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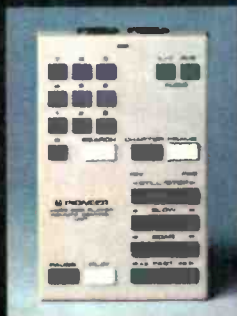
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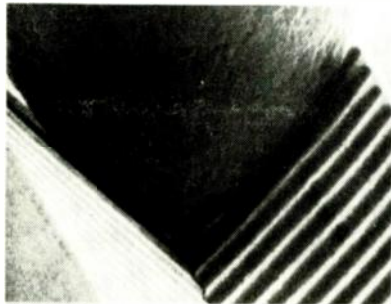
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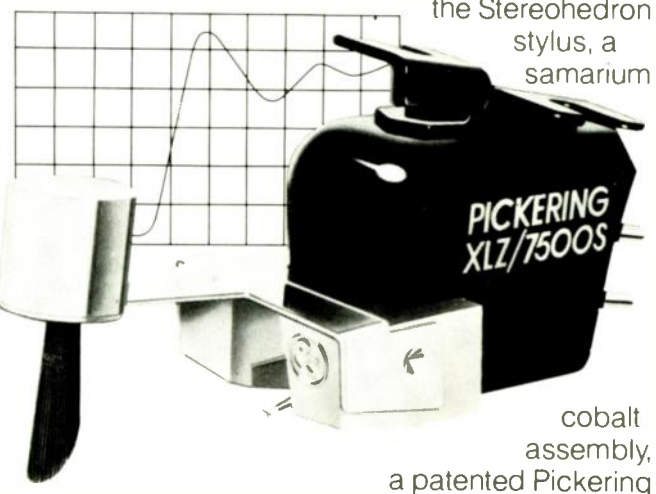
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begins after page 48

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EDITORIAL

On the Front Lines

This, the first issue of the new publishing year, marks a turning point for HIGH FIDELITY as well as the calendar: William Tynan takes the reins as the magazine's editor, a post held since early 1968 by Leonard Marcus.

Scarred just superficially by the editorial wars of a dozen years, Len Marcus nonetheless concluded a while back that the achievement of his personal goals and his tenure at HIGH FIDELITY were at odds. We were fortunate to have Bill Tynan on hand to step into his place—a seasoned member of the ABC Leisure Magazines family, one thoroughly conversant with our traditions and standards and possessed of the experience, energy, and insight to guide the magazine firmly into the new decade, with its promise of rapid change and bewildering complexity in the journalistic spheres we grapple with each month.

Bill's own connection with the magazine goes back to 1969, when he was appointed program director of High Fidelity Cable Television, a CATV system in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. He was special projects editor of HF and assistant editor of STEREO, our newsstand quarterly, from 1972 to 1974 and editor of THE WORLD OF TAPE (predecessor of our BUYING GUIDE TO TAPE SYSTEMS) from 1973 to 1975. After a hiatus in which he received his master's degree from Columbia University, he returned to his roots two years ago to become editor of STEREO and our audio-related annual publications, now numbering six. More recently he again became special projects editor of HF and soon after was named editor of VIDEO TODAY, the self-contained magazine-within-a-magazine inaugurated here and in our sister publication MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY in November 1980.

Bill has no crystal ball—and neither do I nor any other of the sages whose names grace our masthead. But it takes no such mechanism to see that the Eighties hold the prospect of a cultural-technological revolution that will alter forever the ways we gain access to music and store it for later retrieval; the ways we receive and view images recorded on tape and film; the ways we get the news of the day and information about everything from local merchants' sales to the stock market and the monarchs of ancient Mesopotamia; and the ways we procure goods and services, do our banking, communicate with locales far distant, and many other things we cannot now anticipate. Much of this may seem to lie outside HIGH FIDELITY's ken. But electronics is the instrumentality of all these developments, and we at HF ignore any of them at the peril of failing to provide you, the reader, with the information you want, placed in the perspective of its significance for the thoughtful consumer of the Eighties and beyond. This is likely to be a decade that will test the intellectual mettle of Bill and the rest of our editorial staff.

And while I'm at it, I will place them all squarely on the front lines by name—the stalwarts who, with the aid and comfort of their able editorial, graphics, and support colleagues, are chiefly responsible for the contents of current and forthcoming issues: Bob Long and Peter Dobbins, who are charged with the herculean task of keeping abreast of the audio and video marketplaces; Shirley Fleming, who since 1965 has piloted every issue of MUSICAL AMERICA safely into harbor; Jim Oestreich, who tends to our coverage of classical recordings and the people associated with them; and Susan Elliott, whose BACKBEAT pages encompass the restless phenomena of popular music, the men and women who make and record it, and the musical instruments and studio equipment they use to do so.

Bill and these editors have their work cut out for them. The years of Len Marcus' stewardship—years of considerable growth for HIGH FIDELITY—produced an admirable body of fine, cogent musical and audio journalism. (Longtime readers may recall with pleasure such special issues as those devoted to Beethoven, to Duke Ellington, to HIGH FIDELITY's own twenty-fifth anniversary, and to the centenary of the phonograph in 1977.) The magazine's past as a whole enshrines quality, timeliness, technical penetration, and humanist concern. The strength of the present editorial team should guarantee their perpetuation.



ROBERT S. CLARK, Editorial Director

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Letters

Musicianship or Political Prowess?

Robert Levine complains ["Letters," September 1980]—I fear rather naively—that "critics deserve a share of the blame" for the "unimaginative, technically weak conducting" that prevails in many American orchestras. They occasionally deserve some of the blame, but after twenty-five years of writing criticism for the "Chicago Sun-Times," I insist that the primary responsibility is that of managers and businessman trustees.

For more than a decade the Chicago press has had to deal with a hostile symphony management because of the reluctance of critics to go along with the appointment of Henry Mazer as associate conductor of the Chicago Symphony. Mazer has proved invulnerable in spite of the fact that the orchestra, the subscribers, and the critics all seem to agree that he is not a musician of the stature required for this job at this time. He is secure because of his skill in executive survival techniques, the politics of business. (In Walter Hendl, Chicago had a second conductor who was a fine musician but no politician at all.)

Mazer will accept assignments no guest conductor would consider, such as taking the orchestra for subscription programs when it is exhausted from recording sessions with Sir Georg Solti. His years of professional association with the general manager, his willingness to comply with Solti's schedule, and his social cultivation of the trustees give him a strength no critic can touch. If Levine would look further, he would find similar situations where a conductor is not an outstanding musician but has well-developed political skills.

Robert C. Marsh
Chicago, Ill.

Furie on "Cav/Pag"

No one would object to any critic's right to express distaste for a record. What is objectionable about Kenneth Furie's distaste for the Angel "Cav/Pag" set conducted by Muti [September 1980] is that he expressed it in an offensive and arrogant manner that would embarrass even a six-year-old.

Several years ago a negative Furie review would be sprinkled with an adequate supply of "blasted," "bloody," and "damned," but now he has sunk to nose-thumbing sarcasms and moronic ridicule, such as "Yessiree, it's back to the

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autograph scores, boys and girls!" Mr. Furie should not be allowed to write for HIGH FIDELITY until he grows up. Even if he did pass through his bullying phase, his opinions would not be worth the paper they're printed on.

Donald B. Drewecki
Troy, N.Y.

More to "King's Row" than Music

It is good news that Korngold's score for "King's Row" has been recorded in its entirety [August 1980]. But it is not just for reviewer Paul A. Snook

to go out of his way to defame the film while praising the score and the recording.

The movie version of "King's Row" was taken from a best-selling novel by Henry Bellamann, published in 1940. If it is a mere soap opera, as the reviewer claims, then what are "Gone with Wind," "Long Day's Journey into Night," and "Anna Karenina," also adapted from other media? The film boasted some of the finest production values of any of Hollywood's output and had a superlative cast, including

none other than Ronald Reagan performing effectively, for a change, as the hero's sidekick. Intelligently adapted from the novel, it was photographed with fine atmospheric artistry.

Author Bellamann does not deserve to be condescended to; he was primarily a musician rather than a writer. Born in Fulton, Missouri (assumed to be the setting for the book), in 1882, he studied with Widor and Phillip in Paris and in 1924 joined the examining board of Juilliard. He received a medal from the French government for his prominence in promoting French music and also composed a concerto and sonata for piano, a violin sonata, a piano quintet and choral works. (Anyone for a revival of these?) Besides verse and novels, he published "A Music Teacher's Notebook" in 1920.

His wife completed a sequel to his book, "Parris Mitchell of King's Row," which was adapted as an early TV soap opera, but Bellamann cannot be blamed for the deficiencies of spinoffs that appeared after his death. I find the original novel finer-grained than those of Sinclair Lewis or Louis Bromfield. If this was "banal, populist raw material," I wonder which Korngold films your reviewer would consider superior cinema—Errol Flynn costume epics?

James Wade
Seoul, Korea

Mr. Snook replies: Mr. Wade has written an eloquent and thoughtful letter, full of bizarre and esoteric data. Since I do not set myself up as a connoisseur of second- and third-rank popular literature of a generation ago—in which field he has obvious authority—I hesitate to take issue with his points. It's reassuring to know somebody still reads, let alone cares passionately about, such once-acclaimed writers as Louis Bromfield. But Mr. Wade is right: I prefer the unpretentious, quasi-abstract balletic swordplay of Errol Flynn costumers to the various "incestuous," "sadistic," and "sinister" characters that inhabit King's Row. Each man to his own cliché.

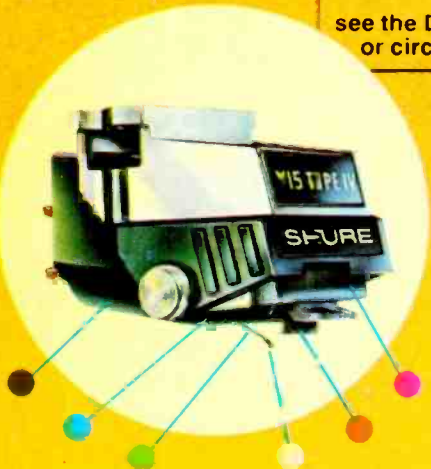
Reimann's "Lear" Re-Commended

The complaint expressed by Dr. Hans Illing ["Letters," October 1980] that you do not review reissues, although not strictly accurate, raises an interesting point. Perhaps you cannot be expected to review every record issued in America (although the British magazines manage to do so with records issued in England). But you seem to miss some major releases, e.g., the DG record-

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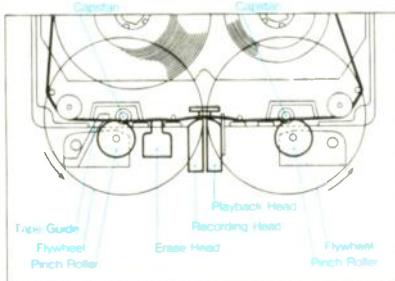
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ing of Reimann's "Lear," which was issued in September 1979 and has received great praise in other musical publications. A similar complaint may be lodged for the epochal survey of Verdi tenor arias by Carlo Bergonzi, issued on Philips in the fall of 1976. I have no problem with the quality of most of your reviews, but you could expand the quantity a bit.

Lawrence S. King
New York, N.Y.

Reimann's "Lear" fell into the cracks between music editorships. The fact that it received the Koussevitzky Award, as reported last month, may make up in part for the omission and be ample recommendation—Ed.

Finishing Schubert's "Fragment"

Many thanks to Harris Goldsmith for his enthusiastic review [August 1980] of the Heinz Rögner performance of Schubert's Symphony No. 7 with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. I share his enthusiasm for the release and agree with his appraisal of Felix Weingartner's orchestration of the sym-

phony. As Goldsmith suggests, Weingartner's scoring does sound "idiomatically Schubertian."

It cannot be denied that the recording brings with it some controversy. But after hearing and thoroughly enjoying it, I resent more than ever the close-mindedness of certain musical purists who would have us believe that only fully complete autograph manuscripts are worthy of our attention. For example, in his 1977 biography of Schubert, Joseph Wechsberg expresses his distaste for all attempts to complete the Seventh Symphony. After noting that Weingartner published an orchestrated version of the symphony in 1934 (albeit with a "great many errors"), Wechsberg delivers a scathing condemnation: "If Schubert had felt the urge to go on, he would have written the symphony. He would not have left the fragment. . . . It was absolutely wrong to fill in the score."

Why? What are the purists afraid of? Though admittedly some post-humous reworkings are more successful than others, none of them does any harm to the original unfinished compositions; for purposes of study, these frag-

ments are safely preserved in our music libraries. But they will remain forever only on the printed page until they are prepared for performance and performed. As with any other composition, the success or failure of a completion effort should depend solely upon the public's acceptance or rejection of its artistic merits.

Let us not deify composers to such an extent that we become paranoid about their music. Do we really wish that we could never hear a performance of the Mozart Requiem, Bartók's Third Piano Concerto, "Turandot," Mahler's Tenth, or "Lulu"? I am thrilled to be able to hear even an approximation of the way Schubert's Seventh Symphony might have sounded.

Recomposers (if there is such a word) deserve our lasting gratitude. They do us a great service, and with very little personal glory. With all due apologies to the purists, I gladly salute such as Franz Xaver Süssmayr, Tibor Serly, Franco Alfano, Deryck Cooke, Friedrich Cerha—and yes, Felix Weingartner.

Richard J. Veit
Waco, Tex.

20 SECONDS OF ALLSOP 3 COULD HAVE KEPT THESE TAPES ALIVE.

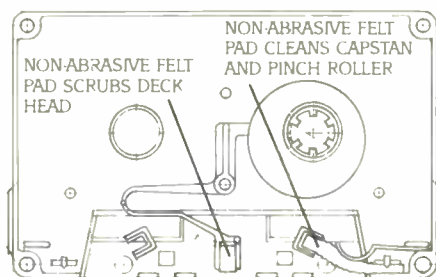


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Circle 2 on Reader-Service Card

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Circle 4 on Reader-Service Card

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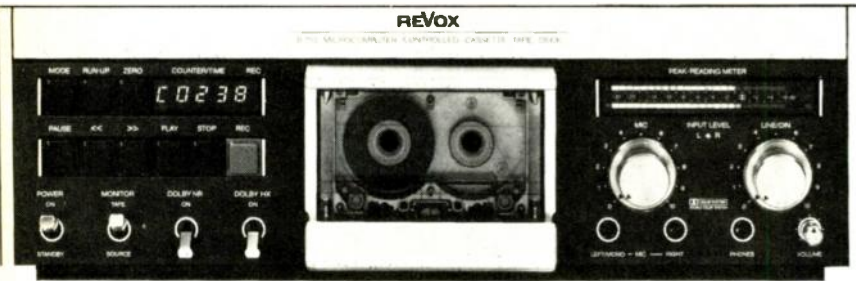
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High Fidelity News



ReVox goes cassette

Beginning at the top, so to speak, ReVox is introducing its first cassette deck: the B-710, in the under-\$2,000 bracket. The transport uses four motors, two of which turn the dual capstans of the closed-loop drive, employing a single quartz speed reference. The peak metering is calibrated from -30 to +6 dB (with the 0 dB at Dolby reference level) and resolves 1-dB steps from -10 up. The digital display can read either counter numbers or time; it is used in conjunction with timer/play/record controls hidden, along with those for tape matching, beneath the hinged top trim strip.

Circle 141 on Reader-Service Card



Altec's feedback foller

Altec Lansing's Model 1678 is an automatic microphone mixer reported to deliver maximum acoustic gain while helping to prevent feedback in multimicrophone operations. Its built-in analog computer samples the level of the eight inputs, compares each to the total of all inputs, and then adjusts each level so that overall mixer gain is held constant. The unit is also designed to compensate accurately for the difference between coherent and noncoherent signals, thus avoiding mixing errors. Other features include balanced mike or line level inputs with phantom power for condenser microphones, outputs for logging tape recorders, remote muting, and switchable 200-Hz high-pass filters. The Model 1678 costs \$2,300; a four-input version, Model 1674, sells for \$1,500.

Circle 142 on Reader-Service Card

Micro-Seiki on a budget

A belt-drive, semiautomatic turntable, the MB-18 from Micro-Seiki, offers soft-touch pushbutton controls, strobe, and $\pm 5\%$ pitch-adjustment capability. The unit features a low-mass straight tonearm with detachable carbon-fiber headshell. The MB-18, with antifeedback isolation feet, costs \$275.

Circle 149 on Reader-Service Card



Pyramid power from Yamaha

A newly designed power supply and output stage, avoiding the use of massive transformers and large heat sinks, are responsible for the compact size and relatively light weight of Yamaha's B-6 power amplifier, which is similar in concept to the Carver Corporation's Magnetic Field amplifier. The B-6, whose housing is shaped as a truncated pyramid, is rated at 200 watts (23 dBW) per side and weighs less than 20 pounds. Employing a similar power supply and output stage is the A-760 integrated amp, rated at 80 watts (19 dBW) per channel. The B-6 costs \$950, the A-760 \$390.

Circle 145 on Reader-Service Card

With bated breath

By the time you read this, we may already know some answers, but for the time being we are beset by questions about noise-reduction systems—in particular: How many new products at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show (a January trade event in Las Vegas) will include DBX noise-reduction circuitry, and how many Telefunken's High Com?

Telefunken claims to have been very successful at acquiring licensees among the Japanese manufacturers. But the licensing agreement says that the signatory company may make—not that it will make—the circuit. When we visited the Japan Audio Fair last fall, we spotted no new High Com equipment.

DBX, meanwhile, has added leverage in promoting its system. Matsushita Electric recently announced that it will be offering two Technics-brand cassette decks this year with built-in DBX encode/decode circuitry as well as a decode function for the DBX discs. (Several were displayed by Matsushita in the Audio Fair.) And the rumor mill has it that

(Continued on page 19)

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TDK Metal. Now you can have ninety minutes in either case.



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its Laboratory Standard Mechanism assures years of pure metal sound.

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High Fidelity News

(Continued from page 14)

Japanese-made receivers will soon appear with built-in disc decoders.

DBX, however, is probably wondering what to make of the announcement by CBS Records that it has developed its own "revolutionary" disc noise-reduction process that "completely eliminates all surface noise and greatly enhances dynamic range." Correct playback requires an optional adapter, but CBS claims that, when played back without the adapter, an encoded disc "will produce the same sonic quality as that of today's conventional recordings." No date for introduction of the discs or adapter has been set, and officials at CBS have so far scrupulously avoided our questions about technical details.

We also are full of questions about something called Dolby C, displayed in prototype at the Audio Fair. It seems to be a sort of double Dolby B (therefore delivering roughly 20 dB of hiss reduction) but with enough new circuitry added to make it unique, patentable, and more expensive than the familiar B circuit. But the figures we saw suggest that the noise reduction extends to somewhat lower frequencies than straight Dolby B addresses.



New scheme from Celestion

Celestion calls its Ditton 200 loudspeaker a four-way, three-driver system. In this scheme, a soft-dome tweeter and two 8-inch drivers are vertically aligned on the baffle; the upper driver functions as the woofer and the lower serves double duty as midrange and passive radiator. The tweeter reportedly has been designed for wide dispersion, increased power handling, and high efficiency. The Ditton 200 is rated at a sensitivity of 87 dB SPL for 1 watt at 1 meter and costs \$300.

Circle 140 on Reader-Service Card

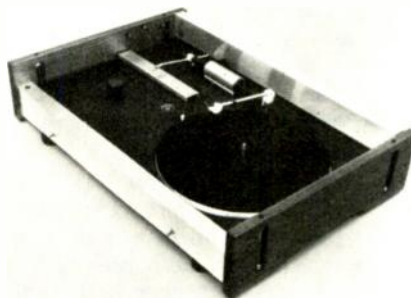
Circle 16 on Reader-Service Card



Nixing noise

The NR-2 from Advanced Audio Systems International is a single-pass device claimed to provide up to 14 dB of dynamic noise reduction from tape, disc, or FM. The device employs two variable low-pass filters whose cutoff frequency is determined by the amplitude and spectral content of the audio signals. The only user adjustment is a threshold control that determines the level at which the low-pass filters will cut in. Audible control action is said to be low due to a 1-millisecond detector time constant. Cost of the NR-2 is less than \$150.

Circle 144 on Reader-Service Card



Airborne

Both the platter and the lateral-tracking tonearm are suspended on a cushion of air in the belt-drive turntable manufactured by the Wayne H. Coloney Company. The air bearings used in the AB-1 are said to come close to the theoretical ideal, with unmeasurable friction, no wear, and maximum resistance to wobble. Vertical tracking force in the pickup-carrying arm is applied through a disc magnet mounted on a second arm; it rides over an opposing bar magnet positioned below and parallel to its line of travel. In addition, vertical tracking angle is adjustable over an unusually wide range (± 20 degrees) by means of a pivot arrangement at the headshell. The AB-1, which comes with an air pump that connects to the main assembly via flexible tubing, is priced at \$1,500.

Circle 146 on Reader-Service Card

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Circle 9 on Reader-Service Card

CrossTalk

Q. A while ago I purchased a Wintec R-1060 receiver; now I find to my dismay that Wintec has terminated sales in the U.S. Although I returned my warranty card, I don't know how or where I may obtain warranty service. The dealer states that the local distributor also has vanished. What are the warranty rights of those who have bought equipment from now-defunct companies?—Robert Kramer, Fairlawn, N.J.

A. We have had a number of similar letters from owners of Do-korder equipment, and we can give very little encouragement in reply—though the situation seems anything but clear-cut. At one time, warranty law varied considerably from state to state, but there was something of a consensus that the dealer undertook an implied warranty in the very act of selling you the equipment. That is, his offering it for sale was construed as warranting “merchantability” to some extent, putting some of the onus on him.

Since the passage of the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act, however, the emphasis has been squarely on the obligation of the manufacturer. As a result, written warranties are more comprehensive and comprehensible than ever before. But when the company offering the written warranty ceases to exist, the alternatives seem to have been weakened considerably. Our only advice, if you have a serious problem, is that you contact the appropriate office in your state government (often it is the state attorney general or a consumer protection agency) for guidance.

Q. I have a Sansui BA-3000 power amp and CA-3000 preamp with Pioneer speakers. The right channel sometimes shuts off for a few seconds while I'm playing my cassette deck or turntable. I tried switching the speakers, but the problem remained in the right channel and therefore is caused by the electronics. When I took the amps to a repairman, he couldn't pinpoint the problem either. What could it be?—Randy Roxson, Glendale, Ariz.

A. Possibly it's the protective circuitry in the BA-3000. And since the sound returns after a few seconds, we'd look first at the thermal protection. Presumably the technician to whom you took it did, too, and found that both

channels trip at the normal point—that is, that the right channel is not hypersensitive. If so, we'd guess that the right-channel heat sinks are not getting adequate ventilation.

But there's another possibility. Now don't get angry; just go and check the wire attaching the right-channel output to the right speaker. A broken conductor or a loose connection can act just like a switch when vibration from the music jiggles it.

Q. I'm using a five-band Radio Shack graphic equalizer connected to the pre-out/main-in jacks of a Harman Kardon A-402 control amp. The two work well together, but occasionally the equalizer seems to push an infrasonic surge through the amp, judging from the cascade of LEDs, which light several steps above the normal output indication. I've found I can create the situation by switching on a high-wattage small appliance in a nearby receptacle. I returned the equalizer for a new unit and ran the system through an isolation transformer with negligible improvement. What next?—Dennis McLynn, Brookfield, Ill.

A. It's unclear why you think the surge is coming from the equalizer. Assuming that you're using it to bolster the deep-bass response of your speakers (with your connection scheme, you're certainly not using it as a program equalizer), any infrasonic surge created in the preamp should be boosted, too. Harman Kardon has made broadband electronics its watchword, so the preamp and amp will have minimum influence on the surge. (And by altering the tonal balance and, with it, the phase linearity that are among the desiderata of the H-K approach, the equalizer is in a sense undoing the company's design care; to that extent, the two components seem ill matched.) We can see how the combination could aggravate a surge but not how it could create it.

Q. I have Altec-Lansing Valencia speakers. You thought highly of them a decade or so ago. Would today's speakers, at about \$500 apiece, sound significantly better? I can't tell, going from home to the dealer's showroom. By the way, will all other speakers in a showroom act as passive radiators to

those being operated?—Verne H. Olsen, Warehouse Point, Conn.

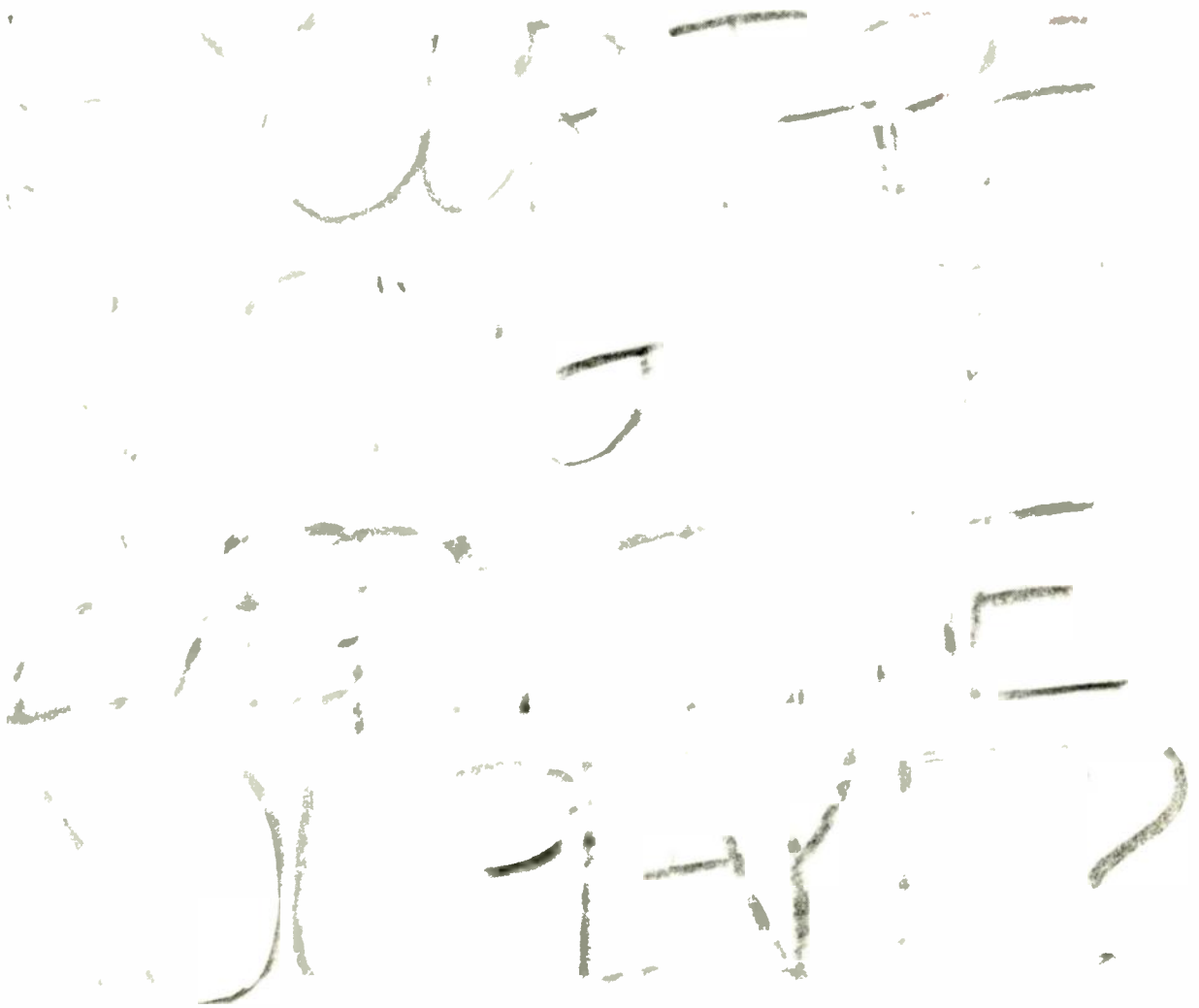
A. To our ears, speakers have improved remarkably in the last decade. But it's your ear that must be satisfied, and in your own listening room, which dealer demo rooms can't duplicate.

The many speakers set cheek by jowl do interact, but not in the way you postulate. A passive radiator loads the woofer's back wave—the pressure variations generated inside the enclosure. Nearby speakers alter the loading and propagation of the front wave and thus can introduce anomalies to much higher frequencies. If all speakers were intended for true bookshelf mounting, with their baffles flush with the book spines, other models could be substituted for the adjacent books at little if any acoustic expense. Most of today's better speakers require more “lebensraum” and lose their sonic quality crowded into a grille-cloth ghetto.

Q. I want to erase and reuse some cassettes that appear to be in good condition, but I don't know what to do about the labels. I have some peeloff replacement labels from Saxitone (though they are not very good, having no lines, etc.), but when I tried to get the old ones off with nail-polish remover and lighter fluid, it was to no avail. What do you suggest?—E. J. Soniat, Metairie, La.

A. First of all, that you desist forthwith from applying solvents indiscriminately to your cassettes. If they're okay when you start, they aren't likely to stay that way long. Just apply the new labels over the old ones. The labeling area is not one of the cassette's critical dimensions, so the extra thickness won't cause problems in a correctly designed deck (as long as you take care that your labels stay within the labeling area). Incidentally, if you want guidelines printed on your labels (we don't because we use typewriters), you should be able to find several alternative brands that have them. **HF**

We regret that, due to the volume of reader mail we get, we cannot give individual answers to all questions.



If lately your favorite recordings sound like they're gradually unrecording, it could be the tape they're on.

You see the oxide particles on some tapes just aren't bound on very well. And when the oxide particles come off, your music could come off sounding faded and weak.

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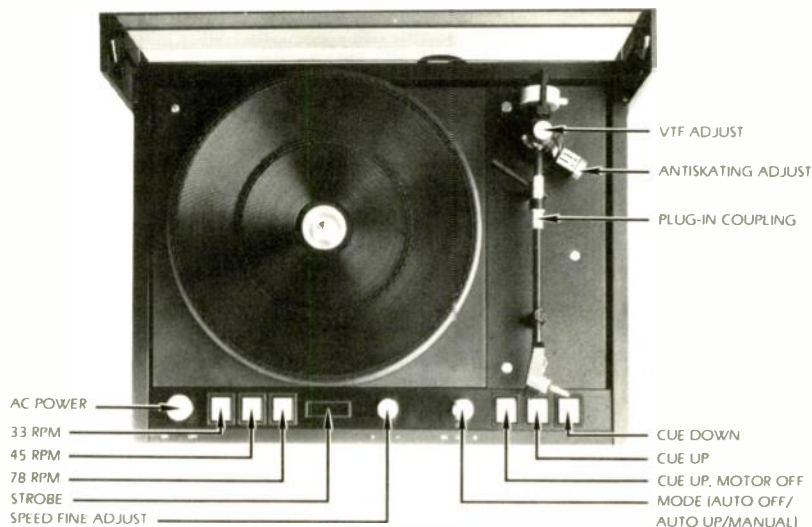


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Maxell Inc. 1988

New Equipment Reports

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Swiss Precision in Thorens Turntable

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MIN STYLUS FORCE FOR AUTO TRIP 160 mg

TOTAL LEAD CAPACITANCE 185 pF

Thorens TD-126 Mk. III C three-speed (33, 45, 78 rpm) semiautomatic single-play turntable, with Iso-track tonearm, base, and dust cover. Dimensions: 19 by 15¼ (top plate), 6½ inches high with dust cover closed; 10½ inches additional vertical clearance necessary with cover open. Price: \$800; without arm (as TD-126 Mk. IIIB), \$645; additional arm tubes, \$25 each. Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Thorens, Switzerland; U.S. distributor: Epicure Products, Inc., 25 Hale St., Newburyport, Mass. 01950.

To even the wariest eye, Thorens' top-of-the-line semiautomatic TD-126 Mk. III appears identical to the Mk. II version (test report, December 1977). It still is one of the few three-speed machines available; the plug-in arm tube has been retained; and, of course, Thorens continues to use a belt-driven platter and spring-supported suspension for the isolation they afford. Yet in terms of performance, there is ample evidence indeed of careful refinements lurking under the familiar top plate.

Data from CBS Technology Center point to the Mk. III as a turntable that in several respects sets performance standards by which others will be judged. The flutter measurements are the lowest CBS has ever encountered. The rumble figure, also the lowest we've seen in several years, is 7 dB better than that for the Mk. II. Other tests provide similar top-notch measurements. Speed accuracy is right on target, with a slightly greater adjustment range than the earlier version: at least a half-tone either way at each speed. The 78 setting encompasses everything from about 73¼ to 85½ rpm. (The large majority of acoustic recordings were cut at a speed somewhere within this range.)

The plug-in arm tube, which places the coupling close to the pivot to minimize effective mass at the headshell, may have been pared down, though Thorens gives no exact information on this. With the same highly compliant Shure V-15 Type III pickup, the arm's vertical resonance now falls almost exactly at the 10-Hz "ideal." In any event, the resonance peaks are very well damped in both planes, suggesting excellent warp tracking. The VTF gauge is respectably accurate; the antiskating bias factor (for the "1-gram" setting) is squarely in the middle of the usual range and, although bias is not quite linearly applied, stays within that range (0.1-0.2) at any setting between ¼ and 3 grams.

In our review of the Mk. II, we noted the somewhat slow startup of the belt drive and the fact that speed did not settle down for a number of rotations. This time around, Thorens seems to have gone for higher torque: Startup is rapid, with no hesitancy at all. Even more exciting is the obvious reworking of the unit's suspension system. We had been somewhat dismayed to find that the Mk. II was particularly susceptible to sharp shocks against a less than sturdy mounting surface. The Mk. III, however, is virtually immune to such jolts; in fact, with two people

The new FISHER



A receiver with advanced digital tuning and Class A-II power amplifier.

Introducing the new Fisher RS270 AM/FM stereo receiver with Quartz Locked digital synthesizer tuning. This drift-free tuning method locks and stays on frequency — what you read on the state-of-the-art digital display is the exact FM station frequency. Digital circuitry eliminates the traditional tuning knob — just a light touch of the tuning bars activates an auto scan station search.

The RS270 remembers your favorite stations. You can select 12 of your favorite stations (6 AM/6 FM) and store them in the RS270's memory for instant access at the touch of a button. It makes listening to your favorite broadcasts more enjoyable, and

more convenient. And you can reprogram the memory in seconds.

Not just plenty of power. But cleaner power. The RS270 incorporates Fisher's new and exclusive Class A-II power amplifier circuitry. Class A-II is a variable bias circuit that combines



the high efficiency of Class B operation with the non-switching low-distortion characteristics of Class A operation. The best of both worlds. Result: the RS270 delivers an ultra-low distortion, **cleaner 50 Watts per channel minimum RMS power into 8 ohms, 20Hz-20kHz with no more than 0.02% total harmonic distortion.**

All the outward signs of the advanced technology inside. The RS270 includes a built-in moving coil cartridge preamplifier so you can enjoy the superior performance of moving coil cartridges without the expense of an accessory preamp. Fisher's exclusive "Panel Logic" display tells you at a glance the RS270's mode of operation.

It's what you'd expect from the new Fisher. We invented high fidelity over 40 years ago. We've never stopped moving ahead. The new RS270 is a perfect example. Part of the new Fisher. Where the only thing about us that's old is our tradition of quality and craftsmanship. Visit your Fisher Dealer and see the RS270 today.

© Fisher Corporation, 1980

 **FISHER**
The first name in high fidelity.®

The plug-in arm tube on the TD-126 Mk. III allows for quick pickup replacement but minimizes effective mass by keeping the connector near the pivot.



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pounding on the table on which the turntable sat, the arm would not mistrack and no evidence of surface-borne feedback could be heard from the speakers. So delighted were we at this behavior that we checked its vulnerability to acoustic feedback by aiming a pair of speakers directly at the turntable from a distance of about one foot. With the volume turned way up, we could detect absolutely no signs of howling!

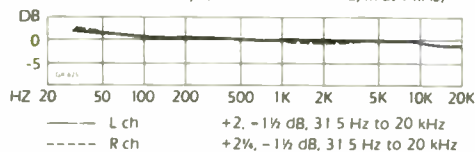
A semiautomatic design, the Mk. III repeats its progenitor's automation scheme. There are three operating modes accessible via a knob: ML, its most automatic mode, lifts the arm and shuts off the motor at the end of the record; L, for arm lift, leaves the platter turning; O represents completely manual operation. The velocity-sensing arm-lift mechanism performs flawlessly. If you are in the habit of manual cueing (lifting the arm and setting it down by hand), you'll probably want to switch to the manual mode so the velocity sensor won't react to the rapid arm movement and lift the arm.

The TD-126 Mk. III is a superb machine, but one whose appeal must still be weighed against a number of factors. The plug-in arm tube allows the convenience of rapid pickup changing for the multicartridge audiophile, but mounting a pickup in the Thorens "wand" is still a complicated and exacting procedure. Here at HIGH FIDELITY, the styling elicited comments ranging from "severe but stylish—like a Chanel suit" to "unnecessarily drab." Take a look at the picture and make up your own characterization. But in terms of performance, we seriously wonder how much better Thorens' \$15,000 Reference turntable can be. Considered against that unit, the TD-126 Mk. III is a real (gulp!) bargain.

A Classic Open-Reeler?

Akai GX-625 open-reel deck

PLAYBACK RESPONSE AT 7½ IPS
(MRL 21T104 test tape, -10 dB re 200 nWb/m at 1 kHz)



Akai GX-625 two-speed (7½ and 3¼ ips) quarter-track open-reel deck, in metal case with wood ends. Dimensions: 17½ by 17 inches (main plate), 7 inches deep plus controls; 1-inch clearance required for feet when horizontal, ½-inch clearance when standing vertically. Price: \$785; optional RC-17 remote control, \$63; optional RC-70 remote control, \$158. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor. Manufacturer: Akai Electric Co., Ltd., Japan; U.S. distributor: Akai America, Ltd., 800 W. Artesia Blvd., Compton, Calif. 90220.

In a way, the GX-625 sums up the quarter-track home deck, giving you all the "classic" features and (with two exceptions) none of the "extras" that constitute the apocrypha of the format, so to speak. For example, it has no reversing (convenient, but often mechanically chancy), no quadraphonics (of limited appeal today), no half-track heads (essentially a pro feature), no 15 ips or overdub (ditto), and (sigh!) no tape lifter defeat for editing. What this urtext model does have is separate recording and playback heads, direct capstan drive, NAB reel capacity,

The new FISHER



Fisher Direct Drive... the most technically advanced tape drive system.

In the new Fisher DD280 cassette deck, Fisher has replaced the conventional belt-drive system with a high-torque 18-pole brushless, coreless, direct drive DC flywheel motor. The motor shaft is the tape transport capstan itself. The result is a silent, one-piece direct drive system that glides at a stable 360 rpm. Wow and flutter are reduced to an incredibly low 0.04%. Gone forever are belt wear problems resulting in speed change, belt breakage and replacement. For long term reliability direct drive is the answer.

Feather touch electronic solenoid controls. Don't look for "clunky" levers on the DD280. Transport functions are actuated by sensitive solenoid electronic switching. IC logic circuitry assures instant, positive action. You can go directly from rewind to fast forward to play... without having to manually stop between functions. LED indicators signal mode of operation.

Drive coils provide pulsating magnetic field to propel flywheel.

18-pole permanent ring magnet is bonded to back of flywheel.

Dynamically-balanced flywheel weighs over 1/2 lb., helps maintain speed accuracy, low wow and flutter.

Sensing coil between driving coils and flywheel magnet continuously monitors speed in DC servo circuit.

Capstan shaft is directly connected to, and is part of the flywheel. There are no belts, no pulleys.

Metal tape compatibility.

The DD280 is also metal tape compatible. The new metal particle tapes offer a marked improvement in signal-to-noise ratio and dynamic range over previous tape formulations. With its metal EQ and bias settings, plus high performance MX/Ferrite heads, the

DD280 produces tapes of stunning accuracy. With metal tape, the DD280 delivers an impressive frequency response of 30Hz-20kHz.

Low in profile. And high on features. The low-profile DD280 has everything you'd expect in a professional-quality cassette deck. Calibrated input level controls. Dolby* Noise Reduction. Large-scale dual-range VU meters. Peak level LED indicators and more.

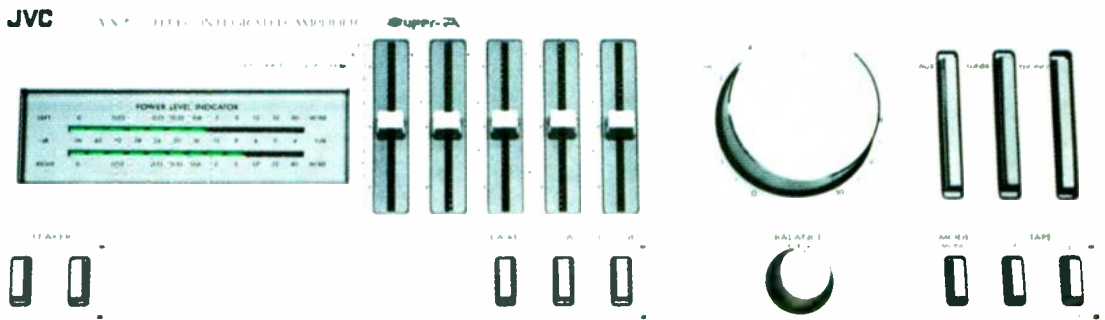
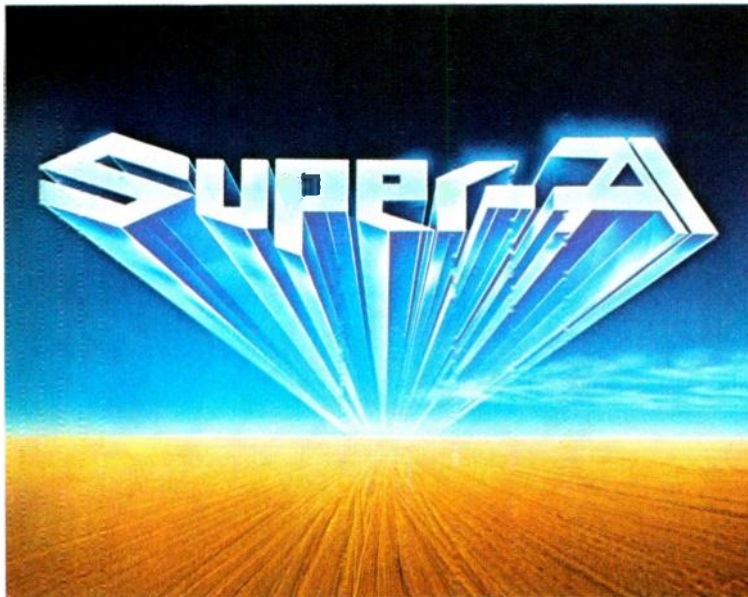
It's what you'd expect from the new Fisher. We invented high fidelity over 40 years ago. We've never stopped moving ahead. The new DD280 is a perfect example. Part of the new Fisher. Where the only thing about us that's old is our dedication to quality and craftsmanship. See the DD280 soon at your Fisher Dealer.

*Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories.

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 **FISHER**
The first name in high fidelity.®

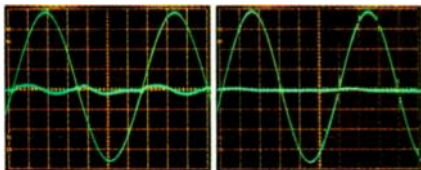
We don't charge extra for brilliant engineering. JVC Super-A.



Super-A A-X2 Integrated Amplifier

For years, audiophiles have praised the purity, depth and naturalness of Class-A amplifiers.

But they haven't been wild about the heat, weight, power limitations and high cost that go hand-in-hand with Class-A's low efficiency and high idling currents. That's why Class-A has remained a rare, esoteric design



Class-AB Jagged center line indicates switching distortion.

JVC Super-A Minimal distortion in output waveform.

chosen by the few who were willing to pay for its fidelity and put up with its limitations.

JVC Super-A design brings together the purity of Class-A and the efficiency of the more common Class-AB. By eliminating most of the measurable switching and crossover distortion, Super-A achieves the kind of sound that has distinguished Class-A designs of the past.

At the same time, Super-A is as efficient as Class-AB, so there are no heat and weight problems which also drive up the cost of conventional Class-A. And JVC Super-A amplifiers have no transient intermodulation distortion (TIM) thanks to very wide bandwidth

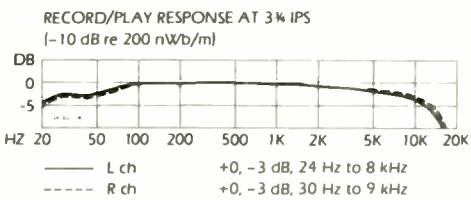
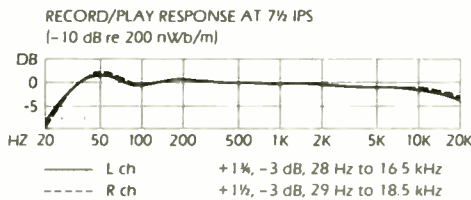
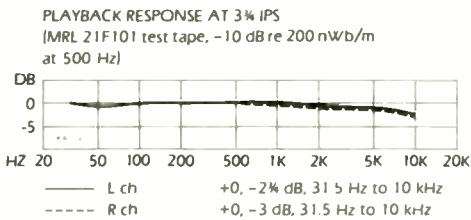
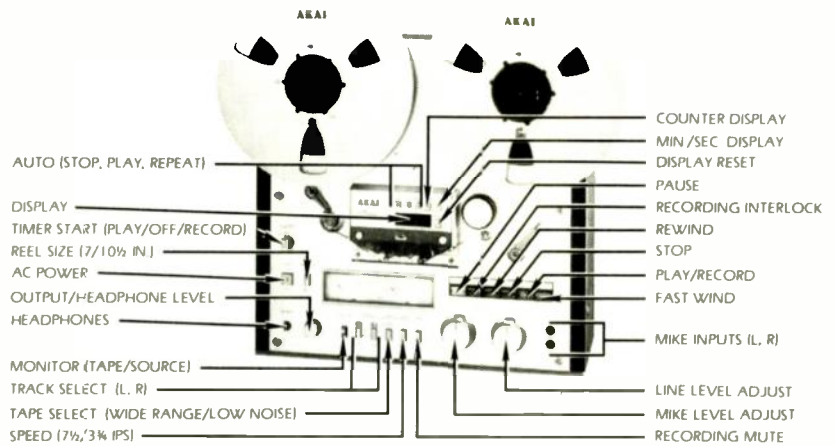
capabilities. What's more, the A-X2 Super-A amplifier shown here includes a 5-band graphic equalizer for both normal playback and recording EQ, LED power meters, "direct power supply" which yields high damping factor at all frequencies, and JVC's Triple Power Protection system.

All this comes with plenty of power behind it: *40 watts per channel continuous (RMS) power into 8 ohms, from 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.007% total harmonic distortion.* When you put everything together, and compare our power and price with the competition, you'll discover you're getting the benefits of Super-A and graphic equalization practically for nothing.

JVC®

US JVC CORP

58-75 Queens Midtown Expressway, Maspeth, New York 11378.



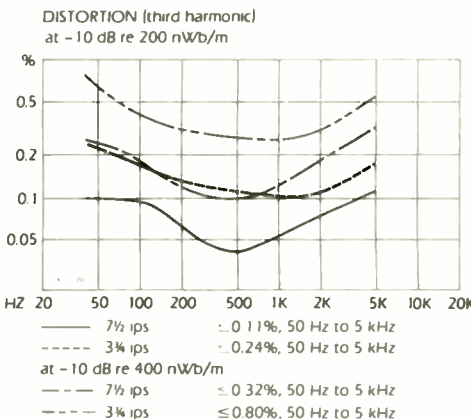
S/N RATIO (re 200 nWb/m, A-weighted)

	7 1/2 ips	3 3/4 ips
playback	-65 1/2 dB	-64 dB
record/play	-61 dB	-61 dB

METER READING FOR 200 NWB/M + 1/2 dB

METER READING FOR 3% DISTORTION (at 400 Hz)

at 7 1/2 ips	+ 7/4 dB
at 3 3/4 ips	+ 6 1/2 dB



mike/line mixing, logic transport controls (so you don't have to punch stop between modes), a one-track-at-a-time mono recording option (extremely rare these days, but welcome for lots of uses), and fine performance.

The two nonclassic "extras" are the playback speed adjustment (a useful plus, particularly since it is defeated automatically during recording to prevent mistakes) and the counter system, with its related automatic functions. If left to its own devices, the electronic display will show arbitrary numbers, like classical mechanical-turns counters. If you want the equivalent of the MEMORY STOP or MEMORY PLAY functions so familiar in cassette gear, you reset the counter to 0 at the point where you want the tape to stop or begin playback; when you subsequently rewind, the tape follows the programmed command when it reaches 0. If the programmed command is REPEAT, the deck goes into playback at 0 and begins rewinding again when it reaches the counter setting at which you began your manual rewind, repeating that portion of the tape until you sue for mercy via another command.

All the while, a separate timer is at work. They begin together and use the same display, but the timer operates only during recording or playback, while the counter also keeps track of the tape that passes the heads in the fast-wind modes. The two can be reset to 0 (or :00) independently, so you can continue to "keep your place" on the tape via the counter while timing a selection in the middle of the tape. The system takes some getting used to but is both accurate and helpful once you do.

Among the transport controls is a PAUSE, which we at first assumed would permit "rocking" the tape past the playback head to find edit points. Not so. The deck's logic includes playback-head muting in all modes except recording and playback, and muting actually continues for a fraction of a second after tape motion has resumed from either STOP or PAUSE. The only way to hear the output without playing the tape is by threading it on the wrong side of the capstan and punching PLAY. The motors engage and the tape lifters retract, but the tape no longer is between the capstan and the pinch roller and therefore responds when you twist the reels. This awkwardness has been true of many other models over the years, of course; we understand it even less in this age of cassettes, when editability is one of quarter-inch tape's major competitive strengths.

The muting also prevents any twitterings of output during fast wind—elegant but less helpful than the common alternative when you're trying to locate a particular passage on the tape. The PAUSE is especially good for an open-reel deck, whose high moving mass compromises the kind of quick starts that cassettes manage easily. Here, recording leaves only a noticeable "chiff" if there is any tone at the input when you come out of PAUSE or a slight click if there isn't. Also suggesting current cassette decks is the RECORDING MUTE feature. When you press it during recording, it cuts all input, the signal will return if you press the button once again, but if you press PAUSE (a natural next step in most situations), the mute will turn itself off so that recording can recommence normally whenever you choose.

We had to figure out such niceties for ourselves, the manual being what it is. The Japanese take justifiable pride in their linguistic attainments, and relatively few American consumer-goods companies probably could match this degree of proficiency in three languages (English, French, and German) at once. But



The display on the GX-625 is switchable to counter or timer modes. With the counter, the REPEAT, PLAY, and STOP keys allow for cassette-deck style automation.

ERASURE (400 Hz, re 200 nWb/m)	64 dB
CHANNEL SEPARATION (at 400 Hz)	63½ dB
CROSSTALK (Track 3 recorded at 100 Hz)	
Track 4 (left reverse)	-57½ dB
Track 2 (right reverse)	-72 dB
SPEED ACCURACY	
at 7½ ips	0.6% slow, 105 to 127 VAC
at 3¾ ips	0.4% fast, 105 to 127 VAC
SPEED ADJUSTMENT RANGE	
at 7½ ips	+9.0 to -7.9%
at 3¾ ips	+10.5 to -7.3%
WOW & FLUTTER (ANSI/IEEC weighted peak, r/p)	
	average maximum
at 7½ ips	± 0.94% ± 0.06%
at 3¾ ips	± 0.04% ± 0.08%
SENSITIVITY (re 200 nWb/m; 1 kHz)	
line input	75 mV
mike input	0.28 mV
MIKE INPUT OVERLOAD (clipping)	58 mV
MAX. OUTPUT (from 200 nWb/m)	0.91 V
REWIND TIME (7-in 1,800-ft. reel)	93 sec.

for so complex a product there simply is no substitute for local production of the manuals by technical writers to whom the language is a birthright. Very few companies heed this precept; the GX-625 suffers somewhat more than average from ignoring it.

The recording controls include a two-position tape switch. The manual lists such tapes as BASF LH and TDK T as appropriate for the LOW-NOISE position, TDK Audua and Scotch 206 and 207 among those for the WIDE-RANGE position. Diversified Science Laboratories used the latter with 206 to make the measurements, which are uniformly very good for a home deck in this price range. The reference level is slightly higher than heretofore (the NAB 0 VU of past reports represents a flux density of 185 nanowebers per meter, as opposed to 200), though the difference is not great enough to prevent comparisons. There is some indication that the industry may be moving toward a reference level 6 dB higher, at 400 nanowebers per meter, so we show distortion at both reference levels here. By "using up" more of the headroom inherent to the open-reel format, a higher reference level would be both more consistent with the swing to peak-reading metering devices and more comparable to the way cassette-equipment specifications are derived. You'll see that when the lab doubled the flux density level, distortion approximately doubled at most frequencies, so the higher figures should not be compared to those in past reports—just to possible future ones.

The meters are quicker than VU, reaching within 3 dB of full readings for any tone bursts lasting longer than 125 milliseconds, and are so well damped that worst-case overshoot is only ½ dB. They are calibrated from +5 to -20 dB, with 1-dB divisions from -10 up. Their styling is a little pallid (one staff member called them "albino") by conventional standards, so they are not particularly easy to read; otherwise we liked them. And we certainly liked the controls, whose color-coded illumination and well-conceived logic make them both efficient and enjoyable to use. And we admired the range of capabilities built into the machine, including timer start, which is achievable in most remotely controllable solenoid decks but not always with this ease. All in all, a very solid, creditable job of filling the broadest possible spectrum of home-user needs in a deck that still is sane in both price and complexity.

JBL's Best Bookshelf Yet

JBL L-112 loudspeaker system, in wood-veneer enclosure. Dimensions: 14¾ by 24½ inches (front), 13¾ inches deep. Price: \$450. Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 8500 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, Calif. 91329.

There is no mistaking the L-112 for anything but a JBL product. A three-way ported design housed in a handsomely finished wood-veneer enclosure with the company's distinctive frame-mounted cloth grille, its familial resemblance to earlier models belies the rethinking that characterizes what JBL calls its most advanced bookshelf speaker system. In fact, to our ears, it is JBL's most accurate essay in the genre.

JBL is among the manufacturers who have turned to laser-based

NEW HIGHS. The 500ID defines hard-to-get high frequencies because it comes with a cantilever that doesn't easily distort them.

It's boron-vapor hardened to track under "G"-forces that would buckle ordinary cantilevers.

NEW FIDELITY. In addition to hearing more highs you're going to hear less noise from a 500ID.

There's nothing complex about the benefits of Samarium-Cobalt magnets. They are simply less massive and higher in output than conventional ones.

So, if we had to give a reason for our signal-to-noise ratio being better than most, it's because the materials we use are better than most.

NEW TECHNOLOGY. Because the 500ID features Empire's inertially damped tuned stylus system, its performance is consistent — even when the capacitance varies from one system to the next.

Which means, the performance we monitor in our lab is the performance you're likely to hear at home.

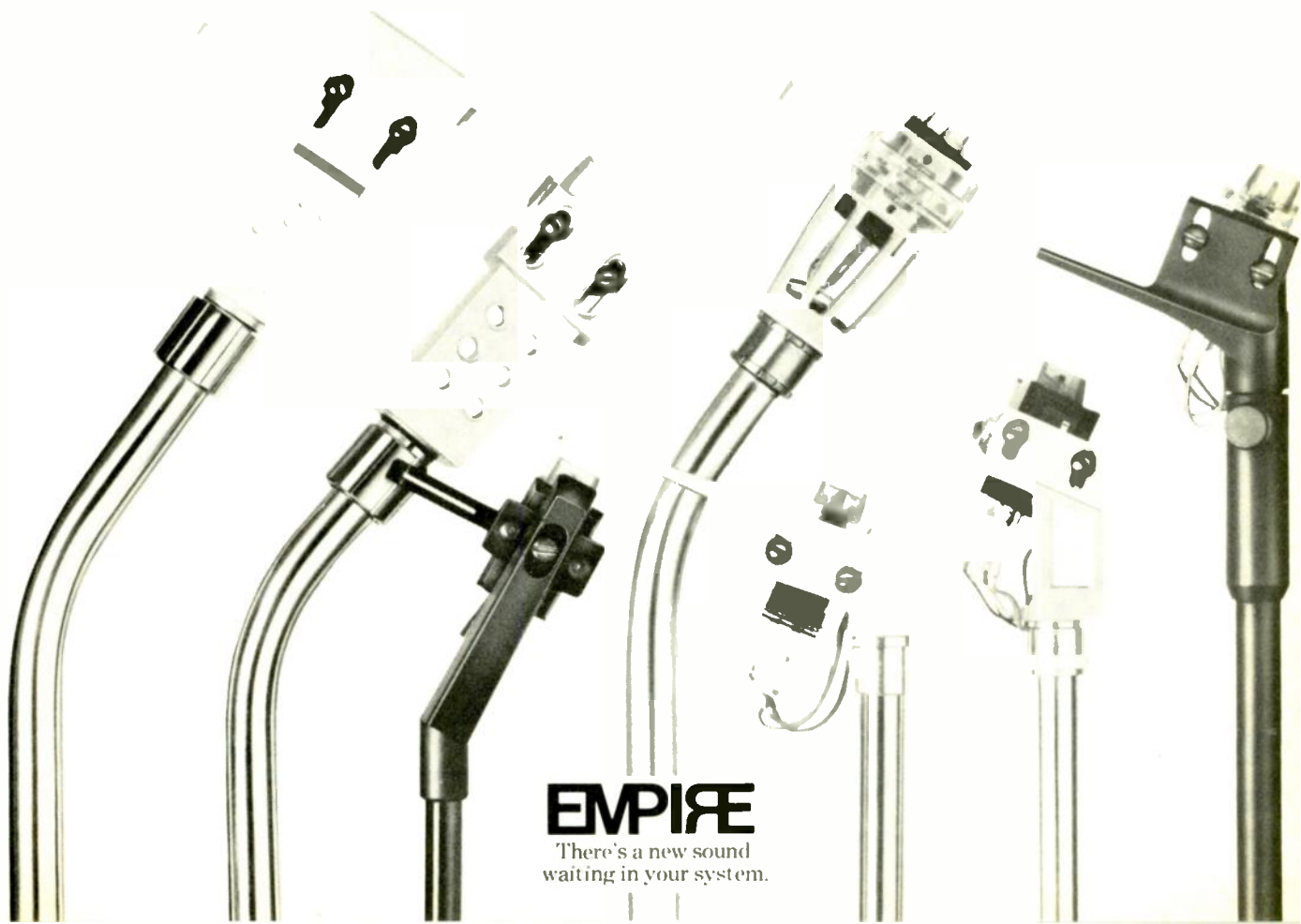


NEW SECURITY. Empire's two-year limited warranty is 365 days longer than the one-year limited warranty offered by many other manufacturers.

An extra year in no uncertain terms.

NEW SOUND. The Empire 500ID. You're an arm's length away from a new listening experience.

EVERYONE WHO WANTS THEIR OLD SYSTEM TO SOUND LIKE NEW, RAISE YOUR ARM.



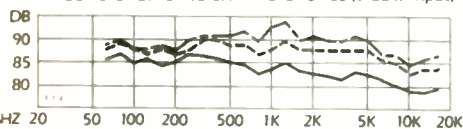
EMPIRE

There's a new sound
waiting in your system.



JBL L-112 loudspeaker

ANECHOIC RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS (0-dBW input)



■■■■■ boundary-dependent region
 — average omnidirectional response
 - - - average front hemispheric response
 - · - on-axis response

AVERAGE OMNIDIRECTIONAL OUTPUT
 (250 Hz to 6 kHz)
 83% dB SPL for 0 dBW (1 watt) input

CONTINUOUS ON-AXIS OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)
 110% dB SPL for 20 dBW (100 watts) input

PULSED OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)
 123% dB SPL for 33 dBW (2,000 watts) peak

"NOMINAL" IMPEDANCE 6.6 ohms

APPROX. TWEETER CONTROL RANGE (re "flat")
 +2 dB above 2.5 kHz; see text

APPROX. MIDRANGE CONTROL RANGE (re "flat")
 +1, -2 dB, 350 to 1,300 Hz;
 +2, -8 dB, 1.4 to 3.5 kHz;
 +1, -2 dB, 4 to 7 kHz

techniques to analyze diaphragm motion, providing the designer with immediate visual confirmation of nonlinearities of cone motion (i.e., distortion) when testing drivers. The tweeter in the 112, said to be an outgrowth of these optical interferometry techniques, is fairly exotic in design. Its dome is formed of a thin phenolic membrane with a vapor-deposited aluminum coating. The magnetic structure in the 12-inch woofer also has been redesigned. A flux-stabilizing ring in the assembly reportedly maintains a symmetrical magnetic field across the voice-coil gap, reducing harmonic distortion at low frequencies.

According to the data generated at CBS Technology Center, the innovations incorporated in the L-112 do, in fact, pay handsome dividends. Most noteworthy are the truly exceptional distortion measurements. Levels of both second and third harmonics are among the lowest we've yet encountered in a speaker of this type. From 100 Hz up to the test limit at 10 kHz, distortion at moderate listening levels stays well below 1/2%. At the lab's "loud" level (100 dB), the second harmonic exceeds 1/2% only around 100-200Hz, and the third harmonic does so only at about 6 kHz; in neither instance does distortion reach 1%. Below 100 Hz, where distortion measurements always rise (in part because of the inherent fundamental rolloff), the second harmonic stays below 1% down to 35 Hz even at loud levels, and the third harmonic remains below 1% down to about 50 Hz. Remarkable behavior, indeed!

In terms of efficiency and power-handling capabilities, one could hardly hope for better performance from a system of this size. The 0-dBW (1-watt) input elicited a generous 83% dB of output, yet the speaker withstood the 20-dBW continuous-tone test with nary a complaint. And in the pulsed-power test, the CBS amp ran out of steam before the 112 exceeded distortion limits.

The somewhat "lumpy" impedance curve is typical of multidriver systems, with maxima of 27, 18 and 9.5 ohms (at approximately 60, 550, and 3,300 Hz, respectively) but never dropping significantly below the 6.6 ohms of the CBS rating point. One might not want to risk taxing an amplifier by paralleling two pairs of 112s across it, but a single pair should please even the fussiest amp.

Frequency response with midrange and treble controls set at their nominally flat "0" positions is the flattest we've yet seen from a JBL speaker. Transient waveform reproduction, as depicted in scope photos, is virtually perfect, having just the slightest wrinkle in the 3-kHz trace to suggest possible cabinet reflection. As is usual with speaker controls, the midrange adjustment is virtually useless for its stated purpose. Though its action cuts in at around 300 Hz, rotating it to its maximum (marked +3) affords an increase of about 1 dB in what we would call the midrange, and its minimum position (-12) introduces a severe sag in the treble response to around 2 kHz. The high-level control shows a similar amount of boost at its maximum position but results in such a severe rolloff above 2 kHz at its minimum setting that the tweeter is effectively shut off. In our own listening evaluations, we preferred the flat settings and used our preamp's tone controls for any "sweetening."

After extended listening evaluations, we feel that the L-112 is, by far, the most successful JBL bookshelf system to date. Its tonal balance is remarkably accurate throughout the midrange and treble, and its sound has an open, distinctly unboxy quality. The redesigned tweeter stands out, deserving its own praise; the tinkling of a triangle and the highest overtones of a brushed cymbal emerge with uncommon sweetness and clarity. Some listeners may find the bass a mite too strong—one instance where we could expect tone controls to prove useful in most rooms.

Used (as shipped) in mirror-image pairs, the L-112s present an extraordinarily wide listening "stage." Even though the front-to-back depth suffers by comparison, the speaker will doubtless win many admirers for its dramatic projection. In essence, it combines overall accuracy and a low-end gutsiness that make it appealing to lovers of both classical and popular music.

Circle 132 on Reader-Service Card

Fidelity Research FR-3 Mk. 3F moving-coil pickup, with multi-radial diamond stylus. Price: \$230; FRT-3G stepup transformer, \$250. Warranty: "limited," one year parts and labor, excluding stylus wear. Manufacturer: Fidelity Research, Japan; U.S. distributor: Fidelity Research of America, P.O. Box 5242, Ventura, Calif. 93003.

Though the moving-coil cartridge in its traditional form has a host of

**A Sterling
Pickup
from FR**

Beauty of design... and performance!

NIKKO AUDIO components offer advanced technical design and performance on the same superior level as their extraordinary good looks.

Shown below: The Gamma 20 frequency-synthesized digital tuner with 6-station programmable memory, Beta 20 preamplifier with performance, construction and many features of far more costly units,

EQ 1 graphic equalizer,

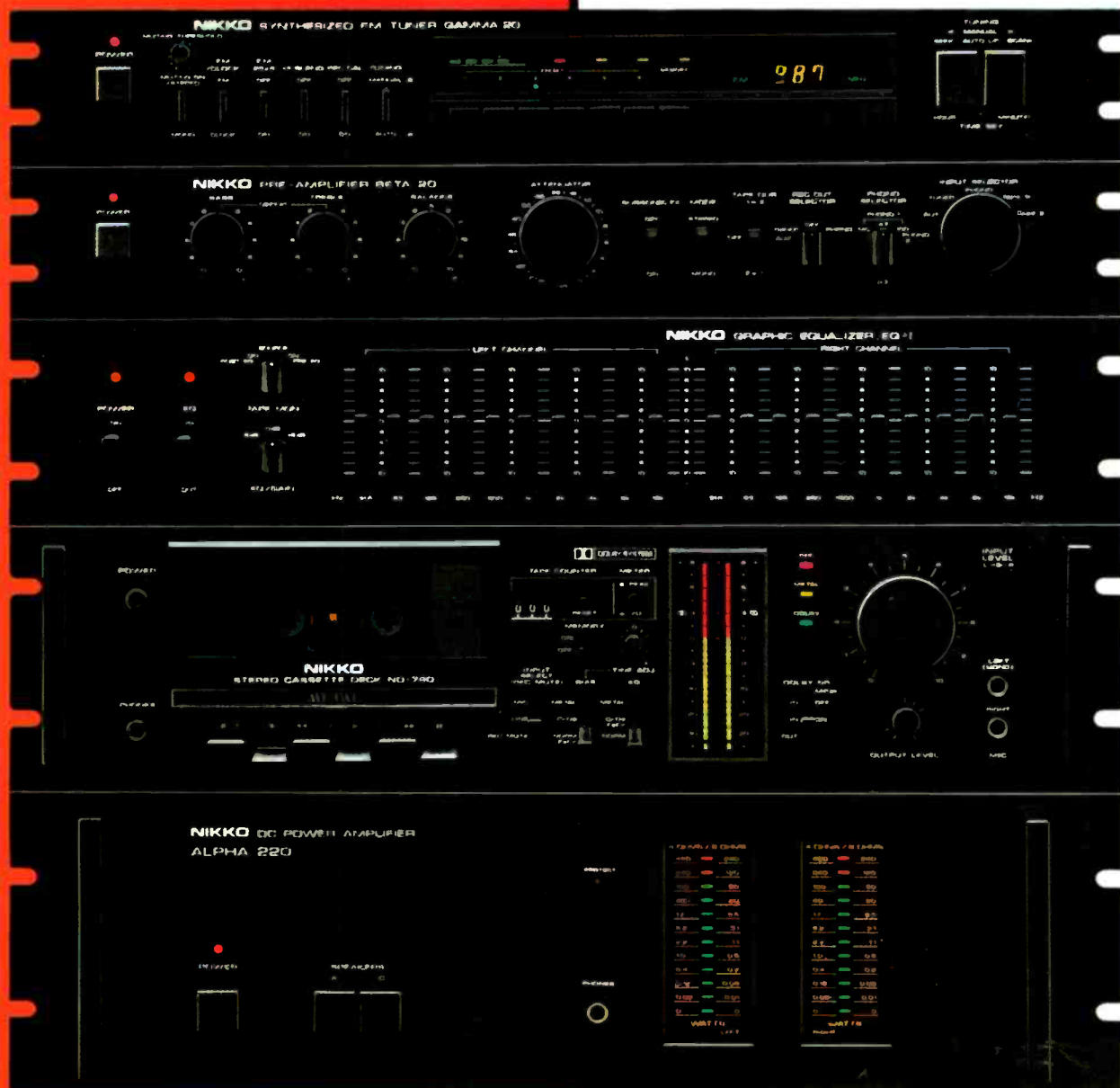
NIKKO AUDIO

cassette deck (with optional rack mounts),

Alpha 220 DC servo motor driving power amplifier. All except cassette decks backed by a transferable 3-year parts & labor limited warranty.

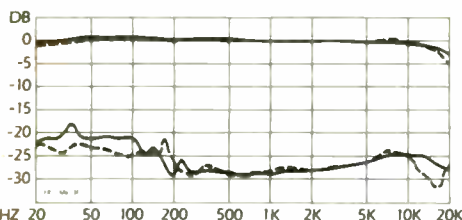
Visit your authorized NIKKO AUDIO dealer and find out why we say that the beauty of our products more than meets the eye.

Beauty... more than meets the eye



Fidelity Research FR-3 Mk. 3F phono pickup

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



Frequency response
 — L ch +1, -3½ dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
 - - - R ch +½, -5 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz
 Channel separation
 ≥ 25 dB, 200 Hz to 6 kHz,
 ≥ 17 dB, 20 Hz to 20 kHz

SENSITIVITY (at 1 kHz) 0.025 mV/cm/sec

CHANNEL BALANCE (at 1 kHz) ± ¼ dB

VERTICAL TRACKING ANGLE 24½°

LOW-FREQUENCY RESONANCE (in SME 3009)

vertical 8.8 Hz; 3½ dB rise
 lateral 8.2 Hz; 4 dB rise

MAXIMUM TRACKING LEVEL (re RIAA 0 VU, 2.0 grams)

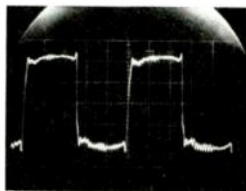
at 300 Hz > +18 dB
 at 1 kHz +15 dB

WEIGHT 10.8 grams

TIP DIMENSIONS

tip radii 12.5 by 6.3 micrometers
 scanning radii 5.2 micrometers

SQUARE-WAVE
 RESPONSE (1 kHz)



shortcomings—minuscule output, stiff compliance, frequently poor tracking ability, and a steep price tag—it has earned itself a special place in the hearts and minds of dedicated audiophiles. In all honesty, we have never been zealous admirers of the genre, equating its chief appeal—namely the ephemeral “moving-coil sound”—with a rising high end. Yet along comes a cartridge like the FR-3 Mk. 3F, which performs well on the test bench and sounds absolutely superb, and we find ourselves becoming converts.

Remember, however, that this is a traditional moving-coil design, albeit one with solid silver coils. On the scales at CBS Technology Center, it weighed in at a hefty 10.8 grams. And its output, at 0.025 millivolt, is still lilliputian by fixed-coil standards, demanding the use of a stepup transformer or pre-preamp. In all other respects, it is nothing short of remarkable.

Unlike other moving-coils of our acquaintance, the FR-3's frequency response is very smooth; instead of a peaky high end, it actually shows a slight rolloff in the upper treble region. Separation is more than adequate, and tracking ability is excellent at the manufacturer's recommended VTF of 2 grams. If you equate high tracking force with record wear, you should quickly disabuse yourself of that notion; records are more likely to be damaged when mistracking styli slam into groove walls because of insufficient VTF. But the lab data do suggest that less than a 2-gram VTF will work well, since the pickup passed CBS's sweep-tone “torture test” at half that force.

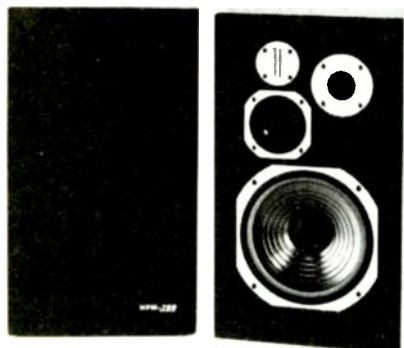
Alignment and polish of the line-contact (multiradial) stylus tip were judged excellent in microscopic examination. The stylus is not user-replaceable, so when replacement becomes necessary, Fidelity Research offers purchasers a new pickup for half price. (Presumably the old pickup will then be shipped back to Japan for factory overhaul.) Given Fidelity Research's admonition to mount the FR-3 only in extremely massive arms, we were somewhat surprised at how successfully it mated with CBS's “standard” medium-mass SME arm. Low-frequency resonance, though falling somewhat short of ideal, is certainly well removed from the warp-information area and well damped. This indicates that the cartridge will perform well in a wider range of arms than FR suggests.

For our listening tests, we used Fidelity Research's FRT-3G transformer. Our impression of the sound from the combination was one of utter smoothness and effortless detail from the deepest bass to the highest treble. The FR-3 made the surface noise on many of our records less obtrusive than usual. And we were pleased to discover that it was almost impossible to make the cartridge sound strained or distorted, even with hotly cut discs.

In short, Fidelity Research seems to have a real winner in the FR-3 Mk. 3F. Though the expense involved is prodigious—\$480 in combination with the transformer—this is one moving-coil pickup that might excite an expense-be-damned attitude in the serious audiophile.

Circle 134 on Reader-Service Card

Pioneer's Livable Speaker



Pioneer Model HPM-700 loudspeaker system, in wood enclosure with vinyl finish. Dimensions: 13¼ by 24 inches (front), 12¼ inches deep. Price: \$275. Warranty: “limited,” three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Pioneer Electronics Corp., Japan; U.S. distributor: U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., 85 Oxford Dr., Moonachie, N.J. 07074.

With the redesigned HPM line of speakers, Pioneer adds a new ingredient to the growing list of nonpaper cone-material recipes: graphite. Familiar to sportsmen as, among other things, the miracle material for modern golf club shafts, graphite is said to be excellent for making diaphragms by virtue of its stiffness and high internal loss (self-damping) characteristics. Pioneer mixed it with a polymer compound to make it moldable and employed it in three new HPM models, including the middle-of-the-line HPM-700.

The driver complement of the four-way ported system consists of a 10-inch woofer, 4-inch midrange, 1¾-inch tweeter (each with the polymer-graphite cones), and a horn-loaded high-polymer-film supertweeter. Retained from the original HPM series (test report on the HPM-60, October 1976), the supertweeter functions as a sort of piezoelectric transducer. Connection to an amplifier is via two spring-loaded “knobs” in a recess at the rear panel. Directly above these are two level controls (marked MID and HIGH).

For a multidriver system of this complexity, its impedance curve is remarkably smooth and well controlled. From the nominal 5.4 ohms, at 130 Hz,

We've Made Our Match

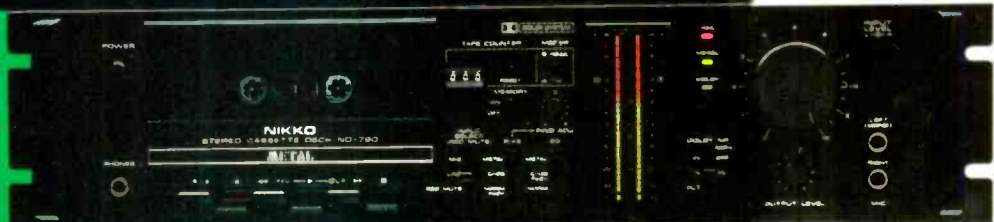
Enhance the performance of your system with the addition of a full performance & feature-packed cassette deck from NIKKO AUDIO, each designed in our recognized tradition of the highest quality performance at a reasonable price.

The inexpensive ND-5901 offers metal capability and many features not usually found in its price range, plus a choice of matte black or silver front panel. The ND-790 matches metal capability with bias fine tuning for optimum performance with any tape formulation. Sendust hyperbolic record/playback head and an improved 4-section erase head (rather than a conventional 2-section) for optimum performance with metal tape, switchable peak/VU LED readout, plus optional rack mount handles (shown).

The ND-990 matches this with complete IC logic illuminated soft-touch solenoid controls, optional remote capability, two-motor direct drive transport, optional rack mount handles (shown), plus many more features—in matte black or silver.

Step up to NIKKO AUDIO quality without stepping up in price.

© 1981 NIKKO AUDIO, 320 Oser Ave., Hauppauge, NY 11787.
Available in Canada.



NIKKO AUDIO



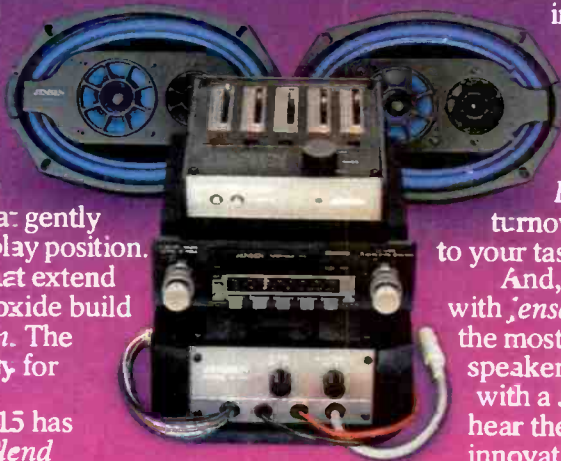
“I don’t care if you are going all the way to Spokane, you don’t have a Jensen 15 band variable parameter equalizer.”

Jensen innovations in car audio have not been with gimmicks or gadgets, but with meaningful advances in sound performance. And by using Jensen computer designed components together in a system, you can drive their high performance even higher.

The Jensen T-415 AM/FM stereo cassette tuner

The heart of your car audio system is a tuner like the T-415. Its tape section has true audiophile features: *Auto Reverse* to instantly play the other side of a cassette or, after rewinding, automatically play the same side again. *Auto Load Mechanism* that gently lowers and locks your tape into play position. *Syntox® Ceramic Tape Heads* that extend tape head life while minimizing oxide build up. And *Dolby® Noise Reduction*. The T-415 also has playback capability for metal tape.

The tuner section of the T-415 has refinements such as *Auto High Blend Circuitry*. It’s a special IC that automatically adjusts the high frequency separation when FM stereo reception conditions are poor. And it has the convenience of pre-set tuning.



The Jensen A-124 power amplifier

An ideal power amplifier for the T-415 tuner is the 100 watt Jensen A-124. Its *high grade and heavy duty components* fully protect it against input overload, FM interference, reversed polarity and thermal overload.

The A-124 features switchable low impedance inputs and switchable bi-amp. Its *frequency response* is 20 to 20,000Hz, $\pm 1.5\text{dB}$ and its *signal/noise ratio* is 80dB.

Then, because you know sound, add a *Jensen EQ400 Equalizer* with 15 selectable

turnover frequencies to fine tune music to your taste and your car’s environment.

And, of course, complete your system with *Jensen Triax® Three-Way Speakers*, the most widely imitated car stereo speakers in the world. Surround yourself with a Jensen car audio system. You’ll hear the difference meaningful innovation makes. And be moved.

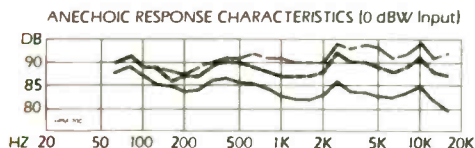
® “Triaxial” and “Triax” are the registered trademarks identifying the patented 3-way speaker system of Jensen Sound Laboratories, An Esmark Company. (U.S. Patent 4,122,315).
® “Dolby” and “Dolby System” are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

JENSEN
SOUND LABORATORIES
AN ESMARK COMPANY

When it’s the sound that moves you.

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Pioneer HPM-700 loudspeaker



- boundary-dependent region
 - average omnidirectional response
 - average front hemispheric response
 - on-axis response
- AVERAGE OMNIDIRECTIONAL OUTPUT (250 Hz to 6 kHz)
84 dB SPL for 0 dBW (1 watt) input
- CONTINUOUS ON-AXIS OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)
110 dB SPL for 20 dBW (100 watts) input
- PULSED OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)
121 1/4 dB SPL for 31 1/4 dBW (1,330 watts) peak
- "NOMINAL" IMPEDANCE 5.4 ohms
- APPROX. TWEETER CONTROL RANGE (re "0")
± 2 dB above 6 kHz
- APPROX. MIDRANGE CONTROL RANGE (re "0")
± 1 dB, 1.3 to 5 kHz

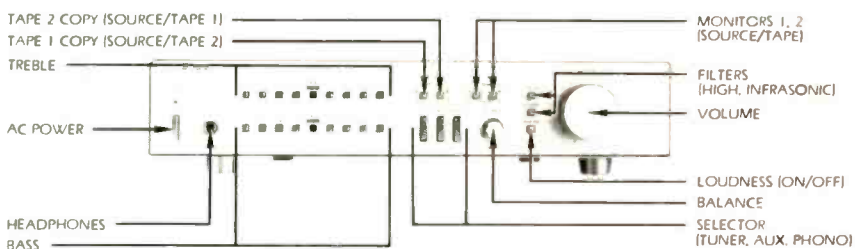
impedance values rise gradually through the midrange, reaching 16 ohms near 1.3 kHz, then decreasing gradually to a minimum value of 5 ohms at about 12 kHz. In combination with the 700's high efficiency, this presents one of the easiest loads imaginable for an amplifier to power. Of course, our usual caveats about paralleling two pairs of speakers whose combined impedance across the midrange falls substantially below 4 ohms apply here.

In normal usage, there's probably no danger of ever damaging these speakers with a high-power amplifier. In the tests at CBS Technology Center, they easily withstood the 20-dBW continuous tone-test and managed up to 31 1/4 dBW of pulsed input before reaching distortion limits. At moderate listening levels, both second and third harmonic distortion average less than 1/2% from 60 Hz to 10 kHz. At loud levels, third harmonic products remain below 1/2% through the treble; second harmonics rise a hair above 1% in the midbass but stay far below 1/2% throughout the critical lower treble.

Frequency response is quite uniform, with elevated output right down to the deep bass region. Scope photos show virtually perfect handling of 300-Hz transient waveforms but some evidence of overhang in the 3-kHz traces. Because the crossover frequencies are relatively high for a four-way system, what purports to be a midrange control exerts no influence at all on midrange frequencies, although the HIGH control governs a band that is indeed high. In lab tests, their action proved to be somewhat inconsistent—the middle ("0") position of the MIDRANGE producing less 12-kHz output than the ± 3 or -3 settings, for example. In any event, neither control substantially affects perceived tonal balance; we find this preferable to those extravagant controls that allow a careless user to undo what a speaker designer has achieved.

Sonically, the HPM-700 has much to commend it, even if our auditioners were not unanimous in their praise. On the plus side are the depth and tightness of the bass and excellent overall tonal balance. High frequencies are handled well, with broad directivity, and, perhaps as a result, stereo imaging is remarkably precise and stable side to side. Those who had reservations cited midrange coloration; one auditioner commented that voices seem to recede a bit from the otherwise dramatic frontal sound field. Like the original HPM speakers, however, this version impresses us with its generally attractive sound. There are many who admire the super-accurate loudspeakers for their analytic qualities but complain about just those qualities for extended listening. So considered, the HPM-700 is an altogether livable loudspeaker.

Circle 131 on Reader-Service Card



Harman Kardon hk-725 preamplifier, in metal case.

Dimensions: 15 1/4 by 3 1/2 inches (front panel), 12 1/2 inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. AC convenience outlets: two switched (400 watts max. total), one unswitched (200 watts max.). Price: \$280. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Made in Japan for Harman Kardon, Inc., 240 Crossways Park West, Woodbury, N.Y. 11797.

Long known for its Citation line of high-end separates, Harman Kardon now seems intent on bringing a similar level of performance to more budget-conscious audiophiles. The hk-725 is a component in the company's new 700 series, along with a power amp, digital tuner, and cassette deck (hk-705, test report, August 1980). Like the others in the line, the preamplifier is attractively styled, with a low profile and an aluminum front panel. A profusion of small squared-off buttons govern most control functions. The most unusual application of these pushbuttons is in the fixed-resistor tone controls, eight buttons each for bass and treble plus a separate defeat button for each band. It is a glamorous-looking little preamp, and we're delighted to report that its overall performance lives up to its aesthetic appeal.

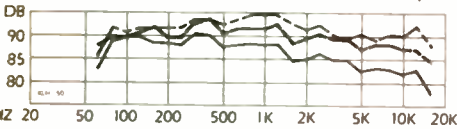
Circle 19 on Reader-Service Card

An HK Preamp with Panache



KLH-150 loudspeaker

ANECHOIC RESPONSE CHARACTERISTICS (0-dBW input)



boundary-dependent region
 — average omnidirectional response
 - - - average front hemispheric response
 . . . on-axis response

AVERAGE OMNIDIRECTIONAL OUTPUT
(250 Hz to 6 kHz)

86½ dB SPL for 0 dBW (1 watt) input

AVERAGE ON-AXIS OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)

109 DB SPL for 15½ dBW (36 watts) input

PULSED OUTPUT (at 300 Hz)

116½ dB SPL for 23½ dBW (225 watts) peak

"NOMINAL" IMPEDANCE

4.0 watts

Technology Center turned up a rating of 4–8 ohms; we would call it spot-on at 4 ohms. The measurement descends from the bass-resonance peaks to exactly that value (just below 200 Hz) for the "nominal" rating and hovers between about 3½ and 5¾ ohms right out to 20 kHz, with the entire power range very near 4 ohms. We've seldom seen such a classic example of the species, which dictates that paralleled pairs will result in a 2-ohm amplifier load and therefore are not recommended with most transistorized designs.

Sensitivity—or efficiency, if you prefer—is surprisingly high for so small a system, even a vented one. The anechoic curves suggest what the laws of physics dictate: that some deep-bass response has been traded away to get the efficiency. Subjectively, the bass response is quite good, however, and the output vis-à-vis other models in the size class confirm the efficiency. The response and harmonic distortion curves from the CBS anechoic chamber appear to support the claims for the polypropylene drivers. Response is quite smooth, with only a moderate downward tilt in the upper frequency range—a tilt that many designers and listeners deem necessary for concert-hall verisimilitude.

The grating third harmonic stays under 1%, even in the high-level (100 dB) test, for all frequencies above 100 Hz. The second harmonic, while very low (generally less than ½%) above 500 Hz, stays in the neighborhood of 1% between 60 and 500 Hz with a 0-dBW (1 watt) drive and approximately doubles when output is raised some 10 dB to 100 dB SPL. The lab's 3-kHz pulse was somewhat elongated on the scope trace, suggesting underdamping, and betrayed a series of reflections, albeit at extremely low levels. The 300-Hz pulse also showed traces of belated energy release.

Two factors required an unusually close examination of these specifics: the claimed performance of the speakers, and their only-moderate dynamic range. In the continuous-tone test, buzzing began at only 15½ dBW (36 watts), though the resulting output was 109 dB SPL, which certainly should be enough for most home users and is about par for most speakers at 20 dBW (100 watts). In the pulsed-input test, distortion became excessive at 116½ dB; this should be plenty of leeway for most purposes but is not very generous by comparison to other speakers. We wondered if this could be a model that was particularly sensitive to near-overdrive conditions.

Our listening tests only once turned up a "coloration" directly attributable to incipient excess—a slight rasp on the loudest notes of higher voices. But other colorations that seemed independent of level were apparent. The word used most frequently to characterize what our auditioners heard was "throaty," though "edginess" and "breathiness" in the violins and flutes also were mentioned. Usually these terms suggest roughness in the treble and/or relatively high distortion levels; yet when we compared the 150 to competing models, it was deemed remarkably free of false midrange brightness—another symptom of relatively high harmonic distortion. Indeed, the very throatiness was judged to lend extra differentiation and bite in some woodwind music.

The stereo image is wide and shallow. As usual, this precipitated conflicting opinions, depending on the musical tastes of the listeners. And, while we always encourage readers to do their own listening, we believe it especially important in this case; the 150 definitely has its own sound, and it is one over which there can be genuine disagreement. Its drivers do, measurably, deliver low-distortion sound, so whatever you think of the 150, KLH is doing something right that may ultimately result in sound as transparent—for any taste—as the present driver cones.

Circle 139 on Reader-Service Card

Empire 600LAC fixed-coil phono cartridge with LAC (Large Area Contact) diamond stylus. Price: \$175; S-600LAC replacement stylus, \$87.50. Warranty: "limited," two years parts and labor, excluding stylus wear. Manufacturer: Empire Scientific Corp., 1055 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11530.

Empire terms its latest line of pickups the Dynamic Interface Series and claims reduced mass, higher output, and improved tracking ability for each of the six new models. Flagship of the series is the 600LAC, a fixed-coil design that incorporates several of the innovations introduced in the earlier, still top-of-the-line EDR-9 pickup (test report, October 1979). One of those features is the LAC stylus-tip geometry. Similar to that of the Shibata, it spreads the contact area up and down

A Versatile Pickup from Empire

Lux Tuner/Amplifiers



R-3055—55 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20–20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05% Total Harmonic Distortion.

Sound thinking is... *DUO- β* BETA and intelligent tuning.

Sound is all we think of. Exquisite sound, rich and full from top to bottom. With the kind of sophistication that simplifies, so everything about Lux/Tuner/Amplifiers is functional... designed for a purpose.

Great sound starts with super-stable, DC amplification for low inherent distortion, high dynamic range and wide bandwidth. Then, with Lux's exclusive duo-Beta circuitry, distortion is taken below audibility...almost unmeasurable.



R-3030—30 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20–20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05% Total Harmonic Distortion.

We've eliminated the flat amp stage which reduces phase distortion even further, and designed the tone controls into the power amplifier section. Finally, a subsonic filter removes the last traces of audible rumble and other low frequency noise.

Superior sound also depends on pinpoint center tuning. Lux's intelligent tuning systems find—and hold—that elusive center. Mistuning is a thing of the past.

Lux's new, Flash Tuning System* is an array

of LEDs which point the direction to tune, automatically changing into a signal strength indicator at the exact center tuning point.

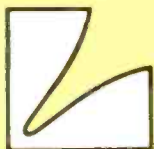


R-3045—45 watts per channel, minimum RMS into 8 ohms, both channels driven from 20–20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05% Total Harmonic Distortion.

Another system, Closed Loop Locked (CLL) Acculock, provides an electro-mechanical lock at the exact center tuning point. You can do it blindfolded. The Acculock system includes variable sensitivity and a lock defeat for every tuning circumstance.

Lux's Tuner/Amplifiers: R-3030, R-3045 and R-3055 incorporate duo-Beta circuitry and Flash Tuning. R-3055 includes CLL Acculock as well. Both the R-3045 and R-3055 have provision for MC cartridge, with variable input impedance and equalizer gain...automatically.

Every Lux Tuner/Amplifier is built with a host of features...the expected and the exclusive. But the definitive test is performance. Superb sound, simply achieved. Listen at your Lux dealer. Lux Tuner/Amplifiers...better because they're built with sound thinking. *Patent Pending



Ultimate Fidelity Stereo Components

LUX Audio of America, Ltd.

Reflecting Tomorrow's Technology in Today's System

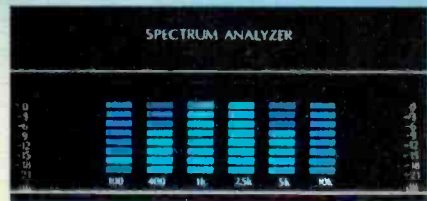
160 Dupont Street, Plainview, NY 11803/(516) 349-7070 • West Coast Office: 11200 Chandler Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91603/(213) 980-7641 • Canada: Lux Audio of Canada, Ontario

Sansui "Z" Receivers give you a spectrum worth analyzing.

What frequency range does your favorite singer's voice most commonly fall into? What about your favorite instrument?

How accurately does your cartridge handle those frequencies? How about your tape deck?

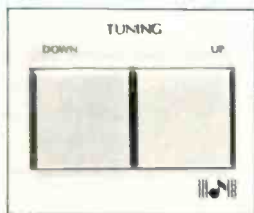
The newest Sansui "Z" Receivers all have an ingenious spectrum analyzer that answers these and other questions by letting you see exactly what you hear.



And it's what you *hear* that makes Sansui so special.

SANSUI—THE LEADER IN DC TECHNOLOGY. The DC-Servo Amp brings you coloration-free, superbly defined reproduction with the healthy, realistic bass response that only a DC configuration can provide. Gone are unwanted ultra-low frequencies—like record warps and tonearm resonance. What you hear is a clean, tight, transparent sound that sets a new standard for receiver performance.

SYNTHESIZED DIGITAL TUNING. You can't mistune a Sansui synthesized digital receiver. Not even a little. Press the up/down tuning buttons.



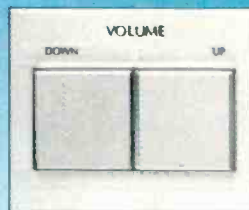
The digital circuitry ensures that every station received is automatically locked in for lowest possible distortion, with its frequency indicated both on a digital readout and by a LED indicator along an analog type dial.

12 PRESET STATIONS. To make FM and AM tuning still easier, up to 12 user-selected stations may be "stored" in all "Z" Receiver memory circuits for instant recall. The last station received will be remembered when the tuner is turned on again; and memories are kept "live" even during a power outage.

TOUCH VOLUME CONTROL & LED PEAK POWER LEVEL INDICATOR. The Sansui "Z" Receivers use a pair of touch-buttons to adjust the listening level. Relative volume control setting is indicated on a fluorescent display.

On most models actual peak power amplifier output is shown by 14- or 18-segment LED indicators.

And there's more. Instead of up/down tuning buttons, both the 9900Z and the 8900ZDB have tun-



ing knobs linked to a rotary "encoder" disc. As you turn the knob, the encoded disc works with

an LED and a photo transistor to generate electronic pulses to raise or lower the tuned frequency. In addition, the 9900Z, 8900ZDB, and 7900Z have ceramic buzzers which signal unobtrusively while you tune in a station. There are three speaker select switches on the 9900Z for driving any two of three connected speaker pairs and two switches on all the other "Z" receivers. Included are LED's for every important function. Two Muting Modes. Two tape deck connections with dubbing. And much more.

The full line of Sansui "Z" Receivers are at your Sansui dealer now. Visit him for a complete demonstration soon. He has just the right model for your pocketbook and power requirements.





SANSUI "Z" RECEIVERS

9900Z

160 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.015% THD.

8900ZDB

125 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.02% THD.

7900Z

100 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.02% THD.

5900Z

75 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.03% THD.

4900Z

55 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.03% THD.

3900Z

40 watts/chan., min. RMS, both channels into 8 ohms, from 20-20kHz, with no more than 0.03% THD.

Cabinet of simulated wood grain.

Sansui

SANSUI ELECTRONICS CORP.

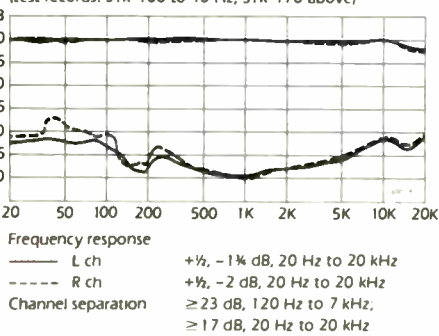
Lyndhurst, New Jersey 07071 • Gardena, Ca. 90247

SANSUI ELECTRIC CO., LTD., Tokyo, Japan

In Canada: Electronic Distributors

Empire 600LAC phono cartridge

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



SENSITIVITY (at 1 kHz) 1.1 mV/cm/sec

CHANNEL BALANCE (at 1 kHz) ± < ¼ dB

VERTICAL TRACKING ANGLE 28°

LOW-FREQUENCY RESONANCE (in SME 3009)

vertical 9.8 Hz; 3½ dB rise

lateral 8.8 Hz; 5 dB rise

MAXIMUM TRACKING LEVEL (re RIAA 0 VU, 1.5 grams)

at 300 Hz +18 dB

at 1 kHz +15 dB

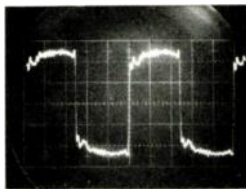
WEIGHT 5.4 grams

TIP DIMENSIONS

tip radii 6.3 by 8.4 micrometers

scanning radii 8.4 and 6.3 micrometers

SQUARE-WAVE RESPONSE (1 kHz)



the groove walls and has smaller dimensions front to back. The cartridge also has adopted the inertially damped tuned-stylus assembly, which involves the use of a miniature iron bar supported by an elastomer mount inside the cantilever tube to damp high-frequency mechanical resonances. The cantilever itself is formed of aluminum, with a vapor-deposited coating of boron for increased stiffness.

Since the 600LAC employs this mechanical damping arrangement rather than depending on specific capacitive loading to perform the task electrically, Empire says that it will operate into a wide range of preamp loads without audible ill effects. Our experience in the listening room confirms this. But the company does recommend a capacitive load of 150 picofarads, and CBS Technology Center performed its tests with that termination. The use of high-intensity samarium-cobalt magnets no doubt accounts for the cartridge's high output, and channel balance is just about perfect. Other performance characteristics are equally impressive. Frequency response is wide and smooth, and there is more than adequate separation across the audible band. Square-wave reproduction is excellent, the ringing evident in the scope photo being simply an artifact of the test record, introduced by the Westrex cutterhead.

Microscopic examination found tip alignment (critical for optimum performance with this type of stylus) and polish to be excellent. Tracking ability also rates high marks at a VTF of 1.5 grams (the mean of Empire's recommended range), and the pickup was able to negotiate the CBS "torture test" at a much lower 0.9 gram. The low-frequency resonance in CBS's medium-mass SME tonearm is well damped and almost perfectly placed, indicating that the cartridge should be compatible with a wide variety of arms. At 28 degrees, the vertical tracking angle is somewhat higher than the 15–20 degrees employed in cutterheads but well within the range of values found in other top-notch pickups. Our own experience tells us that it is extremely difficult to correlate VTA with audible effects; we will have more to say on the topic in a future issue.

For our listening evaluations, we mounted the 600LAC in a low-mass damped tonearm. (It comes with a stylus brush, cleaning fluid, an assortment of mounting hardware, and a small screwdriver. Installation is straightforward, posing no unusual problems.) What we heard essentially confirmed the lab findings. Tracking stays sure and steady, even on difficult material, and the overall sound of the cartridge is very smooth. We noted a slight emphasis of upper harmonics on some instruments, but this effect was negligible and on some material unnoticeable. Switching the phono-input capacitance to 550 picofarads from Empire's recommended 150 made no significant change in sound, supporting the manufacturer's claim of load insensitivity.

Though not inexpensive, the 600LAC would make a fine addition to a quality system. And, perhaps just as important, it should perform well with an uncommonly diverse array of associated equipment. If you're the type who would rather listen to your stereo than tinker with it, the 600LAC may be the pickup you've been looking for.

Circle 133 on Reader-Service Card

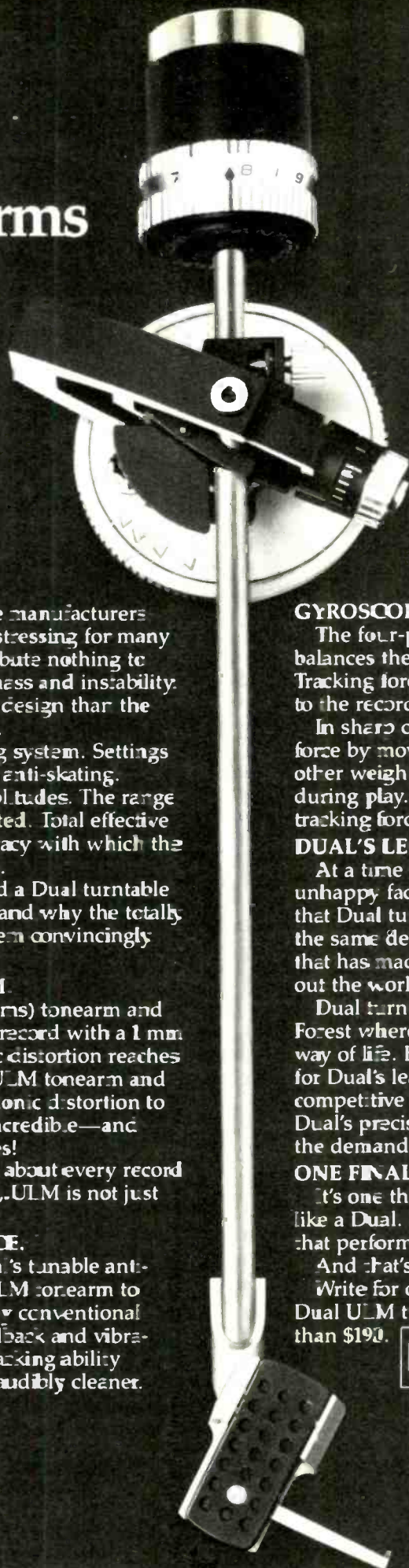
Image Building with Omnisonix

Omnisonix Model 801 Omnisonic Imager spatial enhancement device, in metal case with wood ends. Dimensions: 10 by 3¼ inches (front), 5 inches deep plus clearance for connections. Price: \$200. Warranty: "limited," lifetime on proprietary circuit board, one year parts and labor on other active components. Manufacturer: Omnisonix, Ltd., P.O. Box 430, Middletown Ave., Northford, Conn. 06472.

Somewhere deep in the grooves of the stereo record is thought to lurk the ultimate reality: information that, were it extracted, would transport the listener to the recording studio or concert hall. Reality, in this sense, is synonymous with improved imaging—a stereo panoply free of the confines of the loudspeakers. Since the stereo image is created from differences in the strength and phasing (time relationship) of left- and right-channel signals, changes in the image can be created by manipulating these relationships. This, indeed, is what the 801 Omnisonic Imager is designed to do. One should not, however, confuse it with a time-delay unit; like several other products (beginning with the Carver C-4000 Sonic Holography preamp, test report, January 1980), the 801 is intended to perform its essential magic with just two front speakers.

The 801 may be connected between preamp and power amp or in a tape-monitor loop; in the latter case, connections on its rear panel will restore the recorder hookup, and a front-panel pushbutton serves as the system's tape-monitor

Now that other tonearms are finally going straight...



It's evident that other turntable manufacturers are learning what we've been stressing for many years. Curved tonearms contribute nothing to record playback except more mass and instability.

But there's more to tonearm design than the shape of the tube. Much more.

There's the pivot and bearing system. Settings for balance, tracking force and anti-skating. Resonant frequencies and amplitudes. The range of cartridges to be accommodated. Total effective mass. All these affect the accuracy with which the stylus tracks the record groove.

Anyone who has ever owned a Dual turntable knows exactly what we mean, and why the totally engineered Dual tonearm system convincingly outperforms all others.

ULTRA LOW MASS SYSTEM

When a conventional (13 grams) tonearm and cartridge combination tracks a record with a 1 mm warp (barely visible), harmonic distortion reaches 11.5 percent. Dual's exclusive ULM tonearm and cartridge system reduces harmonic distortion to only 0.012 percent. That's an incredible—and audible—reduction of 958 times!

When you consider that just about every record manufactured today is warped, ULM is not just desirable—it's essential.

TUNABLE ANTI-RESONANCE

Another Dual exclusive. Dual's tunable anti-resonance filter matches the ULM tonearm to the mass and compliance of any conventional 1/2-inch cartridge. Acoustic feedback and vibration sensitivity are reduced, tracking ability improved... and the sound is audibly cleaner.

GYROSCOPIC GIMBAL SUSPENSION

The four-point gyroscopic gimbal centers and balances the tonearm exactly where it pivots. Tracking force remains constant and perpendicular to the record even if the turntable is not level.

In sharp contrast, tonearms that apply tracking force by moving the counterbalance—or some other weight—forward are actually unbalanced during play. Under typical playback conditions, tracking force cannot be precisely maintained.

DUAL'S LEGENDARY RELIABILITY

At a time when "planned obsolescence" is an unhappy fact of life, it may be reassuring to know that Dual turntables continue to be produced with the same dedication and manufacturing precision that has made Dual so highly respected throughout the world.

Dual turntables are made in the legendary Black Forest where meticulous craftsmanship remains a way of life. But more than tradition is responsible for Dual's leading position in a lineup of some fifty competitive brands. The performance provided by Dual's precision engineering has always exceeded the demands of either the record or cartridge.

ONE FINAL THOUGHT

It's one thing to make a tonearm that's shaped like a Dual. But that's a long way from a tonearm that performs like a Dual.

And that's telling it as straight as we can. Write for our brochure describing all nine Dual ULM turntables. Prices start at less than \$190.



United Audio
120 So. Columbus Ave
Mt. Vernon, NY 10553

Omnisonix 801 Omnisonic Imager

OUTPUT AT CLIPPING	7.4 volts
HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD; 20 Hz to 20 kHz) at 2 volts	<.001%
FREQUENCY RESPONSE (mono in to mono out)	
± ¼ dB, < 10 Hz to 83 kHz,	
-3 dB at 520 kHz	
INPUT CHARACTERISTICS (re 0.5 V; A-weighting)	
sensitivity	460 mV
S/N ratio	87½ dB



switch. A button marked HBX activates the circuitry or bypasses it for "straight" stereo. There are no other controls; the Imager may be left powered continuously (it draws only 6 watts) or plugged into a switched convenience outlet.

Signal-processing devices such as this always present a problem in testing. Because they are meant to manipulate the signal, conventional amplifier test philosophy is not entirely appropriate. Yet there are certain things that a signal processor should and should not do: It should be able to handle any signal levels that it might experience and should be compatible with ancillary equipment; it should not introduce distortion or noise. In these regards, the 801 passed Diversified Science Laboratories' tests with flying colors. Total harmonic distortion at the standard 2-volt output level is just about unmeasurable. The clipping point is far higher than any signal level the device is likely to encounter, and its signal-to-noise ratio is commensurate with that of an excellent preamp. Data from DSL also indicate that the unit's output impedance should be compatible with typical preamps and receivers.

In listening tests, we quickly learned that the sonic effects of the Omnisonic Imager are highly dependent on the type of program material, how it was recorded, and the listener's position relative to the loudspeakers. Simply recorded programs produce the most realistic results. For example, "Sonic Fireworks, Vol. 1" (Crystal Clear CCS-7010) and Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" (Sheffield Lab 8) respond quite well to this type of enhancement. Each was recorded with natural ambience via a two- or three-microphone setup. With the Imager, the sense of space and ambience does improve. The stereo "stage" widens, and the listener is less aware of speaker location. Most images remain fairly well placed, but there are some disconcerting side effects, particularly on transients. The triangle on the Sheffield disc, well placed in normal stereo, could not be pinpointed after enhancement. Violins retain their spatial integrity when bowed but shift far off-stage when plucked. And several auditioners noted an increased level of surface noise with processing.

Morton Gould's Chalfont disc of orchestral works, with the London Symphony, (SDG 301) was recorded with multiple microphones, and the phase shifts created by the 801 smear and broaden an already less-than-stable image. The effect was similar to a painting on the surface of a balloon being stretched. "Fresh Aire III" (American Gramophone AG-365) is a multitrack recording of synthesized and natural instruments. The apparent location of the synthesizer shifts dramatically with pitch, but the effect here is interesting and quite pleasing.

Though we did not receive circuit diagrams, DSL ran some tests that provide clues to the operation of the device. When left or right channels are driven individually—corresponding to an instrument at the far left or far right of the orchestra—signals appear at both channel outputs, though at different levels. For example, with a far-right input, the right output is 6 to 7 dB greater than it would have been with a mono input feeding both channels. In addition, a substantial amount of signal appears at the left channel, along with an apparent bass boost of about 2 dB in both channels. The crossfeed is quite purposeful and partially out of phase. This tricks the listener into perceiving the image as existing farther to the right than the actual location of the right speaker. Thus, the stereo stage seems wider than the distance between speakers. DSL also confirms that, when left and right outputs are combined, the bass boosts that appear in each are compensatory and overall response is essentially flat.

The 801 Omnisonic Imager certainly is capable of dramatic effects. With classical music, where one hopes to recapture a sense of concert hall realism, those effects are largely dependent on the recording itself; pop music gains more uniformly. But hear it for yourself—it demands audition.

Circle 136 on Reader-Service Card

(More)

Circle 6 on Reader-Service Card ▶

There are 300 voices
in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.
This tiny diamond tipped sapphire
enables you to hear every one.



Shown actual size

What you see above is the diamond stylus/sapphire crystal cantilever of the Bang & Olufsen[®] MMC 20 CL Phono Cartridge.

We chose sapphire because it is one of the most rigid materials on Earth. So there is no audible tip resonance. No distortion of the music. Even when subjected to the 10 G forces which cantilevers encounter when tracking today's records.

And while sapphire may seem like overkill, the fact is that your cartridge, though dwarfed by the rest of your system, has an overwhelming influence on the reproduction quality you achieve. Which is why we go to great lengths to achieve optimum performance where it counts in our cartridges.

Another place the MMC 20 CL excels is its stylus. A Contact Line nude diamond. Super-polished to shun contaminants and reduce record wear. It



tracks the groove like a train on a rail.

Then there is the Moving Micro Cross, heart of the patented B&O[®] cartridge for years. Now highly refined, it maximizes stereo separation and minimizes effective tip mass (ETM). For extended record life, and unsurpassed trackability.

Since inductance is low, induced noise is negligible. And output is constant, regardless of cable or preamp capacitance.

Bang & Olufsen's other three cartridge models are the MMC 20 EN, MMC 20 E, and MMC 10 E. They are produced to the same exacting stan-

dards as the MMC 20 CL. And offer almost equivalent performance.

The top three models each come with their own computer-generated test report showing output voltage, channel balance, channel separation, and tracking ability. The MMC 20 CL is also supplied with its own individually plotted frequency response graph.

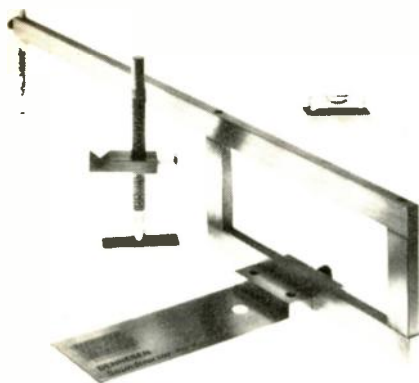
While you might wonder just how much difference all of this makes, you can hear it for yourself at your local Bang & Olufsen Dealer.

Or write to us, and we'll send you reprints of what reviewers the world over have been reporting. Which is that Bang & Olufsen Stereo Phono Cartridges are great places for your music to begin.

Bang & Olufsen

Bang & Olufsen of America, Inc.
515 Busse Road
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007
Attention: Harold Flemming

Get It Right with the Soundtractor



Dennessen Soundtractor phono pickup alignment device. Price: \$100 (in aluminum; \$35 in plastic). Warranty: "limited," five years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Dennessen Electrostatic, Inc., 58 Rantoul St., Beverly, Mass. 01915.

Simple and reliable, the pivoted tonearm is by far the most common type in use. Unfortunately, it cannot keep the stylus tangent to the groove over the entire disc surface—a trick that a lateral-tracking arm (and the cutterhead itself) accomplishes quite naturally. Yet excellent results can be achieved with a well-designed pivoted arm provided it is set up properly. The Dennessen Soundtractor, a Rube Goldbergian affair fashioned of aluminum, is designed to aid that setup and thus realize the full potential of the pickup—namely, the greatest channel separation and lowest distortion over the largest record area.

The geometry of the pivoted tonearm was developed by H. G. Baerwald four decades ago. He determined that, for minimum lateral-tracking error, the cartridge should be offset by a specific angle and the stylus should "overhang" the spindle by a certain amount. The offset angle and overhang distance depend on the length of the tonearm and the points on the record surface where "perfect" tracking is desired. With such geometry, the stylus cantilever can be tangent to the record groove at only two points, but, if these are chosen properly, the departure from tangency (the "error") can be minimized across the disc. Given the dimensions of a standard 12-inch LP, the "Baerwald radii"—the optimum points of tangency—should be at 2.6 and 4.8 inches. Here's where the Soundtractor comes in.

The aluminum base of the device slips over the turntable spindle. A trammel, similar to that of a beam compass, slides in a trough and adjusts so that the compass point at the far end lies directly over the arm pivot. You then lock the trammel into position and adjust the compass point to accommodate the height of the tonearm. With the Soundtractor held in this position, you set the overhang by lowering the arm until the stylus rests in a pinhole on the Soundtractor base. It may be necessary to reposition the cartridge in the headshell (or move the tonearm pivot) so the stylus and pinhole will meet.

Next, the effective offset angle is adjusted. The sides and front of the cartridge must be parallel to the markings on the crosshatch gauge surrounding the pinhole (which is at the inner Baerwald radius). Again, the cartridge can be twisted to line up properly. That's really all there is to it: With the stylus positioned in the pinhole and the cartridge body parallel to the cross-hatchings, you know that both overhang and offset are correct. All that's left is to tighten the cartridge mounting screws.

We find the Soundtractor easy to use (although care should be exercised not to damage the stylus) and more accurate than many an overhang gauge supplied with a turntable. (The latter does not usually provide a means of checking offset angle.) Of course, some cartridges are designed with nonparallel housing sides, making it more difficult to assure correct offset angle. And the device's design rests on a tacit assumption that the stylus cantilever is always parallel to the cartridge sides, which is not always the case.

The Soundtractor system also includes a vertical-tracking-angle adjustment jig. The device really gives you a means of readjusting tonearm height (and therefore, to a small degree, VTA), not of adjusting VTA properly to start with. The gauge mounts on the turntable's top plate with double-sided tape. A bubble level rests on the arm, which is brought to rest in a trough on a movable platform. You raise or lower the platform until the arm is level. The platform height is read from markings on the vertical stanchion.

Of course, the VTA gauge can be used only with adjustable tonearms. Dennessen instructs you to raise and lower the arm in stages until audible distortion is at its lowest, then to note the readings (which presumably will be different for many records in your collection) on the record jacket. So noted, you are supposed to readjust arm height every time you change records—a noble idea, but in reality more work than most music lovers are willing to perform.

The Dennessen Soundtractor provides a highly reliable and accurate means of adjusting stylus overhang and offset angle. The usefulness of the VTA gauge depends on how readily you can adjust tonearm height and whether you are sufficiently sensitive to the type of distortion that VTA error generates. At \$100, it's an expensive little gizmo, but the savings afforded by the plastic version bring it within the reach of most audiophiles. We heartily recommend it.

Circle 135 on Reader-Service Card

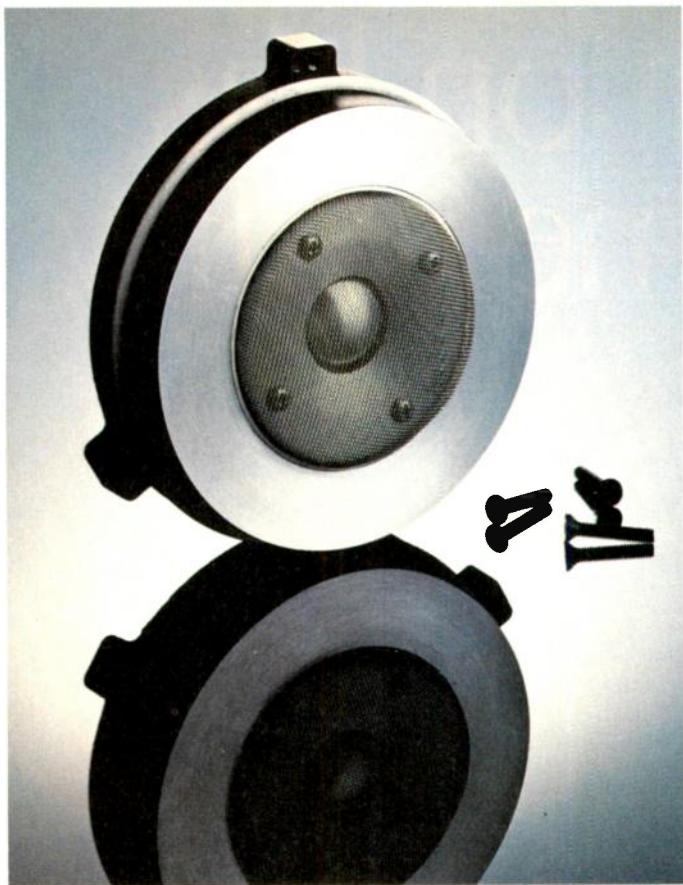
Manufacturers' Comment

We invite rebuttal from those who produce the equipment we review. The comments printed here are culled from those responses.

AES-31 loudspeaker, October 1980. We made a change in this model in August and neglected to inform you. The impedance has been increased to make this speaker compatible with any amplifier or receiver with an 8-ohm output. The lowest impedance now is 6 ohms, only in the range between 11 and 14 kHz. Our nominal impedance rating of 8 ohms is now proper.

Sidney J. Siegel
Audio Electronics Systems, Inc.

Circle 18 on Reader-Service Card ▶



JBL's L112. Introducing a new upper class.

Introducing a new class of tweeter performance:

The upper frequencies of music reproduced with accuracy, power, depth and subtlety that you've never heard from a bookshelf speaker before.

To advance the state-of-the-art of tweeter behavior, JBL engineers utilized laser holography to study cone diaphragm movement—while the cones were energized as in actual use. They were able to see motion that can't be detected with the naked eye (even through a microscope).

The resulting tweeter component for the L112 is a lightweight phenolic vapor-deposition aluminum-coated dome radiator with a copper voice coil that offers an optimum combination of strength, mass and rigidity. It's at the leading edge of technology.

It performs with exceptionally smooth response, wide dispersion, and it handles high power levels. You'll hear harmonics you've never heard before.

Combined with the newly developed 044 tweeter is a 5" mid-

range driver with a large 7/8" voice coil and stiffened cone that provides transients incredibly close to a live performance.

The L112's Symmetrical Field Geometry 12" woofer delivers low frequencies with extremely low distortion. Lower than any bookshelf speaker we've ever tested. You'll hear crisp, clean, powerful bass all the way down to the lowest notes.

And a new High Resolution Dividing Network controls the L112's drivers throughout their full operating range... for sound

so coherent, it will seem that only one extremely wide-range transducer is responsible—not three!

Each L112 is crafted at our Northridge, California facility, inspected and tested in over 50 test stations and beautifully hand-finished with oiled and rubbed American walnut veneer.

Get to know the new upper class. At your JBL dealer.

James B. Lansing Sound, Inc.
8500 Balboa Blvd
Northridge, CA 91329

JBL First with the pros.

Imagination has just become reality.

Finally. The elusive goal, attained.

Audiocassettes of such remarkable accuracy and clarity that differences between original and recording virtually vanish.

This is the sound of the future. Tapes with the widest possible dynamic range. The flattest frequency response obtainable. And freedom from noise and distortion.

New Fuji tapes: Born of microscopic particles made smaller, more uniformly than ever before. Permanently mated to polymer film so precise, its surface is mirror smooth. The product of intensive research that unites physics, chemistry, computer technology and psychoacoustics.

The sound of the future. Hear it at your audio dealer today. In four superb tapes that share a single name.

FUJI
CASSETTES

Imagination has just become reality.



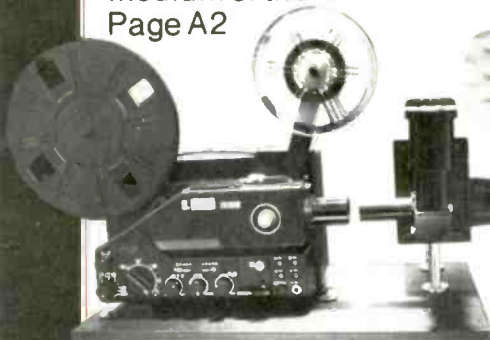
VIDEO TODAY

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Will film or video tape prevail as the home movie medium of the '80s?
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How the two main video tape formats differ, and what the advantages are of each.
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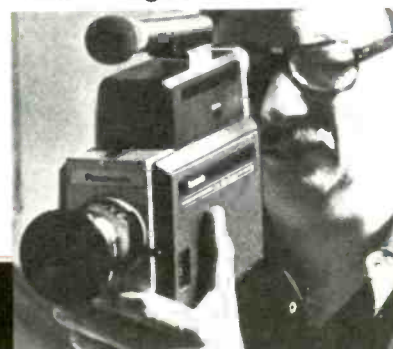


Hands-On Report

Panasonic

PV-2100 VCR/ PK-600 Camera

How this portable pair fared during several rugged months of regular use. Page A9



Record Now... ...View Later

All the ins and outs of putting off until tomorrow what you couldn't view today.
Page A12

VideoFile

Recording

Ten easy steps for setting up your VCR to record TV programs. Page A13

Film purists and movie-equipment manufacturers alike are gnashing their teeth in the fear that video will supplant super 8, or at least share a good deal of its market. If both camps would stop waving their flags of hysteria, they would see that the maladjustment is only temporary and that film and video are eminently compatible. The task is to span the gap between them.

Pros in commercial television and, to a more limited degree, in feature film production have known this for years and have put the knowledge to constructive use. Now we're beginning to see film-to-video transfer equipment geared to super 8.

While Kodak and Sony have enjoyed an early share of this market with their telecine projectors used for local television news coverage, other manufacturers are now show-

ing interest. And all of them are known primarily for their super 8 cameras and projectors.

The latest gear was recently unveiled at Photokina, photography's largest exposition, which is held every two years in Cologne, Germany. Sankyo Seiki, a leading manufacturer of super 8 cameras and projectors, displayed a prototype telecine transfer system called TV-Trans-8. First link in the system is Sankyo's Stereo 800 projector, modified with a special lens and single-blade shutter (instead of the usual three-bladed type) to eliminate the shutter bar — or "blanking" — effect that occurs when film is not properly synced to the video signal. A Sankyo representative told us that film shot at either 18 or 24 fps (frames per second) can be used and converted to the rate of 30 scans per second required for TV. The unit is compatible

with both the 60-field NTSC American standard and the 50-field European PAL system.

Other elements of the system include a mirror-box attachment for either viewing or transferring slides and a viewing device for monitoring film as you transfer it to tape via a video camera and your VCR.

The image we saw, on what looked like a Sony industrial monitor with 25-inch screen, was absolutely steady. Color was broadcast quality; sound, emanating from Sankyo's separate speakers, was far superior to television's standard low-fi. There's no word on when we can expect production models to reach the market and at what price.

Elmo, one of the most respected manufacturers of quality super 8 gear and staunch in its support of movie-only products, has made the first step into the video arena with the Trans Vision 600. The machine is similar to Kodak's VP-1 Videoplayer, in that it uses a flying spot scanner to "read" super 8 film images and relay both sound and picture to your TV set. Reel capacity is 600 feet of super 8 silent or sound film (magnetic or optical soundtracks). The 3-inch CRT (cathode ray tube) will scan film run at either 18 or 24 fps, and Elmo claims a horizontal resolution of more than 250 lines.

The machine resembles an open-reel audio deck, with its buttons for play, still mode, fast forward and rewind, sound channel selection and recording on either regular magnetic stripe or balance stripe of super 8 film. In spite of the efforts of Elmo's technical representative at Photokina, the pre-production Trans Vision unit exhibited the same slight jitter that plagued Kodak's early VP-1s. We were assured, however, that the problem will be remedied in final production models. (continued on page A16)

The First Spans



Sankyo Seiki's prototype film-to-video transfer system employs a specially modified Stereo 800 projector and mirror-box attachment (center).

A once in a lifetime performance. Any night of the week.



“The Romantic Age”
Alonso, Fracci, Thesmar and
Evdokimova.

ABC Video Enterprises is proud to announce an unprecedented event in the history of ballet: **THE ROMANTIC AGE**. Four of the legendary ballerinas of our time together for one performance to recreate classic ballets from the Romantic era. And it is now available to you on videocassette.

Conceived especially for the 1980 Festival Cervantino in Mexico by Joseph Wisny, this unique program features Cuba's Alicia Alonso, Italy's Carla Fracci,

France's Ghislaine Thesmar, and America's Eva Evdokimova performing *pas de deux* from *Robert the Devil*, *La Peri*, *Natalie the Swiss Milk Maid*, and *Esmeralda*. The grand finale of this stunning 90 minute show features the four premiere danseurs together in the 1845 masterpiece, *Pas de Quatre*.

Recorded in magnificent color and high fidelity sound, this exclusive video presentation is a must for every connoisseur's collection

Please send me
ABC Video Enterprises
“The Romantic Age”

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The purchase price of \$59.95 includes postage and handling. Allow four to six weeks for shipment.
 Payment is enclosed (check or money order)
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ABC Video Enterprises Inc.



VideoFronts

Scanning the scene: the latest Video News and Products



A versatile new VHS deck incorporating cue-and-review visual search is available from Hitachi. The VT-8500A records in the 2-, 4-, and 6-hour modes and operates at 10 times the 6-hour (EP) speed in either search function. ■ Features include still-frame, frame-by-frame advance, slow motion, audio dubbing, a thirteen-function remote control and automatic end-of-tape stop and rewind. The electronic tuner allows advance programming of up to five shows over a 7-day period; a special circuit prevents memory loss during power failures. Cost is \$1,295.

SECOND COMBINATION CAMERA/VCR UNVEILED

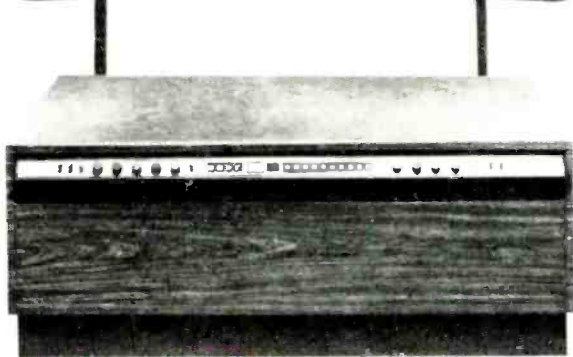
A second experimental combination color camera/video cassette recorder has been unveiled. Similar in concept to Sony's Video Movie (see VIDEO TODAY, November 1980), Hitachi's Mag Camera weighs just under 6 pounds total, including battery. Using 1/4-inch tape in a shell about the same size as an audio cassette, the camera can record up to 2 hours. A single-chip MOS color-image sensor functions as a pickup device.

■ The Mag Camera was first shown in Japan late last fall. Asked when production models would be available, Hitachi said, "Within two years, we hope." If Mag Camera is available by late 1982, it will beat by three years the target date for the Video Movie.

WATCH FOR COMPONENT TV

Component TV is on the way. By the end of 1981, you should be able to buy what is essentially a quality TV monitor with no electronics other than those directly connected to operating the picture tube. Inputs for a variety of video sources are provided — VCR, TV tuner, home computer, etc. Sony already sells component TVs in Japan as the Profeel System; a 19-inch set costs about \$640.

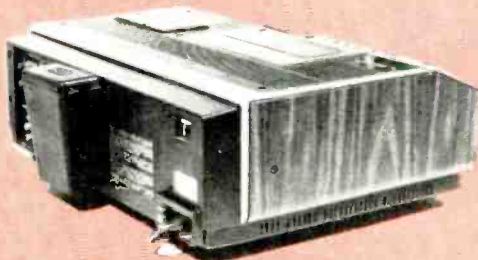




State-of-the-art optics and a wide range of functions have been incorporated into Advent's VB-225, a two-piece projection TV system. The new VideoBeam model features random-access remote control — and inputs and switching for discs, tapes, games, cable, and other video sources. Picture size is 45 by 60 inches. The \$3,295 price also covers a wide-range acoustic suspension speaker.



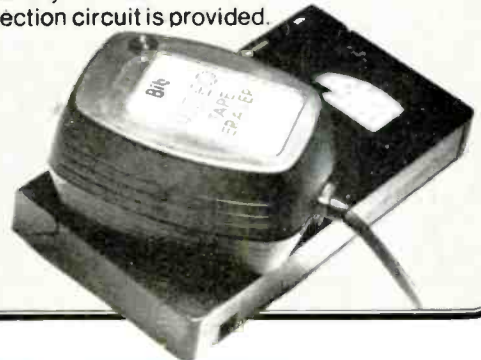
Easily attachable to the rear of a VCR via foam tape, the Vid-Kaddy from Video Specialties is a simple, snap-open storage case designed to hold a typical remote-control unit and the attached cable. Price is \$6.95.



SelectaVision-Compatible Disc System Promised

Barring any hitches, Toshiba says it will have available by Christmas 1981 a video disc system that is compatible with RCA's SelectaVision. Prototype models will be unveiled before the end of this month (January), with pricing to be set by early summer. The company has chosen to offer another system — the VHD (Very High Density) format developed by JVC — for the Japanese market. The first SelectaVision players from RCA are scheduled for introduction this March; Zenith plans to offer SelectaVision models by mid-1981.

Newest addition to Bib's Videophile Edition of video tape care products is the VE-3 video cassette eraser (\$47.50). The device's magnetic field strength — 2,420 gauss at 1/8 inch — is said to substantially exceed the erasure capability of most VCR erase heads. A thermal protection circuit is provided.



A new multi-event programmable VCR from General Electric has a broad array of speed functions. In the EP mode, the VCR-1012W, a VHS deck, allows you to advance the picture one frame at a time at half-speed, at 3 times normal, or at 10 times normal (in either fast-wind mode). Program Search lets you automatically fast-wind to predetermined locations on the tape. ■ The programmable tuner section can record up to five programs in a 7-day period, unattended, using the 2-, 4-, or 6-hour speed. A twelve-function remote control and a dust cover are included. The VCR costs \$1,050.



Beta VHS

What's the difference?

by William Tynan

Beta and VHS (Video Home System) are the two video cassette formats currently available in the U.S. While they approach their task differently, they share a common recording principle — helical scanning.

Broadcast television employs a quadruplex recording system in which four heads record at right angles to the path of a high-speed (15 ips) 2-inch tape. Fitting the wide bandwidth of video signals on a narrower tape (1/2 inch) to be played at slower speeds for home use requires a different approach. The helical system uses two heads on opposite sides of a tilted, rotating drum to lay down diagonal tracks.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s when home VCRs existed mainly as 1/2-inch open-reel or (Sony's) 3/4-inch U-Matic, a narrow guard band of blank tape was left after each recorded video track to reduce "crosstalk" between

adjacent fields. Maximum recording time was 1 hour. A major breakthrough occurred in 1975, when Sony introduced its Betamax system, employing an *azimuth recording* technique. By slanting the gap 7 degrees in one direction on one head and the same amount in the opposite direction on the second head, Sony kept intertrack crosstalk to a minimum. This also eliminated the necessity for the guard bands and opened the door to longer recording times. About a year later the first VHS VCR appeared, using a slightly modified azimuth technique — the gap offset was 6 degrees.

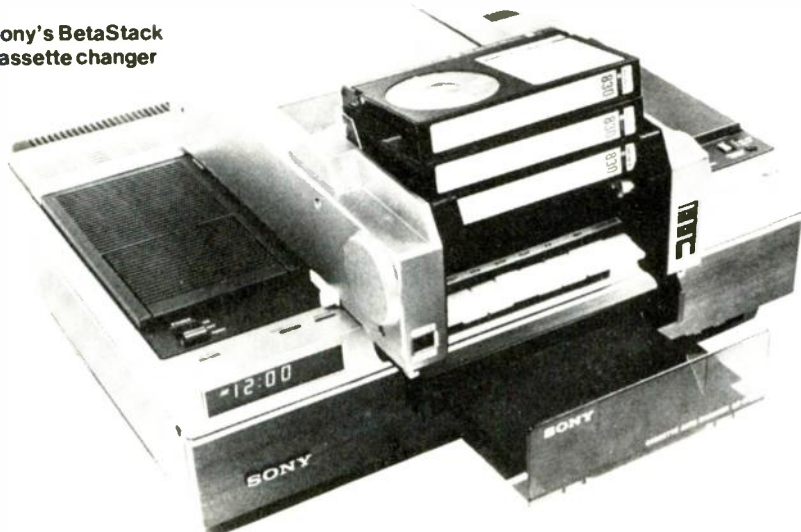
In both the original and azimuth recording methods, the head drum rotates at 30 revolutions per second. Extended playing speeds reduce the rate of tape travel past the rotating heads. To squeeze the same number of video tracks into a smaller space, VCRs with extended play modes must use

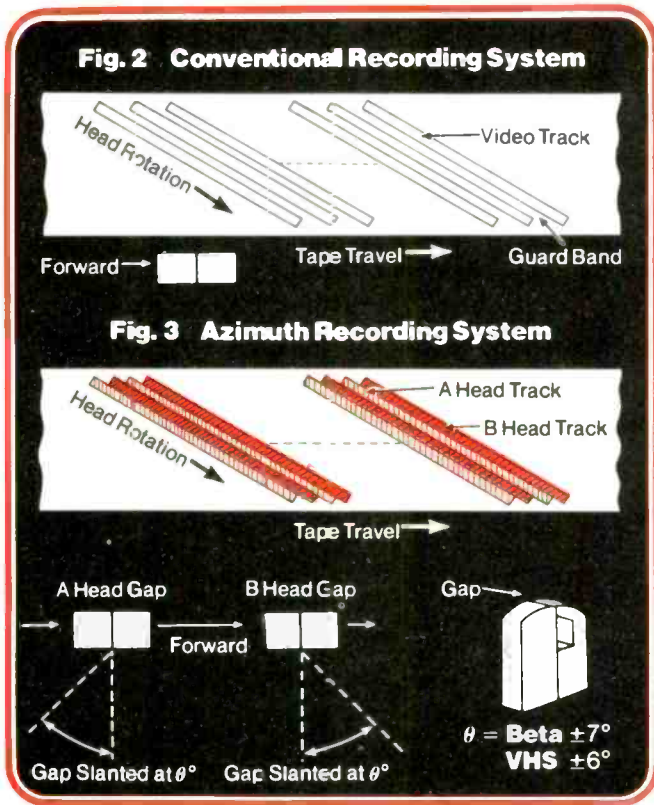
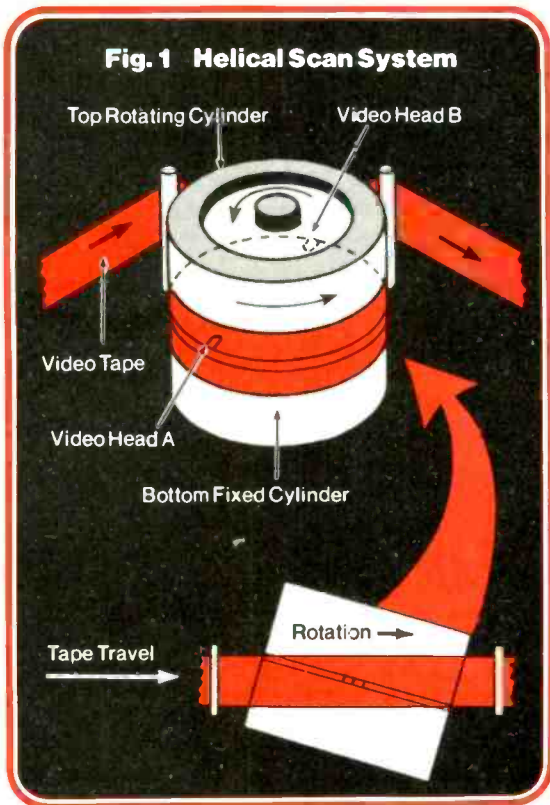
smaller heads. While the number of tracks is constant, the quantity of video information that can fit in a particular field is reduced. Thus a standard-speed-only VCR has the potential for producing pictures of higher quality than those from a multispeed unit.

Tape path. One of the primary differences between Beta and VHS is the tape path or "wrap." Beta machines use a U-shaped wrap. When you insert a cassette and close the compartment door, the plastic protective lid on the cassette and the tape reel locks are released. (A similar action occurs when you insert a cassette in a VHS machine.) For recording and playback, the tape is extracted from the cassette and drawn into a 2-foot-long path. Though somewhat complex, the path is such that you can rewind or fast-forward the tape without subjecting it to the stress of returning it to the cassette.

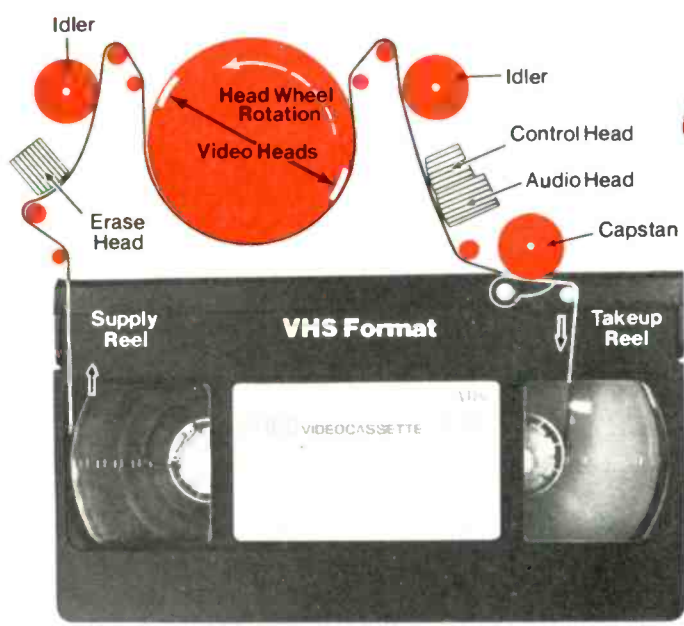
VHS machines use an M-shaped path. When you place the deck in either PLAY or PLAY/RECORD, two guides and two tape-loading rollers extract the tape, moving it against the head drum. (A single guide is used in the Beta system.) While the tape path is simpler than Beta's, it is potentially more stressful. VHS machines must go through STOP before entering a fast-wind mode; since that involves returning the tape to the cassette, maintaining an exact cue point tends to be more difficult on VHS than Beta. However, the time between pressing PLAY and the appearance of a picture on the screen is essentially the same for both formats. (continued on page A8)

Sony's BetaStack cassette changer

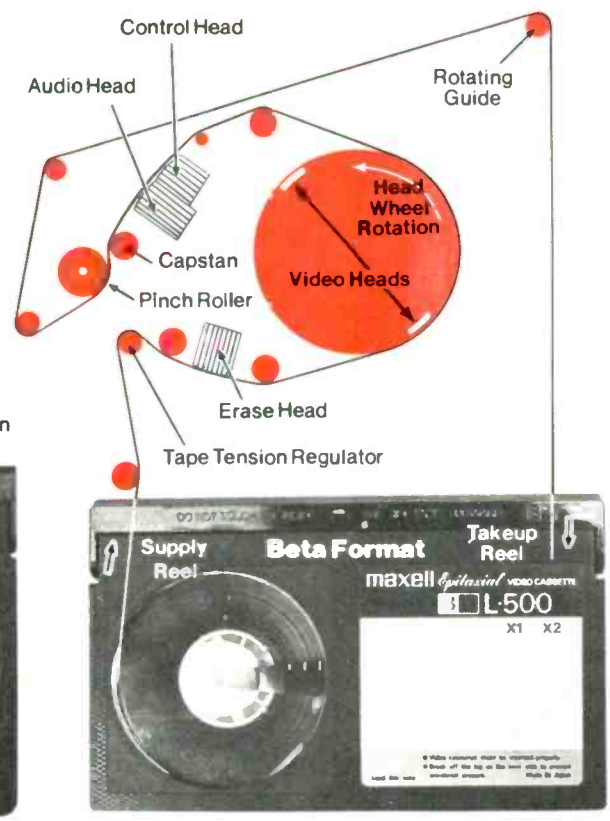




VHS and Beta recorders employ a rapidly rotating drum with two record/play head gaps (above, left). Conventional single-gap recorders require guard bands (top right) to prevent interference (crosstalk) between adjacent tracks. Azimuth recording system offsets head gaps to eliminate bands, increase recording time.



VHS tape path, referred to as an M-wrap, is short and simple. But the tape must return to the cassette before fast-wind operation.



Beta deck's U-wrap uses two feet of tape, but is less stressful to tape than the VHS wrap, allowing fast winding outside of the cassette.

RECORDING TIMES (Minutes)

VHS

Tape Designations	Tape Lengths			
	T-30	T-60	T-90	T-120
Standard Play (3.335 cm/sec)	30	60	90	120
Long Play (1.67 cm/sec)	60	120	180	240
Extended Play (1.14 cm/sec)	90	180	270	360

Beta

	L-125	L-250	L-375	L-500	L-750	L-830
Beta II (2 cm/sec)	30	60	90	120	180	220
Beta III (1.33 cm/sec)	45	90	135	180	270	330

Tape eject mechanism. Another advantage the Beta approach offers is the process of ejecting a tape. When you push EJECT, the threaded portion of the tape winds back into the cassette and the compartment automatically rises to lift the cassette out of the machine. This design allows use of a cassette changer mechanism, such as Sony's BetaStack. Using BetaStack, which holds three cassettes, you can record up to 20 hours of programming automatically. The VHS design does not allow for a changer and, for the immediate future, must rely on longer playing times.

Tape length and speed. In the standard speed mode, VHS tape travels at 3.335 centimeters per second and Beta at 2. To compensate for the slower speed, Beta machines use a larger head drum than do VHS models (74.5mm diameter compared to 62mm), resulting in a higher "writing speed." (The video heads rotate at a constant rate of 30 rps; the greater the diameter of the head drum, the greater the circumferential distance the heads must travel in 1/30 of a second, and thus the higher the linear speed with which they contact the tape.)

As increasing emphasis has been placed on longer recording times, each format has added slower speed modes. (See table.) Currently you'll find VHS machines available with some combination of SP (standard play), LP (long play), and EP (extended play), which yield maximum recording times of 2, 4, and 6 hours,

respectively. Beta machines have Beta II (standard speed) and Beta III (long play) with maximum recording times of 3 and 5 hours, respectively. Very few Beta decks still available will record the original Beta I (1 hour), although some Sony decks allow you to play back these tapes.

The two formats code tape length differently. Beta uses an "L" prefix, followed by the length of the tape in feet. For example, an L-250 records for 1 hour at standard speed. VHS most often uses a "T" prefix, followed by the recording time in minutes. (A few brands employ their own, non-standard designations for VHS tapes.) Thus a T-60 plays for 1 hour at standard speed. Those same tapes have a maximum recording time of 90 minutes (L-250, Beta II) and 180 minutes (T-60, extended play). And therein lies what many see as VHS's strongest advantage over Beta: maximum recording time for a given length of tape. You can fit another 90 minutes of programming on the VHS cassette.

A T-180, which would allow 9 hours of recording, has yet to reach the U.S. market. The Beta camp recently introduced an L-830 tape with a maximum recording time of 5 hours. However, if you were to buy video tape tomorrow, the maximum lengths you'd find at most stores would be T-120 for VHS (365 minutes maximum) and L-750 for Beta (275 minutes maximum).

One important point: The tape lengths and playing times are nominal. A tape manufacturer cannot

realistically produce exactly the same length of tape for each cassette. Usually, reputable companies err on the high side, giving you a few extra feet in case your VCR runs slightly fast, as some do. Bargain brands are apt to try to hit the prescribed length exactly, and when played on a fast VCR, these tapes may yield less than the anticipated recording time.

Incompatibility. The formats are basically incompatible: The Beta cassette is smaller than the VHS's, the tape wrap is different, the recording speed is different. There's simply no way you can play on one system a tape recorded on the other.

But another form of incompatibility often exists *within* each format. This is caused primarily by the reduction in head size that comes with the longer play modes. In multispeed machines, the heads measure only about half the size of those in standard-speed-only models. Regardless of format, if you record a tape at standard speed on a multispeed machine and play it back on a standard-play-only deck, the picture will often be "noisy"; the wider head is picking up video information from the two adjacent tracks as well as from the narrow one it is tracking.

Narrow tape heads also may affect the interchangeability of tapes among machines if the tapes were recorded in a long-playing mode. With the relative reduction in video information on these tapes, decks can have a difficult time locking on to an "alien" signal. Some decks come equipped with tracking and skew controls to overcome the flagging and jittery picture that can result, but the effectiveness varies from tape to tape.

Although Beta was the first modern video cassette system, VHS has enjoyed a substantial margin of popularity almost from the time it became available. Estimates vary, but the consensus is that VHS decks constitute about 75% of home recorders and Beta about 25%. This makes little difference when it comes to buying blank recording tape, since most tape companies offer a full line in both formats. With prerecorded cassettes, you'll find a slightly broader selection of VHS titles, especially if you use rental services.

The issue of which format will ultimately dominate is hardly settled. If Agfa had a 400-ASA film but Kodak's fastest was 300 ASA, would Kodak give up? We don't expect Sony and the other Beta backers to either.

Panasonic PV-2100 VCR/PK-600 Camera:

A Full Measure of Enjoyment

by Edward J. Foster

Being a reviewer has its perquisites, not least of which is a chance to live with new equipment before deciding whether to buy it. After a while, one can become blasé and lose interest in purchasing new toys for the home-entertainment system. But a couple of years ago, when I reviewed a VCR (VHS format, Panasonic's PV-1500, as I recall), the bug bit. By the time I returned it, my family and I were hooked.

Whereas the review sample was an in-home model, I could see the advantages of a portable. We have an All-American swimmer in the family (my elder daughter), and I wanted to record the races. Movie film is quite expensive; film shot under pool-deck lighting conditions had proved disappointing, especially in color balance. It's downright frustrating to miss the end of a 200-meter backstroke because you ran out of super 8 film. But the cost per minute of videotape is so low that you can afford

to be profligate. Besides, you can use the tape again and again, so it would be great for recording practice sessions.

I chose Panasonic's PV-2100, a 2-hour/4-hour VHS system. Typical of portables both then and now, it comes with a tuner/power supply separate from the VCR itself. The PV-2200, with its electronic (pushbutton) tuner, was tempting, but I opted for the less expensive, rotary-tuned version since both models use the same VCR and, in this case, the electronic tuner does not offer any greater sophistication in unattended recording. Either model would limit me to one recording cycle in a 24-hour period on a preset station. Without the seven-day timer and multiple-program capability of the PV-1500, I saw little reason to pay more for the convenience of pushbutton tuning; the money would be better spent on a higher-quality camera. *(continued on next page)*



My choice of camera was Panasonic's then top-of-the-line PK-600 — a color model with electrically operated 6:1 zoom lens, automatic iris control with a maximum f-stop of 1.8, and electronic viewfinder. The wide zoom ratio and fast lens struck me as particularly important at a swim meet. You never know where you'll be sitting, and in the past I'd found the zoom lens on my 35-mm SLR absolutely essential. The electronic viewfinder — really a 1.5-inch, black-and-white CRT — not only would show me what I was taping, but would provide instant replay from the VCR without requiring me to lug a TV set around.

But the CRT consumes power, and battery life therefore becomes considerably shorter than when using a camera with an optical finder. To compensate, I bought two extra rechargeable batteries. (Batteries can be changed easily in the field; see photo below.) Figuring on 20 minutes of recording time per battery, I would be safe for an hour (or so I thought). Finally, I added a pair of 20-foot camera-extension cables that, together with the 10-foot cable attached to the camera, would let me roam up to 50 feet — the maximum permissible distance with the Panasonic system — from the VCR. I also purchased a carrying case to protect the VCR.

The first thing you discover with a portable VCR is that 20 pounds feels like 20 tons when it's hanging as deadweight from your shoulder. The ads showing the smiling father racing alongside his son between third and home plate are just fantasy — at least for me. Merely hauling all the gear into the stands is a struggle. Of course, there are lighter VCRs than the PV-2100; its die-cast chassis and solenoid controls add weight. But these elements should enable the deck to withstand the abuse a portable typically is subjected to better than one of less rugged construction — a significant consideration, in my opinion.

The next thing you learn is how to conserve power. No matter what portable system you use, you shouldn't expect to get its rated recording time each time out. The actual energy stored in a rechargeable battery depends on many things: how old it is, how recently and how fully it was charged, its history of charge/discharge cycles, and the temperature at which it was charged and is being used. On a cold day, expect less recording time per battery and bring another spare. You can increase battery life by pressing STOP instead of the remote pause (on the camera) whenever you'll not be taping for a few minutes. In PAUSE the camera and the VCR motors still draw power. In fact, you can run down the battery without taping a thing; STOP saves this power and, incidentally, reduces wear on the VCR drive mechanism and heads. And since you'll probably be working close to the VCR most of

Placement of function and transport controls allows easy use in the field.



Author adjusts the blue color balance on the Panasonic PK-600 camera, then (next page) sights and shoots.

the time, you can easily reach the STOP button. I've seldom used my extension cables, not only to save power, but because I'm wary of having someone cut the cable and walk off with my VCR while I'm 50 feet deep in a crowd.

The PK-600 camera has a three-position color-temperature switch with manual trim of red and blue via separate knobs. With the manual controls at their center-detent positions, the system is balanced for studio light (3,200°K) or for bright daylight (5,000°K or 6,500°K) via the switch. When lighting conditions are not perfect, you select the closest switch setting and trim the red and blue levels for minimum reading on the WHITE BALANCE/ILLUMINATION meter. I've found the controls easy to use and not extremely critical: color rendition, in general, has been excellent. Even with unusual lighting — for example, fluorescents — color reproduction has been acceptable. I've also found that I can get adequate results at lower-than-normal light levels, indicated by the orange "low-light" LED in the viewfinder. A green light signals that the VCR

is recording. Both LEDs are at the edge of the screen, making them difficult to see if you wear glasses.

Using the PK-600 is a snap. Except for the color-balance switch and controls and the fact that you frame and focus a black-and-white video display rather than seeing a color image on ground glass, operation is very similar to a movie-film camera. Focal length changes smoothly and automatically when you press the fore or aft section of the zoom rocker switch, or you can zoom mechanically by grasping the zoom lever on the lens. The lens is focused by rotating the forward portion of the lens barrel. It strikes me as a bit more difficult to focus the black-and-white image rather than the true color image, but you adapt. One warning: Never point the uncovered lens of a video camera at the sun or other strong light.

Whether the camera is powered up or not, you may damage the tube irreparably.

You start the recorder by pressing the trigger on the camera grip; it locks and must be squeezed again to release it and stop recording. Actually, the switch is the remote PAUSE control I referred to before. You must put the deck into the record mode by pressing the appropriate buttons on the VCR and, if you want to stop (rather than pause), must again use the deck's controls. The microphone, mounted on the top of the viewfinder, can be extended, or it can be removed and used remotely. The foam screen reduces wind noise when working outdoors; recording level is set automatically via an ALC. Sound quality is hardly up to high fidelity standards, but it's acceptable — better than that on sound-movie cameras.

While I've made good use of the PV-2100 "on location," it has seen even more service at home. Setting it up for off-the-air recording and for playing video tapes is so easy that anyone should be able to do it. The tuner and VCR connect via two cables: A multiconductor cable, designed to plug in only one way, transfers power and controls signals; a coaxial cable to handle the signal screws into place (be careful not to bend the center wire). When the VCR is connected to the tuner, the battery is charged (as needed) whenever power is supplied. An LED on the tuner section indicates that the battery is charging; when it's fully charged, the LED is off. A jack on the front of the tuner allows a second battery to be charged. (It's a good idea to "top up" each battery once a month or so, when they're used infrequently.)

VHF connections are via 75-ohm coax jacks on the tuner. The antenna hooks up to one, and the TV set to the other. For UHF, 300-ohm (twinlead) binding posts connect the antenna and TV to the tuner. Coax and twinlead cables to the TV are supplied, as are 75-ohm-to-300-ohm and 300-ohm-to-75-ohm balun transformers so that, even if your VHF antenna or TV are not designed for coax fittings, you can easily make the conversion. Whenever the TV/VTR switch on the tuner is set to VTR, the TV must be set to channel 3 (or 4, whichever is unused in your area) to receive signal. This may be the signal being received by the VCR tuner or the program being reproduced by the recorder. Whenever the tuner is turned off, the selector switch automatically returns your television to normal operation.

Over the past year, the family and I have used the VCR to record specials we didn't want to miss while we were away. We've outwitted the networks' penchant for putting the best shows on against each other by taping one

for later viewing; we've seen the late late show without being bleary-eyed the next day; we've taped movies and plays that had some special meaning for us for our "permanent" collection; and we've rented movies on VCR tape. In short, we've used the VCR in about every way we could. It's difficult to say which way we've used it most.

In some instances we intended only to "time shift" but liked the program so much that we kept the tape (commercials and all) to show to others. After several viewings, we've often tired of a program or movie and put the tape back in the "to be reused" pile, even though we originally had intended to keep it.

We've turned on to movie rentals, both from large chains such as Fotomat and from local stores and clubs. In general, the quality has been very good, and rentals are economical since it's pretty hard for a family of four to go out to see a flick for \$10 or \$15. Sure, you can't rent what's playing currently in the theater, but some of the best movies of all time are on tape, and they're *not* shown in the local movie house. Even if the same movie may be rerun on TV, we've found we prefer to rent — if only to get the uncut version. During the rental period (usually a week), we're likely to view the tape twice.

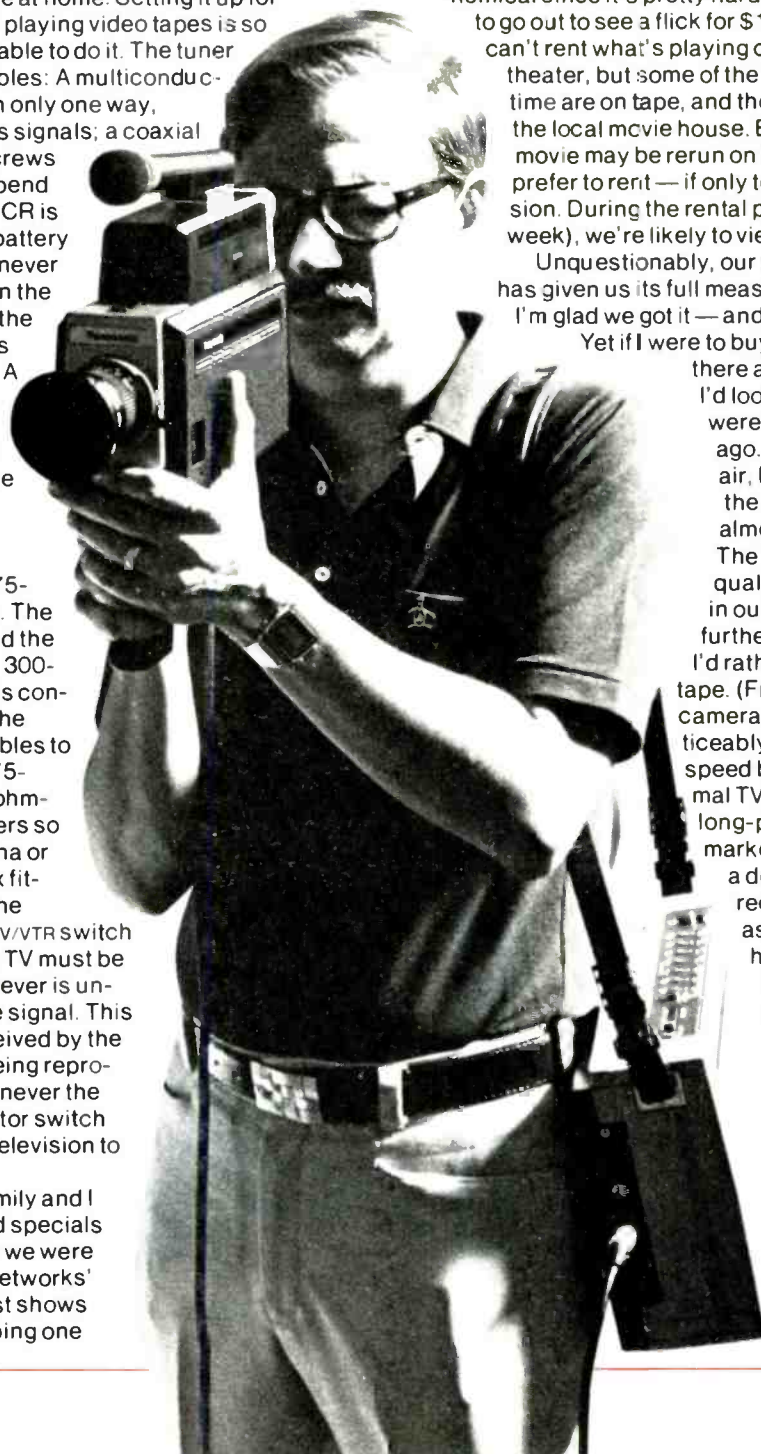
Unquestionably, our video recorder outfit has given us its full measure of enjoyment.

I'm glad we got it — and got it when we did.

Yet if I were to buy a system today, there are certain things I'd look for that simply weren't available a year ago. For taping off the air, I've come to use the LP (4-hour) speed almost exclusively.

The less-than-perfect quality of TV reception in our area is degraded further at slow speed, so I'd rather save money on tape. (From the PK-600 camera, the picture is noticeably better at standard speed but better than normal TV reception even at long-play.) Going into the market now, I'd look for a deck with 6-hour recording capability as well as 2 and 4 hours. And I'd like the facility of a fourteen-day, multi-event programmer — already available in home recorders — in the portable format.

Given my fondness for taping sporting events, I'd look for a portable with less
(cont'd on page A15)





Record Now...



How to set up your VCR to tape TV programs

by Edward J. Foster

Technologically complicated? Yes, but also remarkably easy to use. The video cassette recorder, or VCR, is — short of a computer — about the most complex piece of home-entertainment equipment that you can buy. Yet VCRs have been designed for the mass market, and operating them is as simple as or simpler than operating an audio cassette recorder.

Converting your new toy to record TV shows involves a number of easy steps. Details on hookup and operation differ from model to model, of course (which will be explained in the instructions with the machine). But in general, here's what you can expect.

Initial Hookup. First disconnect the VHF (channels 2 through 13) antenna from your TV set and attach it to the VCR. Your antenna lead will be either 300-ohm twinlead or 75-ohm coax. The former usually is a flat lead with two wires running parallel to each other; coax cable is round and ordinarily terminates with a screw-on connector. The VCR may have only a coax VHF input connector. If your present cable is coax, you're all set; if not, you'll need a 300-ohm-to-75-ohm balun transformer. Frequently one is supplied with the VCR, and it also should be available at radio-parts stores. If you receive UHF (channels 14 through 83) transmissions in your area, move the UHF-antenna lead from TV to VCR as well. It's almost always a 300-ohm twinlead connection, both on the set and the VCR.

Next connect the VCR's VHF output and UHF output to their respective

antenna inputs on the TV. Again, the latter usually is a 300-ohm twinlead hookup, and the former of the 75-ohm coax type. A length of 300-ohm line and a coax jumper cable may come with the VCR. Many modern TV sets have 300-ohm and 75-ohm VHF inputs. If yours does, simply connect the coax jumper from the VCR's VHF output to the TV's VHF input, even if you previously had used the TV's twinlead input. (If the TV has an input switch, put it in the 75-ohm position.)

Basic Setup. The VCR may have a three-position input selector (tuner/line/camera); put it in the tuner position. Select either channel 3 or 4 on the RF-converter switch, depending on which is unused in your area. The VCR will then translate whatever channel it's receiving to the designated channel (3 or 4) and send this to the TV.

The VCR also will have a two-position switch marked TV/VCR (or VTR for video tape recorder). In TV, the television set receives signals from the antenna and can be tuned to receive any channel in your region just as if the VCR were not connected. In VCR, the TV gets its signal from the VCR output and must be tuned to channel 3 or 4 to receive a picture.

Use TV to play a recorded tape or to monitor what the machine is doing. (Some models will let you monitor in this fashion *only* in the record or play mode. In other modes, the TV screen will be snowy, as when tuned to a blank channel.) Use TV to see a channel *other* than the one the VCR is recording. Since the VCR is always connected to the antenna, you can record one program while watching another by switching to TV and tuning the station you want to watch on the TV tuner. You can record that or any other station on the VCR by selecting it with the VCR tuner. (Note: If your TV stations come in on cable, connections among the cable converter, the VCR, and the TV may be different than we have described, and you may not be able to watch one station while recording another without renting two cable converters.)

Initial Adjustments. The VCR has its own TV tuner, which must be adjusted for best reception. Most instruction manuals suggest that, when setting up the VCR for the first time, you switch off its AFC (automatic frequency control) before fine tuning each channel in your area with the controls on this tuner. That done, you switch on the AFC to assure continued good reception. (You should also fine tune your TV to the channel 3 or 4 output of the VCR.) *(continued on page A15)*

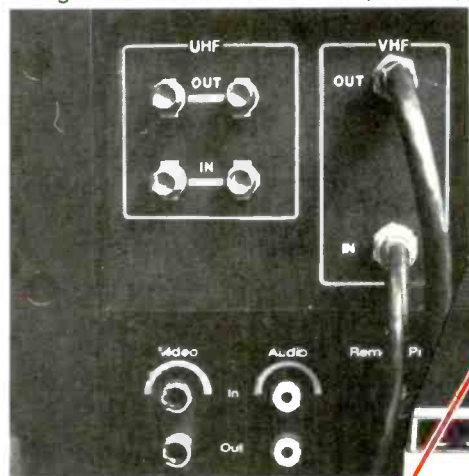


...View Later

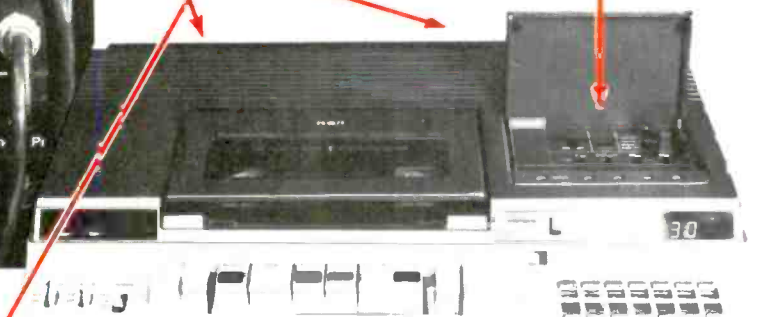


Disconnect the VHF antenna from the TV and connect it to the VCR. The antenna lead-in will be either the 300-ohm type (flat, with two wires running parallel to each other) or 75-ohm coax (shielded, circular cable). So-called balun transformers are available at radio/TV stores to convert 300 ohms to 75, or vice versa, if your VCR and antenna lead don't match.

Connect the VCR's VHF and UHF outputs to the appropriate inputs on your TV, using the correct wires or cables (see text).

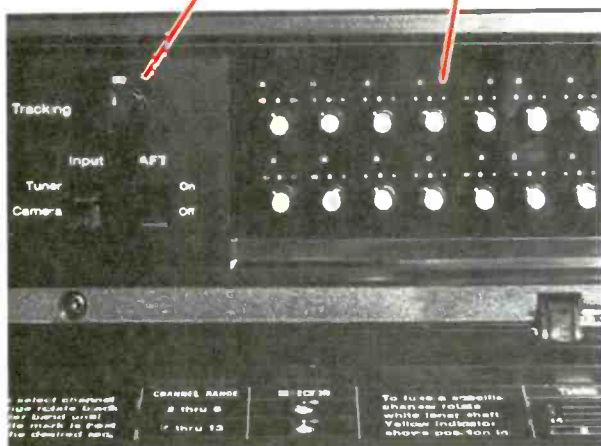


Set the timer clock to the correct time including a.m. or p.m. Normally no battery backup is provided, so if power is lost or you unplug the VCR, you must reset the time. Some models flash "12:00" when power is restored.



Set the switches on your VCR to the proper positions. Switch TUNER/LINE/CAMERA to TUNER, the RF converter to channel 3 or 4, and TV/VCR to the appropriate position (see text).

Adjust your VCR's tuner for best reception. In most instances, you should disengage the AFT during fine tuning and switch it back on after completing adjustments.



(continued on next page)

Recording

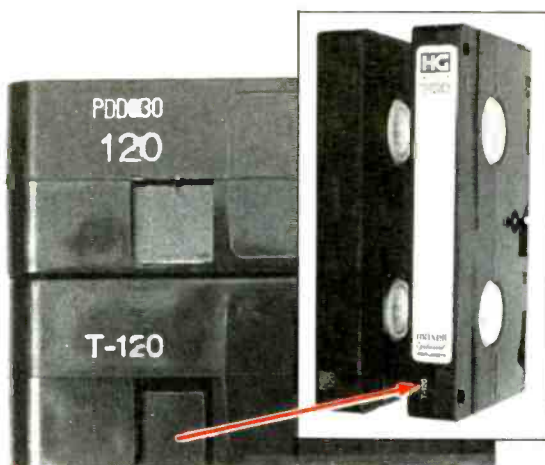
Recording



Select the appropriate tape speed and length. As sound quality and picture detail suffer slightly from reduced speed, you should make some test recordings to determine if you want to use any of the extended-play modes. Always select high-quality blank tape.



Recording is simple: Insert a blank cassette, reset the tape counter to zero, and punch RECORD and PLAY simultaneously.



Some taped programs you will want to erase; others you will want to save permanently. A knockout tab on the rear of the cassette will prevent accidental erasure. Arrow shows position of the tab.

For commercial-free recording, use the FUSE button, which usually is included on remote-control units, providing ergonomic ease of operation.



Unattended operation is slightly more complex. With the switch set for TIMER RECORD, enter the start and finish times into memory. With multi-day, multi-event VCRs, you must key in the channels and days as well. Once the information is entered, depress RECORD and PLAY, and the unit will turn on and off at the correct time.

RECORD NOW (continued)

Most VCRs have a self-contained digital clock that controls the "unattended-recording" feature. Switch to the "time set" mode and press the buttons or levers until the display indicates the correct time. Usually buttons are provided to set hours and minutes separately. The display advances one count for each press of the button; hold it down, and the count advances slowly at first, then more rapidly. If you overshoot, some systems let you reverse the count. Be sure the display has the appropriate a.m. or p.m. reading. Once the clock is set, leave the VCR plugged in. If you lose power, the clock must be reset.

Choosing Tape and Speed. At this point, you're set to record. Choose a recording speed and tape length appropriate for the program. Initially, it's a good idea to check out your VCR at each speed. Slower speeds provide more recording time per given length of tape, but picture and sound quality will be degraded somewhat.

But often these differences are difficult to detect. If your TV already has limited audio and video response — and many do — or if reception in your region is marginal, the extended-play modes may capture all the audio and video information available. The better your TV reception is, the higher quality you will be likely to demand from the VCR, and you may be dissatisfied with slow-speed operation.

Obviously, you want a good quality tape, especially if you intend to use the slowest speed. Some new tapes are specifically formulated for extended play. In any case, beware of counterfeit or off-brand products.

How to Record. It is even simpler to record with your VCR than with an audio cassette deck because recording levels are set automatically. All you need do is pop in a cassette — it only goes in one way, so don't force it — press RECORD and PLAY simultaneously, and you're in operation. Of course, you should check a few things first: Be sure that the input selector is on TUNER (if you wish to record off the air) and that the VCR tuner is on the correct channel. It's useful to reset the tape counter to zero at the start of the program so you can return to the beginning via MEMORY REWIND.

Commercials can be deleted by pressing PAUSE, which stops the tape but keeps everything else active. Most VCRs have a remote pause that allows you to control the deck from your easy

chair. Check your instruction manual for how long you can leave it in PAUSE without damage. There's usually some limitation, but that's no reason not to use the feature. PAUSE gives you virtually seamless editing; pressing STOP will often cause the picture to be lost momentarily when it is played back. And, after STOP, the recording mode must be re-entered by pressing RECORD and PLAY simultaneously.

Other Controls. Most controls on a VCR are self-explanatory; besides those just mentioned, there will be a FAST FORWARD and REWIND and perhaps controls for slow motion, stop motion, etc. There will be a control to EJECT the cassette; usually STOP must be pressed first. AUDIO DUB will allow you to re-record a soundtrack without affecting the picture — useful when transferring slides to video tape or improving a home recording.

One peculiarity of VCRs is their susceptibility to dampness. If moisture has condensed on internal parts, the system can be damaged in use. Thus, built-in moisture sensors, such as a "dew" lamp, prevent inadvertent operation under these conditions.

Unattended Operation. Most VCRs offer some form of unattended recording. You can set up the system to record in your absence by loading a tape, setting a switch for timer record, entering the start and finish times into memory, and pressing RECORD and PLAY. At the proper times, the deck will record the channel you've selected on the tuner and then turn itself off.

Models differ in this capability. On the simplest level are the decks that can be programmed for one recording cycle in the following 24-hour period. More sophisticated decks let you set programs for the next seven- or fourteen-day period. Some allow you to go through several recording cycles during that period; that is, you can record a series of programs in your absence by telling the deck the day, the start and stop time of each, and the channel on which each occurs.

Reusing a Tape. Just as with an audio cassette, you can reuse the same tape many times; the previous recording is erased as the new one is recorded. To prevent accidental erasure, knockout tabs are provided on every cassette. If you wish to save the program, break off the tab, and the tape cannot be re-recorded. If you change your mind — and there's a limit to how many times anyone wants to

watch the same movie — covering the hole with a piece of tape will trick the VCR into re-recording.

Of course, re-recording a short program over a long one leaves the "tail" of the original still on the tape. You can get rid of it by switching the VCR to an unused input (line or camera) and recording through to the end of tape. Considering the recording time (as much as 6 hours in the new VHS format), this can be a nuisance. You might want to buy a bulk eraser to wipe the entire tape clean.

Video taping is addictive. Once you familiarize yourself with what a VCR can do — from taping off-the-air broadcasts or slide shows to making home movies — you find yourself using it more and more frequently. It rapidly becomes an indispensable part of your home-entertainment system.

HANDS-ON REPORT (continued)

weight (without sacrificing ruggedness) and one that could record for a longer period on a single battery. (But I'd not forgo the electronic viewfinder of my PK-600.) I'd also like slow-motion and stop-motion playback, which have been available in the Beta format and are now appearing in VHS, and I'd like to be able to recharge the battery in the field (when I'm away several days at a time) without dragging the tuner along.

A VCR is a complex piece of equipment, and a portable does take its share of abuse while you're carrying it from place to place. Despite the care we've used to keep it from harm, our system has been back for service twice since we've had it. (In fact, it was out for repair when pictures for this article were shot, and the unit shown is a newer model — the PV-3100.) The first fault occurred when the deck refused to release a cassette and, in fact, went totally dead with the cassette inside. The second problem occurred soon afterward: The battery wouldn't charge internally. We were fortunate to have a solid warranty agreement, and I'd recommend that you read the warranty card before purchasing a VCR.

While this report has dealt exclusively with a Panasonic system, many of the features and procedures are similar to those on other models. Certainly the portable format is one of the most exciting elements of home video, and one whose versatility is sure to attract an increasing number of people.

Coming in February's VIDEO TODAY

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Video Music: Fact or Fantasy?

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Credits: A9, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, Robert Curtis

THE FIRST SPANS (continued)

Goko, a company that has created some of the most sophisticated sound-editing equipment for super 8, seems to be applying equal imagination to the video field. The elaborate label, Goko Multipurpose Video Camera System, matches a truly versatile arrangement.

You start out with Goko's GK-100 video camera and add various elements to perform specific functions. Want to transfer super 8 film images to video? Mount the GK-100 atop what appears to be one of Goko's motorized sound-editing machines, and you have the Goko Telecine System TC-20. It accepts up to 800 feet of super 8 sound or silent film and projects at 18 or 24 fps for video display. Because a 24-faceted polygon prism is used in place of a conventional shutter, flicker is eliminated. (Unfortunately, the model on display produced a slightly unsteady video image. But this could have been due to improper adjustment or damage during shipping.) As a bonus, the rotating prism allows variable slow and fast motion speeds that can be edited into a video tape transfer of your film.

If you stack the camera with Goko's Video Slide System SS-30, you can view your slides on TV or transfer them to video tape. A special mechanism fades images out and in for smooth dissolves with none of the intermittent black-screen effect experienced during conventional slide projection. Two mount cartridges (each containing 20 slides), automatic changer, and sound sync possibilities (via your VCR) are part of the package.

Mount the GK-100 on a small camera stand — supplied by Goko — and aim its close-focusing zoom lens into a little white box called the Video Album System VS-10. This setup is the most versatile of the lot, since it allows you to reshoot snapshots,

slides, movies, and artwork (such as titles), then combine all these elements and transfer them to video tape. All stationary artwork is mounted in the box, while movies must be projected through a lens/mirror component in the back. A separate control unit enables you to add special effects, such as dubbing sound, producing fades, and executing quick cuts and wipes.

Goko Video Album System VS-10

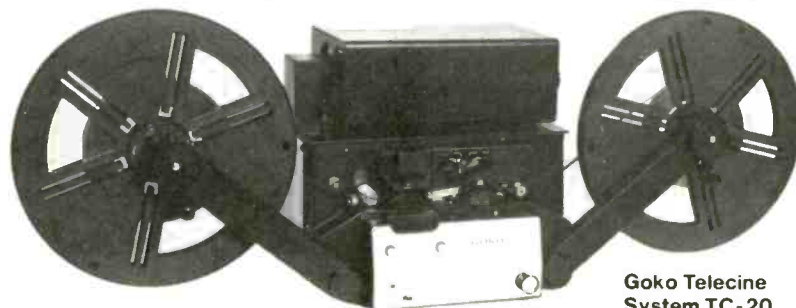


For the scientifically minded, Goko makes the Micro Video System MV-40, which contains a sturdy microscope stage with the usual adjustments. Goko has designed a special lens barrel to fit the GK-100 camera; you supply your own microscope objective lenses. Goko's idea of providing a microscopic display system for more than one observer is extremely practical for students and medical personnel. And micrography, combined with slides and film on video tape, would seem perfect for creating professional-looking educational programs.

Not all of these products may be ready for U.S. import. But you can find out more about Goko from Riley Marketing, Inc., 1245 Goodnight Lane, Suite 15, Dallas, Tex. 75229.

The issue here is not whether it will be film or tape that dominates in the coming decade; rivalry will not help either. Instead, the focus should be on their interaction for the benefit of both. The products seen at Photokina and other exhibitions throughout the past year — though few in number — indicate that the first spans of the bridge between them have already been built.

— Tony Galluzzo



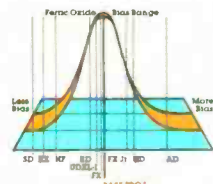
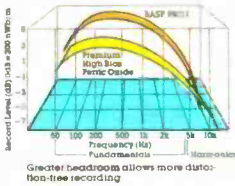
Goko Telecine
System TC-20

The Tape Guide

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The one tape that stands up when you crank it up.



Premium ferric oxide tapes have more headroom which allows higher maximum recording levels (MRL). Among all premium ferric oxides PRO I has the best MRL for loud recordings. Uniform maghemite particles provide increased headroom for very accurate and loud recordings with virtually no distortion. In the fundamental music range (20Hz-5kHz) PRO I can be



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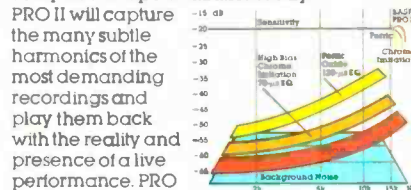
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The pure chromium dioxide particles in the PRO II, unlike ferric oxide particles, are homogeneously shaped and uniformly sized to give that tape superior performance



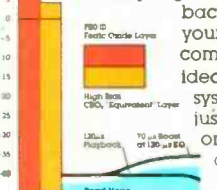
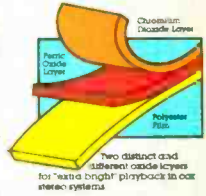
PRO II has the best high frequency sensitivity and the least background noise of any high bias tape

PRO II will capture the many subtle harmonics of the most demanding recordings and play them back with the reality and presence of a live performance. PRO II is the tape for the Type II/chrome/high bias position that comes closest to Metal tape performance for half the price.

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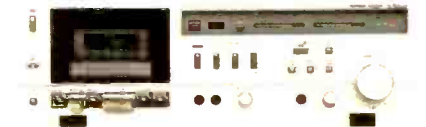
So before you settle for a deck that will set you back \$10 or more every time you want a quality recording, audition the new Harman Kardon Decks with Dolby HX.

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The New Young Lions

by Bridget Paolucci

An informal tabulation of artists pegged for recording stardom in the coming decade by those in the business



Who will become the classical recording stars of the 1980s? Obviously, many young artists merit success, but only some possess the kind of distinctive talent that makes a career promising, and even fewer will receive the extra "push" from managements and record companies that ultimately establishes a name. To find out who those few may be, we polled thirty-five of the people in the best positions to spot them—recording executives, managers, and agents—for their views. We asked them particularly to name performers who already have made at least one recording, so that readers can sample their talent.

The determination of who is and who is not already "established" was crucial. To mention just one obvious omission, only a couple of years ago Hildegard Behrens would have been included, but her first recording, as Herbert von Karajan's *Salome* (Angel SBLX 3848), suddenly made her an international recording star. Here, then, are those still on the rise:

Most often tapped for success is the twenty-five-year-old cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Born in Paris of Chinese parents in 1955, he gave his first recital at the University of Paris at age six. In 1962, his family moved to New York, and the next year, on the recommendation of Pablo Casals, he performed under Leonard Bernstein in a coast-to-coast telecast celebrating the opening of the Kennedy

Center. The boy studied in the pre-college program at Juilliard, graduated from high school at fifteen, and after a short stint at Columbia University, decided to enroll at Harvard. He and his wife, Jill, reside in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Ma's technique seems effortless: Intonation is secure, the sound infinitely varied. His warmth, exuberance and serenity shine through in his music. He has appeared with most major American orchestras and makes international tours annually. In 1978, he was the winner of the Avery Fisher Prize.

His recent recording of Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* (Deutsche Grammophon 2531 262) with Anne-Sophie Mutter and Mark Zeltser, all selected and conducted by Karajan, has received worldwide acclaim. In his September review, Harris Goldsmith called the cellist "incredible." Ma is now under exclusive contract to CBS, which issued two recordings last fall: cello concertos by Lalo and Saint-Saëns (digital, IM 35848; reviewed in this issue) and the Haydn concerto (M 36674).

This season Ma is touring as part of a newly formed trio with pianist Emanuel Ax and violinist Young Uck Kim. The Ax-Kim-Ma Trio is bound to attract attention, not simply because of its cryptic name, but because it comprises three gifted soloists, each committed to the art of ensemble playing

Emanuel Ax, himself one of the anticipated recording stars, claims that he never wants to "lose the proportion of

chamber music." The thirty-one-year-old pianist eschews the prima donna attitude even as a soloist with orchestra: "I am comfortable viewing a concerto as a collaborative effort. The pianist also has to adapt."

His father had been a coach at the opera house in Lvov, Poland, when Emanuel was born. His family moved to Warsaw when he was eight, then to Winnipeg, and finally to New York, where he entered Juilliard. His break came in 1973, when he won the Arthur Rubinstein International Competition in Tel Aviv and, with it, an American tour.

Ax insists that pianists "all try to do exactly the same thing. We try to play what's written. What's distinctive is going to be there anyhow. It's just you." When he takes the stage, he looks like an ordinary young man. But when he plays, the effortless technique, warmth, and lyricism are not at all ordinary. His genuine humility and sense of commitment often result in self-effacing performances of great sensitivity. His style is often called poetic.

So is that of Yuri Egorov. But it is poetry of a vastly different kind—brooding, tense, and highly personal. This twenty-six-year-old Russian pianist defected from the Soviet Union in 1976 during a tour of Italy. He asked the Italian police to take him to the Dutch authorities for asylum and has lived in Amsterdam ever since.

In 1977, Egorov entered the Van C'iburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth and lost; this "failure" proved to be the turning point of his



career. Some members of the audience—including impresario Maxim Gershu-noff—were distressed that he did not make the finals, and banded together to raise funds to promote his career. The following January, he made his Carnegie Hall debut, an event that prompted Goldsmith to hail him in *MUSICAL AMERICA* as “one of the most sensational and genuine new talents to emerge in many years.” Egorov already has three recordings to his credit, including his December 1978 Carnegie Hall recital (Peters PLE 121) and a brilliantly colored reading of Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* (PLE 113).

Another adulated young Russian pianist is Andrei Gavrilov, twenty-five, winner of the 1974 International Tchaikovsky Competition. His father is a painter, his mother a musician who has closely supervised her son’s career. The young Gavrilov studied at the Moscow Conservatory and made a much-praised debut outside the U.S.S.R. at eighteen when he replaced an indisposed Sviatoslav Richter at the Salzburg Festival.

Gavrilov has developed his own recording technique for solo albums. He makes hundreds of short takes, barely pausing between them and constantly refining and revising as he goes along. His recording of Prokofiev’s Concerto No. 1 and Ravel’s Concerto in D (Angel S 37486) was a major contender in 1979’s International Record Critics Awards, and his Rachmaninoff Third (Melodiya/Eurodisc 28354KK, never released here)

a top nominee the previous year.

The conductor of the Prokofiev/Ravel performances was twenty-five-year-old Englishman Simon Rattle, whose rise to success has been phenomenal. His professional career began as a percussionist with the Liverpool Philharmonic when he was fifteen. He took conducting lessons from Pierre Boulez and at sixteen won a scholarship to London’s Royal Academy of Music to study conducting and piano. Three years later, he won the John Player International Conductors Competition. In his 1976 Royal Festival Hall debut with the Philharmonia, he became the youngest ever to direct that orchestra, and he has returned each season since. (“There’s a shortage of conductors,” he quips.) He reveres the late Wilhelm Furtwängler and regards Carlo Maria Giulini as his mentor. In the U.S., Rattle has led the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Chicago and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras.

This year, apparently feeling a need to round out his education—particularly in the literature that absorbs so much of his time and attention as he travels from one engagement to another—he is studying English literature at Oxford. He became principal conductor and artistic adviser of the Birmingham (England) Symphony Orchestra this season, allowing him to keep his hand in while devoting the bulk of his time to his studies.

Polish pianist Krystian Zimerman is also taking the year to focus on other

subjects, in his case art and languages. He first attracted international attention in 1975 as the youngest pianist ever to win the Chopin Competition in Warsaw. Although he does not want to be branded a Chopin specialist, his Chopin is splendid indeed. His recording of the waltzes (DG 2530 965) is fresh, clear, and elegant, with passages of great lyricism and moments of fragile grace.

Zimerman, born in Poland in 1956, studied piano first with his father. By age eight, he was playing his own compositions on television. After he won the Chopin Competition, the Polish government provided his family with an old villa where Krystian could practice undisturbed. Numerous offers of concerts and recitals have poured in, but he has been selective about public appearances, feeling a need for time away from performing to develop repertoire as well as to pursue his other interests.

Havana-born Horacio Gutiérrez, thirty-one, displayed what Goldsmith called a “demonic energy reminiscent of Horowitz” in his premiere recording, the 1976 coupling of the Liszt and Tchaikovsky First Concertos under André Previn (Angel S 37177). At age eleven, Gutiérrez started playing with the Havana Symphony Orchestra, but in 1962, after two years of the Castro regime, his family decided to come to the U.S., settling in Los Angeles. In 1967, he went to New York to study at Juilliard and “to be in the center of music and theater. I’m a very big fan of theater, you know. It’s my second love.”



When asked about his goals, he replies, with what can only be described as fervor: "Ultimately, I want my performances to be totally pure musical experiences—no awareness of technique, no awareness that I am 'doing things' to the music. From beginning to end, a sense of inevitability." He cites Rachmaninoff's records as an example: "No barriers, nothing is chopped."

His performances are as colorful and vibrant as his speech. Paul Hume of *The Washington Post* has called Gutierrez "a giant of the piano," and a *London Times* critic reported: "His virtuosity is the kind of which legends are made."

Russia dominates the list of promising violinists, but only one still lives in the Soviet Union. The youngest of the lot, twenty-three-year-old Shlomo Mintz, emigrated as a boy to Israel, where he was discovered by Isaac Stern. "I found him when he was about ten years old," says Stern with a kind of paternal pride. "I hear students in Israel all the time, and Shlomo was the recipient of an America-Israel Foundation scholarship there." The master violinist arranged for the boy to go to New York with his family. Mintz graduated in 1978 from Juilliard, where his harmony teacher Michael Czajkowski often taught him in a tutorial situation, to work around his international concert commitments.

Stern says Mintz is "always in search of human contact, impulsive, warm. He's developing beautifully both as a person and as a performer. His play-

ing demands the listener's ears, and that's the first thing an artist needs. He has a certain urgency of style." His recording of the Bruch First and Mendelssohn concertos with the Chicago Symphony under Claudio Abbado will be released shortly by DG.

The Latvian Gidon Kremer, born in Riga thirty-three years ago, was a protégé of the late David Oistrakh, with whom he studied at the Moscow Conservatory for eight years. The young violinist won prizes in Brussels (1967), Montreal (1969), and Genoa (1969), resulting in many invitations to perform in the West, but the Soviet government barred trips outside the country for a time. After he won the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1970, he was permitted only to play with orchestras in Budapest and Vienna, and then there were no more performances abroad until 1974, when Oistrakh arranged Kremer's first recital in Vienna. Numerous concert tours in Europe and the U.S. followed, and in 1978 the Soviet Cultural Ministry finally gave him permission to travel freely.

It was about this time that his parents applied for visas to Israel (his father is of Jewish extraction), but on the way they stopped in Heidelberg and ended up staying there. Gidon and his wife, meanwhile, had been spending a good deal of time in West Germany, and when, last August, the Soviet government ordered them home, they refused and asked for political asylum.

Kremer enjoys playing little-

known works. Among his numerous recordings for Melodiya and other East Bloc labels is Alfred Schnittke's Concerto Grosso for Two Violins (Tatjana Grindenko is the other violinist), Strings, Cembalo, and Prepared Piano, coupled with the Sibelius concerto and conducted by Gennady Rozhdestvensky (available here on Vanguard VSD 71255). Also on Vanguard (VSD 71227) are the Mozart Concerto in G, K. 216, and the Concertone for Two Violins, K. 190, which he conducts as well as plays, again with Grindenko. From Western studios are his Brahms concerto with Karajan (Angel S 37226) and his highly acclaimed Serenade by Bernstein, the composer conducting the Israel Philharmonic (DG 2531 196). More recently, Kremer recorded an album of French music (including, besides the popular Chausson *Poème*, such rarities as the "cinéma-fantaisie" version of Milhaud's *Le Boeuf sur le toit*).

Conducting this last is Riccardo Chailly. He was born in Milan in 1953, son of Luciano Chailly, who is well known in Italy as a composer and musicologist. Young Chailly studied piano and composition at the Milan Conservatory and later in Perugia and Siena. In 1968 he was invited to lead the Solisti Veneti in Padua, and two years later Abbado appointed him his assistant for La Scala's symphonic concerts.

Chailly made his U.S. debut in 1974 with the Chicago Lyric Opera and opened the San Francisco Opera season in 1977. Early in 1978, at age twenty-five,

he made his first operatic appearance at La Scala, conducting Verdi's *I Masnadieri*. The performance was extraordinary in its balance, clarity, and sensitivity—and its sheer excitement—and while the demanding audience disagreed at one point on whether or not the soprano deserved applause, a unanimous roar of approval and standing ovation met the conductor at his curtain call.

His 1979 recording debut offered Massenet's *Werther* (DG 2709 091), with Plácido Domingo in the title role. Other companies jumping on the Chailly bandwagon are Philips, with Mendelssohn's Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3, and London, which will issue *Guillaume Tell*, featuring Pavarotti and Mirella Freni.

Vladimir Spivakov was forbidden to travel to the West last season because of restrictions imposed on Soviet artists following the invasion of Afghanistan. By midyear he was permitted to fulfill a concert obligation in West Germany, but his U.S. engagements for this season have been canceled.

Spivakov, born in 1944, was already enrolled in the music school attached to the Moscow Conservatory by the age of seven. He won prizes in international competitions in Paris, Genoa, and Montreal and placed second to Kremer in the 1970 Tchaikovsky Competition. At his U.S. debut in 1975, the *New York Post* rated him "in the select company of the world's leading violinists." He was the only artist invited to perform with the New York Philharmonic during its 1976 tour of the Soviet Union.

Not all promising violinists are Russian; former child prodigy Anne-Sophie Mutter was born in Germany in 1963. At age seven, she won the nationwide *Jugend Musiziert* Competition. Karajan heard her in 1976 when she was thirteen and asked her to play with the Berlin Philharmonic at Salzburg's Whitsun Festival. In February 1978, she made her Berlin debut with the orchestra, playing the Mozart Concerto in G, K. 216. She recorded the work a few days later, and that performance is available on DG 2531 049, along with the Concerto in A, K. 219.

Nineteen-year-old Dylana Jensen is just beginning to cause excitement in musical circles. Eugene Ormandy offered her a Carnegie Hall debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra, which was to take place in December. Ironically, the Californian's only commercial recording is on the Russian Melodiya label, unavailable here: the performance of the Sibelius violin concerto that won the Silver Medal at the 1978 Tchaikovsky Competition. But RCA plans to record her as well.

Winning the Gold Medal that year was Elmar Oliveira, the first American ever to do so. A reception at the White House and a round of appearances with U.S. orchestras followed. This season he will introduce a concerto written for him by Ezra Laderman. The thirty-one-year-old violinist recently recorded the Saint-Saëns First and Franck sonatas (CBS MX 35829) with pianist Jonathan Feldman, performances that have been lauded by

critics for their remarkable expressivity.

Oliveira has also recorded Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Gerard Schwarz conducting. Schwarz the trumpeter is already a recording star, but Schwarz the conductor has just begun a promising career. He brings to his conducting the same precision and exuberance that have characterized his trumpet playing. "What I try to do," he says, "is to combine emotional sensitivity and intellect. First I take a literal, crystal-clear look at a piece, then I try to make it work as a whole. That's especially important on recordings: The whole piece has to work."

Schwarz speaks enthusiastically about the orchestras and music festivals he directs: the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Y Chamber Symphony (New York), the Eliot Feld Ballet orchestra, the Waterloo Music Festival in New Jersey, and the White Mountains Center for the Arts in New Hampshire. "I have no trouble switching hats," he claims. "The hardest thing is dealing with different administrations."

His conducting has been praised for its lyricism and rhythmic clarity. Audiences will miss the trumpet virtuoso, but Schwarz feels that he must conduct full time: "One cannot keep both careers going. The trumpet is time-consuming, and conducting takes so much studying. Also, I don't want to have the option of playing. In other words, if bad moments come along—and they do for any conductor—I don't want to say, 'Well, I



Anne-Sophie Mutter

Dylana Jensen

Elmar Oliveira

James Conlon

really play the trumpet.' That's not healthy."

Conductor Andrew Davis, born in England in 1944, was an organ scholar at Kings College, Cambridge, and studied conducting with Franco Ferrara in Rome. In October 1970, he was called upon to replace an indisposed colleague with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London's Festival Hall. The program included Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, which he had never conducted. He learned it on short notice and received excellent reviews. Three years later, managing director Walter Homburger was looking for a new principal conductor for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra following the death of Karel Ančerl. He especially wanted to retain as much of Ančerl's repertory as possible for the season; the Janáček Mass was on the schedule, and that led him to Davis. Davis appeared with the Toronto orchestra for that one program and was appointed music director, beginning with the 1975-76 season, a post he has held ever since.

Davis mounts the podium in whirlwind fashion, and there is a similar driving brilliance to his work. No matter how complex the score, the inner voices remain clear and well balanced. He was scheduled to make his Metropolitan Opera debut in February conducting *Salome*.

Leonard Slatkin, thirty-five, is one of the few American musical directors of a major U.S. orchestra. His recordings with the St. Louis Symphony received three Grammy Award nominations in 1978.

His father, Felix Slatkin, a native of St. Louis, served as concertmaster of that city's orchestra under Vladimir Golschmann. He left over a salary dispute and went on to Hollywood, where he soon became a major conductor and arranger for film studios. It was a time when artists were fleeing Europe, and the Slatkin home became a haven for such musicians as Stravinsky and Schoenberg. It also was the site of rehearsals for the Hollywood String Quartet, which he led and which included his wife, cellist Eleanor Aller Slatkin. This was the heady atmosphere in which young Leonard was raised. (His younger brother, Frederick, took up his mother's instrument; under the old Russian surname Zlotkin, he has also received considerable note of late.) Leonard studied violin and piano, then conducting with his father and with Jean Morel at Juilliard.

He is in the process of recording the complete orchestral works of Rachmaninoff with the St. Louis Symphony for Vox. "It's beginning to have a distinctive sound," he says of the orchestra. "It's becoming a Slavic and French orchestra in the mold of the Boston and Philadelphia idea, not an outright virtuosic orchestra."

Slatkin believes that his greatest strength as musical director is programming. He has developed a broad-based repertoire, encompassing a variety of styles. When he introduces pieces that have not been heard before, he balances them with more familiar works: "The more far-out the piece, the more con-

servative the balance."

"There's lots of learning to be done at this stage," says Slatkin in his modest, straightforward manner. "At age thirty-five, I can't pretend to have had an enormous amount of experience. I haven't gone through enough to be among the elite." His colorful Rachmaninoff and Gershwin recordings, however, reveal a superb rhythmic sense and clarity of texture.

Mentioned frequently by our consultants as a promising conductor is James Conlon, aged thirty. He has yet to make his first recording, but that would seem to be the next logical step in his successful career. He performs regularly with American and European opera companies and orchestras, including the Met and the New York Philharmonic.

Another unrecorded artist—the only tenor consistently earmarked for success—is Neil Shicoff. Since his debut at the Met as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* during the 1976-77 season, he has had excellent reviews for performances in *Rigoletto* and *Werther*, among others. Shicoff's voice is strong, beautiful, and full throughout its range, and he sings with genuine passion. His emergence as a recording star seems only a matter of time.

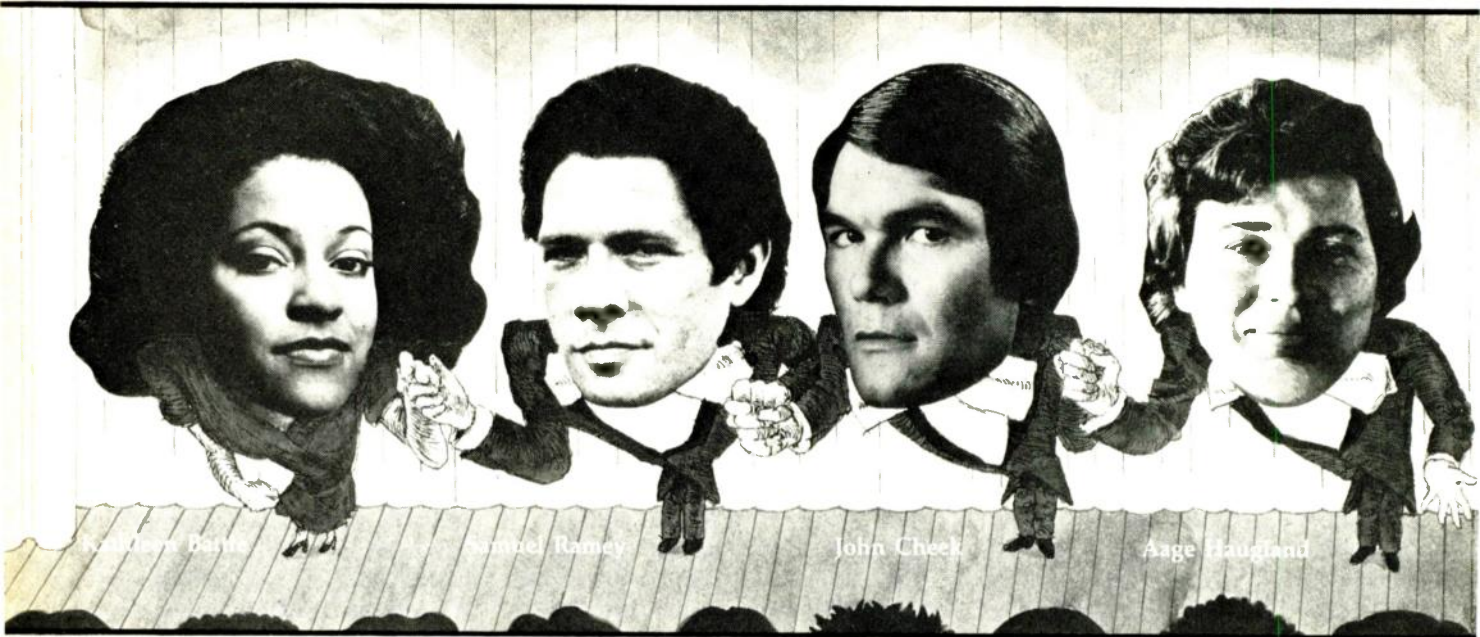
A lesser-known tenor whose voice has been compared to that of the young Jon Vickers by *Opera* magazine is Barry Busse. He graduated from Oberlin and the Manhattan School of Music. Awarded a contract by the Minnesota Opera Company, he has also sung with the San



Neil Shicoff

Barry Busse

Ashley Putnam



Francisco Opera and the Houston Grand Opera.

Although Busse's career is just beginning to blossom, he can already be heard on records because he had the good fortune to perform in two premiere productions. The first took place in Minnesota, where he created the role of the Shoe Salesman for the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*, subsequently recorded by Desto Records (7137/8). The second was the American premiere of Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*, presented by the Virginia Opera in 1978. He sings the Earl of Bothwell in Moss Music Group's live recording of that opera (MMG 301).

The title role in the Musgrave recording is sung by soprano Ashley Putnam. Her name was mentioned by everyone in the business who talked about voices—usually accompanied by some comment about vocal problems. But Christopher Clark, national chairman of the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions, dismisses those reservations, saying, "She's too gifted, so people are always looking for her to fail." Putnam was one of two winners of the 1976 auditions, and Clark remembers her performance well. "She sang 'Qui la voce' with a very rare combination of technical virtuosity and a full, lush sound—and with an electricity as a performer that is even rarer, particularly in one so young."

Putnam began as a flute major at the University of Michigan, playing in the marching band. At the urging of her

teachers, she switched her major to voice in her junior year. She went on to Santa Fe as an apprentice, returning there in 1976 to sing in Cavalli's *L'Egisto* and Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*.

Her New York City Opera debut, as Violetta in *La Traviata*, followed, along with a deluge of publicity. The Putnam name was seen in article after article, creating the kind of doubt that inevitably accompanies any publicity blitz. Despite Operation Overkill, the fact remains that she is a true "singing actress." Her voice is rich, her performances highly communicative, her future bright.

Also appearing at City Opera last year and often suggested as potential stars were Diana Soviero, Olivia Stapp, and Carol Vaness. But, as in the case of Conlon and Shicoff, no recordings are yet available.

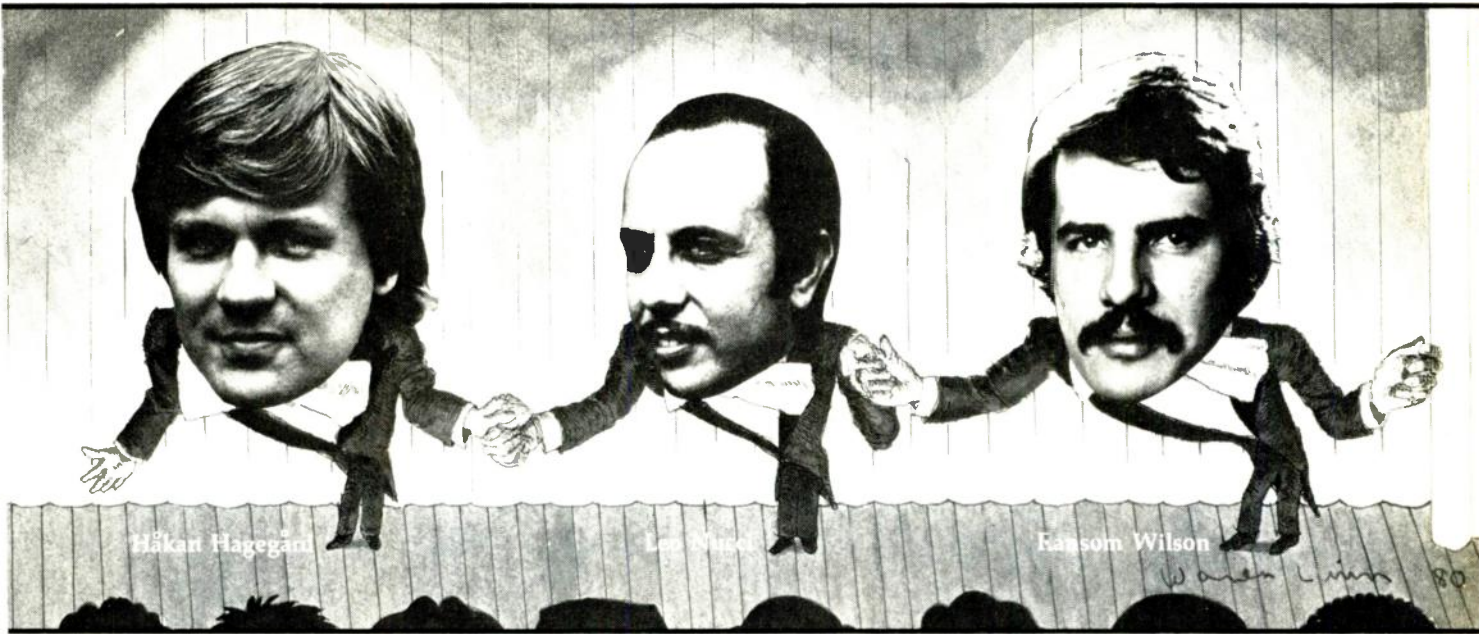
Kathleen Battle's pure, radiant soprano can be heard in the Levine/Ravinia Festival recording of Bach's *Wedding Cantata* (RCA ARL 1-2788). She appears annually with both the Ravinia and the Cincinnati May Festivals and is a regular guest with the New York, Cleveland, Chicago, and Boston orchestras. Her voice is unusually supple and limpid, equally at home in concert or operatic repertory.

Battle is very attractive, with a sunny, vivacious personality. A native of Ohio, she received bachelor's and master's degrees from the College Conservatory of Music (University of Cincinnati). She made her professional debut in the Brahms *German Requiem* at Spoleto at the

invitation of the late Thomas Schippers. During the 1977-78 season, she appeared at the Met as the Shepherd in *Tannhäuser*, in San Francisco as Oscar in *Un Ballo in maschera*, and at the Houston Grand Opera as Nannetta in *Falstaff*.

In just three years, Battle has become an international figure, singing with the Berlin Philharmonic and the Orchestre de Paris and appearing in productions by the Glyndebourne and Zurich opera companies. She was to have sung Despina in the Met's production of *Così fan tutte* early this season and can be heard in a new recording of *L'Italiana in Algeri* with Marilyn Horne.

The Mustafà on that recording is one of the most exciting, thoroughly musical new performers on the operatic stage: bass-baritone Samuel Ramey. Kansas-born Ramey came to public attention in March 1977, when he sang the title role in the New York City Opera production of Boito's *Mefistofele*. His voice, attention to musical detail, and commanding stage presence made it a memorable event. He has since sung Figaro and Don Giovanni in productions the City Opera mounted for him. When *Don Giovanni* entered its second season last fall, Ramey switched to the role of Leporello, an indication of his versatility. He has also begun performing in Europe. He returned to the Aix-en-Provence Festival last summer to sing in *Semiramide* with Montserrat Caballé and Horne; the *New York Times* review singled out "the dexterity and force of Samuel Ramey."



With several recordings to his credit, he impressed Andrew Porter in Verdi's *I due Foscari* (Philips 6700 105) and Dale Harris in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Philips 6703 080). This spring he will perform in the City Opera's new production of Verdi's *Attila*.

As the '80s begin, there seems to be a plethora of gifted young baritones and basses. Bass-baritone John Cheek has just begun his recording career with the *Mefistofele* Prologue (Telarc DG 10045, with the Atlanta Symphony, Robert Shaw conducting) and a Mass by John Knowles Paine (New World 262/3, with Gunther Schuller and the St. Louis Symphony).

Cheek graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts. In 1977, he made his Met debut in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and subsequently sang in *Boris Godunov*, *Il Trovatore*, and *Luisa Miller*. He also performs with a number of major symphony orchestras and has begun to present recitals. "They're the most challenging," says Cheek. "Only you and a pianist. Artistically, you need a variety of vocal color and dramatic contrasts. If all you have to offer is a pretty voice, it's boring." His powerful voice is never boring.

Danish bass Aage Haugland, thirty-six, has been a member of Copenhagen's Royal Theater since 1973 and made his Met debut last season in *Der Rosenkavalier*. His voice is large, and the low notes are true and resonant. London critics praised the "dark magnificence of tone" of his Hunding at the Eng-

lish National Opera, and his Varlaam in the new Paris Opera *Boris* was termed "outstanding" by *Newsweek*.

Swedish baritone Håkan Hagegård, at thirty-five a permanent member of the Stockholm Royal Opera, will always be Papageno to those who saw Ingmar Bergman's film version of *The Magic Flute*. He made his Met debut last season as Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*, a performance later carried on national public television. His voice has a totally natural sound—easy and fluid. And his musicianship serves him well in both Lieder recitals and operatic productions. A recital of Romantic songs is available on Bis LP 54.

Baritone Leo Nucci is a native of Bologna. After winning the Viotti Competition in 1973, he sang at opera houses throughout Italy, and he made his debut at the Met in *Ballo* last season. His, too, is a resonant, natural sound; it will be heard in a new recording of *La Traviata* with Katia Ricciarelli and José Carreras.

Two especially communicative artists are clarinetist Richard Stoltzman and flutist Ransom Wilson. Omaha-born Stoltzman, thirty-eight, received a master's in music from Yale and, in 1967, began a long association with Marlboro that led to the formation of the chamber music ensemble Tashi. He can be heard on recordings with the group as well as a solo album entitled "The Art of Richard Stoltzman" (Orion ORS 73125).

His seemingly effortless mastery of the clarinet has been applauded at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival

and Great Performers Series. He combines the classical clarinet repertory (played with extraordinary color and sensitivity) and jazz, easily switching from standard literature to improvisational performance. Stoltzman has played with many major chamber groups, such as the Guarneri and the Tokyo Quartets, as well as leading orchestras throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Wilson talks about finding new audiences with almost missionary zeal: "I want to reach people who listen only to Bob Dylan before they lose their hearing. And I mean that literally."

Born in Alabama in 1951, he graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts and Juilliard. His mentor is none other than Jean-Pierre Rampal. In his recording "Impressions for Flute" (Angel S 37308), he displays a flawless technique along with a poignant, haunting tone. As Wilson's career develops, he is trying to balance his "middle-of-the-road recordings with the very serious, such as Bach and Telemann." (A review of his latest recording, featuring works of those two composers, appears in this issue.)

Even with our two unrecorded "ringers," we can't pretend that this list will prove to be complete. Just as some of these names would not have been cited a year ago, others will surely emerge before the year is out. But what we can safely predict is that—barring unkind fate—these names will loom large in any list of recording veterans ten years hence. **HF**

Record Reviews

Young Pianists in Debut Recordings

Contest winners take the plunge in the first three discs of a new DG series and one from Musical Heritage.

by Harris Goldsmith



Boris Bloch
A potential charmer

Steven de Groot
A headstrong technician

David Lively
Direct, appealing manner

Stephanie Brown
Premature debut

The phonograph has always been important in spreading the word, and numerous performers have launched glamorous international careers through their recordings. But whereas artists of earlier times didn't make records until they were firmly established, today's budding singer or instrumentalist needs that debut disc to impress increasingly skeptical concert managers and critics. The first recording has become a sort of trophy, almost as routine a launching pad for the burgeoning professional as that auspicious New York or London recital.

Only the exceptionally gifted (or lucky) neophyte, though, wins full-fledged sponsorship from an international recording company; even one so blessed is apt to find his introductory recital released only in the country (or city!) in which he is slightly known, and deleted after a few years, never to reappear. The less fortunate majority either record for smaller labels or (no disgrace—simply a reality in today's conservative "tight money" economy) subsidize their own vanity presses in hopes that their initial investments will be repaid

with future glory. Although many in the record business are sympathetic to the plight of the young or unknown artist, their charity is perforce circumscribed by fiscal realities: Save for rare instances, little-known names are at a disadvantage alongside the Horowitzes, Sutherlands, and Karajans.

Still, stardom is not forever, and a viable way must be found to tap new galaxies. To judge from past performance, Deutsche Grammophon rejects the kind of heartless opportunism that will sign the newest contest winner with a grand flourish and drop him as soon as the hoopla subsides. Instead, it has rather consistently espoused an alternative course in featuring new artists with single—and sometimes shared—discs (usually midpriced), while making clear that the helping hand does not necessarily signify full-fledged sponsorship. Its new Concours series follows the same pattern as some previous DG releases. Early in my tenure with this journal, I reviewed two discs devoted to prizewinners at the 1960 Warsaw Chopin Competition. A decade later DG Debut (issued only in

Europe) introduced Zola Shaulis, Dino Ciani, and the Tokyo Quartet. And over the years, there have been sporadic single recordings of performances at various competitions: From the 1961 Liszt-Bartók International Piano Contest held in Budapest came Gábor Gabos, Clark David Wilde, Valentyn Belcenko, and an even younger Ciani; from Moscow's 1970 Tchaikovsky Competition John Lill's Brahms Second Concerto; and only recently, from the 1975 Warsaw competition, Krystian Zimerman's prizewinning performances. Nor have such issues been exclusively confined to DG: Vladimir Ashkenazy's stint at the 1955 Chopin event was a mainstay in the early Angel catalog (the seventeen-year-old Soviet pianist placed *second* in that marathon), and Garrick Ohlsson's two Connoisseur Society albums commemorated *his* hour of triumph at Warsaw in 1970.

If those releases are fair indication, some of the new names will eventually become DG regulars (as did Ciani and the Tokyo Quartet—and Maurizio Pollini, who won the top prize in the 1960 Chopin contest but first went to EMI for a few record-

ings). For the majority, the Concours album will be a one-shot deal, a sort of professional stepping stone. As the series title implies, one prerequisite is that the artist have won at least one major contest. (This condition, though unspoken, applied to the earlier recordings as well.) So far, only pianists are featured—in Europe, the three discs here are supplemented by two more introducing Diana Kacso, a South American, and Jorge Luis Prats, a French-trained Cuban—but an accompanying press release promises other instrumentalists in future issues.

DG's mode of presentation, whether by accident or design, proclaims a tone of neutrality. All three of its recordings here derive not from studio sessions, but from live recitals held in Munich. While there may have been some retouching from rehearsals, these programs resemble radio tapings in their candid documentation. In every instance, the sonics—while perfectly serviceable—are cold, hard-toned, and rather unalluring, lacking the finish of the typical DG product. On-location reproduction needn't be so drab; some of the finest-sounding Rubinstein, Cherkassky, and Horowitz discs came from actual concert performances, and Rudolf Serkin's Carnegie Hall recital taped for television represents one of Columbia's high-water marks in capturing that elusive artist. The quiet pressings, though, are characteristic of DG's best work, and annotations treat both the artists and the music.

As for repertory, the Concours recitals offer standard works (De Groote), twentieth-century virtuoso fare (Lively), and more exotic items (Bloch). But given that leeway, all of the music is thoroughly—and predictably—representative of what audacious, high-powered contestants choose to display their digital (and, one hopes, interpretive) superiority.

Boris Bloch, a Soviet émigré now residing in New York, won first place in the 1978 Busoni Competition held in Bolzano, Italy. And naturally, Busoni figures in two of the works in his admirably played recital: The elegy "Turandots Frauengemach" (*Turandot's Boudoir*) turns out to be "Green-sleeves" dressed in purple prose; the other, a garish Liszt paraphrase on themes from Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* with further embarrassments from Busoni, goes on much too long but is packed with pianistic fireworks. Bloch storms these citadels with inborn flair and a glittering, varicolored sonority. He also plays three Rachmaninoff *Etudes Tableaux* with idiomatic soulfulness (without pounding the daylights out of the heavily scored Op. 39, No. 5, in E flat minor). Two shorter Rachmaninoff works, the composer's own piano solo version of "Lilacs,"

Op. 21, No. 5, and the "Vocalise," Op. 34, No. 14 (effectively arranged for piano by the young Hungarian Zoltán Kocsis), demand less in the way of fire-eating drama and even more spontaneous lyricism. Bloch's joie de vivre and seemingly instinctive command of rubato and nuance evoke and preserve an almost improvisatory freshness. Certain important questions remain unanswered by this recital; Beethoven's F major Sonata, Op. 10, No. 2, is hardly that master's profoundest work, but Bloch's performance, slightly cavalier in detail and loose in structure, captures the fun better than does many a more "correct" reading. This young man has technique to burn and a perpetually singing tone; he may be no philosopher, but he does appear to be a potential charmer. His assets are readily discernible even without any particular help from the engineering.

Ohio-born David Lively placed in the Moscow Tchaikovsky Competition, the Concours Reine Elizabeth in Brussels, and the Marguerite Long in Paris before winning first prizes at the Clara Haskil in Geneva and the Dino Ciani in Milan. He received most of his training at the Ecole Normale de Musique under Jules Gentil, and the "French touch" is instantly recognizable in his clear, limpid account of Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. Rhythms are clean-cut and brisk, the tone is light, pearly, and cool, with clear separation of lines enhancing the prevailing classicism. Yet in the culminating Toccata, he holds a tight rein and sparks fly. The overside Stravinsky pieces are engagingly rendered: The 1940 Tango—a miniature counterpart of the *Ebony* Concerto—and the 1919 *Piano Rag Music* are played with wry, deadpan humor that suits their cryptic acidity; the *Trois Mouvements de Petrushka* lack the computerized poise and refinement of Pollini's nonpareil recording (DG 2530 225) but emerge in a direct, appealing manner.

I have heard Steven de Groote give a fascinating account of Chopin's *Polonaise Fantaisie* in concert, but the South African-born Van Cliburn prizewinner's performances of Beethoven's *Eroica* Variations and Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes* seem aggressive and contrived. To be sure, De Groote is an exceedingly well-schooled musician and has a mind of his own. There are details to admire, such as his treatment of the bass line in Variation No. 2 of the Schumann. He also has formidable technique: Note the limpid ostinato in No. 3 and the uncommonly fleet No. 5. But elsewhere, admiration turns to irritation; the playing abounds with arbitrary theatricalities, glaring, overdrawn dynamic contrasts, and phrases stretched beyond the breaking point. Rather unexpectedly, the Beethoven

shows the same sort of lily-gilding rhetoric and harsh tone. De Groote, incidentally, plays the Schumann in the later (1853) text, without the five extra variations.

Unlike the Concours pianists, Stephanie Brown has been garnering laurels of a more modest sort, primarily as a chamber musician. She has given some solo recitals as a member of Young Concert Artists, Inc., and now that organization sponsors the young American's solo recording debut. Her playing of Brahms's *Klavierstücke*, Op. 118, and Franck's *Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue* offers a compendium of minor virtues: limpid, dreamy introspection, demure fluency, a lovely, singing tone. But one sorely misses rhythmic tension, a characterful delineation of structure, and a sense of harmonic awareness in these genteel, tentative interpretations. Though Brown is clearly skilled and sensitive, one wonders whether her well-meaning admirers are not, in the long run, doing her a disservice in exposing her burgeoning talent while it is so unformed. At this stage of her career, she seems innocently unaware of the implicit classicism and sobriety of Brahms, the Gothic grandeur of Franck. Musical Heritage's rich, luminous reproduction serves her well.

BORIS BLOCH: Piano Recital.

Boris Bloch, piano. [Hanno Rinke, prod.] DG CONCOURS 2535 006, \$6.98 [recorded in concert].

BEETHOVEN: Sonata for Piano, No. 6, in F, Op. 10, No. 2. RACHMANINOFF: *Etudes Tableaux*: in F minor, Op. 33, No. 1; in C major, Op. 33, No. 2; in E flat minor, Op. 39, No. 5. Lilacs (arr. Rachmaninoff). VOCALISE (arr. Kocsis). BUSONI: Turandots Frauengemach. LISZT-BUSONI: Fantasy on Two Motifs from W. A. Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro."

DAVID LIVELY: Piano Recital.

David Lively, piano. [Hanno Rinke, prod.] DG CONCOURS 2535 009, \$6.98 [recorded in concert].

RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. STRAVINSKY: *Petrushka*: Three Movements. Tango. Piano Rag Music.

BEETHOVEN: Fifteen Variations and Fugue on a Theme from "Prometheus," in E flat, Op. 35 (*Eroica*). SCHUMANN: *Symphonic Etudes*, Op. 13.

Steven de Groote, piano. [Hanno Rinke, prod.] DG CONCOURS 2535 007, \$6.98 [recorded in concert].

BRAHMS: Piano Pieces (6), Op. 118. FRANCK: *Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue*.

Stephanie Brown, piano. [Judith Sherman, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4200, \$6.95 (\$4.45 to members) (add \$1.25 for shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724).

The Purcell Paradox

So right for its time, his vocal music poses a problem for ours.

by Susan Thiemann Sommer

The "British Orpheus," as he was known to his contemporaries, Henry Purcell was born into a virtual musical vacuum and spent nearly all of his thirty-six years feverishly filling the gap. The disruption of civil war and the establishment of Cromwell's Commonwealth had effectively shut down the chief sources for musical employment in seventeenth-century England—theater, church, and court—driving a generation of musicians into other work. Purcell's father and uncle were apparent exceptions; at least they were known as musicians in London circles, for with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, both were immediately appointed to the Chapel Royal as choristers. Not surprisingly, Henry (born 1659), who showed his musical talent very early, was also recruited into the king's choir as a boy. There he became acquainted with a rich repertory of anthems and service music from the early part of the century and absorbed more than the rudiments of composition. A three-part song "Sweet tyranness" dating from 1667 is ascribed to him, and according to the *New Grove Dictionary*, there is no reason to question the attribution.

In 1673 his voice broke, and for a few years the teenager was employed in odd jobs, tuning the organ and copying music at Westminster Abbey, and writing songs and anthems on the side. His truly productive period began at age twenty, when he was appointed organist at the Abbey, succeeding John Blow. For the rest of his short life music flowed from his pen in a glorious stream of songs, anthems, services, odes, instrumental pieces, and most especially, incidental music for the theater, which was enjoying spectacularly renewed vitality under the Stuart monarchs.

Paradoxically, Purcell's energy and skill in filling the urgent musical needs of his time make his music something of a problem for the modern listener. Most of his greatest works were written for specific occasions, and even those for more general use—the church services, for example—partook of a tradition now all but dead. No twentieth-century audience would sit through a dull and silly play like *Pausanias, the Betrayer to His Country*, for instance, just to hear the delectable "Sweeter than roses" in its original setting. And the execrable

verse of the court odes, which contain so much beautiful music, would make any sensitive soul (then as now, one suspects) writhe in embarrassment.

Another obstacle to enjoyment lies in the nature of Purcell's music itself: Its very elegance defeats it, for it often lacks the robust popular appeal that sustains many a lesser baroque composer in today's imagination. The extraordinary refinement and subtlety of his best work demand great sophistication from the performer and, indeed, from the listener as well. Even the ribald catches with their barroom lyrics call for professional singing skills of a very high caliber. To perform Purcell well—no easy task—requires virtuosity, sensitivity, and a perfect feel for balance and tempo.

A glance at the Purcell listing in

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Even in his time, Purcell was recognized as Britain's finest composer, the "British Orpheus." A virtually complete collection of his known songs was published shortly after his death.

Schwann shows a preponderance of instrumental music—arguably the least interesting portion of his output—and naturally, multiple recordings of his masterly and atypical *Dido and Aeneas*. With great joy, then—and no little trepidation—we may welcome this feast of recordings devoted to the more characteristic but less familiar aspects of his composition.

King Arthur is a good example of the problems alluded to. Since it fills four sides of an album and is often described as an opera, the unwary listener might be forgiven for expecting a coherent musical drama. It belongs, however, not to the operatic, but to the masque tradition, a hybrid genre that relies on spectacular visual pageantry to illuminate comparatively static scenes accompanied by musical "numbers"—something more akin to the Ziegfeld Follies than to conventional opera. There is no plot to speak of; the archpatriot Arthur leads the alternately belligerent and pastoral Britons victoriously against the Saxons and withstands several trials, magical and otherwise. The "scenes, machines, and dances" dominated the sumptuous production at the Queen's Theater in 1691, and the musical sources for the work remain scattered, symbolic of the essentially ad hoc nature of the production.

King Arthur includes some fine musical scenes. The exquisite seduction duet "Two daughters of this aged stream," with its voluptuously twining thirds, and the tremolos of the frost scene are justly famous, as are those most English of pieces, the "Harvest Home" chorus and the classically proportioned song "Fairest Isle." But ultimately, even in a well-sung performance such as Deller's *King Arthur* on record does not amount to a fully satisfactory musical experience. The two issues listed are virtually identical in disc format; price and availability will have to guide the prospective purchaser.

More conducive to an appreciation of Purcell's theatrical music through records is the anthology approach, even though this necessarily removes the works from their dramatic context. Several discs under consideration present this repertory, the outstanding one undoubtedly being Alfred Deller's "Music for a While." Over the years I have expressed reservations about this singer, much of whose work I find mannered and self-conscious, but he is unquestionably a master of the Purcellian style. Coming at the end of a lifetime devoted to the sensitive study of this music, his recording will undoubtedly stand as a touchstone for generations of Purcell singers to come. He is in excellent voice; it is astonishing how little his sixty-six years had touched the delicate timbre of his counter-

tenor instrument. Recorded, as the credit poignantly gives it, "au premier jour de printemps," five months before Deller's unexpected death in August 1979, the selection of songs might have been chosen as a summation of his career, the very greatest examples of Purcell's art in their finest interpretation. Particularly effective are the songs built over a ground bass, works like "The Plaint" from that baroque extravaganza *The Fairy Queen*, the beguiling "Music for a while," and the sublime "Evening Hymn," whose "ecstatic fervor" so moved Vaughan Williams. Purcell was a master of this technique, yet one has really to hear the amazing flexibility with which Deller shapes the irregular melodies falling over the inexorably patterned bass figures to appreciate the full measure of the composer's genius.

The intricately ornamented quasi-recitative of the mini-cantatas "From rosy bowers" and "Sweeter than roses" and their abrupt tempo changes and multi-sectional forms exemplify Deller's consummate understanding of the precise proportion required to set all the facets of these exquisite jewels into proper perspective. He can express the cheerful charm of the epithalamium "Thrice happy lovers" or the pliant grace of the non-Shakespearean "If music be the food of love" as well as the deeper anguish of Purcell's laments—"Retired from any mortal's sight," for example, the bitter cry of a shepherd with surprisingly genuine feelings. Only in the perennial favorite of voice students, "I attempt from love's sickness to fly," does the older artist falter, its ingenuous simplicity completely eluding him.

The measure of Deller's achievement can best be seen by comparing his recording to the rivals under review. Both Anna Carol Dudley and René Jacobs are sensitive artists of considerable experience. Dudley, who has recorded several discs of twentieth-century music, has full command over her clear, pleasant soprano, yet her interpretations remain curiously flat. Frequently she chooses tempos just a little too fast, so that the music never has a chance to breathe and expressiveness is stifled; she has no time to invest any nuance of color into her voice. Jacobs, on the other hand, has plenty of nuance and variety. Note the contrast between the main melodic structure of the virtuoso countertenor solo " 'Tis nature's voice" (which Purcell wrote for his own use) and the "incredible graces" that ornament it—beautifully tossed off as though the composer were improvising on the spot. But alas, Jacobs bleats and scoops so, that for the most part all sense of Purcell's beautifully extended melodic line is lost.

Christopher Hogwood adopts another approach to Purcell's theatrical music: Following the current English mania for recording all of a composer's works in one genre, he presents here all the incidental music found in three plays, Congreve's *The Old Bachelor*, Dryden's *Amphitryon*, and Duffey's *The Virtuous Wife*. Mostly short instrumental airs—dances, act tunes, and the like—with an occasional tuneful song occurring along the way, these charming pot-pourris serve admirably as background music but cannot stand up to attentive listening.

The selections from *The Fairy Queen* performed by Frederick Renz and his Ensemble for Early Music fare considerably better. Renz has fashioned six "suites," most of them carved naturally out of the fifty miscellaneous musical numbers that make up this random and episodic work. Concentrating on cheerful music, like the invocation to the "songsters of the air" and the trumpet calls of "Hark the echoing air," the disc is bright and breezy without descending to triviality. Both Hogwood's and Renz's ensembles play with verve and considerable style, though the singers on Oiseau-Lyre are more polished and professional than those on MHS.

The Deller Consort recording entitled "O Solitude" gives a glimpse of Purcell's monumental church music. The English verse anthem, which combines expressive sections for solo singers, pillars of choral sound, and instrumental ritornels, provided a congenial showcase for his talents. *O give thanks* is a very attractive example, as is the more formal *O Lord, God of hosts*, which he wrote for the Chapel Royal in his early twenties. *Blow up the trumpet*, which plays brilliantly with variegated choral color, must have made a spectacular effect in Westminster Abbey, where it was first heard. Nominally a verse anthem, *My song shall be alway* is actually an extended solo, here magnificently sung by that reliable baritone Maurice Bevan, with choral refrains. Another solo work furnishes the disc's title, a setting of the quasi-religious poem *O Solitude* by Katherine Philips in one of Purcell's inimitable grounds for countertenor.

Despite their sometimes ridiculous texts, Purcell's odes make quite satisfactory recorded entertainment, combining a variety of vocal and instrumental textures and forms in compact packages of about eight to twenty-five minutes. Among them, the radiant birthday ode for Queen Mary, *Come ye sons of art*, is understandably a favorite, with its highlight the irresistibly exuberant countertenor duet "Sound the trumpet." The new MHS recording may lack the brilliance of several earlier versions—those fea-

turing Deller or Russell Oberlin come immediately to mind—but if you do not already own a copy, the sheer infectious joy of the music is sure to please. The reverse side, with selections dominated by the shrill vibratoless soprano of Julianne Baird, is less immediately appealing.

More completely successful is the Deller Consort recording that pairs Purcell's chamber setting in praise of St. Cecilia (he wrote three other odes for the musical-saint's day as well) with the cantata *If ever I more riches did desire*. In form, the latter work—to a text of Abraham Cowley—resembles the odes, with a number of movements, including one touching song that sadly concludes, "an old plebeian let me die." Purcell's convivial nature—he especially liked drinking with his theatrical friends—led to the delightful catches or rounds for three voices on the reverse side. Despite the clear diction of the singers, MHS cannot be forgiven for its failure to provide texts for these alternately roisterous and delicate comments on wine, women, and song.

Finally we have yet another recording of the ever affecting *Dido and Aeneas*. Written for performance by students at a girls' boarding school in 1689, this little operatic masterpiece has attracted the talents of countless twentieth-century divas in the role of the doomed heroine. D'Anna Fortunato, a smaller-scaled Dido than most of her rivals on disc, is nonetheless regal. Her even vocal production and controlled but deeply felt expressivity fit perfectly into the chamber scale proper to the work. While director Joel Cohen claims not to have searched for "some kind of definitive (and unattainable) historical authenticity" in this performance, his use of so many amateur singers (the title roles apart) does unwittingly suggest the sounds of Josiah Priest's drawing room, where the opera was first heard.

PURCELL: King Arthur.

CAST:

Philidel/Nereid	Jean Knibbs (s)
Cupid	Rosemary Hardy (s)
Venus/Honour	Honor Sheppard (s)
Comus	Leigh Nixon (t)
Co'd Genius/Pan	Maurice Bevan (b)
Grimbald	Nigel Beavan (bs)

Mark and Alfred Deller, countertenors; Paul Elliott, tenor; Deller Choir and Consort, King's Musick, Alfred Deller, dir. HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 252/3, \$19.96 (two discs, manual sequence). Tape: 40.252/3, \$19.96 (two cassettes). (Distributed by Brilly Imports, 155 N. San Vicente Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211.) MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4188/9, \$13.90 (\$8.90 to members) (two discs, automatic

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sequence). Tape: MHC 6188/9, \$13.90 (\$9.90 to members) (two cassettes). (Add \$1.25 for shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

PURCELL: Music for a While: Songs (13).

Alfred Deller, countertenor; William Christie, harpsichord; Wieland Kuijken, viola da gamba; Roderick Skeaping, violin. **HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 249, \$9.98.** Tape: 40.249, \$9.98 (cassette).

The Plaint; If music be the food of love (first setting); I attempt from love's sickness to fly; Fairest Isle; Sweeter than roses; Not all my torments; Thrice happy lovers; An Evening Hymn; From rosy bowers; O lead me to some peaceful gloom; Retired from any mortal's sight; Music for a while; Since from my dear Astrea's sight.

PURCELL: Songs and Grounds (11); Harpsichord Works (3).

Anna Carol Dudley, soprano; Laurette Goldberg, harpsichord; Carol Herman, viola da gamba; Catherine Liddell Strizich, lute; Robert Strizich, lute and baroque guitar. 1750 ARCH RECORDS S 1776, \$7.98 (1750 Arch Records, 1750 Arch St., Berkeley, Calif. 94709).

Songs and Grounds: If music be the food of love (first and third settings); Sweeter than roses; Not all my torments; More love or more disdain; The fatal hour comes on apace; Urge me no more; O solitude; I attempt from love's sickness to fly; An Evening Hymn; Bess of Bedlam. Harpsichord Works: A New Ground; Rondo; Minuet.

PURCELL: Songs and Elegies (12).

A René Jacobs, countertenor; Wieland Kuijken, viola da gamba; Konrad Jung-hänel, theorbo. [Adelheid and Andreas Glatt, prod.] ACCENT ACC 7802, \$11.98 (distributed by Audio Source, 1185 Chess Dr., Foster City, Calif. 94404).

'Tis nature's voice; Music for a while; Retired from any mortal's sight; Since from my dear Astrea's sight; Pious Celinda goes to prayers; Incassum, Lesbia; Ah! cruel nymph; The fatal hour comes on apace; As Amoret and Thirsis lay; Sweeter than roses; I loved fair Celia; Young Thirsis' fate.

PURCELL: Theater Music, Vol. 4.

Judith Nelson, soprano; Martyn Hill, tenor; Christopher Keyte, bass; Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood, dir. [Peter Wadland, prod.] OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 550, \$9.98.

The Virtuous Wife; The Old Bachelor; Amphitryon.

PURCELL: The Fairy Queen (excerpts).

Julianne Baird, soprano; Peter Becker, countertenor; Stephen Sturck,

tenor; Wilbur Pauley, bass; New York Ensemble for Early Music, Frederick Renz, dir. [Frederick J. Bashour and Jeffrey Nissim, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4237, \$6.95 (\$4.45 to members).

PURCELL: O Solitude: Chants and Anthems (6).

Honor Sheppard, Jean Knibbs, and Penelope Walmsley-Clarke, sopranos; Alfred and Mark Deller, countertenors; Paul Elliott and Leigh Nixon, tenors; Maurice Bevan, baritone; Deller Choir and Consort, Alfred Deller, dir. **HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 247, \$9.98.**

O solitude; O Lord, God of hosts; O give thanks unto the Lord; My song shall be alway; Hear my prayer; Blow up the trumpet in Sion.

ODES (2) AND ELEGIES (3) FOR QUEEN MARY.

Julianne Baird, soprano; James Bowman and Peter Becker, countertenors; Stephen Sturck, tenor; Wilbur Pauley, bass; New York Ensemble for Early Music, Frederick Renz, dir. [Frederick J. Bashour and Jeffrey Nissim, prod.] MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 4234, \$6.95 (\$4.45 to members).

PURCELL: Odes: Come ye sons of art; High on a throne of glittering ore. Elegies: O dive Custos Auriacae domus; Incassum, Lesbia. BLOW: No, Lesbia, no.

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If ever I more riches did desire. Laudate Ceciliam. Catches: Come, let us drink; The Miller's Daughter; Sir Walter enjoying; A health to the nut-brown lass; Prithee be n't so sad and serious; I gave her cakes; Young John the gardener; Once, twice, thrice I Julia tried; Of all the instruments that are; Under this stone; Since time so kind to us does prove; 'Tis woman makes us love.

PURCELL: Dido and Aeneas.

CAST:

Belinda	Nancy Armstrong (s)
First Witch	Sallie Gordon (s)
Second Witch	Susan Klebanow (s)
Second Lady	Roberta Anderson (s)
Dido	D'Anna Fortunato (a)
Spirit	Ken Fitch (ct)
Sorceress	Bruce Fithian (t)
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Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen, dir. **HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 10.067, \$9.98.**

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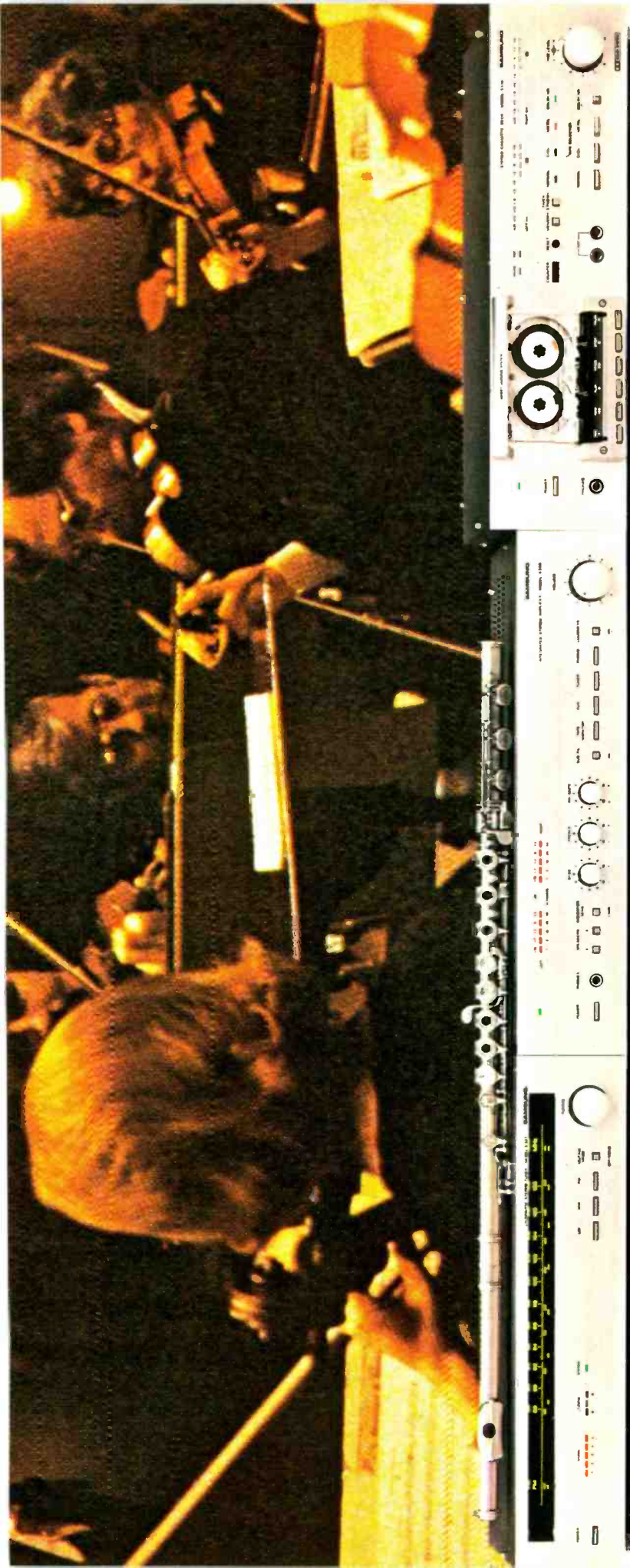
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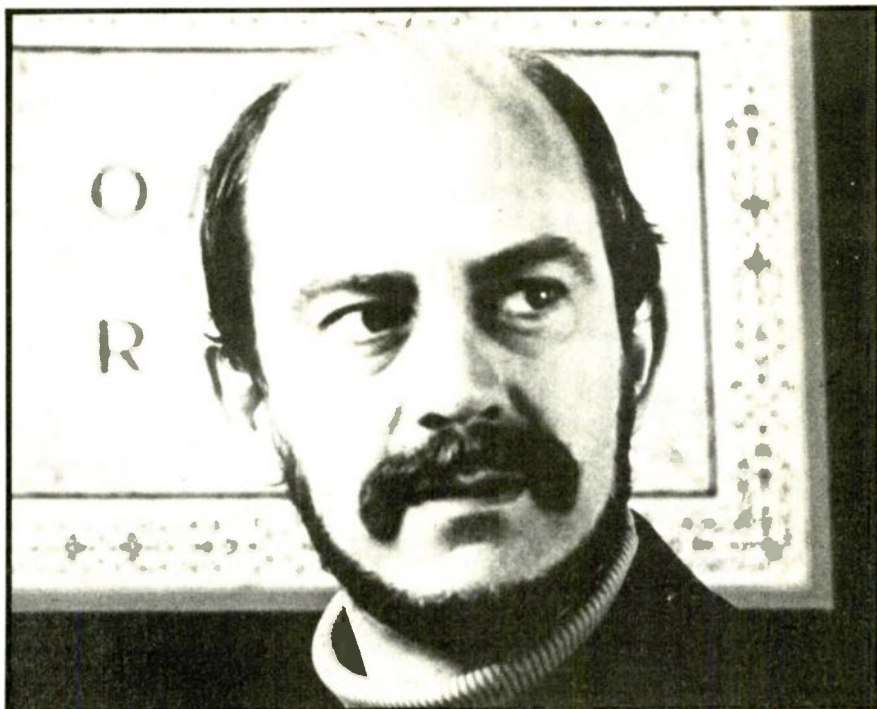
BACH: English Suites (6), S. 806-11;
French Suites (6), S. 812-17.

Alan Curtis, harpsichord. TELEFUNKEN 46.35452, \$43.92 (four discs, manual sequence).

Anyone who envies the lot of a record reviewer should be reminded periodically that untold hours must be spent in a sort of existentialist hell, listening to deadly dull performances that sound as if they were recorded with knitting needles. Every so often, though, something comes along to revive even the most jaded ears, and I'm delighted to report that Alan Curtis' magnificent new renditions of Bach's *English* and *French Suites* constitute refreshment of the most welcome sort. These records, in fact, have spent a good deal of time on my turntable during the past month, and I can't imagine tiring of them anytime soon.

Unlike his master Gustav Leonhardt and his contemporary Igor Kipnis, Curtis has not yet achieved "household word" status as a harpsichordist, but among cognoscenti he has maintained a secure reputation as a player of real distinction. If there is any justice, these recordings bid fair to place him in the forefront.

What distinguishes his playing above all is his marvelously lively approach to rhythm, which he skillfully uses to powerful, expressive effect. Unlike the piano, of course, the harpsichord is incapable of subtle nuances of volume and timbre; rhythm is one of the harpsichordist's few expressive devices, but when imaginatively exploited it can have enormous impact. Drawing upon a rich repertoire of rhythmic subtleties—prolonging an important note



Alan Curtis: Bids fair to become a household name

ever so slightly, shortening an upbeat, delaying a downbeat, speeding up through a scalar or sequential figure, or pulling back at a cadence or phrase ending—Curtis taps the music's real lifeblood, and its pulse throbs with new intensity.

This is the very antithesis of "sewing-machine" Bach, the seamless line and metronomic beat still widely (and quite erroneously) believed to represent "authentic" performance practice. That Bach antedated the Romantic period does not in any sense imply that his music ought to be performed in a cold and calculated way—a point substantiated in any number of Renaissance and baroque musical treatises. And how different, after all, must have been musicians' perception of time and rhythm before the invention of the metronome! Baroque-period writers (such as Quantz) who attempted to quantify tempos for dance movements could only relate them to the wonderful flexibility of the human pulse. In the flexibility of his rhythms, and the freshness of his approach to phrasing and articulation, Curtis thus proves himself well in tune with the exuberance and expressiveness of baroque art. In this respect he reminds me of Blandine Verlet, although he never falls into the kinds of excesses that sometimes mar her performances; he shares her dynamic intensity

but—following Leonhardt's example—tempers it with refinement and good taste.

Thanks to Curtis' delicate pushing and pulling of rhythms, the Allemande of the Fifth *French Suite* is a model of elegance, and elsewhere (notably in the Gavottes of *English No. 3* and *French Nos. 5* and *6*) agogic accents keep one on the edge of one's seat; the wonderful sprung rhythms of the Prelude of *English No. 2* and the Gigue of *French No. 2* further demonstrate his art. Slowed by the savoring of rhythmic details, some of the Courantes (as in *English Nos. 1, 2, and 4*) are just a bit too languorous, and the Gigue in *English No. 1* is rather tame, but elsewhere his freedoms do not vitiate the all-important forward thrust of the music.

Curtis' decorations of repeats, too, are exemplary. Would that there were more of them! The *French Suites* have been shorn of most repeats (so that individual movements fly by all too quickly), and both here and in the *English Suites* the elimination of second-strain repeats poses questions of proportion.

There can be no reservation, though, about Curtis' choice of harpsichord, a magnificent 1728 instrument by the Hamburg builder Christian Zell. The sounds are as ravishingly beautiful as they are authentic for the music, and Curtis' discrete use of an especially luscious buff stop is poetic. Also

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

gratifying is the use of a mildly unequal "well-tempered" tuning. (Bach's conception of a "well-tempered" system was almost certainly a compromise temperament—permitting use of any key but giving each a distinctive character—rather than true equal temperament.) Special praise, too, to the recording engineers, who have captured the sound with commendable fidelity—and who apparently felt no compulsion to splice out the occasional (perfectly natural) sound of registers being changed.

Curtis' French Suites face formidable competition from Leonhardt's outstanding recording (MCA/Seon AX 67036/2, March 1979); I find myself vacillating between Leonhardt's burnished elegance and Curtis' more overtly expressive style. Verlet's interpretations (Philips 6768 653) are considerably less impressive, lacking the subtlety of either of these. For the English Suites—failing American release of the Leonhardt and Verlet recordings available in Europe—there really is no competition, Huguette Dreyfus' readings (Archiv 2533 164/6) being insufferably literal. In any case, the new Telefunken album, offering some of the finest performances of baroque keyboard music ever put on record, is not to be missed. S.C.

BACH: Motets (6).

A Stockholm Bach Choir, Vienna Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, dir. TELEFUNKEN 26.35470, \$23.96 (two discs; digital recording). Tape: 24.42663, \$23.96 (two cassettes).

Singet dem Herrn, S. 225; Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf, S. 226; Jesu, meine Freude, S. 227; Fürchte dich nicht, S. 228; Komm, Jesu, komm, S. 229; Lobet den Herrn, S. 230.

BACH: Motets (4): S. 225, S. 226, S. 228, S. 229.

Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus, Ferenc Sapszon, cond.; Gábor Lehotka, organ. [János Mátyás, prod.] HUNGAROTON SLPX 12104, \$8.98.

Too many recordings make Bach's motets sound like cathedral anthems—rather sweet and soft, full of an expressive feeling that helps to obscure the fact that the singers cannot quite get their voices around the notes. All but one of the motets, it is true, were written for funerals; yet they contain some of Bach's strongest and most confident music. Two survive with doubling instrumental parts. All have continuo, however, and a 1732 Saxony ceremonial suggests that, at important funerals, "instruments played softly now and then."

Harnoncourt takes his cue from this indication (and, I guess, from the instrumental character of many of the vocal lines); his performances are doubled

throughout by strings and wind—reticently balanced in the background—which play antiphonally in the double-choir pieces. The practice works well, and his original instruments sound as good as ever.

I did have some fears that the choral singing would rule this version out, for that has never been the strong point of Harnoncourt's Bach cantatas and has been a fatal flaw in his Handel recordings. But instead of choosing a light-voiced choir or an ensemble of boys and men (there is already a good version in the catalog by the Regensburg Cathedral Choir under Hanns-Martin Schneidt, Archiv 2708 031), he works here with a quite conventional choir from Sweden. Although the top voices are slightly unsteady and Latin diction is not perfect, he makes the choir sing with real flexibility and grace, matching the inflections of the instruments, fading quickly at cadences, and moving forward in a sprightly, flowing manner. It cannot quite sustain the longest movements in *Fürchte dich nicht* and *Der Geist hilft* (which ramble slightly, like Bach's keyboard toccatas), but the perfectly constructed *Jesu, meine Freude* is very fine, with the instruments giving a tangy edge to the texture, and Harnoncourt's rare understanding of Bach's Lutheran spirituality is perfectly captured in the chorale of *Komm, Jesu, komm*, a lilting innocently happy triple-meter hymn to death.

One small but serious worry: At bar 170 (New Bach Edition) of *Singet dem Herrn*, what I can only presume to be an incompetent tape edit has lopped about a sixteenth note off the last quarter, making nonsense of the rhythm. If Telefunken has any pride in this, its first digital baroque release (which sounds no more immediate than the cantata series, by the way), it should consider remastering this side.

Reread my first sentence, and you have my review of the new Hungarian recording: a well-meaning try but, with competition from Harnoncourt and Schneidt, not recommended. N.K.

BACH: Suite for Orchestra, No. 2, in B minor, S. 1067—See Telemann: Suite for Flute, Strings, and Continuo, in A minor.

BARTÓK: *Bluebeard's Castle*, Op. 11.

CAST:

Judith Sylvia Sass (s)
Bluebeard Kolos Kováts (bs-b)
London Philharmonic Orchestra,
Georg Solti, cond. [Christopher Raeburn,
prod.] LONDON OSA 1174, \$9.98.

COMPARISON:

Troyanos, Nimsgern, Boulez CBS M 34217

This recording projects the desire, the fear, and the ambivalence that are all

part of Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* (*A Kékszakállú herceg vára*)—described by his colleague Zoltán Kodály as a "musical volcano erupting for sixty minutes of tragic intensity." But there need be no fear or ambivalence about the performance: It is wonderful. No one who loves the opera could fail to be reduced to tears, or at least to thoughtful silence, by this recording, which by all rights should be called a production.

The touchy issue of nationalism, so easily taken to absurd extremes, cannot be avoided here. This *Bluebeard* surpasses its internationally cast competitors largely because—as is instantly clear to the ear—the cast and conductor understand every word of Béla Balázs' libretto (after Maeterlinck) and every idiom of Bartók's youthful score. Sir Georg Solti (here one should say Solti György), Sylvia Sass, and Kolos Kováts might have been born to these assignments. Solti was, in fact, born a year after Bartók wrote *Bluebeard*, and he remembers the composer from the halls of the Liszt Academy in Budapest. And in that building in March 1978, Kováts auditioned for the conductor and was almost immediately signed to sing this role.

The merits of presenting a work so intricately psychological and so intimately wedded to textual subtleties in its original language, understood by so few of those who might own the recording, cannot simply be taken for granted. It was fascinating to hear *Bluebeard* in English, but that old record is gone, and only Hungarian versions remain. Any departure from the original Hungarian puts a tremendous strain on Bartók's music, so thoroughly drawn and developed out of the rhythms of the speech itself. If listeners have indeed reached the point where they will make an effort to understand the text, fine, but the story runs a great risk of being misunderstood. Even in the best previous recording, the CBS issue with Tatiana Troyanos, Sigmund Nimsgern, and Pierre Boulez conducting, one senses that the performers have conscientiously learned the libretto and thought about its ramifications—yet the psychological balance is off. What the Solti recording can do, because of its vividness and because it is so rooted in Bartók's culture, is make it clear even to the laziest listener that this is an opera with no villain.

It is so easy to think that after seven doors open, he's going to do her in; the situation may be hopeless, but it's not serious. Much harder to realize is that this is an opera without hypocrisy or sarcasm. The action takes place so deep within the minds of Bluebeard and his young wife Judith that we must believe they are both telling the truth. He is a victim as much as she is. The proverbial die is cast when Judith opens the

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DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 7, Op. 70. Philadelphia, Ormandy. RCA RED SEAL ARL 1-3555, Nov.

GRIEG: Works for String Orchestra. Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Tønnesen. BIS LP 147, Nov.

HANDEL: Ariodante. Mathis, Baker, Lepard. PHILIPS 6769 025 (4), Aug.

HANDEL: Concerti Grossi (6), Op. 3. Northern Sinfonia, Malcolm. NONESUCH H 71376, Oct.

HANDEL: Sonatas for Two Oboes and Continuo (6). Holliger, Bourgue, Jaccottet. PHILIPS 9500 671, Dec.

HAYDN: Paris Symphonies (6). Orchestra of Naples, Vaughan. ARABESQUE 8047-3 (3), Oct.

HAYDN: Symphonies Nos. 97, 98. New York Philharmonic, Bernstein. CBS M 35844, Oct.

JANÁČEK: Diary of One Who Vanished. Márová, Příbyl; Páleníček. SUPRAPHON 1112 2414, Nov.

JANÁČEK: Fate. Hajóssyová, Příbyl, Jílek. SUPRAPHON 1112 2011/2 (2), Oct.

LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsodies (7). Various. ARABESQUE 8011, Dec.

MAHLER: Symphony No. 9. London Philharmonic, Tennstedt. ANGEL SZB 3899 (2), Oct.

MOZART: Eine kleine Nachtmusik, K. 525; Ein musikalischer Spass, K. 522. Amadeus. DG 2531 253, Dec.

OFFENBACH: Suites for Two Cellos (2), Op. 54. Peclard, Pidoux. HARMONIA MUNDI FRANCE HM 1043, Nov.

RUGGLES: Complete Works. Thomas, Kirkpatrick. CBS M2 34591 (2), Oct.

SCHUBERT: Piano Sonatas (2), D. 571, 625. Tirimo. SAGA 5469, Nov.

SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 7, in E (arr. Weingartner). Berlin Radio, Rögner. SPECTRUM SR 116, Aug.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 4, Op. 43. London Philharmonic, Haitink. LONDON CS 7160, Nov.

SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 2, Op. 43. BBC Symphony, Beecham. ARABESQUE 8023, Sept.
SOLER: Keyboard Works. Puyana. MERCURY SRI 75131, Dec.

ARTHUR FIEDLER: Forever Fiedler. RCA CRL 3-3599 (3), Sept.

FERNANDO DE LUCIA: The Gramophone Company Recordings, 1902-9. RUBINI RS 305 (5), Dec.

ANDRÉS SEGOVIA: The EMI Recordings, 1927-39. ANGEL ZB 3896 (2), July.

third door and sees her husband's fabulous wealth, but not until he gives her the key to the seventh does he know what she has already realized: that she, the most beloved of all, must inexorably follow his other wives, living in eternal darkness, lost to the world but still adored. Think of it as a parallel to *Pelléas et Mélisande* by Debussy, with whom Bartók was so entranced at the time; think of it as an extension of the "eternal feminine," or as a kind of Elektra situation, or as a disturbing statement on the impossibility of love. Whatever *Bluebeard* is, it is not simple. Nor, I feel compelled to say, is it antifeminist, as some (male) commentators have concluded. I'm not sure that in the end Judith doesn't get the better deal. And it is Bluebeard who must repeatedly ask the woman he loves what it is he has told her or shown her about himself, as he reveals secret after secret, imaginary landscapes that go foul.

The tension between the two characters is marvelously brought out in this recording by the great contrast in the voices themselves (as opposed to the pair on the Boulez disc). Kováts' low notes are firm and—discounting a few intonational problems—secure; he can sound heroic when, at the opening of the famous fifth door, he tells Judith that all of this now belongs to her, that she should "make the moon and stars [her] servants." Sass, who once again indicates that she has the makings of a great singing actress, can sound determined, with an edge on the voice that is not at all unattractive; but when she is awestruck, as at the opening of that fifth door, her singing is meltingly sweet and feminine. (To get the full impact of this recording's remarkable dynamic range, I had to turn up the volume a couple notches higher than usual, lest I miss the whispers.)

Turning curmudgeonly: There are a couple of miscalculations. When Sass/Judith asks for the key to the second door, she does it "because I love you," but the way she says it, she might as well need the key to get into the laundry room. And as the sixth door opens, Bartók calls for "a deep moan," but this recording gives us a mezzo-soprano one. Whose teardrops have formed the "mournful, silent waters" behind that door? It is unfair to overinterpret Bartók's or Balázs' intentions for the listener, and if the producer thinks that the teardrops came from a woman or women, I don't want to know it.

Neither do I want to know what the annotator thinks may be the "truth" about the opera. The notes to this boxed disc are uppity in the extreme and, beyond that, inadequate: two paragraphs of history and a synopsis with quick and easy psychological analysis and not a word about the performers.

The London Philharmonic, which Solti now heads, gets mentioned last because it is good and responsive but not particularly outstanding or cohesive. It sounds best right at the beginning, when it comes in to facilitate the move from speech to song. Yes, this recording does include the Prologue, well delivered by Istvan Sztanakay; the spoken verses serve as fair warning that in this *Bluebeard*, the listener is not going to turn down the volume or turn off the switches without getting involved. K.M.

BARTÓK: Rhapsodies for Violin and Orchestra (2)—See Berg: Lulu: Suite.

BEETHOVEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 1, in C, Op. 15.

Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, piano; Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini, cond. [Cord Garben and Karl Faust, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 302, \$9.98. Tape: 3301 302, \$9.98 (cassette). [Recorded in concert, September 1979.]

COMPARISONS:

Serkin, Ormandy CBS M5 6838
 Fleisher, Szell CBS M4X 30052

This performance—the only realized part of a projected cycle—derives from a live, televised concert given in Vienna on September 21, 1979. DG has a knack for on-location productions; while this taping does have a cough or two (unlike DG's recent live Bernstein recordings) and the sound lacks the ultimate in warmth and tonal blend (probably as much the fault of the pianist and orchestra as of the producer), there is plenty of amplitude and dynamic range is good.

The interpretation is less eccentric than one might have feared. Michelangeli, it is true, conveys a rather icy aloofness that makes his occasional languishing nuance or rubato on the first note of a phrase seem all the more like skillful embalming and, thus, artificial. On the other hand, these idiosyncrasies are really not so far removed from those perpetrated in Rudolf Serkin's excellent reading. And like Serkin and Leon Fleisher, Michelangeli projects a bold tonal weight in the fortissimo passages and vigorous athleticism eminently suited to this rollicking, boisterously rhythmic composition. As would be expected of so pianistic a performer, countless details stand out: The dynamic contrasts and plummeting runs of the first-movement cadenza (the long third one is used) are played to the hilt; the notoriously difficult slurs in the rondo's principal theme are dispatched with an attentiveness that borders on the finicky.

Everything adds up to a riveting and impressive account, if not a particularly heartwarming one. Giulini gives his all in a

full-blooded, massive, yet incisive performance, which moves along with robust vigor despite its broad pacing. H.G.

BEETHOVEN: Fifteen Variations and Fugue on a Theme from "Prometheus," Op. 35 (*Eroica*). For a review, see page 58.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3, in E flat, Op. 55 (*Eroica*).

A New York Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta, cond. [David Mottley, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS IM 35883, \$14.98 (digital recording). Tape: HMT 35883, \$14.98 (cassette).

There *must* be a reason to buy this recording: It is the first digital *Eroica* (but others will follow); the New York Philharmonic's playing has improved of late (but it still must compete with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Concertgebouw, the Vienna Philharmonic, and on records, Szell's Cleveland and Toscanini's NBC Symphony); it includes a 22-by-22-inch blowup of Zubin Mehta's album portrait (but my wall space is already crowded with shelves for all those other analog—and even mono—*Eroicas*).

Nor—to the disappointment of Mehta's detractors—is it much of a party record. In truth, his *Eroica* is almost as free of eccentricity and egocentricity as it is of ideas. One or two unorthodox details may be mentioned: Barely perceptible ritards cause the final cadences of the first-movement exposition and recapitulation to droop; there is a bit of Furtwänglerian grazing in that movement's development section; and there is a tiny, unobtrusively managed slowing for the third-movement trio. Otherwise the interpretation, for all its punctiliousness and decorum, sounds totally unmotivated. Accent after accent, phrase after phrase, episode after episode drifts by with a kind of Beautyrest nonchalance. Significantly, although none of the tempos is particularly slow, the overall effect is one of soporific deliberation.

One hesitates to place all of the blame on the musicians. While much has been made of Mehta's fondness for the creamy tenuto and the kind of mystic ambience espoused by some of the last generation's practitioners of "German Romanticism," the homogenized leveling of CBS's reproduction is almost unbelievable: The timpani sound mushy and saturated, the winds unctuous, the brass muffled, and worst of all, the strings seedy in tone and underarticulated. Balances seem free of spotlighting (presumably the digital master was made with only two microphones), but the dynamic range is often askew, with lightly scored passages sometimes disappearing and sometimes emerging with

more force than the full orchestra. H.G.

BERG: Lulu: Suite.* Der Wein.* Judith Blegen, soprano*; Jessye Norman, soprano*; New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez, cond. [Andrew Kazdin, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS M 35849, \$8.98. Tape: MT 35849, \$8.98 (cassette).

BERG: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. **BARTÓK:** Rhapsodies for Violin and Orchestra (2).

Yehudi Menuhin, violin; BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. [R.

Kinloch Anderson, prod.] ARABESQUE 8009, \$6.98. Tape: 9009, \$6.98 (cassette).

SCHOENBERG: Orchestral Works. Günter Reich, speaker*; chorus*, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Boulez, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS M 35882, \$8.98. Tape: MT 35882, \$8.98 (cassette).

A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46*; Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31; Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16; Accompaniment to a Film Scene, Op. 34.

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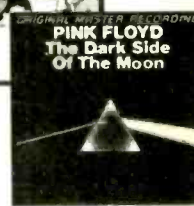
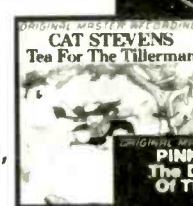
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lumbia's recent, belated release of recordings by Pierre Boulez constitutes a vivid reminder of what is now missing from the city's musical life, at least at the commanding heights of the New York Philharmonic: a continuing commitment to the twentieth century's most central and innovative repertory—and also to the highest standards in its performance. (Even though the new recording of Schoenberg orchestral works was made in London, presumably for reasons of cost, the pieces were part of Boulez' Philharmonic repertoire, and under him were played better than they had been previously by the orchestra.)

The Berg disc with the Philharmonic is particularly welcome because it restores to the catalog *Der Wein*, a richly sensuous concert aria composed in 1929, during the early stages of work on the opera *Lulu*. As text, Berg selected three of the five poems that make up Baudelaire's *Le Vin*, in the German versions by Stefan George, and arranged them in a sequence that suggested a ternary structure. Not much of the French poet's irony survives the dual translation (into German and into Berg's music), and the perfume of Bayreuth can occasionally be distinguished in this wine's bouquet, but it is a heady brew indeed, particularly intoxicating in this raptly sung, handsomely played performance.

Jessye Norman has never, to my ears, done anything more impressive; she sings with freedom, intensity, and security; she rides the climaxes powerfully and floats pianissimos with velvety warmth; she projects the words (insofar as the writing permits) with idiomatic clarity and apt inflection. The orchestra is in impressive form too, the tango rhythms and the lush polyphony clearly etched, the ardent string writing played with appropriate sentiment. This performance was one of the high points of Boulez' final New York season; we are lucky to have it in permanent form.

The conjoined *Lulu* Suite may now seem a superfluity, though it did not when it was taped in May 1976, for Helene Berg was then still alive and the opera's completion and eventual recording by Boulez hardly predictable. Had CBS stirred its stumps and published the suite recording a few years back, it would surely have had more market appeal. Even so, connoisseurs of Viennese vocal writing will be as gratified by Judith Blegen's secure embrace of the fiendishly difficult "*Lied der Lulu*" as by Norman's *Der Wein*. This is one passage in the role that the run of stage *Lulus* (e.g., Helga Pilarczyk, Anjs Silja) have the greatest difficulty encompassing, but it suits Blegen to a tee; she is comfortable with the range and makes the lines seem natural and shapely.

For those who want only the *Lulu*

Suite, instead of the complete opera, the choice is currently between this and a Silja/Dohnányi recording (London OS 26397, coupled with the *Salome* finale). They are different in much the same way as the respective conductors' recordings of the opera: Boulez' tenser and more translucent, Dohnányi's lusher. As noted, where the single vocal movement is concerned, there is little contest. The clearly recorded disc includes translations of the vocal texts—but the English given for *Der Wein* is a translation of Baudelaire's French, not of the Stefan George German words that Berg set!

Arabesque's Boulez-led Berg/Bartók coupling with Yehudi Menuhin may appear to belong in this company, but it doesn't really; though new to this country, it was recorded more than a decade ago and published in Great Britain in 1969. In the Berg, Boulez secures clear, open textures, but Menuhin's fiddling, preoccupied with the difficulties of the writing, lacks much character. To this neat but uninvolved performance, I much prefer the recent Perlman/Ozawa version (DG 2531 110), more extrovert in spirit but executed with so much tonal beauty and expressive directness as to be quite irresistible. Arabesque's overside Bartók is not particularly vivid either, the fast movements quite missing the spirit of the Hungarian rhythms. On my review copy, the Bartók side was afflicted with fierce surface noise, though the Berg was substantially quiet.

Boulez' mini-anthology of Schoenberg works, ranging from 1909 (Op. 16) to 1947 (Op. 46), is at once an attractive coupling and an indispensable addition to the catalog: the Five Pieces and the Variations are arguably two of the composer's greatest works, and the *Begleitmusik*, Op. 34, hasn't been available for some time. What is more, the performances are of great skill and refinement, such that one could enumerate felicities in almost every bar. Space being what it is, I shall have to confine myself to a few factual points, and urge you to let the record speak further for itself.

The Op. 16 Pieces are played in the full 1922 scoring, not the 1949 version for slightly reduced forces. The Variations compete successfully with the impressive Solti version (London CS 6984), which is more aggressive, dramatic, and sometimes excessively top-line-ish in its emphasis. Boulez' more austere and polyphonic performance retains its cool in the Finale, where Solti is by comparison hectic; nobody in my experience has made this Finale cohere as does the French conductor.

The coolness helps, too, in *A Survivor from Warsaw*, a melodramatic work that needs no additional hysteria; Günter Reich's clear but appropriately accented narration and the strong singing of an un-

identified chorus put this piece across well. (Since no text sheet is provided here, neither the narrator's few lines in German nor the Hebrew of the "*Shema Yisrael*" will be comprehensible to most listeners). The much-neglected, highly expressionistic *Begleitmusik* may finally receive some attention, thanks to this excellent performance.

Though the recorded sound has less obvious visceral impact than that of the London Solti disc, its more natural pickup provides ample clarity of texture. I wish the string tone were more alluring, but perhaps one should be satisfied with the sheer accuracy and very shapely phrasing that the BBC players achieve. May we have the rest of Schoenberg's music with orchestra from Boulez in performances of this quality, please? D.H.

BLOW: No, Lesbia, no. For a review, see page 60.

BORIS BLOCH: Piano Recital. For a review, see page 58.

BRAHMS: Piano Pieces (6), Op. 118. For a review, see page 58.

FRANCK: Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue. For a review, see page 58.

GOLDMARK: Rustic Wedding Symphony, Op. 26.

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, André Previn, cond. [Suvi Raj Grubb, prod.] ANGEL SZ 37662, \$8.98. Tape: 4ZS 37662, \$8.98 (cassette).

It's pleasant to see the favorites of my distant youth, lost from sight for more than half a century, come back one by one. Is it the passing of time that gives a better perspective, or is it the waning of the antagonism fashionable a few decades ago toward everything Romantic? At any rate, after the return from exile of Mendelssohn and some of the other greats, the minor masters of the nineteenth century are also being heard and recorded—without condescension. Among them was Karl Goldmark (1830–1915), one of the best liked and most respected composers in Central Europe at the turn of the century. That popular literature should have overlooked this decent, modest, amiable, and hard-working musician, whose life epitomized the rise from rags to riches, is surprising.

Goldmark was the son of a Jewish Hungarian provincial cantor of such utter poverty that he lacked means to send the youngster to school, only in his twelfth year did Karl learn to read and write and then largely by his own efforts. Soon he began to play the violin, and at age seventeen, his musical gifts beginning to be noted, the impecunious youth somehow managed to en-

roll in the Vienna conservatory. Still, he remained a lifelong autodidact, learning counterpoint—even piano playing—all by himself. With a steady job as violinist in Viennese theater orchestras, he acquired a remarkable knowledge of practically all the instruments in the orchestra—by learning to play them! This experience undoubtedly accounts for his extraordinary orchestration gifts. As his works began to be performed, both Liszt and Brahms welcomed this new member of the Viennese musical corps; finally, his opera *The Queen of Sheba* (1875) became an instant world-wide success.

Among his other works, the symphonic suite entitled *Rustic Wedding* became very popular; Brahms praised it in a warm letter to Goldmark. Not quite Western European nor quite Hungarian, the music should perhaps be called Austro-Hungarian. It shows a sure-handed eclectic who nevertheless could transcend eclecticism and assert himself through good melodic invention, superb orchestration, a jovial expressive countenance, and a fine sense for lush color and euphony. The first movement, a set of twelve freely handled variations that depict the moods and personalities of the wedding company, is colorful and entertaining. The second ("Bridal Song") is a sort of orchestral aria with attractive, almost Schubertian, accents. A Serenade follows, interesting because, while decidedly rustic, it is a well-fashioned example of sonata form—the only such construction in the symphony. Then comes a slow, *Tristan*-esque love duet between bride and groom, finally left alone "In the Garden." (Who, in those days, could escape *Tristan*—vide *Verklärte Nacht*?) The melodies are fine, and the music flows freely. The finale, again in the popular vein, romps with a fresh tune, here fuggally, there with drone basses.

Brahms called this work "faultless," though the last two movements do seem a bit long and repetitious. Make no mistake, however; this is very pleasant music and only a grimly narrow avant-gardist could fail to like it. André Previn leads an excellent performance, in which the Pittsburgh winds particularly distinguish themselves, and the strings are also admirable. The recording is clean and clear, marred only by a slight pre-echo. P.H.L.

HANDEL: Jephtha.

Iphis Margaret Marshall (s)
 Angel Emma Kirkby (s)
 Storgé Alfreda Hodgson (a)
 Hamor Paul Esswood (ct)
 Jephtha Anthony Rolfe Johnson (t)
 Zebul Christopher Keyte (bs)
 Southend Boys' Choir, Academy
 and Chorus of St. Martin-in-the-Fields,

Neville Marriner, cond. [Chris Hazell, prod.] Argo D 181D4, \$39.92 (four discs, manual sequence). Tape: K 181K43, \$39.92 (four cassettes).

Storgé Glenys Linos (s)
 Iphis Elizabeth Gale (s)
 Angel Gabriele Sima (s)
 Hamor Paul Esswood (ct)
 Jephtha Werner Hollweg (t)
 Zebul Thomas Thomaschke (bs)

Mozart Boys' Choir, Arnold Schoenberg Choir, Vienna Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, dir. TELEFUNKEN 46.35499, \$39.92 (four discs, manual se-

quence). Tape: 34.35499, \$39.92 (three cassettes).

HANDEL: Israel in Egypt.

Jean Knibbs, Marilyn Troth, Daryl Greene, and Elizabeth Priday, sopranos; Christopher Royall, Ashley Stafford, Brian Gordon, and Julian Clarkson, counter-tenors; Paul Elliott and William Kendall, tenors; Stephen Varcoe and Charles Stewart, basses; Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra. John Eliot Gardiner, cond. MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 804273, \$13.90 (\$8.90 to members) (two discs, manual sequence). Tape: 204273, \$13.90 (\$9.90 to



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clear, virtuosic sixteenth notes. The orchestra, balanced well forward, complements it well. There is an occasional lack of subtlety in the performance—I have a special affection for the ravishing, cool recording by Simon Preston and his Christ Church Choir (Argo ZRG 817/8), which does the pastoral “He led them out like sheep” more beautifully than Gardiner—but for sustained forcefulness it could scarcely be bettered. The great, elegiac chorus in Part II, “The people shall hear” (a close relation of *Jephtha’s* “How dark” and a distant cousin of the “*Qui tollis*” in Mozart’s C minor Mass), is magnificent. The soloists have little of importance to contribute and are not especially distinguished; it would surely have been worth importing Felicity Palmer for the unaccompanied fanfarelike lines at the end. (She sings an analogous passage in Harnoncourt’s recording of the *St. Cecilia* Ode, Telefunken 6.42349, brilliantly.) The recording, from Erato, is slightly fuzzy, with a touch too much resonance. Gardiner’s performance demands a razor-sharp acoustic.

Also from Erato, but released here on RCA, is Raymond Leppard’s *Samson*. This starts with a flaccid, droopy account of the Overture and goes downhill almost all the way, reviving only in the thrilling war choruses of Part III. Even Marriner’s blandness is not as bad as the total lack of interest in Leppard’s direction; every rhythmic felicity is smoothed out, every strongly characterized phrase glossed over, and every dramatic passage reduced to a uniform, chugging sewing machine. This performance has the flavor of a recording-studio read-through on a high professional level, in which none of the participants has the least understanding of—or indeed interest in—what is being sung and played.

The fine cast of soloists proves disappointing. Janet Baker turns the urgency of “no moment lose, for life is short” into the declaration of a dowager countess; her pastoral aria is as far from the “merry pipe and pleasing string” as could be imagined; all the power of Delilah’s demonic character is diluted. (Baker and Leppard can do far better than this, as in a *Hercules* scene and a *Lucrezia* never released here.) Robert Tear, as *Samson*, has lines like “I laid my strength in lust’s lascivious lap” and sings them as if he were a prurient twelve-year-old schoolboy in confession. The choir is well blended, neat, and utterly unimpressive; it emerges distantly, as if from an English cathedral. RCA provides a box cover that is as grotesque as the performance. N.K.

LALO: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor. **SAINT-SAËNS:** Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33.

A Yo-Yo Ma, cello; Orchestre National de France, Lorin Maazel, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS IM 35848, \$14.98 (digital recording). Tape: HMT 35848, \$14.98 (cassette).

While neither of these urbanely crafted but relatively superficial works provides a true gauge of Yo-Yo Ma’s interpretive depth (for that, try Beethoven’s Triple Concerto, DG 2531 262, September 1980), he renders both with tonal purity, a finespun line, and a refreshingly patrician outlook. And Lorin Maazel’s conducting—

perhaps a bit *too* antiseptic—frames Ma’s achievement with rhythmic incision and broad tempos, which permit all relevant instrumental details to tell.

The type of orchestral sound Maazel favors, along with his precisionist knack for accentuation and balance, supplies the best raw material for the new digital techniques; while the woodwinds are not overly miked, their clean, cool tone is always audible. The stress on abstract refinement seems to emanate from the podium rather than from the control room. CBS’s audiophile mastering and pressing are admirably quiet, but I de-

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text just a touch of overloading in the hefty Lalo tuttis (perhaps the fault of my equipment).

This is a fine pairing, though the Saint-Saëns lacks the character of the Giulini editions with Rostropovich (Angel 5 37457) and Starker (Seraphim 5 60266). H.G.

DAVID LIVELY: Piano Recital. For a review, see page 58.

MASSENET: Le Roi de Lahore.

CAST:
Sità Joan Sutherland (s)
Kaled Huguette Tourangeau (ms)
Alim, King of Lahore Luis Lima (t)
Scindia Sherrill Milnes (b)
A Soldier David Wilson-Johnson (b)
Indra Nicolai Ghiaurov (bs)
Timour James Morris (bs)
An Officer John Tomlinson (95)
Army Chief Gareth Morrell (bs)

A London Voices, National Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Bonyngue, cond. [Richard Beswick and Andrew Cornell, prod.] LONDON 3LDR 10025, \$32.94 (three discs, automatic sequence; digital recording).

MASSENET: La Cigale*; Valse très lente.

Enid Hartle, mezzo-soprano*; London Voices*, National Philharmonic Orchestra, Richard Bonyngue, cond. [Richard Beswick, prod.] LONDON CS 7163, \$9.98.

MASSENET: Orchestral Works.

Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, John Eliot Gardiner, cond. **MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY** MHS 4212/3, \$13.90 (\$8.90 to members) (two discs). (Add \$1.25 for shipping; Musical Heritage Society, 14 Park Rd., Tinton Falls, N.J. 07724.)

Suites for Orchestra: No. 3, Scènes dramatiques; No. 4, Scènes pittoresques; No. 6, Scènes de féerie; No. 7, Scènes alsaciennes. Don Quichotte: Interludes: No. 1 (*Serenade de Don Quichotte*); No. 2 (*La Tristesse de Dulcinée*). La Vierge: Le dernier Sommeil de la Vierge.

Le Roi de Lahore (1877), Massenet's third full-scale opera and first big success, is thoroughly characteristic of his style; here he finally found his quintessential voice.

Or perhaps the word should be "voices," since *Le Roi* is marked by the eclecticism that surfaced throughout his career in works like *Hérodiade* (1881), *Le Cid* (1885), *Esclarmonde* (1889), and *Thais* (1894). In *Le Roi* he brought together for the first time the heroic, the spectacular, the supernatural, the exotic, and the intimate. Seizing with relish the opportunities offered by the essentially pageantlike form of Parisian grand opera, he filled his score with rousing

choruses, sinuous dances, impassioned declarations, lyrical reflections, and a whole range of brilliant orchestral effects. The work's sheer theatrical confidence is exhilarating.

Some, of course, will not find it so. Despite the recent widespread renewal of interest in Massenet, he remains for many a lost cause: meretricious, sentimental, and, no doubt, tedious. Even those who recognize the admirable qualities of his more intimate and homogeneous works, such as *Manon*, *Werther*, *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame*, and *Don Quichotte* (all designed to suit the cozy ambience of the Opéra-Comique—or even smaller theaters), find it hard to appreciate his grander and more miscellaneous effusions.

Like Meyerbeer, he set out to please the complacent and materialist bourgeoisie by providing it with a mixture of thrills, distractions, and uplift—not necessarily a contemptible aim, especially when pursued with the skill, allure, and charm of the younger composer. *Le Roi*, early as it came in his career, possesses these virtues. By the standards that dominate current operatic thinking, the plot is easy to ridicule, concerning, as it does, the rivalry between the King of Lahore and his chief minister for the temple dancer Sità and the intervention of the Hindu god Indra in these terrestrial concerns. Like the exactly contemporaneous Petipa/Minkus ballet *La Bayadère*, with which its story shares several important features, *Le Roi* is both a consolatory fable of significant value and superb entertainment.

This premiere recording presents it with great persuasiveness. Richard Bonyngue is in his element, managing huge forces with confidence and just the right kind of brio. Joan Sutherland, good to report, is in magnificent voice. Apart from one or two rather hard-pressed moments, she is wonderfully exciting in the challenging role of Sità, less resolutely doleful than in some of her past assumptions and far clearer in diction.

Huguette Tourangeau's enunciation, despite her French-Canadian background, is disappointing. Her increasingly bottled-up vocal production clearly interferes with her diction as well as with her ability to maintain a clean singing line. Sherrill Milnes, as Scindia, the villainous usurper of the throne, is impressively strong and forthright—indeed, too insistently so. Anyone who has heard, say, Maurice Renaud sing Scindia's beautiful Act IV romance, "*Promesse de mon avenir*," will doubtless yearn for more lyricism and subtlety. James Morris, too, would be more persuasive with less emphasis; like Milnes, he seems to be singing a lot of his role through a fixed snarl. Nicolai Ghiaurov remains by and

large commanding though his vocalism now betrays a certain loss of smoothness. Luis Lima attempts manfully to encompass the King's difficult music; given his fundamental unsuitability for so heroic a part, he copes very capably, despite the strain evident in his top notes.

The National Philharmonic plays well, and the chorus makes a brave noise in appropriately spectacular digital sound. A helpful introduction to the opera accompanies the French/English libretto. Bonynge uses an edition that includes Massenet's post-Parisian revisions and additions, principally an aria for Sità at the beginning of Act IV and a "Romance-Serenade" for Kaled in Act II.

La Cigale (1904), with its varied and sensuous orchestral effects, melodic ease, and tenderness of feeling, exemplifies not only Massenet's theatrical skill, but all the considerable virtues of French nineteenth-century ballet music from Delibes to Messager. It is particularly interesting to see how Massenet—so adept in *Le Roi* at providing the right kind of contrast for the perfumed atmosphere of Hindu paradise with a short dance-divertissement (including a so-called "Saxophone Waltz")—sustains interest in a two-act, forty-two-minute narrative about the unhappy fate of an improvident young girl. Key to his success is his unerring sense of proportion: Nothing in the score tries to achieve more than is inherent in the material; above all, nothing is stretched beyond its natural limits. The final sequence, in which *Cigale's* soul is welcomed into heaven by angels, uses a female soloist and chorus to great effect. Mawkish as the idea may sound, its realization is touching. Those responsive to the elegant charms of nineteenth-century French theater music yet dubious about approaching something entirely unfamiliar should turn for immediate reassurance to the enchanting *Valse très lente*, appended to *La Cigale* and, like it, beautifully performed.

There is a great deal of charming music in Massenet's seven orchestral suites, four of which John Eliot Gardiner and the Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra perform with admirable proficiency. The prelude to the fourth scene of Massenet's sacred oratorio *La Vierge* was understandably one of Beecham's favorite lollipops; the excerpts from the opera *Don Quichotte* are equally irresistible. D.S.H.

MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 56 (*Scottish*); Hebrides Overture, Op. 26.

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein, cond. [Hans Weber and Hanno Rinke, prod.] DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2531 256, \$9.98. Tape: 3301 256, \$9.98 (cassette). [Recorded in concert.]

MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 3, in A minor, Op. 56 (*Scottish*); *Athalie*, Op. 74: Overture; War March of the Priests.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Christoph von Dohnányi, cond. [Christopher Raeburn, prod.] LONDON CS 7184, \$9.98.

MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 5, in D minor, Op. 107 (*Reformation*); Hebrides Overture, Op. 26.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, Bernard Haitink, cond. PHILIPS 9500 713, \$9.98. Tape: 7300 804, \$9.98 (cassette).

MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 5, in D minor, Op. 107 (*Reformation*). SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 (*Spring*).

Philharmonia Orchestra, Riccardo Muti, cond. [John Mordler, prod.] ANGEL SZ 37601, \$8.98 (SQ-encoded disc).

If a conductor were to observe faithfully all of Mendelssohn's tempo markings throughout the *Scottish* Symphony, the work would fit on one side of an LP. We have actually had such rarities from Mitropoulos (admittedly, a rather hectic rendition) and Abbado.

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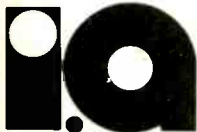
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Heard on its own, Dohnányi's performance is very satisfying and musical, with fairly vigorous tempos throughout. In comparison with Bernstein's inspired reading, however, it seems a trifle sedate. Though not uninspired and perhaps more faithful to the score at certain points, Dohnányi does not quite carry the listener along with the same panache. True, Bernstein's opening Andante is anything but "con moto," and his Adagio, while not draggy, is expansive, to say the least. Neither conductor imparts the slight agitation Mendelssohn asks for at the beginning of the first movement's Allegro; Bernstein is absolutely serene here. And he begins the coda of the finale quite slowly, accelerating only toward the end. Yet seldom do the fast movements show such blazing commitment as they do here; the scherzo is especially exhilarating. Bernstein demonstrates that Mendelssohn at his best is really very exciting.

He also offers a well-paced, dynamic *Hebrides Overture* (alias *Fingal's Cave*), the huge ritard in the final measures notwithstanding. But Dohnányi has a more interesting coupling, serving up a genuine rarity: two excerpts from Mendelssohn's incidental music for Racine's *Athalie*. The Overture, one of the composer's few really somber pieces, is also unusual for him in its use of the harp; not unworthy, it deserves an occasional hearing. The War March of the Priests, which my high school orchestra used to play at graduations (no *Pomp and Circumstance* for us!), is stately and repetitive—ideal for such occasions. At times it seems about to turn into Mendelssohn's Wedding March but is unfortunately unable to do so. Both pieces receive sympathetic performances.

Each of these records is distinguished by superb orchestral playing. In particular, the Israel Philharmonic's sweet-toned violins and the lightness and lean-ness of its playing make it ideal for this music. The recordings are also exemplary, the DG having a drier acoustic, the London more warmth. Typical of his recent work, Bernstein's is taken from a concert performance in Germany, where—we can be grateful—audience members prefer to turn blue rather than cough during a pianissimo.

Some of the stormiest music Mendelssohn ever wrote depicts not the waves dashing against the coast of Scotland, but the conflict within the Catholic Church as portrayed in the first movement of his *Reformation Symphony*. This is an underrated work, which does not "play itself," but requires a little extra care and effort from the conductor to bring about a convincing realization—precisely what Bernard Haitink supplies in his performance with the London Philharmonic.

As he so often does, Haitink presents the work as a totality in a reading of great integrity and nobility, yet without slighting its stormy aspect. He gives such a beautifully proportioned, unified performance that no detail calls attention to itself—with a single exception: In common with many conductors, he directs the finale's Allegro maestoso section in a rather brisk alla breve tempo (two beats to the bar), even though it is not so marked. Conductors such as Munch and Toscanini have opted for a broader tempo of four beats to a measure, as indicated in the score; Toscanini, in fact, in his classic recording, takes the slowest tempo I've ever heard and produces a finale that is absolutely overwhelming. The danger in playing it alla breve is that the music can easily sound flippant. Haitink avoids this pitfall and offers a buoyant, joyous finale that, while it may not be overwhelming, is certainly uplifting. This is, then, an outstanding *Reformation Symphony*, superbly played by the London Philharmonic and superbly recorded, with the same integrity to be found in Haitink's performance. Once again, Philips produces the most natural orchestral sound on records.

Haitink does give us those Scottish waves as well in a warmly expressive and expansive *Hebrides*, supplying the turbulence where needed. My only quibble is with the rather clubby timpani, which don't sound that way in the symphony.

All other versions of the *Reformation* available on major labels offer it complete on one side. With a performance as fine as this, it's a bit disconcerting to have to turn the record over after the second movement. And prices being what they are, I might think twice about buying the work split over two sides, with only a single overture as filler.

Riccardo Muti's *Reformation*, while respectable enough, does not have the natural flow of Haitink's, nor does it seem to offer any particular point of view. The Meno allegro section of the first movement draws attention to itself by being a little too "meno," the minuetlike scherzo is a bit heavy, and the Andante is too slow and mannered. Muti begins the finale's Allegro maestoso a little more broadly than Haitink but before long adopts a definite alla breve tempo. Toward the end of the finale, he starts the accelerando many bars before it is marked and, finally arriving at the instruction to become gradually more animated, has nothing left to do.

With the *Spring Symphony*, Muti completes his Schumann cycle. I like his treatment of the lyrical section beginning at bar 437 of the first movement (neither Romantic nor entirely strict), the reverential feeling he imparts to the slow movement,

his use of the same pulse for both trios of the scherzo, and the relaxed grazioso tempo of the finale. In fact, but for a slightly too deliberate scherzo, I like his tempos throughout.

Unlike some conductors, Muti does not revise or retouch Schumann's orchestration, but neither does he make the necessary dynamic adjustments. For example, at measures 118-21 of the first movement the sustained horns are so loud that they obliterate the rising and falling woodwind scales. For that matter, the horns are too loud throughout this movement, though not in the rest of the symphony. Exposition repeats are observed in the outer movements.

Both Muti performances suffer from rather distant miking in a reverberant acoustic, so that many of the softer details simply do not register with any clarity and some are virtually inaudible—especially when the gritty surfaces can be heard so well. J.C.

PURCELL: King Arthur; Dido and Aeneas; Vocal Works; Harpsichord Works. For a review, see page 60.

SAINT-SAËNS: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 1, in A minor, Op. 33—See: Lalo: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, in D minor.

SCHOENBERG: Orchestral Works—See Berg: Lulu: Suite.

SCHUMANN: Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13. For a review, see page 58.

SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 1, in B flat, Op. 38 (Spring)—See Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3.

STRAUSS, R.: An Alpine Symphony, Op. 64.

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. [Thomas Mowrey, prod.] LONDON CS 7189, \$9.98. Tape: CS5 7189, \$9.95 (cassette).

COMPARISON:

Mehta/Los Angeles Phil. Lon. CS 6981

STRAUSS, R.: Don Juan, Op. 20; Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 28; Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.

A Cleveland Orchestra, Lorin Maazel, cond. [Paul Myers, prod.] CBS MASTERWORKS IM 35826, \$14.98 (digital). Tape: HMT 35826, \$14.98 (cassette).

The last of the Strauss tone poems (for Op. 64 is no more a symphony than is the *Sinfonia domestica*) is only rarely heard in concert or on records—and for good reason. This gargantuan 1915 score, once considered impossibly difficult, even today puts virtuoso orchestras to a stern test; yet all its

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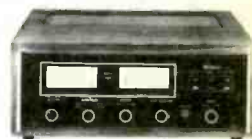
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mountainous laborings give birth to musical mice. Ravel deprecatingly referred to his own *Bolero* as "fifteen minutes of orchestra without music," a characterization that might more justly be applied to the forty minutes of tonal travelogue here.

All that granted, one can still find considerable aural pleasure in the magnificently recorded, warmly rich sound effects produced by the Bavarian Radio Symphony under Solti's sure-handed if somewhat impersonal direction. This reading is brisker, more idiomatic, and less pretentious than Mehta's—the only other one currently available here. And while the 1975 Los Angeles (Royce Hall) sonics were resplendent indeed, the present team of London engineers (Stanley Goodall, David Frost, Nigel Gaylor) works even more successfully in the Munich Herkulessaal; if the *Alpine* Symphony is to be heard at all, it surely should be in the most impressive reproduction.

I no longer have the imported 1973 Kempe/Dresden recording at hand; as I remember, that interpretation was more distinctive and eloquent, yet the sound, while excellent for its time, is surely no match for the sonic strengths and splendors of the Solti version. Nor is there likely to be one, unless digital techniques can bring greater

lucidity to the nearly impenetrable tonal textures.

I've already noted briefly the present digital program in its cassette edition (December 1980, "Tape Deck"). This rehearing gives me no cause to re-evaluate Maazel's readings: His *Death and Transfiguration* may be the best available; the *Don Juan* is exciting in its livelier moments, overromanticized in its lyrical ones; the *Till* is humorless. Nevertheless, I welcome the chance to make my first direct comparison between the beautifully processed and pressed disc edition and the superchromium cassette.

As I had expected, or at least hoped, the extremely robust and vivid digital recording is done fully equal justice in both formats. The ultrabright highs, perhaps just a bit too sharp-edged, as well as the substantial lows and admirably wide dynamic ranges seem to be absolutely identical as one switches back and forth (at an equalized level) between disc and tape. As for surface noise, there is none audible in cassette playback with proper Dolby adjustment, while the disc grooves—exceptionally smooth though they are—reveal just the faintest grittiness.

On the other hand, the deplorable disdain of major American manufacturers for tape collectors still prevails; for the same price paid by their discophile brethren, cassette buyers get no musical annotations at all. Equal rights seem as remote as ever! R.D.D.

TELEMANN: Suite for Flute, Strings, and Continuo, in A minor. BACH: Suite for Orchestra, No. 2, in B minor, S. 1067.

A Ransom Wilson, flute; Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Gerard Schwarz, cond. [Patti Laursen, prod.] ANGEL DS 37330, \$10.98 (digital recording). Tape: ZS 37330, \$8.98 (cassette).

COMPARISON—Telemann:

Munrow, Murriner/

Academy

Ang. S 37019

Some high-powered talents combine here to meager effect. Neither chamber work really demands advanced recording technology, and in any case the present Soundstream sonics may confirm the suspicions of digital-recording critics that some high frequencies (especially in *ff* high-register string passages) are given unnaturally sharp edges. And the fast-rising trumpeter turned conductor Gerard Schwarz, though surely destined for stardom, still has much to learn about the proper interpretation of baroque masterpieces. These distinctively personalized readings are often vehement at one extreme, stiffly deliberate at the other.

Only flutist Ransom Wilson

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(Rampal's prize American disciple and occasional corecitalist) achieves at least partial success: His superbly bravura performances are an executant and tonal delight in themselves, though he is much too richly Romantic for the Bach in particular. His Telemann is less anachronistic (with even a surprisingly effective attempt to imitate recorder tonal qualities, at least in the opening Overture). But I still find no real challenge here to my favorite version of the (putatively) original scoring for treble recorder by David Munrow with Marri-ner's St. Martin's Academy in the 1974-75 Angel edition.

If you insist on the flauto traverso, there are a number of good versions, most recently the engaging, if scarcely very baroque, one in which James Galway doubles as soloist and conductor of the Solisti di Zagreb (RCA ARL 1-3488). Where the Bach B minor Suite is concerned, most connoisseurs deprecate presentations (like this one) of the work not only in isolation, but with the flutist given a concerto-solo rather than concertante role. To appreciate the difference, listen to the Academy flutist, William Bennett, in Marriner's 1971 complete set of the four Bach orchestral suites (Argo ZRG 687/8). R.D.D.

ZELENKA: Hipocondrie in A; Overture in F.* Trio Sonata No. 2, in G minor.*

Vienna Concentus Musicus, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, dir.* Jürg Schaefflein and Paul Hailperin, oboes; Milan Turković, bassoon; Eduard Hruza, violone; Herbert Tachezi, harpsichord.* TELEFUNKEN 6.42415, \$10.98. Tape: 4.42415, \$10.98 (cassette).

I am, I confess, a Zelenka freak. When the Holliger recording of his trio sonatas appeared (it was released some years ago in Europe, though only recently here; Archiv 2708 027, September 1980), the vivid imagination and eccentric power of the music came as a revelation. I searched for every score I could find and ended up with Bärenreiter versions of the sonatas (poorly edited), a set of *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, already recorded by Supraphon (available here on Nonesuch H 71282), and two volumes of *Musica Antiqua Bohemica*. The contents of the first volume were subsequently recorded by the Camerata Bern in the marvelous album that won the International Record Critics Award in 1979 (Archiv 2710 026, March 1979). I have yet to hear works from the second published volume: choral psalms and *Magnificats*, which are perhaps not as original as the orchestral works, but well worth performance.

Both the sonatas and the orchestral music were recorded on modern instruments, well played. Now here is a one-disc

selection from both groups—one sonata, two orchestral pieces—performed by Concentus Musicus on original instruments. As one might expect, Harnoncourt makes the most of the music's wildness and unpredictability. (HF's European editor, Edward Greenfield, memorably described Zelenka's music as "Bach with a touch of Charles Ives.") In some cases the firmer control of the Camerata Bern serves the music better, though the playing of Harnoncourt's band is always more virtuosic.

I would not have chosen these works

as Zelenka's three best and hope that Harnoncourt will do a one-disc selection from the capriccios, plus perhaps the wonderful Fifth Trio Sonata. Those would severely tax even his players, however; here Jürg Schaefflein and Paul Hailperin are able to burble happily in the sonata, and there are no stratospheric horn parts in the orchestral pieces. Harnoncourt is at his best in the opening overture movements of both, stressing the extraordinary scrunches of the music; the dances need a more natural flow. N.K.

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WILLIAMS: Star Wars: Main Theme. Superman: Theme. BARRY: Moonraker; The Black Hole: End Title. ROSENTHAL: Meteor: Main Title. STRATTA: The Lost Galaxy; The Late Planet Love. GOLDSMITH: Star Trek: Main Theme (film). Alien: Main Title. COURAGE: Star Trek: Theme (television series). LARSON-PHILLIPS: Battlestar Galactica: Theme.

As the John Williams bandwagon shifts into high gear, some may fear that the *Star Wars* theme and all its progeny may soon become as painfully ubiquitous as Maurice Jarre's droning *Lawrence of Arabia* and weepy *Dr. Zhivago* themes were a decade ago.

Nevertheless, the suite that conductor Charles Gerhardt has put together by expanding the composer's own five-movement concert treatment of *The Empire Strikes Back* with seven complementary sections makes the best possible case for this sprawling and multifaceted score. In fact, his forty-five-minute version offers a more compelling and diversified overview of the music's strongest points than the seemingly interminable four-sided soundtrack album (RSO 2-4201, September 1980). Gerhardt also invests it with greater sweep, drive, and gusto—qualities characteristic of the triumphant series of recordings that he, the National Philharmonic, and producer George Korngold made for RCA during the 1970s.

Christopher Palmer's insightful liner notes go far to offset the inflated taffy-candy blather of Ray Bradbury's jejune ruminations on the movie music of the twenty-first century. Chalfont's bright,

spacious ambience and immaculate surfaces should make this, sonically as well as musically, the definitive edition of *Empire* for a long time to come.

For his first recording as conductor of the Boston Pops and Philips' first digital release, Williams—appropriately or immodestly enough, depending on your point of view—gives us an inevitable "Greatest Hits" potpourri that many may find superfluous in view of the excellent representation *Superman, Empire, Star Wars*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* already enjoy on disc. More useful would have been a selection of excerpts from some of his more neglected scores, such as *Poseidon Adventure, Black Sunday, Images*, and *Family Plot*, or at least the rousing *Cowboys Overture* he has been performing with the Pops of late.

At any rate, the orchestra's silken, effortless manner works best in the lovely *Superman* music, while many of the other items lack the bite and bounce conductors like Gerhardt have brought to them; in comparison to Gerhardt's, for example, Williams' tempo in the "Imperial March" from *Empire* is positively leaden. The "new music" from *Close Encounters* referred to on the jacket seems to be simply a development of the climactic passage that accompanied the spaceship's opening and the tantalizing glimpse of its interior in the original film. The Philips recording has perhaps a shade more warmth and body than the Chalfont, though the pressing—while acceptable—does not quite match the latter's superior level.

At first glance, the Stratta collection appears to be another opportunistic, "sympho-pop" spinoff from the Williams hype machine. But it offers some other agreeable ingredients: Leonard Rosenthal's swooning main title music from *Meteor* (whose soundtrack was issued only in Japan); a clever counterpointing of the *Star Trek* movie and TV themes by Jerry Goldsmith and Alexander Courage, respectively; and some refreshingly different and sometimes quite sensitive reworkings of familiar themes from *Black Hole* and *Moonraker* (by John Barry), *Alien* (by Goldsmith), and *Battlestar Galactica* (by Stu Phillips)—plus two attractive originals by conductor Ettore Stratta himself. The Williams material is played more or less straight (i.e., as in the soundtracks), but the other numbers are credited to such talented arrangers as Richard Hayman, Jim Tyler, and Jorge Calandrelli.

Though perhaps overpriced at \$14.98, this well-recorded and nicely packaged program avoids the twin pitfalls of slick commercialism and grandiloquent pomposity that gradually seem to be overtaking certain aspects of the movie-music business. P.A.S.

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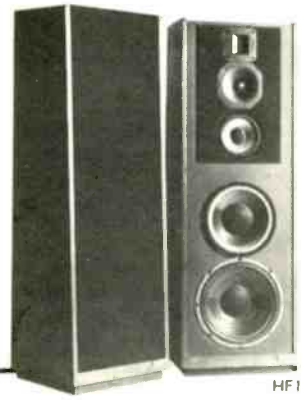
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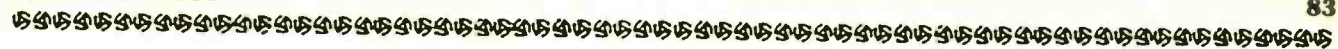
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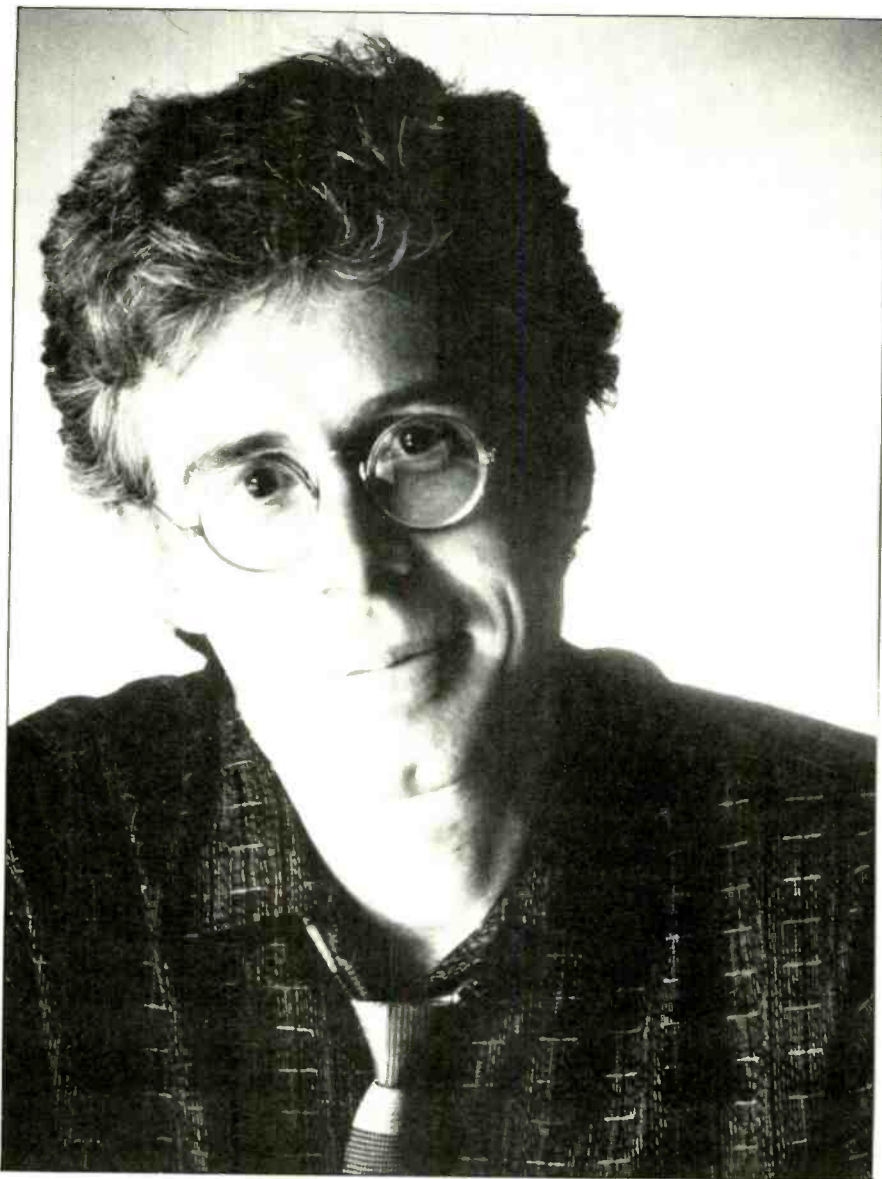
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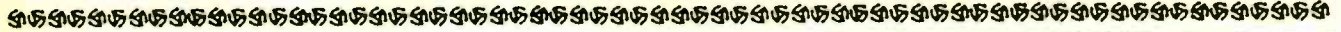
by Stephen Holden

U ntil last year, singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn was known as "Canada's best-kept secret." But then the thirty-five-year-old silver blond with ten albums under his belt finally cracked the American market with *Wondering Where the Lions Are*. The song was from his first

Millennium album, "Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws," which went on to sell a couple of hundred thousand copies in the States and went gold in Canada. (Gold LPs in Canada are those with sales of over 50,000 units.) So now Millennium proclaims in his ads, "the secret is out."

Well, almost. Cockburn—who pronounces his name Coburn—isn't yet a household word in America. These days, it's harder than ever to break a class act like his. A highbrow intellectual and serious mystic, he writes in French as well as English and has a scholar's understanding of poetic metaphor. The images in his songs often suggest the opalescence of Japanese painting, while the diction of his meditative lyrics is sometimes reminiscent of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. "I see the rose above the sky/ opens/ and the light behind the sun/ takes all," goes the chorus of *The Rose Above the Sky*, the most overtly religious song on Cockburn's eleventh and latest album, "Humans." On *Rumours of Glory*, the LP's first single, he conjures up a Canadian sunset and then, Wordsworth fashion, finds intimations of immortality in its splendor. But there are also hints of darkness: "You see the extremes of what humans can be?/ in that distance some tension's born/ energy surging like a storm." Not surprisingly, *Rumours* shares the lilting, folk-reggae idiom of *Lions*, as well as that song's message of serene hope. And both are spiritual come-ons that spring from Cockburn's deep commitment to Christianity.

We met on a brisk morning in the penthouse offices of Millennium Records. "My parents don't believe in God at all," says the Ottawa-born doctor's son. "They only took us to church because my grandmother would have been upset if they hadn't. We went to the United Church, which in Canada is a combination of Methodist and Presbyterian. As soon as we were old enough to complain about having to wear gray flannels on Sunday, we didn't have to go anymore. But I've always been aware of another side of life—one that's different from the tangible things we're confronted with every day. I've always looked for information about it through art and reading, through different philosophies and spiritual disciplines. I had a shallow involvement with Buddhism for a while, and I read Gurdjieff and even got into black magic. I'd be the last one to claim that drugs held any answers for anybody, but my experiences with psychedelics strongly reinforced the knowledge that there's more to life than meets the eye. It all just led me closer and closer to Chris-



Photos by JoAnne Smale

tianity, and about six years ago, I made that commitment. Since then I've been calling myself a Christian."

Compared to most musicians, Cockburn is quite erudite. Like virtually every North American folk or pop singer/songwriter of his generation, the immediate catalyst for his career was Bob Dylan. But he was also inspired by the Beat writers—Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, and Allen Ginsberg. Echoes of Ginsberg's voice, his "breath rhythms," as well as elements of his mysticism and compressed imagery can be found in some of Cockburn's lyrics. And two tours of Japan, where the singer has a loyal following, have stimulated his interest in modern Japanese literature.

Cockburn has been playing the guitar since he was fourteen and writing songs for about ten years. Though deemed an exceptional jazz/pop guitarist by many critics, he views his playing as merely competent. (The six-string acoustic is his chosen instrument.) He is a writer first, a singer/guitarist second. "I went through a period of playing ragtime and country blues," he says, "and later I mixed in a lot of Beatles and Dylan with Jelly Roll Morton and Mance Lipscomb. I was always interested in jazz, and when I finished high school, I went to the Berklee School of Music in Boston and majored in composition."

In the late Sixties, friend and long-

time producer Eugene Martynek introduced Cockburn to Bernie Finkelstein of True North Records, a small, independent label in Toronto. Bruce became True North's first artist, and, along with Canadian singer/songwriter Murray McLauchlin, one of its mainstays for the eleven years of its existence. His 1970 debut, "Bruce Cockburn," was one of two LPs that were distributed in America under a worldwide deal with CBS.

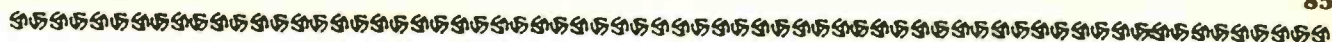
"CBS did no promotion for us," Cockburn recalls. "And they only picked up the option on my first and third ['Sun-wheel Dance'] albums under the deal. What really turned us off was their refusal to distribute my fourth album, 'Night Vision,' which was the most commercial thing I'd done to date."

It was also his first "electric" album and became his first gold LP in his homeland, though he had been recognized there as a major talent almost from the outset of his career. On "Salt, Sun & Time" and "Joy Will Find a Way," his next two albums, he moved from folk/rock toward jazz. True North had no U.S. affiliation during this time, so these albums were available here only as imports. His next three discs—"In the Falling Dark," "Circles in the Stream" (both released in 1977), and "Further Adventures Of" (1978)—were distributed here by Island Records. "Circles," which included some of the material from the LPs not released here, contains some of Cockburn's flash-

iest and finest jazz playing.

Bruce's next move was to Millennium, an RCA-distributed label founded by rock producer Jimmy Ienner (Grand Funk Railroad, Bay City Rollers). It would seem an odd home for him, but together Millennium and RCA have accomplished what neither CBS nor Island could by breaking Cockburn on FM radio. He helped, of course, by taking a more commercial direction. "Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws" and "Humans" both use the strong rhythm section of drummer Bob DiSalle and bassist Dennis Pendrith, and several of the tunes on "Humans" are embellished by the exquisite fiddling of Hugh Marsh, a young musician Cockburn met recently in Toronto. The chemistry between his lyrical violin and Cockburn's chromatic melodies, bell-like guitar, and passionate Neil Young-ish singing creates the same magical spark that lit up Jackson Browne's duets with David Lindley when Browne was still an acoustic folk singer.

"Humans" is also Cockburn's most emotionally down-to-earth album, the first one in which he has spoken of the dark side of life in explicitly personal terms. His tone is angry as well as reflective. "It's been a heavy year personally," he explains. "I was on tour in Italy and Japan and Canada, and traveling like that is always very intense. On top of that, my wife and I separated. Two of the songs, *How I Spent My Fall Vacation* and *Tokyo*, are basically impressions of my travels. Three



songs—*You Get Bigger as You Go*, *What About the Bond*, and *Fascist Architecture*—deal specifically with the separation. But I think enough people go through stuff like that, so the songs have a fairly universal application. The whole album deals with a lot of death and pain—a lot of the ugliness that I've encountered around me. But I hope it comes through that, even in the face of it, there's still ground for hope. Songs like *Rumours of Glory* and *The Rose Above the Sky* are about moving from downness into something that opens up, although what that something is is not really spelled out."

One of the LP's most powerful songs is a vision of human violence called *Grim Travellers*, in which Cockburn relates the aggression of the Red Army Underground and African mercenaries to the assault of tabloid headlines and the frustration of traffic jams. "Those grim travellers in dawn's skies, see the beauty—makes them cry inside / Makes them angry and they don't know why."

"Based on whatever observations I've done of history, there's nothing I've seen that indicates people have the ability to straighten themselves out as a group," he says ruefully. "*Grim Travellers* starts out from terrorism, but it's about the fact that none of us are free from the darker qualities that are part of human nature in general. It's a fairly hopeless song. One of the reasons why we followed it with *Rumours of Glory* is that it gives the other side of the coin—that however negative we can be, we also depend on each other and are capable of great love."

Clearly, Cockburn's faith is secure enough to support a lot of doubt and despair. It's a very different brand of Christianity from the fire-and-brimstone fundamentalism being preached by his one-time idol Bob Dylan. "I'm by nature fairly conservative and inclined to try to live my life by the biblical approach as much as I can," Cockburn explains. "But there's a lot in the Bible I have trouble accepting as the final word. And I don't trust human groups. I don't like the way we humans behave when we're in large groups. So, although I think it's great that the born-again movement has brought people to Christ, to the extent that it's a human social phenomenon, I distrust it. There are too many historical precedents for people doing awful things in the name of religion when what's going on is really just a social movement."

Cockburn speaks with the meas-

ured amiability of someone who understands himself quite well. He weighs his words carefully and enjoys the challenge of being totally precise. His quiet optimism leads me to believe that the pain and loss of the last year have been absorbed. "A lot of the songs on 'Humans' came out of my realization that I needed other people," he says, smiling. "I've always been a loner and kept a distance between myself and even those I've regarded as friends. But all of a sudden, when I was getting kicked around and bat-

tered, all these people were right there—they came through in a way I never would have expected."

The song that best expresses Cockburn's newfound trust in others is *More Not More*, a soaring ballad in which the singer vents an almost tearful joy over being with his friends: "There must be more / more current more spark / more touch deep in the heart / not more thoughtless cruelty / not more being this lonely." It is one of the album's many nakedly human moments. ❧

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Looking Back on 1980

This year we asked our critics to discuss the most significant albums of 1980 (November 1, 1979 to November 1, 1980). "Significant" in most cases translated to best, but—lest we be accused of keeping our heads in the sand—there were also several significant disappointments that we couldn't ignore.

The problem with pop albums today is that genuine musical feeling often takes a back seat to the ever-advancing juggernaut of recording technology. The albums, artists, and producers I've found significant over the last year are thus those whose mastery of technology enhances and serves, rather than dominates, their artistic intentions.

Pretenders (Sire)

This is a stunning debut album with a brilliant job of nasty-but-lucid production by Chris Thomas. Chrissie Hynde and band pull off the impossible by projecting a completely original and believable rock & roll attitude that is street-lurid, sexy, and contemporary. If some of Hynde's poses are scary, so is 1980; the kind of luminously hard rock this band plays is no pretense.

Bob Seger: Against the Wind (Capitol)

This album is smoother than Bob Seger's last and contains more ballads and midtempo tunes, but it shows that his command of r&b-based rock and pop is now total. *Fire Lake*, *Horizontal Bop*, and *You'll Accomp'ny Me* are gems of the very form Seger helped create.

The Police: Zenyatta Mondatta (A&M)

Not since the Jimi Hendrix Experience has a rock trio sounded so lush and full. The Police integrate legitimate African, reggae, and funk influences into their by now seamless style, creating a truly international sound. They have hit full stride with this delightful LP.

The Manhattans: After Midnight (Columbia)

Ray, Goodman & Brown II (Polydor)
Both of these albums signal the triumphant return of first-class r&b balladry, and none too soon. The Manhattans feature luxuriously seductive arrangements. Ray, Goodman & Brown



Crispin Cioe

put street-corner vocalizing together with modern production—a delightful combination. Lots of smooth falsetto and top-shelf harmonizing make these LPs treasures of the group-vocal format, with several memorable singles, like the Manhattans' *Shining Star*, sure to be long-standing classics.

Professor Longhair: Crawfish Fiesta (Alligator)

He died earlier this year, but Henry Roeland Byrd, alias Professor Longhair, will live eternally as the king of rolling New Orleans r&b piano. This album was re-

corded with his last touring band, a group of younger New Orleans musicians very attuned to Byrd's special Mardi Gras, second-line cross-rhythms. A great final testament from a truly unique American.

Bob Marley and the Wailers: Uprising (Island)

Far from running out of things to say, Bob Marley continues to break new musical ground. The Wailers are simply one of the best self-contained bands extant, and new songs like *Work*, *Could You Be Loved*, and the haunting acoustic-guitar-accompanied ballad *Redemption Song* show that reggae is a resilient and wide-open music that will, I predict, become increasingly international in scope and appeal.

Bruce Springsteen: The River (Columbia)

For Bruce-oids, the long-awaited double album is no disappointment, and it's chock full of ballads, rockers, and idiosyncrasies. It also features the kind of short, punchy, steamroller classics that he has reserved for live shows in the past and rarely committed to wax. *I'm a Rocker*, *Ramrod*, *Cadillac Ranch*, and most especially *Hungry Heart* are rock for the ages.

Ran Blake: Film Noir (Arista/Novus)

This is a real sleeper. Pianist Blake is the dean of "third stream" jazz, and the compositions here, fleshed out by a fine ensemble of players from the New England Conservatory, are based on his favorite film classics (e.g. *Touch of Evil*, *Key Largo*). Blake's moody, almost romantic dissonance finds its perfect programmatic complement in these personalized theme songs.

The coming decade will undoubtedly produce major new artists who will embody trends we can scarcely imagine now. Certainly the international influences on American pop and jazz will continue. (Stevie Wonder's single *Master Blaster*, for instance, is a stone reggae cut.) More immediately, though, dance-oriented rock as practiced by Devo and the B-52's will break wide open next year, although the breakthrough album hasn't yet been released. Dancing is, above all, a human need, and the '80s may prove to be the kind of decade when, in the immortal words of Smokey Robinson, "You've got to dance to keep from crying."

Continued belt-tightening by record companies amid a climate of lowered expectations characterized the American record industry in 1980. In mid-autumn, with double-digit inflation an established fact of the economy, there were no signs that the business would regain the boom momentum of the '60s and '70s. A year ago, there was a mad stampede to sign up "power pop" in anticipation of a rock & roll revival that never happened. The furor was

based partly on economics (power pop or new wave was cheap to produce) and partly on nostalgia, as a generation of a&rs men who had grown up with Elvis and the Beatles looked back with longing to the halcyon days of the counterculture. But only a handful of the dozens of revivalist acts signed made money or stirred up significant critical waves.

The Clash: London Calling (*Epic*)
The B-52's: Wild Planet (*Warner Bros.*)
Pretenders (*Sire*)

The Clash's third album, the B-52's second, and the Pretenders' debut are 1980's three most important records to be tagged new wave and to achieve commercial success. All blend pop tunefulness with the harder-edged, leaner arrangements that characterize the younger generation's rock.

On "London Calling," a two-record set, the Clash breaks through English punk's two-chord assault to deliver a sarcastically apocalyptic message. But there is enough musical finesse and stylistic breadth (especially in the incorporation of reggae) here to appeal to more people than just a cadre of hard-core punks. The B-52's "Wild Planet" proves that this playful quintet from Athens, Georgia, is not a mere flash in the pan. Its zany pop-art compactations of cultural trash, pushed by a funk-wise rhythm section, create the year's peppiest dance-rock. The best cuts on the "The Pretenders" are also danceable, with lead singer and writer Chrissie Hynde echoing Patti Smith's tough sensuality but not her crazier excesses. Hynde's *Brass in Pocket* is a masterly single.

Joni Mitchell: Shadows and Light (*Asylum*)
Bruce Springsteen: The River (*CBS*)
Smokey Robinson: Warm Thoughts (*Motown*)

Rock's older generation has put out several impressive albums this year. Joni



Stephen Holden

Mitchell's two-record live set movingly summarizes her post-"Court and Spark" career, during which she moved from folk/pop to pop/jazz. Not only did she refine Bob Dylan's narrative line to the highest level of poetic subtlety, she invented a unique musical style to do so. Bruce Springsteen's "The River," also a two-disc set, is a vast, ambitious work with a strong emphasis on pre-Beatles rock. Though it contains no epic ballads to match *New York City Serenade*, "The River" further establishes Springsteen as the most convincing old-time rock & roll nostalgist of his generation. "Warm Thoughts" is soul giant Smokey Robinson's most expansive, beautifully produced album yet. His falsetto grows more thrilling as age darkens it, and his evocation of erotic surrender has never been more awesome than in the ballad *What's in Your Life for Me*.

Barbra Streisand: Guilty (*CBS*)
George Benson: Give Me the Night (*Quest*)

The year's two splashiest pop records are production triumphs by old hands who have kept improving their craft. Barry Gibb's production of "Guilty" buoys one of pop music's toughest voices, and his European melodies with their Caribbean grooves are among his prettiest. On "Give Me the Night," pop/soul producer Quincy Jones has George Benson singing in a lighter voice and surrounds him in a symphonically-dressed pop/funk that is even more sophisticated than its prototype, Michael Jackson's "Off the Wall."

Urban Cowboy (*Asylum*)

The success of this soundtrack helped country/pop become one of the year's most ballyhooed trends. A virtual *Who's Who* of the genre, *Urban Cowboy* illustrates the deep stylistic affinities between Los Angeles, Nashville, and Austin pop styles. It also contains two wonderful singles in Mickey Gilley's *Stand by Me* and Johnny Lee's *Lookin' for Love*.

Stylistically, 1980 was finally a conservative year. As they had for the past half-decade, Springsteen and Steely Dan cast the longest shadows over the mainstream, with the Doobie Brothers' syncopated rhythmic signatures (derived from Steely Dan) the reigning Top 40 cliché. Echoes of Springsteen resounded through Billy Joel's "Glass Houses" and Jackson Browne's "Hold Out."

Springsteen was thirty and mainstream rock continued to age, with most of the hit albums by so-called dinosaurs. More than ever, the synthesizer and the Fender Rhodes dominated studio pop. Underground new wave music—the record industry's answer to cable TV—constituted an increasingly visible alternative to the mainstream, as a loose network of independently distributed labels emerged. Radio either refused to acknowledge new wave, or, when it did, found the audience too small to be commercially viable. But, like cable programming, new wave underground doesn't really aim for mass-market acceptance. For serious rock has become an elite subculture, similar to bebop in the '40s when it broke from mainstream jazz. It seems likely that the decentralization of pop will continue into the '80s, and that alternative outlets will become better organized.

As many of the following choices suggest, 1980 was a year when introspection if not retrenchment outweighed experimentation, perhaps in response to the national mood. Few new artists or styles attained major importance either commercially or aesthetically, with a seasoned community of performers, writers, and producers creating much of the year's most satisfying and possibly influential music.

Bruce Springsteen: *The River* (CBS)

To one listener long charmed by Bruce Springsteen's verve but skeptical of his formalized romanticism, this four-sided odyssey through American myths and realities of love and identity comes as a stunning triumph. Where recent albums found him focussing on a narrow cinematic perspective, the view here is multilevelled and movingly adult. That Springsteen has also restored the exuberance missing on his last few albums doesn't obscure his maturity, suggesting that rock, finally, is growing up.

Van Morrison: *Common One* (Warner Bros.)

Van Morrison's strongest record in years isn't an index to current musical trends, but rather a dazzling leap away from the musical mainstream and back into the mystic. This is epic, transcendental music that eludes generic boundaries to rival "Astral Weeks" and "Veedon Fleece," his most ambitious prior works.

T-Bone Burnett: *Truth Decay* (Takoma)

Like Morrison, Texas-born Burnett is propelled by spiritual concerns. But where his Irish peer explores an expansive orchestrated style, Burnett pares his ruminations down to their rockabilly, blues, and country essences without oversimplifying or diluting their provocative themes. Like his Alpha Band work, these songs can be funny and chilling in the same instant.

Arthur Blythe: *Illusions* (Columbia)

Alto saxophonist Arthur Blythe has been critically lionized in recent years, but this daring journey along the "punk-jazz" frontier is the first really convincing testament to his importance as a leader. Both Blythe and guitarist James "Blood" Ulmer stand out in the kinetic, dizzyingly poly-



Sam Sutherland

rhythmic pieces, consolidating their pivotal roles in the dialog between avant-garde jazz and rock.

Shandi (RSO/ Dreamland)

A textbook example of why U.S. major labels have been unable to make newwave meaningful, this odious "debut" thumbs its nose at the creativity and fanatic intelligence the best new rock reaches for. Here, last year's blonde country thrush becomes this year's dark-haired sex object. Records like this lessen the chances of the new generation's truly daring works.

Pretenders (Sire)

This is the year's only fully-realized rock debut. It's a brash, high-powered collection that underscores the enduring rock virtues found in much of the best new wave/new rock/you-name-it released on these shores. In lead singer Chrissie Hynde, rock finds one of its most enticing

vocal stylists and thoughtful writers in ages—and a subsequent British single, *Talk of the Town*, suggests the best may be yet to come.

Elvis Costello: *Get Happy!!*

Elvis Costello: *Taking Liberties* (Columbia)

Both his r&b-inflected new album, "Get Happy!!," and the provocative two-disc anthology of shelf tracks, British LP leftovers, and unreleased singles make the same point: Elvis Costello is the best rock songwriter to surface in the last five years and the most influential new wave figure.

The Robert Cray Band:

***Who's Been Talkin'?* (Tomato)**

While not necessarily the best blues LP of the year, this debut for Seattle-based guitarist Robert Cray and his band is certainly the most heartening. Its youthful authors (Cray is just twenty-six) successfully argue that the idiom will outlive its eulogists. The inspiration of both original blues titans and '60s blues-rockers is evident, as is the form's reclamation by black Americans, not just rock dilettantes.

Delbert McClinton: *The Jealous Kind* (EMI/Capitol)

Chronically underrated and consistently good, Delbert McClinton fuses classic soul, country, and blues to reveal the shared goals of both white and black Southern music. With the Muscle Shoals Sound crew offering crack, sympathetic support, this may be his most r&b-dominated work. The choice of material makes the LP a maverick gem that parallels contemporary r&b's swing toward a more song-form orientation.

Roadie (Warner Bros.)

The mutual greed of the film and recording industries spawned a whole slew of pop soundtrack packages, but none is as incoherent as this grab-bag of newwave, country, rock, and pop. If the movie has moments of comic flair this collection doesn't include them.

Paul Simon: *One Trick Pony* (Warner Bros.)

No, it's not his best. But as a solution to the marriage of film narrative and pop music, it's as naturalistic an approach as was taken this year, matched only by Ry Cooder's music for *The Long Riders*. Si-

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As usual, a plethora of platinum garbage dominated the charts this year, but there were also some encouraging signs. One is that such acts as the B-52's, Talking Heads, Devo, and Elvis Costello are selling relatively well. Another is that a lot of the year's best music emanated from these shores. The British still exported their fair share, but compared to previous years the domestic/foreign ratio was considerably more balanced.

The following, with one exception, represents for me what was 1980's best. The exception marks an extremely disappointing turn in the wrong direction.

T-Bone Burnett: Truth Decay
(Takoma)

As a member of the Alpha Band, T-Bone Burnett occasionally found himself wandering on the uncertain grounds of Eastern mysticism and modalities, esoteric symbolism and seemingly idle idolatry. On "Truth Decay," however, he goes back to his Texas blues and country roots and the results are astounding. With a piercing, sardonic lyrical vision, a plaintive, wailing voice, and backing from Alpha alumni that shimmers with swiftness and power, Burnett strikes at the heart of a multitude of emotions, creating a sense of fervent liberation.

Elvis Costello: Get Happy!!
Elvis Costello: Taking Liberties
(Columbia)

This year's model, "Get Happy!!," plumbs the depths of '60s Stax and Motown motifs and offers a dizzying assortment of songs about personal pain, social pain, and Elvis Costello's fiery battle between heart, head, and lust. "Taking Liberties" is a capricious collection of B sides and unreleased tracks that highlight his songwriting prowess and versatility. Thus far, the man can do no wrong.

Rodney Crowell: But What Will the Neighbors Think?
(Warner Bros.)

The early rock sound of Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Buddy Holly grew out of a rich blues and country heritage. Rodney Crowell's sweet-voiced country music has steadily veered back to those roots. On his second solo LP, the wry, responsive songwriter achieves a pure, clean, engaging brew. Like Keith Sykes (whose *Oh, What a Feeling* he covers), Crowell is crafting new American



Steven X. Rea

rock & roll with a deceptive simplicity and a daring, self-effacing cool. *Ashes by Now* gets a vote as one of the year's best Top-40 hits.

John Hiatt: Two Bit Monsters (MCA)

It took the quote-unquote new wave and the likes of Elvis Costello to bring the eccentric John Hiatt out of his shell. But once out and exposed to the harsh light of the modern world, it didn't take him long to find his own: "Two Bit Monsters," rife with personal psychodramas and high-strung soliloquies, is an eager, seductive LP. Hiatt's preoccupations—sex, America, and Americans' artificial packaging of style and morality—are framed in economical, cutting-edge three-minute visions that you can dance to.

Steve Forbert: Little Stevie Orbit
(Nemperor)

With the exceptions of *Get Well Soon*, *One More Glass of Beer*, and *Lucky*, Steve Forbert's third album is a thoroughly unsatisfying work. As different as his two previous LPs were, they shared a specificity of emotion and a lucidness that are missing here. What isn't missing is ample evidence that this songwriter is floundering.

Mink Deville: Le Chat Bleu
(Capitol)

Willy Deville is a diehard romantic dressed in the guise of a greasy Lower East Side street thug. Recorded in Paris, the ultimate urban romantic site, "Le Chat Bleu" combines sensitive Edith Piaf-type artiness, switchblade-sharp blues/rock, and glorious, grandiose overblown ballads. Deville is so sure of his inner voice that it all gels perfectly.

Van Morrison: Common One
(Warner Bros.)

On his best album since "Veedon Fleece," Morrison does a total turnaround from recent endeavors, returning to the rambling, eloquent jazz-shaded music of his most ethereal, religious works. The pudgy Irishman mumbles and skats his way through the quest for some nebulous Holy Grail, backed by one of the best bands he has ever assembled in a studio. He delves into the sublime and the pretentious with equal skill, name-dropping literary figures left and right—Blake, Coleridge, Eliot, Joyce, and even J.D. Salinger bob to the surface. Of course, it's all a lot of mystical hooley and lofty mumbo jumbo, but who cares? Van means it, and when he *means* something, the results are classic.

Squeeze: Argybargy (A&M)

Squeeze mixes the unabashed vim and vigor of the Dave Clark Five with the heady harmonies and melodic strengths of the Beatles, crafting deliriously busy, bouncy slices of modern-day working-class Britons' lives. Principal writer/singer Glenn Tilbrook's McCartney-like timbre tongue-twists silly rhymes and off-the-wall wordplays to a transcendent level: *Pulling Mussels (from the Shell)* and *Another Nail in My Heart* are sheer, strident pop successes. Nick Lowe is set to produce Squeeze's next, which bodes well for the group's future.

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When many of the year's best jazz records have their feet firmly planted in the past, it might suggest that nothing interesting is going on in today's jazz. In reality, much of 1980's best jazz has come from contemporary musicians who are taking a fresh view of their roots. Even the reissue field has moved into deeper, more exploratory areas.



John S. Wilson

The Clark Terry Five:
Memories of Duke
 Sarah Vaughan:
Duke Ellington Song Book Two
Quadrant: All Too Soon
 Zoot Sims Plays Duke
Ellington: Passion Flower
 Zoot Sims, Sarah Vaughan, Clark Terry, Quadrant:
A Celebration of the Duke
 (Pablo Today)

There is a great storehouse of pieces by Duke Ellington—beyond *Satin Doll*, *Take the 'A' Train*, *Sophisticated Lady*, and *Mood Indigo*—that, until now, has scarcely been touched. But these five recordings, produced by Norman Granz for his Pablo Today label, are filled with both familiar and unfamiliar tunes, some of which are presented in fresh contexts.

Trumpet player Clark Terry, an Ellingtonian for nine years, is at home both in the basic idiom and its variations. In *Sophisticated Lady*, he makes dazzling use of his light, airy attack; on *Passion Flower*, he

translates Johnny Hodges' unique virtuosity on alto saxophone to the trumpet; and on *Echoes of Harlem* he recreates Cootie Williams' growling brilliance. The other recordings in this series are of more interest for their unfamiliar Ellington material than for their new approaches to standards. But Sarah Vaughan's disc vividly demonstrates that the distinctive qualities of her voice would have fit nicely into Ellington's band.

The Widespread Depression Orchestra: Boogie in the Barnyard
 (Stash Records, P.O. Box 390,
 106 Prospect Park W.,
 Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215)

The Widespread Depression Orchestra began by recalling blues bands and then moved on to the big black bands. Now, through the growing confidence of its soloists, it has developed a personality of its own. It projects a vivid immediacy—that "sound of surprise" that Whitney Balliett has pinpointed as an essential of jazz—to music that is often apt to sound academic.

Ralph Sutton and Ruby Braff: Duet
Ralph Sutton and Jay McShann: The Last of the Whorehouse
Piano Players, Vols. 1&2
Ralph Sutton and Kenny Davern: Trio, Vols. 1&2
Ralph Sutton: The Other Side
 (Chaz Jazz, Box 565,
 North Hampton, N.H. 03862)

Ralph Sutton falls somewhere between Clark Terry, when Terry was part of the creative ferment in Ellington's orchestra, and the Widespread Depression Orchestra, which builds on past models. Sutton came along at the end of the great Harlem pianists and built onto that tradition. These recordings for Chaz Jazz are his first in over a decade and all show a strong pianistic personality and a rare adaptability. He becomes part of Ruby Braff's romanticism and of Kenny Davern's full-bodied vigor. And his keyboard duets with Jay McShann, backed by Milt

Hinton and Gus Johnson, are marvels of swinging energy.

Freddie Keppard: The Legendary New Orleans Cornet
 (The Smithsonian Collection,
 Smithsonian Customer Service,
 P.O. Box 10230, Des Moines,
 Iowa 50336)

Far from being a commonplace reissue, this Freddie Keppard disc highlights virtually the entire recorded output of an elusive legend of jazz. Keppard has been a misty image even to close followers of early jazz, and, with Larry Gushee's excellent notes, this album is as meaningful a study of him as we are likely to get.

Late Band Ragtime
 Compiled by David A. Jasen
 (Folkways)

David A. Jasen has been exploring ragtime and the years between its fadeout and the rise of jazz. "Late Band Ragtime" is a provocative collection that points up the interrelationship between ragtime, jazz, and big bands in the '20s and '30s, and their subsequent disassociation in the '40s and '50s.

Jasen is consolidating the past with reissues. The Widespread Depression Orchestra, along with performers on small record labels such as Chaz Jazz and the burgeoning Concord Jazz, are rediscovering and redeveloping the past. All are positive signs that the static state in which early jazz has been held may finally break up in the '80s, giving new continuity and growth to music that has been largely sidestepped for three decades.

It was not a year for trend-setting in contemporary jazz. Backing and filling seemed to be more the order of the day, although there were a few bursts of colorful new ideas breaking through the monochromatic clouds of predictability. Here are some of the most intriguing.

Arthur Blythe: Illusions

(Columbia)

Arthur Blythe's last album, "In the Tradition," didn't exactly raise my hopes for his future on Columbia. But "Illusions" is happy testimony that an artist doesn't always have to get sucked into the record company mill and lose all semblance of originality. Blythe's enormous talents—which are among the most remarkable I've heard since the last, sad days of Eric Dolphy—are in full, impressive display.

The Art Ensemble of Chicago: Full Force

(ECM)

The Art Ensemble now has two solid albums in a row. "Nice Guys" was one of the best of '79, and "Full Force" is every bit as good. The maturity of the Ensemble members seems to deepen with each outing, and they now show a sure, firm grasp of the powerful tools of the new jazz. Perhaps most important, this is music that reaches out and pulls the listener in—a far cry from the more self-centered, avant-garde meanderings of the group's early recordings.

Solar Plexus: Earth Songs

(Inner City)

Flairck: Variations on a Lady

(Polydor)

Here are two groups that deserve more attention. Solar Plexus has been changing personnel pretty quickly—maybe too quickly. Its first album featured a fine young female vocalist named Lin McPhillips who has since decided to go solo. The second, "Earth Songs," is a compositionally fascinating work in which the ensemble playing is a good two or three cuts above the soloing. Most of the credit for the always-provocative music probably should go to pianist Denny Berthiaume, who appears to be the group's real creative force.

Flairck (which deserves a better name) is probably going to disappear into music-business limbo. Too bad, because it is a fascinating ensemble, rich with new ideas. I was especially impressed with its rhythmic intensity—hot and to the point no matter how unusual the meter—and by its remarkable versatility. This is a group



Don Heckman

of musicians who have listened as closely to the Incredible String Band as they have to Django Reinhardt.

Ray Pizzi: The Love Letter

(Discovery Records, 117 N. Las Palmas Ave., Los Angeles, Ca. 90004)

For a jazz fan whose heart is in Manhattan, living in Los Angeles can be a sometimes numbing experience. Almost every jazz musician in L.A. plays competently, sometimes even provocatively. But too often the fingers are at the service of the brain, not the soul. Ray Pizzi is a continual exception. I've heard him play everything from bassoon to flute to saxophone, always with the kind of intense, spirited involvement in the music that is the virtual hallmark of great jazzmen. "The Love Letter" isn't his best album, but it's a more than adequate introduction to one of the truly underrated jazz players of recent years.

Joanne Brackeen with

Eddie Gomez: Prism (Choice)

Joanne Brackeen: Mythical Magic

(Pausa)

Jessica Williams: Rivers of Memory

(Clean Cuts/Adelphi)

Judy Roberts: The Other World

(Inner City)

1980 was a year in which several new female jazz performers demonstrated an ability to compete with the men's club on equal terms. Joanne Brackeen has been around for a while, but only in the last year or two has she gotten a handle on the stunning rhythmic energies that propel her improvisations. San Francisco's Jessica Williams can play every bit as fast as Brackeen, but she hasn't yet reached Brackeen's level of maturity and self-assuredness. Judy Roberts, a singer who manages to mix the influences of Sheila Jordan and Flora Purim, is one of the finds of the year. Much more will be heard from her, I'm sure.

Giants of Jazz: Sidney Bechet,

Benny Carter, Earl Hines,

Red Norvo, Fats Waller,

Lester Young (Time/Life)

Producer Michael Brooks should be congratulated for avoiding most of the pitfalls of reissue programs. Each of the Time/Life sets released so far (since 1978) has been thoroughly researched, with an obvious intention to profile the human as well as the superhuman aspects of these great performers. There are small things to carp about—the intentionally limited time spans of some collections, the occasional personal favorite that has been omitted. But for the most part the Time/Life series is a stunning example of how good jazz reissues can be when they are assembled by people who know and love the music.

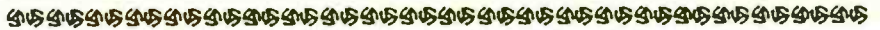
Cecil Taylor: 3 Phasis

(New World Records)

Cecil Taylor has never been the most accessible of the jazz avant-garde players, but this time around he lets the curtain down just a bit. Instead of overwhelming us with a nonstop, passionate roar, he has actually provided some sectionalization. The result is an excellent opportunity for a close look at Taylor's demanding but exquisitely fascinating music.

This year has seen several charter members of the avant garde—Arthur Blythe, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Cecil Taylor, Air, and others—move into a somewhat more accessible (I hesitate to say commercial) mode. While that won't put this kind of jazz on the charts, it does make it easier to get involved in, and that's

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As a recording engineer, I make my choices for 1980's best LPs less on the musical aspects than on the purely aural. For instance, Billy Joel's "Glass Houses" and the Clash's "London Calling" are great albums, but from a pure sound standpoint, they're merely average. Indeed, Phil Ramone, Val Garay, Lew Hahn, Arif Mardin, and other pop producer/engineers who have been innovative in the past didn't seem to do anything sonically

brilliant this year. All the excitement seems to be in the classical department and in the whole area of specialty discs. There are, however, several standard-recorded popular discs worth mentioning.

Carly Simon: Come Upstairs

(Warner Bros.)

Producer Mike Mainieri and engineer Scott Litt not only have changed Carly Simon's sound, but they've created a framework for her songs that is completely fresh. There is some excellent synthesizer work here, the drum sound is remarkably good, and the use of artificial reverb is the best I've heard in years. The songs are right up there with her best.



Fred Miller

Lipps, Inc.: Pucker Up

(Casablanca)

Steve Greenberg has put together this eminently danceable pastiche of vocals, synthesizers, cowbells, vocorders, strings, and saxophones, which remains fun to hear even after thirty or forty playings. Engineer David Rivkin recorded it at Sound 80 in Minneapolis.

Emmylou Harris: Light of the Stable

(Warner Bros.)

OK, it's corny to make a Christmas album, but Emmylou's performances are first class, and husband/producer Brian Ahern's recording is as clean and crisp as they get. The mandolins and autoharps are exactly the right effect, and so are the guest vocals from Dolly and Linda.

Robert Palmer: Clues

(Island)

"Clues" was recorded at a rather esoteric location in the Bahamas, and it is quite well done. The sound is technically excellent and manages to avoid a "sheen" in favor of a truly gutsy raw sound. Credit goes to engineer Alex Sadkin, who perfectly complements Robert Palmer's music.

Gary Numan: Telekon (Atlantic)

When I first heard Gary Numan, I thought he was from Neptune and wished he'd go back and hide under his technorock. As it turns out, he's quite willing to use some good old ideas in the studio as well as experiment with some new ones. "Telekon" is a truly interesting record to listen to, and it's beautifully recorded.

Perhaps they are complementary phenomena, but while nothing new happened in standard recording this year, the new technologies grew exponentially. There has been a tremendous surge in digital recording (especially by smaller labels). DBX-encoded discs have gotten a foothold in the marketplace, and half-speed mastering has become de rigueur for the serious listener. Finally, direct-to-disc seems to be going the way of the brontosaurus. ☞

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Bruce Springsteen Is Worth Waiting For

by Sam Sutherland

Bruce Springsteen: *The River*
 Bruce Springsteen, Jon Landau,
 Steve Van Zandt, producers
 Columbia PC2 36854 (two discs)

Five years ago, amid the delirium that accompanied the release of "Born to Run," critic-turned-producer Jon Landau described Bruce Springsteen as "the future of rock & roll." One astute and somewhat more objective observer (Landau had, after all, produced that LP) suggested the music and its author represented a "high church of rock & roll," its themes, origins, and emotional urgency all shaped by an orthodoxy inherited from two decades of American music.

That said, I'll have to admit that "The River," the long-awaited two-disc project that has filled most of Springsteen's time since his last major tour in

1978, may make believers out of the most skeptical of us. That Springsteen has matured into a performer of awesome energy and emotional generosity has been apparent for some time. But compared to the loose, exploratory rage of his second album ("The Wild, the Innocent, and the E Street Shuffle"), his writing has seemed limited, his delivery almost too gothic and intense.

On "The River" he has done nothing less than summarize and extend the best features of his past work, fitting them into a brilliant conceptual framework. What makes that sense of formal purpose work is the seeming informality of the music itself. Alongside the deliberation of "Darkness on the Edge of Town" or the all-or-nothing fervor of "Born to Run," these new songs often sound playful, off-the-cuff, or even relaxed.

Yet underneath the restored exuberance of its uptempo rockers and the spare, low-keyed ache of its most introspective ballads lies a steady heartbeat. Throughout the four sides, Springsteen has attempted to expand the alternately wide-eyed and hard-boiled romanticism of his recent writing into a multileveled essay on love, identity, and commitment—the topics most common to rock both Before and After The Beatles, and the ones easiest to mouth without really saying much.

On these songs, he says a lot. Romance is both magical (*Two Hearts*) and doomed (*Stolen Car*); marriage is both a promise (*The Ties That Bind* and *I Wanna Marry You*) and a prison (*Hungry Heart*). Beyond these central concerns for emotional fulfillment and the trials of constancy lies the more crucial question of self-knowledge, a prospect linked on "Darkness at the Edge of Town" to the family itself. Where on that album he sought to reconcile his youthful alienation from his parents, here—as on *Independence Day*—the schism becomes a bond, the need for self-definition a statement of maturity. And, on *The Price You Pay*, he concludes that ultimately the final judge is within.

Such themes, and the often stunning language with which he approaches them, might suggest that "The River" is a self-absorbed position paper on American life. Yet its real triumphs are the conversational tone of the lyrics and the easy swing from carefree exuberance (on rockers like *Crush on You*, *I'm a Rocker*, and *Hungry Heart*) to naked, emotive intensity. Only when you examine the lines closely does the precision and potency of the writing become clear.

On *The River*, that balance between conversationalism and poetic astuteness reaches its peak. In describing a youthful passion that has been overshadowed by the grueling realities of a blue-collar life, and the weariness of a marriage dictated by custom (the protagonist made his lover pregnant, "and, man, that was all she wrote"). Springsteen achieves devastating emotional force with relative understatement. Finally, he asks a question that cuts to the heart, one that will burn itself into many memories: "Is a dream a lie if it don't come true, or is it something worse?"

Musically, "The River" gives the E Street Band its most satisfying exposure yet, capturing both the skeletal power and impressionistic delicacy its members have

mastered in their years together. Springsteen's vocals sound less mannered than on "Darkness," owing partially to the less labored production sound. Where that record was set in chasms of echo that emphasized his throbbing, full-throated delivery, the generally cleaner mix here makes the readings sound more spontaneous and natural. The high-relief articulation of the digital final mix never lapses into overcalculation, perhaps because these were reportedly early takes cut in more of a live format than a carefully layered parafait of overdubs.

"The River" is not only Bruce Springsteen's most persuasive gospel, but one of the most satisfying and mature rock testaments in memory.

Kurtis Blow

J.B. Moore & Robert Ford, Jr.,
producers. Mercury SRM 1-3854
by Crispin Cioe

Late last year "rapping" music burst forth over the air waves, on the streets, and in the discos as a major r&b innovation. Over a smoothly syncopated instrumental track, replete with partying crowd sounds in the background, the singer or deejay chants a funky spoken discourse, extolling the virtues of everything from nonstop dancing to his own amatory powers. Of course the roots of this style go back to gospel church services and ultimately Africa itself, but in recent years James Brown, Mick Jagger, Gil Scott-Heron, and Millie Jackson, among others, have been visible practitioners of the genre. Even Charlie Daniels was a successful country cousin earlier this year with *Devil Went to Georgia*. Moreover, the Jamaican variant of this style, called dub, is now the most popular recorded music on that island.

Kurtis Blow, whose debut single (*Christmas Rappin'*) was released only last year, is undoubtedly the first American rapper to emerge as a potential pop star, and with good reason. This debut album features such exceptional rhythm tracks and lyrics that it immediately transcends any gimmickry associated with the style. Guitarist John Tropea's whiplash rhythms ride herd over every cut, and several impressive piano solos by Denzil Miller nicely punctuate Blow's raps. But it's the raps themselves that rivet your attention. Producers/cowriters J.B. Moore and Bob Ford have supplied Harlem-born Blow with the perfect mix of street jive and social comment, and he adds a surprising



Blow: a riveting rapper

depth to such overt party songs as *The Breaks* and *Hard Times*. The inner city reality is unmistakable, for example, when Blow ironically chants: "Hard times, people of the planet/Times are tough, tough as granite," accompanied by an ultra-funky bass line. Yet with this rapper, any social or even light political message is never too far from the dance floor.

Johnny Cash: Rockabilly Blues

Earl Poole Ball, producer
Columbia JC 36779
by Steven X. Rea

Johnny Cash's two sons-in-law, Rodney Crowell and Nick Lowe, both supply songs to "Rockabilly Blues." But despite its title and the credit lines that read "rockabilly piano" and "rockabilly rhythm guitar," the album isn't all that different from past Cash efforts. Which is to say that it's an engaging, early rock-rooted country affair, ripe with melancholy ballads, gospel influences, blues, and some clipping, uptempo tracks.

Cash's authoritative, booming voice seems to get more expressive as the years go on. His version of Lowe's loping *Without Love* (backed by Lowe, Dave Edmunds, the Rumour's Martin Belmont, and the Attractions' Pete Thomas) lends real credence to the Anglo author's Americanizations. On the title track and *Cold Lonesome Morning*, a kind of countrified *Wake Up Little Susie*, Cash's natural bel-locichets around the beat.



Cash: all in the family

Crowell's contribution, *One Way Rider*, is, unfortunately, the sole selection that suffers from too much of a good thing. Backed by vocals from wife June Carter and a quartet of trumpets and trombones, Cash's rendering of the swift, spiritual-like composition gets bogged down in its own busyness. Far more successful is B.J. Shaver's *It Ain't Nothing New Babe*, an old doleful tune made all the more so thanks to Jack Clement's dobro playing.

Since his early Memphis days twenty-five years ago, Cash has become a virtual American musical institution. It's encouraging to see the generation he helped to father return to him and embrace his music wholeheartedly.

The Doors Greatest Hits

Paul A. Rothchild, Bruce Botnick,
& the Doors, producers
Elektra 5E 515
by Mitchell Cohen

All told, they probably cut fewer first-rate tracks than the Turtles or Grass Roots, had less bizarre wit than Love, and were sometimes as preposterous as the Seeds. Yet, the Doors still exude a justified aura of immediacy and fascination. Like all good cartoonists, they exploited primal colors, blatant imagery, exaggerated effects, dynamic motion. Guitarist Robbie Krieger, drummer John Densmore, and keyboardist Ray Manzarek played with dramatic elasticity, but it was



Morrison: jerk and genius

the late Jim Morrison who made the Doors mythic. Morrison was, in great rock tradition, part jerk, part genius. For every moment of hallucinogenic psycho-hokum, he produced one that was a real glimpse of "the other side" of late-'60s rock.

Claims of state-of-the-art definitiveness aside, "Greatest Hits" is a companion to *No One Here Gets Out Alive*, the recently published Morrison biography. It's a collection for people who just want to get one foot into the Doors: *Light My Fire* is inevitable, and eternal; *People Are Strange* has continuing film-noir appeal; *Break on Through* is a powerful Declaration of Principles; Krieger and Manzarek star on *L.A. Woman*; and although every a.o.r. jock worth his throat spray plays it at the first sign of a drizzle, *Riders on the Storm* features Morrison at his most restrained and haunted.

For the rest, it's Morrison, no blues singer, bellowing like Ralph Kramden on *Roadhouse Blues*. Morrison the shuckster on *Not to Touch the Earth*, and trivialities like *Hello I Love You* and *Love Me Two Times*. Even allowing for the necessary absence of the band's lengthy opuses, the likes of *Moonlight Drive*, *Soul Kitchen*, or *Wishful Sinful* might have been preferable. If superior compendia like "13" and "Weird Scenes Inside the Gold Mine" are to remain out of print, then a comprehensive, annotated set is in order—not a ten-song career condensation with a red-tinted portrait of Morrison. "Greatest Hits" is less than the Doors deserve.

**Merle Haggard:
Back to the Barrooms**

Jimmy Bowen, producer MCA 5139
by Steven X. Rea

Merle Haggard has always been in finest form when he's singing about something near to his heart, and, as the title of his latest LP suggests, liquor is obviously in close proximity. *Misery and Gin* (the hit single from the *Bronco Billy* soundtrack), *Back to the Barrooms Again*, *I Don't Want to Sober Up Tonight*, and *I Think I'll Just Stay He-re and Drink* are just a few of the alcohol-and-tears-soaked numbers on the California country singer's new disc.

With a voice that's deep and clear, Haggard traverses other familiar country terrain such as the sexual temptation inherent in life on the road (*Make-Up and Faded Blue Jeans*), the pain of broken love (Iain Sutherland's *Easy Come, Easy Go*), and the satisfaction of true love (*Can't Break the Habit*). Aided by a group of Nashville's finest—including fiddler Johnny Gimble, keyboardist Larry Muhoberac, and, in particular, pedal steel player Norman Hamlet—he puts across these classic country themes without getting bogged down in over-orchestration, too-thickly-textured vocal choruses, or other Nashvillian musical clichés. Instead, on *Misery in Gin* for instance, the strings create an aptly blurry, drunken backdrop. And *Easy Come, Easy Go* is a successful transformation of an English pop tune into a pure country ballad.

"Back to the Barrooms" confirms what Haggard's last LP, "The Way I Am," only suggested. After a long dry spell strewn with indifferent, inconsequential recordings, the craggy-faced crooner is back in the saddle again, singing—and writing—as though he really means it.

Delbert McClinton: The Jealous Kind
Barry Beckett & the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, producers
EMI/Capitol ST 12115
by Sam Sutherland

Delbert McClinton's career as a singer, songwriter, and musician has been the classic hard-luck route too often traveled by natural musicians unimpressed with commercial strategies. The very spirit and diversity of sources that made his solo records and early '70s collaboration in Delbert and Glen so satisfying explain why this laconic Texan has failed to provide an easy hook for radio playlists.

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McClinton: a combination of white soul and down-home humor

and the Muscle Shoals crew at the helm may just change that. In Beckett and his crack partners, McClinton has found a sympathetic and equally open-minded framework for his white soul instincts. For the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section, like the singer himself, bridges country, r&b, and rock with a naturalism rare among contemporary musicians. On "The Jealous Kind," this ensemble has elected to stress McClinton's grasp of classic soul material while leaving his dry country inflections intact. (This approach was anticipated on his last album, "Keeper of the Flame," but that project was scuttled when the Capricorn label entered bankruptcy.)

McClinton has shelved his own writing to concentrate on interpretations of outside material from Bobby Charles, Al Green, Van Morrison, and Jerry Williams, with some Nashville and Motown stylings thrown in for good measure. *Shotgun Rider* elevates a familiar country storyline of love on the run to a propulsive, lyrical romantic invitation, while Charles' *I Can't Quit You* and the venerable *Baby Ruth* provide McClinton with the chance to display the down-home humor that often winks through his own writing. Even an umpteenth cover of Green's *Take Me to the River* works, sounding anything but redundant in its uptempo reading.

There isn't a wasted track, and the playing is as deft and infectious as we've come to expect from this ensemble. With the help of the Muscle Shoals Horns, the rhythm section clearly brings an added pulse and spirit to this music so close to

their own roots. Bonnie Bramlett's romping background vocals are prominent in the mix and deserve to be—she hasn't sounded this good since her classic Delaney and Bonnie performances of the late '60s/early '70s.

"The Jealous Kind" makes no grand statements, cares not a whit for the latest hip stylistic bent, and doesn't cater to *Rolling Stone* or the Top 40. Instead, McClinton, Beckett, et al. have made a lively, mature record ripe with feeling, humor, and satisfying musicianship, and that's more than enough.

Rockpile: Seconds of Pleasure
Rockpile, producers
 Columbia JC 36886
 by Stephen X. Rea

By his own admission, Nick Lowe has long been an irreverent pop plagiarist, at various times nicking the likes of Abba, the Band, the Beatles, et al. Likewise, his Rockpile cohorts Billy Bremner, Dave Edmunds, and Terry Williams have been thrashing out riffs that collectively embrace everything from country to pop to rock. Still, "Seconds of Pleasure" is very much the work of one, unique band. After years of romping through old Chuck Berry rockers, after years of aping the Byrds and out-Americanizing American country and rockabilly artists, these four aging Britons have absorbed enough to finally gel into a tangible, recognizable musical lump.

Most of the half-dozen originals
Continued on page 99

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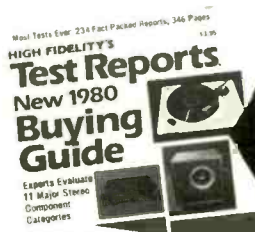
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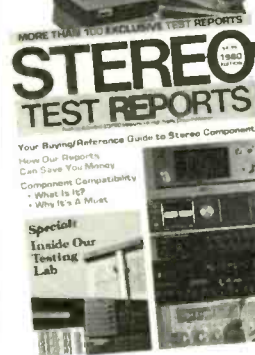
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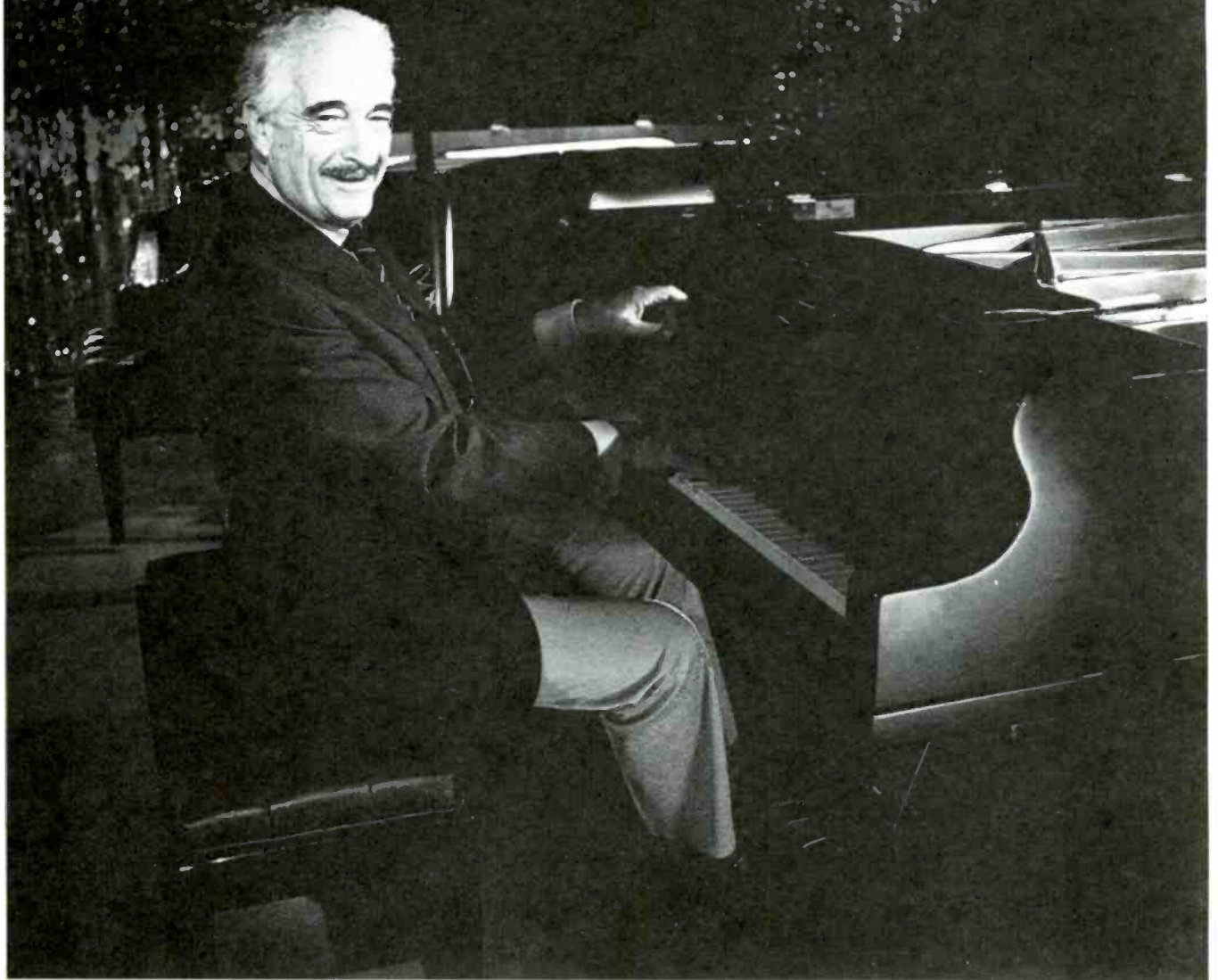
JANUARY 1981



LUKAS FOSS

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HIGHLIGHTS OF JANUARY

- Tuesday 13** The National Symphony under Rostropovich performs the U.S. premiere of Krzysztof Penderecki's *Te Deum* with the Oratorio Society of Washington.
- Thursday 15** An all-Ligeti program by the Cleveland Orchestra includes the first U.S. performance of excerpts from the opera *Le Grand Macabre*. Lorin Maazel conducts.
- Thursday 22** The Boston Symphony under Ozawa plays the world premiere of Theodore Antoniou's *Circle of Thanatos and Genesis* for narrator, tenor (Michael Best), and chorus.
- Thursday 29** Leonard Bernstein returns to the New York Philharmonic podium to lead a program of works by Lukas Foss and Aaron Copland.

Contributing editors:

Charles B. Fowler, education
Jack Hiemenz, television
Joan La Barbara, new music
Jacqueline Maskey, dance
Patrick J. Smith, book reviews
Dorle J. Soria, personalities

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Comment on commentators

I seldom read your magazine, and that may be my loss, I'm thinking, after reading that excellent piece in the October 1980 issue by Jack Hiemenz [On Television]. He took the words right out of my mouth and gave them excellent expression. 'Tis good having your thoughts expressed; you don't feel so isolated.

It was a curious coincidence that after many decades of awe and respect for *The New Yorker Magazine*, I should complain to the editor about Pauline Kael's ten-column movie reviews on what is, for the most part, crap. In such a temper, in my letter I found it more favorable to cite only one half of my complaint. The other half is answered most admirably by Mr. Hiemenz. For while the movie review goes on without end, the dramatic critic of *The New Yorker* simply doesn't have enough to say to fill a short page. "Gill's fatuous, depthless column is probably the least distinguished act in town" is how Mr. Hiemenz sums it up (again taking words from my mouth).

Mr. Hiemenz should be given all the space he needs to air his grievances "at performing art shows . . . that insist on importing hosts and commentators who are clearly, painfully, ludicrously out of their element." (If he feels that Pia Lindstrom

asked silly questions of Madame Makarova, he should have heard Miss Lindstrom's interview with Zubin Mehta after an orchestral concert; it was cruel.)

If we the viewers are to have relief from this suffering of embarrassment from interviewers "out of their element," we need more writers like Mr. Hiemenz to bear down hard, continually banging away at such awful stupidity.

Eugene Weintraub
New York, NY

I am writing in reference to Jack Hiemenz's article in the October issue complaining about the quality of the commentators on several recent performing arts broadcasts. Mr. Hiemenz seems to have forgotten that all of us in the audience are not as knowledgeable as he in matters artistic.

During the broadcast of *La Bayadere*, Pia Lindstrom's interviews were, in my opinion, very informative and cleared up several misconceptions I and several of my friends had concerning the production of a ballet. It is important to remember that during the broadcast there were many viewers, myself included, who needed to learn some basic information. Unfortunately, many of the artistic authorities who Mr. Hiemenz would prefer have a difficult time coming down to a lay person's level; as a re-

sult, they appear rather stuffy and highbrow, and only serve to perpetuate the popular notion in America that the fine arts are elitist and reserved for the wealthy and/or intellectual.

As an analogy, consider the precious few science programs on the air such as "Nova" and "Universe." I am a research chemist by profession and probably have more expertise in scientific areas than the average television viewer. Many of the "Universe" programs, narrated by Walter Cronkite, are very elementary and the conclusions drawn are often painfully obvious to those of us with scientific experience. I could argue that Walter Cronkite, anchorman and celebrity, is simply not qualified to effectively interview distinguished scientists. Actually, I think Mr. Cronkite is doing science a great service by presenting complex scientific concepts in a form that the lay public, who is probably even more distrustful of technology than the fine arts, can readily understand.

Thus, I feel Mr. Hiemenz is too harsh in his judgment of Lindstrom, et al. Let the authorities appear later when enough of us in the audience are sufficiently educated to fully comprehend what they can present.

Erik B. Nelson
Tulsa, OK

Mr. Hiemenz replies:

How does Mr. Nelson know that the people I suggested as hosts for dance telecasts would "have a difficult time coming down to a lay person's level"? One of my candidates, Arlene Croce, has written scripts for the "Dance in America" television series that are models of clarity and stylishness. The other, Clive Barnes, has spent fifteen-odd years reporting his dance views for lay readers in The New York Times and the New York Post, and nobody ever accused him of being overly intellectual. As for Pia Lindstrom, charity forbids that we pursue the matter further—since on the day I received Mr. Nelson's letter, Miss Lindstrom lost her job as anchor and arts commentator on WNBC's "Live at 5" program.

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When there are no seats set up for a performance, no lights to soften the exposed brick walls, and no anticipation of a musical or theatrical event hanging in the air, the Lepercq Space at the Brooklyn Academy of Music can be a cavernous and dismal place.

On a mid-September afternoon, with the traffic noise from Flatbush Avenue muted in the distance, it was the unlikely setting for a conversation with a musician of such energy, enthusiasm, and intelligence that the bleakness of the room vanished as if commanded by a greater force.

That force was Lukas Foss, a name familiar to the musical world for so many years that his youthful appearance comes as something of a surprise to someone who had forgotten that Foss began his career as a Wunderkind, entering Fritz Reiner's conducting class at Curtis at fifteen, studying with Koussevitzky at seventeen, and attracting informed attention as a conductor, composer, and pianist while still in his teens. The promise of those early years has been fulfilled in a variety of ways, both nationally and internationally, on the podiums of major symphony orchestras and in the increasing number of performances of his works, among them *Echoi* and the celebrated *Time Cycle*. But the year 1980 has brought to Lukas Foss an even greater distinction, the directorship of the Milwaukee Symphony simultaneous with his continuing role as music director of the Brooklyn Philharmonia, a position he has held since 1971. Add to this the appearance of the Brooklyn orchestra in Carnegie Hall on January 12 as part of the Festival of New York State Orchestras, the Milwaukee orchestra at Carnegie in April, and the presentation of the "Meet the Moderns" series in Manhattan's Cooper Union, and you have the ingredients for an extraordinary season of hectic and highly visible activity.

The propelling force for all of this is a man firm in his musical philosophy and possessed of unusual managerial instincts. These qualities have had the fortunate result of providing his audiences with a fresh approach to music whether old or new. "I like to conduct Beethoven as if the ink were not yet dry on the score," he says. "Too often performances of familiar works are like polishing an old shoe; there is no freshness, no discovery. Music from whatever period should be played like modern music. I put a searchlight on the notes." Foss is also a shrewd programmer, steadfast in his belief that, as opposed to the potpourri approach, everything on a program should relate to everything else, revealing not only correspondences but meaningful contrasts as well. "Coupling Beethoven's First Symphony with the Ninth Symphony is ridiculous, because the Ninth simply eats up the First. *Wellington's Victory* is a better choice with the Ninth—there is a little bit of the sublime and the ridiculous in both. To put a Rossini overture with a Brahms symphony is also bad because there is no connection; it is variety for variety's sake. In my first Brooklyn Philharmonia program this season I have scheduled the Bach/Schoenberg Prelude and Fugue in E flat, a Bach violin concerto, and excerpts from *Parsifal*, which is Wagner's most religious work, relating it to Bach's music which is always spiritual in character. This connection is further bridged by Schoenberg, who did a sort of Wagnerian thing in his orchestration of Bach, so that by having Bach/Schoenberg, Bach/Wagner you get the kind of programming that is different yet not so jarring that one work cancels out the next."

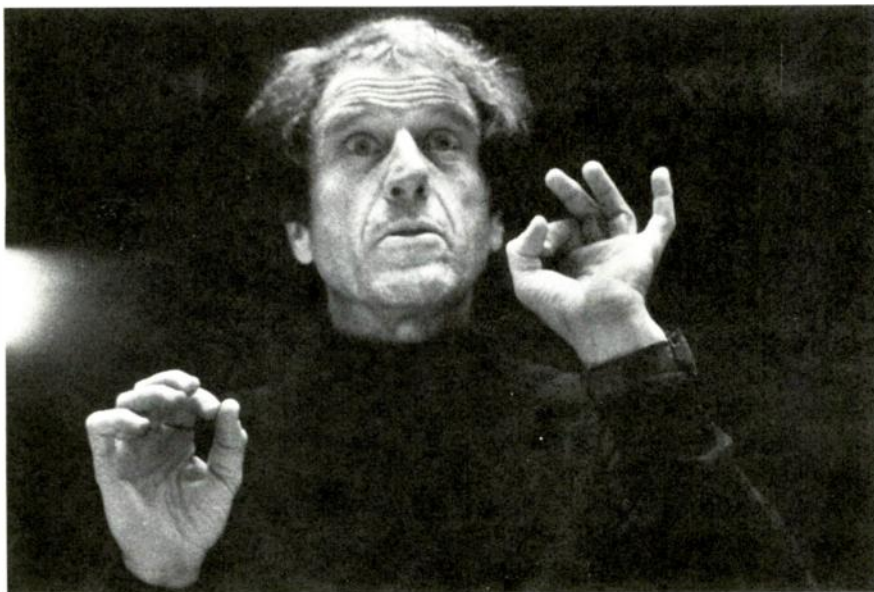
The same interest in providing a structure beyond that of the individual works on a program is evident in the Meet the Moderns series, to be heard this season both in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Foss has devised a Music Plus format—"Modern music must always be presented in a new format," he says—for each of the four concerts. The first, music plus drama (operas by John Eaton and Menotti); the second, music plus computers

Lukas Foss

The energetic composer and conductor directs the Milwaukee Symphony in addition to the Brooklyn Philharmonic and the "Meet the Moderns" series

Arthur Satz

"If the grace notes are played right, people think they're hearing an authentic performance. I'd much rather hear the wrong grace notes and the right spirit, which is infinitely more difficult to detect."



Louis Nemeth

Foss: no recipes for sound; just interpretive ideas

(Boulez, Xenakis, etc.); then music plus film, and music plus dance.

Accommodating himself to the stewardship of two such disparate orchestras as Brooklyn and Milwaukee poses no problems for Foss. Although Milwaukee has a fifty-week season, he will, by special arrangement, conduct a limited schedule of fifteen. Combined with Brooklyn's ten-week season, the conductor's guest appearances elsewhere will of necessity be severely curtailed, but there should remain ample time for composing. "Conductors who insist on conducting all the time fall into a routine. Routine is a terrible danger. I have always been a full-time conductor and a full-time composer," he says firmly.

Some of the differences between the orchestras will be challenging. Milwaukee, with its longer season, younger personnel, and established reputation, is "a fabulous orchestra, one of the country's eight best. I was overwhelmed by the beauty of the playing. The Brooklyn Philharmonia's musicians are older, composed more of teachers and chamber musicians, people who don't normally play in an orchestra, but not less professional for being that. It is now the orchestra I dreamed of ten

years ago. You know, it takes five years to build a good orchestra, and another five years for people to notice. As a conductor, I speak the same language to both groups. Nor do I want to give either one a 'special sound'; I have no recipe for sound. What matters are interpretive ideas. I am very grateful to my predecessor in Milwaukee, Kenneth Schermerhorn. He must be a born orchestra builder, and is turning over to me a beautiful tool. There is absolutely nothing to 'overcome.' However, I am another kind of person, a totally different type of musician, and I think that makes the transition easier."

As a musician who has achieved celebrity as both conductor and composer, Lukas Foss has developed some definite ideas about the relationship between the two. "When I was quite young, I was suspicious of the conducting profession; I thought conducting would hurt me as a composer. Curtis wanted me to become a pianist, but I wanted to eat much more music than a recitalist is permitted to. Conducting gave me that opportunity. And composing gratified my desire to study scores with an intensity that even conductors rarely enjoy. I became a composer because I fell in love with great music. As a fifteen-year-old, I rode on the New

York subway every day with the *Missa Solemnis* until I had memorized every note. This kind of study is a strange, devotional exercise that expresses the composer in me, not the conductor; a conductor seldom equals this intensity."

Foss also speaks as a composer when he discusses what constitutes a stylistically correct performance. He suggests that there is a "facile musicological purism" rampant today, as opposed to genuine musicological study, which says that "if the grace notes are played right, or the harpsichord is used instead of a piano, then people think they're hearing an authentic performance. Well they're not, if the spirit is missing. I'd much rather hear the wrong grace notes and the right spirit, which is infinitely more difficult to detect." In another attempt to get away from this "facile musicology," Foss is essaying a different approach to the program notes for the concerts of the Brooklyn Philharmonia. Characterizing the usual notes as "deadly," he is substituting source material by the composer himself, or someone else of stature writing about the composer, for the customary first theme-second theme descriptive style. "Even wrong statements by interesting big people are more revealing of the truth than smaller people saying truisms."

Truth, as opposed to truism, is a constant theme in Foss' conversation. "Creative artists are dealing with truth. They have an antenna to the times; and usually live more in the present than the audience or consumer presence." But society today has rejected the artist's truth, particularly the composer's, because "there is no investment involved. Therefore it is dispensable. Nobody seems to look forward to the composer's next work; it is not an event in the musical world. This is a sad situation for the composer. He needs the nourishment of society needing him."

As a composer who is performed and recorded to a far greater

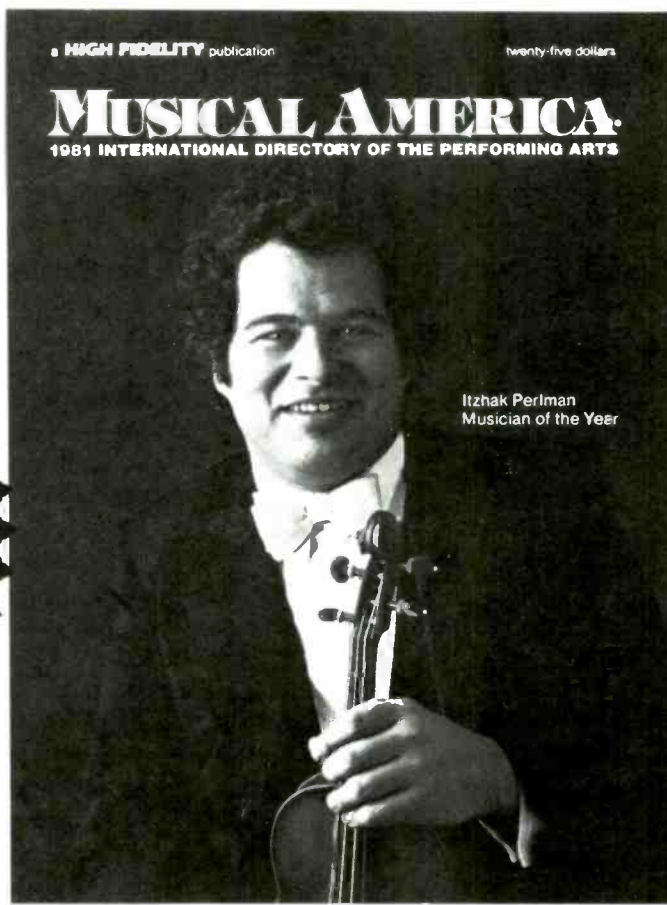
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Heifetz's 80th: A Birthday Uncelebrated

And in Cincinnati, the
lively Michael Gielen
is at home

Dorle J. Soria



This past year the music world has been busy celebrating anniversaries of the living and the dead, the eightieth birthday of Aaron Copland, the seventieth birthdays of Samuel Barber and William Schuman, and the sixtieth birthday of Isaac Stern—with, coming up, the centenary of the birth of Bela Bartók and the ninetieth birthday of Carnegie Hall. And in July there will be a hoop-la for the seventieth birthday of Gian Carlo Menotti. All these events are the occasion for eulogies from press and public, special concerts and telecasts, parties and presentations.

Only one great artist is refusing to be thus projected into the limelight and lionized—Jascha Heifetz. The violinist, a legend and a standard in his lifetime, who will be eighty on February 2, has said, in effect, to one and all: “No. Do not disturb. Leave me alone.” Offers for official ceremonies and testimonials, for gala musical and social events in his honor, all have been refused—politely, but curtly, firmly. Obviously there will be programs on the air, revivals of his films, articles in important newspapers. But the stage prepared and waiting for him will be empty. The hero, to use one of his own words, will “evaporate.” When the momentous day comes, he will be at his long-time home in Beverly Hills, with a few—very few—close friends, or at his Malibu Beach house, where he likes to take solitary walks along the sand and watch the water.

Heifetz does not change. He is, as always, aloof and remote. The Apollo of the violin does not descend into the agora. The greatest violinist of his day, behind the mask which has given him the name of The Great Stone Face, has succeeded, in a publicity-polluted world, in defending his privacy. We still have a characteristic letter he wrote to Arthur Judson when the concert manager suggested a celebration of the silver anniversary of Heifetz's American debut on October 27, 1917, at Carnegie Hall. Heifetz: “Thank you very much for thinking of October 27. God forbid that you should do anything about it in any way, shape or form. You see, I have been appearing on the stage for thirty-four years [he had made his official debut at seven in Kovno playing the Mendelssohn Concerto] and am therefore beyond the evil of the twenty-fifth anniversary. Again, I appreciate your thought, and we will do exactly nothing about it.” At the same time he sent us, then in charge of publicity, a warning letter. “Dear Dorle: Just received a letter from Mr. Judson about the twenty-fifth anniversary. I want you to clearly understand (and I cannot make it strong enough) that under no circumstances do I want in any way, shape or form anything to be mentioned in any advance publicity, any other publicity, newspapers or magazines about the anniversary. I want to be sure there will be no slip-up. Please be good enough and confirm your understanding of it at your earliest convenience. . . . What are you doing with yourself these days? With warm greetings. Yours,” signed “Jascha.” We, devoted to Heifetz, wrote back humbly: “The only person to whom I had mentioned it was Miss S. . . of the Minneapolis Symphony when she wrote requesting new publicity material. However, I have sent her an urgent letter, asking her not to use the story in any shape or form.” We devoted the rest of the letter to general news and told Heifetz how the Stadium Concerts season was doing badly and that Mrs. Guggenheimer was worried. “The war news is



The hero will evaporate

too bad or the weather. If the worst comes Minnie depends on that 'Heifetz audience' to balance her budget!"

About larger issues he was cool and detached. During the war he wrote from the coast. "I am still a member of the Newport Beach Police Force and have volunteered for assignments in connection with the Civil Defense Program. But I imagine what you read in the papers is far worse than what it actually is. Everything is under control and if, by some chance, we are bombed or incendiary, will let you know if in proper condition."

His sense of values remained the same, for the ridiculous as for the sublime. Some years ago (as we remember the story) Heifetz slipped and hurt himself in a delicatessen he often frequented and he sued the poor owner for a large sum of money. Shortly after—Piatigorsky told us—the cellist came to Heifetz's home to play chamber music and, as was their custom, he brought his own lunch. When he opened his package of sandwiches Heifetz asked where he had got them. When Piatigorsky mentioned a place unknown to him the violinist demanded: "But why didn't you buy them from" and he named the man he was suing. Piatigorsky, taken aback: "But Jascha, isn't that where you have a lawsuit?" Heifetz: "But they still have the best sandwiches."

When Heifetz appeared at the UN in 1959 to celebrate Human Rights Day we wrote to him that "Human Rights" should include "the right to hear you play occasionally." That privilege was not to last many more years. Heifetz's last appearance in New York was in 1966. His final concert appearance was in June 1972 at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, a recital he donated in recognition of the successful launching of the multi-million-dollar campaign for the USC School of Music where he was on the faculty. He has not played in public since then but continues to teach, a promise once made to his own teacher, Leopold Auer.

Many famous "Heifetz stories" will be repeated when the birthday articles start to appear. Here are two of the best-known. The first concerns a conversation the violinist is said to have had with Harpo Marx. Heifetz to Harpo: "Do you know, I've been self-supporting since I was seven." Harpo to Heifetz: "Before that I suppose you were just a bum." This one dates from the extraordinary Heifetz debut at Carnegie Hall at which Leopold Godowsky and Mischa Elman were present. As one dazzling number succeeded another the violinist turned to Godowsky: "Very warm in here, isn't it?" "Not for pianists," answered pianist Godowsky.

And then there is the famous letter which George Bernard Shaw wrote to Heifetz when the latter, then only nineteen, played in London. "Your recital has filled me and my wife with anxiety. If you provoke a jealous God by playing with such superhuman perfection, you will die young. I earnestly advise you to play something badly every night before going to bed, instead of saying your prayers. No mortal should presume to play so faultlessly."

Well, despite the fact that Jascha Heifetz is still incapable of playing "something badly," even if he tried, he has managed to reach a ripe age. We thank him for all he has given us—the music which remains in our ears and our memory, the wealth of his recordings. We thank him for his friendship and we wish him many good and private years to come. Happy birthday, dear Jascha.

When the momentous day comes, he will be at his long-time home in Beverly Hills, or at his Malibu Beach house, where he likes to take solitary walks along the sand and watch the water.




With Piatigorsky, good sandwiches

Makarova & Company: Questions Raised

Kenneth Rinker's "Cantata": energy, invention

Jacqueline Maskey

 After much expectation-building, the brand new ballet company under the artistic direction of ballerina Natalia Makarova made its New York debut on October 7 at the Uris Theatre. On hand to assist the first week were some of the better-known names in ballet; besides Makarova there were Anthony Dowell and Fernando Bujones, Denys Ganio from Petit's Ballet National de Marseille and Elisabetta Terabust from the London Festival Ballet; reinforcements for the four-week engagement were announced to be Cynthia Gregory, Karen Kain, and Peter Schaufuss. Behind all this star power assembled the body of the company, a group of seven young soloists and twenty-two *corps* dancers, Makarova-selected by audition and, for the most part, youngsters with Balanchine's New York School of American Ballet barely behind them.

The first program selected by Makarova was a demanding and varied one: Petipa's *Paquita*, Act II, staged by Makarova in a version remembered from her Leningrad Kirov days and led by Bujones and Terabust; Béjart's *Sonata No. 5 for Harpsichord and Violin* (J.S. Bach), danced by herself and Dowell; *Vendetta*, choreographed by Lorca Massine to a score by Konstantin Kazansky, for Makarova, Ganio, Bujones, Dowell, and *corps de ballet*.

"Vendetta" & "Paquita"

As a second nighter at the first program, I found the evening a mixed one: some delights, a couple of agonies, lots of questions. The high point was the Béjart piece, a dullish *pas de deux* designed originally for Suzanne Farrell and Jorge Donn in the



Makarova and Dowell in *Sonata*

choreographer's style of grab bag eclecticism, but which was given stature by the intense and beautifully controlled performances of the dancers. Dowell, in particular, gave a demonstration in his solo of suavely articulated movement which would be hard for any male ballet dancer on the stage today to match.

About *Vendetta*, I can merely say that it is the best ballet I've seen from Lorca (son of Leonide) Massine, who has over the years compiled one of the most dismal creative records around. Humor is not the younger Massine's strong point and I doubt that he realized or communicated to his dancers

that he was busy with a camp piece which would not look out of place in an old Maria Montez epic. The attitude of everyone concerned in this tale of gypsy passion seemed one of deadly seriousness. My hopes were raised momentarily by Makarova when she flashed a roguish smile, shook her chains and expensive rags (by Rouben Ter-Arutunian) and seemed about to set a firecracker under the piece; they were dashed when she thought better of it and turned to a sober rendition of her part: a gypsy with a raging libido and plenty of men to unleash it on. Bujones danced with flair to spare and Ganio looked altogether handsomer and a more interesting performer than his roles with the Marseille company a few weeks earlier had allowed him to be. Dowell, bless him, was totally miscast, but looked very engaging trying to pretend that he wasn't.

The major mistake of the first week's run was *Paquita*, a gut-buster stylistically and technically, designed to test every aspect of a dancer's accomplishment. The only way to dance these variations is perfectly, and with one or two exceptions they were too much for the eager but unseasoned and immature young women whom Makarova had selected to do them. Nancy Raffa in the *pas de trois* made the strongest impression; in the ballerina role—made, one would think, for Cynthia Gregory—Terabust gave a merely mechanical performance.

There was yet more to come from Makarova and Company—the season continued until November 2—during which time a clearer company profile would possibly emerge as well as the answers to some pressing questions about Makarova's abil-

ity to accomplish the task which she has set herself: the establishment of a permanent company whose stylistic heritage will unmistakably reflect the school in which she herself was raised.

Rinker's "Cantata"

Cantata #84: "behind the moon, beyond the rain," is the second of a projected three-part suite choreographed by Kenneth Rinker. The first section was seen almost a year and a half ago, also at the downtown American Theatre Laboratory space, and was called *40 Second/42nd Variations*. It surprised one with its energy, invention, and sure theatrical touch and with its unfamiliar cast of dancers recruited from Rinker's first dance workshop in 1978, Blueprint.

Cantata has all the qualities of its forebear, but perhaps because the surprise element no longer holds, it is possible to scrutinize the piece and see Rinker's weaknesses as well as his strengths. These seem to be the opposite of those of most young classical ballet choreographers who tend to work comfortably with two or three dancers; by contrast, Rinker handles groups marvelously—he can build from a single-movement phrase for an individual dancer to a massed group climax with ease. The best of his new work is in these lengthy crescendos of movement; the least is in his thin and slack choreography for only two or three dancers.

Cantata begins with the final moments and bows from *40 Second/42nd Variations*. Rinker in his program notes indicates that it is "...at the end of a performance and at that instant immediately played out before leaving the stage space for the streets and life outside. It is a never-happened journal, sparked by the high

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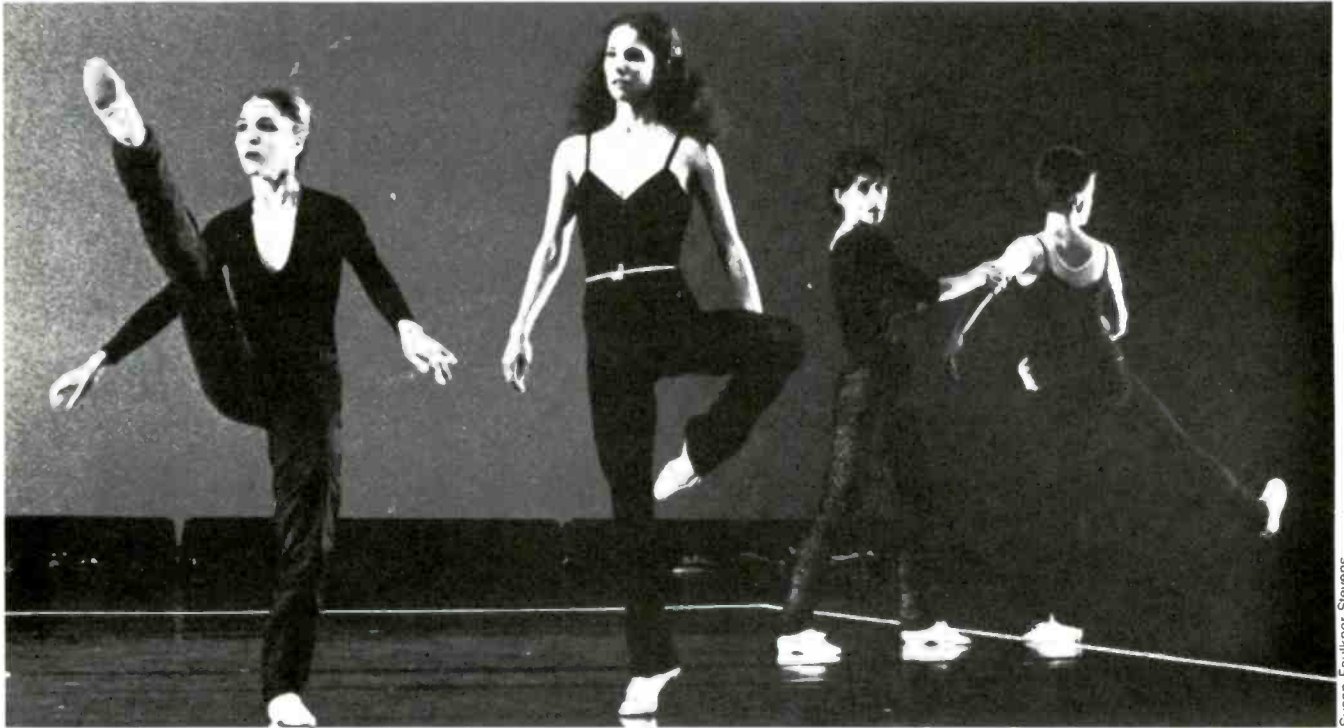
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Susan Faulkner Stevens

Rinker's *Cantata* with Beth Davis, Laura Delano, Marcia Trees, and Nancy Nasworthy

and the black of everyday; not timed by clocks and placed somewhere in the never-never." What this means in practical terms is that Rinker's dancers must start *Cantata* at a pitch of intensity which, conventionally, they might have spent an evening building up to. They seem, all ten of them, to have no trouble at all beginning on such a high note. When, after their bows, they casually break up, we are to understand that the curtain has fallen and we are seeing what dancers do in the immediate minutes following the completion of a performance: go over difficult passages; criticize; gripe; congratulate; massage a sore spot. In this opening section Rinker uses his tallest and smallest dancers—a lanky redhead and a tiny, intense-as-a-flame girl—to work out a movement sequence. By particularizing the sequence he makes sure you recognize the movements when they occur thematically throughout the dance; he also demonstrates a choreographic platitude that the same movements look totally different when performed by dancers of contrasting physique and temperament.

In his work Rinker shows his attraction to the romance and fantasy of the theater; in *Cantata*—another weak point—he totters perilously close to the weakly sentimental when exhibiting it. But he also recognizes the brutality in the life beyond the stage door and that it cannot always be held at bay. Rinker in this context has one of his dancers shriek, "Give me an H!" and as the others respond en masse she goes on to an "A," then to a "T," finally to an "E." The dancers plunge and stamp in a kind of frenzy which is chilling in its impact. Rinker comments further on urban callousness and isolation when later a fallen dancer is backed by a quartet absorbed, not in the victim at their feet, but in the disaster headlines of the *N.Y. Post* (the least scary trumpets, "Slaughter on 89th St.>").

It is to be regretted that in *Cantata* Rinker, a beautiful mover, uses himself so minimally. At one point early on he walks across the stage dressed in droopy handyman clothes, pushing a broom. I took that for a metaphor for the craft of the choreographer: the someone who, after he

sets a piece in motion, inevitably says, "O.K. Let's clean it up." His only other appearance is at the very end of the piece when he leads his dancers in a lyric section supported musically by a movement from a string quartet.

One can only guess that this is a performance-wise way of conserving his energies for an all-out effort in Part Three of his projected suite.

The music to *Cantata* is by the many-faceted Sergio Cervetti, also Rinker's collaborator on *42nd Variations*. For this one he writes a sentimental pop tune, uncannily the sort Hollywood manufactures to accompany the unrolling of screen credits; a string quartet adagio; an organ prelude and postlude; not to mention some hot licks for percussionist Bill Buchan and live piano (played by the composer), whose performance mingles at certain points with computer-generated tapes (also of Cervetti's invention). The slide projections by Valerie Sonnenthal, evocative views of windows looking out and in with, at one point, a rainbow summoned by the snap of a dancer's fingers, were handsome and apt. **MA**

The Nashville Institute for the Arts

Teachers learn to "master the craft" of art

Natilee Duning



Photos by Beth Odle

Faculty members Coughlin and Chrietzburg with a grateful participant

Charles Fowler's guest columnist this month is a freelance writer and editor in Nashville. She was music editor of the city's morning newspaper, The Tennessean, for two years.



Heads bowed, eyes closed, the group sat silently as the maddening ring of a telephone shrilled from the tape recorder. They listened intently to the rhythm of ring, rest, ring, until a longer-than-usual pause broke the pattern. Hands shot up in recognition of the change.

Gathered in a reception room on the campus of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, these participants in the inaugural summer session of the Nashville Institute for the Arts were examining the complex relationship between sound and silence, the role of rhythm in Mozart's Quintet for Piano and Winds, K. 452.

Later, following the study session, the Quintet was performed in concert for a second time. The audience listened with an intensity almost palpable. One performer expressed the feelings of the entire group: "It wasn't just Mozart any more. It was *our* Mozart."

The Quintet was one of several

works drawn from the literature of music, dance, and drama for study during the week-long summer session of the Institute, which is modeled after the Lincoln Center Institute in New York. One of the first successful transplants of that highly successful aesthetic education program, the Nashville Institute attracted over one hundred participants from seventeen public and private elementary, junior high, and high schools to its summer session, June 12-18, 1980. These teachers and administrators paid nothing to attend; private and public donors picked up the tab. However, before an individual school could enroll, its school system was required to commit funds for arts experiences and related classroom experiences for the coming year. In addition, each participating school was required to send at least three teachers and the principal (to insure commitment at the top) to the summer session.

Transmitting the arts experience
The Institute's effectiveness, of course, is currently being tested in the classroom, dependent on the arts experiences these teachers fashion for their students from resources available through the Institute. Ultimately it is

for the aesthetic education of the area's children that the Nashville Institute for the Arts—even as its Lincoln Center parent—exists. Nashville's participating teachers and principals will affect an estimated five thousand to six thousand students through the 1980-81 Institute Schools Program.

Mark Schubart, founder and director of the five-year-old Lincoln Center Institute, addressed the initial gathering of the Nashville Institute's summer program: "The study of art is not an emotional bath, not a mysterious, otherworldly experience. Sure, it has emotional content. It's affective. It's also hard work that requires discipline, thought, historical perspective, and a mastery of craft."

That was precisely the lesson learned by the participants, who "hit the ground running," according to Institute director Dr. Anne Brown. With the exception of Sunday, when Institute attendees relaxed at a Nashville Symphony concert in the park, each day of the week-long program was crammed with tightly scheduled seminars, live performances, aesthetics lectures, films, and receptions. Nine faculty teaching artists, including three from the Lincoln Center Institute, led three seminar groups in intensive

morning sessions where participants experienced the process of artistic creation in music, drama, and dance.

"Take your shoes off. Let's begin with some warm-up exercises," directed dancer/mime artist Susan Chrietzburg to Seminar B participants the first morning. With self-conscious smiles they left the safety of their chairs to rise up on tiptoe, knees and ankles popping.

"Walk around the room. Find your own walk. Think about it. Now make it an old person's walk."

The young blond teacher in straight-leg jeans slowed and bent her back to approximate a decrepit hobble. The bearded fellow in the rugby shirt seemed to wilt, his elastic step became an earthbound shuffle.

"Now make it a young person's walk. Pretend you're two years old," suggested Chrietzburg.

The fiftyish lady in the lime-green polyester pants suit toddled unsteadily about the room. A distinguished-looking man in gray slacks and pin-striped shirt alternately ran and hopped from spot to spot.

After a few moments, the teachers stopped and discussed how the different movements had influenced their perceptions of mood. More dance-related exercises followed, physical expressions of joy, sorrow, anger, satisfaction, anxiety. ("What's the difference between anxious and frantic?" asked Chrietzburg. "Anxious is when you're afraid your child is going to fall off a motorbike," offered a matronly teacher. "Frantic is when he does.")

A greeting—with overtones

A brief break and then theater director Michael Hankins took over, separating the seminar participants into two lines facing one another. Two by two the teachers and principals were to walk out and greet each other using only first names, the inflection determined by the relationship that Hankins supplied each pair.

"Okay, both you ladies are in love with the same man. And both of you know it," said Hankins. The two teachers eyed each other warily as

they voiced each other's name.

"He just wrecked your new car, and you're angry," Hankins instructed the next pair. "She's the woman you would most like to have an affair with," he told the male half of the next couple.

One young teacher, matched up with the principal of her school, began, "Mr. Johnson. . ."

"First names, please," Hankins broke in. "We're here to break down barriers, my dear."

The barriers went down quickly as the group concentrated on the exercises, not on themselves.

New York composer Bruce Coughlin made a clicking sound, then asked the person next to him to repeat the sound and add another. The pattern repeated itself around the seminar circle, each participant repeating the last sound he had heard and adding another. Soon the group had created a vocabulary of grunts, groans, clicks, and squeaks which could be shaped into a statement of sorts, much in the same way musical sounds form a musical statement.

The difficulties of music

Both Coughlin and teaching artist John Knowles of Nashville's Blair School of Music agreed that music presented special difficulties when it came to teaching basic concepts to adults without musical backgrounds.

"In the first place," said Knowles, "the ear must be trained to discern the difference between pitches. If some members of the group can't hear pitch, I can't rely on that tool, so I have to use some other device. Singing is out. So we use words and sounds that everyone is familiar with. For instance I can demonstrate the contour of a musical line by pointing out the difference in inflection between a statement and a question. Still, it's tough. Teaching music without using musical terms and musical sounds is a little like teaching art without teaching the students how to draw."

"I think the problem in teach-

ing music," said Coughlin, "is that in order to understand Mozart you have to understand Bach, and very few people have much background in music. Things happen in music. A composer will thwart your expectations; but in order to know how a composer differs from those before him, you have to know what musical expectations he is thwarting. People get lost at concerts because they don't know how to follow the music."

For those teaching and those being taught, the six days of the Institute's summer session were too short. Both artists and participants expressed frustration at the lack of time.

"Now that I'm realizing the value of what I'm doing, I wish I had another week so I could do the exercises all over again," said one teacher at mid-week.

"One of the reasons we're going at such a frantic pace is because we have such a passion for what we have to share," said teaching artist Eberhard Ramm of Blair School of Music. "Still, the intensity of the seminar is itself analogous to the creative process. A composer or an actor devotes that kind of time and energy to perfecting his art. I think that's part of what the Institute is trying to get across. If you're really interested in helping kids to get inside the creative artistic process, you can't just spend twenty minutes talking about the arts and then go back to spelling. You have to build a concept that is all-encompassing."

From Copland to Shakespeare

Works under study at the Nashville Institute for the Arts included the dance *Day on Earth*, choreographed by Doris Humphrey to music by Aaron Copland; William Schuman's *American Festival Overture* and the Mozart Quintet; scenes from Shakespeare's *Richard III* and three short theater pieces commissioned by Actors Theatre in Louisville, Kentucky. The performers, from Nashville, New York, Atlanta, presented each work twice—once at the beginning of the week, once later on—so



Nashville teachers celebrate their joie de vivre through creative dance

that participants could compare their initial responses to those that followed workshop concentration on each work. This specific, rather than generalized approach to art through individual works is at the heart of both the Lincoln Center and Nashville Institutes' methods.

"The work of art always points to itself," said philosopher-in-residence Dr. Thomas Hearn to the gathered teachers. "It is about itself and calls us to attend to it all by itself: 'Here, look at me, and don't worry about my significance or how you will use me in the classroom.'

"For the most part, we put our minds in idle and cruise through the world. Our ordinary patterns of experience are defined by inertia. After a while, we begin dealing with the world in generalizations unless something impinges on us. It is the purpose of the aesthetic object to get us, to make us stop and attend to this particular. As we focus in on it, we find it contains the richness of a world of ex-

perience. The focus is on the particular, but it gives us a picture of the world."

The Institute teaches teachers to experience, rather than to judge, explained June Dunbar, associate director of the Lincoln Center Institute, in a visit to the Nashville program. "It's not a matter of liking or disliking, but of responding to what's there," said director Anne Brown.

No quick formulas

"This is not a week of recipes, of saying 'This is how you do it,'" continued Dunbar. "The exercises are designed to enable teachers to see that the performing arts are a series of choices made by the performer. They begin to see how those choices are made by making them themselves.

"I think it's illuminating for the teachers, many of whom have learned to think of the body of knowledge as finite. In fact, the choices are infinite; there is no single *right* way to

interpret the character of Richard III, no definitive approach to Mozart.

"If a teacher can gain personal confidence and insight into the performing arts, he can pass his own experience on to his students. But such experience must first be internalized by the individual before it can be translated to others."

Participants in the summer Institute sessions submitted proposals for programs in their schools this fall. Available for school performances are artists who taught at the Institute and the works performed at the summer session, as well as artists affiliated with the newly opened Tennessee Performing Arts Center. Institute-trained teachers—most of whom teach subjects other than the arts-related—are working actively with the artists to develop programs pertinent to the interests and developmental levels of their students. In that collaboration lies the real measure of the Institute's accomplishment.

"I'm overwhelmed at the wealth of talent and resources to which I've been exposed," said an elementary school teacher during the open forum held at the end of the summer session. "It's frustrating that there's so much to offer and that the young children I teach will be able to tap into so little."

"If you do use a fraction of what you intend and do it well, that's enough," responded Michael Charry, conductor and music director of the Nashville Symphony and chairman of the Nashville Institute board. "You don't have to make ten connections, you just have to make one.

"Locking into this artistic process and opening it up to all your students will be a vital joy to you and to them. The Institute* will be here backing you up from now on. We're in Nashville to stay." **MA**

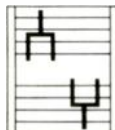
*Further information concerning the Nashville Institute for the Arts is available from:

Dr. Anne Brown, Director
The Nashville Institute for the Arts
Nashville University Center
1007 18th Avenue South
Nashville, TN. 37212

The Kitchen Center

The new season jettisons old categories

Joan La Barbara



The opening concerts of The Kitchen Center's 1980-81 season reflected the attitude of its new music director, George Lewis, who questions our dependence on "labels," those convenient handles by which we categorize and form groups of often dissimilar individuals. Music, he feels, should be "presented freely without predisposition." Lewis is determined to introduce new voices to the SoHo experience and to showcase a greater number of composers who have others play their music—an idea that seems suddenly new after the late '70's blossoming of virtuoso performer/composers. The season, still in flux, shows promise.

The duo concert featuring electronic music environment by Tom Hamilton with instrumental improvisations by J.D. Parran, which opened the season last September 8, was a gradually unfolding event. Four speakers were placed around the audience. What seemed at first like subtle rumbling of traffic emerged as electronic tape sound which grew gently louder, making its presence clear. The beginning sounds were soft, like gentle fragrances of plants whose scents become more apparent



Paula Court

Lewis: avoiding musical labelling

as the sun warms them. The environment developed with the slow introduction of each line of the four-track tape (created from a series of loops of varying length) and manipulated live by Hamilton, controlling certain parameters (speed, duration, tessitura, and synchronization with the instrumentalist).

Live electronics

“Live electronics” means different things to different people. There are some who consider manipulating the dynamics of a tape to be performing live electronics; others consider live performance to be the playing of commercial synthesizers, while still others build electronic modules which control instrumental sound in real time or which can be manipulated by repatching or knob-turning during performance to create new aural results.

The raw simplicity of Hamilton's live manipulation of pre-recorded tapes and pre-patched modules seemed almost refreshing. The electronic sounds were pure, unnoisy, and relatively calming. J.D. Parran

began his interactive improvisation on flute, playing fluid lines against the electronic counterpoint. His aggressive flute technique contrasted nicely with his laid-back, unaggressive manner of performance; he is a musician whose facility and ability need not be proved by histrionics.

The amplification of the electronic sound was done so tastefully that it never covered the acoustic flute. Traffic sounds from the street blended into the overall ambience without disturbing or inhibiting. One had the sense that Parran was waiting for the environment to become more spacious; where there are no holes one cannot play except to violate the peace, and this was a performer who did not violate peacefulness. Each entrance, first on flute, then on clarinet, was signaled by organlike noodling from the tape. Parran's choice often was to enter on soft beats with single tones, disturbing the air only slightly, tiptoeing in rather than blasting his way through. He moved between multiphonics and pure tones with ease and grace, proving himself to be both a sensitive and



Hamilton: raw simplicity



Zorn: intensity to the point of saturation

Paula Court

an adventurous performer. The evening was pleasant though not avant garde.

Raucousness, controlled

The program the next night was in sharp contrast. Billed as "Jai-Alai" (an opera), it presented John Zorn and company in a raucous, highly amplified, Zappa-esque performance, sounding like free jazz but carefully controlled, cued, and scored. The set was an intentional mess; different areas were designated by a collection of objects: balloons attached to microphone stands; slide projectors on metal milk carriers; small wooden packing crates; glasses, pots, megaphones, music stands—all arranged in an organized chaos.

The pre-performance stance was loose, the performers hard to distinguish from audience members. Entrances onto the set were studiously casual and off-hand. Zorn began by blowing up a balloon. The others did similar tasks, blowing into paper bags, giving stage directions, tuning or clearing fuzz out of amplifiers. The first determined sound was brash,

loud, and wailing. Screeches on a clarinet mouthpiece, scratches and scrapes on an amplified violin, growls and squeals from inside the piano all contributed to an abrasive cacophony that lasted for an hour before intermission without letting up for a moment. Such intensity can be exhilarating, but I reached a saturation point at intermission and, like many others, left.

Before leaving, however, I noted a number of interesting elements. Slides on the walls behind the players were being "played" by two projection artists, using their hands to allow parts or all of a particular slide to come into focus, creating flashes and fuzzes and altogether making the visuals move in various ways. Some of the slides were of dancers, others of parts buildings, plants, a man's bare legs in women's red high-heeled shoes, stone steps contrasting with mosaic tiles and wood floors.

Polly Bradfield performed some fascinating tricks on amplified violin, holding a chopstick against the fingerboard and snapping it so that the vibration was amplified, tapping the

stick end-up (not sideways) against the body of the violin (rather like some Basque musicians I saw a number of years ago who let clavé-like sticks fall rhythmically on pieces of resonant wood, mostly guiding the sticks rather than holding them). And, there were lots of unusual noises made from unorthodox items; one fellow played his shirt (rubbing one hand against his shoulder in rhythmic patterns close to a microphone) while another sang into and through floodlight reflectors.

While it was definitely fast-moving and intense, and while one could surmise that catching the cardboard-printed letter cues or the single, percussive audio cues was like hitting the ball so that an opponent could not return it, I couldn't fathom the connection with opera as I understand the word. There seem to be a number of works being called operas these days that fall far short of that elevated classification.

All in all it was an exciting and varied start to a new season at The Kitchen, with great promise for surprising events to come. **MA**

Patrick J. Smith
Editor

A Guide to Orchestral Music: The Handbook for Non-Musicians

by *Ethan Mordden*

Oxford University Press,
 579 pages, \$19.95.

Reviewed by *Nicholas Kenyon*

No one would accuse Ethan Mordden of having written a dull book.

"Stravinsky, in a way, was a one-man rite of spring for twentieth-century music." The first movement of Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* is "a musical version of a snake pit." Honegger's *Pastorale d'Été* is "as tranquilly upfront and glowing as dawn in the Swiss mountains." Walton's *Façade* is "a ground-zero of neo-Classical textual clarity." Ravel's *Bolero* is "a study in obsession, take it or leave it." Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony is "a strangely 'pure' work, perhaps the most spontaneous-sounding of all symphonies." Mordden has a clever turn of phrase, and some of these descriptions are mildly thought-provoking. The book bursts with confidence. Mordden knows everything and is intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity; if we are not careful we are swept along on a torrent of enthusiasm, not pausing to ask ourselves whether this particular bit of hyped-up description means anything, or whether it couldn't as

well refer to something completely different. What symphony is "almost mystical in its stimulation"? Mahler Two? Brahms Four, actually. What concerto is "suggestively dramatic"? Pass. Brahms's First Piano Concerto. What symphony "glides happily through four movements' worth of warmth and contentment"? You got it: Brahms Two; at least it does if you've been listening to Mehta.

A more serious question is whether this kind of description and comment serves a useful function. Mordden is not reticent about the purpose of his book: "My intention is to educate the novice to the utmost, to make him or her an insider who comprehends symphony [a meaningless term that Mordden uses as a shorthand for both symphonic form and "orchestral music"] as well as anyone short of a trained musician." But I do not get the impression that Mordden is concerned with education. He is keen on getting the reader involved and excited, but he tells him very little that is new. Who'd be a so-called non-musician if that meant it was necessary to explain the Poulenc Organ Concerto, "a lot of organ here," or of the Copland *Short Symphony*, "Well, it's short." Too much of the book is on this level of banality. "Piquant is the word for this piece" (Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto); "a work of remarkable personableness" (Elgar's Cello Concerto). The author himself seems to realize the limits of this sort of verbalizing; in a sudden parenthetical outburst in the middle of Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, he shouts to the reader, "Listen; you'll hear." As Mordden would say: right on.

That could be one criterion for judging the book: does Mordden tell us anything we can't hear with our own ears? Another motto for the book comes from the note on Messiaen's *Turangalila* Symphony: "Such a gigantic business cannot be charted in detail here; let us travel loosely." Travel loosely is indeed what Mordden does through these hundreds of pieces. They are well selected, on the

whole—works by composers from Vivaldi to Henze, with a noticeable bias only in the direction of the American twentieth-century composers. Factual errors are very few: Mordden has done his homework, albeit with an identifiable number of books and record sleeves. (The entry on Debussy's *La Mer* provides an amusing example of his liner notes' letting him down.) But I'm reminded of Churchill's remark about Balfour: "What he says that's true is trite, and what isn't trite isn't true." Mordden at his least trite, and most pretentious, does not make sense: Mahler "expanded the symphony to a brilliantly innovative eloquence of musico-dramatic metaphysics." Mordden at his most trite is superfluous: Mahler also "feels very, very current."

The central problem of the book is that it does not begin to distinguish between description and analysis. The "novice" is entitled to something more rigorous, to something which at least characterizes a piece of music as precisely as possible. But to Mordden, analysis means wrapping up in trendy language the fact that there's a fast first movement, a lyrical second movement, a minuet, and a jolly finale. And attaching labels to them, so that we know how we ought to react: the first two movements of Beethoven's Ninth are "power and joy," then comes "beauty," and then "brotherhood." I cannot think of anything more patronizing to the nonmusician than to tell him how to *feel* about great music.

Analysis would, however, involve the author not merely in enthralling his reader and telling him that it "isn't that hard" listening to music, but in challenging him and writing sentences that he might have to read more than once. Mordden does have one long attempt at a sort of analysis, when he tries to explain symphonic form in his Introduction. All he succeeds in, however, is expounding the familiar parody of sonata-form structure which nineteenth-century theorists thought up to explain eighteenth-century struc-

tures, and which rarely bears any relation to the truth. It is ironic indeed that Mordden should choose Mozart's E flat Symphony, No. 39, with which to present his theory; he claims that "it will prove more rules than it will exceptions." How wrong can you be (as Mordden would say). He is blissfully unaware of the revealing conflict of opinion about the second-subject group in the first movement, discussed by Hans Keller in the Penguin symposium *The Symphony*. Mordden identifies the "second subject" with that chosen by Gordon Jacob in his analysis in the Penguin score—the flowing eighth-note tune which follows the bridge passage. Keller calls this analysis "preposterous" and the identification of the second subject "wrong." Whether or not Keller is "right" (and like him, I feel that the second subject-group is dominated by the serene five-bar melody with pizzicato accompaniment that follows), Mordden just ignores the difficulty—and thus ignores the subtlety of Mozart's genius. He also has quite a problem finding a second subject in the finale which is, of course, and unusually for Mozart, monothematic; he apologizes for the composer: "rather than come up with a *real* second theme, Mozart merely revamps the first theme."

It is also impossible to write usefully about classical sonata form without discussing key relationships—scarcely a difficult subject to grasp, as the elegant and useful writings of Imogen Holst and Antony Hopkins, among many others, have demonstrated. But Mordden, in one deflating parenthetical paragraph, declares that since this "does not affect the listener on an awareness level . . . I don't think he need concern himself with it to any extent." (Yet he then goes on to explain its basis reasonably well.) The idea of writing about the first movement of Beethoven's *Eroica*, for example, without reference to keys is daunting, and Mordden achieves absolutely nothing when he tries to do so. "Two abrupt chords launch the work, one

of the most unpretentious openings ever." (What listener has ever found those tremendous chords unpretentious?) "Yet this is perhaps the great moment in the history of the symphony, the great leap forward of contagious genius." (You idiot. Of course the two chords aren't the leap forward; it is the structure of what follows that is Beethoven's innovation—for instance, the proportion of the coda, which Mordden never even mentions, to the whole).

At moments like this, Mordden's book becomes intensely depressing. It seems to suggest that all that can be achieved in writing about music is either obviously true, or obviously rubbish. Yet the work of truly illuminating commentators—Charles Rosen, Wilfrid Mellers, Hans Keller—all tells us otherwise. But I have the impression that Mordden is interested not so much in music as in writing books full of clever sentences. When I looked at the book's title, I wondered what a non-musician was. Now I know.

Nicholas Kenyon writes on music for The New Yorker.

Sonata Forms

by Charles Rosen

Norton, 344 pages \$14.95.



Charles Rosen's earlier book *The Classical Style* is, in its effortless brilliance, a very hard act to follow, but in *Sonata Forms* he has produced a worthy successor and companion to that widely acclaimed volume. The vexing subject of "sonata form," which is all too rarely understood in more than textbook terms by those who write about it, is here given a fresh and challenging examination. This book, like all of Rosen's writing, requires attentive and concentrated reading, but it repays a hundredfold that attention—the more so since Rosen writes readably and never indulges in thickets of impenetrable prose. Indeed, it is the concentrated nature of his style which is daunting,



Charles Rosen: illuminating

for he throws off ideas and concepts at such a rate that any three or four pages could furnish the subject matter of a whole book, or at least of an extended discussion.

Rosen, as expected, is not interested in the textbook definition of the form as it became codified in the nineteenth century. What this book is about is the multitude of "sonata forms" that emerged and developed in the eighteenth century—their features, their functions, and their mutations—with attention given to aspects that derive from opera and the aria as well as from instrumental music. Rosen, moreover, does not confine his examples to the Masters—in this case, Haydn and Mozart—but evidences the development through examples from many lesser composers. This is especially valuable, for it is accepted now that the "great masters" did not invent many of the features that they so magnificently employed and made memorable. In many cases, composers little known today were more daring in their explorations; the eighteenth century was, after all, a time of ranging musical experiment within a developing form. What Rosen has produced is both an examination of one aspect of music and a history of music within a period.

Many features of this book are commendable, apart from the au-

Continued on page 38

New York

New Music for Young Ensembles

New Music for Young Ensembles, an organization that encourages the composition of scores that pose only moderate technical (and presumably also conceptual) difficulty, presented the first of its two seasonal Carnegie Recital Hall programs on October 6. One of the cowinners of its 1980 competition was performed, Quartet for Saxophones by Daniel Perlengo, as well as an honorable mention from 1979, the Trio in Two Movements for Flute, Clarinet and Piano by Matt Doran.

The program notes stated that Perlengo was concerned with creating a quartet sound of harmonic blending rather than one of individual instrumental virtuosity, and in this he did succeed: the almost unvarying disposition of soprano, tenor, alto, and baritone saxophone reiterated a single timbre for the duration of the work's twelve minutes. The effect was relentlessly monochromatic, bleary, and ultimately tiresome, the excellent efforts of Dennis C. Anderson, Lawrence Feldman, Dan Trimboli and Richard Wasley notwithstanding.

Doran's modest offering did not deal with anything like the textural impedimenta Perlengo had elected to battle, and the lyrical openness of its first movement provided some contrast to the rondo vivacity of the second. However, the feeling remained that the three instruments, cleanly played by pianist Mark Birmingham, flutist Elizabeth Szlek-Consoli, and clarinetist Bernard Yannotta, had been boxed into unnecessarily rigid relationships vis-à-vis one another, that a certain added degree of imaginative play and daring might have been of service.

The balance of the program included Poulenc's Sonata for Clarinet and Bassoon, played by Yannotta and Kim Laskowski with extraordinarily little sympathy for the inherent

humor of the Poulenc idiom; Yannotta's clarinet, emphatically energetic, seemed only minimally in touch with Miss Laskowski's placidly reticent bassoon.

Perhaps the most satisfying moments of the evening came just after the awards presentation—Martin Bookspan and Eleanor Steber officiating—when Mrs. Szlek-Consoli addressed herself to the alternately bright and wistful snippets that constitute Otto Luening's Third Suite for Flute Solo. The charming material emerged as direct and efficient, and such was its execution. However, the closing selection—a puzzling choice after so much attention to twentieth-century wind music—Schumann's Andante and Variations for Two Pianos, brought out a second pair of ill-assorted musicians: a somewhat overwrought Lily Dumont clangorously launching herself into the *primo* while a super-cool pianist Birmingham blandly traversed the *secondo*.

HARVEY E. PHILLIPS

New York

Ann Schein, piano

The American pianist, Ann Schein, gave the first of six all-Chopin recitals at Alice Tully Hall on October 13. Miss Schein had a brief vogue some years ago, with some promising recordings for the long-defunct Kapp label, but in the intervening years she has withdrawn from the limelight.

As one critical of some aspects of this artist's earlier work, I was particularly interested in hearing her again. The first important thing to say is that her considerable flair and virtuosity are untarnished; the second—and even more crucial—observation to be made is that Miss Schein has returned immeasurably matured. I am becoming increasingly chary of using review space to launch crusades, but it seems appropriate to state, unequivocally, that Americans would do well to pay more attention

to deserving home-grown talent and less to dubious rejects from foreign lands. Miss Schein is infinitely more impressive than most of those émigrés from you know where.

She plays with a beautifully molded legato tone and appealing sincerity, and she was able to bring out the best aspects of Chopin's salon-like First Sonata, giving it a cohesive stride and subtle coloration that caused one to wonder why that work is so seldom heard. In the two mature sonatas, there were one or two minor disappointments, such as a lack of definition in the Scherzo of Op. 35 or a few moments of imprecision in the finale of Op. 58. And it remains to be noted that, for all her American citizenship and Polish tutelage (she studied with Mieczyslaw Munz at Juilliard, privately with Arthur Rubinstejn, and also did a stint with Dame Myra Hess), Miss Schein is very much a technician in the French tradition. This has its drawbacks as well as its assets: while her general lucidity and articulation are a joy to the ear, her *fortissimo* playing is a trifle bright and brittle.

In the main, though, Miss Schein has maintained her essential brilliance and lyricism, and has strengthened her musicality with a more penetrating grasp of structure and harmony. Although she can still strike a personal chord, the subjectivity is now winningly incorporated into an overall conception. Judging by this first recital, Miss Schein's self-confidence in undertaking a six-concert marathon is not misplaced. No artist could hope for a more successful comeback.

HARRIS GOLDSMITH

New York

Russell Sherman, piano

"I have been too familiar with disappointments," said our sixteenth president, "to be very much chagrined." Honest Abe was talking about political reversals, but had he been a music critic in Alice Tully

Hall for Russell Sherman's recital the evening of September 17, he would have been not only disappointed and chagrined, but dismayed and perplexed as well.

A pianist who studied with Steuermann and displayed great talent at a youthful age; who was known as one of the finest interpreters of contemporary music in the 1950s, admired by so many of the important musical intellectuals of that period; and who not long ago, as a mature artist, began concertizing extensively to find an audience beyond his loyal but quasi-cultist following; this pianist might be expected to put together an uncommonly interesting program and perform it in an original and insightful manner. Such were the expectations. The reality, alas, fell far short. The program was indeed well constructed: Beethoven's Fantasy, Op.77, and Schumann's C major Fantasy, with the Schumann *Prophet Bird* coming in between; four Preludes and the Sonata No. 10 by Scriabin; and Beethoven's *Waldstein* Sonata in conclusion. The cunning correspondences among the selections that revealed themselves as the program unfolded attested to Sherman's skill as a program builder. It was unfortunately the performances, particularly of the major works, that disappointed.

The Schumann Fantasy was no fantasy, but rather a series of events all pretty much of the same color, drained of contrast and ill-defined in structure. Passion, sentiment, grace, abandon—so many of the qualities that comprise the romantic lexicon—were either absent or insufficient. Without them, this masterpiece became little more than a tedious demonstration of how not to play this particular composition.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the major problem with the *Waldstein* was the result of Sherman's being too comfortable with the sonata, too self-assured technically and otherwise for a deeper probing of the content. So the first movement, for example, was

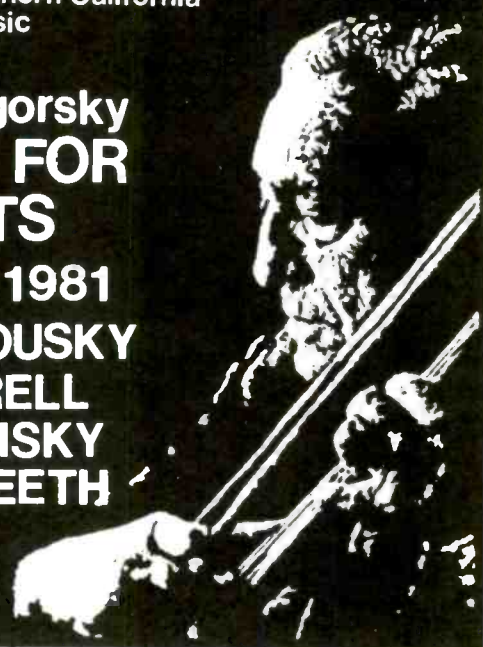
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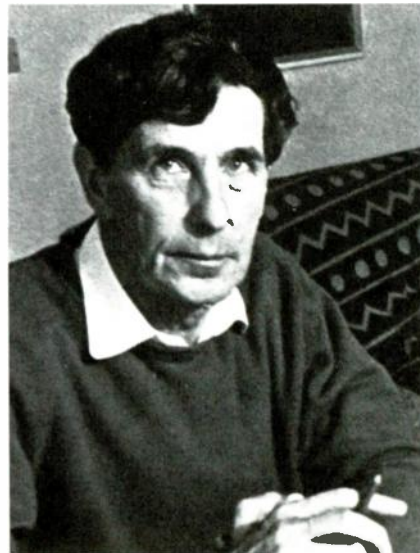
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• *For information on the 1981 competition write to: Assistant Dean, The Juilliard School, Lincoln Center, New York, N. Y. 10023.*



Zukerman conducting the St. Paul: questions remain

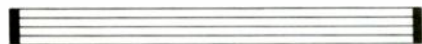


Tippett: shimmering lyricism

too fast, a tour-de-force which played around with phrasing, pulling here, curbing there, almost as if it were the pianist's toy. Later on, the trills were dazzling.

The Scriabin received the best performances of the evening by far, particularly the Sonata and the Opus 11 No. 16 Prelude, which made the disappointments of the rest of the program even more distressing. Sherman is a pianist of considerable virtuosity; he is intelligent, inventive in his programming, and, one assumes, sincere in his convictions. But on this occasion at least, something terribly important was missing. ARTHUR SATZ

St. Paul



St. Paul Chamber Orch. (Zukerman)

Trading his violin for a baton (for at least part of the evening), Pinchas Zukerman conducted his debut concert as music director of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra at St. Paul's O'Shaughnessy Auditorium on October 3.

Though the metaphor did spring to mind, Zukerman-at-the-podium was not an instance of Samuel Johnson's dog walking on its hind legs—the point being, as Dr. Johnson saw it, that one ought not to ask how

well the dog did it, but simply to relish the fact that he could do it at all. Zukerman, after all, is no longer a novice conductor. He has stood on his hind legs and conducted a number of the nation's major orchestras in recent seasons, and for the past two summers has served as music director of London's South Bank Festival.

And indeed, there was much to admire in the thirty-two-year-old Israeli-born violinist's traversal of the three Mozart works that made up the program. (Fully fifty percent of the pieces Zukerman has programmed for this season's Capital Series, the orchestra's major subscription series, are by Mozart.) The energy of attack and clarity of line that he managed to elicit from the players in the fugue of the opening work, the Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546, continued after intermission in the outer movements of the *Jupiter* Symphony, though the Beechamesque ritard at the end vitiated somewhat this jubilant movement's ultimate effect. And except for a few moments in the finale where the winds were covered by the strings, orchestral balances were keenly gauged. The Minuet, taken at a brisk clip, was aptly buoyant, but the Andante, however lovely some of its effects, lacked an overall sense of line, and throughout, Mozart's *fortes* tended to be taken at the same vol-

ume as his *fortissimos*—a factor that may change when Zukerman has become more familiar with this hall's dry acoustics.

No reservations could be registered, however, when Zukerman took up the fiddle for a performance of the Concerto No. 5 in A major, none, surely, concerning his sensible tempos or the sheer virtuosity of his passage-work and none, certainly, regarding the unalloyed sweetness of tone and phrase—Romantic but with no sentimentalizing—from both soloist and orchestra in the Adagio.

Questions remain, nonetheless, about Zukerman's skills—even his potential skills—as a conductor, as they do about the future of the orchestra itself, an orchestra brought to international attention for its skill and adventurous programming during the eight-year reign of Zukerman's predecessor, Dennis Russell Davies (now music director of the Stuttgart Opera). Though the orchestra nearly folded two years ago due to financial difficulties, the orchestra's board is pinning its hopes on its new conductor's fame (and record company contacts), and with the aid of vastly more conservative programming, at least in its Capital Series, is hoping to double its audience in just one season. It's a gamble that may or may not pay off.

MICHAEL ANTHONY

Toronto

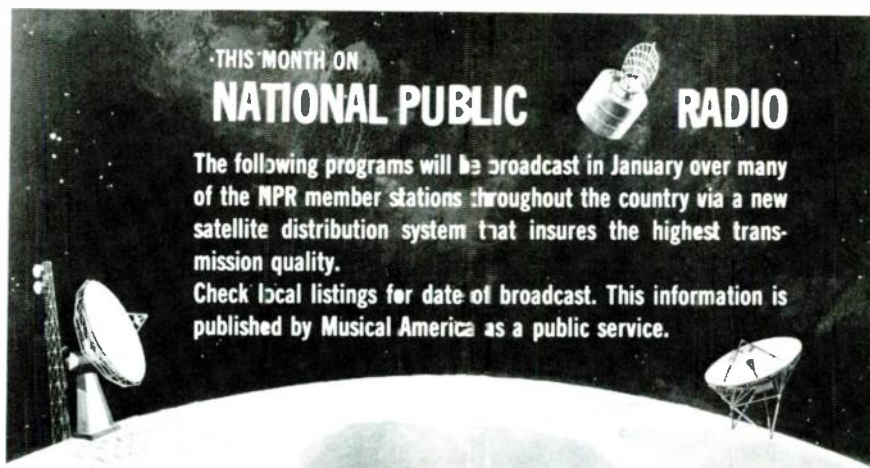
Toronto Symphony: Tippett Triple Concerto [North American premiere]

Sir Michael Tippett's Triple Concerto for violin, viola, cello, and orchestra, first performed at the London Proms last August 22, was given its North American premiere on September 30 by Andrew Davis and the Toronto Symphony at Toronto's Massey Hall. The composer is seventy-five, but the work is the product of a young and agile mind, ever exploring new possibilities. Still, it shares with earlier work both its mosaic-like structure and the practice of self-quotation; there are allusions to the coda of the Fourth String Quartet and to the dawn music from the end of *The Midsummer Marriage*.

The thirty-one-minute concerto is in three movements separated by interludes. Despite its automating blocks of sound and the way the soloists function as individual personalities, the work is a continuous entity, growing forward to the final transition of its initial "birth-motif." The slow movement shows the influence of gamelan music in its nuclear melody and instrumentation, yet the effect is not mere glitter; the shimmering lyricism of this movement is intrinsic to the work.

Andrew Davis directed the Toronto Symphony and three fine soloists—Steven Staryk (violin), Rivka Golani-Erdesz (viola), and Daniel Domb (cello)—in the kind of inspired performance this demanding work merits.

The concerto was a revelation for Toronto, which has heard performances of only the Fourth Symphony (given its Canadian premiere by Davis and the Toronto Symphony last year) among the recent works. This situation was remedied by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's festival of Tippett and His Contemporaries, held in late September to mid October. But Toronto has yet to hear a Tippett opera. GAYNOR JONES



THIS MONTH ON NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

The following programs will be broadcast in January over many of the NPR member stations throughout the country via a new satellite distribution system that insures the highest transmission quality.

Check local listings for date of broadcast. This information is published by Musical America as a public service.

GRAND PIANO

- Rosalyn Tureck: all-J.S. Bach program. (Taped Aug. 5, 1979, J. of Maryland.)
- Anthony and Joseph Paratore: works by Brahms, Debussy, Lutoslawski, and Saint-Saens. (Taped June 25, 1980, Bachauer Int'l. Piano Competition) Martine Joste and Sylvaine Biller: works by Ivan Myschnegradsky. (Taped Feb. 3, 1980, West Berlin.)
- Santos Ojeda: Ginastera's "Sonata para Piano," Bartók's "Dut of Doors," and Chopin's Fantasia in F minor, opus 49. (Taped Oct. 23, 1978.) Sylvia Kersenbaum: Schumann's "Carnaval," opus 9, Scriabin's Nocturne for Left Hand, opus 9; and Ginastera's "Three Argentine Dances." (Taped Sept. 25, 1979, Nashville.)
- Grant Johannesen: works including Mozart's "Duport" Variations; Ravel's "In the Style of Borodin"; and Poulenc's "Self Satisfaction." (Taped Nov. 25, 1979, Symphony Hall, Atlanta.)

INDIANAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

- John Nelson, conductor: Berlioz's "Roman Carnival" Overture, Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5. (Itzhak Perlman), Dvořák's "New World" Symphony (Taped Oct. 20, 1979.)
- John Nelson, conductor: World premiere of Anthony Newman's Violin Concerto (Hidetaro Suzuki), Requiem by Mozart/Sussmayer, with the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, Charles H. Webb, Jr., director, Linda Zoghby, soprano; Shirley Close, mezzo, Michael Talley, tenor, Kenneth Cox, bass. (Taped Oct. 27, 1979.)
- John Nelson, conductor: Janáček's "Jealousy" (Overture to the opera "Jenufa"); Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 in A, Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, (Andre Watts). (Taped Nov. 10, 1979.)
- John Nelson, conductor: Debussy's "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun," Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, (Gil Morgenstern); Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments; Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion & Celesta. (Taped Nov. 24, 1979 and April 19, 1980.)

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

- Carlo Maria Giulini, conductor: Haydn's Symphony No. 99 in E-flat; Ravel's "Rapsodie Espagnole"; Brahms's Symphony No. 1 in C minor. (Taped May 11, 1980, Beethovenhalle, Bonn, W. Germany.)
- Carlo Maria Giulini, conductor: Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony. (Taped May 25, 1980, Royal Festival Hall, London.)
- Carlo Maria Giulini, conductor: Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 in D, Brahms's Piano Concert No. 1 in D minor. (Vladimir Ashkenazy.) (Taped April 18, 1980.)
- Carlo Maria Giulini, conductor: All-Schumann program Manfred Overture, Violin Concerto in D minor (Gidon Kremer), Symphony No. 3 in E-flat. (Taped Oct. 29, 1980.)

INTERNATIONAL CONCERT HALL

- Robert Fitzpatrick conducts the Curtis Symphony Orchestra: The Third Annual Kennedy Center/Friedheim Awards; "Athenaten," opus 51, by Gene Gutche; "A Lyric Symphony" by Robert Wykes; Third prize, Ramon Zupko's "Windsongs—Concerto for Piano and Orchestra" (Abraham Stokeman); First prize: John Harbison's Piano Concerto (Robert Miller); Second prize: Jacob Druckman's "Prism." (Taped Sept. 28, 1980, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.)
- Erich Leinsdorf conducts the Zurich Tonhall Orchestra: Weber's Overture to "Der Freischütz"; Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony; Strauss's "Don Juan," Schumann's Symphony No. 1, ("Spring") (Taped June 3, 1980, Great Music Hall, Zurich, Switz. as part of 1980 Zurich Int'l. Music Fest.)
- Lovro von Matačić conducts the Zurich Tonhall Orchestra: Bruckner's Symphony No. 5 in B-flat. (Taped July 1, 1980, Great Music Hall, Zurich, as part of 1980 Zurich Int'l. Music Fest.)
- Gerd Albrecht conducts the Zurich Tonhall Orchestra: Berlioz's "Symphonie fantastique"; "Lelio," opus 14b, with tenor Peter Keller, baritone Roland Hermann, narrator Gert Westphal, and the Singing Choir of the Engadiner Kantorei and the Chamber Choir Seminar Kunsnacht. (Taped July 4, 1980, Great Music Hall, Zurich, as part of 1980 Zurich Int'l. Music Fest.)

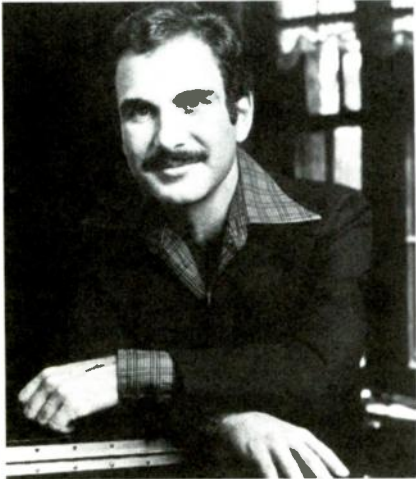
NPR RECITAL HALL

- The Audubon Quartet/Thomas Hryniv, piano: "Barroco Para Cordas," opus 2, by Tarcisio Burity, Schubert's "Quartettsetz," "White Haired Girl" by Chu Wei; Fauré's Quartet for Piano and Strings in C minor; Dvořák's Quintet for Piano and Strings in A. (Taped June 8, 1980, at Music at Gretna in Pennsylvania.)
- The Percussion Group (ensemble-in-residence at the College Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati): works by Takayoshi Yoshoka, Schoenberg, Gerhard Samuel, Frederic Rzewski, Stephen Mosko, Michael Udow, and Russell Peck (Taped Jan. 29, 1980, Corbett Auditorium, U. of Cincinnati.)
- Music at Gretna: Jude Mollenhauer, harp; Carl Ellenberger, flute; Konrad Owens, clarinet; Barbara Sonnes, violin; Sidney Curtis, viola; Deborah Reeder, cello; Elizabeth Keller, piano; works by Debussy, Musgrave, Ibert, and Brahms. (Taped July 27, 1980 at Music at Gretna in Pennsylvania.)
- Serenata Genève/Mainz Wind Ensemble: Genève works by Emil Petrovics, Carlos Chavez, Luciano Berio, Ferenc Farkas, Igor Stravinsky, and Edgar Varese. (Taped May 28, 1980, Twelfth Festival of Contemporary Music, Martigny.) Mainz Ensemble: works by Giovanni Gabrieli, Anton Dvořák, Richard Strauss, Carl Orff, and Jean Françaix. (Taped May 14, 1980, Schwtzinger Music Festival, Germany.)

Martin Katz: The Accompanist at Work

A very special art is analyzed by one of its finest practitioners

Janet Tassel



Christian Stener

Katz: the key is partnership



With von Stade: the relationships in a song become reality

Recently I talked with accompanist Martin Katz at his apartment in the Ansonia, Stanford White's great New York landmark and home of musicians for generations. I waited for Katz beside an open, fretwork-enclosed window while in the next room he coached a young soprano in Fauré's *Poème d'un jour*. Like Wilhelm in Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*, set in that same Verdi Square neighborhood, from the window I heard "pianos and the voices of men and women singing scales and opera, all mixed. . ."

While waiting, I reviewed my notes: In 1967, when Martin Katz was twenty-one and serving (with the rank of Spec.5) as accompanist to the U.S. Army Chorus in Washington, D.C., he found himself precipitated—a good deal ahead of schedule—into his present career as one of the handful of prominent accompanists in the world. Fortune's push came in the

Janet Quinn Tassel, who writes frequently on music, is on the English faculty of the University of Lowell, in Lowell, Massachusetts.

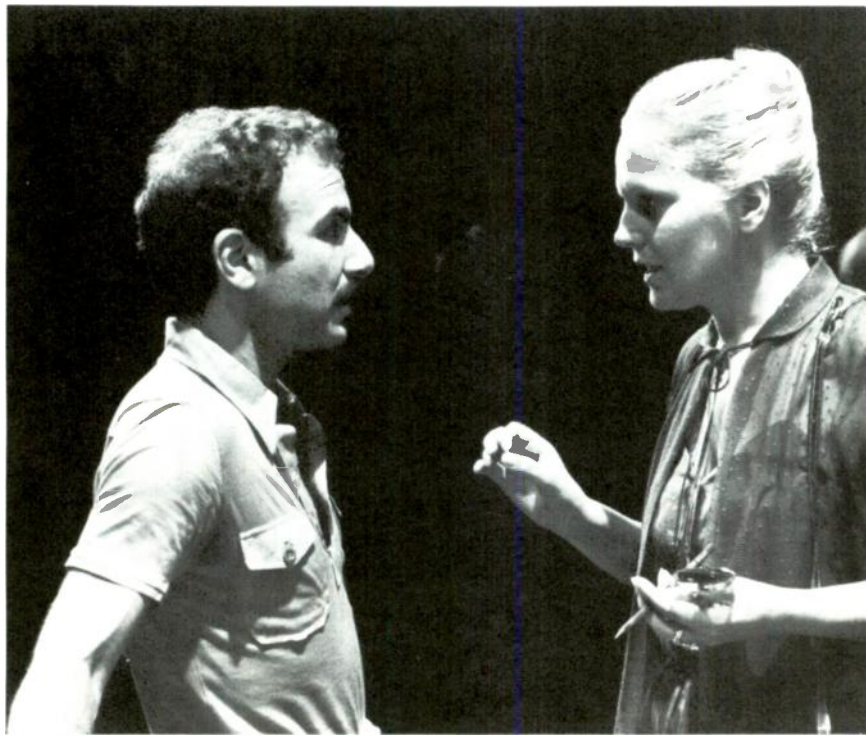
guise of a phone call from Marilyn Horne, ringing up to ask if he could accompany her in a concert scheduled for February 3, 1967 in Macon, Georgia.

Horne's regular accompanist, Gwendolyn Koldovsky—Katz's teacher at the University of Southern California School of Music—wishing to cut back her touring commitments, suggested that the increasingly busy mezzo contact Martin Katz. Katz, she assured Horne, was a young man possessed of unique promise. A full-scholarship accompanying major while at U.S.C., he had been selected to play for the classes of Pierre Bernac, Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and for those of Lotte Lehmann up at Santa Barbara. Unfortunately, he had been drafted, but withal his accompanying progress was unaffected, and moreover he was opportunely placed for her concert in Washington. Horne, on the basis of "vibrations" she had already felt about "the kid," hired him, and has since used him exclusively.

For two years, Katz arranged

his leaves so that he could play for all Horne's concerts, including two important New York engagements. He was thus able to move to New York in February 1969, freshly civilian, with a germinating reputation and some cash—by any reckoning, a felicitous start. Singers happily not being secret sharers, within a year he had acquired a nucleus of regulars and a devoted penumbra of sometimers. The roster of both was, and remains, impressive. In addition, he was Tebaldi's accompanist during her final three years in America and for her now-legendary return concert at La Scala on May 20, 1974; and last autumn Victoria de los Angeles chose him to play for her two-coast series.

The accompanist's craft
When his student left, Katz made us some coffee and joined me in his handsome dining room. Over the coffee ("my weakness; I drink far too much of it. This is a good blend, though, don't you think?") we discussed the differences between the accompanist's craft and that of the solo pianist. First, he said, he would em-



With Katia Ricciarelli: He calls a singer "a gift from heaven"

phasize what the difference is not: the accompanist must be no less technically equipped than the soloist. Occasionally in the course of his teaching, he said, he meets a young pianist who, suspecting that he will not succeed as a soloist, hopes to find asylum in accompanying. "I owe it to him to disabuse him gently of that notion."

"To be sure, I may not have to play six minutes' worth of double thirds as the soloist does in Chopin's 'Double-Third' Etude, nor am I faced with the octaves in the Tchaikovsky concerto or the interminable non-stop trill for fingers four and five at the end of the last Beethoven Piano Sonata. But then I will have a song like the *Erkönig* of Schubert onomatopoeic music which is full of horseback riding portrayed on the piano by the right hand doing repeated octaves for eight pages without relief.

"The accompanist also has to deal with technical difficulties in terms of shadings that the soloist doesn't have to think about. The voice is capable of more coloring than any other instrument; so to match and support and surround it, the ac-

companist has to control the amount (and quality) of tone in the piano." For coloring the accompanist must use the pedal "to create brushstrokes, and he makes frequent use of the soft pedal (which concerns the soloist much less) to control tone, and even more, to create muted, silvery shadings."

Audiences often aren't aware of a technical hurdle because "it's only part of the accompaniment. But just playing a single chord, well-balanced and exactly the right dynamic for the singer or the violin so as not to cover a drop in power—in the voice's mid-range, for example—is quite demanding technically. As is the whole question of ensemble, which the soloist needn't consider; the five notes to a beat which match the violinist's seven notes to the same beat. In that respect the accompanist maybe can't *make* the concert, but he sure can break it. One adapts to each singer"—some of Katz's songs are marked with four colors to indicate who wants what—"but that doesn't mean compromise. It means partnership. I am adamantly opposed to the idea that

an accompanist must be self-effacing, Beethoven's sonatas are written for piano and violin, in that order." (Evelyn Lear had told me earlier that she always insists on Katz's being given equal billing: "He knows better than I do when I should breathe. Should he get smaller type on the poster?")

A sense of the music

Katz poured us some more coffee and leaned back, looking out the window, his chair balanced on two legs. Sounds of vocalized scales drifted into the room. He spoke of transcription: "Solo pianists rarely deal with transcriptions, which involve capturing the *sense* of the music from its reduction. But any time my singer performs an aria, whether from opera, motet, or oratorio, it's my job as accompanist to sound as much like an orchestra as I can. The pedal is again my ally; with it I 'imitate' the sonority, depth, and thickness of the orchestral sound. But I'll use anything—elbows, knees—to get the essence of the thing. Some accompanists hate doing transcriptions, but I like it. I consider it a challenge to sound like something I'm not." Apparently it is a challenge successfully met: Tatiana Troyanos had told me that she relies heavily on his "tutoring" when she's negotiating murky harmonic passages like so many in Ravel's *Schéherazade*, for instance; "I feel," she'd said, "as if I'm practicing with the orchestra when he plays."

Legato: "The solo pianist of course has to be master of legato, but it seems to me that in accompanying a legato machine like the human voice my responsibility as a technician is to play *incredibly* legato, as well as to match my tone's roundness and sweetness to the voice's. Think of the Rachmaninoff *Vocalise*, which doesn't have any words, just beautiful legato tones designed to sound like two voices. In another Rachmaninoff song, 'Cease thy singing, maiden fair,' after a long introduction for piano, the voice comes in with 'Stop singing!' If the piano ever had to be le-

gato, it's there; not like hammers and ivories and pedals, but like the human voice."

Then there's transposing. "An accompanist gets so he thinks in triplicate. I play songs like Schubert's *An Die Musik* in four different keys. And I have to be ready to transpose with no notice: once a soprano doing 'Non mi dir' somehow edged up a tone, and I had to transpose the rest of the aria on the spot."

Where a solo pianist thinks in terms of a scale, the accompanist must produce program music from that scale. "Take a simple G-major scale. Depending on the song, it must sound like somebody weeping, spinning, or galloping, a brook racing or spring unfolding, a sick girl trying to get out of bed or a lover serenading in the garden. Before the singer and I decide how to shade the six verses of a Schubert song, we obviously have to relate to the text. That's my responsibility."

The need to understand text emphasizes the accompanist's obligation to be master of the important Western languages. Katz is fluent in French, Italian, and German; he has a reading acquaintance with Russian (two of his singers, Evelyn Lear and Nicolai Gedda, work frequently in Russian), and his Spanish is "evolving." He will often provide announcements, translations, and changes to the audience when his singer doesn't speak in the home language. But more crucial: "How do I perform a song if I don't know if the water I'm depicting is a brook or an ocean, a stagnant lake or a waterfall, or just a drop splashing?"

Reality in song

All the singers I had spoken to had invoked this aspect of their accompanist's task. Frederica von Stade said that she and Katz discuss the relationships within the song as if they were real. He developed *Songs of a Wayfarer*, for example, as story before they both developed it as song; "he was an actor, a poet, and an interpreter even before his fingers touched



With de los Angeles on her two-coast tour in 1979

the keys," she said. And Judith Ble-gen, describing how Katz had helped her with the poem of Brahms's *To An Aeolian Harp*, said, "Marty moved me straight to the central meaning of the text, acted it out for me, got into the characters' heads, and did it all so vividly that the song began to sing itself."

The accompanist, then, must be transcriber, colorist, transposer, and linguist. Often, he must also be an inventor. Evelyn Lear credits Katz with all her ornamentation; he did most of von Stade's ornamentation for her *Barber* and all of Horne's *Tancredi*. Horne relates: "I had been singing things like *Cenerentola* as early as 1956, so I think I showed Marty the way, but now he writes all my ornamentation with me. One of our biggest projects together was Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*. We started from scratch—just words and notes—and we fleshed it out together. I think we came up with something terrific."

Katz, however, feels most proprietary about "his" *Rinaldo*, a synthesis and pruning of Handel's two-and-a-half different versions. The Katz edition was first performed in Houston in 1976 and is scheduled for Ottawa in 1982. In this, another of Horne's projects for him, Katz coached each singer and ornamented

all the music for singers and orchestra, so that the entire production bears his imprint.

He reflected, drew on his cigarette, and continued. "The more I talk, the more immodest I sound to myself. When I tell you we accompanists need to be omniscient, you won't think I'm trying to sound like God, will you? But my singers call upon me to plan songs and programs for them months, even years, in advance. I also have to be alert to their immediate needs, which may differ from recital to recital. A soloist playing a Chopin movement too slowly may not be making good music, but an accompanist who drags a phrase may cause his singer to turn blue; the way we did it the time before may not work for him or her today. We have to foresee, adjust, cover up; the singers can't do it—we have all the notes. I guess the closest analogue would be the conductor."

Earlier, though, Horne had said that the accompanist can bail her out even faster than most orchestra conductors, "who could take some lessons in the finer points of singers' needs." And both Lear and Katz like to recount the saga of Vivaldi's *Col Piacer*, a four-minute piece which ran for about twenty minutes at one concert because Lear somehow repeated



With Tebaldi at La Scala, 1974



With Horne: fortune's push

a passage that kept catapulting them back to the second page. "She sang it divinely, each time repeating it differently," but finally he "charged into the ending," taking her with him. (After the concert, Lear's mother said to her, "That was beautiful, dear, but wasn't it a bit long?") Singers are more likely, however, to "jump" passages than to repeat them, and Katz's custom of near-memorization helps defuse that nasty contingency. (It also renders unnecessary the page-turner, a distraction Katz never allows.)

Keeping the pace

It sounds, said I, like a lot of work. "Well, sure, but what could be more satisfying?" For one thing, it's never boring; his musical life is characterized by variety (and by the need for youth and stamina, I mentally noted, although in theory an accompanist can work until time's winged chariot carries him off the stage). Allowing for the relatively constant flow of private students, one day might be devoted to six hours of practice, the next to orchestrating a song by Carol Hall about von Stade's daughter, or to learning new music; two days a week might be travel and performance days (his tours may actually keep him away from New York

for as long as six weeks); there are the days spent teaching at the Westminster Choir College in Princeton and at the University of Maryland; and the master classes, which he conducts throughout the world.

And of course coaching alone provides a diversity of experiences: learning with von Stade a song-cycle by Thomas Pasatieri, which they then premiered together; helping Blegen prepare her new Oscar for the Met's *Ballo* (and reassuring her afterwards that she was indeed boyish enough); or assisting Zubin Mehta: having coached Horne for her performance with the New York Philharmonic of Elgar's *Sea Pictures*, Katz was asked to do the piano rehearsals. When the orchestra rehearsals began, Mehta asked him to stay on to check balance from different points throughout the hall.

Occasionally a weekend is spent recording (in a recent Ravel session with von Stade and the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, it was he, says von Stade, who pulled everything together when things came "unraveled"). Katz might even be found dallying with conducting, as he did with the National Philharmonic for the BBC's January 1980 production, "Call Me Flicka," a portrait of von Stade.

The human element

"... but really, so much of what I do boils down to human relations. I help my singers decide which gown to wear. I calm their nerves, even when mine are shattered. We keep each other company waiting for planes and look for bathrooms together backstage."

Each of his singers had a different anecdote about the joy of life with the Well-Tuned Accompanist, illustrating a parabola of expectations ranging from gin-rummy partner and comic relief to father-surrogate. But I also perceived what appeared at first to be a subtle paradox. He made them feel, they said, like *bona fide* prima donnas, arranging things so that *they* would look good. (Von Stade said she was confident that if she stopped singing and broke into a tap dance, he would swing right into something appropriate without a missed beat.) But wasn't this the fellow with the partner-complex and the granite refusal to be self-effacing?

"Well," said he self-effacingly, "after all, if they look good, so do I. But listen," he said, stubbing out his cigarette, "I want my singers to look good because I want those audiences to appreciate that a singer is a gift to them from heaven. That's why, for instance, I always urge a singer not to throw away big moments, like that spectacular soft high attack in the phrase 'in my song' in Mahler's *Ich bin der Welt*. I want the audience to get the goosebumps that moment deserves, to feel its intensity, the way I do. Such music, and the singers who make it happen, are the link between us mortals and God."

I left Katz as he was beginning a lesson with Gary Norden, a twenty-eight-year-old accompanist from Kansas. Waiting for the elevator, I listened again to Bellow's "men and women singing scales and opera." Standing with me and watching me carefully was a tiny lady with orange bangs and lacquered eyebrows, carrying a piebald string bag for groceries. She erupted in a splendid gold smile: "Noisy place, huh?" **MA**

An Extraordinary "Don Giovanni"

Director Peter Sellars emerges as a "theatrical prodigy"

Ellen Pfeifer



Photos by James Haber

Opening trio with Maddalena, Honeysucker, and Kibler

During the summer of 1979, just before the arrival of Robert Brustein's American Repertory Theatre, Harvard University's Loeb Drama Center was given over to a series of student-run theatricals.

It would not have been unreasonable to expect these undergraduate exercises to be embarrassingly sophomoric. But anyone brave enough to take in the students' improbable single-evening, fully staged production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle was rewarded by the discovery of a theatrical prodigy. The creator/director/master-of-ceremonies, a cocky little Harvard junior named Peter Sellars, proved to be nothing less than a genius in the making.

With a carefully abridged tape recording of Wagner's music, a wonderful cast of mimes, a variety of ingenious puppets, and props constructed of green garbage bags and plastic bleach jugs, Sellars created a

Ring that was iconoclastic, wildly funny, heroic, and extraordinarily moving. Half-serious, half-parodic, it must have set some kind of record for the most ideas and the least amount of money spent on the tetralogy.

Since then, Sellars has graduated from Harvard and directed one of the plays in ART's debut season, an extraordinary concession and act of recognition on the part of Brustein, who has so far allowed Harvard students only minimal participation in his professional activities at the Loeb.

A most inventive director

Given this background, there was every reason to believe that Sellars' production of *Don Giovanni*, in collaboration with artist Edward Gorey, conductor James Bolle, and the New Hampshire Symphony, would be a brilliant event. It was.

The two performances, September 20 and 23 at Manchester's Palace Theater, confirmed that Sellars is already one of our most inventive, thoughtful, and provocative op-

era directors. For those who saw it, his *Don Giovanni*, with its extraordinary images, its mad swirl of ideas and insights, will likely remain a touchstone for all future productions.

To begin, Sellars took to heart Mozart's designation of *Don Giovanni* as a *dramma giocoso*. Unlike many directors, he seemed stimulated by the inherent ambiguities, the black comic possibilities, the simultaneity of broad humor and pain. The result was surreal, savage, yet hilarious.

Against Gorey's pen-and-ink-sketch decor, the director dressed his characters in black-and-white, choosing a vaguely 1930's urban locale, in keeping with his belief that the opera is basically timeless and placeless. Don Giovanni (James Maddalena) became a twisted version of a cinematic romantic leading man, with his white tie and tails and slicked-back hair. His violent nature erupted from time to time like the gleaming switchblade concealed in his breast pocket. And his basic egoism was revealed—in one of the production's most stun-



The seductive *Don*: an ultimate display of egoism

ning images—during the serenade when he held and caressed a mandolin as if it were his own erect phallus.

As repugnant as he might seem, this Don Giovanni also displayed a fascinating charm, a seductiveness that would explain his success with women. (That all-important element was notably missing from the portrayal of Don Giovanni in Joseph Losey's recent film version.) So, for example, in "*La ci darem la mano*," Sellars coupled the caressing tone of Maddalena's voice with a physical caressing of Zerlina's hand that was incredibly sensual. Poor girl, she didn't know what hit her.

Joking and poignance

Donna Elvira (Susan Larson) became a funny, pathetic Margaret Dumont character, a duped, middle-aged former spinster whose first appearance found her staggering and careening under the weight of a battered suitcase as she tracks down her traitorous husband.

This half-slap-stick depiction of

Elvira was perhaps Sellar's most telling achievement. For example, there was probably nothing funnier in the whole show than Leporello's accounting to her of Don Giovanni's conquests: a slide show of Victorian nudes in suggestive poses. Yet Elvira's humiliation at that moment was total, and it was all the more poignant for the joking involved.

Not everything¹ Sellars did worked quite as well. For one thing, he never really came to grips with Donna Anna (Mary Lindsey). She was neither the heroic, morally outraged character that the music suggests nor the ambiguous, duplicitous, sexually awakened creature suggested by Romantic revisionists like E.T.A. Hoffmann. Rather, she remained an enigma. And only at the end of the opera, when she passionately kissed the corpse of Don Giovanni did we have any inkling of Sellar's point of view.

Then, too, it is pretty hard to believe that the masked trio would go so far as to join Don Giovanni in a

striptease during the First Act party.

Also, some viewers might not buy Sellars' interpretation of the statue-come-to-life. In this production, Don Ottavio dressed up as the dead Commendatore, Masetto sang his music, and the whole finale appeared to be a plot to scare Don Giovanni to death. No divine intervention. Just a human conspiracy.

The things that were right

Still this *Don Giovanni* was remarkable more for the things that were right than the things that didn't work. One of its principal strengths was the way Sellars helped the singers create persuasive characterizations. We have already mentioned the Don Giovanni of Maddalena and the wonderful Elvira of Susan Larson. But there was also an extraordinary portrayal by Keith Kibler of Leporello, a poor, bullied slob whose weakness for a buck or a well-turned ankle prevailed over decent instincts.

Robert Honeysucker was the cavernous-voiced Commendatore and the put-upon but fractious Masetto. Mary Lindsey sang Donna Anna with a voice of considerable weight and forcefulness, but incomplete technical control. Frank Hoffmeister sang elegantly as Don Ottavio, but Sellars wasn't able to help him flesh out this milk-toasty character. Nancy Berman was a sweet young thing as Zerlina, but she was vocally the weak link of the cast.

James Bolle conducted the original Prague version of the score which, among other things, is minus the arias "*Dalla sua pace*," and "*Mi tradi*." His musical realization would have made for an exceptional evening in the theater even without Sellars' staging. The performance was notable for its balance of passion and elegance of articulation, and for recitatives that were performed for meaning, not for speed. **MA**

The White Mountains Festival

Gerard Schwarz directs lively music in a splendid setting

Shirley Fleming

It is almost a foregone conclusion that whatever Gerard Schwarz touches will turn to musical gold. The success which the young trumpeter-turned-conductor has generated in his three best-known functions—as music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Y Chamber Orchestra, and the Waterloo Village Festival in New Jersey—arises from a very palpable combination of personal warmth, organizing ability, and above all lively musicianship, and it is a combination that can prove effective in a variety of settings.

Schwarz, thirty-two, has added a fourth job—a new setting—to the three which already bear his own particular imprint. This one is different from the rest and may prove more difficult to sustain. But if musical quality, diamond-sharp mountain air, luxurious and nostalgic accommodations, and the hovering presence of Mt. Washington have anything to do with it, the White Mountains Festival of the Arts at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, can make its mark as one of the attractive summer festivals in the East.

The Mt. Washington Hotel

Schwarz has been its director for two seasons now, but only this past summer did the eight-year-old festival take the decisive step of moving from Jefferson, New Hampshire into the majestic Mt. Washington Hotel, where grand corridors, wide verandahs, gleaming sun porches, and a football-field entrance lounge summon up remembrance of *Lodging in Style* for the rich and famous. The Mt. Washington Hotel is seventy-eight years old; it was the scene of the World Monetary Conference of 1944 and its bedrooms bear little



Schwarz: a combination of personal warmth and lively musicianship



Oliveira: the music-making was anything but casual



The Mt. Washington Hotel: amid the mountains, the music was engaging

brass plates on the doors with names of those who presumably slept happily there—Anthony Eden, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Dean Acheson and the like, along with some other familiar earth-shakers: Thomas A. Edison, Woodrow Wilson, Winston Churchill. It's a nice place to dream in, and to hear music in.

What sets the White Mountains Festival apart—and poses a challenge for its music director—is its isolation. There are few distractions in the neighborhood: if the music doesn't please, the guests can't decamp to the movies in town because there isn't any town—at least no closer than twenty-five mountain miles away. Around Mt. Washington Hotel there are woods and still more woods. Aspen is a metropolis by comparison. The daytime delights at Bretton Woods consist of golf, tennis, fishing, and hiking. For the rest, Schwarz and his audience make up a tight little island of mutual dependence, with all

the advantages and perils of such a situation.

Soloists & premieres

During my visit last August, the advantages were decidedly in the ascendance. Schwarz had brought into residence a chamber orchestra of some forty-odd players (over half of them from his Los Angeles Chamber Symphony), and lined up a roster of attractive soloists—violinist Elmar Oliveira, flutist Carol Wincenc (doubling as principal in the orchestra), pianists Ruth Laredo and Edward Battersby, saxophonist Harvey Pittel, harpist Heidi Lehwalder. The New York Philharmonic's principal flute, Julius Baker, could be found, in jogging shorts and track shoes, holding masterclasses on the big glassed-in porch and lunching with visiting members of the Tucson Flute Club on the grass terrace afterward; that night he donned black tie for his performance with the orchestra of a new

work by Hugh Aitken.

In the vast ground-floor rooms of the hotel guests came and went, from tennis court to swimming pool, while the orchestra rehearsed in the grand ballroom and Oliveira warmed up intently in one of the small sitting rooms nearby. Guests could look in on rehearsals if they chose, and in the afternoon sit in old-fashioned wicker chairs on the porch and watch the shadows lengthen on the slopes of Mt. Washington while the Olympic Brass Quintet played Purcell and Gabrieli.

The music-making

While the atmosphere was casual, the music-making wasn't. For the two or three orchestra concerts a week, Schwarz designed interesting and offbeat programs that included such oddities as Richard Strauss's Duet Concertino for Clarinet and Bassoon with String Orchestra and Harp, Gounod's *Petite Symphonie*, and



Wincenc: among the attractive young soloists taking part



Baker and flutist Soichi Menagishi, a Japanese colleague

a wonderfully exuberant Symphony in D by Cherubini. On non-orchestra nights, orchestra members presented chamber music programs of their own, with such visitors as Baker and Oliveira taking part. It was a good mix, and gave both players and audiences plenty of variety.

For the opening orchestra concert on August 8, Schwarz followed an ingenious plan of performing works derived by later composers from their predecessors—thus, a Bach Suite orchestrated by Mahler, a Mahler Minuet orchestrated by Britten (the second movement of the

Third Symphony), and a pair of premieres following the same conception: Aitken's specially commissioned *Rameau Remembered* for Flute and Chamber Orchestra, and Benjamin Lees's *Scarlatti Portfolio*, A Transformation for Orchestra of Seven Piano Sonatas.

The new works were entertaining in the best sense and with luck will make their way beyond the White Mountains onto a wider concert circuit. *Rameau Remembered*—drawn in large part from the opera *Castor and Pollux*, according to the composer—juxtaposed free, improvisationlike fantasy with near-verbatim quotation, giving the solo flute a wide range of expressive liberty. Soloist Baker made the most of it. *Scarlatti Portfolio* was written by Lees originally as a ballet (premiered by the San Francisco Ballet in 1979) and was played as an orchestral suite for the first time. It is bright and crisp, Scarlattian in rhythmic patterns and general flavor while considerably spiced-up by the presence of castanets, trumpets, and pungent, un-Scarlattian harmonies. Schwarz and the Festival Orchestra turned it out smartly.

The straight instrumental diet of the White Mountains Festival was varied from time to time by such events as the appearance of the Greenhouse Dance Ensemble, or the performance of Walton's *Facade* with Janet Bookspan as the speaker. One gala Saturday night featured a Viennese Ball with the orchestra and its conductor officiating.

The White Mountains may just be the right thing at the right time and place. Its isolation is splendid, its setting restful, its music consistently engaging. And for Gerard Schwarz, he says of himself: "As a conductor, I'm over the hump. I've done the Beethovens and the Brahmses and the Mahlers, and now I can try new things, music that is more out of the way." Without by any means neglecting familiar music, he is doing that at Bretton Woods, and it makes good listening. **MA**

American Wind Symphony Orchestra Competition

Specially commissioned concertos pose a challenge

Daniel Webster

Hot steel is a trademark of Pittsburgh, and it was on the hot steel of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra's floating concert hall, drawn up to the Allegheny River shore at Point State Park, that the finalists in the Symphony's first International Competition for Winds, Brass, and Percussion played their crucial final round. The event came just as the Midwest reached its summer melting point, and the finalists played while perspiration fell on reeds and dripped on mouthpieces.

It was a difficult finale in an innovative competition. Where most competitions evaluate players in standard repertory, the Wind Symphony, in an effort to identify talent and widen its repertory, required players to perform pieces specially commissioned for the event. Inevitably, the judges (Czech composer Ivana Loudova, conductor/trumpeter Gene Young of the University of Wisconsin, and I) leaned toward the best concertos, and found difficulty in recognizing a performer's best efforts when the music proved dreary. (Is a first-rate performance possible in second-rate music? The question plagues critics all the time.)

Commission results vary

The new concertos were commissioned by the Wind Symphony's founder-conductor Robert Boudreau

Is a first-rate performance possible in second-rate music?

with the prescient help of major corporations and foundations in Pittsburgh. The Wind Symphony's barge bristled with flags, but none more important than those reading "Dravo," "Koppers," "U.S. Steel," and "Sears." The commissions were dispersed to composers in Latin America, Europe, and the United States. The results varied, but despite their standings in the competition itself, all works had entered the Wind Symphony's repertory and had been played during the ensemble's summer season along the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongehela Rivers. It was an irony that one of the least effective of the concertos, Henk Badings' Concerto for Clarinet, was played nearly twenty times. But, as Boudreau said, "The player has to believe in his music."

The early auditioning process weeded out players on some instruments and apparently failed to find top-rung players on others: an odd situation, given the \$3,500 first prize and two other prizes of \$2,500 and \$1,500. For the semifinals, five performers remained to play concertos for flute, clarinet, oboe, trombone, and percussion. Each contestant played his concerto, then returned to perform a work with piano—which

gave the judges a perspective based on more standard repertory.

Eloquent percussion concerto

Only two judges remained for the finals, since Mrs. Loudova's own Fantasy Concerto for Percussion was one of the scores to be played. Twenty-six-year-old Steve Schick, a lecturer in percussion at the University of Iowa, performed the concerto, which used a kitchen-full of instruments—no timpani—in very musical ways. A clear choice for the first prize, Schick proved to have a gift for supple phrasing and nuance in music that was as eloquent as any violin concerto. Boudreau's ensembles took the work tightly in hand, and the bands of dense sounds which surrounded the percussion line were finely weighted and colored.

Second prize went to trombonist Don Lucas, faculty member at North Texas State University. His concerto, by the Polish-American Jerzy Sapieyevski, used a central solo trombone joined at times by two other trombones, a device which provided some richness in a fundamentally harsh score. Lucas played it resolutely. No third prize was awarded.

Through the busy weekend of competition performances and accompanying public concerts, the repertoire was almost entirely from the twentieth century. Does the audience like contemporary music? Boudreau was surprised by the thought.

"I don't think the question ever came up," he answered. **MA**

Daniel Webster is a music critic of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Contemporary Music at Indiana State

Annual festival generates vigorous opinions and good music

James Wierzbicki



ISU-AVC Photo

Composers Bargsten and Stucky with percussionist Don Morehead

It seems anomalous, but on a per capita basis, Terre Haute, Indiana in recent years has probably had more exposure to new music and the people who create it than most cities ten times its size.

Every year since 1967 Terre Haute—once a bustling railroad hub but lately reduced to a city of about 60,000 supported primarily by agriculture and light industry—has been the site of an impressive festival of contemporary music sponsored by Indiana State University. To date, eighty-four composers have accepted the university's invitation to visit the campus to supervise performances of their works by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, to teach classes, and to interact with students and townspeople alike in open forums. People don't turn out in droves for the multitude of events that make up the annual four-day festival, but those who do project an interest and an opinionated enthusiasm that's sometimes lacking even in the busiest musical centers. Terre Hautians have come to expect a lot from the compos-

ers who drop in on them each year; by and large, they get it.

Mailman's Symphony No. 2

Featured composer for the fourteenth annual Contemporary Music Festival (September 22-25) was Martin Mailman, a forty-eight-year-old professor of music at North Texas State University whose 1979 Symphony No. 2 concluded the wrap-up concert in the school's Tilson Music Hall. His younger colleagues, each of whom was invited to participate solely on the basis of a single orchestral score selected by the festival committee from almost a hundred submissions, were Joey Bargsten, twenty-two, a graduate student at the University of Iowa and a winner of one of this year's ASCAP Foundation grants for young composers; Maximo Flugelman, thirty-five, an Argentinian who's studied at the Manhattan School of Music; Steven Stucky, thirty-one, currently on the faculty of Cornell University and the author of an up-coming book on the music of Witold Lutoslawski; and Jordan Tang, thirty-two, director of orchestral activities at Southwest Missouri State University in

Springfield. Bargsten's *Sinfonische Stimmungen*, Flugelman's *Symphonic Variants* and Stucky's *Kenningar* (Symphony No. 4) all received their world premieres on the September 25 concert; Tang's Symphony No. 2, like Mailman's, had had only one performance prior to the festival.

Mailman's three-movement Symphony No. 2 was easily the best crafted of the lot. More the product of experience than experiment, the twenty-eight-minute piece stood out from the others as a shining example of effective orchestration, carefully plotted proportions, and skillful working out of rhythmic-melodic material. Its aggressive dissonance notwithstanding, it was an essentially conservative work that eloquently supported the allegiance to the twentieth-century musical mainstream voiced so frequently by Mailman during the festival's discussion sessions. Indeed, the symphony's nods to "modernism"—a tone cluster here and there, occasional *glissandi*, an isolated incident of knuckle-rapping on the violin backs—proved to be its weakest elements; whatever they had to say seemed completely beside the point when compared with the bold

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Tang with ISO pianist Dorothy Munger



Chairman Fluegel with Mailman

statements the composer made with his slow-motion lyricism and hyperactive *allegros*.

Tang and Stucky works

Tang's and Stucky's symphonies, though not as polished and perhaps less satisfying in the long run than Mailman's, were nevertheless the most adventurous offerings.

Orchestral tone color—vivid, glistening, and brilliant—was the key ingredient in the work Tang wrote on commission for the Utah Symphony. More often than not the coloring was applied to abstract gestures set against a stark background of silence or sustained string sound; taken out of context, these brightly hued splinters of the basic tone row would probably have little emotive power, but arranged as they were in sequences of ever-increasing intensity, they added up to something of startling force. Still, the nineteen-minute piece seemed unduly long; although it had all the apparent neatness of a classical sonata, the structure simply wasn't strong enough to support the tension that gives the music its dynamic energy. Near the end it hovers when it ought to soar, it repeats itself when it should be summarizing its message.

Some judicious trimming

might also be in order for Stucky's *Kenningar*. This single-movement, twenty-one-minute piece, described by the composer as "a kind of concerto for orchestra," uses to good advantage the idea of "controlled aleatorism" developed by Lutoslawski and others in the mid-1960s. Improvising on just a handful of notes carefully selected by the composer, various sections of the orchestra build up colossal piles of sound that regularly dissolve into single sustained pitches. The most jarring dissonances, always appearing at dramatically opportune times, are usually injected into the mix by only a few instruments. Pacing of the climaxes is for the most part effective, but several of the plays on pitch combinations are too leisurely (too self-indulgently long, perhaps) to focus the listener's attention on where the music is headed. Like Tang's symphony, Stucky's slows down and drags near the end, and the strength of what might otherwise be an awesomely quiet conclusion is severely diluted.

The pieces that represented Bargsten and Flugelmar would not be much helped by pruning or reshaping. While they demonstrate that their composers possess much in the way of melodic invention and or-

chestral technique, both the *Sinfonische Stimmungen* and the *Symphonic Variants* ultimately sound like the student works they are. They try to say too much in too short a span of time; they introduce a bounty of thematic ideas and then fail to develop a single one of them in a meaningful way.

Flugelmar's, Tang's and Bargsten's pieces were led by Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Exxon/Arts Endowment conductor Raymond Harvey; assistant conductor Kenneth Kiesler handled the Mailman and Stucky scores. Both Harvey and Kiesler are new to the orchestra's staff this season. They had no say in the selection of the music and, except for one reading session in Indianapolis before the festival, they were working from scratch in the five open rehearsals that preceded the September 25 concert. That they took to the scores as well as they did, in full view of the ISU students and an intrigued Terre Haute public, speaks well for their commitment to new music in general; their accomplishments on the night of the concert suggest that the ISU festival—designed to facilitate communication between composers, performers, and listeners—continues to be a success of which its sponsoring institution can well be proud. **MA**

“The Lighthouse”

World premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies' opera reveals a new stylistic synthesis

Peter Heyworth



Wilson-Johnson, Rippon, Mackie: the opera transcends mere excitement

Peter Maxwell Davies is one of an ever-increasing number of young composers (any composer under fifty today ranking as “young”), who find little outlet for their dramatic ambitions in the world of the traditional opera house. One reason for that is economic: a new production represents such a large investment that few opera houses outside Central Europe are prepared to chance their arm on any work composed in an idiom that could be described as advanced. But there is also a growing gulf between the combinations of music and drama that such composers have in mind and the resources of a massive, proscenium-arched theater.

Hence the hopes placed in what is vaguely described as “music theater,” by which I take to mean any sort of modestly scaled association of music and drama outside the framework of traditional opera. One or two exceptions apart, I cannot claim that the results so far achieved herald a new golden age of *dramma per musica*. But Peter Maxwell Davies' latest stage work, *The Lighthouse* (which, perhaps significantly, he describes as an opera), does rank as a viable piece of music theater.

In scale, *The Lighthouse*, which had its first performance at this year's Edinburgh Festival, stands midway between the series of small dramatic actions that Maxwell Davies has composed over the last fifteen years for his performing group, The Fires of

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London, and his single shot at a full-scale opera, *Taverner*, which was performed some ten years ago at Covent Garden. It calls for three solo men's voices, a twelve-man band, and a simple production, such as can be mounted on an improvised stage.

The historic event

The work is based on a true story. In 1900 a lighthouse off the Scottish coast was found to be unmanned. All was in shipshape condition, except that the lamp was out and the three keepers had disappeared. To this day the mystery has remained unsolved, and Maxwell Davies offers his own, highly subjective, account of what might have occurred.

The Lighthouse is divided into a prologue and a single act, which, with an interval, together last about an hour and three quarters. In the prologue three officers of a supply ship tell a court of enquiry what they found when they visited the deserted lighthouse. They do so partly by directly addressing the Court (whose questions are ingeniously depicted by a solo horn) and partly by acting out their approach to, and arrival on, the scene.

In the main act we go back in time and move into the lighthouse itself. Stormbound for weeks, its three keepers are in an overwrought condition and each of them in turn sings a song that reveals a secret that torments him. As a youth, the rough diamond, Blazes, has brutally robbed

and murdered an old woman and has passively allowed his father to be hanged for a crime he has committed. The poetic Sandy suddenly becomes aware that the object of his erotic imaginings is not a girl but a boy whom he had years ago consigned to oblivion. Arthur, the instigator of the drama, is a revivalist with visions of hellfire. He convinces his guilt-racked comrades that the devil is a living reality, who then in their imagination rises out of the swirling mists to claim them. Maddened with fear, they rush out to destroy the beast that lies in their own breasts, only to confront their rescuers, the officers of the supply ship, whom they are too crazed to distinguish from the devil and his agents. In self-defense the officers kill the keepers and then rig the evidence to cover all trace of what has occurred.

The Davies themes

Madness, guilt, and Anti-Christ are themes that have long haunted Maxwell Davies' Bosch-like imagination, and in *The Lighthouse* they return with all the power of fixations, which find their most direct expression in the “confessions” of the three keepers. These take the form of old-time songs, such as the composer has so often distorted and parodied in small pieces of music theater, like *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, *Miss Donniethorne's Maggot*, and other works.

Blazes' narration takes the form of a racy patter song, which was put



The northern subconscious surfaces, obsessed with drink, sex, and guilt

over with marvelous dash by Michael Rippon, accompanied by fiddle and banjo. Sandy (Neil Mackie) sings a maudlin Victorian ballad, suitably supported by cello and out-of-tune piano. Arthur's revivalist hymn (sung by David Wilson-Johnson, an outstanding young baritone of evident musicality and intelligence) calls for clarinet, brass, and tambourine. These three songs conjure up with sickening exactitude the northern subconscious, with its tormented obsessions with violence and drink, sex and sentiment, guilt and redemption.

In one crucial respect Maxwell Davies has here departed from his earlier and smaller-scaled music theater. Whereas he once pushed the human voice to its extremities to create a sense of desperation, in *The Light-house* he uses these devices with far more restraint and then only to make a specific dramatic point. That is a great advance, for they were in danger of lapsing into gimmickery.

A deeper dimension

What, however, lifts *The Light-house* far above works such as the "Mad Songs" is its more substantial musical content and hence deeper dramatic impact. Always a composer who seeks new syntheses between the disparate components that go to make up his complex idiom, Maxwell Davies has here succeeded in integrating the grotesque elements that predominate in many of the scores he wrote in the late Sixties and early

Seventies with the very different sort of music he has composed since he went to live some six years ago in the remote Orkney Islands, off the northern coast of Scotland.

That music is inspired by a sea and landscape which pervades his new opera. The sense of rock, cloud, and sea is omnipresent. There is, for instance, a magical moment of stillness when, on its passage to the lighthouse, the supply ship emerges out of a storm into calm waters. Similarly, the mists that envelop the lighthouse carry an ominous sense of mystery. The vividness with which this stark background is evoked does much to give the work an impact that goes beyond mere excitement.

The work received an enthusiastic ovation at the end of both the performances I saw in Edinburgh. There are, however, details about which I have reservations. A scene in which off-stage "voices of the cards" are heard while two of the keepers play crib is a corny device that serves little dramatic purpose. The principal act is rather slow to take fire, partly because so much of its earlier part is devoted to the three narrations. As a result, the prologue, though more subdued in mood, is musically more strongly sustained. The production at Edinburgh also left much to be desired. Yet *The Light-house* remains a gripping and original work, and Richard Dufallo drew impressively taut playing from The Fires of London.

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Books

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thor's omnivorous intellect and his ability to synthesize and to think creatively. The clarity, organization, and cogency of the musical examples are noteworthy (there must be almost as much space devoted to musical examples as to text). Indeed, with the number and complexity of the musical examples, many of which are orchestral scores covering several pages, what is really needed is a cassette of those examples in performance. The book's impact would gain immeasurably.

Central to Rosen's approach—what sets it apart from a good deal of academic writing—is the fact that the author himself is a pianist, and a very good one. He sees music both as an abstract art and as a medium of performance, and this is crucial to his discussion. An understanding of sonata form must go beyond the specifics of exposition, development, and recapitulation to a comprehension of the expressive powers of those concepts. Rosen is always aware of the music *as sounded*, and this adds to the weight of his arguments.

Not surprisingly, his focus is on the harmonic implications. Rosen sees the move from tonic to dominant as a move from consonance to dissonance, with the resulting tensions resolved by the return to the tonic. He is undoubtedly correct in eighteenth-century terms. My question is: to what extent do our ears, accustomed to a far greater intensity of dissonance, now hear the move to the dominant as merely a differing kind of consonance, rather than as dissonance? We certainly don't hear music with eighteenth-century ears, though there is undoubtedly a residuum of effect. The question is even more applicable to the nineteenth century, when orchestral color and texture begin to predominate to a far greater extent than in the eighteenth.

Rosen's attention, however, is rightly directed at the eighteenth century, which means that the pivotal

figure of Beethoven is viewed in his eighteenth-century guise as the culmination of the "classical" period rather than as the revolutionary romantic so dear to the nineteenth century. (By the way, one of the many felicities of *Sonata Forms* is the elucidation of Haydn's wit in his music: this facet of Haydn's genius has seldom been so well delineated.)

Rosen must follow up this study with another on the nineteenth-century codification of the forms, for the last chapters here, on Schubert and Schumann, touch on those questions but do not discuss them with the depth and range accorded to the earlier history. Yet anyone genuinely interested in music can be grateful for what Charles Rosen has given us. His light illumines everywhere. P.J.S.

The Lioness and the Little One: The Liaison of George Sand and Frédéric Chopin

by William G. Atwood

Columbia University Press,
316 pages, \$16.95.

This well-written book is a thoroughly enjoyable recounting of the lives of two artists who have become linked in romantic fantasy. Atwood has the good sense not to be beguiled by the temptations of the subject, so that the book is both grounded in fact and yet compelling in its delineation of the characters of Sand and Chopin and the many volatile lives that surrounded them. His appreciations of the Sand family, of such luminaries as Liszt and his mistress, Marie d'Agoult, carry with them the stamp of authority, and if Atwood does not discuss either the music of Chopin or the literary qualities of Sand, he does give a vivid picture of their lives and their turbulent times. P.J.S.

Great Pianists Speak for Themselves

by Elyse Mach

Dodd, Mead, 204 pages, \$9.95.

Piano-chat by, among others, Arrau, Ashkenazy, de Larrocha, Gould, Horowitz, and Tureck. MA

Lukas Foss

Continued from page 6

degree than many of his colleagues, Foss would seem to gratify a larger portion of society's need than the majority of his contemporaries. Is this because he has written in a variety of styles, from tonal to aleatoric, geared to the changing spirit of the times? "I do not write in a 'variety of styles.' There is a logical continuity from my early to more recent works. You don't change styles like you change a shirt. Some composers have one dream and follow it through their life's work. Others, and I am in this category, are driven by an endless curiosity. One problem opens up a little window to the next. Styles should not be considered as technique, but as personality. People have trouble with this; they love to label. It has something to do with that same facile purism I spoke of. If we didn't label, we might discover that we know next to nothing."

As inventive and stimulating as Foss is as a composer, this year is still the year of Foss the conductor, of the two orchestras and the modern music series. The capacity to lead is indeed a special gift, something to be nurtured and developed. "The danger for a young person is always that he won't develop. I know conductors who were very good at the age of twenty, and are still very good at the age of fifty. I made mistakes, of course, which I hope never to make again, but I have learned what it means to be a leader. But leadership is one of those terrible words, like creativity. The great creative minds I've known never say 'I'm creating.' They say 'I'm working.' And great leaders never say 'I'm leading.' The people who talk about leadership and creation—forget it!" As a leader and a creator, Lukas Foss knows whereof he speaks. It seems particularly appropriate that a man who has spent his life "putting a searchlight on the notes" should now find that he himself is so prominently in the spotlight. One of the most productive musical figures active today deserves no less. MA

Artist Life

Continued from page 9

It was the end of September when we met Michael Gielen. He had only an hour free, after lunch, between morning and afternoon appointments. And later there was a reception at the University Club of New York, given by David J. Joseph, president of the Cincinnati Symphony, and Jack Romann, concert manager of the Baldwin Piano Company. The party was to mark the conductor's inauguration as new musical director of the Cincinnati Symphony. After the festivities he was flying to Cincinnati; there was a rehearsal the next morning for the upcoming concert: a program combining the Dance of the Golden Calf from Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* with two Bach cantatas

When Gielen came in he looked a little like the actor Werner Klemperer, that special alive look of the German, or German-Jewish, intellectual. He has a small, graying, pointed beard, restless, expressive hands, and a direct, open manner. His eyes, behind glasses, are keen and bright. He asked if he might take off his coat. Autumn had officially begun but it was still hot summer weather. He wore an open shirt and light blue cotton slacks. Later, formally dressed for the reception, his informality of approach remained. He is a most articulate person, speaking almost perfect and amazingly precise English. He is at ease in six languages including, of course, his native German and the Spanish of Argentina, where he was brought up.

A man of international outlook and training, Michael Gielen is neither a musical nor a social snob, refuting a recent *Saturday Review* article which claims that the preference for European over American conductors to head American orchestras "includes an unmistakably snobbish element." If there was early resistance to Gielen's appointment it was not because he was German, locally unknown, and rumored to be an "ultra-



Sandy Underwood

Gielen: keine Angst

modernist," but because he was the first to take over the post of the lamented, gifted, and charismatic Tommy Schippers. But he has survived the first suspicions, has won over the orchestra, and is arousing public interest and support. Until 1982-83, he shares the Cincinnati assignment with Frankfurt, where he is the opera's *Generalmusikdirektor*.

For a conductor, Michael Gielen is in mid-career. That is, at fifty-three, his activities have covered most of Europe, various American orchestras including the New York Philharmonic with which he made his debut here (*The New York Times*: "One of the pleasantest surprises of the season"), major festivals and guest appearances from South America to Australia. Before Frankfurt he was chief conductor of the Stockholm Opera and then music director of the Belgian State National Orchestra. At present he is also principal guest conductor of the BBC Symphony in London.

He seemed destined for what he does. He was born July 20, 1927, in Dresden. His father was an actor and stage and opera director. His mother was an actress. His uncle was the pianist, composer, and Schoenberg champion Eduard Steuermann; his wife is a former opera singer. He was brought up in Buenos Aires, where his father, escaping the Nazis, had emigrated. He began his musical life

there, first as pianist, then as composer and as coach and accompanist at the Teatro Colon, learning his operatic *métier* from such masters as Furtwängler, Fritz Busch, Böhm and Kleiber, from such great singers as Flagstad. "I was fortunate. In Germany others were being destroyed. Buenos Aires was a good place to be. I attended school there and the university. The government policy then was very liberal. There were thousands of refugees. Just as Thomas Mann and Schoenberg and Bruno Walter went to Hollywood during that time, many European intellectuals and artists came to Argentina."

I had read an old *New York Times* clipping in which he had discussed his conductor-versus-composer dilemma in an historical context. "The great era that began with the Renaissance and centered on man as the creator ended with World War II. Auschwitz finished this. Now a disenchanted generation lives on residues of the great tradition looking for new expression. Contemporary composers are swept up by a new culture that is based more on collective effort. Like many scientists we work in teams, letting performers share in the creative effort." He was then—this was eight years ago—writing a work entitled *Einige Schwierigkeiten bei der Überwindung der Angst* which means *Some Problems in Conquering Anxiety*. We asked if he had ever finished this strange-titled work. Looking anything but anxiety-ridden, he nodded.

"You know the word *Mitstimmung*? Cooperation—the word much used in Germany today in connection with labor and management. It can also be used for a relationship between orchestral musicians and conductors and composers—a relationship often frustrating to the musician. One way to close this gap is through chance music. And so I wrote this as a model of cooperation. Not a piece—a model. Different events for different parts of the orchestra, following a general idea. There were rules. The musician had three choices: to do what was ordered by the text, to do

the contrary, to abstain. The first performance was on the Saarbrücken Radio. But since the average musician has no practice in the use of liberty the result was some fifty minutes of blasting-away, an outpouring of immense protest. And so I did it again, at the Musica Viva series in Munich, but this time with no freedom to abstain or obstruct. I rehearsed the various groups and told them how to illustrate sections." And how did it come out this time? "Wild. Certain results traditional, others nontraditional." And what did you learn from this musical "chance" behavior"? "Nothing new." He laughed. "That music basically has something to do with order. Anarchy doesn't go with it. Improvisation can be done by a few people but it is not for big groups, not for the symphony orchestra, which is an historic institution, evolved over the years, a museum today. And so, what next?"

We asked about orchestras. Were musicians here different from those abroad? "Yes, definitely. I feel that orchestra musicians in America have a stronger sense of personal responsibility, because they live largely on private money. The high professionalism of American orchestras is due to the pressure of the individuals who give money to support the or-

chestras and the pressure of the many excellent musicians who want to join these orchestras. My own opera house is one hundred percent subsidized. We need only earn ticket sales up to ten percent of that amount. There is never the sense of imminent catastrophe."

We turned to the subject of conducting. How should a young conductor start? Traditionally, as he did? "Yes, it is a sound education, beginning as a *répétiteur*. You learn repertoire, flexibility. You learn from the singers, the conductors, from your superiors. After opera the concert experience is much easier."

At this stage in his career, opera is only of interest to Michael Gielen "if I can do it as I do it in Frankfurt, as music-theater. By music-theater I mean the importance of the producer as counterpoint to the original text, as a means of enlarging the vision, to relate the vision to the concepts of today." Every opera, he said, contains three periods: "The moment when it is written, the moment where the plot is placed in history, the moment in which it is received by the audience. I look for a stylistic combination of these things, a new dimension, a fusion which will produce a new result. In Frankfurt, working with the producer Hans Neuenfels, I think I have succeeded with Schreker's *The Stigmatized* (transposed to Freud's time) and with Busoni's *Doktor Faust*."

Michael Gielen is writing "a little book" for Peters Editions in Frankfurt on programming and tempos—"two things about which I often differ from my colleagues."

His ideal of programming: "One piece next to another so that the first will throw light on the second and vice versa, in such a way that you will hear both works in a new way. For instance, Beethoven and Mozart, or Beethoven and Schoenberg? It makes all the difference. I choose Beethoven and Schoenberg, of course, and Beethoven will be shown to be the revolutionary and Schoenberg the conservative. Don't forget, in his day Beethoven was an iconoclast.

When one conducts Beethoven it should be possible to discern the presence of Haydn from the past, mingling with the spirit of Mahler from the future."

He spoke of the Ninth Symphony. "It is accepted as a masterpiece. No doubt of that. It is played like the National Anthem. But the work is much more than that." He described how he once programmed it, to make his point. "I divided the program in two parts. In the first I played the Adagio from the Ninth and, without a break, lead into Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*, after the last note of which we went straight into the solo 'O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!', ending with the two chords. Intermission. For the second half of the program we played the Ninth in its entirety. And when the Finale began you heard it as 'a survivor from Warsaw'—it went directly to the heart. It also showed where German 'idealism' led—the dialectic of enlightenment where nineteenth-century liberalism led to World War II and the Nazis, and can not be separated from German culture."

As to "tempos," the conductor says he differs from others mostly in the case of Beethoven. "The current trend of interpretation has gone far from what Beethoven intended. We have Beethoven's metronome markings and we must try to follow what he wanted. That usually means to play faster than is the general tendency. To play the music as indicated gives it unheard of aggression!" But why don't conductors try to follow Beethoven's markings? "Because people shun the aggressive truth of Beethoven. They prefer to sentimentalize, to play a perpetual Song of Joy."

An intellectually and musically exciting conductor, Cincinnati will enjoy Michael Gielen. As for the Maestro, he enjoys Cincinnati. He enjoys his orchestra, the educated musical public, the city itself. "The food is good. Good cigars are smoked. It is a place where good music can be made." **MA**

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Continued from page 96
here are credited to Nick Lowe/Rockpile. *Teacher Teacher*, a succinct, catchy Everly Brothers-ish number, takes the teacher's crush syndrome onto pure pop turf. *Heart and Now and Always* resonate with a wholesome charm, and *When I Write the Book*—with its swirling organ chords—is torn straight from the pages of the Brinsley Schwarz band's halcyon days.

Of the finds unearthed by these four pop archaeologists, most impressive are Joe Tex's *If Sugar Was as Sweet as You* and Kip Anderson's paen to gluttony, *A Knife and a Fork*. A heretofore unheard Squeeze song, *Wrong Again (Let's Face It)*, is rampant with that band's characteristically sly verve. Also included in the package is an EP of Nick and Dave doing their utmost to sound like Don and Phil on four classic Everly Brothers tunes.

Lowe's bass is driving but never domineering, Williams' drumming is spry and to-the-point, and Bremner's vocals are one of the LP's most pleasant surprises. With its three-part harmonies, acoustic guitar rhythms, and electric guitar leads and fills, "Seconds of Pleasure" may sound like vintage rock & roll. But it also sounds like the work of a contemporary foursome whose own personalities have finally taken control.

Talking Heads: Remain in Light

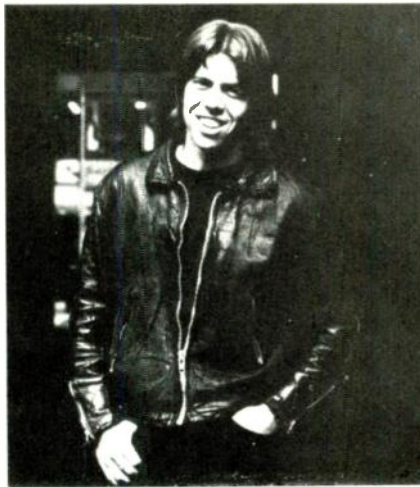
Brian Eno, producer

Sire SRK 6095

by Crispin Cioe

More art music than art rock, "Remain in Light" features the most stunning and total appropriation of Third World musical sources of any pop album in recent memory. The basis for its songs is contemporary African popular music, especially that of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti. This brilliant, prolific Nigerian's groove-oriented compositions combine traditional African polyrhythms with choppy, James Brown-ish horn and guitar parts.

Far from merely copping such hip African roots, Talking Heads has ingeniously combined the tapestrylike rhythm patterns with a variety of ultramodern instrumentation and topped it with composer/guitarist David Byrne's edgy, space-age-Kafka sensibility. Producer and cocreator Brian Eno must also be cited for the exceptionally deep, clear aural scenarios he provides: this band has never sounded better on wax. On *Born under Punches*, for instance, Adrian Belw's incredible guitar solo sounds like a



Thorogood: American hot wire

telephone dial tone run amok, providing an incisive counterpart to the claustrophobic and paranoid chorus: "All I want is to breathe/Won't you breathe with me?/ Find a little space. . . ."

But for all the futuristic surrealism of Byrne's lyrics, there is also a heartfelt and direct humanism in the catchy melodic hooks and choruses that permeate "Remain in Light." This is particularly apparent on the beautifully haunting *Once in a Lifetime*. Not since the early Velvet Underground has an American band forged such an artful combination of breathtaking aesthetic exploration with straightforward pop culture awareness.

More George Thorogood and the Destroyers

Recorded by John Nagy

Rounder 3045

by Mitchell Cohen

When George Thorogood takes on a rocking number like *House of Blue Lights*, he goes on a breathless rip; the joint jumps, the notes fly from his guitar, and what his voice lacks in range and control is made up for in all-American hot-wired enthusiasm. At those times, he's the Personality Kid of the new white blues revisionists, a brethren that includes such outfits as the Fabulous Thunderbirds, Paul Jones's Blues Band, and the Night-hawks. For his third Rounder album (not including the six-year-old tapes unearthed and issued by MCA a year ago), Thorogood has added a honking sax in the person of Hank Carter. But he has not tampered significantly with the formula that made "Move It on Over," his last effort, a gold album: brash spunk-blues, dirty slide guitar, raw production, and compositions

from the Mt. Rushmore of bluesmen (Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Elmore James, Willie Dixon). He takes the braggadocio of Dixon's *I'm Wanted* and the leering descriptiveness of *Tip on In* and adds his own swaggering touch.

The closer Thorogood gets to gut-level basic blues, on songs like *One Way Ticket* and *Goodbye Baby*, the more he sacrifices the qualities that set him apart. He's a whip on the slide, but what his blues owe to Hank Williams and Chuck Berry is more fun, and shows more potential, than his attempts to recreate the sound of Elmore James or Hound Dog Taylor. The hippest choice of material on "More" is a version of *Night Time*, which out-freneticizes the original by the Strangeloves, and his own *Kids from Philly*. This last, an instrumental, has a rockin'-roots toughness that marks Carter as a yakety-saxman in the King Curtis mode. And as George and the Destroyers chug to the railroad beat of Carl Perkins' *Restless*, it's clear that for Thorogood, as for such forebearers as the Stones (who also started out covering Slim Harpo and Willie Dixon tunes), the merger of rockabilly and blues is the road worth taking.

Stevie Wonder: Hotter than July

Stevie Wonder, producer

Tamla T8 373MI

by Sam Sutherland

Stevie Wonder's first single-disc album in over half a decade seems practically modest compared to the wide-ranging, extended collections he has concentrated on for much of the '70s. But what's modest for Wonder is still far richer and more accomplished than most American pop in recent years, and "Hotter than July" is a dazzling earful.

In contrast to the pop, soul, and jazz odyssey of 1976's "Songs in the Key of Life," the new set is forcefully upbeat. It also uses a more coherent arranging style, one that alludes to the poles of the earlier work while bridging them neatly (often within a single song). *Did I Hear You Say You Love Me* with its bubbling dance groove beneath emphatic horn choruses, neatly showcases the tie between Wonder's sure-footed rhythmic instincts and his increasingly assured gifts as an arranger.

Even the ballads tend toward brisker medium tempos, using vocal harmonies and instrumental textures to convey their gentleness. *All I Do* rides on a lambent bed of keyboards and synthe-



Gerry Mulligan circa 1961

burst. Nonetheless, the Basie band gives him superb support, punching out riffs and building energy into his songs. And the Count's five solos with his rhythm section are marvellous. All are variants of a piano style that seems to be little more than a dance on a dime.

Judy Holliday and Gerry Mulligan: Holliday with Mulligan

Mixed by Gerry Mulligan & Hugh Fordin
DRG SL 5191 (DRG Records,
200 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019)
by John S. Wilson

This collaboration between Gerry Mulligan and Judy Holliday is more a curiosity than a success. It was recorded in 1961 in Hollywood, when Holliday was making the film version of *Bells Are Ringing*. (She died in 1963.) Though she was primarily an actress and comedienne, and secondarily a singer, during her few years with Mulligan she was also a songwriter, and four Holliday-Mulligan tunes are on this disc.

What's the Rush?, which opens the LP, is a lazy, laidback song that Alec Wilder might have written. Holliday sings it in a relaxed fashion with interesting shading and phrasing. As she slides up toward the top of her notes, her style is reminiscent of Mildred Bailey. But both her songs and singing go downhill from here. Though she had sung in *Bells Are Ringing* and in her early years with the Revuers, her material had been tailored for her limitations.

So when she gets into the standards on this disc—Irving Berlin's *Lazy and Supper Time*, Harold Arlen's *I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues*—her warm but thin voice simply cannot sustain.

Mulligan does everything he can for her with lovely, supportive arrangements (by Ralph Burns, Bill Finegan, Al Cohn, Bob Brookmeyer, and Mulligan) played by his brilliant Concert Jazz Band. And he backs her on baritone saxophone with the loving care that Lester Young backed Billie Holiday. In some cases, his solos succeed in lifting the tunes and the singer into a swinging context.

Pat Metheny: 80/81

Manfred Eicher, producer
ECM 2-1180 (two discs)
by Don Heckman

My theory that guitarist Pat Metheny's proper arena of performance is pop music rather than jazz has been dealt a serious blow by this new two-record set. That he is a fine technician has never been in doubt, but his earlier albums defined a gifted, if somewhat superficial artist who seemed more concerned with accessibility than with jazz adventurousness. "80/81" doesn't take much edge off the glossiness of his playing—I still find it a bit too glib—but it does tell us that Metheny intends to be more than a newwave Al Di Meola.

His wisest decision this time around was the choice of personnel, which represents a clean slice through a cross section of the last decade of jazz styles: Dewey Redman and Mike Brecker on tenor saxophones, Jack DeJohnette on drums, and Charlie Haden on bass. Producer Manfred Eicher stretched the session into a double record, allowing Metheny to range from extended, virtually free jazz improvising (on *1st Folk Song*) to more traditional improvising (on Sides 2 and 3) to laid-back, deeply interior probing (on Side 3).

What results is an always fascinating, often provocative performance from everyone involved. Brecker's marvelous swooping, soaring improvisation on *1st Folk Song* is one of his finest recorded moments. He is equally at the top of his form on *Every Day (I Thank You)*, a Metheny piece that fulfills the obligatory ECM demand for a floating, ethereal, Coltrane-updated ballad. Redman sounds strangely traditional, which is not necessarily bad. He is lively and articulate on Metheny's *80/81* and on the wonderful two tenor and guitar, interval-swallowing *Pretty Scat*.

Continued on page 105

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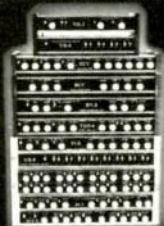
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Stone's Throw: Shopoff, Stone, Severtson

Continued from page 101
 tered. As always, DeJohnette is a rock throughout, and Haden is a better time-keeper than soloist. But that's okay, too. Metheny's soloing is more impressive than I would have expected. He has the willingness, rare these days, to vary his tone and attack from piece to piece, and he doesn't try to prove his youthful machismo by turning on high-decibel rock energy simply for the sake of it. But he also has a tendency to noodle on aimlessly, to play disconnected phrases without any sense of an overall, coherent whole. It may sound as though I'm asking for a lot from a young jazz improviser. But "80/81" clearly proves that Metheny is already a masterful enough player to do more than string hip licks together.

Stone's Throw: Suppressed Desire
 Stone's Throw, producer
 Sierra Briar SRS 8709
 (Sierra/Briar Records,
 P.O. Box 5853, Pasadena, Ca. 91107)
 by John S. Wilson

Stone's Throw is a quartet from San Diego whose material ranges from the jazz and pop of the '20s to the rhythm and blues of the '50s, with side excursions into bluegrass and radio commercials. The results are provocative, surprising, delightful, and exasperating. Key figure Molly Stone, a refugee from country music and bluegrass, sings and plays flute, tenor saxophone, and bass. The secondary performer is Phil Shopoff, a cor-

netist, singer, guitarist, and bassist with a rock background. They are supported by pianist Bryan Finkelstein and violinist Paul Severtson, who steps into the spotlight with his own rip-'em-up treatment of *Orange Blossom Special*.

Stone's Throw is at its best in its ensemble vocal work. It recreates the Boswell Sisters' sound and attack on *Everybody Loves My Baby* and the Rhythm Boys' breaks, asides, and scat singing on *My Suppressed Desire*. At the other end of the scale, it recaptures the '50s r&b of the Drifters and the Chords on *Money Honey* and *Sh'Boom*. A male vocalist, presumably Shopoff, has a blithe way with novelty songs, particularly *Wacky Dust*. Stone's solos are inconsistent: On *Stormy Weather* she shows a strong, secure voice, but on *I Cried for You* and the '40s commercial *Chiquita Banana*, her singing is uncertain (and, on the latter, upstaged by her own sparkling flute solo).

Both she and Shopoff overextend themselves instrumentally. Her flute playing is effective but her work on tenor saxophone has a stiff, undeveloped quality that sounds amateurish. Shopoff's cornet has moments of clarity and crispness that are balanced by passages of fumbling mumbles. The real instrumental substance come from Finkelstein and Severtson. Stone's Throw has shown great imagination in digging up material from the fringes of jazz, pop, blues, and r&b. And its ensemble singing is first-rate. It is unfortunate that it dilutes its efforts with second-rate instrumental work.

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Sutherland

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mon is closer to pop heartlands, though, and even constrained by the script's needs and the less adventurous instrumentation of Stuff, this is pop unafraid to show its roots or its intelligence.

The year's conservatism is not necessarily a regression, even if there are symptoms of stagnation in certain rock and pop quarters. For black music, the decline of disco led to a renaissance in classic soul audible in both r&b and white pop genres. And despite the apparent and implicit racist bent of mass market radio (excepting a few canny black urban stations that overturned ratings by crossing color lines), Afro-American root styles from avant-garde jazz to Chicago blues fared better than in the past. Artists as diverse as Pat Metheny and Elvis Costello tapped that spectrum in varying degrees to achieve gratifying new twists to their work.

The year of the soundtrack, 1980 produced film music that was magical (Cooder's *The Long Riders*), mercenary (*Roadie*, *Fame*, and a score of others), and in-between (*Urban Cowboy*).

And while the trade itself continued foraging for the Next Big Thing in rock, both demographics and media trends showed a swing toward other styles, arguing that as the country grows up, maybe the music will have to. Even the best new rock thus stepped away from self-consciousness and showed new glints of maturity. In the hands of masters like Springsteen, there was evidence that rock itself could be adult.

Heckman

Continued from page 91

all to the good. I've also been impressed by the increased visibility and growing abilities of female jazz artists such as Joanne Brackeen, Jessica Williams, Sheila Jordan, Lin McPhillips, Judy Roberts, and a remarkable big jazz group called Maiden Voyage. On the negative side, I'm concerned that so many gifted young black musicians are still opting for blues/rock or disco/jazz rather than jazz. The commercial morass that has engulfed such natural jazz leaders as Herbie Hancock, George Benson, and Stanley Clarke, among others, entices them, and I can understand their reasons, commercial and otherwise. But I also see the misuse and consequent drying up of a large wellspring of creativity. Finally, it's worth noting that

fusion jazz wasn't any more interesting in 1980 than it was in 1979.

Rea

Continued from page 89

Keith Sykes: I'm Not Strange I'm Just like You (Backstreet)

Keith Sykes's LP heralds another significant return to rock's innocent days. Sykes—who came out of the Greenwich Village folk scene of the late '60s with two Vanguard records—writes simple, unaffected, utterly infectious tunes. They're bluesy, country-ish rockers that lope along with a sense of good times. Again, Buddy Holly and the Everly Brothers spring to mind, but unlike the slew of neo-rockabillys (Billy Burnette, the Kingbees, the Blasters), Sykes isn't mimicking or reliving the old glory days. He's just doing what he knows best.

In their respective ways, artists like Burnett, Crowell, Hiatt, and Sykes have opted for the simpler lines of rock & roll's old design. The whole rockabilly revival, from Queen to Campi, is another indication that a lot of music is going to be leaner, closer to the bone. Emmylou Harris' mellifluous, pure "Roses in the Snow" bluegrass album signals another kind of return to simplicity, as do the folk/rock strains of Robin Lane & the Chartbusters' resounding debut.

On the other hand, the neo-psychedelic and electrorock stuff going on here and in England points in another direction. Of all the bands to emerge from the paisley-around-the-edges movement, Liverpool's dreadfully monikered Echo & the Bunnymen show the most promise: "Crocodiles" (Korova/WEA import) assaults the listener with its intense, moody brew of Doors-like dynamics, demented images, and strong, haunting melodies.

The futuristic synthesizer work of Gary Numan, Ultravox, et al., will presumably continue on its cold, proficient path. Personally, I prefer something with real life blood, à la Bruce Woolley's poppish "Bruce Woolley & the Camera Club" or Robert Palmer's single *Johnny and Mary*.

A big disappointment this year is Talking Heads' "Remain in Light." While it's undeniably charged-up with hypnotic Afro rhythms and David Byrne's and Brian Eno's incessant chanting, a lot that was great about the Heads—Byrne's twisted, intense ruminations on trying to perceive a world out there—has been supplanted by these, these . . . rhythms. It's intriguing, but, ultimately, innervating.

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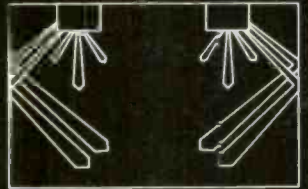
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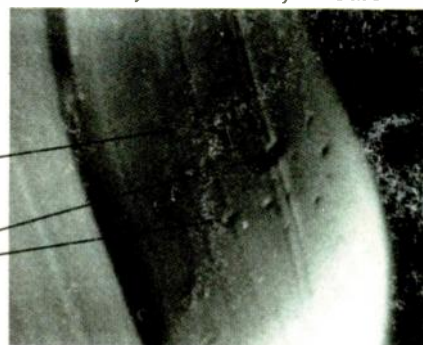
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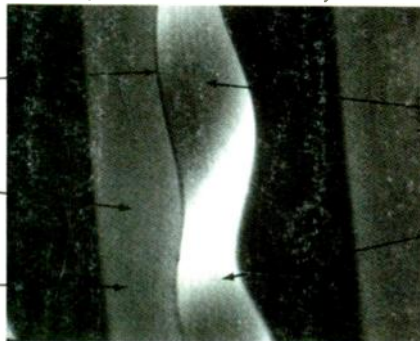
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