ICD

HIGH FIDELITY

FEBRUARY 1970 60¢

Beethoven's Choral Music—Which Recordings Should You Buy?

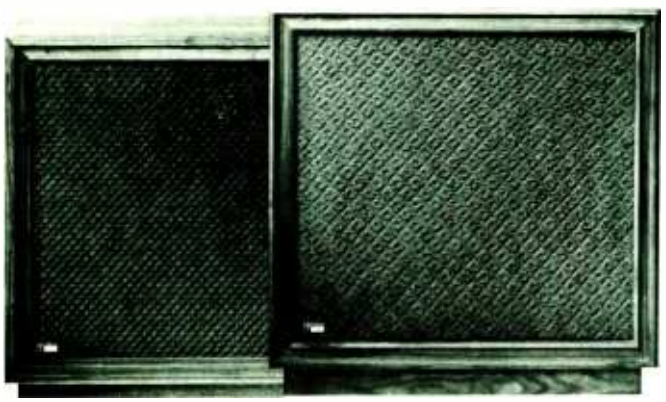
Are Headphones Better than Speakers?

Eight Stereo Spectaculars to Judge Headphones By

defined mid-range can be a real problem. Ideally, a mid-range speaker should be almost as big as a woofer. But in a bookshelf-sized system with a big woofer that is, obviously, impossible. Fisher solved the problem by making the XP-7B a four-way system, and using two 5¾-inch mid-range drivers, each assigned a different section of the mid-range. The smooth, effortless sound achieved by this arrangement, plus a pair of 3-inch wide-dispersion cone tweeters, speaks for itself.

The Fisher XP-9C,
the world's finest bookshelf speaker system.

There simply isn't a better bookshelf system you can buy than the XP-9C at $199.95. The woofer is huge—15 inches in diameter. To give some idea of how this ultra-compliant bass driver is made, the voice coil alone is 2½ inches, and the super Alnico magnet weighs in at 12 pounds. For mid-range the XP-9C uses a pair of matched 5-inch drivers that deliver distortion-free response from 500 to 1200 Hz. Then, a hemispherical dome tweeter handles the frequencies from 1200 to 5000 Hz. And a dome super-tweeter finishes the job smoothly, to the limits of audibility. The Fisher XP-9C is a true 4-way speaker system, as the world's finest bookshelf system positively must be.



The Fisher XP-12,
the world's finest
$219.95
speaker system.

The Fisher XP-15B,
the world's finest
$289.95
speaker system.

The XP-12 is a floor-standing speaker system that uses an uncluttered arrangement of two oversized speakers and a tweeter. The bass speaker is a 12-inch high-compliance woofer, designed to operate only in the lower three octaves of the audible spectrum for optimum response. The mid-range speaker is bigger than any that could fit into a bookshelf unit. At 8 inches, it's as big as many bookshelf woofers. Here, it handles frequencies between 400 and 2500 Hz. A 1½-inch hemispherical dome tweeter, with a specially developed soft cotton dome, reproduces frequencies from 2500 Hz to beyond audibility.

The XP-15B consolette employs a 15-inch woofer with a free-air resonance of 15 Hz, in addition to the identical mid-range and treble drivers used in the XP-12.

The Fisher XP-18,
the world's finest speaker system.

This is the real showdown. We designed the XP-18 to be the finest speaker system you could buy, bar none. Its cost, however, is actually lower than that of many other speaker systems, $359.95.

The XP-18 is a four-way system, with the frequency range divided up as follows:

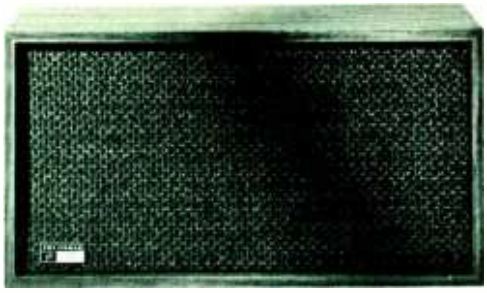
Bass from 30 Hz to 150 Hz is handled by an enormous 18-inch woofer. A high-flux-density 12¾-pound magnet structure provides the critical damping that produces an astonishingly solid, non-resonant bass.

Lower mid-range from 150 to 1500 Hz is fed to an 8-inch high-compliance driver. Upper mid-range from 1500 to 3000 Hz is reproduced by a 5¾-inch driver.

Finally, the upper limits of the spectrum are handled by two matched 2-inch dome tweeters, each with a specially designed metallized mylar dome. These special tweeters provide a full 150 degrees of sound distribution. Three precision step controls allow you to adjust the mid-range and treble to suit any acoustic environment.

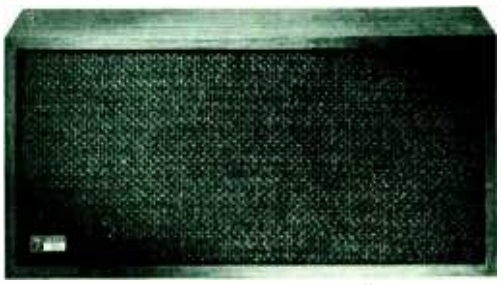
And, oh yes. The XP-18 sounds more like live music than any other speaker system in the world.

The Fisher



The Fisher XP-44B, the world's least expensive good speaker system.

A pair of XP-44B speakers sells for just $89. But it has better overall sound, and bigger bass, than speakers costing far more. Each XP-44B "Little Giant"® contains an advanced 6-inch woofer with a butyl rubber surround that eliminates the annoying cone edge distortion so common in compact speaker systems. The 3-inch extended bandwidth tweeter is the same one we use in our $149.95 speaker system.



The Fisher XP-55B, the world's best $49.95 speaker system.

This low-cost speaker system does everything you'd expect a high-cost speaker system to do. It provides bass down to 37 Hz by utilizing an 8-inch woofer with long-throw voice coil. It delivers smooth treble, with wide-angle dispersion up to 20,000 Hz. Crossover occurs decisively at 1,500 Hz.

Mail this coupon for your free copy of The Fisher Handbook, 1970 edition. This reference guide to hi-fi and stereo also includes detailed information on all Fisher components.

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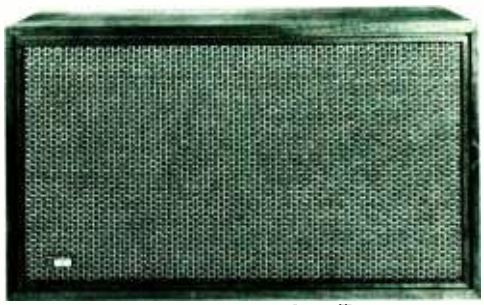
The Fisher XP-60B, the world's best $79.95 speaker system.

If you want outstanding bass, and you won't pay more than $80 for it, this is the only speaker for you. It uses a massive 10-inch woofer with a free-air resonance of 20 Hz. In its air tight enclosure, fundamental bass response extends down to 35 Hz. A 3-inch extended bandwidth tweeter provides pure treble tones to 20,000 Hz without coloration or break-up.

The Fisher XP-66B, the world's best $99.95 speaker system.

There are quite a few speaker systems at this price, but the Fisher XP-66B challenges them all. This three-way system uses a big 12-inch free-piston woofer with a free-air resonance of 18 Hz. Mid-range frequencies are handled by a 5-inch driver made of a new resonance-free cone material. A 3-inch cone tweeter is used for extremely wide dispersion and smooth upper treble. The XP-66B offers life-like reproduction of the most complex musical passages at an ordinary bookshelf price.



The Fisher XP-7B, the world's best $149.95 speaker system.

We'll let you in on a secret we've discovered in our experiments to achieve an ideal bookshelf speaker. While bass can be relatively easy to reproduce by using a big, high-quality acoustic suspension woofer (the XP-7B woofer is a full 12 inches in diameter), natural, well-

Once and for all, let's clear up all the technical confusion about loudspeakers.

Model for model, dollar for dollar, Fisher speaker systems have a wider frequency range, lower distortion, cleaner transients, better dispersion and less overall coloration than any other brand, regardless of design features or engineering claims.

The number of different loudspeaker designs offered to the prospective buyer today is nothing short of staggering. There are almost as many engineering approaches as there are manufacturers, and each particular design philosophy is affirmed to be the one true faith.

Even the sophisticated audiophile who knows his amplifiers and cartridges stands bewildered amidst the permutations and combinations of driver designs, speaker configurations, crossovers and enclosure types.

Our advice is: stop, don't panic, listen. Because the only justification for a new and different engineering feature is the sound.

Fisher takes a completely pragmatic approach to speaker design. We say yes to anything that makes a speaker *sound* better. We say no to anything that only makes a speaker *read* better. As a result, when you buy a Fisher speaker, you're buying sound, not some intangible hi-fi mystique.

Let's face what the politicians would call the gut issue here. When a man puts down, say, $149.95 for a speaker system, the nagging question on his mind is: "Am I getting the very best sound this kind of money can buy?"

Fisher can confidently answer "Yes!" to that question, no matter which one of the nine Fisher speakers is the case in point. We know *all* the alternatives in each price category and have evaluated them in our laboratories. We are putting our reputation as the world's largest component manufacturer on the line with each speaker model we offer. If there were a better way of making any one of them, that's the way we would make it.

Now let's examine the engineering features that *are* meaningful in terms of actual sound and relate them to the specific performance characteristics of Fisher speaker systems.

Big, acoustic-suspension woofers.

All Fisher speaker systems use a larger-than-you'd-expect acoustic-suspension woofer. An exclusive free-piston design, coupled with an extremely compliant butyl rubber or butyl-impregnated surround and a specially treated cone, allows a fundamental bass response down to 30 Hz without doubling or distortion.

As an additional measure of their quality, the free air resonance of Fisher woofers ranges from 38 to a remarkable 10 Hz.

The voice coil is specially designed to handle plenty of power. Loud-music lovers appreciate that feature.

Our mid-range is better by definition.

Virtually all the definition or 'presence' of musical instruments occurs in the middle frequencies. Fisher speakers have better definition because, very simply, we use the best mid-range speakers. In addition to utilizing specially developed magnets (see further below), all of our mid-range speakers incorporate a butyl-impregnated half-roll surround for extra high compliance (and therefore extreme clarity and smoothness of reproduction).

To prevent interaction with the woofer, each mid-range driver is sealed off from the rest of the system in an airtight enclosure. This, naturally, costs more to do. But we've found that it's essential to the characteristic natural sound Fisher speakers are identified with.

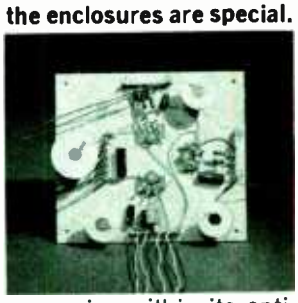
Now, about transient response.

There are many people who believe that the ability of a cone to respond quickly—or transient response—is the single most important determinant of a speaker's sound. That's why we're pleased to tell you that by using newly developed super Alnico magnets, with high flux density, Fisher woofers and mid-range speakers achieve faster, more positive control of their cones than any other speakers being manufactured today. Fisher transient response is absolutely unsurpassed in the industry.

The reasoning behind our tweeters is also clear.

Specially designed, sealed-back tweeters provide excellent frequency response to beyond the limits of human hearing. By using a low-mass voice coil, highs are natural sounding as well as unusually clear and transparent. For wide dispersion, Fisher tweeters incorporate a soft dome diaphragm. Their impregnated cotton or formed mylar construction eliminates parasitic high-frequency resonances and the resultant coloration of sound.

Even the crossover networks and the enclosures are special.



In a Fisher speaker system nothing is taken for granted. We know that unless each speaker does exactly the job it was designed to do, no more, no less, the overall sound will suffer somewhat. So we've designed band-pass filters which, when used in place of conventional roll-off networks, assure that each speaker will handle only the frequencies within its optimum range. Furthermore, special quality capacitive and inductive elements are used to achieve lowest losses and smooth transition at each of the crossover points. The sharp-cutoff 6 to 12 dB per octave networks prevent interactions at the crossover points.

All the time and effort we take getting the internal components of our speaker systems just right would be fruitless if we put it all into an ordinary speaker cabinet.

That's why we've designed a better cabinet. It's constructed entirely of non-resonant compressed flake board rather than vibrant plywood, to eliminate the boxy speaker sound so common in even the most expensive plywood-cabineted speaker systems. Our speaker systems are tightly sealed and completely filled with AcoustiGlas® to provide a high degree of damping.

These design innovations and this preoccupation with quality holds true for the least expensive as well as the most expensive Fisher speaker system.

On the inside of this gatefold you'll find each speaker system described. We urge you to compare the Fisher speaker in any price category with anything else you can buy at that price. Compare them on paper if you wish, but most important, go to an audio store and listen.

As a reader of this magazine, we're counting on you to be more impressed by good, natural sound than by exotic design.

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A sophisticate who can afford the finest in stereo components and equipment, would select the Pickering XV-15 Cartridge labeled 750E, 400E or 350. They're the proper ones to deliver "100% Music Power."

With the more simple equipment that characterizes today's informal living, the XV-15 with a DCF of 150 or 200 will assure "100% Music Power."

A Pickering XV-15 Cartridge with a DCF of 100 or 140 will guarantee "100% Music Power" on the type of set up that the young in your house use for dancing or listening.

The Dynamic Coupling Factor is an index of maximum stylus performance when the cartridge is related to a particular type of playback equipment. This resultant number is derived from a Dimensional Analysis of all the parameters involved. To select a pickup for a professional manual turntable, with its sophisticated, dynamically balanced tone arm, tracking at an ultra-light force, a higher DCF index would be required than, say, for a pickup to be used in an ordinary record changer. For maximum distortion-free response, this index to application relationship properly determines maximum stylus performance in your playback equipment. 100% music power is assured at all frequencies – linear response from 10 to 20,000 Hz virtually a straight line – due to the extremely low mass of its moving magnetic system – 1/5 to 1/10 of ordinary pickups.

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Op de Pickup

DEAR READER:

Although I am not much of a linguist—French and German are the only foreign tongues I can grope my way around in—I always enjoy browsing through the high fidelity magazines that I receive from all over the world. I am especially amused by the sudden intrusions into other languages of English audio and musical terms, the latter generally in the pop category, and I thought that you too might like to see the influence of American high fidelity on the world's languages.

The term "high fidelity" has itself become almost universal. France is one exception here—they translate it as *haute fidélité*—but of course they have that watchdog Academie. Still, they do use "hi-fi" (rather than a French version, which I suppose should be *"hau-fi"*), as most of the world does, for a prestigious term. ("Hi-fi" is not yet the debased term elsewhere that it has become here, and many foreign magazines have even incorporated it into their titles, as for instance Germany's *HiFi-Stereophonie* and Italy's *Discoteca-HiFi.*)

At any rate, this is what a recent browse-session turned up:

FROM GERMANY (*HiFi-Stereophonie* and *Fono Forum*): *"die Rüchseite des Receivers"; "die neue HiFi-Anlage Compact"; "beim styling haben wir . . ."; ". . . am Eingang Tuner"; "Big Bands sind wieder gefragt"; "Background-Musik zum . . ."; ". . . für den Tonarm Lift"* (*Tonarm*, incidentally, is a perfectly legitimate German word); *"Michelangeli at his best . . . ein Tip für Klavierfans"; ". . . habe ich jedoch den 'Do-it-yourself'-Fimmel."*

FROM ITALY (*Discoteca-HiFi*): *"antenna FM munita di booster"; "un woofer eccezionale"; "un nuova mid-range, ad un nuovo tweeter ed a nuove caratteristiche del crossover"; "Hi-Fi show a Roma"; "sicura e priva di rumble."*

FROM FRANCE (*Harmonie* and *Diapason*): Not much audio "Franglais" seems to get past the Academie, but I did come across *"le Hit-Parade classique"; "de publier deux best-sellers sur . . ."; "chaque canal, monitoring"; aux jazzmen de l'école parkerienne . . ."* (Charlie Parker, presumably); *"pick-up magnétique."*

FROM HOLLAND (*Luister*): *"Hifi-Low-Noise ontwikkeld"; "Hi-Fi stereo tapedeck houdt niet . . ."; "spoor van rumble noch"; "speciaal cross-over-systeem"; "anti-skating instelling . . ."; ". . . all-balance pick-up arm, is een maatstaf"; "play-back toets"; "op de pickup en tapehead ingang −60 dB en de tuner en. . . ."*

FROM SWEDEN (*Musikrevy*): *"svaj och rumble"; "Goldring pickupsystem bevisligen"; ". . . mitt i downtown, Washington"; "orsakade av Pincheffekt som . . ."; "för älde Hi-Fi-verk"; "tracking-kontroll modell"; "självutnämnda soulradio . . . sex diskjockeys"; ". . . varav tva för Compact-kassetter"; "tillhörande FM-tuner"; "intinuerligt reglerbar antiskating"; "gedigen blues-pop . . . ett par jam-session-liknande . . ."; "tonvikten i soulmusik."*

FROM JAPAN (*Record Geijutsu*):

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* * * * *

Next month we will survey the field of compact stereo—those modestly priced three-piece systems—in **STEREO WITHOUT FUSS.** We will also give you some hints on **HOW TO HOOK UP AN EXTRA WOOFER.** Conrad L. Osborne returns to these pages with what both he and we feel is the most important essay he has ever written, **DOES OPERA HAVE A FUTURE?** And there will be a bright piece by William Zakariasen about musical parody on records, **THE SIEGFRIED—WALTZ?**

Leonard Marcus

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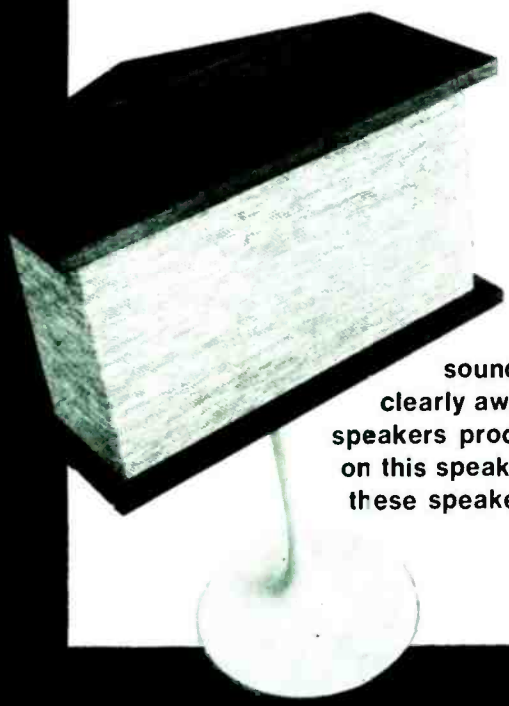
The rave reviews keep coming...



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Stereo & HI-FI Times — Winter-Spring 1970

Norman Eisenberg — High Fidelity
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Julian Hirsch — Stereo Review
"all the room-filling potency of the best acoustic-suspension systems, combined with the tautness and clarity of a full-range electrostatic speaker . . . I have never heard a speaker system in my own home which could surpass, or even equal the BOSE 901 for over-all 'realism' of sound."

Bert Whyte — Audio
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letters

Classical Music, Dead or Alive

I have been meaning to comment on John McClure's article, "The Classical Bag" [August 1969] but the pressures of a dying and disintegrating business have made it difficult. After years of being one of "the better record shops"—Record Mart of Philadelphia—we are about to be one of the casualties of the revolution that Mr. McClure describes. We survived the 33-rpm revolution, Dienbienphu, E. J. Korvette, Khrushchev, S. Klein, Ho Chi Minh, and Record Club of America; but it looks like Moby Grape, Chicago Transit Authority, The Grassy Knoll, Dementia Praecox, and their peers have overpowered us.

I feel that the reasons kids ignore classics have nothing to do with the music itself. One part of Mr. McClure's article got right to the heart of the matter: the "atmosphere," the "aura," the "presentation," the "trappings"—whatever you might call it—is the anathema to today's young people because it reeks of everything established, stuffy, socially snobbish, and repressive. An aware seventeen-year-old will simply not listen to *Also sprach Zarathustra* at Philadelphia's Academy of Music surrounded by the ladies from Devon and Paoli who applaud with such decorum when the world's greatest conductor stands on the podium in his immaculate penguin suit asserting his absolute authority over 106 people also impeccably dressed. Yet that same seventeen-year-old and hundreds like him bought *Zarathustra* from me because they found it overwhelming in Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* film.

Now, when kids want what has come to be called "their" music, there is no question of separating music from performer: if they want Janis, they want Janis; Moby Grape's music cannot be thought of independently of Moby Grape. But it has occurred to me from over-the-counter experience that this is not true when young people today, for whatever reason, become interested in a "classic." *What counts is the music and the price.* When the kids came to the store looking for "Elvira Madigan," it wasn't important to them whether Mozart's Concerto was played by Geza Anda, Rubinstein, Casadesus, or Adolf Henselt. They simply wanted the *music*. I sold more of the Reiner/Victrola *Zarathustra* than all the others, because it was cheaper. If this is true, why not produce a series of low-priced records by anonymous artists—young musicians who have never recorded before—records whose heros are Beethoven and Bartók, Strauss and Mozart, not the men in the penguin suits. There is a vast potential market of aware young people who can love a Mozart concerto or an *Appassionata* or a *Das Lied von der Erde* without giving a damn whether or not the embellishments begin on the principal note, or whether Von Schickelfuss' mystical approach is too Teutonic!

Howard Kornblum
Philadelphia, Pa.

John Anderson's letter proclaiming the death of classical music in the November issue is a fascinating study in musical ignorance and sheer contradiction. Mr. Anderson says that "as a member of the [younger] generation . . . I know too well how accurately he [John McClure] has summed up the situation." According to this logic, it apparently follows that by being twenty-four years old one automatically possesses a valid musical judgment. It would also perhaps follow that my reasons for liking classical music have no validity, since I am over thirty—almost thirty-one, to be exact. As a concert pianist who plays to substantial numbers of appreciative audiences, it is helpful for me to know that the response I have encountered is really mythical and nonexistent, since "classical music was indeed excellent, but it is still dead." Pray tell, does Mr. Anderson also mean to imply that classical music was dead when it was still excellent—whenever that was? Are we also to hold against classical music the fact that "Mozart and other classical composers wrote only so much and can be heard only so many times"? Anyone with the slightest conception of the extent of music literature knows that one could spend a whole lifetime hearing and assimilating the classics.

Have you, Mr. Anderson, attempted even a minimum exploration of serious music? If you have and these great works still do not "reach" you, then your sensitivity threshold must not be particularly high. You say that classical music should come off its lofty pedestal and join the rest of the peasants. You may be a peasant, Mr. Anderson, but if so, must we join you?

Linda Greer Morales
Stillwater, Okla.

Reading young Mr. Anderson's letter in the November issue, one wonders if he has heard Oscar Wilde's famous aphorism about the dangers of impending obsolescence inherent in a conscious effort to keep up with current trends. Perhaps he considers that great, or even good, art is never out of date, and this leads us to what is to me the great difference between classical and rock music. The

Continued on page 8

When absolute musical accuracy is required, Acoustic Research speaker systems are usually chosen.

A statement by composer Henry Brant:

"On March 24, 1969 the Eastman Wind Ensemble, Donald Hunsberger conductor, presented a program consisting of four of my spatial compositions.

The problems posed for the recording were unusual in that my music requires specific setups for the performers in particular positions in the hall, as well as on stage. In the four works heard, groups of woodwinds, brass and percussion — in some cases, each one led by a separate conductor — were disposed in the balconies, and behind and at the sides of the audience at the ground level, as well as on stage. A pipe organ, sounding from stage rear, was also used. The spatial arrangement of the players was different for each composition, and in all these pieces the music given to the separate groups is highly contrasted, no two groups ever playing the same music or even anything similar.

The photograph was taken during a rehearsal and shows one of the participating groups under my direction. (A separate orchestra in the top balcony, not shown in the photograph, is being simultaneously led by Dr. Hunsberger.)

The recording was made by using four channels simultaneously on ½-inch wide recording tape. Neumann U-47 microphones were spaced in a rectangular array in the audience seating area, to produce a recording which is played back through four speaker systems, one in each corner of the listening room. Four AR-3a speaker systems were used as control room monitors during the recording and playback.

The results, both in the amount of resonance achieved and in the quality of sounds produced, are impressive, and suggest the initiation of further experiments aimed at capturing the specific details of directionality which define the sound of classical and contemporary antiphonal music."

A catalog of AR speaker systems, amplifiers and turntables is available free upon request.

AR

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24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

Acoustic Research International
Radiumweg 7, Amersfoort, Holland

CIRCLE 2 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 6

simple fact is that rock is not art at all —not even bad art. At its best, rock bears about the same relationship to classical music that a *Playboy* cartoon does to a Rembrandt painting. Not that the *Playboy* cartoon has no value. It is amusing, entertaining, perhaps even titillating, but ultimately meaningless unless it says something timely.

And here we have the other important point. Great art need say nothing—indeed, if art's primary purpose is to convey a message, it is usually doomed to failure. If it says anything at all, it is a timeless statement, and certainly nothing that can be translated into words. The more abstract an art form is, the more true this becomes. And music is certainly the most abstract art of all. No, I am not of Mr. Anderson's generation. I am an old fogey nearing the half-century mark. I like to think, however, that one of the most valuable lessons I have learned is the folly of following popular trends as a substitute for a proper sense of values derived from one's own innate intelligence and conscience. I hope Mr. Anderson's generation learns *this* lesson before it's too late!

Herbert E. Lyons
Syracuse, N.Y.

John Anderson apparently has a bad case of the we-are-too-important syndrome. He presumes all this dreadful noise, labeled pop/rock, is the music of the future, despite the fact that it is generally labeled "Now" music. Like all popular music of the past, most of it will die a well-deserved death, and only a small smattering of it will find its way into the "standard" repertory. And that small smattering will be played over and over again, like Mozart and his associates.

Little Johnnie assumes that classical composers wrote only so much and they can be heard only so many times. And yet their compositions have survived, and there is little reason to assume that a half-deaf generation will ignore them completely. He forgets that for every one classical composition played today, there were three or four (by the beloved composers, not to mention the dozens who never made the grade) that fell by the wayside.

If in twenty years we still hear the Who, the What, and the Howzsat, I, for one, will certainly be amazed. Nope, Johnnie, something else will come along and most of the pop/rock garbage will be right where it belongs: in the garbage can of forgotten youth.

Don E. Manning
Chicago, Ill.

Barbirolli and Otello

In reference to David Hamilton's first sentence in his admirable review of the new Angel recording of Verdi's *Otello* conducted by Sir John Barbirolli [November 1969], I would like to add the following information on two other 78 rpm recordings conducted by Sir John. They are the *Brindisi* with Giovanni Inghilleri, Octave Dua, Luigi Cilla with the Royal Opera Chorus and Orchestra (HMV D1698, recorded in 1928), and *"Dio mi potevi"* and *"Niun mi tema"* with Renato Zanelli (HMV DB1173, also recorded in 1928). Zanelli re-recorded these titles a year later in Milan—the conductor at those sessions was Sabajno. For some odd reason these different versions were both given the same release number. As far as I know, the 1928 versions were either withdrawn immediately after issue or only test pressings were issued. There is no reference in any HMV catalogue regarding their availability.

John Kirkman
London, England

Quo Vadis FM?

"FM: Where Is It Going?" states the cover of the November 1969 issue. You intrigued me very much with this title, but, alas, I turned inside to Ian Alberts' article "Has Success Spoiled FM?"—which is another intriguing question and title—but all I read was the dismal history of FM radio, a statement about the Boston experiment with 4-channel stereo, and another lament about the decrease in stations broadcasting classical music. But Mr. Alberts provides no answers as to the future of FM radio, nor does he tell us how success has really spoiled FM broadcasting.

We at WRFM are proud of our technical quality both from the fidelity standpoint and stereo balance and separation. We say, bring on the best audio receiving equipment being made today and we will reproduce the program material equal to the best recordings being made. And there are other FM broadcasters in the country who devote much effort in an attempt to achieve the same quality, such as KIOI in San Francisco and WJIB in Boston. Damning the FM broadcast industry as a group is like saying all FM receivers are inferior because of the defects in one or two low-priced units. But, at the same time, I am not saying that Mr. Alberts is not correct in challenging a number of FM broadcasters for their technical performance. I have yet to hear a demonstration of the new 4-channel stereo system but, if WRFM did not have a long-term contract covering the use of our second sub-channel, I would be interested in carrying out single-station 4-channel experiments.

The history of FM broadcasting and its problems and dismal past are known to virtually all students of frequency modulation broadcasting, so to go into them again is a waste of time. I do take offense, though, to the fact that every writer doing articles on FM programming in HIGH FIDELITY and other magazines related to our business, attacks every station that is not broadcasting classical music.

Why has the amount of classical music on FM radio declined and why does it continue in a downward direction. There

Continued on page 10

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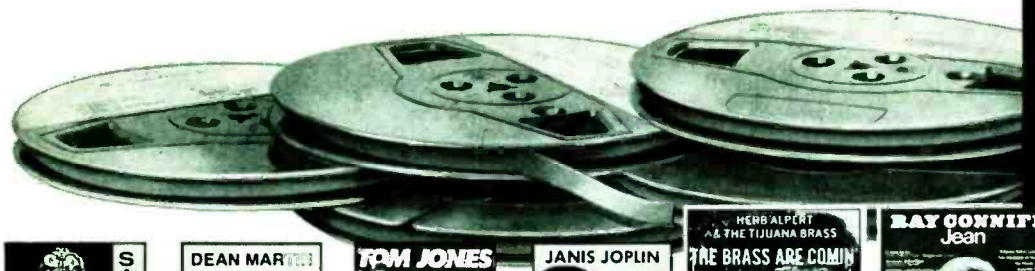

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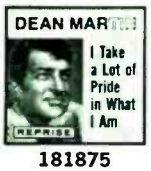

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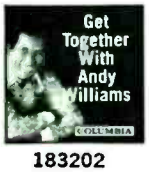

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CIRCLE 15 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

LETTERS

Continued from page 8

are two reasons: poor management of the stations and lack of response from the listeners. Where is FM going? It is going in the direction of money and audience. Stations are searching harder than ever before for successful audience-building formats. If the audience for a certain type of music will demonstrate that it is there, then there will be a station to serve it.

Marlin R. Taylor
Station Manager, WRFM
New York, N.Y.

I would suggest that Mr. Alberts' timely article be reprinted and mailed to the station manager and chief engineer at every FM radio station in the country. Why not offer to your readers the mailing of two reprints (one addressed "station manager" and one "chief engineer") to the station(s) of their choice upon receipt of 50¢ per station (or more to cover costs) and the correct mailing address with zip code.

Bob McKee
Belvidere, Ill.

Why didn't you send the money along?

Gould and Goldmark

Glenn Gould is hereby publicly requested to record Bach's *English* Suites. It's astonishing to me that he should have passed them by this long. Personally, I can hardly wait to hear Mr. Gould's reading of No. 5, in E minor, with its fascinating Prelude and almost futuristic Gigue.

And Georg Solti simply must do a complete *Queen of Sheba* by Karl Goldmark. Why isn't Columbia Records' Dr. Peter Goldmark lifting a finger to secure greater recognition for his granduncle's legacy? This gorgeous, sultry score was once one of the Met's most popular repertory operas. Alas, the incomparable Mihály Székely and Mária Németh are no longer with us to sing the leading roles. With luck, though, Solti could surely find other suitable artists.

Francis Xavier Varosy
Hollywood, Calif.

On the Surface

I represent SCRATCH, Southern Californians Revolting Against Terrible Clicks and Hiss. It is the intent of our newly formed organization to award an annual "Grand Prix du Scratch" to that recording which best exemplifies the current low quality control standards of some leading companies. The prize will go to the year's highest-priced record with the most annoying surface noise. An honorable mention will be awarded to a recording (at any price) which, despite the high dynamic level of its program material, offers the most distracting carnival of pops, clicks, snaps, and general crackle.

SCRATCH is formed of ordinary classical music lovers who own stereophonic equipment valued at or above $800, and who have precision-tracking cartridges and featherweight tone arms. The ten charter members organized in order to combat the conditions which cause a record buyer to spend endless hours each year auditioning and returning the same scratchy records.

We invite information from other Southern Californians so that the auditioning effectiveness of our organization may be increased. Eventually we hope to publish a consumers' guide to scratchy records.

David E. Gregson
SCRATCH
2413 Locust St.
San Diego, Calif. 92106

The Missing Libretto

I have read with great interest and sympathy the several letters in recent issues concerning the various clicks, bumps, and other extraneous noises which seem to afflict so many records these days. I quite agree with all the complaints and wonder why such slipshod quality control persists.

But I have a different problem to mention, the all-too-frequently missing libretto or other descriptive printed matter, which is supposed to be included with various recordings. My collection specializes in operas, and in the last year I have had to write to the manufacturer on six different occasions to obtain the booklets which were left out of recordings I have

Continued on page 17

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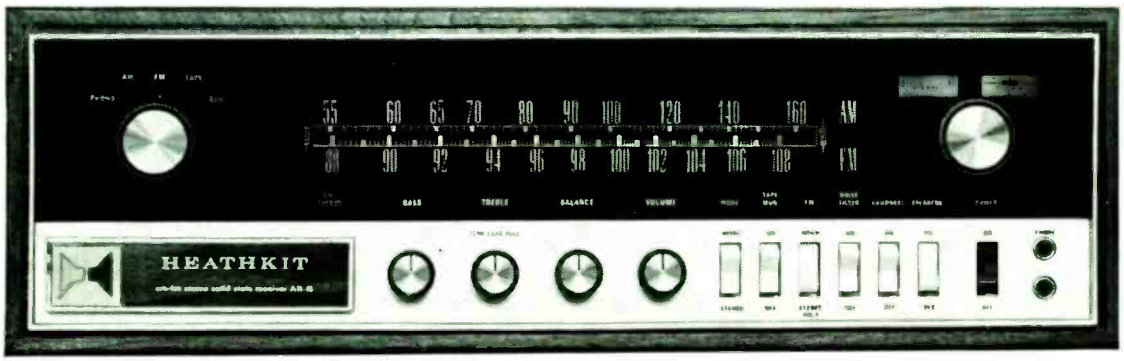
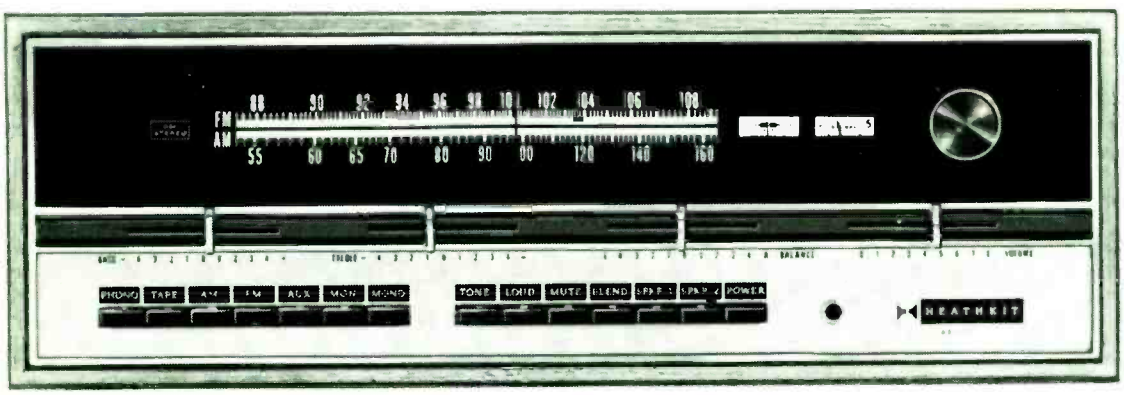


2. Heathkit® AR-29



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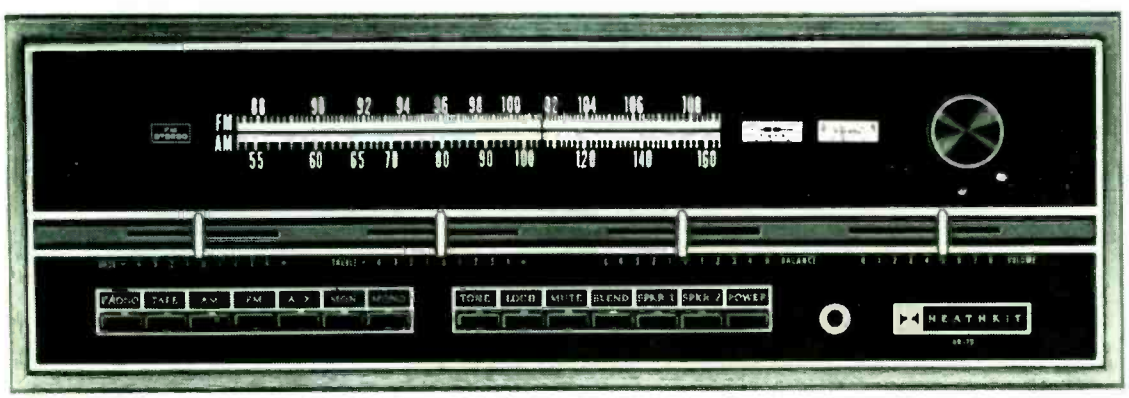

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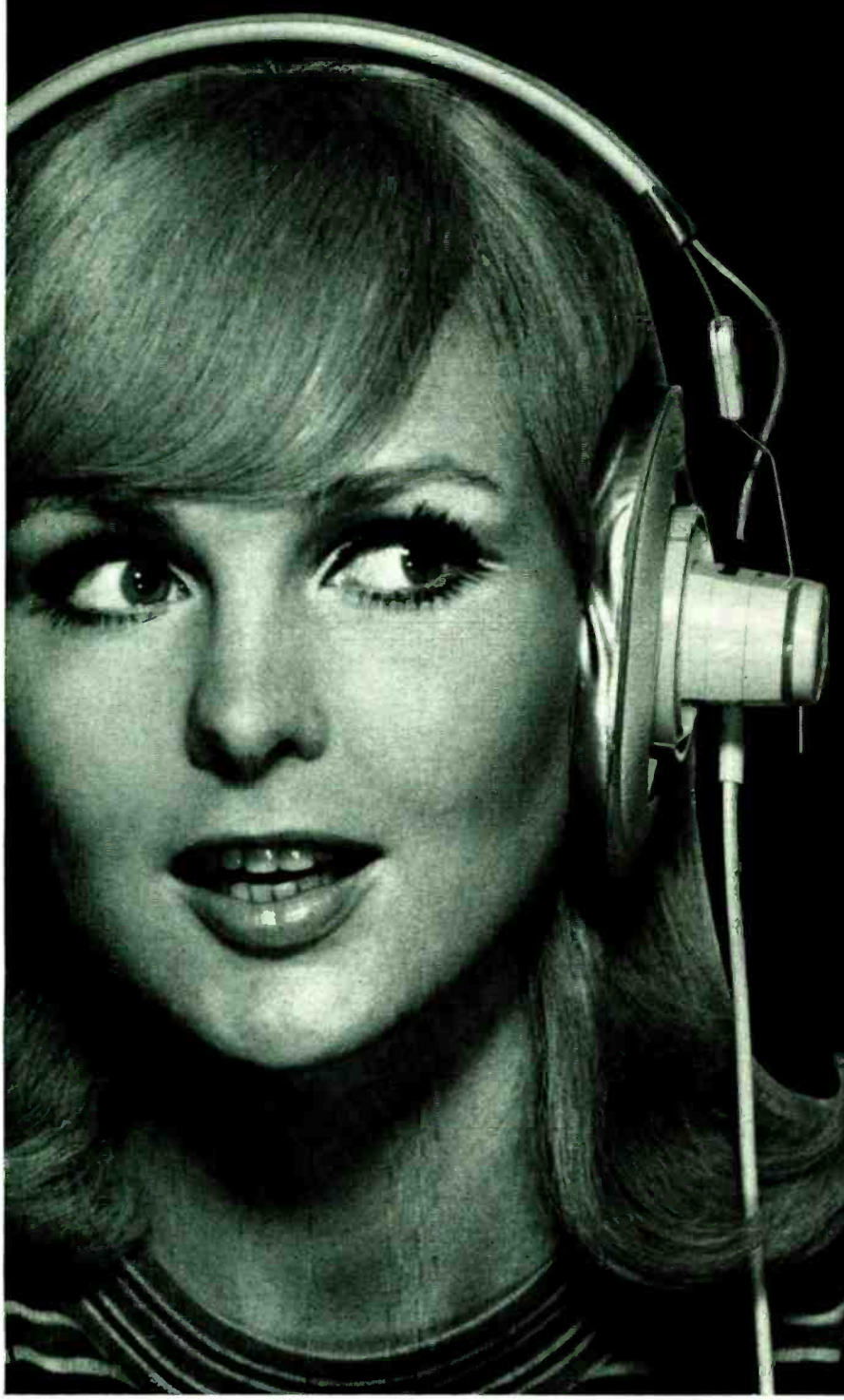

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CIRCLE 3 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued from page 10

purchased. The offenders include London, Epic, RCA, Philips, and Angel. I wonder if other HIGH FIDELITY readers have had this problem; it is really a nuisance, especially when the recording is of an unfamiliar work. I must add that the manufacturers have all been prompt to supply the literature on demand, but the demand should have been unnecessary.

Robert W. Upshaw
Simsbury, Conn.

For a Generous Abridgement

Some years ago, the Metropolitan Opera Club offered a number of two-disc abridgements of operas which, when recorded complete, take from three to six records. I found the Club's abridged versions of *Aida*, *Il Trovatore*, *Die Walküre*, and *Carmen* quite satisfying musical digests of the full-length operas.

While the dedicated opera collector enjoys and demands the complete recordings, neither my attention span nor my available time permit me to listen closely to more than two or three discs at a time. And yet I am invariably disappointed with most one-disc highlights which are the only alternatives to operas that run to four, five, and even six discs.

I would find it most welcome if the companies recording opera would offer two-disc abridgements of operas that take up three or four discs, and three-disc versions of those which occupy five or six. While, for instance, a complete *Les Troyens* should be in the catalogue, the present two-record highlight edition (Angel SB 3670) will keep me happy. In fact I plan to make a few of my own abridgements by taping excerpts from complete opera sets on blank cassettes. Are there any others like me?

Peter O'M. Pierson
Santa Clara, Calif.

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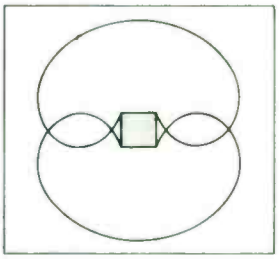
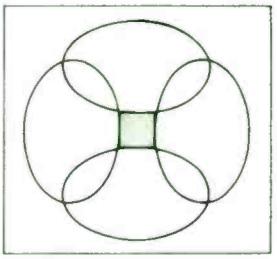


Two woofers are mounted on opposite sides of the speaker enclosure, each radiating low frequency sound of more than 180°.



Four midrange/tweeters are mounted one to a side, each projecting high frequency sound waves in an arc of more than 90°.

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*Patent applied for.

CIRCLE 100 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

behind the scenes

Reports from the International Recording Centers

At Walthamstow, Philips records in eighteen sessions Berlioz' monumental Les Troyens—*with Josephine Veasey singing Dido and Colin Davis conducting.*

LONDON

Berlioz' Les Troyens—Complete at Last

Berlioz' monumental opera, *Les Troyens*, has now finally been recorded, both parts note complete. At least four companies have considered undertaking this much-needed project, but the honor ultimately fell to Philips—largely, one gathers, because Colin Davis was the obvious conductor, and he happens to be under contract to that company. Much to Philips' advantage, the recording sessions—held at Walthamstow Assembly Rooms—were timed to the series of live performances given last fall at Covent Garden, also under Davis' direction.

For all their carefully laid plans, the Philips producers—Erik Smith, formerly of Decca, and Berlioz authority David Cairns—could hardly have foreseen that Josephine Veasey, who sings the key role of Dido, would fall ill in the middle of the Covent Garden run. Miss Veasey's indisposition, in fact, seriously threatened the outcome of the entire ambitious project. For the live performances Covent Garden was luckily able to call upon another singer, Janet Baker, to replace the original Dido, but since Miss Baker is one of EMI's most cherished "exclusive artists" with an engagement book full to the bursting point, there was no chance of securing such a fine substitute for the recording.

It was literally touch and go until the midpoint of the eighteen scheduled sessions. Erik Smith gloomily prophesied that if Miss Veasey was still ailing by that deadline, there would be no chance at all of fitting Dido's music into the remaining time. Merciful providence intervened, however, and Miss Veasey's throat cleared at the last minute. A couple of days later I attended the session devoted to the closing pages of the opera and she was at peak form. Not that she ever recognizes—openly at least—her own merit. "Was it all right, the way I died?" she asked uncertainly on returning to the control room. She then listened to the take, with eyes closed and hands held as though in prayer. "I didn't like *'Malheureux amour'*," she said firmly at the end. "But you were marvelous in the *'Annibal'* bit," countered Erik Smith. "You'll never get me to admit it," replied Miss Veasey, completely unswayed.

Trojan Birds and Horses. At that particular session it was not so much the performers who proved worrisome as the birds in Walthamstow's attic. Erik Smith noted a curious noise coming through the microphones. Was it the tape, he wondered? It took a few minutes to track down the problem to birds who had managed to find their way into the hall. More valuable minutes were lost in chasing them out. And when it wasn't birds, there was always the threat of clattering cups from the kitchen. The recording takes involving the Triumphal March and the entrance of the Trojan Horse required an especially elaborate number of performers. For this session the kitchen was used not only for providing refreshment but as a subsidiary studio housing the "offstage" brass players. It was bad enough for the instrumentalists, who complained that they were literally deafening themselves with the reverberation of brass sound against the kitchen tiles on floor, walls, and ceiling. The room was also as hot as a furnace, and the poor assistant conductor, Robin Stapleton, had the worst time of all: the only place where he could both direct his players and see Colin Davis through the closed-circuit television was on top of a stove. "Walthamstow," Erik Smith pointed out wryly, "is not quite big enough, but where else could we go?" The Royal Albert Hall, suggested someone, but the Philips crew visibly shuddered at the thought of the expense.

After the tricky Trojan Horse session, it seemed child's play taping the opening of the opera, for a whole session had been arranged for Cassandra's first solo and no other singers were involved. At Covent Garden, Anja Silja took the part, but the Philips producers had chosen instead the Swedish singer Berit Lindholm. There was a further advantage in that Miss Lindholm—unlike the rest of the cast—had none of the taxing effects of live performances to recover from before coming to Walthamstow. "Our most relaxed session," pronounced Erik Smith; and when David Cairns pointed out that the remaining sessions needed to yield only twelve minutes of completed music each, Smith, after his earlier nerve-wracking trials, remained the confirmed optimist: "Then we're laughing, aren't we?" And he was.

Others in the cast include Jon Vickers as Anneas and Peter Glossop as Chorebus. The Philips technicians are confident of fitting the whole score on five records, and hope to have the set ready by early spring. After Philips' fantastic achievement of issuing their stereo recording of last summer's final Prom concert within sixty hours of the actual performance, that hardly seems too tall an order.

Mozart by Zukerman and Barenboim. EMI and CBS found themselves faced with some problems in diplomacy when Daniel Barenboim and Pinchas Zukerman discovered an artistic affinity and wanted to play violin and piano duos together. It made EMI realize how lucky they were that the Barenboim/Du Pré marital partnership was already wedded

Continued on page 25

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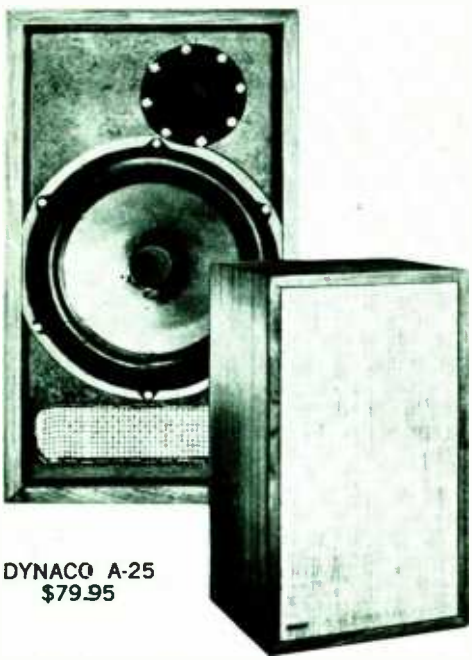

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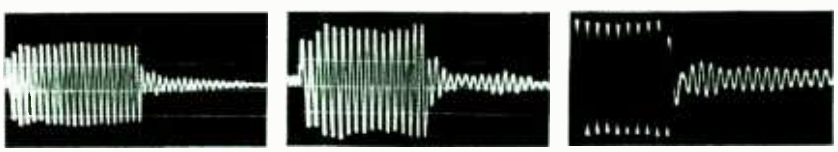

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to a single label. But with CBS regularly using the EMI studio in London for their recording sessions and cordial relationships established, a reciprocal arrangement was made wherein EMI will record the violin/piano duos, while CBS will supervise some Mozart violin concertos with Barenboim conducting the English Chamber Orchestra. The first concertos on the list were the D major, K. 218 and the A major, K. 219. It was a typical Barenboim occasion with fun for everyone. Conductor and violinist started with the longer Concerto, the A major, which they had already performed earlier that week in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and to the surprise of the CBS recording manager, Paul Myers, the whole thirty-minute Concerto was completed in a single session. It was Barenboim's puckishness that impressed Myers, in his manners and his music-making. At times he would make faces at Zukerman, as though intent on causing him to laugh and drop a note, but his young compatriot never slipped once. So close was the liaison that Myers later confessed, "I almost began to believe in ESP."

The D major Concerto was easily completed in the second of the three scheduled sessions, and CBS hoped that the third could be used for recording an unexpected bonus, the Adagio for Violin and Orchestra, K. 261. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to find the required flute players, and so this session was a brief one—among the shortest on record at the EMI studio—for only twenty minutes were needed to tidy up the two concertos.

EDWARD GREENFIELD

VIENNA

For Mozart's Magic Flute—International Stars And an Austrian Lion

Decca/London's new recording of Mozart's *Magic Flute* is truly an international affair: a Welsh Tamino (Stuart Burrows), a Spanish Pamina (Pilar Lorengar), a Dutch Queen of the Night (Christine Deutekom), a German Papageno (Hermann Prey), and a Finnish Sarastro (Martti Talvela); even the Queen of the Night's three ladies come from different countries: Hanneke van Bork from Holland, Yvonne Minton from Australia, and Hetty Plümacher from Germany. The conductor is Hungarian-born Georg Solti, and the recording crew, of course, consists of the familiar British team of Christopher Raeburn, Gordon Parry, and James Lock. In order to prevent a babel of different German accents in the spoken dialogue, Decca/London deemed it advisable to secure the services of the Viennese basso Manfred Jungwirth to supervise the cast's diction (Jungwirth, you will recall, sang Ochs in the label's new recording of *Der Rosenkavalier*).

The idea behind this new production was to capture the dramatic quality of Mozart's opera. Large parts of the spoken dialogue—even passages that are usually cut in stage performances—were included in order to accentuate the dramatic element. The stereo stage production was entrusted to Otto Fritz, a producer currently working at the Vienna State Opera. "I think he has done a marvelous job in adjusting his staging to the demands of a recorded performance—quite a different sort of challenge altogether from a live *Flute*," Christopher Raeburn told me.

The Viennese have always regarded *The Magic Flute* as personal property and despite the cosmopolitan character of the enterprise, Gordon Parry underlined some important Austrian contributions: apart from the Vienna Philharmonic, the choir of the State Opera, and the three boys (who must remain anonymous in accordance with the stern laws of the Wiener Sängerknaben), another Austrian star deserves mention. "The recently developed 'gun microphone,' a product of the firm AKG," Parry explained, "played an important part in the recording." This microphone operates rather like a photographer's zoom lens and permits the singers to move more freely about the sound stage; it also helped Solti attain some of the "magic" sound quality specified by Mozart. In one of his letters, Mozart noted the "charming" impression which a theatrical performance can make when listened to "from a box near to the orchestra." So Raeburn and his colleagues were able to quote chapter and verse to justify their sonic decisions for the *Flute*. There was a major exception to this ideal of close-to immediacy. "Be careful," Solti warned before embarking on Monostatos' aria in Act II. "This is one of the rare cases where Mozart wants the music to sound as if it came from afar." A glance at the score confirmed the statement and Monostatos (Gerhard Stolze) did his best to follow the composer's instructions, stealing away from the microphones to the sound of a pianissimo orchestra.

The thunder accompanying the appearance of the Queen of the Night, which directly follows this aria, posed a problem. Decca/London believes in realism. The final recording, I was told, would contain a bit of *musique concrète*: not only will the performance sport real thunder, but also the roar of the lions which Gordon Parry intended to tape in the Schönbrunn Zoo. ("Another Austrian contribution," he added with a grin.) Obviously the conclusion of the musical sessions, which took place in Vienna during October, did not signal the end of Raeburn's work. Apart from editing chores and taping various sound effects, there still remained the question of how and to what extent these special effects should be used.

KURT BLAUKOPF

speaking of records

The Conductor as Listener

by Henry Lewis

Mr. Lewis, conductor of the New Jersey Symphony, accompanies his "diva-wife," mezzo Marilyn Horne, at their home in Orange, N. J.

SINCE MY LOVE for music is not a casual affair, I seldom play records solely to pass the time. In fact I've been what you might call an intensive listener ever since I was a child. When I was nine or ten years old I was given my first classical recording—Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, with Koussevitzky conducting—and I listened to it the way most kids listen to popular music. I'd play the last movement, especially the coda, over and over again, and even bring my mother into the room to listen with me. "Isn't that the most fantastic thing you've ever heard?" I'd ask her. "Yes, son, yes," was her gentle, patient response.

Since those formative years I've continued to listen to records zealously and seriously—sometimes therapeutically. When I am not at one with the world or myself, I invariably pull out a long-abused copy of the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet playing Mozart's Divertimento No. 17, in D, K. 334 (Westminster 9069, mono only). This performance has always struck me as one of the most singularly beautiful recordings of chamber music I've ever heard; its continuing effect on me is positively healing. I put on the record, turn out the lights, lie down on the floor, and cry—inside and out. (The way I've treated that record is a minor scandal; miraculously it has survived a decade's worth of fervent use). Marilyn's [mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, the author's wife—Ed.] "therapeutic album" is Joan Sutherland's "Art of the Prima Donna" (London OSA 1214, two discs); when she's really down she plays "A Soldier Tired" or *"Bel raggio."*

I also listen to Bruckner for much the same reason, especially as performed by Furtwängler and Van Beinum. I've even converted Marilyn with Van Beinum's recording of the Eighth on Epic (unfortunately now deleted); before we were married she absolutely hated Bruckner.

I mentioned Furtwängler in connection with Bruckner. Here was a conductor who has been for me an object of great admiration because of his originality, individuality, and honesty. He rightfully freed himself from slavish adherence to the printed note, realizing that the notes as engraved in a score are symbols—much like dance notation. The notation is not the essence of the music, not the spirit; Furtwängler had that rare and great ability to go beyond the printed score, to arrive at and to show us what the music is really about.

Furtwängler recordings have the quality of being *performances* rather than fixed accounts: they are unique, complete, and self-contained. Listen to his Schumann Fourth or Haydn No. 88 (both on Heliodor S 25037) and you have the feeling of attending a live performance.

Oddly enough, Toscanini's approach is quite similar, despite obvious differences in tempo. All this rigmarole about Toscanini being a literalist is utter nonsense. When he didn't like a particular passage—even in a Brahms symphony—he felt free to editorialize, to clarify a texture; in short, to make it sound better. Take his recording of Sibelius' Second Symphony as an example (available only in the five-disc all-Toscanini "Treasury of Historic Broadcasts," RCA LM 6711). If you look at the score, you'll see that Sibelius' indications of tempo changes are at variance with what Toscanini gives us. To some, Toscanini's "tamperings" violate the *letter* of the score, but, like Furtwängler, he captures the *spirit* to a degree unmatched by any bookish slave.

There was a time when I was discouraged about becoming a musician because concerts had become such funereal experiences. Thankfully we are emerging from the musicological stage of the Fifties, when a critic's highest praise was "a no-nonsense performance." This brief but damaging encounter with literalism has ended, and today's young conductors offer real hope for the future.

So far I've dealt with recordings primarily in the context of instrumental music. Needless to say, with a diva for a wife, vocal music plays a large part in my life—and in our record collection. The names of Callas, Nilsson, Stignani, and Tebaldi loom large on our shelves. Legendary figures from the past are well represented too, with special emphasis on Schumann-Heink and Rosa Ponselle. Marilyn's all-time favorite old vocal recordings seem to be exclusively Wagnerian; the Traubel/Toscanini Immolation scene (RCA Victrola VIC 1369, mono only); the Farrell/Svanholm *Siegfried* duet under Leinsdorf (RCA Victor LM 2761, mono only, deleted); and countless Flagstad recordings.

We have a lot of pop favorites too. Lena Horne's and Kay Starr's albums are often played in our house, as are some of the great Dinah Washington's. One of Dinah's best was an early LP called *Queen and Quincy*, a marvelous collaboration with Quincy Jones. We're also fond of some of Petula Clark's early efforts when Tony Hatch was providing her with excellent arrangements.

And *anything* the Beatles do is of interest to me: their influence has been extraordinary. The show *Hair* has really grown on me; in its lyric content and the intensity of its vision the show owes much to the Beatles, especially to their songs *Eleanor Rigby* and the whimsical *Yellow Submarine*.

Our taste in music, then, is not restricted to any single type of diet. Records, aside from providing an enormous amount of pleasure, widen one's scope considerably. Before the era of the phonograph, one's musical knowledge was generally limited to what could be heard at concerts, and this was slim pickings for anyone who lived far from a large cultural center. Today this is no longer the case; records offer the opportunity to delve into diverse musical genres in a way virtually impossible in the past.

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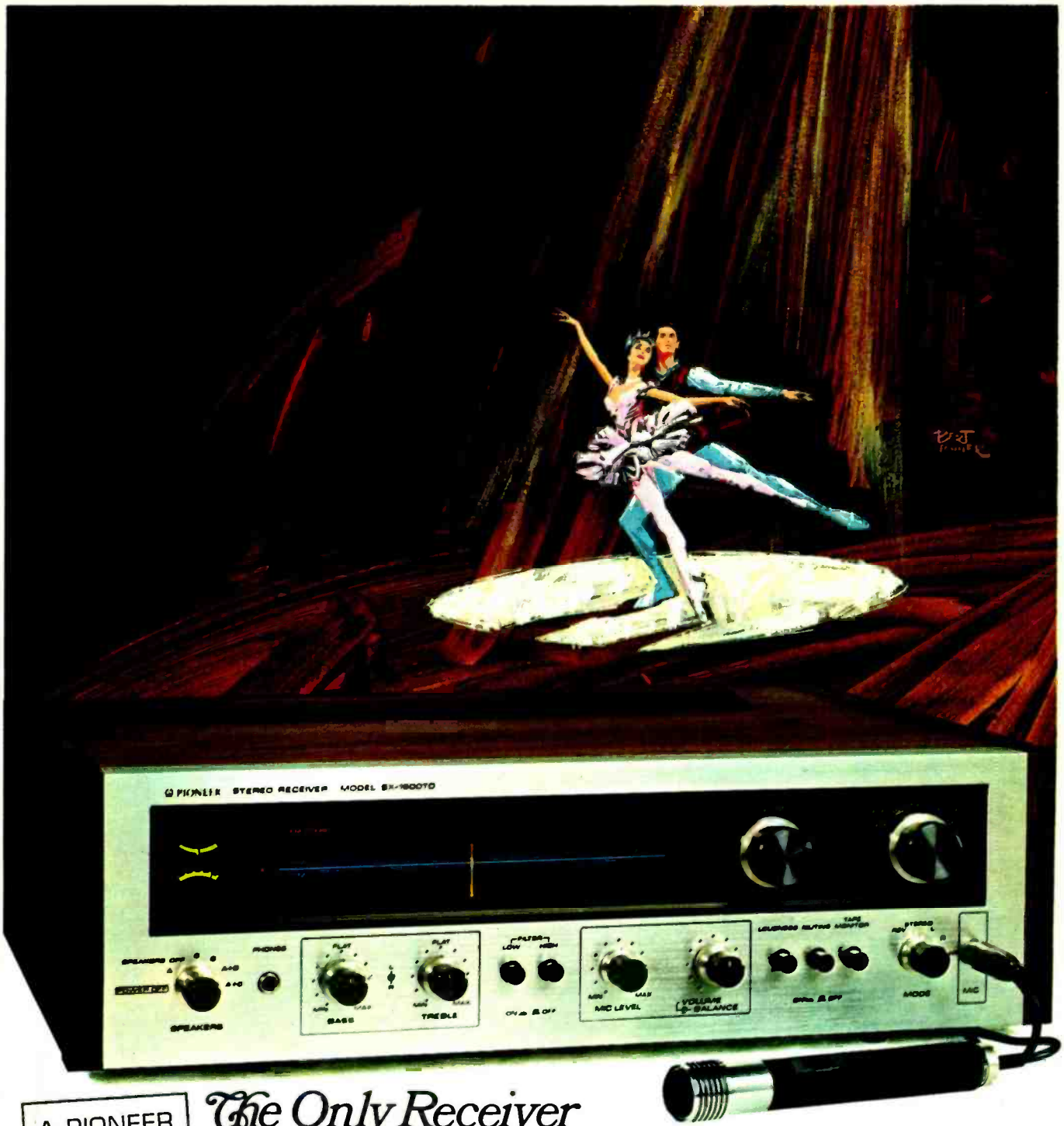

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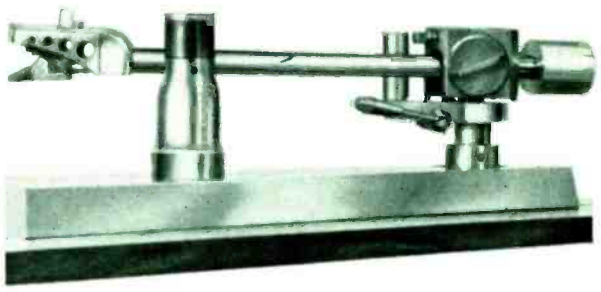

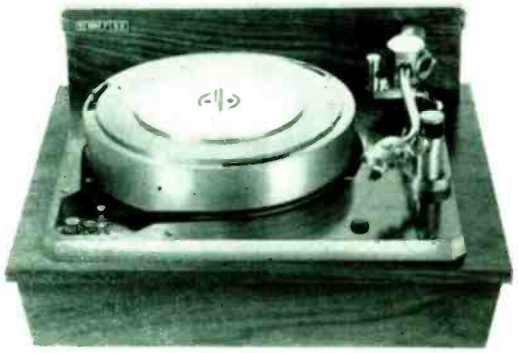

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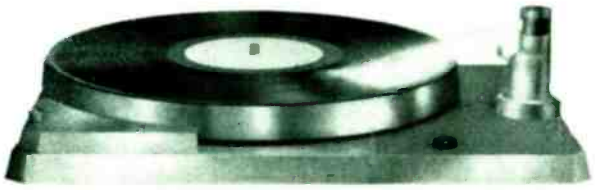

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HIRSCH-HOUCK REALLY FLIPPED OVER THE NEW CONCORD MARK III

And we think you too are going to flip for the same reasons reported by Hirsch-Houck Laboratories in the January issue of *Stereo Review*. But, let Hirsch-Houck do the speaking.

"The Concord Mark III features their new pressure-sintered ferrite heads, which are claimed to have a hardness between that of a sapphire and a diamond and to be correspondingly wear-resistant: it is also claimed that they provide an extremely wide frequency response. We cannot comment on the former claim, but our tests certainly confirmed the latter."

"When we measured the overall playback-frequency response of the Concord Mark III, the advantages from its new heads were immediately apparent...we did not extend our measurements beyond 20,000Hz to check Concord's claim of 27,000Hz response: the results in the audible range were impressive enough!"

"The wow and flutter were respectively 0.015% (the residual level of our test tape) and 0.05%, among the lowest figures we have ever measured on a tape machine."

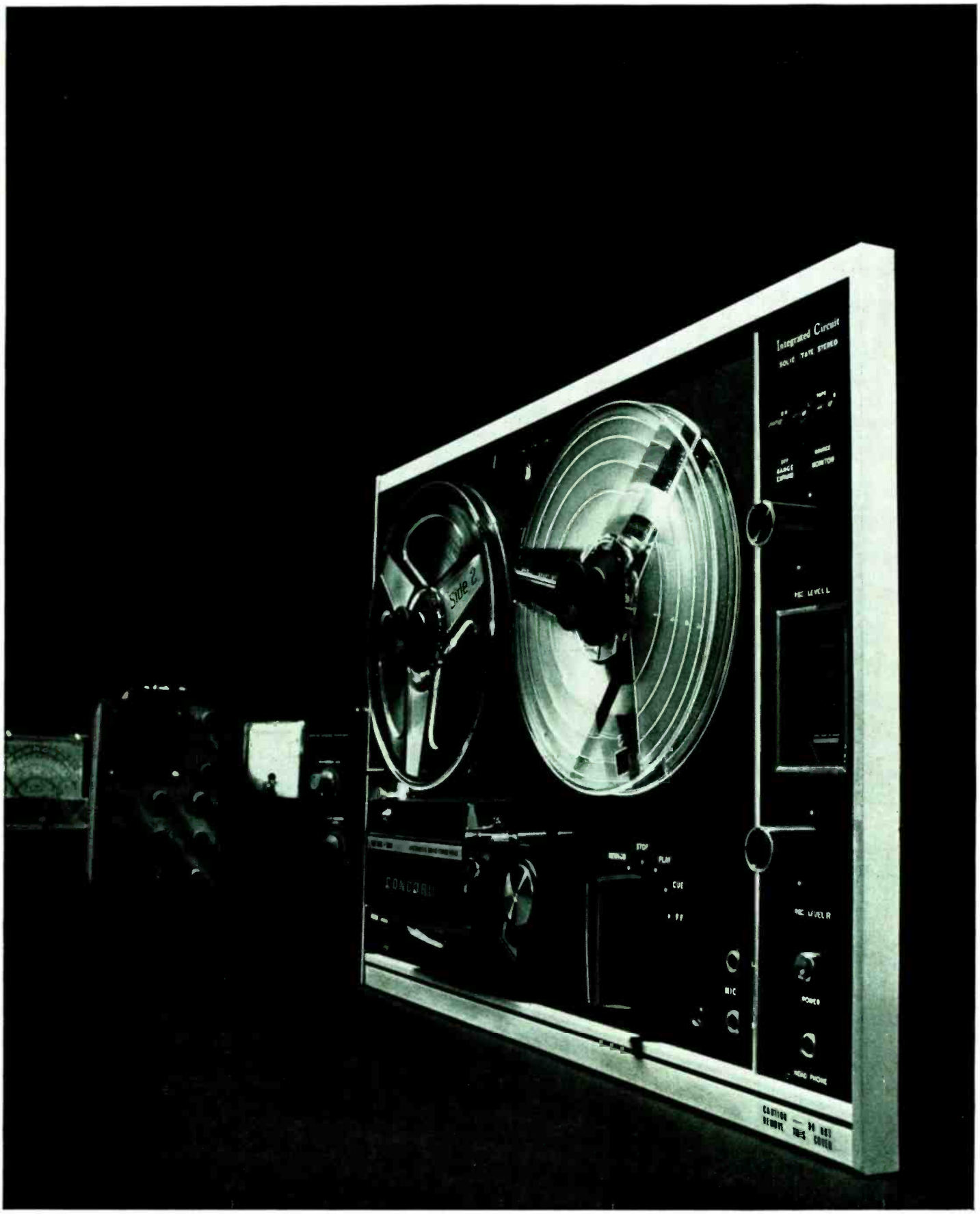
"In any event, the Concord Mark III provided one of the quietest backgrounds in the absence of signal that we have heard (or should we say "not heard"?) from a tape machine."

"In all other respects, the Mark III was equally satisfying. Its frequency response and overall cleanness of sound left little to be desired."

"The best news of all is its price—under $260. We haven't used a tape recorder at that price that could match it (if such machines do exist, we have not had the opportunity to test them)."

The Mark III, under $260, is one of a series of hysteresis-drive tape decks. The Mark II, under $230, similar in every respect except that it uses Hi-Mu laminated record and playback heads and a ferrite erase head. The Mark IV, Concord's top-of-the-line deck, similar to the Mark III, also has an extra playback head and electronic automatic reverse. Audition the new Mark Series at leading high fidelity dealers. For an "all the facts" brochure, write: Concord Electronics Corp., 1935 Armacost Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90025. EPI Subsidiary of Ehrenreich Photo-Optical Industries, Incorporated.

CIRCLE 17 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



CIRCLE 17 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

too hot to handle

Somewhere, late in 1968 I think, I read that the Elpa PE-2018 turntable had a glaring fault. Specifically, when many records were stacked on its spindle, the lower record interfered with the moving tone arm and occasionally fell on the arm, damaging the pickup. Has this fault been corrected?—Ken Barovsky, San Jose, Calif.

First, it wasn't the 2018, but the Model 2020 that was criticized for the fault you mentioned. Second, it was hardly a fault since the records used in the test did not have typically dimensioned center holes. Third, the organization—Consumers Union—which made the criticism has since amended it and given the 2020 a clean bill of health.

The NAB frequency response characteristic is referenced between limits of 50 Hz and 15 kHz. How do manufacturers of prerecorded tapes handle the frequencies that lie beyond these limits? I ask this because I recently ran tests comparing a prerecorded tape of a pipe organ performance with both the disc version of the same recording and a tape dub from the disc. Although tone controls remained flat throughout, it was evident to two pairs of ears that frequencies below 50 Hz or thereabouts were clearly lacking in intensity in the prerecorded tape as compared to both the disc (made by the same manufacturer, of course) and the dub copy of the disc. How would you account for the difference?—James E. Jackson, APO San Francisco, Calif.

The NAB spec you cite refers to FM broadcast performance rather than tape. The NAB open-reel tape standard dated April 1965 does indeed cover the entire range from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. But to answer your question, we would point out that the prerecorded tape and the disc presumably were made from different dub master tapes, each specially prepared for its purpose from the original master tapes. This standard practice generally includes some re-equalization of the program material, at the producer's discretion, depending on either the technical requirements of the reproduction process or those of optimum listening in the home. It's possible, for example, that bass may have been added to the disc master to compensate for presumed bass deficiency in the loudspeakers of average home phonographs. By the same token, the extra bass boost may have been omitted from the tape master on the theory that purchasers of the relatively expensive prerecorded tapes probably will have high-quality playback systems needing no extra bass emphasis. It's equally possible, of course, that the sound on the disc was closer to the original than was that on the prerecorded tape because of less-than-perfect processing of the tape version. Or you may simply be hearing a difference in editorial decision, so to speak, between the two engineering/production teams: the one that worked on the disc version and the one that prepared the tape issue.

In your November issue you announced that there now is an adapter that will permit the Rabco SL-8 tone arm to be used with the AR turntable. I assume that the AR has a nicely balanced suspension system shared by both the arm and the turntable. What happens when you replace that arm, whose weight is negligible, with the SL-8, which weighs three pounds, plus its adapter? Won't it throw the AR suspension off balance?—J. Edmonds, Whitehall, N.Y.

The SL-8 doesn't rest on the old AR arm mounting, but on the AR's top plate. Since the arm/turntable suspension is mounted under the top plate, it is not affected by a weight resting on that plate, particularly when that weight is cushioned by the springs under the Rabco adapter bracket.

I have a Heathkit AA-22 amplifier and an AJ-33A tuner that has been aligned at the factory. Although Heath commented that my assembly job was very good, I hear a background noise on FM similar to the sound on a TV set when there is "snow" instead of a picture. On very weak stereo stations this noise dominates the program material. Can you tell me how to get rid of the noise? If it is any help, I live in an apartment, and use a simple dipole antenna made of 300-ohm twin-lead.—Thomas J. Sebo, Ypsilanti, Mich.

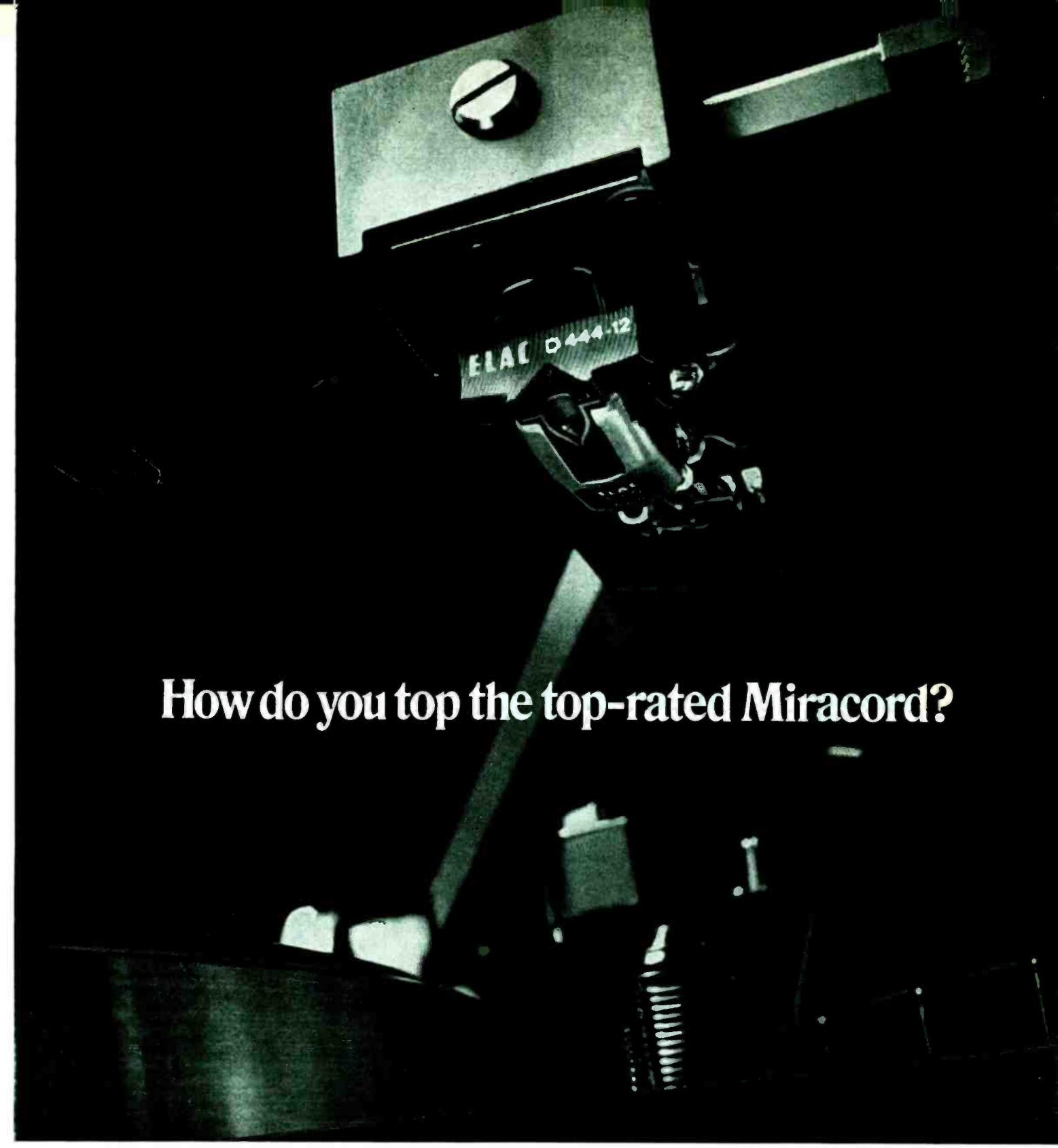
It sounds as though you simply aren't getting enough signal to the antenna terminals of your tuner. You can, of course, buy a more sensitive tuner; but a more practical solution would be to go for a roof-top antenna if the building's regulations will allow it.

The Teac A-1200U has a switch labeled "monitor" at the top and "tape" at the bottom so that, during recording, the user can hear either the incoming signal or the signal that has already been recorded on the tape. If I connect the Teac into the tape input and tape output connections on a stereo console, will this switch continue to function as it should, allowing me to choose either source or tape for monitoring when I record from the console?—Sgt. W. B. Hillhouse, Jr., APO, New York.

That depends on the console. The signal in the leads from the outputs of the Teac to the tape inputs of the console will still be determined by the position of the switch. But unless the console also has a monitor switch of some sort, it will continue to play the program you are recording—phono or radio—unless you switch the console to "tape," which would cut off the program of course. In that case, the only recourse would be to buy a stereo monitor amplifier and an extra pair of speakers, or to butcher the console.

Recently I came across the article "Speakers: Facts and Fiction" in your June 1969 issue and was concerned by your comment that speaker damage can result from the use of inferior amplifiers with quality speakers. I occasionally drive my AR-3a's with a 30-watt Lafayette amplifier. While I have no reason to believe that I have damaged the speakers, which are protected by 1¼-amp fuses, I wonder whether sharp transients or rough bass would be more likely to damage speaker elements. I have always assumed that tweeters were practically immune to physical damage and that the only real danger aside from thermal overload would be rupture of the woofer cone.——Kenneth J. LeGrys, Cambridge, N. Y.

As our article said, speaker damage can occur under these circumstances only in extreme cases—particularly with an unstable amplifier that might break into oscillation. But tweeters as well as woofers can be damaged if this occurs. In fact tweeters usually are designed to handle less power than woofers, since it takes less energy to produce the same loudness level at a high frequency than it does at a low frequency. Far more likely, though of no particular danger to the speakers, is the high distortion level that you may force from a low-powered amplifier in trying to drive your speakers at high volume. As for your Lafayette amp, we don't know exactly which model you are referring to (30 watts per channel? total?), but if the amplifier is in good condition, it should not harm your AR speakers.



How do you top the top-rated Miracord?

Equip it with today's most advanced cartridge, the new Elac 444-E. The Elac 444-E and the Elac/Miracord 50H have much in common. Both are made by ELAC of West Germany. Both have recently received national recognition. The Miracord 50H is acclaimed by leading high fidelity editors & experts. The Elac 444-E rated superior by 50 discerning high fidelity salesmen. These experts tested the Elac 444-E in their home systems and compared it to their present cartridges. A few comments:

"A great groove tamer for the straight-from-the-studio sound lover! All of today's terms won't describe the utmost enjoyment I experienced."

"... probably one of the finest cartridges I've had the privilege to evaluate. I find it superior in all respects."

The Miracord 50H automatic turntable with the Elac 444-E cartridge is about the finest record playback system available today. The Elac 344-E cartridge is an excellent choice with the Miracord 620 (also highly acclaimed by the experts). Elac offers a complete selection of cartridges from $24.95 to $69.50. Miracord, a choice of automatic turntables from $109.50 to $169.50.

Hear them today. **Benjamin Electronic Sound Corp.,** Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735. Div. Instrument Systems Corp.

ELAC/MIRACORD

CIRCLE 8 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Only Marantz Has Gyro-

What's a Marantz?

Any audio engineer or stereo hobbyist will tell you. Marantz builds the world's finest high-fidelity components. And has for fifteen years.

This message, therefore, is not to engineers but to professional musicians, serious music-lovers, and beginning stereo hobbyists. We'd like to introduce you to Marantz.

Never Heard Of Marantz?

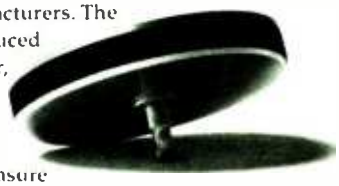
Until this year, the least-expensive Marantz stereo component you could buy cost $300.00. And our FM tuner alone cost $750.00! To own a Marantz, you either had to be moderately wealthy or willing to put beans on the table for awhile. But it was worth it. And a lot of experts thought so, too, because the word soon got around, and the products sold themselves.

What The Competition Said

The chief design engineer of a major competitor once said that no one even tries to compete with many of Marantz' sophisticated features; it would be just too expensive. Marantz designs its circuits the same way the aerospace industry designs missiles and jet planes—for utmost performance and reliability.

Gyro-Touch Tuning

Marantz even offers a different tuning experience because you rotate the actual tuning flywheel. This results in the smoothest, most precise tuning possible. And this Marantz-exclusive design requires considerably fewer moving parts than conventional systems used by other manufacturers. The benefits: reduced friction, wear, and service problems. We call this patented pleasure "Gyro-Touch Tuning."



Features, Not Gimmicks

The unique features of a Marantz component are there for only one purpose: to make possible the highest level of listening enjoyment.

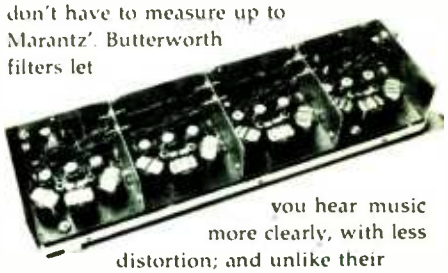
That's why we put an oscilloscope in our best components.

An oscilloscope is kind of a TV tube. But instead of the Wednesday Night Movie, it shows you a green wavy line. An electronic picture of the incoming FM radio signal, telling you exactly how to rotate your antenna for minimum multi-path distortion (ghost signals) and maximum signal strength (clarity) even from the weakest stations.

The "scope" also shows correct stereo phasing: that is, if the broadcasting transmitter or your equipment is out of phase. And it lets you set up optimum stereo performance and reception to create a solid "wall" of sound.

Butterworth Filters

You've probably never heard of Butterworth filters because practically no one else uses them besides Marantz. And the U.S. Military. Other manufacturers feel they can get by without them. And they can. Because their standards don't have to measure up to Marantz'. Butterworth filters let you hear music more clearly, with less distortion; and unlike their conventional I.F. coil or filter counterparts, they never need realignment. They help pull in distant FM stations and separate those right next to each other on the dial. Although Butterworths cost more, Marantz designed not one but four of them into their Model 18 receiver.



Built To Last

Marantz stereo components aren't built in the ordinary way. For example, instead of just soldering connections together with a soldering iron, Marantz uses a highly sophisticated waveflow soldering machine—the type demanded by the Military. The result: perfect, fail-

Touch Tuning!

proof connections every time.

Even our printed circuit boards are a special type—glass epoxy—built to rigid

military specifications, ensuring ruggedness and dependability.

Marantz Power Ratings Are True

When someone tells you he has a "100-watt amplifier," ask him how the power was rated. Chances are his 100 watts will shrink to about 75 or 50 or perhaps even as few as 25. The reason is that most manufacturers of stereo amplifiers measure power by an inflated "peak power" or "IHF music/dynamic power."

Marantz states its power as "RMS continuous power" because Marantz believes this is the only method of measurement that is a true, absolute, scientific indication of how much power your amplifier can put out continuously over the entire audible frequency range.

But if Marantz *were* to use the unscientific conventional method, our Model Sixteen 80-RMS-80 power amplifier could be rated as high as 320 watts per channel!

Moreover, you can depend on Marantz to perform. For example, the Marantz 80-RMS-80 amplifier can be run all day at its full power rating without distortion (except for neighbors pounding on your wall). That's power. And that's Marantz.

Marantz Speaks Louder Than Words

In a way, it's a shame we have to get even semitechnical to explain in words what is best described in the medium of sound. For, after all, Marantz is for the listener. No matter what your choice in music, you want to hear it as closely as possible to the way it was performed.

In spite of what the ads say, you can't really "bring the concert hall into your home." For one thing, your listening room is too small. Its acoustics are different. And a true concert-hall sound level (in decibels) at home would deafen you.

What Marantz does, however, is create components that most closely recreate the sounds exactly as they were played by the musical performers. Components that consistently represent "where it's at" in stereo design. No one gives you as much—in any price range—as Marantz.

Every Marantz Is Built The Same Way

Every Marantz component, regardless of price, is built with the same painstaking craftsmanship and quality materials. That's why Marantz guarantees every instrument for three full years, parts and labor.

Now In All Price Ranges

Today, there is a demand for Marantz-quality components in other than very-high price ranges. A demand made by music-lovers who want the very best but must consider their budgets. Though you can easily invest more than $2000.00 in Marantz components, we now have units starting as low as $199. True, these lower-priced models don't have all of the same features, but the quality of *every* Marantz is exactly the same. Marantz quality.

And quality is what Marantz is all about.

Hear For Yourself

So now that you *know* what makes a Marantz a Marantz, *hear* for yourself. Then let your ears make up your mind.

marantz.
Components • Speaker Systems • Receivers

3M OFFERS A FOUR-CHANNEL DECK

Wollensak is the latest trade name to appear on equipment that can be used to play back Vanguard's Surround Stereo tapes. The Quad/Stereo Model 6154 is similar in appearance to the 6150 pictured here. The prime difference is in the playback head, which reproduces all four tracks independently and simultaneously. The erase and record heads—actually built into a single housing though functioning as separate heads—are the normal stereo variety, however, so quadriphonic recordings cannot be made on the unit.

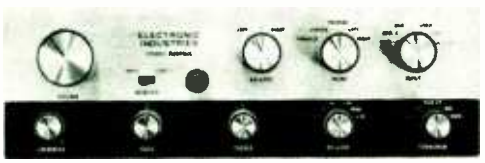
The jack panel on the Wollensak 6154 is also of special interest. By patching inputs and outputs together in the correct configuration, tape echo and sound-on-sound are possible. If you own a half-track stereo recorder on which the initial tracks can be made, stereo sound-on-sound is even possible. So is sound-with-sound, according to 3M, though synchronization will not be perfect in that mode.

The jack panel also has a switch that allows the recorder to be biased either for recording on standard tapes (like Scotch 111) or for the new high-performance tapes (like Scotch Dynarange) that require somewhat higher bias for optimum performance. Since four-channel recordings, in spite of the glamour presently attached to them, are still in the experimental stage, this little bias switch may be the most significant feature of the new unit. It solves the problem of optimum bias so neatly and so simply that we can't help wondering why no manufacturer has thought of it before.

The price at this writing is expected to be somewhere around $500. The similar Model 6364 includes a stereo amplifier as well. Why two listening channels with a four-channel playback head? Simple, says 3M. Most buyers already will have a stereo system to handle two of the channels. The other two channels can be played over the 6364's built-in monitoring system by adding an optional pair of speakers, allowing the owner to hear all four channels without further expenditure.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

YES, BUT WITH TUBES?



Peploe's SPA-1A deluxe preamp-control.

Dual 100 power amp; amplifying channels and power supply occupy separate chassis.

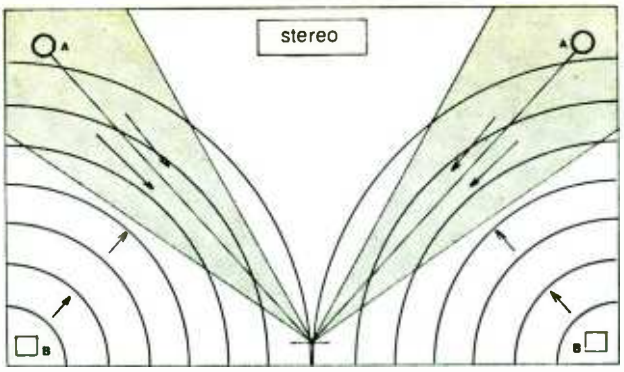
Peploe, Inc. is a name none of us had been aware of until shortly before the Los Angeles High Fidelity Music Show last fall. At that time, advance information about its line of electrostatic speakers and its complementary line of *tubed* electronics began to come our way. Then came the announcement that Peploe had bought out the JansZen Division of Neshaminy, including its basic patents in the electrostatic speaker field.

In Los Angeles, we had our first chance to meet the men who turn the wheels at Peploe and to see their products. We were shown—and regaled by the sound from—a battery of systems ranging from bookshelf size up to hefty floor-standing jobs. All carry the RTR trade name, since they are made by Peploe's RTR Division plant in Canoga Park, California. Electronics are made in Peploe's home town—Minneapolis—by its EI (for Electronics Industries) Division. EI has been making amplifying equipment, largely for the musical instrument market, for the better part of two decades, though it was bought by Peploe only recently.

All the high fidelity electronics are tubed rather than solid-state. Why, you ask? Because, says Peploe, they are designed to drive electrostatic speakers. The load that an electrostatic presents to its associated amplifier is quite different from that of standard cone speakers: electrostatics tend to form an unstable liaison with even the best solid-state amps. The result at its worst is hopeless oscillation. And at best the combination can't offer any iron-clad guarantee that nothing will go amiss.

As we all know from having heard them, not all

Continued on page 42



Shaded areas indicate direct and reflected direct sound from satellites (A). Concentric circles represent omni-directional reverberant sound reproduced by sound cubes (B). Similar acoustical principles apply for any listening position within rectangle formed by satellites and sound cubes.

Now: the practical answer to 4-channel sound.

(From Electrohome, Canada's leading stereo manufacturer)

You've probably heard quite a bit about 4-channel stereo sound. Which means you've also heard about the problems.

Problems like restricting 4-channel sound to tape only and limiting playback time by 50% in the process. Not to mention the cost of replacing your current playback equipment and recordings because they are obsolete.

And finally, the whole thing is not yet available.

Relax. We have a practical answer to 4-channel sound: Electrohome Environment I. And it's here today!

What Is True High-Fidelity?

To provide true high-fidelity reproduction similar to sound experienced under "live" conditions requires consideration of six fundamental acoustic factors.

First — Wide range and wide angle frequency response equal to the response of your ear.

Second — Minimum distortion; less than your ear can detect.

Third — Maximum *natural* power level adequate for your listening room.

Fourth — Stereophonic directional information producing natural physical separation of the orchestral instruments.

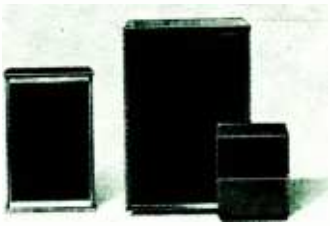
Omni-directional Satellite Speakers.

But There's More

These have been the only factors considered by the High-Fidelity Industry in general. Due to the limitations of speaker positioning, and their sound-radiating patterns, the results even for the above characteristics have been something less than satisfactory. But high-fidelity reproduction is dependent upon other equally important factors which have been ignored until recently:

Fifth — Reproduction or simulation of spatial characteristics of orchestral instruments, i.e., a grand piano should sound like a large instrument instead of a small point source.

Sixth — The reproduction or simulation of the omni-directional reverberant sounds characteristic of a good concert hall (as a separate entity from the directional sounds from the orchestra.)



High Efficiency Tuned-Port Speaker Systems. Adaptable to Satellites: Electrohome full range speaker systems are restricted to bass reproducers when used with satellites. Frequencies above 200 Hz are radiated from the satellites, and the non-directional frequencies below 200 Hz from the bass reproducer. Similarly when satellites are used with Electrohome consoles the bass frequencies are reproduced from the console cabinet only.

Omni-Directional Satellites: A Forward Step

Pioneered in 1960, these treble speakers are designed to radiate in a hemispherical pattern to provide direct high-frequency dispersion to all parts of the listening room. In addition their radiation pattern provides expansion of the sound source by controlled reflection from the adjacent wall and ceiling areas, producing the natural "acoustic" size of the instruments in the orchestra. With even distribution of sound in a hemispherical pattern no reflected beaming of sound occurs which can reduce or confuse stereo directional information. Corner location of these satellites provides natural separation of instruments, raises the sound source through the large radiating area of reflected sound, and literally forms a sound stage in front of the listener. (It is interesting to note that nine years after the introduction of satellites by Electrohome, many so-called "leaders" are heralding their own adaption of the technique as a "major development" and "substantial breakthrough.")

Environment I: A Giant Step

Electrohome engineers didn't stop here. There remained the problem of controlled omni-directional reverberation, a significant quality of any live concert hall performance. The limited reverberation electronically injected on most recordings is *supplemented* by the output from Environment I dispersed through a pair of full-range omni-directional Sound Cubes.

Thus natural loudness levels of the environmental sounds of the concert hall reach the ear from a non-directional source. This sound is designed to have a delay of 25 milliseconds and a reverberant period of 1.8 seconds, which are the reverberant characteristics of an ideal concert hall. The Environment I unit is a dual-channel 30-watt amplifier with dual dynamic reverb components producing the desired frequency pattern of reverberant sound. In conjunction with omni-directional satellite speakers, Environment I forms the world's first total Environmental/Audio System — or a complete four-channel sound system. *Most important, it functions with today's FM stereo and does not obsolete present tape or record libraries.*

Electrohome Modular Amplifiers, Cassette Recorder and Turntables. Two amplifier — turntable combinations are available: 40 watt (E.I.A.) with Dual 1210 changer and 60 watt (E.I.A.) with Dual 1209 changer.

Hearing Is Believing

Ask your Electrohome dealer for a demonstration. All the technical talk in the world won't convince you of its incredible realism as much as hearing one selection of your favourite stereo recording in four-channel sound on Electrohome Environment I. Or mail the coupon and we'll look up the dealer for you — and send more information. But don't waste time waiting for 4-channel stereo from all those "leaders." Remember — it took them nine years to catch up with Satellite Sound.

ELECTROHOME

...an extra degree of excellence.

Please forward complete data on Electrohome Environment I and Electrohome Stereo Modules, as well as the name of my nearest Electrohome dealer.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail to: Electrohome Limited, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

CIRCLE 24 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

180 WATTS of SANSUI POWER

SANSUI 5000A

180 (IHF) watts of Sansui power are built into the 5000A—an AM/FM stereo receiver that has been created for the connoisseur who demands the ultimate in tonal magnificence and clarity of sound. The Sansui 5000A ***features a new FM Pack with linear tuning for greater selectivity and pin-point station selection*** . . . All-Silicon AM tuner for maximum stability . . . inputs for three separate sets of speaker systems . . . records up to 4 tape decks simultaneously . . . just a few of the features which will make the Sansui 5000A the nucleus of your most comprehensive hi-fi music system for years to come. At your Sansui Audio Dealer. **$449.95**

Sansui® **SANSUI ELECTRONICS CORP.**

Woodside, New York, 11377 • Los Angeles, California 90007

SANSUI ELECTRIC CO., LTD., Tokyo, Japan • Frankfurt a.M., West Germany • **Electronic Distributors** (Canada), British Columbia

CIRCLE 55 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

 Continued from page 38

electrostatic/solid-state combinations are headed for disaster, of course. But Peploe sees no reason why we should worry about the possibility when tubes can drive electrostatics—and drive them superbly if the circuitry is well designed—with nary a hint of potential instability. All told, the EI Division makes four models. Two are preamps: the SPA-2 at $395 and the deluxe SPA-1A (with niceties like separate roll-off and turnover equalization controls) at $750. The power amps are the Dual 50 and Dual 100, rated at 50 watts and better than 75 watts rms per channel respectively. The former sells for $395, the latter (are you ready?) for $1,500.

Obviously, it's a superhigh-quality market that Peploe is aiming at. Between Peploe's new systems and the former JansZen line, however, speaker prices cover a broad range down to under $100 for some of the separate drivers and the JanKit (an electrostatic tweeter plus an eleven-inch cone woofer mounted on a baffle for custom installation).

CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

MORE ABOUT THE NEW HOME VIDEO RECORDERS

In the January issue, this column devoted space to the RCA SelectaVision system for playing back prepared video materials in the home; we went on to mention a number of magnetic-type systems—that is, those embodying record as well as playback functions for home use—that were lurking in the wings. Since then, a bit more information about the magnetic systems has come our way.

For one thing, the Sony Videocassette system has been shown in New York. The basic deck may cost as little as $350, according to Sony, and can be equipped to record by adding an adapter that is expected to sell for around $100. The deck plays through a standard black-and-white or color TV receiver. The Videocassettes themselves

Sony's video cassette system: shown in New York, but not expected on the market this year.

measure 8 by 5 by 1¼ inches and were developed in conjunction with Philips of the Netherlands, which already has announced a similar system. Grundig likewise is said to be working with the Videocassettes and is expected to announce a compatible system in due course.

A Matsushita cassette-type system also has been announced in Tokyo and presumably will be available here under the Panasonic name. It is not compatible with the Sony/Philips cassettes, however. It uses half-inch tape and will be compatible with the current Panasonic, Sony, and similar open-reel home recorders. A company spokesman has described the Panasonic cassettes as convenience packaging of present video tapes rather than a new and incompatible video recording system.

None of these systems is expected on the U.S. market this year, and it could be several years before some are available in appreciable quantities. In this interim, other companies are sure to have something to say on the subject. As we said last time, it's still anybody's horse race.

equipment in the news

New top model for the Miracord line

Benjamin Electronic Sound has announced that the three-speed Elac Miracord Model 770H should be available from dealers by the time this issue appears. Among its new features is a fine-tuning speed control system that uses a built-in strobe disc with a numerical readout to indicate when the turntable is precisely on the speed for which it is set. Another unusual feature is an elapsed time stylus wear indicator. There also is provision for stylus overhang adjustment and antiskating. At this writing, the 770H is expected to sell for $199.50.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Heath introduces two new receiver kits

Heath's first new receivers since the AR-15 display a certain family resemblance to the earlier model but are considerably lower priced. Both kits are stereo FM/AM models. The AR-29, pictured here, will sell for $285. It features a new, permanently tuned nine-pole L-C IF filter system in the FM tuner section and is rated at 35 watts continuous power per channel into either 8 or 4 ohms. The AR-19, at $225, is similar except that it has a conventional IF filtering system and a less powerful amplifier section. Both kits are designed so that front-panel meters can be used to check the sets' operation without external test equipment.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Continued on page 44

Continued from page 42

First Sherwood receiver with new styling

At recent shows, prototypes of Sherwood components with a new look have been on display. Now the company has announced availability of a premium-quality stereo FM receiver, the SEL-200, embodying the new look. Sherwood calls attention to the SEL-200's toroid IF filter design, which it says will outperform other IF filter configurations. Other unusual features include a calibrated loudness control, front-panel connections for both input and output of a second tape recorder, a stereo-only mode in the tuner circuit, and a dimmer for the front-panel lights. The SEL-200 is rated at 60 watts per channel rms into 8 ohms, or 85 watts into 4 ohms. It sells for $599.

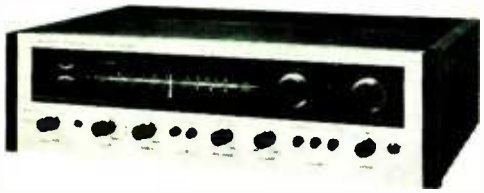
CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Roberts features reversing, Cross Field head

The Roberts Model 800X is a three-speed (7½, 3¾, and 1⅞ ips), three-motor recorder with a built-in stereo monitoring system. It uses a Cross Field bias head for recording (in stereo or mono) and will accept reel sizes up to 10½ inches in diameter with an optional NAB-reel adapter. Reversing is automatic in playback and is cued by metallic foil strips in the tape. The Model 800X sells for $539.95.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Unplugability in Pioneer receiver



Pioneer's SX-990 stereo FM/AM receiver offers a feature that seems to be growing in popularity. Specifically, preamp and amplifier sections of the receiver function independently and are interconnected through jumper cables on the rear jack panel. By removing the jumpers, outboard equipment such as an electronic crossover network, can be added to the system without internal changes. The SX-990 also has both U.S.-style and DIN inputs and outputs for tape recorders, while special preamp output jacks can be used with Pioneer's self-powered speakers as a switched alternative system to the receiver's built-in amp and conventional speakers. Output is rated at 28 watts per channel continuous into 8-ohm loads; the price is $299.95.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Cassette deck anticipates four-channel tapes

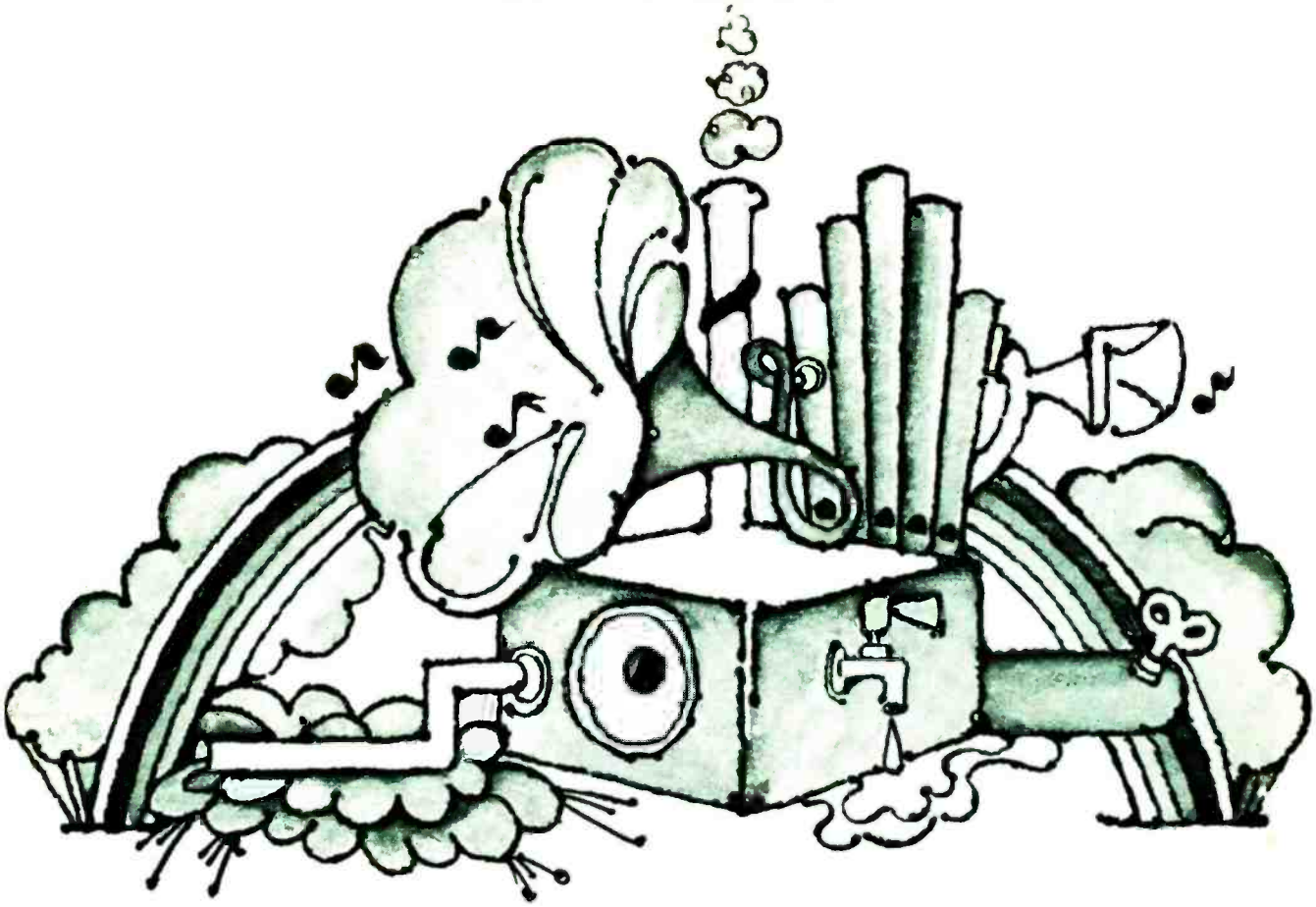
Kenrich Purchasing Corp. has announced the Lumistor Products LP-1 cassette deck, to be marketed with a converter kit containing a four-channel record/playback head and an extra pair of record and playback preamps, including input level controls. The LP-1 without the converter kit will sell for $99.95, and will be capable of normal stereo or mono recording or playback. The converter kit, which is expected to sell for $49.95, is designed to add all that would be needed for four-channel operation.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Compact plays FM, AM, records, cassettes

Allied Radio has announced a stereo compact system that may be purchased without speakers or with a pair of Allied three-way bookshelf units. Output of the amplifier section is listed at 17.6 watts rms per channel into 4-ohm loads. The cassette deck will record directly from the tuner, which is equipped with built-in antennas for both AM and FM, from the four-speed record changer or from microphones, which may be added to the system. Without speakers, the price is $349.95; the complete system sells for $379.95.

CIRCLE 154 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



HO HUM
Another major breakthrough

Oh No! Not Again! Yes it seems that every year someone "re-invents" one of the discarded speaker designs of the past. Or they purport to modify the laws of physics by miniaturizing a 32-foot wavelength. They may even write a "technical" article on their revolutionary discovery and succeed in getting it published.

We customarily make an optimistic estimate that these speakers will survive five years. Some make it. Some even get re-invented all over again after a subsequent five years. In the meantime they sell. Because they sound different. Different from all other speakers. Different from the live performance.

We'd sort of miss them if they failed to show up. After all, what would spring be without a new major breakthrough? And would it really be fall without the letter edged in black? Pity!

So—aren't you glad you own KLIPSCHORNS?

Paul

Paul W. Klipsch
Klipsch and Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 280
Hope, Arkansas 71801

P. S. We have a list of over 20 major breakthroughs that have appeared, died and were interred. Your Klipsch dealer will be glad to show it to you. We know some more good prospects for this list. You can't see those names — until next year.

KLIPSCH & ASSOCIATES
Box 280 H-2
Hope, Arkansas 71801

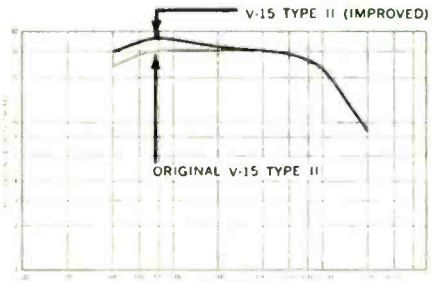
Please send me complete information on Klipsch speakers and Klipsch Wide Stage Stereo. Also include the name of my nearest Klipsch Authorized Audio Expert.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Occupation _____ Age _____

CIRCLE 36 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The "Mint 400" Del Webb Desert Rally

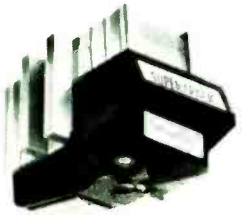
EVEN A ½ TON DUNE BUGGY SOMETIMES WEIGHS ¾ GRAM



TRACKABILITY CHART (1 GRAM STYLUS FORCE)

The same inertial forces that make a vehicle airborne when cresting a hill affect the tracking force of the phono stylus. Record surfaces, unfortunately, are a morass of miniscule hills and valleys. When the stylus is nominally tracking at 1 gram, this force significantly *increases* as the stylus enters a "hill," and *decreases* as it begins the downward "plunge." In addition, frictional characteristics of the tone arm or record changer mechanism may further affect uniformity of tracking forces; however, the *Shure V-15 Type II Improved Cartridge* retains its trackability throughout the audio spectrum. It accomplishes this difficult task within a critically determined latitude of tracking forces (¾ to 1½ grams) to insure continuous contact with the groove walls regardless of the varying tracking forces caused by the hills and valleys in a record groove.

Here is why fractions-of-a-gram are important to record and stylus-tip life: ¾ gram tracking exerts a force of 60,000 lbs. per sq. in. on the groove walls —and this rises to 66,000 lbs. per sq. in. at 1 gram, and 83,000 lbs. at 2 grams. At 2 grams you have added over *11½ tons* per sq. in. to the groove walls *over ¾ gram tracking!* Think about it.



SHURE V-15 TYPE II (IMPROVED)

Shure Brothers Inc., 222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204

CIRCLE 57 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

new equipment reports THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

SCOTT OFFERS LOW-COST RECEIVER

THE EQUIPMENT: Scott 342C, a stereo FM receiver. Dimensions: 15¾ by 11½ by 5 inches. Price: $269.95. Manufacturer: H. H. Scott, Inc., 111 Powdermill Road, Maynard, Mass. 01754.

COMMENT: One of the lowest-priced sets ever brought out by Scott, the model 342C combines a stereo FM tuner and a medium-powered control amplifier. Among its visual features are a tuning dial that "blacks out" when the set is turned off, and a light that comes on automatically to illuminate the legend "perfectune" when you have zeroed in on an FM station (this is in addition to a signal strength tuning meter, and another illuminated "stereo" sign). The set's circuitry boasts the use of quartz IF filters that are said never to need realignment, printed circuit modules that snap into place (thus eliminating soldering problems between circuit sections and also facilitating servicing), and another new form of wiring hookup known as "wire wrap" which Scott says is the "successor to the solder joint."

Among more familiar features are the logging scale under the FM channel markings, and five knobs: the program selector (phono, FM, Extra 1, Extra 2); dual concentric bass control (either channel independently or both simultaneously, as you choose); a similar acting treble control; channel balance; and power off/on switch combined with loudness control. Following these are push buttons for high filter, loudness compensation, tape monitor, stereo/mono mode, interstation muting, and two-speaker system selection (two controls that let you turn on or off either or both of the two stereo speaker systems that you connect at the rear). A headphone jack, to the right of these switches, is live at all times. In common with much of Scott equipment, the loudness compensation switch actually introduces its bass boost in the normal position (you have to push the button to convert the loudness control to an uncompensated volume control); this is in keeping with a long-held Scott concept that some bass boost is agreeable for normal listening situations.

Speaker hookups at the rear are of two kinds: for the "number 1" stereo pair, screws on a barrier strip are used; for the second stereo pair, phono jacks are used which means that if you opt to run a second set of speakers from the 342C you'll have to connect them via leads that are correctly soldered (with respect to polarity) to phono plugs. Input jacks are provided for connecting signals from a magnetic phono pickup, from two high level sources, and for the tape monitor function. Another set of jacks permits feeding signals into a tape recorder. Twin-lead antenna terminals (300-ohm) and one unswitched AC outlet are also on the rear. The AC line and each amplifier output channel are protected by individual fuses.

In our tests the FM section of the 342C scored very well: IHF sensitivity was clocked at 2 microvolts and full quieting of 46 dB was reached for only 15 microvolts of signal at the antenna terminals. The set logged 38 stations on our cable FM outlet—more or less what you might expect from a receiver in this price class—of which 30 were judged suitable for critical long-term listening or off-the-air taping. The tuner section sounded wide-range, clean, and well balanced on both channels. The set's amplifier section, which produced medium power at very low distortion, could drive low-efficiency speakers, and its stability and versatility were confirmed by hooking up two sets of stereo speakers as well as stereo headphones, and driving them all at once. Distortion at normal output levels remained almost nonmeasurable across most of the audio band.

For an economy set that does "everything," from a name manufacturer, the 342C represents a nice balance of performance characteristics, and could serve as the heart of a relatively compact but very good stereo installation. The set comes in an integral metal case which may be placed "as is" on a shelf, or fitted into a custom cut-out. Alternatively, you can order an optional wooden cabinet for an additional $22.50. (For lab data and response graphs, please see following pages.)

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

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.

Scott 342C Receiver *Additional Data*

Tuner Section

Capture ratio	1.5 dB
S/N ratio	67 dB
IM distortion	0.81%

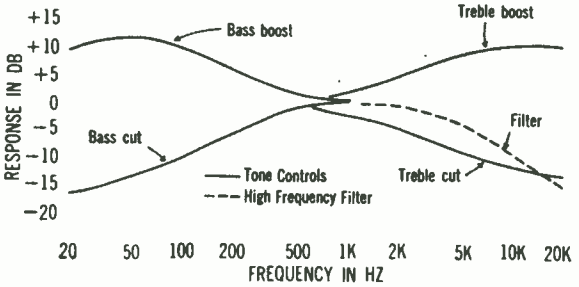
THD	mono	l ch	r ch
40 Hz	0.74%	3.0%	2.6%
400 Hz	0.53%	2.4%	2.0%
1 kHz	0.38%	1.3%	0.98%

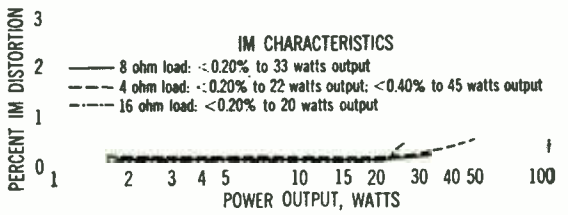
19-kHz pilot	−66 dB
38-kHz subcarrier	−67 dB

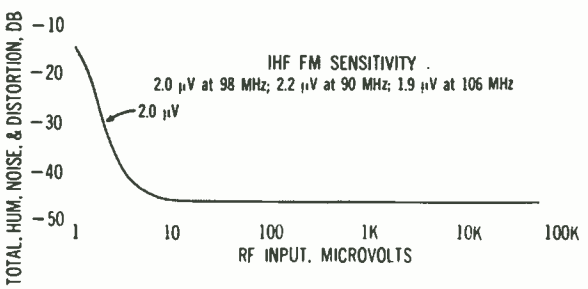
Amplifier Section

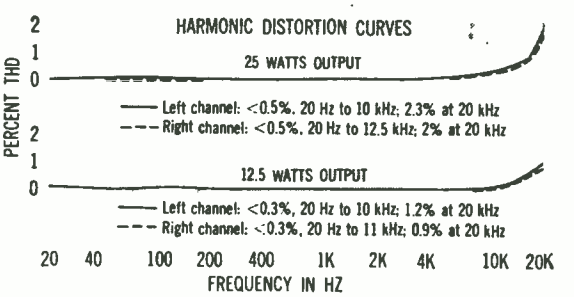
Damping factor	25

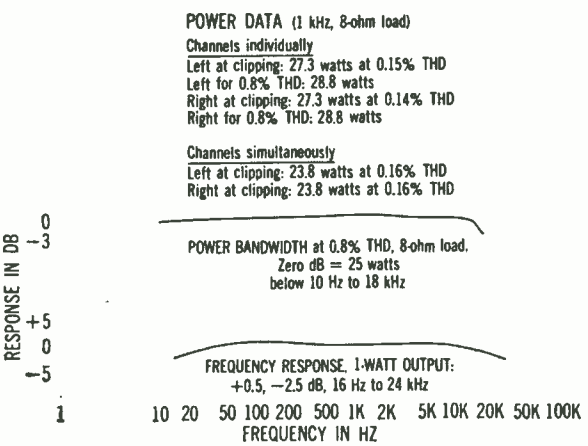
Input characteristics (for 25 watts output)	Sensitivity	S/N
phono	3.3 mV	53 dB
extra 1	450 mV	64.5 dB
extra 2	450 mV	64.0 dB

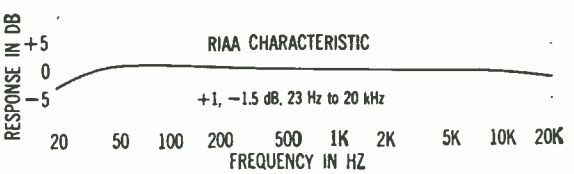


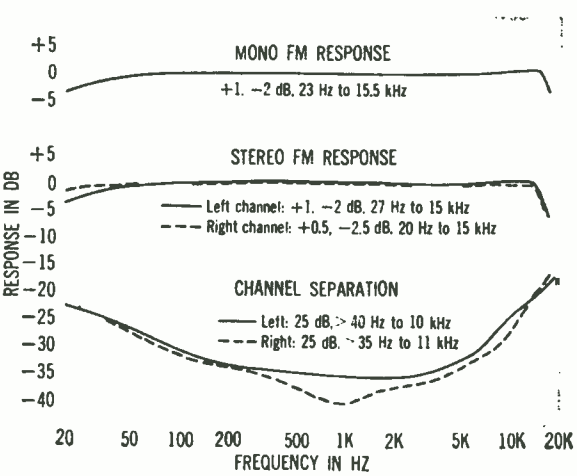




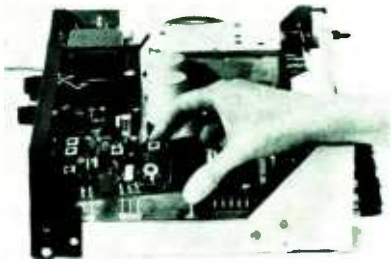








Square-wave response.



Circuit techniques used in the Scott include preamplifier (above left) made up of integrated circuits on printed board, IF strip (above right) containing quartz filter and "perfectune" circuit, and (lower right) plug-in board type of construction which helps standardize manufacturing process and facilitates servicing of equipment.

FISHER'S COMPACT CASSETTE RECORDER

THE EQUIPMENT: Fisher RC-70, a cassette tape record/playback deck. Dimensions: 5 by 11½ by 3 inches. Price (includes two microphones, cables, and blank C-60 cassette): $149.95. Manufacturer: Fisher Radio Corp., 11-35 45th Road, Long Island City, N. Y. 11101.

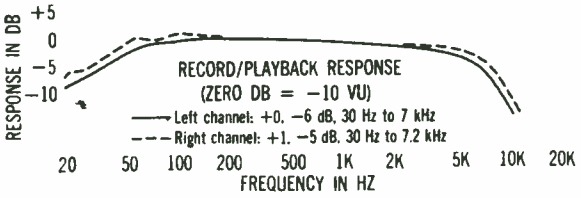
COMMENT: Fisher's entry into the burgeoning cassette tape field is a very compact deck that packs an impressive sonic wallop. Plug it into a high-quality playback system, put on any good prerecorded cassette, and listen: you may not believe that the sounds you hear are coming from a tape unit running at only 1⅞-ips speed and small enough to carry around in a briefcase. Some of the clues to this sound are found in the RC-70's excellent playback response, its low distortion, and its high signal-to-noise ratio.

The RC-70 has no built-in power amp or speakers. It does, however, contain preamps for recording and playback, and so it may be connected into the "tape feed" or "tape out" jacks (for the former function) of any standard receiver or amplifier; into the "tape play" or other high-level inputs (for the latter function). Connecting cables are supplied. The RC-70 also comes with a pair of mikes, for live stereo recording, and a blank 60-minute cassette.

Connections for signals in and out, and for the AC power cord, are at the rear. Topside, there's a three-digit tape index counter with reset button, the standard well into which you insert the cassete, and a row of press-to-use key controls. This group includes buttons for recording (with safety interlock to prevent accidental erasure of recorded tapes), fast rewind, stop/eject, play/record, fast-forward, and pause. Below this group are a pair of well-marked VU meters, left

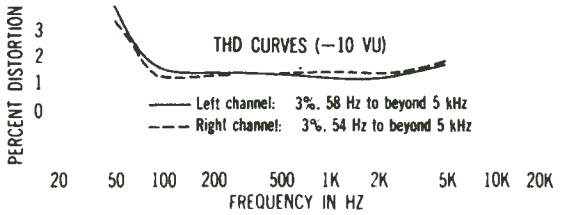
Fisher RC-70 Cassette Recorder
Additional Data

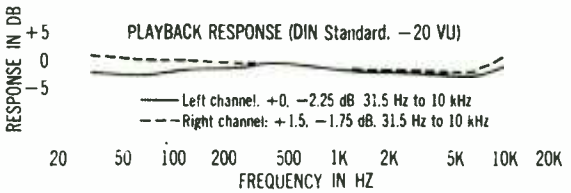
Performance characteristic	Measurement
Speed accuracy, 1⅞ ips	105 VAC: 2.1% fast 120 VAC: 2.1% fast 127 VAC: 2.1% fast
Wow and flutter, 1⅞ ips	playback: 0.13% record/playback: 0.18%
Rewind time, C-60 cassette	1 min., 4 sec.
Fast-forward time, same cassette	0 min., 59 sec.
S/N ratio (ref. O VU, test tape)	
playback	l ch: 51 dB r ch: 51 dB
record/playback	l ch: 47 dB r ch: 47 dB
Erasure (400 Hz, normal level)	60 dB
Crosstalk (400 Hz)	
record left, playback right	37 dB
record right, playback left	35 dB
Sensitivity (for O VU recording level)	
high level (line) input	l ch: 200 mV r ch: 179 mV
mike input	l ch: 0.7 mV r ch: 2.1 mV
Accuracy, built-in meters	left: reads 3 dB high right: reads 2.5 dB high
IM distortion (record/play, −10 VU)	l ch: 12.5% r ch: 16.5%
Maximum output	l ch: 1.2 V r ch: 1.0 V



and right mike inputs, a stereo/mono mode switch, a power off/on switch, and a dual concentric recording level control that regulates gain on each channel simultaneously or independently, as you choose. The deck also has two pilot lamps: one indicating power on; the other, recording mode.

As a recorder, the RC-70 stands up well in the cassette arena. If you watch the VU meters so as not to peak the needles into the distortion area (marked in red), you'll find that cassettes dubbed on the unit from other sources sound surprisingly like the original, with more clear highs than you'd expect and a reasonably low hiss level. Tape speed is slightly high, like other cassette models, all of which apparently do run somewhat faster than the nominal 1⅞-ips speed. Wow and flutter are inaudible. Both channels are closely matched and show the same smooth response, with good head-to-tape contact, over the unit's useful range.





As we've found to be true of all cassette machines, operating the RC-70 proves to be both simple and enjoyable. There's something about this product form that should arouse an interest in tape on the part of many who otherwise might shy away from the cost and complexity of a full-size deck.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

E-V'S HIGH STYLE SPEAKER SYSTEMS

THE EQUIPMENT: Electro-Voice Aries, a full-range speaker system in enclosure. Dimensions: 22¼ by 27½ by 16¼ inches. Price: $275. Manufacturer: Electro-Voice, Inc., Buchanan, Mich. 49107.

COMMENT: With its Aries series of speaker systems, E-V is making an obvious effort to appeal to those concerned with decor as well as with sound. The former appeal is evident in the three styles in which the new system comes (traditional, contemporary, and Spanish). The latter consideration becomes evident as you listen to the Aries: it's a full-bodied, clean, wide-range reproducer.

Essentially an enlarged form of air-suspension system, the Aries employs a very high-compliance 12-inch woofer, a 6-inch midrange speaker, and a 2½-inch tweeter—all radiating directly from behind a highly styled grille. Crossover frequencies are at 400 and at 2,500 Hz. The system, nominally intended for floor placement, could conceivably be placed on a low bench if desired. Moderately efficient, the Aries can be driven by just about any amplifier, and is rated for peak power of 70 watts. Input impedance is 8 ohms; connections are made via screw-type binding posts at the rear, where there's also a five-step high-frequency control.

The speaker system is fairly sensitive to how you adjust this control; we found after considerable listening that either the minimum position (No. 1), or the step just above that (No. 2) gave us the most satisfying tonal balance. Positions higher than No. 2, at least in our room, lent the sound a richly bright quality which indeed some of our younger friends preferred, especially for listening to rock. In any case, adjusted to our taste, we found the highs very agreeably projected and amply spread through the listening area, with no real beaming effects discernible until just above 10 kHz. From here on up, the response pattern narrowed gradually, with 14 kHz audible only on axis. From here the response began its slope toward inaudibility. The midrange sounded full and level. At the low end, response seemed to diminish a bit at about 65 Hz but remained very clean and defined, rolling off smoothly to about 47 Hz where the first real signs of doubling became evident. This effect increased at about 35 Hz, but strong fundamental bass—albeit mixed with some doubling—could be heard down to 22 Hz. No more than the usual minor variations could be discerned throughout the speaker's range. On white noise, the Aries' response varied very noticeably, with different settings of the rear control, from smooth to moderately harsh. As you might expect, the pattern sounded smoother at lower settings of the control.

On stereo program material, the pair of Aries projected a very wide sound front into the listening area, easily demonstrating an ability to cover a larger-than-average room with clean sound. In smaller rooms, and/or at lower listening levels, one might prefer to readjust the amplifier tone controls somewhat if position No. 1 or 2 on the speaker still projects a strong upper midrange.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

SONY INTRODUCES AN EXCELLENT COMPACT

THE EQUIPMENT: Sony HP-465, a modular (three-piece) stereo system consisting of control module (automatic turntable and control amplifier) plus two separate speaker systems, all in walnut housings. Dimensions: control module, including dust cover supplied, 17 7/8 by 16 by 10 inches; each speaker system, 14 3/16 by 14 1/8 by 7 1/2 inches. Price: $249.95. Manufacturer: Sony Corp. of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

COMMENT: The mods march on with this recent entry from Sony, which exemplifies all the virtues of the increasingly popular "three-piece" stereo system: attractive styling, simplicity of installation and use, and, above all, very respectable performance that belies the system's relatively low cost and compact dimensions. The HP-465 consists of a "control module" which contains an amplifier and a four-speed automatic turntable. The latter is a Garrard 3500, very similar—except for minor style changes—to the Garrards used in many other compact systems, and actually a variation of the Garrard AT-60 reported here in November 1965. This player comes fitted with a Pickering V-15/AT-3 magnetic cartridge, another component often found in compact systems and similar to the Pickering V-15 reported here in April 1967.

The record player sits in a walnut-sided cabinet fitted with a dark-tinted, heavy plastic lift-up cover. Fronting it, the control panel contains a large volume knob with a pointer that lights up when the set is turned on; smaller knobs for channel balance, treble, and bass; slide switches for stereo/mono mode and for input program selection; a speaker off/on toggle switch; and a power off/on rocker switch. A stereo headphone jack is live regardless of the position of the speaker switch. The power switch, in its "off/auto" position, lets you turn on the HP-465 by starting its turntable; it will shut everything off when you stop the turntable (or let it stop by itself in automatic operation). In its regular "on" position, the switch turns on the built-in amplifier for use with other program sources. The treble and bass controls regulate their respective tonal ranges simultaneously on both channels. All the controls have a luxurious look and "feel"—very reminiscent of Sony's higher priced separate component line.

The rear of the module contains stereo input jacks for tape-deck playback and an additional high-level signal source, such as a stereo tuner. Another pair of jacks feeds signals from the HP-465 to a tape recorder. Speaker connectors also are phono-jacks; the nearly 20-foot speaker cables supplied with the set fit these jacks and similar jacks on the speakers themselves. An unswitched AC outlet and the system's AC power cord complete the rear picture.

This amplifier, as tested at CBS Labs, shapes up as a very competent, clean, medium-low-powered unit eminently capable of driving the speakers supplied. Its published rating of 18 watts music power (per channel) corresponds to the lab's measured 14 watts of continuous rms power. Power bandwidth, within the design limits of the unit, is ample; distortion at normal listening levels is close to nonmeasurable across most of the audio range. The high-end response continues comfortably to beyond audibility to contribute a nice margin of stability to the set and help in its transient response. The low end, as expected, rolls off—but smoothly—below the 40-Hz mark. Signal-to-noise characteristics are excellent.

For each of the HP-465's speaker systems, Sony has designed a two-way reproducer utilizing a 6½-inch woofer and a 3-inch tweeter, installed with dividing network in a front-duct-loaded enclosure that functions as a small bass-reflex type. Styling—in brushed chrome and walnut—matches that of the control module. The sound is extremely smooth and uncolored; indeed, within their design range, these speakers strike us as among the cleanest and smoothest yet auditioned. The bass end holds up firmly and cleanly down to 50 Hz; below this frequency, doubling begins and at about 45 Hz, response just seems to drop out. Upward from the bass, response is very linear and balanced in amplitude, with no audible peaks or dips. Dispersion also is very good, with no real directive effects becoming noticeable until at 6 kHz. From here up, the response pattern narrows very gradually, although 10 kHz remains audible well off-axis. At 12 kHz, the response is audible mainly on axis, and from 13 kHz, it begins a slope toward inaudibility. White noise response is remarkably smooth,

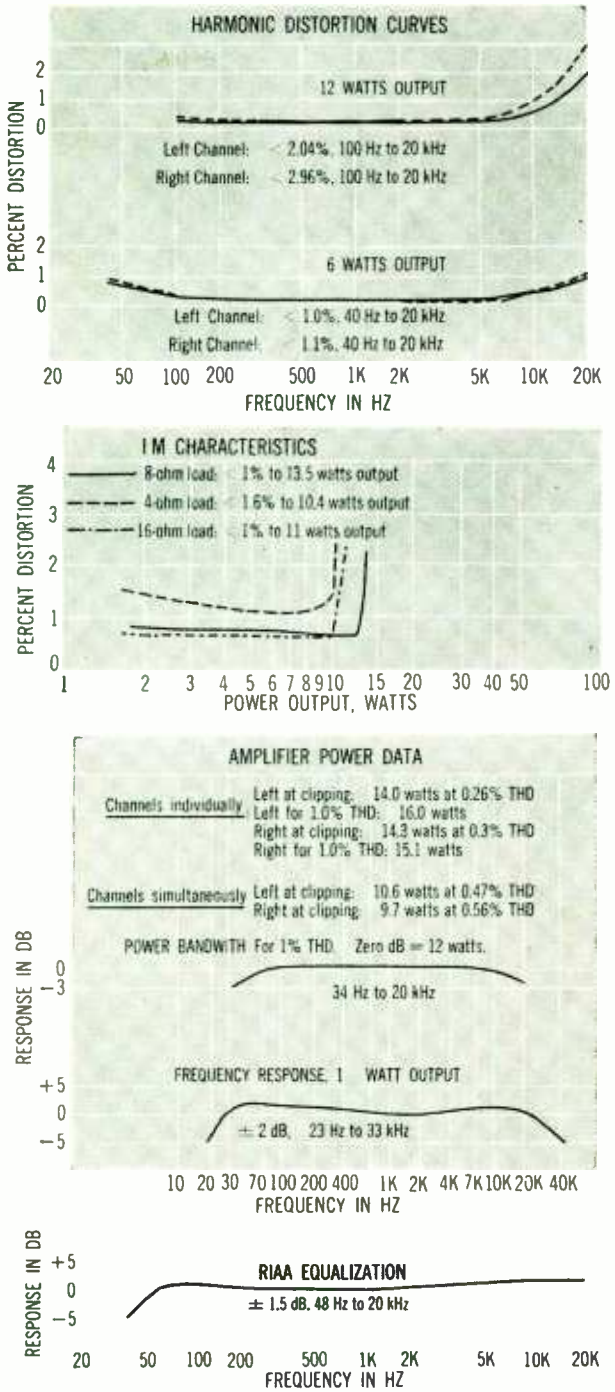
Sony HP-465 *Additional Data*

Performance characteristic	Measurement	
Damping factor	12	
Input characteristics for 12 watts output	Sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono	3.2 mV	65 dB
tape playback	252 mV	58.5 dB
aux	155 mV	58.5 dB

with no audible coloration and with excellent dispersion characteristics.

The system as a whole is very easy to listen to—in addition to being easy to install and to use. It strikes us, in fact, as a superior compact which would do very well as the heart of a fine stereo system for a small-to-average-size room, or as an excellent second system for den, bedroom, or playroom.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Square-wave response.

TEST REPORT GLOSSARY

Bias: anti-skating; a force applied to counteract a tone arm's tendency to swing inward.
Capture ratio: a tuner's ability, expressed in dB, to select the stronger of two conflicting signals. The lower the number, the better.
Clipping: the power level at which an amplifier's output distorts.
Damping: a unit's ability to control ringing.
dB: decibel; measure of the ratio between electrical quantities; generally the smallest difference in sound intensity that can be heard.
Doubling: a speaker's tendency to distort by producing harmonics of bass tones.
Harmonic distortion: spurious overtones introduced by equipment to a pure tone.
IF: intermediate frequency, into which the RF is converted by a tuner.
IM (intermodulation) distortion: spurious sum-and-difference tones caused by the beating of two tones.
k: kilo-; 1,000.
m: milli-; 1/1,000.
M: mega-; 1,000,000.
μ (mu); micro-; 1/1,000,000.
Pilot and sub-carrier: 19-kHz and 38-kHz broadcast signals used in transmitting FM stereo; must be suppressed by receiver.
Power bandwidth: range of frequencies over which an amplifier can supply its rated power without exceeding its rated distortion (defined by the half-power, or –3 dB, points at the low and high frequencies).
RF: radio frequency; the radiated energy of a broadcast signal received by a tuner.
Resonance: a tendency for a device to emphasize particular tones.
Ringing: a tendency for a component to continue responding to a no-longer-present signal.
RMS: root mean square; the effective value of a signal that has been expressed graphically by a sine wave. In these reports it generally defines an amplifier's continuous, rather than momentary, power capability.
Sensitivity: a tuner's ability to receive weak signals. Our reports use the Institute of High Fidelity (IHF) standard. The smaller the number the better.
Sine wave: in effect, a pure tone of a single frequency, used in testing.
S/N ratio: signal-to-noise ratio.
Square wave: in effect, a complex tone, rich in harmonics, covering a wide band of frequencies, used in testing.
THD: total harmonic distortion, including hum.
Tracking angle (vertical): angle at which the stylus meets the record, as viewed from the side; 15° has become the normal angle for the cutting, and thus the playing, of records.
Transient response: ability to respond to percussive signals cleanly and instantly.
VU: volume unit; a form of dB measurement standardized for a specific type of meter.

REPORTS IN PROGRESS

BSR McDonald 300 Turntable

Teac 6010 Tape Recorder

CIRCLE 45 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →

It takes nerve to ask $1,000 for an FM/FM stereo receiver. Unless you have the stuff to back it up.

This is our SA-4000 stereo receiver. It costs $1,000. But don't look for it at your Panasonic dealer yet. Because the first 25 units in existence have been snapped up by audio laboratories. They're ripping it apart to see how we created it.

For $1,000, the SA-4000 better be something special. It is. How special? Try to tune it. You'll discover it's the first stereo receiver in history without a tuning knob. That's only for openers.

Nobody's ever combined the best pre-amp, the best power-amp, and best tuner into one unit before. This kind of ingenuity, creating a whole new generation of audio equipment, is commonplace at Panasonic.

It's happened 14,048 times, so far. That's how many patent rights and designs have come out of our 50 research and development labs. Where the hackles of 2,500 engineers and scientists go up when somebody says, "It can't be done." Many of the audio components they've created never existed just 3 years ago.

But the real key to quality is this: Every component, from the tiniest transistor to our 36-inch woofer, is manufactured in one or another of our 80 factories. Tested, inspected, and quality controlled by 40,000 master technicians. That's why we're so absolutely certain of their compatibility. Their excellence. And their reliability.

Nobody makes audio equipment like Panasonic.

And this goes not only for our $1,000 receiver. But our 4 other stereo receivers as well. The same imagination. The same rigid quality control. The same loving attention to detail is present in all our stereo receivers. They'll give you sound that'll knock your ear on its ear.

Our 4-track stereo tape decks are packed with little miracles of audio engineering. Every circuit is married to every transistor. To every component. That's love.

Speakers? Take your choice from 5 new Panasonic multi-speaker systems. Each set of woofers and tweeters is acoustically matched for the purest sound. With a range wide enough to wake up an Airedale.

You've never heard stereo component systems like these before. Because nobody ever made them before. The speaker systems. The tape decks. They're all compatible with our $1,000 receiver. And with our less expensive receivers.

Stop by any dealer we franchise to handle the Panasonic Audio Equipment line. If he doesn't have the $1,000 unit in stock yet, listen to our less expensive models. They sound like a million.

PANASONIC

just slightly ahead of our time.

For your nearest Panasonic Audio Equipment dealer, write Panasonic, 200 Park Avenue, New York 10017

One of our competitors just introduced a two-stage synchronous motor.

We're bloody flattered.

In 1967, Garrard engineers perfected the Synchro-Lab motor. A revolutionary two-stage synchronous motor.

Revolutionary because, for the first time in a component turntable, it successfully combined two types of motor: induction and synchronous.

The induction portion supplies the torque to reach playing speed instantly. The synchronous section then "locks-in" to the 60-cycle frequency of the current.

This produces unvarying speed, and thus unvarying pitch, despite variations in voltage.

A missed point

Not surprisingly, a competitor has introduced a copy of our Synchro-Lab motor on their costliest model.

Alan Say, our Chief Engineer, comments. "We're bloody flattered. After all, being imitated is a rather good indication of how significant an innovation really is.

"But, curiously, they seem to have missed the point.

"With a non-synchronous motor, you need a heavy turntable. Its momentum makes up for fluctuations in motor speed.

"Our purpose was to achieve constant speeds, using a lighter turntable and the least possible power. Less power and a low mass table help reduce rumble. And relieve mechanical stresses all 'round.

"When we went to the Synchro-Lab motor, we cut our turntable weight to three pounds. They're still using a seven pound disc.

"So, while others *are* following our lead, there's no comparison yet.

"Quite selfishly, we're pleased on both counts."

H. V.'s commitment

This is, by no means, the first time a Garrard innovation has been imitated.

Spurred by a commitment of some thirty years standing, Garrard engineers have recorded every major advance in automatic turntables.

H. V. Slade, a co-founder and Garrard of England's uncompromising Managing Director from 1918-61, set policy which endures to this day.

"We will sell a Garrard in the U.S. *only* when it is more advanced than any machine available there."

Satisfyingly dissatisfied

"To fulfill such an unbending commitment," points out Alan Say, "requires chaps who are perpetually dissatisfied." The 1970 Garrards would seem to bear that out.

Last year, we added viscous damped tone arm descent for gentler, safer cueing.

But offering an automatic turntable that was undamped in automatic cycle ran cross-grain of logic. So one of our engineers devised a linkage system between the changing mechanism and the damping "jack".

Now Garrard's tone arm is damped in automatic.

This year, a popular and exclusive Garrard feature—our disappearing record platform—has become a non-disappearing record platform.

Someone at our Swindon labs discovered we could make it a bit larger and stronger that way. A small advantage, and a difficult decision. But one that would have pleased H. V.

And we've added a counterweight adjustment screw to our gimbal-suspended tone arm. It permits you to balance the arm to within a hundredth of a gram.

To quote our Mr. Say, "Anyone with a touch sensitive enough to take full advantage of it should be cracking safes with the Lavender Hill Mob."

An embarrassment of riches

You can select from not one, but six Garrard component models. Prices range from the SL95B (left) at $129.50 to the 40B at $44.50.

Although prices vary from model to model, Garrard standards do not. Only the number of refinements possible at each price.

It can be a most difficult choice. Your dealer can help you make it.

Garrard

CIRCLE 103 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Recent Models Compared

New Designs in Headphones

By Robert Long

IN THE LAST year, headphone design has taken new directions that, for the first time since headphones became available as high fidelity products, offer radical changes in the way sound is generated in the earpieces and coupled to the ear itself. In our last headphone survey [January 1969], all the models covered were basically one type: a stereo pair of small dynamic drivers radiating their sound through a perforated plastic or similar "grille cloth" and surrounded by some sort of doughnutlike cushion that served to trap the sound and couple it to the ear. To be sure, there were variations: some headsets had level controls, others were fused; one company used dual drivers in the earpieces, like the woofer and tweeter of a speaker system. But while they might influence convenience or sound quality, all the variations were in a sense cosmetic, making little material difference to the basic experience of headphone listening.

The two new directions go a bit deeper. One retains most of the conventional techniques but delivers an end experience that is somewhat different from that of listening with "standard" headphones. The other replaces the basic element in standard designs—the dynamic drivers—with electrostatic transducers. The electrostatics examined in detail for this article are the Koss ESP-7 and ESP-9. Those with flat earpieces are the Sennheiser HD-414 and Fisher HP-100. The Beyer DT-480, Fisher HP-60, Koss K-6L6, and Jensen HS-2 represent a more conventional approach to headphone design. So does the Knight/Koss KG-802—but this unit also represents a novel departure in that it is offered as a do-it-yourself kit.

There are a few other models coming along as well. Stanton plans to enter the headphone field early this year with a line that will include an electrostatic model. Scott now carries headphones, though primarily as an accessory to its console line. And, of course, there are a few new offerings that represent minor variations on previous models. David Clark, for example, has made the 100s available in three higher impedances as the Model 103, 106, and 112 (300, 600, 1200 ohms respectively), and makes the 200s with volume controls as the 250s. News of at least two more conventional models reached us too late for inclusion in this survey: the Olsen PH-173, priced at $24.98 and the Pioneer SE-20A, costing $24.95. Both were due in time for Christmas.

The New Flat Earpieces

The earcup or cushion around most headphone drivers theoretically should form a positive seal with the head if it is to do its job effectively. If it does, it can produce a couple of less desirable side effects, however. For one thing, it tends to make your ears perspire during prolonged use. More important, though more subtle, is the effect it has in cutting you off from the aural ambience around you. While you may think of that factor as a desirable one in terms of excluding traffic noises, the neighbors' TV sound, or the kids' racket, it can also give you an unnatural and possibly uneasy sensation. This sense of isolation probably contributes to the fatigue that some users report feeling after long periods of headphone listening.

Our experience with the new models that dispense with standard earcups seems to confirm this observation. These models use a flat membrane of foam plastic that covers the entire earpiece and acts as a cushion between it and the head. The sound must, of course, pass through this membrane, which rests lightly on the ear instead of encircling it. The seal is therefore less perfect, admitting more ambient noise and allowing body heat to dissipate a bit more readily. Since both of our flat-earpiece sets—particularly the Sennheiser—are light in weight, using them regains some of the freedom and naturalness of loudspeaker listening, while retaining much of the super-close-up quality characteristic of headphone sound.

The Electrostatics

The concept of electrostatic drivers has attracted audio engineers for years. Despite some practical problems in application, they have offered promise of liberating designers from the complex resonance modes inherent in cone drivers, and have seemed to bring closer the dream of a flat-responding and distortion-free transducer. A major problem in getting an electrostatic reproducer to approach that ideal has been, of course, the requirements of bass fre-

quencies. Since the distance (excursion) over which the vibrating membrane of an electrostatic driver is free to move is exceedingly limited by comparison with cone drivers, an extremely large surface area was needed for the electrostatic speaker to move enough air to produce adequate bass.

In headphone design, however, the acoustic pressures required—and therefore the quantity of air to be moved—are so much lower than those required of a loudspeaker that much smaller drivers can be used. But another problem is involved: electrostatics need a polarizing or biasing voltage in addition to the regular audio signal. Consequently, extra circuitry or accessories must be worked into the design.

In the Koss ESP-6, this circuitry is built right into the headphones, which of course makes them relatively bulky. And because about 1 volt is required for adequate polarization, the signal level must be considerably greater than that required by most dynamic sets. To get this level and for the best frequency response, the ESP-6 should be driven from the "transfer switch" model T-3 supplied with the headset. The T-3 is connected to the speaker terminals of one's amplifier or receiver. Alternatively, if you connect the ESP-6 directly into the headphone jack typically found on today's receivers you should modify the resistive loading behind the jack, as described in the ESP-6 owner's manual.

The Koss ESP-7 handles both these problems by making connections to the speaker outputs of the amplifier. The speakers are in turn connected to terminals in the headphone leads and controlled by a speaker/phones switch in a little black box called an "energizer" by Koss. Also in the energizer are the electronics necessary to derive the polarizing voltage from the signal and a special jack that will accept the plugs on either ESP-7 or ESP-9 heaphones. The ESP-9's E-9 energizer—which will, of course, accept ESP-7 phones as well—takes the system one step farther. In addition to the audio-derived polarizing voltage, the E-9 has AC connections and a switch that will allow polarization from house current.

Are these polarizing voltages dangerous? The answer is no. Electrostatic voltages, by definition, are without appreciable current and therefore can deliver only negligible power when shorted out. And it is current, rather than voltage, that hurts when you receive a shock. So, while up to about 800 volts is needed to polarize ESP-series headphones—whether that voltage is derived from house current or from the audio signal—it should present no hazard to users.

Evaluating Headphones

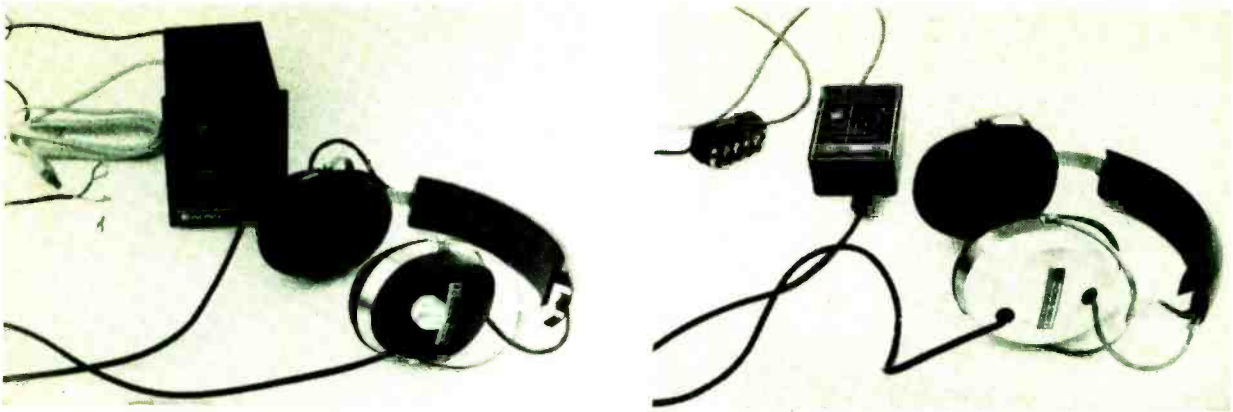
To evaluate the new models, we used controlled listening tests to provide "direct readouts" of the performance features that would interest a listener: the way the headphones sound, feel, and behave in use. Extended musical listening provided some idea of the smoothness and range of each headset and enabled us to evaluate any discomfort or fatigue that it may induce when used for long periods. But our main

Beyer DT-480.

Fisher HP-60.

Koss K-6L6.

Jensen HS-2.



Koss ESP-9, left, and ESP-7 with their respective junction boxes.

tests involved a sweep signal generator covering the entire audio spectrum. The first model we checked with the generator was chosen because it appeared to be neither particularly low nor particularly high in sensitivity. Turning the gain on our preamp to its middle (12 o'clock) position, we adjusted the output of the generator at 1 kHz for a level that was strong but not uncomfortably loud. Then we began working slowly upward, listening for peaks or valleys, to 15 kHz as a normal upper limit to reliable testing.

We next worked from 1 kHz downward, again listening for roughness in the response curve and the inevitable roll-off toward inaudibility at the bottom end. We also listened for doubling: the characteristic form of harmonic distortion that an overworked driver tends to produce at low frequencies. We also tried to determine the minimum frequency audible at the original level setting, and the minimum frequency audible by applying a standard boost—in this case, switching in the preamp's loudness compensation. In our table, frequency response figures show the range over which each unit was considered to be relatively flat. Frequencies in parentheses are the lowest tones audible without bass boost for each unit.

The method was the same for successive headphones except that we first noted what gain setting was necessary to get a level at 1 kHz similar to that of the first model—an index of the unit's relative sensitivity. The two electrostatics, since they connect to the amplifier's speaker terminals instead of the preamp's headphone jack, present a special case, however. Using a 60-watt (rms per channel) amplifier, we found that comfortable gain settings were quite low. But with the same preamp and a less powerful amp, higher gain would be needed to deliver the same levels; so sensitivity cannot be compared directly between the electrostatics and the dynamics. (The ESP-6s, when connected into a headphone jack, are relatively quite low in sensitivity. However, when used with their T-3 unit connected to the loudspeaker outputs, sensitivity improves.)

Headset weights do not include the weight of the cords, most of which probably will be resting on a shelf or table in most applications. And, of course, it would have been unfair to add in the weight of the Koss energizer units, which form part of the complete system of leads from amplifier to headset. For purposes of comparison, we might point out that the lightest set in our last headphone article weighed 4 ounces. The heaviest we have tested to date (the Koss ESP-6, which has polarizing transformers built into the earpieces) weighed in at over 30 ounces.

What We Found: The Dynamics

As you may already have surmised, we were pleased by the sensation of listening to the foam-covered earphones in a quiet room. The Fisher HP-100s turned out to be among the most comfortable and least fatiguing sets for long-term listening we have ever used. With the Sennheisers, however, the small area of the individual earphones seemed to make their position on the ears critical for proper coupling—and thus for full audible bass response. Moreover, in trying to adjust the position of the earpieces for maximum subjective response, we often ended up with the headband askew—that is, with the earpiece riding asymmetrically high on the headband.

Without canvassing a large sampling of users, however, we can't be sure how much of a problem the Sennheiser design presents. Ears vary from user to user, influencing the way in which any earpiece will couple to them. Particularly in view of the enthusiastic reception the Sennheisers have received elsewhere, we can't help wondering whether it may not be more a question of the way we—rather than the headphones—are made. But, in any event, we found that the broader sound-transmitting surface of the Fishers posed no similar problem.

Both these models and the Beyer DT-480s exhibited a notably smooth response with little appreciable tendency to peak or dip at particular frequencies. In this respect they were noticeably better than the Koss dynamics, the Fisher HP-60s, or the Jensen set. They also produced clean, well-defined sound—with top honors among the three probably going to the Beyer set. In each case—and in fact with every headset tested for this article—response at the upper end was limited less by the set than by the hearing of the wearer. At the bass end, all the dynamics were quite free from doubling except when the loudness control

was used to boost bass response. They did, however, show a marked roll-off in the bass.

Almost predictably, the least expensive set we tested (the Knight/Koss KG-802) produced the least impressive response. It had more tendency to peak than any of the other tabulated models (though not as much as some other models we have tried in the past), and peaks toward the high end appeared at somewhat different frequencies in the two earpieces. As the frequency was raised or lowered, therefore, the test tone tended to drift to right or left. While we would expect that in extreme cases the phenomenon might cause disconcerting effects (for example, in a high solo violin passage that traveled from a note at a peak in one earpiece to one at a peak in the other), we were unable to make the KG-802 headphones misbehave audibly in this respect on musical program material.

WHY I PREFER HEADPHONES
by Samuel Corrand

Give me the privacy of headphone-listening any time. I put on a good, smooth-sounding stereo headset and at once I'm transported to an intensely sonic world in which all I hear is the program material—with no interference and distraction from the vagaries of room acoustics, or noises elsewhere in the house, or sounds from outside. Instead of relying on loudspeakers (with all their well-known problems), I have—thanks to headphones—a more direct and very clean listening path right through the amplifier and to the record, tape, or broadcast I'm auditioning. Actually, I can hear many more nuances in the program material with headphones than with speakers; maybe the bass at the very low end doesn't come up as strong as it would on good speaker systems, but man—dig that channel separation In fact, I've found that headphone listening is the only way to tell whether some recordings really are stereo or not, or at least just how "stereo" they really are. With speakers, you often can't discern that much-touted "stereo effect." Headphones leave no doubt. In fact, with headphones, I find I can listen more analytically than at a concert, and really hear the score as the composer wrote it. I can practically see the written notes.

Furthermore, if the telephone rings in the next room, I don't even have to hear it—let alone answer it; I'm involved with Mahler or the Beatles, depending on my whim at the time. And—very important—I can listen to volume levels as high as I like without disturbing anyone else in the place. Which means, for instance, our three-year-old sleeping down the hall, or our teen-agers watching channel 5 on their TV set.

Finally, as an audio buff, I enjoy the opportunity headphones give me to hear subtle things in the response of equipment—such as slight pickup mistracking or hints of amplifier distortion, etc.—that I have found are virtually masked when listening over loudspeakers. In this sense, my headset is to me what a stethoscope is to a physician. So, for both musical and audio reasons, give me headphones over speakers any time.

WHY I SHUN HEADPHONES
by Michael Slocum

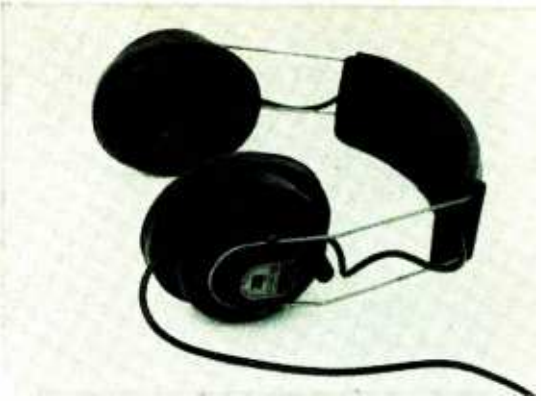
The very idea of encasing my head in a confining and weighty gadget just to listen to music turns me off completely. I've tried several models, but the experience always makes me feel that I've been had, that I've surrendered my individualism and human state-of-being and become part of a machine. This is more than a psychological hang-up; with that signal cable connecting the headset you're wearing to the equipment driving it, you are literally part of the machine, and your free movement in and about the listening room becomes sharply restricted. I recall once, with headphones clamped on, turning to reach for a book and nearly pulling a very costly amplifier (and the turntable next to it) from the shelf.

I also can't stand the slow build-up of additional warmth around my ears that I've experienced wearing headsets. Let's face it: headphones may be marvelous acoustical gadgets (for some people and some purposes), but they also make dandy ear muffs—just what I need in my well-heated apartment.

The stereo separation I hear with headphones sounds unnatural and exaggerated; the listening experience then becomes for me clinical rather than aesthetic. I know of the devices you can hook into the system to lessen this separation, but I somehow resent the idea of buying gadget X in order to defeat a basic characteristic of gadget Y. To me this makes as much sense as cutting your finger in order to make use of a new bottle of iodine.

Another thing that bothers me about headphones is their inherently limited response, especially in the deepest bass, as compared to good speaker systems. I'm willing to accept the so-called "room effects" and the "bass reinforcement" introduced by room acoustics in speaker listening. After all, isn't that what happens during a performance of live music in a concert hall? To me, one basic measure of a stereo system's excellence is how well it permits me to enjoy music in my own room rather than in the nonroom situation you create with headphones. And the wonderful enhancement of stereo that I've heard recently—thanks to those new multidirectional speakers that involve the room walls to increase the ratio of reflected-to-direct sound—is utterly and categorically ruled out with the use of headphones.

Oh yes—and pray tell, how will headphones accommodate themselves to the coming four-channel stereo sound?



Before and after: the Knight/Koss KG-802 is a headphone in kit form.

Building a Headset

Before going on to describe how the electrostatics came through our tests, a word about building the one kit model. There is, of course, very little wiring to be done in a headset—even one with volume controls; much of the building of the Knight KG-802 requires plastic cement rather than solder. After only about an hour, the finished set was drying—and cooling—on our workbench. Was it worth the work? Well, Koss makes a similar wired set without the volume controls but with a stereo/mono switch for about $25—a mere saving of approximately $10 if you're willing to concede that the features peculiar to each are roughly of equivalent value.

While the KG-802s didn't perform as well as the dynamics costing about twice as much, they seemed to us to deliver pretty good sound for the price. If you want to try headphone listening at a minimum investment, therefore, they would be a good bet for you. The quality of the sound they deliver is unequivocally better than that of most rock-bottom-price sets we've heard in the past.

Hearing Electrostatically

Equally unequivocal is our enthusiasm for the sound that came out of the Koss ESP-7s and ESP-9s. In tuning our signal generator toward the bass frequencies we were, of course, looking for a roll-off point where acoustic output began to drop appreciably. We simply couldn't find one! Right down to 20 Hz—the limit of our signal generator—the test tone remained clearly distinguishable. Response readouts, made on automatic plotting equipment and provided by Koss with the two sets, showed why. The ESP-7 curve was down less than 5 dB at 20 Hz; at 15 kHz, indeed, it was down about twice as far without producing any serious effect on audible response. And the ESP-9 curve was even flatter: down only about 5 dB at 15 kHz and about 1 dB at 20 Hz!

Like all headphones, the electrostatics should not be driven too hard. At high levels, the Koss sets continue to pump out sound with less audible distortion than one generally would expect of dynamics operated at similar levels. But as the levels become extremely high—considerably higher than one could tolerate for extended listening—bass frequencies begin to break up, presumably as diaphragm excursion reaches its limits. The only other audible distortion we could discover was some slight doubling at ex-

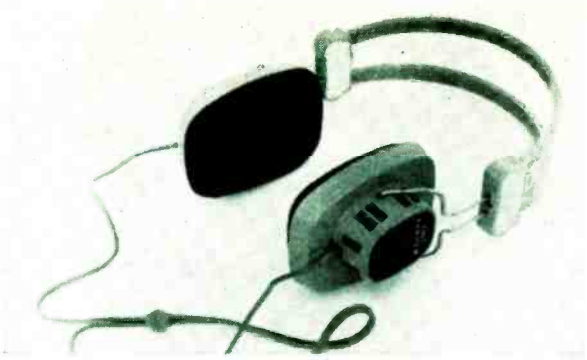
HEADPHONES: THE

Manufacturer	Model	Price	Cable
Beyer	DT-480	about $90.00	9 ft.
Fisher	HP-60	$24.95	8 ft.
	HP-100	$34.95	8 ft.
Jensen	HS-2	$24.95	7 ft.
Knight/Koss	KG-802	$14.95	7½ ft.
Koss	K-6LC	$29.95	10 ft. coiled
	ESP-7	$79.00	4 ft.
	(tested with SE-7 energizer, which has		
	ESP-9	$150.00	5½ ft.
	(tested with E-9 energizer in self-power		
Sennheiser	HD-414	$29.95	10 ft.

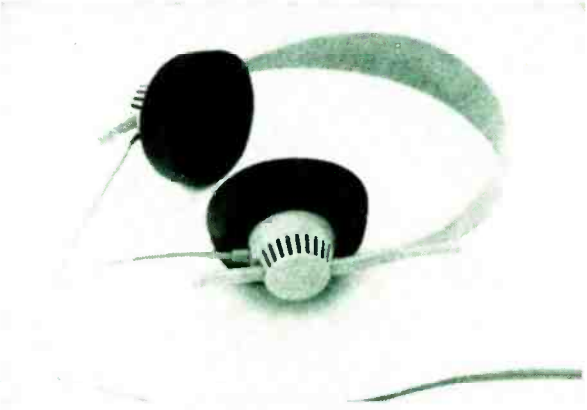
tremely low frequencies using the ESP-7's energizer. The cause appeared to be the energizer rather than the headsets, since the doubling occurred whether we were using the ESP-7s or the ESP-9s; and neither headset produced audible doubling with the E-9 energizer.

Our tests with the E-9, incidentally, were carried out using only the self-energizing audio-derived polarization mode. When we received the unit, its circuit board had come loose in shipping. On sliding the board back into its terminal clips, we discovered a certain amount of hum on AC operation, which also produced slightly higher acoustic levels than the self-energizing position. Koss tells us that neither effect is to be expected and that, due to other complaints of loose circuit boards, a clip to hold the board in place has been added to the E-9.

Over-all, the electrostatics performed superbly. The sound is extremely clean. The two models do have shortcomings, however: weight, price, and the necessity of making special connections to the amplifier's output. But if you're after state-of-the-art sound, these probably are the sets that will claim top priority for your attention.



Fisher HP-100.



Sennheiser HD-414.

NEWEST MODELS

Weight	Sensitivity	Approx. Freq. Response (see text)	Isolation	Comfort	Special Features, etc.
17 oz.	high	(30)60–15,000 Hz.	very high	good	
12 oz.	fairly low	(30)60–15,000	moderate	good	
9 oz.	medium	(25)50–15,000	low	excellent	flat ear pads
15 oz.	medium	(25)70–15,000	moderate	good	
16 oz.	fairly low	(35)80–15,000	low	good	kit; vol. controls
15 oz.	fairly high	(35)80–15,000	high	good	vol. controls
22 oz.	(see text)	20–15,000	very high	heavy, but good	electrostatic
20-ft. cable to speaker taps)					
23 oz.	(see text)	20–15,000	very high	heavy, but good	electrostatic
mode; E-9 has 5½-ft. cable to speaker taps)					
5 oz.	medium	(25)60–15,000	low	excellent	flat ear pads

Seven Records (and One Tape) to Judge Your Headphones By

by Norman Eisenberg

LISTENING TO STEREO via headphones differs somehow from hearing the same music reproduced over loudspeakers. As our pro and con debaters indicate (see page 59), the headphone experience offers some unique features which you may or may not like. In any case, compared with speakers you can count on headphones to be: more revealing of channel separation and channel balance in both the program material and the signal source; generally not quite as revealing of the deepest bass; more easily driven into roughness of response by high signal levels in midrange and highs; fairly oblivious—for better or worse—to the effects of your listening room's acoustics.

With all this in mind, then, here's a selected list of stereo releases that I have found especially good for assessing headphone performance. That there may be hundreds of others equally good, I grant you. These happen to be my current favorites.

Berlioz: Symphonie fantastique. The Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, conductor. Columbia MS 6248.

At the risk of incurring the ire of several of today's critics, I must insist that Ormandy's version of the "Fantastique" remains my favorite. Given a choice of the several interpretations now available, the differences I detect among them strike me as fairly unimportant and in no way conducive to labeling any as "definitive." This leaves me, then, with the gleeful prospect of picking my winner simply on the basis of its sound—and to my ears the Philadelphians make a real adventure of this music. Compared to any version I've heard, their bass is stronger and better defined, their midrange is clearer, their top highs better "aired," their over-all balance magnificent. The most bass-shy of headphones should impart more than a hint of the deep drum passages in the last two movements, but watch out for roughness in the treble when you get to the section in the "Witches Sabbath" in which the strings are played with the backs of the bows. There is no roughness in the recording, and you will hear this eerie effect clearly enough on good speakers. If you hear it as clearly via headphones, you have a good set. Listen too for the sense of space that surrounds this recording: you are hearing a very large orchestra and your headphones should convey that impression.

Bach Organ Music From Soissons Cathedral. Prelude and Fugue in G; Toccata and Fugue in F; Prelude and Fugue in D minor; Prelude and Fugue in A minor; Fantasia and Fugue in A minor; Prelude and Fugue in B flat. Marie-Madeleine Duruflé, organist (in the first three selections); Maurice Duruflé, organist (in the last three selections). Angel S 36507.

No series of recommended test records would be complete without at least one organ program. The organ, with its enormous range of dynamics, frequencies, and tonal color possibilities, has long been regarded as the best single source of sound for showing off, or showing up, audio equipment. Listen to this magnificent recording with stereo headphones and ask such questions as: am I hearing the full tonal range? is the low pedal effect coming through? are the strong highs holding firm, without roughness and without being made to waver by simultaneously played strong lows? Switch to the mono mode during strong treble passages and listen carefully for any sign of the signal shifting from one phone to the other—such shifting indicates unequal peaking in the pair of phones. With a really good headset you should feel as if you were seated in one of the front rows of the cathedral—a sensation you simply won't get from loudspeakers which, no matter how good, tend to put you further back in the audience. My guess is that with good headphones you will probably listen to this record clear through to the end, forgetting all else during the experience.

Monteverdi: Vespers of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Soloists; organist; Ambrosian Singers; Orchestra of the Accademia Monteverdiana, Denis Stevens, conductor. Vanguard VCS 10001/2 (two-disc set).

Most vocal recordings provide good tests of headphones: the singers' diction should be rendered clearly enough to permit you to discern the words being sung. Sometimes, however, headphones can make things sound "too clear" by overemphasizing sibilants—which indicates, of course, high-frequency distortion, poor transient response, or both. Almost any headset tends to make sibilants sound more prominent than they sound over loudspeakers, but a really good headset will not permit sibilants to become unnatural-sounding, hissy, or harsh. An album like this Monteverdi—which provides printed text so that you can follow along with the increasingly complex lines sung by the vocalists—is excellent for this test. Another feature here is the disc's stereophony: left and right channels were not recorded with excessive separation, and on many speaker systems you might hear hardly any difference between mono and stereo modes of playback. With headphones, switching from mono to stereo should spread the sound and also add the feeling of a musical and ambient "bottom" which does not detract from, but rather enhances, the importance of midrange and highs.

Stravinsky: Petrushka. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, conductor. London CS 6009.

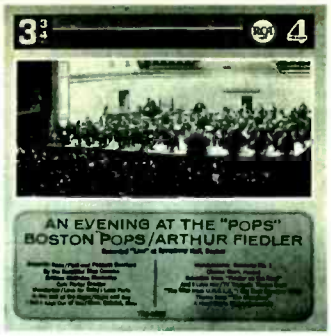
One of the earliest stereo discs of merit to be released and still happily listed as available, this version of the complete "Petrushka" remains a favored stereo show piece. It abounds in tremendous orchestral effects, teasing transients, and endless passages that challenge the excellence of playback equipment generally. For specific use in judging headphones, listen for its very natural stereo separation which—in addition to the obvious feature of left-to-right spread—should impart a sense of air and space. How well do the phones you're auditioning reproduce with clarity the middles and highs, especially on forte and tutti passages? They should sound as clean as the quieter passages. Check also for internal detail during complex ensemble effects; reject a headset that blurs the distinct tonalities of various instruments. Finally, this recording has an excellent front-to-rear or depth effect which a good headset should suggest almost as fully as speakers.

Brahms: Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115. Karl Leister, clarinet, with the Amadeus Quartet. Deutsche Grammophon 139354.

In view of the beauty of both this performance and its recording, listening to it proves doubly rewarding. Played over loudspeakers, it reveals in a relatively subtle manner how stereo bestows its ambient enhancement, rather than a sense of wide-stage separation, onto a small chamber group. Listening with good headphones—which emphasize whatever left-right separation there is in a recording—carries this enhancement a few steps farther, putting you closer to the musicians, enabling you to discern relative placement of instruments more readily (the solo clarinet is centered, with first violin, second violin, viola, and cello framing him from left to right in that sequence), and also enabling you to pick out inner melodies and harmonic lines much more easily than you could when listening over loudspeakers. How successfully you can do so reflects in great measure the smoothness of the headphones' response, particularly in the upper frequencies.

Glen Gray's Greatest! King Porter Stomp; Smoke Rings; Begin the Beguine; I Can't Get Started; In the Mood; No Name Jive; Memories of You; Blowin' Up a Storm; Tango Blues; Song of India. Capitol DKAO-375.

This is an amazing album on more than one count. For one thing, it documents a skill and artistry in melodic inventiveness, arranging, and performing virtuosity that have all but been drained out of what today passes for popular music. For another, it demonstrates—better than any similar record I've heard—how reprocessing older mono recordings into new form for playback on stereo equipment (Capitol is careful to call the process "duophonic" rather than to glibly term it "simulated stereo") can produce a big, clean sound that is genuinely enhanced by stereo playback. Listen to this in the mono mode and . . . all right, it sounds pretty good for an oldie. But flip the switch to stereo and, magically, the sound opens up, the brasses over yonder take on a bold gleam, the woodwinds down here woo you with their plaintive call, the driving bass/rhythm section stands up and really beats it out. You are suddenly transported to front and center of a big bandstand, and you remember what is meant by "big band sound" and why it held audiences spellbound for years, and why—if more albums of this type come along—it may again resume its rule of the renowned roost. Anyway, a good headset will emphasize everything worthwhile in this recording and—if the left and right phones are sonically balanced—let you perceive the hint of an echo in the phone opposite the one reproducing the main sound of a solo instrument. Listen too for the shimmer of struck cymbals, and the squashed-down timbre of muted brasses; these sounds demand superior high frequency response from any transducer—speakers or headphones.



An Evening at the "Pops." Boston Pops Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, conductor. RCA TR3 5003. Open-reel tape, 3¾ ips.

This one is strictly for tape enthusiasts contemplating the purchase of new headphones. Recorded live during a performance at Boston's Symphony Hall, this unique tape release offers—in stereo—a sense of the excitement of the event, the feeling of an audience, the ambience of the hall. Flip the mode switch (on your receiver or amplifier) to mono and all that is gone. Flip back to stereo and your headphones should make you feel as if you are there. Listen also for the applause, the occasional coughs, chairs scraping, and countless other little noises of the live event—these, in sum, constitute excellent tests of your headset's transient response. The noises should sound real enough but not overly extended. While you're at it, enjoy the sheer bravura and vitality of the Boston players as they romp with Fiedler through an incredible repertoire that ranges from a Strauss waltz to TV theme songs; from Britten to the Beatles; from Mendelssohn to Cole Porter and "Fiddler on the Roof"—with some Suppé, Bizet, and a Spanish march for good measure.

Mozart: Three Divertimentos, K. 136, 137, 138; Six Country Dances, K. 606. Chamber Orchestra of the Saar, Karl Ristenpart, conductor. Nonesuch H 71207.

In keeping with the nature of this music, and thanks to a recording that meets its artistic requirements, the highs here are clean and well rounded. If they sound overwhelming or ear-shattering (the strings taking on a steely tone, for instance), the headphones you're wearing may be the cause of peaking the response in the upper midrange. The tonal quality should not change when switching from mono to stereo, but you should get a definite sense of ensemble spread and inner detail on stereo. At the low end, the headphones should permit you to hear without strain the actual tonal line of the string bass whose range here is well within the capabilities of any good headset.

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The Riddle of the Magic Flute

Why did Mozart change the original fairy tale into a Masonic allegory? The identity of Sarastro may provide the key

by Audrey Williamson

ONE OF THE ENIGMAS of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* concerns the curious change early in June 1791 from its original plan. The idea for the original story line had been proposed to Mozart by Johann Schikaneder, who hoped to persuade Mozart to write a fairy tale opera, of the kind which Schikaneder's rival, Marinelli, had been staging with great success at the Leopoldstädter Theatre, Vienna. That Schikaneder did help to write the libretto is generally accepted.

The first of these popular "magic" operas, *Oberon*, had been produced on November 7, 1789, with music by Paul Wranitzky, and a libretto by C. L. Giesecke. Giesecke was a minor actor and singer in Schikaneder's company at the time of the production of *The Magic Flute*, in which he appeared. In 1849 Julius Cornet, in a book on opera published in Germany, reported that he had met Giesecke in Vienna in 1818 and been told by him that he himself was the real author of *The Magic Flute*: Schikaneder, Giesecke claimed, had been responsible only for his own comedy part of Papageno and the scenes connected with his role.

As a result of this story, many biographers of Mozart have accepted Giesecke as the main author of *The Magic Flute*, for Giesecke was, like Schikaneder and Mozart, a freemason, and the more likely intelligence, they considered, behind the ultimate form of the libretto as an allegory of freemasonry.

That Giesecke might have written the libretto for *The Magic Flute* is possible, in view of Giesecke's previous experience as a librettist; but a number of questions arise which cast doubt on his claim. How, if it were true, did Schikaneder induce Giesecke not only to allow Schikaneder's name to appear alone on the program, but to remain silent in the ensuing years during which *The Magic Flute* became a great popular success and earned Schikaneder a fortune? Why did Giesecke never demand a share of these glittering proceeds, from which Mozart himself—who died two months after the opening night—also never benefited? The second factor is that there is no known record that Giesecke himself was a freemason at the time *The Magic Flute* was composed. His masonic certificate, preserved in Dublin where he died in 1833, is dated 1793, two years after the production of the opera.

There may be explanations for this, such as the influence of Schikaneder and Mozart, both devout freemasons, on him in constructing the libretto. But one of the difficulties that has dogged all researchers delving into both the source and the symbolism of *The Magic Flute* has been the fact that freemasonry is a secret society which then, as now, enjoined on its members strict silence about the fraternity, its membership, initiation rites, and ritual. As Goethe, himself a mason and admirer of *The Magic Flute* (he actually wrote a sequel), pointed out, the opera contains elements only the initiated will recognize; they are camouflaged for the general public by the pure fantasy of the tale. Would this secrecy have been broken for the sake of a collaborator if Giesecke did not in fact become a mason until 1793?

It is a question worth bearing in mind when we come to examine the previously mentioned change of plan, and the possible reason for it.

The facts are briefly these. *The Magic Flute*, like *Oberon* before it, was based on a story taken from a collection of Oriental fairy tales published in 1786, by Christoph Martin Wieland and others, under the title *Dschinnistan*. The tale in this case was *Lulu, oder die Zauberflöte*, and the opera in its initial stages followed the simple story of the fairy queen who gives the hero a portrait of her daughter and

sends him to the castle where the wicked magician is holding her captive. He is also given a magic flute to aid him in this task.

"For some reason which has never yet been satisfactorily explained," writes Professor Edward Dent in *Mozart's Operas*, "the whole plot was completely changed at this stage. The wicked magician was made the agent for good and the fairy queen the representative of evil." He notes as do other commentators that the reason for the alteration may have been that on June 8 Marinelli produced at his theater a comic opera called *Der Fagottist, oder die Zauberzither*, also based on *Lulu*.

Neither Mozart nor Schikaneder, however, ever said that the other opera had influenced the change, and Dent himself is not satisfied. "What is more difficult to explain is that the new opera was transformed completely from a conventional fairy tale to a glorification of freemasonry under a very thinly veiled allegorical disguise. The scene was transferred to ancient Egypt and an entirely new set of characters was introduced"—Sarastro, the high priest of Isis and Osiris, being of course the chief. The fairy queen's early beneficence was now shown to be the wily cover for an evil plot of vengeance, while Sarastro became the embodiment of noble priesthood, viciously maligned. Even the names of the characters were changed.

Ernest Newman, in his book *More Opera Nights*, was equally puzzled by the change: "When all the external facts are sorted out and put together again, so far as that is possible today, we are still no nearer a satisfactory answer to the question why the new *Magic Flute* should have taken so decidedly the line that it did." In Sarastro, in fact, the whole opera flowers into the religious spirit which was the basis of eighteenth-century freemasonry, essentially a cult preaching tolerance and wisdom, reason and compassion, as the major human virtues.

A few words need to be added to this. Freemasonry was a liberalizing cult, and was, undoubtedly, largely instrumental in the growth of ideas which culminated in the American and French Revolutions (Benjamin Franklin was one of many influential freemasons). Freemasonry was feared by aristocratic authority and condemned by the Catholic Church as heretical. One of the basic rules of freemasonry was religious tolerance, and all races of whatever creed were welcomed into the society.

Freemasonry was outlawed under a papal bull by Pope Clement VIII in 1738, and later by Pope Benedict XIV; but Catholics and even some priests throughout Europe continued as members. In 1764 the Empress Maria Theresa suppressed the order, even though her husband was a member; but her son Joseph II openly protected it. The death of Joseph II in 1790, six years after Mozart became a mason, was not without significance to *The Magic Flute*, for the new Emperor Leopold II cared nothing for music or masonry, and this was disturbing to Mozart the composer, who had enjoyed Joseph's patronage. (It has not passed unnoticed that Sarastro rates Tamino higher as a man than as a prince.)

Nevertheless, all of this had happened before the opera was begun. What, apart from Marinelli's new production, could have influenced the sudden veer to a glorification, perhaps even a vindication, of freemasonry? It is here that we come upon another complication: the symbolic identity of the characters, which was not revealed in print until 1866, when Moritz Alexander Zille (1814–1872), theologian, teacher, and freemason (described as "half mystic, half rationalist"), published in Leipzig an anonymous pamphlet claiming that Tamino represented Joseph II; Pamina, the Austrian people; Sarastro, Ignaz von Born, the Viennese scientist and freemason; the Queen of the Night, Maria Theresa; and Monastatos, the Jesuits. Although Otto Jahn, Mozart's biographer, mentions a masonic interpretation of the opera as early as 1794, it is from Zille's pamphlet that many commentators still take *as fact* Sarastro's identity with Born, even though some of Zille's other theories seem farfetched.

That Viennese masons of the period would tend to see Maria Theresa, their late enemy, in the Queen of the Night is natural. But the Empress was long dead, and it is to Sarastro that we probably must look for any significant key to the changes.

Was Sarastro really Born? Ignaz von Born had founded the Viennese masonic lodge in 1781. He was a respected intellectual, and had published a satire against the Jesuits and scientific papers connected with the lodge. Mozart certainly knew him, for, in a letter to his father in 1784, he lists him among his subscribers, and on April 20, 1785, one of his masonic pieces, *Maurerfreude* (K. 471), was

Is Maria Theresa the Queen of the Night? Here she greets the young Mozart. The girl holding Mozart's hand is the empress' daughter Marie Antoinette.

played at a banquet given by the lodge in honor of Born.

Born died in July 1791, but his death could not have been the direct cause of the changes in the opera, for these were made early in June. Supporters of the Born/Sarastro interpretation also seem to overlook the fact that Born resigned from the Vienna Lodge in 1786, after suffering some personal attacks over his disagreement with Joseph II's masonic reforms. If the attacks on Born are a reflection of those that the Queen of the Night makes upon Sarastro, they were certainly not recent enough to explain *The Magic Flute*'s new direction.

What did happen in 1791 that was of such resounding interest to freemasons throughout the world that it seemed a significant attack upon their order? The answer—and it is astonishing that I can find no musical historian who has mentioned it—is the final condemnation of the Count di Cagliostro by the Inquisition at the Vatican, after a trial lasting eighteen months; and the condemnation was for heresy through freemasonry.

On March 21 sentence of death was passed by the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition. The following day Pope Pius VI opened the dossier of the investigation and, unable to sanction death, imposed a sentence of life imprisonment. On April 7 Cagliostro knelt in chains to hear the sentence, and was then led away to the Castle Sant' Angelo and solitary confinement. On June 8 the *Moniteur Universel* of Paris published an account from their Rome correspondent of the posting of the sentence and the public burning of all of Cagliostro's papers, books, and "Masonic cordons." It is certain that the news reached masons in all other capitals earlier than this, and the Catholic verdict on Cagliostro (described on his arrest as "a personage of wide and singular fame") had been a matter of constant masonic speculation since his arrest in Rome in December 1789.

The whole of freemasonry reeled from the Vatican bombshell, and it was a blow from which it never fully recovered. Despite the rush in a few quarters to disassociate themselves from Cagliostro, freemasonry never again wielded the political influence it had had in the eighteenth century.

Who was Cagliostro and why did his fate have such disastrous effects on freemasonry? Why, moreover, have music historians not linked Cagliostro's fate with the sudden change in the libretto of *The Magic Flute* from an innocuous fairy tale to a protest against intolerance and perhaps vindication of the ideals of freemasonry? Why have they failed to remark on the similarity of Cagliostro's name to Sarastro? They have noted Zoroaster as a source, of course, but overlooked the one person, a highly publicized freemason, whose name was on everyone's lips in the early months of 1791.

The answer is partly that the Inquisition did its work only too well. Cagliostro has become notorious in all encyclopedias as a charlatan—which in part he was—a criminal and a magician, on evidence assembled by the Inquisition; but this evidence came from sources so prejudiced and tainted that they included without question the vindictive "Memoirs" of the infamous Comtesse de Lamotte, whose hatred of Cagliostro stemmed from the affair of the Queen's necklace in France, for which she had been condemned while Cagliostro and his patron, the Cardinal de Rohan, had been exonerated. Other damaging evidence was given by a valet who had been dismissed by Cagliostro for cheating his patients. At his trial Cagliostro was allowed no witnesses, nor were his accusers ever produced or questioned.

Biographers of Cagliostro have identified him with Sarastro, but because most of them were spiritualists or occultists, and inclined to deify him, these books have helped neither his nor their reputation. The fact that he was tried and condemned for freemasonry has become obscured.

The true story of this curious man is shrouded in mystery, partly of his own making and partly from the circumstances surrounding his life. For this reason, it is difficult to remember that he was basically a prominent freemason and a kind of Christian Science "healer," whose houses in Strasbourg, Paris, and London were besieged by both rich and poor alike, and whom he treated without remuneration. The evidence that he made some cures (based, it would seem, on common sense, herbal knowledge, psychological shrewdness, and a sensible diet—methods that were very much ahead of their time) is incontrovertible; so is his refusal to accept money for healing. Nor was any court able to convict him of any crime.

Cagliostro had first been met by Casanova at Aix-en-Provence in 1768, as a penurious young artist traveling under the name of Joseph Balsamo. Casanova had been attracted by Cagliostro's beautiful young wife, Lorenza, and had invited the pair to supper. In London in 1776 the pair turned up as the Count and Countess di Cagliostro, the wife now being known as Serafina.

Where Cagliostro obtained his wealth remains a mystery. We can dismiss the stories that as an alchemist he had discovered the "rose powder" of the Philosopher's Stone and could make gold and diamonds, although it is quite true that he certainly encouraged these tales of his occult powers. His memoirs were partly romantic fiction: his pretense of an Egyptian upbringing obviously was meant merely to surround himself with an aura of mystery and to foster an interest in the "Egyptian" lodge he founded in Lyons and other centers of freemasonry. He held many séances at this lodge, his medium a child who gazed into a sphere of clear water. There was no doubt chicanery involved here; but the general spiritual aims of the lodge were those of freemasonry and Cagliostro seems to have led an austere life in keeping with them. At worst, he seems to have been a fairly harmless adventurer.

Cagliostro was devoted to his beautiful young wife, and for her sake initiated a lodge for women, heretofore unknown to masonry, which tended to antifeminism. (It is interesting to note that Lorenza/

Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive

Orson Welles as Cagliostro in the film Black Magic *(United Artists, 1949).*

Serafina later betrayed her husband under pressure of the Inquisition.) He was almost certainly born Giuseppe Balsamo of Palermo, Sicily (the name Cagliostro came from an aristocratic branch of the family). He was accepted in Malta by the Grand Master and Knights Hospitaler and by distinguished people throughout Europe, some of whom, even when skeptical, have left fascinating descriptions of the power of his personality. Houdon sculptured a bust of him. In Russia, however, he failed to captivate Catherine the Great, who afterwards wrote satirical plays about him; but like all monarchs she had every reason to distrust and hate freemasonry. (It was also rumored that her lover Potemkin, like Casanova before him, was not immune to the charms of the lovely Lorenza/Serafina.)

Cagliostro died miserably in 1795 in the fortress-prison of San Leo, where he had been kept in a subterranean cell for fears of attempts by freemasons to rescue him. Two years before, while still in Sant' Angelo, he had prophetically written, "I have two more years to suffer before passing to the Eternal Orient." This is his only prophecy the accuracy of which we have real proof.

What interests us in connection with *The Magic Flute* is Cagliostro's creation of an Egyptian lodge of freemasonry, based on supposed ancient Egyptian mystic rites. (In fact, freemasonry began as a guild of architects and stonemasons working on Gothic cathedrals: hence, in the masonic service for Mozart after his death, the reference to God as "The Architect of the Universe.") Cagliostro was largely a copyist—his alchemy and spiritualism came from the Illuminati (as opposed to the more scientific) section of freemasonry, strongest in Bavaria and the south: their echoes would probably be heard a great deal in Vienna.

It is necessary, therefore, to say that the Egyptology of *The Magic Flute* and of Cagliostro's lodge probably derived from the same source: a romance called *Sethos* published in 1731 by the Abbé Jean Terasson, said to be drawn on by freemasonry for some of its ritual. The operatic connection has often been pointed out. The romance tells of an Egyptian prince, his education by an old tutor, Amedes, his initiation into the mysteries of the pyramids, and his slaying of a serpent—among other adventures. In his memoirs Cagliostro invented a similar background for himself (with a tutor named Althotas!), and as a freemason he adopted the symbolic seal of a serpent.

Cagliostro's aim to gather together the divided forces of freemasonry into his Egyptian lodge, put before the General Convention of Universal Masonry held rather unsuccessfully in Paris in 1784, would have been widely known (freemasons were great travelers and social mixers), and it—as well as the common source of *Sethos*—may well have been an element in the changes made in *The Magic Flute*.

What is certain is that to Mozart *The Magic Flute* was of great spiritual importance, inspiring him to some of his most deeply felt and impressive music. Even George Bernard Shaw wrote of it as "the music of my own church." The inspiration is surely the Illuminati, the mystic, rather than the scientific, and there is no real reason to put it beyond Schikaneder, who may have had a shrewd flair for *singspiel* entertainments and oriental fantasies, to suit popular taste. W. J. Turner, a perspicacious critic, has seen Mozart's own hand in the libretto, "giving the fairy tale a serious symbolical expression," and it is well known that when the composer attended a performance with an acquaintance who laughed at it all, his anger at the "Philistine" was such that he could not stay in the theater. "I called him Papageno and went out," he wrote to his wife, Constanze.

The instinct for self-preservation caused many freemasons to disassociate themselves from Cagliostro after his disgrace. Nevertheless Cagliostro had friends in high and low places throughout Europe and not all failed him. In the first shock of the Papal condemnation, aimed not only at him but at freemasonry as a whole, the reaction may well have produced Sarastro, the "Great Coptha" (as Cagliostro was called) representing the enlightened who are, he says, "constantly being attacked by the ignorant and prejudiced," and an opera that, in too veiled terms to provoke prosecution, expressed an unswerving faith in the masonic ideal of brotherhood, tolerance, equality, and spiritual "rejuvenation."

Part II: The Choral Music

Beethoven on Records

Continuing High Fidelity's appraisal of all available recordings of the composer's music

by H. C. Robbins Landon

Beethoven did not write a great deal of choral music compared to the many other genres he cultivated, such as the piano sonata or string quartet: but such choral music as he composed is generally of great importance in his artistic life, and one work—the *Missa Solemnis*—must be ranked among the greatest compositions of all time.

The two major choral works of Beethoven's Bonn period are the *Kantate auf den Tod Kaiser Joseph II (Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II)* and the *Kantate auf die Erhebung Leopold II zur Kaiserwürde (Cantata Upon the Occasion of Leopold II Becoming Emperor)*. These two cantatas are without question the major works of Beethoven's early years and it is no wonder that Haydn was very impressed with the young composer when he saw the *Joseph* Cantata manuscript in Bonn.

The middle period of Beethoven's creative life contains three significant choral works: *Christus am Oelberge (Christ on the Mount of Olives)* of 1803, the beautiful Mass in C for Princess Hermenegild Esterházy of 1807, and the *Choral Fantasy*, Op. 80 of 1808.

During Beethoven's third period we have not only the gigantic *Missa Solemnis* but also the finale of the Ninth Symphony (which, of course, will be considered in the forthcoming discography of the symphonies). It is known that Beethoven was working on at least one and possibly two further Masses when he died; it is quite clear that choral music always exerted a fascination on the composer, but the right circumstances to compose and perform large-scale works of this kind rarely presented themselves. It is, for example, significant that the first two cantatas seem to have been written on Beethoven's own initiative and were never performed in his lifetime (though the *Joseph* Cantata was actually rehearsed, the players found it too difficult). The *Missa Solemnis* was again written without a specific performance in view—the complete work was heard only after Beethoven's death.

Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II, WoO. 87.

• *Martina Arroyo, soprano; Justino Diaz, bass; Camerata Singers; New York Philharmonic, Thomas Schippers, cond. CBS 32 11 0040, $5.98 (with* Ah, perfido!, *Op. 65; Régine Crespin, soprano).*

• *Ilona Steingruber, soprano; Alfred Poell, baritone; Vienna Academy Choir; Vienna Symphony, Clemens Kraus, cond. Lyrichord LL 107, $4.98 (mono only).*

Beethoven's *Joseph* Cantata was written in 1790 and it seems to have been the piece that was shown to Haydn when he passed through Bonn on his way back to Vienna in the summer of 1792. Haydn was very impressed by the Cantata and immediately accepted Beethoven as a composition pupil: and indeed, this really is a very impressive work. It is given an excellent performance by Schippers, and is certainly the better of the two available recordings—the old Clemens Kraus version was made some twenty years ago and very much sounds its age. The CBS disc offers Régine Crespin's beautiful performance of *Ah, perfido!*, also an early work (1796). Any musical connoisseur living in the late eighteenth century must have realized from these two pieces alone that Beethoven was a very remarkable young man. Both works effectively explode the myth that Beethoven did not know how to write for voice. This is errant nonsense written by nonmusicians. Anyone who can read a score will see that the choral writing of the Cantata is assured and effective, while *Ah, perfido!*, apart from being a gorgeous piece of music, is also as well written for the voice as any aria by Mozart or Haydn.

Christus am Oelberge, Op. 85.

• *Judith Raskin, soprano; Richard Lewis, tenor; Herbert Beattie, bass; Temple University Choirs; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia MS 6841. $5.98.*

• *Liselotte Rehmann, soprano; Reinhold Bartel, tenor; August Messthaler, bass; South German Choral Society; Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Josef Bloser, cond. Vox STL 500870, $4.98.*

• *Maria Stader, soprano; Jan Peerce, tenor; Otto Wiener, bass-baritone; Vienna Academy Chorus; Vienna State Opera Orchestra. Hermann Scherchen, cond. Westminster WST 17033, $5.98.*

This oratorio, first performed in Vienna in April 1803, was Beethoven's attempt to enter a field in which Haydn, with his *Creation* (1798) and *Seasons* (1801), was an established master. Beethoven did not succeed in writing a *Creation*, but *Christ on the Mount of Olives* is a very remarkable achievement none the less. The two highpoints as far as this writer is concerned are the soldiers' chorus and the finale, which is, even compared with the glories of Haydn's late choral style, absolutely thrilling.

Of the three recordings, the Columbia with Ormandy is far superior to its rivals, both as a performance and in its immaculate and clean recording. I must confess that Ormandy has never been my favorite conductor, but this is a very well-conceived performance, particularly regarding choice of tempos (pointing up the obvious relationships between the various sections—a lesser conductor would have overlooked this) and in the balance of soloists, choir, and orchestra. The Philadelphia Orchestra, too, is so superior to the Stuttgart Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra as to put the other two records out of the running entirely.

The Vox recording is really quite good, and if we did not have the Columbia, it would do very nicely. The Scherchen version on Westminster was made in the early Sixties and is not successful, despite the presence of excellent soloists. Scherchen was a very erratic conductor and seldom achieved performances of absolutely first-rate quality on recordings. To sum up: if you do not know this music, hasten out and buy the Columbia record; you will be thoroughly delighted.

A fourth recording may be scheduled for release late this year by Angel. Wagenheim conducts the chorus and orchestra of the Beethoven Hall, Bonn, with soloists Christine Deutekom, Nicolai Gedda, and Wolfgang Anheisser.

Mass in C, Op. 86.

• *Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Monica Sinclair, mezzo; Richard Lewis, tenor; Marian Nowakowski, bass; Beecham Choral Society; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. Capitol SG 7168, $4.98.*

• *Patricia Brooks, soprano; Lili Chookasian, contralto; George Shirley, tenor; Bonaldo Giaiotti, bass; Musica Aeterna Chorus and Orchestra, Frederic Waldman, cond. Decca DL 79433, $5.98.*

The Mass in C, Beethoven's first attempt with the form, was premiered at the Bergkirche in Eisenstadt with Haydn's own choir and orchestra. It seems that Haydn got Beethoven the job: Haydn, then seventy-five years old, was living in retirement in Vienna and was only nominally *Kapellmeister* to Prince Nicolaus II Esterházy. Beethoven, knowing the spectacular success of Haydn's late Masses, was rightly nervous about the new Mass's reception and said as much in a letter to Prince Esterházy. Esterházy replied that it was right and proper for Beethoven to acknowledge Haydn's mastery but the younger composer need have no fear. But as events turned out, the Mass was a complete flop at Eisenstadt. Nicolaus Esterházy referred to it in a letter as "ridiculous and detestable." Even allowing for insufficient rehearsal, it is a total mystery why this beautiful and serious Mass should have been a failure at Eisenstadt, and an equally curious fact that it has never really become popular at all.

Waldman is a very good choral conductor and he leads a distinguished performance which has also been very sensibly recorded. It does not, however, measure up to the Beecham version, which has better soloists, a superior choir, an orchestra equally as good, and, of course, Beecham himself. Sir Thomas was often an idiosyncratic conductor and he has been severely criticized for reorchestrating Handel and playing Haydn in butchered versions. All this has nothing to do with his supreme, subtle, and poetic gifts as a conductor, qualties that he brings in abundance to this wonderful performance. The recording is by now rather passé, but it is nevertheless sufficiently robust not to detract from the performance.

Two new recordings of the Mass are announced for release later this year: from DGG with the Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra conducted by Karl Richter with soloists Gundula Janowitz, Julia Hamari, Horst R. Laubenthal, and Ernst Gerold Schramm; from London with the Leipzig Radio chorus and the Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Herbert Kegel with soloists Hannelore Kuhse, Annelies Burmeister, Peter Schreier, and Theo Adam.

Fantasia for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra, in C minor, Op. 80.

• *Julius Katchen, piano; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Pierino Gamba, cond. London CS 6451, $5.98 (with the Piano Concerto No. 1).*

• *Rudolf Serkin, piano; Westminster Choir; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia MS 6616, $5.98 (with the Piano Concerto No. 3); M2S 794, $11.96 (two discs, with the Ninth Symphony); D4S 740, $23.92 (four discs, with the complete piano concertos).*

• *Alfred Brendel, piano; Stuttgart Teachers' Choral Society; Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilfried Boettcher, cond. Vox STL 514160, $4.98 (with Liszt's* Wanderer Fantasy*); Turnabout TV 34205/09, $10 (five discs, with the complete piano concertos).*

• *Daniel Barenboim, piano; Vienna Academy Chamber Choir; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Laszlo Somogyi, cond. Westminster WST 17078, $5.98 (with the Piano Concerto No. 3).*

• *Daniel Barenboim, piano; New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel SD 3752, $23.92 (four discs, with the complete piano concertos).*

The *Choral Fantasy* was first performed at one of Beethoven's concerts in the Theater an der Wein on December 22, 1808. That concert included the first performance of the Fifth Symphony, the Sixth Symphony, the Fourth Piano Concerto, and excerpts from the Mass in C as well as *Ah, perfido!* It must have been one of the greatest premiere evenings in the world's history. It was also phenomenally long and, as usual with nearly all Beethoven concerts, there was not enough rehearsal time; in the event, it was the *Choral Fantasy* that suffered. The work actually broke down and Beethoven had to start again from the beginning. Opinions have always been divided about the *Choral Fantasy*. Its admirers have pointed out that the composition stands as a unique record of Beethoven as an improvisator, for the whole first part of the work is a kind of impromptu fantasia. Its detractors say that the *Fantasy* is too much of a good thing and that the piano sounds rather incongruous racing up and down in tandem with soloists, choir, and orchestra. Personally, I would say that the work is not an entirely successful experiment but is full of beauties and unmistakably bears the giant's imprint.

It may appear curious to begin a review by listing the timings, but the discrepancies among the recordings are so strange that I think that they almost speak for themselves: Serkin: 17 min. 40 sec.; Katchen: 19 min. 10 sec.; Brendel: 20 min. 37 sec.; Barenboim/Somogyi: 20 min. 46 sec.; Barenboim/Klemperer: 21 min. 18 sec. I cannot believe that Beethoven conceived the *Choral Fantasy* in such a way that it could be performed with a difference of three minutes and thirty-eight seconds, which in this case is the difference between Serkin and the recent Barenboim. Something must surely be wrong here. Much as I have always admired Bernstein and Serkin, I do feel that they play the *Choral Fantasy* too quickly. It is admittedly very exciting in places, as Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic always are; but there are times when even Serkin, with his prodigious technical abilities, simply cannot play all the notes, and this is surely a sign to slow up. But they do not, and the result is an electrifying but basically misguided conception of the work.

Katchen's version is a fine one. He has a bold, masculine, and technically commanding grasp of the music, and the conductor, Pierino Gamba, whom I have never heard in the flesh, does his job very well.

Alfred Brendel is without any question the most intellectual, the most intelligent, and the most dedicated of the younger school of Viennese pianists—in fact, I believe that he is fast becoming one of the world's very greatest pianists. Unfortunately the orchestras in his integral set of the piano concertos and *Choral Fantasy* are not first- or even second-rate; nor are the recordings more than accept-

Beethoven on Records

able. This is a distinct drawback to the whole, but one day we may hope that Brendel will do all these performances with better forces. Anything that Brendel touches is always marked by devoted study and careful preparation, and the *Choral Fantasy* is no exception. The performers take the music much more slowly than Serkin/Bernstein, but I believe this tempo—which is only slightly slower than Katchen's—is basically the right one. But as I said above, the over-all sound is not terribly enticing, and the orchestra, choir, and conductor are not of the first rank.

Much the same also applies to Barenboim's Westminster version. He is particularly put at a disadvantage by a sluggish orchestra and a not very distinguished conductor. Barenboim has obviously thought out his conception carefully and it seems convincing. The recording, made five years ago, is adequate but not in the class of Columbia or London. Barenboim's second version, with the New Philharmonia conducted by Klemperer, is a revelation. The pianist has matured immensely in the intervening years, and Klemperer, as might be expected, provides magnificent and massive orchestral and vocal support. No doubt under the influence of the great conductor, Barenboim's timing is now somewhat longer, making this version the longest of all those discussed. Yet, as always with Klemperer, the slow tempo does not mean a slow pace. In many ways this is the most impressive of all the existing versions, thanks primarily to the presence of Dr. Klemperer.

Missa Solemnis, in D, Op. 123.

- *Elisabeth Söderström, soprano; Marga Höffgen, contralto; Waldemar Kmentt, tenor; Martti Talvela, bass; New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel SB 3679, $11.96 (two discs).*
- *Eileen Farrell, soprano; Carol Smith, contralto; Richard Lewis, tenor; Kim Borg, bass-baritone; Westminster Choir; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein, cond. Columbia M2S 619, $11.96 (two discs).*
- *Gundula Janowitz, soprano; Christa Ludwig, mezzo; Fritz Wunderlich, tenor; Walter Berry, bass; Vienna Singverein; Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139208/09, $11.96 (two discs).*
- *Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Christa Ludwig, mezzo; Nicolai Gedda, tenor; Nicola Zaccaria, bass; Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Angel SB 3595, $11.96 (two discs).*
- *Ilona Steingruber, soprano; Else Schürhoff, contralto; Erich Majkut, tenor; Otto Wiener, bass; Vienna Academy Choir; Vienna Symphony, Otto Klemperer, cond. Vox STL 511430, $4.98 (two discs).*
- *Lenore Kirschstein, soprano; Jeanne Debroubaix, contralto; Peter Schreier, tenor; Günther Morbach, bass; Chorus of Cologne; Gürzenich Symphony Orchestra, Günter Wand, cond. Nonesuch HB 73002, $4.96 (two discs).*
- *Uta Graf, soprano; Grace Hoffman, mezzo; Helmut Kretschmar, tenor; Erich Wenk, bass; North German Radio Chorus and Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. Vanguard Everyman SRV 214/15, $4.96 (two discs).*
- *Lois Marshall, soprano; Nan Merriman, mezzo; Eugene Conley, tenor; Jerome Hines, bass; Robert Shaw Chorale; NBC Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Red Seal LM 6013, $11.96 (two discs, mono only).*

As I have observed at the beginning of this article, the assertion that Beethoven did not write well for the voice is at best a half-truth. By the time Beethoven was composing the *Missa Solemnis* and the Ninth Symphony, he did expect his vocal soloists and choir to perform very difficult passages and he often wrote for the voices in their highest registers. The conversation books written when Beethoven was rehearsing the Ninth Symphony in 1824 (at which concert parts of the *Missa Solemnis* were also first performed), show us that the two female soloists, Karoline Unger and Henriette Sontag—both of whom were to become famous prima donnas—came frequently to Beethoven to discuss various points in connection with the forthcoming premiere. Both women complained bitterly about the high tessitura of their parts. But Beethoven would not change a note and we find Karoline Unger writing in one of the conversation books, "Well, in God's name, we shall go on trying!" The Ninth Symphony and the *Missa Solemnis* are now performed all over the world. Beethoven knew the parts were not impossible and he quite rightly thought that one day choirs could be found able to negotiate the extremely high parts of both these works.

There is an anecdote, which appears to be authentic, in which Otto Klemperer was conducting a work by Beethoven with the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and one of the orchestral players afterwards remarked to the maestro: "That is a very slow tempo, isn't it, Dr. Klemperer?"; Klemperer replied, very serenely, "You will get used to it." This anecdote came to mind as I listened to this conductor's grandiose performance of the *Missa Solemnis* on Angel. Many of the tempos, particularly in the Gloria and Credo, will sound slow to many people; but there is a reason, and a very complicated one, for Klemperer's choice of these slow tempos. Richard Strauss, as many people know, was not only a famous composer but an equally famous operatic conductor, whose Mozart performances in the Munich Residenztheater made history in the period between the two World Wars. Strauss formed a theory, which was then thought to be very controversial, that most of the great music by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven was conceived in one fundamental tempo. For example, he conducted the whole finale to Act II of *The Marriage of Figaro* in such a way that every section stood in precise mathematical relation to its preceding and following number. Sometimes such a procedure is perfectly obvious, as in the Adagio introduction and the following Allegro in the first movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 98: the tempo of the Allegro is surely double that of the Adagio. Nowadays, this theory is almost universally accepted by musicologists the world over. Klemperer has always taken this view himself and the entire *Missa Solemnis* is quite obviously built around this principle. If you therefore analyze the Gloria and Credo, you will see that Klemperer has precisely worked out the tempo relationships so that even as enormous a movement as the Gloria, with its many changes of tempo, hangs together in a thoroughly convincing way. Once this principle is understood, Klemperer's monumental and panoramic view of the *Missa Solemnis* becomes so natural and so right that I, at least, find it difficult to accept other versions in which this principle is not followed. But even apart from this technical device, Klemperer's performance of the *Missa Solemnis* possesses an overwhelming grandeur and majesty. The soloists do not perhaps sing with the spectacular beauty of those in Karajan's DGG set, but obviously Klemperer was more intent on achieving rugged grandeur than incidental beauty of tone. It is not, perhaps, a spontaneous reading, but it is a very great one, and we must be thankful that Klemperer was able to put it on records at the height of his kaleidoscopic career. Angel's Klemperer recording puts completely into the shade the old one he made many years ago for Vox.

A quite different reading, but really very exciting indeed, is the one that Leonard Bernstein gives us. He too has obviously had serious thoughts about the *Missa Solemnis* and his is by no means a casual or superficial interpretation. What particularly strikes one is the wonderful feeling of spontaneity and energy that radiates from this interpretation. There are times when the effect is positively hair-raising, as in the timpani solos in bars 326 ff. and especially 342 ff. towards the end of the Agnus Dei. Although of an entirely different training and temperament, Bernstein approaches the final fugue of the Credo in much the same way as Klemperer—a deliberate tempo which is seen to be necessary if you adhere to the one-basic-tempo theory.

Karajan has recently been devoting a great deal of his efforts toward producing a physically cultivated and beautiful sound. Those who have heard his Wagner operas will realize that he is almost al-

Continued on page 103

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Rosenkavalier *Continued*

ing starring a first-generation *Rosenkavalier* cast: Lotte Lehmann's Marschallin was rightly judged immortal, as was the Ochs of Richard Mayr; Elisabeth Schumann made an ideal Sophie and Maria Olszewska a rich and warm Octavian. Despite its ancient technology, this historic recording has been reissued many times, and is now to be had on Seraphim IC 6041 (three budget discs) together with a selection of songs and arias recorded by Lehmann and Schumann. Indispensable for anyone with a historical interest.

Indispensable too is this new, complete, gleaming, irresistible London production: for the marvelously apt, polished, and intuitive conducting of Georg Solti; for a noble, supremely sensitive Marschallin from Régine Crespin; for some boldly venturesome but entirely successful casting with young, fresh voices in the three other principal roles; for playing of the utmost precision and musicality by the Vienna Philharmonic; and—not least—for a recorded luxury of sound that is consistently rich and satisfying to the ear, yet never without acoustical relevance.

London has produced many wonderful and ear-opening operatic records before this one, and not a few of them have come from the *Rosenkavalier* location: Vienna's Sofiensaal, where the *Ring* was made. Appreciation has in the past been tempered occasionally by a suspicion that the sound was drawing attention to itself too consciously; and not all of the "special effects" have won undiluted approval. In this *Rosenkavalier* there is no hint of gimmickry whatever: just the most natural and appropriate perspectives for every scene, with a balance of razor-keen sensitivity between voices and orchestra at every point in the score. For this accomplishment and much else, a salute of profound respect is the proper due of producer Christopher Raeburn and his Decca/London team of engineers: Gordon Parry, Jimmy Lock, and Jack Law.

Gimmickry, no—but touches, yes. Touches of repeated inspiration, like the perspectives of the Baron's Act I entrance, as he thrusts the Werdenberg servants aside. Or the Viennese *Schlag* sound of the off-stage band playing "*schöne Musi*" in the cafe scene. Or the silver gleam of the Presentation of the Rose music, which yields soon to the tender intimacy of the first Octavian/Sophie duet with its intertwined woodwinds. The listening ear is always treated honestly, never cheated or jarred by disproportion. And you will hear a hundred things you have never before heard in *Rosenkavalier*, harmonies and inner strands of invention whose presence was probably unsuspected—but always available in the full score. Nor will you feel that these elements are thrust into undue prominence, or that the score has been distorted to reveal them: they just appear naturally. You will hear more words too—and Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Komödie für Musik* is the longest and most densely packed libretto ever made into an opera—for the cast enunciates with exemplary clarity.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the release is Solti's work. I hold him to be among the greatest opera conductors alive, but would have thought his temperament too vigorous, muscular, power-oriented to be quite at ease with a score that demands, above all, patience, tender insight, spaciousness, and ease. Yet he is supremely gentle whenever the music needs it, perceptive always, and builds tension only when appropriate. His architecture for the final trio—in which the Marschallin gives up her Octavian and joins the young lovers together—is almost unbearable in its held-back suspense; but when the resolution comes at last, it brings utterly satisfying release. I could go on for pages about the rightness of Solti's dynamics and tempos, his consideration for the singers, the cohesive and polished sonorites with which the Vienna Philharmonic's instrumentalists reward him (and us). But we have not yet started on the singing, and it is past time.

For many, it is the Marschallin's opera; and by the quality of her performance it must stand or fall. Crespin reaches into and reveals the very soul of a complex, sensitive, and aristocratic woman: she catches and keeps the listener's full involvement. This closeness of identification she never for a moment loses—nor our empathy—even at occasional moments of imperfect execution. At times she seems to lag behind Solti's beat, and at other moments her generally lovely and even voice takes on a certain amount of edge; but the over-all impression is one of supreme command. She "burns in" the monologue in Act I ("*Da geht er hin*") a little strongly for my taste—and does not "hold and take, hold and let go," to quote her own advice to Octavian—but her character remains always consistent: a beautiful young woman caught in a marriage without love, who senses that time can change her and that only love matters—even the love of a seventeen-year-old boy that cannot last. Crespin's Marschallin is nothing like Lehmann's, and nothing like Schwarzkopf's: it is her unique conception, dramatically three-dimensioned and musically distinguished. Her enunciation is accurate, with rather less of the French accent than one heard a few years ago.

The Octavian of Yvonne Minton (an Australian mezzo-soprano) is brilliantly successful. The voice itself is true and clear, and it is used with bold ingenuity in each of Rofrano's moods and guises: ardent lover, petulant schoolboy, tipsy Viennese housemaid, chastened infidel. Yet at no point in the score can she be confused with either Sophie or the Princess, for her voice is always distinctive.

The trio of ladies is completed by Helen Donath, whose high soprano offers an ideal timbre for the part of Sophie. Miss Donath comes from Texas, sings like a young angel, projects most accurately the character specified by the libretto: a bandbox debutante—witless, nervous, and impressionable—who can nonetheless turn on some stubborn will power when it matters. If Miss Donath does not drive Elisabeth Schumann out of the memory, she still does marvelously, making a good effect in her Act II duets with Octavian and contributing a serenely faultless top line in the opera's climactic trio and the concluding "*Spür nur dich*" duet.

The Baron Ochs of Manfred Jungwirth is going to start some arguments. He delivers a far younger, straighter sound than we are used to. He has the range of a true basso (and delivers very creditably the famous low E pedal note at the close of Act II), but the voice sounds much of the time like a baritone, and a fairly light one at that. Jungwirth stays well clear of much of the traditional Ochs "business" and indulges in none of the broad comedy (more often gross mugging) which sometimes makes us wonder why the Marschallin should admit such an oaf to her acquaintance. Instead we meet a young and rustic nobleman with country ways and a certain arrogance—but a nobleman, for all his uncontrolled lechery. It is the first time I have heard Strauss's own prescription for Ochs satisfactorily compounded: "The part has been drawn strongly enough by the poet so that the actor should soften and beautify, rather than emphasize the crude and unpleasant side of the character."

Jungwirth performs more musically than any previous Ochs I have heard, and he is a clever enough actor to make us feel truly sorry for him when his world collapses in Act III—for, please note, the vengeance meted out to him for his bottom-pinching ways is disproportionately cruel: which is why, I suppose, actors and directors generally conspire to exaggerate Och's venality and try to make this extreme punishment seem deserved.

Otto Wiener makes the most of his lines as Faninal, the *arriviste* financier. Anne Howells and Murray Dickie have a good time as the two Italian intriguers. Other

neat cameos come from Anton Dermota (a fine tenor in his day) and Alfred Jerger, once a famous and classic Ochs himself.

The Singer's aria (in the Levée Scene) gets a pushed sort of reading from Luciano Pavarotti: not bad, but nothing really graceful or memorable either. Funny how rarely Italian tenors are heard to advantage in this bit—though Strauss intended a parody on the classic Italian bel canto aria of the eighteenth century. Richard Tauber's old 78-rpm version is still unsurpassed.

London packs into this album the fattest and most elegant brochure I have ever seen: seventy-two pages containing (naturally) the complete libretto in German and English, blurbs on the performers and essays—by Alfred Jerger (his memories of Strauss), Erich Graf ("Humor and Sentiment"), and Rodney Blumer ("The Characters"). A list of "principal themes" in musical quotation is keyed into the libretto: numbers tell you whether the melody in progress is "Marschallin's Loss" or "Ochs's Discomfiture"—but the editors admit readily that classifying Strauss's themes is not so straightforward a process as pinning down Wagner's leading motifs. The book (it is much too big to be called a booklet) is lavishly decorated with color reproductions of Alfred Roller's designs for the original production of the opera (Dresden, 1911): the costumes, including those of the minor characters, details of the three settings, even architectural drawings for the scenery builders.

What else remains? Just to say again that Strauss's best-loved opera has now received a definitive stereo recording, one not likely to be bettered for many a long year; and that this *Rosenkavalier* ranks among the finest opera recordings ever made.

STRAUSS, R.: Der Rosenkavalier. Régine Crespin (s), Marschallin; Helen Donath (s), Sophie; Emmy Loose (s), Marianne Leitmetzerin; Anne Howells (s), Annina; Rosi Schwaiger (s), Milliner; Yvonne Minton (ms), Octavian; Luciano Pavarotti (t), A Singer; Murray Dickie (t), Valzacchi; Kurt Equiluz (t), Major Domo; Anton Dermota (t), A Landlord; Karl Terkal (t), Animal Vendor; Herbert Prikopa (b), Major Domo; Otto Wiener (bs-b), Faninal; Manfred Jungwirth (bs), Baron Ochs; Herbert Lachner (bs), Police Commissioner; Alfred Jerger (bs), A Notary; Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. London OSA 1435, $23.92 (four discs).

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by David Hamilton

The Recorded Legacy of Ferruccio Busoni

At the keyboard: one of the great intellects and performing virtuosos of the century

THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE of this record should hardly require underlining. Ferruccio Busoni was one of the great intellectual figures of the musical world in the early decades of the twentieth century—composer, pianist, musical philosopher, and teacher. In recent years, his original compositions have become more widely known and appreciated, so that he is no longer thought of primarily as an arranger of Bach's music (witness the story of the lady who, upon being introduced to Mrs. Busoni, exclaimed "Not Mrs. *Bach*-Busoni!"). The International Piano Library's new disc now helps further to round out our picture of this extraordinary man, as well as restoring to circulation some significant recordings by three of his pupils.

There is some evidence in Busoni's correspondence that he recorded more sides than were actually issued (the Gounod-Liszt *Faust Waltz* is the only work specifically mentioned), but no trace has been found of more than the eight sides included here, which were probably recorded in London, in either 1919 or 1922 (the two years in which the letters speak of making records). Since all accounts agree that Busoni's playing was most impressive in the great works of the literature—Beethoven and the Mozart concertos, especially—it is regrettable that the list of surviving records includes nothing but short works. However, I suppose we must be grateful for what we have; even as late as 1922, piano recording was a decidedly limited art, and if Liszt himself had walked into the studios he would probably have been told to "keep it down to four minutes, Abbé."

The most accessible of Busoni's records is the Liszt *Hungarian Rhapsody*; although the slow section is abridged, it does give a fairly clear idea of the freedom, power, and clarity of his playing, while the virtuosity

Busoni *Continued*

of the repeated-note variation is stupendous in its variety of color and dynamic shading. Also impressive is the Bach transcription, for even through the misty recording one can hear how Busoni built up a climax. The C major Prelude and Fugue sacrifices the regularity of tempo we value today in Bach, but the broad articulations are certainly consistent with the work's harmonic structure, and the effectiveness of the tonal shadings in the Prelude is undeniable.

The Chopin pieces are played with a freedom verging on license, but the limpid ornamentation in the Nocturne is especially treasurable. The little A major Prelude is repeated, as was the custom in those days, and then Busoni improvises a modulation into the *Black Key* Etude. It's not clear why he recorded the latter piece twice, but the slower performance makes a better effect; unfortunately, the Etudes suffer most of all from the cloudy sound.

These records are documents, and they call for some patience in listening, but serious study is very rewarding, for on repeated hearings the bare outlines of the performances begin to fill in. As I have implied, the sound is thin, the bass weak, the climaxes distort—but this is all we have. Happily, the dubbings are clear and honest; nothing has been falsified.

Since Busoni's own records fill up only a single side, the International Piano Library has backed them with performances by his pupils. Michael von Zadora recorded the *Carmen* Sonatina around 1929; this is a flashier performance than Ogdon's or Steuermann's, and the *Flower Song* theme is declaimed with considerable rhetorical flair, but the modern recordings elicit more textural variety. Egon Petri's 1945 Chaconne is a very impressive job; there is some unwise "de-clicking" on the last 78 side that impairs the musical continuity in this dubbing. Finally, Edward Weiss plays the *Indian Diary*, Book I (Book II is the *Indian Fantasy* for piano and orchestra). Taken from a 1952 Circle LP, this performance is on the tame, even sluggish side, especially if compared with Petri's version (recently reissued on Odeon HQM 1112). Weiss contributes an interesting essay to the illustrated booklet that accompanies the record.

Obviously, this record is a must for Busoni collectors, and for anyone who is seriously interested in the history of piano playing. More than that, it contains some performances that still manage to project their musical and intellectual validity over not only the inadequacies of the recorded sound but also the great stylistic gap that separates us from the generation of musicians born more than a century ago; for this reason, it is more than merely "historical" in interest.

FERRUCCIO BUSONI: "The Issued Records." BACH: Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I: Prelude and Fugue, in C; Chorale Prelude "Nun freut euch" (arr. Busoni); Partita for Violin Solo, No. 2, in D mihor, S. 1004: Chaconne (arr. Busoni). BEETHOVEN: Ecossaises (arr. Busoni). BUSONI: Sonatina No. 6 ("Carmen Fantasy"); Indian Diary, Book I. CHOPIN: Etudes: in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5 (two performances); in E minor, Op. 25, No. 5; Nocturne in F sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; Prelude in A, Op. 28, No. 7. LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13, in A minor. Michael von Zadora, piano (in the Sonatina); Egon Petri, piano (in the Chaconne); Edward Weiss, piano (in the Indian Diary); Ferruccio Busoni, piano (in the other works). International Piano Library IPL 104. Available with a $10 contribution to the International Piano Library, 215 West 91st Street, New York, N.Y. 10024.

Son of "Switched-On Bach"

Or what went wrong in the delivery room

by Leonard Marcus

DEAR GLENN:

I'm writing this note to you for two reasons. You remember calling me this summer and telling me how great Walter's moogifying of the Fourth *Brandenburg* was coming, even better than the Third he did in "Switched-On Bach"? Well, that's the first reason. Then there was the quote on the record jacket of Walter's sequel: "Carlos' realization of the Fourth *Brandenburg* Concerto is, to put it bluntly, the finest performance of any of the *Brandenburgs*—live, canned, or intuited—I've ever heard. Glenn Gould." That's the second reason.

Now, you will also remember, we both agreed that "Switched-On Bach" was a superb recording. I'm afraid we were practically alone among our critical colleagues, although the public certainly flocked to it. I've gone on record in HIGH FIDELITY with my belief that it was the most important demonstration of the musical value of stereo since the London/Solti *Rheingold* over a decade ago. And, to be sure, I was anxiously awaiting the second Carlos album, especially after all those second-rate Moog albums that tried to cash in on the success of "S-OB." Well, to be frank, I was very disappointed. Not that I didn't enjoy parts of it. I did. For instance, I thought that the first band—you know, those stereo signals to help you balance your speakers—was an improvement over the "S-OB" album. Also, I was terribly amused by the last band, the Monteverdi *Domine ad adjuvandum*, with its attempt at portraying solo and ensemble singers through electronic manipulation. I presume that I was amused for the correct reason, namely the poor vocal enunciation. A marvelous satire. I couldn't understand a word.

But I don't think the rest of the album comes off; and I'd like to tell you why. The main reason, I suppose, is that if you are going to transcribe a piece of music, you must have some reason to think that you are benefiting the music. For instance, the Stokowski and Respighi transcriptions of Bach's organ pieces benefited those works in at least two ways: they brought them to the attention of a public that went to symphony concerts but not to organ recitals; and they allowed the contrapuntal lines to emerge more clearly than they do when played on most grand organs in reverberant churches. Mozart's transcriptions of Bach and Handel, and Bach's own transcriptions of his and others' works, also enabled that music to be heard under conditions other than those originally intended, or when new musical forces were available.

But these reasons are not valid when you are talking about a phonograph recording. When you place a record on your turntable, it is no more difficult to handle a disc with the original instrumentation than one with a transcribed version. If a record of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony played on the piano is what you put on (and I use the term advisedly), it's because you want to hear Beethoven's Fifth Symphony on the piano—not because the producer couldn't afford an orchestra. You might attend a Szigeti concert because he is in town that night; you wouldn't buy a Szigeti recording only because

Walter Carlos at the Moog synthesizer.

he plays out of tune. The recording must contain some other benefit.

Walter's first album provided, again, two benefits: the Moog allowed the contrapuntal lines to be heard more clearly than would be possible via ordinary instruments; and through his brilliant use of stereophony, Walter pointed out the structure of Bach's phrases and architecture to a previously unheard-of degree. In the present album, as I will point out in a moment, he does just the opposite: he tears down Bach's structures.

Another reason that I don't think this album comes off is one I've long suspected and the recording amply demonstrates: you can usually mess around with Bach and still have some glorious music; but if you mess with most composers, you just end up with a mess.

Now for some specifics. In the Scarlatti pieces, originally keyboard works, Walter has simply added different colors to different phrases and sections, and has fragmented the parts both coloristically and stereophonically. The fragmentation, I'll admit, does increase one's perception of individual phrases, but I could hear no well-thought-out stereophony that might clarify the structure of the pieces. Then, again, Scarlatti's structures here are not all that intriguing. I could hear nothing—whether in tempo, articulation, or phrasing—that gave me the slightest clue as to the benefit of the Moog. (In "S-OB" you were at least able to hear what some pieces sounded like when played at speeds impossible for human hands. You, as a virtuoso, would know whether the "W-TS" versions of the Scarlatti G major or second D major Sonatas really are unplayable at Walter's speed. My point is that they don't *sound* it.) And as for the colors Carlos chose for Scarlatti, they all sounded "keyboardy" anyway, so why not simply play them on a harpsichord —or even a Hammond organ? I think Walter's imagination in selecting timbres that might have been implied in—or least "read into"—the music failed him here.

The same defect shows up in the orchestral selections. In the *Water Music*, he completely misses the boat—if you'll pardon the expression. The colors he selected are no improvement on those Handel chose. In the Air, for instance, it sounds as though somebody had orchestrated the opening for saxophones, adding oboes and perhaps a muted trumpet later on. In the last excerpt, we hear horns and trumpets, but then there are sections where the music sounds as though it is played by a huge band of harmonicas. If that was Walter's intent, he could have hired some sax and harmonica players; as for the "electronic" colors that intruded from time to time, I simply could not understand what they contributed. The Monteverdi *Orfeo* Suite did, I'll admit, help expose the contrapuntal lines through stereo, and some of the musical implications through color.

Now we come to the Fourth *Brandenburg*. Again, Walter stays close to the original orchestral timbres, which makes the whole process inane. But worse, where previously he shed original light on some of Bach's ideas, here he often destroys those ideas. Let me give you one telling example. You know those wonderful solo entrances—a long note sneaking in under the other instruments, then coming to the fore and developing its own personality? Did you hear what Walter did to that? The long note is noticeable as long as it is held, but as soon as it reaches for other notes, the line is lost in the welter of similar-sounding voices. You simply cannot hear which voice is the one that just sneaked in. Throughout, Walter has spoiled Bach's solo-*vs.*-tutti games and has left us with only thick-*vs.*-thin "orchestrations" to contemplate. He's thrown our char shu ding into a not-too-efficient blender—or mixer, if you will—and given us back a lumpy, if spicy, oatmeal.

I think the problem is that whereas in the Third *Brandenburg*—which Walter rendered so magnificently in "S-OB"—the original sounds are not orchestrally selective, in the Fourth they are. The Third is scored for strings that break up to form solo ensembles and then coalesce into tutti sections. Walter was able, for instance, to add trumpetlike sounds when the music might have implied them, and there his instincts were exquisite. In the Fourth, Bach has called for three individual soloists, two flutes and a violin, and has written his music accordingly. When Walter subtracted that basic idea from the music, he could find nothing to replace it that would make the slightest musical sense. And why, for heaven's sake, did he stick with "flutey" sounds when the reason for those sounds—that is, to enable the ear to attach itself to the particular instruments, and thus follow some special lines—had been dissipated? If you see Walter before I do, would you suggest that he stick with music that is not already coloristically differentiated—the Sixth *Brandenburg*, perhaps, or the C sharp or B minor preludes and fugues from Book I of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*? I think they will offer him more opportunities.

Incidentally, I was particularly struck by one idiosyncracy throughout the album: the slowing down at the ends of pieces. This practice, you know, has fallen into disrepute in the twentieth century. And here was an electric transcription—as twentieth-century as you can get—using the same romantic ritard. What bothered me was that it sounded so *right*! We of course have no reason to believe that Bach didn't do the same thing (and some reasons to believe that he did). It occurred to me that perhaps the slowing down at the end of a piece is instinctive, and that the practice of forcing the full tempo to the end is just an artificial eccentricity of our contemporary culture. If the bulk of our concert fare emanates, even tenuously, from song and dance, you can see how the ultimate slowing is natural. Even today, when we dance, the band slows down at the end, to let us know that the end is upon us and that we had better prepare our dance steps accordingly—in my day, to prepare for the "dip." And doesn't every singer expand the ending of a song, to let you know that it is soon time to applaud? There is no reason to believe that this hasn't always been the case, and that the expanded conclusion developed—until our own "cool" era—along with the development of music itself. At any rate, it's a thought.

By the way, what did you think of my proposal to record the Beethoven Sonatas on the harpsichord?

All my best,

Cordially,

LEN

"THE WELL-TEMPERED SYNTHESIZER." MONTEVERDI: Orfeo: Suite; Vespers (1610): Domine ad adjuvandum. SCARLATTI, D.: Sonatas: in G, K. 455; in D, K. 491; in E, K. 531; in D, K. 96. HANDEL: Water Music: Bourrée; Air; Allegro deciso. BACH: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, in G, S. 1049. Walter Carlos, synthesizer. Columbia MS 7286, $5.98.

classical

reviewed by
ROYAL S. BROWN
R. D. DARRELL
PETER G. DAVIS
SHIRLEY FLEMING
ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN
CLIFFORD F. GILMORE
HARRIS GOLDSMITH
DAVID HAMILTON
PHILIP HART
PAUL HENRY LANG
ROBERT C. MARSH
ROBERT P. MORGAN
GEORGE MOVSHON
SUSAN THIEMANN SOMMER

BACH: Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord: in G, S. 1027; in D, S. 1028; in G minor, S. 1029; Trio Sonata for Two Flutes and Continuo, in G, S. 1039. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, gamba and cello; Frans Brüggen and Leopold Stastny, flutes; Herbert Tachezi, harpsichord. Telefunken SAWT 9536, $5.95.

Though these gamba sonatas are by no means rare works, this is, curiously, the first domestically released stereo recording in which a harpsichord is partnered by a real gamba. The several alternative versions now available offer various combinations of cellos, violas, harpsichords, and pianos—even one with a viola d'amore and harpsichord—but for a modern recording with the correct instrumentation, this seems to be a premiere.

Nikolaus Harnoncourt is well known for his work with the Concentus Musicus of Vienna, an ensemble specializing in performances of Bach chamber works, cantatas, etc. on original instruments. Now Harnoncourt steps to center stage as soloist and the results are interesting, enlightening, and just a little disappointing. While Harnoncourt's technique is certainly more than adequate, it is not enough to make us forget that he is sometimes struggling with a difficult and unwieldly instrument: one hears an awkwardly turned phrase or a strained tone here and there.

One of the hallmarks of a Concentus Musicus performance is the carefully and cleanly articulated phrase, which is further broken down into several small note groups—a procedure often indicated by Bach himself. The tendency is also apparent here, but carried almost to the point of navel contemplation: so carefully do we examine each group of notes that the total view is lost and the result is often choppy or lacking in continuity. In short, Harnoncourt's musicology is beyond reproach, and he has very successfully communicated his rather radical ideas about Bach through the Concentus Musicus; but on his own, he seems to get bogged down in principles at the expense of the spontaneous flair necessary for a solo artist.

Tachezi's contributions reflect Harnoncourt's approach entirely; imitative passages between the two are reproduced precisely, ornaments always match, and, in general, a complete uniformity of purpose prevails. The recording assigns equal weight to harpsichord and gamba so that each may be soloist or accompanist as the occasion demands.

A bonus is offered in this release by the inclusion of a neat and subdued performance of the G major Trio Sonata for Two Flutes and Continuo. This piece was later rearranged by the composer as the First Gamba Sonata: Bach simply assigned one flute part to the gamba (an octave lower) and the other to the harpsichordist's right hand. The left hand plays the bass line, and the harmonic filler supplied by the continuo harpsichord in the Trio Sonata is omitted in the gamba version. C.F.G.

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies: No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 8, in F, Op. 93. Vienna Philharmonic, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. London CS 6619, $5.98.

One could understand a conductor reveling in the lush warmth of the Vienna Philharmonic's sonority, but fortunately for Beethoven, Schmidt-Isserstedt valiantly resists any such temptation. His Fifth, though golden-toned and mellow, is thoroughly galvanic. Tempos are militant but not rushed; phrasing is expansive yet direct and uncluttered. The repeat is observed in the first movement, though that in the finale is sensibly dispensed with. My only quibble with this orthodox interpretation is that the pace for the finale might have had a more sustained, pounding momentum. Here it seems just a mite jaunty and clipped.

In the Eighth Symphony, Schmidt-Isserstedt opts for a middle ground between the headlong momentum espoused by Scherchen, Toscanini, Kletzki, and Szell, and the rotund geniality of such conductors as Beecham and Krips who (wrongly, in my opinion) regard the work as a humorous, lighthearted affair. Whatever "humor" one finds in its pages is, so far as I can see, of a decidedly caustic, sardonically mocking variety. A great deal of illuminating detail comes to the fore (e.g., the triplets in the cello part during the third movement trio), but never at the expense of elemental forward thrust. Steinberg's version of the Eighth for Command shares many of Schmidt-Isserstedt's values.

London's sound is velvety but with sufficient weight and amplitude, though the Fifth suffers a bit from pre-echo. In sum, this coupling belongs among the recommended versions of both works. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Trio for Piano and Strings, in D, Op. 70 ("Ghost"). BRAHMS: Trio for Piano and Strings in C, Op. 87. Rudolf Serkin, piano; Adolf Busch, violin; Hermann Busch, cello. Odyssey 32 16 0361, $2.98 (mono only).

With this recording we are reminded of the brothers Busch, one of the most remarkable of musical families. The eldest, Fritz (1890-1951), was a conductor well known to record collectors. (He presided, among other things, over the great Glyndebourne edition of *Don Giovanni.*) Both Adolf (1891-1952) and Hermann

TAPE FORMAT KEY

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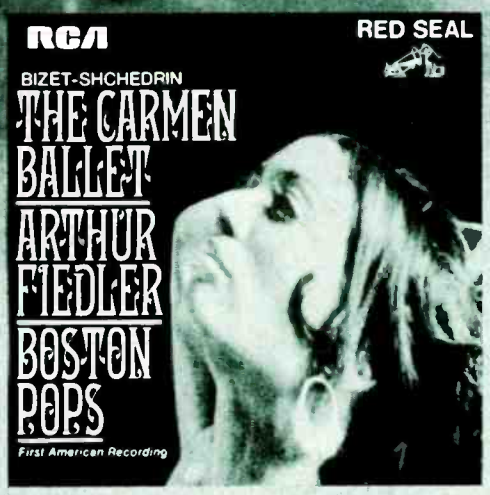
Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday
Happy Birthday

We're celebrating four birthdays this month.

Birthday #1 celebrates the 70th season of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Birthday #2 refers to the recent birthday of its notable maestro, Eugene Ormandy. "Crown Jewels of the Waltz Kings" celebrates both of these happy occasions with six of the most glorious, lighthearted and triumphant waltzes of all time.

Birthday #3 is Arthur Fiedler's 75th. Birthday #4 marks his 35th year of recording with us. We present "The Carmen Ballet" in honor of both of these events. Composed as a vehicle for Shchedrin's wife, the celebrated Maya Plisetskaya, this musical saga of Carmen is a truly remarkable piece of orchestration. We share Mr. Fiedler's enthusiasm for it.



RCA Records and Tapes

CIRCLE 50 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

(1897–) were chamber players of eminence, here joined by Adolf's son-in-law, Rudolf Serkin. All were brought to this country by their distaste of Hitler's Germany, Serkin in 1933 and the Busch family around 1940. This recording documents their final decade of activity together. (Earlier examples are in Angel/Seraphim's "Great Recordings of the Century" series.)

The performances are those of true masters, strong, energetic, propulsive, with a firm grasp of the niceties of accent and phrase. Sonically, of course, they show their age, but few will mind. Whichever side of the generation gap you may be on—the young collector out to assemble a record library on a low budget or the mature listener who may have heard this group in live performance—Odyssey offers a most welcome release. R.C.M.

BERLIOZ: L'Enfance du Christ, Op. 25. Jane Berbié, mezzo; Alain Vanzo, tenor; Robert Andreozzi, tenor; Claude Calès, baritone; Jean-Pierre Brossmann, baritone; Roger Soyer, bass; Juan Soumagnas, bass; Chorus and Orchestra of the French National Radio, Jean Martinon, cond. Nonesuch HB 73022, $5.96 (two discs).

Jean Martinon is a musician who reminds me in many ways of the pleasant wines one finds on a European trip that taste wonderful on their native soil but, somehow or other, prove disappointing for export. His tragedy in Chicago was that, instead of taking a great American orchestra for what it was, he tried to make it what it could not be: a French ensemble in mentality and technique. Heard here, with his new command, his skills and stature are clear. The music and musicians are both French and they prosper in a benevolent environment. The performance is an excellent one, refined, idiomatic, completely in sympathy with the composer's designs.

Jean Martinon's new command reveals both his skills and his true stature.

Martinon's merits include the retention of the three pianissimo chords that close Part I, a bit of text traditionally omitted by French conductors and deleted from many recordings. A complete text is a blessing, but so is the clear diction and accurate pronunciation of these French singers. The rival Davis set, for all its advantages, offers an English cast trying to project the dramatic nuances of a French text, and there are obvious problems.

Like *La Damnation de Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette*, *L'Enfance du Christ* is a sort of undeveloped opera, too rich in characterization and action to be a cantata, yet concert music rather than a theater piece. Of the three scores mentioned, it is probably the weakest, but in a performance as good as this one, that fact ceases to mean a great deal. Listen to the Hosannas and Alleluias, the exquisite shepherd's chorus, or the reverent yet musically exciting writing for Joseph and Mary and the very special qualities of this work and this performance will become clear. The low cost of the Nonesuch recording is, of course, an added inducement. R.C.M.

BOUCOURECHLIEV: Archipel I—See Jolas: Quatuor II.

BRAHMS: Variations on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24; Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. Gary Graffman, piano. Columbia MS 7276, $5.98.

Welcome to the Brahms/Handel Society, Mr. Graffman! With this release, an impressive group of brilliant, middle generation American pianists are represented on disc by this challenging set of variations. I am speaking, of course, about Graffman and his friends, Eugene Istomin, Leon Fleisher, Jacob Lateiner, and the lamented Julius Katchen. Istomin and Lateiner, on Columbia and Westminster respectively, were the first to enter the sweepstakes—and the first in are also the first out: neither performance remains in print. The next race trotted out Fleisher (Epic) and the first Katchen version (London). In time, the latter recorded an entire Brahms piano music cycle and remade his effort.

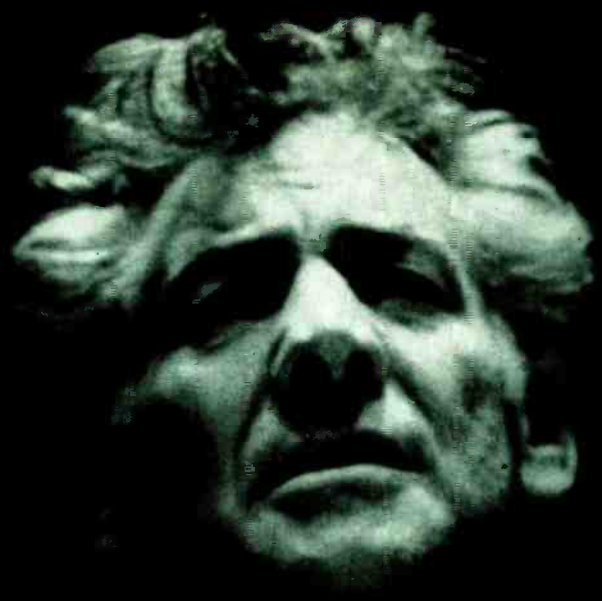
One can readily understand why this opus appeals to virtuosos. For one thing, to present the Variations as a cogent entity poses something of an intellectual challenge (though Brahms helped in that respect with some pointed hints vis-à-vis tempo relationships). For another, the work is beautifully plotted out for the keyboard. Most of it is clearly written and easy to make "sound" pianistically. While there are a few nasty passages which tax octave, double-note legato, and trilling techniques to the utmost, the Handel Variations, for the most part, demand impressive rather than superhuman resources. Its major obstacles, then, are interpretive rather than digital. Graffman meets the work head on and makes the sparks fly. His risoluto octaves in No. 4 are wonderfully crisp and plangent and his ostinato precision in No. 7 sounds as if it were jet-propelled; there is some intriguing rubato in No. 12 and, whenever crispness and ringing clarity are called for, Graffman is remarkably incisive.

And yet I find the performance, as a whole, unconvincing. Too much of the playing is pianistically oriented and "up tight" musically. Such an accusation is, of course, rather subjective and difficult to substantiate, but I'll give it a try. Take the theme and Variation 1, for example: Graffman ploughs right into that variant without so much as a deep breath; Fleisher (whose ability to build cumulatively equals and even surpasses Graffman's) waits for a split second. Throughout the entire performance, Graffman drives forward relentlessly; Fleisher, on the other hand, gets much the same bristling vigor, but relaxes slightly to give color and point to passage after passage. There is more yield in Fleisher's rhythm and, paradoxically, the result is *more*, rather than less, ebullience. Take Variation 14 with its trills, broken octaves, and crashing double sixths: Fleisher by "keeping his cool" in the preceding Variations 12 and 13, points it up for the climax it is; Graffman plays brilliantly but loses out because he was too tight-fisted beforehand. Then, too, there is the problem of leggiero. Graffman, in an effort to make all details ultraclear, plays too loudly and heavily. He tugs away at Variation 22 (those are merely stress marks not sforzandos) and gives as charmless a performance as I've ever heard (Fleisher, with delicate pedaling and a more coloristic approach evokes a real atmosphere there). But it is the bleak, icy edge in Graffman's playing coupled with a trace of rhythmic stiffness that puts me off here.

Turn the disc over, though, and you will find a different and far more confident Graffman. The Paganini Variations are really etudes, and here the present pianist is nothing short of a bona fide firebrand. He is especially successful with the Second Book, which is astonishing in its textual honesty and pianistic resources. Gaunt, driven, and yet utterly limpid, Graffman's version is further blessed by a distinct trace of sardonic humor. His polyrhythmic command couldn't be more complete, his glissando octave cascades are dryly etched, and the marksmanship throughout is terrific. Graffman even relaxes here, and savors a bit of charm and color now and then. He repeats the theme, by the way, before delving into Book II. I approve (and so did Brahms). H.G.

BRUCKNER: Quintet for Strings, in F. WOLF: Italian Serenade. Enrique Santiago, viola (in the Bruckner); Melos Quartet. Candide CE 31014, $3.98.

At first one might doubt that the basic features of Bruckner's style could possibly be conveyed in chamber music, but, as this recording makes plain, they



It was two years ago when, with Bernstein at the piano, the intriguing 12-song cycle was recorded live, at a concert in Vienna. The second time is now. The soloists, happily, are the same. Walter Berry and Christa Ludwig.

But on this recording, Bernstein has moved from the piano back to the podium. And added the New York Philharmonic. The result is great music, and one thing more: A listenable study of the growth of the mastery of another man's majesty. Better still, it's a study you can make yourself. Because when you buy the second version of this unique repeat performance, the first comes along, too. So that you can hear more of Leonard Bernstein at his best. At his best.

Leonard Bernstein Performs Mahler's "Des Knaben Wunderhorn." Twice.

"Des Knaben Wunderhorn"
Featuring Walter Berry
and Christa Ludwig
On Columbia Records

can. We have had other successful discs of this Quintet before, but the Melos Quartet and violist Santiago seem to go further than most in discovering the little nuances a composer can never fully reproduce in notation. In matters of accent and rhythm, phrasing, dynamics, and pulse they prove to be Brucknerians of high achievement, to which the fine Dolby process recording and the modest price of the disc are added benefits.

Omitted here is the Intermezzo Bruckner wrote as an alternate to the Scherzo —no great flaw since we have the composer's first thoughts rather than these second intentions. The Wolf is one of the basic shorter works in the quartet repertory and, in its place at the start of Side ., provides a congenial preface to the quintet, showing us two sides of Viennese music in the period 1885–87.

R.C.M.

CHOPIN: Waltzes (complete). Agustin Anievas, piano. Angel S 36598, $5.98.

Agustin Anievas' present Chopin waltz anthology sets a new record for completeness. Up to now, DGG's Támás Vásáry held the record for generosity with seventeen rather than the standard fourteen waltzes. Anievas plays nineteen works, all of which are contained in the text published in Germany by G. Henle Verlag. More Chopin waltzes are known to exist: one discovered in 1952 is still unpublished (the Ms reposes in a private English collection); the others are presumably lost, though hopefully they too will eventually come to light.

Anievas seems more refined here than on his earlier Seraphim releases: his high-powered technique is more delicate and scrupulous. His runs are limpid and pearly, his rhythms cascade, and there is considerable ease and subtlety in the way he lets an elaborate *cantilena* ebb and flow. Occasionally I get the feeling that Anievas' left hand is content with a bland, uninflected "um-pah-pah" when it could be adding exciting life and support to the music. Yet, this is a robust, unperfumed Chopin and I like it. In the works of Opp. 69 and 70, incidentally, Anievas in every case favors the Fontana texts rather than the considerably different one found in the Ms. (The aforementioned Henle score provides both alternatives for these pieces.)

Fine, resonant piano sound and silent, silken surfaces.

H.G.

DES PREZ: Missa Ave maris stella; Tu solus qui facis mirabilia; Mittet ad virginum; Absalom fili mi; Salve Regina. University of Illinois Chamber Choir, George Hunter, cond. Nonesuch H 71216, $2.98.

A few months ago I was exclaiming how nice it was to have a new Josquin Mass in the New York Pro Musica's release of the *Missa Ave maris stella*. Perhaps this lovely work is on its way to becoming a repertory piece, for here it is again in a stunning performance by George Hunter and the University of Illinois Chamber Choir. Josquin stands midway between the medieval concept of layered composition with its Renaissance heritage of *cantus firmus* technique and the later sixteenth-century ideal of through-composed homogeneous vocal writing which reached its apotheosis in Palestrina. In performance the conductor has a choice between these sides of the composer's character. He may choose to emphasize the earlier side of Josquin with crisply delineated lines, instrumental doublings, and a minimum of singers, or he may prefer (depending on the forces at his command) an interpretation leaning more toward what was to come, striving for a beautiful composite sound with a purely choral ensemble.

The first approach is John White's on Pro Musica's Decca release; the second is typified by George Hunter. Both are certainly valid from a historical or an interpretative standpoint. Here I prefer Hunter's version, however, because the over-all result is so much more beautiful without sacrificing any of the strength inherent in the musical construction. The recording techniques used on the two discs amplify the differences, and here again the soft spacious sound on Nonesuch is more pleasant than Decca's closely miked harshness.

As if this weren't enough at Nonesuch's bargain prices, four splendid motets, each showing a different side of this versatile composer, round out the disc. The Illinois choral sound is perfect for the sustained simplicity of *Tu solus qui facis mirabilia* and the ethereal *Mittet ad virginum* where the pure floating tones of the sopranos shine like sun through stained glass. *Absalom fili mi*, on the other hand, is a dark work, a magnificant lament whose low constricted lines for men's voices aptly express the wrenching grief David felt for his son. The closing *Salve Regina* is conceived more as a song of praise than as a beseeching supplication—a fitting conclusion to this entirely praiseworthy disc.

S.T.S.

Early Carter Expertly Performed

by Robert P. Morgan

I AM PLEASED to report that these two works, both of which represent important stages in that remarkable development of Elliott Carter's compositional style during the years following World War II, are now available on one disc in performances that can be described as close to ideal. The earlier of the two pieces, the 1948 Sonata for Cello and Piano, is the first Carter work to make extensive and consistent use of "metrical modulation," a technique which has since remained a central concern in the composer's musical thought. Although still cast in a basically neoclassical formal framework, the rhythmic impetus of the piece points in a radically new direction which was to open up fascinating new possibilities for development in subsequent works. But it is a strong work in its own right and is of a decidedly original character, clearly one of the major compositions in the entire cello/piano literature.

The Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord was written only four years later (1952), yet it already reveals in explicit form many of the compositional assumptions only implicit in the earlier work. Musical form is now conceived in terms of a constantly unfolding structure. Thus there are no recapitulations of earlier material: each idea follows organically from the one preceding it. Most characteristic, however, is the striking new kind of rhythmic coherence, a fluidity and continuity of motion unprecedented in twentieth-century music. Interesting also is the emphasis on the relationship of the various timbres, particularly that between the plucked harpsichord and the pizzicato cello and staccato woodwinds. The harpsichord writing is idiomatic and yet completely original—i.e., not neo-eighteenth century.

There are already available recordings of both these works, but none can match this one in terms of the clarity of performance or the intelligence of interpretation (although the Bernard Greenhouse reading of the Cello Sonata on Desto has much to recommend it). Carter himself, who supplies the liner notes, refers to these performances as being "as lively, novel, and fresh as if they were improvised." Considering that this quality is never attained at the expense of accuracy, this fine disc represents quite an extraordinary achievement.

CARTER: Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord; Sonata for Cello and Piano. Harvey Sollberger, flute; Charles Kuskin, oboe; Fred Sherry, cello; Paul Jacobs, harpsichord (in the Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord); Joel Krosnick, cello; Paul Jacobs, piano (in the Sonata for Cello and Piano). Nonesuch H 71234, $2.98.

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CIRCLE 37 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

GOTTSCHALK: Works for Piano (40). Alan Mandel, piano. Desto DC 6470/3, $23.92 (four discs).

I have kept this behemoth around for weeks trying to work up some enthusiasm for it, but enthusiasm remains irritatingly absent. One *wants* to like the first big set devoted to America's earliest important piano composer, the hundredth anniversary of whose death is commemorated with this release, but there is such a streak of triteness, obviousness, and hollowness through the whole thing, that one simply cannot work up much excitement about it.

There is just too much Gottschalk here and Gottschalk is not that good a composer. Furthermore, Mandel's performance seldom amounts to more than factual reportage. It has spirit, and Lord knows the cannonading octaves of the big show pieces are banged out grandly enough, but it lacks elegance and atmosphere. He gives us plastics instead of red plush.

A list of forty compositions in the set is scarcely essential. It covers every aspect of Gottschalk's music—the southern folklore pieces (which are his most important contribution to the literature), the tear jerkers like *The Dying Poet* and *The Last Hope*, the ballads and waltzes, the galops and mazurkas, and the numerous pieces reflecting Gottschalk's delight in the Caribbean and South America. The best of Gottschalk remains Eugene List's Vanguard record, which has been in the catalogue for years. I hope it stays there forever. A.F.

HANDEL: Sonatas for Violin and Continuo, Op. 1 (Nos. 1b, 3, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, and 15); Sonata in G; Adagio-Allegro in A. Eduard Melkus, violin; Eduard Müller, harpsichord and organ; Karl Scheit, lute; August Wenzinger, cello. Archive 198474/5, $11.96 (two discs).

Eduard Melkus is not a timid man, and when he accepts the standing invitation to ornament a Handel sonata—normal eighteenth-century practice, of course—he doesn't do it by halves. Scale-figures sweep by, passing tones dance, trills sparkle, turns roll out. Somewhere in all of this is the melody line, which he has properly presented unadorned the first time through. My own reaction is that the tail wags the dog, but having listened to these advance pressings without benefit of liner notes, I leave open the possibility that Melkus may present a good historical case for his behavior. Virtuosos in Handel's time were known to get the bit in their teeth, and maybe Melkus is making a point of biting down on his.

The performances in general are bigboned, overt in spirit, rhythmically very oomphy. Opus 1, a collection of fifteen sonatas which include works for oboe and flute as well as violin, was not meant to be taken in large doses, and even with the benefit of the variety of continuo instruments provided here, interest begins to run down. But listen sparingly, and the violin sonatas emerge as solid, idiomatic fare. S.F.

HAYDN: Mass No. 11, in B flat ("Creation"). April Cantelo, soprano; Helen Watts, alto; Robert Tear, tenor; Forbes Robinson, bass; Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge; Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, George Guest, cond. Argo ZRG 598, $5.95.

It is most gratifying to see the growing interest in Haydn's late Masses which occupy the place in his old age that *Otello* and *Falstaff* do in Verdi's. These are incomparable masterpieces, the products of a creative mind undimmed in power, immensely experienced, and wise in the ways of the world of music. The aged composer still had the title of Esterházy court conductor, but without stated duties: all his prince wanted was an annual Mass for his wife's name day. Now world famous and living in Vienna, Haydn turned with alacrity to the composition of Masses and oratorios: all of them are among the outstanding works of their kind. We must remember that in the Catholic south such elaborate church music still shared with opera the most important place in musical composition, as indeed the two genres were related, members of the large family of dramatic music. Haydn knew the field well, but his previous Masses and other church music as well as his eighteen operas

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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

were composed before he had arrived at the summit; moreover, in the meantime he had made the acquaintance of Handel's music, which was of decisive influence on his choral style and technique.

There is something about these Masses that is unique, though typical of Haydn: their naïve, heartfelt, and genuinely popular tone and nature. Despite the fine sonata constructions and the polyphony, he addressed himself to the people—even the fugues are transparent and easy on the ear. Also, Haydn consistently sets the portions expressing adoration, praise, and thanksgiving with more gusto than those expressing sorrow, repentance, and plaint. This particular Mass is called the *Creation* Mass because Haydn actually borrowed a small bit from the oratorio, but the spirit of that songful and engaging work is present everywhere. The people in Austria understood this and loved these works—even the stern papal *Motu Proprio* of 1903 made an exception when it permitted their continued use in Central Europe because of the people's devotion to them. This popularity remains unabated, and while today few churches can afford a full orchestra, Haydn's Masses can still be heard on Sundays in the cathedrals and large churches in Vienna or Salzburg.

The first requirement of a good performance is, then, the communication of this healthy, open, unabashedly joyful spirit of a true believer, but these are the very things that today's musicians, especially the church musicians, cannot achieve because of self-conscious restraint. The conductor, George Guest, and his forces, are not unaware of the problem but they succeed only partly in realizing the popular tone in their performance. While the orchestral sound is good, the all-important choral sound is not; as a consequence there is little variety and dramatic verve in the chorus. They sing conscientiously, here soft, there loud, but in between the extremes they tend to settle for a grey middle course. Further, the chorus is not well balanced; the boys are fine, but tenors and basses are satisfactory only in soft passages—in the fortes only the trebles are distinct. In addition there is quite an echo, which undoubtedly contributes to the muddiness of the choral sound. Finally, the recorded sound is not as good as one would expect from Argo; in the forte passages there are annoying distortions.

Among the soloists, Helen Watts and Forbes Robinson are excellent. April Cantelo, a fine singer and musician, is a little unsteady and breathless on the high notes, but then she is a lyric soprano and what is needed here is a dramatic one. Robert Tear, the tenor, evinces a tendency to squeeze out tones in the upper register. Neville Marriner's beautifully trained orchestra is its own self, and Guest keeps things together nicely, if not very inspiringly. P.H.L.

HINDEMITH: Der Schwanendreher—See Walton: Concerto for Viola and Orchestra.

HONEGGER: Symphonies: No. 3 ("Liturgique"); No. 4 ("Deliciae Basiliensis"). Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 95.

JOLAS: Quatuor II. XENAKIS: Herma. BOUCOURECHLIEV: Archipel I. Mady Mesplé, soprano; French String Trio (in the Jolas); Georges Pludermacher, piano (in the Xenakis and the Boucourechliev); Claude Helffer, piano; Jean-Claude Casadesus and Jean-Pierre Drouet, percussion (in the Boucourechliev). Angel S 36655, $5.98.

All three composers represented on this disc currently make Paris their home and the center of their musical activities (and thus the record's title "New Sounds From Paris"), although only Mlle. Jolas is French by birth. Best known, of course, is Xenakis, whose dense, massive piano piece, *Herma*, completed in 1961, is typical of his music of nine years ago. There are cascades of notes, creating a global impression of enormous activity in which, however, the individual elements perform at best a minor function. There is no question that the work makes a strong aural effect, and there is, I feel, an inescapable sense of musical logic in its progression, although I would hate to have to define it in specifically musical terms.

The *Quatuor II* by Betsy Jolas is the most traditionally oriented of the pieces. Here a textless voice is combined with a string trio, the voice having an essentially soloistic role in relation to the accompanying strings. The voice writing is extremely lyrical in conception, and the floating quality of the line creates a beautiful effect in the luxuriant, highly chromatic tonal idiom. There is a great deal of textural variety, and the shifting relationship between the vocal and instrumental material is handled most effectively.

The composition by André Boucourechliev is essentially aleatory in conception and is presented here in two of its infinite possible versions. These differ so widely that I feel a real question exists as to how and in what sense they can be said to represent the same "composition." Although the instrumental combination of two pianos and percussion provides a kind of textural consistency and one does recognize similar musical gestures, the over-all shapes of the two versions are totally different. Still, the piece (or pieces) does display continuous textural interest and is performed so convincingly that it manages to sustain interest much better than most such works.

The performances of the Xenakis and Jolas pieces are also excellent, particular credit going to Mady Mesplé for her beautiful projection of the vocal line in the Jolas. A final word about the sound: the extended silences in the Xenakis are frequently interrupted by pre-echo. This veiled hint of things to come could easily be an effective compositional resource, but it is not what the composer had in mind here. R.P.M.

LASRY: Chronophagie. Aude Cornillac, voice; Jean Guerin, tabla; Teddy Lasry, flute and "bass violin"; Structures Sonores Lasry-Baschet. Columbia MS 7314, $5.98.

The Structures Sonores Lasry-Baschet are musical instruments invented by the brothers Bernard and François Baschet. They involve rods of glass and metal which are made to vibrate by stroking with the fingers or hitting with mallets; they also involve huge, flower-like bells of highly polished metal and resonators of inflated rubber and other materials.

François Baschet is a sculptor, and his contribution to the total result is by far the most successful. The instruments have been shown, mute, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and they are at their best in that condition. Bernard Baschet is an acoustical engineer who is responsible for the paltry sound produced by these impressive-looking things, and Jacques Lasry is the composer who has written the thin, uninteresting music recorded here. Most of the burden of that music is actually carried by the flute and the "bass violin"; the Structures Sonores contribute mainly incidental rumbles and percussion sounds. The title may be translated "Waste of Time." Amen. A.F.

LIGETI: Aventures: Nouvelles Aventures; Volumina; Etude No. 1, "Harmonies." Ensemble "Die Reihe," Friedrich Cerha, cond. (in Aventures, Nouvelles Aventures); Gerd Zacher, organ (in the other works). Candide CE 31009, $3.98.

The Hungarian-born composer György Ligeti is best known in this country for the three works that figured in the soundtrack of the film *2001*: the 1961 *Atmosphères* for orchestra; the Kyrie from his 1965 Requiem, and the short a cappella *Lux aeterna* of 1966. This new disc adds to his recorded repertoire the *Aventures* for three singers and seven instrumentalists (1963) and its similarly scored sequel, *Nouvelles Aventures* (1965), and also includes repeat recordings of two organ works previously included on DGG 137003. (Other recorded Ligeti works are the electronic *Artikulation* of 1958, on Limelight 86048, and the 1967 Cello Concerto, on Wergo 60036.)

The two vocal works are almost theater pieces, with some elements that don't come across on records. Their wordless texts are purely phonetic, but they are to be delivered with elaborate shades of expression: the syllables are adorned with question marks, exclamation points, and descriptive phrases such as "Mysterious question, with great inner agitation," and the singers are also instructed concerning their stage attitudes and gestures.

The superficially normal instrumental ensemble (flute, horn, percussion, harpsichord, piano doubling celesta, cello, and double bass) is put to producing some extraordinary sounds, notably in the percussion department. In fact, the list of percussion implements re-

quired reads more like the inventory of a well-stocked department store—not only xylophone, glockenspiel, drums, and cymbal, but also a wooden lath (to be broken in two), a thick carpet (to be struck with a rug beater), a balloon (to be stroked with moist fingers), a bottle (to be broken), a metal tray piled high with dishes (ditto), and a variety of papers and cloth (to be torn). This isn't as absurd as it may sound at first; after all, it's really no sillier than smashing together two large brass discs, or banging on a skin stretched across a metal tub. All these sounds do fit into Ligeti's conception, and—at least on records—the means by which they are obtained are irrelevant.

The two pieces are built up from short sections, differing violently in expressive character and musical content: sustained clusters articulated by vowel changes, softly whispered consonants, etc.; very active whispered textures; frantic cadenzas; intensive tutti passages; and all sorts of intermediate combinations. The general aspect is similar to a dramatic action in an unknown language, with the participants never clearly defined—the three singers may represent many different persons. Like so many examples of recent music, these stand on the outer perimeter of what we have thought of as music; pitch relations play only a very restricted role, and even rhythm seems more a tool for creating variations of density than a means for achieving any hierarchical structure. Of color and texture, Ligeti has made sure that there is great variety, and the resulting works are certainly intriguing and often entertaining in a very theatrical way.

The performances, by the ensemble that premiered *Aventures* (and including the singers who took part also in the premiere of *Nouvelles Aventures*), are quite good, and noticeably more accurate than those on Wergo 60022 (stemming from a Darmstadt performance of 1966, with the same singers, led by Bruno Maderna).

The organ works were discussed in some detail by Robert P. Morgan in the April 1969 issue; they are inventive explorations of the instrument's resources for registral variation and tone-cluster sonorities. Gerd Zacher, who played them on the DGG record, does so again here, but on a different organ, that of the Berlin Gedächtniskirche (no specifications given).

The program notes deserve some special opprobrium for their inaccuracy, uninformativeness, and pompous flippancy; if the music deserves this kind of verbal hatchet job, why did the manufacturer bother to issue the record?

D.H.

MAGNARD: Symphony No. 3, Op. 11. LALO: Scherzo for Orchestra. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. For a review of this recording, see page 95.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 2, in C minor ("Resurrection"). Elly Ameling, soprano; Aafje Heynis, alto; Netherlands Radio Chorus; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. Philips SAL 3715/16, $11.96 (two discs).

MAHLER: Symphony No. 2, in C minor ("Resurrection"). Edith Mathis, soprano; Norma Proctor, alto; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio, Rafael Kubelik, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 139332/33, $11.96 (two discs).

There is no shortage of Mahler Seconds. These sets put nine in the current catalogue. For those who demand a vivid representation of the composer's score, the bountiful listings are deceptive. This is difficult music to perform and perhaps even more difficult to record well. All the older versions have severe technical problems one way or another, and for those who want prime sound as well as an interesting performance, the choice of late has been between a low-priced album by Abravanel (worth having simply for what Beverly Sills and Florence Kopleff achieve in the finale) and an intense, well-engineered, and thoroughly characteristic effort by Solti and a London recording crew.

Now comes a Dutch production from a distinguished orchestra that has been in the forefront of Mahler's cause since 1903. And hard on its arrival, Deutsche Grammophon supplies a new entry as

Perlman and Ashkenazy: A Stunning Team for Prokofiev

by Philip Hart

EVERY NOW AND THEN two major solo virtuosos get together for ensemble performances that really strike fire: in the past we have had such combinations as Casals and Serkin or Cortot and Thibaud; and now two brilliant young musicians, each with a highly distinctive personal profile, join for some of the most exciting violin-piano (or piano-violin) performances to be heard on records today—or in concert for that matter.

Despite the diversity of their respective backgrounds, Messrs. Perlman and Ashkenazy have found a common musical ground for a unified projection of both their own talents and the composer's musical intent. Apparently these two musicians, who are under contract to separate labels, were so eager to record together that their respective companies arranged a reciprocal agreement: one disc apiece for London and RCA. From London last summer we had superlative accounts of the Franck Violin Sonata and the Brahms Horn Trio (with Barry Tuckwell), and now RCA has produced this stunning record of the two Prokofiev Sonatas.

These two works have in the past engaged the interest of such major violinists as Joseph Szigeti and Isaac Stern, but this is the first time that a superb violinist has been partnered with a pianist of equal stature—a special blessing for these duo sonatas, which clearly reflect the composer's penchant for writing virtuoso keyboard parts. The D major Sonata, to be sure, was originally written for flute and piano, but the violin is heard to far better advantage in this music and Prokofiev's recasting of the flute line into violinistic terms is also exceptionally effective and idiomatic.

Of the two sonatas, the first in F minor is a dark and brooding work: its alternation of slow-fast-slow-fast recalls a baroque tempo sequence, although there is nothing antiquarian about this rather forbidding music. The slow movements have a dark power characteristic of late Prokofiev at his most expressive, and the faster sections project an intensity that requires not only exceptional virtuosity but also keen co-ordination. The D major Sonata occasionally harks back to the astringent lyricism of the much earlier Violin Concerto in the same key. Its mood is gentler than that of the F minor Sonata, and technically less demanding.

One could linger over many performance details here—Ashkenazy's fiery reading of the F minor's Finale, Perlman's beautifully modulated coloring of the slow movements, the unanimity of approach to phrasing and interpretive ideas tempered by the individualism of two poetic temperaments. Ashkenazy demonstrates how stunningly he has matured during his residence in England. Had he remained in Russia, he might never have had the opportunity to encounter such a superlative young partner, for despite the ten years' difference in their ages, their performances demonstrate a truly reciprocal feeling between two superlative musicians. As one who has followed the development of Itzhak Perlman since his student days, I am continually awed by this young man's capacity for musical growth. In these two notable ensemble releases we witness the coming of age of a major musical talent.

RCA has provided excellent reproduction here; the piano tone has especially good presence. This is, in sum, one of the most satisfying records in many a month, one that may well become a classic. Let us hope that these two young artists will be given more opportunities to record together. How about some Beethoven?

PROKOFIEV: Sonatas for Violin and Piano: No. 1, in F minor, Op. 80; No. 2, in D, Op. 94a. Itzhak Perlman, violin; Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3118, $5.98.

part of Rafael Kubelik's complete edition of the Mahler Nine.

How do these releases rate with what we already have? Interpretively they are both very much of the same type, forceful but basically conservative performances that show a full measure of respect for what each conductor takes to be the composer's intentions. Neither performance appears to coincide exactly with my score, the 1952 Universal Edition text, which is based, for some reason, on the second edition of the Symphony rather than the posthumous third edition.

Both versions, then, are slightly preferable to Abravanel (who introduces some needless mannerisms) and on a par with Solti, especially if Solti's fire and dramatic underlinings are not as congenial as the more relaxed, Walter/Klemperer approach. Haitink is extremely sensitive to the changing tempo markings, and he paces the work most judiciously to sustain a long developing line. Everything sounds wonderfully convincing as you hear it, real proof that the Amsterdam Mahler tradition is no press agent's pipe dream.

Vocally, the Haitink must yield to the Kubelik, presumably because of another local tradition that favors the use of Dutch artists. Both the ladies are adequate but unspectacular. Kubelik's singers are clearly of international stature. Both Haitink and Kubelik benefit from choruses that seem at ease with a German text, an advantage that neither Solti nor Abravanel secured with their English-speaking forces.

But in many ways the most interesting comparison is simply to play one edition against the other and observe the musical effect. Matching the Haitink against the score, one is continually impressed by how well the recorded sound conveys what the printed music suggests to be the composer's intention. This is all the more impressive since (superficially, at least) the other versions sound more brilliant. Turn up the volume on the Philips and you'll be surprised at the fine, concert-hall quality it preserves.

Nowhere is this better shown than in the final pages, where Mahler clearly wants a large pipe organ and bells to supplement the already heavy scoring. The organ music is in no sense inconsequential, although it rarely penetrates the heavy texture. (The Solti illustrates this as well as any recent set.) What a pleasure, then, to hear this passage, well balanced in the total registration, in the Philips album. Mahler then calls for bells with a deep, solid tap note, and Haitink has them for a glorious effect.

In the same pages, Kubelik offers a lesser result, characteristic of earlier recordings of this work, and in place of bells there is the usual compromise—a shallow clatter from those orchestral obscenities, tubular chimes; so this passage, rather than reflecting its inherent

nobility, suggests the ringing of the cosmic doorbell.

Elsewhere, although one must admire Kubelik's skills as a Mahler interpreter, Haitink seems just a little more adept in establishing and maintaining a style, and his shaping of the musical materials is generally better focused in terms of dramatic content. Thus, although one must respect Kubelik's achievement, Haitink's results are, I think, even finer and his set offers the obvious alternative to the Solti edition. R.C.M.

MENOTTI: Sebastian. London Symphony Orchestra, José Serebrier, cond. Desto DC 6432, $5.98.

With the exception of *The Unicorn, the Gorgon, and the Manticore,* I have always preferred Menotti's instrumental music to his operas. To my mind, Menotti applies his melodic gifts far more easily and naturally to instruments than to words. Certainly, there is no better example of the composer's soft-hued lyricism than the *Sebastian* ballet, premiered in 1944 and recorded here for the first time in its entirety. A highly dramatic work, *Sebastian* contains one emotionally charged melody after another, including what is to me one of the most beautiful themes ever written, the Barcarolle, whose poignancy is due as much to Menotti's typical harmonic and rhythmic configurations as to the melody itself. With the exception of a few *Rite-of-Spring*-isms in the Courtesan's Dance, *Sebastian* is one of Menotti's most original works and is more than worthy of attention.

While the ballet is adequately performed and recorded by Serebrier and his forces, it is no match, either in interpretation or, surprisingly enough, in sound, for the long-deleted Stokowski/NBC Symphony version of the Suite made almost fifteen years ago for RCA. (Perhaps Victrola could be persuaded to reissue it coupled with the Spivakovsky/Munch performance of Menotti's sublime Violin Concerto.) The sound on the Serebrier disc lacks both brilliance and depth, and has a tendency to break up in the louder passages—a shame, since the stereo quality is excellent. The performance gets better as it goes along, however, and the music alone would make this release well worth having. R.S.B.

MONTEMEZZI: L'Amore dei tre re. Luisa Malagrida (s), Fiora; Delia Surrat (s), A Handmaiden and A Young Girl; Rita de Carlo (c), An Old Woman; Pierre Duval (t), Avito; Mariano Caruso (t), Flaminio; Antonio Leone (t), A Young Man; Enzo Sordello (b), Manfredo; Ezio Flagello (bs), Archibaldo; Coro Accademia; Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma, Richard Karp, cond. Delphi EC 69014, $11.96 (two discs).

Montemezzi belongs, along with Zandonai, Pizzetti, and a few others, to the post-Puccini generation of Italian opera composers—the last gasp of a once thriving tradition. We don't hear their operas much today, although they did have something of a vogue during the inter-war period at the Met. *L'Amore dei tre re,* in fact, chalked up a respectable forty-nine performances there between 1914 and 1949. The reasons for the current neglect of this fine work—indeed, of virtually the entire early twentieth-century *verismo* school—has partly to do with a changing operatic fashion that now seems to prefer the softer-grained bel canto repertoire, and also the fact that the powerful dramatic voices needed for these operas are in short supply. Try to cast *L'Amore dei tre re* with singers that even approach the level of the Met's 1914 Toscanini-conducted quartet of Bori, Ferrari-Fontana, Amato, and Didur. It simply can't be done.

Nor, I'm afraid, has Delphi Records managed to pass any vocal miracles. The recording was apparently intended to spotlight Ezio Flagello, who not only stands head and shoulders above his colleagues in terms of sheer tonal quality, but shows more dramatic temperament than one usually expects from this often rather bland singer. Flagello's voice is certainly right for the vengeful, blind Archibaldo: his roomy, black-velvet textured bass rises to every occasion, whether rumbling threateningly in the lower register or thundering out imposing imprecations with full-throated high

Es and Fs. Yet, while his impersonation has plenty of forcefulness, it never gets much further than rather generalized expressions of anger, distrust, or hatred: the interpretive outline is there, but it needs to be executed with more subtlety, imagination, and meaningful pointing of the words. Sesto Bruscantini came closer in the old Cetra set, although he had nowhere near Flagello's impressive vocal equipment.

The other singers are what one might encounter on an average evening in a small Italian opera house. Luisa Malagrida is the worst offender: her throaty, unalluring voice moves sluggishly through Fiora's music, hardly suggesting the smoldering sensuality that motivates this tragic creature. Both Pierre Duval and Enzo Sordello are vocally solid and dependable, but they tend to punch out the line without much sensitivity.

Richard Karp shows a real feeling for the music and occasionally the orchestra responds to his direction with considerable eloquence. It never quite jells, though, and the good moments are offset by instances where the musicians sound as though they're sight-reading their parts. The engineering is extremely unnatural: the singers seem to be in one studio, cavernous and reverberant, while the orchestra plays in another, dry and echoless. Although the dynamic range is rather constricted, one does hear a great deal more of Montemezzi's colorful score than on Everest/Cetra's antediluvian effort.

I hope that Delphi will not be too discouraged by the mixed results of their first release, for the company has some ambitious and laudable plans to record other offbeat operatic items—I understand that a performance of Pizzetti's *Murder in the Cathedral* will soon be available also with Flagello. P.D.

SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, No. 21, in B flat, D. 960; Scherzo in B flat, D. 593. Wilhelm Kempff, piano. Deutsche Grammophon 139323, $5.98.
SCHUBERT: Sonata for Piano, No. 21, in B flat, D. 960. Artur Rubinstein, piano. RCA Red Seal LSC 3122, $5.98.

My favorite versions of the Schubert posthumous B flat Sonata, Artur Schnabel (Angel COLH) and Leon Fleisher (Columbia), were cut from the catalogue some time ago. That left only Clara Haskil's World Series reissue as a reasonably acceptable reading of this great piece. Haskil's wonderfully unsentimentalized piano tone, though, had far more character and tension in its monophonic Epic original than it did on the rechanneled and acoustically manhandled World Series disc. The problem is not wholly resolved by the concurrent appearance of these new editions. Yet both Kempff and Rubinstein offer very interesting statements.

Both, of course, are mature and knowing interpreters. Kempff tends to be more angular and ascetic than Rubinstein who prefers to work in rounded-off arcs of plush sonority. In the first movement, Kempff scores a decisive victory over Rubinstein with his decision to observe the exposition repeat. That repeat is preceded by a long "first ending" which changes the whole character of this long movement from one of dreamy introspection to monumental drama. But even disregarding the repeat, Kempff's treatment is bolder and more incisive than Rubinstein's beautifully phrased but rather tensionless, careful account. In the remarkable Andante sostenuto slow movement, Rubinstein's slower tempo strikes me as more sympathetic than Kempff's more agitated one. But it is Kempff rather than Rubinstein who comes close to approximating the wonderfully hushed *ppp* colors produced so remarkably well by both Schnabel and Fleisher.

Rubinstein and Kempff are surprisingly similar in their treatment of the Scherzo: both are rather deliberate in gait and Rubinstein's surprisingly sharp rhythmic inflection almost matches Kempff's sharp accentuation (Rubinstein, however, is a bit more fastidious in his execution). Rubinstein plays the Finale well but he fusses just a bit too much with the tempo—particularly in transitional passages; Kempff's account is a shade simpler and more vehement. He manages all the notes well enough, but like Schnabel he lets you know that some of the dotted chord sequences are pianistically awkward. His account of the earlier B flat Scherzo is wonderfully well played, but this adorable filler should have been transferred to one of Kempff's other Schubert collections: so much B flat tonality on one disc is a bit much, I'm afraid.

Rubinstein's reproduction is a shade plangent but otherwise faithful to his sturdy piano tone. Kempff's engineers have apparently miked his performance from a greater distance with a corresponding increase in dynamic range.

Consider it a draw between two keyboard Titans. If you need a deciding vote, I'll cast it for Kempff. H.G.

SCHUMANN: Fantasia in C, Op. 17; Carnaval, Op. 9. Claudio Arrau, piano. Philips SAL 3630, $5.98.
SCHUMANN: Fantasia in C, Op. 17; Kinderzenen, Op. 15. Alexis Weissenberg, piano. Angel S 36616, $5.98.

Here is a classic demonstration of the difference between valid subjectivity and pretentious mannerism. Arrau's *Fantasia* is full of personalized touches—a bit of rubato here, a *Luftpause* there, an arresting interplay of texture in yet another spot—but the essential grandeur of the writing and its even more essential forward momentum emerges intact. The Chilean-born but German-Romantic trained virtuoso is in peak form on the Philips disc. His tone—deep, right down to the bottom of the keys—is pure velvet. Every nuance and every detail is obviously the fruit of a lifetime quest, yet retains an essential spontaneity that courses through the entire musical struc-

ture giving it life and pulse. *Carnaval* is equally impressive. Many might well favor a more headlong, tightly knit conception than Arrau's leisurely spacious one, but this is pianism and musicianship of a high order. The differentiation between staccato and legato in *Pierrot* and the resolute, bronzen clarity of his *Paganini* are but two of the countless felicities to be gleaned from this imaginative, generous rendition. The Philips disc, one of the first to reach domestic buyers in an imported pressing, is superbly processed and reproduces Arrau's uniquely individual sonority with resplendent realism.

Weissenberg is in many ways a formidable player. In terms of sheer finger control, he can hold his own even against such a master as Arrau. But the Bulgarian-born, Samoroff-trained former Leventritt winner tends to use his finely honed finger tips at all times, even when the music calls for mass rather than point. In describing another pianist, I once raised the analogy of an artist blocking in a mural with a fine-lined fountain pen. I think that that description could also apply to Weissenberg's technical approach. Take, for example, the beginning of the *Fantasia* or "Blindman's Buff" in the *Kinderszenen*: both resemble the frantic, myopic activity of a small mole burrowing underground. The result is uncomfortably fitful, angry, and petulant. Had Weissenberg used just a bit of arm weight, he could have made his effects with more graciousness and simplicity. Worse still is Weissenberg's incessant use of what might be termed *interpretus prolongus*. Any sophisticated musician will testify that it is possible to intensify a harmonic progression and force a listener's concentration by slightly augmenting the duration of certain leading chords. Schnabel, to cite just one major example, used this device to make a Beethoven slow movement absolutely spellbinding. Weissenberg indiscriminately abuses his prerogative in this area: his incessantly tortured footdragging in the more lyric episodes of the *Fantasia*, in the *Kinderszenen's Träumerei* and *Der Dichter spricht* causes the music to disintegrate right before your ears. It might also be noted that Weissenberg's piano tone is thin, jangly, and bleakly percussive. H.G.

SCHUMANN: Quartets for Strings, Op. 41: No. 1, in A minor; No. 2, in F; No. 3, in A; Quartet for Piano and Strings, in E flat, Op. 47; Quintet for Piano and Strings, in E flat, Op. 44. Glenn Gould, piano (in the Piano Quartet); Leonard Bernstein, piano (in the Quintet); Juilliard Quartet. Columbia D3S 806, $11.96 (three discs).

Here is the first recording by Glenn Gould of a composer he is reputed to love. If the Quartet is typical of his way with Schumann, he had better stick to playing the music he says he hates—like Mozart sonatas, etc. Frankly, the brilliant, controversial, and usually intriguing pianist seems to have flipped his lid here: the playing is astonishingly hard, tinkly, brashly insensitive . . . and dull. Chords are rattled off with the humanity of a machine gun roulade; melodies—yes, those wonderful Schumann melodies—are rendered impotent by a clipped, jaunty, metrically straitjacketed staccato. The last movement, taken at hair-raising speed, provides a modicum of frustrated excitement, but aside from that, the performance seems to me a dead loss. The Quintet was issued a year or two ago on a Columbia single in conjunction with Mozart's G minor Piano Quartet. Bernstein's keyboard work is a trifle showy and percussive, but he does at least display a certain understanding of, and affection for, the idiom. While I prefer the Serkin/Budapest and Eschenbach/Drolc readings (for Columbia and DGG), Bernstein and associates (the Juilliard foursome is too businesslike to be called "friends"!) are exciting and large-scaled.

The three string quartets are splendidly done. The Juilliard's approach lies midway between the rigorousness of the Drolc (DGG) and the untrammeled playfulness of the Parrenin (Odeon). In other words, their appraisal of Schumann takes cognizance of the need for silky tone and playful light and shade, but for all that, remains essentially clear, taut, and structural. Columbia's sound is exceptional here. H.G.

STRAUSS, R.: Der Rosenkavalier. Régine Crespin, Helen Donath, Yvonne Minton, Manfred Jungwirth; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 75.

STRAVINSKY: The Firebird (complete ballet with rehearsal record). New Philharmonia Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet, cond. For a feature review of this recording, see page 95.

STRAVINSKY: The Rite of Spring; Five Easy Pieces; Three Easy Pieces. Bracha Eden and Alexander Tamir, pianos. London CS 6626, $5.98.

Whatever the qualities of these performances, I'm afraid they are completely sabotaged by a recording that sounds as if it has been made in the Basilica of St. Peter or some similarly resonant space. Much of the piano duet arrangement of *The Rite of Spring*, here redistributed for two pianos (with some gratuitous and very dubious further modifications), sounds like utter nonsense, as if the pianos had no dampers at all; in a piece that requires lots of secco articulation, this is simply disastrous. There is no point in belaboring the shortcomings of the playing (insofar as they are audible); fortunately, the Thomas/Grierson version issued last summer (Angel 36024) is sufficiently fine to satisfy anyone in need of this rather specialized item.

The two sets of *Easy Pieces* don't fare much better here; if you must have a recording, try Gold and Fizdale (Columbia CMS 6333)—but even one-fingered pianists, if they have capable friends to undertake the second part, can get much more out of these delightful miniatures by playing them. D.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 35; Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). David Oistrakh, violin; Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, cond. (in the Concerto); David Oistrakh, cond. (in the Symphony). Angel/Melodiya SRBO 4112, $11.96 (two discs).

EMI's Soviet affiliation has borne better fruit than this two-disc compote stewed from two concerts (September 27 and 28, 1968) toasting the elder Oistrakh on his sixtieth birthday. With such superb budget accounts of the Concerto available as those by Kogan (on Angel's own Seraphim label) and Szeryng/Munch (Victrola) or the full-priced but one-sided versions by Friedman/Ozawa and Zukerman/Dorati (for RCA and Columbia, respectively), there seems little reason to choose an expensive one spread over an entire twelve-inch disc (without even a token filler) even when it is bowed and fingered by a master of Oistrakh's rank. But, alas, there is an even bigger handicap to this performance, for Oistrakh most definitely does not improve on his own numerous prior recordings of the work. Of those, the one which really said something special about both the violinist and the music was the initial effort—a Soviet 78-rpm set later transferred to LP as the original Colosseum CRLP 101. The orchestral sound there was something to gag at and, in truth, the eccentric tempo changes and provincial use of the Auer revisions would cause many raised eyebrows today. For all that, the young Oistrakh's playing had a lightness, a burning interpretive quest, and a sheer individuality that were never quite recaptured. By 1954, when Oistrakh taped the Tchaikovsky Concerto for the second time, in Dresden (now on Heliodor in rechanneled stereo), the reading had reverted to the usual half-original-half-Auer text and had become rather silky and featureless. The 1959 Columbia disc with Ormandy at the helm is a bit stronger in concept and more fibrous in tone, but the essentials of the 1954 view remain intact. Perhaps because of the concert conditions, and partly because of the interaction with Rozhdestvensky's own strong personality on the podium, the present birthday performance recaptures some of the wild tempo liberties of old Colosseum 101. The text however remains the 1954 one, which virtually all establishment (as opposed to iconoclast) fiddle virtuosos utilize these days. Moreover, while Oistrakh's technique is still formidable in the main, he does sound rather fat, shopworn, and dour in his intonation here. If you must have Oistrakh in this work, I suppose that the 1959 Philadelphia version offers the best compromise. (The ancient Colosseum has been out of the catalogue for years.)

The Symphony, on the other hand, is a far more valuable document. Some of the execution is rather hysterical and the recorded sound, while sturdy, also tends toward overloading and raucous opacity. For all that, the interpretation reaches inspirational white heat: here is a *Pathétique* so frenzied and potent in its spontaneity that even a Hanslick (who happened to like this particular Tchaikovsky score) could call it "odorously Russian," "bombastic," and "nihilistic." It takes some doing to make a thrice-told tale like the *Pathétique* arouse such strong epithets today—particularly so as Oistrakh's interpretation, for all its energy, manages to stay within the limits of musical respectability. Let's face it, Tchaikovsky *was* pretty heady stuff for his time, and I take my hat off to a conductor who can remind me of that fact! Angel ought to release the Symphony as a single in its Seraphim series. Then I'll be glad to recommend it along with the other superlative bargain performances by Monteux (Victrola), Toscanini (also Victrola), Giulini (Seraphim), and Talich (Parliament). At top rates, with the encumbrance of a dubious account of the Concerto—not quite. Happy Birthday anyway, Comrade Oistrakh! H.G.

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Hans Wild

Ernest Ansermet—His Last Recordings

by Royal S. Brown

ALMOST FROM THE outset of his conducting career, Ernest Ansermet found himself in an ideal position to further the cause of the works and composers with which he was always associated. Joining the forces of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in 1915 at the recommendation of Stravinsky, it was Ansermet who conducted the premiere of Satie's infamous *Parade* in 1917 (although Ansermet never recorded any music by Satie, whom he accused of the "sin of endless repetition"). When he founded the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in 1918, he continued to be one of the world's leading exponents of new music, offering first performances of works by Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, and many others, including his two fellow countrymen Arthur Honegger and Frank Martin. As forward-looking as he was, however, Ansermet drew the line at twelve-tone music, and he even wrote a book in which he tried to prove—mathematically (for as a young man Ansermet had studied and taught mathematics)—that dodecaphonic music was "totally opposed to the laws of hearing," a project that alienated him from his lifelong friend, Igor Stravinsky.

Ansermet's receptiveness to innovation was also carried over into the area of recording. He was one of the few conductors to take an active interest in technical matters, and his sympathy and understanding for what was going on at the other end of the microphone often proved invaluable. It was, in fact, mainly through recordings that the Swiss-born Ansermet became known in this country. The recording of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* that, in 1946, inaugurated his permanent association with Decca/London, was widely circulated here, and he went on to make a sizable number of albums embracing all aspects of the repertoire, both classical as well as contemporary. He was the first, for instance, to put on disc the complete *Paris* symphonies by Haydn.

The "Ansermet touch" meets with varied success in these three "Memorial Albums," recorded just before the conductor's death last year at eighty-five. The best of the three offers the only domestically available performance of Honegger's Fourth Symphony and an interpretation of the Third that is absolutely stunning. Musically as well as emotionally, the Third Symphony is one of Honegger's most violent compositions. It is a richly contrapuntal piece whose various themes are beautifully delineated by an ingenious orchestral and rhythmic texture, and Ansermet truly excels in controlling these elements. The very opening chords, with the piano sustaining a bit longer than indicated in the score, strike an ominous note. The extraordinary dramatic atmosphere is created not so much by the horizontal movement of the music as by the conductor's almost uncanny ability to maintain maximum tension in the constantly changing instrumental balance of the symphony. My only objection is Ansermet's treatment of the pesante antiphonal climax toward the end of the third movement. Instead of maintaining the rhythmic and dynamic level as indicated in the score, Ansermet separates the "responses" by rests, and plays them at a considerably softer level, thereby weakening the climactic character of the section. But this is a minor point when compared to the magnificence of the rest of the performance.

After the Third Symphony, the Honegger Fourth, which was written right on the heels of its predecessor in 1946, almost elicits a double-take—it is an extremely lyrical work whose mood is alternately pastoral and jocular. In treating the Fourth in much the same way he treats the Third, Ansermet loses some of the work's genial lyricism. This becomes particularly apparent when one compares Ansermet's version to the much warmer interpretation by Munch on a French Erato release, Ansermet's, on the other hand, is a virtuoso reading that is particularly strong in the Symphony's less lyrical moments.

Ansermet rarely recorded with orchestras other than his own Suisse Romande, but this new version of Stravinsky's *Firebird* was made with the New Philharmonia Orchestra during the conductor's final visit to London. In comparing the present NPO performance with the older Suisse Romande recording, I had the distinct impression that in the later release Ansermet had further toned down his already decidedly understated conception of the work. This may be due to the fact that the sound on the earlier release has more presence (while the newer disc has more balance), or it may be that the New Philharmonia, which offers better playing per se, was not fully responding to Ansermet's wishes. At any rate, what is lacking in both is a genuine dramatic development, and one has only to listen to the rehearsal record to understand why. Here Ansermet devotes an almost obsessive concentration on rhythmic detail and textural balance—he even de-emotionalizes the clarinets and oboes in the *Berceuse* section: "This is a simple folk melody, not a lied." While Ansermet could bring out more absolute musical value in a work such as this than almost any other conductor (and Stravinsky's music can never suffer too greatly from such an approach), I found myself wishing that the conductor had been less intransigent with his tempos and less restrained in the climaxes. Perhaps the somewhat less than complete success of Ansermet's *Firebird* can be explained by the almost total success of his *Petrouchka*. *Petrouchka* is a *vertical* work whose effect depends upon an almost instantaneous appreciation of the constantly changing fragments. As such, it is ideally suited to Ansermet's absolute approach to music. The *Firebird* is a much more *horizontal* piece whose various sections exist relatively one to another in a manner that Ansermet did not seem to fully appreciate.

I am sure there is an Albéric Magnard fan club somewhere, whose members will be ecstatic with this release of the composer's Third Symphony. This piece and the coupled Lalo Scherzo are attractive examples of late-romantic composition. Unlike the Lalo work, it is deadly serious in intent and strongly controlled in its formal construction. Harmonically and rhythmically, it reminds one variously of Franck (via Chauson), D'Indy, Dvořák and many others, without really acquiring its own character except during the two inner movements, which have some quite striking moments.

Nothing could be more gratifying than the excellent sound and quiet surfaces on these recordings. Although it is the sort of thing one has come to expect from London, the sonic quality takes on an added significance in light of the pure and inimitable Ansermet style. These memorial recordings are as much a tribute to the late Swiss conductor as he was to the company that recorded him for twenty-three years.

HONEGGER: Symphonies: No. 3 ("Liturgique"); No. 4 ("Deliciae Basiliensis"). Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. London CS 6616, $5.98.

STRAVINSKY: The Firebird (complete ballet with rehearsal record). New Philharmonia Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet, cond. London FBD S 1, $5.98 (two discs).

MAGNARD: Symphony No. 3, Op. 11. LALO: Scherzo for Orchestra. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. London CS 6615, $5.98.

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VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra; Symphony No. 8. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin, pianos (in the Concerto); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. Angel S 36626, $5.98.

Vaughan Williams' 1926 Piano Concerto was regarded at the time as sporting such a hard-driving and grandly scaled solo part that two pianos were really required to put it over. The composer obliged by rescoring the work for dual soloists, but the one-piano version was left standing for anyone who might wish to tackle it. This appears to be the first recording of the work in either version. The Concerto lives up to its reputation. The outer movements have the dynamism, fullness, ruggedness, and zest one associates especially with Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony; its slow movement is in the usual peat-smoke vein.

On Side 2 is the world's finest performance of the Eighth Symphony, wherein Vaughan Williams did some experimenting with his orchestra: first movement, Variazione senza tema for the full ensemble; second movement, Scherzo alla marcia for wind instruments; third movement, Cavatina for strings; finale, Toccata for full orchestra plus a big battery of tuned percussion. It is all beautiful, but the last movement is the climax. As I observed once before in this journal, it is as if all the bell towers in England were chiming at once in joy and praise. A.F.

WALTON: Concerto for Viola and Orchestra. HINDEMITH: Der Schwanendreher. Paul Doktor, viola; London Philharmonic Orchestra, Edward Downes, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0368, $2.98.

The viola has always been an instrument in search of a repertory, and if the modern violist—after his allotted excursions into public view with *Harold in Italy*—has managed to find an identity for himself, he owes this in great measure to Walton and Hindemith.

The dour romanticism of Walton's 1929 Concerto (first performed by Hindemith, incidentally) is slightly faded today, and the sequential blustering is right out there for all to hear; but it is beautifully orchestrated and it gives the solo instrument red-carpet treatment—which are attributes hard to resist. The present recording is of the 1961 revision, in which, we are told, Walton lightened the orchestration, eliminating contrabassoon and tuba, adding a harp, and bringing some of the viola passages down an octave into the instrument's best register. It comes off handsomely, thanks to a superb performance by Doktor, whose tone is like dark honey, abetted by a sense of rhythmic freedom that is perfectly apt—furthermore. Doktor projects the nervous jubilance of the second movement with a blithe energy that many a violinist might envy.

Hindemith's *Schwanendreher* (the Swan-turner) is six years younger than Walton's Concerto and—despite the fact that it is based on German folk tunes—is a far more austere piece, bolstered with real bone and sinew. You know exactly what is coming, in fact, with that gritty opening solo plunge-in at the very beginning of the first movement. The viola is altogether more exposed than in the Walton (there are a number of long unaccompanied passages) and Doktor seems to revel in every intense measure that comes his way. The interaction between viola and solo instruments in the orchestra is brought off in masterly fashion, and the performance as a whole is powerful and articulate. It is good to have both these works back in the current catalogue in performances of this caliber. S.F.

WOLF: Italian Serenade—See Bruckner: Quintet for Strings.

XENAKIS: Herma—See Jolas: Quatuor II.

recitals & miscellany

FERRUCCIO BUSONI: "The Issued Records." BACH: Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I: Prelude and Fugue, in C; Chorale Prelude "Nun freut euch" (arr. Busoni); Partita for Violin Solo, No. 2, in D minor, S. 1004: Chaconne (arr. Busoni). BEETHOVEN: Ecossaises (arr. Busoni). BUSONI: Sonatina for Piano, No. 6 ("Carmen Fantasy"); Indian Diary, Book I. CHOPIN: Etudes: in G flat, Op. 10, No. 5 (two performances); in E minor, Op. 25, No. 5; Nocturne in F sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; Prelude in A, Op. 28, No. 7. LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13, in A minor. Michael von Zadora, piano (in the Sonatina); Egon Petri, piano (in the Chaconne); Edward Weiss, piano (in the Indian Diary); Ferruccio Busoni, piano (in the other works). For a feature review of this recording, see page 77.

ANDRE KOSTELANETZ: "Musical Evenings." ROSSINI-BRITTEN: Soirées musicales. DELIUS: On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring. WALTON: Capriccio burlesco. GOTOVAK: Kolo. LITOLFF: Concerto symphonique, Op. 102: Scherzo. CASALS: Saint Martin of Canigó. DELIBES: Naïla Waltz. Theodore Lettvin, piano (in the Litolff); orchestra, André Kostelanetz, cond. Columbia MS 7319, $5.98.

Kostelanetz shows a great deal of programming imagination here—this is an enticing, well-varied, light-symphonic "promenade" concert. Only the Walton *Capriccio* of 1968 claims to be a recording "first," but I don't recall ever encountering before the other two novelties here: the episodic dances from Jakov Gotovak's 1935 opera, *Ero, the Joker,*

and Pablo Casals' mellifluous musical memorial, written in the early Forties, of a monastery near Prades, France. Even the other relatively familiar selections are not often recorded nowadays, although they proffer appealingly light music of uncommon vivacity or—in the Delius tone poem—pastoral nostalgia.

I wish I could end my review at that, but while innumerable symphonic novices well may be delighted, more discriminating listeners must be warned that little if anything else even remotely measures up to the interest of the programming itself. The featured Walton piece is a strictly hack work which bubbles busily for seven minutes without ever coming to a real boil, and Kostelanetz seems incapable of the stylistic grace demanded by the other works. While the "big" recording is effective, if perhaps a bit too dark and reverberant, it exposes only too cruelly the orchestra's often hard-edged, coarse tonal qualities.

R.D.D.

JOHN McCORMACK: "Opera Recital." MOZART: Don Giovanni: Il mio tesoro. MEHUL: Joseph: Champs paternels. BIZET: Carmen: Flower Song (in Italian); Les Pecheurs de perles: Je crois entendre encore (in Italian). GOUNOD: Faust: Salut, demeure (in Italian). DELIBES: Lakmé Ah! viens dans la foret profonde (in Italian). MASSENET: Manon: Le rêve (in Italian). PUCCINI: La Bohème: Che gelida manina. BOITO: Mefistofele: Dai campi, dai prati; Giunto sul passo estremo. HERBERT: Natoma: Paul's Address. WALLACE: Maritana: There Is a Flower That Bloometh. BALFE: The Bohemian Girl: Then You'll Remember Me. WAGNER: Tristan und Isolde: O König, das kann ich dir nicht sagen. John McCormack, tenor; various orchestras. Victrola VIC 1472, $2.98 (mono only) [from Victor originals, 1910–1930].

This second Victrola disc devoted to John McCormack contains no selections that have not previously appeared on LP, but it should nevertheless be welcomed by anyone who missed these recordings the first time around. (Most of them were last seen on Camden CAL 512, which also included two songs omitted here; the Wallace and Balfe were on CAL 407, the Wagner on Victor LCT 1036, and the *Don Giovanni* aria has had several earlier LP incarnations.)

In the more standard arias here, it would be foolish to argue that McCormack's versions are superior to those by more abundantly equipped singers such as Caruso, Martinelli, Gigli, and Bjoerling, but the liquid sound and easy phrasing are still very pleasant to hear. I note a number of minor irregularities, such as the redistribution of text at the climax to *Che gelida manina* and the failure to sing the *Carmen* high note softly as directed. It is also disappointing to find so many French arias sung in Italian, but (as Philip L. Miller points out in the liner notes) the singer seemed to prefer that language. Most of these tracks date from 1910 and 1912, and

it is clear that McCormack became a much more accomplished singer, both technically and musically, in later years. Of this lot, I find the Boito, Delibes, and Massenet arias most successful.

McCormack's *Il mio tesoro,* made in 1916, is justifiably a classic for its vigorous rhythmic projection and elegant phrasing (including a famous long phrase over the melisma leading to the return of the main material); the forty-four intervening years have brought few comparable performances of this aria. The Méhul aria is also forcefully intoned, and the English-language selections bring the singer to the home ground where he was most comfortable. Finally, the Wagner is a curiosity, recorded for McCormack's own pleasure in 1930 but not issued until after his death; the rhythm is not firm enough nor is the German idiomatic, but this particular stretch of Tristan's music does not fall unpleasantly from the throat of a lyric tenor.

This time, the dubbings all seem convincingly in pitch; the *Pêcheurs, Faust,* and *Lakmé* arias are a half tone below the written keys, but this is quite plausible—indeed, the *Lakmé* is certainly correct, for McCormack uses Delibes' own alternative version of the recitative, leading to the lower key. The copies used as source material don't seem to be the same as those used for earlier reissues, and have, at any rate, been equalized differently, with good results—there is less surface noise than before, but little perceptible loss of vocal quality. No texts are provided. D.H.

EZIO PINZA: "Opera Recital." MOZART: Le Nozze di Figaro: Non più andrai; Don Giovanni: Finch' han dal vino; Deh vieni alla finestra; Die Zauberflöte: O Isis und Osiris. HALEVY: La Juive: Si la rigueur; Vous qui du Dieu vivant. THOMAS: Le Caïd: Air du Tambour-Major. GOUNOD: Faust: Le Veau d'or. BELLINI: Norma: Ah! del Tebro. MEYERBEER: Robert le Diable: Nonnes, qui reposez. VERDI: Ernani: Che mai veggio? . . . Infelice, e tuo credevi; Il Trovatore: Di due figli . . . Abietta zingara; Don Carlo: Elia giammai m'amo . . . Dormiro sol; Messa di Requiem: Confutatis maledictis. Ezio Pinza, bass; various orchestras and conductors. RCA Victrola VIC 1470, $2.98 (mono only, recorded between 1927 and 1939).

No record in the catalogue contains more honest singing. Pinza was always a man who gave full value—honest notes, strong yet sensitive artistry, always male yet always graceful. What a singer he was! And how to explain his particular combination of musicality and animal magnetism to those who can only read about it in books, or reach for it in records like this?

Pinza died twelve years ago, and had left opera ten years before that to enrich a Broadway show (*South Pacific*) with his dark voice and his mature sex appeal. But between 1919 and 1948 he became the leading Italian basso in the world and during his twenty-two seasons at the Metropolitan he sang seventy roles: all the Verdis, of course, and much else besides. He was Boris and Mephistopheles, Don Basilio and (in Mozart) Figaro. Most specially, he was—for an entire generation of Americans—Don Giovanni himself.

Perhaps the two *Giovanni* items are sufficient to describe the man. Hear the Champagne aria as Pinza sings it on this record and consider who might rival him for momentum and almost weightless athleticism. Then a moment later, we have the same man—and the same voice—meeting the entirely different requirements of the Serenade, transmitting passion and an insinuating sexuality which was uniquely his.

Hear the polished granite of Sarastro's Invocation and consider that it is done by the same basso who makes something supremely musical out of the jerky staccatos in Ferrando's narration, the ditty that starts *Trovatore* on its way. The *Ernani* aria is a universally admired interpretation, one that establishes standards for all other basses. In Philip's aria from *Don Carlo,* he projects a chilling disillusion, and from the Requiem we get perhaps the most humane reading of this awesome passage that I can recall having heard. The arias from *Norma* and *La Juive* are also classics, famous for their power, beauty, and richness of vocal color.

Pinza once denied that he was a great artist—"I just make beautiful sounds," he said. What this record proves is that he was perhaps the most instinctive, naturally gifted singer of his time, a man in perfect balance with his art: and that is greatness by any standards I know.

The transfers have been carefully and successfully done—all but the *Faust* excerpt which has noticeably higher distortion than the others. G.M.

HERMANN PREY: "A Ballad Evening." SCHUBERT: Die Bürgschaft. WOLF: Der Sänger; Der Feuerreiter; Der Rattenfänger. SCHUMANN: Die wandelnde Glocke; Belsatzar; Die beiden Grenadiere. Hermann Prey, baritone; Konrad Richter, piano. London OS 26115, $5.98.

This recording, made at a live concert (or concerts), is drawn from a program of German ballads that Hermann Prey has performed frequently in recent years —three songs each of Schubert, Schumann, Loewe, and Wolf. Unfortunately, the recorded version omits Loewe entirely, and Schubert is represented only by the somewhat sprawling fifteen-minute Zumsteegian ballad of 1815, *Die Bürgschaft,* a kind of scena made up of numerous episodes connected by passages of recitative. In this song, too, Prey perpetrates one of those little ruses that you can get away with in recital but really should not commit to disc: he transposes two higher-lying episodes down a tone while leaving the rest of the song at written pitch. While I'm not going to argue that the rambling key-sequence here is of profound significance (as compared, say, to that in the Müller cycles), but Schubert's modulations have a purpose that is blunted when they are altered. The only other recording of this song, by Fischer-Dieskau, takes the *whole* song down a tone and is thus preferable, even if the singing is choppier and fussier than Prey's.

Otherwise, the repertory here is first-rate. Schumann's Belshazzar song, if not consistently carried out, is full of splendidly colored harmonies, and the little Goethe poem about the wandering bell is most amusingly treated. Wolf is represented by three of his best songs, respectively lyric-expansive, dramatic, and humorous in tone.

Basically, I like Prey's approach—very straightforward, letting the composer do most of the storytelling. He has the advantage too of a fine accompanist; Konrad Richter is a new name to me, but I hope that we will hear more of him. Happily, we hear him very well on this record, one of the best voice-and-piano sounds ever to come from London, with a nice solid, compact bass sound.

There are a few drawbacks, some undoubtedly contingent on the live-performance circumstances: a few flat passages in the voice (as at the start of *Der Sänger*), a tendency to strain at the climaxes, and a lack of humor in *Der Rattenfänger.* The incidental coughing, not to mention the applause, could become annoying.

Competition? Mainly Fischer-Dieskau, of course; his ballad record (Odeon SME 81055) includes the same Schubert and Wolf selections as Prey's, plus some other Schubert and Schumann, and the *Grenadiere* and *Belsatzar* are on DGG 139110. There's not a lot to choose between them, and both records lack the same very important appendage for the non-German-speaking listener: texts and translations. This is perhaps forgivable in the case of the Odeon disc, which was manufactured for the German market, but is absolutely incomprehensible on the part of London; all these songs tell stories, and there isn't much reward for the singer's efforts if his listeners don't understand the stories. The liner note, with its synopses, is no substitute (nor is it entirely reliable; *Der Feuerreiter* was set first as a solo, and only later arranged for chorus and orchestra). D.H.

"THE WELL-TEMPERED SYNTHESIZER." MONTEVERDI: Orfeo: Suite; Vespers (1610): Domine ad adjuvandum. SCARLATTI: Sonatas: in G, K. 455; in D, K. 491; in E, K. 430; in D, K. 96. HANDEL: Water Music: Bourrée; Air; Allegro deciso. BACH: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, in G, S. 1049. Walter Carlos, synthesizer. **For a feature review of this recording, see page 78.**

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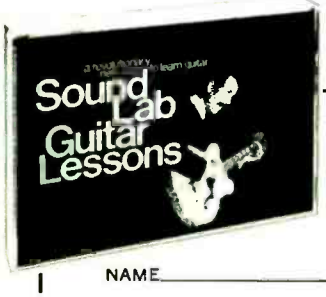

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in brief

BACH, C.P.E.: Symphonies (4), W. 182 ("Hamburg"). Franzjosef Maier, violin; Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord; Collegium Aureum. RCA Victrola VICS 1453, $2.98.

These four symphonies neatly sum up C. P. E. Bach's classic position as a composer that looks both over his shoulder to the baroque and forward to the romantic epoch. The Collegium Aureum (twelve string players with harpsichord) accent the music's baroque attitudes with vigorous, incisive, and clean ensemble playing at its finest—certainly a valid approach. The recording is also appropriately bright, airy, and crisp. C.F.G.

BRAHMS: Symphony No. 3, in F, Op. 90; Tragic Overture, Op. 81. Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. Seraphim S 60101, $2.49.

Giulini gives Brahms's Third a warm, spacious reading with smooth, sunny expansiveness and lyrically turned phrases. The tempos are rather similar to the slow ones Toscanini chose for his 1952 RCA recording, but Giulini's outlook is more yielding, less stringently disciplined than the Maestro's. I like a tauter, tarter approach myself, but there is absolutely no mistaking the strong, individualistic character of this interpretation. The *Tragic* Overture is completely convincing and Seraphim's sound, although a mite cavernous and woolly, is otherwise completely suave and acceptable. H.G.

GLIERE: The Bronze Horseman, Op. 89: Ballet Suites No. 1 and No. 2. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Algis Zuraitis, cond. Melodiya/Angel SR 40103, $5.98.

After my harsh review last August of an earlier Glière ballet disc by the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, it's a bit disorienting to find such an altered picture here. The orchestra itself sounds markedly better (if still a bit coarse), and it is given brilliant, open-stereo recording and first-rate disc processing. Moreover, the present conductor is not only obviously competent but able to fire genuine enthusiasm among his men—he may even convince some listeners that the music here, for all its conventionality, shares some of the lush, romantic appeal of Glière's *Ilya Murometz* Symphony. R.D.D.

HUMMEL: Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, in E. HAYDN: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 3, in A. BOCCHERINI: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in G. Jaap Schröder, violin; Anner Bylsma, cello; Wim Groot, trumpet; Concerto Amsterdam, Jaap Schröder, cond. Telefunken SAWT 9529, $5.95.

Haydn's violin concertos were all early works; No. 3 was written about 1770 and contains no real surprises. But it does have a fairly elaborate first movement in which the soloist engages in some fancy decorative business, and the long Adagio is both expansive and graceful. Violinist Jaap Schröder does handsomely by the work. The Hummel Trumpet Concerto is pure Sunday-afternoon-in-the-park music, and if it seems a little thin in the living room—well, the loss is ours. The Boccherini is perfunctorily played, and the cello is frequently buried by the tutti strings. S.F.

ORFF: Catulli Carmina. Anne Marie Biggs, soprano; Robert Mazarella, tenor; instrumentalists; Roger Wagner Chorale, Roger Wagner, cond. Angel S 36023, $5.98.

The sonic sensationalisms of *Catulli* were pretty thoroughly exploited by Ormandy's version for Columbia a couple of years ago. Nevertheless, there are compensations, for the present soloists and West-Coast chorus are both vocally and dramatically superior to Columbia's Blegen, Kness, and the Temple University Choirs. And Angel's bright, markedly stereoistic, rather chilly sonics are perhaps as much an advantage as a disadvantage in projecting the many unaccompanied choral portions of the work. R.D.D.

RACHMANINOFF: Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 44. MUSSORGSKY: A Night on Bald Mountain. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Paul Kletzki, cond. London CS 6622, $5.98.

Paul Kletzki has all the right ideas here, but his orchestra is simply not the equal of the Philadelphia's brilliant and rich tonal palette. In this sort of late-Romantic music it is virtually impossible to compete with Ormandy and his musicians, and their recording of this symphony is certainly the preferred one. P.H.

RESPIGHI: Pini di Roma; Fontane di Roma; Gli Ucelli. London Symphony Orchestra, Istvan Kertesz, cond. London CS 6624, $5.98.

Even a bonus in the form of the endearing *Birds* Suite can't boost Kertesz' *Pines/Fountains* coupling much higher than midway in the Respighi discography. There is little or nothing to criticize adversely in these attractive performances and gleamingly clean recordings, but there is no real competition for either Munch's spectacular versions or Ansermet's poetic readings of the Roman poems (to cite only rivals available under the same London label). R.D.D.

BEETHOVEN ON RECORDS

Continued from page 72

ways able to evoke a remarkably rich and subtle sound even when the orchestra is playing fortissimo. A great deal of this effect is of course very calculated, and there is no doubt that many of the most beautiful portions of his *Missa Solemnis* interpretation do indeed sound calculated. But they also sound marvelous. His solo quartet is perhaps the best balanced, and certainly it has been carefully rehearsed by Karajan. If this DGG set lacks something of Klemperer's majesty and Bernstein's energy, it is, nevertheless, very well recorded, and the balance is often better than in the Klemperer, the sound of which is occasionally on the tubby side. Although many people will want to have the new Karajan recording because of the elegant DGG sound, in many respects the older one on Angel is a more thoughtful, more beautiful, and a less contrived performance. There is a dignity that almost verges on the mystical in the Kyrie that one does not hear in the new DGG version. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's singing is particularly beautiful and so is that of Christa Ludwig; the male soloists are, I would say, better on the DGG recording. I suspect that the presence of that legendary recording supervisor Walter Legge had something to do with the particular excellence of the Angel recording. Legge's recordings were always something very special.

I would recommend, if you can afford them, owning versions by all three conductors: each brings out a valid side to this fantastic effort of Beethoven's late period.

Of the two budget recordings, the Goehr actually manages to get the *Missa* on three sides, leaving the fourth free for the *Coriolan* and *Egmont* Overtures conducted by Josef Krips. The trouble with the Goehr version is that it has second-rate forces and was recorded over a decade ago. There are some felicitous details, such as the central, slow part of the Credo (beautifully handled here), but the set as a whole is not one of Goehr's most distinguished efforts and the recording distinctly shows its age. On the other hand, the version of Günter Wand on Nonesuch is very acceptable. The recording is bright and well balanced, and Wand manages to get almost first-rate playing and singing from a distinctly less-than-first-rate group. If you must economize, the Günter Wand version will give you a very good idea of this great and difficult masterpiece. In closing, I would like to make brief mention of the old Toscanini set. It was unevenly recorded perhaps, but none of the present versions recaptures the overwhelming intensity and the hushed awe that Toscanini gets in the orchestral passage between Sanctus and Benedictus; it was one of the great revelations of my life when I first heard that, and I do recommend younger readers try to find a copy and listen to this performance. For blazing intensity and sheer devotion there is nothing quite like it.

Coming in April: Part III, Beethoven's String Quartets, by Robert P. Morgan.

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repeat performance

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S REISSUES

BACH: Cantatas: No. 56, "Ich will den Kreuzstab"; No. 82, "Ich habe genug." Mack Harrell, baritone; Robert Shaw Chorale; RCA Victor Orchestra, Robert Show, cond. RCA Victrola VICS 1468, $2.98 [from RCA Victor LSC 2312, 1960].

If sensitive musicianship and a reverent approach are what you require in these two popular solo cantatas, then Mack Harrell should fill the bill despite his rather unpleasantly dry, tight baritone. Also on the plus side is Robert Shaw's splendid orchestral support and an anonymous oboist who plays sensationally in both cantatas. Hermann Prey doesn't quite get such fine colleagues on his Turnabout disc, but there's no denying that the sheer beauty of his voice and equally persuasive interpretation add up to a more appealing vocal performance. Victrola's warm, spacious recording leaves nothing to be desired.

BARTOK: Bluebeard's Castle. Olga Szönyi (ms), Mihály Székely (bs), London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. Mercury SR 90311, $5.98 [from Mercury SR 90311, 1963].

Just as mysteriously as it disappeared from the catalogue several years ago, Dorati's fine recording of *Bluebeard's Castle* now returns in its identical Mercury format. Kertesz also conducted the LSO in his recent version for London, but Dorati achieves far more effective results with the orchestra in terms of rhythmic precision, linear thrust, and controlled tension—the climaxes here have an overwhelming impact. And, too, I know of no other recording that exploits the music's coloristic and descriptive subtleties quite so brilliantly. The seven-year-old sonics need no apology: the full orchestral palette has been stunningly reproduced.

While the two soloists cannot match the ingratiating vocalism of London's Ludwig/Berry team, they both seem more at home in the Hungarian speech patterns, interpreting the music with dignity and considerable involvement. The late Mihály Székely could still make an imposing sound when the music was not too high for him (an occasional downward transposition facilitates matters), and Olga Szönyi's dramatic flair helps one overlook her rather gutteral production. For the singers' thorough identification with the idiom and the orchestra's superb account of the score, this is definitely the *Bluebeard* to have.

MOZART: Arias from Der Schauspieldirektor, Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Le Nozze di Figaro, Die Zauberflöte, Don Giovanni, and Così fan tutte. Eleanor Steber, soprano; Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond. Odyssey 32 16 0363, $2.98 (mono only) [from Columbia ML 4694, 1953].

Eleanor Steber did not exactly go unappreciated during her Met career, but it seems peculiar that such a major voice should not have achieved more international celebrity. These arias were recorded at an especially happy period: by 1953 her luscious soprano had ripened into a rich, creamy, sensuous instrument while retaining the light flexibility of her earlier soubrette years. Perhaps Steber never did fit the popular conception of a prima donna. Her performances were always characterized by an open-hearted interpretive generosity that occasionally seemed a bit flamboyant if not downright vulgar (her Manon, for all its gorgeous vocalism, was especially open to this charge). Yet the Met has never had an Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* of such imposing majesty, and her Donna Anna is still regarded as something of a house standard that few other sopranos have since matched.

There's some marvelous Mozart singing on this disc, no mistake about it. *"Traurigkeit"* from *Abduction* (Steber was the first and only Met Constanze) has a touching tragic pathos; *"Dove sono"* from *Figaro* is a moving lament by a proud and wounded woman; and Donna Anna's *"Non mi dir"* is not only ravishingly sung but a supremely noble feminine statement into the bargain. A rather weepy *"Ach, ich fühl's"* and weak low notes in Fiordiligi's *"Per pietà"* spoil these arias, but the over-all accomplishment on this disc remains nonetheless on an extremely high level. Walter's accompaniments are marvelous and the sound is still decent, although my copy had very noisy surfaces.

REGER: Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Johann Adam Hiller, Op. 100. Hamburg State Philharmonic Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond. Telefunken SLT 43064, $5.95 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Telefunken LGX 66049, 1956].

"Variations and Fugue" is a frequent entry in the extensive catalogue of works by Max Reger. In addition to the *Hiller* Variations, the composer also sought inspiration in themes by Mozart (again for orchestra); Bach, Beethoven, and Telemann (for piano); and in a theme of his own devising (for organ). Reger evidently found the form much to his taste and these works represent his longest and most ambitious works. They also neatly sum up the rather paradoxical face presented by this composer: despite

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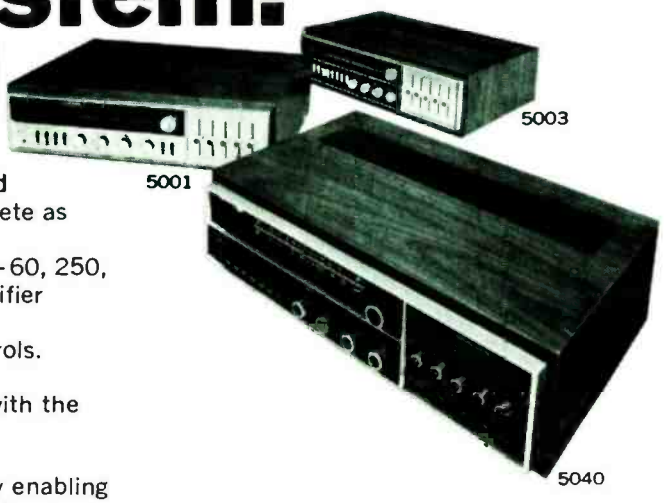

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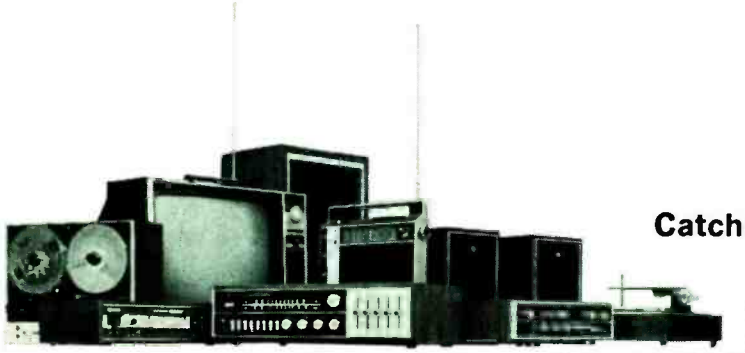

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his overstuffed textures and slithery chromatic harmony, Reger was essentially a miniaturist and virtually incapable of sustaining a lengthy symphonic structure (perhaps the fact that he did most of his composing while stone drunk explains why). At any rate, the *Hiller* Variations, written in 1907, is a splendid exercise for orchestra. The eleven explorations of the jaunty little theme from Hiller's *Singspiel*, *Aerndtekranz*, are full of character, by turns romantic and dreamy, humorous and light-hearted—in fact, the piece as a whole is reminiscent of Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* both in its harmonic coloring and over-all puckishness.

Joseph Keilberth, who died just over a year ago while conducting *Tristan* in Munich, never reached the top rank of German conductors, but occasionally he gave performances that really caught fire. Fortunately this is one of them: the personality of each variation comes across beautifully, the rich scoring is superlatively balanced, and the big fugue builds to a stunning climax. The sound only betrays its age at this point, for the final measures are rather harshly reproduced; otherwise the clear, lifelike sonics have been rechanneled with surprising success.

SCHUBERT: Der häusliche Krieg. Ilona Steingruber (s), Laurence Dutoit (s), Walter Berry (bs-b), et al.; Akademie Kammerchor; Vienna Symphony, Ferdinand Grossmann, cond. Lyrichord LLST 7207, $5.98 (rechanneled stereo only) [from Vox PL 8160, 1954].

Schubert's eighteen operas represent a vast no man's land as far as the phonograph is concerned. This abbreviated version of the composer's penultimate effort in the form tells us why: there's plenty of engaging melody here but not much dramatic point. The libretto, based very loosely on Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, has a good deal of comic potential, but Schubert just can't resist overburdening each scene with too many tunes and redundant musical elaboration. For its sheer inventive quality, the disc is rewarding in a rather abstract way, and those curious enough to give it a try will find the performance generally satisfactory if a bit on the earnest and heavy-handed side. The rechanneled sound is boomy, overreverberant, and excessively bass-heavy.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN: "A Karajan Festival." TCHAIKOVSKY: 1812 Overture, Op. 49. SIBELIUS: Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7. LISZT: Les Preludes; Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. Berlin Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan, cond. Deutsche Grammophon 643212, $3.98 [from various Deutsche Grammophon originals, recorded 1965–67].

'Tis said that the majority of classical record buyers are weary of the warhorses and are increasingly on the lookout for interesting offbeat repertoire. Be that as it may, I imagine DGG will have little difficulty in finding takers for this technicolor package of old favorites, all done with Karajan's typical suavity and theatrical flair. The chief attraction, of course, is the *1812*, a rousing, beautifully played performance complete with the *de rigueur* canons, bells, and, as a fillip, the Don Cossacks intoning the opening Russian Hymn. Less strenuous but just as imposing are the Sibelius and Liszt items—what superb, rippling tension Karajan gets from the Berlin strings in *Finlandia*. DGG has hot been tempted to juice up the sonics by overmodulation and the reproduction is as stunningly lifelike as on the originals.

GERARD SOUZAY: "The Art of Gérard Souzay." Gérard Souzay, baritone; Dalton Baldwin, piano; Lamoureux Orchestra, Serge Baudo, cond. World Series PHC 3-019, $8.94 (three discs) [from various Philips originals, 1963-1968].

Gérard Souzay has been one of the most prolific of recording artists, although many of his discs are no longer available. This, then, is a valuable collection gathered from a number of his Philips discs made over the past eight years, and offers a varied program of opera and songs (by Gounod, Chabrier, Fauré, to unhackneyed French arias (*La Jolie Fille de Perth*, *L'Africaine*, *Hamlet*, *Manon*, and *Roméo et Juliette*) and art songs by Gounod, Chabrier, Fauré, Hahn, Ravel, and Duparc). The other two discs concentrate on German lieder by Schubert (excerpts from *Die schöne Müllerin*, *Winterreise*, and *Schwanengesang*), Schumann (seven *Dichterliebe* songs and three items from the Lenau cycle, Op. 90—material taken from a Schumann recital never released here), Beethoven, Brahms, and Strauss.

While Souzay's attractive lyrical baritone has lost some of its sheen and warmth of late, there is scarcely any music here that does not benefit from his refined artistry and committed interpretive intensity. It's difficult to think of anyone who could handle the French repertory so elegantly today. The arias show him straining a bit, but the singing has splendid character and brio; the delicately accented songs, though, are just about perfect. Strauss's big-hearted Romanticism is not always encompassed with absolute comfort—Souzay is happier with the lighter lyrics of Schubert, Brahms, and Schumann, and his performances here give great pleasure.

Souzay recorded extensively for London in the Fifties and these long-deleted discs have always seemed to me to show the baritone at his peak—especially one recital of French opera arias that boasted really spectacular vocalism. Will we ever see them again. I wonder?

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the lees side

Elvis Presley came out of Memphis in the mid-Fifties.

Rock, Violence, and Spiro T. Agnew

ROCK-AND-ROLL came into commercial eminence in the early 1950s. Perhaps its historical significance can be dated from the time *Rock Around the Clock*, a film starring Bill Haley and His Comets, became a success. Rock was tapering off slightly in popularity when, in the mid-'50s, a young man with the somewhat odd name of Elvis Presley came out of Memphis and restored it to favor.

At that time, I was a young music and drama critic for the *Louisville Times*. Rock-and-roll music troubled me. Not only did it bore me musically—it was rhythmically tedious and harmonically dull. More, it bothered me in some inner part of the self that can perhaps be called the social sense.

Elvis was to give a concert at the Louisville Armory in the near future. I wrote a column, blasting him on musical grounds, and noting what I felt to be an underlying association between rock-and-roll music and violence. Several theaters had been virtually wrecked during rock-and-roll concerts recently.

If rock music continued as a major influence in entertainment, I felt, the country was in for an era of mounting violence.

It is always difficult to document relationships between music and social tendencies. But most people I know who are professionally involved in music believe they exist. I once asked Friedrich Gulda, the Austrian concert pianist and sometime jazz musician, whether he thought the music of Richard Wagner was a reflection of rising German nationalism or a cause of it. "How can you separate them?" he said.

When czarist Russia controlled Finland, the Russians banned Sibelius' *Finlandia* on grounds that it tended to promote revolutionary feelings. And they were quite right—it did. When *La Marseillaise* was first sung in France, with its blood-curdling call to arms, was this a symptom of popular discontent, a catalyst, or cause of it? I would think it was all three.

History has adjudged these revolutionary movements good, in the main—though no one can condone the terrible slaughter of innocent and guilty alike that accompanied the mindless rage of the French revolution.

But not all social movements are good. More than once in history a civilization has crumbled under the onslaught of disturbed social forces from within. The comparison of the United States today to Rome before its dissolution has become a cliché.

When I made my statement in the *Louisville Times* about Elvis and the potential for violence I felt was in rock-and-roll music, I received an astonishing response. Literally hundreds of schoolgirls (very few boys) wrote to me, some of the letters filled with acrimony because an old fuddy-duddy like me (I was twenty-five) could question the virtues of their hero. But I made a statistical analysis of the letters. Over sixty per cent of the writers said they disliked Elvis but were afraid to admit it for fear of being thought square by their girl-friends. That is how the force of conformity functions in the manipulation of the young. Many of the girls (some of them twelve and thirteen) were vaguely troubled by what Elvis did to them emotionally. They did not know what it was. I did. So did you. Some said they were writing me because there was no other adult with whom they could discuss these things. Where the hell, I thought, are your parents? I often think it nowadays, when I am talking to some troubled youngster only too anxious to close the generation gap.

I attended Elvis Presley's Louisville concert. The disc jockey who had been his most persistent champion in the area made a speech before he appeared, a speech about how good Elvis was to his mother, what a nice churchgoing boy he was, and how patriotic. Having wrapped him in the American flag, he asked the huge assembly how any mean old adult could write a nasty column against their hero. What do "we" think of such a man?, he cried, his arms upraised like a preacher's. From something like eight thousand girlish throats, a scream of rage went up, and Elvis came onstage, borne on wings of hate. It reminded me of nothing so much as movies I had seen of Hitler's rallies in the 1930s, and I moved closer to a knot of cops. There were lots of policemen there: they had become standard fixtures at rock-and-roll concerts because of the incidents of violence.

1958. The Newport Jazz Festival. The producer had been spiking the lineup of jazz artists with more and more nonjazz commercial acts. Newport had, as a result, become a gathering place for nonjazz fans, where they could get drunk, ball on the beach, and raise hell.

I said in print that if the festival continued in this direction there would be a street riot. The festival continued in that direction, and next year the National Guard had to be called in.

About three years ago, having caught the references to drugs—indeed, the exhortation to their use—buried in a lot of rock and folk-rock lyrics, I wrote an article, suggesting that if this continued the country was in for a wave of drug use that could shake its foundations.

I do not see myself as an oracle. I am two things by training: a songwriter and a newspaperman. Applying the techniques of the latter to the skills and insights of the former, I hear things in contemporary songs that scare the hell out of me.

I cannot prove this. But if you asked me whether rock music has been a symptom or a cause of America's terrible problems with its young people, I would be inclined to say, "Both—but primarily a cause." Rock music has widened the inevitable and normal gap between gen-

Continued on page 110

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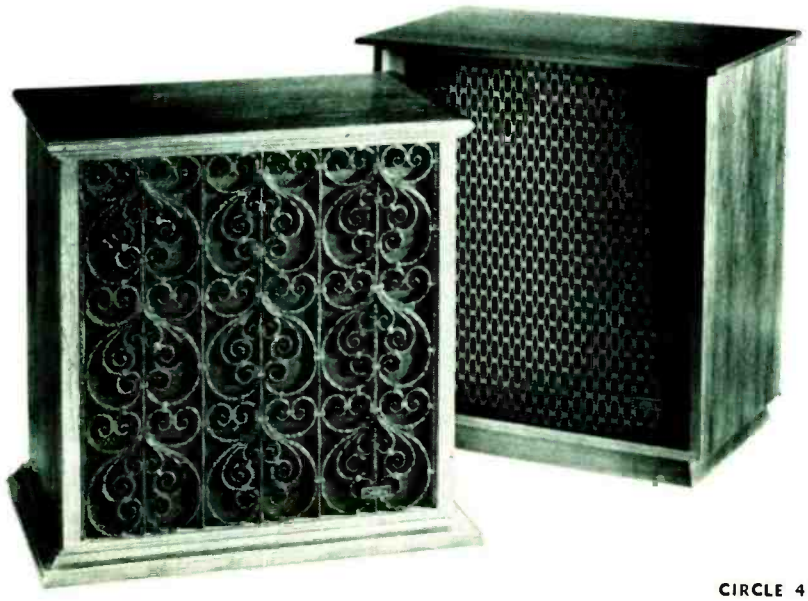

CIRCLE 4 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

THE LEES SIDE

Continued from page 108

erations, turned it from something healthy —and absolutely necessary to forward movement—into something negative, destructive, nihilistic. It has had of course plenty of help from the television industry (which, be it noted, owns a substantial piece of the record industry), the boys on Madison Avenue, and an industrial establishment so avaricious that it will try to sell products even at the risk of its own demolition.

Separate the young people from their parents. If they won't listen to voices of experience, they're easier to manipulate. Sell to the kids by flattering them—you're the hippest, smartest, best-informed generation in history; your parents just don't understand you. Sell to the parents in turn by scaring them about their increasing age: have skin so young you'll be mistaken for your daughter; drive the hip car that'll make you seem young so your kids will once more respect you. It is nothing less than sinister.

I am no fan of Spiro T. Agnew. He is using too many techniques of the demagogue: in his way, he's using methods as bad as that disc jockey in Louisville. And so when he started popping off about the communications media, I had mixed feelings. In the end, I came to the conclusion that he said the right things for the wrong reasons. The answer, as Nicholas Johnson of the Federal Communications Commission has insisted, does not lie in transferring the power to mold American thought from a few men in New York to a few men in Washington. It lies in giving it back to the people.

But Agnew raised important issues, no matter how clumsily. I too distrust the motives and growing power of the communications conglomerates. I don't like record companies whose parent organizations make military hardware and then put out records by rock groups that work the kids into a frenzy of anger against their parents—kids who then go out and raise hell with Dow Chemical instead of boycotting those albums. There *is* something wrong with our communications media, and it's something more serious than mere blandness in entertainment. Nick Johnson is worried about the things television *doesn't* tell you. So am I.

I am also worried about the music you are not allowed to hear. A top 40 radio station is practicing *de facto* censorship.

I believe that rock music has given young people a virulent fever. Whereas jazz flows along with an exciting but ultimately satisfying and releasing 12/8 time feeling, rock music just stays there, its beat jumping up and down in the same place and producing in the end only the pent-up energy of frustration.

Pour that stuff into the ears of an entire generation of young people, make it almost impossible for them to hear anything else, alienate them from their parents with lyrics leading them to the distrust of anyone over thirty, and I would say you've invented a sure-fire formula for trouble.

And trouble we've got. GENE LEES

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(Stereo Review, January 1968)

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The Stereophile, Vol. 2, No. 9, 1968

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CIRCLE 23 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the lighter side

reviewed by

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JOSE FELICIANO: Alive Alive-O! José Feliciano, vocals and guitar; rhythm accompaniment. (Hi-Heel Sneakers; Malaguena; Day Tripper; Light My Fire; Guantanamera; Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out; El Jenite, eleven more.) RCA Victor LSP 6021 $9.96 (two discs). Tape: Parts I and II: TP3 5076, 3¾ ips, $9.95; Part I: P8S 1537, $6.95; Part II: P8S 1538, $6.95; Part I: PK 1537, $6.95; Part II: PK 1538, $6.95.

José Feliciano is alternately one of the most satisfying and infuriating performers in pop music. When he is together, he can rap out some of the smoothest guitar playing and inventive vocalizing around; but he can also be incredibly lazy and self-indulgent on both pipes. And a live recording seems ideally suited to emphasize both tendencies.

Inspired by the crowd, Feliciano mounts a few exciting moments here, especially on guitar. But the album is also rife with flubs that would never, one hopes, be left in a studio-made album. At more than one point the guitar is out of tune, the sound wavers in several spots, and Feliciano himself repeats his favorite clichés endlessly. The songs, especially in English, seem to be aimed at the lowest common denominator in the audience and a few, like the Beatles' *A Day in the Life*, are total failures. Feliciano tells jokes that were old when Bud and Travis used them six years ago and his parodies of other singers are inexact when they aren't petty. And as usual RCA has left in all the (very loud) applause which has about the same effect on this listener as a fingernail dragged across a blackboard.

Feliciano is a romantic and at his best when the material calls for his special kind of vibrancy, especially songs such as *Light My Fire* and *Day Tripper* which he sings in Spanish. Though there are moments of *Alive Alive-O!* that really catch on, they are swamped by the hours that don't. If you're a Feliciano fan, you probably already own much of the material here; if you're not, there are much nicer ways to get acquainted. J.G.

ANNA BLACK: Thinking About My Man. Anna Black, vocals; Billy Byers, arr. (Market Man; Devil Man; Hound Dog; seven more.) Epic BN 26444, $4.98.

This is the second album from Miss Anna Black, a sincere and competent singer whose muggy voice quality suits her fondness for black blues. Like most young singers doing the black thing, her pronunciation is a bit overdone, and she sports a nervous mannerism that comes out as "yeah" on the end of too many phrases. Otherwise, she's as good as several other popular young ladies working in a similar emotional style.

Of far more interest are the album's musical backgrounds, contributed by arranger/trombonist Billy Byers. Would someone please tell me why Byers never gets credit for his writing? You have to have connections in the music business even to find out who he is—unless you're a musician, arranger, or producer. You can be sure *they* know who he is, for Byers does an inordinate amount of the writing you hear on records, TV, and films. What's more, he's superb. Many think he writes all the big names out of town.

The charts here, used to sweeten essentially stock blues, utilize rhythm and a brass section which blows beautifully. Byers has made a lot of music (some of it all but negated in the mix) out of a limited number of instruments. He's furtively famous for his ability to do such things.

Byers may or may not be the best writer in town. Who can tell until he's allowed to be, or insists upon being, fully acknowledged for his talents? So call this an In review. You're the first on your block to know who Billy Byers is. M.A.

✻

ELMORE JAMES. Elmore James, vocals and guitars; rhythm accompaniment. (The Sky Is Crying; Fine Little Mama; Dust My Broom; Shake Your Money Maker; One Way Out; I Need You; six more.) Bell 6037, $4.98.

JUNIOR PARKER: Honey-Drippin' Blues. Junior Parker, vocals and harmonica; rhythm accompaniment. (Easy Lovin'; I'm So Satisfied; You're the One; Reconsider Baby; Lover to Friend; I Got Money; seven more.) Blue Rock SRB 64004, $4.98.

KOKO TAYLOR. Koko Taylor, vocals; rhythm accompaniment. (I'm a Little Mixed Up; Nitty Gritty; Fire; Twenty-Nine Ways; Insane Asylum; Yes, It's Good for You; six more.) Chess LPS 1532, $4.98.

Elmore James was part of the first wave of electric blues in Chicago in the early Fifties, about the same time as such better-known stars as Muddy Waters were making their names. And James, though he is not well remembered, was of crucial importance as a bridge between the music of the Delta (even after it was electrified by Waters, et al., and contemporary Chicago bluesmen such as Junior Wells, Buddy Guy, and Paul Butterfield). James was ahead of his time, much freer and more confident in electrified blues than most of his contemporaries in the Windy City in the Fifties, and these recordings, all of which must have been made before 1959, retain a remarkable freshness and vitality. Whoever is responsible for the engineering deserves credit for a superb job of remastering—most of the cuts sound as if they were made yesterday.

Unfortunately, the liner notes fail to provide recording dates and personnel. And if James really wrote all the tunes on the album, he deserves much greater fame as a songwriter as well as performer. In any case, the LP is almost a source book for much of today's pop music.

Junior Parker is very nearly at the opposite end of the r & b spectrum from James. Where James is harsh and earthy both as a vocalist and guitarist, Parker

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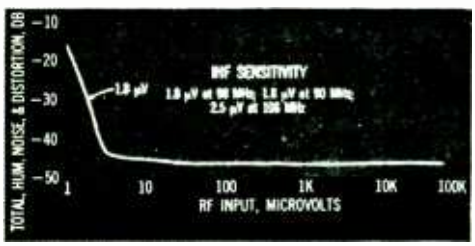

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is sweet and sophisticated, especially as a singer but also on harp. James relied on a repertoire of straight blues, but Parker employs a lot of new material from writers like Doug Sahm. Although he apprenticed with Sonny Boy Williamson and traveled with Howlin' Wolf—whose sound is one of the most elemental on the Midwest scene—somewhere along the line Parker developed a mellow style resembling late-Fifties commercial r & b. He is his own man, but in some ways his singing is not dissimilar to that of Johnny Ace or the Crown records cut by B. B. King. No dates here either, but these sides are apparently of recent vintage; the bandmen are anybody's guess.

The Koko Taylor album, produced by veteran blues bassist and composer Willie Dixon, is a happy mixture of old and new. Miss Taylor and Dixon mix the traditional Chicago blues formula with cops from modern soul stylings. Most of the material is good enough, and the vocalist reads it with warmth and invention. The sidemen are among the best in Chicago, old (Johnny Shine, Walter Horton) and young (Buddy Guy). The album was one of this month's unexpected pleasures and I heartily recommend it, together with the Parker and James records. J.G.

DENNY BROOKS. Denny Brooks, vocals; Dave Roberts and Bob Klimes, arr. (Life Is a Season; Not to Know; Both Sides Now; eight more.) Warner Bros./7 Arts 1822, $4.98.

Everybody evolves, but not necessarily in the right direction. It's always good to see an album with a once-familiar name, play it, and find that the artist has traveled to an interesting place since you last heard him.

Singer Denny Brooks has hovered around the fringes for years, cutting his teeth on folk music, working with a number of bloodless groups such as those led by Randy Sparks. I sort of liked him without noticing him.

Warner Bros. noticed him—and he was ready. Brooks has turned into an exciting, warm, and knowing singer. His energy level pulls you in long before the first track is finished. The energy is backed with a strong, rough-edged voice, and thoughtful songs.

The string arrangements are by Bob Klimes, another long-time-smoldering talent who has found his way. Klimes almost, but not quite, overorchestrates. The result is rich without being too rich. It's nice to see his name on so many albums lately.

Brooks has only one thing to worry about: he doesn't write his own material. For some reason, most people in rock who sing as well as Brooks also write equally well. He has serious competition.

Even so, this is an album to be proud of. M.A.

SHIRL MILETE. Shirl Milete, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. (Hell Walks the Street; Afraid to Rock the Boat; Ain't That Sad; Life; Nine Pound Ham-

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mer; Big Country Blues; five more.) Poppy PYS 40005, $4.98.

Shirl Milete is a country-and-western singer. He is also a protest singer. It is a happy measure of the changes we have all been through that there is no contradiction. Of course, c & w has always been music of protest, of complaint, about wages and hard times and the boss, and lately about commies and hippies and other city folk. But by "protest singer" we usually understand a left-liberal political line and this has been as rare as a heckelphone in c & w.

Milete's voice is a quavering, emotion-laden baritone, somewhere between Johnny Cash and Ian Tyson (he sounds very much like John Stewart on his recent Capitol disc, *California Bloodlines*, which if you haven't heard yet, shame on you). He has a tendency to overact, but his material is carefully enough chosen to support his excesses.

For example, Milete pushes Bob Dylan's sentimental, talky *Tomorrow Is a Long Time* close to the maudlin without, I think, quite crossing over. His own songs—*Hell Walks the Streets, Afraid to Rock the Boat*, and others—are traditional in both form and content, except for a slight twist of lyric that gives them a more humanitarian and overtly political feel than is usually true of country music. (This cliché is being challenged both by straight country artists like Cash and Bobby Bare and by younger performers adopting country—the Byrds, Stewart, the Flying Burito Brothers, etc.)

The cut that is sure to attract the most attention leads off Side 2. *I Wonder If Canada's Cold* is sung from the point of view of a young man who would rather not kill in a war in which he does not believe. It will be interesting to see if the song is played by c & w radio stations. Much of Milete's writing is still awkward, but it is vigorous and original and well worth your attention.

Who is buying these albums remains in doubt. Is it only the pop and folk audience, the people who buy Bob Dylan and Pete Seeger, that make room on their shelves for selected country records? Or is the c & w audience itself changing, like the rest of us, in response to civil rights and the war in Vietnam? Singer/songwriter Joe South (*Games People Play*) has suggested that the children of the southern states, like the offspring of other ethnic groups, though shaped by their home lives, are rejecting many of the values of their parents. Country music, he says, must change if it is to survive. That, clearly, has begun to happen. J.G.

DAN HICKS AND HIS HOT LICKS. Dan Hicks, vocal, rhythm guitar, harmonica, and drums; Jon Weber, lead guitar; Sid Page, violin; Sherry Snow, vocal; Christina Viola Gancher, vocal, celesta, and piano; Jaime Leopold, bass. (Canned Music; How Can I Miss You When You Won't Go Away; I Scare Myself; eight more.) Epic BN 26464, $4.98.

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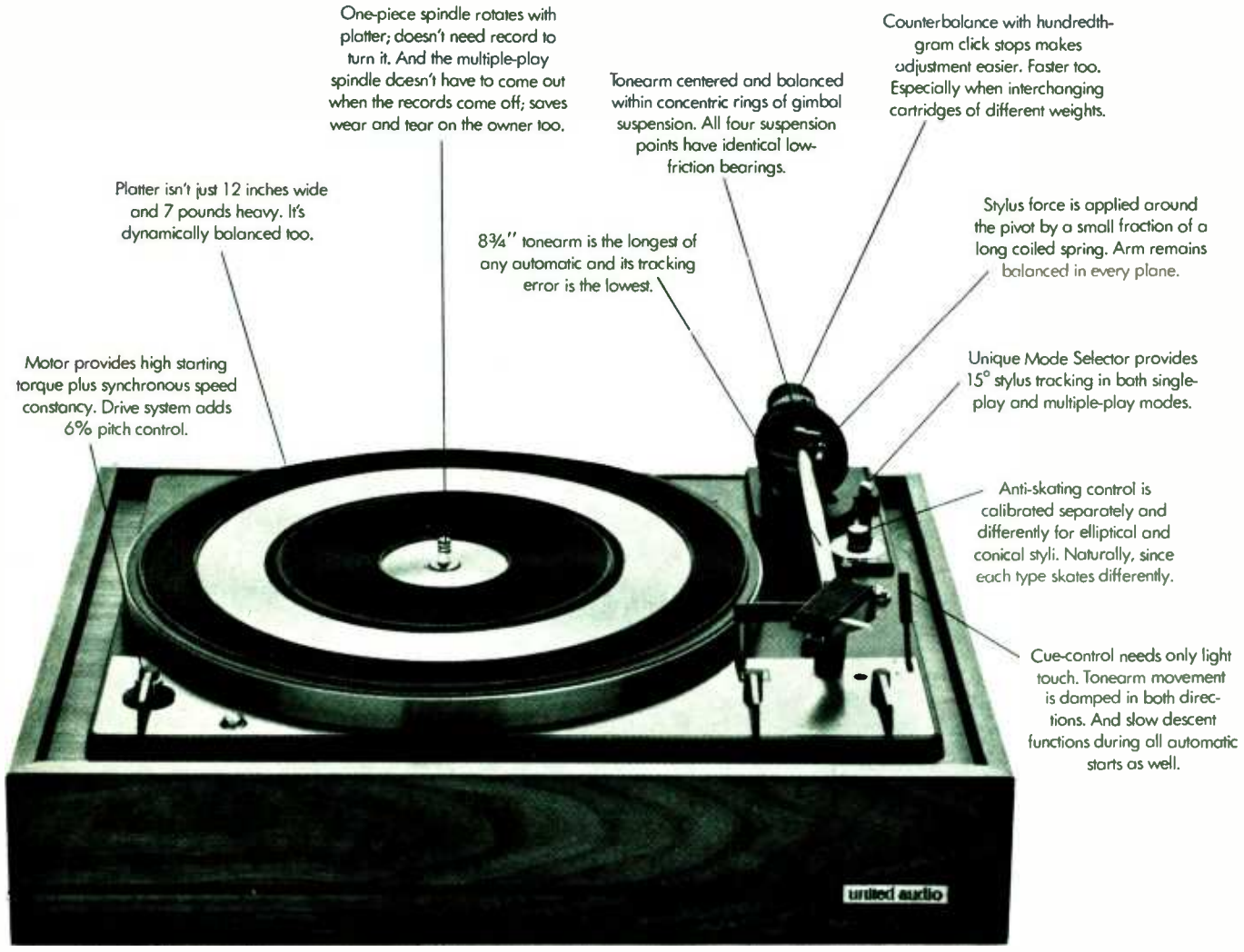

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you grow ravenous for the fresh and different. Occasionally you hear a delightful opening track of an album—only to find that the rest isn't up to it. This is such an album.

The first song here, *Canned Music*, tells of a boy who, to escape canned music, takes his girl to hear a live concert, only to see her walk off with the drummer. It has an odd, sleep-walking quality, and a funny kind of charm.

But all the rest of the album has a similar flavor. The group is low key and lazy-sounding, and that's refreshing. But they have no range—in the nature of their material, in dynamics, in coloring. They sound like a cross between Spade Cooley and his Western Swing and a blues band playing shuffle. G.L.

CARPENTERS: Offering. Karen Carpenter, vocals, drums, and electric bass; Richard Carpenter, vocals and keyboards; Jack Daugherty, arr. (Get Together; Eve; All I Can Do; ten more.) A & M SP 4205, $4.98.

Karen Carpenter is nineteen. Her brother photographs even younger. They're terribly talented and terribly inconsistent.

The album opens with the most beautiful version of *Ticket to Ride* ever made, stunningly sung by Karen and superbly orchestrated by Jack Daugherty. The track is followed by a bubble-gum entry called *Don't Be Afraid*, neatly but naïvely done. Then another dumb track: *What's the Use*. Both duds are Carpenter-written. So is the next, but it's very good: *All I Can Do*. Then *Eve*, another original: "Eve I can't believe you'd really leave him." Yeuch. And treated with Great Significance.

So it goes through the album, a see-saw of thrilling and unfortunate work. The Carpenters' songwriting has not caught up with their musical maturity and sophistication. They must have dug back to grammar school for half these songs—and they should have left them there.

Despite that, this album should be bought for *Ticket to Ride* and a couple of others. Just ignore the rest. Whatever you do, keep your eye out for their next album. This is the kind of talent that refines itself quickly. M.A.

SOVIET ARMY CHORUS AND BAND: "By Request." Soviet Army Chorus and Band, Boris Aleksandrov, cond. (Adelita; Funiculì, Funiculà; The Hammer; Oh No, John!; nine more.) Melodiya/Angel SR 40107, $5.98.

The renowned Soviet forces demonstrate their ecumenical musical interests here by invading—this time without tank and gun support—the folk/traditional song repertories of Mexico, Italy, "America," and England, as well as Czechoslovakia, the Ukraine, and the homeland itself. Most of the selections are sung in the native language—with utmost earnestness, surprising intelligibility, and of course a completely unidiomatic flavor. The results

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are often campily comic yet oddly touching (especially in the brave attempt to cope with the humor of the familiar English folksong).

Sometimes the performances are impressive for the sheer vocal attractions of many of the unidentified soloists and of the immense, sonorous full choir itself. But it's only in the final virtuoso "patrol" arrangement of the Russian *On the March* that the singers and players are wholly at ease and infectiously zestful. The stereo recording is first-rate, although I'd like warmer acoustical surroundings for so large an ensemble. R.D.D.

*

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL: Green River. John Fogerty, vocals and lead guitar; Tom Fogerty, rhythm guitar; Stu Cook, bass; Doug Clifford, drums. (Commotion; Tombstone Shadow; Wrote A Song for Everyone; Lodi; five more.) Fantasy 8393, $4.98. Tape: ●● X 8393, 3¾ ips, $5.95. ■ X 48393, $5.95, ■ M 88393, $6.95; ●● X 58393, $5.95.

If you know their hits—*Proud Mary* on the first album and *Bad Moon Rising* here—all the songs by Creedence Clearwater Revival are going to sound familiar to you. They approach everything on the same basic level, a country/blues-influenced rock that is so simple that its intensity and variety come as a constant surprise. I expected the Fogerty band to peter out after a couple of hits; instead they have gotten better and better. *Green River* is a superior pop album.

The focus of the group is John Fogerty's singing, a gutsy rasp that has as much elemental raunch as a horny polecat's yowl. His own bluesy soloing on guitar and the down-home-funk of his rhythm section also contribute. The thing these days is back-to-basics; the CCR bring it all home, right back to Gus Cannon and the Memphis Jug Band. J.G.

jazz

*

EUBIE BLAKE: The Eighty-Six Years of Eubie Blake. Eubie Blake, piano and vocals; Noble Sissle, vocals. (Dream Rag; Maple Leaf Rag; Spanish Venus; You Were Meant for Me; twenty-five more.) Columbia C2S 847, $9.96 (two discs).

Compared to the venerable Eubie Blake, Duke Ellington is a mere *Wunderkind*. Blake, a major ragtime pianist and popular composer (*Memories of You, I'm Just Wild About Harry*), is, at eighty-six, still playing a highly creditable piano and exuding bubbling high spirits that would be remarkable for a man forty or even fifty years his junior. Although he does not tour as constantly as Ellington, he plays regularly at the Ragtime Society's annual fall bash in Toronto and at the Ragtime Festival every spring in St. Louis. In this two-disc set, recorded in January 1969 just before his eighty-sixth birthday, Blake traces his career and compositions in the ragtime world (starting with his *Charleston Rag* written in 1899—the year Duke Ellington was born) and, with the help of his old partner, Noble Sissle, his years in the musical theater which included scores for *Shuffle Along* and *Blackbirds of 1930*.

This set is invaluable musical Americana, played by one of the originals of an era that has long passed. Blake's engaging personality shines through everything he plays, erupting at times into shouts, whoops, and exclamatory comments. His own career and the memory of the musicians with whom he worked in his ragtime days are served extremely well by these performances. Waiting until a performer is almost eighty-six before asking him to sum up his life's work can be a risky business. Fortunately, Eubie Blake has retained his physical abilities remarkably well and John Hammond has had the perception to take advantage of the fact by producing this set. J.S.W.

*

MAXINE SULLIVAN/BOB WILBER: Close as Pages in a Book. Bob Wilber, soprano saxophone and clarinet; Bernie Leighton, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Gus Johnson, Jr., drums; Maxine Sullivan, vocals. (Too Many Tears; Restless; You're Driving Me Crazy; nine more.) Monmouth-Evergreen 6919, $4.79.

The association between Bob Wilber and Maxine Sullivan, which began auspiciously on Wilber's *Music of Hoagy Carmichael* (Monmouth-Evergreen 6917), is even closer and better in this set. Miss Sullivan, who returned to recording on that first disc after a long absence, is in superb voice, running a gamut from a flip treatment of *As Long as You Live* to a magnificent example of subtle jazz singing on *Gone with the Wind*, from suggestions of a lovely Mildred Bailey lilt on *Darn That Dream* to a vocalized line in duet with Wilber's soprano saxophone on Duke Ellington's *Rockin' in Rhythm*.

Two of the selections are old standbys from her early repertoire—Johnny Mercer's charming *Harlem Butterfly* and, of course, the inevitable *Loch Lomond*. Wilber, whose work on soprano saxophone in recent years has been consistently brilliant and thoroughly individual, continues to build his image as one of the most important contemporary mainstream jazzmen. And in this case, his clarinet is almost as impressive as his soprano. Despite Wilber's excel-

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*Mfr.'s suggested retail price.

lence, though, this is Miss Sullivan's record—one of the finest jazz-pop vocal sets recorded in recent years. J.S.W.

BROTHER JACK McDUFF: Gin and Orange. Jack McDuff, organ; Gene Barge, Ben Branch, Bill Phipps, and Cliff Davis, saxophone; Cash McCall and Jerry Byrde, guitar; Phil Upchurch, electric bass; Richard Powell, percussion; Morris Jennings and Joe Burkes, drums. (The Electric Surfboard; Get It Up; With the Wind; five more.) Cadet 831, $4.98.

Amid the plethora of organists whose repertoires seem to consist of nothing but heavy-handed, basic blues, Jack McDuff has been among the select few who can usually be counted on for taste and imagination even when he is working much the same groove as other organists. In this set, he is way ahead because he is in a groove of his own—playing with a studio group that includes a propulsive guitar and a tenor and alto team (Ben Branch and Gene Barge) with charts by Richard Evans that take the pieces well out of the normal organ rut.

McDuff is also heard with his regular group, playing at the London House in Chicago, in pieces that are looser and come closer to the predictable, although they are lifted by the vivid spirit of the group. The back liner to this disc provides an unexpected plus with the welcome revelation that Mort Fega, one of the most conscientious and knowledgeable jazz disc jockeys, is alive and well in Phoenix, Arizona after disappearing from New York radio where he had been a mainstay for many years. J.S.W.

*

LENNY BREAU: Live! Lenny Breau, guitar; Ron Halldorson, electric bass; Reg Kelln, drums. (No Greater Love; The Claw; Bluesette; seven more.) RCA Victor LSP 4199, $4.98.

There are all sorts of signs lately that jazz is coming back to life, and one of them is Lenny Breau. It is interesting, and perhaps significant, that Chet Atkins, head of RCA Victor's artists and repertoire staff in Nashville, first recorded him. And this album, though recorded "live" during an engagement at Shelley's Manne Hole in Los Angeles, was produced by Danny Davis, who's also out of Nashville. Yet it's a jazz album.

Breau's greatest claim to fame is versatility. His playing embraces everything from traditional linear amplified jazz guitar through flamenco to country-and-western. Yet there is an over-all sense of personal style that holds the whole thing together. Finally, he's an extremely lyrical player. Breau is one of that handful of players (Chuck Wayne and George Van Eps are among the pioneers of this

Continued on page 126

the tape deck

BY R.D. DARRELL

Grand Opera in Microcosm. No, I'm not referring to Milhaud's miniature *opéra-minutes* nor to operatic performances mimed by puppets, and certainly not to programs of excerpted highlights. I'm hailing the release of the first complete opera in musicassette format: two cassettes in an attractively boxed package measuring only 4½ by 3 by 1½ inches, the equivalent of the two-disc edition of London's new *Traviata* starring Pilar Lorengar and conducted by Lorin Maazel (London/Ampex LKD 31161, $14.95; libretto/booklet on request).

Tiny as the new *Traviata* may be in physical dimensions, there is nothing small about the performance itself. Maazel's reading is exceptionally virile and dramatically exciting; the vigorous Deutsche Oper Orchestra plays with rich sonority; and the singing of a generally able cast is topped by Fischer-Dieskau's compassionate embodiment of the elder Germont and Lorengar's poignantly appealing Violetta. Even technically, despite the undeniable limitations of 1⅞-ips tapings at this relatively early stage of their development, the sonics are impressively transparent, robust, and evocative of big-hall acoustics. Audio connoisseurs, of course, will want the fuller realization of the recording potentials here in the forthcoming 7½-ips open-reel edition (D 90161, $14.95; libretto/booklet included), but the present pioneering opera-in-microcosm edition is sure to open up the world of opera to new audiences.

The success of complete opera cassettes is so confidently anticipated that London/Ampex already has announced six more large-scale performances: the recent *Pagliacci* with James McCracken, and five earlier recordings already known in open-reel format—*La Bohème* with Tebaldi, *Tosca* with Nilsson, *La Fille du régiment* and "The Art of the Prima Donna" with Sutherland, and the omnibus "Covent Garden Anniversary Album." An Angel series of complete cassette operas is expected soon, and other companies are sure to follow. Indeed the only bleak news on the cassette front is that Ampex, Angel/Capitol, and most other pioneering cassette manufacturers now have followed the example set by Columbia and RCA on their entry into this field in adopting a new "standard" single-cassette list price of $6.95 or $6.98.

Operatic Tape Firsts. Departures from the hackneyed standard repertory are fortunately a bit more frequent in the realm of recorded tapes than in the major opera houses. Several pertinent examples have been accumulating in recent months, with two of the most welcome novelties coming from London/Ampex. Listeners who share Toscanini's admiration for Alfredo Catalani's *La Wally* will be delighted by its first appearance on tape, starring Tebaldi and Del Monaco with Fausto Cleva conducting (T 90150, two 7½-ips reels, $17.95). Others, to whom this work is unfamiliar, will find that the atmospheric charms of the music triumph over both a melodramatic libretto and less than ideal singing by the two stars. The "story" of Delibes' *Lakmé* is perhaps even sillier and its music's once fashionable exoticism is now sadly faded. Nevertheless, its wealth of suave melodies will exert an irresistible appeal to conservatively minded listeners, and the title role offers opportunities for coloratura virtuosity that are ideally realized by Joan Sutherland. She is vocally magnificent in this first substantially complete taping, where the soprano's acting and enunciation weaknesses are for once no particular handicaps. And while the rest of the cast is mostly routine, Richard Bonynge's conducting a bit too easygoing, and the recorded sonics a bit boomy although impressively big and colorful—no matter: the over-all effect still is disarming and charming (T 90151, two 7½-ips reels, $17.95).

Libretto/booklets are supplied with these London/Ampex reels, but Angel still clings to the policy of supplying large-size, disc-edition libretto/booklets on request for its two tape firsts. These are Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, and Mirella Freni stars in each performance. In the ingratiating, seldom-heard Mascagni work she is supported by Pavarotti, Sardinero, et al., with the Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden under Gianandrea Gavazzeni (Y2S 3737, 3¾-ips reel, $9.98). In the first "complete" taped *Roméo et Juliette* (there are a number of cuts), Miss Freni is partnered by Franco Corelli, with a Paris Opéra supporting cast, chorus, and orchestra under Alain Lombard (Y3S 3734, 3¾-ips reel, $14.98).

Both works are well recorded (the Mascagni with exceptional transparency), but the performances differ markedly in their effect. Lombard's deft conducting is a decided plus, but the two lovers in *Roméo* sound more Italianate than French, and even the authentically French minor members of the cast are mostly undistinguished. Sentimental as Gounod's music may be in large part, it deserves a better presentation than this. The less well-known and generally undervalued Mascagni work, however, is rich in pleasant surprises. A light, even naïve score perhaps, but it is given an irresistibly engaging performance by Miss Freni (here ideally cast), most of her colleagues, and conductor Gavazzeni.

Finally, I can't resist adding another release—although strictly speaking it is neither an opera nor a tape first. But it is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's finest operettas, and the first in a brand-new series of performances by the D'Oyly Carte company which will replace those of the early stereo era. The work is the ever-delightful *Pirates of Penzance*, done with the spoken dialogue (omitted in the 1960 version), and this time far better sung and acted—as well as even more satisfactorily recorded—with top honors going to Owen Brannigan, Donald Adams, and John Reed (London/Ampex D 90156, two 7½-ips reels, $14.95; libretto/booklet included).

8-Track Cartridge Bargain Masterpieces. RCA, which was prominent in boosting cassette prices, has been kinder to collectors of cartridge tapes, who will find many enticing releases in a new Victrola series priced at only $4.95 each. Like their RCA Victrola disc editions, some of the programs represent famous recorded performances of earlier years, while others are relatively new recordings, usually (but not always) by less well-known performers. Among the new releases in the former category, I am especially delighted to rehear—in a new format—two magnificent recordings which have been out of print in their original reel tapings. One is that colossal landmark of early stereoism, the Reiner/Chicago 1954 performance of Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra* (now on V8S 1007). I hailed Sviatoslav Richter's Beethoven *Funeral March* and *Appassionata* Sonata (now on V8S 1006), at the time of its 1961 reel appearance as one of the towering triumphs of the whole tape repertory.

I can also recommend—quite apart from their attractive low price—the memorable Toscanini-led Dvořák *New World* Symphony of 1953 and Schumann *Manfred* Overture of 1947, in their original monophony (V8S 1009); the richly heartfelt Munch/Boston Franck Symphony in D minor of 1957, once available in a 2-track reel taping (now on V8S 1011); and, among the newer materials, a program of familiar tenor arias gloriously sung—in German—by the late Fritz Wunderlich (V8S 1008).

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superscope

Continued from page 122

approach) who look on the guitar almost as a keyboard instrument. His counterlines are interesting.

Breau is to the guitar what Tom Scott in Los Angeles is to the reed instruments: an extraordinarily accomplished, as well as gifted, young player. Indeed, he may well be the best young guitarist in America.

This album is, if anything, better than Breau's first. G.L.

STUFF SMITH: Guest Artist, Stephane Grappelly. Personnel unidentified. (Blues in the Dungeon; Skip It; How High the Moon; This Can't Be Love; S'posin'; Willow Weep for Me.) Everest FS 238, $4.98.

This meeting between two jazz violinists of such different temperament as Stuff Smith and Stephane Grappelly is fascinating. Grappelly is precise, urbane, and capable of performances that generate a light, airy, gracefully swinging drive (as he showed in his American debut at Newport last summer when he played under horrendous circumstances, surrounded by surly adherents of Sly and the Family Stone). Smith, on the other hand, was a master of the broad, slashing, gut-based alley fiddle. In these performances, recorded in Paris, they mesh beautifully, and stimulate each other to a deeper exploration of their resources. Stylistically, each moves a bit toward the other but neither one gives up his own integrity. Smith, in fact, was encouraged by Grappelly's example to show more of his lyrical side than usual. There are also two samples of Stuff's gruff-voiced singing. J.S.W.

in brief

LED ZEPPELIN: II. Atlantic SD 8236, $4.98.
Led Zeppelin, led by Jimmy Page and Robert Plant, became the current teeny hotpants kings on a first album with no hit single; it doesn't usually happen that way. The singles are starting to come and album *II* is super hard rock. J.G.

SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '66. A & M SP 4236, $4.98.
Dear G.L.: The girl you were raving about in Brasil '66 [HF, November 1969] is Lani Hall and she's the whole show. Mendes again manages to forget to mention her. At least she got her picture on the album this time (she's the one with dark hair, and she's not Brazilian). This album is far better than the last, especially *Norwegian Wood* and *Some Time Ago*. M.A.

LIGHTNIN' SAM HOPKINS: Lightnin'. Poppy PYS 60002, $9.96 (two discs).
Set blues vet Lightnin' Hopkins down in front of a mike and let him fill up two LPs. Top it off with a Milt Glaser cover. Brilliant. J.G.

DAVE MACKAY AND VICKY HAMILTON. Impulse AS 9184, $4.98.
A highly tasteful album from a vocal duo who would have mattered ten years ago when there was a public appetite for agile, jazz-flavored singing. An A for effort but not for timing. M.A.

MICKEY NEWBURY: Looks Like Rain. Mercury SR 61236, $4.98.
Mickey Newbury, a Bob Dylan-influenced c & w singer, is nearly done in by the incredibly careless production on this LP, despite several interesting songs and the presence of five of the best sidemen in Nashville. Very depressing. J.G.

JAZZ/ROCK/SOUL PROJECT. Riverside RS 3048, $4.98.
The subtitle "Great Performances That Paved the Way for Today's Pop Sound" is probably true, and doesn't matter. I love the album for nostalgia. It features Cannonball's *This Here*, Nat Adderly's *Work Song*, Wes Montgomery doing *Moanin'*, and other memorable if no longer pertinent moments in jazz. M.A.

BLODWYN PIG: Ahead Rings Out: A & M SP 4210, $4.98.
England is going through a little-noticed rock boomlet of very high quality. Blodwyn Pig, an adventuresome quartet led by composer Mick Abrahams, have bowed with a first-rate LP. Judging by recent releases, London must be something like San Francisco three years ago. J.G.

NORMAN GREENBAUM. Reprise 6365, $4.98.
A new talent who may or may not be more important than his album shows. The album lacks production concept, and these days it is not enough to be another pleasant young singer/writer. M.A.

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The **Rectilinear III**, the **Rectilinear Mini-III** and the **Rectilinear X.**

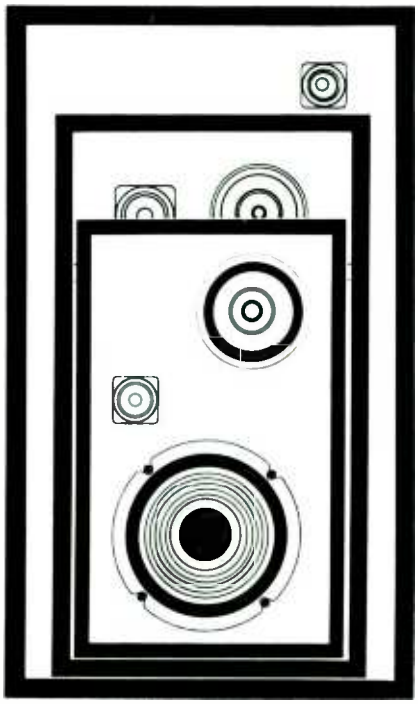
We base this brash assumption on our study of people possessing the above qualifications.

They seem to reject, to a man, all speakers created for a particular "taste." The big-bass taste. The zippy-highs taste. The Row-A-spectacular taste. Or even the more refined taste for subtly rich bass with slightly subdued upper midrange but sharply etched highs.

They want no personality at all in their speakers. Just *accuracy*. What goes in must come out, no more and no less. If the input is less than perfect, they use tone controls and filters, rather than loudspeaker manufacturers, to improve it.

And they're unimpressed by novelty for novelty's sake. They've got to *hear* that engineering breakthrough, not just read about it.

These people are invariably reduced to a choice of no more than six or seven models, out of literally hundreds. Three or four of this ridiculously small group of neutral-sounding, transparent speakers are full-range electrostatics. Which means that they're huge, awkward to place, murderously expensive and far from indestructible. Which, in turn, leaves only three, as we said:



The **Rectilinear III**, a classic after less than three years, acclaimed by every reviewer under the sun as the floor-standing monitor speaker without equal; four-way with six drivers, $279.00.

The **Rectilinear Mini-III,** the only small compact with class; three-way with three drivers, $89.50.

The **Rectilinear X**, "the world's fastest bookshelf speaker," with unprecedentedly low time delay distortion; three-way with three drivers (including our new high-excursion 10-inch woofer), $199.00.

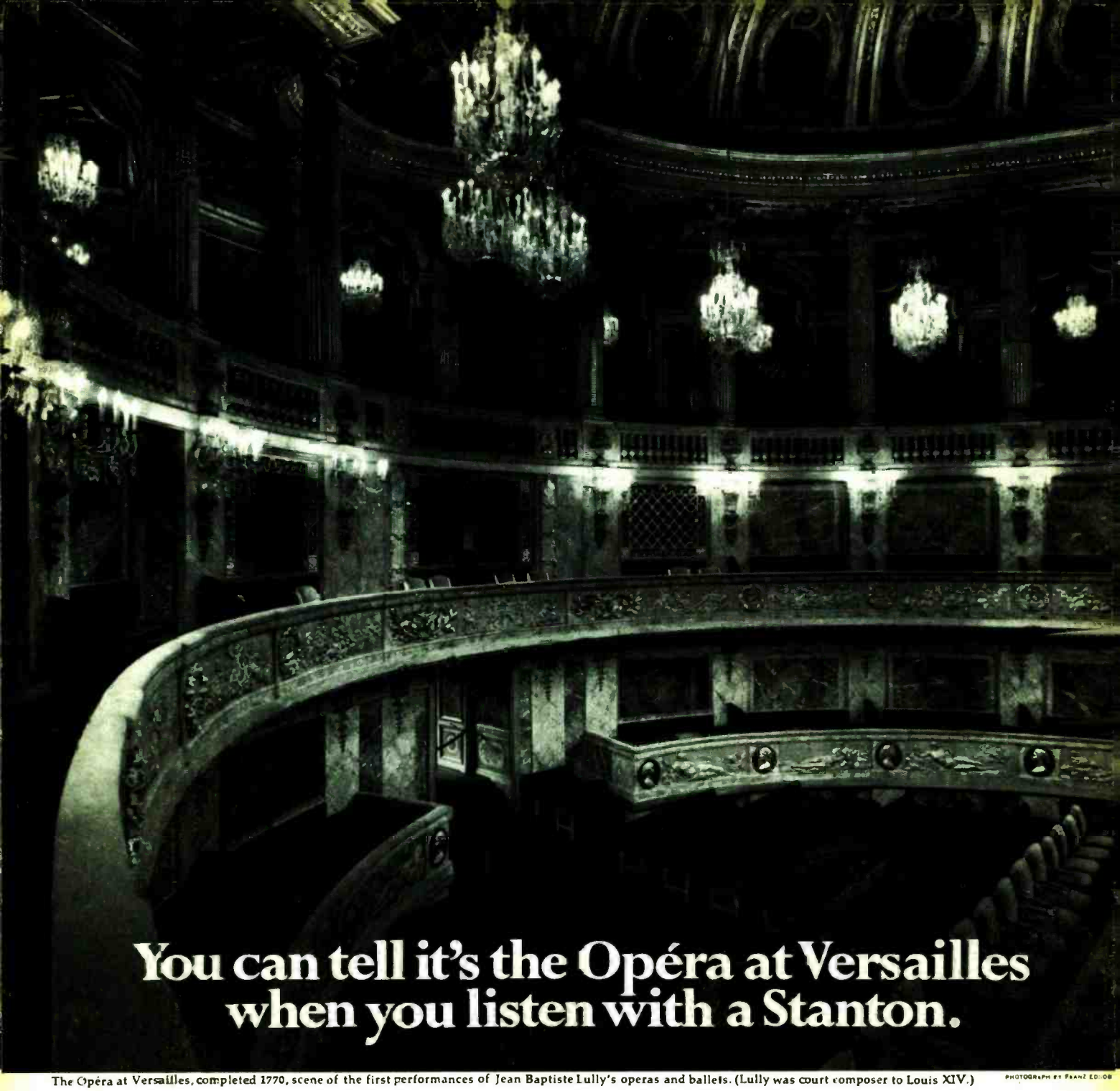
Of course, in the real world out there, everyone is *not* an expert, so there'll be many speakers left on the market.

But there seem to be enough experts around to keep one company very happy.

(For more information, see your audio dealer or write to Rectilinear Research Corp., 30 Main St., Brooklyn, N. Y. 11201. Canada: H. Roy Gray Co. Ltd., 14 Laidlaw Blvd., Markham, Ont. Overseas: Royal Sound Co., 409 North Main St., Freeport, N. Y. 11520.)

Rectilinear

CIRCLE 59 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



You can tell it's the Opéra at Versailles when you listen with a Stanton.

The Opéra at Versailles, completed 1770, scene of the first performances of Jean Baptiste Lully's operas and ballets. (Lully was court composer to Louis XIV.)

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANZ EDER

The ultimate test of a stereo cartridge isn't the sound of the music.

It's the sound of the hall.

Many of today's smoother, better-tracking cartridges can reproduce instrumental and vocal timbres with considerable naturalism. But something is often missing. That nice, undistorted sound seems to be coming from the speakers, or from nowhere in particular, rather than from the concert hall or opera stage.

It's easy to blame the recording, but often it's the cartridge.

The acoustical characteristics that distinguish one hall from another, or any hall from your listening room, represent the subtlest frequency and phase components of the recorded waveform. They end up as extremely fine undulations of the record groove, even finer that the higher harmonics of most instruments.

When a cartridge reproduces these undulations with the utmost precision, you can hear the specific acoustics of the Opéra at Versailles, or of any other hall. If it doesn't you can't.

The Stanton does.

The specifications.* Frequency response from 10 Hz to 10kHz, ±½ dB. From 10kHz to 20kHz, individually calibrated. Nominal output, 0.7mV/cm/sec. Nominal channel separation, 35dB. Load resistance, 47K ohms. Cable capacitance 275 pF. DC resistance, 1K ohms. Inductance, 500mH. Stylus tip, .0002" x .0009" elliptical. Tracking force, ¾ to 1½ gm. Cartridge weight, 5.5 gm. Brush weight (self-supporting), 1 gm. Each Stanton 681 is tested and measured against the laboratory standard for frequency response, channel separation, output, etc. The results are written by hand on the specifications enclosed with every cartridge. The 681EE, with elliptical stylus and the "Longhair" brush that cleans record grooves before they reach the stylus, costs $60. The 681T, identical but with interchangeable elliptical and conical styli both included, costs $75.

For free literature, write to Stanton Magnetics, Inc., Plainview, L.I., N.Y. 11803.

Stanton

CIRCLE 71 ON READER-SERVICE CARD