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By Roland Gelatt

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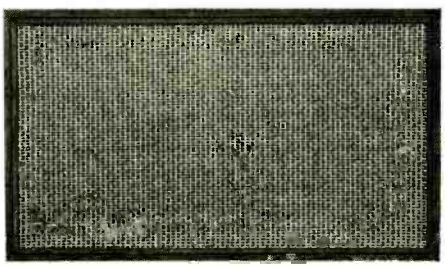

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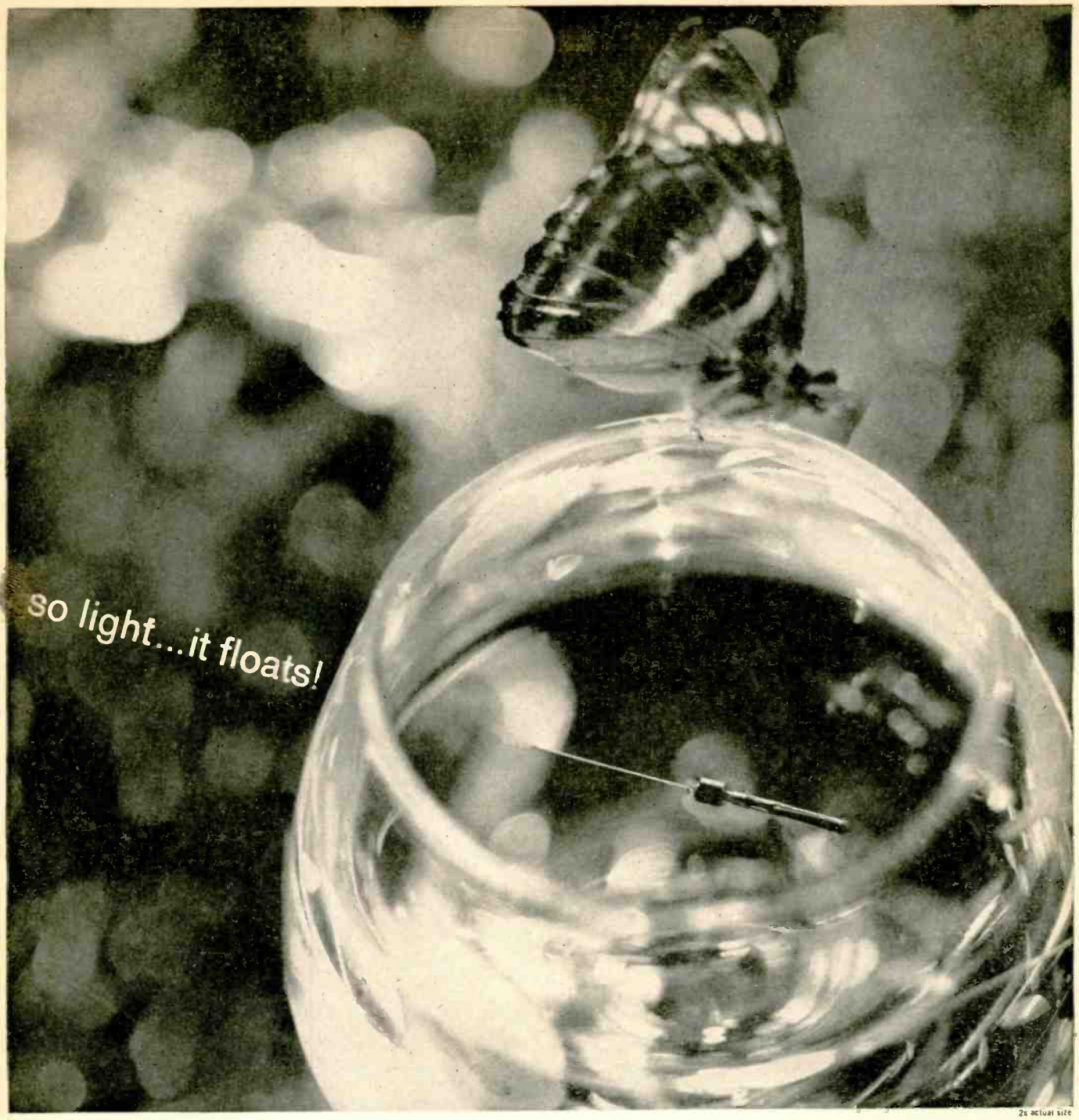
CIRCLE 68 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



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CIRCLE 71 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Page 44

Page 51

high fidelity

Page 48

Music and Musicians

Sound Reproduction

Reviews of Recordings

APRIL 1963 • VOLUME 13 NUMBER 4

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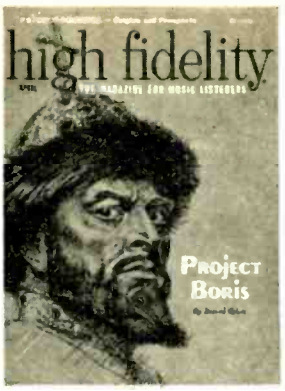

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Boris Christoff as Boris Godunov

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CIRCLE 39 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

AUTHORitatively Speaking

Dr. S. J. London is only one of many physicians we know who find in music a constant source of refreshment, but he is rare among medical men of our acquaintance in pursuing his avocation with the same spirit of scientific inquiry that his professional role demands. As medical director of a pharmaceutical company, Dr. London is actively engaged in research in physiology, pharmacology, and clinical medicine; as student of music, he follows a similar course, in an endeavor to discover and explain causes and effects. We were therefore not at all surprised to learn of his intense interest in the work of the nineteenth-century physicist and physician Hermann von Helmholtz, who contributed so much to the art we call high fidelity (see "The Origins of Psychoacoustics," p. 44). Dr. London is currently working on a book on the biology of music, to be written along classic Helmholtzian lines as a "personal tribute to Helmholtz for the transcendental scope and beauty of his thinking."

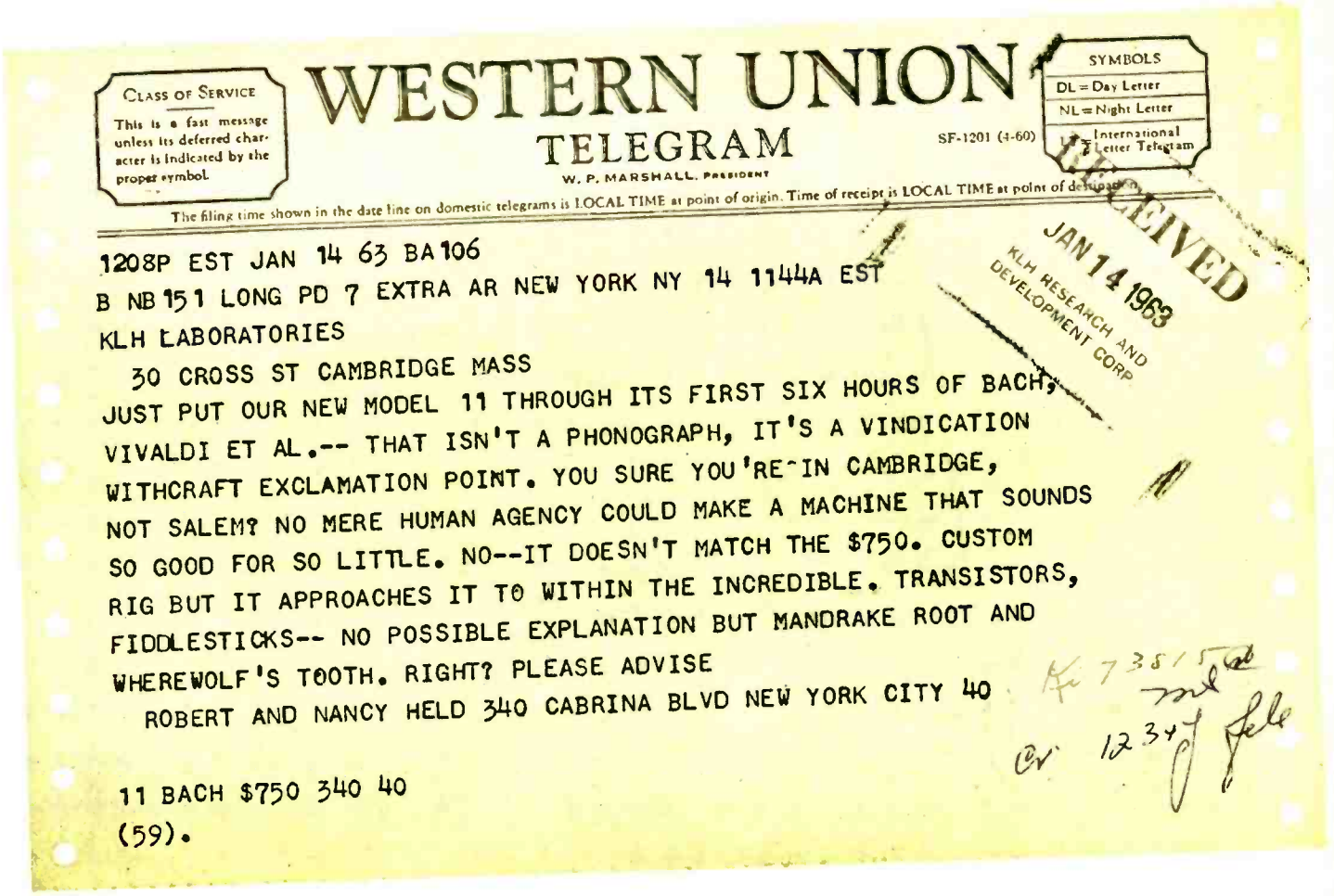
Our investigation of psychoacoustics moved quite naturally from its origins to its prospects. The latter question we assigned to **Irving M. Fried**, and his prognosis appears on p. 48. Most HIGH FIDELITY readers are probably aware that Mr. Fried is the founder of Lectronics of City Line Center, Inc., an audio sales and consulting firm, and thus vastly experienced not only with the mechanical and electronic components of music systems but with the intellectual and emotional complexities of the people who buy them. That he can cope with the problems is perhaps due to a liberal education and a broad experience. Mr. Fried studied international relations as a Harvard undergraduate, later entered that university's business school, and still later attended its law school (he is now a member of the Pennsylvania Bar). Wartime service in the Navy, marriage, and paternity have also marked the years. Lectronics, he tells us, is his alter ego.

The Editor in Chief of this journal is markedly averse to any celebration of his own activities in this column. He says it's obvious what he's doing—getting out the magazine every month and sometimes writing a feature article for it (see "Project Boris," by **Roland Gelatt**, p. 51). We anticipate an acerbic word in our direction on the score of even the following brief announcement: summer will see the publication, by Lippincott, of a new and revised edition of the Editor in Chief's book *The Fabulous Phonograph*.

Practically everybody is aware that **Paul Henry Lang** is Professor of Musicology at Columbia University, Music Critic of the *New York Herald Tribune*, and Editor of the *Musical Quarterly*. He is also, it appears, one of those HIGH FIDELITY readers who were somewhat exercised by the appearance in these pages (June 1961) of H. C. Robbins Landon's article entitled "A Pox on Manfredini." For "A Second Look at Manfredini," turn to p. 57.

We take great pleasure and pride in noting that **Nathan Broder**, Contributing Editor and long-time member of HIGH FIDELITY's reviewing staff, has recently been elected President of the American Musicological Society. Congratulations are in order to Mr. Broder—and to everyone concerned.

First . . . you catch a werewolf



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Although we did not solicit this telegram,

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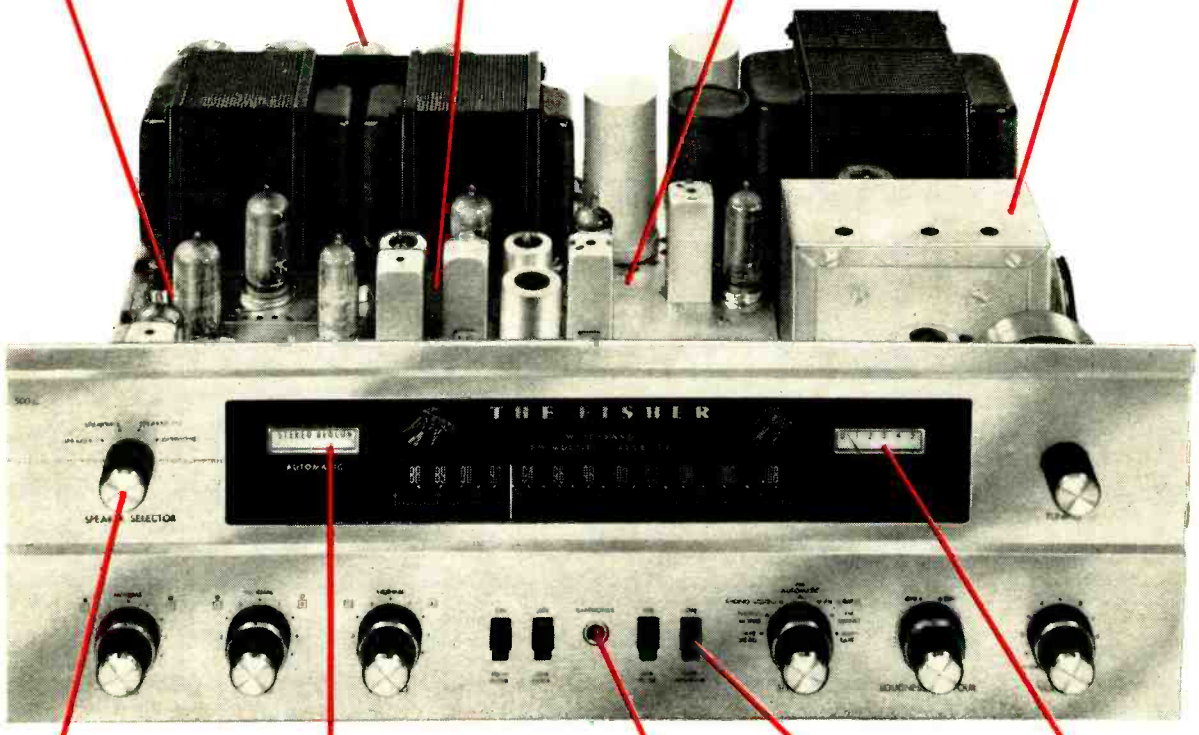

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The unit shown in detail at left is the new Fisher 500-C. It is completely identical to the new 800-C except that the latter includes, in addition, a high-sensitivity AM tuner section with adjustable (Broad/Sharp) bandwidth plus a built-in ferrite rod AM antenna.

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CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Letters

The Case of Anton Bructzner

SIR:
The provocative article on Bruckner by H. C. Robbins Landon [HIGH FIDELITY, February 1963] began on a sour note—Bruckner's name is misspelled in the heading. I suppose that the average American knows no more about the *Fraktur* alphabet than a hog knows of predestination (to quote H. L. Mencken), but editors who choose special effects should be familiar with the characteristics and properties of those effects. It was reasonable to set Bruckner's name in *Fraktur*, as he was an old-fashioned person and *Fraktur* is definitely old-fashioned in German printing. But who is the *Lump* who is not able to distinguish between a lower-case "k" and the ligature "tz"?

William D. Lynn
Falls Church, Va.

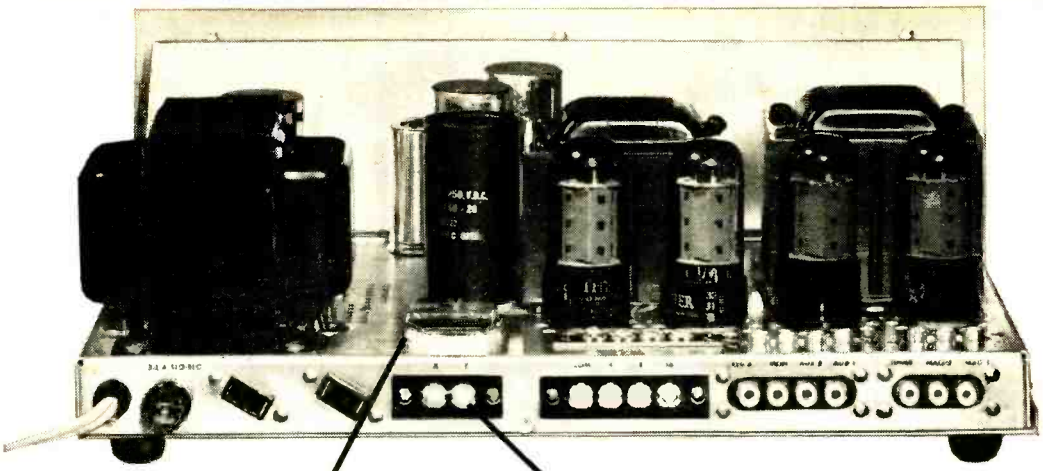
Who, indeed, but the entire editorial staff? Collectively we offer our shame-faced apologies. At least, we'll now know better than to run an article on Hans Pfikner. Mr. Lynn goes on to point out another error: the first Bruckner symphony to be recorded complete was not the Seventh as played by Ormandy and the Minneapolis (1935) but as played by Horenstein and the Berlin Philharmonic (1928—for Polydor/DGG). Our correspondent then proceeds to berate H.C.R.L. for preferring the original versions of Bruckner symphonies to the later ones. He makes some telling points, and we wish we had space to print his remarks in full. It's a pleasure to edit a magazine for such exigent readers.

SIR:
The article on Anton Bruckner is an exciting and stimulating commentary on a much neglected and underrated master.

Glenn R. Miller
Washington, D.C.

SIR:
It was good to see an article about Anton Bruckner in your February issue. Bruckner and Bach were the culmination of their eras. Bruckner's music asks only that it be accepted for itself, for what is

Continued on page 12



1. Others don't have this.

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3. Others <u>can't</u> have this.

Three points of superiority of the Fisher KX-200 StrataKit over all other single-chassis stereo control-amplifier kits:

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CIRCLE 40 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 12

the chorus master named in the brochure and the one named on the label. If you will check a copy of this recording, you will find that Wilhelm Pitz is mentioned as chorus master in the brochure and that Reinhold Schmid (who is chorus master of the Vienna Singverein) is named on the record. I'd like to know where credit is due.

Barbara J. James
La Verne, Calif.

Our reviewer must be absolved from responsibility, since he listened to unlabeled advance pressings. A query to Angel Records reveals that Schmid is the responsible chorus master in this performance, but the chorus is definitely the Philharmonia (normally under the direction of Pitz) and not the Singverein. A revised brochure has been printed with the error rectified.

TV Picture, FM Sound

SIR:

Like Charles Tepfer ["In Video Est Audio," HIGH FIDELITY, November 1962], I have witnessed the gradual improvement in TV audio, and also have become increasingly frustrated with the shortcomings of same. To my mind, the only real solution for the perfectionist is the complete separation of audio from video. A TV audio front end, terminating in a 10.7 IF, can be coupled to any FM tuner IF strip with very superior results. Furthermore, the picture quality will be greatly improved when the sound takeoff is removed from the TV tuner. The sound bar interference is eliminated and the picture can be fine-tuned without regard to sound. Also, intercarrier buzz and other video interference is removed from the sound. The FM tuner's oscillator must be disabled when the TV sound is received, to prevent interference. A few years back there were a couple of TV audio tuners on the market but they failed to get much buyer support. However, I believe the time is much riper now for the reintroduction of such a device. The very appearance of your article seems to support this contention.

J. Pushkin
Hempstead, N.Y.

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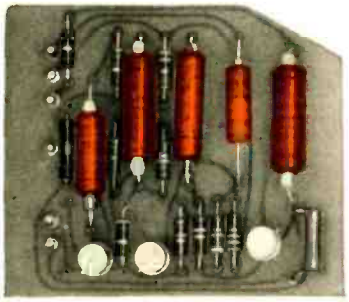


...a straight wire with gain. *"A major breakthrough in the application of semi-conductors to high-fidelity sound...Citation A literally has flat response to beyond 1,000,000 cycles and distortion that is non-measurable...Superb response characteristics not matched by any known preamplifier... A unit that should meet the demands of the most critical listener and audio perfectionist...It suggests that...a sound path could be set up that approaches the classic goal of amplifier design* ***...a 'straight wire with gain'."***

EQUIPMENT REPORT—HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

For the full text of High Fidelity report, write Dept. HF-4, Citation Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, N. Y.

harman kardon

CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Cracked notes in your aria?

...then "bargain" recording tape's no bargain!

Trouble with cheap tape with an unknown name is simply this: You can't *see* much difference between it and fine-quality tape. But you sure *hear* the difference when tiny imperfections are magnified into shattered sound . . . a danger greater than ever with today's four-track stereo, where each track of recording takes less than a quarter of the tape's width.

Surest way to record sound crystal clear, enjoy maximum performance from your equipment is to rely on "SCOTCH" BRAND Recording Tapes. They are required by 3M to pass more than 100 quality tests to ensure inch-after-inch uniformity. Result: identical recording characteristics—full frequency sensitivity, wide dynamic range—throughout each reel, reel after reel.

High potency oxides in "SCOTCH" Recording Tapes make possible thinner, more flexible coatings that assure intimate head-to-tape contact for sharp resolution. Exclusive Silicone lubrication that lasts the life of the tape assures smooth tape travel. It protects against recorder head wear, extends tape life. So for genuine "money's worth" in performance, step up to the tape professionals prefer: "SCOTCH" BRAND.

On SCOTCH® BRAND Recording Tape, you hear it crystal clear!

The new Weathers "66" weighs 96 ounces

...and every ounce is pure performance!

The Weathers "66" is the finest achievement in uncompromising design and performance. The low mass of the Weathers "66" makes it the proper turntable for today's high compliance stereo cartridges and tonearms. In appearance alone, the "66" is radically different. It is 16" long, 14" deep, but only 2" high, including the integrated base. It is the closest approach to rotating a record on air. It achieves this ideal through unique engineering design and precision manufacturing.

The Weathers "66" uses two precision hysteresis synchronous motors mounted on opposite sides of the deck. Virtually vibration-free, they directly drive two soft rubber lathe-turned wheels which in turn drive against the inside rim of the platter. This is the quietest, most accurate and dependable drive system yet designed. Its −60 db. rumble is the lowest of all turntables.

Eliminates Feedback Problem—Because the new high compliance cartridges and tonearms track at extremely light pressures, they can pick up floor vibrations which are transmitted into the music as audible distortion. The "battleship" type of turntable more easily picks up room vibrations and transmits them with greater amplitude. When a high compliance pickup system is used with the heavier turntable, acoustic feedback is apt to occur. And there is no practical, effective way to acoustically isolate these heavier units.

The Weathers "66" is suspended on 5 neoprene mounts which produce an isolation from floor vibrations of more than 500 to 1. Paul Weathers calls this system a "seismic platform" (implying that only a violent earthquake could cause any vibrations or feedback).

On Pitch—The speed constancy of the Weathers "66" is so accurate that a special test record had to be made to measure its 0.04% wow and flutter content. It reaches 33⅓ rpm immediately, and will be accurate within one revolution in 60 minutes. Most heavy turntables will usually deviate 4 or more revolutions in 60 minutes—a painfully obvious inaccuracy to anyone with perfect pitch. You hear only the music—no rumble, no wow, no flutter, no feedback, no noise of any kind.

The "66" is a strikingly beautiful turntable that you can use anywhere, without installation. And you need not buy a base—it's an integral part of the turntable! ■ Turntable—$75.00 net. With viscous-damped arm—$99.50 net. Turntable and Arm with new Weathers LDM Pick-up—$129.50 net. See it at your high fidelity dealer, or write:

WEATHERS
Division of TelePrompTer Corp.
50 W. 44th St., N.Y. 36, N.Y.

T-9

CIRCLE 102 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

LONDON

For its recording of Benjamin Britten's complex *War* Requiem (Latin liturgical text interlaced with Wilfred Owen's First World War poems), Decca-London brought Galina Vishnevskaya over from Moscow for a delayed debut in the soprano part. The score had been written with Vishnevskaya, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Peter Pears specifically in mind, but at the time of the Coventry Cathedral premiere last year Vishnevskaya was unable to undertake the assignment. Apparently, this gave her all the more time for study: she arrived for the Kingsway Hall sessions note-perfect. The work as a whole, however, was new to her, and she was obviously deeply stirred by its majesty and compassion. At the playback of the great "*Libera me*" ensemble she exclaimed that she had never heard anything more tremendous in her life, and in her enthusiasm embraced Britten in the Russian manner.

Fischer-Dieskau was similarly moved by the music's sweep and emotional compulsion. At one time his participation had seemed almost as problematical as Vishnevskaya's. "Dietrich's contracts with EMI and Deutsche Grammophon made life difficult for a while," said a Decca man, "but in the end he got his release for us, and we breathed again."

Britten's Requiem. The recording is expected to be in the shops in September, after many months of work on the part of all concerned. John Culshaw, the company's director of classical recordings, had consultations with Britten on artistic and technical points long in advance of the actual recording sessions. That Culshaw and others should have prevailed upon Britten to conduct in person rather than from a back seat was something of a coup. Although Britten is intolerant of sloppiness, once he gets on the rostrum he is self-possessed and good-humored. Knowing precisely what he wants and how to get it from musicians of all kinds, he usually inspires his forces with the sort of security that alone leads to authoritative and exciting performances.

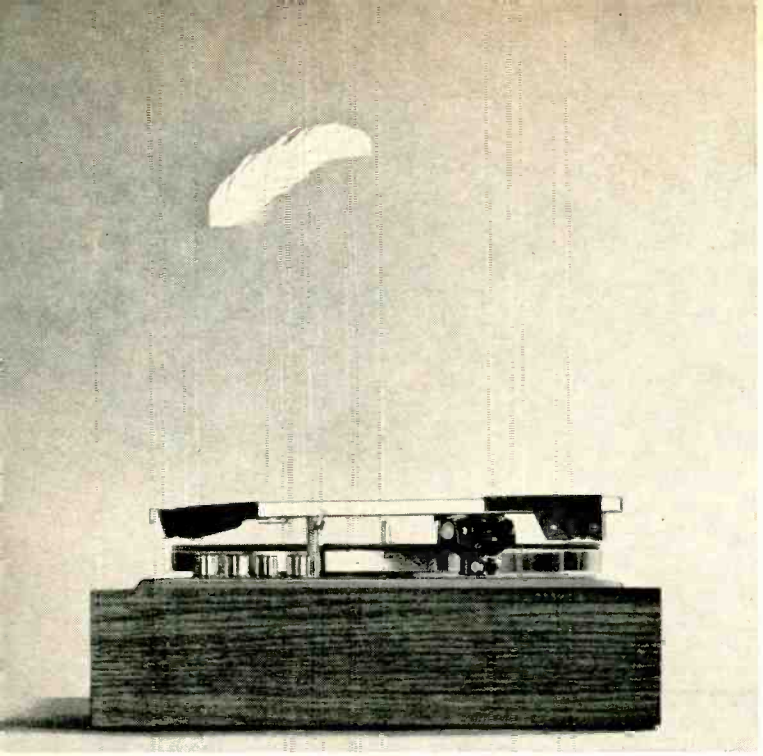
The recording was completed in eight sessions, after much preliminary positioning of performers and microphones

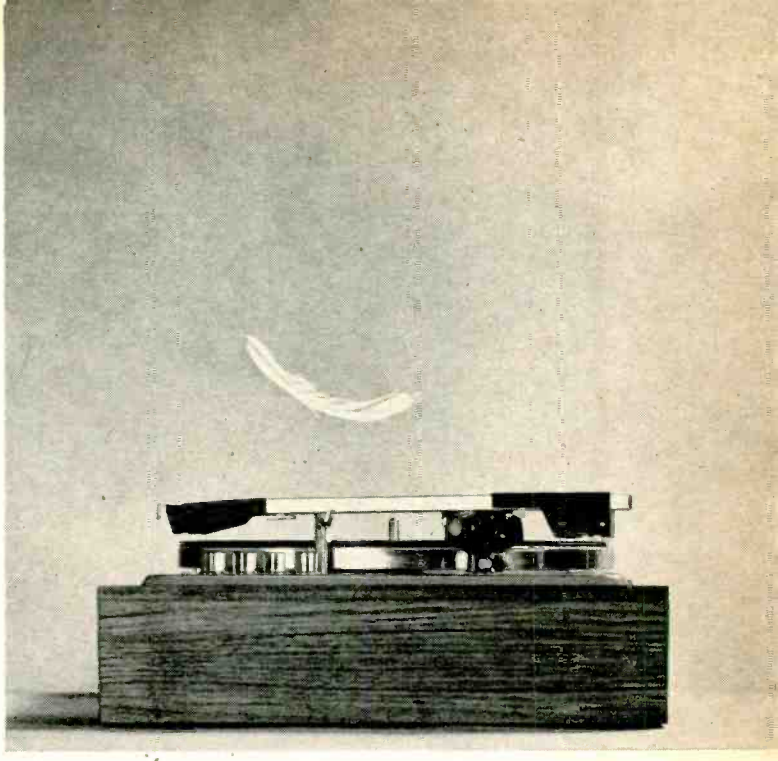
Britten, Vishnevskaya, Culshaw

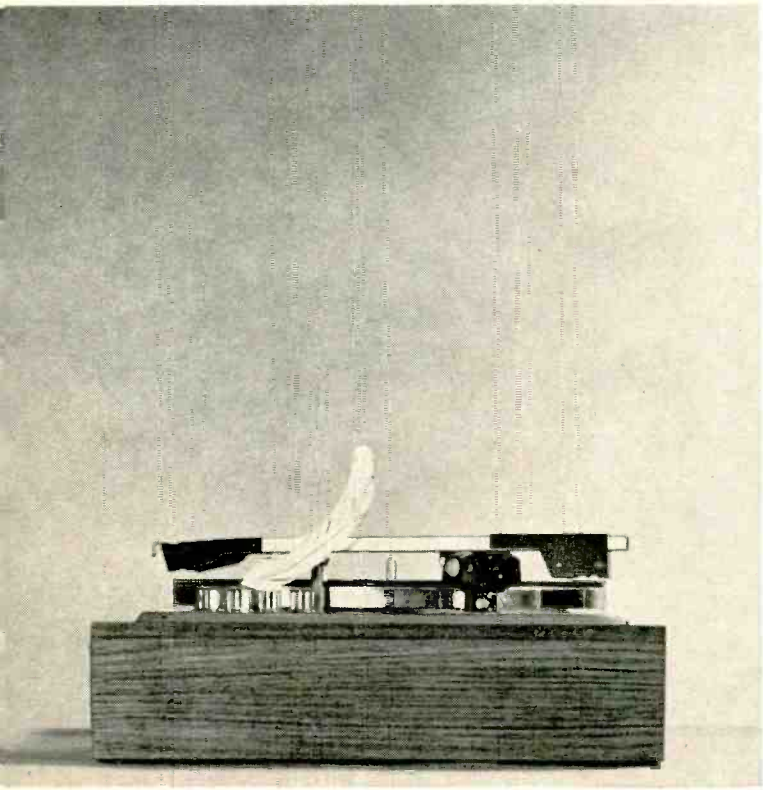
to balance the score's three main dynamic levels and groupings. The liturgical part of the text was rendered by Vishnevskaya, the London Symphony Orchestra, and an adult chorus comprising eighty amateurs from London's Bach Choir and fifty professionals, mostly from the BBC. A second grouping was of the two male soloists, who sang Wilfred Owen's words with commentaries by a chamber orchestra, the Melos Ensemble. Third was a remote, angelic choir of sixty boys from Highgate School, who sat in the balcony alongside a small supplementary organ. At one point the boys lost pitch when required to sing in a different key from the soloists' ensemble. Britten rapped for silence and said: "Listen to the organ accompaniment and stick to that. What you are singing up there isn't at all like what the soloists are singing down here. Don't forget, this is hideous, horrible 'modern' music!" At another point he asked the boys to sing with abandon, giving all the tone they'd got. He made it clear that he had no use for the church music tradition which refines the life out of treble voices.

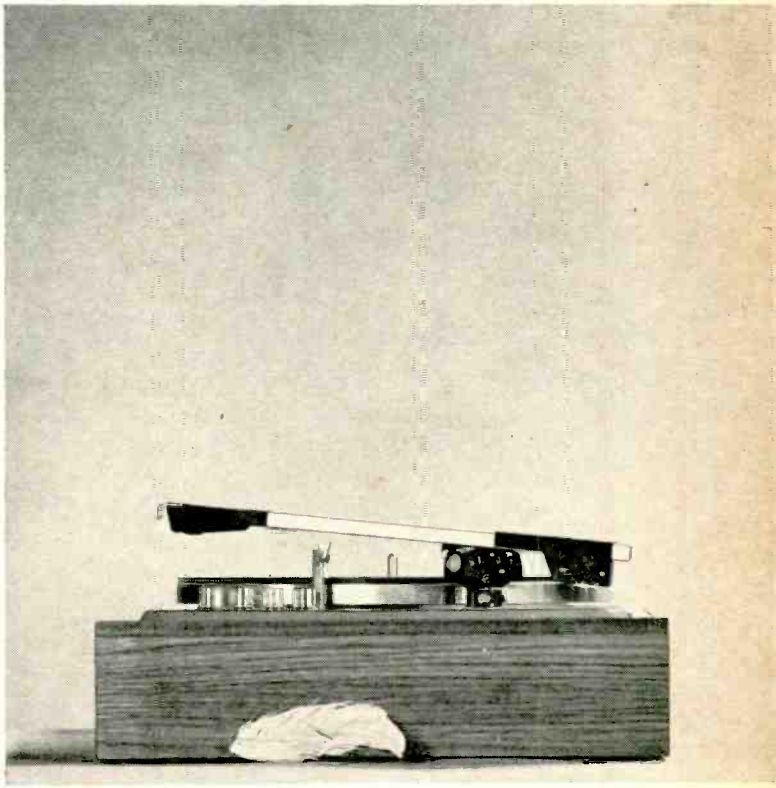
In this and other tactics, Britten proved highly professional. Very few sections of the score required more than two takes —which, considering the special acoustical and inter-gearing problems entailed, is a good tally. Britten himself refused to accept any compliments. Taking a characteristically self-deprecatory attitude towards his own proficiency on the podium, he laid down his baton and exclaimed: "A conductor? Me? I'm nothing but an amateur."

Continued on page 20









the light, gentle touch

Nothing, short of experiencing it yourself, can better describe the feather-touch ease with which the Miracord responds—the way it operates and performs to bring out and preserve the best in your records.

For with the Miracord, you needn't handle the arm, and therefore, it can't be dropped. In fact, most Miracord owners rarely use it manually. They prefer to play even their single records automatically.

They put a record on the turntable, and simply push the button. Automatically, the arm rises from its rest, moves inward over the record and then gently lowers the stylus into the starting groove. When the record is finished, the arm automatically lifts off, and returns to its rest, or you can do this in the middle of play by simply pressing the 'stop' button. The Miracord performs these functions more gently and more precisely than by hand.

The Miracord also plays stacks of up to 10 records in automatic sequence But, unlike other automatic units, the Miracord is a demonstrably high quality instrument, with design features and performance characteristics you usually associate with quality turntables that can only be played manually.

The Benjamin-Miracord is equipped with a solid, one-piece, 12 inch, dynamically balanced turntable, a mass-balanced transcription arm, and a choice of two motors: model 10H with Papst hysteresis motor is priced at $99.50, and model 10 with 4-pole induction motor is priced at $89.50. Cartridge and base are priced extra.

Make it a point to see the Benjamin-Miracord at your hi-fi dealer soon. Write for free descriptive literature.

BENJAMIN MIRACORD

BENJAMIN ELECTRONIC SOUND CORP., 80 SWALM STREET, WESTBURY, L. I. SOLE U. S. DISTRIBUTOR FOR ELECTROACUSTIC (ELAC)® RECORD PLAYING COMPONENTS

CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 18

Less Amateurish Amateurs. That the adult chorus in the *War* Requiem should have been given a professional stiffening may, one hopes, set a significant precedent. In general it is true to say that the fame of amateur choirs in this country tends to outstrip their prowess, especially in scores of wide dynamic and expressive range. There is, however, at least one signal exception to this rule. I have been listening to tapes of the *Quattro pezzi sacri*, fourfold fruit of Verdi's extreme old age, as sung for EMI-Angel by the Philharmonia Chorus (with the Philharmonia Orchestra, under Carlo Maria Giulini). The Philharmonia Chorus is 240 strong, and for this recording, plus two widely spaced public performances, underwent forty rehearsals spread over fifteen months. The rehearsals were under the direction of Wilhelm Pitz, the Bayreuth chorus master who, for five years or more, has been flying over from Aachen for weekly rehearsals and practice sessions. "An expensive business," concedes Walter Legge, founder of the Chorus (as well as of the Philharmonia Orchestra, of course), "but this is a hobby of mine, and one may be excused for spending a bit of money on one's hobbies."

Intensive rehearsal is, of course, only half the battle. The other half is picking the right voices and firmly replacing them when they are right no longer. On these points Mr. Legge said: "The death of every chorus is when you get sentimental about faces you know, faces that have been there from the start. I resolved that this should not happen in our case. The average age of our singers is a little over thirty, say thirty-two. In the women's sections, the average is down to twenty-eight. I feel that with women's voices youth is rather more important than with men's. No woman is accepted over the age of thirty-five, and they are all reauditioned at forty. Tenors are accepted up to forty and reauditioned at forty-five; baritones and basses up to forty-five and reauditioned at fifty. In five and a half years we have had seven thousand auditions. Applicants are warned that unless they have special abilities they will not be considered. Even so, we reject fifteen or so applicants for every one we accept."

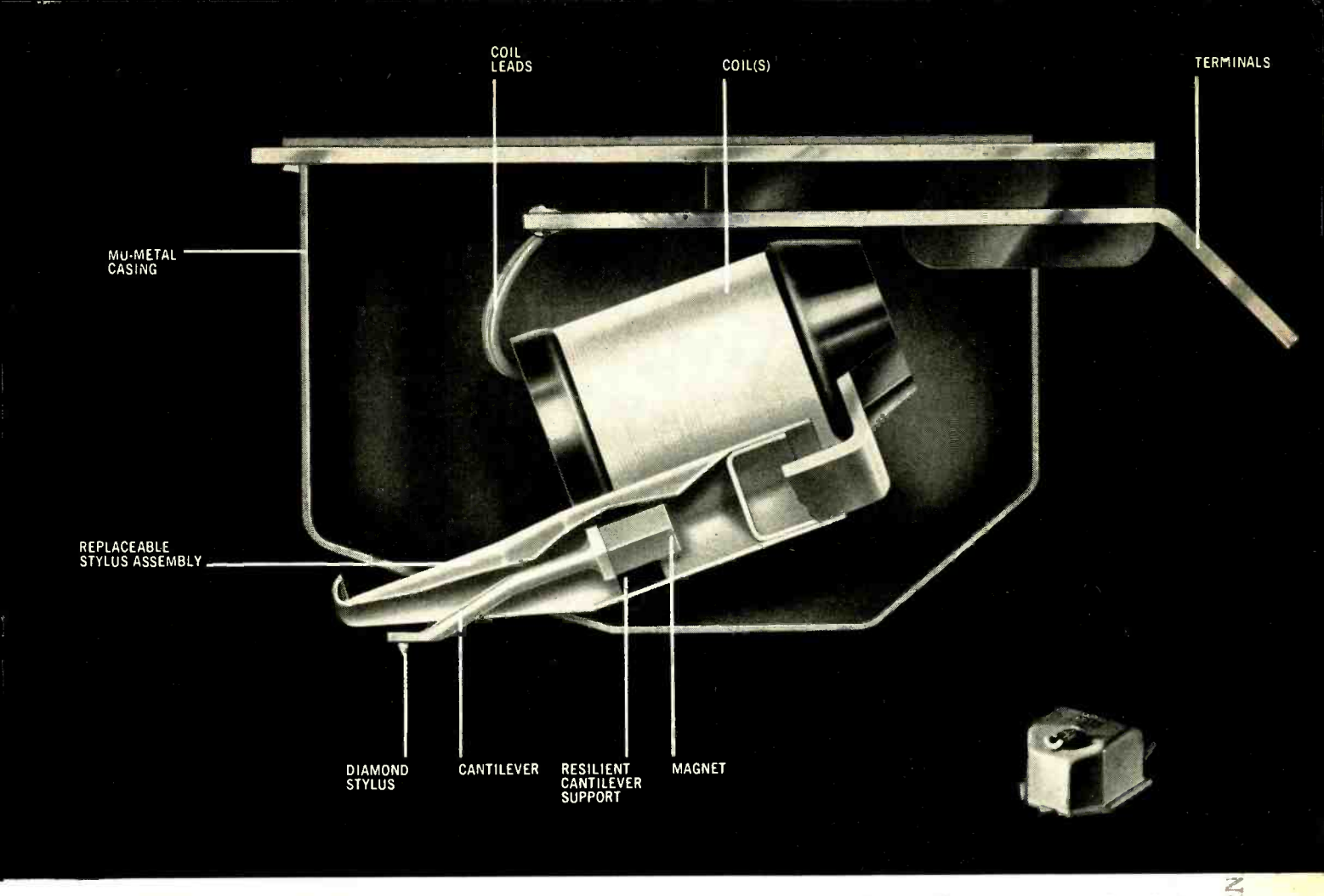
CHARLES REID

PARIS

The end of winter is the end of the musical year, here as elsewhere, and thus perhaps an appropriate time to risk a few generalizations and judgments of a kind which the short perspective in these notes usually prohibits. From the point of view of the average musical consumer, how have things been going in France lately?

Well, the past season did not seem unusual while it was under way,

Continued on page 22



COMPLIANCE: can there be too much of a good thing?

Have you any idea of the quality you would hear from a record if the cartridge produced a perfect waveform of the sound groove? Yet, from all the talk you hear, you'd think *stylus compliance* were the only criterion of cartridge performance.

Admittedly, high compliance is essential if the stylus is to follow or 'track' the complex course of the record groove with reasonably low force. But, how high is high enough, and how much is too much?

While 'tracking', the stylus performs complex movements set up by the sound pattern pressed into the groove. But, the movement of the stylus doesn't produce the sound or the sound waveform. This is accomplished by the movement of the magnet which, as you can see from the cross-sectional view, is at the other end of the cantilever to which the stylus is affixed.

If magnet and stylus do not execute identical motion patterns, due to the slightest flexibility in the cantilever, an altered or distorted waveform will result. Quality and fidelity will suffer.

This problem becomes most acute with increased stylus compliance. For, in reaching for higher and still higher compliance, it becomes necessary to reduce the dynamic mass of all the moving components of the stylus assembly to the lowest possible magnitude.

The mass of the stylus itself is virtually fixed by the radius of the tip. Further reduction of the magnet mass is limited by minimum output requirements. But, the mass of the cantilever can be reduced by using less material. This, however, entails the risk of making it thinner, more flexible and more prone to bend during stylus excursions. This flexibility is often mistaken for compliance. It will, in fact, produce 'false' higher readings in compliance measurements.

As stylus compliance is increased, the tone arm also plays a more critical role. If arm friction is high with relation to the compliance of the stylus or—putting it another way—if stylus compliance is so high as to be greater than the arm's own compliance or responsiveness to the spiral action of the groove, the resultant 'drag' will prevent proper tracking. And if stylus force is increased to correct for this condition, the greater force is likely to compress or decenter the cantilever. In either case, distortion is inevitable.

The new Elac 322 is the culmination of an intense, year-long engineering program concerned primarily with improving cartridge performance. The ultimate objective was to achieve a cartridge without distortion, without crosstalk — a cartridge capable of reproducing a perfect waveform replica of the sound groove.

How close the Elac 322 has come to this ideal is evident from its performance. Specifications offer some clue. But, numbers can never convey the emotional experience in quality, the personal gratification that comes with hearing good music and good sound.

The new Elac 322 reproduces all frequencies from 20 to 20,000 cycles, ± 2 db, and with less than 2% intermodulation distortion. Interchannel separation measures better than 25 db at 1000 cycles, and over most of the spectrum. It measures 20 db at 10,000 cycles, and an incredible 12 db at 20,000.

The stylus has a compliance in the order of 14 x 10^{-6} cm/dyne. Recommended tracking force with most arms ranges from 1.5 to 3 grams. It will, however, track at 1 gram with some arms. A magnesium cantilever is used because of its lighter weight and greater rigidity than aluminum, the material most often used in stylus assemblies.

Price of the Elac 322 stereo cartridge with .52 mil diamond stylus is $49.50. Also available: Elac 222 compatable mono/stereo cartridge with .7 mil diamond stylus at $39.50. At your hi-fi dealer. For further details, write to:

BENJAMIN ELECTRONIC SOUND CORPORATION
80 SWALM STREET, WESTBURY, NEW YORK

Sole U. S. distributor for Electroacustic (Elac) ® Record Playing Components.

THE NEW ELAC MODEL 322 STEREO CARTRIDGE

BENJAMIN ELAC

CIRCLE 20 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BOGEN's new stereo components receive highest praise from HIRSCH-HOUCK, leading independent consumer test laboratory.

RP60 Receiver

"The stereo performance of the RP60 was exceptional. Separation was more uniform with frequency than we have ever seen on a multiplex tuner. In particular we were pleased to see that the separation was nearly 20db at 10KC and 17db at 15KC. This is substantially better than we measured on a number of quite expensive FM multiplex tuners.

"Also the frequency response was more uniform than that of any other FM tuner we have ever measured, being better than ± 0.5db from 20-20,000 cps. The hum level of the tuner was −59db, which approached the residual hum of our Boonton generator. We have never measured hum less than −60db.

"From a functional standpoint, the RP60 is well conceived and executed. The styling is attractive, and complete control facilities are obtained without excessive cluttering of the panel with controls. The phone jack on the front panel is an excellent idea and worked well. We particularly liked the fact that the listening volume with low impedance phones was comfortable, and the series resistors in the phone circuit eliminated the background hiss and hum which so often plague the user of phones with a power amplifier.

"The Stereo Minder works well. This, or some equivalent, is an absolute necessity in a stereo tuner or receiver, and some otherwise excellent tuners are rendered nearly useless for stereo broadcasting conditions by the lack of an indication of the presence of a stereo transmission.

"The RP60 (or RPF60) is a basically excellent unit."

HIRSCH-HOUCK REPORT #EFGMP-451-FF

$314.95

TP250 Tuner

"The simplicity and functional design of the TP250 are exemplary. This is a tuner which any layman or housewife can operate without difficulty. It is difficult to criticize its performance, since it proved to be an exceptionally listenable tuner. It was noticeably superior in sound (on stereo broadcasts) to some much more pretentious and expensive tuners. This may be attributable to the low distortion, excellent separation and non-critical tuning.

"Stereo separation is excellent through the midrange, being 25db or better from 500cps to 9KC. It is better than average up to 10KC, where it is most needed."

HIRSCH-HOUCK REPORT #FG-450-FF

$159.95

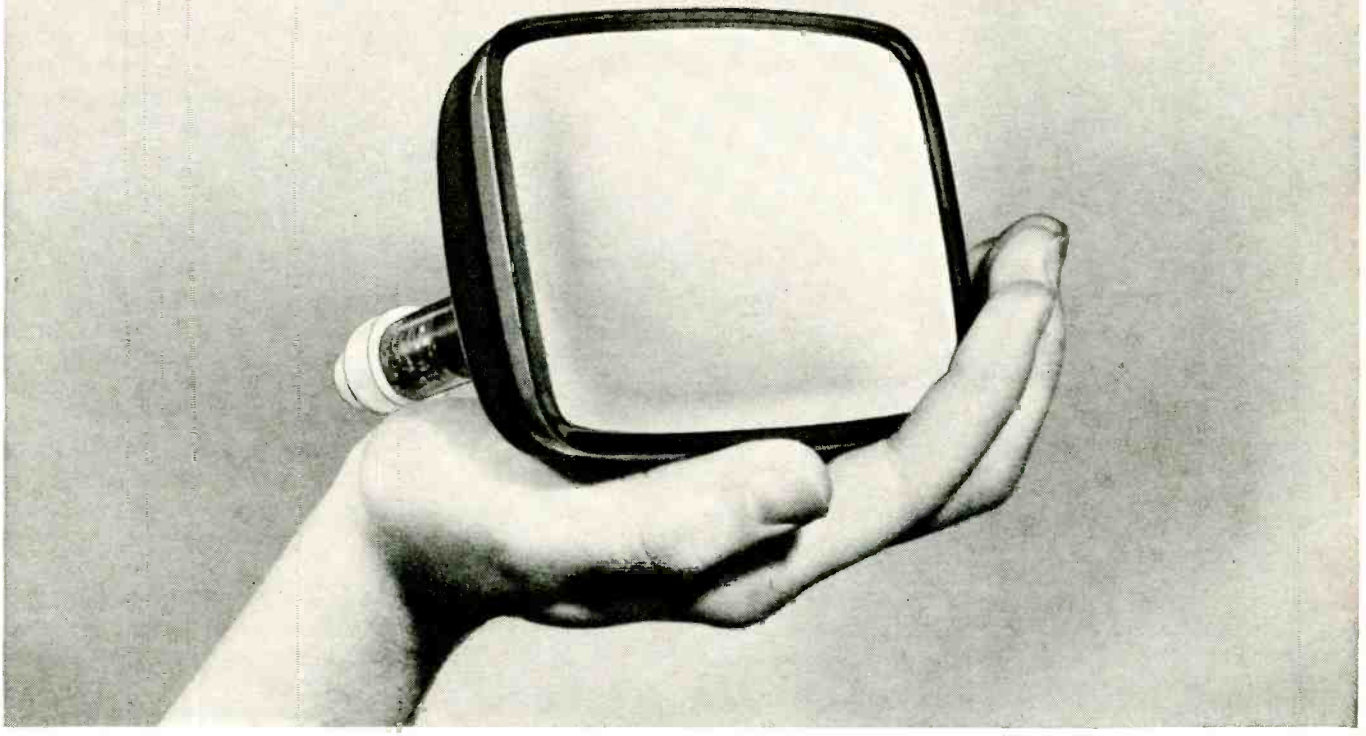
Receivers, amplifiers, tuners from $99.95; Turntables from $59.95. Write for free BOGEN Stereo High Fidelity components catalog.

BOGEN LEAR SIEGLER, INC.
COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION
DESK H-4, PARAMUS, N. J.

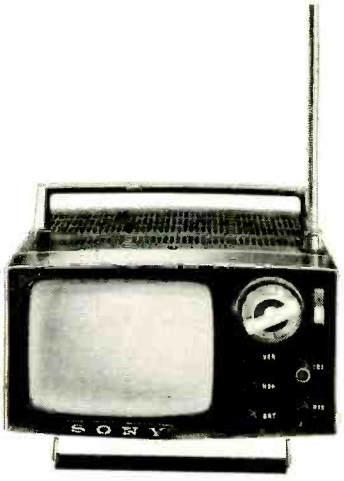
PRICES SLIGHTLY HIGHER IN THE WEST

CIRCLE 21 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

even the picture tube is revolutionary



SONY MICRO-TV–THE TELEVISION OF THE FUTURE



The handful shown above is a television picture tube. A rather special tube, actually—conceived, designed and manufactured by SONY. It is the picture tube in the remarkable new Micro-TV, the 25-transistor set that makes ordinary TV as outdated as the regenerative receiver. Picture quality high fidelity—sharp as a razor, with blacks that are truly black and whites that are white, and no distracting scanning lines to intrude as you view from arm's length, with all controls handy. But that's only part of the picture. Micro-TV weighs only 8 lbs., and operates anywhere—outdoors on its own rechargeable battery, in a car* or boat on a 12v system, and indoors on AC. $189.95. Rechargeable battery extra.

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**Before installing or using a TV set in an automobile, check with your Motor Vehicle Bureau to verify permissibility.*

Send in for your personal copy of "Randy, the transistor radio", a delightful children's book in full color. Please enclose 25¢ for postage and handling.

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CIRCLE 88 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Henryk Szeryng

From a classroom in Mexico City to the international concert circuit, the path has taken many turnings.

IT IS MORE THAN LIKELY that a number of American music lovers first met the violinist Henryk Szeryng in the same way I did—through an exceptionally lyrical and full-toned performance of the Bach Solo Sonatas and Partitas on an Odéon recording which found its way to this country in 1955. The set won a Grand Prix du Disque (the first of four since bestowed on Szeryng albums), but in spite of this distinction no one over here seemed to know much about the artist himself, beyond the fact that he had been born in Poland and was a citizen of Mexico. Two years later the mystery lifted when Mr. Szeryng came to Carnegie Hall in company with the Cleveland Symphony, and proceeded to play the Brahms Concerto in a manner proclaiming a violinist of stature. It then came to light that a source of information about this artist had existed in New York all along—the source being none other than Artur Rubinstein, who had in a sense "discovered" Szeryng and was indirectly responsible for his first American tour.

As every devotee of chamber music now knows, the friendship between Rubinstein and Szeryng reached a musical climax with a series of notable collaborations (for RCA Victor) on several Beethoven sonatas, including the *Kreutzer* and the *Spring*, followed by the three sonatas of Brahms. A few months after the latter were released, Mr. Szeryng was back in town for further recording, this time with Mercury, and was putting the finishing touches on his preparation of a new concerto by Benjamin Lees before playing its premiere with the Boston Symphony. I met him late one evening in Mercury's studio, and learned that the artistic path which had led him to the well-remembered Bach recording had taken some curious turnings.

"My life has been strange and rather wonderful, I think," said Mr. Szeryng, who seems still to marvel somewhat at finding himself, at forty-one, immersed in the full tide of world-wide concertizing after a relatively quiet ten years spent mainly in teaching. "From 1943 to 1953 I directed the string department at the Mexican National University in Mexico City and played, perhaps, twenty concerts a year. At the end of that time I was able to step into a concert career, even after so long an absence, because I had learned a great deal from teaching."

There is, however, considerably more to the story. Szeryng began studying piano with his mother in Warsaw when he was five, and after switching to the violin he was able, at the age of seven, to play the Mendelssohn Concerto for Bronislaw Huberman. Two years later, on Huberman's advice and recommendation, Szeryng was packed off to Berlin to study with the famous teacher Carl Flesch. "I studied with Flesch until I was thirteen, and everything I know, violinistically speaking, I learned from him. Mind you, I say violinistic—not musical or interpretative. It was later, in Paris, that I learned a great deal musically, from Georges Enesco and Jacques Thibaud. They were simply friends—I never actually studied with either of them, though I did record the Beethoven Concerto with Thibaud conducting!"

In answer to a query from me, Szeryng went on. "What was Flesch like as a teacher? Many people have read his *Memoirs*, but I would much rather they go to his *Art of Violin Playing*, which is nobler and wiser. The *Memoirs* are so bitter. He wrote in the introduction to the *Art of Violin Playing* that his intention was to free the student of bad habits and encourage his strong qualities—not to lead him into imitation of the teacher. But then comes the tragic part. Flesch had some weak pupils, with small personalities, who copied him in everything—fingering, bowing, phrasing. Others did not, but these were *not* his

Continued on page 38

AR INC.

AR-3 PLAYBACK:

THE FINE ARTS QUARTET AS AUDIENCE

THE FINE ARTS QUARTET has just recorded Beethoven's Quartet in E flat major, Opus 127 (Concert-Disc CS-235). The musicians are listening to the first playback, checking its fidelity to the tonal sonority and interpretation that have brought them rave notices all over the world.

AR speakers are being used for monitors. They were chosen by the Quartet members themselves because they create a musical carbon copy of the live performance, free of hi-fi gimmick effects.

AR-3 and AR-2a speakers are often used professionally, but they are designed primarily for home use. AR-3's are $203 to $225, depending on finish, and AR-2a's are $109 to $128. A five-year guarantee covers parts, labor, and reimbursement of any freight to and from the factory.

A catalog and list of AR dealers in your area will be sent on request. We will also send a brief description of two books on high fidelity published by AR.

ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge 41, Massachusetts

CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Marantz Model 8B, Dual 35-watt Stereo Amplifier, $264.

There are three amplifier characteristics which determine the realization of maximum performance quality from a given loudspeaker. First in importance is stability (a characteristic which is not fully understood by many in the industry). Next in importance are low distortion and wide power response. These are the prime factors which make one amplifier sound better than another. In *all* these respects the Marantz Model 8B is conceded to be in a class by itself. Other designs may have succeeded in approaching one or another performance characteristic, yet none have equalled the 8B amplifier in overall excellence. In fact, except for its conservative 35 watt rating, it is virtually identical in characteristics to the remarkable Marantz Model 9 amplifier.

Long term reliability is also important to the owner. As is true with all Marantz products, parts and construction are of the highest grade in the field. An individual report is packed with each amplifier stating its performance under rigid tests. Assurance of the continuation of its fine performance is backed by a full two year warrantee.

The vast majority in the high fidelity industry use Marantz in their own personal systems, as well as for demonstrations and tests of their products. Follow their lead where only the best possible results are acceptable. Send for free booklet 57F.

The precision quality of the **Model 7 Stereo Preamplifier** makes it a perfect match for the 8B Amplifier. $264. Cabinet extra

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Jensen "SPACE-PERSPECTIVE*"
FOR STEREO HEADPHONE LISTENING

Jensen's exclusive SPACE-PERSPECTIVE network makes it possible for the first time to eliminate the "closed ears" effect of ordinary stereo headphone listening, in which the sounds appear to come only from the left and right, and accurately presents the "open ears" sensations of normal stereo speaker listening in a room, in which the performance is out-in-front as intended with true directional effects. It accomplishes this by accurately shaping the frequency characteristics and time delay of the signals sent to the individual phones so that they correctly portray the sound "build-up" and "shadowing" at the ears due to the obstacle effect of the human head as acoustic waves from the source flow around it. This breakthrough is due to an ingenious circuit development by Bauer of CBS Laboratories, employing the analogue computer, and is based on the acoustic measurements on the human head by Wiener, then at the Psychoacoustic Laboratory, Harvard University.

1. Ordinary stereo headphone listening confines the left channel sound to the left ear, the right channel sound to the right ear. You have the impression you are in the midst of the musicians, who are partitioned to the left and right of you.

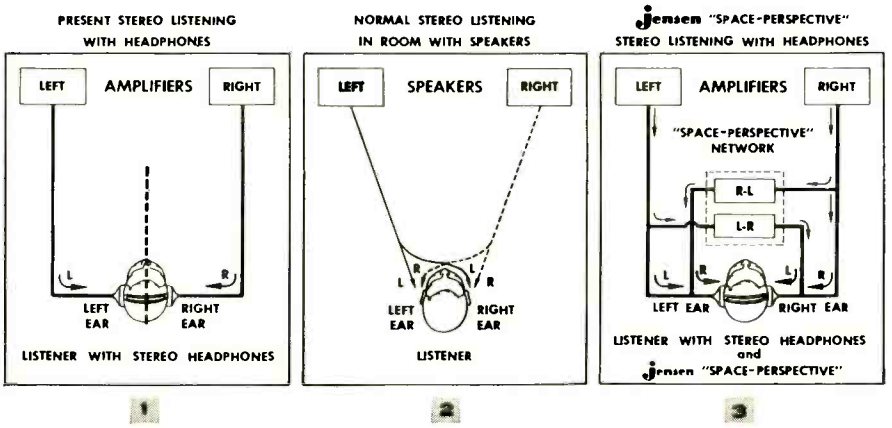
2. In "open ears" stereo speaker listening, sound from the left speaker reaches the left ear, *and also* the right ear a little later in time. The sound pressure at the left ear rises, while that at the right ear falls, due to acoustic "shadow" as the audio frequency is increased. The corresponding thing happens for sound from the right speaker.

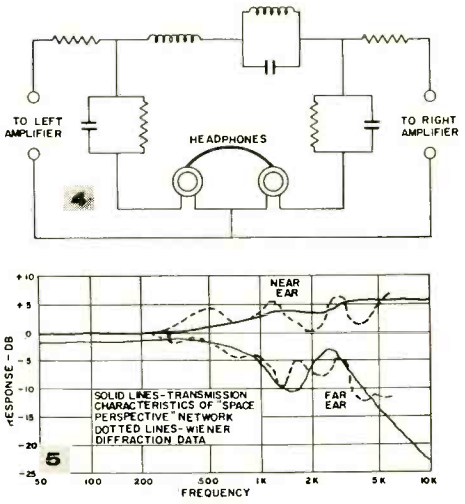
3. Bauer at CBS Laboratories visualized an inspired answer to the problem—a left-right, right-left "cross-feed" *electrical* network that would accurately simulate the "open ears" *acoustical* situation. Note the resemblance of the electrical paths of 3 to the acoustic paths of 2.

4. Bauer's circuit is complex, as would be expected since frequency characteristics and time delay must be precisely shaped. Resistance networks and potentiometer or volume control "blending" circuits cannot do this.

5. Here is the performance of the Jensen SPACE-PERSPECTIVE network compared with Wiener's acoustic data. Note how accurately the network produces the desired acoustic result at the ears. (The data is shown only over the frequency range important to stereophonic directional location; HS-1 'phones and network transmit the full frequency range.)

*T. M. Jensen Mfg. Co. CC-1 and CFN-1 Licensed by CBS Laboratories Div., Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.





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CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HENRYK SZERYNG

Continued from page 34

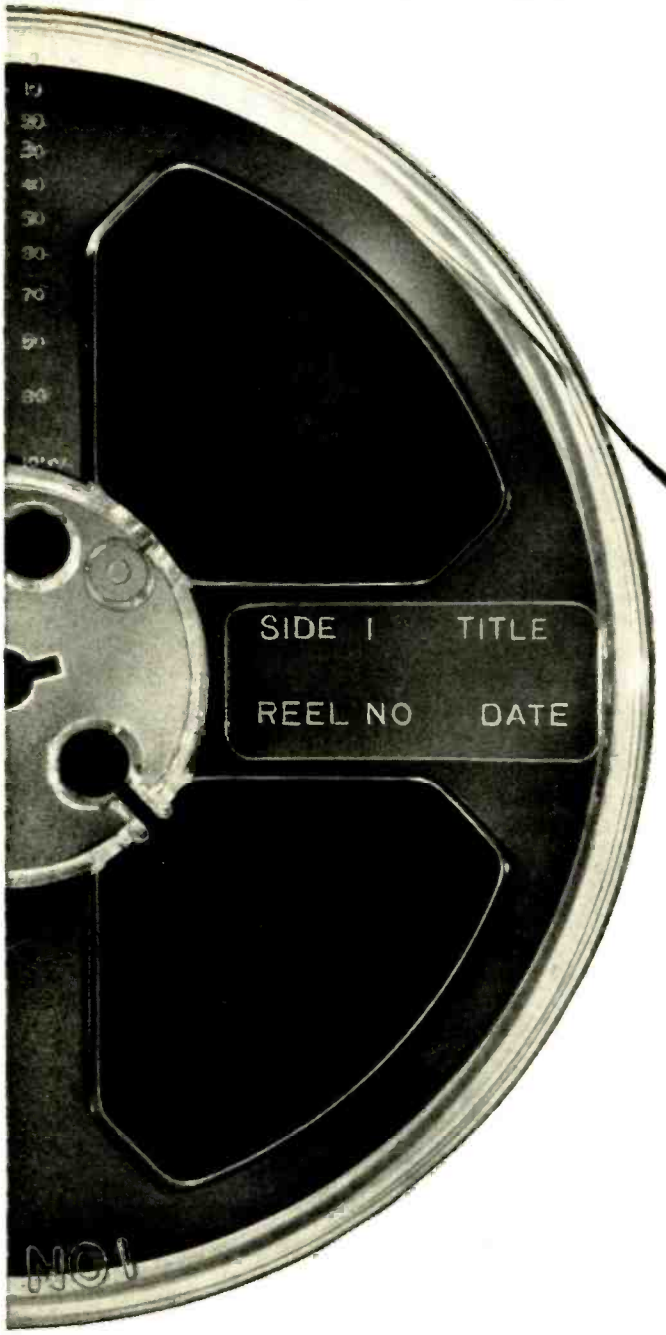
favorite pupils. His advice against imitation was like the advice of a doctor who warns you not to smoke and at the same time takes out a cigarette and lights it. But in matters of technique he was a great teacher."

IT WAS AFTER the period with Flesch (which constituted his final training) that Szeryng's career branched off from the natural route taken by most concert violinists. His parents had seen to it that his education was not confined to the narrow straits of the typical prodigy, and it was perhaps the broadening influence of study in aesthetics, history, literature, and languages (he speaks seven fluently) that prompted him to go to Paris in 1934 to study the fundamental aspects of music with Nadia Boulanger. His interest in composition was more than merely perfunctory, and he acknowledges considerable activity along this line under Mme. Boulanger's direction. In 1939, however, came a second turning.

With the fall of Poland, Szeryng enlisted with the Polish forces in exile, and during most of the war, except for a term as translator for the Polish Prime Minister, General Sikorski, he played concerts for Allied servicemen stationed throughout the Western world. "It was then that I became truly aware of the power of music to communicate," he said. "I played for officers and enlisted men, Americans, Africans, English, and Poles. They all responded in the same way." During these wartime travels he played twice in Mexico City—recitals which led to his permanent engagement there towards the end of the war.

Mexico might still claim Mr. Szeryng as its own exclusively (the official esteem accorded him is indicated by the fact that he travels under a diplomatic passport) had it not been for Artur Rubinstein's "great moral help." After first hearing Szeryng, Rubinstein lost no time in using his influence to arrange bookings for him in London, Paris, and Berlin; and it was he who in 1956 came backstage to Szeryng after a concert in Paris, bringing with him "a short gentleman in a broad black hat." The gentleman offered to schedule twenty concerts in the United States—and thus under the imposing wing of Sol Hurok, Szeryng's future on this side of the Atlantic was assured.

During our evening's conversation Mr. Szeryng mentioned in passing that while studying the Bach solo works he had found it helpful to play them on the organ. ("That is why I begin the fugues softly and let them build up voice by voice. On the organ you can play them no other way.") The mode of study struck me as indicative of just how fully Szeryng lives up to his contention that he regards his instrument as a means and not an end—a belief professed by many violinists but acted upon by infinitely fewer. SHIRLEY FLEMING



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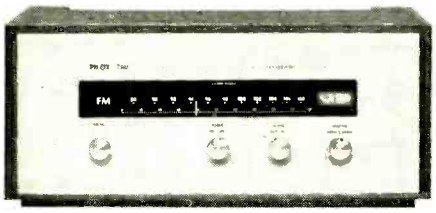
CIRCLE 78 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

'The finest FM Stereo Tuner ever built for the home'

says Martin Gersten, chief engineer of WNCN, The Concert Network

Mr. Gersten talks from experience—both as an FM broadcaster and as a high-fidelity authority and enthusiast. And in all his experience he has never heard an FM stereo tuner that compares with the PILOT 780.



He first heard the PILOT 780 in September, 1962, at the New York High Fidelity Show.

He says: **"The Concert Network station in New York City, WNCN, 104.3, was broadcasting music and interviews with manufacturers and dealers directly from the Show. We tried to monitor our station on several FM tuners. None of them, including the most expensive ones, could produce a satisfactory signal, that is, until we walked into the PILOT exhibit and tried the 780. The exceptionally clear, noise-free signal it produced was a revelation. Subsequent tests convinced me that this was the finest FM Stereo tuner ever built for the home. Today, I use this tuner in my home and, as far as I am concerned, it is in a class by itself."**

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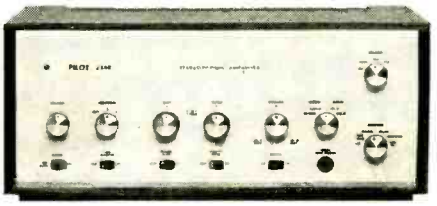

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CIRCLE 72 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

An Inquiry Into Psychoacoustics

THE TERM psychoacoustics is widely heard these days, but it is a term not susceptible to easy definition. Indeed, it is much easier to say what psychoacoustics is not than to say what it is. It is not, for example, solely a matter of "how we hear"; this topic belongs more properly in the realm of aural physiology. It is not only a matter of what is "pleasing" to hear; this subject is the concern of applied psychology. It is not purely a question of the means by which sound is produced, or reproduced; this is the province of designers and engineers.

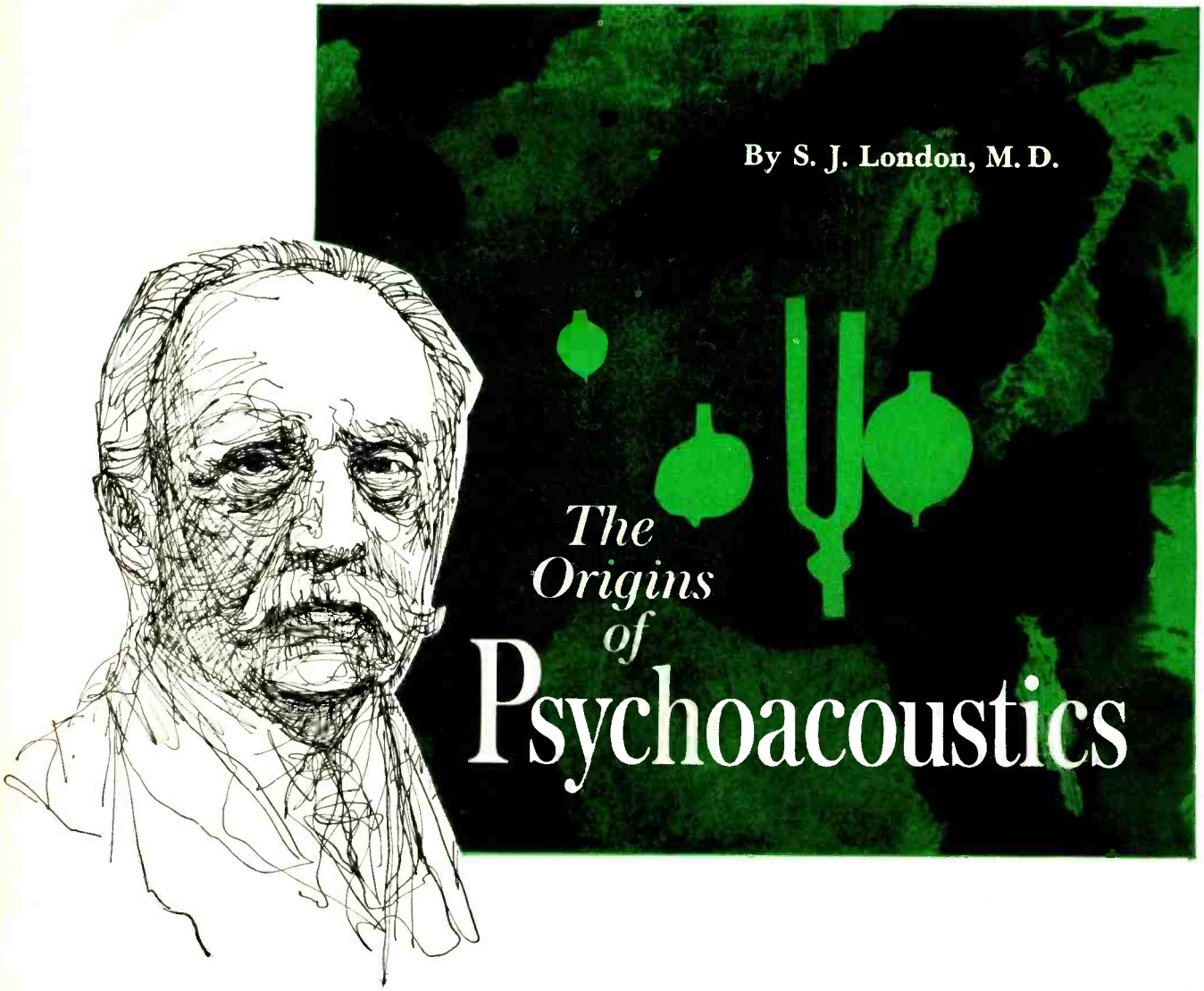
What, then, is psychoacoustics? One can say, perhaps, that the term is a convenient catchall, a semantic repository for everything relating to the nature of sound, including what we do not know or fully understand. A neat analogy then can be drawn between psychoacoustics and philosophy. The "love of wisdom" embraces many categories of knowledge—languages, literature, history, the natural sciences, mathematics, and so on. In fact, even in this day of nuclear power and space exploration there exists at many universities an academic division known as the "Faculty of Philosophy"—whose members of course expound many subjects. Each is, in its way, a tool in the pursuit of wisdom. Like philosophy in its broadest sense, psychoacoustics involves a variety of disciplines—from the physics of sound to the physiology of hearing to the psychology of the human receptor.

In terms of this journal's special interests, psychoacoustics promises a means of understanding things in sound reproduction hitherto not understood or seemingly at variance with objective data. For instance, a notable set of early "listener preference" tests (conducted in 1945) indicated that only 12% of those tested preferred wide-range sound for the playback of classical music. If these test results had been accepted at face value, the progress of high fidelity might have ended right there. Subsequent tests have produced quite the opposite results and permitted different inferences to be drawn. The important point is that psychoacoustics has made it possible to interpret, rather than simply to accept, the findings of such tests. Thus, analysis of the test conditions of the 1945 experiment revealed basic limitations for the perception of high quality sound reproduction: for instance, the sound intensities, or listening levels, used were not adequate for symphonic music, and the reproducing equipment employed suffered from distortion that became disagreeable at the wider response bandwidths. It now seems apparent that other factors were also operative, such as the listeners' own conditioning to "canned sound" by years of hearing music on AM radio sets, inferior phonographs, and juke boxes. Conceivably too, some listeners may have voted for the restricted range out of unrealized dislike for the test situation itself or their fellow-subjects or those conducting the test.

If psychoacoustics has provided a valid hindsight, it also suggests the potentialities of a new foresight—in the design of equipment as well as in the choice of equipment for a given home music system. In the former area, a good deal of controversy centers around the issues of extremely wideband response (beyond the normally accepted high fidelity range of 20 to 20,000 cycles per second) and of very small, but continuing, reductions of distortion in amounts hitherto not admitted to be audible. Here, psychoacoustics challenges prevailing concepts by insisting that every iota of improvement is perceptible and results in less listening fatigue—and should thus bring about a stronger and wider acceptance of the whole principle of high fidelity. Oddly enough, to bolster this position, its proponents turn back to the nineteenth century and the authority of the physicist and physician Hermann von Helmholtz, whose researches provided the first documentary evidence in support of the principle on which today's "wideband response theory" is based. The article in this issue by Dr. S. J. London deals with this seminal figure and relates his work to the progress of high fidelity. In connection with the relevance of psychoacoustics to the controversial problem of what actually constitutes "high fidelity" for an individual listener, Irving M. Fried, in another article, explains its unique contribution to evaluation of the listening experience.

Clearly, psychoacoustics has an importance for high fidelity—and our present examination suggests that it may bring to the scientific knowledge and technical prowess already at our disposal a new and fruitful insight.

AS high fidelity SEES IT



By S. J. London, M. D.

The Origins of Psychoacoustics

A hundred years ago Hermann von Helmholtz startled his contemporaries by insisting that the perception of sound involved physical, physiological, and psychological factors. Today we see his work as the genesis of psychoacoustics.

IN THE BEGINNING there was Helmholtz.

No irreverent echo of Holy Writ is intended. One hundred years ago a granite-faced Junker produced a gospel that stirred the nineteenth century to its Romantic marrow with an integrated philosophy of science and art. Titled *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music,* Helmholtz's massive treatise demonstrated, for the first time in history, that music was not a creation of mathematics or metaphysics but rather the total of what the ear perceived and how the brain interpreted what was perceived. Today we see in Helmholtz's discoveries the genesis of psychoacoustics.

Helmholtz not only gave a radically new dimension to the musical aesthetics of his age; he also challenged the future. One of the most important concepts this great pontifical figure leveled at us was, strangely enough, that of wide frequency response, a doctrine that we assume to be uniquely of the mid-twentieth century. Yet actually this fact should surprise no one, for in many ways Helmholtz belonged more to our time than to his own. He was, for instance, the prototype of today's

high fidelity devotee, with an overwhelming love for music, an insatiable curiosity about the nature of sound (fed by a genius for mathematics and physics), an incurable tinkerer's instinct, and a cantankerous perfectionism. Every paper theory and cerebral abstraction had to be tested against the evidence of the ear itself—and often resulted in musical sounds the likes of which were not heard again until the advent of John Cage. It is for this reason, more than any other, that every modern household that shares its *Lebensraum* with an audio system owes its way of life to Helmholtz and that present-day promulgators of wide frequency response begin and end their arguments with him.

To some extent, Helmholtz's excursions into what we now call psychoacoustics grew from the the very circumstance of a twentieth-century mentality in conflict with nineteenth-century Romanticism. In these days when it is considered quite chic for creative artists to borrow heavily from the natural sciences, it is hard to realize that in 1852, as Helmholtz began his research, the sciences and the arts were at loggerheads. The cold rationalism seemingly preached by Darwin's biology, Faraday's new atomic chemistry, and Gustav Magnus' physics was being strenuously opposed by a hostile school of arch-Romanticists, who believed that exposure of the roots of art as mere extensions of matter and energy meant the complete destruction of all beauty. Fortunately, however, there existed a small group of intermediaries—medical men, mainly—who undertook to bridge the gap by demonstrating how the human organism, in structure and function, is able to convert natural phenomena into works of art. It was to this select pastorate—which included the French physiologist Claude Bernard, the German anatomist Wilhelm His, and the American clinician Oliver Wendell Holmes—that Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand von Helmholtz belonged.

WHAT STARTED Helmholtz on his glory road was a violent controversy between physicists and musicians over the significance of overtones (they were called partials then). The disputants could agree on only one fact: that not more than a handful of the mathematically possible overtones—up to the fourth and possibly the sixth—were audible. These they could hear on stringed instruments, the organ, the piano, and by means of their very primitive acoustical devices. From this point on, however, all was *Sturm und Drang*; the physicists claimed that if physical law decreed the existence of an imposing host of overtones, they did in fact and in deed exist, and that if most of them were not audible, the fault was that of the human ear and not of the physics of sound. The musicians, on the other hand, insisted that overtones were only abstractions compounded and confounded by the absurdities of mathematics; if overtones could not be heard they were nonexistent, and if they were nonexistent, even those that could be heard were illusions manufactured by the ear. Regardless of the stand taken, the hapless scapegoat was the ear and its alleged infirmities and limitations.

Such specious arguments outraged Helmholtz, especially since neither side had taken the trouble to examine the culprit organ more than superficially. From the time he had been a first-year medical student, in 1838, he had devoted his life to the physiology of sensation. This work had convinced him that every attribute of perceptible physical energy was received and recorded by the human sensory organ assigned to its perception exactly as it existed in nature. If any mystery attached to that perception, it was due to ignorance of the anatomy and physiology of the receptor organ, of the way in which it converted physical into nervous energy, and of the latter's influence on the brain.

From the very outset, therefore, Helmholtz carefully emphasized the three functional divisions of musical sound: *physical acoustics*, the physics of tone; *physiological acoustics*, the perception of physical tone by the ear; and *psychological acoustics*, the interpretation by the brain of what the ear transmitted. The last, he said, might easily prove to be the most important of the three, but for the time being he was more concerned with the second which, if satisfactorily explained, would lead as naturally to the third as the Tiber to Rome. Both of these interrelated functions, he believed, depended on the manner in which overtones were perceived. Indeed, so intense was Helmholtz's preoccupation with partials that he was openly derided by certain of his contemporaries: Brahms called him a foolish dilettante, while Emile Chevé, another physician-acoustician, dubbed him the Pontifex of the Partials.

But neither a fool nor a false pope he, as he was to prove in logical fashion. His first step was to manufacture accurately tuned pure-toned resonators of glass and metal that fitted his ears snugly. When he sounded a compound tone, the overtone with the wavelength of his resonator was thus intensified and stood out from all the others. In this way he demonstrated that all overtones up to the sixteenth, and under certain conditions a little higher, were not only present but audible. He then went on to prove mathematically that the very high overtones were only *apparently* imperceptible because the energy of their vibrations was so weak as to be overpowered—but not obliterated—by the greater energy of the lower overtones.

From this investigation he drew his first important conclusion: that the quality and color of a compound tone derived from all its overtones; the pure fundamental itself was flat and colorless, whereas its compound tone was full-bodied and rich. Moreover, even without resonators a listener

The Origins of Psychoacoustics

could, by strict attention, train himself to distinguish overtones at least up to the sixteenth. Helmholtz then proceeded to all sorts of tones—from all known instruments to the human voice—and arrived at other conclusions that are today considered basic to sound reproduction. For instance, he pointed out that in a musical tone of good quality the fundamental was the loudest, the first two overtones (the octave and the twelfth) were the next powerful, the third and fourth overtones (the double octave and its fifth) were moderately powerful, the higher overtones were weak and faded rapidly. When overtones above the sixth were intensified, the tone was dry and tinkling (as those of us who remember early piano recordings can well attest); when they were absent, the tone was soft and sweet but altogether dull. When all the overtones were louder than the fundamental, the tone was confused and lost its pitch. Insofar as individual instruments were concerned, their qualities depended not only on the number of overtones they produced but on their timing—whether they appeared, or disappeared, abruptly or gradually. Another aspect of instrument quality was the inharmonic overtones produced—the scraping of a bow on a string, the rush of air from an organ pipe, the tap of a piano hammer. Although these needed to be held to a minimum, their presence was nevertheless required to round out the quality of the instrument.

Helmholtz called this study of tones the analytical approach to tone perception, but to confirm his observations he reversed this process and used what he called the synthetic approach. For this he invented a series of tuning forks placed between the poles of electromagnets and attached to the mouths of perfectly tuned resonators. The tuning forks, activated by an electric current passed through the magnets, poured their sounds into the resonators, which then emitted pure tones. The apparatus was controlled by a keyboard which not only regulated the tones to be sounded but also determined their intensity by varying the voltage through the electromagnets with grades of pressure on the keys. In this way the investigator was able to synthesize tones by sounding their fundamentals and each calculated harmonic up to the sixteenth, and by varying the relative dynamics of fundamentals and overtones to imitate the tone colors of almost all the instruments. It was at this point that Helmholtz made the discovery for which modern sound reproduction is most indebted to him. He found that his synthetic instrumental tones lacked the vitality of natural instruments and concluded that this lack was due to the absence of the very high overtones beyond the sixteenth which he was unable to reproduce accurately and which most acousticians assumed were inaudible. Therefore, he declared, even nominally inaudible overtones appear to be necessary for perception of the full beauty and expressiveness of a musical tone: i.e., in our terms, wide frequency response is an imperative.

But why, Helmholtz asked, was this so? From his own work and that of others, Helmholtz estimated the full auditory range of the ear to be from 4 to 40,000 vibrations per second, but that its musical range was constricted to 40 to 4,000 vps (although some well-trained ears could widen the band to 24 to 6,000). His experiments with organ pipes and the polyphonic siren revealed that pitch became indeterminate and tones unmusical below 40 and above 4,000 because the fundamentals could not be accurately perceived at these levels. Fundamentals below 40 vps were heard as pulsations, the number of pulsating beats corresponding to the number of vibrations per second; although their upper harmonics were in musical range, they produced only inchoate masses of sound because they overpowered the fundamental. Despite their basic unmusicality, these very low tones still had a place as unusually descriptive sounds (whose utility Romantic composers were only then beginning to discover). At the other extremity, sound waves with frequencies above 4,000 had their energy so dissipated by the rapidity of their vibrations that they were at the threshold of audibility. As fundamentals, therefore, they were practically inaudible, but as overtones they were important determinates of tone quality (and likewise added an ineffable something to the needs of Romantic high tone color). In other words, the frequency range of sound necessary for the full enjoyment of music stretched from 36 vps at the lower end to an incredible 36,000 at the upper.

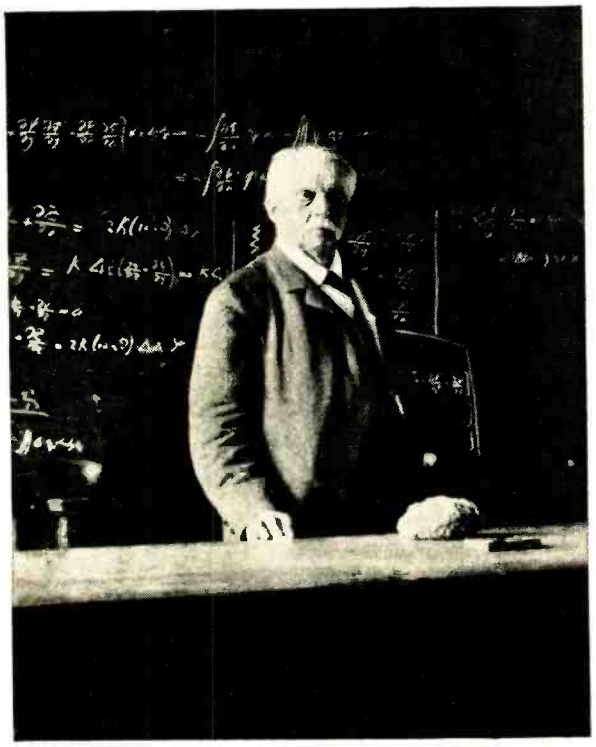
Helmholtz then set about finding what in the ear made this a physiological fact, thus establishing the core of physiological, and hence of psychological, acoustics. The only reasonable locus of the core was the inner ear—the cochlea—shaped like a snail shell, filled with fluid, and partitioned by a basilar membrane containing a great number of elastic microscopic fibers. It was these fibers, he said, that converted the physical energy of sound into nervous impulses that rode the auditory nerves to the brain. Each fiber vibrated to a sound wave of identical frequency; and since the basilar membrane was shaped like a piano or a harp, the shorter fibers responded to sound waves of high frequency and the longer fibers to those of low frequency.

There were, according to the most authoritative contemporary anatomists, 4,500 fibers in the basilar membrane. Deducting three hundred fibers for the tones lying outside musical range, Helmholtz estimated that 4,200 were available to perceive the seven musical octaves. This meant that there were

six hundred fibers for each octave and fifty for each semitone, more than enough to distinguish slight changes in pitch and certainly ample to ensure that every fundamental and every overtone would strike its corresponding fiber with corresponding force. They were so close together, however, that a given sound wave—fundamental or overtone—would inevitably excite not only the fiber in unison with it but adjoining fibers, the latter obviously with less force. Under these conditions the maverick three hundred out of musical range would just as inevitably be brought into play, as overtones, when fundamentals at either end of the musical range were sounded. Since they were physically present, it was entirely possible for the listener to train himself to appreciate them by concentration of attention.

Here at last, Helmholtz said, was the physiological basis for the perception of compound tones, intervals, chords, and progressions, the matrix for "the tissue of music and harmony." Subsequent audio-physiological research, with its new electronic and psychosurgical techniques, has proved Helmholtz wrong about the specific role of these fibers in cochlear function, but it has not altered the basic physiological principles he so brilliantly worked out. It has, as a matter of fact, vindicated the concept of psychoacoustics that led others, as it did its originator, into richer pastures of research. For Helmholtz, the issues were those of consonance and dissonance, of musical beauty and ugliness.

Helmholtz found by continued experiment that two or more compound tones sounded together produced a beating sensation in which the number of beats was equal to the arithmetical difference between the frequencies of the constituent tones, and that the overtones, both high and low, contributed markedly to the beating sensation. If the tones contained harmonics that were largely the same, the beats were held to a minimum and the resulting intervals—such as the octave, the double octave, the fifth—were consonant. Conversely, the fewer the identical overtones the greater the beating sensation and the more dissonant the interval, explaining why dissonance increased through the fourth, the major sixth, the major third, and became unmistakably dissonant when the minor third and the minor sixth were reached. These findings were of utmost importance to music theory, which was Helmholtz's primary goal, but he also managed to extend them into areas that were immeasurably to influence acoustical reproduction.

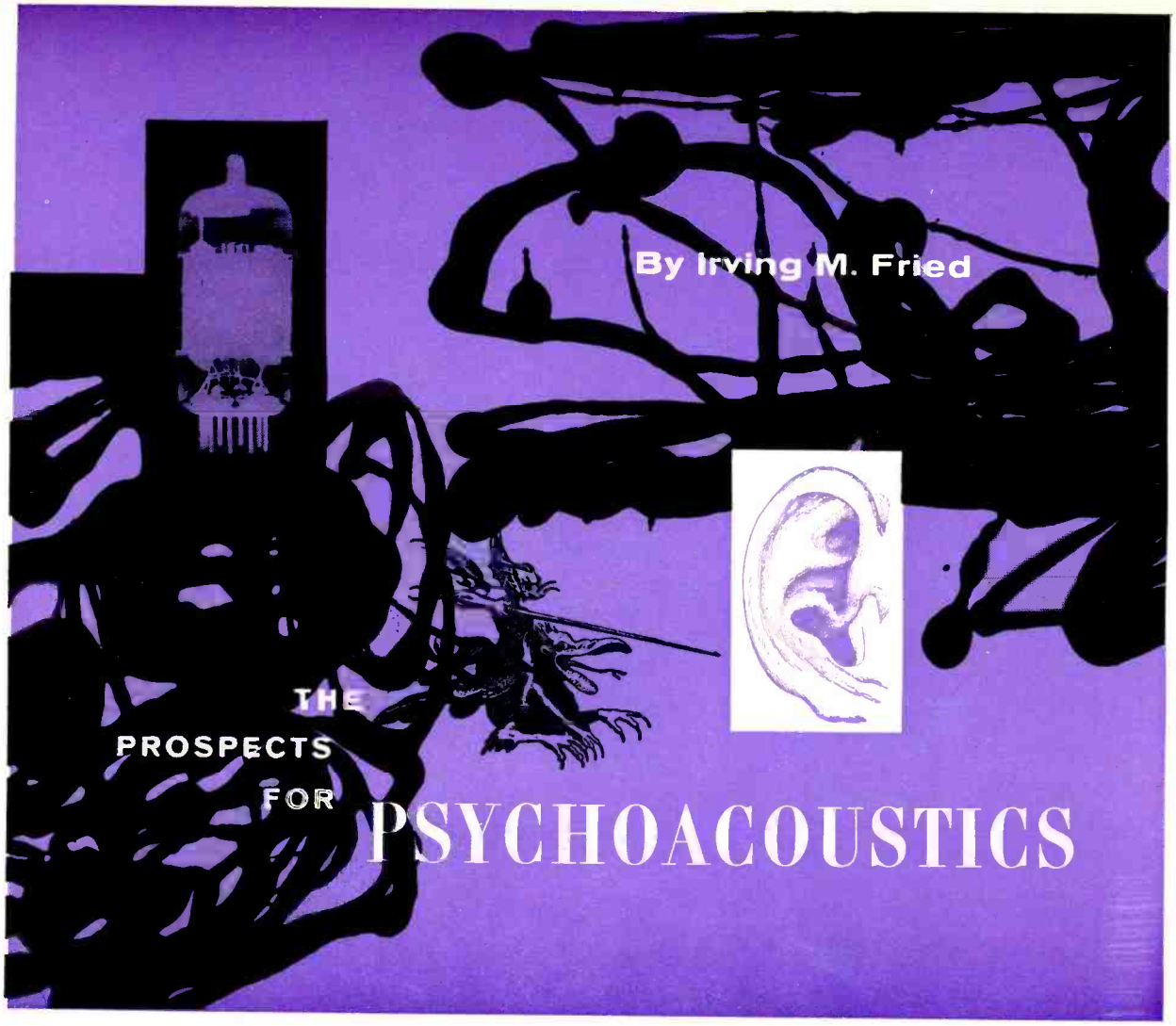


Bettmann Archive

In 1863, a twentieth-century mentality.

Since the lower overtones in an interval were not only louder but more likely to be identical than the upper ones, they usually played a more important role in determining its consonance or dissonance. If, however, the intensity of the higher overtones was increased, their divergences were more easily perceived, the beating sensation increased, and a borderline consonant interval like the major third was more apt to be turned into a dissonance. Several important conclusions flowed quite naturally from this principle. The major third or the major sixth, ordinarily pleasant in the middle and upper registers, became dissonant in the bass because in that compass the higher overtones were usually louder than either the lower overtones or the fundamentals and hence their beats easier to perceive. This explained why basses and baritones were more liable to produce unpleasant vocal effects than tenors or sopranos and why the value of a bass depended so greatly on the quality of his lower register.

Because the higher overtones of a violin had considerably more power than those of other instruments, they were more perceptible and consequently influenced the instrument's pitch to a greater extent. It was therefore difficult even for trained ears to identify intervals or chords correctly in the violin's high registers, and so it was that the great Tartini frequently called his upper register intervals as much as an octave too high. By the same token, identical high register intervals on different instruments sounded dissimilar because the quantitative and qualitative differences between their high overtones so altered tone quality as to destroy any semblances of pitch similarity. The high overtone differences produced when various instruments played together then suggested much about the aesthetics of ensemble music. They explained why, for instance, string quartet players needed years of togetherness to produce beautiful sound even though they played related instruments: their tone productions depended on the characteristics of their harmonic (and inharmonic) overtones and could be made to blend only by similar bowing and fingering techniques. With orchestras, the problem was compounded: it was necessary that performers *Continued on page 117*



A new technique is being formulated for evaluating music systems in terms of the total listening experience.

Sound reproduction, like all Gaul, may be divided into three main parts. One has to do with the design of components and related equipment; another involves the environment in which the equipment is used; a third concerns the listener and his reaction to the sound produced. This last consideration—the newest and so far least understood—involves both physiological and psychological factors to which the listener is subject. It has now become apparent that this new area, called psychoacoustics, is a most important one in assessing the suitability of a given home music system for an individual listener. In its largest sense, the study of psychoacoustics attempts to relate a subjective reaction to an objective set of sonic circumstances. Once such a relationship is established, then psychoacoustic considerations themselves may be used—if not to help in the design of sound equipment, at least to serve as a guide to the listener in choosing equipment best suited to his own needs.

Indeed, it has become increasingly evident that the judgment of the quality of performance of a high fidelity system must necessarily include subjective factors—that the factual recital of measurements and functions does not adequately convey a sense of "how it sounds." This realization of what may be called the total listening experience was not, in the past, universally shared by high fidelity experts. I recall many instances in which the overall listening quality of a given system installed in someone's home was poor, yet the engineer who designed the equipment refused to change it because it had "good specs."

Today, in happy contrast to such "thinking by the numbers," many audio experts are suggesting that we will, in time, adopt more sophisticated concepts of measurements, which must take into account subjective experience as well as objectively derived data. In any case, the application of psychoacoustics may well lead to more meaningful evaluations of

sound reproduction from program source through the separate audio components to the sound system finally installed in the home.

We already have, of course, precedents for the evaluation of the listening experience on a statistical basis—conspicuously the many attempts to prove that reproduced sound was "indistinguishable" from live sound. Among the more notable tests of this sort, the following were of major significance: Leopold Stokowski's stereophonic transmission via telephone lines from the Academy of Music, in Philadelphia, to the stage of Constitution Hall, in Washington, D.C., in the early 1930s; Gilbert Briggs's "live" and "reproduced" concerts a few years ago in Carnegie Hall, New York City; the Pension Fund experiments of the Philadelphia Orchestra, a few years ago, with the orchestra "live" against itself reproduced via Ampex, Fisher, and Jensen components; the Acoustic Research/Dynaco concerts, during recent audio and music shows.

Invariably, the demonstrators concluded from each such test that "You couldn't tell the difference." Unfortunately, this assertion could be made only by ignoring those who *could* tell the difference and who preferred the live to the reproduced sound (or in some cases, vice versa!). As one who was present at several of these demonstrations, I can say that the group which "couldn't tell the difference" was comprised mainly of those engaged in selling the equipment on exhibit, people who had already invested in it and wanted to be reassured of its high quality, and those predisposed to accept the wonders of technology uncritically. In short, the "mental set" was all important.

The will to believe may in fact be the determining factor in any evaluation of the quality of sound reproduction. Mr. Briggs, commenting on his own numerous demonstrations, has bluntly stated that the single most crucial factor in suggesting "reality" with reproducing equipment is the site of the demonstration—the concert hall itself. Speakers and amplifiers notwithstanding, the very fact of being present in a concert hall, where one naturally is accustomed to hearing live music, might lead one to believe that what is being heard is the real thing rather than a reproduced version. In the home, of course, we lack the aura (as well as the acoustics) of the concert hall. And so the quest begins for better equipment, better room acoustics, better program material. This quest has produced vast improvements—but it does not tell the whole story.

In addition to public concert-demonstrations, the history of sound reproduction also documents numerous examples of investigations into listening in home environments. Most of these home listening tests were intended to serve as guides in the design of equipment for different types of listeners, and their findings are often illuminating. For instance, Dr. Harry F. Olson's experiments in hearing preferences, performed under strict laboratory control, revealed that "expert" listeners (accustomed to live sound and conscious of the limitations of reproduced sound) preferred triode amplifiers on wide-range reproduction rather than pentode-type amplifiers. It was further brought out that untrained listeners (accustomed to the limitations of conventional equipment and unfamiliar with live sound) invariably preferred narrow band reproduction (80 to 4,000 cycles) to medium band reproduction (60 to 8,000 cycles), while "expert" listeners preferred wide band reproduction (40 to 12,000 cycles) to medium band reproduction but only if the total system distortion was below 2%.

Mr. Briggs also has conducted home experiments. He finds no correlation between actual measured hearing acuity, listening preference, and "expertness." Rather, he finds a startling correlation between listening experience and "expertness," suggesting that the ability to discriminate depends on the acquired or inherent capacities of the listener.

Again, prolonged "listening preference" tests were carried on, with musically expert listeners, by P. J. Walker and his associates in England. These were made during the development of the Acoustical Corner Labyrinth Reproducer of 1949 and of the later (1956) Quad Electrostatic. From these researches it was found that an evaluation of sound as "real," or "pleasantly real," derived primarily from the acoustics of the sound presentation, the relative degree of reflected and direct sound in the listening room.

Other studies may also be mentioned: those of A. D. Blumlein, father of the stereo disc; P. G. A. H. Voigt's researches on speakers, from which emerged the "Window on the Orchestra" concept, so popular in Britain and Europe; Stewart Hegeman's correlation of sound sensations with mechanical and electrical specifications, from which investigation has developed the present-day "wide band amplifier response" approach.

THE NET EFFECT of these and other experiments is to suggest the desirability of developing a system of evaluating home listening, its possibilities and its limitations. What are the basic criteria, for instance, which should determine our choice of listening equipment? What can we listen for, realistically? Knowing the limitations of audio equipment, can we then acknowledge that the response of the listener is itself the most important criterion in the series of judgments that end with the phrase "high fidelity"? I think we can. As soon as we do, we can abandon certain naïve ideas about the reproduction of music, such as the one I call the "fallacy of specifications." Almost all high fidelity owners, some time or other, spend large sums of money to improve their music systems, purchasing equipment with astonishing specifications—amplifiers with "perfect" square waves and lots of power, speakers guaranteed to reproduce 20 to 20,000 cycles, and so on. And many of us afterwards find ourselves no more satisfied with the "new" sound than with the "old."

One explanation for this disenchantment may be that "specifications" as such have limited relevance to the problem of choosing and operating a pleasant or "natural-sounding" music system. In the first place, no one has ever established a satisfactory correlation between specifications currently in vogue (and specification standards do change, from time to time) and the actual listening process. Furthermore, it is apparent to anyone versed in this field that most of us prefer certain kinds of distortion to "lab perfect" conditions. For instance, it has recently been pointed out by one writer that most listeners—not "expert," and relatively unacquainted with live sound—prefer a bass characteristic that is sharply peaked between 60 and 120 cycles. As soon as these listeners are exposed to the technical language of sound engineering, it appears that they must be reassured that their preference is really "flat"—although in fact they still want that peak. (Many speaker designers obligingly provide it.) Again, most of us prefer "good" stereo reproduction to monophonic despite the fact that the measured distortion, by conventional "specs," may be considerably lower in some monophonic systems and program sources.

Finally, most listeners—if asked to choose a loudspeaker by sound alone—will choose the one with the kind of coloration (i.e., distortion) to which they are accustomed. The only time, in my experience at least, that a "lab perfect" speaker is chosen as a listening preference is when the listener has been informed that it is "lab perfect"!

While conventional specifications for equipment are helpful to a limited degree, they obviously do not take into account the uncharted, but clearly important, psychoacoustic factors. What does correlate most closely with the choice of a system is the "mental set" of the listener—what he is prepared to believe and to enjoy. It has been shown that what he will believe and enjoy in a concert hall is not exactly what he will believe and enjoy in his home; that what he will believe and enjoy on live presentation is not the same as his response to reproduced presentation; that what he will believe and enjoy in a dealer's showroom is different from what he will enjoy at home. Even to a specific home installation there may be a wide difference in listener response. At one recent session I know of, for instance, three "experienced listeners" were exultant at the "powerful bass," while a fourth insisted that the bass was unnatural. He also complained about the "treble shriek," and wondered why the others present did not hear it.

There is also at hand enough evidence to conclude that the "recommendations" of testing labs that do not take into account the complex of sensations and attitudes operative in home listening are of limited value. Far more fruitful are those lab reports that attempt to correlate measurements with listening tests and that suggest a general kind of system in which a component—albeit one that does not measure perfectly—may logically be chosen.

PENDING A revision of performance specifications and a concomitant interrelating of them with personal listening tastes and variations in home environment, it may seem well nigh impossible to define a goal for music listening in the home. Yet such definition is possible today, at least in a relative if not absolute sense. It involves not one "ideal system" but three generic types, doubtless with overlappings and variations; and in truth, the aims behind these systems have determined the design criteria employed in the significant developments in the history of audio. Briefly, they may be described as "The Artist in the Room," "Electronic Enhancement," and "The Window on the Orchestra."

"The Artist in the Room" concept is largely the history of the phonograph. The earliest recording artists were singing "just for you." At every stage of development, there have been listeners who have wanted to believe that Caruso is in the room, so to speak. As sound moved to Hollywood, this principle was amplified (literally) and elaborated. The sonic goal of the talking films was to get the sound out from behind the screen, so that the actors would seem to be talking to each person in the audience. This involved peaking the response characteristic, to aid in the projection of voices and to lend "presence" to the audio-visual illusion. In the United States this kind of high fidelity, the artist in your room, has been, until recently, the guiding concept. Most of the early home "hi-fi" equipment was taken bodily from theatres or adapted to fit into smaller cabinets. For instance, the Shearer Horn, beloved of early audio *aficionados,* became the model for most home speaker systems.

A system intended to suggest "The Artist in the Room" will include large amplifiers with reserve for high level transients and loudspeakers (classically, horn systems) with "presence" peaks—or at least the facility for adjusting the presence—and directional treble dispersion. Recording engineers—and our recording techniques were all developed on the basis of this same concept—will employ close-up microphone techniques, using multiples. For stereo, they will use wide-spread techniques, involving multiple "faders" and "mixers," to convey the sound that one might hear at the conductor's podium, or at least in the first few rows of the hall. Among notable examples of recordings conceived in "close-up" sound are a series left by Toscanini. The Maestro, by the way, often preferred to use large theatre horns for playback.

An interesting variation on the "Artist in the Room" principle has appeared in the last several years. In an effort to spread the source of sound, engineers have developed various kinds of omnidirectional speakers. Generally, these reflect the mid-frequencies and the treble frequencies from the corner or the ceiling. In such fashion, with a close-up recording technique, the engineers replaced the acoustic conditions of the recording hall with the acoustics of the listening room, the latter becoming the surrounding for the *Continued on page 116*

PROJECT BORIS

A report on the best laid plans of an opera recording — Angel's *Boris Godunov,* to be released later this month.

By Roland Gelatt

NOBODY CAN remember exactly when Project Boris was originally conceived. I recall having first heard about it in May 1961, when I had a chat in London with David Bicknell, director-in-chief of EMI-Angel's international recording activities. Bicknell is a tall, ruddy Englishman in his mid-fifties whose psyche somehow combines the sensitivity and fervor of an artist with the sturdy composure of a veteran foreman. He was at his unruffled best that day as he outlined some of the far-ranging projects on which his company hoped to embark. "One of our more ambitious plans," he said, "involves the re-recording of *Boris Godunov*—with Christoff again, of course. We feel there is a market today for a new stereo version of this opera, and we intend to use plenty of atmospheric effects to suggest the action on stage. Kyril Kondrashin will conduct, and we're in hopes of engaging a chorus from the Soviet Union or one of the satellites. We'll record it in Berlin—because we can get there easily and so can they."

Before any definite dates had been set or contracts signed, the Russians put up The Wall and overnight Berlin became a singularly inappropriate locale for East-West musical coöperation. Moreover, at just about the same time, Kondrashin let it be known that his commitments in Russia had reached the point where he could no longer promise to participate. For Bicknell, whose experience with unpredictable Russians goes back to the days of Feodor Chaliapin, these were unfortunate but not cataclysmic developments. With or without the Russians, he was determined that Project Boris should go on. But a good deal of replanning had now to be done—and for this Bicknell called in his chief assistant, a young Australian named Peter Andry.

Andry could still rely on the project's *sine qua non*, Boris Christoff, a basso of Bulgarian birth and Italian training who is generally regarded as the most accomplished interpreter of Mussorgsky's haunted monarch to have emerged since the prime years of Chaliapin. But Christoff was all. The rest of the enterprise had to be put together from scratch. "Our first problem," Andry recalls, "was to choose a suitable recording hall. We wanted a large and very live hall—a place where we could put a sizable chorus, a full orchestra, and plenty of soloists without losing any spaciousness and depth of sound. Among the various halls available to us, the Salle Wagram in Paris

seemed far the best for our purposes. This meant that we would need a French orchestra—and we settled on the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra and the conductor André Cluytens, who is an experienced hand at directing opera recordings." Negotiations for hall, orchestra, and conductor occupied Andry intermittently through the fall of 1961, and by the end of the year he had progressed far enough to make some tentative commitments for sessions in September 1962.

A vital ingredient, however, was still lacking. In *Boris* a first-class chorus is of the utmost importance. It is intended as the embodiment of the Russian people, the collective mouthpiece—as it were—through which Mussorgsky expresses his concern and compassion for the common man. And Andry had no chorus. Ten years before, when EMI made its first recording of *Boris,* the problem was easily solved. Then the choral parts were sung by Russian emigrés who had escaped after the 1917 revolution to settle in Paris. (Many of the emigrés had learned to support themselves as taxi drivers, and at the 1952 sessions there were often a hundred cabs parked around the recording hall.) In the intervening decade, however, the Choeurs Russes de Paris had disintegrated. Even at the time of the earlier *Boris* recording, the youngest of the emigrés were already middle-aged; ten years later they were too old to sing Mussorgsky. A replacement for the White Russians had to be found, and the finding fell to Michel Glotz, a hyperbolic operaphile in his mid-thirties who works for EMI's French subsidiary, Pathé-Marconi, as a sort of roving talent scout and ebullient trouble shooter. Glotz began by advertising in the newspaper *Figaro* for Russian-speaking singers of a suitable age. Three people answered his ad. Then he considered the practicality of teaching a French chorus to sing in Russian, but quickly gave up this plan as immoderately costly and time-consuming.

"It became increasingly obvious," Glotz told me later, "that we had no alternative but to import a chorus from one of the Iron Curtain countries. Christoff was strongly in favor of Bulgaria. He maintained that the Sofia Opera Chorus was the best in Eastern Europe. So I enlisted the help of a Bulgarian friend who lives in Paris and we sent off a letter of inquiry to the Ministry of Culture in Sofia. Their answer was a round-trip air ticket—no letter, just the ticket. I went to Sofia in May. A man from the Ministry met me at the airport, took me to a good hotel, and gave me money for incidentals. He also gave me a ticket to the opera that evening, and I discovered that Christoff was absolutely right. These people are magnificent singers—with a long tradition of performing Russian opera in the original language. The next day I started negotiations with the Ministry. Fortunately, they were anxious to show off their chorus and were willing to subsidize part of the costs. Otherwise we could never have afforded to bring a hundred singers to Paris all the way from Bulgaria." Glotz also auditioned several solo singers at the Sofia Opera and engaged about a dozen of them for minor roles in the *Boris* recording. He left Bulgaria with a pocketful of contracts and a solemn assurance that choristers and soloists would duly appear at the Salle Wagram in September with their parts studied to perfection.

In London, meanwhile, the tempo of Project Boris was on the increase. Suddenly hundreds of details clamored for attention, and Andry cast around for some expert help. He found it in the person of David Lloyd-Jones, a recent Oxford graduate with an encyclopedic knowledge of Russian literature and a professional command of music. Lloyd-Jones had been closely involved in a new production of *Boris* at Covent Garden and was thus in a position to give invaluable advice on matters of staging. For technical guidance, Andry brought in Robert Gooch, a quiet, bespectacled engineer who had recorded several other operas for EMI and was conversant with the acoustics of the Salle Wagram. Late in April—while Glotz was still searching for his chorus—the three experts sat around a table and went through the score from beginning to end with a view to anticipating the problems that might be encountered.

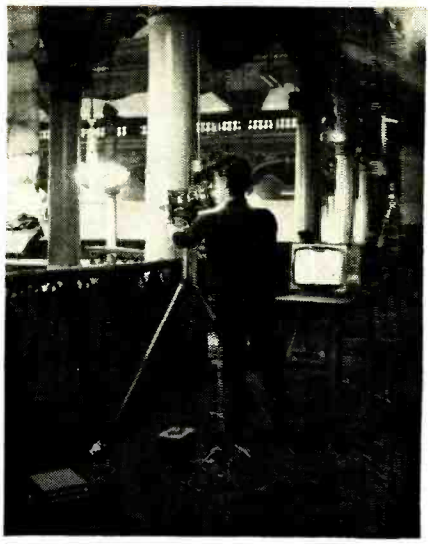
The problem of the score itself had already been settled. Early in the history of Project Boris, the decision had been made—primarily by David Bicknell—to use the Rimsky-Korsakov revision. It was not an easy decision to make, either from an artistic or commercial standpoint. The original Mussorgsky score and the Rimsky revision are two very different operas. The Mussorgsky is stark, episodic, at times brutally dissonant, seldom conventionally "operatic." The Rimsky is the work of a practiced man of the theatre and an astute orchestrator—in which exotic pageantry is emphasized and rough edges are filed away. Convincing artistic arguments can be advanced for each. And commercial arguments too. It was suggested that the first recording of Mussorgsky's *Ur*-text might conceivably have a larger sales potential than a re-recording of Rimsky's familiar revision. No one could know for certain, but Bicknell opted for Rimsky—with the proviso, however, that certain passages cut from the earlier EMI recording be restored in the new one. Christoff, who sings both versions, agreed with this decision.

In his preliminary conferences with Gooch and Lloyd-Jones, Andry set forth his general views on stereo opera recording. "I believe," he explained to me later on, "not so much in stage movement per se as in the necessity for setting the scene. Sometimes, to be sure, you have to do this by having your characters move from one microphone to another. But sometimes you can set the scene merely with a different type of sound. I'm not in favor of movement for its own sake." Gooch, for his part, described the type of microphone setup he envisaged and in general outlined the sonic potentialities at their disposal. Lloyd-Jones made concrete proposals for the handling of certain key scenes.

After the three had agreed on a general plan of

Under the classic frieze typical of the Salle Wagram's Empire décor the choristers imported from the Sofia Opera watch the orchestra and conductor, located in another part of the hall, on closed-circuit television. Beforehand (as pictured here at left), the Bulgarian singers had gathered round their celebrated compatriot Christoff to renew old acquaintance. The photograph below this scene of fraternal welcome shows the basso in conversation with conductor André Cluytens. At bottom, left, are the men in the control room: recording director René Challan; chief engineer Bob Gooch; finder-of-the-chorus, Michel Glotz; and—in dark coat—Peter Andry, in general charge of proceedings.

Photographs by Hans Wild



Activity was going on everywhere in the Salle Wagram; at top right a television man adjusts his camera on the balcony; as staging-consultant David Lloyd-Jones looks on, Czar Boris practices the proper way to knock over a table (the white-haired bystander is a sound-effects supervisor); Alexander Labinsky, Christoff's long-time accompanist, is seen demonstrating a point in the score; Challan and Christoff debate a problem. The photograph at bottom left shows one of the more than four hundred takes that made this stereo recording of Boris Godunov.

action, Lloyd-Jones began to map out the detailed scene-by-scene strategy. His first step was to diagram the recording stage into a pattern of numbered and lettered squares. Then he routed the traffic on this imaginary stage in accordance with the prescriptions of the score and with opera house traditions. The result was a sheaf of mimeographed "Directions for Soloists and Chorus" in which every movement and sound effect in the opera was explicitly noted.

While Lloyd-Jones was devising his staging scheme, the a & r people at Pathé-Marconi grappled with the logistics of the September sessions. In addition to the large contingent from Bulgaria, singers would be arriving from Italy, Yugoslavia, Germany, and England, and hotel accommodations had to be found in Paris for all of them. To complicate matters further, they would be arriving and departing at different times. "The ideal way to record an opera," Andry concedes, "is to start with the overture and run right through to the final curtain. But it's also, I'm sorry to say, a very impractical way. For one thing, you can't get busy singers to make themselves available for the full two or three weeks required to record an opera. They want to record all their scenes within the space of a few days—and this means that you have to hop about from one part of the score to another. It's impractical from an economic standpoint as well. When you're paying for the board and keep of a large chorus, you don't want them on your hands any longer than necessary."

The task of working out a practical schedule of recording *Boris* was given to René Challan, a Prix de Rome composer who has been a recording director at Pathé-Marconi for many years. His first step was to parcel out the score into fifty-one sequences, varying from two to seven minutes in length and each ending at a place where a successful splice could be made. Bearing in mind the availability of artists, the musical and engineering problems to be encountered, and the economics of the project as a whole, Challan put together a chart assigning the fifty-one sequences to specific hours and days. For the first session, at 3 o'clock on Tuesday, September 4, the chart called for Boris, Feodor, and Shuisky (i.e., Boris Christoff, Ana Alexieva, and John Lanigan) to record the conclusion of Act II—sequences 29-31, with a *durée prévue* of 8′ 25″. Four more afternoon and evening sessions on the following Wednesday and Thursday would account for the rest of Boris' big scenes (his address to the people at his coronation, the monologue "I have attained the highest power," and the death scene) as well as the two scenes from Act III in which Rangoni takes part. The chart then showed a hiatus of six days (to allow Cluytens to fulfill a prior engagement). When the sessions resumed at 8 o'clock on the evening of Wednesday, September 12, the Sofia Opera Chorus was to be on hand for the first time. The recording was then to proceed without a break to the final session on Friday morning, September 21.

Towards the end of June, Challan's schedule was submitted to Andry for approval, then returned to Paris for mimeographing and distribution to everyone concerned. "After that," says Andry, "there was nothing to do but keep our fingers crossed and hope that everything would come off as planned."

WHEN I met Peter Andry in the Hotel Bellman on the morning of the first session, it was clear from his jovial demeanor that no catastrophes had yet developed. "I've just come from seeing Czar Boris," he explained. "He seems in a very good humor and I think the sessions should begin smoothly." We ate as quick a lunch as is possible in Paris and walked over in brilliant sunshine to the Salle Wagram.

The main doors of the hall on the Avenue Wagram, a few blocks north of the Etoile, are opened for boxing matches on Friday nights and *bals dansants* on Saturdays. Otherwise this entrance is closed, and at recording sessions one goes in by a rear passageway on the Rue de Montenotte, a short narrow street with shops for cheese, wine, meat, and groceries, a shoemaker and a baker, a few cafés, and a couple of tiny hotels (of somewhat doubtful respectability). On the swinging plush-covered doors leading directly into the hall were large signs calling for silence and no smoking. The latter injunction seemed particularly pertinent. The Salle Wagram dates from 1812, and the interior is full of old—and, one suspects, rather easily flammable—wood. It is a beautiful hall, square in shape, with a large open arena in the center, a narrow balcony surrounding it on all four sides, and a lovely Empire ceiling of filigree and inlay. The building has been classified as a "public monument," which means that no structural or decorative alterations can be made without approval from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. One wonders why permission was ever given to install the ruthlessly utilitarian fluorescent lights over the arena; the original chandeliers must certainly have been much handsomer.

The orchestra had already begun to tune up in the center of the arena when we arrived. Behind them, on a temporary stage laid out in squares conforming exactly to the Lloyd-Jones plan, a tiny tabby cat scampered about. Bob Gooch, the chief recording engineer, was busy tapping his various microphones—several of them suspended from a boom in front of the stage, others in and above the orchestra. Up in the control room his French assistants were carefully checking out the tape equipment and the monitoring console.

Christoff appeared promptly at 2:55, greeted old associates, was introduced to new ones, and went off with Cluytens for some last-minute consultations; then he climbed up on stage and played with the kitten while awaiting further instructions. At length the control room called for a trial run-through of the first sequence. Already a change had been made in Challan's original schedule; instead of beginning with the Clock Scene, Christoff preferred to start off with his solo in the Prelude. The horns sounded a unison G, the clarinets descended to a

C minor triad, and instantly one was transported to the Kremlin in the year 1598. From the balcony of the hall the run-through sounded magnificently spacious and brilliant; it was easy to understand why the Salle Wagram has become one of Europe's most favored recording halls. But the ears in the control room were apparently not satisfied, for there ensued much shifting of microphones and lowering of curtains behind the stage.

Finally, at 4 o'clock all was in readiness for Take 1. In the control room Gooch had installed himself in front of the huge monitoring console. Facing him were two loudspeakers and a television screen, which was connected to various cameras in the hall. To Gooch's right sat Challan, flanked by a full orchestral score of *Boris* and an intercom phone to the conductor's stand. Behind them—on a raised platform at the rear of the room—sat Andry and Glotz. An orchestral score was at Andry's elbow also, and it was he who had ultimate responsibility for running the show, though Challan—for linguistic reasons—communicated with the musicians below.

As Take 1 proceeded, Andry's expression grew progressively glummer. "Such a cavernous sound!" he exclaimed. Gooch turned around, peered over the rims of his glasses, and said soothingly, "Well, at least we're getting somewhere—it's a definite improvement, you'll have to admit." But Andry was not to be placated. Turning to Challan, and with a note of tension creeping into his voice, he said: "Tell the orchestra to take a break while we work this out." Then to Gooch: "Bob, we've got to get this hall damped down. Let's lower every piece of drapery in the place."

While the engineering crew scurried off downstairs, Christoff appeared in the control room, accompanied by his wife, Cluytens, Lloyd-Jones, and Alexander Labinsky—a frail and ancient man with a parchmentlike complexion who is Christoff's accompanist and musical adviser. Labinsky was the one person in the Salle Wagram whose memories of *Boris* went back to Czarist Russia; and when he looked up from his tattered score to offer a suggestion, everyone listened with attentive respect. But it was now Christoff who spoke. "Let's hear a playback," he demanded in a sonorous singer's voice. He listened to it, head buried in hands, a figure of utter dejection. When it was over he stood up. "Not good," he announced. Andry nodded his head. "We're not too keen on it either," he agreed. "It's too reverberant; the hall still needs damping." Christoff frowned menacingly. "No, it's the balance," he protested. "The orchestra drowns my singing. I do not recognize my voice at all." Andry threw up his hands in feigned horror. He had been expecting this outburst from the beginning. Singers invariably complain about balance at the first session. "Oh, I can't agree with that," he objected, mustering as much firmness as one can in confrontation with an obdurate basso. "Why don't you listen again?" This time the take was played back at a different volume level. Christoff seemed somewhat mollified. "Well, we'll try it once more," he said, and went back to the recording stage. The solo was repeated again and again. Then work began on the Clock Scene. But the afternoon was wearing on, tempers were frayed, and at six everyone was happy to call it a day.

FOR THE SECOND SESSION, twenty-four hours later, the hall had been damped down even further. Drapes hanging from the ceiling now shut off the balcony completely. Christoff took up the Clock Scene where he had left off. It was extraordinary to observe how he could throw himself into the tormented hallucinations of Boris at a moment's notice. One minute he was an urbane basso in a well-tailored Italian worsted suit; the next, he was Czar Boris reeling before the horror of his troubled conscience. The scene was splendidly performed, the orchestra applauded, and the playback won general approbation. Everything now began to run more smoothly. By the end of the fifth session, Project Boris was pretty nearly back on schedule.

On September 12, when the company reassembled after the planned six-day interruption, it was revealed that Project Boris had suffered its first casualty. In the interim Peter Andry had fallen ill in London, and it seemed doubtful whether he could resume work before the end of the month. But the over-all plan had already been set, and the Messrs. Gooch, Glotz, Challan, and Lloyd-Jones were instructed to carry on—now with eighty-nine newcomers in the Salle Wagram. The Sofia Opera Chorus had arrived, just as the Bulgarian Ministry had promised, and the hall was filled with the chatter of a strange tongue.

The choristers came to the Salle Wagram well in advance of their first session and stayed clustered together in what seemed to be rather nervous anticipation. We soon discovered why. The moment Christoff set foot in the hall, they burst out in a ravishingly harmonized folk song, clapping their hands as he walked towards them, and surrounding him in a sea of affectionate compatriots. "Let this song of our land unite us forever "they sang, and tears filled Christoff's eyes. It had been twenty years since he left Bulgaria for vocal study abroad. Since then he had become a national hero *in absentia,* the most celebrated Bulgarian of our time even though he had long since ceased to live in his native land. But for some of these singers in the Salle Wagram he was more than a hero. He was an old friend, a fellow student from the distant days before the war, and during the course of the ensuing sessions there was much conviviality and remembrance of things past.

The arrival of the Bulgarians lightened the atmosphere at the sessions perceptibly. Their singing surpassed all expectations. For a month prior to their trip to Paris they had been rehearsing *Boris,* interrupting their summer holidays to do so, and the virtuosity and musicality of their work were astonishing. "Never before in my *Continued on page 119*

A Second Look at Manfredini

By Paul Henry Lang

THE RIPPLES caused by H. C. Robbins Landon's "A Pox on Manfredini," in the June 1961 issue of HIGH FIDELITY, are still discernible in the correspondence columns of this journal long after that article's appearance. That so many readers are concerned with the issues it presented is gratifying indeed, and the author is to be congratulated on the interest he generated. Certainly, it is not my intention to quarrel with Mr. Robbins Landon, but rather to discuss the problems which are at the bottom of the whole affair.

The historian endeavors to resuscitate bygone art; it is his main task. He uncovers the conditions that determine historic styles, illuminating the work of art from every possible angle. Insofar as those conditions can be reconstructed, he can make his contemporaries conscious of them; but he cannot conjure up the instinctive empathy felt by men of another age. We hook up a transformer, so to speak, to the old work of art; and if we can convert the electricity it generates to our voltage, our mental apparatus begins to hum. But the transformer cannot re-create the atmospheric conditions in which the old art breathed. From the distance of a couple of centuries a composer, for instance, tends to recede into the general style of his time, and to many of

us these old masters all seem to have composed the same sonatas, the same concertos, and the same operas. Yet they are individuals, and once we become familiar with their differing styles and procedures we can recognize their individuality.

Every artistic expression has a relation to its time which is lost if we are unable to establish our own relationship to that time. For a century and a half it was held that only with Bach and Handel do we really enter the domain of unquestionably living music; the result of this presupposition was the impossible historical category of "pre-Bach" music. There are many persons who listen to the "Princes of Music" of the sixteenth century, Palestrina, Lasso, Victoria, and Byrd, with respect and even awe—all the books say they were great composers—but few discern behind this music a human countenance or even shades of variation: Gloria sounds pretty much like Credo, Kyrie like Agnus Dei. Lully, Couperin, Kuhnau, and all the others are pleasant enough, but they appear to wear a common garb and look alike; no message seems to emanate from them beyond a certain innocent charm. But when we hear "I know that my Redeemer liveth," or the second *Brandenburg* Concerto, there is not the slightest doubt in our minds that this is "our" music, by composers we "understand" and whom we could not mistake for anyone else. But ought we to be so sure? On the one hand, there are many universally admired pieces in Handel's works that were lifted bodily from older composers now declared dead; on the other, what does the *Art of Fugue* convey to the music listener who is accustomed to "original invention" and "meaning"?

The prevailing opinion—and not only among laymen—is that this old music lacks subjective expression and therefore fails to convey the type of satisfaction we are used to. But why should we assume that because more recent music is of a different kind it is superior and more highly developed? No one would maintain such ideas with regard to painting or literature. The medieval painter who used no perspective is no longer considered "primitive"; his superimposed layers are recognized as a valid concept. Nor do we speak of pre-Voltaire or pre-Swift literature. This old music does have subjectivity and expressivity, though not in the nineteenth-century sense: all contemporary documents prove that in preromantic music individuality was felt and understood. The trouble is caused by the modern listener's inability to perceive the earlier composer's inner, unified vision. He must reconstruct this vision from the small details which are not inner truth but largely facts that must be quarried from the cold foreign past.

The older masters took their departure from the métier, from the collective universal, which guided them serenely, whereas with the advent of the romantic era the great artist arose from real or imagined opposition to the norm. There were many plodders among the old composers, to be sure, as there have always been in every field of human endeavor, and there were also many who worked humbly as mere artisans, without fanfare and even without a desire to be different from their colleagues. They were not troubled with any impulse to unravel the mysteries of the universe; rather they directed an eye at the manners and experiences of their day, worked within the musical fashion, and were not isolated from the popular taste. But they often ended by being overwhelmingly powerful individuals whose every utterance is unmistakably their own. Only a few decades ago a Buxtehude, and a Vivaldi, and a Charpentier were nothing but names in textbooks; now they have been recognized as great composers because we have become conversant with their style and principles and have begun to distinguish the individual within the uniformity of the reigning style.

Seventy or eighty years ago even the experienced and famous musicians who prepared the first complete edition of Bach's works, the celebrated Bachgesellschaft edition, were completely baffled by baroque music. They knew neither the literature nor the style, and therefore accepted everything in Bach's handwriting as genuine. They did not realize that Bach copied many a score by other composers, both earlier and contemporary, which he found interesting. As a result the old Bach edition is studded with all sorts of compositions by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century masters whom, ironically enough, Bach regarded with admiration but we declare passé. It was only later that scholars discovered that all of Bach's harpsichord concertos, to quote one example, were actually composed by Vivaldi, Marcello, and others.

TODAY we realize that no art is understandable from a knowledge of historical facts alone; it must be experienced through a perception of its style—not only analyzed, but felt and divined. It is not so much the historical facts (which to the layman are always the mark of scholarliness) as the historical connections that are most important. The minute we attempt to explore the historical connections, then we are entering the area where the idea is to be found—and idea, no matter how relative, leads to style.

An obvious question arises at this point: what is the relationship between musical instinct and musical value? That they do not necessarily coincide is evident. Our musical life shows a gulf between what the general public likes and what the initiated consider the highest manifestations of music. But we should not accept without suspicion the articles of faith of the epicureans who at the drop of a hat trot out nothing less than the *Art of Fugue*. They believe that artistic value is as evident in their choices as the trade-mark of a famous manufacturer. For the moment let us disregard the fact that our knowledge of baroque music is still very sketchy, that an im-

mense treasure of scores, containing many masterpieces, is still to be made known and available. But we do have a fair number of publications and recordings, among them many by minor composers. Musicians, editors, and advisors to record companies, whose acquaintance with "old" music is rather recent, find themselves in a world whose language they speak imperfectly, and it is for this reason that they are preaching a cult of indiscriminate proliferation. But there is another and much worthier reason for making the minor composers available: they can be enjoyed not in neglect or defiance of the approved great masters, but in simple acceptance of the fact that altogether enjoyable art can be created by musical poets who are not exactly thought-ridden. At certain times a minor composer who knew no high ecstasies or profound griefs falls easier on the ear than a towering genius. One may question the profundity or the accomplishment, but there is no denying the entertainment.

Essentially taste is a convention, often a very unreasonable convention, and like every convention it is changeable—in art it must change. In a certain sense, taste is a form of social etiquette and lack of taste is often nothing else than the liberation of new territories for creative imagination. In Manfredini's time, the marks Mr. Robbins Landon is distressed not to find in that composer's music would have been considered lacking in taste—but the historian, working backward and armed with hindsight, must beware of converting migrations of taste into aesthetic arguments.

Finally, there is the question of the relationship of invention and imagination, which in the case of our still little understood field of music are terms subject to different interpretations. The difficulty for us is that the ratio and quality of these two elements are not constant; they change, often radically, within a generation or two. How can we otherwise explain that an excellent musician such as Gounod could find Bach's C major prelude from the first book of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* a piece lacking in invention but presenting imagination in the "accompaniment," to which Gounod furnished his dubious *Ave Maria*? The notion of "invention"—and hence to our unscientific aesthetics, the "expressive"—is purely arbitrary and in itself irrelevant unless stylistically qualified. Because the old masters are strong in the handling of their materials, and because this ability of theirs can be quickly appreciated whereas their soul is often hidden, it may appear to some that they had nothing but a well-settled uniform technique. Not only Mr. Robbins Landon but many an otherwise able musician considers the baroque the age of musical statutes and bylaws observed meticulously by everyone—except Bach and Handel. One thing is certain, though, and several HIGH FIDELITY correspondents who took up *l'affaire* Manfredini are fully aware of it: in this music it is not the strength of the emotional expression and the dynamic enrichment that determines artistic value. If this were so, Bach's *Musical Offering* would be surpassed by Tchaikovsky's B flat minor Piano Concerto. It is function and design, the "working-out" or manipulation of musical substance that leads to masterpieces in this old music.

But even music much closer to us shows that "invention" was not always synonymous with "originality," and that "imagination" must be sought elsewhere. The *Jupiter* Symphony and the Fifth of Beethoven both start out with very ordinary clichés plucked from the public domain—but see what happens to the clichés by the application of imagination! Surely, Mr. Robbins Landon, who knows his Haydn and who has done so much to make this great and neglected master come to life, is aware that most of his wondrous symphonies and quartets were hatched with the motto *creatio ex nihilo*. This was the eighteenth-century precept: the question was how soon the creative spark would strike the imagination. Look at the beginning of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. This stupendous symphonic structure still begins with "nothing"—a few tentative intervals that do not even fix the tonality—but then we can virtually witness how imagination forces the raw matter to coalesce into an idea. This process was alien to the romantics. They had to begin with a substantial and fully formed musical idea, an approach which of course represents a totally different, though equally valid, aesthetic concept. Unless we understand these aesthetic premises and refrain from applying our own, we are unable fully to understand the artistic intentions of the composer and may even altogether misjudge the music, as Berlioz did Haydn's or Tchaikovsky Bach's.

There is no denying, however, that Mr. Robbins Landon's strictures are at least partly justified. Certain commentators, broadcasters, and record editors, seeing that a vital literature originated in the baroque era, lump together the living music with the dead, advocating their views with the same superciliousness that the party of the 24-carat masterpieces exhibits. They take us into their confidence, though they have little to confide, pouring into our ears a copious flow of thin music. It is a kind of make-believe by which the blessed past is projected into the prosaic present. This anomaly should be protested, but it would be sad if, as Mr. Robbins Landon only half facetiously suggests, the baroque concerto could serve only to make martinis more potable.

There are indeed abuses in this as in any other area of music, but the abuses need not be abused quite so sweepingly. Whatever means a scholar may adopt, his concern is always with a cultural tradition which it is his business to transmit. I am afraid that Mr. Robbins Landon, on the contrary, satisfied himself with an incongruity to be exploited. If so, I am sure he misjudged his HIGH FIDELITY public. As one of this audience I too enjoy a fine piece of cheerful vituperation, but "A Pox on Manfredini" suffers from a quality that is not a sign of imaginative criticism but of sensational impatience.

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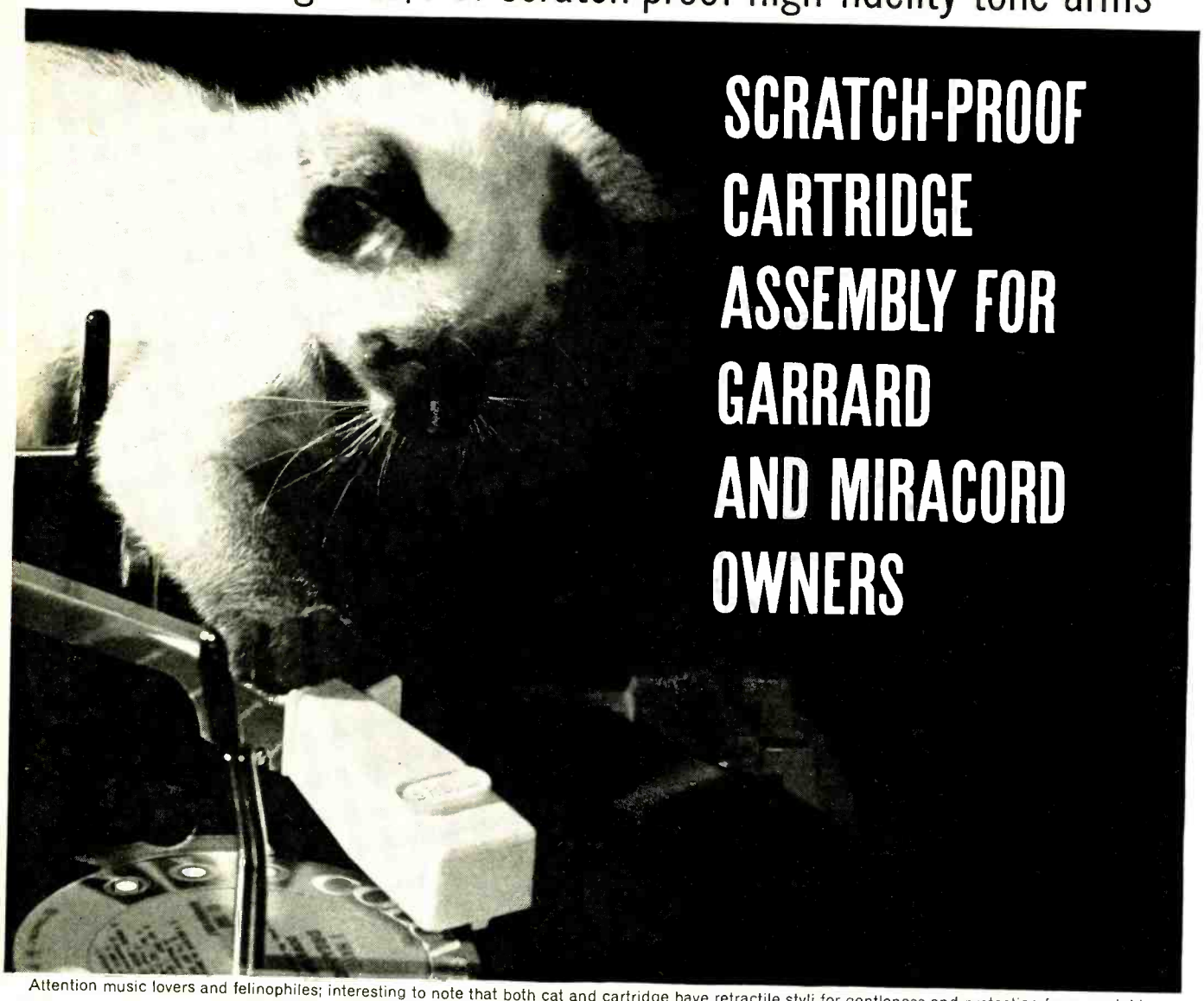

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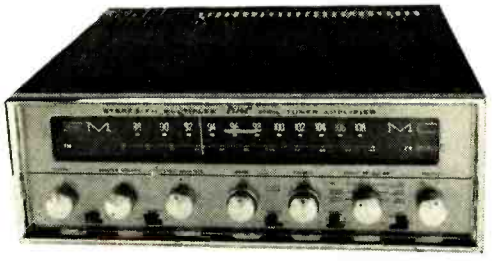


Pilot Model 654MA

Tuner-Amplifier

AT A GLANCE: The Pilot 654MA is an FM-multiplex stereo tuner and twin-channel integrated amplifier, offering on one chassis facilities for receiving stereo and mono broadcasts as well as equalization, controls, and power amplification for other program sources such as discs and tapes. Tests, conducted by United States Testing Company, Inc., indicate that the 654MA is a well-designed, clean-sounding instrument. It measures 14⅝ inches wide by 12¾ inches deep by 5⅛ inches high. Price, including a black- and gold-colored brass case, is $329.50. Manufacturer: Pilot Radio Corp., 37-22 36th St., Long Island City 1, N.Y.

IN DETAIL: The 654MA is enclosed in its own attractively styled enclosure. It can, however, be custom-installed in almost any kind of cabinet. Operating controls on its front panel include an FM tuning control, a master volume control, a stereo balance control, separate bass and treble controls for each channel, a six-position switch which serves as a combination function selector and input selector (phono mono, phono stereo, FM, FM stereo, tape stereo, and tape mono), and a two-position switch that selects one of two phono inputs. Also included are slide switches for AC power, loudness contour, scratch filter, rumble filter, and tape monitor. The FM station dial is a large, across-the-face scale that is illuminated during use. The set has output taps for 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speakers as well as output terminals for feeding a derived ("A+B") signal to a center channel speaker. One switched AC convenience outlet is also provided. Input jacks are supplied for two low level inputs and a high level tape input. There are also tape output jacks for feeding a tape recorder.

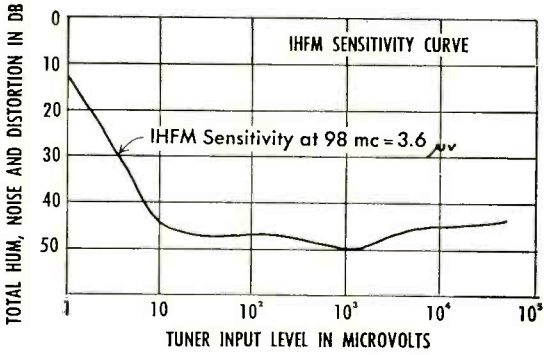
The amplifier section has two preamplification stages per channel, which include the equalization for RIAA phono. The output of a 12AX7 dual triode preamplifier is fed to a second 12AX7 that functions as a tone network driver and first audio amplifier. A third 12AX7 provides additional audio gain and phase inverting for the push-pull output stage which incorporates two 7591 pentodes per channel. Negative feedback is used from the output transformer to the cathode of the second audio amplifier. DC and AC balance adjustments are available for each channel.

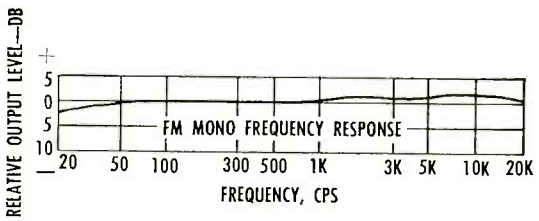
In USTC's tests, the Pilot 654MA delivered approximately 20 watts per channel before clipping occurred. With each channel operating separately, the left channel clipped at 1,000 cps at 20.4 watts and the right channel at 19.5 watts. At these levels the waveform harmonic distortion for both channels was 0.14%. With both channels operating simultaneously the output of the left channel dropped only slightly from 20.4 watts to 19.8 watts for the same distortion level (0.14%). The power bandwidth curve—measured on the left channel with the output distortion maintained constant at a 0.5% figure—extended from 23 cps to 12.5 kc.

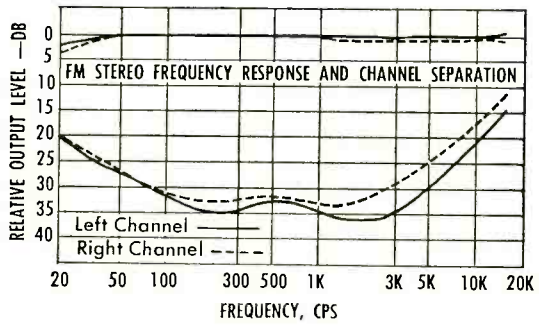
The frequency response of the amplifier section of the Pilot 654MA was found to be flat within ±1 db from 10 cps to 10 kc, dropping down to –3 db at 7 cps and 39 kc. The harmonic distortion, measured on the left channel, remained under 1% from 29 cps to 14 kc at 20.4 watts output, and under 1.5% from 20 cps to 20

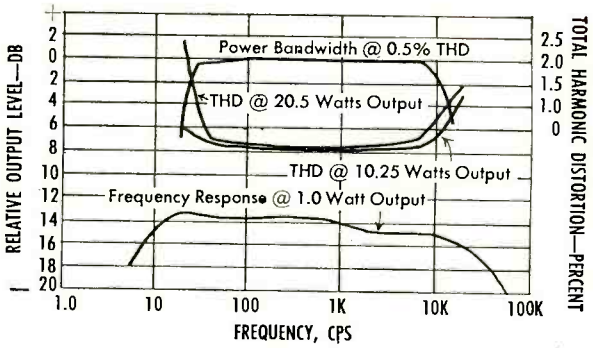
REPORT POLICY

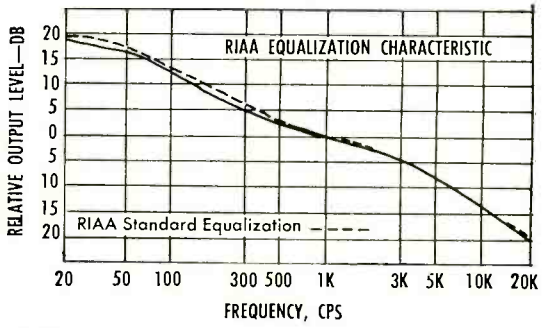
Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization which, since 1880, has been a leader in product evaluation. Speaker reports are based on controlled listening tests. Occasionally, a supplementary agency may be invited to contribute to the testing program. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY.

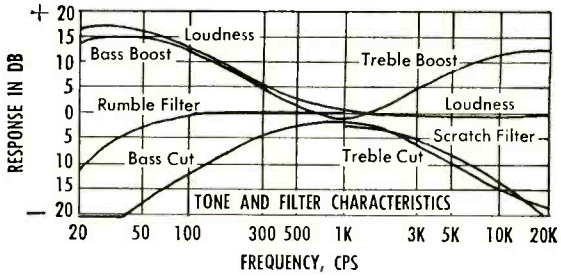












kc at 10.2 watts output. Intermodulation distortion on the left channel measured very low, reaching 0.12% at 4 watts, 0.2% at 10 watts, and less than 0.3% up to 25 watts.

The tone controls provide approximately 13 db of boost or cut at 100 cps and 10 kc. The scratch and rumble filters, as well as the loudness contour, were moderate in their effects. The amount of low frequency attenuation provided by the rumble filter is relatively small, with the 30-cps rumble component being reduced by only 6.5 db. The scratch filter will remove much of the mid-frequency program material, since it operates at the approximate slope of 6 db/octave above 2,000 cps. The loudness contour is a fair approximation to the natural equal-loudness curves.

The amplifier's sensitivity for each of the inputs was: tape high level input, 115 mv; magnetic low level input, 3.3 mv; and magnetic high level input, 13.8 mv.

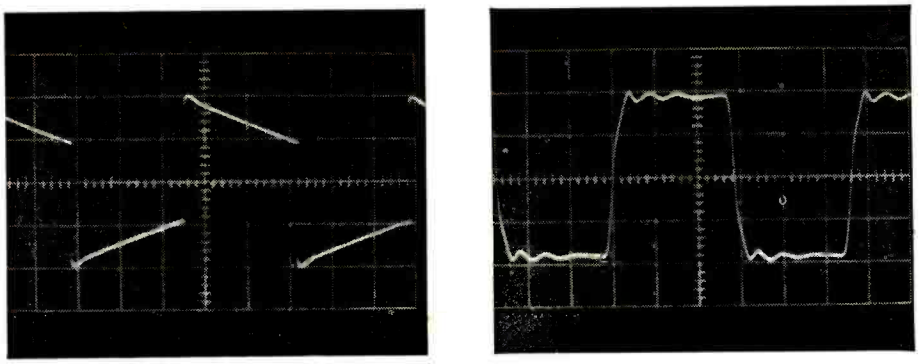
The RIAA equalization characteristic of the 654MA was very good, being maintained within ±1.5 db of the RIAA standard from 20 cps to 20 kc. The set has no built-in NAB equalization for use with magnetic tape heads, but according to Pilot, an approximate NAB equalization will be obtained when the tape head is fed into the magnetic phono input and the bass control is set at the 4 o'clock position to boost the low end of the curve. This gives a rough approximation of the NAB standard, although for best results when playing recorded tapes, the 654MA should be fed from a tape playback preamp.

The amplifier's signal-to-noise ratio was 70 db through the tape high level input, 51 db through the magnetic high level input, and 48 db through the magnetic low level input. The damping factor of the amplifier was favorably high at 5.7.

The amplifier's response to high frequency square waves was fairly good. The 10-kc waveform shows some rounding of the leading edge and slight evidence of ringing, but not enough to be considered serious. With a 50-cps square-wave input, the output waveform had some low frequency phase distortion, which in the amount shown is typical of most integrated amplifiers and is not too serious.

Measurements on the FM tuner section of the Pilot 654MA were made by USTC through the amplifier, with the amplifier supplying approximately one watt of audio output. The IHF sensitivity of the tuner was good, being 3.6 microvolts at 98 mc, 5.5 microvolts at 90 mc, and 7.5 microvolts at 106 mc. Its audio harmonic distortion was very low, being 0.28% at 400 cps, 0.21% at 1,000 cps, and 0.47% at 40 cps. The tuner's signal-to-noise ratio was good (59 db) as was its capture ratio (4.5 db). IM distortion was a very low 0.25%. Its tuning eye gave a slightly erroneous indication of the receiver's proper tuning point, and when tuned to a station solely by using the tuning eye the receiver's harmonic distortion rose to 0.74%. When properly tuned to 98 mc, 90 mc, and 106 mc, the dial reads 0.4 mc low, 0.6 mc low, and 0.7 mc low, respectively. Monophonic frequency response of the tuner was flat within ±1.3 db from 27 cps to 27 kc and was down 3 db at 33 kc.

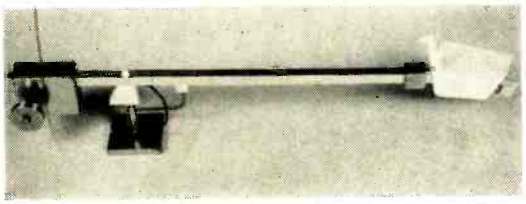
In FM stereo operation, an indicating light comes on when the set is tuned to a station broadcasting a stereophonic program. The distortion level in FM stereo operation was still quite low. On the left channel, the distortion was 0.86% at 40 cps, 0.70% at 400 cps, and 0.58% at 1,000 cps. On the right channel the distortion was 0.84% at 40 cps, 0.78% at 400 cps, and 0.62% at 1,000 cps. FM stereo frequency response was flat on each channel within ±1 db from 24 cps to 15 kc. The channel separation, of both channels, was good—being in excess of 30 db from 80 cps to 2,700 cps, and



Square-wave response at 50 cps, left, and at 10 kc.

in excess of 20 db from 20 cps across most of the band, dropping to 10 db on the right channel, and 13 db on the left channel, at 15 kc. The output of the 654MA, when operating in stereo, is 2 db down from its monophonic output. The 19-kc pilot and the 38-kc subcarrier levels in the tuner output, relative to full output, were down 31 db and 29.5 db respectively.

All told, the 654MA is quite good as both a tuner and an amplifier. It is especially outstanding in its low harmonic distortion, very low intermodulation distortion, and the very good frequency response and channel separation on FM stereo operation. It should serve nicely in many an installation where the convenience of having all functions on one chassis is desired.



Pickering Stanton 481A Cartridge; Model 200 Tone Arm

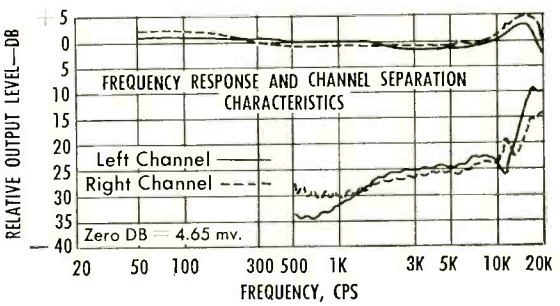
AT A GLANCE: One of Pickering's newest "Fluxvalve" magnetic cartridges is the Model 481 Stanton Calibration Standard, which was tested by United States Testing Company, Inc., in conjunction with the Pickering Model 200 Stanton Unipoise tone arm. The cartridge tested contained the Pickering D-4007A stylus assembly (0.7-mil diamond), which is designated as the Model 481A. Other styli are also available having 0.5-mil, 1-mil, and 2.7-mil diamond tips, and any may be readily slipped into the cartridge (without tools) for easy replacement. As a system, the 481A cartridge and the 200 tone arm proved to be top-quality performers. Prices: the 481A cartridge, $48; Model 200 arm, $36. Manufacturer: Pickering & Co., Inc., Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, L.I., N.Y.

IN DETAIL: The Unipoise tone arm, to begin with, features a very simple construction with a single pivot bearing. The arm is fashioned of a light hollow aluminum shaft of square cross section. Its front end contains a plastic cartridge shell, while a sliding counterweight at the rear is used for adjusting the arm to static equilibrium in the horizontal plane. Additionally, one side of the counterweight is fitted with a round adjustable nut used to balance the arm statically in the vertical plane. When correctly balanced the arm will sit true on its single pointed pivot bearing and will be free to move in all directions without friction. Indeed, when properly set up, the bearing friction is completely negligible, as low or lower than that found in other fine tone arms.

The cartridge's tracking force is adjusted by moving a second counterweight, located between the pivot and the cartridge shell, to the indicated location on the tone arm shaft. Markings are provided on the shaft for setting the tracking force to 1, 2, or 3 grams, and these markings were found to be accurate within 0.1 gram. The cartridge shell contains a four-prong plug that mates with the four pins on the cartridge for fast and simple cartridge installation. For other than Pickering cartridges, the plug can be removed and the standard spring clips can be put on the wires for connection to the pins on the cartridge.

The tone arm contains its own built-in arm rest, and its lead-in wires are terminated in two phono jacks that are located, after installation, beneath the turntable mounting board. The lead-in wires exert some lateral force on the tone arm, but they can be arranged to minimize this force to negligible proportions, which USTC recommends be done for best results when using light tracking forces of 1 or 2 grams. The tone arm has no pronounced resonance frequency above 10 cps, and is not too susceptible to jarring of the mounting board. USTC considers this tone arm to be of generally very high quality, and regards it as an ideal companion to the 481A cartridge.

The 481A cartridge itself is designed to track at

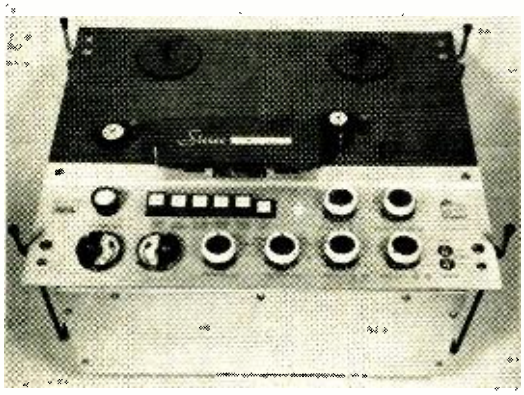


between 2 and 5 grams, and USTC performance measurements were made at a 3-gram tracking force. The cartridge was loaded with 47,000 ohms on each channel. As a system, the 481A cartridge in the Pickering 200 tone arm performed very well, with the cartridge exhibiting an extremely flat response over most of the range, as well as excellent channel separation.

Response on the left channel was flat within ±1 db from 50 cps to 11 kc, with a 3.5-db peak at 15 kc. The right channel was flat within +2 and -1 db from 50 cps to 11 kc, with a 5-db peak at 15 kc. Channel balance was maintained within 0.5 db over the mid-frequency range. The cartridge's channel separation was better than 30 db at 1 kc, and better than 22.5 db up to 10 kc. At 15 kc, the channel separation was 18 db to the left channel and 22 db to the right channel. These are, in sum, among the finest figures yet encountered.

The cartridge's sine-wave distortion was generally quite low, as was its IM and square-wave distortion. The cartridge had very low needle talk, extremely high compliance, and an excellent ability to track very heavily modulated grooves. The cartridge provided an output level of 4.65 mv at 5 cm/sec peak velocity, which is high enough to drive any preamplifier.

All things considered, the laboratory data and listening tests on this cartridge and tone arm indicate that each is a very fine product. They mate logically to form a high-performing pickup system, one that should provide satisfactory service in any high fidelity installation and be of interest to the discriminating listener.



EICO RP-100 Series

Tape Recorder

AT A GLANCE: The RP-100 by EICO is a quarter-track, two-speed stereo/mono tape deck with built-in record/playback transistorized preamplifiers. It is available as a factory-wired and -assembled unit (Model RP-100W, $399.95) or as a "semi-kit" (Model RP-100K, $299.95). In the latter version, the tape transport is preassembled; the buyer wires the electronic sections and then connects them to the transport for the finished product. The completed recorder may be installed in a number of ways as well as carried about. An optional carrying case costs $29.95; an optional rack mount accessory costs $9.95. No microphones are furnished. To listen to the RP-100 requires an external amplifier and speaker system, or headphones.

Tests of the semi-kit version conducted by United States Testing Company, Inc., indicate that the RP-100 is a well-designed unit that boasts many worthwhile features. Manufacturer: Electronic Instrument Co., Inc., 3300 Northern Blvd., Long Island City 1, N.Y.

IN DETAIL: The EICO RP-100 is an extremely versatile and smooth-running tape machine. It provides stereo or monophonic quarter-track ("four-track") erase, record, and playback. It also can play half-track stereo and mono recorded tapes. It can be used for sound-on-sound recording quite conveniently, and its separate record and playback heads permit monitoring off the tape being recorded. Separate line and microphone input level controls are furnished for each channel to permit adjustments for mixing and recording levels. Each channel has its own signal level meter. The deck, over-all, is handsomely styled and all controls are neatly and logically arranged. Maximum reel size is seven inches. Two speeds—7½ and 3¾ inches per second—are provided.

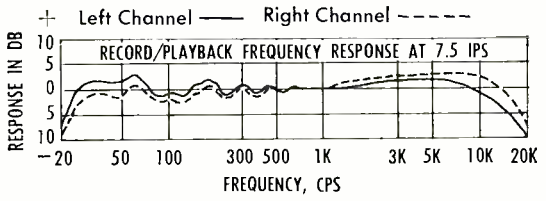
The transport is powered by three motors: a hysteresis synchronous motor for the capstan drive, and two four-pole induction motors for the supply and take-up reels. Speed change between 7½ and 3¾ ips is accomplished by a push-pull knob that causes the drive belt to shift between two steps on the pulley of the capstan-drive motor. USTC found that this speed-change method in the RP-100 worked with unusual smoothness. The drive belt, incidentally, is looped around a massive capstan flywheel, designed to impart smooth and silent motion to the transport.

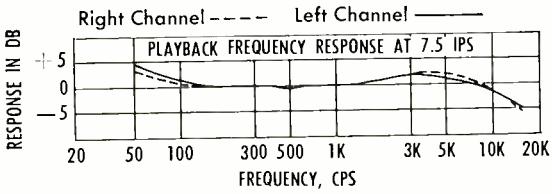
The transport is electrically operated by push-button controls. Electro-dynamic braking is applied to the reel motors, and electro-dynamic holdback tension to the supply reel. Solenoid-operated tape lifters (for the fast forward and rewind modes), a solenoid-operated pinch-roller, and mechanical flutter filter are featured. An automatic stop mechanism operates in the play or record mode, but not in fast forward or rewind.

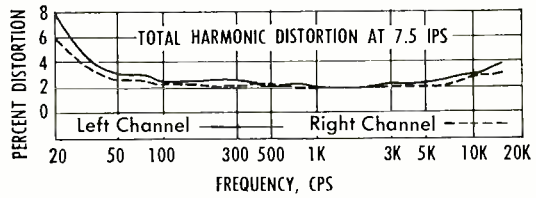
The control buttons are mechanically interlocked to prevent going from one operating mode to another without first going through the stop position. While in the stop position, the tape lifters are not activated and the playback preamps are on, permitting easy cuing and editing of the tape.

The three magnetic heads (erase, record, and playback) are arranged along an arc so that the tape assumes an angular wrap around them, eliminating the need for pressure pads. This arrangement also was found to make threading of the tape somewhat easier on the RP-100 than on many other decks.

Variations in line voltage had no noticeable effect on the operation of the tape deck, which ran somewhat fast at both speeds (1.2% fast at 7.5 ips and 1.3% fast at 3.75 ips). Wow and flutter were moderate, being measured as 0.12% and 0.25% respectively at 7.5 ips, and 0.22% and 0.3% respectively at 3.75 ips. The re-







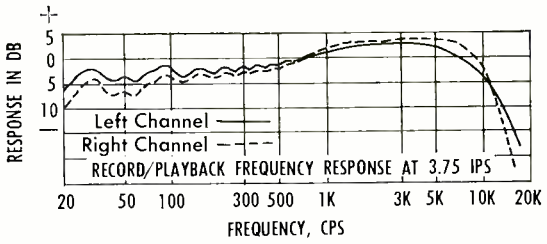
wind and fast forward time was 45 seconds for a seven-inch, 1,200-foot reel of tape, which is comparatively fast. Inasmuch as the automatic stop mechanism is inoperative in the fast forward and rewind modes, USTC advises that the operator be on hand to stop the deck when the end of the tape is reached. The transport's ability to handle tape was considered very good, and the tape could be started and stopped quickly without developing spillage or slack.

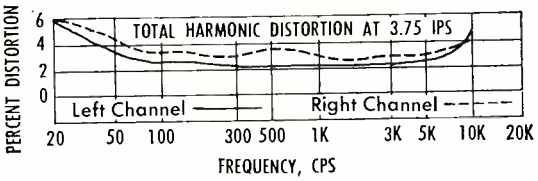
Associated with the electronics of the RP-100—in addition to the six push buttons and two signal level meters—are ganged line, microphone, and playback level controls for each channel, separate recording and playback equalization selector switches, and separate recording and playback mode selector switches. The recording mode selector switch has positions for making sound-on-sound recordings on either channel without the necessity of making external patch cord connections from the output of one channel to the input to the second channel. The microphone input connectors provided on the front panel are the screw-on type rather than the more common phone jacks. The microphone preamplifiers in the recorder are designed for use with high impedance dynamic microphones only, and crystal or ceramic microphones will not give as good results with this recorder.

The recording amplifier in the RP-100 uses 4 PNP transistors per channel, and the recording level meter circuit includes an adjustment for calibrating the meter. The 70-kc push-pull bias-erase oscillator uses a 6BX7 dual triode tube, with the B+ for the tube obtained from a 6X4 rectifier supply. Bias level adjustment potentiometers are provided in the recording amplifier so that peak high frequency performance can be obtained from the recorder. The playback preamplifier contains 3 PNP transistors per channel. Power for the transistor circuits in the RP-100 is supplied from a full-wave selenium rectifier. A second rectifier circuit supplies the necessary DC power to operate the pinch-roller solenoid and the electro-dynamic brakes.

To facilitate head alignment and bias adjustment, a 10-kc alignment tape is supplied with the RP-100, and if the instructions in the manual are followed carefully, alignment of the RP-100 is fairly simple. If an AC VTVM (vacuum-tube voltmeter) is available, it will facilitate an accurate alignment.

In USTC's tests, the RP-100 provided maximum output levels (with a 700-cps 0-VU signal) of 2.1 volts on the left channel, and 3.1 volts on the right channel, which is a difference of about 3.4 db. The recorder's playback response was flat on the left channel within ±2 db from 80 cps to 10.5 kc, and within ±4.5 db from 50 cps to 15 kc. The response of the right channel was generally similar to the left channel.





The record/playback frequency response at 7.5 ips was flat within ±2.5 db from 23 cps to 12.5 kc on the left channel, and from 26 cps to 16 kc on the right channel. At 3.75 ips, the left channel had flat response within ±3 db from about 70 cps to 10 kc, while the right channel's response was uniform within ±4 db from 80 cps to 11 kc.

The harmonic distortion of the recorder was less than 3% from 50 cps to 11 kc at 7.5 ips, and less than 4% from 60 cps to 9 kc at 3.75 ips. These measurements, as well as the record/playback response measurements, were performed with signals recorded at −10 VU. At higher recorded levels, the distortion rises, and the 3% distortion point at 700 cps (7.5 ips tape speed) occurs at −0.4 VU on the left channel and at −1.5 VU on the right channel. The recorder had a very favorable signal-to-noise ratio. On playback it was 48 db on the left channel (re 0 VU) and 51 db on the right channel. The record/playback signal-to-noise ratio was about 3 db less on each channel.

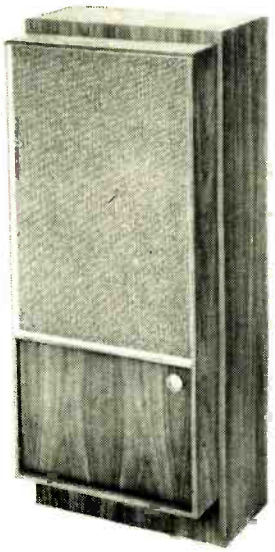
The recorder's IM distortion was clocked at 5% IM on each channel at the normal recording level of −10 VU, which is satisfactory for this class of equipment. Peak recording levels, up to 0 VU, introduced higher IM—18% and 30% on the left and right channels, respectively—and should be avoided when recording on the RP-100.

All in all, USTC concludes that the RP-100 is a well-built machine that has a great deal of flexibility. The RP-100 should appeal to the home recordist whose interest in tape recording may not be professional, but is certainly more than casual.

How It Went Together

The individual steps in the assembly and wiring of the RP-100 are simple enough and instructions in the manual are readily followed, but the stacked construction of the unit—necessary for fitting all parts into place—makes it difficult to check possible wiring errors after assembly or (as happened with our samples) to locate a couple of defective capacitors and a shorted head cable that had inadvertently been supplied with the kit. While an experienced kit builder would have relatively no trouble in this regard, the rank novice might be confused and would probably have to consult the manufacturer for advice. Total construction time, including the minor trouble-shooting mentioned, was thirty hours.

Audio Dynamics Model ADC-18 Speaker System



AT A GLANCE: Audio Dynamics, known for the ADC cartridges and the Pritchard tone arm, has introduced a line of high quality loudspeakers that incorporate novel design features such as the use of a rectangular-shaped woofer. The differences in the speakers (the ADC-14, ADC-16, and ADC-18) are confined to the extreme reaches of the bass response and relate directly to the size of the enclosure. The ADC-18, tested for this report, is a two-way system housed in a handsome walnut cabinet that is 40 inches high, 17 inches wide, and 12½ inches deep. It is a very smooth, natural-sounding speaker system that strikes us as one of the finest presently available. Price is $250. Manufacturer: Audio Dynamics Corp., Pickett District Rd., New Milford, Conn.

IN DETAIL: It is evident by now that a deliberate and successful attempt is in progress to upgrade the design and performance of "conventional" speakers—that is, speakers that operate on the electromagnetic voice-coil and diaphragm principle. A major part of this effort involves the material of which the diaphragm is made; the traditional paper cone increasingly is being supplemented with, or supplanted by, new materials—of which expanded polystyrene foam is the most used. The new speakers from Audio Dynamics exemplify this trend and introduce some design twists of their own, all of which combine to produce speakers of great merit and commendable performance. Any of the three is more than satisfactory in its size and price class, but the ADC-18 in particular appears to be an outstanding reproducer from any standpoint, one that is suited for the finest of home music systems.

It is a two-way system in which the woofer and tweeter are designed to overlap in response between 1,000 and 4,000 cycles per second by means of their design as well as by the dividing network that is employed. The woofer has a natural roll-off toward 4 kc, and the tweeter down to 1 kc. The aim of this approach is to smooth the midrange response and to reduce distortion. The network is installed within the enclosure, and both tweeter and woofer radiate directly into the listening area from behind an attractive grille cloth. The nominal impedance of the ADC-18 is not critical, and is given as 8 to 16 ohms. The system is of moderate efficiency and can be driven by amplifiers rated from 10 to 65 watts power output per channel.

The woofer is made of expanded polystyrene foam shaped as a rectangle with slightly rounded corners. This shape naturally provides a larger radiating area than a round woofer of the same diameter as the dimension across the width of the ADC woofer. The shape also contributes, according to the designer, to the speaker's piston action and linearity of response. The woofer diaphragm is attached to the voice-coil in the usual manner, but its outer edge is attached directly to the front panel of the enclosure by means of a soft cloth "surround." The resiliency, and thus the compliance, of the suspension is enhanced by the fact that the surround is impregnated with silicone rubber. The woofer magnet is a ceramic type, weighing nine pounds.

The tweeter employs a one-and-a-half-inch voice-coil that drives a very light diaphragm made of Mylar. The diaphragm is round, and curved outward to provide a wide angle of treble dispersion.

The cabinet itself is rock-solid and its inner walls are heavily lined with sound-absorbent material. It is completely sealed except for a small aperture that applies some resistive loading to the rear of the woofer.

The response of the ADC-18 was extremely clean and smooth throughout its range, which is estimated to extend from below 30 cps to beyond audibility. The bass line was in general clear and well defined. Distortion did not become apparent unless the speaker was driven very hard in the 30-cycle region. With the doubling that occurs as the input signal is increased, or with the natural roll-off that takes place with no increase in input signal, the woofer continued to respond to an indeterminate point below 30 cps. Throughout the midrange and highs, the ADC-18 was uniformly clean and smooth, with only a few negligible variations.

The highs seemed widely dispersed and open-sounding from virtually any position one would normally listen in, and at varying distances from the speaker. Reproducing white noise, the speaker's characteristic sound quality was smooth and subdued, indicating a minimum of acoustic coloration. Transient response was crisp and clean, with no audible hangover or ringing effects.

The ADC-18's reproduction of program material was eminently satisfying. The initial impression of listening to music through the ADC-18 was one of immediate acceptance, and this impression has been strengthened after weeks of listening. The speaker does not favor one type of music, or one family of instruments, over another. It is an impartial, honest, transparent reproducer that seems to render no more or less than what is fed into it. Its tonal range is very nicely balanced: the bass has ample impact; the midrange and highs are clean and airy. There is virtually no trace in its sound of boxiness or any "canned" quality. A pair of ADC-18s enhance monophonic material, and provide excellent stereo. And not to be overlooked is the fact that its superior sound emanates from a handsome, sculpture-like cabinet. The ADC-18, in sum, is very easy to listen to and live with, and is a worthy complement to the ADC cartridge itself.

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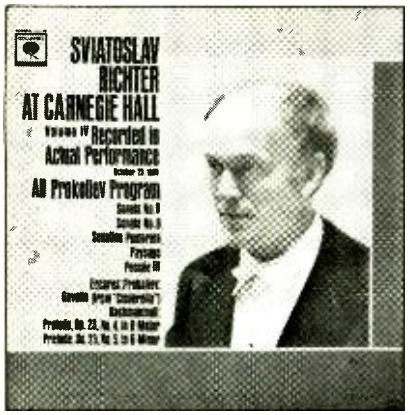

CIRCLE 26 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Music Makers

by ROLAND GELATT

SIXTY YEARS AGO this month, the Columbia Phonograph Company took full-page advertisements in America's leading magazines to "announce a most extraordinary achievement, marking an epoch in the art of recording and reproducing sound." This epochal undertaking was a series of Grand Opera Records, selling at $2.00 per single-sided ten-inch disc. The artists were reigning luminaries at the Metropolitan Opera—among them, the basso Edouard de Reszke (then on the verge of retirement), the contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink (long before she had become America's symbolic grandmother), the soprano Marcella Sembrich.

It was an impressive constellation of singers, and Columbia paid dearly for their services. (Sembrich reportedly received $3,000 for her three ten-inch discs.) But as sometimes happens in the unpredictable record business, customers proved hard to find. On the acoustic phonographs of the time, Columbia's piano-accompanied recordings sounded scratchy and faint, and the poor sonics were probably largely to blame for the disappointing sales. At any rate, within a few years the records had completely disappeared from view.

Now the whole series of thirty-two records is being revived on microgroove, in an album entitled "The 1903 Grand Opera Series," due from Columbia this month. And they no longer sound scratchy and faint. For this we have to thank the engineer in charge of the project, Edward ("Buddy") Graham, who has accomplished an incredible job of sonic resuscitation. Graham was obliged to work from scratch in the most literal sense, for Columbia's masters had long since been melted down, and the only available "source" was a set of the sixty-year-old records in the New York Public Library's collection.

"My heart sank when I first listened to them," Graham confesses. "The surface noise was excruciating, and it seemed like a hopeless undertaking." For that first playback, Graham had used an ordinary 3-mil stylus. But closer observation revealed that the grooves on these 1903 pressings were far from ordinary. Instead of the usual V-shaped formation, the grooves had the look of a flat, shallow trough. Graham asked the lab to furnish him with a truncated stylus—that is, a stylus with its tip sawed off—and the difference, he says, was startling. "Suddenly I was getting tone and presence instead of surface noise."

Having found the proper stylus width and shape, Graham copied the thirty-two records onto 15-ips tape without introducing any equalization whatsoever. The precious discs were then sent back to the library and the job of electronic rehabilitation began. By boosting some frequencies and attenuating others, Graham was able to bring voices forward and minimize surface scratch. Amazingly, he discovered that the upper-frequency range of these ancient recordings went beyond 5,000 cycles; and because of this unexpectedly high top limit, he did not allow his filters to cut in below 6,000 cycles. Some surface noise thus inevitably comes through, but at least nothing is missing from the originals.

Each selection in the series presented a different problem, for Columbia's 1903 engineers were obviously working by trial and error. Sometimes the voice predominates, sometimes the piano; sometimes the sound is forward, sometimes distant. Graham's task was to smooth out these variations as much as possible. Undoubtedly the most time-consuming record in the lot was Giuseppe Campanari's rendition of the *Largo al factotum*. The New York Public Library's pressing had a large crack, but you will never suspect this in its reincarnation on LP; the offending noises—225 of them—were all neatly removed from the tape. Altogether, this is a superb demonstration of the sound that can be coaxed from old recordings. And the performances themselves, with their stentorian spoken introductions, are of tremendous historical and musical interest.

CONCURRENTLY with this dip into the past, Columbia is staking out a claim to the future—as embodied in the sixteen-year-old person of Andre Watts. In mid-January, this young pianist appeared on a televised Young People's Concert, playing the Liszt E flat Concerto under Leonard Bernstein's direction. He played it so well that when Glenn Gould fell ill and canceled a series of performances as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Andre Watts was asked to substitute in his place. And he substituted so well that Columbia promptly recorded the performance and signed him up to a contract. Our spy at the recording session reports that Watts showed the unruffled assurance of a veteran and that his approach to Liszt—delicate, singing, classically poised—turned out to be the antithesis of what one might normally expect from a musician of his age and generation. The Liszt concerto, coupled with *Les Préludes*, is being rushed into production and should be on sale by the time this issue appears.

THE ERSTWHILE head of Westminster Records, an Americanized Londoner named James Grayson, is back at his old desk—a classic case of the man and the job being inseparable. Grayson was president of Westminster from its founding in November 1949 until the firm ran into financial difficulties ten years later, and during that decade he was largely responsible for the characteristic Westminster "image"—Bach and Handel from Scherchen, Schubert from Badura-Skoda and Demus, Haydn from the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet, Couperin from Cuenod. Now, after a hiatus of three years, the new owners of Westminster—ABC-Paramount Records—have asked him to return as managing director. Grayson agreed to come back, on condition that he could continue to run the Music Guild, founded in 1961.

Plans for new recordings are high on Grayson's agenda. When we spoke with him, the plans were still fairly nebulous, though a spring trip to Europe—for the purpose of auditioning new artists and supervising recordings—had already been mapped out. From the hints that were dropped, we had the very definite impression that Westminster's old image would soon reassert itself.

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Records in Review

Photo: Donald Southern

Nilsson and Windgassen, at Covent Garden.

For the First Time on Records, *Siegfried* in Its Entirety

by Conrad L. Osborne

IN TERMS of living performance, *Siegfried* is the most problematic of all the operas of the *Ring* cycle, if not of Wagner's whole output. All his operas suffer because today's audiences find it hard to accept a more or less literal representation of such improbabilities as a swan-boat or a cap that transforms dwarfs into toads; hence the nonrepresentational direction taken by the Wagner grandsons at Bayreuth. But *Siegfried* suffers most of all, for its action (or its stage business, perhaps I should say) consists almost entirely of just such goings-on, supplemented by dialogues that, superficially, seem nothing but rehashes of last week's installment.

The first act is especially difficult, consisting entirely of conversation between an old whimpering dwarf and a young bullying muscleman (both tenors), interrupted by another conversation between the dwarf and a one-eyed god in disguise, and climaxed by a scene in which the muscleman forges, in plain view, a sword out of some fragments, and then splits the anvil in two with it. This act, like the rest of the opera, is dominated by the character of the young Siegfried—without doubt the most difficult of all the Wagnerian roles to represent convincingly. This is because the singing-actor (assuming, for the sake of argument, that he cares a damn) is given almost none of the usual guide lines by which to operate in building a characterization. The essential thing about Siegfried is that he is, when we meet him, a person with no previous experience in human relations save that gained from his years spent in the depths of the forest with the Nibelung Mime. Thus, an actor playing the role must remove from his characterization all reactions which might depend on, let us say, childhood relations with mother or father, or any sort of experience with the opposite sex (down to mere knowledge of its existence). If an actor were really to succeed in this, there would be nothing at all laughable about even the famous line *"Das ist kein Mann!"*—in fact, Siegfried's wonderment at his own perceptions and feelings throughout the final scene would be extremely moving. But such a characterization would require careful rethinking of practically every line of the role; it is an acting challenge of the first order. And all this, to be convincing, from a man who looks the part and who has a voice of extraordinary size, range, resonance, and endurance. (Simply memorizing the part is work enough; suggest to any tenor who has managed to overcome the vocal and musical difficulties that he must now think about just who Siegfried *is*, and you are asking to be pitched out of the studio window.) Add the virtual impossibility of ideal casting in the very long title role to the staging problems posed by the fight with the dragon, the forging of the sword, and such episodes —to say nothing of the casting of the other roles—and one can recognize the unlikelihood of ever seeing the thing believably brought off.

But what a score it is! No advertising copy is needed at this date for such magnificent passages as the Forging Song, the Forest Murmurs, or the final duet. It is, rather, the scenes most often slighted that can now inspire admiration as, thanks to London, we are able for the first time to listen to and study the opera at some leisure. The long "Riddle Scene" between Mime and The Wanderer is really a wonderful piece of writing. The charges that it is "undramatic" or "repetitive" are silly in the extreme; just as Wotan's long monologue in *Die Walküre* is not primarily about the preceding events of the cycle, but about Wotan himself and the nature of his relationship with Brünnhilde, so is this scene devised chiefly for purposes other than

synopsis. To begin with, of course, it introduces Wotan in his new guise, and with his new (quite different) way of looking at things—the establishment of such a turn in character development is itself justification for the scene. In addition, it moves the action forward by bringing to Mime the information that only a hero who has never known fear can forge the fragments of Nothung. And it serves as a final, concise look at the world order that will, before the opera is over, be overthrown.

In any case, one can never separate the dramatic function of an operatic scene from the music. Here, the music, with its recapitulation of themes associated with the Nibelungs, the Giants, the Wälsungs, the Sword, and the young Siegfried, not only "sums up" the previous action, but forces an *emotional* return to them, reminds us of their meaning for us. This is an almost essential device of a drama laid out as a cycle, and the most valid *raison d'être* for the whole leitmotiv system. It is Wagner's recurrent use of the device that is responsible for much of the *Ring's* massive, epical effect; such scenes actually serve to frame the drama and clarify its structure—which is why the *Ring* operas generally seem longer, rather than shorter, when these scenes are cut.

None of them is cut in this, the first *Siegfried* on records (except for the marvelous old HMV-Victor 78s of roughly half the opera). In fact, not a bar of the whole long score (1,163 pages in the Eulenberg miniature edition) is omitted, and we are thus three-fourths of the way towards a truly complete, technically up-to-date *Ring*. The performance here would be difficult to improve on these days, and no one should hesitate to invest in it. It has an exciting conductor, an excellent Brünnhilde, a superb Alberich, and very respectable performers in all the other roles.

Siegfried is, to my mind, Solti's finest recorded accomplishment to date. There is no capriciousness of tempo, no attempt at "individualizing" accent. The reading is extremely brisk and clear, so much so that it occasionally misses some of the repose and warmth that one would imagine Furtwängler bringing to it—I am thinking mainly of some of the quieter moments in Act II. But it moves so beautifully and logically, and with such a fine sense of proportion among the scenes, that the opera almost seems short; I have certainly never before had the sense of the action moving so swiftly (perhaps because so much of the action is in the score itself). The Vienna Philharmonic sounds tremendous. There are no mellower, richer brasses, nor are there any finer soloists for the second act passages—clarinet, oboe, and violin in the Murmurs, the horn in Siegfried's Hunting Call: all are magnificent. (Siegfried's playing of the pipe is also just right, and quite funny.) The over-all sound of the ensemble is gorgeous, and the huge orchestra can snap like a whip when it needs to. "*So schnell wie möglich*," Wagner has written for the closing pages of Act I—"As fast as possible"—which is in this case almost dizzyingly fast and exceedingly lucid to boot.

The cast is not ideal, but it's as close as one could reasonably expect. Windgassen, of course, leaves something to be desired in the title role. His voice is really of a sort that, in an era of great dramatic singing, would be assigned to the lighter Wagnerian roles—Erik, Lohengrin, Walther, probably Parsifal—but which would sensibly be kept away from Siegfried. His tenor is just not the ringing, heroic instrument called for and will inevitably create a somewhat undernourished impression. Yet he has been far and away the best Wagnerian tenor before the public over the past decade, and even the best Siegfried. He never descends into beefy bellowing; the voice is always focused and clear, sometimes constricted, but sometimes possessed of a fine resonance. Musically, he is close to flawless: his treatment of the text is intelligent and sometimes insightful; his phrasing is tasteful. He makes the most of the lyric moments and surmounts the final scene in quite an impressive fashion. Even in the more heroic sections, where his tenor is outmatched, he refuses to apply extra muscle to make his voice something it isn't. This is not a great performance, but a likable one that commands respect, and one that could not be surpassed by any other current *Heldentenor*.

Nilsson is splendid. As in the case with most really imposing voices, her soprano never sounds quite as exciting on records as it does in the opera house, and there is little really exceptional about the purely aural aspects of her impersonation, as there is about the visual. However, the cool, balanced quality of the voice, its remarkable trueness to pitch, and its uncommon steadiness are here, as is her lovely phrasing and unusually easy handling of "*Ewig war ich*," and the really stunning high Bs and Cs (the last one held for considerably longer than its indicated value). I would like to be enthusiastic about Hotter's performance, since he is an artist of real stature, but I can only say that his performance has all the expectable attributes of intelligence, sensitivity, and a feel for the grand line. His voice (which sounded so good in the low keys of the recent DGG *Winterreise*) is here a very worn-sounding one. Most of the color has fled from his tone, leaving an unrelieved grayness of timbre, and he is unable to keep his voice steady in the frequent long sustained passages of this role. He still gives us fine moments, as in the colloquy with Alberich in Act II, and most of that with Siegfried in Act III; but the punch is gone.

I am not entirely convinced by Gerhard Stolze's Mime, brilliantly executed though it is. His voice is almost too thin and light; that of Paul Kuen, the Mime of the *Rheingold* set, seems to me more appropriate—a character tenor, but a substantial one. (And, though I don't like to carp, I really think that since we have a *Ring* in the making, no effort should be spared to leave such roles in the same hands throughout.) Beyond that, there is the fact that Stolze deals with nearly all the music in an ugly sort of *Sprechstimme*; one can term it singing only by stretching a point. It ends by sounding overdrawn. The case need not be stated so strongly—there is plenty of characterization in the music, and even if it were sung perfectly "straight," we would get the point. But there is, anyway, a difference between a character role in Wagner and a character role in Berg; the former ought to be sung, however one chooses to characterize it. After all, we have to listen to this fellow pretty constantly for about two hours. Within his framework, Stolze works ingeniously, but it is not to my taste. Neidlinger is at least as fine here as he is on the *Rheingold* recording—easily the best Alberich I've ever heard, and the only one of whom I could honestly say, purely on the evidence of his work in this role, that he's a good singer.

Höffgen is a stylish, poised Erda. Her voice lacks the deep, quiet contralto quality I would like to hear in the part, but her singing is round in tone and captures the general atmosphere of her scene. Sutherland, sounding very fresh and free, is welcome lagniappe as the Forest Bird, and Böhme booms impressively through his speaking-trumpet.

On the basis of the sound offered by the final advance pressings, I should say the set will be up to the company's best operatic standard. London has struck an excellent vocal/orchestral balance in the set, avoiding both the singer-dominated sound of the older type of recording and the orchestra-ruled sound of some of its recent sets. Neidlinger, Nilsson, and Hotter all seem in fine relation to the remarkably clear, warm orchestral sound; Windgassen and Stolze are sometimes not present enough. I must observe again that, with only the *sound* of an opera to go by, we must hear the singers more clearly and consistently than we do in the theatre if they are to make any impression. This is, though, to some extent a question of individual taste, and *Siegfried* at least contains no instances of singers swept out of the picture by the orchestra. The special effects create a good impression of physical presence—the hammer clanks on the anvil with a jarring impact, and Nothung cleaves the anvil in two with a satisfying swipe. The question of perspective is again arguable: I wish Erda would sing her first line ("*Stark ruft das Lied*") up close, rather than from a distance, and I wish the Wanderer wouldn't go off into another room to yell at Fafner in Act II. But others will disagree.

All told, a solid production, and a welcome plug in one of the more deplorable gaps in the catalogue. On to *Götterdämmerung*, please.

WAGNER: *Siegfried*

Birgit Nilsson (s), Brünnhilde; Joan Sutherland (s), A Woodbird; Marge Höffgen (c), Erda; Wolfgang Windgassen (t), Siegfried; Gerhard Stolze (t), Mime; Hans Hotter (bs), Der Wanderer; Gustav Neidlinger (bs), Alberich; Kurt Böhme (bs), Fafner. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.
• LONDON A 4508. Five LP. $24.90.
• • LONDON OSA 1508. Five SD. $29.90.

Heinrich Franz Biber von Bibern

Scordatura— And the Mysteries of the Rosary

by Eric Salzman

EVERY HISTORY OF MUSIC mentions Heinrich Franz Biber von Bibern and his curious religious program music for violin written in *scordatura,* that vibrant and evocative term for a mistuned violin, and known as the *Biblical* or *Mystery* Sonatas. One has heard tell of remarkable and forgotten secrets, of an art of violin playing that was lost and could never be recovered. Yet for all its reputation, the actual music has remained quite obscure. In 1905 the seventeenth-century manuscript was finally printed (in the rather awesome *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Osterreich* series), but the notation there was intended merely to serve as a guide to the player, indicating where he should put his fingers on the mistuned strings. Since the scheme of mistunings changes in every piece, the results are, to put it mildly, confusing. A second, "practical," edition for a normally tuned violin, issued a number of years ago, was so full of editorial distortions that it did not merit consideration as a representation of the original. And not only have performers been scared off by the fearsome technical feats demanded, but the difficulties of keeping a mistuned violin in any kind of tune at all are nightmarish. Paul Hindemith, who is reported to have given one of the few modern concert performances of these works, is said to have had a whole battery of assistants backstage busily tuning violins.

The obvious result: much talk, few performances. Only now, with the release of Cambridge Records' fine recordings, are we able to say that the Biber *Mystery* Sonatas genuinely merit their reputation. They have been translated into excellent performances that not only overcome the mechanical difficulties (for the most part at least) but also have style and character.

Biber was born in Bohemia in 1644 and thus can be said to belong to the middle generation of baroque composers. Like many of his colleagues and compatriots, he became a Kapellmeister, first in the court of a certain prince-bishop in Moravia and, later, for the Archbishop of Salzburg. His efforts as a virtuoso violinist and composer even earned him a rare patent of nobility as well as the favor of the great figures of the age, including the Emperor himself. While, like other German composers of the period, he seems to have absorbed a good many Italian influences, especially from the early-baroque instrumental music of Northern Italy, it is not altogether impossible that, in a day of international crosscurrents and rapidly changing stylistic developments, his work may, in turn, have had some effect on the formation of the mature Italian baroque string style. Certainly, Biber had a direct influence on the character of German-Austrian string technique, particularly with respect to chordal playing, generally regarded as a particularly German and un-Italian characteristic. There is no question that, apart from questions of sheer string color, the principal significance of *scordatura* is that it greatly facilitates complex harmonic and chordal patterns on an instrument that is normally more at home in melodic functions.

Biber published one set of sonatas in 1681. The unpublished and updated *Mystery* Sonatas are thought to have been written in the previous decade. The name of the set derives from the fact that in the manuscript each Sonata is accompanied not by a title, but by an engraving illustrating a New Testament scene. The entire set comprises the fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary. A sixteenth composition, a Passacaglia for solo violin, is accompanied by an engraving of the Guardian Angel. The works were apparently meant to be performed in church during the Rosary Service; the Passacaglia seems to be connected with the Feast of St. Michael, which was introduced into the church calendar at about the time the Sonatas were written.

Many attempts have been made to elucidate the "programs" of these works. The "Christ on the Mount of Olives" Sonata consists of a single, freely constructed movement which, with its constantly changing tempo and character, often seems quite graphic and narrative. This impression is increased by the heading *"Lamento"* at the very beginning, a marking that may well refer not merely to the opening but to the entire work. Some of the other references are even more explicit. The "Ascension" Sonata has an *"Intrada"* and a following *"Aria Tubicinum"* in which the violin with its bass quite literally imitates trumpets and drums, suggesting the glad welcome for Christ in Heaven. Some two-part counterpoint might symbolize the Visitation. A touching Adagio may suggest the Adoration of the Shepherds. The long Chaconne which constitutes the entire Fourth Sonata might refer to the child Jesus among the Doctors. Dotted rhythms and repeated notes might suggest to an audience of the time the Passion of Christ. The Descent of the Holy Ghost might be indicated by the mysterious, quivering, trilling violin; the Ascension of Christ and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary by ascending scales; the sure help of the Guardian Angel by the incessant repetition of the four-note bass theme in the final Passacaglia.

In my own opinion, however, Biber's intention may well have been less an attempt to provide a literal musical parallel to the Gospel narratives than to express an interior religious feeling aroused by contemplation of the Mysteries. Far from being free, programmatic fantasias, most of these Sonatas are built around double-bar pieces of vocal or dance origins: arias with variations; Allemandes, Courantes, Gigues and Sarabandes, generally with doubles or variations of their own. One, two, or three of these appear in each Sonata, generally preceded or followed by "open-form" movements. The first movement may be a Praeludium with a running, showy violin part over a held pedal bass or a more complex slow-fast movement labeled "Sonata" and containing imitation and contrapuntal development. The final section may be a Finale proper, also with fast figures over a pedal bass, or a concluding chordal Adagio. Obviously these do not represent the fixed patterns of the eighteenth-century sonata —even the distinction between church and chamber sonata is not yet established. But we do see easily recognizable types which appear elsewhere in Biber's work. Within these outlines Biber achieves remarkably expressive lines, an elegant play of sonorities, extraordinary string colors that result from the *scordatura,* a wide range of chordal and harmonic effects, and, finally, a remarkably flexible and even asymmetrical array of rhythmic and phrase structures.

When Biber breaks out of the requirements of the formal musical language of his period, he does so, it seems to me, because of the intensity of the musical thought. This is true, I would think, of the "Mount of Olives" Sonata mentioned earlier. It is certainly true in the last two Sonatas where he carries the Variations principle far beyond the mere idea of the decoration of a theme. Thus in the last Sonata, an

Aria and Variations eventually becomes the subject of a free, expressive, contrapuntal Canzone. In the next to the last Sonata, an aria-with-ground-bass is elaborately transformed and reconstituted in a beautiful formal sequence of phrase overlap. Something similar happens on an even grander scale in the "Resurrection" Sonata, where the fusion of meditative, musical, and technical effects is perhaps most complete. The principal section of this composition consists of a remarkable series of variations on an actual Resurrection hymn, treated partly as a ground bass and partly as a treble melody against its own continuation in the bass. The mistuning arrangement in this Sonata has been completely misunderstood by the editor of the *Denkmäler*; fortunately, Sonya Monosoff, violinist in the present recording, gets it right and the intention becomes clear and extraordinary. Each string becomes like an organ stop, and when the theme appears in the violin in octaves the sonorous effect is electrifying.

Miss Monosoff solves the terrific problems of the *scordatura* by using a set of six old violins and a variety of different types of strings (all provided, by the way, by Rembert Wurlitzer). The particular tuning necessary for each Sonata was set up well in advance, with several weeks allowed for the strings to work into the unaccustomed positions and tensions. The mental obstacles of the notation and the tricky technical problems of the violin writing were, of course, solved by Miss Monosoff's excellent head- and finger-work. Actually, solutions could not be found for all of the intonation problems, as Miss Monosoff frankly admits in her excellent program notes. The differences in string tension—even if maintained without change—require thousands of tiny adjustments in the precise positioning of the fingers not only from piece to piece but, within one work, from string to string. All of these adjustments must be carefully worked out, often in unusual double- and triple-stopping positions, and almost always in a situation where the performer is unsure what the actual pitches are supposed to be. Nevertheless, the over-all impression given by these performances is excellent. The variety of tone colors and double-stop effects is stunning; the musical intelligence and projection are exceptional.

Mr. Scholz's viola da gamba is not only a Stainer of the period but, incredibly enough, it may actually have formed part of a set ordered by Biber (Biber used Stainer instruments and, in fact, spent a good deal of time with Stainer in the Tirol).

The varying use of different continuo instruments is, on the whole, quite successful. The harpsichord and the organ are roughly of the period and are attractive in sound. The gamba and bassoon playing is fine. The late Dr. Smith is a conscientious and sometimes inspired keyboard performer, although one often wishes that he had not stuck quite so closely to the *Denkmäler* realizations of the continuo parts. I would have liked, among other things, to have heard a good deal more in the way of ornamentation, rolled chords, and so forth. Miss Monosoft does provide a good bit of such ornamentation always in good taste and style; she also provides some excellent rhythmic and phrase flexibility which serves the music magnificently.

The sound is close and dry; if it is not beautiful, it is at least clear, consistent, and trim. The stereo version tends to split up the violin and the continuo. The historical and technical background is well provided in the notes by Paul Nettl and Miss Monosoff herself. All in all, this album is an achievement which finely re-creates an exceptional experience of a rich and not yet fully understood age.

BIBER: *Fifteen Sonatas and Passacaglia for Violin*

Sonya Monosoff, violin; Melville Smith, organ and harpsichord; Janos Scholz, viola da gamba; John Miller, bassoon.
• CAMBRIDGE CRM 811. Three LP. $14.94.
• • CAMBRIDGE CRS 1811. Three SD. $17.94.

By Harris Goldsmith

On Two Recital Discs, Debut of a New Czech Pianist

Ivan Moravec

UNTIL VERY RECENTLY the name Ivan Moravec was almost totally unknown on this side of the Atlantic. It now seems likely that this situation will quickly be rectified: next season the young Czech pianist will make his American debut with the Cleveland Orchestra and a concert tour is on the books. In the meantime, music listeners have an opportunity to acquaint themselves with his work through two recital discs just issued by Connoisseur Records.

Moravec's career to date has not been a conventional one. Born in Prague on November 9, 1930, he studied under both Erna Grünfeld and Ilona Kurz and was embarked on a promising future when, in his early twenties, he was struck with an undiagnosed ailment which produced "mysterious and excruciating pains in his hands, arms, and back." On his recovery, in 1957, he went to Italy to put himself under the tutelage of Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, whose influence can be detected in certain aspects of his playing on the present recordings. In general, Mr. Moravec is a detached sort of performer. His conception of phrasing, voice-leading, and rhythm is, to be sure, highly subjective, but the most basic feature of his pianism is the neatly balanced, ultrareserved clarity of his fingerwork. Moravec does not seem to be a colorist; he favors, rather, a dry, monochromatic type of keyboard sound (influenced here, no doubt, by the brilliant and rather graphitelike tonal characteristics of his Baldwin instrument). I would say that accentuation, symmetry, and severe clarity of texture are the qualities uppermost in the pianist's mind.

Among the works on the present two discs, the Mozart C minor Sonata is most suited to Moravec's highly calculated type of keyboard artistry. The tempos are rather fast here, and the over-all musical form emerges clearly defined. Purely from a technical standpoint this is superlative playing. Moravec has complete digital independence and an absolutely faultless balance of power between his right and left hand. The phrases are shaped with complete au-

thority and awesome security. The rapid runs in the first movement—all taken with clipped staccato and perfectly accentuated—are an ample measure of Moravec's stature as an executant. All told, his is a rather aloof approach and, as such, will appeal to the intellect rather than the emotions; but so too is the music itself somewhat reserved. As a classical exposition then, Moravec's version of the Mozart C minor must take a place equivalent to that occupied by the Lipatti among editions of the Mozart A minor, K. 310. In other words, this is obviously the work of a highly gifted and intelligent interpreter who does not find it necessary to defy convention and good taste to make a personal impact.

In the *Appassionata*, on the other hand, Moravec allows himself certain indulgences. It is impossible, for example, to equate his whispered statement of the work's opening with the brisk conciseness Beethoven so obviously implied with his *Allegro assai* tempo indication, and throughout the entire Sonata the pianist veers towards a highly romantic interpretation of the music. In many respects Moravec's stretched rubatos and bold underscorings remind me of Richter's interpretation of this piece. There is one crucial difference between their interpretations, however: clearly, Moravec has read Beethoven's score, whereas Richter often gives the impression of having neglected to do so. The former, for instance, observes the crucial *subito piano* at the beginning of the first movement recapitulation and places accents correctly throughout. These significant details are largely ignored in the Richter performances. Furthermore, Moravec is able to give the impression of a more consistent basic tempo than Richter achieves, although both artists are, in truth, extremely (in my opinion, excessively) flexible. I personally feel that among currently available editions Egon Petri's is the most faithful to the composer's intentions, but Moravec's reading makes for an exciting performance of the virtuoso type. The clarity he achieves in the last movement, while taking it at a tremendous clip, is, for example, a remarkable tour de force.

Turning to the Chopin-Franck coupling, I find Mr. Moravec more successful with the Belgian composer. The *Prélude, choral et fugue* is given a broad sonorous reading which impressively captures the cathedral-like grandeur of that work. Less warm in concept than Richter's superb version (its only competitor in the present catalogue), Moravec's performance is, in its own way, equally valid and very much better-recorded. The two Chopin favorites get extremely personal interpretations. I confess to finding Moravec's playing here a bit too sharp-edged and unflowing for this basically romantic music. It is, in fact, rather too "detail" conscious. Even so, one cannot help being impressed by the regal security of this artist's digital articulation and by the disciplined way in which he clarifies all the inner voices. The use of rubato is extremely resourceful if not constantly convincing (some of the hushed passages all but come to a dead halt), and the basic continuity is maintained despite some wayward tempos.

Altogether, Mr. Moravec's artistry is of a kind not frequently encountered. At its least convincing, it is intriguing; at its best, it is magnificent. I await his debut in this country with immense interest.

Technically, these 45-rpm discs are very well made, but since surface noise is negligible and volume level extremely low, one runs the risk of exposure to bothersome amplifier hum and turntable rumble. I myself would prefer a conventional LP disc with wider grooving and higher volume output. The packaging of these records is superb, incidentally; the program notes are explicit, thorough, and literate.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*
†Mozart: *Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in C minor, K. 457*

Ivan Moravec, piano.
• • CONNOISSEUR CS 562. 12-in. 45-rpm SD. $6.95.

CHOPIN: *Ballade No. 3, in A flat, Op. 47; Scherzo No. 1, in B minor, Op. 23*
†Franck: *Prélude, choral et fugue*

Ivan Moravec, piano.
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CLASSICAL

BACH: *Concertos: for Flute, Violin, Harpsichord, and Strings, in A minor, S. 1044; for Violin, Oboe, and Strings, in D minor, S. 1060; Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, in G, S. 1048*

Soloists; I Musici.
• PHILIPS 500008. LP. $4.98.
• • PHILIPS 900008. SD. $5.98.

This performance of the triple concerto, a fine work that deserves to be better known than it is, compares favorably with the Archive, the best of the four versions available before the present one appeared. The soloists here are all able, and the tempos seem good, although I prefer Archive's more animated pace in the *Adagio ma non tanto*. For some reason the Musici add a cello to the harpsichord's bass line in this movement, giving it a different coloration and character. The sound of the Philips is brighter, that of the Archive mellower. The D minor Concerto is still another attempt to restore the original that is thought to have been the basis for what we know as the Concerto for Two Harpsichords, in C minor. It is transcribed by Franz Giegling, who, like his predecessors, generally allots the right-hand part of Harpsichord I to the violin and the same part of Harpsichord II to the oboe. The result is quite plausible, and the only criticism I have here is that the absence of a harpsichord in the slow movement is felt. The *Brandenburg* receives an energetic performance, marred only by heavy accents on the first beat of each measure towards the end of the first movement.
N.B.

BACH: *Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1: Preludes and Fugues 1-8*

Glenn Gould, piano.
• COLUMBIA ML 5808. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6408. SD. $5.98.

Glenn Gould has been very much in the public eye lately. The television audience has been treated to some of his performances, and the celebrated case of Gould vs. Bernstein (or Gould vs. Brahms) is still a vivid memory. To judge by comments I have heard and by the newspaper reports, the public eye has reacted as to a cinder. The consensus seems to be that some pianists should be heard and not seen, at least not close up. Records are, of course, another matter, and may be the best way to receive what Mr. Gould has to offer. While I have found some of his recordings considerably inferior to others, I am one of those who believe that by and large he has a good deal to offer. There are in the present disc some things I find hard to accept, but Gould makes me aware, as few other pianists do, that everything he does is the result of long and painstaking study whose sole aim is to expose the composer's thought as faithfully as possible. It is obvious that every note is presented with precisely the weight, and with precisely the relationship to every other note in the piece, that Gould thinks it

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should have. Since he is a gifted and penetrating musician, some of these works, such as the C sharp minor Prelude and Fugue and the D minor Prelude, come off beautifully.

There are some interestingly individual ideas here, too. In the D major Fugue, for example, Gould differentiates between the two pairs of dotted eighths and sixteenths by holding the first eighth longer than the second. On the other hand, the first part of the C minor Prelude sounds to me like a finger exercise, although the second part is played with imagination. The phrasing chosen in the C major Prelude or the D minor Fugue or the E flat major Prelude will appeal to some more than to others. The great E flat minor Prelude is shorn of any trace of romantic sentimentality; the brevity of the half-note chords here is probably justifiable, but one wonders why a few chords are arpeggiated downwards. And so it goes.

The playing—and recording—throughout is of an extraordinary clarity (there is practically no pedal) and technically faultless. You may disagree with some of Gould's ideas, but you won't be bored. This is the first disc in a series that will comprise the entire *Well-Tempered Clavier*. It is to be hoped that in the forthcoming recordings the Columbia engineers will expunge Mr. Gould's singing, here occasionally faintly audible, as ruthlessly as they would any other extraneous noise. A good pianist should be heard, to be sure, but as a pianist. N.B.

BARBER: *Toccata Festiva, Op. 36*—
See Poulenc: *Concerto for Organ, Strings, and Timpani, in G minor.*

BARTOK: *Divertimento for Strings*
†Vivaldi: *Concerti grossi, Op. 3: No. 10, in B minor; No. 11, in D minor*

Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai, cond.
• LONDON CM 9332. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6332. SD. $5.98.

BARTOK: *Divertimento for Strings; Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*

Richard Burgin, violin; Boston Chamber Ensemble, Harold Farberman, cond. (in the Divertimento). Ralph Votapek, Luise Vosgerchian, pianos; Everett Firth, Arthur Press, percussion (in the Sonata).
• CAMBRIDGE LRM 803. LP. $4.98.
• • CAMBRIDGE CRS 1803. SD. $5.98.

Bartók from East and West, including a fine Russian performance of the Divertimento as well as an excellent and much needed stereo recording from Boston of the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion.

The music of Bartók, now widely performed in the Soviet Union, has become a channel through which modern Western ideas and techniques are entering the Soviet Union. It is fascinating to see how, in spite of the pressures of official taste, Soviet artistic ideas are nevertheless developing along the lines of what is happening or has happened in the West. Even the very existence of a crack chamber ensemble is good evidence of changing tastes. The Moscow Chamber Orchestra is a first-class organization which combines rich Russian string tone with a precisely articulated style of great clarity, polish, and expressivity. Their style is still distinctive, and even, one might say, genuinely Russian, but the lush, old-fashioned, soulful Russian style is replaced here by a musical approach that has close affinities with modern Western chamber style. The very idea of a chamber ensemble of this kind lies essentially outside of the "Romantic" tradition and all of its "Socialist-realist" transformations. The repertory for a group like this must be drawn largely from the centuries preceding and following the nineteenth. Even more important, the medium itself suggests an anti-Romantic approach, replacing blended, balanced orchestral sound with chamber music individuality and clarity, harmonic and rhythmic ambiguity with contrapuntal precision, grand gesture with meaningful detail, rhetoric with a more thoughtful sense of structure and poetic expression.

These characteristics are clearest in the Bartók but they also apply to the Vivaldi concertos, both of which are from *L'Estro armonico*. The sensitivity to baroque style is considerable. It is true that the string tone (aided and abetted by the virtuoso London engineers) is round and fat; it is also true that the continuo is sparingly used and, when it does appear, is almost submerged beneath the weight of the gorgeous string sound. But it is hardly a foregone conclusion that a good baroque style implies a desiccated instrumental tone. The really important point here is that the richness and beauty of tone are put at the service of strong, clear lines and shapes.

The performance of the Bartók Divertimento must rank as the best in the catalogue, a remarkable example of a completely conscientious reading that sacrifices nothing in the way of expressivity. Every dynamic, every balance, every shading is beautifully adjusted and a whole range of warm and varied colors, inflections, and articulations are brought to bear on the realization of a precise conception. The composer's ideas are understood and projected both literally and below the surface as well. Precision and fidelity are achieved, not mechanically, but with a sense both of flexible detail and of big line. While it is certainly true that the work is not exactly "far out" by modern Western standards, its artistic questions and answers are still essentially contemporary. The Soviet musicians rise magnificently to these stylistic, intellectual, and poetic challenges.

By comparison, Mr. Farberman's performance is a good deal more easygoing. It is relaxed and it swings but it is also much less precise. It tends to emphasize the lyric flow of the music rather than its tensions and dramatic juxtapositions. The Russians get a much wider play of colors ranging from extreme richness to a vibratoless, white, *misterioso* sound. The various kinds of attacks, articulations, and special colors are emphasized as are the contrasts between solos and tuttis with the result that everything emerges in fine, bold, expressive relief. All of this is enhanced by London's recorded sound, an advantage further increased by the fact that the Cambridge version suffers from some bad tape splicing.

Mr. Farberman's performance of the Divertimento would certainly have made a much greater impression if the Russian competition hadn't arrived at the same moment. As it is, it has many attractive things, including Richard Burgin's fine solo violin playing. But the unique value of the record is to be found on the other side: the first stereo recording of the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion. Mr. Farberman is a percussionist in the Boston Symphony and a composer in his own right, and one has the impression here of enormous sympathy with the idiom and character of the work. The four performers are all fine musicians and they produce a handsome and vital reading that conveys the strength and the originality of this striking contemporary masterpiece. E.S.

BEETHOVEN: *Overtures: Leonore No. 1, Op. 138; No. 2, Op. 72a; No. 3, Op. 72a; Fidelio, Op. 72*

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond.
• LONDON CM 9328. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6328. SD. $5.98.

A few quibbles are possible about details in these performances, but on the whole they are capsule dramas set forth with a confident hand. Certainly they are the best Beethoven that Maazel has given us so far, and the orchestra is a great one. Unfortunately, it has been recorded with excessive resonance, which blurs detail and casts a smear of violin sound over ensemble details that ought to register clearly. Since no other stereo disc duplicates this repertory, one must accept the present edition with its misapplication of engineering techniques best kept in the pop music field —or remain with the fine old Klemperer monophonic edition. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano*

No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"); No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"); No. 26, in E flat, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux").

Artur Rubinstein, piano.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2654. LP. $4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2654. SD. $5.98.

These performances are very—well, very Rubinstein. The notes hit a new pinnacle for press agentry by saying, "If there is but one god in piano music —Beethoven—his prophet is Rubinstein." To which, I fear, there is no fit reply but the cockney, "Aw, come off of it, guv'nor." Rubinstein is a remarkable artist, but if he is to be regarded as a high priest of Beethoven, it is time he ceased concentrating on the popular "sonatas with names" from the composer's early and middle periods and showed us how he stacks up with his pianistic rivals in the *Hammerklavier* and the last sonatas as well as the *Diabelli Variations*.

The three performances recorded here abound in romantic mannerisms and self-conscious virtuoso strokes, elements thrilling to Rubinstein's vast public but not the ideal representation of Beethoven's piano writing. If we survey the ranks of the Beethoven pianists, it is not difficult to find more penetrating and rewarding statements of this music. For a start, there are the Serkin versions of the *Moonlight* and *Pathétique* and Foldes' recent edition of *Les Adieux*. In all three instances one will find a restraint, a tighter control of line, and an awareness of the composer's idea of rhythm and phrasing which are missing in the Rubinstein versions.

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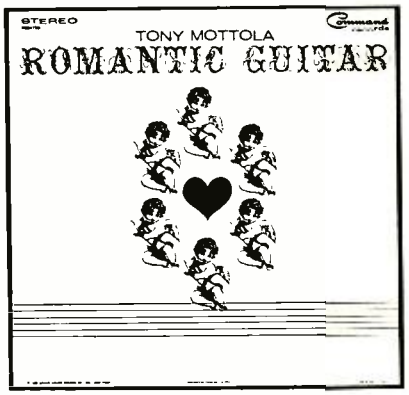

Songs include: Tendery, If Ever I would Leave You, Mitzi, Always and Always, Alone Together, Speak Low, I Got It Bad, Fly Me To The Moon, Misty, plus 3 more.

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The obvious focus of this set is the *Moonlight*. (The other sonatas Rubinstein has recorded before.) The first movement could serve as the paradigm of the approach which makes it a lush nocturne; from there on it's all fireworks. If it's the Rubinstein manner you want, it is here in abundance and well recorded—though with little difference between mono and stereo. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata")*
†Mozart: *Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in C minor, K. 457*

Ivan Moravec.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 74.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 5, in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"); No. 7, in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2*

David Oistrakh, violin; Lev Oborin, piano.
• PHILIPS PHM 500030. LP. $4.98.
• • PHILIPS PHS 900030. SD. $5.98.

This is one of the best-recorded likenesses of the Oistrakh violin we have had. The tone flows with a silken elegance that conceals technical refinements which a more ostentatious violinist would exploit. Oistrakh's musicianship is well matched by Oborin, whose contribution is as important to the success of these performances as those of his better-known colleague. And the engineers are not to be slighted, for balances are excellent in both forms, and the presence of the performers is forceful and cleanly defined.

The statement of Op. 30, No. 2 here is competitive with any we have, although slightly lacking in the drama of the Schneiderhan-Seemann version. In the Op. 24, Oistrakh excels in the slow movement but lacks the vitality which his rivals on DGG bring to their miraculous affirmation of the cantilena heralding rebirth. This is a master's performance, nonetheless, projecting a tranquil and romantic spring song with the touch of a poet.

Obviously, European record makers have not agreed on the proper stereo positioning for a violinist and pianist. Philips' Oistrakh is on the left, DGG's Schneiderhan on the right. Mono puts both in the center, and unless you want a wide stereo spread, this perspective struck me as fully satisfactory. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; Overtures: Egmont, Op. 84; Zur Weihe des Hauses, Op. 124*

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
• MERCURY MR 50317. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90317. SD. $5.98.

The interpretative perimeters of this score were defined for record collectors by the old Toscanini and Furtwängler editions: the one intense, hard-driving, and sweeping in a long curve to the climactic finale; the other slower, broadly phrased and deeply inflected, and proceeding by the cumulative force of statement to a memorable level of eloquence. The latter approach, now best heard in Furtwängler's DGG set, always has seemed to me most in accord with the nature of the work, but I know others disagree.

Among the dissenters, obviously, is Maestro Dorati, whose performance here is quite fast, very light, and propelled by an unrelenting force. Even the nominally slow movement marches briskly; the fast sections really move. There is more to this reading, however, than the usual quick brush to a familiar score. Much of the detail is treated in a fresh and even unorthodox fashion—for a start, the Adagio bar with the oboe cadenza in the opening movement. I question the length of the interpolated rest, but one cannot call it hackneyed. Despite the quick pace and the single side format, the repeat in the opening movement is observed.

Egmont gets a more orthodox but thoroughly effective performance, one that seems to justify the attention Dorati is receiving in Europe. The *Consecration* is less successful, partly because it is a work that requires faultless balances and here the winds are far too easily overpowered by the strings. Indeed, I suspect throughout this disc one hears "engineer's sound" rather than "conductor's sound." The violins get too much of the limelight, the inner voices too little. R.C.M.

BIBER: *Fifteen Sonatas and Passacaglia for Violin*

Sonya Monosoff, et al.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 73.

BIZET: *Jeux d'enfants, Op. 22*
†Brahms: *Waltzes, Op. 39: Nos. 1-6, 10-11, 14-15*
†Hindemith: *Sonata for Piano, Four Hands*

Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus, pianos.
• MUSIC GUILD 22. LP. $5.50.
• • MUSIC GUILD S 22. SD. $6.50.

Badura-Skoda and Demus give a delightful account of the Bizet work. Their playing has humor, buoyancy, and zest. They were obviously having fun making this record, and their enthusiasm is vividly communicated to the listener.

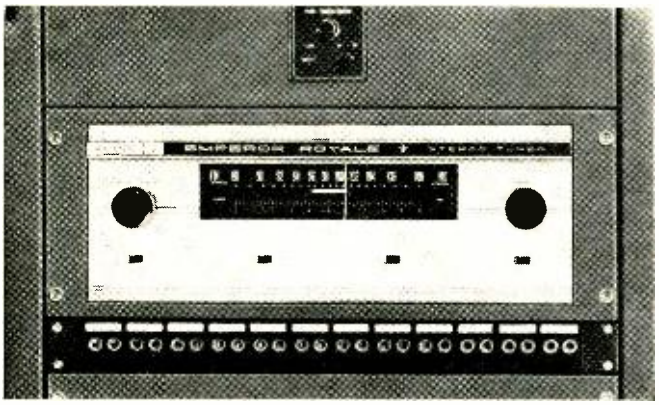
Some of the same tonal color and lyrical impressionism carry over into the rendition of the Hindemith. Although this graceful romanticism emphasizes new facets of this music, I do miss some of the monochromatic linearity and rhythmic tautness which Hindemith's occasionally cerebral style demands. But, with this reservation, the present interpretation has many undeniably attractive features.

Not so with the Brahms. The waltzes are given coy, languid readings with all sorts of fussy mannerisms and excessive use of portamento. This is essentially hearty music and as such requires more elemental vigor. These artists are basically lyricists, and their sympathies apparently lie outside of this musical orbit.

The recording, apparently made in a very live studio, is a shade diffuse in tone, although pleasant to the ear. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Hungarian Dances: Nos. 1, 3-6, 10*—See Schubert: *Symphony No. 4, in C minor ("Tragic").*

IDENTICAL TWINS



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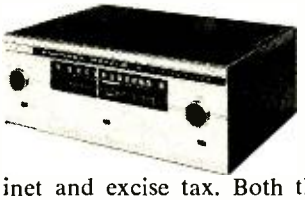
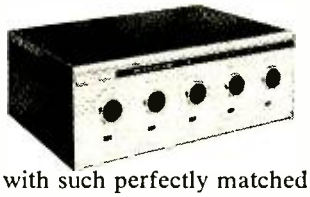


For those who want to enjoy exceptionally good stereophonic sound at a savings, Altec provides the 315A "Empress Royale" FM tuner at only $256.00 including cabinet and excise tax. Both the 314A and 315A come with decorative control panels in satin gold.



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CIRCLE 5 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BRAHMS: *Piano Works*

Ballades (4), Op. 10; Intermezzos (3), Op. 117; Rhapsodies (2), Op. 79; Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in F minor, Op. 5; Stücke (6), Op. 118; Variations on a Theme by Schumann, Op. 9; Variations on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24; Waltzes, Op. 39—on VBX 430. *Scherzo, Op. 4; Sonatas for Piano: No. 1, in C, Op. 1; No. 2, in F sharp minor, Op. 2; Phantasien, Op. 116; Stücke (8), Op. 76; Stücke (4), Op. 119; Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 21, Nos. 1, 2; Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35 (Books I, II)*—on VBX 431.

Walter Klien, piano.
• Vox VBX 430/31. Six LP. $9.98 each album.

These two sets constitute the first complete recording of the Brahms music for keyboard solo, and it is indeed singular good fortune that the project was put in the assured and sensitive hands of Walter Klien. The Austrian pianist gives a really impressive account of himself on these discs, offering performances which are strong, poetic, technically rock-steady, and yet delicate and flexible when necessary. Klien is a very modern player in that the architectural and intellectual qualities of the writing are stressed with relative objectivity and leanness, but his interpretation springs from the same soil that produced such notable exponents of the literature as Edwin Fischer and Artur Schnabel. In other words, his playing is scholarly and rugged, expansively rhetorical, and directs the listeners' attention to the music itself rather than to the performer.

Klien is equally at home with the large and small forms. He achieves a lovely limpidity of texture and engaging charm in many of the smaller pieces (the B minor Capriccio from Op. 76 is especially fleet and cleanly articulated), but holds the bigger works together impressively well. The three early Sonatas (which can so easily ramble) are delivered with almost crushing impact and a real sense of bravura, while the *Paganini Variations* are stated with rhythmic firmness of outline (Klien's basic tempo is a rather broad one) and welcome emphasis on the poetical rather than the pyrotechnical content. The *Handel* set, on the other hand, could have been invested with a bit more poetry. Klien's interpretation does tie up more loose ends than any other rendition I have heard, but some of the subtlety and introspection of the writing are lost in the process. Even so, it is exhilarating to hear the work "hurled" at you, and Klien's hard-driving statement is by no means devoid of sentiment.

Needless to say, certain of these works can be heard to more persuasive effect on other recordings (Rubinstein's of the F minor Sonata, for example, has a bit more flexibility and tonal subtlety), but the totality of Klien's work is amazingly convincing. The recording (mono only) is satisfactory, though slightly clangy, and the labeling—as in many Vox boxes—leaves something to be desired. I searched in vain for the performances of six of the Organ Preludes, Op. 122, which were supposedly contained in Vol. 2, while the Romance in F, Op. 118, No. 5 and the Intermezzo in E flat minor, Op. 118, No. 6 (occupying places on Sides 3 and 4, respectively, in VBX 430) were both labeled as being Op. 118, No. 5 on the review copy. But the quality of the performances and the low price of the albums more than offset these minor defects. In sum, enthusiastically recommended. H.G.

BRAHMS: *Waltzes, Op. 39: Nos. 1-6, 10-11, 14-15*—See Bizet: *Jeux d'enfants, Op. 22.*

BRUCH: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26*
†Mozart: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 4, in D, K. 218*

Jascha Heifetz, violin; New Symphony Orchestra of London, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2652. LP. $4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2652. SD. $5.98.

The present performance of the Bruch G minor is one of the most dazzling examples of incandescent fiddling that I have ever heard. While Heifetz's older recording of the work ranked with the best in this violinist's discography, this remake far surpasses it in every way. A new repose and flexibility in his playing simply enhance the diamond-cutter brilliance of his attack. And such perfect bow control and intonation. Again, the new purity and simplicity of his phrasing, especially in the slow movement, is a welcome feature of the interpretation.

Similarly, the Mozart also displays a reconsidered interpretative outlook. Heifetz appears to have responded to criticism (his own criticism and musical conscience, above all) and modified his erstwhile typical mannerisms of inflection. In the new reading every note is attacked squarely "on pitch" rather than from slightly above or below, and the throbbing vibrato is happily eliminated completely. And once again, the technical brilliance associated with Heifetz for over fifty years remains. The only jarring note in either of these performances is the slightly anachronistic cadenzas (his own) which the violinist uses for the Mozart.

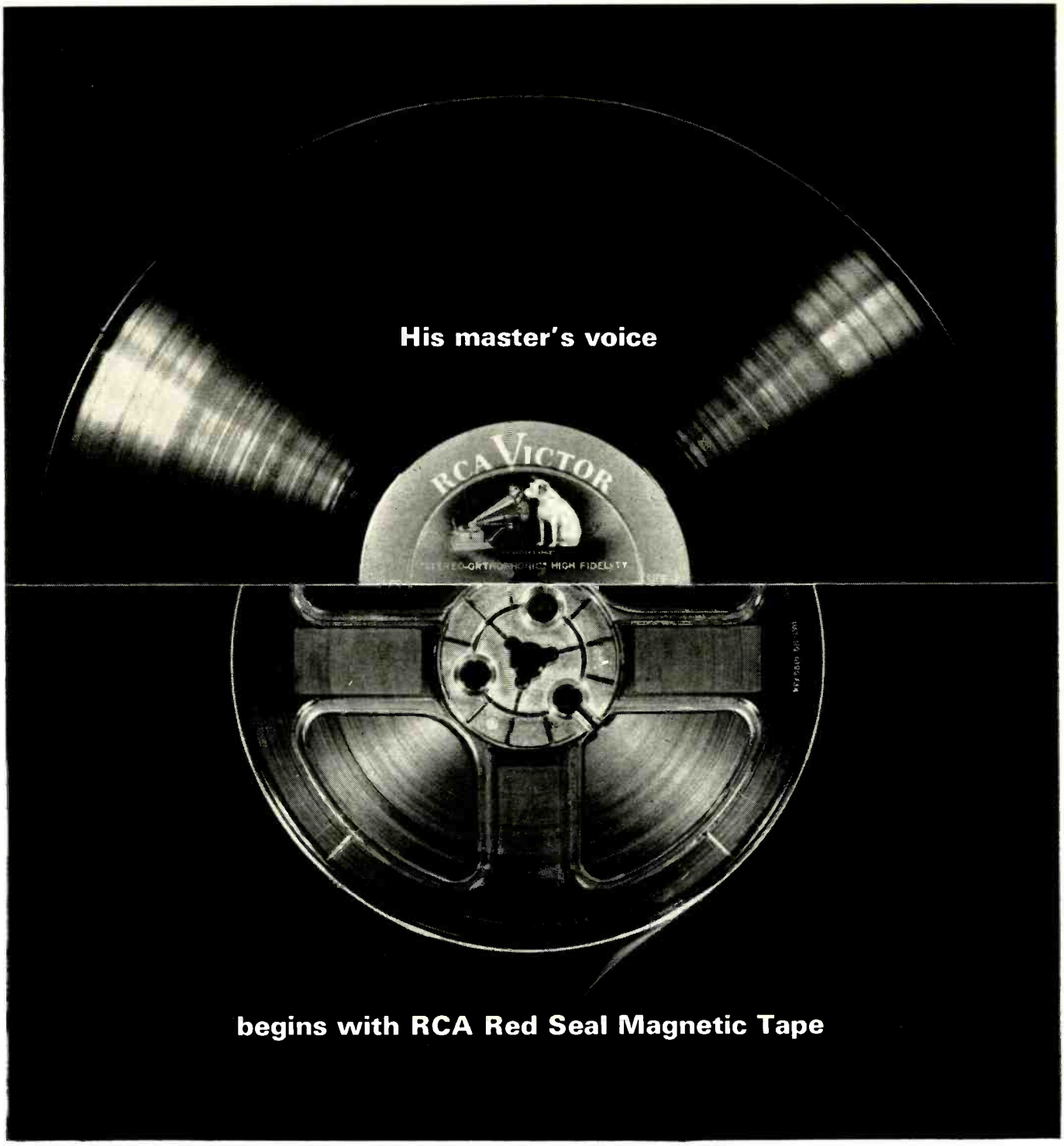
Sargent leads beautifully sympathetic accompaniments, keeping the sonorities down in the Mozart (he cuts the complement of strings) but allowing the climaxes of the Bruch to surge ahead with fiery intensity. The orchestral playing throughout has exquisite finish.

Victor's sound is ideal, possessing warmth and clarity in equal measure. A startling amount of instrumental detail emerges—and in perfect proportion to the strand of sound which is the solo violin. The stereo edition enhances the airy clarity evident in the monophonic pressing. A magnificent record. H.G.

BYRD: *Mass for Five Voices; Great Service: Magnificat and Nunc dimittis; Ave verum corpus*

Choir of King's College, Cambridge, David Willcocks, cond.
• LONDON 5725. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON OS 25725. SD. $5.98.

These are fine-spun, sensitive performances. That each part in these polyphonic works has a life of its own is clearly brought out in this recording, even though there is sometimes a tendency for the treble voices to predominate. The treatment of rhythm, tempo, and dynamics is flexible. Especially in the Mass, the change of texture when one or two parts drop out is more marked than in any other recording of that work. This



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CIRCLE 75 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

makes the five-part passages even richer than usual. The sections from the Great Service show that Byrd could write just as beautifully for the Anglican rite as for the Catholic. The sound of the chorus is lovely, and except for the occasional overprominence of the soprano line, well balanced; the intonation is almost always secure. I found that I had to turn up the volume somewhat higher than usual for the best effect. N.B.

CHOPIN: *Ballade No. 3, in A flat, Op. 47; Scherzo No. 1, in B minor, Op. 23*
†Franck: *Prélude, choral et fugue*

Ivan Moravec.

For a feature review including this recording, see page 74.

CHOPIN: *Waltzes* (complete)

Ingrid Haebler, piano.
• Vox PL 11970. LP. $4.98.

This is one of Miss Haebler's finest efforts to date. She delivers these pieces with commendable bravura, admirably straightforward (but by no means metronomic) rhythm, and fine vigor. Hers is a rosy, "out-of-doors" type of Chopin playing, perfectly idiomatic and romantically satisfying, never pretentious or labored. Perhaps her pianism lacks the incandescence and classical purity of such players as Lipatti and Werner Haas (both of whom have made outstanding recordings of the Waltzes), but I can well imagine that many people may prefer her tone, which adheres to the clinging, conventional sound usually associated with Chopin's music. Furthermore, her disc includes (as does the earlier—and excellent—Vox release by Novaes) the three lovely posthumous Waltzes.

The sound is a trifle clattery and reverberant, but never so much so that one's listening pleasure is seriously diminished. H.G.

DUBOIS: *The Seven Last Words of Christ*

Winifred Dettore, soprano; Wayne Conner, tenor; Marshall Heinbaugh, baritone; Earl Ness, organ; Philadelphia Oratorio Choir, Earl Ness, cond.
• RITTENHOUSE RM 1002. LP. $4.98.
• • RITTENHOUSE RS 1002. SD. $5.98.

Théodore Dubois's *Seven Last Words* is a reverent work but to my ears musically rather uninteresting. Ness and his excellent forces do their utmost to make it live. The three oratorio soloists are first-rate, the choir well trained, and Ness himself directs and plays the organ imaginatively. Although the experiment of having the soloists sing at varying distances from the microphone for dramatic effect does not always come off very well, there is a great deal of depth, range, and clarity in the recorded sound. Sung in English, as is customary in this country, this is certainly one of the best available recorded versions. P.A.

DURUFLE: *Requiem, Op. 9*

Hélène Bouvier, mezzo; Xavier Depraz, baritone; Marie-Madeleine Duruflé-Chevalier, organ; Philippe Caillard and Stéphanie Caillat Chorales; Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux, Maurice Duruflé, cond.
• EPIC LC 3856. LP. $4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1256. SD. $5.98.

Maurice Duruflé, renowned contemporary French organist and composer, completed his Requiem in 1947. The thematic material is based almost entirely on the Gregorian chant in the *Mass for the Dead*, around which Duruflé has woven an interesting choral and orchestral fabric, yet despite its thematic sources the music is not archaic. Stylistically, it is quite French. Duruflé's chief influence has been the Requiem of Gabriel Fauré, and like that work this music is more comforting than terrifying. Although there are a few passages where Duruflé writes more dramatically than Fauré, his Requiem is for the most part beautifully placid. The parallel with Fauré extends to details, since the present work is divided into the same sections, and soloists are used in the same places.

With the composer conducting in his own church, Saint-Etienne-du-Mont in Paris, one would naturally expect the performance to be authoritative. But it is far more than that; it is deeply moving. The two vocal soloists may not be outstanding, but the combined choirs are superbly disciplined and sing with exceptionally clear diction.

It takes only a moment of listening to realize why this, the first recording of the Requiem, was awarded a Grand Prix du Disque. The clarity, balance, and naturalness of the sound are apparent from the very outset, while in stereo each section of the choir is effectively pinpointed. Put Duruflé's work down as an important addition to the list of distinguished settings of the Requiem. And put this recording down as a fine example of the art of interpretation and reproduction. P.A.

FRANCK: *Prélude, choral et fugue*— See Chopin: *Ballade No. 3, in A flat, Op. 47; Scherzo No. 1, in B minor, Op. 23.*

FRESCOBALDI: *Music for Harpsichord*
†Picchi: *Balli d'arpicordo*

Rafael Puyana, harpsichord.
• MERCURY MR 50259. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90259. SD. $5.98.

Having got off to an excellent start with his first disc (reviewed here last December), Puyana confirms the impression he made there with the present release. The Frescobaldi pieces include the fine variations on the airs called *La Frescobalda* and *Ruggiero*, as well as a nicely varied group of galliards neatly rounded off by the repetition of the first one at the end. Little is known about Giovanni Picchi except that he was active as an organist in Venice early in the seventeenth century. His *Dances for Harpsichord*, here presented complete, reveal him as a composer of considerable skill and invention. The *Pass'e mezzo* has some impressive variations, the *Todesca* is charming, and the *Ballo alla polacha* has nobility, but the music as a whole seems to have less character and substance than the works by Picchi's contemporary and present disc mate. Puyana is nevertheless to be commended for venturing off the beaten path, and especially for the sensitiveness with which he uses the resources of his instrument. Very good sound. N.B.

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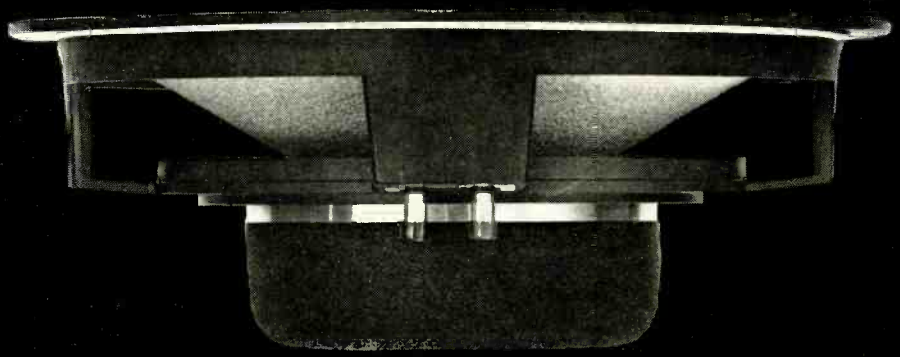

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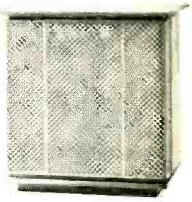

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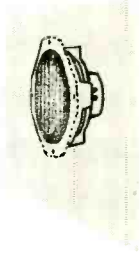

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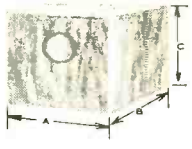

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CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HANDEL: *Trio Sonatas, Op. 2: No. 8, in G minor; No. 5, in G; Sonata for Oboe and Harpsichord, in C minor, Op. 1, No. 8; Sonata for Recorder and Harpsichord, in B flat*

Baroque Trio of Montreal.
• VOX PL 930. LP. $4.98.
• • VOX STPL 500930. SD. $4.98.

All of these works are short and well made, with songlike or dancelike melodies and Handel's usual transparent textures. The two trio sonatas are performed here by flute, oboe, and harpsichord. The able Trio—Mario Duschenes, flute and recorder; Melvin Berman, oboe; Kelsey Jones, harpsichord—plays flexibly and with unanimity, and the sound is well balanced and lifelike. N.B.

HAYDN: *Mass No. 9, in D minor ("Nelson")*

Sylvia Stahlman, soprano; Helen Watts, contralto; Wilfred Brown, tenor; Tom Krause, bass; Choir of King's College, Cambridge; London Symphony Orchestra, David Willcocks, cond.
• LONDON 5731. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON OS 25731. SD. $5.98.

Until you know the late Haydn Masses you really do not know the composer. Always surprising, his work in the years 1796–1802 reveals powers which are not fully evident even in the 107 symphonies he had produced earlier. The *Nelson* Mass, surely, belongs in the company with Bach's Mass in B minor, the Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*, or the Verdi Requiem as a score of ever growing splendor, drama, and magnificence. Here, virtually for the first time, is a chance to hear it. This is the stereo debut of the music, and the text used is the authentic original of the composer as edited by H. C. Robbins Landon. (The old Haydn Society set, which introduced the *Nelson* Mass to many listeners, was based on extremely corrupt material.)

The performance seems to me a remarkable effort to restore a lost tradition. The high baroque trumpet parts are well realized, and counterbalanced by the roll and thunder of the drums. There is no woodwind in the orchestra, but the stronger voice of the organ is used with strings for the accompaniment. The brilliance of the instrumental parts, moreover, is matched by the vocal writing, and you can debate for yourself whether it is the high trumpet or the high soprano of Miss Stahlman that wins the greatest honors. (I tip my hat to the lady.) Her colleagues have nothing quite so spectacular to do, but they make up a strong solo quartet, while the chorus is one of the finest in the world. (I'm an old Cambridge man, and prejudiced, but my college was Trinity so I'm not *that* prejudiced!) Honors go as well to the conductor, who gives the work the thrust and vitality it requires.

I would be happier, however, if the organ, organist, and place of recording were identified. From the internal evidence I would surmise that the tapes were made in the chapel at Cambridge, for the acoustics are those of soaring gothic vaults, and in that case the organ is presumably the much rebuilt Elizabethan instrument which adorns the loft of that noble edifice.

In any case, the sound is very good with just the right atmosphere of ecclesiastical precincts. R.C.M.

HINDEMITH: *Sonata for Piano, Four Hands*—See Bizet: *Jeux d'enfants, Op. 22.*

KEYES: *Music for Monday Evenings*
—See Kodály: *Symphony.*

KODALY: *Symphony*
†Keyes: *Music for Monday Evenings*

Louisville Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.
• LOUISVILLE LOU 631. LP. $7.95. (Available on special order only, from 830 S. Fourth St., Louisville, Ky.)

For a composer of world celebrity to write his first symphony at the age of seventy-nine is at least unusual and probably unprecedented; Kodály's symphony, however, is not much different from his other orchestral works in spirit and style. In other words it is impeccably made, in a generally conservative idiom, full of good tunes, and gently suffused with Hungarian folk color. It is the kind of thing one would expect to find recorded by one of the virtuoso conductors, such as George Szell, who introduced it to this country last year, a few months after its completion. Whitney is not altogether happy with it, but gets a considerable richness out of its slow movement.

The dance suite on the other side, by the young composer Nelson Keyes, was written for a high school orchestra which meets on Monday nights, and that is precisely what it sounds like. A.F.

LEHAR: *Die lustige Witwe*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), Hanna Glawari; Hanny Steffek (s), Valencienne; Nicolai Gedda (t), Camille; Kurt Equiluz (t), Cascada; Hans Strohbauer (t), St. Brioche; Eberhard Wächter (b), Danilo; Josef Knapp (b), Baron Zeta; Franz Böheim (comic), Njegus. Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Lovro von Matacic, cond.
• ANGEL 3630 B/L. Two LP. $9.96.
• • ANGEL S 3630 B/L. Two SD. $11.96.

It has been a long time since I've listened to Angel's previous recording of *The Merry Widow* (now nearly a decade old), but it seems to me that it possessed more lilt and life than the new effort. Perhaps we have just grown accustomed to the very high standard that Angel has set for its operetta recordings.

This performance is very well sung and played. Schwarzkopf's handling of her exquisite soprano has grown a shade careful for this part, and there are now in evidence one or two sharp (in quality, not pitch) top notes, as well as a very poor trill, but by and large, she still sings the music irreproachably and speaks her lines with point and sophistication. Her "Vilja Song" is quite representative of her work—round-toned, poised, extremely accurate, but not altogether winning; she is a bit too much the singer, not quite enough the "personality." Steffek's *"Ich bin eine anständ'ge Frau"* does not make much effect, partly because she does not coax the words enough, partly because she is not recorded very close-to. She does well in the "Pavilion Duet," though.

Wächter is fine so long as he is singing along in an easy, lyric way—he is remarkably relaxed in the high (for a baritone) tessitura. He goes overboard, though, with *"O Vaterland,"* forgetting

the rather pleasant music entirely in favor of some exceedingly precious, self-indulgent acting. Once he settles down, he sings beautifully. Gedda is just about perfect in Camille's music—his tenor has certainly gained in ring and color since his early recordings, even if it seems to have lost a trace of the pure lyric ease it used to have. His vocalism here is quite showy, in the best sense. The smaller roles are all adequately, if not memorably, performed.

Von Matacic gets sharp execution from the Philharmonia, but there are times when his heart doesn't seem in it—the opening of Act II, for instance (which is admittedly pretty awful stuff, enjoyable only in the framework of a firmly tongue-in-cheek staging). On the whole I would counsel investigation of the London set: Gueden's Hanna has more fire and abandon than Schwarzkopf's, and the conductor, Robert Stolz, has the sort of touch that often eludes Von Matacic—on *that* set, the "Vilja Song" has a touch of magic. Emmy Loose also characterizes Valencienne with more piquancy than Steffek, though London's men (Per Grunden and Waldemar Kmentt) are neither as good vocally nor as sharply differentiated as Wächter and Gedda.

Angel's sound is, by current standards, middlin' good—perfectly listenable, but nothing exciting. The mono set is not inferior in any important way to the stereo. Complete text and translation provided. C.L.O.

LISZT: *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 2*
—See Schubert: *Symphony No. 4, in C minor ("Tragic").*

MILHAUD: *Les Choéphores*

Vera Zorina, narrator; Virginia Babikian, soprano; Irene Jordan, mezzo; McHenry Boatwright, bass. Schola Cantorum of New York; New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5796. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6396. SD. $5.98.

Les Choéphores—The Libation Bearers of Aeschuylus, translated into French by Paul Claudel—provided Milhaud with the opportunity to compose one of his most important scores. The polytonal choruses which he spread throughout the work were astonishing enough for their period (the music was written in 1919) but the various numbers for an exactly notated speaking voice, speaking chorus, and percussion were something absolutely sensational. They still are. The atmosphere of blood, hate, revenge, and general doom achieved in this violent music remains unparalleled, and an up-to-date recording was long overdue. The chorus sings superbly, the orchestra plays extremely well, Zorina is an admirable recitant; the singing soloists must all have had bad colds that day. A.F.

MONTEVERDI: *Madrigali guerrieri*

Charles Bressler, Herbert Handt, tenors; Chester Watson, bass; Albert Fuller, harpsichord; Aeterna Chamber Orchestra, Frederic Waldman, cond.
• DECCA DL 9417. LP. $4.98.
• • DECCA DL 79417. SD. $5.98.

These fifteen pieces, depicting the thoughts of a soldier concerning love and war, vary from short ones of a few lines to an entire miniature cantata. They

range from solo monodies with continuo accompaniment to many-voiced works with strings. Most of them are in the intense and dramatic style that Monteverdi was one of the first—if not the first—to introduce into music. Especially striking, to me, are the cantata-like *Altri canti d'amor*, in which Watson does some particularly effective singing, and *Hor ch'el ciel*, with its mysterious opening and unusually expressive harmonies. Mr. Waldman's forces perform with verve and a wide range of dynamics. They spin out long melodies beautifully, and convey the excitement of the more rhythmic passages. The sound is excellent in both versions. N.B.

MOZART: *Arias: Don Giovanni: Madamina, il catalogo e questo. Il Flauto magico: Qui sdegno non s'accende. Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai. Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K. 513*—See Rossini: *Arias.*

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 26, in D, K. 537 ("Coronation"); No. 27, in B flat, K. 595*

Robert Casadesus, piano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5803. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6403. SD. $5.98.

The performance of the D major Concerto sounds to me exactly like that by the same forces on Columbia's ML 4901. The only difference I could hear is that the rather loud beginning of the finale has been toned down. From the standpoint of both performance and recording, it remains the best available in the domestic catalogues. Casadesus' elegant and polished playing, avoiding sentimentality even in the easily sentimentalized Larghetto, and Szell's deft handling of the orchestra combine to make this a highly enjoyable reading. As for the great B flat major Concerto, Casadesus is here favored with much better sound than in his older version with Barbirolli and the New York Philharmonic. The result is a reading that is superior to all the others I know that are now available (I haven't heard the Backhaus), except the Serkin. I find Serkin's Larghetto more poetic, but prospective purchasers would do well to compare both versions before deciding. N.B.

MOZART: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 4, in D, K. 418*—See Bruch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, in G minor, Op. 26.*

MOZART: *Sonata for Piano, No. 14, in C minor, K. 457*—See Beethoven: *Sonata for Piano, No. 23, in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata").*

PICCHI: *Balli d'arpicordo*—See Frescobaldi: *Music for Harpsichord.*

POULENC: *Concerto for Organ, Strings, and Timpani, in G minor*
†Barber: *Toccata Festiva, Op. 36*
†Strauss, Richard: *Festival Prelude for Organ and Orchestra, Op. 61*

E. Power Biggs, organ; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (in the Poulenc and Barber); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. (in the Strauss).
• COLUMBIA ML 5798. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6398. SD. $5.98.

This record provides a good sample of the sound of the new Aeolian-Skinner organ in the Philadelphia Academy of Music as well as (not surprisingly) another demonstration of Mr. Biggs's skills.

The Philadelphia organ is apparently somewhat similar to the one just completed at Lincoln Center. If anything, it seems to be a somewhat more attractive instrument, an effect that is possibly due more to hall acoustics than to differences between the instruments themselves. In recording, at least, the Philadelphia instrument comes across with a handsome, vigorous sound that is beautifully voiced for elegant, clear, and contrasting lines and colors.

The Organ Concerto by the late Francis Poulenc is quite closely related to his Two-Piano Concerto. There are, however, some significant differences. The Organ Concerto takes itself quite seriously; its evocation of the past is not so much a collection of quotes and references but an actual evocation of an obscure but glorious era. The wit here is the result of benign good humor and the work is even —more or less—internally consistent.

Poulenc was a cultivated gentleman who heard and enjoyed a gread deal of pleasant music of no great import which he gracefully rescued from oblivion by transforming it and turning it to his own musical accounts. With a straight face the composer gave us here a concerto in the style of Viotti, or perhaps Méhul as transcribed by Saint-Saëns. There is now and then a Poulenc-style wrong note, but not very often. Yet the results have all the charm and *esprit* of typical Poulenc-erie. It is not very easy to explain exactly how all this is carried off so successfully. Part of the effect is certainly due to a marvelous naïveté; the naïveté of, say, a Matisse odalisque—that is, the most sophisticated naïveté in the world.

The contrast between the graceful, light touch of Poulenc and the heavy-handed Barber Toccata is striking. This latter composition was written for the occasion of the inauguration of the new Philadelphia organ and, in fact, it turns out to be just a little too occasional. This is not an impressive or an engaging work either in its ideas or in the way they are delivered. The performance is, however, noteworthy and—as in the Poulenc—Biggs, Ormandy, and the Philadelphia Orchestra produce an excellent collaboration. The orchestral sound is somewhat dull, possibly because of a tendency to favor the organ.

The Strauss work constitutes some very pompous filler. Originally written for the dedication of the Wiener Konzerthaus, this piece was used for a similar purpose during the opening week of Philharmonic Hall at Lincoln Center. The idea was to show off the new Aeolian-Skinner organ installed in that auditorium but, unfortunately, it was impossible to get the instrument ready in time. Mr. Biggs played on a borrowed electric organ instead, and it is this instrument that was used in the present recording. Perhaps it didn't matter very much since, in any case, Strauss did not really use the organ as a solo instrument here but as an adjunct to his enormous orchestra. The organ is there to add a note (or several hundred notes) of proper solemnity —an echo from more hallowed precincts to suggest a sacred blessing on a secular

enterprise. The work itself is, unfortunately, a terrible piece of bombast. The performance is properly grandiloquent.
E.S.

RACHMANINOFF: *Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 44; Chanson géorgienne, Op. 4, No. 4*

Netania Davrath, soprano (in *Chanson géorgienne*); Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 1094. LP. $4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2119. SD. $5.95.

This is the finest of Rachmaninoff's symphonies, and along with *Isle of the Dead*, the most successful of any of the composer's purely orchestral works. The material is cogent and its development stimulating without being cloyingly sweet or long-winded. There once was an RCA Victor reissue of a recording of the Third Symphony by the Philadelphia Orchestra as led by the composer, and Boult, Sargent, Ormandy, and Golovanov were responsible for later editions of the score. Only the Ormandy disc remains in the catalogue to challenge this newcomer.

In contrast to Ormandy, who exploits the opulent Philadelphia sonority to the hilt, Abravanel seems determined to keep the lines of the score as lean and astringent as possible. His tempos are on the fast side and, for the most part, well chosen. A lot of woodwind and brass detail intentionally submerged by Ormandy (who favors a more "generalized" approach) is brought to the fore in the Vanguard recording—which matches the orchestra's style with engineering that is clear, sharp, and highly complimentary to the wind, brass, and percussion sections. (The strings are a bit scrawny—probably a true facsimile of their actual sound. The ensemble's over-all work, I hasten to add, is highly skilled and thoroughly professional.) Unless one has an antipathy to the lush style of the Philadelphia Orchestra, however, the Ormandy must retain preference, for Abravanel's intelligent interpretation lacks some of that conductor's personal involvement and sheer flair for this type of music.

The *Chanson géorgienne* is the same work familiar to many as *O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair*. Netania Davrath does rather well by the music, but the old acoustical version by John McCormack (with Fritz Kreisler lending his violinistic adornments to the tenor's golden voice—recently revived by RCA Victor on LM 6099) has a warmth and rapturous conviction which far outmatches the present singer's accomplishment.
H.G.

ROSSINI: *Arias: La Cenerentola: I miei rampolli. Il Barbiere di Siviglia: A un dottor; La calunnia. L'Italiana in Algeri: Femmine d'Italia*
†Mozart: *Arias: Don Giovanni: Madamina, il catalogo e questo. Il Flauto magico: Qui sdegno non s'accende. Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai. Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K. 513*

Ezio Flagello, bass; Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, Nicholas Flagello, cond.
• SCOPE MV 0001 LP. $3.98.
• • SCOPE SV 0001. SD. $4.98.

This is the first release under the new

Scope label, and the first recorded solo recital by Ezio Flagello. This young basso is already getting major buffo assignments at the Met, as well as some of the more serious roles, such as Paolo and Pogner. His appearance, as well as his voice, makes him perfectly suited to the buffo repertory, though it is to be hoped that his unusually round, beautiful instrument will not be entirely squandered on such fare. In time, he should make an ideal Falstaff, since he has both the true *basso contante* timbre and the high notes required for the role.

The present disc offers much gratifying singing. Flagello's voice ascends without problems to the high G, and stays open and bright around E flat and E, without turning blatant (this ability is a good deal less common than one might suppose). He does the Rossinian patter very well, as Magnifico's aria illustrates, and has a reasonable command of the general buffo inflections for indicating nastiness or extreme choler. There is as yet nothing especially individual or illuminating about his way with such music (Capecchi, for example, makes things much more specific), but the voice is a joy to listen to and there is no lack of temperament or stylistic grasp of a more general sort.

The more serious numbers are less satisfactory. He negotiates the vocal depths of the *Magic Flute* aria with a minimum of discomfort, but somehow misses the quiet dignity and authority of the piece (his voice, basically, is not dark enough for Sarastro). *"Mentre ti lascio"* is quite undistinguished—a pleasant, slightly restless stretch of vocalizing, altogether lacking in the anguish and passion which this great aria ought to have.

The accompaniments are solid, but do little to lift the recital. Scope's sound is decent, with good stereo spread, but a touch of harshness and a lack of any real depth. I believe the mono version is actually the less fatiguing to listen to, and it seems no less faithful to the voice. The jacket notes are perfectly competent, but tell us virtually nothing about the content of the arias—there is no hint of what *"Mentre ti lascio"* is all about, to say nothing of any text. C.L.O.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 4, in C minor ("Tragic")*
†Liszt: *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 2*
†Brahms: *Hungarian Dances: Nos. 1, 3-6, 10*

Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Paul Sacher, cond. (in the Schubert); Austrian Symphony Orchestra, Hans Hagen, cond. (in the Liszt and Brahms).
• EVEREST 6102. LP. $4.98.
• • EVEREST 3102. SD. $4.98.

What strange bedfellows we have here! There is music by Schubert, Liszt, and Brahms that might reasonably be juxtaposed on a single disc, but this isn't it. If one considers these works separately, however, one will find that they are given creditable accounts. Paul Sacher, conductor of the famous Basel Chamber Orchestra, is a very fine musician, and his reading of the Schubert Symphony is sane and well proportioned. Hans Hagen seems at home in the gypsy-flavored works of Liszt and Brahms, and he has been accorded reasonably good reproduction. Sacher, on the other hand, has been let down by relatively poor sound, of limited tonal and volume range. P.A.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Festival Prelude for Organ and Orchestra, Op. 61*—See Poulenc: *Concerto for Organ, Strings, and Timpani, in G minor.*

VIVALDI: *Concerti grossi, Op. 3: No. 10, in B minor; No. 11, in D minor*—See Bartók: *Divertimento for Strings.*

WAGNER: *Siegfried*

Birgit Nilsson, Wolfgang Windgassen, Hans Hotter, et al.; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 71.

WEBER: *Der Freischütz* (highlights)

Irmgard Seefried (s), Agathe; Rita Streich (s), Annchen; Richard Holm (t), Max; Eberhard Wächter (b), Ottokar; Kurt Böhme (bs), Kaspar; Walter Kreppel (bs), A Hermit. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Eugen Jochum, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPEM 19221. LP. $5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPEM 136221. SD. $6.98.

An excellent once-over of the opera,

drawn from DGG's complete recording released about two years ago. Of the two up-to-date versions of the complete opera, I prefer Electrola's by a small margin (partly because of the inclusion of more dialogue, which is of no consequence in an abridged version). An abridgment of the Electrola recording is listed in the catalogue, but I haven't heard it.

As for this one, it includes just about all the major items of the score, though it reduces some of them (one verse of Kaspar's drinking song, for example). The selection has been done with a view towards keeping the work's essential shape, which it does very well, with no distressing end-of-band fade-outs. The only number I really wish had been included is *"Und ob die Wolke,"* but there are limits to what a single disc will hold. Enough dialogue has been kept to keep the drama moving intelligibly.

I still find Holm's voice a couple of shades too light and undramatic for this role, but he is knowing in his handling of the big aria. Seefried is in top form; Streich vocalizes well, though without much in the way of characterization; Böhme is a convincing heavy without providing much really good singing tone. Jochum's leadership is fine, the sound excellent in stereo (I have not received the mono). If an abridgment is of interest, this is a worthwhile purchase.

C.L.O.

WOLF: *Goethe Lieder*

Mignon Lieder: Heiss' mich nicht reden; Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt; So lass mich scheinen; Singet nicht in Trauertönen (Philine); Kennst du das Land? Ganymed; Anakreons Grab; Die Spröde; Die Bekehrte; Blumengruss; Gleich und gleich; Frühling übers Jahr; St. Nepomuks Vorabend; Epiphanias.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Gerald Moore, piano.
• ANGEL 35909. LP. $4.98.
• • ANGEL S 35909. SD. $5.98.

This is quite a satisfying recital, although I don't care for it quite as much as I did for the excellent Schwarzkopf/Moore *Italian Songbook* disc released about a year ago. It seems to me that the Schwarzkopf mannerisms do not fit the present songs quite as well as they do the *Italian Songbook* selections. Her tendency to pick things to pieces, to smash a song into a welter of textual fragments, does damage to the *Mignon* songs. The simplicity and emotional directness of the character gets lost. We get the same sort of applied whisper (and therefore the same emotional effect) on each of these lines: *"Allein das Schicksal will es nicht"* in *Mignon I*; *"Vor Kummer altert' ich zu frühe"* in *Mignon III*; *"Es glänzt der Saal"* in *Kennst du das Land?* Yet the meaning and even the general mood is quite different in each case, so that this kind of whisper begins to sound like mere effect—a substitute for really getting inside the song.

There is still much fine singing. *Mignon III* is really very good, with the singer filing her tone down to an almost colorless thread. The climaxes of *Kennst du das Land?* are wonderful; especially admirable is the building of the third verse to the big phrase on *"Es stürzt der Fels und über ihn die Flut!"* (Moore also underlines the change from second to third verse very beautifully.) *Ganymed* is given a superb performance, with

Moore setting forth the even single tones of the accompanying motif meaningfully, and Schwarzkopf's soprano gleaming steadily through the final verse—this is still an impressive, lovely voice. Side 2 is almost wholly successful. Songs like *Die Spröde* and the gorgeous *Frühling übers Jahr* seem to call forth more spontaneity from Schwarzkopf than some of the more heavily "serious" ones. Even *Epiphanias*, which usually comes off best with a fairly hefty male voice, is gratifyingly realized. Altogether, a most worthwhile release, even if the performance often remains in the realm of the admirable rather than the overwhelming. The sound is not of the best, being a trifle shallow and dry—in this instance, the stereo pressing is distinctly better than the mono, particularly as regards fullness of piano tone. C.L.O.

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

HUGUES CUENOD: *Songs from Shakespeare, Bach, and La Fontaine*

Wilson: *Take, O take those lips away.* Purcell: *Come unto these yellow sands; Full fathom five.* Morley: *It was a lover and his lass.* Arne: *Blow, blow thou winter wind; Under the greenwood tree; Where the bee sucks, there suck I. Come, come away death.* Bach: *Five Songs from the Little Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach: Erbauliche Gedanken eines Tabakrauchers; Bist du bei mir; Aria di Giovannini; Wie wohl ist mir; Gedenke doch, mein Geist.* La Fontaine-Clérambault: *L'Hipocrite reclus; La Peau de l'ours; Sotte vanité; L'Oisiveté; Bons amis rares; La Vie champêtre; L'Envie.*

Hugues Cuenod, tenor; Albert Fuller, harpsichord.
• CAMBRIDGE 702. LP. $4.98.
• • CAMBRIDGE 1702. SD. $5.98.

A very interesting collection, particularly strong in the Shakespeare songs on the first side. All of these are good, and the Arne contributions are extraordinary; *Where the bee sucks*, in fact, seems to me a really inspired setting. Several of these songs were on discs back in 78 days, but so far as I know they have not previously turned up on LP.

The numbers collected by Bach for his *Little Notebook* are by no means of great musical stature except for *Bist du bei mir*, but they make extremely pleasant listening. The same can be said for the lightheaded little La Fontaine songs, with basses figured by Clérambault, who apparently made use of previously existing tunes. They are marked by curious end-of-phrase embellishments, and by heavy underlining of the "morals" at the conclusion of each fable; in *La Vie champêtre* and *L'Envie* this is done by means of unusual falsetto runs.

Cuenod is really splendid. His light, clear tenor is well suited to such literature, and his exemplary musicianship and crystalline enunciation in each of these languages is of great assistance. He displays considerable breath control, a fine trill, and an instinct for keeping the music moving. His hushed performance of *Bist du bei mir* approaches perfection. Fuller's accompaniments, including some graphic pictorial effects in the La Fontaine numbers, are excellent. So is the sound, though the stereo separation (I haven't heard the mono edition) between harpsichord and voice is too extreme for my taste. Notes, texts, and translations are supplied.
C.L.O.

VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES: *Cantos de España*

Montsalvatge: *Cinco canciones negras: Cuba dentro de un piano; Punto de habanera; Chévere; Canción de cuna para dormir a un negrito; Canto negro.* Granados: *Llorad, corazón; Iban al pinar.* Rodrigo: *Cuatro madrigales amatorios: Con qué la lavaré; Vos me metasteis; De dónde Venís, amore?; De los álamos vengo, madre.* Esplá: *Cinco canciones playeras españolas: Rutas; Pregon; Las 12; El pescador sin dinero; Coplilla.* Falla: *La vida breve; Vivan los que rien; Alli esta! Riyendo!*

Victoria de los Angeles, soprano; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, cond.
• ANGEL 35937. LP. $4.98.
• • ANGEL S 35937. SD. $5.98.

Another lovely collection of Spanish vocal music—this time exclusively twentieth century—from Miss de los Angeles. Montsalvatge's songs, with their texts mirroring Negro scenes and their Caribbean influences in the music, bear superficial resemblances to some of Villa Lobos'—especially in *Canto negro*, which depends for its effect on a rhythmic playing-around with repeated syllables. They have an almost popular flavor, and seem to me to miss the essence of the

poetry wherever it is straightforward and intense, as in *Chévere* ("A Man with a Scar").

Both the Granados and Rodrigo groups are based on old traditional texts, and their melodic lines are traditional too. Rodrigo is perhaps the more inventive of the two (though the Granados *Llorad, corazón* is hauntingly mournful —and of course the composer represents an earlier generation than Rodrigo's); at times, it almost seems as if a sixteenth-century court song had been grafted onto a page of Respighi orchestration. The results are mildly interesting.

The Esplá songs strike me as the best of all; based on intriguing verses by Rafael Alberti, they never fail to provide effective setting. *El pescador sin dinero* ("The Fisherman with No Money"), in fact, is an unusually sensitive and finished song, marked by fine taste and restraint in its orchestration. The arias from *La vida breve* need no comment by now—De los Angeles' way with them is as compelling as ever, even if her voice no longer has quite the fresh freedom of the first few years. She is in good form throughout the recital, and in this sort of music her interpretations are as close to definitive as any can come. The accompaniments are excellent, and so is the sound, in both versions. Angel has also performed its customary thorough job of presentation—notes, complete texts, and translations. C.L.O.

NOAH GREENBERG: *"Renaissance Festival Music"*

New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg, cond.
• DECCA DL 9419. LP. $4.98.
• • DECCA DL 79419. SD. $5.98.

Side 1 of this disc includes a group of dances of various sorts from a collection published by Tielman Susato at Antwerp in 1551. Mr. Greenberg's fine group of players allows us to hear them as they might have been performed at some royal banquet or a wedding of wealthy nobility. Some are done by "loud" instruments (cornett, sackbuts, shawms), others by "soft" instruments (recorders, krummhorns, viols), still others by a combination of these. The fresh, lovely colors are sufficient reason for the current revival of these old instruments—a revival in which Mr. Greenberg's ensemble has taken an important part in this country. As always with this group, performances are lively and strongly rhythmical. In two of the dances, drums and cymbals add to the effect.

The same general principles are observed on the other side, which is devoted to Venetian pieces of around 1600, including one by Andrea and three by Giovanni Gabrieli. In one or two instances Mr. Greenberg uses more players than were likely to be available in a Venetian church except on the grandest occasions, but the results are splendid. The performers sound as much at home with their instruments as though they were veteran members of the musical staff of St. Mark's in Gabrieli's time, and Decca's engineers have served them skillfully in both versions. N.B.

ANTONIO JANIGRO: *Music for Strings*

Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2653. LP. $4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2653. SD. $5.98.

A mixed lot. First there is a group of pieces from various chamber suites by Couperin, arranged for cello and strings by Paul Bazélaire. These are beautifully played by Janigro as soloist, but their connection with Couperin seems remote. Next comes Mozart's Divertimento in D, K. 136. By playing the appoggiaturas long instead of short, Janigro drastically changes the character of the first theme; the slow movement, however, is nicely sung. A lusty performance of Corelli's Concerto grosso in D, Op. 6, No. 4, with a lively realization of the continuo (played by Anton Heiller on a harpsichord), follows. Finally, there is Britten's youthful *Simple Symphony*, with its rather moving, though long, *Sentimental Sarabande* to offset a touch of cuteness at the close of the first two movements. The sound in both versions is full and resonant. N.B.

PAUL PARAY: *"Ballet Highlights from French Opera"*

Gounod: *Faust: Ballet Music; Waltz.* Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Bacchanale.* Bizet: *Carmen: Danse bohème.* Berlioz: *Les Troyens: Royal Hunt and Storm.* Massenet: *Phèdre: Overture.* Thomas: *Mignon: Gavotte.*

Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Paul Paray, cond.
• MERCURY MR 50318. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90318. SD. $5.98.

A look at the contents of this record will quickly reveal that not all of it is ballet music. Little matter. Paray plays it all with verve and vibrancy. Some of this music has been played and

recorded too often, but one would never guess it from the freshness and spirit of the conductor's approach, from the clean, lively playing of the orchestra, or from the bright, crisp quality of the reproduction. Even jaded ears will appreciate these performances. P.A.

ARTURO TOSCANINI: *"Toscanini Plays Light Classics"*

Bizet: *Carmen: Suite No. 1.* Brahms: *Hungarian Dances: Nos. 1, 17, 20, 21.* Dukas: *L'Apprenti sorcier.* Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Dance of the Hours.* Rossini: *Guillaume Tell: Overture;* Saint-Saëns: *Danse macabre.* Smetana: *The Moldau.* Strauss, Johann II: *On the Beautiful Blue Danube.* Sousa: *Stars and Stripes Forever.*

NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR VCS 7001. Two SD. $13.96.

To take a recording which has reached its legal majority and convert it into a pleasing and plausible example of electronically synthesized stereophony is an engineering tour de force of consequence. It opens the door to the reprocessing, rerelease, and rehearing of many Toscanini performances now buried in the archives. For although nothing will replace the Toscanini originals as documents of the Maestro and his art, there is no question that carefully made stereo transcriptions can bring his music to many who might otherwise pass it by in favor of more up-to-date discs.

It would be foolish to suggest that the contents of the album, dating from 1942–53, are indistinguishable from Victor's best work of a decade later. But it would also be unfair to imply that the average person, listening to these records, would not accept them as genuine examples of the two-channel medium. They sound good. The stereo reprocessing has been done with both skill and taste, and although the premium price is steep for light music, it is obvious that a lot of time and expert labor were involved in the preparation of this set. Moreover, one gets a feeling of direct experience of Toscanini and his orchestra which simply is not to be matched by the monophonic originals.

The best test case is the Dukas, which is a particularly fine monophonic record (LM 2056), but seems quite a bit more vivid here. The *Moldau*, its partner on both discs, is perhaps the least satisfactory of the reprocessed works.

In preparing this review I listened to the "stereo" edition, replayed the originals, and then alternated the two. In one case, the Bizet *Carmen* suite, the new version was decidedly superior to that of the monophonic discs in my file, while the Strauss waltz offered a kind of sound which could not possibly be secured from the 78 pressings. Rhythmically, I find the performance too inflexible, but it is astonishing to realize what has been done in updating its sonics.

Elsewhere, apart from the stereo effects, two major changes can be noted: the addition of resonance and the resultant change in textures, and the alteration of dynamic values. Quiet passages have nearly always been lifted in level, while loud ones have been slightly scaled down. I don't know why this was done, and at times I almost hear a husky-voiced ghost asking with polite irony, "You know what means *fortissimo*?"

I assume the public for whom this album was prepared consists of those who enjoy light music and want to hear the miracles Toscanini could achieve with some of these scores. In those terms the set is a success, for it makes its points with a vigor which monophonic records cannot match. The Toscanini cult, on the other hand, will be wise to view it as a piece of engineering virtuosity, valid and interesting in such terms, but no more completely Toscanini than *Turandot* is completely Puccini. R.C.M.

VIENNA CHOIR BOYS: *Twelve Madrigals; Eight German Folk Songs*

Vienna Choir Boys, Hermann Furthmoser, cond.
• PHILIPS PH 500011. LP. $4.98.
• • PHILIPS PHS 900011. SD. $5.98.

The "madrigals" include German polyphonic songs by Erasmus Widmann (1572–1634), balletts by Gastoldi and Morley, and chansons by Claude Le Jeune and Pierre Certon. All are sung in German. The abilities of the remarkable group of boys that sings them are familiar in America. It remains only to report that they are in good form here, with their usual excellent diction and intonation. The folk songs, all but one sung, like the "madrigals," unaccompanied, are unfamiliar—at least to me—though one of them, the *Steirischer Glockenjodler*, is strangely similar to Brahms's Lullaby. Good sound. N.B.

SPOKEN WORD

SHERIDAN: *The School for Scandal*

Geraldine McEwan (Lady Teazle); Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies (Mrs. Candour); Meriel Forbes (Lady Sneerwell); Pinkie Johnstone (Maria); Ralph Richardson (Sir Peter Teazle); John Gielgud (Joseph Surface); Richard Easton (Charles Surface); Laurence Naismith (Sir Oliver Surface); Malcolm Keen (Rowley); Peter Barkworth (Sir Benjamin Backbite and Careless); Charles Lloyd Pack (Crabtree); David Evans (Snake); Howard Goorney (Moses); David Evans (Trip). Directed by John Gielgud; musical arrangement and direction by Leslie Bridgewater.
• COMMAND 13002. Three LP. $14.94.
• • COMMAND RS 13002. Three SD. $17.94.

The cover of Command's album rather startlingly proclaims this an "Original Cast Album." That, to be sure, it is not, but it is a fine recording of the extremely polished revival which has just left New York's Majestic Theatre after a successful run of several months. The production, though not perfect, was so much better than any other representation we can hope to see for a generation or so that it seems silly to quibble. In some respects, it shows to better advantage on records than it did in the theatre.

I am thinking specifically of Ralph Richardson's Teazle. Visually, it was, I thought, too busy; Sir Ralph got so tangled up in a series of "turns" that he tended to let the character—the warmest and roundest in the play—slip plumb out of sight on more than one occasion. His Teazle was, in sum, gimmicky. But on

the recording, we are left with only the vocal part of his characterization—and it could not be better. His moments of choler, of near apoplectic rage, of almost touchingly blind self-righteousness, of generosity, of hurt (what a role it is!) —all fall into place to add up to a complete human being. I doubt that there is another actor alive who could capture so precisely the wonderful change from uneasy reconcilement to comfortable squabble in his second scene with Lady Teazle. ("All the same, my dear . . ." We have in an instant the picture of a man who just can't quite leave a matter alone.) Among many other treasurable moments, I like best the heart-breaking resignation of his "My widow, I suppose," when Lady Teazle pleasantly suggests that he can go one step further than making her his wife.

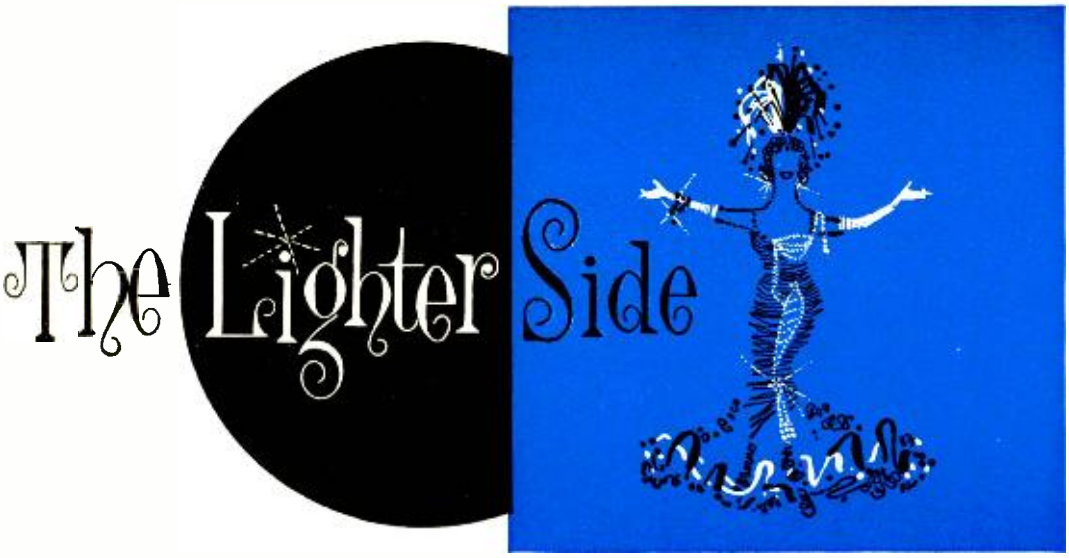
Gielgud's Joseph Surface was the dominating performance in the theatre, and it holds up well here, though there are one or two spots where it seems the oiliness and the oratorical pomposity of the "sentiments" could have been toned down a bit for recording purposes. Small matter—one would not notice it at all save in the context of such a subtle performance. He is especially brilliant in Joseph's one moment of breathless disintegration, just before Teazle's arrival in the "screen scene."

There is also a superb Lady Teazle from Geraldine McEwan. The problem is to keep the character from seeming too bitchy for Act IV reclamation, and Miss McEwan solves it nicely. Her Lady Teazle is always on the verge of bursting into rippling laughter, and frequently does (and a lovely infectious laugh it is). Irresponsible and even malicious as Lady Teazle can be, she is primarily a country girl dizzied by her taste of society and simply having the time of her life among the scandalmongers. This is what Miss McEwan projects so well, and what makes us ready to accept her magnificent turnabout speech after Teazle's discovery of her behind Joseph's screen. At the same time, Miss McEwan sacrifices none of the point behind the *bons mots* of the scandal scenes, or the offhandedness of her insults to her aging husband; the Norina in Lady Teazle (if I may borrow an operatic reference) is all there.

The rest of the cast is exemplary, which is what one could not expect of most productions. Malcolm Keen's excellent Rowley, for example, or David Evans' equally fine Snake (especially good in his admiration of Lady Sneerwell's accomplishments in the opening scene) are of a quality seldom found in such subsidiary roles. Laurence Naismith's genial Uncle Oliver, Richard Easton's amiable, slightly adolescent Charles, Peter Barkworth's effete Backbite, Charles Lloyd Pack's genuinely odious Crabtree (he has probably the nastiest-sounding voice I've ever heard in a theatre)—all are admirably in the frame.

One complaint, and a serious one, I fear. While the notes by Sir John which Command has provided are of interest, the text would have been even more welcome. It is not that the words are unclear, for they are impeccably spoken and recorded. But there are too many important entrances, exits, and other changes of situation that are not in any way made apparent, and on which the humor or even the sense of the lines depends. One important example: When Joseph's servant reports that Teazle is about to appear during the "screen scene," there is a fair amount of audible confusion from Mr. Gielgud and Miss McEwan, followed by a very short pause, followed by Teazle's opening line, "Ah, ever improving himself." Now it is true that if one listens closely, one may be able to fish the meaning out of the hurried sequence of lines; but if one misses a word or two, one will not realize that 1) Lady Teazle has concealed herself behind the screen, or 2) that Joseph has hurriedly taken a book in hand and is affecting deep concentration upon Teazle's entrance. In other words, the whole dramatic situation here is by no means apparent, and, incidentally, the fun of Teazle's line is lost. To those who know the play well or have the production fresh in mind, there is no problem; to others, bafflement could well result from this and perhaps a dozen other sudden, unmarked changes in situation on the recording.

I, for one, am grateful that Command has not cluttered things up with a mess of sound effects intended to clarify the situation or with ad-libbed additions to the dialogue ("Here, Lady Teazle, quick—behind this screen!"). And many of these situations are made clear in the stereo rendering of the movements, while a few more are described by a between-scenes narrator, whose role is fortunately kept to a minimum. But the text, complete with the stage directions, would have put the capstone on the release. As it is, one must buy the play as well as the recording, and hope that the directions in the printed edition are not too irrelevant. It is, however, worth it, for Command has done the one (essential) thing so often overlooked in the recording of plays—it has obtained the very best in the way of performance. C.L.O.



POPULAR • THEATRE • FOLK

Limeliters Hassilev, Gottlieb, and Yarbrough.

They Match the Manner To the Matter

"Our Men in San Francisco." *The Limeliters. RCA Victor LPM 2609, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2609, $4.98 (SD).*

EACH SUCCESSIVE release (and there are now seven entries in the catalogue) attests anew to the primacy of the Limeliters among America's endlessly proliferating folk trios. Almost four years of close harmony have molded this group—Glenn Yarbrough, Lou Gottlieb, and Alex Hassilev—into a brilliantly cohesive whole that is far greater than the sum of its parts. Each of the three singers, as a matter of fact, had once established a reputation of a sort as a soloist; but, until they pooled their talents in the spring of 1959, none had struck real artistic fire.

The hallmark of the Limeliters' style is mature intelligence. They can be as frenetic as the loudest campus quartet on vinylite, but they indulge in such abandon only if the material so requires. When it does, as in *The Wabash Cannonball* that leads off this program, they concede decibels to no one. To a degree unmatched by any competition, however, the Limeliters have developed an interpretative suppleness that makes each ballad a three-dimensional experience. On this disc, they suffuse a lullaby, *Sleep Soft,* with a gentleness redolent of warm milk

and snug blankets and, a moment later, invest *Corn Whiskey* with a subtle interplay of moods that quite literally transfigures that much-battered chestnut. To the Limeliters, the protagonist of *Corn Whiskey* is not the amiable drunkard we have come to know through other versions: he is a man cursed with insight; a loser who waxes fatalistic, wistful, sardonic, bitter—and only incidentally comic—about whiskey and the women whose "breath tastes as sweet as the good old moonshine."

The program is a typical one in that it ranges widely through both time and geography. From Greece comes the melodic tale of the girl *Yerakina*, and the France of centuries past provides the vivacious *Le Joueur de luth*. This classic of *double-entendre* lightheartedly recounts the tale of the lute player who arrives in town to give lessons to the ladies, but sorrowfully rejects an aging mademoiselle too eager, but too late, to learn.

Quite the finest offering on the record, however, is a medley of four Civil War songs. It opens with Glenn Yarbrough's high, limpid tenor etching the bittersweet *Bright Golden Buttons*: drums throb and swords glint as the Americans of that other age march off to war and to inevitable disillusionment, for "the cheers turn to crying when life turns to dying, and bright golden buttons will all turn to rust." Then, to somber, insistent chords, the trio limns the chiaroscuro home-coming of the decimated *First Battalion*. Again Yarbrough's light voice rides in high, ironic counterpoint above the dark, driving melody. Grim death stalks the outposts in *Yes I See*, and *Two Brothers* poignantly underlines the internecine heartbreak of our hundred-year-old national tragedy. A reprise of *The First Battalion* caps six original, exciting minutes that—in raw emotional impact—surpass most to be found on Civil War albums now available.

Nonetheless, for all its excellence, this release is not free of flaws. It was recorded live at San Francisco's hungry i, and therein lies the rub. More and more folk singers are now being taped in actual performance—a procedure that provides a certain spontaneity but also provides a surfeit of silly chatter. Today's combos feel constrained to loosen up their audiences with comic—God save the mark!—comments on every selection. As a case in point, a first-rate spoof of *John Henry*, titled *Max Goolis*, fails to survive Lou Gottlieb's windy, witless, and almost endless introduction. O.B.B.

Sammy Davis, Jr.

"Merman in Vegas." *Orchestra, Russ Black, cond. Reprise R 6062, $3.98 (LP); R9 6062, $4.98 (SD).*

"Patti Page on Stage." *Orchestra. Mercury MG 20758, $3.98 (LP); SR 60758, $4.98 (SD).*

"Eddie Fisher at the Winter Garden." *Orchestra, Eddy Samuels, cond. Ramrod RRM 1, $7.96 (Two LP); RRS 1, $9.96 (Two SD).*

"Sammy Davis, Jr., at the Cocoanut Grove." *Dick Stabile's Orchestra, George Rhodes, cond. Reprise R 6063/2, $7.96 (Two LP); R9 6063/2, $9.96 (Two SD).*

Eddie Fisher

The Latest Crop from the Café Circuit

STRETCHING ACROSS the continent, from the Copacabana in New York to the hungry i in San Francisco, are a series of night clubs and hostelries now doing double duty as show places and recording studios. In this dual role, they have been responsible for a great many on-the-spot recorded mementos of the great and near-great café entertainers of today. With their inevitable fulsome introductions and shattering applause (much of it inserted after the actual taping), these discs usually end up high on the best-seller charts. It is not surprising to find another parcel of live-performance microgrooves among the current crop.

The great lady of the American musical theatre, Ethel Merman, made her Broadway debut in 1930, but waited until October 26, 1962 to venture on to the café circuit. Thirty-two years between debuts is a long, long time, and it shows. For though the Merman voice can still puncture an eardrum, the experience is less agreeable than it used to be. (And there are several anxious moments in her act which, thanks to her own theatrical know-how and showmanship, she skillfully covers up.) Opening with a new Roger Edens' number, *Just a Lady with a Song*, La Merman plunges into a reprise of all (well, nearly all) the songs she has made famous, from *Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries* to *Everything's Coming Up Roses*, concluding with (what else?) *There's No Business Like Show Business*. All the performances display tremendous vivacity and enthusiasm. Billy

May's arrangements are cleverly geared to the singer's no-nonsense vocal delivery, and are most helpful in smoothing over some of the rougher moments. Miss Merman has probably never been quite so close to the cash customers, and she is obviously enjoying the experience.

From further south (or is it north?) on the Las Vegas night club strip comes a recording of Patti Page's act at The Dunes. Miss Page is primarily a recording artist, whose stage exposure must have been extremely restricted, to judge from her homey, almost corny, chatter and her straightforward recording style. She too is giving the customers exactly what they came to hear—a cavalcade of her old hits, *Doggie in the Window, Cross Over the Bridge, I Went to Your Wedding,* and the inevitable *Tennessee Waltz.* As long as she sticks to this repertoire she is on safe enough ground. When she tries more sophisticated material, songs such as *Night and Day* or *Don't Worry 'Bout Me,* I suspect the customers are ordering another drink. She resorts to a good deal of chitchat with her audience, most of it pretty dreary, and when she advises a customer "not to drink too much," she surely wasn't endearing herself to the club owners. She has not been particularly well served by the orchestra, its arrangements, or by the recorded sound.

Emulating the late, great Al Jolson, Eddie Fisher took over the Winter Garden Theatre this past season, but where Jolson confined his appearances to Sunday nights, Fisher did a five-week stand. Although he is a greatly improved singer since the days when he recorded for RCA Victor, he is hardly a dynamic performer. What he could rely upon was a good deal of personal sympathy after his recent marital difficulties, and a sort of nice, open-faced boyishness which the women in his audience probably found irresistible. Since the latter is not apparent on the recording, almost two hours of pleasant but hardly exciting singing becomes a slight bore. When he is recalling the songs which helped his early career—*Heart, Oh My Papa,* and *Anytime*—everything is fine, and the Jolson medley has also considerable impact. Unfortunately, most of his other songs lack the spark needed to vitalize them, and *Don't Let It Get You Down* strikes me as too obvious an appeal for sympathy. There is good theatre ambience in the stereo version, but the sound is often on the fuzzy side.

Both Sammy Davis, Jr., and his audience were really swinging when his Cocoanut Grove recording was made. One of the most gifted and versatile of contemporary night club performers, Davis gives a dazzling display of his virtuosity as a singer, impersonator, and all-round entertainer. In the seventy minutes of this two-record album, it is almost impossible to recall one dull moment, from his amusing, slightly Dietrich-like *Falling in Love Again* (and his comments when he spots his wife, Mai Britt, at the ringside table), to the truly exciting medley from *West Side Story* with its accompaniment by Johnny Mendoza's pulsating bongos, by the Sinatra-styled version of *River Stay 'Way from My Door.* No Davis disc would be complete without some of his remarkable impersonations, and in *Rock-A-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody* he includes some extraordinary lifelike ones of Jimmy Stewart, James Cagney, Louis Armstrong, and Marlon Brando. Everything he does is projected with tremendous vitality and artistry, even down to the banter he indulges in with his audience. No wonder they all love him. I have heard only the mono version, which has moments of fading as the artist moves out of range of the microphones. This effect, rather strange here, may well be used advantageously on the stereo version. J.F.I.

"Piaf . . . Chansons." Edith Piaf; Orchestra. Capitol T 10328, $3.98 (LP); ST 10328, $4.98 (SD).

I have no information as to when this recording was made, but assuming it to postdate Piaf's recent illnesses, it suggests either that the reports of those illnesses were dramatically exaggerated, or that the diminutive *chanteuse* has the most astonishing recuperative powers. Not once in the course of this program of new songs is there the slightest hint that her vocal or her interpretative powers have been impaired. The performances of *Des histoires, Quatorze Juillet,* and *Toujours aimer,* songs of anguish and disillusion, blaze with a pathetic intensity that is quite chilling. Incomparable as Piaf is—and has always been—in this type of song, she is scarcely less wonderful in *Ca fait drole* and *Faut pas qu'il se figure,* in which she superbly projects the rapture of a woman hopelessly in love but timid of showing her affection too overtly. Individually, none of these songs are likely to supplant the more popular numbers in Piaf's repertoire, but collectively they are a wonderful showcase for this ill-starred woman's remarkable talents. Stereo adds very little to the impact of this disc, though it does boast a slightly more live sound than the mono issue. J.F.I.

Piaf: total anguish, total rapture.

"Whaler Out of New Bedford." Ewan MacColl, A. L. Lloyd, Peggy Seeger. Folkways FS 3850, $5.95 (LP).

Whaling was once a proud American monopoly. In the streets of Nantucket and New Bedford strode captains who knew the coasts of Africa and Japan, Peru and Australia; sailors who remembered the soft embraces of Polynesia and the icy grasp of Antarctica—all this before the great nineteenth-century expeditions of exploration. The glory has long faded from the New England waterfronts, and Yankee ships no longer course the Southern Ocean in pursuit of the mighty whale, but this disc—in its own roughhewn way as evocative of that era as the works of Herman Melville—recreates the ambience of the old whale fishery. Here, hauntingly performed, is the *Boston-Come-All-Ye* that recruited crews, the whaleman's fond accolade to *The Bark Gay Head,* and the eager joy of *Homeward Bound.* In between are cleverly interwoven mementos of the soft Pacific islands where crews took languorous ease on coral beaches. The flip side offers the sound track, equally rich in ballads—of a documentary film on whaling. The singers—Ewan MacColl, A. L. Lloyd, and Peggy Seeger—have made their mark in the world of authentic folk song, and their performances are all one could hope for. Recommended. O.B.B.

Continued on next page

"Together with Love." Eileen Farrell; Orchestra, André Previn, pianist and cond. Columbia CL 1920, $3.98 (LP); CS 8720, $4.98 (SD).

In her three earlier recordings of pop songs, Eileen Farrell has seldom been less than wonderful, even when she has had to battle against what often sounded like overforceful arrangements. Here she is freed from such handicaps by the subtle and complimentary settings devised by André Previn for these dozen semi-torch ballads. Some of these (*But Not for Me*, *Cabin in the Sky*, and *Love Is Here To Stay*) are standards, and to them Miss Farrell brings all her vocal charm and expertise in some truly lovely performances. Even more appealing to me, possibly because the songs are so little known, are her effortless but very artful performances of Wilder's *Everywhere I Look*, Arlen's *The Morning After*, and two songs written by Previn and his wife, *Just for Now* and *Where I Wonder*. Incidentally, the Farrell voice sounds darker in hue than before, and her vibrato has widened, so that in her more intense moments she often sounds like Judy Garland. A scintillating disc, highly recommended. J.F.I.

"The Desert Song." Dorothy Kirsten, Gordon MacRae; Chorus and Orchestra, Van Alexander, cond. Capitol W 1842, $4.98 (LP); SW 1842, $5.98 (SD).

Recorded operetta, when it is well sung and imaginatively presented, enjoys one great advantage over a theatre presentation: it completely eliminates the "book." In the case of *The Desert Song*, particularly, this is a considerable relief—for the tale Harbach, Mandel, and Hammerstein dreamed up for this Moroccan musical strained one's credulity pretty severely. Fortunately, Romberg's score teemed with lovely melodies which more than compensated for the absurd libretto, and Capitol's new version of the work is completely successful. Both Dorothy Kirsten and Gordon MacRae seem to find this music more congenial than that of *The Student Prince* (reviewed in this issue on page 103). Miss Kirsten is particularly brilliant in *Romance*, and in a sparkling and vivacious performance of the *French Military Marching Song*. Gordon MacRae's voice is rather colorless, but it blends well with Kirsten's in the romantic duets, and is heard to advantage in a rousing rendition of *The Riff Song*. But the vocal honors do not belong exclusively to the two leads. The supporting soloists, Gerald Shirkey and Lloyd Bunnell, and the Roger Wagner Chorale all contribute assistance immeasurably superior to that usually found on similar presentations. Excellent sound, with the stereo seating you in fifth row center. J.F.I.

"Sing and Play a Folk Song." Jim Helms, guitar; Art Podell, guitar and banjo; John Fine, bass. Horizon WP 1603.

Here is that rare thing, a folk first. World-Pacific's Horizon label provides a top-drawer string accompaniment to twenty of the finest ballads in the literature. An accompanying folio contains words and music, enabling any wobble-voiced amateur to sing his heart out for *Barbara Allen* or *Billy Boy* or *Molly Malone*. A top array of tunes, a truly polished presentation, and, best of all, the enclosed music make this a genuine joy for anyone who wants to stretch his vocal cords in the cause of self-satisfaction and folk art. There is no phoniness, no patronizing in this fine offering. Check it out. O.B.B.

"Netania Davrath Sings Yiddish Folk Songs." Orchestra, Robert DeCormier, cond. Vanguard VRS 9117, $4.98 (LP); VSD 2127, $5.95 (SD).

The pure, floating soprano of Netania Davrath—well known through four previous Vanguard releases, including her stunning *Songs of the Auvergne* (VRS 9085)—brings to this disc of Yiddish folk songs a full measure of artistry. Born in a Jewish household on the Polish-Russian border, Miss Davrath virtually grew up with these uniquely touching, uniquely Jewish ballads. Her deep familiarity with and her love for them shines through every phrase. Her poignant *Rozhinkes Mit Mandlen* haunts the ear, and a selection of joyous Chassidic melodies resurrects all the gay love of God informing that inspired eighteenth-century movement. As is customarily the case with Vanguard recordings, the sound is impeccable, with the monophonic version rivaling the stereo edition in unalloyed excellence. O.B.B.

"Our Man in Hollywood." Henry Mancini and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2604, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2604, $4.98 (SD).

The spatial effect of the stereo recording is unusually striking here, in Mancini's kaleidoscopic musical arrangements of these movie and television themes. There are, to be sure, one or two nondescript pieces which resist his orchestral reworkings (*Dreamsville* and *Bachelor in Paradise* fall into this category),

but the rest of the program offers what might be called a feast of aural technicolor. The buoyant theme from *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm* becomes unusually perky with the use of four merry piccolos, while a jangling Brazilian piano lends a curious saucy bounce to *Mr. Hobb's Theme*. The full orchestral arrangement for *Drink More Milk* has all the swirl of a Sicilian tarantella, with instrumental timbres following one another in a welter of iridescent orchestral color. These compositions have never before sounded so good, thanks to Mancini's resourceful and unconventional settings. J.F.I.

"Tony Dallara Sings." Vesuvius ST 4408, $3.98 (LP).
Tony Dallara is a warm, winsome vocalist who ranks among Italy's favorite purveyors of pops. Here he sings a dozen Italian hits, all of them infectiously melodic, testifying that the Common Market countries have more than mere tariff concessions to offer us. *Bambina Bambina* and *Baci Baci* possess both immediate appeal and a high degree of durability. One regrets the absence of either texts or translations, but Dallara's intense way with a song can even bridge the language gap. The sound, derived from a European recording, has a faintly muffled quality that annoys but does not disable. O.B.B.

"English Folk Songs—Old and Older." John Runge. Washington VM 735, $4.98 (LP).
Unless my equipment plays me false, one side of this release represents a refurbishing of the "English Folk Songs" sung so beautifully by John Runge on a Riverside release of some six or seven years past (RLP 12-814). To the best of that memorable, unhackneyed recital, however, Washington adds eight Elizabethan airs performed by Runge with a kind of earnest mirth that perfectly reflects the time and the genre. Runge's tenor—high and somewhat reedy—is a robust equivalent of Richard Dyer-Bennet's, and I can think of no greater accolade. This is a splendid recording; anyone with an interest in English traditional song will treasure it. Clear, full-range sound. O.B.B.

"Our Man in London." The Melachrino Strings and Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2608, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2608, $4.98 (SD).
In arranging this bouquet of choice light music from both sides of the Atlantic, RCA Victor's musical ambassador in London, George Melachrino, has created the sort of Anglo-American musical *entente cordiale* most listeners will find quite irresistible. The side devoted to American music, mostly selected from film and show scores, is beautifully arranged and very handsomely performed but on the whole less interesting or varied than the English side. Here the conductor has gone further afield, to the old English airs *Greensleeves* and *Sally in Our Alley*; to Haydn Wood's drawing-room ballad *Roses of Picardy*; and to popular song hits of the war years, *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* and *The White Cliffs of Dover*. More stimulating, musically, than any of these are the *Waltz Medley* Richard Adinsell wrote as part of his incidental music to Noel Coward's play *Blithe Spirit*, and Geoffrey Toye's *The Haunted Ballroom*, a delicious parody of Edwardian musical style originally composed for a Sadler's Wells ballet. Luscious is the only appropriate word for the orchestrations, the performances, and the sound. J.F.I.

"Middle East Goes Modern." Eddie Adamis and His Orchestra. Philips PHM 200-066, $3.98 (LP); PHS 600-066, $4.98 (SD).
Eddie Adamis, a native of Beirut, where East and West meet in a montage of bikinis and veils, blends the traditional rhythms of the bazaars with the big-band arrangements of Paris to achieve a synthesis that—while delighting purists in neither camp—will attract the millions in between. Arabic music strikes the Western ear as dissonant and repetitious, but the Adamis treatment polishes all the harsh tonal edges and, through judicious cutting, minimizes the long sameness. The result should beguile anyone with a mild interest in the East and/or a taste for exotic rhythms. Those who already know the sensual beauties of Middle Eastern music will feel, however, that Adamis has vitiated the arak with too much sugar. Big, broad stereo sound, the choice version here, stretches the percussion from wall to wall. O.B.B.

"Strings Afire in Spain." The Clebanoff Strings. Mercury PPS 2032, $4.98 (LP); PPS 6032, $5.98 (SD).
The sequel to last year's "Strings Afire" proves to be just as big and dazzlingly brilliant, although it also is markedly dry, sharp, and loud unless one reduces considerably the extremely high modula-

tion level in playback. Again, the Wayne Robinson and Caesar Giovaninni arrangements are fancy, the symphonic Clebanoff performances often melodramatically pretentious. Nevertheless, at least a few of these genuine stereo spectaculars—*Ritual Fire Dance*, *The Flea*, and *El Torero*—achieve musical distinction, thanks to superb flute playing by Julius Baker. His virtuosity here must be heard to be believed! R.D.D.

"Screamers!" Eastman Wind Ensemble, Frederick Fennell, cond. Mercury MG 50314, $4.98 (LP); SR 90314, $5.98 (SD).

The arresting title does not imply sonic stridencies: "screamer" is traditional big-tent nomenclature for a fast, short piece of musical razz-ma-tazz used to accompany bareback riding, steeplechase, or cowboy-and-Indian circus acts. There are sixteen of these rousing divertissements here, ranging from Farrar's *Bombasto* of 1895 to Karl L. King's *Circus Days* of 1954. King, onetime bandmaster for Barnum and Bailey and the best-known living exponent of this genre, is also represented by three other pieces, topped by the razzle-dazzling *Robinson's Grand Entree* of 1911. Three more—*Rolling Thunder* (1916), *Bones Trombones* (1922), and *Circus Bee* (1908)—are from the pen of another hippodrome specialist, Henry Fillmore (1881-1956). Other less well-known composers are represented by single selections, all great fun, but only one of which—Allen's glittering *Whip and Spur* of 1902—matches the éclat of King and Fillmore at their best. A few of these pulse-raising pieces have been recorded before, but never have they been done with more thrilling sonic realism. R.D.D.

"Our Man in Boston." Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA Victor LPM 2599, $3.98 (LP); LSC 2599, $4.98 (SD).

Except perhaps for the *March of the Charioteers* (from *Ben Hur*) most of the encore materials here are already familiar in Fiedler's buoyant, richly sonorous, and precise performances. Some of them have been included in other fairly recent Bostonian releases, but I assume that they are all freshly recorded here—certainly the extremely powerful sonic and somewhat unnatural acoustical ambience is characteristic of the very latest Symphony Hall pops series technology. I like best Mason's sprightly arrangements of *Guys and Dolls* selections and the romantic symphonic expansion of *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* (uncredited); but Hayman's amusing *And Now a Word from Our Sponsor* is always a sure hit—as indeed are all the others: *Mack the Knife*, *Exodus*, and *The Apartment* themes might be given special mention. R.D.D.

"The Fabulous Voice of Richard Tucker." Richard Tucker; Orchestra, Skitch Henderson, cond. Columbia ML 5797, $4.98 (LP); MS 6397, $5.98 (SD).

There is much beautiful singing by Richard Tucker in this concert of songs of love and inspiration, though quite a portion of it shows him to be neither comfortable nor really at home in this repertoire. The overemotionalized approach, the too dramatic performance, the rolling r's smack a little too much of the opera house. The tenor sounds happiest, I think, in *Softly As in a Morning Sunrise* and, oddly enough, in *The Sweetest Sounds*. I say oddly because his *Tonight* is a comparative failure, as is another show tune, *Climb Ev'ry Mountain*. Vocally, it would be hard to fault his performances of *The Exodus Song*, *I Believe*, and *With These Hands*, but I find the style rather maudlin. Highly interesting arrangements are provided by Skitch Henderson, whose orchestra accords the singer splendid support. J.F.I.

"Our Man in Latin America." Perez Prado and His Orchestra. RCA Victor LPM 2610, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2610, $4.98 (SD).

As always, Prado's frantically driving performances (given additional punch and weight by tremendously powerful if rather hard stereo recording) are irresistibly danceable, no matter how raucous they may be. Here he features Latinized variants of the Twist, but I much prefer his more varied, if still heavy, big-band bossa novas (*Guarare*, *Pachito E-che*, and *Alma Llanera*). The pieces on the disc have been chosen to represent some eleven various Caribbean, South, and Central American national origins. R.D.D.

"Italian Mandolins." Claudio Bonelli and His Orchestra. Time 2068, $4.98 (LP); S 2068, $5.98 (SD).

The arrangements here (for a twenty-one-man ensemble featuring six mandolin players) are ingenious and tasteful, the Italian pop song selections are well chosen, and the performances both musically and sonically attractive—especially in the bouncing *Vivere*, a catchily Latin-Americanized *Resta cu'mme*, and a soulful *Strada'nfosa*. In addition, the recording itself—notably full-blooded and panoramic—will be of special interest to audiophiles as an example of Time's

new "Process 70," which employs less high-end preëmphasis than the normal. Just how much this feature contributes to the over-all effectiveness remains to be demonstrated in further releases and on other types of program material, but here at least it certainly achieves a genuine sonic glitter quite free from the only too common glassy sharpness of so many recordings touted as "ultrabrilliant." R.D.D.

"A Double-Barrel Blast." Cook 1078, $4.98 (LP).

Cook's two-barrel barrage bats an even .500. Side 2, *Listening In on Computer Conversations*, is a labored, foolish spoof of computers that is about as risible as a defective transistor. Side 1, however, offers perhaps the funniest bit of humor—macabre, to be sure—that vinylite is likely to carry your way. *The High Cost of Dying* is the recorded transcript of a telephone call from "newly bereaved" relatives to the undertaker of their choice and the resultant haggling over the price of interment. Here is convincing testimony to the fact that the pinnacles of hilarity are often scaled by people who are merely being themselves. The undertaker—neatly entrapped by Emory Cook's skilled mourners—agonizes over his prices and the strange ways of the clergy ("They're funny that way; even if you don't pay them, they like to say a few words over the body") to the point where he *almost* wins your sympathy. A very offbeat and very funny release. The sound, as befits so spontaneous an offering, is spotty. But happily no word is lost. O.B.B.

"Viennese Waltzes." Marcel Pagnoul and His Orchestra. Time 2069, $4.98 (LP); S 2069, $5.98 (SD).

By exercising a good deal of musical license and expanding the environs of Vienna to include such distant cities as Moscow, Strasbourg, and Paris, Marcel Pagnoul has assembled a program of what he calls Viennese waltzes. The *echt* Viennese entrants are the compositions of Johann Strauss II, Lehár, and Ivanovici, and there is a reasonable facsimile thereof in *Les Patineurs*, from the Strasbourg-born composer Waldteufel. But there is little of the Viennese style in Tchaikovsky's *Waltz of the Flowers*, much less in Marchetti's very, very French waltz *Fascination*, and none whatever in Waldteufel's *Estudiantina*, which smacks of Valencia rather than Vienna. But if you do not object to the inclusion of these non-Austrian selections, or to the abridgment of the familiar Strauss favorites (which are all minus their preludes, postludes, and repeats), the performances by this French orchestra, though taken at much faster tempos than would be acceptable in Vienna, are quite enjoyable. I have not heard the mono version, but the sound of the stereo is both spacious and agreeable. J.F.I.

"My Son, the Celebrity." Allan Sherman. Warner Brothers W 1487, $3.98 (LP); WS 1487, $4.98 (SD).

As attested by his debut disc, "My Son, the Folk Singer," Allan Sherman is a funny fellow indeed. This sequel to his preceding smash (check those ratings even yet!) amplifies both the virtues and defects of its forerunner. *Al 'n Yetta*, an inspired take-off on *Alouette*, and Sherman's hilarious *Mexican Hat Dance* are far funnier than anything on "My Son, the Folk Singer," but he comes a stinging cropper on the tasteless likes of *Won't You Come Home, Disraeli*. On balance, however, Sherman remains the drollest of song satirists. Forgive his occasional sins and have fun. He provides a lot of it. O.B.B.

"The Student Prince." Dorothy Kirsten, Gordon MacRae; Chorus and Orchestra, Van Alexander, cond. Capitol W 1841, $4.98 (LP); SW 1841, $5.98 (SD).

A good stereo recording of Romberg's *The Student Prince* is badly needed; the only other version (on RCA Victor LSC 2339) is marred by Mario Lanza's tasteless vocalism and by the use of some undistinguished additional musical numbers by Roy Brodszky. Unfortunately, the new Capitol issue does not fill the bill very satisfactorily. Dorothy Kirsten's Kathie sounds ravishing at moments, but in general the maturity of Miss Kirsten's voice and style never suggests the young Heidelberg waitress. This is Gordon MacRae's second appearance on records as Prince Karl Franz. His performance is colorless, and vocal stress is often too apparent. The lesser roles are all most capably sung, and the chorus work—by the Roger Wagner Chorale—is quite outstanding. The simulation of a performance in the theatre has been expertly realized by Capitol's engineers, who have used the stereo techniques sensibly and successfully on such numbers as *Student's Marching Song* and *Drinking Song*, both ready-made for the medium. By comparison, the mono, excellent though it is, sounds rather drab. J.F.I.

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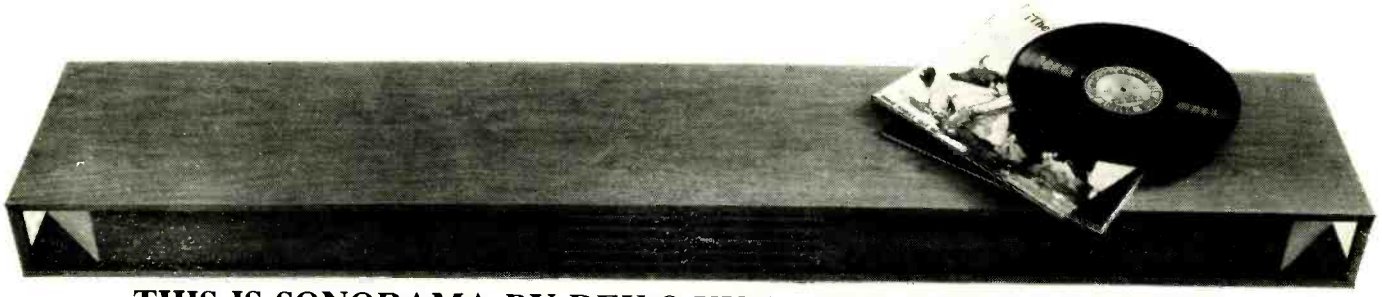

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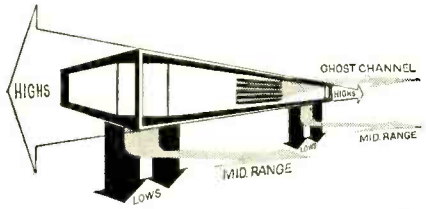

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CIRCLE 79 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Bob Brookmeyer: "Trombone Jazz Samba." Verve 8498, $4.98 (LP); 6-8498, $5.98 (SD).

Valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer has a go at bossa nova with a seven-man group that includes Jim Hall on guitar, Gary McFarland on vibes, and a Latin rhythm section made up of Willie Bobo, Carmen Costa, and Jose Paula. Some pleasant bossa nova tunes have been included, but because Brookmeyer's heavy-timbred trombone is too ponderous for the usually airy feeling of the bossa nova, the performances fail, for the most part, to come off. Things work out much better on one selection in which Brookmeyer shifts to piano, changing the group's character considerably in the process. In any event, the disc has an ambivalent nature: along with unfeigned attempts at bossa nova, there are such gimmickries as a *Colonel Bogey Bossa Nova*, a bit of malarkey on the *Mutiny on the Bounty* theme, and a *Blues Bossa Nova*, written by Brookmeyer, that has almost no apparent relationship to the genre.

Don Ellis: "Essence." Pacific Jazz 55, $4.98 (LP); S 55, $5.98 (SD).

Ellis, a trumpeter and exponent of "the new thing" (as the farther-out wing of jazz has been identified recently) has provided a relatively mixed program here. Those who are not willing to accompany him off into the distant world of splutters and flutters on *Irony*, or the lingering moans and sudden shrieks that he identifies as a "ballad" called *Slow Space*, may still find some things to catch their ear. The prime choice is *Ostinato*, based on African-derived rhythms and building up firmly to a strong, shouting solo by Ellis. Duke Ellington's *Johnny Come Lately* also offers him a foot on the ground and an opportunity to work out a solo in which his relationship to Dizzy Gillespie is very pronounced. And there is *Lover*, taken very fast—essentially a showcase for Ellis' virtuosity. Many of these pieces swing, but doubts may be raised in the minds of those who feel that jazz remains jazz just as long as it swings. Ellis recognizes the roots from which he springs, but he seems anxious to leave them behind.

Art Farmer: "Listen to Art Farmer and the Orchestra." Mercury 20766, $3.98 (LP); 60766, $4.98 (SD).

For several years Art Farmer has been on the verge of breaking out of the common mold of contemporary jazz trumpeters and revealing completely an individuality sometimes discernible in his playing. This was particularly true of the period during which he and Benny Golson jointly led the Jazztet. Farmer's failure then to achieve this potential personal distinction may have had a good deal to do with that group's failure.

That potential is finally realized on this disc. Farmer's means of achieving it appear to be keyed to two things: his use of the flugelhorn, which he has played occasionally before (and which proved to be equally effective for Miles Davis), and the interesting orchestral settings created by Oliver Nelson. The variety of colors conjured up with woodwinds, horns, and brasses brilliantly complement the colorful range of Farmer's playing. The combination of assurance and rightness about everything Farmer does in this collection is the sign of a master at work. The selections run from a slow and brooding treatment of Farmer's haunting tune *Rue Prevail* to a singing version of *Fly Me to the Moon*; from slow, soaring lyricism on *My Romance* to a sprightly bossa nova approach to *The Sweetest Sounds*. There is similarity between these performances and the Miles Davis—Gil Evans collaborations, although these works have greater variety and Farmer is by far the more polished performer.

Terry Gibbs's Big Band: "Explosion." Mercury 20704, $3.98 (LP); 60704, $4.98 (SD).

Gibbs has kept his big band working on a part-time basis on the West Coast for a year or more, and the results of this relatively steady employment are evident in these performances, taped during an appearance at The Summit. This full-bodied, swinging band has one essential quality understandably missing from almost any group assembled in a studio just for recording—relaxed assurance and ease. The program is a mixture of freshly approached standards (*Sleep, I'll Take Romance*), adaptations of small-group jazz classics (*Billie's Bounce*), and originals by Gibbs, Al Cohn, and Bill Holman. There are several good soloists in the band besides Gibbs, in addition to a fine rhythm section. But the pointless liner notes, attributed to Jerry Lewis, give no information whatever about the group or its personnel. Nevertheless, for fanciers of big-band jazz, this is a very welcome disc.

Dizzy Gillespie: "New Wave!" Philips 200-070, $3.98 (LP); 600-070, $4.98 (SD).

Although Gillespie was among the first American jazz musicians to be attracted to the bossa nova on its home ground, Brazil, the early stages of the fad in this country managed to slip past him before he could get on board. This set, made up almost entirely of bossa nova treatments of Brazilian and American tunes, puts him solidly in the forefront. His regular quintet (as of the period when Lalo Schifrin was on piano and Leo Wright played flute and alto saxophone) has been augmented by the Brazilian guitarist Bola Sete, the Brazilian percussionists and singers Jose Paula and Carmen Costa, and Charlie Ventura playing tenor and bass saxophones. Added, too, is an overdose of echo that often muddies the performances. Over-all, it is a disappointing set with an oddly rag-tag air. There is an imaginative and roaringly lusty bossa nova treatment of *Careless Love*, a brilliant solo by Schifrin on *Chega de Saudade* (in the midst of an otherwise lumpy and bedraggled performance), and several flashes of Gillespie's polished trumpet work. But there is also an inappropriate novelty song for Paula and Costa, a sluggish attempt at a bass saxophone solo by Ventura, and several other aimless selections.

Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra: "Themes of the Great Bands." Capitol T 1812, $3.98 (LP); ST 1812, $4.98 (SD).

Although this collection wanders in and out of jazz (its focus is the signature themes made familiar in the days of the big bands—some jazz, some nonjazz), it should have strong appeal for anyone who used to stay up at night listening to the "remote" broadcasts by those bands. Gray and his collaborators have proved to have a far better knack than most other studio organizations for recapturing for modern recording processes the sound and feeling of the familiar big-band arrangements of the past. Some of the themes re-created here are available in recent recordings by the band leaders who used them, but there are also several welcome additions—Jan Savitt's *Quaker City Jazz*, Artie Shaw's *Nightmare*, and Woody Herman's *Blue Flame*. A free bonus record is attached to this release which contains ten more themes (making twenty-two in all), among them Gene Krupa's *Star Burst*, Jimmy Lunceford's *Uptown Blues*, Bobby Sherwood's *The Elks' Parade*, and the Casa Loma's own *Smoke Rings*.

Continued on page 108

by John S. Wilson

Duke with Coleman Hawkins.

With Max Roach and Charlie Mingus.

Ellington—After Four Decades, A New Luster

THERE ARE two or three jazz musicians whose genius might be equated with Duke Ellington's, but none of them has exercised that genius over so long a period. During Ellington's four decades in jazz he has had, of course, his fallow periods; but his accomplishments even at low ebb would be sufficient to cap the careers of most jazzmen.

During the Fifties, for example, his flow of creativity as a composer was not so abundant as it had been. Nevertheless, he produced *Suite Thursday*, *Such Sweet Thunder*, *Satin Doll*, and the erratic but occasionally provocative scores for *A Drum Is a Woman* and *Anatomy of a Murder*, along with numerous little gems of tunes that were blithely tossed off and allowed to disappear in the constant hurry toward new things. In retrospect, the relative mediocrity of that period seems due not so much to any drying up of his personal muse as to his apparently static view of programming.

Given the opportunity, the Ellington orchestra of those days could be as exciting and distinctive as most of its predecessors. But the opportunity was not granted very often. An Ellington program at a concert or festival or night club became drearily predictable, and placed stress on the least worthy aspects of the band: Cat Anderson's caterwauling trumpet, Paul Gonsalves' marathon tenor saxophone solos, and performances by the very ordinary singers who appeared from time to time. These concerts became contests of endurance in which the listener hung on, hoping for something distinctively Ellingtonian. (After 1955, there was at least the unfailingly exciting performance of Johnny Hodges to look forward to.)

The suspicion that this orchestra, usually considered Ellington's most natural medium of expression, might actually have become an inhibiting factor began to take definite shape a little over a year ago when he appeared as a pianist with only bass and drum accompaniment—his first such concert. Although the occasion was not an unqualified success, largely because of Ellington's surprising squeamishness about placing himself in the spotlight for any length of time, it hinted at an encouraging revival of the lustrous Ellington aura. He drew his material from the almost limitless resources of his forty years as a composer, and at the same time broke away, by necessity, from the patterns established with the band.

The direction suggested by this brief break with tradition was followed up last summer during a short hiatus between the termination of Ellington's contract with Columbia and the beginning of a new one with Reprise. Between August 18 and September 26, he made three albums (for the United Artists and Impulse labels) with four unusually challenging musicians: Charlie Mingus, Max Roach, John Coltrane, and Coleman Hawkins.

On "Money Jungle," Ellington forms a trio with Mingus and Roach which, in discipline alone, is remarkable. Foregoing his tendency to dodge the spotlight, Ellington remains the focus of the entire record. Mingus' fire and virtuosity are molded into an almost incredibly close support of Ellington's piano; he plays too some distinctive introductions and interludes, but they are carefully controlled, and never erupt into the dominance that typifies his own records. And Roach, a drummer whose adventurous exploration of his equipment has become a trademark, stays discreetly in the background, providing a strong, well-constructed foundation.

Ellington runs the gamut of his pianistic talent—from flashes of the Harlem stride school which nourished him to passages that are pure mature Ellington. He purrs lovingly through two of his dreamiest tunes, *Solitude* and *Warm Valley*, and digs joyously into another old favorite, *Caravan*. And four new—and worthy—Ellington compositions are played with a splendor and fervor that probably could not be equaled by any other threesome.

Ellington's meeting with Coleman Hawkins marks the first time these two veterans have recorded together, despite the fact that both have been prominent since the mid-Twenties. Participating here is a small group strongly reminiscent, stylistically, of those Ellingtonian musicians who were led at recording sessions in the late Thirties by Johnny Hodges, Barney Bigard, Cootie Williams, and Rex Stewart. Trumpeter Ray Nance who, like Ellington, sounds invigorated by his new surroundings, plays brilliantly all through this set. New vitality can be discerned even in the work of such relatively consistent performers as Hodges, Harry Carney, and Lawrence Brown. Hawkins' years of free-lancing, with the consequent lapse into loose, rambling performances, sometimes put him at a disadvantage in the company of this compact group, which seems to have an instinctive sense of form. But he reaches the peak of his skill collaborating with Duke on *Self Portrait*, a lovely ballad by Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, or joining in the lusty tumult of *The Jeep Is Jumpin'*. These, and most of the selections, are sound, solid Ellington performances of vintage quality.

"Duke Ellington and John Coltrane" is the only one of the meetings that is less than satisfactory. Ellington serves as little more than an accompanist (and during two long Coltrane solos he simply sits it out). His solos are all brief and quite casual, while Coltrane, on tenor or soprano saxophone, goes on and on—with, in most cases, deadening results.

The rest of the selections considered here, however, indicate new and stimulating possibilities for one of the most enduring figures in jazz.

Duke Ellington: "Money Jungle." United Artists 14017, $4.98 (LP); 15017, $5.98 (SD).
Duke Ellington: "Meets Coleman Hawkins." Impulse 26, $4.98 (LP); S 26, $5.98 (SD).
Duke Ellington: "And John Coltrane." Impulse 30, $4.98 (LP); S 30, $5.98 (SD).

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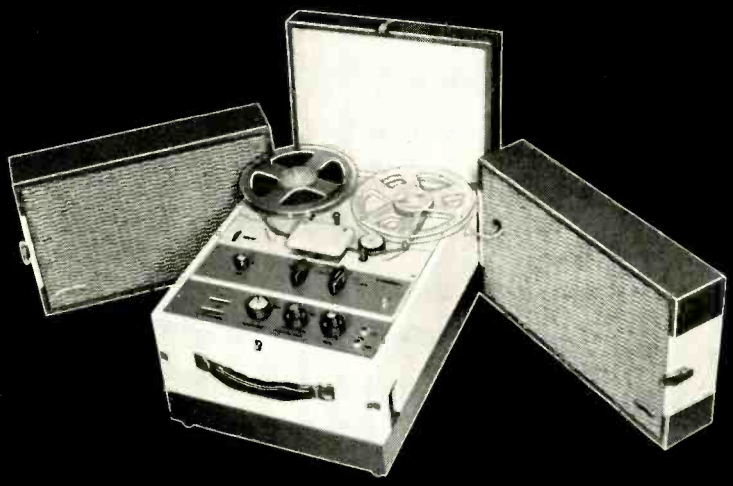

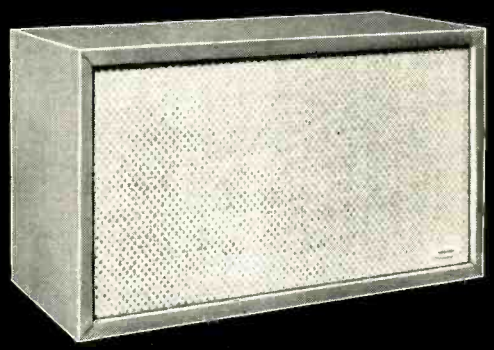

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CIRCLE 49 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

JAZZ

Continued from page 105

Woody Herman: "1963." Philips 200-065, $3.98 (LP); 600-065, $4.98 (SD).
You have to go all the way back to Woody Herman's original Herd in the middle Forties to find any of his bands equal to this one. Power, polish, spirit, humor, a sprinkling of brilliant soloists, and arrangements that make use of the group as a band rather than as merely a framework for solos are the ingredients of these excellent performances. Plus, of course, the very perceptive and knowledgeable guidance of Herman—whose clarinet, incidentally, sounds much more at home here than in his bands of the late Forties. The most important factor is the clean, clear, bright attack—of the sections individually and of the entire ensemble. But there are at least two standout soloists: Phil Wilson, a remarkable trombonist who seems to have picked up where Bill Harris left off as he slides lazily through his lines, smoothly, gruffly, with staccato asides and glancing touches of humor; and Sal Nistico, a well-disciplined and strongly swinging tenor saxophonist. Pushing the whole thing is a marvelous rhythm section: Nat Pierce, piano; Chuck Andrus, bass; and Jake Hanna, drums. Hanna in particular is a tremendously propulsive force.

Illinois Jacquet. Epic 16033, $3.98 (LP); 17033, $4.98 (SD).
John Hammond, producer of this disc, is apparently intent on doing a multiple resuscitation job. He succeeds here in returning Illinois Jacquet, Sir Charles Thompson, and Roy Eldridge to their proper roles, and presenting them once again as the tastefully supple swingers they are. Jacquet, it will be recalled, long ago abandoned his real talent to produce a mess of lucrative honks and squeals; Thompson has latterly been fashionably dull on organ; while Eldridge has simply been passed by. All of them are present here, backed by a couple of excellent rhythm sections—each of which includes a strong guitar (the absence of which has contributed greatly to the multitude of unswinging big-band performances in the past dozen years). Within settings reminiscent of the old Basie small groups, Jacquet foregoes his blatancies and concentrates on the rich, sinuous playing which first brought him to attention. Thompson rolls along with Basie-like grace, and Eldridge demonstrates that his biting, cutting style has not lost any of its edge. It's good to know that there can still be this much fun in jazz.

The Jazz Crusaders: "At the Lighthouse." Pacific Jazz 57, $4.98 (LP); S 57, $5.98 (SD).
This young quintet has come along fast in the two years since it made its first recording, *Freedom Sound* (Pacific Jazz 27). The freshness and promise has coalesced into well-integrated teamwork that still retains the attractive vivacity of the early performances. The quintet appears at its best on the faster selections here, on which it builds up, with lighter texture, the driving intensity often achieved by Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. Trombonist Wayne Henderson is the most consistent and authoritative of the soloists, although tenor saxophonist Wilton Felder also has some excellent moments. Joe Sample, the group's pianist, is erratic; although he has some potent rhythmic ideas, he is apt to get stuck in down-home clichés. An enormously helpful contribution is made by Norbert Hooper, whose drumming balances a positive, assertive drive with a light, lifting quality. Still another asset for the Crusaders is their ability to create good original material: five of these six pieces come from within the group, and they strike a far better average than most such originals.

Mike Mainieri Quartet: "Blues on the Other Side." Argo 706, $3.98 (LP).
Mainieri is a young vibraphonist who made a very strong impression when he was first heard with Buddy Rich two years ago. Like most youngsters, he was anxious to show off his flash and virtuosity then—but he had the ability to back up his showing-off. Sidelined with an illness after that, he returns on this disc leading a group of his own for the first time. The signs of quick maturity shown here are even more impressive than the virtuosity he displayed with Rich. Most of these pieces are taken at moderate or slow tempos. Mainieri's playing is gentle and reflective at times, warmly lyrical on slow ballads, and smoothly swinging, with no desperate histrionics, on faster selections. His quartet contains no familiar names, but it is remarkably cohesive and has, in Bruce Martin, an exceptionally deft and perceptive pianist.

Shelly Manne—Bill Evans: "Empathy." Verve 8497, $4.98 (LP); 6-8497, $5.98 (SD).
The trio at work here is made up of Manne on drums, Evans on piano, and Monte Budwig, bass. There is, as the title implies, considerable empathy existing among them, particularly between Manne and Evans. Manne is a tasteful and highly imaginative drummer who gives Evans' delicately swung piano solos a neatly shaded backing. He is also an individualist, and the setting he provides is unique—particularly in the use of cymbals and gongs for very interesting accent effects. The program seems, at first glance, hardly promising: two of the lesser tunes from Irving Berlin's generally unexciting score for *Mr. President* and the well-worn *Danny Boy* are the ominous offerings on one side. Actually, the banality of the tunes is of little consequence, for Evans moves quickly away from them to become involved with Manne in a variety of delightful exchanges and improvisations. The other side consists of an adventurous treatment of *With a Song in My Heart*, a delicate but perky version of Gordon Jenkins' *Goodbye*, and a performance of *I Believe in You* (from *How To Succeed*). The last-named, though it is a better tune than the two *Mr. President* items, emerges here as the least effectively played piece in the set.

Art Pepper: "The Artistry of Pepper." Pacific Jazz 60, $4.98 (LP).
This collection of re-releases serves as a valuable reminder, now that Pepper is not free to make any new records, of the excellent work done by him. The clear purity of his alto saxophone tone and the gracefully rhythmic flow of his lines are heard at their best in the four selections on Side 1, where he is teamed with tenor saxophonist Bill Perkins in some wonderfully fresh-sounding ensemble passages. These performances remind one of the best work of the early Gerry Mulligan quartets, with the added de-

light of Pepper's very individual solo work. The second side, played by three different groups, is more uneven. On two selections Pepper reverts to a loose and wispy style, but his other contributions are creditable.

Vi Redd: "Bird Call." United Artists 14016, $4.98 (LP); 15016, $5.98 (SD).

The few women who have made a mark as jazz instrumentalists have invariably been pianists. There have been others—Melba Liston on trombone, Billie Rogers on trumpet, and Betty Smith, an English saxophonist, come to mind—but none has achieved the stature of Mary Lou Williams or Marian McPartland or Toshiko. Vi Redd, then, is striking into reasonably new territory when she presents herself as an alto saxophonist. (She also sings, but even though she shows herself to be a capable vocalist here, one must assume that this is simply a hedge.) Her full capabilities as an alto saxophonist are not given a really fair exposure, for this collection is made up, with one exception, of pieces recorded by Charlie Parker. Since her tone and style are quite obviously derived from Parker, the suggestion of his presence, in these circumstances, shrouds everything she plays. The disc is taken from two different sessions; at one of them she played consistently better than at the other. One receives the impression, therefore, of a highly promising altoist who may have distinctly more to offer than this initial disc shows.

Frank Sinatra—Count Basie and His Orchestra: "Sinatra—Basie." Reprise 1008, $3.98 (LP); 9-1008, $4.98 (SD).

The consistency with which Frank Sinatra wins the annual "favorite male singer" poll conducted by the jazz magazine *Down Beat* has always struck me as puzzling. For whatever one's view of the meaning of the term "jazz singer," Sinatra is not one. If ever evidence of this should be needed, it is contained in this meeting with the Basie band. Sinatra's forte is the ballad. Once the tempo starts moving up, he tends to turn unattractively flip, to appear to be singing out of the side of his mouth, or simply to be straining to keep up. Since most of these pieces are on the medium and uppish side, he is not shown to good advantage. The Basie band is reduced, except for a few solos, to a background role, which it performs with polish and aplomb.

Billy Strayhorn: "The Peaceful Side." United Artists 14010, $4.98 (LP); 15010, $5.98 (SD).

This disc presents solos by Billy Strayhorn who—as Duke Ellington's arranger, co-composer, and assistant pianist since 1939—is so integral a part of the Ellington creative complex that it is frequently difficult to determine which of them wrote what. (For a further discussion of Ellington himself, see page 106 of this issue). *Take the "A" Train*, for example, almost always assumed to be Ellington's composition, is actually by Strayhorn. Some discreet voices and strings are occasionally added to the piano in these performances of tunes he has written alone or with Ellington (*Lush Life, Day Dream, Chelsea Bridge*, and of course *"A" Train*, among others). Playing in a style slightly reminiscent of Ellington, Strayhorn has produced a lovely disc; his performances are unusually discerning in their simplicity and directness.

JOHN S. WILSON

Music (Epic EC 803. October 1961) remains without competition. But for extroverts at least, Stokowski's reel has a galvanic sound appeal uniquely its own.

JONGEN: *Symphonie concertante*

Virgil Fox, organ; Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra, Georges Prêtre, cond.

• • CAPITOL ZP 8573. 37 min. $7.98.

A tape first which sound fans will relish as a wall-bursting "demo." The program is played with immense virtuosity, but the musical content strikes me as even shallower than when I reviewed the disc edition in February 1962. However, I must say that there is far less surface noise in the present taping than in either the LP or SD versions, and that the stereo recording sounds cleaner and more incisive here than in the latter.

KHACHATURIAN: *Spartacus: Suite. Gayne: Suite*

KHACHATURIAN: *Symphony No. 2*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Aram Khachaturian, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80100 and 80106. 41 and 52 min. $7.95 each.

Listeners with a taste for the Soviet-Armenian composer's brash rhythms, catchy tune-fragments, and somewhat poster-art "Eastern" tone colorings will relish his versions of mostly familiar *Gayne* pieces—including the ubiquitous *Sabre Dance*, which sounds just as insistent and slapdash in the composer's hands as in anyone else's. Those who think he has something more significant to say in his larger works (and who don't already own the 1960 Stokowski/United Artists version of the Second Symphony now reissued by MusicTapes) may be able to find more enjoyment than I can in that rather grim, enigmatic, and often pretentious music. The main attraction here, though, is the first stereo representation of the *Spartacus* score featured on the Bolshoi Ballet's American tour. Only a few selections are played here, and several of these are calm and romantically expressive. The rest of the work is in saucy barbaric style, of course, and if there's no great musical substance anywhere, there is considerable freshness and vivacity. The brightly recorded orchestra is admirable throughout. The tape processings are very good, except for two momentary intrusions of reverse-channel spill-over.

MOZART: *Quartets for Strings: No. 14, in D, K. 387; No. 18, in A, K. 464*

Juilliard String Quartet.

• • EPIC EC 827. 58 min. $7.95.

MOZART: *Quartets for Strings: No. 15, in D minor, K. 421; No. 19, in C, K. 465 ("Dissonant")*

Fine Arts Quartet.

• • CONCERTAPES 4019. 57 min. $7.95.

What a glorious windfall: four of the six Mozart *Haydn* quartets in first—and superb—4-track tapings! Both reels are well processed and excellently recorded, with apparently somewhat closer miking in the Concertape. Both are magnificently performed too, although in distinctively different styles: the Juilliard's playing is more deftly integrated, precise, and more "modern," stylistically, than that of the more individualized and romantically outspoken Fine Arts four. But you can't go wrong with either.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: *Waltzes*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.

• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2093. 42 min. $8.95.

With the January stereo disc version still fresh in my ears, direct A/B comparisons were merely confirming proof that the present taping boasts identical sound qualities. There is a slight preëcho at the very beginning, but in compensation the surfaces of the tape are even quieter than those of the disc. And with my praise for Reiner's performances perhaps still fresh in readers' minds, I need only note here that all five waltzes (Josef Strauss's *My Life Is Love and Laughter*, Johann II's *Vienna Blood*, *Artist's Life*, *Roses from the South*, and *Treasure*) seem even more intoxicating on second hearing. The bravura *Thunder and Lightning* Polka encore proves to be a demonstration of sonics that puts to shame most more overtly showy examples.

WAGNER: *Orchestral Excerpts*

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.

• • MERCURY (via Bel Canto) ST 90287. 43 min. $7.95.

Fine orchestral playing, airily floating in lucid and expansive stereo, is the prime attraction of this well-processed tape. Unfortunately, Dorati seems self-conscious and stilted in readings of *Die Meistersinger* Prelude, Good Friday Spell from *Parsifal*, and a very deliberate *Tannhäuser* Overture (Dresden version) which offer no competition to Bruno Walter's tapings of the first two works, or to Stokowski's of the third. Dorati's Prelude to Act I of *Lohengrin* comes off better, and here there seems to be no 4-track reel competition.

E. POWER BIGGS: *"Heroic Music for Organ, Brass, and Percussion"*

E. Power Biggs, organ; New England Brass Ensemble, Rosario Mazzeo, cond.

• • COLUMBIA MQ 486. 32 min. $7.95.

The featured artist actually appears as soloist only in an enchanting Purcell Ayre which shows off to perfection the baroque color resources of the Flentrop organ in the Busch-Reisinger Museum at Harvard University. Elsewhere he plays a subordinate role in the accompaniments to six spirited brass and percussion players in his own and Daniel Pinkham's arrangements of pieces by Clarke, Handel, Croft, Purcell, and Telemann. The last-named's brief overture to *Der getreue Musikmeister* and amusing *Heldenmusik* suite (consisting of a dozen short marches entitled "Honor," "Charm," "Bravery," etc.) are novel materials and the most discreetly and stereogenically scored. The various English marches, trumpet tunes, and voluntaries are fine rousing stuff, but rather overscored, especially in regard to percussion, and most of them have been done before as well or better in tapings by

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by R. D. Darrell

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Voisin for Kapp and Wobitsch for Vanguard. But if the transcribers' scholarship is somewhat flimsy here, their sonic and stereoistic effects are often electrifying. The recording is superb throughout, and the tape processing, apart from frequent preëchoes, excellent.

LEONID HAMBRO and JASCHA ZAYDE: *Two-Piano Recital*

Leonid Hambro and Jascha Zayde, pianos.

• • COMMAND CC 11010. 43 min. $7.95.

Demonstrating that for Command's engineers the hazards of piano recording hold no more terrors than those of taping percussion ensembles and full symphony orchestras, this reel is outstanding for both its stereo technology and flawless tape processing. The performances (of Mozart's Sonata in F, K. 497; Schubert's Fantasia in F minor, Op. 103; and Mendelssohn's *Allegro brilliant*, Op. 92) are assured, straightforward, and brilliantly dexterous. Yet my praise must be regretfully qualified. Playing the duet parts on two pianos tends to exaggerate their differentiations and to spread unduly the stereo sonic image; the instruments themselves are either somewhat hard in their tonal qualities or often made to seem so by the players' hammering vehemence; and, more seriously, Hambro and Zayde seldom get below the surface attractions of the Mozart and the Schubert to suggest the essential eloquence of these works. Only Mendelssohn's more bravura essay is interpretatively successful.

KARL MUENCHINGER: *Music for Chamber Orchestra*

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond.

• • LONDON LCL 80110. 40 min. $7.95.

Except for Corelli's lovely *Christmas* Concerto, Op. 6, No. 8 (taped some years ago by the Solisti di Zagreb for Vanguard, originally in a 2-track and later in a 4-track version), the present program is made up of tape firsts: the Concertino No. 2, in G, long attributed to Pergolesi and here to Carlo Ricciotti; Münchinger's arrangement of the so-called *Kanon* by Pachelbel introduced on 78s by Fiedler; and the Chaconne from Act III of Gluck's *Paride ed Elena* which includes the famous Gavotte. Baroque purists may tut-tut Münchinger's romantic approach and overexpressive string vibrato (I certainly prefer Janigro's tauter, more vivacious treatment of the Corelli concerto), but the combined emotional and sonic appeal of all these performances—that of the gravely ceremonial, expansively flowering Pachelbel work in particular—will be hard indeed for most listeners to resist. Perhaps they can tolerate more kindly than I can the intrusions of reverse-channel spill-over in the otherwise good tape processing.

ROGER VOISIN: *Music for Trumpet and Orchestra, Vol. 4*

Roger Voisin, trumpet; Kapp Sinfonietta, Emanuel Vardi, cond.

• • KAPP KTL 49008. 43 min. $7.95.

To set the record straight, this is *not* the disc collection entered as Volume 4 in Schwann: that (Kapp 9062) is properly titled "Trumpet Music" and so reviewed in these pages February 1962. It has not yet appeared in a tape edition. The present collection was issued on disc last fall as Kapp 9070. Once again Voisin plays like the supreme virtuoso he is; Vardi's accompaniments are admirably deft (with particularly fine realizations of the harpsichord continuo by Igor Kipnis); again the recording is clean and open, and the tape processing, except for slight preëchoes, first-rate. The selections are even more novel than usual: except for the vivacious Torelli Concerto in D, they are all tape firsts (indeed, only this work and the fascinating Fux Serenada for Two Trumpets are available on discs). Perhaps the three Fanfares for Four Trumpets by Sigismund Neukomm (1778-1858) are too brief to be of much more than historical interest; but both Stradella's amusingly lively Sinfonia to *Il Barcheggio* and Alessandro Scarlatti's brisk Sinfonia No. 11, in D, are thoroughly delightful baroque discoveries.

"Bashin'." Jimmy Smith, electronic organ; Orchestra. Verve VSTC 279, 39 min., $7.95.

The best tribute I can pay the unpredictable Jimmy Smith is to assert that, although his instrument produces as ugly *ersatz* tones as I've ever heard, I'm consistently hypnotized here by his genuinely jazzlike improvisational imagination. Oliver Nelson's arrangements for the sixteen-man band on the first side are all effective, and I like best the highly original *Ol' Man River* and the catchy if erratic *Step Right Up*. Still more fascinating are the title piece, on the second side, and two others for trio alone (Smith, guitarist Jimmy Warren, and drummer Don Bailey). The recording and tonal balances are fine throughout.

"Count Basie and the Kansas City Seven." Impulse ITC 304, 37 min., $7.95.

There is perhaps rather too much inconsequential fluting here (although Frank Wess is a very deft soloist, especially in his two originals *Secrets* and *Senator Whitehead*), and I could well do without the Count's shifting from his usual light-fingered piano to a tubby electronic organ in the sentimentalized *I Want a Little Girl*. But everything else here represents the current Basie Septet at its most vivacious and delicate best, with clean, markedly stereoistic recording capturing every detail of the *sotto voce* subtleties in *Count's Place*, *Tally-Ho Mr. Basie*, and *Shoeshine Boy*. Excellent tape processing adds to the attractions of one of the very best of Basie's latest releases.

"Gay Purr-ee." Original Sound Track Recording, Mort Lindsey, cond. Warner Brothers WSTC 1479, 35 min., $7.95.

If the best-seller charts and most disc reviewers (including my colleague J.F.I., with whom I seldom disagree) are to be believed, it is not only the kids who lap up this feline fantasy distinguished by an Arlen-Harburg score and such luminaries as Judy Garland, Robert Goulet, and Red Buttons. But I must confess that it all struck me as an almost unbearably embarrassing venture into what I can only describe, sourly, as "whumsey." Perhaps you'd better trust

your own ears on this one. Certainly there can be no complaints about the recording (except for its lack of acoustical warmth) or the tape processing.

"Jumbo." Film Track Recording, George Stoll, cond. Columbia OQ 507, 35 min., $9.95.

"Rome Adventure and **Neapolitan Favorites."** Film Track Recording ("Rome Adventure"); Café Milano Orchestra ("Neapolitan Favorites"); Max Steiner, cond. Warner Brothers WSTC 1458, 34 min., $7.95.

Two current film reels of no great distinction, but they do contain some special attractions besides that of impressive sound. *Jumbo* is synthetically high-spirited (and niggardly in length for its premium cost), but Doris Day does very well with *Over and Over Again* and *My Romance*, and Jimmie Durante's staccato reprise of *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World* is by itself well worth the price of admission. Durante's appearances, however, are far too brief. The other reel features tenor Emilio Pericoli in a highly emotional *Al di là*, but I found this showpiece less appealing than Steiner's characteristically rich orchestral versions of Neapolitan favorites on the other side, topped by a tuneful *Serenade*, and the brisk mandolin-and accordion-dominated *Arrivederci Roma* and *Volare*. A couple of spillover whispers sneak in here, and I suspect one in *Jumbo* too, but in other respects both reels seem well processed with minimal surface noise.

"Mr. President." Original Cast Recording, Jay Blackton, cond. Columbia OQ 490, 46 min., $9.95.

This show has taken such a beating from both theatre and disc critics that its success with the mass public seemed inexplicable to me until I heard the present reel and discovered that, while the critics are certainly right about the relative colorlessness of the characterizations (which even Nanette Fabray and Anita Gillette can't succeed in vitalizing), the secret of its appeal lies in the score. Certainly it is naïve and old-fashioned, and certainly Berlin has written much better tunes in the past; nevertheless, these are unmistakably Berlin-ish and in their very lack of sophistication are comfortably easy on one's ears. If you're looking for another *Of Thee I Sing*, you'll be sadly disappointed; but if you want relaxing, light musical entertainment, there's an abundance of that in *Mr. President*.

"Two of a Mind." Paul Desmond and Gerry Mulligan, saxophones. RCA Victor FTP 1172, 41 min., $7.95.

Few easygoing jazz improvisations and interplays have been as delectable as these relaxed yet superbly rhapsodic duos by Desmond (alto sax, left) and Mulligan (baritone sax, right) with centered rhythm section. I've never heard the former play more lyrically or the latter more imaginatively. Although the tape surfaces are a bit rough and preëchoey on the first side at least, the exquisitely pure and cleanly differentiated stereo recording catches to perfection the contrasts and blends of individual tone color and stylistic nuances. Desmond's free-wheeling title piece, Mulligan's lively *Blight of the Fumble Bee*, and a quiet *All the Things You Are* are all fine; the long, sometimes lyrical, sometimes swinging *The Way You Look Tonight* is an out-and-out masterpiece!

THE PROSPECTS FOR PSYCHOACOUSTICS

Continued from page 50

performer—who is thus even more noticeably "in the room."

Next came the "Electronically Enhanced" school of high fidelity. It was a short step from Hollywood's work in bringing the artist into the listening room to surrounding the listener with music. The first major step in this direction, of course, was Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, created jointly by the artist-engineers of Hollywood and Leopold Stokowski. Millions thrilled to Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, seen and heard in a theatre alive with sound—recorded on eight tracks—from every direction. More recent counterparts are the seven tracks of "Cinerama," the six tracks of "Todd-A-O," and the four tracks of "Cinemascope."

Stokowski, one of the pioneers in sound reproduction, suggests that recorded music can do more than re-create original performances, that it can be used artistically to heighten the moods and emotions of music. He further suggests multiple recording and reproducing channels, in front of, at the side of, and behind the listener. In time he expects composers to create a new musical idiom expressly suited to electronic recreation.

The equipment required for "Electronically Enhanced" reproduction is similar to that for the "Artist in the Room"; one just requires more of it, in more complex setup. Using current two-channel material, we can derive "composite mid channels," and "reverse echo channels." If, in time, we have more channels of information available, we will be able to do a more thorough job of enhancing music electronically.

The "Window on the Orchestra" concept—evolved in Europe, principally in England—embraces a completely different aesthetic of recorded music. Its premise is that no intelligent person can ever believe that a symphony orchestra is actually playing in his living room, nor would he want the dynamic range and power of an orchestra in that confined space. Advocates of the "Window on the Orchestra" regard as a more reasonable sonic ideal the hearing of music as if one were listening through an open window to a performance going on in a large adjacent room. The reproducing system, then, and especially the loudspeaker, acts as the window through which one hears a satisfyingly authentic, naturally diminished reproduction of the original—with the acoustics or ambience of the original as an important part of the over-all presentation.

It was P. G. A. H. Voigt, designer of theatre horns in the 1920s for Edison-Bell, who developed the notion of a reduced sonic image for the home, and his speaker, the Voigt Corner Horn of 1928, exemplified this notion in playback equipment. Other kinds of equipment and techniques developed abroad in conjunction with the "Window on the Orchestra" theory were somewhat different from their counterparts in the United States. Thus, monophonic recording engineers favored the use of a single, distant microphone which permitted much of the acoustic ambience to be mixed with the direct signal. For stereo recording, A. D. Blumlein of EMI suggested the use of two microphones with overlapping patterns, placed fairly near each other. The objective was again to capture the ambience of the recording hall, and to increase the depth illusion rather than to intensify "left-right" or "surround-sound" effects.

Amplifiers for "window" systems were not required to reproduce high level transients, and consequently they were designed to be lower-powered, but very stable and accurate, with very low distortion at normal listening room levels. In speakers, extreme accuracy—to convey the ambience—was most important. Thus, the Voigt and succeeding designs used heavy magnetic systems for precise control of the diaphragms. Electrostatics were first admired in England because it was felt that they had a special ability to reproduce the "window" kind of sound, and when techniques had been developed sufficiently, P. J. Walker produced a free-standing full range unit.

From the discussion above, it can be seen that the equipment and techniques for one kind of system do differ, to a marked degree, from those for another kind. Yet all three merit the name of high fidelity. The determinant of what type of system is "best" must perforce be a psychoacoustic evaluation. Thus, the man who expects his reproducing system to "enhance" the music will be most unhappy with equipment refined for the effect of the "window." Too, while everyone professes to want to improve his system, to make it "better," "better" is a matter of subjective interpretation. Indeed, the varying descriptions and conflicting opinions one hears from different listeners discussing the same piece of equipment tell us more about the listeners themselves than about the equipment.

The professed audio expert—engineer, salesman, testing specialist, or even writer—must be at least as much a psychologist as a technician. His final descriptions of reproducing equipment and music systems must be phrased in terms of their objectives, the kind of listening for which they were intended. And anyone who assembles and installs complete audio systems or recommends such systems must go behind the "specs," and try to furnish a system that will give pleasure to its user. Happy is the listener who has a system designed for his goal in listening; desperate is the man who has a "perfect" system designed for another kind of listening than his.

In fact, without a technique of relating the communicative function of audio equipment to its human receivers, people, we cannot really say that "high fidelity" has any meaning. With the technique that psychoacoustics affords, high fidelity becomes more valid both as a science and an art.

THE ORIGINS OF PSYCHOACOUSTICS

Continued from page 47

be trained to blow and bow more consonant high overtones from their very dissimilar instruments.

As for composers, Helmholtz pointed out the necessity of their having a full understanding of the high overtone qualities of each instrument and each instrumental choir. What was an orthodox interval or chord in one instrumental combination could easily become dissonant in another. When this technique was utilized deliberately by a genius like Beethoven, the effect was often electrifying (although even he was at first castigated for his daring). The invention of new instruments with new high overtone spectra—an obvious reference on Helmholtz's part to Wagner and his heroic bass trumpet and perhaps to Adolphe Sax—also trod the plank of dissonance, however brilliantly descriptive their effects might be.

For dissonance is a shifting frontier governed by the nature of music as a continuum of sound with a changing flow-pattern where slight changes in physical sound may profoundly alter its psychoacoustics. Thus the canny tone poet builds his climax by stating a chord softly in the strings, then repeats the chord as he gradually adds woodwinds and brass in higher octaves with greater volume; his chord becomes imperceptibly more dissonant and dramatic until it eventually reaches its climax in what appears to be pure dissonance. What at first may be disturbing reveals, on repeated auditions, much beauty and logic, until eventually the disturbance vanishes entirely, leaving the listener conditioned to the beauty of the dissonance. A similar conditioning process takes place in the historical continuum of music: the dissonant chords of the first movement of the *Eroica*, the discords of Berlioz's Requiem or Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* are no longer ugly but represent the warp and woof of our musical lives.

Helmholtz wrote in *On the Sensations of Tone*: "Whether one combination of tones is rougher or smoother than another depends solely on the anatomical structure of the ear and has nothing to do with psychological motives. But what degree of roughness a hearer is inclined to endure as a means of musical expression depends on taste and habit; hence the boundary between consonances and dissonances has been frequently changed . . . and does not rest solely on unalterable natural laws, but is also the result of aesthetic principles, which have already changed, and will still further change, with the progressive development of humanity." On this principle is established the bulwark of psychoacoustics. Were Helmholtz alive today it is quite possible that his terms of reference would include not only our avant-garde composers but stereo amplifiers of 60 watts per channel.

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PROJECT BORIS

Continued from page 56

life," said Labinsky, "have I heard a chorus perform the opening scene with all the attacks absolutely clean." A Paris newspaper man observed that "these Bulgarians seem to come from another age which they have somehow managed to preserve in a hostile world. You can hear it in their singing." Christoff and Glotz accepted congratulations on the chorus with the genial satisfaction of impresarios who have brought off a coup; the Bulgarians had been brought all the way from Sofia on their say-so, and the venture had proved a triumphant success.

For Boris' death scene, recorded on Thursday the thirteenth, Christoff and Lloyd-Jones were on stage while the chorus was assembled in a low-ceilinged, dimly lit basement storeroom, ordinarily used for caching beer, champagne, cognac, and various other potations on sale at *les bals dansants*. The plan was for Christoff to sing right on mike in dead center; Lloyd-Jones, directly behind him, was to stagger and fall down at the appropriate moment; the chorus below was to sing at full volume, with the gain on the basement microphones turned way down so as to create the desired effect of a sound emerging from distant corridors. ("The effect is quite different," explained Glotz, "from having the chorus sing softly on stage.")

Challan asked for a run-through, but Christoff broke off in mid-passage. "I can't hear a note of the chorus," he objected, and it was true. The Bulgarians could be heard in the control room through the loudspeakers; Cluytens could hear them on the headphones he was wearing; but on stage they were inaudible. "I suppose we should have thought of that," said Gooch as he hurried downstairs to rig up a loudspeaker on stage so that Christoff could hear the chorus. When the speaker was installed, everybody tried again. This time it was Cluytens and the chorus master who raised objections. Despite the closed-circuit television system, which allowed the chorus to watch Cluytens on a portable screen, the orchestra and chorus could not seem to mesh. "Couldn't we try it in the main hall?" Cluytens asked, and the chorus was instructed to come back upstairs. They gathered under the balcony behind the stage and sang the passage first facing the microphones and then facing away from the microphones. Either way the sound in the control room seemed much too immediate and articulate—not at all an effect as from a distant corridor. Many experiments were tried until at length the chorus was put far behind the conductor on a broad flight of steps leading into the hall. Christoff could hear, conductor and chorus master were within eyeshot of each other, and the sound on the tape had the essential *lointain* quality.

And so it went on to the final session—preliminary plans colliding with practical exigencies, the ideal in conflict with the possible. Somehow or other, quick and effective solutions were invariably attained by this brilliant if not always congruent company. And hour by hour, session by session, Project Boris passed from vision to reality. On the last day the number of takes passed the four hundred mark. Miles of magnetic tape had been recorded. In the weeks ahead much work would need to be done: editing, rebalancing, superimpositions (for example, the bells in the Coronation Scene). Microgroove masters would have to be cut, annotations prepared, promotion developed. But the vital work was over.

Gooch shut down the monitoring console for the last time, stuffed his notes on the final session into a briefcase, walked down the creaking steps, and took a parting look at the Napoleonic splendors of the Salle Wagram. He had less than two hours to pack and catch the plane to London. A stereo *Boris* had been put on tape.

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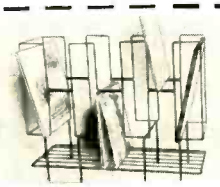

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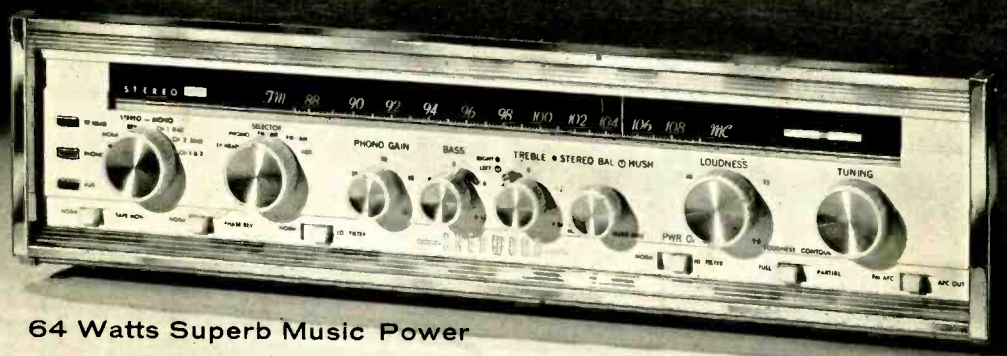

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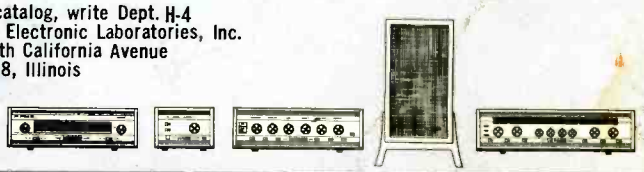

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