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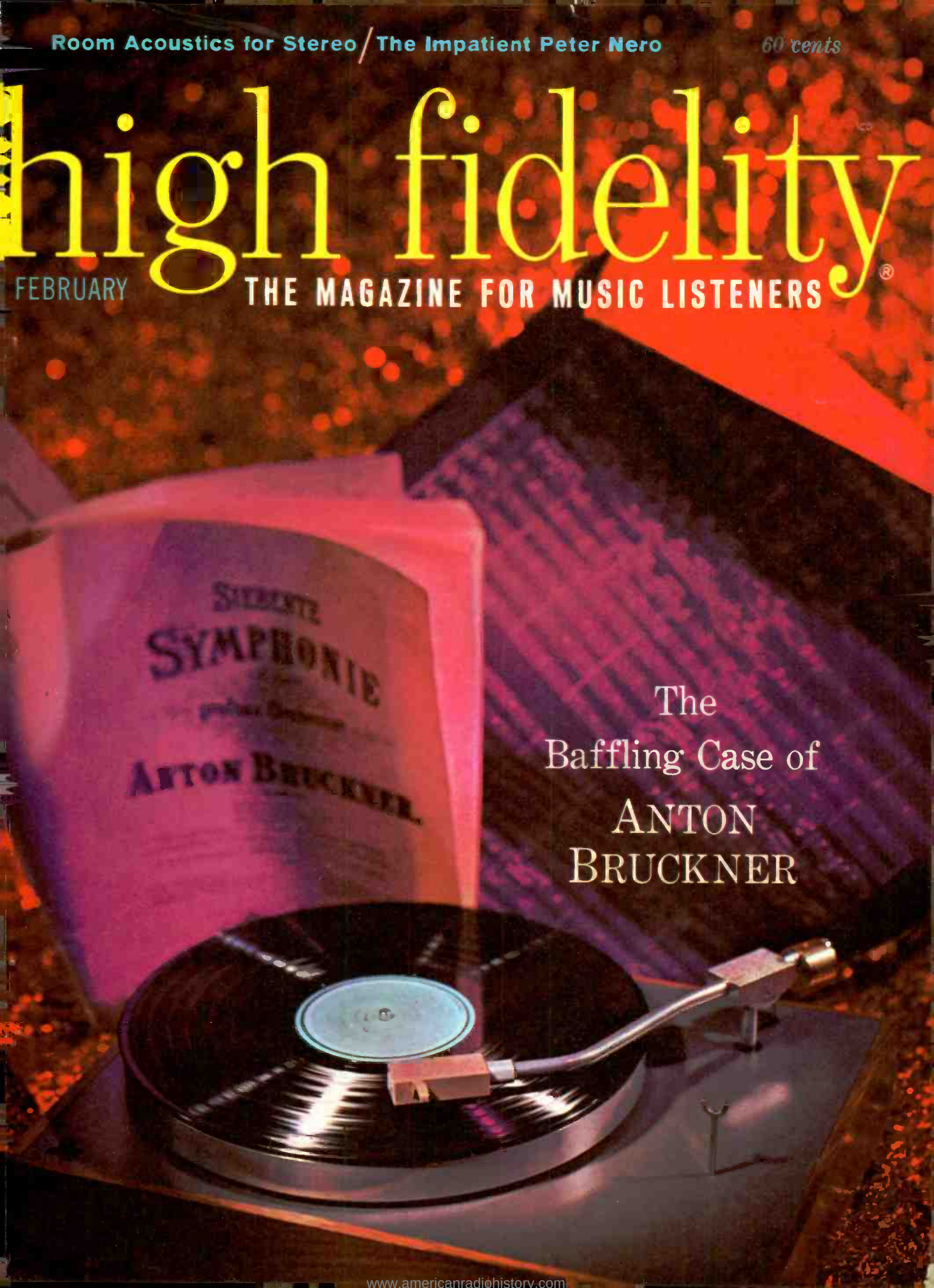

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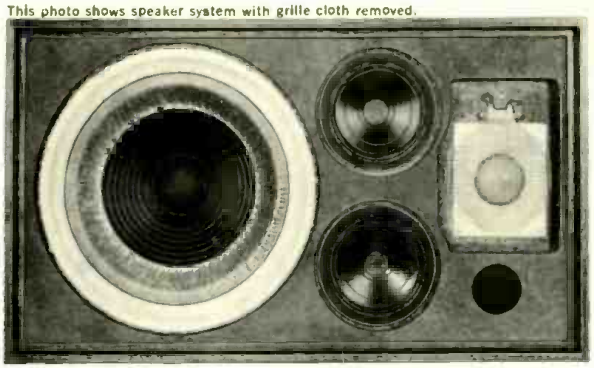

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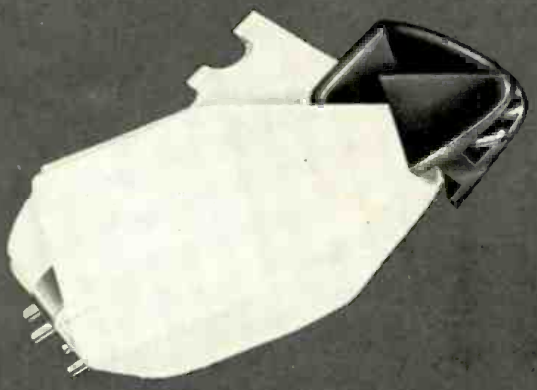

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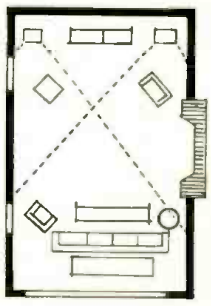

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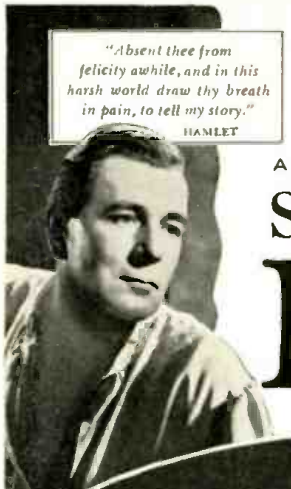

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AUTHORitatively Speaking

For the last fifteen years, HIGH FIDELITY's European Editor **H. C. Robbins Landon** has made Vienna his working headquarters, but in the process he has not become quite the complete Austrophile. Fully aware of the intellectual currents and highly sensitive to the spiritual ambience of the city on the Danube, Mr. Landon is yet Boston-bred, American-educated, and widely traveled on at least two continents. Thus, he is particularly well fitted to write with sympathy of the Austrian cult of Bruckner-worship and at the same time to perceive why that composer is elsewhere often execrated. On the case of Anton Bruckner, Mr. Landon casts much light: see p. 46.

With "Room Acoustics for Stereo," p. 50, **David P. Eisenman** makes his debut appearance in these columns. Mr. Eisenman was born in Bradford, Pennsylvania (so few years ago that he has asked us not to divulge the date, lest anyone think he may really be a member of Mr. Salinger's Glass family), attended school in Buffalo, New York, and is now immersed in engineering sciences and applied physics at Harvard. He also raises orchids, he says. How much credence is to be given to this statement, we don't know: Mr. Eisenman has a flair for the dramatic. We do know, however, that when it comes to acoustics, our author gets at the facts.

In Volume I, Number 1 of this journal (Summer 1951) there appeared an article entitled "Repertory Unlimited." The author was **C. G. Burke,** and much of his forecast of the future of microgroove recording, then still young, has since materialized. At the time, Mr. Burke's own record library numbered more than ten thousand discs, and he was about to embark on the monumental discographies of Beethoven and Haydn and Mozart which distinguished so many issues of HIGH FIDELITY during the ensuing years. Mr. Burke was, and remains, an amateur, in the primary meaning of that term: his formal musical training was confined to a brief study of the piano; his only official connection with any record company was one short year's tenure in the early Twenties (when he himself was not yet out of his teens). Since the days of acoustic recordings Mr. Burke has dedicated himself to listening to music—as he prefers to hear it, in his own home; to investigating the reproducing equipment which can do it fullest justice; and to sharing with a discriminating following of readers an encyclopedic knowledge and unique discernment. Mr. Burke has been away from our pages for some time (we understand there's a novel of epic scope in progress). Long-time readers will join us in welcoming his reappearance with "A Lost Inquiry," p. 54; newer readers will find an extraordinary talent awaits them.

Every month HIGH FIDELITY's record section includes a feature entitled, simply, "Jazz," and every month for almost ten years now it has carried the byline **John S. Wilson.** Clearly, Mr. Wilson is HIGH FIDELITY's jazz authority. He also fills the same role for the *New York Times,* radio station WQXR, the *Encyclopedia Americana,* etc., etc. In fact, some people, including many of the experts, regard him as jazz authority to the nation. We are herewith privileged to present "Peter Nero: an Expression of Impatience," p. 57.

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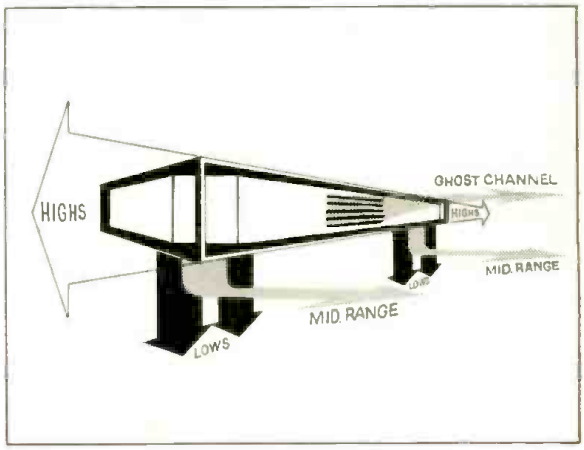

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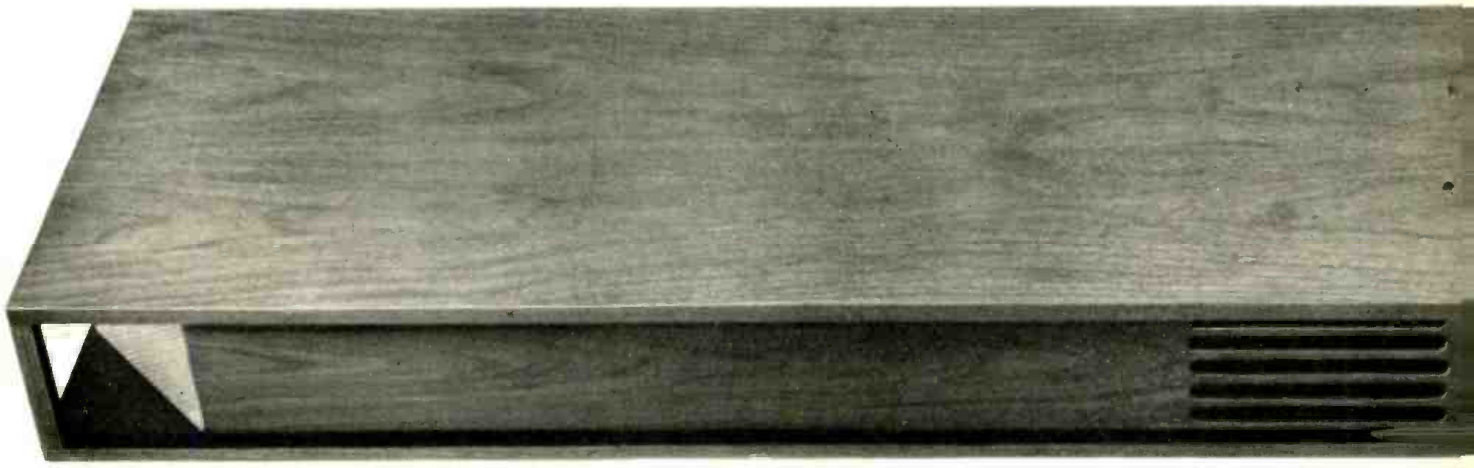

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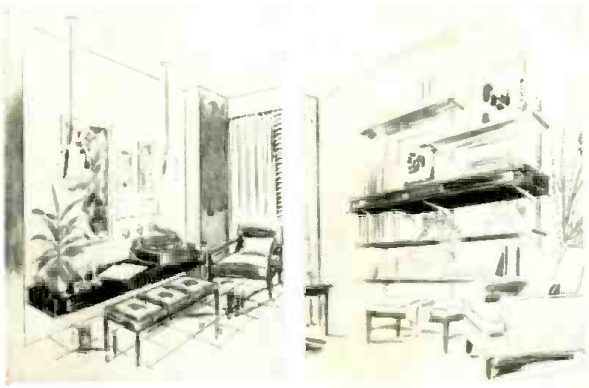

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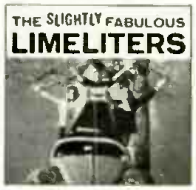


347. Hilarious, intimate, "in person" concert by top folk-song/comedy trio.

339. Brilliant, masterful interpretation by Heifetz and Reiner.

308. Haydn's most famous, familiar and rewarding symphonies.

4. *Younger Than Springtime, Some Enchanted Evening,* 13 more hits.

327. Lilting Strauss waltzes and overtures in true Viennese style.

419. 30 hits by banjos, tuba, rhythm. *Bill Bailey, Dem Golden Slippers.*

321. Orchestral wizard whips up exotic Gypsy flavors. Super sound!

318. The two masterpieces of French impressionist chamber music.

215. Definitive versions of Gershwin's two most popular classics.

320. A stunning modern work—recorded in glorious modern sound!

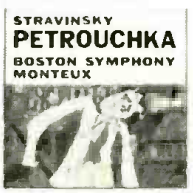
337. "Plenty of substance . . . forthright and sensitive."—*High Fidelity.*

1. Also 10 more soothing instrumentals—*While We're Young, Estrellita.*

401. Trumpet king in 12 sizzling performances. *Jazz Me Blues,* others.

5. The first classical L.P. of all time to sell more than one million copies!

322. Absolutely the last word in SOUND—the sauciest *Gaîté* of all!



325. Monteux pioneered this work and made it immediately famous.

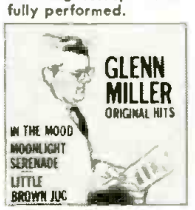
309. Glowing hi-fi performance of this richly melodic score.

243. The ever-delightful Romberg score, beautifully performed.

334. Stirring epic of heroism and valor, thrillingly performed.

302. Maestro's glowing souvenir of the Eternal City—in new sound!

258. Romberg's irresistible score magnificently sung by the late tenor.



145. Also *Kalamazoo, String of Pearls, Tuxedo Junction,* 6 more.

246. Trapp family sings *My Favorite Things, Do-Re-Mi,* more show "greats."

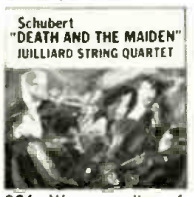
312. Overtures that are so lively they almost bounce off the record!

311. Met's new sensation sings arias from Verdi and Puccini operas.

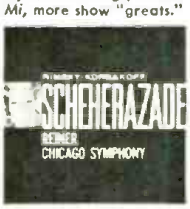
323. Called the greatest harpsichordist of all time! (Regular L.P. only)

273. Also *Mazeppa, Rakoczy March.* A high fidelity showpiece!

304. Hi-fi spectacular of colorful Grofé, bombastic Beethoven.



326. Warm reading of this melodic work. Also "Quartettsatz."



301. Oriental orchestral feast, sumptuous sound. A hi-fi "must."

CIRCLE 76 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

420. *Waltz of the Flowers, Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy,* 11 more.

421. Romantic overture, roguishly satirical tone poem in sumptuous sound!

425. Bassist-composer captures rhythms, moods of wild border town.

400. *Two Hungarian Rhapsodies, Valse Oubliée,* etc. (Reg. L.P. only)

398. Thrilling folk fare: *Hear About Jerry, Crawdad Song, Muleskinner.*

395. Thundering Toccatas, thrilling Prelude and Fugues by moster organist.

394. Includes *Deep River, Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring, Evening Prayer,* others.

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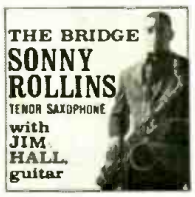
INCLUDES WORLD-FAMOUS RCA VICTOR Red Seal RECORDS



392. Modern jazz colossus! *Without A Song, You Do Something To Me.*

333. As colorful and refreshing as the change of seasons.

391. *I Love You, Let's Fall In Love, Almost Like Being In Love,* 12 in all.

367. Ageless Mozart-iano in thrilling virtuoso interpretations.

366. Stunning sound! "Decisively the best."—*HiFi/Stereo Review.*

363. Amusing, amazing showpiece—various artists. STEREO ONLY.

338. Joyous affirmation of faith through power of great music.

350. "Electrifying, precise, stylistically elegant."—*HiFi/Stereo Review.*

365. Pulsating mandolins play *Santo Lucia, O Sole Mio, Funiculi Funicula.*

399. *No Other Love, If I Loved You, It Might As Well Be Spring,* more.

341. New calypso album Belafonte fans have been waiting 6 years for!

348. Won 2 Academy Awards—for Best Score, Best Song, (*Moon River*)!

345. The great basso sings 8 immortal arias. (Regular Long-Play only)

324. The divine Schubert masterpieces in glowing performances.

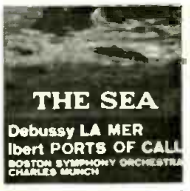
313. Definitive recording of a superbly romantic masterpiece.

335. The haunting majestic score features an exquisite vocal solo.

330. Beloved favorites beautifully arranged to evoke a tender mood.

316. "A compendium of marvels...sublime," noted *The Reporter.*

306. The most famous symphony ever written. Powerful! Compelling!



314. The glory of Debussy's "Sea" splashed in brilliant hi-fi.

Yes, now you can choose from exciting *new releases* . . . current *best-sellers* . . . beloved *all-time favorites* . . . including RCA Victor's world-renowned RED SEAL records!

Enjoy thrilling performances by great classical artists such as Van Cliburn . . . Rubinstein . . . Munch . . . Reiner . . . and scores of others—selected for you from virtually the entire RCA Victor catalog!

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You Have A Club Charge Account—you pay for records *after* you get them and *while* you are enjoying them. Members' prices are always shown in the Music Guide (usually $3.98 or $4.98—Stereo $1 extra) plus postage and handling.

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*A survey, by an independent organization, showing prices paid for comparable records will be sent on request.

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Now, one of the most beautiful and stirring of all operas in an unforgettable recorded performance by Metropolitan Opera stars. "The greatest of all recorded Aidas...should stand unchallenged for years."—*New York Herald Tribune.*

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315. Electronic stereo reprocessing of one of his finest performances.

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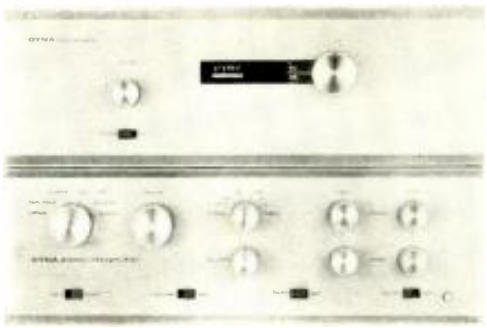
WILL  * REPLACE  ?

No, Music-Lover—take heart. Live music is here to stay. But when recorded music can be so perfectly played back that *even experts* can't tell the difference from a live performance, this is big news for those who love music, live or otherwise. For three years now, thousands of discriminating listeners have attended concerts of the Fine Arts Quartet, sponsored jointly by the manufacturers of Dynakit amplifiers and AR speakers. Performances were so arranged that the audiences were alternately listening to live and recorded portions, without prior announcement as to which was which. These are typical comments of recognized experts:

> *C. G. McProud, editor of Audio reported: "We must admit that we couldn't tell when it was live and when it wasn't." The Herald Tribune referred to "awesome fidelity." Record reviewer E. T. Canby wrote: "My eyes told me one thing, my ears another." Ralph Freas, audio editor of High Fidelity, wrote: "Few could separate the live from the recorded portions."*

When reproduction and reality cannot be separated, the reproducing equipment has achieved the top-most *practical* level of quality. And when that equipment is so moderately priced as Dyna Mark III amplifiers and PAS-2 pre-amplifiers, the obvious conclusion is that you *can* spend more money but you *can't* get higher quality. Anybody can build a Dynakit, including you, Music-Lover. And you can be confident that it will work well with performance indistinguishable from the original source of sound.

All Dynakits are designed with top performance as the primary objective. In any power range, mono or stereo, the established excellence of Dynakits is assured. If Dynakit's superior engineering, high quality parts and functional layout give you such fine performance that you can't *tell* the difference, why *pay* the difference?

* A New Note of Elegance for Your Dynakits: Handsome accessory satin-tone front panels and die-cast knobs install easily on all past and present preamps and tuners. Side-by-side or stacked, the effect is that of a single harmonious unit. Brackets are included for easy panel-mounting in a cabinet. See them at your dealer.

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NEW!

the ultimate in sound reproducers

SHURE STUDIO *Stereo Dynetic*

MODEL M222 and M226 integrated tone arm and cartridge

. . . cannot scratch records . . . tracks at 3/4 grams

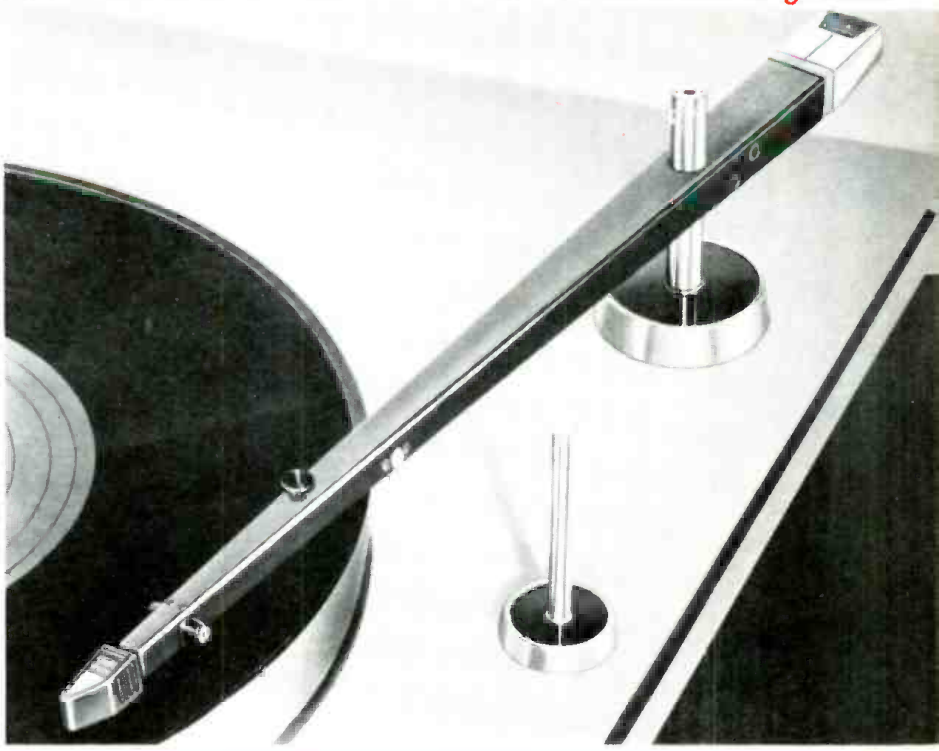
- Unapproachable for record protection and sound quality
- Cannot scratch records—even if "dragged" across grooves
- Ultra-light, flawless tracking—even if table is tilted!
- New "plug-in" cables for easiest mounting —no soldering

The Shure Studio Dynetic integrated tone arm and cartridge has long been recognized as a unique contribution to highest fidelity coupled with unparalleled record protection. The new Model M222 and M226 Studio Stereo Dynetic arm is significantly improved in many important respects at no increase in price: tracking force has been lowered to an ultra-light ¾ to 1½ grams. Compliance is an astounding 22 x 10^{-6} cm. per dyne! New plug-in cable makes for easy, solderless mounting. Precision .0005" diamond tip.

The Studio Stereo Dynetic arm's no-scratch feature has been the talk of every hi fi show since its introduction—does away with the major cause of ruined records once and for all. Has actually been artificially stopped in tests to "skip" back and play the same groove over and over many thousands of times without audible damage to the groove.

Out-front needle makes it ideal for music lovers to "index" records. Instantly changeable stylus requires no tools.

Model M222 for 12" records, Model M226 for 16" records. Complete assembly includes Arm, Cartridge, Stylus, Plug-in Cable. $89.50 net each.



SPECIFICATIONS FOR MODELS M222 and M226	
TRACKING FORCE	¾ to 1.5 grams
FREQUENCY RESPONSE	20 to 20,000 cps without "break-up"
CHANNEL SEPARATION AT 1000 cps	Over 22.5 db
SENSITIVITY: OUTPUT AT 1000 cps	4.5 mv per channel
RECOMMENDED LOAD IMPEDANCE	47,000 ohms per channel
COMPLIANCE (VERTICAL & LATERAL)	22.0 x 10^{-6} cm per dyne
INDUCTANCE	400 millihenrys
D. C. RESISTANCE	600 ohms
STYLUS	.0005" diamond

SHURE N22D

IMPROVEMENT STYLUS

FOR MODELS M21 • M212 • M216 • M3D • M7D • M3/N21D • M7/N21D

Now, you can upgrade your older model Shure Stereo Dynetic integrated tone arm and cartridge to equal the lighter tracking, higher compliance, improved channel separation, and superior record protection of the new Shure M222 and M226 Studio Stereo Dynetic units. Simply by replacing your old stylus with the N22D, the performance of your Shure integrated arm will be audibly improved.

Because the N22D is interchangeable with the N21D, you may wish to use this stylus as a replacement for the N21D in M7/N21D and M3/N21D Cartridges. This is an ideal means of improving the performance of these cartridges to track at forces of 1½ grams *or less*. (However, the N22D Stylus will *not* function at forces *greater* than 1½ *grams!*)

Compliance becomes 22.0 x 10^{-6} cm/dyne, separation over 22.5 db at 1000 cps, tracking from ¾ to 1.5 grams. With .0005" diamond. $24.75 net, including counterweight for reducing tracking force of Models M212 and M216.

LITERATURE: SHURE BROTHERS, INC. 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Illinois, DEPT. HF-B

Patented and other patents pending.

CIRCLE 87 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Letters

More Mahler by Walter?

SIR:
Many readers of HIGH FIDELITY have campaigned for the release on discs of important historical broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera, and I wish to put in a plea for the similar release of other unique musical performances.

What particularly concerns me is that the late Bruno Walter died before he could make studio recordings of all the symphonies of Mahler and Bruckner. Here in Australia I have heard some Voice of America tapes of public concerts conducted by Walter, and I cannot help feeling that there must be either official or private tapes of broadcasts of Mahler and Bruckner symphonies which he did not record for Columbia.

I for one would be grateful to own a monophonic Mahler Third, Sixth, Seventh, or Eighth under Walter, however poor the sound.

Reverend E. J. M. Millar
Victoria
Australia

Columbia recorded every Mahler symphony which Bruno Walter performed with the New York Philharmonic, and these records have all been issued (the Ninth with the Columbia Symphony). Unfortunately, Walter never led the orchestra in the four Mahler symphonies mentioned by Mr. Millar, and it seems very doubtful, therefore, whether his interpretations of these works were ever broadcast, let alone taped. Columbia has just issued a new stereo version of the Mahler First under Walter, and his recording of the Bruckner Seventh is promised for release later in the year.

An A for Excerpts

SIR:
Angel Records is to be congratulated on its well-received *Iphigénie en Tauride* and *Damnation de Faust* excerpts on one stereo disc. Let us hope to have, in the near future, excerpts from *Werther, Louise, Hérodiade, Les Troyens, La Juive, The Merry Wives of Windsor,* and

Continued on page 22

+0 -¼ db from 1 to 1,000,000 cps. That's the bandwidth of the new Harman-Kardon Citation A—the world's first professional Solid State (transistorized) Stereo Control Center. It is totally new in concept, design and performance. When you hear it, you will share the experience of its creators—the experience of genuine breakthrough and discovery; the experience of hearing music as you've never heard it before. Citation A represents a towering achievement for Stewart Hegeman and the Citation Engineering Group. It will change all of your ideas about the reproduction of sound. Visit your Citation dealer now for an exciting premiere demonstration.

For more complete technical information on Citation A write to the Citation Division, Dept. HF-2, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, N.Y.

harman kardon

CIRCLE 46 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

$299.95

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

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

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CIRCLE 22 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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Traditional Patrician 800 illustrated with matching Contessa equipment console. In walnut, mahogany or cherry finishes.

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...a complete new collection of high fidelity loudspeaker systems and matching equipment consoles

The Patrician 800, like its famous predecessors, is devoted to the reproduction of sound with absolute honesty. It speaks only when spoken to . . . with a voice that is no more spectacular—and no less so—than the music it is asked to duplicate.

As a result, the Patrician 800 is somewhat larger than most other speaker systems—even to its extraordinary 30-inch woofer—simply because a system of this magnitude is required to reproduce the deepest musical sounds accurately and without compromise.

In appearance, the Patrician 800 achieves a new standard of elegance in both Traditional and Contemporary designs . . . for this system was conceived as the ultimate reflection of your good taste in fine music and superb home furnishings.

We invite your critical appraisal of the entire new Patrician loudspeaker collection at your nearby Electro-Voice high fidelity demonstration center. Or we will be happy to send a catalog on request,

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Electro-Voice®
SETTING NEW STANDARDS IN SOUND

CIRCLE 39 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 18

May Night, as well as parts of little-known operas by Verdi, Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, and Meyerbeer. All these works contain good arias, ensembles, and orchestral pieces.

Albert Martin
Quebec
Canada

We agree that the excerpt approach makes a good deal of sense for many off-the-beaten-track operas. It works in concert form too—as witness the highly successful performance in New York this season of the last act of Massenet's Don Quichotte. *Act IV of* Les Huguenots, *and excerpts from Dukas's* Ariane et Barbe-Bleue *conducted by Robert Lawrence. Incidentally, a fine selection of excerpts from Massenet's* Werther *has recently been issued by RCA Victor. Our reviewer gave good marks to the interpretation of Rosalind Elias, Cesare Siepi, and other members of the cast.*

Record Reviews Indexed

SIR:

I find your magazine highly readable and always informative. One of my favorite sections is "Records in Review," which I scrutinize closely each month. I find it indeed unfortunate that, at present, these reviews are of little lasting value to me since there is no yearly index published. I realize, of course, that you publish the collected reviews in hardbound edition each year, but this requires the subscriber to duplicate his collection of reviews at a bothersome expense.

I feel an annual index of reviews would be a great boon to the faithful reader of your publication.

Lucien B. Lindsey
Pebble Beach, Calif.

Interested readers can find record reviews of HIGH FIDELITY *and other magazines indexed in the* Index of Record Reviews *(published by Polart, 20115 Goulburn Avenue, Detroit 5) and in the* Music Index *(Informations Services, Inc., 10 West Warren Avenue, Detroit 1). These volumes are available in many libraries.*

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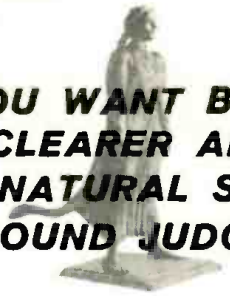


IF YOU WANT BETTER, CLEARER AND MORE NATURAL SOUND . . . USE SOUND JUDGEMENT!

There is only one way to build a tape recorder that gives the clearest, best sound. You must start with the very best components and fine, exacting workmanship. These are basic.

Specifically, you must choose a motor with enough power and it must be synchronous. You cannot skimp on the cost of this motor. Only a synchronous motor provides the necessary motion for flawless operation without noticeable wow or flutter.

Your tape recorder requires other essentials, too. The amplifiers must have the least possible distortion and the best possible frequency response. They must be designed for the least possible service. They should have military-type printed circuits. These circuits provide contact at all times, do not break down, and are easily serviced when necessary. The components must be reliable. They should have a rating of a multiple of the actual voltage or amperage required. Components such as these are expensive. But, economy here is false economy . . . and false economy leads to big service bills later on.

Your tape recorder must also be light and compact for easy carrying. Total weight should be around 20 lbs. which allows for inclusion of all operating features needed for ideal performance.

The magnetic heads for your recorder are, of course, most important. The recorder manufacturer must build these carefully with the precise gap needed for optimum performance. The position of the heads must be adjustable to within a few thousandths of an inch. This will keep the two or four recording tracks within established standards. These finely designed magnetic heads should also resist the abrasive action of recording tape. This prevents their being worn out in a short period of time. Consequently, they will last for many thousands of hours of recording pleasure.

Your recording instrument must also have a tape transport system that is smooth and reliable. The transport system should give you an immediate change of speed, without wearing out or breaking down. It must give you minimum tension and use only precision-built components. These quality components should be the result of months of research and testing by the finest staff of tape recorder engineers . . . engineers who could not be duplicated for any amount of money. Here again, any economies can lead only to poor performance. And, poor performance does not result in clear, natural sound.

A word about the personnel who design and construct your tape recorder. They should consist of a great number of qualified engineers (average key personnel length of employment is 18 years!) working along side of skilled craftsmen, artisans and assembly people — all of whom own a share in the manufacturing company. This concept of "everyone a co-owner" results in a deep personal interest in the design and manufacture of a product. And it means unchallenged quality for you.

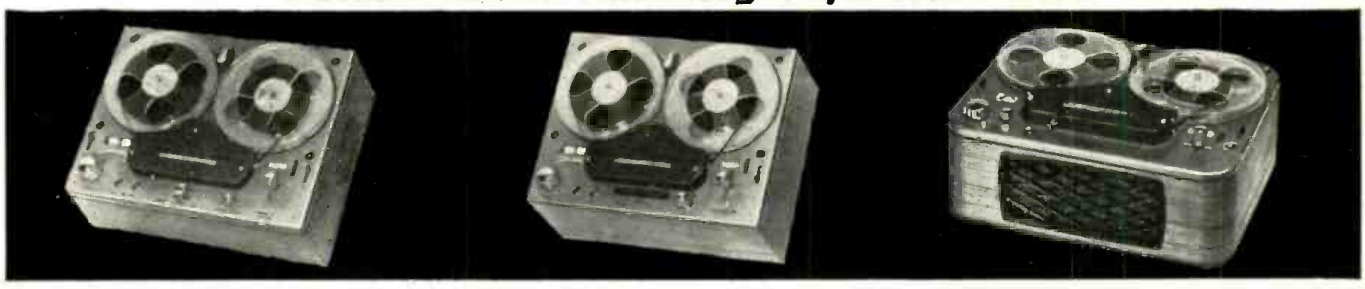
As a final touch, your quality tape recorder should have the fine styling suited to any decor or for installation into any quality hi-fi system. Its case, knobs and top plate must be sturdy. This, too, guarantees many hours of uninterrupted, pleasurable performance.

Now you have your tape recorder! More accurately, you have a TANDBERG TAPE RECORDER. There is no outward, apparent difference between a Tandberg and others . . . but there is a FUNDAMENTAL difference. The Tandberg tape recorder superficially may *look* like others. But, when you check all the components mentioned above the differences are enormous! The superior quality is evident.

The Tandberg runs smoother. It is more reliable. IT DOES PRODUCE DISTINCTLY BETTER, CLEARER, MORE NATURAL SOUND.

RE Tandberg*

*Details about Tandberg Tape Recorders



MODEL 74
Complete Stereo Music System.
Features: 3 speed, 4 track stereo record, stereo playback with a power amplifiers and 2 built in speakers.
List $399.50

MODEL 64
Stereo Record/Playback Deck.
Features: 3 separate heads, monitoring on tape, multiplex input, 3 speeds, automatic tape stop, sound-on-sound. Remote control start-stop available.
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MODEL 8
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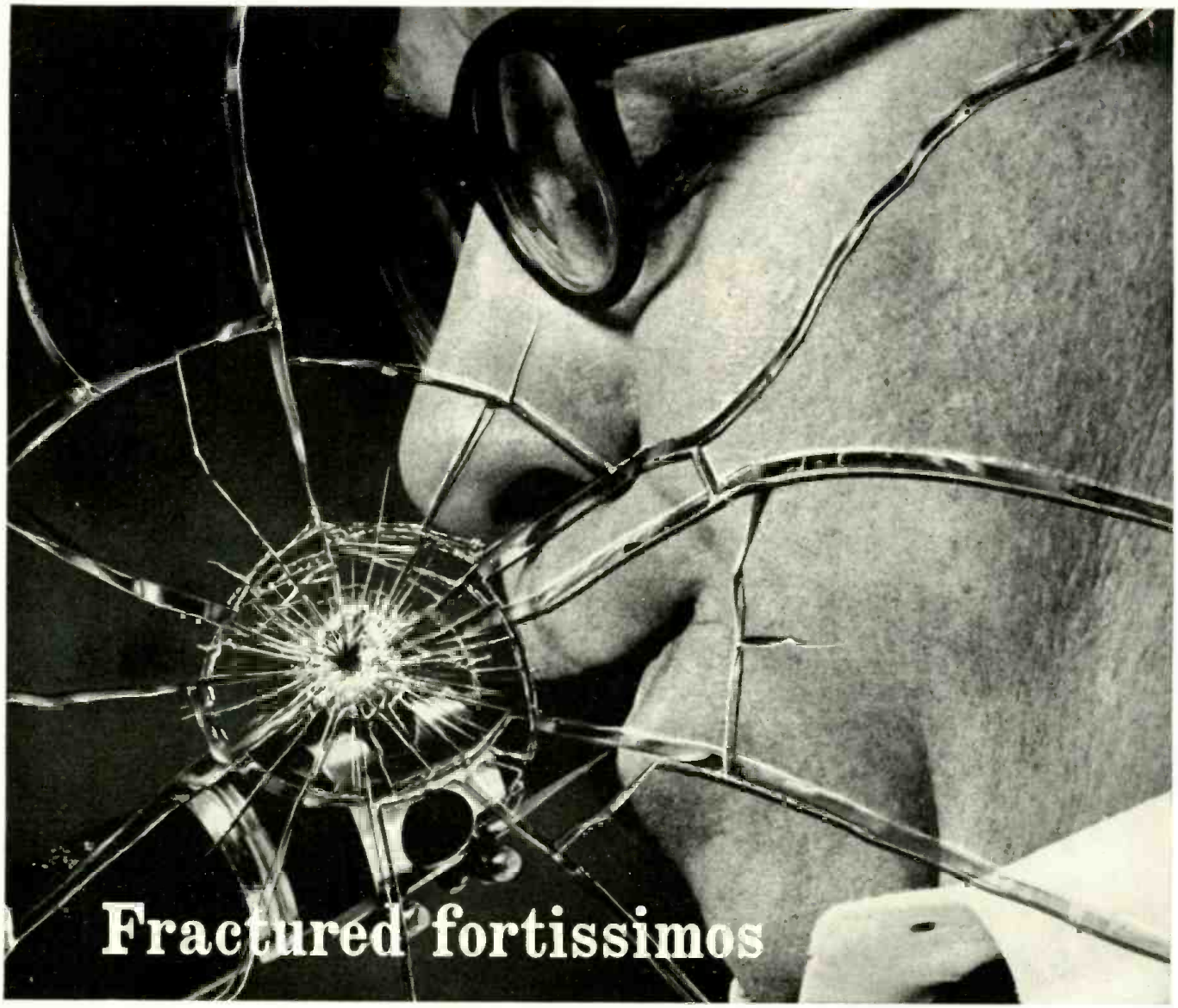
RE Tandberg of America, Inc., P. O. Box 171, 8 Third Ave., Pelham, N. Y.

CIRCLE 100 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



in your concerto?

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

No doubt about it! Something's wrong with recording tape that carries a bargain-basement price, an unknown name. They're sure signs the tape would flunk some *or many* of the more than 100 quality tests that "SCOTCH" BRAND Recording Tapes are required to pass to assure flawless sound.

Coating and backing thicknesses of "SCOTCH" Recording Tapes, for example, are held to microscopic tolerances—especially important in today's 4-track stereo. This uniformity not only guards against crack-ups in sound, it assures wide dynamic range, identical full fidelity recording properties throughout every reel, reel after reel.

High potency oxides used in "SCOTCH" Tapes permit thinner, more flexible coatings that make intimate head-to-tape contact a certainty for maximum frequency response. Exclusive Silicone lubrication, impregnated throughout the oxide coating, ensures smooth tape travel. This completely dry lubricant protects recorder against head wear and actually extends tape life. For your recording and listening pleasure, step up to the tape professionals prefer: "SCOTCH" BRAND.

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

Magnetic Products Division 3M COMPANY

CIRCLE 65 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

This Fisher tuner outperforms all other makes regardless of price.

The Fisher FM-100-B FM Stereo Multiplex wide-band tuner, $249.50*

Then how good is this Fisher tuner for $50 more?

The Fisher FM-200-B FM Stereo Multiplex wide-band tuner, $299.50*

You don't have to buy the costliest Fisher model to obtain better FM tuner performance than any other high-fidelity component manufacturer can offer you.

The Fisher FM-100-B is just one step up in price from the least expensive Fisher FM Stereo Multiplex tuner, yet it yields to no other available brand in sophisticated Multiplex circuitry, nor in the ability to receive even the weakest and most distant broadcast signals with optimum noise suppression, interference rejection and audio fidelity.

The specifications achieved with the high-gain GOLDEN CASCODE front end (three tuned circuits), five wide-band IF stages and four wide-band limiters are nothing short of spectacular: 0.6 microvolt sensitivity for 20 db quieting at 72 ohms (1.8 microvolts IHFM); 70 db signal-to-noise ratio (100% modulation); 60 db alternate channel selectivity; 2.2 db capture ratio (IHFM); 0.4% harmonic distortion at 100% modulation. But the most remarkable feature of all is the exclusive STEREO BEACON, the ingenious Fisher invention that automatically lights a signal to show whether or not an FM station is broadcasting in Multiplex and automatically switches the tuner to the required mode of operation, Mono or Stereo.

It took Fisher to improve on Fisher. The FM-200-B tuner is unquestionably an even more advanced instrument than the FM-100-B, well worth the price difference of $50.00 to the perfectionist. An additional tuned circuit (a total of four) plus two of the new Nuvistor tubes in the front end, one more limiter (5 instead of 4) and a specially designed cathode-follower audio output result in the following subtle improvements in specifications: 0.5 microvolt sensitivity for 20 db quieting at 72 ohms (1.6 microvolts IHFM); 74 db signal-to-noise ratio (100% modulation); 64 db alternate channel selectivity; 1.5 db capture ratio (IHFM); 0.3% harmonic distortion at 100% modulation.

In addition, the FM-200-B incorporates not only the STEREO BEACON feature but also the exclusive Fisher MICROTUNE automatic frequency control system.

THE FISHER

FREE! $1.00 VALUE! The new 1963 edition of The Fisher Handbook, a 40-page illustrated reference guide, idea book and component catalogue for custom stereo installations.

Fisher Radio Corporation
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Please send free 40-page Handbook, complete with detailed specifications on Fisher FM Tuners.

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01202

*WALNUT OR MAHOGANY CABINET, $24.95. METAL CABINET, $15.95. PRICES SLIGHTLY HIGHER IN THE FAR WEST. EXPORT: FISHER RADIO INTERNATIONAL, INC., LONG ISLAND CITY 1, N.Y. CANADA: TRI-TEL ASSOCIATES, LTD., WILLOWDALE, ONT.

CIRCLE 43 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 24

MILAN

At a time when most Italian record companies (or Italian distributors of foreign records) are complaining about bad business, there is one kind of record that has proved consistently profitable here. This is the so-called *disco letterario*, the equivalent of the American "spoken word" recording. The nonmusical disc has obvious advantages for record companies in costing relatively little to produce—no orchestra, often no royalties, etc. Repertoire is practically unlimited, the chance of competing versions is slight, and there seems to be a steady public for literary fare.

Few of the records lose money, and some have been runaway best sellers. Official figures are a state secret in Italy, but reliable rumors insist that a Cetra "compact" of actor Arnoldo Foà reading Lorca's *Lament for Ignacio* (with a guitar occasionally strumming underneath) has sold upwards of two hundred thousand copies. A couple of years ago a special company, the Istituto Internazionale del Disco, was formed to make spoken records almost exclusively. A good deal of its program—like Cetra's—has been random, including everything from Leopardi to Truman Capote; its biggest success has been a complete recording of the New Testament, with each Gospel read by a different (anonymous) actor. At a price of about one hundred dollars per album, the Istituto has sold more than three thousand sets. Cetra promptly made its bid for a similar market with a recording of Dante's *Inferno*, first installment in what is to be a complete *Divina Commedia*.

Now RCA Italiana is following suit, with a series of recordings of poets reading their own works. Italy's leading poets—Eugenio Montale, Giuseppe Ungaretti, and the Nobel prize winner Salvatore Quasimodo—have already appeared before the microphones. One of the leading writers of the younger generation, Pier Paolo Pasolini, wrote a poem especially for his record debut, making the disc a double first edition.

The director of the RCA series, Paolo Bernobini, has great hopes for the future and would like eventually to commission miniature plays for recording, a kind of microgroove *théâtre de poche*. Meanwhile, the Istituto Internazionale del Disco is engaged in an extremely important project in the field of recorded theatre: this organization is gradually bringing out the plays of the celebrated Neapolitan actor-playwright Eduardo de Filippo, with the author himself taking major roles. First to appear was the charming *Natale in Casa Cupiello* ("Christmas at the Cupiellos'"), and a few months ago this was followed by *Filumena Marturano*, a play which Eduardo wrote for his sister Titina. This unforgettable actress was forced by ill-

Continued on page 36

Here's how a really advanced stereo control amplifier...

becomes this simple to use!

The new Fisher X-101-C: sophisticated stereo design with the new 'basic' look.

Even without the dramatically new arrangement of controls, this would still be by far the most advanced single-chassis integrated stereo control-amplifier in its power class. That much is assured by its performance. Its Hinged Control Desk, however, makes it the first genuine all-family amplifier in high fidelity history.

For the audiophiles in the family, the X-101-C incorporates comprehensive controls of the utmost versatility. But for immediate enjoyment of stereo by even the least technically-inclined members of the family, only the 'basic' controls (Program Selector, Stereo/Mono Switch and Volume Control) are in view. The other controls – those that are not absolutely essential for instant use of the amplifier–are concealed behind an attractive, hinged cover. The result is the most uncluttered appearance and the most functional operation ever achieved in a stereo component – as well as the end of all uncertainty on the part of the non-technical music lover.

The X-101-C is rated at 60 watts IHFM Music Power (30 watts per channel) and features several important innovations in addition to its Hinged Control Desk. The exclusive Fisher Tape-Play System, for example, permits full use of all controls during tape playback and yet retains the convenience of monitoring while recording. A front-panel jack is available for the connection of headphones, and a special switch can silence the main speakers while the headphones are in use. A revolutionary new circuit development permits direct connection of a center-channel speaker without using an additional amplifier!

See and hear the new Fisher X-101-C at your nearest dealer. Even the briefest demonstration will convince you of its superb engineering logic and brilliant performance. Price: **$199.50***. The new X-100-B stereo control-amplifier, an improved 50-watt version of the famous X-100, **$169.50***.

The X-202-B, a highly advanced 80-watt stereo control-amplifier, **$249.50***.

The X-1000, world's most powerful single-chassis stereo control-amplifier (110 watts), **$339.50***.

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THE FISHER HANDBOOK

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THE FISHER

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RESEARCH MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Send in for your personal copy of "Randy, the transistor radio". A delightful children's book in full color, that tells the story of how transistor radios work. Please enclose 25¢ for postage and handling.

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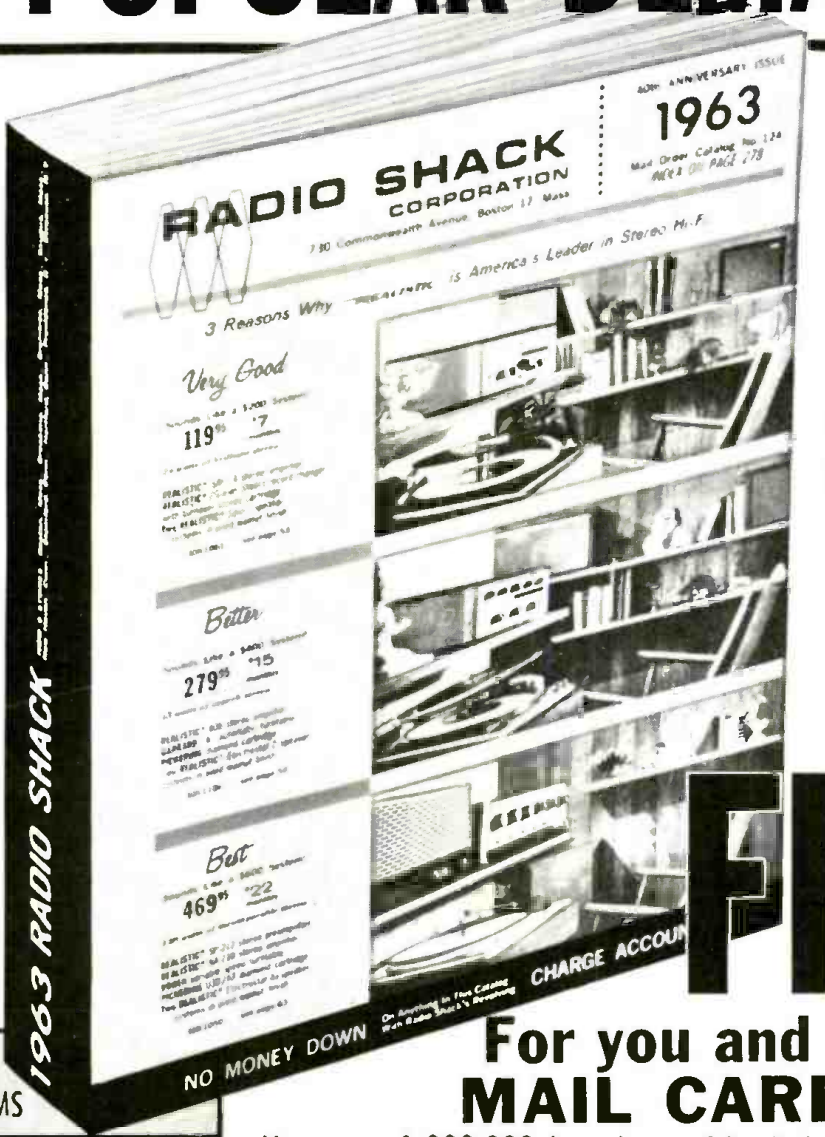

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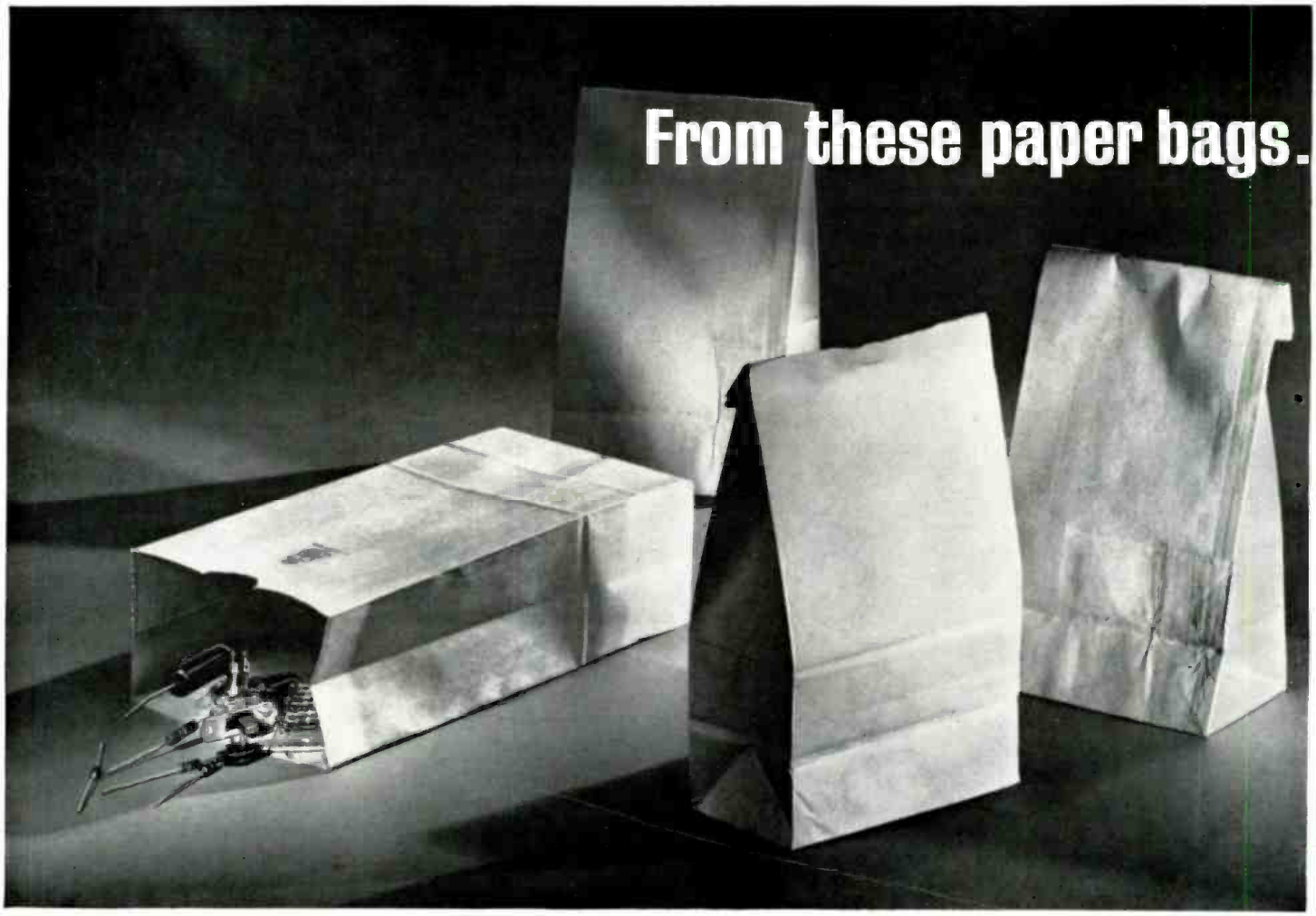


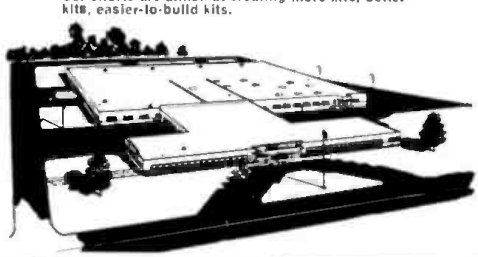
ABOUT THOSE HEATHKIT PAPER BAGS . . . It's true there are fancier ways to package a kit, but there is none more functional or more money-saving. We look at kit packaging in its true light—to contain and safeguard parts . . . and the world-famous Heathkit paper bags in their protective cartons do just that, completely and economically. Result:

YOU PUT YOUR MONEY IN PARTS WHEN YOU BUY HEATHKITS! The money we save in packaging your Heathkit enables us to put more money into its parts . . . a place where it counts . . . for better performance and longer life. Add this finer quality to the extra savings of buying direct from the Heathkit factory and you have the reasons for the world-famous Heathkit reputation for extra value. PROVE IT TO YOURSELF BY COMPARISON!

HEATHKIT ALL-TRANSISTOR STEREO AMPLIFIER . . . the most advanced, the most powerful . . . it makes $135 sound like a million! Transistors come of age in the new Heathkit AA-21 . . . this amazing instrument uses 28 transistors and 10 diodes to deliver 100 watts (IHFM) or 70 watts (Heath rated) for a superb dynamic range of 13 to 25,000 cps, ± 1 db! Features include; complete freedom from microphonics, cool operation transformerless output, multiple feedback loops, circuit-breaker protection, 5-position dual concentric input selector for "mixing" inputs, 5-position "mode" selector, and dual concentric volume, bass, and treble controls. Basic controls on front; secondary controls (tape-monitor input sw., speaker phase sw., loudness sw., and input level controls) are behind the hinged lower panel.

Who is Heathkit?

Heathkit is the pioneer and world's largest manufacturer devoted exclusively to the design and manufacture of do-it-yourself electronic kits. All our efforts are aimed at creating more kits, better kits, easier-to-build kits.



What are Heathkits?

Heathkits are electronic equipment in unassembled form. All parts are packaged in convenient groups and a complete, easy-to-read, well-illustrated instruction manual tells you how to put them together. Heath offers over 250 kits from simple portable radios to big analog computers.

Who builds Heathkits?

Millions build Heathkits. People with absolutely no mechanical ability or knowledge of electronics as well as skilled electronic experts—all find value, economy, fun, relaxation, and pride of accomplishment in Heathkits. You can too.

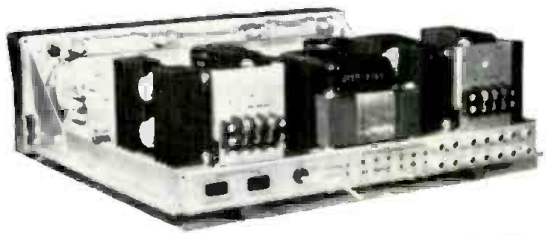
CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

...comes the world's most advanced amplifier

EASY TO BUILD—EASY TO BUY

The Heathkit AA-21 uses 5 circuit boards and 6 encapsulated component modules (70 resistors and capacitors, all factory wired and sealed) to make it easy to complete.

Kit AA-21, 28 lbs., no money dn., $13 mo.....**$134.95**
Assembled AAW-21, no money dn., $21 mo.....**$219.95**



MATCHING AM/FM/FM-STEREO TUNER

• Styled to match the AA-21 • Built-in stereo adapter • 16-tube broad-band circuit • Automatic FM stereo indicator • Adjustable FM squelch • Phase control • Tuning meters

Kit AJ-41, 27 lbs., no money dn., $11 mo.....**$119.95**
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This money back guarantee stands behind every Heathkit. It guarantees that you are getting equipment of the highest quality that will provide years of use and pleasure. Equipment second to none. Heathkit—world pioneer in the exciting hobby of kit building.

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CIRCLE 47 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Continued from page 28

ness to retire nearly a decade ago, but her art has been preserved on this record, taken from a tape made for the Italian Radio in 1950. Naturally, the engineering shows its age, but lovers of the theatre will be happy to put up with indifferent sonics for the sake of the superb performance.

Expanding Angelicum. Another sign of prosperity in the record business in Italy is the construction of an important new studio by Angelicum. Owned by an order of monks, the premises of the Angelicum have for many seasons housed a first-rate concert series, and for several years recordings with the Angelicum orchestra have been made here. The catalogue naturally leans towards sacred music, but it also lists a great deal of secular eighteenth-century music (including rarities like Mozart's *Ascanio in Alba*) and an occasional work from later periods.

The new, air-conditioned studio, built over the concert hall, is not so large as RCA Italiana's mammoth Studio A, but it should prove ideal for Angelicum's purposes (and, Angelicum officials hope, for use by other companies as well). Its inaugural was made at the end of November: Vivaldi's oratorio *Juditha Triumphans*, with Oralia Dominguez singing the title role. Angelicum's artistic director, Riccardo Allorto, has great plans for the studio and for enlarging Angelicum's already impressive catalogue.

Reluctant Pianist. The despair of Italian recording companies is Italy's foremost pianist, Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, who has acquired a reputation for canceling appearances and declining to approve tapes. For several years Michelangeli hasn't been near a recording studio, even though his Angel coupling of the Ravel Concerto in G and the Rachmaninoff No. 4 was widely praised. Last spring, Michelangeli taped several recitals for an Italian telecast and technicians from Cetra made test pressings from the tapes, hoping that the artist would consent to their release. He wouldn't—but his interest was sufficiently aroused to lead him to sign a contract for three microgroove discs, probably dedicated to Debussy.

Another reticent pianist, a generation younger than Michelangeli, is Maurizio Pollini, 1960 winner of the Warsaw Chopin prize. Hailed by Rubinstein and by the other judges as a great new talent, Pollini came back to Italy, undertook a single concert tour, made one-and-a-half records (the Chopin First Concerto, and a recital disc shared with Michel Block), then withdrew for further study. He has finally emerged from this retirement and is concertizing again. In some ways he is still immature, but he is nevertheless a fascinating artist, and there is hope that he too will find his way back to the recording studios this year.

WILLIAM WEAVER

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

AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION

Lexicon for Listeners

#1

WHY DOES THE ADC-3 HAVE A COMPLIANCE OF 15×10^{-6}?

Only a little over two years ago such a figure would have been considered unbelievably high. Until that time adequate compliance was probably the greatest single problem faced by the cartridge manufacturers.

THEN CAME THE ADC-1. A major breakthrough had been achieved, for by lowering the stylus mass by a ratio of 4 to 1 over anything previously attained, it was possible to increase compliance to 20 x 10^{-6} cms./dyne (30 x 10^{-6} in our newest cartridge) without sacrificing any other qualities while at the same time reaping all the many benefits of true high compliance.

WHAT IS COMPLIANCE? Compliance is merely a measurement of the stiffness of the stylus suspension. The higher the compliance, the lower the stiffness. A compliance of 20-10^{-6} cms./dyne means that if a force of 1 dyne (.00102 grams) is applied to the stylus, it will move 20 millionths of a centimeter. 5 x 10^{-6} cms./dyne would indicate a movement of only 5 millionths of a centimeter when the same pressure is applied.

Unfortunately, high compliance is not merely a matter of loosening the stylus suspension. A large number of other problems have first to be solved. For instance, if the stylus mass is not greatly reduced, severe peaking and distortion would result. How these critical problems were solved will be described in subsequent ads. Sufficient to say, it is now common knowledge among the audio fraternity that Audio Dynamics did indeed solve them triumphantly and that we are now blessed with all the many advantages (and some disadvantages) of true high compliance.

The most obvious benefit is that of perfect tracking at low stylus pressures. With suitable associated equipment, amazingly low pressures may be used and many benefits both immediate and potential are realized.

Nevertheless, in numerous cases, the associated equipment, and not the cartridge, limit the degree to which tracking force may be reduced.

RECORD CHANGERS AND AUTOMATIC TURNTABLES, for instance, are required to operate under a variety of conditions and with cartridges ranging from excellent to abominable.

With these problems, it is not surprising that the changer tone arms are not optimised for perfect performance at very low tracking pressure. In fact, most modern changers operate best at around 2-3 grams.

WHY THE ADC-3 HAS A COMPLIANCE OF 15 x 10^{-6}. It is for this pressure range that the ADC-3 was specifically designed. Compliance of 20 or over would be useless as the stylus would simply collapse under the pressure. On the other hand, a compliance of 10 or below would not enable the last ounce of performance to be extracted from the record and therefore, after literally months of testing, 15 was decided upon as giving the best of both worlds. Stylus mass, radius, polish and other related parameters were then optimized to match this compliance, providing a cartridge which will obtain the very highest performance possible from its associated equipment.

ADC-3 SPECIFICATIONS – TYPE: Miniature moving magnet • **SENSITIVITY:** 10 millivolts per channel ±2 db at 1,000 cps (5.5 cm/sec recorded velocity) • **FREQUENCY RESPONSE:** 10 to 20,000 cps ± 3 db • **CHANNEL SEPARATION:** 30 db 50 to 7,000 cycles • **STYLUS TIP RADIUS:** .0007" (accurately maintained) • **STYLUS TIP MASS:** .8 milligrams • **LATERAL AND VERTICAL COMPLIANCE:** 15 x 10^{-6} cms./dyne minimum • **RECOMMENDED LOAD IMPEDANCE:** 47K ohms • **TRACKING FORCE:** 2 to 5 grams • **MOUNTING CENTERS:** Standard ½" and 7/16" centers. Unit adapts to virtually all tone arms.

ADC

AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION

Pickett District Road, New Milford, Connecticut

ADC-1 $49.50

ADC-2 $46.50

ADC-3 $37.50

ADC-40 $44.50

ADC-14 $175.00

ADC-16 $220.00

ADC-18 $250.00

CIRCLE 11 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

said Anton Schmitt of New York's famed Harvey Radio after listening to the Acoustech I solid state stereo power amplifier for the first time. "The dynamic range and transparency of sound permit me to hear shadings and subtleties I was never aware of," Anton continued. "Even when I turn up the bass controls on the preamp, I still hear more tightly controlled lows, not boom. This amplifier sets a new standard in sound reproduction."

This dramatic advance in the art of sound reproduction results from the sophisticated solid state circuitry of the Acoustech I. The expensive all-silicon output stage (beta cutoff above one megacycle) combined with direct-coupled circuitry (no driver or output transformers) provides unequalled transient response. Together with the high damping, these unique characteristics give a clarity and ease of listening that was as immediately obvious to Anton Schmitt as it will be to you.

Matching this unparalleled electrical performance is the Acoustech I's equally unparalleled reliability. Using the most advanced techniques found in precision scientific and military instrumentation, the Acoustech I will perform almost indefinitely at its original performance level. Operation of the amplifier with no load, capacitive load, switching transients, and shorted speaker leads which can disable many vacuum tube amplifiers do not harm the Acoustech I. Mil spec glass-epoxy circuit boards, computer-grade electrolytics, girder construction, cool running and conservative operation of all components permit the most extensive warranty in the industry. Unlike vacuum tube amplifier manufacturers who cannot provide extended warranty for tubes, Acoustech provides an unprecedented FIVE YEAR warranty on the silicon output transistors.

The Acoustech I can be heard at leading audio dealers across the country.

MINIMUM SPECIFICATIONS: 40 watts per channel, rms, both channels operating simultaneously, delivered 8-16 ohms, 20-20,000 cps, with less than 0.95% harmonic and IM distortion (IM measured with 60 and 6000 cps tones mixed 4:1) at rated output; Rise time 1.75 μsec; Frequency response, ± ¼ db, 5-50,000 cps; ± 3 db, 2½-250,000 cps; Input impedance 150,000 ohms; Dimensions 15¾" w x 5" h x 12" d. **$395** including cage. (Slightly higher West of Rockies).

Harvey Radio Corporation in New York City is one of the oldest and most influential audio dealers in the country. From high fidelity's early days, Harvey has invariably been among the first to recognize the importance of significant technological breakthroughs like magnetic cartridges, acoustic suspension speakers, and now, quality solid state power amplifiers.

IMPORTANT OFFER Fill out this coupon for complimentary copy of Acoustech's new booklet "Why Solid State Amplifiers Can Sound Better." Also included will be detailed information on both the Acoustech I and II and a list of dealers from whom a demonstration can be heard.

TO: Acoustic Technology Laboratories, Inc. Dept. H-2, 139 Main Street, Cambridge 42, Massachusetts

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CITY.....ZONE.....STATE.....

ALSO ENCLOSE NAMES OF INTERESTED FRIENDS

COMING . . . Acoustech II solid state stereo decade control center

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sandor Konya

Out of Italian opera,
a reluctant Wagnerian.

IT WOULD BE stretching a point to claim that the hardships of wartime and a year in military prison camp are positive assets in the schooling of an operatic tenor, but when a proper Wagnerian hero emerges from such circumstances, who can say that these turns of fate may not have been propitious? In the case of Sandor Konya, one of the most attractive Walthers that Metropolitan *Meistersinger* audiences have seen or heard in years, it may very well be true that such early "difficulties" (to paraphrase politely) had a tangibly good effect. For one thing, they kept Konya out of professional singing until he was twenty-eight, allowing both voice and technique to mature; for another, they encouraged the growth of a physical stamina which can be counted upon when the moment for the *Preislied* rolls around at close to midnight.

Today, at "thirty-nine and a half," Konya is giving performances at the Met on what is practically a double-feature basis. You may hear him on a Thursday in a five-hour evening of *Die Meistersinger* and find him singing Radames at the following Saturday matinee—having spent the intervening day in rehearsal; and for good measure he may turn up two days afterwards to sing the Italian aria in *Rosenkavalier*. This kind of timetable perturbs him not at all. "I am never tired," he said recently—having just completed such a marathon and looking, indeed, ready for anything.

But the power of endurance is far from being the most important of Konya's attributes. Concentrated schedules would hardly be demanded of him were it not for his remarkable versatility. And thereby hangs a tale: for Konya, the lyric Walther, the "World's Champion Lohengrin" (the title was conferred by Wieland Wagner), stepped into these roles only when fortune beckoned. He might even be considered a somewhat reluctant Wagnerian.

Sandor Konya, born in Hungary, began to study voice at seventeen in Budapest, and from the start showed a natural aptitude for the lyric Italian style. He came of age just in time to be drafted into the Hungarian Army, then under the domination of the Germans, and within a year was captured by the British and interned in Germany. It was at this point, one might say, that fate and the British took a hand in the genesis of the future Lohengrin: life in a prisoner-of-war camp, whatever else it lacked, did offer opportunities for singing, and Konya was soon in demand not only for performances in camp but also for appearances before English brass and German civilian audiences. And he began to develop a facility with the German language.

In 1946, British hospitality notwithstanding, Konya escaped from camp and was hidden for four months in the hayloft of a German family. Eventually, with passable German and a suit of civilian clothes, it was safe to emerge from hiding, register with local authorities in Münster as a "German born in Hungary," and get on with the business of vocal study. With the help of the director of the Münster Opera House, Konya made his way to a voice teacher in Steinhude, near Hanover, with whom he studied for four years, concentrating on the Italian repertory but occasionally being forced, as he tells it, into local conservatory productions of Wagner because no other suitable tenor was available. He earned part of his living during these years by fishing in the great Steinhude Lake; he also played chess, and it was at a local chess tournament that he met the future Mrs. Konya.

IN 1951, Konya hitchhiked with his wife to Bielefeld, Germany, won the city opera audition for an "Italian" tenor, and made his professional debut as Turiddu in *Cavalleria rusticana*. It was the beginning of a busy period, with the regular Bielefeld contract allowing opportunities for guest appearances—always in Italian roles—in Stuttgart, Hamburg, Munich, and Berlin; it allowed time, too, for additional study of the repertory during summer months in Milan. In addition, Konya developed a flair for operetta and popular song, both of which occupy him still. Then in 1958, fortune, in the form of Wieland Wagner, beckoned.

"I had stayed away from the Wagner repertoire," says Konya, "until Wieland Wagner phoned and asked me to audition for the new production of *Lohengrin*. When I told him I didn't know the role, he said I could sing the audition with the score." Konya was still learning the part when he arrived in Bayreuth; after the successful audition, two weeks of "very hard work" were sufficient to turn the former Turiddu into one of the most successful Lohengrins in Bayreuth's history.

Mrs. Konya—a spirited, attractive German who occasionally supplements her husband's newly acquired English—has a vivid recollection of opening night. "The stage hands were about to turn the wheels for the swan to go out, and Wieland Wagner whispered to Sandor, 'Are you nervous?' My husband said, 'I'm not nervous. I have given my word. But perhaps *you* are nervous?' " It seems doubtful, in retrospect, that he could have been. Konya's performance pleased Herr Wagner so greatly that he presented the tenor with the gold costume which was then unique to Bayreuth (silver having been traditional since Wagner's time), and Konya now wears this costume in most *Lohengrin* productions—except the one in Rome, where he is clad in the silver tunic once reserved for Gigli.

Konya admits that the requirements of Wieland Wagner's productions are difficult. "Every gesture must be done in slow motion," he said the other day, springing to his feet to demonstrate the normal vigorous sweep of the arm that comes so naturally when singing a vigorous phrase. "To move around, to make a big gesture, helps a singer relax. But in Bayreuth one stays very still, raises the arm very slowly. '*Heil dem König*,' " he sang again—and this time the arm rose in a hypnotically deliberate curve.

Konya has recorded fairly extensively in Europe for Deutsche Grammophon, including versions of *Bohème* and *Butterfly* sung in German. So far only three of his albums—a collection of Puccini arias, a miscellany of Verdi/Wagner excerpts, and disc of Viennese operetta arias—are available here. Future recording projects include a set of Wagner excerpts for DGG, with assignments also coming up from other companies.

The tenor professes to be quite happy with the sound of his voice on records, and he finds the tape recorder of inestimable help in learning new roles. His usual method is to record a part with piano accompaniment and then memorize it from the tape, listening with earphones on planes or on automobile trips while Mrs. Konya drives. To demonstrate the quality of his small German portable tape machine, Konya flicked the switch and out poured the lilting strains of a Latin-American folk song in German. It was Konya's latest popular hit abroad—"on all the German jukeboxes," said his wife. It seemed a long way from *Lohengrin*, but in its way just as convincing. SHIRLEY FLEMING

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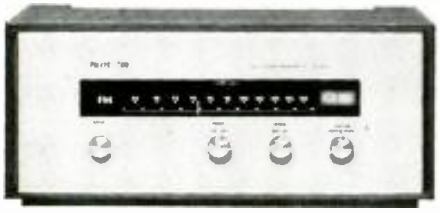

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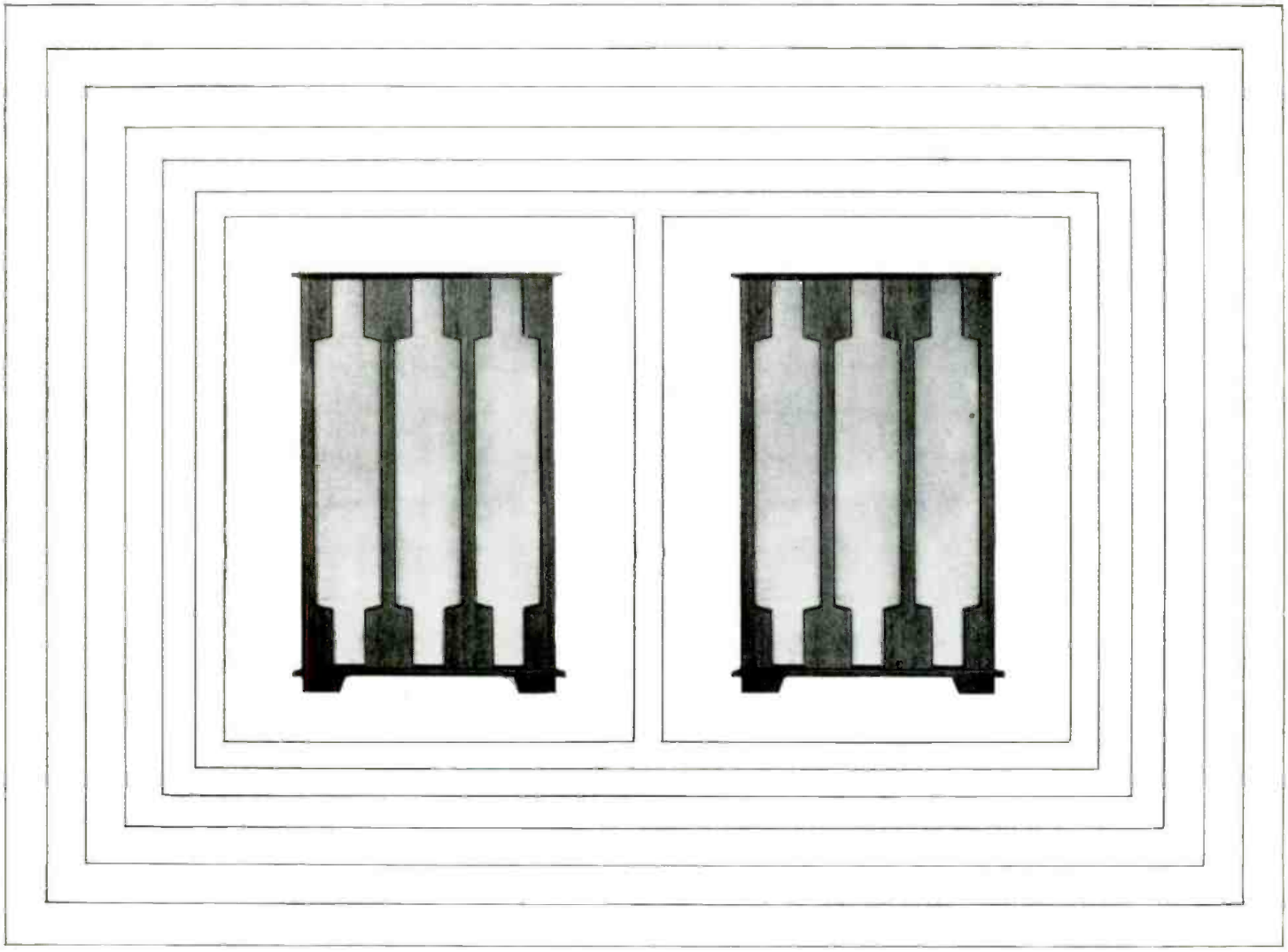

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High Fidelity Ill Defined

ALTHOUGH THEY DIFFER as to ways and means, manufacturers of high fidelity components know perfectly well what it is they are striving for. It is no more nor less than the goal sought after from the day of Edison and the phonograph, of Marconi and the radio, of Poulsen and magnetic recording. "Natural reproduction" or "clear channels" or "high fidelity"—whatever the nomenclature, the aim has been the same: the capture in sound of the unique moment of artistic re-creation, whether of symphony or poem or play, and its subsequent release, intact and unchanged, for the private delectation of Everyman. For the better part of a century, this pursuit has preoccupied some of the most brilliant and imaginative minds all over the world. And the end is not yet in sight.

While tremendous strides have been taken towards what we now call high fidelity, the ultimate goal still challenges. Each month brings a new application of a known theory, or a new discovery that reduces distortion another iota, or improves frequency response, or in some way brings the sound heard in our living rooms closer to the sound the recording artists and engineers intended. New materials are found and new techniques evolved to perform certain functions more efficiently and economically, thus rendering high quality sound more widely accessible. In its broadest sense, "high fidelity" is the integration of scientific knowledge and technological skill with a sensitive understanding of aesthetic values, to the end that an artistic experience may be fully communicated. It is in itself a creative act.

How else to "define" such a phenomenon? Certainly it would take a brash or overweening man to circumscribe high fidelity in specific, quantitative terms. In any case, such an attempt would be intellectually futile, inasmuch as the technical perimeters surrounding sound reproduction are constantly moving out—and in the process becoming more rigorous and demanding. For instance, an amount of distortion regarded as "acceptable" five years ago would be considered excessive today. The same is true of frequency response, power requirements, and so on.

If describing high fidelity in terms of a set of figures is inherently mistaken—or at best valid only at a given time—what, then, of a definition in which the figures used are so far below even the minimal standards of yesterday as to be a travesty on the true nature of high fidelity?

We could avert our eyes and say this is all wrong and it cannot be. But the fact is that this is all wrong and it very well can be. We are referring to the "proposed definition of high fidelity" offered by the Electronics Industries Association to the Federal Trade Commission—a definition requiring no more than 5 watts of music power and a loosely specified response from 100 to 8,000 cps, with no mention of distortion. If adopted, this standard could become a legal yardstick for allowing the use of the term "high fidelity" quite indiscriminately. The potential violation of a concept is not, in itself, terribly disturbing. But such a definition plainly could permit the accolade of "high fidelity" to be bestowed on many inferior products—and presumably with official sanction. The consumer who is not technically sophisticated would, of course, be the most vulnerable to any kind of misrepresentation.

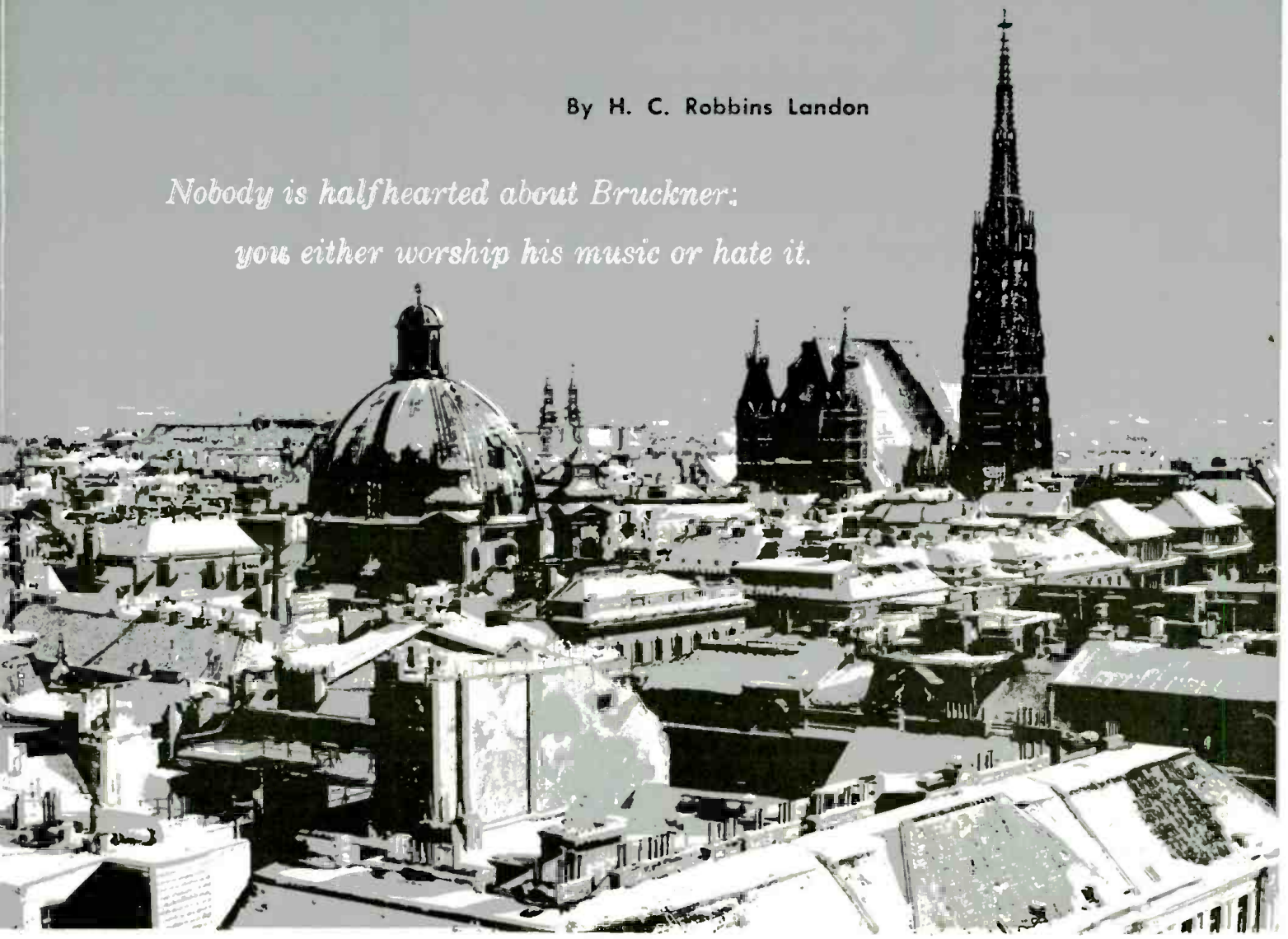
This proposal—which has been characterized as worse than no definition—was written by a committee representing a number of firms belonging to the EIA, but in its present form it represents the EIA as a whole. The EIA includes among its members some of the nation's leading electronics firms, who have made incalculable contributions not only to our individual comfort and well-being but also to our nation's progress and welfare. To censure the organization outright because of a single ill-advised venture would be clearly unreasonable. But to challenge this specific move, and to reassert that any standards for high fidelity must logically come from those who have given it birth and nourishment, seems to us wholly mandatory.

We urge the FTC to take no action until all responsible voices have been heard. In this instance, those voices must include individual component manufacturers as well as perhaps some disaffected member firms of the EIA itself, the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers, various professional organizations concerned with the science and art of sound reproduction, and a number of trade and consumer publications that profess to serve the best interest both of industry and of the public.

AS high fidelity SEES IT

By H. C. Robbins Landon

Nobody is halfhearted about Bruckner: you either worship his music or hate it.



THE BAFFLING CASE OF Anton Bruckner

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, Vienna's famous concert organization, the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, sent out to its subscribers a questionnaire asking them what kind of music they wanted to hear, which composers, which works. Of the 4,000 persons queried, only 1,086 replied; on the whole, however, their preferences may be taken as representative of those of the average conservative concertgoer in Vienna. The answers were tabulated in two ways: first, by composer; then by specific works. As anyone familiar with postwar Vienna might surmise, Anton Bruckner came out on top, by a comfortable margin: Bruckner, 337; Mozart, 277; Franz Schmidt, 270; Beethoven, 257; Haydn, 244; Richard Strauss, 244—and so on down to Schoenberg (77), Webern (71), and Prokofiev (66). As for particular works, Bruckner's Eighth Symphony won at 377 (Mozart's *Jupiter* got only 100 votes).

For those unfamiliar with the phenomenon of Bruckner in Austria, it should be explained that his popularity there has been rising steadily ever since the First World War, and most sharply since the sensational revelations of the early Thirties, when it was shown that the published scores of Bruckner's famous symphonies had been "improved" by well-meaning disciples. It is not always clear why Bruckner allowed his original versions to be altered by conductors; but in at least one case, the unfinished and towering Ninth Symphony, the retouchings by Franz Schalk and Ferdinand Löwe were flagrant falsifications of the master's intentions; and there was no question that the *Originalfassung*—first

played in 1932—of the Ninth was more powerful in addition to being more authentic. As score after score appeared in the "original version," not only was the musicological sensation among scholars heightened but audiences in Austria and Germany had a chance to reconsider Bruckner. Both the professional critics and the general public came to wholehearted agreement that the original versions, though longer, were more convincing than the "edited" scores. Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Hans Weisbach, Sigmund von Hausegger switched from the "old" to the "new" and authentic versions. (Of celebrated present-day conductors, only Knappertsbusch stubbornly refuses to use the corrected scores.)

Gradually, to many Austrian and German music lovers, Bruckner came to mean all things. As World War II progressed, it was to Bruckner that they turned in times of bombing, darkness, and death. When Hitler's death was announced over Hamburg Radio in those final cataclysmic days of April 1945, it was the Adagio of the Seventh Symphony that followed, illustrating (one presumes) the utter depth and despair into which the German nation had been plunged. Even more than Wagner, Bruckner came to mean the essence of German spiritual life: all that was *Dichter* and *Denker*, all that was mystic and philosophic, seemed to be summed up in the solemn grandeur of Bruckner's adagios. It was, people felt, the ultimate expression of the Faustian nature in music. The shattering emotional experience of the Eighth under Furtwängler, played by the Vienna Philharmonic in the scarcely heated Musikvereinsaal during the somber winter of 1944, seemed to make all the suffering worthwhile. An officer on leave in late 1944 wrote in his diary, "The [Bruckner] Ninth with Hans Weisbach: now I know what we are fighting for; to return to the Front will be easier."

The reverence for Bruckner in Vienna has, indeed, something extramusical and feverish about it. The newest trend is to hiss applause after performances of the Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, on the principle that "profound silence" is the only appropriate tribute to these two huge and emotionally racking works. The Viennese also considered it entirely appropriate that St. Stephen's Cathedral should, a couple of Vienna Festivals ago, have allowed the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra to give a concert there consisting of the Bruckner Ninth Symphony and his Te Deum. "Thank God," said one Viennese to me, "they *couldn't* applaud in the Stefansdom. Besides, it's almost a Mass, that symphony, isn't it?"

In the fifteen years during which I have lived in Vienna, I have often—as a matter of statistical curiosity—asked people at a Philharmonic Orchestra concert if they thought that Bruckner was a greater composer than Beethoven. Most of them have replied: "Perhaps not, but he says more to me." Those who have not attended a Bruckner concert in Vienna can hardly imagine the concentration, the dedication, with which audiences listen to the Masses and symphonies. I have never felt a more charged atmosphere in any concert hall than I did in the Musikverein after Furtwängler's performance with the Philharmonic, shortly before his death, of the Bruckner Eighth. And not only the audience is so emotionally involved; the players themselves seem to take on a kind of rapt, otherworldly inwardness when playing Bruckner. Everything combines to produce an atmosphere closely akin to mass hysteria by the time the work is finished. The very loudness of the last pages of the Eighth, in which it is tradition to have a whole set of extra brass come in (making sixteen horns, six trumpets, six trombones, and two bass tubas), is in itself shocking. And thus the return to reality after the final unison notes crash down is so difficult that applause really does seem out of place (as, indeed, it often does after the performance of any great piece of music).

But this is only one side of the picture. The composer is nowhere near so universally admired as the existence of the Bruckner cult in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Holland would suggest. In other countries and other cultures, Bruckner is often regarded with a loathing fully as strong, and perhaps as unreasonable, as the adoration in which he is held in Austria. I have seldom met someone to whom Bruckner was simply "*égal*," and the violence of reaction which his music calls forth constitutes what must be called the Bruckner Problem.

Bruckner's music produces, and I think will continue to produce, intense emotions, because it was born in a man whose simple, peasantlike exterior concealed a swirling flood of passionate feelings. When the Third Symphony was first performed in Vienna, the audience was so shocked that it first laughed and then angrily walked out of the hall, leaving the composer alone with the orchestra and a few faithful followers. In the United States, people do not generally walk out in the middle of concerts; but I remember distinctly the fury of some Bostonians who were treated to their first taste of Bruckner's Eighth with Koussevitzky shortly after the last war. I was invited to lunch at a house on Beacon Street the next day, and as the discussion about the Eighth grew more and more heated, one man, literally shaking with rage, put down his fork and left the table, choking out as he stormed from the dining room: "It's the most frightful, wicked music I ever heard."

I was exposed to a similarly violent reaction when I paid my first visit to Denmark. We were sitting around the piano—one of Copenhagen's leading conductors, a well-known Danish musicologist, several other musicians, and myself—when the conversation fell on Bruckner. It was then I realized that much of the Bruckner Problem in non-German-speaking countries is political rather than musical. "Karajan came up during the war and conducted Bruckner, I think it was the Seventh Symphony," said the Danish conductor. "I'm sure he did it well, but for us it represented everything about Germany we hate, the marching boots, the concentration

camps. . . ." "Surely that's an exaggeration," I said. "You can't mix music and politics that way." And on the argument went, till I sat down at the piano and began to play the beginning of the Ninth Symphony. The company listened attentively, but after a few minutes my host came over. "Please don't play it," he said, pushing a glass of cognac into my hand; "it really makes me ill."

Several years later I was in Prague, talking to members of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. We were discussing the group's repertoire, and I asked if they did any Bruckner. "During the war and before, the German Philharmonic Orchestra here [now the Bamberg Symphony] played a lot of Bruckner: but it was for the German population. We Czechs can't stand Bruckner; it reminds us of the Occupation." And the subject was very abruptly changed.

Actually, this confusion of art and politics in connection with Bruckner is partly the result of the Austro-German attitude which, as I have tried to convey, borders on worship. If Bruckner's music represents (as I think it must, at least subconsciously) the essence of German spiritual life to the Austro-Germans, such peoples as the Danes and Czechs probably react against it more for what it represents than for what it is. Dragging politics into the Bruckner Problem has only served to make it worse.

It does not help matters to include Bruckner with the parochial, highly nationalistic composers who sprouted forth at the end of the nineteenth century, such as Delius, Sibelius, Smetana, Elgar, and Nielsen —composers whose present popularity exists almost exclusively (and even Sibelius is hardly an exception any more) in the cultural milieu to which they belonged. In other words, the English do not dislike Bruckner for the same reason that the Austrians dislike or, more truthfully, are bored by Elgar. The problem of Bruckner is surely one that is, or should be regarded as, purely musical. Austrians sometimes try to persuade doubting foreigners that in order to savor Bruckner you must have seen St. Florian, the great Benedictine Abbey in Upper Austria where Bruckner was organist; you must have soaked up the atmosphere of Upper Austria, the lilting countryside, and so forth. This is surely rubbish, just as it is foolish to say that to like Delius you must lie on the grass by the Thames on a summer evening. Of course it is obvious that the *Ländler*, from Mozart and Haydn down to Mahler, has had a strong effect on Austrian music; but you can like a *Ländler* or a waltz without ever having set foot on Austrian soil. And to confuse the Bruckner Problem with local "*Kolorit*" is certainly as bad as to bring politics or *Weltanschauung* into the affair.

THE FIRST THING that labels a Bruckner Symphony as out of the ordinary is its huge length compared to that of previous symphonic works. The Eighth Symphony, for example, is almost three times as long as Beethoven's Fifth. This, in itself superficial, observation means that the listener must concentrate for some eighty minutes; it puts the playing of a Bruckner symphony on a special level, otherwise occupied (as far as length goes) only by Mahler. The large size of the orchestra—not to speak of the technical difficulties demanded of the brass section—also places the music out of the range of all but major symphonic organizations. Thus, on the simplest level, the execution of a Bruckner work involves problems unrelated to those of the standard repertoire. It takes but one thought for an orchestral management to schedule a Bach suite, a Schubert symphony, a Mozart concerto: it takes at least two, even in Austria, to include Bruckner's Seventh, Eighth, or Ninth on a program.

The moment one stops thinking about the Bruckner Problem and starts listening to the music with an objective ear, however, it is not difficult to see at once why the Austrians identify themselves, or rather their cultural heritage, with this music: for Bruckner is a vast summing up, a final passionate outpouring of a long and hallowed tradition, the end beyond which it is not—and, as history has shown us, has not been—possible to proceed. Mahler was by no means such a repository of tradition as was Bruckner; Mahler leads forward, even to Shostakovich. Bruckner leads nowhere (unless you are prepared to call Franz Schmidt somewhere, which most non-Austrians are not): he is the end of the long road.

In the Bruckner orchestral works, there are powerful echoes of the great symphonic tradition: of Austrian baroque, with gigantic fugues, proud trumpets, and rattling kettledrums; of Haydn's late Masses, which were miraculous fusions of the late Viennese classical style and the older contrapuntal forms; of the doom-ridden tremolos in the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth—an atmosphere to which Bruckner, trancelike, returns again and again. There are also traces of Schubert's lyricism, and many of Bruckner's second subjects bear the stamp of music's greatest song writer. In the scherzos, we have a continuation of the famous Austrian dance tradition, one that flourished in the *Deutsche Tänze* and Minuets which Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven wrote (and were not ashamed of writing) for court balls and also for less formal occasions; this tradition turned into the early waltz (Josef Lanner) and, of course, the Strauss dynasty. In the orchestration of Bruckner's symphonies, there is always a strong undercurrent of a mighty organ; and this is no accident, for Bruckner began his career as an organist, and toured Europe—as far as London —in that capacity. Finally, his orchestration and his harmonic language owe a strong debt to Wagner, the composer who might be said to have colored Bruckner's music more than anyone else. In short, when a musically well-educated Austrian listens to Bruckner he hears, at least in his subconscious, the mighty procession of his musical culture.

After what I have written above, it sounds, on paper, as if Bruckner were music's greatest eclectic; but if you knew *Continued on page 120*

Bettmann Archive

The Bruckner Symphonies on Records

OF Bruckner's earlier symphonies (which include two before that designated as "No. 1"), there used to be several microgroove recordings, but all have disappeared except for the former Unicorn recording, with veteran Brucknerite F. Charles Adler, of Symphony No. 1, in C minor, now to be had on Siena 1001. On the whole, No. 1 is not a work, nor this a recording, with which to begin a Bruckner library. Nor is No. 3, in D minor, in spite of its real touches of genius, the Bruckner work with which to start a collection. There are two available recordings of the Third, neither of which uses the original version. SPA offers a two-record set (30/31) with F. Charles Adler (Mahler's Tenth Symphony on the fourth side), now very outdated sonically. Knappertsbusch, another veteran Brucknerite (who, as mentioned in the accompanying article, refuses to accept the original versions), plays the work with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on a single disc, London CM 9107; and this is clearly the preferred recording.

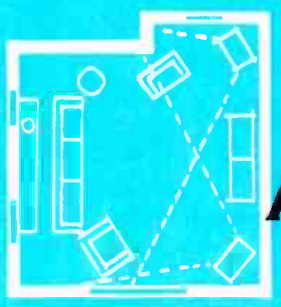
Beginning with the Fourth Symphony, we are dealing with masterpieces. To me the Eighth and Ninth contain, each in its own way, the essence of Bruckner—all his greatest and most uncompromising thoughts—but the popular pieces are without doubt No. 4, the *Romantic*, and No. 7, in E—which, incidentally, was the first Bruckner symphony to have been recorded (on 78s, with Ormandy). There are four versions of the Fourth to choose from: Hollreiser with the Bamberg Symphony, part of a three-disc Vox set (VBX 117 or SVBX 5117) which includes the Seventh with Rosbaud (a marvelous conductor far too little known in America); a Decca set—also on three discs and also coupled with No. 7 (DX 146), conducted by one of Germany's leading Brucknerites, Eugen Jochum; a very old Klemperer on Vox (11200), which does not show this great conductor at his best; and a gorgeously recorded, smoothly played version with the late Bruno Walter (Columbia M2L 273 or M2S 622, two discs, including the *Tannhäuser* Act I Overture). I would say that Jochum's is the most faithful interpretation, whereas Walter's has the best sound.

Of the difficult and long No. 5, there is only the beautifully played Knappertsbusch (Vienna Philharmonic, on London's two-disc set, CMA 7208 or CSA 2205, with music from *Götterdämmerung*), not, however, the original version. The lyrical Sixth Symphony no longer exists in the American catalogue; there used to be a decent, two-LP on Westminster, conducted by Henry Swoboda.

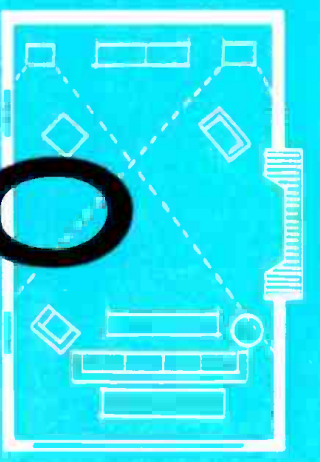
Continuing with the oft-recorded Seventh, there are no fewer than five editions in the Schwann catalogue (a sixth, the Van Beinum/Concertgebouw on London, was recently deleted—no great loss). Van Otterloo's with the Vienna Symphony on Epic (SC 6006) is a second-rate job and can be ignored. From the above-mentioned Rosbaud set, you can also get the Seventh alone, on one Vox LP, 10750—this is a very good buy and a distinguished performance with the Southwest German Radio Orchestra. Jochum's with the Berlin Philharmonic is a standardly good reading, but all these pale before the magnificent, searching performance with Klemperer and the Philharmonia on Angel (3626B or S 3626B, a two-record set containing also the *Siegfried Idyll*).

Of the Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, perhaps the definitive recordings were never issued—those performances with Furtwängler, which live as a cherished memory in many Europeans' hearts. There is a strong rumor that Deutsche Grammophon may make available a Berlin radio tape of the Eighth with that conductor. If this turns out to be the case, get it by all means. Meanwhile, there is an opulent Karajan version with the Berlin Philharmonic, splendidly recorded on two Angel discs (3576B or S 3576B) and perhaps the best introduction to Bruckner at present available. Van Beinum's Eighth (Epic SC 6011, also two discs) is again second-rate, while Jochum's old performance (Decca DX 109), much loved when it first came out, is now hopelessly outdated sonically (and on three LPs to boot). One of the most rewarding Bruckner performances comes, strangely, from the Leningrad Philharmonic with whom Mravinsky turns out a stunning Eighth on Artia-MK 210B (two discs).

There are now six versions of the Ninth available. Adler's (SPA 24/25, two records) is the only one not to use the original version, and for that reason it is out of the running. The original version of this symphony is the only possible one, for the revised score destroys much of the autograph's brilliant originality and daring. The only two stereo recordings are Keilberth's with the Hamburg Philharmonic on Telefunken (18043, 8043 in mono) and Walter's on Columbia (MS 6171, ML 5571 in mono). Keilberth is not one of my favorite conductors—for me his heavy, coarse joviality has ruined many a Mozart performance at Salzburg—but I must confess that, even with a second-rate orchestra, he gets nearer the jagged monumentality of the Ninth than does Walter, whose Bruckner is a little too smooth for many Brucknerites. I have also had much pleasure from the Vox record with Horenstein (8040), although the Vienna Symphony (that is what Vox means by "Pro Musica" in Vienna) is not the Vienna Philharmonic. Van Beinum's (Epic LC 3401), like all his Bruckner recordings, simply misses the mark. Loving a work does not, I fear, mean understanding it. The Jochum set (Decca DX 139) has the disadvantage of taking two discs, but this, like all Jochum's Bruckner readings, is an intensely dedicated, selfless performance (if you will compare his with Walter's, you will see what I mean about the Walter—in the latter too many corners, if not cut, are at least rounded off). I once heard Furtwängler do the Ninth with the Berlin Philharmonic. None of the readings mentioned above touches it for depth and intensity. I am still waiting for DGG to make the tape recording of his performance (which is known to exist) available on records.



ROOM ACOUSTICS FOR STEREO



BY DAVID P. EISENMAN

TO GET THE MOST from your stereo sound, you have to have a room.

This statement portends no whimsey, nor is it simply a reiteration of the obvious. The fact is that most present-day recordings are furnished with "built-in" acoustics. The recording engineer attempts to capture not only the sound of instruments and voices but the acoustical ambience of the concert hall or studio in which the performance takes place. Furthermore, he deliberately takes into account the probable acoustic surroundings—the average living room in the average home—in which the recording will normally be heard. Inasmuch as a room is, then, an *a priori* assumption on the part of those who make recordings, those who listen should make certain that their particular rooms complement rather than frustate the sonic effect which has been provided in advance.

The importance of a room can be highlighted if we consider for a moment what happens when music is heard in a "non-room"—an outdoor setting or a so-called anechoic chamber (i.e., a room acoustically dead, or having almost total absorption and thus no reflection of sounds). Such an environment has been held to furnish "flat response"; and since flat response is desirable in an amplifier, some people have the impression that it is a quality to be striven for in a listening room. In actual fact, with the absence of reflecting surfaces the natural sense of space that surrounds live sound is lost; and because the sound heard is essentially directive, the natural blend that occurs among various elements of a sonic signal is missing. And in an anechoic chamber at least, the absolute silence from all areas other than the specific sound source (or sources, if stereophonic reproduction) tends to create a sense of unnaturalness and may even induce a feeling of physical strain on the listener's part. From this point of view, the random background noises concomitant with outdoor listening may be an actual advantage, and the shell or similar housing generally provided at outdoor concerts works an acoustic improvement.

Essentially, what a room does is to enclose the sound—for better or worse, depending on the room's reflection characteristics as well as its standing wave patterns or resonances. Reflections may be hard and sharp or soft and diffuse, according to the manner in which sounds are absorbed, diffracted, or diffused by furnishings and their arrangement. Resonances are caused by a room's architectural structure, its dimensions and shape. All these factors must be dealt with if a satisfactory dispersion of sound is to be achieved. A good starting point is to know that sound is re-

flected according to a law of physics, common to optics as well as acoustics, which states that the angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection. To explain: objects in a room bounce waves of sound much as polished surfaces reflect beams of light. This law is superseded, so to speak, when the reflecting object's dimensions are small in relation to the wavelength of the sound, in which case the reflected sound behaves as if it were emanating from a new, omnidirectional source. From such an object, in other words, the sound would have an intensity equal in all directions.

Inasmuch as bass tones have long wavelengths (a 500-cycle tone, for instance, has a wavelength of a little more than two feet; a 100-cycle tone has a wavelength of eleven feet), such tones are more subject to dispersion by ordinary room furnishings. High frequencies, on the other hand, have shorter wavelengths and thus are less subject to random dispersion. On the contrary, they are more subject to being blocked by ordinary objects in a room. Normal sound reflection, in sum, favors the average loudness of bass frequencies—by allowing these tones to "sneak around" obstacles as well as by increasing the number of paths along which such tones can double back to the listener's ears.

The goal, however, for the acoustics of a listening room is even distribution of sound to all parts of the room. The problem, of course, is with treble response, as I have already indicated. Even such seemingly innocent obstructions as the arm of the chair—if between the listener and the sound source—can block the highs. In this regard, a good rule is: if you can "see" the tweeter, you can hear at least its direct output of highs—but this much alone does not assure that you also are hearing enough reflected highs. In this connection, Dr. Leo L. Beranek—acoustical consultant for Philharmonic Hall in Lincoln Center, New York City—told me that some of the best rooms for playbacks of recorded music are the library-studies found in many large older homes. According to Dr. Beranek and other acoustic experts, such rooms not only are happily insulated from noises in other parts of the house, but they often have superb high frequency diffusion, thanks to the many right-angle edges of row upon row of books along the walls. These edges provide dimensions smaller than the wavelengths of high frequencies and therefore do a fine job of diffusing the sound. The fair size of such a room helps too.

Another major aspect of reflection is symmetry, which necessitates the geometric balance of furnishings in such a way that the acoustic conditions into which two speakers must work are the same. Data on this subject is relatively scarce, and what little there is remains open to debate. Professionals often solve problems of sound reflection by trial and error. An architect or an acoustician, faced with sound reflection problems, may build a scale model of a room. Into this model he places special lights, in positions from which sound will originate. The reflection of light beams in the model then indicates what may be expected of the sound in the actual room. Such a procedure is probably not possible for the layman, but there are certain rules he should keep in mind. For one thing, the listening room should be at least moderately symmetrical with respect to its furnishings, so that the paths of sound from both speakers are fairly analogous. Obviously, the positioning of a good deal of soft, upholstered furniture on one side of the room and none on the other produces a decidedly asymmetrical arrangement, and will result in thoroughly different high frequency distribution patterns from any two speakers used for stereo. Again, an extreme example of asymmetry would be the placing of an overstuffed chair directly in front of one speaker, and nothing at all in front of the other. Such an arrangement can unbalance the stereo system beyond the compensating powers of the amplifier's tone or balance controls.

A second critical factor in room acoustics is resonance—both of the room itself and of the furniture and other objects in it. Most hard objects have their own natural resonant frequencies. When a tone of similar frequency is sounded, the object tends to vibrate "in sympathy" with the source of the sound, thereby increasing its apparent loudness and—in the case of reproduced music—adding distortion. Room resonances are legion. Depending on a room's size, its relative dimensions, its shape, and its contents, the resonances or "normal modes" in that room may introduce peaks in response all along the audio spectrum. When these peaks are especially pronounced, or when they occur at what technicians call "unhappy frequencies," they become very annoying. For instance, an acquaintance of mine reports having struggled to conquer a room resonance at about 120 cycles which was emphasizing what otherwise would have been a very small amount of hum in his sound system. He then found in this same room a "bass hole"—an area in which bass frequencies arrive from various dispersing points out-of-phase with each other, thus canceling each other. He now sits in blissful silence from hum.

From the standpoint of resonances, the best room is one in which no two dimensions are such that they form a ratio of a whole number, or even a large fraction of a whole number. Thus, a room with dimensions in proportion of, say, 4:2:1 would be subject to pronounced resonances. Such a room must be carefully treated if it is to serve as a suitable playback room. A more desirable ratio would be 4:3:2.5 or 5:4:3. One expert insists on proportions of 1.6:1.25:1 (which means a rather high ceiling if the room is at all large, but the results are claimed to be acoustically ideal). The popular living room, which is 20 feet by 12 feet and has an 8.5-foot ceiling, has the ratio of 5:3:2.125. While not of the "golden measurements," such proportions are susceptible to good acoustics and good stereo—but only if the inevitable resonances are dealt with.

The way to deal with them is to take steps to

absorb sound selectively, in the offending ranges, by the use of ordinary furnishings, draperies, carpeting, and the like—as well as specific acoustical materials, such as acoustical tiles. What any of these items do, essentially, is absorb sound rather than reflect it. Some commercial materials, such as perforated tiles, also can be used to diffuse the sound reflections. Of course, most materials are frequency-selective: that is to say, they absorb more of certain frequencies than others. For instance, light and fluffy materials tend to absorb the highs, but have less effect on the midrange and bass. On the other hand, plasterboard and plywood panels absorb more of the bass and will reflect the highs. Draperies absorb mostly treble, to provide a "smoothing" effect, while carpeting has a general kind of over-all absorbent quality.

An analogy with light may help explain why this feature of a room is so important. Light is universally absorbed by any substance that is black. A black cloth, for instance, reflects no light and absorbs all visible frequencies, dispersing their energy in the form of heat. A simple demonstration of this fact (originated, incidentally, by Ben Franklin) is to place variously colored pieces of cloth on snow and observe the different depths to which they sink.

Unfortunately, there are no materials that absorb sound as the black cloth absorbs light. Many commercial acoustical materials are designed to absorb best the midrange or speech, and while serving well to reduce the over-all sound level in public places such as stores, these materials—used indiscriminately in the music listening room—may very nearly obliterate a major portion of the desired audio response. In other words, in a room intended for the playing of recorded music an effort to reduce room resonances should not necessarily become an attempt to reduce over-all sound intensity. Such an attempt might be compared to painting a white room some specific color to reduce its light intensity instead of simply adding a little black (the universal absorber) and thus "graying" it.

The "graying" of a room sonically, however—that is, the over-all reducing of sound level by the equal absorption of all frequencies—is well-nigh impossible without professional help. The closest the non-expert can come to doing it is by carpeting the floor. Adding, or removing, any other object or material is tantamount to "coloring" the sound of that room, by the inevitable emphasis or deëmphasis lent to a given range of frequencies. A happy point to remember, however, is that the recording engineer did have in mind the "average living room" with its average furnishings. This may be cold comfort to those whose rooms or tastes in décor are significantly more or less opulent than "average"—but it does mean that there is some leeway. But specific acoustical materials, as such, may be thought of as "concentrated furniture"—and so their use can become quite critical. Indeed, because of their properties, it often is easier to overuse them, and their introduction to cure one ill, if not carefully planned, may produce another ill.

For instance, a common attempt to counteract tubby bass is to apply acoustical tile rather indiscriminately. Actually, these tiles absorb more treble than bass. Consequently, the effect is to aggravate, and at considerable cost, rather than to ameliorate the defect. Again, it is common practice to combat noise by reducing the over-all loudness level of a room by the use of acoustic materials, and then raising the level of the sound system accordingly. This method will overcome the noise, but only if the room's reflection and diffusion patterns remain unchanged and if the materials used do not upset the balance among frequency ranges.

Even in such an application, no attempt should be made to absorb all sounds. Careful choice of absorbers to match the range of noise, or of the annoying frequency peak, should produce satisfactory results. This, of course, may take some doing and in general requires the advice of a professional, or at least of someone who has had considerable experience in room acoustics.

Information regarding acoustic materials and their relative sound-absorbing properties can be found in a number of readily available texts or reference books on acoustics. In general, commercial products, such as tiles, should be used only on the advice of a reliable consultant, and then preferably in patches for specific areas rather than in the "blanket" approach that covers an entire ceiling or all four walls. Indeed, the blanket approach may introduce "dead spots" that interfere with the normal (and natural) dispersion of sound so necessary for a perception of the full stereo effect. In sum, acoustical materials as such should not be regarded as a panacea for all acoustic ills but rather as a last resort—and then used only with great care.

The happy truth is that a good deal can be accomplished with a judicious use of ordinary room contents, which themselves function as "acoustical materials." Windows *Continued on page 125*

The three rooms pictured on the facing page house the same music system, but their different décors alter their acoustic properties and thus influence the sound heard. The room at the top is a "live" room. Its light furniture, minimal carpeting, and exposed windows all combine to produce random reverberation effects that aggravate room resonances to an unnatural degree. The center room—with upholstered sofa, larger rug, floor-length drapes, and tall bookshelves—strikes a nice balance between the too "live" and the too "dead." An example of the latter is the room shown at the bottom: lavishly draped and carpeted, with a good deal of heavily upholstered furniture, it is highly absorbent of treble. Particularly unfortunate are the chairs in front of the loudspeakers where they block most of the highs.

By C. G. Burke

A LOST INQUIRY

An exagmination round the factification of four operas not long ago recorded, wherein are made certain divagations on the nature of art and morality.

AN INFORMANT who studies this kind of matter declares that a TV troubadour, to cheer, regale, and indeed inspire a wife of his, used to load a turntable with a stack of records, enjoin the lady to silence, and let the music throb away for hours.

Then he would sit in the clamp of a rapture not unlike coma, motionless and hushed except for a burst or two of finger-snapping irresistibly extorted by the music's glory.

What they heard in this togetherness was his own voice singing.

How many days all the circumstances of the troubadour's entrancement lasted the informant cannot say, but after a term the helpmeet announced strongly that she would end this marriage, more speedily than her wont.

So great is the spell of music.

. . . . What shape of spell, what texture, intensity, that could ecstasize its donor so while the allicient donee preened her wings for flight to another landing? Granted that there are beauties so very keen they unsettle, may it not follow that there is a degree of keenness invidious, even evil, when beauty without conscience unsettles too much?

To the archives, then, for a sober hearing; but in all the tiers of shelves not one record of our minstrel. One or more would have been bought, but an alphabetical fortuity interposed during scrutiny of the index, where *Freischütz* loomed near where the minstrel did not. That disarranged this study.

For that is an opera entirely devoted to a magic spell, which might throw some light on the spell under inquiry. So it was heard, in Deutsche Grammophon's sculptured stereo (SLPM 138639/40; LPM 18639/40 in mono) of as inclusively expert a performance as the best of opera houses can yield only for exceptional galas, while the grand surge and extraordinarily keen articulation of the sound are beyond the acoustical probabilities of most locations in most opera houses. The concentrated merits of this pair of very long-playing records (two minutes less than two hours) could not fail to divert attention from the TV minnesinger.

Der Freischütz covers a standard Franco-Italian *opéra-comique* frame with a tapestry of such determined and exuberant Teutonism that a long hard look is needed for the frame to be divined. Here is the special Germanic little world of Kind's libretto

and Weber's music: a dense and somber forest, ominous with the mystery of blackness, wrapped around and over a hamlet oppressed by grisly recollection of the Thirty Years' War recently dead from exhaustion. Here the men are foresters and the aspiration is to shoot straight: prestige and leadership are matters of so many bullseyes, and the heroine is bestowed on the truest gun.

From their introduction and throughout, Weber gives character to his characters with the decisive point of Mozart, and adds a vivid and alterant painting of landscape external to the domain of Mozart, painter of indoors and gardens. The braggart peasant Kilian, the weak hesitant hero Max (richly sung by Richard Holm), and the reckless ruffian Kaspar (Kurt Böhme, none better in this part) do not need a text to explain their nature already more explicit in the music. Pantomime would suffice too for the girls in their pretty contrast: mooning Agatha, simple, serious, and pious, and bubbling Aennchen, bright, teasing, and tender, if identification were all that mattered; but we would not like to miss the embellishment of identification spun for Aennchen—Weber's wife in tones—by Miss Rita Streich on the records, nor the accomplishment of the versatile soprano Irmgard Seefried in keeping her Agatha consistently young and fearful, even during "*Wie nahte mir der Schlummer*," usually offered with some justification by its singers with a certain domineering complacency at being able to contend with the difficulties of one of the longest *scenas* in opera.

And Samiel—his portraiture is almost entirely done by a malignant orchestra reeking of brimstone because he, the immemorial fright of forests, cannot be plausibly staged except as a shadow or a smolder or a convulsion of darkened light. He surpasses all the established requirements of operatic demonry because of the tenacity of his rustic single-mindedness. He is the Black Huntsman absorbed conscientiously in the shop of his locality, which is shooting. For a terrible price he infuses perfect accuracy into a brew of bullets by an appropriate fearsome incantation at midnight, a ceremony that is the sortilegious stuff of the celebrated finale of *Der Freischütz*'s second act.

The desperate bullets are molded by the heat of Weber's fancy in the midst of a forest glen in a crescent tumult of furious transformation. No doubt, during the complex of eerie orchestral outbursts—the beasties crawling, slithering, flitting, rushing; the forest disintegrating, the bullets taking foul shape, the souls being mortgaged—that for all his provincialism Samiel is a master of the advanced techniques of satanic thaumaturgy; and if the pleasant nervous fright felt by a *Freischütz* audience is less devout than the terror of the dramatis personae, it has a universal basis, in the fear of what is black or strange or hidden.

Boozy Kaspar first, then prissy Max, sell their souls to Samiel, and in the superb opening scene of the final act, wherein the bridesmaids present Agatha with a funeral wreath when a bridal crown is expected, the air and music are so ominous of the tragedy building from the first scene of all that a tragic conclusion is imperative.

Nevertheless it is avoided, in a sudden and cynical collapse of drama, by the last-minute intervention of a holy hermit wholly boring who pushes in from nowhere to confound Samiel, save Agatha, punish Kaspar, and pardon Max. A few hearty platitudes prepare a final curtain on a jubilation of repentant tears and a vista of future happiness for the young him and her.

In *Freischütz*, Kind and Weber were deliberately writing folk. That is a precarious thing for sophisticated men to try. Nearly always their sophistication makes them condescend, and their worry over the mysterious populace they are trying to interpret without being part of it induces them to edify. Good must prevail over evil which must be punished; and to obviate perplexity about which is which, symbols are allocated to make identification certain. Max and Kaspar do the same heinous thing, each selling himself to the Devil; but Max is the juvenile lead, he drinks with reluctance and is a tenor, attributes which as a matter of course reward him with the maiden whereas Kaspar must die for the offense in which they were partners because he is a well-worn tosspot and a basso.

Wherever art is wayward from its own exigencies edification is probably lurking, and in the art calculated for the populace—which is always everybody else—the reassuring ethics of right's triumph over wrong, and an accompanying symbolic key, are invariable. The thing can be studied at its simplest in the TV Western, where right is always recognizable in the only member of the cast of gunmen who can shoot straight; a proof of virtue rewarded by the embrace of the frontier heroine in shaven brows and surfeited jeans. From Max to Billy the Kid—a murderous cretin who on TV never misses—good is made by fiat and proved by symbol.

KASPAR SHAKES HIS FIST at heaven, and is stricken dead, and that is the fate of Don Giovanni too, in the dramatic conclusion of another great opera. He is a villain whose evil is so transfigured by the sumptuous gallant sparkle of the music that Mozart mischievously gave to him that it is he and not the sheeplike juvenile lead Ottavio who captures our sympathies, which must be corrected by the spectacle of the retribution ordained for his crimes.

Which are enormous. If we forbid our eyes to imitate our ears' enchantment, we see this Giovanni as a revolting scoundrel until his very end, when his stanch loyalty to his one principle, which is the principle of evil, will not yield even to death. He is merciless and unmagnanimous, empty of the human sympathies, faithless and a cad in all directions.

He is not a mere rakehell, a career-man in women who as such would excite quite as much admiration and envy as reprobation: he is vile in all his relationships except with the Statue. The fellow kills

Donna Anna's father before her eyes when it would have been just as serviceable, and as easy for an agile blade, to incapacitate him. With a particularly noisome kind of brutality he turns Donna Elvira, whom he has jilted, over to his valet, once to receive the latter's mockery and another time his embraces, while the master sneaks off to try his hand with her maid. Moved professionally to abridge the maidenhood of the peasant girl Zerlina, he offers a preposterous marriage as bait, meanly cruel to her, and degrading to his station. He humiliates the inoffensive rustic Masetto with offhand needlessness, and is contemptuously ungrateful to the valet who serves him faithfully in all his dangerous dirty enterprises. He is a monster—and in the scintillating magic of Mozart's music the most attractive of *Don Giovanni*'s people.

. . . . This ramble, for which it may at least be said that one thing leads to another, is not a criticism of records already reviewed—although it will be a happy puff for four fine editions before its end—but an inquiry, regrettably spellbound along its route, into the spell of a TV Orpheus, to which it ought eventually to return. However, readers may be interested to know which version of *Don Giovanni* conjures best—RCA Victor LSC 6410 (in mono, LM 6410) maintains the steadiest level of merit in a competition where each of five other sets has some stretches of leadership. It is notable for a lack of any serious defects, memorable for most of its admirable singing, and commendable for the taut symphonic cohesion of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under leadership of studied decisiveness.

The tale of *Freischütz* is folkish, the legendary seducer Don Juan was a common figure in the lower theatres of Mozart's time, and the composers who gave a culminating glory to the two stories heeded the injunction of popular art that evil must be punished on the stage at least. Both evinced distaste for this by slyly making their hero sapless, and Mozart even gave a charming dazzle to iniquity, but both at the last minute extirpated evil by a *deus ex machina*, Weber's holy hermit and Mozart's statue.

The ordained triumph of righteousness can be reassuring to worried spirits in spite of the effect on drama of any predestination. It is the old dualistic core of many theologies Christian and pagan, with God immanent in a Good Principle and Satan lurking in a Principle of Evil. In one or another of its emphases or variations it lingers in theological ethics and is woven into the ethics of civicism and of art. In America its most familiar expression is Crime Does Not Pay, and its most abundant allegory the climacteric lethal shot from the imbecile boy's infallible six-shooter.

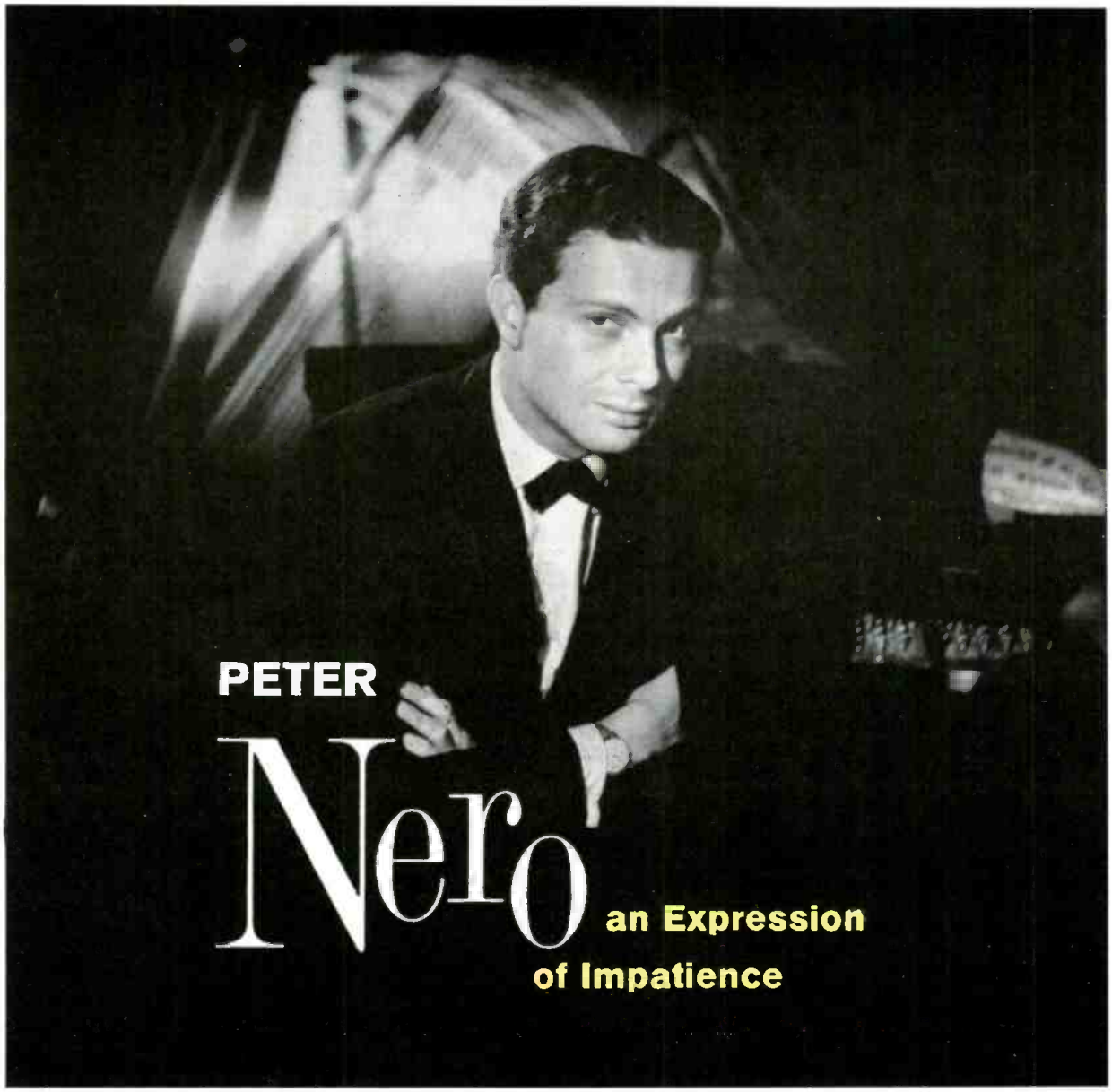
It is good to find that television drama has something in common with *Don Giovanni*, and we find too that the old dualism is not by any means a mere conjectural philosophy in television, but an article of faith devoutly preached by the newest of polytheism, wherein Suds approximates Zeus, Deodora is Aphrodite, Nicotis is Hermes, and Bruhzeera subs for Pallas. Its Good Principle is the rising graph, and the falling graph is its Principle of Evil. Religiously its drama damns whatever does not uphold its good. It strives to make the Gross National Product grosser.

Any crusading zeal puts a certain inflexibility into crusading literature, and the polytheocracy of Suds, Deodora, and the rest does demand a certain cerebral quiescence that not everyone can afford, so that fugitives from its rule are found investigating drama of less predictability, ethics of wider range, and a godhood of more varied temper.

FOR THAT, one would turn with greatest expectation to Olympus, but the present phonographic repertory makes a mightier case for Valhalla, in the existence of a London stereo of *Das Rheingold* (OSA 1309; A 4340 in mono) intensely vivid in the embroilment of an ungodly gang of feckless gods in a mess of ethical complications. This is the only honorable recording of that music drama ever made, and its alliance of knowledge, taste, experience, and judgment behind the high abilities of its vocalists and orchestra makes a total presentation—like that of the *Freischütz* above—far superior to what the usual resources of a single opera house can offer. The declamation is delivered in this *Rheingold*—the only one of Wagner's music dramas not to wander for a minute from his dramatic prescriptions, and wherein only the Rhinemaidens, in character, sing, the others reciting against instrumental music of incomparable dramatic variation in hue and movement—with intelligent and sensitive point by good voices that know how to act; and the best among the orchestras that play for opera fashions a tireless continuity of wondrous glow, bright or somber, for the long train of harmonic luxury from the first swirl of the ineffable multivolution of E flat that makes a river of a prelude, to the last sighing tint of the enchanting baleful rainbow after the gods have crossed it to the new heavenly fortress for which they have cheated everyone.

(There is a mellifluence of ranked and tiered brass in this orchestra, under this conductor, in this recording, that leaves the imprint of a caress after even the strongest blow.)

Theology and ethics are the stuff of the drama, whose excellent and remarkable text issues a dominant notion that where the gods are the ethics are so hopelessly muddled that neither can be salvaged without the intervention of a pure and fearless man. Wagner's ethical preoccupations, prominent in all his dramas, are those of a sharp and volatile brain excited by the new interrogations of a revolutionary era and fascinated by the study of his own behavior, whose intricate trail in not one of its clonic coils ever conformed discernibly with any chart of any known morality. He was not a man to write popularly for the populace, and the vigor of the bald conflicting greeds in *Rheingold*, its wit and horseplay, and above all its allotment of both obvious good and obvious bad to all its people, give reality and *Continued on page 121*



PETER Nero an Expression of Impatience

By JOHN S. WILSON

SEVERAL YEARS AGO—it might have been around 1956—a girl who worked at radio station WQXR in New York City, where I was doing a weekly jazz program, asked me to listen to a "demo" record by a young pianist she knew. He was, as I understood it, a Juilliard student who was more interested in being a jazz pianist than in establishing himself in a concert career.

I heard the recording and met the performer, a pleasant, clean-featured youngster named Bernie Nierow. His playing showed some of the characteristics common to classically trained pianists who develop an interest in jazz—considerable technique but a rather fuzzy jazz conception. Nierow swung more readily than most such neophytes, but his jazz attack seemed too uncertain to suggest that he would make much headway in that field. My prognosis notwithstanding, a bit later he landed a professional engagement as a jazz pianist, entertaining during intermissions at the Hickory House, a Manhattan restaurant and night club. After this promising start, however, he went on to a job in Las Vegas, where a couple of years later I heard that he was still working. The opportunity for anyone to develop as a jazz pianist in Las Vegas struck me as slight, and I assumed that his prolonged stay there meant that he had abandoned jazz for the relatively safe life of a cocktail pianist.

If I ever thought of Bernie Nierow again, it was only to wonder fleetingly what had become of him. Then, last summer, I found myself talking with an RCA Victor executive who was full of the remarkable success with which his company had

launched and promoted a new pianist, Peter Nero. In the short space of a year, this young artist had become "one of the hottest properties on records," with a repertoire ranging from richly romantic treatments of popular tunes to crossbreedings wherein *The Way You Look Tonight* became a Bach-tinged concerto grosso, Rodgers and Hart acquired a Mozart setting, and *Look for the Silver Lining* was built into a rousing, Sousa-like march. My friend glowed over the steadily increasing sales of each successive Peter Nero record and the skill with which he and his colleagues had created the Peter Nero image. "Even the name is part of the image," he declared. "We gave him that name. His real name is Bernie Nierow."

So Bernie Nierow had been transmuted into Peter Nero.

I SMILED at the fate of my "cocktail pianist," but later I wondered seriously how a fumbling, would-be jazz player became the musician chosen by the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) as "the best new artist of 1961," how an obscure musician seemingly buried in the deserts of Las Vegas suddenly turned into a major record company's golden boy. The answer, I found, was luck, calculation, and impatience. The luck—both good and bad—was supplied by Bernie Nierow, as was the impatience. RCA Victor provided the calculation.

Like most alert business organizations, RCA Victor periodically appraises its situation in relation to its competitors. Over the years one constant factor turning up in the firm's surveys was the chronic absence from its roster of *the* popular pianist of any given period. Although Victor has almost always had distinguished classical artists on its list, such pianists as, say, Liberace or Ahmad Jamal, Roger Williams or Jan August or Carmen Cavallaro, have always belonged to somebody else. So, some time back, Victor launched a concentrated search for a pianist who could be developed to fill the gap.

"It wasn't difficult to decide what kind of pianist we were looking for," Robert L. Yorke, Division Vice-President of Victor's Commercial Records Creation Department, explained. "Fundamentally, he had to be melodic. I would hope that he would be tasteful. It would be nice if he had some humor. And it was essential that he have a sound of his own." The difficulty, of course, was finding an actual pianist to embody this ideal. Over a period of five or six years, Victor gave serious consideration to about thirty candidates—serious at least to the extent of recording them. Most of these discs were never released because the pianists sounded too much like other pianists or because they seemed to have no potential for broadening their scope.

While Victor was pressing this frustrating search, the ultimate incarnation of its goal was floundering along a trail that seemed to be leading nowhere.

As a small boy in Brooklyn, the child of completely nonmusical parents, Bernie Nierow had shown a surprisingly instinctive facility at the piano. This facility proved to be his unmaking as well as his making. On the positive side it gave him a local reputation as a budding genius and led him to a teacher whose emphasis on technique was so insistent that his one abiding asset both as Bernie Nierow and as Peter Nero has been, in the jazz jargon that now colors his speech, his "chops"—his hands. The Wunderkind also acquired, however, a habit, which soon became ingrained, of refusing to practice beyond the barest minimum requirements. At eleven, Master Nierow was playing the Haydn D major Piano Concerto from memory and, at fourteen, dazzling ladies' groups as he stormed through the *Ritual Fire Dance*; at seventeen he was losing out in piano competitions to the same contestants he had defeated four years earlier. "It was the result of no sweat," he admits now. "My facility had helped in the beginning, but I hadn't built on it. I was told I was lazy."

It may have been laziness that was undercutting Nierow's potential, or it may have been uncertainty about the direction in which he wanted to go. His basic desire to be a concert pianist led him to enroll as a part-time student at Juilliard and later to study with Abram Chasins and his wife, Constance Keene, whom he met in 1951 when he won the annual school musical talent contest at WQXR, where Chasins serves as music director. But at the same time he made a significant addition to his "flash" repertory for ladies' club appearances—his own piano transcription of *La Virgen de la Macarena* (which he knew as *The Brave Bulls Theme* because it was used in the film called *The Brave Bulls*). While he was going to Brooklyn College, he auditioned successfully for Paul Whiteman's "TV Teen Club" program, playing the same piece. He not only won the grand prize on this show but in the next four months played *The Brave Bulls* on five more contest programs, including Arthur Godfrey's "Talent Scouts," and won them all. Agents suddenly began to pursue him, but to Nierow's dismay, "they wanted to put me in saloons. That was the most horrible fate I could possibly imagine. I wanted people to listen to me—and I knew that wouldn't happen in a saloon."

The prospect of playing in a saloon was not the only thing that disturbed him. He felt increasingly guilty about spending his time on such "popular" material as *The Brave Bulls* and the *Ritual Fire Dance*. From the time he was a child, he had had it drilled into him that any music but classical music was worthless. He scorned popular music. As for jazz, it occupied so deep a substratum that it was beyond consideration.

THIS POINT OF VIEW was to change, however, when as a college senior, in 1955, Nierow found that jazz was becoming respectable. He began to listen to Dave Brubeck because, even though what

For Bernie Nierow fate wouldn't be brushed aside.

Brubeck played was labeled as jazz, "it was cerebral, refined, witty, artistic, with fugues and counterpoint and the cleanest sound."

One day the potential jazz convert came across a record, by a pianist he had not heard before, called "The Genius of Art Tatum, Vol. 6." One of a set of twelve discs, it roused Nierow's skeptical curiosity more than anything else, but he took it home and played it. Then he sat down at the piano and, as he had done so often and so easily before, attempted to duplicate what he had heard on the record. But this time it wasn't easy—this time all his vaunted facility could not enable him to keep up with the complexity of Tatum's harmonies or the kaleidoscopic speed of his ideas. Nierow was more than upset; he was in despair. When he pulled himself together, he realized that in Tatum he had finally found a model who provided everything he wanted, except dynamics—"plus he plays it different every time."

Spurred by this discovery, Nierow embraced jazz. He began to write jazz tunes himself—or what he thought were jazz tunes—because he was bothered by the form of the jazz performances he was beginning to listen to. "I was bugged by this business of playing chorus after chorus," he explains. "It seemed formally wrong and boring." Early one morning a theme popped into his head which he built up in terms of Bach devices and syncopation. "I really knew nothing about jazz then," he has admitted. "The composition was strictly mechanical—theme, development, and recapitulation. But I felt like a pioneer. 'I'm going to blaze new paths!' I cried. 'This is jazz.'" He called the piece *Scratch My Bach*. A demonstration record that he made roused no interest among recording companies, but a booking agency liked it, signed Nierow, and got him the job at the Hickory House.

In Bernie Nierow's view at the time, being a jazz pianist meant the achievement of complete freedom. "I no longer had to depend on self-discipline. I didn't have to play somebody else's music. I wasn't worried about playing jazz. Ever since I was seven everybody had said I had a beat. And I knew I had the chops to do it." Recalling that debut today, Peter Nero chuckles ruefully: "I was desperately trying to imitate Tatum. I had Tatum's runs down but that was all—just a bunch of runs. *The Brave Bulls* went over big at the Hickory House, but I hated it. I began to learn from other jazz musicians that if you play *Rhapsody in Blue* you're an idiot, that *The Brave Bulls* was childish. I shied away from these pieces, but still the hippies put me down behind my back."

A basic problem for Nierow as a jazz pianist was his inability to improvise in jazz terms. When he was first attracted to Dave Brubeck's playing, he refused to believe that Brubeck and other jazz musicians actually improvised. At the Hickory House he found that stringing Tatum devices together did not really constitute improvisation. If he had the support of bassist and drummer, he thought, he might be able to give up his Tatum crutch.

An opportunity to lead a trio with this instrumentation came when a new Las Vegas hotel, The Tropicana, opened in 1957. He moved to Vegas where he learned, grew, and suffered because, as he says now, he didn't know what he was doing. "I was discovering the improvisatory end," he explained recently. "But every night was torture. I had a sound in my ear, but I couldn't reproduce the feeling of a phrase on the piano. I had become hip in the sense that I knew the hip rules—no interpolation of classics, no use of counterpoint—but I was trying to work in a groove that was foreign to me."

After two years in Las Vegas ("You play to thousands of people every night and nobody listens") his prospects had dwindled to such an extent that he would have been able to stay on only as a sideman in other groups. Early in 1959 he returned to New York and found himself back where he started—at the Hickory House as intermission pianist. Because he now knew that it was difficult to play jazz without at least a bassist, he began to work out Bachian treatments of *Autumn Leaves*, *Night and Day*, and *Over the Rainbow* as a substitute for jazz. But he looked on this as retrogression.

As the months passed and he plodded through his chores at the Hickory House, Nierow felt that he had reached a dead end. He was thinking of turning to private teaching when he sat in one night for the regular pianist at a musicians' hangout on 52nd Street called Jilly's. That night, for the first time in his jazz career, Nierow found an audience—"Everybody liked me, even the bartender. The boss flipped." As a result, he went into Jilly's with a bass accompanist in December 1959, for what proved to be *Continued on page 122*

new from SHURE

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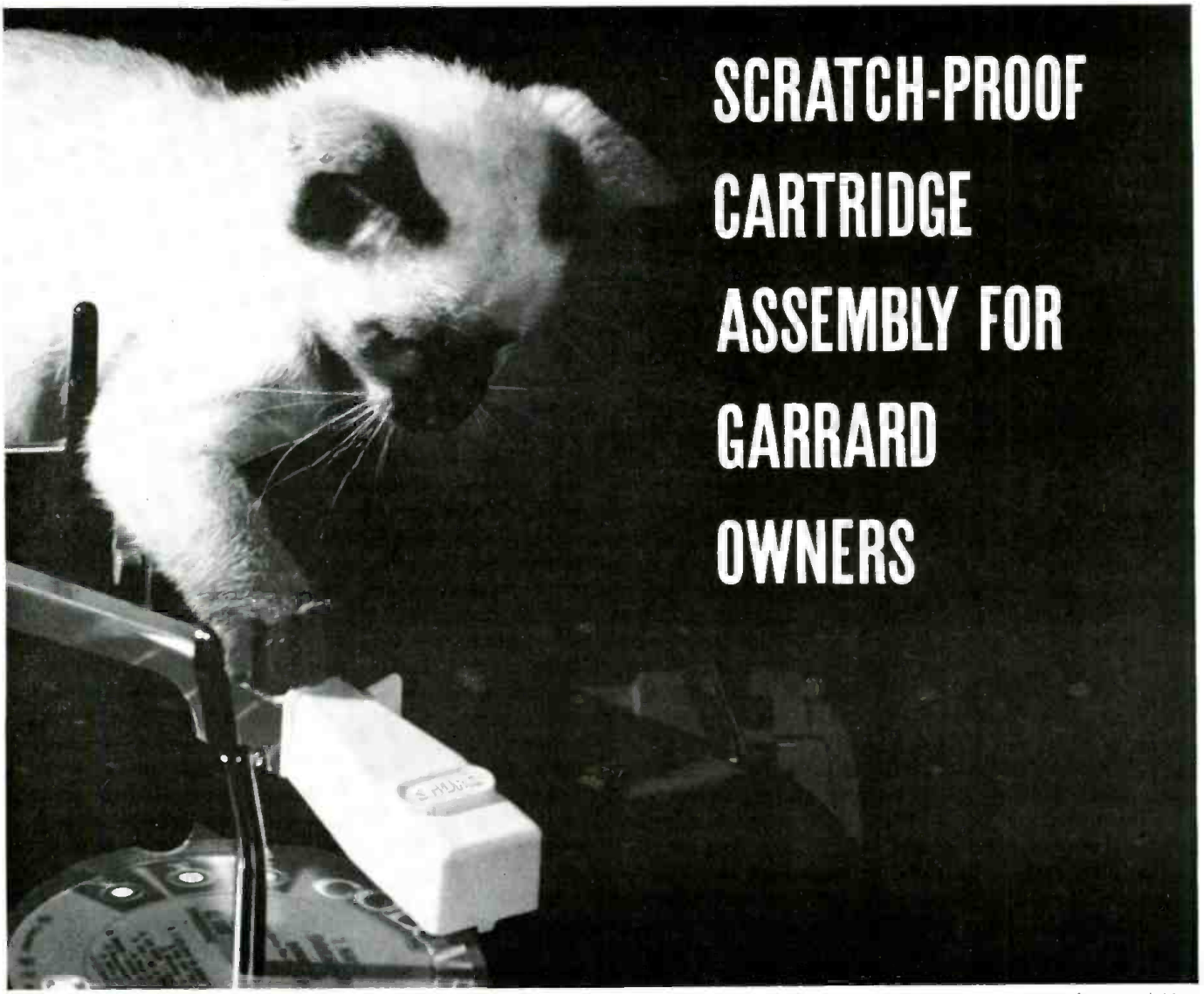

Special note to music lovers and felinophiles: interesting to note that both cat and cartridge have retractile styli for gentleness and protection from scratching

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SPECIFICATIONS

Frequency Responses:	From 20 to 20,000 cps
Output Voltage:	6 millivolts per channel
Channel Separation:	more than 22.5 db at 1000 cps
Recommended Load Impedance:	47,000 ohms
Compliance:	20.0 x 10^{-6} cm per dyne
Tracking:	1.5 to 3.0 grams
Inductance:	600 millihenries
D. C. Resistance:	750 ohms
Stylus:	.0007" diamond
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PRICES: MODEL M99/A. fits Garrard Laboratory model "A." Includes tone arm head, factory mounted cartridge, .0007" diamond. **$49.50** Audiophile Net. **MODEL M99/AT6.** fits Garrard AT-6. Includes tone arm head, factory mounted cartridge, .0007" diamond. **$49.50** Audiophile Net. **MODEL N99.** Replacement stylus assembly, .0007" diamond. **$19.50** Audiophile Net.

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

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EQUIPMENT REPORTS

EICO ST-70
Integrated Amplifier

AT A GLANCE: The EICO ST-70 is an integrated stereo amplifier, offering preamp-control facilities and dual power output channels on one chassis. It is available as a kit for $99.95, or factory-wired for $149.95. A metal cover is included. The unit reported on here by United States Testing Company, Inc., was built from a kit. In USTC's view, the ST-70 is well designed, easy to build, and offers exceptionally good performance for a combination amplifier. Manufacturer: Electronic Instrument Company, Inc., 3300 Northern Blvd., Long Island City 1, N. Y.

IN DETAIL: As with the EICO ST-84 preamplifier reported on earlier (September 1962), the ST-70 features the handsome, functional styling characteristic of EICO's recent products. The front panel is neatly arranged for maximum convenience in use, and contains a row of knobs for the main operating controls and a series of slide-switches for auxiliary controls. The knobs, from left to right, are: a seven-position input selector; a six-position stereo/mono mode selector; channel balance; volume; and concentric bass and treble controls. The switches, above the knobs, control: tape head equalization (for both 7.5- and 3.75-ips speeds); tape monitor; loudness contour; rumble filter; scratch filter; balance check (which cuts in a special null-type circuit that aids in equalizing the gain of the two amplifying channels); and speaker-phasing.

At the rear of the amplifier, input jacks are provided for magnetic phono cartridges (a 47K-ohm input as well as a 100K-ohm input), tape head (1 megohm input), FM tuner, AM tuner, multiplex adapter, and tape recorder (all 500K-ohm inputs). Tape recorder output jacks are provided as well as 4-, 8-, and 16-ohm speaker taps for each channel. There are also a center channel speaker output tap and two AC convenience outlets (one switched, one unswitched).

The amplifier, which contains a total of twelve tubes, has—in each channel—a two-stage 12AX7 low-level preamplifier with feedback equalization; a 12DW7/7247 dual-triode serving as first audio amplifier and furnishing gain for the feedback tone control circuit; 1/2-12AX7 as a second audio amplifier; a 6SN7GTB driver and phase inverter; and two 7591 push-pull output stages. Additional negative feedback is used from the secondary of the output transformer back to the second audio amplifier stage.

The chassis contains potentiometers and test jacks for adjusting the DC bias and balance in each channel's output stages, but in order to do this the kit builder

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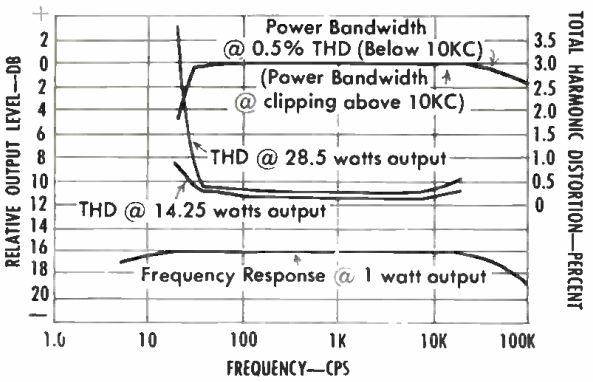
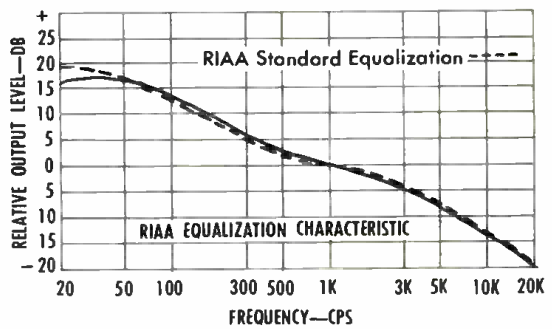
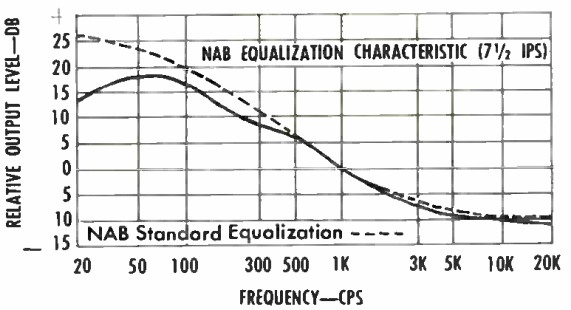
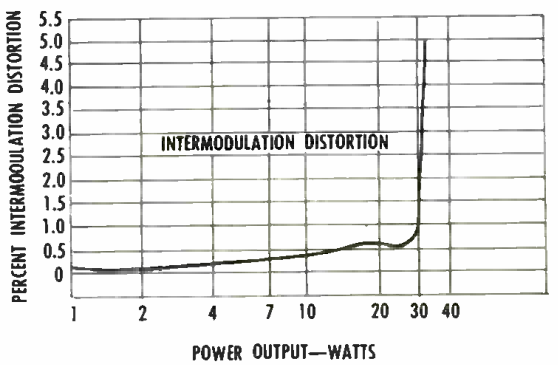
REPORT POLICY

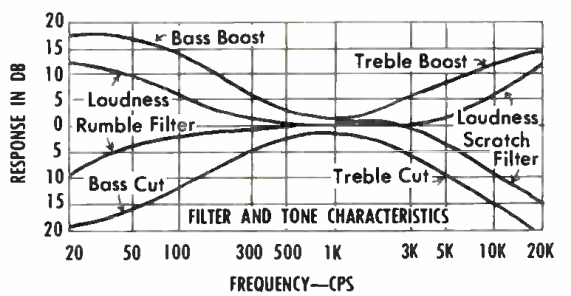
Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and listening tests. Data for the reports, on equipment other than loudspeakers, is obtained by the United States Testing Company, Inc., of Hoboken, New Jersey, a completely independent organization which, since 1880, has been a leader in product 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.

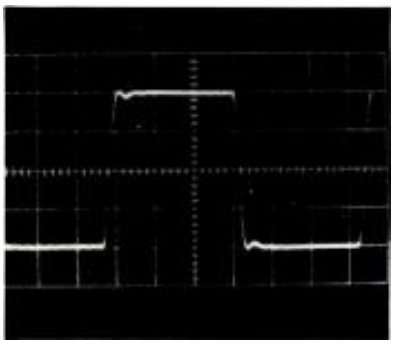


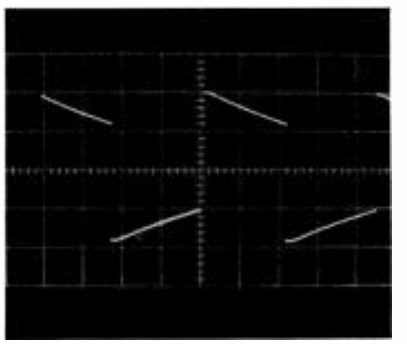












Square-wave response, 10 kc and 50 cps.

must have available a fairly accurate DC vacuum tube voltmeter (VTVM) or a volt-ohmmeter (VOM). The power supply uses a GZ34 rectifier tube, and supplies AC voltage to the filaments of all tubes.

In USTC's tests, the amplifier provided 28.5 watts output at 1 kc before clipping occurred on the left channel, at which level the harmonic distortion was a very low 0.21%. The right channel clipped at 27.8 watts with 0.25% THD. When both channels were operating simultaneously, the left channel clipped at 22.8 watts with 0.6% THD.

The amplifier's power bandwidth was measured at 0.5% THD up to 10 kc and at the clipping point above that frequency. In all, it extended from 23 cps to above 100 kc, which is excellent. Harmonic distortion remained under 0.6% from 36 cps to 20 kc at full power (28.5 watts), reaching 1% at 31 cps. At half power, the THD remained under 0.3% from 30 cps to 20 kc, reaching 0.9% at 20 cps.

The frequency response of the ST-70 was measured as flat within +0 and –1 db from 5 cps to 47 kc, and was down only 3 db at 100 kc. The amplifier's IM distortion was very low, remaining under 0.6% up to 27 watts and under 1.5% up to 30 watts. These all are

How It Went Together

The kit for the ST-70 contained all parts needed for building the amplifier. The construction is fairly simple, requiring the usual hand tools and no high degree of manual dexterity. The instruction manual is occasionally marred by a minor error or a misprint regarding the length of leads; these are not serious and could be resolved by the average kit builder.

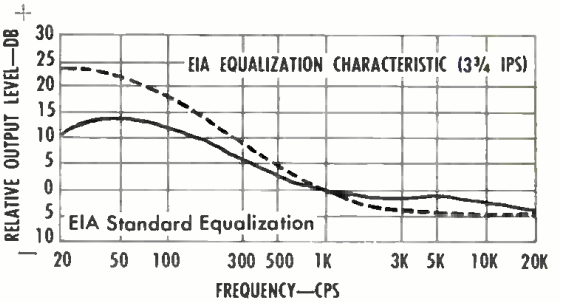
In general, the ST-70 was a pleasure to build, and the discovery that the kit-built version performs so admirably was even more of a pleasure. Total construction time was sixteen hours.

outstanding figures for a combination amplifier in the price class of the ST-70.

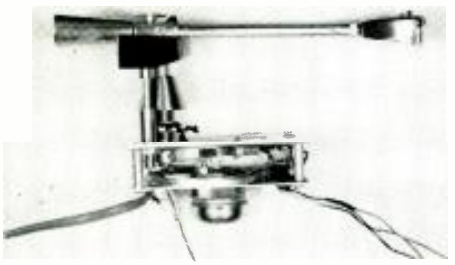
Equally commendable was the excellent square-wave response of the ST-70. As shown in the photos, its 10-kc transient characteristic was fine, approaching that found in very good basic power amplifiers. The 50-cps waveform showed a flat response with relatively minor phase distortion.

The RIAA equalization characteristic was very good, being flat within ±1 db from 35 cps to 20 kc. Tape head equalization was not as accurate, inasmuch as the curves for both tape speeds showed significant departures from the standard equalization at these tape speeds. The sensitivity of the amplifier (for 28.5 watts output) was 450 mv on the high level inputs, 4 mv on the magnetic phono inputs, 1.4 mv on the tape head input with 3¾-ips equalization, and 2.17 mv on the tape head input with 7½-ips equalization. The amplifier's signal-to-noise ratio was 53 db on phono, 43 db on tape head, and 76 db on the high level inputs. The amplifier had a damping factor of 6.2, which is about average for its class.

The treble controls provided approximately 17 db of boost or cut at 10 kc, while the bass controls provided 10.5 db of boost or cut at 100 cps. The scratch filter operated at the approximate rate of 9 db per octave above 3 kc, while the rumble filter cut at the approximate rate of 9 db per octave below 70 cps—both desirable characteristics from a musical standpoint.



The EICO ST-70—in sum—provides high quality performance at a modest cost. Its only limitation is its tape head equalization characteristics and the signal-to-noise ratio in the tape head position but this would be of concern only to those using a tape deck that lacked its own preamplifiers.



Rek-O-Kut Auto-Poise AP-320 Tone Arm

AT A GLANCE: Rek-O-Kut's Model AP-320 combines the S-320 tone arm with the Model APK Auto-Poise mechanism to convert a manual turntable to a fully automatic unit. The Auto-Poise device may be added to an existing S-320 arm or both may be bought at once, as Model AP-320. Tests conducted at United States Testing Company, Inc., indicate that the AP-320 combines the convenience of automation with the excellent performance of a professional-type tone arm. Prices: S-320 arm alone, $34.95; Model APK Auto-Poise converter, $49.95; complete Model AP-320 automatic tone arm, $74.95. Manufacturer: Rek-O-Kut Co., Inc., 38-19 108th St., Corona 68, N.Y.

IN DETAIL: The fidelitarian who demands high quality as well as the ease of automatic operation of a turntable can have both by using Rek-O-Kut's AP-320 tone arm. The arm is the newest of Rek-O-Kut's professional-type units, and boasts many worthwhile features. Combined with the APK mechanism, it still offers the virtues of an arm in its class, and at the same time eliminates the need to place the pickup on the record manually, or remove it, or even to start and stop the turntable.

The APK mechanism is a carefully crafted device that is driven by its own synchronous motor. When activated by a touch of its "play-reject" button, the APK begins its cycle of operation. A lever, which rides on a cam that is driven by the motor, lifts the tone arm from its rest bracket. A plastic feeler, mounted on one end of the arm post, sits in a cut-out groove in the cam, and guides the arm toward the record. As the arm approaches the record, a sensing switch starts the turntable. The arm then is gently lowered onto the record. Once the stylus is seated in the record groove, the Auto-Poise mechanism is completely disengaged from the tone arm, leaving it free to track the record unencumbered.

When the end of the record is reached, a second sensing switch reactivates the Auto-Poise which then gently lifts the arm, returns it to its rest position, and shuts off the turntable motor. A careful examination of the unit, supplemented by numerous tests of its action, indicates that the Auto-Poise is a very well-made device, capable of smooth performance for its intended function, and not in any way "compromising" the performance expected of a high quality arm such as the S-320.

The S-320 arm itself is known as the Micropoise and is in general an excellent design. It is essentially a metal tubular type with a removable metal shell for the pick-up, and an adjustable counterweight for balancing. It also includes a precisely calibrated adjustment for stylus force (the Micropoise feature) as well as an additional adjustment for lateral balance (known as the Omni-Balance feature). The arm comes with a prefitted wiring harness that includes two signal cables and a separate grounding lead.

USTC found the adjustments for balancing the arm

and for getting proper stylus force to be both simple and accurate. Static horizontal balance is accomplished readily by turning the rear counterweight. A small brass weight, fitted in the cartridge shell, enables balancing the arm for use with very light cartridges; with heavier cartridges the brass weight may be removed.

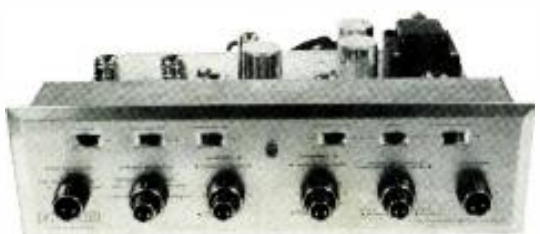
The Micropoise adjustment—found on top of the arm, directly over the pivot post—sets the tracking force. The first full clockwise rotation of the Micropoise knob produces no change in the weight exerted on the stylus. Each succeeding rotation exerts one gram of weight. USTC found this device to be extremely accurate—with an error of less than one-tenth of one gram per turn—thus obviating the need for using a stylus force gauge.

Mounted on the side of the arm is the Omni-Balance weight, which may be adjusted for balancing the arm laterally. The setting of this adjustment is obtained from a chart, supplied with the arm, that lists various cartridges and the recommended settings for them. When the Omni-Balance is correctly set, the arm becomes balanced in all planes, and consequently the turntable need not be perfectly level for proper tracking by the cartridge. This additional balance also makes the arm less susceptible to the effects of jarring and vibration.

Other features of the arm were found to be of uniformly high caliber. Its bearing friction was relatively low, allowing freedom of movement in all axes. The arm showed no pronounced resonances above 10 cps. The arm rest serves a dual purpose: in addition to holding the arm safely when not in use, this rest acts also as a stop and rest point for the arm's travel. That is, a slight shifting of its position in a screw slot permits

the user to adjust the lowering point of the arm on a record. The geometric design of the arm was considered excellent, and the S-320 introduces a negligible amount of tracking error.

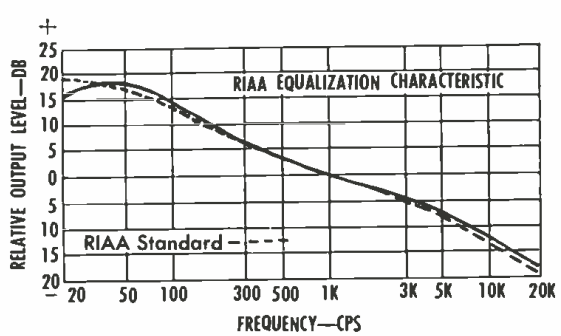
Connecting the Auto-Poise mechanism to the tone arm was considered to be easy enough for anyone who has built the simplest of kits, and probably could be done even by a rank beginner. In Rek-O-Kut's Model R-320-A, the mechanism and arm are preinstalled on a turntable, ready for use. The AP-320 automated arm, in sum, is truly a worthy item, combining the virtues of a professional-type arm—such as fine balance and low tracking pressure—with the convenience of automation.

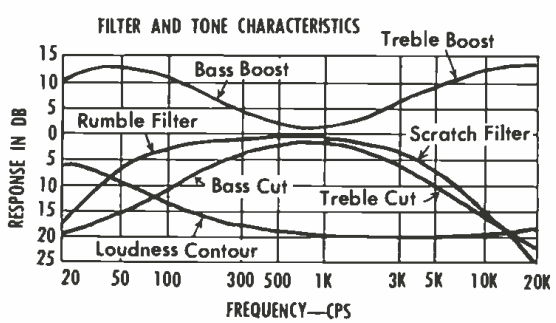


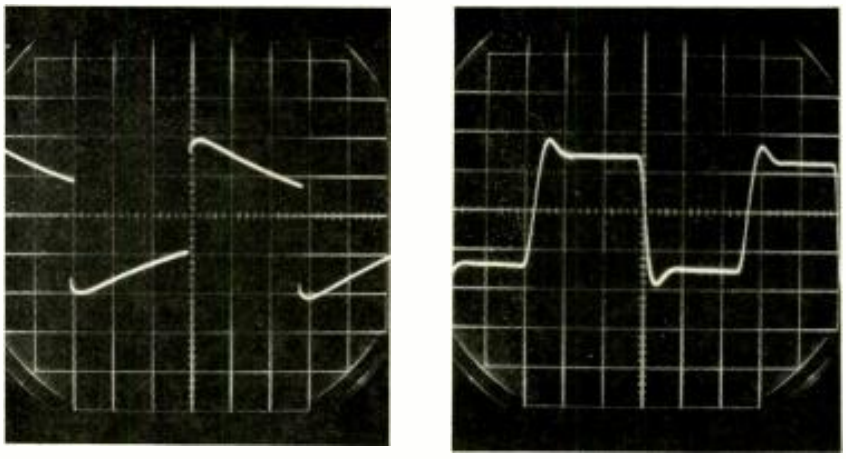
H. H. Scott Model LC-21 Preamplifier

AT A GLANCE: The Scott LC-21 is a high quality stereo preamplifier-control unit available in kit form. Tests of the kit-built version, conducted by the United States Testing Company, Inc., indicate that the unit either meets or exceeds its specifications. Harmonic distortion, for instance, was so low as to be unmeasurable. The unit is a trouble-free, satisfying project for the do-it-yourselfer as well as a first-rate audio component when finished. Dimensions are 5¼ inches high by 15½ inches wide by 13¼ inches deep. Price: $99.95. Manufacturer: H. H. Scott, Inc., 111 Powder Mill Rd., Maynard, Mass.

IN DETAIL: Six knobs (four of them dual concentric types) and six switches, plus a pilot lamp, occupy the neatly styled and logically arranged front panel of the LC-21. The knobs, from left to right, are: a five-position input selector (microphone, tape head, magnetic phono, tuner, and extra or auxiliary input); a seven-position stereo mode selector (balance A, balance







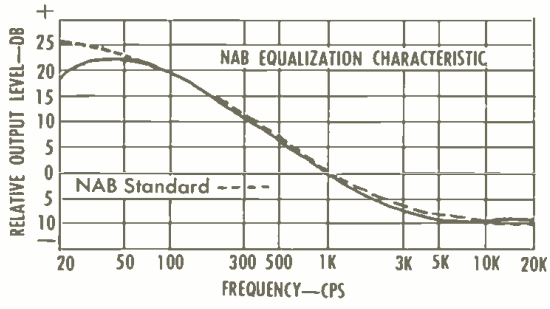
Square-wave response, 10 kc and 50 cps.

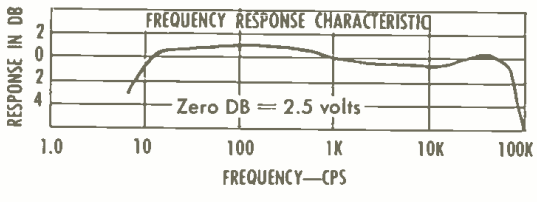
B, monophonic records or "A+B," stereo, reverse stereo, channel A, channel B); dual concentric bass and treble controls for each channel; concentric stereo balance and center channel level controls; and a loudness control that incorporates a push-pull AC power switch. The slide switches above the knobs include: a pickup selector (either high or low impedance magnetic input); tape monitor; rumble filter; scratch filter; phase reversal; and loudness contour.

The LC-21 has two high-gain inputs per channel, one with a 47K-ohm input impedance (magnetic 1), and the other with a 150K-ohm input impedance (magnetic 2). These jacks can be used for a magnetic phono cartridge as well as a tape playback head. No separate input is provided for a crystal phono cartridge but the "extra" input can be used for this purpose. Output jacks are provided for connecting to power amplifiers as well as to a stereo or mono tape recorder. A derived center channel output also is provided; its level is controlled from the front panel. The rear of the chassis also contains two AC convenience outlets.

The circuit of the LC-21 uses 12AX7 tubes, all operating with DC filament voltage for minimum hum. The power supply is built around a 6X4 rectifier tube for the B+ voltage, and a full-wave semiconductor bridge rectifier for the filament voltage. The use of

Continued on next page





How It Went Together

Like other audio kits from H. H. Scott, Inc., the LC-21 is a most carefully prepared project that should be successfully completed by even the novice kit builder. The manual is a model of clarity. Each series of working steps is accompanied by a life-size drawing, in color, that shows where the parts go. These drawings are part of the instruction book, and do not require tacking on the wall to be studied. The parts themselves are grouped on coded cards in the exact sequence in which they are to be added to the chassis, and there is a separate card for each group of instructions. Even a color-blind person can pick out the resistors; not only are the electrical values printed next to each resistor but the colored bands themselves are identified in print. As in most preamplifier-control units, the under-chassis wiring at one point must be done in tight quarters, but the instructions guide you safely through these narrows and advise you when the squeeze is over. Much of the hardware (connecting lugs, tube sockets, terminal strips) is preinstalled on the chassis, and most of the wires are precut to proper lengths. A small screwdriver and a generous supply of solder come with the kit. Total assembly time was about eighteen hours, all of them trouble-free.

the same tube type (12AX7) for the amplifying stages is an obvious advantage in that only the tube need be kept on hand for replacement in any stage that may require it.

In measurements made at USTC, the LC-21 easily met or exceeded its specifications. Frequency response was found to be flat within ±1 db from 10 cps to 70 kc. It was down 3 db at 7 cps and at 82 kc. At the preamp's rated signal output of 2.5 volts, its total harmonic distortion was too low to be measured on the test instruments, and was estimated to be considerably less than 0.1% in magnitude. The preamp's intermodulation distortion was measurable, but extremely low, being 0.15% at 1 volt output, and 0.37% at 2.5 volts output. The RIAA phono equalization characteristic agreed with the RIAA standard within ±2 db from 25 cps to 20 kc, and the NAB tape equalization was found to be correct within ±2 db from 37 cps to 20 kc.

The preamplifier's square-wave response at 10 kc was quite good, showing a relatively small amount of overshoot and generally good waveform. At 50 cps, the flat portion of the square-wave response had a moderate tilt, indicating some phase distortion.

Sensitivity of the LC-21 for 2.5 volts output was 0.5 volt at the high-level inputs, 2.95 mv at the magnetic 1 input, and 8.2 mv at the magnetic 2 input. The magnetic input sensitivity figures given by USTC are for RIAA equalization, and the preamp would have about 4 db less sensitivity for NAB equalization.

The signal-to-noise ratio of the LC-21 was better than 81 db in the high-level positions, 62 db in the magnetic 1 position, and 60 db in the magnetic 2 position. Needless to say, these are very good figures and indicate that no hum or extraneous noise will be introduced into the signals by the LC-21.

The tone controls are feedback types, providing about 13 db of boost and cut at 100 cps and at 10 kc. The loudness curve, measured with the volume control in the "9 o'clock" position, has a very desirable contour from a musical standpoint. The scratch filter was found to be quite effective, cutting at the rate of about 6 db per octave above 3,000 cps. The rumble filter was less effective, dropping the bass response at 30 cps by 6 db. The derived center channel feature enables connecting a monophonic power amplifier and speaker to provide a third sound source in the same room with the regular stereo pair of speakers, or to send a monophonic version of a stereo program to another room.

Used in conjunction with high quality power amplifiers and speakers, the Scott LC-21 proved to be a clean-sounding and convenient stereo control center. It is, in sum, one of the better audio "front ends" available today.

Fisher XP4A Speaker System

AT A GLANCE: The XP4A is the latest and finest of the new line of speakers offered by Fisher Radio. It is a compact, full-range system consisting of a woofer, two midrange speakers, and a tweeter housed with a frequency-dividing network inside a handsome cabinet. The system, designed by engineer Bill Hecht for Fisher, incorporates some novel features that make it technically interesting and acoustically very smooth and listenable. Dimensions are 24½ by 14 by 12 inches. The system may be used vertically or horizontally. Prices: in walnut, $199.50; in birch, $189.50. Manufacturer: Fisher Radio Corp., 21-21 44th Drive, Long Island City 1, N.Y.

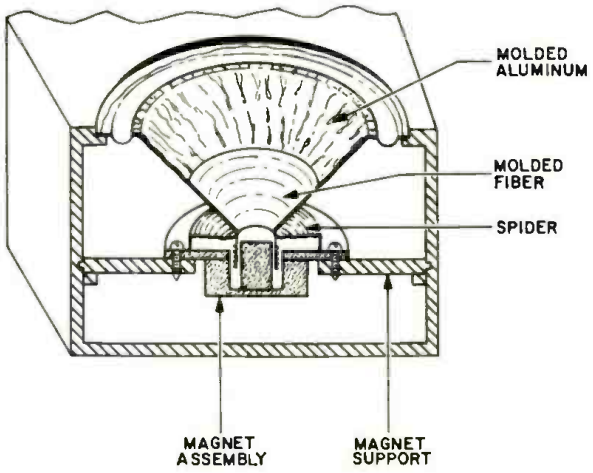
IN DETAIL: The most radical innovation found in the XP4A is the unique manner in which the woofer is constructed and installed in the enclosure. To begin with, its cone is built in two sections; the inner portion, about 8 inches in diameter, is made of 1/16-inch-thick composition fiberboard. Bonded to this is an outer portion made of corrugated aluminum that extends the over-all diameter to 12 inches. The aluminum section handles the deepest bass, while the fiberboard area reproduces mid-bass. This unusual construction is intended to cause the entire diaphragm to behave as a true piston in order to reproduce bass tones cleanly and without significant distortion. At the outer rim of the aluminum section is a soft cloth "surround" that is bonded directly to the front baffle which itself is part of the speaker enclosure. The woofer thus is supported by the front panel of the enclosure and, consequently, has no metal frame or basket. Additionally, the rear section of the speaker, that is, the magnet and its housing, is supported by the rear panel of the enclosure. The net result is that there is no physical attachment between the cone and the magnet. A spider is used for centering the voice coil but not for supporting the diaphragm. The advantages claimed for this design (on which patents are pending) is that it enables the relationship between voice coil and cone to be a more purely electrical one, rather than a mechanical or physical one with its attendant problems of resonances and distortion.

Another design innovation is found in the treatment

of the voice coil. In general, it is desirable to introduce some damping, or braking, of the coil's motion so that the excursions of the cone correspond more closely to the alternating electrical pulses that comprise the signal from the amplifier. This aids the clean definition of complex tones and improves transient response. One way of damping a voice coil is to use a shorted turn of wire around it, which opposes whatever movement the coil "wants" to make at any instant. Designer Hecht found, however, that this method caused too much reduction in the power of the voice coil for it to do its job correctly. The solution he hit on was to wind the voice coil on a form made of pure copper which itself acts as a shorted turn of wire, but does not reduce the power of the voice coil. What happens is that when the voice coil moves back and forth in the air gap of the magnet, eddy currents are generated that produce forces that oppose the motion of the voice coil. This damping force, which is a function of the velocity of the voice coil, remains constant and equal for all the frequencies reproduced by the speaker, and thereby tends to smooth the woofer's entire range and aid its transient response. Incidentally, a patent is pending on the voice coil design as well as on the "no basket" idea.

The woofer is crossed over to the midrange speakers at 1,400 cps, and the midrange to the tweeter at 2,500 cps. The network that provides frequency division is a 12 db/octave type. The midrange units themselves are 5-inch speakers, especially treated to handle the range from 1,400 to 2,500 cps. The tweeter is a hemispherical-dome type, 2 inches in diameter and powered by a 5-pound magnet. Its shape is designed to provide smooth and wide-angle dispersion of highs. Level controls, to adjust the relative output of midrange and tweeter, are provided on the rear of the cabinet. The efficiency of the XP4A is about 2%; according to the designer, it can be driven successfully by any clean amplifier of from 10 to 60 watts power rating. Nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Connections to the XP4A are made via screw-on binding posts, labeled for polarity to assist in proper phasing when using more than one system. The enclosure itself is rock-solid, sealed, and stuffed with sound-absorbent material; it is, essentially, an "infinite baffle" variant. All four speakers radiate directly from behind a decorative grille.

The net effect of the careful and deliberate designing that is evident in the XP4A has been to produce a speaker that is among the cleanest- and smoothest-sounding of any compact we have yet auditioned, with virtually no trace of coloration or "boxiness" and a high order of definition of all sounds. In terms of actual frequency response, the bass begins rolling off gently from about 40 cycles, with fairly clean output evident to about 30 cps. The speaker seems to have a built-in resistance to doubling: by driving it abnormally hard we were able to get it to distort in the 30- to 40-cps region, but the order of distortion was distinctly lower than observed in other systems. Going up the scale, the speaker's response was well balanced and smooth. There was a slight dip at 74 cps, a minor peak at 380 cps, and small dips at about 525 cps, 1,100 cps, and 6,000 cps. These are, in sum, no more or less than the norm for most speakers, including some costing more than the XP4A. The highs, which continue to beyond audibility, had a very broad dispersion pattern, confirming the wide-angle design claim. The speaker's response to white noise—even with midrange and tweeter controls turned up full—was quite soft and smooth.



Cutaway view of the Fisher XP4A reveals its unusual construction. The speaker cone is attached directly to the enclosure, and the magnet housing is supported by the rear of the enclosure. There is, consequently, no metal frame or "basket."

On a variety of high quality program material, the XP4A proved to be an impartial, effortless reproducer. Some listeners at first commented on its "unspectacular" sound, but soon all agreed that this was very natural sound, the sort that could be listened to for extended periods with minimum listener fatigue. It was in general exemplary on all signals, but it seemed to have a special ability to project the subtleties of low-stringed instruments and the natural quality of the human voice.

A pair of XP4As, particularly on stereo, provided a very satisfying panorama of sound in a room 30 feet long. The two units were spaced about ten feet apart at one end of the room. In this room, we found that the best tonal balance required turning up midrange and tweeter controls to their full positions. Doubtless, in small and more acoustically live rooms, some listeners would prefer alternate settings of these controls. In any case, the two XP4As provided fine stereo, with no "hole in the middle," and imparted a sense of instrumental spacing and over-all sonic blending. The XP4A, in sum, is another fine example of reproducer design and certainly merits careful audition by anyone considering a compact speaker system in its price class.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

ADC-18 Speaker System
Pilot 654MA Tuner/Amplifier
Wollensak T-1580 Tape Recorder

Masters of the Piano on Columbia Records

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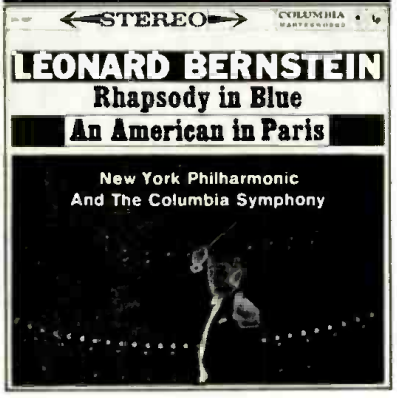
brings his incredible talents to the piano and podium and does honor to both in these dynamic performances.

Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue— Leonard Bernstein, Conductor; Columbia Symphony Orchestra; Leonard Bernstein, Pianist/ Gershwin: An American in Paris — Leonard Bernstein, Conductor; New York Philharmonic



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continues his series of historic new recordings of the major literature of the piano in these definitive readings.

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CIRCLE 29 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Music Makers

by ROLAND GELATT

THE DEATH of Louise Hanson-Dyer, at her home in Monaco on November 10, passed unnoticed in the New York press—a strange disregard of a respected and influential patroness of music. Mrs. Dyer founded, financed, and directed the Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, an enterprise that has rescued a great deal of worthwhile music from undeserved oblivion. Its most recent production—Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, reviewed on page 71—is untypical in that the recording breaks no new ground; but it is altogether typical of Oiseau-Lyre in its scholarly authenticity and tasteful execution.

Mrs. Dyer was born in Australia, married young, and became prominent in her native Melbourne as a promoter of various musical causes. In the 1920s she moved to Paris to be near the artistic center of things and there —partly under the influence of Wanda Landowska—became much interested in and attracted by early music, especially that of François Couperin. She soon discovered that modern editions of Couperin's music left much to be desired, and she determined to set matters right. Fortunately, Mrs. Dyer had both the wherewithal and the taste to accomplish a magnificent job; the sumptuous twelve-volume Oiseau-Lyre edition of Couperin's complete works set a new standard in the production of musicological publications. Soon after it appeared, in 1933, Mrs. Dyer's company began making recordings as well. By 1939, Oiseau-Lyre had built up a catalogue much prized by connoisseurs, particularly its recordings of early French music conducted by Roger Désormière.

Mrs. Dyer settled in Oxford during the war but returned to Paris with her second husband, Dr. J. B. Hanson, soon after the city was liberated. Dr. Hanson shared her enthusiasm for early music, and together they revived the Oiseau-Lyre firm. One of their early postwar ventures was the first complete recording on the harpsichord of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, made in Paris by a Landowska pupil

Mrs. Dyer—"wherewithal and taste."

named Isabelle Nef. In time, as the activities of the firm widened, the triple responsibility of producing, recording, and distributing discs became too much for even this energetic couple to handle, and an agreement was thus made with the Decca Record Company in London to take over the engineering, manufacture, and sale of the Oiseau-Lyre catalogue. Mrs. Dyer continued, however, to choose repertoire, engage artists, and foot the bills. The coming of LP enabled her to give increasing attention to large-scale works—Handel's *Sosarme* and *Semele*, Purcell's *Fairy Queen* and *Come ye sons of art*, Arne's *Comus*, to name a few. She had a gift for searching out talented young performers. Joan Sutherland, Alfred Deller, and the conductor Colin Mason are among the now-celebrated artists who first appeared on records under the aegis of Oiseau-Lyre.

Later this month, Oiseau-Lyre will publish the last large-scale recording with which Mrs. Dyer was associated: an abridged version of Berlioz's opera *Béatrice et Bénédict* on two records, conducted by Colin Mason. It is good to know that the work of the company will continue under her husband's stewardship. But Mrs. Dyer's vitality and enthusiasm will be missed. "She achieved more for music," writes her friend and associate Charles Cudworth, "than a host of well-meaning councils and committees."

PHILHARMONIC HALL—the new home of the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center—has turned out so far to be something less than an unqualified acoustic success. After attending a good many concerts there, we have to go along with the majority opinion in finding the hall deficient in bass, vibrance, and warmth. Most musicians whom we have queried on the subject—including three conductors who have performed there—profess themselves unhappy with Philharmonic Hall's acoustics. There seems to be pretty wide agreement that the hall falls short of the world's best and that some major structural alterations may have to be made.

A dissenting view comes, however, from John McClure, the director of classical recordings at Columbia Records. "I much prefer Philharmonic Hall," he told us recently, "to Carnegie Hall or to the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. We have been scheduling all of our recording sessions with the Philharmonic in the new hall this season, and the results have been fabulous. We have no intention whatsoever of recording the Philharmonic anywhere else."

Just to set the record straight, we should add that McClure himself is not entirely happy with Philharmonic Hall. He feels that the acoustics were better last spring, before the hall was completed, than they are now—and he hopes that some changes will be made to restore the conditions of May-June 1962. But basically he finds it far superior to most of the halls he has worked in. Incidentally, Philharmonic Hall's "instant people" —referred to by Robert C. Marsh in his review on page 73—have now been retired. McClure prefers to work in a completely empty hall, in order to obtain maximum reverberation.

reviewed by

PAUL AFFELDER
NATHAN BRODER
O. B. BRUMMELL
R. D. DARRELL
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN
HARRIS GOLDSMITH
JOHN F. INDCOX
ROBERT C. MARSH
CONRAD L. OSBORNE
ERIC SALZMAN
JOHN S. WILSON

Records in Review

"The Death of Dido," as portrayed by Reynolds.

by Conrad L. Osborne

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* Freshly Achieved

HENRY PURCELL wrote only one true opera (the music for *King Arthur, The Fairy Queen,* and *The Indian Queen* being of an incidental nature, however complex and extended it became), but *Dido and Aeneas* is, within its small frame, as successful a lyric drama as any to come out of England. In the space of fifty minutes it creates a distinct set of characters from whose actions (or non-actions) the conflict grows in a completely natural way; and it embraces a variety of mood that ranges from frivolity to pastoral serenity, from the surrender to love to the surrender to death. There are witches, and there are boozy sailors and their girls. There are songs of delightful piquancy (Belinda's "Pursue thy conquest, love"), triumphal dances of tremendous zest and point, and recitatives of imposing strength (the Sorceress' "Wayward Sisters"). Through all this the music of Dido runs like a melancholy current, from her opening song, "Ah! Belinda," with its acciaccaturas and drooping little feminine phrase endings, to the great lament, "When I am laid in earth"—as sublimely beautiful a piece of music as any ever written. And Purcell, like nearly all his successors in the hack-beset vocation of opera writing, had to do it all with a libretto that, to understate the case, left something to be desired. (Actually, the scene construction and plot progression is thoroughly professional, and Nahum Tate gave Purcell an excellent variety of moods and situations to deal with. But that verse! Even Piave would have cringed.)

Oiseau-Lyre's new recording of this work is a superb achievement. It has strong competition from the Mermaid Theatre edition (still available as an Electrola import), but for my taste, at least, faces it down. The late Kirsten Flagstad, the Dido of the older version, was magnificent, especially when we consider what sort of instrument she brought to this gentle, small-scaled music. But Janet Baker, an artist new to me, is even better. Her voice is clear, true, and extremely well focused. Because it is essentially a lighter, more pointed soprano than was Flagstad's, she does not ever give the feeling of taking a step or two away from the music, an impression which Flagstad, in her care for not overwhelming music and colleagues, sometimes left. Moreover, her English enunciation is considerably clearer than Flagstad's was, as is her rhythmic articulation. To select a single instance, I might take the two lines, "The skies are clouded: hark! how thunder/ Rends the mountain oaks asunder!" which emerges with much more shape and incisiveness in Miss Baker's handling. Of course, no one will want to do without the late great Norwegian soprano's "When I am laid in earth," which had a measure of profundity, of a welling of feeling beneath a placid surface, that Miss Baker is not able to summon.

The older recording also boasted the services of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, who assumed three separate roles, including the important one of Belinda, and who sang a duet with herself ("Fear no danger to ensue"). None of her recent competitors is up to her vocal standard, but I rather enjoy the thought of three roles being taken by three singers. The Misses Patricia Clark, Eileen Poulter, and Dorothy Dorow are all pleasant and able singers, and, again, sing Eng-

lish a bit more naturally than Miss Schwarzkopf. On the other hand, I prefer the Witch of Arda Mandikian to that of Monica Sinclair. The ugly, rasping quality, which both of them seem to feel essential to the role, sounds much more convincing from Miss Mandikian; Miss Sinclair is "putting it on" frightfully. (But why don't they try *singing* it sometime?) Between the Aeneases there is not much to choose: both basses are of the closed, rather dull-sounding sort common among English oratorio singers, though this is not altogether inappropriate to the role. I believe I prefer Mr. Hemsley to Mr. Herincx on grounds that he sings a trifle more smoothly—but the difference is niggling.

The orchestral and choral work seems to me considerably better on the new recording: things are crisper, more sharply defined, and the embellishments rendered with more security. In addition, the sound of the new set is cushiony and clear—even better than HMV's very good mono engineering. Since *Dido* takes up only a single record, why not own both versions? C.L.O.

PURCELL: *Dido and Aeneas*

Janet Baker (s), Dido; Patricia Clark (s), Belinda; Eileen Poulter (s), Second Woman; Dorothy Dorow (s), Spirit; Monica Sinclair (ms), Sorceress; Rhiannon James (ms), 1st Witch; Catherine Wilson (s), 2nd Witch; John Mitchinson (t), Sailor; Raimund Herincx (bs), Aeneas; Thurston Dart, harpsichord continuo; St. Anthony Singers; English Chamber Orchestra, Anthony Lewis, cond.

• OISEAU-LYRE OL 50216. LP. $4.98.
• • OISEAU-LYRE SOL 60047. SD. $5.98.

Lovely Bits, but Not by Bach

by Nathan Broder

AMONG THE MOST puzzling of the many puzzles involving the compositions written by or attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach is the *Passion According to St. Luke*. Since the work is hardly ever performed, even many professional musicians are rather uninformed about it, and a brief summary of its history as we know it may therefore be appropriate.

It will be remembered that only a tiny part of Bach's enormous output was published during his lifetime. Among the manuscripts left at his death was the present Passion. Philipp Spitta, when preparing his great biography of the composer, examined it and concluded that it was entirely in Bach's handwriting. From the watermarks in the paper Spitta determined that it must have been written down in the early 1730s at Leipzig; from the style of the music, however, he decided that the extant manuscript was a copy of a work written earlier. His final conclusion was that Bach had composed it in Weimar, and copied it out some twenty years later when he needed a Passion for a Good Friday performance at Leipzig. Spitta's belief received some slight support from the fact that an early obituary of Bach, written mostly by Philipp Emanuel, stated that the composer had left five Passions. Since the *St. John, St. Matthew,* and a portion of a *St. Mark* Passion were known, it was possible that one of the missing ones could be the *St. Luke*.

So great was Spitta's authority in matters pertaining to Bach that the *St. Luke* was included in the Complete Works edition, despite misgivings on the part of the editors and other scholars. The misgivings grew as time went on and reached a high point in 1911, when Max Schneider proved that only the first half of the manuscript was in Bach's handwriting and that the rest had been written, rather hastily, by his young son Philipp Emanuel. While this discovery did not in itself invalidate Spitta's thesis that the manuscript was a copy of an earlier Bach work, further analysis demonstrated such differences in style from anything Bach had written even in his early days that there could no longer be any question of attributing it to his authorship. The consensus nowadays is that Bach needed a Passion for performance at Leipzig, didn't have the time or inclination to compose a new one, found one by a composer not yet identified, began to copy it out but then turned it over to Philipp Emanuel to finish, and performed it, perhaps around 1730.

At the risk of sounding like a Monday morning quarterback, one wonders how this work could ever have been taken for a genuine composition by Bach. The very layout is unlike that of any of his choral compositions. Aside from the opening chorus (which is quite chordal) and the chorales, the chorus has only a few snippets to sing, none over two pages in length. There are only six solo arias (three for tenor, two for soprano, one for alto), and the only concerted solo number is a trio. All the rest is recitative and chorales (thirty-two of them!). The whole work proceeds on a fairly even level of feeling-tone, which is several degrees lower than that of Bach's best early cantatas, not to mention the *St. John* and *St. Matthew* Passions or the B minor Mass. Textual passages of dramatic or emotional import, which always stir Bach to musical illustration, evoke nothing from our unknown composer. The recitative has no special warmth or intensity, even for the utterances of Jesus; the chorales are given uneventful hymnbook harmonizations; and most of the arias are pale representations of the feelings they are supposed to express. It would have been very unlike Bach to take up, at the height of his powers, an old work of his own composition for use on so important an occasion as Good Friday and *not* to have rewritten and improved a section here and there; yet here he seems simply to have copied another man's efforts.

Not that this *St. Luke* is worthless. It is clearly the product of a skilled, if not very inspired, composer. Nor is it devoid of fine moments. There is a lovely bit of two-part singing between the Disciples and the Evangelist near the beginning (*"Wo wilt du"*). Brief but exciting passages are the Disciples' *"Herr, sollen wir mit dem Schwert schlagen?"* and the Elders' *"Was, dürfen wir weiter Zeugnis?"*. Two of the tenor arias, *"Das Lamm verstummt"* and *"Lass mich ihn,"* stand out above the rest; the latter is the most expressive of the arias, although the intensity of its beginning is not sustained throughout. There are even some unorthodox touches in the scoring: the trio, which is quite cheerful for its text (*"Weh und Schmerz"*), omits the continuo; two of the tenor arias have an elaborate bassoon part; the death of Jesus is mourned by a chorale for woodwind choir; and in *"Lass mich ihn"* the oboists are instructed to mute their instruments with paper.

Both performance and recording are on the whole excellent. The chorus sings with good tone and fine balance. Equiluz is satisfactory as the Evangelist (his part does not lie so high as in the familiar Passions), and so is Wimmer in the role of Jesus. The two ladies are not quite as good, but discharge their duties acceptably. The German text and an English translation are provided.

BACH: *St. Luke Passion, S. 246*

Christiane Sorell, soprano; Maura Moreira, contralto; Kurt Equiluz, tenor; Franz Wimmer, bass; Akademie Kammerchor; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, George Barati, cond.

• LYRICHORD LL 110. Three LP. $14.85.
• • LYRICHORD LLST 7110. Three SD. $17.85.

The First Recordings From Philharmonic Hall

by Robert C. Marsh

THESE ARE THE FIRST recordings made in Philharmonic Hall, Lincoln Center, which last fall became the new home of America's most venerable orchestra, the 120-year-old New York Philharmonic. The Brahms was recorded in June 1962, during the week of acoustical experimentation conducted prior to the auditorium's receiving its finishing touches. Although billed as "The Sound of Lincoln Center," this disc is in fact a documentation of a not-to-be-repeated phase in the history of the hall. A quite different "sound of Lincoln Center" is to be heard from the second album, which documents the opening night concert on September 23, 1962. A third sort of sound, I have no doubt, is being produced in the hall today, since the inaugural festivities ended with the prediction by the authorities that it might be a year before the fine tuning would be completed and the full potential of the design become apparent.

I can attest that during the opening week the sound was never identical for two consecutive nights and that the general tendency (manifest on the present records) was for the bass to exhibit serious weakness in relation to the middle and high frequencies and for the wind choir to appear submerged in the midst of the strings, percussion, and brass surrounding it. I concluded at the time that the hall had fallen a good deal short of what might have been expected from the advance hullabaloo.

This Brahms Second is one of those recordings that makes a fair first impression but fails to stand up to any very stringent comparisons. Played against the recent Steinberg edition on Command, for example, it lacks the crisp, sparkling presence that brings the winds out into the foreground, while the string tone appears heavily slanted towards the violins. Unless one's speakers have particularly efficient low frequency response, one will have trouble following the bass parts, which seem to be coming from some distance off stage. There are strictly musical compensations for these engineering deficiencies, however. This is a good, straightforward, knowledgeable performance of a work that has been one of the most successful of Bernstein's staples from the nineteenth-century repertory. But one could wish that it had been given as good a recording as can be found in the best of the conductor's recent discs made at Manhattan Center.

It should be noted that Philharmonic Hall numbers among its resources so-called "instant people"—these being Fiberglas mats placed in the seats to simulate the acoustical conditions of full or partial occupancy. For the Brahms the hall was about half thus populated, effecting a reverberation time of a little more than two seconds. "A more suitable acoustical environment . . . cannot be imagined," the notes tell us. I agree that the orchestra will profit by recording in a hall that permits greater control over reverberation—some of its recent work for the microphone has suffered from either too much or too little hall resonance; but obviously "a more suitable acoustical environment" for the Brahms Second would be one in which the lower strings could be heard with greater clarity and presence, and this is a matter involving more than reverberation time.

The two-disc album devoted to the September 23 gala and issued as part of Columbia's "Legacy Series" is a handsome production indeed, with a beautifully designed booklet containing many photographs of the occasion, a detailed account of the whole Lincoln Center undertaking, and notes on the music. For a souvenir of the opening of Lincoln Center, it assuredly fills the bill. As anything other than a memento of a great occasion, its contents—one fifth of the *Missa Solemnis*, a single movement of the Mahler Eighth, a new Copland piece, and the Vaughan Williams Serenade—might be questioned. The inaugural program was, at the time, severely criticized for its emphasis on parts rather than wholes. If this judgment was applicable to a concert, how much more cogently does it apply to an album of records, to be acquired presumably for the pleasure of repeated playing.

To go through the fare presented, *morceau* by *morceau*, we have first the *Star-Spangled Banner*—as recorded here, a long drum roll with attendant choral and orchestral sounds. Next follow the remarks of John D. Rockefeller III, Chairman of the Board of Lincoln Center: a good speech, dignified, to the point, but probably not to be savored more than once. The *pièce de résistance* of the first disc is the Gloria of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, a work which Bernstein had already recorded in its entirety. The Lincoln Center recording has a desirable increase in resonance over that in the conductor's complete edition on Columbia M2S 619, but otherwise the previous version is preferable. For one thing, its soloists are a great deal better. Eileen Farrell takes part in both performances, but in the earlier recording her colleagues are Carol Smith, Richard Lewis, and Kim Borg, who far surpass their Lincoln Center counterparts—Shirley Verrett-Carter, Jon Vickers, and Donald Bell. Vickers is particularly disappointing. Bernstein's own work too is much more impressive in the earlier version. For a quick contrast, you need only play the coda of the Gloria, which goes reasonably well in the studio performance but quite misses fire in the Lincoln Center one.

On the second disc comes the world premiere performance of Aaron Copland's *Connotations for Orchestra*. I am unsure how an orchestra can connote anything, but by taking a term from semantics and shifting it to another field Copland has managed a ploy which will probably set fashion. To continue in the state of high fashion, Copland has based this work on a baroque form (the chaconne), and written it in the twelve-tone technique. It turns out to be yet another of his contrived pieces, less rewarding than his *Orchestral Variations*. The trouble is that the level of invention is far too uneven for the length of the work, and the dreary manipulations of its dull sections determine the over-all impression. Bernstein's performance seems to be a good one, and the sonics are, in some way, the best in the album.

In the hall, on the night of the event, the most satisfactory performance was that given Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*. Written on the request of Sir Henry Wood to employ sixteen vocal soloists, it provided Bernstein with his single opportunity for understatement: he used only twelve. They sing very well, and the stereo here does justice to a vocal group in

the foreground and the orchestra in the rear, although instrumental detail is sometimes lost. This is subdued music, characteristically British in its emotional values. Coming after intermission, it apparently found Bernstein sufficiently relaxed to present a reading of charm and warmth.

The grandiose atmosphere returns in the final work, the *Veni, Creator Spiritus* section of the Eighth Symphony of Mahler. Heard live, it was all but unendurable—loud, shrill, and lacking in bass. In the climaxes it seemed to me as if a thousand voices were all shouting within intimate range of my eardrums. The recording is at least not so overpowering. It has been severely monitored, and one can easily imagine the worried engineer watching the needles climb and cranking down the levels. This introduces quite a bit of "compression distortion." There is, in fact, far too much going on in the Mahler Eighth for the monophonic disc to keep track of it all. Only stereo can provide a fair likeness of this work, and at quiet moments the Philharmonic Hall recording comes close to doing so; but balances are never completely under control, and the whole business often turns into a muddle of sound. The banal intrusion of a doorbell chime where Mahler must have bells is a disheartening touch, and to top it off the soloists are particularly awful —especially Richard Tucker, who seems not to know Mahler from Mascagni.

The important thing about a concert hall is not what happens there on opening night, but the role it plays later in the life of a city. Carnegie Hall opened its doors in 1891 with Tchaikovsky on hand as visiting celebrity and a program that included a hymn ("Old Hundred" was sung by both chorus and audience) and such banal stuff as the Russian guest's *Marche slave*. (The main work, for the sake of the record, was the Berlioz *Te Deum*.) Bernstein's program is of a slightly higher cut, but in the same tradition. Carnegie survived, and so—one assumes—will Philharmonic Hall. These discs are interesting as social history, but some day they may become a source of embarrassment as well.

"The Sound of Philharmonic Hall"

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

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5774. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6374. SD. $5.98.

"First Performance — Philharmonic Hall"

Beethoven: *Mass in D, Op. 123 ("Missa Solemnis"): Gloria.* Copland: *Connotations for Orchestra.* Vaughan Williams: *Serenade to Music.* Mahler: *Symphony No. 8, in E flat: First Movement.*

Vocal soloists; Columbia Boychoir; Juilliard Chorus; Schola Cantorum of New York; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA L2L 1007. Two LP. $9.96.
• • COLUMBIA L2S 1008. Two SD. $11.96.

CLASSICAL

BACH: *Arias*
†Handel: *Arias*

Ernst Häfliger, tenor; Soloistengemeinschaft der Bachwoche Ansbach; Münchner Bach-Orchester, Karl Richter, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18268. LP. $5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138268. SD. $6.98.

The Swiss tenor Ernst Häfliger has already proved himself an admirable artist in recordings of complete cantatas and Passions by Bach, and in the present disc he shows once again that he is equipped to handle almost any type of baroque aria. His voice is of an agreeable quality, not very rich but firm and susceptible to coloring. It is strong and flexible and evenly produced through a wide range, though the top sometimes has a noticeable admixture of falsetto. Long phrases are taken in a single breath without perceptible effort. Moreover, Häfliger enunciates very clearly, with hardly any trace of a foreign accent whether in Latin, Italian, or English. His ability to convey a wide range of emotional expression is somewhat limited, but it is sufficient to encompass the varied demands of the selections presented here. Whether in the fiery *"Deposuit"* from Bach's Magnificat or in the fine-spun legato of "Thus when the sun" from Handel's *Samson*, he conveys the "affection" of each aria very nicely. Other arias by Bach are from the B minor Mass, the *St. Matthew* Passion, and Cantatas 45 and 189 (this last, by the way, is now considered not to be by Bach); and by Handel from *Julius Caesar* and *Xerxes* (including a lovely performance of *"Ombra mai fù"*). Very good sound. N.B.

BACH: *Concertos for Harpsichord (s) and Strings, S. 1052-1056, 1058, 1060-1065*

Robert Veyron-Lacroix, Anne Marie Beckensteiner, Marie-Claire Alain, Olivier Alain, harpsichords; Jean-François Paillard Chamber Orchestra.
• WESTMINSTER XWN 19016/19. Four LP. $4.98 each.
• • WESTMINSTER WST 17016/19. Four SD. $5.98 each.

Here are all but one of the concertos for one or more harpsichords by Bach. The missing one is the Concerto in F, S.1057 (for one harpsichord and orchestra), probably omitted because it requires two recorders in addition to the strings (it is a transcription of the Fourth *Brandenburg* Concerto). The soloist in the works for one harpsichord is Veyron-Lacroix, who is joined in the multiple concertos by the artists named above, in the order given. Veyron-Lacroix's playing is clean, elegant, and technically impeccable. His partners in the works for more than one soloist match him nicely in style and skill, and one of the fine qualities of the set is the precision of ensemble: it is not often that one hears three and four keyboards producing embellishments in perfect unanimity. Nevertheless, there are better performances on records of some of these pieces. Several

Ernst Häfliger: at home in baroque.

of the solo concertos are played, it seems to me, with more insight and imagination by Kirkpatrick on Archive, and the D minor Concerto in particular lacks the fire that made the old Landowska recording so incandescent. I have also heard more caressing readings of the beautiful first movement of the C minor Concerto for Two Harpsichords (S. 1060). On the whole, however, this is an excellent set of performances.

Aside from one or two movements in the solo concertos where the orchestra is just slightly behind the harpsichordist, the strings are first-rate. Westminster has apparently attempted to achieve concert hall realism. The keyboards are not thrust forward in larger-than-life-size reproduction with the strings faintly audible in the background. Instead, the harpsichords speak in their natural, mild voices. It is necessary to turn the volume up higher than usual to get the proper results. The stereo version is of course far superior to the mono in the multiple concertos.

The works are distributed as follows: Vol. 1—Concertos for One Harpsichord: in D, S. 1054; in F minor, S. 1056; in D minor, S. 1052. Vol. 2—Concertos for One Harpsichord: in A, S. 1055; in G minor, S. 1058; in E, S. 1053. Vol. 3—Concertos for Two Harpsichords. Vol. 4—Concertos for Three and Four Harpsichords. N.B.

BACH: *St. Luke Passion, S. 246*

Vocal soloists; Akademie Kammerchor; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, George Barati, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 72.

BACH: *Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, S. 1014-1019*

Yehudi Menuhin, violin; George Malcolm, harpsichord; Ambrose Gauntlett, viola da gamba.
• ANGEL 3629B. Two LP. $9.96.
• • ANGEL S 3629B. Two SD. $11.96.

These sonatas do not lend themselves easily to subjective interpretation, and Menuhin does not attempt to read personal ideas into them. On the other hand, the works do not by any means "play themselves." Menuhin and Malcolm

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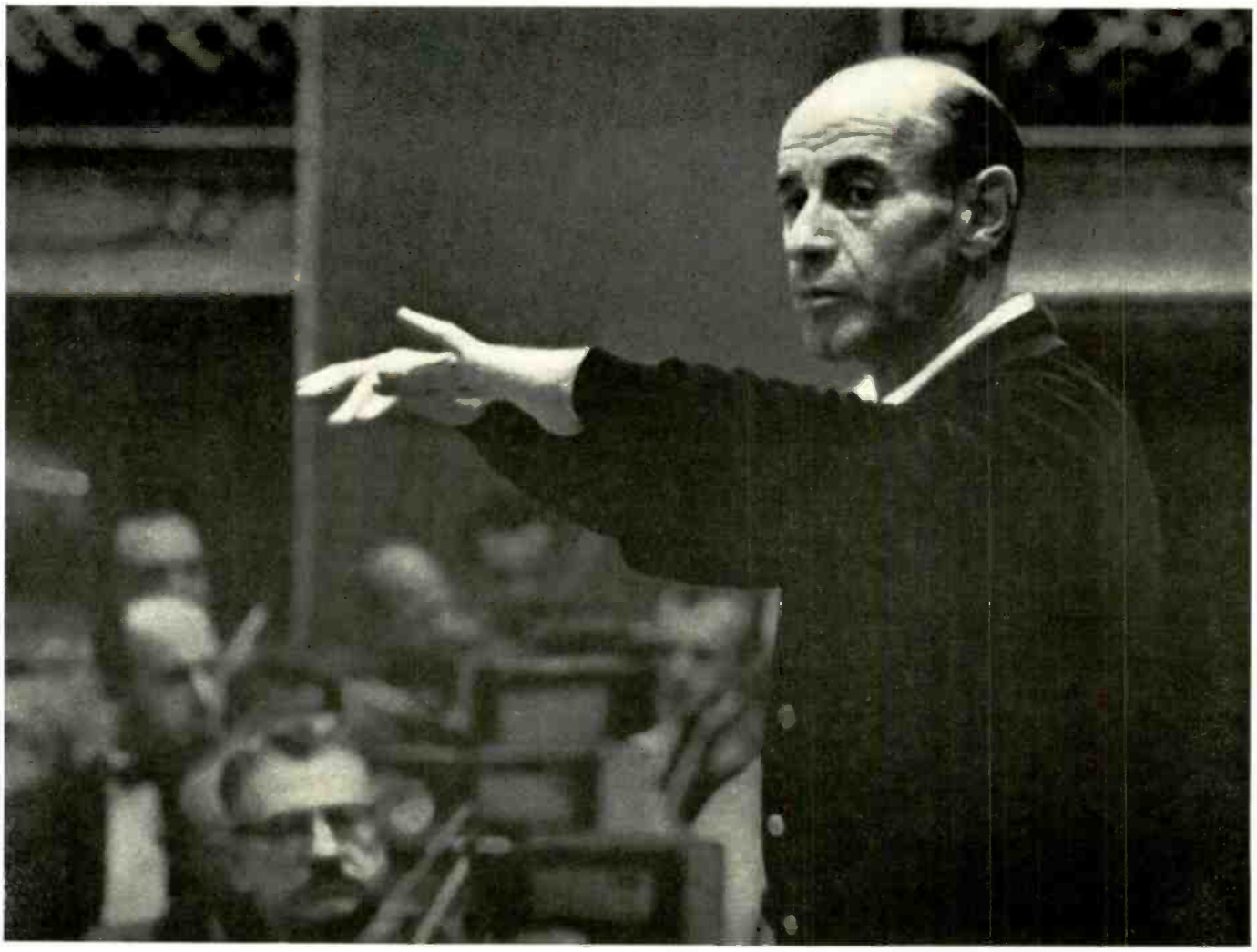

The charming Mr. Leinsdorf immediately makes us welcome in Symphony Hall. When we ask about the microphones over the stage, he tells us that before recording, an RCA Victor recording crew has been doing exhaustive experimentation and explains, "I want them to capture the most natural, the most true reflection of the Boston Symphony in Symphony Hall." Later, as they rehearse, polish, then record the fiendishly difficult Bartók *Concerto for Orchestra*, we are struck by the wonderful rapport Mr. Leinsdorf has with the musicians. Though a strict disciplinarian, his keen wit always lightens tension at the right moment. When you hear the album, it is readily apparent that the recording crew captured the sound Mr. Leinsdorf requested – just close your eyes and you are right back in Symphony Hall with the Boston Symphony.

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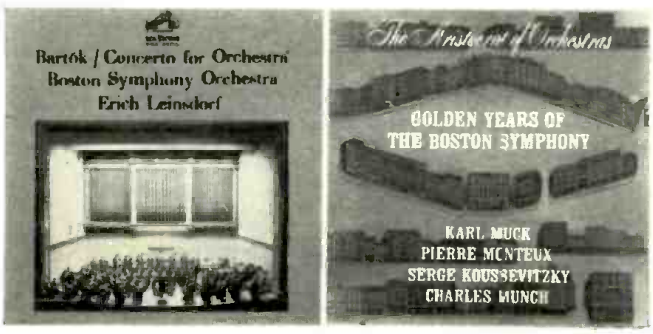

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choose excellent tempos, their phrasing and accents are always musical, and they differentiate nicely between the crisp liveliness of some of the fast movements and the poetic songfulness of some of the slow ones. Sometimes they add small embellishments. On many occasions—as in the Adagio of No. 4, the Largo of No. 6, the first two movements of No. 5, and all of Nos. 2 and 3—they achieve compelling eloquence. Menuhin's playing is clean, and his tone on the whole of fine quality, although once or twice, in passages on the G string, it verges on juiciness. Malcolm is a worthy partner.

One of the advantages of this set is the clarity with which the right-hand part of the harpsichord comes through in its frequent dialogues with the violin. The addition of a gamba on the bass part is unusual in performances of these works, though there seems to be no reason to object to it stylistically. In many passages it strengthens the bottom line in welcome fashion. The sound in both versions is excellent. N.B.

BACH: *Suites for Orchestra: No. 1, in C, S. 1066; No. 4, in D, S. 1069*

Munich Bach Orchestra, Karl Richter, cond.
• ARCHIVE ARC 3181. LP. $5.98.
• • ARCHIVE ARC 73181. SD. $6.98.

With this disc Richter completes his set of the four Suites (Nos. 2 and 3, on Archive ARC 73180 or 3180, were reviewed in these pages last July). The performances here, as on the earlier-released record, are musically on a high level and technically impeccable. Especially well done are the Allegro sections of the overtures, which are light and springy. But the other portions of each work are also nicely played. Variety is obtained in the repeats either by a change of dynamics or, in No. 1, by focusing attention on the woodwinds. The set now joins the Menuhin (Capitol) and Münchinger (London) as the best of the stereo versions, with the Menuhin, in my opinion, still at the top. N.B.

BARATI: *Chamber Concerto*—See Rochberg: *Symphony No. 2.*

BEETHOVEN: *Cantata on the Death of the Emperor Josef II*

Ilona Steingruber, soprano; Alfred Poell, bass; Akademie Kammerchor; Vienna Symphony, Clemens Krauss, cond.
• LYRICHORD LL 107. LP. $4.98.

Josef II died in February 1790, when Beethoven was nineteen. A memorial ceremony was planned to take place in Bonn on March 19, for which the young composer was to set appropriate verses by a local bard. Whether or not the score was ready in time, it was not performed and, indeed, went unpublished and unplayed throughout Beethoven's lifetime. The resurrection of the work came in 1884 as a consequence of efforts by the critic Eduard Hanslick. We may assume that Beethoven, at least in his later years, regarded the score as a piece of juvenilia (certainly he could have had it played if he had wished), but actually it sounds a good deal more mature than one would expect from its date of composition. *Fidelio* is suggested at several turns, and the manner consistently is one of dignity, eloquence, and noble sentiment.

The late Clemens Krauss.

The recording now reissued is at least a decade old and not to be held to present-day engineering standards. The performance, however, is a strong and thoroughly sympathetic one, and the dedicated Beethoven collector should welcome it as a rare opportunity to hear the most important of the composer's works from his Bonn years. R.C.M.

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

Josef Suk, violin; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Franz Konwitschny, cond.
• PARLIAMENT PLP 169. LP. $1.98.
• • PARLIAMENT PLPS 169. SD. $2.98.

Up to now we have lacked a stereo version of this score on the lowest-priced labels. The present set, although no serious rival of the Francescatti–Walter edition for top honors, is a sound, musicianly performance with a rewarding measure of good solo playing and a first-rate accompaniment. The engineering is in the same class, offering a big, round sound with plenty of presence. R.C.M.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral")*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
• EPIC LC 3849. LP. $4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1249. SD. $5.98.

At first thought one might feel that George Szell and Bruno Walter would be equally companionable for a country walk, but there are differences in temperament, and they soon come to the fore. Walter is plainly out for a stroll. He will not hasten his steps, and when he finds a vista he enjoys, he is in no hurry to move on.

Szell, on the other hand, likes to walk at a more even and brisker pace and appears slightly worried about the impending shower. There is always an air of, "Yes, that's very nice, but we must be getting along"; and even when the storm has passed and the shepherd sings his song of thanksgiving, Szell is disturbed by the thought of a late afternoon appointment and unwilling to relax into a more tranquil mood.

Both versions are well played and well recorded. You must obviously choose your walking companion for yourself. Szell, in his own temper, is an agreeable one. The Breughel painting on the record sleeve has been expurgated, incidentally. R.C.M.

BEN-HAIM: *Pastorale variée, for Clarinet, Harp, and Strings*—See Britten: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, Op. 15.*

BERGER: *Quartet for Strings*
†Wyner: *Concert Duo for Violin and Piano*

Lenox String Quartet (in the Berger). Matthew Raimondi, violin; Yehudi Wyner, piano (in the Wyner).
• COMPOSERS RECORDINGS CRI 161. LP. $5.95.

Arthur Berger, professor of music at Brandeis University, began his creative career as an ardent Stravinskyan neoclassicist, and the Stravinskyan richness, variety, and tautness of rhythm is still much to the fore in the present work, which dates from 1958. The tonal structure, however, follows serial principles of Berger's own, and the whole has a serious dramatic profile of a most impressive and distinguished kind.

The rhapsodic music of Yehudi Wyner has never been my dish of tea, and the Concert Duo for Violin and Piano is no different from previous works in this respect. I say this not to set up my own taste as a final court of authority but for quite the opposite reason: there are times when the only thing you can do is to take an aesthetic Fifth Amendment, and this is one of them.

Both recordings are first-class, as the performances would also seem to be. A.F.

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

Henryk Szeryng, violin; London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
• MERCURY MG 50308. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90308. SD. $5.98.

In the spring of 1959 there appeared an RCA Victor recording, in both mono and stereo, of the Brahms Concerto, performed by Henryk Szeryng with this same London Symphony orchestra, on that occasion conducted by Pierre Monteux. Now, less than four years later, here it is again with the same soloist and orchestra but with a different conductor and on the Mercury label. Writing about the earlier version I said: "Szeryng is a thorough musician, exceptionally sensitive in matters of phrasing. To judge by the recording, his tone is not massive, yet it is very clear and sweet, and every note is articulated with the utmost care and refinement. His is as fine and probing an interpretation of the concerto as anyone could want, and Monteux, an expert Brahms interpreter in his own right, seconds him with like care and sympathy."

Victor recently saw fit to delete this superlative version from the catalogue. This is a pity, for while my comments about the soloist's performance apply in equal measure to the new recording, I am neither as happy about Dorati's rougher accompaniment or Mercury's overblown reproduction. The use of 35-mm magnetic film is excellent for producing greater clarity, but that clarity suffers, and so does the music, when the volume level is boosted above all proportion.

Those who are looking for a good new version of the Brahms Concerto have a choice between the present one (with the volume controls turned down) or the slightly less sensuous, admirably poised interpretation by Oistrakh and Klemperer on Angel. As for me, I'm holding onto the latter and my older Victor disc by Szeryng and Monteux. P.A.

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BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.
• PARLIAMENT PLP 172. LP. $1.98.
• • PARLIAMENT PLPS 172. SD. $2.98.

There is certainly no shortage of good Brahms Firsts in the catalogue, but this one has both a low price and other attractions besides. The Czech Philharmonic remains one of Europe's finest orchestras, and Ancerl directs it in a clean-cut, forthright statement of the music, well integrated and free of frills. Only the first movement seems a trifle slow and heavy. The sound is spacious and well balanced, except for the first clarinet, which is occasionally too prominent in the ensemble. P.A.

BRAHMS: *Symphonies: No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68; No. 2, in D, Op. 73; No. 3, in F, Op. 90; No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98*

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond. (in No. 1); George Szell, cond. (in No. 3); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. (in No. 2); Hamburg State Philharmonic, Joseph Keilberth, cond. (in No. 4).
• RICHMOND-TELEFUNKEN K4R 1. Four LP. $7.92.

The Furtwängler performance included in this bargain-priced album was recorded on 78s, and the Szell was an early microgroove recording. The two other records in the set are considerably more recent in their origins and sound it. Beinum's performance is a worthy memorial to a fine musician. The Furtwängler is much more uneven, with some wonderful passages but many others in which the conductor's musical stature remains undisclosed. Szell's version of the Third omits the opening movement repeat and is seriously lacking in low frequencies. The Keilberth No. 4 contains some needlessly heavy underlinings but remains impressive on a number of counts.
R.C.M.

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

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

For a feature review including this recording, see p. 73.

BRITTEN: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 1, Op. 15*
†**Ben-Haim:** *Pastorale variée, for Clarinet, Harp, and Strings*

Paul Kling, violin (in the Britten); James Livingston, clarinet (in the Ben-Haim); Louisville Philharmonic Orchestra, Robert Whitney, cond.
• LOUISVILLE LOU 626. LP. $7.95. (Available on special order only, from 830 S. Fourth St., Louisville 3, Ky.)

Benjamin Britten is so much a member of The Establishment that one would have thought his concertos would be recorded by the leading British instrumentalists and issued by big commercial firms. But inasmuch as this early work, composed in 1939, is rather dull and derivative, it probably does not matter that its distribution in this small-company release will not be wide. Kling is good, but he cannot bring the music to life.

The variations by Paul Ben-Haim are a pleasant diversion by Israel's leading composer, and they are most expertly performed. A.F.

CARTER: *Pocahontas Suite; Sonata for Piano*

Charles Rosen, piano (in the Sonata); Zurich Radio Orchestra, Jacques Monod, cond. (in *Pocahontas*).
• EPIC LC 3850. LP. $4.98.
• • EPIC BC 1250. SD. $5.98.

The ballet *Pocahontas*, one of Elliott Carter's earliest works, is very derivative and a bit of a bore. The Piano Sonata is quite another matter. It is in Carter's mature style and is one of the most impressive works of its kind, especially when played by so brilliant and persuasive an artist as Rosen. The work makes very extensive and ingenious use of overtones and hence demands the best in modern recording, which it definitely has been given here; in addition it exemplifies that extraordinary complexity of rhythm which is the sign manual of Carter, and a grand sweep and size also characteristically his. A.F.

CHAUSSON: *Symphony in B flat, Op. 20*
†**Franck:** *Le Chasseur maudit*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
• RCA VICTOR LM 2647. LP. $4.98.
• • RCA VICTOR LSC 2647. SD. $5.98.

Munch and the Bostonians give a most compelling account of the lyrical and dramatic symphony by one of César Franck's most gifted pupils. Although I find the performance by Paray and the Detroit Symphony even more forceful and dramatic than this new one, Mercury's reproduction sometimes blasts to the point of distortion, whereas Victor's is better-modulated. The new disc also offers as a bonus a rousing performance of Franck's tone poem *The Accursed Huntsman*, a reading in which Munch and the engineers allow us to hear more of the inner voices and bell effects than is customary. P.A.

CHOPIN: *Mazurkas* (complete)

Orazio Frugoni, piano.
• Vox VUX 2017. Two LP. $6.95.
• • Vox SVUX 2017. Two SD. $6.95.

Let me state at the outset that I am no devotee of the tortured "taffy-pull" rubato and languorous smudgy tone which so many pianists seem to think are *de rigueur* for Chopin. A straight, "rethought" performance of the Mazurkas would be most welcome in this quarter. Frugoni's stiff and unpoetic approach, however, is far from the answer. One by one, these marvelously individual little pieces are clumped out with scant tonal allure and less sensitivity. In fact, I suspect that one could take a metronome, set it ticking at the beginning of Side 1, and then go through this entire album without missing a beat.

When one can choose between Nikita Magaloff's crystalline, ultra-Parisian interpretations of the Mazurkas or Rubinstein's more passionate, deeply Slavic accounts, the unimaginative efficiency of the Frugoni set is in no way competitive, despite its decent reproduction and low price. H.G.

COWELL: *Quartet for Strings, No. 5*
—See Toch: *Five Pieces for Wind Instruments.*

DVORAK: *Quartets for Strings*

No. 1, in A minor, Op. 16; No. 2, in D minor, Op. 34; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 51; No. 4, in C, Op. 61; No. 5, in E, Op. 80.

Kohon Quartet.
• Vox VBX 549. Three LP. $9.95.
• • Vox SVBX 549. Three SD. $9.95.

Listening to this album is a real voyage of discovery. The first of three volumes devoted to the complete string quartets of Dvořák, this set contains the five quartets from the composer's middle period, the period of his early maturity. What makes these discs so exciting is that three of the quartets—Opp. 16, 34, and 80—are receiving their premiere recordings on microgroove.

It is strange how little of Dvořák's chamber music we hear on this side of the Atlantic—usually only the Quartet in E flat, Op. 51; the *American* Quartet, Op. 96; the Piano Quintet in A; and the *Dumky* Trio. In all, he wrote fourteen quartets, and the ones in this album, composed between 1874 and 1881, are full of delightful music—music built on a solid foundation by an inventive composer in the process of finding his own individual style. Thus, there is a fine blend of classical respect for form with an innate melodic flow and an underlying affinity for the Bohemian folk idiom. The Kohon Quartet, currently

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☐ Schwarzkopf's earlier "Merry Widow" (remember her "Vilia"?) came out ten seasons ago, as Angel's first Champagne Operetta. It was a *grand succès*—"true bewitchment," "recorded perfection," "a gem." No need to re-record for stereo if the new performance could not excel the old. We are proud that it does! ☐

The new "Merry Widow" is blessed with a still richer characterization by the great Schwarzkopf, exotic Balkan instruments for the "Pontevedrinian" party scene and more titillating sparkle in every gay detail. Hanny Steffek, Nicolai Gedda and Eberhard Wächter lead the large cast, with Lovro von Matacic conducting. ☐ If you loved Angel's first "Merry Widow," you'll be ecstatically happy over the new one...she's even more charming. Your dealer will be glad to introduce you.

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the quartet-in-residence at New York University, gives a fully authoritative performance of these five works, playing with incisiveness and excellent cohesion. The Vox engineers have the two violins widely separated from the viola and cello in the fairly close-up stereo recording, making it possible to hear the stereo effect from any point in the room, yet without a hole in the middle. This set is strongly recommended to chamber music and Dvořák lovers looking for something worthwhile and off the beaten path. I look forward with pleasure to the release of its two sequels. P.A.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 4, in G, Op. 88; Scherzo capriccioso, Op. 66*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond.
• ANGEL 35847. LP. $4.98.
• • ANGEL S 35847. SD. $5.98.

Within barely two months' time, we are suddenly blessed with two superior recordings of what is probably Dvořák's finest symphonic creation—first the late Bruno Walter's magnificent performance with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, and now this sensitive reading from Giulini. Choosing between them is difficult. Both are notable for the high quality of their sound, which is characterized by depth, resonance, and general naturalness in both mono and stereo. Interpretatively, they differ slightly. In the first three movements, Walter is inclined to be more forceful, emphasizing the music's dramatic qualities, whereas in the finale he becomes gentler. Giulini, on the other hand, treats the first three movements more lyrically, then becomes more dramatically taut for the variations in the finale. By a very slight margin I prefer the Walter, but you cannot go wrong with either version. P.A.

FAURE: *Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19; Preludes, Op. 103: No. 1, in D flat; No. 3, in G minor; No. 5, in D minor*—See Saint-Saëns: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in C minor, Op. 44.*

FRANCK: *Le Chasseur maudit*—See Chausson: *Symphony in B flat, Op. 20.*

HANDEL: *Arias*—See Bach: *Arias.*

HANDEL: *Music for the Royal Fireworks; Concerto a due chori, No. 2, in F*

Wind Ensemble (in the *Fireworks*), Pro Arte Orchestra (in the Concerto), Charles Mackerras, cond.
• VANGUARD BG 630. LP. $4.98.
• • VANGUARD BGS 5046. SD. $5.95.

The *Royal Fireworks* music is now available on records in four different versions: the original, for a large wind band with drums; Handel's own arrangement for a normal baroque orchestra; Harty's transcription for a standard nineteenth-century orchestra; and an arrangement by Leopold Stokowski (reviewed in these pages last month). The present recording is of the first version, with twenty-six oboes, fourteen bassoons, nine trumpets, nine horns, and so on, and plenty of percussion. The creamy reediness of all those woodwinds, the brazen trumpets, the noble horn blasts, and the thundering drums add up to an enormous strawberry shortcake of sound. A delightful treat, if not one to be sampled too often. By all means get the stereo version. You won't have to invite your neighbors in; they'll be able to hear it where they are.

The Concerto is another feast for the ears. It is for two groups of horns, oboes, and bassoons with a string orchestra. Much of it is arranged from earlier works by Handel (one of the movements, for example, began life as "Lift up your heads" in *Messiah*), and all of it makes fine listening. Charles Mackerras has added some embellishments as well as some tasteful touches in the instrumentation. The performances are of high quality and so is the sound. N.B.

HAYDN: *Organ Masses: No. 2, in E flat ("Great"); No. 5, in B flat ("Little")*

Regensburg Cathedral Choir and Boys Choir; Members of the Bavarian Radio Symphony, Theobald Schrems, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18756. LP. $5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138756. SD. $6.98.

Neither of these works is as interesting as any one of Haydn's final half dozen Masses (written between 1796–1802). "Practical" scores, designed for the uses of the church rather than concert purposes, the Second and Fifth of the Masses never stray far from the strict requirements of the clergy. (Indeed, the *Little* Organ Mass gets through the sacred text in seventeen and a half minutes, an accomplishment growing out of the ingenious trick of directing the Gloria and Credo to be sung simultaneously.) This album provides, however, a pleasant excursion into baroque church music, made all the more appealing by the fact that stereo can provide a spacious acoustical setting reminiscent of medieval vaults and choir lofts. The performers here are both skilled and sensitive to style, and the organ is a good one. The disc adds up to an out-of-the-way item of special interest to Haydn collectors. R.C.M.

HAYDN: *Symphonies: No. 3, in G; No. 21, in A; No. 23, in G; No. 96, in D*

New York Sinfonietta (in No. 3); Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Max Goberman, cond.
• or • • LIBRARY OF RECORDED MASTERPILCES HS 8/9. Two LP or Two SD. $8.50 each on subscription: $10 each nonsubscription.

With these releases, the first series of Goberman's Haydn project comes to completion. I cannot think of any group of records, heard in the past year, that have been more consistently interesting. Indeed, I have come to notice that when the month's review records appear beside my turntable, I invariably reach for the new Goberman disc first. If this is favoritism, make the most of it.

Those who question the usefulness of musicology might well consider Goberman's version of No. 96. Popular as the work has always been—it was the hit of London in its debut season—this is the first time it has been recorded from "authentic and original" parts. And it sounds better for it. Goberman has the musicality to make this a fine performance on any count, but it goes beyond

Goberman: true to the spirit.

that: the harmonies are right and some of them are bold, the instrumental lines are more interesting, the whole is stamped more clearly with Haydn's mature genius. So far as I am concerned, this is the only recording of the work to be considered seriously. It is paired (on HS 8) with the first recording of the symphony called No. 3—which actually belongs somewhat later on in the series. Popular in Haydn's day, it deserves to be popular again, for it is a baroque confection of enormous wit and vitality.

Symphonies 21 and 23 have both been recorded before, but not in stereo. Both works date from 1764, a year in which Haydn was in an inventive, experimental state of mind. No. 21 shows this with its opening slow movement, a lovely Adagio, which would alone justify the cost of the record. No. 23 closes with a delicious *perpetuum mobile*, one of those Haydn-esque trick endings which are unique in music.

The performances are wonderfully true to the spirit of the works, and the recording is excellent. R.C.M.

HEROLD: *La Fille mal gardée* **(excerpts) (arr. Lanchbery)**

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, John Lanchbery, cond.
• LONDON CM 9321. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6252. SD. $5.98.

La Fille mal gardée is probably the oldest ballet in the current repertoire. The first production dates from 1789; the most recent one was Sir Frederick Ashton's for the Royal Ballet in 1959. The original light ballet comedy was the creation of an anonymous musician who used folk songs and popular tunes as his basis. When it was revived in 1828 in Paris, Ferdinand Hérold of *Zampa* fame, then chorus master of the Paris Opéra, arranged a new version of the score, adding music of his own, as well as that of others, including the opening chorus of Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and the Storm Scene from *La Cenerentola*. There have been other arrangements since then, but the present one, made by John Lanchbery for the 1959 production, draws mainly upon Hérold's.

As befits the story of young lovers who thwart a domineering mother's attempts to marry her daughter off to the village idiot, the score is light and frothy. Performed with zest and reproduced in

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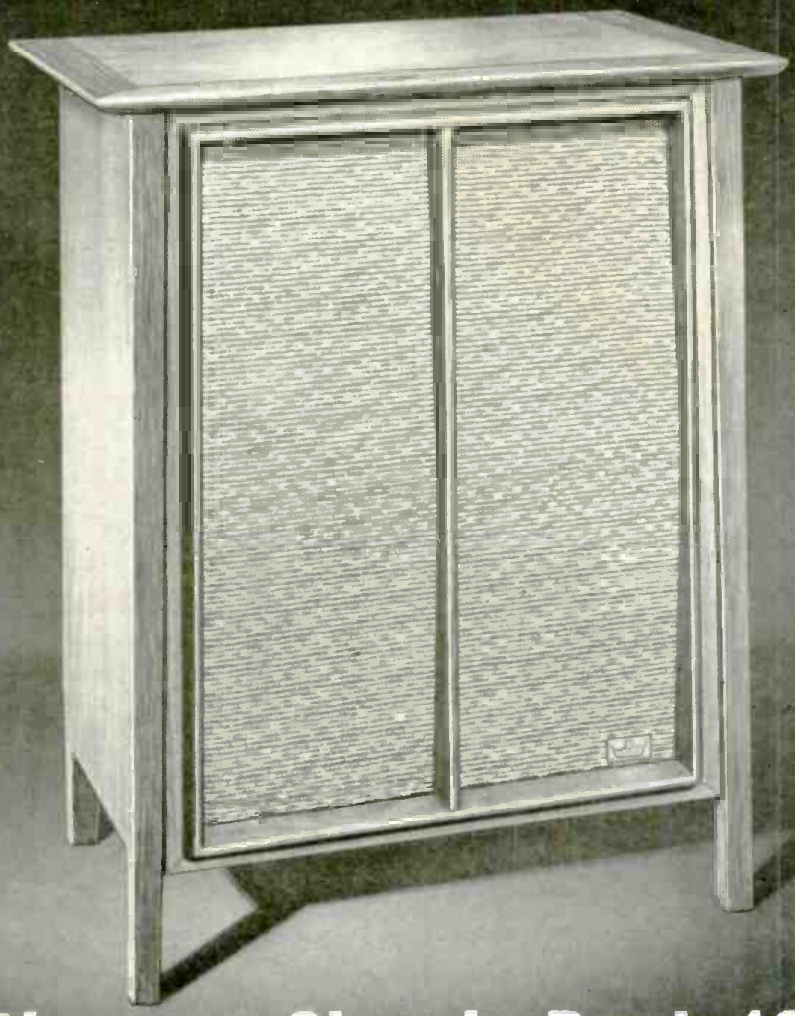

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wide-ranging stereo, its appearance on records will be especially welcomed by those who have seen and enjoyed the ballet. P.A.

HOLST: *Hymn of Jesus, Op. 37; Ballet music from "The Perfect Fool," Op. 39; Egdon Heath, Op. 47*

BBC Chorus and BBC Symphony Orchestra (in Op. 37), London Philharmonic (in Op. 39 and Op. 47), Sir Adrian Boult, cond.
• LONDON CM 9324. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON CS 6324. LP. $5.98.

A feast for Holst fans. The *Hymn of Jesus* is a large-scale work for two and a half choruses plus large orchestra with a text taken from the Apocryphal Acts of St. John. The music—largely based on the piling up of triadic sonorities unrelated except by contrast—makes an impressive effect. The suggestions of plain song; the main section with its bursts of triadic glory over resonant, descending basses; the cosmic dance that follows; the light, lyric interlude and succeeding marchlike build-up, and the resounding recapitulation of the big, handsome main section all add up to a sonorous statement of power that, however, cannot quite compensate for the lack of any genuine or striking musical ideas.

I myself much prefer the subtlety and understatement of *Egdon Heath*, a late work of 1927. Apparently the association with Hardy suggested a more rigorous, introspective style and some musical ideas of a quiet, expressive originality. The work has a spare, serious shape that is tight and organic and has a good deal more to communicate artistically than all the expansive chorus-and-orchestra gestures of the *Hymn*. As for the ballet music from the composer's comic opera *The Perfect Fool*, its musical substance is of no great weight, but the writing has style and the orchestral setting is deft.

Boult leads the London Philharmonic in a fine performance of *Egdon Heath* and the ballet music, and the same conductor is equally successful with the BBC Orchestra in the *Hymn*. In the last-named work, however, the chorus does not always manage the difficult vocal parts with ease. The recording, which has fine sound, was issued in conjunction with the British Council. E.S.

Boult leads a feast for Holst fans.

KLEMPERER: *Merry Waltz*—See Weill: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik.*

LISZT: *Die Ideale; Prometheus*

Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, Ludovit Rajter, cond.
• PARLIAMENT PLP 171. LP. $1.98.
• • PARLIAMENT PLPS 171. SD. $2.98.

Two of Liszt's more profound and less frequently recorded tone poems are here given rich, effective presentations with strong rhythmic pulse, darkly sonorous orchestral tone and clean, vital playing. The recorded sound too is finely spacious and vibrantly resonant, with good stereo detail. At any price, this would be a desirable disc, and at the rates quoted it is an extraordinary bargain. H.G.

LISZT: *Sonata for Piano, in B minor; Funérailles*
†Schumann: *Arabesque, Op. 18; Fantasiestücke, Op. 12: Traumeswirren: Presto passionato, Op. 22; Toccata, Op. 7*

Vladimir Horowitz, piano.
• ANGEL COLH 72. LP. $5.98.

This performance of the Liszt Sonata—a brilliant and headlong sprint through the score by a twenty-eight-year-old Russian emigré named Vladimir Horowitz—joins a distinguished roster of recorded interpretations by Fleisher (thirty-one), Vásáry (twenty-seven), and Anievas (also twenty-seven). It will therefore be surmised that the Liszt Sonata is particularly a young pianist's terrain—at least as far as the phonograph is concerned.

The version at hand has always been regarded as one of the greatest Horowitz interpretations ever recorded; and heard anew in this excellent transfer, its sweeping style and cumulative energy are even more impressive than I had remembered. It is indeed one of the landmarks in the art of recorded piano playing. Considering that the disc was made in 1932, when tape recording with its flexible editing capabilities was not yet developed, one can excuse a few tiny finger slips (which, at any rate, do not detract at all from Horowitz's almost superhuman virtuosity). I myself feel that the hazardous conditions under which this performance was committed to wax add to the sense of excitement. Indeed, similar hurdles in the recording process might well have helped Vásáry, for example, who to my ear has proved conclusively, in three live recitals which I was fortunate enough to hear, his capacity for the kind of pyrotechnics that Horowitz obtains on this disc. The Vásáry recording of the Sonata, for whatever reason, sounds strangely genteel and "comfortable" for an artist so brilliantly endowed as he. Fleisher, on the other hand, succeeds in reaching a Horowitz-like peak of sizzling intensity—and quite remarkably does so without resorting to Horowitz's occasional bursts of sensationalism. Furthermore, his performance is note-perfect, as well as twenty-seven years newer as a recording. His disc remains my favorite for this music.

There are, however, special factors to be taken into consideration in dealing with the Horowitz reissue. For one thing, it affords one the opportunity of rehearing an epoch-making performer at an early stage in his career. Furthermore, Horowitz's rendition is a document in the history of Liszt interpretation—marking, as it does, a radical departure from the old-fashioned, wild-and-woolly style of Liszt playing and setting the stage for the compact, economical approach which still prevails. Nothing in the Horowitz performance seems dated, even today, some thirty years later.

It has been suggested lately that Horowitz may remake the Liszt Sonata for Columbia, but as yet this project has not materialized. He has, however, made more recent versions of the *Funérailles* and the Schumann *Arabesque*. There is no question in my mind that this 1932 *Funérailles* is far more thrilling and fresh-sounding, less pensively grandiloquent than its successor on RCA Victor LM 2584 (a record worth having, however, for other tremendous performances on it). Even sonically, Angel's dubbed sound compares favorably with that of the later edition, although it is necessarily of lesser amplitude. On the other hand, the 1962 *Arabesque*, included in the pianist's debut recital for Columbia, makes this 1933 version sound a mite inflexible, and here the dated sound seems pretty feeble in comparison.

Traumeswirren is played with the utmost brilliance and rhythmic definition, though Richter's memorable version has more gossamer delicacy and coloristic sensitivity. Richter is also superior to Horowitz in the Toccata, but the greatest version of all remains Josef Lhevinne's (on a now deleted Camden reissue), which has a spacious singing quality that no one else has managed to bring to the work. Horowitz's account is dry, steely, and briskly paced, very similar to that of Simon Barère, albeit with decidedly finer control and musicianship. The *Traumeswirren*, by the way, is the only item on the present disc not originally made available on 78s; though recorded in 1934, it remained unreleased until the present album appeared, in France in 1958.

On the whole, Angel's engineers have done a very praiseworthy job in restoring the old sound. Surface hiss is negligible, and wherever possible vitality has been preserved. The Sonata (which is, of course, the major item in this collection) sounds best of all the pieces in the collection and compares quite surprisingly well with more modern recordings.

Despite any reservations suggested in the lines above, this is a quite wonderful disc, and I warmly recommend it to all connoisseurs of superlative piano playing. H.G.

MENDELSSOHN: *Piano Music, Vol. 2*

Albumblatt, Op. 117; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in D minor, Op. 40; Three Fantasies, Op. 16; Fantasy on "The Last Rose of Summer," Op. 15; Gondellied; Six Preludes and Fugues, Op. 35; Rondo brillant, Op. 29; Serenade and Allegro gioioso, Op. 43; Sketches (2); Sonata in B flat, Op. 106.

Rena Kyriakou, piano; Pro Musica Orchestra (Vienna), Hans Swarowsky, cond. (in Op. 40, Op. 29, and Op. 43).
• Vox VBX 412. Three LP. $9.95.

A goodly amount of very interesting piano music is contained in this album, much of it recorded for the first time. The real treasures, so far as I'm concerned, are the Preludes and Fugues. These should be revelatory works for those people who associate Mendelssohn's piano music with the insipid style of some of the hackneyed *Songs Without Words*. The first fugue, in particular,

has a vibrant dramatic surge which could almost be taken for Mozart, and there are frequent overtones of Bach and Beethoven throughout the other ones. In the Preludes, however, Mendelssohn tends to let his romantic flights of fancy take over: this music could have come only from his pen. The two less frequently played orchestral pieces are also lovely, especially the *Serenade and Allegro gioioso* with its brilliant B minor tonality. (One need not say much about the far more familiar D minor Concerto—it is a minor masterpiece, of course.) The early Sonata (the late opus number indicates late publication) shows rather emphatically that its young composer had been listening to Beethoven's Sonata in B flat, also an opus 106. Despite its derivative nature, it is skillfully put together and very well worth knowing. The little scherzo from the Op. 16 group is the sensitive little piece known to so many young piano prodigies. The only piece of patchwork here is the *Last Rose of Summer* Fantasy—which Mendelssohn surely must have come to regard as a thorn in his side.

As already indicated in reviews of her previous installments of this project, Miss Kyriakou is born for this music. Her piano technique is delightfully crisp, but never brittle; her interpretation is always expressive, but never overly sentimental (a failing difficult to avoid in this literature), and she always phrases with warmth and humor. Moreover, she has a dynamic rhythmic sense and unfailingly demonstrates a reserve of power when called upon to do so. Only in the Concerto do I find her performance to be inferior to the best version (an extraordinary Serkin performance for Columbia), and at that, hers is not far behind.

The sound, adequate in the earlier volume of this integral collection, is brighter and finer here. The review copy had a periodic surface swish on the side that contains the Sonata. H.G.

MORENO TORROBA—SABICAS: *Concierto en Flamenco for Guitar and Orchestra*

Sabicas, guitar; Orquesta de Conciertos de Madrid, F. Moreno Torroba, cond.
• DECCA DL 10057. LP. $4.98.
• • DECCA DL 710057. SD. $5.98.

The annotations for this record describe the unusual qualities of this concerto, which juxtaposes the formal qualities of the classical sonata-allegro with the alien, improvisatory flamenco style. In a novel enterprise, Sabicas improvises his solo part in the same way that he would shorter pieces, while Moreno Torroba shapes his orchestral backdrop around it.

The weird alliance is a surprisingly successful one. Moreno Torroba is a highly skilled technician and he holds his end up with extreme sensitivity and harmonic creativity. Sabicas' technical daring projects from the orchestration with dazzling impact, its vibrance complemented by the subdued introspection of the *tuttis* (the latter have something of the mood of Rachmaninoff's D minor Piano Concerto tempered with strains of Falla and the Spanish school). I especially like Torroba's treatment of winds and castanets which, when used in this way, help to integrate the music by extending the percussive nature of the flamenco style into the orchestra.

Three solo selections played with customary brilliance by Sabicas round out

a very attractive disc. The sound (a product of Spanish Hispavox) is drily precise and cleanly defined—in other words, ideal for this type of music. H.G.

MOZART: *Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra, in C, K. 299*
†Telemann: *Suite for Flute and Strings, in A minor*

Julius Baker, flute; Hubert Jelinek, harp; I Solisti di Zagreb, Antonio Janigro, cond.
• VANGUARD BG 636. LP. $4.98.
• • VANGUARD BGS 5048. SD. $5.95.

Although one of these works was written by an Austrian and the other by a German, both have in common a definitely French flavor. Both, too, are entertainment music, and each in its own way succeeds admirably in achieving its unpretentious aim. Neither has been neglected in the record catalogues, but I do not remember hearing any better performances on discs. Julius Baker has long been admired as one of our best flutists. His smooth, musicianly, and technically impeccable playing here is up to the high standard set in his previous recordings. Hubert Jelinek, a Viennese harpist, is a skillful partner in the Mozart. The microphones, however, have not always been as kind to him here as to the other performers. In some passages, especially in the first movement, thematic material in the middle and upper registers of the harp is covered by the flute or the orchestra. Otherwise, the sound is first-class in both versions, as is the orchestra throughout. N.B.

MOZART: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 25, in C, K. 503; Rondo for Piano and Orchestra, in D, K. 382*

Alfred Brendel, piano; Pro Musica Orchestra (Vienna), Paul Angerer, cond.
• Vox GBY 12110. LP. $4.98.
• • Vox STGBY 512110. SD. $4.98.

To me, Mr. Brendel's playing here sounds first-rate. Both the style and the technique seem impeccable; and if the other aspects of this recording were on the same level, Columbia would have to reckon with a strong rival to Messrs. Serkin and Szell in this great Concerto. But Mr. Angerer is no Szell, nor do the Vox engineers reproduce violin tone here as realistically as did Columbia's forces. It is only fair to point out, however, that Vox achieves a better balance, generally, between piano and woodwinds than in any of the other recordings of the Concerto, though the bassoon does get swamped in the first movement. N.B.

MOZART: *Quartets for Flute: in D, K. 285; in G, K. 285a; in C, K. 285b; in A, K. 298*

Camillo Wanausek, flute; Members of the Europa Quartet.
• Vox DL 830. LP. $4.98.
• • Vox STDL 500830. SD. $4.98.

Wanausek produces a lovely, liquid tone, and if you don't mind audible breathtaking, you may agree with me that this is very enjoyable flute playing. He is ably accompanied by the string trio. If the sound were on the same level as the performances, one could recommend this disc warmly, but unfortunately

Julius Baker: no better Mozart flutist.

the tone of violin and viola seems wrapped in a thin covering of tinsel. From this point of view the Epic and Vanguard recordings of these quartets, although monophonic, appear closer to reality, and the performances there are just as good. N.B.

PUCCINI: *Il Tabarro*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Giorgietta; Dora Carral (s), A Lover; Lucia Danieli (ms), Frugola; Mario del Monaco (t), Luigi; Renato Ercolani (t), Tinca; Piero de Palma (t), Song-Sheet Vendor; Robert Merrill (b), Michele; Silvio Maionica (bs), Talpa. Chorus and Orchestra of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Lamberto Gardelli, cond.
• LONDON A 4151. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON OSA 1151. SD. $5.98.

PUCCINI: *Suor Angelica*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Suor Angelica; Giuliana Tavolaccini (s), Suor Dolcina, A Lay Sister; Dora Carral (s), Suor Genofieffa, An Alms Sister, A Novice; Giulietta Simionato (ms), La Zia Principessa; Lucia Danieli (ms), Mother Superior, A Lay Sister; Miti Truccato Pace (ms), Sister Monitress; Anna di Stasio (ms), Mistress of Novices, Sister Infirmaress; Jeda Valtriani (ms), Suor Osmina, An Alms Sister. Chorus and Orchestra of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Lamberto Gardelli, cond.
• LONDON A 4152. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON OSA 1152. SD. $5.98.

PUCCINI: *Gianni Schicchi*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Lauretta; Dora Carral (s), Nella; Lucia Danieli (ms), Zita; Miti Trucato Pace (ms), La Ciesca; Agostino Lazzari (t), Rinuccio; Renato Ercolani (t), Gherardo; Angelo Mercuriali (t), Pinellino; Giovanni Fiorani (b), Betto; Mario Frosini (b), Guccio; Fernando Corena (bs), Gianni Schicchi; Paolo Washington (bs), Simone; Silvio Maionica (bs), Marco; Giuseppe Morresi (bs), Maestro Spinellocio, Ser Amantio di Nicolaio. Chorus and Orchestra of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Lamberto Gardelli, cond.
• LONDON A 4153. LP. $4.98.
• • LONDON OSA 1153. SD. $5.98.

This is the first time that the three one-act operas comprising Puccini's *Il Trittico* have been recorded more or less as a triptych—with the same leading lady, the same conductor and orchestra, the same recording techniques, and a common pool of supporting players used throughout. It also marks the first appearance of *Il Tabarro* and *Suor Angelica* in stereo versions.

The more closely one becomes acquainted with these works, the more impressive they seem. *Suor Angelica*, it must be granted, is at best a work for special tastes. Its music is pretty throughout, and the human situation (Angelica's, I mean—as the mother of an illegitimate and, we find, deceased son; as a nun cloistered away by her family for face-saving reasons; and as the member of a noble family who is forced to sign away her inheritance) is compelling in a perfectly honest way; this makes the scene between Angelica and her aunt, the Princess, a powerful one, and lends conviction to Angelica's very fine aria, *"Senza mamma, o bimbo."* However, the charm of the work's first twenty minutes or so rests on the assumption that the revelation of petty frailties and other human characteristics among ladies and gentlemen of the cloth is perforce terribly cute—a notion which I find even less lovable in an opera than in a Bing Crosby movie. And the final miracle is tied so visibly and specifically to certain items of Roman Catholic dogma as to lose its value as symbol—if one boggles at the doctrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, one will have a tough time swallowing Angelica's little ascension.

Tabarro, on the other hand, is a highly successful work. Its shock value may have worn by this time, but the shock is quite secondary, anyway. Michele is considerably more than a horror-story heavy; the beautifully melancholy scene between Michele, the middle-aged barge owner, and Giorgietta, his young wife, in which such matters as the tragedy of a lost child and nostalgia for a lost, simple love are touched on, establishes him as a man of sensitivity and enduring strength. The positions of Giorgietta and the stevedore Luigi—the latter's tinged with social protest in his bitter aria, *"Hai ben ragione"*—are also made completely understandable, and Frugola is perhaps the most brilliant of all Puccini's secondary characters. These things, it seems to me, count for a great deal more than the cloak gimmick, or even than the deservedly praised atmospheric touches with which Puccini brings to life his picture of barge existence on the Seine; they mark *Tabarro* as an opera with real stature.

Gianni Schicchi is the one section of the triptych universally recognized as first-rate, and this judgment will get no argument from me. *Schicchi* is a delight from beginning to end, both libretto and score being chock-full of a witty inventiveness that places the opera on a level below only the very greatest comedies of the lyric stage. Together, these three operas make for a most satisfying evening in the theatre; whatever one may think of *Suor Angelica*, it at least serves as effective contrast to the grimness of *Tabarro* and the effervescence of *Schicchi*.

The performances on the present recordings are good ones. Tebaldi does not create memorable characters; from role to role, she is just the same, good-sounding soprano. She gets a hint of earthy urgency into her Giorgietta, and lightens her voice effectively for the brief role of Lauretta; but, mainly, this is simply good, rather conventional operatic soprano singing, marred here and there by sharpness of quality or flatness of pitch. Her Angelica is lush and compelling, without having quite the special incandescence that might finally make it credible—only a great singing-

actress, a Callas without the wobble, could do that.

Her colleagues are, for the most part, first-class. In *Tabarro*, both Del Monaco and Merrill are effective; the tenor sounds somewhat strained, but this is very demanding music (though the role is short) and a somewhat effortful sound is not entirely inappropriate. Merrill's Michele is bland as a characterization, especially by comparison to Gobbi's on the old (now deleted) Victor version, but it is certainly well vocalized. His easy, balanced brand of singing is particularly welcome in the tender scene with Giorgietta. Danieli is a full-voiced Frugola, the *comprimario* parts are well taken, and the important sound effects are very well rendered.

In *Suor Angelica*, Simionato supplies the quality that is so often missing in performances of the role of the Princess —she manages to sound aristocratic as well as strong. There is no place for vulgarity in the role; yet most mezzos, in an effort to sound authoritative in the low-lying passages, hammer out boomy chest tones which leave an inelegant impression. Again, the smaller parts are efficiently done.

The *Schicchi* is also a good performance, though it doesn't really seem to me preferable to Capitol's. Corena always makes a good effect in the title role, but on records, where sheer voice counts for a great deal, his problems in the high register and his rather approximate way of dealing with uncomfortable phrases ("*Addio Firenze*," for example, is given fairly sloppy treatment) make me rather prefer the dark baritone of Gobbi, who is no less adept at the part's buffo aspects. And if a well-sung Schicchi is of prime importance, the Cetra recording, starring Giuseppe Taddei, should be investigated; Taddei's fat, warm baritone rolls out beautifully, and his portrayal is pointed if not quite as convincing as either Corena's or Gobbi's during the Schicchi-as-Donati business. As Rinuccio, Lazzari reveals a thin lyric tenor which hardly sounds any larger or juicier than, say, Piero de Palma's, though the recording's "natural" perspective may be partly at fault. He negotiates his aria intelligently, but the slimness of his equipment lets the role down and makes Carlo del Monte's performance for Capitol preferable. All in all, I think I prefer the Capitol version, which also features a Lauretta from Victoria de los Angeles that is rather more incisively done than Tebaldi's; the Capitol supporting cast is as strong as London's, and the sound as good.

But for an all-in-one packaged *Trittico*, London's new set is obviously the answer. One warning: the *Schicchi* libretto supplied with the advance pressings is hopelessly garbled, though this may have been corrected by now. C.L.O.

PURCELL: *Dido and Aeneas*

Soloists; English Chamber Orchestra, Anthony Lewis, cond.

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

ROCHBERG: *Symphony No. 2*
†Barati: *Chamber Concerto*

New York Philharmonic, Werner Torkanowsky, cond. (in the Rochberg); Members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (in the Barati).
• COLUMBIA ML 5779. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6379. SD. $5.98.

These are two important American works which, thanks to the good offices and finances of the Naumburg Foundation, have made their way onto discs relatively early in their careers.

At forty-four, George Rochberg can hardly be called a young composer, but his talents and accomplishments are just now earning him recognition. His Second Symphony is a work of classical symphonic scope and of Schoenbergian intensity and vision. The derivation from Schoenberg is obvious, since Rochberg uses a big post-romantic orchestra with plenty of resonant doubling and a four-movement, partly traditional symphonic pattern filled with the sort of expressive, tense twelve-tone writing that is clearly influenced by the Viennese composer. The twelve-tone material is employed thematically to build classical forms in such a way that everything is superbly integrated and cross-referenced. Every single note is in some sense thematic and essential, but each also plays a role as part of a larger line and shape.

Merely to chart the music's ancestry and its technical achievement is not enough. The work has also an underlying originality and an expressive power and poetry that are remarkable. As in any successful work of art, the shape of the piece and its expressive content are really one and the same; and the relationship of the forms to classical tradition is less important than their internal growth and logic. The impressive finale actually

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THE IMPORTS

ANYONE seeking revealing performances of the two Shostakovich piano concertos should hear Pathé-Marconi FCX 769, with the composer as soloist and the French National Radio Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. In the Concerto No. 1, Op. 35 (1933), this disc far outdistances the Eugene List-Westminster version, curiously the only one remaining in the domestic catalogue. Playing with directness and his usual bright, percussive touch, Shostakovich makes the piece elegiac and satirical where other pianists have given the impression of sentimentality and vulgarity. All the performers exhibit real zest, especially trumpeter Ludovic Vaillant, who delivers his famous solo with superb impudence. For the tuneful, even simpler Concerto No. 2, Op. 102, which Shostakovich wrote for his pianist-son Maxim in 1957, there is more competition—from List again, Leonard Bernstein (Columbia), the Czech Mikhail Voskresensky (Artia), and Shostakovich himself on the MK label. List is rather prosaic, Bernstein misses the mark with too smart a display of virtuosity and a corny slow movement, and Voskresensky is too timid. Shostakovich plays in an appealingly calm and virile way in both recordings, but the new Pathé sounds much better. As a bonus the disc contains three *Danses fantastiques*, Op. 5 (1922), the composer's first published works. These short pieces, probably influenced by Prokofiev, have the inventive, darting quality of their period. Obviously, Shostakovich enjoys playing the piano as much as he does writing for it, and by good fortune the recording itself (despite a certain diffuseness of string tone in Op. 35) serves him better than anything he has been given previously.

For the past decade the Spanish Institute of Musicology has been sorting and publishing the complete works of Cristobal de Morales (c. 1500–1553), who ranks with his pupil Victoria as the greatest composer of Spanish-Roman sacred polyphony. Some even consider Morales the link between Josquin des Prez and Palestrina, and his Masses, which were the first to be published in the New World, had a strong influence on Mexican and other Latin-American music. Research on Victoria was begun long ago, and half a dozen recordings of his works are listed in the Schwann catalogue. It is now high time for Morales to come to life, and happily his first representation on records sets a very high standard indeed. Harmonia Mundi has issued a twelve-inch disc containing the *Missa Quaeramus cum pastoribus* plus a related motet (HM 30621) and a ten-inch disc with six motets (HM 25160), all performed by the Choir of the Benedictine

Sovfoto

Shostakovich, at a Leningrad concert.

Abbey in Montserrat in Spain. Morales' dualism—the lyricism and clear contrapuntal writing characteristic of the European, with the mystical and sometimes dramatic expressiveness seemingly inherent in the Spaniard—is set forth with great skill. The recording itself has the correct, unobtrusive resonance needed for this *a cappella* music, and the notes—in French, German, and English—are fine as an introduction to the composer's work.

AN OPERATIC RARITY has just reached us—Cetra's single disc of excerpts from Mascagni's three-act *Isabeau* (LPC 55034). *Isabeau*, the composer's ninth frantic effort to duplicate the success of *Cavalleria rusticana*, had a dual Italian premiere in 1912, with Mascagni conducting in Venice and Tullio Serafin in Milan. A momentary triumph, it soon faded into neglect. Serafin remembered, however, and last year remounted the opera for its fiftieth anniversary, at the San Remo Festival, after which "chosen pages" were recorded. *Isabeau*'s librettist was Luigi Illica, Puccini's chief collaborator. Puccini had, in fact, turned this one down, but to Mascagni the archaic tale and lofty sentiments of *Isabeau* seemed to promise another *Pelléas et Mélisande*. King Raimondo, convinced that his daughter's simple purity stems from overweening pride, sends her naked on horseback through the streets of the town. The sympathetic townsfolk shutter their windows, but a young falconer unwittingly comes upon Isabeau. Condemned, he serenely thinks what he saw worth dying for. Isabeau offers to marry him, and both are killed. I don't know how effective *Isabeau* is as a full-length opera, but the excerpts show respect for the poetic text together with Mascagni's customary vocal grandiloquence and a tempering of the forceful orchestral strokes from *Cavalleria* by a Puccinian undertow of character motifs and development. There is a notable refinement here, but the important factors are the melodies. Soprano Marcella Pobbe and tenor Pier Miranda Ferraro make the most of the lovers' roles, while Rinaldo Rola is properly stern as the King. Serafin, of course, is the orchestra's guarantee, and the sonics, though not really spacious, are strong and clean. The package has voluminous notes and a synopsis, but no libretto.

The 1889 edition of *Grove's Dictionary* says of Telemann that he "was overaddicted to realism; this concentrates the attention on mere externals and is opposed to all depth of expression and consequently to true art." Enough of Telemann's enormous output has now come to light to refute the canard that he was a dulling influence on eighteenth-century church music, and in secular music that very "realism"—a programmatic instrumental style derived from the Italians and popular Hungarian texts—produced dozens of pleasantly humorous and spirited works. A recording of two little secular cantatas and seven songs has just been released by Electrola (E 70488) with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as soloist. On one side we find the previously unrecorded *Trauermusik eines Kunsterfahrenen Canarienvogels* ("Funeral Music for a Traveling-Artist Canary"), with the baritone bemoaning his lost treasure and cursing the cat who ate it. Fischer-Dieskau is positively Papageno-ish, a comic singer utilizing baroque ornamentation in a lusty declamatory style, while the accompanying violin, viola, oboe, and continuo delicately chatter and lament *à la* Vivaldi. The other cantata and the songs deal charmingly with such universals as hope, deceit, wine, and boudoirs. There may be no "depth of expression" here, but what lovely artistry! The recording is perfectly lucid, and complete German texts are provided.

With the three latest releases in its "Music in Old Cities and Royal Courts" series, Odeon continues to demonstrate that lively formats, enthusiastic performances, and tastefully illustrated annotations can go hand in hand with authentic scholarship. In "Munich" (C 91108) we encounter the sixteenth-century court orchestra and singers under the influence of Orlando di Lasso and such composers as Tilman Susato, Matthia Ferrabosco, Jacob Regnart, Andrea Gabrieli and his nephew Giovanni. The disc representing seventeenth-century Leipzig (C 91111) includes six Arias by Adam Krieger and instrumental works by Johann Christoph Pezel, Johann Rosenmüller, and Johann Kuhnau. Half of the record given over to Dresden (C 91105) is devoted to the eighteenth-century composer Johann Adolf Hasse, with excerpts from the famous opera *Arminio* conducted by Wilhelm Brückner-Rüggeberg and the Flute Concerto in G played beautifully by Heinz Zoller with Hans von Benda conducting the Berlin Philharmonic. On the other side we find a Violin Concerto in G minor by Vivaldi and music by Johann Georg Pisendel, Sylvius Leopold Weiss, and Johann David Heinichen. GENE BRUCK

RECORDS IN REVIEW

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has no real classical precedents at all. Its relentless contrapuntal tread, sharply punctuated by thematic outbursts, contains a germinal form of all the themes of the work: it gathers up and, finally, disperses the ideas and energies of the entire composition in a remarkable and original kind of summation statement. It is this kind of musical thought that, with the clearest and most expressive means, establishes every detail meaningfully in place and yet also carries the work along from its hammer-blow opening right through to a poetic close.

The performance under Torkanowsky is impressive: not trim in every detail, but full of shape and thrust. The sound is full and dark but always clear.

George Barati is the forty-nine-year-old conductor of the Honolulu Symphony and a relatively rare latter-day example of a musician who combines conducting with composition. Most important, he is extremely capable in both areas. His attractive, hard-driving Chamber Concerto is a loose, agile work, also of a dark, chromatic coloring, but freer and more limber than the Rochberg in its shape and content. Its fluid lines, constantly on the move, are set into a general conception of dramatic intensity that prevails even in the scherzo. The four-movement outline would seem to be traditional, but actually the internal shape of each movement—with the many changes of tempo and character—grows out of the ideas themselves rather than is imposed from the outside. In spite of the contrasts, all the movements are closely bound up together, both in overall character and in musical idea—the themes are related not so much as brothers and sisters but rather as cousins. I have one quarrel with the scoring—an overuse of a certain bass sonority produced by doubling the bassoon with the lower strings. But, in general, the instrumental writing is excellent—neatly articulated, full of character, and corresponding perfectly to the dissonant, nervous edge of the musical ideas.

The performance is good and so is the recording. My copy of the stereo version had extremely noisy surfaces, apparently due to a bad pressing. E.S.

SAINT-SAENS: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 4, in C minor, Op. 44*

†Fauré: *Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19; Preludes, Op. 103: No. 1, in D flat; No. 3, in G minor; No. 5, in D minor*

Robert Casadesus, piano; New York Philharmonic. Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• COLUMBIA ML 5777. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6377. SD. $5.98.

Some extremely coarse and heavy-handed orchestral work—noisy, murky, and poorly controlled—spoils what could have been a very good record indeed. Bernstein confuses the lyric warmth inherent in both of these scores with gushing sentimentality. The Johanessen and Darré editions of the Concerto (not to mention the deleted Casadesus-Rodzinski collaboration) leave the newcomer far in the rear. The increased reverberation of the stereo version only belabors the brassiness and sagging bulkiness of the Philharmonic's tone.

Freed from the incubus of the collaborating forces, M. Casadesus is able to make his playing audible without resorting to strong-arm tactics. His readings of the three Fauré Preludes is lucid, tastefully restrained, and altogether winning. H.G.

SCHUBERT: *Moments musicaux, Op. 94; Drei Klavierstücke, Op. posth.*

Alfred Brendel, piano.
• Vox PL 12140. LP. $4.98.

Brendel's second disc devoted to Schubert resembles the first in that the performances are virile and knowing, but far surpasses it in terms of engineering expertise. This, in fact, is probably the best-sounding piano reproduction in the entire Vox catalogue, so mellow and realistic are its tones.

Brendel's way with this music is rugged and heroic rather than intimate. In the popular *Moments musicaux* he is much more interested in suggesting formal balance, cohesive tension, and rhythmic surge than he is in producing smoothly rippling pianistic statements. Poetic introspection, however, is by no means missing—though some interpreters have emphasized this quality more strongly than Brendel does here. His version is somewhat reminiscent of Serkin's, yet less nervous- and tortured-sounding than that of the more famous older pianist (whose Columbia edition strikes me as being too forced and contrived to do justice to these miniatures). Brendel's readings, on the whole, are the equal of any currently available on microgroove.

The longer, more complex posthumous Impromptus can better sustain all the insistent energy that Brendel unleashes. Here his taut, well-regulated technique and unfaltering cohesion are precisely to the point. In fact, I cannot remember hearing these pieces played with better organization and more purposefulness than they are here, and it is this side of the record which places it unquestionably among the best to come my way in many a month. H.G.

SCHUBERT: *Piano Works*

Sonata for Piano, in C ("Unfinished"); Allegretto in C minor; Ländler (4); Moment musical, in F minor, Op. 94, No. 3.

Sviatoslav Richter, piano.
• MONITOR MC 2057. LP. $4.98.
• • MONITOR SMC 2057. SD. $5.98.

Richter is unquestionably a great pianist, but he is at times a most perplexing and exasperating one as well. He has on a number of occasions (too many for an artist of his caliber) demonstrated that his sense of form is extremely fallible. On this disc he furnishes one more such demonstration—and does a few other things that are downright maddening.

The problems begin immediately with the opening movement of the C major Sonata. Schubert wrote "moderato" as the tempo marking for this movement. Now this can be taken to mean "not too slow"; or it can be understood as "not too fast." Under no circumstances, however, could it be reasoned that Schubert meant to sanction the crawling deliberation which Richter inflicts on us here; the music simply disintegrates.

Furthermore, Richter almost refuses to let the piece end. He is apparently out to prove that Schubert's much publicized "lengths" are interminable as well

as "heavenly"! For one thing, he takes the repeat of the exposition in the first movement (an unheard-of thing to do in a sonata as long and loosely constructed as this) and then fights the inevitable when he *does* reach the coda by grotesquely retarding the final cadences. His ending here is a positive nag: the musical portrayal of a well-meaning but overly talkative fellow who keeps prattling and pumping your hand compulsively, never once listening when you tell him that you are late for an appointment.

Richter further unsettles the unity of the sonata by adopting a breakneck pace for the fourth movement that is totally incongruous with the deliberate (to say the least) speeds of the other three.

Then, there is the question of just how much of this incomplete work should be played. The most obvious solution is to perform only the two long movements that the composer finished. They make a unit as balanced as the B minor Symphony. Serkin follows this policy in his recording of the work, and it seems most valid. Wührer, on the other hand, utilizes a completion job by Ernst Křenek, and this too is certainly feasible. Richter's solution is far more questionable. In the third movement Scherzo (in which only a few bars of *da capo* are missing) he plays up to the point where the composer broke off, which gives him a suitable "first ending" leading back to the repeat. The final two times around he omits five and one-half bars and thus provides a respectable, if somewhat curtailed, conclusion. In the finale, however, the Soviet pianist abruptly stops dead in his tracks when he reaches the place where Schubert left off, and the effect is both violent and inartistic.

There are, almost needless to say, many wonderful details in all of these performances. The shortcomings of Richter's handling of the sonata are of such serious consequence, however, that I cannot, in all honesty, recommend this disc.

The sound is a bit tubby, but otherwise clean and acceptable. H.G.

SCHUMANN: *Arabesque, Op. 18; Fantasiestücke, Op. 12; Traumeswirren: Presto passionato, Op. 22; Toccata, Op. 7*—See Liszt: *Sonata for Piano, in B minor.*

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Quartets for Strings: No. 4, Op. 83; No. 8*

Borodin String Quartet.
• MERCURY MG 50309. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90309. SD. $5.98.

This disc is another product of Mercury's recording expedition to the U.S.S.R., a country whose lively tradition of chamber music has been maintained in Soviet musical life.

To me, Shostakovich has always seemed to be out of his depth in chamber music (although he has dutifully written a good deal of it). Most of the earlier quartets—including the Fourth—lack the colorful, dramatic force and scope that has distinguished Shostakovich the symphonist. Apparently, in his attempt to find a language that is both personal and widely accessible, he has thinned out the medium and the style to the vanishing point. In the Fourth Quartet, for example, one senses the intention to write a kind of "pastorale" piece, an attempt to simplify and popularize a type of music normally considered abstract and abstruse. One misses

the interior, contrapuntal developmental style that constitutes the genius of the medium itself. There is little variety in the square rhythms, phrases, and tempos. The string writing itself is monotonous and unimaginative with one kind of texture and phrasing—middle-register legato playing—prevailing to an excessive degree. The harmonic and melodic range is limited, and the ideas and forms are primitive.

Shostakovich does far better in the Eighth Quartet. Beneath the external simplicity—and, in a way, growing out of it—is a good deal more internal thought. The work takes its basic shape from a motto theme made up of four notes that derive from a notation pun on the composer's name. The theme permeates the work as a kind of ostinato subject, and it gives the five connected movements the character of a single-movement chaconne in five sections. The basic method is surprisingly close to serial technique in certain ways. At any rate, it induces a sense of organic unity that can absorb even a quote from the composer's First Symphony and a few references to old revolutionary songs. Since the work also makes more imaginative use of string textures and articulations, it communicates something substantial in the way of lively and poetic musical expression.

The Borodin String Quartet is a leading Russian ensemble of exceptional musicality. They perform these works with an appropriate warm, lyric, legato style. The recordings are close and realistic in both monophonic and stereo versions. E.S.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Symphony No. 5, in D, Op. 47*

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl, cond.
• PARLIAMENT PLP 168. LP. $1.98.
• • PARLIAMENT PLPS 168. SD. $2.98.

In certain ways the Czech Philharmonic's performance of this Shostakovich favorite is more "authentic" than some versions more familiar to Western listeners. Unhappily, however, it is also true that the performance lacks a good deal in the way of drive and internal strength.

In the Shostakovich Fifth there are serious problems of tempo: a good deal of the work should go a lot more slowly than it is normally played. The importance of moderate opening tempos in the first and last movements may be indicated by the fact that Shostakovich calculates big build-ups in speed and tension and brings back familiar material in accelerated motion. Thus, to pick an important case in point, the final peroration is not intended to provide a broadening of the main tempo but actually a slightly faster setting of the main thematic idea.

Ancerl is obviously aware of these facts, being, one supposes, close to the composer's own musical world. His tempos correspond to those intended, and many details of articulation and phrasing are also accurately reproduced and projected. The orchestra is basically a good one—although some of the wind playing is a little edgy or thin hy our refined standards—and it is well drilled in important musical matters. Yet in spite of all these virtues the results are often dull and stodgy. The slow tempo notion seems to be extended to areas where it does not belong—the scherzo lumbers along at an extraordinarily elephantine pace, for instance. In general, the performance lacks the tension expected in a Shostakovich Fifth. Although the musicians eventually work their way into a slow movement and a finale that have moments of scope and strength, they fail to achieve that kind of projection throughout.

The recorded sound is not outstanding but it is clear and communicative. E.S.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: *Die Fledermaus*

Hilde Gueden (s), Rosalinda; Wilma Lipp (s), Adele; Sieglinde Wagner (ms), Orlofsky; Anton Dermota (t), Alfred; Julius Patzak (t), Eisenstein; August Jaresch (t), Dr. Blind; Alfred Poell (b), Dr. Falke; Kurt Preger (b), Frank. Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Clemens Krauss, cond.
• RICHMOND RS 62006. Two LP. $4.98.

No dialogue here, and no libretto with the album, either—just the music. The performance, first issued by London in the early days of microgroove, remains a recommendable one, marked by the admirable lightness, clarity, and impetus of Krauss's leadership. The men of the cast—except for the exceptionally liquid-voiced Alfred of Anton Dermota—are not vocally distinguished, though the veteran Patzak remains a knowing, if rather careful Eisenstein, and Poell is a thoroughly competent Falke. Gueden and Lipp, though, are at their youthful, fresh-voiced best; both are in better form than in their later recorded re-creations of these roles.

For home listening purposes many purchasers may be quite happy to eschew the spoken passages, though to me a *Fledermaus sans* Frosch and most of the third-act nonsense with Alfred and Frank lacks an important element. But whatever one's view on the omission of dialogue, this characteristic and high-level rendering of the score must be considered very much a bargain at Richmond prices, and the performance is quite competitive with more recent, higher-priced versions. The sound is still eminently listenable. C.L.O.

STRAUSS, JOHANN II: *Die Fledermaus: Overture. Waltzes: Emperor; Vienna Blood*—See Weill: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik.*

TCHAIKOVSKY: *The Nutcracker, Op. 71*

London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond.
• MERCURY OL 2113. Two LP. $9.98.
• • MERCURY SR 29013. Two SD. $11.98.

Some years ago, Dorati made the first complete recording of *The Nutcracker*—if my memory serves correctly, the first complete recording of any Tchaikovsky ballet. It was an excellent job, but it and all other complete *Nutcrackers* pale beside this newest version. Dorati, it will be recalled, was once a ballet conductor, and he knows how to keep this music alive and on its toes. The playing is always crisp and clean, with strongly balletic rhythms; and Mercury's 35-mm film recording offers the purest, most realistic sound yet to come from that company. One can discern the resinous quality of the strings, the natural breathiness of the flutes, while in

stereo the whole orchestra has been beautifully distributed. This *Nutcracker* definitely goes at the top of the list. P.A.

TELEMANN: *Cantatas: No. 19, Gott will Mensch und sterblich werden; No. 72, Was gleicht dem Adel wahrer Christen*

Helmut Krebs, tenor; instrumentalists.
• CANTATE 642208. 10-in. LP. $4.95.

These small sacred cantatas are from a set of seventy-two, for all the Sundays and holidays of the year, published by Telemann in 1725. They were deliberately written for modest forces—one voice, an obbligato treble instrument, and continuo—so as to be usable in private devotions at home as well as in church. Each one consists of two arias separated by a secco recitative. They have a refreshing simplicity of style, though the vocal parts are by no means easy. A lively aria in No. 72 has a slightly operatic tinge. All of them clearly express the sentiments of the texts. Krebs sings with fervor, skill, and attractive tone, and he is ably supported by a violin (in No. 19), an oboe (in No. 72), and a continuo consisting of organ, cello, and bass. The German texts are supplied together with excellent English translations. Very good sound. N.B.

TELEMANN: *Suite for Flute and Strings, in A minor*—See Mozart: *Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra, in C.*

TOCH: *Five Pieces for Wind Instruments: Sonatinetta for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon*
†Cowell: *Quartet for Strings, No. 5*

Fred E. Hinger and Charles E. Owen, percussion; Philadelphia Woodwind Quartet (in the Toch), Beaux-Arts String Quartet (in the Cowell).
• COLUMBIA ML 5788. LP. $4.98.
• • COLUMBIA MS 6388. SD. $5.98.

The Toch pieces are aptly described in the jacket notes as "true divertimento music"; they are genial, tuneful, witty, and full of highly entertaining ingenuities of melody, structure, and coloristic writing. Both pieces are equally delightful, and in both the recording makes the

Beside Dorati's Nutcracker, *all pale.*

instruments walk right out of one's speaker or speakers; mono and stereo alike are excellent.

Henry Cowell's Fifth Quartet, written in 1956 but revised in 1962, is almost bewilderingly gentle, conservative, and academic for a composer of his scandalously modernist reputation. To be sure, the flight from the tone cluster has been going on in Cowell's music for a long time, but it reaches a climax of pale pinkness—if there is such a thing as a pale pink climax—in this work. There are the usual program notes about the hymn and fuguing tune; there are also some nice modal effects and some expertly managed fuguing. I suspect that at least some of the pallor is the fault of the performers. A.F.

VERDI: *Aida*

Renata Tebaldi (s), Aida; Ebe Stignani (ms), Amneris; Mario del Monaco (t), Radames; Piero de Palma (t), Messenger; Aldo Protti (b), Amonasro; Dario Caselli (bs), Ramfis; Fernando Corena (bs), the King. Chorus and Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome), Alberto Erede, cond.
• RICHMOND RS 63002. Three LP. $7.47.

A re-release of a London recording dating from the early Fifties, this low-priced album is a sensible enough buy, but I still cannot recommend it except for those especially interested in a version featuring the young Tebaldi or the old Stignani. The restoration of this performance reminds us of what Tebaldi sounded like shortly after she first came to international attention: the voice was lighter and a bit freer than it is now, quite round and lacking in that quality which can be regarded as a virtue (when it's known as "bite") or as a defect (when it's known as "edginess"). Her performance doesn't have the passionate incandescence of the role's greatest interpreters, but from a purely vocal standpoint it is hard to fault. Stignani sounds remarkably fine in the upper register, and rather frightfully frayed in the lower; naturally, she brings a good deal of authority to her work.

The male side of the cast is, on the whole, inadequate. Del Monaco, his tenor sounding more darkly burnished and more exciting on top than recently, gets off a few thrilling high A's and B flats, but contributes so much graceless ranting ("*Celeste Aida*," the Nile Scene duet, the final scene) as to destroy most of the role's really compelling passages. Protti and Caselli both sound workaday and muffled, and Erede's leadership is erratic. The sound is more than acceptable, though soloists are placed very close-to by today's standards. In general, then, this is a good value at the price; but for a cornerstone work such as *Aida* the average collector is well advised to spend the few extra dollars for a more striking performance and for such packaging refinements as a libretto and background notes. C.L.O.

VIVALDI: *Concertos for Violin and Strings: in A, P. 234; in C minor, P. 419; in C, P. 88; in A, P. 236*

Nathan Milstein, violin; harpsichord; string orchestra.
• ANGEL 36001. LP. $4.98.
• • ANGEL S 36001. SD. $5.98.

The small group of celebrated violin

virtuosos who have recorded concertos by Vivaldi—a group that has hitherto included Stern, Oistrakh, and Elman—now receives a strong reinforcement. Of the four works Milstein has chosen, two (P. 234 and 88) seem not to be otherwise available, and the other two can hardly be said to be overrecorded. The C major Concerto, with its cheerful, energetic first movement and melodious siciliano, is an especially attractive addition to the catalogue. It is not often that we get such lovely and fine-spun solo playing in Vivaldi, and Milstein's direction of his unnamed little ensemble is quite satisfactory. Aside from the fact that the harpsichord is almost inaudible in many solo violin passages, the sound is excellent. N.B.

WAGNER: *Tannhäuser: Overture and Bacchanale. Rienzi: Overture. Der fliegende Holländer: Overture*

Chorus from the Society of the Friends of Music; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.
• LONDON CM 9314. LP. $4.98.
•• LONDON CS 6245. SD. $5.98.

What London calls the "original Paris version" of the *Tannhäuser* music turns out to be the overture in what we normally call the Dresden version, followed by the Bacchanale, the latter thereby lacking a proper beginning. The junction of the two in the familiar concert (and operatic) text came after the disastrous Paris production of the opera, but surely such a fusion of these elements must have been in Wagner's mind when the Bacchanale was composed. We do him no service to revert to conditions imposed by the French theatre. There is no disputing the vigor of the present performances, however. Indeed, the Bacchanale gets started at such a clip that one wonders how the pace can possibly be maintained. Later the orgying subsides, and one is given a chance to appreciate the excellence of the chorus.

The two overtures on the second side of the disc receive highly charged statements and bright recorded sound, a combination many will find exciting. Comparing them with Klemperer's versions, I was more impressed by the firm low frequency registration of the latter's orchestra and the skill with which that conductor broadens the phrases and achieves an even greater cumulative force. R.C.M.

WEILL: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*
†Klemperer: *Merry Waltz*
†Strauss, Johann II: *Die Fledermaus: Overture. Waltzes: Emperor; Vienna Blood.*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond.
• ANGEL 35927. LP. $4.98.
•• ANGEL S 35927. SD. $5.98.

The most newsworthy item here is the *Merry Waltz* of Mr. Klemperer, since it marks that great conductor's debut on records as a composer. Taken from an opera, the piece is one of those dance-in-a-sanitarium things much admired by German playwrights and choreographers in the expressionist heyday. Alban Berg might have brought it off with lasting vitality, but there is nothing more embarrassingly awful than expressionism that has passed its time. There is no better example of this truth in the entire literature than the unfortunate *Merry Waltz*.

The recording throughout is magnificent, but the performance of the Weill is pedantic and heavy-handed, and of the Strauss not much better. A.F.

WYNER: *Concert Duo for Violin and Piano*—See Berger: *Quartet for Strings.*

RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

LEONARD BERNSTEIN: *"The Sound of Philharmonic Hall"*

LEONARD BERNSTEIN: *"First Performance—Philharmonic Hall"*

New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 73.

JUSSI BJOERLING: *Recital*

Offenbach: *La belle Hélène: Au mont Ida.* J. Strauss II: *Zigeunerbaron: Wer uns getraut.* Lehár: *Land des Lächelns: Von Apfelbluten einen Kranz; Dein ist mein ganzes Herz.* Georg: *Sjung din hela Langtan ut.* Berggren: *Var det en drom.* Nyblom: *Brinnande gula flod.* Millöcker: *Bettelstudent: Ich setz den Fall; Ich hab' kein Geld.* Kálmán: *Jag drommen varje natt om dig.* Herbert: *Naughty Marietta: Ah, Sweet Mystery.* Sylvain: *Tva Man om en anka.* Jurmann: *Ninon.* Gyldmark: *Gitarren klingar.* Ralf: *Sing Me to Sleep.* Traditional: *Otchi tcherna; Psalm No. 4.*

Hjördis Schymberg, soprano (in the Strauss and Millöcker); Olle and Gosta Björling, boy sopranos (in the Psalm); Jussi Björling, tenor; Orchestra.
• Rococo 5201. LP. $4.95.

To complement its own disc of early Björling opera recordings sung in Swedish (Rococo 31), as well as the already extensive reissuing of later Björling recordings on Capitol and Victor, Rococo here presents a collection of *very* early Björling. The album includes many of the popular songs and operetta selections which have become collectors' items in their 78-rpm versions, and even one performance by Björling as a boy soprano, with his brothers Gosta and Olle—sturdy, clear little voices.

The music is nearly all of supreme corniness. The singing is nearly all absolutely astonishing—smooth, ringing, and rich. Thrillingly brilliant high B naturals and Cs pop out of nearly every selection, always mated with the most ravishing legato. Beautiful decrescendos are effected just for the fun of it. And of course everything is invested with that wonderful clarity and that unique, silvery timbre that was never absent from Björling's singing. Heaven knows the musical rewards here are slim, but that hardly matters in the face of this sort of singing. No one who cherishes the sound of a great tenor voice masterfully handled will want to miss this record. C.L.O.

WILLI BOSKOVSKY: *"Cream Puffs aus Wien"*

Boskovsky Ensemble, Willi Boskovsky, cond.
• VANGUARD VRS 1097. LP. $4.98.
• • VANGUARD VSD 2129. SD. $5.95.

Like the "Bonbons" of 1961 and "Lollipops" of 1962, these 1963 "Cream Puffs" are even more than tonal goodies which, once tasted, arouse insatiable appetite. They are passports to the Vienna of one's memories or dreams, revitalizations of a kind of home music making that the phonograph once may have helped to destroy but which it now nostalgically memorializes. The latest examples include, as before, several original small-ensemble versions of works best known in expanded orchestral scorings: six of Beethoven's 12 *Contretänze*, Grove's 141, for string and wind octet; Josef Strauss's *Marien-Klänge* Waltz, Op. 214 (octet); and Johann Strauss I's *Bajaderen* Waltz, Op. 53, for three violins and bass. Again too there are seldom played works by such well-known composers as Schubert (*Grätzer* Galop), Johann Strauss II (*Scherz* Polka, Op. 72), and Lanner (two Mazurkas; *Malapou* Galop, Op. 148; and *Hans Jörgel* Polka, Op. 194), all for octet. And again there are rare rediscoveries: Hieronymus Payer's *Galanterie* Waltz for two violins, viola, and bass; and a batch of little dances by Anon., Vincenz Stelzmüller, and Franz Gruber (who did so write something besides *Stille Nacht*!) played by only two violins to Karl Scheit's guitar accompaniment.

This year the sonic format seems somewhat bolder than before: a shade more closely miked, perhaps, or at least embodying an enlarged acoustical ambience, but there is no significant loss of chamber intimacy and the recording is even more lucid if perhaps not quite as luminous. Boskovsky and his Vienna Philharmonic first-desk men play, as always, as if for their own relish rather than out of professional necessity, and no one who cherishes the earlier releases in this series will need to be reassured that the music itself exudes a charm and fragrance unique in the whole recorded repertory. R.D.D.

GRACE BUMBRY: *Song Recital*

Schubert: *An die Musik; Die junge Nonne; Litanei; Rastlose Liebe; Der Doppelgänger.* Brahms: *Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht; Wie Melodien zieht es mir; Sapphische Ode; Vergebliches Ständchen.* Liszt: *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein.* Wolf: *Gesang Weylas; Schlafendes Jesuskind; Anakreons Grab; Verborgenheit.* Strauss, R.: *Zueignung; Die Georgine; Sehnsucht; Ständchen.*

Grace Bumbry, mezzo; Erik Werba, piano.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18635. LP. $5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138635. SD. $6.98.

GRACE BUMBRY: *Opera Arias*

Gluck: *Orfeo ed Euridice: Che farò senza Euridice; Che puro ciel.* Verdi: *Don Carlos: O don fatale. Un Ballo in maschera: Re dell' abisso affrettati.* Mascagni: *Cavalleria rusticana: Voi lo sapete.* Bizet: *Carmen: L'Amour est un oiseau rebelle; Près des ramparts de Seville; En vain pour éviter.* Gounod: *Sappho: O ma lyre immortelle.* Saint-Saëns: *Samson et Dalila: Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix.* Tchaikovsky: *Jeanne d'Arc: Oui, Dieu le veut! Adieu, forêts.*

Grace Bumbry, mezzo; Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, Janos Kulka, cond.
• DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON LPM 18826. LP. $5.98.
• • DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON SLPM 138826. SD. $6.98.

These records offer our first extended look at the young American mezzo who won fame as Bayreuth's "Black Venus," and who made her recording debut as the mezzo on the London *Messiah*. Miss Bumbry is indeed a very gifted and promising singer, but at present that is about all, and one wonders why—apart from the usual commercial considerations—she must be pushed forward with two solo recitals of oft-recorded material at this stage of her career.

Her voice is round and full, and she seems to be a conscientious musician and better than average linguist. But as yet she does not have anything individual to bring either to the songs or to the arias: everything is quite matter-of-fact, uninformed with any special musical or interpretative point of view. One might think that the arias would suffer less from these limitations than the songs, but that is not the case. For one thing, Miss Bumbry's upper tones are not yet in focus (and may never be, unless she pulls back from some of the more challenging roles for a while); for another, she has some very high-powered competition on nearly all these pieces (Callas, Resnik, Gorr, to name a few). The songs are done well, so far as good vocalization, correct enunciation, and a general grasp of mood are concerned. In two or three of them (*Doppelgänger; Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht; Zueignung*) we hear the beginning of what might be an individual and striking concept, but one that needs time to mature. And again, the competition is formidable.

In short, we hear in these sets an attractive singer, presently capable of solid, conventional performances, and with a promise of much more. But in such familiar repertory, it takes more than these qualities to make a disc recommendable. Both of these records have dry, clear sound, rather deficient in bass, and efficient, somewhat cold support from the accompanying artists. Review copies of both suffered from scratched surfaces on a couple of selections. C.L.O.

SEVERINO GAZZELLONI: *Flute Recital*

Evangelisti: *Proporzioni.* Castiglioni: *Gymel.* Berio: *Sequenza.* Messiaen: *Merles noirs.* Matsudaira: *Somaksah.* Maderna: *Honeyreves.*

Severino Gazzelloni, flute; Aloys Kontarsky, piano (in the Castiglioni, Messiaen, and Maderna).
• TIME 58008. LP. $4.98.
• • TIME S/8008. SD. $5.98.

Time has previously issued albums entitled "Guitars in Italy" and "Accordion in Italy." This record might be called "Avant-garde Flute in Italy." Gazzelloni is to avant-garde flute music as Joachim was to the late-romantic violin literature. Some of the most attractive works of the European avant-garde have been written for him; and since the new *Gebrauchsmusik* is generally geared to the talents of a specific virtuoso performer, Gazzelloni can be said to make substantial con-

tributions to the success of each individual work.

To get the full effect, one should really see him in action. Each piece is virtually choreographed, and one gets a vivid visual impression of the shape of phrases, of accents, of rhythmic contours, of difficulties overcome and virtuosity triumphant. This visual spectacle helps to overcome the inherently anti-virtuoso, anti-avant-garde characteristics of an instrument with limited range of pitches, dynamics, and special effects. The flute can produce the violent contrasts, big cluster sounds, wild jagged lines, and percussive effects of avant-garde music only in a very small way; even the intentional discontinuity and disassociation of certain kinds of new music are barely communicable on an instrument whose essential sonorous characteristics are uniformity and purity.

In live performance, Gazzelloni manages, by means of his stage manner and musical approach, to convince you that the distance between his softest and loudest note is somewhat greater than the space between the merest sob whisper and the loudest orchestral-percussion tutti in the world. In the recording, this is achieved by the simple techniques of miking. The results are impressive although all of the dynamic relationships are magnified out of proportion. The over-all effect is actually distorting: we get a bloated, monster flute, the size of a double-bass tuba, stretching and wriggling across our living room, emitting fiery blasts of musical flames and scorching air. This is particularly true in the solo flute music but also in the flute and piano recording, which greatly favors the flute. The dry, close sound is not especially favorable to the piano tone and, in spite of clarity, is actually short on certain upper partials which are, one would think, extremely important in a music that exploits the cluster and clatter of all manner of extreme piano sound.

Nevertheless, this is a remarkable disc, and it is certainly an outstanding triumph for Gazzelloni. He swoops from the bottom to the top of the range and then stands on tiptoe to reach beyond that. He flutters, whistles, hoots, hisses, buzzes, taps the keys, plays double-stops (yes, double-stops on the flute), smashes out accents, and then breathes a whisper and a sigh; he gives us trills and tremolos, sustains an endless breath, and then quadruple-tongues at enormous speeds. In short, he gets a small piece of metal to speak with just about every conceivable kind of audible accent and phrase. Together with Kontarsky, who must clatter down the piano and bang out clusters, as well as stop, strum, smash, and plunk the insides of the instrument, Gazzelloni produces and reproduces a fantasy world of sound that shows off the young composers at their most imaginative.

The four Italian works on the record were all written for Gazzelloni. The best of these is the Luciano Berio *Sequenza*, a solo piece which pulls together a whole gamut of ordinary and extraordinary flute playing. The work manages to suggest, in a way, an *Ur*-text of all the possible flute music that can or could be—and yet it all coheres. Gazzelloni plays it that way too—as if it were the last possible flute music in the world.

Niccolò Castiglioni's contribution is impressive and striking. Unlike many recent works, it has a great deal of direction and motion. As the end approaches, one feels a sense of increased tension and the close is a genuine point of arrival whose necessity one then sees was predicated by the opening. The effect of all this is striking.

Olivier Messiaen is very much a spiritual father of the recent avant-garde. In spite of the fact that his colorful work is the most conventional on the disc—in the sense of its being organized with thematic pitch material—one can easily hear its relationship to the music of his younger colleagues. The work is one of the composer's bird pieces, based on actual bird calls but stylized, refined, and turned into a special kind of Messiaen poetry. The literalness of the idea of a flute's playing bird music is a little disturbing, but in a way all of the music on this record is bird music—least of all, perhaps, the Messiaen.

The other three works are of less interest. Yoritsune Matsudaira's piece is in what one might call a conventional avant-garde style, pretty in a wandering, musing way but not very engaging. The works of Franco Evangelisti and Bruno Maderna share an emphasis on the special sounds of click, flutter, and glissando. The pitches involved are mostly incidental; oddly enough, they fall out in quite tonal patterns, a happenstance that actually gives the pitch elements more prominence than they were probably meant to have. The Maderna is attractive as bits of sound, but one does not have the impression that they add up to a piece. Nor is the case any different in the Evangelisti, where the performer chooses the order and tempo of a group of fragments—a collection of scrap metal reassembled ad lib. by the performer.

Avant-garde music and misty prose seem to go together. David Behrman's liner notes have a certain poetical charm of their own and they do convey the author's interesting ideas and impressions about this music. But some of the descriptions of what goes on in the music do not seem to me to be accurate, and almost no concrete information is conveyed—not even a date. E.S.

HOWARD HANSON: "*Musical Diplomats U.S.A.*"

Liadov: *Baba Yaga; The Enchanted Lake; Kikimora.* Guarnieri: *Brazilian Dance.* Wayne Barlow: *The Winter's Past.* Kennan: *Night Soliloquy.* Grieg: *The Last Spring.* Sousa: *The Stars and Stripes Forever.*

Eastman Philharmonia, Howard Hanson, cond.
• MERCURY MG 50299. LP. $4.98.
• • MERCURY SR 90299. SD. $5.98.

Next month it will be just a year since the eighty-seven members of the Eastman Philharmonia returned from their three-month, thirty-thousand-mile tour of Western Europe, the Near East, and the U.S.S.R. Under the direction of Howard Hanson and his associate, Frederick Fennell, these students from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, astounded audiences everywhere by the professionalism of their playing. That same professionalism is very much in evidence on this record, where everything is performed with discipline and polish.

While there have perhaps been more sensitive readings of the three supernatural Liadov tone pictures than those given them by Dr. Hanson, they are very competently done; and the string pieces by Wayne Barlow, Kent Kennan, and Grieg are presented with great finesse—it is too bad the excellent oboe and flute soloists remain anonymous. As for

Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever*, if it was played on the tour with anything like the precision and rousing brilliance we hear on this recording, it's no wonder that foreign audiences went wild. Dr. Hanson and his youthful musicians also prove, by the way, that this march can sound just as stirring in the orchestra as it does when played by a band.

Mercury's reproduction is generally first-rate, particularly in stereo; in mono, the heavier passages, recorded at slightly too high a level, tend to blast. P.A.

FRITZ KREISLER: *"Immortal Performances"*

Bach: *Concerto in D minor, for Two Violins and String Orchestra.* Bizet-Kreisler: *L'Arlesienne: Intermezzo.* Corelli-Kreisler: *Sanctissima.* Beethoven: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 8, in G, Op. 30, No. 3.* Godard: *Lullaby.* Grieg: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in C minor, Op. 45.* Nevin: *Mighty Lak' a Rose.* Rachmaninoff: *O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair; When Night Descends.* Schubert: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A, Op. 162.* Thomas: *Mignon: Connais-tu le pays?*

Geraldine Farrar, soprano; John McCormack, tenor; Fritz Kreisler, violin; Efrem Zimbalist, violin; Hugo Kreisler, cello; Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano.
• RCA VICTOR LM 6099. Two LP. $9.96.

A welcome set of reissues, although two of the real plums in the set—the Grieg and Schubert Sonatas with Rachmaninoff at the piano—have been available on microgroove and marketed separately for several years. In this latest transfer (which has, incidentally, different stamper numbers from the earlier issue) the sound has even more bite and solidity than in the previous dubbing. The Grieg, in particular, sounds astonishingly fine for a 1928 recording, and the performance remains definitive. (That of the Schubert faces several newer versions which are competitive interpretatively.)

Transferred to LP for the first time is the Kreisler-Rachmaninoff version of the Beethoven Sonata. Here the interpretation sounds very old-fashioned indeed, and it is interesting to compare this performance with the Kreisler-Franz Rupp version of 1936, made as part of the violinist's integral Beethoven series. To my ears, the more massive style of the later one is much nearer to the Beethovenian ideal, but neither Kreisler performance can touch some other interpretations (the Grumiaux-Haskil, for example) of this particularly jocular little Sonata. Nevertheless, it is good to have available this example of two such celebrated artists performing Beethoven, and the transfer has eliminated a lot of the surface noise while preserving vitality. The poor balance in the slow movement, unfortunately remains.

The two duets which Kreisler recorded with his brother Hugo in 1927—the year before the latter's death—preserve the beautifully pungent sound and synchronized flexibility of these two performers. I say "duets" advisedly, for Michael Raucheisen's piano is all but lost in the generally very acceptable reproduction.

The remaining items, all acoustical recordings, are necessarily curios. Even so, the style of the Kreisler-Zimbalist Bach Concerto comes across, and the rapturous phrasing of the performance almost manages to transcend the limitations of a string quartet accompaniment and a second movement which is cut to

ribbons. Victor has done all it could with the sound of these antiques, which, of course, is not very much. H.G.

LOTTE LEHMANN: *"A Tribute"*

Schubert: *Die junge Nonne; Doppelgänger.* Schumann: *Aufträge; Der Nussbaum.* Mendelssohn: *Venetianisches Gondollied.* Beethoven: *In questa tomba oscura; Der Kuss.* Brahms: *Ständchen; Wiegenlied.* Wolf: *Zur Ruh', zur Ruh'.* Wagner: *Schmerzen; Träume.* Strauss, R.: *Ständchen; Morgen; Zueignung.*

Lotte Lehmann, soprano; Paul Ulanowsky, piano.
• COLUMBIA ML 5778. LP. $4.98.

It has been some seventeen years since Lotte Lehmann made her final operatic appearance (as the Marschallin, of course), and a dozen since she delivered her final recital. Yet she seems almost as much a part of the current musical scene as ever; she is very active as a teacher (her master classes have attracted crowds of observers both here and abroad), and this season returned to the Metropolitan as an associate director of the *Rosenkavalier* production (one gathers that her function was largely that of a coach).

Her seventy-fifth birthday is now at hand, and to celebrate the occasion, Columbia Records has released an album of Mme. Lehmann's 1941 Lieder recordings—fifteen examples of her way with song, all accompanied by the excellent Paul Ulanowsky, and seven of them (*Aufträge, Der Nussbaum, Venetianisches Gondollied, In questa tomba oscura, Der Kuss, Zur Ruh' zur Ruh'*, and *Schmerzen*) released here for the first time. Though Angel has seen to it that the operatic side of her art is represented in that company's "Great Recordings of the Century" series, Lehmann's heritage of Lieder recordings has not been well represented since the withdrawal of the collection released under the Camden label. The new Columbia album is therefore especially welcome, the more so in view of its heretofore unreleased titles.

It is a beautiful record. The recording, naturally, seems a bit cramped by recent standards, the piano sound in particular suffering noticeably in comparison with modern efforts. (Indeed, the engineering is rather poor even by 1941 standards, though it is very possible that the microgroove transfer is responsible for some of the faintness.) The voice, however, comes through very well; and lest there be some hesitancy at purchase of a group of recordings made by a soprano already well into her fifties and growing increasingly cautious about operatic engagements, it should be stated right off that the Lehmann voice was in splendid form for these sessions—hardly less fresh or full-bodied than in her operatic records of the Thirties. There are, to sure, a few instances of flatness of pitch, but that is something that can be said of many of her earlier recordings. As for the previously unreleased selections, they do not seem to me in any way inferior to the others, and one can only guess at what prompted the company to withhold them.

I have known Lieder enthusiasts who disapproved of Lehmann's treatment of songs. For some, her strongly inflected, dramatized performances are too operatic, too flamboyant, to the point where they distort the framework of the songs. I do not see her interpretations in this light at all. That her renditions were highly personal, and hence highly romantic in the best sense, is undeniable; but why listen to singers at all if not to hear their varying apprehensions and projections of a song's spirit? In general, I feel that a woman has no business at all singing either *Doppelgänger* or *In questa tomba oscura*; yet Lehmann takes me into each of these great songs in a fashion paralleled by very few singers. If a man can sing *Die junge Nonne* or *Gretchen am Spinnrade* and make it convincing, so much the better for him; he would have to be a very great artist.

Lehmann never fails to bring something unusual to her treatment of a song. In *Träume*, for instance, she adopts a light, almost childlike tone, very different from the fairly heavy Brünnhilde sound one usually hears—an excellent example of a singer turning what would at first seem to be a limitation into the basis for a different view of a song. She captures its atmosphere of rapt longing to perfection. In Wolf's *Zur Ruh'*, the impression of a constant, concentrated building of tension is altogether unique; it is as if she did not stop singing, even during the rests. (This is something many intelligent singers strive for—the holding of a continued line of concentration, as if the singing were continuing even through the piano interludes; but very few are really able to create the effect.) Perhaps the key to all this is artistic sincerity. Strauss's *Zueignung*, for instance, is an "effective," somewhat trite song. It is often used as an encore, and can very easily emerge as a bit of sentimental humbug. In Lehmann's hands, it is a noble message of commitment—this due entirely to the artist's utter directness and lack of condescension in approaching it.

Through all these numbers, Lehmann's unique timbre—firm and compact, yet soft—is to be heard, along with her supremely communicative way with words (or even sounds—listen to her formation of the German *"ei"* diphthong, or her very feminine way of forming the *"ch"* sound). She is not afraid to whisper, to suddenly darken or lighten the tone. She is tragic in one song, coquettish in the next. She is, in sum, a lesson in communicativeness to a generation of artists of unquestioned taste, superb musicianship, ideal enunciation, and—with a few exceptions—very little natural, unspoiled temperament. C.L.O.

CHARLES MACKERRAS: *"Kaleidoscope"*

Offenbach: *Orphée aux Enfers: Overture.* Tchaikovsky: *Mazeppa: Cossack Dance.* Smetana: *The Bartered Bride: Dance of the Comedians.* Nicolai: *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor: Overture.* Brahms: *Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 20, and 21.* Weber: *Abu Hassan: Overture.*

London Symphony, Charles Mackerras, cond.
• PHILIPS PHM 500022. LP. $4.98.
• • PHILIPS PHS 900022. SD. $5.98.

The images on a kaleidoscope are noted for their color and variety; so is the music on this record. All but the Brahms *Hungarian Dances* come from the world of opera, and all are light but musically substantial. Mackerras has a way with this music. His performances are spirited, and he elicits crisp, clean sounds from the orchestra. The only unfamiliar spot occurs in the *Dance of the Comedians*,

evidently an arrangement direct from the operatic score rather than the customary concert version. Philips' engineers have produced a most faithful recording, with exceptionally naturalistic, resinous sounds from the strings. P.A.

MANHATTAN RECORDER CONSORT: *"Sheep May Safely Graze"*

Manhattan Recorder Consort, LaNoue Davenport, cond.
• CLASSIC CE 1049. LP. $4.98.

A rather mixed bag. The best music, as well as the most rewarding performances, are provided by two soprano arias with recorders from Cantatas 39 and 208 by Bach. They are nicely sung by Sheila Schonbrun. Also present are a Trio Sonata in G said to be by Corelli but not further identified; a pleasant little cantata by Pepusch called *Corydon*; some dances by Claude Gervaise, played here by recorders and krummhorns (not always in tune) accompanied by doleful tappings on a drum or by a vociferous tambourine; a lovely Fantasia by William Byrd; two unimpressive modern pieces for recorders, one by Carl Gerhardt and the other by Mr. Davenport; and an *In nomine* by Thomas Tomkins. The jacket notes have much to say about the performers and their instruments but almost nothing about the music. N.B.

TEMPLE PAINTER: *Harpsichord Recital*

Temple Painter, harpsichord.
• ARTIA ALP 198. LP. $4.98.

Mr. Painter, who teaches in Philadelphia, reveals himself here as an imaginative and proficient harpsichordist. There are moments when he lets his imagination carry him a bit far, as in the Handel Variations in B flat, where he does not hesitate to play an octave higher than the music is written, and, in the second variation, practically recomposes some measures. But most of the time his readings are not only unobjectionable but rather impressive. In addition to the Variations and Handel's Suite No. 11, there are pieces by Byrd, Chambonnières (a majestic chaconne), Scarlatti (two sonatas), Purcell, and the G major Prelude and Fugue from Book I of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Also present is a Suite by a young German composer, Harold Boatrite, which exploits nicely the properties of the fine Challis instrument used here. The Toccata in this Suite is an especially attractive display piece. Very clear sound. N.B.

JOSEPH PAYNE: *Harpsichord Suites of the Baroque*

Joseph Payne, harpsichord.
• HAYDN SOCIETY HS 9060. LP. $4.98.

One of the by-products of the postwar upsurge of interest in baroque music has been the rise of a new generation of young and gifted harpsichordists. The latest member of this group to be recorded is Joseph Payne, who was born and educated abroad but is now active in this country. He seems to be an excellent musician, with a good technique and sense of style, and has obviously profited by a couple of years of study with Wanda Landowska. His playing, in this group of pieces by various seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French and German composers, is flexible and intelligent. He conveys the improvisatory character of some of these pieces, and is capable of rhythm that is firm without becoming rigid. In Bach's *French* Suite No. 2 he has some rather unusual ideas about tempo and character, but only in the Gigue did it seem that he was overdoing things, by overloading the melody with trills and thus obscuring the line. Among the other works offered are a fine melodious Suite in E by Pachelbel and some interesting variations by Froberger. Unfortunately, much of Side 2 is marred by background hum. N.B.

VARIOUS PIANISTS AND ORCHESTRAS: *"The World's Greatest Piano Concertos"*

Beethoven: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*. Grieg: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16*. Liszt: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 1, in E flat; No. 2, in A*. Rachmaninoff: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 18*. Tchaikovsky: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in B flat minor, Op. 23*.

Wilhelm Backhaus, piano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Clemens Krauss, cond. (in the Beethoven). Peter Katin, piano; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond. (in the Grieg). Wilhelm Kempff, piano; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Anatol Fistoulari, cond. (in the Liszt). Julius Katchen, piano; New Symphony Orchestra of London, Anatol Fistoulari, cond. (in the Rachmaninoff). Peter Katin, piano; New Symphony Orchestra of London, Edric Cundel, cond. (in the Tchaikovsky).
• RICHMOND-TELEFUNKEN K5R 2. Five LP. $9.90.

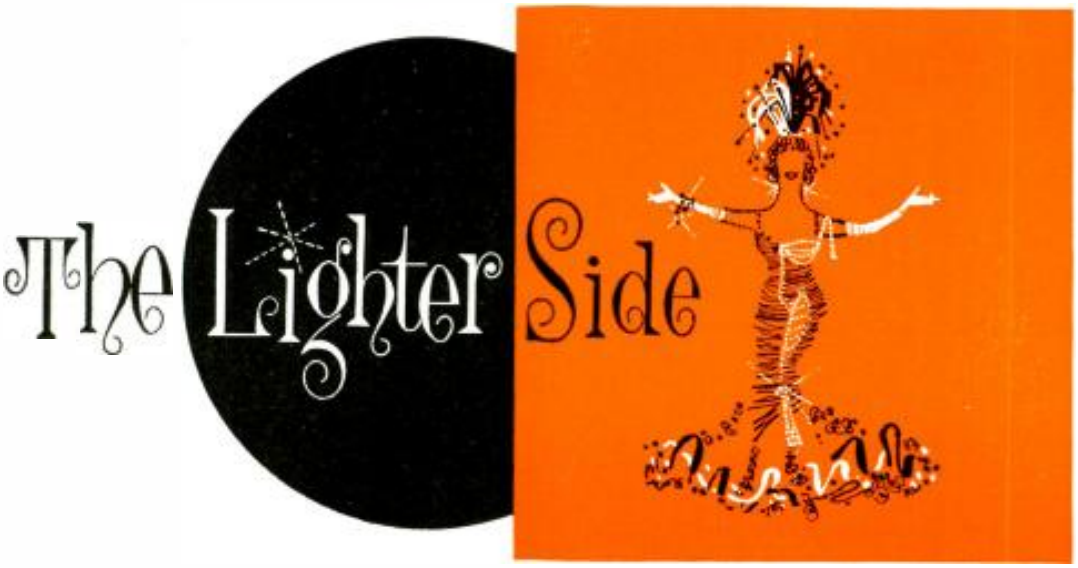
The five records comprising this set were previously released separately on the Richmond label. No extended comment is therefore necessary.

Backhaus' *Emperor*, with all its labored grandeur, is less laborious (and actually grander) than his later stereo version on the full-priced London label. The sound is unpleasantly shrill (with swishy surfaces), and the flaccid playing of the Vienna Philharmonic is more suggestive of Lear than of Napoleon. As a bargain issue, its merits and demerits put it about on a par with the Rauch and Riefling editions (which are better recorded but carry less authority as interpretations). At full price, Fleisher wins by a mile.

Kempff's interpretations of the Liszt stand up very well in terms of sound, and his *echt*-Deutsch pianism remains interesting for its heavy pedaling and spaciousness. But put on the Richter or Vásáry recordings of the E flat, and you are in a different world. Kempff, however, is acceptable for its modest price.

Katchen's Rachmaninoff is impossibly limp and affected, and no bargain at all; the Parliament Richter disc, poor sound and all, is vastly better value.

Katin's detached, classical playing is quite successful in the Grieg where it has a reticent poetry, but sounds a bit "narrow" rhythmically and lacking in ardor as applied to the Tchaikovsky. Richter's edition of the Tchaikovsky for Parliament is a more exceptional value, and the Katin Grieg, taking nearly a whole disc to itself, is really not an economy version any more than are those single-sided ones by Fleisher, Gieseking, Lipatti, Curzon, Novaes, and the latest Rubinstein which lead the field for that work. H.G.



POPULAR • THEATRE • FOLK

Osipov State Russian Folk Orchestra

On the Balalaika— Melody Near to the Heart

"Balalaika Favorites." *Osipov State Russian Folk Orchestra, Vitaly Gnutov, cond. Mercury 50310, $4.98 (LP); SR 90310, $5.98 (SD).*

SOME INSTRUMENTS are peculiarly national in character. Certainly, the balalaika—a species of guitar with a triangular body and usually three strings—seems to encompass the musical soul of Russia. Its literature runs the gamut from simple melodies first plucked out by anonymous shepherds in anonymous Ural valleys to compositions by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glière. All of it is intensely, uniquely Russian—by turns big and boisterous, lonely and bereft, never far from the heart. No better introduction to it can be found than this recording, made last year in the Soviet Union by Mercury's own sound crew with its own equipment. Here, in brilliant, shimmering stereo, banked balalaikas (backed by pipes, accordions, and horns) weave a tapestry of glittering and utterly beguiling melody.

Conductor Vitaly Gnutov begins with Budashkin's *Fantasy on Two Folk Songs*, a quietly rhapsodic composition akin to Vaughan Williams' exquisite *Fantasia on Greensleeves*. Kulikov's arrangement of another folk classic, *Under the Linden Tree*, casts a spell of soft poignance. By contrast, Tchaikovsky's sharply rhythmic *Dance of the Comedians* affords the orchestra an opportunity to display all its virtuosity and, in the closing measures, to haunt the ear with the sweet blare of ancient shepherd's horns—strange, atavistic instruments that are still made by hand in the Vladimir area of Russia. Light and shadow play through Andreyev's *Waltz of the Faun*, punctuated by low frequency tone bursts that will rattle all but the most precisely adjusted styli. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Bumblebee* has never flown with more abandon nor with happier harmonics. And Alexander Mossolov—he of the clanging dissonances of *Iron Foundry*—contributes *Evening Bells*, an evocation of dusk's pervading melancholy in some universal village that every man in every country has, at one time or another, longed to know.

It is not my intention to denigrate Soviet recording techniques, but previous releases of folk orchestras stemming from the U.S.S.R.—including the Osipov ensemble heard here—sound muffled and pallid in comparison to this disc. Indeed, few records extant will drive a high fidelity system to fuller sonic splendor. Musically, it opens a new and fascinating vista—a vista of fresh tones and timbres, of gleaming melody and exotic rhythm. This is an album worth playing again and again. O.B.B.

"Beyond the Fringe." *Original Broadway Cast Recording. Capitol W 1792, $4.98 (LP); SW 1792, $5.98 (SD).*

Britishers Moore, Miller, Cook, and Bennett.

No Chorus Girls, but Plenty of Wit

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED by four Englishmen, all still in their twenties, *Beyond the Fringe* is easily the most original revue to come to Broadway in aeons. Actually, I'm not sure that revue is quite the right word for this entertainment. It has none of the trappings usually associated with such ventures: no chorus girls, no spectacular sets or costumes, no gaudy production numbers, not even an orchestra. It settles instead for a single austere stage set resembling the entrance hall of some Norman castle, a grand piano, a few props, and a quartet of extremely versatile and talented performers.

These Oxbridgians (two went to Cambridge, two to Oxford) are convulsing audiences nightly with a series of witty, satiric, penetrating, and hilarious sketches and monologues. Most of their barbs are hurled at The Establishment as represented by Prime Minister Macmillan, Lord Beaverbrook, the BBC, and the Church of England, though sometimes they prefer to attack the absurdities of TV cigarette advertisements, male singers of art songs, or the frustrations of a pianist unable to find an ending for his Beethoven-ish arrangement of *Colonel Bogey*. In the theatre, they present twenty-three numbers, of which only ten have been transferred to disc by Capitol. Some of these are not the brightest gems of the evening, and a number of them do not fare very well on records.

Take a Pew. Alan Bennett's rambling and almost interminable sermon on the text "My brother Esau

is an hairy man, but I am a *smooth* man," falls short of full impact because of our inability to see his ecclesiastical, owl-like face peering over a clerical collar, as he flounders for words to fill out his allotted preaching time. And since one cannot see the hurried entrances and exits of the quartet or their changes of costume in a marvelous Shakespearean parody, *So That's the Way You Like It*, the rushed and jumbled lines are not so pointed for the record listener as for the viewer. *The Aftermyth of War* ("Unavoidably peace came") is an amusing and pungent satire on a BBC documentary broadcast which fares quite well on records, although its major delight, Dudley Moore's irreverent portrait (complete with wig) of Dame Myra Hess, is missing. *The Sadder and Wiser Beaver*, with its withering last line, is a typical revue blackout skit, and the implications inherent in *Bollard*, where four gay young men assemble for a TV cigarette commercial, are as explicit on disc as they are in the theatre. Peter Cook's repetitive and slightly addled mumblings as a miner who wanted to become a judge but—lacking the requisite knowledge of Latin—had to settle for something slightly lower in the social scale is a masterpiece of observation and characterization, and is extremely effective here. But Jonathan Miller's little vignette of Bertrand Russell, *Portrait from Memory*, and the closing sketch *The End of the World*, both marvelous in the theatre, fail to impress me on the record. So, although the recording has its moments, it is no substitute for a visit to the John Golden Theatre. J.F.I.

"Jumbo." Original Sound Track Recording. Columbia OL 5860, $4.98 (LP); OS 2260, $5.98 (SD).

Nobody who saw Billy Rose's 1935 musical extravaganza *Jumbo* is likely ever to forget the experience. Housed in the cavernous old Hippodrome, this cross between an Arabian Nights Entertainment and a circus jamboree presented, among other things, some of the most improbable sights ever seen on the New York stage. Paul Whiteman conducted his band seated astride a white horse; A. Robins pulled from his costume and props what seemed to be the year's banana crop; while Jimmy Durante, the star of the show, was upstaged by, of all things, an elephant.

It was a show of quantity rather than quality. What little of the latter it possessed arose from the songs provided by Rodgers and Hart, nearly all of which have since become standards. These, plus *This Can't Be Love* from *The Boys from Syracuse* and *Why Can't I?* borrowed from *Spring Is Here*, are used in this sound track recording, and for the most part are in the hands of Doris Day. Miss Day, never one to pass up a good thing, sings *My Romance*, *Little Girl Blue*, and *This Can't Be Love* most winsomely. The recording suggests that the original story line has been considerably changed in the film version to exploit Miss Day; though Jimmy Durante is still around, the part is now secondary. For a minute or so, he may be heard in a reprise of *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World*, although the number is sung (?) in its entirety by Stephen Boyd. Martha Raye, a foil for Durante, has little to do, and is heard only in the opening and closing ensembles and in the duet *Why Can't I?* with Doris Day. The performances have considerable animation, but I am afraid that the quality of the sound itself is far from outstanding. J.F.I.

"Frank Sinatra Sings Rodgers and Hart." Frank Sinatra; Orchestra. Capitol W 1825, $4.98 (LP).

Capitol has extracted eleven Rodgers and Hart songs from albums Sinatra recorded when he was with the label, and rounded out an even dozen with a hitherto unreleased version of *Wait Till You See Her*. These performances are well enough known to need no further comment, but the disc itself offers an interesting view of the Sinatra voice and art over six years. The former is in consistently good condition from the *Dancing on the Ceiling* of 1955 right up to the *Blue Moon* of 1961, in which some slight vocal deterioration is noticeable. As for his art, his remarkable gift for melodic phrasing, his uncanny feeling for the cadence of a lyric, and his ear for harmonic sequences—these are as constant here as they were twenty years ago. And don't overlook the versatility of this singer, who is equally at home in the plaintive *Glad To Be Unhappy* and in the jaunty *I Wish I Were in Love Again*. The sound is variable, but always pleasing. Even *The Lady Is a Tramp* from the sound track of *Pal Joey* sounds good. J.F.I.

"On Tour." University of Michigan Band. William D. Revelli, cond. Vanguard VRS 9114, $4.98 (LP); VSD 2124, $5.98 (SD).

Commemorating their triumphal 1961 European trip, the one-hundred-man "concert" division of the Michigan band repeats here one of its typical tour programs—and matches, if it does not indeed surpass, the success of previous releases. Superbly recorded in clean mono and expansive stereo, Revelli's collegians prove themselves the peers of the best professional concert bands in precision, verve, and richly colored tonal qualities. My only complaint is that they play only two original scores: the deftly antiphonal and dramatic fantasy on American Civil War tunes by their own arranger, Jerry H. Bilik, and William Schuman's spirited *Chester* Overture for Band. The remaining transcriptions are extremely effective ones, however, and the materials themselves range widely—from the imposing Mussorgsky *Great Gate at Kiev* to such zestful novelties as Agostini's *Divertissement for Three Trumpeters* and Rachmaninoff's unexpectedly jolly *Italian* Polka. R.D.D.

Richard Rodgers: always welcome.

"Mark Twain's '1601.'" Read by Richard Dyer-Bennet. Dyer-Bennet Records DYB 1601, $4.98 (LP).

Mark Twain, a ribald and witty littérateur, was subject to the censorship of his puritanical wife throughout her lifetime. But on at least one occasion the writer broke loose to produce a gamey literary exercise. Entitled "1601," it has circulated under private imprints since 1876. Framed as a conversation in the Court of England's Queen Elizabeth I, the burden of the work is: Who broke wind in the royal presence? To some this is high comedy, Twain at his best; to others it is largely intellectualized Chic Sale. Folk troubadour Richard Dyer-Bennet, who numbers himself among the work's admirers, here offers a sympathetic, well-modulated reading that includes every one of the four-letter words Twain used with such relish. On the flip side, Dyer-Bennet sings in his reedy, inimitable fashion a half-dozen ballads such as *Old Joe Clark* and *The Erie Canal* in the unexpurgated original versions. Dyer-Bennet brings uncompromising honesty and high artistry to this material. But abounding as it does in blunt Anglo-Saxonisms, this record will not appeal to every ear. Excellent reproduction. O.B.B.

"Choral Spectacular." Chorus and RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Norman Luboff, cond. RCA Victor LPM 2522, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2522, $4.98 (SD).

Emboldened by the *cognoscenti's* raptures over Himalayan-scaled choral masterpieces in stereo, Luboff boldly essays here the role of a poor man's Berlioz. His is a strictly pops program (*Begin the Beguine*, *Where or When*, *Seventy-Six Trombones*, etc.), but the Stott-Luboff scorings for oversize British forces—one-hundred-voice choir and full symphony orchestra—are only rarely

overfancy. The performances are consistently skillful and occasionally (as in *Granada*) distinguished by uncommon bravura. The spacious acoustics of England's Walthamstow Town Hall are very much in evidence—impressive enough in monophony, and quite out of this world in the stereo disc and 4-track tape (FTP 1136, 37 min., $7.95). R.D.D.

"A Musical Adventure in Magic Tahiti." Ceremonial Musicians from the film *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Columbia CL 1901, $3.98 (LP); CS 8701, $4.98 (SD).

"Tahiti: Island of Paradise." Authentic Tahitian Music recorded in Papeete during the filming of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. M-G-M E 4082, $3.98 (LP); SE 4082, $4.98 (SD).

The cinematic virtues of *Mutiny on the Bounty* quite aside, the film has sparked a considerable interest in that brightest jewel of all Polynesia, Tahiti. These albums reflect different facets of that jewel. Columbia's "A Musical Adventure in Magic Tahiti" showcases the native musicians featured in the film, and juxtaposes the ancient chants and dances of the islanders with those Gallicized pops sung today in the bars and cafés of Papeete. *Pagan Drums of Tamatoa* is one of the most intoxicating excursions into primitive percussion on vinylite. By contrast, the modern selections rely heavily upon the non-Polynesian guitar, and—while they possess the vitality common to most hybrid art forms—they lack the dynamic vigor of the ancient prototypes. M-G-M's entry, "Tahiti: Island of Paradise," dwells heavily upon contemporary compositions, but Gaston Guilbert—the old Tahitian hand who taped the disc—knows island material and island musicians as do few others. He manages to catch the neat blend of Polynesia and Paris that forms the ambience of Papeete. *Ua Tai Au Ia Oe* (I Cry for You) is an unforgettable example of such present-day balladry. These discs do not compete; they complement each other. You can't go wrong with either and you can go very right indeed with both. O.B.B.

"Most Popular Movie Themes." Xavier Cugat and His Orchestra. Mercury MG 20745, $3.98 (LP); SR 60745, $4.98 (SD).

A characteristic Cugat disc of Latin-American stylings intriguingly applied to a dozen film songs. Cugat's skillful rhythmic arrangements lend an unexpected freshness to these tunes, most of them heard too long in familiar and stereotyped settings. *Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing* loses none of its inherent romantic appeal when turned into a samba, and the insinuating and languorous rhythm of the bolero adds an unusual excitement to *Over the Rainbow*, and *The Green Leaves of Summer*. I am not much attracted by Cugat's cha-cha version of *It Might As Well Be Spring*, but the remaining numbers are all quite delightfully transformed by his slightly unorthodox treatment. J.F.I.

"Rapture." Johnny Mathis; Orchestra, Don Costa, cond. Columbia CL 1915, $3.98 (LP); CS 8715, $4.98 (SD).

It seems to me, as I have not heard Mathis in quite some time, that these performances are more disciplined and less perfumed than his earlier efforts. He is still capable of producing some rather ugly tones, and his vibrato is still very much in evidence, but he strikes me as a vastly improved singer. The program is not only basically good, but is good for him, and I could hardly ask for more agreeable performances of *Stella by Starlight*, *Here I'll Stay*, and *My Darling, My Darling*. The Don Costa arrangements, very carefully tailored to complement the Mathis voice, are as successful and as compatible as those Axel Stordahl used to write for a younger Sinatra. J.F.I.

"Travis on Cue." Horizon WP 1606, $3.98 (LP); ST 1606, $4.98 (SD).

Travis Edmonson, late of the defunct Bud and Travis duo, here displays his wares solo. He is a congenial and knowledgeable folk singer with an abiding respect for the integrity of his material. Perhaps his finest moment on this release is in the haunting Mexican love song *Malagueña Salerosa*, but he also shapes a driving *Lonesome Traveler* and, surprisingly enough on a folk record, a dramatic version of an old pop tune adapted from Lecuona's *Andalucia—The Breeze and I*. Superb reproduction captures the electric spirit of this live performance. O.B.B.

"Song Fest Fun at Home." Living Voices with Orchestra. RCA Camden CAL 714, $1.98 (LP); CAS 714, $2.98 (SD).

Mitch Miller may have staked out the biggest claim to the sing-along gold mine, but it can be exploited just as profitably by others. Witness the present bargain-priced, brightly recorded program by a British male ensemble under an unidentified director. The group matches Mitch's own hearty straightforwardness and similarly makes use of only a few accompanying instruments. The twenty-seven selections provide a good cross section of the standard favorites, among which only a few performances (like those of *America the Beautiful* and *Dixie*) suggest a British provenance, while a number of others (*Auld Lang Syne, When the Saints Come Marching In*) are every bit as good as the best American sing-along versions. R.D.D.

"The New Music of Leroy Anderson." Orchestra, Leroy Anderson, cond. Decca DL 4335, $3.98 (LP); DL 74335, $4.98 (SD).

Six of the orchestral miniatures in this fine concert of Leroy Anderson's music are rescorings of items salvaged from the composer's greatly underrated score for the 1958 musical *Goldilocks*. As such, they are new to records. The ballet music, expanded and reorchestrated, sounds better than ever, but the items benefiting most from the composer's neat orchestral transcriptions are the numbers which were originally vocal—and fared rather poorly in the Broadway production. There are some typical Anderson charmers in the remaining cameos, all of them entirely new to discs: a graceful, flowing *Arietta* of much melodic appeal, *Home Stretch*, a rousing galop full of

Leroy Anderson: tunes new to discs.

Joe "Fingers" Carr: better than ever.

orchestral sparkle and humor, and *Clarinet Candy*, a brilliant virtuoso piece in the vein of the earlier *Bugler's Holiday*. Nobody ever seems to conduct Anderson's music with such felicitous results as the composer. These performances are winning, and so is Decca's excellent sound. J.F.I.

"Brassy Piano." Joe "Fingers" Carr, piano, and His Men of Brass. Warner Brothers W 1456, $3.98 (LP); WS 1456, $4.98 (SD).

The ebullient *alter ego* of recording executive Lou Busch wins new devotees for the undying art of ragtime whenever he sits down at his jangly upright piano. Even purists need not fear bombast or commercialization when Carr augments his usual banjo and traps sidemen with a full brass choir. He not only plays better than ever, himself, but infects the new accompanists with his own gusto, while using them sparingly and always to some musical point. Seldom if ever have the *Maple Leaf Rag*, *Down Home Rag*, etc., sounded jauntier, and for effective contrast a seductive *Johnson Rag* makes particularly good use of stereo antiphonies between keyboard and winds. The miking is ultraclose, the modulation level high; yet the recording boasts impressively vivid presence. R.D.D.

"The First Family." Cadence CLP 3060, $3.98 (LP).

The inordinate popularity of this runaway best seller stems in large part from the striking—almost uncanny—vocal portraiture of President and Mrs. Kennedy by Vaughn Meader and Naomi Brossart, respectively. Meader has mastered every intonation, inflection, and pronunciation of the Presidential delivery, and Miss Brossart is a soft-spoken, kittenish Jackie who, when she gasps with anoxic laughter, will split your sides. Far too accurate to be caricature, the imitations rely upon improbable situations for comic impact; the individual vignettes are somewhat uneven but never miss the mark completely. O.B.B.

"Popular Songs in Mandarin Chinese." Poon Sow Keng. Capitol T 10326, $3.98 (LP); ST 10326, $4.98 (SD).

Born of an overseas Chinese family in Malaya, Poon Sow Keng has become one of the Far East's most popular vocalists. Here Miss Poon sings a dozen selections, all endemic to the Chinese cultures of Southeast Asia, in flawless Mandarin. Language, however, spells her only affinity to the great body of Chinese song. She scorns the high-

pitched, faintly assonant traditional style in favor of a straightforward Westernized approach. This is no tragedy, as Miss Poon's soprano is strong, supple, and richly colored. While I can think of no happier introduction to Asian pops for the curious Westerner, Miss Poon will bring him no closer to the beauties of true Chinese music, or even to the diluted product heard in the bistros of Hong Kong, than will Rosemary Clooney. Excellent reproduction. O.B.B.

"Just Drums." Charlie Sipes, percussion. Synco 1244, $4.95 (LP).
Synco Records (2165 Redthorn Road, Baltimore 20, Maryland) makes its debut with a pop accompaniment disc that rivals in usefulness the best that Music Minus One has ever produced. The title is almost exact: there is nothing here but the drum—and cymbal—rhythms in a dozen different tempos (cha-cha, slow and medium fox trots, etc.). Thus, each band on the disc can serve for a variety of specific pieces, to be played by student soloists or ensembles lacking a drummer. Good clean, realistic recording. R.D.D.

"Yulya Sings 'Midnight in Moscow' and Other Russian Hits." Yulya Whitney. Monitor MP 597, $4.98 (LP); MPS 597, $4.98 (SD).
Russian-born Yulya Whitney, who married an American newsman in Moscow and now calls New York home, is a splendid missionary for the popular songs of her native land. Her latest recording offers an attractive array of favorites, including the haunting World War II hit *Moscow Nights*, the pre-Revolutionary, liftingly melodic *Syertse* (My Heart), *Wait for Me*, and *Silently*. Mrs. Whitney's pleasant, husky voice and sure emotional projection limn each ballad to perfection, and her instrumental backing (accordion to the fore) breathes of lonely steppes and long rivers, of kerchiefed maidens and doomed soldiers. Recommended. O.B.B.

"Gypsy." Original Sound Track Recording. Warner Brothers B 1480, $4.98 (LP); BS 1480, $5.98 (SD).
I have not seen the film version of *Gypsy*, but from the evidence of this sound track recording it bears only a slight resemblance to the gusty, brilliant Broadway musical which, thanks to a memorable performance by Ethel Merman, was one of those rare emotional experiences encountered in the musical theatre. The wonderful Jule Styne score has been left virtually intact, but most of the songs have lost their flavor and bite, due to some indifferent performances. Just who the sound track singers are, Warner Brothers has failed to disclose. But Lisa Kirk is known to have done most of the singing for Miss Russell, and though she doesn't do very well by the songs, she does give a reasonably convincing imitation of Miss Russell's voice. In *West Side Story*, Marni Nixon was the singing voice of Natalie Wood. Has Miss Wood now discovered she has a voice, or is a double used for her, too? The liner notes explicitly say that the trio of Minsky strippers are acted and sung by Roxanne Arlen, Faith Dane, and Betty Bruce, so it is permissible to blame them for an exaggerated and dull account of *Gotta Have a Gimmick*. To add to a reviewer's confusion, liner notes *and* record label are incorrect on the number *Together Wherever We Go*: both state that it is sung by "Rose, Louise, and Herbie," characters in the story. Nothing of the kind—Lisa Kirk sings it as a solo, and a very brief solo at that. Watson, my deerstalker cap and pipe, if you please. J.F.I.

"The Persuasive Trombone of Urbie Green." Vol. 2. Urbie Green and His Orchestra. Command RS 33-838, $4.98 (LP); RS 838, $5.98 (SD).
Green's first starring vehicle (September 1961) was a good one; the second does the soloist equal justice while achieving more varied appeal. This is thanks partly to more imaginative scorings, by Green for several sextet numbers topped by a virtuosic *Hello Young Lovers*, and by Ralph Burns and Bobby Byrne for the big-band selections which include an electrifyingly bravura *Runnin' Wild*. But it is also thanks to Green's generosity in sharing honors with his skilled colleagues, Doc Severinsen on trumpet, Wait Levinsky on alto sax, et al. And the most notable among these costars is the late Eddie Costa, playing piano and vibes in what must surely rank among his best recording dates. R.D.D.

"This is 21-Channel Sound" (Sampler). Various artists. M-G-M E 4094, $3.98 (LP); SE 4094, $4.98 (SD).
The brilliance of M-G-M's multimiking technology comes through even in monophony, but only the stereo edition fully displays the antiphonal and motional ingenuities—as well as the occasional lack of acoustical naturalness—in these representative sonic showpieces. Selections are drawn from current releases by both American (Larry Elgart, David Rose) and German (Edelhagen, Wege, and Halletz) instrumental ensembles. R.D.D.

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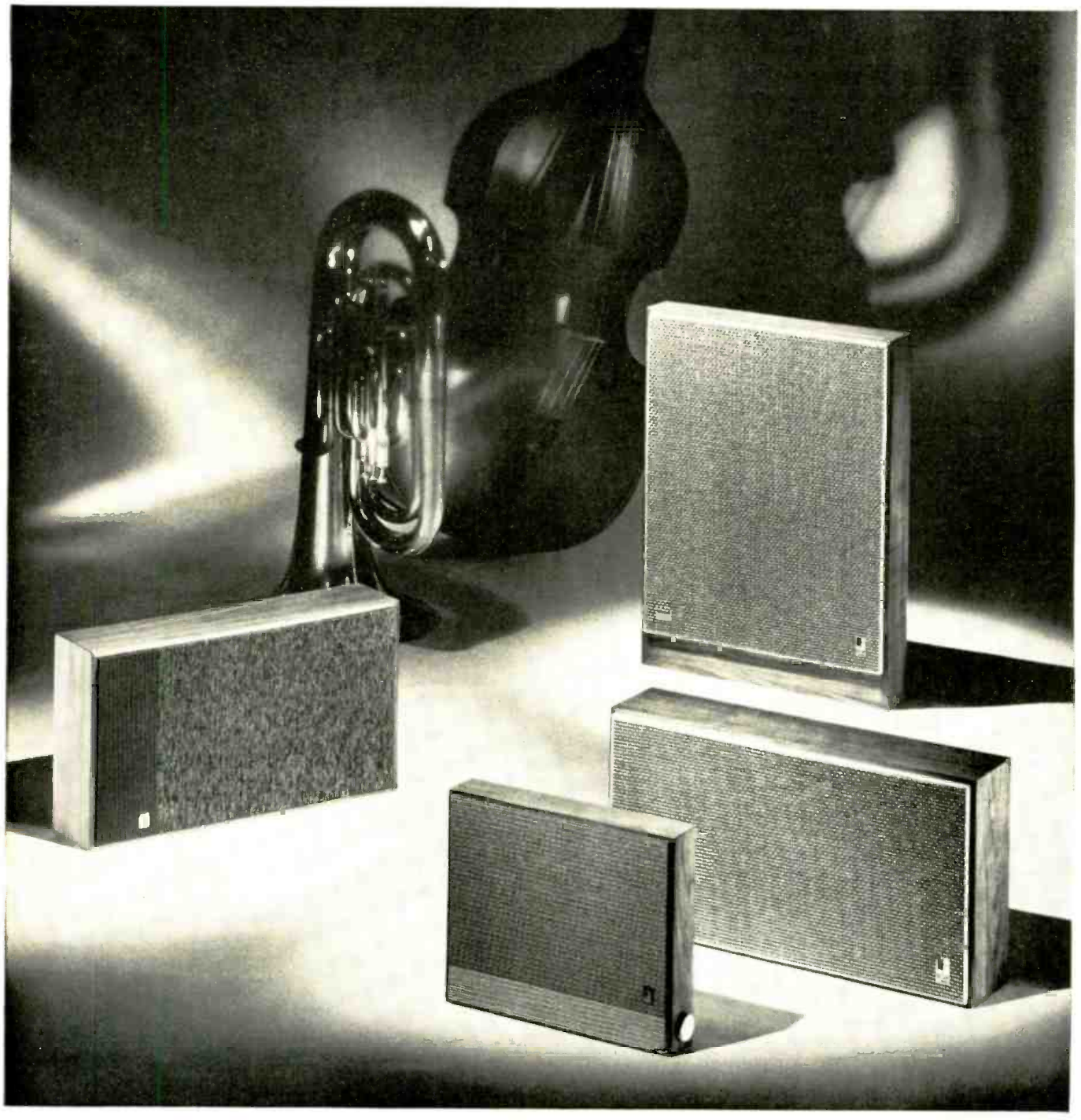

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JAZZ

Count Basie and His Orchestra: "The Legend." Roulette 52086, $3.98 (LP); S 52086, $4.98 (SD).

This set of originals by Benny Carter provides the Basie band with better material than it usually gets, even though much of it is disappointingly bland. (The same general improvement was evident in a previous pairing of Carter and the Basie band, *Kansas City Suite*, Roulette 52056.) To some extent the blandness results from too frequent use of the basic Basie device, the riff, in settings that are relatively similar. The old Basie band of the late Thirties could get away with this method because its strong point was soloists who invested the various pieces with individuality. The current band, however, is primarily an ensemble group. It has a high polish; but when, in a succession of pieces, the suavely blended saxophones inevitably ride through the repetitions of a riff, the idea begins to lose its edge. Carter breaks away from this pattern effectively on the title piece, which has Ellington overtones, and on a slow blues, *Who's Blue?*, in which Basie plays a solo in quite a different manner from his customary one. For the rest, there is little that really compels attention.

Charlie Byrd: "Bossa Nova Pelos Passaros." Riverside 436, $4.98 (LP); 9436, $5.98 (SD).

Although he spearheaded the current interest in bossa nova, Charlie Byrd is still managing to keep well ahead of the flood of discs that have followed his "Latin Impressions" on Riverside and "Jazz Samba" with Stan Getz on Verve. More than any other American musician, this superb guitarist has been able to catch the lyrical and rhythmic qualities typical of such Brazilians as João Gilberto and Luis Bonfa. He concentrates here on tunes by Gilberto, Baden Powel, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and Carlo Lyra, and includes three of his own compositions in the Brazilian vein. The performances are split among his regular trio (one of the most polished groups playing today) and two amplifications of that ensemble—one with strings, the other with trombone, flute or alto saxophone, rhythm guitar, and Latin percussion. The string group is particularly effective as both a background and a contrast to the percussive sound of Byrd's guitar and rhythm section. The other group has less to offer, although Charlie Hampton proves himself to be a strongly lyrical alto saxophonist.

Leroy Carr: "Blues Before Sunrise." Columbia CL 1799, $3.98 (LP).

Carr, who died in 1935, was an influential transitional figure in the blues development of the early Thirties, when blues singers, primarily country men, began to find audiences in the cities. Carr's style was less exaggerated than that of his more primitive colleagues, and he adjusted some of their grotesqueries to his softer but no less emotional manner in a way that appealed to urban audiences. His usual partner was Scrapper Blackwell, whose guitar served as a contrast to the soft sonority of his voice. This is an excellent and representative collection of their recordings—one of the series of reissues produced for Columbia by Frank Driggs.

Oscar Castro-Neves and His Orchestra: "Big Band Bossa Nova." Audio Fidelity 1983, $4.98 (LP); 5983, $5.95 (SD).

American groups using brass, saxophones, and rhythm have tried bossa nova (with uncertain success), but this is the first disc I know of showing how this sort of thing is done in Brazil. On the evidence here, Americans can take heart—they are doing better than might be suspected. Castro-Neves is a pleasant pianist who works in looping, churning lines, but his band is heavy-handed and static. Only occasionally is there any suggestion of the graceful melodiousness that typifies the best bossa nova performances. Even tunes that have proved their viability, such as *Desafinado* and *Samba de Uma Nota So*, are treated rather lugubriously. The band does do reasonably well, however, by one of Castro-Neves' own tunes, *No Faz Assim*.

Buddy DeFranco—Tommy Gumina Quartet: "Kaleidoscope." Mercury 20743, $3.98 (LP); 60743, $4.98 (SD).

Clarinetist Buddy DeFranco and accordionist Tommy Gumina have developed a quartet that should please many listeners. Its warm, personal ensemble voicing can be applied to bright, rhythmic selections or to slow ballads with equal effectiveness, while the solo passages are well within the mainstream of jazz development. Most important, however, is the imaginative setting and development of each piece, which provide a constant shifting of light and colors. "Kaleidoscope" is an apt title, for this quartet offers, more than most jazz groups today, a continually changing display of inventive and polished playing.

Paul Desmond and Gerry Mulligan: "Two of a Mind." RCA Victor LPM 2624, $3.98 (LP); LSP 2624, $4.98 (SD).

These six duets by Desmond and Mulligan were apparently recorded on at least three separate occasions, for three different rhythm sections (in this instance, only bass and drums) are heard accompanying them. The rhythm sections create most of the variety here. Connie Kay, the Modern Jazz Quartet drummer, plays on three pieces with two different bassists, and provides the saxophonists with a strong, rolling foundation over which they seem to ride with airy ease. The drummer in the third rhythm section, Mel Lewis, a superb performer in a big-band context, seems relatively pedestrian in this quartet setting. As for the two principals, their duet passages are neatly and sinuously woven, with Mulligan returning to the rather light tone he used with his original quartet. When they go off on their solos, Desmond manages to soar into graceful, singing passages with consistent success, but Mulligan's solo efforts have a despondently colorless air dissipated only on a brightly swinging tune called *Blight of the Fumble Bee*.

Stan Getz: "Big Band Bossa Nova." Verve 8494, $4.98 (LP); 6-8494, $5.98 (SD).

After the initial stimulation given to the bossa nova fad by Getz's performance with the Charlie Byrd trio on "Jazz Samba" (Verve 8432), this attempt to transfer the calmly airy bossa nova style to a big band with arrangements by Gary McFarland seems relatively unexciting. These are pleasant performances and McFarland has done well in not allowing the size of his instrumentation to bury the essentially small-group feeling which gained the bossa nova its initial popularity. But a sense of sameness sets in as one listens to this disc, a sameness that appears both in Getz's improvisations and in the general style of the tunes. Oddly, the basic rhythm of the bossa nova wears much better than the tunes and solos laid over it here.

Stephane Grappelly: "Feeling Plus Finesse Equals Jazz." Atlantic 1391, $4.98 (LP); S 1391, $5.98 (SD).

Grappelly, once the violinist colleague of Django Reinhardt in the Quintet of the Hot Club of France, here returns to one of the instrumentations used by the quintet: violin, two guitars, bass, and drums. His partner in this instance is Pierre Cavalli, who plays electric guitar instead of the unamplified instrument used by Reinhardt until the last years of his career. There are occasional suggestions of Reinhardt's influence, but Cavalli seems most at home in the post-Charlie Christian manner. Grappelly has a greater share of the spotlight than he usually received in Reinhardt's ensemble, and he fills it well. His suavely swinging style drives these pieces along in a smooth and rhythmic manner, and largely through his presence the sound and feeling of the old Hot Club Quintet are brought back with remarkable success. This group revives some of Reinhardt's pieces—*Nuages*, *Daphne*, *Minor Swing*—and gives an interesting interpretation of John Lewis' tribute, *Django*.

Roy Haynes Quartet: "Out of the Afternoon." Impulse 23, $4.98 (LP); S 23, $5.98 (SD).

Although Haynes, a drummer, is the nominal leader of this quartet, the focal point is the remarkable multi-instrumentalist, Roland Kirk. Kirk's strong, forthright playing on tenor saxophone, flute, manzello, and stritch gives all the selections a sinewy vigor, complemented by the crisply tripping drumming of Haynes. Pianist Tommy Flanagan contributes some appropriately contrasting interludes. But most of the time this surging, rambunctious playing is

carried along by Kirk's inexhaustible melodic invention.

Johnny Hodges: "The Eleventh Hour." Verve 8492, $4.98 (LP); 6-8492, $5.98 (SD).

Although this is a jazz-soloist-with-strings session, it avoids the catastrophic tediousness attending most such recordings—and for two good reasons. One is that Hodges is unique among jazz musicians in having a style essentially romantic to begin with, enabling him to release his jazz abilities with full force even when he has to cope with the inevitable romanticism induced by strings. The second is the presence as arranger of Oliver Nelson, who continues to prove himself one of the most ingenious orchestrators in contemporary jazz. His writing at the very least prevents the strings from suffocating the solo horn and, in its better moments, presents them as a positive factor in the performances. All the tunes come from the Ellington book except for a movie theme, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, and the album's title tune (the theme for a TV series), which is such a sickly thing that not even the normally masterful Hodges can do anything with it.

Billie Holiday: "Ladylove." United Artists 14014, $4.98 (LP).

This disc, not previously released in the United States, was recorded during a concert in Germany in 1954. Although Miss Holiday seemed well past her peak then, struggling with a voice that often failed to respond to her will, in this instance we see a glorious flash of her real prowess. The inflections, the subtleties, the twists of phrase—all fall into place as she sings such old favorites as *My Man, Them There Eyes, I Cried for You*, and *I Cover the Waterfront*. Her accompaniment on one side is a trio, while on the two long selections of Side 2 she has the added support of Red Norvo, vibraphone; Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; and Jimmy Raney, guitar. With them she sings a *Billie's Blues* that must rank as one of her best efforts. On *Lover Come Back to Me*, Norvo, DeFranco, and Raney build up such a head of steam that they practically sweep her off her feet. A valuable addition to the Holiday discography.

Les McCann Ltd.: "On Time." Pacific Jazz 56, $4.98 (LP); S 56, $5.98 (SD).

McCann has found his way out of the "soul jazz" clichés typical of much of his earlier work, and now employs a fresher and more open style. It is scarcely adventurous, but moves through a pleasantly broad middle-ground area. The most interesting aspect of this set, however, is the presence of guitarist Joe Pass, who made a very impressive debut on *Sounds of Synanon*, Pacific Jazz 48. Pass, a lyrical soloist, serves as an excellent foil for McCann and, one gathers, helps him to steer clear of his more flamboyant excursions. With Pass guiding the way, this is a very pleasant, unpretentious disc.

The Modern Jazz Quartet: "The Comedy." Atlantic 1390, $4.98 (LP); S 1390, $5.98 (SD).

In *The Comedy*, John Lewis sums up his musical impressions of *commedia dell' arte*, a subject that has fascinated him for the past ten years. The summation consists of seven charmingly melodic pieces, opening and closing with a reference to *Fontessa*, one of Lewis' first efforts at interpreting *commedia dell' arte* in the early Fifties. *The Comedy*, besides serving as a vehicle for Lewis' distillation of this special interest, also offers a definitive view of the Modern Jazz Quartet at what may be a climactic point in its development (the group now exists only on a part-time basis). The ensemble reaches a peak of distinction here, with an unusually robust attack in evidence at times, along with the anticipated flow and blending of Lewis' piano and Milt Jackson's vibraphone, and the surging rhythm foundation provided by Percy Heath on bass and the incomparable Connie Kay on drums. *The Comedy* is a major achievement for both Lewis and the Quartet.

Cecil Payne: "The Connection." Charlie Parker 806, $3.98 (LP); 806-S, $4.98 (SD).

The Connection is memorable for, among other things, the scores to which it has given birth. First came the music written and played by Freddie Redd in the New York production. A second score was written and performed by Dexter Gordon on the West Coast, and now we have a "new original score" composed partly by Cecil Payne, partly by Kenny Drew, used in both New York and European productions. It is performed by an excellent group led by Payne on baritone saxophone: Clark Terry, trumpet; Bennie Green, trombone; Duke Jordan, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Charlie Persip, drums. We encounter, on this disc, a notable peculiarity: Payne's selections are played with a lusty, full-bodied impact that is tremendously impressive, while those written by Drew emerge in loose, occasionally frantic, and relatively empty performances. Payne plays brilliantly on his own tunes, leading unusually visceral ensembles and taking his solos in a big-toned, assertive manner that is complemented by his attractive melodic lines. Terry, as always, is joyous, and Green adds some wryly conceived passages in a slow and sinuous piece called *Born Again*.

Lalo Schifrin: "Lalo Equals Brilliance." Roulette 52088, $3.98 (LP); 52088-S, $4.98 (SD).

Bossa nova, modern jazz, and reflections of eastern music tumble through the performances by a group which is, essentially, Dizzy Gillespie's quintet as of early 1962 with Jimmy Raney added on guitar and Willie Rodriguez on percussion.

Although Schifrin, Gillespie's pianist, is theoretically the focal point (as leader, composer of four of the eight selections, and occasional soloist), his work is generally undistinguished. It is Leo Wright, instead, playing alto saxophone and flute, who creates the interest here—which, thanks to him, is considerable. He is an unusually agile flutist who can range from soaring lyricism to a rough, jungle type of sound with seemingly effortless skill. As an altoist he is capable of both a driving attack and, when the occasion demands, a keening style which avoids the customary pitfall of blatancy. In view of the Gillespie group's early association with bossa nova, the two bossa nova selections included are disappointingly routine. But, largely because of Wright, the remaining selections have moments of power.

Charley Teagarden and His Group: "The Big Horn of Little T." Coral 57410, $3.98 (LP); 757410, $4.98 (SD).

No sibling relationship has ever caused more injustice to a musician than in

the case of the Teagarden brothers. Charley Teagarden has been a magnificent trumpeter for over thirty years, hidden by the broad shadow of his brother Jack, and cloistered in such bands as Paul Whiteman's and Jimmy Dorsey's. For the last three years he has led his own small group in Las Vegas, and a record company has finally had the good sense to record him. "Little T" has a magnificent tone and the ability to play long, beautifully controlled lines that carry their own internal melodies and rhythms. Although he is usually associated with the prewar school of trumpeting, and his selection of material reflects that connection, the length and continuity of his lines are much closer to the postwar trumpeters who followed in the wake of Dizzy Gillespie. He is, essentially, a mixture of the old and the new, as though Bix Beiderbecke were blended with Gillespie, and the result is a personal style that enlivens even overdone standards (and there are a few in this set) with freshness and excitement. The inevitable triviality engendered by Las Vegas seeps into some of this program. But whenever Charley Teagarden is playing, which is most of the time, this recording is a delight.

Paul Winter Sextet: "Jazz Meets the Bossa Nova." Columbia CL 1925, $3.98 (LP); CS 8725, $4.98 (SD).

Paul Winter took jazz to the White House in November, when Mrs. Kennedy invited his group to play at one of her afternoon concerts for young listeners. Before that, the sextet had won the Intercollegiate Jazz Festival in 1961 and had toured South America for six months under the auspices of the State Department. In Brazil, Winter encountered the bossa nova, recorded several selections in Rio de Janeiro and, on returning to New York, recorded enough more to fill out this album. The sextet approaches the bossa nova with a bit more delicacy than similar American groups are usually apt to, and conveys a truer sense of the mixture of placidity and propulsion characteristic of the most effective Brazilian performances. The ensemble playing here is usually closely knit and crisp, but the soloists are still tentative and derivative. Winter on alto saxophone and Les Rout on baritone saxophone do contribute some promising bits, however.

Eldee Young & Co.: "Just for Kicks." Argo 699, $4.98 (LP).

Young, a member of Ramsey Lewis' trio, is one of a growing number of jazz bassists who also play cello. He does so on one side of this disc, as part of a quartet including Leo Wright on alto saxophone and flute, Mal Waldron, piano, and Red Holt, drums. During the rest of the recording he plays bass, and on both halves of the program utilizes bow and pizzicato. This sort of thing is often little more than a novelty, but in this case the performances are unusually interesting. The bowed passages on bass are remarkable for their virtuosity, and for the superb control on slow pieces such as *Crazy She Calls Me* and *Cry Me a River*. Young handles the cello with equal skill and sometimes in very unexpected ways, as when he develops a somber bowed treatment of *Motherless Child* into an astonishingly fierce and effective display of passion. Wright adds considerably to the ensemble when he joins with his alto saxophone.

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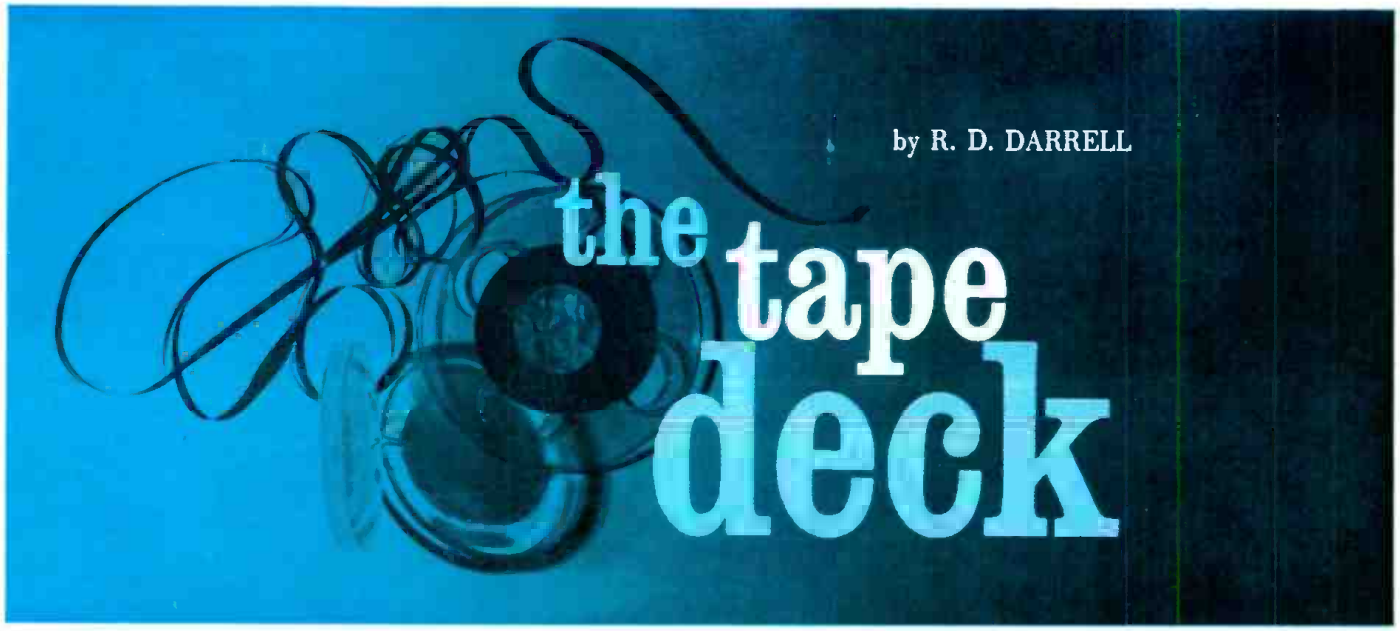

The following reviews are of 4-track 7.5-ips stereo tapes in normal reel form.

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 5, in E flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")*

Rudolf Serkin, piano; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond.
• • COLUMBIA MQ 489. 39 min. $7.95.

Without qualifying my praise for the Fleisher/Szell taping for Epic (April 1962), I may now say that the impetuous vitality of Serkin and Bernstein gives this new version priority in the *Emperor* sweepstakes. It is perhaps less tautly controlled in both detail and overall integration, but it is larger-scaled, more eloquent, and above all volcanically dramatic. Serkin's earlier mono readings have long been notable, but here he achieves greater spontaneity, thanks in no small part to the verve of Bernstein's collaboration — surely his most impressive accomplishment as an accompanist to date. This taping is outstanding for the sheer vividness and grandeur of its big-hall sound.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; Leonore Overture, No. 3, Op. 72a*

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.
• • COMMAND CC 11016 and 11011. 47 and 45 min. $7.95 each.

Excellently processed tapings (marred only by a preëcho or two) confirm the earlier disc evidence that last year's Steinberg/Command Brahms Second was no lucky fluke. Their Beethoven Fourth is a close match in its combination of strength, good humor, and songfulness, as well as in its technical blend of a reverberant auditorium ambience with closely delineated orchestral sonics. Steinberg's is a more vigorous conception of this work than Ansermet's for London, and is sure to win a wide audience—although some of us will continue

Steinberg: Beethoven with vigor.

to reserve a special place of esteem for the more piquant and poetic earlier version (which also has the advantage of twin-pack coupling with Beethoven's Second Symphony). Walter's Columbia taping (with the Fifth) will also have its special admirers, but for the majority of reel listeners Steinberg's is likely to be ranked *hors de concours*.

His Brahms First may well be too, but I can't be quite as enthusiastic as the disc reviewers have been. Performance and recording are fine indeed (and the present taping certainly is free from the surface noise troubles found on some of the discs), yet neither conductor nor engineers convey the conviction here—for me—that they do in both the Beethoven Fourth and Brahms Second. Perhaps this is largely because, on returning to Bruno Walter's First for Columbia (MQ 337, June 1961), I now succumb to its eloquent warmth more completely than I did on first encounter. The orchestra is outclassed by Steinberg's, to be sure, and the richer, more distant recording is less lucid and brilliant than is Command's version; yet for sheer romantic enchantment the Walter version remains unsurpassed.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 2, in D minor, Op. 70*

Cleveland Orchestra, George Szell, cond.
• • EPIC EC 823. 36 min. $7.95.

Dvořák's invigorating Second Symphony is, along with the Fourth, one of the most immediately rewarding discoveries home listeners can make outside the standard symphonic repertory. It is not as "great" or as mature a work as the Fourth or Fifth perhaps, but it certainly is one of the most liltingly Czechish that Dvořák ever wrote. Those of us who were first introduced to it via Talich's 1939-40 78s have always retained a very special fondness for it. There are several good stereo versions on discs, but although Kubelik's for London generally is included among these, I was disappointed in its 1960 taping. In comparison with the present reel, that version proves markedly inferior. The Szell tape warrants unqualified recommendation: it possesses verve and eloquence, and is immaculately processed with expansive recorded sonics.

FRANCK: *Grande pièce symphonique, Op. 17; Choral No. 2, in B minor; Prélude, fugue et variation, Op. 18; Prière, Op. 20; Pastorale, Op. 19, No. 4; Pièce héroïque, in B minor*

Jeanne Demessieux, organ.
• • LONDON LCK 80101 (twin-pack). 78 min. $11.95.

Miss Demessieux, dreaming nostalgically over the console, evokes the spirit of nineteenth-century romanticism only too accurately, and the richly broadspread recording captures all too realistically the turgid sonics and cavernous reverberance of her Madeleine Church (Paris) instrument. "Symphonic" organ connoisseurs may find a blissful Nirvana in this long, slow program; most other listeners will be bored to distraction. I am particularly disappointed in the laborious performance of one of the few Franck organ works I have enjoyed in the past: the B minor Choral, which Miss Demessieux herself once recorded (in monophony) with far more vital effect.

GRIEG: *Peer Gynt: Suites: No. 1; No. 2*

Oslo Philharmonic, Odd Grüner-Hegge, cond.
• • RCA CAMDEN CTR 480. 32 min. $4.95.

The 1959 stereo disc edition of these popular suites in authentically native interpretations was so highly praised among the bargain-priced releases of its time that I am shocked to find it is currently out of print. In the present reel version the recording still sounds attractively rich and open, if obviously not of the latest vintage. The performances are a bit slower but more earnestly expressive than those of most American orchestras, and the tape processing is good except for a trace of background hum in the A side only. Unless you want a slightly more extensive representation of the *Peer Gynt* score (as provided in the Fjelstad/London taping, LCL 80020, of 1960), the present suites are a good, low-cost choice.

HONEGGER: *Le Roi David*
†Milhaud: *La Création du monde*

Martial Singher, narrator; Netania Davrath, soprano; Jean Preston, mezzo; Marvin Sorenson, tenor; Madeleine Milhaud, speaker; University of Utah Chorus (in the Honegger); Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond.
• • VANGUARD VTP 1651 (twin-pack). 87 min. $11.95.

MILHAUD: *La Création du monde; Suite provençale*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2075. 32 min. $8.95.

One of the major between-wars musical monuments of the twentieth century, Honegger's great symphonic psalm is a more uneven work than Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* or the *Symphony of Psalms*, to which it has some resemblances, but it is impressive in its powerful choruses and its grandeur of conception. The withdrawal of a 1952 Westminster LP album conducted by the composer himself left a lamentable gap in the recorded repertory—which lends added significance to the present first stereo (and first tape) edition. And the present recording not only triumphantly exploits the expected virtues of stereo, but the performance itself is even more satisfactory than Honegger's own. For this, special credit must go to Singher in his new role as the omnipresent narrator—a performance far less mannered than that of Jean Hervé in the earlier discs. It is, indeed, the most beautiful example of French enunciation I've ever heard on records. The Israeli soprano Miss Davrath is an inspired choice, and while the mezzo and tenor are less distinctive, they too sing more attractively—if less idiomatically—than their predecessors. Mme. Milhaud is positively bloodcurdling in her brief part as the Witch of Endor. But Abravanel himself displays an admirable understanding of the work (he was a percussionist under the composer in its premiere) and the ability to inspire his chorus and orchestra to their finest peak. A real triumph for all concerned: one deserving commendation, too, for the inclusion of full French and English texts, and for the reel's clean surfaces and freedom from spill-over.

The Milhaud pieces are also tape "firsts"—the amusing yet often poignantly expressive *Creation of the World* presented in these two releases in markedly contrasted interpretations. Munch's, which employs an enlarged string section, is in grander symphonic style with more vivid recorded presence; Abravanel's is more appropriately chamberlike with slightly more distant miking. Neither conductor really makes the most of the work's pseudojazz passages, but Abravanel is the jauntier here and the more hauntingly poetic elsewhere; Munch, despite his obviously better soloists, is much too stiff and vehement. Yet the Bostonian reel is to be recommended for its quite suitable *Suite provençale*. Based on themes by André Campra (1660-1744), these eight lively pieces in brilliant modern dress are a delight, and here Munch and the Bostonians play with just the right gusto and vigor.

ORFF: *Entrata (after Byrd)*
†Beethoven: *Wellingtons Sieg, Op. 91 ("Battle Symphony")*
†Gabrieli, Giovanni: *Canzon del primi toni, No. 1*

Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond.
• • WESTMINSTER WTC 156. 30 min. $7.95.

This reel merits attention for the lesson it provides on the importance of processing. The hard and harsh sonics I criticized in the SD edition of last November are now shown to have been largely a fault of the disc cutting or processing rather than of the recording itself. This excellently processed tape reveals much less unpleasant recorded sound, achieved without any sloping-off of the high frequencies. To be sure, the excessive solo "spotlighting" cannot be eliminated, and Scherchen's readings remain as mannered and pedestrian as before. His *Battle Symphony* is a poor substitute for either the fine Dorati (Mercury) or Gould (RCA Victor) tapings of this stereo showpiece. So the reel can be commended only for the *Entrata* and *Canzon*—and then only with reservations: the odd Orff work for five "orchestras" is extremely repetitive, and the magnificent Gabrieli work has been arranged for modern instruments and is lethargically played—for all the ringing brilliance of its brass sonorities.

PROKOFIEV: *Cinderella, Op. 87* (excerpts); *Romeo and Juliet, Op. 64* (excerpts)

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.
• • LONDON LCK 80098 (twin-pack). 88 min. $11.95.

PROKOFIEV: *The Love for Three Oranges: Orchestral Suite, Op. 33a*
†Chopin: *Les Sylphides*

Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.
• • RCA VICTOR FTC 2097. 42 min. $8.95.

If you still treasure, as I do, the 1956 Stokowski 2-track RCA Victor *Romeo and Juliet* Suite, the present more extensive ballet selections by Ansermet will be only moderately attractive. To be sure, he plays ten pieces to Stokowski's five (only two of which are duplicated), and

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the modern recording is more translucent; but the music sounds merely romantically pretty here, with nothing approaching Stokowski's poignance or his essential dramatic pathos "washed with a wild and thin despair of violin." The eleven *Cinderella* excerpts, however, are much better suited to Ansermet's piquant and graceful treatment. Stokowski's seven excerpts on a 1960 Everest-Alphatape may be more dramatically vigorous, but there is no decided interpretative edge, while London's brighter, purer sound gives the new tape preferred rating. And if the two halves of this twin-pack are somewhat unequal in other merits, both are immaculately processed with notably less surface noise than the earlier reels.

Preëchoes are back with us again in the otherwise technically impressive Fiedler tape, which boasts much bigger, more overtly dazzling and reverberant sonics. To my ears the sound—occasionally coarse—fits the hrash but often exciting *Love for Three Oranges* music much better than the ballet transcriptions of Chopin pieces. This opinion may seem to contradict that of my colleague Eric Salzman in his December review of the disc edition, but I suspect—from his reference to the "booming bass" of the Prokofiev disc side—that the spectrum balance has been better equalized in the tape version. However, E. S.'s criticism of the "Victorian stolidness" of the Anderson-Bodge Chopin orchestrations is quite valid for the tape, too. I prefer either the better-known Glazunov scoring or that by Roy Douglas—and the latter is available on tape in a London performance by Peter Maag which is more gracefully balletic than Fiedler's heavier "concert" reading.

WAGNER: *Orchestral Excerpts*

Das Rheingold: Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla. Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries. Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's Rhine Journey and Funeral Music.

Pittsburgh Symphony, William Steinberg, cond.
• • COMMAND CC 11012. 39 min. $7.95.

Rienzi: Overture. Der fliegende Holländer: Overture. Tannhäuser: Overture, Bacchanale.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond.
• • LONDON LCL 80109. 50 min. $7.95.

Exceptional care must have been taken with the Command tape processing here, since, despite the extreme dynamic contrasts in the recorded performances (and a modulation level only barely lower than that of the stereo disc edition), there isn't a trace of either preëcho or spillover, and even in the quietest passages the surface noise (or so-called tape hiss) has been held to an absolute minimum. This, together with the processors' scrupulous maintenance of the full frequency range and exact spectrum balance of the original magnetic film master, adds up to a technological triumph—which is, thanks to the choice of materials and Steinberg's blazingly vital performances, as dramatic musically as it is sonically.

The London tape also is immaculately processed, if at a considerably lower modulation level, but Solti's performances seem to me (my disc colleague R.C.M. notwithstanding) almost methodical and pallid in comparison with Steinberg's. Solti's restrained treatment of the *Rienzi* trumpet calls is novel, certainly,

but scarcely very dramatic, and I fail to see any justification for his splitting the *Tannhäuser* Overture and Bacchanale into their independent concert versions. He does include the women's chorus in the latter (and it is beautifully sung by members of the Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde), but there is no real competition here for the integrated Overture and Venusberg Music as taped by Stokowski for RCA Victor, or for *The Flying Dutchman* Overture as taped by Walter for Columbia.

"Leroy Anderson Favorites." Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond. RCA Victor FTC 2126, 35 min., $8.95.

The almost overpowering, big "new" sound of the Boston Pops Orchestra now seems somewhat less rough, though just as glittering, as in the recent disc edition of this program. The sonics still sound strangely unlike those of Symphony Hall, to me, and I can't be reconciled to Fiedler's currently vehement approach to the *jeux d'esprit* he first made famous. This is sure to be a best-selling tape (in spite of preëchoes), but I doubt that the composer's old-time admirers will find it as endearing as the more genial and witty, if less sensationally recorded, reels by Fennell for Mercury and by the composer himself for Decca.

"Carousel." Roberta Peters, Alfred Drake, et al.; Command Chorus and Orchestra, Jay Blackton, cond. Command RS 843, 45 min., $7.95.

"Show Boat." Barbara Cook, John Raitt, William Warfield, et al.; Merrill Staton Chorus; Orchestra, Franz Allers, cond. Columbia OQ 487, 46 min., $9.95.

For once the most immodest advertising claims aren't far off: this taping of the Rodgers-Hammerstein masterpiece is just about the finest recorded edition of any musical show I've ever heard. Notable technically for its vivid sonics, it is even more admirable for the consistently intelligible enunciation of every singer's lyrics (not a syllable of which is slurred or covered up), for the musicianship and sheer vocal appeal of the gifted soloists, and for the ability of the conductor both to hold his forces under firm but elastic control and to galvanize them into thrillingly dramatic performances. If you insist on quibbling, you can find some stylistic incongruities between the operetta-trained Drake and the opera-trained Peters, Turner, and Treigle, and there is perhaps an almost obsessive concern with precision throughout. There is, too, considerable pre- and post-echo in the otherwise excellent tape processing. But these are negligible flaws in a production which sets entirely new standards for this repertory.

Columbia's revival of the great *Show Boat* score also has many merits, but they somehow fail to add up to full dramatic conviction. The recording is extremely broadspread and full-blooded, but seems relatively thick and heavy in comparison with Command's crystalline clarity. The performances are spirited (and those of the chorus particularly good), but Allers' direction lacks resilience and subtlety. The stars are all competent, but in several instances (like that of Anita Darian in Helen Morgan's original role) they are grievously miscast; and even Cook, Raitt, and Warfield at their best never come close to matching the artists who have distinguished the

same parts in the past. Nor is the dramatic effect enhanced by the excessive and generally pointless exploitation of stereo motion.

"Exotica Suite." Si Zentner Orchestra and Martin Denny Ensemble. Liberty-Bel Canto LT 14020. 29 min., $7.95.
"A Taste of Honey." Martin Denny Ensemble. Liberty-Bel Canto LT 7237, 30 min., $7.95.

The first examples of Bel Canto's multi-labeled releases I have heard in a long time include gleamingly bright tapings of Les Baxter's "Exotica" Suite in a novel juxtaposition of the characteristic Zentner and Denny performance styles, and a representative program of the latter artist's adaptations of current film and show hits which has zoomed in its disc edition to a top ranking in the best-seller lists. In the reel version of the Suite, its big-band *fortissimos* can be reproduced much less raucously than on discs, yet there is no veil of the kaleidoscopic colorings of Bob Florence's ingenious scorings; and the sonic and stylistic contrasts between Denny's "exoticism" and Zentner's combination of solo trombone suavity and driving ensemble jazz are even more divertingly schizophrenic than ever. In the "Taste of Honey" program, Denny's own attempts to blend mild jazz and mild exoticism are less startling (and there are a few intrusions of spill-over in the otherwise good tape processing), but his improvisatory piano solos and antiphonal duos with his costarred (but here unaccredited) vibist are for once not overburdened with excessive percussion. They often provide fresh illuminations of such pop favorites as *Stranger on the Shore, Walk on the Wild Side, Route 66,* and even a *Clair de lune* as it might have been written by a Debussy exiled from Paris to the South Seas.

"Let's Duet." Gordon Jenkins' Chorus and Orchestra. Warner Brothers WSTC 1464, 27 min., $7.95.

This is a short program of sentimental favorites sung by channel-separated ensembles with lightly pulsing orchestral accompaniment. It warrants favorable mention for its ingeniously canonic arrangements and vivacious performances of *Fugue for Tinhorns, I've Heard That Song Before, Cream Puff,* and an original *Repeat After Me.* But what gives this mild entertainment reel special distinction is its processing: not only is there complete freedom from preëcho and spill-over but the tape surfaces are the quietest I've yet encountered.

"Oliver." Broadway Cast Recording, Donald Pippin, cond. RCA Victor FTO 5017. 54 min., $8.95.
"Stop the World—I Want To Get Off." Broadway Cast Recording. Milton Rosenstock, cond. London LAN 85001, 48 min., $8.95.
"Oliver" and "Stop the World" Selections. Mantovani and His Orchestra. London LPM 70058. 30 min., $6.95.

Different as these two British contributions to the Broadway stage may be in most respects, they both brim with tunes that beguile one's ears on first encounter. Lionel Bart's score for *Oliver* is an inventive delight throughout—even better, to my taste, in such numbers as the poignant *Boy for Sale,* the zestful *Be Back Soon,* and the irresistible *Who Will Buy?* than in those tunes which have already made the hit parade. The whole show is consistently entertaining even to listeners who haven't seen it on stage.

And while boy trebles aren't normally to my taste, I have to concede that Bruce Prochnik is wholly disarming in the title role. The other principals (particularly Clive Revill as Fagin, Georgia Brown as Nancy, and Danny Sewell as Sikes) are as fine singing actors as Britain has sent us.

The Newly-Bricusse *Stop the World* is a more mannered show which, however effective it may be on the stage, is less than convincing on records. Newly himself tends to ham a good deal in his Littlechap's virtuoso solos, but several hit tunes (*Someone Nice Like You, What Kind of a Fool Am I?*) save the show. And notable above all is Ann Quayle's astonishingly versatile performance in *Typically English, Glorious Russian, Typische Deutsche,* and *All-American.*

If you hesitate to invest in the full-scale show reels, don't fail to sample their sheerly melodic attractions via Mantovani's lusciously orchestrated selections. For once he is neither too sentimental nor too lush, and the combination of superb materials and excellent recording (with notably quiet-surfaced tape processing) gives his skilled players the opportunity of proving their command of tonal coloring.

"Romantic Italian Songs." Sergio Franchi, tenor; Chorus and Orchestra, Wally Stott, cond. RCA Victor FTC 2127, 35 min., $8.95.

Sergio Franchi, Sol Hurok's answer to the public prayer for a new Mario Lanza, is the undoubtedly willing subject of one of the most extravagant publicity build-ups of all times, but he bears this burden easily enough in his debut program of Neapolitan traditional and popular songs. His enunciation is excellent; his virile personality is effectively and not too self-consciously projected; and if most of his interpretations seem studiously modeled on those of famous older tenors, he occasionally achieves (as in *La Vilanella, Marechiare,* and *O Surdato 'Namorato*) a more spontaneous gusto of his own. And the voice itself, despite some tightness (and probable enlargement by astute miking), really lives up to its publicity: a ringingly heroic and eloquent tenor that unquestionably will thrill every devotee of Italian song.

"Roger Williams' Greatest Hits." Roger Williams, piano; various orchestras and conductors. Kapp KTL 41043, 36 min., $7.95.

An immaculately recorded and processed tape anthology of popular favorites from the appealing cocktail hour pianist's earlier releases. It is sure to win him new devotees. Not all the present selections are my own choices of his best, but I certainly do endorse such numbers as *Tammy, I Got Rhythm, September Song,* and *Clair de lune.*

"The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm." Sound Track Recording Excerpts. Gus Levene, cond. M-G-M STC 4000, 41 min., $7.95.

There's more talk than music here, with Charlie Ruggles as the listen-my-children narrator, and the various so-called "dramatic moments" enacted by a weird mixture of British and Hollywood stars: Laurence Harvey, Terry-Thomas, Martita Hunt, Jim Backus, Buddy Hackett, et al. Very young children may enjoy this well-processed tape, but it's likely to strike more sophisticated Grimm fanciers as a watered-down, self-conscious substitute for the original tales.

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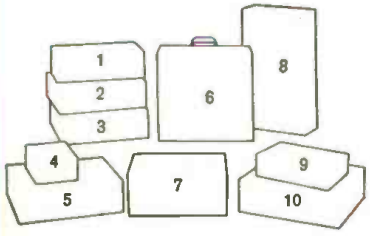

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HIGH FIDELITY NEWSFRONTS

BY NORMAN EISENBERG

CBS-3M Tape Cartridge. Shown in prototype about three years ago but only recently put on the market is the CBS-3M cartridge, which is radically unlike anything hitherto available. A spool of tape is housed within a plastic case, roughly the size of a package of cigarettes. To record on it or play it, you drop the packet in the well of a new machine (being manufactured by Revere) and press a button or two. The machine takes over completely: it threads, plays, and rewinds with no further attention from the user. Inasmuch as the tape speed in this system is only 1⅞ inches per second, a monophonic tape cartridge can furnish about ninety minutes of continuous playing time: a stereo version, forty-five minutes. Up to twenty cartridges may be stacked at once to run in sequence automatically—presumably to provide music not only all day but well into the night.

The first question, from our standpoint, is what kind of music? Here lies the rub, for the new system has yet to prove itself—at least to our satisfaction—as a high quality recording or reproducing system, or at least one that is equal to present tape systems costing as much or less. (The machine is priced at $450; prerecorded cartridges are $8.95 and $9.95; a blank cartridge for recording one's own is $4.75.) Certainly, the material played at a recent demonstration of the new device—while agreeable—did not transport those present to any acoustic Nirvana. We were, however, intrigued by the convenience and attractiveness of the system, as well as by the accomplishment of its very existence as a product (albeit for limited "test marketing" in St. Louis so far).

At the preview demonstration, no mention was made of the once much-mooted third track. There is room on the tape for a third track, and when the cartridge was originally shown that track was spoken of as suitable for recording the ambience or "room effects" of a performance (thus enhancing the stereo characteristics in terms of space and realism). We asked one of the high officials present at the demonstration about this feature and were told that "the idea is still alive, and may be used." We then asked how the manufacturer rated this cartridge in comparison with stereo discs and with reel-to-reel quarter-track tape at 7½ inches per second. The answer was that no such rating was being attempted, but we were adjured to remember "that tape outlasts discs." We then asked about the potentialities of the new cartridge machine for recording. Wasn't it just about impossible to edit or splice the tape inside the plastic housing? We were advised that the machine is regarded as essentially a playback device, that its application in recording was admittedly "limited." In view of this, we

Loading the cartridge recorder.

persisted, why incorporate "record" facilities at considerable cost to the buyer? Well, we were told, a stripped-down deck version (for playback only through an existing sound system) may be introduced later this year.

Of course, such a unit would presume a fairly large repertoire of prerecorded cartridges. The first announced list of such recordings is small and confined largely to pops and light classics, but conceivably the entire Columbia catalogue (and eventually those of other companies as well) could be made available—provided (1) that the initial marketing experiment in St. Louis succeeds, (2) that a playback "attachment" can be produced at a competitive price, and (3) that the sonic results equal or surpass what is presently available from more familiar program sources. One encouraging sign relative to the last consideration is the fact that the tape used in the new cartridges is 3M's new "Scotch" Brand No. 270, which has been found to provide a signal-to-noise ratio 6 db better than the widely used Scotch No. 111. Columbia, in fact, now is using 270 for its master 15-ips tapes. This superior tape, combined with the ultrathin gap heads found in the new machine, may yet make audio news beyond St. Louis.

New Product, New Plant. Audio Dynamics, manufacturers of the highly regarded ADC cartridges and Pritchard tone arm, now is making a bid for attention at the opposite end of a stereo system by launching a new line of loudspeakers. The ADC reproducers are built around a rectangular-shaped woofer that is suspended in the wooden cabinet. The tweeter diaphragm is made of Mylar. To provide the space needed for producing and testing speakers, Audio Dynamics has moved to a new plant in New Milford, Connecticut—something that President Peter Pritchard always wanted to do because "it puts me closer to the summer music festivals." What about the fall and winter? "We can always listen to our own speakers."

Our report on the new ADC speaker is scheduled for next month's issue. In the meantime, we prodded Mr. Pritchard about new cartridge developments. "Just how low a tracking force is practicable?" we asked. "Don't we reach a point of diminishing returns when we go much below 2 grams?"

"All other things being the same," explained Pritchard, "lower tracking forces, combined with suitable arms, can be expected to produce less record groove deformation and less groove-wall destruction. Of course, the latter becomes critical only when a record, such as a particular favorite, is played over and over. Most records are played by the average collector about five times a year, and records too have a way of 'recovering.' That is, the groove-walls—if not initially damaged but only slightly deformed—do spring back to their original contours when the record is stored for a time."

"Does this mean, then," we pressed, "that we have reached the limit in lowering tracking force?"

"By no means," countered Pritchard. "Lower tracking forces can mean cleaner sound from a record because not only is there less danger of damaging the groove on the very first playing, but also the temporary elastic deformation which occurs as the stylus traces the groove is greatly reduced. There is, today, evidence that 1 gram is better than 2 grams in this regard, and that ¾-gram is better than 1 gram. The differences, to be sure, are small but they exist, can be measured, and are of ultimate concern to the audio perfectionist."

"Just how low, then, do you feel we will get with stylus tracking force—considering the practicability in design terms versus the desirability in acoustic terms?" we asked.

"Eventually," said Pritchard, "we probably will have pickups that track at about two-tenths of a gram. That appears to be an optimum tracking force, commensurate with minimum distortion and maximum record life. Assuming a pickup whose other design parameters dovetail with a two-tenth-gram force—such as suitable tip radius and cartridge mass, and a proper arm—a record then could be played thousands of times with no appreciable wear."

THE BAFFLING CASE OF ANTON BRUCKNER

Continued from page 49

no Beethoven and were to read a scholarly German thesis on Beethoven's musical inheritance, you might imagine that composer to have been a combination of Haydn and Mozart but with more *ff's*. Bruckner's language, though we can easily trace its sources, is highly original; once you know it, you could turn on the radio and spot Bruckner at once even if the piece were one you had never heard. For like all great synthesizers—Mozart is perhaps the most celebrated example—Bruckner knew instinctively which elements of his heritage to accept and which to reject.

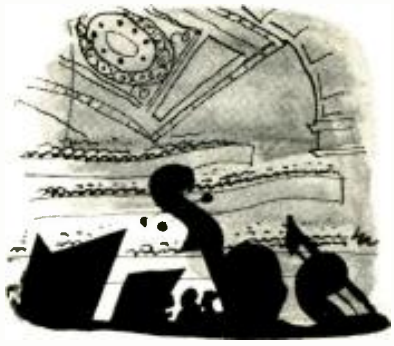
The enormous forms in which his music is cast are necessary because the material he presents is highly complex; it is also complicated, which is not the same thing. Thus, in the Finale of the Eighth Symphony, the coda unfolds itself like the reading of the Archangel at Doomsday; and at the very end, preceded by jagged timpani fanfares, every principal theme in the symphony comes in at once in a final and apocalyptic flash of grandeur. But to arrive at this point, to make this last affirmation of *e pluribus unum*, Bruckner had to construct a long and involved movement, to build up, stone by stone, the mighty edifice capable of receiving, at the end, such an overwhelming superstructure. One of the things that bewilders many people about Bruckner is this very size: we must always remember that he worked in the largest possible forms. (There is, significantly, no important short piece at all by Bruckner.) His mind worked precisely opposite from that of a Persian miniaturist, in whose art our eye is caressed by delightful details; in Bruckner, everything—even the smallest detail—is constructed with an eye to the whole and is thus relatively unimportant in itself.

IN THIS SENSE, not only the Austrians but the rest of us too are getting a Faustian summing-up in such a work as the Bruckner Eighth or Ninth Symphony. Why, then, has this music—coming from a school whose other members have written works cherished the world over—not gone the way of earlier Austrian composers? Why has not Bruckner become a main staple of our musical fare in the way that have Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, or Johann Strauss?

A number of answers to this difficult question have been suggested, but none appears to be wholly satisfactory. It is, for example, possible to link Bruckner's fate with the fate of romantic music in general: for with the upsurge of romanticism, the course of music began to take that fateful direction towards nationalism which ended in the pre-Schoenbergian chaos of a host of minor composers, all working within their own countries and penetrating the international concert world only with difficulty, or not at all. By conjuring up the temptation of subjectivity, composers had to pay the devil's price: isolation and misunderstanding. And if Schubert's path was difficult—we must remember that he wrote his Ninth Symphony more or less for the desk drawer—how much more tortuous was that of Bruckner, who was, moreover, burdened by a total lack of worldly sophistication, a hard, peasant's accent (his crude, primitive German was a sort of society joke in Vienna), and a generally uncouth appearance. Still, this naïve exterior obviously had nothing to do with the visionary grandeur of his music, and the argument connecting Bruckner and romanticism can be effectively countered by citing other romantic figures such as Mendelssohn or Tchaikovsky, whose music has not experienced any difficulty in crossing the borders of the countries in which it originated.

Still another argument, which one heard more frequently twenty or thirty years ago than one does today, is the old anti-Wagnerian cry. For many years it was the fashion to decry Wagner and, automatically, Bruckner, whose music, as we know, owes much to Wagnerian methods. Yet today Wagner is accepted as one of music's greatest geniuses, certainly not to be classified as a problem any more. This argument, too, does not bring us nearer the core of the matter. "I am tempted to believe," writes a valued colleague, "that there is no explanation for the feast-or-famine attitude towards Bruckner—except that we are perhaps in the presence of a cultural lag that seems to be more laggardly in some milieus than in others."

Granted this is true, someone reading this article a hundred years from now will probably experience the same curious sensations with which we read of mighty and earth-shaking aesthetic battles that took place generations ago: battles with which we can hardly identify ourselves emotionally, so long ago in space and time did they occur. Personally, I do not doubt for a minute that Bruckner is the greatest symphonist since Beethoven. Bruckner, I am convinced, is here to stay, and it is up to us to face his music squarely. Like the tourist in the Uffizi gallery in Florence who was told by the guard, "It is not the pictures that are on trial, it is you," one might paraphrase, "It is not Bruckner's music that is on trial. . . ." Perhaps the answer to the Bruckner Problem is as simple as that.



A LOST INQUIRY

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sympathy at one time or another to the whole miserable lot of them.

The dramatist and composer significantly directs most of our sympathy to Loge, excluded both from mankind and godhood, a trickster at Wotan's command and Wotan's scapegoat, but also a wry philosopher helped by mockery to endure what he sees. Wotan, archgod, is a poor devil so burdened with commitments to everyone that the fulfillment of any would violate a dozen others. Despondently but often in noble style he is a swindler, a thief and a fence, a liar, a weakling and a bully. His consort Fricka recalls him to those of his conflicting duties that further her own wishes. His hatchetman Donner is the divinity of bluster—but unforgettable in the thunder these records make when he sledges out his rainbow—and the juvenile pair of Froh and Freia, when everything is tottering, are unaware of any immediacy beyond their fancy for each other. The Rhinemaidens are disastrously insolent until their gold is stolen, thereafter vindictive. Alberich is a Caliban, and Mime would like to be.

Fasolt is the only one clean in the lamentable crew, for although Fafner too is an honest workman who does what he agreed to do, he is a fratricide for gain while his brother has impulses of generosity and is willing to give up gold for love. For his decencies Fasolt is killed and his murderer gets the treasure. Valhalla is the reward for the stupendous transgressions of Wotan and his henchmen. The rest mutter about a future retribution.

It would be unfair not to point out that, three operas later, Wagner will have established an estimable philosophical scheme to whose denouement *Rheingold* is only an introduction. In the operas' texts, that is: the intensely dramatic music compels its hearer to take the metaphysical struggles as a narrative of human conflicts and the symbolic exponents as human beings in trouble. The rogue Wotan, like the scoundrel Don Giovanni and the sneaking milksop Max, is a figure of sympathy whenever the composer chooses, since music, like oratory, has no intrinsic conscience and no obligation except to itself; and both can confer, while they last, a most diverting and dangerous blindness.

Implicit in *Das Rheingold* is Wagner's understanding that the gods and goddesses of any polytheism are simply men and women equipped with all the human frailties plus a distribution of specific supernal powers to make those frailties awesome. The mind returns to the Hellenic polythearchy in an inevitable homing from the introductory finger-snapping Orpheus to the domain of Apollo, who after all was Orpheus' father, or dad.

Gluck would be the illustrator of that pantheon, but unluckily the few relevant Gluck recordings are technically inferior to the high standard ordained

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PETER NERO

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a stay of a year and a half. In the friendly atmosphere of Jilly's, Nierow bloomed. He threw away *Over the Rainbow* and *Night and Day*. His nights there, he says, were just "jazz, jazz, jazz." He began to develop a small following. And—most important—jazz musicians were coming in and telling him that "now it really swings."

"I was on my way to being a jazz pianist," Nierow declares. "I began to idolize pianists that I used to detest—people like Thelonious Monk and Horace Silver. Oscar Peterson, too. I never liked him until I heard him at Basin Street one night and I thought I'd go off my chair. I could blow ten minutes on a tune and make it sound musical to my own satisfaction. I was playing good, clean jazz of the André Previn or Billy Taylor school, although I wasn't able to play the gutty kind of jazz I wanted to play."

While Nierow felt that he had finally mastered one aspect of music, he began to rebel against some aspects of the jazz world. The inevitable hangers-on—"the beards and the hippies"—irritated him. He was bored by the jazz custom of swinging constantly ("After swinging for sixteen bars, more swing ceases to interest me."). He realized that although he loved jazz and loved classical music, neither one completely satisfied him.

He was in this frame of mind when he heard from an old family friend employed by RCA Victor that Victor was looking for a pop pianist. This was the knock of opportunity, but Nierow failed to respond ("I didn't even know what a 'pop' pianist was."). Fate, however, apparently won't be brushed aside lightly. While Nierow was frozen in uncertainty, RCA Victor had asked Stan Greeson, Roger Williams' onetime manager, to be on the lookout for a pianist. Greeson's inquiries eventually led him to Jilly's. "I was fascinated by Bernie's playing," Greeson recalls. "but. . . ." The "but" was Greeson's suspicion that Nierow was "too far out" for the general public. Yet underneath this, he sensed real emotion and "a wonderful feeling for his instrument."

To see if these positive factors could be channeled towards the sympathies of a large audience, Greeson and Nierow had a long session together. Nierow played pieces from his non-jazz repertory —*Over the Rainbow*, *Autumn Leaves*— and Greeson asked him how he would do other pieces. Greeson was aiming at a middle road between jazz and classical music, which he believed might make the most of Nierow's talents in both fields. A week later Nierow recorded a demonstration disc made up of eight tunes including *Scratch My Bach*, *Over the Rainbow*, and some ballads. It was sent to RCA Victor and within two days Nierow had a contract.

Now the Peter Nero image began to take shape. His jazz-*cum*-classical treatments of familiar tunes were done with a sense of humor, and so the image was polished and sophisticated, with a sly twinkle in the eye. And since the name Bernie Nerow (he had dropped the "i" in Las Vegas) did not quite conjure up this picture, he was provided with one that did. There was a brief thought of calling him simply "Nero," but finally it was decided that he needed a first name and Peter was chosen as suggesting the proper level of urbanity —a dry champagne image. For his first album an orchestra was assembled in keeping with this image: not too lush, just strings and trombones.

Even the idea of champagne *brut* can be intoxicating. Exultantly, Nero cast aside all the jazz "rules" that had been hanging over him. "If I didn't feel like playing a flatted fifth, I decided I'd throw it out," he declares. "I'd put Bach in if I wanted to. I'd make *Cherokee* sound like Indians and *Spring Is Here* sound like spring. If I felt like an arpeggio, I'd play one. All this is taboo in jazz. And I decided to play as lyrically as I could. There's nothing wrong in playing a melody if it's played right."

As he threw off the old shackles, his exuberance grew. "I figured if that first record was a hit, I'd have to go on the road. And I didn't want to go on the road because I was happy at home. So I decided I was going to have fun. I treated *Over the Rainbow* with complete irreverence. I swung the first chorus. Later it turned into Bach, very carefully worked out. Then it got big—it sounded as though it needed the cannons of the *1812 Overture*, so I put in the cannons. Many people now think this is beautiful. Others fall out laughing at it. I've played it so often now that I've gotten a little tired of the joke."

The first Peter Nero album, "Piano Forte," was released in April 1961. One Victor executive, on hearing it, feared that the company had overplayed its hand. "We're liable to be in real trouble," he exclaimed. "We'll never be able to top that!" In fact, the sales figures indicate that Nero has topped himself with each successive album (his fifth, "The Colorful Peter Nero," was released this winter). He left Jilly's when the first album came out and, with a trio, began working night clubs across the country. Recently he has been concentrating on concert appearances. Between performances he plans ahead for his next album, sketching out the arrangements, taping the piano parts, and sending sketches and tapes to Victor a & r man Marty Gold, who fills out the arrangements. Nero gets his ideas from a variety of sources, most of them ephemeral. They may be stimulated by the key of the tune he is working on. *Body and Soul* is in D flat, which reminds him of *Clair de lune*—and *voila!*, there's some *Clair de lune* in his *Body and Soul*.

Nero thought Richard Rodgers' *Mountain Greenery* sounded like Mozart. "So I put a field of Mozart behind it; and if I feel like swinging, I swing. Who's to say no? Mozart? This is strictly an expression of myself, an expression of my impatience with both jazz and classical music."

A LOST INQUIRY

Continued from page 121

for this errant survey, and a compromise is imposed in the enchanting shape of Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, better qualified for inclusion here by the salient merits of its one extant phonographic edition (Oiseau-Lyre OL 50179/80 or SOL 60011/12) than by the tenuity of its connection to Olympus.

But although the gods are not seen they are felt, and the people in Handel's pastoral masque are nymphs and shepherds and a cyclops, creatures traditionally in contact with empyreal tutors. The scene too is heavenly, certainly not earthly: one of those eighteenth-century Arcadies improved from Ovid and Virgil, where spotless reclining shepherdesses in languid silks tend their house-trained flocks on tailored lawns of scented cereals while fountains toss refreshing sparkles and lithe young swains touch the lyre to charm the friendly birds and hush the dainty stingless iridescent insects.

The plot is direct. Fair Galatea, nereid, is loved by comely Acis, shepherd, and by grotesque Polyphemus, cyclops; favors Acis, whom the jealous Polyphemus forthwith kills; and invokes a goddess to make the lifeless shepherd immortal as a limpid Arcadian stream forever murmuring his love.

The hero slain. The heroine desolate. The villain unpunished. No predestination, no moral in a story of austere simplicity—which in spite of the bland artificiality of its place and persons attains a peculiar elevation of restrained and benevolent poignancy in Handel's learned staves, where the arias caparisoned with graces and the chorused nymphs and shepherds rich in counterpoint provide a basis for belief in the factitious stagery by proving that it can have an equivalent.

These two records are precious but do not glare. Chorus and orchestra are words too big for the little groups of singers and players prescribed by the earliest precedent, but the groups are stylistically versed and deft, at ease with Handel's garlanded requirements; and the sound, which cannot properly aim for magnipotence of impact, keeps itself instead on the target of unblurred clarity. Miss Joan Sutherland, Galatea, rises over any rightful expectation with a display of how a velvet voice can flit around some myriad corners without rubbing off any of its nap.

. . . . A look backward is a discouragement. The beginning search for a specific spell and perhaps a specific danger in music has been baffled into absurd divagations by encounters with other magics. The inquiry into ethics has been a fiasco of confusion, and various thearchies have intervened to bother. The one thing clear is a strong, strong memory of four musical masterpieces concerned magically with magic. Time must certainly obscure that memory, and then the original inquiry shall be resumed, sooner or later, perhaps.

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ROOM ACOUSTICS

Continued from page 52

function as "acoustical materials." Windows and their coverings, for instance, have a major effect on a room's sound. Large, exposed glass surfaces will reflect the highs, often so vigorously as to set up little "hot spots" that yield very pronounced treble response. A thin bamboo drapery, or something similar, hung over a big window will improve treble propagation and at the same time tend to flatten out any peaks in the bass. Full-length draperies, including those that extend beyond the actual dimensions of the window, are excellent treble absorbers. Additionally, if hung at a distance of about six inches from the wall, draperies begin to have a smoothing effect on the bass. If less absorption is desired and windows are relatively small, draperies may be made of a thin fabric or perhaps eliminated entirely. A less sightly but often effective method of smoothing the bass tones in a room is to place plywood panels behind sofas and cabinets. Often, the very wood of which a large cabinet is made does the trick, and this is very probably the reason why many listeners assert that when their equipment finally is put in a proper cabinet it not only looks better but sounds better too. Rooms done in contemporary décor, with little upholstered furniture, tend to be overbright in sound. A thick carpet—preferably wall-to-wall—will serve as an effective sound-improving agent in such a room.

Finally, in addition to the acoustic factors considered above, the ideal playback room requires low background noise level if listeners are to be spared masking effects and general annoyance. Extraneous noise may be subtle but it can definitely interfere with the balance of the sound you hear. In general, lower-pitched tones tend to mask, or render less distinct, higher-pitched tones played at the same loudness level. Because of the effects of one instrument on another, some masking is inherent in the musical performance itself, but this is presumably calculated on the part of the composer. In playing recorded music, any additional or spurious masking is to be avoided. Fortunately, most normal-size living rooms have a short enough reverberation time so that the effect of masking by environmental noises is minimized. Furthermore, the same methods described earlier for dealing with the acoustic problems of diffusion, reflection, and absorption invariably lower a room's sensitivity to background noise.

Those interested in exploring the subject of room acoustics further will find the following volumes of particular interest: Paul E. Sabine, *Theory and Use of Architectural Materials* (available for 25 cents from Acoustical Materials Association, 335 E. 45th St., New York, N.Y.); Knudsen & Harris, *Acoustical Designing in Architecture* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., $8.00); Leo L. Beranek, *Music, Acoustics, and Architecture* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., $17.50).

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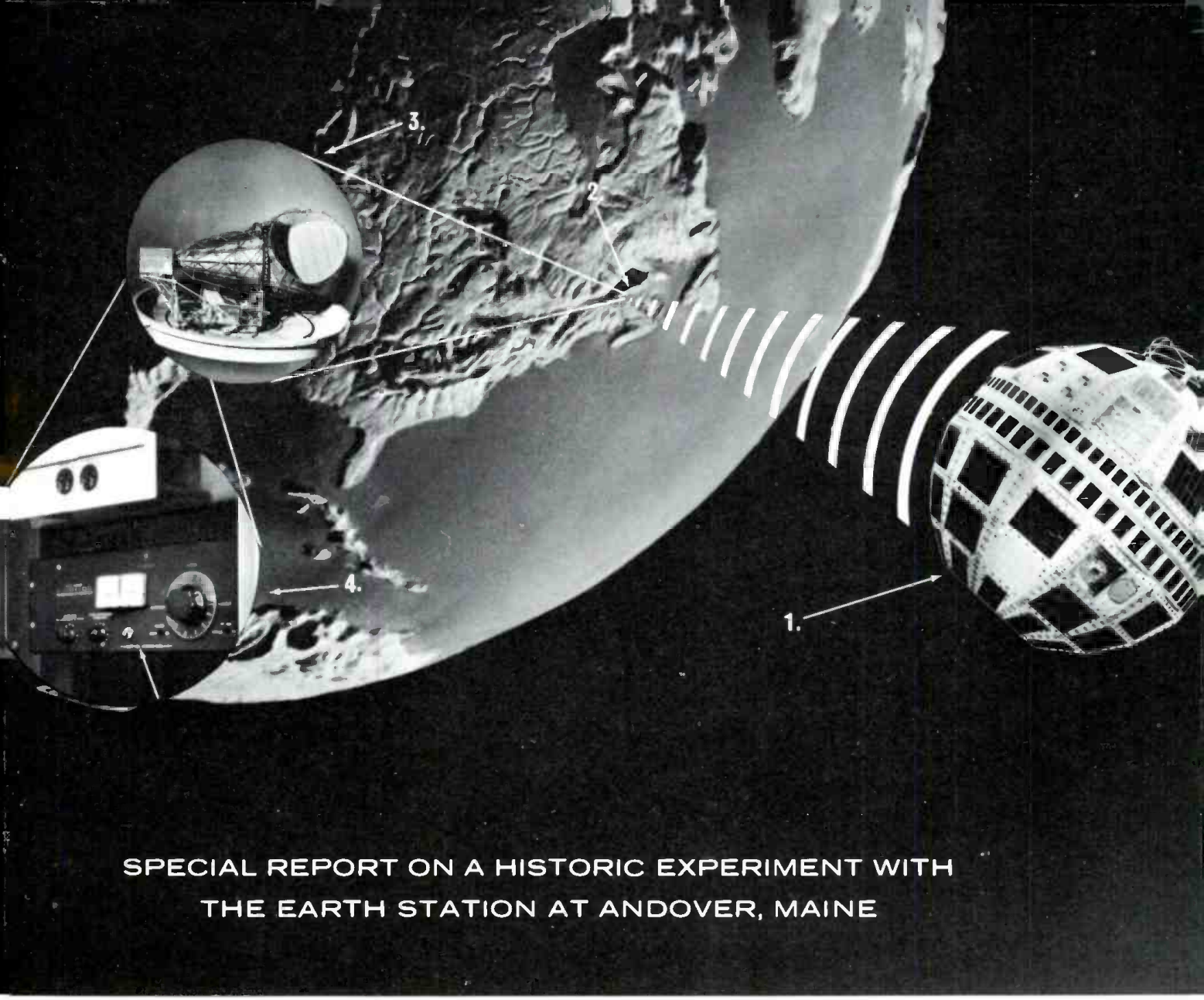

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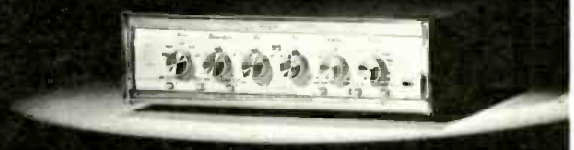

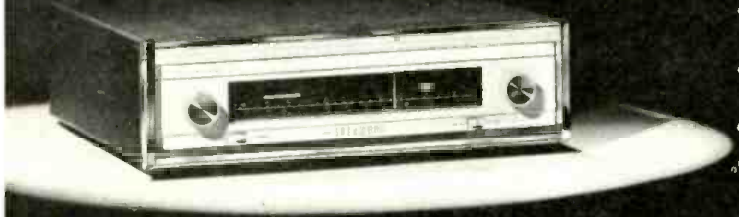

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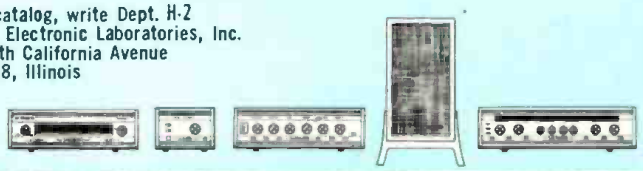

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