. 1-4 ("Le quattro stagioni")*

Vittorio Emanuele, violin; Società Corelli.
• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2008. 43 min. \$8.95.

In welcoming back this fine Italian ensemble (unaccountably missing from the catalogues since its first two releases in 1954-5) I'm sorry that it didn't dig deeper into its baroque repertory than the familiar *Four Seasons*, which already exists in several unbeatable versions, at least one of them (that by Janigro for Vanguard) available on 4-track tape since last March. The present thirteen-man group, which acknowledges no conductor, plays as skillfully as ever and its soloist is notable for his finespun tone and delicate precision: and though the players are somewhat closely miked, they are beautifully recorded in brighter and broader stereo than Vanguard's. But the rather intense performances lack the warmth and resilient verve of Janigro's, and the continuo harpsichord part is played (or recorded) so reticently that it is barely audible even in its most effective role, that in the slow movement of the *Autumn Concerto*, where Janigro's Anton Heiler shone so brightly.

DANIEL SAIDENBERG: *"Royal Music of Europe"*

Instrumental soloists and ensembles; Saidenberg Little Symphony, Daniel Saidenberg, cond.

• • FERRODYNAMICS FD 1001-6. 38, 34, 43, 45, 40, 51 min. respectively. \$8.95 each (\$53.70 for the complete set of 6 reels).

For its entry into the tape field, the Ferrodynamics Corporation hardly could have chosen more distinctive debut material than this rich miscellany of mostly baroque music which first appeared a few months ago on discs under the aegis of

the American Society of Concerts in the Home. Many of the composers and all but one of the major works here have never been represented on tape before. They almost consistently proffer far more than merely historical interest.

If the performances themselves are less consistently ideal, at least one reel is a masterpiece in every respect. I can unreservedly recommend Volume 6, in which Paul Maynard comes into his own as a soloist both in dashing clavecin works of Louis Couperin, Elisabeth de La Guerre, and Pierre de Chambonnières, and in a series of magnificent organ pieces including three enchanting *Noëls* by Dandricu and Balbastre, and five of the most eloquent compositions of François Couperin. And the sheer aural appeals match those of the music itself: the rich tonal resources of the Holtkamp neobaroque organ (at the General Theological Seminary in New York) and of Maynard's Kirkman-type Hubbard and Dowd harpsichord are fascinatingly exploited in the soloist's imaginative choice of registrations and are captured in the purest and most natural stereo.

The other two outstanding reels are Volume 5, with the Claremont Quartet's zestful readings of Mozart's *Hunt* Quartet, K. 458, and Haydn's Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 5; and Vol. 4, in which a weak performance of the Beethoven Quintet, Op. 16, is completely overshadowed by the Bach Trio Sonata in C, S. 1037, and the Handel Concerto à quatre in D minor, liltily played by Claude Monteux, flute, and Harry Schulman, oboe, with continuo.

In the other reels, the performances by Daniel Saidenberg's Little Symphony (and the Gotham Baroque Ensemble) lack full authority and flexibility to my ears, and the clean stereo recording reproduces only too candidly the over-constrained acoustical ambience of Carnegie Recital Hall. There is also considerable background noise, but only purists are likely to grumble over these flaws. And even they will easily overlook them while relishing Samuel Baron's deft flute roulades in Vivaldi's *Goldfinch* Concerto and Harry Schulman's delectable playing in the Handel Oboe Concerto No. 3, in G minor. In addition, they will savor the charms of Purcell's incidental music to *The Gordian Knot Untied*, Telemann's *Don Quixote* Suite, Handel's *Double Concerto* No. 4, in F, and several of his seldom heard pieces featuring horns and woodwinds. These will come as exciting, fresh discoveries to most nonspecialist listeners, and will appear as invigorating old friends to connoisseurs of the baroque.

"Concert Encores and Music from the Films"; "Songs to Remember." Mantovani and His Orchestra, London LPK 70025 (twin-pack), 71 min., \$11.95; and LPM 70034, 42 min., \$6.95.

The mixture as before, soothing alike to man, beast, and parakeet! But it must be conceded that no listener who is not gagged by Mantovani's syrupiness can fail to be mesmerized by the spacious sonics here, particularly in the "Music from the Films" portion of the longer reel, where pianists Rawicz and Landauer squeeze the last drop of color and emotion out of the *Warsaw* Concerto, *Cornish* Rhapsody, *Dream of Olwen*, etc.



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"England's Ambassador of Jazz."

Jonny Dankworth and His Orchestra. Roulette RTC 518. 48 min., \$7.95. John S. Wilson's analysis of this Basic-influenced British band as one which has yet to develop an identifiable character of its own seems only too accurate. Nevertheless, its present program of originals by Dankworth himself, his sidemen, and his staff arrangers (*Kool Kate*, *New Forest*, *Specs Yellow*, *Desperate Dan*, etc.) is still offbeat enough to hold notable promise for Dankworth's future. And at least flashes of already well-developed imagination and skill clearly emerge here even in the heavy and exaggeratedly stereoisitic recording.

"Finian's Rainbow." Original cast of the 1960 Production. Max Meth. cond. RCA Victor FTO 5003. 43 min., \$8.95. The unfading Irish charms of the famous Burton Lane score well may delight new listeners as successfully as it did those who heard this company's revival production at New York Civic Center. But for those who cherish the old Columbia LP of the original company (starring the still inimitable Ella Logan and David Wayne) the stereo sonics here are scant compensation for these relatively pallid personality projections and lack of persuasive magnetism.

"Fiorello." Oscar Peterson Trio. Verve VSTC 238. 37 min., \$7.95.

Peterson himself rambles rather haphazardly over the piano keyboard, and I'd like to hear more of Ray Brown (bass) and Ed Thigpen (traps)—both imaginative players. Nevertheless, there is considerable jaunty grace in the ensemble's well-recorded *divertissements*, particularly on *Home Again*, *Unfair*, *Gentleman Jimmy*, and *On the Side of the Angels*.

"Eydie Gorné Vamps the Roaring 20's." Eydie Gorné. Don Costa's Orchestra. ABC Paramount ATC 802, 26 min., \$7.95.

A rather short tape, but one which realistically captures the ebullient Miss Gorné's surprisingly idiomatic evocations of such *jeux d'esprit* of the Scott Fitzgerald era as *Toot Toot Tootsie*, *Button Up Your Overcoat*, and *Let's Do It*.

"Kismet"; "Can-Can." London Theatre Company. Eric Rogers. cond. Richmond RPE 45009, 42 min., \$4.95.

Like the other releases in Richmond's series of Broadway-show highlights, this offers no competition to the original-cast editions. But it does represent excellent value for its modest price, in brightly stereoisitic recording, spirited if not particularly polished orchestral accompaniments, and in the straightforward singing by various talented youngsters.

"Love Is the Thing." Nat "King" Cole with Gordon Jenkins and His Orchestra. Capitol ZW 824, 31 min., \$7.98. Characteristically warm and intimate torch ballads, which don't always escape mawkishness, but which always are unpretentiously accompanied and beautifully recorded in the purest and richest of floating stereo sound.

"The Glenn Miller Story." Recording from the sound track of the film. Decca ST7 8226. 39 min., \$7.95.

Despite the presence of eight members of the original band, these heavily plugging reprises of the great Miller hits evoke none of their memorable gusto. But what redeems the reel is its inclusion of two added attractions in the form of the long *Basin St. Blues* and *Ochi-Tchor-ni Ya* by Louis Armstrong and the All Stars. The Old Master may trumpet less dazzlingly than he used to, but he sings as superbly as ever. His sidemen play with fine spirit too, and the wide-range, strongly stereoisitic recording enhances the vitality of these outstanding performances.

"Music From Million-Dollar Movies"; "Song of India." Boston Pops Orchestra. Arthur Fiedler. cond. RCA Victor FTC 2023. 40 min., and FTC 2041, 39 min.; \$8.95 each.

Superbly auditorium-authentic tapings, welcomingly processed at more moderate modulation levels, of two recent Fiedler disc triumphs: one of film score hits, including what must be well-nigh definitive performances (with pianist Leo Litwin) of the *Warsaw Concerto*, *Dream of Olwen*, and *Cornish Rhapsody*; the other a miscellany of Pops Concerts encores, including the *Bahn frei* and *Thunder and Lightning* polkas, *Jolly Fellows* waltz, and Richard Hayman's rambunctious *Dancing Through the Years* medley.

"Oldies But Goodies." Griff Williams and His Sweet Music. Mercury STB 60068. 30 min., \$6.95.

The present memorial tape of the late Griff Williams makes that leader's loss acutely felt. Here again a businessman's bounce style is enlivened by a truly resilient pulse, and a sentimental songfulness is never allowed to become cloying. Apart from its danceability, this tape is remarkable too for the ballroom spaciousness of its bright and broad-spread stereoism—an acoustical warmth so natural that even a specific jacket note can scarcely convince me that it was achieved through the use of an echo chamber.

"Pop-Overs." Eastman-Rochester Pops Orchestra. Frederick Fennell. cond. Mercury STB 90222. 30 min., \$6.95.

After having criticized the stereo disc edition for sonic coarseness, I am glad to report that the present tape, while still perhaps overdetailed, does much better justice to the Eastman orchestra's tonal qualities. Fennell's performances, however, still strike me as lacking his usual spirit and tautness—merits evident here only in a zestful *Age of Gold* Polka. There are two inexplicable omissions of longer works which were in the original program: *Finlandia* and the *Schwanda* Polka and Fugue.

"Pyramid"; "One Never Knows." The Modern Jazz Quartet. Atlantic ALP 1904 (twin-pack). 73 min., \$11.95.

The Modern Jazz Quartet has created a new kind of chamber music, coolly impressionistic and perhaps "jazz" only by courtesy. Its sonic fantasies are notable particularly for quasi-fugal textures and a tonal magic in scoring, which features Milt Jackson's glittering vibraharp. In the present coupling this strange artistry can be heard in two stages of its development: first, in leader John Lewis' extraordinary understated film score of several

years ago for *No Sun in Venice* (*One Never Knows*); then in the more recent—and even more highly acclaimed—collection featuring not only Ray Brown's blues reminiscences in the title piece, but also a superbly atmospheric *How High Is the Moon* and a deft *jeu d'esprit* on Duke Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing*. The earlier recordings still sound notably pellucid in the present taping, which is a great improvement over the original stereo disc edition of *One Never Knows*; the later ones are chamber music stereoisim of almost ideal transparency and luminosity. For a genuinely different and wholly enchanting musical experience (one which most "classical-music" listeners have never encountered before). I can't recommend this remarkable release too enthusiastically!

"Saturday Night Sing Along with Mitch." Mitch Miller and the Gang. Columbia CQ 316, 32 min., \$6.95.

More of the same "sing-along," but Mitch and his hearty male chorus (and discreet accompanying ensemble) seem to command more sonority and persuasiveness with each new recording in their best-selling series. This is a particularly good release, both for its open sound and its generous selection of such appropriate materials as the perennial *Baby Face*, *Ain't She Sweet?*, *Little Brown Jug*, *Poor Butterfly*, and a dozen other prime participation-favorites. This reel, like the original disc, is accompanied by the song texts.

"Show Boat and Porgy and Bess in Latin Tempos for Dancing"; "The Sound of Music in Latin Tempos for Dancing." Edmundo Ros and His Orchestra. London LPM 70020, 30 min., and 70032, 29 min., \$6.95 each.

Every time I hear a new Ros tape (or disc) I'm bowled over anew by the incomparable precision and éclat of his truly virtuosic orchestra, the subtlety with which he metamorphosizes familiar tunes into a wide variety of Latin styles, and the magnificent lucidity and authenticity of the stereo recording itself. Nowhere else in the dance music repertory in general, or the usually monotonous Latin-American domain in particular, have I ever found such consistently arresting—and always "musical"—distinction. If you think I exaggerate, just listen for yourself to *Bill* as a valse creole, *Old Man River* as a mambo, *Bess*, *You Is My Woman Now* as a baion (in the Kern-Gershwin program), or the title song as a cha-cha and *Climb Ev'ry Mountain* as a bolero mambo (in the Rodgers & Hammerstein reel)—each a little masterpiece of originality, skill, and good taste in both conception and sonic realization.

"Songs by Burke and Van Heusen." Lena Horne; Lennie Hayton and His Orchestra. RCA Victor FTP 1004, 36 min., \$7.95.

Here Miss Horne is ultrabrightly recorded in high-level, somewhat exaggerated and spotlighted stereoisim which makes the most of her unique powers of personality projection. The program itself, however, while pleasantly contrasting torch ballads with quasi-blues, achieves comparable distinction only in the final, infectiously jubilant *Ring the Bell*.



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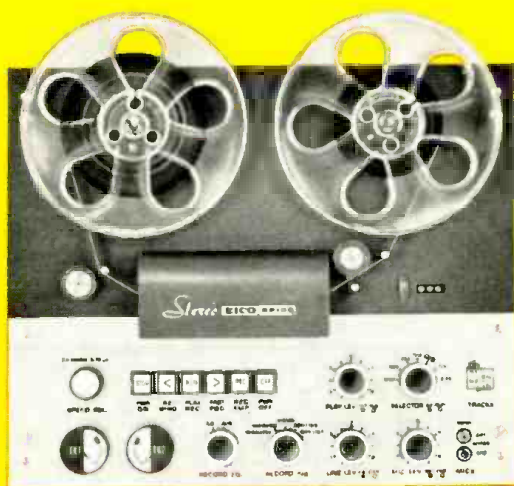
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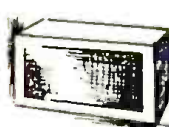
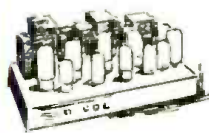
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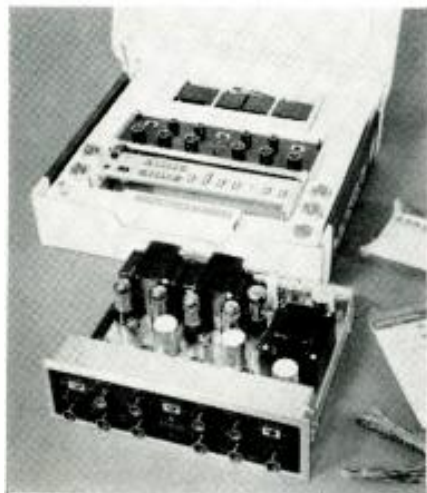
High Fidelity Newsfronts



by RALPH FREAS

Waning with Wax? An aggressive publicity man tossed a press release our way last week about a product guaranteed (practically) to extend the frequency range of any high-fidelity system. But it isn't used in the system. Interesting? We read on, to find he was touting a patent medicine alleged to eliminate the common wax that gathers in the ears of audiophiles and nonaudiophiles alike. Our laboratory isn't set up to analyze the product in question, and our own medical experience stops just short of prescribing aspirin for headaches. Hm-m-m, if you think wax makes your high fidelity wane, better see a doctor.

Kit Mates. The H. H. Scott people, as you might have expected, are making a control amplifier kit to follow up the FM tuner kit that bowed early in the fall. Like the tuner kit, the LK-72 amplifier kit comes in a special "Kit-Pak," matches the tuner in appearance and size



Amplifier kit in a "suitcase."

and, presumably, goes together as easily. Want a few manufacturer's specs? Here goes: 72-watt full-power output (36 per channel), IHFM power band down to 20 cps, total harmonic distortion at 1 kc under 0.4 per cent at full power, hum better than 70 db below full-power output. You may already have seen these units in the stores by the middle of last month. Price: \$149.95.

1,500 Real-Life Sounds. A catalogue of "Hi-Fi and Super Sound Effects" arrived

recently and, thinking that many tape recordists might have use for odd sound effects, we browsed through it with interest. Stimulating reading. Effect number 552 "Wind—continuous," for example, would seem to be an appropriate background for King Lear's speeches. The catalogue (and records) are available from MP-TV Services, a Hollywood, Calif., firm. The publicity release accompanying the catalogue says that it lists more than 250 records of the newest sounds of: autos, animals, trains. General Douglas MacArthur's Farewell Address, and "many other unique sound effects." Old sound effects never die, eh?

Baffle It Yourself. On a recent trek into Pennsylvania we found the Neshaminy Electronic Corporation readying a kit version of their Z-400 speaker system (the Model 350 woofer used in conjunction with the two-element JansZen electrostatic). Called the Jan Kit 41, it is no kit in the usual sense of the word. Actually, it is the Z-400, minus enclosure. The speakers are mounted on a half-in.-thick panel, fully wired, ready for whatever kind of installation the purchaser wants (in separate enclosure, behind a wall, in a rigid component cabinet, or wherever). Only two cubic feet of enclosure are needed. The firm says that any increase beyond this size does not drastically increase the efficiency or reduce the resonant frequency of the speaker in the enclosure. Going from two to three cubic feet adds only 1 db of bass efficiency below the two-cubic-foot resonance frequency. The slight gain, says the firm's Phil Klein, is more than offset by the increase in cabinet volume and cost. And speaking of costs, the purchase of the Jan Kit 41 at \$99.95 represents a saving of about \$35 for the person who doesn't need the Z-400's enclosure.

More Reverberation. To the growing list of companies offering reverberation units, add Stromberg-Carlson and Allied Radio Corporation. Reverb units, as many readers already know, attempt to simulate the delay of sound as experienced by someone listening to an orchestra in a large hall. The chief benefit of using a reverb unit in a home music system would seem to come in adding some concert hall feeling to a closely miked, and therefore unduly crisp, live concert broadcast. The same would be

true of any broadcast originating in an acoustically dead studio. Closely miked recordings might also benefit from the addition of some reverb but, in our experience, the recording engineer takes care of it in the studio. Indiscriminate use of the unit would seem to be gilding the lily just a bit.

New View of Needles. We took a pretty lively interest in needle wear back in the good old days when we used to grind our own cacti. Then microgroove came along. No amount of squinting would reveal the condition of that tiny stylus.



No squint with Syl-a-Scope.

and needle inspection passed into the hands of the dealer and his microscope. Things seem to be swinging our way again, however, with the introduction by Robins Industries of something called a "Syl-a-Scope." It is an instrument that, according to the manufacturer, throws a magnified image of the needle on an illuminated screen, showing its contours, flaws, or signs of wear. The best part is this: the Syl-a-Scope can be used without removing the needle or taking the cartridge from the tone arm. The screen measures 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. by 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. It isn't Cinerama but, for \$19.95, we can again see how the needle is wearing.

All Thumbs? Remember the old chestnut about the boy asking directions in New York of an old man. "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" he wanted to know. And the old man mumbled, "Practice. Practice. Practice."

Same thing in threading a tape recorder.

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A little practice makes it almost as easy as placing a disc on a turntable. Easy as manual threading is, we admit to being fascinated by automatic tape-threading devices. Ampex now offers one (an accessory to their new PR-10 recorder) consisting of a pair of motors for supply and take-up reels, plastic tape guides, and a stiff leader that is picked up by a projecting hook. The complete threader sells for \$35. The PR-10, by the way, is only now beginning to appear in stores.



Ready for a threader.

It is, in Ampex's words, "the first completely professional tape recorder priced under \$1,000."

In our November 1960 issue, the equipment report on the Ampex 970 contained an unfortunate error. The price was stated to be \$750. Actually, the current price of the unit is only \$595.

"All-Out in Specs." We had a chance to toss the newsman's inevitable question at Saul Marantz the other day—what's new?

"We're praying that our Model 9 power amplifier will be in full production soon," Saul told us. As he described it, the Model 9 is a single-channel unit putting out 70 clean watts.

It seemed to us that Marantz is running counter to the trend in putting one channel on a chassis and we asked to know his reasons.

"Don't think we didn't consider putting two channels together," he said, "but, to get it to run cool and put out clean power at the same time, the weight has to be high. The Model 9 weighs fifty-five pounds as it is. Two on one chassis would boost the weight to about eighty pounds. We use four tubes in push-pull parallel, used so conservatively that you can touch them. On the top, that is," he hastened to add.

The price? Saul told us the Model 9 will cost \$300.

"You mean two ninety-nine, ninety-five, don't you?" we asked.

"No," he said, "I mean three hundred dollars. We aren't saving nickels.

"This amplifier is all-out in specs. It will take a lot of doing for anyone to match it."

We don't doubt it.

New Cartridge Firm. Watch for a new cartridge, the ADC-1, soon to make its appearance. The unit gets its name from the initials of the producer, Audio Dynamics Corporation. A moving magnet type, it features extremely low mass

(said by Peter Pritchard, the firm's president, to be "the lowest"). Other claims made by the ADC-1 are "very high compliance" (10 x 10⁻⁶ cms/dyne) and the ability "to track at less than a gram." We'll watch for this one with much interest. The firm expected to start delivery last month.

Focus on Furniture. If you've wondered how to arrange your high-fidelity system to give it visual as well as sonic importance in your home, look into some of the furniture ideas being advanced by many manufacturers. An El Cerrito, Calif., firm, Sieler Design Products, is turning out a series of module units in kit form. Construction is simplified by the use of interlocking miters and mortise joints. With a little glue, professional-looking mortise joints can be made by the rank amateur. The partitions that divide the inside of the cabinet are mortise-fitted, and a number of arrangements, depending on the components used, are possible. Kit prices begin at \$29.95, and a variety of woods are available.

Allied Radio Corporation allows maximum design flexibility with a room-divider shelf setup consisting of support-



Polished brass holds oiled walnut.

ing poles with predrilled holes and divider shelves and matching cabinets. Only a screwdriver is needed for assembly. The user can start with a basic assembly and add to it as money and space allow. The supporting poles have a polished brass finish; shelves and cabinetry come in oiled walnut.

A Brooklyn, N. Y., firm, Homewood Industries, offers a completely assembled unpainted equipment cabinet at a \$67.95 list price. Made of ¾-in. birch veneers, the cabinet is 36 in. wide, 29½ in. high, and 17 in. deep. A vented back panel allows for necessary ventilation.

Cardboard Antenna. Something new in do-it-yourself kits comes from Blonder-Tongue. It is an indoor antenna, the Model HK-1, capable of handling four TV or FM sets. The kit includes a four-set coupler, 300-ohm twin lead, and installation hardware. Putting it together requires the use only of a screwdriver and a pair of snippers. It assembles easily on a sturdy cardboard frame (72 in. by 18 in.) and can be placed in a closet, attic, crawl space, or any out-of-the-way area. The price is \$9.95.

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SAVE THAT WOOFER

In changing your system from mono to stereo, that old woofer has a special, perhaps temporarily dual, role to play.

THE STEREO BLITZ that shook the high-fidelity world a little over two years ago gave considerable pause to the music listener whose system had just reached the monophonic peak of perfection. If it gave only momentary pause to some, many still resist its lure completely. The reasons may be as varied as the various people who resist. But here we'll concern ourselves with only one—the problem of adapting a good monophonic speaker system for stereo.

Did we say problem? Isn't it a simple question of duplicating the system you already have? Maybe. Offhand though, there appear to be three categories (there may be more) of speaker systems with special duplication problems. There is, first of all, the big multispeaker, full-range system. Even if its owner could afford to duplicate it, the chances are he wouldn't have sufficient space in his listening room to do so. The second category is the simpler system—a 12-in. wide-range speaker in the average six- to nine-cubic-foot enclosure considered minimal before bookshelf enclosures (with their techniques of producing good bass) came along. In this case, finding sufficient space for another enclosure of the same size is probably a bigger problem than finding enough money to buy it. A third, and less common variety of problem-system, is the one that has been built into a wall. Its placement there was selected for optimum monophonic sound, and the possibility of moving it or of duplicating it for stereo is pretty remote.

The one solution to all three problems is that of using the woofer as a common bass source for both channels and adding a pair of small, low-cost speakers to produce the stereo effect. There are many such small (8-in. or less) speakers, limited in bass response, which are perfectly acceptable reproducers of midrange and high frequencies. Because their en-

losures can also be small, the possibilities of placing them for best effect are numerous. Let's admit right now that this proposal will not result in the same full stereo reproduction as a pair of matched full-range systems. But, since frequencies below 250 cycles are not directional, the absence of a second woofer may not be overcritical when the saving of money and space is weighed in the same balance. One might also view this compromise as temporary for, if space and budget permit, the second channel can be gradually built into a full-range system.

If you are convinced that "common bass" is a good solution for your stereo conversion, several wiring details must be considered. First, common bass is obviously not the same as one-channel bass. You may own a speaker system with, let us say, a 15-in. woofer and an 8-in. midrange with a crossover at 250 cycles. It would be temptingly simple to connect that system to one channel and buy another 8-in. midrange for connection to the other channel. Not only would such an arrangement deliver just half the bass, but it would result in a mismatch between the two 8-in. units. The 8-in. speaker in the system would deliver only frequencies above 250 cycles, while its mate would receive everything the amplifier is capable of pushing out on one channel. If your ears have accustomed themselves to a good speaker system, the sound of the above hookup would be far less than satisfactory.

There are several answers to the problem. One is a crossover network that mixes the lows of both channels and sends those below 250 cycles to the single woofer. Frequencies above 250 cycles are maintained as separate channels and delivered to the new "left" and "right" speakers for stereo effect. The Heath Company offers such a crossover (Model AN-10) in kit form for about \$20.

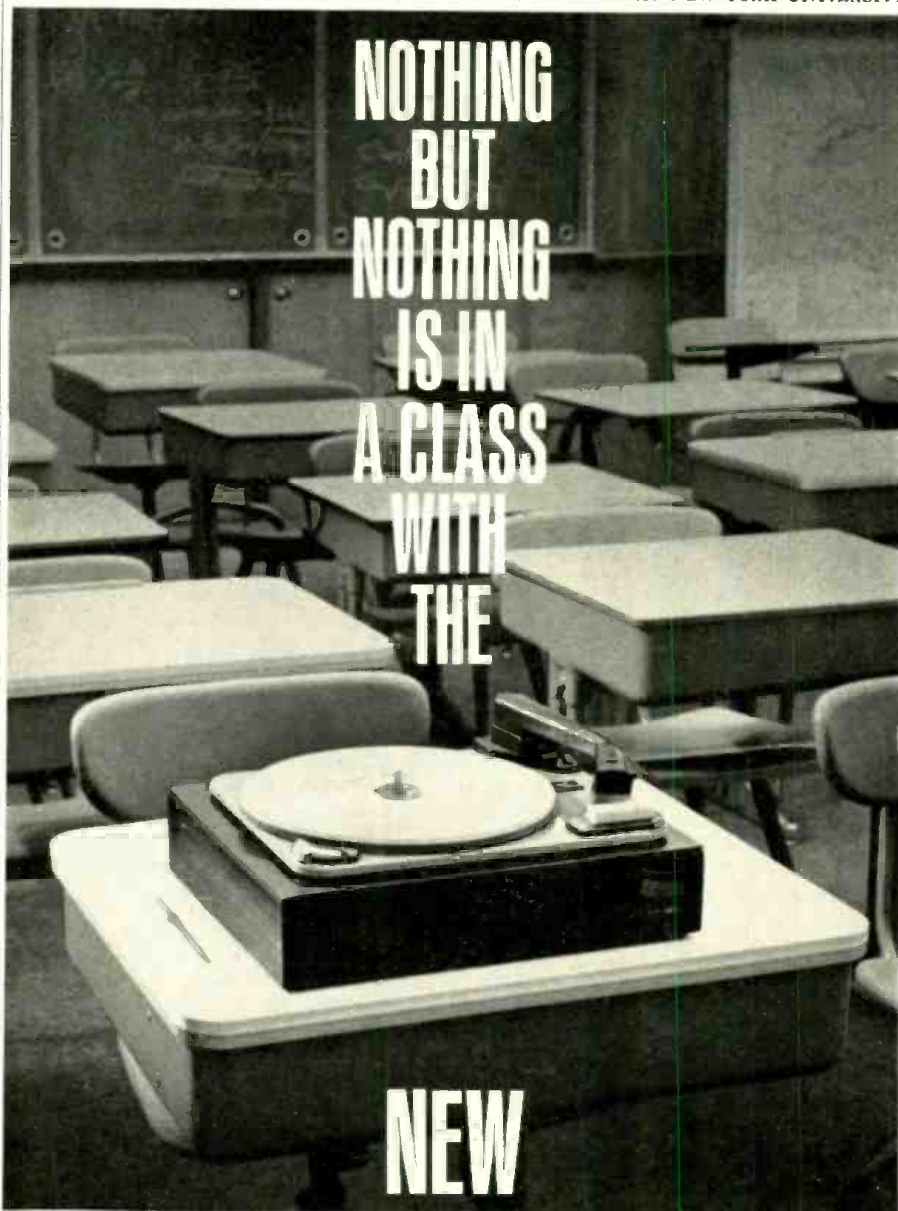
Loudspeaker manufacturers also provide specific solutions. Electro-Voice and University, for example, sell single add-on speakers and the necessary special network for mixing the lows. While these network-speaker combinations were made to be used with the individual companies' original monophonic systems, they can also be used with systems of similar efficiency characteristics. If you don't know the characteristics of your present system, you can easily find out by consulting your dealer or writing to the manufacturer who built it. Efficiency is important to maintain a balance over the full sound spectrum. The Heath network, by the way, mentioned above provides a four-position adjustment enabling the user to match the efficiency level of different high frequency speakers with the particular woofer used.

Still another answer to the problem is that of keeping the monophonic system intact and using it as a center-fill sound source between a pair of small, inexpensive flanking or "satellite" speakers. The stereo effect will still be present but with an added something. This alternative has the advantage also of being simple to assemble. The smaller speakers are connected to the "left" and "right" channel outputs of the stereo amplifier. The original mono speaker then may be connected to the "center" output if one is provided on the amplifier, or to the 4-ohm tap on each channel output, if no "center" output is provided. It would also be a good idea to wire a speaker pad in series with the full-range system to keep it from overwhelming the flanking speakers and thereby destroying the effect.

That wall-mounted woofer mentioned earlier may still seem to be a problem. Its placement, short of removing and enclosing it, is inflexible. No matter, its placement is unimportant. Only the positioning of the midrange and high frequency speakers can change the stereo effect. Actually, the bass speaker can be located anywhere in the room, behind the listener or on either side. There is, as some have noted, a psychological advantage in *not* placing the woofer between the high frequency pair. In this position, the high frequencies *seem* to be coming from the large enclosure—a circumstance that does nothing to enhance the stereo effect.

One final word. Some stereo discs now in the marketplace have been deliberately recorded to achieve complete separation between channels. Some have even sought "very directional bass" as a kind of stereoddity. In such recordings, instruments of very low register are clearly heard from one channel only. The result of playing such a recording on the mixed or common bass system described above can only be imagined. Suddenly from the woofer there may emerge organ pedal notes, a tuba blast, or a string bass tremor that seemingly had no part in the sonic proceedings just a moment before. Such recordings are relatively rare, but should you find yourself in possession of one, don't be too put out—the experience can be entertaining if not good stereo.

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PARIS OPERA

Continued from page 38

connected with the city's sewers, but quite suitable for a phantom's getaway. A few yards to the south loomed another romantic item: a sealed iron door on which I could make out a rusty "1907." It will not be opened until the year 2007, when it will expose to respectful (one hopes) eyes a batch of lead urns inside which are an ancient gramophone, records by Caruso, Patti, and Melba among others, and a package of needles. After a look at the very maritime windlasses for hoisting scenery (the work is now done by electric motors) and at a row of modern switchboards (the electricians have detailed notation for each opera and are "conducted" from above by whispers over tiny loudspeakers), we clambered up through the five stories of iron and steel latticework and catwalks that fill the space between Lon Chaney's lake and the floor of the stage. At each level there were rolls of canvas and shrouded objects waiting to be whisked up through traps and long slits—one of Julien's few criticisms of Garnier is that the entire stage floor cannot be lowered and raised. Something marked "Tosca, côté jardin" looked particularly heavy.

The stage was deserted except for two painters retouching a backdrop for Gene Kelly's ballet. Although it was early in the afternoon, the hinged columns for that evening's performance of *Samson et Dalila* were already in place, waiting for their moment of truth. Monge pushed a button, and down slithered the pride of the house, a thirty-ton half-cylindrical "sky" upon which lights can produce excellent storms and dawns and a peculiar blue infinity I have never seen elsewhere.

Then we climbed up through three more stories of catwalks and a tropical forest of ropes, until my eyes shrank from looking down at the distant dimly lighted stage. At my elbow hung huge slabs of make-believe ready to be lowered in a second, and over in one corner squatted a fascinating assembly of ancient bells. One of them, according to a



reliable tradition, was stolen from the St.-Germain-l'Auxerrois church, opposite the Louvre; it gave the signal for the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572. Since then it has rung hundreds of times for *Les Huguenots* of Meyerbeer, and if you are in Paris this winter you can hear it sound midnight for *Rigoletto*.

Most of the rest of my visit was spent in ballet territory. There are seven practice rooms for dancers upstairs and one

very famous hall downstairs: the Foyer of the Dance frequented by Third Republic dandies and immortalized by Degas. It is now closed to the public, but can be seen as a distant glitter, apparently half over the horizon in back of the stage, from which the entire corps de ballet seems to emerge for the *grand défilé* in *Les Indes galantes*. All of these rooms can be, and sometimes are, used by singers, but each has the slanting floor, reproducing exactly the surprisingly steep slant of the public stage, and the big mirror that the ballet people need.



For singers there is a series of piano-equipped cells in the back of the building, and, of course, the main stage. The newest and most impressive rehearsal place, for everybody, is away up in the dome directly over the Grand Chandelier of the amphitheatre. This one has an orchestra pit that duplicates perfectly the look and sound of the pit downstairs. The view over the roofs of Paris is extremely operatic—if there were room for an audience, this would be the ideal spot for *Louise*.

In Julien's revolution, ballet is almost as important as singers, scenery, and Garnier's palatial machine, and here, too, he is in line with tradition. Balletomania is not really a modern Russian disease. It began in the Paris of Watteau and reached epidemic proportions in the Paris of Théophile Gautier. French operatic history is poor in prima donnas, but rich in dancer-dictators; from Lully in the seventeenth century to Lifar in the twentieth, there has always been someone around with a vested interest in having dancing in every opera. Since Lifar's departure the dictator's role has not been filled, but the ballet company continues to thrive. Of the grand total of 313 performances at the Opera during the 1959-1960 season, 144 were of ballets. These evenings of dance, usually Wednesday, are among the most agreeable the theatre has to offer. At the moment the stars are George Skibine, Marjorie Tallchief, Claude Bessy, and especially Attilio Labis, a youngster with a sound classical style and an odd beatnik charm. The director of the ballet school and the man responsible for seeing that the Opéra's flock of children, the famous *petits rats*, yields a dividend is Harald Lander, a Dane. His nationality is not really surprising, since Copenhagen is famous for having preserved the purity of French classical dancing styles.

All in all, Julien has reason to be pleased with his achievement so far, and he is. "At first," he says, "I didn't really understand the Opéra. But now I think I do, and I am in love with it. Or perhaps I understand it better now *because* I am in love with it." You feel that he deserves to win his revolution.

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FROM THE LEFT BANK

Continued from page 51

characteristically sensual treatment that established her as one of the most provocative and unusual singers of her time. Her performance was no flash in the pan, as her later career shows. On Epic LN 3205, "Catherine Sauvage," there is abundant evidence that she is now at home in almost any type of song. MacOrlan's surrealist tale of Limehouse, *La Fille de Londres*, in a slightly less dramatic version than Montero's, is equally successful in its own way. So is the grisly tale of *Monsieur Williams*, a gentleman who inadvertently strayed on to Thirteenth Avenue with rather disastrous results. Possibly these stark songs are Sauvage's forte. But who could be sure after hearing her utterly delightful version of the fanciful tale of *L'Île Saint-Louis* or her endearingly sentimental performance of *La Complainte des infidèles*? If Sauvage commits something of a musical faux pas with her uninspired version of *Johnny tu n'es pas un ange* (an old Les Paul number), that is the only weak spot in an otherwise wholly satisfying program.

Patachou once described Georges Brassens as a "phenomenon," and there is little doubt that Brassens has spent the greater part of his career trying to live up to the evaluation. Generally speaking, this nonconformist lyricist-composer-troubadour has succeeded, and in the process acquired the title of *L'Enfant Terrible de la Chanson Française*. His lyrics suggest that he is never happier than when thumbing his nose at modern moralities. (If it were not that a wry sense of humor permeates much of his work, it would be considered outrageous.) Yet he is also capable of dashing off a tender love song (*Le Chasse aux papillons*) or a verse of delicate charm (*Le Parapluie*), pieces which offset such macabre numbers as *Le Gorille* or *La mauvaise réputation*. The charm of Brassens is to be found in his own performances of his own songs. Accompanying himself on the guitar, Brassens raises his gravelly-sounding, untrained voice, and immediately one realizes that no other voice would so perfectly suit these uninhibited rhymes. Nobody would call the performance musical, for Brassens has a lamentable habit of falling from pitch, of slurring notes, and of swallowing phrases; yet somehow it all sounds perfectly adapted to the material. And Brassens knows how to extract every last ounce of pathos, passion, and innuendo from his own lyrics. No wonder he has a large and furiously partisan following. "Monsieur Georges Brassens Sings" (Epic LN 3619) is really tremendous fun; here are Brassens's extremely funny satire on singers who traffic in dirty songs (*Le Pornographe*); his tale of an extremely accommodating community female, *Femme d'Hector*; the bawdy implications of *Le Cocu*; and *Le Vin*, a small masterpiece of irony delivered with tremendous and uninhibited relish.

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Gallic entertainers is the incomparable **Maurice Chevalier**, who at seventy-two is once again riding the crest of the wave. It is thirty-two years since the Chevalier straw hat, sunny smile, sly vocal wink, and irrepressible gay spirits appeared on the American scene; and though the hair is grayer today and the voice slightly tinged with age, the sparkling personality and tremendous *joie de vivre* of this artist remain undiminished.

Chevalier's American career can be broken down into three separate and successful periods: the film ventures in the early Thirties; postwar appearance in 1947-49; and the new movie career of the late Fifties. It is fortunate that we have recorded mementos of each period. "Thank Heaven for Maurice Chevalier" (RCA Victor LPM 2076) contains a dozen songs from his early Hollywood films, some of which are rescued from banality only by Chevalier's unique way of selling a song. A better-rounded picture of the singer's artistry is "Toujours Maurice" (RCA Camden CAL 579), a mélange of film songs and numbers from his 1947 one-man show. The latter are particularly interesting in that they present Chevalier in a new light, as far as American audiences are concerned. In *A Barcelone, Vingt ans*, and *Quai de Barcy* he turns character singer, in little vignettes closer to life than is his usual material. In a sense these numbers represent Chevalier reverting to a performing style he used very early in his French music hall career. Two Chevalier recordings, made in the mid-Fifties, present the artist in contrasting moods. "The Art of Chevalier" (London TWB 91183) is a program of very French and very attractive numbers that Chevalier has been



singing for years, though none has developed into a big success. A mixture of nostalgia, homespun philosophy, and social comment, this is rather subdued Chevalier, but no less pleasurable for that. "Chevalier's Paris" (Columbia CL 1049), a recording of a Chevalier program at the Alhambra in Paris, is chiefly remarkable for the extraordinarily exuberant performances of the then sixty-eight-year-old singer and for the very noisy orchestral backing from the Michel Legrand orchestra. Old favorites—*Valentine*, *Prosper*, *Ma Pomme*—are here, cheek by jowl with Chevalier's amusing take-off of rock 'n' roll and the American cowboy song. The Alhambra audience obviously loved every minute of it, as will most Chevalier fans. His most recent recordings, except for the two or

three songs he sings on the original sound-track recording of *Gigi* (M-G-M 3641; M-G-M S 3641) are confined to standard items in the American popular song repertoire. Taken en bloc, they do not show Chevalier at his best.

Latest of the band of French troubadours to appear in this country, both in person and on discs, is **Yves Montand**, who has been a tremendous favorite in his own country for the past ten years. The talents of this slim, rather elegant man (he bears a slight facial resemblance to the late Louis Jouvet) seem unlimited. He is a persuasive singer of love songs and ballads, an earthy chanter of folk songs, a delightful raconteur in song of strange and amusing tales of places and people, and a convincing pleader for the cause of the little man. Quite a number of his songs have political and social overtones, and it is only when Montand gives vent to his social dialectics that I admit to finding him rather unattractive. He is a remarkably relaxed performer, giving the impression that he is merely performing for a few friends—an art in itself.

Just prior to his one-man show in New York in the fall of 1959, a veritable flood of Montand recordings appeared. Ten- and twelve-inch Odéons, twelve-inch Monitors and Columbias created a confusing situation because in many cases the same masters had been used by the different companies. In addition, many of the songs on the ten-inch Odéons were duplicated on the larger Odéon discs, as well as on the twelve-inch Monitors. "Le Récital 1954 au Théâtre de L'Etoile" (Odéon OSX 101/102) is one of the best of Montand's performances, giving a wonderful idea of how well he communicates with his audience and how they respond to his every number. There is obviously a considerable amount of by-play between performer and audience which gives the whole recording a nice atmospheric feeling. Further, this album contains a number of Montand's better specialties—the very amusing *Le Chef d'orchestre est amoureux*, the fantasy *Une Demoiselle sur une balançoire*, a poignant version of Prévert's poem *Barbara*, and a moving one of *Les Feuilles mortes*. For those who are not completely conversant with French, "An Evening with Yves Montand" (Columbia WL 167) is recommended, not only because Montand gives a suitable introduction to each song, in English, but also because this record contains the only version of *Sir Godfrey*, an ironic, even macabre little number, which Montand does superbly. Most Montand records can be recommended unreservedly, but I have my doubts about the appeal of "Chansons Populaires de France" (Monitor MF 324) which apart from *Le Temps des cerises* is a rather depressing collection of social-protest songs.

Little known on this side of the Atlantic, **Henri Salvador**, one of the most versatile of modern French troubadours, has been a great Parisian favorite for many years. An accomplished singer of romantic ballads and comic songs and a wicked satirist, Salvador also has a considerable reputation as a dancer and

Continued on next page

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FROM THE LEFT BANK

Continued from preceding page

mime. Although this suggests that he is an entertainer best appreciated when seen in person, there is enough evidence on "The Remarkable Henri Salvador" (Kapp KL 1122) to account for his great popularity. In this neatly arranged program Salvador runs the gamut from gentle, fastidious crooning in the Jean Sablon style to the frantic vocal characterizations of a Danny Kaye. Salvador has already made one tour of this country; it is time he returned, for this artist and his work would seem particularly congenial to American tastes.

Towheaded troubadour Charles Trenet is a carry-over from the old guard of French minstrels who flourished in the years just prior to World War 2. Of this famous group, which included Tino Rossi, Lucienne Boyer, Jean Prejean, Lys Gauty, Pils, Tabet, and many others, only Chevalier and Trenet are still active. And active is surely the word for Trenet. Trenet's happy-go-lucky, ebullient singing style is the perfect mate for his own carefree lyrics and gentle, catchy tunes; and since he seldom sings anything but his own songs, his performances of them are usually definitive. This was certainly true of his sparkling versions of his early *La Route enchantée*, *Menilmontant*, *Quand j'étais petit*, etc., once available on Columbia ML 4275, and if you are a Trenet fan, this disc is well worth hunting for. The familiar Trenet sparkle is very much to the fore on his only currently available recording "On the Road to the Riviera" (Angel 65023), but unfortunately most of the material is inferior. Only the interesting lyric and melody of *La Java du Diable* and *Moi, j'aime le music hall* (his salute to the Parisian music hall and its artists, including himself) seem to me to be up to his best level.

LFS SIX

Continued from page 41

into music—excellent music in its own right—of corresponding tension and ceriness.

The case of Baudrier, less heard, and less talked and written about than a good many inferior musicians, is in France a case among several—the case of the undogmatic modern composer, the composer without an explicit aesthetic and technical program, without a clear-cut statement of right and wrong in musical vocabulary, without that orderly single-mindedness so much appreciated in times when things are complex, traditions doubtful, and decisions about a new work's value difficult. For such is the contemporary situation: very few listeners and performers, and even very few composers, are wholeheartedly convinced that contemporary music, even at its best, is "as good" as the classic and romantic music that occupies the fore-

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ground of the musical scene. And this pervading doubt—unheard of in the past and, up to Debussy's day, the privilege of reactionary and unyouthful minds—has given inordinate importance to the use of the foil under the gem. It has become all gain for a modern composer to be the founder and protagonist of a group, to have always a manifesto ready, to engage in polemics—in short, to carry on the romantic and revolutionary tradition of the dangerous and angry young man.

Meanwhile, another composer keeps to himself. He is, in fact, much more "modern": in a time not of innovation but of summing up, he is intent on building, in Sir Herbert Read's phrase, "his personal raft to cross the stream of life." To this end, he uses a baroque diversity of material: traditional timber, yesterday's aluminum, today's plastics, and old prow figures, dug out in half-forgotten sites of the history of music. But for such a composer there is a lot to lose. If I tell the reader of HIGH FIDELITY that Henry Barraud (b. 1900) is one of the best contemporary French composers; that long stretches of unaccompanied modal melody with a predilection for the augmented fourth, involved counterpoint, and a sense of grandeur and decorative austerity are the marks of his style; that his music has a rather unusual way of being very French, by reminding us of the austere expressiveness of Romanesque architecture . . . If I mention Henri Dutilleux (b. 1916) and his remarkable symphonies, which prolong Roussel's manner with additional *trouvailles* in handling orchestral colors and making these colors and the various ways of blending them subservient to symphonic construction . . . If I say these things, I can trust that I am taking him—the reader of HIGH FIDELITY—to *terra* not altogether *incognita*, since Barraud and Dutilleux have been seen and heard in America not long ago. But if I go on, Leporello fashion, with my catalogue of "unconnected" French composers worth hearing. I shall perhaps introduce him to names quite unfamiliar. I shall, however, do so—if only telegraphically.

Jehan Alain (1911-1944). A soul given to fantasy; works for organ and for piano; knew how to set, in a few bars, the atmosphere of a musical fairy tale.

Jean Cartan (1906-1932). A pupil of Dukas and Roussel, and a disciple of "Third" Beethoven: two astonishingly mature string quartets, and a remarkable Pater Noster for choir and orchestra.

P.-O. Ferroud (1900-1936). Admired Florent Schmitt, and wrote music very unlike Florent Schmitt's: wiry, bony, and extremely intelligent. A reactionary critic once defined him as follows: "God made Ferroud and intended him to be anything except a composer. But Ferroud decided he would be a composer all the same, and succeeded." Works for orchestra, chamber music, a short opera after Chekhov.

Charles Koechlin (1867-1950). Looked like Walt Whitman, Tolstoy, *et al.* Not unlike Charles Ives, never ceased to belong to the youngest generation. Mas-

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LES SIX

Continued from preceding page

tered every sort of style, from medieval modes to 12-tone; one of the great orchestral inventors of our time; wrote an amazing number of works—his monumental *Jungle Book* Symphony (after Kipling) among them—with a spark of genius in every single one.

Henri Martelli (b. 1899). A musical draughtsman of great elegance. Has achieved personal style, which implies a risk: knowing so well how to lay out and round up a tempo scherzando, he is tempted to overwork this particular mood. Chamber music, concertos, an exceptional symphonic success: *Bas-reliefs assyriens*.

George Migot (b. 1891). Modal writing again, and many works of every genre, all of which present themselves with the relaxed ease of masterly improvisation. Their style is sometimes a bit hazy, but the originality of their author is genuine.

Alexis Roland-Manuel (b. 1891) and Manuel Rosenthal (b. 1904), Ravel's only pupils. Greatest elegance. Clarity and restraint. Works spiritual and secular, in the Italian and in the French style.

But at this point the reader may no longer be able to refrain from interrupting. "That's all very nice," he bursts out, "and probably true. For I trust you know what you're talking about. But is not Boulez much more important?"

Pierre Boulez (b. 1925) is important indeed; yet not more important than, for example, Koechlin. The difference is simply that Boulez's importance is established, and Koechlin's is not. With Boulez, French music since Les Six has come full circle. Les Six shirked and denied the difficulty of being a modern composer. Boulez's principle and practice are that this difficulty should be the very subject matter of composition. Les Six had been improvisers. Boulez sets up to be a legislator. He carries the principles of Romanticism to the limit. Self-respecting Romanticists were always in quest of "novel melody," bolder harmony, and hitherto forbidden dissonance. With Boulez, the novelty, the boldness, the breaking of laws and the browbeating of the listeners had no longer to be merely the highlights of a new work: they had to be its principle, applied from the first note to the last.

This method had been invented, about 1915, by Schoenberg and his disciples. But their "dodecaphonic principle" had been applied to musical *design* only: melody, harmony, and counterpoint. In France, this school and its doctrine had passed almost unnoticed until, as late as 1945, an excellent musician and pedagogue, René Leibowitz (b. 1913), popularized the "Viennese" grammar and syntax among young composers. And one of them, Boulez, going more than one better, decided that this same principle of avoiding the obvious and preventing the progress of a musical discourse from being foreseeable should be

applied to *all* elements of music—to scoring, meter, dynamics, as well as to harmony and polyphony.

It is Pavlov's method inverted and applied to the de-conditioning of reflexes. Many times the bell has rung and the dog has been given his meat; and for centuries the dominant has rung and the listener has been given his subsequent tonic. Well-conditioned canine reflexes have been the result, and the musician's "musical ear." But now the bell will never more hold its promise: it will ring again and again, but the dog will be given, instead of the expected meat, a pat on the back, a rubber ball, or a thrashing. And the listener will never get his tonic after his dominant: if the bell rings forte and woodwind, pianissimo and cymbals will ensue; and if it rings as if a flow of triplets were coming, he will be given three-fifths of a quintuplet followed by five-sevenths of something else. In fact the whole system amounts to a methodical attempt towards *organizing the unexpected* and driving the square pegs of construction into the round holes of discontinuity—a fantastic attempt, of course, and an illogical one.

But, music not being logic, this is no argument against Boulez. There is tragedy as well as grim irony in this ultraromanticist's tireless struggle for unexceptionable "structures"; and only the heartless, and the wise men of Gotham, will sneer at his endeavors to get out of the marsh of Romanticism by pulling his own hair. After all, Münchhausen too escaped and got out of the marsh—not because his method was sound, but because imagination and vitality were on his side. For displaying the same qualities Boulez's music is fascinating—not for the doubtful dogmas it stands for, but for reasons Boulez the rationalist pretends to disregard. A great deal of dogmatizing and a good many downright academic sub-Boulezian compositions have sprung from Boulez's activity as *chef d'école* and director of the society for modern



music called "*Domaine musical*." But not a few musicians, young or middle-aged (in France, a Yannis Zenakis, a Jean Durbin, a Claude Ballif) who are emphatically not his disciples have been, while openly infuriated, secretly stimulated by his example and by his dissonant personality: part mad engineer; part impresario with an unforgivably good nose for market values; part Saint Anthony tempted by all the perverse pleasures which modern music, that concourse of strange sounds, has to offer.

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DRIVERLESS TWEETER

Continued from page 47

pink glow. The cloud itself is not sound, but the medium on which audio signals may be impressed to produce sound. These signals — from the amplifier, through the oscillator and electrode— thus modulate the ionic cloud. The resultant sound energy stirring in the quartz chamber is then spread into the room through an exponential horn fitted over the chamber.

In its present form, the Ionovac consists of two chassis. One contains the bulk of the electronic circuitry required to do the job and the power supply to energize it; the other contains the oscillator coil, the quartz cell, and the horn. The two assemblies are linked by an electric cable. A line cord, for plugging into an AC outlet, completes the system.

Early models used a quartz cell handmade by the inventor. Plainly this method was not suited to factory production. Accordingly, one of Klein's first efforts at DuKane was to convert from handcrafting to modern manufacturing. Eventually he devised a technique for producing cells in quantity by a "varying temperature" method in which different degrees of heat could be tapped from the same flame. This advance still left other problems.

The choice of material was a major problem; related to this was the matter of "firing" the unit, or starting the ionization process when it was turned on for use. The search for solutions to these difficulties led to an international engineering pool in which DuKane participated with other Klein licensees, including Plessey Limited of Great Britain, Telefunken of Germany, and Audax of France. DuKane eventually devised an automatic start for the ionization process which obviated the need for the material-wasting spark required in earlier versions.

Then it was discovered that about one out of ten quartz cells was aging prematurely, becoming devitrified. This resulted in improper transfer of energy from the oscillator to the cell, and early system failure. To make things worse, many of the speakers generated their own brand of distortion because of a difference between their impedance at initial "firing" and impedance during operation. To compensate for this difference, a variable capacitor was inserted into the circuit. This capacitor changed its electrical value when one of its elements would be moved by the pressure of a metal plate, itself bent by the heat of the speaker. This attempt at control, however, itself got out of control because the metal plate would not return to its original position when the power was turned off. And finally, the inner electrode tended to become pitted and thus useless after too short a time in use.

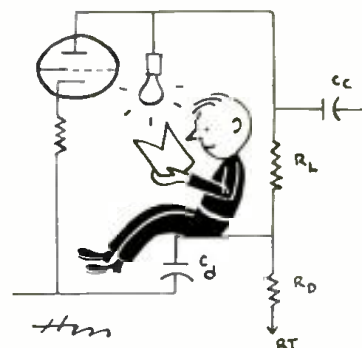
The present state of the Ionovac, indicated by the models shown at the New York High Fidelity Show last September, represents an evolution in research and design which—since 1954—has encompassed about five hundred models. Apparently, the problems of the past have

been solved. The oscillator has been re-located physically to improve its RF generation. The quartz cell has been upgraded. What's more, this cell—which once served only as the sound-generating element—now has become as well the controlling element of the oscillator circuit. As such, it serves as a self-compensating device, regulating the RF generation in accordance with its "needs" during use. The inner electrode has been reshaped, and now is made of a new alloy to withstand the speed-of-light bombardment of electrons within the quartz cell.

Low frequency response of the Ionovac is determined largely by the size of the horn coupled to it. In the present design, this size is related to a decrease in the amount of usable sound pressure generated below about 3,000 cycles. The Ionovac's truest and smoothest response extends upward from about 3,500 cycles (a fact to keep in mind when considering the unit for service in an already existing speaker system). Thus it can be incorporated as a "supertweeter" by using it with an 8-ohm crossover network that provides frequency division at 3,500 cycles. For those who don't care to do-it-themselves, there is the "DuK" series of full-range systems with the Ionovac reconnected as the high-end reproducer.

Despite its present use at the very upper reaches of the audio range, the ionic speaker is not in principle a frequency-discriminating device. With changes in the horn, and in key elements before the horn, its frequency response can be lowered. In fact, work now is under way to perfect a model which will reproduce tones down to 800 cycles. Such a speaker would serve as both mid-range and tweeter, requiring only a suitable woofer to comprise a superior two-way system capable of wafting the major portion of the audio range into a room without going through the "paper curtain" of conventional speakers.

If such a speaker, at this writing, is almost a certainty, so too are other indicated uses of the ionic principle. It has been applied, for example, in the testing of ultrasonic industrial control devices; it may also be used as a research tool in neurophysics and possibly internal medicine. Finally, we are advised that it could serve as an actuating force to propel a space craft once it has reached escape velocity. Thus, via high fidelity and a determined Frenchman, we may yet reach the stars.



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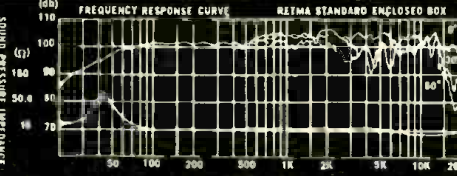
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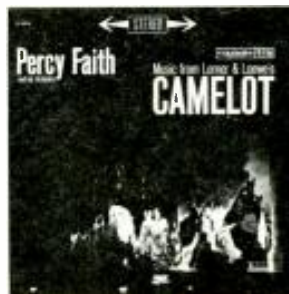
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