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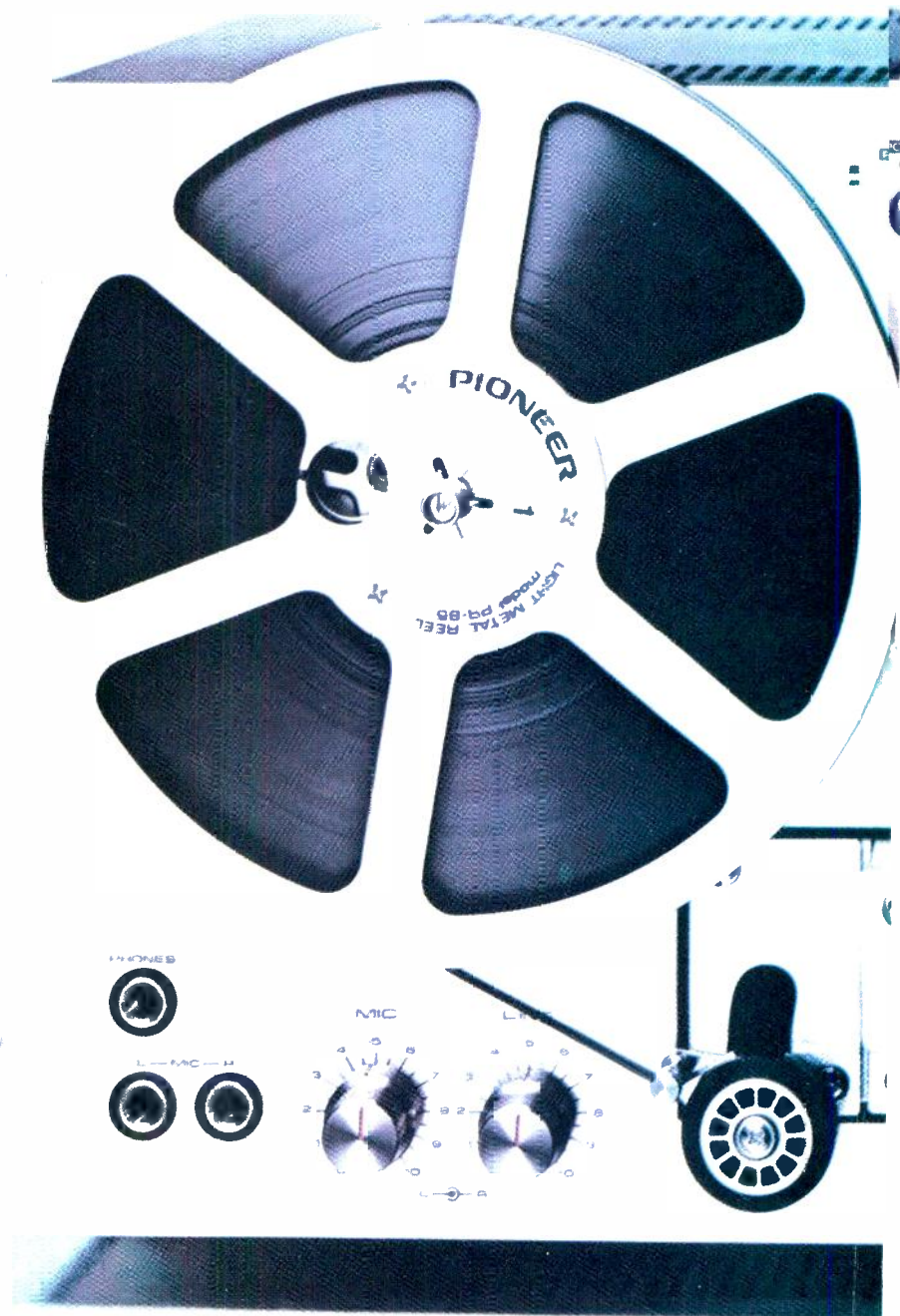
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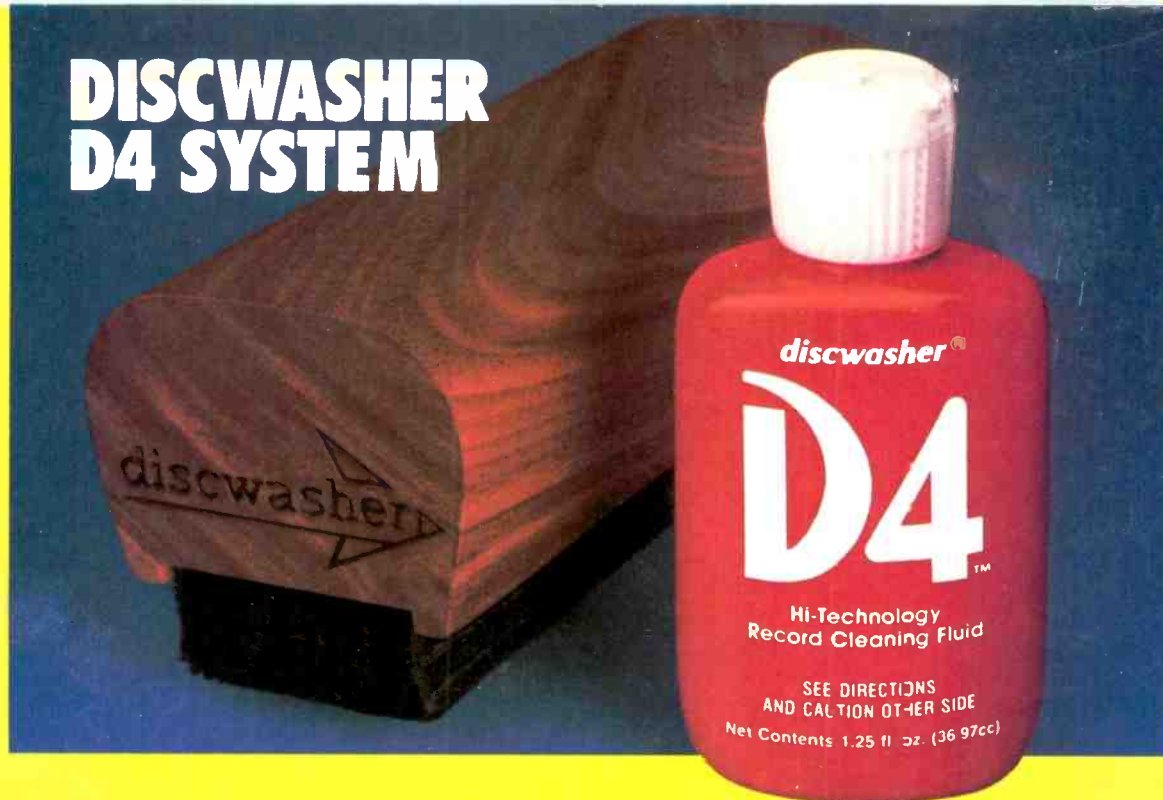
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by Elise Bretton

**Jackson Browne: Deluxe Anthology**  
Warner Bros., 39 songs, \$11.95

Jackson Browne is a prolific writer, usually characterized as an exponent of the laidback, California Sunshine and Grass School of Composition. He certainly is talented, but I find his approach very old-fashioned. He grinds out those verse-chorus-verse-chorus-HOOK-chorus ditties like a virtual one-man sweatshop, but we never really learn how he feels about the world because he's too busy telling us how he feels about himself. You've got to hand it to a guy whose ego is so highly developed that, in a moment of passion, he whispers to his lady, "Sing my songs to me"—and gets away with it.

**Jimmy Buffett: Volcano**  
Warner Bros., 10 songs, \$6.95

Jimmy Buffett went to Montserrat in the West Indies for vacation and took along a camera crew, a rock band, and a few cases of Heinekin. All of this to ease the exquisite pain of creativity, *naturellement*. But he has sold his talent short with "Volcano," opting for laughs and appreciation from his traveling companions. The folio, transcribed from a recent LP, is merely a pale version of something that Harry Belafonte did better way back in 1955. I believe in r&r for our overworked songsmiths, but Buffett is no innocent abroad, and there is no reason why you should subsidize his grand tour.

**Barry Manilow: One Voice**  
Kamikazi and Big 3 Music,  
12 songs, \$7.95

**Barbra Streisand: Wet**  
The Entertainment Co. and Big 3 Music,  
9 songs, \$6.95

Here are two BAPs (Brooklyn American Persons), seemingly quite secure in their plastic towers at the top of the charts. Linked in their opposition to the forces of Punkdom, monarchs Barbra and Barry command garrisons of highly paid

mercenaries to furnish them with material that will protect them from dethronement by such upstarts as Blondie and the Cars. The hired hands have done their best, but the problems in these collections are not their fault.

Both artists have recorded their favorite '40s standards, which are herein encrusted in their own personal gimmickry. Manilow begins and ends *I Don't Want to Walk Without You* with a "da, da, da" section of no possible use to the home or professional musician. The transcription of Streisand's extra choruses of *Come Rain, Come Shine* is likewise unnecessary. The song needs no more than the composer's original 32 bars to make its point.

Indulgent repetition is debilitating to the purchaser and robs the music of its impact. Stretching the Streisand/Summer disco hit *No More Tears (Enough Is Enough)* to eleven pages is more than enough, and Manilow's decision to publish all eight pages of his own arrangement of *Rain* is equally preposterous. Whatever happened to dal segnos and codas? A little less vanity is in order.

**Rod Stewart's Greatest Hits**  
Warner Bros., 10 songs, \$8.95

Surely you remember Rod Stewart, winner of the Goldie Hawn lookalike contest? Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the music store, up pops Stewart with a recap of some of his more strident hits, among them *Maggie May*, *Hot Legs*, and the ultimate in unanswerable questions, *Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?* Responding to all this without offending him is a problem, but then he doesn't seem to care *who* he offends, so I will merely report that nothing new has been added to his MCP mind frame.

Stewart is displayed to great advantage on records and in concerts, where the arch, preening persona and sump-pump larynx distract our attention from the vapidity of the material. However, even he deserves a fair shake from the prootreader, and it's anybody's guess why such an overpriced folio should be marred by so many typographical goofs, such as lost eighth-note beams, omitted duration lines, and mishyphenation. Perhaps the editor is a rabid feminist.



Barry, John Williams, David Shire, Dave Grusin, and Lalo Schifrin—all of whom have been tempered at one time or another in the cauldron of jazz—Williams is always delighted to grab an opportunity to combine *all* his skills, from funk to counterpoint.

This was about as good an assignment as he could have asked for. A jazz group consisting of Phil Woods, Dave Grusin, Grady Tate, and Chuck Domani-co functions as concertino and the London Symphony Orchestra as ripieno, creating a kind of contemporary concerto grosso. (That is not what Williams calls the piece, however, nor does its musical structure justify the description.) The results are mixed, with many of the problems determined by the raw, basic contradictions between composed and improvised music.

The most obvious difficulty lies in the distinction between what the composer provides for the orchestra and what he provides for the jazz group. Williams has many twentieth-century styles at his fingertips, from Gershwin and Ives to Stravinsky to John Williams. Some of those influences work for him, some don't, but in all cases he writes from a rich and complex harmonic basis that is filled with interior movement, disguised tonal centers, and swiftly changing contrapuntal textures. Yet with the jazz ensemble, he suddenly shifts into root-position chords, cycles of fifths, whole-note sustaining backgrounds, and a too-familiar array of jazz-with-strings techniques.

I don't think Williams can be given all the blame. Reed-man Phil Woods does what Phil Woods does, and a composer would have to be dotty to ask him to do anything else. In the Second Movement (*Until the End of Time*), he plays with the kind of warm, dark-toned passion that has made him one of the great jazzmen of his generation. He does so on Williams' simple, quite-predictable harmonic foundation, which is all well and good. The problem is that it has little to do with what is happening in other parts of the "Concerto."

To his credit, Williams sometimes overcomes the problem. The Third Movement is a good example. Woods's fleet runs—tonally simple though they may be—resonate beautifully with the fiery passages in the strings. And, somewhat later, Williams sets drummer Tate loose to im-

provise in and around a passage that includes scored percussion accents and pizzicato strings; the result is breathtaking.

One other point: Its much-vaunted versatility to the contrary, the LSO delivers little more than a workmanlike job. The notes are in all the right places, the crescendos and decrescendos are just fine, the string tone is lush, etc., but the electric tension of an *involved* performance simply isn't there. Just another day at the office, I'm afraid. Williams deserves better.

**Lester Young at Olivia Davis' Patio Lounge**  
*Pablo 2308 219*  
**by John S. Wilson**

This newly released Lester Young set comes as a pleasant surprise. It was recorded in December 1956 in Washington, D.C., a little more than two years before the saxophonist's death. Most of the recordings from this period—in which he suffered a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized for malnutrition and alcoholism—show a talent weighted down. But during this week at Olivia Davis' with the Bill Potts Trio, Young seems far removed from his troubles.

Taped by Potts, his performances are warm, relaxed, and happy, though they lack the immediate command of his early records. Still, after moving into a piece tentatively in the opening chorus, he gradually gets his grip and, by the second chorus, sails off with the kind of imagination and assurance that is generally thought to have completely eluded him by this point.

Perhaps it is the stimulating circumstances that revived him. He is thrown in with three young musicians—Potts on piano, Norman Williams on bass, and Jim Lucht on drums—who idolized him, who were thrilled by the opportunity to play with him, and who had the ability to give him a secure, swinging background within which he could open up his badly battered creative soul. This is an essential session for any Young collector.

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can be credited to coproducer Nick van Maarth, a member of the erstwhile Wha-Koo, which sometimes attempted a similarly grim message from a lush pop/rock vantage point. With Van Maarth's smooth tenor voice to provide harmonic frosting, ballads like *Say Goodbye* lucidly reveal the despair behind Tonio's wisecracks.

Even so, "Amerika" won't be everyone's cup of tea—unless listeners choose to ignore its lyric content altogether. From an ambitious but somewhat oblique "suite" that applies Dadaist notions to rock to the knife-edged wordplay throughout, Tonio K. seems determined to cram an entire thesis into a single LP. Sometimes he stumbles over his own self-indulgence, yet somehow you have to cheer someone so undaunted by commercial prudence and so eager to transmit his own bleak version of the truth.

## ||| JAZZ |||

### **Helen Humes: Let the Good Times Roll**

*Disques Black and Blue, producer  
Classic Jazz CJ 120*

by John S. Wilson

After four years with the Basie band (1938–42) and a successful twenty-five-year solo career, Helen Humes dropped out of sight in the mid-'60s, presumably buried by the onslaught of rock. Her second career is generally thought of as having started in 1975 at Barney Josephson's *Cookery* in New York. (In the 1940s, Josephson owned the *Cafe Society*, where a multitude of stars—Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, Jack Gilford, Zero Mostel, Josh White, among many—made their first impact.)

But Humes was actually in New York six months before she appeared at the *Cookery* and, before that, had been singing in Europe for two years. Classic Jazz has released two albums documenting those earlier years. The first, "Sneakin' Around" (Classic Jazz 110) was recorded in Paris in 1974 and received high critical acclaim when it was issued here last year. This second, "Let the Good Times Roll," is a 1973 French session that shows Humes singing at the top of her form. In fact, there is an openness and exuberance here that has been largely ob-

scured since her success at the *Cookery*.

Side 1 is a brilliant display of Humes's strong vocal prowess in both good-time, uptempo blues and emotionally pitched ballads. Her high, urgent voice is supplemented by Arnett Cobb's grainy, breathy, abruptly punching tenor saxophone, Milt Buckner's joyous organ, and Jay McShann's light Kansas City piano tickling. Side 2 includes *He May Be Your Man* and *A Million Dollar Secret*, both of which she has done too often since 1973, and the by-now commonplace *My Handy Man*. They are a letdown after the first side, which, in itself, is a high point in her recording career.

**Anita O'Day: Live at The City**  
*Larry & Carol Smith & Alan Eichler,  
producers. Emily 10/24/79  
(Emily Records P.O. Box 123, North  
Haven, Conn. 06473)*  
by John S. Wilson

Usually, the more informal the setting, the better Anita O'Day sings. She is more at home in a club than a studio and, at that, comes across better in some clubs than others. For instance, her recent New York appearances at Michael's Pub and Marty's on the East Side were far less successful than her gig at the old Half Note in lower Greenwich Village.

This set was recorded at the City in San Francisco and represents her first "live" session since one in 1958 at the London House in Chicago. Apparently the atmosphere agreed with her. She sounds relaxed—discussing keys and introductions, joking about her glasses, suggesting that she does not know the song she is about to sing—and the aura of informality brings a winning warmth to her performances. In fact, "Live at the City" is one of the most intense records she has ever made. She is very much in the groove, bending the melody lines and the words without losing the lyrics and scattering with finesse. The disc sparkles with O'Day laughter (which has not been recorded enough) and with her surprised, joyful exclamation, "I was reading!" after a beautiful version of *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?* She uses her voice as an instrument on *In a Mellow Tone* by becoming the steady core of a pulsating ensemble and on *Four Brothers* by harmonizing with Norman Simmons' piano on some tricky passages.



Humes—the high, urgent voice



O'Day—the right setting

By the way, Emily Records is named after her toy Yorkshire, who is depicted on the logo in a Nipper pose listening to an old horn Victrola.

**Patrick Williams & the  
London Symphony Orchestra:  
An American Concerto**  
*Don Hahn & Patrick Williams,  
producers. Columbia NJC 36318*  
by Don Heckman

Although he probably isn't overjoyed when one mentions it, Pat Williams may well be best known for the music he composes for television. (The theme for the old *Mary Tyler Moore* show is a good example.) But, like his comrades John



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Continued from page 100

mentum of Whitfield's late-'60s records with the group. Like such predecessors as *Ball of Confusion* and *Cloud Nine*, *Power* is an angry social treatise set to a simple but riveting melodic vamp. Gordy is listed as cowriter, and it's intriguing to consider his success as architect of a huge, privately owned corporation when listening to the song's cynical indictment of political manipulation. Perhaps more than any song yet released in this election year, *Power* captures the conservative mood of the nation and the potential for fascism released by our endangered self-esteem.

If only the rest of the album sustained that energy. The group retreats to the romantic preoccupations of its earliest hits but isn't given a song or production framework equaling these models. Gordy seems to have focused his attention on the title song and, content he had a hit, turned the rest of the project over to his collaborators. As a result, "Power" isn't nearly as powerful as it could have been.

#### Tonio K.: Amerika (Cars, Guitars, and Teenage Violence)

Nick van Maarth and Tonio K. with Jon Devirian, producers  
Arista AB 4271

by Sam Sutherland

Songwriter, guitarist, and singer Tonio K. is one West Coast musician no one is likely to accuse of being laidback. "Life in the Foodchain," his solo debut, was a brainy twist on heavy-metal hysteria, bellowed more than sung and powered by a frantic pessimism: At the center of his fiery rock arrangements, his lyrics described a sardonic misanthrope more than willing to catalog contemporary human folly. Unlike his punk peers, Tonio K. wasn't content merely to express anger or contempt or to point accusatory fingers. His message argued nothing less than complete hopelessness in a world gone mad.

That he did this while sustaining a black comedic sense made him a critics' darling, yet in retrospect the manic pace and raw finish of those songs made them bearable only in short doses. "Amerika," his second LP and first for Arista, seeks to redress the balance with several gentler songs. Though they are no less dire in their conclusions, they are considerably more seductive musically. Part of this shift

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Continued from page 97  
 chorus and long vamp out revert to a hard-rock, half-time feeling. Throughout the song, David Sancious weaves deliriously dense and interesting synthesizer patterns, and the whole thing ends with a children's choir sweetly singing the chorus.

Most of the songs aren't this complex, but coproducer Eddy Offord (of Yes and Emerson, Lake and Palmer production fame) handles Squier's pared-down Led Zeppelin approach with equal deft. Drummer Bobby Chouinard keeps exceptionally strong grooves going throughout, his drum sound natural and ambient enough to lend a controlled looseness to his and bassist Charlie Watts's rocking pulse.

The catchiest tune here, *Who's Your Boyfriend*, is both cute and hard-rocking. That, as we all know, bodes very well for Squier's future as a successful pop/rocker. Given the genre, "The Tale of the Tape" is an inventive and promising debut album.

**The Temptations: Power**  
*Berry Gordy & Angelo Bond,*  
*producers. Gordy/Motown G8 994M1*  
 by Sam Sutherland

The Temptations' return to Motown, the label that groomed the quintet virtually from its inception and reaped a long string of hits as a result, is underlined by an inescapable sense of déjà vu. Apart from coinciding with the twentieth anniversary for both the group and the company, the Temps' first project under the new Motown deal also signals the return of label founder Berry Gordy to active duty as a producer and songwriter. Gordy's very presence conjures up the image of Motown as a formal musical style, and the proceedings here likewise point up contemporary black music's current swing toward '60s soul traditions after a decade of fusion, funk, and disco.

In their heyday, the Temptations were Motown's most versatile hit-making machine, boasting both a stirring ensemble sound and three distinct lead vocal styles—satiny falsetto, visceral second tenor, and subterranean bass. The quintet's best songs frequently juggled all three to achieve an intricate pop derivation of the call-and-response gospel tradition. Its evolution paralleled Gordy's tran-



Squire—hard-rocking but cute

sition from front-line producer to behind-the-scenes executive. During the company's formative first decade, he assembled so strong a stable of producers and songwriters that his role shift was perhaps inevitable. The Temps benefited from that embarrassment of creative riches, working with Smokey Robinson, Holland-Dozier-Holland, and Norman Whitfield. When Gordy turned his sights toward film and TV, the group continued to draw from his label's production pool.

By 1979, however, only Robinson remained as a sympathetic ally. Judging from the new album, Gordy apparently felt Robinson's smooth, lyrical bent wouldn't provide enough range for the comeback he had in mind: Between the opening vocal hook of the title song and the final downbeat, he and his coproducers (including Angelo Bond, William Weatherspoon, and Teddy Randazzo) attempt a virtual summary of the different phases of the group's Motown career.

*Power* is a promising first step, aimed at recapturing the turbulent mo-

Continued on page 103



### Sinatra: his most ambitious work

By comparison, "The Present" is uneven, mostly because the material is not as sophisticated. (Out of the twenty songs on the first two discs, only four have been previously recorded by Sinatra.) No one could redeem trivia like Neil Diamond's *Song Sung Blue*, and the lyrics to Harrison's *Something* don't live up to the melody. However, Sinatra's hard-Swing version of *Just the Way You Are* works well, his reading of *MacArthur Park* skillfully excises its psychedelic dross, and his rendering of Fred Ebb and John Kander's theme from *New York, New York* is rousingly ballsy.

Jenkins' "Future in Three Tenses" has its moments, notably the sweeping chromatic string bridges between songs. Unfortunately the text is a quaint, toadying paean that takes Sinatra on a space journey to different planets on his way to heaven. Before departing he revisits Hoboken and returns to Las Vegas for a last game of blackjack. It's amazing that he is able to impart any dignity at all to this TV-production number, but he does.

There are dozens of great songs by younger writers that are ideal for Sinatra, but he probably has never heard them. Joni Mitchell's *Sweet Sucker Dance*, Robert Kraft's *Bon Voyage*, Henry Gaffney's *This Is It*, Rupert Holmes's *People That You Never Get to Love*, and Randy Newman's *Lonely at the Top* come to mind. With his powers so remarkably intact, the King still has it in him to take on this kind of solid, new material and perhaps enter his fourth phase. One only wishes that he and Jenkins had used this opportunity to do so. ☺

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**Sinatra's "Trilogy": Past, Present, and Popycock**

by Stephen Holden

**Frank Sinatra: Trilogy**  
*Sonny Burke, producer*  
*Reprise 3FS 2300 (three discs)*

This three-record set caps the third phase of one of popular music's most important recording careers. In the '40s and early '50s on Columbia, Frank Sinatra invented the modern bel canto ballad style that Barry Manilow, Neil Diamond, and others perpetuate. In that Prince Charming phase, no one could touch the sheer beauty or the emotional honesty of his singing. Only Tony Bennett came close.

During the Capitol and early Reprise years, 1953-1965, the Prince evolved into the Swinging Sophisticate—the restless, disillusioned romantic. The Swing revival that produced most of the best American pop in the decade prior to Beatlemania owed much of its impetus to Sinatra the Sophisticate. "September of My Years," his landmark collaboration with Gordon Jenkins in 1965 (which also marked his fiftieth birthday), ushered in phase three: Sinatra the Sage, who ruminated on glory, love, and mortality.

"Trilogy" is easily the most ambitious recording project of Sinatra's whole career, its best moments equaling the achievement of "September of My Years" and "Ol' Blue Eyes Is Back," his mid-Seventies comeback album. Not only does it show that he is still the master of the long legato phrase, but it reveals an even deeper, more intransigent solipsism. Sinatra's voice is in marvelous shape for someone in his midsixties—it may even be stronger than it was ten years ago. His pitch is ninety-five percent sure, and his breath sustains most, if not all, of the difficult phrasing. If his instrument lost its velvety timbre many years ago, it has ac-

quired a dark, metaphysical resonance that is seldom pretty but rings with tragic knowledge. The Sinatra of "Trilogy" is an American king. The voice is cynical, resigned, determined, and above all utterly solitary. The Sage doesn't try to resurrect Prince Charming; instead he looks back on his younger selves with a sharp clarity that does not allow easy nostalgia. This voice has *lived*.

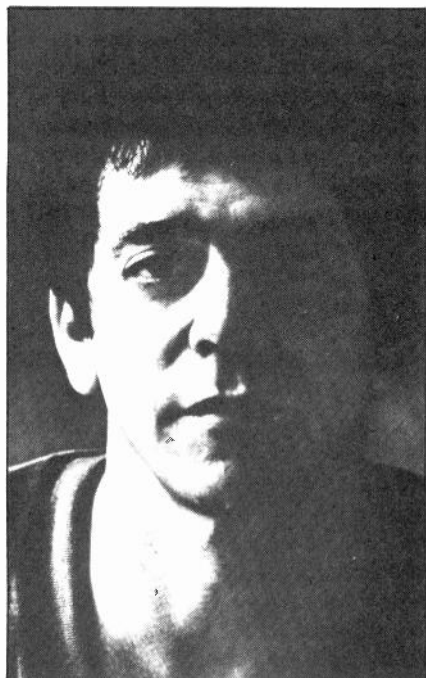
The three discs here represent past, present, and future. Each has a different arranger/conductor. Billy May, who first worked with Sinatra on "Come Fly with Me" in 1957, directs "The Past"—the best of the three. Subtitled "Collectibles of the Early Years," its ten songs predate the rock era. Don Costa, who began collaborating with Sinatra in 1961 ("Sinatra and Strings") captains "The Present—Some Very Good Years," which consists of rock-era standards from George Harrison's *Something* to Billy Joel's *Just the Way You Are*. Jenkins composed, arranged, and conducted the third disc, an original fantasy for voices, orchestra, and chorus entitled "Reflections on the Future in Three Tenses." It's a Hollywood kitsch oratorio, very similar to Jenkins' early-'50s salute to New York, "Manhattan Tower."

The Billy May section alone is worth the price of "Trilogy," its pop-swing arrangements and song selection being consistently first-rate. Highlights of "The Past" are Irving Berlin's *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, Victor Young and Sam M. Lewis' *Street of Dreams*, Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer's *My Shining Hour*, and the Gershwins' *They All Laughed*. Sinatra's voice isn't youthful, but his singing is so controlled, his love of the music so apparent, and his phrasing so right that his interpretations have a noble, leonine defiance. The way he tosses off a phrase like "kings don't mean a thing," from *Street of Dreams*, is one of innumerable demonstrations of his unbreachable philosophic command of his material. *My Shining Hour* becomes more an offhand challenge to posterity than a love song. *Let's Face the Music and Dance* isn't an invitation to romance so much as a calm facing down of mortality. He takes his biggest chance on *They All Laughed*, roaring with a bearish, almost vindictive exuberance, then breaking into harsh laughter at the end. It is the final number on "The Past," and Sinatra uses it to remind us that he's still a winner.





Continued from page 95



Reed—half punk, half comic

**Lou Reed: Growing Up in Public**

Lou Reed & Michael Fonfara,

producers. Arista AL 9522

by Don Shewey

Lou Reed is the master of halfisms. The songs on "Growing Up in Public" are half-joking, half-serious, half-spoken, half-sung, half-finished, and half-raw, but somehow he ties it all together to give the album a tone of both self-mockery and personal bravery.

One of the founding members of the seminal New York rock group the Velvet Underground, Reed has often been called "the godfather of punk" for his musical primitivism and low-life chronicles. But he is also something of a standup comic—a particularly prominent characteristic of his 1978 live album, "Take No Prisoners"—and some of his most affecting material has included earnest, if mawkish remembrances of his relatively normal adolescence (such as *Families* on his last album, "The Bells," and the title cut of "Coney Island Baby").

The punk and the comic intertwine on "Growing Up in Public." In one case, he describes "a weak simpering father" who is cruel to "a harridan mother," who

in turn counsels her children against smiling. In another he naively reflects on heterosexual love. It's unclear just how much of this is autobiographical—though Reed, polymorphously perverse and proud of it, was recently married. Nonetheless, songs such as *How Do You Speak to An Angel*, *My Old Man*, and *Smiles* have the endearing awkwardness of public confession.

There are plenty of flaws to the record. Arrangements are almost nonexistent (the catchy riffs and the interesting raps never seem to coincide), the production is haphazard (the lead guitar is inaudible at times), and a tune like *Teach the Gifted Children* is just too icky for Reed to pull off. But when all his best attributes line up in the same groove—as on *So Alone*, an emotional roller-coaster ride in which he attempts to console a woman jilted by another man—"Growing Up in Public" becomes as powerful and as personal as a rock record can be.

**Billy Squier: The Tale of the Tape**

Billy Squier & Eddy Offord,

producers. Capitol ST 12062

by Crispin Cioe

For mainstream pop/rock to succeed, it must walk a delicate line between the heartfelt and the marketable, with less emphasis on playing than on songs, attitudes, and hooks. Actual styles that have worked have varied greatly—from the Beatles to Elton John to Todd Rundgren—but the key combination is the ability to rock and emerge with a unique profile at the same time.

Billy Squier skirted the edges of pop/rock success as coleader of two talented but ultimately unfocused East Coast bands, the Sidewinders and Piper. On "The Tale of the Tape," his solo debut, he solidifies his influences and weighs in with a few songs that could be hit-single contenders. Though his models are fairly obvious, Squier is an inventive enough melodist and arranger to make his cross-stylizations work. *The Music's All Right* starts with the familiar chiming guitar chord progression from Lou Reed's *Sweet Jane*, then shifts into a strangely affecting choppy verse that's reminiscent of '60s pop groups like the Classics IV. The

Continued on page 100

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# SpinOffs

## New Acts

by Steven X. Rea

**The Elevators: Frontline**  
Earle Mankey, producer  
Arista AB 4270

The Elevators hail from Massachusetts, their modern rock sound geared up with synthesizer-driven rhythms and taut, snapping drums. Sounds like the Cars, right? Well, yes and no. The same lively wit and rock grit pulses through this quintet's debut, the same penchant for offbeat lyrics and quirky vocals. But the Elevators are more than this year's model of the Cars—the title track, *Girlfriend's Girlfriend*, *Stickball Kids*, and *Don't Let Me Die* are tough, inspired outings. Earle Mankey's production is characteristically crashing and clear.

**Amy Holland**  
Michael McDonald &  
Patrick Henderson,  
producers. Capitol ST 12071

Flanked by most of the Doobie Brothers (including coproducer Michael McDonald) and half of Little Feat, Amy Holland should have titled her album "The Doobie Sister." Soulful rock struts and jazzy midtempo tunes groove along amiably, with Holland's willowy vocals leading the way.

**The Kingbees**  
David J. Holman & Rich  
Fitzgerald, producers  
RSORS 1-3075

This L.A. trio plays honed-down '50s-style rock & roll. Singer/guitarist Jamie James does a good Buddy Holly—in

fact, the group tackles Holly's *Ting-a-Ling*, *My Mistake* and the bluesy *Man Made for Love* are the best of the (mostly) original tracks. The Kingbees are economical and to the point, making up in enthusiasm for what they lack in originality.

**Matchbox: Rockabilly Rebel**  
Peter Collins, producer  
Sire SRK 6087

The neo-rockabilly from British quintet Matchbox is annoying from start to finish. All the country-flavored rockin' rhythms are there, all the moves down pat. But vocalist Graham Fenton's English-accented Buddy Holly impersonation is nerve-racking, be it on a Ray Campi song or a clone original. There's nothing wrong with reviving rockabilly, but it should at least transcend mere mimicry.

**The Orchids**  
Kim Fowley, producer  
MCA 3235

Kim Fowley strikes again, this time with another all-girl L.A. band. The Orchids are the '80s' answer to the Runaways (as if one was needed). Modern-sharp, geometrical, bright-colored fashions replace the Runaways' sleazy leather and garter belts; dollops of reggae and pseudo newwave replace their mettlesome heavy metal. Once again, Fowley has created a calculated, crass "package" that is better left in its shrink-wrap.

**Original Mirrors**  
Alan Winstanley, Bill Nelson,  
Ian Broudie & Steve Allen,  
producers. Arista AB 4269

Fronted by former Deaf School vocalist Steve Allen



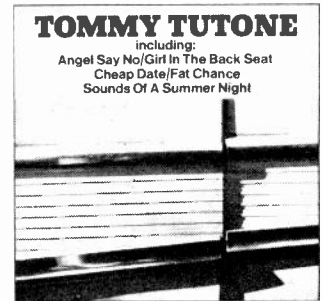
and songwriting partner/guitarist Ian Broudie, Original Mirrors marry disco and rock into a rousing brand of dance music. Jonathan Perkins' keyboards, Allen's singing, and the group's general surge of soul all reflect a strong Four Tops influence.

**Red Rider: Don't Fight It**  
Michael James Jackson,  
producer. Capitol ST 12028

"Don't Fight It" is a north-of-the-border Eagles' "On the Border," with a hearty helping of Tom Petty thrown in. An entirely derivative outfit, this Canadian quintet nevertheless crafts excellent facsimiles. Leader Tom Cochran's warbly Petty-like vocals steer Red Rider along, the title track and *White Hot* (the single) are solid commercial ventures, and Cochran's *How's My Little Girl Tonight* is a better Eagles' song than anything from "The Long Run."

**Russia**  
Paul Ratajczak, producer  
Warner Bros. BSK 3414

A powerhouse rock unit from the Pacific Northwest, Russia's guitar- and keyboard-based attack is tempered by a lot of group harmonies and an occasional midtempo side-track. Why they call themselves Russia is anyone's guess.



**Sorrrows: Teenage Heartbreak**  
John Luongo, Elliot Apter &  
Mark Milchman, producers  
Pavillion NJZ 36369

The title encapsulates this New York quartet's thematic turf: teenage romance, etc. Framed in a neo-Mersey-beat-meets-power-pop stance, the band's songs race along with cool, classy aplomb. As more and more of this stuff finds its way to vinyl (the A's, the Pop, 20/20, the Beat, and so forth) the danger of a new-pop overdose increases. To their credit, though, Sorrows leaves you begging for more, not complaining that you've had too much.

**Tommy Tutone**  
Ed E. Thacker, producer  
Columbia NJC 36372

If Elvis Costello and Bruce Springsteen moved to Marin County and started a band, they'd sound like Tommy Tutone—earthy Northern Californian rock jostling with start-and-stop rhythms and, yes, that tacky organ sound. T.T. explores such realms of Americana as cars, bars, girls, and more girls. On *Cheap Date*, a track tailor-made for the airwaves, it surprisingly all comes together and works. The rest of this Bay Area group's debut is on-again, off-again.



**Emmylou—back to basics**



**Manhattans—the royal corps of soul balladry**

and down-home as a back-porch sing-along, as eloquently and skillfully rendered as any LP released in the country music field for a long, long while.

Emmylou has handpicked songs that, like the genre they comprise, are as old as the hills: The hillbilly gospel tune *Jordan* (on which Johnny Cash offers his booming baritone harmonies), the traditional *Wayfaring Stranger*, the equally traditional *Green Pastures* (harmony courtesy of Dolly Parton), and such tried-and-true classics as *Gold Watch and Chain* (wherein Linda Ronstadt joins in a haunting duet), Bill Halley's lazy *Miss the Mississippi*, the Louvin Brothers' *You're Learning*, and the melancholy, chilling *Darkest Hour Is Just Before Dawn*.

Harris' sterling, high timbre has never sounded more assured and more at home with her material, even on the album's one surprise noncountry cut, Paul Simon's *The Boxer*. Her instrumental support is equally solid: Lee on mandolin and guitars, Skaggs on fiddle, guitars, and vocals, Gordy on acoustic bass, and Tony Rice (from the David Grisman Quintet) on guitar elicit deep, resonant, ardent tones, devoid of the high-end bluegrass twang that lesser country pickers produce on the same instruments. Bryan Bowers' alacrity on autoharp adds a ringing clarity to several tunes. Willie Nelson plays gut-string guitar on *Green Pastures* and hus-

band/producer Brian Ahern adds various guitars to the works.

One has an image of the beautiful Harris sitting in the midst of a warm, woodsy home taking care of her children and leading a quiet, content country life. Indeed, the success that she has enjoyed all these years could have led to complacency. As "Roses in the Snow" heartily testifies, however, she is far from resting on her laurels. In her own genuine, personable way, Harris has taken a far bigger chance in returning to the simple country origins of her music than Linda Ronstadt has taken in going "new wave."

**Manhattans: After Midnight**

Leo Graham, Dennis Lambert, Brian Potter, Bert deCoteaux, & Norman Harris, producers  
Columbia JC 36411  
by Crispin Cioe

I admit to gaining deep satisfaction from the current trend in r&b toward the soul ballad. At its best, the genre lends a kind of tranquil beauty to everyday situations; a good soul ballad on the radio can be a welcome moment of unabashed sentiment in an otherwise harsh and cynical world. The Manhattans, who are actually from New Jersey, stand in the style's lush mainstream. Since their founding in 1965 they have set their ultraromantic lyrics and

choralelike harmonies against delicately syncopated full orchestrations, with Gerald Alston's lead tenor wafting in and out of the arrangements like a wraith of smoke. Their biggest hit, 1975's *Kiss and Say Goodbye*, came during the height of the ravaging disco plague, further underlining their balladic hegemony.

"After Midnight" can do nothing but enhance the Manhattans' standing. Although several producers are involved, it glows warmly and consistently. The strongest cuts melodically were written and produced by Leo Graham, known for his outstanding work over the years with Chicago soul singer Tyrone Davis. His *Shining Star* is a real gem, a lightly chugging ballad that combines its lyric's focus on the virtue of true love with some lacy high harmonies and a nifty, modulating bridge that shifts the song's mood ever so slightly each time it comes around. Jerry Ragavoy and Estelle Levitt's elegantly titled *Cloudy, with a Chance of Tears* is a bittersweet ballad in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, with a gorgeous trombone solo in the middle that underscores Alston's hope-springs-eternal pluckiness in the face of a love gone bad. Except for one soft-core disco cut, *It Couldn't Hurt*, "After Midnight" is ballad country, start to finish. Having lived there almost two decades, the Manhattans mine it with finesse.

*Continued on page 97*



**Terence Boylan: Suzy***Terence Boylan, producer**Asylum 6E 201***by Steven X. Rea**

Terence Boylan's self-titled Asylum debut, released a few years past, was a solid singer/songwriter affair heavily influenced by Jackson Browne. What saved it from being a mere Browne clone was Boylan's knack for crafting a good sloshy ballad, ripe with sentiment and sorrow. *Shake It* appeared on that LP and later became a Top 10 single as rendered by Ian Matthews.

The brother of producer John Boylan (Boston, Little River Band, Charlie Daniels Band), Terence has been working on "Suzy" for close to two years. Several other titles (including "The Trout Is in the Mail") appeared on Asylum's monthly release schedules before "Suzy" finally materialized. Tracks were recorded, then scrubbed. Boylan has been described as "persnickety."

Mostly, the persnickiness has paid off. "Suzy" is an ambitious, quirky, oft-times successful and (only) sometimes awful record that reaches out way beyond the first album's rather commonplace parameters. Boylan has abandoned the Browne whine, instead slipping into a comfortably low growl or a smooth, melodious tenor. Only *Roll Your Own* (which has nothing to do with homemade cigarettes—tobacco or otherwise) suggests Browne's writing and voice. (It also suggests Boylan's desire to let the world know he went to college, since he cops a famous couplet from T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*.)

Apart from such love songs as the Top 40-ish *Did She Finally Get to You*, *Tell Me*, *Ice and Snow*, and *Going Home*, Boylan tackles such topical themes as psychoanalysis (*\$50 an Hour*), the sheltered existence of a wealthy coed (*College Life*), ecology (the bluesy *Dump It in the River*), and the chichi Hollywood night world. This last, titled *Shake Your Fiorucci*, is embarrassing: a dumb boogie blues, replete with guitar lines lifted from Eric Clapton's *Layla* and the Stones' *Bitch*. Mercifully, it's short.

"Suzy" closes with an eccentric amalgam of cocktail jazz and Japanese classical music called *Miso Soup*. In this

whimsical, endearing number, a high-pitched Nipponese incantation suddenly swerves into a cool jazz groove, spotlighting a fine piano solo by Chevy Chase. (Chase and Boylan were bandmates during their college days at Bard.) Other stellar names listed in the credits include guitarists Larry Carlton and Jeff Baxter (both Steely Dan vets—part of the reason some tunes have a Dan ambience), Eagles Timothy Schmit and Don Henley on the harmonies, and keyboardist Jai Winding.

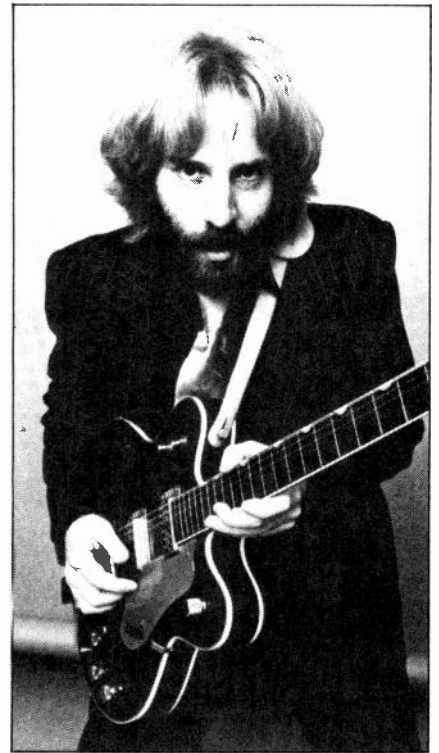
Anyone who is a sucker for slick and sappy love songs, lilting pop hooks, and mellifluous harmonies should find "Suzy" to their liking. And there's some meaty stuff here too. Though Boylan occasionally lapses into banality or stumbles on his own self-conscious wit, this is a record with a lot of personality. And the personality is his, not Browne's.

**Andrew Gold: Whirlwind***Andrew Gold, producer**Asylum 6E 264***by Don Shewey**

On "Whirlwind," former Linda Ronstadt sideman Andrew Gold has traded the sprightly pop of his first (and best) solo album and the mushy balladry of his two subsequent efforts for the grinding guitars and sluggish rhythms that L.A. singer/songwriters revert to when they think, "Rock!" Gold himself handles guitars and keyboards, while the rhythm section comprises drummer Michael Botts and bassist Bryan Garafalo.

The musical results are competent, even convincing, but it all sounds second-hand. The almost danceable *Brand New Face* restates Joe Jackson's *Is She Really Going Out with Him?*, while *Nine to Five* cops its organ overlay and hint of reggae from Elvis Costello; *Little Company* resembles the Everly Brothers gone punk, while *Leave Her Alone* recycles old Jeff Beck guitar licks with Gold making like the lead singer of Bad Company. He doesn't drop these references to pay homage—the way Billy Joel does when he mimics Mick Jagger, Elvis Presley, and the Beatles on "Glass Houses"—he tries to pass them off as his own style.

The strain is uncomfortable, even painful to hear, and it's sad to think that Gold is merely following the trend toward

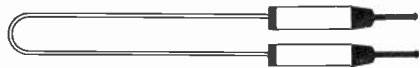
**Gold—trying too hard**

simplistic, "back-to basics" rock. His earlier work may have been criticized as "sensitive" or "romantic" (that is, corny), but it was distinctive. "Whirlwind" sounds like the product of just another L.A. band.

**Emmylou Harris: Roses in the Snow***Brian Ahern, producer**Warner Bros. BSK 3422***by Steven X. Rea**

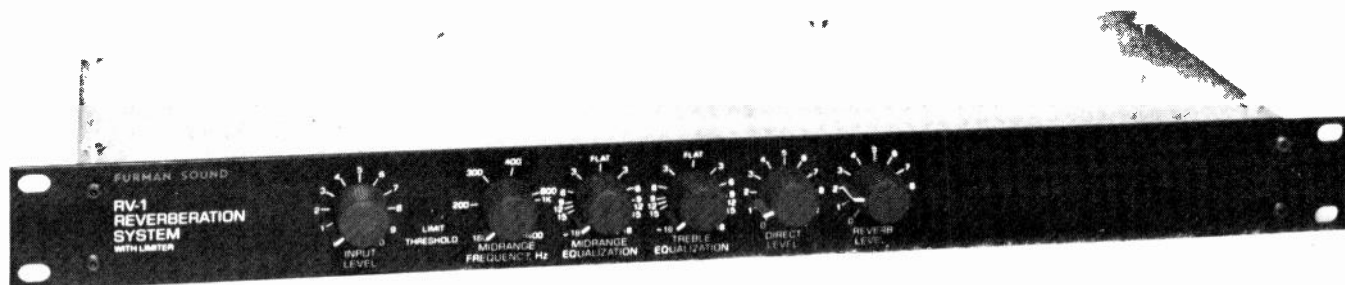
Emmylou Harris has taken a major risk with "Roses in the Snow." Though many members of her Hot Band are here—Albert Lee, Emory Gordy Jr., Ricky Skaggs—their presence does not signal another in her long succession of electric country and country/rock albums. (The most recent is last year's Grammy-winning "Blue Kentucky Girl.") "Roses in the Snow" is something altogether different. Gone are the drums, gone the electric bass. In fact, excepting the modest electric guitar on two tracks, gone is electric anything. This is a 99% pure acoustic album, an unadulterated country record, as basic

## Input Output: Instruments and Accessories



# Spring Reverb in 1980: Furman Sound's RV-1

by Fred Miller



With digital delay lines as common as wah-wah pedals and digital reverb in use in many top-quality studios, it seems an odd time for Furman Sound to introduce a spring reverb unit. Yet the RV-1 does have some degree of finesse and sophistication, particularly in light of its relatively low price tag of \$290.

In its basic form—a piece of wire (coiled for maximum length) with nonadjustable decay time that is suspended between two transducers—spring reverb has been around since before most of us were born. It first came to my attention as a built-in feature on Hammond organs and Fender guitar amplifiers, and in Fisher Radio's Spacexpander. This last was an outboard unit designed to make a "dry" program sound like it had been recorded in an acoustically responsive room, such as a concert hall. Nowadays, reverb is an integral part of the recording process itself. Alternatives abound, from live echo chambers (an isolated space with a speaker at one end and a microphone at the other), to EMT's gold foil unit, to AKG's BX-20 internally equalized spring units, to steel plates, synthesized digital reverb, and—lest we forget—actually recording in a responsive room.

(Do they really still do that?)

Though springs have gone through a number of metamorphoses, the common complaint remains that they always sound like springs—twangy, uneven, metallic. Still, they've maintained a foothold because they are generally less expensive than the alternatives (EMT plates, for instance, go for around \$6,000) and because they're useful in live performance applications, where each musician might want his own particular reverb setting.

The RV-1 is simple to operate, with standard ¼-inch mono phone jacks for input and output and level controls for input, direct (dry) output, and reverb output. The built-in three-band equalizer has plus or minus 19 dB in each of its bands—a handy feature, since reverb is best heard without extreme high or low frequencies. The EQ affects only the reverb output, not the direct, so it doesn't change the frequency response of the original signal. The separate DIRECT and REVERB level pots at the output allow the user to create his own particular blend of dry and reverberant sound. All the controls are smooth and responsive and offer a wide choice of settings.

Internally, the RV-1 is beautifully constructed and all components on the

circuit board are neatly labeled. It uses four watts, requires 115-volt AC to operate, and comes with a three-conductor AC plug (attached). There is a remote foot-switch jack on the back panel for cutting out the reverb while leaving the direct signal unchanged at the output. The front panel includes LEDs to indicate the status of the built-in limiter and power on/off. The limiter at the input stage is designed to prevent an overload on the spring, which usually causes the famous "twang." The limiter circuit is noise free and undetectable when performing.

There's no power on/off switch, so when the RV-1 is plugged in, it's on—and on it stays until you pull the plug. Not that anyone will go broke from a box that uses four watts, but it would be nice to be able to turn the thing off. Also, since all mechanical springs register loud boings when moved, the RV-1 is sensitive to movement and should be mounted in an isolated equipment rack. Still, if you can't afford a plate or digital reverb, the RV-1 is as good as they come for the money. It takes up only 1¾ inches of rack space, looks good, and—thanks especially to the tone contouring afforded by the equalizer—sounds good . . . for a spring.

**Circle 121 on Reader-Service Card**

Designer Storyk then adds that, as with the recording room, "we began to achieve effective control room scattering and dispersion with room geometries, placement of objects, and surface treatments. For instance, we've placed racks of amps and other hardware against a control room's uninsulated back wall in a tilted zigzag pattern. Here we get an effective scattering of the sound with the calculated placement of working equipment, which to me is an example of design at its functional best."

**A**lthough the core of his job is the highly technical details of room structure, surfaces, etc., Storyk freely admits that "studios are for business, and visuals are usually just as important as acoustics. Musicians may not actually pay for studio time, but they often determine which studios are rented. So, I tend to make spaces look bigger, with ceiling treatments and so forth, to make musicians feel more comfortable. Similarly, this office has always used lots of glass,

which at first shocked people. To us, it was a natural way to open spaces up and de-emphasize walls.

"Every material, every object, has acoustic properties, and the ability to use room geometries correctly frees you to use a variety of materials creatively and efficiently. We've never used the so-called industrial materials [acoustic tile, for instance]. They are pricy, boring, and sterile. Instead we tend to use things that are environmentally related to the studio. When we built Hljocriti Recording Studio in Iceland, we used lava as the basic wallboard design ingredient—it's all they have there. Happily, we got it to work aesthetically and acoustically. For a studio we built in Bogotá, Colombia, we used local wood and brick. Bearsville Studio, near Woodstock, New York, also features local wood, which works quite well in the large recording room. In the control room a wooden "cloud" in the monitor bridge helps to focus the sound and retains a fine, natural resonance.

For all the electronic sophistication

that studios have reached today, Storyk feels that there is an overall trend toward "musical quality, not more studio gimmickery. In a sense, studios always reflect the larger cultural patterns of music itself. For example, to the extent that disco dominated pop, studios were responsive to its controlled, artificial ethos. Now we're seeing a popular return to live playing, but combined with all the signal-processing innovations that didn't exist ten years ago. A group like the Knack may have a basic and primary musical approach to rock, with their roots in raw and relatively unsophisticated records from the early '60s. But in terms of modern electronic effects, *My Sharona* displays a thoroughly modern aural understanding."

To put it another way, fifteen years ago there was a drum kit; today there is a drum kit *and* a noise gate, to limit and alter the drum sound. And the first generation of big, state-of-the-art 'bright' studios, now in operation, is contributing to this "modern aural understanding" with sophisticated simplicity.

## Designing for the Future

In their more recent designs, Storyk and Schick have already been dealing with such imminent technologies as digital recording. Halfway into the initial planning and construction phases of Criteria West, the owners decided to build in a complete digital capability. But, Storyk said, "the only big construction change was in the wiring: Digital wiring is hard-connected and cannot be pulled through the normal kinds of conduits used for analog recording equipment. So we had to design troughs for laying in the new circuitry. A completely digital studio, which relies on computer technology, will have less actual hardware in the control room. Since the Cri-West changeover, we've decided to use the trough design in all the studios we build, so they'll be ready for the changeover.

"Also, all the studios we've done for the past two or three years are

wired for video playback, because at this point, while audio studios aren't producing any new video product, they are doing a lot more work synching up music with existing video tapes. On the other hand, video studios may be doing a lot more serious audio work soon: We recently designed a video studio for Todd Rundgren [in Bearsville] that is already turning out, among other things, music-oriented video product. As for video discs, I'm convinced that the final item won't be produced in audio studios."

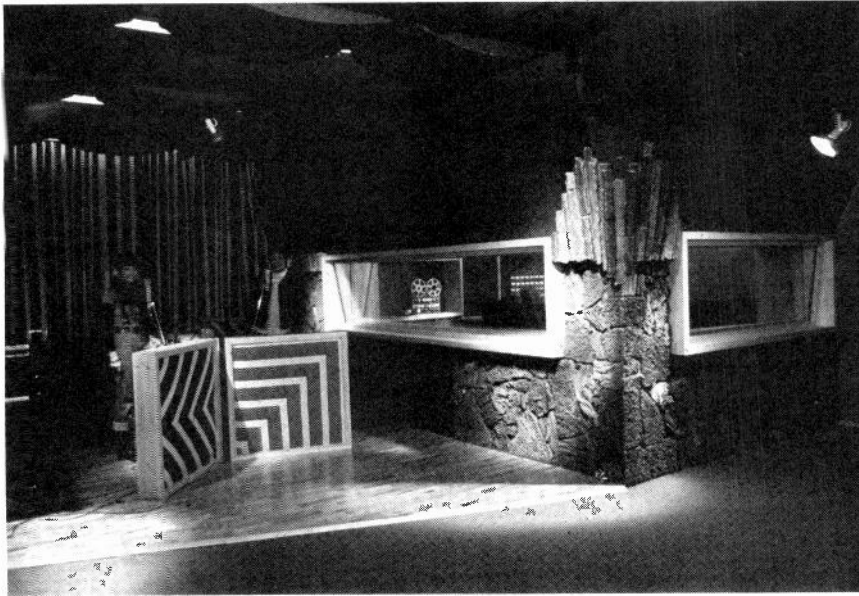
## From Start to Finish

Storyk and Schick estimate that a state-of-the-art twenty-four-track studio today costs anywhere from \$500,000 to \$2 million to build; it usually takes about eighteen months from the first client inquiry to the first recording session. The initial design and program-discussion phase takes about four months, preconstruction or-

ganization—when bids go out to contractors—about two, and actual building from eight to twelve months. The designer stays involved throughout on a regular basis and tests the acoustics when the rooms are completed. Testing devices include a one-sixth or one-third octave-frequency analyzer to detect standing waves, a reverb-measuring device, and a time-delay spectrometer.

"Most postconstruction problems," says Storyk, "aren't acoustic but design-related—an air-conditioner doesn't work, a planter is in the wrong place, etc. Of course, I test all the rooms I build myself, and once, when our geometries didn't work, we had to remove a wall and rebuild it. Even though this is a rare occurrence, it's a weird moment when I finally test a room, and I prefer to do it alone. After building a studio for a year and spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, the testing comes down to all of a few seconds."





Hljóoriti in Iceland—lava is the basic wallboard design ingredient



Rundgren's Bearsville—a wooden "cloud" in the monitor bridge

***"Hearing music accurately is now every bit as crucial as recording it faithfully."***

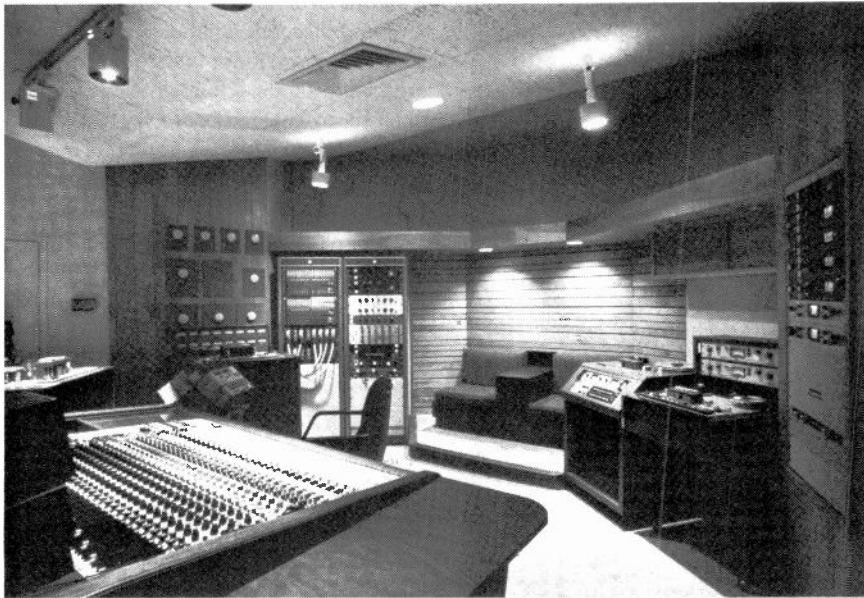
Storyk's wood and glass structures), the drummer is elevated so as to feel like part of the band. Big-time rock groups like Foreigner and the Rolling Stones have often used Studio B for basic tracks, since it combines intimacy with a surprisingly open and resonant room sound.

At the other end of the spectrum is Criteria West Studios in L.A., now nearing completion. Owners Ron and Howard Alpert are enjoying notable success with their first studio, Criteria in Miami (for which Storyk designed Studio E), and intend the new one primarily for high-end, big-bucks pop and rock productions. So Storyk has equipped the three large, high-ceilinged rooms with double isolation booths, special lounges connected to each room, sophisticated lighting, and live stereo echo chambers. One of the rooms will feature a huge bandshell structure for strings, made from the same Spanish tile as the building.

Though one would think that the acoustician's main concern would be the recording room, according to Schick, "these days, most owners are saying, 'Make the control room right. With what's left in the budget, make the best possible recording room.' All the money's now invested in control rooms." The evolution of control-room design has closely paralleled that of the recording room. Schick recalls that in the '60s, a dead-sounding environment was thought to be ideal for listening to playback. "Even six years ago," he says, "the widely accepted control-room design strategy was for the sound to move directly from the speakers past the listeners' ears and straight to the room's back wall, where insulation traps would absorb it. But people later found that they also like to listen to music in reverberant spaces. We began to realize that if you could have the sound reverberate off [instead of disappear into] the surfaces in the control room, but not be colored adversely, it would be that much richer and more natural. You see, no matter how good the test readings and specs looked on one of those 'perfectly dead' control rooms, producers, musicians, and engineers just weren't satisfied with the actual sound they were hearing. In other words, people do want to hear sounds in natural-sounding spaces."



**Aura's Studio D accommodates up to 40 musicians for live sessions**



**Atlantic's Studio B—a favorite of big-time rock groups for basic tracks**

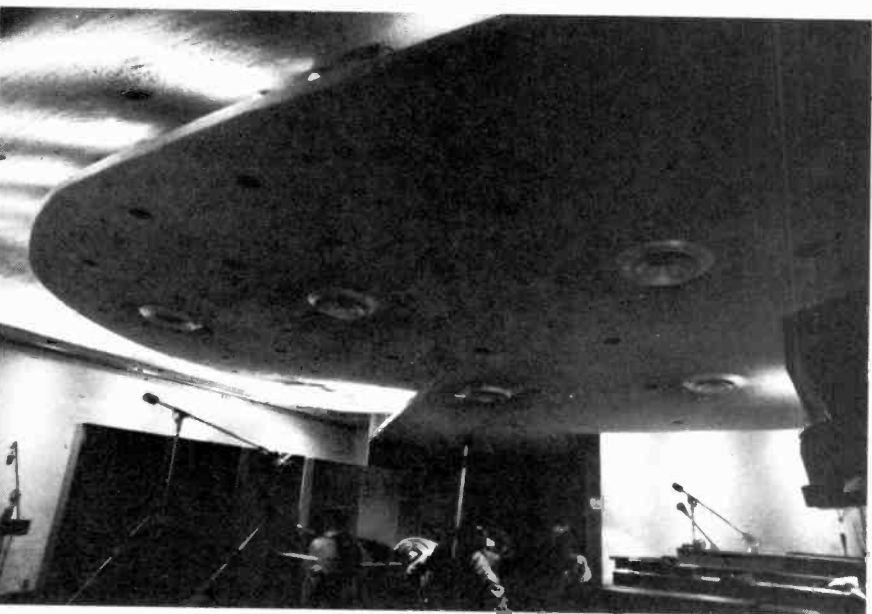
the Isley Brothers, and Kiss member Ace Frehley.

In New York, the company recently completed Aura Recording's Studio D and Howard Schwartz Recording, both of which specialize in jingles and TV-film soundtracks. Schwartz needed a large recording room to handle string and other large instrumental sections, and he also wanted a spacious control room to accommodate additional equipment and seating for account executives and clients. The biggest problems were the structural support columns in the room to be used for recording and a relatively low ceiling.

"Once I knew I had only ten feet, six inches as my working height," says Storyk, "then in terms of acoustics, I knew I couldn't have a room volume bigger than 'X.' From there I worked backward, doing the beginning geometries and planning angles, and ultimately using various design techniques on the ceiling to make the room work right acoustically."

**A**ura's Studio D had to be large enough to handle up to forty musicians for live sessions. Storyk's solution was an L-shaped room: The string players sit in the bottom leg of the L, surrounded by three wood-slatted walls and a glass partition that connects to the rest of the room. The drummer sits in an alcove directly opposite—again, the clean sight lines. I asked Rich Look, who with his partner Steve Chapin is an active television jingle producer and uses a variety of studios every week, how Aura's design had worked for him: "It has very effective sight lines, and the string-section alcove has an excellent reverberant sound. There's also a rough-hewn stone wall behind a raised platform in the main section of the room, for the brass. The stone scatters the horns' sound more or less evenly around the room, and this makes for a subtle, but certainly audible, improvement in the mix."

Atlantic's Studio B in New York called upon Storyk to create a room specifically for rock & roll in a very limited space. He put a large wooden resonator on the rear wall of the oblong-shaped room, thus scattering the sound and allowing for fewer baffles and better sight lines. Though the drums are baffled (with



**Electric Lady's Studio A: a revolutionary design concept**

room.”

Like all of his subsequent projects, Electric Lady presented Storyk with some unexpected challenges: “We discovered an underground river, the Minetta Creek, that periodically flooded the building’s basement. As if that weren’t enough, a movie theater next door sometimes cranked up its soundtracks, which meant we needed added insulation in the walls.”

Hendrix was also concerned about creating an atmosphere that would foster creativity. Storyk responded with such features as automatic dimmers, curtains that drew across sections of the room, and, most importantly, good sight lines. “I still think about what musicians will feel when they’re playing,” he says, “and that means good sight lines between each other and the control room.

“For example, this office is generally against using isolation booths for drums, because they not only deaden the sound too much, but inhibit the drummer. Instead, we use a small alcove, usually a room corner, with a lowered ceiling that acts as a low-frequency trap. Portable baffle walls three feet high, with sixteen inches of clear Plexiglas above the walls, surround the drums. The walls act as resonators, absorbing lows and scattering high frequencies. The Plexiglas reflects sound while letting the drummer see his fellow musicians.”

Over the past twelve years, Storyk has applied his principles of reverberancy and visual openness to the design of more than one-hundred studios in the U.S. and abroad, including Record Plant’s Studio B in L.A. (which was built specifically for Stevie Wonder and his engineer Bob Margoulff), Chipping Norton Studio in England, and Studio in the Rockies at Vail, Colorado. Sugarloaf View has also designed smaller, personalized state-of-the-art rooms for pop stars like Isaac Hayes,





## Studio Circuit

# Recording Studio Design: Sugarloaf's View Is Big and Bright

by Crispin Cioe

The professional recording studio has changed dramatically over the last twelve years, now incorporating as standard equipment twenty-four-track (and in some cases thirty-two) mixing consoles, parametric equalizers, and digital reverb and delay. And as recording technology has become more sophisticated, so has the environment in which it is applied. This is true not only of the recording room—which has been adjusted to accommodate, for instance, the increased sensitivity of microphones—but also of the control room. For engineers, producers, and musicians alike, hearing music accurately is now every bit as crucial as recording it faithfully.

As a result, for studio owners acoustic design has become a necessary fact of life. Today they rely on a handful of firms to both build new facilities and renovate old ones. Companies like Sierra Audio, Westlake Audio, and Everything Audio in Los Angeles and Sugarloaf View in New York are currently leading the pack. Sugarloaf View, one of the oldest, is perhaps the most design- (as opposed to hardware-) oriented of them all.

John Storyk, the company's design partner, studied architecture at Princeton University and still takes on projects outside the studio world, including private homes and musical theaters and clubs. Managing partner Joe Schick has at various times owned a studio (Blue Rock in New York), managed artists (including Fotomaker), and produced records (Karla Bonoff). Storyk, who is both easygoing and intensely enthusiastic about his work, has been involved in music all his life, and played piano and saxophone in various New York clubs in the mid-'60s.

As we talked late one afternoon at his lower-Manhattan offices, Storyk remembered that one of his first post-graduate design projects was what he called a

sensorium in SoHo: "It was called Cerebrum—a kind of sensory environment concept with recorded music, carefully modulated lighting effects, etc. Jimi Hendrix occasionally visited the place, and when he bought Generation, a rock club on Eighth Street, he asked me to redesign the room with a little recording booth in back for taping jam sessions. As the project continued, Jimi and his manager decided that they really wanted a studio. So one day in 1968 Generation closed, and it reopened months later as Electric Lady Studio."

"At that time," continues Storyk, "very few people had actually designed studios. To prepare myself, I read every available book on the subject—both of them—and saw every studio in New York. Sixteen-track recording had just come in, and there were only a few studios designed for it: A&R Studios, the Record Plant, and maybe one or two others."

During the '60s, most studios were built to be acoustically dead rooms, since, in multitrack recording's early stages, engineers had difficulty controlling leakage between microphones. Heavily absorptive insulation padding was applied to the ceiling and walls, and large portable baffles were placed between instruments and amplifiers. Hendrix and his engineer Eddie Kramer (who has gone on to produce many rock acts, including Kiss) wanted to get away from that.

"Electric Lady's concept with the large room, Studio A," says Storyk, "was 'big and bright.' In '69 that was daring, because most rooms still used acoustic surfaces like perforated wallboard stuff to absorb and deaden sound. But Kramer's experience had been at Olympic Studio in England, a large and bright room, where the Beatles had cut 'Sergeant Pepper.' He was a big believer in the *controlled* bleeding of sound from one mike to another

and also liked a very live drum sound. Musicians like to work in a room where the sound that goes out from their instruments stays in the air, a 'live' room, if you will, and most music just sounds better when it's recorded with a certain amount of room ambience in the mix. Today, highly isolated instrumental sounds just don't figure into that much music except in a style like disco, where effects are an integral part of the production.

On the other hand, reverberant rooms, for all their advantages, do create problems in multitrack recording, since microphones will tend to pick up all of their acoustic peculiarities. I discovered that the most common problem in a bright room is the standing-wave phenomenon. Basically, a standing wave is a series of sonic reflections piling up too close to each other in too small a space. The best metaphor would be singing in a shower stall, where you find some tones are much louder than others. These pitches are louder because the distance from the singer to one of the stalls' walls is exactly one-quarter of the pitch's wavelength. A normal room with parallel, hard-wall surfaces is very conducive to standing waves, because the sound tends to bounce straight back and forth, and not disperse elsewhere around the room. In large studios, the worst dimension is floor to ceiling, and even a carpeted floor won't necessarily absorb lower frequencies to prevent standing waves.

"To counteract this, we use precise geometries, sound traps, and various surface treatments—all of which help to scatter sound, keeping it in the room but not piling it up in standing waves. At Electric Lady, I designed a twisting ceiling made of plaster, which took into account the floor's different surfaces and also scattered the waves effectively throughout the



Perry Como



Andy Williams



Charles the innovator

## The All-American Voice

by Stephen Holden

**T**wenty-five years ago, the All-American voice was a polite crooner who sang songs in the New York Tin Pan Alley tradition. The voices of Perry Como, Andy Williams, Doris Day, or Patti Page were white and middle class, their attitudes genteel. Even-tempered, cordial, and not overtly sexual, they expressed the complacent idealism of white suburban America, leaving out the South and blacks. It remained for rock & roll to incorporate the rest of the country.

The fusion of r&b and country into the pop mainstream began in 1956 with Elvis Presley, the first massively popular rock & roll singer. His blend of the blues, country-gospel, and Nashville crooning went on to influence countless pop artists, from Brenda Lee to Bruce Springsteen. Gradually, the accent of the mainstream singer changed from neutral northeastern to a more aggressive, vaguely southern-black inflection. Today even sophisticated New Yorkers like Paul Simon affect a bluesy drawl.

The extraordinary success of Ray Charles's "Modern Sounds in Country Music" in 1962 gelled the fusion of black, urban white, and country styles. Many critics dismiss this album as the beginning of Charles's descent into "schlock," yet it stands as one of the three or four most influential LPs in the history of American pop. Here, Charles—with arranger/conductor Ralph Burns—virtually invented the modern mainstream sound by interpreting country songs in a gospel voice over a lush pop background of strings and chorus. Everyone from Barry Manilow to Bob Seger is indebted to him

for forging that stylistic melting pot.

The mainstream sound has become vastly more refined since 1962, assimilating virtually every regional and ethnic style in the western hemisphere. To my ears, Michael McDonald of the Doobie Brothers and Linda Ronstadt are the quintessential products of that assimilation. Their voices are truly "All-American," and by "All-American" I mean beautiful as well as stylistically comprehensive. Though neither one is classically trained, both sing with a classical musician's sense of precision and balance, with superb legato, security of pitch, and richness.

Dynamically, McDonald's smooth, even delivery reflects the cool, syncopated ultra-urbanity of Steely Dan, with whom he used to work. He can render the most rhythmically intricate melodic passages with unruffled ease, and, as his extensive backup singing attests, he can blend into almost any setting without losing his identity. His delivery is so smooth that one is tempted to call him a crooner. Yet he also strongly echoes Ray Charles, filtering that singer's gruffness, slurred diction, and gospel spontaneity through his L.A. studio-musician technique. Out of the many Charles imitators, from David Clayton-Thomas to Rod Stewart, only McDonald echoes the plaintive sob in the back of the voice that lent Charles's singing its unique emotional force. In connecting that singer's pop-gospel to the post-Swing Italo-American crooner tradition (Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Vic Damone), McDonald has brought one cycle of the rock & roll revolution full circle.

Ronstadt's closest pre-rock & roll

counterpart was Patti Page, a decorously coy crooner who, at her best, communicated a quiet graciousness. Ronstadt relates to the crooners in the same way McDonald does—by blending rock & roll hipness with a polished gentility. Like McDonald's, her honeyed voice is awesomely beautiful and, like him, she tinges every phrase with a note of lament. Her stylistic roots are even more varied and contradictory than McDonald's. On her early records especially, there's an aching twang of country that suggests Hank Williams or Kitty Wells. Sweetening that is a strain of folk ethereality, indicating the influence of early Joan Baez. Even when singing hard, Ronstadt seldom undermines the beauty of her voice, and her pitch and diction are almost perfect. Ultimately, she is the vocal incarnation of the new West—part cowgirl, part cheerleader, strong but pliable, determined but vulnerable, connecting Atlanta to Nashville to Austin to Phoenix to Los Angeles.

Ronstadt and McDonald have both been criticized for not being interpretive singers. But ultimately, interpretation isn't what either one of them is about. Instead, their strength lies in their projection of primal yearning and in the sheer beauty of their instruments. Ronstadt's *Blue Bayou* is a flight of vocal magic that has little to do with lyrics. Similarly, McDonald's version of *What a Fool Believes* communicates a virile vulnerability that overrides the song's more stilted lyric passages. These two voices are more interesting than their pop counterparts of twenty-five years ago because of the diversity of the cultures they embrace.



on Empty.' And that's great, it's a brilliant concept and a great album, but now it's been done."

Similarly, he wonders if the influence of mystery novelists hasn't been overstated, given the critics' lengthening list of comparisons to Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, and others. The impact of cinematic models, however, he freely accepts. In fact, his recent studies with choreographer Joanne DeVito and martial arts master Chuck Norris arose from a projected film clip for the new album's title song, based on a story idea by Zevon set, like the album cover, in a dance studio. After commissioning DeVito to develop a complete choreographic score based on the song and on a longer, more "pointillistic" version of the string interlude on the LP, Zevon was forced to scrap the project for lack of funds.

"This was to be my first shot at wedding music to movie in a way that was inexorably logical," he says after outlining the script, which casts Zevon more as lead dancer than rock & roll star. "Which was the whole deal: How do you make that combination logical? It's almost like we would have invented a form of its own. There wasn't anything quite like it: a rock & roll song, classical music, and special effects." Coming after earlier offers to develop scores and title themes for theatrical films, the scuttled project has been a disappointment, but his fascination with filmmaking remains undiminished. "It's a constant preoccupation for further down the line."

Closer to realization is Zevon's plan to compose longer instrumental works. Spread across a drawing board in the high-ceilinged den he uses for rehearsal and study is the score for the latest permutation of his long-promised symphony, a project he has worked on for years. More immediately, in "Bad Luck" he again composed instrumental bridges, a practice shelved for "Excitable Boy" to focus on that album's stripped-down rock emphasis.

"You've got to remember that my goal is still to translate the Neil Young acoustic/intermission/electric set to the

rock-band/intermission/symphony set." In fact, the decision to number the string interludes on "Bad Luck" stemmed from that goal. "It's like sneaking up on people with language that will make them think, 'Hey, wait a minute, that sounds classical.' I wanted it to sound like that."

Zevon conducted those ensemble pieces during recording, a responsibility that one would think could have tempted him to bring in one of his former producers to lighten the load. "On the contrary," he answers. "One of the things they teach you in rummy school is assertiveness, 'cause you think you're running the world and you're actually the most helpless person in the joint. They force you to be assertive."

"Indeed, to get these string parts to sound this way, I first of all learned to notate much more specifically—the tiniest nuances, exactly how to bow, everything. It's written out in such minute detail the musicians aren't supposed to use their imagination."

He had wanted the string players to achieve certain rock-guitar, as opposed to symphonic, timbres and dynamics. Where his initial efforts at conducting led the viola section to calmly request he stop, "because it's throwing us off," by the time they came to recording *Interlude No. 2* the situation had reversed. "I had to conduct, because the timing is so critical. And then what you have to be, after being absolutely precise, is very uninhibited, and very assertive. Leonard Bernstein is not a guy who's bound by inhibitions. His body language is not saying, 'I'm repressed.' So you've got to grab that, to really lead it."

Lest he sound like a rock & roll Von Karajan, Zevon is quick to stress his lack of formal training, something he views as both liability and asset. In working on his symphonic and chamber sketches, he has had to rely on advice from the musicians in order to learn the limitations of their respective instruments. Yet he asserts his naiveté can help him stretch those limitations. He points to Stravinsky as an eminently trained composer who nonetheless "pushed the envelope," borrowing an Air Force phrase, to find new

voices in old instruments.

Before he can tackle his large-scale symphonic projects, he must face a national tour. Tonight he's mapping out rehearsals with his new stage band, which he enthusiastically describes as the best ensemble he has yet taken out. By the time he hits the concert trail, he will have grafted a theatrical presentation onto his music, incorporating his dance and martial arts training, lighting effects, and even a concert equivalent of the firefights that punctuate epics like *Roland* and the new album's *Jungle Work*, another mercenary anthem.

At thirty-three, Zevon is now facing his career with obvious enthusiasm. Even his conversational side trips tend to contradict the resignation that once overshadowed his work. Where he once sang, in his own *Desperados Under the Eaves*, "except for dreams, you're never really free," his current exhilaration proves otherwise. ♪

\**Desperados Under the Eaves*. © 1976 Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. & Darkroom Music/BMI

\**Wild Age*. © 1980 Zevon Music/BMI



tice the expatriate back. Less than a year after leaving the States, Zevon hopped a plane for London, where he produced sessions for Phil Everly to earn air fare back home.

*Mostly when the reckless years end  
Something's left to save.  
Some of them keep running  
Till they run straight in their graves\**

**O**n a clear, windy March night, Warren Zevon sits in the kitchen of the rented hilltop house he has shared with actress Kim Lankford since his divorce from Crystal. After two days without sleep and a plane flight from New York, he has returned to L.A. to run a gauntlet of press interviews to launch "Bad Luck Streak in Dancing School," his third Asylum album.

Despite his exhaustion, he is ebullient and eager to talk about not only the upheavals of the past, but the aspirations for his current studio and stage work. He looks healthier than ever, in spite of the unbroken chain of cigarettes and a bottomless coffee cup. A recent regimen of dance lessons and martial arts studies has helped him shed forty pounds—a physical fitness program that he laughingly admits is a major accomplishment for a onetime "neck up" man preoccupied with his art at the expense of his body.

That flurry of activity is also in sharp contrast to the hermetic life he led between tours and albums until 1978. "I never knew life could be busy like this," he admits with a grin. But in a more serious tone he adds, "I'm not the same person. I don't think—as much as I can find out about the person I was and remember. Everything in general is just not the same."

Almost everything. He still breaks into the familiar wolfish grin, salting his comments with quick jokes and sudden tangents, and he still professes the same long-term goals as a composer, particularly of serious instrumental works. Yet the essential shyness, conveyed by his oblique gaze and self-deprecating wise-

cracks, has been offset by a new confidence he frankly traces to therapy.

The new album has tested that confidence, given his involvement as producer in addition to writer, musician, and vocalist. Whereas the first two Asylum collections benefited from a backlog of songs and stray melodic fragments and lyrics, "I have a tendency to say that it ["Bad Luck"] was written during the course of recording, allowing for the fact that I had the title and maybe five strong lines," he reports. "You might also remember *Gorilla*," alluding to *Gorilla (You're a Desperado)*, the LP's funniest song and another slice of Zevon-on-wry that mingles frank autobiography with antic fantasy. "A very short version of that was cut a cappella for 'Excitable Boy.'"

For a writer who once despaired about assembling enough songs for each new album, the pressure this time must have been substantial. Zevon confirms that, adding that in the past he feared that "every song's a fluke. Remember, I used to consider myself a classical composer who, because he was reasonably bright and fueled by all these Hunter Thompson toxins, blundered into lyrics. The more Hunter Thompson-ed out, the closer to *Fear and Loathing*, and the more likely the fluke of a song would come out."

This time he couldn't use those toxins. That, in combination with the shorter time frame for writing and his new production role, caused him to approach the LP as a "secret project," waiting until it was finished to solicit outside opinions. Its completion has convinced him that his lyric-writing—as well as composing—craft is safely intact, despite his past fears about "squeezing out each new line."

If Zevon is more confident about the literary dimension of his work, he continues to resist certain labels applied to it in the past. Despite the clear thread of personal experience in his songs, he avoids autobiography. "I still don't believe in writing about yourself to the extent that it dominates everything you're saying," he says. "There should only be one 'Running

***The losers he sang about were convincing because he feared he was one himself.***

***"I used to consider myself a classical composer who, because he was reasonably bright and fueled by all these Hunter Thompson toxins, blundered into lyrics."***





**His obsessions—  
violence, death, and  
madness—seemed both  
process and product of  
a life that danced along  
the edge.**

**If the antic howl of  
Werewolves of London  
made him a star, he  
would later remember  
himself “shackled to a  
platinum chain.”**

problems, his marriage buckling under the strain even as that record provided a long overdue commercial breakthrough. His typical candor in several interviews helped spawn his “F. Scott Fizevon” alter ego, and, as he would later remark in *People* magazine, a vodka bottle became the central character in his personal legend. Though the antic howl of *Werewolves of London* made him a star, in a subsequent song lyric he would remember himself “shackled to a platinum chain.”

In the fall of 1978, he had completed his first headliner tour and made enough money to invest in a new Santa Barbara home. But before he could get accustomed to his new life style, he checked himself into nearby Pinecrest Hospital’s alcoholism rehabilitation facility. It was perhaps inevitable, for he himself had assessed the toll of success long before *Werewolves* carried “Excitable Boy” into the winner’s circle. The losers he sang about were convincing because he feared he was one himself; indeed, until beginning work for his first Asylum LP, Zevon had been as much has-been as hopeful.

**H**is childhood, adolescence, and early career reads like a script developed by an unholy alliance of J. D. Salinger, Jack Kerouac, and Ross Macdonald. Born in Chicago to an immigrant Russian gambler and his Mormon wife, Zevon grew up in L.A. and in the tough harbor city just south of it, San Pedro. He was drawn to classical music at an early age, learning piano and teaching himself to notate by studying the scores of his favorite chamber and symphonic pieces. A junior high school teacher took him to meet conductor Robert Craft, who in turn introduced him to Igor Stravinsky.

Those encounters reinforced an early determination to become a composer, a goal he has sustained throughout his career. Yet his youthfulness and the cultural ferment of the ‘60s soon led him elsewhere. The city’s folk and blues com-

munity, centered around the old Ash Grove club, inspired him to pick up the guitar and banjo, and at fifteen he left school for a cross-country odyssey, eager to be the next Dylan.

His first success came back in Los Angeles, via several singles recorded as the first half of lyme & cybelle, a duo on the White Whale label. From there, he moved to studio work and commercial jingle writing, touting cheap wine and Chevrolets. A solo album (“Wanted Dead or Alive”), recorded for Imperial under the auspices of Kim Fowley and released in 1970, won him a spot on the *Midnight Cowboy* soundtrack, but its crude arrangements and shoestring production yielded abysmal sales. Disillusioned, he took a job as keyboard player and musical director for the Everly Brothers, meeting several of the musicians that would later play on his Asylum projects. Among them were guitarist Waddy Wachtel and a green kid named Lindsey Buckingham.

By the mid-’70s, Zevon, now married and increasingly alienated from both Los Angeles and the music business, was ready to turn his back on both. Packing their bags and selling off their record collection, Zevon and his wife Crystal headed for Europe, eventually settling in the Spanish coastal town of Sitges. There Warren found a job playing piano and singing requests in a bar run by David Lindell, an Irish mercenary soldier turned barkeep. Lindell’s bloodthirsty reveries (which later appeared in his lyrics for the “Excitable Boy” cut *Roland the Headless Thompson Gunner*) dovetailed with Zevon’s fascination with mortality as a literary theme. Most of the songs on “Warren Zevon” began to take shape at this point, and the young couple considered making Sitges their permanent home.

One fateful link with Los Angeles remained, however. Jackson Browne had continued sending letters and cassettes of works-in-progress, and when he won applause for his concert renditions of Zevon songs like *Werewolves of London* and *Carmelita*, he stepped up his efforts to en-



# BACKBEAT



## Warren Zevon

by Sam Sutherland

*Don't the sun look angry through  
the trees  
Don't the trees look like crucified  
thieves  
Don't you feel like desperados under  
the eaves  
Heaven help the one who leaves\**

**W**ith those lines, recorded in the final months of 1975, Warren Zevon brought a new American myth back to earth. Like the Eagles Glenn Frey and Don Henley, Zevon was returning to a classic western fable. But instead of en-

larging the Rock Outlaw to wide screen proportions and central-casting detail, he aimed at its heart. His desperados—like Butch and Sundance in the final frames of George Roy Hill's alternately caustic and sentimental film—sensed the posse's tightening net, itself a metaphor for the end of an age. But rather than holing his outlaws up in a turn-of-the-century cantina, Zevon trapped them in a Hollywood hotel, "listening to the air-conditioner hum," caught in their own passivity.

"Warren Zevon," the songwriter's

first Asylum album, signaled the beginning of a period of self-examination for the Southern Californian rock elite. Jackson Browne, a friend since 1968, was producer and mentor, having helped secure the Asylum contract and an earlier publishing deal, and the sessions drew an all-star supporting cast of Eagles, Beach Boys, and Fleetwood Mac members. Zevon's open-ended but thematically coherent song cycle shared some of his peers' prized themes, yet his perspective was more detached and disturbingly more candid. Like Browne, he often drew on his own past. But he did so with a dry-eyed, bluntly un sentimental diction closer to the hard-boiled prose of a detective novel than the poesy of a Sensitive Singer / Songwriter. If he alluded to the same heroic western past evoked by the Eagles on "Desperado," he also updated it, venturing into the back alleys and bedrooms where heroes and villains alike dropped their masks.

Zevon skewered the narcissism then beginning to cloud the L.A. vision without disengaging himself entirely. On the album's subtlest song, *The French Inhaler*, he pointedly placed himself "with these phonies in this Hollywood bar," only to qualify them as "these friends of mine." Such contradictions were indicative of his willingness to seriously probe emotional catastrophes even as he lampooned them. From elegiac neoclassical ballads to manic rock rave-ups, his vignettes anticipated the tougher, smarter stance that his more successful peers—including Browne ("The Pretender"), the Eagles ("Hotel California"), Fleetwood Mac, and Linda Ronstadt—would later take.

But even as Zevon exposed the desperado, his own rocky past and emotional conflicts made him a candidate for a no less romanticized role, that of artist as victim. As reflected in his songs and magnified in live performance, his obsessions—violence, death, and madness among them—seemed both process and product of a life that danced along the edge.

By the time he released his next Asylum album, "Excitable Boy," he was grappling with new pressures and old

# The Tape Deck

by R. D. Darrell

## Reeling onward and upward

Steadily growing production and brightening prospects mark the open-reel scene. Barclay-Crocker introduces a promising new label, Spectrum, and soon will be adding a giant, Philips. (The latest catalog, No. 5, with supplementary bulletins, is available to potential customers for \$1.00 from Barclay-Crocker, 11 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10004.) And on the West Coast, the Reel Society has announced its takeover of the Stereotape production contracts. (For its new catalog and supplements, costing \$2.00, and "Improved Purchase System" information, write the Reel Society, P.O. Box 55099, Valencia, Calif. 91355.)

I have no Society review copies as yet, but two debut Spectrum/B-C reels (\$7.95 each) that have arrived contain programs that are new to me. Frieder Bernius' Stuttgart Chamber Choir and soloists present three Mendelssohn motets and two psalms in fervent, warmly sonorous performances (D 103). And Wolfgang Rübsum plays four Magnificat organ suites by the obscure early-eighteenth-century French composer Jean Adam Guilain impressively but on a thickly Romantic instrument, the Marienstatt Abbey Church's Rieger organ (D 102).

Of wider and livelier appeal is Carl Nielsen's opera buffa masterpiece, *Maskarade*, by the Danish Radio Chorus and Orchestra under John Frandsen. The work, consistently delightful in itself, is persuasive testimony to the exceptional musical potential of the Danish language (Unicorn/B-C W 0350, two reels, notes and texts, \$26.95). Those who relish, as I do, the inimitable sound of period instruments in Handel, will enjoy the distinctive playing of Nikolaus Harnoncourt's *Concentus Musicus* ensemble in recent recordings of the great *Alexander's Feast* and *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (Telefunken/B-C O 6.35440, double-play reel, \$18.95, and E 6.42349, \$8.95, respectively, both with notes and texts). There's also first-rate singing of Dryden's texts by British soloists and the Stockholm Bach choristers in ideally transparent recording.

## Quintessential cassette bargains

The latest releases in Pickwick's Quintessence series (\$5.98 each music-cassette) feature exceptionally valuable programs that almost excuse the lack of notes. The reissued 1969 Emil Gilels "Live

at Carnegie Hall" recital (2P4C 2708, two cassettes) is well-nigh essential for its dramatically bardic Medtner *Sonata reminiscenza* and provocative for the Russian virtuoso's idiosyncratic Beethoven, Bach-Busoni, Bach-Siloti, Chopin, Prokofiev, and Ravel. Stokowski's will exult in the reissue of his 1960 *Symphony of the Air/United Artists* version of Beethoven's Seventh (P4C 7110)—now with the original extensive third-movement cuts restored and two famous Stokowski transcriptions of Frescobaldi and Palestrina added. Gifted young Russian conductor Yuri Temirkanov leads the Leningrad Philharmonic in one of the most electric and festive performances (1975) of Stravinsky's complete ballet score *Petrushka* I've ever heard (P4C 7147). And in the first of a new import series (HSC 3010A, \$5.98), there's a sure best-seller: musical leprechaun James Galway's best version yet of the Mozart flute concertos. His dexterity and zest are matched by Andre Prieur's New Irish Chamber Orchestra in these performances taken from a New Irish Record Company original, c. 1973.

## Symphonic sets and series

The latest complete set of Brahms symphonies and overtures is the most sonically resplendent of all (London four-cassette box CSA5 2406, \$35.92). Sir Georg Solti's monumental treatments may not please all tastes (I, for one, prefer Bernard Haitink's leaner-textured lucidity), but the golden Solti/Chicago sonorities are unmatched even by Herbert von Karajan's Berlin Philharmonic. As for the latter performers, their Brahms set for Deutsche Grammophon (3371 041) benefited from superbly controlled playing and gleamingly vivid recording, qualities again apparent in their latest symphonic boxes: Mozart's Nos. 32, 35, 36, and 38-41 (DG 3371 038, \$26.94; also available in three separate cassettes) and Tchaikovsky's Nos. 1-3 (DG 3371 053, \$26.94). Both sets imperiously seize and hold one's admiring attention, yet some of us are left unshaken by what seems more the conductor's than the composers' eloquence.

Arabesque brings back the 1965 Schubert series, featuring Denis Vaughan and the Orchestra of Naples, that RCA let go out of print far too soon. Vol. 1, with *Symphonies* Nos. 1-4, two Italian overtures, and the *Zauberharfe* incidental music (9045-3, two boxes, three cassettes, \$20.94),

points up the musicological value of Vaughan's readings, cleansed of score errors. He and his Neapolitans bring more verve to the early symphonies than anyone since his mentor, Beecham.

Two of the best-known Bruckner symphony series are back in the news. Three of Eugen Jochum's Berlin Philharmonic performances now reappear on DG's midpriced Privilege label: the 1967 Fourth (3335 111, \$6.98, minus the five motets included in the original two-disc edition); the 1964 Eighth (two cassettes, 3372 077, \$13.96); and the 1966 Ninth (3335 173, \$6.98, minus the *Te Deum* in the original two-disc set). They all stand up remarkably well, especially the Ninth. Nevertheless, I've long preferred Haitink's more personalized readings, so I welcome the remake of his 1967 Concertgebouw recording of the Bruckner Seventh, now with Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* as filler (Philips 7699 113, two cassettes, \$19.96). The new version is immensely rewarding and a happy augury of Haitink updatings to come.

The flow of Mahler symphonies continues unabated with additions to the Karajan/DG and James Levine/RCA Red Seal series. Karajan's latest Fourth, with the Berlin Philharmonic and soprano Edith Mathis (DG 3301 205, \$9.98), is another of his brilliant, highly idiosyncratic readings, enchantingly recorded, though my review copy had somehow lost its A-side right channel entirely. Levine's Sixth (RCA ARK 2-3213, double-play cassette, \$17.96) shows once again his ability to combine Romantic warmth and searching clarity. It might have been even more successful had it featured not the London Symphony, but the Philadelphia Orchestra, which is consistently magical in his Ninth (ARK 2-3461, two cassettes, \$17.96).

There is an impressive reissue, too, from Rafael Kubelik and the Bavarian Radio Symphony: the 1971 Mahler Eighth, with various soloists and choirs, now filled out with the 1969 Adagio from the Tenth Symphony (DG Privilege 3372 053, two cassettes, \$13.96). Kubelik and his forces (including Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as Pater Ecstaticus) do their best to control Mahler's heaven-storming ambitions in the *Symphony of a Thousand*, but already the powerful, apparently close-up recording shows some signs of inadequacy—at least in comparison with the awesome 1972 Solti/Chicago version on London. **HF**

what more accurate biographical material than Arabesque's gush.

On both discs, matrix (but not take) numbers, original issue numbers, dates, and accompaniment data are given in tabular form; there are no texts or translations. As suggested, the notes should be taken with a grain of salt: Lemnitz "is the only singer known to me to have both played and recorded the Marschallin, Octavian and Sophie," we are told—but she certainly never recorded a note of Sophie, and I can find no trace of her ever having sung it at all. (Lotte Lehmann certainly sang all three, but she recorded only the Marschallin.) D.H.

**ORIGINAL SOUNDS OF THE 1890s.**

**H** Various performers. [Stephen Jabloner, prod.] Westwood LP 501, \$7.98 [from Berliner Gramophone Co. and United States Gramophone Co. originals, 1894-99] (Westwood Records, 2131 Greenfield Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025).

No historically minded audiophile can deny the inestimable value of this uniquely (to the best of my knowledge) extensive documentation of the pre-Victor Emile Berliner discography. Represented in the twenty-two examples from the catalogs of the Berliner Gramophone Company and Berliner's United States Gramophone Company are Sousa's Band (three examples), the U.S. Marine Band, and the Banda Rosa; the Haydn (male) Quartet (two examples, one composed by Berliner); a comic monologue; operatic arias and pop songs; banjo, clarinet, cornet, saxophone, and trombone solos—certainly a varied period selection.

Equally undeniably, however, everything here is aurally intolerable. The original recording speeds ranged between 57 and 70 rpm, and while the restorers may have found the right overall speed in most instances, they still reproduce only too candidly the variations from the norm. The resultant pitch (and other) distortions are likely to bring on severe attacks of seasickness. Heavily shrouded in a pervasive virulent scratch (our term "surface noise" is wholly inadequate to describe what went on in disc grooves in those Dark Ages), these selections are almost all complete sonic travesties of the voices, timbres, and sonorities of their performers. The only place for this is a museum—and filed there not among the art treasures, but among the coprolites of antiquity. R.D.D.

**ANDRÉS SEGOVIA:** The EMI Recordings 1927-39. For a review, see page 54.

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gangen" in Wagner's "Träume," where the consonants have sufficient bite to give the image a memorable concreteness without ever disrupting the continuity of flowing tone). For the full impact of this aspect of her art, one must turn to the live-performance stuff, such as the two-disc collection on BASF 22 22110. After listening to virtually all of Lemnitz' recordings, I came away with the strong impression that she found the recording studio, with its concentration on a mechanical perfection that was not really her best stock in trade, to be an inhibiting ambience—that she was at her best and most spontaneous when caught unawares, as it were.

Still, some of the tracks on the Arabesque disc suggest her dramatic intelligence (and the scene with the Armed Men in the Beecham *Zaubersflöte* stands as fine evidence of her powers of emotional commitment). The *Lohengrin*, with Torsten Ralf, extends only through the tenor's "Athmet du nicht," but we get strong suggestions of Elsa's growing instability (more of the scene, with a better *Lohengrin*, Franz Völker, is in the BASF set, the same performance once on Urania 7019). In the rather drastically cut duet from Tchaikovsky's *Enchantress*, she acts rings around the stentorian Helge Roswaenge, but even here there are passages where caution dominates. The Mozart, Strauss, and Weber selections have their moments, but are short on basic thrust for my taste. As an example of Lemnitz' Verdi, I should have preferred the *Otello* arias, which are firmer than the later *Travatore* selections (her "Ritorna vincitor" for DG, sung in German, is an exceptionally fervent performance, and the postwar *Aida* arias, in Italian, less securely sung, are also impressively characterized).

Perhaps wisely, Arabesque has avoided Lemnitz' song recordings, most of which I find disappointing—the notable exception is the DG set of Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with piano, still the most satisfying recording known to me (the wartime radio tape once issued by Urania is rather less secure vocally). But the singer who so often sounds tremulous, clumsy, and dynamically unvaried on the HMV *Lieder* records must have been otherwise in the recital hall, for that final recital on Roco is intensely communicative, showing the sixty-year-old singer still in firm command of a true balance of word and tone. (The other late recording worth a search is the DG *Rosenkavalier* disc, which finds her in firmer voice than either of the Urania complete sets; she is a touching and knowing Marschallin.)

Miliza Korjus (b. 1912?) came to the Berlin Opera, as Gilda, a year before Lemnitz. Her origin is a matter of some doubt;

officially, her birthplace is given as Warsaw, but the generally reliable Kutsch-Riemens dictionary of singers opines that "it would be closer to the truth to say that she was born in a Swedish colony in Wisconsin and later went to Europe to study singing." Be that as it may, she indubitably made a sensation in Berlin, and recorded forty-two sides for HMV/Electrola in 1934–36, before decamping to Hollywood, where she starred in *The Great Waltz*, one of MGM's flossier pseudo-biographical musicals, with music by the late Dmitri Tiomkin after (a long way after) Johann Strauss Jr. Somehow, her career never moved much beyond that acme (or nadir, depending on your point of view). MGM made no further films with Korjus; she lived in Mexico for a while, made a Spanish-language film, *Caballeria del Imperio*, and then returned for a North American concert tour in 1944–45, to considerable acclaim. Between 1938 and 1947 she recorded sixteen sides for Victor, four each from the two films, and two batches of coloraturized Strauss waltzes. Since 1946 she has not sung in public; in the 1960s some new recordings appeared on her own label, Venus, of which I heard only a few, somewhat discouraging excerpts.

Korjus appeared sufficiently in public to confirm that she had a voice of genuine power; though her major fame came from radio, records, and films, she was not merely an electronic phenomenon. Arabesque has advertised her as a "high-C-above-C" [sic] soprano, but they must be confusing her with the uninteresting Erna Sack; the highest she ever went on records was A flat above high C (in the Meyerbeer *Dinorah* aria, not on the Arabesque reissue). More to the point, she wasn't simply a high-note freak, for her middle and lower ranges were surprisingly full in tone and rich in color. Technically, her facility was hardly equaled between Tetrzini and Sutherland. Her special skills included glittering high staccatos, fantastically clean articulation of scales (including chromatics and the descents that so many otherwise accomplished singers have difficulty with), and rapid-fire repeated notes. She could evidently trill on only a few notes above the staff, and on occasion her intonation just misses the precision that her needle-sharp focus of tone requires.

Rehearing the Korjus recordings in sequence, I have noted two general points. First, she had not much sense of words, of human drama; sometimes you cannot ever decide what language she's singing in, and there is never once the kind of penetrating illumination that a Lemnitz can achieve with a single word. This would correspond with her evident preference for concerts

over opera, and with the fact that, by and large, she is stylistically happier in light music (she recorded hardly anything from the serious song literature, only pop-concert stuff). I can't discern any wit or character in her *Rosina*, for example; she's the epitome of the empty-headed canary, without an iota of rhythmic elasticity. This might seem perfect for Offenbach's *Olympia*, but it doesn't turn out that way, somehow—even a mechanical doll shouldn't be as dull as this!

The second point worth noting is that Korjus did become, in some sense, a more interesting singer (though not a more theatrical one) in the course of her Berlin recordings. The sheer mechanical accuracy of the 1934 stunts, such as the Adam and Proch variations, is leavened by a growing awareness (whether on her part or that of her advisors and arrangers, I cannot say) of what she could do best, vocally and musically. The results are some rather spectacular examples of what should probably be called High Berlin Radio Camp, such as a maniacal version of *Funiculi, funiculari* with Korjus soaring away in the stratosphere, many octaves above a chugging chorus and twanging mandolins—and with a verve and spirit lacking in most of her operatic selections. Two numbers from the film *Der Student von Prag*, tailored by Theo Mackeben, are very sophisticated in their emphasis on the erotic suggestiveness of her midrange portamento and their exploitation of her ability to sustain legato melodies with fairly full tone at a considerable altitude.

I'm sorry Arabesque hasn't given us much of that aspect of Korjus, for it's more fun than the mostly dutiful operatic stuff. The best of this lot is the Lakmé material, in which the cool perfection is not inappropriate. But I miss the spectacular *Vespri siciliani* aria, with its startlingly clean articulation of the grace notes and its amazing cadenza, even though it's a dramatic nullity, a mere stunt like the Dell'Acqua *Villanelle* (which features a hair-raising ascending chromatic scale). Worth hearing, too, are the Rimsky-Korsakov numbers, such as the kitschy but bewitching *Coq d'Or* aria, perfectly tuned and seductively lilting; the swoopy legato that often makes her operatic recordings desperately unstylish (e.g., "Ermani, involami!") seems just right here, paired with the sleek café fiddling of Barnabas von Geczy.

In short, for the Best of Korjus—and I trust you will not entertain aesthetically elevated expectations of what that entails—I suggest you look into the two-disc set from which the Arabesque selection (except for the Benedict variations) is apparently derived (1C 147 30819/20); this includes thirty of her German recordings, and some-

(mono). Tape: 9028, \$6.98 (cassette). [From HMV originals, recorded 1938-42 and 1948.]

**MOZART:** Le Nozze di Figaro: Porgi amor; Dove sono. R. **STRAUSS:** Arabella: Nach dem Matteo; So wie Sie sind (with Gerhard Hüscher, baritone). **TCHAIKOVSKY:** The Enchantress: My fate is strange (in German; with Helge Roswaenge, tenor). **VERDI:** Il Trovatore: Nei tornei... Tacea la notte placida; Timor di me!... D'amor sull'ali rosee (in German). **WAGNER:** Lohengrin: Das süsse Lied verhallt... Athmest du nicht (with Torsten Ralf, tenor). **WEBER:** Der Freischütz: Wie nahe mir der Schlummer... Leise, leise... Alles pflegt schon längst der Ruhe; Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle.

**MILIZA KORJUS: Arias and Songs.**

**H** Miliza Korjus, soprano; various accompaniments. **ARABESQUE** 8013, \$6.98 (mono). Tape: 9013, \$6.98 (cassette). [From HMV originals, 1934-36.]

**ADAM:** Le Toréador: Ah! vous dirai-je, maman (in German). **ALABIEV:** The Nightingale (in German). **BENEDIĆ:** Il Carnevale di Venezia (in German). **DELIBES:** Lakmé: D'ou viens-tu?... C'est le Dieu de la jeunesse (in German; with Marcel Wittrisch, tenor); Bell Song (in Italian); Blanche Dourga (in Italian). **DONIZETTI:** Lucia di Lammermoor: O giusto cielo... Il dolce suono... Ardon gl'incensi. La Zingara: Fra l'erbe cosparse (in German). **OFFENBACH:** Les Contes d'Hoffmann: Les Oiseaux dans la charmille (in German). **PROCH:** Air and Variations. **ROSSINI:** Il Barbiere di Siviglia: Una voce poco fa (in German).

Arabesque's first release includes two vocal reissues devoted to sopranos much favored by collectors in the 1930s. Though both made their Berlin operatic debuts at about the same time, Tiana Lemnitz and Miliza Korjus had little else in common: Lemnitz, a "youthful-dramatic" soprano (as the Germans dub that Elsa/Eva/Sieglinde type of voice), sang primarily in Germany; Korjus, a coloratura, went to Hollywood for a film and soon afterward vanished from the public scene.

Tiana Lemnitz (b. 1897) came to international prominence more slowly than her contemporaries Elisabeth Rethberg and Maria Müller, and didn't make recordings until 1934, when she joined the Berlin State Opera after fourteen years in such theaters as Aachen and Hannover. Berlin remained her base of operations; the advent of the Second World War aborted a prospective Metropolitan Opera engagement and, except for a trip to Argentina in 1950, she stayed close to home after the war. She re-

corded extensively: seventeen sides for DG/Polydor (1934-37); thirty sides for HMV/Electrola (1937-42), plus participation in the Beecham *Zaubersflöte* (Turnabout THS 65078/80) and the Ramin *St. Matthew Passion*; some nineteen sides for HMV in 1948; two complete operas in Dresden for Urania (early 1950s), conducted by Rudolf Kempe: *Der Rosenkavalier* (Octavian) and *Die Meistersinger*; for DG in 1951, the final parts of Acts I and III of *Der Rosenkavalier*, this time as the Marschallin; and a final 1953 single disc for Telefunken. Beyond that, a good deal of wartime broadcast material has turned up, first on Urania, more recently on Rococo and BASF/Acanta; part of her 1957 Berlin farewell recital was issued on Rococo 5320.

Lemnitz' HMV recordings have been rather well circulated recently. From England comes a three-disc set (World Records SHB 47) including all of the operatic titles except the two *Trovatore* arias and the postwar remake of the big *Freischütz* aria, plus a side of Lieder, most of which were never published on 78s. From Germany, there is a two-disc set (EMI/DaCapo 1C 147 28989/90), entirely operatic, omitting only the duet from Tchaikovsky's *Enchantress* and, again, the postwar *Freischütz* remake (not as good as its predecessor, the remake is on Rococo 5273, if that's still available). Now Arabesque has licensed from EMI a single-disc selection, all operatic, all prewar save "Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle," from the third act of *Freischütz*.

The conventional image of Lemnitz as a fine-grained soprano who specialized in floating high pianissimo tones is purveyed in Arabesque's liner notes, which tell us that she was "nicknamed by aficionados [sic] 'Piano Lemnitz.'" The basic sound is indeed gentle, velvety. At its freshest, in the early DG recordings (she was already thirty-seven), the middle range is rich and creamy, and the same basic timbre extends up and down without difficulty or change of texture. (Two Preiser discs include much of her DG material: LV 101 is operatic, LV 126 songs.) Even as early as the first HMV recordings, there is a tendency for the tone to tremble, for the pitch to cause uncertainty—clearly, from the remarkably precise tuning of difficult intervals in Wolf songs, a mechanical rather than a musical problem. The richness of the middle range wanes, the lower notes become hollow, the top chancy.

Fortunately, there is more to Lemnitz than simply a lovely sound that became undependable. An accurate and refined musician, she must have also been a vivid vocal actress; though consistently maintaining a true legato, she managed to give words much bite and color (e.g., "in ödes Nichts ver-

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No. 8, in A minor; No. 11, in D minor.\*  
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Bruno Salvi and Romana Pezzani,  
violins; Angelicum String Orchestra, Al-  
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And still they come. There are 144  
seasons by Vivaldi in the current catalog; if  
I listened to each at its appropriate time  
over the years, that would take me past re-  
tirement (assuming that insanity had not  
struck first). Two more complete versions  
of the four-concerto set may not, you might  
think, be noticed, but one of these does  
make a difference to the present lineup.  
John Holloway's recording with Jean-  
Claude Malgoire is on original instruments,  
and that places it in a much smaller group  
with those by the Harnoncourts (Tele-  
funken 26.35386) and Standage/Pinnock  
(Vanguard VSD 71257), which R. D. Dar-  
rell reviewed in May. I agree with his as-  
sessment that Nikolaus Harnoncourt's out-  
rageously stimulating version is more  
exciting than Simon Standage's eminently  
musically reading, but I find the solo viol-  
in playing the least satisfactory aspect of  
the Telefunken. On the new recording,  
Holloway provides a brilliant account of  
the solo part—metallic and scintillatingly  
rhythmic—which is the best of the three  
available on "baroque" instruments. Mal-  
goire's support is less distinguished, with  
some sloppy ensemble, though the sounds  
are right, tempos are good, and the per-  
formance is spirited.

Arthur Grumiaux's conventional  
version is also recommendable chiefly for  
the solo part, which he plays with an un-  
failing beauty of tone and a strong, solid line.  
But the heaviness is a bit wearying in these  
supremely imaginative pieces and the sup-  
port from Les Solistes Romands (whoever  
they may be) is confined to reliable back-  
ground work. Among modern chamber-or-  
chestra versions, I enjoy Alan Loveday with  
the Academy of St. Martin's (Argo ZRG  
654) and Itzhak Perlman with the strings of  
the London Philharmonic (Angel S 37053).

The rest of these recordings provide  
an admirable roundup of current Vivaldi  
playing styles and present a wide range of  
his very finest concertos. The Berlin Phil-

harmonic's new *L'Estro armonico* is,  
blessedly, not directed by its lord and mas-  
ter, but by its concertmasters: Thomas  
Brandis and Leon Spierer share the direc-  
tion, share the solo concertos, and are  
joined by their colleagues Emil Maas and  
Hans-Joachim Westphal in the four-violin  
pieces. Brandis provides a typical Berlin  
sound: smooth and lush, rounded with vi-  
brato but always impeccably tuned. Spierer  
is slightly more jerky, more incisive, and  
more fun; the contrast between the players  
makes for lively versions of the two-violin  
concertos. Generally, the fast movements  
are vivid and exciting, and some (like the  
first Allegro in the F major Concerto for  
Four Violins) are outstanding. But the slow  
movements get bogged down in an effort to  
be beautiful. The continuo is balanced far  
in the background. Michael Talbot pro-  
vides excellent notes.

*La Stravaganza*, neglected among Vi-  
valdi's concerto collections, contains some  
ravishingly beautiful movements. These  
reissued performances by Felix Ayo and I  
Musici are reliable, but their pounding  
overinsistence becomes tiring; there is a  
suspicion of routine here. The continuo ei-  
ther blares on an organ or else seems com-  
pletely absent: The Largo of the Sixth Con-  
certo is a strange duet between a luscious  
violin and a distant unassisted cello. I re-  
member the marvelous last movement of  
this work on I Solisti Veneti's recording—  
full of passion and fervor. So too is its edi-  
tion of the Op. 11 Concertos on Musical  
Heritage, by far the most enjoyable record  
in this bunch. The sound is heavy, but it  
lives and breathes and captures the atmos-  
phere of the hot Italian sun, the rippling  
water, and the sheer sensuality of sound  
that seems to me to account for Vivaldi's  
popularity today. Piero Toso is the best of  
the violin soloists.

Though there is a good record to be  
made out of Bach's transcriptions of Vi-  
valdi's concertos set alongside the originals,  
the Angelicum version on Musical Heritage  
is not it. Alessandro Esposito's organ play-  
ing is adequate, but the strings in the Vi-  
valdi are below the standard of the other  
ensembles reviewed here. The sleeve does  
not help by reversing the order of works on  
both the Vivaldi and the Bach sides of the  
disc. N.K.

## Recitals and Miscellany

TIANA LEMNITZ: *Operatic Arias*.

■ Tiana Lemnitz, soprano; various ac-  
companiments. ARABESQUE 8028, \$6.95

of note values, probably to make life easier for his wind players in their cascading runs a few pages later.

Böhm's profound natural musicality has produced a performance that is leisurely yet energetic, pointed, and well sprung rhythmically, wise and mellow but young and fresh. For him the LSO plays more impressively than it did for three other conductors currently listed in SCHWANN: with greater precision and polish than for Markevitch (Philips Festivo 6570 047), more intense commitment than for Horenstein (Vanguard Cardinal VCS 10114), and more honesty than for Stokowski (RCA ARL 1-0426). You'll search long and hard to find a version where the bassoon sounds so convincingly *pppppp* before the outburst of the first-movement development. In the second movement's trio, the menacing tread of the timpani is compellingly omnipresent, though Böhm (like Haitink and Furtwängler) is unduly negligent about the aching harmonies provided by second violins and violas. The finale is the crowning jewel of this interpretation, well proportioned, without self-pity, but with a wonderfully regretful ardor from the strings beginning at bar 38 and a *Götterdämmerung*-like finality and devastation in the brass chorale after the big climax. First his Tchaikovsky Fourth and Dvořák *New World* (DG 2531 098) and now this; it becomes increasingly apparent that the belated entry of the Slavic literature into Böhm's discography is a major event. A.C.

**VIVALDI: The Four Seasons, Op. 8, Nos. 1-4.**

**B** John Holloway, violin; Grand Ecurie et Chambre du Roy, Jean-Claude Malgoire, cond. [Georges Kadar, prod.] ODYSSEY Y 35930, \$4.98.

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Solistes Romands, Arpad Gérecz, cond. PHILIPS 9500 613, \$9.98. Tape: 7300 730, \$9.98 (cassette).

**VIVALDI: L'Estro armonico, Op. 3.**

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Thomas Brandis and Leon Spierer, violins and dir. [Hans Hirsch, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 100, \$29.94 (three discs, manual sequence). Tape: 3370 034, \$19.96 (two cassettes).

**VIVALDI: La Stravaganza, Op. 4.**

**R** Felix Ayo, violin; I Musici. PHILIPS FESTIVO 6779 029, \$13.96 (two discs, manual sequence). Tape: 7650 029, \$13.96 (two cassettes). [From PHILIPS 2-940, 1965.]

**VIVALDI: Concertos (6), Op. 11.**

Piero Toso\*, Giuliano Carmignola\*, and Juan Carlos Rybin\*\*, violins; Pierre Pierlot\*\*, oboe; I Solisti Veneti, Claudio Sci-

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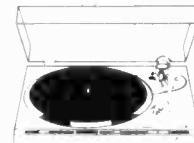
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moving Germanic deliberation. The latter problem does arise, however, in parts of the B flat Impromptu (No. 3), which he plays as if the meter were 4/4 rather than alla breve. Similarly, his reading of the roguish F minor (No. 4) is uncharacteristically mild-mannered; this sensitive but slightly plodding and benign studio version contrasts with the rollicking concert performance Serkin gave last year prior to the recording session.

The recorded sound is superbly melodic, far superior to that usually accorded this elusive artist. The four impromptus, standing alone, might seem short measure, but Serkin—always responsible—scrupulously observes every repeat, and the timings are not all that scanty. This is an important addition to the catalog. H.G.

**STRAVINSKY: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D—See Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2.**

**TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 4, in F minor, Op. 36.**

Philharmonia Orchestra, Vladimir Ashkenazy, cond. [Richard Beswick, prod.] LONDON CS 7144, \$8.98. Tape: CS5 7144, \$8.95 (cassette).

**TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6, in B minor, Op. 74 (Pathétique).**

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond. DG PRIVILEGE 2535 165, \$6.98 (mono). Tape: 3335 165, \$6.98 (cassette). [Recorded in concert, April 1951.]

Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS 9500 610, \$9.98. Tape: 7300 739, \$9.98 (cassette).

London Symphony Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond. [Werner Mayer, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 212, \$9.98. Tape: 3301 212, \$9.98 (cassette).

The seasons of a conductor's life are represented in these four recordings. Only Vladimir Ashkenazy is a countryman of Tchaikovsky's, but the blood tie ultimately matters less than podium experience, for the Russian pianist still seems tentative in his new career. There is nothing remiss in his pacing, and the sound is appropriate in timbre and hue for this darkly Slavic music. But much is underaccented, insufficiently phrased, and bland (e.g., the gracious waltz fantasy of the opening movement, so insinuating in the recent Böhm/London Symphony recording, DG 2531 078, March). Rhythm is slack, and articulation smudgy. I still recommend Böhm, Maazel (Telarc 10047), Abbado (DG 2530 651), and Markevitch (Philips 6570 153).

The three *Pathétiques* document the craft of unequivocal masters at various stages of maturity. Bernard Haitink, at age fifty, supersedes his Sixth of a decade earlier (Philips 6500 081, deleted). Wilhelm Furtwängler was sixty-five when he gave this concert performance in Cairo, Egypt; the Privilege pressing (released in Europe some four years ago) marks its first appearance on discs, though his 1938 studio recording (currently on Seraphim 60231) has long been revered by many. Karl Böhm has waited till his mid-eighties to record the *Pathétique*, a work on the periphery of his repertoire throughout his long career.

Once again Haitink plays down virtuoso elements (though he hardly wants for virtuoso resources), shapes the music with reserve and dignity, and treats Tchaikovsky's wickedly fast metronome markings with a certain skepticism (shared, it would seem, by most of his colleagues, Toscanini and Solti being notable exceptions). Philips again provides warmth and a deep perspective that generally favors richness over detail. So what's different? There is a little more clarity this time, and Haitink has put some weight on his reading. He pays closer heed to the tempo fluctuations in the first movement, and its pavanelike coda is now closer to the quarter note = 80 marking. The scherzo is firmly controlled, free of the disconcerting shifts at bars 275 and 282 in the old version (a different take spliced in?).

Furtwängler's 1938 reading remains uniquely compelling for its nobly arching lines, its freely singing but never saccharine melos, the flexible molding of the awkward 5/4 meter of the second movement, and the bronzen sonority of the prewar Berlin Philharmonic. On tour in 1951, the Berliners were occasionally jittery. (Note the beginning of the scherzo.) Moreover, one has to contend with audience noises, and relative to the Seraphim, less clean and even sonics and a higher price tag. Yet there are treasureable moments here (e.g., the prominent, menacing tremolandos from low strings at bar 210 of the scherzo). Many of the differences between the two Furtwängler recordings parallel those between the two Haitinks. The basic massiveness is still here, but there is more plasticity of movement within episodes (a matter in Furtwängler's case of improvisatory freedom as opposed to Haitink's more analytic scrutiny of the printed page). Furtwängler, too, has speeded up the first-movement coda. And in the scherzo, the Privilege performance also eliminates an abrupt gear shift that appeared on Seraphim; in the 1938 rendition, he sliced the tempo exactly in half at bar 219, vitiating the diminution

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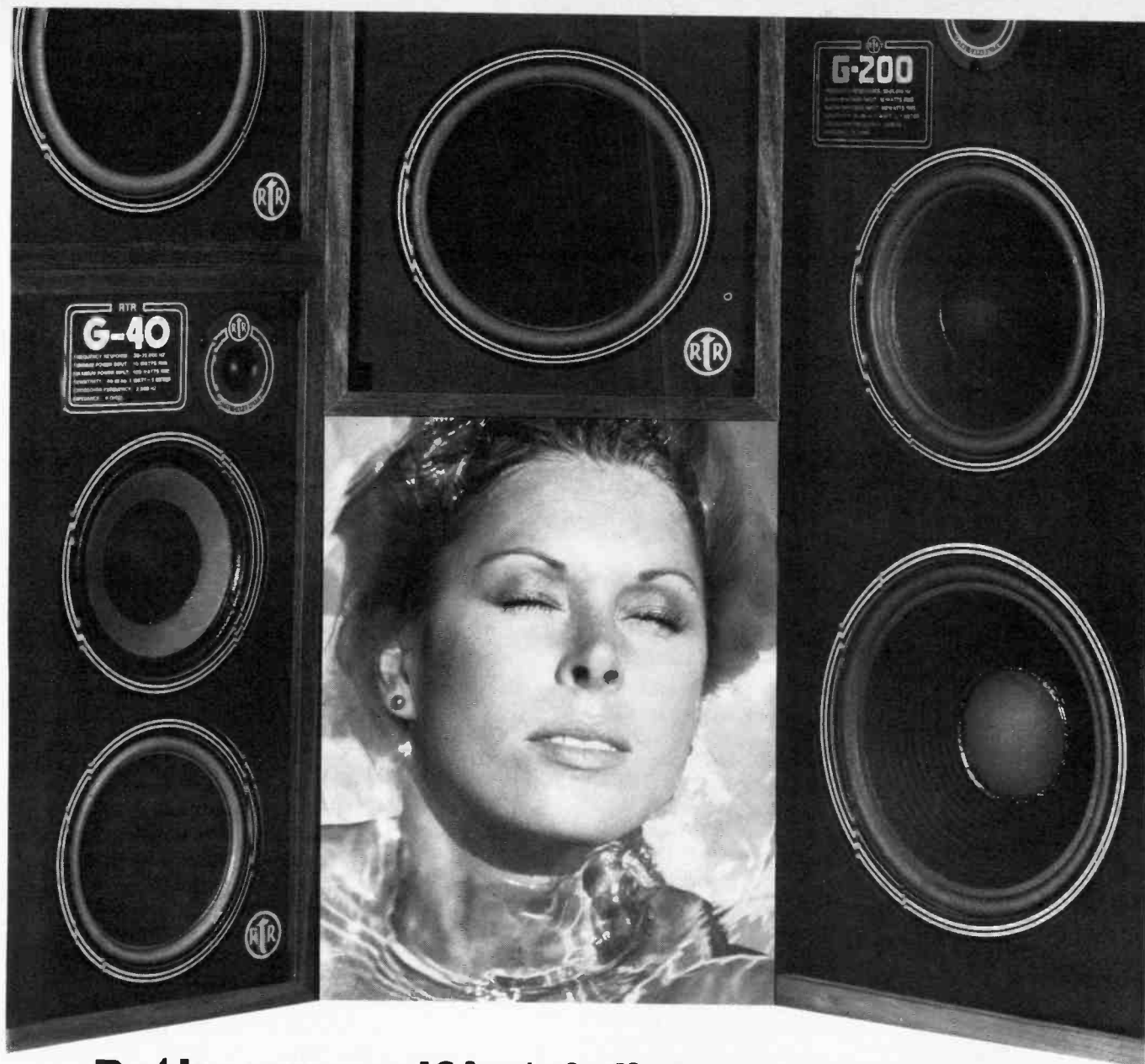
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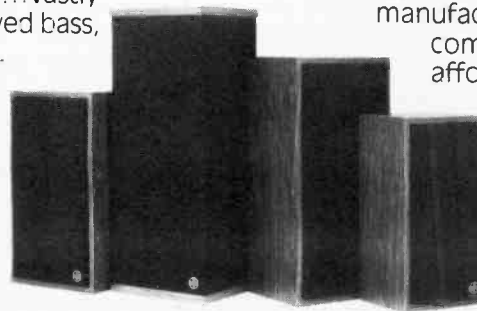
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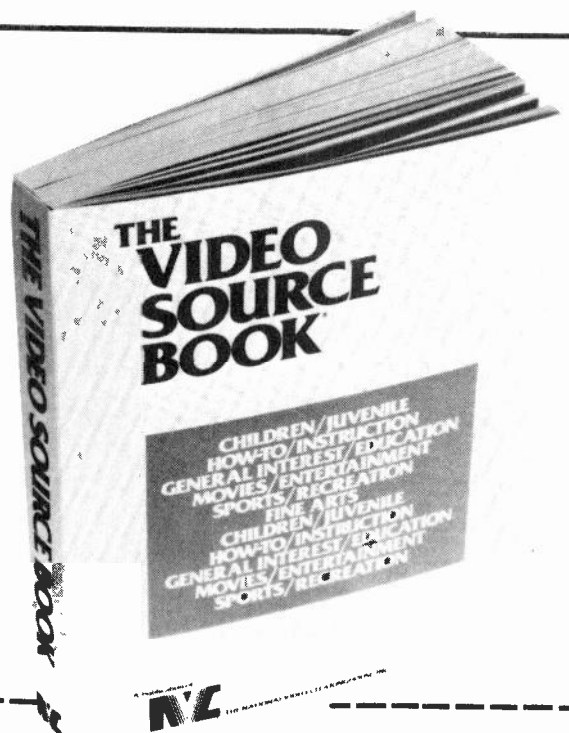
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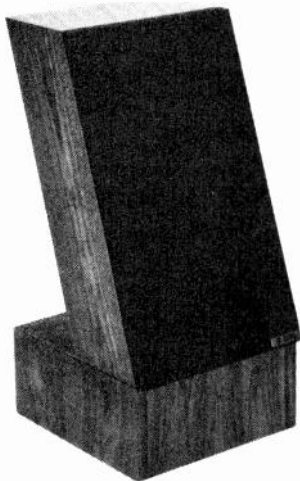
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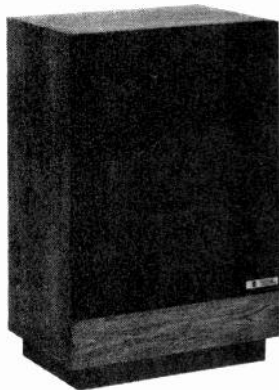
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Symphony No. 1 in D  
Kondrashin, Moscow Phil. Quin. 7144
- MARAIS, MARIN**  
Pièces de viole, Book 4  
Oberlin Baroque Ens. (2): in G; D'un gout étranger † Pièces en trio; Sonnerie Gasparo S-202
- Pièces en trio (1692)  
Oberlin Baroque Ens. (in e) † Pièces de viole; Sonnerie Gasparo S-202
- La Sonnerie de Ste. Geneviève du Mont de Paris**  
Oberlin Baroque Ens. † Pièces de viole; Pièces en trio Gasparo S-202
- MASCAGNI, PIETRO**  
Cavalleria Rusticana  
Caballé, Hamari, Carreras, Manuguerra, Muti, Phil. Orch., Ambrosian Op. Cho. [I] † Leoncavallo 3-Ang. SZX-3895
- MEDTNER, NIKOLAI**  
Piano Music  
Rollé: Fairy Tales, Op. 20; Fairy Tales, Op. 26; Stormy Sonata in f, Op. 53/2 Fin. 9026
- MENDELSSOHN, FELIX**  
Capriccio brillant for Piano & Orchestra, Op. 22  
Ponti, Schmidt-Gertenbach, Berlin Sym. † Chopin: Allegro; Liszt: Totentanz Turn. 34735
- Symphony No. 5 in d, Op. 107, "Reformation"  
Muti, Phil. Orch. † Schumann: Sym. 1 Ang. S-37601(Q)
- MOZART, WOLFGANG AMADEUS**  
Arias  
Von Stade [I] † Haydn, Rossini: Arias Phi. 9500716; ●7300807
- Concerto in B♭ for Bassoon, K.191  
Walt, Ozawa, Boston Sym. † Clar. Con. DG 2531254; ●3301254
- Concerto in A for Clarinet, K.622  
Wright, Ozawa, Boston Sym. † Bsn. Con. DG 2531254; ●3301254
- Concerti (2) for Flute, K.313, 314  
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- Concerti (25) for Piano & Orchestra  
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- No. 27 in B♭, K.585  
Perahia, English Ch. Orch. † Con. 12 Col. M-35828; ●MT-35828
- Mass in c, K.427, "The Great"  
Marshall, Palmer, Rolfe Johnson, Howell, Marriner, St. Martin's Acad. & Cho. [L] Phi. 9500680; ●7300775
- Musical Joke, K.522  
Amadeus Qr, Seifert, Klier † Ser. K.525 DG 2531253; ●3301253
- Serenade in G, K.525, "Eine kleine Nachtmusik"  
Amadeus Qr † Musical DG 2531253; ●3301253
- Il Sogno di Scipione, K.126  
Mathis, Gruberova, Popp, Moser, Ahnsjö, Schreier, Hager, Salzburg Mozarteum Orch. & Cho. [I] 3-DG 2709098
- Symphonies (41)  
No. 25 in G, K.183  
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- No. 29 in A, K.201  
Maazel, Berlin Radio Sym. † Sym. 25 Quin. 7149
- MUSSORGSKY, MODEST**  
Pictures at an Exhibition  
Mehta, NY Phil. † Ravel: La Valse Col. M-35135; ●MT-35135
- OFFENBACH, JACQUES**  
Orpheus in the Underworld: Overture  
Kunzel, Cincinnati Pops (see Over.) Turn. 34744
- Overtures  
Kunzel, Cincinnati Pops Orch.: Orpheus in the Underworld; Vert-Vert (Kakadu); La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein; La vie Parisienne; L'Île de Tulipatan; La belle Hélène; Barbe-bleu Turn. 34744
- PETTERSSON, GUSTAF ALLAN**  
Symphony No. 8 (1969)  
Comissiona, Baltimore Sym. DG 2531176
- PROKOFIEV, SERGEI**  
Concerto No. 2 in g for Violin, Op. 63  
Szeryng, Rozhdestvensky, London Sym. † Sibelius: Con. Quin. 7150
- Quartet No. 2, Op. 92 (1941)  
Fine Arts Qr † Shostakovich: Qr 3 Gasparo S-203
- Sonatas (10) for Piano  
No. 7 in B♭, Op. 83  
Di Bonaventura † Chopin: Son. 3 Sine ULDD-13 (D, Dir.)
- RACHMANINOFF, SERGEI**  
Concerto No. 2 in c for Piano, Op. 18  
Drescher, Richter, Paris Sym. (& Prel. in c♯, Op. 3/2; Rhap., Var. 18) CMS/Sum. 5081; ●45081
- Moments musicaux (6), Op. 16  
Laredo (see Piano) Col. M-35836; ●MT-35836
- Piano Music  
Laredo (Vol. 6): Seven Pieces, Op. 10; Six Moments musicaux, Op. 16 Col. M-35836; ●MT-35836
- Songs  
DeGaetani, w. Kalish [R]: O, nye grusti, Op. 14/8; Siryen, Op. 21/5; Khristos Voskries, Op. 26/6; Noye otvyechali, Op. 21/4; K dyetyam, Op. 26/7; Vyetyer Pyeryelyotnyi, Op. 34/4; Davno v lyubvi, Op. 14/3; Uzh ty, niva moyal, Op. 4/5 † Chausson: Songs None. 71373
- RAVEL, MAURICE**  
Boléro  
Amsler, Lucerne Pro Art Orch. † Tchakovsky: Ser. CMS/Sum. 5009; ▲45009  
Bernstein, Orch. National (& Bolero on The Mighty Moog, synthesized Kazdin & Shepard) Col. MX-35860
- La Valse

# Recent Record Releases

The following listings are excerpts from the "New Listings" section of the May Schwann Record and Tape Guide. Some listings contain a cross-reference (\*) to other works on the recording. Letters in brackets refer to language used in vocal music (G, German; E, English, etc.). Cassette editions are indicated by the symbol ●. Quadriphonic discs are indicated by a Q following the record number; digital discs are indicated by a D following the record number.

## BACH, JOHANN SEBASTIAN

Suites (4) for Orchestra, S.1066/9

Maazel, Berlin Radio Sym.

2-Phi. Fest. 6770031; ●7650031

## BARBER, SAMUEL

Adagio for Strings (from Quartet, Op. 11)

Musici † Bartók:Roumanian; Britten:Simple; Respighi:Ancient

Phi. Fest. 6570181; ●7310181

## BARTÓK, BÉLA

Concerti (3) for Piano & Orchestra

Bishop-Kovacevich, Davis, London Sym.

(Nos. 1,3), BBC Sym. (No. 2) † 2-Pianos Son.

2-Phi. 6768053

Roumanian Folk Dances

Musici † Barber:Adagio; Britten:Simple; Respighi:Ancient

Phi. Fest. 6570181; ●7310181

Sonata for 2 Pianos & Percussion

Argerich, Bishop-Kovacevich, Goudsward, De Roo † Piano Con.

2-Phi. 6768053

## BEETHOVEN, LUDWIG VAN

Bagatelles, Op. 33, 119, 126

Boepple (& Für Elise, Bagatelles K.52,53)

Orion 80375

Concerto in C for Violin, Cello, Piano, Op. 56

Mutter, Ma, Zeltser, Karajan, Berlin Phil.

DG 2531262; ●3301262

Fidelio, Op. 72

Behrens, Ghazarian, Hofmann, Adam, Ridderbush, Solti, Chicago Sym. & Cho.

[G] 3-Lon. LDR-10017(D)

## BERG, ALBAN

Adagio, from Chamber Concerto (arr. Berg)

Boston Sym. Ch. Players † Debussy:Prélude; Schoenberg:Ch. Sym. Op. 9

DG 2531213; ●3301213

## BRAHMS, JOHANNES

Symphonies (4)

No. 2 in D, Op. 73

Stokowski, Nat'l Phil. † Tragic

Col. M-35129; ●MT-35129

Tragic Overture, Op. 81

Stokowski, Nat'l Phil. † Sym. 2

Col. M-35129; ●MT-35129

## BRITTEN, BENJAMIN

Simple Symphony for Strings, Op. 4

Musici † Barber:Adagio; Bartók:Roumanian; Respighi:Ancient

Phi. Fest. 6570181; ●7310181

## CHAUSSON, ERNEST

Songs

DeGaetani, w. Kalish [F]: Amour d'antan, Op. 8/2; Le Charme, Op. 2/2; Le Temps des lilas, from Op. 19; Les Papillons, Op. 2/3; Le Colibri, Op. 2/7; La Caravane, Op. 14 † Rachmaninoff: Songs

None. 71373

## CHOPIN, FRÉDÉRIC

Allegro de Concert in A, Op. 46

Ponti † Liszt:Totentanz; Mendelssohn: Cap.

Turn. 34735

Sonata No. 3 in b for Piano, Op. 58

Di Bonaventura † Prokofiev:Son. 7

Sine ULDD-13 (D, Dir.)

## DEBUSSY, CLAUDE

Estampes, for Piano

Lipson-Gruzen † Piano; Pour Desto 7182

Piano Music

Lipson-Gruzen: L'isle joyeuse; La cathédrale engloutie † Estampes; Pour

Desto 7182

Pour le piano (suite)

Lipson-Gruzen † Estampes; Piano

Desto 7182

Prélude à après-midi d'un faune

Boston Sym. Ch. Players (arr. Eisler) † Berg:Adagio; Schoenberg:Ch. Sym. Op. 9

DG 2531213; ●3301213

## DVOŘÁK, ANTONIN

Symphony No. 7 in d, Op. 70

Ormandy, Phila. Orch.

RCA ARL1-3555; ●ARK1-3555

Szell, Cleveland Orch. Odys. Y-35931

## ELGAR, EDWARD

Serenade in e for Strings, Op. 20

Neel, Toronto Ch. Orch. † Arne; Britten: Simple

Sine ULDD-10 (D, Dir.)

## GIBBONS, ORLANDO

Anthems & Songs of Praise

Wulstan, Clerkes of Oxenford [E]: Praise the Lord, O My Soul; Lord, We Beseech Thee; O Clap Your Hands; Hymns and Songs of the Church, Nos. 1,20,31,5,22;

O Lord, In Thy Wrath; I Am the Resurrection; Hymns and Songs of the Church, Nos. 9,13,67,47,18,24,3,4; See, See, the

Word is Incarnate; Hosanna to the Son of David

None. 71374

## GINASTERA, ALBERTO

Quartet No. 1, Op. 20 (1948)

Philarte Qr † Turina Gasparo S-201

## GOTTSCHALK, LOUIS MOREAU

Piano Music

Rigai: The Banjo, Op. 15; La Scintilla - Mazurka, Op. 20; Ojos criollas, Op. 37; Marche funèbre, Op. 64 (Posth.); Bamboula, Op. 2; Souvenir de Porto Rico, Op. 31; The Dying Poet; Le bananier,

Op. 5; Pasquinade - Caprice, Op. 59; Berceuse, Op. 47; Tournament Galop

Folk. 37485

## HANDEL, GEORGE FRIDERIC

Concerto Grosso in F

Boulez, NY Phil. † Over.; Royal

Col. M-35833; ●MT-35833

Overtures

Boulez, Phil. Ch. Orch. (Berenice) † Con. grosso in F; Royal

Col. M-35833; ●MT-35833

Royal Fireworks Music

Boulez, NY Phil. † Con. grosso in F; Over. Col. M-35833; ●MT-35833

Water Music (complete)

Leitgeb, Salzburg Pro Musica Orch.

CMS/Sum. 5044; ●45044

## HAYDN, (FRANZ) JOSEPH

Arias

Von Stade † Mozart, Rossini:Arias

Phi. 9500716; ●7300807

Symphony No. 88 in G

Walter, Col. Sym. † Sym. 100

Odys. Y-35932

Symphony No. 94 in G, "Surprise"

Moralt, Vienna Radio Orch. (mono) † Sym. 99

CMS/Sum. 5041; ●45041

Symphony No. 99 in Eb

Leitgeb, Salzburg Pro Musica Orch. † Sym. 94

CMS/Sum. 5041; ●45041

Symphony No. 100 in G, "Military"

Walter, Col. Sym. † Sym. 88

Odys. Y-35932

## HOWE, HUBERT S., Jr.

Improvisation on the Overtone Series

(1977)

Elect. Eqpmt † Violette

Op. One 53

## LALO, ÉDOUARD

Symphonie espagnole for Violin & Orch.,

Op. 21

Grumiaux, Rosenthal, Lamoureux Orch. † Saint-Saëns:Havanaise; Intro.

Phi. Fest. 6570192; ●7310192

## LEONCAVALLO, RUGGERO

Pagliacci

Scotto, Carreras, Nurmela, Allen, Muti, Phil. Orch., Ambrosian Op. Cho. [I] † Mascagni

3-Ang. SZX-3895

## LEWIS, ROBERT HALL

Combinazioni I for Clarinet, Violin, Cello

& Piano (1973); Combinazioni II for 8

Percussionists & Piano (1974); Combinazioni IV for Cello & Piano (1978)

Running, Sonies, Barnet, Orkis; Eastman

Percussion Ens.; Kates, Senofsky

Orion 79363

## LISZT, FRANZ

Piano Music

Goldberg: Les jeux d'eaux a la Villa d'Este; Chasse-neige; Bagatelle without

Tonality; Historical Hungarian Portraits:Michael Mosonyi; Von der Wiege bis zum Grabe; Mazeppa

Orion 79365

Totentanz for Piano & Orchestra

Ponti, Schmidt-Gertenbach, Berlin Sym. †

Chopin:Allegro; Mendelssohn:Cap.

Abbado, the LSO, and *Nevsky*, however, proves fissionable. The great patriotic cantata explodes with all the frenetic energy, earthy vitality, and decibel power anyone could want.

Elena Obraztsova's mezzo, though it hasn't quite the enveloping warmth of Lili Chookasian's alto in the Schippers recording (Odyssey Y 31014), is rich, and her "Field of the Dead" is fervent. Special praise goes to the LSO Chorus (directed by Richard Hickox) for sounding so persuasively Slavic as well as to DG's team for capturing the antiphonal interplay of the part-writing so effectively. There's grand ceremonial sweep to the second section, "Song of Alexander Nevsky," and the final "Entry into Pskov," and Abbado whips his forces into an impatient flurry of jingoistic bravado in the fourth part, "Arise, ye Russian People."

In the instrumental department, the opening of "Battle on the Ice" is especially spine-tingling, thanks to the violas' taut sul ponticello playing and the pointed articulation of the violins' sixteenths. But like Schippers, Abbado lets the tempo get a little out of hand, especially at cue 51, where he seems to overlook the *l'istesso* tempo marking. For an object lesson in bringing tension as well as excitement to this movement, I still turn to Reiner.

DG's sonics are wide-ranging and brilliantly transparent, though with a few obtrusive "control room" balances. The twenty-year-old Reiner recording has a little more natural perspective; RCA captured the tubas and bass drum in "The Crusaders in Pskov" better than anyone has since. But that performance is sung in English, reason enough for most listeners to prefer Abbado's. Having reacted so equivocally to the last few *Nevskys* (Ormandy, RCA ARL 1-1151; Slatkin, Candide QCE 31098), I'm delighted to encounter a modern one that, if not perfect, at least inspires genuine enthusiasm. A.C.

**PROKOFIEV:** Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in A, Op. 82; *Suggestion diabolique*. **HAYDN:** Sonata for Piano, No. 62, in E flat.

Viktor Friedman, piano. [Giveon Cornfield, prod.] ORION ORS 79341, \$7.98.

**PROKOFIEV:** Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in A, Op. 82. **MARTIN:** *Eight Preludes*.

Robert Silverman, piano. [Giveon Cornfield, prod.] ORION ORS 79328, \$7.98.

The Sixth is the least familiar of that trio of sonatas (Nos. 6, 7, 8) that Prokofiev composed during the war years 1940-41, and although its sprawling expansiveness has presented problems to most interpreters, the work has considerably more interest and substance than the Eighth, more

often performed. (The Seventh, like it or not, is something of a classic.)

One could hardly imagine two performances more dissimilar than these. Viktor Friedman, a Russian pianist who immigrated to this country in 1974, plays with all the stops out, with blockbuster sonority, and with constant asymmetrical stresses; to translate from the Russian: He hauls the music about mercilessly, oscillating between galvanic communication and gimpy illogicality. Robert Silverman, on the other hand, offers a prim and proper traversal that ends up being tasteful but flavorless.

On superficial hearing, Friedman's bolder address seems to betoken a virtuosity that Silverman lacks, but it is actually the Canadian who is better equipped technically. His chords are squarely centered, and his passagework glistens. Friedman frequently lapses into a smeary opacity, with bloodless pianissimos and hard, unfocused fortes. He has greater flair, but his playing suggests that his fingers are not making proper contact with the keys.

Although Silverman's reading cannot remotely compare with Richter's 1960 Carnegie Hall account (Columbia, long out of print), his well-reproduced disc offers excellent compensation by way of Frank Martin's preludes, in performances that have intellectual shape, cogent clarity, and a degree of authority that his Prokofiev lacks. Friedman's *Suggestion diabolique* sounds oafish rather than caustic, and he plays the great Haydn sonata (another Richter specialty and a Horowitz favorite) with tempo variations and gear shifts that are convincing and musically at the start of the first-movement development but utterly harebrained in the second theme of the finale. Moreover, he is hampered by clattery, distortion-laden, amateurish reproduction. H.G.

**SCARLATTI, D.:** Sonatas for Harpsichord (42). For a review, see page 52.

**SCHUBERT:** Impromptus (4), D. 935.

Rudolf Serkin, piano. [Judith Sherman, prod.] COLUMBIA M 35178, \$8.98.

Though Serkin seems to have avoided the earlier D. 899 Impromptus, even in recital, he has been giving splendid performances of this set for years and has actually attempted to record them before. (An announced monophonic release, coupled with the A major Sonata, D. 664, never materialized.)

This recording is worth the wait. Serkin seems relaxed, employing more color than usual and toying with the rhythm just enough to alleviate his growing inclination toward squareness and slow-

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that runs more than 300 pages in full score and well over an hour in performance. Oddly, Goethe was not one of Liszt's heroes. Astonishingly, it took Liszt only two months to complete the composition.

The symphony's three movements are remarkable in all kinds of ways. Famous as the first conscious twelve-note tone row ever written, the first theme characterizes Faust, and the complexity of his character is mirrored by the thematic involutions of the first movement. The scoring of the Gretchen movement is marvelously delicate and lovely. The finale, portraying Mephistopheles, is a brilliant conception. Mephistopheles takes possession of Faust by using his themes, cruelly parodied. The movement rises to a savage climax signaling the defeat of Mephistopheles, followed by a startling apotheosis—a magical setting of the final "Chorus Mysticus" from Part II of Goethe's *Faust*, more familiar to today's listeners in the setting by Mahler.

This is Ferencsik's second try at the symphony, his earlier version with the Budapest State Chorus and Orchestra and tenor Alfonz Bartha having appeared on DG. Leonard Bernstein also recorded the work twice—first with the Choral Art Society and New York Philharmonic (Columbia MG 699) and more recently with the Tanglewood Chorus and Boston Symphony Orchestra (DG 2707 100). In addition, there are readings by Ansermet (London Treasury STS 15296/7), Horenstein (Turnabout TV 34491), and Beecham (Seraphim S 6017), the last being one of the great performances in the history of recording. Thus, the competition is keen.

Ferencsik easily outdistances his earlier version here; the orchestral playing is much more opulent and exciting, and the engineering is superior. In addition, he bests both Bernstein recordings, although the DG engineers do a remarkably fine job with the Boston Symphony performance. Ferencsik's more controlled approach wears better than Bernstein's impassioned heaven storming. The Horenstein and the Ansermet are both out of the running.

While I would not retire the cherished Beecham from my shelves, I would certainly make room for Ferencsik, especially since the odd side contains a fine reading of the much-neglected "Der nächtliche Zug," a subtler piece than the well-known "Tanz in der Dorfschenke," which is the *Mephisto* Waltz in orchestral guise. The same pairing appears in the Ansermet set, but the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande is no match for the Hungarians in this repertory. I.L.

**MARTIN:** Eight Preludes—See Prokofiev: Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in A, Op. 82.

**MOZART:** Concertos for Piano and Orchestra: No. 21, in C, K. 467; No. 24, in C minor, K. 491.

Prague Chamber Orchestra, Paul Badura-Skoda, piano and cond. [Eduard Herzog, prod.] QUINTESSENCE PMC 7123, \$5.98.

Though this C major Concerto seems to be a first for Badura-Skoda, a highly seasoned, but sometimes bland, Mozartean, he has made at least two previous recordings of the C minor. Comparison of the new version with the one he made a quarter-century ago with Felix Prohaska is revealing and sometimes surprising. Predictably, the emotions have changed, the early *Sturm und Drang* now replaced by a more objective "controlled passion." For a while, Badura-Skoda was becoming a bit arch and stilted in his phrasing, but the emotional simplicity—a pleasing feature of the first version—has returned.

One might expect the acclaimed Mozart scholar to take greater license with embellishment than the talented fledgling, but, as it turns out, certain passages in the first movement that were filled out before are now left bare, and the starkness may indeed provide the greater characterization. Badura-Skoda used to use the conservative Hummel cadenza; here he introduces his own equally conservative and less conclusive interpolations.

Not everyone will respond to these scrupulously balanced, contained readings; these are both "big" concertos, the C major festive and grand, the C minor rather demonic in its intensity. Badura-Skoda the pianist is a trifle cool (a feature he shares with Perahia in the latter's excellent recordings, K. 467 on Columbia M 34562, K. 491 on M 34219), but Badura-Skoda the conductor more than compensates. The crisp, well-balanced orchestral playing is spiced by characterful woodwind vibrato, beautifully audible in the 1970-72 Supraphon engineering. This belated domestic release is an attractive bargain. H.G.

**PROKOFIEV:** Alexander Nevsky, Op. 78.

Elena Obraztsova, mezzo-soprano; London Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, cond. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 202, \$9.98. Tape: 3301 202, \$9.98 (cassette).

**COMPARISON:**  
Elias, Reiner/Chicago Sym.  
RCA AGL 1-1966

I've complained in these pages that the London Symphony's previous *Nevsky* (Previn's on Angel 5 36843) was too civilized and that Abbado's recent Prokofiev disc (the *Scythian* and *Lt. Kije* Suites with the Chicago Symphony on DG 2530 967) was insufficiently raucous. The combination of

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arranging anything for any medium, selecting at will from full-length scores, omitting indicated reprises, and reordering sequences, Newman's choices are often fascinating, even when they are most puzzling. Certainly some of his decisions are defensible: particularly the reordering of the final *Fireworks* Minuets (a common enough practice nowadays, first adopted, I believe, by Sir Hamilton Harty) and the more novel placement of both Minuets before rather than after the *Réjouissance*. This does make for a more climactic windup, but the question remains: Why didn't Handel want it that way?

The performances are quintessential Newman, now frantically fast and slapdash, now idiosyncratically mannered, now electrifyingly devil-may-care—and almost never what one expects. Moreover, his obvious delight in stretching permissiveness to the limit seems to have infected the annotators. The English translation (on both disc label and jacket) of the title of the third movement from the *Fireworks* ("La Paix") is "The Peach." Well, why not? A single letter's difference isn't enough to bring a "ruddier than the cherry" blush to anyone's cheek. R.D.D.

HANDEL: Sonatas for Violin and Continuo (6), Op. 1—See Bach: Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord.

HAYDN: Sonata for Piano, No. 62, in E flat—See Prokofiev: Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in A, Op. 82.

### LANGLAIS: Organ Works.

Ann Labounsky, organ of St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, Pennsylvania. [Frederick J. Bashour, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4127/9, \$17.85 (\$13.35 to members) (three discs, manual sequence). (Add \$1.25 shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

Trois Poèmes évangéliques, Op. 2; Trois Paraphrases grégoriennes, Op. 5; Nine Pieces, Op. 28; Suite brève, Op. 38; Incantation pour un jour saint, Op. 46; Suite folklorique, Op. 61; Huit Chants de Bretagne, Op. 161.

Had it not been for his blindness, as Ann Labounsky reminds us in her biographical sketch of the composer, Jean Langlais would probably have followed in his father's footsteps as a stonemason. Instead, he was sent to the Institution des Jeunes Aveugles (Institution for Blind Youths) in Paris, where the extensive musical training program confirmed his gifts in quite another direction. After further studies at the Paris Conservatoire (where his teachers included Dupré, Dukas, and Gallon), he gained the prestigious appointment

as organist of the Parisian Church of Sainte-Clotilde, and in the succeeding years he has established himself as one of the most revered organist/composers of the century.

Langlais's sizable output includes concertos for organ and orchestra, chamber music, songs, and church music, but his oeuvre is dominated by more than 250 pieces for solo organ. Often improvisatory in character and richly colored—revealing the influence of his teacher and predecessor at Sainte-Clotilde, Charles Tournemire—these works span a large stylistic range from gentle modality to uncompromising dissonance. Some of his music relies more on obvious effects than on real substance, and occasionally the naiveté wears a bit thin (as in the *Suite folklorique*), but the best works (including, of course, the early *Trois Paraphrases grégoriennes*) reveal enduring qualities.

Among the most devoted of Langlais's many students, the American Ann Labounsky has an amply justified reputation as a skillful and sensitive interpreter of his music, and I am told that Langlais himself has expressed the wish that she make the definitive recording of his organ works. We are fortunate, then, to have this attractive anthology, recorded on an unusually sympathetic large Casavant organ (in the design of which she was a collaborator) in a suitably resonant acoustic. With what seems like lavish hyperbole, by the way, the cover of the record box describes the contents as representing Langlais's "Complete Organ Works"; I hope that the typesetter merely neglected to add "Vol. 1" and that future installments will indeed add up to an integral presentation. In any case, the present performances are fastidious—in both technical command and respect for the composer's indications of registration and expression—and affection for the music is everywhere obvious.

In a welcome departure from past practice, MHS has provided quite acceptable recorded sound—nicely atmospheric and with very solid bass. And, apart from the sometimes overly Romantic commentary, Labounsky's notes on the music provide helpful insights. S.C.

### LISZT: A Faust Symphony\*; Two Episodes from Lenau's "Faust."

György Korondy, tenor\*; Male Chorus of the Hungarian People's Army\*, Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra, János Ferencsik, cond. [János Mátyás, prod.] HUNGAROTON SLPX 12022/3, \$17.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

It becomes increasingly evident that Franz Liszt's greatest orchestral masterpiece is the tremendous *Faust* Symphony, a work



35833, \$8.98. Tape: MT 35833, \$8.98 (cassette).

**HANDEL** (arr. Newman): *Water Music: Suite. Royal Fireworks Music: Suite.*

**A** Anthony Newman, organ. [Michael Kellman and John Kilgore, prod.] DIGITECH DIGI 103, \$14.98 (Soundstream digital recording; distributed by Sine Qua Non, 25 Mill St., Providence, R.I. 02904).

If you were as pleasantly surprised as I by Boulez' *Water Music* (Columbia M 33436, October 1975), you'll relish this belated companion release, in which he again demonstrates that at least one avant-garde specialist finds himself very much at home in the baroque era. Here, too, he brings to Handel's gloriously robust, even flamboyant, music not only his characteristic scrupulous control, but exceptionally vital and eloquent persuasiveness. The sonic qualities of these two New York recordings, probably made somewhat later than the *Water Music*, are, if anything, still better: richer, solider, even more expansive in stereo comparisons. Unfortunately, the new release isn't available in SQ-quad, as the *Water Music* originally was (but no longer is).

Apparently the only other Handel

recording left from Boulez' Philharmonic tenure, the magnificent Double (actually triple) Concerto No. 3, in F, is a fit companion for the *Royal Fireworks Music* in its superb evocation of the most full-blooded Handelian grand manner. Since it runs a shade under fifteen minutes, the side is filled out by the Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra's driving but heartfelt performance of the *Berenice Overture*, with its unforgettable, noble minuet melody. Despite the variety of producers (and presumably engineers) involved, there are no jarring sonic or acoustical anomalies.

So the preferred *Fireworks* now include Boulez' as well as the earlier favorites by Marriner (Argo ZRG 697, recorded 1972) and Menuhin (Angel S 36604, 1970)—unless you insist on period instruments, and I haven't yet encountered a fully satisfactory version. If you prefer the more raw qualities of the original winds and percussion, I strongly recommend Mackerras' London Symphony recording (Angel S 37404, reviewed March 1978). And for another fine, perhaps even more elated, performance of the double concerto—along with its B flat companion and the *Agrippina* and *Arianna Overtures*—don't overlook Marriner's (Angel S 37176, May 1977).

Now what about this Digitech disc?

Is there any conceivable justification for organ transcriptions of Handel's festive al-fresco music other than sheer whimsicality? What rationale is there for playing neither the complete *Water Music* nor one of the usual short suites, but an arbitrary choice of fifteen out of twenty selections? And why a digital recording? The frequency and dynamic ranges of the music and the timbre and sonority of the instrument Anthony Newman plays don't provide much in the way of spectacular sonics. No date or stop specifications are supplied for the "historic" Hilborne Roosevelt organ in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, but on the present evidence, it doesn't command any particular "authentic" or startling features. Though some of Newman's lighter registrations are delectable, to be sure, the more frequent full-organ sonorities are too often blaringly harsh—perhaps the fault of the engineering, which employs close miking and eliminates practically all acoustical reverberance.

Still, once I climb down from my critical high horse and doff my hanging-judge wig, I must admit that this program, like everything Newman does, often is uniquely provocative as well as infuriating—sometimes simultaneously. Granted the presumed baroque permissiveness in

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The score is an ever imaginative, sometimes startling combination of elements, beginning with the out-of-kilter organ that ushers in Act I, Scene 1, and continuing in that scene with an ensemble of deftly characterized street folks who quickly epitomize the rabble and masses the French leaders (one hesitates to say heroes) had to rouse. If these and other folksy scenes are reminiscent of Benjamin Britten, this is to the credit of both composers, since realism and individuality reign. And the Britten similarity does not persist. Eaton's constantly colorful musical language uses a raft of devices, both avant-garde and retrospective, for instruments and voices alike. His methods of fitting words to music are as precise, as rhythmically astute, and as creative as any that have surfaced in the last fifty years. The music is a vibrant commentary on the text, and instruments take on lives and personalities of their own.

Danton takes practically the population of Paris to perform: nine principal singers, more than two dozen minor characters, a mixed ensemble serving as Citizens and Rabble, a large chorus for the Crowd and the Volunteers, and a male chorus of political Delegates. Like Eaton's subsequent opera, *The Cry of Clytemnestra* (smaller, but no less ambitious in scope), Danton was first produced by the Indiana University Opera Theater in Bloomington. The provinces, you say. Well, Bloomington may not yet have Bloomingdale's, Soho, or Noho, but this is no product of the hinterlands in operatic terms. CRI's recording was taken from the original university presentation, and it is superb in every respect. Only applause between the acts (and at the end of the delicate love duet for Danton and his second wife, Louise) betrays that it was not taped entirely under closely monitored studio conditions. Balances seem perfect, and conductor Thomas Baldner lets all the colors and comments come through. While the live-performance circumstances surely gave the realization an extra bit of zest, the exigencies of the stage were never allowed to get in the way of purely technical accomplishment.

Eaton has written his principal vocal lines for virtuosos, men and women with dramatic force and flexibility and with ranges of more than two octaves. The Hoosier cast, however young, never cringes at these assignments, and even when the angular melodies zigzag all over the place, the values of characterization are never slighted. The large orchestra's parts are equally difficult, and here the achievements of the Indiana forces are even more impressive. In short, this is in no way a "student"

performance, and when special praise goes to James Anderson (Danton), Tim Noble (Robespierre), Gran Wilson (Desmoulins), Mary Shearer (Louise), and Edith Vanerette (Lucille), it applies at the highest professional levels. K.M.

**GOUNOD: Symphonies: No. 1, in D; No. 2, in E flat.**

Orchestra of the Théâtre du Capitole (Toulouse), Michel Plasson, cond. [Eric MacLeod, prod.] ANGEL SZ 37726, \$8.98. Tape: 4ZS 37726, \$8.98 (cassette).

Gounod the symphonist seems about as likely as Brahms the opera composer. Yet the prestige of the symphony was great, and Gounod, like many another French composer, wanted to try his hand at that most glamorous instrumental genre. Unlike the symphonies of Chaussou and Franck, his are more studies in a form basically alien to the French than serious attempts at composing a symphony. He seems to have had fun imitating the Viennese School—Schubert is the principal model, followed by Haydn and, in the Second Symphony, Beethoven, Weber, and Mendelssohn—and the imitations are rather skillful, but nowhere is there a personal tone or any substantial resemblance to French music. Anachronistic even in their day, today the works are mere curios.

The First has a certain freshness and a French elegance in the orchestration that make for pleasant listening, but the Second is pompous, grandiloquent, and pseudo-dramatic. Gounod falls into all the traps that await a French composer when he crosses the Rhine; his clichés are unending, and unlike the Viennese, he does not know when to break off a sequence. In the Largo, his attempts to be hymnic (the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth mesmerized all composers), to create long-breathed lines by sudden chromatic shifts, are futile. The work does, however, have a deceptively Mendelssohnian scherzo.

Michel Plasson's workmanlike, unexciting performances let the music tell the story, an approach that might work with Haydn but not with such clever, insubstantial music. The sound could also be better: While the woodwinds chatter nicely, and the strings are fair, the bass, horns, and timpani are dull. P.H.L.

**HANDEL: Royal Fireworks Music\*; Double Concerto No. 3, in F#; Berenice Overture\*\*.**

New York Philharmonic Orchestra\*\* and Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra\*\*, Pierre Boulez, cond. [Thomas Shepard\*, Andrew Kazdin\*, and Roy Emerson\*\*, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS M

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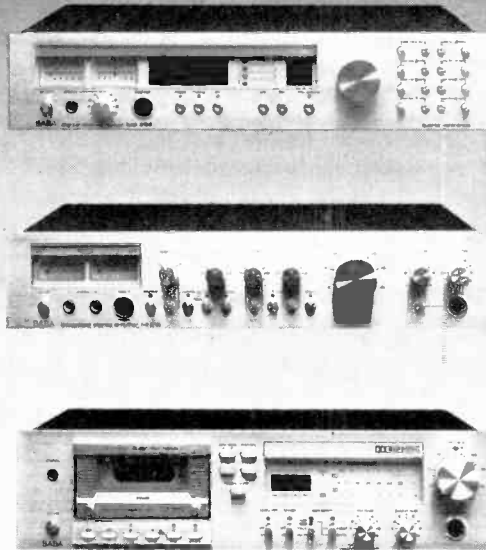
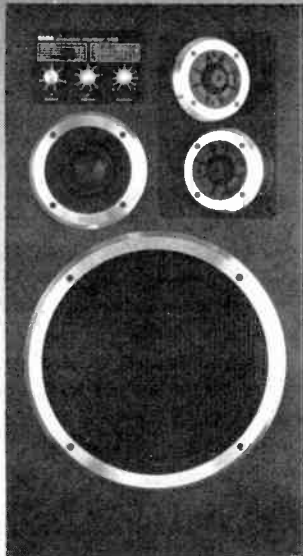
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the choicest being the rendering of "La Petite Pince-sans-rire" (someone who cloaks a mischievous sense of humor beneath a deadpan expression) as "The Little Prince Without Laughter."

Gilbert and Verlet have real strengths as well as substantial weaknesses, and their approaches are almost exactly complementary. Neither recording can be recommended without major reservations, but one could conceivably produce quite a fine complete version by combining the best movements from each. For lack of a better alternative, I suppose you'll need both—or neither. S.C.

**EATON: Danton and Robespierre.**

CAST:

Lucille Desmoulins	Edith Vanerette (s)
Gabrielle Danton	Nelda Nelson (s)
Louise Danton	Mary Shearer (s)
Fishwife	Debra Dominiak (ms)
Baker's Wife	Diane Coloton (ms)
Prostitute	Paula Redd (a)
Danton	James Anderson (t)
Couthon	Randy Hansen (t)
Camille Desmoulins	
	Gran Wilson (t)
Robespierre	Tim Noble (b)
Drunk	William Parcher (bs-b)
Saint Just	Kevin Langan (bs)
	Indiana University Opera Theater

Chorus and Orchestra, Thomas Baldner, cond. [Carter Harman, prod.] COMPOSERS RECORDINGS IUS 421, \$23.85 (three discs, automatic sequence).

From the very outset of *Danton and Robespierre*, one has to admire composer John Eaton. It took courage, not to mention self-confidence, to deal with political stresses of the late eighteenth century in the musical idioms of the late twentieth on a scale so grand that the comparison that leaps to mind is Meyerbeer. And though opera still thrives on nostalgic references, both subtle and not so subtle, few composers can indulge themselves to this extent and come through unscathed, accused of neither gimmickery nor cliché.

Only the most cynical listener would even think of leveling such accusations at *Danton*; Eaton's work stubbornly refuses to stoop to shoddiness, and his superb manipulation of tension and impeccable sense of theatrical timing show the sure hand of genius. I say "stubbornly" because there are touchy moments: the old tremolo trick to the line "their souls tremble like drops of water"; a glissando of disillusionment with the realization that "these are the forged letters, this is the false witness." But—and this is a big but—when the souls tremble, their fear is reflected to chilling effect in the

shaking of the women's voices; and the revealing glissando comes from the high strings that had, just seconds before, been writing those letters: They are the voices of the subversives as well as the voices of doom.

Patrick Creagh's libretto takes up the tale late in August 1792, when the young French Republic was threatened by Prussian invaders, and follows the resistance up to 1794, when both the heroic Danton and "The Incorruptible" Robespierre lost their heads. The words are not as eminently successful as the music. Creagh occasionally takes the short way out, and his sense of perspective sometimes seems vague: Is he posing in the eighteenth century, or looking back from the twentieth; is he or isn't he pretending to be French (the Gallic names sound strange in the otherwise American speech); is he consciously pitting the women's sensitivities against the men's cruder determinations, or is this a passing coincidence? The libretto reads as if it were a bad translation of itself (accenting the Meyerbeer comparisons). But the whole of the work is greater than the sum of its parts, as any successful opera should be. I, for one, couldn't care less about either Danton or Robespierre, yet despite the libretto's problems, I came out caring a lot about this theater piece and hoping that it will have a



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summary of the intervening dialogue—you can easily tell what is going on at any point. Karl Schumann's notes for the Kálmán are more diffuse, but much more helpful than Angel's Benatzky annotations. I still find this *Land of Smiles* fairly strenuous and much prefer the old Ackermann set, with Gedda twenty years younger (EMI/HMV SXDE 3044), but the Kálmán is enjoyable; perhaps Arabesque will follow it up with his *Csárdásfürstin*, a more original score.

D.H.

### COUPERIN: Pièces de clavecin, Book IV.

Kenneth Gilbert, harpsichord; Gian Lyman Silbiger, viole. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4072/5, \$23.80 (\$17.80 to members) (four discs, manual sequence) (Add \$1.25 for shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

Blandine Verlet, harpsichord; Christophe Coin, viola da gamba. TELEFUNKEN 36.35411, \$29.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

During the last years of his life, François Couperin suffered from more or less constant ill health, and his *Pièces des violes*, dating from 1728, appear to have been his last works. The fourth and final book of harpsichord pieces, published in 1730, was made up of earlier compositions, the last having been finished five years before. "I hope," wrote Couperin in his touching preface to the *Quatrième Livre*, "that my family will find in my manuscripts something to make them miss me, if regrets somehow serve us after life, but in any case one must have this idea in order to attempt meriting that illusion of immortality to which almost all men aspire." After 250 years, Couperin's immortality seems secure, and the simultaneous issue of two recordings of his *Quatrième Livre* speaks well for the enduring attraction of his music.

Kenneth Gilbert's recording represents the last installment in the Musical Heritage Society release of his complete survey of the Couperin *livres*. (Originally recorded by Radio Canada in 1970 and 1971, these performances have been available for some time in Europe on the French Harmonia Mundi label.) Blandine Verlet's version, on the other hand, is labeled "Vol. 1," suggesting that the other three *livres* may follow. Gilbert's performances are spread rather sparsely over four discs, while Verlet—at the expense of some second-half repeats—gets everything on three.

Gilbert is the Apollonian, the classicist, the aristocrat. Everything about his playing is precisely measured and controlled, and the inflections of rhythm, phrasing, and articulation are executed

with great finesse. At his best, he captures all the grandeur of "La Visionnaire," and in movements such as "La Harpée," "La Monflambert," "Les Ombres errantes," and "La Convalescente" his subtle rubato provides exquisite delights. At other times, however, his introspective approach is either overdone or simply inappropriate, and the deadpan results are disappointing. He misses all the humor in "La Petite Pince-sans-rire," and he is anything but audacious in "L'Audacieuse" and "La Muse victorieuse." "La Bondissante" is decidedly earthbound, and the "Menuets croisés" and "Les Tricoteuses" are merely monotonous.

Verlet, very much the Dionysian, is a dramatic—even flamboyant—player, and her boldly expressionistic style works well in the more strongly characterized pieces. "Le Trophée" is splendidly brassy, "La Bondissante" springs about with compelling energy, and there is no mistaking the tongue-in-cheek implications of "La Petite Pince-sans-rire." She is much more generous than Gilbert with rubato, lending just the right lurch to "L'Arlequine" (to be played "grotesquement," says Couperin) and providing some lovely effects in such subtler pieces as "Les Tricoteuses" and the "Menuets croisés." Elsewhere this very flexibility gets her into trouble, for rhythms are sometimes stretched well past the breaking point, destroying the shape and flow of the music. Quite aside from being played too fast, "La Convalescente" is grotesquely distorted by wayward rhythms, and there are some most unfortunate consequences in "Les Gondoles," "La Divine Babiche," "L'Exquise," and "Les Pavots." Also objectionable is her brusque execution of appoggiaturas—an interpretation that, in addition to sounding inelegantly impetuous, is of dubious historical authenticity. (Gilbert, by contrast, favors the more usual long appoggiaturas, but the effect is sometimes compromised by overly mechanical execution.)

Both performers use modern reproductions of eighteenth-century French harpsichords—Gilbert a Hubbard copy of a Hemsch, Verlet a copy by Derek Porteus of a 1733 Blanchet—but neither instrument, at least as recorded here, gives much pleasure. (The information on Gilbert's harpsichord, unaccountably omitted by MHS, comes from the Harmonia Mundi issue.) The Hubbard, lacking warmth, sounds rather wooden and boxy; Verlet's instrument fares better, but the treble is uncharacteristically muted, and the sonorous bass is exaggerated by the close-miked recording.

Musical Heritage provides very useful notes by Georges Beck (translated by Greer Garden), while Telefunken insults the buyer with the worst babble imaginable. Ludicrous mistranslations abound,

mous work, *Im weissen Rössl* (*White Horse Inn*), one may indeed question whether the term "Viennese operetta" is still usefully applied. I would incline to call it musical comedy, for the initial Viennese impulse (or its frequently strong sideline in Hungarian style) is present here only as second-hand period evocation. This is a musical that happens to be set in a summer hotel in the Salzkammergut just before World War I, so music in traditional Viennese styles appears—but also Tyrolean folk music and, less congruously, American popular song and (sort of) "jazz." Stylistic unity is thrown to the winds, and indeed several composers, including Robert Stolz, contributed numbers to the score.

Unveiled in Berlin in 1930, *Im weissen Rössl* quickly swept Germany, even invading the opera houses, which, in a time of economic depression and increasing political reaction, greedily embraced anything that would draw the public and avoid controversy. Kurt Weill, whose works faced extremely limited prospects in the German state theaters, called Benatzky's operetta "the most superficial type of theater," which it surely is. The prevalent *Zeitgeist* is ominously adumbrated in the trivial plot, as the invocation of nostalgia extends to the introduction of old Kaiser Franz Joseph as the *deus ex machina* to resolve the conventional amorous tangle: Before very long, a newer and less beneficent form of imperial authority would respond to German yearnings for simple answers imposed from above.

All that aside, the music is also not much more than trivial, and the local-color imitations (Tyrolean and American) are a shade plastic. When the Kaiser arrives to the strains of the *Rudetzkymarsch* (Johann Strauss Vater, vintage 1848), everything else we have heard is eclipsed by its directness and rhythmic vitality. Angel's recording, presumably derived from a Bavarian TV production, is presentable if not vocally luscious. The best voice is that of tenor Norbert Orth, who has some good numbers, while Peter Minich, in the lead, falls into what one might call "Shout-stimme" at crucial points. Anneliese Rothenberger's voice ages gracefully; the writing is not demanding, and the rapid tremor invading the voice is only slightly distracting. The Kaiser gets to "Rex-Harrison" a Viennese song—this and some other anachronistic details may be unique to this particular production, which lists Willy Mattes not only as conductor, but also as arranger. He directs with spirit, although not eliciting ideal polish from his forces.

More than any deficiencies of the performance, what is likely to impair your enjoyment of this recording (unless you

know German well) is the absence, not only of a libretto, but even of a plot summary that can be plausibly matched with the audible events. At least one number described as a feature of Act II is actually heard in Act I; the final events of the second act are not recounted at all; and so on. Since most of the musical numbers are not mentioned, there is also no specific and comprehensive attribution of the contributions of the various composers and lyricists to this many-handed score. At full price, this is inexcusable.

A superior solution to the problem is demonstrated in two concurrent operetta releases, Arabesque's reissues of the EMI sets of Lehár's *Das Land des Lächelns* (8055-2, two discs, \$13.96) and Kálmán's *Gräfin Mariza* (8057-2, two discs, \$13.96); these are the performances featuring Rothenberger and Nicolai Gedda that I reviewed in these pages in December 1973. In his notes for the Lehár, R. D. Darrell explains that reprinting of the libretto was not permitted by the publisher, and he gives a number-by-number account of the music, with a



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BELLINI: *Norma*.

## CAST:

Norma	Renata Scotto (s)
Adalgisa	Tatiana Troyanos (ms)
Clotilde	Ann Murray (ms)
Pollione	Giuseppe Giacomini (t)
Flavio	Paul Crook (t)
Oroveso	Paul Plishka (bs-b)

Ambrosian Opera Chorus, National Philharmonic Orchestra, James Levine, cond. [Roy Emerson, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS M3X 35902, \$15.98 (three discs, automatic sequence).

## COMPARISON:

Callas, Serafin/La Scala  
Sera. IC 6037

In the substantial, though poorly conceived, booklet that accompanies this set, the performance history of *Norma* is adumbrated through illustrations of Pasta (the creator of the title role in 1831) and such successors as Grisi, Lilli Lehmann, Ponselle, and Milanov. Nowhere is there a photograph of, or a single reference to, Maria Callas—surprising, considering her crucial part in restoring Bellini's work to the living repertory and the influence, both direct and indirect, her unforgettable performance has inevitably had on all subsequent *Normas*. At the very least, it may be said that her portrayal of the Druidic priestess set a standard for dramatic conviction that has affected the expectations of audiences ever since.

By those standards—and no singer coming after Callas in this role can escape being judged, by them—Renata Scotto, the most intelligent of present-day sopranos, is very impressive. As *Norma*, she is convincingly proud and passionate, a woman who transcends self-absorption and goes to her death ennobled. It is hard to think of another contemporary *Norma* who could match the temperament, the range of emotion, or the sheer intensity Scotto displays here.

All the same, her performance is less than a triumph, not for want of artistry, but because of vocal limitations. She is a woman of vaulting artistic ambition, eager to confront the most demanding roles in the spinto repertory, like *Gioconda*, *Elisabeth de Valois*, and *Norma*. Intellectually she is fully equal to all the challenges; vocally she is not.

In *Norma*, it is true, she has far less difficulty producing the notes than either Shirley Verrett or Grace Bumbry, two current international exponents of the role. Some of her high notes are ugly—especially the reiterated A's and the culminating B flat toward the end of each verse of "*Casta diva*"—but the high Cs are mostly easy and the middle of the voice is in excellent shape



Renata Scotto  
As *Norma*, temperamentally great

throughout. And though the fioriture never sound as completely fluent as they should, she makes a better stab at them than either Verrett or Bumbry.

Where Scotto fails is with respect to scale. The role requires an amplitude of sound, a fundamental vocal grandeur, a timbre that will immediately summon up a world of monumental passions. From her opening recitativo accompagnato, "*Sediziose voci*," to the long final scene of the opera, *Norma* must suggest not merely an individual woman, but an exemplar of misprision, the very type of suffering womanhood. This I do not hear anywhere in her otherwise mostly admirable performance. In the opening scene she is forced to simulate the requisite declamatory style by liberal use of the glottal stroke, with results that sound merely strenuous. In one low-lying phrase—"è tardi"—during the scene with Pollione beginning "*In mia man alfin tu sei*," she falls back on an ineffective parlando. But for the most part, she relies on an intelligent responsiveness to the demands of the developing drama, which, though in itself impressive, is insufficient to realize the full scope of Bellini's heroine. Her crabbed and unlovely "*Casta diva*," by far the weakest part of her performance, is symptomatic of her failure to meet the role's huge vocal demands.

By comparison, Tatiana Troyanos is proficient and on the whole vocally adept as Adalgisa but ultimately not very individual—something one could never conclude about Scotto. Their voices do not blend

particularly well, and there is thus little sensuous pleasure in passages like "*Mira, o Norma*."

In technical skill, Giuseppe Giacomini is in a lower class altogether, his voice being short at the bottom, tremulous in tone, and often hoarse. Nor is he more satisfactory stylistically, often sliding up to top notes and, worst of all, substituting aspirates for legato singing. One feature of his performance, however, is commendable. He alone seems fully aware that the function of the *appoggiatura* is to lend emphasis and expressiveness to the ending of a phrase, as when Pollione turns to Adalgisa in Act I and exclaims, "*Misera te! Che festi!*" ("Miserable woman! What have you done!"). Almost all the *appoggiaturas* are observed in this recording, but apart from Giacomini, none of the singers—not even Scotto—makes anything of them.

After a clumsy start with his opening "*Ite sul colle, o Druidi*," the allegro section of which is heavily aspirated, Paul Plishka gives a workmanlike account of Oroveso. Ann Murray is a satisfactory Clotilde, Paul Crook an obtrusively English-sounding Flavio. The chorus sings with appropriate style. James Levine elicits fine playing from the National Philharmonic Orchestra and provides firm musical guidance for the vocalists. Above all, he supplies a welcome vibrancy that does full justice to the passionate nature of this magnificent music-drama. Still, I could occasionally do with a bit more relaxation and tenderness, as in the big cello tune at the beginning of Act II.

The recording is very forward and somewhat wearily brilliant. Surfaces are good, but there is some pre-echo. The libretto appears in Italian and English. My recommendation is to stick with the earlier Callas recording. D.S.H.

BENATZKY, et al.: *Im weissen Rössl*.

## CAST:

Josepha	Anneliese Rothenberger (s)
Ottilie	Grit van Jüten (s)
Clare	Elke Schary (s)
Leopold	Peter Minich (t)
Otto	Norbert Orth (t)
Sigismund	Peter Kraus (t)
Kaiser	Hans Putz (spkr)

Munich Children's Choir, Bavarian Radio Chorus, Munich Radio Orchestra, Willy Mattes, cond. [Ulrich Kraus, prod.] ANGEL SZBX 3897, \$18.96 (two SQ-encoded discs, automatic sequence).

Although Ralph Benatzky (1884–1957) was almost coeval with Emerich Kálmán, in practice he belongs to the subsequent "generation" of operetta composers, whose principal successes came after World War I. To Benatzky's most fa-

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Leonard Bernstein—his Beethoven lovingly played; resplendantly produced

pos and "show biz" exaggerations, was something to avoid, the version with that orchestra a decade later was the best thing in that complete cycle (and Columbia's engineering there was at its least unattractive). The new account has changed distinctively. Tempos are mostly faster; the scherzo, in particular, taken at a grandiose pace in the older performance, is now very brisk indeed, though the trio is perhaps a shade slower than before. Rhythm and textures are sharper, more transparent. Bernstein veers toward greater classicism here, and his rethought interpretation is along the same lines as Carlos Kleiber's (DG 2530 706), albeit with more weight of tone and variety of articulation. Fine as the 1968 reading was, this one is even more winning; the finale, granitic and firmly controlled, marches to a relentless culmination.

The Eighth is judiciously paced in all four movements, and the interpretation has changed little. Its sound, of course, is immeasurably superior—warm, full, and delicate, without the coarse, shrill, bulldozer quality of the Columbia disc. Bernstein flirts with mannerism in his tapering of the last measures of the Minuetto, both before the trio and in the da capo. (The same effect seemed more straightforward coming from the tough New Yorkers.)

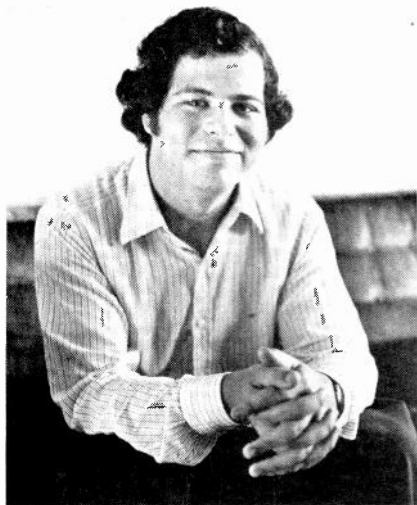
The Ninth begins with superb tautness and discipline; the instrumental tracery is keen and delicate, but a huge dynamic range becomes manifest after the first few bars. The climaxes surge volcanically, yet there is always a feeling of acute, arrow-straight control. Even the last bars of the opening movement, which might have sounded still better without the pronounced ritard, are finely tapered. The scherzo sounds a bit more comfortable, less breathless, than it did in the earlier account; the rhythmic control is noteworthy, and the trio is miraculously light and contained—an incandescent performance. Bernstein's Adagio reminds me of the third movement ("Hymn of Thanksgiving") in the A minor Quartet, Op. 132: A courageously measured basic tempo provides a dramatic foil for the contrasting Andante interludes, and one senses that the conductor accentuates the tension by getting imperceptibly faster with each return to the basic Adagio; this is an accepted approach in the quartet, and it works memorably in the symphony as well. The fanfares at the end of the movement are shapely, and despite the almost unprecedented breadth, everything sounds utterly organic. The "Ode to Joy" begins a bit solemnly, but one marvels at the way Bernstein incorporates the mercurial quo-

tations from earlier movements into the steadfast progression. The tenuto on "Vor Gott!" is fraught with power and never sounds artificially pompous, as it did in the older performance. The fast Prestissimo at the end never loses clarity or control. The chorus is fine, and the solo quartet unexpectedly good. Kurt Moll sings his opening recitative with both anacrusis and appoggiatura (as Toscanini and Weingartner preferred it). Gwyneth Jones is less shrill than usual; she lacks a truly silken sound but hits pitches securely and comfortably. Though René Kollo is somewhat hectoring in his Alla marcia solo, his characterization is suitably rowdy. This is a wonderful Ninth indeed, the culmination of an inspired set.

As for the texts, Bernstein favors the revised trumpet parts at the end of the *Eroica's* first movement and, like Weingartner, Toscanini, et al., doubles the woodwind with brass in the Ninth's scherzo. On the other hand, he does not add French horns to the bassoons in the first-movement recapitulation of the Fifth. The last bars of the Seventh's Allegretto are bowed in the usual manner. All repeats are observed in Nos. 1-6 and in No. 8; in No. 7, repeats are taken in the first movement and in the scherzo and trio (first time around), but only the first part of the scherzo is repeated in No. 9. There is no spurious da capo repeat in No. 1's Menuetto, nor is there a repeat in No. 7's finale (although Bernstein *did* include that in his 1968 New York reading).

DG has issued an interesting by-product of this cycle on a separate disc: the complete String Quartet, Op. 131, played by the whole string section of the Vienna Philharmonic. Beethoven's quartets have always fascinated conductors: Toscanini recorded the two central movements of Op. 135 (in reverse order) and once performed the fugal finale of Op. 59, No. 3 (with the introduction to the *first* movement as preface!); Furtwängler recorded the Cavatina of Op. 130; and the *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133, is frequently played by string orchestras. Op. 131 is at least as successful as the *Grosse Fuge* in orchestral garb, particularly the last movement, which gains power from the added heft. Bernstein feels this music very deeply and leads a devotional performance dedicated to the memory of his wife, Felicia Montealegre Bernstein. There is a tendency to exaggerate swells and expression marks, some palsied vibrato from the high violins, and some willful manipulation of tempo. Yet the music has rarely, if ever, sounded more moving than it does here; devotees of the original will surely learn something from this rich, noble interpretation. H.G.

More on page 64



Itzhak Perlman  
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welcome opportunity to revisit monuments of the repertory, three works capable of holding their own with any yet conceived in this genre. R.P.M.

**BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (9).**

Gwyneth Jones, soprano\*; Hanna Schwarz, alto\*; René Kollo, tenor\*; Kurt Moll, bass\*; Vienna State Opera Chorus\*, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [Hanno Rinke, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2740 216 SKL, \$79.84 (eight discs, manual sequence). Tape: 3378 090, \$59.88 (six cassettes). [Recorded in concert, 1977-79.]

Symphonies: No. 1, in C, Op. 21; No. 2, in D, Op. 36; No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 (*Eroica*); No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67; No. 6, in F, Op. 68 (*Pastoral*); No. 7, in A, Op. 92; No. 8, in F, Op. 93; No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125\*.

**BEETHOVEN: Quartet for Strings, No. 14, in C sharp minor, Op. 131.**

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [Günther Breest, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 077, \$9.98 [recorded in concert, September 1977].

The significance of Leonard Bernstein's second recording of the nine Beethoven symphonies can be fully appreciated only in relation to its thoroughly dismal precursor. DG's album—lovingly played by the Vienna Philharmonic, resplendently produced from live concerts (and touchup sessions, with audience present)—is nothing less than a total artistic vindication for the conductor and a pointed rebuke to the laissez-faire standards that prevailed in his earlier Columbia cycle with the New York Philharmonic (D85 815; also available singly). One comes away from this illumi-

nating comparison not merely with a vastly revised estimation of Bernstein's Beethoven (indeed, of Bernstein as a serious interpreter altogether), but also with a sobering reminder of the extent to which a recording's aural framework can insidiously influence perception and evaluation of a musical performance.

It is something of a tribute to the conductor that, even with the wretched Columbia sonics, his mid-Sixties interpretations of the symphonies seemed partially viable, if hardly outstanding. (I am shocked that none of the original reviews mentioned the four bars—386-89—missing from the first movement of the *Eroica* in at least two different pressings; such carelessness was symptomatic of the series as a whole.) DG's luminous, natural reproduction (with the audience as quiet as mice) directs the ear to detail after detail hopelessly obscured by Columbia's steely highs and confused ambience. Inevitably, there are changes in Bernstein's interpretive outlook, too—in the main, his tempos have become a trifle slower, his pointing of detail more loving—but these are subtle and inconsistent, best dealt with by examining the performances individually.

In the First Symphony, trim, lively tempos and well-sprung rhythms prevail. Bernstein tends to contrast understated delicacy and emphatically muscular climaxes. The Adagio introduction to the first movement is more subtly paced than before, but the essentials of the very good older reading remain intact, heightened by orchestral playing of rare refinement.

In the Second, Bernstein's mannered tenuto on certain notes and preciosity in lyrical phrases are more pronounced than in the straighter, tougher New York version. Yet the balance between winds and strings in the first-movement development section is miraculous. The Vienna orchestra plays very beautifully, and only momentarily in the Scherzo does the execution seem less assured than before. (Columbia's Second sounded particularly thin, harsh, and dirty, crowded onto a single side in the boxed set; the DG version, spread over an entire disc, sounds simply wonderful.)

Bernstein's new *Eroica* is magnificent. The two opening chords are a little clouded by reverberation, but immediately thereafter the luminous clarity of the orchestra's tone makes listening a mellow delight. The Columbia performance and, if memory serves, Bernstein's 1953 Decca recording were more headlong in the first movement, though the most recent account has plenty of momentum. Most of the rhetorical adjustments sound completely natural. I was only occasionally bothered by precious details: the unctuous, buttery

sound of the low strings at the beginning of the first-movement coda, where the tonality shifts from E flat to D flat; a few delayed pianissimos from the strings in the *Marcia funebre*; and in the finale, an exaggerated retard before the fermata in the introductory bars and an abrupt pause between Variations Nos. 2 and 3. But enough quibbling—for humanity and coherence, this is one of the great *Eroicas* on record. Bernstein takes a single (moderate) tempo for the third movement, and the Vienna horns are absolutely winged in the trio.

Once again in the Fourth, there is greater fluidity and ease in the new performance. Whereas his rapid Adagio introduction in the New York reading plunged ahead with breezy extroversion, and where his (admirable) desire to keep things moving hustled the listener past the necessary moment of repose late in the first-movement development, this version is at once firm and elastic in pulse. In fact, the whole reading is much more beautifully colored and expressively shaped than the unsubtle older one, and the only questionable detail is the slightly vulgar underscoring by the solo horn at the end of the scherzo (which was, strangely, less pronounced in the New York edition). Again, DG's sound is incomparably more ingratiating.

The Fifth is the one sizable disappointment here; at that, it is infinitely more refined than either the Columbia version or Bernstein's well-recorded but brazenly played Bavarian Radio Symphony performance issued by DG for the benefit of Amnesty International (2721 153, February 1978). Bernstein gives a low-tension account of the first movement, with the opening motto bloated and distended so that it sounds like a triplet figuration. The second and third movements begin crisply but bog down emphatically in their climaxes, and there is little savagery in the double basses in the third-movement trio. Though the finale can take the emphatic tempo it receives here, the soft, spongy, glutinous attacks and releases hurt.

The *Pastoral* reaches heights of communication. Bernstein draws out the last notes of both first movement and finale, but he triumphantly avoids all of the more usual danger spots. The brookside movement has a nice, relaxed flow. He keeps textures trim and light, obtains nuanced playing and well-sprung rhythm, and is altogether in better control of himself than in the embarrassingly emotive New York account. The thunderstorm, with powerful timpani, sounds positively cataclysmic.

While Bernstein's 1958 New York Philharmonic Seventh, with its erratic tem-

# Critics' Choice

## The most noteworthy releases reviewed recently

**BACH:** Keyboard Works. Verlet. PHILIPS 9500 588, April.

**BARTÓK:** Piano Concertos Nos. 1, 2. Pollini, Abbado. DG 2530 901, Feb.

**BERG:** Lulu. Stratas, Boulez. DG 2711 024 (4), March.

**BERNSTEIN:** Serenade; Fancy Free. Kremer, Israel Philharmonic, Bernstein. DG 2531 196, June.

**BRAHMS:** Violin Concerto in D, Op. 77. Accardo, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Masur. PHILIPS 9500 624, June.

**BRUCKNER:** Symphony No. 5. Munich Philharmonic, Kempe. ODYSSEY Y2 35243 (2), May.

**COPLAND:** Piano Works. Smit. COLUMBIA M2 35901 (2), May.

**GRIEG:** Olav Trygvason; Landkjenning. London Symphony, Dreier. UNICORN RHS 364, June.

**HAYDN:** Armida. Norman, Burrowes, Dorati. PHILIPS 6769 021 (3), March.

**HAYDN:** Quartets, Opp. 71 and 74.

Amadeus. DG 2709 090 (3), May.

**HINDEMITH:** Mathis der Maler. Fischer-Dieskau, Kubelik. ANGEL SZCX 3869 (3), Feb.

**JANÁČEK:** The Makropoulos Affair. Söderström, Dvorský, Mackerras. LONDON OSA 12116 (2), May.

**MAHLER:** Symphony No. 9. Philadelphia, Levine. RCA ARL 2-3461 (2), April.

**MASSENET:** Don Quichotte. Ghiaurov, Crespín, Bacquier, Kord. LONDON OSA 13134 (3), April.

**MASSENET:** Werther. Kraus, Troyanos, Plasson. ANGEL SZCX 3894 (3), April.

**MOZART:** Symphonies (11). Academy of Ancient Music, Schröder, Hogwood. OISEAU-LYRE D 169D3 (3), May.

**SCHUBERT:** Piano Sonata in B flat, D. 960. Kraus. VANGUARD VSD 71267, April.

**SCHUBERT:** String Quartet No. 15, in G, D. 887. Juilliard. COLUMBIA M 35827, June.

**SHOSTAKOVICH:** Song Cycles. Bogacheva, Nesterenko. COLUMBIA/MELODIYA M2 34594 (2), April.

**STRAVINSKY:** The Wedding; Histoire du soldat. Levine. RCA ARL 1-3375, March.

**TANEYEV:** Oresteia. Belorussian State Opera, Kolomizeva. DG 2709 097 (3), May.

**ZEMLINSKY:** String Quartet No. 2, Op. 15. LaSalle. DG 2530 982, June.

**VLADIMIR HOROWITZ:** The Horowitz Concerts 1978-79. RCA ARL 1-3433, Jan.

**THOMAS MURRAY:** Organ Recital. Town Hall S 23, June.

**THE RECORD OF SINGING, VOL. 2.** EMI ODEON RLS 743 (13), May.

2321/2, November 1979), which augments the "basic" six violin sonatas with Op. 1, Nos. 6 and 11. We still need a good account on period instruments with gamba, and I renew my plea for a Privilege reissue of the fine 1970 Archiv set by Melkus, Müller, Scheit, and Wenzinger. R.D.D.

**BARTÓK:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2.

Pinchas Zukerman, violin; Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta, cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] COLUMBIA M 35156, \$8.98. Tape: MT 35156, \$8.98 (cassette).

**BERG:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. **STRAVINSKY:** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D.

Itzhak Perlman, violin; Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa, cond. [Rainer Brock, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 110, \$9.98. Tape: 3301 110, \$9.98 (cassette).

These are perhaps the most significant violin concertos to have appeared in this century. Not surprisingly, since each was written by a master, they are highly personal works of distinct character. Less expectedly, they also have much in common. The compositional approaches of Bartók, Berg, and Stravinsky, which to their contemporaries seemed so utterly divergent, have with time proved strikingly similar in many respects.

All three concertos were written in a single decade, the Stravinsky in 1931, the Berg in 1935, and the Bartók in 1938. (Interestingly, they share their chronological proximity with Schoenberg's concerto of 1936, to my mind the only other twentieth-century violin concerto that belongs in this company.) All were commissioned by violinists (Samuel Dushkin, Louis Krasner, and Zoltán Székely, respectively), and all call for orchestras of approximately the same size (though Stravinsky specifies a reduced string section). But more significantly, the works share, at least in a general sense, certain marked stylistic traits: a strong tonal orientation, clear formal outlines, and a high degree of textural transparency. Indeed, each fits comfortably within the widespread tendency toward neoclassicism so characteristic of the years between the wars.

Stravinsky, of course, was the "founder" of neoclassicism, and his concerto provides an ideal document for analyzing its properties. The work, which bristles with the joy of music-making, is based on baroque models, the titles of the four movements themselves being indicative: Toccata, Aria I, Aria II, and Capriccio. Remarkably detailed and precise instru-

mental writing gives each note an essential place in musical textures of unusual clarity. The solo violin music is quirky yet virtuosic, the highly accented and propulsive quality in the outer movements giving way to a refined cantabile in the arias. Despite relatively large forces, the effect is very much like chamber music.

Berg's concerto is richer texturally and more complex contrapuntally, yet here too one notices the obvious restraint. This was Berg's last composition, and compared with the earlier works of his maturity, it is unprecedented in its directness. The formal thread is easily followed, and despite Berg's (very undocinaire) use of the twelve-tone system, inherited from his teacher, Schoenberg, the music abounds with tonal associations. Such suggestions are already apparent at the outset, in the wonderfully ethereal rising and falling fifths that alternate between soloist and orchestra, and they accumulate, reaching eventual fruition in the extended quotation of the Bach chorale *Es ist genug* in the final section and in the Mahlerian major chord with added sixth that closes the work. Everything is bathed in a delicate light that conveys a remarkable poignancy. If Stravinsky's view of the past is one of playful distortion and good-natured fun, Berg's evokes a sense of profound nostalgia and regret.

Although Bartók's concerto was completed just before the composer left his native Hungary in 1940, it really ushers in the style associated with his last, "American" period. As with Berg, one hears a pronounced softening of edges in comparison with his earlier music. Formally, the concerto is almost geometric: an archlike structure formed by two closely related outer movements, the last being a sort of free variation of the first, separated by a slow middle movement that is itself cast in a relatively strict theme-and-variations mold. This formal rigor is matched by a tonal one. Less chromatic and more openly key-centered than its immediate predecessors (e.g., the String Quartet No. 5 of 1934), the work has an immediate accessibility that has made it one of the most frequently performed violin concertos.

The performances of the Bartók by Zukerman with Mehta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic and of the Stravinsky and Berg by Perlman with Ozawa and the Boston Symphony are all of very high quality. Textures are consistently clear, ensemble is tight, and intonation is invariably on target. Zukerman's playing has a warmth and expressive force that are especially telling in the Bartók. For the listener not yet at home with twentieth-century music, I can think of no better introduction than these fine discs. And for the initiate, they provide a



# Classical Reviews

## reviewed by

Scott Cantrell	Allan Kozinn
Abram Chipman	Paul Henry Lang
R. D. Darrell	Irving Lowens
Peter G. Davis	Robert C. Marsh
Robert Fiedel	Karen Monson
Kenneth Furie	Robert P. Morgan
Harris Goldsmith	Conrad L. Osborne
David Hamilton	Andrew Porter
Dale S. Harris	Patrick J. Smith
Philip Hart	Paul A. Snook
Nicholas Kenyon	Susan Thiemann Sommer

**AVISON:** Concerti Grossi after Domenico Scarlatti (12). For a review, see page 52.

**BACH:** Concertos for Organ (2)—See Vivaldi: The Four Seasons, Op. 8, Nos. 1-4.

**BACH:** Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord (6), S. 1014-19.

Carol Lieberman, violin; Mark Kroll, harpsichord. [Ralph Dopmeyer, prod.] TITANIC T1 33/4, \$18 (two discs, manual sequence).

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Christiane Jaccottet, harpsichord. PHILIPS 6769 017, \$19.96 (two discs, manual sequence).

Sonatas: No. 1 in B minor; No. 2, in A; No. 3, in E; No. 4, in C minor; No. 5, in F minor; No. 6, in G.

**HANDEL:** Sonatas for Violin and Continuo (6), Op. 1.

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Robert Veyron-Lacroix, harpsichord. PHILIPS 9502 023, \$9.98.

Sonatas, Op. 1: No. 3, in A; No. 10, in G minor; No. 12, in F; No. 13, in D; No. 14, in A; No. 15, in E.

### COMPARISONS—Bach:

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Smithsonian 3012

Bach's sonatas for violin and clavichord have seldom been properly appreciated and understood, their inexhaustible felicities having been overshadowed by the



Arthur Grumiaux  
Magisterial Bach and Handel

greater intellectual and technical fascinations of the unaccompanied violin sonatas. Few listeners or performers remember that Bach scored them not for violin with continuo, but for "cembalo [con]certato and viol:n solo," indicating that the harpsichordist should be the dominant—or at least an equal—partner rather than mere accompanist. Fewer still recall that the title of an early copy goes on to add "with viola da gamba bass accompaniment if desired." Most recorded performances ignore this valuable option. Angel's Menuhin/Malcolm/Gauntlett version (S 3629, recorded c. 1962) was the first, I think, to add this bass-line reinforcement and still seems to be the only modern-instrument recording to do so. Of the considerable number of period-instrument accounts, only one that I know of—the Telefunken set (March 1977)—includes a gamba, and it's no coincidence that this is one of the two top-ranked choices of most Bach connoisseurs. The other favorite, the fine 1969 Cambridge recording recently reissued by the Smithsonian, is played on period instruments but at modern pitch and includes a gamba only in the two additional violin/continuo sonatas, S. 1021 and 1023.

I wish I could hail the latest period-

instrument/baroque-pitch release as fully competitive, for Titanic's young Bostonians, Carol Lieberman and Mark Kroll, are capable, earnest, and often quite exhilarating. But they are handicapped slightly by the tonal dominance of the violin and by the lack of support from a gamba and more seriously by their producer. He must be the one responsible for the use of two different recording locales and engineers. On the first disc (which includes Sonatas Nos. 2, 1, and 5, in that sequence) the violin sounds well-nigh medieval rather than baroque, with piercing sharpness in the high end and wheeziness in the midrange. That the instrument and its player are not primarily at fault is demonstrated by the far more natural and attractive tone of the second disc (with Sonatas Nos. 4, 3, and 6), recorded six months later. The artists deserve a chance to remake the first disc and provide a proper match.

The other current version puts us in a different world: modern instruments, modern pitch, one of today's most elegantly poetic violinists (though more noted for his rococo, classical, and Romantic than for his baroque interpretations), a gifted young harpsichordist, and vivid recording. There is no bass-line reinforcement, of course, and Christiane Jaccottet is somewhat overshadowed by the magisterial Arthur Grumiaux. But she plays delectably and alertly, always making the most of her part. Moreover, her (unidentified) harpsichord has exceptionally bright and attractive tonal qualities that nicely set off Grumiaux's subtle colorations. This set far surpasses his 1967 Philips recording with harpsichordist Egida Giordani Sartori, long out of print. Even the purist (like myself) who normally prefers period instruments in this repertory will find consistent delight in these performances.

The Handel disc (issued for the first time in America, I believe), was recorded fourteen years ago. Even then Grumiaux was secure in his credentials as Francescatti's successor as the most eloquent exponent of the aristocratic Gallic tradition. But his playing here is slightly less assured and more sweetly romantic, while Robert Veyron-Lacroix (without bass-line reinforcement, needed even more here than in the Bach) is generally too reticent. Still, the sonics are soothing (if not as luminous as those in the Bach set), and this belated release ranks among the best of the modern-instrument versions—a shade above the Supraphon set by Suk and Růžicková (4 11

**B** Budget  
**H** Historical  
**R** Reissue  
**A** Audiophile  
(digital, direct-to-disc, etc.)

where so illustrious a performer as Segovia is concerned. Until now, his only recordings consistently available have been those made between 1956 and 1972 for Decca (now MCA) and four mediocre albums made for RCA Red Seal since 1974. The restoration of these prewar HMV discs, therefore, is a major step. But there's a lot more work to be done. During the war, Segovia's recording activities were suspended, and when he began again in 1945, it was before the microphones of Decca. Almost all of his Decca 78s were transferred to LPs early in the 1950s, but those are now out of print. In fact, of the twenty-seven Segovia LPs (transfers and originals) Decca issued, only eighteen are available. Now that MCA has started a vigorous reissue program, perhaps the nine missing albums and the few untransferred 78-rpm tracks will turn up again.

But that's not all. During his early Decca years, in 1948, Segovia made a series of 78s for Musicraft. These were all Bach performances, and all except the S. 1001 Fugue have been available for some time on a terrible-sounding Everest disc (3261, rechanneled) and a slightly better pressing by Saga (5248). He also made a few recordings for English Columbia, in 1950-51, in-

cluding the Castelnuovo-Tedesco concerto and a series of short solo works. The concerto and most (there always seems to be something missing) of the short works are now available only on import (Odeon 33 QCX 127 or, from Japan, Odeon 053 01021). It is extremely doubtful that these will ever be offered in a format as convenient as that of the HMV recordings. What is needed is a label or project that will do for the guitar what Desmar/IPA has done for the keyboard or what New World Records has done for American music.

A few final points must be raised as to the Angel set, all having to do with shortcomings of the otherwise attractive packaging. First of all, there are blatant errors in the notes. The Bach Fugue is, of course, in G minor, as listed, but it should have been noted that Segovia plays it (as do all guitarists) transposed to A minor. Likewise, the C minor Prelude from S. 999 appears here in D minor. According to Duarte's notes, all the Bach arrangements, except the S. 1007 Prelude, are by Segovia; however, the cover listing indicates that four of the six Bach works were arranged by Ponce. (I believe Duarte's information is correct.) A minuet by De Visée is misidentified as a sarabande; and the movements of Ponce's Kreis-

leresque forgery of a Sylvius Leopold Weiss suite are given as Prelude/Gigue/Sarabande/Gavotte, when they are in fact Prelude/Allemande/Sarabande/Gavotte/Gigue!

What's more upsetting, though, is that EMI/Angel, having spent a great deal of time and effort locating, transferring, and sequencing these historical gems, didn't follow through by letting listeners in on the pertinent discographic information, which, it seems to me, should be a central feature of a release of this scope and importance. We are told simply that the sessions (there were only nine) took place in London between 1927 and 1939. (Evidently, further discographic information was supposed to be part of the set, and Angel promises to provide it with future pressings. Meanwhile the information is available from Angel's Editorial Department, 1750 N. Vine St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90028.)

Still, this collection is wonderful to hear and sheds far more light on Segovia's early artistry than any of his autobiographical projects can. And if your only exposure to Segovia has been through his recent concerts and recordings, you owe it to yourself to hear how he sounded at the height of his powers.

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slightly slower, more accurate playing when he remade the piece in the mid-1950s.

Of greatest interest are the works he either failed to record again or recorded for LPs now out of print. Among the former, the most intriguing is the 1930 rendition of Ponce's lengthy Variations and Fugue on "*Folia de España*." Heard here in an early version (later revised at Segovia's suggestion), the opening theme is simpler than that which appears in Segovia's published edition of the work, and only ten of Ponce's twenty variations are played (and those in a scrambled order). Nevertheless, the performance reveals both Segovia's awesome technical command and several facets of the guitar's coloristic and communicative resources. Even more enchanting are performances of Tárrega's tremolo study, *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* (1927), and *Estudio brillante* (1930), both of which Segovia recorded again in the early 1950s. (The later versions, on Decca, have long been out of print.) While the pieces themselves may now be counted among the all too familiar chestnuts of the repertoire, they show him at his most virtuosic and, in *Recuerdos*, his most lyrical.

Interestingly, as time passed and fashion turned from a Romantic to a more "objective" performance style, Segovia's ultra-Romantic exaggerations tended to increase rather than recede. Nowadays, some of his gratuitous pauses and tempo distortions may be as much functions of faltering technique as representations of his current ideas about music. Yet, the seeds of the "Segovia style" are very much in evidence on these early discs: a generous use of glissandos; the old-fashioned rubato accomplished by rushing through a scale passage and then compensating by holding the concluding chord just a touch longer than the notation indicates; a penchant for broken chords; and the occasional combination of all these elements to build a remarkable false climax in the middle of a work.

As always, these manipulations work best in the Spanish music that dominates his repertoire. In the baroque works—Bach, De Visée, and Froberger—we can only accept what now seems a lexicon of stylistic error and textual infidelity as the style of the 1920s and '30s and judge it on its own terms. It is useless, for instance, to try to correlate Segovia's arrangement and performance of the Fugue from Bach's Violin Sonata, S. 1001, with a printed score, for he begins cutting and patching immediately after the subject is stated, and hardly

sticks to the text for more than three lines at a time. The Prelude from the Cello Suite, S. 1007, arranged by Ponce, has sprouted an active (and really rather attractive) bass counterpoint. Segovia, in arranging a few movements from Robert de Visée's 1686 Suite in D minor, freely fleshes out harmonies, grafts on sections from other De Visée works, and performs them with dramatically rolled chords, a quick vibrato, slurred phrases—and worse, two full quarter notes to begin each section of the Bourrée, rather than the eighth notes the style demands. No guitarist would dare impose such affectations on this music today. But if these are not echt baroque readings, they are certainly echt Segovia, and as such, they overflow with an irresistible charm, sheer beauty of sound, and a distinctly personal expressivity.

The extent of that individuality would become even more apparent if some enterprising company would collect and issue the discs of Segovia's contemporaries. Although it is often assumed that he emerged from a vacuum, that is not entirely the case. There was, in his native Spain, a classical guitar tradition with roots that went back to the mid-nineteenth century; its major practitioners viewed the self-taught, evangelical Segovia as a renegade. The pivotal figure was Francisco Tárrega, who died in 1909, the year Segovia (then sixteen) gave his first formal recital. Tárrega never recorded, but some of his pupils did. Miguel Llobet, for one, made quite a few 78s, playing in a style even more wildly Romantic than Segovia's. Emílio Pujol, who at ninety-three is the last living link to the Tárrega tradition and is now best known as a composer, arranger, theoretician, and musicologist, made some recordings too. Like Tárrega, but unlike Segovia and Llobet, Pujol preferred to play without fingernails, and the sound on his recordings is unique. His readings, from the evidence of a set of pavanés by Renaissance vihuelist Luis Milan, are remarkably modern, with consistent, steady tempos, solidly played chords, and a complete lack of coloristic flamboyance.

Yet another fascinating guitarist of this era was the Paraguayan Agustín Barrios, a true eccentric who believed himself descended from Indian chiefs and gave concerts half naked and in Indian feather headdress. Despite all this, he was a superb player and a gifted composer, who recorded dozens of discs of his own music as well as some standard repertoire. John Williams recently devoted a whole LP to the

music of Barrios (Columbia M 35145), and delightful as the readings are, they pale in comparison with Barrios' originals, which, incidentally, seem to have been recorded on a guitar with steel strings.

All these treasures and more are currently circulating among guitar buffs, just as the Segovia HMV 78s did until now, and their transfer to LP would add a desperately needed perspective to the history of this increasingly popular instrument. The guitar world is quickly growing to maturity: As the technical standard continues to improve, players no longer blame interpretive inadequacies on the limitations of the instrument; in programming recitals, performers are turning away from the "sampler" approach and playing longer, deeper works, more akin to pieces one might hear at a piano or cello recital; and musicologists are now specializing in the field, digging up major lute, vihuela, and guitar works from European libraries and publishing them in authoritative editions.

All that lags behind is guitar discography, still in a horrible state even

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ANDRÉS SEGOVIA: The EMI Recordings 1927-39.

**H** Andrés Segovia, guitar. [Fred Gaisberg and David Bicknell, prod.] ANGEL ZB 3896, \$17.96 (two discs, mono) [from HMV originals, 1927-39].

BACH: Partita for Solo Violin, No. 3, in E, S. 1006: Gavotte (arr. Segovia). Suite for Solo Cello, No. 3, in C, S. 1009: Courante (arr. Segovia). Suite for Solo Cello, No. 1, in G, S. 1007: Prelude (arr. Ponce). Prelude in C minor, S. 999 (arr. Segovia; D minor). Suite for Lute, No. 1, in E minor, S. 996: Allemande (arr. Segovia). Sonata for Solo Violin, No. 1, in G minor, S. 1001: Fugue (arr. Segovia; A minor). PONCE ("WEISS"): Suite in A. SOR: Thème varié, Op. 9. DE VISÉE: Sarabande; Bourrée; Menuet. FROBERGER: Gigue. TORROBA: Sonatina in A: Allegretto. Suite Castellana: Fandanguillo. Preludio. Nocturno. MENDELSSOHN: Quartet for Strings, No. 1, in E flat, Op. 12: Canzonetta (arr. Segovia). MALATS: Serenata. TÁRREGA: Recuerdos de la Alhambra; Study in A (*Estudio brillante*). CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Sonata (*Homage to Boccherini*): Vivo ed energico. ALBÉNIZ: Suite Española: No. 1, Granada; No. 3, Sevilla. TURINA: Fandanguillo. GRANADOS: Danzas españolas, Op. 37: No. 5, in E minor; No. 10, in G. PONCE: Sonata No. 3; Mazurka; Petite Valse (arr. Segovia); Variations and Fugue on "*Folia de España*."

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## Segovia's First Recordings

Angel's reissue furnishes the most valuable chapter yet in a multifaceted "biography."

by Allan Kozinn



Andrés Segovia in 1928; painting by Raul Ibarra Cocina

Andrés Segovia, though still giving concerts at eighty-seven, has become increasingly concerned of late with documenting the story of his life and art—reasonable enough for a man who has spent his years earning respect for an instrument that, before him, was a musical poor relation and whose name has become synonymous with that instrument.

The first product of this autobiographical urge appeared in 1970: "The Guitar and I," originally projected as a series of forty discs, each containing one side of reminiscences and one side of technical studies. When the project was canceled after only two LPs (MCA 2535/6), Segovia turned to prose, publishing the first installment of his memoirs in 1976. That thin volume takes us from his birth in 1893 through his autodidactic formative years and early career in Spain to the eve of his first international tour in 1920. He had by then merely laid the groundwork for his long career, and as the memoir leaves off, we see a young man standing on a steamship deck, overcome with self-doubt as he ventured from his homeland. Yet his star would soon rise: Within a decade, he made his celebrated Paris and New York debuts; he met many of the composers from whom he would commission works that are now cen-

terpieces of the modern guitar literature; and during a visit to the London studios of HMV in May 1927, he began a recording career that has spanned half a century.

So in a sense, Angel's release of his complete HMV output—presented here on LP for the first time, in superbly clean transfers by EMI's Keith Hardwick—offers yet another chapter in the slowly unfolding history of Segovia and the guitar. As such, it is illustrated by Raul Ibarra Cocina's 1928 painting of the guitarist, less corpulent then, and an undated photo showing him looking a bit younger. And although composer/guitarist John W. Duarte's charming appreciation and notes don't go nearly as far as they should have in describing this period in Segovia's career, the recordings take up the tale most eloquently.

We hear a comparatively young but mature interpreter at the height of his dexterity, eagerly working to establish himself, his instrument, and his new repertoire before the broader classical music public. What's more, we hear him playing two legendary and long-retired guitars (a Ramirez and a Hauser) and using the catgut strings he so happily relegated to obsolence when nylon became available after the war. While Segovia claimed that catgut strings were invariably false at the octave and gen-

erally difficult to keep in tune, there is little evidence of those problems here. Naturally, the guitar sound captured by the HMV microphones is a bit limited and boxed-in by today's standards, but even so, a remarkable degree of nuance comes through.

To be sure, neither the repertoire nor the basic performance style will come as a surprise to anyone even vaguely familiar with Segovia's work; in fact, this early twelve-year overview shows how little his basic approach has changed over the decades. The program is a typical mixture of single-movement arrangements (mostly his own) drawn from larger compositions for other instruments, pieces by guitarist/composers of the past, and, in the greatest proportion, works composed specifically for him. Moreover, he has recorded virtually everything here at least once again in the last thirty-five years, and most of those later accounts can still be found. Comparisons, however, reveal a few general patterns. While the first versions of Ponce's *Petite Valse* (recorded 1935) and Albéniz' "Sevilla" (1939) are no more exuberant than those he recorded in the early 1960s (MCA 2533, rechanneled), the speed and electricity of his 1936 Canzonetta from Mendelssohn's String Quartet, Op. 12—a work that falls delightfully well on the guitar—gave way to

latti—*con furia*, like mad . . ." (Vol. 3, Chapter 5). Avison's indication *con furia* intensifies Scarlatti's already extravagant Presto: The piece should not merely be played, it should be "played off." Play it again, Wanda (RCA, deleted). (Incidentally, the entire passage from *Tristram Shandy* would have been a relevant addition to Philips' brief notes.) A few reservations about the interpretive decisions, however, would certainly not persuade me to part with this set, nor should they deter anyone from pursuing it.

The *Essercizi* (K. 1-30), among which are several famous sonatas including the Pastorale (K. 9), represent Scarlatti's early maturity both as a composer for the harpsichord and as a master of the "transitional" style. Almost consciously, in his dedication, he indicates that the collection signifies a baroque-classical turning point: "Perhaps you will find them agreeable, in which case I shall carry out further commissions in an easier and more varied style." His discovery of new harpsichord colors and shapes, new virtuoso antics, new dissonance and voice-leading treatments, new rhythmic twists (especially Spanish ones), and new harmonic and dramatic surprises is magnificently exploited in these pieces.

Part of the variety inherent in the writing depends for its full effect upon a harpsichord of clear tone and beautiful timbre. The instrument Scott Ross plays, a 1589 Baffo, is one of the most gorgeous harpsichords I have ever heard; every note has a soul, every register reveals a personality, and every nontonal noise is reduced to naught. What tests one's patience, however, is the lack of the other ingredient for success, an interpretive commitment on the part of the performer. Does there linger some idea that liveliness, lilt, drama, contrast, imagination, not to mention virtuosic abandon, were invented recently, perhaps as aberrations of eighteenth-century purity? If the vitality of this, of all, music fails to silence such nonsense, Dr. Burney's report (1789) might help: "Scarlatti's were not the only pieces with which every young performer displayed his powers of execution, but were the wonder and delight of every hearer who had a spark of enthusiasm about him, and could feel new and bold effects intrepidly produced by the breach of almost all the old and established rules of composition." Scarlatti's music does not need certain kinds of interpretation, such as clarification of voice-leading, removal of dissonances, manifold

color changes, apologetic echo effects, major internal tempo changes, or even much ornamentation, but its fiery inspiration does need to be taken into account, and his warning "to expect . . . an ingenious jesting with Art" should be taken seriously.

Most exciting in this regard is Igor Kipnis' album of twelve of the later sonatas (actually eleven later ones and one early one). Although Kipnis' glittery Rutkowski harpsichords are no match for Ross's succulent Baffo, the performances are zesty, passionately lyrical, and imaginatively thought through. Not too many attempts have been made at ornamentation of Scarlatti's repeats. Kirkpatrick (*Domenico Scarlatti*) says "there is no reason to suppose that he expected the player . . . to add any embellishments not indicated in the text"; Charles Rosen (*The Classical Style*) points out that Scarlatti's music "needs very little [ornamentation] or absolutely none" because "an indiscriminate application of ornament would cause his phrases to overlap." But Kipnis makes an extremely convincing case, reasoning, apparently, that Scarlatti's music should be no more immune to or harmed by eighteenth-century performance practice than anyone else's. The question, as usual, is not whether ornamentation is right or wrong, but whether it is good or bad. Kipnis concentrates on melodic and motivic ornamentation instead of purely decorative trills and frills, thereby emphasizing Scarlatti's articulate, almost Haydnesque style.

The most enchanting sonata on the disc is one of three played on the clavichord, a perfectly authentic and wonderful idea. If ever an eighteenth-century keyboard work (if indeed it was one originally) cried out for the sensitivity, the intimacy, and most of all, the vibrato (*Bebung*) of the clavichord, it is the well-known Sonata in B minor (K. 87). Kipnis gives it a truly moving performance. The other two (K. 322 and 323), while good choices for the clavichord, are less successful because of two pervasive mannerisms: limping and the holding of first beats. These are evident in K. 87, and indeed they imbue a Segovian flavor, but they do more harm in the quicker, more rhythmic pieces where, in some cases, 3/8 sounds like 4/8 and the momentum is too often unduly halted. Actually, Kipnis is not guilty alone; someone has convinced a generation of harpsichordists that therein lies authenticity or, heaven help us, expressivity. Some day we'll root out the culprit.

The liveliness of Kipnis' playing is

outdone only by the astonishing genius of the mature Scarlatti. An F minor triptych (K. 204a, 204b, 205), eighteen and one-half minutes long, provides us with a large-structured experience of a type we are used to having from Bach's pen, or Handel's, or Haydn's—but most extraordinary for Scarlatti. We don't know, of course, how the composer organized performances of his sonatas; maybe he grouped them, nonstop, in threes, fours, sixes, or even eights.

Wanda Landowska must be mentioned (again) in connection with Kipnis' performance of the Sonata in D (K. 443). A tribute to the great lady's power of characterization, it is still difficult to convincingly escape from her view of this wonderful piece. We have all tried, and Kipnis, to his credit, gives in and delivers a stirring rendition in her image.

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#### AVISON: Concerti Grossi after Domenico Scarlatti (12).

Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner, cond. PHILIPS 6769 018, \$29.94 (three discs, manual sequence).

#### SCARLATTI, D.: Sonatas for Harpsichord.

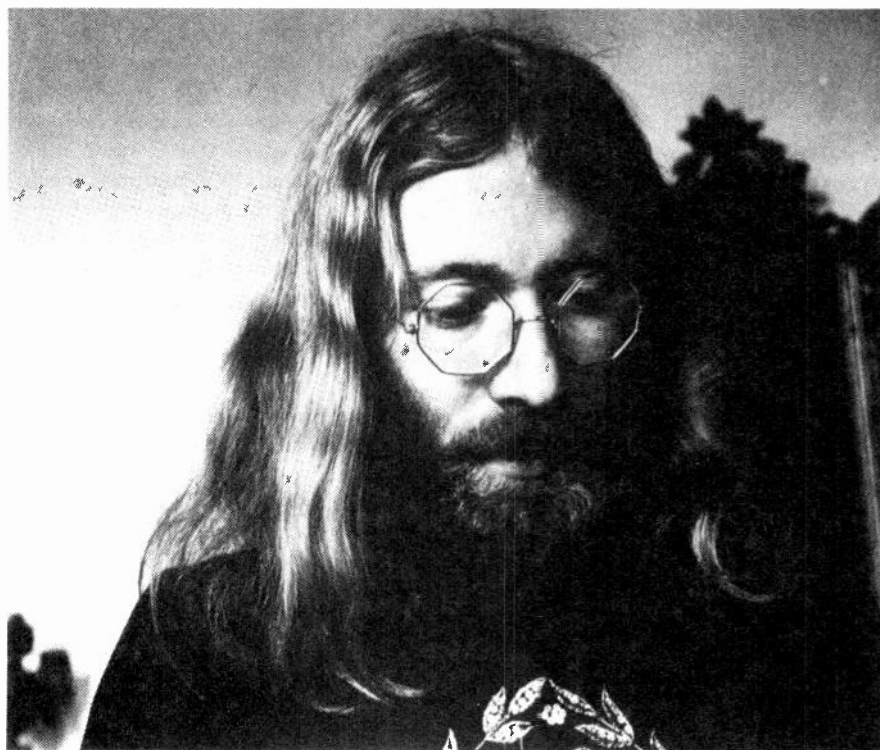
Scott Ross, harpsichord. TELEFUNKEN 26.35487, \$19.96 (two discs, manual sequence). Tape 24.35487, \$19.96 (two cassettes).

Sonatas (*Essercizi*): in D minor, K. 1 (L. 366); in G, K. 2 (L. 388); in A minor, K. 3 (L. 378); in G minor, K. 4 (L. 390); in D minor, K. 5 (L. 367); in F, K. 6 (L. 479); in A minor, K. 7 (L. 379); in G minor, K. 8 (L. 488); in D minor, K. 9 (L. 413); in D minor, K. 10 (L. 370); in C minor, K. 11 (L. 352); in G minor, K. 12 (L. 489); in G, K. 13 (L. 486); in G, K. 14 (L. 387); in E minor, K. 15 (L. 374); in B flat, K. 16 (L. 397); in F, K. 17 (L. 384); in D minor, K. 18 (L. 416); in F minor, K. 19 (L. 383); in E, K. 20 (L. 375); in D, K. 21 (L. 363); in C minor, K. 22 (L. 360); in D, K. 23 (L. 411); in A, K. 24 (L. 495); in F sharp minor, K. 25 (L. 481); in A, K. 26 (L. 368); in B minor, K. 27 (L. 449); in E, K. 28 (L. 373); in D, K. 29 (L. 461); in G minor, K. 30 (L. 499).

Igor Kipnis, harpsichord and clavichord. [George Sponhaltz, prod.] ANGEL SZ 37310, \$8.98.

Sonatas: in B minor, K. 87 (L. 33); in G, K. 146 (L. 349); in F minor, K. 204a; in F minor, K. 204b; in F minor, K. 205 (L. supp. 23); in A, K. 322 (L. 483); in A, K. 323 (L. 95); in G, K. 337 (L. supp. 26); in G, K. 338 (L. 87); in D, K. 443 (L. 418); in D minor/major, K. 444 (L. 420); in C, K. 513 (L. supp. 3).

# Record Reviews



Scott Ross—more interpretive commitment required

## Scarlatti, Garnished and Plain

Avison's resurrected concertos add another dimension to our view of the sonatas.

by Kenneth Cooper

**D**omenico Scarlatti's sonatas for harpsichord circulated widely in manuscript copies during his lifetime, but only a few collections were published, and only one of these was supervised by the composer, the *Essercizi* of 1738. Within a year of this issue, these thirty sonatas were pirated by his old friend Thomas Roseingrave, who reprinted them, adding twelve sonatas dating from his personal association with Scarlatti in Italy, c. 1705-14. There may have been more to that collection, for in 1744, the English composer and orchestra leader Charles Avison came out with "Twelve Concertos in Seven Parts for Four Violins, one Alto Viola, a Violoncello, and a Thorough Bass, done from two Books of Lessons for the Harpsicord [sic]. Composed by Sigr. Domenico Scarlatti with additional Slow Movements from Manuscript Solo Pieces, by the same Author . . ."

Similar in scope and purpose to his

friend Geminiani's arrangements (1726) of Corelli's Violin Sonatas, Op. 5, these fascinating transcriptions are based on twenty-four of the *Essercizi* and earlier works from Scarlatti's little-known "baroque" period, composed while he was still strongly influenced by his father and by his Italian baroque colleagues and mentors Gasparini, Pasquini, and Corelli. The early works include six of Roseingrave's additional twelve sonatas, four sonatas for violin and continuo (K. 81, 88, 89, 91) possibly written for Corelli around 1710, and twelve movements, the derivation of which has eluded even the eagle eye of Scarlatti authority Ralph Kirkpatrick. (I can clear up a few of the identifications: Avison I/3 = K. 91d; III/1 = K. 89b [not 89c]; VI/3 = K. 89c; IX/1 = K. 81b; XII/3 = K. 22; others may be lost sonatas or early Scarlatti or Scarlatti *père* overtures, arias, or chamber works.) Though Scarlatti must have developed his

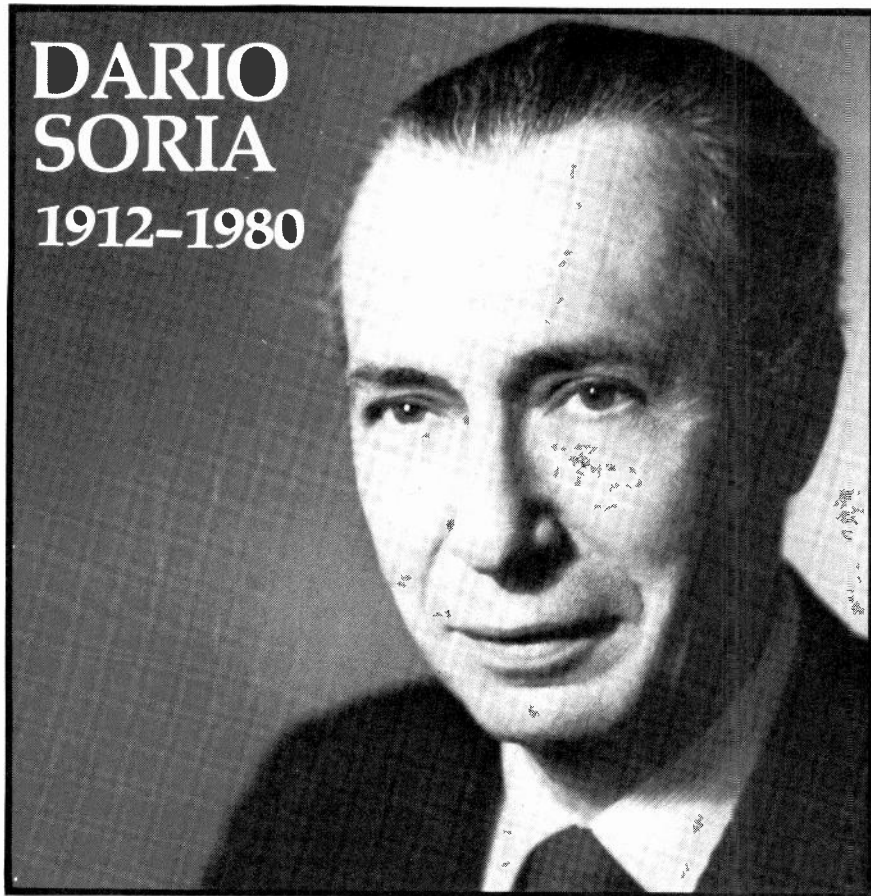
style gradually, the early works differ markedly from the *Essercizi* (probably products of the 1720s and 1730s) and especially from the almost classical poise of the hundreds of later sonatas. The new releases make possible a deeper knowledge and appreciation of Scarlatti's stylistic range.

The Avison *Scarlatti* Concertos are especially welcome, as they have not been published or played for more than two centuries. Aside from their inherent attractions, they serve as indicators of eighteenth-century performance practice. In the process of orchestrating keyboard pieces for concert use, Avison made practical decisions, some of which would not normally have been written down: realization (enrichment, filling) of inner parts, creation of obbligato voices (III/1), ornamentation of melody (II/1), transposition of key (I/1, I/3), creation of structure by means of solo and tutti distribution (I/1, II/2, II/4), compression of range (I/2, II/3, III/4), changing and characterization of tempo (I/3: Allegro becomes Amoroso). The resulting virtuoso string music stands up well next to that of Handel, Corelli, Vivaldi, and even Bach. (Handel, also friendly with Scarlatti, was quick to recognize the *Essercizi* as a valuable source of material for his *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, in 1739.)

Neville Marriner's performances delight the ear and the sense. One of the world's great chamber orchestras expectedly demonstrates grace, ease, and sympathy with this music. More than that, the sweetness of the solo violin playing, the sensuousness and raptness of the slow movements, and the unified motions of the whole ensemble create a natural and totally musical atmosphere. Only one aspect of the performance is questionable: the politeness and gentility accorded some of this exciting, bizarre, and dangerous music. The constant use of a light spiccato seems to neutralize the dynamic inflections and soften the Scarlattian angularity. In certain slow movements (II/3, III/3), preciousness and delicacy pre-empt a true cantabile. Avison has polished up Scarlatti somewhat, but I think he has not "Englished" the Italian excesses quite so much. In the single Avison movement to make its way into literary history (VI/2), it was its furious, even demonic character that inspired Laurence Sterne to write of Tristram Shandy's panicky father (attending Tristram's birth) that "the devil and all had broke loose—the whole piece, Madam, must have been played off like the sixth of Avison Scar-

# DARIO SORIA

1912-1980



On March 28, 1980, while at work in the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives at Lincoln Center on a Metropolitan Opera historic broadcast recording, Dario Soria succumbed to a heart attack. Founder and president of Cetra-Soria Records, founder and president of Angel Records, producer of the Soria Series and vice president of the international division for RCA Victor Records, and managing director of the Metropolitan Opera Guild, he had been for more than three decades one of the central and influential figures in the record industry.

Dario was happiest when his work could combine his twin enthusiasms of music (especially opera) and recordings—and when it brought together the life and culture of his two countries, his native Italy and his adopted America. Born in Rome on May 21, 1912, he was destined for a career in the family bank until Mussolini cravenly promulgated, in historically tolerant Italy, the racial laws of Nazi Germany. The Sorias came to America, where Dario worked for the Office of War Information and became a citizen in 1945.

After a trip to Italy in 1945, he began importing records from the Italian

Cetra catalog. These included some arias sung by a mellifluous tenor named Ferruccio Tagliavini, who soon arrived at the Metropolitan Opera, becoming the first of many distinguished performers who would be introduced to the American public under the Soria aegis. With the unveiling of long-playing records in the summer of 1948, Dario quickly perceived that the economics of opera recordings had been transformed: Not arias, but complete operas—formerly bulky and ponderous—were the natural content of the new medium. Cetra-Soria became one of the LP's first adherents; Cetra's extant complete opera recordings were transferred to the new medium, and, in collaboration with the Italian Radio, Dario began to expand the catalog, bringing us such novelties as the early operas of Verdi, the lesser-known works of Puccini, unknown *verismo* scores—and a soprano named Maria Callas. By 1953, Cetra-Soria had the largest operatic list in the world.

That February, however, Dario Soria sold his company to Capitol Records, for, late the preceding year, Britain's great EMI combine had approached him and his wife Dorle (one of the music

world's most distinguished publicists, then press director for the New York Philharmonic, and now a columnist for *MUSICAL AMERICA*) to form and direct a new company. The English Columbia label, whose long-standing exchange agreement with American Columbia (CBS) had lapsed, needed a new American outlet. As a trademark, the Sorias lit upon an old, abandoned Gramophone Company label, the "Recording Angel," and the first Angel release appeared in November 1953.

The artists included the likes of Callas, Schwarzkopf, Karajan, and Gieseking, but the Angel concept went further than that. Distinguished recordings were works of art and therefore, the Sorias felt, should look like works of art. Reproductions of prints and paintings (made in Paris), smooth pressings (made in England), authoritative annotations and literate operatic translations, all factory-sealed in plastic—the Angel packaging set new standards for the industry. (A cheaper, "thrift-pack" edition was another Angel innovation, but was eventually phased out, for few buyers could resist the luxury version.)

In 1958, the Sorias left Angel, and Dario moved to RCA, for which he produced the Soria Series, a special imprint devoted to exceptional recordings in exceptional packages: The Soria booklets for operas such as Verdi's *Otello*, with extensive color reproductions of original set and costume designs, are deservedly collector's items in their own right. Later, the imprint was revived for use on the pioneering publications of historic Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, begun by Dario when he was managing director of the Guild—a period of exceptional growth for that organization, not only in membership but in the range of activities and services that it provided. After his retirement from the Guild in 1977, Dario remained as a consultant to the Met on recording matters.

All of these achievements only partially account for Dario Soria's special place in the world of music and records. Over and above the legendary social graces of his native land, he radiated a warm and direct concern with people, a delight in their qualities and achievements that was contagious. He loved to share the people and the music that he loved—surely one of the sounder principles for living a good life. He will be much missed.

DAVID HAMILTON



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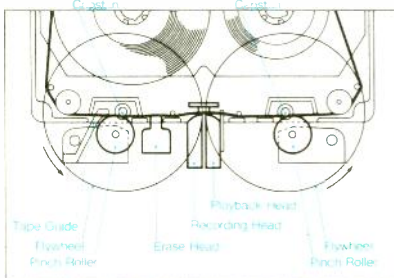
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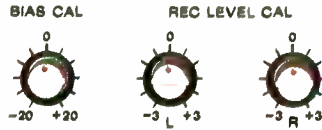
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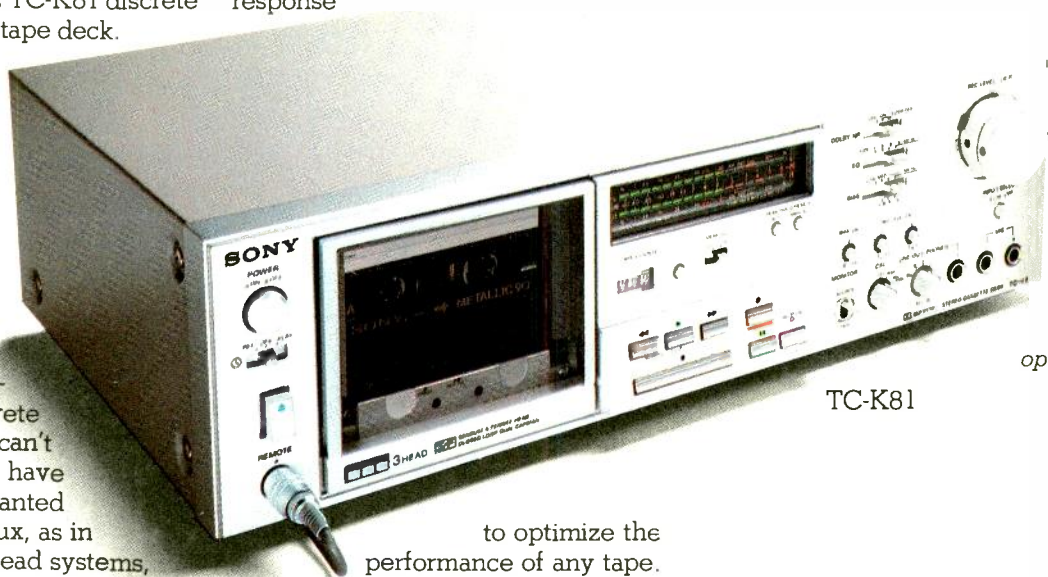
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**SONY**

## CULSHAW AT LARGE

# Video Software II: Opera

by John Culshaw



Kraus and Freni in video *Faust*  
The production was terrible on screen

LONDON—If, as I have maintained, there is little hope for orchestral music on prerecorded video, there seems to be a better argument for opera, and much has been and is being done to convince us of the case. Space limits compel me to comment only on what I have seen over the past year on television, but all of it is potential cassette material; and so far as I am concerned it can all, with one arguable exception, be consigned to the scrap heap.

Some of it came from the stage and some from the studio, and it could be said that the stage won by a slender margin if only because some of the participants looked at least for some of the time as if they were taking part in an opera. There was *Carmen* from the Vienna State Opera with Obraztsova, Domingo, Buchanan, and Mazurok, conducted by Kleiber and produced by Zeffirelli, which I think you will agree is no mean assembly of talent. It was acceptable enough as a single transmission, but it was my misfortune to see it twice—

once in London and again in New York; the second time around it was unbearable because *every time* there was a gap in the vocal line the cameras went over to the conductor. (Shades of my piece on the Scala *Norma*, June 1977.) The faces of Don José and Carmen should be expressing something emotionally important immediately before the Flower Song, and the very last thing one wants to see at that moment is the conductor. Yet if this was maddening and predictable the second time, how much more so it would be on the fifteenth replay of a cassette! So no marks for *Carmen*.

In Great Britain, Welsh commercial television set up *Don Pasquale* and managed to get it on the network, thereby setting back the cause of video opera by several million years. (It was explained that this, too, might eventually find its way to cassette distribution.) It was sung in Welsh Italian, which must have confused any Italians who were watching, to say nothing of the English-speaking audience at which it was aimed. (Subtitles popped up now and then, usually late.) It was embarrassingly unfunny—I think “arch” is the word—and Sir Geraint Evans presented his well-known performance as Sir Geraint Evans. The conductor evidently labored under the impression that he was directing a rehearsal of the third act of *Parsifal* at half-speed, and the orchestra sounded as if placed at the far end of a very long tunnel; if you left the room where the set was playing, you heard nothing at all from the orchestra but a kind of pitchless boom. No marks for *Don Pasquale*.

The BBC countered with a studio production of Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges*, which had the advantage of good stereo sound (it was broadcast simultaneously on stereo radio) and a convincing cast. But—and I know all about the 1921 Chicago precedent—it was sung by an English cast in *French*, which is as dotty a way to go about one's business in a London studio as I can image; if because it was a coproduction with eventual cassette release in mind it had to be sung in a language other than English, then what, pray, is wrong with Russian? The English can sing that language just as well, and understand it just as little, as French. Then there was the question of the special effects in general and the balloon ride in particular. The trouble here, and it is a general malaise, is that video tends to be too self-congratulatory. The ride was pretty in a cardboard cutout sort of way but feeble compared to the kind of effects Hollywood could produce fifty years ago. And if you try to explain to a child (as I did) that in a video studio you have to do things at a hundredth of the time and cost of a movie, you get (and deserve) the reply:

“So what?” In other words, if the ride isn't thrilling and convincing, it isn't worth doing at all. So full marks for the sound and nothing else, which means you might just as well listen to a record.

It is often argued that works should be specially created for the medium, but the next disaster would seem to suggest otherwise. This was an operatic version of R. L. Stevenson's story *The Rajah's Diamond* with music by Alun Hoddinott and a libretto by Myfanwy Piper, who will be remembered for her adaptations of *The Turn of the Screw*, *Owen Wingrave*, and *Death in Venice* for Britten. I almost lost count, but I think there were seventeen scenes in less than an hour, presumably on the grounds that you cannot hold attention for more than three minutes at a time. Well, you certainly cannot develop character or music, so despite its brevity the piece was remarkably boring, and once again Sir Geraint Evans presented his well-known performance as Sir Geraint Evans. I doubt if *The Rajah's Diamond* will ever be seen or heard again—for that, at least, we can be truly thankful.

In New York, I went to a press show of parts of *Faust* in the Chicago Lyric Opera's production that had been video-taped off the stage. The cast was good, and so was the sound, but the design and production were hideously wrong. The former may have looked acceptable at a distance in the theater, but it was terrible on screen; and even if slow-motion sword fights are permitted on the stage (kinda symbolic, see?), they can cause instant hilarity when viewed through the piercing eye of the camera. Still, Carol Fox was in paroxysms of delight, and there was much heady talk among agents about video cassette rights. I fled.

The only potential winner of the lot was a Scottish Opera production of *The Golden Cockerel*, which again was taken from the stage. It was bursting with color and movement; it looked marvelous, and the orchestra sounded good. Unfortunately it was too much for the conductor and far too much for the cast, for no matter how pretty the pictures, there remains a limit to the amount of out-of-tune singing that even a hardened ear can take. So this one, sad to say, sank itself through musical deficiencies.

The next time I write about video software (and I hope it will be in less than three years) I would love to strike an optimistic note. After all, someone, somewhere, is bound to get it right sooner or later; but that will not happen while the present complacent attitude, which suggests that there's really not much wrong with it as it is, prevails. ■■

John Culshaw

1924–1980

(See editorial, page 6)

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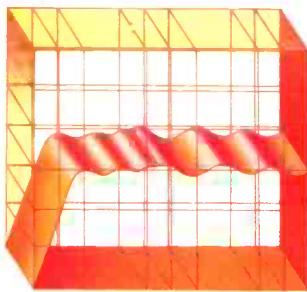
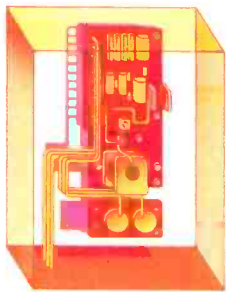
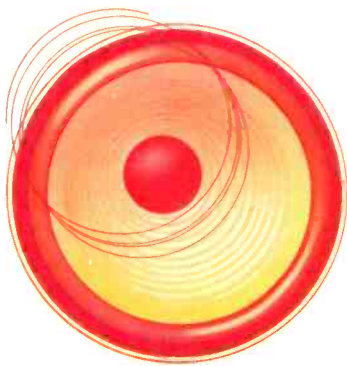
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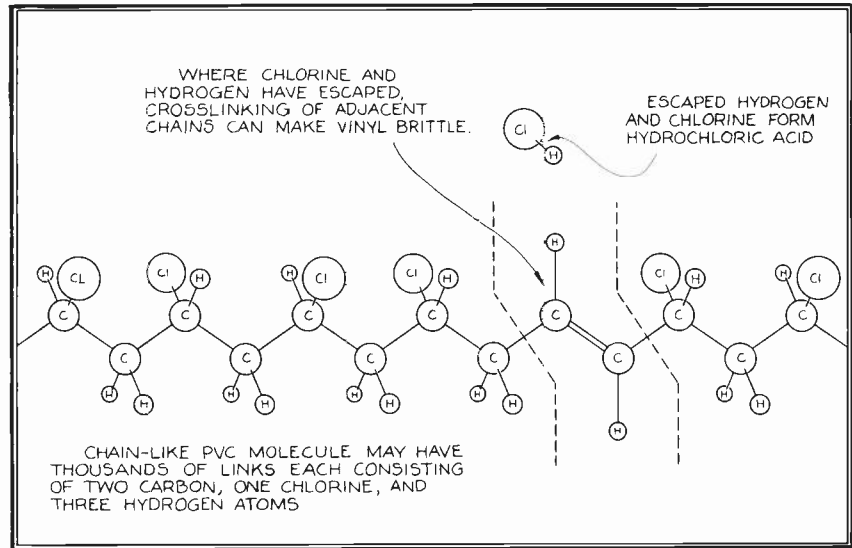
Circle 17 on Reader-Service Card

protect) or "antistatic cleaning sprays" (which often were so loaded with silicone that they gummed up the grooves something fierce). It should be clear from the accompanying discussion of vinyl technology ("What Price Cleaning?") that there has been a lot of research into the subject since those days, and our alternatives have become more sophisticated, if not necessarily clear-cut.

There are, however, some general guidelines for choosing a cleaning system. First, avoid immersing your records in anything if you want them to last. This rules out soap and water and the more arcane (and, I'm told, even worse) use of wetting agents like Kodak Photoflo; they won't do anything good for polymer stability and probably will speed up vinyl disintegration. But do be willing to use moist systems; you won't get rid of contaminants like fingerprints with any of the dry systems I've tried, and if the moisture is limited, so is the potential polymer leeching.

Until the day arrives when record-care solutions have to carry a list of ingredients, as canned foods do, you're left guessing about their properties and the possible harmful effects they may have. Cecil Watts, who died in 1956, was almost alone in his investigations into the chemistry of these cleaning fluids. Much more research has been done recently, most notably by Dr. Bruce Maier, founder of Discwasher. But between the carefully conceived and researched products of such well-known specialists and the obvious quick-buck copies that seem to be backed by no research there lies a host of cleaners that can vary from effective to harmful. With no information on formulations available, the consumer must ultimately depend on his own empirical findings and on brand names. The bigger the manufacturer, the more it has at stake should it produce an inferior or deleterious formulation, and that's your only guarantee of quality.

At least part of the best cure, of course, is prevention. Store and handle your records so that contamination will be kept to a minimum. When they do need cleaning, give them no more than they need. A laundering just before storage, to prevent dust from becoming imbedded and to inhibit mildew and such, is a good idea. But, for precisely that reason, be sure the records are totally dry before you put them away. **HF**



## What Price Cleaning?

During the past few years, the possible long-term deleterious effects of fluids on record vinyl has been a subject of considerable debate—and often outright prejudice. We were not surprised to learn, however, that the issues are anything but new and that audiophiles are not the only ones concerned with this topic. Back in the 1950s, the Library of Congress commissioned a study to determine the factors that could degrade the quality of the phonograph records in its extensive collection. The report, published in 1959 as "Preservation and Storage of Sound Recordings" by A. G. Pickett and M. M. Lemcoe, outlines in part the issues involved in wet cleaning.

Record vinyl is composed chiefly of polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Its molecular structure (visualized above) is formed of three basic elements: carbon, hydrogen, and chlorine. As with other polymers, the central carbon atom of each molecule binds to another carbon atom, creating long chains of randomly oriented, curled molecules. The complete PVC molecule, however, is somewhat unstable; in the presence of pressure, heat, or ultraviolet radiation, the atoms of chlorine and hydrogen tend to break loose and recombine as hydrochloric acid, which acts to further degrade the integrity of the vinyl. To slow down the formation of hydrochloric acid, small amounts of chemical stabilizers (usually lead) are added to the vinyl to bind the hydrogen and chlorine

atoms in a chemically inert form.

One of the conclusions of the report is that "the potential life of a disc can be assumed equivalent to the life of the stabilizer . . ." though under good storage conditions "chemical degradation of a vinyl disc should not occur in less than a century." The issue, then, becomes the effect of cleaning solutions on vinyl stabilizers—that is, how much stabilizer will a liquid actually pull from the vinyl? No manufacturer supplies a chemical breakdown of its cleaning fluid, and reliable figures as to the amount of stabilizer removed by each is simply not available. Even Bruce Maier of Discwasher, who is responsible for the airing of this debate, states that any fluid cleaner will pull out some stabilizer but that a properly buffered solution will have a minimal effect. Other manufacturers give similar replies, and just about all of them warn of the pulling effects of home-made cleaning solutions—namely, soap and water.

Use of wet cleaners, therefore, is a necessary compromise, and their proper use becomes paramount, especially the drying operation. That same report warns of the danger of fungal growth spurred by dampness and nourished by surface contaminants, paper liners, and record labels. A growing fungal colony, because of the acidity of its metabolic by-products, will permanently etch the vinyl surface. If you are in the habit of cleaning records after playing, make sure that their surfaces are perfectly dry before replacing them in their protective sleeves.—The Editors



roller simply floated above the record surface, accomplishing little within the grooves. The brush, however, managed to sweep off a good deal of dust.

The Reference Staticleaner (\$39.90), which has a carbon-fiber brush attached to an all-metal arm and base, worked very well. A ground wire plugs into the base and can be attached to any nearby ground. The only problem I found with the Staticleaner's otherwise smooth operation was a great deal of initial fiber shedding.

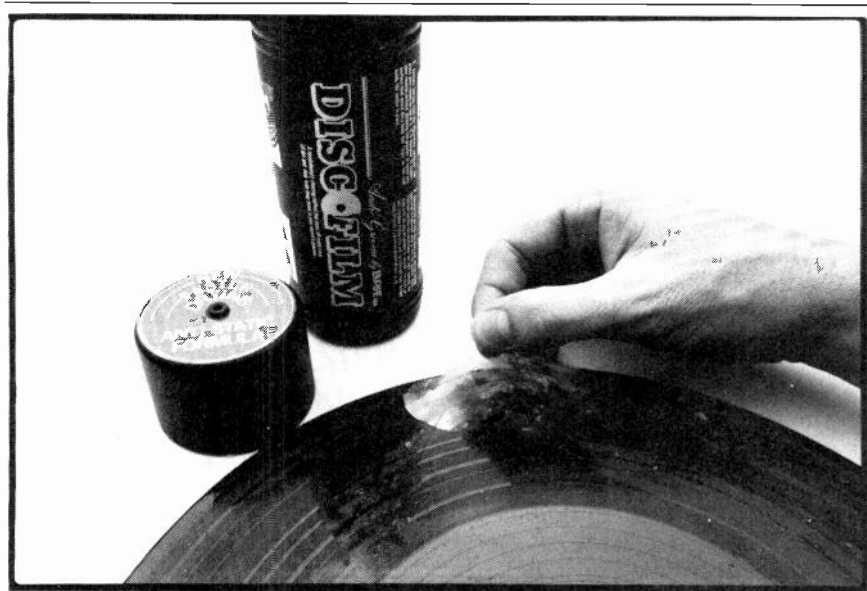
The brush with the Decca Record Cleaner (\$16.95) shed less, but I found it difficult to raise the carrying arm high enough to track on my Technics turntable. Even the supplementary base, supplied to add arm height where necessary, could not raise the record cleaner high enough, causing the brush to zip across the record without pausing to clean. I had to add a home-made wedge.

The Keith Monks Pivot Sweeper (\$23.70) uses an animal-hair brush with a few short copper strands mingled in to conduct static to the base and thence, through the wire provided, to the ground. Height is adjusted by turning the screw base, and it easily mated with the Technics. Tracking and dust removal were quite good.

Audio-Technica calls its arm-mounted brush the Autocleanica (\$12.95), and this velvet roller and carbon-fiber brush combination did a fine job. It also has a ground wire and a well-designed arm rest.

Finally, there are the "adhesives." I hadn't expected much from the Pixoff (\$17.50), a device that looks like a clothing lint remover, but it turned out to be one of the most effective dust removers I tested. It does nothing for or against static and fingerprints, but records were apparently spotless after a thorough cleaning with the device.

Also very effective but less convenient is Empire's Discofilm (\$14.95 for enough to clean twenty-two records), a gooey fluid that you spread around on the disc. An applicator sponge is built into the bottle, and the cap doubles as a support for the record you're cleaning. The liquid dries (in an hour, to play it safe) to a film that peels off, taking the dust and debris with it. If this "facial" is to come off intact, you must apply a very thick coat; if small patches of film stay on the record, you'll have to use tweezers to remove them. Discofilm is quite ex-



TOP: The Watts Dust Bug is the classic of the pivoted-arm cleaners.

BOTTOM: After drying, Empire's Discofilm is removed in one piece.

pensive—about 75 cents to clean both sides of a record.

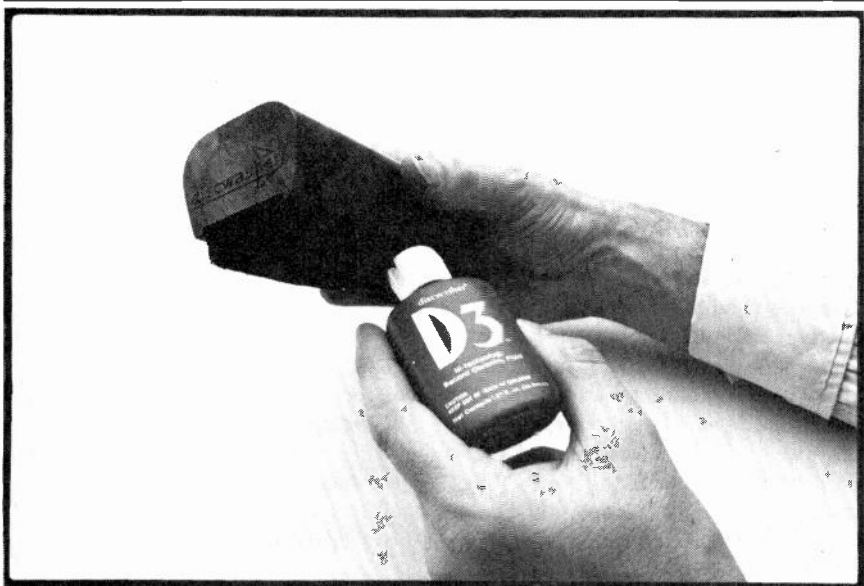
I also tried one of Falcon's Dust-Off aerosol cans of compressed gas, which come in various sizes (\$17.85, \$3.85, \$1.98). I couldn't detect any residue left by the chlorofluorocarbon gas. Whatever the relationship between fluorocarbons and the ozone layer, Dust-Off seems no better than old-fashioned (and free) lung power.

For those of you who are prepared to spend real money on record cleaning, there are the big machines. From England comes the Keith Monks Record Cleaning Machine Mk. III, which costs

around \$2,000 (depending on exchange rates) and will scrub, rinse, and dry your records automatically. If this seems a little out of line, the Mk. IV costs only about \$900. For the average home user, this still leaves an awkward choice: If you buy the machine, you may not be able to afford any more records.

There's one more cleaning method that I should mention, simply because it has cropped up so often in the past: soap and water. Perhaps that solution made sense years ago, when the commercial alternatives generally were treated cloths (which picked up grit and scratched the records they purported to





TOP: Audio-Technica's Rotary Disc Cleaner requires less arm twisting.

BOTTOM: D3 cleaning fluid is applied to leading edge of Discwasher pad.

organic material that the pad may harbor after several record cleanings, wet storage seems a likely environment for growth of mold and mildew.

Audio-Technica's Rotary Disc Cleaner has a unique design that permits the disc-shaped velvet pad to rotate freely when you hold it by the top-mounted knob, minimizing arm twisting. I obtained good results in both dust and fingerprint removal, though I did have some difficulty manipulating the pad so as to lift off all the dust at the end of the cleaning operation.

The Monks Record Care Kit also includes cleaning fluid, velvet pad, and

pad cleaning brush. You moisten the pad by applying the fluid to four holes atop its handle. The surface of the pad is extremely narrow but long enough to cover the full radius of an LP. Performance with dust and fingerprints generally was on a par with the rest—but once again I wonder about long-term storage of a moist pad.

The Whiskey, by Robins, proved to be the least effective of the group, although not a complete dud. The kit comes with a velvet roller (instead of a pad), a stylus brush, and cleaning fluid. I found two problems: The velvet sheds, and the revolving of the roller makes it

difficult to lift the dust off the record.

This last point is important in using any of these cleaners, especially if you opt not to use a moistened pad. I found that a sharp twist of the wrist, making a sort of scooping motion, worked best. Moisture aids the process, both by reducing the static charge that binds the dust to the record and by imparting an adhesive quality to the pad.

The Watts Disc Preener is a velvet roller with a moisture-retaining wick in the center. The directions say the wick contains an "ionic compound" that is activated by the tap water you are instructed to moisten it with. I found handling the device a bit awkward, and I have strong reservations about the use of tap water—at least in New York, where the concentration of particulate matter and dissolved minerals seems to leave a residue on records.

Of all the wet cleaners, the Sound Guard Record Cleaner Kit takes the most direct route, instructing the user to spray the supplied fluid onto the surface of the disc—for heavily soiled records—and warning that the record must be removed from the turntable lest the moisture damage it. You should wait for 15-30 seconds before mopping up the fluid with a small cellulose sponge and then dry the record with a velvet buffing pad. The system consistently produced good results, but it takes more time than the other methods.

Two products combine brushes and velvet pads. The Goldring Super Extatic (\$30) has two rows of carbon fibers mounted on either side of a pad; no liquid is included. Again, shedding gave the pad more material to pick up. The Watts Manual Parastat (\$20.85), which does come with a liquid, consists of two pads on either side of a nylon brush. Using the liquid in the quantity and manner stipulated by Watts didn't do a lot to loosen the dust.

Next we come to the brushes mounted at the end of a pivoted arm. They are intended to provide constant dust removal while you're playing the record rather than heavy-duty cleaning. The classic of the genre is the venerable Watts Dust Bug (\$9.85). Unlike all the other models I used, it employs a fluid (rather than a ground line) to bleed off static charges. And unlike most, it combines a nylon roller with a brush. The Dust Bug has a loyal following, but I found the nylon bristles so stiff that the

# Record Cleaners and the Real World

*An at-home evaluation of what works—and what doesn't*

by Myron Berger



Decca Zero Ohms Record Brush bleeds off static charges while sweeping dust.

Unless you live in a pristine dust-free environment, you've undoubtedly heard the sonic consequences of dirty records. Nobody should be surprised by the statement that keeping discs clean is vital to the full enjoyment of recorded music, but the market abounds with such a variety of brushes, pads, liquids, and gadgets dedicated to vinyl hygiene that selecting the right cleaning method and product is far from simple.

To ease your path somewhat, **HIGH FIDELITY** asked me to conduct an informal survey of the available devices and their relative merits. In my investigation, I did not employ a microscope for intense scrutiny of tiny accumulations of dust, nor did I attempt to quantify the reduction in clicks and pops afforded by each cleaner. Instead, I conducted my tests under real-world conditions. The test environment was an apartment in New York City, and the "instruments" were my eyes and ears. All cleaning operations were performed on new LPs that had been left out on a table for twenty-four hours; the abundance of particulate matter in the air, combined with a very low ambient humidity, made for extremely dusty records.

I searched the market for a representative sampling of nonmotorized record cleaners, weeding out the inexpensive knockoffs of nationally advertised brands. The devices fall into four main categories: conductive brushes, pad/fluid combinations, tracking brushes mounted on their own "tonearms," and what might be called adhesive pickers.

The various conductive brushes on the market are similar in design and concept. Several thousand carbon-fiber bristles are bound to a metallic handle. When you lower the brush onto a rotating record, the fibers bleed off static charges, reducing the attraction between disc and dust. You then sweep the loosened dust either toward the center of the record or out past the edge bead. I tried the Empire Dust Eliminator (\$19.95), the Decca Zero Ohms Record Brush (\$18.95), the Goldring Exstatic (\$20), and the Reference Statibrush (\$19.95).

Each of the brushes performed reasonably well in removing deposits of dust. Without grease solvents, they had no impact on fingerprints, of course. And all shared one fault: shedding. Due to either the brittleness of the carbon

fibers or poor bonding to the handle, records emerged covered with tiny pieces of the bristles the first time I used each brush; less shedding occurred with subsequent use, but the fibers still had a tendency to loosen if too much pressure was exerted on them. The brushes must be cleaned after each use or dust will be transferred to the next record.

A more satisfactory method of cleaning, in my opinion, involves velvet pad/fluid combinations, which remove both dust and fingerprints. The systems I tested were the Discwasher (\$15), the Watts Parastatic Disc Preener (\$7.65), the Keith Monks Record Care Kit (\$7.60), the Robins Whiskee (\$4.85), the Audio-Technica Rotary Disc Cleaner (\$12.95), the Sound Guard Record Cleaner Kit (\$9.95), and the Transcriber Classic One (\$15). All but one is sold with a proprietary cleaning fluid; Watts suggests plain water for the Disc Preener.

Attached to the Discwasher's walnut handle is a curved velvet pad whose fibers are all slanted in one direction; an arrow embossed in the handle points in the direction of the nap. A small brush is supplied to clean accumulated dust from the pad, and a bottle of D3 cleaning fluid completes the system. You apply a small amount of the fluid to the leading edge of the pad and bring it down onto the surface of a rotating disc—a revolution or two will moisten it sufficiently. Then you rock the handle back so that the dry trailing edge of the pad mops up the moisture and debris. Overall, results were excellent with the Discwasher. I could see no remaining specs of dust on the record. Removing fingerprints took a bit more pressure on the pad, but to my eyes and ears the Discwasher cannot be faulted.

The Transcriber Classic One looks similar to the Discwasher, but the concept is quite different. The velvet pad is flat and much smoother, and moistness is maintained by fluid from a reservoir in the handle, refilled via a cap at the top. Dubbed Micro Stor, the reservoir is made up of a core of densely packed tiny glass beads that mete out small quantities of the supplied humectant/cleaner. The Classic One removed dust quite nicely, though fingerprints required that fluid be applied directly to the pad. I wonder, however, about long-term storage of the system; according to Transcriber, it should be stored face down in its molded plastic case to prevent evaporation. Considering the accumulations of

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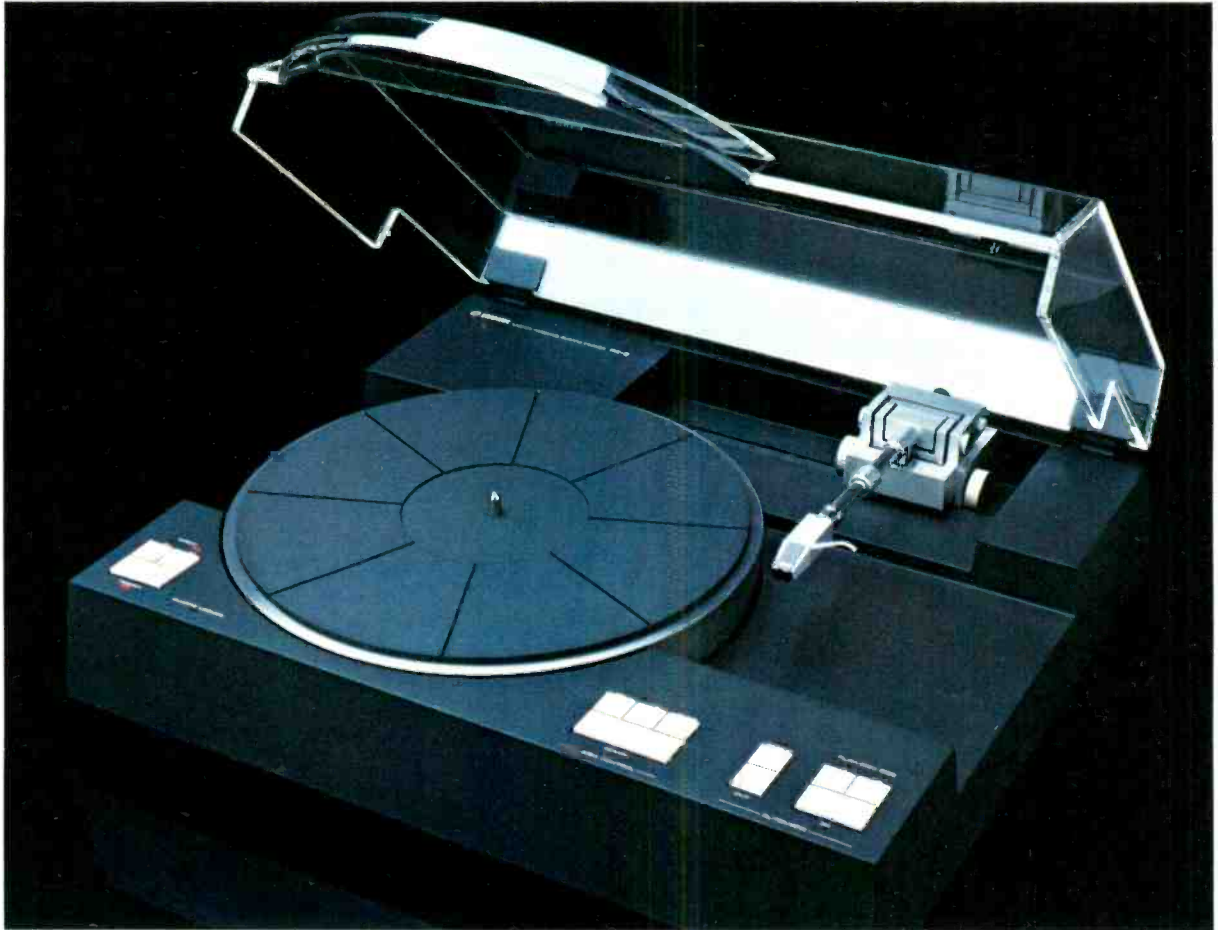
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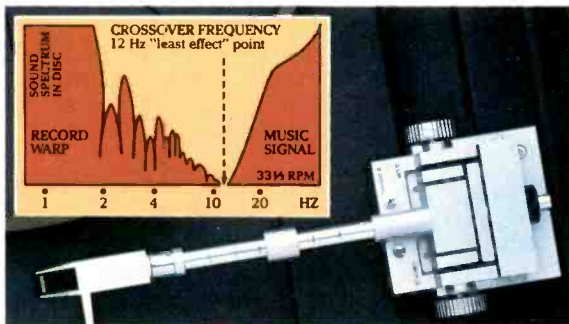
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\*Yamaha cartridges shown (MC-1X and MC-7) on both models are optional.



sionaries who were spreading such racist gump? The extent of the tragedy, Blake understood, was not simply that the white accepted these calculated lies, but that the blacks too adopted this view of themselves. The irony of expunging an antiracist poem to avoid offending blacks is all too depressingly apparent.

Harry White  
Chicago, Ill.

#### "Prehistoric" Cage

Now that record listeners have seen fit to become curious about music composed by John Cage in his "prehistoric" era [reviews, April], there might be reason to resurrect some of his songs, which are probably his earliest output.

In mid-November of 1932, Cage and I—then an aspiring basso cantante—prepared for the Santa Monica Women's Club a program consisting of two Pindaric odes he had composed and two songs each by Hindemith, Poulenc, and Honegger. This time for Southern California was one of the deep troughs of the Depression, and our contemporary sampling was not exactly the fare that the audience would find comfort-

ing. We were, however, invited to repeat the odes at the beloved Mary Carr Moore's monthly American Composers' Circle the following spring. The Pindaric odes are worth rehearing, if for no other reason than that they reflect an early-twentieth-century, West Coast born-and-bred musical talent jolted to life by the electrifying impact of Bauhaus consciousness.

Harry Hay  
Los Angeles, Calif.

#### The Coates Recordings

Bravo Albert Coates! And bravo Ward Marston, for the tasteful production of "The Albert Coates Legacy," Vols. 1 and 2, reviewed in your March issue. It has been longer than I care to think since my worn shellacs of Tchaikovsky, Ravel, and Prokofiev were new; to have these (plus the HMV-only *Petrushka*) on Encore Records' superb LP transfers is, I believe, beyond any collector's wildest expectations.

What should be stressed, beyond Abram Chipman's kind review, is that more of the Russian concert "standards," as well as substantial amounts of Wagner's and Richard Strauss's music, had their elec-

trical-recording debuts under Coates's direction. Through his RCA Red Seal interpretations of *Prince Igor*, *The Golden Cockerel*, *Boris Godunov*, and other works, it was he who educated virtually a whole generation about this repertory.

And what an education! Through all the subsequent encomia of Stokowski as the colorist, Koussevitzky as the energizer, and Beecham or Monteux as conductors who approached the heart of this music, Coates stands as a precedent. His London Symphony recordings often displayed these qualities in combination. One might compare—if they're ever made available through Marston's future efforts—Coates's *Night on Bare Mountain* or *Magic Fire Music* with Stokowski's, his early Tchaikovsky Sixth Symphony with Koussevitzky's, or his Decca/frrr *Romeo and Juliet* with anybody's.

What an enigma was this onetime conductor of the St. Petersburg Opera, but what a wealth of thoroughly original musicianship and excitement are in store if the Encore project continues.

C. E. Crumpacker  
Valley Cottage, N.Y.

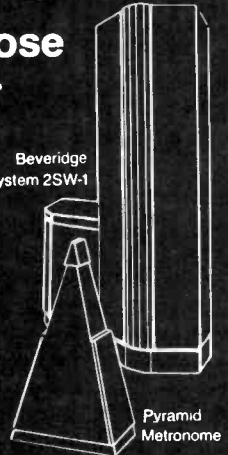
# WHY NOT THE BEST?

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# Letters



## Bring Back Stereo!

I was intrigued by "Too High Fidelity?" by Leonard Marcus [Editorial, April]. He is justifiably unhappy with what is being palmed off as reproduction of music these days, but is it really low fidelity that he is complaining about? The computer industry quickly learned that "garbage in" results in "garbage out," but the audio industry does not seem to have applied that axiom to its sound pickup practices.

My personal criterion of high fidelity is that the wavefront presented to a listener simulate as closely as practicable that presented to him in the best audience seat at a live performance, with nothing added. Unfortunately, since the early days of stereo, microphones have become smaller, with an accompanying reduction of output. Battery preamplifiers have been replaced by power-line devices, and the signal-to-noise ratio has suffered. Technicians have responded by moving microphones closer and closer to the performers and adding microphones in profusion so they can be close to everyone. The extra microphones result in cancellation effects and destruction of the phase relationships essential to the stereophonic phenomenon. To minimize cancellation, the mixer "emphasizes" the predominant instruments or sections, destroying the conductor's intended effects. The resultant signal has very little relation to a live concert, and can in no way be "high fidelity."

Too much that is called stereo today is merely dual monophonic! Most of those responsible for sound pickup have forgotten—or never knew—what stereophonic reproduction should sound like.

I don't think Mr. Marcus quite appreciates how right he is. Digital transmission can't do a thing for us if the "sound technician" persists in generating garbage to go into the system. I hope that your magazine will continue to deplore current sound pickup practices and encourage getting back to real stereophonic sound reproduction.

Herman T. Carter  
Madison, N.J.

## Digital vs. Analog

Contrary to the rave reviews of digital recordings, I have found them to be, in many respects, less satisfying than my di-

rect-to-disc and better analog tape recordings. Certainly, digital records excel in such areas as dynamic range, quiet background, substantial deep bass, and purity of harmonic structure in some passages. I find, however, that they are less natural-sounding in other ways: They lack clarity in complex passages, the warmth of tone found in a good hall, the "breathy" sound from woodwinds, the bite of bow on strings, and the sustained sparkle of cymbals and bells.

While digital recording holds much promise, the results are far from perfect. Until the shortcomings are resolved, I will prefer my "obsolete" analog records.

Bruce B. Koepke  
Lake Oswego, Ore.

## Thomas Best U.S. Conductor?

Harris Goldsmith's critique of Michael Tilson Thomas' chamber-orchestra recording of the Beethoven *Pastoral* Symphony [April] was rightfully laudatory. However, he stated that this performance nevertheless has its "predictable" shortcomings, e.g., "the thunderstorm is disappointingly scrawny." Quite the contrary! The smaller forces involved help to suggest more poetically the tumult of a storm. (Vivaldi needed only twelve or so musicians to suggest the fury of winter superbly in *The Four Seasons*.) The music's rhetoric, not mere volume, creates the cloudburst, and fortunately Thomas realized this.

I hope this admirable *Pastoral* is just the first in a series of refreshingly European performances to be recorded by Thomas, who is in my opinion the most talented conductor America has yet produced.

Paul Morrison  
Rochester, Mich.

## Thomson's "Black Boy"

Another word on the exclusion of the song "The Little Black Boy" from CRI's reissue of Virgil Thomson's *Songs from William Blake*. What the composer has excluded because it "causes so much trouble among blacks" ["Letters," March] is one of the most insightful indictments of racism ever penned, and in 1793 at that. The sentiment "And I am black, but O my soul is white" is uttered by an African boy who has been taught such notions by his mother. But where did she learn that souls have color and that the color is, surprisingly enough, white? From who else but the white mis-

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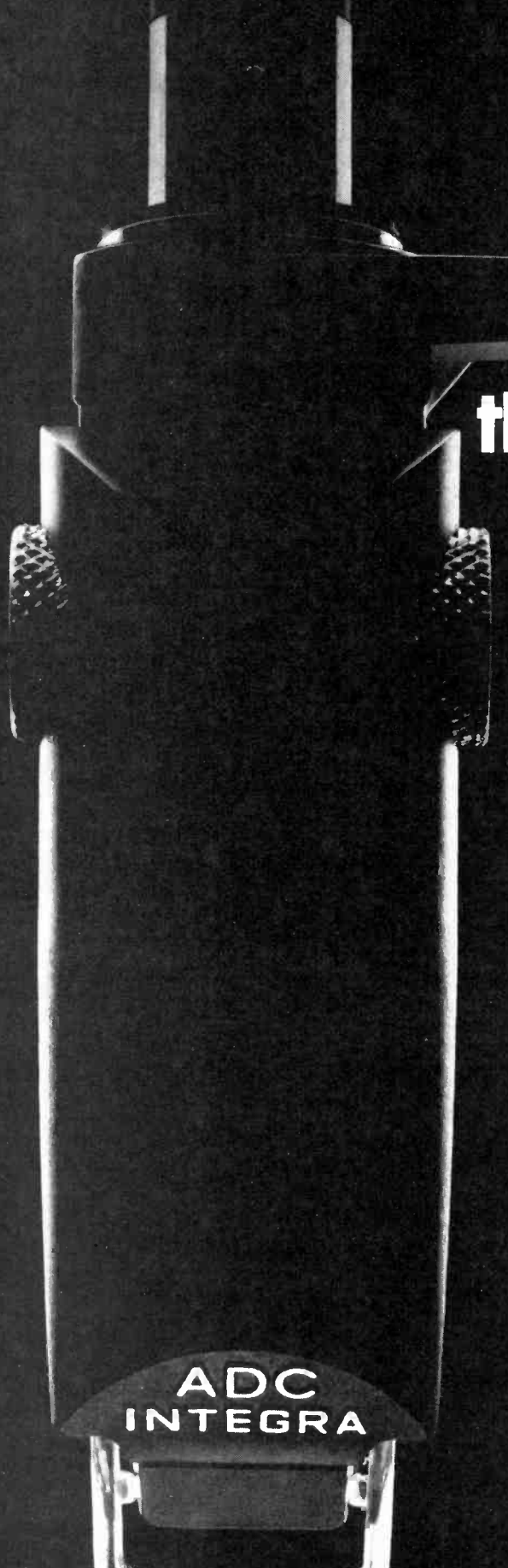
On the other hand, MDR-7 Sonyphones weigh 1.9 oz.

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## Tape Prices

**Ampex Grand Master II:** C-90, \$6.60; C-60, \$5.20

**Ampex MPT:** C-60, \$12.50

**BASF Studio I:** C-90, \$4.69; C-60, \$3.29

**Fuji Metal:** C-90, \$12; C-60, \$9.10; C-46, \$8.30

**Maxell LN:** C-120, \$4.20; C-90, \$3.25; C-60, \$2.15; C-46 \$1.95

**Maxell MX:** C-90, \$11.95; C-60, \$9.95; C-46, \$8.95

**Memorex High Bias:** C-90, \$5.99; C-60, \$4.39

**Nakamichi ZX:** C-60, \$9.75

**RKO Broadcast I:** C-90, \$5.75; C-60, \$3.79

**RKO XD:** C-90, \$3.66; C-60, \$2.60; C-45, \$2.36

**RKO Ultrachrome:** C-90, \$5.76; C-60, \$3.96

**Sony SHF:** C-90, \$5.00; C-60, \$3.70; C-46, \$3.30

**Sony EHF:** C-90, \$5.60; C-60, \$4.00; C-46, \$3.60

**Sony Metallic:** C-46, \$8.00

**TDK OD:** C-90, \$6.60; C-60, \$4.70

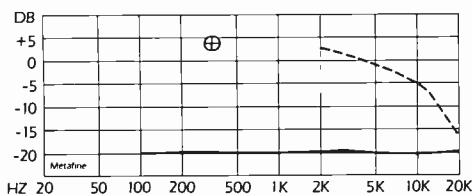
**TDK MA-R:** C-60, \$15.60

**3M Scotch Metafine:** C-90, \$10.79; C-60, \$8.29; C-46, \$7.49

### Type 4 metal-particle tapes (70-microsecond playback EQ)

#### 3M Scotch Metafine C-60 cassette tape

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +3 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz +½ dB  
 at 15 kHz -10½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 100%

RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) +¼ dB

A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) 59% dB

MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 63 dB

THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB at -10 dB  
 1.13% 0.13%

relative capabilities and characteristics.

In examining the results of this round of testing, our overriding impression is that—at least among the major manufacturers—we seem to have entered a new age of consistency. For one thing, the curves for relative output vs. frequency include no real oddities; they are far flatter than the last batch.

The Type 2 tapes, in particular, resemble each other: Sensitivities all are within a 1-dB spread, headroom (even in the 15-kHz maximum-level data) within 2 dB, bias within 10%. These numbers are about par for variations between samples of the same brand and therefore suggest interchangeability between brands with a minimum of unwanted surprises.

Bias points for the ferric group average higher than in the last tests, which included two formulations (Ampex Plus and Realistic Supertape Gold) with bias points near 90% of the reference tape's—and therefore classifiable as our Type 0 ferrics rather than as Type 1. All of these present ferrics, including the nonpremium Maxell LN, BASF Studio I, and RKO XD, should produce good results in decks set up for the more expensive Type 1 formulations. In choosing a tape from this group, remember that if your deck has no bias adjustment you should stay with formulations whose bias requirements are close to those for whatever tape is recommended for your deck; similarly, if it has no recording-sensitivity adjustment, going more than about 1 dB away from the recommended tape's sensitivity will compromise Dolby tracking.

In comparing noise numbers, keep in mind that the 70-microsecond playback EQ of Types 2 and 4 rolls off inherent tape hiss and thus gives these tapes an advantage over Type 1 formulations. But if you compare the maximum-level curves, you will see that the quiet is gained at the expense of high-frequency headroom in the Type 2 group. Which is going to sound quieter will depend in part on the signal you are recording and the way you record it. Aggressive high-frequency content (close-miked brass transients, cymbals, and so on) may come through beautifully on the Type 1 tape but suffer compression and other overload side effects with Type 2, forcing a lower recording level for clean highs and thus bringing the signal back down toward the noise. If you record

both types cautiously, never pushing either into overload, the Type 2 tape will always sound quieter, but you'll seldom be getting the best possible S/N ratio with either.

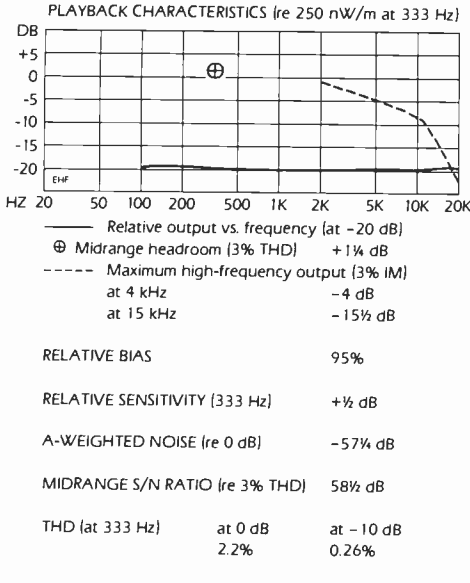
The Type 4 metals are another matter. Their overload curves resemble the shape of those for the Type 1 ferrics but lie several dB higher overall. This means that to get the best dynamic range out of metal tapes you must record them at a higher level. Some decks have separate metering scales for metal tapes; if yours doesn't, you should study these curves carefully and mentally compare signal properties and meter readings with the overload characteristics of the tape while you're recording.

Again, there are no bad tapes here, even though there are differences. Among the metal tapes, TDK MA-R (or, presumably, MA, which is billed as the same tape in a less expensive, standard plastic shell) required the highest bias by a considerable margin. Fuji Metal fell about halfway between MA-R and the majority, Ampex MPT about halfway between Fuji and the rest. If the bias can be tweaked on your deck, this means little; otherwise, you might get some response anomalies if the deck is intended to use a tape at one extreme and you choose one from the other end of the scale. But sample-to-sample variations in the metal tapes we've examined suggest that hard-and-fast assessments of the various brands' bias requirements may still be premature. And many of the differences among metal tapes are even smaller and less consequential.

Finally, there are some minor differences in packaging. If you're as fussy as we are about protecting tapes from dust, you'll appreciate the outer box on the Memorex High Bias—the first genuine improvement in the Philips design and especially striking after the irksome box that Memorex has used for its other tapes. If you like roomy cassette-shell labels, Ampex Grand Master II won't supply them, though its design is unusually handsome. And if you appreciate good materials in general, you may find RKO's packaging disappointing, though its somewhat chintzy liner obviously is better than no liner at all. And when you compare these tapes as a group to the drugstore cheapies, it appears that the battle for quality cassettes is definitely being won among the major producers. **HF**

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**Sony EHF C-90 cassette tape**



writing speed on the frequency-response plotter, some curves showed a markedly "lumpier" quality than others. (High writing speeds smooth out the differences.) The phenomenon seemed to relate not to response as such, but to instantaneous tape output; if the same sweep signal was recorded on a fresh piece of tape, the curve's envelope would normally be identical, but the

little "lumps" or "pock marks" would fall at different frequencies. It appeared likely that this property relates to the surface finish of the magnetic coating and to the size and consistency of the particles in it; partly for this reason, we sometimes referred to it as "grain."

What makes grain of more than trivial interest is the consistency with which a tape's freedom from its influence corresponds with exceptional "openness" in the highs and with silken reproduction in general—in Maxell UDXL-1, Scotch Master I, and TDK SA, among others. Ferrichromes, conversely, regularly exhibit more grain than average and sound slightly "gritty" when compared with a fine ferric or chrome formulation. This time DSL ran slow-speed sweeps (instead of steady tones at discrete frequencies) for each tape with an expanded vertical scale to exaggerate the grain.

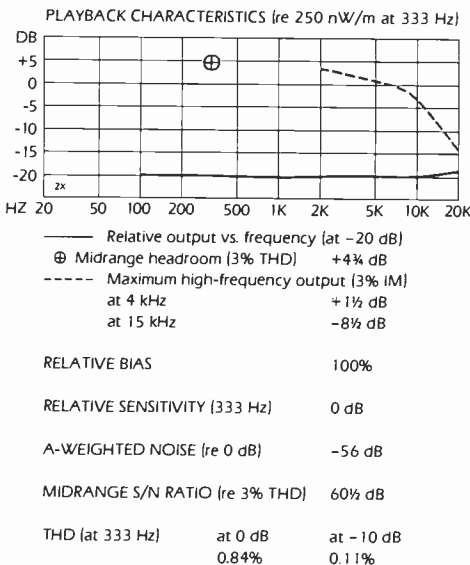
When we compared these curves, we found the quality of those for the metal tapes virtually identical—all with what we would call moderate grain and significantly better in this respect than the first metal samples we examined. Most of those for the Type 1 and 2 tapes were at least a little smoother; smoothest (that is, least grainy) of all were those for Ampex Grand Master II, Maxell LN, RKO Broadcast I, and Sony SHF and EHF. RKO's XD, its least expensive formulation and noticeably the

grainiest of the tapes in this group, did well until it was fed the very short wavelengths at frequencies above 10 kHz. When we compared it with some garden-variety ferrics, the contrast was astonishing. Even one that makes all sorts of performance claims on the label produced an extremely ragged curve well down into the midrange.

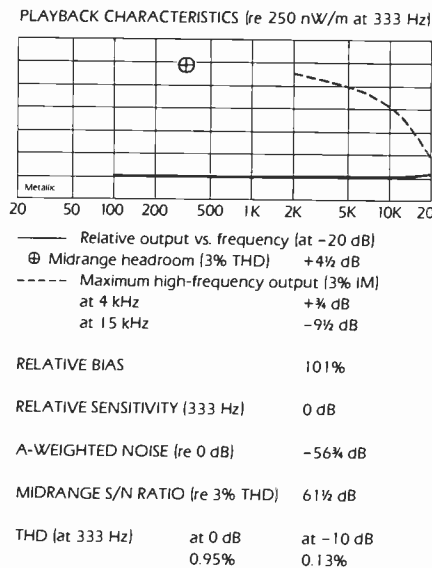
We would caution you, however, not to take the grain test as a criterion of merit by itself. Despite the good correlation we've had with audible results, we're not entirely sure how the test may be influenced by the deck in which the tapes are used. A different tradeoff between bias and recording EQ, for example, might alter the results considerably.

Of course all the data can be influenced by the deck in which a tape is used. Whatever the effect may be on tape grain, the greater high-frequency signal drive needed to compensate for a higher bias point obviously will influence not only the details of frequency response, but also the relationship between the signal and the overload curve. Low-frequency maximum recording levels may actually be increased, while high-frequency levels are reduced. If that, in turn, forces lower overall recording levels, the effective dynamic range will be reduced, and so on. But if the data shown here are not absolutes, they can still help you judge the tapes'

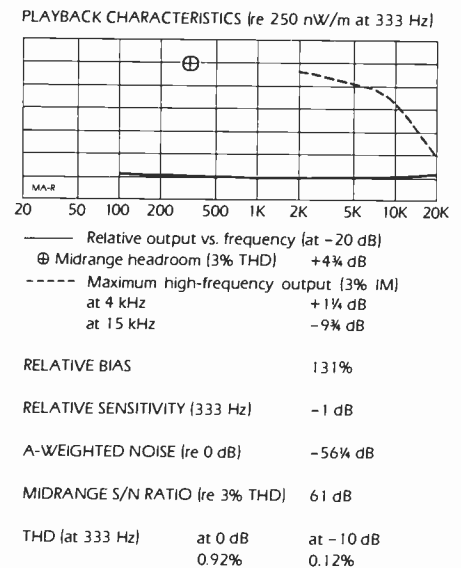
**Nakamichi ZX C-60 cassette tape**



**Sony Metallic C-46 cassette tape**



**TDK MA-R C-60 cassette tape**

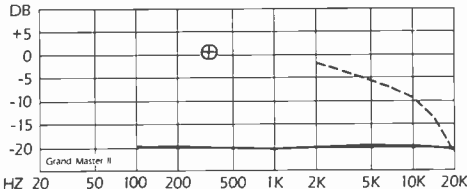




**Type 2 "chrome" tapes**  
(70-microsecond playback EQ)

**Ampex Grand Master II C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

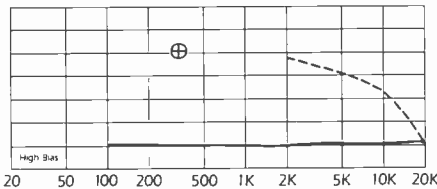


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +4 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz -4 dB  
 at 15 kHz -15½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 98%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) 0 dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -59½ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 60 dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 2.6%  
 at -10 dB 0.40%

**Memorex High Bias C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

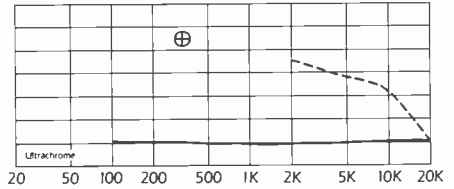


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +4 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz -3 dB  
 at 15 kHz -13½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 97%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -1 dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -60 dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 60½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 2.5%  
 at -10 dB 0.20%

**RKO Ultrachrome C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +2½ dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz -5½ dB  
 at 15 kHz -14½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 100%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -½ dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -61½ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 64 dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 1.7%  
 at -10 dB 0.37%

midrange headroom point shown in our data—your dynamic range would be our S/N-ratio figure, which is measured from A-weighted noise to the 3%-distortion point.

This is not the only 333-Hz distortion point documented. As in the past, we show THD both at DIN 0 and 10 dB lower. Most of the time, typical signals are closer to -10 than to 0, so the lower

level represents "average" performance. Its distortion may consist of both second and third harmonics, though very little second is present in this measurement for some—the metal-particle tapes, in particular. The results at 0 dB generally depend on how close that level is to the 3%-distortion overload point, and the third harmonic dominates as overload is approached. If you read your meters the

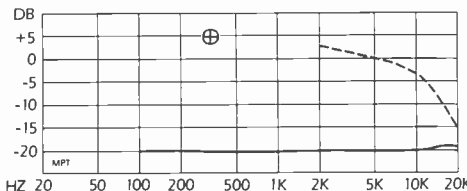
same way for all tapes—making no allowance for differences in overload capability—this figure is even more important than the headroom number since it will give you a relative fix on how clean the peaks should be on the various tapes.

DSL also investigated what we called "stability" in our last tests. Long ago we had noted that, with a slow

**Type 4 metal-particle tapes**  
(70-microsecond playback EQ)

**Ampex MPT C-60 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

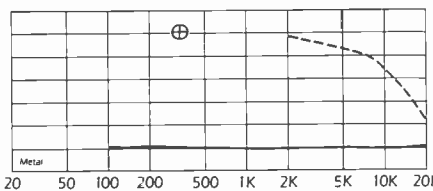


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +5 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz +¾ dB  
 at 15 kHz -8¾ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 108%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) +¼ dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -56¾ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 62 dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 0.78%  
 at -10 dB 0.13%

**Fuji Metal C-60 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

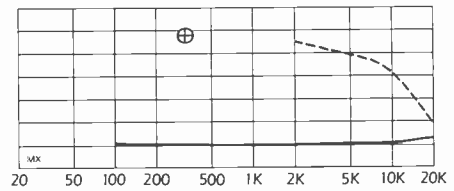


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +5½ dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz +2¼ dB  
 at 15 kHz -8½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 116%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) 0 dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -56 dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 61½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 0.73%  
 at -10 dB 0.10%

**Maxell MX C-46 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +4 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz +½ dB  
 at 15 kHz -9¾ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 100%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) 0 dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -56¾ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 60½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 1.03%  
 at -10 dB 0.12%



these two frequencies as references. The required alteration is reported as a percentage of the current required by the reference tape. Similarly, the input level needed to achieve a recorded level of 25 nanowebers per meter (20 dB below DIN 0 level, defined as 250 nanowebers per meter at 333 Hz) was noted and compared to the input level required with the reference tape. This is reported in dB as the relative sensitivity; a positive number indicates greater output for a given input and a commensurate decrease required at the input to achieve the standard recorded level.

The curves showing relative output vs. frequency are not plotted below 100 Hz because the contour effect (which produces so-called head bumps) has more to do with response in this region than the tape formulation does. Though they are made like regular response curves, they do not show the response you will get in your recorder—only the relative response with the Nakamichi's recording EQ and bias adjustment.

The dotted curves for maximum high-frequency output represent, again, 3% third-order intermodulation products at a number of frequencies between 2 and 20 kHz, though only 4 and 15 kHz are called out in the data. These overload curves lie lower than the more usual saturation curves do but, in our opinion, better represent the real usable high-frequency headroom of the tape.

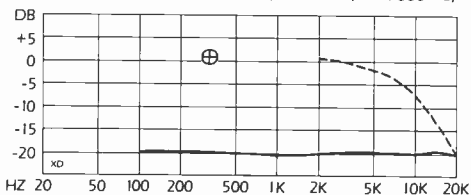
Midrange (333-Hz) headroom is measured as 3% harmonic distortion, rather than intermodulation, for practical reasons, though you will see fairly good agreement about overload characteristics between the two sets of data. Keep in mind, of course, that our figures probably won't match the meter calibration of your cassette deck. As our equipment reports document, meter "0 VU" usually represents a signal level somewhere between 2 and 5 dB below DIN 0 dB. So if a tape's midrange headroom is +2 dB (that is, 3% THD at 333 Hz occurs at a recorded level 2 dB above DIN 0 dB) and your meters read +3 dB at DIN 0 dB, they will read +5 at 333-Hz

tape overload, assuming reasonably accurate meters and reasonably sinusoidal current waveforms. With spikier waveforms—and, particularly, with averaging as opposed to "peak" meters—instantaneous signal values can exceed those displayed on the metering; how much headroom you actually need, therefore, will depend both on the design of the deck and on the nature of the signal you're recording.

The noise figures are A-weighted to approximate audibility factors, measured from biased tape (tape that has been recorded with no input signal), and reported in negative dB (that is, as so many dB below the DIN 0-dB reference). If your maximum signal levels also fall at the 0-dB reference, this figure would represent the tape's dynamic range as well. If you have peak-reading meters whose 0 is at -5 dB DIN and you are paranoid about ever letting them "get in the red," your dynamic range would be about 5 dB less; if, on the other hand, you regularly push the tape right to its overload limit—that is, to the

**RKO XD C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

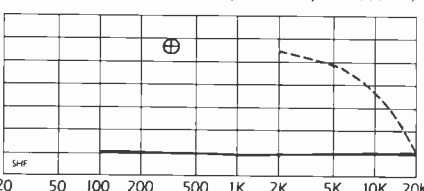


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +1 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz -4 dB  
 at 15 kHz -13 dB

RELATIVE BIAS 99%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -½ dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -53½ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 54½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 2.0%  
 at -10 dB 0.24%

**Sony SHF C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)

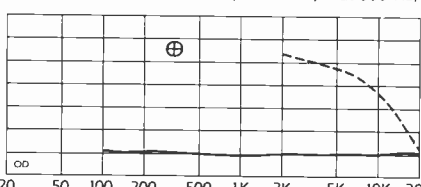


— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +3½ dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz +¼ dB  
 at 15 kHz -12½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 114%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) 0 dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -53½ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 57½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 0.68%  
 at -10 dB 0.14%

**RKO UD C-90 cassette tape**

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
 ⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +3 dB  
 - - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
 at 4 kHz -½ dB  
 at 15 kHz -12½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 109%  
 RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -½ dB  
 A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -54½ dB  
 MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 57½ dB  
 THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 0.85%  
 at -10 dB 0.18%

# Tape Tests: How the New Cassettes, Including Metals, Measure Up

How time flies when you're having fun with your recorder! It has already been two years since our last round of tape tests, and in that time the metal-particle formulations (long a lab curiosity as a potential high-performance alternative to the conventional metal-oxide magnetic "pigments") were announced, trickled to market, were improved, and then were produced in fair supply in a variety of lengths and brands. And the metals are by no means the only important new cassette tapes around.

We chose for testing seventeen branded formulations, including all seven of the metal tapes for which production samples are available. Since most of the latter are available only in C-60 or shorter lengths, we could not continue our established practice of comparing only C-90s. The reason we have been adamant on this point is the preference that buyers have shown for the C-90 length, coupled with its somewhat thinner magnetic coatings as opposed to those in the shorter lengths. A thicker

coating means greater low-frequency headroom, among other things. Since the coatings on C-45s and C-46s normally are the same as those on C-60s, we have accepted any of these lengths (depending on what was available from a given manufacturer) in testing the metal tapes. Thus the results can reasonably be compared with each other but require some reservations if they are to be compared to the C-90s used in our other tests.

Results obtained from the current round of conventional ferrics (all essentially what we have been calling Type 1 tapes) and "chromes" (our Type 2, which includes both true chromium dioxides and the ferricobalt and similarly interchangeable formulations) can be compared with those of two years ago, since the methods involved remain basically unchanged. Diversified Science Laboratories set the switches on the recorder (this time a Nakamichi 582, with its accessible bias adjustment and updated transport, instead of the 1000-II used for the last batch) to the posi-

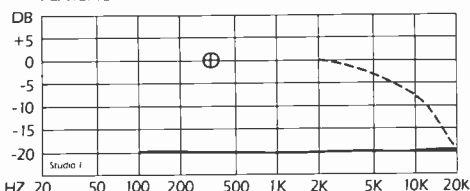
tions appropriate for the general tape group and compared relative bias and relative sensitivity against the deck's reference tape for each group. All the ferric tapes were tested with the "standard" 120-microsecond playback equalization and the EX bias setting and were compared to the same sample of Nakamichi EX-II tape used in the 1978 tests. The Type 2 group includes both chromium dioxide (RKO Ultrachrome, which employs Du Pont's Crolyn II formulation) and chrome substitutes, all tested at 70 microseconds with the SX bias setting and compared to our previous sample of Nakamichi SX. The metal tapes (our Type 4) also take the 70-microsecond equalization, but with the ZX bias; since this is a new tape genre, we compared bias and sensitivity to that of the present Nakamichi ZX tape sample. There are no ferrichromes (Type 3) in the present group.

The next step was the bias comparison. DSL adjusted bias current for equal sensitivity at 333 Hz and 10 kHz—that is, flattest overall response using

## Type 1 ferric tapes (120-microsecond playback EQ)

### BASF Studio I C-90 cassette tape

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +½ dB  
- - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
at 4 kHz -1 dB  
at 15 kHz -13½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 108%

RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -1 dB

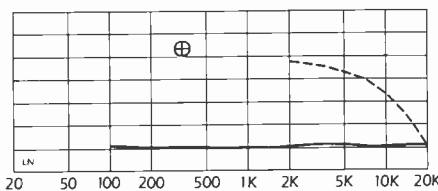
A-WEIGHTED S/N RATIO (re 0 dB) -54 dB

MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 55 dB

THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 2.5%  
at -10 dB 0.18%

### Maxell LN C-90 cassette tape

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) -1 dB  
- - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
at 4 kHz -2 dB  
at 15 kHz -14 dB

RELATIVE BIAS 99%

RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -1 dB

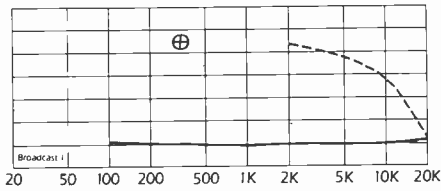
A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -54 dB

MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 52½ dB

THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 5.1%  
at -10 dB 0.35%

### RKO Broadcast I C-90 cassette tape

PLAYBACK CHARACTERISTICS (re 250 nW/m at 333 Hz)



— Relative output vs. frequency (at -20 dB)  
⊕ Midrange headroom (3% THD) +2½ dB  
- - - - Maximum high-frequency output (3% IM)  
at 4 kHz -½ dB  
at 15 kHz -12½ dB

RELATIVE BIAS 112%

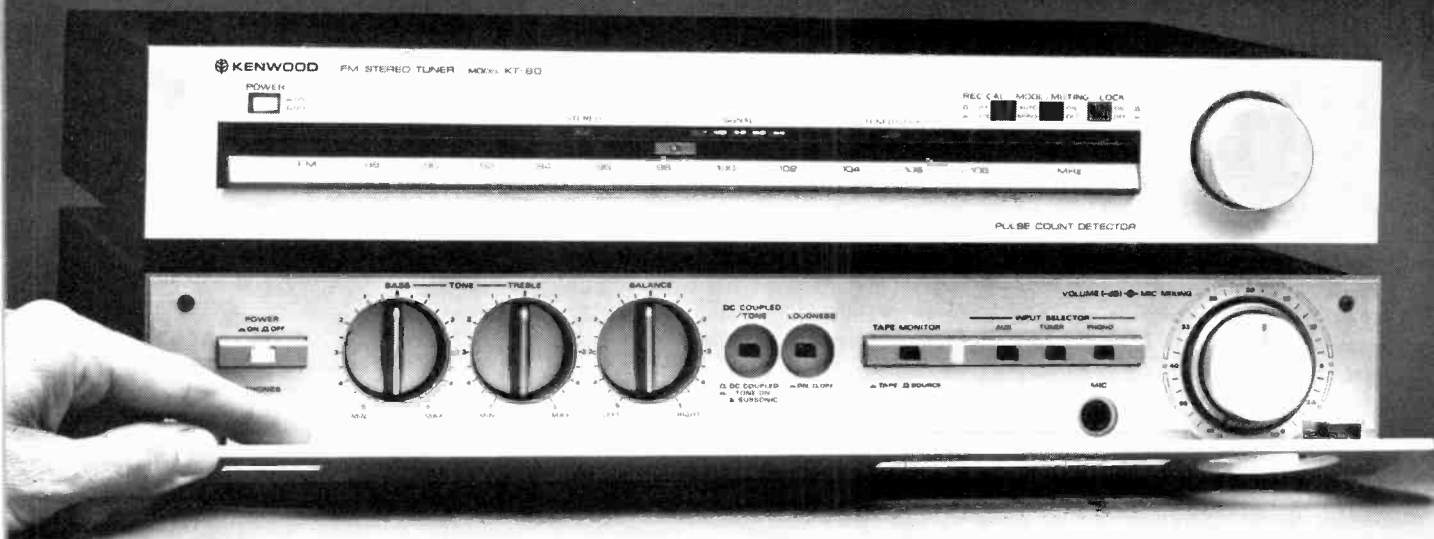
RELATIVE SENSITIVITY (333 Hz) -1 dB

A-WEIGHTED NOISE (re 0 dB) -54 dB

MIDRANGE S/N RATIO (re 3% THD) 56 dB

THD (at 333 Hz) at 0 dB 1.2%  
at -10 dB 0.17%

# High technology takes a low profile.



Feast your eyes on our new Slimline™ separates. We took our high technology and gave it a sleek, low profile. This is high performance with a well developed sense of style.

## HI-SPEED™

The KA-80 integrated DC amplifier features our unique Hi-Speed™ circuitry, which allows the amplifier to react faster to the musical input signal. The result is super-clean sound reproduction with superior depth, definition and stereo imaging. And an incredible frequency response of DC-450,000 Hz (-3dB).

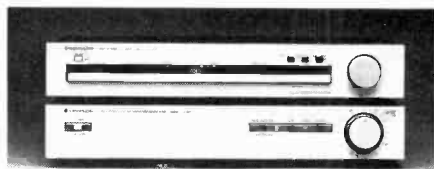
But don't let its slim profile fool you. The KA-80 has plenty of power. 48 watts per channel minimum RMS, both channels driven, at 8 ohms from 20 Hz to

20,000 Hz with less than 0.02% total harmonic distortion.

Look behind its stylish tilt-down front panel and you'll find an array of sophisticated controls including a DC coupled/tone switch that provides either laboratory-flat response or subsonic filtering with complete bass and treble control.

## PULSE COUNT DETECTOR

Its matched companion is the KT-80 FM Stereo Tuner, which uses Kenwood's exclusive Pulse Count Detector circuitry to digitally reproduce a linear FM signal



that is virtually identical to the original broadcast signal. The KT-80 also reduces FM distortion by half, and at the same time, improves signal-to-noise ratio by 6 to 12dB.

To tune the KT-80, you use its five LED tuning indicators to determine signal strength. Then Kenwood's servo-lock takes over to tune precisely to mid-channel and eliminate signal drift.

There's even a built-in record-calibration tone for optimum taping off the air.

Kenwood Slimline separates. High performance audio never looked better.

Visit your Kenwood dealer soon. And see and hear for yourself.

For the Kenwood dealer nearest you, see your Yellow Pages, or write Kenwood, P.O. Box 6213, Carson, CA 90749.

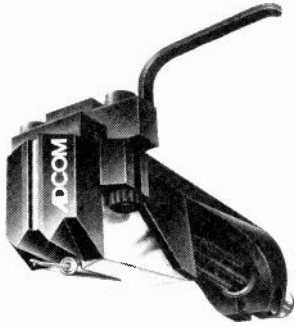
 **KENWOOD®**



PULSED OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)  
125¼ dB SPL for 33¼ dBW (2,100 watts) peak

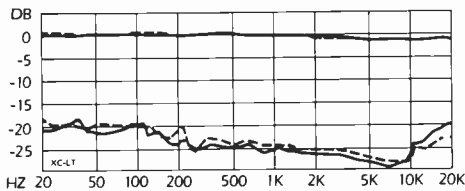
"NOMINAL" IMPEDANCE 6.1 ohms

## Moving-Coil Virtues Without the Hassles



Adcom XC-LT Crosscoil pickup

FREQUENCY RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION  
(test records: STR-100 to 40 Hz; STR-170 above)



Frequency response  
 — L ch +½, - 1½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz  
 - - - R ch +½, - 1¼ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz  
 Channel separation ≥20 dB, 115 Hz to 17.5 kHz

SENSITIVITY (at 1 kHz) 0.7 mV/cm/sec.

CHANNEL BALANCE (at 1 kHz) ± <¼ dB

VERTICAL TRACKING ANGLE 24°

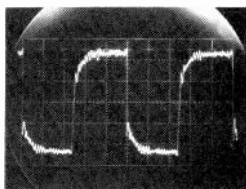
LOW-FREQUENCY RESONANCE (in SME 3009)  
 vertical 9.0 Hz; 1½ dB rise  
 lateral 8.6 Hz; 2 dB rise

MAXIMUM TRACKING LEVEL (re RIAA 0 VU; 1.8 grams)  
 at 300 Hz +18 dB  
 at 1 kHz +15 dB

WEIGHT 4.75 grams

TIP DIMENSIONS  
 tip radii 10.4 by 15.7 micrometers  
 scanning radii 9.2 micrometers

SQUARE-WAVE  
 RESPONSE (1 kHz)



The Model 3000 is a speaker bound to please a great many listeners. Its warm, mellow sound and upfront imaging add their own excitement to musical reproduction. And, considering its innovative bass design, we see it as a harbinger of other interesting products from this young company.

Circle 132 on Reader-Service Card

**Adcom XC-LT Crosscoil moving-coil phono cartridge, with LineTrace diamond stylus. Price: \$240. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Adcom, 9 Jules Lane, New Brunswick, N.J. 08901.**

The vaunted "musicality" of moving-coil cartridge sound once had to be paid for in high cartridge weight, low stylus compliance, a stylus that could be replaced only at the factory, and output so low that an additional amplification stage or stepup transformer was required before you could hear it properly. As the genus moves more and more into the mainstream of phono gear, the loopholes in these "rules" seem to widen.

Adcom's Crosscoil, at not quite 5 grams, weighs less than the majority of moving-magnet or moving-iron models. Its compliance, as indicated by CBS Technology Center's measurements of resonance and maximum tracking levels, is reasonably (though not exceptionally) high. And its output level is about 70% of that produced by today's typical moving-magnet designs—a difference of only about 3 dB, permitting direct connection to conventional preamp input stages. The only remnant of traditional moving-coil limitations is the factory stylus replacement.

The XC-LT is the top of a six-pickup line: three high-output XC models and three LC models with the low outputs of the traditional designs. The XC-LT is distinguished from the other high-output models by its LineTrace stylus; the others have elliptical styli.

The Crosscoil cartridges are named for their X-shaped coil armatures, adopted by the manufacturer to reduce weight while permitting more turns of wire per coil, for higher output. Also, the X shape is said to insure good channel separation and channel-to-channel output uniformity.

The lab measurements would seem to bear out these claims. Frequency response was among the flattest we've measured, sloping almost imperceptibly downward at the highest frequencies, and channel balance was within the ±¼ typical of today's best pickups. Resonance is at a comfortable frequency with our standard SME-3009 test arm and, even more important, is extremely well damped. Tracking ability also is a match for the best we've tested. When mounted in the home system we used for listening, the Crosscoil had no trouble tracking the heavy bass modulations of the "Bells of St. Anne de Beau Pre" (M&K Real Time RT 114), though—like many other cartridges—it had some difficulty with the cannon shots in the digital "1812 Overture" (Telarc DG 10041).

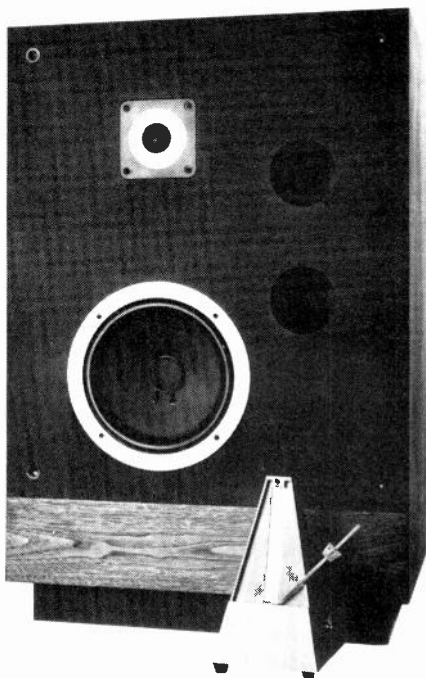
As you'd expect from all this, the sound of the XC-LT was quite clean and neutral—a good sound but a hard one to describe without the distinctiveness (for good or ill) that creates rabid enthusiasts and detractors. Bells sound realistically metallic and less jingly than on pickups with the common, rising high-end response. Bass is solid, with subjectively low distortion.

One note of convenience stands out: The white indexing line on the cartridge front is one of the biggest, brightest, and easiest to see of any pickup. If your turntable is mounted in a dim corner (as so many are), you'll especially appreciate the cueing ease this affords. And if the XC-LT calls more attention to itself in cueing than in playing records, that is an index of the ultimate virtue in a pickup: sonic unobtrusiveness.

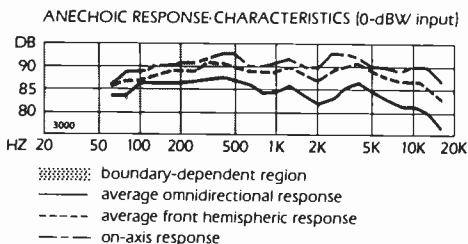
Circle 135 on Reader-Service Card

**Report Policy:** Equipment reports are based on laboratory measurements and controlled listening tests. Unless otherwise noted, test data and measurements are obtained by CBS Technology Center, a division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc., and Diversified Science Laboratories. The choice of equipment to be tested rests with the editors of HIGH FIDELITY. Samples normally are supplied on loan from the manufacturer. 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; HIGH FIDELITY, CBS Technology Center, and Diversified Science Laboratories assume no responsibility for product performance or quality.

## Make Room for Modular



**Modular Acoustics Model 3000 loudspeaker**



AVERAGE OMNIDIRECTIONAL OUTPUT  
(250 Hz to 6 kHz)  
85½ dB SPL for 0 dBW (1 watt) input

CONTINUOUS ON-AXIS OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)  
112 dB SPL for 20 dBW (100 watts) input

DIN 0. They read within 3 dB of true values for any signal lasting a mere 5 milliseconds or more (which is quite quick-acting for meters) and overshoot only slightly: a maximum of 1½ dB, for a pulse duration of at least 55 milliseconds. While the very best of the "bar graph" indicators will give you more information about your signals, these excellent meters are better than most of the bar-graph devices we've examined and vastly better than many.

Sensibly, Teac has not chosen to load down the CX-650R with technological glitter—special microprocessor-controlled functions and the like. That's not to say that it's unoriginal. Among the more individual touches: The separate recording-level controls for each channel are friction-ganged internally so that you can change both by rotating one but can easily hold one where it is and adjust the other. It's a much more efficient balancing system than the common two-element kinds, in our view. But this essentially is a solid, practical deck with the convenience of bidirectionality, a carefully selected array of features that make sense in regular home use, and a clear-cut, functional, handsome front panel as a means of interface with its user. And the tapes it makes sound good. There's always room for a deck with such attributes.

Circle 131 on Reader-Service Card

**Modular Acoustics Model 3000 loudspeaker system in walnut-veneer cabinet. Dimensions: 19 by 28½ inches (front), 12½ inches deep. Price: \$250. Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Modular Acoustics, 30682 San Antonio St., Hayward, Calif. 94544.**

Probably more ingenuity has been lavished on bass loading than on any other aspect of loudspeaker design. The Model 3000 from Modular Acoustics, a new name in the speaker market, is a case in point. An attractively styled floor-standing system, it employs a 1-inch dome tweeter and what at first glance seems a rather small low-frequency driver for the substantial-looking enclosure. The 8-inch woofer actually is part of an unusual tuned-port system: a "Helmholtz dual-port resonator." There are two separate chambers, each ported externally via cutouts on the front baffle and joined internally via a third port. Since the design uses a relatively small woofer, Modular can drive it to higher frequencies than it could otherwise; the crossover appears to be at about 2 kHz, an octave or two above that in typical two-way systems.

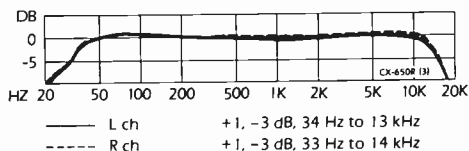
According to Modular, the 3000 has resonance points at 30 and 70 Hz. The impedance curve measured at CBS Technology Center, however, shows an additional rise at 80 Hz. The curve is therefore something less than smooth, with low-frequency impedance peaks of 23, 28, and 16 ohms at 25, 55, and 80 Hz, respectively, followed by a nominal value of 6.1 ohms at 160 Hz. Impedance rises again through the midband, reaching 14 ohms at 1.5 Hz, then dropping sharply to 3 ohms at 4 kHz. The effect of such overall high impedance values is mitigated by the fairly high efficiency afforded by the ported enclosure.

In its ability to handle large amounts of power, the 3000 tested out quite well. It easily accepted the 20 dBW (100 watts) of the continuous-tone test and withstood peak power pulses above 33 dBW (2,000 watts) before outright complaint. Its output in both of these tests indicates an excellent dynamic range, with no compression of musical transients. And tests in CBS' anechoic chamber confirm Modular's claim of extended low-frequency output. The frequency-response curves show useful response output down to about 35 Hz.

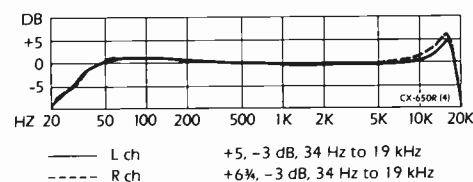
The tone of the 3000 is, on the whole, warm and rich. Stereo imaging is pleasing, with a forward, spacious quality. And bass reproduction, as promised, is certainly generous, though perhaps lacking some definition in deep percussive sounds. Oscilloscope photos picturing its reproduction of high-frequency transients show a virtual doppelganger of the original waveform, and to our ears treble frequencies are rendered with a sweetness only occasionally diminished by a bit of extramusical emphasis.

Though the speaker is capable of reproducing a wide variety of instrumental timbres with extreme clarity, some upper midrange frequencies—massed strings, for instance—lack fine detail. Perhaps the choice of a 2-kHz crossover is a little on the high side for them. Some corroboration for this can be seen in the distortion measurements: Both second and third harmonics remain, on the average, well below 1% at moderate and loud listening levels, but there is a noticeable rise in third harmonic distortion as the woofer approaches its crossover frequency.

## RECORD/PLAY RESPONSE, TYPE 1 TAPE (-20 dB)



## RECORD/PLAY RESPONSE, TYPE 4 TAPE (-20 dB)



## S/N RATIO (re DIN 0 dB; A-weighting)

	Type 2	Type 1	Type 4
playback without noise reduction	61 dB	59 dB	61 dB
Dolby playback	68% dB	67%	69 dB
record/play without noise reduction	57% dB	55 dB	58 dB
Dolby record/play	65% dB	63%	65% dB

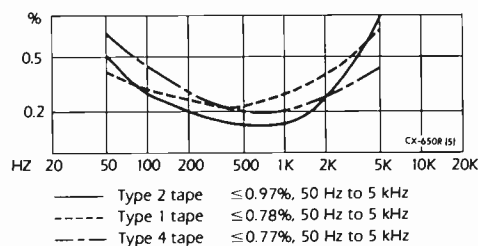
## METER READING FOR DIN 0 DB

+1½ dB

## METER READING FOR 3% DISTORTION (at 333 Hz)

Type 2 ("chrome") tape	+2 dB
Type 1 (ferric) tape	+4 dB
Type 4 (metal) tape	+2% dB

## DISTORTION (third harmonic; at -10 dB DIN)



## ERASURE (333 Hz; re DIN 0 dB)

Type 2 tape	73% dB
Type 4 tape	64 dB

## CHANNEL SEPARATION (at 333 Hz)

59% dB

## SPEED ACCURACY

0.5% fast at 105, 120, &amp; 127 VAC

## WOW &amp; FLUTTER (ANSI/IEEC weighted peak)

	average	maximum
playback	± 0.07%	± 0.10%
record/play	± 0.10%	± 0.13%

## SENSITIVITY (re DIN 0 dB; 333 Hz)

line input	100 mV
mike input	0.40 mV

## MIKE INPUT OVERLOAD (clipping)

40 mV

## OUTPUT (from DIN 0 dB)

0.68 V

mounting them and the dual capstans facing the cassette-shell openings compounded the difficulties. So it's no wonder that bidirectionality and performance have developed a reputation for intrinsic incompatibility. But Teac proves here, as elsewhere, that the reputation is undeserved.

The CX-650R is a true bidirectional deck—not just one with auto reverse in playback alone—and thus solves the problem in its most virulent form. It uses a single, centered four-track (dual stereo) record/play head for both directions of tape travel. Flanking this head, in the two small holes in the cassette shell, are a pair of erase heads, one for each direction. The two capstans and pinch rollers use the larger outboard holes. The control logic offers three options. The first is unidirectional, marked as if it worked only in the forward direction, though it allows you to play back or record in reverse as well. The second is out-and-back, with automatic reverse in either recording or playback at the end of Side 1—that is, the forward direction of travel. The third is continuous playback: At the end of Side 2, the tape reverses once again and repeats. In recording, however, that sequence would perform erase what you had recorded on Side 1, so the deck automatically stops at the end of Side 2—in effect, reverting to out-and-back operation.

You can go from any transport mode to any other without pressing STOP. This means, among other things, that you can achieve a quick manual change of transport direction during recording. The resulting gap is less than a second long, so the results with a carefully chosen "turnover" point are far preferable to those with the automatic reversal. If you use standard cassettes, you lose all of the incoming program that was "recorded," in both directions, on the leader; even if you use leaderless cassettes, the switch in direction may fall just where you'd least want it musically.

The PAUSE also creates a gap of less than one second and leaves "pops" on the tape that are audible in low-level signals, but it is quick-acting. In addition, there's an AUTO SPACER. If you press it during recording, the signal feed to the recording head is cut off so that it records about 4 seconds of silence; then the transport automatically goes into PAUSE, ready to begin recording again when you press one of the two PLAY buttons.

Their pilot lights (just above these buttons, and therefore just below the fast-wind buttons) respond to a clever logic system. If you are in one of the play modes, its LED will stay lit. (You don't need it to tell the direction the tape is going since the main direction indicators below the cassette door are entirely unequivocal.) If you are recording, the RECORD LED will stay lit, too. Press PAUSE, and the play LED goes out in favor of that for the PAUSE; from that mode, you must press either one of the PLAY buttons to recommence tape motion. If, instead, you press a fast-wind button, the PLAY LED on that side will flash. If you press the recording interlock but nothing else, both PLAY LEDs will flash to remind you that you have to choose a transport direction if recording is to begin. But if you only want to monitor the incoming signal, you can postpone the choice by pressing PAUSE along with the interlock. The logic also permits a "flying start": You can play a recorded tape and, at any moment you choose, press both the interlock and the PLAY button for that direction of tape travel to start erasing or re-recording.

When we could get no information from Teac about the tapes it assumes in its production adjustments of the CX-650R, we arbitrarily chose Scotch Master I as the Type 1 ferric, Maxell UDXL-II as the Type 2 tape (for the "chrome" switch positions), and TDK MA-R as the Type IV metal. The first two performed very well indeed (and two out of three, as they say . . .), but MA-R gave us a noticeable peak at the high end. Elsewhere in this issue, among our current tape tests, you'll find that MA-R required the highest bias setting of the seven metal formulations we measured; choosing a brand that "prefers" lower bias will reduce the peak but is likely to introduce some droop in response at frequencies just below it. With the possible exception of this peak (whose frequency is beyond the spectral content of many input signals, of course), the data are uniformly good. Unless specified, all the measurements shown were made in the forward direction; Diversified Science Laboratories also measured the reverse direction for some parameters and found it to be, if anything, a hair better.

It's almost refreshing to come across a deck with meters in this era of front panels that light up like Rockola juke boxes when they sense a signal. Teac's meters are traditional in that they are calibrated from -20 to +5, but they read "peak" values (i.e., maximum, as opposed to the average values of true VU meters) and therefore can use a relatively high 0-dB reference—in this case 1½ dB below

Stereo threshold	36½ dBf	
Stereo S/N ratio [at 65 dBf]	67½ dB	
Mono S/N ratio [at 65 dBf]	71¼ dB	
CAPTURE RATIO		
	1 dB	
ALTERNATE-CHANNEL SELECTIVITY		
	50 dB	
HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N)		
	stereo	mono
at 100 Hz	0.50%	0.28%
at 1 kHz	0.28%	0.24%
at 6 kHz	0.30%	0.76%
STEREO PILOT INTERMODULATION		
	0.25%	
IM DISTORTION (mono)		
	0.10%	
AM SUPPRESSION		
	58½ dB	
PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION		
	67½ dB	
SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPRESSION		
	65½ dB	

**Akai Model AA-R30 amplifier section**

RATED POWER	15% dBW (38 watts)/ch.
OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (both channels driven)	
8-ohm load	16½ dBW (45 watts)/ch.
4-ohm load	17 dBW (50 watts)/ch.
16-ohm load	14½ dBW (28 watts)/ch.
DYNAMIC HEADROOM (8 ohms)	
	2 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)	
at 15% dBW (38 watts)	≤0.017%
at 0 dBW (1 watt)	<0.010%

FREQUENCY RESPONSE	
+½, -1 dB, 14 Hz to 79 kHz;	
+½, -3 dB, <10 Hz to 124 kHz	

RIAA EQUALIZATION +¼, -1 dB, 65 Hz to 20 kHz;	
-3 dB at 26 Hz; -18½ dB at 5 Hz	

intentional, since the receiver lacks a switchable infrasonic filter. Though cutting into the audible band, the rolloff has no significant audible consequences. Overall, the phono stage has adequate gain and overload and very good signal-to-noise ratio. Its sound is clean and well balanced and presents just about "classic" loading conditions for most fixed-coil magnetic pickups.

As in other receivers in this price class, the AA-R30's tone controls lack a true defeat, even with both set at their nominal 0 detent points. Measurements made at DSL, however, reveal only minimal frequency perturbations with the controls set flat (down ½ dB at 50 Hz). Both bass and treble have a maximum boost or cut of 12 dB. The loudness contouring is a bit less severe than we've seen in some other receivers, but once again, how much you use it (and how well you like its effect) is largely dependent on program material and the efficiency of your speakers.

We are especially pleased with the FM section. The lighted tuning scale cursor changes from a pale orange to an equally subdued green when a stereo FM broadcast is received. The large, extremely legible, channel-center meter is accompanied by a signal-strength meter capable of registering values from 21¼ to 63½ dBf, with nine increments between. The stereo threshold is rather high (36½ dBf—for 47 dB of quieting), and the muting threshold is only a hair lower, but a quick glance at the signal-strength meter as you tune across the FM scale should tell you when a station can be effectively salvaged in mono (with MUTE off, of course). As with many channel-center meters, pinpointing the needle directly in the center block does not necessarily indicate the point of lowest distortion; on our sample DSL determined that, for cleanest stereo reception, the needle should be slightly to the left of the center marking. Overall FM performance is quite respectable, and the 1-dB capture ratio stands out as excellent for a tuner in this price category.

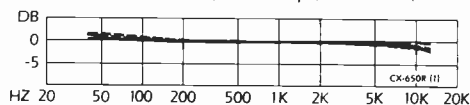
Despite quibbles—the five-segment LED power meter, for instance, may prove entertaining but has little usefulness—the AA-R30 is certainly a well-conceived and handsomely executed piece of audio gear. For the novice as well as the audiophile forced to tighten his belt, the AA-R30 wins high marks as a receiver with good performance and lots of panache.

INPUT CHARACTERISTICS (re 0 dBW; A-weighting)			PHONO OVERLOAD (1-kHz clipping)	190 mV
	sensitivity	S/N ratio		
phono	0.46 mV	76 dB	PHONO IMPEDANCE	49k ohms; 120 pF
aux	25.6 mV	79 dB	DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz)	52

# With Teac, You Can Have It Both Ways

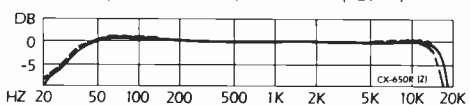
**Teac CX-650R cassette deck**

PLAYBACK RESPONSE (TDK test tape; -20 dB DIN)

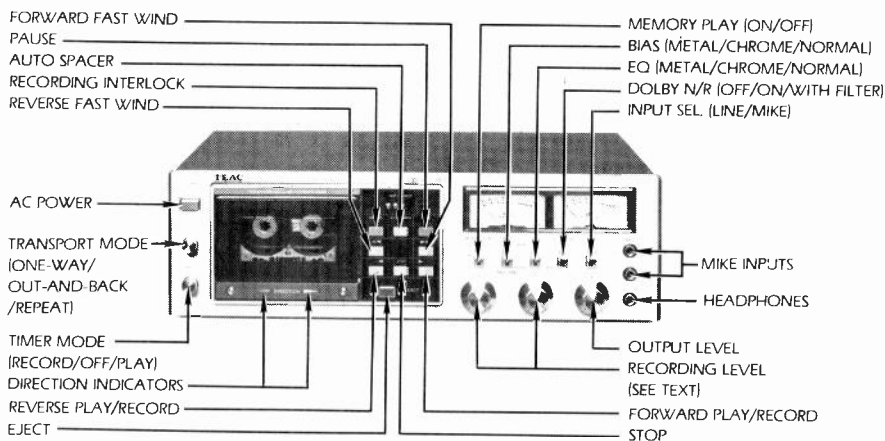


forward direction	
—— L ch	+½, -2 dB, 40 Hz to 12.5 kHz
----- R ch	+1, -2 dB, 40 Hz to 12.5 kHz
reverse direction	
----- L ch	+½, -1½ dB, 40 Hz to 12.5 kHz
----- R ch	+1½, -¼ dB, 40 Hz to 12.5 kHz

RECORD/PLAY RESPONSE, TYPE 2 TAPE (-20 dB)



—— L ch	+¾, -3 dB, 34 Hz to 16 kHz
----- R ch	+1, -3 dB, 33 Hz to 16 kHz
with Dolby noise reduction	
----- L ch	+¾, -3 dB, 34 Hz to 14.5 kHz
----- R ch	+1, -3 dB, 33 Hz to 14.5 kHz



**Teac Model CX-650R bidirectional cassette deck, in metal case. Dimensions: 17¼ by 15¼ inches (front panel), 12¾ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$700; optional RC-100 remote control, \$75. Warranty: "limited," one year labor, two years parts. Manufacturer: Teac Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Teac Corp. of America, 7733 Telegraph Rd., Montebello, Calif. 90640.**

Bidirectional tape decks are nothing new—even in cassette equipment—though they are rare. One reason may be the inadequacy of some early designs. It seemed that designers simply couldn't manage comparable specs when they added the second direction of tape travel. The problems eventually were solved in open-reel transports (notably by Teac itself), but the tiny heads and limited options for

AM SUPPRESSION	52% dB
PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION	39% dB
SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPRESSION	61 dB

#### Sony STR-V25 amplifier section

RATED POWER 14½ dBW (28 watts)/channel

#### OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (both channels driven)

8-ohm load	15½ dBW (35 watts)/channel
4-ohm load	15% dBW (38 watts)/channel
16-ohm load	13% dBW (24 watts)/channel

DYNAMIC HEADROOM (8 ohms) 2¼ dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)  
at 14½ dBW (28 watts) <.01%  
at 0 dBW (1 watt) <.01%

#### FREQUENCY RESPONSE

+0, -¼ dB, < 10 Hz to 28 kHz;  
-3 dB at 122 kHz

Looking back on Sony's many achievements in consumer electronics, the excellence of the STR-V25 is really not surprising. Yet its freshness and originality are blessings in a market crowded with look-alikes—and this at such a low price point. While our recent tests (including those for this issue) show that surprisingly good gear can be bought at bargain prices these days, we see Sony's achievement as above and beyond the call of competitive duty.

Circle 134 on Reader-Service Card

RIAA EQUALIZATION ± < ¼ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz;  
-1¼ dB at 5 Hz

#### INPUT CHARACTERISTICS (re 0 dBW; A-weighting)

	sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono	0.46 mV	75 dB
aux	24 mV	80% dB

PHONO OVERLOAD (1-kHz clipping) 160 mV

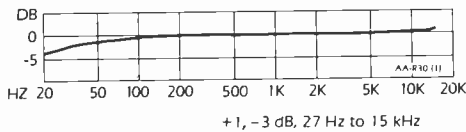
PHONO IMPEDANCE 51 ohms; 115 pF

DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz) 47

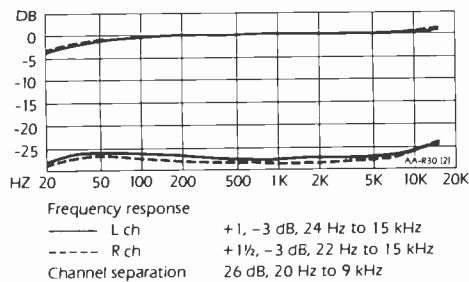
## Flexibility Plus Finesse from Akai

#### Akai Model AA-R30 FM tuner section

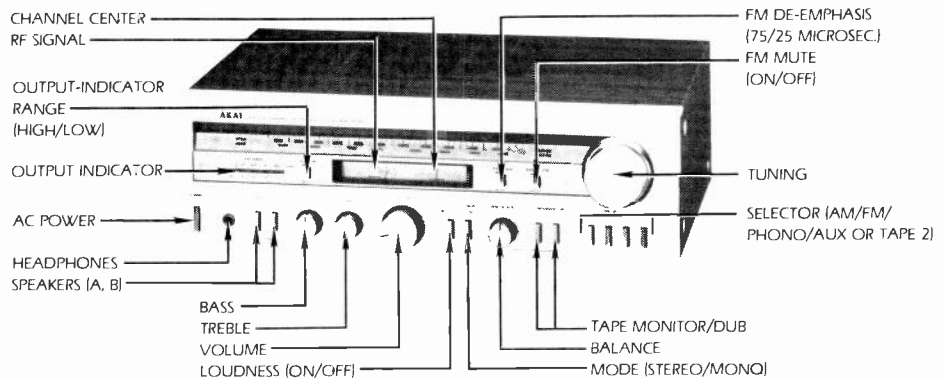
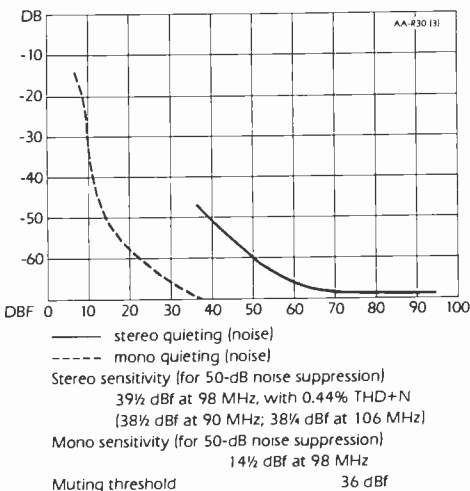
##### MONO FREQUENCY RESPONSE



##### STEREO RESPONSE & CHANNEL SEPARATION



##### FM SENSITIVITY & QUIETING



**Akai Model AA-R30 stereo FM/AM receiver in metal case. Dimensions: 17¼ by 5¼ inches (front), 11½ inches deep, plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: one switched (100 watts max.), one unswitched (200 watts max.). Price: \$300. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Akai Electric Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Akai America, Ltd., 2139 E. Del Amo Blvd., Compton, Calif. 90220.**

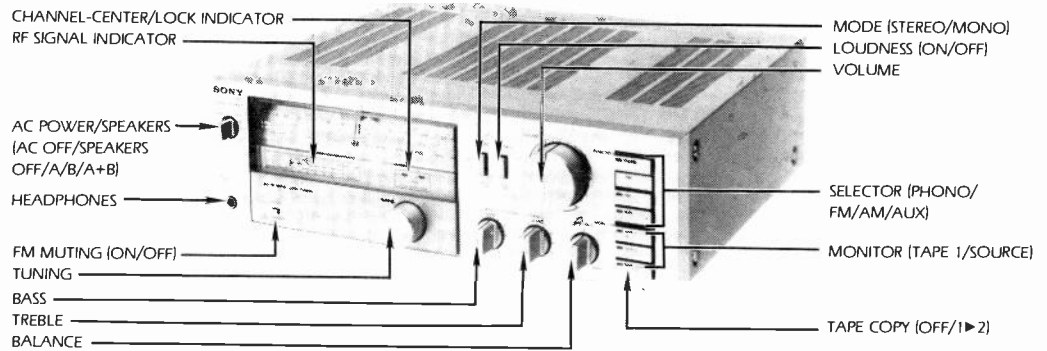
If a company other than Akai had produced the AA-R30 receiver, we probably would have registered some surprise at the high degree of tape flexibility offered by such a low-priced model. However, considering Akai's long involvement in the tape recorder field, it is quite appropriate to find in this receiver two tape monitor switches, dubbing facilities, an FM de-emphasis switch for recording Dolby broadcasts, as well as an aux input capable of accepting a third recorder.

Cosmetically, the AA-R30 is distinctly an Akai product: Its brushed aluminum faceplate, clearly labeled pushbuttons, and large meters recall the sensible design of the company's cassette decks. Though rated at 38 watts (15½ dBW) per channel into 8 ohms, the receiver pumped out 16½ dBW (44.7 watts) at clipping on the Diversified Science Laboratories test bench. And, if called to reproduce sharp musical transients, its 2 dB of dynamic headroom—translating into a peak output capability of 17¼ dBW (59.5 watts)—should suffice in most listening situations. Distortion in the amplifier section beats specs handily at both rated and 0 dBW outputs. The unit lacks turnon circuitry and speaker-protection relays, but in our own listening tests there was no audible evidence of turnon transients and the power supply decayed slowly and peacefully at shutoff. The output stage is protected by internal fuses, visible through the top-mounted perforated grille; if these blow, an authorized service technician should replace them.

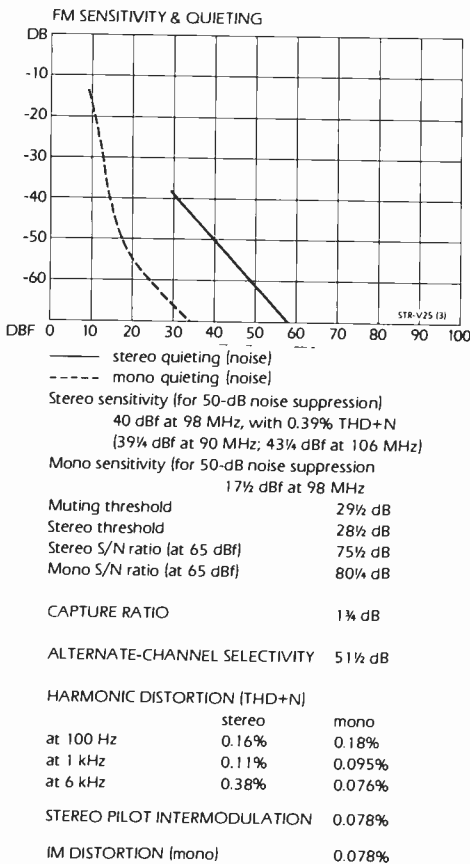
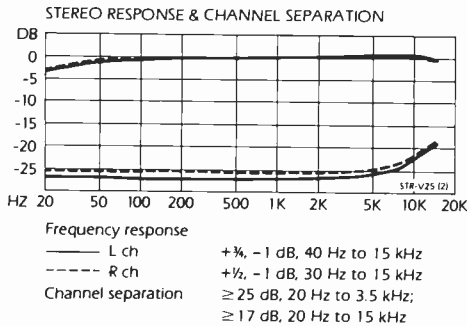
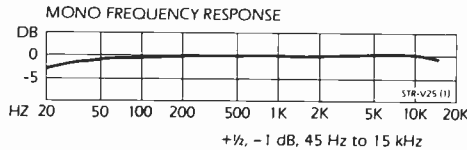
The phono preamp's RIAA equalization curve is essentially flat over most of the audible band, but there is a noticeable rolloff below about 65 Hz, with response down 3 dB at 16 Hz and 18¼ dB at 5 Hz. The rolloff here is probably



# Sony's Low-Cost, High-Class Receiver



Sony STR-V25 FM tuner section



## Sony Model STR-V25 AM/FM receiver, in metal case.

**Dimensions: 17 by 5¼ inches (front), 12¾ inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: one switched (100 watts max.), one unswitched (300 watts max.). Price: \$270. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Sony Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: Sony Corp. of America, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019.**

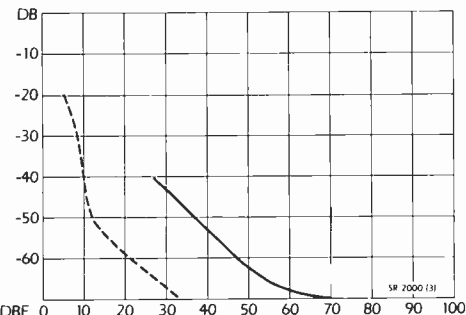
Sony's STR-V25 receiver presents us with a knotty problem in perspective: Do we allow ourselves to wax enthusiastic on its bold new visual and functional direction, or do we attempt to maintain a dispassionate reserve on the ground that, good as it is, the V25, as a modestly priced model, does not claim state-of-the-art technology across the board. Of course, raising the question answers it and frees us to note that the V25 is the least expensive of four new Sony receivers that blend form and function in a most agreeable and attractive manner. An examination of its silvery faceplate reveals the logic of its layout: The tuner section and its attendant controls and meters occupy a single distinct area, preamp-based controls have their central focus, and the function selectors are arrayed in a neat vertical format—clearly labeled and each with a small LED to indicate which is selected. Gropius himself might have delighted in the design.

Beneath the faceplate lie a few other surprises. While most FM performance data—for sensitivity, alternate-channel selectivity, and capture ratio—are on a par with those of other low-cost receivers, the V25 proves itself truly superlative in one extremely important area: quieting. In bench tests at Diversified Science Laboratories the standard 65-dBf input elicited a superb 75½ dB of stereo quieting (yes, stereo; the mono figure is just over 80 dB!), and quieting actually improved marginally at higher inputs. Those numbers are better than you can expect even in a supertuner, and the sonic result is essentially noise-free FM under typical suburban reception conditions. To aid in tuning, Sony devised a combination channel-center/point-of-lowest-distortion meter, Acute Servo Lock, that consists of a green LED flanked by two red ones. You rotate the tuning knob until the green LED lights, indicating station lock for lowest possible distortion. Also pleasant is the hysteresis built into the muting and stereo thresholds so that borderline stations don't pop in and out with minor changes in signal strength.

The DC-coupled amplifier is essentially free of distortion. Rated at 28 watts (14½ dBW) into 8 ohms, it reaches a steady output of 15½ dBW (35 watts) at clipping. With 2¼ dB of dynamic headroom, the amp is capable of supplying momentary peak power of 16¾ dBW—almost 50 watts. The preamp section's RIAA equalization curve is essentially ruler flat; since it is down just 1¼ dB at 5 Hz, an infrasonic filter might have been a good idea to block out warp-generated signal components. We are pleased, however, that Sony has included speaker protection and power-muting delay circuits so that turnon and turnoff transients, as well as the large transients introduced by some signal processors, have less chance of zapping drivers.

The phono input impedance approaches the ideal for fixed-coil pickups. The phono stage's 75-dB signal-to-noise ratio is excellent, and the 80¼-dB S/N figure for the Aux input simply superb. Unusual, too, for a receiver in this price class is the true tone control defeat—all you do is set each control to its center detent position. For the tape recorder (or outboard-processor) enthusiast, there are two tape-monitor loops and one-direction dubbing. But tape output impedance is quite high—especially from FM and phono—suggesting that connecting cables should be kept short to avoid high-frequency loss.

FM SENSITIVITY &amp; QUIETING



— stereo quieting (noise)  
 - - - mono quieting (noise)  
 Stereo sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)  
 37 dBf at 98 MHz, with 0.74% THD+N  
 (37½ dBf at 90 MHz; 36¼ dBf at 106 MHz)  
 Mono sensitivity (for 50-dB noise suppression)  
 12¼ dBf at 98 MHz

Muting threshold 27 dBf  
 Stereo threshold 27 dBf  
 Stereo S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 69½ dB  
 Mono S/N ratio (at 65 dBf) 75¼ dBf

CAPTURE RATIO 1¼ dB

ALTERNATE-CHANNEL SELECTIVITY 61¼ dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD+N)

	stereo	mono
at 100 Hz	0.51%	0.22%
at 1 kHz	0.29%	0.13%
at 6 kHz	0.27%	0.17%

STEREO PILOT INTERMODULATION 0.30%

IM DISTORTION (mono) 0.066%

AM SUPPRESSION 62¼ dB

PILOT (19 kHz) SUPPRESSION 64¼ dB

SUBCARRIER (38 kHz) SUPPRESSION 86 dB

#### Marantz SR-2000 amplifier section

RATED POWER 14¼ dBW (30 watts)/channel

OUTPUT AT CLIPPING (both channels driven)

8-ohm load	16½ dBW (45 watts)/channel
4-ohm load	17¼ dBW (60 watts)/channel
16-ohm load	14¼ dBW (30 watts)/channel

DYNAMIC HEADROOM (8 ohms) 4 dB

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz)

at 14¼ dBW (30 watts)	≤ 0.014%
at 0 dBW (1 watt)	≤ 0.019%

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

+0, -1 dB, 29 Hz to 64 kHz;  
 +0, -3 dB, < 10 Hz to 172 kHz

RIAA EQUALIZATION +0, -1 dB, 30 Hz to 20 kHz;  
 -11 dB at 5 Hz

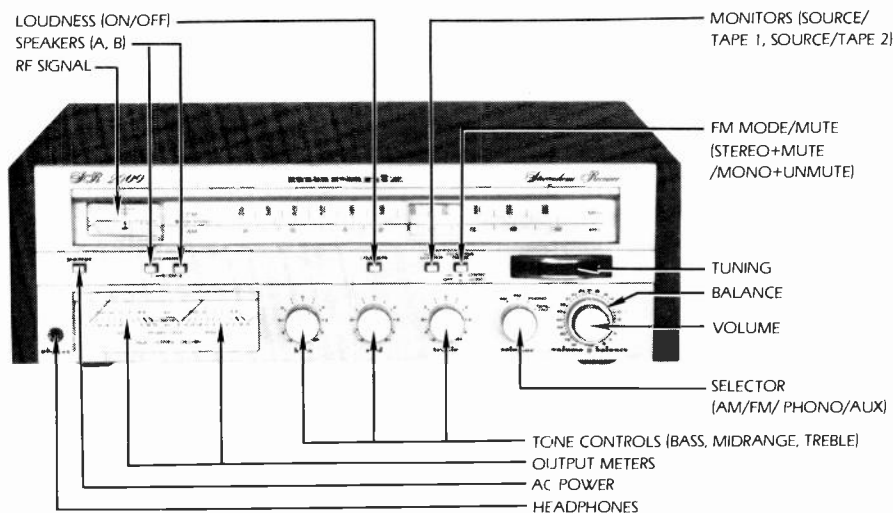
INPUT CHARACTERISTICS (re 0 dBW; A-weighting)

	sensitivity	S/N ratio
phono	0.57 mV	75¼ dB
aux	32 mV	82 dB

PHONO OVERLOAD (1-kHz clipping) 155 mV

PHONO IMPEDANCE 50k ohms, 275 pF

DAMPING FACTOR (at 50 Hz) 74



we could not fault this scheme. And in the listening room, we were delighted by the bright, clean sonics.

The preamp section, with a signal-to-noise ratio of 75¼ dB referenced to 0 dBW output, also proves itself capable of excellent performance. A low-end rolloff amounting to -11 dB at 5 Hz is apparent in the RIAA equalization curve. Since the unit lacks a switchable infrasonic filter, such a diminution of subsonic energy is good protection against the reproduction of power-robbing rumble and warp-generated subsonics. The rolloff does extend slightly upward into the audible region, however.

Tone controls are unusually flexible for a receiver of this class, with the inclusion of a separate midrange control in addition to the usual bass and treble controls. Data generated at DSL reveal their action to be gentle and well placed. In use, the detented click stops on each control relate nicely to their tone contouring action; that is, their full effect isn't realized by the first notch or so. The LOUDNESS control, as usual in many receivers, shows a rather large bass boost, but that should be problematic only if your speakers are very efficient. Considering the flexibility offered by the tone controls, we preferred using them to achieve the correct tonal balance for low-level listening.

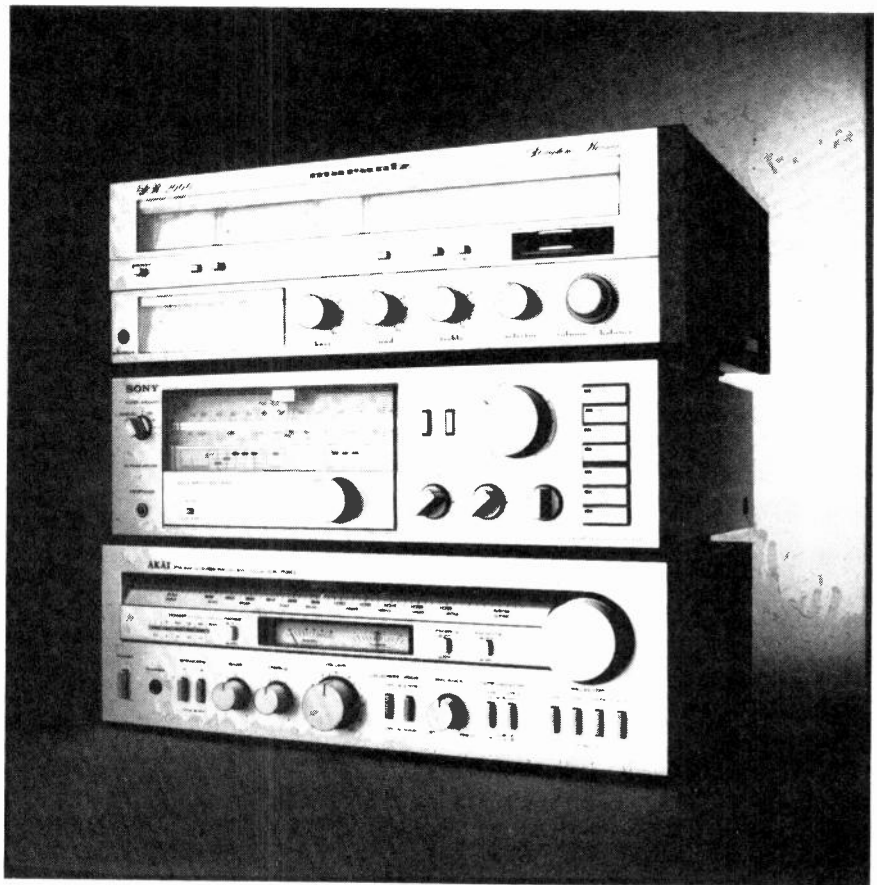
The real overachiever status of the SR-2000 comes in the power amp section. Though rated at 30 watts (14¼ dBW) per channel into 8 ohms, it is capable of supplying 16½ dBW (45 watts) into 8 ohms and 17¼ dBW (60 watts) into 4 ohms at clipping. And in terms of its ability to reproduce musical transients, DSL measured a dynamic headroom of a full 4 dB, translating to a pulse power output capability of 18¼ dBW (75 watts)! We can conjecture that the conservative power rating was sparked by Marantz' desire to avoid the full FTC preconditioning warmup test at the higher power output, but the net result for the music lover is a receiver with enough power reserve to reproduce the most demanding musical material. Total harmonic distortion, both at rated output and 0 dBW, easily beats spec across the audible band. And the low-frequency damping factor of 74 is more than sufficient to keep tight rein on the woofer's excursions.

The SR-2000 is an extremely satisfying budget-priced receiver. Although we can quibble with the practical necessity for twin power output meters when a switchable subsonic filter or FM signal-strength meter would have served much more practical ends, Marantz' engineers have certainly done an admirable job in balancing price against features and performance. Considering the competition in this most active of high fidelity product areas, a receiver such as the SR-2000 demands attention.

Circle 133 on Reader-Service Card

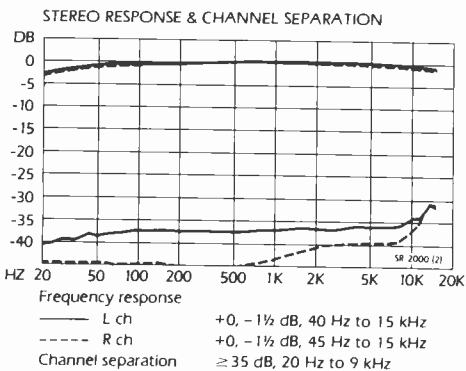
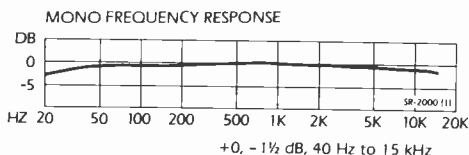
# New Equipment Reports

Preparation supervised by Robert Long, Peter Dobbin, and Edward J. Foster. Laboratory data (unless otherwise noted) supplied by CBS Technology Center or Diversified Science Laboratories.



## Marantz' Budget-Priced Beauty

Marantz SR-2000 FM tuner section



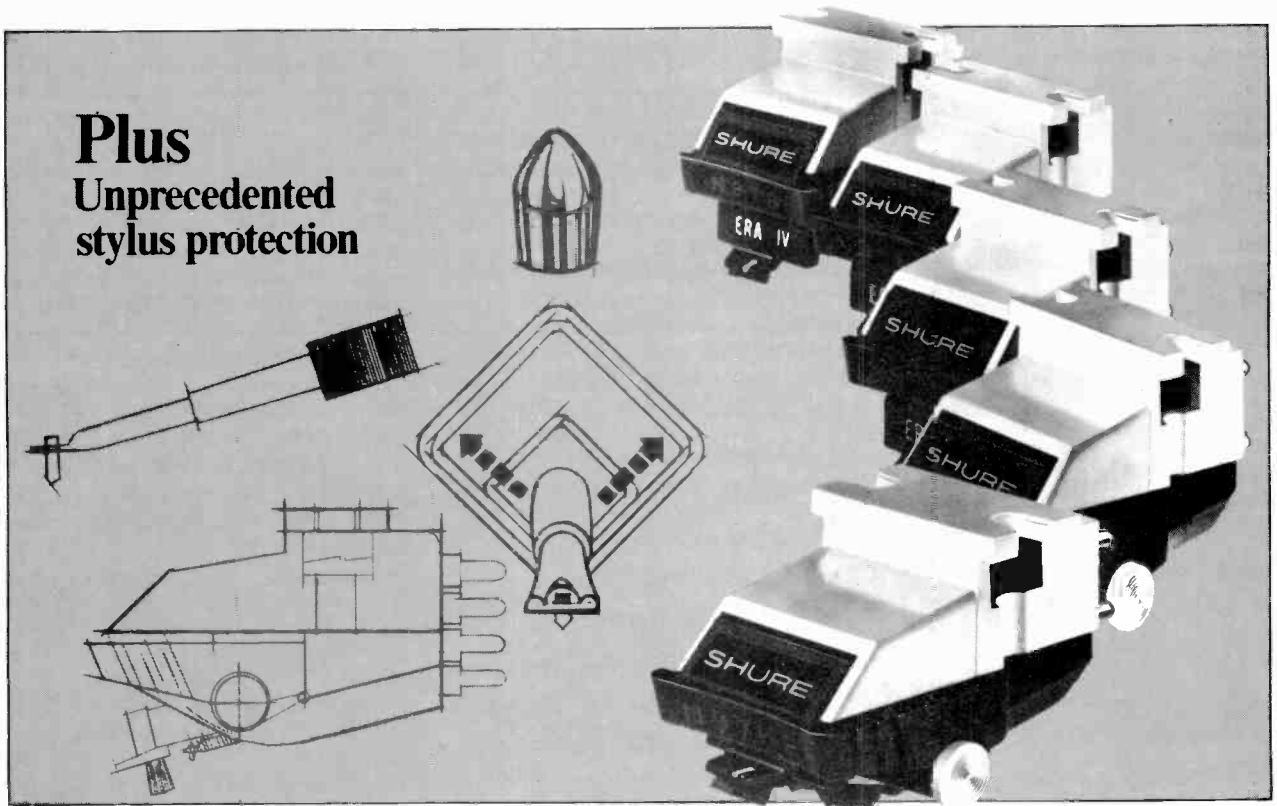
**Marantz Model SR-2000 stereo FM/AM receiver in wood case with vinyl veneer finish. Dimensions: 18½ by 5½ inches (front), 12¾ inches deep, plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: one switched (100 watts max.), one unswitched (200 watts max.). Price: \$350. Warranty: "limited," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Made in Japan for Marantz Co., Inc., 20525 Nordhoff St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311.**

Marantz has pulled off a neat trick with the SR-2000 receiver, a budget-priced component whose overall performance belies its low price. While some companies go for lots of buttons and lights in their inexpensive models, Marantz has wisely chosen to pare down the "extras," allowing the receiver's basic performance to shine through. So you won't find complex tape-dubbing switches, an output attenuation button, or provision for more than one phono input, but the controls arrayed on the handsome aluminum front panel address themselves directly to the needs of most consumers seeking a basic receiver.

Marantz' familiar flywheel tuning knob in combination with the long tuning scale (9½ inches) make for fast, accurate station selection. Though for economy a signal-strength meter was omitted, the combination FM center-tuning/AM signal-strength meter should suffice in areas where proper antenna orientation is not crucial. In tests at Diversified Science Laboratories, the tuner section proved itself exceptionally sensitive, demanding an input of just 37 dBf for 50 dB of quieting in the stereo mode (12¼ dBf in mono). Distortion, too, is very well controlled, even at the frequently troublesome higher frequencies. Other important FM specifications—alternate-channel selectivity, ultimate signal-to-noise ratio, capture ratio, and separation—place the tuner squarely in the first-rate category. Though a combination FM muting/mode selector button can be a nuisance in some tuners, with the SR-2000's high sensitivity and well-chosen FM muting threshold (27 dBf),

# fact: five new Shure Cartridges feature the technological breakthroughs of the V15 Type IV

**Plus  
Unprecedented  
stylus protection**



## the M97 Era IV Series phono cartridges

Model	Stylus Configuration	Tip Tracking Force	Applications
M97HE	Nude Hyperelliptical	$\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams	Highest fidelity where light tracking forces are essential.
M97ED	Nude Biradial (Elliptical)	$\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams	
M97GD	Nude Spherical	$\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams	
M97EJ	Biradial (Elliptical)	$1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 grams	Where slightly heavier tracking forces are required.
M97B	Spherical	$1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 grams	
78 rpm Stylus for all M97's	Biradial (Elliptical)	$1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 grams	For 78 rpm records.

Shure has written a new chapter in the history of affordable hi-fi by making the space-age technological breakthroughs of the incomparable V15 Type IV available in a *complete line* of high-performance, moderately-priced cartridges: the M97 Era IV Series Phono Cartridges, available with five different interchangeable stylus configurations to fit every system and every budget.

The critically acclaimed V15 Type IV is the cartridge that astonished audiophiles with such vanguard features as the Dynamic Stabilizer—which simultaneously overcomes record-warp caused problems, provides electrostatic neutralization of the record surface, and effectively removes dust and lint from the record—and, the unique telescoped stylus assembly which results in lower effective stylus mass and dramatically improved trackability.

Each of these features... and more... has been incorporated in the five cartridges in the M97 Series—there is even an M97 cartridge that offers the low distortion Hyperelliptical stylus! What's more, every M97 cartridge features a unique lateral deflection assembly, called the SIDE-GUARD, which responds to side thrusts on the stylus by withdrawing the entire stylus shank and tip safely into the stylus housing before it can bend.

**NEW! M97 Series Era IV Phono Cartridges...  
Five new invitations to the new era in hi-fi.**



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Outside the U.S. or Canada, write to Shure Brothers Inc., Attn: Dept. J6 for information on your local Shure distributor.

Manufacturers of high fidelity components, microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.

# HIFI-CROSTIC

## No. 55 by William Petersen

### 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 Output, reading down.

The answer to HiFi-Crostic No. 55 will appear in next month's issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

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

S 1	K 2	L 3	F 4		T 5	R 6	Y 7	B 8	X 9		G 10	S 11	K 12	V 13	L 14
O 15	R 16	M 17	I 18		O 19	F 20	Y 21	T 22	K 23		W 24	N 25		S 26	B 27
X 28		M 29	Y 30	F 31	A 32	H 33	P 34	J 35	K 36		S 37	E 38	X 39	R 40	M 41
D 42	T 43	I 44	O 45	Y 46	K 47		F 48	S 49		M 50	S 51	H 52	W 53	Z 54	
O 55	K 56	O 57	N 58	V 59	S 60	E 61	T 62		O 63	S 64		C 65	M 66	A 67	
U 68	V 69	S 70	T 71	N 72	L 73	A 74		W 75	F 76	E 77	V 78	S 79	M 80	R 81	K 82
	B 83	U 84		N 85	Z 86	V 87	S 88	A 89	F 90	G 91		Z 92	F 93	S 94	
J 95	K 96	B 97	S 98	O 99	A 100	T 101	M 102	E 103	N 104		H 105	W 106	S 107	J 108	L 109
M 110	K 111		O 112	S 113	X 114	B 115	A 116	F 117	K 118		R 119	C 120	P 121	S 122	V 123
M 124	T 125	D 126	G 127	F 128	K 129	I 130		A 131	R 132	N 133	H 134	J 135	B 136	O 137	F 138
L 139	K 140		P 141	M 142	E 143	V 144	W 145		S 146	H 147	Z 148		B 149	C 150	L 151
S 152	F 153		K 154	Z 155	M 156	S 157	R 158	I 159		Y 160	X 161	N 162	O 163		F 164
	J 165	B 166	A 167	R 168	T 169	O 170	D 171	P 172	S 173		G 174	K 175	I 176	T 177	F 178
H 179	S 180		L 181	X 182		S 183		P 184	M 185	S 186	X 187		Y 188	D 189	A 190
U 191	B 192		R 193	T 194		R 195	G 196	C 197	I 198	M 199	U 200	S 201	L 202	B 203	
E 204	J 205	T 206		A 207	S 208	V 209									

### INPUT

- A. With Word E, French flutist (comp.)
- B. Danish conductor, recorded all six Nielsen symphonies (full name)
- C. Mozart's Quartet K. 458
- D. Italian soprano (b. 1916)
- E. See Word A
- F. Copland orchestral piece (3 Span. wds.)
- G. Welsh baritone Geraint
- H. English instrument maker, created ballad horn
- I. Lacking vivacity, uninspired
- J. Auber opera
- K. Liszt symphonic poem (Ger)
- L. President of Muzak (init. and last name)
- M. Folk-jazz singer/guitarist in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (full name)
- N. Muted, as kettledrum or violin (Fr.)
- O. Ornament in early lute music
- P. Welsh harp
- Q. When augmented, from C to G sharp
- R. American harpsichordist (full name)
- S. Falla suite (6 wds.)
- T. Of music, hurrying (It.)
- U. Inferior, smaller
- V. What follows Word Y. (2 wds.)
- W. Ancient Byzantine mode
- X. Tremolos in early violin sonatas
- Y. First two words of well-known round (see Word V.)
- Z. A half-tone higher

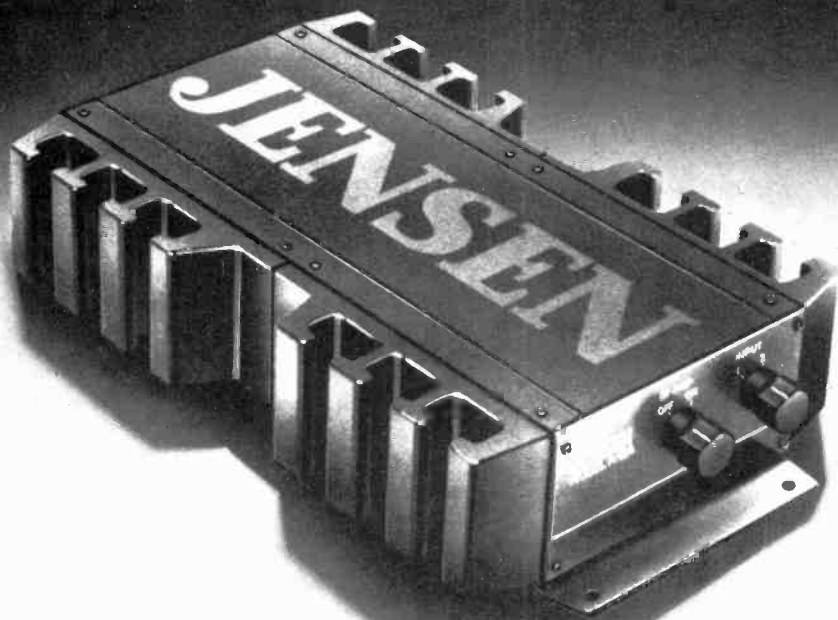
### OUTPUT

207	116	32	167	131	89	67	190	100	74
166	97	203	8	136	27	149	83	192	115
120	150	197	65						
126	189	42	171						
61	143	38	77	204	103				
178	90	4	164	128	48	93	31	117	76
									138
									153
									20
91	10	127	196	174					
134	52	179	105	147	33				
159	44	198	176	18	130				
165	108	135	95	35	205				
2	96	47	12	140	118	154	36	111	129
									175
									56
									23
									82
109	139	73	14	151	202	3	181		
102	29	185	50	17	41	156	124	199	110
									66
									142
									80
104	162	133	58	85	25	72			
15	99	170	63	55	163				
34	121	184	141	172					
112	45	19	137	57					
195	40	193	132	158	6	119	81	16	168
122	37	173	51	26	186	152	98	1	146
									60
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									79
101	194	5	71	125	62	22	43	177	206
									169
191	200	84	68						
209	123	69	144	59	78	87	13		
75	53	106	24	145					
39	182	114	28	187	9	161			
21	46	188	7	30	160				
148	54	92	86	155					





# Power monger.



That's the Jensen A-124 Car Stereo Power Amplifier, all right. Distributing an F.T.C. Continuous Average Power Output of 100 watts into 4 ohms.

Not only does it have plenty of power to dispense, but it also knows just how to deal it out. To get the very most out of your system. And do the very most for your music.

#### **A 4-speaker, bi-amplifiable unit.**

The A-124 amp is an ideal low distortion power source for 4-speaker car stereo systems. Imagine a frequency response of 20 Hz to 50,000 Hz,  $\pm 1.5$  dB.

Flick a switch and it operates in the advanced bi-amp mode. Which is

perfect for 4-speaker systems or the new Jensen "separates" speaker systems which places woofers, tweeters, and midrange drivers individually throughout the car.

When switched to bi-amp, this amp displays its keen sense for a balance of power. Two 10 watt output-transformerless amplifiers drive the tweeters and midrange drivers for clear high frequencies. At the same time, two hefty 40 watt OTL amps in this unit distribute the forceful power needed to get full, low-distortion bass from the woofers.

The Jensen A-124 offers two different low level input capabilities, so that it is compatible

with both pre-amp and speaker outputs.

#### **Thinking for itself.**

When you turn on your stereo unit, the A-124 instantly comes to the ready, thanks to an automatic on/off switch.

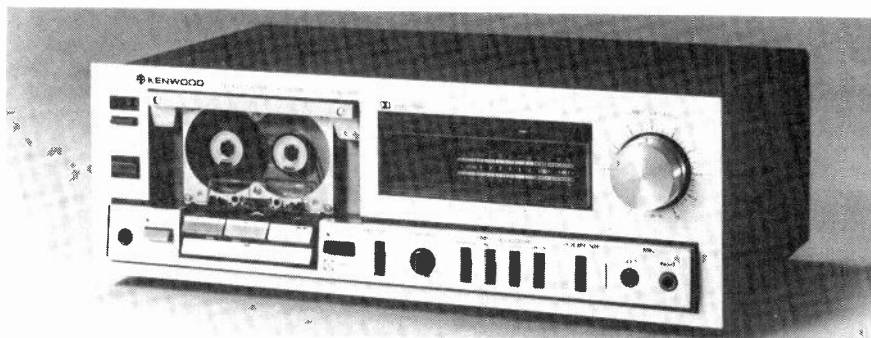
It's instantly output short-circuit proof...just one of the many built-in protection features. And the unit comes complete with 15 meters of low capacitance shielded hook-up cable to eliminate RF interference.

So get the most out of your music...by getting the most out of your car stereo system. With the Jensen A-124 Amplifier.

**JENSEN**  
SOUND LABORATORIES  
AN ESMARK COMPANY



High Fidelity News



**A budget metal deck**

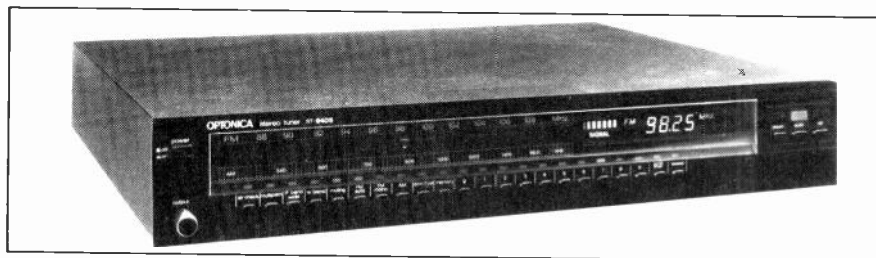
A metal-tape cassette deck from Kenwood, the KX-500, features a single RECORDING button and automatic shutoff in all modes. It uses a dual-belt drive system, has fluorescent peak-reading meters, and provides a four-position tape selector, along with a bias fine-adjust control. Other features include recording mute, pause, and timer standby. Rated wow and flutter is 0.05%; with Dolby noise reduction and 70-microsecond EQ, S/N ratio is rated at 64 dB and frequency response at 30 Hz to 16 kHz. Price of the KX-500 is \$225.



**Store components elegantly**

Apres Audio Ltd., manufacturer of audio furniture, has introduced the Elegant component storage design. Oak shelves suspended on acrylic panels accommodate micro or conventional-sized components and discs. A smoked acrylic drop-latch door covers the component area, while rear-panel vents allow heat dissipation. The Elegant, which is available in natural or walnut-stain oak finishes, measures 46 by 33 1/4 by 18 1/2 inches and costs \$579.

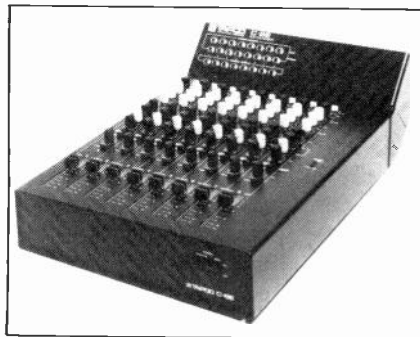
Circle 142 on Reader-Service Card



**Slim-line supertuner**

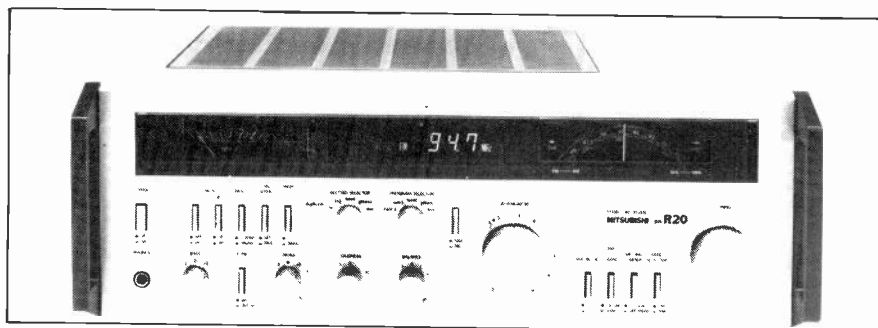
Optonica's previously announced ST-9405 digitally synthesized FM/AM tuner is now being shipped to dealers. Part of Optonica's slim-line component series, the tuner features a 44-LED analog scale in place of a conventional tuning needle, plus a digital frequency display. Other highlights of the unit are a 12-LED signal-strength meter, a high-blend switch, a two-position FM muting switch, output level control, and an IF bandwidth selector. The ST-9405 is priced at \$1,000.

Circle 138 on Reader-Service Card



**Expand and mix with Tapco**

Newest addition to Tapco's Catalina series of mixers is the C-8E, an expansion module for the C-12 Master Console. It has eight inputs, each with a MIKE/LINE switch, an overload LED, three sends, 3-band EQ with sweepable mid-range, four mix busses with panning, and a solo feature. Although designed to be connected to the Tapco console, the C-8E has mixing amplifiers and a self-contained power supply. Offering the services of a buss or input expander or submixer, the C-8E costs \$1,450.




**First receivers from Mitsubishi**

The DA-R20, flagship of Mitsubishi's new receiver line, is rated at 60 watts (17% dBW) into 8 ohms at no more than 0.02% THD. Among its features are a built-in head amp for moving-coil pickups, IF bandwidth switching, a fluorescent digital frequency display, and a high-blend switch. Price of the DA-R20 is \$560; two other models in the line, R-10 and DA-R7, cost \$390 and \$290, respectively.

Circle 145 on Reader-Service Card





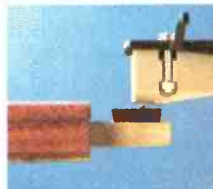
# Give your cartridge more than The Finger!

## Give it Stylus Care With the new Discwasher SC-2 System.

The famous SC-1 stylus brush (standard of the record and hifi industries) now has a synergistic fluid called SC-2.



New Fluid



Nylon Brush



Inspection Mirror

SC-2 Fluid enhances and speeds cleaning and yet protects diamond adhesives, cartridge mounting polymers and fine-metal cantilevers against the corrosive effects of many other "cleaners".

The Discwasher SC-2 System. Stylus care you can finger as clearly superior.



## SC-2 Stylus Care System



**discwasher**<sup>®</sup>  
PRODUCTS TO CARE FOR YOUR MUSIC



# The continuing story of TDK sound achievement.

## Part One.



Music has gone through many transitions. Its rhythms, tones and forms have changed dramatically. As have the means of reproducing it. From the first wax cylinder to today's music machine: the TDK cassette.

TDK pioneering in ferrite technology began over forty years ago. This led TDK engineers to develop microscopic particles which, through their long shape and uniform size,

could translate magnetic energy into flawless sound. By 1968 TDK had created TDK SD. The world's first high fidelity cassette. In 1975, TDK created a

revolution. Super Avilyn. Ultra-refined gamma-ferric oxide particles were bombarded with cobalt in a proprietary ion-adsorption process. The resulting TDK SA cassette had higher signal to noise. Higher coercivity. Low noise. A maximum output level superior to anything heard before. Overnight, TDK SA became the high bias reference.

TDK has a philosophy of sound. A belief that total performance is the outcome of a perfect interplay between the parts. It all begins with *Part One*, the TDK tape. Magnetic powder is first converted into TDK magnetic material in the form of a coating paint or binder. On a giant rotary press and in a dust-free atmosphere, jumbo rolls of tensilized polyester are coated evenly with TDK binder. The tape rolls are edited and leader is inserted at precise intervals. Surgically sharp knives then cut the tape into predetermined widths. The edges perfectly straight. All along the way, TDK tape undergoes thousands of checks. It's polished to micron smoothness to give better head contact, increase sensitivity and maintain stable output. TDK binder, recently improved, packs more particles on the tape surface. And the whole process is done automatically. Controlled by a central computer brain. From

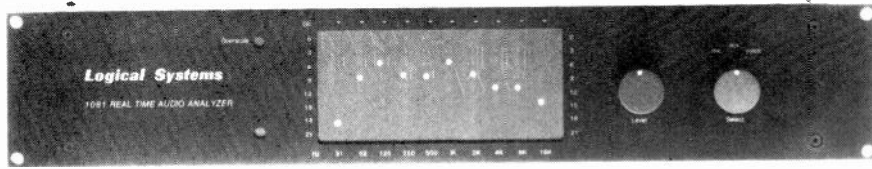
the very first, TDK tape runs true. And so does the sound.

The TDK story will unfold in future chapters. You'll learn about other key parts and their sound synergy in a TDK cassette. And you'll draw only one conclusion. Music is the sum of its parts.



 **TDK**  
The machine for your machine

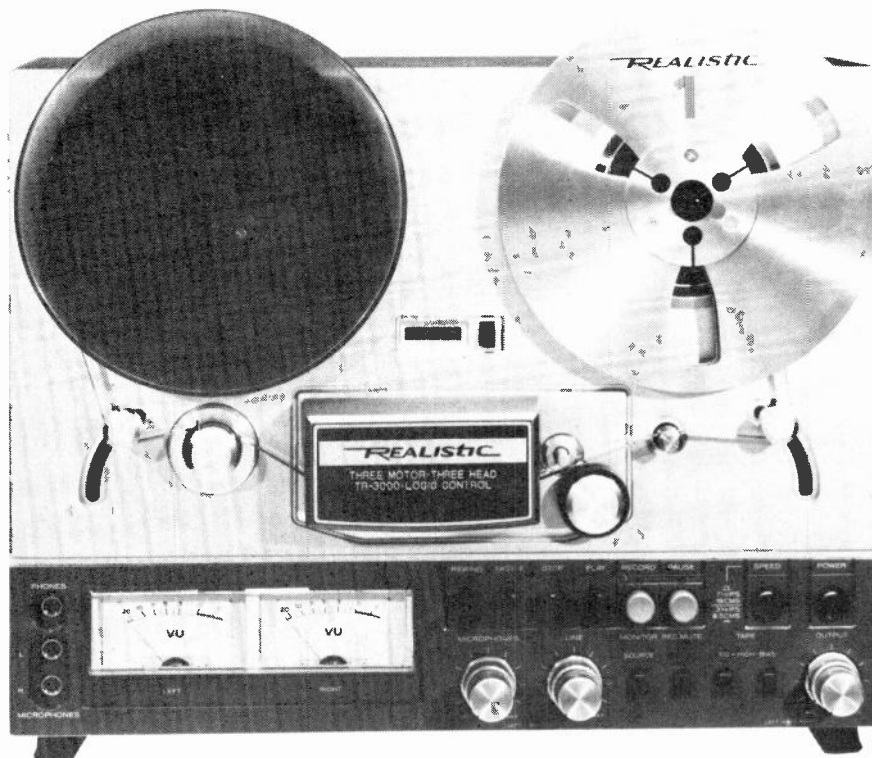
# High Fidelity News



## An audio analyzer kit

The latest kit from Logical Systems is the 1081 real-time audio analyzer, which displays a 21-dB range in each of ten octaves. A diagnosis sweep signal shows system response and aids in equalizing it for the listening room. An input jack for a dynamic microphone is provided on the 1081, which can be hooked up to a receiver, preamp, mixing board, tape deck, or the audio jack of a video cassette recorder. The frequency bands, from 31.2 to 16 kHz, match those of standard ISO graphic equalizers. The components of the kit come mounted on a circuit board. With a rack-mountable chassis, the 1081 costs \$179.

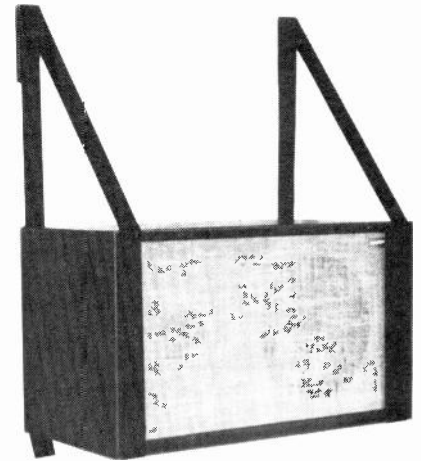
Circle 137 on Reader-Service Card



## Realistic open-reel

The Realistic TR-3000 from Radio Shack is an open-reel tape deck with full-logic solenoid transport controls, separate bias and equalization selectors, and dual mike and line input controls. The two-speed deck (7½ and 3¾ ips) employs three motors, including a servo drive for the capstan, and is equipped with three heads. Rated wow and flutter at 7½ ips is 0.06%; frequency response at that speed is said to be 30 Hz to 20 kHz, ± 1½ dB. The TR-3000 comes with a seven-inch plastic reel and two pairs of patch cords for \$499.95.

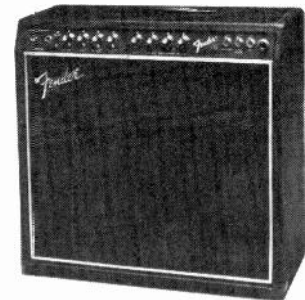
Circle 136 on Reader-Service Card



## Hammock for speakers

Speaker Slings from Valstrap offer a new way to mount speakers on walls. Their adjustable polypropylene straps are designed to hold up to 300 pounds. Each strap comes with mounting plates and is available in brown, white, or black. One package, at a price of \$10, includes enough materials to support one speaker.

Circle 140 on Reader-Service Card



## Guitar amplifier

The Fender 75 is a tubed guitar amplifier with lead and rhythm channels, both of which are foot switchable. It also offers a three-spring reverb unit with foot-pedal control, a 40-dB midtone control, and a boost switch. Front-panel green and red LEDs indicate when reverb and lead control, respectively, are on. A high/low power switch provides two output ranges; the higher is rated at 75 watts (18¾ dBW) continuous. Price of the Fender 75 is \$795.

Circle 141 on Reader-Service Card

more on page 17

Circle 36 on Reader-Service Card ▶

It's called print-through.  
And if you think it interferes with your  
reading, you should hear what it does  
to your listening.

It happens on tape that has low  
magnetic stability. Music on one  
layer of the tape is transferred to  
music on an adjacent layer, causing  
an echo.

At Maxell, we've designed our  
tape for superior magnetic stability.  
So what's happening to the opposite  
page won't happen to your music.

You see, we believe you should only  
hear the music you want to hear.

Nothing less, and nothing more.



**IT'S WORTH IT.**

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Circle 22 on Reader-Service Card

**WHAT'S  
HAPPENING  
ON THIS PAGE  
SHOULDN'T  
HAPPEN  
ON YOUR  
RECORDING  
TAPE.**

IT'S WORTH IT.

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# CrossTalk

**Q.** Overall, I am quite pleased with my Marantz Model 2600 turntable—except for the cueing device, which permits the tonearm to descend far too rapidly onto the surface of a disc. I've examined the owner's manual, and there doesn't seem to be any adjustment for cueing speed. Can you suggest a remedy for this?—Richard Rucker, Redwood, Calif.

**A.** Viscous-damped cueing devices can lose their ability to maintain slow, gentle tonearm descent if the silicone-based damping fluid dries out. It's simple to remedy: A drop or two of Marantz' own silicone fluid (No. SIO-ILA) applied to the shaft of the cueing device should be all that's needed. (You can order the damping fluid directly from Marantz' parts department, 20525 Nordhoff St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311.)

**Q.** My receiver, a Technics SA-500, has twin LED power meters designed to read properly with 8-ohm loads. I am quite confused, however, since the meters read the same whether my speakers (8-ohm EPI 100s) are switched on or off and even if only my headphones are plugged in. The three conditions create such different load impedances (and power demands) across the amplifier, why do the meters read the same?—Will J. Lepeska, Barrington, Ill.

**A.** Power meters are misnamed: They are volt meters calibrated to read perfect-case power equivalents. If the amplifier were feeding an 8-ohm resistor, the figures displayed would be accurate. A speaker is anything but a perfect resistor, however, since its impedance varies widely across the frequency band. But the meters are blithely unaware of what, if any, load the amp is feeding and continue to show voltage at the output no matter what the current drain (and therefore the power) may be.

**Q.** I recently purchased a pair of 4-ohm minispeakers from UltraIn-ear. In addition, I own a pair of Bose 501s, which also are rated at 4 ohms. According to the owner's manual that

came with my integrated amplifier, paralleling these speakers from the A and B speaker outputs can be hazardous to the amp, since the combined impedance will drop to 2 ohms. Can you recommend an alternative way of hooking these two pairs of speakers so that they will play simultaneously with no chance of damage to the amplifier?—Richard Quackenbush, Amsterdam, N.Y.

**A.** No. You are quite right to avoid hooking up two pairs of low-impedance speakers for simultaneous play. The combined impedance, especially if the 4-ohm nominal figure falls in the musically active midrange area, may well demand more current than your amp is designed to provide—leading to automatic activation of its protection circuitry or, at worst, a blown output stage. It is possible to hook pairs of low-impedance speakers in series, which doubles the impedance but effectively neutralizes the amp's low-frequency damping factor. We don't recommend it, because the sonic consequence is muddy bass reproduction.

**Q.** I own a Kenwood KA-7600 amplifier, and I suspect that excessive heat buildup is causing it to distort. It is rated at 75 watts per channel, and I often run it at moderate-to-loud volume levels for sustained periods. After an hour or so, I hear a harshness that was not evident at the start. Would a fan keep the amplifier's temperature constant and therefore optimize its consistent performance?—Greg Hannasch, Eagan, Minn.

**A.** It is possible that under hard use an amplifier's bias points will shift and cause increased distortion. Usually, however, this is the result of one or more marginal or defective internal components and can be repaired. A fan (provided that it is of good quality and does not introduce objectionable mechanical noise) may help if it can keep the temperature low enough to prevent the change in bias. A fan probably will cost less than a repair job, so it may be worth a try. We assume, of course, that you're already supplying reasonably good ventilation to the heat sinks; if

you're not, unimpeded convection cooling could prove a free "repair."

**Q.** I recently installed a Clarion PE-751A receiver/tape player in my Grand Prix. It sounds fine until I turn on another accessory, such as lights, wipers, or the heater. Then a low whine sets in and gets louder and higher pitched as I accelerate. The same condition prevails whether I'm listening to FM or playing a tape. Can you offer any help?—Allen Choka, Wilmette, Ill.

**A.** It sounds to us as though you did not ground the unit properly to the car chassis. This would result in electrical hum pickup. We suggest you double-check your wiring or have it inspected by someone with auto sound experience.

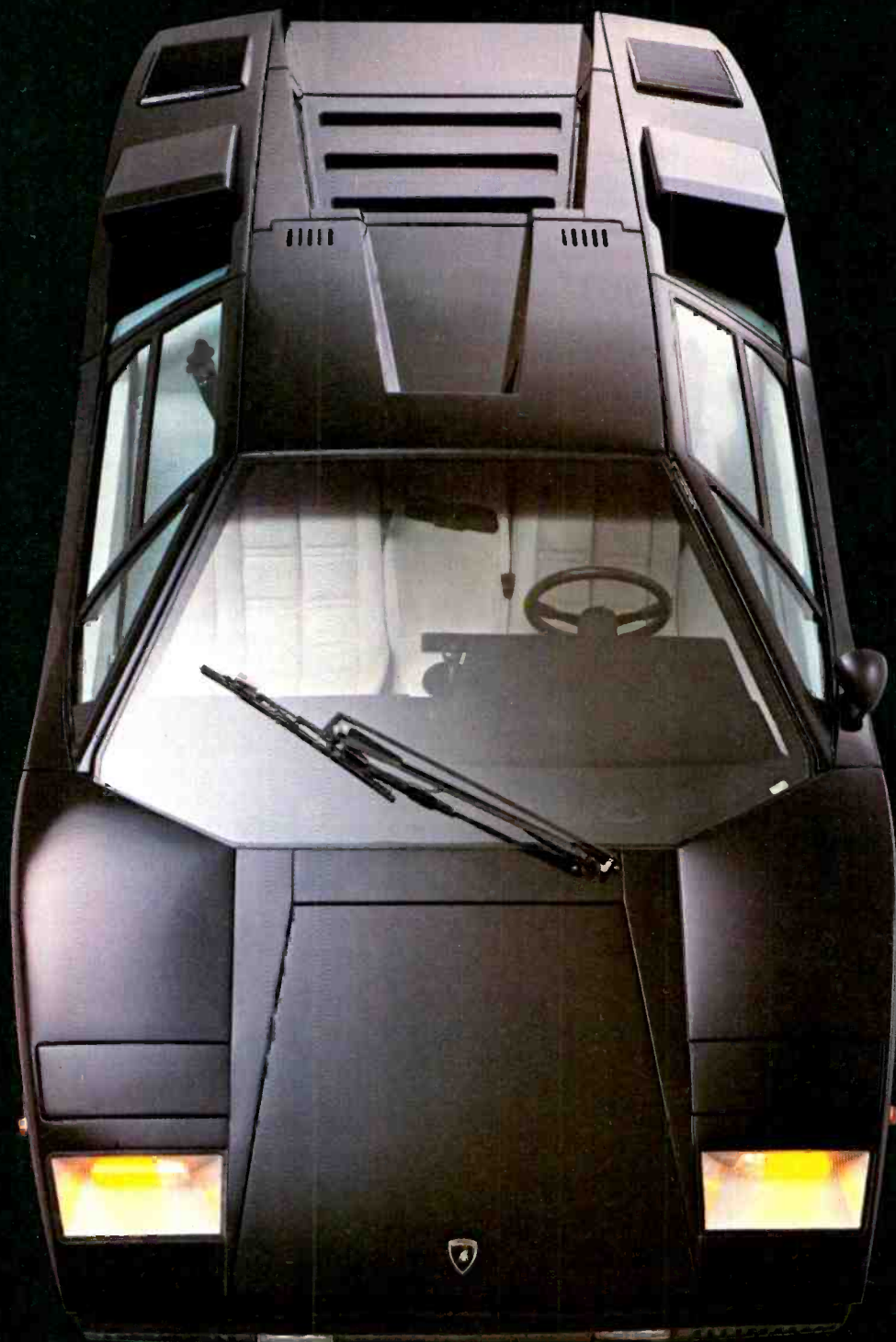
**Q.** How can I go about securing parts for my Dynaco 400 power amp? I read that Dynaco was recently purchased by ESS and is now producing speakers, but is the "new" Dynaco still maintaining a parts and service department for its old audio electronics?—Rick Davis, New York, N.Y.

**A.** According to a spokesman, Dynaco is rebuilding its electronic parts inventory. If you know what ails your 400, the company recommends that you call the parts department first to determine price and shipping charges. If you don't feel qualified to undertake repairs yourself, Dynaco will give you an up-to-date list of its warranty service stations still in operation. Be warned, however, that faceplates, rack handles, and electronic parts for very old units are not being stocked. Dynaco is now located at 110 Shawmut Rd., Canton, Mass. 02021; (617) 828-7858.

||| We regret that, due to the volume of reader mail we get, we cannot give individual answers to all questions.



It would be a pity to put an ordinary car stereo  
in a \$125,000 Lamborghini.



Instead, you'll find an Alpine Car Audio System as standard equipment, factory installed in each of their magnificent machines. Chosen by Lamborghini for its superior features and sound performance, Alpine offers a number of pure bred, high technology car audio

systems to make whatever you love to drive sound as good as it looks. For an audition, visit your Alpine dealer. He'll show you the extraordinary in car audio sound. Alpine Electronics of America, Inc., 3102 Kashiwa Street, Torrance, California 90505.

**ALPINE**  
car audio systems

# we stunned the competition with this Super-A receiver.

When JVC brought out "Super-A" amplifiers last year, they were hailed as a tremendous achievement. Now, we go a step further with our new line of Super-A receivers. Which means you can get Super-A amplification along with JVC's 5-band graphic equalizer, a terrific FM/AM tuner, and everything else that has made JVC a premier name in receivers. All for prices you'd expect to pay for conventional class-A/B receivers.

## What does Super-A sound like?

By eliminating switching and crossover distortion (you can actually see them disappear on an oscilloscope), Super-A eliminates the subtle harshness which makes some conventional amplifiers hard to listen to. The sound is natural and detailed, with the delicate texture

of musical instruments coming through clearly.

At the same time, the R-S33 receiver shown here gives you a hefty *40 watts per channel into 8 ohms, from 20-20,000 Hz. with no more than 0.007% total harmonic distortion.* Power like this in a conventional Class-A would cause it to run hot and weigh a ton, to say nothing of costing you a fortune. But the R-S33 costs only \$329.95.\*

## 5-band graphic equalizer

With conventional tone controls, you can make only crude adjustments of problems like cartridge peaks, speaker roll-off and room

acoustics. But with JVC's 5-band graphic equalizer, you can make adjustments in five separate tonal regions. So you can boost deep bass without creating mid-bass boominess. Mellow out a voice without cutting the highs. Boost the extreme highs and more.

## Traditional JVC quality

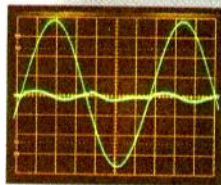
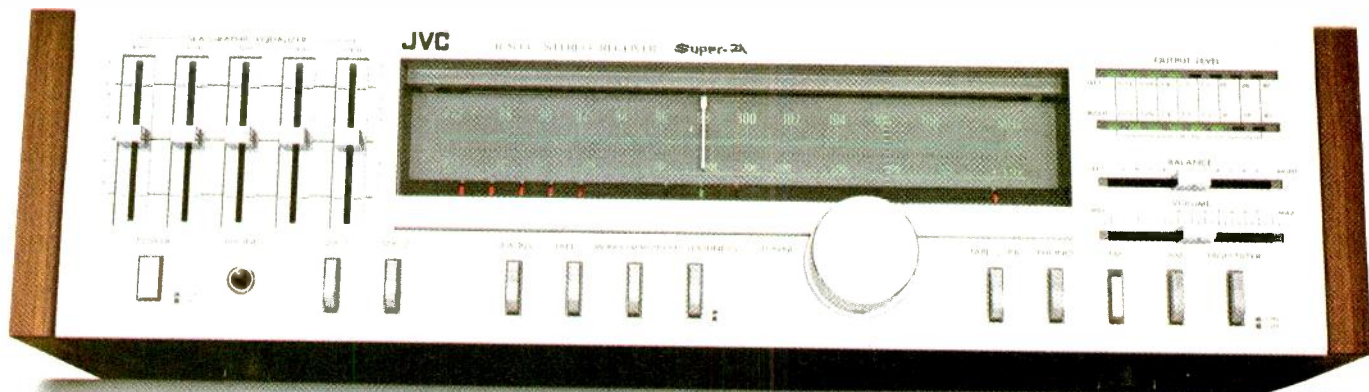
With all this going for the R-S33 receiver, you might almost think we cut corners to offer it at such a great price. We didn't.

As with past JVC receivers, you get a direct-coupled DC power amplifier section. A sensitive tuning section with linear-phase IF stages. Two tape monitors with equalizer and dubbing facilities. LED power meters. And JVC's patented, error-free Triple Power Protection system.

\*Manufacturer's suggested retail price.

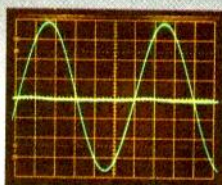
# R-S33

Super-A receiver



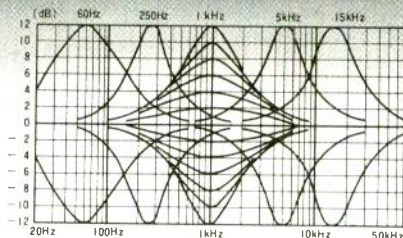
### Conventional Class-A/B

Jagged center line indicates the presence of high-order harmonic distortion. This is the result of transistor switching in some conventional amplifiers.



### JVC Super-A

Center line shows minimal distortion in output waveform. Switching and crossover distortion (high-order harmonics) are notably absent.



S.E.A. graphic equalizer permits independent adjustment in 5 tonal regions.

## 800-221-7502

Just call his toll-free number for the location of your nearest JVC dealer (212-476-8300 in New York State). While you're there, you might also want to check out our low-distortion, class-A/B receivers, the R-S11 and R-S55. And if you want the extra convenience and accuracy of quartz-synthesized digital tuning, you can get it in our R-S55 and our R-S77 with Super-A.

# JVC®

US JVC CORP

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**After stunning the audio world  
by going beyond Class-A ...**

# SUPERBA





# MOVE IN THE BEST OF CIRCLES.

AKAI turntables. Six of the most accurate, precisely-engineered components in the world. Backed by 50 years of superior technology in turntable motors for noise-free, dependable performance. Designed to maximize your musical enjoyment, and deliver your records' highest

fidelity. With virtually every feature you've ever looked for, including one of today's most important: value. You'll find it built into every piece of equipment in the AKAI family circle.

To start a music revolution of your own, see your AKAI dealer or write AKAI, P.O. Box 6010, Compton, CA 90224.

AKAI turntables for 1980, featuring full automatic, semi-automatic, direct drive, belt drive, quartz lock configurations; automatic return and shut-off; DC servo motors; static balanced tonearms; variable pitch controls; built-in strobe lights; anti-skating controls; vibration-absorbing insulated feet; front panel controls for convenience and easy access.

## AKAI

You never heard it so good.



7 QUARTZ

SWITCH CONTROL

RETURN

# McIntosh

## "A Technological Masterpiece..."



McIntosh C 32

### "More Than a Preamplifier"

McIntosh has received peerless acclaim from prominent product testing laboratories and outstanding international recognition! You can learn why the "more than a preamplifier" C 32 has been selected for these unique honors.

Send us your name and address and we'll send you the complete product reviews and data on all McIntosh products, copies of the international awards, and a North American FM directory. You will understand why McIntosh product research and development always has the appearance and technological look to the future.

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## EDITORIAL

### John Culshaw

On this past April's last Monday morning, as I was scanning the just-delivered page proofs of the current issue's "Culshaw at Large," with its final paragraph beginning, "The next time I write about video software..." the phone rang to tell me that John Culshaw had died over the weekend in London. There would be no next time. Next on top of my mail pile was this issue's tribute to Dario Soria, another giant in the record world who had died a month earlier. We seldom publish eulogies; this month we would have two. In fact, the last one appeared in November 1979, a tribute to that other great record producer, EMI's Walter Legge. It had been written by his onetime Decca/London competitor, John Culshaw.

John was an elegant, soft-spoken, even subdued gentleman with a flair for the theatrical, all of which probably helped make him one of the most successful producers of recorded and televised opera in the history of the media. If anyone created the art of stereo opera production, it was he. His 1959 landmark recording of *Das Rheingold*, followed by the rest of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, was responsible for convincing the serious music lover and discophile that stereo was a viable technique for presenting musical and dramatic values, and not just a gimmick. Two weeks before his death, *Billboard* polled industry engineers, producers, and writers to determine the best-sounding classical recordings; in this era of "audiophile" records, only one production, a digital disc, got even a single vote more than the twenty-year-old Culshaw *Ring* or one of its component operas.

After producing such other legendary recordings as all of Kirsten Flagstad's since 1955, most of Benjamin Britten's (conducting his own operas and *War Requiem*), and the *Elektra* with Birgit Nilsson that won our first annual record award in 1968, he left Decca in 1967 to become head of music for BBC television. There his outstanding productions again included Britten operas, specifically a *Peter Grimes* taped not on-stage, but in a fishing village, and an *Owen Wingrave* composed for TV. He left the BBC in 1975 and a year later became a contributing editor for HIGH FIDELITY.

Because his frequent travels enabled him to report on developments around the world, we decided to call his column "Culshaw at Large." It was on one of these trips, deplaning at the Sydney airport, that he had to update a vaccination. The hypodermic needle was contaminated with a particularly potent Australian strain of viral hepatitis. He died of it eighteen months later, on Saturday, April 26, one month short of his fifty-sixth birthday.

When quadraphonics was vainly struggling to find a market, one often heard around the industry, "If only there were a Culshaw for quad." Yet during the last, sad years of his life, John was available to produce records—but nobody, least of all his old company, was willing to sign him up. As he wrote of Legge in the same situation, "It was almost as if the companies were taking revenge on someone who was too big for them." Recently, however, it did seem as though he were about to get back into the studios. Philips was planning what would certainly have been a remarkable album—a *Tristan und Isolde* conducted by Leonard Bernstein and produced by John Culshaw.

Somehow, I wish I didn't know that.

*Leonard Marcus*



# Technics

Everyone knows what Technics direct drive does for performance and accuracy in our turntables. That's why 73 of the top 100 radio stations that use turntables use Technics direct-drive turntables. Now, for only \$330\* you can record your cassettes with the accuracy of Technics direct drive. And that says a lot about the Technics RS-M45.

So does its tape transport system. Especially when you consider what the RS-M45 has going for it: An FG servo DC direct-drive capstan motor. And while 0.035% wow and flutter can tell you a lot about our direct-drive performance, the world's only limited 3-year motor warranty† tells you a lot more.

Equally impressive are the RS-M45's solenoid controls. They not only make switching from one mode to another simple and accurate, they also put minimal strain on the tape transport system.

And to put minimal strain on you, there's the optional RP-9645 remote control unit. With it, all transport functions, as well as record mute, can be operated from your easy chair.

Just as special are the RS-M45's fluorescent VU meters with auto-reset peak-hold. They're fast, electronic and highly accurate. You'll also like Dolby<sup>®</sup> NR and a S/N ratio of 68 dB.

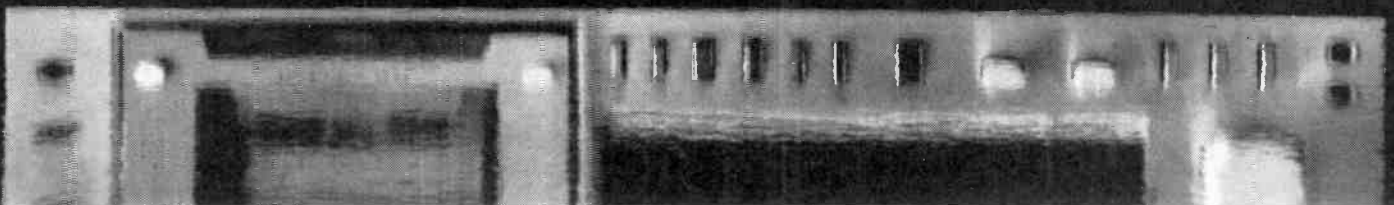
And if our SX record and playback heads make CrO<sub>2</sub> tape sound great (20 Hz-18 kHz), wait until you hear the increased frequency response (20 Hz-20 kHz) and extended dynamic range of meta.

Technics RS-M45. Direct drive and solenoid controls say it isn't your typical \$330 cassette deck. In fact, compared to the leading brands, it's one of a kind. And that's very typical of Technics.

\* Technics recommended price, but actual price will be set by dealers.

† Limited 3-year warranty on the direct-drive motor and limited 2-year warranty on the deck. Includes labor and parts. Carry-in service. Proof of purchase required. Warranties void for commercial use. <sup>®</sup> Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

## How to tape your records as accurately as Technics direct-drive turntables play them.



Tracks digital cannons,  
synthesizers, big bass drums  
and hot piccolos  
with perfect aplomb.



## New AT32 Dual Moving MicroCoil™ Stereo Cartridge

Moving coil cartridges have been known for phenomenal transient response for years. Now there's a moving coil cartridge which combines this acoustic transparency with equally sophisticated tracking ability at as little as one gram. The new AT32 from Audio-Technica.

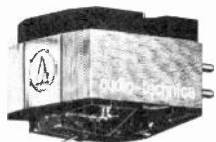
Inside the jewel-like case of the AT32 is a most sophisticated moving assembly. Effective moving mass is extremely low to permit high compliance without unwanted resonances. And every AT32 moving system is individually hand-tuned to insure optimum tracking at all frequencies, while eliminating unit-to-unit variations.

The nude-mounted, square-shank miniature elliptical diamond in its beryllium cantilever is exactly aligned to the groove for lowest distortion. And the tiny moving

coils are mounted in an inverted "V" which precisely aligns each coil with the groove face it senses.

The care in design, construction, and testing lavished on each AT32 is clearly evident in its superb reproduction of even the most-difficult-to-track selections. Indeed, adding an AT32 to your system eliminates one more barrier between you and your music. Audition the AT32 at your nearby Audio-Technica showroom today. AUDIO-TECHNICA U.S., Inc., 1221 Commerce Drive, Dept. 70H, Stow, Ohio 44224.

**audio-technica**®



Model AT32  
Stereo Phono  
Cartridge with  
Dual Moving  
MicroCoils™  
\$300

AUDIO-TECHNICA PROFESSIONAL AND HOME PRODUCTS FOR BETTER SOUND



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Cover photograph by Bob Brody

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### SOLUTION TO HIFI-CROSTIC NO. 54

[E]than Mordden: Better Foot Forward: [T]he History of American Musical Theatre

The Ziegfeld touch was already apparent in "The Parisian Model." There was an approach to nudity in "To Like to See More of You," and for one choreographic sequence the girls had bells on their fingers, toes, necklines, and, as one helpful critic put it, "elsewhere."

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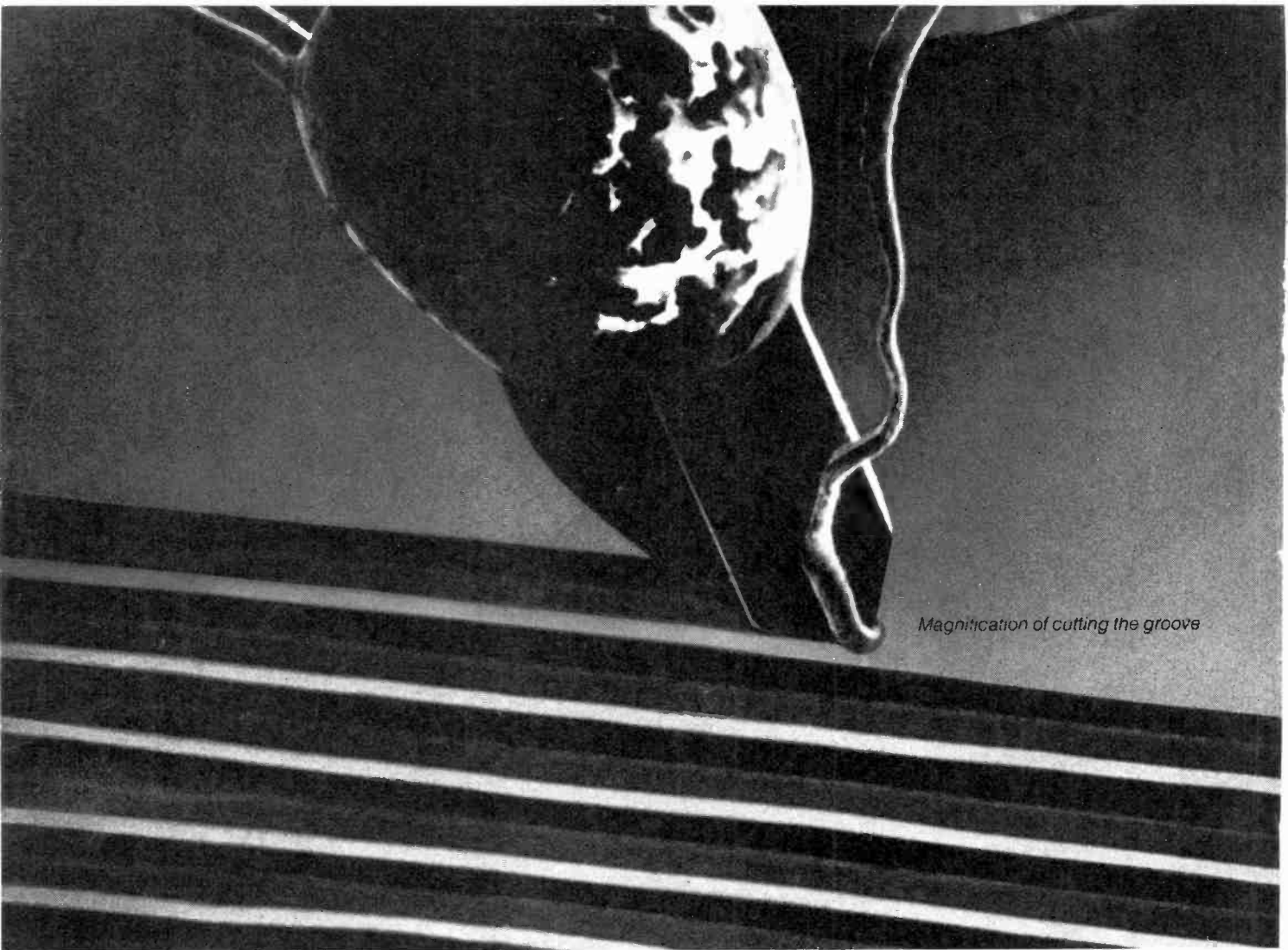
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Magnification of cutting the groove

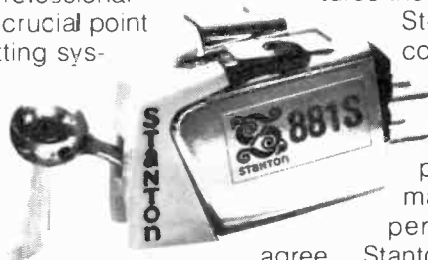
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# Stanton-The Professional in The Recording Industry

Application — Cutting the master — Stanton plays it back

Record manufacturing starts with the simultaneous cutting and playback of the lacquer original. Recording engineers rely on the Stanton 881S Professional Calibration Standard Cartridge at this crucial point to monitor the performance of the cutting system and the entire sound transfer process. This requires a Stanton cartridge of superb precision that will pick up every musical signal without causing visible or audible signs of wear. This is especially important in the playback of the original since lacquer is a very soft material.

The Stanton 881S is perfect for the playback of the



master. Recording engineers rely on it to assure minimum wear of the lacquer groove because it features the patented Stereohedron® stylus tip. The Stereohedron® has exceptionally wide contact area for reduced pressure on the groove wall. And the 881S tracks superbly because of its low dynamic tip mass. Rare earth magnets are incorporated into the design allowing reduced mass and higher output than conventional permanent magnets. The Professionals agree... Stanton's 881S is a precision instrument ideal for master evaluation. *From disc cutting to disco to home entertainment your choice should be the choice of the Professionals... Stanton cartridges.*



**STANTON**  
THE CHOICE OF THE PROFESSIONALS™

For further information contact: Stanton Magnetics Inc., Terminal Drive, Plainview, New York 11803

Circle 34 on Reader-Service Card



