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500-TX pulls in music where, until now, it was hissssssss.



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quality for the sake of selectivity. Wide-band also makes it possible for FM stations to sound clean and undistorted even when they overmodulate their signals.

Furthermore, dual-gate MOSFET RF and mixer stages can handle input signals varying in strength over a range of 600,000 to 1, without overload, and without the need of a Local/Distant switch. So you won't be able to tell if you're receiving a weak or a strong station even if you want to. They'll all sound the same.

Before we get off the subject of the tuner of the 500-TX, there's one more thing we'd like to mention.

The AM section. It too will bring in stations you're not used to hearing, through its use of a 4-resonator ceramic ladder filter. And even more important, it makes AM as listenable as FM-mono.

Other features of the 500-TX.

In every respect, the 500-TX is the most advanced, most sophisticated product we've ever manufactured.

It's the most powerful receiver in the world, delivering 190 watts into an 8 ohm load. (Most receivers with high power ratings are rated at 4 ohms. Their power

into conventional, 8 ohm speakers is actually somewhat lower.) With all that power you'll have no trouble driving the most inefficient speaker systems cleanly, as loud as you want.

There are four ways to tune the 500-TX. In addition to ultra-smooth manual tuning, there's also Fisher Tune-O-Matic™. This lets you preset your four favorite FM stations, and then tune to any one instantly, electronically at the touch of a button. Or you can choose to use the AutoScan™. Touch one of two buttons and the next FM station up or down the dial is automatically tuned in. Hold down either button and every FM station up or down the dial comes in, one by one. Remote control AutoScan is also possible with an optional accessory.* So you can tune in any station from your easychair or bed.

The most remarkable feature of the Fisher 500-TX is the one we've saved for last.

It costs a lot less than you might guess to go from before to after.

\$449.95. (Walnut cabinet, 22.95. Prices slightly higher in the Far West.)

The Fisher 500-TX on the dial with all you could get



Mail this coupon for your free copy of **The Fisher Handbook**, 1969 edition. This reference guide to hi-fi and stereo also includes detailed information on all Fisher components.

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The Fisher

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*The Fisher RK-30, \$9.95.

If you think you're familiar with the FM stations in your area, get a surprise.

The new Fisher 500-TX receiver on display at your favorite hi-fi store pulls in weak and faraway stations in your neighborhood has been heard before.

(No, you're not the only one who hears a hiss where the FM guide says there should be a station.)

The 500-TX is unusually sensitive (usable sensitivity 1.7 microvolts). But that's not the main reason why it brings in stations that other receivers pass over.

The stations you hear most clearly are weak or distant stations located right next to stronger, louder stations. Most tuners will reject these stations completely. Others will receive them indistinctly.

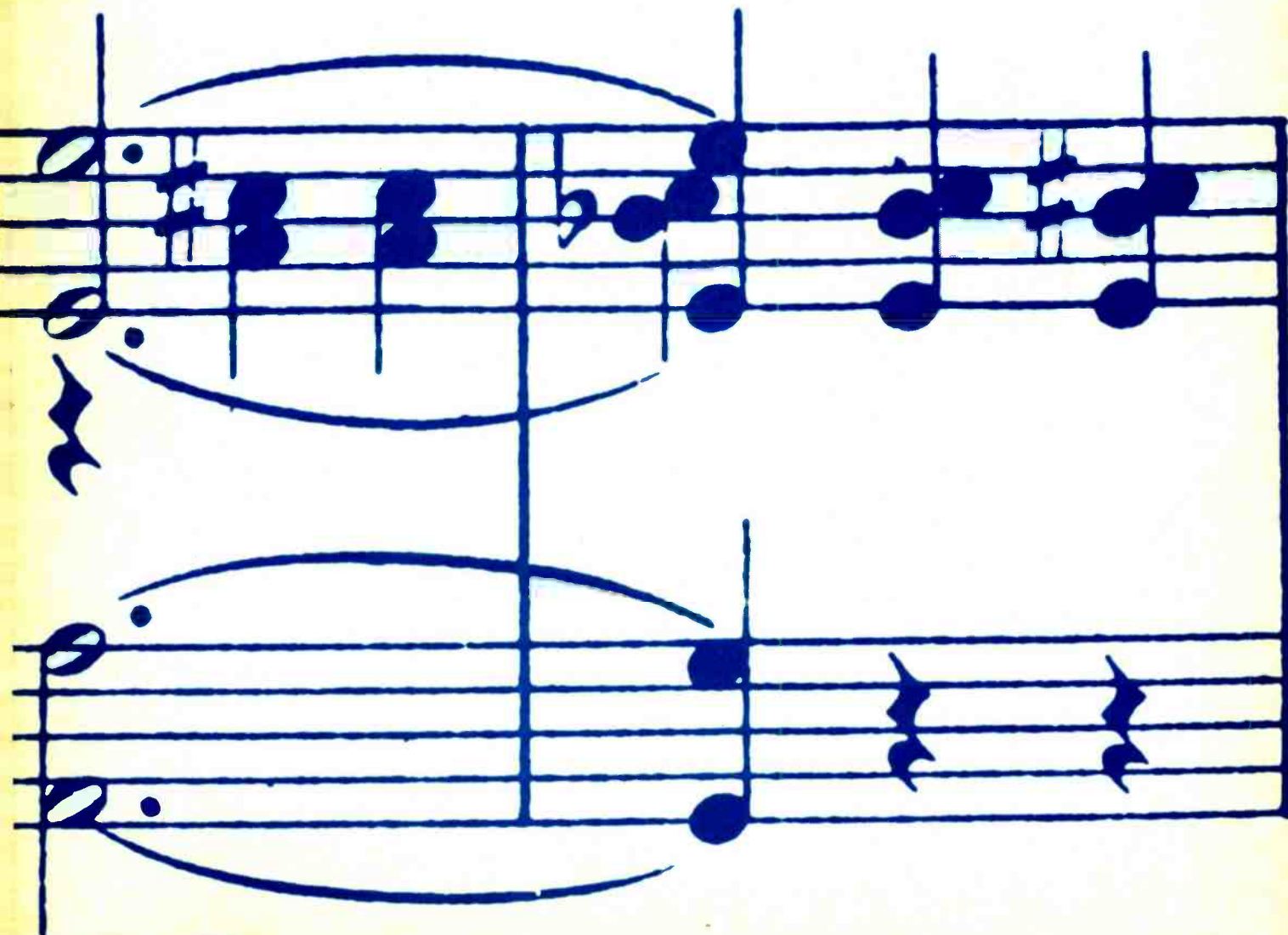
But the Fisher 500-TX was designed to receive these stations loud and clear. And free of noise and hiss.

A highly selective crystal filter and wide-band design of the IF section assures that there's no sacrifice in

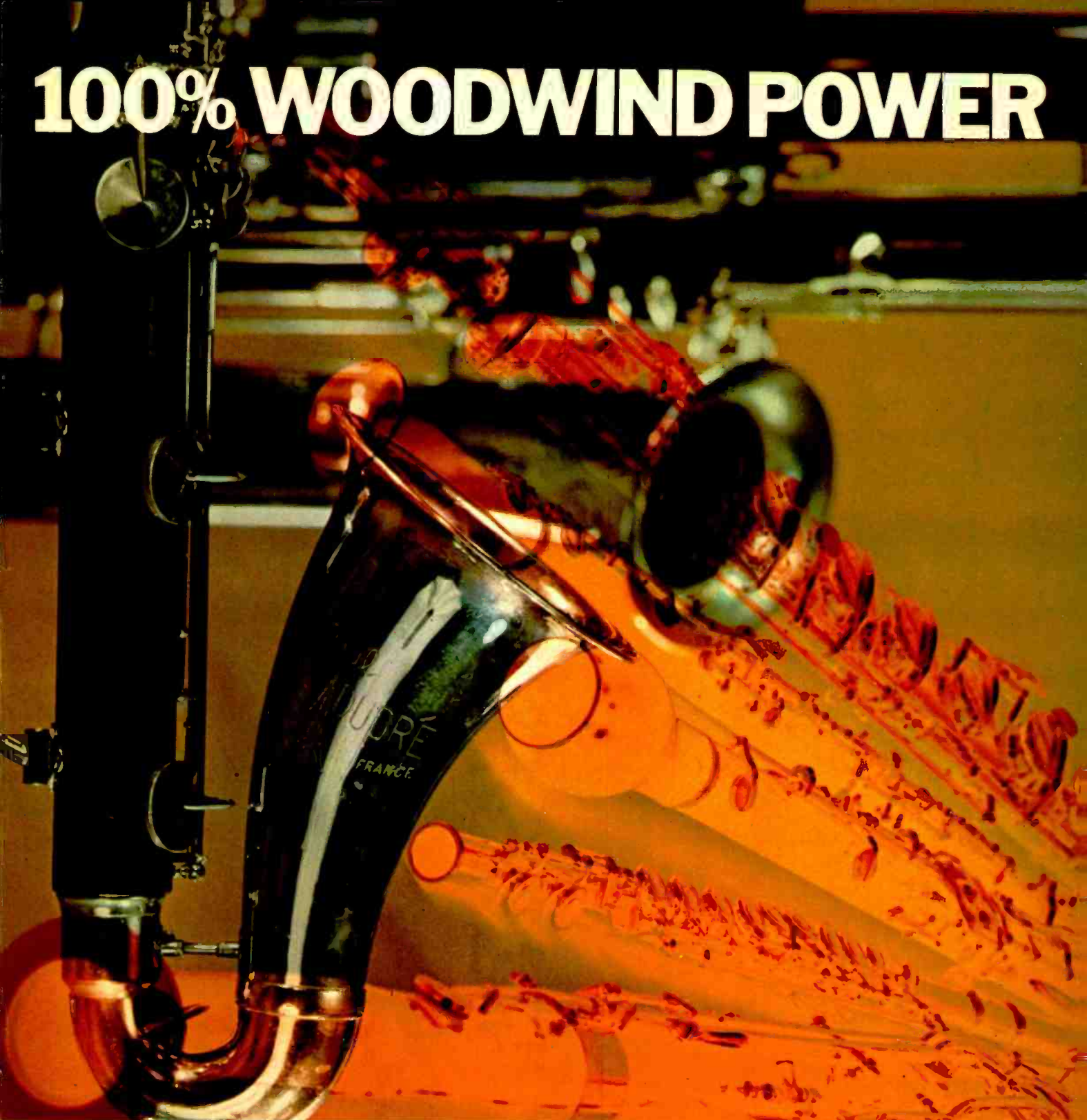
Before:

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After:



100% WOODWIND POWER



PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ ECKHART

Words are inherently limited in stimulating the emotions aroused by music. This is especially so in describing how high fidelity components perform.

With cartridges, for example, we speak of flat frequency response, high compliance, low mass, stereo separation. Words like these enlighten the technically minded. But they do little or nothing for those who seek only the sheer pleasure of listening.

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We listened especially for the ability of these cartridges to reproduce the entire range

of every instrument. With no loss of power. In the case of woodwinds, this meant a cartridge that could recreate the exact nuances that distinguish an oboe from an English horn. A clarinet from a bass clarinet. A bassoon in its lower register from a contrabassoon in its higher register.

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From the Publisher

The association I have enjoyed with Roland Gelatt for the past fifteen years is of a kind rare indeed between business colleagues, particularly in that supercharged segment of the communications world known as magazine publishing.

Much of what **HIGH FIDELITY** and **HIGH FIDELITY/Musical America** are today is Roland's doing. As third editorial chief (following Charles Fowler and John M. Conly) his tenure had been by far the longest of all in our eighteen-year life. Our careers have run some interesting parallels (I am **HIGH FIDELITY**'s third publisher) and our love for music seems in similar tandem (we both have a special affection for opera) and I suppose that's the chief reason that so many of the hundreds of business conferences we've had over the years were so productive and also so much fun.

The refining and remolding process which has, over these years, brought **HIGH FIDELITY** from a more rudimentary product appealing to some 60,000 readers to its present estate—and a circulation of better than 165,000—is but one testimonial to the dynamics of Roland's talents. To me, however, creations such as two special Mozart issues, the Verdi, the Wagner, or (more recently) the New Music issue, or this superb effort on Berlioz will be among the most often recalled specifics of a very personal professional relationship. For this is the last issue in which Roland's name graces our masthead. On January 27, 1969 he began his duties as managing editor of *Saturday Review*. Regretfully, he is right in leaving us because his ever expanding aptitudes will range over a broader spectrum there than they ever could here. So be it.

Roland, we'll miss you.

Warren B. Syer

Coming Next Month

ALL ABOUT TURNTABLES AND CHANGERS

The "automatic" revolution has now begun to be felt even in manual turntables. Next month our new Associate Editor, Bob Long, takes a look at the latest in turntables and changers; in the same issue Daniel Gravereaux of CBS Laboratories will explain "How We Judge Turntables, Arms, and Changers," following his recent discussion here of pickup criteria. If you are in the market for record-playing equipment, you might as well wait another month so that you can read these two informative and helpful articles.

SHOSTAKOVICH'S SYMPHONIES

Now that all thirteen symphonies by the Soviet Union's most celebrated (both officially and popularly) and most condemned (both officially and popularly) composer are available on records, our resident Shostakovich expert, Royal S. Brown, has been able to hear them with a fresh perspective. In his discography he discusses each work in turn and presents a thoughtful analysis of the recordings, with recommendations for each.

THE PROFESSORS HAVE TAKEN OVER ROCK

And the kids are therefore deserting it. Everywhere you turn, some Great Thinker is finding everything from the wisdom of Solomon to the perception of Shakespeare to the beauty of Shelley in even the most incompetent rock-and-roll drivel. April will bring Arnold Shaw's blast at some of his fellow academicians in "Rocks in Their Heads."

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Cover photo of Berlioz statue
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Those Paranoid Producers

For sheer adolescent paranoia, John McClure's letter [January 1969] eclipses even the Culshaw article which it is defending ["The Record Producer Strikes Back," October 1968]. As in the article, there is virtually no discussion of the aesthetic questions involved. Instead, McClure's "argument" consists of a list of clichés ("change," "young," "McLuhan" vs. the "Keepers of the Flame") obviously intended to elicit a positive response from all of us who sympathize with the "hustling, brash, young media" and their groovy manipulators. Why didn't McClure just come out and say "It's what's happening, Baby," and leave it at that?

The distinction, of course, is completely false and is created by Culshaw and McClure as a rhetorical substitute for real argument. Nobody in his right mind would doubt that new standards must be established. The question is whether or not Culshaw's standards are necessarily the correct ones, a question which does not seem to have even occurred to Culshaw. The lack of substance in Culshaw's response to Conrad L. Osborne's criticism of *his* standards (not "all new standards." Mr. McClure) indicates that perhaps he has not himself thought the problem through sufficiently to formulate any working aesthetic. I would be most interested in reading Culshaw's comments on the specific problems of music and medium and his responses to specific criticisms, but they will be valid only if they are based on musical considerations.

Richard Steiger
Oakland, Calif.

Old Philadelphia

Emily Coleman's article on Eugene Ormandy [January 1969] was a fine, well-deserved tribute to the energy, dedication, and musicianship of a first-rate conductor. First rate. But not now, or ever, to judge from recordings of past decades and from numerous live concerts one hears, *great*.

I do not wish to carp. Mr. Ormandy deserves his fame and prestige if only because of the courage and perseverance he displayed in the face of the shameful flak thrown at him during his early years with Philadelphia. But halfway through the article, I came across a statement that jolted me. To say that Ormandy "took an orchestra . . . on the threshold of greatness" and "fulfilled its promise" is simply false and historically and critically irresponsible.

In 1914, Leopold Stokowski took a dull, *Kapellmeister*-ish civic band and began doing precisely what is attributed to his successor in the above-quoted assertion. By the time Stokey had reached his

best years (late Twenties and early Thirties), he had created an orchestra that was, beyond any real argument, the greatest the world had ever known. Since then, other bands have reached a point where they can claim equal honors, but none has surpassed that "Old Philadelphia" for flexibility, sensitiveness to nuance and color, razor-edged response, and sheer staggering virtuosity.

Ormandy did *not* take an orchestra "on the threshold of greatness" and push it over the line. He took the greatest orchestra then in existence and kept it from deteriorating as the Philharmonic had after the departure of Toscanini (and, knowing the Philharmonic, probably will do again after the departure of Bernstein). Let us give Ormandy's Philadelphia its due—it is still a very great orchestra, capable at times of transcendent performances. Fine, and all credit to Ormandy that this is so. He is a thorough professional and a splendid musician, but he lacks that indefinable quality of greatness that can galvanize an orchestra with fires of creation.

Miss Coleman's article was, with this exception, a fine piece of work, doing full justice to its subject and making the reader appreciate anew all of Ormandy's many fine qualities as a man and a musician. But the falsity, the singular absurdity of that one statement is flabbergasting. It's an example of a process in music which might be called greatness-by-demise-of-one's-colleagues. Among those profiting by the entropy at work in the conducting profession are Szell (twenty years ago who had ever heard of him or cared), Leinsdorf (belongs in a second-rate Italian opera house—no second-rate German opera house would have him), Steinberg (as close to a total nonentity as one can get and still be sentient), and Ormandy, who looks better, even to me, as those around him keep looking blander.

William Trotter
Charlotte, N.C.

Surface Hiss

As a long-time reader of HIGH FIDELITY and a longer-time stereo/high fidelity fan, I have been extremely interested in your new column "Too Hot to Handle." I was particularly delighted to see the letter published in the November issue complaining about the problems encountered with today's record releases. May I please add my comments in the vain hope that something will be done by the record companies to improve their product and truly reflect the quality built into today's high fidelity components.

I would not complain of the exorbitant

Continued on page 10

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

DROP TEST



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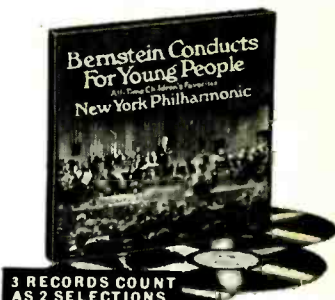
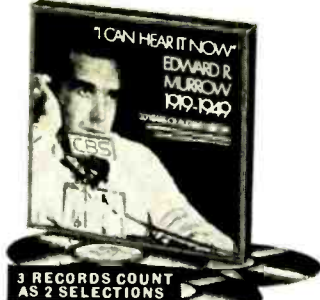
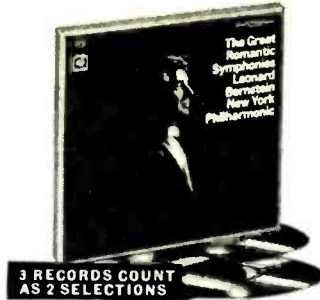
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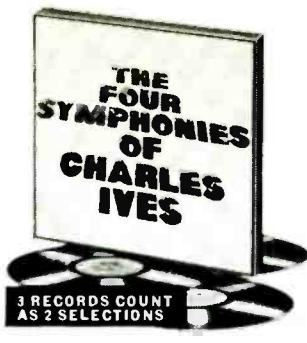
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Continued from page 6

cost of each record album I buy if it were technically sound. Instead I am greeted with a bunch of pops and clicks and distortion that good hi-fi equipment only accentuates. I know that I have the return privilege guaranteed by the record manufacturer. However, I sometimes buy records in Chicago or Los Angeles and am not able to determine just how terrible they are until I play them in Massachusetts. To whom do I return them? The dealer uptown isn't interested in my

problem since he didn't sell me the record. Return them to the manufacturer? Now I shall have postage added to the already excessive cost of the record. So I keep the thing and apologize each time I place it on my turntable.

Oh, I have been the route of the Parastat and Dust-Bug record moisteners with their added expense and ineffectiveness. However, if the record manufac-

Continued on page 12

A Note from the Copyright Office

The many inquiries we receive from authors and composers indicate a need for general information to guide them in dealing with some promoters and publishers.

The Copyright Office cannot give legal advice. We are therefore unable to comment in individual cases on the provisions of legal contracts, the terms of publishing arrangements, or the conditions under which a song is recorded. The Office also has no authority to recommend or comment on the reliability of any publisher, agent, co-author, recording company, or "song service."

It is possible for the Copyright Office to suggest some of the factors that writers should consider before signing a contract or paying someone for publishing or recording their works. However, we cannot advise authors and songwriters what to do in particular cases, and it may often be important to consult an attorney for this kind of advice.

In typical cases, it is not the practice of established and reputable publishing companies and phonograph record producers in the United States to charge the writer anything for publishing or recording his work. Where a work has been accepted by a publishing or recording company, the usual arrangement is for the company to offer the author a contract clearly specifying that the company will pay all costs of producing copies or records and of promoting the work, and that it will pay the author a royalty on sales. The author is ordinarily not required to pay anything or buy anything.

Although it is not the usual arrangement, publishers, printers, record producers and pressers, agents, and others are often willing to enter into an agreement with the author to provide services that the author pays for. Examples of services of this kind include editing a manuscript for publication, job printing and record pressing,

publishing the author's own edition, arranging for cutting a demonstration record, or acting as the author's agent in attempting to sell or promote the work. In these cases, the author understands that the work is being done on his order and at his risk and expense; he is not given unrealistic promises and praise in an effort to get his business.

There are also a few publishers and "song services" that make their primary profit from the authors with whom they deal rather than from the sale of books or records. Often, after an author has responded to an advertisement by sending a copy of his verse, song, or manuscript to one of these companies, he gets an answer praising the work highly and expressing interest in doing one or more of the following:

- Writing music for the author's verse and then publishing or promoting the resulting song;
- "Publishing," recording, or promoting a song for the author who submits both verse and melody;
- Including the author's work in an anthology or other publication.

Acceptance of an offer of this kind nearly always requires the author to pay a fairly substantial amount of money toward the costs of the enterprise, either directly or through the purchase of copies or records. In exchange, the company typically promises to promote the work, to pay royalties on sales, and to provide the author with a certain number of copies or records for his personal use. There have been cases of this sort where the author recovered his investment, but they are the exception. Nearly always the amount the author pays covers all of the company's costs and gives it a profit, while his return in royalties and unsold copies is substantially less than his total investment.

Copyright Office
Library of Congress

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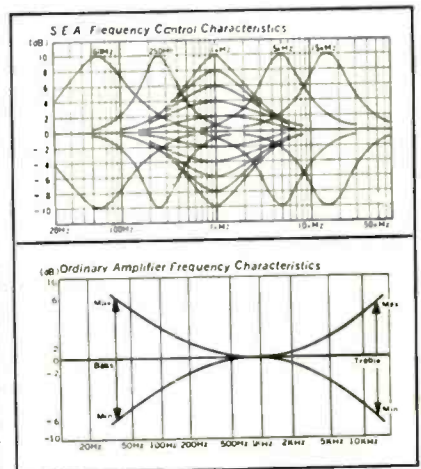
In introducing the striking all solid state 60 watt 5001 and 140 watt 5003 AM/FM Multiplex Stereo Tuner Amplifiers, JVC brings the stereo fan a new dimension in stereo enjoyment—the complete control of sound effects.

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systems to be used either independently or simultaneously. Indicative of their unchallenged performance is their refined styling. All controls are arranged for convenient operation. The attractive black window remains black when the power is off, but reveals both dial scales and tuning meter when the power is on. For the creative stereo fan, the JVC 5001 and 5003 are unquestionably the finest medium and high powered receivers available today.

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



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**A copy of this Test Report
on the Tandberg Model 64X
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is yours for the asking:**

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORT

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratory

The outstanding performance of past Tandberg recorders is a matter of record. In our comments on the original Model 64 (HIFI STEREO REVIEW, October, 1958), we pointed out that, almost alone among home tape recorders of that time, the Tandberg 64 at 7½ ips did not in any way change the sound of a recorded program, whether from discs or FM.

It is difficult to improve on the record of performance, but Tandberg engineers have done so. The new Model 64X is externally identical to the Model 64, but substantially better in many respects. Particularly at the lower tape speeds, the Model 64X has a substantially improved signal-to-noise ratio.

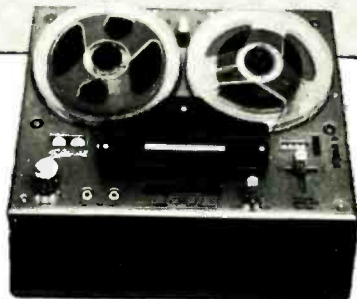
Other changes between the new Model 64X and the older Model 64 include changes in the equalization at 1½ ips and a reduced bias current at the 1½-ips speed. A significant change is the addition of a parasitic shield on the head facing the unrecorded side of the tape opposite the recording head. This is largely responsible for the improved frequency response and signal-to-noise ratio of the Model 64X.

At 7½ ips, we measured the overall record-playback frequency response of the Tandberg Model 64X as an excellent +0.5, -2.5 db from 40 to 20,000 Hz. The playback frequency response from the Ampex 51321-04 test tape was excellent. In fact, it was so good that a number of listeners might be deceived into thinking they were hearing a 7½-ips machine with the Tandberg Model 64X operating at 1½ ips.

The 64X offers the highest caliber of performance presently obtainable in a home tape recorder. It is unquestionably a high-fidelity recorder at 3¾ ips, which cannot be said for quite a few otherwise fine machines. We could not fault its performance in any respect. The Tandberg 64X sells for \$549 and is well worth it.

As appearing in
HIFI STEREO REVIEW
February 1968 issue

The 64X offers the highest caliber of performance presently obtainable in a home tape recorder ... we could not find fault with it in any respect. The Tandberg 64X sells for \$549 and is well worth it."



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LETTERS

Continued from page 10

turers were doing their job of providing a good product, these items would not be necessary. It's like buying a bucket to place under a leaky pipe: the bucket could have been bypassed if the problem had been corrected at the source.

I am certain that in today's state-of-the-record-art, something better than vinyl—virgin or otherwise—exists from which records can be fabricated. I remember years ago that someone developed a fiberglass disc; it did not lend itself to mass production, and therefore was presumably impractical. Something must be done, however, to upgrade the abysmally low quality of most American record pressings.

E. J. Bernardini
Hanson, Mass.

Spohr and Miss Fleming

Poor old Spohr! I refer to the review of his Nonet and Double Quartet by Shirley Fleming in your November edition. Of course, she's quite entitled to find his music "not very interesting"—after all, I know someone whose favorite Beethoven piece is the *Battle Symphony*. But when she says that the stresses and strains of German romanticism simply passed him by, I think that this composer, who always seems to bring out the best in critics, must have a few facts quoted in his defense.

1) Spohr was one of the first composers to appreciate the romantic quality of the clarinet. Two of his concertos, at least, predate Weber's two famous efforts and, as anyone who has heard the Spohr C minor Concerto on Oiseau-Lyre can testify, this work is indeed full of early romantic feeling.

2) His operas dealt with romantic subjects from his very first attempt, composed in 1806. *Faust*, dating from 1813 (but not produced until 1816) is termed a "romantic opera" and uses melodrama and other romantic devices found in Weber's *Freischütz*. Listen also to the excerpt from *Jessonda* in the "History of Music in Sound" series. You might or might not think the musical ideas are uninteresting, but there can scarcely be any doubt that Spohr's method of announcing imminent death in that opera prefigures the corresponding passage in *Die Walküre* where Brünnhilde informs Siegmund of his approaching death.

3) His symphonies are motivated by romantic ideals. Take No. 4, the much-maligned *Consecration of Sound*. This title does not refer to Spohr's evaluation of his work (any more than Nielsen's *Inextinguishable* does to his) but is the name of a poem which the symphony attempts to describe. Because of the program, Spohr introduces a march instead of a scherzo (thus anticipating Tchaikovsky) and at various stages quotes a Lutheran chorale and an Ambrosian chant. The "slow" movement in fact alternates slow and fast passages which are

Continued on page 16

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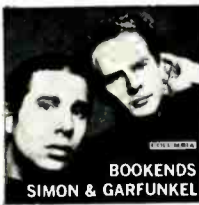


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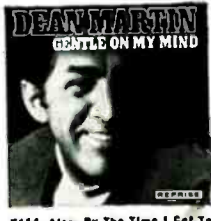
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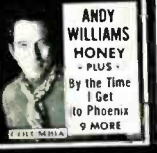
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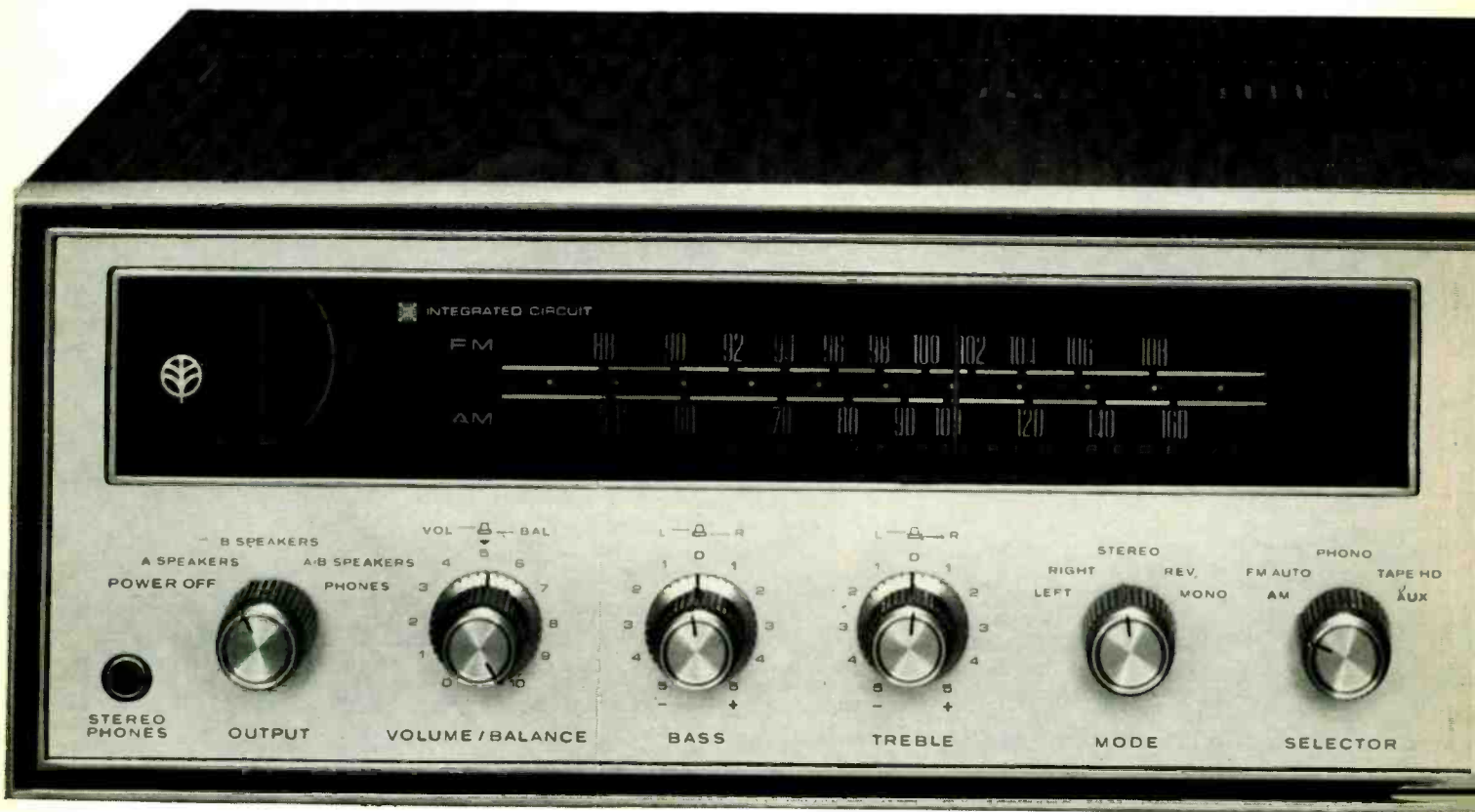
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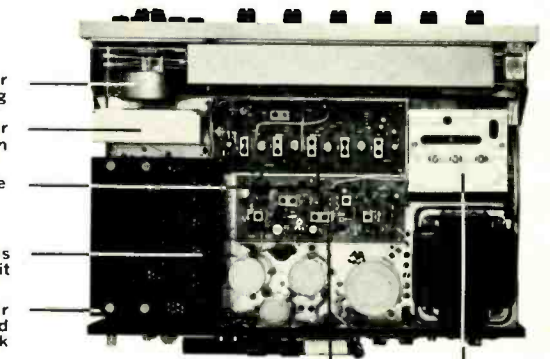
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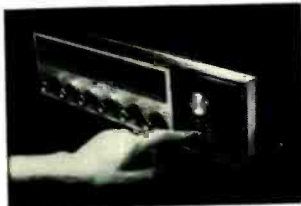
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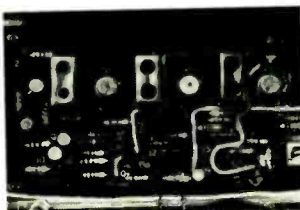


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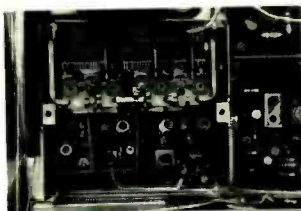


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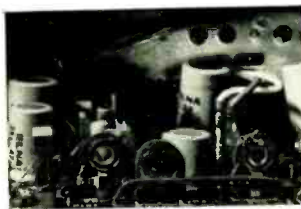
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CIRCLE 3 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 12

linked by their basic pulse, and the finale is a gentle allegretto.

4) His harmony is staged along the chromatic road to *Tristan*, particularly his later works which Wagner apparently knew. Certainly Spohr's last opera, *The Crusaders*, was studied by Wagner at Dresden with a view to production. This work was called by Spohr a "music drama" and predates Wagner's use of the term. It was composed between *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*, and there are no set arias, dialogue, or recitatives.

I hope Shirley Fleming will hunt out some of these works by Spohr: she might come to find him an interesting composer. But even if she doesn't, she will learn a lot about the influence of a lesser composer on some of the greater ones.

Keith Warsaw
Nottingham, England

Movie Music

In "Records That Escaped the Trash Bin" [December 1968], Gene Lees assailed "old-fashioned" classical film music as being "phony." I find it hard to find anything of value in today's jazz- and rock-based scores, primarily because they add nothing to the understanding of the film—most pop scores are nothing more than muzak.

The old "classical" film scores, composed by such artists as Franz Waxman, Alfred Newman, Bernard Herrmann, Miklós Rózsa, and Erich Korngold, added depth and characterization to the film. There was—and is—nothing phony about that.

Richard H. Bush
Long Island City, N.Y.

Fair Play for Bach

I should like to amplify two points in Gene Lees's review of Columbia's "Switched-On Bach" in the December 1968 issue. While we do not wish to detract from the obvious achievements of Walter Carlos, we do wish to call attention to the very significant role Benjamin Folkman played in the realization and production of the recording. In addition, although it is true that we received an advance of \$2,500 for the album, it should be noted that we have a generous royalty arrangement with Columbia Records.

Rachel Elkind
Trans-Electronic-Music
Productions, Inc.
New York, N.Y.

Koussevitzky and Mengelberg

In answer to Mr. Adams' plea in your December "Letters" column for RCA's release of the Sibelius Second Symphony by Koussevitzky, there is such a version presently available in England on English Victrola's Legacy series. There is also, on the same label, a Koussevitzky *Harold*

Continued on page 20

 <p>PROKOFIEV MITROPOLIOUS</p>	 <p>ELEANOR STEBER LEONTYNE PRICE HERMINE STREIBER</p>	 <p>MUSSELS GREENSLEEVES</p>	 <p>SCHUBERT</p>	 <p>MARCHE SLAVE CAPRICCIO ITALIANO NIGHT ON BALD MOUNTAIN MITROPOLIOUS</p>	 <p>VIVALDI</p>	 <p>Liberace</p>	 <p>Greensleeves The Norman Luboff Choir</p>
<p>1. COLUMBIA Odyssey. Prokofiev, Romeo and Juliet Ballet Suite, Mitropoulos—New York Philharmonic.</p>	<p>2. COL. Ody. Barber, Knoxville "Summer of 1915", Hermit Song, Eleanor Steber, Leontyne Price.</p>	<p>3. COL. Odyssey. Mahler, Symphony No. 1 (with "Blumine" Movement) New Haven Symphony Orchestra—Briefi.</p>	<p>4. COL. Odyssey. Schubert, Unfinished Symp., Rosemunde Overture, Magnificat in C Major, Vienna New Symphony.</p>	<p>5. COL. Odyssey. Marche Slave, Capriccio Italian Night on Bald Mountain, Mitropoulos—New York Philharmonic.</p>	<p>6. COL. Ody. Vivaldi, Concertos for Woodwinds and String Orchestra, Goberman—N. Y. Sinfonietta.</p>	<p>7. COL. Harmony. Liberace Plays Rhapsody in Blue and Other Favorites, Liebestraum, Chopsticks.</p>	<p>8. COL. Harm. Norman Luboff Choir, Greensleeves, Annie Laurie, Cockles and Mussels, The Ash Grove.</p>
 <p>Andre Kostelanetz</p>	 <p>LIPATTI CHOPIN WALTZES</p>	 <p>MAHLER BRUNO WALTER</p>	 <p>TCHAIKOVSKY PATHETIQUE SYMPHONY MITROPOLIOUS</p>	 <p>PROKOFIEV</p>	 <p>AETHA FRANKLIN QUEEN OF SOUL</p>	 <p>THE MORMON TABERNALE CHOIR ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS</p>	 <p>Viva Tijuana!</p>
<p>9. COL. Harmony. Andre Kostelanetz, You and the Night and the Music, Night and Day, Love for Sale, others.</p>	<p>10. COL. Ody. Chopin Waltzes, "Valse Brillantes", "Two Four", "L'Adieu", "Minute Waltz", Dimu Lipatti.</p>	<p>11. COL. Ody. Mahler Symphony No. 4, Bruno Walter, Des Halban (sop.)—New York Philharmonic.</p>	<p>12. COL. Ody. Tchaikovsky, "Pathetique" Symphony, Mitropoulos and the N. Y. Philharmonic Orch.</p>	<p>13. COL. Ody. Prokofiev, Classical Symp., Lt. Kije Suite, Love for 3 Oranges, Goberman-Vienna New Symp.</p>	<p>14. COL. Harm. Aetha Franklin, Queen of Soul, Love for Sale, I Apologize, I May Never Get to Heaven.</p>	<p>15. COL. Harm. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Onward Christian Soldiers, Slide with Me, Ballad of Brotherhood.</p>	<p>16. COL. Harm. The Fiesta Brass, Viva Tijuana! Tijuana Taxi, Spanish Lace, A Taste of Michelle.</p>

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LETTERS

Continued from page 16

in Italy as well as an all-Copland disc. May I too add my voice to that of Mr. Adams for more Koussevitzky reissues on this side of the Atlantic.

And while we are on the subject of reissues, it seems to me that Philips might initiate and persevere in a Willem Mengelberg series, beginning with the complete Beethoven symphonies and whatever other Mengelberg radio and concert transcription treasures are presently reposing in its Holland vaults.

Jules Levey
New York, N.Y.

The Age of Beethoven

Harris Goldsmith is entitled to his opinion concerning the authenticity of the early Beethoven piano concertos (reviewed in December 1968), but his limited acquaintance with the composer's life history should not be allowed to prejudice the views of his readers. His strongest argument against accepting these works as the Master's own—that "the composer was fourteen in 1784, not *douze ans*," and that Beethoven "would have known his own age!"—is contrary to known fact. That Beethoven actually *did* believe he was born in 1772 and therefore "*douze ans*" in 1784 was probably the result of his father's attempts to create another *Wunderkind* in Mozart's image. To quote from Thayer's biography: "The composer, then, even in his fortieth year, still believed the correct date to be 1772, which is the one given in all the old biographical notices, and which corresponds to the dates affixed to many of his first works, and indeed to nearly all allusions to his age in his early years."

This evidence, admittedly meager (more is provided in Thayer), suggests the compositions may indeed be authentic as they possess a mistake of which an aware forger (or reviewer) would be ignorant.

William S. Hoffman
New Haven, Conn.

High Fidelity, March 1969, Vol. 19, No. 3
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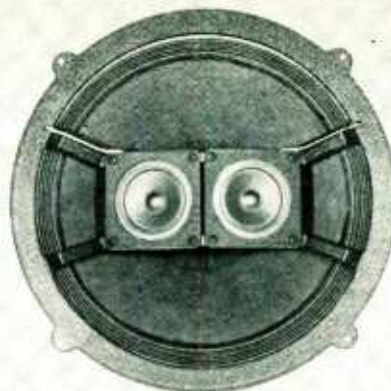
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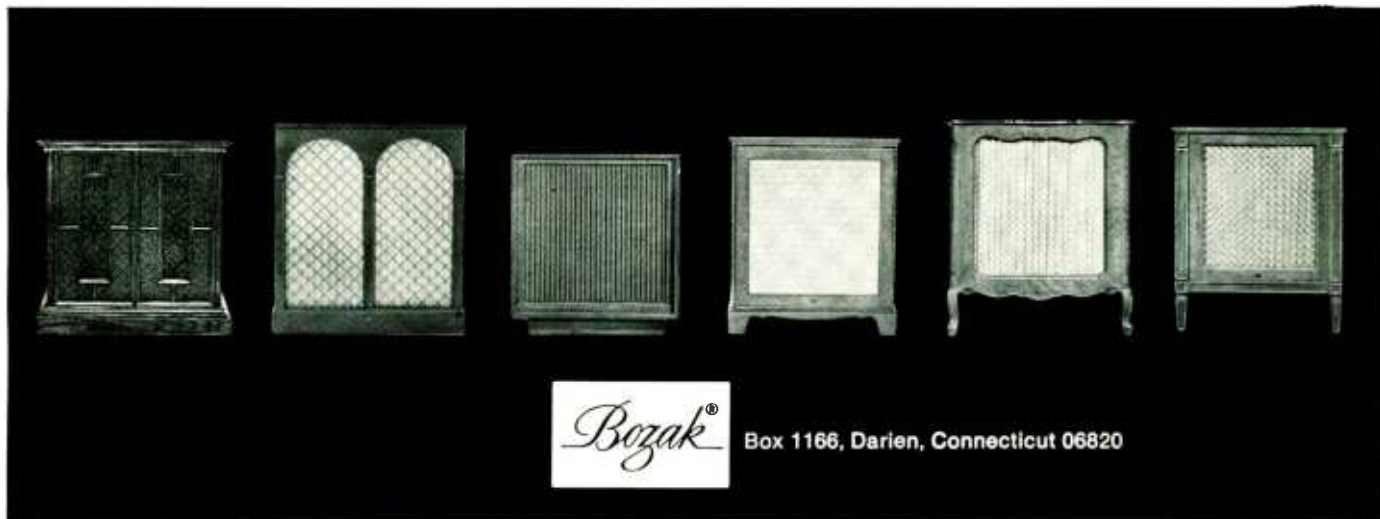
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MUSIC MAKERS

BY ROLAND GELATT



Colin Davis, who will serve as conductor throughout Philips' ambitious undertaking to record all the major, and some minor, works of Berlioz.

Berlioz Projects to Celebrate a Centenary

FIFTEEN YEARS have passed since we last put Hector Berlioz on our cover, and in the interim his "image" has undergone a marked transformation. In 1954 he was—for most of us—still A Discovery, a tract of exotic *terra incognita* waiting to be explored. On the sidelines, urging the unconverted to shed misconceptions and to listen with open ears, were some devoted and articulate proselytizers: Jacques Barzun, Robert Lawrence, John N. Burk (our Berlioz man in 1954), and the late Duncan Robinson, founder of the now defunct Berlioz Society. It was a time when the composer needed to be championed, when prejudices needed to be demolished.

All that now seems like ancient history. Berlioz no longer requires this kind of special pleading. He belongs. With all his beauties and banalities, his warts and his wonderments, he has secured a solid place in our collective affections. As David Cairns so well explains in a recent issue of *The Gramophone*, "The things that once kept Berlioz' music at a distance—the unusually long melodic spans, harmonic short-cuts, linear orchestration, rhythmic unpredictability—have since become part of the general musical consciousness. For younger listeners the notorious Berlioz problem hardly exists. He is simply one composer among many."

This being the case, it is no surprise that Berlioz' centenary is being celebrated this year with a freshet of new recordings. The major Berlioz project of 1969 (and beyond) is the vastly ambitious Philips cycle inaugurated with the current release of *Romeo and Juliet* performed by the London Symphony Orchestra under Colin Davis' direction [see review, page 81]. During the course of the next

several years Philips intends to record all of Berlioz' major works in as authentic and thoroughgoing a manner as possible. Colin Davis will be the conductor throughout, and the productions will be in the hands of two British newcomers to Philips' classical division: Erik Smith, formerly one of John Culshaw's ablest lieutenants at Decca/London, and the above-mentioned David Cairns.

The recording schedule for 1969 begins later this spring with *Nuits d'été*, performed as the composer originally intended with three different solo singers. Next on the agenda comes *The Damnation of Faust*, which will be taped in the fall with the London Symphony (and Josephine Veasey in the role of Marguerite). Then, towards the end of the year, work begins on the long-awaited complete recording of *The Trojans*. This is perhaps the last great opera that remains unrecorded, at least in its entirety. Many years ago Westminster brought out Part II ("The Trojans at Carthage") under Hermann Scherchen's direction, and more recently Angel published a set of excerpts conducted by Georges Prêtre and featuring Régine Crespin as both Dido and Cassandra. Both fell far short of what was needed. *The Trojans* cannot be approached in a half-hearted way. It needs a recorded production on the same scale as *Götterdämmerung* or *Elektra*. A year or so ago there was talk of a Decca/London recording with either Colin Davis or Georg Solti at the helm, but this project seems to have been abandoned now that John Culshaw has moved on to his new post at BBC Television.

Philips seemingly has *The Trojans* to itself, and the company hopes to produce a recording that will remain the

definitive statement for many years to come. Most but not all of the cast will come from the Covent Garden production that is being mounted this fall. "Sometimes," explains Davis, "a great singing actor or actress will make far less of an impression on records than in the theater, and we have to be on guard against this." One can be reasonably certain, however, that Josephine Veasey and Jon Vickers will be cast on records, as they are at Covent Garden, in the roles of Dido and Aeneas.

Looking ahead to the 1970s, Davis and the Philips crew will be tackling the Requiem and Te Deum ("we still have to find a suitable site—a place which not only has the right reverberation period but which records well too"), the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, *Benvenuto Cellini*, and remakes of *Harold in Italy* and *L'Enfance du Christ*. The conductor is unsure whether he wants to attempt another recording of *Beatrice and Benedict* and he is quite certain that he will leave *Lélio* to others. "There may be some minor pieces on the schedule too," Davis adds, "but only those that genuinely interest me. I'm not one of those people who value completeness for its own sake."

When Colin Davis was in the States last fall on a guest conducting stint with the New York Philharmonic, I asked him how he originally became ensnared by Berlioz. "You won't believe it," he replied, "but I was twenty-one when the music really struck me for the first time. I never listened to the radio or to records when I was growing up, and I seldom went to concerts. We were too poor

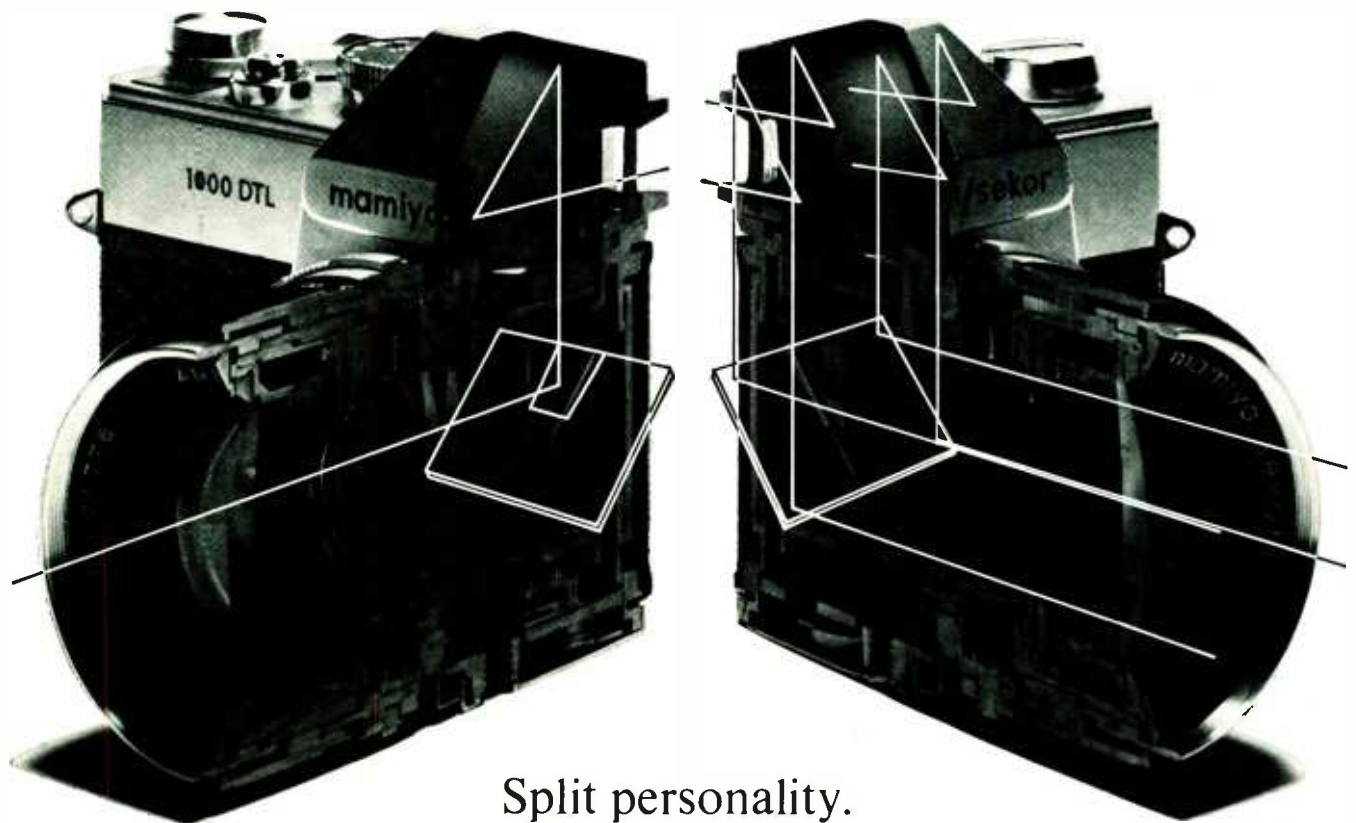
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MARCH 1969

MUSIC MAKERS

Continued from page 22

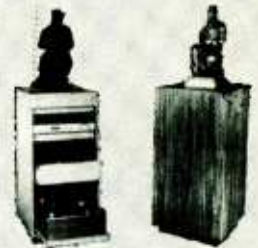
for that. Anyway, Berlioz somehow escaped me. The moment of revelation came shortly after the war at William Glock's summer school in Dartington. Roger Désormière was on the faculty and conducted the second part of *L'Enfance du Christ*. From that time on I was a Berlioz man. When I became assistant conductor of the BBC Scottish Orchestra a few years later, I put Berlioz on my programs as often as I dared. The more I played him, the better he seemed. He's essentially a composer for the young man. Everything about him is passionate. That's why it's killing to perform. It may be that in the next twenty years I'll have less to do with Berlioz. It's not that I want to banish him from my life, but I may not want to suffer the deprivations of conducting his music."

What about Berlioz' precipitous ups and downs? Did the conductor find some passages tough sledding? "No, not really. Of course, there are undoubtedly boring things in Berlioz. There are miscalculations. He has no formula to mask a lack of ideas, no solid middle ground. Either Berlioz is inspired or he's tedious. But I think I find more ups in him than most people. For example, when Berlioz starts writing in an archaic vein I find it wonderful, though others start to yawn. Perhaps I'm hopelessly disposed in his favor, but Berlioz at his best seems to say everything I want music to say."

Aside from the mammoth Philips cycle with Colin Davis, what else is on the way? Well, there were to be two other recordings of *The Damnation*, one from Decca/London, the other from EMI/Angel. The first was canceled early in the planning stage and the second—scheduled to be made in Paris this spring under the direction of Charles Munch—was halted by the conductor's unexpected death in Richmond last November. There is talk of reviving the EMI/Angel production with another conductor and with Janet Baker and Nicolai Gedda as principal soloists, but nothing definite has been scheduled. There is also talk of issuing the old Munch/Boston Symphony *Damnation* in stereo for the first time. Apparently it was recorded in two-channel form but released only in mono. If it does appear, it will be issued on the Victrola label.

Two further *Fantastiques* are on the way, one by Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic (Columbia), the other by Georges Prêtre and the Boston Symphony (RCA). Two additional versions of *Harold in Italy* will also swell the Berlioz listings. One comes from Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra with Joseph de Pasquale as soloist (Columbia), the other from Prêtre and the London Symphony with Walter Trampler as soloist (RCA). Vox tells us they have "two major Berlioz works scheduled for recording in France early in 1969, but we dare not give you any definite word." And on that mysterious note I'll close and leave you to the Messrs. Boulez, Davis, McMullen, and Jacobson.

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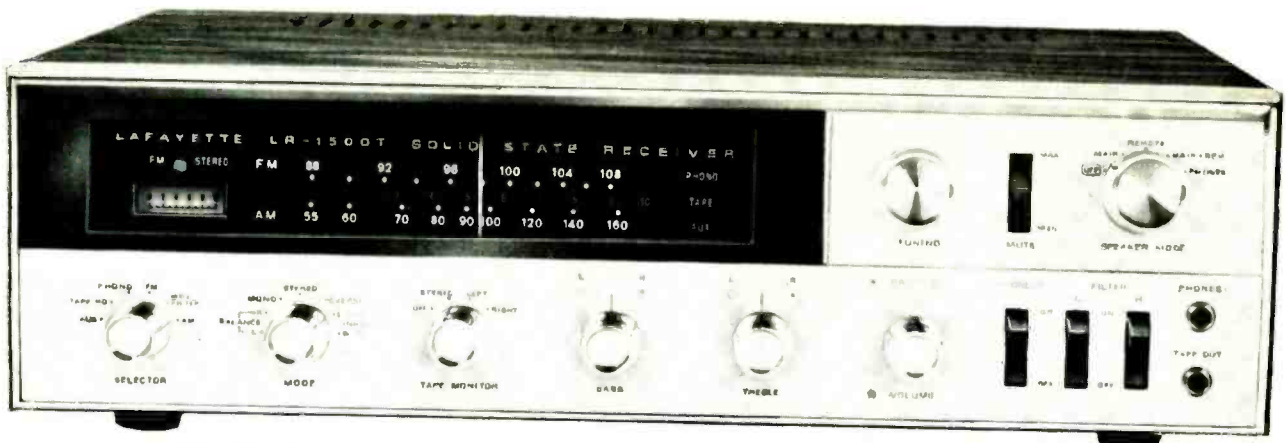
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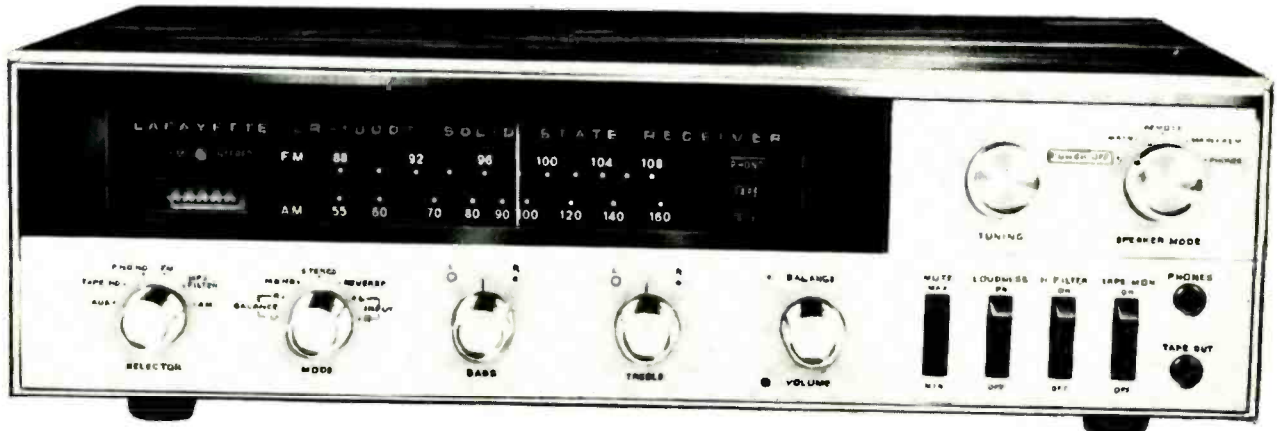
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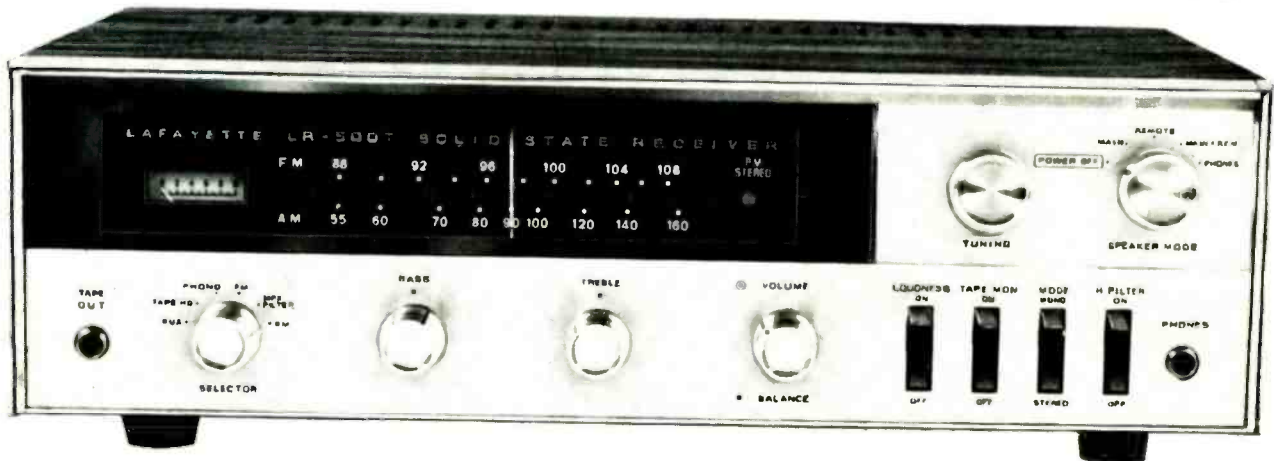
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LONDON

Abe Lincoln In Britain

We in England took it as a compliment that Aaron Copland has been recording one of his most completely American works here with the London Symphony Orchestra. *Lincoln Portrait* is not a work that readily translates to European concert conditions, for the overtones of the narration are not felt by our audiences at anything like full intensity, but apparently Copland and CBS felt sure that British musicians could convey the special transatlantic favor of the music.

"Much harder than you think," said Copland of the score, and so it proved. The exposed woodwind chording in some of the slow sections required concentrated effort from the players before real precision was achieved. Much easier to record successfully were the fast and brilliant passages, where the LSO (an extrovert orchestra as André Previn says) felt really at home.

The fun came during the playbacks. Inasmuch as the narration was to be superimposed later (at the time of the sessions the speaker had not yet been decided), it was especially important that pauses of the right length should be allowed between the dramatic punctuating chords. So it was that we were treated to the composer/conductor's own matter-of-fact narration. "He was born in Kansas, raised in Indiana, and lived in Illinois," muttered Copland to himself, and he had to gabble the last phrase in order to get it in before the next crash from the orchestra. The first take proved disastrous in the matter of pauses, but practice took care of that problem. Then there was the question of making the orchestra loud enough but not so loud that the narrator would be drowned out.

"It's a bit tricky at 238," warned Copland, "where you've got your *fortissimo* against the narrator's 'democracy.'" Again, at one point Copland roared, "Then the Lord called!"—and at once had to urge in a quite different sort of voice, "Not quite so *forte*!"

At these sessions Copland was also recording *Down a Country Lane*, an arrangement of a 1962 piece originally written for piano. "I don't know it," I admitted brightly to Tom Sheppard, CBS recording manager, before the rehearsal started. "Neither does Copland!" commented Sheppard dryly. It seems that the composer had made the arrangement specifically for a Boosey and Hawkes series intended for school orchestras and, not surprisingly, had never himself conducted it.

Plonk pthzzz! One of the delights of hearing Copland rehearse is to note the wide range of instrumental imitations he devises—"Bom, bom, bom bim!" he shouts, or "Dadadadadadadi!" But in that habit he is easily outshone by the semiretired Ernest Ansermet, who came to London to record Stravinsky's complete *Firebird* music for Decca/London with the New Philharmonia Orchestra at Kingsway Hall. "Dadgboom! Tarratara!" Ansermet roars with a voice that would do credit to a Bayreuth Siegfried. "Teetataoaaah!" he shouts at concertmaster Carlos Villa, then explains, "You have the portamento not done!" The whole string section then inspires him to wrath. "I have always a noise after the pizzicato," he complains irritably. "I always have 'Plonk pthzzz!' Please: 'Plonk—nothing!'"

These manners may come as a surprise to those who from Ansermet's music making have deduced that he is a quiet, calm musician. The explosions are, in fact, a surface phenomenon. Behind the outward displays, Ansermet is always intent on producing the exact sounds that his meticulous ear tells him are needed.

In many ways he reminded me of Stravinsky himself rehearsing the same music several years ago in the same hall with the same orchestra. I mentioned the point afterwards, and Ansermet took it without surprise. "You must remember," he said, "that Stravinsky first saw me conducting his works, so he has taken my way for conducting his music."

Certainly no one could be more exacting than Ansermet in getting the exact markings of the score observed, and the sessions were spread out generously, with short takes the general rule in the more complex passages. That is the only concession Ansermet makes to age. At eighty-five he looks and acts like a man twenty years younger. I asked him how it is that so strenuous an occupation as conducting seems to encourage long life. "Music," he replied at once; "it is so entertaining!"

Dvořák by Kertesz. Another Decca/London session at Kingsway Hall brought an even bigger project than *Firebird*: a complete recording of Dvořák's *Requiem* with Istvan Kertesz conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, the Ambrosian Singers, and a fine quartet of soloists—Pilar Lorengar, Erzsebet Komlossy (a newcomer from Hungary who has just recorded Kodály's complete *Háry János* music with Kertesz), Robert Ilosfalvy (another Hungarian, currently singing Des Grieux at Covent Garden in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*), and Tom Krause. Though the sessions had been preceded by a concert performance at the Royal Festival Hall, Kertesz was most taxing in his extra rehearsals for the recording. When I arrived at Kingsway Hall, he was tackling the Offertorium—getting the delicate muted string rhythm in triplets exactly right, making the horns practice on their own an odd set of arpeggio flourishes, and taking the choir

Continued on page 30

The first cassette deck with the guts to talk specs.

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

And we've proved it. Conclusively.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

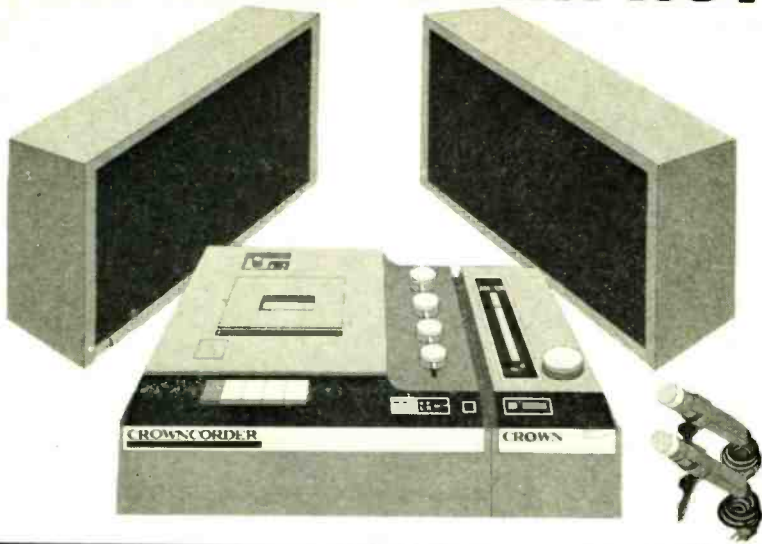
The CAD4 is at your Harman-Kardon dealer now. It's only \$159.50. And we guarantee it will change your mind about tape cassette recorders.

For detailed technical information on the CAD4, write to Harman-Kardon, Inc., 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803, Dept. HF3.



CIRCLE 29 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE MINI-COMPACT



Hard to believe it will sell for less than \$200! A complete professional type cassette stereo system, includes AM-FM and FM stereo tuner. This Crown mini-compact is small enough to play anywhere (built-in AC and DC), with sound big enough to fill a concert hall.

CROWN '69

See your local Crown Dealer or write INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIERS COMPANY, 755 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California 94107.

CIRCLE 17 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

"THE ST-PRO-B PASSED *CBS LABS' TESTS BETTER THAN ANY STEREO HEADSET PREVIOUSLY ENCOUNTERED"

As appearing in HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE
EQUIPMENT REPORTS, October 1968 issue.



*Test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Laboratories, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

Convince yourself — listen to the ST-PRO-B and the complete line of Superex stereo phones.

You'll be delighted with the breathtaking realism, matchless quality, and comfort — possible only with our exclusive woofer/tweeter design. Prices start at \$19.95; ST-PRO-B approx. \$50

Write for your copy of test report.

SUPEREX ELECTRONICS CORP.
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CIRCLE 62 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NOTES FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Continued from page 28

a cappella through the vigorous fugue of "Quam olim Abraham."

The Decca/London team was unusually strong, with Christopher Raeburn in charge of a double set of recording managers and engineers. Deliberately, the chorus was kept at a modest size (eighty strong) to ensure sharpness and precision. Kertesz, as might be expected, is using the Czech Artia edition of the score published in 1961, which for the first time incorporates changes that Dvořák introduced at the first performance but which never reached the original English edition.

Any Wrong Notes? For CBS, Pierre Boulez directed a whole week of sessions with the New Philharmonia Orchestra. The setting was EMI's studios in St. John's Wood, borrowed for the occasion, and EMI engineers were there to assist recording manager Paul Myers, now regularly stationed in London for European sessions. The works taped were fascinatingly varied: Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and the cantata *Meeresstille* took up the first couple of days; then came two sessions devoted to Boulez' own formidable new piece *Livre pour Cordes*; the remaining sessions were given over to the three Debussy *Nocturnes*, with the John Alldis Choir taking part in *Sirènes*.

In *Sirènes* the ladies in question found at the last minute that they would feel more comfortable standing up than seated. "They would sound better lying down," remarked one of the engineers, and the comment was fair enough—not on any physiological grounds but simply by reason of microphone problems. Even after the first take it took some time for the engineers to position their microphones so as to capture some of the mysteriousness of Debussy's choral sound, the sense of distance and spaciousness that is here essential.

In Boulez' *Livre pour Cordes* only the strings were involved, but the work brought two harrowing sessions. The first movement had already been played in a live Festival Hall performance, but editorial points still kept cropping up. "Are we pizzicato or are we *arco*?" asked one of the violins at a crucial point, something that had apparently not been settled by the concert. "Pizzicato, definitely," said Boulez firmly—but then, with the slightly pained expression of a creator frustrated, "Do you not feel it so, no?" The second movement (which had proved too much to rehearse for live performance) was even tougher, so tough, in fact, that it took the people in the control room all their time to follow the score, let alone point out any mistakes. The final take was completed with eight seconds only of the session to spare. "Were there any wrong notes at all?" I asked Myers. He shook his head—"Whoever disagrees can check the score himself." Somehow I do not think the offer will be taken up.

EDWARD GREENFIELD

CIRCLE 57 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

Quadradiial stereo sound system? Quadradiial stereo sound system!

XL-4 Quadradiial Stereo Sound System. Sony's incredible, new four-loudspeaker reproduction system has two speakers in the recorder and two in the split lid. It covers the entire audio frequency range, while surrounding you with a concert-hall presence of stereophonic sound.

Noise-Suppressor Switch. Special filter eliminates undesirable hiss that may exist on older tapes. Automatic tape lifter protects heads from wear. Automatic Sentinel shut-off turns off power at end of reel or should tape accidentally break.

Four-Track Stereo and Mono Operation. Separate bass and treble controls, vertical and horizontal operation, solid-state circuitry (provides 20 watts' dynamic power), professional VU meters, record interlock (prevents accidental erasure of tapes). Frequency response, 30 to 20,000 Hz; signal-to-noise ratio, 50 db.

Exclusive Sony Instant Tape Threading. Retractable pinch roller provides a clear, unobstructed tape path for ease of threading. Seven-inch reel capacity, four-digit tape counter and pause control, three speeds.

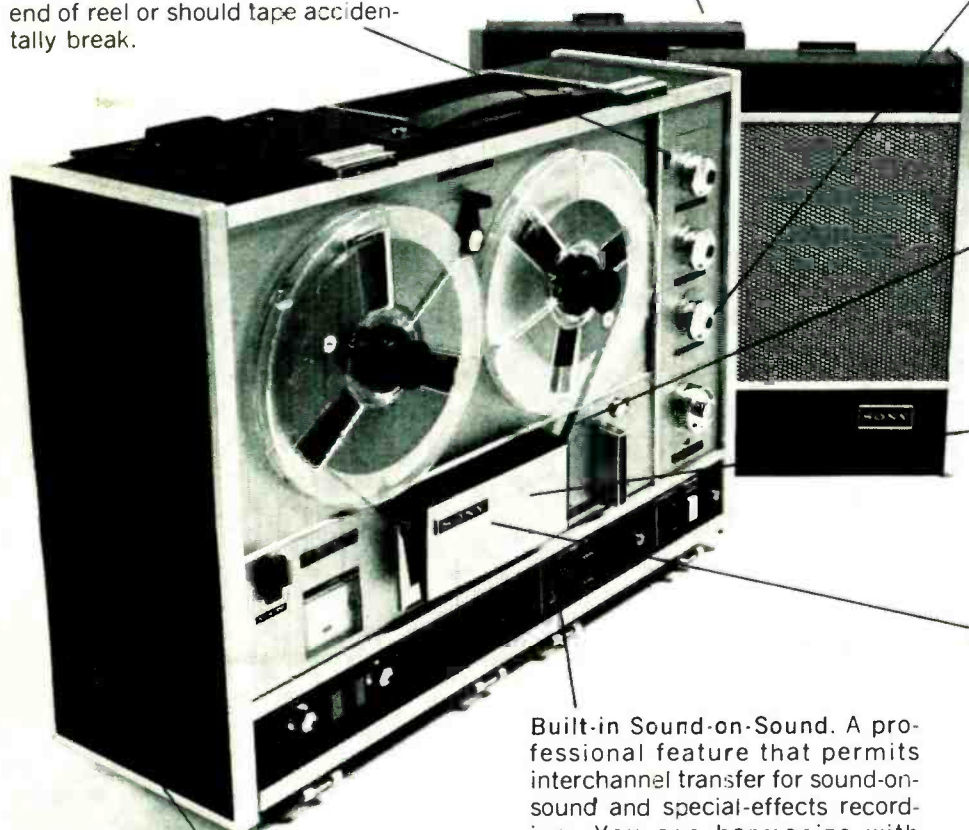
Non-Magnetizing Record Head. Exclusive Sony circuit eliminates record head-magnetization build-up, the most common cause of tape hiss.

Scrape Flutter Filter. Special idler assembly located between erase and record/playback heads eliminates tape modulation distortion. This feature formerly found only on professional equipment. Wow and flutter only 0.09% at 7½ ips.

Built-in Sound-on-Sound. A professional feature that permits interchannel transfer for sound-on-sound and special-effects recording. You can harmonize with yourself!

Sony Model 540. Priced less than \$399.50 including two Sony F-96 dynamic microphones. Five additional accessories available. For your free copy of our latest catalog, please write Mr. Phillips, Sony/Superscope, Inc., 8144 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley, California 91352.

Stereo Headphone Jack. Easily accessible; for private listening.



Two of today's speaker systems have

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

most outstanding nothing in common.

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

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

A high linearity 5¼" driver carries the upper bass and midrange, while the treble is handled brilliantly by two of ADC's exclusive high flux mylar dome tweeters, angled to give optimum dispersion.


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

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

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

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

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

 ADC. The uncommon speaker systems.



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



TOO HOT TO HANDLE

I want to invest in some really good and big floor-type speakers in the \$150-200 price range (possibly a little higher if necessary). I am particular, among other things, about high efficiency, virtually nonexistent white noise, and very strong, firm deep bass down to 20-28 Hz or better. What is available?—F. Guerrier, Brooklyn, N.Y. Nothing. We all would like a \$200 speaker that fits your criteria, but so far no one has discovered how to produce it. Incidentally, there is no such thing as nonexistent white noise. You're probably thinking of HIGH FIDELITY's practice of feeding white noise (such as interstation noise of an FM tuner) into speakers under test to see whether it is colored by unevenness in speaker response and as a quick check on angular dispersion characteristics.

I have read Cecil Watts's booklet on how to care for recordings, using his own products (Preener and Parastat). Have you ever tested the products to see whether they do what the inventor claims? Since other writers recommend cleaning records only with water or with a detergent and running water, I wonder whether the Watts system has any advantages. We have a dry climate here, and I suppose there is sometimes a good deal of static electricity; but I have found that the record-cleaning solutions and chemically treated cloths sold in stores only gum up the record grooves.—Ronald A. Van De Voorde, Tucson, Ariz.

We have tested Watts products in the past, and our verdict, based on continuing use of these items, is that they do perform as claimed. We also have tested the detergent-and-water method and found that it works fine—if you're careful. But it's cumbersome, and it can lead to severe static problems just as some "cleaning" products can lead to severe groove fouling. So we consider that the Watts products offer a very satisfactory method of caring for records.

The AR-3a speaker systems look quite attractive for use with my Fisher 400 receiver. But I am not quite sure they are big enough for the room I have in mind. Its dimensions are 15 by 16 ft. I like a big, room-filling sound.—David Shilts, Marshall, Mich.

You may get it with this combination. The ARs are more than "big" enough (that is, capable of delivering lots of sound—not at all the same thing as "big" in terms of physical dimensions) to fill a room of the size you mention, depending on how much sound you call big and what the room's acoustics are like. The 400 is not quite up to the 25 watts (rms) per channel recommended for the speakers, but the power it will deliver may well be enough for your purposes. You might do well to look into the AR-5s as well. With your almost-square room, the 5's tamer bass may cause fewer acoustic problems in that region—and save you a few dollars to boot.

I have an Empire 208 Troubadour turntable, for which I would like to buy a new tone arm. I would appreciate your advice on which arms among those available are most compatible with this turntable. I plan to spend between \$60 and \$120 for the tone arm.—Lenoir B. Bradford, Jr., Baltimore, Md. Empire's own excellent Model 980A arm at \$65 would have distinct advantages for you. It would be the easiest arm for you to install on your model 208 turntable, since the metal baseplate of the 208 has predrilled holes spaced for this arm's correct mounting distance. Moreover, it has negligible tracking error, very low resonance, adjustable stylus force down to zero grams, and a calibrated antiskating adjustment.

Would there be any advantage in my getting a new solid-state stereo FM tuner to replace my four-year-old Dynakit FM-3?—S.J. Magnussen, Ames, Iowa. Not in our view. The very first mono Dynatuners had some hum, but it was eliminated in later versions, including the stereo FM-3 kits. If your Dynatuner is indeed only four years old, it is a "later version." We feel that such a set—correctly built and aligned—is still as good as any in its price class or even in a slightly higher price class. However, it is a tubed unit, and tubes do age. Quite possibly, therefore, your set's performance is not up to its original peak level. We'd suggest that you check all the tubes and replace any that are weak; gently wipe any dust off all internal parts, especially the tuning capacitor; then go through the touch-up

alignment procedure spelled out in the kit-owner's manual.

I own Klipschorn speaker systems, and wonder whether you could recommend an electronic crossover to use with them to enhance their already fine performance.—George Thompson, Louisville, Ky.

We couldn't, and won't. The use of an electronic crossover is definitely not recommended with Klipschorns inasmuch as the horn-loading of such systems already provides high damping. Thus, any additional damping that would be introduced by an electronic crossover would be unnecessary and even possibly wasteful of acoustical energy. The electronic crossover technique is most effectively used in low-damped, direct-radiating speaker systems.

I recently bought the Haitink performance of Bruckner's Fourth on Philips. The surface noise was so atrocious that I took it back to the store for replacement, only to find the replacement as bad as the first copy. A friend of mine just came back from Belgium with a pressing of the same recording, and the surfaces are clear, clean, and beautiful. Are all copies of this recording available in the U.S. bad?—Arthur Hays, Los Angeles, Calif.

Ours was. And the European pressing we heard sounded, like your friend's, excellent.

I am pretty much confused by the various terms used to denote the quality of high fidelity equipment. Can you recommend an article or booklet that can give a rank amateur like me an idea what these terms mean and what to look for when trying to analyze whether a given product is good—or better than another?—Richard Geier, Dayton, Ohio.

The best reference we know of (loyalty aside, since it and HIGH FIDELITY share the same publisher) is the 1968 edition of STEREO annual. It's still available at \$1.00 a copy from The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. 01230. Practically everything else that's written for the neophyte is so simplified and unspecific that it answers far fewer questions than it raises.

This \$299.95 AM/FM stereo receiver delivers



100 clean watts.

Do you realize what that means?

Do you realize that a receiver with this kind of power can drive, not one, but two pairs of speaker systems at concert level with no sign of distortion? That it can reproduce a 30 Hz bass signal loud and clear (if your speakers can take it)?

What's more important, 100 distortion-free watts at 8 ohms are enough to prevent even the slightest suggestion of strain at any level. The music sounds smooth, natural, transparent.

Of course, there's more to the Fisher 250-T than this tremendous power.

The FM tuner section has an FET front end and uses IC's in the IF amplifier. IHF sensitivity is 2.0 microvolts. Which is low enough to bring in both strong and weak signals with equal clarity. Stereo separation is greater than that of most stereo cartridges. The tuner includes Fisher's

patented Stereo Beacon*, which automatically signals the presence of a stereo signal and switches to the stereo mode.

There's an ultra-sensitive AM tuner that delivers sound fully comparable to FM-mono.

And there are two ways to tune the FM tuner.

First, there's an easy-to-tune fly-wheel tuning knob.

And there's Fisher's Tune-O-Matic™ pushbutton memory tuning. It permits you to pretune any five FM stations and, later, tune to any one electronically, dead-accurately, at the touch of a button.

As for the controls, they're versatile enough to please any audiophile.

You can hook up an extra pair of speakers in another room, and listen to the remote speakers alone, the main speakers alone, or both together.

You can alter the extreme bass and treble response of the receiver without touching the mid-range. (Only expensive Baxandall tone controls make that possible.)

A receiver with 100 watts music power (IHF) into 8 ohms used to cost a lot more than \$299.95. But the Fisher engineers, using cost-saving advanced circuitry (IC's and FET's) have found a way to bring down the price.

Do you realize what that means?

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

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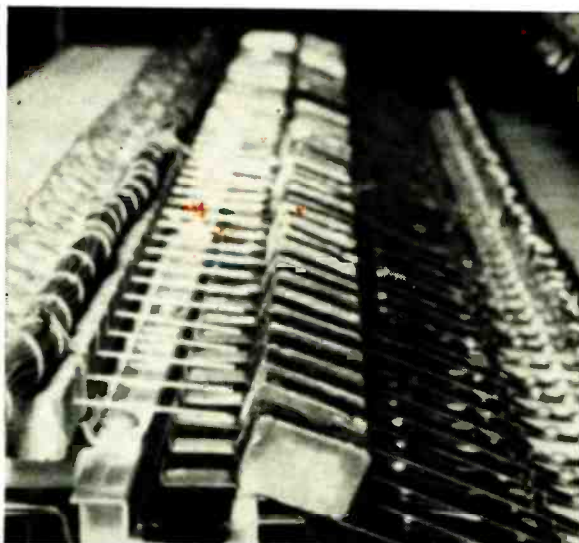
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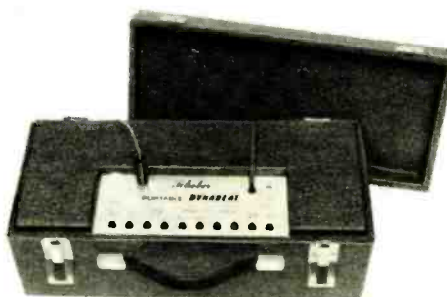
CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NEWS&VIEWS

MECHANICS REDISCOVERED



Allen's "Flying Hammers" (above) consist of a row of weighted metal springs, one for each key, that begin bobbing when a key is struck. Keys run out of picture to right; springs are in center. As they bob, they make and break contacts at left, producing a "repeat tone." Some typically all-electronic instruments are shown at left (melody instrument) and below (rhythm section).



It's refreshing, after accommodating ourselves for years to a steady infusion of electronics into more and more areas of daily life, to discover a major manufacturer of electronic music equipment concluding that some objectives can be accomplished better mechanically than they can electronically—taking, so to speak, a giant step backward in design.

Since electric organs have spawned all kinds of ingenious gadgetry—most recently, things like the electronic melody instrument and the rhythm section shown above—we greeted with something less than enthusiasm the Allen Organ Company's announcement of a press showing of a pair of new instruments that would simulate classical piano, rinky-tink piano, harpsichord, mandolin, flamenco guitar, banjo, and who knows what else (in addition to the more usual electric organ timbres, of course). As soon as the demonstration began, though, it became obvious that something more than electronic gimmickry was involved. The mandolin and banjo demonstrations, in particular, seemed free of the canned quality we've

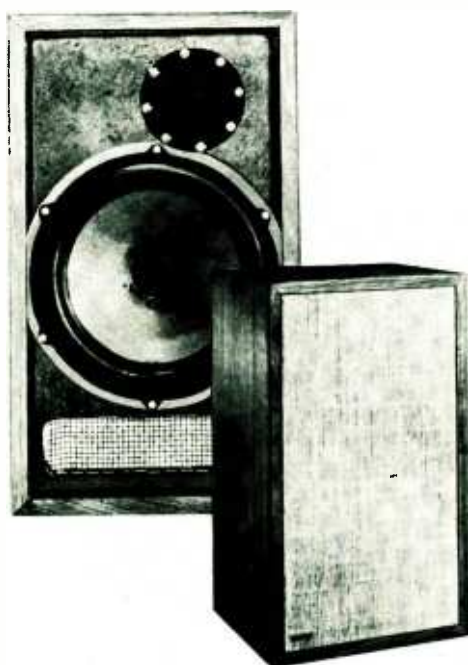
come to associate with electronic ersatzes. How come?

Allen's answer was to open the console and show off the array of "Flying Hammers" that come into play when a repeat stop is pressed by the organist. As you can see in the photograph, each key has its own hammer, which bobs up and down when the key is pressed, playing the note over and over until the key is released. It could be done electronically—in fact, it has been done electronically—but the result (without immensely complex logic circuitry) would reintroduce the canned-sound effect by matching the pulsation rates for all keys to microsecond perfection. The *mechanical* action, however, introduces slight irregularities—and they are just what gives the sound its pleasant "liveness."

For once, in other words, mechanics wins over electronics. It's no cause to go dusting off the old wind-up Victrola, to be sure—but it is reassuring to us old-timers.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued on page 38



\$80 FOR A \$250 SPEAKER ?

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

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

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

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

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

dynaco inc.

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CIRCLE 73 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

MARCH 1969

ANOTHER INDIRECT RADIATOR

We wouldn't be surprised if the biggest debate now shaping up in high fidelity circles turns out to be direct vs. indirect dispersion in loudspeakers. Since Edison's morning-glory horn, most sound sources have tried to aim directly at the listener. That's what bass reflex and acoustic suspension systems do, for example. And their proponents claim that the more complications you introduce into the path from transducer to ear, the greater the chance of degrading the sound.

Indirect radiators—like the Bose 901 and the Harman-Kardon HK50—spread around by bouncing it off a passive reflector (Bose uses the listening-room walls; H-K a built-in reflector). The argument here is that direct radiation produces narrow beams of sound that can play tricks on the listener—tricks obviated by indirect radiation.

Now another speaker system has been entered on the side of indirect radiation. Eastman Sound has announced the Prismatic Reflector (\$300 each) as the latest model of Martin Spectrum Slope Speakers. It has a down-firing woofer (something like Empire's Grenadier series) and four other speakers—a midbass, two midranges, one tweeter—aimed at a reflector built into the system.

To judge from the interest generated by indirect radiation in general (and Bose in particular) the Prismatic Reflector will probably be followed by others of the type in months to come. And, no doubt, the argument will grow apace too.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HOW TO START A FIGHT

The Alliance Manufacturing Co., with understandable pride, has announced the world's first home antenna rotator (Tenna-Rotor model T-45) that can be activated from more than one control unit. Multi-TV homes, as the company points out, are a growing phenomenon; and TV often shares its antenna with an FM receiver. So now you can put separate controls in the living room, the den, the bedroom, the family room—wherever you do your watching or listening—without putting up individual antennas.

But what happens, we can't help wondering, when Uncle Harry wants to watch the football game in the den while Aunt Emma settles down for a Saturday afternoon with the opera in the living room? Let's hope both transmitters happen to lie in the same direction. A misapplication of Alliance's idea could be the biggest threat to domestic relations since the younger generation discovered the miniskirt.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

IT'S FOR FREE

Are you a budding tape recordist? If so, Ampex has a little (twelve-page) booklet for you. It's called *A Head Start to Better Tape Recording*, and within its limited space it packs more basic suggestions and less product promotion (the name Ampex appears in the text only four times by our count) than just about any similar giveaway you're likely to find.

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**SENNHEISER'S FIRST HEADSET**

Sennheiser, a German manufacturer of quality microphones, has introduced a stereo headset whose operating principle, the company tells us, is as unusual as the set's appearance: by adopting time-delay techniques (apparently similar to those used in noise-cancelling microphones), the back wave from the transducer elements is prevented from interfering with the primary wave, obviating the need for elaborate ear seals and enclosure cavities on the earpieces. According to the manufacturer, biproducts of the design are light weight and comfort coupled with excellent performance. And, apparently, moderate price—the Open-Aire HD-414 headset costs \$28.50.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**OUTBOARD PHONO PREAMP**

Olson Electronics has a handy-dandy little preamp designed to let you feed magnetic phono cartridges to high-level inputs—for instance, line inputs on tape recorders—where an equalized preamp circuit is not otherwise available. AC-powered, the unit claims RIAA equalization over a 30-20,000 Hz range. The model number is AM-368; it sells for \$8.98.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SPEAKER KIT FROM ALLIED

Allied Radio has introduced a three-way bookshelf speaker system, available either as a kit or assembled. Frequency response for the system is listed as 20 Hz to beyond audibility. The drivers are a 12-inch acoustic-

Continued on page 40



OUR NEWEST STEREO TUNER

The stereo FM-3 was introduced in 1963 and we are still barely able to keep up with the demand. After six years, it remains the most popular of all stereo tuners.

Our newest stereo tuner doesn't replace the original mono FM-1, which after nine years still outsells all other mono tuners combined.

This unprecedented longevity is explained by Dynaco's unswerving devotion to performance, reliability and unmatched low cost. The stereo FM-3 is only \$99.95 as a kit and

\$154.95 factory assembled. The \$79.95 mono FM-1 can be converted to stereo at any time by adding the \$29.95 FMX-3 multiplex module.

Dynaco introduces new products only when they fill a real need. They never render previous models obsolete. And at less than half the cost of other tuners, such consummate value just naturally gets around.

We can't promise that the FM-3 will still be our newest tuner in 1979.

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

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

suspension woofer, a compression midrange with a diffraction horn, and a compression horn tweeter. Separate level controls adjust tweeter and midrange output. Power handling is listed at 35 watts, impedance at 8 ohms. The finish is walnut veneer. In kit form, the 2370K system costs \$99.95; assembled and finished it costs \$119.95.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



THE CASE OF THE VENTED CONE

An unusual feature of the Cizek 205 loudspeaker system is a series of perforations in the tweeter cone, designed, says the manufacturer, to control resonances. Further damping and response-smoothing is applied to the tweeter, we are told, by a glass fiber pad between the cone and the speaker housing. The outer circumference of the 10¼-inch high-compliance woofer is made of butyl rubber. The system is rated to handle 20 watts (continuous); nominal impedance is 4 ohms; listed response is 35-20,000 Hz (± 3 dB). The price is \$78 in either walnut or cherry; unfinished, in either wood, it is \$71.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



SHURE CALLS IT A PRO

The latest microphone amplifier-mixer, the M67, from Shure Bros. is designed, the company says, for a variety of professional and semiprofessional uses, from remote broadcast work to sound reinforcement systems. It has four inputs for high-impedance microphones and one line input. Each of the four mixer channels is provided with a low-frequency filter (to control such effects as mechanical noise picked up through the microphone stand), and the mixed output may be monitored at either line or microphone level (the VU meter is switchable for either +4 or +10 dBm levels). It is AC-powered but can be operated from an accessory (\$12.60) battery power supply; the mixer itself costs \$147.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



H-K PROMISES HIGHER-FI CASSETTES

The most recent standard-bearer in Harman-Kardon's invasion of tape recorder territory is a stereo cassette deck, Model CAD4. H-K claims 12 kHz for the upper limit of response in its narrow-gap heads—an encouraging figure for cassettes. Most of the controls are standard; an exception is a record overload light that is triggered when the meters read more than +2 VU. The CAD4 (without microphones) is expected to sell for \$159.50.

CIRCLE 154 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



AMPEX CHANGE CASSETTES

Three changer models have been added to the Ampeg cassette line. Simplest is the Micro 90 playback-only deck (\$129) for adding prerecorded cassette facilities to existing systems. There are also two recorder/player models: the portable, AC-powered Micro 88, which plays through two slide-on speakers; and the home model Micro 95 (\$269, pictured), which includes two separate speaker systems. Both record/playback models are furnished with record meters and a pair of dynamic omnidirectional microphones. All three models will accept up to six cassettes stacked in the changer and play one side of each in the stack sequence; and all have built-in pause controls.

CIRCLE 155 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

PIONEER ADDS TO TRANSDUCER LINE

Pioneer says it has the answer to small amplifiers and receivers with insufficient power to drive low-efficiency acoustic-suspension speaker systems. The CS-5, a two-way bookshelf-size system, is claimed to have a power-handling capacity of 25 watts and to be capable of being driven to high volume levels with relatively small inputs. Cost is \$59. Another budget-priced addition to the Pioneer catalogue is the SE-20 headphones; the price of \$19.95 includes a storage case. The 8-foot-long cord terminates in a standard stereo phone plug.

CIRCLE 156 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

This is the new Grenadier 7000

BUILT TO BEAT BOX SPEAKERS FOR SOUND, STYLE AND PRICE

Our newest stereo cylinder gives you all the things no box can offer at a beautifully popular price.

Like the *only* sound stereo design. A horizontally-mounted woofer that faces down for 360° bass dispersion *without* standing waves. A new divergent acoustic lens that spreads the highest highs through a full 160° arc. And completely non-critical placement.

Also three peerless component speakers. Our spectacular 12" high-compliance woofer, with an 8-lb. magnetic structure and 2" voice coil for flawless bass down to 25Hz. A 4½" midrange direct radiator, for purely transparent sound between 450 and 5000 Hz. A 1" ultrasonic domed tweeter for highs up to 20k Hz.

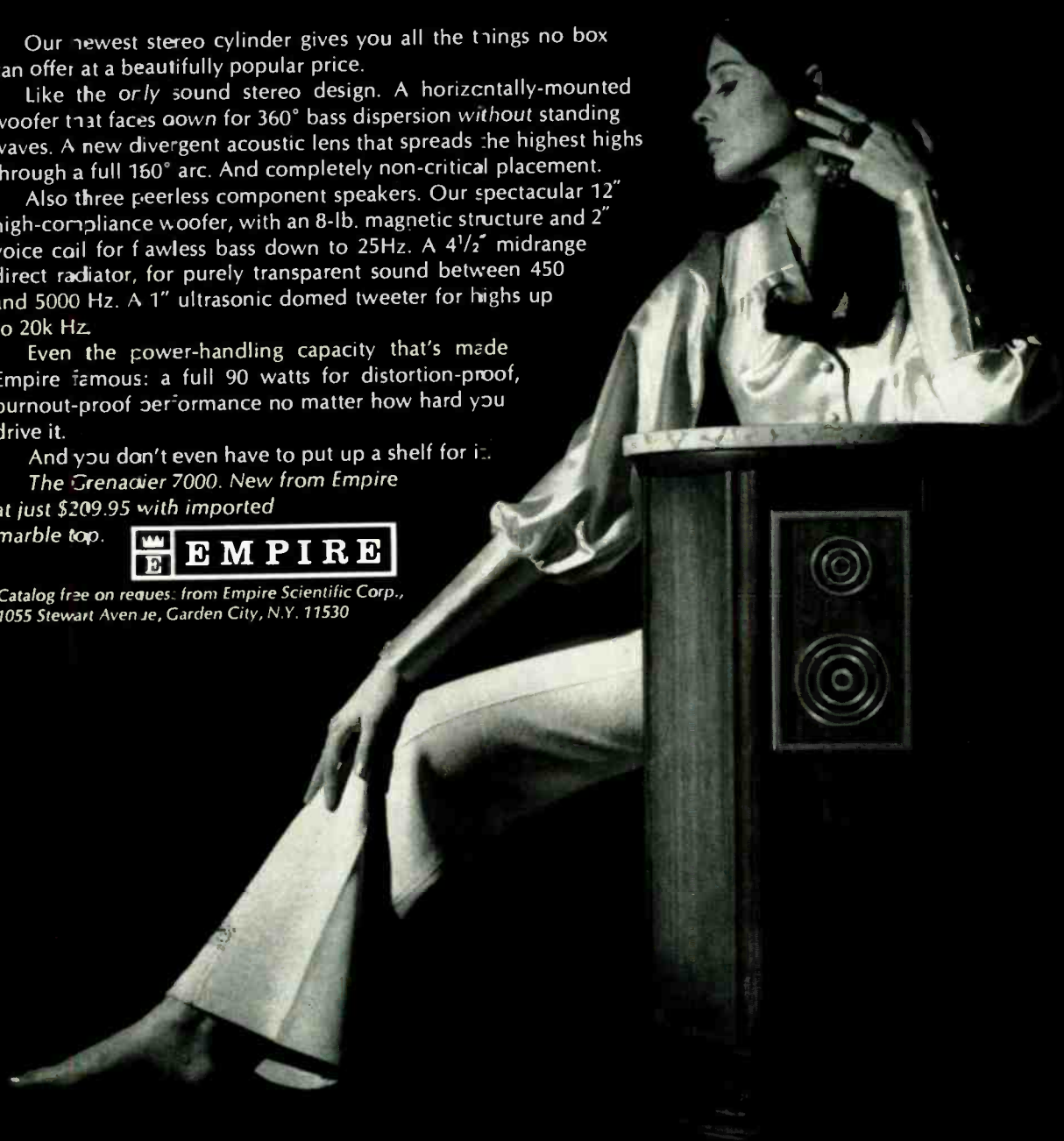
Even the power-handling capacity that's made Empire famous: a full 90 watts for distortion-proof, burnout-proof performance no matter how hard you drive it.

And you don't even have to put up a shelf for it.

The Grenadier 7000. New from Empire at just \$209.95 with imported marble top.



Catalog free on request from Empire Scientific Corp.,
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Berlioz

and the Realm of the Imaginary

One controversial French composer/conductor reflects on the work of another

BY PIERRE BOULEZ

WHAT BERLIOZ BROUGHT to music is so singular that it has not yet been truly absorbed, has not become an integral part of tradition. Whereas Wagner, for example, has given rise to fanatical admirers as well as detractors, Berlioz still seems to be isolated. He stands at a point where customary judgments cannot be easily applied. I think we must see the principal reason for this in the fact that a large part of his *oeuvre* has remained in the realm of the imaginary. No one dreams of denying that his works exist or of maintaining that they cannot be incorporated into our musical heritage, for he resembles Wagner in having fully as much practical sense as imagination. One of the permanent aspects of his character is just such a mixture of realism and fantasy—and his realism could be every bit as meticulous as his fantasy could be extravagant.

Berlioz' compositions exist in a sphere that is difficult to define, for they do not respect, and do not claim to respect, the usual conventions in the process of creation and transmission. Depending on circumstances, history required the composer to write works either called for by religious services or intended as entertainment. Such conditions require established forms, which change from one period to another but which respect the social conventions currently in force. Sacred music is one aspect of this ritual, whereas concert and operatic music is the other side of the same ritual. Obviously, there has always been so much stylistic osmosis between the two that it is sometimes difficult to tell which of the two rituals any given piece of music belongs to.

The French Revolution did not change this situation in any significant way, although it did emphasize the lay ritual as being a national duty. Music was to be one of the essential phenomena of the great popular celebrations organized by the French Revolution, under the obvious inspiration of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The revolutionary ceremonies rejuvenated Christian ritual and imposed different conditions upon it by making it deal once again, and urgently, with the needs of society. They used processions and "abstract" spectacles, which had been the Church's exclusive prerogative for centuries. Replacing God by the goddess Reason was all that was needed; circumstances changed, but the underlying motivation

remained the same. Nevertheless, the relationship between music and society was fundamentally different; Berlioz was to remain under the influence of this change throughout his entire life.

It is true that we can see a directly observable revolutionary influence in such works as the Requiem, the *Te Deum*, or the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* (the revolutionary element presents no apparent contradiction with either Roman Catholic observances or governmental devotion), but this influence is not the most mysterious phenomenon found in Berlioz. He has often been criticized for his gigantism and his fondness for ostentatious effects. He frequently did his best to encourage misunderstandings by a certain redundancy in his works as well as in the written commentaries with which he accompanied them throughout his lifetime. Was this not simply to compensate for dreams he had never realized—dreams which, as I see it, were connected with certain aspects of the French revolutionary idea that had been deprived of their meaning by political and social evolution?

To this must be added a devouring need to talk about himself. It shows up not only in the books which describe his own life as a man and as a musician but also in numerous works in which, directly or indirectly, he tells about himself. This will be recognized as a need that is inherent in Romanticism. What we have here, however, is a very special form of Romanticism peculiar to Berlioz, for it is difficult to detect confessions as consistently personal in the other great composers of the period. Even if personal details come constantly to the surface with some of them, these other composers transpose and go beyond the personal in such a way as to create a myth. (I am thinking, obviously, of *Tristan*.)

Under such conditions, everything helped to make Berlioz a predestined victim of the imaginary. His compositions both transcend and fall short of the conventions; it is only with great difficulty that they can finally be inserted into the customary framework of the theater or the concert. They overrate the latter and underrate the former. The limitations inherent in a social form of transmission have scarcely any reason for being or any logic; we are fully aware of their artificial character, which restricts the imaginary



Bettmann Archive

and does not allow it to find expression in an immaterial, fluid dimension. All the circumstances that make the concert and the theater what they are seem too restricting to this form of the imaginary; they suppress, to a large extent, its reason for being.

THERE IS AN ESSAY by Berlioz that the public knows hardly at all; titled "The Orchestra," it is the final chapter of his *Traité d'orchestration*, a study read only by professional musicians. It is by far one of his most significant texts because it reflects his attitude towards musical realization. It is typical of Berlioz' character, mixing realism and imagination without opposing one to the other, producing the double aspect of an undeniable inventive "madness"—a fairly unreal dream minutely accounted for. This chapter begins in a down-to-earth way and simply describes for us what an orchestra is, how it is organized, how it can be installed in a hall. There is nothing out of the ordinary in all that. Soon, however, there are added some revealing observations concerning outdoor orchestras. The open air, which is the typical place for imaginary expansion, is the acoustical enemy of organized sound. Between "nature" and "musical art" there already exists, therefore, this basic incompatibility. Nonetheless, Berlioz allows them a chance of joining forces in the streets of a city, with the façades of the buildings serving as the approximate equivalent of a closed hall (his personal reasons for this stand are apparent; perhaps he would not have written so positively after his disappointments in the streets of Paris). Once past this very symptomatic digression, Berlioz describes the ideal performing conditions for concerts and the theater. But he cannot stop there, and once again he gives in to the demon of supposition by describing what he calls a "magnificent Festival orchestra." He deplors "the constant uniformity of performing masses" as an insuperable obstacle; in short, he denounces the standardization of symphonic components and considers it in its negative aspects. His reflection, dating from more than a century ago, on the rigidity of the symphonic apparatus shows great insight; this rigidity was indeed going to fix and paralyze the imagination of composers in established, accepted dimensions, allowing them to express them-

selves only within the same framework and under identical circumstances. It cannot be denied that the standardization of musical conditions brought about, in a certain sense, greater professional competence, built up the repertory, made the concert a social tradition (even a social necessity); Berlioz could not, however, at that time and especially in France, be aware of this phenomenon. On the other hand, he saw very clearly the absolute necessity of a model—musical as well as sociological—to be adhered to by all works intended for symphonic performance.

I pass over certain polemical remarks—unfortunately still pertinent—on the tyranny of economic conditions and come to the heart of the chapter, namely the description of an imaginary orchestra, down to the minutest detail. "Yet it would be curious," writes Berlioz, "to try once, in a composition written for the occasion, the simultaneous use of all the musical forces that can be gathered together in Paris. Let us suppose that a conductor had them at his command, in a vast hall designed for the purpose by an architect familiar with acoustics and music. He should, before writing, determine with precision the plan and arrangement of the immense orchestra and should keep them constantly in mind while composing." Berlioz has already called our attention to "the importance of the various points the sounds come from." Here also he condemns standardization in orchestral placement since it works against the specific character of each work. His point of view, which surprises us by its acuteness, is essentially modern. Berlioz writes: "Certain parts of an orchestra are intended by the composer to ask questions, and others to reply; now, this intention becomes evident and beautiful only if the groups between which the dialogue is set up are at a sufficient distance from each other. The composer must therefore indicate in his score the placement he considers appropriate for them." And certainly we have as a precise example the way orchestras of brasses are placed in the Requiem; this involves not only a spectacular effect but the location of a musical structure in physical space. The position of the brasses in the Requiem was originally descriptive and symbolic, associated with the four points of the compass, but it nevertheless reveals, for the period, a far from customary preoccupation. (I don't believe that Venice, Gabrieli, and Monteverdi contributed anything at all to Berlioz' conception in this respect, for he was unfamiliar with the ceremonies of San Marco.)

Further on, Berlioz foresees and answers the objections that could be raised to the use of great orchestral masses and the way they were going to be abused at the end of the nineteenth century, when musical material not originally designed for such treatment was *fattened up* by doublings. To quote him again: "Until the present day, in Festivals we have heard only the ordinary orchestra and chorus with their parts quadrupled or quintupled according to the number of performers; but here we would be

concerned with something quite different, and the composer who wanted to bring out the prodigious, innumerable resources of such an instrument would most undeniably have to perform a new task."

Berlioz then describes in minute detail the entire make-up of this imaginary ensemble, giving us supporting figures; no fewer than 467 instrumentalists and 360 choral singers. The listing of instrumentalists begins with 120 violins and finishes with four Turkish crescents (also called Chinese pavilions); in between we find thirty harps and thirty pianos; as for horns, there are all of sixteen. Including the chorus, we don't quite reach the "symphony of a thousand" but we are not far from it, since the performers number 827. It is not the entire mass of this enormous ensemble which interests him; what he actually wants is to form a large number of small orchestras within this large orchestra, in order to diversify both style and sonority: "It would naturally be necessary to adopt an exceptionally broad style whenever the entire mass is called into play, saving delicate effects, light and rapid movements for small orchestras that the composer could easily form and set to dialoguing within this musical congregation. Besides the iridescent colors that this multitude of different timbres would allow to burst forth at any moment, unheard of *harmonic* effects could be created."

Berlioz then begins to draw up a precise catalogue of the effects that could be created with this orchestra; and I must say that reading this catalogue has always led me to make a most incongruous comparison with the end of *The 120 Days of Sodom*, where Sade, temporarily unable to finish his book, draws up a catalogue of perversions still to be described. There is in Sade's catalogue as in Berlioz' a sort of obsession with the analysis of different combinations which is ascribable to the same reason: dissatisfaction of desire, compensated for by imagined debauchery. This is, no doubt, the only thing Berlioz and Sade have in common!

Reading this catalogue imagined by Berlioz when all the instruments would be united in a "Festival orchestra" lets us pass in review all of nineteenth- and twentieth-century instrumentation, including not only the instrumental combinations that have already been used but also those that exist in a merely approximate way because of the economic impossibilities about which Berlioz complained (and which have not changed very much up to the present!). I would like to cite a few of those whose chances of being realized remain exclusively within the realm of the imaginary. They are, among others:

"The combination in a large orchestra of thirty harps with the entire mass of strings playing *pizzicato*, thus forming, in their ensemble, another gigantic harp with 934 strings, for graceful, brilliant, voluptuous accents throughout the entire range of nuances;

"The combination of the thirty pianos with the six glockenspiels, the twelve pairs of antique cymbals, the six triangles (which, like the cymbals, could be

tuned in different keys), and the four Turkish crescents, making up a *metallic* percussion orchestra, for joyful and brilliant accents in the *mezzo-forte* nuance."

After describing in this way the entity made up by each possible grouping, he wonders "how to enumerate all the harmonic aspects that each of these different groups would assume when associated with the groups that are sympathetically or antipathetically related to it?" Here again Berlioz' combinative imagination is given free rein. He describes widely used, even conventional forms, such as "a song by the Sopranos, or the Tenors, or the Basses, or of all voices in octaves, accompanied by an *instrumental orchestra*"; but he also thinks of less orthodox solutions and reverses the usual situation in order to suggest to us "a song of Violins, Violas, and Violoncellos *together*, or of woodwinds *together*, or of brasses *together*, accompanied by a *vocal orchestra*."

Whether because of exhaustion or because of discouragement before such a mountain of future treasures, the description ends with a very prosaic "etc., etc., etc. . . ."

Sade comes to mind again immediately afterwards, for Berlioz is going to give us a minute description of "the system of rehearsals to be set up for this colossal orchestra." The conductor and his assistants, subassistants, and rehearsal masters are governed by a single set of rules, which cover no fewer than twelve stages. And that is where the *realistic* description ends.

In passing, Berlioz emphasizes the excellent qualities of this orchestra and defends himself against an accusation that he is particularly sensitive to: "The popular prejudice calls large orchestras *noisy*; if they are well organized, well rehearsed, and well directed, and if they perform true music, they should be called *powerful*; and certainly nothing is more different than the meaning of these two terms. . . . What is more: unisons take on real value only when they are multiplied beyond a certain number. . . . That is why small orchestras, regardless of the quality of the performers who make them up, have so little effect and consequently so little value." Discussion on this subject, from Berlioz to Mahler, from Wagner to Schoenberg, has not yet died down. There is not much chance that it ever will. But it is only an episodic aspect over which Berlioz does not linger, and I shall quote his concluding paragraph, which is especially symptomatic:

"But in the thousands of combinations obtainable with the monumental orchestra we have just described would be found a harmonic richness, a truthfulness of timbres, a succession of contrasts that cannot be compared with anything that has been accomplished in art up to the present, and above all an incalculable melodic power, both expressive and rhythmic, a force of penetration unlike any other, a prodigious sensitivity to nuances in the ensemble and in its parts. Its repose would be as majestic as the ocean's sleep; its agitations would be reminiscent

of a tropical storm, its explosions would evoke the cries of volcanoes, it would re-create the moaning, the murmuring, the mysterious noises of virgin forests, the clamoring, the prayers, the triumphal and mourning songs of a people with an expansive soul, an ardent heart, impetuous passions; its silence would impose fear by its solemnity; and the most rebellious organizations would shudder upon seeing the roaring growth of its *crecendo*, like an immense and sublime conflagration!"

The majestic description winds up with this accumulation of conditionals, and the conditional is indeed the appropriate tense for this project that Berlioz was never to realize but that he carried in his memory. His "people with an expansive soul" reminds us of Rousseau, Robespierre, the ceremonies in the Champ de Mars. This project, which was to remain in Berlioz' imagination, came to a halt before the contingencies of a closed, withdrawn society. One is tempted to say that Berlioz' written compositions make up only the scattered pieces of a Great Opus that escaped him—an Opus that resembles in this respect that definitive *Livre* towards which Mallarmé was working, the "*Coup de dés*" being only a stage along the way.

The "*Spectacle*" that Berlioz constantly dreamed of is a spectacle of himself projected into the realm of the imaginary—an absolute future dimension sustained by an abolished, exceptional past. All the works in which he consented to respect the limits of theatrical convention—even *Benvenuto Cellini*, the most "autobiographical"—never succeeded in taking on a truly scenic appearance. A letter from Wagner to Liszt on this subject is particularly revealing; it already gives an acute definition of the problem: "If there is a musician who makes use of the poet, it is surely Berlioz, and his misfortune is that he always adapts this poet to his musical fantasy and arranges first Shakespeare, then Goethe according to his wishes. He needs the poet because the latter fills him completely, transports him with enthusiasm, forces him, becomes for him just what a man is for a woman. It is with sadness that I see such an extraordinary artist go astray because of this self-centered solitude."

Béatrice et Bénédicte and *Les Troyens* contain pages that are among Berlioz' best, but far from bringing about a theatrical rejuvenation, they prove to be incapable of providing the kind of dramaturgy and myth-making quality that would establish them as examples. Very weak scenic conventions often contradict the composer's musical imagination; we do not get beyond "separate pieces" and "recitatives." Although these are admittedly amplified by comparison with the operas of Berlioz' predecessors—Gluck and Weber in particular—they unfortunately do not blend into a new entity that would find its sustenance in a specifically "Berliozian" conception of theatrical aesthetics. As for such compositions as *La Damnation de Faust*, staging them reduces their imaginary dimension to a painful sham. Berlioz' visual

imagination is not essentially of the kind that can be represented *materially*; it is, indeed, a "vision." On the other hand, as soon as Berlioz forces himself to write for the theater, his "vision" is hindered, clouded over, by the permanent presence of theatrical conventions that he remembers and that he does not create. Instead of making his genius open out, they confine him within limits that cause him to lose his freshness and greatness, sometimes reducing him to picturesque effects. (Could one possibly attribute the same significance to the tempest encountered in the *Ring* and the storm in *Les Troyens*?)

THE BEST OF Berlioz' imagination is displayed in an area that, in the final analysis, belongs to no realm determined by precise conventions. In a sense, *Lélio* is the typical example of what the proper field of his poetic invention might have been if the contingencies of musical organization had not quickly led him to give up this kind of project which, for various reasons, was so difficult to accept, because of aesthetic considerations quite as much as because of economic difficulties. In *Lélio*, there is a unique way of linking theater and concert by the autobiographical element. It is an intimate journal, sufficiently elaborated upon to be read and played collectively; the author has included himself in the staging, and in his own person. Such a procedure belongs neither to the theater nor to the concert, but rather to public confession.

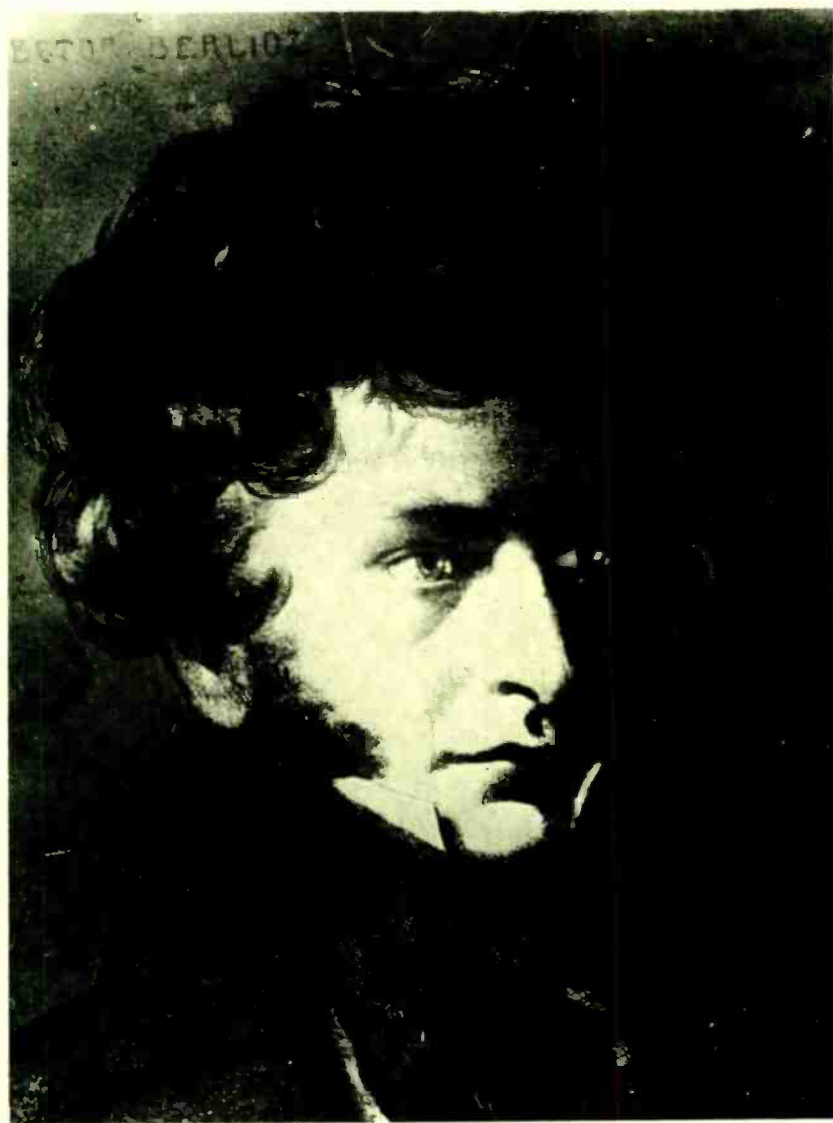
This original way of expressing himself anticipates a future time if we look at it from a pragmatic point of view. The conditions imposed upon Berlioz by his period did not make it possible for him to achieve an exact realization of his ideas; that is why he had to put up with substitute solutions that fell far short of satisfying the requirements of his original intuition.

Fragments of a great imaginary project, Berlioz' compositions no doubt require us to find a style of presentation unconnected with any of those that we still accept today, since the latter exist for works conceived in terms of certain predetermined categories. This is an essential condition, I believe, if these works are to find their rightful place, if they are no longer to produce, as they often do now, the impression of an incomplete phenomenon, an erratic creation. With a hundred-year delay, the discovery of this point of encounter and fusion between imaginary concert and imaginary theater remains naturally very problematic, especially since the values represented by Berlioz' works are frozen by history, whether or not one tries to deny this fact.

If posthumous reconstitution remains in all likelihood an illusion, one can with greater profit infer from this suspended dream present-day solutions for contemporary creation. But these solutions could scarcely be *seen*, literally speaking, as having anything to do with the original "vision" of Berlioz.

Translated by David Noakes

BERLIOZ-SUR-SEINE



Collection Viollet

A Pictorial Essay by Roy McMullen

The hot-eyed young Hector Berlioz of the above portrait (by Emile Signol and now in the French Academy at Rome) arrived on the Paris Left Bank sometime during October 1821, shortly before his eighteenth birthday. Sadly transformed by illness and disappointment, he died in an apartment near the Place Clichy on March 8, 1869, and was buried in the nearby Montmartre Cemetery.

During that nearly half a century he was often absent from the city, as a student in Italy, as a celebrity in Germany, Austria, Russia, and England, and as a nostalgic visitor to La Côte-Saint-André, the country town near Grenoble where he was born. But Paris, as the album of places and people on the following pages can remind us, was always the stage on which he yearned to star—in the double role of Romantic Genius and Great Lover.

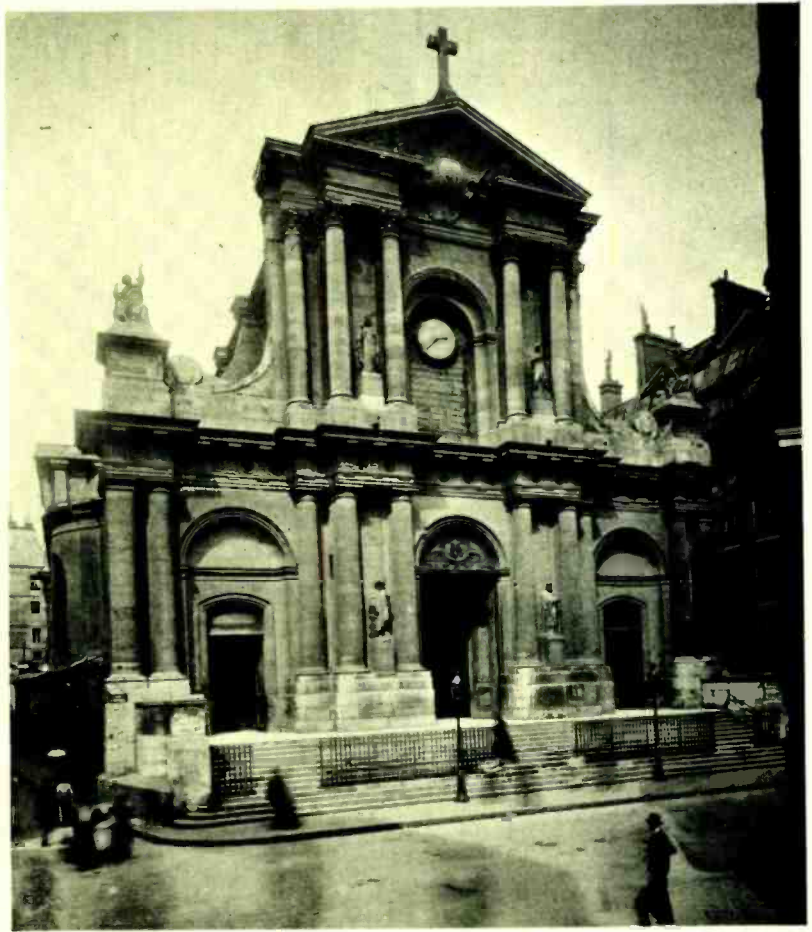


The neoclassical École de Médecine, shown above as it was around 1821 (the facade still exists), was Dr. Louis Berlioz' reason for sending his gifted son up from La Côte-Saint-André to study in Paris. Hector tried manfully but briefly to conquer a deep horror of the dissecting table, and then, braving parental wrath and the loss of a substantial allowance, directed his ambition towards the domed seventeenth-century palace of the Institute (right), where the competitions were held for the musical Prix de Rome. He began trying for the prize before he had even been admitted to the Conservatoire, and finally won it in 1830, on his fifth attempt. (He was cloistered in the Institute during the July days when the populace was chasing Charles X from the throne.) By that date he was already the composer of such works as the *Symphonie fantastique*, the *Waverley Overture*, and the *Nuit* scenes that were the nucleus of *La Damnation de Faust*.

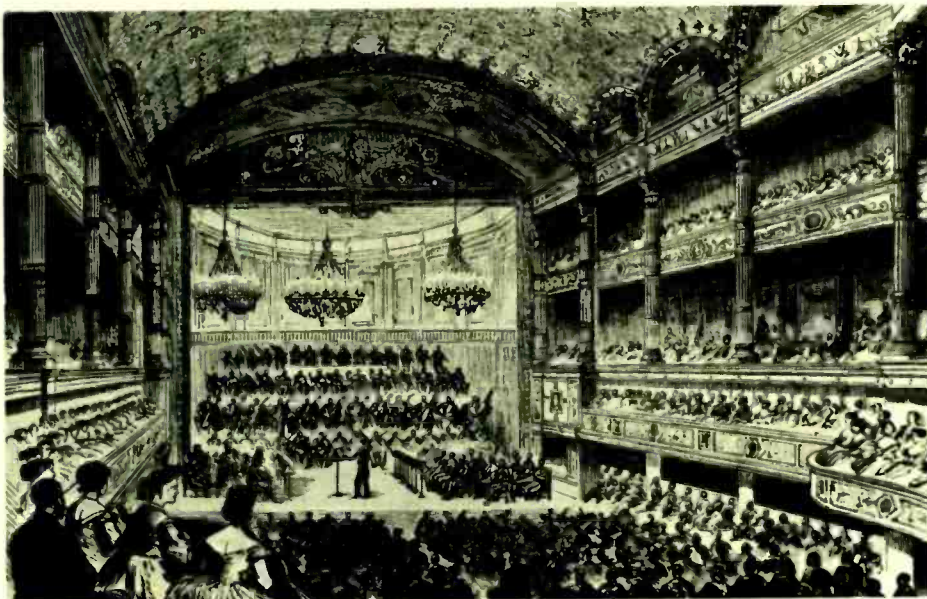


Roy McMullen

One of the finest places in which to catch the flavor of the Romantic Paris of the young Berlioz is the old Conservatoire's Pompeian-style concert hall (below), which is today much as it was when it resounded to a series of memorable first performances — sections of the future *Damnation de Faust* in 1829, the *Symphonie fantastique* in 1830, *Harold en Italie* in 1834, *Roméo et Juliette* in 1839. Another must on a musical pilgrim's list ought to be the Church of Saint Roch (right), whose Jesuit-style facade still bears traces of Bonaparte's famous whiff of grape-shot. Here in 1823 the rash Hector, just turned twenty, made a first and disastrous attempt to have one of his works heard in public. The work in question—a Mass, fragments of which survive in the Requiem — was finally performed at the church in 1825 and produced what the composer modestly designated a “rather brilliant” effect.



Collection Viollet





"My life," said Berlioz, "is a novel that interests me a great deal." Camille Moke, the smooth-haired young woman on the right, had a role in the novel during 1830 — until she jilted her musical paladin, then on his way to Rome, for marriage with the piano manufacturer Pleyel. But Camille was merely, in the composer's words, a "violent distraction." The principal heroine of the story was already the Irish actress Harriet Smithson, whom our engraving depicts playing Ophelia gone mad. It was in this part that Berlioz saw her for the first time, at the Théâtre de l'Odéon (right) in 1827. They were married in 1833 at the British Embassy, and from 1834 to 1837 they lived near the top of the Montmartre butte, in a house that appears in our photograph as it was at the beginning of this century (it was torn down in 1925). Here he worked on *Harold en Italie* and *Benvenuto Cellini*.



Ray McMullen



William - Violet



Roy McMullen



Collection Viollet



Collection Viollet

Three Paris monuments evoke Berlioz' martial religious music. At the Church of Saint Louis des Invalides (top, left) in 1837 the Requiem was first performed, to honor General Charles-Marie de Damrémont and the men who had died with him during the fighting in Algeria. In 1840, at the base of the column in the Place de la Bastille (above), with the composer conducting with a saber, the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* had its premiere, and was drowned out by the noise of the crowd and marching troops. (The elephant, a plaster model for a never executed fountain, is the one that figures in *Les Misérables*. It remained in the Place until 1847.) At the Church of Saint Eustache (bottom, left) the Te Deum, which Berlioz characterized as "colossal, Babylonian," was first performed in the year 1855.



From 1821 until 1873, when fire destroyed the building, the Paris Opéra occupied "provisional" quarters in the Rue Le Peletier. Here, with the production of *Benvenuto Cellini* in 1838, Berlioz suffered one of the worst defeats of his career. "As the curtain fell," wrote one critic, "the public woke up whistling" (one of the French forms of booing). Caricaturists turned the hostile reaction into ridicule. The agony ended with a scribbled note by the composer to the director of the Opéra: "I have the honor of informing you that I am withdrawing my opera *Benvenuto*. I am intimately convinced that you will learn about this with pleasure."

100
1838

à Monsieur le Directeur de l'Opéra

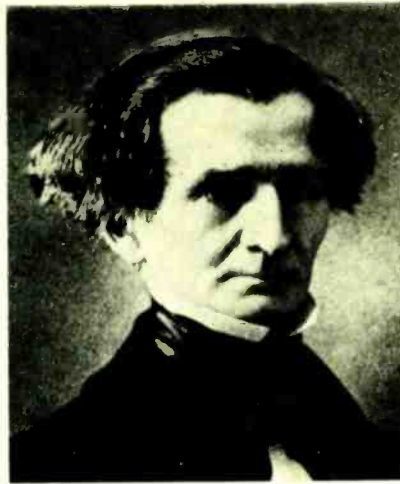
M

Monsieur

J'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer
que je retire mon opéra
de Benvenuto. Je suis
intimement convaincu que
vous l'apprenez avec plaisir

J'ai l'honneur d'être,
Monsieur, votre dévoué
serviteur

H. Berlioz

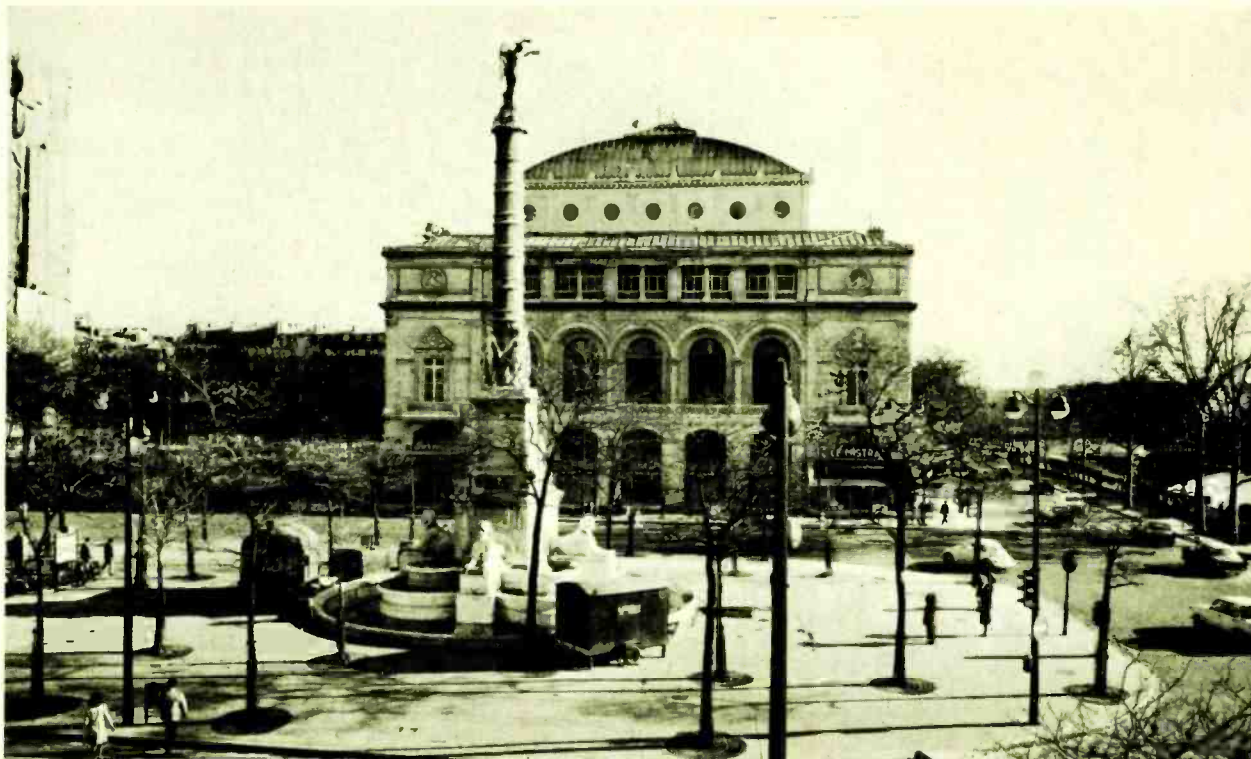


Collection Viallet



A photograph taken in 1855 shows a rather ruffled Berlioz regarding the world with what can be interpreted as wounded resignation. Harriet, after a period of nearly total paralysis, had died in 1854, and he married the failed soprano Marie Recio, who appears left exuding the satisfaction of a woman who had been a celebrity's mistress for fourteen years and had at last become his wife. But if the composer's private life had lost most of its early Romantic excitement, his public activity could still be spectacular. The vast piece of masonry below was the Palace of Industry in the Paris Exhibition of 1855, where he conducted three concerts and drew a total audience of approximately forty thousand listeners.





Roy McMullen

The rebuilt Théâtre-Lyrique — which became the Théâtre des Nations in 1874, the Opéra-Comique in 1887, the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt in 1899, and the Théâtre de la Ville last year — opened in 1862 under the direction of the great impresario Léon Carvalho. Here in 1863 the Carthage half of *Les Troyens* had its premiere. Rehearsals were inadequate, the cast had other engagements in mind, and the staging, according to the composer, was “absurd at some points and ridiculous at others.” The caricaturists were at work as usual. But on the opening night there was only one whistle, the press was by no means entirely hostile, and so there were twenty-two performances. With this half success for half an opera Berlioz’ creative career ended, there being no hope for a Paris production of his *Béatrice et Bénédict*.





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Berlioz

ON RECORDS

An Appraisal
by
Bernard Jacobson



There are over eighty Schwann catalogue entries under the name of Berlioz. With three or four glaring major exceptions, and a handful of minor ones, they cover the composer's entire output.

Of the recordings they denote, perhaps five qualify for unreserved recommendation, and seven or eight others may be described as acceptable stopgaps.

Buying Berlioz records is thus an enterprise fraught with high probabilities of disappointment. The purpose of this critical discography is accordingly simple: it is to put at the collector's disposal the experience of one who has heard every Berlioz recording currently in the lists (and some defunct ones too). Being intended as a practical guide, the survey assesses everything that is available and nothing that isn't.

The degree of emphasis that emerges on conductorial willfulness, insensitivity, or downright incomprehension need surprise no one. Fifty-two years ago Bernard Shaw expressed a conviction that Mozart and Berlioz were, among composers of the past century or two, "by far the most elusive and difficult in performance." Clearly they still are.

But 1969 is luckier than 1917 in one important respect. The outstanding Berlioz conductor Shaw knew in his days as a professional music critic, Sir Charles Hallé, had died in 1895. No one, by 1917, had replaced him. Now, however, we have in Colin Davis a Berliozian of commanding stature. And since Davis has embarked on the project of recording *all* Berlioz' major works, it is reasonable to hope that the current gaps will be worthily filled within the next few years.

I think it important that the judgment implied by that remark should be established at the outset, for the benefit of those who already have strong views on Berlioz interpretation. If the suggestion that Davis is not only the greatest *living* Berlioz conductor but also a greater one than either Charles Munch or Sir Thomas Beecham infuriates you, then the following pages will do the same.

The five categories under which I have treated the music are intended as useful rather than significant subdivisions. With Berlioz, categories interpenetrate more than with most composers, and it would be possible to make several other, equally cogent, divisions. I have included the *Angel Damnation de Faust* excerpts disc in the same section as the complete *Damnation*. But I have allotted the various versions of the three famous "lollipops" from this work to the miscellaneous section, along with overtures, both for convenience in dealing with coupling and because I think that separate recordings of the *Hungarian March* or the *Dance of the Sylphs* serve a different kind of need among collectors.

THE SYMPHONIES

The *Symphonie fantastique* is the first of Berlioz' four symphonies. With twenty-three versions listed in the catalogue at the time of this writing, it is also by far the most recorded of all his works.

For my taste, the Davis recording with the London Symphony (Philips 500101 or 900101) shot straight to the top of the list when it was released, more than two years ago. Withstanding the test of time, repeated hearing, and exhaustive comparison, it is still at the top. Davis' performance succeeds better than any other I have heard, either live or on record, in synthesizing the two most widely disparate aspects of Berlioz' paradoxical style: the wild-eyed, opium-clouded, hagridden drama of the super-romantic, which too many conductors see as the whole of Berlioz; and the no less vital classicism, never far below the surface, which informs and regulates even his most hysterical outbursts and which accounts for the curious but unmistakable sense of elegance inseparable from his music.

All this is in Davis' exhilarating command of rhythm, line, and orchestral mass, seconded by brilliant instrumental execution (the brasses in particular are phenomenal) and faithfully reproduced by the engineers. Furthermore, in keeping with Davis' characteristic concern for what the composer really wanted, this is the only one of the twenty-three recordings that is absolutely complete in every respect—for Davis observes the repeats both in the first movement and in the "March to the Scaffold," and he also includes the cornet part with which Berlioz, some time after completing the symphony, enhanced the textural charm of the waltz movement.

The other recordings fall into four general classes. There are three very fine performances which may appeal to those who are uninterested in repeats, who are prepared to forgo the cornet, and who for one reason or another find Davis' approach antipathetic. Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic (Odyssey 32 16 0204) provide easily the best of the bargain-label performances. Sticking remarkably close to Berlioz' markings, Mitropoulos gives a



splendidly vital reading more closely attuned to the romantic than to the classical elements of the music. He brings out the low trombones in the "March to the Scaffold" with bloodcurdling vividness.

On Melodiya/Angel (S 40054), Genady Rozhdestvensky brings equally impressive insights to bear on the score. His handling of tempo is especially individual: in the "Scaffold" movement, for instance, he achieves a gathering fury of Furtwänglerian sweep quite different from the implacable tread most conductors aim at. Many seemingly unimportant details of texture or phrasing are freshly illuminated in his performance, but I find it lacks the last degree of over-all coherence. The Moscow Radio Symphony plays above its usual form, and there is some particularly good work from the principal clarinet.

The third and last of these qualified successes is Ernest Ansermet's performance with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Selling for the price of a single disc on London CSA 2101, this brings a double bonus with it: a pretty good performance of the *Corsaire* overture as a filler, and a second record containing parts of the rehearsal for the *Fantastique* performance. Though not in the same measure as Davis, Ansermet has comprehended the Berliozian stylistic brew with powerful insight. He is most successful in the "Witches' Sabbath" finale, where the very tone of his orchestra seems to breathe fire and brimstone. This is due partly to the playing, which is passionately musical if not quite of virtuoso standard, and partly to the exceptionally lifelike and colorful recording.

In common with Mitropoulos, and with Bernstein, Boulez, Dorati, Karajan, and Ozawa of the conductors still to be discussed, Ansermet has the advantage of a third movement (the "Scene in the Fields") undisturbed by side break.

The next two recordings, those of Otto Klemperer with the Philharmonia (Angel 36196 or S 36196) and Ataulfo Argenta with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (London STS 15006), share a partial adherence to Davis' canons of textual fidelity but, considered in their entirety, fail to make the grade. Klemperer's read-

ing, which includes the first-movement repeat and the second-movement cornet but not the fourth-movement repeat; is of strictly curiosity value: this might be described as classicism run mad, with rock-steady rhythms, funereal tempos, and an unshifting reluctance to get excited. Argenta is more idiomatic, but in spite of his bow in the direction of authenticity—observance of the fourth-movement repeat—and in spite of some surprisingly decent playing from the Conservatoire Orchestra, the performance is too patchy to survive comparison with the very best.

After the qualified successes and the special-interest versions comes the largest category of all—the qualified failures. One of these, the recent Pierre Boulez/London Symphony performance (CBS 32B10010, two discs), has the specific advantage of being coupled with what is far the better of the two recordings of *Lélio, or The Return to Life*. Boulez leads a compelling account of *Lélio*, an extraordinary hodgepodge of spoken narration and unco-ordinated musical numbers which, in Berlioz' original conception, formed the sequel to the *Fantastique* under the umbrella title *Episode from an Artist's Life*. So if it's *Lélio* you're after, preference must clearly go to Boulez over the older version by the Paris Symphony Association under René Leibowitz (Lyricord 71 or 771). But in spite of magnificent orchestral playing, fine record-



ing, and telling points of interpretation from time to time, Boulez' *Fantastique* seems to me way off the mark. It smacks of the kind of pedantry that falls short of actual correctness.

His reading has been hailed in some quarters as a sort of "cleaning-up" of the old master. So it is, if you regard the excitement of those *animatos* at the ends of movements and the damnable, deliberate ugliness of much of the "March to the Scaffold" as moral excesses to be curbed at any cost. At all such moments, Boulez' gentlemanly pussyfooting misses the point completely.

Moderation is the last thing you could impute to Seiji Ozawa's performance with the Toronto Symphony (CBS 32 11 0035 or 32 11 0036). He begins well enough. There are admirable things in the first movement, and the sound has something



of the well-ventilated Berliozian quality understood so well by Davis and Ansermet. But in the second movement individuality begins to tip over into eccentricity. The *p, espressivo* reprise of the theme at measure 175 is much too loud, the one-measure silence at 232 much too long. Matters grow steadily worse with a rushed slow movement and a "March" in which the brasses seldom remember to sustain their tone properly, and the Finale degenerates into an ineffectual scramble. From what I have heard of his work over the past two years, Ozawa is capable of a much better performance now.

Pierre Monteux's only extant reading, with the Vienna Philharmonic on RCA Victrola VIC 1031 or VICS 1031, is sadly disappointing. Perhaps because of a lack of understanding in the Viennese orchestra, the performance sounds oddly uncomfortable both in tone and in pacing.

Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon 138964) are polished but impossibly square and unidiomatic. Unidiomatic in a different way is Leonard Bernstein with the New York Philharmonic on Columbia MS 6607: this reading has the right kind of *slancio* but errs seriously on the side of tonal beefiness. Vladimir Golschmann with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Vanguard 170 or S 170) mixes moments of perception with others of crass insensitivity—listen to the pizzicato cellos and basses thumping their way through the texture at the passage beginning measure 176 of the waltz. Similar good-bad mixtures may be observed in Eugene Goossens (Everest 6037 or 3037), Antal Dorati (Pickwick 4040 or S 4040), and Sir John Barbiroli (Vanguard 181 or S 181). And last in this category may be placed the earlier of the two extant Charles Munch recordings—with the Boston Symphony on RCA Victor LSC 2608. I am aware of the esteem in which Munch's Berlioz is widely held. But to me this performance, like many others by Munch, suffers both from a persistent inability to set and hold a firm rhythmic pulse and from a raucousness of emotional tone that sets the elegance of Berlioz at a disastrous discount.

The Boston recording at least offers some good orchestral playing. Munch's later recording with the new Orchestre de Paris (Angel S 36517) lacks even that recommendation. And since here the interpretative shortcomings have deteriorated into sheer waywardness, this unhappy recording may serve as starting-point for the final category of *Fantastiques*—the out-and-out failures. A second eminent occupant of this musical doghouse is the Philadelphia Orchestra performance (Columbia MS 6248) under Eugene Ormandy, who puts himself beyond the pale by his presumptuous and misconceived attempts to ginger up Berlioz' beautifully judged brass writing. Morbidly inclined listeners will find examples in the coda of the first movement and in the big brass tune of the "March."

The other occupants of this class—Pelea, Zecchi, De Cross, Vandernoot, and Wallenstein—are here by default rather

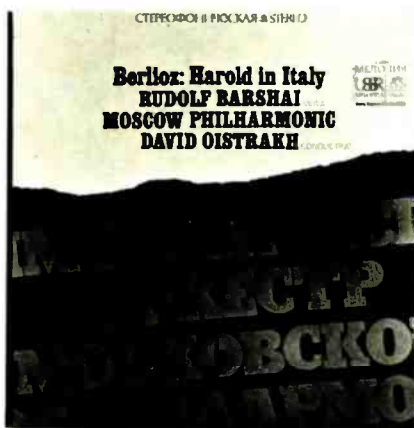
than through positive vice. They simply fail to achieve anything remarkable.

The next symphony in chronological order is *Harold in Italy*. It is a harder work than the *Fantastique* to bring off in performance, and even on records the problems posed by balancing the solo viola with the full symphonic texture have precluded any comparable multiplicity of attempts.

William Primrose was for a long time regarded as the leading exponent of the solo part—as, indeed, of the viola in general. His performance of *Harold* is available in two versions, one with Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic (Columbia ML 4542, mono only), the other with Munch and the Boston Symphony (RCA Victor LSC 2228). Neither is really satisfactory. Primrose plays beautifully from a technical point of view. His understanding of the work, however, seems to me superficial. In both versions, too, there are bothersome details such as the misreading of the rhythm when the subsidiary theme returns towards the end of the first movement (pages 71 and 72 of the Eulenberg miniature score).

Nor is the conducting by either maestro really successful. Munch whips up a good measure of excitement but again at the expense of poise and delicacy, and Beecham's ideas about tempo are decidedly strange, especially in the middle movements, which he quite fails to hold together.

The best viola playing in any of the five available recordings is by Rudolf



Barshai, with the Moscow Philharmonic Symphony under David Oistrakh on Melodiya/Angel 40001 or S 40001. His rich tone and musicianly phrasing are a delight to listen to, and since Oistrakh directs a reasonably well-conceived and executed account of the orchestral part, this version probably deserves first place among the five currently available.

From a purely orchestral point of view, the best version is that by the Philharmonia under Davis (Angel 36123 or S 36123). But though this performance has the greatest lucidity of texture and though the middle movements are enchantingly done, it cannot be regarded as one of Davis' best efforts. The principal trouble is the main Allegro of the first movement, for which either Davis or soloist Yehudi Menuhin decided on a tempo so slow that the music never leaves the

ground. Menuhin's playing, too, though sensitive and often beautiful, is no match for Barshai's.

The remaining *Harold* is a swift, exciting, no-holds-barred performance by Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic with violist William Lincer on Columbia MS 6358. Bernstein does not have the affinity for Berlioz that characterizes his work with Mahler. Still, there is much pleasure to be had from this brilliant, extrovert reading, and Lincer's playing is good.

Berlioz' third essay in and around the symphonic genre is *Romeo and Juliet*, that magnificent "dramatic symphony with choruses, vocal solos, and prologue in choral recitative." There are presently three recordings available: by Pierre Monteux with the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus on Westminster 2233 or 233; by Arturo Toscanini with the NBC Symphony and Chorus on RCA Victor LM 7034 (mono only); and by Munch with the Boston Symphony and the New England Conservatory Chorus on RCA Victor LDS 6098. (The just released recording by Colin Davis, on Philips PHS 2-909, is reviewed in this issue of HIGH FIDELITY.)

I find Monteux's in most respects the best of the three. He is exciting without ever pushing excitement beyond bounds. He is wonderfully lyrical in the love music. He has the best soloists: Regina Resnik and tenor André Turp are both excellent; and in his bigger part, bass David Ward deploys a splendidly resonant voice with welcome warmth and clarity (though a couple of his French words are pronounced oddly).

The only major drawback of Monteux's performance, which is well recorded and has more convenient side breaks than the other versions, is the extremely sedate, lackluster treatment of the "Queen Mab" scherzo. This feathery virtuoso piece comes into its own in the Toscanini performance, which is taken from the 1947 NBC broadcasts. (Another Toscanini performance of the scherzo is available separately on RCA Victrola VIC 1267, mono only, but this 1951 version is marginally less fleet and assured than the one in the complete recording.)

The "Queen Mab" scherzo, however, is a very small segment of a great work, and I find Toscanini's performance as a whole severely lacking in sensitivity. The conductor's monomania is evident at times. At the very beginning, he is so preoccupied with securing a brilliant effect in the imitative string entries that he forgets to ensure the correct articulation of the little sixteenth note just after the first beat of each bar—even when you know it's there, it is impossible to hear it. This sort of thing, though usually in less extreme form, recurs constantly. And the final scene is badly marred by Nicola Moscona's grotesque French diction, as well as by Toscanini's inappropriately jaunty tempos and articulation.

Munch's performance offers nothing as bad as this but also nothing to match the best of either Monteux or Toscanini. He secures some fine orchestral playing, but his chorus is immature, and Rosalind

Elias is allowed to get away with some pretty insensitive belting in her solo.

A recording of orchestral excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet*, played by the New York Philharmonic under Bernstein, is available on Columbia MS 6170, coupled with a performance of the *Roman Carnival* overture. The interpretations are impassioned and a shade larger than life, and the recording is not one of Columbia's best.

The last of Berlioz' four symphonies, the *Symphonie funèbre et triomphale* for enormous wind-based orchestra and chorus, has been unjustly if understandably neglected. It cries out for a first-rate modern stereo recording, and it has not yet been accorded one. The three versions available give but a puny notion of the music's power. The least unsatisfactory is the Parisian performance under Désiré Dondeyne (Westminster 18865 or 14066). Fritz Straub's Cologne performance (Lyricord 40, mono only) and Ernest Graf's Viennese one (Urania 100 or 500) are unacceptable on both interpretative and sonic grounds. Dondeyne is not much better, but he will have to do for the moment.

THE RELIGIOUS MUSIC

On paper, the monumental Requiem (or *Grande messe des morts*) looks to have been well treated by the phonograph. Four stereo recordings are currently listed. Unfortunately, the best performed of them is also the worst recorded. This is the oldest version, by Hermann Scherchen with the French Radio Chorus and National Opera Orchestra (Westminster 2227 or 201).

In any case, Scherchen's interpretation is one of sporadic rather than sustained greatness. Quite apart from the dated sound, several movements are rendered ineffective by tempos that are deliberate to the point of ponderousness. Furthermore, one of these movements, the a cappella "*Quaerens me*," not only drops around a tone in pitch but is disfigured by a stupid cut that results in the total disappearance of the line "*Culpa rubet vultus meus*" from the text.

Nevertheless, in some fundamental respects Scherchen's performance is a worthy representation of the score. One of the most important facets of Berlioz' writing, here as elsewhere, is his use of silence. Among the conductors who have recorded the Requiem, Scherchen alone, time and time again, is the only one to give full value to the pauses without which the music cannot breathe. The most vital instance of this is at the beginning of the *Agnus Dei*, where the alternate measures with fermatas *must* be longer than those without. Scherchen here achieves a wonderful sense of rapt suspense. His rivals plow on regardless, as if they were conducting perfectly ordinary $\frac{3}{4}$ bars in tempo. The Sanctus is another movement where the Westminster version scores. Here Jean Giraudeau is an all but ideal tenor soloist. He takes the trouble to sing really quietly, and his floated B flat on "*Sabaoth*" is even sweeter than Léopold Simoneau's in the older Munch recording. The hushed cymbal and bass drum too are suitably

mysterious only in the Scherchen version.

For these and other similar reasons, the Westminster set, with all its faults, gives a far stronger impression of what the music is about than any of its better-engineered successors. In both his recordings—with the Boston Symphony and the New England Conservatory Chorus on RCA Victor LDS 6077, and more recently with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Chorus on Deutsche Grammophon 139264/65—Munch makes the same cut as Scherchen in the "*Quaerens me*." Nor does he do anything to make either of his versions rank as a worthy rival to the Westminster on interpretative grounds.

In his older recording on RCA, he benefits from the presence of a good tenor soloist, though, as I have suggested, Simoneau is less impressive than Scherchen's Giraudeau, and from a clear and colorful recording. His Deutsche Grammophon recording is less lucid if more atmospheric; but any loss of detail is more than compensated for by the superiority of the chorus, which outshines RCA's group as any ordinarily expert adult chorus is bound to outshine an obviously undergraduate group in music like this. On the other hand, Peter Schreier, the tenor in the Deutsche Grammophon set, bellows his way lustily through the Sanctus as though the purpose of the work were to wake, rather than commemorate, the dead.

Ormandy's soloist, Cesare Valletti, is equally unencumbered by respect for dynamic markings, and his chorus is even more brash and adolescent than the New England group. Since he eschews the "*Quaerens me*" cut, Ormandy finds himself in the surely unfamiliar position of having produced the only textually un-mutilated performance, but there is not much more that can be said in favor of his interpretation. Certainly he makes a fearsome noise in the "*Tuba Mirum*," and Columbia has given him a recording of admirable breadth and focus. But the way he allows his tenors and basses to gloss over the rhythm at "*orationem*" in the Introit (making what sounds like a triplet instead of an eighth and two sixteenths), the cheery banality of his cymbal thumps in the Sanctus, and his wanton clippings of rests and fermatas everywhere—all this bespeaks superficiality and lack of real involvement.

The *Te Deum* poses, on a somewhat smaller scale, the same problems as the Requiem, and the only available recording, by Beecham with the Royal Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra on Odyssey 32 16 0206, does not begin to solve them. One can dimly perceive that an impressive performance is going on, and Alexander Young is a noble tenor soloist, but the recording, hopelessly dim and shadowy even if you improve it slightly by turning your control to the mono position, does not give the chorus the ghost of a chance, and it is largely impossible to distinguish the text even when you have it in front of you.

Like the Requiem, *L'Enfance du Christ* enjoys—if that is the right word—four recordings. This time choice is easier, because the Davis performance (Oiseau-Lyre 50201/02 or 60032/33) not

only has an ample share of the best singing, playing, and engineering, but is the only one of the four to be performed textually intact. Once again Munch, as well as André Cluytens in both his recordings, makes an idiotic little cut—the three *pp* orchestral chords at the end of Part 1. When my colleague David Hamilton, reviewing the newer Cluytens performance, asked Angel about this excision, he was rewarded with the information that these chords are "traditionally" omitted in performances in France because they are considered inappropriate. Obviously the place hasn't changed much since the days when Berlioz himself was shocked by a performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony that began the third movement with the horn theme, omitting, no doubt equally "traditionally," the first eighteen bars!

In any case, the Davis must be considered generally the best version of *L'Enfance*. It is not ideal, since most of the soloists are acceptable rather than remarkable. Peter Pears, however, is an enormous asset as the Narrator. His French does not sound quite idiomatic, but the precision of his intonation, the subtlety of his phrasing, his restraint, and his devotion are all impressive and unrivaled. The Goldsbrough Orchestra sometimes plays less tidily than one expects from Davis, but the St. Anthony Singers are good, and the greatest section of the work, the hushed Epilogue, is sustained with a controlled delicacy that makes all the other versions sound crude.

The Munch performance, with the Boston Symphony and New England Conservatory Chorus on RCA Victor VIC 6006 or VICS 6006, offers more polished orchestral playing and an outstanding Mary and Joseph in Florence Kopleff and Gérard Souzay. Munch's conception, on the other hand, is more overtly expressive and consequently less moving than Davis', and this is accentuated by the too operatic sound of his Narrator, Cesare Valletti, who never attempts the quiet, floated lines of which Pears is a master.

The older Cluytens performance, unremarkable in itself, is ruled out by the poor quality of the recording (on Vox SVUX 52009), though it offers Jean Giraudeau as a sensitive Narrator. The conductor's later effort, with the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra and the René Duclos Chorus on Angel S 3680, is marginally more satisfactory in interpretation but still nothing to get excited about. As for its stellar solo line-up, the names impress more than the actual performances: Nicolai Gedda sounds unexpectedly ill at ease in the Narrator's music; and as Mary, Victoria de los Angeles is below her best vocal form, pushing out every note with an effortfulness that precludes the projection of any real line.

SECULAR VOCAL MUSIC

Far the largest entry in this section is *The Damnation of Faust*. This extensive, not to say compendious, "Dramatic legend in four parts" is available in two officially complete recordings and one sizable disc of selections (or "high-

lights" as they call them, just in case you should think any lowlights had been included).

As it happens, one of the "complete" versions, the one by Igor Markevitch with the Lamoureux Orchestra and the Elisabeth Brasseur Chorus on Deutsche Grammophon 138099/100, is not really complete. Presumably, in order to squeeze the work onto two discs, Markevitch has adopted the Procrustean expedient of cutting off the bits that won't fit. These include a large section of the Easter Hymn, part of the "Menuet des follets" (a much less awkward title than "Minuet of the Will-o'-the-wisps"), several measures of the drum-and-trumpet "Retreat" at the beginning of Part 3, and part of the orchestral postlude to the song Faust sings in Miss Oppenheim's room.

All this is regrettable, because Markevitch's performance is a generally fine one. The orchestral work has character and zest, and in the burlesque "Amen" the chorus contrives to sound admirably drunk. The recording too is good, which is an advantage the one really complete performance, by Munch with the Boston Symphony, the Harvard Glee Club, and the Radcliffe Choral Society on RCA Victor LM 6114 (mono only) does not share. Munch's direction in this work is sound enough, but it lacks Markevitch's degree of personal involvement. Still, Munch sounds like the most passionate of virtuosos by comparison with André Cluytens, who leads the Paris Opéra Chorus and Orchestra in a single disc of excerpts (Angel 35941 or S 35941). This includes the whole of Part 1 (with the "Hungarian March"), the "Song of the Flea," the "Dance of the Sylphs," Faust's song "Merci, doux crépuscule" (shorn of its orchestral postlude), Marguerite's "Roi de Thulé" song, the "Menuet des follets," Mephistopheles' serenade, Marguerite's "D'amour lardente flamme," and Faust's "Invocation to Nature." Cluytens' direction is undistinguished in the extreme, and the "Hungarian March" offers some of the worst orchestral playing I have ever heard on disc.

Of the various soloists in these three recordings, Angel's Faust and Deutsche Grammophon's Marguerite and Mephistopheles are the most successful. All the Fausts sound a trifle young and thoughtless for this careworn role, but Gedda is far the most sensitive of them, and his voice rings out splendidly on the Angel disc. Richard Verreau on Deutsche Grammophon is good but somewhat stiff—you can almost hear him counting the beats—and David Poleri on RCA has vocal problems. Munch's Suzanne Danco and Martial Singher, and Cluytens' Rita Gorr, are all rather disappointing. Souzay, for Cluytens, is a fairly good Mephisto, but Markevitch's Michel Roux is even better—a thoroughly sleazy, hypocritical demon, this.

A very different sort of musical experience—and a much easier choice—is provided by the cycle of six songs entitled *Nuits d'été* (*Summer Nights*). These were originally composed with piano accompaniment between 1834 and

1841. There are four extant recordings of the orchestral version Berlioz later made, and also a separate performance of two of the songs (*Le Spectre de la rose* and *Absence*) by Maggie Teyte with orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward on Angel COLH 138 (mono only).

This latter is, I'm afraid, the sort of disappointment "classic" versions too often turn out to be. The songs—especially the ravishing *Spectre*—are hopelessly rushed. The line is never given time to expand, and there is little verbal sensitivity to compensate for the lack of musical insight.

Of the four complete performances, Régine Crespin's with the Suisse Romande orchestra under Ansermet (London 25821) is far and away the best. Line, phrasing, tone, diction—all are superb. Miss Crespin's hushed and (metaphorically) breathless singing of *Le Spectre de la rose* is a performance of genuine classic status. This is one of the loveliest pieces of Berlioz interpreted



tation—or interpretation of anybody—I have ever heard. Ansermet's accompaniment matches the perceptiveness of the singer.

Janet Baker's performance with the New Philharmonia under Barbirolli (Angel S 36505) is as sensitive as one would expect from this artist, but for all its beauty it cannot match Crespin's. Leontyne Price (RCA Victor LSC 2695) does some admirable things, and the voice itself provides many touching moments. However, Miss Price's command of French is shaky (especially her inconsistent handling of final "e" and her impure vowels in such words as "Rose"). Moreover, a phrase like "ni messe ni De Profundis" seems to impose some clumsy changes of registerial gear on the singer. Her note values too are often inaccurate—the quarters on "Mais ne crains rien" are too short, the final "Ah!" in "Sur les lagunes" is too long. The rhythmic inaccuracies are frequently compounded by Fritz Reiner, who draws luxurious but stiff accompaniments from the Chicago Symphony.

The mono-only version by Eleanor Steber with Mitropoulos and the Columbia Symphonia (Columbia ML 5843), though smoothly vocalized, seems to me to lack the faintest hint that the singer knows what the songs are about. The words are enunciated clearly enough, but there is never a trace of tonal shading

to illuminate their meaning. The production of an unvarying stream of beautiful sound is not what I take the art of singing to be about.

One other nonoperatic vocal work by Berlioz has been recorded: the cantata, or rather "Lyric scene," *La Mort de Cléopâtre*, with which he failed to win the Prix de Rome in 1829. Someone ought to put on a concert of works that have failed to win that dubiously honorific prize—a number of valuable compositions would probably emerge. In spite of the liability imposed by a poor text, Berlioz turned out an admirable piece, fiery, full of striking inspirations (including a few bars familiar to most listeners from their later reappearance in the slow theme of the *Roman Carnival* overture), and very well organized. Jennie Tourel's performance with Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic (Columbia CML 5838 or CMS 6438) is a splendid one. Miss Tourel's comparatively limited vocal resources are transcended by the intensity of her dramatic projection. Bernstein's accompaniment is one of the best pieces of Berlioz conducting he has given us, and the recording is exceptionally spacious and realistic.

THE OPERAS

Well, yes. Here we come to the standing blot on the Berlioz discography. There is no recording at all of *Benvenuto Cellini*, which I found an exciting and thoroughly viable opera when I saw it at the Holland Festival in 1961. There is no complete recording of *The Trojans*, which probably ranks as Berlioz' masterpiece. And the existing recording of *Beatrice and Benedict* omits the essential spoken dialogue.

All there is on disc of *The Trojans* (apart from three versions of the "Royal Hunt and Storm," to be discussed in the next section) is another of those lily-livered "highlights" sets (two discs this time, Angel 3670 or S 3670). The Paris Opéra Chorus and Orchestra are rather flabbily conducted by Georges Prêtre, and the saxophonish vibrato of the horns in the hunt music is particularly hard to take.

Nevertheless, even with French brass playing, the big march-style choruses make part of their true effect. Régine Crespin, who doubles in the roles of Cassandra and Dido, almost succeeds in justifying this dubious procedure (which was tolerated by Berlioz himself). She is good in Cassandra's "Malheureux roi" and the other "Prise de Troie" excerpts. But it is when the Trojans reach Carthage that she really comes into her own. Her Dido is clearly a magnificent assumption. She is wonderful in the doomed queen's farewell to her "proud city." She also sings finely in "*Nuit d'ivresse*," one of the most beautiful love-duets in all opera, but here unfortunately the effect is spoiled by tenor Guy Chauvet, who bawls his head off with a crudity that might have shocked even that tough Aeneas. In the Dido/Anna duet, contralto Marie-Luce Bellary

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THE TROJANS

By Colin Davis

Notes by a persuasive missionary
on the magnificent epic opera that he will soon
record in its entirety



EVERY NOW AND THEN people who have become aware of my admiration for Berlioz ask me, rather challengingly, to explain why he did not succeed as a composer of musical drama. My first impulse is always to assert that he *did* succeed. Nearly everything he wrote is essentially dramatic—and dramatic in a way that gets through to audiences. Last year, for example, a concert version of the complete *Trojans* was presented at the Promenade Concerts in London, and every ticket was sold. I am counting on the same public reaction when the opera is staged at Covent Garden this fall.

Much depends, of course, on what you want from music. If you want to be Puccinized, if you are looking for an intellectual argument, if you want a feeling of redemption, if you favor a musical world in which lovers go to bed, then Berlioz is not for you. On the other hand, if you want a spell spun out of a summer evening by the sea, if you want intimacy, restraint, and complete purity contrasted with destructiveness, if you favor a world in which love-making takes place in a cave or some place equally wild and romantic, then Berlioz is your composer. He is one of our greatest poets of music, and I would suggest that if you are not moved by his big dramatic moments—the farewell at Carthage, for instance—you ought not to be reading this article.

I am willing to grant, however, that his operas are not uniformly successful and that they make unusual demands on the imaginations of performers, audiences, and critics. (Perhaps I ought also to grant that my views reflect my education and my personal

taste. Like Berlioz, I am not an academic musician. Again like him, I do not play the piano. I was already twenty-one when I first heard his music, and it appealed to me immediately because I loved melody and I loved singing.)

Benvenuto Cellini, Berlioz' first opera and the only one for which he himself did not write the libretto, has wonderful things in it, but it is a bit confused and on the whole it lacks his characteristic span and conviction. Though his own experiences as an artist may have aroused in him a sympathy for a fellow-artist, Cellini's autobiography did not engage his deepest feelings—certainly not in the way the story of *The Trojans*, from his earliest days, engaged them.

The music of *Beatrice and Benedick* is close to pure heaven for my ears. Berlioz distills from every situation in the opera a mood that reflects his obsession with a kind of love which he longs for and which he cannot find for himself in real life. He avoids the extremes of destructive frenzy to which he occasionally swings in his other pieces when he is aware that he cannot have the sort of love he longs for. But the work is very loosely constructed, and the characters do not emerge very clearly. *Benedick* is a particularly scratchy creation, *Hero* and *Beatrice* are developed along lines that merely reveal the composer trying to express himself in them, and the comic figure *Somarone* is simply a mystery stuck on to the story by a genius—the supposedly grotesque madrigal is actually quite pretty. There is also, I think, at least for English and American audiences,

a peculiar difficulty about this work for which Berlioz is not really to blame: we tend to think back to Shakespeare's play, and the comparison fails to work out either with the opera's text or its music. *Much Ado About Nothing* is a sophisticated comedy with a great deal of intellectual acrobatics, whereas *Beatrice and Benedick* is gentle and delicate.

The fact is, it seems to me, that in both *Benvenuto Cellini* and *Beatrice and Benedick*, for all their marvelous, witty, and melodic music, Berlioz is not really on his own ground. His imagination was too distant from real life to be able to create real-life characters with credibility (he could never, for instance, have composed *The Marriage of Figaro*, although Mozart might easily have written *Beatrice and Benedick*, and brought it off successfully). He despised ordinary human beings, I think, and was constantly irritated by the pettiness of reality. He liked big, general images. He never lost his vision of what men might be in a world constructed by the imagination on a vast scale—in a great empire partly inhabited by gods and swept by forces unlike anything we experience in everyday existence.

IN SHORT, Berlioz is in his element in *The Trojans*, and the result is one of the most magnificent works ever composed. I must say that I am impatient with some of the objections that have been raised against this extraordinary opera.

It has been called too long. But it is not long. It is about the length of *Die Meistersinger*, and not as long as *Die Götterdämmerung*. I think that people who find it too long are simply suffering from a common illusion—the illusion that persuades us that a lot of time has passed when a lot of things have happened, and that practically no time has passed when practically nothing has happened. The first act of *Tristan*, for example, may seem relatively short in imaginative retrospect because so little takes place; and the first act of *The Trojans* may seem relatively long because of what the listener and viewer must absorb: the apparent departure of the Greeks, the forebodings of Cassandra, the disbelief of Choroebus, the singing and dancing of the celebrating Trojans, the ominous news of Laocöon's death, the dragging of the horse into the city. Also, unlike Wagner (and like Mozart), Berlioz hardly ever lets you relax and listen comfortably to a repeated theme; he keeps forcing you to adjust to something new in the music, and thus adds to your impression that a lot of things are happening and a lot of time is passing.

The opera has been called static and untheatrical, and I admit that I can see what is meant by this criticism. Within each tableau there is not much development of the situation, at least not much in the usual sense in which a plot develops. Often the important action does not take place before our eyes; often Berlioz is intent on creating a mood that is the result of what has occurred. But cannot much the

same thing be said about the dramas of Sophocles and Racine? Although Berlioz does provide musical and psychological development from one tableau to another (for instance, Dido's progression from confident widowhood through weakening, falling, submission, and rage to resignation and death), he clearly feels that we know the story and do not need the usual sort of on-stage action and evolution of the plot. He does, however, provide plenty of theatrical excitement—processions, wild crowds, off-stage trumpets, the ghost of Hector, the Andromache scene, the collective suicide of the Trojan women, the prophetic and epic cry "Italy," the fury of Dido and her noble death. Even in its calm moments *The Trojans* is by no means a closet drama. It calls for a stage. When you can combine, for instance, the poetically ravishing music of the tableau in Dido's gardens with equally poetic settings, you can produce a wonderful experience for an audience. In fact, the work is so theatrical that one of the problems we—myself and the producers and technicians at Philips—will have to face in recording it is precisely that. We must find ways to project from records an astonishing visual and spatial imagination.

What the objections I have just mentioned come down to, I feel, is a failure to recognize an essential fact about Berlioz: namely, his strange combination of a poetic content that is nonintellectual and nonclassical with a general outlook, a technique, and an approach to form that are thoroughly classical. In this, the only major composer whom he really resembles is Gluck (although occasionally, in his love of extremes, he may remind one of Weber). Hence any attempt to perform or appreciate *The Trojans* in terms of Italian operatic conventions or of Wagnerian music drama is a mistake.

Whereas Wagner tends to swim in powerful emotions, Berlioz seeks to distill them. The great waves of universal love that wash through the closing scene of *The Ring* do not appear in *The Trojans*. The personal love of Dido and Aeneas is untouched by Wagnerian overtones of self-pity and self-indulgence; it has nothing to do with a secret desire to be mothered and it has no Freudian connection with death—if Berlioz decides to destroy you, he does so, and that is that. He does not suggest that somehow you may be saved—you go down proudly, expecting nothing. Indeed, much of *The Trojans* is primarily about the energy of a people; the Trojans who provoke the destruction of their city and who then, as a surviving remnant, go on to found Rome (destroying Dido along the way) constitute the real protagonist of the opera. You get this feeling for the energy of the people very strongly in the first part: in the noise and power of the crowd at Troy and in the tremendous force that drives them to take their fatal chance with the horse. You get it again in the closing scene at Carthage, when Dido, her love frustrated by the force that drives the Trojans on to Italy, dies prophesying the glory of Rome. (This balance between the crowd hysteria of the first part and the tragic climax



Kerstin Meyer as Dido and Jon Vickers as Aeneas in the 1959-60 Covent Garden production of The Trojans—a work embodying a vast world partly inhabited by gods and swept by superhuman forces.

of the second part is one of several reasons why the work should be performed, and recorded, in its entirety.)

Some of the music in which this great drama is embedded is linked to the personages; Cassandra and Dido in particular are clearly characterized by the orchestral and vocal writing. Some of the music—for instance, the interlude of the royal hunt and the storm—is poetic description and an evocation of the forces of nature. Some of it gives you the impression of being battered by the violence of events. Much of it, as I have said, spins out a mood that is a consequence of the action. But all of it is essentially classical, so much so that occasionally, when listened to with the mid-nineteenth-century in mind, it sounds positively archaic.

At least the melodies, which may have several parts and may go on for fifty or more bars, often sound archaic to me. Unlike those of Beethoven, for example, they are not made up of pregnant little fragments. Sometimes they have the shape of a simple, long-lined Oriental creation; sometimes they make use of a sixteenth-century type of phrasing. Firmly anchored at each end by a tonic and a dominant, and moved around by diminished chords, they have a definitely monkish flavor, which I suppose may be the influence of the church music Berlioz listened to as a boy in La Côte-Saint-André. They are also a reminder that he played the flute.

MMUCH OF WHAT has been written about his harmony by academic critics, and which applies to many pages of *The Trojans*, seems to me both correct and beside the point. He undoubtedly learned to form chords from playing the guitar. His harmony is very simple and extremely unsurprising (at least his cadences are); it is often theoretically incorrect; it does not work properly when tried on the piano; it was utterly out of date when composed; it is really

just melodic expression harmonized. But it works for Berlioz—and you cannot “correct” it. It works partly because he was a genius at using the instruments of the orchestra to stimulate the imagination, and also because he used its simplicity to keep his ideas unsullied. He was not a man to spoil a large, dramatic effect by interfering with the insides of a chord.

I hope what I have just said does not suggest that I find the music of *The Trojans* lacking in complexity, for in fact I find it full of unexpected beauties at each hearing, and never boring. I am merely pointing out that when you get down through its irregular phrasing (the predictable phrasing of Tchaikovsky would have driven Berlioz mad), its unusual rhythms, and its effects of tumult and disorder, what you find is the order of an old-fashioned classical composer.

What you also find, if you are a performer, is that the music of Berlioz can be properly performed only as Berlioz conceived it. Everyone knows how to interpret the role of Floria Tosca, partly because it has been done so often and partly because the conception is at the level of the fiction in women’s magazines. But for Dido, Cassandra, and the music of Berlioz in general you need to have a great deal of imagination, and to have read some Shakespeare and some Vergil. You need to know how to declaim—and if you do that in the wrong places or in the wrong way, you are a ham (especially in England and the United States). You have to be noble, aristocratic, and godlike, and gifted with the greatest possible talent for classical legato singing. If you are a conductor or an orchestra man, you have to know how to lead through the harmony to the pure cadences that support the great themes. You have to perform with tremendous rhythmic precision, and a combination of burning intensity and tenderness that makes the pace killing. And all the while you have to be a demigod yourself, full of self-denial and a kind of savage glee.

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Fifteen Years of the IHF

Now reaching a milestone,
the Institute of High Fidelity looks to the future

by Neil Spann

THE ATMOSPHERE AT New York's Hotel Governor Clinton was characterized more by suspicion than by jubilation when representatives of twenty-three audio component companies gathered there fifteen years ago to incorporate the Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers—a name changed in 1963 to drop the word Manufacturers. It was the morning of December 16, 1954, and as they waited for the meeting to be called to order the group—twenty-two men and one woman—carried on polite, though strained, conversations. The strain was not unnatural. Representing the hard core of an industry then in its infancy, these people were often business rivals, sometimes bitter ones. Yet on this morning they had put their differences aside in a common cause.

What had brought about this showing of solidarity? And what exactly did the industry hope to accomplish by forming a trade association?

The answers take one back to the late '40s, when a few components manufacturers found themselves becoming an "industry" with the appearance of custom component retail shops patronized by nonprofessional consumers. Less than a decade later, the components movement was experiencing phenomenal growth. Some firms found their sales doubling annually. New companies were being formed, and audio specialty shops were becoming increasingly familiar landmarks. But compared with other consumer industries, the audio business even today is a mere stripling—and certainly at the time of the IHF's charter meeting its member firms were too young, and often too poorly financed, to have established a national reputation.

As a highly successful but new and small industry, the business as a whole attracted a fair share of problems. One of the most troublesome involved the "fly-by-night" companies which swept into the business, trying to make a quick killing by unloading inferior products advertised as "high fidelity." Promoters also moved in, taking advantage not so much of the consumer as of the manufacturer, who—often more a dedicated hobbyist or engineer than an experienced businessman—may have been overanxious, or naïve, as to the best way to publicize his latest technological achievement. Perhaps the most immediate impetus for the

Neil Spann, a former Associate Editor of Merchandising Week now on the writing staff of Sales Management magazine, has long followed the developments of high fidelity from a business point of view.



This photo of a 1956 board meeting shows some of the figures who lent their names to the high fidelity industry. Standing, left to right: Joseph Benjamin, William Grommes, Walter Stanton, Leonard Carduner, Sidney Harman, Lawrence Epstein, Walter Jablon, Milton Thalberg. Seated, clockwise around the table: Isadore Minkin, Laurie Turpa, Board Chairman Avery Fisher, President George Silber, Executive Secretary Ed Kornfeld, Bernard Cirlin.

formation of the IHFM, however, was a development involving a group of Chicago promoters who formed an organization named the High Fidelity Institute. As George Silber, then president of Rek-O-Kut, recalls it: "They had planned to give out a seal of approval—for a fee, of course—to any manufacturer who joined their organization. In other words, they were going to charge us to sell our products—and their scheme came very near to succeeding." Such problems led responsible manufacturers to realize the need of a central organization whereby they could have some control over the industry's direction.

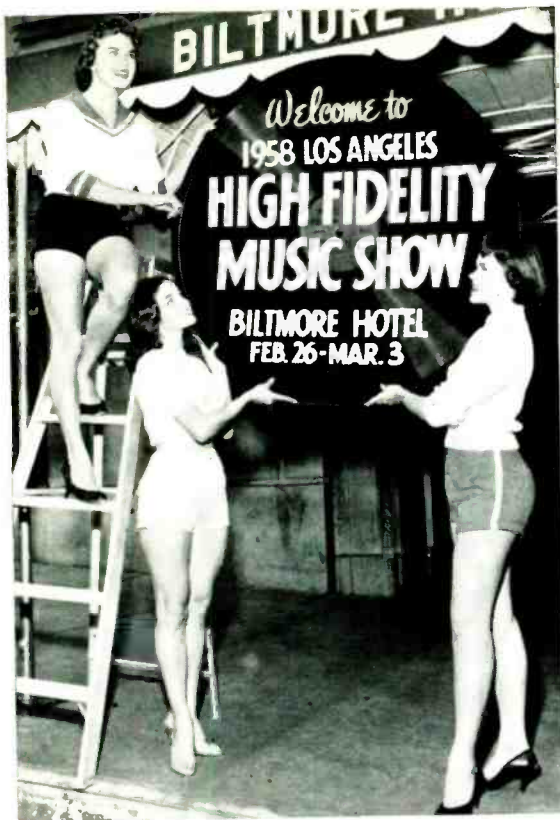
One of the first men to take the initiative in forming such an organization was Mr. Silber. Silber presided over the IHFM's charter meeting, and was named its first president. Membership was restricted, as it is today, to those companies either directly engaged in the manufacture of high fidelity components or having components manufactured to their specifications. Member companies were also committed to sell their products to high fidelity dealers in not less than fifty per cent of the major marketing areas, a requirement ruling out Institute membership for such firms as Lafayette and Radio Shack, which distribute through their own network of dealers or by mail order.

Once officially incorporated, the Institute gave attention to a variety of issues that had been causing its members concern. One of the most pressing involved the industry "music" shows, which had been promoted and managed by an independent

agency. With its own trade organization now established, the industry decided to take over operation of the shows itself. The first IHFM-sponsored show got going in 1955, at the Ben Franklin Hotel in Philadelphia. Though the scene was nothing but bedlam, according to some participants' memories, the attendance was good, and this was encouragement enough to continue. IHF shows are now held annually in New York City, and in alternating years in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Today, there is some criticism within the industry of the whole concept of the shows. One prominent IHF member asserts: "The format hasn't changed since the first show opened; unless we can attract more people and, of course, have the facilities to accommodate them so that they can hear the equipment and not be mobbed in the process, then I think the shows are finished." In response to such dissatisfaction IHF officials are reviewing the matter from top to bottom.

Executive Director George Dubé (first professional in this role, previous directors having been company executives doubling in brass) is currently engaged in investigating various alternatives to the present setup. As he points out, "A music show requires some solid type of sound barrier between exhibits, and hotel walls—all that thick plaster and lath—provide about the best there is." It seems a certainty, however, that future shows will afford less cramped facilities than have sometimes been pro-



At left, in 1958 visitors to the Los Angeles show were treated not only to a view of the latest in audio equipment but to welcoming smiles from a trio of pretty girls who served as official greeters; above, in 1968 television viewers could see many of the products displayed at the New York show and hear them described by Mr. Skitch Henderson and IHF Executive Secretary Gertrude Murphy.

vided. Last fall's San Francisco show was held in that city's spacious Civic Auditorium. A setting comparable to the New York Coliseum, even the Coliseum itself, may be tried out this year in New York. If the results are favorable, similar exhibition halls most likely will be used for other IHF shows across the country.

Another issue of great importance to the industry has been the problem of equipment standards. At the time of the IHFM's formation, the marketplace was becoming glutted with "True Hi-Fi" products which bore no relationship to genuine high fidelity equipment. Some of these items were frankly cheap goods sold cheaply; others carried high price tags for merchandise of inferior quality. Audiophiles could discern the difference, but the average consumer was often taken for a ride. To counter this the Institute established a Standards Committee, composed of engineers and editors, and assigned it the task of creating standards that could serve as a guide for the measurement of high fidelity components.

It should be emphasized that these standards simply set the techniques and forms of measurement for high fidelity equipment, not the criteria of performance. Once such tests were performed and the results released, the chips could fall where they might. IHF standards for amplifiers and tuners went into effect in 1958; the amplifier standard was revised in 1966, and that for tuners is now

undergoing a long delayed revision to include stereo FM. The IHF's standards have become widely accepted here and abroad by manufacturers, by testing agencies, and by magazines covering this field. To be sure, not every provision of these standards is accepted universally—and different groups may use different testing equipment—but there is enough agreement to make for a healthy consistency in technical statements.

Within the not too distant future the IHF can be expected to establish standards for other audio products. Probably the next standards to come will be for turntables and for tape recorders, both reel-to-reel and cassette. Whether IHF standards will ever be established for loudspeakers is open to question.

GROWTH OF THE INDUSTRY and expansion of IHF activities have gone hand in hand during the past decade and a half. The industry, of course, has become more sophisticated in its approach to design, since those days back in the '40s and '50s when energies were concentrated strictly on engineering. Few stereo buyers perhaps even recall the days when components were strung out all over the place—with wires exposed, and power supplies and other audio accouterments in plain view. The industry has swung its emphasis away from the old-time audiophile hobbyist towards the mass market by offering more attractive and easier-to-install com-



In conversation at the San Francisco show in 1968: HF's Audio-Video Editor, Norman Eisenberg; John Koss, President of the IHF; interested participant Frank Sinatra, Jr.

ponents packages. The development of the stereo receiver is a particularly striking case in point.

The IHF naturally has made similar adjustments in direction. It too is concentrating more on the less technical consumer. Its new orientation towards the high fidelity dealer is an example.

Since last July, the IHF has accepted more than one hundred high fidelity component dealers as affiliate members, and for good cause. As the market for component products expanded, the need intensified at the retail level for competent sales personnel. Many specialty shops today are hard put to keep pace with the technological advances incorporated in new equipment. The mass merchandiser, including key department stores whose sales personnel are unfamiliar with high fidelity, often is unequipped to offer customers essential information and competent advice. On request, the IHF is now assisting such dealers and mass merchandisers by providing sales-training materials. This principle of keeping dealers and sales personnel directly informed from industry sources works, moreover, with equal significance in the reverse order. By coming within the IHF structure, the retailer for the first time will have an opportunity to relay directly to the manufacturer what is on the customer's mind. The dealer orientation, therefore, is opening up a whole new order of communication between the consumer and the industry.

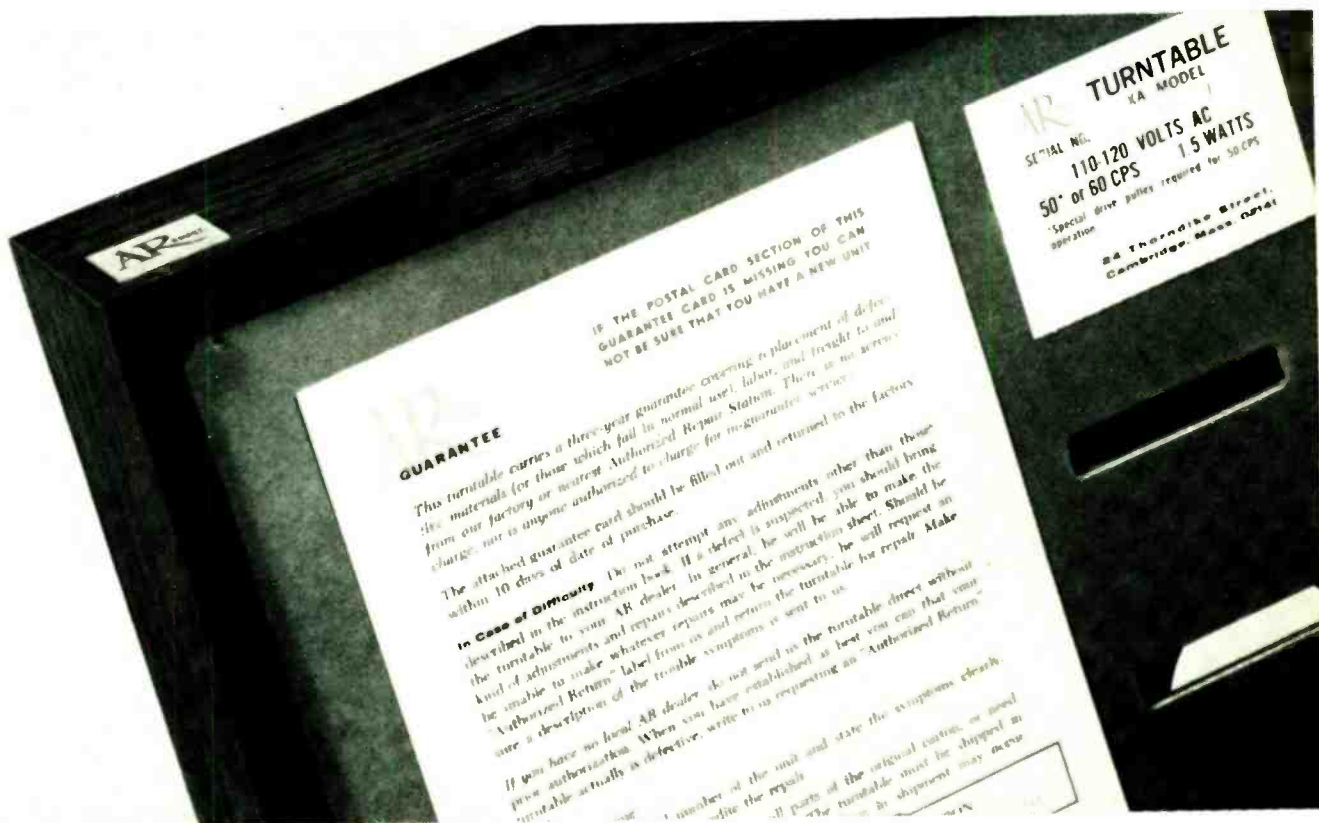
There is also another program under way which

in the light of the industry's history, bears a peculiar touch of irony. The IHF's board of directors has approved the adoption of a symbol, or identification tag, for equipment manufactured by the Institute's members. The IHF explains that this program will simply serve to identify products bearing the tag as representing "the craftsmanship of firms which have helped to pioneer the concept of high fidelity." From this point of view an identifying symbol has some merit, particularly as a general guide for buyers unacquainted with an audio firm's individual reputation.

Nevertheless, the program does recall the abortive Chicago take-over of the early 1950s. With only forty-seven of the hundred or so component manufacturers within the industry affiliated with the IHF, one wonders how nonmember firms will react when the new IHF tag hits the marketplace. One also wonders how much influence the program will have on the affluent, nontechnical customer. Would he, for instance, turn thumbs down on a Marantz amplifier, or some other expensive, state-of-the-art product, just because it lacked the IHF symbol?

A nice question—and one to which no one at this point dares attempt an answer. But then, it's only one of several open-ended matters still before a very young industry that is trying as best it can to attain the maturity it avowedly needs if it is to cope with the problems of new markets, new technology, and new personalities.

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not one cent for parts,
not one cent for labor,
not one cent for service charges,
not one cent for freight.**



AR guarantees are unmatched in the high fidelity industry. They are also easy to read. We believe that when a consumer buys a product, he should get one that works as he has been told it will work for the price he has been asked to pay. If the product then fails to operate correctly through no fault of the consumer, the manufacturer must accept responsibility for the failure at no cost to the consumer. A guarantee under which the consumer is forced to pay, perhaps repeatedly, for the manufacturer's errors, is not fair.

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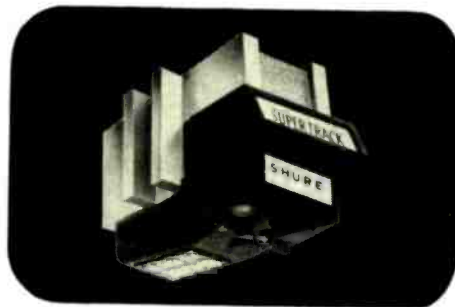
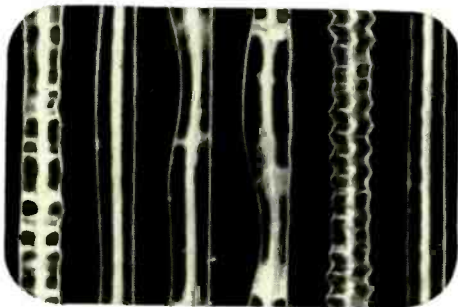
CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



CLOSE THE TRACKABILITY GAP (AND YOU'LL HEAR THE DIFFERENCE)

The photomicrograph above portrays an errant, hard-to-track castanet sound in an otherwise conservatively modulated recording. The somewhat more heavily modulated grooves shown below are an exhilarating combination of flutes and maracas with a low frequency rhythm complement from a recording cut at sufficiently high velocity to deliver precise and definitive intonation, full dynamic range, and optimum signal-to-noise ratio. Neither situation is a rarity, far from it. They are the very essence of today's highest fidelity recordings. But when played with an ordinary "good" quality cartridge, the stylus invariably loses contact with these demanding grooves—the casta-

nets sound raspy, while the flute and maracas sound fuzzy, leaden, and "torn apart." Increasing tracking weight to force the stylus to stay in the groove will literally shave off the groove walls. Only the High Trackability V-15 Type II Super-Track® cartridge will consistently and effectively track all the grooves in today's recordings at record-saving less-than-one-gram force . . . even with cymbals, orchestral bells, and other difficult to track instruments. It will preserve the fidelity and reduce distortion from all your records, old and new. Not so surprisingly, every independent expert and authority who tested the Super Track agrees.



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SUPER TRACKABILITY PHONO CARTRIDGE

At \$67.50, your best investment in upgrading your entire music system.

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CIRCLE 55 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE

EQUIPMENT REPORTS

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO NEW AND IMPORTANT HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT



FROM INDIANA COMES A STEREO AMPLIFIER THAT SHATTERS ALL PREVIOUS PERFORMANCE RECORDS

EQUIPMENT: Crown DC-300, a stereo basic or power amplifier. Dimensions: 19 inches wide (standard rack mount), 7 inches high, 9¾ inches deep. Weight: 40 pounds. Price: \$685. Manufacturer: Crown International, 1718 Mishawaka Road, Elkhart, Indiana 46517.

COMMENT: If the Crown DC-300 amplifier were rated by the methods used by many high fidelity companies today (music power into a 4-ohm load and doubling that figure to express both stereo channels), it could be spoken of as—hold your breath—an “800-watt” amplifier. (We shudder to think what this figure might become at the hands of nonhigh fidelity manufacturers who use the EIA rating to express “peak power”—1,600 watts? 2,000 watts?) Even by the more conservative, more rigorous, and more valid rating method we use (continuous, rms power into an 8-ohm load), the DC-300 turns out to be a 380-watt (190 watts per channel) amplifier. These are legitimate, ultraclean watts—by which token the DC-300 becomes, as far as we know, the top-ranking stereo basic amplifier on the consumer market today. It is also, at \$685, the highest priced, a fact that apparently has not deterred a surprising number of buyers—well-heeled perfectionists and professionals. The unit has, in addition to home music system use, several studio, laboratory, and p.a. applications which are explained in the owner's manual.

This sonic Samson emanates from Elkhart, Indiana—a town most commonly known for its prolific

output of musical instruments. Actually, the confluence of major producers of musical instruments and the manufacturer of what may well be the world's greatest amplifier happens to be pure coincidence. The Crown firm—which by the way has absolutely no connection with Crown of Japan—is a division of International Radio & Electronics Corporation, since 1947 a builder of short-wave radio stations and related equipment. The name of Crown was chosen to designate its tape recorder line—also professional and ultrahigh quality—which actually started as one custom-built unit assembled in 1951 for a Brazilian missionary who requested it. A year later Crown became the firm's tape recorder division and has since then enjoyed a slow and orderly growth, maintaining its independence, its quality image, and its key personnel.

Something of this intransigence and sense of permanence surrounds the DC-300 amplifier. It is built like the proverbial Sherman tank, and its performance is so good, it seems to mock the measuring equipment used for evaluating it. Distortion in this amplifier which averages a mere few hundredths of a per cent over most of the audio band, is more of a theoretical “must be there” concept than an actual measurable phenomenon. Response is literally a ruler-flat line from below to far beyond the normal audio band. Its power reserves are unprecedented in consumer audio, and the unit has excellent stability. The CBS Lab data taken on the DC-300, detailed in

REPORT POLICY

Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Laboratories, Stamford, Connecticut, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., one of the nation's leading research organizations. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Manufacturers are not permitted to read reports in advance of publication, and no report, or portion thereof, may be reproduced for any purpose or in any form without written permission of the publisher. All reports should be construed as applying to the specific samples tested; neither HIGH FIDELITY nor CBS Laboratories assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.

the accompanying chart and graphs, represents in sum the highest performance yet encountered in an amplifier. What this means from a listening standpoint can only be appreciated if you use the DC-300 with the highest quality associated equipment: very low rumble turntable, clean preamp, and wide-range speakers. Serving as the powerhouse in such a system the DC-300 can be depended on to offer no spurious contributions of its own while at the same time it provides an unprecedented amount of clean power and high damping to accurately control the speakers. Among the comments we have heard while using the DC-300 in a stereo system were: "an open, clearer sound," "better bass definition," "nuances I never heard before in that recording." We might add that the DC-300 is hum-free and noise-free as well as distortion-free.

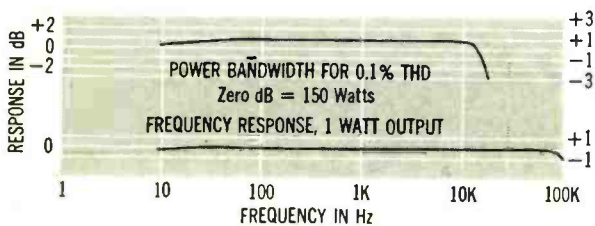
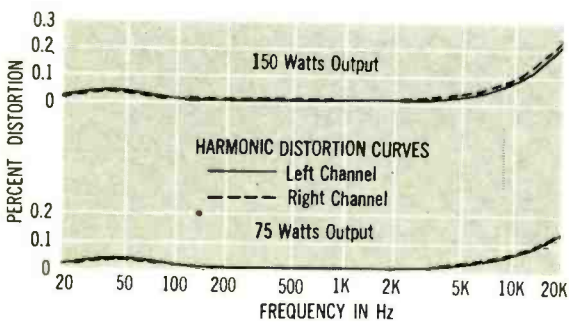
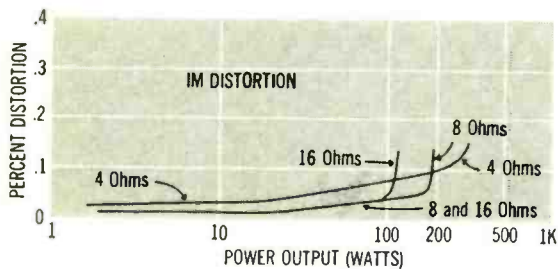
Interestingly enough, the DC-300 was designed originally as a laboratory tool for industrial and professional use. Almost with tongue in cheek, Crown

introduced it at the 1967 New York high fidelity show. Consumer reaction was so favorable, and continued to build up so strongly during the following year, that the firm finally decided to enlarge its production of the unit and offer it formally as a consumer product this past December. And, encouraged by the reception accorded the DC-300, Crown plans to launch its own preamp-control unit and a similar, though lower priced, basic amplifier later this year.

For the premium performance of the DC-300, the stereo enthusiast must of course pay a premium price. In addition, there are certain ground rules to observe when using this sonic giant. Any speaker system (regardless of size or type of design) that can handle a continuous power of 30 watts can take on the DC-300—but, counsels Crown, you should fuse the lines to the speakers as per the chart provided in the owner's manual. Additional speakers are safe to run off the DC-300 so long as the total impedance per channel does not go below 4 ohms. The DC-300's



Square-wave response to 50 Hz, left, and to 10 kHz.



Crown DC-300 Amplifier

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Power output (at 1 kHz into 8-ohm load)	
1 ch at clipping	180 watts at 0.027% THD
1 ch for 0.1% THD	190 watts
r ch at clipping	180 watts at 0.021% THD
r ch for 0.1% THD	190 watts
both chs simultaneously	
1 ch at clipping	180 watts at 0.027% THD
r ch at clipping	180 watts at 0.021% THD
Power bandwidth for constant 0.1% THD,	
150 watts	below 10 Hz to 17 kHz
Harmonic distortion	
150 watts output	either channel, under 0.25%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
75 watts output	either channel, under 0.15%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
IM distortion	
4-ohm load	under 0.1% to 200 watts output
8-ohm load	under 0.05% to 180 watts output
16-ohm load	under 0.04% to 100 watts output
Frequency response, 1-watt level	+0, -1 dB, below 10 Hz to 100 kHz
Damping factor	higher than 80 (beyond limit of test equipment)
Input characteristics for 150 watts output	Sensitivity 1.72 V S/N ratio 106.5 dB

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

Ampex Model 1450 Tape Recorder

Marantz Speaker System

line cord should not be connected to the convenience outlets found on preamps, amplifiers, and receivers; its power drain may prove too much. Instead, the line cord should be connected to its own AC wall outlet, and its center pin grounded—either directly if you have a three-pin AC outlet, or by a three-to-two-pin socket adapter, with the pig-tail lead from the line cord then attached to the holding screw on the AC outlet. The DC-300 should not be turned on before, or at the same time as, the system preamp. Turn the preamp on first, pause a second or two, then switch on the DC-300.

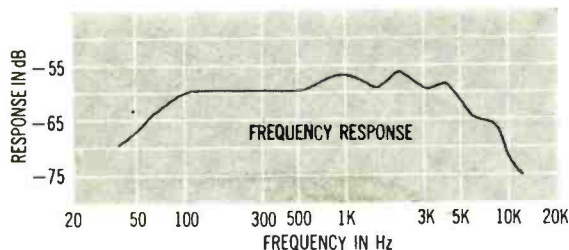
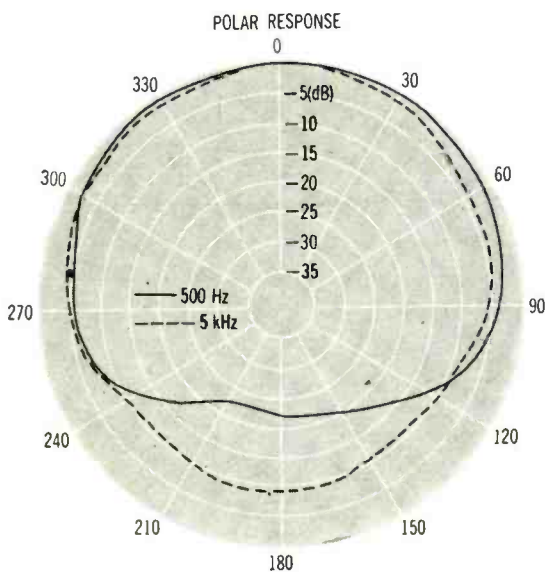
As for electrostatic speakers, the DC-300 is ideal, as long as you follow the recommendations in the

manual. Not only does its stability enable it to handle capacitive loads unerringly, but its ability to clip cleanly will prevent sparking effects among the electrostatic elements even at extremely high power demands. In fact, at the New York high fidelity show Crown was using the DC-300 to drive six full-range electrostatics (three per channel hooked in parallel) with the greatest of ease.

If you are willing to put up with the pampering the DC-300 needs, if you have other components of a quality to match it, and if you have \$685 to spend on a basic amplifier, the Crown was made for you.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DYNAMIC MIKE OFFERS TWO IMPEDANCES



THE EQUIPMENT: PML F-67BS, a dual-impedance dynamic microphone, cardioid pattern. Dimensions: $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches long; top, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches; handle, 1 inch. Price: \$59.50. Manufactured by PML of Sweden; distributed in the U.S. by Ercona Corp., 432 Park Ave. So., New York, N.Y. 10016.

COMMENT: The PML mike is a dual-impedance model: a switch on the body lets you select low or high impedance. Low impedance (low Z) would be the preferred value for most tape recording work especially where cables to the recorder exceed 20 feet in length. The high impedance (high Z) lets you take advantage of the higher signal output (20 dB more) it provides—if your cable length is not more than about 20 feet. Additionally, the high Z might be useful in driving some public address amplifiers to high output levels. The mike's frequency response is the same for either mode: within plus or minus 8 dB from 40 Hz to 10,000 Hz. To our knowledge, for stronger highs above 10 kHz, you'd have to get a mike that costs about twice what this one costs.

The cardioid graph plotted at CBS Labs verifies the unidirectional pattern of the PML mike. This pattern, which picks up more sound from the front and progressively less from the sides and rear of the mike, is the one preferred for most recording inasmuch as it permits the mike to be positioned for a satisfactory blend of direct and indirect sound.

The F-67BS mike comes with 20 feet of shielded, unterminated cable, and a metal holder that fits standard ($\frac{5}{8}$ -inch diameter and 27 turns per inch) mike stands. Optional accessories include a gooseneck cable and switch, an adapter for wearing it around the neck, and a windscreen—details available from Ercona.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

**HIGH PERFORMANCE, MEDIUM
PRICE FOR NEW TAPE DECK**



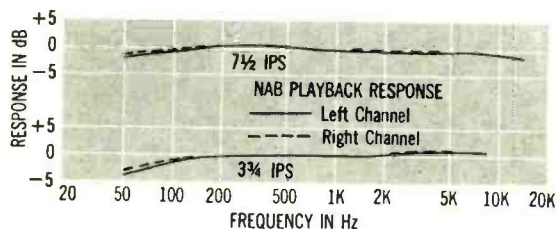
THE EQUIPMENT: Teac A-1200, a stereo tape deck with built-in record/playback preamps. Dimensions: 17 by 15½ by 9¾ inches. Supplied in walnut case. Price: \$299.50. Manufacturer: Teac Corp. of America, 2000 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, Calif. 90404.

COMMENT: If subsequent products from this firm resemble the A-1200 in terms of what it offers vis-à-vis what it costs, the name of Teac—which recently has expanded its U.S. operations—will become increasingly one to reckon with in high fidelity circles. The present model combines very creditable performance with numerous features in a neatly styled format that is—for tape equipment as good as this—very attractively priced.

The A-1200 is a three-head, three-motor, two-speed (7½ and 3¾ ips) record/playback machine. The head arrangement permits direct monitoring while you record. The unit also offers the facilities for multitrack dubbing and echo effects. Independent line and mike inputs also permit mixing while recording, using the deck's front panel level controls. The signal output, on playback, must be connected to an external amplifier and speakers (the A-1200 has no built-in power amps or speakers). In the event your own system amplifier (or receiver) lacks the tape monitor function, there's a suitable switch for it on the A-1200.

The transport section is controlled by a series of push buttons for rewind, stop, fast forward, regular forward (play), and record. To record, you must push this last button, colored red, together with the play button while you release a third "safety" control. This arrangement provides an unusual degree of protection from accidental erasure of a recorded tape. Atop and centered on the transport is a four-digit tape counter with reset button. Tape speed controls are at the right, below the take-up reel.

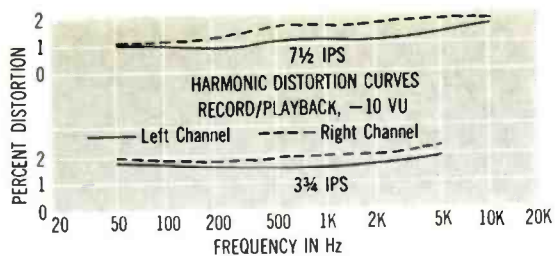
The electronic controls include additional push buttons to engage the head response for stereo, mono, and the special effects mentioned earlier. Each input



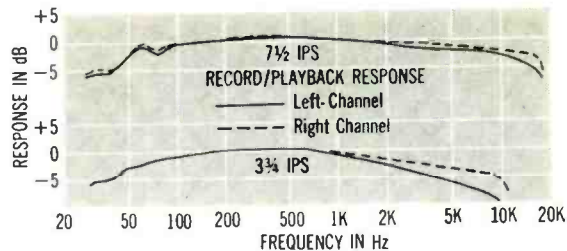
Teac A-1200

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 7½ ips	105 VAC: exact 120 VAC: exact 127 VAC: exact
3¾ ips	105 VAC: exact 120 VAC: exact 127 VAC: exact
Wow and flutter, 7½ ips	playback: 0.08% record/playback, 0.11%
3¾ ips	playback: 0.13% record/playback: 0.17%
Rewind time, 7-in., 1200-ft. reel	1 min. 9 sec.
Fast forward time, same reel	1 min. 10 sec.
NAB playback response	
7½ ips	l ch: +0.5, -2.25 dB, 50 Hz to 15 kHz r ch: +0.5, -1.5 dB, 50 Hz to 15 kHz
3¾ ips	l ch: +1, -3.75 dB, 50 Hz to 7.5 kHz r ch: +1, -3 dB, 50 Hz to 7.5 kHz
Record/playback response (-10 VU recorded signal)	
7½ ips	l ch: +1, -6 dB, 26 Hz to 16 kHz r ch: +1, -6 dB, 25 Hz to 18 kHz
3¾ ips	l ch: +0, -7 dB, 27 Hz to 6 kHz r ch: +0, -7 dB, 29 Hz to 10 kHz
S/N ratio (ref 0 VU, test tape)	
playback	l ch: 51.5 dB r ch: 46 dB
record/playback	l ch: 51.5 dB r ch: 46 dB
Erasure (400 Hz at normal level)	68 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	
record left, playback right	53.5 dB
record right, playback left	52 dB
Sensitivity (for 0 VU recording level)	
line input	l ch: 120 mV r ch: 125 mV
mic input	l ch: 0.26 mV r ch: 0.25 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters	left: exact right: reads 1 dB high
IM distortion (record/play)	
7½ ips, 0 VU	
record level	l ch: 5.5% r ch: 6.0%
-10 VU	l ch: 5.5% r ch: 6.0%
record level	l ch: 5.5% r ch: 6.0%
3¾ ips, 0 VU	l ch: 6.0% r ch: 7.0%
-10 VU	l ch: 6.0% r ch: 7.0%
THD, record/playback (-10 VU)	
7½ ips	l ch: under 1.6%, 50 Hz to 10 kHz r ch: under 1.8%, 50 Hz to 10 kHz
3¾ ips	l ch: under 1.9%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz r ch: under 2.3%, 50 Hz to 5 kHz
Maximum output, line	l ch: 1.3 V r ch: 1.3 V



channel has separate level controls for line and mike, and the output level has its own dual controls (six controls in all). On the center of the electronic panel is a dual-channel VU meter which proved to be one of the most accurate yet tested and certainly better than the meters usually found on home recorders. Speed accuracy, as tested at CBS Labs, was the best yet seen in any tape recorder: no measurable error at any line voltage setting for either of the deck's two speeds. The A-1200 also had negligible wow and flutter—the values measured in the lab actually were lower than those claimed by the manufacturer. These, and other, data are listed in the accompanying chart. The NAB playback response was practically perfect. The record/playback response—while expectedly



showing a little more variation—was very smooth at 7 1/2 ips, and capable of capturing highs with little distortion to beyond 15 kHz. Record/playback response at the slower speed was only adequate for noncritical recording. Harmonic distortion was somewhat better than average, signal-to-noise definitely better than average, for this price class. The crosstalk measurement shows ample channel separation for excellent stereo. Ample erasure is provided to wipe clean a previously recorded tape.

The Teac A-1200 looks good, sounds good, and "works easy." It's hard to imagine how a tape recorder in its price range could be made much better.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

DELUXE PREAMP SPORTS TWO METERS



THE EQUIPMENT: Sony TA-2000, a preamplifier-control unit. Dimensions: front panel, 15 3/4 by 5 1/2 inches; chassis depth, 11 inches. Price: \$329.50. Manufacturer: Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101. Optional walnut cabinet, \$24.50.

COMMENT: Very high performance, more than usual versatility, and high-quality construction characterize Sony's TA-2000, a separate preamp-control unit aimed at critical stereo listeners, hobbyists, and probably some professional users too. Its most obvious feature is the brace of VU meters on the front panel; these may be used to set channel balance of all signals, to measure frequency response and channel separation of phono pickups, to correct tape-head alignment when using a tape deck that lacks its own playback preamp, and to check on the frequency response of any tape deck.

The full roster of controls and features is impressive indeed. The top row of the front panel contains a volume control, the two meters, treble and bass tone controls, a mode selector, and a function selector. The tone controls, each of which operates on both channels simultaneously, are calibrated and stepped so that exact settings may be repeated for special purposes. In addition, a defeat switch enables you to cancel all tone control effects at once and return the system to flat response. The mode selector has positions for normal stereo, channel reversal, left only, right only, and balancing left and right channels.

The function selector is divided between a lever switch and a knob.

Across the bottom of the front panel there's the power off/on switch, a line output jack, a headphone jack with its own level control, a channel-balance knob, low and high frequency filter switches, three phone-jack inputs for auxiliary signals and for left and right channel microphones, and a tape monitor switch.

The front panel signal jacks can be ignored (they all are duplicated at the rear), or used as a convenience in making quick or temporary hookups, or—to an extent—used together with some of the rear panel jacks for special applications, including the hookup of three tape recorders at once, or listening on headphones while piping stereo to two completely different amplifier/speaker setups, and so on. The rear inputs include: tape head, phono 1, phono 2, tuner, auxiliary 1, and tape (amp). Each of these stereo pairs has its own level adjustment; in addition, one phono jack has a level switch that lets you connect the lowest signal-output phono pickups (moving-coil types) directly without the need for an intervening booster. There's also a five-pin DIN socket for hooking up a tape recorder that uses the unitized type of signal cable, common on recorders built abroad. The rear panel also contains two sets of stereo signal outputs and a mixed-signal ("center channel") output. The stereo outputs may be adjusted for signal values of 0.3 and 1 volt (to suit the input needs of different power amplifiers); the mixed-channel output is regulated by its own variable level control. The AC line



Square-wave response to 50 Hz.



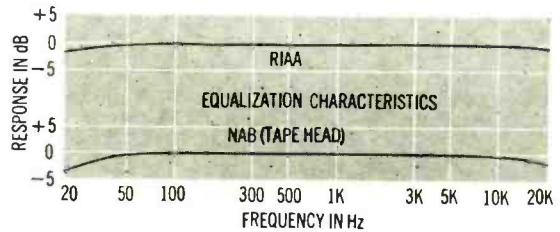
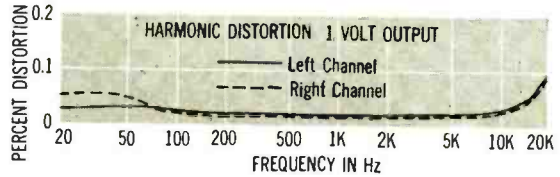
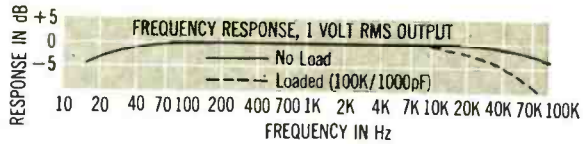
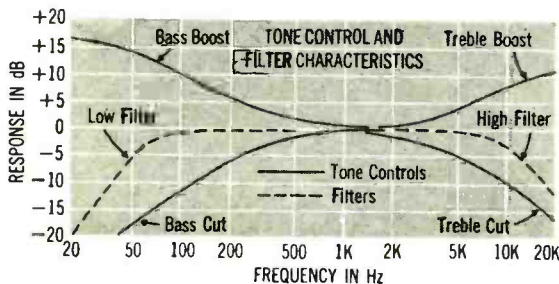
Square-wave response to 10 kHz with full IHF loading (100 K/1000 pF), left; without loading, right.

cord, four convenience outlets (three switched), and a grounding post complete the rear complement. Like all Sony components we've tested, the TA-2000 is extremely well built, showing evidence of high-grade parts, careful circuit layout, excellent shielding, and attention to details.

In CBS Lab tests, the TA-2000—under the maximum or "most strenuous" load used for preamp testing (the IHF load of 100 K, 1000 pF, which corresponds, roughly speaking, to about 36 feet of ordinary shielded signal cable)—furnished better than three times its rated output voltage at extremely low distortion. Frequency response at the very high end also varied somewhat with the degree of loading; under maximum load it still remained flat within plus zero, minus 3 dB from 20 Hz to beyond 20 kHz; under more normal loading conditions (corresponding, say, to up to twelve feet of audio cable between it and the power amp it is driving), the response was down only 3 dB out at 90 kHz. These, and other performance data are detailed in the accompanying graphs and chart. Note the very low distortion figures, and the excellent input sensitivities and signal-to-noise ratios. Equalization characteristics were virtually ruler-flat across the audio band; tone controls operated effectively; filter action was very good, showing fairly sharp cutoffs that could reduce a good deal of noise without degrading too much of the musical portion of a signal.

Incidentally, the headphone jack on the front panel is rated for 600 ohms or higher impedance headsets. We tried listening with low impedance headphones connected to this jack by turning the headphone level adjustment to maximum, and then using the master volume control to reach a comfortable listening level. It worked fine. If you try it, just remember not to turn the latter control up full—the signal meter needles will "peg"—that is, swing over suddenly to the extreme right.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Sony TA-2000 Preamplifier

Lab Test Data

Performance characteristic	Measurement
Output (at 1 kHz into 100 K/1000 pF load)	
l ch at clipping	3.11 volts at 0.06% THD
center ch at clipping	8.3 volts at 0.28% THD
r ch at clipping	3.18 volts at 0.05% THD
both chs simultaneously	
l ch at clipping	3.10 volts at 0.057% THD
r ch at clipping	3.15 volts at 0.046% THD
Harmonic distortion, 1-volt output	left ch: under 0.095%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz right ch: under 0.086%, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
IM distortion, 1-volt output	0.05%
Frequency response, 1-watt level	with max load: +0, -3 dB, 20 Hz to 27 kHz with min load: +0, -3 dB, 20 Hz to 90 kHz
RIAA equalization	+0, -2 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
NAB equalization	+0, -2 dB, 27 Hz to 20 kHz
Input characteristics for 1-volt output	
Tape head	Sensitivity 1.2 mV S/N ratio 58 dB
Phono 1	1.1 mV 63 dB
Phono 2 (normal)	1.1 mV 63 dB
Phono 2 (low)	0.17 mV 43 dB
Tuner	129.0 mV 80 dB
Aux 1	146.0 mV 80 dB
Aux 2	150.0 mV 80 dB
Tape in	132.0 mV 80 dB
Mike	1.1 mV 60 dB

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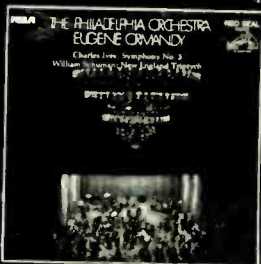
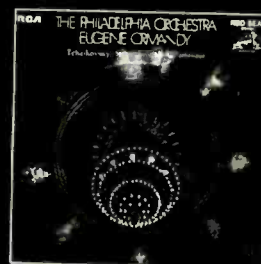
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THE NEW RELEASES

Reviewed by ROYAL S. BROWN • R. D. DARRELL • PETER G. DAVIS • SHIRLEY FLEMING
 ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN • CLIFFORD F. GILMORE • HARRIS GOLDSMITH • DAVID HAMILTON • PHILIP HART
 BERNARD JACOBSON • PAUL HENRY LANG • STEVEN LOWE • ROBERT P. MORGAN • GEORGE MOVSHON
 CONRAD L. OSBORNE • MICHAEL SHERWIN • SUSAN THIEMANN SOMMER

THIS IS AS NEAR perfect a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* as any of us is likely to hear. The situation hitherto on records, analyzed in my Berlioz discography on page 81, has amounted to a qualified recommendation for the Monteux version. Now Davis' new recording sweeps the board.

It possesses all the qualities Monteux achieved in equal or greater measure. It avoids Monteux's few small blemishes, and the major one of his extremely drab Mab: the Queen of the Fairies is as much herself in Davis' quicksilver reading as in Toscanini's. It shares Monteux's advantage of containing the complete Part II, as well as Part III, on the second side.

These competitive points are important in their way, and they deserve to be noted. But Davis' performance is of the kind that leaves such sordid matters as comparison far behind. This is one of the most exciting unions of spirit and technique to be found in the tantalizingly imperfect world of the phonograph.

After no more than five minutes have passed, one perceives that the easy brilliance of the orchestral playing can be taken for granted. The chorus too has been trained with rare thoroughness. All this technical expertise would be abortive if it were not for the conductor's matchless understanding of the Berliozian language. Davis has seldom sounded more authoritative or more relaxed in his command. In consequence, the atmosphere of each section is caught with a piquancy of characterization that I have never before experienced in this work. The brass recitatives in the Introduction have a superb tonal brilliance and rhythmic buoyancy. The choral Prologue is full of beautifully observed touches, at the same time expressive and spontaneously musical. Romeo's lonely melancholy has the authentic Berlioz combination of richness with asceticism—a central instance of his stylistic paradox—and the "Festivities

at the Capulets" for once sound like festivities. The Love Scene is gorgeous; Davis makes it logical too. Perhaps most remarkable of all is "Juliet's Funeral Procession," which for the first time in my hearing is as lovely as the intensively worked score suggested it ought to be. The unsatisfactory, crabbed effect of previous performances had made me wonder whether in this instance Berlioz' imagination had outrun his technique, but Davis stills all doubts.

The three soloists are excellent. Contralto Patricia Kern has an intermittently troublesome vibrato, but the problem is easily outweighed by the sensitivity of her singing—her rapt quality of tone at the phrase "*liés d'amour par le hasard d'un seul regard*" is especially moving. Tenor Robert Tear handles his little solo well. John Shirley-Quirk is less aptly cast for the role of Friar Laurence than Monteux's David Ward: much of the time the music sounds too low for him. However, he is a splendid musician, and he manages to make every note sound by the sheer intelligence with which he uses his voice. His French diction is good, and he is helped in the final "Vow of Reconciliation" by the wonderfully lucid balance of the recording, which throughout is one of the finest Philips has produced. (I reviewed the set from European pressings, and I fervently hope that this time Philips' American plant will come up with discs worthy of the original tape.) In every respect, this is the best Berlioz performance Colin Davis has yet put on record. It was worth waiting for, and expectations of his future Berlioz recordings will now run higher than ever.

BERLIOZ: *Roméo et Juliette*, Op. 17

Patricia Kern, contralto; Robert Tear, tenor; John Shirley-Quirk, bass; John Alldis Choir; London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Colin Davis, cond. PHILIPS PHS 2-909, \$11.58 (two discs).



Harriet Smithson, the Irish actress who became Mme. Berlioz and inspired the composer's *Roméo*.

COLIN DAVIS'
 ROMEO AND JULIET—
 "AS NEAR PERFECT
 AS POSSIBLE"

by Bernard Jacobson



Prokofiev and Scriabin with dazzle—and love.

GLENN GOULD IN A BRAND-NEW ROLE— GOOD OLD PIANISTIC HAIR-STANDING

by Harris Goldsmith

IS THERE ANY special significance we are intended to infer from Glenn Gould's sudden and unexpected espousal of "Horowitz Repertory" here? Does the switch to a different kind of keyboard literature portend a similar return to the concert stage by this artist in self-imposed exile? Or does it merely mean that Gould, tired of raising eyebrows with interpretative perversities, has decided to prove anew that he is as capable of good old pianistic hair-standing as any current virtuoso? In any case, prove it he certainly does. Though it comes as no surprise to me that a man who can play Bach with such note-perfect ease and contrapuntal clarity and who is capable of such inflammable brilliance in Mozart Allegros and Beethoven Prestos should be one of the supreme technicians of the age, I daresay that this latest demonstration was in order: here Gould provides the best of all possible rebukes to snide insinuations made of his work in years past ("Between you, me, and the corner lamp post, Ossip, maybe the reason he plays it [Brahms's D minor Concerto] so slow is maybe his technique is not so good").

For all the umpteen-thousand performances of the Prokofiev Seventh Sonata (it used to turn up on virtually every young pianist's debut recital), only the two earliest have retained a lasting impact. One of these was Sviatoslav Richter's reading (he gave the world premiere of the piece); the other was Horowitz' account (he presented it for the first time in America). Fortunately, both of these artists recorded the Sonata, and we are thus able to analyze the divergent—I am tempted to say "diametrically opposed"—excellences of what are essentially the two fundamental methods of dealing with Prokofiev's keyboard music. Richter's way was that of a lyricist. He opted for a crisp, spry rhythmic regularity and colored his clean, linear type of tone with prismatic lucidity. His reading was whimsical, light-fingered, rather humorous, and (one suspects) much akin to the way Prokofiev himself must have interpreted this music. Horowitz, on the other hand, was altogether grimmer. His rendition emphasized a sardonic, ponderous force not unlike a heavyweight tank in combat. Horowitz reminded us that the Prokofiev Seventh is definitely a war sonata. The bronzen, massive Horowitz sonority, his much more sub-

jective, romantic phrasing, and his less coloristic tonal hue all served to emphasize the harsh conditions prevailing in the Russia of the time (circa 1941-42) of the Sonata's gestation. Tempos too were rather on the slow side in this famous 1945 recording (the finale as Horowitz played it at his 25th Anniversary Concert in 1953, subsequently released in recorded form, is much faster), but far from dulling the excitement the deliberation produced a "held" quality and an extraordinary rhythmic tension.

Gould's treatment somehow captures the best of both these worlds. His, on the whole, is a far "straighter" interpretation than Horowitz' but a far more spacious and more caustic one than Richter's. His rhythmic objectivity is much akin to Richter's in that the fast passages are given with ultraclear textures and terse simplicity. For all that, however, Gould comes far closer than any other pianist known to me to the solid weight and breadth of Horowitz' account. He conveys the lyrically meditative portions of the first movement with all the languorousness and dignity one could wish for, while a terse-lipped understatement removes all traces of tawdriness from the intentionally unctuous *andante caloroso*. Yet this purging of excess leaves the legitimate melodic sentiment of that middle section beautifully intact. As for the *precipitato* finale, Gould's performance is as absolutely splendid as either Richter's or Horowitz'. In my view, indeed, it is of an even greater splendor: his leaps at the very end are superhumanly flawless. All three of these artists, I might add, refrain from pushing the toccatalike patterns of this *moto perpetuo* beyond the realm of clarity and containment; contrast the work of any of them with that of an excellent average pianist, who is apt to plunge through this splashy wing-dang finale like an incensed terrier chasing his own tail! Finally, Gould profits too from sonics that, aside from a bit of overloading in the last movement, are firm and realistic, by far the best given to any member of this great triumvirate of Prokofiev players.

Scriabin's Third Piano Sonata, the so-called *Gothic* Sonata, might be said to represent the midpoint of that much misunderstood composer's creative arch—a work midway between his Romantic/Im-

pressionist neo-Chopin early period and his all but incoherent late "Mystic" ramblings. It is the only four-movement work among the ten piano sonatas Scriabin wrote, and as with much of his output, it is far more distinguished for the intricate neocontrapuntal working out of its material than for any intrinsic strength. Still and all, this creation is rather firmer in texture and less labyrinthine than usual with this composer—and, in the finale especially, it is quite blazingly impassioned. All of the work's strengths are made the most of and its diffusenesses are minimized by the tightly organized, no-nonsense approach Gould takes. He plays this Scriabin Sonata with much the same kind of nuance and affinity evident in his decade-old recording of the early Alban Berg Sonata. Indeed, he plays this Scriabin to even greater advantage in that here he is not tempted to indulge his great intensity and plasticity in excessive extremes of tempo.

To be sure, the only available competing edition, again by Horowitz on an RCA disc, offers distinguished rivalry. Gould's approach, if no less febrile than Horowitz' (febrility, incidentally, is an altogether commendable, perhaps even an indispensable, quality for this type of music), has far more expanse and tonal body—helped along, no doubt, by the patent superiority of Columbia's sonorous new engineering over the cramped, shallow, and blastly sound accorded Horowitz.

In sum, this coupling is played with as much love as Gould's recent and perverse account of Mozart's K. 282 Sonata seems to have been played with hate: the intensity of feeling is considerable in each instance, for—as I hardly need to say—Gould is no man of moderation! Here, then, is one of the most dazzling virtuoso piano recordings of all time, and it should be added that the annotations (written by the performer) are irresistibly witty as well as original and informative.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83*
†Scriabin: *Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in F sharp minor, Op. 23*

Glenn Gould, piano. COLUMBIA MS 7173, \$5.79.



Recording *Lakmé* at Monte Carlo in 1967: Bonyngue conducting, Joan Sutherland and tenor Alain Vanzo on stage.

A FIRST COMPLETE STEREO LAKME: TWENTY MELODIES AND OTHER CHARMS

by George Movshon

THE APPEARANCE OF a new recording of *Lakmé*—the first offered complete and in stereo—is a reminder that no opera that has even once proved successful ever dies: it just waits around. It sits on the shelf for a decade, or a generation, or even a century—until the right climate comes around or, more likely, the right artist.

Lakmé is the name of a lovely “Indian-Indian” girl whose father, Nilakantha, is a Hindu zealot and hates all foreigners and unbelievers. Gérald is a young English soldier who goes picnicking one day, trespasses in a sacred grove, and encounters the maiden. For both, it is love at first sight. She dies in the end.

Surely no more is needed to show what sort of story it was that librettists Gondinet and Gille lifted from the work of Pierre Loti to set before Léo Delibes, a proficient composer of operettas and ballet music, or to indicate the opportunities offered to his melodic capacity and his low-calorie orientalism. *Lakmé* is a typical “exotic” opera, by which is meant that it belongs to a group that started long before *Entführung* and was still going strong with *Turandot* in 1926. Give or take a detail or two, the formula here requires a Western Hero Tenor to plunge into the Oriental World, where he finds one Adorable Local Soprano and several Beastly Baritones and Basses. Nineteenth-century opera is littered with such cases of crosscultural shock, located in unreal Ceylons, Indias, Chinas, and/or Egypts. (Don’t be fooled by

Radames’ Egyptian passport—he is still Standard Western Hero caught in the toils of an exotic theocracy.)

Lakmé is eighty-six years old and seems to raise its tiaraed head about once a generation, generally at the behest of a diva who fancies her figure in a sari and her coloratura technique in the “Bell Song,” that cynosure of canary show-pieces. In France, *Lakmé* has held its place in the repertory of the Opéra Comique, but elsewhere there have been only four sopranos able to bring the work securely to life: Marie van Zandt, the Brooklyn beauty for whom Delibes composed the opera; Luisa Tetrazzini, the stubby Italian nightingale whose triumph came in London; Amelita Galli-Curci, who made Chicagoans love it (and her); and Lily Pons, who finally brought *Lakmé* to the Metropolitan. Others have tried; but on occasions not even the power of a Marcella Sembrich or an Adelina Patti was enough to convince audiences that the work was worth their time and attention.

Is *Lakmé* worth *your* time and attention, in this tense and graceless year of 1969? That depends upon what you customarily look for in recorded opera. If it is the total involvement exacted, in their several ways, by *Tristan*, *Pelléas*, or *Cavalleria rusticana*, then no: you will find nothing remotely similar here. *Lakmé* offers something gentler, less grasping, less “hot.” Do you enjoy *La Rondine*? *Walzertraum*? Zarzuelas, of the Chapi genre? Then you may well get

a considerable amount of pleasure from this album, for *Lakmé* provides a cognate experience. The important thing is to approach it on its own terms: twenty melodies, six of them really good, quite professionally wrapped together. And every now and then a real surprise, like the Act I duet for Lakmé and Mallika, “*Sous le dome épais*,” or the unexpected “*Leur vert bizarre*,” a charming duet lavished on two minor characters, Frédéric and Ellen. One doesn’t need to mention the score’s highlights, for they are well known: Gérald’s soliloquy “*Fantaisie aux divins mensonges*”; the lovers’ duet “*Dans la forêt*”; and of course the inescapable “Bell Song.”

And that leads directly to consideration of the central question: the singing of Miss Sutherland. It is hard to imagine any other contemporary singer dealing so confidently and tastefully with this music. She does so many splendid things that even a short list would grow too long. Her natural voice is, it should be noted, by several degrees more powerful than the type that has historically succeeded as Lakmé. (The point is most easily illustrated by comparing the Sutherland weight of voice with that of, say, Lily Pons. Each artist could sing Lucia or Gilda; but Pons would not sing Norma or Donna Anna, while Sutherland would tend to stay away from roles like Zerlina or Norina—and singers of *those* parts have generally been given Lakmé in the past.) But an obvious affection for the music conquers all, and makes Miss

Sutherland hard to resist. The "Bell Song" is not faultless—indeed she sings it better in a recorded recital on London OSA 1214—but it compares respectably with several accredited "historic performances," and it is far better recorded than any other version. The principal criticism must center on the notorious Sutherland failing of enunciation; the words are slurred and swallowed almost throughout the performance, something sure to distress French auditors, in particular, who are used to hearing more verbal content in their music than other tongues yield. But then again, one can always be philosophical and take the view that Hindu maidens generally speak French undistinctly, especially in "exotic" operas....

Miss Sutherland's ease is doubtless helped by the unfrenzied range of tempos adopted by conductor Richard Bonyngé. His dynamics too are matched to the gentler voices in the cast, most of whom give graceful and easy readings in their roles. Alain Vanzo is a fine lyric tenor who spins many lovely phrases and gives great pleasure. Jane Berbié has a few moments of doubtful intonation, but her Mallika is a strong contribution. Claude Calès is a name new to me, a lyric baritone voice of Pelléas weight and a sensitive artist. Gabriel Bacquier makes a strong impression as the villain of the piece, singing with force and style; though a deeper voice in the role might have helped the over-all balance of timbres, it is hard to think of a present-day French basso who could handle phrasing and words with anything approaching Bacquier's authority. Monica Sinclair gives an amusing caricature, Margaret Rutherford-style, of an English governess; and soprano Gwyneth Annear (whose name I shall look for in the future) sings delightfully in her duet with Calès.

Chorus and orchestra are adequate without being impeccable; there are a couple of late choral entries and passages of muddy articulation. But Bonyngé's work is sympathetic throughout, and the sound is London's usual reliable product.

If three whole discs of *Lakmé* seem like more than you need, consider an Angel highlights record (S 36107 released in 1964) in which Gianna d'Angelo sounds very good indeed as the heroine and Nicolai Gedda contributes a competent Gérald. Or wait for London to put out a highlights disc of the present edition. In any event you may safely put away, if you have it, the previous (mono) complete *Lakmé* with Mado Robin, for it is now superseded in every respect.

DELIBES: *Lakmé*

Joan Sutherland (s), *Lakmé*; Gwyneth Annear (s), Ellen: Josephite Clement (s), Rose; Jane Berbié (ms), Mallika; Monica Sinclair (ms), Mistress Bentson; Alain Vanzo (t), Gérald; Emile Belcourt (t), Hadji; Gabriel Bacquier (b), Nilakantha; Claude Calès (b), Frédéric: Monte Carlo Opera Chorus; Orchestre National de Monte Carlo, Richard Bonyngé, cond. LONDON OSA 1391, \$17.57 (three discs).



The Beatles: a fab foursome turned to flab?

THE BEATLES' NINETY-MINUTE BORE, AND THE ROLLING STONES' BEGGARS BANQUET

by John Gabree

IT BECOMES HARDER and harder to write about the Beatles. At first (five long years ago that is), they were impudent, exciting, the first white rock group to attract the blues and folk music fans back to rock. Later, after they became culture heroes, movie stars, and artistes, many critics, especially political ones like me (but including a lot of appallingly unpolitical ones), found themselves writing sociological treatises instead of reviews. But musically they still combined freshness and vitality with a sharp sense of what sounded nice. A few of their compositions—*Eleanor Rigby* and *A Day in the Life*—are among the best pop tunes ever written. Anyway it was always interesting to watch the world's reaction to the fab foursome.

So, while I can't claim to have awaited the new album with baited ears, I was unprepared also for how bad it has turned out to be. The fab has turned to flab. *The Beatles*, ninety minutes of music on two records, is massively boring, a collection of mediocre compositions given some of the most flaccid performances of recent months. The only tension on the album is between the quartet's snottiness and their indifference to the audience.

A good deal of the new album is taken up with a variety of homages

and parodies (and, by and large, parody is a lazy man's art form): mock country-and-western, mock West Indian, mock Beach Boys, mock teeny rock, mock electronic music, mock '30s pop, and especially mock Beatles. Most of it doesn't work and some of it is even offensive: for example, the parody of the Beach Boys is sloppy and unconvincing (although the song itself, *Back in the U.S.S.R.*, is quite funny), and I imagine the blues and c & w copies are insulting to people for whom these are meaningful forms. Even the very best cuts are disappointments. *The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill* finally can't sustain Lennon's cuteness. *Happiness Is a Warm Gun* is, despite its title, a song about sexual aggression, not peace. The cut I like best is Ringo's *Don't Pass Me By*, but that may be because his singing is simple and straightforward and the group is playing plain old rock.

Of course, if ever you were going to, by now you have run out and plunked down your \$11.58 and anything said here is pretty academic. What's unfortunate is that at the same time you probably didn't pick up *Beggars Banquet* by the Rolling Stones. It is a much better record.

I have always been partial to the Stones. They have a much surer and,



The Rolling Stones: the best group in rock?

it seems to me, more realistic vision than the Beatles and they have been much more willing to explore the possibilities of rock rather than lean on other musical styles when they get in a bind. I have felt for a long time and feel even more strongly now that the Rolling Stones are the best group in rock-and-roll.

Banquet is by no means a perfect album. At one point Mick Jagger leans too heavily on rural blues. The lyrics of *Sympathy for the Devil*, which the group seems to think is the best cut, are pretentious and confused and the point of view is muddled. But this is carping. Jagger's singing has never been more expressive and involving; he literally drags you into these ten songs. The best are probably *Stray Cat Blues*, the raw, ugly sort of antilove song (like their earlier *Back Street Girl*) that the Stones do so well, and *Salt of the Earth*, an affectionate look at the working class by youths who have recently and ambiguously left it. Everyone is in top form on his instrument—the drums and bass are like jabs in the gut—and the group's new producer, Jimmy Collier, keeps everybody beautifully in line. I really don't think it would be too strong to call this the best rock album ever made; certainly it is among the half dozen best.

Two songs really point up the differences between the two bands. A large portion of the young believe that radical reform of the world, East and West, is necessary and imminent. "Revolution" is in the air. The Beatles, as they have in the past, cast their lot with the status quo, and *Revolution 1*, taken on the album at an even drowsier pace than on the single, is a bland, smug encouragement to cop out. I have been told frequently that *Revolution 1* is a put-on, but I don't buy it; the performance, especially on the album, is as oppressive as the lyric and, anyway, the choice and manner of a parody should be revealing about its creator. On the other hand, the Rolling Stones' *Street Fighting Man* acknowledges the need for change while questioning the likelihood of success today. Their performance is tough, focused, together; the Beatles are soft, spongy, and uncaring. Unfortunately, the Beatles have always been easily accessible and pleasant and the Stones difficult and sometimes ugly. It is always an effort to appreciate and especially to love the Stones. But it is worth the effort.

BEATLES: The Beatles. John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, vocals and instrumentals; various assisting musicians and electronic equipment. *Back in the U.S.S.R.*; *Glass Onion*; *Blackbird*; *Revolution 1*; *Honey Pie*; twenty-five more. Apple SWBO 101, \$11.58 (two discs).

ROLLING STONES: Beggar's Banquet. Rolling Stones, vocals and instrumentals. *No Expectations*; *Factory Girl*; *Street Fighting Man*; *Stray Cat Blues*; six more. London PL 539, \$4.79.

CLASSICAL

BACH: Concertos for Violin and Orchestra: in A minor, S. 1041; in E, S. 1042; Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra, in D minor, S. 1043

Alice Harnoncourt, Walter Pfeiffer, violins; Concentus Musicus (Vienna), Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cond. TELEFUNKEN SAWT 9508, \$5.95.

The Concentus Musicus, as in all their Bach recordings, play these three masterpieces on original instruments. The violins, for instance, all date from the seventeenth or eighteenth century and are fitted with gut strings, flatter bridges and fingerboards, and are played with the shorter and lighter bow used in the eighteenth century. As a result, the players can dig freely into the strings (which the Concentus Musicus people do with great enthusiasm) without producing the harsh tone necessary to carry over a modern symphony orchestra. A much more frequent use of open E and A strings is also possible, and desirable, for coloristic effects.

The present ensemble is not the first to attempt baroque music on original instruments, nor is it the first to make a thorough study of the performance practices of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—but I know of no group which demonstrates a *more* complete understanding of the idiomatic requirements of this music. Too often, individuals and groups interested in this early literature get so involved in presenting an academically "correct" reading that they forget that it is music they are trying to communicate. Happily this is not the case here at all; the Concentus Musicus performances are vibrant and alive and often positively thrilling. Every nuance and phrase mark is carefully and deliberately fitted into the total framework, and the final product is guaranteed to win over any skeptic frightened away by the "scholarly" aspects of these productions.

Recorded sound and surfaces are excellent, and the jacket notes—typical of Telefunken's *Musik und ihre Zeit* series—are the most thorough available from any company. C.F.G.

BARTOK: Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta—See Stravinsky: *The Firebird: Suite* (1910).

BARTOK: Sonata for Piano (1926); *Allegro Barbaro*; *Three Rondos on Folk Tunes*

†Prokofiev: *Sonata for Piano, No. 9, in C, Op. 103*

Joseph Kalichstein, piano. CARDINAL VCS 10048, \$3.50.

Joseph Kalichstein, a twenty-three-year-

old virtuoso from Tel Aviv, is someone to watch . . . indeed, he is someone to listen to right now! His debut recording here has real profile and intensity. The first thing that strikes you about his playing of the Bartók Sonata is its masculine, broadly delineated sense of clarity and structure. Kalichstein's slightly deliberate tempo for the first movement is not merely justified by Bartók's Moderato indication there; it also works wonders aesthetically. Similarly, there is fine lyric feeling in the way this pianist goes about the slow movement, and all sorts of little mutations of tempo and accent add zest and life to the finale. Kalichstein was either born with Hungarian blood in his veins, or else he has gotten an artistic transfusion from Bartók-specialist Ilona Kabos, who was one of the young pianist's teachers at Juilliard. However derived, it would be difficult to imagine more sensitive, communicative, or idiomatic Bartók playing. The bite, humor, and tenderness are perhaps even more apparent in the Three Rondos, while the *Allegro Barbaro* is terrifying in its gutsy impact here.

I used to think that Prokofiev's last piano Sonata was a rather wan affair, but Kalichstein's splendid reading has caused me to revise my opinion. His tempos are a bit more deliberate than Richter's in his old Monitor performance, but Kalichstein, with his added muscle, gives the music a scope and vigor that are well-nigh irresistible.

The nicest thing of all to report about this exciting new artist is that he appears determined to make the piano sing as well as sizzle. With all the hectoring, high-strung, and trigger-happy players around these days, what a pleasure it is to find a newcomer with the inclination, the patience, and the inner serenity to listen attentively to Prokofiev's tender melodies and to Bartók's nature sounds!

Vanguard's Dolby-ized piano tone is absolutely stunning here—just about the cleanest, the solidest, and the most crisply realistic reproduction I have yet heard of a concert grand. H.G.

BERLIOZ: Roméo et Juliette, Op. 17

Soloists; John Alldis Choir; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Colin Davis, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 81.

BLOMDAHL: Game for 8; Five Italian Songs; Prelude and Allegro for Strings

AnnSofi Rosenberg, mezzo, Hans Leygraf, piano (in the *Italian Songs*); Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Ulf Björlin, cond. ANGEL S 36576, \$5.79.

Karl-Birger Blomdahl was, until his death last year, Sweden's best-known living composer, and this recording makes evident the fact that he was a very solid and well-trained musician. All three works here show a mastery of composi-

tional technique, impressive in its sureness and its control over the materials. Yet the over-all effect of the program is somehow unsettling. The problem seems to be that one is not so much conscious of Blomdahl as a distinct musical personality as a skillful adapter of the works of others. The Prelude and Allegro for Strings, written in 1949, represents almost a carbon copy of sections of Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta; and the *Five Italian Songs* of 1954, to words by Salvatore Quasimodo and Giulio Arcangioli, although not so explicitly evocative of a specific compositional style, are curiously neutral in this regard.

The *Game for 8* is the most recent (1962) and most ambitious of the three, and at least on the surface seems more interesting than the other two. It has a fresh, up-to-date sound which momentarily misleads one into thinking that here, finally, is something original. But once again, as one continues to listen it becomes increasingly apparent that what one hears that sounds new is really only a thin coating of recent textural innovations, in this case borrowed from a wide range of current sources. The piece

consists of music for a ballet in eight sections (the title refers to this fact and not to the number of players; it is scored for full orchestra), and each section has its own musical bag, be it wall-to-wall clusters reminiscent of Penderecki, pointillism in the manner of the 1950s, or jazz à la Gunther Schuller. Still, as every admirer of Stravinsky knows, it is a rare composer who can write ballet music that can stand on its own; and as music for a staged ballet, I can well imagine that the work could be very effective. On records, however, there just isn't enough to hold the interest for long.

The performances are generally very good, although Miss Rosenberg has a tendency to slide from note to note, making it difficult at times to determine just what the pitch is. The Stockholm Philharmonic under Björlin does a beautiful job, and I hope to hear more performances by them of recent music. The notes provide a useful introduction to Blomdahl's music, and the song texts are included with English translations.

R.P.M.



CHOPIN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 2, in F minor, Op. 21; Grand Fantasia on Polish Airs, Op. 13

Artur Rubinstein, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3055, \$5.98.

Over the years Eugene Ormandy has acquired the reputation of being a crack-erjack accompanist for concertos, while the Philadelphia Orchestra, with its famous "Philadelphia Sound" (whatever that is), has acquired some of the fattest box-office receipts in the history of musical commerce. With this conductor and ensemble back under its fold, it is quite understandable that RCA should have lost no time in pressing the prodigals into hasty service.

Understandable—but, as it turns out, artistically disastrous. Rubinstein already had three recorded Chopin F minors to his credit, the last of which, with Alfred Wallenstein at the helm, was—and is—perfectly acceptable both as to performance and sound reproduction. The only justification for having the great pianist take another stab at the work was

No Violinist Does Unaccompanied Bach Quite Like Henryk Szeryng

THE RELEASE OF a much wanted recording, like a bus on a rainy day, is sometimes unconscionably long in appearing. Eventually, the record (like the bus) shows up—in pairs. Such is the case with Henryk Szeryng's unaccompanied Bach. This violinist's superlative set of the Six Sonatas and Partitas, which won the Grand Prix du Disque when it was issued on French Odeon in 1954, remained maddeningly unavailable in this country until just last spring, when it appeared on Odyssey. Now, hard on its heels, comes a completely new stereo edition from DGG. Since the differences between the two versions are surprisingly few, it may be more profitable first to focus on what they have in common.

Bach's works for unaccompanied violin seem to transcend the limits of the instrument (witness the countless transcriptions of the Chaconne—from Schumann's to Stokowski's—in an attempt to "realize" its harmonic implications). Since the violin is essentially a melodic instrument rather than a contrapuntal one, most violinists are obliged to chop and slash their way through Bach's polyphony like a bushman hacking his way through tropical underbrush with a machete. But Szeryng convinces one for the first time that these works are in fact idiomatic: his technical mastery, consummate-

ly insightful phrasing, and judiciously deliberate tempos enable him to avoid the labored arpeggiations that seemed an inescapable concomitant of these works, leaving the music free to pour forth with organlike sonority.

Furthermore, Szeryng has an uncanny ability to separate contrapuntal strands and differentiate each fugal voice from its counter-subject by selective weighting of the notes within a chord. The clarity of his fugal entrances in the second movement of the G minor Sonata, for example, is little short of astonishing. (Only Sziget's set on Bach Guild gives evidence of similar intellectual penetration, but his playing—he was well past his prime when the recording was made—regrettably conveys a sense of strain.) Szeryng's concern for contrapuntal voice leading extends even to cadences. Instead of sustaining final chords for their full value, he drops the harmonizing notes one by one until only the tonic is left, simultaneously making a gradual diminuendo that, far from sounding anticlimactic, seem to resound into infinity. Certainly, no one else plays unaccompanied Bach this well today.

As for differences between the two Szeryng albums, his interpretations have been slightly refined over the fourteen-year span that

separates them. This is apparent in his treatment of ornaments, trills, and cadences, in still greater contrapuntal clarity, and in more straightforward phrasing. The most conspicuous difference, though, is in sonic quality. Odyssey's set is microphoned close-to, with rich and warm violin sound that is a bit larger than life, while DGG's recording is a trifle distant and lacking in body. Unfortunately, however, the fidelity of the earlier album is more representative of 1944 than 1954; the highs are so muffled that one keeps wanting to boost the treble, but there is none to boost. In contrast, DGG offers highly listenable, wide-range sound, subtle stereo that does not split the instrument in two, and immaculate surfaces. Whether or not these improvements are worth an additional \$9.90 is something the prospective purchaser must decide for himself. In any event, we have the luxury of choice: a budget version in dated sound, or a more costly edition in contemporary sonics. In this case it's "*Chaconne*" à son gout!

MICHAEL SHERWIN

Bach: Sonatas and Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin (complete)

Henryk Szeryng, violin. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139270/72, \$17.37 (three discs).

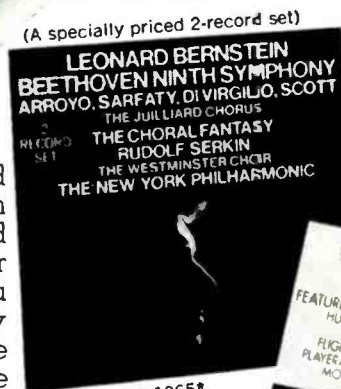
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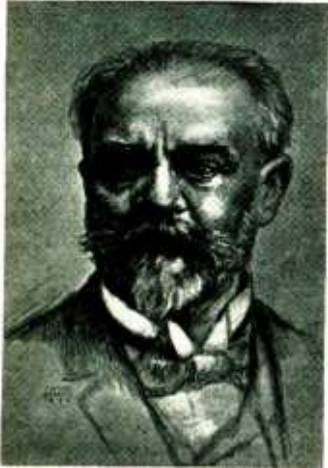
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The Great Dvořák Cello Concerto, Plus Two Rare Treats



IT IS IMPOSSIBLE not to admire this aristocratic performance of the greatest of all cello concertos. If you came to love the work through the old Casals/Szell recording (still listed in the catalogue as Angel COLH 30), you might conceivably wish for a bit more vigor and attack here. Similarly, if your paradigm is the notable Czech Philharmonic edition by Rostropovich and Talich (also happily still available, on Parliament 139), you might opt for a bit more tonal variety on Gendron's part, especially in the opening movement. But once one has acknowledged those brilliant, though diametrically opposed, interpretative landmarks, it must be emphasized that Gendron and Haitink have produced a close to ideal "middle-of-the-road" statement. For one thing, it abounds with detail—the kind of detail that results from ultraprecise orchestral playing and a perfectly balanced and vivid type of recording. Nothing in the score escapes Haitink's eagle eye, and he has the fullest co-operation from Gendron, a soloist with the purest of chamber music instincts. Then too, there is—for all the punctiliousness—not a trace of that steely, hard-bitten quality so often accompanying such deliberate clarity. In his first recording with the London Philharmonic, Haitink has that ensemble sounding almost like the Concertgebouw. In other words,

the strings have a dark, unforced luster plus plenty of deep-toned weight; the winds are pointed and tangy. For all the rhythmic crispness, the over-all feeling is one of relaxed ease and perfect proportion.

But what really clinches the top recommendation for this disc over the Fournier/Szell recording (its closest rival in terms of modern, stereo sound) is the inclusion of two absolutely beguiling and virtually never heard encore pieces. The Rondo, like the Concerto, was written by Dvořák for his cello-playing friend Hanus Wihan, and the *Waldesruhe* (Silent Forest) was arranged for him from a four-hand piano suite entitled *From Bohemia's Forests*. I needn't say much about either composition: just listen to them. One hearing in the record shop and you will have this disc spinning on your own turntable!

HARRIS GOLDSMITH

Dvořák: *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in B minor, Op. 104; Rondo for Cello and Orchestra, in G minor, Op. 94; Waldesruhe, Op. 68*

Maurice Gendron, cello; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS PHS 900189, \$5.79.

the possibility of producing a truly superlative account. Having opted for the luxury, RCA has shabbily squandered the opportunity. Ormandy's boisterous generalized approach has reawakened all of the sloppy, cavalier traits that Rubinstein in recent years has so successfully repressed. This is a roughneck, totally extroverted performance . . . heavy, dull, and brutal. And along with the brusk, four-square framework that Ormandy provides, this disc taped in Philadelphia's Academy of Music (which Columbia long considered unsuitably dry for recording) gives us soggy, muddy recorded bass, splintery harsh violins, haphazardly balanced woodwinds, and that bad old Rubinstein gramophone piano tone: all hard fundamentals, with absolutely no poetic overtones. Do not blame it all on the engineering though, for if a conductor allows bloated strings to swamp the winds and is constantly oblivious to pianissimos and the many important instrumental dialogues between, say, flute and bassoon in the concerto's third movement, there is little that anybody in the control booth can do about it.

I am sorry to say that the only rationale for acquiring this unfortunate disc is the entertaining little *Fantasy on Polish Airs*, which Rubinstein plays with high spirits and which is less injured by the infelicitous podium direction. H.G.



DAVIES: *Revelation and Fall*
Gerhard: *Collages (Symphony No. 3)*

Mary Thomas, soprano; Pierrot Players, Peter Maxwell Davies, cond. (in the Davies); BBC Symphony Orchestra, Frederik Prausnitz, cond. (in the Gerhard). ANGEL S 36558, \$5.79.

Peter Maxwell Davies is probably the best-known composer of the under-fifty generation in England. Several of his works are known in this country on records, but it is safe to say that *Revelation and Fall* (composed in 1966 for a Koussevitzky commission) exceeds them all in dramatic impact and musical imagination. This virtuosic setting of a hair-raising prose poem by the turn-of-the-century Austrian poet Georg Trakl has an immediacy that transcends considerations of idiom and style, an impact that remains as repeated hearings confirm the rightness of every detail in its half-hour length.

Davies has set up a very special sound-world for the piece; although a simple chamber orchestra (one each of the standard orchestral instruments) is the basis of the ensemble, a number of specially constructed percussion instruments are used as well as some individual amplification for various instruments. The solo soprano ranges from *Sprechstimme* to elaborate melismas as she presents the violent imagery of the text, and at a

climactic point she has resort to a "loud-hailer" (better known on this side of the Atlantic as a bullhorn). On the record, this latter effect doesn't have quite the impact that it did in last summer's New York performance—where, indeed, it tended to distract attention from the totality of the piece.

Like every other composer of today whose works encourage (and successfully stand up under) repeated serious listening, Davies is in command of a complete musical language, highly developed and highly personal. Rather than a series of local effects, this piece is a single span, within which the surface dramatics contribute to the total progression, from the peremptory introduction to the fading sounds of the "fiery rain of blood" at the end. The music's tension is a direct result of the composer's complete control of his means, and even in the quiet passages there is no relaxation, for every detail is relevant in this compelling juxtaposition of violence and lyricism. *Revelation and Fall* speaks in a strong voice, with utter authority; it is a voice from which we should be hearing again.

The Catalan-born Roberto Gerhard, a student of Schoenberg and "godfather" of Britain's "avant-garde," composed his third symphony in 1960 (also on commission from the Koussevitzky Foundation, which helped to underwrite both these recordings). It is a kind of experiment in the combination of taped sounds with a symphony orchestra; the title

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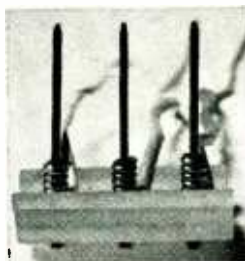
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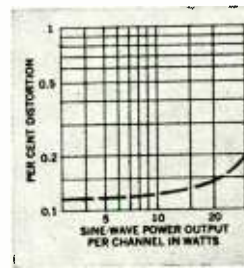
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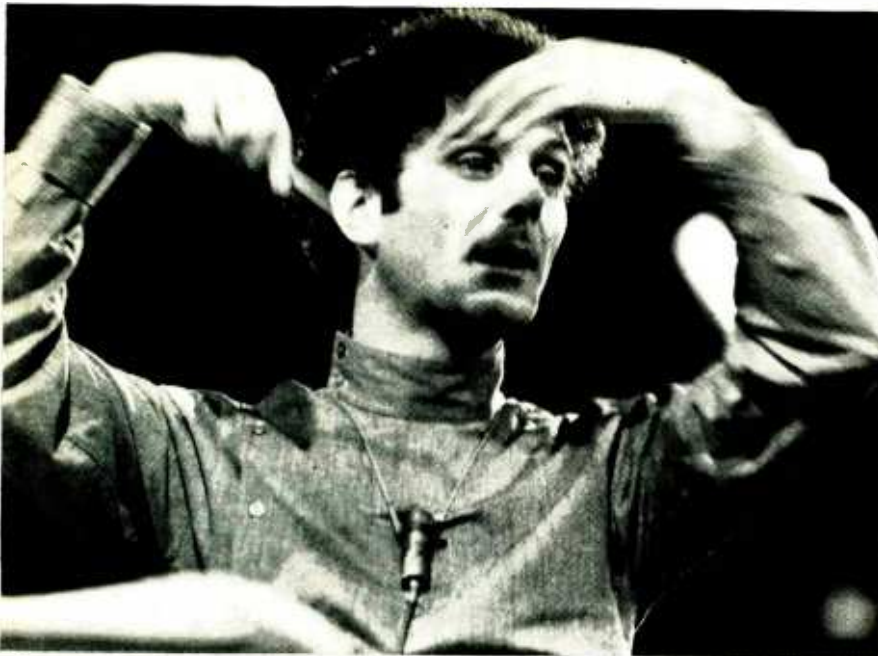
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Peter Maxwell Davies invokes a compelling juxtaposition of violence and lyricism.

Collages refers only to this, and not to any "pasting-together" of pre-existent material. As the electronic age goes, 1960 was "a long time ago," and both the taped sounds themselves and their use in the work seem somewhat primitive today. Nevertheless, despite some static passages (as if Gerhard's usual security were limited by the new materials), there is some brilliant writing here; if not a completely successful piece, this is still the work of a fine composer with interesting things to say.

In the absence of scores, I cannot verify the accuracy of these performances, but both are convincing, and they are superbly recorded. Text and translation are given for the Davies piece. D.H.

DELIBES: *Lakmé*

Joan Sutherland, Jane Berbić, Alain Vanzo, Gabriel Bacquier, et al.: Monte Carlo Opera Chorus; Orchestre National de Monte Carlo. Richard Bonyngé, cond.

For a feature review of this recording, see page 83.

GERHARD: *Collages* (Symphony No. 3)—See Davies: *Revelation and Fall*.

GOUNOD: *Roméo et Juliette*

Mirella Freni (s), Juliette: Eliane Lublin (s), Stephano Michele Vilma (ms), Gertrude: Franco Corelli (t), Roméo: Robert Cardona (t), Tybalt: Maurice Auzéville (t), Benvolio: Henri Gui (b), Mercutio: Yves Bisson (b), Paris: Christos Gregoriou (b), Gregorio: Claude Calès (b), Capulet: Xavier Depraz (bs), Frère Laurent: Pierre Thau (bs), Le Duc: Chorus and Orchestra of the Paris Opéra, Alain Lombard, cond. ANGEL SCI. 3734, \$17.57 (three discs).

If any record company can be said to have done much lately for the cause of French opera, it is Angel. In addition to the complete recordings of standard works, Angel has given us rather good highlights discs of such pieces as *Lakmé*, *Thaïs*, and *Hérodiade*, not to mention the truncated but nonetheless valuable *Les Troyens*. And in addition to this *Roméo*, there is the promised *Werther*, of which HIGH FIDELITY'S readers had word in Roy McMullen's "Notes" from Paris last January.

Roméo et Juliette was itself very much a standard work in the not so distant past. In the Metropolitan's early days, it was as good a bet as any opera to open the season; and all of us with a memory of the old house will recall that Gounod was among the select composers whose names were inscribed over the proscenium. He was considered a two-opera man in those days.

After twenty years of dormancy, *Roméo* was revived at the Metropolitan last year. But this proved to be a with-friends-like-this-who-needs-enemies effort: it showed us an attractive side of its two stars, but made no case whatever for the opera. And it is an opera for which the case needs to be made. It has some serious weaknesses, and belongs to an entire genre with which current sympathies seem out of tune. Just about everyone I know who has experienced *Roméo* for the first time via the Met production has concluded that it is a hopeless bore of an opera, relieved here and there by a pretty melody.

One problem, of course, is that the music only rarely approaches greatness and sometimes descends to outright triviality—even in the otherwise affecting Chamber Scene, for example, there is a fatally banal allegretto section at an important point ("Il faut partir, hélas!" etc.). Another difficulty lies in the fact that there are only two roles of real significance, for although Laurent, Capulet, Mercutio, Stephano, and even Tybalt

have important moments, none can assume any important part of the burden. In each case, there is much to lose and little to gain—a bad artist can do some damage, but a good one can help only marginally. And there is the stylistic and linguistic problem posed by any French work. The essence eludes most foreigners even if they are good singers, and France herself is simply not furnishing singers of the required type and quality.

Finally, there is the matter of the form of the work, and the sort of operatic evening it implies, which we seem to have trouble accepting. *Roméo* is written in five rather short acts. These acts are sensibly arranged, and each is built around one or two essential actions that will just about support it. The music is constructed and paced accordingly. But there is some sort of law that prohibits five-act operas ("You can't have four intermissions!"). So it is done in three. But now the acts are too long for the style of the writing and the layout of the pieces. Extra cuts are therefore tempting, with the result that the acts are still too long and are internally out of shape as well. At the Met, there is the further imposition of an execrable ballet in the opening scene. (There is no ballet at all in the original, written for the Théâtre Lyrique; Gounod, or someone, did write one for the first performance at the Opéra, but of course it was intended for the fourth act, not the first.) In my production of *Roméo*, there is an intermission after each act, because that is enough of this sort of thing for a while. The sets can be imposing, because I don't have to worry about fast changes. There is no ballet, and no restoration of Juliette's bravura aria after drinking the draught; but most of the other cuts are opened, so that the supporting characters (particularly Capulet) regain a measure of the strength they do have, and so that the little scene of Laurent inquiring after the letter (for instance) may lend some urgency to the final act. And all these secondary roles are cast with people who, whatever their other strengths and failings, have some importance on the stage, some individuality.

And the opera would be taken with the utmost seriousness, for there are enough fine things in it to command our respect. Nearly all the set arias are excellent pieces—especially Roméo's "*Ah! lève-toi, soleil*" and Mercutio's Queen Mab ballad but including even the energetic song for Capulet and the notorious "Waltz" of Juliette (notorious because irrelevant but not really so bad as display pieces go). Most of the love music is at least pretty, and often more, and at least two extended passages never fail to move me. One is the big concerted number that ends what ought to be the third act, beginning with Roméo's "*Ah, jour de deuil*," and the other is the entire final scene. Surely this adds up to a rescuable opera, though perhaps not in repertory conditions.

The current recording (the opera's second, and the first in stereo) seems based on a solid premise: since the presence of Mirella Freni and Franco Corelli gave the Met revival what life it had (albeit

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**Norman Eisenberg in High Fidelity,
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of an un-Gallic sort) and since much of the problem elsewhere lay with the lack of a real French spirit from singers or conductor, an obvious solution is to plunk the Freni/Corelli combo down in the midst of the Paris Opéra herself.

Unhappily, this does not turn out quite as planned in any respect, but there has been one happy decision, and an important one: the selection of Alain Lombard as conductor. M. Lombard is French; more than that, he is good. Everything has snap and life, and such dramatic writing as the score has (in the Prelude, the duel scene, the Tomb Scene) is given full measure. But things are tightly controlled too: despite an over-quick tempo or two (the unrelievedly rushed Queen Mab ballad, for instance),

there is no feeling of freneticism or whipped-up excitement for its own sake. Lombard secures excellent playing, and lends the whole performance a basic validity and live tone.

Otherwise, things don't really work out, except in a negative sense—there's hardly anything that's really terrible. The microphone has not been especially kind to either of the title-role singers. The French is often nothing short of horrifying, and of course one is much more conscious of this when concentrating solely on the audible performance. Corelli disdains nasal diphthongs altogether, while Freni calmly alters all vowels to "aw" anywhere above the stage.

The voices per se are, of course, lush ones. Freni has many moments of round,

warm, lyric soprano-izing. But only infrequently is it really "with" the music or the character: little personal magic comes through. The "Waltz Song" is, in fact, rather poor—careful-sounding, none too accurately intoned, lacking in abandon or joy. She avoids most of the high options.

Corelli does not seem in his best form. He is impressive when singing at full tilt, especially in the big finale (complete with interpolated C) and in the Tomb Scene, and he executes some lovely diminuendo effects, as at the end of the Balcony Scene or with the now famous tapering of the final B flat in "Ah! lève-toi." But, perhaps because of the effort to sing rather more lightly than is his custom, the voice sometimes sounds thin, sometimes awkward, and there is an excess of portamento and of the good old scoop, of which very little goes a long way in this music. It just isn't clean enough or precise enough, despite what seems to be a considerable effort to bend his *tenore di forza* to the task. In the theater, it is in many ways a fine role for him: his appearance is a great advantage, and he has some moments of intensity that cannot fail to communicate. But on records, the advantages tend to vanish, and the problems are subject to the close-up.

The others, I'm afraid, contribute little beyond their authentic accents. An exception is Henri Gui, who, even though rushed in the Mab song, renders it expertly and makes a good effect in the duel scene. The voice is a trifle light even for this role, but under the circumstances we mustn't complain. Depraz, who a few years back made some excellent sounds on records, is in terrible shape here—a dry, unfocused tone and no sense of line at all. Calès is a decent, uninteresting French baritone. Lublin a decent, uninteresting French soprano, typically white of voice. The Tybalt is barely sufficient, the Gertrude poor—the best effect among the supporting singers, in fact, is made by the Gregorio and the Duke, each of whom has a voice of some substance and authority.

Worst of all, most of these people sing with all the urgency and communicative drive of a prerecorded telephone time signal. The prime artistic goal seems to be the arousal of sufficient energy to participate in the opera at all; this Laurent seems to know well indeed the properties of soporific potions, while Capulet seems in some sort of trance while transmitting wedding instructions to Juliette.

It's not quite as bad as the above remarks make it sound, for thanks to Lombard the performance does continue to exist, and the two leads give us some rewarding vocal moments. I wonder, though, if some collectors will not want at least to consider the much older (1954) performance on London, still in very listenable mono sound. Though Janine Micheau and Raoul Jobin do not have the vocal glamor of their current counterparts, they both have a stylistic familiarity and musical ease that has its attractions. And as Capulet, for example, the set has Charles Cambon, a veteran baritone with some real authority in his delivery; while the Laurent, Heinz

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Reh fuss, though sadly deficient in the needed low notes, at least sings with recognizable legato and considerable beauty of tone when the tessitura is right.

As I say, it's worth consideration.

C.L.O.

GRIEG: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16*

†**Liszt:** *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat*

Van Cliburn, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3065, \$5.98.

These Cliburn/Ormandy performances gave me much pleasure. Technically, the pianist is in terrific form for both works: his trills and runs are remarkably even and agile; his octave playing is solid; his musical instincts flexible and unforced. In the Grieg, there is much lyrical toying around with phrasing in the first and last movements, but the effect is never anything but natural, direct, and communicative. And although Cliburn's Liszt E flat doesn't have the jolting individuality of some more personal reading (his opening, for example, is quite without the electrifying abandon of the recent Argerich/Abbado DGG account), its well-adjusted stability might well make it an easier interpretation to live with. Ormandy is an excellent partner here, and the slow movement of the Grieg, in particular, features some memorable dovetailing between solo and orchestral parts.

Sonically, the recording is not out-

standing. The volume level is rather low, the microphone placement suggests excess distance (perhaps the impact was dissipated because of the semi out-of-doors location at the Philadelphia's summer home in Saratoga Springs, where this performance was taped), and the totality features a glassy piano and "wrong-end-of-the-telescope" perspective. Unlike RCA's simultaneously released Ormandy/Rubinstein Chopin disc, however, there is a sense of tonal liveness here at least, and a far more judicious equilibrium between the soloist and orchestra. Important instrumental comments do come through, despite the harshness of tutti passages. H.G.

IVES: *Symphony No. 3*

†**Schuman:** *New England Triptych*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3060, \$5.98.

Who invented the phrase "the usable past?" I'd like to know, and I hope that some reader of HIGH FIDELITY will write in and tell me. Here are two American composers using their usable past for all it's worth.

The American usable past, as selected by Charles Ives and William Schuman, is humble, strong, and quite unconventional for its period; it has nothing to do with the poor man's Mozart and lower-case Haydn so often, so mistakenly, and so tediously pawned off as early American music.

Ives bases his Third Symphony almost

entirely on early New England hymn tunes, marvelously manipulated and totally transformed into one of those profound, rich, aspiring musical monuments of his that cleanse the soul. This is his quietest and shortest symphony, and the one most lightly scored—strings, single woodwinds, two horns, and one trombone, plus chimes in the last two bars—but it is one of his richest achievements. Unfortunately, he gave it a folksy title, *The Camp Meeting*, and homespun subtitles—one of which RCA makes worse by dropping its last letter and calling it "Old Folks Gatherin'." As they would say in "Peanuts," *Bleah!* The effort to sell Charles Ives as a musical Norman Rockwell is exactly the thing that is going to cause an anti-Ives reaction when the present Ivesolatry begins to run its course.

Schuman does not transform or disguise his material, as Ives does. He writes three orchestral pieces based directly on William Billings—the first movement on the anthem *Be Glad Then America*; the second movement on the round *When Jesus Wept*; the last on the Revolutionary War song *Chester*. The *Triptych* was written in 1956 as a glorified pop concert piece for André Kostelanetz; Schuman may not have taken its outside movements too seriously, but they suggest that Billings' essentially vocal conception does not lend itself easily to symphonic treatment. The slow movement, however—with its long lines, its lovely soloistic orchestration, and the magical key changes Schuman has given it—is a beauty.

Now, gentlemen, using the usable past

SINCE FOUNDING his own Esterházy Orchestra in New York in 1961, David Blum has grown considerably both in technical mastery of conducting and in the ability to project his musical sensitivity. In this, the fifth of his Haydn records for Vanguard, he produces his best performances, orchestrally and interpretatively, of any I have heard from him either in concert or on records. He is, I feel, basically a better conductor than Leslie Jones, whose Nonesuch recording offers the same coupling, and his orchestra is superior to that of the Little Orchestra of London.

Despite Blum's strong admiration, as expressed in his liner notes, for No. 91, his performance of No. 90 comes off much the better. No. 91 is at best a rather problematic Haydn symphony: its dark mood and richer texture never quite achieve the majesty of the great No. 99 in the same key. Nor does Blum really succeed in realizing in his performance the work's architectural ingenuity, of which he writes with such fascination in his notes. The Symphony No. 90, at least as here recorded,

In Progress, David Blum's

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Symphonies Nos. 90 and 91



is, however, sheer delight throughout. Lighter in texture than No. 91, it possesses a finale with one of Haydn's most unforgettable tunes, which evokes Blum's best performance.

The Esterházy orchestra, though variable in personnel, has always commanded the services of some of the best free-lance orchestral players in New York, and the solo winds play here with exceptional distinction. The string section has good cohesion of sound and nice balance with the winds; the orchestra in No. 91 sounds larger than in No. 90.

Vanguard's recording produces an extremely fine sound, which the Dolby processing offers with minimal electronic background. Unfortunately, this quiet ambience makes it all the easier to hear a distinct postecho in loud passages throughout both symphonies.

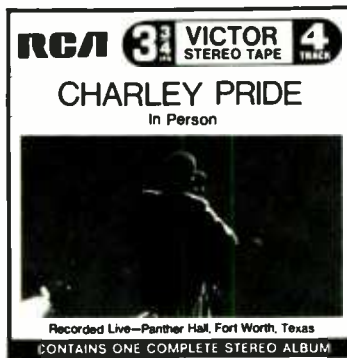
PHILIP HART

Haydn: *Symphonies: No. 90, in C; No. 91, in E flat*

Esterházy Orchestra, David Blum, cond. CARDINAL VSC 10044, \$3.50.

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is fine, but it creates an obligation; ethically speaking, this is not a one-way street. And the name of William Billings is totally absent from the current Schwann. There have been recordings of his works from time to time, but seldom with any concern for proper performance style; anyway, they are all gone. What we need is a big set of Billings—anthems, fuguing tunes, secular pieces—not sung by one of your Lincoln Center chorales but by a Sacred Harp group in the Deep South, where the tradition of this most celebrated of eighteenth-century New England composers is still very much alive.

Ormandy's performances of both Ives and Schuman are workmanlike and effective, but without exceptional inspira-

tion. The recordings are superb; what the Philadelphia strings do with this most radiantly string-colored of Ives's symphonies is really marvelous. A.F.

LISZT: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in E flat—See Grieg: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, in A minor, Op. 16.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 4

Netania Davrath, soprano; Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel, cond. CARDINAL VCS 10042, \$3.50.

This is the first recording of Mahler's

Fourth Symphony to use the Critical Edition of 1963, which embodies a number of substantial differences in tempo and dynamic markings and in orchestration from the standard texts. In places, the adoption of Mahler's last thoughts has resulted in greatly enhanced clarity of texture.

Nevertheless, coming after Abravanel's apocalyptic performance of the Second Symphony, his present performance strikes me as disappointing. His control here is much less firm and his accentuation less purposeful. The most serious loss of control is no less regrettable for coming at a point where many other conductors err in the same way: the *ppp subito* passage twelve measures before figure 12 in the slow movement, where the tempo is allowed to press forward disastrously. In the first three movements, moreover, a lack of rigor in the observance of dynamic markings obtrudes itself, and sometimes, as at the third measure after figure 1 in the first movement, even negates the effect of textual authenticity.

In the paradisaical finale, of which I should have expected her to be an ideal interpreter, soprano Netania Davrath is equally disappointing. The fourth D in the second bar of her part is appreciably sharp, and though matters improve after this, she never really sounds at ease.

Perhaps this performance of No. 4 would have seemed more impressive if No. 2 had been less spectacular. But Abravanel has set himself a towering standard. Let us hope that his future recordings will come closer to it. B.J.

MOORE: Carry Nation

Ellen Faull (s), Mother; Beverly Wolff (ms), Carry Nation; Julian Patrick (b), Charles; Arnold Voketaitis (bs), Father; et al.; Chorus and Orchestra of the New York City Opera, Samuel Krachmalnick, cond. DESTO DC 6463/65, \$17.94 (three discs).

Douglas Moore is one of the few composers who has enjoyed a modest success in the rather dismal area of contemporary American opera. His basic recipe is simple enough: select from American history a well-known character or incident with built-in audience appeal, concoct a theatrical libretto liberally fleshed out with local color, and spoon over the mixture a musical score spiced with generous helpings of nostalgia, sentiment, homespun tunes, and Broadway pazazz. When all the ingredients work—as they do for *The Ballad of Baby Doe*—you can settle back for some lively, enjoyable, and unpretentious musical theater; when they don't work—and they do not for *Carry Nation*—you're right back there in that rather dismal area of contemporary American opera.

Carry's problems begin with the libretto, which is long on dime-store psychology and short on the kind of simple but lovable characters whose flamboyant behavior inspire Moore to his best. Aside from the effective short prologue, which shows the aging Carry in

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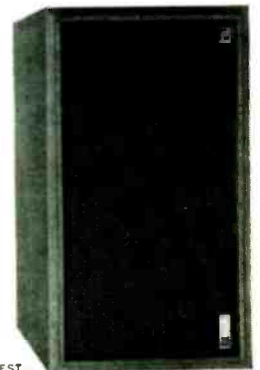
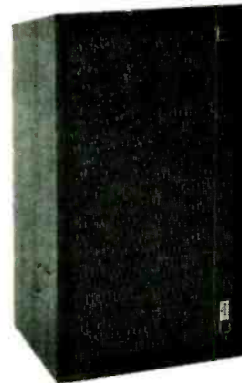
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her familiar role as the saloon-busting crusader, the plot is concerned with the lady's early years in Missouri and those incidents that supposedly led to her later hatchet-swinging career against demon gin. To gauge from William North Jayme's libretto, young Carry certainly was sorely beset by a troublesome family—her father, a stern Bible-quoter with vaguely incestuous feelings for his daughter; her deranged mother; and Charles, her husband, tender and loving but gradually being destroyed by an alcoholism engendered by horrid experiences in the Civil War. In Mr. Jayme's hands, the drama carries about as much conviction as *One Man's Family*, and the contrived climax—Carry's "Immolation" Scene after Charles's death, when she prays for a cause to sustain her life—has a very hollow ring.

Even had the libretto been a masterpiece of psychological penetration, it seems very unlikely that Mr. Moore could have succeeded with such an inverted drama. The weakest musical element in *Baby Doe* is the tortured, complex figure of Augusta—Moore's pleasant music cannot begin to characterize her convincingly—and *Carry Nation* has four such Augustas even more awkwardly presented. Furthermore there are few opportunities for Moore to interpolate folksy Americana divertissements (face it, Missouri in 1865 was hardly the most colorful corner of the U.S.). So what we have here is not a very happy situation—a collection of attractive but essentially any-

mous, innocuous, and inappropriate tunes wedded to an unconvincing libretto.

The recorded performance duplicates the 1968 production by the New York City Opera and is, on the whole, a very decent job. Beverly Wolff almost sounds convinced by Carry, and except where she is forcing her voice in the name of dramatic emphasis, she gives many moments of lovely singing. Julian Patrick's virile baritone and forthright manner are welcome, although there's not much he can do to make Charles a very interesting character. Both he and Miss Wolff blend well in their duets, which are among the score's best pages. Arnold Voketaitis and Ellen Faull are as good as need be in the impossible roles of Carry's parents. The recording is only so-so: the orchestra is quite distant and the soloists have been badly overmiked, sounding almost as if they had been superimposed over prerecorded accompaniments. The records come with notes and a complete libretto. P.G.D.

MOZART: *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 14, in E flat, K. 449; No. 15, in B flat, K. 450*

Daniel Barenboim, piano; English Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. ANGEL S 36546, \$5.79.

Daniel Barenboim is something of an anomaly among contemporary young pianists. At twenty-five he eschews the

virtuosic tendencies of his own generation, not caring a fig about showmanship through velocity. His playing suggests that of some philosophical/romantic old German, seeking to unravel the mysteries of music in almost Furtwänglerian fashion. It's a dead-serious approach, occasionally rewarding—as in his mystical foray into Mozart's C minor Fantasia (Westminster)—but it is also devoid of lightness and grace. Their absence in the present performance undoes Barenboim's good intentions.

Despite the close proximity of their Köchel numbers, these works are cut from different fabrics. The E flat Concerto is ultracompact, chamberlike and intimate, decidedly unshowy. Its neighbor is a "public" piece, a "grand" concerto with much in the way of bravura. Barenboim subjects both to the world of his private, apparently mystical vision.

Tempos are leisurely throughout; in both works the andantinos emerge as andantes. In some of Mozart's later concertos the slow movements can withstand a fairly wide range of tempos (particularly the A major, K. 488, where—with phenomenal success—Serkin treats the andante as an adagio), but the trick is much harder to pull off in the concertos here at hand. Barenboim does not succeed. In both pieces, even after many rehearsals, I felt the music collapsing for lack of momentum. The finales too are spiritless, especially that of the E flat. This movement is not intended as an example of jollity (the indication is



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allegro ma non troppo), but Barenboim's performance is not merely unduly slow—it is uncomfortably heavy-handed.

One movement works rather well, the first of the E flat. Here Barenboim's slow unfolding imbues the music with gravity and great dignity, but it stands alone.

The recording is warm and rich, with balances strongly favoring the pianist. S.L.

MOZART: Divertimentos for Strings:
No. 1, in D, K. 136; No. 2, in B flat, K. 137; No. 3, in F, K. 138.
Serenade No. 6, in D, K. 239
("Serenata Notturna")

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Herbert von Karajan, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139033, \$5.79.

MOZART: Symphonies: No. 28, in C, K. 200; No. 29, in A, K. 201

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Karl Böhm, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 139406, \$5.79.

As the listening public becomes familiar with the eighteenth-century symphony beyond the fifteen or so selected masterpieces from its culminating period, conductors and recording engineers are faced with historical problems, stylistic and expressive nuances new to most of them.

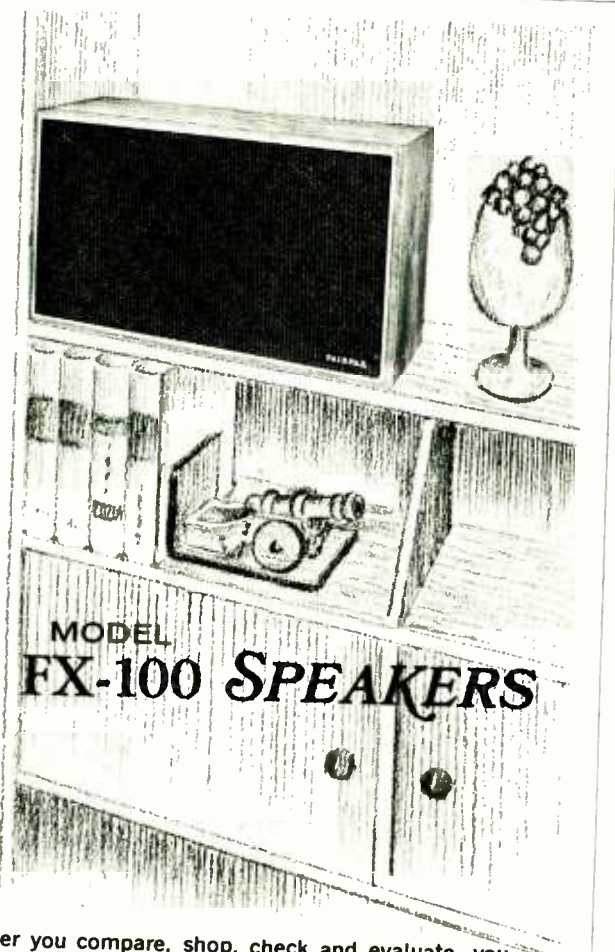
The two sets of symphonies discussed here furnish an object lesson in how two great conductors, directing the same superior orchestra, can reach different results because of their different appraisal of these nuances.

Mozart's three divertimentos—K. 136, 137, 138—are really Italian opera symphonies, that is, overtures whose three sections amount to a miniature three-movement symphony. (The overture to *The Abduction from the Seraglio* is a good example of a later one.) As remarked in a previous review here, the designation "divertimentos" is not Mozart's. But there can be no doubt that K. 200 and 201 are full-fledged symphonies, with the minuet added to make a four-movement form. In 1774 when Mozart composed the C major and A major symphonies the immense change being wrought by Haydn was not yet felt and understood, even though the older master had by that time four dozen symphonies to his credit. Significantly, Haydn's growing importance was first acknowledged by the French, for whom he wrote a number of symphonies; he became the most popular instrumental composer in Paris and his scores (as well as many spurious ones) were printed there, whence they gradually penetrated into Vienna, Germany, and England. So the great stylistic upheaval came to Vienna via a considerable detour. For the time being, south of Germany the symphony was otherwise purely Italian, even when composed by Germans. The iron-fisted logic of thematic development coupled with the utmost freedom of imagination that made Haydn the creator of the classical symphony was not yet known; the Italian symphony continued to prance festively in its first movement, to breath a slight melancholy in its second, and to romp ebulliently in its finale.

Mozart knew this genre well. His worshiped model, Christian Bach, was indistinguishable from a native Italian, and he also knew Hasse, the other converted German, as well as the genuine Italians; and he was completely devoted to this clear, perhaps a little frivolous and impersonal, but proud, uncomplicated, sensuous, and delectable art. Mozart gradually became acquainted with Michael Haydn's symphonies (K. 201 is patterned after one of the Salzburg Haydn's symphonies in the same key), and through him perhaps also with some of Joseph Haydn's early works, and there begins a change, though still wholly within the Italian orbit. The change from the overture tone, manner, and substance to that of the concert symphony, while considerable, is elusive, and parallels the change from the "sonata for piano with the assistance of a violin" to the "sonata for violin and piano." A modicum of symphonic development aided by light counterpoint appears. Though the development sections are still rather perfunctory connecting links and are usually satisfied with sequential play, they begin to have a *raison d'être*. The crucial point, already in evidence in the three overture-symphonies under discussion, is in the melody. Mozart, who did not grow up in the German instrumental tradition, began

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early to combine the square-cut instrumental themes with vocal elements, with those expressive bits of recitative, that gave his mature music its inimitable character: his instrumental melody begins to speak.

Böhm, who fully grasps the issue, lets the melody speak—that is, sing—lavishing great care on every trill and every appoggiatura, even in the whirlwind finales. The melody is always in the sunlight, and nowhere does one feel haste or forcing of the pace; the music just flows irresistibly. Karajan, conducting the same Berlin Philharmonic, gives elegant performances. K. 136 is fine indeed, but he does not convey the infinite grace of this melodic line; there are some slurs, the trills are uneven, the inner parts not so

finely balanced as under Böhm's hand, his orchestra is a little bottom-heavy, and the phrasing in the slow movements lacks Böhm's poetic charm. Above all, the fast movements, especially the finales, do not seem so effortless; the same fine orchestra is bidden to show its virtuosity, a demonstration totally unnecessary when it plays under Böhm. Play both recordings—it is a worthwhile artistic and educational experience.

P.H.L.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonata for Piano, No. 7, in B flat, Op. 83*

†Scriabin: *Sonata for Piano, No. 3, in F sharp minor, Op. 23*

Glenn Gould, piano.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 82.

PROKOFIEV: *Sonata for Piano, No. 9, in C, Op. 103*—See Bartók: *Sonata for Piano* (1926).

RACHMANINOFF: *Three Russian Folk Songs, Op. 41; Spring, Op. 20*—See Tchaikovsky: *1812 Overture, Op. 49* (RCA Red Seal edition).

SCHUMAN: *New England Triptych*—See Ives: *Symphony No. 3*.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *Quartets for Strings* (complete); *Two Pieces for String Octet*

Borodin Quartet; Prokofiev Quartet (in the Octet). MELODIYA/SERAPHIM S 6034 (containing Nos. 1-5) and S 6035 (containing Nos. 6-11 and Two Pieces), \$7.47 (each of two three-disc sets).

A highly original and colorful use of the orchestra has long been one of the trademarks of Shostakovich's style, and his thirteen symphonies have made his fame. Yet, after his symphonies, Shostakovich's eleven string quartets comprise by far the largest body of compositions in the composer's general oeuvre, and this important Melodiya/Seraphim release should reveal a Shostakovich few people know very well.

Unlike Bartók's works in this genre, Shostakovich's quartets do not manifest a style that is perfectly native to the medium. For all of his skill in contrapuntal writing, Shostakovich has a tendency in his quartets to neglect the voicing of the various instruments in favor of a rather simplistic melody-accompaniment writing that does not take full advantage of the rich "sound" that can be obtained from a string quartet. Such a style, of course, lends itself fairly well to works dominated by a strong and lyrical melodic writing. Yet Shostakovich's melodies are not, by and large, lyrical, nor do they represent the backbone of the works they appear in. If there is one aspect that dominates all of Shostakovich's quartets, it is a preponderance of chromatic and decidedly instrumental themes whose importance in the work often depends at least as much on their rhythmic characteristics as on their purely lyrical qualities. Without the benefit of orchestral color, the thematic material in the quartets sometimes seems rather bare and thin and evokes an occasional "Is that all?" reaction.

If Shostakovich's attention to the internal details of quartet writing is not always, perhaps, what it should be, his conception of the larger, external forms used in the works often manifests an uncanny sense of what is right. Like Alban Berg in such works as *Wozzeck* and the Violin Concerto, Shostakovich uses a number of classical and baroque forms and styles

Continued on page 106

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The Big, Seminal Works Of Karlheinz Stockhausen

by Robert P. Morgan

THE NUMBER OF STOCKHAUSEN compositions in the catalogue continues to grow apace, and this new release makes available two of his biggest and most complex instrumental works. *Gruppen*, written from 1955-57, and *Carré*, written in 1960, both require well over one hundred performers, special seating arrangements for concert performance, and considerable rehearsal time. It speaks for Stockhausen's importance in contemporary musical life that both these works have been made available on record within little more than a decade after their conception. It is also significant that with this addition virtually everything of importance written by Stockhausen until the recent past is made available in recorded form, a fact which alone puts him in a class by himself among serious composers of the postwar generation.

I am convinced that *Gruppen* is one of the focal works of the twentieth century, and it would come as no surprise to me if it should eventually attain the status of a landmark in the sense that the *Sacre du printemps* is a landmark. Like the *Sacre* it marks the culmination of an earlier development and also suggests possibilities for development in a new direction. In both cases the music written immediately afterwards seems to take a radically different turn; yet in retrospect the seeds of the new style can be seen in the work that sums up the old.

In *Gruppen* there is a synthesis of various aspects of musical organization with which Stockhausen had been concerned in the early 1950s. As early as 1952, when he wrote the *Klavierstück I*, he had begun composing with what he called "groups," that is, complexes of notes which had a general over-all character in regard to intervals, durations, register, dynamics, density, and articulation, but within which the individual characteristics of each note were of secondary importance (and were even interchangeable). Thus it was the character of the group as a whole, its *Gestalt*, that was of importance and not the specific intervals, dynamics, etc. (This, incidentally, marked a move away from the composer's earlier pointillism, which put great stress on the individual character of each note.) A second important development of this period was the idea of establishing a multilayered time field in which different strands of the over-all texture would move at different tempos, an idea which found its first realization in *Zeitmasse* (the German word for "tempos") for five woodwinds. The problem in *Zeitmasse*, as any listener can affirm, is that the different time layers tend to lose their identity in the total texture: they become "mixed" with the other strands so that one hears in effect one over-all time field of considerable complexity. The solution to this problem was suggested by Stockhausen's experimentation with the spatial aspects of music and his use of space in his electronic composition *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1956). In this piece the music is made literally to move through space from one loudspeaker to another within a network of five

speakers placed around the listener. It was the possibility of spatial differentiation in music which suggested a way of separating the different temporal layers so that they would not mix as they did in *Zeitmasse*: each temporal strand could form part of an independent space-time field.

Gruppen was the first composition to exploit the possibility of using all of these techniques in combination. Thus the "groups" of the title refers not only to the use of group, as opposed to pointillistic, technique but also to the fact that the instruments (109 in all) are grouped into three independent orchestras of similar instrumental composition so that one is placed before the audience while the other two are placed on the left and right side respectively. This allows for spatial independence among the three orchestras so that each is enabled to proceed with its own compositional group at its own tempo. The total organization of the piece, then, is ordered according to the opposition and interaction of these three orchestral units. Sometimes two units (occasionally even all three) are allowed to come together and synchronize momentarily, only to break apart again and go their separate ways. It is this constant growth and decay of the various groups in and out of one another, occasionally crystalizing into larger units for climaxes, that supplies the sense of progression and development in the piece.

Perceived on a purely sensuous level, the composition appears as an explosion of orchestral colors and effects, but it is, I believe, much more than just that. Even the uninitiated listener cannot escape the sense of growth and decay mentioned above, and when, for example, the brass and percussion elements of all three orchestras finally combine at the same tempo to form one group of some thirty measures (by far the longest—and loudest—group in the piece) the sense of arrival and climax is unmistakable. From this point on there is a gradual "dissolution" of the three orchestras until finally the piece simply dies away, only one horn remaining from the total ensemble. It would be hopeless to try to describe all of the different kinds of textures achieved through the opposition, combination, and separation of all the instruments, ranging from sections in which isolated note groups appear interspersed with sudden silences to statistical complexes of such density that one has only a blurred aural impression of the whole. Suffice to say that the piece is a shattering sound experience on virtually any level that the listener might want to approach it.

The road from *Gruppen* to *Carré* leads towards increasing indeterminacy. Already in the more complex groups of the earlier piece it is apparent that many of the elements could be changed without essentially altering the total effect. Further, the temporal relationships between the three instrumental groups are frequently so arranged that some variability is inevitable from performance to performance. In *Carré* this factor of variability is consciously in-

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corporated into the composition. As in *Gruppen*, the over-all instrumental conception of the piece is spatial: some eighty players are divided into four small orchestras positioned on all four sides of the audience (*Carré* means "square" in French). In addition each orchestra has a small chorus of mixed voices which vocalizes on phonetic sounds. Once again the music is allowed to move from source to source, and again each orchestral unit is at times heard singly and at times in combination with other units.

The compositional procedure, however, is quite different from that of *Gruppen*. *Carré* is composed in what Stockhausen calls "moment" form, an open form which in principle could go on indefinitely. Musical "moments" are relatively complete entities and to this extent are not unlike the groups of *Gruppen*, but here they are formed in such a way that, while related to one another, they are not dependent upon one another. Thus, although one moment may suggest the one which follows it, the connection is in no way casual, and it would be equally possible for a different moment to follow. Stockhausen has stated that the piece "tells no story. One can ignore a moment if one no longer wishes or no longer is able to listen." Thus each moment can be taken for itself, and in listening one can tune in and out at will without fear of losing the thread of continuity. (Such a piece obviously does not so much begin and end as simply start and stop.)

Taken on the composer's terms, I feel that *Carré* must be rated a success. One can "listen in" and "listen out" with no sense of loss. Not surprisingly, however, the general quality of the piece is extremely impressionistic and static, and for my taste it is a bit on the tedious side. I like to listen actively, whereas the kind of listening demanded here strikes me as being essentially passive. The work, in fact, raises basic questions about what music is or at least should be, and each listener will ultimately have to make up his own mind. But at least for

Stockhausen, this new development has become increasingly important in his subsequent work, which is more and more static and improvisatory in character and mystical in its aesthetic implications.

The performances of both pieces under the composer's direction (with the aid of additional conductors for the multiple orchestras) are remarkably good. The score of *Carré* is not yet available, but the realization of *Gruppen*, which I could follow with a score, is extraordinarily precise when one considers the staggering complexities of the piece. It should be realized, however, that such spatially conceived music tends to lose something when reduced to a two-track system. The spatial differentiation of the three orchestras in *Gruppen*, is, however, very convincingly brought off by having the middle group equally distributed between both channels while the other two groups are distributed to the left and right respectively. Thus one is really able to hear the music move about the room. (I had occasion, incidentally, to listen to the piece once on a monophonic system and found that it made very little sense—a good indication, I think, of how successfully Stockhausen has integrated the spatial idea into the composition.) *Carré*, of course, creates greater problems. As best I can tell, the front and rear orchestras are both equally distributed between channels, which means that the quadrat formation of the piece is lost. I have never heard this work in live performance, but I would guess that the effect would be quite different from what one hears in the present reading.

STOCKHAUSEN: *Gruppen*; *Carré*

Cologne Radio Orchestra, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Bruno Maderna, and Michael Gielen, conds. (in *Gruppen*); North German Radio Orchestra of Hamburg, Mauricio Kagel, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Andrzej Markowski, and Michael Gielen, conds. (in *Carré*). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 137002, \$5.79.

Continued from page 102

to obtain a maximum dramatic effect through their juxtaposition in the work. One finds everything from sonata-allegro forms to recitatives, from theme and variations to fugues, with occasional combinations of several forms.

The first four Quartets, which span the years from 1937 to 1949, are all rather bland works, with the exception of the five-movement Third, which is one of the most frequently played. The Fifth and Sixth, on the other hand, are two of Shostakovich's finest works. Both come much closer than any of the other quartets to what one expects from a conventional string quartet. And both, particularly the Fifth, are characterized by a melodic style decidedly more lyrical than one often finds in Shostakovich's works. This lyricism, combined with a skillful use of polytonality and linear counterpoint, gives these two quartets a depth frequently missing in the first four.

Unlike the earlier Quartets, which are often almost pastoral in quality, the Seventh through Eleventh are all quite somber in nature and manifest a much freer use of form and harmony. The slow movements here are pervaded by a rather moody lyricism reminiscent of Berg. (The main theme in the second movement of the Ninth Quartet, in fact, bears a strong resemblance to part of

Marie's aria in the third scene of the first act of *Wozzeck*.) The faster movements, on the other hand, are frequently notable for a Bruckneresque drive and virility, and they represent some of Shostakovich's best writing for string quartet. One excellent example is the scherzo of the Eighth Quartet, while the last movement of the Ninth is even more relentless and, with its insistent dissonances and grotesque string effects, is one of the most musically advanced movements in any of Shostakovich's later works.

Melodiya/Seraphim has made a wise decision in choosing this complete recording by the Borodin Quartet for release in this country. Although the Beethoven Quartet of Moscow has been much more closely associated with Shostakovich and has recorded the first ten quartets in Russia, the Borodin Quartet is made up of a much better group of musicians, and the works recorded here often benefit from the sharpness and precision of their playing. Nonetheless, the Borodin Quartet does not seem to identify with the music in as passionate a way as does the Beethoven Quartet, and neither group does the Shostakovich works as much justice as do certain non-Russian ensembles. Compare, for instance, the recording of the Tenth Quartet in this set with the intense, superbly recorded version by the Weller Quartet on a London re-

lease. Or compare the Borodin Quartet's recording of the Third with that by the Smetana Quartet on Crossroads or even with the ancient recording by the Fine Arts Quartet on Mercury. The Borodin group often seems to have no idea of what a *pianissimo* is, and, particularly when compared to other ensembles, its playing seems rather weak in rhythmic vitality, a quality quite important for the later quartets.

The recorded sound in these volumes is not always what it should be. While the various instruments are recorded quite cleanly when they are playing solo, much of the ensemble playing sounds harsh and muddy, with the bass being rather unresonant and the stereo directionality leaning, appropriately enough, rather to the left. I might also add that the long-winded program notes are obviously a bad translation from the Russian, which was puerile enough to begin with, being full of such descriptive chatter as "four instruments talk to each other," "... giving a mischievous feeling to the proceedings," etc.

Since many of the quartets (the First, Second, Fifth, Sixth, Ninth, and Eleventh) are not currently available on any other domestic recordings, Melodiya/Seraphim's release is extremely welcome in spite of its shortcomings. Certainly, it communicates

Continued on page 107

the music. The Third and Fifth Quartets alone are worth the price of the first volume, while every work in the second volume is a show stopper of sorts. The latter volume also features one of Shostakovich's earliest compositions, the Two Pieces for String Octet, a fascinatingly uneven work whose first movement harks back to the Russian lyricism of the First Symphony, while the strident polytonality and wealth of string acrobatics of its second movement foreshadow certain works to follow. R.S.B.

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It is gratifying to find Sibelius in again. For all the until just recently fashionable scoffing at his music, it retains its communicative originality and impressive substance. Save for the six Bartók String Quartets, can anyone name a twentieth-century cycle that can top these seven symphonies in terms of sheer quality and staying power?

Bernstein is not the first conductor to offer the entire Sibelius cycle in recorded form, but he enters the arena with some formidable recommendations. For one thing, he has a great personal flair and, for the most part, high-powered help from his orchestra. For another, he is generally aided by the vivid stereophony of Columbia's sound (as, for instance, in the finale of No. 4, where the various solos are vividly pinpointed). For still another, Bernstein carries the mantle of Koussevitzky, a conductor whose readings of Sibelius have—for better or worse—acquired legendary status.

I, who have distinct reservations about the late Boston maestro's style, consider the Koussevitzky imprimatur a mixed blessing. Certainly his celebrated recording of the Second Sibelius, for all its vivid heart-on-sleeve sentiment, was too Tchaikovskian in its excitement to convey the true distinctiveness of the Finnish master's music. In a way, it is unfortunate that Columbia is releasing Bernstein's readings only in a five-disc set; on this all-or-nothing basis my own recommendation must go to Epic's integral edition by Akeo Watanabe and the Japan Philharmonic. Watanabe, being half Finnish, also has a strong claim to the *echt* Sibelius tradition, and the Japan Philharmonic plays cleanly and well. In fact, they not infrequently surpass the New Yorkers in terms of fine nuances and, for me, they hold a basic advantage by virtue of their clear, cold, sharply defined tonal characteristic.

My Sibelius symphony discography in the May issue will treat the available individual recordings in detail. H.G.

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Bartók: SONATA FOR TWO PIANOS AND PERCUSSION

Poulenc: SONATA FOR TWO PIANOS (1953)

Bracha Eden and Alexander Tarr

CS-6583

Sibelius: SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN C MAJOR (Op. 52), SYMPHONY NO. 6 IN D MINOR (Op. 104)

The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra — Lorin Maazel

CS-6591

Mozart: SYMPHONY NO. 40 IN G MINOR (K.550), SERENADE NO. 6 IN D MAJOR (K. 239) ("Serenata Notturna")

The English Chamber Orchestra — Benjamin Britten

CS-6598

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

The London Symphony Orchestra — Simea Ehrlich

CS-6602

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The Original Firebird Suite—A First Recording

IN REVIEWING Stravinsky's own recording of the 1945 *Firebird Suite* (HF, November 1967), I summarized the complicated history of the concert versions of this ballet. Boulez' release now fills in the remaining gap in the phonographic documentation of that history, for this—the very first suite that Stravinsky made—has never before been recorded. It was published in 1912, using the same plates that had been used for printing the complete score (with minor modifications to provide concert endings for the movements), and thus the lavish orchestration (with quadruple winds, etc.) of the original ballet is used—a stunning sound, and to my mind a more satisfying one than that of the reduced suites. Leinsdorf's homemade suite uses this scoring too (it includes a bit less of the opening scene than the 1910 suite, but adds the *Berceuse* and *Finale*), as do, naturally, the complete recordings by Ansermet and the composer.

Because there are some fine things omitted from all these suites, I continue to recommend the composer's complete recording, but Boulez offers an interesting alternative among the supplementary possibilities. This is an excellent performance, cleanly and very specifically played; the precision and vitality are especially re-

warding in the *Firebird's Dance* (the alterations of scoring are quite striking in this section) and in the *Infernal Dance*.

Boulez has not previously recorded any music of Bartók, but this recording shows him every bit as proficient as in his recordings of other masters of the early twentieth century. The strings of the BBC orchestra are perhaps not as good as its winds, who carry much of the burden in *The Firebird*, but they acquit themselves well here, in a performance both slower and less tense than the usual ones. Boulez clearly grasps the fact that speed is not the only way to imbue this music with excitement; by moving more slowly and fully establishing the individual character of each part, he achieves a better projection of the total texture than does any other performance I know—a truly impressive achievement. It's too bad that some end-of-side distortion mars the last movement, for the sound is otherwise superior. DAVID HAMILTON

Stravinsky: *The Firebird Suite* (1910)

†Bartók: *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*

BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7206, \$5.79.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture, Op. 49*

R { †Rachmaninoff: *Three Russian Folk Songs, Op. 41; Spring, Op. 20*

John Shaw, bass-baritone (in *Spring*): Cathedral Choir and Children's Choir of St. Ambrose; Central Band of the Royal Air Force; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Buketoff, cond. RCA RED SEAL LSC 3051, \$5.98.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *1812 Overture, Op. 49; Marche slave, Op. 31; Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy Overture*

London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. ODYSSEY 32 16 0238, \$2.49.

Apparently inspired by DGG's release last year of an *1812 Overture* in which Herbert von Karajan restored the opening hymn, *God, Preserve thy People*, to a choral setting, RCA has decided to go it one better. Its new version, conducted by Igor Buketoff, also brings back the chorus for the Tsarist national anthem and the return of the hymn in the finale. As an additional fillip, a boys' choir flits in and out, piping the Russian folk

song "At the gate, the homeland gate." Of course, Buketoff also enlists the services of the by now obligatory brass band (Central Band of the Royal Air Force), cannons (Guns of the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery), and bells ("authentic Russian church bells, still hanging in cathedral spires in Russia today").

Perhaps the most startling aspect of the disc, however, is the recorded sound. It is blindingly bright, with the upper partials leaping out with laserlike intensity. The presence of the woodwinds is extraordinary, with the microphones seemingly crammed into the very bells of the instruments. The recording was evidently done "without benefit of Dolby," for tape hiss is conspicuous throughout. But, despite this drawback, there is no denying the recording's sonic effectiveness.

Unfortunately, the performance does not have the same impact as the sound. The St. Ambrose Choirs, while more accurate in intonation than Von Karajan's Don Cossacks, lack an authentic Russian timbre. Buketoff's direction, though meticulous, is notably wanting in forward thrust and drive. Finally, the "Guns of the King's Troop" sound about as

exciting as the slamming of a car door.

Far more compelling are the works by Rachmaninoff on the reverse side, neither currently represented in Schwann. A masterful setting of three Russian folk songs for contralto and bass chorus is delightfully appealing, while *Spring*, a fifteen-minute cantata dating from 1902, is typically somber. In the latter the capable baritone soloist John Shaw may be a trifle light in weight, but otherwise the performances are all one could ask.

The most attractive item on Boult's *Odyssey* disc (dubbed "Tchaikovsky Spectaculars") is the *Romeo and Juliet*, which supersedes another performance by the same forces on Stereo Fidelity (where it is coupled with the same composer's *Hamlet*). Boult's newest *Romeo* is a shade more dramatic than the older version, and the sound—while hardly spectacular—is better focused, but the disc as a whole is woefully deficient in Tchaikovskian fervor. Though the conductor's *1812* lacks heavy artillery, it nonetheless fits the category of "large bore." If the battle of 1812 had been fought with Boult's gentility, both sides would have lost the war. M.S.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Eugene Onegin* (excerpts)

Evelyn Lear (s), Tatiana: Brigitte Fassbänder (ms), Olga: Fritz Wunderlich (t), Lenski: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b), Onegin: Martti Talvela (bs), Grem-in: Hans Marsch (bs), Zaretski and A Captain: Chorus and Orchestra of the Munich State Opera, Otto Gerdes, cond. HELIODOR HS 25084, \$2.49.

This is a generous German-language selection, totaling just an hour's playing time. It is comprised of the prelude, both of Lenski's arias, Tatiana's entire Letter Scene, Onegin's aria, a choral sequence from the second act, the duel duet, Grem-in's aria, and the whole final scene.

R { Unfortunately, the only distinguished singing comes from Wunderlich, who sings Lenski's music with even greater beauty and finish than he did on the Angel highlights (coupled with *Queen of Spades* selections). Evelyn Lear has some interesting things to offer in terms of inflection and word coloring—she obviously has an understanding of the character. But the voice sounds worn and effortful, so that the fresh, young sound the music should have is absent; and there is very little in the way of a sustained line. Fischer-Dieskau makes a neat enough job of the aria, provided one can accept the rather effete sound he brings to it, but he simply leaves off singing during most of the final scene; it is literally impossible to tell where the melody is heading most of the time. Talvela produces some imposing sound, especially towards the bottom of the voice, but the phrasing of the aria is so square and insensitive that the wonderful sweep of the piece vanishes.

The choral and orchestral work is only ordinary, ditto the sound. All told, it's hard to recommend this disc, espe-

cially if one can locate a copy (mono only) of the highlights record drawn from the complete Bolshoi recording (most recently on MK) with Vishnevskaya, Lemeshev, Belov, and Petroff. It has the double advantage of being sung (a) in Russian, and (b) much better. C.L.O.

TELEMANN: *Orchestral Music*

Concerto for Two Flutes, Two Oboes, Strings, and Continuo, in B flat; Concerto for Three Trumpets, Two Oboes, Timpani, Strings, and Continuo, in D; Suite in G ("La Putain"); Musique de table, First Production: Conclusion for Two Flutes, Strings, and Continuo in E minor.

Esterhazy Orchestra, David Blum, cond. BACH GUILD BGS 70695, \$5.79.

Concerto for Three Trumpets, Two Oboes, Timpani, Strings, and Continuo, in D; Concerto for Horn, in D; Concerto for Three Oboes, Three Violins, Strings, and Continuo, in B flat; Concerto for Violin, Trumpet, Obligato Cello, Strings, and Continuo, in D.

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA RED SEAL 3057, \$5.98.

Memories of the disastrous New York concerts given by the Esterhazy Orchestra in commemoration of the 1967 bicentennial of Telemann's death should deter no one from acquiring this excellent Bach Guild record. Those concerts must presumably have suffered from totally inadequate rehearsal schedules, for the crisp, stylish playing that distinguishes the recorded performances is on an entirely different level.

In two of the works included—the B flat major Concerto and the G major Suite—David Blum has no competition on record. Both works are first-class Telemann, especially the Suite, a genre piece whose title ("Putain," or "prostitute"), genial folkish melodies, and rhythmic zest by no means preclude elegance. The elegance is well captured by the performances, and the zest even more so—there is plenty of style here, but happily no piddling around in finicky Olde Musicke vein.

In the splendid D major Concerto for three trumpets, two oboes, and timpani I feel the zest sometimes gets a little out of hand. Here the best of the several versions available is Kurt Redel's on Philips World Series PMS 9035, where oboe soloist Manfred Clement, an artist who deserves to be better known, plays and ornaments quite ravishingly.

Still, this well-engineered Bach Guild disc, which also offers a *bonne bouche* from the *Musique de table*, should be in every Telemann collection. The Ormandy offering belongs somewhere else. The people who will enjoy it are those who feel Telemann should sound like badly played Brahms. The bass lines lumber along like sclerotic centenarians, and some of the tempos are beyond belief. Not having absolute pitch, I was impelled

at the start of the Three-Trumpet Concerto to check my turntable in case I had inadvertently left it at 45 rpm.

Ormandy's nod in the direction of stylistic authenticity—the inclusion of continuo instruments—is effected without taste or discretion: the harpsichord plunks away, sounding twice as big and immediate as the whole string band.

It was a gracious gesture on the conductor's part to spotlight his first-desk men with a program like this. It would have been still more gracious of him to determine tempos that were within their capacities. The first movement of the Horn Concerto slows down painfully every time Mason Jones enters (in sharp contrast with the much more nimbly played performance by Erich Penzel on Nonesuch H 71148), and the soloist was not even afforded the courtesy of a chance to remake the end of the finale, whose last note is diabolically out of tune.

The D major Violin, Trumpet, and Cello Concerto is a splendid piece, and it seems to be otherwise unavailable on disc. But here too the principal soloist, Norman Carol, is evidently extended beyond the limits of his technique. In the case of the impressive Concerto for Three Oboes and Three Violins, the Barshai performance on Angel 36264 or S 36264 is only one of several versions that place Ormandy's directionless direction in the appropriate light, or rather shade. B.J.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Symphony No. 4, in F minor; Norfolk Rhapsody, No. 1*

New Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. ANGEL S 36557, \$5.79.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Symphony No. 4, in F minor; Serenade to Music*

Vocal soloists (in the *Serenade*); New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7177, \$5.79.

The Fourth is the toughest, most strenuous, severe, and dissonant of the symphonies of Vaughan Williams, and the most monumental. It is full of extremely complex counterpoint; it is also full of a relentless energy close to violence, occasionally relieved by those distant, seraphic *pianissimos* of which this composer was a past master. The whole work is built around two four-note phrases in a manner that would win more praise from Arnold Schoenberg than from César Franck, both of whom were utterly devoted to that sort of thing. Anyhow, this is a masterpiece that deserves more than one recorded interpretation.

As one would expect, the Boult version lies closer to both the letter and the spirit of the score and has a more transparent sonority than the Bernstein. The latter conductor is more massive in his approach; his tempos, for once, are likely to be slower than those of the competition, and his sound is more that of an orchestra than of the instruments com-

posing it. Both recordings are excellent. For that matter, so are both interpretations. As Captain MacHeath says in *The Beggar's Opera*, "How happy could I be with either were t'other dear charmer away."

If, however, you do not already have a recording of the *Serenade to Music*, the Bernstein disc is the better buy: the *Serenade* is one of Vaughan Williams' greatest achievements while Boult's filler, the *Norfolk Rhapsody* No. 1 is just that.

The *Serenade to Music* is well known, but it might be worth while to recall that it was composed in 1938 as a tribute to Sir Henry Wood on the fiftieth anniversary of the start of his career, that its text is the praise of music from *The Merchant of Venice*, and that it was written for orchestra with sixteen solo singers, all of whom were friends of Wood's and participated in the premiere. The recording here was made in 1962 when the piece was performed at the opening of Philharmonic Hall in Lincoln Center, and the singers are all New York celebrities. This performance was released at the time in a commemorative album still in the catalogue. Coupled on the present disc with the toughness and pugnacity of the Symphony, the *Serenade* affords a striking contrast—it is one of the most heavenly, serene, and luxurious pieces of music that ever occurred to the mind of man. The performance is very good too, except when the three mezzos Chookasian, Tourel, and Verrett get to thinking they are Norns. A.F.

Recitals & Miscellany

WILLI BOSKOVSKY: *Dances of Old Vienna*

Johann Strauss I: *Jugendfeuer Galopp, Op. 90; Indianer Galopp, Op. 111; Tivoli-Rutsch Walzer, Op. 39; Exeter Polka, Op. 249.* Johann Strauss II: *Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 114. Josef Strauss: Die guten alten Zeiten Walzer, Op. 26. Schubert: 4 Walzer & 4 Ecossais; 4 Walzer & 2 Ecossais. Lanner: Pesther Walzer, Op. 93; Jägers Lust Galopp, Op. 82.*

Willi Boskovsky, violin; Boskovsky Ensemble, Willi Boskovsky, cond. LONDON CS 6570, \$5.79.

Take another look at the contents listed above! Most of the selections are recorded Firsts, and even the one relatively familiar work, Johann I's *Liebeslieder* waltzes, sounds novel since it—like everything else here—is played in chamber style by an ensemble of only two violins, viola, bass, flute, clarinet, and two horns. How delectable this old-fashioned, intimate kind of music making can be and how delightful these mostly mid-nineteenth-century dances are will be a revelation to anyone who knows only the later Viennese repertory—and that only in the usual symphonic versions. Those familiar with the earlier Boskovsky

Ensemble releases for Vanguard will rejoice with me over the present resumption, under London's auspices, of this unique series—which demonstrates both the personal charm and idiomatic authority of Boskovsky and his Vienna Philharmonic first-desk men even more effectively than does the better-known series of Boskovsky-conducted full-orchestral Viennese dance programs released (also by London) some time ago. The stereoism here is perhaps almost too vivid in its close-up recordings of the admirably differentiated soloists, but how beautifully and zestfully they play! And who would have thought that old Johann Strauss I and Josef Lanner had so much blood in them? or such wit and verve as captivate

one here in the *Indianer* and *Jägers Lust* gallops in particular? R.D.D.

HELMUT FRANZ: "Modern Choral Music"

Bedford: *Two Poems for Chorus*. Ligeti: *Lux aeterna*. Mellnäs: *Succsim*. Kopelent: *Matka*.

Gerhard Otto, flute (in the Kopelent); Chorus of the North German Radio (Hamburg). Helmut Franz, cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 137004, \$5.79.

Here is an interesting selection of new choral music by composers from Eng-

land, Hungary, Sweden, and Czechoslovakia. Ligeti's *Lux aeterna* is, of course, rapidly becoming something of a classic—it was used in the sound track of the film *2001*, and this is its third recording. Given the idea of the piece—a beatless, accentless time span with the individual voices entering as imperceptibly as possible, spreading and shifting to form varying tone clusters—the most successful performance remains that by the original dedicatees, the Stuttgart Schola Cantorum (on M-G-M's *2001* record, SIE 13; my comments are based on the original Wergo pressing, WER 60026). None of these groups has sopranos who can enter imperceptibly on a high B, but the Stuttgart group is most successful at maintaining an essentially unarticulated continuum. The new Hamburg disc is not far behind, and either is much preferable to the relatively coarse version by Gregg Smith (on Columbia MS 7176, another *2001* record, where the piece is unfortunately overlapped at beginning and end by electronic "interludes").

The other three pieces, less single-minded than the Ligeti, demonstrate the wide range of new choral techniques now available—many of them deriving from the music of Luigi Nono, some of whose choral works should certainly be available on records. (At least one of these composers, David Bedford, is a pupil of Nono.) Choral glissandos and melismas, whispering and speaking, and a general concentration on the phonetic rather than the semantic elements of the text—these are the primary characteristics of the idiom. Some of the results resemble electronic sounds, and the piece by Arne Mellnäs in fact includes a brief electronic interlude, while Marek Kopelent adds a solo flute for some nice effects. None of these pieces, however, maintains interest as successfully as the Ligeti, or as the best of Nono's choral music.

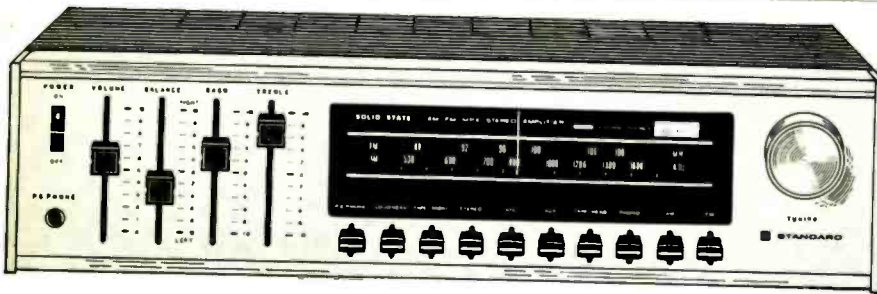
In the absence of scores, I can only report that choral tone and ensemble seem quite good and that the recording jibs a bit at some of the high soprano sounds but is otherwise good. Texts and translations would be useful in some of these pieces, but are not included in the liner notes. D.H.

NEW YORK PRO MUSICA: Instrumental Music of the Tudor Court from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I

Anon.: *La bounette; La down cella; La chymyse; Galliard*. Henry VIII: *Tanndernaken*. Whyte: *In nomine*. Tallis: *A point; Veni redemptor; Clarifica me pater*. Munday: *Tres partes in una*. Cornysh: *Fantasia "Fa la sol."* Newman: *Pavan*. Byrd: *Fantasia; My Lord of Oxenford's March; O Mistress Mine*. Dowland: *Frog Galliard; Lachrymae tristes*. Bevin: *Browning*. Ward: *Ayre; Fantasia*. Farnaby: *Rosa solis*. Coperario: *Fantasia*.

New York Pro Musica, John Reeves White, cond. DECCA DL 79434, \$5.79.

Just occasionally—for instance, in King Henry VIII's *Tanndernaken* and again



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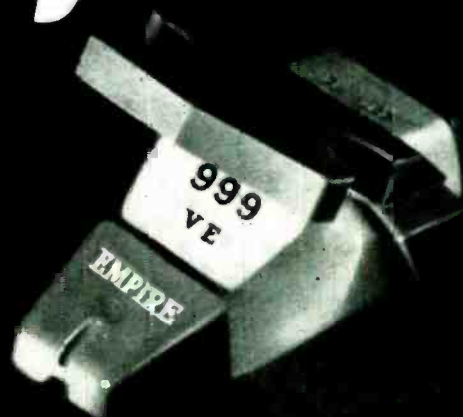
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in the closing Fantasia by Coperario—this collection (dubbed by Decca “The Kynges Musicke”) suffers from the New York Pro Musica’s old tendency to play absurdly fast. But at least three-quarters of the pieces are charmingly done, with a variety of instrumental tone that brings out all their fresh beauty. Perhaps the loveliest thing on the disc is William Cornysh’s fantasia, *Fa la sol*, especially its second section, with krummhorn and kortholt spinning lines of subtly contrasted sonority on the two channels and a bass viol binding the whole together in the middle.

There are many other delights to be had from this release. My only complaint, apart from those few questionable

tempos, is the omission from the album liner of detailed source listings, and even of such amenities as the composers’ dates. If the presentation can be faulted, the crystal-clear recording certainly can’t.

B.J.

ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF: “An Elisabeth Schwarzkopf Songbook, Vol. 2”

✓ Schubert: *Erkönig, D. 328; An mein Klavier, D. 342*. Mozart: *Das Veilchen, K. 476; Meine Wünsche, K. 539*. Schumann: *Die Kartenlegerin, Op. 31, No. 2*. Mahler: *Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt; Ich atmet’ einen linden*

Duft; Lob des hohen Verstandes. Wolf: *Lebe wohl; Selbstgeständnis; Nimmersatte Liebe; Verborgenheit*. Strauss, Richard: *Meinem Kinde, Op. 37, No. 3; Wer lieben will, Op. 49, No. 7; Ach, was Kummer, Op. 49, No. 8*. Stravinsky: *Pastorale*. Mussorgsky: *In den Pilzen*. Tchaikovsky: *Pimpinella, Op. 38, No. 6*.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Geoffrey Parsons, piano. ANGEL S 36545, \$5.79.

Admirers of Schwarzkopf will be relieved to find her voice more secure and pliant here than on DGG’s recent Wolf *Spanisches Liederbuch* project. The repertoire has, for the most part, been carefully chosen to steer clear of her current technical limitations and the selections add up to a most enjoyable and sensibly planned recital.

Schwarzkopf being the potent and individual interpreter she is, there are instances here of both perceptive insights tellingly executed and, for my taste at least, some terribly overcalculated touches. I enjoyed the narrative songs best of all for Schwarzkopf seems to be a born storyteller. The sharp characterizations of the three participants in *Erkönig* are chillingly accurate—a startlingly effective performance proving that this song need not be the exclusive property of large, dramatic voices. Another magnificent but entirely different portrait is Schumann’s *Fortune Teller*, pictured here as a breathless, giddy young woman who furtively consults the cards regarding her future suitors while mother dozes. The humor of *Lob des hohen Verstandes* is laid on a bit too thickly, but the biting satire of *St. Anthony’s Sermon to the Fishes* comes over nicely in Schwarzkopf’s through-clenched-teeth interpretation. The most hilarious of the lighter songs is Mozart’s very obscure *Meine Wünsche* (not included in the soprano’s Mozart Lieder record with Edwin Fischer)—it’s about a young man who would like to be Emperor but decides that Joseph can keep the job since he is already doing pretty well at it.

Few songs here really require a sustained, spun-out legato line, but those that do (Wolf’s *Lebe wohl* and *Verborgenheit* and Mahler’s *Ich atmet’ einen linden Duft*) tend to sag rather badly. I feel too that the oversophisticated manner adopted for Strauss’s simple cradle song *Meinem Kinde* and the almost Freudian way Schwarzkopf caresses Schubert’s innocent little apostrophe to his piano are not very happy ideas. Schwarzkopf’s superior musical intellect may convince you otherwise, but these performances are not for me. The three Russian items that conclude the disc—Stravinsky’s tiny wordless vocalise, Mussorgsky’s etched-in-acid song of a vicious little mushroom/toadstool gatherer (an interesting anticipation of Shostakovich’s *Katerina Ismailova*), and Tchaikovsky’s sprightly Italian specialty number—make charming little encores. Geoffrey Parsons’ accurately played accompaniments seem a trifle square and self-effacing, but the warm, clear, well-balanced sound is ideal.

P.G.D.

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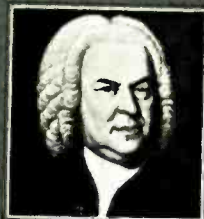
For the Avant Garde among us we herald two additional albums in our famous new series, designed to “make any owner of good equipment proud to demonstrate its splendors” (*The Gramophone*). The first, a plugged-in approach to modern trombone music, features premières by Berio, Stockhausen, Alsina and Globokar, with the latter as soloist. This strikingly original recording, often humorous, experiments with the trombone plunger mute, allowing sound to be modified to resemble certain sonorities of human speech.

The second Avant Garde release—listed here—spotlights organist Gerd Zacher, one of the foremost interpreters of new music, in a program of never-before-recorded compositions by Ligeti, Kagel and Allende-Blin. Playing the organ of the Luther Church

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REPEAT PERFORMANCE

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

PURCELL: *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*. April Cantelo (s), Alfred Deller (ct), et al.; Ambrosian Singers; Kalmar Chamber Orchestra of London, Michael Tippett, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 286, \$2.50 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Bach Guild BG 559, 1957].

The English have had a long tradition of commissioning large choral works for festival occasions. Purcell wrote a fair share of them during his short life and the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1692) is his masterpiece in the genre. It is full of the composer's richest invention: choruses of magnificent Handelian breadth, ground-bass songs, a fully developed five-part instrumental introduction, his most elaborate piece of descriptive declamation (" 'Tis Nature's Voice" —which Purcell himself sang at the first performance), and countless provocative instrumental and harmonic touches.

The performance here is a glowing one. Tippett's light approach preserves the festive nature of the music without a trace of pomposity, and his soloists are the most dependable of Purcellians. Of course true stereo would be a great help in this music, but Vanguard's rechanneled sound could have been worse.

SCHUBERT: *Sonatas for Violin and Piano, Op. 137* (complete); *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in A, Op. 162*. Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Riccardo Castagnone, piano. World Series PHC 9103, \$2.49 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Epic LC 3609, 1959].

Grumiaux's sweet tone and comfortable informality blend beautifully in these four modest but appealingly lyrical works. Like so much of Schubert's music, the violin/piano Sonatas were meant to be played by amateurs in the home rather than by virtuosos in the formal surroundings of the concert hall—which makes this cosy, fireside approach all the more attractive for living-room listening. There are other well-played versions that take a more assertive view (Schneider/Serkin on Vanguard and Martzy/Antonietti on Mace, for example), but it seems to me that Grumiaux's easygoing spontaneity yields performances to live with. A generous one-hour's worth of music has been successfully reproduced here, although the piano is a bit too distant for ideal balance.

STRAUSS, RICHARD: *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Leonie Rysanek (s), Christel Goltz (s), Elisabeth Höngen (ms), Hans Hopf (t), Paul Schoeffler (b), et al.; Chorus of the Vienna State Opera; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. Richmond SRS 63509, \$9.96 (four discs) [from London A 4505, 1956].

Whether one warms to *Die Frau* or not,

it certainly represents, in the eyes of its creators at least, the pinnacle of their collaboration. The libretto is Hofmannsthal's definitive and most elaborate statement of his favorite theme—the essential nature of man's relationship with woman—and the music is Strauss's last major work on the grand scale of his early tone poems and operas. While the score is an uneven mixture of inspiration and banality, of perceptive text setting and indulgent tone spinning, the opera as a whole makes for a fascinating visual and aural experience (as anyone who has witnessed the Met's fine production can testify).

Obviously, with all its special effects and colorful orchestration, *Die Frau* demands the latest in stereophonic techniques for an adequate phonographic realization. Not many companies, however, would be willing to gamble the huge expenditure necessary for a modern recording—the latest, a largely unsatisfactory effort on DGG, settled for a live taping in the Munich National Theater. London's pioneer performance, now appearing in stereo for the first time and on four discs instead of five, is far superior. Leonie Rysanek still sings the Empress, but here, at a relatively early stage in her career, the voice is at its freshest and most youthfully radiant; she handles the soaring music easily and with spine-tingling dramatic conviction. Schoeffler's voice may not have been the most beautiful in the world, but his Barak is intensely human and moving. Both Christel Goltz and Elisabeth Höngen, as Barak's wife and the Nurse, give impassioned performances even though their vocalism tends to be a bit wild, and Hans Hopf's Emperor is acceptable if not terribly elegant.

Böhm presents the score in an honest and straightforward fashion. He might have given a more opulent and dynamic reading but hardly one with more clarity, lyricism, and musical logic. The stereo version opens up the sonic ambience considerably, although this is not the kind of all-out production the opera would have if the Decca/London team were to tackle it today. There will probably not be another recording of *Die Frau* for many years; in the meantime we are fortunate to have this difficult and important opera so satisfyingly performed.

AMSTERDAM CONCERTGEBOUW

ORCHESTRA: 80th Anniversary Edition—Schubert: *Symphony No. 9, in C, D. 994*. Brahms: *Symphony No. 4, in E minor, Op. 98*; *Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80*. Mozart: *Symphonies: No. 35, in D, K. 385 ("Haffner")*; *No. 41, in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter")*. Bruckner: *Symphony No. 4, in E flat ("Romantic")*. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Willem Mengelberg, Eduard van Beinum, Eugen Jochum,

and Bernard Haitink, conds. Philips SPS 4-905, \$17.57 (four discs) [from various Philips originals, recorded between 1939 and 1967].

To celebrate the eightieth anniversary of the Concertgebouw, Philips offers this happy repackaging of four discs recorded by the orchestra's four most eminent maestros. First, of course, is the legendary Willem Mengelberg, conductor for nearly fifty years, from 1895 to the end of World War II. Mengelberg built the Concertgebouw into one of Europe's most acclaimed orchestras, a group that commanded the respect and admiration of nearly every major twentieth-century composer from Mahler and Strauss to Schoenberg and Stravinsky. (The Concertgebouw is, in fact, especially noted for its long Mahler tradition—a complete cycle of the nine symphonies was performed as early as 1920.)

Mengelberg is represented here by a reading of Schubert's Ninth Symphony, recorded at live performances in 1939 and 1940. This is an unpretentious, unbuttoned frolic through Schubert's score—bounding with good nature and vitality. The playing is not always perfection and the sound is faded (the disc has not been rechanneled), but compared to most contemporary views of this Symphony, Mengelberg's approach is refreshing for its brash spontaneity and refusal to inflate the music beyond its measure.

The other three discs prove that the Concertgebouw has been left in good hands: Van Beinum (who conducted from 1945 to 1959) coaxes a ravishing tone from the orchestra in his flexible yet nicely proportioned reading of Brahms's Fourth Symphony; Eugen Jochum (who shared the chief conductor's post with Bernard Haitink from 1959 to 1964) leads elegant performances of the two Mozart symphonies; and Haitink, the orchestra's current musical director, gives a splendidly warm and free-flowing account of the Bruckner Fourth.

Effusive literature on the orchestra, its conductors, and the music is spread rather haphazardly between two booklets, one of which contains a Concertgebouw discography, unhelpfully giving Philips' European catalogue numbers. The sound on the three stereo discs is pleasantly spacious, although Philips' pressings continue to be atrocious. A rather sour codetta to an otherwise distinguished album.

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF OPERA.

Various soloists, orchestras, and conductors. London RFO-S-1, \$6.79 (three discs) [from various London originals, recorded between 1956-67]. This set, which consists of selections

Continued on page 116

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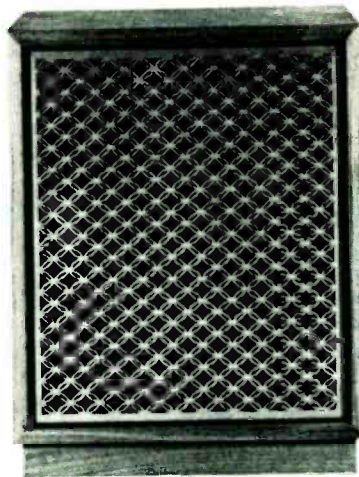
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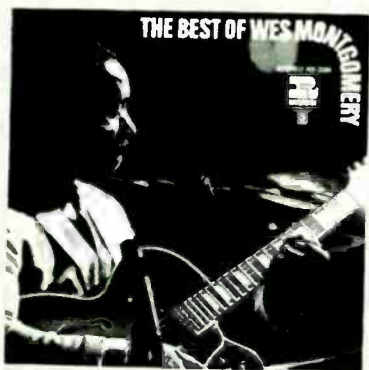
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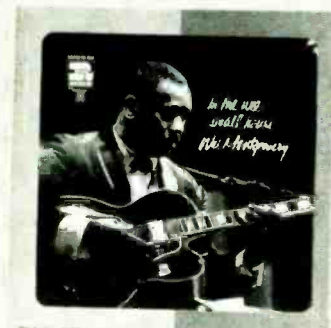


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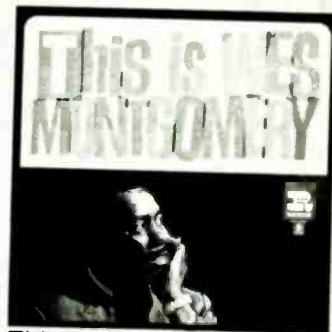


Herbie Mann: Moody Mann
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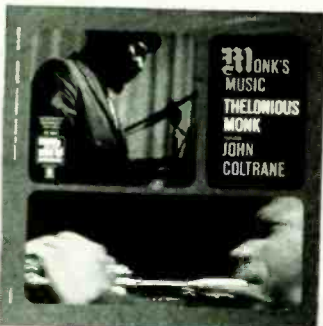
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REPEAT PERFORMANCE

Continued from page 114

from London's many complete opera and vocal recital albums, has a great deal going for it—to wit, thirty-seven big-name opera stars. Not every singer on these three discs may be to your taste, but only the most jaded opera fan could fail to be impressed by the line-up: Flagstad, Sutherland, Nilsson, Berganza, Crespini, Ghiaurov, Siepi, Fischer-Dieskau, Corelli—in short, as glittering an assemblage of singing talents as is possible in this imperfect world.

London's compiler has performed a delicate task most astutely: the choice of the contents bespeaks both an intimate knowledge of the company's operatic catalogue as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the singers involved. The most recent recordings of Tebaldi and Del Monaco, for instance, have been sensibly bypassed for two excerpts from recital discs made in the Fifties when their voices were in peak form. Sulfotis is a spotty performer, but her best work for London to date is the complete *Nabucco* and here is a duet from that recording with Tito Gobbi, marvelously well done. And so it goes—very few vocal lemons intrude upon this rich treasury of fine singing.

No texts are provided, but each artist is given a short biographical sketch which is generally tasteful, informative, and low-pressured. A note on the back of the enclosed booklet disarmingly confesses that one of the major reasons for this release was promotional. And why not?—it proves that London has something worth buying.

CESARE SIEPI: "The Art of Cesare Siepi." Arias from *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Don Carlo*, *Nabucco*, *Ernani*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Sonnambula*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *Mefistofele*. Cesare Siepi, bass; Orchestra of Radio Italiana, Arturo Basile and Alfredo Simonetto, conds. Everest 3228, \$4.98 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Cetra 50035, 1950].

Everest has done a terrible job with this reissue. As if the botched job of rechanneling were not enough (what kind of primitive electronic equipment does this company use?), the entire disc plays a full tone sharp. Handled with a reasonable amount of care, the recital could have proved valuable. Siepi was only in his early twenties when, circa 1929, he taped these arias for the Italian Radio, and the disc represents his earliest recorded work. While there is nothing especially remarkable about Siepi's interpretations at this early stage in his career, the voice itself displays the basso's typically soft-grained, black-velvet texture in its freshest estate—really one of the most gorgeous voices to emerge from postwar Italy. You'd never know it from this amateurishly produced disc, however: a pity artists have no legal recourse against such misrepresentation.

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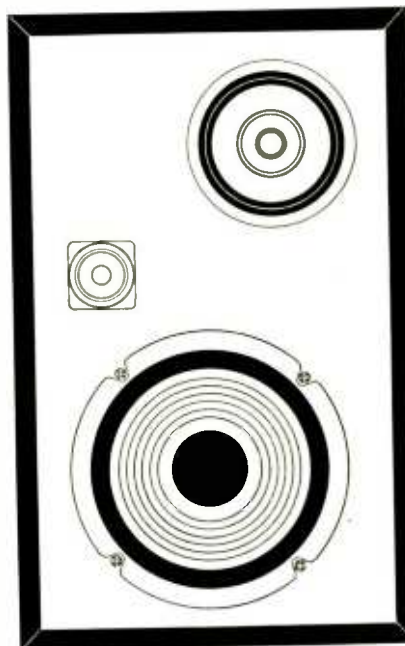
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CIRCLE 58 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

BERLIOZ ON RECORDS

Continued from page 60

makes a much more acceptable partner for Crespin.

Colin Davis' performance of *Beatrice and Benedict*, that delightfully frothy comic opera which Tovey aptly described as Shakespeare's "*Much Ado About Nothing* without the Ado," is with the St. Anthony Singers, the London Symphony, and soloists on Oiseau-Lyre 256/57 or S 256/57. Musically speaking, it is highly enjoyable. The only major weakness is the strained Benedict of John Mitchinson. April Cantelo sings Hero's suitably heroic air "*Je vais le voir*" very well, and Josephine Veasey is an excellent Beatrice. The orchestral playing is full of point, and Davis is the only conductor on record to have captured the overture's elusive mixture of fanfare, lyricism, and conviviality with any success.

Of the actual music, the trio "*Je vais d'un coeur aimant*" for Hero, Beatrice, and Ursula is as lovely a piece as is to be found anywhere in Berlioz, and even the more commonplace numbers are enjoyable.

But with all the pleasures offered by this set, a comic opera shorn of its dialogue inevitably sounds pretty silly. Complete recordings of *all* the Berlioz operas are thus the principal lack and the first priority.

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

In this category belong the overtures, the familiar excerpts from *The Damnation of Faust* and *The Trojans*, the *Rêverie et caprice* for violin and orchestra, and the massive arrangement of the *Marseillaise*.

All of Berlioz' eight overtures except *Rob Roy* are available on records, in anything from one performance to a dozen and in varying permutations. Since the Schwann listing makes it quite clear who plays what and where, I have not felt it necessary to list every single performance, though I have listened to them all.

For all the five overtures it includes (*Le Corsaire*, *Les Francs-Juges*, *King Lear*, *Roman Carnival*, and *Waverley*), the Davis record (Philips 500138 or 900138) is the first recommendation. There is no competition for *Waverley* and *Francs-Juges*, and of *King Lear* the only rival is a decently played but poorly recorded performance by Jean Martinon and the Lamoureux Orchestra. Of the *Corsaire* competitors, the best are Ansermet and Beecham, but the former is not as lively as Davis and the latter lacks precision. *Roman Carnival* has fared better; and if you find Davis here too relaxed, you may prefer the high-powered Toscanini performance (which is too steely for my taste) or the good

versions by Munch, Karajan, and Ansermet.

There is no really satisfactory separate version of the *Beatrice and Benedict* overture. Ansermet here is surprisingly unconvincing, the two Martinon performances are genial but slightly undervalued, and the only qualified recommendation can go to Munch. His performance, however, is no match for Davis' in the "complete" set discussed above.

In the *Benvenuto Cellini* overture, regrettably omitted from the Davis collection, I find Ansermet's performance the most likable. Martinon, with the Paris Conservatoire in unusually good form, also leads an attractive reading, and Munch is impressive but, like Bernstein, a shade supercharged.

Among the various warhorse selections from *The Damnation of Faust*—"Dance of the Sylphs," "*Menuet des follets*," and "*Hungarian March*"—Ansermet is the best of the three conductors who offer all three. Munch, this time with the Philadelphia Orchestra, is nearly as good. Ormandy spoils the "*Menuet*" with affected little accelerandos that are presumably supposed to be dramatic, and turns the "*March*" into more of a Hungarian gallop by his ridiculous choice of tempo. Martinon's overture disc on London contains a good performance of the "*Hungarian March*," but Beecham's "*Dance of the Sylphs*" is too slow, and consequently somewhat glutinous.

On the other hand, the same Beecham disc (Angel 35506 or S 35506) is a clear first recommendation for the "*Royal Hunt and Storm*" music from *The Trojans*. The conductor's touch is unerring in this music. The Royal Philharmonic plays beautifully, the delicately braced horn calls and shimmering strings evoke a sense of woodland enchantment, and the inclusion of the choral cries of "*Italie!*" is welcome. Munch's version again ranks a fair second. Karajan is powerful and impressive, but in a vast, inappropriately Wagnerian way.

The brief *Rêverie et caprice* is a negligible piece for which two recordings is a generous ration. Aaron Rosand's performance (Vox 10470 or 510470) is more pointed than Menuhin's rather slithery version (Capitol SP 8667).

The 1830 arrangement of Rouget de Lisle's *Marseillaise*, set by Berlioz for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra, may serve for an aptly rumbustious conclusion. It is performed with plenty of vigor, if not much brilliance, by the Orchestre de Paris and assorted vocal forces under Jean-Pierre Jacquillat on Angel S 36518. Since the French contribution to the Berlioz discography has been limited in both scope and success, it is only charitable to leave the rampant republic with the last word.

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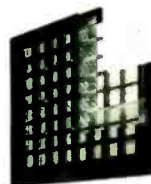
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Frank Sinatra: Confessions and Contradictions



WE LEAVE OUR handprints on everything we touch. The clothes we select, the music we like, the way the pitch of the voice rises when we're tense or insecure—these things are confessions. Even in trying to evade confession, we confess: in being phony, we only tell the truth backwards.

The creative artist makes the most obvious confessions. But the interpretative artist makes them too: he confesses in the material he selects and in the way he performs it. Even if he doesn't like the material, he reveals himself in his approach to it. *Strangers in the Night* is dreck. Frank Sinatra recorded it. He stated his contempt for the song in the *dooby-dooby-doo* tag he attached to the end of it. He thereby told us that he's a snob about material. But then he told us something he didn't intend to: that there was a streak of hypocrisy in him. If he didn't respect the song, he shouldn't have recorded it—not even for money, which he hardly needed at that point.

Some years previously, his recording of *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* told us that he was a man of great arrogance. It said: "I'm so big and I'm so great that I can make a hit out of anything, even something as lousy as, say, *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*."

Three years ago, Sinatra turned fifty. Evidently it rocked him to his heels. In quick succession, he recorded *A Man and His Music* and *The September of My Years*—the one a retrospective of his career, the other a retrospective of his life. The latter comprised material about growing old. You could sense a qualitative change in the man: a real and heavy despair. It is the darkest album he's ever made, and his eyes during that period, the loneliest eyes I have ever seen, seemed to verify that he meant every word of it.

That was a milestone album. Every once in a while, Sinatra makes such a record, one I think is meant to be a personal statement. And now he's made another—*Cycles* (Reprise 1027). If you listen to it carefully, you can hear that the man has made some sort of progress, progress in that part of the self we used to call the soul. The despair is gone. Much of the arrogance is gone. He sounds like a man who has come to grips with himself and life. The title track says he keeps discovering that life runs in cycles. Another song, Gayle Caldwell's excellent *Wandering*, says that sometimes he thinks he's on the right track, but he keeps coming back to "the same place, the same place where I started." *From Both Sides, Now* says that after looking at them from both sides, he really doesn't know love or life at all.

Two of the songs are dreadful: *Rain in My Heart* and *My Way of Life*, both of which are "big" songs, flamboyant and pretentious. *Rain in My Heart* has a particularly bombastic and self-important key change that I find terribly annoying. And *My Way of Life* has a weirdly ghastly lyric. If the words of *People* are neurotic in their belly-crawling dependency, those of *My Way of Life* are almost psychotic in their jealous possessiveness. The character of the "singer"

here (and every song is a fictional characterization of sorts) is that kind of man who surreptitiously reads his wife's diary, accuses her unjustly of infidelities, and drives her half crazy with his own madness. Yet we can see why Sinatra did the song: there's a line that says he's tired of the people at the door, the applause from the floor. Put that together with the last lines of *Cycles*, an interesting lyric on a very ordinary country-and-western melody: "So I'll keep on tryin' to sing, but please don't ask me now."

Traces of Sinatra's old snobbery turn up in two of the songs. In *Moody River*, he sings the word "sin" and then, finding that the rhyme word for it is "friend" (country-and-western, rock, and folk writers are notoriously sloppy about rhyming) he sings it with amused contempt as "frind," thereby putting the writer down. But if he didn't dig it (and I don't dig it either) he shouldn't have done it. As a matter of fact, the song is out of style and context with the rest of the album.

He makes lyric changes in John Hartford's *Gentle on My Mind*. At the end, he "corrects" Hartford's grammar: he sings "the rivers flowing gently on my mind," and it kills the mood. Hartford's use of "gentle" as an adverb is an Americanism, parallel to "Drive Slow," which bothers none of us any more. We are in the process of dropping a lot of adverbial endings on this continent, and the English language in another fifty years is going to be radically different than it is now. As Chaucer used a lot of "low" English only to have it become standard English, Hartford uses the people's Eng-

lish of our time, and Sinatra makes a serious error in tampering with it. As a matter of fact, he doesn't do the song at all well. He tries to make it swing in the manner of jazz, and country-and-western music swings in quite another way. By punching out the time, he kills the swing and diminishes the depth of the song. Finally, he omits the powerful second verse. He almost gets into the mood of the song at the end, when he slows to ballad tempo. Maybe he should have done the whole thing that way, as he does *Little Green Apples*.

You haven't heard *Little Green Apples* until you hear Sinatra do it. It's the high point of the album. He slows it up, does the recitativelike section ad lib, then the refrain softly in tempo. And we discover that Bobby Russell's song about the joys of ordinary married life is not merely good, it is exquisite—one of the loveliest songs in years.

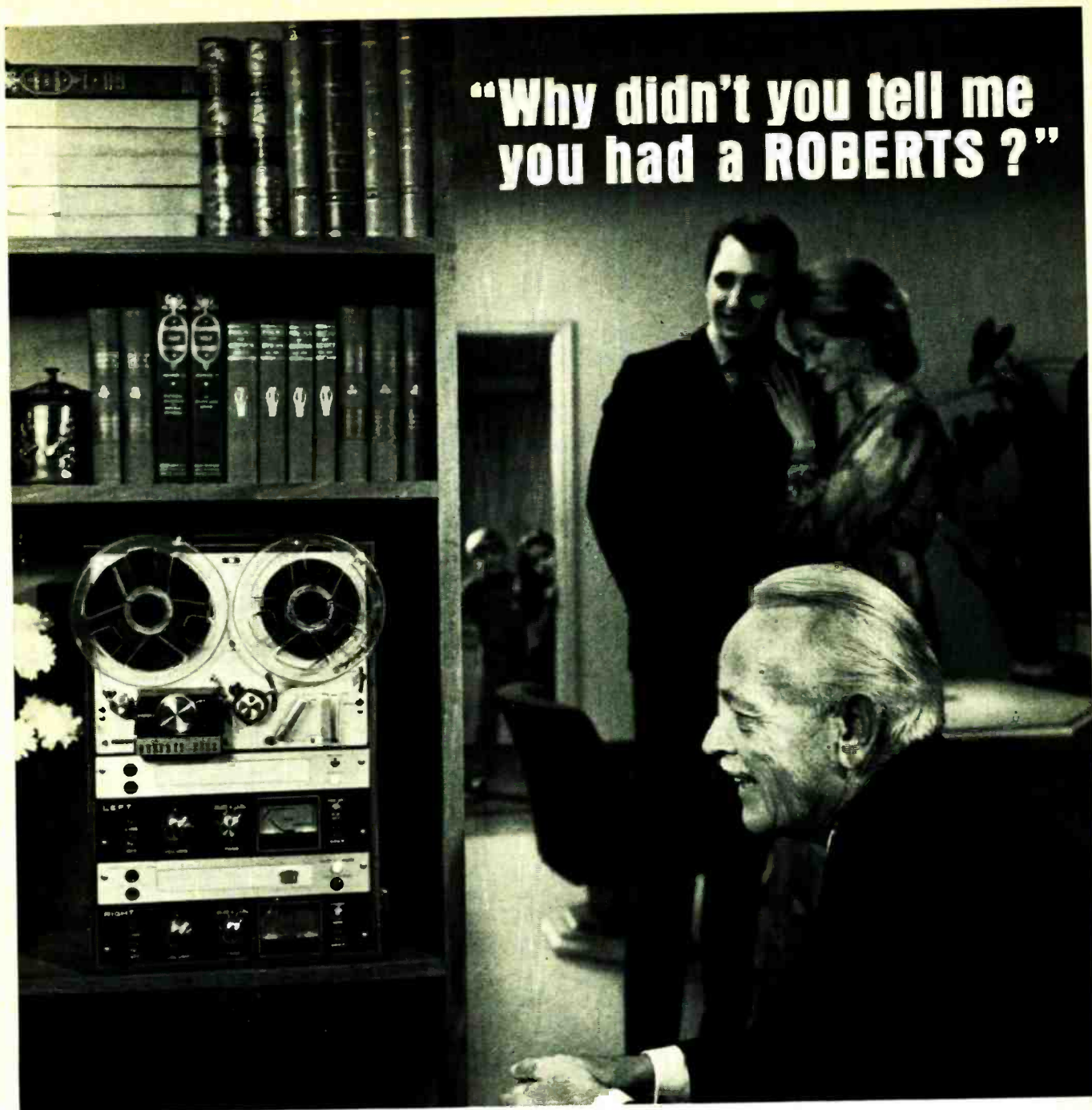
We also discover where Frank Sinatra is these days: he is finding out that there is a proletarian poetry going on in our time—not the angry, up-tight, and frequently ugly little songs of purported social significance, but songs that embrace the big little lyrical things of this world. It is in Jim Webb's *By the Time I Get to Phoenix*, which Sinatra does here, in Bobby Hebb's *Elusive Butterfly*, and in all of Hartford's work. We're witnessing a rediscovery of simple values, and it is coming out in some of our songs. And this is where Sinatra's professional life starts to flow in a common stream with his personal life. He is saying here, "Hey, contrary to what I said in *Life* magazine a few years ago, there's some fine material being written these days," and he's also saying sadly that the life he's lived is not where it's at. For all the fantastic success of his career, he's missed out on much of what makes life good. And don't tell me I'm reading things into this album: the handprint of the man is all over it.

Frank Sinatra has always been a mass of contradictions. I have heard countless stories of his arrogance, hostility, rudeness, and contempt for others—genuinely ugly little bits of behavior. At the same time, I know of many incidents of his incomparable consideration and kindness. Nor have the latter been grandstand displays: the public has never heard of most of them. Indeed, he has as a matter of policy so carefully concealed acts of thoughtfulness that one had to conclude he was afraid people might think him soft.

If this album is a personal statement—and I am convinced it is—it says that the two Frank Sinatras are becoming one, and that this person accepts weakness and error in himself and therefore in others. He is saying, "I have been a fool." And the day you say that, and say it with a sigh of self-forgiveness, you begin to find peace.

The September of My Years had a mood of anguish. *Cycles* has the mood of a sad smile, and it is full of compassion. It sounds as if this remarkable talent may be turning into a remarkable man.

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GENE LEES • JOHN S. WILSON

SYMBOL * DENOTES AN EXCEPTIONAL RECORDING

* **TAMBA 4: Samba Blim.** Luiz Eca, piano and arr. Ahanga, drums, conga, and afuche; Bebeto, flutes; Dorio, bass, guitar, and percussion; fourteen strings. *Samba Blim; Weekend; Reza; Watch What Happens*; nine more. A & M SP 3013, \$4.79.

This record has hardly been off my turntable since the day it arrived. It is the best record of the month, one of the best of the year, and one of the best albums of Brazilian music ever recorded in the United States.

These days you're lucky if two or three tracks of an album are good. This one has twelve such tracks; every track is interesting; every bar is interesting. Listen to drummer Ohana (Brazilians have so strong a sense of identity that many of them evidently feel no need for a second name) while tuning the others out for a while. This man's control of texture and sound and dynamics is startling. What brushwork. Dorio, who plays bass and guitar (often on the same track, thanks to overdubbing), works so closely with the drummer that they get just about the tightest rhythm-section sound any of us are ever likely to hear.

Luiz Eca is an excellent pianist. He is obviously a well-trained, well-schooled player. Sometimes he sounds like Bill Evans—but then, who doesn't these days? But he does things that are distinctly Brazilian: chopping out guitar rhythm figures, for example. His time is impeccable. So is that of the whole group.

The Tamba 4 sing. I almost forgot to mention that. But they are different from our vocal-and-instrumental groups, which accompany their singing with instrumental work. The Tamba 4 invert the procedure: they accompany their playing with singing. They use the voices like pads of horns behind the solos. Strings fill things out: in addition to being a brilliant pianist, Eca is a skilled string writer. The strings, incidentally, are beautifully played, even though the album was made in New York. That is presumably because the usual hack contractors were avoided. I believe David Nadien, concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic, put this string section together, and it's a joy to hear.

Creed Taylor produced the album—and beautifully. The sound is velvety



Tamba 4: Brazilians who play, who sing—and who guarantee beautiful listening.

smooth and clean. A & M generally has good sound and good pressings, but this is exceptional.

This album swings, it flows, it rocks; it is full of the joy of life and the joy of music. G.L.

BEATLES: The Beatles

John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, vocals and instrumentals; various assisting musicians and electronic equipment. *Back in the U.S.S.R.; Glass Onion; Blackbird; Revolution 1; Honey Pie*; twenty-five more. APPLE SWBO 101, \$11.58 (two discs).

ROLLING STONES: Beggars Banquet

Rolling Stones, vocals and instrumentals. *No Expectations; Factory Girl; Street Fighting Man; Stray Cat Blues*; six more. LONDON PL 539, \$4.79.

For a feature review of these recordings, see page 84.

* **MOTHERS OF INVENTION: Cruising with Ruben and the Jets.** Mothers of Invention, vocals and instrumentals. *Anything; I'm Not Satisfied; No, No, No*; ten more. Verve 6-5055, \$4.79.

Ruben and the Jets are the Mothers of

Invention. They are perhaps the most respect-worthy group in rock, first because they are all solid musicians, and second because they don't truck with the rock mystique. They don't protest, moan, flaunt, preach, fumble, or feel sorry for themselves in the name of Art. What they do is laugh—at themselves, at the establishment, and at the hippies who buy their music. As a rule, the super-intense hippie world is quick to defend its territory, but they don't seem to notice this mockery from within their ranks. The acid world could use a few laughs, and it's a shame the talented Mothers don't get more appreciation from their own.

This album is in keeping with the Mothers' policy of irreverence. It's not even rock. It's an immaculately faithful trip (excuse the unfortunate choice of word) into the deadly pop music of the 1950s—apparently the formative years of the musicians involved.

It's a gloriously stupid album. Even the titles smell of the Eisenhower years: *Desert, Fountain of Love, Jelly Roll Gum Drop*. Personnel run-downs include Frank Zappa: low grumbles, oo-wah, and lead guitar; Ian Underwood or Don Preston: redundant piano triplets; Arthur Dyrer Tripp III: lewd pulsating rhythm. The group's fan club (address on album) is United Mutations and a quote at the bottom of the page says: "The present-day Pachuco refuses to die!" Ruben Sano, June 1955." Even the album title is inspired. There is nothing to be said about this kind of brainless music, and the group doesn't try to say anything. They only relieve it with startling efficiency. Only once did I catch Zappa's guitar slipping into something meaningful—but he quickly yanked himself back into simpering 6/8. Memory is merciful. One remembers Frank Sinatra of the '50s and forgets Paul Anka.

Recently there has been a vague attempt to repopularize this kind of music. The movement is nonhumorous and sincere, therefore obnoxious. It's different with Zappa and the Mothers. One suspects they really do like this music, or the nostalgia it induces in them. But make no mistake: they know what it is. The smiles on the Mothers' faces are still honest. M.A.



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DON SEBESKY: The Distant Galaxy.

Orchestra, Don Sebesky, arr. and cond.
*Dance the Night Away; Sounds of
Silence; Soul Lady*; seven more. Verve
6-5063, \$4.79.

Don Sebesky is an extremely able composer and arranger who, like a lot of us, couldn't stay with jazz while it was standing still, and on the other hand couldn't accept the chaos of New Thingery. So he turned to pop. Some of what he's done is quite interesting—particularly his *Jazz Rock Syndrome*.

It was fairly predictable that when a man of Sebesky's skill waded into New Pop, where even elementary competence is uncommon, he'd get commercially hot, and it's happened. Sebesky's name is on a lot of albums, perhaps too many; I think he's spreading himself too thin.

Sebesky's commercial writing often drags me. He has a certain bag of tricks that grow tiresome quite quickly. Ever since Paul Simon popularized it, people have been running that sound-of-Tudor-England thing into the ground.

This album is stone commercial, and Sebesky evidently decided to throw the whole collection of gimmicks into it. He's arranged a batch of pop material for strings, harpsichord, rock rhythm section, distortion guitar. In between and through the tracks is a lot of electronic folderal. These windy wheezings and skidding glissandos were already a bloody bore to hip listeners ten years ago, which I'm sure Sebesky knows as well as I do. But the kids are pretty square, and Sebesky evidently doesn't mind selling them clichés for cash.

I hope we can expect more good music from Sebesky. But perhaps, like almost every arranger who gets hot, he'll just say, "Ah, the hell with it, I scuffled for too long—I'm going to make the bread while I can." *Sic transit* too many fine writers.
G.L.

JOHNNY MATHIS: Those Were the Days.

Johnny Mathis, vocals; Robert Mersey and D'Arnell Pershing, arr. and cond. *59th Street Bridge Song; Light My Fire; Little Green Apples*; seven more. Columbia CS 9705, \$4.79.

I like Johnny Mathis. Maybe it's because his albums can be counted upon to be full of pretty songs, solid singing, and tasteful arrangements. If you enjoy Mathis, you're probably as sick of defending his singing as I. But evidently we're not alone. He has twenty-five albums in print.

There's nothing great about Mathis. There's nothing great about Mexican rice and refried beans. You have a taste for them or you don't.

The arrangements on this album are not the best ever to come down the pike (although arranger Bob Mersey seems to be improving). And Mathis makes some goofs, such as a missed modulation in *Those Were the Days*, a newly composed hit song about two hundred years old. Like all recent recordings of *Light My Fire*, Mathis and Mersey follow the appealing formula of José Feliciano's hit rendition.

In all, the songs are good, the arrangements are lush, the cover photograph is in technicolor, and features Mathis' good looks. This is a steady, quietly distinctive talent. All very relaxing, very dependable. Go with it.
M.A.

* MABEL MERCER AND BOBBY SHORT: At Town Hall.

Mabel Mercer and Bobby Short, vocals with rhythm accompaniment; Bobby Short, piano. *I'm Throwing a Ball Tonight; That Black and White Baby of Mine; Bojangles of Harlem; Sand in My Shoes; Gimme a Pigfoot and a Bottle of Beer; All of You; Staying Young; On the Carousel; Sweet Talk; Penny Rebecca*; sixteen more. Atlantic S 604, \$11.58 (two discs).

If you wanted to put together a dream concert of popular songs in 1969, you almost certainly would choose Mabel Mercer and Bobby Short as your performers. Short is a living library of unusual and beautiful songs by the likes of Cole Porter and Cy Coleman and his vivid, bouncy style is ideally suited to recapturing the nostalgic feel of the bygone era (as we now see it) of booze, jazz, and a simpler life. Mabel Mercer, on the other hand, is a *grande dame* of song, a performer who brings dramatic depths to her portrayals of life and love. Short is all glitter and style, a consummate entertainer; Mercer is stately and profound, a great actress.

Strictly speaking, the album isn't up to what each artist has constructed in studio recordings, but what it lacks in perfected performances it more than makes up for in the excitement of "being there" last May when these two great

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troupeurs shared the stage. The set features two LPs, one for each singer with two cuts in duet on the second record (one of them, Simon and Garfunkel's *59th Street Bridge Song*, takes on a new life here).

It seems like an awfully long time since there has been a new album by Bobby Short; I'm glad he's back. Encore.

People who remember Mercer and Short won't need much encouragement to add this album to their collections. Hopefully, a few rock fans (perhaps titillated by revivals like *Dream a Little Dream of Me* and the Rodgers and Hart tunes by the Mamas and Papas) will give it a spin. It might be a startling experience for them.

J.G.

✿ GREG DEMPSEY AND KATHY YESSE. *The Daughters of Albion.*

Greg Dempsey and Kathy Yesse, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *I Love Her and She Loves My; Yes, Our Love Is Growing; Hats Off, Arms Out, Ronnie; Good to Have You; Well Wired; Hey, You, Wait, Stay*; six more. Fontana S 67586. \$4.79.

From beginning to end this record is a professional job by these two young southern Californians. The compositions are inventive, the singing assured, the arrangements above average, and the studio work excellent. It seems that no cost has been spared as the pair, multitracked to the volume of the Cowsills and Mamas and Papas combined, romp through the program. Their vocal sound varies widely within the style bounded roughly by the Beatles, the Cowsills, the Mamas and Papas, and, I suppose, Simon and Garfunkel; but Yesse's voice is good enough and Dempsey's songs strong enough to make this a rewarding and original album. The best cuts range from the folksy *Yes, Our Love Is Growing* to the rollicking *I Love Her and She Loves My*. *Hats Off, Arms Out, Ronnie* and *Hey, You, Wait, Stay* also deserve mention as the arrangements assimilate snatches of dixieland jazz, hard rock, fifties Harlem-girl rock, folk music, and moments of vaudeville hamming. The variety show wrap-up parody of everything, *1968/John Flip Lockout*, works most of the time. Even the cover art is outstanding.

I think this is a record most pop music fans, from teeny-boppers to Ivy Leaguers writing term papers on rock cosmology, will enjoy. I urge you to search it out.

J.G.

TAMIKO JONES: I'll Be Anything for You. Tamiko Jones, vocals; Don Sebesky, Teacho Wiltshire, Artie Butler, and others, arr. *Black Is Black; Try It Baby; Ya Ya*; nine more. A & M SP 3011, \$4.79.

Tamiko Jones's recording career was sparked by jazz flutist Herbie Mann who heard her, liked her, and recorded an album with her. It was a hesitant but passable first try for Miss Jones, who showed potential but indecision as to which way to go stylistically.

Miss Jones is at A & M now and she seems to have chosen a road: low-energy rhythm-blues. The low energy probably stems from the basic smallness of her voice. It's a supremely ordinary

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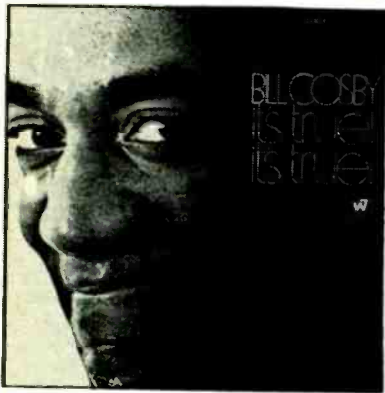
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voice. The matching arrangements are by several people who know better. The liner notes advise us to "note the especially engaging low string figures Teacho Wiltshire uses throughout *I'll Be Anything for You*." I listened. Unison triplets. What else is new?

Disappointingly enough, all this forgettability was produced by Creed Taylor, the man who did such fine work with people like Bill Evans and the late Wes Montgomery. Everyone has to eat. That's what this album's about for everyone with the possible exception of Tamiko Jones. She may believe she's saying something. M.A.

BIFF ROSE: The Thorn in Mrs. Rose's Side. Biff Rose, vocals and piano; Arthur G. Wright, Kirby Johnson, and Nick Woods, arr. *Angel Tension; Buzz the Fuzz; What's Gnawing at Me*; eight more. Tetragrammaton T 103, \$4.79. It is not enough to say that Biff Rose Does His Thing. The phrase is used up to the point of ridiculousness. Sears does its people thing. The Vietnamese do their war thing. Gentle Ben does his bear thing.

Biff Rose plays piano, sings, and writes his material, but that doesn't explain him. He's a man with an odd tilt inside his head and an enormous talent. Rose's piano playing is firm but not elaborate: a blend of honky-tonk and modern idiom. He knows complex harmony but doesn't dwell there. His melodies are attractive, sometimes smooth, sometimes ruttid. His voice is robust or shy, unstudied, and unself-conscious. Both piano and voice are competent, but neither is the primary message of the work.

What holds Rose together is his words. The liner notes are made up of dozens of his unrelated thoughts: "Nuclear and unclear thinking are the same thing. Depends on how you use the U.N. . . . Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace or I'll take things into my own hands . . . Om Sweet Om . . . Song: June got busted . . . it's all over! . . . I don't know why

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Rose's songs are about people, love, alienation, today's life. He thinks heavily but plays it light and the effect is dramatic. My favorite track is *Molly*, a song about a young man who runs off to join the circus (show business). He makes the big time but somehow he never saves the money to send for Molly, who continues to wait and understand. The years pass in grease paint and festive tension, till the no-more-young man is left with Molly's letters, a promise he never meant to break, and no way back to Molly except to close his eyes and dream. The song captures a special brand of emotional helplessness.

One nonoriginal piece is included, a poem (spoken) called *Paradise Almost Lost* by Joseph Newman. The poem is a marvel of construction and Rose does justice to its charm.

Rose writes: "Sometimes I'm square, sometimes I'm hip. Sometimes I'm both, just call me squip." This is an engrossing, unconventional talent, the kind from which stars are made. M.A.

CHAD AND JEREMY: The Ark. Chad Stuart and Jeremy Clyde, guitars and vocals. *The Emancipation of Mr. X; Sunstroke; Pipe Dream; You Need Feet*; eight more. Columbia CS 9699, \$4.79.

The Ark, like Chad and Jeremy's previous albums, is pop music—good pop at that. But it's obvious here that they're trying to break into serious contemporary rock. These words—serious, contemporary, and rock—when lumped together carry negative connotations to the musically literate members of the "older" generation, and often justly so. There's a great deal of crud in rock that tries to pass for serious contemporary art music. But there are moments. . . .

The Ark isn't profound art, nor is it presented as such. In certain aspects, such as a song title or two (*Pantheistic Study for Guitar and Large Bird*), and a track in imitation of Paul McCartney's singing, it has touches of pretension that tend to elicit an "Oh, come on" from the listener. These lapses are few.

Chad and Jeremy are capable musicians. And they're smart enough to work within their limitations and careful not to overreach themselves either in the instrumental work or in the lyrics, most of which they've written. The songs have substance, without being hung up in the obscure allusions or other affectations typical of so many rock lyrics. They say what they have to say simply and skillfully.

The outstanding track is *Sunstroke*, which is rock, and quite beautiful. They use acoustic guitar, sitar, recorder, cello, electric bass, strings far in the background, and voices in conjunction with an electronic synthesizer. Both in music and lyrics, this is the most sophisticated song in the album. Chad and Jeremy are not stepping out on a limb, but *Sunstroke* appears to be an indication of real growth.

A good album for pop fans and the "serious rock" audience alike. C.C.

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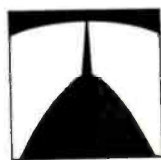
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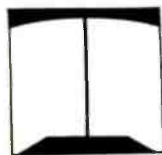


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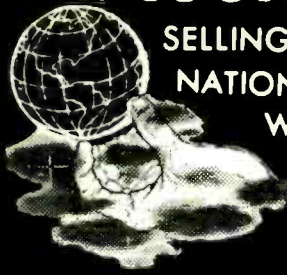


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JAZZ

✳ **TOM SCOTT: Rural Still Life.** Tom Scott, reeds; Mike Lang, piano; Chuck Damanico, bass; John Guerin, drums. *Just Messin' Around; Body and Soul; Freak In;* three more. Impulse 9171, \$5.79.

✳ **STEVE MARCUS: Count's Rock Band.** Steve Marcus, saxophones; Larry Coryell, guitar; Mike Nock, piano and harpsichord; Dominic Cortese, accordion; Chris Hills, guitar; Bob Moses, drums; Chris Swensen, arr. and percussion. *Theresa's Blues; Ooh Baby; Back Street Blues;* four more. Vortex 2009, \$5.79.

A new breed of jazz musician is beginning to make himself felt. He is a product of a musical world in which rock has replaced jazz as the innovative music, as the music of the young. Right now we are in a transitional stage in which two groups are involved. There is a younger group that grew up listening to rock and then discovered jazz. There is also a slightly older group who started out on the traditional jazz path, became disenchanted, and then discovered rock.

Both groups are coming together, producing median musicians such as Larry Coryell, the guitarist, and Chuck Rainey, the Fender bassist, who seem to be equally at home in both rock and jazz. Also there are rock-bred musicians who are reaching towards jazz (such as Al Kooper) and jazz-bred musicians who are reaching towards rock (such as Steve Marcus). And then there are musicians who would be men for all seasons at any period, such as Tom Scott.

Scott is an incredibly talented reed man who is just past twenty. His reputation has been made almost entirely in jazz, although he had to grow up immersed in rock (Bill Haley and the Comets were big when he was six or seven; Elvis Presley hit when he was eight or ten), and he is already established as one of the most versatile studio musicians in Los Angeles.

Rural Still Life reflects not only his vast versatility (with both straight and electronic instruments) but his eclectic outlook and his ability to move freely and creatively in almost any style. This is a set of pieces that swing with almost incredible ferocity, pieces that bristle with improvisational vitality and have shape, form, and direction, none of which should be taken for granted in jazz these days. Scott can squeal as shrilly as Pharaoh Sanders or Albert Ayler but he does it to a purpose and he uses the sound as a color or accent rather than as an end in itself. His respect and debt to John Coltrane is well displayed (and intelligently displayed) on *With Respect to Coltrane*.

But this set displays more than Tom Scott. Mike Lang, a pianist whose talent was evident while he was still in college playing in Bob Pozar's trio (a winner at the Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz Festi-

val several years ago), continues to live up to every implication of his early promise; and Chuck Damanico, a bassist out of the Don Ellis band, is a West Coast equivalent of some of the alarming young bassists who are turning up in the East. In this company, John Guerin, a drummer whose work is new to me, holds up his end remarkably well.

Steve Marcus, who comes into the new contemporary musical blend from a jazz background—the Berklee School, Stan Kenton, Woody Herman—backed into rock apologetically (he admits that he used to hide his Beatles records when his friends dropped in) until a year and a half ago when he made *Tomorrow Never Knows* (Vortex 2001) with essentially the same group that he uses on *Count's Rock Band*. Although *Tomorrow* was colored by many of the faults of both rock and jazz (long, empty solos, monotonous riffs, lack of any viable progress or structure), it occasionally came alive with an excitement that derived from both its rock and jazz roots.

Count's Rock Band, for some mysterious reason, is not only a steady drag but it is decorated with depressingly coy trimmings (a nineteen-second spasm called *C'est ça* which is actually an intro to another piece and a thirty-five-second thing called *Drum Solo*, which could scarcely be duller if it went on for thirty-five minutes). This same group, heard in person, suffered from none of these defects. It blew and swung and its problems, such as they were, came from the first record rather than the second. All of which may indicate that it doesn't make any difference whether you come out of rock or jazz, whether you mix it one way or the other—creativity, taste, and a positive sense of direction make the difference between genuine brilliance and sham glitter. J.S.W.

✳ **DUKE ELLINGTON: North of the Border.** Duke Ellington, piano; the Ron Collier Orchestra, Ron Collier, cond. Decca DL 75069, \$4.79.

One of the most serious problems facing Canada has been the drain-off of talent by the United States, and to a lesser extent, England.

This album, the first jazz work to come out of Canada in years, is a result of the intelligence and organizational energy and perhaps guts of a man I knew when he was studying composition in New York with George Russell on a Canada Council grant. Ron Collier finished his period of studies, went back to Toronto, and identified himself as a Canadian artist—even though he could probably have tripled or quadrupled his income writing film scores in Hollywood, for which he is eminently suited.

This is really Collier's album, not Ellington's. Duke flew up to Toronto to lend his name to the project. Happily, his piano solos are sufficiently interesting and beautiful that he must be considered an almost equal partner in the project.

Collier put the orchestra here together, using some of the best musicians in Toronto, such as saxophonist-flutist Moe Kauffman, English-born vibraharp-

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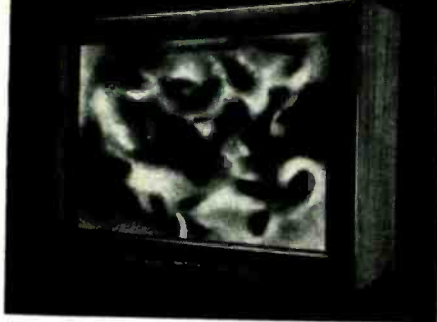
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ist Peter Appleyard, trombonist Butch Watanabe, and a twelve-man string section. The album was recorded as a project of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, a sort of sister or subsidiary organization of the N.A.B. here, and CAPAC, which is the ASCAP of Canada. They probably did it not in a fit of altruism but because the government in Canada has been putting pressure on broadcasters to support native talent in demonstrable and active ways. Would that somebody in Washington would do the same here.

The music is by Collier, a composer of considerable skill with a fine sense of form, Norman Symonds, and Gordon Delamont. If it has to be characterized, it can be described as third-stream jazz; but it's just music—the music of men who are quite at home in various idioms and use them naturally as they feel them.

All the music is good, though the best thing is, I think, Collier's ten-minute *Aurora Borealis*, written for a CBC ballet presentation originally. The opening theme is built out of climbing fourths; the second theme, which arises out of that figure, is quite lovely. The orchestra is first-rate.

Chances are that this album will find a better sale in the United States than in Canada. North of the border, they'll say, "Oh well, it's just Canadian talent." Such is their national inferiority complex; and they will no doubt drive a few more artists south of the border. Ironically, the day I received this, I read that Canada's secretary of state had announced a cut-back in his government's support of the arts.

Idiots. Bunglers. Fools. Something good and rich and interesting could happen in the arts in Canada. This album proves it. G.L.

ANTHONY ORTEGA: New Dance. Anthony Ortega, alto saxophone; Chuck Domanico or Bobby West, bass; Bill Goodwin, drums. *New Dance; Sentimentalize; Conversation Piece; The Shadow of Your Smile.* Revelation 3 (P.O. Box 65593, Los Angeles, Calif.), \$4.98 (mono only).

Anthony Ortega has been around a long time although, in terms of records or

renown, he does not have much to show for it. Checking back to find when Ortega's musical personality began to show itself, I found a review of a record he made for Coral in 1957 with Nat Pierce in which I reported that his solos were constructed of "a fascinating mixture of leaps, lay-backs, asides, scatter shots, and sudden splurges of sound." In retrospect, I can see that Ortega was an element in the advance guard of what was to become "the new thing" in the Sixties. Eleven years ago he was an original but, compared to what has come along since then, a disciplined original. For the past decade his career, as outlined in John William Hardy's liner notes, has consisted of disappointment and obscurity.

Yet he emerges on this unusual record as a mature, confident, well-directed musician who is living more dangerously, musically, than ever. Most of this disc is devoted to duets by Ortega on alto saxophone and Chuck Domanico on bass. Only on *New Dance* does he expand to a trio with Bill Goodwin on drums and Bobby West on bass. These are extremely demanding circumstances for extensive improvisation (all the selections are at least ten minutes long). Yet Ortega and his colleagues sustain them with a remarkable display of controlled freedom. The dual lines of saxophone and bass twine around each other in fascinating fashion.

Ortega, for all the "leaps, lay-backs, and splurges" of that 1957 disc, has become a very directly melodious saxophonist but one with a positive and adventurous attack. The "orchestration," if that's what it can be called, of the trio selection is remarkable for its varieties of textures, moods, and colors both in its ensemble effects and when the three split into soloist and accompaniment. Even more absorbing is the saxophone/bass development of *The Shadow of Your Smile*, slowly, languorously evolved in free time, highlighted by Domanico's brilliant bowing. The second side, devoted to two Ortega originals, *Sentimentalize* and *Conversation Piece*, both of them bass and saxophone duets, becomes a bit too persistent exploration of one area, although Ortega has some beautiful and moving passages. J.S.W.

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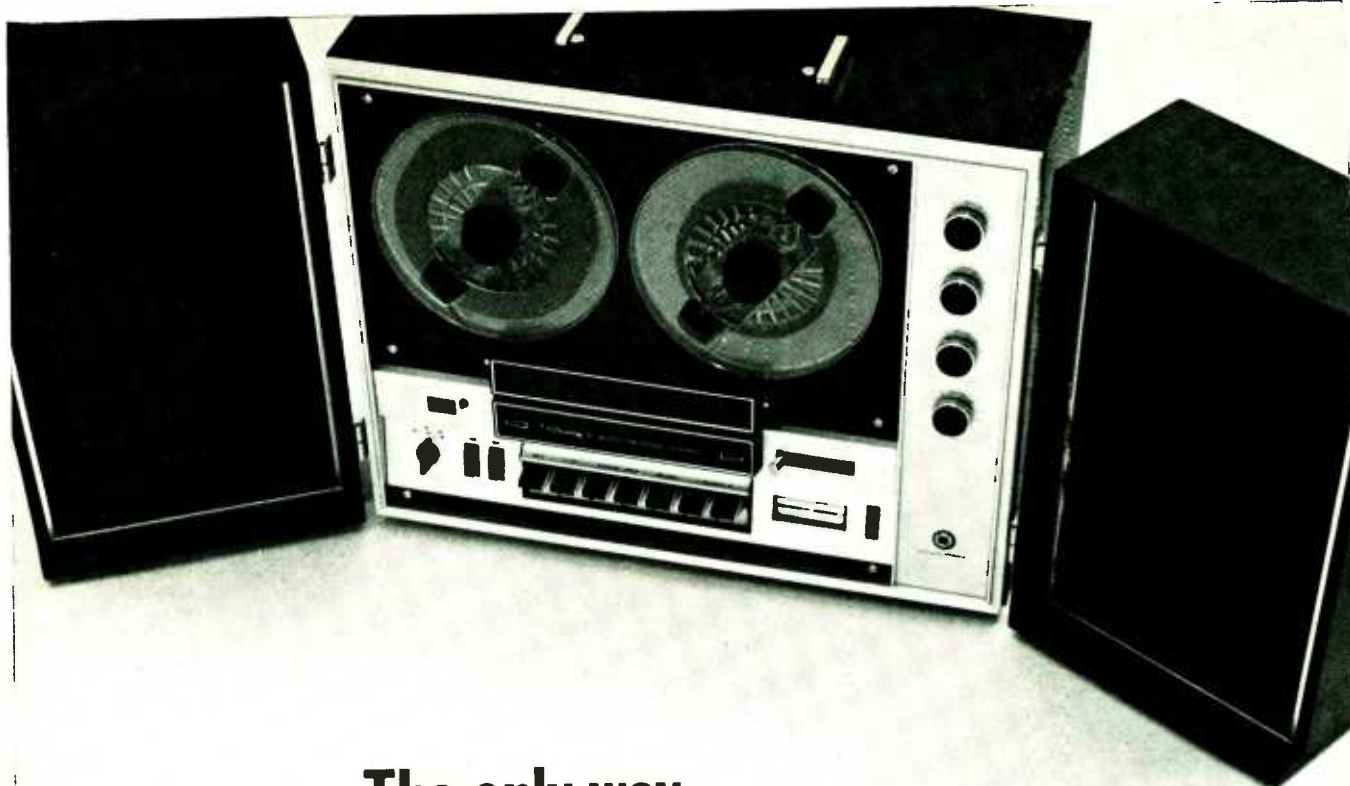
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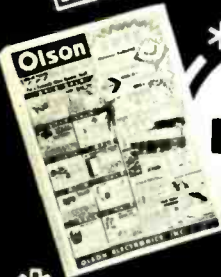
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THEATER & FILM

OLIVER! Music from the film. Ron Moody, Shani Wallis, Mark Lester, Harry Secombe, and others, vocals. John Green, arr. and cond. Colgems 5501, \$4.79.

For those who expected Lionel Bart's *Oliver!* to hew faithfully to Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, the London and Broadway musical was bound to be a disappointment. But, as musicals go these days (at least on Broadway if not in the West End), *Oliver!* had a lot to recommend it, certainly as played on Broadway by a cast headed by Clive Revell and Georgia Brown. They dove into Bart's songs, most of them superior versions of a traditional type of Broadway song, with zest and enthusiasm that were so energetic they often verged on outright ham—although the performances scarcely suffered from this outgoing quality.

Something dire has happened in the transfer of this essentially competent score to Hollywood. All the fun has gone out of it. Ron Moody is a temperate Fagin where Clive Revell gave the role a bravura touch. Shani Wallis is a watery Nancy while Georgia Brown made her the living embodiment of all the great torch singers of the Twenties. Neither approach has anything to do with realism but one is more fun than the other—and fun is, at best, all that *Oliver!* has to offer. As to the young master himself, Mark Lester is much closer to the typical Hollywood concept of a child than whoever it was (and there were several) who played the part on the stage. This is not to say that the stage *Olivers* could not have been just as dismal, but there is something about Hollywood that brings out the worst in a child actor—so, for the record, one should not hold this appearance against young Mark Lester.

J.S.W.

THE SHOES OF THE FISHERMAN. Music from the film. Orchestra and chorus, Alex North, composer and cond. M-G-M S1E15, \$5.79

Alex North used 101 musicians in this score—the biggest call for men that has gone out in Hollywood in years. (The liner notes slyly try to puff the size of the orchestra by describing it as "over one hundred" musicians.) Certainly the score is "big." At one point, I think I can hear six French horns. The thematic material is attractive, some of it appropriately stirring. But I'm puzzled. I can understand why people buy pop-oriented, melodic scores, like those of Henry Mancini, but why do they purchase such albums as this? The prodigious gifts of Mr. North are not in question. It's just that the material is necessarily episodic. What's the appeal? Is this symphonic music for people with short attention spans?

Incidentally, the surface on the record is terrible. M-G-M's surfaces generally are, but I think they're getting worse.

G.L.

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This is what AUDIO MAGAZINE had to say:

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THE TAPE DECK

BY R. D. DARRELL

Springtime Symphonies. To rediscover, after many years of listening, the kind of music that seems to have erupted directly from some youthful source of high-tensioned joy is a relatively rare experience—and the revelation of course depends on hearing a performance that re-creates the exuberant vitality of the work itself. This month it is Leonard Bernstein who affords tape collectors such an opportunity, with his coupling of two small-scale symphonies that should have a well-nigh irresistible appeal to almost all musical tastes but which have seldom been done justice in recorded form.

One of these is the little Symphony in C, which Georges Bizet wrote as a seventeen-year-old student and which remained unheard until 1935. It has been taped twice before, by Irving for a 1960 Kapp reel now out of print, and in 1962 by Ansermet in a still delectable Bizet program for London. But Bernstein's version is the first wholly successful rejuvenation of this miniature masterpiece, communicating both its effervescence and its cleanly delineated tonal colorings. Again, in the better-known *Classical* Symphony of Prokofiev, Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic come closer than anyone else to what many of us regard as the Koussevitzkian ideal of elasticity, jauntiness, and bravura. In short, this reel (Columbia MQ 1027, 42 min., \$7.95) is absolutely essential to every tape library.

Opera—Comic and Otherwise. Turning from symphonic to operatic realms, infectious humor and vivacity are unfortunately even rarer discoveries. Hence the special notice properly demanded by the first tape appearance of one of the few genuinely "fun" operas: Donizetti's *La Fille du régiment*, here starring Joan Sutherland in the title role, with Luciano Pavarotti in the male lead, Spiro Malas as the Sergeant, and the Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducted by Richard Bonyngé (London/Ampex EX+ LOS 90143, two reels, approx. 50 and 57 min., \$16.95). Though my personal welcome for this recording has to be qualified in certain respects—there is a pervading lack of idiomatic French enunciation, some embarrassingly self-conscious comedy bits, and even rather overclose miking (from London, of all companies!)—the music itself is delightful and Miss Sutherland's vocalism as ravishing as ever.

I also have reservations about the recent release of a still finer and far more subtle comic opera, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, reservations not having to be ameliorated this time by a bow to a tape first. We already have a far more sparkling *Così* from DGG, conducted by Jochum and starring Seefried, Fischer-Dieskau, et al., and a less scintillating but beautifully controlled and recorded

Angel performance from Böhm with Schwarzkopf and Berry. The latest *Così* (RCA TR3 9001, 3¼-ips, four-play, approx. 188 min., \$24.95) does have a special interest for its all-American cast (Leontyne Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Sherrill Milnes, George Shirley, Ezio Flagello) and conductor (Erich Leinsdorf), performing with the British Ambrosian Chorus and New Philharmonia Orchestra, and it boasts substantial other attractions—it is very well sung and played for the most part and is recorded with gleaming lucidity and expansiveness. It also offers such further advantages as the processing of the opera on a single reel, with each of the two acts complete on a side, and the inclusion of an excellent booklet of annotations and texts. Lacking, however, are genuine humor and intimacy, qualities here absolutely essential.

Another Mozart opera duplication can be passed over more cursorily: the *Don Giovanni* conducted by Böhm and starring Birgit Nilsson, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, et al., with the Prague National Theater Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon/Ampex EX+ DGR 9263, two reels, approx. 89 and 80 min., \$21.95). Here the over-all performance is just too lacking in dramatic fire and conviction (except for Martti Talvela's blood-curdling Commendatore) to compete with either of the two fine earlier tapings, by Krips (London) and by Giulini (Angel).

Still another opera release to permit a choice for tape fans is a somewhat special case. I myself frankly consider the artistic merits of Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* negligible, but admirers of the opera will welcome the current, highly belated release of the famous 1958 version starring Tebaldi and Del Monaco with Gavazzeni conducting (London/Ampex EX+ LOS 90142, two reels, approx. 74 and 35 min., \$16.95)—may even prefer it to the 1964 Angel version, taped in 1966, which stars Stella and Corelli with conductor Santini. Certainly the London recording's warmth and brilliance belie its age, and the singing of Mme. Tebaldi, in her vocal prime, is sheerly beautiful.

Berkshire Redivivus. How many present-day tape collectors remember the pioneering prestereo reels bearing the Berkshire label? Not many, I'm afraid, but those veterans who do will surely be happy to know of the label's rebirth—now for a new series of low-price (\$4.95 each) cassette tapes.

The only so-called classical release in the first batch of Berkshire cassettes I've heard is billed as the "Elvira Madigan Theme" with no artist identifications. But it proves to be a transfer of the one-time Vox recording of Mozart's K. 467 Piano Concerto, with Maria Tipo as soloist, filled out here by the "Summer" movement from Vivaldi's *Seasons*, conducted by Rolf Reinhardt (Berkshire

B-75). At its extremely modest price it's sure to find its way into many beginning cassette collections.

So should the current Berkshire pops releases, mostly drawn from the Mercury/Philips catalogues but including several still notable programs. "Frederick Fennell Conducts Cole Porter" (B-70) was once hailed as the finest of all orchestral albums of Porter's show music, and in my opinion it still warrants that accolade. Two others I particularly relished are the "Hits of Sinatra" played by the great Robert Farnon Orchestra (B-67) and the incomparable Pearl Bailey's "Empty House Blues" (B-61). I also found special historical interest in the Pete Rugulo Ensemble's "Percussion at Work" (B-72) as one of the early examples of a stereo spectacular that fell even more rapidly and sensationally than it rose. Incidentally, the Berkshire cassettes, despite their bargain price, come in deluxe containers, though unfortunately without notes and with no more than minimal artist and title identifications.

More DGG All-Classical Cassettes. The latest batch of imported Deutsche Grammophone cassettes (with brief annotations as well as deluxe packaging, but list-priced at \$6.95 each) is even more impressive to serious listeners than the previous four. For one thing this fifth list is larger (fifteen releases); for another the selections represent many more recent recordings than were found among earlier DGG cassette offerings. Partly in consequence, though, there are fewer programs that have not appeared previously in open-reel editions: notably an anthology of the "Sabre Dance and Other Russian Rousers" (921005); selections from the Verdi *Rigoletto* starring Fischer-Dieskau (922017); the fine batch of Rossini Overtures conducted by Serafin (922024); and the celebrated, if ponderous, Richter/Karajan version of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto (923021).

Technically more striking than any of these is the series of cassette transfers of mostly quite recent recordings by the Berlin Philharmonic under Karajan. The orchestral playing is so superb that I suspect that even those who, like me, often quarrel with this conductor's interpretations, will be spellbound: a Liszt/Smetana program (923049); Rimsky-Korsakov *Scheherazade* (923027); the Strauss Family "Blue Danube" program featured in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (923025); Tchaikovsky's *1812*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Marche slave* (923045); Sibelius' Fourth Symphony, *Swan of Tuonela*, and *Valse triste* (923042); and the Brahms First Symphony (923023). These are truly outstanding cassettes, though most audiophiles will remain convinced that only the optional reel editions can do full sonic justice to the original master tapes.

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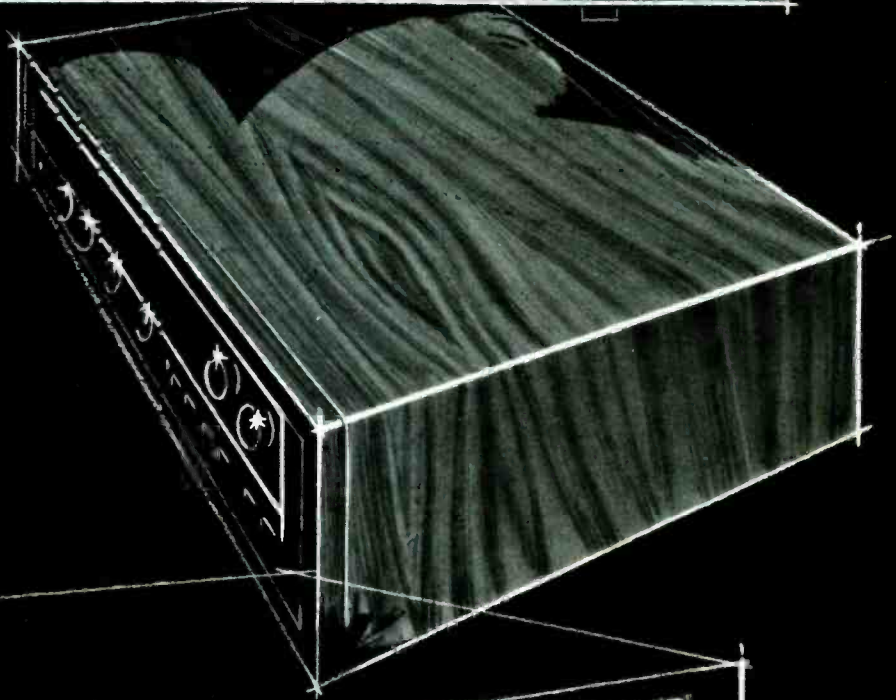
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