

NOVEMBER 1975 \$1.00

LAB TEST REPORTS OF SIX SPEAKERS

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Royal Sound RSC SP-55 • Avid 105
Rectilinear 5 • Janszen Z-824

HIGH FIDELITY

ICD ® 08398

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How to Avoid Pitfalls
In Speaker Shopping

10 Ways to Improve
The Sound of
Your Speakers

Why You Should Buy
A Speaker First



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receivers the world

Pioneer believes that any objective comparison of quality/performance/price between our new SX-1010, SX-939 and SX-838 AM-FM stereo receivers and any other fine receivers will overwhelmingly indicate Pioneer's outstanding superiority and value.

Our most powerful ever.

Pioneer uses the most conservative power rating standard: minimum continuous power output per channel, into 8 ohm loads, across the full audio spectrum from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz.

Despite this conservatism, the SX-1010 far surpasses any unit that has come before it with an unprecedented 100 watts of power per channel, minimum RMS, at no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion. Closely following are the SX-939 (70 watts RMS per channel, minimum) and the SX-838 (50 watts RMS per channel, minimum), both with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion. Dual power supplies driving direct-coupled circuitry maintain consistent high power output with positive stability. A fail-

safe circuit protects speakers and circuitry against damage from overloading.

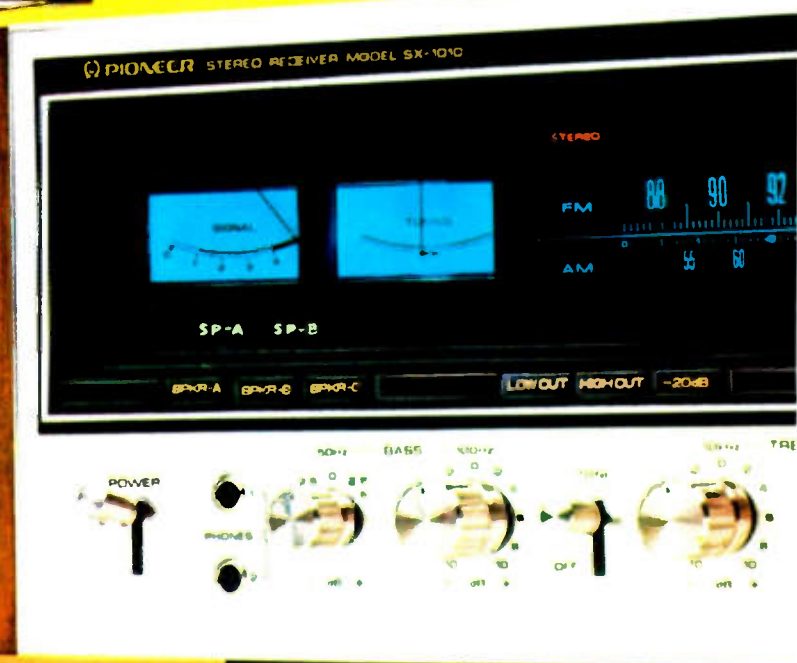
Outstanding specifications for flawless reception

FM reception poses no challenge to the exceptionally advanced circuitry of these fine instruments. Their FM tuner sections are designed with MOS FETs, ceramic filters and phase lock loop circuitry. The result is remarkable sensitivity, selectivity and capture ratio that brings in stations effortlessly, clearly and with maximum channel separation.

| | SX-1010 | SX-939 | SX-838 |
|--|---------|--------|--------|
| FM Sensitivity (IHF) (the lower the better) | 1.7uV | 1.8uV | 1.8uV |
| Selectivity (the higher the better) | 90dB | 80dB | 80dB |
| Capture Ratio (the lower the better) | 1dB | 1dB | 1dB |
| Signal/Noise Ratio (the higher the better) | 72dB | 70dB | 70dB |

Total versatility plus innovations

Only your listening interests limit the capabilities of these extraordinary receivers. They have terminals for every conceivable accommodation: records, tape, microphones, headsets — plus Dolby and 4-channel multiplex connectors. Completely unique on the SX-1010 and SX-939 is tape-to-tape duplication while listening simultaneously to another program source. The SX-838 innovates with its Recording



There can be only one best.



The finest stereo receiver has ever known.





3,025 possible tonal compensations with unique twin stepped tone controls (SX-1010, SX-939)

Selector that permits FM recording while listening to records and vice versa. Up to three pairs of speakers may be connected to each model.

| | SX-1010 | SX-939 | SX-838 |
|----------------------------|---------|--------|--------|
| INPUTS | | | |
| Tape monitor/4-ch. adaptor | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Phono | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Microphone | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Auxiliary | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Noise reduction | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| OUTPUTS | | | |
| Speakers | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Tape Rec./4-ch. adaptor | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Headsets | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Noise reduction | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4-channel MPX | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Master control system capability

Pioneer's engineers have surpassed themselves with a combination of control features never before found in a single receiver. All three units include: pushbutton function selection with illuminated readouts on the ultra wide tuning dial, FM and audio muting, loudness contour, hi/low filters, dual tuning meters and a dial dimmer.

Never before used on a receiver are the twin stepped bass and treble tone controls found on the SX-1010 and SX-939. They offer over 3,000 tonal variations. A tone defeat switch provides flat response instantly throughout the audio spectrum. The SX-838 features

switched turnover bass and treble controls for more precise tonal compensation for room acoustics and other program source characteristics.

In their respective price ranges, these are unquestionably the finest values in stereo receivers the world has ever known. Audition their uniqueness at your Pioneer dealer. SX-1010 — under \$690* · SX-939 — under \$600* · SX-838 — under \$500* Prices include cabinets

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Pioneer's line of receivers presents equally outstanding values starting at under \$250. Shown here are the SX-535 — under \$300* · SX-636 — under \$350* · SX-737 — under \$400*. All with cabinets.

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SX-535



SX-636

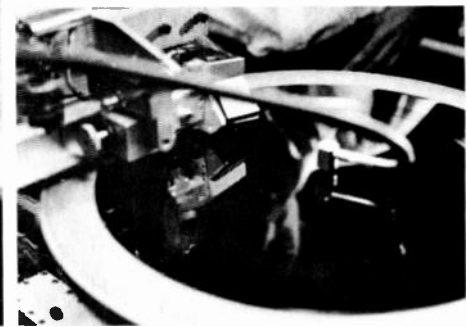
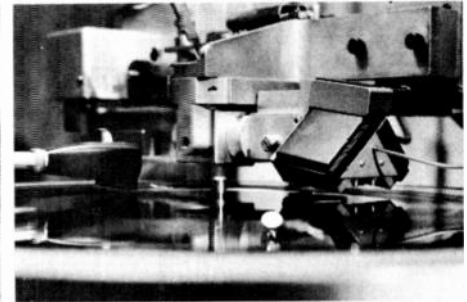
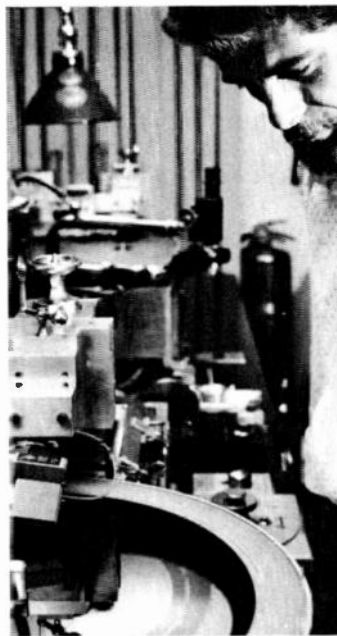
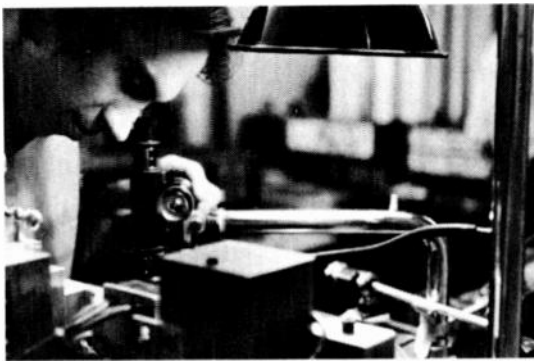


SX-737

*The value shown is for informational purposes only and includes the following cabinet construction: SX-1010, walnut veneered top and side panels; all other models use walnut grained vinyl top and side panels. The actual resale price will be set by the individual Pioneer dealer at his option.



CIRCLE 44 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Top Disc Cutting Studios, like The Mastering Lab, rely on Stanton's 681-Calibration Standard in their Operations.

Not everyone who *plays* records needs the Stanton Calibration Standard cartridge, but everyone who *makes* records does!

At The Mastering Lab, one of the world's leading independent disc mastering facilities, the Stanton 681 Triple-E is the measuring standard which determines whether a "cut" survives or perishes into oblivion.

A recording lathe operator needs the most accurate playback possible, and his constant comparing of lacquer discs to their original source enables him to objectively select the most faithful cartridge. No amount of laboratory testing can reveal true musical accuracy. This accuracy is why the Stanton 681 Series is the choice of leading studios.

When Mike Reese, principal disc cutter at The Mastering Lab, plays back test cuts, he is checking the calibration of the cutting channel, the cutter head, cutting stylus, and the lacquer disc. The most stringent test of all, the evaluation of direct to disc recordings, requires an absolutely reliable playback cartridge . . . the 681 Triple-E.

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For further information write Stanton Magnetics Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803
CIRCLE 43 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

HIGH FIDELITY



Equipment reports. See page 53.



Out of the shadow. See page 91.



Music and Musicians

- Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-75)** Royal S. Brown 21
- The Woodstock Generation Nears Thirty** Gene Lees *The boom babies are aging; what changes will that bring?* 28
- Hermann Prey** Susan Gould *"The recording studio has been my teacher"* 31
- Behind the Scenes** *Rossini from Philips . . . Contract signings . . . Enter the Swedes* 38
- The Many Faces of Charles Rosen** Joan Higgins *Is the pianist an artist, a scholar, or a polymath?* 83
- Carlos Kleiber on His Own** Harris Goldsmith *His recording of Beethoven's Fifth establishes him as his own man* 91
- Blue Note Archives Riches** John B. Litweiler *United Artists' first reissues include major recordings* 92
- Three from Carl Orff** R. D. Darrell *Three new discs show the attractions of a much-maligned composer* 94

Audio and Video

- Too Hot to Handle** 42
- News and Views** *A provocative Danish speaker design . . . Philadelphia hi-fi show* 44
- Equipment in the News** 46
- Equipment Reports** 53
- Avid 105 speaker system
- Bose 301 speaker system
- Leslie DVX Model 580 speaker system
- Janszen Model Z-824 speaker system
- Rectilinear 5 speaker system
- Royal Sound RSC SP-55 speaker system
- How to Improve Your Speakers** James Brinton *Including some ways that cost nothing* 63
- You Should Choose a Speaker First** Norman Eisenberg *Plus some tips on buying compatible components* 71
- Games Speaker Dealers Play** Howard Ferstler *How to avoid pitfalls when shopping for speakers* 79

Record Reviews

- Classical** *Sills in Barbieri . . . Ashkenazy's Chopin etudes . . . American ballroom music* 96
- Critics' Choice—Classical** 97
- Lighter Side** *Russell Morris . . . Roger Daltrey . . . Peter Nero . . . Steve Goodman* 137
- Theater and Film** *A Chorus Line . . . The Day of the Locust* 140
- Critics Choice—Pops** 142
- Jazz** *Carmen McRae . . . Sabby Lewis Orchestra . . . Jackie Paris and Anne Marie Moss* 142
- The Tape Deck** R. D. Darrell *The death of open-reel recorded tape? . . . Bach in a box* 149

Et Cetera

- Letters** *Contra Gould . . . The Real Ravel . . . Broadcast pioneer* 6
- HiFi-Croctic** 50
- Product Information** *An "at-home" shopping service* 36, 117
- Advertising Index** 116



Coming
Next
Month

To dazzle the special person on your Christmas list, why not a **Supertuner**? Our December issue offers facts, figures, and comparisons on five top models costing from \$600 to \$2,650. Or more modestly, but equally welcome, how about one of the best recordings of the year—the recipients and nominees of the **Eighth Annual High Fidelity/Montreux International Record Awards**. In addition, December includes the remembrances and plans of **Goddard Lieberson**, the man who pretty much invented the Columbia Records label as we know it, and reveals a little-known proposal from **Richard Wagner** to emigrate to the U.S. moved the Bayreuth Festival to this country.

SOLUTION TO HIFI-CROSTIC NO. 5

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CIRCLE 15 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Letters



Glenn Gould
Methodological madness?

Contra Gould: Method, Premise

In his August article "The Grass Is Always Greener in the Outtakes," Glenn Gould states, "Let me confess at once that I have no expertise as a poll-taker [and that] my statistical sampling—eighteen auditionees—was undoubtedly too small. . . ." Although one can admire him for his honesty in reporting the situation, one cannot generalize from the results of that small a sample of Mr. Gould's acquaintances about the population of musicians, technicians, or untrained laymen at large.

The study has a number of additional major flaws, among them that the subjects were acquaintances of the experimenter and that the pretest attitude scale administered to the subjects was biased in that the logical opposite of each category wasn't presented. For example, "approve without reservation" is not the logical opposite of "strongly disapprove." It should be "strongly approve" and "strongly disapprove." Even the "neutral position" isn't neutral. It states, "Have never given the matter much thought and/or couldn't care less what those weirdo-Commie technocrats think up next."

Mr. Gould's conception of "laymen" is rather odd too. On page 56 he states that "none of the laymen had more than rudimentary training in score-reading." Consequently, what he is testing are not the "untrained laymen" of the article's sub-head at all, in the common-sense meaning of the term.

Despite these and other major flaws in the study, Mr. Gould somehow comes to the impossible conclusion that "over-all, the study has confirmed some of my suspicions about the listening process, about the interaction of knowledge and attention, and it will, I hope, serve as a basis for more detailed interrogations to come." I can only hope for the latter, for one cannot come to the conclusions Mr. Gould did merely on the basis of his study. I refer him to Donald T. Campbell and Julian C. Stanley's book, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*, published by Rand

McNally in 1967, as a first reference in case he decides to tackle the problem more meaningfully in the future.

I am sorry to be so critical about this study, for it does raise some important questions, and I also much admire Mr. Gould in his role as musician. But when he attempts to run an experiment with so many faults in it, I feel readers should be cautioned against coming to the conclusions he did, based on the data he collected. All one can safely conclude is that his eighteen acquaintances behaved in the manner he described. One cannot generalize about the sample.

Kenneth Kulman
Dept. of Sociology
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Ill.

I have always had great respect for Glenn Gould's artistry and philosophies, but if I were HIGH FIDELITY I would have been embarrassed to publish his amateurish (as he himself admits) and rather meaningless compilation of statistics.

Mr. Gould's data and analyses indicate to me that his methods are suspect, to say the least. His pseudo-scientific treatment of splices per se serves only to camouflage the real issues. I do not believe that the "average" listener is interested in how many splices he can correctly identify on any given recording. Mr. Gould deliberately chose to ignore his auditionees' views on the quality of the performances—or, specifically, whether the splices they heard, or thought they heard, "compromised the musical experience."

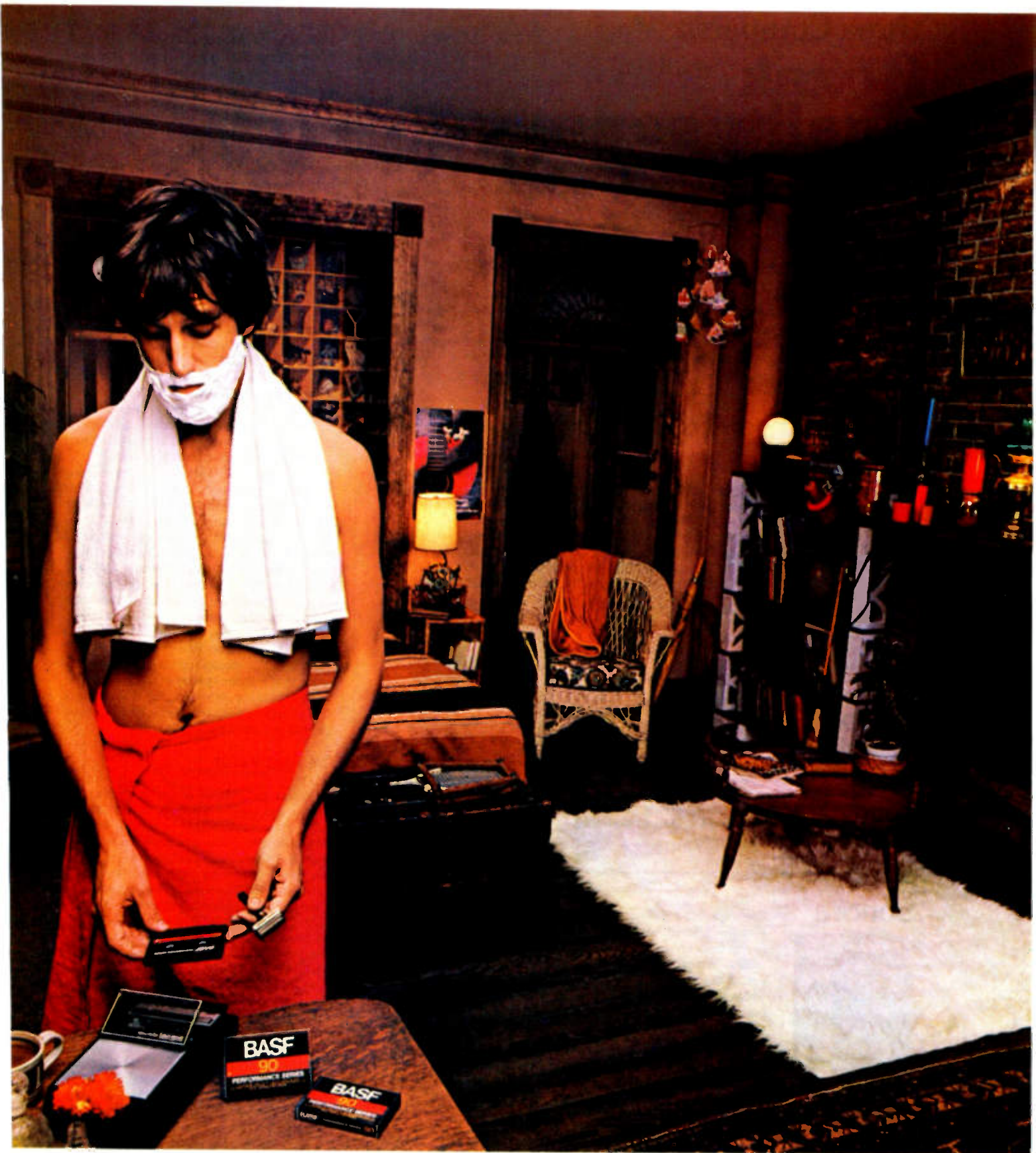
I do not think experiments designed to show that most people cannot hear splices are telling us anything we do not already know. Most people do not hear splices in commercial recordings; Mr. Gould, furthermore, would most probably fare poorly on a splice-guessing test of material that he recorded but that was edited in his absence. So what? He is too intelligent to believe that André Watts and Stephen Bishop are complaining about the audibility of splices. I believe Messrs. Watts and Bishop have legitimate complaints about studio recording. Whether or not they possess "editorial potential" is immaterial. An artist should be able to record in the manner of his choice.

One of the reasons I am writing this letter as a member of the Nakamichi organization rather than as a private reader of HIGH FIDELITY is that Nakamichi Research is very much involved in live recording. For us the audibility of a few splices does not adversely affect our enjoyment of an otherwise fine studio recording. We feel strongly, however, that the over-all inaudibility of splices does not justify the labeling of the preference of live (or at least spliceless) recording as "technological neo-Romanticism."

Harron K. Appleman
Technical Consultant
Nakamichi Research, Inc.
Santa Monica, Calif.

We have passed on both of these letters to Glenn Gould; doubtless he will have something to say when he has ruminated a bit. Meanwhile, a few comments. Mr. Kul-

CIRCLE 7 ON READER-SERVICE CARD →



**If you've never heard music on BASF tape before,
turn the page and see how it sounds.**

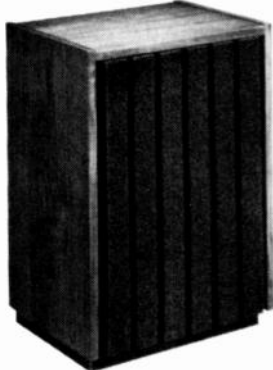
Three Compacts

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Yet, room size and amplifier power limitations sometimes dictate the use of smaller-than-optimum loudspeakers. For these applications, Bozak, whose reputation for providing the truest possible bass spans more than a quarter century, has developed three compact speaker systems, each of which offers fidelity in bass response far beyond what might be expected from an enclosure of its size.

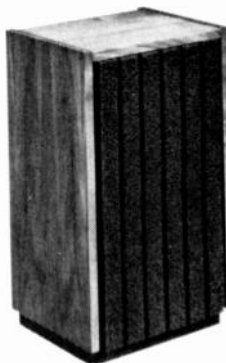
Rhapsody



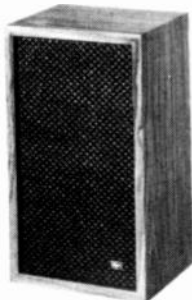
The ideal loudspeaker for a medium-size room, the Rhapsody is a three-way system providing a full spectrum of true sound from natural bass through clear midtones to the highest shrill-free treble. Waterproof finish lets the Rhapsody double as an end table without fear of spotting. A three-position brightness control permits matching the speaker system to room acoustics. Sculptured foam grille enhances the true walnut surfaces.

Tempo III

Bozak's smallest three-way system has been acoustically designed to reproduce currently popular music with its emphasized bass. A ducted enclosure helps bring discotheque sound into the living room. Cabinet finish is waterproof, so there's no fear of ordinary liquids marring the surface. Grille is of modern acoustical fabric. Available in free-standing or bookshelf models.



Sonora



Although the smallest Bozak speaker, the Sonora caused *Popular Science* magazine to say "you can get really good sound from an under-\$100 speaker . . . While no speaker is perfect in reproducing lows, it was exactly this solid, rich sound that made the . . . Bozak speakers stand out." To which we add, the crystal clarity of its highs are equally important to the success of this finest of compact bookshelf speakers.

If you buy any compact speaker, regardless of your room size or budget, without first listening to the Bozak compacts, you'll be doing your music system an injustice. We'll gladly send you the names of dealers in your area where you can hear them for yourself.



Bozak, Inc., Box 1166, Darien, Connecticut 06820

man rightfully objects to the phrase "un-trained laymen," so we should make clear that the phrase, which appeared only in the subhead of the article, is not Mr. Gould's; in the article itself, "laymen" clearly refers to people who are neither "professional musicians" nor "audio experts." Otherwise, Mr. Kulman seems to have reacted as if reading a technical paper in a scientific journal. (Didn't he even crack the teeniest smile while reading?) The object of this experiment was to gain some insight into the way people hear and listen, not to provide a model to predict whether a given splice would be detectable by a person picked at random out of the Houston phone book.

If we're going to be scientific, though, we could wonder how objections to Mr. Gould's pre-experiment "attitude scale" affect his statistical results, which are nowhere correlated with the subjects' general attitudes toward splicing. But since Mr. Kulman brings it up, what do "logical opposites" have to do with gauging people's attitudes? The ways in which one may approve or disapprove of splicing don't necessarily come in neat pairs. What's fine for the Messrs. Gallup and Harris may not be very useful in exploring the complex and subtle responses to aesthetic issues.

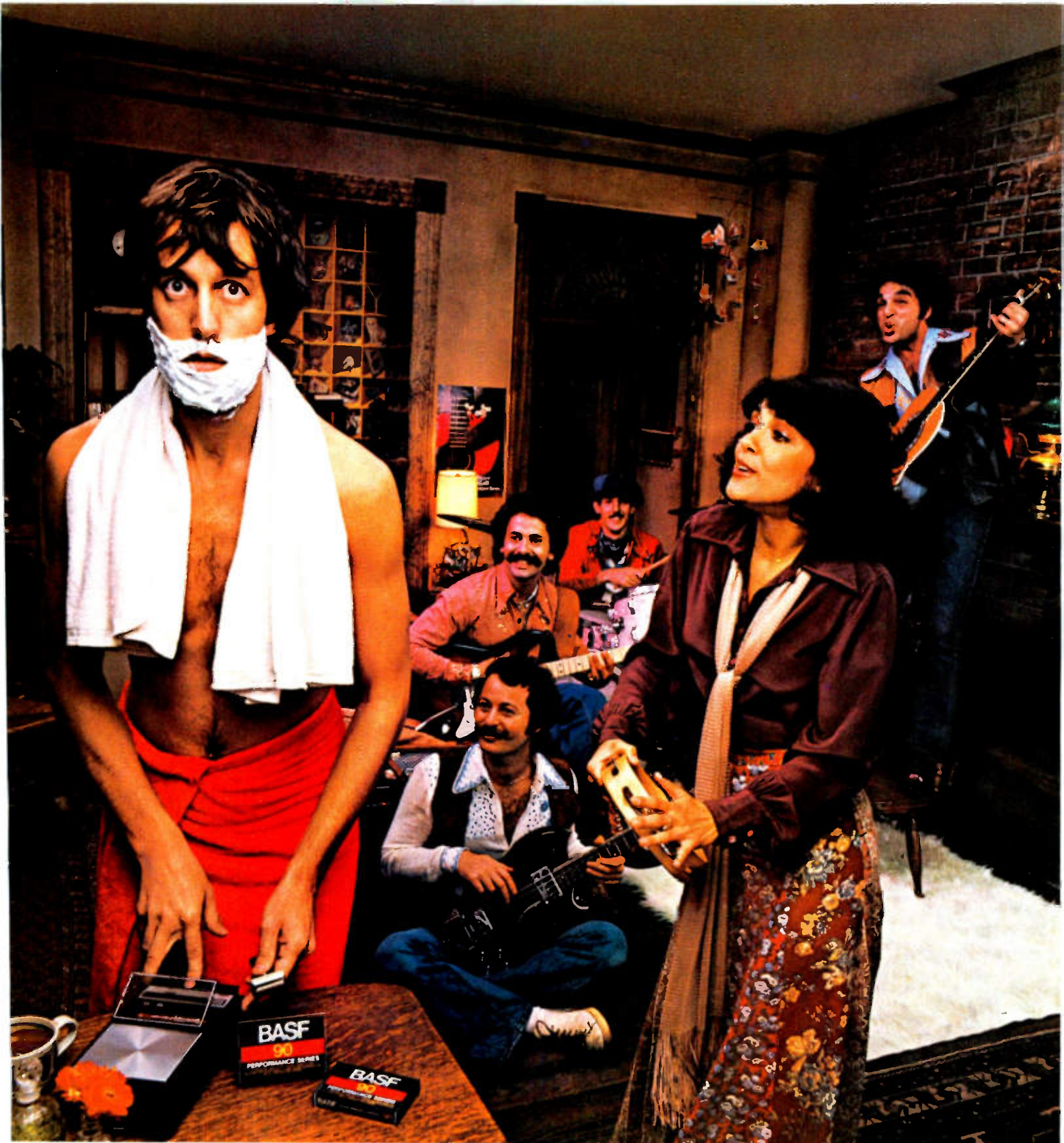
Mr. Appleman's direction, questioning what the experiment might prove, seems more promising. It's hard to quarrel with Mr. Gould's announced premise: "If, indeed, a significant percentage of splices were readily and consistently detectable, there would be something wrong with the product under consideration; if that were the case, the views of Messrs. Watts and Bishop would be substantiated and I would long since have fled for the hills." Mr. Appleman has noticed that there is a bit of a leap from this statement to its logical converse: that if those splices aren't detectable, there's nothing wrong with the product. And of course the converse of a true statement is not automatically true.

The Real Ravel

If a major purpose of record reviews is to provide descriptive analysis of the issue(s) under consideration and at least a limited comparison to other available recordings, Royal S. Brown's July feature review of the Vox Ravel album by Stanislaw Skrowaczewski and the Minnesota Orchestra seems to me to fall far short of the mark. Admittedly, my almost total disagreement with Mr. Brown's assessment of the album's performances and sonics influences my reaction to his review. But contrast the Ravel essay with Philip Hart's Tchaikovsky feature review preceding it, and my point should be obvious. I certainly do not agree with all of Mr. Hart's detail judgments either—but who expects or needs to?

Standards of performance for Ravel's works have been well defined, I would think, by recordings made in the stereo era alone. (One might allude to the Koussevitzky/Boston Symphony recordings of the *Daphnis Suite No. 2*, *Ma Mère l'Oye Suite*, and *Bolero*, but those are of yet another order of excellence in performance, and sonics are important, especially given Ravel's subtle orchestration.)

Allowing for reasonable differences of taste, I think there are clearly definable



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using a highly magnetizable dense oxide coating.

Of course, when you listen to music this rich and clear, you don't just hear it. The music happens. (Which may come as a surprise if what you've been experiencing until now is background noise.)

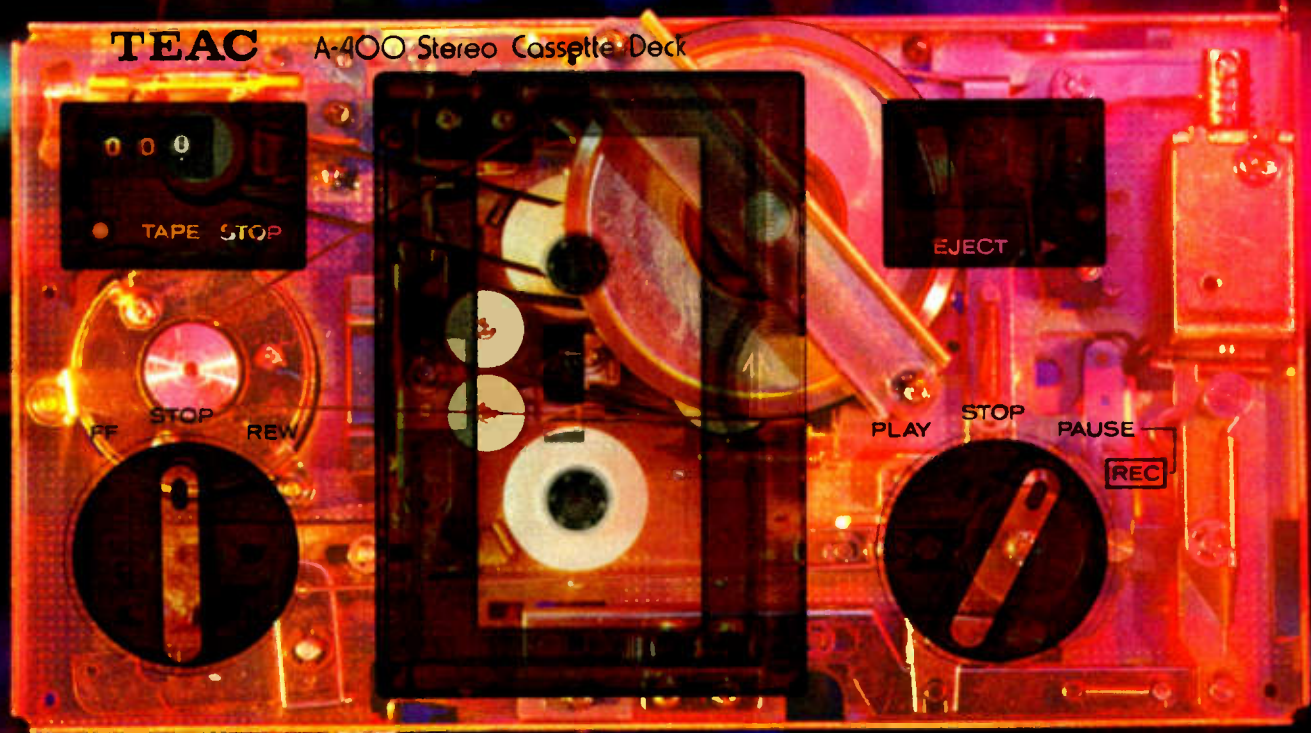
Now if all this sounds too good to be true, there's something we'd like to point out. BASF invented audio tape in the first place. Giving us lots of time to perfect it.

So it isn't surprising we sound so much like the original. You see, we are the original.

BASF. We sound like the original because we are the original.



The component look.



By design.

A-400

The 450 redefined the cassette deck as a true high fidelity component. That remarkable transport design generated a new found measure of respectability for the cassette format.

Our engineers then determined that a vertical transport was best



suited for a front load application. In terms of overall design integrity and mechanical stability. So rather than adapt one transport design to fit another need, we produced a completely new, highly streamlined mechanism. From the inside out. It's called the A-400.

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standards of orchestral execution and interpretation that Skrowaczewski and the Minnesota ensemble do not come within miles of achieving. Compare, for example, the *Vox Alborada* with either Chicago recording (Reiner or Martinon); the *Valses nobles et sentimentales* with Munch/Philadelphia; the *Rapsodie espagnole* with Martinon/Chicago; the *Daphnis* with either Munch/Boston recording or with Monteux/LSO. Indeed, *Daphnis* has been better done in Minneapolis—and complete too. Long-time collectors may have copies of Dorati's December 1954 recording with lovely singing by the Macalester College Choir of that era. To criticize the St. Olaf group's pronunciation, as Mr. Brown does, but to ignore the blatant coarseness of their

tone is the height of critical irresponsibility. Yes, I rather like the *Vox Ma Mère l'Oye* and *Bolero*, but what of Haitink and Monteux (complete) and Martinon and Mehta (suite) in the former or Martinon and Van Beinum in the latter? The avid collector who locates Van Beinum's *Bolero* (on an old Epic disc) will find also a *La Valse* that begs description—"dream filters" or no.

Which brings us to the matter of sonics. Every recording I have mentioned (including the mono Dorati *Daphnis*) surpasses the *Vox* issue as a representation of Ravel's infinitely varied orchestral palette. The *Vox* sound does not remotely resemble that of our local symphony in the new Orchestra Hall. That auditorium uniquely combines extreme liveness and brightness with a

slightly excessive reverberation. Not once during the season just past did Maestro Skrowaczewski achieve a true pianissimo in concert performances; those "exceptional pianissimos." Mr. Brown, and the violin tone in particular, are the sole creation of *Vox* in running the tapes through their "dream filters" during the mastering process. So, also, can *Vox* take credit for the dark, reverberant ambience, which I find quite obscures most details of Ravel's writing. Sure, it's the record that counts, and, if *Vox*'s gimmickry had yielded a product suitable to Ravel, I would applaud. To my ear, at least, the clarity and brilliance that are the essence of Ravel are not to be heard on these discs. There are, we understand, more sessions to be held next season. Better luck then!

James E. Forrest
Minneapolis, Minn.

Messrs. Forrest and Brown are obviously listening for—and hearing—different things; on our equipment, we hear basically what Mr. Brown did. Readers will have to decide for themselves.

Beyond that, three notes. 1) If Mr. Forrest expected the Ravel review to contain the elaborate comparisons of Philip Hart's Tchaikovsky review, he has misunderstood the intention of both. Mr. Hart had, at our request, spent some two years wading through Tchaikovsky recordings to produce what was in all but name a discography of the orchestral works. Mr. Brown, it happens, had already done a Ravel discography, published in the March and April issues; since the *Vox* set is a take-it-or-leave-it proposition, detailed comparisons would have been beside the point, and he logically confined himself to variations in his basically enthusiastic response to the whole. 2) Our normal response to the suggestion of "clearly definable standards of orchestral execution and interpretation" is: Okay, define them. With Ravel, we are most struck by the lack of general agreement about interpretive standards; following publication of Mr. Brown's Ravel discography, nearly every correspondent who wrote about it had a completely different idea of what constituted "definitive" interpretations. We like many of the recordings Mr. Forrest cites, but what sort of standard do they define? 3) Since there is no way to define a "true pianissimo," we suspect that Maestro Skrowaczewski just may have managed one or two certifiable ones during the whole season; in any event, the question of hall acoustics is more complex than Mr. Forrest seems to imagine. A hall, for example, is considerably more reverberant when, as for recordings, there is no audience; this is all the more pronounced in a hall that, as Mr. Forrest notes, has "slightly excessive reverberation" when full.

Mr. Brown is incorrect in stating that the Minnesota Orchestra's new Ravel collection has the only current recording of the fanfare for *L'Eventail de Jeanne*. It is included on Stokowski's Phase-4 disc containing the Franck D minor Symphony (SPC 21061), which Schwann does not cross-index under Ravel.

Robert Pinochehto
Maynard, Mass.

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Creem, MARCH 1975

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That anything with automatic features simply didn’t perform. But as *Sound* magazine says in its August 1975 issue:

“In recent years... the quality of the automatic turntable has risen dramatically. And the performance of the B.I.C. 960 certainly substantiates our belief that a serious music lover can attain extremely high quality in an automatic unit just as in the best manuals.”

B I C

In a Sept. 1975 test report, *Radio & Electronics* agrees, noting that B.I.C.:

“might well be considered a top-performing manual turntable in its price category.”

Modern Hi-Fi and Music (Aug./Sept. 1975) reports:

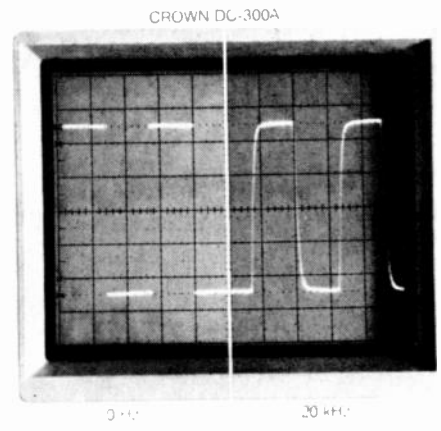
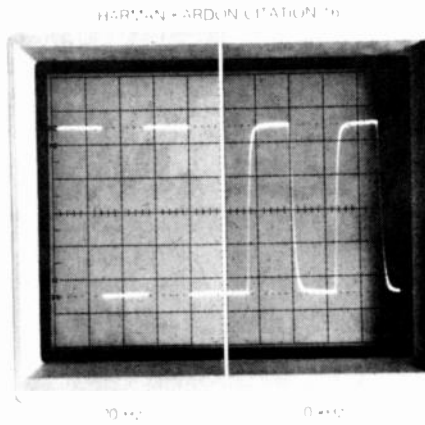
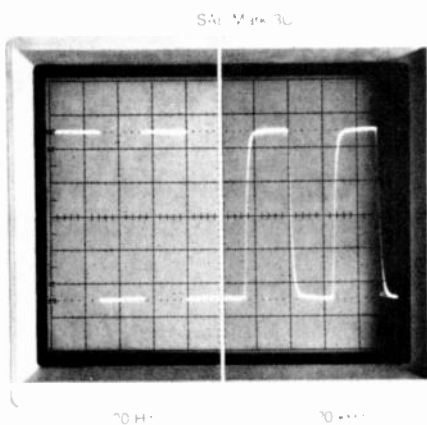
“wow and flutter of 0.03% at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm and rumble less than -65db; specifications which are more typical of a good manual than most automatics.”

And because they’re *not* imported (B.I.C. turntables are built entirely in the U.S.) the price of this performance comes as a pleasant surprise.

If you’re serious enough about your system to spend \$100 or more on a turntable, a B.I.C. 940, 960, or 980 has what you want and more of it – all three are multiple-play manual turntables sharing the same quality features and high performance.

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if the musical wave is to pass through undamaged.

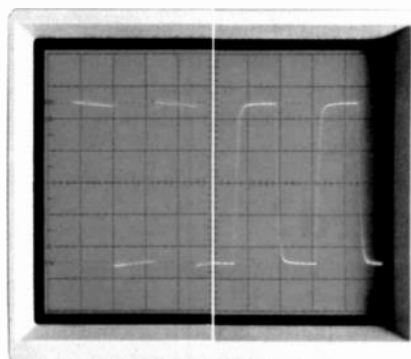
Square wave measurements do not replace conventional methods of testing components. Yet it can be said that an instrument which fails to produce excellent square waves is limited in musical authenticity.

All square wave measurements 10V peak to peak

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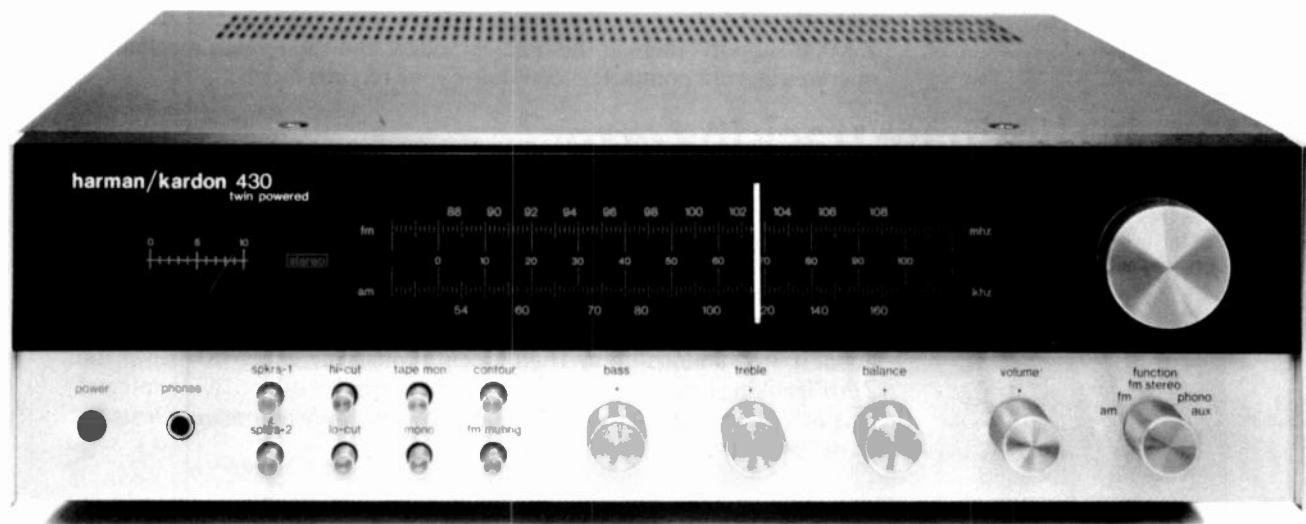
The square wave reproduced here is not that of the 430 power amplifier section alone. Amazingly, it is the square wave achieved by the 430 amplifier and preamplifier operating together!

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At Harman Kardon, technical advances are pursued not for their own sake, but as methods of predicting and improving music quality. It is in this context that we have prepared our literature on the 430 as well as our booklet: Square Wave Analysis of Audio Amplifier Performance. Your Harman Kardon specialist dealer can supply both. Or write to us directly at Harman Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.



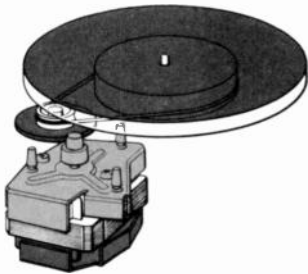
Four questions you multiple-play

1. Does it perform as well as any single-play turntable?



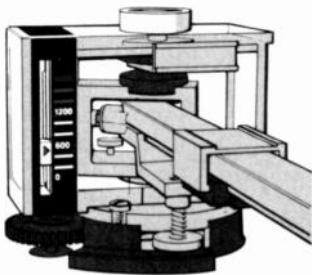
There are some who believe that a single-play turntable is somehow inherently better than a multiple-play unit. All right—the Z2000B *is* a single-play turntable. Its capacity to function as a multiple-play unit offers convenience with no compromise of performance. The *automatic* mechanism which gently indexes the arm, lifts it at the end of play, returns it to the arm rest and shuts off the motor—is completely disengaged during record play. A 2-position control sets the proper vertical tracking angle for single or multiple play. The Z2000B can truly be called the automated, single-play turntable with multiple-play capability.

2. Does it have belt-drive and variable speed?



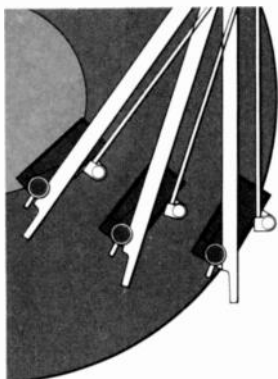
Garrard engineers have attained remarkable results by combining the world famous Synchro-Lab motor and an inventive belt/idler drive combination. A 5 lb., die-cast, dynamically balanced platter is rotated via a flexible belt. Not only are the tiniest fluctuations of speed smoothed out, but an extraordinary -64dB rumble is only one example of the impressive specifications achieved. A variable speed control corrects out-of-pitch recordings and an illuminated stroboscope provides optical confirmation. The Z2000B combines all of these elements to achieve the main goal of Garrard engineering: superior performance at reasonable cost.

3. Does it handle records gently?



All responsible turntable manufacturers are concerned with protecting your records. With Garrard, it's an obsession. The Z2000B boasts an array of features designed solely to prolong the life of your records. In addition to the exclusive, articulated tonearm, it incorporates an exceptionally accurate magnetic anti-skating device. Cueing is viscous damped in *both* directions. The ingenious built-in automatic record counter keeps track of how many LP sides the stylus has played. And unlike some of the highest priced changers that support records only at the center hole, the Z2000B supports them at the hole *and* edge, and the release mechanism operates at *both* points. Protection for your records indeed!

4. Does it eliminate tracking error?



The grooves of a record are cut by a stylus that travels in a straight line. Conventional playback tonearms move in an arc. The difference between these two paths is called "tracking error." Simply stated, tracking error launches a cycle of distortion and record wear. In good design, the error is averaged over the record so that distortion is minimal. But such compromise was unacceptable in the Z2000B. What Garrard engineers did about it was summed up by High Fidelity Magazine which described the Zero Tracking Error Tonearm as "... the best arm yet offered as an integral part of an automatic player." The Z2000B is the *only* automatic turntable in the world without tracking error.

For your free copy of the New Garrard Guide, write to Garrard, Division of Plessey Consumer Products, Dept B, Plainview, New York 11803.

must ask about any turntable.



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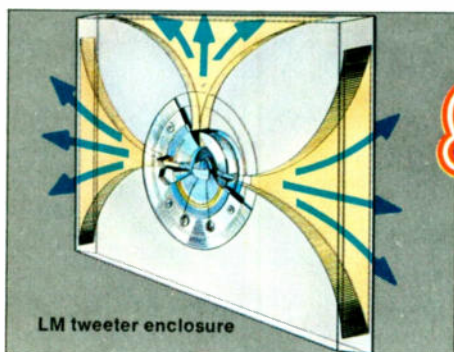
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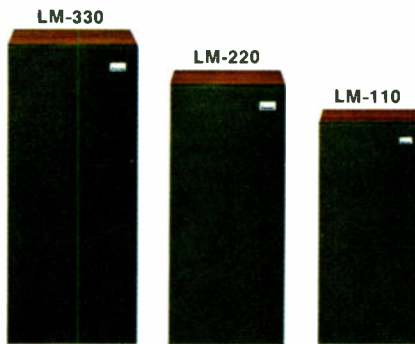
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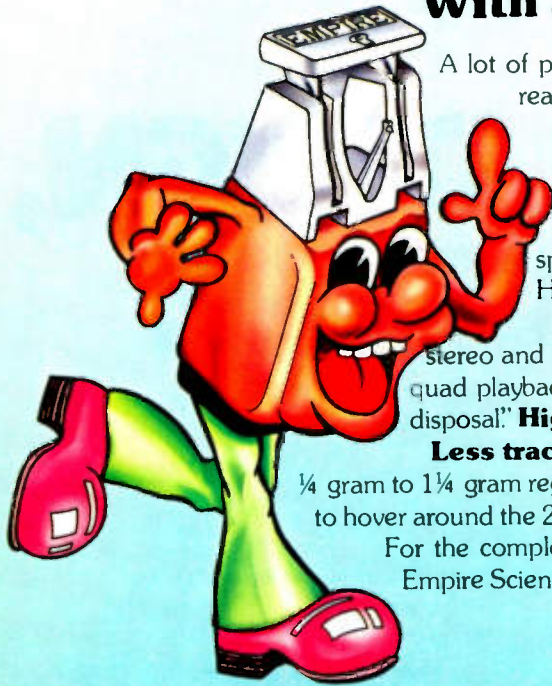


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More versatile: "Not only does the 4000D/III provide excellent sound in both stereo and quadruphonic reproduction, but we had no difficulty whatever getting satisfactory quad playback through any demodulator or with any turntable of appropriate quality at our disposal!" **High Fidelity.**

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For the complete test reviews from these major audio magazines and a free catalogue, write: Empire Scientific Corp., Garden City, N.Y. 11530. Mfd. U.S.A.



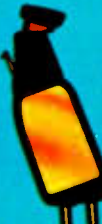


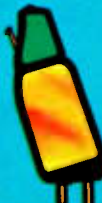


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| Output Voltage per Channel at 3.54 cm/sec groove velocity | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
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by Royal S. Brown

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)



THERE IS PERHAPS no greater tribute that can be paid to a composer than superlative performances of his music. From this point of view, the weekend of August 9 at Tanglewood in Lenox, Massachusetts, had promised to be an impressive tribute to Soviet composer Dmitri Dmitreivich Shostakovich. Not only was Shostakovich's strangely hermetic Second Cello Concerto to be performed by Mstislav Rostropovich, the dedicatee of this extremely difficult work and a deep friend of the composer's, but Maestro Rostropovich was also to conduct the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the 1937 Fifth Symphony, a work that has meant Shostakovich to thousands of listeners ever since its premiere. Sadly, shockingly, the weekend concerts at Tanglewood turned out to be a memorial.

The first hint of the tragedy came toward the end of the first half of the Saturday evening (August 9) concert. Having sung Tatiana's "Letter Scene" from Tchaikovsky's *Yevgeny Onegin*, the young Shostakovich's favorite work, soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, Rostropovich's wife, returned to perform an encore, an aria from Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride*. Singing the mournful, deeply Slavic melody with no orchestral accompaniment and standing almost motionless, her arms clasped in front of her, Vishnevskaya, both vocally and in appearance, gave the impression of a person in deep mourning chanting a lament, perhaps for a dead child. It was only after the intermission that Boston Symphony music director Seiji Ozawa, speaking for his colleague, announced that Rostropovich had received a call from Moscow informing him of Shostakovich's death at 7:00 p.m. Moscow time.

After a moment of silence, Rostropovich, deeply intense and determined but obviously grief-stricken, proceeded to conduct the Shostakov-

ich Fifth. Following the symphony's triumphant conclusion, the great cellist/conductor, in the midst of applause and cheers, made a final, *in memoriam* gesture by kissing the closed score, upon which he later laid a bouquet of red roses that had been handed to him on-stage.

The memorial tribute continued the next day as Rostropovich, his black garb starkly contrasted against the Sunday-afternoon white worn by the orchestra members and conductor Ozawa, performed the Second Cello Concerto, apparently losing his concentration once or twice, only to immediately plunge again more deeply, more intently into the work than I have ever seen or heard any performer do with any piece. And as if to finalize this unplanned memorial, Rostropovich, Ozawa, and the Boston Symphony went to Boston the following day (August 11) to record the work for Deutsche Grammophon. Few of Shostakovich's compositions could have been more appropriate than this concerto in expressing the tragic, tortured, grotesque, even absurdist side not only of his profoundly internalized vision of existence, but also of existence itself.

Yet, ironically, the concerto, composed in 1966, was the last work to be written by Shostakovich as a healthy man. Even before its premiere in September of that year, the composer suffered a major heart attack from which he never fully recovered. From that moment on, much of his music seemed the outcry of a man who had experienced his own death, culminating, in 1969, in the cold and bitter Fourteenth Symphony. The music of this work, combined with the words of four different poets, lashes out—sometimes in an aching poignant aria, sometimes in a sardonic snarl—not only against the absurdity of death, but also against two of death's henchmen, war and monolithic au-

thority, both of which had left their heavy imprint on Shostakovich's soul.

The heart ailment from which he eventually died was not his only affliction in recent years. Around 1970, Shostakovich was stricken with crippling arthritis, for which diverse remedies, from a treatment in Western Siberia to rare Japanese herbs, were tried. Yet he found it increasingly difficult not only to play the piano (he had at one time been tempted to become a concert pianist), but even to write. (When I first saw him, in the summer of 1973, he was holding his right arm with his left hand in order to sign autographs.) For this reason, Shostakovich had avoided large-scale compositions in his last years in favor of song cycles and chamber works (he had planned on doing a cycle of twenty-four string quartets), his final endeavors including a six-movement Fifteenth Quartet, described as "thoughts of life in the face of death," and a viola sonata. Yet rumors of a Sixteenth Symphony have persisted, and, according to one report, the score remained half completed at the composer's death.

The most remarkable thing about his music is the depth, the completeness of the experience it can produce within the listener. In a generation more and more concerned with chance and less and less concerned with feeling in all the arts, Shostakovich stressed the inexorable—and ultimately death itself—and the farthest reaches of human emotion. Having been fortunate enough to talk with Shostakovich for an hour during his visit to this country in June 1973, I can only attest that the man was every bit the match of his music. Fortunately, the music will continue to create the man, or at least that amazingly expansive, profoundly human universe of feeling he inhabited. But the man who created the music will be deeply missed.

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Now you can hear musicians on your stereo sound stage (your listening area) as they were recorded: from front to back, as well as from side to side. With excellent transient response, definition and clarity.

But let's backtrack and see exactly how Bang & Olufsen got so far ahead.

The problem of phase distortion.

Phase distortion occurs in multiway conventional speakers at the crossover point when the same note is being reproduced simultaneously by two drivers. It is most noticeable at lower frequencies and during tran-

sients (sudden variations in volume). What you hear is a blurred sound picture, lacking definition.

There are two characteristics to phase distortion: one is fixed, the other is variable. In conventional crossover filters, alternating driver units are fixed mechanically and electrically 180 degrees out-of-phase (to compensate for amplitude "suck out"). (See Diagram A.) Variables in phase shift are due to passive filter components.

Today's high-quality loudspeakers have virtually solved the problems of frequency response, as well as harmonic and intermodulation distortion.

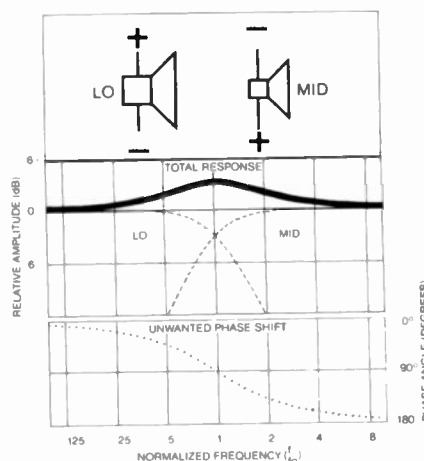


Diagram A: Conventional 12dB/oct. crossover filter.

Which makes the study and correction of phase distortion, the final hurdle in speaker perfection, all the more important and meaningful.

A discovery we really listened to.

At the 1973 AES convention in Rotterdam, two Bang & Olufsen engineers, Madsen and Hansen presented a paper on audible phase distortion that represented three years of research.

They had created an electronic crossover, tri-amplified speaker which totally eliminated phase distortion. From it, they concluded that phase distortion is the remaining main source for sound coloration in conventional speakers.

That it is, indeed, audible at lower frequencies and higher volume levels.

The solution: the Phase-Link method.

Madsen and Hansen's electronic crossover speaker was, of course, cost-prohibitive to the consumer. So Bang & Olufsen set about creating a practical solution.

E. Baekgaard, head of the Bang & Olufsen electrical engineering department, developed a mathematical computer simulation of the loudspeaker's electro-acoustic

transfer function. And he began experimenting.

Instead of placing alternating drivers 180 degrees out of phase, he put them all in the same phase. "curing" the fixed phase shift. This created an audible amplitude "suck out," (See Diagram B) which led to the discovery of the missing link:

An additional narrow band filler driver at the crossover point. It "cured" both the amplitude "suck out" and the variable phase shift by providing a compensating signal between the woofer and midrange.

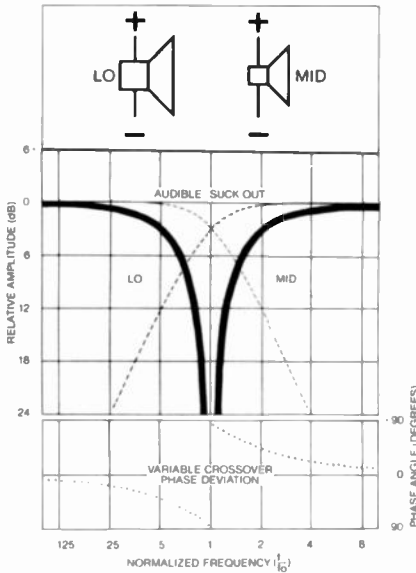
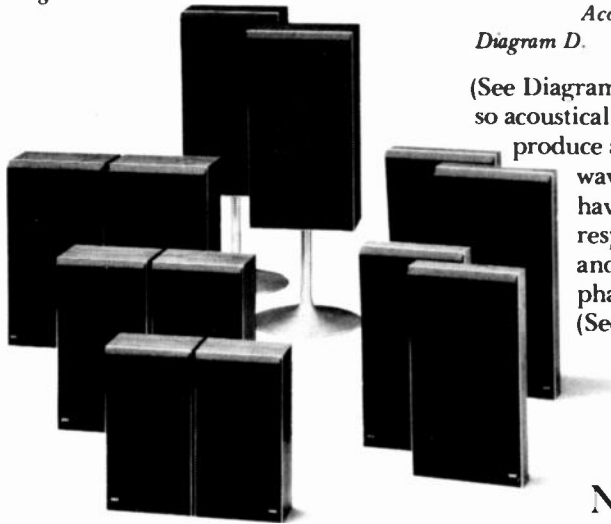


Diagram B.



Because the ear is sensitive to phase distortion mainly in the lower frequencies, phase link is only used between the low-frequency driver and the midrange unit in the high-power, 3-way (M70, S60) systems and not between the midrange and the tweeter. In medium-power, 2-way speaker systems, one phase link is used in 12dB/oct. (S45, P45) filter combinations. Low-power, 2-way speaker systems can be made without phase distortion through a sophisticated 6dB/oct. filter technique (S30).

Cabinets are supplied in genuine rosewood, teak and oak veneers or white lacquer over birch applied to tough, rigid particle board.

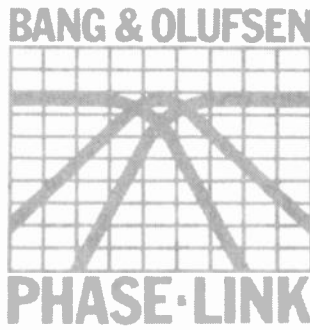


Diagram C: The Bang & Olufsen new dynamic filler driver eliminates phase distortion.

And it made the audible output identical to the electrical input. (See Diagram C.)

Today, our Bevox Phase-Link loudspeakers have even further refinements. The drivers are mounted to form a common, angled baffle, acoustic axis to ensure that the sound generated from each driver will reach the ear simultaneously.

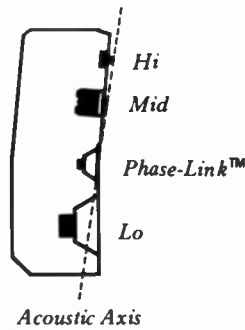


Diagram D.

(See Diagram D.) These speakers are so acoustically accurate, they can reproduce an electronic square wave signal. Proof that they have excellent frequency response, low distortion, and are free of audible phase distortion as well. (See Diagram E.)

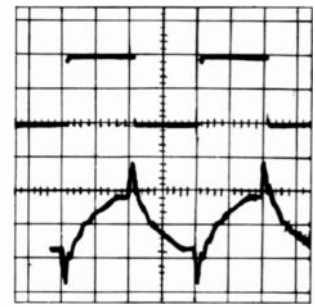
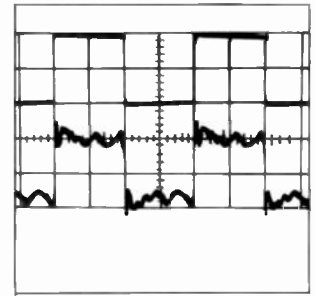


Diagram E: 1. A good conventional speaker with wide, flat frequency response and low distortion still cannot reproduce the original square wave signal.



2. Bevox Phase-Link loudspeakers can reproduce square wave accurately by virtually eliminating phase distortion.

Your Stereo Sound Stage.

More than stereo separation, Bevox Phase-Link loudspeakers produce a total stereo sound picture. With notes retaining their clarity, free from hangover because of excellent transient response. Which means that in a fine recording, you'll be able to sense where every instrument and section is located.

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a subscriber to the series you may keep this \$45.87 value for just \$17.95 plus shipping and handling as described in the reply card.

Or, if you decide against the album, return it and *The Encyclopedia* within 10 days without paying or owing anything. You will be under no further obligation. To take advantage of this free audition, mail the bound-in postpaid reply card. If the card is missing, write Time Life Books, Time & Life Building, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

60% of BOSE Owners Changed Our Mind

While we enjoy talking about the technology that distinguishes the BOSE 901[®], and about the unprecedented series of rave reviews by leading critics, the purpose of an advertisement is to increase sales by introducing more people to the product.

A surprising result of a customer survey changed our mind as to the most effective use of advertising funds. It revealed that 60% of the people who select the BOSE 901 do so at the recommendation of a 901 owner! This told us that the best advertisement is the product, and the best salesman is the enthusiastic owner.

We concluded that an excellent use of advertising funds would be to help set up an absolutely phenomenal music system in as many owners' homes as possible. Known as the SUPER BOSE SYSTEM, it consists of the 1801[™] power amplifier and two pairs of 901 speakers. One pair of 901s is placed to reflect sound off a front wall, and the second pair reflects off side walls, producing sound with spatial realism and presence that is simply astounding.



Our program in setting up these systems in owners' homes is to provide the **SECOND PAIR OF 901s FREE** to all those serious enough to purchase a component system consisting of the 1801 amplifier and a pair of 901s. We have allocated sufficient advertising funds to cover all purchases made from October 15, 1975 to January 15, 1976.

We believe that the SUPER BOSE SYSTEM is the best music system available today.

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One equalizer is required for the Super Bose system, and accordingly the second pair is supplied without equalizer.

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The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701

The
Lees
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The Woodstock Generation Nears Thirty

by Gene Lees



IN ALL THE ECONOMIC analyses I've read lately, those attempts to divine what went wrong with the economy, I haven't seen one mention of an obvious fact: Anybody born nine months after Daddy came home from the war in 1945 is celebrating his thirtieth birthday. All those cute, cuddly products of wartime and postwar concupiscence now range in age from twenty-five to thirty-five. And this, it seems to me, has implications not only for the economy, but for our culture.

Prosperity, in recent theory, has been linked to economic expansion. And economic expansion has been linked to population growth. What is going to happen when we achieve Zero Population Growth?

The wartime and postwar baby boom produced a surge in the population charts. At first nobody noticed all those little kids, hidden away as they were, four or five to a bungalow. But then they began leaving home, buying Tupperware and bedsheets and used cars, and renting apartments. Suddenly it got very crowded, and there were all those beer cans in the wilderness and litter on the beaches and all that garbage no one knew how to get rid of.

I'm sure that the makers of diapers and Johnson's Baby Oil were aware of the presence of these youngsters well before the rest of us were. I can imagine a meeting of the board of directors circa 1950, all beaming as they look at a sales chart with a curve that goes right off the top of the graph paper. The people who sell primary-school books must have felt the impact by the early 1950s, along with construction companies expanding schools or

building new ones (and later high schools and universities). There must have been some good years then for the people who make hockey pucks and baseball gloves and doll clothes.

And then it was over. The *New York Times* reported, four or five years ago, that graduating teachers were having a tough time finding work. We began to see stories about universities worrying about falling enrollment.

"They're the golden ones, that generation," says a friend of mine, one of the writers of *The Waltons*. "They outnumber everybody else. They did when they were fifteen, and they will when they are sixty-five." They got campus reform when they were in college. They seem indifferent to the plight of today's elderly; but when they get to be sixty and start putting pressure on the politicians, then you'll see decent social welfare programs for the old.

The effects of their maturing are increasingly apparent. It was one of the things that knocked the hell out of the automobile industry in the last couple of years. When those postwar babies were coming out of colleges and high schools and going into their first jobs, they had to buy cars. When Detroit raised the prices, these young adults—no longer a captive market—sat tight, and the prices broke.

Since the baby market has been shrinking, Johnson's has found another market—among these very babies who were raising its sales twenty-five years ago. Now its TV commercials are pitching baby oil and baby shampoo at adults—one of the most successful campaigns in adver-

tising history.

Adolescents and young adults were a major factor in expanding the market for stereo equipment during the '60s. Stereo itself was comparatively new; not every home had a phonograph. What kind of stereo equipment would the young seem likely to buy? The inexpensive. If that was so in the '60s, then sales of the lower-priced gear should have fallen recently. People in the business tell me that this has in fact happened and that higher-priced equipment, the kind that successful adults buy, is still selling. (On the other hand, one tends to keep good equipment for a long time. Will sales in this price class fall when those twenty-five- to thirty-five-year-olds have bought all the top-line record players they need? We'll see in a few years.)

The young also dominated the arts in the 1960s. They were dumb, they were callow, they were incredibly glib even in their skepticism. Compounding the horror was the fact that they thought they were educated. And different. Somehow different. All of which made them easy to lead, easy to con. The record industry responded with alacrity and efficiency, pouring our rivers of musical pabulum and telling an audience with insufficient discrimination that the bad rhymes and heavy-handed "messages" and dreary harmony of this or that quaver-voiced singing group were "Art." With a very large capital A. Never had such praise been heaped on such trivia.

But now those kids have families and jobs. Many of them are beginning to be really educated—almost as educated as they used to think they were.

This age group remains a superb market for records. It used to be said that only young people bought records. But in point of fact, they were the first generation to have a general interest in records and, indeed, the first generation to own so many phonographs.

They don't have the same tastes they had ten years ago. Nor can their tastes any longer be easily shaped by press agentry. Many of them have gone on to discover music—real music. I see the evidence of it in concerts, in nightclubs. But I do not think the record industry, as a whole, perceives the nature and extent of this change.

These maturing postwar babies have raised the average age of Americans from twenty-five a few years ago to twenty-eight today. If the record makers ignore the fact that their largest potential market is among adults now, they will suffer for the oversight.

They should talk to the people over at Johnson's. ●



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The Bose 901, 501 and Model 301. The only speaker systems that meet the two basic requirements for preserving the qualities of live music in reproduced sound: the proper balance of reflected and direct sound for spaciousness and clarity; and flat power radiation to assure correct frequency balance and accurate reproduction of instrumental timbre in an actual listening environment.

The internationally acclaimed 901® system utilizing nine full range drivers with an active equalizer to provide the ideal balance of reflected to direct sound at all frequencies, setting the standard for lifelike music reproduction in the home.

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The new Model 301 offering a unique combination of features: Asymmetrical Design, a Direct Energy Control and a Dual Frequency Crossover™ network. This achieves reflected and direct sound with flat power radiation in a bookshelf enclosure, producing a sound quality that is extraordinary from so compact a speaker at so low a price.

The innovative speakers. From Bose. Each unique in concept and design to provide the maximum musical enjoyment for your home. One of them will ideally meet your requirements.

Shown above, left to right, 501, 901, and Model 301. For information, write to us at room HS.

Model 301 Patents Issued and Pending

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MODEL 301



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The Bose Model 301. The first and only system to offer the spaciousness and clarity of a Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker with the convenience and beauty of a bookshelf enclosure. Speaker design and performance from the same engineering that produced the internationally famous Bose 901® and 501 speaker systems.

The Bose Model 301 began as a unique engineering challenge: create a small, low cost Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker with maximum flexibility of placement and truly exceptional sound. The end result incorporates three significant developments not available in any conventional speaker:

- **Asymmetrical Design:** each Model 301 radiates a different spatial pattern to the left and right side of the room, providing stereo reproduction that expands beyond the spacing of the speakers. Consequently, each speaker of a stereo pair is constructed as a mirror image of the other.
- **A Direct Energy Control:** a control located at the top of the cabinet allows you to select the proportion of direct to reflected sound at high frequencies to produce the optimum spatial characteristics for your particular room.

- **A Dual Frequency Crossover Network:** a new approach to crossover design separates transition frequencies of the woofer and tweeter to provide an overlap in frequency response of over one octave. This technique minimizes localization of sound to the woofer or tweeter alone, and produces unusually smooth response through the middle frequencies.

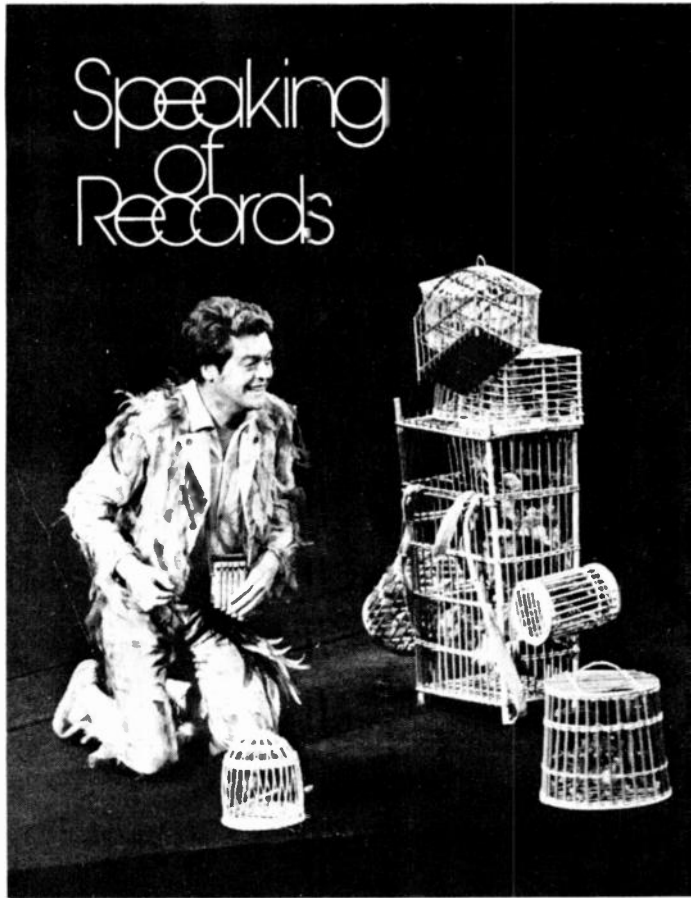
Each of these developments solves a particular problem associated with designing a small, low cost Direct/Reflecting loudspeaker. Now you can enjoy the "sense of presence" that only a Direct/Reflecting speaker can offer. Stereo reproduction that expands beyond the spacing of your speakers to accurately place the sound of instruments across the entire breadth of your listening room.

The new Bose Model 301 Direct/Reflecting Loudspeaker. A sound quality that you will find extraordinary from so compact a speaker and at so low a price.

For a full-color brochure on the Model 301, write to us at Room H3.

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"The Recording Studio Has Been My Teacher"

Hermann Prey talks to Susan Gould

"DO YOU KNOW about my big project? Of all the things I have done recently, this is the one of which I am proudest!" Hermann Prey, friendly and exuberant, seemed Papageno incarnate even in his tuxedo, after a concert, as he spoke enthusiastically of his "Recorded History of the German Lied," complete in 1974.

"I was lucky that DG and Philips agreed to do it—DG the technical part, Philips the release and publicity. [The series has not been issued domestically, but may be found in some import shops.] It was my idea in the first place, but I had a list that added up to fifty records, and eventually we brought it down to twenty-seven.

"I also wanted to do it in a way nobody could or would do it, because it was too musicological. I was against putting in all the song cycles, and I only wanted one or two records of Schubert, but I was told I had to put in the cycles, so now we have six records just of Schubert. I wanted more of the late Romantics, the Lied after Wolf,

and here I won, more or less: a whole record of Pfitzner, one of Loewe, one of Strauss, and two or three of Wolf. Then we have the Second Vienna School—Webern, Berg, Schoenberg, and several others. The latest composer is Friedrich Gulda—a piece for voice, piano, and drums, with him at the piano. It is a very good song, a bit jazzy, with improvisations!

"I would have liked more early music. The first song is by Volkenstein, a minnesinger of the thirteenth century, and I sing it as written, in *Mittelhochdeutsch*, with lute accompaniment. But then in the first record we come all the way from Volkenstein to Bach, a very fast trip through four centuries! Next are Mozart and his contemporaries, followed by the bulk of things: Schubert, Schumann, Brahms.

"We recorded everything in Munich, on the same spot, but with different collaborators, using viola da gamba, lute, organ, guitar, and different pianos—we have Demus playing

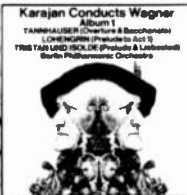
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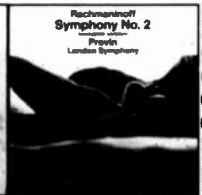


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MICHELANGELI returns to LP after an absence of more than twelve years. Both newly recorded programs reveal the pianist's infinite technique and intense individual style; his drive for perfection superiorly realized. One of the century's greatest pianist, indeed!



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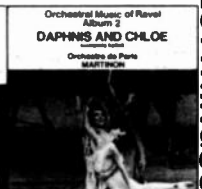


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PREVIN, orchestra and EMI/Angel engineers provide recordings of these highly contrasting works of award-winning caliber. The drama and toughness of the First is awesome; the sensuousness of the Second, achingly beautiful. Previn is regarded as today's foremost Rachmaninoff conductor. And for good reason.



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BEST THINGS COME IN 2'S

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It's virtually impossible to build a product that is so optimized that it can never be improved. But we believe it is possible, indeed an obligation, to build loudspeakers that are so deep in concept and technology that they remain fresh and exciting performers for many, many years. Our classic electrostatic Model Nine is a perfect example of such a product. After nearly fifteen years, it is still rated "Best Attainable Sound" by the prestigious "Stereophile" magazine and equally praised by other leading publications and authorities in the field.

But times and technology do change. And we, albeit with a certain sadness, recognize that although our original acoustic suspension bookshelf loudspeakers are still perfectly adequate sound reproducers, they are no longer representative of the best we have to offer. KLH Research Ten is our new line of loudspeakers that takes full advantage of all of today's incredible advances in audio technology. The tweeters, the woofers, the crossover networks are the most sophisticated devices ever designed for loudspeakers—regardless of what those loudspeakers cost. Whether it's our smallest KLH Research Ten loudspeaker or our largest, you'll find there's an amazing commonality of design, components, and most important, sound. Which is to say virtually no sound at all. Because if there is a single thing that typifies this new group of loudspeakers, it is an uncommon lack of coloration. You'll also find that the differences between each of the loudspeakers in the line is quantitative rather than qualitative. You'll be able to buy more performance for somewhat more money. But whether you spend the extra money or not, you'll still be getting a loudspeaker that is unequivocally the best you can buy in its price range. And if you'll just think about our Model Nine for a moment, you'll realize you'll also be getting a loudspeaker that you'll be able to live with for a long, long time. That's KLH Research Ten. We hope you have a very happy decade with us.

CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the Schubert piano and for Mozart we have a kind of Hammerklavier. In some instances the accompanist on the record is not the one we originally intended, in the sense that I felt that certain songs or composers or periods would be more suited to certain pianists, but then we would run into a conflict of schedules, so I had to make some compromises, not in quality, but in my own feeling of which accompanist was best for which work. The end results are excellent, anyway!"

Recalling other unusual projects, such as recording some of Mozart's "risqué" pieces for various vocal combinations (released in America as "Mozart Was a Dirty Old Man," Seraphim S 60050, and in Europe as "The Jolly Mozart"), I asked Prey whose idea it had been to record Friedrich Silcher's piano-vocal transcriptions of Beethoven sonatas and symphonies (Archiv 2533 121).

"They were discovered by the people at the Archiv division of DG; at first I found them very funny, but as we began to work on them, we did them very seriously, because they are after all great music, wonderful melodies, and sometimes very good poems, by Schiller, Kerner, Uhland. The words go astonishingly well in general, and I am sure that if the sonatas and symphonies did not exist in their original forms, these would be considered very good Lieder!"

"Something else that I have recorded that stands out in my memory is Pfitzner's opera *Palestrina* [DG 2711 013], which I did under Kubelik in the winter of 1972-73. I had only a very small part, the Count Luna, but he has one great moment: In the second act, there is a big council, the Council of Trent, and everybody argues until the whole meeting breaks down, when Luna says, 'I propose you invite the Protestants.' Imagine, in the midst of this Catholic gathering! What happens after this is marvelous: a roar, an explosion of noise, but all in music, the yelling of the people and the orchestra together—what you might call 'composed yelling.'

"But with all of these out-of-the-way things I have recorded, there are some very standard ones I would still like to do, such as Germent in *Traviata* and Rodrigo in *Don Carlos*, a role I sang in Hamburg when I was very young, but in German, and so now I would like to record it in Italian, and perhaps someday do it again on-stage. Something I would love to do is Mandryka in *Arabella*, but only on records, at least for a few years. Then there are some roles that can be sung in two ways, more lyrically or more dramatically, so I, a lyric baritone, could do them. This also depends on

the rest of the cast; if it all fits together, you make the right effect either way."

When Prey records an opera, does he find it easier or more difficult if he has not done the role on-stage? How does one affect the other? Does he think of changes in his interpretation after he has recorded a role?

"Oh, certainly, I do realize that there are things I must change. In some operas I had not done on-stage before, such as my first *Don Giovanni*, a 'highlights' album for Electrola many years ago [formerly available here on Turnabout TV-S 34030], well, now if I hear that record...! But then recording itself is something else, another world, and to do opera on-stage you sing in a different way, in another dimension. I often hear discussions of the validity of the recording as a document of a performer's art, and I must say, as we do in German, that I have two thoughts in my chest. On one hand, I would like to have a document of a real opera performance, for example this or that role as it is in Salzburg, or Bayreuth, or La Scala. On the other hand, I think that making a recording has nothing to do with performance.

"This goes even more for Lieder or for chamber music. You can't hear the details of a recital in a big hall, such as the Grosse Musikvereinsaal in Vienna or Carnegie Hall in New York, as you can in a recording. If you want to hear a quartet by Beethoven and you have good equipment, you can hear this music much better at home than in any hall in the world, even if you lose the 'atmosphere.' And when I record a *Liederabend*, I do it for the recording, for the people to listen to in their homes, which is not the same as I would do it in the concert hall.

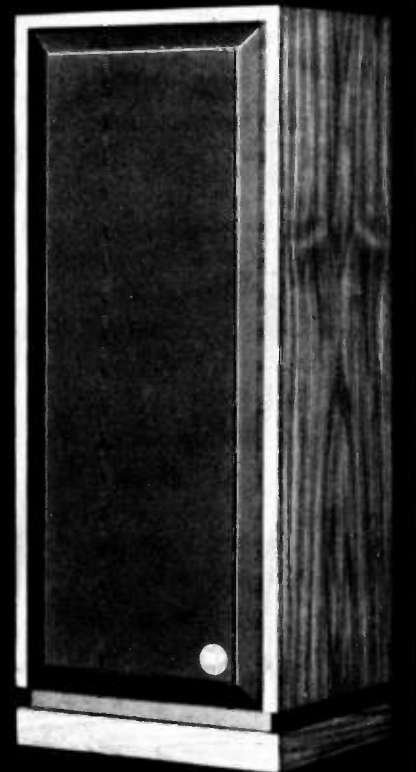
"In recording opera, there is another problem: It can almost never be done chronologically. You must do the last scene first, say, because the chorus must finish early, or this singer has to go someplace else, or that one has not arrived yet, or some aria makes the soprano nervous. I try not to let this bother me, because, as I said, I record for the recording and not as if it were a live performance.

"Making a movie is also a different performing experience, even if it is of an opera you have done on-stage. I have made many films, mostly for German television, such as *Così fan tutte* a few years ago, then later Lortzing's *Der Wildschütz*, a very nice opera that we filmed in a castle. I also have my own television show, mostly of classical music, with a little bit of operetta and 'musical,' and this is yet another world of music-making.

"You know, I began recording at the very beginning of my career, in 1952.

The SCX³

A significantly better way to listen to music.



qualities are exceptional. The membrane can be accelerated and stopped with *extreme accuracy*. The result is very extended frequency response with truly low distortion. Overlapping completely disappears. Fuzziness is gone. The inner voices of the orchestra come alive. There's the kind of airiness and transparency you find only in the concert hall. And all of this is achieved without the traditional drawbacks of the electrostatic tweeter — no capacitive load to drive your amplifier crazy

The KLH Research Ten SCX³ is an awesome performer. Its uncanny ability to recreate the timbre and texture of every instrument in an orchestra will absolutely astound you. All too often, loudspeakers that can successfully reproduce the boom of brass unfortunately bring the same brittleness to the sound of violins. Or if they can capture the sizzle of the cymbal, they fizzle when it comes to the plucking of a string. Clearly this is due to the severe limitations of the single-ended tweeter — cone or dome. Too much mass has to be started, accelerated and stopped too quickly. The structure just doesn't allow for it. Consequently there's a lack of air between instruments, a kind of a blur and overlapping that squashes the music together.

Not so with our new DVR Tweeter. The DVR combines the best attributes of dynamic and electrostatic tweeters. It has an ultra-thin membrane with an etched printed circuit "voice coil" — plus an array of many rare-earth samarium-cobalt magnets on either side of the membrane to create a push-pull effect. Because the membrane mass is so low and the magnets have such extraordinary force, the inertial



The DVR Tweeter.

and no need for a power supply. But a tweeter, even a great tweeter, doesn't make a loudspeaker. Actually, though, there isn't much we can say about the SCX³'s mid-range. It's just the best mid-range made. Period. As for the 12" Megaflex™ Woofer, it is probably the most unique magnetic structure available today. It uses many specialized strips of magnetic material which, housed in its large, box-like structure, create and focus magnetic energy (flux) into the voice coil gap with

essentially no external stray field. Since all of the energy is directed to an exact and predetermined area of the voice coil, very large woofer excursions are possible. Also the magnetic field produced is so uniform that many non-linear types of distortion found in conventional designs simply are no factor in this configuration. But perhaps even more important is the staggering power handling capacity of this woofer — over 200 watts RMS at 30 Hertz.

In short, the SCX³ has an exceptional woofer. And exceptional metalized Mylar™ capacitors. And exceptional air core inductors (as opposed to iron core inductors which saturate at high listening levels and cause major distortion).

What we're obviously trying to say is that the SCX³ is an exceptional loudspeaker — a significantly better way to listen to music.

At \$400, it darn well be-ter be better.

For more technical information, write to KLH Research & Development, 30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139. (Distributed in Canada by A. Allen Pringle Ltd., 30 Scarsdale Road, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada.)



KLH Research Ten Division
KLH Research & Development Corp.
30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139

CIRCLE 30 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

the year of my first professional engagement, and I immediately found myself responsible for carrying on the great Lieder tradition. My first record, a 78 of 'Heidenröslein' and 'Horch! horch! die Lerch', was accompanied by the famous German pianist Michael Raucheisen, who had been a close friend of Karl Erb, the tenor so well known for his Lieder interpretations. They had given many concerts together, and when Erb's wife, the great coloratura Maria Ivogün, left him to marry Raucheisen, Erb told the newspapers, 'What a shame! I've lost my accompanist!' Well, one of my earliest records was Wolf's *Italie-*

nisches Liederbuch with Erna Berger [formerly available on Vox SLDL 5532], who was Ivogün's prize pupil. You see the connection?

"Anyway, in 1952, the year of my first recording and my first professional engagement, I also left my voice teacher, and since that time I have not had a teacher at all. I have seen him once in a while, since he lives in Berlin, but we talk about other things, not about coaching or teaching. Instead, the recording studio, the tape, listening to what I have done, these have been my teacher, so to speak, so my luck is that I have been able to make so many recordings. I have developed,

and I have studied, by hearing myself after a session, having to do something over.

"And this brings us back to the big 'project,' the twenty-seven records of Lieder. After I had finished about twenty of them, when I performed in public there was a different response: the audience and critics said, 'This is a new Prey!' I asked myself why. I realized it was because of those hours and hours in the studio. After all, if I make a forty-five minute record, that costs me a week of work, from ten in the morning till four, with only a quick pause for a cup of tea but without really interrupting the work. The technicians know there is only time to drink something, and everything must be ready to go right on, and at four we have finished. Figure six hours, six days, that's thirty-six hours of work for one recording, so you can't help but learn and develop and improve.

"As a result of this experience of the twenty-seven records, I also learned there are some things I cannot improve, that I have done as well as I ever could. I used to think after recording, every time, 'Now I will do it better, next week I could have done it better,' but I discovered that this is not necessarily true. Oh, maybe in five years I can do a certain thing better, or more likely in another way, because everything changes so quickly, even audience reaction and critical opinion.

"Yet all in all, recording also helps. The Lieder project, for instance: In my performance schedule, I left out four weeks here, two weeks there, and I never did anything else while I was recording. I would never record in the morning and sing in an opera at night. I would just live for the particular style of the composer I had to record, to stay in the feeling of the music, of the period. I hope this has come across in the final product, because, as I said, there are some songs I do not think I could do better."

When he listens to records himself, what does Prey like to hear?

"Ah! I love jazz, especially pianists, and I have a big collection of records of jazz pianists, particularly the Americans. It was my secret dream, when I was a student. I had my own band then, and I was a mezzo-good pianist. But now it is years since I played, except for fun, and I've lost my technique, so I just relax in my chair and listen to records of jazz. No classical music, please! I live with it all the time—recordings, movies, TV, concerts, opera, oratorio, Lieder—*basta!*"

That "*basta!*" it should be noted, was accompanied by a burst of good-natured Papageno laughter. ●

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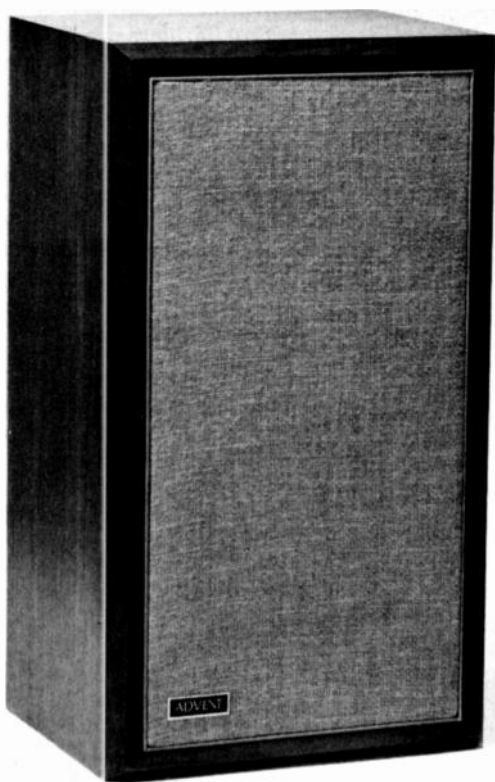


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- It sounds consistently the same from speaker to speaker off the production line.

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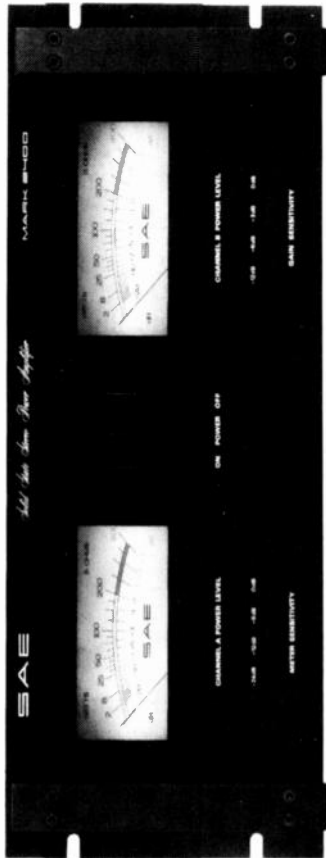
In the meantime, we'll be happy to send you comprehensive information (including its reviews) on why and how it does what it does.

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*If you're doing some A-B'ing of speakers in a showroom, they should be compared at equal volume levels for meaningful evaluation, and should be placed close to each other so that the effects of room placement are roughly the same. And you should compare no more than two different speakers at a time.

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CIRCLE 48 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Behind the Scenes

Information, please. Anyone who collects records seriously knows how hard it is to come by thorough and reliable discographic information. Anyone who has tried to compile a discography knows how hard it is to make one thorough and reliable.

In recent years, our letters column has periodically contained the announcement by one J. F. Weber of the availability of various discographies. Weber and his colleague Peter Morse have produced an invaluable series, packaged with deceptive modesty: "a uniform format with stiff printed covers, typed on an IBM Selectric typewriter for maximum clarity, and carefully mimeographed." The contents are anything but modest, comprising no less than "all known recordings" within each subject, with all pertinent obtainable information—performers, dates, record numbers, and often an index to "the most informative reviews." As additions and corrections come in from a worldwide network of correspondents, not to mention new recordings, revised editions are published. These are offered at reduced price to those who have bought the earlier edition.

Six discographies have just appeared, beginning with an 86-page revision of one of the series' earliest subjects, Hugo Wolf (\$4). The new subjects are: Varèse (13 pages, \$1), Bernstein as composer ("excluding popular singles," 16 pages, \$1), Berg (16 pages, \$1), Pfitzner and Marx (18 pages, \$1), and Britten (58 pages, \$3).

Already available in revised form are Morse's "Mendelssohn Vocal Music" (30 pages, \$2) and "Richard Strauss Lieder" (46 pages, \$2), and Weber's Mahler (47 pages, \$2) and Bruckner (with "special attention" to the score editions used, 34 pages, \$2). A revision of the out-of-print 1971 "Loewe and Franz" should be out later this year. Four 1970 titles are in the gradual process of revision; some copies of the preliminary editions, which did not attempt absolute completeness, are still obtainable: "Schubert Lieder" (49 pages, \$2), "Schumann Lieder" (20 pages, \$1), "Brahms Lieder" (20 pages, \$1), and "Schubert/

Schumann/Brahms Choral Music" (26 pages, \$1).

Next in line: "Richard Strauss Opera" by Alan Jefferson (price "about \$5 depending on final length"), which may well be available by the time you read this. A Webern discography has been held up by Columbia's long delay in releasing its complete-works project.

Orders and inquiries to: J. F. Weber, 1 Jewett Place, Utica, New York 13501.

Rossini from Philips. Philips is making up for its late start in the opera-heavyweight ranks with furious activity all over. The premiere recording of *I Masnadieri* is the latest installment in Philips' early-Verdi series. As previously reported, a series of Haydn operas began this past summer with *La fedeltà premiata*. Now Rossini has joined the Philips schedule, with the recording of his *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*, written in 1815, the year before *Barbiere di Siviglia* (whose latest phonographic incarnation, for Angel, is reviewed this month). Montserrat Caballé sings the title role, supported by José Carreras (Leicester), Valerie Masterson (Matilde), Rosanne Crefield (Enrico), Ugo Benelli (Norfolk), and Neil Jenkins (Guglielmo). Gianfranco Masini conducts the Ambrosian Singers and the London Symphony.

Enter the Swedes. H.N.H. Distributors, known heretofore as the U.S. distributor of Unicorn records, has now added the Swedish Caprice label. The first batch of records we received comprise a quite staggering assortment: jazz and folk discs, a lovely account of the Rachmaninoff Op. 39 etudes tableaux by Janos Solyom (RIKS LP 23), a coupling of the Verdi string quartet and Johan Wikman's Op. 1, No. 2 by the Saulesco Quartet (RIKS LP 65), a disc of Swedish tape music (RIKS LP 35), a disc devoted to the contemporary composer Gunnar Bucht (RIKS LP 75). All are elaborately packaged and annotated, with notes in Swedish, English, and German. H.N.H. will distribute another Swedish label, Bis, as well.

H.N.H. promises further expansion of its offerings; watch this space.

Carmen, Luisa. Time for this month's report on the Solti *Carmen* recording, which did finally come off in London in July. The major cast change: Tatiana Troyanos replaced Teresa Berganza in the title role. The other principals as reported: Te Kanawa, Domingo, Van Dam.

Also on the Decca/London summer schedule in London: a new *Luisa Miller* with Caballé, Cossotto, Pavarotti, and Milnes. The conductor is Pe-

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ter Maag; the orchestra is the National Philharmonic, in its operatic debut.

Antonia. Undoubtedly the most talked-about event of this summer's Mostly Mozart Festival in New York was the appearance of conductor Antonia Brico. She conducted an abbreviated program (which, by popular demand, had to be repeated) to allow time for a screening of the film *Antonia: Portrait of a Woman*. It was that documentary, instigated by Ms. Brico's onetime pupil Judy Collins, that suddenly aroused interest in a career that began promisingly some forty years ago and then went no-

where. Now the seventy-plus Ms. Brico is in considerable demand and obviously enjoying her new opportunity to ply her trade.

There remained the obvious question of recordings. Columbia Records was interested but wanted to hear her in action; the verdict was favorable, and a Mozart disc was made (*Haffner* Symphony plus three overtures).

Under contract, new and old. There has been much contract-signing of late, and those who believe that loyalty has perished from the earth will be cheered by the number of resigners—such as Artur Schnabel (RCA),

Itzhak Perlman (EMI—current projects include the Bach sonatas and partitas and a Kreisler disc), and Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic (DG and EMI—you name it, they're recording it).

EMI's last major conductorial acquisition, the rapidly rising young Italian Riccardo Muti, has proved something of a coup. Now EMI has signed two veteran conductors of considerable reputation: Eugen Jochum and Carlos Kleiber. Repertory plans for Jochum were vague, but it should be noted that EMI has not of late enjoyed the exclusive services of a conductor so thoroughly schooled in the broad classic-romantic repertory. Kleiber, a rather austere perfectionist (no, we are not going to remind you that he is the son of . . . oops), has recorded infrequently but with great distinction—his DG Beethoven Fifth with the Vienna Philharmonic is greeted enthusiastically this month by Harris Goldsmith. Already planned: a *Wozzeck* in Dresden, where Kleiber made his much-praised DG *Freischütz*.

Also worth watching is the talented young English conductor Andrew Davis, who made a striking New York Philharmonic debut the season before last and is now conductor of the Toronto Symphony. Davis' recent Classics for Pleasure recording of the Shostakovich Tenth Symphony was released domestically last month on Seraphim, and now he will be recording for CBS. (His first disc, a London Symphony coupling of Britten's *Young Person's Guide* and excerpts from Prokofiev's *Cinderella*, is due shortly from Columbia.) CBS plans to make use of Davis' considerable repertory versatility as well as his abilities as an accompanist—his Philharmonic debut program included the Mozart K. 449 Piano Concerto with Murray Perahia (also a CBS artist).

Reiner Society. We have just received "Newsletter No. 1" from a new Fritz Reiner Society. The Newsletter lists various possible goals for the Society (publishing a newsletter, establishing an archive, issuing records, developing radio programs, etc.), then adds: "What is needed now are your ideas, your suggestions for these goals and for any other aspect of the Society. What is also needed are more members. The larger our membership roster, the greater will be our ability to bring about the realization of our goals." The dues for the first year (running through September 1976) have been set at \$5. Write to Bruce R. Wellek, Fritz Reiner Society, Box 202, Novelty, Ohio 44072.

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Julian Hirsch, *Stereo Review*

The Ortofon VMS-20E is a new cartridge designed to offer essentially the same high order of performance as the now-famous M-15E Super, but to do so in a wider variety of tone arms—including those found on today's very best automatic turntables.

The difference between the two is best described by again quoting Julian Hirsch:

“The major difference between the two cartridges appears to be that the M-15E Super will play anything we

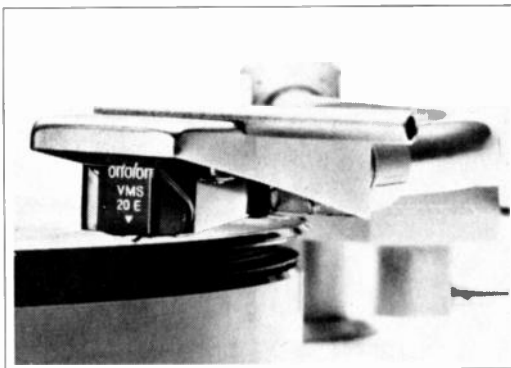
have seen on record without difficulty at 1 gram, while the VMS-20E might have to be operated at 1.5 grams in the most severe cases. We would still opt for 1-gram operation, assuming the tone arm is capable of it.”

The VMS-20E employs Ortofon's unique (and patented) Variable Magnetic Shunt design, which frees the stylus from the need to drive either coils or magnet directly and allows a combination of very low dynamic mass (0.5 milligram) and very high compliance (40×10^{-6} cm/dyne in the horizontal plane in the VMS-20E).

It is a product of the meticulous manufacture and testing for which Ortofon (a maker of professional recording equipment for more than fifty years) is known throughout the world.

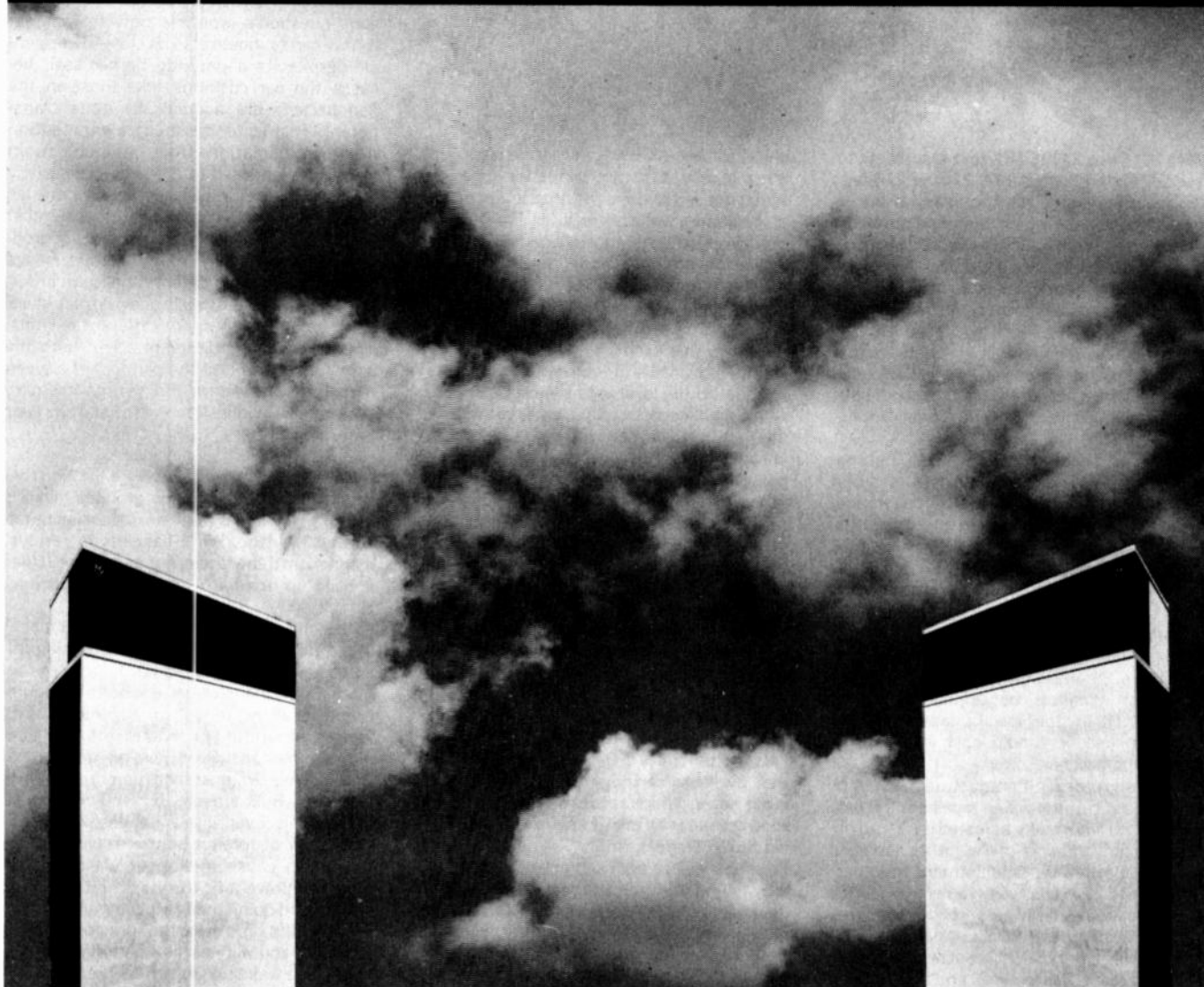
At \$65, the Ortofon VMS-20E is probably the least expensive way to make a major audible improvement in a good stereo system.

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CIRCLE 31 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Too Hot to Handle

With my Teac 2300S [HF test reports, October 1974] and Scotch 207, 212, or 214 tape the recorded signal is either over- or under-equalized, depending on the position of the equalization switch. With any of the three tapes there appears to be a peak in the extreme highs, which tends to magnify any noise in the signal source. Although there may be a tape for which the 2300S is perfectly adjusted, I'd prefer not to be tied to that particular brand. Could you suggest an equalizer with which I could flatten the response of the Teac?—Leo W. Early Jr., Silver Spring, Md.

As our report said, we used the 2300S primarily with Maxell UD and with both bias and equalization switched to HIGH. These same settings are recommended in our copy of the owner's manual for Scotch 212, HIGH bias and NORMAL eq. for Scotch 207. Scotch 214 is not included in the table of recommendations. Teac's list of "recommended" tapes is so long, one has to assume that the settings will be a more perfect match for some than for others. In any event the best cure is not an add-on equalizer, but adjustment of the 2300S itself for the specific tapes that you prefer to use; it should cost less and be more satisfactory.

We wish recorder manufacturers would be more specific about which tapes are the best match with a normally adjusted deck and encourage buyers who prefer other tapes to specify appropriate readjustment much as, in the days of leaded gas, you could ask the dealer to adjust many automobiles for either regular or high-test. Revox appears to have taken this approach (at least with its more knowledgeable customers), and it's common practice with professional equipment unless the customer does all his own maintenance as a matter of course. But in consumer equipment the question of exact tape matching all too often simply gets swept under the rug on the assumption that the purchaser doesn't—or doesn't want to—understand the difference.

The levels from my speakers are markedly lower on PHONO than on TAPE or TUNER. I thought it might be the turntable (Dual 1218 with Stanton 681EEE cartridge), but some friends have the same problem. Is there something wrong with the amp (Dynaco SCA-80Q), or is it a normal thing? To combat the problem I set the amp at TAPE MONITOR and press the recording switch on my tape deck (Pioneer CT-5151) with any handy cassette in place. This makes the signal sensitive to the deck's recording-level controls. What am I doing, and am I hurting anything?—Sam Chodush, Brooklyn, N.Y.

If nothing else, you're wearing out the pilot lights on your tape deck. The sensitivity of the SCA-80Q (based on our original report on the SCA-80, which it replaces) is 130 mV (about average) for TUNER, TAPE, and SPARE (aux), 2.9 mV (less sensitive than many

units) for PHONO. If your tuner delivers peak levels at, say, 1.3 volts, that's ten times the signal needed to drive the amp to full output at maximum volume setting. The Stanton may produce peaks up to about 6 mV with typical recordings—about twice the level needed to drive the amp to full output under the same conditions. That is, the levels from the tuner may be five times those from the pickup in this example. Without input level controls (available in few units) the only way to equalize the level is to switch to a pickup with a higher output or to a tuner with adjustable output. A saner (or, at least, far cheaper) solution is to adjust the volume control when you switch from PHONO to the other inputs or vice versa.

The Pioneer decks seem well made, but we see no reason to put yours to work when you don't need to. Decks through which the signals can be fed simply by pressing the record button but without engaging the transport may suffer only minor fatigue from such use; try it with a deck on which you also must engage the drive system and press the pause button, and you will be adding wear to the motor bearings as well.

I plan to purchase a Q-8 tape deck, but I find that available cartridge tapes have no program notes. Which recording companies will send the notes by mail if I write to them?—David Baker, Rogers, Ark.

So far as we are aware, Ampex has been the only company (outside of Advent, which deals only in cassettes) with anything like a regular system for distributing program notes, where they are available, that are too extensive to be packaged with the tapes. Ampex puts postcards in with the tapes for which such notes (usually opera librettos and the like) are available; you send Ampex the card, and it sends you the notes. If you don't find the card, you have to write to the original recording company and request a copy of the liner or booklet prepared for the disc issue. But don't hold your breath waiting for it to come.

With Ampex turning control of distribution over to its licensors (the original recording companies), this may change. (See "News and Views," September 1975.)

In your view, are "open air" headphones such as the Beyer DT-302 and the Sennheiser HD-414 and 424 actually capable of accurate and linear response at extremely high and low frequencies, as is often claimed? Does their over-all performance compare with, for example, that of the Koss lightweight HV series?—Gary Williams, Lynchburg, Va.

In general we find the coupling of the earpieces to the wearer's ear canal a little more critical with the open-air type of headset than with the conventional high-seal type. This is perhaps most noticeable with the Sennheisers, though they strike some listeners as having a particularly smooth—if not always par-

ticularly wide-range—sound. For this reason some users seem to prefer them to the Koss HV series, while others prefer the subjectively wider response of the HVs. (We haven't tested the DT-302s.) But, the implications of your question's wording notwithstanding, the HV series should also be classed as open-air despite its apparently tighter seal, because the ear cushions—like those in the Sennheisers—are acoustically quite transparent. That is, all the models you mention have low isolation from ambient room sounds, as opposed to the high-seal sort.

But the operative phrase here is "some listeners." We find headphones to be the most profoundly personal of all high fidelity products. Physiologically they fit (and hence match acoustically) different heads in different ways; psychologically they attract or repel different listeners for different reasons. Therefore value judgments about both the sound as sound and the comfort of a given model can vary widely, and we urge you to try the models in question and make up your own mind.

A dealer recently tried to sell me the Nortronics bulk tape eraser on the grounds that it's the only way to get rid of all residual magnetism on the tape. What happens to residual magnetism if the tape is not degaussed? Does it build up or what?—Martin Pei, Honolulu, Hawaii.

With a dirty erase head or insufficient current in the erase circuit of your recorder, magnetism may build up to some degree. Particularly in inexpensive battery-portable equipment, erasure tends to be inadequate, leaving a murmur of previous recordings behind the new one. Poor head alignment can, under some circumstances, produce a similar effect. Bulk erasure, correctly done, will prevent this. Even with a well-designed home deck a bit of foreign matter—say, an oxide flake—can cause a dropout when you re-record by preventing the erase and recording heads from doing their respective jobs. When you play the tape after the foreign matter is removed, you will hear a momentary silence if the tape was bulk-erased before re-recording, and will hear a bit of the old signal if it was not. With a good, well-maintained deck you should be unable to tell whether your tapes have been bulk-erased or just deck-erased.

Should cassettes be stored in a "played" condition like open-reel tapes? Is there any difference between cellulose acetate base and polyester?—[unsigned, postmarked Tokyo].

Yes to both questions. Any tapes can be stored more safely if they are evenly wound than if they are uneven, which subjects the base to varying stresses from point to point and can cause deformation. Of course cassettes don't have to be "played" to the end before storage, but they should be stored in a protective box with some kind of hub locking to retain the neat wind and prevent formation of loose tape loops.

There most emphatically is a difference between acetate and polyester in this context. Acetate will absorb enough atmospheric moisture to swell and produce deformation for that reason alone; polyester is almost impervious to atmospheric moisture. That is why acetate tapes have all but disappeared from the marketplace—at least in name-brand varieties.

Indulge yourself in epicurean delights by placing a record on the Philips GA 209 fully automated electronic turntable. Then walk away. The 209 takes it from there. It automatically selects the precise speed you've calibrated. And it automatically measures the record size, cueing the tone arm gently to the lead-in groove.

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CIRCLE 42 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Jens Bang

News and Views



Jacob Jensen

From Inside Out

All companies are, of course, composed of people; it is the people who determine both the directions that the company takes and the products that it offers. A powerful reminder of this principle came recently with our visit to Bang & Olufsen's head office in Struer, Denmark. More than any company we can think of, B&O is consciously self-evaluative (even self-critical) and aware that, as a small company in a small country, it must take pains to build on its unique strengths—meaning, primarily, its people-product relationships—if it is to compete internationally.

Partly, this implies a pursuit of the traditional Danish admiration for craftsmanship (an emphasis that goes back to B&O's founding in 1925). In recent years, this has led to an emphasis on design as design: the concept that the physical form that a product takes should be an act of communication between its designer and its user. "Handsome" and "logical" are not enough; the styling of the product evolves as a concomitant of internal technical design and puts the user in touch with the works, so to speak, so that control becomes a reflex action rather than a conscious groping for the correct control mode. It is, in a word, organic.

The two pictures shown here caught our eye as embodying a further expression of this philosophy. Far from being the usual official corporate portraits of their subjects—or of the product, in both cases the Beogram 6000 servo turntable—they have a quirky, individual sense of person-to-person communication.

Jens Bang, whom we met, conveys his ideas with just the sort of thoughtful intensity represented in the photograph. He is the company's manager of product planning and is the son of its co-founder, Peter Bang. Jacob Jensen, whom we did not meet, is an architect and industrial designer who has been working under contract to B&O since 1964. The placement of the ship's model in the photograph is, we are assured, no accident. First, sailing vessels

are a favorite subject of his—as they are of several others at B&O (not surprisingly, since Struer is located near a fiord with first-class sailing conditions). Second, they represent within their own time and technology the same elegant expression of technical-design values that B&O is striving for in its products.

The Question of Phase Distortion

One purpose of our trip to Denmark, referred to above, was to audition a new B&O loudspeaker design incorporating the results of considerable exploration of and thought about phase linearity. This may well shape up as the subject of discussion among audio buffs in the second half of the Seventies.

Briefly stated, phase distortion (that is, want of phase linearity) can radically change signal wave forms (without changing frequency content) by displacing the various frequency components in time with respect to each other. This form of distortion for years has been blamed for such phenomena as the "blurring of transients" with some equipment. At the same time some experts have denied that phase distortion normally is perceptible, insisting that the ear tends to hear as identical two signals with identical spectral content, however different they may look on an oscilloscope.

Little has been known quantitatively about the relationship between phase distortion and audible signal degradation. Far more has been done, for example, in harmonic and intermodulation distortion (though, even here, there are many measurement/perception anomalies whose bases remain elusive). A common view has been that what-

Seiji Ozawa chose the AR-10 π for listening at home



Seiji Ozawa is Music Director of both the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the San Francisco Symphony. He listens to music 'live' almost every day. At home

he continues his listening with AR-10 π speakers. We believe that a high fidelity speaker system could receive no greater compliment.

Acoustic Research
10 American Drive
Norwood
Massachusetts 02062
Telephone 617 769 4200



Please send me a complete description of the AR-10 π

Please send me the AR demonstration record 'The Sound of Musical Instruments' (check for \$5 enclosed)

Name _____

Address _____

HF-11

CIRCLE 1 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

ever alters the wave form must be undesirable, however difficult it is to isolate and detect by itself. Hence Crown International (among other companies) has included phase-linearity data among the specs of some products, Phase Linear named itself after the concept, and loudspeaker manufacturers as divergent as Dahlquist and Ohm have sought phase coherence (a related concept) in their products.

What surely is the seminal study of perceived phase distortion appeared (in the *Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*) only last year. It is the result of work by Villy Hansen and Erik Rørbaek Madsen of Bang & Olufsen. Their results show clearly that surprisingly small quantities of phase distortion can be perceived, at least with the types of wave form and equipment (headphones, rather than loudspeakers) used in their study. Yet doubt remains. If phase linearity is so important, ask the doubters, how can we abide the notoriously phase-nonlinear output of tape recorders—used almost universally in today's audio?

The answer is not (yet) at hand. But the specifics that Hansen and Madsen have offered doubtless will prove sufficiently provocative that others will be looking for answers as well. And the research may affect all sorts of consumer products.

Are some radical approaches to loudspeaker crossovers in order? (B&O, for example, either uses 6-dB/octave crossovers or adds a driver specifically to correct the phase distortion introduced by other crossover slopes.) Is phase

correction desirable in tape recorders? Are commercial recordings being compromised by promiscuous "processings" (equalization and the like) that introduce phase distortion in mixdown? Can a quadriphonic-matrixed disc (which involves intentional phase alteration) ever be as good as a correctly made stereo disc for stereo playback? Are phase-linear tone controls audibly better than those that introduce phase distortion along with response enhancement? The "accepted" answers to these and similar questions could be quite different in the Eighties than they were in the early Seventies.

Philadelphia Hosts Hi-Fi This Month

The 1975 Philadelphia High Fidelity Music Show, scheduled for November 7 through 9 at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, is subtitled the Bicentennial Show—partly in deference to the hotel's neighbor, Independence Hall.

The last show in Philadelphia was sponsored by the Institute of High Fidelity in 1973 and held in a near-suburban motel. Teresa and Robert Rogers (who have organized many high fidelity shows in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., as well as other cities) say they have returned to a center-city location this year as a result of a survey of dealers in the area, who appear to believe that the downtown site is preferred by Philadelphians.

Equipment in the News

AR adds, subtracts features in new speaker

Except for its lack of a Woofer Environmental Control and associated crossover components, the AR-11 speaker system's performance, drivers, and crossover are said to be essentially identical to those in the AR-10 π . Included, however, are an improved version of the 12-inch woofer and a newly designed 3/4-inch tweeter, which—in combination with a new crossover network—gives uniformly dispersed flat energy output to the highest audible frequencies, according to Acoustic Research. Two 3-position switches on the rear of the cabinet make attenuations of mid-range and high-range levels possible if necessary. The cost of the AR-11 is \$295.

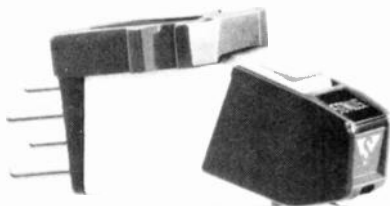
CIRCLE 147 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

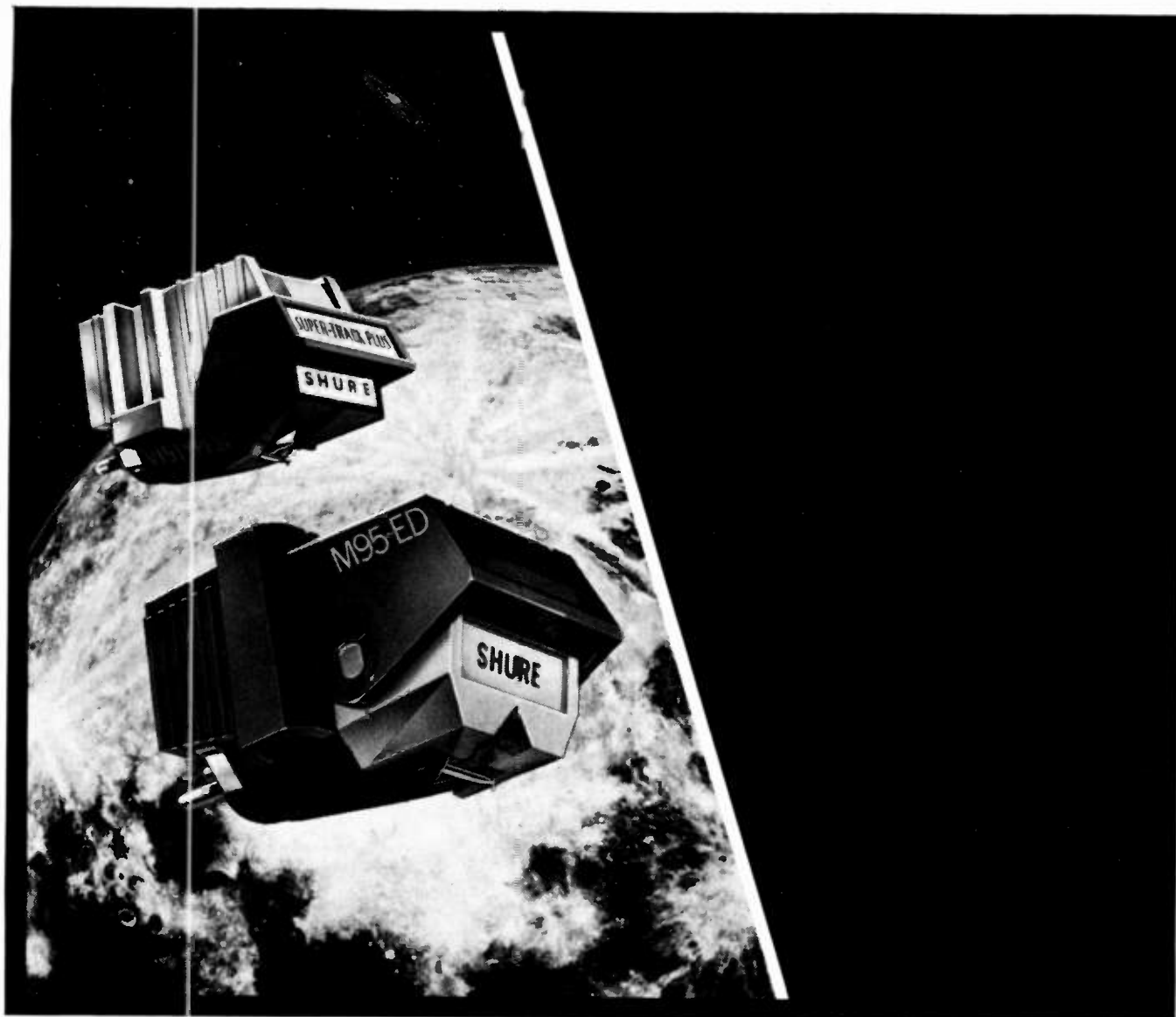


Sonic Research presents Sonus line

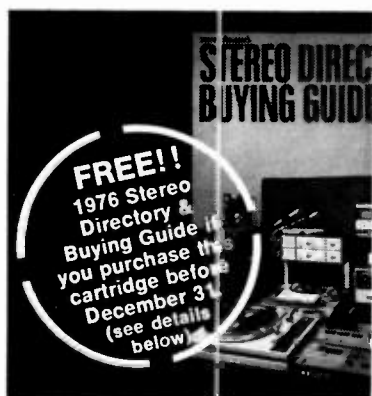
Sonic Research, Inc., claims the ultimate in high-quality phonograph cartridges with the introduction of its Sonus line. Peter Pritchard, founder of Audio Dynamics Corp., designed the cartridges for his new company. Tailored for the serious audiophile, the stereo cartridges feature a new diamond configuration and what Sonic Research calls a Positiv-Lok stylus assembly. The models are designated as Green Label (with spherical stylus tip), Red Label (a biradial), and Blue Label (with a multiradial tip comparable to the Shibata). They cost \$80, \$95, and \$115, respectively. A calibrated version of the Blue Label cartridge will be available for \$175.

CIRCLE 148 ON READER-SERVICE CARD





II'nd only to the III.



The new Shure M95ED phono cartridge combines an ultra-flat 20-20,000 Hz frequency response and extraordinary trackability with an utterly affordable price tag! To achieve this remarkable feat, the same hi-fi engineering team that perfected the incomparable Shure V-15 Type III cartridge spent five years developing a revolutionary all-new interior pole piece structure for reducing magnetic losses. The trackability of the M95ED is second only to the Shure V-15 Type III. In fact, it is the new "Number 2" cartridge in all respects and surpasses much higher priced units that were considered "state of the art" only a few years ago. Where a temporary austerity budget is a pressing and practical consideration, the M95ED can deliver more performance per dollar than anything you've heard to date.

Shure Brothers Inc.
222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60204
In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Limited



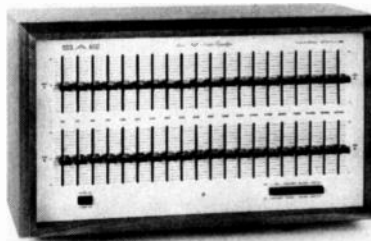
* FREE! 1976 Stereo Directory & Buying Guide with the purchase of a Shure V-15 Type III, or the M95 series, M75 Type II or M91 series of cartridges. Simply send us your warranty card with the notation "Send Free Buying Guide" before Dec. 31, 1975. (Offer subject to supply and may be withdrawn at any time.)

CIRCLE 53 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Half-octave equalizer from SAE

SAE's Model 27B equalizer has twenty sliders in each channel, each yielding 16 dB of cut or boost in a nominal half-octave of the frequency spectrum. The frequency controls—which use toroid inductors, low-loss capacitors, and professional-grade low-noise slide pots—are said to do their job with low distortion, phase shift, and noise. Dynamic range is rated at upward of 90 dB, with undistorted headroom reaching to 11 volts. A pink-noise generator is built into the unit as a reference source. A five-year free service contract, covering parts and labor, is included in the \$550 price. The similar Model 2700B, with a black rack-mount front panel, sells for \$600.

CIRCLE 149 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Sansui introduces LM series

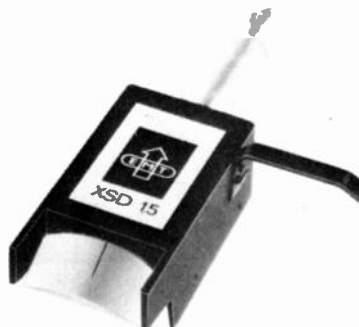
Sansui's Model LM-110, least expensive of its Linear Motion loud-speaker series, features a multiradiation baffle with three exponential horns mounted on the upper front of the enclosure. These horns channel the back radiation from the tweeter to the left, right, and top. This use of the tweeter's back wave obviates the standard baffle cavity and is said to promote linear diaphragm motion by allowing free "escape" of the back wave through the horn system. The tweeter also uses a copper-clad aluminum wire voice coil to reduce moving mass. With a peak power rating of 35 watts and 8-ohm impedance, the two-way speaker has a frequency range of 38 to 20,000 Hz, according to Sansui. Its 6½-inch cone woofer is in a ducted-port baffle. The LM-110, priced at \$249.95 a pair, is the only model in the series not sold individually.

CIRCLE 150 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

An EMT pickup "for professionals only"

Gotham Audio has announced availability in this country of EMT's handmade XSD-15 stereo phono cartridge. The moving-coil pickup is intended as a "precision transducer designed for professional use where the most exacting performance is required" and is delivered with a strip-recorder response readout plus data on distortion, output voltage, and separation—all measured from the purchased sample itself. The shell fits plug-in arms made by SME, Sony, and others. A built-in magnifier and graticule aid in cueing. The cartridge is available through some professional equipment dealers or direct from Gotham Audio Corp., its importer, at \$300.

CIRCLE 151 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



Moderate-priced Dolby deck from Kenwood

A recent addition to Kenwood's cassette-deck line is the front-loading Model KX-620. Its electronically controlled DC servo motor and large-diameter precision capstan are said to maintain wow and flutter at less than 0.09%. Kenwood says that its low-noise electronics have permitted a signal-to-noise ratio with chrome tape of 61 dB and that headroom above the meters' 0 VU (some 3 dB below Dolby reference level) is a full 10 dB. Switching provides bias for chrome or ferric tapes, equalization for either of these tape types, plus a special recording-equalization position for ferrichromes and similar tapes. The KX-620 is priced at \$219.95.

CIRCLE 152 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



A casual Koss

A new moderate-priced model from Koss Corp. is styled with a denim headband and called the Easy Listener. Similar in design to other Koss lightweight low-seal (the popular open-air type) models, it is equipped with a coiled cord terminated in a conventional stereo phone plug. For use with equipment that has only a mono miniature phone jack (some TV sets and many portable radios and tape players, for example), an adapter is supplied. The Easy Listener costs about \$40.

CIRCLE 153 ON READER-SERVICE CARD



IF YOU DO ANYTHING WITH 1/4" TAPE, YOU CAN DO IT BETTER WITH REVOX.

- Automated broadcast operations
- Scientific analysis
- On location mastering
- Tone or time changing
- Audio tape quality control
- Electronic music synthesis
- Noise analysis
- Film synchronization
- Radio telescope
- Language laboratory
- Machine tool control
- Phonetic analysis
- Radio telemetry
- Industrial research
- Information retrieval
- Electrocardiography
- Making calibration tapes
- Tape mastering with SELFSYNC
- Data storage from digital computers

And that's a simple statement of fact.

From the moment it was introduced, the Revox A77 was hailed as a recording instrument of unique quality and outstanding performance. The magazines were unanimous in their praise. Stereo Review summed it all up by saying, "We have never seen a recorder that could match the performance of the Revox A77 in all respects, and very few that even come close."

So much for critical opinion.

Of equal significance, is the fact that the Revox A77 rapidly found its way into many professional recording studios.

But what really fascinates us, is that the A77 has been singled out to

perform some unusual and highly prestigious jobs in government and industry. The kinds of jobs that require a high order of accuracy and extreme reliability.

Take NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) for example. When they wanted a machine to stand-ardize on, a machine that would lend itself to use in a wide variety of circumstances. And most importantly, a machine that was simple to use, the logical choice was the Revox A77.

Or take the governmental agency that wanted an unfailingly reliable tape machine to register and record satellite bleeps. The choice? Revox.

Or the medical centers that use

specially adapted A77's for electro-cardiographic recording.

We could go on and on (see accompanying list), but by now you probably get the point.

No other 1/4" tape machine combines the multi-functioned practicability, unfailing reliability, and outstanding performance of a Revox.

If you have a special recording problem that involves the use of 1/4" tape, write to us. We'll be happy to help you with it.

And if all you want is the best and most versatile recorder for home use, we'll be glad to tell you more about that too.

Revox Corporation
155 Michael Drive
Syosset, N.Y. 11791
U.S.A.

Revox International
Regensdorf 8105 ZH
Althardstrasse 146
Switzerland

Revox
C.E. Hammond Co. Ltd,
Lamb House
Church Street
Chiswick
London W4 2PB
England

Revox Canada, Ltd.

Please tell me where I can see and buy Revox A77
Revox Good used machines* BAT

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*As and when available from our dealers

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|----|-----|
| VV | 1 | M | 2 | O | 3 | F | 4 | R | 5 | WW | 6 | I | 7 | | V | 8 | E | 9 | M | 10 | W | 11 | J | 12 | L | 13 | VV | 14 | O | 15 | |
| U | 16 | K | 17 | | X | 18 | N | 19 | WW | 20 | S | 21 | Y | 22 | C | 23 | I | 24 | M | 25 | | | VV | 26 | O | 27 | ZZ | 28 | | | |
| F | 29 | V | 30 | T | 31 | O | 32 | YY | 33 | M | 34 | A | 35 | Z | 36 | VV | 37 | U | 38 | B | 39 | J | 40 | | W | 41 | R | 42 | | | |
| P | 43 | I | 44 | XX | 45 | | X | 46 | N | 47 | | | K | 48 | E | 49 | G | 50 | | | | YY | 51 | C | 52 | O | 53 | ZZ | 54 | | |
| H | 55 | F | 56 | D | 57 | K | 58 | WW | 59 | T | 60 | M | 61 | I | 62 | | N | 63 | L | 64 | | | VV | 65 | Z | 66 | V | 67 | A | 68 | |
| E | 69 | J | 70 | M | 71 | | O | 72 | Y | 73 | K | 74 | WW | 75 | YY | 76 | XX | 77 | | | | ZZ | 78 | C | 79 | L | 80 | O | 81 | | |
| E | 82 | M | 83 | I | 84 | W | 85 | O | 86 | G | 87 | X | 88 | F | 89 | K | 90 | Y | 91 | | | O | 92 | B | 93 | M | 94 | W | 95 | S | 96 |
| YY | 97 | F | 98 | T | 99 | E | 100 | | | J | 101 | Y | 102 | Z | 103 | M | 104 | | | U | 105 | D | 106 | L | 107 | N | 108 | O | 109 | XX | 110 |
| Y | 111 | U | 112 | ZZ | 113 | W | 114 | I | 115 | | | G | 116 | K | 117 | | | S | 118 | | | L | 119 | T | 120 | X | 121 | VV | 122 | M | 123 |
| O | 124 | | | E | 125 | B | 126 | F | 127 | YY | 128 | XX | 129 | | | WW | 130 | L | 131 | I | 132 | | | VV | 133 | E | 134 | G | 135 | | |
| V | 136 | XX | 137 | F | 138 | Y | 139 | | | H | 140 | X | 141 | F | 142 | I | 143 | B | 144 | Z | 145 | K | 146 | V | 147 | | | VV | 148 | M | 149 |
| | | WW | 150 | P | 151 | ZZ | 152 | E | 153 | J | 154 | S | 155 | L | 156 | Z | 157 | R | 158 | | | O | 159 | F | 160 | N | 161 | M | 162 | V | 163 |
| WW | 164 | | | M | 165 | YY | 166 | O | 167 | J | 168 | | | VV | 169 | W | 170 | J | 171 | D | 172 | YY | 173 | H | 174 | X | 175 | U | 176 | M | 177 |
| A | 178 | | | Z | 179 | W | 180 | E | 181 | | | M | 182 | K | 183 | W | 184 | L | 185 | J | 186 | I | 187 | ZZ | 188 | WW | 189 | | | | |

DIRECTIONS

To solve these puzzles—and they aren't as tough as they first seem—supply as many of the Output words as you can in the numbered dashes following the Input. Unless otherwise specified in the Input, the Output consists of one English word. 'Comp' means compound, or hyphenated, word.

Transfer each letter to the square in the diagram that bears the corresponding number. After only a few correct guesses you should begin to see words and phrases emerging in the diagram, which when filled in will contain a quotation related to music, recordings or audio.

The words in the quotation are separated by darkened squares and do not necessarily end at the end of a row.

Try to guess at these words and transfer each newly decoded letter back to its appropriate dash in the Output. This will supply you with further clues.

A final clue: The source of the quotation—the author and his work—will be spelled out by the first letters in the Output, reading down.

The answer to HiFi-Croctic No. 6 will appear in next month's issue of *High Fidelity*.

| INPUT | OUTPUT | INPUT | OUTPUT |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|
| A Name given to a symphony often falsely ascribed to Haydn | 68 35 178 | P Maiden that Zeus turned into a beautiful heifer | 151 43 |
| B Favorable review (slang) | 144 39 126 93 | Q Of a vocalist who sings of unrequited love | 167 86 3 92 27 |
| C Fuss | 52 23 79 | R A perverse fool | 5 158 42 |
| D The collective rites, including the music, of a particular church | 172 57 106 | S Arrests (slang) | 155 118 96 21 |
| E Danish-German composer and organist (1637-1707). Bach walked 200 miles to hear him perform | 82 69 9 153 100 134 49 181 125 | T German violinmaker, the author of a valuable treatise on their manufacture (1762-1830) | 60 31 99 120 |
| F West Coast popular singer discovered by songwriter/bandleader Johnny Otis in the mid-1950s (full name) | 127 160 4 98 142 56 29 89 138 | U Last name of coloratura soprano (1843-1919); first name of pop vocalist (b. 1927) | 105 112 38 16 176 |
| G See Word V | 87 135 116 50 | V With Word G., a Metropolitan Opera soprano, offers frequent joint recitals with her baritone husband | 30 136 8 67 147 163 |
| H Fairy queen of dreams (Irish folklore), depicted by Shakespeare, Milton, Berlioz | 140 174 55 | W Ballet by Ruth Page and Nicolas Rimisov with music from <i>Il Trovatore</i> | 11 95 184 41 180 114 85 170 |
| I Type of organ in which some of the stops are obtained by playing the parent ranks of pipes in various pitches | 115 84 132 24 7 62 187 143 44 | X Agreement in pitch or quality of tone | 141 18 121 46 175 88 |
| J See Word N (2 wds.) | 186 168 101 171 70 12 154 40 | Y One of his albums set a record by remaining on <i>Billboard's</i> charts for 400 weeks | 111 102 139 73 22 91 |
| K 16th century Italian composer of madrigals and motets | 90 74 17 117 183 58 146 48 | Z Negro fortune-teller in Verdi's <i>A Masked Ball</i> | 66 36 157 145 103 179 |
| L See Word O (2 wds.) | 185 64 119 131 13 80 156 107 | VV Italian composer (d. 1756), some of whose works have been confused with Pergolesi's | 169 37 65 1 14 148 26 133 122 |
| M Symphonic fairy tale by Prokofiev (4 wds.) | 34 162 177 2 25 123 61 182 | WW See Word N (2 wds.) | 164 75 130 150 6 189 59 20 |
| N With Words VV and J, a traditional Irish song recorded by the Abbey Tavern Singers on HBR (2 wds.) | 10 104 71 165 83 94 149 19 108 47 161 63 | XX Mahler's <i>Song of the</i> _____ | 45 137 110 129 77 |
| O After <i>The</i> and with Word L, Lady Harriets song in Act II of Flotow's <i>Martha</i> (2 wds.) | 124 159 15 72 32 109 53 81 | YY With Word ZZ, superstar rock group | 97 33 173 51 166 128 76 |
| | | ZZ See Word YY | 152 54 188 113 28 78 |

Solution to last month's HiFi-Croctic appears on page 4.

INTRODUCING TDK SUPER AVILYN. IT OUTSOUNDS CHROME. AND THE #1 FERRICHRROME.

INDEPENDENT LAB TEST RESULTS

| | TDK SA | A | B | C | D |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Signal-to-Noise Ratio | 1 st | 4 th | 1 st | 6 th | 7 th |
| Distortion (I.M.) | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 7 th | 6 th |
| Low-Frequency Response Accuracy | 1 st | 1 st | 1 st | 1 st | 1 st |
| Mid-Frequency Response Accuracy | 1 st | 2 nd | 5 th | 5 th | 2 nd |
| High-Frequency Response Accuracy | 2 nd | 2 nd | 6 th | 5 th | 1 st |
| Maximum Output Level (3% thd) | 1 st | 2 nd | 4 th | 6 th | 5 th |
| Output (0 VU) | 1 st | 4 th | 5 th | 2 nd | 2 nd |
| Surface Abrasiveness | low | high | high | high | low |



Seven tapes were tested (TDK SA, TDK KR, Scotch Chrome, BASF Chromdioxid, Advent Chrome, Scotch Classic, and Maxell UD) and ranked 1st to 7th. The chart shows the results for 5 representative tapes tested.

The following tape decks were selected for use in the tests: Nakamichi 500 & 1000, Advent 201, and TEAC 450.

SA now available in C 90.

You want the best sound you can get from your cassette recorder without worrying about headwear. And until now, chrome and ferrichrome had the sound—they outperformed ferric oxide tapes in extended high frequency response with lower noise.

Well, TDK has advanced cassette recording to a new standard of high fidelity. It's new Super Avilyn, the cassette that outsounds chrome, the best-selling ferrichrome, and the top-ranked ferric oxide tapes.

Its magnetic particle is new. It soaks up more sound and plays it back with less distortion. That's power and clarity you can hear.

Super Avilyn doesn't require special bias/eq. setting for optimum performance. It is compatible with any tape deck that has the standard CrO₂ bias/eq. setting.

Distortion—that's the big story. Look at these lab test figures.

LEAST DISTORTION—CLEAREST SOUND.

| RECORD INPUT LEVEL | TDK SA | A | B | C | D |
|--------------------|--------|------|------|-------|------|
| 0 VU | 11% | 13% | 26% | 50% | 32% |
| -5VU | 4.5% | 5.4% | 11% | 17.5% | 5.4% |
| -10VU | 4.2% | 4.5% | 8.5% | 7.8% | 4.8% |
| -20VU | 4.9% | 5.0% | 8.0% | 5.2% | 6.0% |

SMPTE METHOD: I.M. DISTORTION—7000 Hz—60Hz, 4:1 ratio.

There's just no contest. Super Avilyn delivered the clearest, cleanest sound. More lifelike sound—and to a discriminating ear, that's the ultimate test. Fact is, Super Avilyn is the new state of the art.

TDK Electronics Corp.
755 Eastgate Blvd., Garden City,
N.Y. 11530. Also available in Canada.



Wait till you hear
what you've been missing.

Introducing the BSR Silent Performer

The only rumble from this belt-drive turntable comes from our competitors.

For years most expensive manual record-playing devices have used belt-drive as a smooth, trouble-free—and most important—silent method for transmission of power. Now, our engineers have succeeded in integrating a highly-refined belt-drive system into more affordably-priced turntables. They offer a combination of features and performance not yet available in even more expensive competitive models. We call them the Silent Performers.

Our Model 20 BPX is a fully automated single-play turntable with a precision machined platter, high-torque multi-pole synchronous motor, tubular "S" shaped adjustable counter-weighted tone arm in gimbal mount, viscous cueing, quiet Delrin cam gear, automatic arm lock, dual-range anti-skate and much more. It is packaged with base, hinged tinted dust cover, and ADC K6E cartridge. See your audio dealer for more information, or write to us.



BSR

Consumer Products Group
BSR (USA) Ltd.
Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913

CIRCLE 10 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

New
A CONSUMER'S GUIDE Equipment Reports

Avid's Floor-Standing Air-Suspension Speaker

The Equipment: Avid 105, a floor-standing full-range speaker system in wooden enclosure. Dimensions: 26¼ by 20½ by 15 inches. Price: \$300. Warranty: five years, materials and workmanship; shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Avid Corp., 10 Tripps Lane, East Providence, R.I. 02914.

Comment: The Model 105 is Avid's newest speaker system and the top-of-the-line model in the series launched last year. (For a report on Model 100, see HF, August 1974.) It is a three-way air-suspension system employing five drivers in an enclosure that is larger than "standard." The woofer is a 12-inch long-throw (high-compliance) cone mounted on the front baffle along with a 3-inch air-suspension-loaded midrange cone and what Avid terms its primary high-frequency driver: a 1-inch dome tweeter. The other two are side-firing auxiliary tweeters: 1½-inch wide-distribution cones mounted on the side panels.

An elaborate crossover network inside the walnut veneer cabinet provides low-to-middle crossover at 500 Hz, midrange-to-high crossover at 4,000 Hz. Additional elements bring in the side-firing tweeters at about 9,000 Hz and, at the same time, equalize the main tweeter to balance it with the others. The wraparound grille covers the front baffle and sides. It is easily removed to gain access to the control panel, which includes two similar controls—three-position screwdriver adjustments marked +2 dB, flat, and -2 dB, for midrange and highs. Below the controls is a fuseholder that contains a quick-acting 2-ampere fuse (type AGC-2) that protects the mid- and high-frequency drivers. Input connections are made at the rear via spring-loaded press-to-connect terminals that accept stripped leads.

The Avid 105, consistent with air-suspension systems generally, is low in efficiency, and the manufacturer recommends driving it with at least 25 watts of amplifier power. The rated power-handling capacity on program material is 200 watts. In tests at the CBS lab, the speaker needed 11 watts to produce the standard output test-level of 94 dB when measured at 1 meter on axis. It can handle steady-state power of up to 40 watts, without buzzing or producing excessive distortion, to yield an output of 100 dB. On pulse power tests, it produces an output of 111 dB for an input of 212 watts (average, 424 watts peak power), the limit of the test amplifier, without excessive distortion. These figures, in sum, attest to ample dynamic range and confirm the manufacturer's power ratings.

Avid rates impedance at 8 ohms nominal, 6 ohms minimum. The measured impedance of our test sample is almost exactly 8 ohms just past the usual bass rise, and it never goes below 8 ohms across the audio band. Connecting two of these systems in parallel across the same amplifier output terminals should pose no problem.

Frequency response as measured at the lab is very



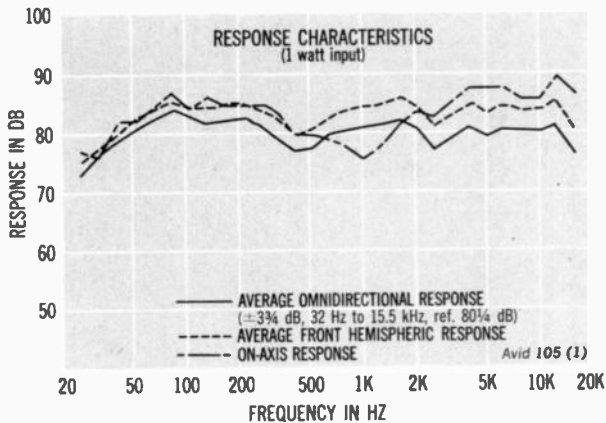
smooth and linear, running within ± 4 dB from 30 Hz to beyond 16 kHz (using 80 dB output as the reference level) with the midrange and tweeter level controls set to their indicated flat positions. The midrange control introduces somewhat more than 2 dB of boost or attenuation from about 700 to 3,500 Hz; the high-frequency control's action is closer to the 2-dB level (boost or cut) from about 5,000 to 15,000 Hz. As might be expected, it was the midrange control that made the most audible difference during music listening tests, in which we finally settled on the flat position for the midrange and -2 dB for the highs.

As we have pointed out in other speaker reports—and, indeed, as the owner's manual for the Model 105 explains—there are no predetermined "normal" balance switch settings for your particular listening room. The exact combination of settings always should be determined by the individual listener in his own room.

High-frequency pulse tests show very good conformation to the input test signal, with virtually no ringing. Low-frequency pulse tests are good, although at very high power level there is some hangover in the output. On audible test tones, the Avid responds smoothly and with very wide dispersion to beyond audibility at the high end. The lows hold up cleanly and evenly to 40 Hz, where doubling is evident, and then continue to below 30 Hz with no apparent increase in doubling. White-noise response is better than average, sounding smooth or very smooth depending on the position of the level controls.

In music listening tests, the relatively low efficiency of the speaker calls for a boost in the volume control of our amplifier, as compared to some other speakers we've used. Reproduction is very clear and well-defined, with good transient response and solid lows. The system produces a delicate sound when called for (as on chamber music) and a more brazen sound as needed (for instance, during the last moments of Stravinsky's *Firebird*). The

REPORT POLICY Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, 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 Technology Center assumes responsibility for product performance or quality.



general impression is one of transparent, uncolored, smooth reproduction.

The Avid 105, by the way, sounds best when it is placed with its back very close to the wall and when there is a dis-

Avid 105 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 80 Hz % 2nd | 80 Hz % 3rd | 300 Hz % 2nd | 300 Hz % 3rd |
| 70 | 0.27 | 0.21 | 0.45 | 0.19 |
| 75 | 0.45 | 0.26 | 0.25 | 0.27 |
| 80 | 0.37 | 0.15 | 0.25 | 0.42 |
| 85 | 0.65 | 0.41 | 0.33 | 0.47 |
| 90 | 1.3 | 0.25 | 0.70 | 0.54 |
| 95 | 2.9 | 0.78 | 1.9 | 0.62 |
| 100 | 5.2 | 1.2 | 6.2 | 1.4 |
| 101 | 6.0 | 0.45 | 8.2 | 1.0 |

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

tance of at least 18 inches from the nearest side wall. The former requirement, we found, helps smooth the lows; the latter aids in spreading the highs.

CIRCLE 141 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Bose's Remarkable Bookshelf Speaker

The Equipment: Bose 301, a full-range speaker system in walnut case. Dimensions: 17 by 10½ by 9¼ inches. Price: \$192 per pair (not sold singly). Warranty: five years, parts and labor; shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Bose Corp., 100 The Mountain Rd., Framingham, Mass. 01701.

Comment: The Bose 301 is the most unusual, and one of the best-sounding, bookshelf speaker systems we have yet encountered. Like Noah's animals, it comes only in pairs, each a reciprocal of the other, with the woofers and tweeters symmetrically placed. This design feature is one of three that are involved in achieving Bose's "direct/reflecting" sound presentation within the limited dimensions of a true bookshelf-size system. The other two are a unique "direct energy control" and a dual-frequency crossover network.

Each of the two-way speakers uses an 8-inch woofer and a 3-inch cone tweeter. The enclosure, loaded with a ducted port, functions as a small bass-reflex cabinet. The port is located on an angled panel at one end of the enclosure, and above it is the tweeter, which also is angled forward and to the side. A thin panel, or vane, that projects downward in front of the tweeter can be rotated about its vertical axis by means of a finger-hold (the direct energy control) on top of the cabinet. When the vane is turned so that it is approximately parallel to the front surface of the speaker, it offers maximum sideward deflection to the sound from tweeter—and hence maximum reflected sound (from nearby walls) in the aural "image." When it is parallel to the side of the enclosure, the result is maximum deflection directly out into the room, toward the listener. Vane, tweeter, and port all are hidden behind a removable decorative grille.

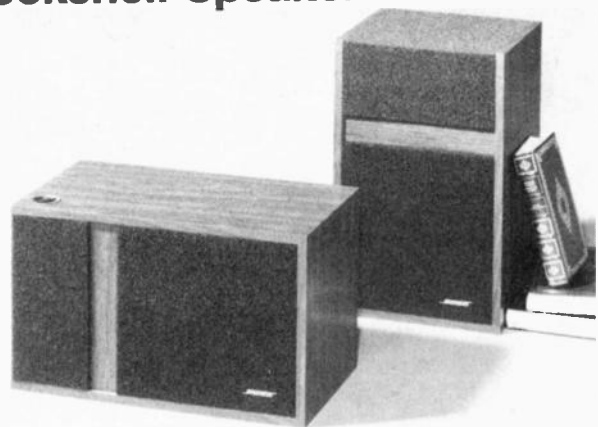
Instead of a single nominal crossover frequency between woofer and tweeter, the Model 301 uses a network that provides more than an octave (from 1,400 to 3,000 Hz) of overlap between the two drivers. The reason for this approach is to adjust both the phase and amplitude responses of the drivers to provide complementary characteristics. Both woofer and tweeter, then, operate in the midfrequency range. This technique is credited with elimi-

nating an undesirable "point source" effect and with producing a more "open" treble sound.

The two systems are designated as "part 1" and "part 2"—nominally, left- and right-channel reproducers respectively. This design makes for a great latitude in installation, further aided by the adjustable panels over the tweeters. These speakers are intended mainly for horizontal positioning, although it is conceivable that they might be used vertically in some setups. For best results, they should be placed 1½ to 5 feet above the floor (they literally are bookshelf systems in terms of size and optimum location), and each "part" should be 1½ to 3 feet from any reflecting side wall, with free space about the tweeters. These requirements are not, by the way, as stringent as they may seem at first glance; it is possible to install the pair on a bookshelf with books on either side of each unit and still enjoy the benefit of their spacious stereo.

The Bose has a rated impedance of 8 ohms. Recommended minimum amplifier power is 10 watts; maximum is 60 watts. Connections are made at the rear via knurled-nut binding posts that accept stripped leads or spade lugs.

In lab tests at CBS, the impedance measured 7.3 ohms at about 200 Hz, past the bass rise. Other minima are above 10 kHz, where impedance is still above 8 ohms, and at about 50 Hz, where it is a shade less than 7.3 ohms. So it



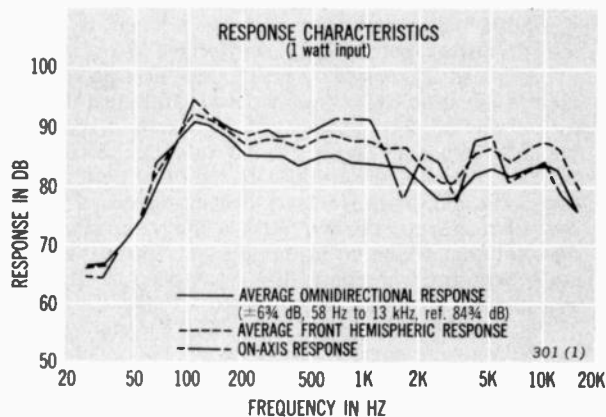
would appear that no problems should be encountered if one wants to use two pairs of the speakers on one amp.

Of somewhat higher efficiency than typical air-suspension systems, the 301 needs 3.9 watts to produce the standard output test level of 94 dB when measured at 1 meter on axis. On a steady-state power basis, it takes 40 watts to produce an output level of 105 dB before distorting. Fed with pulse power, the speaker handles up to 138.7 watts average (277.4 watts peak) to produce an output level of 113.5 dB. All this indicates ample dynamic range and excellent power-handling ability within the amplifier range recommended by the manufacturer.

Pulse tests at both low and high frequencies produce outputs that conform very closely to the test-signal inputs, indicating excellent transient behavior with minimal ringing or hangover effects. Over-all measured frequency response shows a slight midbass peak, followed by a relatively smooth midrange and high end that slopes very gradually but continues into the upper reaches with considerable energy. The actual plot from the graph runs about ± 7.5 dB from 54 Hz to 15 kHz. On audible test tones, the 301 responds well below 50 Hz—though with increased doubling, which becomes apparent at 90 Hz and stays with the signal to just below 30 Hz. Directional effects in the midrange and highs are nearly nonexistent, and tones above 10 kHz are clearly audible all about the system. Beyond 15 kHz the response dips to inaudibility. White-noise response is generally smooth and amply dispersed into the listening area.

Tests of the effect of the vane's orientation produced a sense of a change in its apparent source rather than a change in the quality of the sound itself. This characteristic is reconfirmed in listening to normal stereo program material over a pair of systems. We placed them, as instructed, on bookshelves, spacing them some 6 feet apart in a room about 12 feet wide. This provided the requisite (maximum) distance of 3 feet from reflecting side walls. This setup produces the most convincing stereo presentation we have yet heard in this particular room—with a broad and spacious feeling that also maintains good stereo imaging.

Aside from superior stereo as such, they produce very musical sound with ample fullness, good tonal balance,



Bose 301 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 80 Hz | | 300 Hz | |
| | % 2nd | % 3rd | % 2nd | % 3rd |
| 70 | 0.20 | 0.20 | 0.22 | 0.45 |
| 75 | 0.30 | 0.20 | 0.22 | 0.45 |
| 80 | 0.52 | 0.24 | 0.38 | 0.47 |
| 85 | 0.85 | 0.35 | 0.70 | 0.52 |
| 90 | 1.4 | 0.65 | 1.40 | 0.58 |
| 95 | 2.3 | 1.3 | 3.0 | 0.55 |
| 100 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 6.5 | 0.90 |
| 105 | | | 10.0 | 1.8 |

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

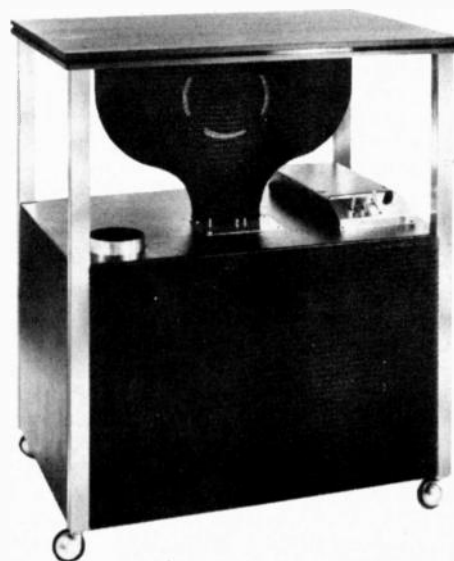
and a smooth midrange and treble that is most accommodating in maintaining both the quiet gleam of strings and the bright bite you expect from percussives. Admittedly, the low end lacks the ultimate depth and authority of larger and costlier systems (such as Bose's own Model 501 or 901), but at less than \$100 per system, the 301 seems hard to beat in its own class.

CIRCLE 142 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Leslie's "Aimable"—and "Amiable"—DVX

The Equipment: Leslie DVX Model 580, a full-range floor-standing loudspeaker system in wood and metal cabinet. Dimensions: 29 by 20½ by 33 inches high (without optional casters). Price: \$473; \$16 for set of four casters. Warranty: three years on parts, shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Electro Music/CBS Musical Instruments, 56 W. Del Mar Blvd., Pasadena, Calif. 91105.

Comment: Regular readers may remember that in the June 1973 issue we published a report on the Leslie Plus 2 system—a design we weren't very enthusiastic about despite some interesting facets of its design. The present product has some uncommon properties, too, but it is quite a different beast. It was designed not by the Electro Music people themselves, but by a team from another CBS subsidiary: CBS Laboratories (now CBS Technology Center). Given the fact that its designers were closer to what we consider to be the high fidelity field (Leslie has been best known for its electric-organ speakers, though it has



continued to offer new products for high fidelity use since the introduction of the Plus 2), we decided to test it.

This posed a problem, however. Obviously we couldn't ask the very people who designed it to gather test data for us. (All our lab documentation is, of course, prepared at the CBS Technology Center.) And if we went elsewhere for lab data, how would we duplicate the "test bed" that is common to all our speaker tests, permitting comparison of data from one report to another? We finally asked an independent engineer to go to the lab and, using the same equipment and techniques that are applied to our other speaker reports, measure the DVX.

The most obvious novelty in the 580's design (hidden behind flat rectangular grilles in the similar Model 570) is the "hourglass" Dipole Coupler midrange/tweeter housing in the upper portion of the system. It has two 1½-inch dome tweeters, a 3-inch upper-midrange driver, and an 8-inch lower-midrange driver. The Dipole Coupler is a dipole: It radiates from both front and back, with the two wave fronts thus produced out of phase with respect to each other. In theory these wave fronts will therefore cancel each other where they meet at the edges of the dipole (which is much shallower than it is wide). This, together with the rotatable mount of the assembly, is the coupler; it controls (again in theory) the perceived strength of the directly radiated signal to balance all parts of the room simultaneously for good stereo imaging.

The entire bottom portion of the cabinet contains the woofer: a 15-inch driver in a ducted-port enclosure. The mouth of the duct can be seen at the left-front top of this enclosure. To the right is the crossover network, which has three-position balance switches for the lower-midrange driver, upper-midrange drivers, and tweeters. The two switches for the midrange drivers are marked +3, 0, and -3; that for the tweeters, 0, -3, and -6. A fuseholder is next to the switches; connections are made at the rear of the crossover via color-coded binding posts that accept bared wires, large spade lugs, or banana plugs.

The actual effect of the lower-midrange switch begins a little below the nominal crossover (250 Hz), increases gradually to a maximum of ±6 dB or so between 400 and 600 Hz, then tapers off again. The upper-midrange control yields about ±3 dB change from its crossover (1,500 Hz) to 3,000 Hz. Similarly, the tweeter control delivers about 3 dB of change between positions above 5 kHz.

As shown on the accompanying graph, response is very good: within about ±3 dB from below 40 Hz to 7 kHz or so, then sloping off evenly above that. The bass, as tested with sine waves in the listening room, holds up well with very little doubling down to about 25 Hz. Distortion is, in fact, exceptionally low. Note that in some low-level measurements the testing engineer found it so low that no reliable percentage value could be assigned.

On the top end, tones to 15 kHz show little evidence of beaming—which may seem surprising in terms of the intentional dipole directivity of the design but is easily accounted for on the basis of bounce from the back wave. That is, when musical localization is not at stake (putting a premium on the first wave front received and hence on the direct radiation from the front wave) the reflected back wave is equally important and can adequately "fill" the theoretical null at the sides of the dipole.

White-noise tests suggested some boxiness—perhaps a result of the "cavity" in which the dipole is located (between the top of the woofer enclosure and the cabinet top itself). White-noise dispersion is excellent, however.

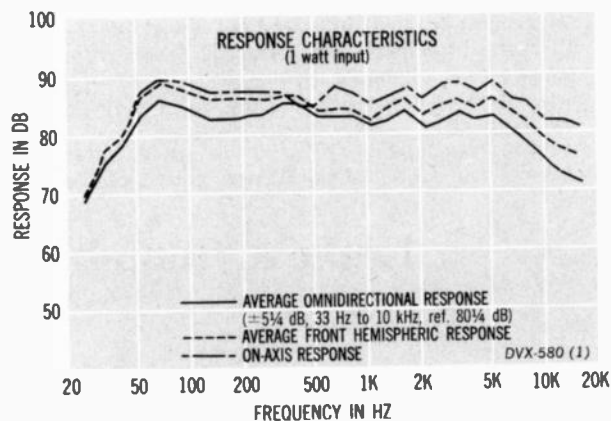
Leslie (or rather Electro Music) rates the system at 4 ohms. The actual rating point as measured in the lab is 5 ohms (at about 75 Hz). The impedance curve rises to a

peak of about 10 ohms just above 500 Hz, then subsides to another minimum of a little below 4 ohms around 2.5 kHz and rises gently from there as frequency increases. This represents a reasonably flat curve as speaker impedances go and confirms the 4-ohm rating.

Efficiency may be called moderate. The lab found that 5.25 watts were needed to produce the standard test level (94 dB at 1 meter). The speaker took 100 watts (for an output of 109½ dB) before distorting excessively in steady-state tests; in pulse tests it absorbed the maximum power of the test amplifier (250 watts average, 500 watts peak, for an output of 116 dB) without undue distortion. Obviously the 580 will handle a lot of power with equanimity and has an excellent dynamic range.

Some listeners characterized the Leslie as "rich," others as "rather dark" in coloration, and in some rooms it does have a way of bringing out the subharmonics in sounds as disparate as male voice and solo guitar. On musical material—and, again, in some rooms—the balance is a little more "bassy" than one might assume from either the response curve or audible tone tests. It is not, however, a question of boominess; the bass is prominent, but "true" (that is, with a firm sense of pitch and without undue doubling). After some experimenting with the controls we chose the midpositions of the two midrange controls and the upper one for the treble (the three "zero" positions, in other words) as those that delivered the best balance, though with some recordings (notably harpsichord) some listeners preferred the treble at -3.

There are plenty of highs to give good detail in instrumental music, and the Dipole Coupler distributes them around the room in such a way that the sound source seems considerably larger than the speaker, even with only one turned on and with a mono source. The effect is



Leslie DVX 580 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 80 Hz | 100 Hz | 300 Hz | 500 Hz |
| 70 | 0.04 | 0.10 | 0.04 | 0.13 |
| 75 | 0.07 | 0.14 | 0.04 | 0.20 |
| 80 | 0.11 | 0.15 | 0.065 | 0.28 |
| 85 | 0.09 | 0.15 | 0.04 | 0.35 |
| 90 | 0.16 | 0.21 | 0.065 | 0.39 |
| 95 | 0.30 | 0.33 | 0.015 | 0.44 |
| 100 | 0.73 | 0.32 | 0.12 | 0.46 |
| 105 | | | 0.28 | 0.47 |
| 109½ | | | 0.48 | 0.60 |

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

almost that of a so-called direct/reflecting speaker at times; this helps lend a pleasing sense of space to the "image"—in mono or stereo. Only in heavy, complex orchestral textures did we sometimes find the sense of space and detail somewhat blurred in some rooms, no doubt abetted by some ringing, which can be discerned in 3-kHz pulse-test photos.

The "aimability" of the dipole does help in "focusing" the stereo image, though we found it somewhat less effective than the admittedly elegant geometry of the theory behind it might suggest. That is to say that changes in dipole orientation do affect the image, but that the dipoles are amiably forgiving of "incorrect" angling. But with the dipoles turned to conform with the (somewhat simplistic) instructions, the stability of the stereo image is exceptional, remaining well balanced as you move about the room. When you stand near one speaker—a position in which

stereo balance normally goes by the board—the image remains intact.

Probably the first thing you will notice about the 580, however, is the full, deep bass it produces. In this respect, it is one of the finest systems we've tested in years. (The 15-inch woofer—a size that is not nearly as common in this age of bookshelf systems as it once was—surely can get a large part of the credit for this.) Perhaps the second thing you will notice is the sensation that the music is not coming from the speaker itself, but from a fairly broad area extending behind the speaker. By then you will want to begin experimenting with the rotating Dipole Coupler. These are among the strengths of this unit: the factors that, taken together, make it unique. And the sound was judged exceptional over-all by many of our listeners. Here, then, is a Leslie we would urge you to hear for yourself.

CIRCLE 145 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

A Lowboy Electrostatic/Dynamic from Janszen

The Equipment: Janszen Model Z-824, a floor-standing full-range loudspeaker system, in pecan-finish wood enclosure. Dimensions: 31 by 29 by 19½ inches (maximum) deep. Price: \$695. Warranty: three years (electrostatic elements, ten years), shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Janszen Electrostatic (Division of Electronic Industries, Inc.), 7516 42nd Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427.

Comment: Janszen has been concentrating on bookshelf systems in recent years—all, of course, with electrostatic drivers used for the upper portion of the spectrum, since this is and always has been Janszen's "thing." The Z-824, as a floor-standing unit, therefore harks back somewhat to the days when "electrostatic" meant big.

Because of its shape, we unofficially dubbed the Z-824 "the cowcatcher." There is a reason for the complex angling of its front panel: It helps to promote optimum dispersion from the drivers. Behind a foam grille are two baffle panels, each containing a 12-inch woofer and an array of four electrostatic elements, which are further angled with respect to each other so that the total of eight present an almost continuous spherically curving front. Also on the front panel is a level control for the electrostatic elements.

Connections are made at the rear on binding posts that will accept bared wires, large spade lugs, or banana plugs. There actually are two color-coded sets, strapped so that only one need be used in single-amp operation. If you prefer to bi-amp the system, you can remove the strapping and drive the electrostatic elements and the dynamic woofers independent of each other. A line cord supplies energizing voltage to the electrostatic elements.

The woofers are in a sealed enclosure. They are crossed over at about 800 Hz to the electrostatic elements, which might be described as a midrange/tweeter array for this reason. Their front-panel control has an extreme range in that its minimum position can be set to, in effect, turn them off altogether. We found pros and cons for various settings in the top quarter of the control range. The maximum setting emphasizes the so-called presence range; turned down about halfway, the control produces a somewhat subdued high end. The lab measurements were made with this control at the midpoint—standard procedure when, as is the case here, the manufacturer makes no specific recommendation.

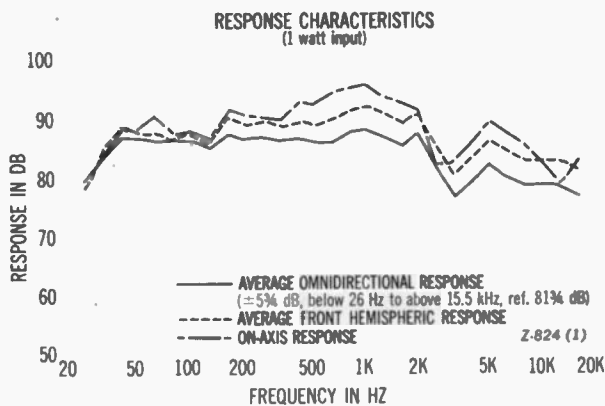
The response curve shows a marked dip in the region



around 3 kHz but otherwise is quite flat out to both extremes of the frequency range. In listening to test tones, we found little doubling in the bass, which holds up well down to 25 Hz or below, though the deep bass sound seems a little rough with some recordings. At the top we found response generally excellent and well dispersed to beyond 15 kHz. White noise has some coloration, presumably attributable to the 3-kHz dip, but it proved difficult to describe. Some listeners used the term "throaty"; in A/B comparisons some described it as "a little less body" by comparison to some other speakers.

The sound is exceedingly transparent and finely detailed, however, in all sorts of music. Male voices and the lower instruments seem particularly clean; sopranos and such instruments as the harpsichord remain clean but take on a subtle, often pleasing, brightness. Some evidence of ringing is visible in 3-kHz pulse-scope photos.

Janszen rates the Z-824 at 4 ohms. At the rating point (around 80 Hz, above the bass-resonance rise at 40 Hz) the CBS lab measured impedance as 8 ohms. It rises little above this value, and never falls below it, to about 2 kHz; then there is a peak of about 16 ohms at 5 kHz, followed by a steady drop as frequency rises. At 20 kHz the impedance is down almost to 2 ohms. This does not contradict Jan-



zen's rating; it simply underlines a typical property of electrostatic drivers: They are more difficult for typical transistor amplifiers to handle at high frequencies than at lower ones. (In normal operation, of course, signal levels are extremely low at very high frequencies, saving the amplifier from the abuse it might suffer were such a low impedance encountered in the midrange.)

Efficiency of the system is fairly high. Only 2.15 watts are needed to drive it to 94 dB (at 1 meter on axis). It handles up to 100 watts (for an output of 109 dB) before distorting excessively on steady tones; in pulse tests it will take the test amplifier's full power (360 watts average, 720



The Equipment: Rectilinear 5, a full-range loudspeaker system for floor or bookshelf use, in wood enclosure. Dimensions: 25 by 15 inches (front; may be positioned horizontally or vertically); 14½ inches deep. Price: \$299; optional Rectilinear Dispersion Base (for floor-standing use), \$59 per pair (not supplied singly). Warranty: five years parts and labor, shipping paid one way. Manufacturer: Rectilinear Research Corp., 107 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, N.Y. 10454.

Comment: The Rectilinear 5 is a four-way sealed-enclosure loudspeaker system that is very much in the Rectilinear tradition and yet offers some novelties of design. On the back panel are color-coded binding posts (for bared leads, large spade lugs, banana plugs, or the supplied dual-banana plug), a fuseholder, and a clip to hold a spare (AGC3

Janszen 2-824 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 80 Hz | | 300 Hz | |
| | % 2nd | % 3rd | % 2nd | % 3rd |
| 70 | 0.80 | 0.32 | 0.60 | 1.2 |
| 75 | 1.1 | 0.25 | 1.0 | 0.52 |
| 80 | 0.28 | 0.17 | 0.27 | 0.40 |
| 85 | 0.45 | 0.25 | 0.40 | 0.43 |
| 90 | 0.75 | 0.35 | 0.65 | 0.45 |
| 95 | 1.2 | 0.17 | 1.1 | 0.45 |
| 100 | 0.28 | 0.18 | 0.35 | 0.70 |
| 105 | 0.42 | 0.27 | 0.62 | 0.83 |
| 109 | | | 0.90 | 1.2 |

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

watts peak) for an output of 117½ dB without undue distortion. Power handling and dynamic range are excellent.

This obviously is an extended-range system. It is axiomatic that electrostatic elements don't want for response at the top end. The things that set the Z-824 apart from most speakers that use electrostatic elements are its deep bass response, its excellent power handling (a severe restriction in some electrostatics), and its wide dispersion. Electrostatic elements tend to be beamy; it presumably is the configuration of the eight-panel array in the Janszen that solves this problem. It is a fine speaker.

CIRCLE 144 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The "Laboratory Series" Rectilinear 5

fast blow) fuse; there are no controls. The four drivers are mounted in the front panel. (The grille cloth can be removed if necessary, though there is little point to it and the instruction folder contains some caveats lest you damage the wood "bead" around the grille in the process.)

First there is a 12-inch woofer that operates up to 200 Hz. A 7-inch bass/midrange driver equipped with a whizzer cone takes over there and contributes output to around 5 kHz. The crossover system—if it can be called that—is unconventional. Neither the 7-inch driver nor either tweeter is electrically limited at the top end; each is fed the entire signal, from its high-pass filter on up, the only limitation at the top being the physical ability of the driver to reproduce the wavelengths involved. The tweeter is a 1½-inch Mylar dome operating from 1 kHz upward. The fourth driver is a 1-inch polycarbonate dome that handles only the final octave—from 10 kHz upward.

The omnidirectional response curve is a fair representation of what you hear with the Rectilinear 5: a notably strong bass end, a slight emphasis in the "presence range" (at least with respect to the range immediately above it), and extended highs with some tendency to emphasize the extreme top (the rise above 10 kHz, where most speakers are rolling off).

In listening to white noise, too, we detected slight mid-range emphasis and a slight exaggeration of the extreme highs, which nonetheless retained an open, airy quality. In these same tests we found that white-noise "coloration" remained remarkably constant within 45 degrees in any direction from the speaker's axis, indicating excellent dis-

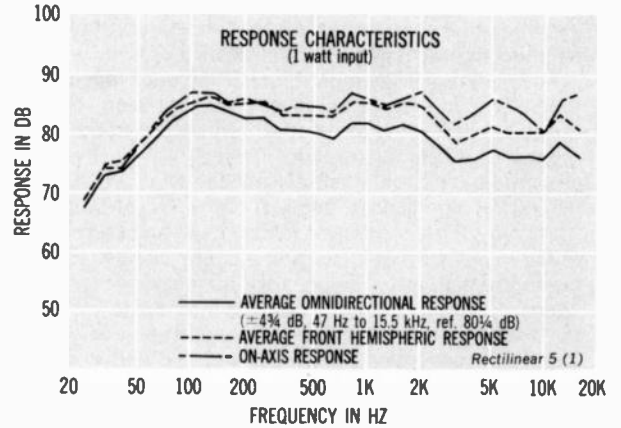
person within this area. As the angle becomes extreme (approaching 90 degrees off axis), however, there is a progressive loss in extreme highs.

Tone tests confirm that some beaming can be discerned by about 13 kHz, though the tones remain audible within the ± 45 -degree "cone" well above 15 kHz. At the other frequency extreme, test tones hold up strongly with little doubling to below 30 Hz. In these tests we noted—as we did with music—that the bass seems somewhat more sensitive to placement than average. We generally preferred some floor placements (particularly in simulating the Rectilinear Dispersion Base, which holds the system a few inches off the floor and cocked back at an angle of 10 degrees for better dispersion) where no bass roughness could readily be detected by ear and the bass generally seemed smoother—or, in listening to music, cleaner and more "true"—than in some bookshelf positions.

Rectilinear recommends at least 30 watts in the driving amplifier and says the model is safe to use with any amp up to 250 watts per channel. At the CBS Technology Center, the lab tests showed that it will handle up to 100 watts of steady tone (at 300 Hz), for an output of 104 dB, before distorting excessively. Pulse tests were run to 327 watts average (654 watts peak), the limit of the amplifier used, without undue distortion. The latter test yields output levels of 112 dB. These figures indicate excellent dynamic range and peak handling. Some evidence of ringing was detected in the pulse tests. The speaker requires 7.8 watts for 94-dB output, indicating moderately low efficiency.

The model is rated at 6 ohms nominal. Actually its impedance curve is unusually flat, nowhere rising above about 11 ohms (at bass resonance, specified by Rectilinear as 41 Hz) or dropping below 5.5 ohms (at the rating point, a little above 100 Hz). Throughout the midrange and all but the highest treble the impedance is a little over 8 ohms, dropping to about 6 ohms just short of 20 kHz. This consistency of impedance is theoretically desirable, of course, because it presents a relatively constant load to the driving amplifier.

The sound obtained is immediately likable—though not equally so to all listeners. The speakers have a live, "forward" quality that is both exciting and appealing, and



Rectilinear 5 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 80 Hz % 2nd | 80 Hz % 3rd | 300 Hz % 2nd | 300 Hz % 3rd |
| 70 | 0.14 | 1.5 | 0.27 | 0.75 |
| 75 | 0.14 | 1.4 | 0.27 | 0.95 |
| 80 | 0.18 | 1.0 | 0.37 | 1.0 |
| 85 | 0.45 | 1.2 | 0.68 | 1.1 |
| 90 | 0.68 | 1.1 | 0.95 | 0.9 |
| 95 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 2.3 | 1.2 |
| 100 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 1.2 |
| 104 | | | 6.6 | 1.7 |

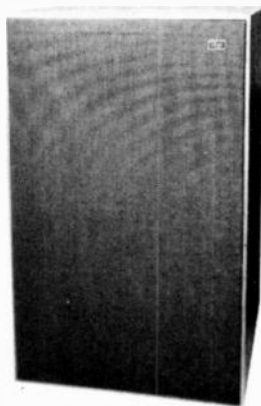
*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

have a certain gusto in the way they reproduce bass. Listeners used to hearing less energy at the extreme high end (and many speakers are intentionally designed this way, of course) judged the sound to be on the bright side.

The liveness and immediacy of sound, plus the transparency and breadth of response, convince us that the Rectilinear 5 is among the models in the \$300 range that warrant serious consideration.

CIRCLE 146 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Royal Sound's Unconventional SP-55



The Equipment: RSC SP-55, a full-range loudspeaker in wood enclosure. Dimensions: 25 by 15½ inches, front (can be used vertically or horizontally) 12 inches deep. Price: \$249. Warranty: provisions had not been made final at presstime. Manufacturer: Royal Sound Co., Inc., 409 N. Main St., Freeport, N.Y. 11520.

Comment: Much of what is written about new loudspeakers has a distinctly messianic quality that, when you've seen it in enough variants, eventually becomes suspect. So it was with more than a few grains of salt that we initially imbibed the descriptive matter on the SP-55. Royal Sound claims excellent dispersion, response, transient handling, and freedom from distortion for this speaker. While none of these claims startle, the means that have been adopted to achieve them are admittedly unusual.

In particular, there is an internal, driven woofer that does not radiate sound directly at all; its function is to control the air-loading on the inner side of the radiating woofer so that, it is stated, the bass is produced as from an infinite-baffle system. Among the advantages claimed are better bass transients because the radiating woofer cone need not be stiffened to avoid breakup. Another special design point is a copper pole cap used to keep voice-coil inductance low and independent of the coil's position with respect to the magnet structure (for "symmetric pulsa-

tion"—the "SP" of the model designation). And special pains were taken to keep the impedance presented to the amplifier constant at all frequencies.

To take this last claim first, the SP-55 does indeed have the flattest impedance curve we have ever seen. The normal "bass rise"—the peak, often very severe, at bass resonance—is barely discernible. The curve is virtually a straight line, nowhere rising significantly above 10 ohms nor falling significantly below 8 ohms. Royal Sound actually rates the system at "4 to 8 ohms"—an exact reversal of the usual habit of specifying a single, almost arbitrary number when actual impedance varies widely with frequency. Presumably the company's intent is to imply that the model is well suited for all applications where one might use conventional 4-ohm as well as 8-ohm speakers, which is true. And pairs of SP-55s can be paralleled in each channel without worry about excessive current in output transistors. Most important, probably, is the constant load—*independent of frequency content—presented to the amplifier.*

Royal Sound says the unit will take up to 80 watts of steady-state power. Actually the lab at the CBS Technology Center found that distortion becomes excessive (at 300 Hz) only at 100 watts, for an output of 102 dB. With pulsed power the speaker reaches 225 watts, average (450 watts peak)—the limit of the test amplifier—without undue distortion. Output at this level is 108½ dB. This represents excellent power handling though not the very wide dynamic range that the wattage numbers might at first suggest since the efficiency of the system is distinctly lower than average: 18 watts were needed to reach the standard (94 dB at 1 meter) test level. Dynamic range is good, however.

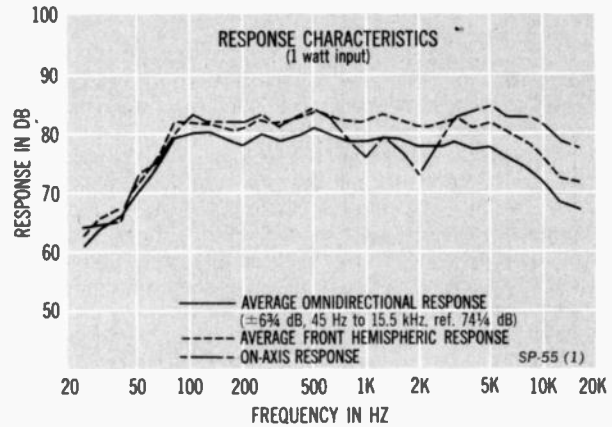
And the distortion figures are very good indeed. There is, in addition, very little evidence of ringing or overshoot in pulse-test photos. So far, in fact, the lab data establish a number of points on which Royal Sound has done an admirable job of achieving its design aims. Before discussing others, however, let's back up and describe the SP-55.

It may be described as a bookshelf system, since it is approximately the classic 2-cubic-foot size and shallow enough (12 inches) to be placed on some bookshelves. There are color-coded press-clip connections for bared wires on the back of our sample (though connection instructions next to these terminals describe screw connections), which is venerated to present a respectable appearance when the unit is free-standing.

Behind the removable grille cloth are the radiating woofer (as stated before, a separate and somewhat different woofer with its own crossover is used internally), a cone midrange driver, and domed tweeter. Approximate diameters are 8, 3, and 1½ inches respectively.

Two rotary adjustments on the baffle are normally hidden behind the grille. That for the midrange has a maximum adjustment range of a little over 5 dB from around 800 Hz to 2 kHz; that for the treble has about the same spread from 2 kHz upward. These two frequencies would appear to represent the crossovers. Both controls have some influence beyond their normal control range, but not much. And both have a NORM indication at the midpoints; this setting of each was used in all lab tests.

The response curves represent unusually linear response from about 80 Hz to 3 kHz, with a gradually increasing slope as frequency rises. Linearity across a broad range from midbass to midtreble, in fact, is on the order of ±2 dB—better than many tape decks and even phono pickups. This statement is, of course, based on the omnidirectional response curve. In some rooms the sound, of flutes, for example, does tend to suggest a little of the roughness visible in the on-axis curve (which, since it is made from a single microphone position and can vary



Royal Sound SP-55 Harmonic Distortion*

| Output Level (dB) | Frequency | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 80 Hz | | 300 Hz | |
| | % 2nd | % 3rd | % 2nd | % 3rd |
| 70 | 0.60 | 0.13 | 0.26 | 0.30 |
| 75 | 0.18 | 0.13 | 0.18 | 0.21 |
| 80 | 0.18 | 0.40 | 0.42 | 0.18 |
| 85 | 0.18 | 0.40 | 0.68 | 0.16 |
| 90 | 0.28 | 0.25 | 1.2 | 0.16 |
| 95 | 0.65 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 0.22 |
| 100 | | | 4.5 | 0.33 |
| 102 | | | 6.2 | 1.4 |

*Distortion data are taken on all tested speakers until distortion exceeds the 10% level or the speaker produces the spurious output known as buzzing, whichever occurs first.

widely with that position, is the least informative of the three curves). But nowhere did we encounter objectionable roughness. Nor could we perceive, in listening tests, the beaming that is suggested by the spread between the three curves at the top end.

In white-noise tests the highs proved excellently dispersed, though not quite as open and airy and not quite as prominent as with some speakers. We could detect no significant beaming in this test or with sine waves out to beyond 15 kHz—where the level is dropping off, of course. In the bass, sine-wave tones remain clean, with little doubling (as one would expect from the distortion chart) down to about 35 Hz, where the output simply begins to drop off.

After all we have said, some readers doubtless will be disappointed the first time they hear the SP-55. By contrast to many speakers in its price range it may appear colorless or a little "distant." Particularly in A/B comparisons, it may seem to lack the gutsiness of one model, the zing of another, the presence of yet another. We urge you not to be put off by these first impressions. For one thing, its low efficiency must be compensated for before adequate comparisons can be made; for another, it does add relatively little (false) coloration to the sound. If you like a little more presence, you can turn up the midrange control; if you like a little more zing, you can turn up the tweeter control. We would expect listeners—certainly, at least, in this country—to prefer these settings over the *minimum* settings of either control.

Americans generally seem to prefer overstated to understated sound, and to listeners so oriented accuracy may appear to be understatement. The SP-55 is essentially an accurate reproducer. If the very deepest bass of some (generally expensive) systems is not there, neither is the false bass of some (generally cheaper) systems that masquerades as ultradeep bass, for example. We can't be sure, on a point-by-point basis, how much each of the design novelties incorporated into the speaker contributes to its qualities, but Royal Sound is doing something right.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

High praise for ADC MKII low mass cartridges.



“This cartridge (ADC XLM MKII) gave us some of the smoothest and cleanest high-end results we have heard from record reproduction. Heavily recorded difficult musical passages were handled with ease and overall musical accuracy was maintained.”

*The Len Feldman Report
in FM Guide*

**“Tracking ability at low and middle frequencies was exceptional... the high level required half the tracking force of most other cartridges... one of the best 2-channel stereo cartridges and better than most CD-4 types.”
(ADC Super XLM MKII)**

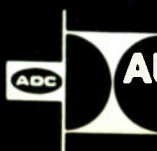
*Hi-Fi News and
Record Review*

ADC XLM MKII cartridges embody principles found in no other cartridges, as evidenced by our U.S. Patent. They feature a unique “induced magnet” whereby the magnet is fixed and the magnetism is induced into a tiny hollow soft-iron collar. This collar in turn moves between the pole pieces thereby allowing for a major reduction in the mass of the moving system. This LOW MASS permits the stylus to trace the most intricate modulations of the record grooves with a feather-light tracking force—as low as $\frac{3}{4}$ of a gram.

This results in super-linear pick up especially at the higher frequencies of the audible spectrum, which other cartridges either distort or fail to pick up at all. This low tracking force also assures minimal erosion and a longer playing life for the records.

This family of LOW MASS Cartridges is offered with Shibata type and elliptical diamond styli.

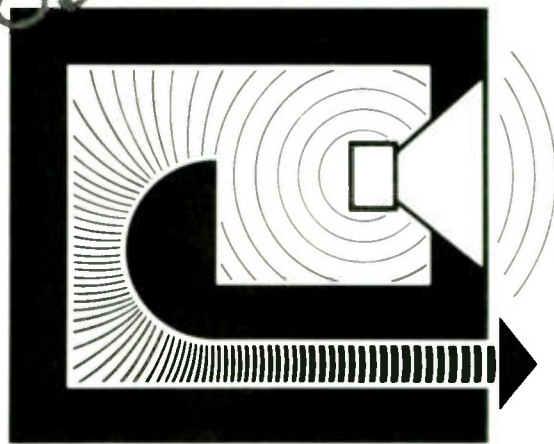
For detailed specifications, write ADC.



AUDIO DYNAMICS CORPORATION

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U.S. PATENT
NO. 3,892,288



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B·I·C VENTURI™



by James Brinton

How to Improve Your Speakers

Ten ways—some costing nothing—to maximize the sound of your systems.

TASTE BEING WHAT IT IS, there's always a desire for more or deeper bass, for clearer, more extended highs, and for that elusive sense of spaciousness so rarely captured in the home. That's why audiophiles try improving their speakers. Short of spending thousands of dollars on the best speakers available, is there anything the average audiophile can do that really will improve his situation? The answer is yes, many things—and some require no expense at all.

But the choice of measures should be carefully made. Some speaker systems are so cheap that to spend money "improving" their performance would be wasteful; others are so good that modifications or additions must be handled meticulously if they are not to degrade their performance.

Among the devices for improving speaker performance are the so-called add-ons: subwoofers, supertweeters, and new midrange units. There are electronic devices such as equalizers, electronic crossovers for bi- and triamplification. This sort of approach brings up a basic question. In any improvement scheme, is it more profitable to modify the speaker system itself or the signal going into the system or both?

Pairs and Placements

One easy way to improve the sound of some, but not all, loudspeakers is to double up, with two systems operating (in parallel or in series, depending on their impedance ratings) wherever you now have one. The Advent Loudspeaker, for example, seems to profit from this stacking treatment—many audiophiles feel that the paired speakers sound like more than the sum of the parts. But other systems won't be improved through this approach, and some may be degraded. In fact, the reason for the Advent's success here isn't fully understood, although it may have something to do with the new load presented to the amplifier, the shorter cone excursions needed for a given sound pressure level, or the distances between various driv-

ers and the coupling that takes place between them as a consequence of pairing.

If you wish to try stacking with your own speakers, it's wise to borrow, rather than buy, the second set. Vary the position of the speakers relative to each other; a few inches will make a significant difference in the coupling between drivers and thus could change the sound greatly. You can, of course, "stack" them either side by side or vertically. Experiment with driver coupling by repositioning systems with respect to each other.

Roy Allison, president of Allison Acoustics, suggests an approach to speaker placement that may greatly improve bass response if the layout of your listening room will allow it and if the associated midrange and tweeter elements have enough dispersion. Simply place the speakers against the side walls of the listening room, about 2½ to 3 feet from a corner. The woofer of each should be near the floor, aiming parallel to the side wall. This will increase the efficiency with which bass energy is coupled into the room and may make you rethink the need for a subwoofer.

Extra Drivers

One of the most common ways to upgrade is to add extra drivers to help extend frequency response: subwoofers, for example, or supertweeters. This sort of add-on has several things going for it and several against it.

First, it can be expensive. In most cases it is necessary to add an electronic crossover (although occasionally the add-on speaker will contain a crossover of its own) and another amplifier to power the add-on.

Second, unless the program material you are using is superb, there's as much chance of decreasing the listening pleasure as increasing it. Most of today's records have a good deal more hash and rumble than musical content at the extreme low end, and many are deliberately rolled off—musically speaking—below 50 Hz. And at the high end,

Caveat Auditor

Before adding a single component to your speaker system, before upgrading it in any way, you should determine the real cause of your dissatisfaction with the sound you're getting. If you demand absolutely flat broadband response from a pair of \$75 bookshelf speakers, you are plainly asking too much of the maker, his product, and the laws of physics. Try going to a larger, more capable system before surrounding a small one with subwoofers, supertweeters, equalizers, and other add-ons.

It's a good idea first to take a look at the other end of the audio chain, your phono cartridge's performance. Nothing can change the sound of a speaker more, and more inexpensively, than a new phono cartridge. If you are missing highs, perhaps you need a new stylus or a better cartridge with a flatter high-end response. The same goes for bass response, with the emphasis on tracking. Also, you may be able to improve separation and/or bass reproduction by experimenting with damping for your tone arm. (See HF, July 1975.)

If you do decide to upgrade your speakers, remember that those from reputable manufacturers generally are well thought-out as to acoustic balance, efficiency, driver interaction, etc. Their design specifications have been arrived at by experts with professional judgment and equipment who probably will do a better job of this synthesis than the average audiophile. As you "upgrade," you will be attempting to improve on a professional design; while this can be done, it requires much patience and an ear acute enough to distinguish between better and just *different*—which often will sound better at first. And some improvements may be only marginal; one never knows beforehand. This is not just part of the risk, but part of the reward, for some improvements are dramatic. J.B.B.

unless both cartridge and record are good, one is apt to get better reproduction of high-frequency distortion and mistracking products than of instrumental harmonics.

But for those with access to good discs and tapes, there is much to gain from add-ons. This is what makes the market for subwoofers from Dahlquist, Fulton, Hartley, Hegeman, IMF, Janis, M & K, and others. And, at the other end of the spectrum, there are mid- and high-frequency add-ons from such companies as Janszen, Micro/Acoustics, RTR, and STR.

If you have patience and time but lack funds, you might want to try a homemade subwoofer. It is possible to mount a low-frequency driver in a wall, floor, closet door (brace it), or any other listening-room surface that promises a volume of 10

to 12 cubic feet or more behind it to act as a baffle. Use a large woofer with a low free-air resonance—say, a 15-inch driver as a minimum (Hartley makes 18- and 24-inch monsters).

You need not provide separate subwoofers for each channel. If you can derive a common mono bass signal from the back of your preamplifier or integrated amplifier, you need only add a mono amplifier to power the subwoofer, plus a low-pass filter to keep the frequencies handled by your existing system out of the subwoofer and its amp. Your speaker maker will usually be able to supply the information needed for building a simple low-pass filter for use either before or after the power amplifier. Also, this sort of installation tends to be relatively efficient; an amplifier smaller than that for your present speakers probably will suffice. If your present electronics offer no source for the mono switch, you probably will need a stereo electronic crossover, with the two inputs paralleled, feeding into the mono amp.

As for its crossover frequency, subwoofers don't have much business operating above 60 to 80 Hz, and much lower crossovers than that often are recommended. In your application, perhaps the best place to cross over to a subwoofer is at your speaker systems' -3 dB point—the frequency, below bass resonance, at which response is down by 3 dB. With better acoustic-suspension systems it will be at a fairly low frequency; with electrostatics and planar-magnetic speakers, it may be much higher. But the -3 dB point is a good starting place, and because you can allow the upper-frequency speaker to roll off naturally it makes the design of the simple crossover even simpler.

If you feel you can afford one of the commercially available subwoofers, you will also be purchasing a good deal of advice in the bargain—and, in some cases, electronic crossover and amplification circuitry. So long as you make your needs clear, you can generally depend on the makers of such items for reliable information on putting their products to work for you.

While the manufacturers generally acknowledge their products' low-frequency limitations, most claim fairly extended high-frequency response. Why, then, add an outboard supertweeter? Although total energy output may indeed be high at high frequencies, dispersion, distortion, or transient response may not be adequate for your tastes. If you just add highs, your systems will simply sound unnaturally bright; add-ons are to be used to increase the *quality* of high-frequency information, not just its quantity.

As with subwoofers, high-frequency add-ons need a crossover. In point of fact they need it more than the subwoofers, which will absorb high-frequency energy with little ill effect. The reverse is not true; tweeter elements are small and are de-

signed for relatively civilized amounts of energy and, if presented with high-level, low-frequency information, will overheat and destroy themselves.

At one time a large number of high-frequency add-ons was available. Recently the number seems to have shrunk a bit, but Janszen, Micro/Acoustics, RTR, and STR all offer this type of product.

Janszen's name is familiar as a maker of electrostatic midrange/tweeter units, and although some of its products look the same from the outside there has been continual development over the past decade. Not only is performance improved over the Janszens of the 1960s, but the line also has grown to include more than half a dozen models with two to eight radiating panels, built-in crossovers, and prices from \$80 to \$300. The latter figure may seem high for a tweeter, but the Janszens cover much of the midrange as well as the high-frequency end of the spectrum.

For use with low- to medium-efficiency speakers, Micro/Acoustics offers an add-on array of cone tweeters. Its main claim is improved dispersion, although it also adds to the amount of high-frequency energy present. It works with, but does not necessarily replace, tweeters already in your system. It is priced at less than \$60.

A step up the technological ladder are the add-ons from STR: two units with either three or five piezoceramic horn-loaded transducers. They not only are efficient (about 30% is claimed), but also

can handle large amounts of power. The cost runs from \$75 to \$99.

RTR makes some of the largest electrostatic add-ons. Its smaller unit has six panels, while the larger one uses 15. Both handle fair amounts of power, claim response to 30,000 Hz (as do the Janszens), and have built-in crossovers. Prices are \$169 and \$279.

Beyond this, adventurous souls can dive into the catalogues and look for tweeters of their own. Some of these are apparently very low in price, but generally one gets what one pays for. In addition, rolling one's own can be difficult; it is very hard to learn much from the descriptions in speaker catalogues, and it may be even tougher to implement your ideas after buying the drivers.

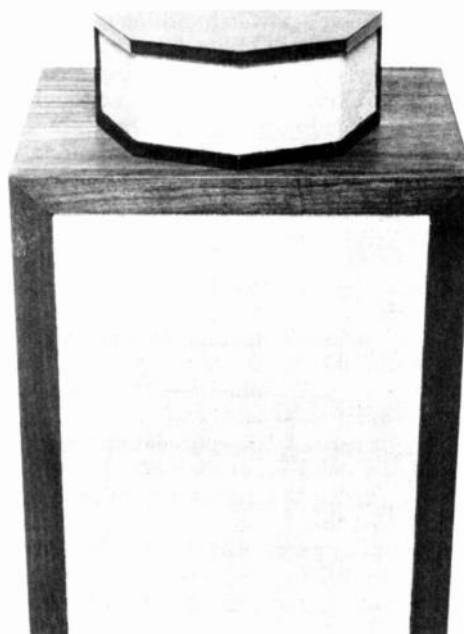
Equalization

If you are fairly well pleased with the bandwidth of your system or would like to make only minor modifications to it, you might well invest in an equalizer. More than just super tone controls, this device can help overcome some of the deficiencies of your listening room and can flatten peaks and fill in dips in your speakers' response curves.

The equalizers most audiophiles are familiar with are the octave-band varieties made by BSR, SAE, and Soundcraftsmen. Fewer are familiar with the Altec 729A Acousta-Voicette, a unit with one-third octave resolution. It is better able to cope with narrow peaks and dips than the octave-



Add-on subwoofer (this one from Hegeman Laboratories) extends downward the frequency range of existing loudspeakers. Since deep bass is "nondirectional," only one subwoofer need be used in a stereo system.



Add-on supertweeter does much the same at the other end of the frequency range. Electrostatic supertweeters first became popular a generation ago; this one (from Micro/Acoustics) uses a dynamic driver array for wide dispersion.

About Multiamplification

Crossovers are one of the facts of life, like death and taxes, that speaker makers must live with. A poorly designed crossover network can add distortion, ringing, and other fuzz to the signal. And even where the network is well designed, there is still one reason for bypassing it, and that's to reduce distortion within the power amplifier.

It was for this application that the electronic crossover was developed years ago. It divides the audio range into two or three frequency bands for separate amplification. Since the lower and higher frequencies don't meet during amplification they can't intermodulate, and the result is cleaner sound. Also, because there's less chance of clipping in a multi-amplifier system, some forms of harmonic distortion also are reduced.

If your loudspeaker is one of the rare ones that allows you to bypass its internal crossover, you can easily switch over to multi-amplification with the addition of an electronic crossover and the needed amplifiers. If there is no way to bypass the built-in crossover, you face a difficult decision: Should you break into the sealed enclosure, probably voiding the warranty? And if you do, will you be able to reassemble things?

If the decision is easy for you, or if you are one of the lucky ones who can patch in directly, the next question involves crossover frequencies. Start your experimentation with the frequencies used by the manufacturer—beyond this, you are in unknown territory with only your ears to guide you. As a rule of thumb, though, it's wise to extend the operating range of high-frequency drivers into lower ranges only with the greatest caution. A tweeter's power-handling capabilities will generally decline at lower frequencies.

You may have trouble finding an electronic crossover. There never have been enough of these for hard-line audiophiles, and there are relatively few for sale today (by Audio Research, Crown, C/M Labs, Pioneer, and some less well-known companies, such as M & K, DeCoursey Engineering, and Huntington Electronics). Of those available, only the Crown VFX-2 seems to have the infinitely variable crossover frequencies that aid experimenters; almost all the rest use either fixed or switch-selected discrete frequencies.

This shouldn't discourage you, since there are a number of small companies that will manufacture crossovers to suit your specifications at a fairly low price. The engineering isn't too demanding. Generally, such products can be found through the classified ads in hobbyist magazines.

Note, too, that almost any company that sells a crossover is a potential source of information on crossover applications, crossover frequency selection, correct phasing, selection of rolloff rate (6, 12, or 18 dB per octave), and so on. Try cross-referencing this information with that available from speaker makers.

J.B.B.

band devices, but at \$875 it exacts its price. For an added fee, Altec will send along an engineer with the appropriate test gear to flatten the response of your speakers and your room. The results may be worth the cost, which now is well over \$1,000 including labor.

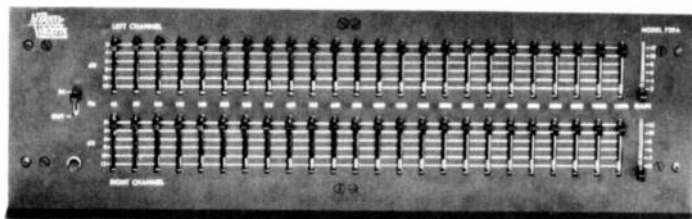
But for most audiophiles, octave-band equalizers will suffice and are far more affordable. It is too much to ask that they remove narrow frequency-response variations, but they can do a good job of flattening out system response and, at the same time, are a bit more useful (because they are simpler) than the Altec for correcting flaws in record and tape frequency balance. The octave-band units range in price from below \$100 to \$550.

If your needs are simple and your wants are few, you can manage with fewer equalization bands. The BSR FEW-2 has five bands, ganged for stereo, and costs less than \$100. At about \$230, JVC's SEA-10 five-band model provides a bit more flexibility than the FEW-2. These units frankly are aimed at program correction, though, and, if they succeed in solving your over-all listening problem, it will be partly a matter of luck.

Then there are black-box equalizers. This small market is characterized by Norman Labs' Model Five. Various Model Fives are designed to complement specific loudspeakers in the lines of ADC, AR, Altec, Dynaco, and KLH. Fitting into the system between preamplifier and power amplifier, or into a preamplifier's tape-monitor loop, the Norman alters, for example, the contour of bass frequencies below a certain point to counteract a speaker's natural rolloff. Adding the equalizer's boost to the speaker's cut theoretically results in flat response. Similar effects are obtained in the mid- and high-frequency ranges and are switch-controlled.

The Norman, which costs less than \$90, embodies an appealing concept. The hooker is that the company's taste and measurements may not exactly agree with yours, nor may the Model Five's frequency contouring be an exact solution to the exact room-related problem you have. Even so, many audiophiles report excellent results with it and its kin under other brand names.

Caveats go with the use of any equalizer. All will add some noise and distortion to your system's sound, so do not be shocked if there is some loss of the fugitive "transparency" so dear to audiophiles. And—more importantly—since a usual application of equalizers is to strengthen the low bass, take note of the following: The increased excursion your woofer must now make in order to pump the added energy into the room will increase its own distortion by a measurable degree; in extreme cases, your woofer may be forced to move so far that it will "bottom," causing mechanical damage; finally, use of an equalizer can increase the power demands on your amplifier, espe-



Speaker equalizers come in all shapes, sizes, and prices. Simple ones (like that from Norman Laboratories, above) resemble tone controls and usually do not allow different settings in two channels. The most elaborate equalizers control channels individually, in one-third-octave bands. The "classic" model is the Altec Acosta-Voicette (left). Models between these extremes generally are appropriate for equalizing program content as well as loudspeaker systems.

cially if your speaker is one of the less efficient acoustic-suspension types, and eat up the wattage headroom you have planned for. These are the tradeoffs, and it's up to you to decide how much bass equalization is enough.

The Feeling of Space

While some systems have a sound that can be described only as spacious, others sound boxed in and constricted. Is it possible to overcome this? Yes, to a degree. One of the simplest ways of generating a more spacious sound is to add rearward-firing midrange speakers—to your front channels, if your system is quadriphonic. A pair of fairly low-cost drivers, in their own enclosures and facing the wall against which your main speakers are placed, can open up things nicely. Depending upon the impedances of both sets of speakers, it is possible to simply wire the added radiators in parallel (for higher-impedance speakers) or in series (for lower-impedance units) with your existing speakers. Include a T-pad so you can balance the sound bouncing off the wall with that from your present speakers. Again, some know-how is desirable if you are going to make such do-it-yourself experiments.

Then there's the "proscenium arch" speaker. It has been said that at least some of the sound characteristic of large electrostatics and planar-magnetic speakers is due to their height. Some of the sound from these speakers is radiated from as much as four feet above the head of a seated listener, thus creating a sensation a bit like that in a hall where sound bounces off the upper back of

the stage and off the proscenium arch above and before it.

A pair of inexpensive, high-quality speakers mounted above your existing (front-channel) speakers might help re-create some of this effect in your listening room. They also can foul things up miserably if they are not handled with a great deal of care. Again, these can be connected in series or parallel with your front-channel speakers, impedances permitting, and should be padded for level control.

With the improvement of stereo program material and loudspeakers, the "hole in the middle" has just about disappeared. Even so, some improvement in the spatial effect can sometimes still be gained by placing a center-channel loudspeaker between the existing stereo pair and feeding it low-level monophonic information. In some modern opera recordings, especially where the protagonists move about the stage, voices sometimes drop in level as they move from stage left to stage right. Adding a center channel will cure this and may also allow you to place your stereo pair farther apart to emphasize separation and yield an effect a bit like moving forward in the hall.

Ambience Recovery

Finally, there's the Haffler Effect, or ambience recovery. Its best-known trade name is Dynaquad. If your receiver or preamplifier doesn't include some form of "derived" four-channel circuitry, you can buy a Dyna Quadaptor or one of the similar "speaker-matrix adaptors," which can be connected to the output terminals of your power am-

plifier. The adapter will extract the difference, or "hall-sound" information from the two stereo channels for powering dual side or rear speakers.

The effect can be striking; it is not genuine quadraphonics, of course, but the entry fee is at least quite low. The Quadaptor kit sells for \$22.50, and many audiophiles already have the extra speakers. No new power amplifier is needed. Generally it's a good idea to use speakers of the same efficiency and impedance (Dynaco prefers 8 ohms) as the front speakers.

There are situations in which the passive approach of the speaker matrix isn't adequate. Perhaps you are forced to use a pair of speakers with either a bad impedance match or a poor efficiency match with the front speakers or both. This can result in too little or too much ambience information. If this happens, you can buy a quadraphonic

synthesizer. Although synthesizers are included in most four-channel receivers, they also are available separately.

One of the earliest, and now one of the least costly, is the Electro-Voice EVX-4, which has been selling in catalogues and discount stores for about \$10. The E-V unit is plugged into the main or tape outputs of the preamplifier, derives the ambience information, and passes the four resulting signals to separate stereo power amplifiers for front and rear speakers. This increases the price, but there are those who favor this approach over speaker matrixing.

Placement of the ambience speakers is optional. Some people like them at the back of the room, some put them on either side of the main (front) speakers, some feed ambience signals to proscenium speakers. Season to taste. ●

Where to Go

Since some of the companies in the add-on business have low profiles in that market, we have compiled a partial directory. This list isn't complete and isn't meant to be, but it should help you get started writing for information.

Subwoofers/Supertweeters

Altec Corp., 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, Calif. 92803
R.T. Bozak Mfg. Co., Box 1166, Darien, Conn. 06820
Celestion, c/o Rocelco, Inc., 160 Roland Dr., Montreal, P.Q., Canada H4X 7M8
Cerwin-Vega, P.O. Box 1295, Studio City, Calif. 91604
Dahlquist, Inc., 27 Hanse Ave., Freeport, N.Y. 1520
Electro-Voice, Inc., 600 Cecil St., Buchanan, Mich. 49107
Fulton Musical Industries, 4428 Zane Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55422
Hartley Products Corp., 54-56 N. Summit St., Tenafly, N.J. 07670
Hegeman Laboratories, Inc., 176 Linden Ave., Glen Ridge, N.J. 07028
Janis Audio Assoc., 2889 Roebling Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10461
Janszen (Electronic Industries, Inc.), 7516 42nd Ave. N., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427
JBL (James B. Lansing Sound, Inc.), 3249 Casitas Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90039
M & K Sound, Inc., 8719 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211
Micro/Acoustics Corp., 8 Westchester Plaza, Elmsford, N.Y. 10523
Philips (North American Philips Corp.), 100 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017
RTR Industries, Inc., 8116 Deering Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91304
STR (Sound Technology Research), 3514 La Grande Blvd., Sacramento, Calif. 95823
Tannoy (America) Ltd., 1756 Ocean Ave., Bohemia, N.Y. 11716
University Sound, 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, Calif. 92803

Utah Electronics, 1124 E. Franklin St., Huntington, Ind. 46750

Electronic Crossovers

Altec Corp., 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, Calif. 92803
Audio Research Corp., 2843 26th Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55406
C/M Laboratories, 327 Connecticut Ave., Norwalk, Conn. 06854
Crown International, 1718 W. Mishawaka Rd., Elkhart, Ind. 46514
DeCoursey Engineering Laboratories, 11828 Jefferson Blvd., Culver City, Calif. 90230
Huntington Electronics, P.O. Box 2009, Huntington, Conn. 06484
M & K Sound, Inc., 8719 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211
Pioneer (U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp.), 75 Oxford Dr., Moonachie, N.J. 07074

Equalizers

Altec Corp., 1515 S. Manchester Ave., Anaheim, Calif. 92803
BSR Electronics, Rte. 303, Blauvelt, N.Y. 10913
Burwen Laboratories, 209 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington, Mass. 01803
JVC America, Inc., 50-35 56th Rd., Maspeth, N.Y. 11378
Norman Laboratories, Inc., 520 Highland Parkway, Norman, Okla. 73069
SAE, P.O. Box 60271, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, Calif. 90060
Soundcraftsmen, P.O. Box 2361, Santa Ana, Calif. 92705
Southwest Technical Products, Inc., P.O. Box 32040, San Antonio, Tex. 78274

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CIRCLE 35 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by Norman Eisenberg

When buying a new stereo system You Should Choose a Speaker First

Plus some hints in choosing your other components.

IN THE CHAIN of a music playback system, the loudspeaker of course is the final link. Yet when planning a sound system the speaker may well be the component to choose first. The general idea is to select the kind of speaker that suits both your taste and your listening room, and then select the remaining components to do justice to that speaker.

A professional sound man probably will tell you that the listening room itself should be planned before considering the speaker. This advice, while valid for sound studios or perhaps for the extremely affluent home builder who also is on excellent terms with both architect and contractor, is beyond the means of most of us. All we can do is consider the room acoustics we already have—and the practical means by which we might improve them (see "How to Match Your Speakers to Your Listening Room or Vice Versa." HF, June 1975)—and pick our speakers accordingly.

The speaker is the mouthpiece of your system; it is the device that stirs the unwilling air in your room into the patterns of molecular compression and expansion that you perceive as Mozart or Mancini, Chicago or the Chicago Symphony. In doing so, it is very critical of that room and of how it relates to the air in it. Your big, fat, dumb amplifier just sits there devouring AC power through its umbilical line-cord and converting it into electronic replicas of sound; it couldn't care less, for its basic operation, whether it reposes in a high-ceilinged restoration of an eighteenth-century drawing room or in a four-by-four planked outhouse. But your speakers are much fussier. They have to bite into their acoustical environment—to taste that environment, so to speak. If they are displeased by what they taste, they will let you know at once, like a kid with a plate of spinach.

How will they let you know? They may thump or boom instead of producing clean, well-defined bass. They may shriek rather than emit clear, airy middles and highs. Alternately, they may produce far less bass, of any kind, than you expected; or they may sound muffled or muted in the upper frequencies. We are assuming, of course, that the speaker system did very little or none of these objectionable things when you auditioned it in a place other than your own room. That is to say, it is decently made and has generally acceptable response (within its admitted design limits), and it appealed to you over others in its price class.

It would be impossible to delineate or even to contemplate the infinite possible combinations of

available speaker systems in various sizes and styles of listening rooms. But there are some obvious generalizations that can serve as guideposts. For one, assess your own room's acoustical character. Is it more on the live side or the dead side, sonically speaking? If the former, then be aware that any speaker in it will tend to sound relatively bright. Depending on your tastes in music as well as sound, you may want to avoid using any system with a prominent high end in that room or to choose one that has a good strong bass output to balance the anticipatedly strong middles and highs. On the other hand, if your room is acoustically dead (thick carpeting, window-covering draperies, plenty of upholstered furnishings, and the like), any speaker in it will tend to sound relatively muffled or even remote. You may opt for a speaker with strong middles and highs; you also may choose one of relatively high efficiency to counterbalance the room's propensity for soaking up sound.

Where you plan to position your speakers also bears on the choice. As a rule, the closer they are to large adjacent surfaces (floor and walls, or ceiling and walls), the more bass reinforcement you will get; the farther from such surfaces, the less bass reinforcement.

In this context, note that the so-called bookshelf speaker system really needs a shelf, or some kind of raised mounting, for optimum performance. Placing it directly on the floor likely will exaggerate the bass response and make it rougher—and, at the same time, fail to provide an optimum path for ample dispersion of middles and highs. Raise that same speaker from the floor, or even merely tilt it back somewhat, and you may find that the bass becomes cleaner while the middles and highs blossom out more realistically and in better balance with the bass.

Other speaker types also set their own ground rules as far as placement goes. For instance, floor-standing models obviously need some floor space on which to stand. Is this space well-located with respect to general dispersion into the area where you will do most of your listening? If the speaker is the kind that relies on room architecture for some dispersion (e.g., the bounce-and-reflect school of speaker design), can you manage to position it to function this way? That is, are there reflecting surfaces where the speaker's instructions say you should have them? And some speakers—typically, the electrostatic "panels"—need space behind

them if the sound emanating from the back is to have enough "elbow room."

Once you have ascertained that the speaker you want can indeed make the kind of sound it is designed to produce in your room, other things logically fall into place—in particular the choice of the driving amplifier. There are three main points involved: power, impedance, and damping factor.

Most speakers come with recommendations for minimum driving power and maximum safe power-handling ability. Choose an amplifier (or a receiver) that can furnish at least the former amount and not more than, say, 50% over the latter. The reason for adhering to the minimum recommended is simply to provide ample signal energy to achieve satisfyingly loud output levels—which is especially important in low-efficiency speaker designs. The reason you can be somewhat liberal about the maximum amount is that the amplifier rarely, if ever, will actually be called on to hit its maximum power output capability. And even if it does so during a split-second crescendo, most speaker systems of high fidelity quality can handle such a brief peak in stride. (Of course, a steady diet of overwhelming power can damage any speaker, but the "50%-over" concept generally is taken to be reasonably safe. If you're concerned about this, you can fuse the speakers; use the slow-blow type unless otherwise instructed by the speaker manufacturer.)

Impedance matching between amplifier and speaker is hardly the problem it once was back when all amplifiers used tubes and impedance-matching output transformers. Most of today's speaker systems are of nominal 8-ohm impedance, and most amplifier specifications are based on 8-ohm loads. If you have chosen speakers of other impedances check the amplifier specifications—or the dealer or manufacturer—for power available at those impedances.

Impedance suggests damping factor, which is simply a ratio of the external load impedance to the amplifier's internal impedance. Because of their circuitry, solid-state amplifiers typically have very low internal impedance and consequently very high damping factors. This is all to the good since damping factor is a means of controlling speaker-diaphragm vibration and contributing to generally cleaner sound and to crisp, well-defined transients in particular. The characteristically high damping factors of modern amplifiers and receivers also enable the use of relatively long runs of hookup wire, which, by adding resistance, tends to reduce damping factors. Sealed-box speakers apparently benefit the most from high damping factors; vented cabinet systems apparently are not as critical of it.

Having estimated the amount of amplifier power needed for a given load impedance (and at least casually verified the amplifier's damping factor), you will find that the specs listed for various

receivers and amplifiers not only begin to make more sense in themselves, but help to narrow the choice to certain available models. That lovely unit with the magenta indicator lights? Too bad—it doesn't provide enough output power to drive your speakers in your room. That cute little set going at a bargain price? Tough—its low damping factor and want of speaker switching argue against installing it with the thirty feet of wire you will need running around your baseboard and against eventually running even longer extension-speaker leads into another room as you had planned.

By now, the general performance level and character of your sound system will have taken some kind of recognizable shape, and you should choose your input sources accordingly. For instance, with a wide-range speaker powered by a superamplifier, it would make no sense to get an el-cheapo record changer. The system would reproduce as much rumble as low-frequency signal in the bass region and would obligingly reveal all the high-frequency distortion of inferior groove tracking. With more modest speakers and amplifier, you can get away with a record player that is not itself state of the art; the sound will not be as grand as in the super system, but at least it will be relatively free of objectionable noises.

In like manner, you will discern that the specific features available (or not) on the receiver or amplifier you have chosen may influence what other equipment you buy or plan to buy in the future: tape decks, microphones, noise reducers, equalizers, four-channel decoders, and the like. In some instances you may have to bend the rules a bit. Say you are into tape recording and one of your pet pastimes is dubbing from one deck to another. You then would logically buy a receiver or amplifier that not only delivers the power needed by your speakers, but also provides convenient inputs and outputs for both recorders. If, however, the model of your choice is too high-priced, you would have to decide whether to sacrifice a little output power, pass up some of the front-channel tape-switching flexibility, or buy a model with simple controls now and add (or build) a relatively elaborate outboard tape-switching unit as budget (or time) allows, interconnecting by hand in the meantime.

A final point: The choice of record player also influences the choice of phono pickup. A very quiet-running turntable fitted with a low-mass arm that has reliable adjustments for tracking force, antiskating, and stylus overhang can accept a super-pickup with high compliance and elliptical stylus. With lesser-quality turntables, the choice of a cartridge gets scaled down accordingly. In fact, most phono cartridge manufacturers have begun to indicate the general type of record player (if not specific models) best suited for their various models. So if you choose the end of your system—the speakers—first, you logically will end by choosing its beginning last. ●

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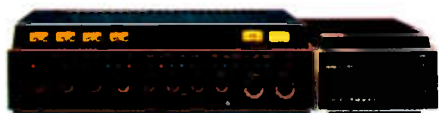


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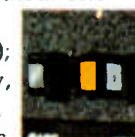
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You are in complete command of every function. Functions are selected by twenty-one pushbuttons — each with lighted tip — to indicate which are activated. The pushbutton functions include: *Output* (disables preamps. for headphone listening); *Inputs* (stereo phono, CD-4 phono, auxiliary, tape, tape monitor, dubbing, AM, and FM). The dubbing button connects the 4-ch. jacks on the front panel for recording and playing tape without removing the permanent connections on the rear panel; *Mode* (mono, stereo — front channels only, stereo — front and back channels, SQ decoding, and discrete 4-channel); *Other Functions* (high filter, low filter, loudness compensation, tone flat, squelch defeat, and FM Dolby); *Power* (turns off the unit and two accessories).



Total control. Separate Baxandall bass and treble controls for front and rear channels. Separate level controls for each channel. Master volume control. Tuning control.

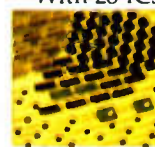
Full metering. Four lighted output meters with 40 dB dynamic range and peak-indicating circuitry to follow the softest and the loudest passages; they even respond to record "clicks." Tuning meters that light only when needed: signal-strength meter for AM, signal-strength and center-tuning meters for FM.

Relay protection for your speakers. At a touch of the Power pushbutton, the relay disables the preamps.

Distinctive styling. Massive diecast front panel. Black textured metal cover. Simulated walnut-grained metal end panels. Tastefully luxurious.

Build it yourself.

With 28 ICs, 134 transistors, and 55 diodes, obviously some kit building experience would be helpful. But it isn't difficult. Modular construction simplifies — 14 circuit boards and 4 wiring harnesses. Most of the boards flip up for checking while the unit is operational. The built-in test meter helps, too.



Modules II and III — Stereo Power Amplifiers.

Expand your MODULUS system with your choice of stereo power amplifiers. Module II is a medium power amplifier (35 watts per channel); Module III is higher powered (60 watts per channel) 35 or 60 watts: minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz. Both styled to match the Module I Tuner/Preamp. Add one of either power to make a MODULUS Stereo Receiver. Add two of either power to make a MODULUS 4-Channel Receiver.



Module IV — FM Dolby

To enjoy the reduced noise and increased dynamic range of specially-encoded Dolby FM broadcasts, add this module. It fits inside the Module I Tuner/Preamp.

Module V — CD-4 Demodulator

The spacious quadrasonic sound of CD-4 discrete 4-channel recordings is yours with this option. And no external black boxes, as it slips securely inside Module I.

Module VI — SQ Decoder

Sophisticated circuitry with full-logic and variable blend enhancement for excellent quadrasonic separation from matrixed records, tapes, and FM broadcasts. Like the others, it has a place waiting inside your Module I.

MODULUS. For what it is, what it can be, surprisingly low cost.

Module I, 599.95; Module II, 159.95; Module III, 179.95; Module IV, 39.95; Module V, 79.95; Module VI, 49.95.

MODULUS. For today, for tomorrow.

See next page for specifications

MODULUS™

Features and specifications

MODULE I — Digital AM/FM Tuner/2-4 Ch. Preamp/Control Center (#AN-2016)



21 Function Selectors. Each lights when active. 4 Output Meters. 1 each channel. Digital Frequency Readout. For AM & FM frequencies. Separate light indicators for 2-ch. FM & CD-4 phono. Center-Tune Meter for accurate FM tuning. Signal Strength Meter for AM and FM stations. "Blackout" Information Panel. Jet black when power is off.

Headphone outputs. Stereo & 4-channel. 4 Individual Level Controls. Left & Right, Front & Back. 4 Individual Tone Controls. Bass & Treble, Front & Back. Front Panel Tape Dubbing. Separate from rear jacks. Master Volume Control. Adjusts all 4 channels. Smooth direct planetary-drive Tuning for AM & FM. Massive diecast front panel. Handsome and rugged.

(see specifications below)

MODULE II — Medium power Stereo Power Amplifier (#AA-1505)

Perfect match for Module I in styling and performance; also compatible with most other preamps. 35 watts, minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz. Intermod. distortion less than 0.1% at full output. Frequency response: -0.5 dB from 8 to 45,000 Hz. Damping factor: 60. Drives two sets of 8 ohm stereo speakers. Front panel switching of Main and Remote Speaker systems. Polarized speaker connectors. Lighted power button.



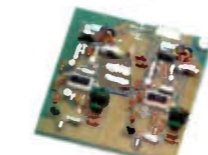
MODULE III — High power Stereo Power Amplifier (#AA-1506)

Identical to Module II in features and specifications, except: 60 watts, minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz.



MODULE IV — FM Dolby (#AD-1504)

Using this module for noise reduction of Dolby encoded FM broadcasts is like moving the station one-third closer. You get better reception of more stations (not for use on regular FM broadcasts). Uses two special ICs; unity gain; noise reduction up to 10 dB.



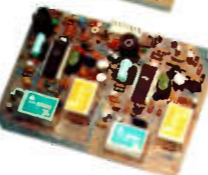
MODULE V — CD-4 Demodulator (#AD-1507)

High performance plug-in module for reproducing four discrete channels of audio from CD-4 discs. LSI IC in each channel with detection quality enhanced by LC filters. Separation ≥ 20 dB, front to back, side to side, or diagonally. Total harmonic distortion less than 1%.



MODULE VI — SQ 4-Channel Decoder (#AM-1503)

Latest concept in matrix decoding from CBS, Inc.; full logic circuitry with variable blend. Uses three special ICs. Response ± 1 dB, 25 to 15,000 Hz; total harmonic distortion 0.5% or less; separation 40 dB L-R front; 12 dB L-R rear; 18 dB front-to-back; 20 dB diagonally.



AN-2016 SPECIFICATIONS — PREAMPLIFIER — Frequency Response: 10-30,000 Hz ± 0.5 dB **Total Harmonic Distortion:** 0.05% **Intermodulation Distortion:** 0.05% **Hum and Noise:** phono: 75 dB (ref. 10 mV input); hi-level: 80 dB (ref. 0.25V input) — **FM — Sensitivity:** 1.7 μ V **Total Harmonic Distortion:** less than 0.3% **Alternate Channel Selectivity:** greater than 100 dB **Capture Ratio:** 13 dB **IM Distortion:** less than 0.05% **Frequency Response:** 20-15,000 Hz ± 1 dB **SEPARATION:** 40 dB at 1k Hz **Signal-to-Noise Ratio:** 68 dB **SCA Rejection:** 65 dB — **AM — Sensitivity:** 6 μ V for 20 dB S/N **Signal-to-Noise Ratio:** greater than 48 dB **Alternate Channel Selectivity:** greater than 60 dB

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PIONEERS IN HIGH FIDELITY COMPONENTS

by Howard Ferstler

Games Speaker Dealers Play



How to avoid the many pitfalls that await the unwary speaker shopper.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH a shopper feels he can depend on his audio dealer for authoritative advice on selecting a speaker system, it is important for him to be knowledgeable enough to use his own judgment. Even the most expert of retailers cannot have the clearest perception of what is best for an individual. And, of course, there are a few dealers who are less than competent and ethical, in which case enlightenment serves as the best method of consumer protection.

At the very least, you must make sure that each speaker you try out is heard under conditions that allow it to perform at its best. Be suspicious of a highly rated system that sounds bad.

One thing you should do before listening to any speakers that you plan to purchase is to examine the positions of brightness and similar controls. A ploy used by more than one shopkeeper that I have visited is to adjust the controls of a top-brand speaker system so that it sounds substantially worse than it ordinarily would and use it as a straw man against which more profitable models can be favorably compared. One merchant specialized in loudspeakers that have a particularly hot high end. Next to his preferred models, he placed a very good, well-known pair of speakers

that are not noted for a hot high end. Since the latter system has a bit of a high-end rolloff, it would ordinarily sound a little subdued or even muffled when compared to the hotter models. But he also had turned the tweeter level control all the way down so that the high-end output was very low.

There are several variations of this tactic. One dealer I know turns the tweeter and midrange level controls of all his demonstration models all the way up. He claims this makes for more consistent comparisons. It might, if all the systems were made by the same company. But manufacturers have different ideas about how far these controls should be able to vary the signals going to the drivers: Some controls will increase the output of the drivers quite a bit from their "normal" settings; others supply only subtle increases or are capable only of decreasing response. Most loudspeaker makers specify a "normal" position, and that is the proper setting if a system and the design philosophy behind it are to get a fair trial.

Another dealer prevents side-by-side comparison of certain brands altogether. For instance, he sells two well-known speakers; one costs about \$125, the other about \$300. I happen to like the \$125 system slightly better and think its superiority would be audible to most critical listeners, particularly with classical music, in an A/B test. But each unit is hooked up to separate components

A Florida-based free-lancer, Mr. Ferstler is a long-time student of retail practices and habits.

and offered as a package, making comparison impossible without rewiring. A customer with a lot of money to spend is led to the expensive stuff, while he might have saved \$350 on a pair of speakers.

Probably the greatest weakness in any dealership is the listening room. Most are just too large or have a ceiling that is too high. The average home listening room is 1,800 to 2,800 cubic feet in volume with a ceiling height of 8 feet. In such a room a speaker system that has very wide dispersion in the higher frequencies will reflect much of this energy off adjacent walls and, most important, off the rather low, plastered ceiling. This adds to the sense of bigness that is usually desirable. The average dealer's listening room is much larger and is likely to have a ceiling height of 10 or even 12 feet.

One merchant has a very popular and highly regarded bookshelf speaker, noted for its good mid- and high-frequency dispersion, sitting next to another manufacturer's product that has much poorer high-frequency dispersion but costs twice as much. (Originally it was a large studio monitor.) The listening area is huge—at least 25 by 60 feet—and the ceiling is about 12 feet high and covered with acoustic tile to boot. In a direct comparison of the two, the bigger, more expensive unit sounds much more alive and bright; the bookshelf model sounds quite tinny and almost muffled on some passages. Yet in my living room they are bright enough. Queried about this listening room, the dealer informed me that it did not matter and that the bookshelf model was simply inferior in design.

Another shopkeeper who had those same speakers on display had placed them on the floor *upside down*, so that the tweeter was only a few inches away from a very heavy, treble-absorbing pile carpet. This man told me that the system sounded bad under any conditions and that putting it upside down made no difference.

A dealer who has an extensive line of poor to excellent speakers may claim he needs a large listening room to allow them all to be compared. He may place the customers close to each speaker pair, in the direct listening field—which does not approximate the more distant, reverberant field in a living room. If the shopper stands back to get a better perspective, he may find that the better systems sound tinny and muffled in the demonstration room's vastness. When faced with this situation, it would be wise for you to try to persuade the dealer to let you audition some speakers at home.

Some retailers simply do not know—or will not explain to their patrons—that a model played loudly will sound better than one playing at even slightly lower volume. Thus the more inefficient models under comparison will be at a disadvantage unless compensation is made for the differences in sound output. This can be done by adjusting the volume control quickly during the

switching, but it is best accomplished by a balancing network permanently installed in the switching system. Many dealers have such networks. But remember: A balancing network can be adjusted to work against a customer, as well as for him, by "goosing" the output of the speaker that the dealer wishes to push. So listen *first* for relative loudness; only when you are satisfied that two models are adjusted for equal output should you begin to compare tone quality.

I might point out that this is true with any kind of equipment. A valid demonstration of amplifiers or cartridges requires that their outputs be balanced for equal intensity at the listener's ear. More than one "expert" audiophile has been fooled into believing that one super power amplifier was better than another, possibly lower-rated model, simply because their input sensitivities were slightly different. The subtler the differences in tonal qualities, the more exact must be the loudness matching for valid comparison.

You must be especially watchful when considering a package deal. Some dealers may offer a good changer and cartridge and a good receiver and then throw in an off-brand pair of speakers that are well below the quality level of the other components. The sound suffers accordingly.

Surely, there is such a thing as a package deal that offers a good combination of components at a reasonable—though not necessarily spectacular—discount. But beware of any package in which one element is way out of line with the rest. You can be reasonably sure it has been assembled on the basis of commercial, rather than sonic, considerations.

What can you do to put yourself in the most advantageous position when choosing your speakers?

Even before you do any serious listening, *read*. Get a recent book on the subject and become familiar with the terms and technology. Study high fidelity publications, taking special note of reports on equipment tests that may be of interest to you. For one thing it will help you recognize those package-deal mismatches. For another, it will give you a clearer idea of how various components should behave—whether a specific speaker should sound the way it does in the dealer's listening room, for example.

Contact friends who are audio hobbyists, or who at least have good home systems. Talk to them, listen to their systems, and evaluate everything you hear. (Beware of the "lunatic fringe," as this type of audiophile will have you either going into hock for a state-of-the-art setup or feeling bad because you cannot afford one!)

Finally, try to select a dealer with a good listening environment, a line of speakers whose quality is generally recognized by the testers and knowledgeable friends, and a helpful approach. Inquire about models he does *not* sell; fair answers usually indicate a fair dealer—and a fair deal. ●

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CIRCLE 33 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

by Joan Higgins

Charles Rosen— Artist, Scholar, or Polymath?

*The pianist's staggering intellect has made him an expert
in many fields, but basically it all serves his art.*

"DEFICIENCY-WISE," gasped a *Time* reporter after an interview with Charles Rosen, "what's your best subject?"

Icy stare. Long silence. One-word verdict: "Chemistry."

Ah yes, a likely story for the growing Charles Rosen legend. But any tale will do, as long as it passes basic inspection tests. Does it suggest this pianist's immense range of knowledge? (Check.) Does it imply the air of apparent hauteur? (Check.) Does it give him, unfailingly, the crushing bon mot? (Check. Check. Double check.)

Keep the *Time* reporter but color him drama critic.

"The trouble with you, Charles," carps the distinguished arbiter of public taste, "is you don't read enough drama reviews."

"I'm sorry, you're wrong"—a standard Rosen opener. "I always do my light reading when I'm practicing dull passages at the piano."

Replace the critic with some partying *literati* deep into a discussion of Emerson and Balzac. The pianist happens by, catches the last name, asks innocently, "Which Balzac?" He then gives—in the stunned silence that follows—a concise review, bolstered by verbatim quotations, of the literary output of Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac, a writer of court letters who flourished in the seventeenth century.

Now follow our hero to the faculty club and observe him among the philosophy professors as they earnestly invoke the teachings of Hume. Inserts Rosen helpfully: "Hume reduced everything, you know"—the rising gorge of the professors goes unnoticed—"to resemblance and contiguity"—who is this man?—"which are really the two basic forms of Jakobson's linguistics"—and why is he

saying those terrible things—"metaphor and metonymy!"—about Hume?

Like all the rest, the last is also true. "I was infuriated," says one of the impaled, "until I thought about it a while and decided he was right."

Charles Rosen is always right, to the delight of his friends and the dismay of his enemies, two groups that thrive in about equal abundance. His devotees describe him as "a force of nature," as overwhelming and unarguable as a tidal wave. A man of staggering intellect, he is also, they insist, warm, likable, free of airs and eccentricities. His detractors acknowledge the evident brainpower but concentrate on what they term his arrogance. "Too bright." "Knows too much." One dissident even suggests that Oscar Levant's poser to George Gershwin ("If you had it to do all over, would you still fall in love with yourself?") applies equally well to Rosen.

Unfortunately, the squabble—though engaging to us outsiders—seems confined to hostesses puzzling on just where to seat the pianist at dinner. ("No, no! Not next to Blumfsky!") That's their problem. Ours is simply to decide which Charles Rosen is in the ascendancy and to guess by what set of accomplishments history will judge him.

As an artist? Some leading musicians place him among the handful of great pianists on our small planet. As a scholar? *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* is already regarded as a masterpiece, one of the most significant musical treatises of the twentieth century. His lectures and writings on artistic epochs have had a seminal influence on contemporary thought.

Or, quite simply, as a polymath? A Yale professor considers this musician's knowledge of literature so extensive that "I would welcome him as a colleague." A London art critic believes Rosen knows more art history than most now teaching in the field. A New York editor calls him "one of the

Bostonian Joan Higgins' music articles have appeared in the WCRB Concert Guide, the *New Boston Review*, *Boston* magazine, and the *Boston Globe*.

most interesting people writing today." And a California philosopher patly explains, "He has a philosophical mind, that's all."

Obviously, history is going to have a hard time drawing a bead on Charles Rosen. In his own age, the welter of interests seems too diverse, too confusing to us to be easily explained.

Maybe he can't make up his mind. Maybe he does it all with mirrors. Or maybe, just maybe, this mind is precisely what others say it is—the keenest, most encompassing, and astonishingly impressive intellect in music today.

A miracle in a family must be worse than a murder case.—The Potting Shed, by Graham Greene.

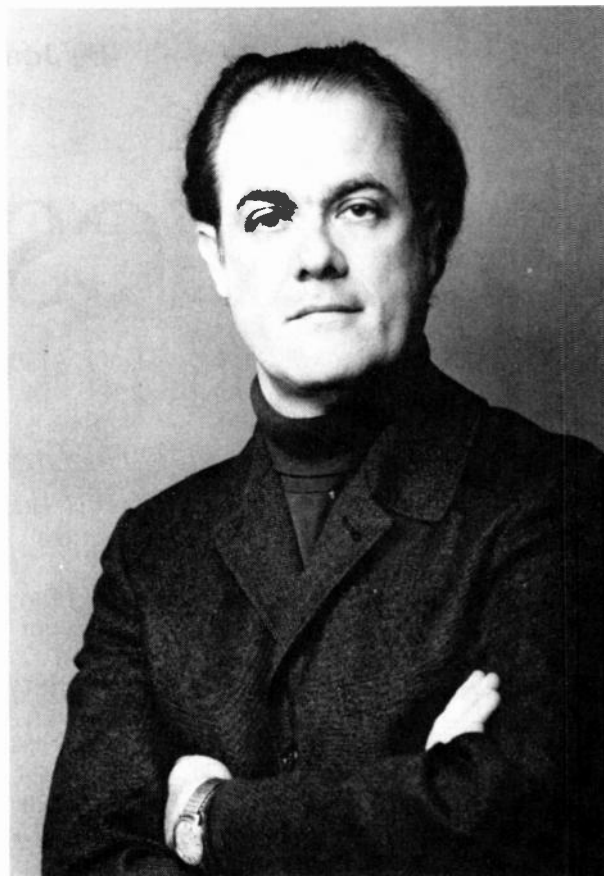
Shortly after their firstborn's birth in New York City on May 5, 1927, Irwin Rosen, an architect, and his wife, Anita, a former actress, noticed some remarkable things: Their infant was talking at 9 months; at 2, he was teaching himself to read; at 3, reading skills polished, he was at the piano displaying the acute ear of a prodigy; by 5, he had navigated his way safely through all of Lamb's Shakespeare. It was noted in passing that the child had a photographic memory and, long before Rex Stout had invented Archie Goodwin, near total recall.

"Charles was the center of our household," states his younger brother Don, director of ichthyology at New York's Museum of Natural History. "People came as much to view this phenomenon as to visit our parents." He remembers his brother perfecting technical passages at the piano while simultaneously reading a novel (a legitimate Liszt practice device) and, from a very early age, instantly reducing orchestral scores to the keyboard.

"I recall this music critic who used to come over to the house," says the scientific Rosen. "He would grow incensed at things Charles would say—my brother always had this way of communicating precisely and directly—but I thought, even then, that Charles understood music better than he did."

At 7, the musical Rosen played for Leopold Godowsky and was afterward placed in the lap of the great pianist and asked what he wanted to be when he grew up. Replied the *Wunderkind* in the first recorded example of Rosen candor, "I want to be a pianist—like Josef Hofmann." (Godowsky, reportedly delighted by the remark, relayed news of the prodigy to his colleague; a teaching offer did duly come from Hofmann in Philadelphia, but the New York-based Rosens were forced to reject it.) At age 11, after four years at Juilliard, Charles Rosen became the youngest pupil of another eminent pianist of the Romantic virtuoso tradition: Moriz Rosenthal.

While his musical development burgeoned, so too the youth's wide-ranging interests. During one



summer vacation, he taught himself German, and later on, Italian and Latin; his percentile rank in scholastic aptitude tests at Horace Mann Lincoln was 99.8; he rejected a grant to study philosophy at Oxford (wrong place—the great Wittgenstein was at Cambridge); at Princeton, he took a secondary major in mathematics while earning a Ph.D. in French literature (and an A.B. *summa cum laude*).

His brother sees no anomaly in this breadth of learning: "It's his absorption with abstract symbols. That's what music is. So is literature, art, language." (So is math. So is philosophy in its alliance with linguistics.)

The composer Milton Babbitt remembers Rosen at Princeton as already an assured performer who could sight-read any score placed in front of him, who was forever breaking the strings of all the pianos at the university, and who—on a subsequent academic sojourn at Davis—insisted on speaking French to everybody in the French Department.

Today Babbitt ranks him as "one of the three best pianists in the world," though he deplores his neglect of all but a minuscule number of avant-garde composers. ("Charles would tell you, undoubtedly, that most are not worth performing. . . . Now he devotes himself to the ages.") But even back then, Rosen provoked exasperated admiration. Concedes Babbitt: "A difficult, strong personality."

Rosen admits that his choice of French literature as his major field of study in college was dictated because "the Greek professors were all in the Marines" and "the history professors thought if you studied history, you could improve the world. That was not why I wanted to study history." Since he intended to be a pianist, any major would do. So he simply deduced who had the most stimulating mind then extant at Princeton (Ira O. Wade of the Literature Department) and headed that way.

In 1951, after his New York debut recital, the musician left for France on a Fulbright scholarship, soon adopting that country as his second home. (He still maintains an apartment in Paris.) On his return two years later, he taught in the Modern Language Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Marking time, only. After two more successful New York recitals, he was offered a contract by Columbia Artists. Rosen then turned his full attention to concerts and recordings, abandoning what some considered to be a brilliant academic career of unlimited promise.

I found myself reading The Classical Style as if snared by a great thriller. I do not mean this idly; there is a masterly power of detection in this book. Its distinguished style and insightfulness make it a book I keep coming back to, as I do to the Rosen recordings of the late Beethoven sonatas.—Leonard Bernstein, February 19, 1975.

The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven was commissioned in the mid-Sixties, but when negotiations began to break down between author and publisher, Viking Press delightedly leaped into the breach. The editors instantly recognized the importance of the book; so did the reviewers. Ecstasized George Steiner in the London *Sunday Times*: "Rosen carries over into English prose those strengths of clarity, scruple, and excitement which he brings to his playing. Simply by itself, this book sets new standards for the application of language to music."

The application of literary techniques was consciously sought. "One of the strengths of *The Classical Style*," says poet John Hollander, "is that it was enormously influenced by sophisticated methods of literary criticism. Charles has paid a lot of attention to what's been going on in the field, and that does inform his insight. You know, in reading that book, that here is a literary critical mind at work."

Though the conception and execution of *The Classical Style* took less than four years, production delays added two more years to its publication. It won for Rosen the 1972 National Book Award, the first book on music to do so (though one of the judges resigned in protest at this decision, claiming that the book was unintelligible).

Throughout its writing, the pianist continued a heavy concert schedule here and in Europe, recorded the last six Beethoven sonatas and the late keyboard works of Bach, increased his lecture engagements, and began teaching one semester a year at New York State University's Stony Brook campus.

He also began to point out to the musical world where it could stand some self-improvement. This first occurred, in print, in 1965, when the musician suggested, from the pages of *Perspectives of New Music*, that musicologists, performers, and composers break out of their isolation and learn to know and love one another. Musicologists, performers, and composers were mutually enraged, but New York Philharmonic music director Pierre Boulez read the article and sensed here a soul brother. He met Rosen, found him "one of the best pianists I know," and duly asked him to serve as piano instrumentalist for the Boulez-directed recordings of Weber's compositional oeuvre.

Also recorded at the composer's invitation were the Boulez piano sonatas, a performance that evoked for one critic a sense of both past and present. Robert C. Marsh wrote (*HIGH FIDELITY*, September 1973) that Rosen "brings to them something that goes well beyond the notes on the page—the ability to relate them to the larger performance tradition of virtuoso piano music. . . . The depth and scope of his musical interests have a decided effect upon the way he plays these pieces."

The depth and scope of the pianist's interests leave conductor Boulez, for one, unfazed. "To know music," he says, "you must know more than just music—you must be interested in everything related to your art. Charles Rosen has ideas about music. There is a very deep knowledge, there is joy, there is a kind of rigor in all he plays." To the suggestion that Rosen is a somewhat unconventional musician, removed from the harbors of a conservatory and influenced by his brush with other disciplines, Boulez replies, "I like this kind of musician—I was of this kind myself."

And he adds, "A conversation with Charles Rosen is an interesting experience."

A conversation with Charles Rosen can be a downright exhausting experience. On a recent return from Europe, he learned that a friend was hospitalized and so descended upon the ailing man. For more than an hour, the invalid was regaled with a discussion of the parodies of Bret Harte, a vivid description of the figures of Aretino, an argument on the philosophies of Hegel and Schiller, and a lively question-answer period on Coleridge's poetic intention in *The Ancient Mariner*. ("The conversation was a success," fantasized one wag, "but the patient died.")

With equal versatility, Rosen began writing a spate of articles on vastly differing topics—essays

on music, art, criticism, literature, philosophy—for American and European publications. In all he revealed an aversion to hermetic thinking and an impatience with facile, pat solutions; in many he dwelt on the paradoxes of art.

"There is no such thing as an authentic performance of a work, and what is more, there never was one," he wrote in *HIGH FIDELITY* ("Should Music Be Played Wrong?", September 1971). "We are either too early or too late. And yet . . . the work of music remains unchanged behind this relativity, fixed, unswerving, and above all, in principle, accessible."

He once rejected the facile explanation of Schumann's music through the decoding of its biographical allusions ("What Did the Romantics Mean?", *New York Review of Books*, November 1, 1973). "What we should ask," he wrote, "is how these motifs convey a meaning, how they function within a work so that their latent power is released." If the notes C, A, A signified Clara (Schumann's wife), why, asked Rosen, was she played backward? "She is also played upside down throughout Schumann and at her right place going forward in the finale of Mozart's A minor Sonata."

"Charles once told me," says *NYRB* editor Robert Silvers, "that he deplored the influence of Sainte-Beuve. By making so much of the lives and quirks of personality of the artists he wrote about, Sainte-Beuve encouraged the illusion that biography explained the work itself."

Silvers regards the pianist as a brilliant expositor of complex ideas, a man of enormous retentive and analytical intelligence especially adept at grappling with the history of ideas. To Silvers what is impressive is not simply the quantity of Rosen's knowledge, but that "his erudition isn't gratuitous—you sense that it is always being organized to some point. And the point often has to do with clarifying the conceptions that artists actually have used in their work or with scraping away the misconceptions that have been imposed on them, sometimes even by themselves."

This concern for our proper evaluation of art keeps reappearing as Rosen takes to the concert stage, the lectern, or the typewriter. From the typewriter recently came an essay ("Romantic Documents," *New York Review of Books*, May 14, 1975) that probed the interior thought of Flaubert and Byron—exposing along the way the strengths, paradoxes, ambiguities of Romantic concepts. Even punctuation had its special meanings for the Romantics, and Rosen showed how subtly inaccurate editions could distort our image of the past, deflect our vision from important ties with that past: "In their strange original form [these documents] force us to penetrate to their essential kinship with our own world. . . . Only when they have been fully thrust back into the alien life from which they came, plunged back into history, can

they commence to take on a significance that is not purely historical and speak directly to us today."

The words reveal his own artistic ethos: Rosen likes a performance with "a feeling of history behind it," so before recording his Bach and Beethoven albums, he studied the composers' original manuscripts. Leading critics found the pianist's "feeling of history" formidable indeed. "Even where I am not persuaded," wrote *Boston Globe* critic Michael Steinberg of the Beethoven recordings, "I find Rosen's playing always compelling, constantly teaching me something about Beethoven."

Clearly, Charles Rosen accepts little on faith. Even composers are not spared from sacrilege when he suggests, "A composer's idea of his work can be both precise and slightly fuzzy. . . . Even the performance imagined by the composer as he writes may deform, or leave unrealized and unheard, something essential in the music as written" (*HF*, May 1971).

Blasphemy? Fact. Composer Donald Martino states that, in introducing his piano concerto, Rosen was able to illuminate certain dimensions of the composition that he, Martino, had not fully foreseen. Says the Pulitzer Prize winner for 1974 of Rosen, "He has thoughtful and provocative opinions about virtually everything."

Says a former Viking editor, "You can disagree with him—but at your peril."

Listening to Shostakovich doesn't make anybody physically ill. It makes him morally ill. He gets all the harmony he's used to but with lots of piquant dissonances. That's like eating a normal meal with a little more pepper.—Charles Rosen, in a January 1975 interview.

Charles Rosen, in persona, impresses. Classic-featured, the face is marred only by a rough complexion and a jaw too firm. He has thinning blond hair; a smallish, compact frame; X-ray eyes. Handsome still at forty-eight, his features seem more clearly etched, in sharper relief, than they appear in photos taken some years ago. There is a built-in tension in all his movements. He radiates, even manufactures, energy.

"I don't know what the difference between the intellectual and sensuous approach to music would be." He speaks in low, cultivated overtones of an American in Paris (which he often is), and the voice balances on the edge of laughter. "It's all intellectual, except some of it is half-baked intellectual. A really intellectual approach is the most sensuous one of all."

"I do have one approach to music which is very basic: If it's there, it should be heard. Being heard doesn't mean that you should just play the note. If the note has a kind of meaning within the piece, it ought to be possible to convey that—whatever it is. That seems to me always an emotional meaning. I

suppose that what gives an impression of structural playing in my work is really an attempt at clarity.

"I can almost not bear to give up anything of the music. I realize that you can't bring out everything, but I would like to come as close as I can. If Beethoven wrote an accent, you should not only play the accent, you should try to make it clear why the accent is at that point."

The pianist lives, while in New York, in the West Side home once shared by his parents and brother. Commodious but cluttered, the apartment now displays a bachelor's disdain for decor and a connoisseur's taste for modern art (a Jasper Johns print on one wall, a Richard Merkin collage on another). A Steinway grand dominates the living room. There are books everywhere.

Exuding the air of someone who has just fifteen minutes to catch a plane, Rosen manages to convey a natural graciousness together with a wish to get on with it. No, though deeply immersed in the Romantic period now, he is not sure he will write a book on that era. (When a Viking editor broached the Romantic sequel to the classical period, he asked, "Would you like *Son of Classical Style* or *The Classical Style Rides Again?*")

He explains that his latest book, *Arnold Schoenberg* (recently published by Viking Press), is an introduction to Schoenberg aimed at making his music more accessible. "What people object to in new

music," says Rosen, "is that the elements they consider essential to music are not there any more. A big hole—that's the real innovation. Debussy withheld certain kinds of moving texture and long lines of melody which his audiences expected. With Elliott Carter, they expect a central regularity, and they're not given that. Even though they see the conductor beating 1-2-3-4, there's nothing going on on-stage to correspond to his movements, so they conclude the performance has broken down." (Very often it has. Tales abound that only Rosen's secure musicianship has rescued certain performances from disaster.)

The pianist muses, discourses, examines, explains, but his summing-up is usually delivered with one big lump of insight: "Listening to contemporary music is largely not an ability to accept the new, but a willingness to renounce the old."

He gravitates to the best minds in many fields. But, in the end, the other interests lead to one central fact: He is a performing musician, one of the best pianists alive.—Elliott Carter, in a January 1975 interview.

Rosen likes to have guests over for dinner—intellectuals from all disciplines—so that he can ply them with haute cuisine, heady thought, and fine wine. Unchecked, he can go on at length about the many variants for quiche (he is an epicurean cook) or the only possible recipe for *côtes de porc charcutière*. Unasked, he will obligingly offer advice to friends on the errors of their last wine purchases, since the fruit of the vine is still another area of his expertise.

Stumping Rosen has developed into a favored pastime in the pianist's circle where friends delight in watching him move in on a problem. Columbia language professor Steele Commager once told him that a colleague had solved, after months of deliberation, the puzzle of what piece Brahms was playing in the famous portrait of him seated at the piano. "Oh, I hadn't thought about the hand position!", cried Rosen. A five-second pause for mentally riffling through the repertoire: "Of course! It's Brahms's G minor Rhapsody, Op. 79, No. 2." Of course, sighed Commager. (The repertoire at his fingertips is astonishing even to Carter: "Once he went to the piano at a party and to illustrate a point played through a large section of Handel's *Theodora* from memory, a work that nobody at that time—not even Charles—had ever heard. Indeed, he can play through large passages of Haydn symphonies and trios, among many other works outside the piano repertoire, from memory. As his book shows, he has most of the important works written in the classical style clearly in mind and can make detailed comparisons among them.")

Companions are often sought out by the pianist

Rosen on Records

The following is a representative selection from the Rosen discography. Many of these recordings are now out of print, but that's record biz; of the many records Rosen made for Epic before its demise as a classical label, Columbia has so far reissued only the Chopin-Liszt concerto coupling.

BACH: Art of Fugue; Goldberg Variations; Musical Offering (two rercars). ODYSSEY 32 36 0020 (three discs).

BARTÓK AND LISZT: Piano Works. EPIC BC 1278 (OP).

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas Nos. 27–32. COLUMBIA M3X 30938 (three discs).

BOULEZ: Sonata No. 1; Sonata No. 3: Trope and Constellation. COLUMBIA M 32161.

CARTER: Double Concerto. Paul Jacobs, harpsichord; English Chamber Orchestra, Frederik Prausnitz, cond. COLUMBIA MS 7191 (with Variations for Orchestra).

CARTER: Sonata. EPIC BC 1250 (with *Pocahontas*; OP).

CHOPIN: Concerto No. 2. **LISZT:** Concerto No. 1. New Philharmonia Orchestra, John Pritchard, cond. ODYSSEY Y 31529.

DEBUSSY: Etudes (complete). EPIC BC 1242 (OP).

HAYDN: Sonatas Nos. 20, 44, 46. ENGLISH CBS 61112.

RAVEL: Gaspard de la nuit; Le Tombeau de Couperin. EPIC LC 3589 (mono; OP).

SCHOENBERG: Pieces, Opp. 33a and 33b; Suite, Op. 25. **STRAVINSKY:** Sonata; Serenade. EPIC BC 1140 (OP).

SCHUBERT: Sonata in A, D. 959. **MÓZART:** Rondo in A minor, K. 511. EPIC BC 1255 (OP).

STRAVINSKY: Movements. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky, cond. COLUMBIA MS 6272 or MS 7054 (with various couplings).

WEBER: Complete Works. Pierre Boulez, cond. COLUMBIA (to be released). J.H.

to go to the movies, and though his confreres are cerebral his choice of movies is not. Ingmar Bergman is beyond him. He loves Hollywood epics like *Youngblood Hawke*, he is deeply if improbably moved by *Camille*, and he is unable to recount the curved-cue routine of *The Pool Shark* without breaking up. Pressed, he can remember all the lines (e.g., W. C. Fields after a fall off a cliff: "It's that last foot that's dangerous") and the full casts of films seen nearly forty years ago. ("No, H. B. Warner was not the High Lama in *Lost Horizon*—that was Sam Jaffe. Warner was Chang.")

Rosen seems as delighted as the next man at all that his photographic mind can recall, but—like German philosopher Friedrich Schlegel, whom he is fond of quoting—he seems to view his intellect as a thing apart. One senses always a deep obligation to that intelligence, a wish to push his capabilities to their utter limits. He is far less impressed by precocity ("Carlyle didn't talk until he was six, you know") than by the drive and determination that can put natural gifts to good account.

His friendship with Elliott Carter and his wife, Helen, dates back more than fifteen years; it was to this couple that he dedicated *The Classical Style*. After watching Rosen's artistry develop over the years, Carter says of him today: "Like other important pianists of his generation, Charles once belonged to the neoclassic school of performance, striving for a forceful, rhythmic flow which is only slightly modified to make expressive points and, of course, great textural clarity and transparency—qualities which the neoclassic music of Stravinsky had made particularly meaningful in the third, fourth, and fifth decades of this century.

"But he has transcended that style now, with the result that there is a vast array of different kinds of touch and tone color. At the same time, his flexible shaping of phrases and his general interpretation of works has opened up and became more expressive, sensitive, and characterized on his recent recordings. Comparing the recent Beethoven recordings, for instance, with the older recordings of the classics, as well as his first recording of my double concerto with his second, shows this change. He has an extraordinary ability to penetrate the quality, meaning, and character of a piece of music, to develop an over-all interpretation of it, and then to project this conception very convincingly."

The composer defines Charles Rosen as a pianist—first, last, and always a performing musician who continually, and with infinite care, refines his art. The gargantuan researches into the past are but a search for illumination, believes Carter, a setting of each period in its proper historical perspective.

"What have reached us from the past tend to be conventionalized routines that have been substi-

tuted for living tradition," he says. "With each new period, the point of view about any fixed period in the past has changed and must be reinterpreted in the light of present experience. The nineteenth-century view of the eighteenth century seems to us unconvincing today, as being too sentimental and overprettified.

"What Charles has done over the years is to examine closely the cultural and musical background of each of the important periods that produced the familiar musical classics, including those of the very recent past, as both his book on Schoenberg and his playing of that composer's music—and indeed, even more, his recorded performances of the Boulez sonatas—show. Consequently, his interpretations of music of any period are informed with a very deep perception of what characterizes that period in our eyes and, as well, what is meaningful in it for us. He is not concerned primarily with nostalgia for the past, but with the ways its works deserve our admiration and can convince us of their artistic value."

"He just wants to get back to fundamentals, to the basic facts of musical life," says Carter, in what must be the most accurate summation yet heard of this complex, many-sided, relentless genius.

If the composer is right—and the pattern of Rosen's life would seem to indicate that he is—then everything else falls into place. Whatever realms that omnivorous intellect explores, it simply mines for profit and reinvests in artistry.

The multiplicity of talents may bewilder us, but it has never posed any serious threat to Rosen's life goal as stated, with a terrifying simplicity, at the age of seven: "I want to be a pianist." Possession was complete even then, and the intensity of that possession can be measured in a statement made many years later. "I am not sure . . . that it is necessary to understand music in order to love it," he remarked, "but I am certain that love brings a need for understanding."

Everything that Rosen has stated or written or argued about revolves around this love and this need. The intellect can range as far as it likes, but it always comes back home again.

With his rare talent for dissecting and synthesizing human thought, he evokes the image of a tireless prospector sifting out fool's gold. Whatever nuggets he finds, he will profligately spend—maybe on a single evening, from one concert stage, in a solitary performance. The evanescent moment will be lost on fools or dissolved in memory. And he will go right on spending himself recklessly while others wonder how such precious gifts could be squandered for beauties so transitory. They will never realize that this is, for some, the one reality. "Its permanence lies elsewhere—in thought, not in action. . . . Its essence is outside time."

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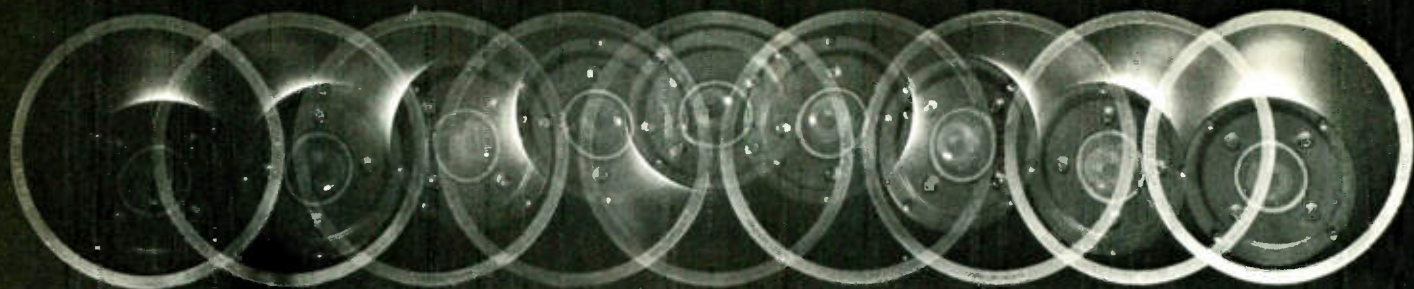
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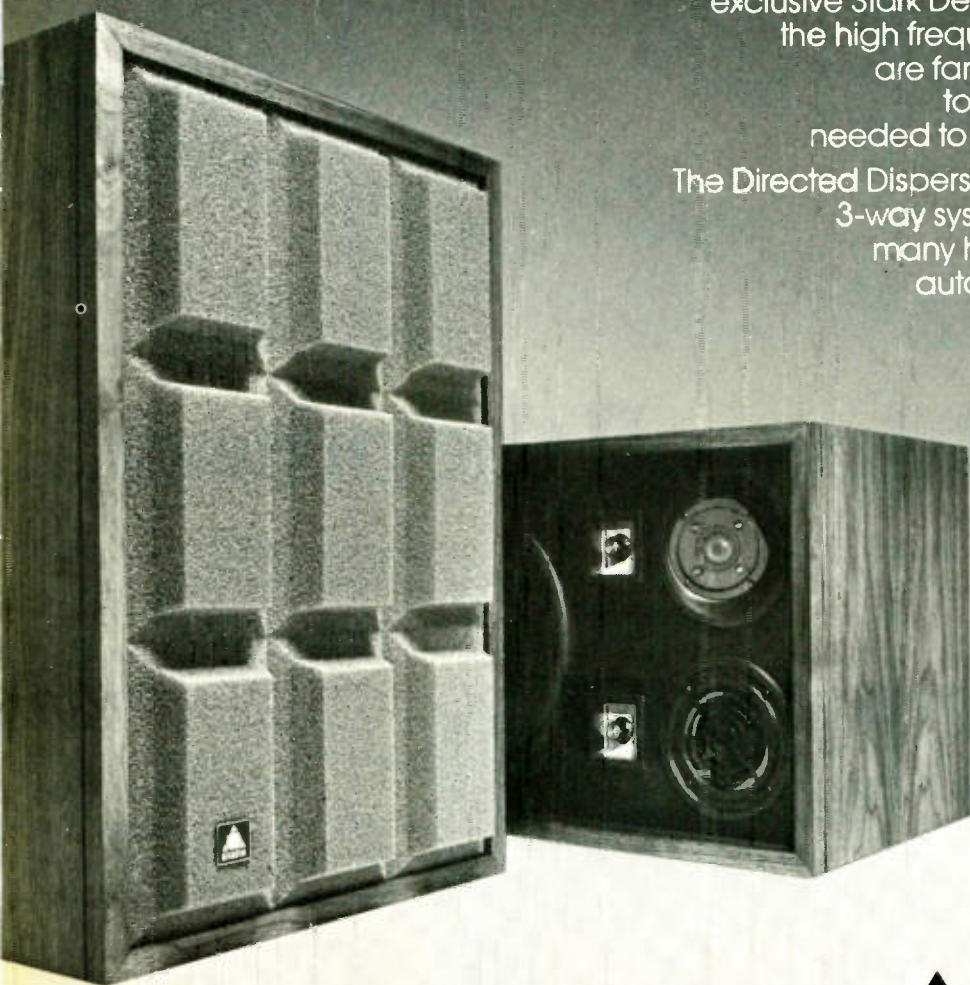
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by Harris Goldsmith

Carlos Kleiber: Out of the Paternal Shadow

DG's outstanding new Beethoven Fifth establishes Kleiber as a formidable interpreter in his own right, but still his father's son.

PERHAPS IT IS MERE COINCIDENCE that Carlos Kleiber chose to record the Beethoven Fifth Symphony, of which his late father, Erich, in 1954 made one of his most famous recordings (currently available in England, on Eclipse ECS 518). Still, the comparison is fascinating—and fruitful.

Perhaps because he is his father's son (it is said that Erich discouraged his seeking a career in music), Carlos necessarily looks for divergent ways of expressing his interpretive ideas, a situation rather analogous to that of Rudolf and Peter Serkin—two great musicians who, for all the obvious differences in repertory sympathies and playing styles, are far more alike in their intense involvement and in their linear pianism than perhaps even they may care to admit! Like the Serkins, both Kleibers display an unusual awareness of tradition. Again, it is the son who seems bent on innovation, by which I mean only that the father expressed his individuality in more conservative terms, not that he rigidly adhered to "standard" practices. Still, both recognizably belong to the classical, rather than the romantic, camp.

Both conductors view the symphony's first movement in brisk, fiery terms. They favor a rather terse, impetuous, brightly defined sonority, with stinging accents and sharp articulation taking precedence over the customary "blended" sound of many European orchestras. In both performances the controversial passage at bar 293 is given in its original instrumentation or something close to it; instead of replacing or overpowering the bassoons with horns, as most conductors do, Carlos favors the urtext—Erich had the novel idea of discreetly adding one horn, thereby preserving the essential bassoon sound but gently reinforcing it.

In textural terms too the readings are extremely close: In both cases the string/wind antiphony of the coda is rendered with extreme clarity. But whereas

Erich tended to eschew rhetorical devices (his is virtually the only recording that allows no extra time whatever for the fermatas in the opening motto), Carlos gives the music more breathing space and, in truth, just avoids mannerism in such strokes as the fractional delay on the chords at bar 58 et seq. By going standards, the Carlos Kleiber performance is relatively puristic and light-footed but less clipped and businesslike than his father's. The latter had a slightly better orchestra to work with in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. The Vienna Philharmonic plays with more alertness and tonal beauty for Carlos than it often does (compare the slightly sleepy Böhm performance, DG 2530 062), but there are a few unpolished moments—e.g., the final chords are not quite together.

Carlos begins the second movement with a great deal of *moto*, but before long his little adjustments bring the tempo back to something more conventional. As with Erich, the violins are sharply defined, almost militaristic, at bar 81, suggesting that both conductors insisted upon martially precise bowing. The woodwind arcs at bar 127 et seq. are exquisitely shaped (rather like Toscanini in manner) and, if a few of the hefty climaxes (e.g., bars 29 and 78) are slightly weighted and sluggish, the prismatic, radiant sonority elsewhere saves the day. Like his father, Carlos heeds the *piu mosso* at bar 205 with unusual, some may feel excessive, fidelity.

The *poco rit.* at the beginning of the third movement is a shade overpointed in Carlos Kleiber's reading, but in the main he takes a puristic view. In the celebrated trio for cellos and double basses, he insists on maintaining the tempo. Even Toscanini and Cantelli (obviously no self-indulgent romantics!) let up slightly, as did Erich Kleiber. While the playing is admirably precise, the passage is for me rendered antiseptic compared with all three of those worthy

predecessors. The return of the scherzo with its woodwinds and plucked strings and the hushed transition into the finale, though, are very elegantly and sensitively handled by the younger Kleiber. (He gets each soft timpani stroke to "sound" without losing the mysterious atmosphere.)

I have always been slightly disappointed with Erich Kleiber's account of the finale. For all the care over articulation and rhythmic values, the reading seemed static, dispassionate, even self-negating. Carlos lets it flow more and displays similar rhythmic poise (as in the unison passage for oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns at measure 27). Yet his reading too is ultimately a bit understated, and thus unfulfilled. He momentarily loses control and accelerates slightly in the development section (a different "take," perhaps?), and there is a decided lack of power from trombones and timpani at such crucial points as the fanfares at bar 122 and the sforzando leading into the coda (bar 294). I also find both Klei-

bers' acceleration in the coda slightly frivolous-sounding, though both give welcome prominence to the piccolo part; the Toscanini and Cantelli performances show how much more climactic and dramatic this movement can sound. Carlos Kleiber, incidentally, is the only one of these four conductors who observes the exposition repeat here.

The Beethoven Fifth spread over two premium-priced sides is no doubt expensive, but whatever its minuscule lapses this is a distinguished, even great, performance. It may not be the greatest imaginable, or even the greatest we have had on records, but Carlos Kleiber establishes himself clearly as one of today's finest conductors. I look forward to hearing much more from him; conductors of this stature are rare these days.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Carlos Kleiber, cond. [Werner Mayer, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 516, \$7.98.

Lester Young



Sam Rivers



Cecil Taylor



Jackie McLean



Riches from the Blue Note Archives

United Artists' first Blue Note reissue includes major recordings by Cecil Taylor, Jackie McLean, Lester Young, and Sam Rivers.

by John B. Litweiler

IN 1939, ALFRED LION and Francis Wolff, Jewish refugees from Germany, founded Blue Note, the jazz label that persisted as an independent for twenty-seven years. (Only one had a longer independent tenure.) Shortly after the catalogue was sold to the Liberty-United Artists combine, Lion retired to become the B. Traven of ex-producers; Wolff continued to direct recording dates until his 1971 death, and eventually the New York operation moved in toto to the United Artists headquarters in Los Angeles.

Last year Blue Note received a surprise call from the New Jersey engineer who recorded nearly all the Lion-Wolff sessions: Would you please pick up all your tapes that I've been storing? The current management found literally a vault of treasures, in dread-

ful disorder. The master tapes had the merest identification ("Andrew Hill, Feb. 10, 1965"), and the producers' logbook—the only possible guide to song titles and personnel—was absent, possibly with the wandering Lion, possibly willed by Wolff to a friend. The detective work involved inspired this batch of reissues and fresh lore; present plans see a total of forty double-LP albums by early 1976.

Enthusiastic, meticulous, eccentric, honest men in a field of seedy operators, Lion and Wolff exhorted their artists to please make hit records but left their musicians to determine material and formats. Die-hard traditionalists at first, they plunged into the postwar jazz revolution in 1947; for two decades, then, they documented the mainstream (bebop

through the hard-bop and modal schools to avant-garde polytonal jazz) with unequaled thoroughness, becoming models to the rest of the jazz record industry.

Long-forgotten material from other United Artists properties is combined with Blue Note's to form this series' initial release. The records come in plain brown wrappers with black and white cover photos, along with extensive and (excepting the Cecil Taylor essay) valuable program notes. The sound quality is remarkable considering the probable condition of some of the original masters—indeed, have the Lester Young Aladdin sides (LA 456) ever sounded so good?

Young recorded these in the period of crucial change that followed his horrifying Army experience. The joy that flowed through his glorious era as Count Basie's star saxophonist was now colored by a profound, sometimes dominant, sense of tragedy. He had begun to break his early style down into its components, to analyze and reassemble them in often extremely careful fashion. If some of these Aladdin cuts are near his career low, they predict the method of his overwhelmingly passionate 1955–56 expressions. Significantly, the last fifteen years of his life are the basis of his exalted reputation as a ballad player; we hear the beginnings in "These Foolish Things" (1945) and especially "She's Funny That Way" (1946).

The album contains many flashes of Young's authentic genius, which is raised in bold relief by the ugliness of Willie Smith's alto sax in "Jammin' with Lester." Young's fervent creative urge, most evident in the 1945–46 dates, can't be contained by inappropriate sidemen or pop song material: Witness the ballads, "You're Driving Me Crazy," "No Eyes Blues," and "Lover Come Back to Me," with its beautiful substitute theme. Comparing "D. B. Blues" (1945) with the famous "Jumpin' with Symphony Sid" (1947) reveals the change in his sensibility. The former is a moving statement, simultaneously witty and anguished, but the latter, aided by his widened sonorous palette, is an epic. An important collection, certainly, including some very lovely music, too.

If Gil Evans' immense arranging skill is undeniable, so is his bad taste (LA 461). His sentimental instincts make these orchestrations of jazz standards diminutives of the originals. The low points are a shameless "Chant of the Weed" and the startlingly gimmicky "Django," but more thoughtful scoring and the broad, cutting sound of the late Cannonball Adderley's florid alto save two 1958 sessions. This ranks among the best work of Adderley's career, and the pairing of soloist and orchestrator is a triumph in "St. Louis Blues," "Bird Feathers," and "Struttin' with Some Barbecue." The voicings and counter-melodies in the latter two are Evans at his best, and, curiously, his romanticism adapts excellently to "Manteca" (again with superb Adderley) to make the album's high point.

The beginnings of the apocalyptic John Coltrane's stylistic maturity are clear in the Blue Note tracks (LA 451) with journeyman bassist Paul Chambers and the brilliant, nervous drummer Philly Joe Jones. If the added players (Pepper Adams, baritone sax; Donald Byrd, trumpet; Kenny Burrell, guitar) are enjoyable, the heroic flair of tenorist Coltrane's ideas

nonetheless shines through like the moon in Scorpio. His harmonic re-evaluations recur in gnarled fashion and, despite references to his master Dexter Gordon (especially in the September 1956 sextet), his tone and line are wholly personal, his characteristic lyricism manifest, his perfect time and timing set for the rest of his life. Too, he lacked the extreme puritanism of his most avant-garde work, and a rare gaiety flits through "Trane's Strain." Who can resist the terrific vigor and swing of "Dexterity," "Omicron," "We Six," or the thorough originality of "High Step"? But be warned: Chambers is a weak soloist, and two tracks are his alone.

The two rarest Cecil Taylor records are united (LA 458), adding "missing" works from both sessions, with joyous results. Already flirting with atonality in his first recording session, the pianist asserts a sense of identity and originality at least as profound as brother pioneer Coltrane's. The wild contrasts and occasionally complex internal structures in the rubato of "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To" predict his 1975 style, and he sheds fresh light on "Sweet and Lovely" by thoroughly violating the song's original spirit. The delight in his own prowess that vitiates "Charge 'em Blues" becomes happy high spirits by 1959 (and better recording balance between Taylor and his rowdy band). It would take a major essay just to catalogue the marvelous touches of harmony, arhythmic timing, asymmetric lines, convoluted structures, dynamic excellence, subtle wit, multiple meaning, and authentic beauty here. It's the peak of his early style, music to hear again and again.

Altoist Jackie McLean credits the Coltrane-Taylor-Ornette Coleman revolution for his own musical liberation, but these typical works (LA 457) reveal a far different kind of thought. He concentrates on his horn's middle range, inventing phrases with little relationship except their regularity of timing and general simplicity. Throughout both LPs he seldom develops a motif for even so long as eight, let alone sixteen, measures. His emotional range runs to the broad extremes, often expressed in the broadest possible fashion, his rhythmic impetus derives from a regular violent hammering on the beat, and the volume gradations in the quartet tracks are nearly the limits of his dynamic range.

His special virtue, and it is considerable, is the vividness of his conception combined with a gift for melodic fragments in tension and a flat, "true" sound that's highly expressive, sometimes harsh, sometimes oboelike. His playing in the sextet is excellent—unfortunately, neither trumpeter Lee Morgan nor his imitator Charles Tolliver is in top form—and three of the five quartet tracks rank among McLean's finest work ever. Sparkling notes arise amid long tones in "Moonscape," progressing to bright, clean phrasing; the cruelty of "High Frequency" is magnified by his choice of notes and false register squeals. Always a rewarding artist, McLean is at his best—that is, most passionate—in this album.

By contrast, Andrew Hill (LA 459), with far greater resources, accomplishes less. His technique is flawless, his variety of material is notable ("Poinsettia"—pretty tune!), his mastery of writing and piano improvisation are unassailable. But his playing is badly understated, his phrasing is brittle, and his melodic

ideas are weak. The quintet date does show off his skill at floating tempos roaming back and forth through the implied rhythm, but trumpeter Freddie Hubbard is definitely a fish out of water. Despite Hill's sidemen's obvious abilities, only bassist Richard Davis ("Calliope") and altoist Pat Patrick ("One for One") create distinct impressions. The string quartet on one side approaches Muzak.

Neither is Sam Rivers' sextet (LA 453) very satisfactory: A sloppy altoist overbalances the ensembles, and Rivers' voicings are dull in any case. Primarily a tenorist, he has absorbed Coltrane, Maurice McIntyre, Wayne Shorter, Sonny Rollins, and Albert Ayler in snippets, piecing them together with what often sounds like deliberately perverse accenting; the free-form "Aflatus" is a special success, though.

With the Hill quartet, Rivers is outstanding for a change, at ease to structure his solos around urgently emotive sequences, extending ideas at satisfying length. The quartet is excellent: J. C. Moses is an ideal drummer; Hill's writing almost justifies the concept of "program music" in jazz. His piano work here is coherent and firmly stated, and his lines are extended into larger, melodic-based forms. "Pain," with its surface "cool," and "Desire" express subtlety you'd hardly expect from Hill, but the entire date ranks among the handful of his best.

Among treasures to come in the Blue Note reissue series: the legendary Herbie Nichols' long out-of-print piano works collected; the complete Blue Note Fats Navarro (the trumpeter's LPs are also out of print); the collected 1947-52 Thelonious Monk, including previously unissued material; an all-new al-

bum from tenorist Sonny Rollins' near-classic 1957 live trio date. No other jazz reissue/restoration program of late has begun so auspiciously. Nobody else, however, has anything like the wonderful Blue Note archives to build with.

PAUL CHAMBERS-JOHN COLTRANE: High Step. Paul Chambers, bass; John Coltrane, tenor saxophone; Philly Joe Jones, drums; quintet and sextet (1955), quartet and sextet (1956). *Dexterity; We Six; Nixon, Dixon, and Yates Blues*; ten more. BLUE NOTE LA 451H2, \$7.98 (two discs, mono).

SAM RIVERS: Involution. Sam Rivers, tenor and soprano saxophones and flute; Sam Rivers Sextet (1967), Andrew Hill Quartet (1966). *Paeon; Violence; Illusion*; nine more. BLUE NOTE LA 453H2, \$7.98 (two discs).

LESTER YOUNG: The Aladdin Sessions. Lester Young, tenor saxophone; quintets, sextets, and septets (1945-48). *These Foolish Things; Lester's Be-Bop Boogie; Sunday; Jumpin' with Symphony Sid*; twenty-three more. BLUE NOTE LA 456H2, \$7.98 (two discs, mono).

JACKIE MCLEAN: Jackknife. Jackie McLean, alto saxophone; Larry Willis, piano; Jack DeJohnette, drums; sextet (1965), quartet (1966). *Jackknife; Blue Fable; Moonscape*; seven more. BLUE NOTE LA 457H2, \$7.98 (two discs).

CECIL TAYLOR: In Transition. Cecil Taylor, piano; quartet (1955), quintet (1959). *Azure; Carol/Three Points; Love for Sale*; ten more. BLUE NOTE LA 458H2, \$7.98 (two discs, partly mono).

ANDREW HILL: One for One. Andrew Hill, piano and composer; quintet (1965), quartet and sextet (1969-70). *One for One; Illusion; Euterpe*; eight more. BLUE NOTE LA 459H2, \$7.98 (two discs).

GIL EVANS: Pacific Standard Time. Gil Evans, piano and arr.; with various big-band personnel (1958-59). *King Porter Stomp; Round Midnight; Joy Spring*; twelve more. BLUE NOTE LA 461H2, \$7.98 (two discs).

by R. D. Darrell

The Three Faces of Carl Orff



Philips issues Herbert Kegel's first-rate accounts of Catulli Carmina and Der Mond, while BASF offers a disc of Schulwerk selections.

MANY RELATIVELY INEXPERIENCED LISTENERS apparently find Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and *Catulli Carmina* either exceptionally thrilling or chilling for their "barbaric" rhythms and spectacular sonics. Some more sophisticated listeners belittle the composer as a charlatan-showman or a cynical exploiter of musical/dramatic "camp." But while neither of these views may be entirely unjustified, I find each grossly exaggerated. And it happens that the current batch of releases brings us not only a fine *Catulli Carmina*, but a recording of Orff's less-often-heard opera *Der Mond* and a disc representation of his music-education work.

Catulli Carmina, the second panel in Orff's *Trionfi* triptych, has been so overshadowed by the first, the

much more spectacular and famous *Carmina Burana*, that its own distinctive attractions are too often minimized. To be sure, its imposing "Eis aiona!" chorus with multiple percussion and four-piano accompaniment—which serves as both *Prelusio* and, shortened, *Exodium*—does indeed remind one rather too strongly of *Carmina Burana*'s big "O Fortuna" opening and close. But the work's main body (which was the entire work until the framework was added) is for unaccompanied chorus, with some tenor and soprano solo passages, and it voices some of the most fervent musical paeans to human sexual love in these remarkable settings of the incomparable "Lesbia" poems of Catullus, the poignant eloquence of which survives the ravages of two thousand years.

Not the least of the release's merits is its provision of a handsome notes/libretto booklet. It gives us the Catullan texts (in the more prudish past usually bowdlerized, if not omitted entirely) not only veiled in Gibbons' "decent obscurity of a learned language" (i.e., the original Latin), but also in full uncensored English, French, and German translations—which nowadays seem only mildly ribald.

Almost a decade ago, the East German specialist in modern music Herbert Kegel had a *Carmina Burana* released here on Heliodor, a version of neither exceptionally good nor poor qualities. In the meantime, he and his Leipzig Radio forces have made notable progress, as is strikingly evident here in Philips' new *Catulli Carmina*. The 1970 Roger Wagner recording (Angel S 36023) remains particularly admirable for its lovely singing, but the Leipzig chorus is nearly as attractive vocally, and the soloists more stylistically distinctive, while Kegel keeps the whole performance under far tauter control and makes it more grippingly dramatic—advantages enhanced by the more vivid recorded sonics and theatrical presence. So, since the 1971 version by the first outstanding Orff exponent on discs, Eugen Jochum (DG 2530 074), is uncharacteristically routine in performance and relatively distant and dry in recording qualities, the present Kegel edition is a decisive first choice.

The exaggerated reactions to the "noisy" Orff, which I described at the outset, may well be corrected by turning to *Der Mond*. This highly original work, written in 1937-38, just after *Carmina Burana*, is based on a fey Grimm fairy tale. Its first half deals with the theft of the moon by four rustic fellows who hang it on a local tree and arrange to have their own individual quarters cut off and buried with them when they die. In the opera's second-half underworld, they glue their pieces together, wake the multitudes of sleeping dead, and stimulate them to begin a macabre drinking and gaming brawl. The racket wakes St. Peter, who hurls a comet at the revelers but then permits the high jinks to resume for a time before finally sending the dead back to their eternal sleep and restoring the moon to its rightful place in the heavens. (As in most German fairy tales and philosophical systems, any rationale is obscure at best!)

Such a crude précis can give no notion of the work's sheer charm, frequent moments of lyrical delicacy, and imaginative variety. It was first recorded back in 1958 for Angel by Sawallisch (SBL 3567), and that version long has commanded near-cult admiration. Although it's still in print, I don't have it at hand for detailed comparisons, which is perhaps just as well, since its devotees are not likely even to consider its being superseded. Its individual distinction can't be, but Kegel's version of course benefits immensely from newer technology—audio engineering as cleanly natural and un gimmicked as today's state of the art can achieve. And in their own ways, narrator Eberhard Büchner, the four effectively differentiated fellows, minor cast members in mostly speaking roles, and conductor Kegel are all first-rate executants and spellbinding interpreters. If you don't already know this odd but engaging musical fairy tale, you're in for an unexpected treat in either recording.

Many of both the admirers and detractors of Orff's concert and stage works may not realize that he first won more specialized fame for his music-education work with children. He worked with Dorothea Günther at her school in Munich and, inspired by Jaques-Dalcroze, produced his seminal *Schulwerk* collection of exercises and short pieces in 1930-33. Since then, Orff, in collaboration with Keetman and others, has helped to make his explorations into the variety of rhythmic and timbre experience known and used all over the world. (Even in my own Hudson Valley township, an enterprising music teacher in the elementary school has imported many of the *Schulwerk* system's special percussion instruments and sponsored her pupils' own concerts.)

Until lately, however, the only recorded examples were in the fine 1958 mono *Music for Children* two-disc Angel set, BL 3582, still listed in Schwann-2. In mid-1973, BASF KHB 20374 brought to this country Harmonia Mundi's newer, if shorter, batch of vocal and instrumental examples, again directed by Orff himself. Now there's another set, this one all-instrumental (except for the Tölz Boys Choir's rhythmic shouts in one piece, *Diminution-Schrei*). Led by the eponymous *Street Song* (*Gassenhauer*), many of them feature the varied coolly ringing tones of metallophones, marimbas, xylophones, and glockenspiels. Others feature fifes, recorders, drums, plastic maracas, etc., in short marches and inventions. A few, for larger ensembles, bear such enticing titles (in English) as *Gnomic Capriccio*, *Processional*, and *Unsquare Dance*. All are notable in particular for their rhythmic variety (in a few cases pre-echoing some of the motives used later in *Carmina Burana*), and one of the most amusing as well as effective, *Rondo-Appause*, consists entirely of crisp hand-clapping and foot-stamping.

It's all good fun that kids should relish for its infectious gusto and ear-sharpening timbre variety. But while they may want to replay it in infinite repetition, the music's natural limitations in length and substance are less likely to tempt adults to too frequent rehearsals. Yet since it does have some more-than-educational-only value, it's unfair of BASF to provide no notes of any consequence. Apparently the producers hope to capitalize commercially less on the disc's genuine school-use potentials than on the public interest aroused in the Midwest by some radio-station broadcasts of the opening *Street Song*. BASF's earlier "*Musikalischer Hausbuch*" release at least includes some generalized notes, but it too ignores the practical school uses to which it also is most likely to be put.

ORFF: *Catulli Carmina*. Ute Mai, soprano; Eberhard Büchner, tenor; Leipzig Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Kegel, cond. PHILIPS 6500 815, \$7.98.

ORFF: *Der Mond*. Eberhard Büchner (tenor), Narrator; Helmut Klotz (tenor), Horst Lunow (baritone), Fred Teschler (bass), and Armin Terzibaschian (bass), Four Fellows; Reiner Süß (bass), St. Peter; Leipzig Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Kegel, cond. [Walter Zimmer, prod.] PHILIPS 6700 083, \$15.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

ORFF-KEETMAN: *Street Song* (*Schulwerk/Musica Poetica* selections). Instrumental ensemble, Carl Orff, cond. [Alfred Krings, Heinz Jansen, and Henno Quasthoff, prod.] BASF HC 25122, \$6.98.

reviewed by
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BACH, J.C., W.F., AND W.F.E.: Chamber Works with Flutes. Jean-Pierre Rampal and Eugenia Zukerman, flutes; Pinchas Zukerman, violin and viola; Charles Tunnel, cello [Roy Emerson, prod.] COLUMBIA M 33310, \$6.98.

Having enjoyed the Zukermans' Telemann-Kraus-Beethoven record (Columbia M 32842), I found even greater pleasure in this record of music by three of Bach's sons.

In the first place, Eugenia Zukerman is joined by the incomparable Jean-Pierre Rampal. Whether playing Wilhelm Friedemann's Duet in F or joining with the other players, they offer some quite enchanting and invariably musical playing. Moreover, the two quartets by Johann Christian—one in C with violin and cello, one in D with viola and cello—are utterly delightful pieces, superb examples of the high rococo that had such a strong influence on the young Mozart. Only Wilhelm Friedrich Ernst's Trio in G for two flutes and viola is rather routine.

The recording is warm without being overly spacious. P.H.

BEETHOVEN: Missa Solemnis, Op. 123. Margaret Price, soprano; Christa Ludwig, mezzo; Wieslaw Ochman, tenor; Martti Talvela, bass; Peter Planyavsky, organ; Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. [Werner Mayer, prod.]

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2707 080, \$15.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

Comparisons:
 Toscanini/NBC Sym. (1940) unissued
 Toscanini/NBC Sym. (1953) RCA LM 6013
 Klemperer/Vienna Sym. Turn. THS 65015/6
 Klemperer/New Philharmonia Ang. SB 3679
 Jochum/Concertgebouw Phi. 6799 001
 Karajan Ang. SB 3595, DG 2707 030, Ang. SB 3821
 Masur/Leipzig Gewandhaus Euro. 85 760 XFK

Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, which the composer proclaimed his "most perfect composition," is indeed one of the supreme glories of Western civilization. A work of such special impact ought never really to enter the standard repertory, where routine repetition can dull the response to its brilliance. Toscanini, whose Missa performances remain unparalleled in my experience, conducted it fewer than ten times in his entire sixty-eight-year career.

Karl Böhm's new recording, his second, shows what can happen when this basically inaccessible work is reduced to everyday dimensions. The performance is appropriately massive and solemn, but seriously short of fervor. The interpretation centers around a very sympathetically rendered Sanctus—spacious, heartfelt, serene, with the "Benedictus" violin solo beautifully played by Gerhart Hetzel. Yet even the Sanctus suffers from inert brass playing in the climactic "Osanna in excelsis," where the trombones should come to the fore assertively; the conservative Vienna Philharmonic brassy, true to their tradi-

Classical



Karl Böhm
 A massive Missa but short on fervor.

tion, assume an inappropriately supportive role.

Time and again Beethoven's extraordinary responses to the text are minimized. The dizzying excitement of such contrapuntal passages as the great "Et vitam venturi" fugue at the end of the Credo are tranquilized by Böhm's emphatic beat and placid tempos. Much of the extravagant instrumental detail is rendered indistinct. The huge warlike moments of the Agnus Dei, which make Beethoven's plea for everlasting peace uniquely ironic, are casualties of the conductor's pacification program. (In fairness, these forces are not helped by the rather distant microphone placement, which gives the voices their due but tends to diffuse the symphonic aspects of the work.)

I must emphasize that I am not faulting Böhm's tempos per se. The Kyrie might have worked in this simple, devotional approach had the phrase shapes been presented with more arch and tensile line; Toscanini's great 1940 broadcast performance benefited from a similarly grave pace. Also, Böhm (like Karajan and Günter Wand on Nonesuch) seems to have difficulty making transitions. In the Gloria, for example, Beethoven marks the B-flat "Gratias agimus" section *meno allegro*, by which he surely meant a subtle relaxation of the basic *allegro vivace*, which is what one hears from Klemperer, Toscanini, Jochum, and Masur. With the others one gets instead an overly literal slowing of tempo that disjoints the line and makes nonsense of the cumulative argument.

The chorus sings well, and the four soloists are a bit wobbly but generally good. Margaret Price articulates better than did Gundula Janowitz (Karajan/DG and Karajan/Angel II), and Christa Ludwig's sonorous delivery (also heard on Karajan/Angel I and Karajan/DG) is always welcome. Martti Talvela is an asset, though he was heard to better advantage in the Klemperer/Angel set, where he was nine years younger and more closely microphoned; Wieslaw Ochman rounds out the quartet admirably.

Of the *Missa* conductors on records, the only one whose conception approaches Toscanini's is Klemperer, and in fact I am most struck by the similarity of their approaches. There are huge differences in basic temperament, of course—Toscanini all fiery brio, Klemperer tending toward sobriety even in fast passages—but both favored a tough-minded, assertive, unpretentious, structural approach, and they had similar ideas about tempo integration (though Klemperer's *allegro maestoso* in the Gloria

Critics' Choice

The best classical records reviewed in recent months

- ASHFORTH:** Byzantia. Bossert. ORI. ORS 74164, Oct.
BACH: Brandenburg Concertos. Davison. VAN. Ev. SRV 313/4SD (2), Sept.
BEETHOVEN: Bagatelles. Gould. COL. M 33265, Aug.
BEETHOVEN: Late Quartets. Végh Qt. TEL. SKA 25113 (4), Aug.
CHOPIN: Preludes. Arrau. PHI. 6500 622, Oct.
CRUMB: Music for a Summer Evening. NONE. H 71311, Oct.
ENESCO, ROUSSEL: Songs. Marcoulescou. ORI. ORS 75184, Oct.
GRIEG: Lyric Pieces (selections). Gilels. DG 2530 476, Sept.
KODÁLY: Orchestral Works. Philharmonia Hungarica, Dorati. LON. CSA 2313 (3), Aug.
MASSENET: La Navarraise. De Almeida. COL. M 33506, Aug.
MENDELSSOHN: Piano Concertos. Perahia, Marriner. COL. M 33207, July.
RAVEL: Orchestral Works. Skrowaczewski. Vox SVBX 5133 (4), July.
RAVEL: Trio; Violin-Cello Sonata. J. Laredo et al. COL. M 33529, Oct.
STRAUSS, R.: Bourgeois Gentilhomme; Horn Concerto No. 1. Ormandy. COL. M 32233, Aug.
SUK, JANÁČEK, R. STRAUSS: Works for Chamber Orchestra. Los Angeles Ch. Orch., Marriner. ARGO ZRG 792, Sept.
VILLA-LOBOS: Piano Works. Freire. TEL. SAT 22547, Sept.
WEILL: Symphonies (2). De Waart. PHI. 6500 642, Sept.
ARIAS AND DUETS. Blegen, Von Stade. COL. M 33307, July.
CLASSICAL BOHEMIAN PIANO MUSIC. Firkusny. CAN. CE 31086, Oct.
20TH-CENTURY FLUTE MUSIC. Sollberger. NONE. HB 73028 (2), Sept.

has always seemed rushed to me, far less effective than Toscanini's truly majestic tempo).

The resemblance is even more pronounced in Klemperer's first recording, for Vox (recently reissued in the Turnabout Historical Series), which predates Toscanini's 1953 commercial recording by some two years. Klemperer's 1966 Angel version undoubtedly has much superior orchestral playing, singing, and sound, but he had an even firmer grasp on the music in the earlier recording. Certainly his Gloria and Credo had more muscle than in the slightly lethargic stereo version, though the latter profited elsewhere from Klemperer's somewhat more relaxed approach: The earlier Kyrie is militant to the point of being headlong, and the beginning of the Sanctus (marked "Adagio. Mit Andacht"—with devotion) lacks repose in the Turnabout version. (It should be mentioned that the Turnabout issue is missing a bar at the *allegretto ma non troppo* of the Credo, page 213 of the Peters miniature score. I was unable to determine whether it was missing in the previous Vox incarnations.)

Aside from the Klemperer/Angel, the only modern recording I can recommend strongly is the recent Jochum/Philips, which I find the best-recorded of all. The precise, vivid acoustic captures all the elements with utmost presence, which largely compensates for the general reticence the Concertgebouw brasses share with their Viennese counterparts. Jochum's performance is musicianly but rather detached, and

occasionally foursquare. The rather cautious Credo aside, however, his tempo relationships are beyond reproach.

The three Karajan versions, for all their executant and even musical mastery, seem to me more about Karajan than about Beethoven, though his new Angel version (August 1975) recaptures some of the shape of his 1959 Angel version. The Kyrie, for example, has far better line than in his 1966 DG performance. Yet Karajan still seems bent on avoiding articulation at all cost, and I consider "at all cost" too high a price to pay for this completely refined, unanimous, and ultimately bland tonal blend. It's all very beautiful, but meaningless. Nor is the Masur/Eurodisc set a satisfactory alternative. Like Böhm, Masur has the disadvantage of distant microphoning; here too the voices dominate, and there is a minimum of orchestral detail. I also find the conductor—whose work has impressed me—disappointingly perfunctory, especially in the Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, which all emerge clipped, rushed, and insensitive, without the enkindling humanity and glow that Klemperer brought to similar tempos in his first recording. Once again the brass playing is woolly.




And that brings us back to Toscanini. In the 1953 performance that preceded his commercial recording, the galvanic, firmly accented tempos and incisive instrumental and choral work produced, in such sections as the Credo's "Et vitam venturi" fugue and the end of the Gloria, a heady propulsion unequaled by anyone else in my experience

Explanation of symbols

Classical:

-  Budget
-  Historical
-  Reissue

Recorded tape:

-  Open Reel
-  8-Track Cartridge
-  Cassette

of the *Missa*. Rarely have I heard anything to compare with the wondrous instrumental color and rapt feeling before the "Benedictus" or with the chorus's shout of "Et resurrexit" in the Credo. Those felicities were preserved in the RCA recording, but in bodiless, eviscerated, shrill, and generally unpleasant sonics. Since a relatively recent pressing (stamper numbers 17S/20S/16S/17S) sounded much the same as my original copy, I had pretty well given up on this performance until a friend recently astonished me with a copy acquired about ten years ago (stamper numbers 14S/17S/12S/14S), which produced quite agreeable sound with more warmth and bass support. The treble, while still acute, sounds less strident when supported from below.

Perhaps it is futile to continue hoping for a general release of Toscanini's 1940 *Missa Solemnis*, with Milanov, Castagna, Bjoerling, and Kipnis—much the greatest *Missa* I have heard (and, in its various sub rosa issues, reproduced with solid and lifelike effect), more forceful and less ferocious than the 1953 recording. However, is it unreasonable to implore RCA to restore the commercial recording to listenable estate? H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5. For a feature review, see page 91.

BERG: Sonata for Piano, Op. 1—See Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No. 1.

BERIO: "The Many Voices of Luciano Berio." London Sinfonietta, Luciano Berio, cond. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-0037, \$6.98.

Much of this disc is taken up with excerpts from Berio's opera, the title of which is, logically enough, *Opera*. Just what *Opera* is all about is not made clear in Misha Donat's jacket notes, which is probably not Donat's fault.

At all events, the longest piece in the collection is a melodrama wherein a tenor, a very nervous one attempting to entertain an audience on the *Titanic*, tries to sing a song based on an alliterative poem by Heine and wanders off into a long, incoherent speech that contains the largest assortment of alliterative clichés in the English language ("turn the tables," "bite the bullet," "bitter blow," "dim and distant," and so on endlessly) but finally manages to sing, frenetically and insanely. One is genuinely relieved when the poor man (Gerald English) has finished, apparently in total collapse.

Other works on the record, whether or not they are taken from *Opera*, emphasize Berio's interest in verbal sound as sound, with little or no reference to its semantic meaning. A beautiful "Agnus" from *Opera* is treated in this fashion, and there are equally fascinating pieces based on the name of Martin Luther King and on poems by the Spanish writer Rafael Alberti. A lullaby for a dead child, in Sicilian, comes closest to ordinary song of all the works here, and it is a very good song indeed.

Berio is always composing opera, no matter what he may call it. This collection is scrappy and disorganized, but not even the hideous, mannered, and totally



Harrison Birtwistle
A latter-day *Varèse*.

inappropriate photographs of a clown that are scattered over the jacket and the text insert can keep this good man down. A.F.

BIRTWISTLE: Verses for Ensembles*; *Nenia—The Death of Orpheus**; *The Fields of Sorrow**. London Sinfonietta, David Atherton, cond.* Jane Manning, soprano; *The Matrix*, Alan Hacker, cond.* HEADLINE HEAD 7, \$6.98 (distributed by London Records).

Verses for Ensembles, performed by the London Sinfonietta under David Atherton, is a big work, filling one entire side of the disc. In it, Harrison Birtwistle reveals himself as a latter-day *Varèse*, using only brass, woodwind, and percussion, employing the extreme registers of the pitched instruments and extreme effects, like the acid blast one gets out of a clarinet by blowing very hard with a relaxed embouchure. He uses this device a little too much, but on the whole the piece is grandly dramatic, with the big gesture, tension, and excitement that *Varèse* introduced into music. And like *Varèse*, even Birtwistle's pianissimos are fortissimo in their sense of anticipation.

Nenia—The Death of Orpheus, on the other side, is a work of a totally different character. As Michael Nyman points out in his jacket notes, it inaugurates a period in Birtwistle's work wherein he exploits ensembles of homogeneous timbres. *Nenia* uses a soprano voice (Jane Manning); three bass clarinets, one of which ultimately takes up the standard clarinet; and percussion. (The instrumentalists are not named, but they are identified collectively as *The Matrix*, conducted by Alan Hacker.) This composition, employing a text by Peter Zinovieff, is simply the most beautiful elegy ever conceived by the mind of man. I find

its lyricism, its nobility, its restraint, its depth and humanity as intensely moving as, say, that of the second movement, "Behold, all flesh is as the grass," of the Brahms German *Requiem*—which, I hasten to add, Birtwistle's work does not resemble in the slightest.

The Fields of Sorrow is a short choral work, the orchestration of which is heavily horn-colored. It is also a magnificent elegy, but it lacks the subtlety of nuance that the solo voice provides in *Nenia*.

Recordings and performances throughout are superb. A.F.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 2, in C minor (ed. Haas). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Horst Stein, cond. [Michael Woolcock, prod.] LONDON CS 6879, \$6.98.

Comparison:
Haitink/Concertgebouw Phi. 802 912

Like Haitink, Stein uses the Haas edition of the Bruckner Second, which is based on the uncut score as it existed in 1873. Oddly, Eugen Jochum, who gave the premiere of the Haas edition in 1938, chose to record the Nowak edition, which perpetuates the cuts that Bruckner's friend Herbeck persuaded him to make in 1877.

The cuts serve primarily to deny us some valuable music, especially sixty-two bars near the finale's end that contain references to earlier movements and the initial presentation of an ostinato bass line similar to that in the coda of the first movement of the Beethoven Ninth. Nor do the three earlier deletions, totaling seventy-seven bars, make sense to me, especially since the symphony's weaknesses remain intact. The Second suffers from an opening movement whose basic motifs are commonplace and that, moreover, is slack in the dramatic force applied to the development of those ideas. Things improve in the slow movement, the outstanding feature of which is the extension of the second theme into a yearning passage, first for violins, later for winds. The third movement is a brief but typically crisp and virile Bruckner scherzo with a touchingly artless viola tune in the trio. The composer might have been deservedly proud of the whirling, vehemently impetuous finale.

In general, Stein is freer and more plastic than Haitink, who intrepidly refuses to bend without explicit sanction from the score. Thus in the first movement the oboe and clarinet solos at letters F and Q, respectively, are more lyrically shaped in the Viennese performance, rather mechanical in the Dutch one. The ultimate wisdom of Haitink's tautness is illustrated, however, between bars 400 and 500 of the finale, a slack and fussy stretch for Stein. Although the actual tempos rarely differ, Stein seems more relaxed in the slow movement, perhaps due to the warmer, if less precisely articulated, playing of the Vienna Philharmonic. In the scherzo, London's fiercer, more close-up recording may account for the aggressive impact Stein's timpani and brass have in the second ending. Stein omits the repeats in both scherzo and trio, which Haitink observed (notwithstanding Deryck Cooke's assertion to the contrary in Philips' liner notes).

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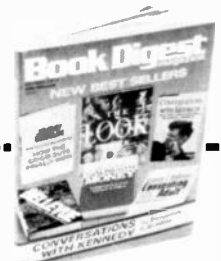
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tively innocuous point for the inevitable side break in the Andante. (The Nowak cuts enable DG to fit all of Jochum's Andante on Side 1.) Over-all, no clear-cut recommendation is possible between the Stein and Haitink performances; the buyer can't go far wrong with either. (He can with Reichert's crude and murky Turnabout edition, which is no bargain.) Stein certainly seems an able Brucknerian, and I look forward to domestic release of his Sixth, also with the Vienna Philharmonic. A.C.

CASADESUS: Sonata for Piano, No. 4, Op. 56; Etudes (8), Op. 28. Gaby Casadesus, piano. [Steven Epstein, prod.] COLUMBIA M 33505. \$6.98.

There is an unwritten maxim in French aesthetics that might be stated as follows: Expression without style is worthless, but any style worthy of the name can generate its own expressive content. Certainly, these quintessentially Gallic piano works by the late Robert Casadesus have been so finely, so lovingly sculptured out of the raw materials offered by the piano that the listener can simply luxuriate in the supple arabesques of the thematic lines, the vigor and variety of the rhythmic figures and the richness of the keyboard deployment without looking further for a deeper meaning to the music, on either the technical or the emotional level.

Gaby Casadesus gives dramatic, exciting, lilting, and perhaps just a bit relentless performances that mesh perfectly with her late husband's style. All in all, an excellent, sometimes invigorating, sometimes soothing, alternative to the chestnuts of the "pianistic" repertoire. R.S.B.

CHOPIN: Etudes, Opp. 10 and 25. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 6844, \$6.98.

Comparison: Pollini DG 2530 291

Ashkenazy has changed his style considerably since he first recorded the Chopin etudes for MK some fifteen years ago. His range of repertory sympathies has become wider, his pianistic style far more angular and dynamic.

It is hard to realize that these are the same ten fingers one heard in action in the earlier account (which Everest plans to reissue). Throughout one encounters a far more individual and extroverted personality, given to constant elaboration, even exaggeration, of detail. The former patrician adherence to basic tempo has given way to the liberal gearshifts and contrasts of yesteryear. Along with the elasticity, one finds a tendency to dilate harmonic points and dwell on passing detail.

One might not agree with some of the license, but I think it difficult not to be affected by the magisterial impact. The performance of the C major, Op. 10, No. 1, has far more grandeur than before. The burly C sharp minor, Op. 10, No. 4, is rather close in its flinty, sparsely pedaled style to the recent Horowitz version. The *Revolutionary*, Op. 10, No. 12, is ultraspacious, almost ferocious. In surprising contrast, the last two



Gaby and Robert Casadesus—a perfect meshing of styles.

etudes of Op. 25 are relatively subdued.

It is impossible for me to choose between the new Ashkenazy etudes and Pollini's superb DG account. The Pollini interpretations are more literal, in the best sense: classically oriented readings of blueprint clarity and rhythmic backbone, but in no way unimaginative. I wouldn't want to be without either disc.

For some reason, London's engineering is more incisive and impressive in Op. 10 than in Op. 25. The latter set sounds a shade sweeter, but the bold vitality of Ashkenazy's piano seems less well captured. The considerable reverberation (in both sets) bothers me less than in Ashkenazy's recent Schumann disc, where passagework tends to ricochet and run together. H.G.

CHOPIN: Waltzes (19). Abbey Simon, piano. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] TURNABOUT TV-S 34580. \$3.98.

Like Anievas on his Angel disc (S 36598), Abbey Simon adds to the standard fourteen Chopin waltzes the five early pieces that were published posthumously. Simon follows the order of the Henle edition, which places two of the supplementary pieces before the popular E minor Waltz, usually known as No. 14. But unlike the Henle text, which offers the two waltzes of Op. 69 in both the original autograph and the (very different) Fontana versions, he basically sticks to Fontana, as in Op. 69, No. 1.

The performances are, as one would expect from such a supertechician, fleet and often tasteful and exciting within a "traditional" framework. Simon shapes the material with lots of leeway; if his rubatos rob the music of a certain patrician symmetry, there is no loss of grace, and this is on the whole highly accomplished music-making. Of the available accounts of the waltzes, this one is surpassed artistically only by those of Rubinstein (RCA LSC 2726) and Lippatti (Odyssey 32 16 0058), and they offer only the standard fourteenth. The very good piano sound could stand a shade more pliancy and coloristic range. H.G.

DEBUSSY: Etudes. Anthony di Bonaventura, piano. [E. Alan Silver, prod.] CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CSO 2074, \$6.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

For all their wit and musicality, the Debussy etudes are chiefly about technical mastery, and Di Bonaventura is by any standard a masterful technician. He plays the instrument beautifully in addition to playing it well. He produces a most limpid sound, varies textures, and pedals with utmost resourcefulness. He is a colorist of real persuasiveness and reveals a wealth of rapt poetry and delightful fantasy in many of these pieces.

Listeners who favor the more toughly, objectively analytical interpretations of Charles Rosen (Epic, deleted) and Beveridge Webster (Dover, deleted) will no doubt argue that such grace and gentle coloration are better suited to Debussy's early works than to the late etudes, which reflect the composer's progressively greater abstraction, toughness, and linearity. But I consider Di Bonaventura's way equally valid; this beautifully played, vibrantly recorded disc seems to me altogether exemplary. H.G.

DVOŘÁK: Serenade for Strings, in E, Op. 22. **TCHAIKOVSKY:** Serenade for Strings, in C, Op. 48. English Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim, cond. [Suví Raj Grubb, prod.] ANGEL S 37045, \$6.98.

Comparisons: Marriner/Academy St. Martin (Dvořák), ZRG 584 (Tchaikovsky) Argo ZRG 670

This obvious coupling, though popular in Europe, has not graced Schwann since an early-Fifties Capitol disc that, ironically, used different conductors (Von Benda in the Dvořák, Mengelberg in the Tchaikovsky!).

Fortunately this is one of Barenboim's better recorded efforts. In the Dvořák serenade, the ECO plays at least as well for him as for Kubelik in his lamented DG account (which not only was much preferable to his earlier Israel Philharmonic version, now on

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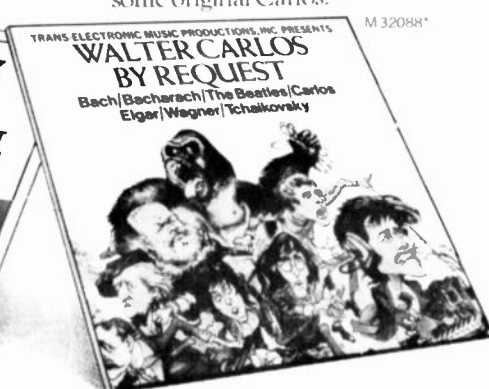
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Stereo Treasury, but also offered left-right violin antiphony and a rare sampling of Kubelik the composer, his *Four Forms for Strings*). Among current versions, the only serious rival is Marriner. Both are unabashedly romantic, with some of Barenboim's tempo quirks perhaps a shade less convincing. Both versions are well recorded, so the choice may be determined by couplings: Barenboim's Tchaikovsky or Marriner's resplendent Grieg *Holberg Suite*.

In the Tchaikovsky serenade, Barenboim happily eschews the heavy-syrup treatments of Ormandy, Karajan, Barbirolli, et al. His moderately brisk speeds allow the ECO to maintain light and clear textures with no loss of subtle, warm vibrato. He is refreshingly straightforward in the often abused Waltz and only a shade ponderous in the *cantabile* middle section of the *Elegy*. In this work I do have a clear preference for Marriner's crisper and more delicate edition, but his coupling—a beefed-up version of the *Souvenir de Florence* sextet—will be a drawback to some. A.C.

DVOŘÁK: Slavonic Dance, Op. 72, No. 2—See Scriabin: *The Poem of Ecstasy*.

HUMMEL: Quartet for Clarinet and Strings, in E flat. **CRUSELL:** Quartet for Clarinet and Strings, No. 2, in C minor, Op. 4. The Music Party: Alan Hacker, clarinet; Duncan Druce, violin; Simon Rowland-Jones, viola; Jennifer Ward Clarke, cello. [Peter Wadland, prod.] OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 501, \$6.98.

HUMMEL: *Etudes* (24), Op. 125. Mary Louise Boehm, piano. TURNABOUT TV-S 34562, \$3.98.

The strong anti-Romantic feelings prevalent in the earlier part of the twentieth century having faded, and the nineteenth having receded sufficiently to allow a view in perspective, many long-forgotten composers are coming to the surface. Some enjoy a brief vogue only to disappear again, but others can justly claim a new lease on life. Among the latter is Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837). Mozart, who did not like to teach, was so impressed by the youth's talent that he not only taught him for two years, but admitted him to the Mozart ménage as a boarder. Haydn thought so highly of him that he recommended Hummel as his successor at Esterháza; Schumann said some of Hummel's piano sonatas alone would make him immortal. For a while even Beethoven sniffed a rival in the composer who was famous all over Europe as a great piano virtuoso and whose works were sought after by all publishers. Obviously, we are dealing here with a musician of stature—so what happened to his reputation?

Hummel was a highly productive composer who poured out work after work while leading the busy life of the traveling virtuoso and conductor, but the effort to satisfy the clamoring publishers inevitably led to a very uneven output. Though much of it is indeed shallow and routine, the man who composed the fine A minor Piano Concerto, or the septet, or the F sharp minor Piano Sonata (and undoubtedly many other such works)—brilliant, evocative, at times pensive, at others passionate, and all of

them beautifully written—demands to be better known.

Unfortunately, the clarinet quartet recorded by Oiseau-Lyre was not a good choice; though it has a bold and fascinating scherzo, the rest is only routine work. Not so the piano etudes offered by Turnabout. Four or five of the twenty-four may be no more than good technical exercises, but the others—delightful character pieces, here poetic, there dramatic, always elegant, suave, and well turned—surely belong to the representative body of early Romantic piano literature. Mary Louise Boehm plays them attractively. She fully understands the particular melodic-ornamental passagework that is so characteristic of Hummel, and the garlands cascade scintillatingly under her supple fingers.

The uncritical selection and recording of much "old" music is now being extended from the nether regions of musical history to the nineteenth century. As remarked before, Hummel has much better chamber works than this clarinet quartet, but at least it has its brief moments; the other work on the Oiseau-Lyre recording, by the Swedish composer Bernhard Henrik Crusell (1775-1838), has none. It is a competently put-together work by a good musician who has nothing to say. Just because this fine group of old-instrument buffs has a clarinet player who uses an instrument of 1800 vintage, they don't have to dig out indiscriminately every work in which the old instrument can be used with "historical accuracy."

At that, our able clarinetist, Alan Hacker, cheats a bit, for he had an instrument maker add four keys to the old whistle as necessary "to make certain passages clearer in execution." Right he is, but then why not make things entirely clear by using a good modern clarinet? That business about the richer tone of the old instrument because of the "boxwood construction" is nonsense; it is not the boxwood that vibrates, but the air column in the bore. Moreover, the bores in these old instruments were usually lined with brass to prevent rotting.

The Music Party is made up of highly competent players, but of course they keep their instruments "as far as possible in the condition [they were] in the early 19th century." They must have a lot of fun playing on those relaxed-tension gut strings, but to us the sound is dull and lacking in expressive qualities. It must be said, though, that these players are so capable that they almost get away with it. P.H.L.

IVES: Songs (3)—See Schoenberg: Pierrot lunaire.

JANNEQUIN: Chansons françaises. Ensemble Polyphonique de Paris, Charles Rivier, cond. TELEFUNKEN 6.41877, \$6.98.

Clément Jannequin's lively and melodic popular songs of the sixteenth century form the basis of a delightful new release in Telefunken's prestigious Das alte Werk series. Although Jannequin seems to have specialized in quick patter songs, this disc also includes a sampling of his romantic tunes—"O cruauté logée en grand beauté" is par-

ticularly fine—and charming spring songs. By far the two longest, and probably his best-known, works here are "Le Chant des oyseaux" and "La Bataille," those big, colorful frescos on which Jannequin painted birds and battles in lifelike musical imitation.

The twenty selected from among the composer's 260 chansons to be recorded here are set for four unaccompanied voices, and the Ensemble Polyphonique de Paris (soprano Jocelyn Chamonin, countertenor Joseph Sage, tenor André Meurant, and bass Georges Abdoun) fills the bill to perfection. A smooth blend of attractive and well-matched voices, clear musical phrasing, and impeccable rapid diction give this group rare distinction. Only one criticism

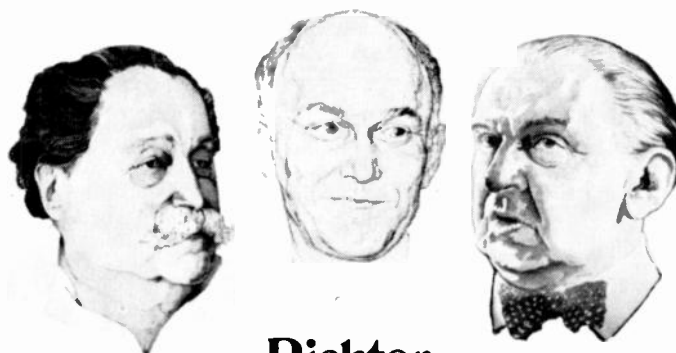
of an otherwise splendid production: There are neither texts nor translations. S.T.S.

KHACHATURIAN: Spartacus (complete ballet). Bolshoi Theater Chorus and Orchestra, Algis Zhuraitis, cond. [B. Vladimisky, prod.] COLUMBIA/MELODIYA D4M 33493, \$20.98 (four discs, automatic sequence).

Having listened to this album twice and having, in addition, sat through the ballet twice, I can only say that the mere thought of facing Khachaturian's score once again is enough to depress me thoroughly. The subject of Spartacus, a runaway slave who leads an uprising of rebellious gladiators and fugitive slaves against the might of Im-

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- AGL1-1267 Richter/Leinsdorf/Brahms: Piano Concerto #2/Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- AGL1-1268 Munch/Schubert #8/Beethoven #5/Boston Symphony Orch.
- AGL1-1269 Reiner/Vienna/Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- AGL1-1270 Munch/Ravel: Daphnis & Chloe (Complete)/Boston Symphony Orchestra
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quisition of one of the superb full-priced sets. (Columbia could solve this problem by reissuing the memorable 1957 Budapest/Trampller readings, far superior to their stereo remakes.)

The Philips disc, the first installment in a cycle, offers closer, drier, more impactful sound. The augmented Grumiaux Trio's performances are sturdy, secure, and a bit inelegant—the music has more light and shade, more insinuation and pathos than these players suggest. Like the Heutling and Danish Quartets, this group follows the new "correct" movement sequence in K. 515. Philips, however, seems hopelessly confused about the quintets: The present jacket bills the C major Quintet as "No. 2 in C minor, K. 515" (the labels are correct), while the jacket for the next disc in the series, pictured on the back of this one, lists the G minor as "No. 3 in C, K. 516" and the C minor as "No. 4 in G minor, K. 406 (516b)"!

In K. 516, I cling steadfastly to the 1957 Budapest/Trampller version; otherwise my first choice remains the cool, aristocratic Danish set. The Tátrai, a bit warmer in tone, looser in ensemble, and more homespun, offers vigorous, shapely readings with a mild romantic tinge, which will appeal to listeners who find the Danish players chilly.
H.G.

MOZART: Sonatas for Piano, Vol. 5. Glenn Gould, piano. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 33515, \$6.98.

Fantasy/Sonata in C minor, K. 475/457. Sonatas: in B flat, K. 570; in D, K. 576.

With this disc Glenn Gould completes his traversal of the Mozart piano sonatas. As with the recently released coupling of the Beethoven Opp. 33 and 126 Bagatelles (M 33265, August 1975), I detect a return to the at least semicomunicative playing of Gould's earlier years. The familiar stylistic

quirks—all the little gargoyle embellishments, the plaguelike avoidance of legato—remain in evidence, but in two of these sonatas the sound is warmer, more nuanced than usual in recent years, and the flow of the music is not only left intact, but even intensified.

The exception is the C minor Fantasy/Sonata. The fantasy begins plausibly but frigidly. Before long the line is drooping with all sorts of little holds and clipped mannerisms. The end of the fantasy is exceptionally clear, and the first movement of the ensuing sonata reveals its counterpoint with icy detachment in not too controversial a tempo. The Adagio, however, presents Gould at his most irritating: The tempo causes the music practically to disintegrate, and the process is completed by the lack of any logical line or phrasing. This is already one of Mozart's coldly classical edifices, and Gould's infusion of frozen sentimentality turns detachment to triviality. The vigorously paced finale makes partial amends, but the impact is largely nullified by the willful arpeggiations and the like, which transform embellishment into graffiti.

K. 570 and K. 576 are an unalloyed pleasure, given with grace, scrupulous clarity of line, and sophisticated style. The slow movements (marked adagio, like that of K. 457) are briskly, unpretentiously turned into flowing andantes, all to the good; the elegant outer movements are full of incisive passagework. I can quibble: Why are the Alberti bass lines in K. 576's central movement thumped out with such indelicate vehemence? And isn't K. 570's first movement a bit lightweight (contrast Lili Kraus's greater breadth and power)? But in the main, the forward impetus and sheer winged grace of Gould's work carries the listener along.

The reproduction is excellent, free from the brittleness that marred some earlier installments in this project. Gould's vocalism, though, might be better served with adhesive, rather than magnetic, tape.
H.G.

MUSSORGSKY: Orchestral Works. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Marc Andrae, cond. BASF BC 22128, \$6.98.

Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Tushmalov and Rimsky-Korsakov); Scherzo in B flat; Intermezzo symphonique in modo classico; The Capture of Kars; Ceremonial March.

It's not often that Mussorgskians come across a recorded program as enticingly far off the beaten path as this one. It would be of high value just for the three short pieces on its B side, which belatedly supersede the long out-of-print 1953 mono versions by Susskind for Parlophone and MGM.

The very early (1858) scherzo is good fun of some rhythmic interest, if not much else. And the 1880 march (variously called "Festive," "Triumphal," etc.) may seem—after hearing later examples by Rimsky in particular—only too typically "Russian" and, in its trio, "Oriental" in character. But the larger 1867 intermezzo—amorphous, episodic, overextended, and contradictorily nonclassical as it may be—provides illumination on the composer's desperate efforts to realize his own extraordinary musical personality.

It might be even more revelatory if we could hear these three pieces as scored by Mussorgsky himself, before Rimsky's editorial pencil got at them. The notes say nothing on this point, but undoubtedly the Rimskian editions are used (even though the originals have been published in Russia). And if young Marc Andrae (any relation to the noted Swiss conductor Volkmar Andrae, 1879-1962?) isn't daring enough to break with performance tradition, at least he and his Münchenerers play with immense enthusiasm and admirably controlled dramatic vigor.

It's the familiar Pictures, however, that make this disc unique, after one does a double-take and realizes they aren't so familiar after all. For Andrae plays them not in the Ravel orchestration that has been the standard since Koussevitzky commissioned it in 1922, nor even in one of the occasionally heard rival transcriptions by Stokowski, Caillet, Sir Henry Wood, and others, but in the piano pieces' first orchestral score of way back in 1891, a bare ten years after Mussorgsky's death. The transcriber, otherwise unknown, was one Mikhail Tushmalov, a pupil of Rimsky (who apparently got his hand in too, as indicated by the label's dual credit).

Tushmalov omits a couple of pieces, "Gnomus" and "Bydlo," and makes use of only the first "Promenade," but what surprises me most about his version is how little it differs in sound from the Ravel and Stokowski scorings. There are many significant differences, of course, both in the distinctive timbres chosen for solo passages and in the over-all sonorities. Yet, while Tushmalov is unmistakably far less sophisticated and imaginative, he captures as well, or possibly even better, some of the music's darker, chthonian, and so-called primitive power. At any rate, this pioneering Pictures orchestration is provocative, especially as played and recorded with such thrilling sonic impact and weight as Andrae and the BASF engineers give it.

R.D.D.

ORFF: Catulli Carmina; Der Mond.
ORFF-KEETMAN: Schulwerk/Musica Poetica.
For a feature review, see page 94.

PROKOFIEV: Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67.
BRITTEN: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34. Will Geer, narrator; English Chamber Orchestra, Johannes Somary, cond. [Seymour Solomon, prod.] VANGUARD VSD 71189, \$6.98. Quadriphonic: VSO 30033 (SQ-encoded disc), \$7.98.

It's ironic that, after some fifty years of distinctive stage and screen roles, it's that of the homespun Granpaw in the videotots' delight series *The Waitons* that has finally brought fame to Will Geer. Well, his old admirers must still rejoice in his good fortune; his new ones well may be led by him to discover these two young-peoples' classics.

In *Peter*, Geer steers a midcourse between Mia Farrow's *semplice* children's-story-telling-hour approach (with husband André Previn and the LSO, Angel SFO 36962) and the heavily "acted out" treatment carried to extreme in Beatrice Lillie's manically camped-up version (with Skitch



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Henderson and the LSO, London CS 6187). In Britten's *Guide*, however, he is less dramatic narrator than helpful concert companion/commentator—a role enhanced in intimacy by the lower level at which he is recorded vis-à-vis the music. (I still prefer hearing this invaluable educational work without any spoken commentary at all, as in the composer's own version, London CS 6671.)

The English Chamber Orchestra plays well in both works, and it is recorded throughout with extreme brilliance—if also a touch of high-end sharp-edgedness and some almost too vivid percussion spotlighting. R.D.D.

In quad: This is, perhaps, the most successful quadraphonic recording—as quadraphonics—I've yet heard from Vanguard. In both pieces the articulation of space fits the music, and vice versa. One is comfortable with it, yet excited by it.

Peter, with the smaller orchestral forces, fills the space less fully. One has the sensation of being in a fairly large hall—the sort used by most recording companies, in preference to the artificial acoustics of even the best and largest studios, to make prestige recordings. The orchestra is spread out at the front and sides, with plenty of space all around it and the listener, who finds narrator Will Geer looking him right in the eye, so to speak. The woodwinds, which have the nicest things to do, are arrayed just behind Geer, and the other instrumentalists take their places in the remainder of the space. The effect is at once intimate and impressive.

The *Guide's* instrumentalists spill over into a larger space, surrounding the listener more completely and making the final fugue quite thrilling indeed. There is still much of the intimacy and all of the impressiveness. The placement of Geer, both in space and time, is a little less convincing, however. He begins at left front, with a good deal of echo; his placement later on is a bit fuzziy and his sound a bit drier, so that he never seems quite integrated with the orchestra in sonic terms. Perhaps this mirrors the degree to which the text itself seems to intrude on—to interrupt the pacing of—a score that really needs no text. If so, it isn't a case of choosing the right sound for the situation, but of compounding one minor impropriety with another. R.L.

REIZENSTEIN: Quintet for Piano and Strings, in D, Op. 23; Sonatina for Oboe and Piano, Op. 11; Partita for Treble Recorder and Piano, Op. 13. Melos Ensemble. OISEAU-LYRE SOL 344, \$6.98.

Franz Reizenstein, who died in 1968 at the age of fifty-seven, was a Hitler refugee who spent most of his life in England. He studied with Hindemith in Germany and with Vaughan Williams in England, and the influences of this unlikely combination are apparent in his well-made, essentially academic work.

He wrote genial gentleman's music, at its best—so far as this disc is concerned—in the enchanting scherzo and slow movement of the piano quintet and the lovely, shapely oboe sonatina. This last owes much of its

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effect to the superb performance by Janet Craxton, the oboist, and Lamar Crowson, the pianist. A.F.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Capriccio espagnol—
See Scriabin: The Poem of Ecstasy.

ROSSINI: Il Barbiere di Siviglia.

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Count Almaviva | Nicolai Gedda (t) |
| Doctor Bartolo | Renato Capecchi (b) |
| Rosina | Beverly Sills (s) |
| Figaro | Sherill Milnes (b) |
| Don Basilio | Ruggero Raimondi (bs) |
| Fiorello | Joseph Galiano (b) |
| Ambrogio, An Officer | Michael Rippon (bs) |
| Berta | Fedora Barbieri (ms) |

John Alldis Choir; London Symphony Orchestra, James Levine, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL SCLX 3761, \$21.98 (three discs, automatic sequence). Tape: ●● 4X3S 3761, \$23.98.

Comparisons:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Ausensi, Berganza, Benelli, Varviso | Lon. OSA 1381 |
| Merrill, Peters, Valletti, Leinsdorf | RCA LSC 6143 |
| Bruscantini, De los Angeles, Alva, Gui | Ang. SCL 3638 |
| Gobbi, Callas, Alva, Galliera | Ang. SCL 3559 |

As Charles Osborne's booklet essay notes, Angel's third stereo Barber is "more than complete," including not only every bar of the standard score (a recording first), but also an aria for Rosina interpolated just before the storm in Act II.

In theory, that completeness should give this recording an edge, but theory isn't practice. There is justification for adding the "new" aria, "Ah s'è ver che in tal momento," apparently written for Sigismondo in 1815, the year before Barber, but already used in Barber by 1819. Certainly an aria at that point is appropriate (though obviously not necessary); Rosina otherwise has only a few lines of recitative in which to react to the disclosure of Lindoro's betrayal. But the aria is melodically nowhere and structurally too reminiscent of "Una voce poco fa," which also leaves Rosina in an oddly aggressive posture. The clincher, though, is that Beverly Sills makes nothing special of the aria, and for me it is simply an intrusion.

Ditto, in this setting, the principal restoration in the "standard" score, Almaviva's grueling final aria "Cessa di più resistere," a generous but dramatically extraneous piece whose only function is vocal display. As sung by Valletti (RCA) and Benelli (London), it was a real gain; Nicolai Gedda negotiates it, but barely. Again, an intrusion.

Some editorial traditions really do have a sensible basis, and they must be dealt with pragmatically. Sills, for example, follows all the soprano transpositions and alterations, and then some, and I do have theoretical objections. With "Una voce" raised from E to F, and with no separating band between Scenes 1 and 2, the opening chord produces a hairy modulation from the E major of the preceding recitative; and while raising "Contro un cor" from D to F lands Sills in more congenial terrain, Gedda must trail along, and his five-bar sustained note on "giubilerà" becomes a strangulated high B flat instead of G. More serious, the rewritten soprano passagework and the added ornamentation consistently head in the wrong direction. Rossini ingeniously devised the mezzo lines with ample bravura display opportunities that generally move



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downward; a soprano naturally wants to move upward. Consequently the rewriting at "Mo se mi toccano" in "Una voce" and at "Cara immagine" in "Contro un cor" seems to me irrelevant to, even at war with, the musical line.

But these are theoretical objections that can be overcome by the singer's individuality, as D'Angelo, Callas, Capsir, and Peters have done in varying degrees. Sills generally sounds pretty in a fluttery and unsupported way, and she can score some points when she doesn't have to sing high or loud—"Ah tu solo, amor" in "Dunque io son," for example, or the nicely floated "A mezzanotte" aside to Almaviva in the Act II quintet. She is surprisingly effective in the low excursions of the Act II trio (down to B flat) and finale (down to A). But this just doesn't add up to any sort of Rosina, and the recitatives are no help: dignity and pathos after the disclosure of the letter, but elsewhere farcical posturing—the shrieked "Che furia" before "Se il mio nome," the kittenish squealing in the dialogues with Figaro before "Dunque io son" and with Bartolo before "A un dottor."

Sherrill Milnes certainly has the equipment for Figaro, but he too creates no character. No other Figaro of my experience has his easy command of high G and A, and that matters: just as Rosina's writing inclines downward, Figaro's points upward. But Milnes doesn't sound comfortable; perhaps the unnatural weight he has applied with increasing success in the Verdi repertory has cost him the bright sheen of the somewhat higher tessitura in which his voice once operated most easily. Then too he has an unfortunate tendency, shared by most of this cast, to peck at notes. His "Alto là!" entrance in the Act I finale is sung out, to fine effect. But whether pecking or singing, there is little vocal or dramatic consistency. In "Largo al factotum," a fine, straightforward "V'è lo risorso poi del mestiere" is followed by a garishly clichéd whine on "collo donnetta, col cavaliere" and later on "qua la porucco" and the "Figaro"s. The whole Almaviva/Figaro Scene I finale is lifeless—and sometimes crude, for Milnes can't manage the ornamental notes well.

Gedda might have been a wonderful Almaviva on one of the earlier Angel Borbers, but he just isn't consistently pleasant to listen to now: He is in serious trouble above the staff, and his coloratura is labored. His Don Alonso whine is cute, but it sounds perilously like his straight singing; his loud singing is mostly more effortful, not louder, than his soft singing. "Se il mio nome" is pretty, though here as elsewhere he ignores the trills, and he generates nothing like the comic intensity of Valletti (RCA). In "Ecco ridente" and the Act I finale, he is suspiciously veiled in resonance, even more than the rest of the set (about which more below).

Easily the best of the principals is the Basilio, Ruggero Raimondi. He is remarkably nimble in the recitatives, and in the musical numbers he articulates with clarity and intelligence, relatively new weapons in his arsenal. By concentrating his firm, rounded tone he makes a wonderfully unctuous effect with his first line in the quintet, "Servitor, servitor di tutti quanti," and he

tears into his "Buona sera" with savage glee. Throughout there is a strongly con-jured character: an openly vicious Basilio who revels in the malice, not the fun, of his slander.

"*La calunnia*" is sung in the original D rather than the usual C, vindicated by Raimondi's climactic F sharps. The thunderous "cannon shots" fall most impressively on E flat and E rather than the accustomed D flat and D. But again, this bit of purism pays off only because Raimondi can handle those F sharps: only the most misguided purist could prefer the dull original-key renditions of Cava (Gui/Angel) and Montarsolo (Ab-bado/DG) to the transposed version of Ghiaurov at his vocal peak (London) or several others. (The transposition is even sanc-tioned by Alberto Zedda, editor of the Ri-cordi critical edition, which by the way is not used here, apparently for copyright rea-sons.)

Renato Capecchi unfortunately couldn't decide whether to growl or sing Bartolo. When he first la-ra-las the "Quando mi sei vicina" tune in the recitative, he buffos mercilessly: as soon as the orchestra joins in, he sings and sings well, without spoiling the joke. No doubt the role lies low for him. "A un dottor" is a mess: Most of the aria is grunted, but the refrains ("vi consiglia" and so forth) are sung, and sung all too clearly by a baritone—suddenly this nasty Bartolo turns into Figaro. Capecchi achieves some strikingly fine things when he turns from caricature to character. Both scenes with the disguised Almoviva are first-rate: His mounting rage at the drunken soldier's taunts and his progressive exasperation at Don Alonso's obsequious "pace e gioia"s are communicated in strictly musical terms. In the complex ensembles of the Act I finale, Capecchi and Raimondi steal the show from below. Capecchi's pluses out-weigh the minuses, but he doesn't sing as consistently well as the "singing" Bartolos (notably the young Baccaloni on Odeon, Tadeo on Bartoletti/DG, and Dara on Ab-bado/DG), nor can he match Corena (Rich-mond, RCA, and London) as a convincing buffo.

Joseph Galiano and Michael Rippon make a fine Fiorello and Officer, but the casting of Fedora Barbieri as Berta is cruel: The recitative is ugly and way off pitch, and the aria is excruciating—the staccato eighth notes individually gasped, the sung phrases wailed at great distance from the indicated notes, culminating in a grotesque final phrase.

I'm not sure James Levine's conducting can be fairly judged, for the EMI engineers and/or Angel processors have cast a sonic shroud over the proceedings. With three different cartridges I was unable to elicit clear textures or crisp articulation any-where. Tone colors are muted; instrumental and vocal ensembles are opaque, with vir-tually no inner detail audible (the bassoons might as well have stayed home). Since this is a frequent characteristic of Angel issues of EMI recordings, and in particular of Angel's "underground SQs," I will be most curious to hear what this performance sounds like in its English release. Recently EMI in England issued a remastered version of the 1957 Callas/Gobbi/Galliera Bar-ber with crystal-clear textures and warm.

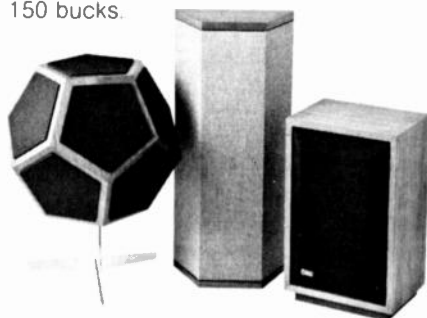


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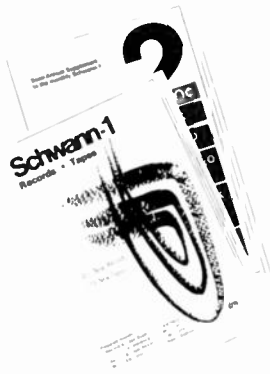


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transparent balances; it sounds twenty years newer than the new set.

Levine's approach is basically relaxed in tempo, though not fanatically—"Largo al factotum" goes at a real allegro vivace. Even when tempos are on the slow side, they are kept in proportion. Levine seems to be relying on clear articulation and careful shaping of ensembles, but neither is audible in the final product. Often there is a pleasant lilt, as in the opening "Piano, pianissimo" and the moderato section of "Una voce." The "pace e gioia" business has a nice oily flow, and Bartolo's "Quando mi sei vicina" is turned with ironic grace. The individual sections of the elaborate "Don Basilio!" quintet are intelligently structured, and even at these moderate tempos they gather real momentum at "La testa vi gira" and "L'amico delira," but the sonic blur largely vitiates the over-all impact. The Act I finale falls apart in much the same way. Levine's storm is unpleasantly noisy; why does he begin the thunder section already fortissimo instead of the much more effective indicated piano?

At the very least, Levine creates a framework within which a distinctive cast could produce a distinguished performance. It's tantalizing to imagine what Borgioli and Stracciari, the Almaviva and Figaro of the antique Molajoli set on Odeon, would have done with "All'idea" at these scaled-down tempos. For that matter, even this weakish cast might have been prodded into a more expressive result. But rehearsing the other *Barbers* alongside the new one not only reconfirmed old favorites, but prompted upward reevaluation of numerous other individual efforts. And one can choose from performances that are not so much variable in quality as different in kind.

My emphatic first choice remains the Varviso/London set, the best Rossini conducting I have heard—phrased with a revelatory sense of buoyant continuity. Berganza, Benelli, and Ghiaurov are altogether superb, the others solidly competent. While the recitatives are heavily abridged (which some will count a plus), the only musical cut is in "A un dottor."

The runner-up spot is for me an impossible choice among the Leinsdorf/RCA, Gui/Angel, and Galliera/Angel sets. RCA's Metropolitan Opera version, which is virtually complete, has a cast (Merrill, Peters, Valletti, Tozzi, Corena) that on paper looks hardly stronger than that of the new Angel, but all the performers give something like their best (Valletti's Almaviva is one of my favorite recorded operatic characterizations), and the cast forms a strong ensemble. The Gui recording also benefits from its theatrical origin, in this case a Glyndebourne production, and the performance has uncommon dramatic coherence coupled with an original and persuasive musical viewpoint: Gui stresses Bellini-esque *cantilena* over tight metric structure (though not at the expense of forward motion); he secures excellent vocal and instrumental execution, including some exquisitely shaped wind playing, and best of all the approach is well suited to the cast at hand, with especially distinctive work from De los Angeles and an unusually restrained Bruscantini. Galliera's incisive and superbly proportioned reading has



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Kenneth Cooper
Scarlatti with spectacular virtuosity.

some of the life and poise of Varviso's; his solid cast, headed by the vivid characterizations of Callas and Gobbi, makes this set a formidable contender, particularly in the current English issue (SLS 853).

Abbado/DG, Bartoletti/DG (reissued in Europe as Privilege 2728 005), Erede/Richmond, and Molajoli/Odeon all have major weaknesses, but they all have major strengths too. In such a field, the appeal of the new Angel set seems limited to diehard fans of its principals.

There are some awkward side breaks, but that's nothing new for Barber, and these are long sides. The lengthy Osborne essay contains much information, along with some arguable interpretation. When he deals with the Beaumarchais Figaro plays, he oversimplifies seriously, and his one-sentence *précis* of the third play, *La Mère coupable*, quite garbles the plot. (I confess to great fondness for this sentimental, but powerful and touching piece.) K.F.

SCARLATTI, D.: Sonatas, Vols. 1-2. Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord. VANGUARD VSD 71201 and 71202. \$6.98 each.

Vol. 1: Sonatas: in C, L 3 (K 502), in C minor, L 10 (K 84), in D, L 14 (K 492), in F minor, L 189 (K 184), in F, L 198 (K 296); in G, L 204 (K 105); in G, L 209 (K 455); in A minor, L 223 (K 532), in A, L 238 (K 208), in F minor, L 281 (K 239); in G, L 389 (K 375); in D minor, L 422 (K 141); in A, L 483 (K 322) **Vol. 2:** Sonatas: in E, L 23 (K 380); in F sharp, L 31 (K 318); in F sharp, L 35 (K 319); in A minor, L 93 (K 149), in B, L 148 (K 261), in C, L 205 (K 487); in E, L 225 (K 381), in C sharp minor, L 256 (K 247); in C sharp minor, L 260 (K 246); in B, L 446 (K 262), in C, L 457 (K 132), in A, L supp 31 (K 83)

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| Key No. | Page No. | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Acoustic Research | 45 |
| 2 | A.D.R. Audio | 148 |
| | Advent Corp. | 37 |
| | Akai America Ltd. | 81 |
| 3 | Allison Acoustics Inc. | 110 |
| 63 | Altec | 136 |
| | Analog & Digital Systems | 12 |
| 4 | Angel Records | 31 |
| | Audio Dynamics Corp. | 61 |
| | Audio Technica U.S., Inc. | 113 |
| 5 | Avid Corp. | 115 |
| 6 | Bang & Olufsen of America, Inc. | 22, 23 |
| 7 | BASF Systems, Inc. | 7, 9 |
| | Book Digest | 99-101 |
| | Bose Corp. | 27, 29, 30 |
| | Bozak, Inc. | 8 |
| 8 | British Industries | 13 |
| 9 | British Industries | 62 |
| 10 | BSR (USA) Ltd. | 52 |
| 11 | Capitol Magnetic Products | 106 |
| | Cinema/Sound Ltd. | 128 |
| | Classified Ads | 146, 147 |
| | Columbia Records | 103 |
| 12 | Component Discounters | 144 |
| 13 | Crown International | 132 |
| 65 | DBX, Inc. | 130 |
| 14 | Design Acoustics | 113 |
| 15 | Discount Music Club | 6 |
| | Discwasher, Inc. | 69 |
| 16 | District Sound | 148 |
| | Dixie Hi Fidelity | 142 |
| 17 | Dual | 133 |
| 18 | Dynaco, Inc. | 107 |
| 19 | Electro-Voice, Inc. | 39 |
| | Elpa Marketing Industries | 34 |
| 20 | Empire Scientific Corp. | 20 |
| 21 | Fuji Photo Film, USA, Inc. | |
| | Audio Film Division | 89 |
| 22 | Garrard | 16, 17 |
| | Gold Seal | 105 |
| | Harman-Kardon | 14, 15 |
| | Heath Co. | 73-78 |
| 24 | Icelandic Airlines | 134 |
| 26 | Illinois Audio | 148 |
| 25 | Jennings Research Inc. | Cover IV |
| 64 | JVC America, Inc. | 121 |
| 28 | Kenwood | 131 |
| 29 | King Karol | 147 |
| 30 | KLH Research & Development | 32, 33 |
| 31 | Klipsch & Assoc., Inc. | 41 |
| 32 | Lafayette Radio | 143 |
| 33 | Leslie Speakers | 82 |
| 62 | Magnavox | 109 |
| 34 | Mantis Research Labs | 142 |
| | Marantz Co., Inc. | 150, Cover III |
| 35 | Maxell Corp. of America | 70 |
| 36 | McIntosh Laboratory | 115 |
| 37 | Memorex Corp. | 5 |
| 38 | Meriton Electronics, Inc. | 139 |
| 39 | National Record Plan | 129 |
| 40 | Onkyo | 141 |
| | Ortofon | 40 |
| 41 | Phase Linear Corp. | 123 |
| 42 | Philips Audio Video Systems Corp. | 43 |
| 44 | Pioneer High Fidelity | Cover II, 1 |
| 45 | Radio Shack | 110 |
| 46 | Radio Shack | 127 |
| | RCA Gold Seal | 105 |
| | Record Mart | 147 |
| | Revox Corp. | 49 |
| 47 | RTR Industries | 127 |
| 48 | SAE, Inc. | 38 |
| 49 | Sansui Electronics Corp. | 18, 19 |
| | Schwann Record Catalog | 114 |
| 50 | Scott, H.H., Inc. | 119 |
| 51 | Scott Paper Co. | 120 |
| 61 | Sennheiser Electronic Corp. | 122 |
| 52 | Sherwood Electronic Laboratories | 112 |
| 53 | Shure Brothers, Inc. | 47 |
| 60 | Sony Corp. of America | 135 |
| | Speakerlab | 145 |
| 43 | Stanton Magnetics, Inc. | 2 |
| 54 | Stark Designs | 90 |
| 55 | Stereo Corp. of America | 144 |
| 56 | Superex Electronics Corp. | 112 |
| | Superscope, Inc. | 125 |
| 57 | Tandberg of America | 119 |
| | TDK Electronics Corp. | 51 |
| | Teac Corp. of America | 10, 11 |
| 58 | Telephonics | 111 |
| | Thorens | 34 |
| | Time-Life Records | 24, 26 |
| 59 | Top Discount Audio | 145 |
| | Uher of America | 104 |
| 17 | United Audio Products | 133 |
| 9 | Venturi | 62 |
| | Wyeth Press | 104 |

which further intensifies the dazzling éclat of the soloist's bravura performances, will shatter forever any lingering illusions of the harpsichord's being a small-toned instrument and Domenico Scarlatti's sonatas' being musical miniatures.

These releases, the first solo records by the talented young American harpsichordist/musicologist Kenneth Cooper, are notable not only for often spectacular virtuosity and the tonal brilliance of the instrument used (a Frank Hubbard replica of an eighteenth-century harpsichord by Pascal Taskin), but also for the choice of some of Scarlatti's most musically as well as technically fascinating works. Vol. 1 stresses extraverted showpiece exemplars, Vol. 2 some of the more aesthetically magisterial creations. A few selections are familiar ones, but most of them (especially six or eight probable first recordings) are likely to be refreshingly novel.

Both volumes include at least a few examples of Scarlatti—and Cooper—in more relaxed and lyrical veins: the calm K. 208, sunny K. 322, and richly romantic K. 296 in Vol. 1; the poignant K. 247 and rhapsodic K. 132 in Vol. 2. And not all the livelier pieces are insistently hard-driving, as witness the chipper, if familiar, K. 455, bouncy K. 375, and lilting K. 502 (Vol. 1); the cheerful K. 246, wayward K. 318, witty K. 83, and infectiously zestful K. 262 in *zapateado* style (Vol. 2). Vol. 2 is especially interesting for its illustrations of the sonata pairings emphasized in Kirkpatrick's great study of Scarlatti and his works, many of which were intended by the composer himself.

Since there has not been much activity of late in the Scarlatti discography, these releases are especially welcome, as is Westminster Gold's gradual reissue of the more than 300 sonatas recorded over the years 1956-65 by Fernando Valenti, one of Cooper's teachers. Two three-disc sets, WGM 8280-3 and WGM 8311-3, have so far appeared. R.D.D.

SCHOENBERG: Chamber Symphony No. 1, Op. 9.* BERG: Sonata for Piano, Op. 1.* WEBER: Five Movements, Op. 5.* Chamber ensemble, Gunther Schuller, cond.*; Idil Biret, piano*. [John Lewis and Ilhan Mimaroglu, prod.] FINNADAR SR 9008, \$6.98 [Webern: from ATLANTIC SD 1420, 1964].

One of Schoenberg's most ambitious and innovative scores, the First Chamber Symphony is also one of the most challenging for the performer, as Gunther Schuller points out in his admirable liner note. Not all the intonational and balance problems are solved in this recording (actually made more than a decade ago, by an ensemble of New York's best free-lance players, but never before released), even with the help of miking to back off the two horns and build up the solo strings.

What is exciting—and superior to all other recordings of the piece—is the way Schuller sustains its shape and momentum through the many changes of tempo and character. The tempos are reasonable, too—nothing like Boulez' rat race. Until we have Schoenberg's full-orchestra rescoring, this is likely to remain the preferred way to hear the Chamber Symphony.

I can't say as much for the two items on the other side of the disc. To begin with, Idil Biret is burdened with an inferior piano, but her pallid, languorous traversal of Berg's one-movement sonata would arouse little enthusiasm even under better conditions; too, there is a puzzling gap in the fifteenth measure before the end of the piece. The Webern is competent, but hardly the taut, razor-edged experience that we know from the Juilliard and LaSalle quartets. Still, the Chamber Symphony is worth the asking price. D.H.

SCHOENBERG: Piano Works. Maurizio Pollini, piano. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 531, \$7.98.

Three Pieces, Op. 11; Six Little Pieces, Op. 19; Five Pieces, Op. 23; Suite, Op. 25; Pieces, Opp. 33a and 33b. Comparison: Jacobs None, H71309

Hardly have we had time to absorb Paul Jacobs' fine recording of the Schoenberg piano music (June 1975) when along comes Maurizio Pollini's impressive, if rather more expensive, collection of the same works. Like Jacobs, Pollini suffers no technical hangups in the face of the knotty and wide-ranging keyboard writing; he too responds imaginatively to its coloristic potential, if not always as subtly.

Of the two, Pollini is the more literal. He is also consistently faster in tempo than other pianists who have recorded this music: For example, at slightly more than seven minutes' timing, he comes closer to Schoenberg's indicated six minutes for Op. 11, No. 2, without sacrificing any of its nocturnal repose. In the later sets, I find him marginally less secure musically, with a tendency to force unpleasantly clattery climaxes that make the neo-classicisms of the Op. 25 Suite rather fierce, the sly rhythms of Op. 33b drab rather than humorous. And he hasn't subjected the accepted musical text to the same re-examination that Jacobs undertook.

But there is much pleasure here, especially in the thoughtful Op. 11 and the delicate, unforced Op. 19. The recorded sound is superbly natural. (I take the aforementioned clatter to be a function of the instrument itself.) D.H.

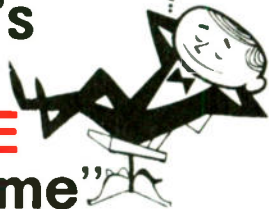
SCHOENBERG: Pierrot lunaire, Op. 21 (in English).* IVES: At the River; The Greatest Man; The Circus Band.* Cleo Laine, vocalist; The Nash Ensemble, Elgar Howarth, cond.*; Anthony Hymas, piano*. [Ralph Mace, prod.] RCA RED SEAL LRL 1-5058, \$6.98.

I yield to none in my admiration for Cleo Laine, and I think that performing *Pierrot lunaire* in English is rather a keen idea. But this recording does not work. First of all, the translation used, by Cecil Gray, is awkward in sense and uncomfortable with Schoenberg's notes and rhythms. Take the first line of *Nacht* (No. 8): "Finstre, scharze Riesenfaller." For this, "Heavy, gloomy giant black moths" gives the meaning fairly well, but when fit to the notes it leaves the essential substantive "moths" swallowed up on a very sort note at the end of the phrase. This happens all the time.

Laine derives her inflections of the vocal



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| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 |
| 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 |
| 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 |
| 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 |
| 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 | 101 | 102 | 103 | 104 | 105 |
| 106 | 107 | 108 | 109 | 110 | 111 | 112 | 113 | 114 | 115 | 116 | 117 | 118 | 119 | 120 |
| 121 | 122 | 123 | 124 | 125 | 126 | 127 | 128 | 129 | 130 | 131 | 132 | 133 | 134 | 135 |
| 136 | 137 | 138 | 139 | 140 | 141 | 142 | 143 | 144 | 145 | 146 | 147 | 148 | 149 | 150 |
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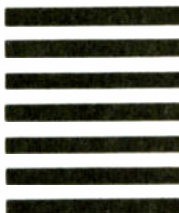
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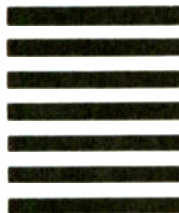
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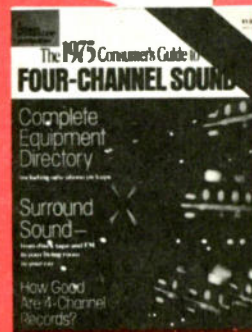
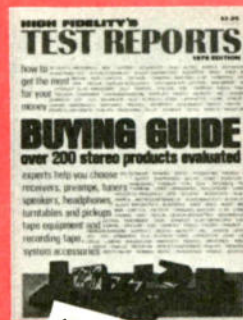
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line from the English words. Were they really satisfactory, this would give good results. But they aren't, so she comes up with any number of contradictions, where she must maul the words to fit the notes or vice versa. A shame, for there is some fine playing here, and the instruments (especially the piano in its lower registers) are well recorded.

A liner note assures us that "Arnold Schoenberg would have given his fullest approval, for he felt strongly that where English rather than German is the language, the work should be done in translation." Yes, but we still have not a good translation—and Schoenberg himself was not the best judge of English translations. Perhaps Andrew Porter will have a go at it?

The three Ives songs that fill up Side 2 are rather good fun, for here Laine is working with words and music that do fit together, and she has a brilliant accompanist. She makes one serious rhythmic error in the last line of "At The River," changes some words in "The Greatest Man," and falls into a few "rather British" vowel sounds in "The Circus Band," but the spirit is basically very right in these touching performances.

A text leaflet is included. D.H.

B **SCHUBERT:** Mass No. 6, in E flat, D. 950. Pilar Lorengar, soprano; Betty Allen, mezzo; Fritz Wunderlich and Manfred Schmidt, tenors; Josef Greindl, bass; St. Hedwig's Cathedral Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. SERAPHIM S 60243, \$3.98 [from CAPITOL SP 8579, 1962].

Even at the Seraphim price, and with no other stereo listing, it is hard to recommend this as an acceptable realization of the radiantly voluptuous, ruggedly erudite, starkly ascetic, almost operatic E flat Mass, a product of Schubert's final year that leaves no facet of the composer's genius unsampled.

Like Ferdinand Grossmann's deleted Philips version, Leinsdorf's is almost disqualified from the start by cuts in the fugal finales of the Gloria and Credo. But at least Grossmann had some rhythmic zest and sweet choral tone from the Vienna Choir Boys, for all the too lean and dry orchestral tone. Seraphim, by contrast, offers fat and oozing orchestral sonority and an indistinct blur from the huge St. Hedwig's Choir, whose sibilants fly in every direction. Leinsdorf's leadership does precious little to help define the contours of the music, and his lugubrious Romantic ritards in anticipation of fermatas are woefully out of place. The soloists are good, though Greindl seems recorded at a comparative advantage over his colleagues.

Should you run across Frederic Waldman's Decca stereo recording in the cutout bins, grab it—it's a fine job. Even better is Rudolf Moralt's 1950 recording (Lyricord 76, still theoretically available), an intense, driving performance, played and sung with opulence and passion. Its antique sonics will have to do until someone gives us an adequate modern replacement. A.C.

B **SCHUBERT:** Mirjams Siegesgesang, D. 942; Gesang der Geister über den Wassern, D. 774; Nachtgesang im Walde, D. 913. Ursula Buckel, soprano; Gerd Loh-

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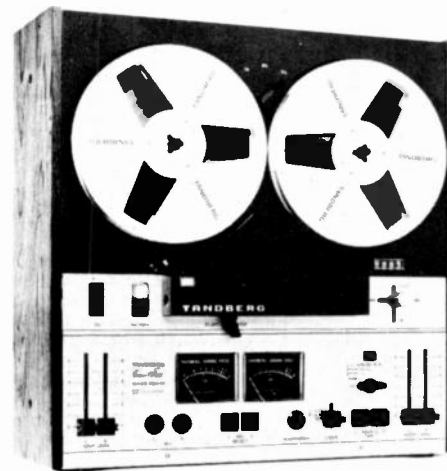
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meyer, piano (in D. 942); South German Madrigal Choir; instrumental soloists, Wolfgang Gönnerwein, cond. CANDIDE OCE 31087, \$4.98 (QS-encoded disc).

Mirjams Siegesgesang, a cantata to a Grillparzer text, though one of Schubert's last works, is something less than completely successful. Fine moments—a gentle pastoral section, some striking naturalistic effects—are undercut by a very conventional opening (which returns near the end), while the active piano part does not succeed in encompassing the breadth of the subject matter. For sure, it could all be more compelling in a performance with conviction—which this one is not, although Ursula Buckel sings prettily.

The two male-chorus-with-instruments pieces—both superior examples of Schubert's genius—do not fare much better at Gönnerwein's hands; the singing and playing are neat, but without over-all shape or distinction. For these works, go to Odeon/Volkspalte SMVP 8043, a good collection led by the late Karl Forster. And let us hope that the next time someone records Schubert male chorus music, the luminous Hymne of 1828 with wind accompaniment will be included.

Candide provides texts and translations, as well as a modicum of historical background. The QS disc, heard in stereo, yielded acceptable, natural sound. D.H.

SCHUBERT: Octet for Strings and Winds, in F, D. 803. Cleveland Quartet; Thomas Martin,

double bass; Jack Brymer, clarinet; Barry Tuckwell, horn; Martin Gatt, bassoon. [Charles Gerhardt, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1047, \$6.98.

Comparisons:
Melos Ensemble
Fine Arts Qt, N.Y. Woodwind Qt.
Berlin Phil. Octet

Ang. S 36529
Ev. 3082
DG 139 102

This recording, the album tells us, "was an outgrowth of a highly successful performance by these artists at the 1974 London South Bank Music Festival." I can well imagine my delight at hearing their spunky, communicative reading on a hot summer night. The players are all proficient and often much more; they seem to enjoy working together; they communicate much of the music's joy and poetry; they score an extra point by using the original edition, which keeps the second movement an adagio rather than speeding it up to a superficial andante.

I feel almost churlish adding that I don't think the interpretation is sufficiently distinctive or integrated to survive the repetition and scrutiny of a recording. There are plenty of captivating details—the tender string playing in the variations, Jack Brymer's lusty clarinet playing, Barry Tuckwell's brightly assertive horn playing—but they don't add up to the kind of integrated whole heard in the superb Melos Ensemble edition. Tempos are not ideally judged or sustained; sentiment sometimes turns into self-indulgence; textures and structural details are sometimes dealt with in too generalized a fashion.

For those who find the Melos account too

sophisticated and antiseptically refined, there are admirable alternatives: the studious version by the Fine Arts Quartet and the New York Woodwind Quartet and the easygoing yet judiciously planned version by the Berlin Philharmonic Octet.

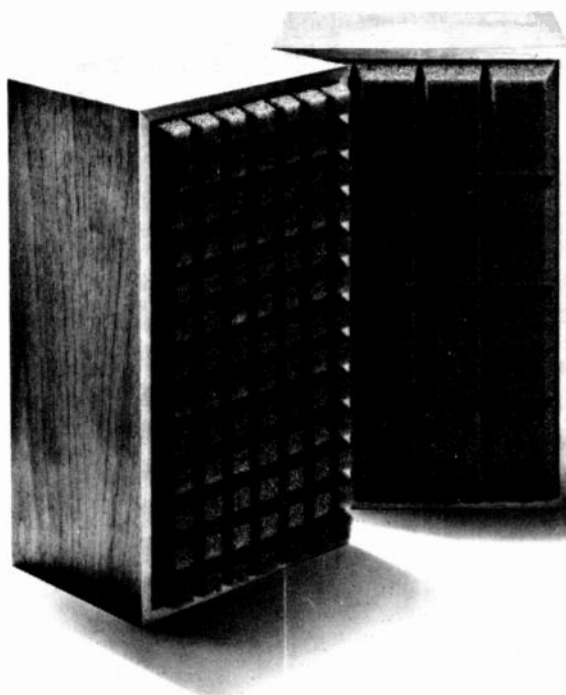
The new RCA disc has good, compact sound: intimate and not too dry. H.G.

SCHUBERT: Quartet for Strings, No. 14, in D minor, D. 810 (Death and the Maiden). Collegium Aureum Quartet. BASF KHC 22059, \$6.98.

There is a moment of decision at measure 15 of the first movement of the *Death and the Maiden*, and the way an ensemble casts the die at that point usually gives a good indication of what kind of performance lies ahead. The question is basically simple. Do you increase the tempo after the pause on measure 14, heightening excitement and the sense of impending adventure, even though no speedup is indicated in the score? Or do you maintain the steady allegro that Schubert calls for and search out the essence of the music in a less spectacular manner?

Without much pondering, most listeners can probably guess which answer each of the famous ensembles provides. The Americans, in high gear, tend to go hell for leather after that pause: the Juilliard (RCA LSC 2378, deleted), the Budapest (in *Odyssey* Y3 33320, mono), and the young Cleveland Quartet (RCA ARL 1-0483) are keen on contrast, conciseness, propulsion, and a kind of whiplash precision and dynamic

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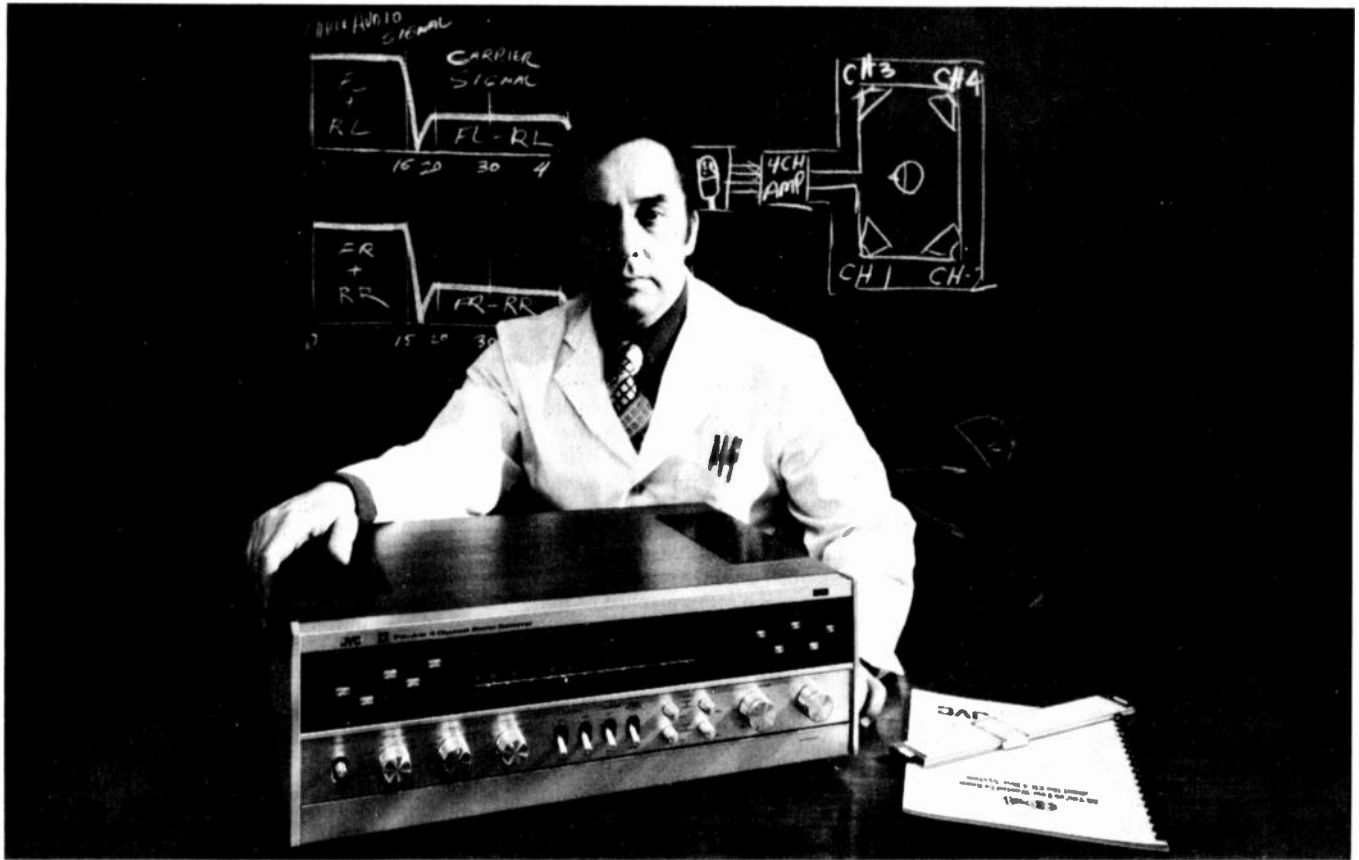
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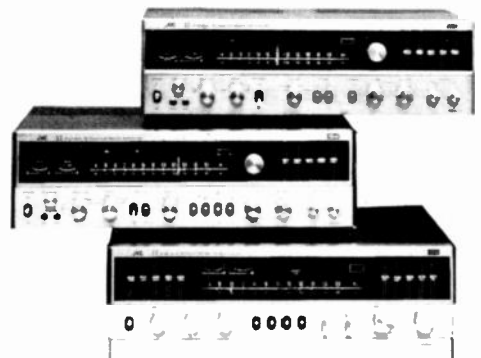
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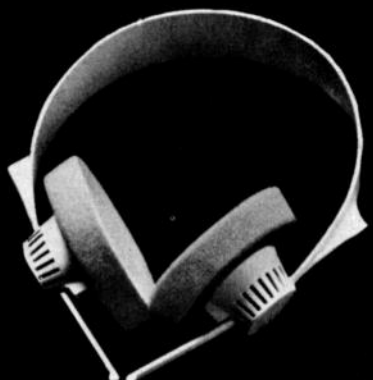
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nuance in fast passages. The Cleveland personifies this approach most emphatically (too much so, for my taste). Other American quartets with a flatter profile get a bit lost in this company, the Fine Arts (Concert Disc CS 212) and the New Hungarian (in Vox SVBX 601) among them—good performers but somewhat pale in comparison.

European quartets follow a less hard-sell philosophy, and, if the listener unwinds himself enough to go along with some of them, the rewards can be great. The Amadeus Quartet (DG 138 048) has long provided a fine example of a seasoned, more deliberate approach to the *Death and the Maiden*, incisive and propulsive enough, yet poised and sometimes understated. (The Hungarian Quartet, on Turnabout TV-S 34472, works along the same lines but falls short.)

Which brings us to the Collegium Aureum. It has added to the catalogue an excellent and durable version of the work, akin to the Amadeus, yet a bit more highly spiced. The Collegium does not step on the accelerator after measure 14, but it generates tension nonetheless, with nicely judged rhythmic drive and bite. The second movement opens with marvelously organ-like tone and proceeds through a set of vitally realized variations, and the last two movements—each a bit more vigorous and highly defined than the Amadeus reading—reveal the group's sharp sense of dynamic shaping.

The Collegium manages, in short, to hold a middle-of-the-road stance between a conservative European approach and the stylish show and glitter of the American groups, and it is welcome. S.F.

B SCHUMANN: Piano Works, Vol. 2. Peter Frankl, piano. Vox SVBX 5469, \$10.98 (three discs).

Abegg Variations, Op. 1; Fantasiestücke, Op. 12 and 111; Kinderszenen, Op. 15; Sonata in G minor, Op. 22 (with Presto *passionato*, Op. posth.); Romances (3), Op. 28; Sonatas for the Young (3), Op. 118; Albumblätter, Op. 124.

SCHUMANN: Piano Works, Vol. 3. Karl Engel, piano. TELEFUNKEN SKA 25112, \$27.92 (four discs).

Sonatas: in F sharp minor, Op. 11; in F minor, Op. 14 (*Concerto Without Orchestra*; with Scherzos, Op. 14a and posth.); in G minor, Op. 22 (with Presto *passionato*, Op. posth.); Album for the Young, Op. 68; Sonatas for the Young (3), Op. 118.

H SCHUMANN: Piano Works. Alfred Cortot, piano. DACAP0 1C 147 01544/5, \$13.96 (two discs, mono) [recorded 1928-47] (distributed by Peters International, 619 W. 54th St., New York, N.Y. 10019).

Papillons, Op. 2; Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6; Carnaval, Op. 9; Kinderszenen, Op. 15; Kreisleriana, Op. 16.

SCHUMANN: Kreisleriana, Op. 16; Humoreske, Op. 20. Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 6859, \$6.98.

SCHUMANN: Carnaval, Op. 9; Waldszenen, Op. 82. Dezső Ránki, piano. [Zoltán Hézser, prod.] HUNGAROTON SLPX 11659, \$6.98.

When the first-ever recorded cycle of the complete Schumann piano music, by Jörg Demus for Musical Heritage Society, was announced some four years ago, many eyebrows were raised at the prospect of hear-

ing some music never before recorded and virtually unperformed in the concert hall. Now Karl Engel (Telefunken) and Peter Frankl (Vox) are well into their respective cycles: two venerable masters, Wilhelm Kempff (DG) and Claudio Arrau (Philips), have recorded well over half the total, with who knows how much more to come; and the steady flow of individual works has reached deluge proportions.

In their latest installments, both Frankl and Engel manage to top their (very good) previous standards. Frankl's basic approach is "modern"; while the playing often has a fine lilt, he usually pays greater heed to note values, dynamic markings, and the like than did the old-timers, and the result is usually more organized and less improvisatory than their sometimes arbitrary-sounding interpretations. In Vol. 2, however, he takes more chances, and the readings have in general more fire than those in Vol. 1 (December 1974).

The Abegg Variations, *Kinderszenen*, and G minor Sonata are especially successful. Abegg has fine glitter and scintillant humor. The *Kinderszenen* cycle is played with robust character and a winning lack of preciousness: In "Wichtige Begebenheit" ("Important Event"), Frankl uses the full scale of his energy instead of trying to preserve "childlike" proportions; his "Träumerei" may impress as a trifle idiosyncratic, with the opening figurations consistently distended into a much slower tempo than the basic one, yet somehow the feeling is compelling rather than quixotic. The sonata is played with true bravura, a blazing account, taut yet impetuous, fully responsive to the driving force that led Schumann to follow an "as fast as possible" marking with a "faster still." Like Engel and Arrau (but unlike Kempff), Frankl scores points by including the *Presto passionato* (the sonata's original finale) after the revised version of the sonata.

Unfortunately the preciousness that ruined Frankl's *Album for the Young* in Vol. 1 returns in the three *Sonatas for the Young*. I don't really mind in the first two sonatas, but No. 3 is a substantial work, with a particularly intriguing final movement. Frankl's playing is thoroughly competent but slightly wan of tone and bland of accent. The two sets of *Fantasy Pieces* receive sensible readings, without quite the magic this haunting mood-painting has achieved with Nat, Bauer, Arrau (Op. 12 on Philips 6500 423, Op. 111 on 802 793), Engel (Vol. 2, November 1974), and Perahia (Op. 12, Columbia M 32299). Frankl, incidentally, plays only the standard eight pieces of Op. 12; Arrau incorporated the little appendix unobtrusively between "Grillen" and "In der Nacht."

Considering the bargain price, and the basic unaffected nature of Frankl's readings, the Vox album is a worthy investment. The piano sound is good and clean, but a few of the disc surfaces were a bit crackly.

Engel was occasionally too staid in some of his earlier performances (e.g., the tight, unimaginatively voiced *Carnaval* in Vol. 1, May 1974). But even in the previous volumes one found readings (e.g., the *Davidsbündler*, Vol. 1) of unusual artistry. For the most part, Engel strives for the massive,



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structural aspects of Schumann's writing, holding the line firm—and sometimes rather four-square. Though he is often sober in his rhythmic and coloristic approach, he is also capable of great warmth and humanity; I am reminded of Otto Klemperer.

The delightful surprise of Vol. 3 is Engel's inspired *Album for the Young*. For once these forty-three vignettes receive the attentions of a great artist, not a grammar teacher. He gives the powerful selections, such as the marchlike "Fremder Mann," a menacing grandeur and invests the chorale-like "Norse Song" with rich, somber coloration. The technically easier pieces are played with delightful vigor and directness that never preclude subtlety. I regret only that Engel didn't follow Demus' lead in presenting the appendix, which contains a few discarded pieces and interesting earlier drafts. (As I have noted before, the earlier version of "Wilder Reiter" has the horse galloping off into the distance, giving the piece A-B-C rather than A-B-A form.)

Engel's account of the three Sonatas for the Young has the diversity and character I miss in Frankl's. He fares admirably with the big sonatas too. His F sharp minor, Op. 11, falls between the very personalized Arrau (Philips 802 793) and the rather taut, objective Pollini (DG 2530 379). He emphasizes the music's grandeur, with rich tone as solid as Arrau's (though less colorful), but unlike Arrau he never fragments the line to extract every last drop of sentiment. The reading may be a trifle heavy compared with Pollini's faster tempos and bracing rhythmic "snap," but the forward progression is always clear, never in peril. The G minor Sonata, Op. 22, also gets a firm, magisterial, soundly judged reading, perhaps a shade too *maestoso* for its own good. I prefer the more youthful, impetuously charged Frankl account, which is more a tribute to Frankl than a rebuke to Engel.

However, I prefer Engel's account of the F minor Sonata, Op. 14, to the excellent ones by Rose (Turnabout TV-S 34533) and Kuerti (Stereo Treasury STS 15255), for the opposite reason! In this work, the steadiness and organizational sense of Engel are more important to me than the febrile intensity of Rose and Kuerti. And while both Rose and Kuerti use the later revision, which restored one of the two rejected scherzos, Engel plays the first published version (i.e., only three movements) and then, as an appendix, plays both scherzos.

The Valois/Telefunken piano sound is marvelously ringing and solid, the surfaces silent. The annotations are admirable, too—especially a continuing essay on the Schumann piano music begun in Vol. 1.

DaCapo's Cortot anthology gathers most, but not all, of his recorded Schumann repertory. He also recorded the "Vogel als Prophet" from *Waldszenen*, the D minor Trio with Thibaud and Casals, and the piano concerto. And of course he made multiple versions of many of the works included. In fact I regret that DaCapo chose the 1947 *Kinderszenen* over the defter, more delicately nuanced, flexibly phrased version from the mid-Thirties. But even in the 1947 recording there are many ravishing details and magical turns of phrase (along with some inexplicable transgressions—

why, for instance, did Cortot invent a repeat in "Wichtige Begebenheit" when none is even implied?).

As always with Cortot, one must regret that this great musicologist, conductor, teacher, writer, and pianist could be so cavalier about detail. Some of the digital lapses are horrendous, particularly in parts of the *Dauidsbünder* and the final section of *Kreisleriana*, but the grand line of musical thought and the immense poetry are always remarkable. He is virtually alone among the pianists of his era I have heard in giving the "Chopin" section of *Carnaval* its specified *passionato-agitato*, rather than languorous, feeling.

The new German transfers of these recordings, all of British origin, are remarkably vivid. Even the 1928 *Carnaval* has plenty of impact; only the noisier surfaces betray its age. Surprisingly, the over-resonant 1947 *Kinderszenen* is less successful sonically than the balance of the set, made from 1936 to 1938.

Hall resonance, ironically, is the bane of Ashkenazy's new Schumann disc as well. There may be pieces in the piano repertory that could benefit from the vast ambience of London's Kingsway Hall, but the *Humoreske* and *Kreisleriana* are not among them. Few works could be less suited to such reproduction. The swirling filigree of the opening section of *Kreisleriana* *ricochets* disagreeably, and throughout the record I was bothered by the thin, brittle, blurry sonics. *Pianissimos* vanish; *fortes* and above lack body and warmth.

A pity, for Ashkenazy's readings are technically perfect and, from what I can hear, musically rewarding. Perhaps the distant sound influenced me, but his *Kreisleriana* recalled Gieseking's (also distant and shallow in sound, though not overly reverberant) in its pacing and use of *rubato*. Both play the final section with extreme fleetness and dexterity, and both employ a brilliant, sharply pointed approach to rhythmic inflection and tone.

Sound is again a problem on one side of

Dezso Ránki's Schumann disc. The twenty-four-year-old Hungarian's *Carnaval* is acoustically rather tight and boxy; "zongora," the Hungarian word for piano, conveys the clonky, percussive tone of the instrument he uses, in music that requires bronzen, assertive sonority. This is technically proficient pianism, but the combination of studentlike caution and unsympathetic sound makes this *Carnaval* noncompetitive.

Not so the overside *Waldszenen*: In these more poetic pieces, Ránki plays with perception, real poetic involvement, and a rapt sense of what the music is about. He lacks, of course, the absolute magical finish of Richter's deleted DG recording, but in every other respect he proves an artist of profound gifts. And the sound has more ease and color on this side, too. H.G.

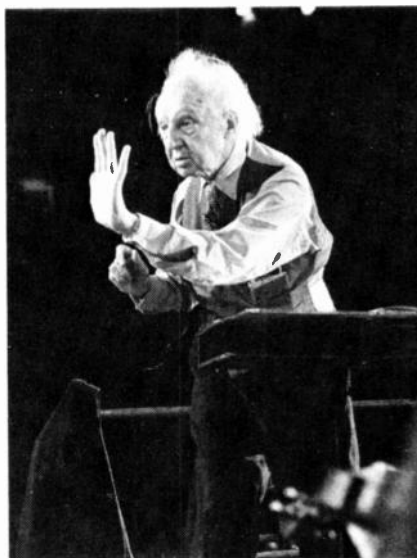
SCRIABIN: The Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54.*
DVOŘÁK: Slavonic Dance in E minor, Op. 72, No. 2.* **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:** Capriccio espagnol, Op. 34.* Czech Philharmonic Orchestra* and New Philharmonia Orchestra*, Leopold Stokowski, cond. LONDON PHASE-4 SPC 21117, \$6.98.

Comparisons—Scriabin:
Stokowski/Houston Sym.
Abbado/Boston Sym.
Mehta/L.A. Phil

Ev. 3032
DG 2530 137
Lon. CS 6552

Even if you don't already know the languishing, fluttering, feverishly questing *Poem of Ecstasy*, merely reading some of Scriabin's performance directions (*molto languido, avec délice, très parfumé, presque en délire, avec une volupté de plus en plus exotique*) would suggest that its ideal interpreter must surely be the Still Sensuous Man Stokowski. Sure enough, he was the first to bring it to records, way back in 1932 with the Philadelphians, and his still in-print 1960 version with the Houston Symphony was one of the early stereo-era spectaculars (which, like Bert Whyte's other original Everest engineering masterpieces, still sounds magnificent).

Now we get what presumably (but don't be too sure!) is the nonagenarian wizard's last word on the subject in a live performance for broadcast, recorded in Prague in the fall of 1972 at the same time as the Bach-Stokowski transcription program (November 1974). As in that collection, the recording markedly spotlights wind and percussion solos, endows the lows with tremendous solidity and weight, and is sonically ultrarich over-all—scarcely "natural" but, except for some overshadowing of the strings, every bit as potently intoxicating as this particular music demands. And perhaps by reason of its now-melting, now-ecstatic nature, it gives little indication of the occasional lapses in control tautness that are evident in some of Stokowski's other recent performances. Of course the Czech Philharmonic's playing (including that of a rather coarse-toned first trumpeter) doesn't approach that of the Boston Symphony under Abbado, and both that DG version and Mehta's for London are better balanced tonally. But Stokowski's Scriabin is in a class by itself, and, if you want the thrillingly uninhibited Real McCoy in musical ecstasy, you'll find it here in excelsis.



Brian Berry

Leopold Stokowski
His Scriabin is still sensuous.

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(Stereo Review, February, 1975)

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Go on to the disc's B side at your own risk, however. The familiar folkish Dvořák Slavonic dance doesn't belong in the same hothouse domain as Scriabin, where it sounds grotesquely out of place. And Rimsky's bravura showpiece (which to my surprise I can't trace in any earlier Stokowski recording) is more roughly, loosely, and heavily played by the New Philharmonia Orchestra than I'm sure Stokowski would have permitted in earlier years. Possibly some of the coarseness, and certainly the exaggerated spotlighting, is the Phase-4 engineers' fault. There are several more satisfactory versions of the *Capriccio espagnol* available, not the least of which is the sixteen-year-old one by Kondrashin for RCA (LSC 3302). R.D.D.

SIBELIUS: *Four Legends, Op. 22.* Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Charles Groves, cond. [John Willan, prod.] ANGEL S 37106, \$6.98.

Comparison:
Foss/Buffalo Phil

None, H 71203

Of the *Four Legends*, related but separately written symphonic poems based on the *Kalevala*, only *The Swan of Tuonela* has captured the public fancy on its own; but the three other pieces are just as compelling, in their more robust ways. All this music is filled with epic breadth and evocative play of imagery.

Groves's view of the music is almost diametrically opposed to that of Lukas Foss on his Nonesuch disc. Almost everywhere save in *The Swan*, Foss is considerably faster. His phrasing also has greater tautness and spring, producing a vitality and extraverted drive in striking contrast with the almost immobile quietude of the British performance. The Buffalo Philharmonic was evidently not a large orchestra and produces a dry and monochromatic texture; but the Liverpool string tone isn't very rich either, and the brasses are less assertive (as in *Lemminkäinen's Return*).

Angel's sonics are more distant and reverberant than Nonesuch's, but the new disc has superb bass-drum transients. The price difference could be a deciding factor here. A.C.

STRAVINSKY: *The Firebird.* New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez, cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 33508, \$6.98. Quadriphonic: MQ 33508 (SQ-encoded disc), \$7.98.

STRAVINSKY: *The Firebird.* London Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. MERCURY SRI 75058, \$6.98 [from SR 90226, 1960].

Comparison:
Stravinsky/Columbia Sym.

Col. MS 6328

These two contributions to musical ornithology are complementary in their virtues and vices. Dorati's capable orchestra is recorded in natural sound of slightly limited dynamic range; Boulez' better ensemble, playing sometimes well below its best, emerges with more color and impact but at a considerable loss in illusion. In some of the pantomime passages, where various soloists contribute motivic fragments, one hears the aural equivalent of a



Maricel Anders Mgt

Horst Stein—new to Americans with recordings of Wagner and Bruckner.

fashion-show runway, the first-desk men of the Philharmonic parading across *seriatim* to do their turns in the spotlight. Especially in the earlier parts of the score, their playing is hardly what one might expect—the “Khovorod” is no pleasure, especially by contrast to the Dorati, which boasts particularly distinguished oboe work—but things improve later on, and the “Magic Carillon” episode is better balanced, more comprehensible to the ear, than in any previous version. I could wish for more subtlety throughout; the advantages of wider dynamic range are often thrown away by the failure to play really softly (the fat horn solo just before the “Khovorod” is a conspicuous example).

Firebird may be difficult to execute properly, but it presents few interpretive hurdles. The tempos are clearly marked, but Dorati muffs a few: The start of the finale is too fast, for example, and this means a loss of contrast with the next, faster tempo, which is here (as always, even by the composer) taken at less than the indicated marking. Boulez falls into no such traps.

Faced with these mixed blessings, I will continue to recommend the composer's version, played with more character if less polish, occasionally “inauthentic” in its espousal of privileged second thoughts about how to play the music, attractively dry and clear in sound. D.H.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Manfred, Op. 58.* London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. [Christopher Bishop, prod.] ANGEL S 37018, \$6.98.

Manfred is a major work in the Tchaikovsky orchestral canon; had he placed it among his numbered symphonies (it would fall between Nos. 4 and 5), it might be more frequently heard. It is, in any event, Tchaikovsky's most highly organized and musically successful symphonic poem.

Having previously expressed some misgivings about the other recordings of *Manfred*, I am happy to report that this important gap is now admirably filled with superb playing by the LSO and stylistically

alert and basically musical leadership from the future music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony. Welcome home, Maestro Previn! P.H.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Folksong Arrangements.* London Madrigal Singers, Christopher Bishop, cond. [Brian Culverhouse, prod.] SERAPHIM S 60249, \$3.98.

The sixteen numbers in this collection only sample Vaughan Williams' efforts on behalf of his national folk heritage. According to the liner notes by Ursula Vaughan Williams, her husband was one of a group of British musicians who participated in a flurry of interest in the collection and harmonization of such material early in this century.

While the composer's place in musical history is hardly dependent on these anonymously authored trifles, certainly the survival of these ballads as “serious” music owes much to his craftsmanlike a cappella arrangements. Star billing on this record goes to “Greensleeves,” and many will enjoy comparing Vaughan Williams' choral setting herein with his familiar orchestral fantasia or with his use of it in the opera *Sir John in Love*. But there are other gems as well: the mournful setting of “The Unquiet Grave,” the contemplative rather than sentimental treatment of “Loch Lomond” (one of two numbers with a solo by tenor Ian Partridge), the charming “Early in the Spring,” among others.

Christopher Bishop, better known to many collectors as an EMI staff producer, draws impeccable and captivating performances from his little chorus. The 1970 recording (here released domestically for the first time) is amply spacious. All in all, a most attractive novelty bargain. A.C.

VIVALDI: *Concertos for Viola d'Amore.* Michel Pons, viola d'amore; Toulouse Chamber Orchestra, Georges Armand, cond. SERAPHIM S 60244, \$3.98.

Concertos: in A minor, P. 37; in D, P. 166; in A, P. 233; in D minor, P. 287.

The viola d'amore is a cultivated taste, at

least on records. Its pleasantly adenoidal tone sometimes slips into a whine, and it occasionally gives an impression of straining to accomplish the tasks set for it by the notes on the page. This does not seem true of live performances; but recordings, with their generally close-up solo miking, tend to focus on the instrument's idiosyncracies.

The present disc does its job gracefully enough, however, and, if these four concertos are nowhere near as entertaining or as individual as the more famous ones for violin, they add up to the kind of recital that diehard baroqueiks still enjoy. The fast movements get a lot of mileage out of passagework figuration whose main function is sonority—arpeggios, sequential patterns, and the like—but the slow movements are dignified and gracious, as Vivaldi's slow movements usually are. The concerto that stands out here is the A major, which features a particularly sinuous Largo.

Michel Pons plays crisply and articulately, and the Toulouse Chamber Orchestra keeps pace. S.F.

WAGNER: *Orchestral Excerpts*. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Horst Stein, cond. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 6860, \$6.98.

Der fliegende Holländer: *Overture*. **Lohengrin:** *Preludes to Acts I and III*. **Die Meistersinger:** *Prelude*. **Tristan und Isolde:** *Prelude and Liebestod*.

Horst Stein, who conducts regularly at Bayreuth and elsewhere in Europe, is not much of a name with which to sell records in America—doubtless accounting for the tendentious title hung on this disc: "The Essential Wagner." Surely the "essence" of Wagner's compositional achievement lies in his control of very large time spans and their coordination with dramatic action, matters to which these orchestral passages are not at all apposite.

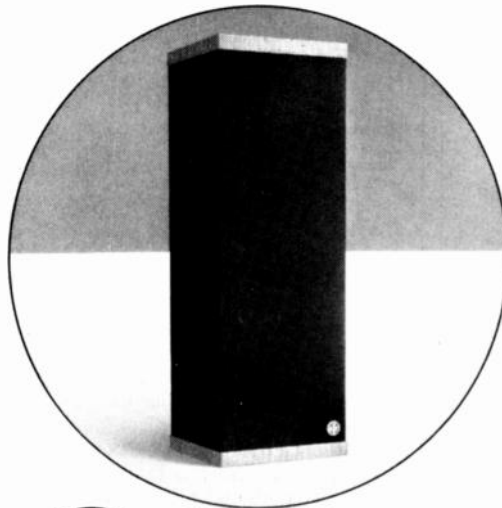
But let that pass. Stein gets very good playing from the Vienna band, if not quite perfection: The first climactic chord of the *Lohengrin* prelude falls short of utter unanimity, those off-the-beat chords in the *Holländer* coda fail to make their intended impact, and the *Tristan* prelude never quite gets off the ground on its way to the climax. The *Meistersinger* prelude is rather good, with exceptionally alert string articulation, and the *Liebestod* is phrased with remarkable spaciousness (although Wagner's concert ending for the prelude would have been preferable to these ears).

The *Lohengrin* third-act festivities are wound up with the curious ending given in the *Eulenburg* miniature score—i.e., the beginning of the transition to the *Bridal Chorus*, halting before the key starts to change—instead of the more common alternatives of a big G major chord (e.g., Bernstein, Klemperer) or the "Nie sollst du mich befragen" motive (Boult, Toscanini). In fact, I've never actually heard this particular anticlimax played before—and hope never to hear it again.

London's sound is really fine, with excellently defined timpani and bass lines in general. D.H.

WEBER: *Five Movements, Op. 5*—See Schoenberg: *Chamber Symphony No. 1*.

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Recitals and Miscellany

EMANUEL AX: Piano Recital. Emanuel Ax, piano. [Peter Dellheim, prod.] RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-1030, \$6.98. Tape: • ARS 1-1030, \$7.95.

CHOPIN: Sonata No. 3, in B minor, Op. 58. **LISZT:** Gnomesreigen; Paganini Etude No. 6, in A minor. **SCHUBERT-LISZT:** Das Wandern; Der Müller und der Bach; Liebesbotschaft; Horch! horch! die Lerch'.

To describe Emanuel Ax as an introspective rather than flashy performer would be an understatement. The crystalline touch and limpid line make the Schubert-Liszt song transcriptions particularly appealing. Introspection is not necessarily a bad thing, especially in repertory so often vulgarized, but in large doses this accomplished pianism sounds rather placid.

In the Chopin sonata, Ax must stand comparison with virtually all the great pianists in recording history. He plays it with care and, at times, an elegant sense for its contrapuntal texture, but he misses the larger architecture, the forward impetus that binds groups of pleasingly turned phrases.

Pleasant reproduction of what sounds like a gorgeous instrument; very clean surfaces. H.G.

WILLI BOSKOVSKY: "Vienna circa 1900." Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Willi Boskovsky, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] LONDON CS 6791, \$6.98.

In my part of the Johann Strauss discographies last month, I noted with regret that the two most recent Boskovsky "New Year's Concert" programs were available only abroad. I'd been told that they weren't being issued here because the Boskovsky series hasn't been selling as well as it once did.

Perhaps the dismay I expressed then helped to change London's mind. At any rate, here's a retitled release of the late-1972 Viennese miscellany that well may restore Boskovsky's appeal in this country if it is just given a chance to be heard. For conductor, orchestra, and engineers Gordon Parry and Philip Wade are all at their most gleaming and engaging best with up-to-date versions of old favorites, plus a few relative novelties, not only by various Strausses, but also by Lehár (*Gold and Silver Waltz*), Suppé (*Beautiful Galathea Overture*), and Ziehrer (*Hereinspaziert!* Waltz, Op. 518). From Papa Strauss (Johann I) we have the very early *Sperl-Galop*, Op. 42, and the (new to me) *Piefke und Purfke* Polka, Op. 235. From brother Josef we have the jaunty *Eingesendet* Polka, Op. 240.

And from Johann II himself we have Boskovsky's latest versions of the *Morgenblätter* Waltz, Op. 279, and *Persian March*, Op. 289, plus a polka threesome comprising the familiar *Unter Donner und Blitz*, Op. 324, the less-often-heard *Lob der Frauen*, Op.

315, and *Explosions*, Op. 43. The Big Bangs of the last-named piece will help you celebrate Johann's 150th anniversary year in spectacular fashion. R.D.D.

PAULINA DRAKE: Piano Recital. ORION ORS 75168, \$6.98.

KABALEVSKY: Sonata No. 3, Op. 46. **MUCZYNSKI:** Suite, Op. 13. **PROKOFIEV:** Three Pieces, Op. 96. **RACHMANINOFF:** Variations on a Theme by Chopin, Op. 22.

A resourceful anthology, this—with the relatively obscure American Robert Muczynski (b. 1929) more than holding his own in the august company of the well-known Russians. Muczynski studied composition with another Russian, the highly cosmopolitan Alexander Tcherepnin, and his Op. 13 Suite, vintage 1960, abounds with the same sort of ingredients that give the music of Prokofiev (and, to a lesser extent, Kabalevsky) its "idiomatic" flavor. The work, which is in six movements (marked "Festival," "Flight," "Vision," "Labyrinth," "Phantom," and "Scherzo"), is beautifully devised for piano and also contains stylistic suggestions of Hindemith.

The Prokofiev *Three Pieces* comprises a "Waltz" arranged from the opera *War and Peace* and a "Contradance" and "Mephisto Waltz" arranged from the movie score *Lermontov*. All considered, these infrequently heard miniatures are stylistically very much on a par with the composer's *Five Melodies* for violin and piano, recorded by both Szegedi and David Oistrakh: rather quizzical, gray, and, at the same time, somehow full of color and charm.

Rachmaninoff's long set of variations on the Chopin C minor Prelude, Op. 28, No. 20, has only its virtuoso demands to recommend it. This 1901 piece sounds like an earlier, less successful draft of the formula that later produced the Op. 42 *Corelli Variations* and the Op. 43 *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini* (separated by several years of compositional inactivity despite the adjacent opus numbers). Pianistically speaking, Rachmaninoff's manner was already fully formed, but his harmonic and coloristic profile lacks the daring, occasionally ironic twist revealed in the later scores (or indeed, in the contemporaneous C minor Piano Concerto). Small wonder, then, that this bland, excessively lengthy opus is rarely heard. Kabalevsky's sonata, on the other hand, has a honky-tonk humor and scintillant brio that make even its undeniable banalities lovable and easy to endure.

The young Hong Kong-born, California-trained pianist Paulina Drake, who recently made her debut at New York's Tully Hall in much of the same literature, does an altogether creditable job with this digitally demanding music. She has a mercurial temperament, with a penchant for fast tempos and impetuously staccato accents, and if her version of the Kabalevsky doesn't quite have the weight and brilliance of Horowitz's or the colorful finesse of Meiseiwitsch's (on HMV 78s), I like it better than the solid but oh-so-earnest reading by Yakov Zak (which shared a Monitor mono disc with an Ashkenazy Chopin ballade and a Gilels Schumann sonata). If Drake can infuse her admirably virtuosic playing with more color and tonal body (it emerges

from the disc as slightly bleak and percussive), she should be an impressive interpreter of this sort of razzle-dazzle music.

H.G.

EASTERN BRASS QUINTET: "Rags and Other American Things" (works by Gershwin, Ives, Joplin, et al.) [Chuck Baxter prod.] KLAVIER KS 539, \$6.98.

For once I can enjoy a brass quintet without complaining about hearing baroque-era music from trumpets (instead of cornetts) and a wholly anachronistic tuba. For the five talented and exuberant youths who make up the present group say to hell with the usual baroque (and serious modern) repertory in order to cut loose with a batch of brashly American divertissements. There are rags by Joplin, Lamb, Marshall, and Hunter; a couple of Sunday-in-the-park march favorites by King and Griffith; a version of the old folk-hymn "Amazing Grace" that suddenly became a hit a couple of years ago; transcriptions of Gershwin's "Mine," "The Man I Love," and "I Got Rhythm"; and—most importantly—four Ives songs in Kenneth Singleton's arrangements: "On the Counter," "Side Show," "Tarrant Moss," and a "Slow March" professional for the burial of a family dog.

Give the boys a break by skipping their insufferably mannered A-side opening Joplin *Entertainer*, and perhaps the overly fancy Gershwiniana too. With these lapses out of the way, the rest is all great fun, often featuring genuinely bravura as well as zesty playing (not least by the aptly named Tucker Jolly on tuba), all captured in brightly glittering recording. Who says that bicentennial musical commemorations have to be dismally serious? R.D.D

B **EMIL GILELS: "The Young Gilels."**
Emil Gilels, piano. WESTMINSTER GOLD
H WGM 8309, \$3.49 (mono) [from 78-rpm originals, recorded in the 1930s].

CHOPIN: Ballade No. 1, in G minor, Op. 23. **LISZT:** Hungarian Rhapsody No. 9, in E flat; Paganini Rhapsody No. 5, in E (La Chasse). **LULLY-GODOWSKI:** Gigas. **MENDELSSOHN:** Songs Without Words, No. 18, Op. 38, No. 6 (Duet). **PROKOFIEV:** The Love for Three Oranges. **MARCH:** RAMEAU: Le Rappel des oiseaux. **SCHUMANN:** Toccata in C, Op. 7. **Fantasiestücke**, Op. 12, No. 7, Traumeswirren; Der Contrabandiste (arr. Liszt).

Assuming that these recordings are from the Thirties as claimed, they preserve the work of the teenaged Gilels, a warm, impulsive musician who tends to stress vivid communication over anatomized technical "perfection"—a very different player from the pianist we came to know after 1955.

Especially attractive is the Chopin G minor Ballade, which, despite a few technical lapses (this was after all an unedited take), emerges with exquisitely limpid, straight-arrow directness. Even more astonishing is the vibrant dynamism of the not too often heard Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 9: Such rhythmic ardor and dazzling energy are rare from a pianist of any age. The Liszt Paganini etude, on the other hand, has lace-like delicacy and all the refinement in the world. The Prokofiev march is exuberant and rather sinister in its unconventional balances (some of which may be attributable to the recording's limited frequency response).

The balance of the playing ranges from sturdy and a bit brusque (the Schumann "Traumeswirren") to downright brutal (the treacherous Schumann Toccata, where Gilels may even surpass Barere's ill-advised speed record). But this impassioned, warm-blooded pianism is appealing even in its less successful moments. This is, in short, a disc of considerable historic importance. H.G.

JAIME LAREDO: Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Jaime Laredo, violin; Ann Schein, piano. DESTO DC 6439, \$6.98.

COPLAND: Sonata. **IVES:** Sonata No. 4 (Children's Day at the Camp Meeting). **BINKERD:** Sonata.

With representative works from three gen-

erations of American composers, this is an admirable one-record summation of how the classic violin-and-piano duo has been handled by men of very different temperament and musical inspiration. The performances are consistently first-class, and the engineering captures and projects them forcefully.

The Ives, with its mixture of hymn tunes and rampant innovation (right down to an unexpected ending), is perhaps the most readily accessible work, and it is a fine, imaginative piece, filled with Yankee spirit. The Copland, I suspect, is more important, a miniature lyric drama worked out in terms of two performers with some excellent writing for both instruments. I deplore the fact that it does not appear more frequently on recital programs, although that

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is all the reason needed to acquire a recording. The Binkerd work has an effective first movement and a lively scherzo. The finale could resolve the design more strongly, but there are good ideas here. The composer is a fine craftsman, and he has something to say in a conservative idiom that makes his ideas readily understood by a majority of listeners.

R.C.M.

EDUARD MELKUS ENSEMBLE: "Viennese Dance Music from the Classical Period" (works by Beethoven, Eybler, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Salieri, and Wranitzky). [Andreas Holschneider, prod.] ARCHIV 2533 182, \$7.98.

It has been nearly fifteen years since then-violinist, rather than conductor, Boskovsky introduced many of us (via Vanguard recordings that I'm pleased to find remain in print) to the delights of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century dance music for chamber ensembles—a repertory to which Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, along with innumerable lesser lights, contributed generously. Now Eduard Melkus, hitherto best known as an authoritative exponent of baroque-era violin music, has assembled a group of expert string and wind colleagues to dig more deeply and less casually into the same inexhaustible tonal mines.

I haven't yet heard his ensemble's earlier "Dance Music of the Biedemeier Period" (Archiv 2533 134) released in May 1973, but the present immaculately recorded performances are more precisely deft than



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those of Boskovsky's ensemble and, of course, are captured in more transparent sound. If some of the earlier Viennese *Gemütlichkeit* has been lost, there is no lack of grace, verve, and obvious relish of the music's by no means exclusively lavender-and-old-lace charms.

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Besides the more-or-less expected Mozart *Ländlerische*, K. 606, and *Contretänze*, K. 609, four of Beethoven's *Contretänze*, WoO. 14, and two Haydn minuets (of which one, H. IX:11/4, is most unexpectedly eloquent), there are more imaginatively chosen ballet pieces from Gluck's *Orfeo* and *Don Juan*, a Salieri minuetto, and a polonaise by Mozart's friend Joseph Eybler. But the most inspired and delectable choices are a little ballet-suite *Quodlibet* and a set of ten *Deutsche* by Paul Wranitzky (1756-1808), a violinist/composer who for several years played in Prince Esterházy's orchestra under Haydn. The amusing little German dances have a special appeal for audiophiles, since each features some offbeat instrument: hurdy-gurdy, Pan pipe, psaltery, two water glasses in C, etc. The piquant combination of such sportiveness with the Archiv series' usual sober musicological documentation is not the least of this release's lively appeals.

R.D.D.

B MUSIC AT THE TIME OF THE CRUSADES. Florilegium Musicum of Paris. VANGUARD EVERYMAN SRV 317 SD, \$3.98.

Here they are, folks! Golden Oldies from the time of the Crusades. Actually most of the Crusades were over by the mid-thirteenth century, the period from which these selections come, but collectors of early music will recognize many popular tunes that have been recorded often.

Here are the "Ductia" that first heralded Pro Musica's *Play of Daniel*, the familiar "Lamento di Tristano," and a couple of well-anthologized *Danses royales*. All of them are decked out in colorful Mediterranean finery, which is the current rage in medieval improvisation. Two particularly effective numbers are "Reis glorios," a Provençal troubadour song familiar to early-music cognoscenti from HAM, and a "new" piece, "Tristes plaisirs," a hauntingly lovely melody played on the chalumeau.

The Florilegium Musicum of Paris is primarily an instrumental ensemble; at least that side of its talents is most evident on this disc. Special mention should be made of the fine medieval fiddling of Jacques Prat and Françoise Bloch and the impressive work of Jean-Claude Veilhan, a virtuoso on half a dozen unusual wind instruments.

A good buy if you are a collector of this repertoire, a novice looking for a sampler album, or just a fan of this lively music.

S.T.S.

B NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN BALLROOM MUSIC. Smithsonian Social Orchestra and Quadrille Band, James Weaver, cond. [Marc J. Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, prod.] NONESUCH H 71313, \$3.98.

Whatever treasures forthcoming bicentennial-commemoration recordings may have for us, the present evocation of once-popular musical Americana is sure to remain unsurpassed of its kind. These twenty-two dance pieces date, in arrangement if not actual composition, from the two decades immediately preceding the Civil War, and they are played not only in their authentic

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James Weaver—tuneful and vivacious nineteenth-century Americana.

Barbara Fahs Charles

period scorings, but by period instruments preserved in the National Museum of History and Technology at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. All of which, along with scholarly notes by Cynthia Adams Hoover that are augmented by detailed musical-source and instrument specifications, might suggest stronger historical-documentary than home-entertainment attractions.

Not so. The music itself is disarmingly tuneful and vivacious, especially in the fascinating Dodworth arrangement of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Talexy's *Musidora* polka-mazurka, Bellak's *Military Parade* schottische, Holloway's *Wood Up* quickstep, D'Albert's *National* schottische, Eaton's polonaise, and the anonymous Schomberg galop.

Yet there's even more aurally appetizing appeal in the extraordinary variety of timbres and sonorities. The performances range from a couple of square-piano solos through trios and quartets to chamber orchestra and—most distinctively—saxhorn wind bands in which the often starred cornets and keyed bugles are sometimes given a run for attention by the now almost wholly unfamiliar alto and bass ophicleides. And all are vividly recorded in the arrestingly live ambience of the Library of Congress' Coolidge Auditorium.

Nonesuch has previously given us several exceptional exemplars of musical Americana: the Foster song album with Jan DeGaetani and Leslie Guinn accompanied by period instruments (H 71268), Joan Morris' "After the Ball" album of sentimental airs (H 71304), and Rifkin's Joplin series, among others. But this one is if anything even more unusual, no less historically significant, and every bit as immediately delectable. And it, too, proffers a prodigal lot for a budget price. R.D.D.

PAULA ROBISON: Flute Music of the Romantic Era. Paula Robison, flute; Samuel Sanders, piano. [Seymour Solomon, prod.] VANGUARD VSD 71207, \$6.98.

The title of this record rather nicely defines what it does and does not contain—music of the Romantic era, as opposed to Romantic music. We are dealing here, not with the musical expression of personal sensitivity by a Schubert, a Schumann, a Berlioz, or a Tchaikovsky, but rather with the display of the performer's bravura, in this case the flute counterpart of the pianistic fireworks of a Liszt, Alkan, or Rubinstein.

So the music on this record (by Boehm, Gaubert, Genin, Godard, and Hummel) and the performances must be taken in that context—admiration for the awesome technical facility of Paula Robison, amusement with the pyrotechnics of Genin's *Carnival of Venice* Variations, and finally some exasperated bewilderment at the waste of so much talent on music of such vapidty. For, as anyone knows who has heard her play, with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center or elsewhere, Robison is a unique artist, not just a brilliant flutist. Let us hope that this record sells enough copies to encourage Vanguard to record her in worthier repertory.

Samuel Sanders, one of the best ensemble pianists around, has collaborated on many occasions with Robison, usually in programs of more substance. Let's hope he too gets a better break next time around. P.H.

PAUL ZUKOFSKY: Music for a 20th-Century Violinist. Paul Zukofsky, violin; Gilbert Kalish, piano; various other performers. DESTO DC 6435/7, \$20.94 (three discs).

This is a heroic set: fourteen modern American pieces for or with the violin. As everyone knows by now, Paul Zukofsky is a superb violinist who specializes in modern music. His endless curiosity about new effects and approaches, his exemplary willingness to go along wherever the composer may lead, and the essential solidity of his violinistic equipment suit him ideally for the role he has chosen to play. His associate, pianist Gilbert Kalish, is equally dedi-

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You can see the rest for yourself in the photograph. This cassette deck is also typically Dual in appearance: clean, functional, uncluttered. If you own a Dual turntable, you've come to appreciate these qualities. And if you're about to own a cassette, you'll appreciate some additional niceties of the Dual. The meters tilt up for viewing from across the room. The viscous-damped cassette holder rises smoothly and silently when the eject button is pressed. The built-in Dolby test oscillator precisely adjusts for any tapes, today's or those of the future.

In short, this cassette deck was designed with the same philosophy that Dual has espoused for years: the most serious audio equipment can also be the easiest and most convenient to use. Price: \$450.

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cated and equally skillful. They are the stars here, but their supporting cast is large and varied.

The one flaw in this set is that thirteen of the fourteen pieces it contains are by exceedingly well-known composers. Zukofsky has done little exploration outside the New York modernist Establishment. But his single adventure into the great unknown is so charming, so full of spirit, adventure, impudence, and invention, that it almost justifies the entire enterprise.

This work is a string quartet by one Michael Sahl, who, we learn from Nicolas Slonimsky's notes, pays homage to a whole pantheon of his predecessors: Slonimsky fails however to mention the one whose influence is most obvious in his work:

Dvořák. Sahl can set the four fiddlers against each other, scrapping like leopards in a cage, but most of the time the piece moves with a sweetness, a smoothness, a melodiousness, and a flowing lift paralleled elsewhere only in the Czech composer's chamber music. To be sure, Sahl's piece is not all Dvořák; it makes endless, highly original use of drones and ostinato figures, one of which is transformed in his scherzo into a finger-snapping, snake-hips kind of theater music, and there are moments when Ravi Shankar sits in. All that makes for character, profile, and daring. Hearing Sahl for the first time is like hearing Bartók or Stravinsky. You know he's onto something and is not just going along with the schoolteachers.



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To generalize very roughly, the composers of the other pieces fall into three categories: the colorists, the twelve-toners, and the academicians. (The line between the last two groups, to be sure, is not too easy to draw.)

One of the most remarkable of the color works is John Cage's *Nocturne* for violin and piano, composed in 1947, when he was really writing music—magnificent music—and not, as in later years, devising elaborate strategies to avoid composing. Slonimsky quotes Cage as saying the purpose of the piece is "to dissolve the difference between string and piano sounds." This it does, with hauntingly beautiful effect. Color music is more up-to-date than the twelve-tone thing, and here is Cage predicting it long before it happened elsewhere.

George Crumb's *Four Nocturnes* is similar to the Cage in mood as well as in title but out-Cages Cage in exploring such sounds as are produced by rapping on the metal frame of the piano, sweeping its strings with wire brushes, and so on.

Morton Feldman, master of the ecstasy of silence, is represented with one of his best achievements, entitled *Vertical Thoughts* No. 2. Harvey Sollherger's *Solos*, for violin, piano, flute, clarinet, horn, and string bass, is smashing, gutty, and exhilarating, but the wildest color piece of all is Henry Brant's *Quombex*, for viola d'amore, music boxes, and organ. If so, it must be made of beer bottles. The piece sounds exactly like the kind of thing one hears in department stores at Christmas, or rather like what one might hear in two or three different department stores at once.

Outstanding among the works of the academics is the sonatina by Walter Piston, with one of the most profound and moving slow movements that past master of slow movements ever composed. Wallingford Riegger's sonatina is Brahms with false notes. Peter Mennin's *Sonata Concertante* puts up a big, dramatic show. Arthur Berger's *Duo* No. 2, a product of the days when Berger followed Stravinsky's neoclassicism, might go into the academic class, too; it is fluent and lyrical but not exceedingly impressive.

Of the serialist pieces, the only one I found really rewarding was Ralph Shapey's *Evocation*, for violin, piano, and percussion. To be sure, this work contains passages, especially in the first movement, that perfectly exemplify the Puritan ethic: If it's acutely unpleasant, it has to be good for you. (This principle, repeatedly proclaimed by that old provincial New Englander Charles Ives, masquerades in Ives's own thinking as modernism.) But Shapey is also master of an unearthly profundity to which the serial method, in the right hands, is the key. His slow movement and finale are uniquely moving and haunting among all the things provided in this set.

Stefan Wolpe's *Second Piece for Violin Alone* is too short to make much of an impression. Milton Babbitt's *Sextets* is the work of a composer whose total-serialist complexities I find appallingly unmusical. And although Roger Sessions was among the first to attack the computerizing aspect of total serialism, his own duo for violin and piano seems almost as forced and dry.

A.F.

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CIRCLE 63 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

The Lighter Side

reviewed by
 MORGAN AMES
 ROYAL S. BROWN
 HENRY EDWARDS
 JIM GOSA
 MIKE JAHN
 JOHN S. WILSON

Roger Daltrey—a potent performer even out of his familiar context.

*** ROGER DALTREY:** *Ride a Rock Horse*. Roger Daltrey, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Come and Get Your Love; Oceans Away; Proud; World Over; Near to Surrender; I Was Born to Sing Your Song*; four more. [Russ Ballard, prod.] MCA 2147, \$6.98. Tape: ●● C 2147, \$7.98; ●● T 2147, \$7.98.

Roger Daltrey without the Who seems at

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first like Mick Jagger recording without the Stones. But Daltrey, like Jagger, is an overwhelmingly charismatic performer. Even out of his familiar context, he is a potent singer in the genre of which he was a principal architect. He is a prime example of the evolution of Britain's rock from American blues.

Rock music has matured and expanded to include a great variety of styles and sounds. Just as jazz extends from New Orleans traditional, in its crystallized state, to the misty edges of avant-gardism (each with its own advocates), rock embraces a wide range of disciplines. It's interesting that both jazz and rock evolved from basic black American music, each developing its own traditions and principles along the way. And each is influenced from time to time by towering personalities who leave a permanent imprint on the literature of the music.

Roger Daltrey is indisputably a major

stylist of a music that swept the world. "Ride a Rock Horse"—an album that is superbly engineered so that there is a great feeling of depth and dimension to the excellent backup band and singers—represents him well. J.G.

Poco: *The Very Best of Poco*. Richie Furay, Jim Messina, and Paul Cotton, guitars; Rusty Young, pedal steel guitar; Timothy B. Schmidt, bass; George Grantham, drums; instrumental accompaniment. *Consequently So Long; Pickin' Up the Pieces*; nineteen more. [Jim Messina, Steve Cropper, Jack Richardson, Jim Mason, and Poco, prod.] EPIC PEG 33537, \$7.98 (two discs). Tape: ●● PTG 33537, \$8.98; ●● PAG 33537, \$8.98.

Starting in the late 1960s, there developed what proved to be the mistaken idea that country music could be blended with rock and roll without ruining either. Poco emerged as the leading proponent of this theory and, hence, became the most prominent bastardizer of country music.

Actually, Poco's "blending" of country and rock amounted to playing rock versions of country-ish songs to the accompaniment of ensemble singing and many shirts bearing embroidered cacti. If this "best hits" album has a virtue, it is that the worst of the chaff has been eliminated, leaving grain that, if not exactly palatable, is at least nonlethal. M.J.

R. E. O. SPEEDWAGON: *This Time We Mean It*. Mike Murphy, piano and vocals; Gary Richrath, guitar; Neal Doughty, organ; Gregg Philbin, bass; Alan Gratzner, drums. *Reelin'; Headed for a Fall; River of Life*; seven more. [Allan Blazek, prod.] EPIC PE 33338, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PET 33338, \$7.98; ●● PEA 33338, \$7.98.

Perhaps this time they really do mean it, but the question remains: mean what?

As always, R. E. O. Speedwagon produces hard rock of a modestly mediocre sort. If one chooses to concentrate on it, the music is moving enough to dance to; the trouble is that nothing about it induces me to concentrate. I listened to this album at appallingly high volume, yet found myself curiously unable to pay attention.

Once again I must point the finger of blame at greed. All but one of the tunes were written by members of the band, and all are dull. If the group had sacrificed its own composer royalties and recorded songs—written by others—with some guts to them, it might have produced a recording of note, rather than just another bowl of instant mashed potatoes. M.J.

RICHARD PRYOR: *Is It Something I Said?* Performed by Richard Pryor. *Eulogy; Shortage of White People; New Niggers*; eight more. [David Banks, prod.] REPRIS MS 2227, \$6.98.

This successful black comedian dishes up a set of dialect humor that is replete with every Anglo-Saxonism one can think of, as well as a few more one might never have heard of. Pryor's material deals with black

and white stereotypes, the use of cocaine, sexual lust at its most rampant. Surreal, freewheeling, and profane, he also creates, in anecdotal fashion, an original character or two with which he regales his audience.

Recorded live at the Latin Casino in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, "Is It Something I Said?" is good-natured and somewhat amusing, an "original-cast" recording of a performance that has to be more meaningful to those who have seen Pryor's turn in a concert hall or on a nightclub floor. He is obviously, however, an expert comedian who gives his admirers a heaping plateful of blue black-oriented humor. H.E.

DEMIS ROUSSOS: *Souvenirs*. Demis Roussos, vocals; strings, horns, and orchestral accompaniment. *Sing an Ode to Love; Midnight Is the Time I Need You; I'll Be Your Friend (Schoen wie Mona Lisa)*; eight more. BIG TREE BT 89509, \$6.98. Tape: CS 89509, \$7.97; TP 89509, \$7.97.

Recorded in France, this disc features the Greek-born international superstar who is planning to duplicate his European success in America. Demis Roussos, a burly man with an affection for wearing long robes, has been labeled "the European Johnny Mathis." He has a sweet, light, affecting voice, perfectly suited for ballads and soft rock. This LP demonstrates these vocal abilities, utilizing echo effects and double-tracking. The Roussos sound is somewhat ethereal, a little eerie, and not unimpressive.

Whether he—or this recording—clicks in the U.S. depends, one suspects, on Roussos' live impact. What is the commercial potential of a man who looks like a wrestler and sounds like a choir boy? We should know before the year is out. H.E.

RUSSELL MORRIS. Russell Morris, vocals and guitar; Vinnie Bell, Hugh McCracken, David Spinozza, and Don Thomas, guitars; Ken Ascher and Jim Wisner, keyboards; Will Lee, bass; Rick Marotta, drums; Mike Brecker, Randy Brecker, and George Opalsky, horns; Jim Wisner, arr. and cond. *Wings of an Eagle; Sweet Sweet Love; Miss Rock 'n' Roll; Sail with Me; When the Mockingbird Sings*; five more. [Edward Germano, prod.] RCA APL 1-1073, \$6.98. Tape: APK 1-1073, \$7.95; APS 1-1073, \$7.95.

This is the first American-made album by the Australian Russell Morris. He is a very appealing singer and a composer of songs that have great charm.

Morris was the king of Australian teenybopper music a few years ago, with a string of hits playing constantly on that country's Top 40 radio. Then, like a Cat Stevens, he withdrew from the active music scene and concentrated on his writing and on redirecting his music. What emerged is a much more mature music—still rhythmic, but with a more sophisticated structure. Seeking to escape the provincialism of Australian music and his old bubblegum image, he has come to the U.S., where he is virtually starting from scratch.

By referring to Cat Stevens, I don't mean to imply that Morris is at all imitative of



Peter Nero

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Russell Morris

Creating pleasurable moments.

him. But I think the comparison will be almost inevitable; there is a sort of similarity of sound and feeling in some of the material.

Morris' songs tend to address Love, lost or found. But as someone once observed, all songs are either about getting it or not getting it. With that perspective, Russell Morris has done well in creating some very pleasurable moments in the recording that introduces him to American listeners. He sings in a clear, infectious voice. The arrangements are uncluttered. The album is produced unpretentiously, allowing the singer and the songs to be heard without gimmickry. J.G.

PETER NERO: *Disco, Dance, and Love Themes of the '70s*. Peter Nero, piano; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Jazzman; Superstition; Soul Ballet; Brother Louie; Don't You Worry About a Thing*; five more. [Tony Sylvester and Bert de

Coteaux, prod.] ARISTA AL 4034, \$6.98. Tape: H 8301-4034, \$7.95.

Are you among the ranks of those who appreciate soul groups for their musicianship and not their singing? Ever wish you could gag Gladys Knight and all the Pips, and just listen to their backup musicians? Would you like to dance to disco music but without having to endure the senseless howling that so many black soulsters attempt to pass off as singing?

If so, rejoice in this new release by popular pianist Peter Nero. For he has taken the best of current black soul music and committed it to vinyl minus the foul vocal fumbling that pours forth unceasingly from a million transistor radios on a million subways, city streets, and public beaches. Of course, there are a few girls ooh-ing and ah-ing politely in the background, but they are not at all disruptive. Such taste in a genre hardly known for that quality is to be encouraged. M.J.

RAY THOMAS: *From Mighty Oaks*. Ray Thomas, lead and backup vocals, flutes, harmonica; strings, rhythm, keyboards, vocal, and orchestral accompaniment. *From Mighty Oaks; Hey Mama Life; Play It Again*; six more. [Ray Thomas and Derek Varnals, prod.] THRESHOLD THS 16, \$6.98. Tape: O 24616, \$7.97; O 24816, \$7.97.

Ray Thomas, along with mellotronist Mike Pinder, can be credited with creating the English supergroup, the Moody Blues, in 1964. Serving not only as flutist, but also as singer, composer, and on-stage front man, he has been an integral part of its monumental success. On the group's last seven gold albums can be found fourteen songs authored by him, including "Legend of a Mind," "The Tide Rushes In," "Mr. Livingston, I Presume," "Dear Diary," and "For My Lady," each and every one easily recollectable by any devoted Moody Blues fan.

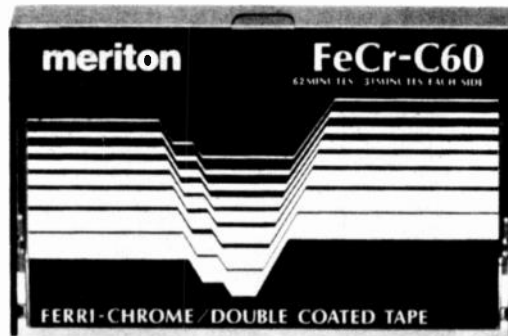
This debut solo LP finds Thomas just as musical, mushy, and mellow as he was during the Moody Blues' nine-year-long heyday. (The members have neither recorded nor performed together for the past two years.) The recording opens with the title theme, "From Mighty Oaks," as stirring an orchestral work as could be obtained from one of the great Hollywood film-score composers. Cornball? Yes! Effective? Yes!

From then on, Thomas peppers this set with a number of ballads, all expertly crafted, played, sung, and recorded, all dripping with the kind of sentimentality one can't bear to hear any more. Example: "High above my head/ There's a silver lining/ In the sky, I tell you no lie/ I know that we can make it/ That's what I said/ 'Cause we've got a silver lining above our heads." Most of the other tunes, nearly all of which he co-authored, are almost as insipid.

Commercial and performed with care, "From Mighty Oaks" and its show tunes, with their goody-goody themes done up as middle-of-the-road rock, can't miss with the Moody Blues horde of fans. It'll probably also corral a bunch of those who are addicted to Paul McCartney's twirpings. H.E.

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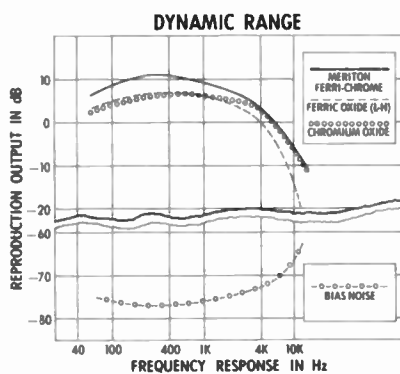
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CIRCLE 38 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

NEIL YOUNG: Tonight's the Night. Neil Young, guitars and vocals; strings and rhythm accompaniment. *Tonight's the Night; Speakin' Out; World on a String*; nine more. [David Briggs and Neil Young, prod.] REPRISE MS 2221, \$6.98. Tape: ●● O 52221, \$7.97; ● O 82221, \$7.97.

Even before its official release, previewers had declared that Neil Young's "Tonight's the Night" was bound to stir up more than its fair share of controversy. One-quarter of the much-beloved and for the most part nonfunctioning supergroup Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young, he is also the creator of a slew of super-successful solo discs. Young is both loved by his fans and respected by most pop critics. In addition, fans and critics alike have always been tempted to read all sorts of obscure meanings into his ambiguous lyrics, which in many instances have been analyzed with the seriousness and enthusiasm usually reserved for an Ezra Pound canto.

And now this much-awaited disc has arrived, and for the most part it's awful. "He's throwing away his career," many have announced. "He's all burned out," others have rationalized. "He has created a stinging parody of his very own success," still others have declared.

All of these explanations are to some degree true. More significant, however, is the explanation no one seems to have come up with: Young was never that good. The creator of a couple of moving songs, glazed with an air of profundity, he has been praised far in excess of his worth.

The pop conventions spawned in the 1960s have begun to crumble. Articles that I read this very day were highly critical of Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones, and those who once might have wanted to stone the authors of these evaluations now might very well be tempted to agree with them—and those who once would not have dared criticize Neil Young because he was Neil Young are developing some degree of objectivity.

Give this audience, which has just begun to get its senses back, an album that begins and ends with a title track that repeats the title line ad infinitum, and they now overreact negatively to the silliness that pervades Young's current work. "Tonight's the Night," however, is not all that bad. It reminds me of an LP by the Fugs, that mid-1960s Greenwich Village avant-garde theater rock band that parodied everything and everybody mercilessly. Young is demonstrating through all this sloppiness and banality that he has gotten away with creating nonsense before—this time by substituting lack of craft for pseudo-profundity—and undoubtedly will do it again. H.E.

*** JOHN ABERCROMBIE: Timeless.** John Abercrombie, guitar; Jan Hammer, organ, piano, and synthesizer; Jack de Johnette, drums. *Love Song; Lungs; Red and Orange; Remembering; Ralph's Piano Waltz; Timeless.* ECM 1047, \$6.98.

ECM continues to produce some of the most interesting, though mainly esoteric, music of our day. Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett, and Gary Burton have recorded some



Steve Goodman
The more you listen, the more you hear.

of their most adventurous music for this German-based label (released domestically by Polydor).

"Timeless" is a further excursion into that space where modern rock and modern jazz are attempting a docking maneuver. John Abercrombie is a versatile, volatile guitarist. Jan Hammer is the keyboard wizard from the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Jack de Johnette is the very model of modern jazz drumming. Creating music together, they are not so much concerned with tunes as with being tuned in to one another. The interplay among these three excellent players is fascinating.

The music probably isn't jazz in a strict sense of the word, but neither is it rock. It is definitely contemporary, improvisatory music that acknowledges both sources of influence and then goes on to make its own statement. J.G.

*** STEVE GOODMAN: Jesse's Jig and Other Favorites.** Steve Goodman, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Door Number Three; Blue Umbrella; This Hotel Room; Spoon River; Jesse's Jig*; five more. ASYLUM 7E 1087, \$6.98. Tape: ●● TC5 1087, \$7.97; ● ET8 1087, \$7.97.

Steve Goodman sounds like your run-of-the-mill city/country singer—at first. But with this kind of album, the more you listen, the more you hear.

For instance, the back-up band. It plays with vitality and authenticity various styles ranging from country-hokey to early Chicago jazz to bluegrass to boogie. Each song is given a unique character and personality. Curiously, although six lines of type on the jacket give credit to everybody including the caterer, no arranger is noted. I assume the arrangements are by Goodman; whoever is responsible deserves mention.

The high points of the recording, to me, are Mike Smith's song "Spoon River" and Goodman's own "Lookin' for Trouble," which has chord changes and mood reminiscent of "House of the Rising Sun." There's a just-for-fun revival of "Mama

Don't Allow It," but we're going to play that music anyhow—anyone who can't have fun with that tune probably wouldn't have fun at Disneyland. "Door Number Three" is a spoofy encounter with Monty Hall and TV's *Let's Make a Deal*.

Goodman's poetic vision falls short of that of some contemporary writers—say, Paul Simon or Paul Williams—and reaches an absolute nadir in "Moby Book," a sort of country-boogie synopsis of *Moby-Dick*. "Lookin' for Trouble" is so good, though, that it just about balances out.

All things considered, this is a pretty interesting album. I'd recommend it. J.G.

FIFTH DIMENSION: Earthbound. Fifth Dimension, vocals; orchestral accompaniment. *Earthbound; Don't Stop for Nothing; I've Got a Feeling*; seven more. [Jimmy Webb, prod.] ABC ABCD 897, \$6.98. Tape: ●● H 5022-897, \$7.95; ● H 8022-897, \$7.95.

For its first ABC album, this fabled vocal group has been reunited with Jimmy Webb, the composer/arranger/producer who, during the mid-Sixties, gave it the biggest hits of its career.

Webb has spared nothing to revitalize the Fifth Dimension's overly familiar sound. He has also attempted to re-create the lush effects of its earlier Webb successes. You can't fault him for trying. Singing not only new Webb compositions, but songs by Lennon-McCartney and Jagger-Richard, the group valiantly contends with spacey, complex arrangements, pretentious studio effects, and other desperate gimmicks.

Through it all, there are plenty of attractive moments. But the Fifth Dimension sound, even more than Webb's overproduction, bogs the record down. These are fine singers, but they have never been and undoubtedly never will be able to color their voices with the honest grittiness that marks the work of genuinely soulful performers.

"Earthbound" is a skillful attempt to recapture the past. As pleasant as it is, it's still nothing more than an echo of that past. H.E.

STEPHEN STILLS: Stills. Stephen Stills, keyboards, bass, guitars, and vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Turn Back the Pages; My Angel; Just as Bad*; nine more. [Stephen Stills, Bill Halverson, Ron Albert, and Howie Albert, prod.] COLUMBIA PC 33575, \$6.98. Tape: ●● PCT 33575, \$7.98; ● PCA 33575, \$7.98.

This album, predictably, is of the sort known in the trade as SOS. (Propriety and the postal regulations prevent our spelling out *all* of that acronym; suffice to say that the first two letters stand for "same old.") What Stills has given us in "Stills" is precisely the same bland, boring, inconsequential, and nondescript folk-rock that 99% of the folk-rock musicians have been dishing out for years.

The reason is simple: Most recording contracts require that an artist produce albums at fixed intervals, typically every six months. Can you imagine Truman Capote being required to turn out a new novel ev-

ery six months? Perhaps it hasn't occurred to anyone in the recording industry that the logical way to make a record is to wait till a performer has something to record.

Of course the reason that doesn't occur to recording executives is the number of people willing and eager to buy anything the current crop of infrequently inspired louts put out. Therefore every six months, like clockwork, out pops a recording that may be played in its entirety at high volume without attracting the slightest attention. Sure enough, here's "Stills." M.J.

Theater and Film

*** JOHN DANKWORTH: Movies 'n' Me.** John Dankworth and His Orchestra. *Modesty Blaise; Darling; Morgan; Return from the Ashes; The Servant*; six more [John Dankworth, prod.] RCA LPI 1-5092, \$6.98.

This is British-born composer/conductor/arranger/alto saxophonist John Dankworth's first American "solo" album (his multiple talents have, however, been put to use in LPs featuring his wife, Cleo Laine), and it is built mainly around themes he has written for some outstanding and less-than-outstanding British motion pictures. In addition to the five film themes, he and his excellent orchestra perform four apparently nonfilm numbers ("East St. Louis Boogaloo," "Round Table Round," "Herbie Walks Again," and "Long John") and excerpts from the scores for two BBC TV series, *Look Stranger* and *Bird's Eye View*. (Dankworth, by the way, composed the original theme for the popular *Avengers* series, later replaced by the much better-known one by Laurie Johnson.)

It has been a while since I've seen any of the movies involved here, but I have the impression that the orchestrations have been beefed up a bit from the originals. Perhaps it's just that more can be heard on this beautifully recorded disc. At any rate, all of the cuts have an "arranger" sound, falling somewhere between Henry Mancini and Maynard Ferguson, although the film-music excerpts do much better justice to Dankworth the composer than the other pieces, which have an aura of sameness about them.

The wacky, zig zag *Morgan!* theme is a particular delight (the sax plus muted trumpet unison, also heard in the "Herbie Walks Again" and "Long John" cuts, creates an intriguingly novel effect), while the more dissonant *Return from the Ashes* evokes the greatest mood. The "All Gone" theme from *The Servant* (written in collaboration with the scriptwriter, playwright Harold Pinter) has that bleak British-blues quality that pervades the black-and-white atmosphere of many English films from the late Fifties and the Sixties.

All the selections are played and conducted with such marvelous life and polish that, with the help of the beautifully

"present" sound quality, even the less original pieces are a joy to listen to. R.S.B.

THE GREAT WALDO PEPPER. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Henry Mancini. [Sonny Burke, prod.] MCA 2085, \$6.98. Tape: • T 2085, \$7.98.

THE RETURN OF THE PINK PANTHER. Original film soundtrack recording. Composed and conducted by Henry Mancini. [Joe Reisman, prod.] RCA ABL 1-0968, \$6.98. Tape: •• ABK 1-0968, \$7.95; •• ABS 1-0968, \$7.95.

The score for *The Great Waldo Pepper* is great pastiche music—exactly what you would expect for another George Roy Hill excursion into nostalgic Americana. Henry Mancini takes many of the classic American musical entertainment genres—the rousing march, the vaudeville waltz, the Hollywood revue overture, the silent-film accompaniment, the rag—and reworks them as if he had had a hand in originating them. None of it sounds the slightest bit like vintage Mancini, but the disc is worth having for its fun value. (There are also two cuts of Victor Herbert's "When You're Away.") It's a pity, however, that MCA couldn't have recorded the marches with more oomph and less pierce.

The Return of the Pink Panther brings back one of the composer's all-time best, super-suave themes. (The original *Pink Panther* score is reportedly one of Mancini's personal favorites.) It also includes "The Greatest Gift," a captivating, rather dreamy tune with some silly lyrics—fortunately, barely heard in the film—by Hal David, plus a tingling suspense-action sequence, "Return of the Pink Panther," Parts I and II, characterized by Mancini's skillful use of the bass flute. On this disc, too, there is a fair amount of pastiche music—Latin dance band, electronic pop (with some horrible electric guitar playing), and belly dance. But there are enough new Mancini sounds to entice even the owners of the first *Pink Panther* album (RCA LSP 2795).

If only there had been a complete LP of *A Shot in the Dark*, by far the best of the three Blake Edwards/Peter Sellers Inspector Clouseau films. (The ironically creepy title theme can be heard on the second "Best of Henry Mancini" album, LSP 3557.) R.S.B.

*** A CHORUS LINE.** Original Broadway cast recording. Music by Marvin Hamlisch; lyrics by Edward Kleban. Don Pip-pin, cond. [Goddard Lieberson, prod.] Columbia PS 33581, \$7.98. Tape: •• ST 33581, \$7.98; • SA 33581, \$7.98.

A Chorus Line is an old story, but one that bears retelling—and in this case it is told exceedingly well. It is the making, not so much of a star, but of the average actor/dancer/singer who can be seen dragging a portfolio from one audition to another and reading *Backstage* in cities all over the world. As produced for record by Goddard Lieberson, *A Chorus Line* is brilliant entertainment—funny, exciting, and moving. It makes one want to don tights and slippers and dance along.

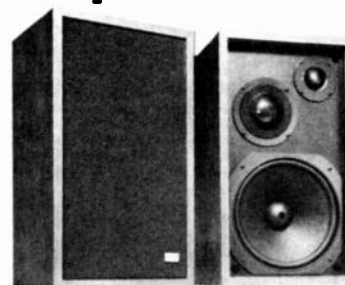
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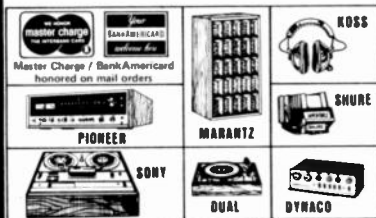
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Critics' Choice

The best pop records reviewed in recent months

- JOAN BAEZ:** Diamonds and Rust. A&M SP 4527. August.
BLOOD, SWEAT, & TEARS: New City. CoL. PC 33484. Sept.
CHICK COREA: Inner Space. At. SD 2-305. Oct.
EAGLES: One of These Nights. ASY. 7E 1039. Oct.
COLEMAN HAWKINS: Sirius. PABLO 2310 707. In Concert. PHOENIX 8. August.
EARL HINES AND HIS ORCHESTRA: The Father Jumps. RCA BLUE. AXM 2-5508. Oct.
CHUCK MANGIONE: Chase the Clouds Away. A&M SP 4518. August.
THE NUN'S STORY. STA. SRQ 4022. Sept.
BUD POWELL: Bud in Paris. XAN. 102. Sept.
JOHN STEWART: Wingless Angels. RCA APL 1-0816. August.

I am not normally partial to show tunes. Over the years, I have been asked to dream too many impossible dreams and climb too many mountains. But this musical is different; it never stops moving, never bogs down in excessive seriousness. Marvin Hamlisch must be commended for composing music of widely varying stripes while maintaining both the theme and the pace. Edward Kleban's lyrics are the highlights of the recording. He describes the making of a chorus-line person with great insight and greater wit.

The best moment is "Nothing"—sung perfectly by Priscilla Lopez—a devastatingly funny portrait of a student actress who proves unable to "feel" herself as a bobsled, a table, or a sports car. Another gem, sung by Pamela Blair, is "Dance, Ten, Looks, Three," which details a dancer's improving her chances at auditions via silicone. The show has several songs of the sort usually called "show-stoppers." Best of these are "Hello Twelve, Hello Thirteen, Hello Love," about adolescence; and "One," which serves as the finale. Both are masterpieces.

A Chorus Line naturally contains a lot of choral singing. It is also orchestrated (by Bill Byers, Hershy Kay, and Jonathan Tunick) in a rather exuberant manner, and at times can get a bit clamorous. The only negative aspect of the clamor is that the music probably won't sound very good on a cheap playback system—a problem, one assumes, not likely to beset HIGH FIDELITY readers. Even if you can't see the show, don't miss the album. M.I.

ROLLERBALL. Film soundtrack recording. Music by Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, Bach, Albinoni/Giazotto, Previn; London Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. UNITED ARTISTS LA 470G, \$6.98. Tape: EA 470H, \$7.98.

In this disc's favor it can be said that the source music it contains has been perfectly chosen for and used in Norman Jewison's *Rollerball*. This music (not identified, ex-

cept for the Albinoni, in the film's title credits) includes excerpts from the third and fourth movements of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony and from the first movement of the Eighth—less well played but, alas, somewhat better reproduced than on Previn's complete recordings of these works for Angel; the eternal, but always lovely, Albinoni Adagio for organ and strings; the Toccata from Bach's famous Toccata and Fugue in D minor, performed by organist Simon Preston; and the waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* ballet.

In addition, Previn has composed two TV-electronic-pop cuts that suit the goings-on in the movie but offer little interest separated from them. And why is the Previn contribution, essentially one piece in the film's "Executive Party" sequence, divided into two numbers, one on each side of the disc?

I must say I see little point in albums such as this, in spite of the quality of the performances and the recorded sound. Those who like the "classical" music from it will no doubt want to have complete performances instead of these frustrating truncations.

There may be some value here for those who want to relive the film via its music. But then United Artists has recorded more than Jewison actually uses and the music is not offered in identical sequence. And *Rollerball* fans will probably regret the exclusion of some brief, Messiaen-ish organ passages and a "Corporation Hymn" (now there's an ominous title!) for organ used on the soundtrack and probably composed by Previn. R.S.B.



DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA (Mercer Ellington, dir.): Continuum. Cootie Williams, James "Buddy" Bolden,

Money Johnson, Barry Lee Hall, Calvin Ladner, and Willie Singleton, trumpets; Chuck Connors, Vince Prudente, and Art Baron, trombones; Harold Minerve, Maurice Simon, and James Spaulding, alto saxophones; Ricky Ford, Harold Ashby, Bill Easley, and Anatole Gerasimov, tenor saxophones; Harry Carney, Joe Temperley, and Percy Marion, baritone saxophones; Lloyd Mayers, piano; Edward K. Ellington II, guitar; J. J. Wiggins and Larry Ridley, basses; Rocky White and Freddie Waits, drums. *Black and Tan Fantasy; Drop Me Off in Harlem; All Too Soon*; eight more. FANTASY F 9481, \$6.98.

This is the Ellington band in transition. Two pieces were recorded within two months of Duke's death on May 24, 1974, while Harry Carney was still alive. One ("Happy-Go-Lucky Local") was done in May 1975. The rest were made in January 1975, when the band was just beginning to shake down under the direction of Mercer Ellington.

A new balance of personalities can be heard emerging. Cootie Williams, last of the old Ellingtonians, is going beyond the one or two specialties he played during the Duke's last years, carrying a slow, pulsing version of "Black and Tan Fantasy" and taking over Johnny Hodges' old feature, "Jeep's Blues." Another Hodges piece, "Warm Valley," has been picked up by Harold Minerve, who manages to play it on Hodges' instrument (alto saxophone) with a silken tone that equals Hodges', but without really sounding like Hodges at all. Art Baron is bringing the spirit of Tricky Sam Nanton back into the band with his plunger mute trombone on "Blue Serge" and "Ko-Ko." The performance of the latter does not have the crisp, full attack of the original version, but Mercer Ellington's "Blue Serge" is already one of the gems of this largely new band. The most touching cut in the set is "Drop Me Off in Harlem," Carney's last recording, a solo piece that shows him at the full flow of his remarkable powers on baritone saxophone right up until the end.

Essentially, this record is a progress report in which some of the older Ellington men are holding the fort while newcomers such as Ricky Ford, James Bolden, Lloyd Mayers, and J. J. Wiggins find their places.

J.S.W.

*** SABBY LEWIS ORCHESTRA:** Boston Bounce. Eugene Caine and Freddie Webster, trumpets; Maceo Bryant, trumpet and trombone; Jimmy Tyler, alto saxophone; Paul Gonsalves, Dan Turner, Big Nick Nicholas, and Jerry Heffron, tenor saxophones; Ray Perry, violin; Sabby Lewis, piano; Al Morgan, bass; Eddie Feggans and Joe Booker, drums. *Bottoms Up; Minor Mania; Hangover*; eight more. PHOENIX 9, \$5.98 (mono) [recorded 1944-47].

Sabby Lewis' band is one of a number of excellent jazz groups that were virtually ignored by the recording companies in the '20s, '30s, and '40s primarily because they were not handy to the recording studios. The territory bands of the Southwest and Midwest are prime examples.

The Lewis band was also a territory

band, centered in Boston, where it played at the Savoy Cafe for several years during the early '40s. As a rule, it was a swinging eight-piece group that, on six selections on this disc recorded in 1946, included Paul Gonsalves on tenor saxophone and Al Morgan on bass. A thirteen-piece band that Lewis took into the Zanzibar in New York in 1944 features Freddie Webster, the influential early bop trumpeter.

But the most fascinating performances in this collection are three extended pieces that make up the second side, played by a six-man group in 1944. The main point of interest is Ray Perry, an extraordinary jazz violinist who is rarely, if ever, mentioned among the major jazz figures on that instrument, although on the basis of these recordings he certainly deserves to be. Until now, he has been known only through his work (on both clarinet and violin) with Lionel Hampton's band in 1941. Perry is a dazzling fiddler, playing in a clean, driving style on "Undecided," swinging easily on "Sweet Georgia Brown," and revealing a rich tone and a secure, moving ballad style on "I Surrender, Dear." The session is very relaxed and brings out the best playing that Sabby Lewis does on the entire disc, along with a strong tenor saxophone solo by Jerry Heffron on "Surrender."

The first side includes six songs recorded in 1946 and 1947 in which Lewis' eight-piece group works in the light, swinging Kansas City groove that Count Basie popularized. It has good muted trumpet work by Eugene Caine, bubbling alto sax solos by Jimmy Tyler (and one tenor solo by him that starts as pure Herschel Evans and then deteriorates into Illinois Jacquet), and an immediately recognizable appearance by Gonsalves on "Edna." The two air shots by the thirteen-piece Zanzibar band are fuzzy, but Webster's trumpet comes through with reasonable clarity.

J.S.W.

*** ORIGINAL SALTY DOGS:** Rhythm Kings . . . On the Right Track. Lew Green Jr., cornet; Tom Bartlett, trombone; Kim Cusack, clarinet; John Cooper, piano; Jack Kuncel, banjo; Mike Walbridge, tuba; Wayne Jones, drums. *Chelsea on Down; Georgia Swing; Brown Bottom Bess*; seven more. GHB 62, \$5.98.

Over the years—ten years, according to Mike Montgomery's liner notes—the Original Salty Dogs, a Chicago-based group, has turned out a series of records that have consistently marked it as one of the best territorial jazz bands in the country. Despite some changes in personnel, that standard is maintained in this set, and if anything improved upon.

Three musicians who have been with the band all through its recording career are still playing their key roles. Lew Green Jr. is a magnificent lead cornet with a bright, knifelike tone that cuts right through to the essence of the material (which comes entirely from the 1920s except for one relatively new piece by Robin Wetterau, a pianist who once played most attractively with the Red Onion Jazz Band). Muted or open, he is a strong solo voice, and he leads the full band through some gloriously brassy ensembles. The other two veterans are

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Mike Walbridge, the tuba player, and Wayne Jones, the drummer, who provide a solid, surefooted rhythm foundation.

In addition, this set features two exceptional soloists along with Green. John Cooper is a pianist with a bright, ragging style that adds flickers of color to the ensembles and a solo style that is normally bright and tripping but that takes on appropriately Beiderbeckean qualities on "Rhythm King." Trombonist Tom Bartlett is in the burry, lusty, shout tradition of Turk Murphy.

The band plays with a great feeling for style—as Cooper does on "Rhythm King" and as Green does in capturing on his cornet Bessie Smith's tone and phrasing on "Nobody's Blues but Mine." But at the same time it is loose, comfortable, and playing on its own terms rather than someone else's. Which makes it all the more surprising when it gets a little far afield in Ellington's "Black and Tan Fantasy" and has difficulty in making its terms relate to the music. But "Georgia Swing," "Santa Claus Blues," and "Jazzin' Babies Blues" are right down the Salty Dogs' alley, and it has turned King Oliver's old "Camp Meeting Blues" into a masterpiece that is filled with brilliant solo and ensemble colors. J.S.W.



JACKIE PARIS AND ANNE MARIE MOSS:

Live at the Maisonette. Jackie Paris and Anne Marie Moss, vocals; instrumental accompaniment. *Thou Swell*; *Jumpin' at the Woodside*; *Happy*; eight more. DIFFERENT DRUMMER 1004, \$6.98.

Initially, the team of Jackie Paris and Anne Marie Moss might seem to be in the Jackie and Roy groove—two voices closely harmonized zipping through jazz-phrased lyrics and bursting into virtuoso scat from time to time. But partly because Moss has a much bigger, stronger voice than Jackie Cain, this duo's arrangements (most of which are the work of Moss) are more complex and, at the same time, are backed by a rhythmic drive so strong that it adds a tremendous energizing factor to the performances.

Supported by an excellent trio led by Mike Abene in live performances from the Maisonette in New York, Paris and Moss do a marvelous job of invigorating such tunes as "My Shining Hour" (a dreadful prospect under most circumstances) and "Thou Swell" (a fine song now seen in a different and interesting light). They also make unusual, intertwined medleys of pairs of pop songs that point up the imagination that Moss puts into her arrangements. She is also a fine, raunchy soloist on "Bright Lights," but not even as resourceful a singer as she is can breathe life into Michel Legrand's dismal "Happy."

There is a lot of justifiable enthusiasm going on in back of their performances, but the spoken material, primarily introductions by Paris that tell the record listener nothing, should have been cut. J.S.W.



JOE VENUTI: Blue Four. Joe Venuti,

violin; Zoot Sims and Spencer Clark, saxophones; Dick Hyman and Dill Jones, pianos; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Cliff Leeman, drums. *Blue Too*; *Dinah*;

I'll Never Be the Same; nine more. CHIAROS-CURO 134, \$6.98.

The indefatigable Joe Venuti is still at it—soaring soulfully on his violin, slashing out irresistibly swinging figures, and finding a never-ending supply of new ways to get into and out of a tune or a run.

Here with a fascinating mixture of contemporary musicians (plus the veteran saxophonist Spencer Clark), Venuti re-explores several bits of terrain that he has been over before. With the exemplary Bucky Pizzarelli, he finds new joys in the violin-guitar duets he was doing with Eddie Lang fifty years ago, although scarcely as much joy as Bucky expresses all through the disc as he strums out chorded solos and gives the various groupings bright, driving rhythmic support. Clark, on bass saxophone, brings back the spirit of groups in which Venuti once played with the great Adrian Rollini. Zoot Sims adds his timelessly contemporary sound to several numbers, and Dill Jones erupts on "Diga Diga Doo" with an explosion of rolling piano figures. Dick Hyman briefly turns himself into Fats Waller on "I Got Rhythm" just before Venuti and Milt Hinton get into a fiddle and slap-bass duet.

This is a real Christmas pie, with new and different goodies emerging from each succeeding groove. J.S.W.

BLUE NOTE REISSUE SERIES. For a feature review, see page 92.



MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: The Last

Concert. John Lewis, piano; Milt Jackson, vibes; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums. *The Cylinder*; *Blues in A minor*; *Round Midnight*; eleven more. ATLANTIC SD 2-909, \$13.96 (two discs).

This may or may not really prove to be the Modern Jazz Quartet's last concert—a "last concert" in Australia in the summer of 1974 preceded this one in New York last November. But the performances are not likely to be improved upon if the quartet ever should get together again. One has to agree with John Lewis' appraisal that these are the MJQ's best performances of the fourteen pieces that make up the album. Not only were the musicians in superb form at this concert, but the occasion seemed to stimulate them to give each selection just a bit more than they had before. Like everything the group did throughout its career, it went out with class.

Beyond the performances, the recording and mixing are superb. A credit line notes that "new acoustic transducer pickups used on bass and piano" were designed by Les Paul. Just what the pickups achieved is made brilliantly clear in a long passage by Lewis and Percy Heath on "Summertime," adding immeasurably to the effect.

The program is, fittingly, a brief, over-all summary of the quartet's career from its origins in Dizzy Gillespie's orchestra (as represented by "Night in Tunisia") and its earliest recordings ("Bags' Groove" and "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise") through such notable Lewis compositions as "One Never Knows," "The Golden Striker,"



Carmen McRae—raising the art of jazz singing to its zenith.

"Skating in Central Park," and "Django." The blend and balance that these four men found were unique in jazz; to hear these recordings is to sense that nineteen years of inventive experience have been distilled on these four sides. J.S.W.

*** CARMEN McRAE:** *I Am Music.* Carmen McRae, vocals; vocal and instrumental accompaniment; Roger Kellaway, Dave Grusin, and Byron Olson, arr. and cond. *A Letter for Anna Lee; Trouble with Hello is Goodbye; Like a Lover; I Never Lied to You; I Am Music;* five more. [Roger Kellaway, prod.] BLUE NOTE LA 462G, \$6.98

As far as I'm concerned, it's nolo contendere for most other singers when Carmen McRae sings. She is the heavyweight champ. When the material is of a caliber equal to her ability, she raises the art of jazz singing to its zenith.

Her first album for Blue Note is a collection of songs lovingly arranged by men who obviously respect and admire her. She responds by giving some outstanding performances that, it might be argued, are not strictly jazz because of the presence of a large string section and background voices. But that's really nit-picking.

McRae combines her astonishing skills with an extraordinary emotional recall. She knows unerringly just the amount of liberty to take with a melody line. She'll caress a tender lyric with enormous warmth or flash-freeze a victim with a bolt of icy hauteur. And there's always that supreme intelligence with which she illumines every nuance of a song. She sings with maturity and authority, with unbridled passion and artistic restraint.

My favorites are "A Letter for Anna Lee," "Trouble with Hello Is Goodbye," and "Like a Lover." Which is not to say these are the "best" tracks, but those that especially turned me on. If you're onto Carmen, this will be a valued addition to your McRae collection. J.G.

RUBY BRAFF-GEORGE BARNES QUARTET: *Live at the New School.* Ruby Braff, cornet; George Barnes and Wayne Wright, guitars; Michael Moore, bass. *I'm a Lucky Guy; Struttin' with Some Barbecue; Sugar;* seven more. CHIAROSCURO 126, \$6.98.

RUBY BRAFF-GEORGE BARNES QUARTET: Salutes Rodgers and Hart. Performers as above. *Mountain Greenery; Isn't It Romantic; Blue Room;* seven more. CONCORD JAZZ 7, \$5.95.

RUBY BRAFF-GEORGE BARNES QUARTET: To Fred Astaire, with Love. Performers as above. *Cheek to Cheek; They All Laughed; Easter Parade;* seven more. RCA APL 1-1008, \$6.98.

This sudden rush of discs by the Ruby Braff-George Barnes Quartet actually traces the group's work over almost a year's time—from the spring of 1974, when the Chiaroscuro record was made at a performance at the New School in New York, to last winter, when the RCA studio set was recorded. (The Concord disc too is studio-recorded.)

Following the records chronologically, we find that Braff and Barnes have settled into a show-tune groove. Tight, polished, rhythmic interpretations of Rodgers and Hart, Gershwin, and Berlin have become their specialty, although the Berlin and Gershwin songs on the Fred Astaire album are a bit looser than the Rodgers and Hart performances on Concord. Perhaps, having found a métier, they are still evaluating and developing it. But in the process they are losing something, as the 1974 New School set shows, with its repertory from a variety of sources, most of them more jazz-related than the Broadway composers.

There is a brighter, livelier attack in the New School collection that stems from the use of such material as "Goose Pimples" (known primarily because of Bix Beiderbecke's recording), "It Don't Mean a Thing," and "Rockin' in Rhythm." And the quartet, not yet locked into the tighter stylized approach of show tunes, could let bassist Mike Moore do some imaginative bowing on "Solitude." On the other hand, the single most brilliant performance on the three discs is probably "Lover" (on the Concord), with Braff's restrained, lyrical introductory verse and the fascinating change of rhythmic emphasis in the chorus. There is nothing that comes close to this in the Astaire album, which is, surprisingly, the least imaginative of the three—although this may simply be an indication that working a relatively narrow range of sound and material is becoming increasingly difficult for Braff and Barnes. J.S.W.

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THE TUBES. A&M SP 4534, \$6.98. Tape: ●● CS 4534, \$7.98; ●● 8T 4534, \$7.98.

This offbeat California band is gifted as well as mad. The Tubes just may be the combination of theatricalism and rock music that succeeds where so many others have failed. H.E.

ALBERT BROOKS: A Star Is Bought. ASYLUM 7E 1035, \$6.98.

Brooks has assembled an incredible cast of famous actors, famous musicians, and famous names in a collage that is undoubtedly the most complex and costly comedy album in history. The only problem: It just isn't that funny. Stan Freberg, where are you when we need you? J.G.

JOSE FELICIANO: Just Wanna Rock 'n' Roll. RCA APL 1-1005, \$6.98. Tape: ●● APK 1-1005, \$7.95; ●● APS 1-1005, \$7.95. Feliciano recalls the Fifties. Pluck pluck, wheeze wheeze, ho hum. M.J.

AVERAGE WHITE BAND: Cut the Cake. ATLANTIC SD 18140, \$6.98. Tape: ●● CS 18140, \$7.97; ●● TP 18140, \$7.97.

The self-deprecating name of this band is actually quite accurate. The group has had considerable success lately on Top 40 radio and the pop-music charts. But apart from a fairly nice, tight sound, there's nothing much to distinguish it from anything else currently on the charts. J.G.

CAT STEVENS: Greatest Hits. A&M SP 4519, \$6.98. Tape: ●● CS 4519, \$7.98; ●● 8T 4519, \$7.98.

This disc presents the most popular achievements of a distinguished contemporary tunesmith whose flair for ripe melodies and quirky lyrics is matched by a singing voice that is simultaneously melting and gruff. Here is a superstar who deserves his status. H.E.

HIRTH MARTINEZ: Hirth from Earth. WARNER BROS. BS 2867, \$6.98.

Produced by the Band's Robbie Robertson, this debut disc presents a charming and varied lot of songs, some of which are Latin-flavored, almost all of which are touched by a brand of genial wackiness. Through it all, however, a gentle and mellow feeling pervades. The result: an endearing listening experience. H.E.

Perils of the reel phoenix. The Ampex Music Division's decision to phase out by May 1976 its recorded-tape production/distribution activities is of course extremely bad news for open-reel collectors in particular. To be sure, there have been ominous fore-warnings: a long-stiffening difficulty of obtaining Ampex releases of any kind for review, last year's attempt to abandon the inclusion of librettos in opera reel sets, the dropping of Deutsche Grammophon and Archiv reels from the Ampex catalogue, and disconcerting lapses in the maintenance of a once admirably high level of technical quality control—all clear signals of a growing disinterest in the taped-music business. And it is just because the Music Division's personnel and policies have changed so radically from those that pioneered in four-track open-reel development and promotion back in 1959 that its departure from today's home-listeners' world is by no means the fatal loss it might have been only a few years ago.

In any case, predictions of the impending death of the open-reel recorded-tape format have so often proved to be so greatly exaggerated that its aficionados have come to consider it a kind of phoenix—the fabulous bird that (according to Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase & Fable*) “is said to live a certain number of years, at the close of which it makes a nest of spices, sings a melodious dirge, flaps its wings to set fire to the pile, burns itself to ashes, and comes forth with new life.”

It is not yet evident how open-reel tape's new life will involve Ampex's major competitor, Stereotape/Magtec, or one of the two major classical labels Ampex has been representing lately, Philips. But the former company, with an already substantial catalogue of quadriphonic as well as stereo reels, has a unique opportunity to expand its markets, and Philips' fans will pray hard that it will follow London's announced plans to take over the distribution and promotion of its own tape releases in all formats.

For open reels in particular the significant role already being played by the specialist mail-order firm of Barclay-Crocker is sure to grow in importance not only as a dealer, but before long also as a processor. Certainly no open-reel connoisseur can afford to miss this enterprising firm's bi-monthly supplements to its comprehensive Catalogue No. 2, 1975, devoted to quadriphonic and stereo, classical and popular, open-reel recorded tapes exclusively. (The sub-

by R. D. Darrell

The Tape Deck

scription price for catalogue and supplements is \$1.00 to Barclay-Crocker, 11 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10004.)

The fantastic rise in sales and popularity of cartridge and cassette tape formats and the even more fantastic progress in musicassette technology and repertory have long overshadowed the far slower growth of open reels. Yet, although they're not comparably commercial money-makers, they still command a substantial market of loyal supporters. These have been and continue to be disdained by entrepreneurs more intent on making a quick buck than on developing the incalculable potentials of an audience insistent on the best in both music and sonic quality. But they—like the phoenix—can't be killed off!

Bach boxed-in, in style. The kind of imaginative promotion open-reel tapes need so badly is exemplified by such recent musicassette achievements as Advent's deluxe series begun just a year ago and by Deutsche Grammophon's current Prestige Box releases. Among the latter I turn from last month's operas to an imposing batch of Bachian choral and instrumental masterpieces. I particularly welcome the long desperately needed first taping in any format of the St. John Passion in the both musically and technically satisfying 1965 Karl Richter version with soloists Häfliger, Prey, Lear, Töpfer, and Engen, and the Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra: DG/Archiv 3376 002, three Dolby-B cassettes, \$23.94 (trilingual texts included).

I'm much less happy with two major Karajan representations (DG 3371 012 and 3371 007, \$23.94 each), respectively the first tape edition of his 1974 Mass in B minor and the first cassette edition of his 1973 *St. Matthew Passion*. Here the soloists are generally admirable, as are the tonal qualities of the Berlin Philharmonic. But the Vienna Singverein Chorus tends to be mush-mouthed, especially in the Mass, and both richly expansive recordings capture orchestral details

much more vividly than those of the choral writing. Yet such flaws are merely minor aspects of the conductor's over-all excessively romanticized, sanctimoniously hushed, old-fashioned readings.

Listeners with any authentic Bachian instincts will prefer the Mass in its infinitely more vital reading, handicapped only slightly by vocally less gifted soloists, by Corboz for the Musical Heritage Society, reviewed here last August. And for the *St. Matthew Passion* the preferred choice may safely be either the 1965 Münchinger/London reel version or the even longer esteemed 1959 Richter version with Seefried, Töpfer, Häfliger, Fischer-Dieskau, and the Munich Bach Choir and Orchestra, which now appears on tape for the first time as DG/Archiv 3376 001, three Dolby-B cassettes, \$23.94 (with trilingual texts).

Richter and his Munich orchestra are also represented by admirable editions of Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* (1968) and four orchestral suites (1960). The former are released by themselves as DG/Archiv 3375 001, two Dolby-B cassettes, \$15.96. The latter, taped earlier in non-Dolby cassettes, now are combined with the *Brandenburgs* in DG/Archiv 3376 003, three Dolby-B cassettes, \$23.94. I'm most pleasantly surprised to hear how well all these straightforward, zestful performances and ungimmicked sonics stand up.

Graceful young harpist discovery. Once a pair of novel harp concertos, spaced a century and a half apart in music history, had been well-nigh definitively recorded by the instrument's Magister-Wizard Nicanor Zabaleta (in 1960 for Deutsche Grammophon), any competitive attempt would seem to be doomed in advance. But a new name to me, Mlle. Catherine Michel, accompanied by the National Opera Orchestra of Monte Carlo under Antonio de Almeida, wisely chooses an entirely different approach—one every bit as disarmingly delicate and piquantly graceful as the talented youngster appears in her cover photograph (Philips 7300 367, Dolby-B cassette, \$7.95).

This irresistibly feminine treatment is particularly effective in the fascinating Rodrigo *Concierto Serenata* of 1954, a work no-less imaginative than its composer's more famous *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar. But it is less well suited to the old-fashioned Boieldieu *Concierto in C* of 1795 or 1800, which for conviction demands the bolder bravura of a Zabaleta. ●

"Marantz is just about the only component manufacturer around that's devoted to system interfacing."

In August, 1974, sound engineers and audiophiles were invited to examine and discuss the new Marantz professional component line featuring the 3800 Preamp, the 510M Power Amp and the 150 Tuner. The following comments were taken from that taped discussion.



The 3800 Preamp

"When you build a phono preamp, you never know what you're going to plug it into. But the Marantz 3800 can interface with the outside world. Whatever amplifier you hang on it won't affect the operation of the preamp one iota. The 3800 will drive any amp on the market — even the super amps"

"Let's say you use three Sony reel-to-reels with the nearest competitive preamp. You'd wipe out the bottom end. Not with the 3800. It'll actually drive a load as low as 1000 ohms at a reasonable level and maintain full frequency response"

"Until now you had to shell out over \$1000 to accomplish that with a preamp. This unit goes for what... \$599.95?"

"Then there's the fact that the 3800 is virtually the quietest preamp going. Not only in specifications, but in perceived noise. Eight-tenths of a microvolt specified"

"Another thing about systems planning — the 3800 has variable frequency turnover tone controls. Designed to complement both speakers and listeners. What that'll let you do is bring up a string bass and leave the viola alone"

"Or if you use the mic feature, like in a live recording, and you're playing your string guitar and you want that nice ring you hear in recordings. You just put the tone controls in the four kiloHertz position and run the treble control up and you've got it"



"It's just one of the most versatile preamps in the world. Not only does it include a full-process Dolby[®] Noise Reduction System, but also the tone controls can be used for tape equalizing"

"Maybe you want to listen to something else while you're making tape copies. You just let one tape recorder talk to the other — one recorder is playing back and one is recording. And you can use the Dolby in that loop. Then you keep yourself entertained by listening to a regular FM or AM station at the same time. And the same preamp is available without Dolby for \$100 less. That's the Marantz 3600"



The 510M Power Amp.

"This is a locomotive when it comes to power. Delivers 256 watts minimum continuous power per channel at 8 ohms with no more than 0.1% total

harmonic distortion and a power band of 20 Hz to 20 kHz."

"The whole package is smaller. Heat dissipation is one reason why. That's where this baby really moves ahead... Marantz has implemented a new method of heat dissipation. It's based on turbulent air flow."

"They call it a staggered finger heat dissipator. It was originally developed for the computer industry where they really have heat problems. What it does is break up the air flow. It's aero-dynamically designed to eliminate stratification and create vortices."

"Efficiency can be up dramatically compared to a convection system. And you do it all in a smaller, lighter package."

"There's one competitive unit that weighs over 140 pounds. The 510M weighs 43."

"It's got gain controls—two of them. Meter range switches with the advantage of not being part of the limiting circuit. And peak/overload indicators that are really sensitive to the fluctuations of line voltage."



The 150 Tuner

"Biggest advantage to the Marantz 150 tuner is the ease of tuning. You can go 60 to 80 kHz of detuning with little change in distortion or separation characteristics. Tuning's less critical because good performance is obtained over a wider segment of the pass band."

"The Model 150, in stereo, performs for almost all conditions with FM distortion under 0.2%. In mono it's around 0.1%. And this is right down to test equipment residuals. You'd have to spend a lot of money for a tuner to match that."

"The 150's 18-pole linear phase I.F. filters give you this excellent performance and long-term stability of alignment. It'll be right-on five years from now without alignment."

"I'd go so far as to say it exceeds the performance of the original Marantz 10B and the 10B was the ultimate tuner in my estimation."

"Gives performance so high in quality that if there's a problem with the signal you tend to question the source, not the tuner."

"Phase lock loop. Of course. Even with multipath and antenna problems shown on the oscilloscope, it sounds cleaner than virtually any tuner around."

"All this is accomplished through the use of the linear phase I.F. filter system—a system composed of three filter blocks of four poles and one block of six poles. Eighteen poles in all."

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