Our Critics Pick the TOP RECORDS OF 1960

The Fight For OPERA IN ENGLISH

How to Choose CHILDREN'S RECORDS
"REK-O-KUT"— the safest word you can say to your dealer

For sixteen years, Rek-O-Kut has been synonymous with quality and integrity in the design of turntables. As other brands have risen, fallen and even completely disappeared, Rek-O-Kut has won consistent acclaim as the overwhelming choice in its field. In performance ratings and engineering contributions to the art of turntable design, Rek-O-Kut has compiled a record unchallenged by any other turntable producer. Now, this tradition is again emphasized by the introduction of the magnificent new N-34H StereoTable... a professional quality two-speed (33 1/2 and 45 rpm) turntable. Quiet power is furnished by a Rek-O-Kut hysteresis synchronous motor and an efficient new belt-drive system. Speeds can be changed even while the table is rotating, merely by pressing a lever.

The N-34H is a symphony of crisp, clean lines accentuated by the unusual deck design. Mated with the new tapered base, the N-34H becomes one of the proudest and most beautiful components ever to grace a home music system. Insist on seeing it at your dealer's.


A NEW DIMENSION IN TURNTABLES—12 5/8" x 19"—DESIGNED TO FIT NARROW CABINETS AND BOOKSHELVES!

**SPECIFICATIONS:**
- Noise Level: -53db below average recording level
- Wow and Flutter: 0.15%
- Drive: Nylon, neoprene-impregnated endless belt. 2-Speeds, 33 1/2 and 45 rpm.
- Simple lever-action changes speeds.

**NOTE:** COMING SOON... ANOTHER GREAT DEVELOPMENT... Rek-O-Kut AUTO-POISE—makes any Rek-O-Kut tonearm you buy now—fully automatic!

REK-O-KUT STEREOTABLES

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Rek-O-Kut Company, Inc., Dept. HF 12
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Please send me complete details on the new N-34H STEREOTABLE:

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Address __________________________________________

City ___________________ Zone ____________

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Within each Electro-Voice system, every component is engineered to complement perfectly the others with which it is used. Some of the outstanding features you'll be receiving are illustrated in the cutaway view of the Esquire 200 featured above: (1) Substantial magnetic circuits for maximum sensitivity, power handling capacity, and uniformity of response. (2) High compliance viscous damped cloth suspension for smooth response and low resonant frequency. (3) Edgewise-wound voice coil for most effective use of available magnetic energy. (4) Die-cast frames for greatest reliability of performance. (5) True electrical crossover, at exceptionally low frequency of 200 cycles, to minimize all forms of distortion associated with the use of woofers covering the midrange. (6) Midrange speaker in a totally isolated cavity for outstandingly uniform response throughout the range over which it is employed. (7) Sonophage® throat structure and integral diffraction horn to give virtually unequalled high frequency response range, with excellent coverage of the whole listening area. (8) Two level controls which permit exact adjustment of response characteristics to personal taste and individual acoustic environments.

A Variety of Prices and Performance

The Esquire 200—Now the value-packed Esquire is available in three different forms... the handsome Esquire 200, the economical unfinished Esquire 200 Utility and the new Esquire 200 Kit. Each is a full three-way system with a 12" woofer, 8" cone-type mid-range speaker and E-V Super Sonax very-high-frequency driver. Esquire 200—14" high x 25" wide x 13½" deep. Hand-rubbed Walnut, Mahogany or Limed Oak...$133.00. Esquire 200 Unfinished Fir Utility—14" high x 23½" wide x 12" deep...$107.50. Esquire 200 in easy-to-assemble Kit form—14" high x 23½" wide x 12" deep...$95.00.

The Regal 300—A premium-quality, three-way system utilizing the finest quality components to assure the best sound possible in a small-sized system. Deluxe 12" woofer, a Deluxe 8" cone-type midrange speaker, and a compression-type, diffraction horn-loaded very-high-frequency driver. 14" high x 25" wide x 13½" deep. Walnut, mahogany, or limed oak...$179.00. Unfinished fir...$149.00. In Easy-to-assemble Kit Form...$125.00.

Consumer Products Division
Dept. 12 F., Electro-Voice, Inc., Buchanan, Michigan
During this past season Wharfedale, the name most highly regarded by music lovers and technicians in the field of high fidelity speakers, introduced the Wharfedale 60.

The Wharfedale 60 was the first shelf-sized speaker to employ the exclusive sand-filled principle which achieves rich, non-strident high notes and glowing bass without electronic, mechanical or acoustical tone coloration or false resonance.

The Wharfedale 60 was the first compact speaker system truly to meet the uncompromising standard of high fidelity performance which identifies all Wharfedale speakers.

The W60, unmatched in its field for quality of sound, has won amazing acceptance almost overnight. This success, in great measure, has been spurred by the unprecedented endorsement of qualified high fidelity dealers, everywhere.

But, above all, this adds to our pride and pleasure... in the sweeping triumph of the W60, 74% of the new owners who returned the cards which register the Wharfedale guarantee, said that they had purchased their W60 upon the enthusiastic recommendation of a friend who had experience and knowledge of fine audio equipment.

Now, in addition to the W60, Wharfedale brings you two other achromatic speaker systems, the W50 and the W70.

In every one of the achromatic systems, the speakers and the superb, handsome cabinet perform truly as a single unit. The reproduction is a perfect image of the music as it was recorded... and, certainly as you wish to hear it.

Today, with the advent of the new Wharfedale Achromatic Speaker Systems, we have taken a giant step toward the goal of the perfect reproduction of the sound of music.

May we suggest that you ask your dealer to demonstrate their remarkable qualities.
December 1960

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Number 6

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Cover: Leaf from a XIV century Florentine choir book in The Morgan Library Collection,
Disheartening Birthday Year

The year now drawing to a close has been one of anniversary milestones for no less than five of our most distinguished American composers. Wallingford Riegger and Paris-born Edgar Varese have both attained to the "grand old man" stage of 75; Aaron Copland celebrated his 60th year this past month; and Samuel Barber and William Schuman are now at the half-century mark.

Since these men, between them, have produced something like half of the viable repertoire of serious American music, it is interesting to see what our record companies have done—and not done—to mark their current anniversary years.

In February of 1959, we used this space to show how record companies had issued something like 1,000 compositions by about 500 American composers during the first decade of LP. We implied that a possible reason most of these records failed to become commercial successes was because the sheer profusion of composers and works on LP tended to blind the awareness of record buyers to the existence of a basic American concert music repertoire. We suggested at that time that the advent of the stereo disc provided record producers with the opportunity to attack anew the problem of bringing American concert music to the record-buying public, and in a way that would make them thoroughly aware of our finest composers and their best works. To this end, we proposed a series of recorded studies in depth that would encompass the best works of our most significant 20th-century composers.


The list was compiled with an eye to a body of creative work of consistent and proven worth, covering all major 20th-century musical styles from the conservative-romantic to the most extreme experimentalism.

We had hoped, two years ago, that the forthcoming combined anniversaries of Barber, Copland, Riegger, Varese, and Schuman during 1960 would provide a spur toward the "recording-in-depth" project. From where we sit now, however, the results have been distinctly disappointing. For, with the single exception of Aaron Copland, our American composers have gotten pretty short shrift with respect to major new recordings.

Samuel Barber, for example, a gifted lyrical writer par excellence among our composers, enjoyed only one major 1960 recording—that by Mercury of his Capricorn Concerto and Medea. Still missing from the recorded repertoire of Barber's music are the rugged, rigorous, and powerful Piano Sonata (1949), the soprano-and-orchestra setting of James Agee's poignant Knoxville—Summer of 1915, the beautifully crafted Cello Concerto, and the profoundly moving Prayers of Kierkegaard for chorus, soprano, and orchestra. Slight consolation for Barber fans will be the CRJ disc of the Violin Concerto and a Vanguard LP scheduled for release about Christmas; the latter includes the stirring Stopwatch and Ordnance Map for male chorus and timpani, the Second Essay for Orchestra, and Music for a Scene from Shelley.

Nor has Wallingford Riegger fared much better. While his opus numbers have just about kept pace with his age, the same can hardly be said for the recordings of his music. Riegger's 75th year has thus far brought forth only the Concerto for Piano and Wind Quintet (1954) the

Famous H. H. Scott Factory Assembled Amplifiers and Tuners

These new Laboratory Standard amplifiers and tuners are the product of painstaking research and development... creative engineering... skillful, patient manufacturing. Each receives more than 50 separate quality tests before it is awarded the Laboratory Standard Guarantee. This care assures perfect performance for many years of use.

330D AM-FM Wide Band Stereo Tuner: The AM and FM sections of this superb instrument are completely separate for reception of AM-FM stereo broadcasts. It is also equipped for addition of Multiplex adaptor. AM quality is practically indistinguishable from FM; FM sensitivity rating 2.5 microvolts, INFM standards. Price $209.95

272 80-watt Complete Dynaural Stereo Amplifiers: Here is a complete amplifier with the high power rating usually found only in separate preamp-power amplifier systems. There are 25 separate controls, including patented H. H. Scott Dynaural Rumble Suppressors. Important features of the 272 Include unique pick-up selector switch, and front-panel center-channel output control. Price $259.95

295D 50-Watt Stereo Amplifier: This amplifier is in use in many fine music systems than any other stereo amplifier in the world. Its many features and operating conveniences include: unique H. H. Scott acoustic-balancing provisions; separate scratch and rumble filters; visual signal-light panel; third-channel output; Inputs for two magnetic cartridges and complete facilities for tape monitoring. Price $209.95

Slightly higher west of Rockies. Accessory cases extra.

H. H. SCOTT
H. H. Scott Inc., 111 Powdersmill Rd., Maynard, Massachusetts

HiFi/Stereo
New kind of KIT from H. H. Scott...

EASY-TO-BUILD 72 WATT STEREO AMPLIFIER KIT • LOOKS AND PERFORMS LIKE FACTORY-BUILT UNITS!

$149.95*!

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H. H. Scott engineers have developed exciting new techniques to ease kit-building problems. The Kit-Pak container unfolds to a self-contained workable. All wires are pre-cut and pre-stripped. Parts are mounted on special cards in the order you use them. All mechanical parts are pre-riveted to the chassis.

Yes...the hard work is all done, but the fun's left for you! Build a new H. H. Scott LK-72 for yourself. You'll have an amplifier that meets rugged HIFM specifications...one that delivers sufficient power to drive any speaker system...one that's professional in every sense of the word.


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*Slightly higher West of the Rockies.

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RUSH ME COMPLETE DETAILS ON YOUR NEW LK-72 COMPLETE AMPLIFIER KIT, LT-10 FM TUNER KIT, AND CUSTOM STERO COMPONENTS FOR 1961

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Address........................................

City........................................State...

Export: Telesco International Corp., 36 W. 40th St., N. Y. C.
from CRI, and the wryly humorous Variations for Violin and Orchestra (1959) from Louisville. We wonder when we'll be hearing the fascinating Study in Sonority for Violins (1927), the impressive Dichotomy for chamber orchestra (1981-82), or the overwhelm-}

The case of William Schuman verges on the disgraceful, especially when the passion, technical brilliance and intensely communicative quality of his best compositions are taken into account. Not one major William Schuman score is to be had in stereo recording, despite the fact that his symphonies, dance scores, and choral works are made to order for the medium. Indeed, the only William Schuman work to be issued in the year of his 50th birthday was a new Louisville mono recording of his Judith, his 1949 choreographic poem for Martha Graham. Still among the missing are the stunningly power-

ful and virtuosic Third, Fourth, and Fifth Symphonies, the impassioned score for Antony Tudor's ballet Undertow, the electrifying Violin Concerto, and the exhilarating Free Song for chorus and orchestra.

Even Edgar Varese, whose music fared reasonably well on records in 1960, is not really adequately repre-}

sented. Of course, Columbia's new stereo disc of Hyperprism, Integrales, Octandre, Density 21.3, Ionisation, and Poème électronique was a fine 75th birthday remembrance for the founding father of experimental per-

cussion music. And Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic are supposed to have recorded one of the big Varese orchestral scores, Arcana. But where are Espace, Ameriques, Equatorial, and Deserts? Dare we hope that the time will come when at least one of these will find its way into the record repertoire?

We are not happy with what has been done for this year's anniversary celebra-

tions. Next year, let's hope things will be different. Virgil Thomson and Roger Sessions will be 65, with Henry Cowell and Roy Harris reaching that age bracket in 1962 and 1963, re-

spectively. Perhaps, so far as recording is concerned, the age of retirement should also be the age of recognition, at least for our major composers.
"Yes, son... and you can use it as a 24 watt mono or stereo amplifier, or to convert the other amplifier I gave you last Christmas to Stereo!"

"GOSH!"

It's the DB212 we're talking about! A unique STEREO AMPLIFIER/CONTROL CENTER by BOGEN-PRESTO, designed to bring good cheer (and greater value) to one and all with its unique 3-way adaptability.

As a conventional stereo amplifier it provides 12 watts per channel, more than enough power for most home speakers. Or, the two channels, electrically combined by the flick of a switch, make the DB212 a 24 watt monophonic amplifier capable of handling the lowest efficiency speaker. And, for higher powered stereo or conversion of existing mono systems, one channel of the preamplifier can drive an external amplifier, while its 24 watt amplifier operates on the other channel.

The DB212 also features low distortion (less than 1%), equalized tape-head inputs, switched hi-lo filters, separate recorder outputs, speaker phasing switch, and more. A value-packed component, this BOGEN-PRESTO top quality amplifier will add spice to holiday listening for many Christmases to come. Available in gold or grey at $119.95 less enclosure.

Our youngster above adamantly demands superior FM-AM reception despite weak stations, crowded wave bands, and local interference. That's why Santa selected the ST442 STEREO FM-AM TUNER, esthetically and technically compatible with the DB212. High sensitivity (better than 1 µV on FM and 3 µV on AM) assures noise-free reception even in the weakest signal areas. Flat to ±0.5 dB from 20 to 18,000 cycles, the ST442 even exceeds the broadcast bandwidth capabilities of FM Stations. Visual meter tuning, distortion controlling circuits (AFC and AGC on FM, AVC on AM), low impedance cathode followers for long amplifier connections, and provision for adaptation to stereo multiplex, are just some of the features that contribute to BOGEN-PRESTO quality, designed to protect the high-fidelity investment and to ensure listening pleasure. Available in gold or grey at $149.50 less enclosure.

For more information on the DB212 and the ST442 plus many other fine tuners, amplifiers, and turntables, write for free literature:

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THIS IS THE GREATEST 'CONTINENTAL' OF THEM ALL...

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**RUGGED**

A Norelco dual-element stereo-dynamic microphone is standard equipment with the CONTINENTAL ‘400’

Letters

Art Vs. Science

I read with interest Mr. Canby’s article on “Hi-Fi and the Universal Man” in your October issue, which seems to imply that high fidelity, being the conjuncture of the musical arts with the science of electronics, is likely to reconcile the opposed temperaments of the artist and the engineer and bring about the birth of a new Universal Man.

I do not believe that the intrusion of technology on art is likely to beget a new breed of Universal Men equally at home in both the arts and the sciences. On the contrary, the trend seems to be for technology to usurp the creative imagination of modern man. The arts cannot flourish in such a mental climate, and pure science itself—which requires an essentially artistic and reflective temperament—suffers when the individual sees in the machine an ideal concept of ultimate perfection and value.

In the increasing mechanization of life, we defer more and more to the dictates of machines. We see this in every department of human activity: in the snarled traffic and soul-laden air of our cities, the ravaged forest, the polluted streams, the spiritless and almost mechanical formulas of modern “entertainment.” Even in musical performance there is a trend toward machine-like discipline rather than toward the spontaneous rhapsodic element that is the essence of any music. The idolization of the machine in our time is throttling the conditions which give rise to spontaneity, the free unfolding of personality, and the joy of living.

I believe that Mr. Canby is proposing a dangerous course when he suggests that the artist take science to his bosom. On the contrary, he should keep it at arm’s length!

Martin Werner
Salzburg, Austria

Power Politics Praised

I very much enjoyed Mr. Fante’s article on Power Politics in the September issue of your magazine. It is a lucid treatment...
JAZZ by the greatest jazz stars of all time!

COLUMBIA RECORD CLUB invites you to accept the monthly selection of these high-fidelity 12" long-playing JAZZ RECORDS for only $19.90 RETAIL VALUE $39.90

If you join the Club now and agree to purchase as few as 5 selections from the more than 250 Columbia, Epic and Verve records to be offered during the coming 12 months, you may select the monthly selection for your Division... take any of the many hundreds of records offered in all Divisions... or take 90 record in any particular month.

Your only obligation as a member is to purchase five selections from the more than 250 Columbia, Epic and Verve records to be offered in the coming 12 months. You may discontinue membership at any time thereafter.

The records you receive are mailed and billed to you at the regular list price, generally $3.98 (Classical $4.98), plus a small mailing and handling charge. You may upgrade records during the membership.

If you wish to continue as a member after purchasing five records, you will receive a Columbia, Epic or Verve record for your Division for every two selections you purchase... a 50% dividend.

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Torr House, Indiana
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I agree to purchase five selections from the more than 250 Columbia, Epic and Verve records to be offered during the coming 12 months, at regular list price plus small mailing and handling charge. Thereafter, if I decide to continue my membership, I am to receive a 15% Columbia, Epic or Verve record of my choice for every two additional selections I accept.

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DECEMBER 1960

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To introduce you to the money-saving music program of the Columbia Record Club, we now offer you the chance to take home one of these great jazz records for only $1.97.

TO RECEIVE 5 JAZZ RECORDS FOR ONLY $1.97—mail the coupon below to introduce you to one of the Club's four musical Divisions: Columbia Records; Listening and Dancing, Broadway, Movies; Television and Musical Comedies; Classical.

NOW THE CLUB OPERATES—each month the Club staff will mail you a club newsletter containing outstanding recordings for all four Division. These selections are described in the Club Magazine, which you receive free each month.

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"... a single speed (331/3-rpm) turntable with an integrally mounted arm . . . employs a somewhat unconventional drive system which results in a totally inaudible rumble level, and low wow and flutter. The arm is simple yet effective, with a mounting system which makes the unit relatively insensitive to shock and vibration." "The arm tracks well at the lowest stylus forces recommended by the cartridge manufacturer." "The hum field surrounding the PR-500 is very low, and no difficulty should be experienced from this source even with poorly shielded cartridges." "... the Stromberg-Carlson PR-500 performs in a manner comparable to that of the most expensive turntables and arms, yet sells for much less." "The PR-500 is an excellent value at $69.95." - High Fidelity Laboratory - Hi-Fi/STEREO

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"The Stromberg-Carlson FM-443...one of the least expensive FM tuners on the market, approaches the performance of more expensive equipment. It is therefore an especially good value for anyone who wants to obtain the highest level of performance in a moderate-priced system."

"The distortion at 100% modulation is about 1% for signals stronger than 10 microvolts."

"The sensitivity measurement of the FM-443, according to IF/FM standards, is amazing. Its usable sensitivity is 3 microvolts, a figure not usually found in tuners in this price range. This high sensitivity has not been obtained at the expense of IF bandwidth."

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High Fidelity Magazine, June '60

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"...a compact integrated stereo amplifier rated at 32 watts per channel. Noteworthy, it excels its rated power substantially over most of the audio range, has excellent power-handling capabilities at both ends of the spectrum."

"Each channel delivered 50 watts at 2% harmonic distortion, or 48 watts at 1% distortion. This is unusual in an amplifier rated at 32 watts..."

"The distortion of the ASR-880 is very low at usual listening levels when correctly operated...it has a rare combination of very high gain and very low hum. The amplifier has a number of special features, such as center channel output and a very effective channel-balancing system, as well as the usual stereo control functions found in all good amplifiers..."

"Only 0.6 or 0.7 millivolts at the phone inputs will drive the amplifier to 10 watts output per channel. At normal gain settings, the hum level is below 70 db below 10 watts even on phone input. This is completely inaudible."

"With a listening quality matching its laboratory response, the Stromberg-Carlson ASR-880 must be considered a very good value at its $199.95 price."---HiFi-Hoek Laboratory
High Fidelity Magazine, Sept. '60

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FM-443A—An improved version of the highly rated FM-443 - New, high-accuracy, precision dial - Precision components in de-emphasis network, giving improved frequency response; 20-20,000 cps ± 1 db - Sensitivity 3.5 microvolts for 20 db quieting - Improved total-distance control in RF stage for lowest distortion and best signal-to-noise ratio on both local and distant stations - Total harmonic distortion; less than 1% full deviation.

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Suggested Audiophile net: $139.95

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A DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS
DECEMBER 1960

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LPM 18597, SLPM 138077

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LPM 18613, SLPM 138113

MOZART:
Mass in C Minor, K. 427 ("Great") • Maria Stader, soprano • Hertha Toepfer, alto • Ernst Haefliger, tenor • Ivan Sardi, bass • Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral • Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra • Ferenc Fricsay, conductor
LPM 18524, SLPM 138124

*Denotes Stereo

Distributed by
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of the question of necessary wattage and should greatly help those who are in doubt about their amplifier requirements.

It also points up, by implication, that figures claimed in specifications can be misleading unless the exact text conditions are stated under which these figures are obtained. Your magazine is doing the audiophile a great service by making him aware of this fact.

W. R. Pendleton
Palo Alto, Calif.

Call for Kipnis

• At a time when so many other recordings of enduring artistic merit are being re-issued in LP format, it is distressing that the great Lieder recordings (Brahms and Wolf) of Alexander Kipnis have not yet found their way into the Recordings of the Century Series. Particularly the Brahms Society Volume I includes some of the most surpassingly profound performances ever recorded, and the technical quality of these discs, with their rich piano sound, is still exemplary. When will Angel Records share their hidden treasures with us?

Axel Sorensen
Minneapolis, Minne.

Memo to Collectors

• As one who enjoys reading letters to the editor, I did not fail to discover the letter of Mr. Ellis W. Schoner in your October issue, regarding the "unavailability” of a number of fine music labels, including ours.

In too many cases, "unavailability" is a word used by the record dealer to conceal his unwillingness to order any record that he cannot obtain from the few distributors with whom he normally deals. Unfortunately, the impression created in the mind of the consumer is that the record company is no longer in business or does not maintain a stock of its catalogued items.

If any of your readers have been frustrated in their attempts to buy Overtone recordings, they can be ordered directly from our plant.

Richard C. Burns
Overtone Records
130 Shelton Ave.
New Haven 11, Conn.

Türandot Disputed

• David Hall's review of the new recording of RCA's Turandot came as a shock to me. I suppose Mr. Hall calls them as he sees them, but it seems to me he is off base when he says that Victor's set leaves the others far in the shade. Perhaps this is true of the London set, which had anything but a "dream" cast, but in my opinion the Angel Turandot is every bit as good as the Victor. With the certainly incomparable

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DECEMBER 1960
Callas as Turandot and with the absolutely magnificent Serafin conducting, it is the Turandot of our decade.

Nilsson sings well enough it is true, but she does not get under the skin of the character. And while she manages all the tessitura passages with security, her voice lacks that "claron" quality that Callas brings to the role. Also, she does not seem cruel enough in the early part of the opera. Thus, the final scene lacks the contrast that it should have.

As for Tebaldi, she is always Tebaldi. She is rock-steady in her tunes, careful in her phrasing, and uninspired in her interpretation. Schwarzkopf may have a curious, unidiomatic Italian accent, but she is the character of Liù to the letter.

The late Jussi Björling is hard to fault. He is just about perfect in every respect, musically and dramatically, and is the prime asset of the RCA set.

I feel that Maestro Serafin (on Angel) is so superior to Leinsdorf that I cannot even bring myself to compare their wholly different approaches. Leinsdorf can wring drama from the score, but it leaves no effect. Serafin blends the drama with a humanism I can only describe as astonishing. Also, he makes us believe we are in Cathay, rather than in Italy. No small feat! All in all, I choose to dissent with Mr. Hall, and I, for one, will live with the Angel set.

Walter Klos

Although our Mr. Hall respects reader Klos's opinions, he says that he still prefers to live with the RCA set, especially as he believes it to be a superior example of stereo recording.

No True Faith

- Why won't Columbia ever learn that their mixing of Percy Faith's high violins makes the sound so penetrating that the listener gets an earache after only a few minutes?

Frank Brotherton
Jasper, Alabama

Columbia is not alone in gimmickning the "presence range" and the mixing on their popular discs. The purpose of the supercharged treble is to make portable phonographs of limited range—on which most pop discs are presumably played—sound all steely and brilliant like the common misconception of "hi-fi."

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DECEMBER 1960
THE FIFTH Symphony was an extremely crucial one for Tchaikovsky. Six years earlier, at a Moscow performance of his Violin Concerto, one of the critics had suggested that Tchaikovsky was "written out"; that his music was tired and uninspired and generally the work of a man past his creative prime. Tchaikovsky was especially sensitive to this sort of criticism, for, during the ten years that separated the Violin Concerto (1878) and the Fifth Symphony, he produced no symphonic work of major importance.

During the summer of 1888, Tchaikovsky wrote to his benefactress, Mme. Nadejda von Meck: "I am exceedingly anxious to prove to myself, as to others, that I am not played out as a composer... Have I told you that I intend to write a symphony? The beginning was difficult; but now inspiration seems to have come. However, we shall see."

The symphony was performed for the first time at St. Petersburg in November, and a month later, after a repetition in St. Petersburg and a performance in Prague, Tchaikovsky wrote to Mme. von Meck: "I have come to the conclusion that it is a failure. There is something repellent, something superfluous, patchy, and insincere, which the public instinctively recognizes. It was obvious to me that the ovations I received were prompted more by my earlier work, and that the symphony itself did not really please the audience."

Time, of course, has negated the harshness of Tchaikovsky's appraisal of his score. The Fifth Symphony is one of the cornerstones of the repertory and is yet another work in the "victory-through-struggle" tradition of Beethoven's Fifth. And yet Tchaikovsky's words are not as unduly self-deprecating as they might seem at first blush. If he was unhappy with the architectural structure of the symphony, one must agree that he had sufficient cause for his unhappiness: the Fifth Symphony is certainly the most episodic and least organically-unified of his last three symphonies. Much of the music is balletic in character, and indeed it has been treated choreographically by Massine in a work called Les Presages ("Destiny") presented in 1933 by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the Fifth Symphony is Tchaikovsky's Op. 64, while his ballet masterpiece, The Sleeping Beauty, is Op. 66.

No matter what weaknesses one may find in its construction, however, Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony seems assured of enjoying eternal popularity. The reasons are not hard to find: First, there is the impact of the aforementioned

(Continued on page 20)
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THE TRUE SOUND OF MUSIC
DECEMBER 1960
victory-through-struggle concept. The motto theme in E minor, stated at the very outset of the symphony by the clarinets in a subdued, reflective manner, recurs in the succeeding movements as a kind of sinister idée fixe. At the beginning of the last movement, and with startling but masterful psychological effect, Tchaikovsky shifts the tonality of the motto theme from the minor to the major. It thus assumes a completely new, heroic aspect and the symphony comes to a triumphant conclusion in E major. Tchaikovsky also endowed the symphony with some of his most effulgent melodic inspiration. It is small wonder that during the discovery of Tchaikovsky by Tím Pan Alley a couple of decades ago the French horn solo in the slow movement of the Fifth Symphony took on a new identity in juke boxes around the country as Moon Love.

Like the other Tchaikovsky symphonies, the Fifth admits of several different performance styles and attitudes. As with the Pathétique Symphony, discussed in this space last May, let's first group the most important recordings of the symphony according to their interpretive characteristics:

**Prim and Essentially Antiseptic—**
Dorati with the Minneapolis Symphony (Mercury MG 50008), Grünér-Hegge with the Oslo Philharmonic (Candem S 489), Sargent with the London Symphony (Everest SDBR 3039; Mono LPBR 6039)

Solti with the Paris Conservatory Orchestra (London CS 6117; Mono CM 9165)

**Literal and Predictable—**
Krips with the Vienna Philharmonic (London CS 6095)
Monteux with the Boston Symphony (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2239)
Rodzinski with the London Philharmonic Symphony (Westminster XWN 1855)

van Kempen with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra (Epic LC 3013)

**Personal—and emotionally wrenching—**
Mitropoulos with the New York Philharmonic (Columbia ML 5075)
Silvestri with the Philharmonia Orchestra (Angel S 33566)

**Wayward, with stylistic inconsistencies—**
Szell with the Cleveland Orchestra (Épic BC 1061; Mono LG 3647)

**Intensely felt and expressively communicated—**
Ormandy with the "Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6109; Mono ML 5433)

**In a class by itself—**

Mravinski with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra (Decca DL 9684)

One version listed in the catalog—Kempe with the Berlin Philharmonic (Capitol SG/G 7219) —was never received for review, but it might have some interesting things to offer (if it actually exists).

Now to some specifics:

The four versions under the "Prim and essentially antiseptic" heading can be dismissed readily as pedestrian, uninspired readings. Krips and Monteux under the next heading give straightforward, unencumbered accounts of the music which can be safely recommended to anyone who prefers his Tchaikovsky lean and de-personalized. Each conductor has a glorious orchestra to work with, but the special glow of the Vienna Philharmonic in this music is as pertinent as it is unexpected.

The Mitropoulos and Silvestri performances are far and away the most controversial of the whole lot. Both conductors revel in the opportunities for self-display which the music affords, and their readings are replete with dramatic emphasis, "rubato", and sudden shifts in dynamic stress. The character of the music is such, however, that it really is not violated by this treatment—and some listeners will undoubtedly prefer to hear it done this way. Of the two "personal" treatments, the Silvestri is the newer and better-sounding.

Szell's recent version for Epic with the Cleveland Orchestra is a surprising one. The conductor seems to gravitate between two different poles—one, the literal, the other, wayward. He favors rather brisk tempi and the orchestra plays well for him—as always—but in the end it is a disappointment, as the finale just seems to fall apart under Szell's completely unsettled and episodic treatment.

Ormandy's recent recordings reveal amazing growth in intellectual depth and maturity. Now in his 25th anniversary season as the conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Ormandy seems to be coming truly into his own. As an example of what I mean, just compare his earlier Columbia LP of the Tchaikovsky Fifth (Columbia ML 4400) of nearly a decade ago with the one issued last late year. The new one has a breadth and nobility far surpassing the earlier one; indeed, in our opinion, the new Ormandy recording outclasses all the other competing versions but one.

That one is the performance Deutche Grammophon recorded in Vienna a few years ago with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra when that organization first journeyed into the "West." One would imagine that Tchaikovsky's own countrymen would give the Fifth Symphony a real Slavic going-over, with heavy emphasis on the brooding melancholy and dark coloration of the music. Actually, the Mravinsky-Leningrad Philharmonic recording is the least "Slavic" of all the versions in this respect. The symphony has a lightness and transparency of texture, as Mravinski interprets it, which casts it in a most attractive and thoroughly different light. Also, the conductor endows the score with subtle dynamic shadings and nuances—especially in the first movement—so that it is a constantly new and surprising experience. The conclusion has a triumphant ring which caps the whole in most satisfying fashion. The recorded sound is excellent and the orchestra is superb—except for a nervous solo oboe and a French horn soloist in the slow movement with a tone straight out of the reed section of the old Glenn Miller Orchestra.

Mravinski, then, is our overall choice in Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, with Ormandy's new stereo version the leader in the stereo department.

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THE spectrum NEWS AND COMMENT

BY THE EDITORS

Immediately following the introduction of the stereo disc, many manufacturers were beguiled into believing that the stereo effect would mask certain tonal shortcomings. Consequently, there was a tendency to slacken quality standards during the industry's high-speed conversion to stereo.

Since then, however, it has become quite evident that the serious listener demands from stereo precisely the same linear frequency response and low distortion that identify good mono sound.

This year's audio designs are, for the most part, eloquent testimony that the industry as a whole is satisfying this demand. For the first time since the introduction of stereo, concern with quality rather than compromise seems to be the rule rather than the exception at all price levels.

Some firms, of course, never swerved from their standards of quality even during the transition from mono to stereo. Others, however, allowed a relaxation of standards during the interregnum. If this resulted in a partial loss of confidence on the part of the buying public, now the industry is certainly bending over backwards to rectify the situation.

The majority of design changes are introduced for the benefit of the low-priced or medium-quality categories of high-fidelity equipment. These changes may bring to such components operating features previously found only in more expensive models, or they may render more palatable the compromise that is inevitable whenever equipment must be designed to a given price limit.

On the other hand, if a major design change occurs in top-rated audio components, chances are that it represents a basic advance in the art of sound reproduction.

The current swing to higher quality norms in audio equipment was evidently set in motion by the same sincere quest for "something better" that originally led the audio pioneers to "secede" from the mediocrities of the radio and phonograph industry and establish high fidelity as a separate field.

Once again, this same spirit of restless perfectionism seems to be broadly operative throughout the industry.

That this type of motivation can find expression in the final product must be credited to the fact that audio today is a part of the disseminating craft industries. As such, it still bears the personal imprint of the handful of devoted hobbyists who started the whole high-fidelity movement. Here is one of the few fields where individual invention still shapes the total product.

In such historical perspective, it appears clear, as 1960 draws to a close, that the art of sound reproduction has entered a new phase in which the relation of stereo and high fidelity is at last clearly defined. Stereo has become the standard of high fidelity, and high fidelity, in the strict and uncompromising meaning of the term, has been accepted as the indispensable condition for good stereo.

Boldness surely must be endemic among kit manufacturers because they always seem to be tearing their hair out over their customer mail. First they have to catch up with it, which is a problem in itself and often takes quite a few weeks. Engineering personnel qualified to answer technical questions can't take out too much time for letter writing.

Dynaco's sales director, Bob Tucker, suggests the following rules for inquirers to get fast and accurate replies:

1. Before writing to a manufacturer, talk over your problem with your local high-fidelity dealer. Two minutes of direct conversation can often pinpoint a problem that might require two months of correspondence.

2. Use postcards, if possible. They are easier to handle than letters.

3. Phrase your questions so they can be answered with short, simple phrases—preferably just yes or no.

4. Be specific in your questions. Describe the technical problems involved clearly. Identify all equipment used. Try not to leave any possibility open; long-distance diagnosis is difficult at best—and you can cooperate by providing a clear description of the case and its symptoms.

5. If you must send a letter, put your name and address on the letter as well as the envelope. The envelope may be lost and your letter never answered.

6. Don't refer to previous letters. You'll get better service if you repeat the information in each letter.

7. Don't send telegrams. Phone if you're in a hurry.

8. When returning equipment for factory service, always include a letter explaining the difficulty. Then send a copy of the letter by separate mail stating when and how the equipment was shipped. This is a double-checking measure that can forestall possible confusion at the factory when your equipment is received.
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The Golden Days

The good old days—when Tin Pan Alley—
that period roughly from the Gay Nineties to the late Twenties—were just that. The Alley was a fabulous place that trafficked in moans, mummies, nostalgia, Alabam’, and love lore. A song hit was something to get excited about. Once a hit got up steam, it would ride along for several years, and it would sell over a million copies of sheet music. One perennial favorite, *Hearts and Flowers*, topped the eight-million mark.

Today the picture has changed. If a hit sells over a hundred thousand copies of sheet music, it is doing well. And if it stays in the running for six months, it has exceptional vitality.

Strangely enough, what caused Tin Pan Alley’s fall from greatness was something the Alley had long dreamed of—the perfect plug. Imagine, if you can, a time when radio and TV didn’t exist. To make a song hit in the old days took plenty of push and pelf. An army of song pluggers labored for months persuading pros to put a song on the bill. Enough pro could swell it into a hit. Song publishers dreamed of a time when one plug would reach a mass audience. That dream, when realized, was to become a nightmare.

In 1927, Al Jolson made a picture called *The Jazz Singer* in which he could be heard as well as seen. This was like a shot in the arm to the silent movie industry. But it was anathema to music publishers. It meant that people could get their music by going to the movies instead of to the music stands.

To complicate the situation further, a year later some bright song pluggers persuaded Rudy Vallee to put their latest on the air. “Jeepers,” they whooped, “this is it. A hit overnight.”

There followed a stampede to get new songs on the air. With their songs going into homes all over the land, publishers expected orders for sheet music and royalties from records to start pouring in. But nothing happened. Slowly it dawned on them with a dull and deadly impact: radio, the perfect plug, was a dud. It was not a means to an end; it was an end in itself. The sound of radio was the swan song of the good old days in Tin Pan Alley.

Though in pre-radio 1923, a characteristic tune—the Prisoner’s Song, for example—would sell 3½ million records, after radio had become established, a hit tune such as *The Music Goes Round and Round*—published in 1930—would barely sell ½ million in sheet music copies and records combined. To this day, pop sheet music has retained only marginal appeal, when compared to its earlier glories. Records, however, climb continuously in sales appeal, and a hit tune, if it lasts any time at all, will almost certainly rack up more than a million sales.

In the old days, fortunes were made on a single hit song. Two boys fresh from the farm, Harry Williams and Egbert Van Alstyne, made their appearance on Broadway one day with a sweetly simple pastoral, *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*, and pocketed $28,000. Frederick Knight Logan heard an old ditty from the deep south strumming an air on the guitar, went home and wrote *Missouri Waltz*, which enriched him by $100,000. Remick sold copies of *Hiawatha* in 100,000 lots to Woolworth. Guy Massey wrote a song from a prison cell, *Prisoner’s Song*, which turned in a neat $85,000 in royalties. Willard Robison lost his home, wrote *Cottage for Sale*, and bought it back. The list could go on and on.

Song writers of the old days, good ones particularly, were rugged individualists, a law unto themselves. When the late Zieg...
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DECEMBER 1960
fled was rehearsing *The Three Musketeers*, he had to keep his entire cast waiting three days for Rudolf Friml to deliver the music for the closing number.

On the first day, Friml had phoned Ziegfeld he was on his way to the theater with the opus just composed. While driving down Fifth Avenue, Friml sighted a blonde of his scenes and forgot everything else, taking her to the races for three successive days while Ziegfeld kept the wires hot trying to locate him. When Friml finally appeared, he produced that spine-tingling march *Of The Musketeers*, and all was forgiven.

Following, the traditions of Stephen Foster, the old song scribbles staked their claim for the most part on the starkly simple and sentimental. Choruses often went only eight or nine bars and the words were easy to remember. Typical American harmonizations sprang up in the nation's barber shops, and are still perpetuated by the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America. These songs somehow wove their way into the very warp and woof of American life.

For instance, what hit of the past decade has become anything like such a universal accompaniment to conviviality as *Sweet Adeline*? John F. (Honey) Fitzgerald used it as a theme song in his two successful campaigns for the mayorality of Boston in 1906-07 and in 1910-11. "Honey Fitzgerald" claimed he was elected both times on a "Straight Sweet Adeline ticket." The song was the favorite of President Wilson and Maj. Gen. Smalley P. Butler. In the 20s, a citizen of Flint, Michigan, was arraigned for singing the song while coming home from a party at 3 A.M. In reporting the event, a local newspaper attributed weird power to the song:

"It acts on the human system like moonshine whiskey on an Indian. It is a sort of loco weed which drives its perpetrators crazy. There is scarcely a note in it that cannot be held, tortured, parodied. It is the only song in existence that can be rendered in all keys at once, both major and minor, and usually is. One has only to look upon its executioners, their vacant, expressionless faces raised to the sky, their glazed eyes fixed on nothing, to know that they are intoxicated by a drug more powerful than hashish, hbang or najaan. In our opinion it violates the Volstead Act and should be suppressed with the utmost vigor of the law."

There was something about the old songs that stamped them on the minds of the people. Compare the songs of World War I—pre-radio—with those of World War II—after radio. Here are some of the former: Hinky Dinky Parley-Voo, Tipperary, Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag, Keep The Home Fires Burning, There's A Long, Long Trail Awarding, to name a few.

Moreover, some of these songs exhibited a typical American humor, not shown in the songs of any other nationality, and which was haunting to the enemy in World War I. Witness: Would You Rather Be A Colonel With An Eagle On His Shoulder Or A Private With A Chicken On His Knob; Oh, How I Hate To Get Up In The Morning; All Dressed Up And No Place To Go.

But the big song of World War I, the one which brought words of praise from Gen. Pershing no less, was *Over There*. George M. Cohan wrote it in a white heat of patriotism and had it published by his old friend, Billy Jerome, who had a small publishing enterprise. Before it began to catch on big, Phil Kornheiser, song plugger for Leo Feist, heard the number and got a strong yen to work on it. Kornheiser believed it would do more to win the war than all the official preannouncements, pronouncements, and manifestoes put together. So he began selling the idea to Ed Bitter, general manager.

Bitter discounted Kornheiser's ravings as being characteristic of a song plugger until he heard the song cheered to the roof in Jansen's Hoffbrau one evening. Then he got the bug. Seeking out Jerome, he offered $10,000 for it. No go. That night he couldn't sleep thinking about the song. Next morning he burst in on Jerome with, "Billy, I've got to have that song. I'll give you fifteen."

"Nope."

"Twenty."

"Nope."

"Twenty-five."

"Sold. But it's gotta be cash."

Up to that time, that was the highest price paid outright for a song, $25,000, which would be equivalent to about $63,000 today. The newspaper publicity probably exceeded that of any other song in history. Columnists computed how much each word of the song cost. A staff of pluggers started in the day the check was signed. A month later, the song had already grossed $30,000. Then it sold into the millions of copies and records.

Another reason the old Alley days were exciting was because they outlined the beginnings of America's unique contribution...
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(Edward Tonnall Conby)

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ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC., 24 Thorndike Street, Cambridge At, Massachusetts
to the world: jazz. The granddaddy of this new music was, strangely enough, a white man from Detroit, Kerry Mills. His first cakewalk, Rastus On Parade, brought him to New York. His next was Happy Days In Dixie, and on his third, Georgia Camp Meetin’, he hit a home run. This piece was revolutionary in its day. It broke in on the plethora of sweet simplicities and set the mineral folks to cake-walking, more of a strut and body contortion than a dance. It opened the way to ragtime which followed soon after.

Along in 1899, a colored man, Scott Joplin, wrote Maple Leaf Rag, probably the greatest rag ever, and some thirty years ahead of its time. This was at first an instrumental number and was beyond the technical prowess of the average piano player. Despite that, it enjoyed many years of popularity.

In 1903, Hiawatha by Neil Moret (Chas. Daniels), hit the music stands. This prize winner, first published in Kansas City, of all places, had collected dust on the shelves of music stores for five years. Then it was acquired by Jerome H. Remick of Detroit for what was considered a hefty advance in those days, $5,000. The firm got behind it with a big ballyhoo. Hiawatha started an Indian trend, but more than that, it emancipated the bass in the piano accompaniment choruses from the um-pa, um-pa which had gone before. The bass exhibited a strain of counterpoint against a main theme. Pop music was finally getting away from the I, IV and V chords.

Then the cry was back to ballads. Ragtime, it was said, had played itself out. Berlin bridged the transition period with Alexander’s Ragtime Band, which, strangely enough, is not in ragtime. It has only a few minor syncopations and is otherwise in straight march tempo. But it revived interest in a waning cause and prepared the ground for jazz. It shows interesting harmonic treatment, especially the descending bass in the refrain.

Although I admit to a certain amount of prejudice for the old days, this is not to imply that better songs were written then. A number of great songs are appearing today, but they don’t get the same chance. They’re lost in the shuffle. The home folks don’t gather around the parlor upright any more. And that, I feel, is one of several reasons why the old favorites go on and on.

On a trip west last summer, I stopped overnight at the Lake Hotel in Yellowstone Park. Spotting a piano in an alcove off the lobby, I started playing Let Me Call You Sweetheart. A white-haired lady came up to the piano all starry-eyed and said, “I just love that song. I sang it when I was a girl.” Soon others began collecting around the piano. About twenty-five people gathered eventually, young and old. We sang the old songs long into the night. Next morning, one member of the party said, “Didn’t we have fun last night?”

Yes indeed. People do warm up to the old songs. Witness the success of Mitch Miller’s Sing Alongs. Somehow those melodies just linger on as mellow reminders of the good old days of Tin Pan Alley.

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Above: 8" Model RRL-8
Below: 12" Model RRL-12

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THE TRIUMPH OF
OPERA IN ENGLISH
by Samuel Chotzinoff

The story of how one man's life-long dreams culminated in the creation of the NBC Opera Company

When I was a "beatnik" in New York half a century ago, my consuming passion was music, opera especially. Three or four nights a week I would attend performances at the Metropolitan, gaining admission by slipping an usher a twenty-five-cent piece. Towards midnight, walking home to save carfare, I would sometimes encounter a strange figure on Broadway. This man, clad in an Inverness cape and slouched hat, looked haunted, and was obviously shunned; for he was always alone. After a time, I learned that he was the music critic of The New York American, Charles Henry Meltzer. The reason for his separation from his colleagues was that he espoused the ludicrous idea that opera should be sung in English.

To advocate in those days that opera should be presented in a language one could understand was rash indeed. Yet I could not help admiring Mr. Meltzer's temerity, and I began reading his column to discover what underlay his single-minded propagation of so outlandish a cause. And
somewhat to my surprise, his crusade seemed to make sense.

Mr. Meltzer posed a rhetorical question that went something like this: How was it that in every country in Europe, all operas were given in the language of the audience? In Berlin, Carmen was sung in German. In Rome, it was sung in Italian. Only in America and in France was Carmen given in the original French. The reason for this, Mr. Meltzer wrote, was clear. Snobbery, pure and simple.

Opera in America was a hobby of the rich, the "Four Hundred," and of a few poor music-lovers like myself. The "Four Hundred" who ruled the Metropolitan and owned the glittering boxes knew little about opera and cared less. They arrived late and left early, and apparently took no interest whatever in the stories or plots of the operas. Probably most of these wealthy patrons would have been surprised to find out Aïda and Rhadames are entombed in the last scene! As for those of us who heard our operas standing up and had a better acquaintance with plot and music, we were too grateful for what we were getting to dare ask for anything more. And what we were getting, said Mr. Meltzer, were concerts in costume. What we were not getting was intelligibility.

Since an opera, unlike an orchestral concert, is based on language, which the music adorns, heightens, and interprets, the opera-going public was missing at least a third of what the composer had wrought. This, Mr. Meltzer maintained, accounted for America's indifference to opera.

I was impressed with Mr. Meltzer's fervor, sincerity, and rationality, so I put the case for opera in English to my fellow musicians. And then I came smack up against the snobbery that Mr. Meltzer had put his finger on as being the cause of the opposition to opera in English. They pointed to the English translations of the opera librettos sold nightly in the lobby of the Metropolitan. I read them and was appalled. In Aïda, Amneris addressed the Ethiopian Princess:

Come hither, thou I dearly prize,
A slave art thou none, nor menial,
Here have I made by fondest ties
Sister, a name more genial.

Furthermore, my musical friends went on, since the music expressed the essence of the words, it wasn't really necessary to understand the words. In any case, the diction of opera singers was generally so poor that one couldn't understand them even if one knew the language they were singing in. And the final argument seemed to them a clincher. The word, they said, inspires the composer to set it to the kind of music that brings out its meaning, its poetry, and its emotion. Any translation, therefore, can only serve as a make-shift, running, as it must, counter to music inspired by completely different words in a different language. Hence, to appreciate fully the music of an opera, one must hear it in its original language.

This persuasive argument sent me to the original librettos for confirmation. It was then that I made a curious discovery. I found that the original librettos of most of the standard operas were anything but literary gems or poetic effusions calculated to inspire composers to endow them in beautiful music. They were, in fact, almost as ordinary, and often as ridiculous, as the English translations sold in the lobbies of opera houses. Moreover, in setting them to music, composers frequently imposed wrong accents on words, and quite often saddled singers with throat-constricting vowels in the upper registers. Even Puccini sometimes failed to take the capabilities and limitations of the human voice into account. That master of the operatic idiom set the word "Un" in the aria "Un bel di" from Madama Butterfly to a high G-flat. But a high G-flat calls for an open throat. Yet Puccini, at this most important moment of his opera, closed the throats of all the Madama Butterflys of the past and of all those to come. No soprano I have ever heard has been able to make a beautiful or even an agreeable sound with the word "Un" in "Un bel di." So, too, in the opening of "Vissi d'arte" from Tosca, the "P" of "Vissi" always sounds either pinched or strident. There are countless examples of such indifference to vocal limitations on the part of the finest composers. They occur even in operas by such masters of bel canto as Bellini.

So much for the claim that the original words are uniquely wedded to the music. The fact is that the relationship of words and music is as often unhappy as it is congenial. Dubious, too, is the claim that the natural accents in words have been preserved in the music and that these natural accents are often disregarded in translations. In the opening of the Flower Song in Carmen, for example, the musical accent falls on the "La" in "La Fleur" instead of on the
more natural "Fleur." A Frenchman says "La FLEUR," not "L'A Fleur." Yet in the a/b, Bizet gives the accent to "La" and nobody objects. In the quartet "Mir ist so wunderbar" in Fidelio, Beethoven sets "wunderbar" in a way that shifts the accent to the last syllable. A German, of course, would accent the first syllable. While I have never heard anyone take Beethoven to task, if such a thing should occur in an English translation, people would rush into print to denounce the artistic perversion.

As to the alleged fine quality of operatic prose, is "Abcheulicher, wo elst du hin?" beautiful or poetic? It isn't. Is it any better than the English version: "You torturer, what evil deed . . ." It isn't. And what is treasurably or inimitably in the phrase "Toreador, en gua-li-a-de" (that's the way Bizet set it to music)? Could any decent English equivalent sound worse? I doubt it.

Finally, there is the assertion that composers pounce on translations of their operas. This theory is, of course, absolute nonsense. Verdi, for example, protested strongly when he discovered that one of his operas was going to be performed in Paris in the original Italian.

In America, however, at the turn of the century, there were no adequate English translations available, and since few Americans understood Italian, French, or German and were unable to spot the imperfections in the originals, the future of opera in English looked dim indeed.

When I succeeded Deems Taylor as music critic of The World in 1925, I was, for the first time, in a position to see and hear operas from very select seats in the parterre of the Met. Mr. Melzer, having spent a lifetime as a lonely crusader for opera in English, was no longer on the journalistic scene. Not anxious to share his fate as a pariah among my colleagues, I did not openly espouse his futile cause. But I was determined to observe the behavior of opera audiences and to build up over the years a valid case for opera in English, and when the appropriate moment arrived, to do what I could towards its realization.

During my adventures at the Met, I was especially struck by the ineffectiveness of operatic comedies. The tragedies fared better. The plots of most serious operas are simple melodramas of the ancient type, generally dealing with the substitution of a foundling for the heir to the throne or a fortune, the treachery of evil persons, monumental jealousies and connivings, and the liberal use of poison, dagger, and gun. If the listener could catch an occasional amore or traditore, he could gather enough of the plot to keep him in his seat.

But the comedies rely a good deal on "recitative," a type of conversation in sing-song fashion. These recitatives carry along the plot and prepare for the solos, duets, trios, etc. In total, they may account for half the duration of an opera. Therefore, in order to follow the story, it is essential to understand the recitatives. Mozart's Don Giovanni is an excellent example of the makeup of an operatic comedy. The Don talks at great length to Leporello. The two plan seductions, outline stratagems, characterize the other personages in the opera, abuse each other. In short, they keep the action in perspective by means of recitative. And if you don't understand what they are saying, you miss not only the unfolding of the story, but you also miss the sophisticated wit of the Don and Leporello.

In my sixteen years as music critic of The World and The New York Post, I watched and noted down the reaction of American audiences to Don Giovanni, The Marriage of Figaro, The Barber of Seville, and other operatic comedies. The audiences sat in stony silence, emitting self-conscious guffaws only when one character kicked another in the behind. On the other hand, at the performances of these operas that I witnessed in Milan, Paris, Copenhagen, and Moscow, I heard the hearty, spontaneous laughter of audiences who understood the words and appreciated the jokes, screams, innuendos, and verbal tiffs in the recitatives.

My days as a newspaper critic came to an end in 1941 when I became the General Musical Director at the National Broadcasting Company. It was in the course of my work there that the time came when I saw my way to do something about opera in English. In 1949, I met Dr. Peter Herman Adler, a conductor and musicologist who not only shared my enthusiasm for opera in our own language but who was already successfully experimenting with it. Dr. Adler had obtained some decent translations of scenes from the standard operas and had coached a number of young American singers in their parts. Among these youngsters, incidentally, were two unknowns, Mario Lanza and George London. Dr. Adler put his singers through some scenes from The Ban-
lered Bride, The Barber of Seville, and La Bohème. Without benefit of scenery, costumes and props, the singers managed to create the illusion of comedy and drama, and in language that was understandable. A week later, the scenes were repeated before a small assembly of musicians and music lovers. Among those present were Artur Rubinstein, Jascha Heifetz, and General David Sarnoff. I saw that they were as moved and impressed as I had been. Indeed, they agreed that the new and rapidly developing medium of television would provide an ideal stage for opera in England. I obtained General Sarnoff's consent to experiment with TV presentations of excerpts in English from the standard repertoire. This was the beginning of a movement that was to build a great new opera audience of ten million viewers on television and to spur as never before the production of opera in English throughout the country.

We began at NBC with fifteen-minute segments of the more popular operas. Television was then in its infancy, and our little excerpts were, by our present standards, poor indeed. Yet, they interested people, and we began to get congratulatory letters. Encouraged by this appreciation, we stretched the fifteen minutes to half an hour. At that point, we paused to take a good look at our past accomplishments and at our future hopes. And after we examined our old kinescopes, we realized that our presentations suffered from old-fashioned acting, staging, and scenery. We could see that before opera could become as popular in America as it was in Europe, a completely new approach would be required. Because the TV camera brought the story and the cast right into the living room, a new type of opera singer—one who at once looked more attractive and authentic—was necessary. The close-up is the destroyor of illusion, and casting for television is most unlike casting for the stage.

We therefore began to seek out good-looking people who also had good voices. It was a most unrewarding effort at first, and once or twice we were driven to dub in the voices of singers behind suitably cast actors. In 1954, we did Strauss' Salome, which called for a thin, emaciated John the Baptist and a slender, emotionally charged princess. The usual ponderous baritone and iron-lunged percheron-like soprano of the opera house would not do for TV. After a long search for a qualified baritone, we gave up and settled for a dubbing. We showed on the TV screen the slender, attractive young movie actor John Cassavetes as John the Baptist, but dubbed in the voice of Norman Atkins. In Elaine Malbin's, however, we had the ideal singing-acting Salome. Our production of the lurid one-act was a considerable success, eliciting enthusiastic praise from press and public.

In our 1957 production of Prokofiev's War and Peace—the only production of this notable work in America—we had to wait till the very week of our first stage rehearsal before we found the ideal singer for the part of Natasha. For weeks we had looked at and listened to many aspirants for the role. Then, when we were about to give up, a totally unknown young woman walked in to apply for an audition, and I saw in her face and figure the Natasha of the opera and of Tolstoy's novel. If only she could sing! We gave her the score and she sang a few pages at sight beautifully. Helena Scott was her name, and we engaged her for the role then and there.

Because of casting difficulties such as these, we are sometimes obliged to postpone or even shelve an announced opera production. But these difficulties are becoming less each year. As if in answer to the exacting demands of television, a new kind of opera singer has been emerging: young, comely, conscious of the emotional exigencies of opera, and willing to work hard to achieve believable characterizations. Although it is true that the Metropolitan Opera House is always filled, the era of old-fashioned opera, with its accent on vocalism and its reliance on the large, vague gesture and pompous stride, will presently be ushered out.

Not casting alone, but stage décor for television opera presented special problems, and there were sometimes errors of judgment that had to be rectified at considerable trouble and expense. To cite an instance: on the day before we televised Leonard Bernstein's Trouble in Tahiti, we realized that some of the sets were not just right for this ironic little satire on Suburbia. A crew of painters worked through the night, and by morning, we had scenery to our satisfaction. When we set out to do Puccini's Gianni Schicchi, our first decision was to create a realistic replica of an ancient Florentine house. But after the plans were drawn, I felt that realistic scenery would not provide the medieval atmosphere we were after. So the drawings were scrapped, and the
comedy was televised with no scenery at all. This left the Florentine house and Florence itself to the imagination of our viewers, many of whom wrote to congratulate us on our having left the décor to them.

In the eleven years of the existence of the NBC Opera, we have televised forty-two works. Six were world premieres, two were American "firsts." Five were commissioned by NBC. Twelve were original works to English text, while thirty were English translations from Italian, German, French, and Russian. In Joseph Machis, we found an adept translator. John Gutman and the team of Ruth and Thomas Martin gave us, respectively, translations of Tosca and Cost fan Tutte, while the poets W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman contributed versions, rather than translations, of The Magic Flute and Don Giovanni. In Kirk Browning, we have had an unusually sensitive and truly imaginative stage and camera director.

NBC's opera department, with its inflexible emphasis on diction, musicality and naturalistic stage deportment, has served, and is serving, as a school for young singers. It gave Leontyne Price her first chance at opera, and has seen fit to engage a popular opera star only once, when it invited Cesare Siepi to appear in Don Giovanni.

We are among the few organizations (perhaps we are the only organization) which have literally adopted Hamlet's advice to the players. Opera is music-drama or musical-comedy; at its finest, words and music in opera are indivisible. No aria was ever created in terms of music alone, not the noble "Che faro senza Euridice" in Gluck's Orfeo, nor the "Un bel di" in Madama Butterfly. They were designed to advance the action, to highlight the story. When they are sung unmusically, that is, for effect or display, they retard the story. When artists take liberties with the music, when their diction is bad or hazy, and when they sing in a language that is incomprehensible to their audience, they mar and sometimes even destroy the composer's design.

Television, which has had and is having a powerful influence on our civilization, has not been without effect on the production of opera. The TV camera has destroyed the old, sentimental image of grand opera as a vocal bout between celebrated singers. The camera is merciless; it detects false sentiment, grandiloquence, histrionic deficiencies, as
Florestan (John Alexander) sings of hope for freedom and reunion with Leonora in the 1939 production of Fidelio.

well as vocal blemishes. Because of TV's all-seeing eye, we are obliged to select our casts on the basis of vocal, physical, and histrionic endowment. And our style of staging and décor, added to English translations, are restoring the old operas to their original effectiveness and giving new operas the fluidity and flexibility of cinematic productions.

The National Broadcasting Company has generously footed the ever-mounting bills for our modern TV opera "spectaculars." Even more important has been the completely free hand the Company has given us to do what we considered best in the choice of repertoire, the commissioning of networks, the casting, décor, direction and whatever else goes into the presentation of music-drama.

Divorced from the snob appeal of foreign tongues, operas on TV have the direct appeal of a first-rate Broadway show. Our audience no longer has to wonder what Tosca says to Scarpia or what Don Giovanni confides to Leporello; and they hear these things sung exactly as the composers wished to have them sung, by a cast whose members are suited to their roles both vocally and physically.

With television pointing the way, live opera will have to become as natural, as convincing as we in the television studio have labored to make it. Towards that desirable end, live opera must accept the inevitability of English translations or versions, and it must even attempt to create an intimacy similar to that which television has brought to opera—by building smaller, rather than larger, opera houses. Then and then only, will opera become an integral part of the American scene.

Samuel Chotzinoff turned his attentions from the concert violin to music journalism more than three decades ago. He first wrote magazine articles and ultimately became a music critic for The New York Post, and later, for The New York Post. His success, in 1936, in persuading Maestro Toscanini to return to retirement to lead the NBC Symphony led to his full-time career in broadcasting, and he was appointed General Music Director of NBC in 1941. His role in establishing and developing the NBC TV Opera Company represents the major portion of his professional life.

THE NBC TV OPERA PRODUCTIONS

1949-50 (experimental season)
Scenes from: The Barber of Seville—Rossini
The Bartered Bride—Smetana
La Bohème (Act IV)—Puccini
The Old Maid and the Thief—Menotti
(NBC Radio Commission)

1950-51
Down in the Valley—Weill
(Recorded—RCA Victor, collector's item)
Madama Butterfly—Puccini
The Bar—J. Strauss
Tales of Hoffmann—Offenbach
Carmen—Bizet
Hansel and Gretel—Humperdinck
Gianni Schicchi—Puccini

1951-52
Pagliacci—Leoncavallo
R.S.V.P. (Monsieur Choufleur)—Offenbach
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
(NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
(Recorded—RCA Victor)
Pique-Dame—Tchaikovsky
Il Tabarro—Puccini
The Barber of Seville—Rossini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Gianni Schicchi—Puccini

1952-53
Billy Budd—Britten
(American Premiere)

1953-54
Carmen—Bizet
Macbeth—Verdi
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
The Marriage of Figaro—Mozart
The Taming of the Shrew—Giansone
Pelleas and Melisande—Debussy
Salome—R. Strauss

1954-55
Abduction from the Seraglio—Mozart
Sister Angelica—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Tosca—Puccini
The Merry-Go-Round—Dvořák—R. Strauss
The Saint of Bleecker Street—Menotti
(Recorded—RCA Victor)

1955-56
Grieffkin—Foss
(NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
Madama Butterfly—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
The Magic Flute—Mozart
The Trial at Rouen—Dello Joio
(World Premiere)

1956-57
La Bohème—Puccini
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
War and Peace—Prokofiev
(American Premiere)
La Grande Bretagne—Hollingsworth
(NBC TV Commission—World Premiere)
La Traviata—Verdi

1957-58
Dialogues of the Carmelites—Poulenc
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Rigoletto—Verdi
Cosi Fan Tutte—Mozart

1959-60
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Maria Golovin—Menotti
(NBC TV Commission—Brussels Fair World Premiere)
(Recorded—RCA Victor)

1959-60
Fidelio—Beethoven
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
Cavalleria Rusticana—Mascagni
Don Giovanni—Mozart

1960-61 (tentative schedule)
Amahl and the Night Visitors—Menotti
(Dec. 25, 1960)
Desert—Kastig
(World Premiere Jan. 1, 1961)
Boris Godounov—Moussorgsky
(Mar. 26, 1961)

HIFI/STEREO
In October, HiFi/STEREO REVIEW began a new series designed to help those of our readers who lack specialized technical backgrounds to get the best value for their hi-fi dollars. The first article dealt with complete stereo systems costing in the vicinity of $550. Those considered here run some $200 less. They do not, of course, attain the naturalness of sound that is the hallmark of more expensive systems, but they do produce musically satisfying results. Each of the three systems presented here proves that good stereo is possible on a budget.

Since there are few absolutes in describing the texture and color of musical sound, individual preference plays an important part in any choice of components. We have therefore not attempted to designate any one system as “the best.” Instead, we confine ourselves to selecting three component combinations within a given price range which meet the requirements of musically commendable reproduction.

Carefully pre-matched economy components to give you more sound for the money

If you have a thousand dollars to spend, getting good stereo is no trick at all. But those with limited budgets will be encouraged to learn that satisfying sound can be had for considerably less, though the success of an “economy system” hinges on matching up just the right components. Many relatively inexpensive amplifiers, speakers, and cartridges, in spite of necessary economies in their manufacture, have some particular virtues in which they excel. By carefully selecting components with the right combination of characteristics, one can achieve an overall level of reproduction approaching that usually expected of more expensive equipment.

For instance, amplifiers with an output of 12 to 15 watts per channel can produce excellent sound providing they are teamed up with high-efficiency loudspeakers. Another example: while budget speaker X may have fine, smooth highs, it may be somewhat weak in the bass. Pickup Y, conversely, may have mediocre highs but a sturdy bass response. But these two in combination will complement each other, and the result can be good overall sound. On the other hand, had you teamed speaker X with a cartridge that had strong highs and weak lows, the resultant sound would be very unpleasant: shrill highs and thin bass.

The three systems suggested here are the result of many hours of mixing and matching in an attempt to fit every component into a complete system which brings out its best.
in System No. 1, for example, the Altec Lansing 835-A loudspeakers have plenty of treble but are a bit bass-shy. The Electro-Voice Model 31-MD cartridge, on the other hand, has extremely good bass response and moderate highs. Separately, each has limitations; together they provide good coverage of the entire audio spectrum.

To go further, which amplifier would best suit this speaker-cartridge combination? Logically, an amplifier with an exceptional bass response to reinforce the lows. Following this line of thought, the Heath WSA-2 was tried with these two units since our lab tests had shown it to have good low-frequency performance. But this amplifier, in combination with the other two components, didn't sound quite right. The particular shape of the curve of its bass-boost circuit did not fit with the response curve produced by the cartridge-speaker combination. Another amplifier, however, the EICO HF-81, turned out to be just about perfect in this context because of its slightly different tone-control action.

Thus, careful matching of components in the budget field becomes vitally important. But while the job of selecting a truly well-sounding system of low-cost components is difficult, it is by no means impossible.

The three systems presented here are, as mentioned, the result of painstaking machining, mixing, and selecting of components by the HiFi/STEREO Review staff. In addition, a listening panel of four distinguished judges has evaluated the overall quality of each of the three complete systems.

(Continued on page 44)
AND PARTICULARS...

this bit of trickery with a unique indexing device which is a little startling when you see it work. The arm sets down near the center of the disc, then rolls toward the outer edge on a pair of small wheels. When it hits the outer edge it falls off, stops, picks itself up, and lowers itself gently into the first groove.

The Glaser-Steers GS-77 changer can also play intermixed records of various sizes; but for automatic operation, the records must be of standard size. A unique feature of this unit is that it automatically selects the proper speed for playing either 33⅓-rpm or 45-rpm records.

The Thorens TD-134—the only manual player in the lineup—does have one automatic feature: it stops automatically at the end of each record. This player, by the way, is the only one of the group that has a speed-adjustment control to compensate for line-voltage variations and other factors that cause records to turn slightly off-speed.

Although all the amplifiers are rated at 14 watts per channel, each has operating features not offered by the other two units. The Heath WSA-2, for example, is the only one that has a phasing switch. On the others, to change phase, it is necessary to disconnect and reverse the speaker leads. The WSA-2 is also the only unit that has filament balance controls, usually helpful in reducing hum. The EICO HF-81's main operational virtue is its multiplicity of inputs: three sets of high-level inputs, and three sets of low-level inputs—equalized for microphone, tape heads, and magnetic phono cartridges.

The Bell 2418 amplifier has the simplest control panel and it is also the only amplifier with a separate on-off switch, a very desirable feature. The other two amplifiers have the on-off switch ganged with the treble control, making it necessary to re-set the treble control each time the units are turned on.

Of the speakers used, the Jensen is a three-way system, the others are two-way speakers. Both the Wharfdale '60 and Jensen TF-3 have tweeter level controls at the back of their cabinets. These allow you to increase or decrease the treble output.
The Listening Jury’s Verdict

The ultimate test of any sound system lies in its listening quality. Consequently, the systems were presented under home-like listening conditions to the judgment of an expert listening jury.

The records played were chosen to reveal the ability of the three systems to reproduce different types of music. Prokofiev’s Alexander Nevsky, in the new recording by the Chicago Symphony under Fritz Reiner (RCA Victor LSC 2395), gave an indication of the systems’ behavior under the onslaught of massive orchestral and choral combinations. Haydn’s Symphony No. 94, played by the Vienna Philharmonic (London CS 6027), revealed the systems’ ability to render lighter textures with sufficient clarity and definition of individual instruments. Brahms’ Quartet for Piano and Strings Op. 60 (RCA Victor LSC 6068) put the spotlight on solo strings and the transient characteristics of piano sound.

Of the three systems auditioned, the jury members generally agreed that System No. 1 was the most brilliant. Goodfriend called it a “demonstration” type sound. “Bright” was another word used to describe it. Said DeMotte, “[It] will appeal to the listener who enjoys a lively ‘zingy’ type of sound.” Cohn felt it furnished reasonable fidelity, but the sound was a little too bright for him. He did point out, however, that the brasses registered particularly well. Snitzer agreed about the system’s bright quality. As to what type of music sounded best on System No. 1, there was no unanimity of opinion. Snitzer reported that the orchestral texture of the Haydn symphony showed the system at its best. Goodfriend, on the other hand, felt that the overall brilliance was best suited for the full orchestral and choral passages of Alexander Nevsky.

System No. 3 represented the other extreme in the fairly unanimous opinions of the judges. Terms like “full” and “rich” typified the reactions to this system. Although System No. 3 did not have the brightness of the first system, it had a very satisfying sound. Said Snitzer, who had been somewhat critical of the brilliance of System No. 1, “For those who want a sweet, pleasant-to-listen-to system, this would fill the bill.” The strings, he said, were sweet, not edgy. Goodfriend commented, “Not brilliant, but solid. Sounds better than one would expect for the size and money.” Cohn commented particularly on the piano sound, which he found had “good quality” and sounded “acceptably real.” “This system,” he continued, “is well balanced and it affords a logical, representative picture of various types of music.” DeMotte called it “well balanced,” with “excellent depth.”

System No. 2 was somewhere between No. 1 and No. 3 in “sound personality.” It was neither as bright as No. 1, nor as rich as No. 3, being perhaps the most neutral system, adding less of its own particular color to the music than either of the other two. Cohn said, “The orchestral sound is well distributed. Both orchestra and chorus are full and resonant.” Snitzer found that it had “good overall balance and separation.” The quartet, he felt, had particularly good presence. “Generally,” he said, “[the system provides] acceptable sound for the money.” Goodfriend, who had been most impressed by the brilliance of System No. 1, found System No. 2 less brilliant. He characterized the sound as having a “mellow” feeling. “Strings,” he said, “are smooth and listenable.” DeMotte also noted the system’s “mellow” sound and remarked on its good balance.

DeMotte, in addition to his comments on the individual systems, made these general observations. “Each of the three systems delivers sound that is basically realistic. A violin sounds like a violin, a piano like a piano, an oboe like an oboe. But each of the systems has its own ‘personality,’ just as every piano has an individual sound and every concert hall an individual coloration.”

“At normal listening levels, none of the systems developed any objectionable distortion. However, when the chorus and orchestra of Alexander Nevsky reached climatic moments, a sense of constriction did become evident. As these moments of massed sound are relatively infrequent, this is not a serious flaw, particularly as the remainder of the music had admirable clarity and transparency.

“It would take a commercial ‘package’ console costing at least $600 or $700 to equal the fidelity of any of these systems. Even then, the ‘package’ would not have as much operational flexibility, and undoubtedly the stereo spread and separation would be decidedly inferior.”

In summary, the following facts can be drawn from the jury members’ comments. Though each system was considered acceptable, the three were clearly different in tonal character. No. 1 was by a good margin the brightest, No. 3 the richest or fullest, and No. 2 pretty well taking the middle ground. It might be well to point out here that the tone controls of the various amplifiers were not, for the most part, in their neutral positions during the listening tests. They were, instead, adjusted to give the most natural sound in the room in which the tests took place. This means, for example, that in System No. 1, the treble control was turned down slightly. In System No. 2, the bass control was turned up slightly and the treble was adjusted to about the 3 o’clock position. System No. 3 had both highs and lows turned up to about the 3 o’clock position.

If you purchase one of these systems, the tone-control settings as outlined above can be used as rough guides for preliminary adjustment. Remember, though, that personal preference plays a large part in determining the “correct” settings. In addition, the acoustic character of the room in which the equipment is installed and even the equipment placement within the room affect the sound quality and balance to a far larger extent than is usually appreciated. So start out, if you wish, by setting the tone controls as outlined above, but make the final adjustments to your own taste.
**ANALYSIS OF LISTENING COMMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM NO. 1</th>
<th>Cohn</th>
<th>DeMotte</th>
<th>Goodfriend</th>
<th>Snitzer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>A reasonable amount of fidelity.</td>
<td>Will appeal to the listener who enjoys a lively &quot;zingy&quot; type of sound.</td>
<td>Quite brilliant.</td>
<td>Very bright, occasionally &quot;blurry&quot; separation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartet</td>
<td>Fair to good. Piano lacks richness and depth.</td>
<td>String and piano tone very bright.</td>
<td>Strings rather thin. The brightness of the system shows up to best advantage here.</td>
<td>Strings somewhat wavy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM NO. 2</th>
<th>Cohn</th>
<th>DeMotte</th>
<th>Goodfriend</th>
<th>Snitzer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quartet</td>
<td>A little rough in the low register.</td>
<td>Piano tone solid.</td>
<td>Good piano sound and good separation.</td>
<td>For those who want a sweet, pleasant-to-listen system, this would fill the bill. Rich and full sound.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM NO. 3</th>
<th>Cohn</th>
<th>DeMotte</th>
<th>Goodfriend</th>
<th>Snitzer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>This system is well balanced and fits a logical, representative picture of the various types of music.</td>
<td>Satisfying fullness. Well-balanced bass and treble. Excellent rhythm.</td>
<td>Not brilliant but solid. Sounds better than one would expect for the price and money.</td>
<td>Smooth and rich-sounding, but a feeling of heaviness in the low bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chorus &amp; Orchestra</td>
<td>General, sound of rich quality.</td>
<td>Nice blending of instruments.</td>
<td>Excellent separation. Highs a little subdued but adequate. Instrumental color excellent.</td>
<td>For those who want a sweet, pleasant-to-listen system, this would fill the bill. Rich and full sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartet</td>
<td>Reasonable balance. Piano has good quality, sounds acceptably real.</td>
<td>Piano tone rounded and resonant.</td>
<td>Generally quite good. Strings nicely full, not edgy. Good &quot;body&quot; in piano sound.</td>
<td>Sweet violin tone; piano a little heavy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Milton S. Snitzer is presently Technical Editor of our associate publication, Electronics World. He has designed many hi-fi systems, and he continues to maintain an active interest in the field. Arthur Cohn looks back on a multi-talented career as composer, violinist, and music educator. As the organizer and first violinist of the Dorian Quartet, he toured the country for many years until he traded concert life for the equally hectic job of a music-publishing executive. James Goodfriend is a composer, arranger, and music editor. His professional work ranges from editing and restoring obscure Baroque scores to writing special music for the concert tours of TV's Captain Kangaroo. He is currently the recording director for Baraee Productions, Inc. Warren DeMotte is a member of HiFi/STereo Review's record review staff, and author/editor of the Long Playing Record Guide. Married to a concert pianist, Ida Hartman, he has ample opportunity to compare "live" and recorded music.

Members of the jury (from left to right): Warren DeMotte, Arthur Cohn, Milton S. Snitzer, and James Goodfriend.
Thus, each of the systems has passed the stiffest test possible: that of pleasing the educated ear. This is not to say that all three systems sound alike. They do not. Each has its own characteristic sound, or flavor. Our judges, for example, while agreeing that all were musically acceptable, disagreed in many details.

If you are preparing to purchase equipment in this general price range, the best procedure would obviously be for you to hear all the systems for yourself. If you live in a large city where a high-fidelity dealer has the proper demonstration equipment in his showroom, by all means avail yourself of his services. Since this will not be possible for many of our readers, we hope that our jurors' remarks on page 43 may furnish some guidance. While reading these comments can't take the place of hearing the equipment yourself, they may convey some idea of the differences between the three systems and help you decide which one is most likely to satisfy your personal taste.

In high-fidelity equipment—as in most fields—it is belaboring the point to say that, in general, you get what you pay for. Naturally, no economy system is capable of the unobtrusive naturalness that is characteristic of higher-priced audio systems. But we believe that stereo systems costing about $350 are capable of musically pleasing sound.

A word of caution is in order. The three systems discussed here are the result of considerable experimentation, as mentioned earlier. Of course, these may not be the only possible combinations to result in good sound. Others that would sound equally good could perhaps be found. But any change in the recommended groupings should be undertaken with extreme care so that the overall result will not suffer.

The one component in the lineup that can be substituted more or less at will is the turntable. Of the three recommended units, two are changers and one is a manual table with an automatic turn-off that stops the motor at the end of the record. All are quality units with reasonably lowumble. However, compared to the costlier "professional-type" tone-arm and turntable combinations, their rumble level is generally higher, and more stylus pressure is necessary for good tracking. Although the specifications of some of the record players indicated that they would track at less than two grams stylus pressure, none of the three units demonstrated at their best when adjusted for this extremely light pressure. While the stylus would stay in the groove and the automatic mechanisms would trip at a gram and a half, distortion appeared and the sound was erratic in loud passages. For really adequate tracking of heavily modulated passages, all of the units required stylus pressures from 4 to 5 grams.

Since all three units have convenient stylus-pressure adjustments, there is no difficulty in obtaining the optimum setting. The Dual changer has a built-in stylus-pressure gauge which is quite accurate. For the adjustment of the other units, the use of an accessory stylus-pressure gauge is recommended to insure that the tracking pressure never exceeds 6 grams. Pressure beyond this point would unduly hasten stylus and record wear.
a forum for dispensing with the most common—and often the most unique—problems of stereo hi fi

by J. Gordon Holt

Terribly Old Speeds

A record collector friend of mine descended upon me yesterday with a pile of ancient acoustic discs and a request that I put them all on tape for him. Some of them seem to be in pretty good condition—which is to say I can hear the music through the scratch—but they all seem to be off pitch. I have a vernier speed control on my turntable, so I can adjust the speed of each record, but I can’t figure out what speed they were recorded at. Any ideas about this?

W. D. Temmer
Baltimore, Md.

There was no standard speed for disc records until around 1925, at which time the 78-rpm speed was adopted by practically everybody. Prior to that time, a disc was likely to be cut at any speed from 70 to 82 rpm, and it was anybody’s guess as to which disc was cut at what speed.

If you want to do the job right, your best bet would be to find out the correct musical pitch of each piece of music and adjust the record’s speed until it plays in that pitch. You can only cross your fingers and hope that not too many of them were transposed into keys other than those in which they were written.

If you don’t read music, you might be able to locate some modern recordings of some of the musical works, and match the pitch of the old discs to these.

FM and Static

How does an FM radio transmission manage to filter out static and electrical interference without also filtering out the treble tones of the program material?

John Watters
Los Angeles, Calif.

No such filtering is involved. By its very nature, FM is, in theory, immune to static. The reasons for this can be outlined as follows:

A conventional amplitude-modulation (AM) transmission consists of a carrier signal of fixed frequency, which varies in intensity in accordance to the audio impulses superimposed on it at the broadcast station. The AM receiver, when tuned to this frequency, picks up the carrier wave, separates its intensity changes from it, and reproduces them as audible vibrations, or sound.

An FM signal, however, is of constant frequency only when no audio signal is being transmitted. When a program is transmitted, the carrier shifts back and forth across its central frequency, increasing and decreasing in frequency with each audio impulse. The FM receiver, tuned to the carrier’s center frequency, converts its frequency shifts into electrical impulses which correspond to the original audio signals, and reproduces them.

Lightning, electric motor interference, and the other sources of noise on AM radio consist of electrical impulses which are variations in intensity rather than in frequency. While the intensity-sensitive AM receiver picks them up and reproduces them as noise, a good FM tuner simply doesn’t respond to them at all.

Heavy Noises

A catalogue sheet I picked up at a recent audio show lists two sets of specifications for the signal-to-noise ratio of a tape recorder. One column is headed “Unweighted Noise” and the other “Weighted Noise,” and there’s almost 10 db difference between the figures. Which measurement should be followed when shopping for a tape recorder?

Gary Wallace
Chicago, III.

To determine the unweighted noise figure, the recorder’s background noise—high-pitched noises, low-pitched noises, and middle-range noises—is measured in the absence of a recorded signal. The combined value of these noises is then compared with the maximum volume that can be recorded and reproduced from the tape. The resulting figure, expressed in decibels, is the unweighted signal-to-noise ratio.

We know, however, that the human ear has quite bad frequency-response characteristics at low volume levels, being less sensitive to bass and treble tones than it is to mid-range ones. So if a recorder’s noise is concentrated in the bass and treble ranges (as it generally is), its audible noise will be lower than the measurements would indicate. For this reason, noise measurements are sometimes “weighted” by applying hearing-characteristics curves to them, to give a figure which is more representative of how loud the noise will seem to the human ear. This, incidentally, makes the signal-to-noise ratio figures look better.

If you’re in the habit of shopping from specification sheets, remember that while unweighted signal-to-noise specifications are directly comparable, weighted ones may not be, because different manufacturers may apply different weighting corrections.

Hop, Skip and Stop

Whenever the tone arm of my record player lands on the record, it skips a few grooves, comes to a stop, skips again, and by the time it has settled down, I’ve missed the first five minutes or so of music.

The problem doesn’t appear to be due to record warpage. Do you have any other suggestions?

Philip H. Balinghoff
Camden, N. J.

It sounds as if you might be trying to play your microgroove discs with a standard 78-rpm stylus, a badly worn stylus, or no stylus at all. (The last suggestion isn’t as unlikely as it sounds; a detached stylus will often leave behind it a small hunk of glue that is enough to hold the armature in the groove occasionally.)

Other possibilities include a badly tilted phono unit, twisted or tight arm cables, or, in the case of a record changer, failure of the mechanism to release the tone arm when it should.

We will assume that you have already checked to make sure your trouble isn’t simply due to a large accumulation of dust on the stylus.

Acoustic-Suspension Speakers

What is the principle behind the so-called acoustic-suspension loudspeaker system?

Bill Tolland
St. Louis, Mo.

Every loudspeaker cone must have some provision for returning it to its at-rest position between in-and-out movements. In most loudspeakers, most of this restoring force is supplied by a mechanical suspension. The remainder of the restoring force is contributed by compression of air inside the speaker’s enclosure.

In the acoustic-suspension system, however, the cone has a very light mechanical suspension which supplies only a small amount of the necessary restoring force. Most of the restoring force comes from the elasticity of the air trapped inside the speaker’s small, airtight enclosure.

This technique has two main advantages: First, the air’s elasticity is much more uniform than is the elasticity of the materials generally used for suspending the cone in its frame, so the acoustic-suspension speaker’s response is linear when the cone is making long excursions. And second, the small enclosure made feasible by the acoustic-suspension system happens to be easier to fit into the average living room than is the much larger enclosure required by other systems of comparable low-frequency performance.
Mr. Thornton's evaluation, to which Bookspan adds special kudos in the interpretive department, "...a masterful account of this massive work...combining melting lyricism with heroic grandeur."

Bookspan and Thornton are also of one mind in their pick of London's recording of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and a pair of horn concertos with Peter Maag conducting London Symphony soloists and orchestra (CS 6178; GM 9247). "Peter Maag continues to impress me as the leading young Mozart conductor of the day," is reviewer Bookspan's summation.

The Sibelius Violin Concerto is yet another Bookspan-Thornton pick, although they disagree as to the ultimate choice. Bookspan prefers Heifetz with Walter Hendl and the Chicago Symphony (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2435), and Thornton's choice is Oistrakh with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6157: ML 5492).

Additional pickings in the concerto field come from Mr. Thornton, who calls the new Isaac Stern-Eugene Ormandy version of the Brahms Violin Concerto "a dream performance, stunningly recorded" (Columbia MS 6155: ML 5486); and from David Hall, who has received pleasure from Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 1 (Bartók 519), with Leonid Hambro doing a stunning solo job and Robert Mann (of Juilliard Quartet fame) conducting the Zimbler Sinfonietta of Boston Symphony players.

Other orchestral recordings that rated high with the reviewers included Thurston Dart's recording for Oscaull-Lyre of the complete Handel Water Music (SOL 60010 OL 50178), Fritz Reiner's brilliant reading of the "stereoscored" Bartók Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2374), and Mercury's second volume of British Band Classics, in which Frederick Fennell's Eastman Wind Ensemble offers a superb concert of music by...
A year-end roundup of opinion

from HiFi/Stereo Review’s

record critics

OF 1960

William Byrd, Gustav Holst, and William Walton (SR 90197; MG 50197). Not to be forgotten is the marvelous Arthur Fiedler-Boston Pops collection of favorites titled Everything but the Beer (complete with beer mugs) on RCA Victor LSC/LM 6082. John Thornton calls this “the best recording, technically, ever realized by Fiedler.”

In the realm of solo instrumental recordings, Artur Rubinstein’s album of Chopin Ballades impresses both Warren DeMotte and David Hall as being in a class alone. The 73-year-old virtuoso plays these romantic masterworks with youthful fervor on RCA Victor LSC/LM 2370.

Excepting the Rubinstein recording, the solo instrumental scene was dominated by the Bach keyboard repertoire. Warren DeMotte selected the Six Partitas done on the harpsichord by Ralph Kirkpatrick for DG Archive (ARC 73129/31; Mono 3129/31), while Mr. Thornton preferred pianist Glenn Gould doing the Partitas Nos. 1 & 2 and the Italian Concerto (Columbia MS 6141; ML 5472).

Other classical “bests” included two selections from the low-priced catalog: the Schubert piano sonatas recorded by Friedrich Wührer (Warren DeMotte’s selection), issued as three-disc Vox Boxes VBX 9 and VBX 10, and the famous Vaclav Talich readings of the complete Dvořák Slavonic Dances, released as a two-record Parliament set (album 121—picked by David Hall). Thus, it is clear that careful selection will enable the knowledgeable collector to assemble a library of remarkable items from $1.98 catalogs, particularly re-issues of pre-stereo recordings.

The potency of stereophonic sound when applied to opera is demonstrated by the fact that four out of the seven best concert-music recordings that received more than one critical vote were operas in stereo. The roster is headed by RCA Victor’s presentation of Puccini’s unfinished masterpiece, Turandot (LSC/LM 6149), with its fabulous cast of Nilsson, Tebaldi, the late Jussi Björling, and Giorgio Tozzi, plus Erich Leinsdorf conducting the Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra. “Exemplary in every respect. Perfect cast, exciting direction, fine recording and production,” is the comment of opera expert George Jellinek. Martin Bookspan, David Randolpgh, and David Hall also put the RCA Turandot on their “year’s-best” lists. David Hall and Martin Bookspan also singled out London’s vivid stereo recording of Peter Grimes, Benjamin Britten’s tale of life and death in an Anglian fishing village (OSA 1305; A 3432). Mr. Bookspan describes it as being “… a masterpiece of the contemporary operatic literature. And the recording under the composer’s direction is magnificent.”

On Mr. Jellinek’s list of 1960 operatic “bests” is another London album, OSA 1313; A 1313, the complete Verdi Aida, starring Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Simionato, and MacNeil, with Herbert von Karajan directing the Vienna Philharmonic. “A stereo tour de force. Karajan’s conducting is individual but very impressive. Tebaldi, Simionato, Bergonzi, and MacNeil are in exceptionally fine form.” David Hall is in agreement with Jellinek’s evaluation and adds that the London 4-track tape (LOR 90015), from which he heard this recorded performance, is superb.

An unexpected multiple choice (by Jellinek and Bookspan) from the year’s recorded operas is Giovanni Paisiello’s Barber of Seville in its recording premiere by Mercury (SR 2-9010; OL 2-110). Paisiello’s score, which antedated Rossini’s more famous one by nearly 35 years, is a delight and is reviewed in detail by George Jellinek in this issue. Mr. Bookspan notes it as “a sparkling pre-Marriage of Figaro opera which seems to have influenced Mozart profoundly. Its disc debut is stunning.”

Other operatic recordings deserving of special praise, in the estimation of David Hall, were Purcell’s King Arthur
Critic's Choices for 1960

MARTIN BOOKSPAN

Dvořák: Requiem—Soloists, Chorus.
Czech Philharmonic, Karel Ancerl cond.
(DGG 186026/7; mono 18547/8)

Puccini: Turandot—Nilsson, Tebaldi. Bjoerling,
Tozzi, Rome Opera, Erich Leinsdorf cond.
(RCA Victor LSC/LM 6149)

Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde—Forrester,
Lewis, Chicago Symphony, Fritz Reiner cond.
(RCA Victor LSC/LM 6087)

LIST: A Faust Symphony—Royal-Philharmonic,
Sir Thomas Beecham cond. (Capitol
SGBR/GBR 7197)

on Oiseau-Lyre (SOL 60008/9; OL 50176/7) and the
sparking Prague National Theater performance of Smetana's
The Bartered Bride (Artia S 82; mono 83). Warren De-
Motte particularly liked the Bixit Nilson excerpts from
Wagner's "Tristan" (London OS 25138; mono 5557).

Turning now to the field of jazz, only one recording got
the nod from two or more of HiFi/Stereo Review's critics.
Both Nat Hentoff and Ralph J. Gleason singled out
Sketches of Spain, the remarkable collaboration on Colum-
bia CS 8271; CL 1480 between trumpeter Miles Davis and
arranger Gil Evans. "I doubt that any jazz musician has
produced work of more lasting value than this," was the
way Gleason hailed the album in his November review, to
which Hentoff adds his comment that the recording repre-
sents "an unprecedented blending of Spanish timbres and
melismatic phrasing with the jazz language."

As for some of their other picks, Hentoff put in a bid for
the controversial Ornette Coleman's Change of the Century
(Atlantic S 1927—stereo and mono). "For all his unortho-
dox ideas," says Hentoff, "Coleman is a fiercely emotional
musician, and this album indicates a further stage of growth
and assurance both in his speech-like playing and in his
dramatic writing."

Despite a violent dissent from Hentoff in the August
HiFi/Stereo Review, Ralph Gleason stuck by his guns in
selecting The Incredible Guitar of Wes Montgomery (Riv-
erside R.I.P. 12-330). "Wes Montgomery is the new star of
the guitar," observed Gleason. "His work is of sufficient
stature to transcend all jazz styles and lield appreciation
from fans of all divisions of jazz."

Other Gleason choices for 1960 include Earl's Pearls with
the veteran pianist, Earl Hines, on MGM S 3892 (stereo
and mono): Mercury's Fascinating Ernestine album with
the young jazz vocal star. Ernestine Anderson (SR 60171/
MG 20492); Verve's Side by Side, with Duke Ellington and
Johnny Hodges (6149; mono 8345); Thelonious Alone in
San Francisco (Riverside 1138/12-312); and Prestige PRLP
7166, Workin' with the Miles Davis Quintet, which, in
Gleason's estimation, is "an example of jazz music produced
but rarely today."

High points of the Nat Hentoff jazz roster for 1960 are
Jazz Contemporary, with trumpeter Kenny Dorham on
Time 2004/52004: the fine Billie Holliday collection on
Verve 8392-2. The Unforgettable Lady Day; and Mingus
Dynasty (Columbia CS 8226; CL 1449). Commented
Hentoff, "It is increasingly clear that Mingus has become
the most explosively original of modern jazz composers."

As might be expected, "pops" LP's of more than fleeting
interest come but rarely in the course of a year's disc out-
put. But Ralph J. Gleason rates Frank Sinatra's Nice 'n'
Easy album (Capitol SW 1417) as one of the best pop songs
collections ever to come along; "Given such good material
as he has in this album, Sinatra can and does make the
definitive recordings of each song."

Stanley Green's choices included singer Anita Darian in
her East of the Sun album for Kapp (KS 3052; KL 1168),
and the latest Yves Montand album for Columbia, An
Evening with Yves Montand (WL 167).

The Broadway show harvest was not as rich this year as
in the immediate past, but Mr. Green highly recommends
Capitol's original cast Fiorello (SWAW/VAO 1521). He
Critic's Choices for 1960

JOHN THORNTON

Handel: Organ Concerti, Op. 4 & 7—Karl Richter
with Orchstra. (London CSA 2302; mono CMA 7302)
Mozart: Clarinet Concerto; Horn Concerti Nos. 1 & 3—Solistos with London Symphony, Peter Maag cond. (London CS 6178; mono CM 9247)
Sibelius: Violin Concerto—David Oistrakh, Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6157; mono ML 5492)
Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9; Prokofiev: Lt. Kije—London Symphony, Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. (Everest SDBR 3054; mono LPBR 5054)
Handel: Water Music—Philomusica Orch., Thurston Dart cond. (Oiseau-Lyre SOL 60010; mono OL 50178)
Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat—Rudolf Serkin, Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6156; mono ML 5486)
Everything but the Beer—Boston Pops, Arthur Fiedler cond. (RCA Victor LSC/LM 6082)
Bach: Italian Concerto & Other Works—Glenn Gould (Columbia MS 6141; mono ML 5472)
Brahms: Violin Concerto—Isaac Stern, Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Columbia MS 6193; ML 5486)

Critic's Choices for 1960

DAVID RANDOLPH

Beethoven: Cello Sonatas—Fournier & Gulda (DGG 138081/3; mono 18601/3)
Mozart: String Quintets Nos. 3-7—Griller Quartet & Primrose (Vanguard VSD 2060/2; mono VRS 1058/4)
Bach: Cantata Arias—Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, (Angel S 35698; mono 35698)
18th Century Flute Duets—Baker & Rampal (Washington 419)
Schubert: "Death and the Maiden" String Quartet—Juilliard Quartet (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2376)
Haydn: Symphonies 99-101—Royal Philharmonic, Sir Thomas Beecham cond. (Capitol SGR 7198; mono CGR 7198)

Critic's Choices for 1960

DAVID HALL

Purcell: King Arthur—Soloists, Chorus, Anthony Lewis cond. (Oiseau-Lyre SOL 60009/9; mono OL 50178/7)
Britten: Peter Grimes—Peter Pears, Covent Garden Royal Opera, Benjamin Britten cond. (London OSA 1805; mono A 4312)
Sessions: Symphony No. 1; Smith: Tetrameron—Japan Philharmonic, Akio Watanabe cond. (CRI 131)
Chopin: Ballades—Artur Rubinstein (RCA Victor LSC/LM 2370)
The Art of Aksel Schiötz (Scandinavian Odeon MOAK 1/5)
Bartók: Piano Concerto No. 1—Leonid Hambro, Zimbalist Sinfinettia, Robert Mann cond. (Bartók 313)
Bach: Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue & Other Works—Wanda Landowska (Angel COLH 71)
Smetana: The Bartered Bride—Prague National Opera (Artia S82; mono 82)
Dvořák: Slavonic Dances—Czech Philharmonic, Vaclav Talich cond. (Parlament 121)
Critic's Choices for 1960

RALPH J. GLEASON

Sketches of Spain—Miles Davis
(Columbia CS 8271; mono CL 1480)

Nice 'n' Easy—Frank Sinatra
(Capitol SW/W 1417)

Earl's Pearls—Earl Hines
(MGM S 3832; mono E 3832)

The Fascinating Ernestine—Ernestine Anderson
(Mercury SR 60171; mono MG 20192)

The Incredible Guitar of Wes Montgomery
(Riverside 1169; mono RLP 12-320)

Thelonious Alone in San Francisco—
(Riverside 1158; mono 12-312)

Workin' with the Miles Davis Quintet
(Prestige 71566)

Side by Side—Johnny Hodges-Duke Ellington
(Verve 6109; mono 8343)

Critic's Choices for 1960

STANLEY GREEN

The Exciting Artistry of Will Holt
(Elektra 7181; mono 121)

Fiorello! (Capitol SWAO/WAO 1321)

East of the Sun—Anita Darian
(Kapp KS 3052; mono KL 1168)

Leave it to Jane (Strand SLS 1002; mono LS 1002)

How the West Was Won—Jimmy Driftwood,
Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney,
(RCA Victor LSO/LOP 6070)

The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart
(Warner Bros. WS/W 1379)

The Andersonville Trial (20th Fox SFX/FOX 4000)

F.D.R. Speaks (Washington W FDR 6)

An Evening with Yves Montand (Columbia WL 167)

Finian's Rainbow (RCA Victor LSO/LOP 1057)

adds that it definitely should be gotten in the stereo version. He was delighted, too, with the spirited revival by RCA Victor of Finian's Rainbow on LSO/LOC 1057. In the show field, he voted for the Strand SLS 1002 album, with its neatly turned version of an early Jerome Kern gem, Leave it to Jane—a "sunny, youthful score . . . as infectious today as it was when first heard 45 years ago."

The folk music repertoire continues to burgeon in all directions. Nat Hentoff's preferences lean definitely toward the grass roots, in that his "best" list includes Lightnin' Hopkins (Tradition 1040, 1085) and the Folkways two-disc anthology of Country Blues (RF 1, RF 201) assembled by author-researcher Sam Charteris from old recordings. Hentoff also pays tribute to singer Olga Coelho, whose collection under the title Xango! (Decca 710018; mono 10018) he acclaims as being "a brilliantly colored survey of Latin-American folk music by an extraordinary singer." Stanley Green also picked a quasi-folk album as one of his favorites: The Exciting Artistry of Will Holt (Elektra EKL 181). He observes, "The bright repertory and intelligent approach mark Holt as an arresting young balladeer."

Both Nat Hentoff and Stanley Green included spoken-word LP's among their year's best choices. Hentoff calls Germaine Monteiro's Lament on the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems and Songs of Federico Garcia Lorca (Vanguard VRS 9053) "the most powerful spoken-word record I have ever heard. Miss Monteiro animates the tender, tragic, terrifying poems of the implacably direct Span-

Critic's Choices for 1960

WARREN DemOTTE

Bach: 6 Partitas for Harpsichord—Ralph Kirkpatrick (DGG Archive ARC 73129/31; mono 3129/31)

Barber: Medea; Capricorn Concerto—Eastman-Rochester Symphony, Howard Hanson cond.
(Mercury SR 90224; mono MG 50224)

Bizet: Carmen—de los Angeles, Gedda,
Paris Radio, Sir Thomas Beecham cond.
(Capitol SGR/GCR 7207)

Boulez: Choral Works—Lamoureux Orch. & Chorus, Igor Markevitch cond.
(Everest SDBR 3059; LPBR 5059)

Brahms: Viola Quintets—Budapest Quartet & Trampler (Columbia MS 6025; mono ML 5281)

Chopin: Ballades—Artur Rubinstein (piano)
(RCA Victor LSC/LMI 2570)

Copland: Dance Symphony—Japan Philharmonic,
Akeo Watanabe cond. (CRI 129)

Schubert: Piano Sonatas—Friedrich Wührer
(Vox Box VBX 9/10)

(London OS 25138; mono 5537)

(Angel S 35681; mono 35681)
Critie’s Choices for 1960

GEORGE JELLINEK


Paisiello: The Barber of Seville—Sciutti, Virtuosi di Roma, Renato Fasano cond. (Mercury SR 2-9110; OL 2-110)

Rossini Arias—Teresa Berganza (London 25106; mono 5514)

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor—Scotto, di Stefano, Bastianini, La Scala Orch., Nino Sanzongo cond. (Mercury SR 2-9008; mono 2-108)

Verdi: Aida—Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Simonato, Vienna Philharmonic, Herbert von Karajan cond. (London OSA 1318; mono A 4149)

Arias in the Great Tradition—Eileen Farrell (Columbia MS 6086; mono ML 5408)

Mad Scenes—Maria Callas (Angel S 35764; mono 35764)

Puccini: La Bohème—Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Tullio Serafin cond. (London OSA 1208; mono A 4256)

ish poet with great artistry and unmistakably honest emotion.” Stanley Green’s choices are the The Andersonville Trial (20th Fox SFX/FOX 4000) with the original Broadway cast and the stirring historical documentation, F.D.R. Speaks (Washington-FDR); this is a fine collection of Franklin Roosevelt’s major speeches from the advent of the New Deal through the harrowing days of World War II.

All told, 1960 brought major additions to the stereo disc repertoire, and it also brought the four-track tape catalog to a point where it can begin to compete with the offerings available on disc. Most important of all, however, has been the general improvement of stereo sound quality all along the line. But let us hope that the coming year will see more qualitative gains, as well as a filling in of the major gaps in the stereo repertoire of concert music, opera, and major Broadway shows.

DECEMBER 1960

BEST TAPES: A BASIC SAMPLING

The year 1960 was not only a good year for discs, it was also the time of the great tape comeback via four-track pre-recorded stereo tape. Nearly fifty producers are in the field now, including all the big major labels. Most are distributing through United Stereo Tapes (UST), but some, like RCA Victor, Capitol, Columbia, and Bel Canto, are working through their own channels. Thanks to the entry into the field of London, the repertoire of pre-recorded four-track stereo tape is broadening in the classical field, as well as in the realm of the Broadway show, jazz, and folk music. Here, then, are a half-dozen 1960 four-track tape releases that HiFi/Stereo Review regards as indispensable for both musical content and imposing sound:

Gilbert & Sullivan: H.M.S. Pinafore (London LOH 90024)

Verdi: Aida (complete opera) (London LOH 90015)

Mendelssohn: Piano Concertos 1 & 2 (Columbia MQ 308)

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 9 (Everest T4 3006)

Prince: U.S. Export—Opus Jazz (Warnor Bros. BST 1240)

Soviet Army Chorus and Band (Angel ZS 3541)

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Soviet Army Chorus and Band (Angel ZS 3541)
A Christmas garland for audiophiles

Fisher's Model 202R AM/FM stereo tuner boosts six IF stages and 0.5-microvolt FM sensitivity. ($329.50)

Adeste

This is indeed a season for sound. The thought of leisurely winter evenings at home, listening to the splendid variety of music that only a high-fidelity system can offer, is sufficient inducement for many to take their first plunge into the delectable realm of stereophonic sound. And veteran audio fans are usually only too happy to seize upon the occasion of the holidays to augment their sound systems with new components.

Something adventurous and festive surrounds the acquisition of new audio gear, be it a speaker, an amplifier, a cartridge, or perhaps an entire system. An anticipatory excitement quickens the senses of the hi-fi fan as he surveys the equipment that holds the promise of new sonic splendors and of more complete enjoyment of familiar, long-loved sounds.

Music-reproducing equipment is particularly appropriate for the Yule Season because music, the most exuberant of all forms of human expression, has always

The Roberts "990" stereo tape recorder features 4-track record and playback facilities ($399.50)

Harman-Kardon introduces the Citation IV stereo preamplifier, available as a kit or factory-wired. ($119.95, kit; $189.95, wired)
Hi-Fideles

contributed to the joyousness of Christmas. Thus, the traditional caroling and bells are now joined in many homes by amplifiers, speakers, and turntables—the electronic minstrels of our age.

In his quest for music, the Christmas shopper has an abundance of new audio components to choose from. For this is the time of year when audio manufacturers, still pursuing their ever-elusive goal of perfection, hopefully trot out their latest designs. Our pictorial sampling of the newest equipment available is a miniature panorama of the most exciting current developments in the field.

Because mere print cannot convey the essence of these instruments—their sound—we can only invite you to window-shop in these mute pages. We are certain that these electronic minstrels will enrich the holiday seasons of thousands of listeners and will continue to bring them the beauty of lifelike music for many years to come.
Karg, known for deluxe designs, enters the medium-price field with the new "Primata" CT-3 FM tuner. ($99.50)

H. H. Scott ventures into the kit field with the Model LT-10, an FM tuner that can be aligned without test instruments. ($89.95)

Stromberg-Carlson's Model RS-511 is a compact two-way speaker system with a highly effective 8" woofer. ($79.95)

Taudberg of Norway is featuring the Model 6, the firm's first 4-track tape deck. ($498.00)
Dynaco's new FM tuner kit, the "Dynatuner," is aligned by using its own tuning meter. ($79.95)

EMI of Great Britain puts an aluminum cone in the driver of the Model DLS bookshelf loudspeaker. ($150.00)

Marantz maintains its place in the top-quality bracket with its Model 9, a 70-watt power amplifier. ($265.00)

SME's tone arm has minimal bearing friction, every conceivable adjustment, and built-in automatic positioning. ($87.00)

KLH becomes the first major American firm to offer full-range electrostatic speakers. ($1030.00 a pair)

Rek-O-Kut's new S-220 "Micropoise" tone arm mounts in a single hole and comes fully pre-wired. ($29.95)
A Parents’ Guide to Children’s Records

Worthwhile children's records can give a child an appreciation of good music. But parents must learn to separate the wheat from the chaff.
by LEWIS POTTER

MY YOUNGEST daughter, Kathy, is five. She loves Mozart’s Jupiter Symphony.

Kathy is not a budding child prodigy. She is a normal, active child, and the fact that she likes to play Mozart on our family phonograph is not the least bit extraordinary.

A few months back, Kathy heard me playing the Jupiter Symphony, and she fell in love with one section in the first movement. She doesn’t want to hear the full symphony. She wouldn’t have the patience to listen to it. She just likes to have me play her own special part for her. She has now reached the point where she can hum fragments of the section to herself.

My point in telling this anecdote is that Kathy’s experience with Mozart is not unusual. Nearly all young children have a unique capacity for understanding and appreciating good music. Love of music is as natural in little children as is their love of play. This capacity for appreciation should be a prime consideration with any parent when he goes out to buy a children’s record.

Unfortunately, this innate good taste is too often debased. First, by parents who let their own lack of taste shape the child’s concept of good music, and second, by record manufacturers who sacrifice taste and responsibility in their rapacious hunt for a fast sale. The youngster who at ten can sneer at concert music as music for “sissies” did not come by these prejudices naturally. They were drilled into him, perhaps unconsciously, by a generation of irresponsible adults.

Certainly, there is a large group of record companies today devoted to making so-called “kiddie records” who have harmed and will continue to harm our children. The companies that manufacture these records are often run by men who are noisy, vulgar, and cheap. Many show no awareness of what children really need. The only reason their records sell is that often they are the only children’s records available in stores and supermarkets. Often the manufacturer makes up for his vague grasp of how to make a good children’s record by his superior knowledge of how to promote and merchandise it.

But ultimately the blame for these records must rest with the parents. Until recently, parents showed little or no interest in the records they bought for their youngsters. They walked into the nearest record shop or record department, picked the disc with the “cutest” title and the most attractive album cover, and brought it home. The same parents who would scream in indignation if they saw their children reading trashy comic books or watching mediocre television had no qualms about handing out the very worst “kiddie records” as gifts.

Fortunately, more and more parents are becoming aware that the records their youngsters hear are as important as the books they read and the TV shows they see. They are beginning to realize that there are few limits to a child’s taste and that they, as adults, have a duty to expose the children to all sorts of music and records—many of them well outside the area generally classified as children’s records. Kathy’s Mozart is a case in point.

We have a neighbor who has made a point of surrounding his children with all sorts of music. After dinner in the evening, the living room hi-fi set may be playing Prokofiev, but it is as likely to be playing Cole Porter or Patti Page. The children have complete freedom to pick any record out of the family record collection and play it. Barring sudden urges at 8 o’clock in the morning, they can play the records any time they want. The children are growing up by themselves in the world of music, and they are doing it alone, guided primarily by their own intense excitement and curiosity over music and records.

This, of course, is musical education at its most ideal. The child is simply surrounded by the musical good taste of his parents. In this environment, it is practically impossible for the child not to develop an intense awareness of the beauty of music.

While most homes may not be able to carry music education through records this far, parents should recognize that they have a responsibility for at least checking the music and story records they buy for their youngsters. Whenever possible, the parent should listen to the record. If this is not possible, a simple precaution would be at least to read the record jacket for information about the record.

WHAT criteria can you use in selecting a good album for the children in your family this holiday season? First, a good children’s record should not just entertain. It should also, add to the child’s knowledge. This is a delicate balance to strike, and, unfortunately, there are few records today that can meet this requirement. A number of LP’s, however, do qualify.

For older children, for example, Caedmon has a truly beautiful album of poet Carl Sandburg reading A Lincoln Album (Caed. 1965). Claude Rains has a gently sensitive album called The Bible Speaks To Children (Bronze 1205), and Charles Laughton puts all his dramatic ability into play in another memorable Bible disc called Bible Readings (Decca 8051). For younger children, Columbia has an excellent LP with Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp called Songs To Learn By (Col. CL 070) which offers delightful song-answers to questions like “How Does The Bee Bzz” and “Why Do Stars Twinkle.”

One word of warning: In an effort to bring Bach to babes, some record companies have turned out albums which while they might be quite sincere, also are quite dull. Children can understand and appreciate Beethoven or Brahms, but if the music is presented like a lecture in a college seminar, they will never touch the record again.

(Continued overleaf)
A second criterion in choosing a children's record is that it should be geared to a child's mind. Many of the records supposedly aimed at the pre-school and elementary-school child contain complicated stories that carry over onto both sides of the LP. These records are not conceivably acceptable to young children, since youngsters have very short attention spans.

A third criterion in selecting a record is performance. Children's records offer a strange variety of performers. There are actors and singers like Charles Laughton and Rosemary Clooney who perform wonderfully for either adults or children. On the opposite end of the scale, you have performers who can only perform for children (and this is probably the very worst sort of entertainer). Good entertainment is a universal thing limited only by the human capacity to appreciate.

Your safest course, then, is to choose records by performers who have proven their ability to entertain. Few records can equal the charm of Julie Andrews and Martyn Green with their songs of sense and nonsense in the LP, Tell It Again (Angel 65041), or Boris Karloff and his Just-So Stories (Caedmon 1038). And Charles Laughton is superb in his readings of the Bible, Mr. Pickwick, or Moby Dick.

In the area of folk songs, which has always been immensely popular with children, there are few performers to match Richard Dyer-Bennet and his Songs With Young People In Mind (Dyer-Bennet 6000), Pete Seeger singing Folk Songs for Young People (Folkways 7532), or Burl Ives Little White Duck (Harmony 5907).

Another word of warning. Along with outstanding performers like Laughton, Karloff, Ronald Coleman, Basil Rathbone, and Burl Ives, you will find a number of children's records by comedians and television comics. These comedians frequently take a four-minute idea and stretch it into an hour. Once they have launched the idea, they seem to feel that screams, noise, and loud background sounds can be the easiest and best substitute for entertainment. Some of them also have an offensively patronizing attitude towards children. Children who listen to records are not imbeciles, and there is no reason why they should be treated as such.

And this, therefore, is a final criterion for selecting a suitable children's record: try for the imaginative. Children themselves are usually blessed with wonderful imaginations, and these should be encouraged. Some youngsters, for example, get enormous pleasure from listening to records from the Folkways "Sounds" series (Sounds of a South American Rain Forest, Folkways 6120; Sounds of the Sea, Folkways 6121). One of the most imaginative children's record is Music For Children (Angel 2582-8) prepared by, of all people, one of Europe's most famous composers, Carl Orff, during his pre-Carmine Burana days. This delightful album offers children an opportunity to hum, clap, sing, and make other forms of homemade impromptu music with the children on the record.

There are, by the way, a number of other excellent participation records now available. Riverside has just come out with an album called Everybody Sing, (1148/21) with folk songs done in a sing-along style by Oscar Brand, Peggy Seeger, Jean Ritchie, Cynthia Gooding, and others. The Young People's Record Guild also offers some fine participation records of similar character.

Among the other rather off-beat records you might consider: 1, 2, 3 and A Zing, Zing, Zing—Street Songs and Games of the Children of New York by Tony Schwartz on Folkways; Children's Songs of Shakespeare's Time by the New York Pro Musica Antiqua on the Counterpoint label; Pueblo Indians in Story, Song and Dance on Caedmon, Civil War Stories and Songs on RCA Victor; A Dog's Life, on Folkways, and I Can Hear It Now on Columbia.

None of these records are the sort you would ordinarily buy in a supermarket or a drug store. They cost more and they are harder to find. And yet their value to a child could be immeasurable.

Children love music because the world of sound is still quite fresh and new to them, and they have an intense curiosity about what can be done with sound. As parents and as adults responsible for these children and their development, it is our obligation to expose this curiosity to the worthwhile sounds of good music and fine literature.
Top Children's Records For Christmas

One of the most difficult tasks that can face any parent at Christmas time is the chore of walking into a record shop and somehow selecting a good children's record from the massive array of LP's that line the racks. Here is HiFi/Stereo Review's choice of the current releases. Some of the records selected would not ordinarily be called "children's records," but they are still LP's that any child would enjoy.

A Dog's Life with Tony Schwartz. Folkways 5580
A Child's Introduction To Jazz featuring Bob Keeshan ("Captain Kangaroo.") Golden GLP 29
Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana. Folkways 7110
Bambi. Disneyland 4010
Bible Readings with Charles Laughton. Decca 8031
Captain Kangaroo's Introduction To The Nutcracker Suite. Golden GLP 40
Carl Sandburg reads from A Lincoln Album. Caedmon 2015
Carnival Of The Animals—Saint-Saëns; Peter And The Wolf—Prokofiev. Noel Gaward with the André Kostelanetz Orchestra. Columbia CL 720
Civil War Stories And Songs. RCA Victor LBY 1032
Cyril Ritchard reads Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland. Riverside RLP 1406
Everybody Sing with Pete Seeger, Cynthia Gooding & others. Riverside 1418/21
Folk Songs For Young People with Pete Seeger. Folkways 7532
I Can Hear It Now. Columbia ML 4095
Just-So Stories with Boris Karloff. Caedmon 1038
Little White Duck And Other Stories told and sung by Burl Ives. Harmony 9507
Lonesome Train—Earl Robinson. Decca 9065
Mark Twain And Folk Favorites with Harry Belafonte. RCA Victor LPM 1022
Mother Goose Songs with Frank Luther. Decca 8357
Music For Children—Carl Orff. Angel 3582 B
Peter Pan with Mary Martin. RCA Victor LOC 1019
Pueblo Indians In Story, Song & Dance. Caedmon 3
Songs With Young People In Mind. Richard Dyer-Bennett, Dyer-Bennett 6000
Songs To Learn By featuring Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp. Columbia CL 670
Sounds Of My City with Tony Schwartz. Folkways 7341
Sounds Of A South American Rain Forest. Folkways 6120
Sounds Of The Sea. Folkways 6121
The Bible Speaks To Children with Claude Rains. Bronze 1205
The Compleat In Fydelty. Cook 1044
The Reluctant Dragon with Boris Karloff. Caedmon 1074
The Wizard Of Oz with Judy Garland. Decca 8387
The Young Person's Guide To The Orchestra—Benjamin Britten; Nutcracker Suite—Tchaikovsky. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Antal Dorati, cond. (Deems Taylor, narration) Mercury 50055
Tubby The Tuba and Peter And The Wolf. Columbia CL 671
Winnie The Pooh with James Stewart. Camden 1008
by David Hall

Verdi’s may have been the dominant creative voice in Italian opera during the latter half of the century, but his was by no means the only one. Arrigo Boito, who in later years was to prepare the magnificent Otello and Falstaff libretti for Verdi, composed an impressive if sprawling treatment of Goethe’s Faust in his Mefistofele when he was still in his twenties. London’s recording, starring Cesare Siepi, Mario del Monaco, and Renata Tebaldi, with Serafin conducting (London OSA 1307), ranks with Aida as its most impressive stereo effort in the Italian operatic field, and is, in addition, a performance that emphatically underlines all that is best in Boito’s near-masterpiece of 1868.

Save for the fact that La Gioconda is a star vehicle of the first water, it is hard to fathom why Amilcare Ponchielli’s blood-and-thunder work should have received no less than three stereo recordings, and each of them is quite good in its own way. Callas fanciers, of course, will prefer her ultradramatic interpretation of the title role on Angel S 3606 C/L. London’s OSA 1302 with Cerquetti, Simionato, del Monaco, Bastianini, and Siepi has good sound and good stereo “stage” production, but it is no match for the stunning RCA Victor version (LSC 6139), in which Zinka Milanov and the late Leonard Warren are both at the top of their form and are abetted by the baton of Fernando Previtali.

The 1890’s in Italy witnessed the rise of Giacomo Puccini, who for a quarter-century thereafter was to be pretty much the cynosure of operatic audiences; but there were also the young firebrands of verismo—the “slice of life” boys—Mascagni with Cavalleria Rusticana (1890), Leoncavallo with Pagliacci (1892), and Umberto Giordano with Andrea Chenier (1896).

“Cav” and “Pag,” those venerable “gold-dust twins” of the repertoire, are currently available in one stereo recording apiece. Unfortunately, the splendid singing team of Bjoerling, Tebaldi, and Bastianini on RCA Victor LSC 6059 is hampered by the sluggish conducting of Alberto Erede. Let’s hope that the situation will be remedied by Tulio Serafin on the forthcoming London OSA 1213, starring Giulietta Simionato, Mario del Monaco, and Cornell MacNeil. Pagliacci fares better; for del Monaco and Gabrielle Tucci, under the direction of Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, turn out a highly dramatic account of this particular “slice of life,” and are assisted by vivid stereo staging.

Compared with “Cavalleria” and Pagliacci, Giordano’s Andrea Chenier may seem a bit drawn out for its actual musical substance, but it can take the rugged dramas of del Monaco and Bastianini, who are starred with Tebaldi in the London stereo re-issue (OSA 1303) of its spiritedly done 1957 recording.

The 1908 Puccini centenary was probably the reason why all of that master’s major operas have found their way to the stereophonic medium, in most instances well ahead of Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi. Tosca, Madama Butterfly, Girl of the Golden West, and Turandot are to be had in two or more stereo versions each.

London has just announced a stereo re-issue of its 1954 Manon Lescaut (OSA 1317), and this product of the youthful Puccini pen boasts the formidable vocalism of Tebaldi.
and del Monaco. But even in its stereo version, this recording hardly matches the extraordinary vividness of the 1959 La Bohème, which has Tebaldi paired with the lyrically gifted Carlo Bergonzi, and with Serafin at the conductorial helm (London OSA 1208). This is the only currently available stereo Bohème, but it is doubtful whether any future version will surpass this splendid combination of vocalism and stereo sonics for sheer beauty.

Neither the recent Tebaldi-del Monaco-London Tosca (London OSA 1210), nor the 1957 RCA album (LSC 6052) with Milanov, Bjoerling, and Warren represents a conclusive treatment of either the music or the drama of this passionate score; but the London recording does have a distinct edge in overall sound and stereo staging.

The presently available two stereo recordings of Madame Butterfly will become three with the release of Capitol's SGCR 7232, starring Victoria de los Angeles and the late Jussi Bjoerling. Meanwhile, one has the choice between the sumptuous vocalism of Tebaldi and Bergonzi on London OSA 1314 with excellent stereo “production,” and the wonderfully effective characterization of Anna Moffo with Cesare Valletti on RCA Victor LSC 6135, in which Erich Leinsdorf does a fine conducting job, but where the stereophony is rather static. Both recordings as such are sonically tops.

Largely because the Puccinian idiom is incompatible with the American “Western,” La Fanciulla del West is something less than a masterpiece. Yet this setting of Belasco's Girl of the Golden West has gotten not one, but two stereo recordings, and with stellar casts—Tebaldi, del Monaco, MacNeil, and Tozzi on London OSA 13061, while Angel's S 3593 C/L has Birgit Nilsson in the title role. The London album wins hands down, not by superior vocalism alone, but more particularly by virtue of extraordinarily fine stereo staging—notably in the card-game scene.

Gianni Schicchi has long been the most popular of the three one-acters that Puccini completed during World War I; for here he captured the spirit of 18th-century opera buffa. The Capitol stereo recording (SGAR 7179) with Tito Gobbi and Victoria de los Angeles is a gem in every way, and with London's Bohème and RCA's Turandot, it is a “must” for any stereo disc library of Italian opera.

Death claimed Puccini before he could add the final touches to his most ambitious work, Turandot. Yet, even without the polish that Puccini would have given it had he lived, Turandot offers some of the composer's most impassioned melody, and in its scenes of oriental pageantry, pages of blazing splendor. The fines of stereo sound is none too good for this score, and RCA Victor has given it just that on LSC 6149, plus a powerhouse cast headed by Birgit Nilsson, Renata Tebaldi, Jussi Bjoerling, and Giorgio Tozzi.

While Verdi and Wagner were achieving their special ascendancy in the realm of Italian and German opera, major repertoire masterpieces were coming into being in unexpected places, such as Russia and Czechoslovakia. Bedřich Smetana's 1865 opera-comedy, The Bartered Bride, has become an international classic, as have Moussorgsky's Boris Godunov and Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin from the Russian repertoire. Regrettably, only Smetana's delightful score has found its way to stereo, performed by the Prague Na-
ional Opera and issued on Artila S 82. The performance is first-rate and the stereo staging is superbly effective. Since Artila has exclusive American rights for recordings done in the U.S.S.R., it is perhaps not too far-fetched to hope for authentic Russian performances in stereo from this source. Of "Boris," Khovanschina, Eugene Onegin, and Pique-Dame, especially, and perhaps Glinka's Life for the Tsar and Russian and Ludmilla, as well as Rimsky-Korsakov's Golden Cockerel, Borodin's sprawling, but often strikingly impressive Prince Igor is the only major Russian opera represented in stereo for the present—and this from London's 1955 Belgrade recording. The solo work is so-so, but the sound of the choruses alone is worth the price of the album (OSA 1501).

Post-German French opera is even more poorly represented on stereo than the product of the preceding generation. A serviceable but not by any means outstanding version of Offenbach's Tales of Hoffmann (Epic BSC 101) with Matti-wilka Dobbs and Leopold Simoneau just about sums up a pretty parlous situation. Massenet's Manon, Charpentier's Louise, and above all, Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande await their due on stereo, not to speak of Delibes' Lakmé and Saint-Saëns' Samson et Dalilah.

Save for Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel (still among the missing on stereo), German opera of the post-Wagnerian era is dominated almost wholly by the brilliant and lush works of Richard Strauss. Although Salome and Elektra have yet to make the stereo opera roster, there are two fine sets of Der Rosenkavalier. The recent Decca recording (Decca 7501) boasts a well-matched cast of Ermgard Seefried, Marianne Scheeb, Rita Streich, and Kurt Böhme, with Karl Böhm conducting, as well as generally effective stereo stage production; but the 1957 Angel album (S 8563 D/L) offers the powerful attraction of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as the Marschallin, as well as the more vola
tile conducting of Herbert von Karajan with the Philharmonia Orchestra. The choice here lies between Angel's virtuosity and Decca's overall good stereo "team">

Since we have no stereophonic Salome or Elektra, it is somewhat surprising to find two relatively esoteric Strauss operas available in stereo: the 1912 Ariadne auf Naxos, announced for release in RCA's Soria Series—LDS 6152, with Leonie Rysanek, Roberta Peters, Sena Jurinac, and Jan Peerce, plus Leinsdorf and the Vienna Philharmonic; and a full-blown score from the 1930's, Arabella. This was recorded by London in 1957 with Georg Solti conducting the Vienna Philharmonic and a star-studded cast grace by such names as Lisa della Casa, George London, Hilde Gueden, Otto Edelmann, and Anton Dermota (OSA 1404). This remains music for dyed-in-the-wool Strauss fans, however.

The modern operatic repertoire is spottily represented on stereo disc; but there are a few outstanding recordings to be noted. Most spectacular is Benjamin Britten's Peter Grimes, magnificently done for London (OSA 1905) under the composer's direction with top-notch English singers, and with the stereo dramatics being handled with extraordinary vividness. Fascinating, but more difficult to grasp and more inward in its expression, is Katya Kabanova, a setting of a grim Russian small-town tale by the Moravian-Czech master, Leo Janácek, done in authentic style by the Prague National Opera on Artila (S 89 B/L). Béla Bartók's Bluebeard's Castle is the one modern masterpiece in the grand manner to be represented on stereo (Deutsche Grammophon SLPM 158030), and Fischer-Dieskau's characterization of the terrifying yet melancholy Bluebeard is most moving. It even manages to overcome the drawbacks of using the German language, instead of the original Hungarian, and small cuts made in the performance. Prokofiev's War and Peace (MG 53-GC 2), Samuel Barber's Vanessa (RCA Victor LSC 6138), Douglas Moore's Ballad of Baby Doe (MG 53-GC 1), and Marc Blitzstein's Regina (Columbia OSA 202) are variable both in musical merit and in effectiveness of stereo sonics. By and large, the New York City Center Opera performance of Regina fares best.

The repertoire of modern intimate opera in stereo is highlighted, I feel, by Manuel de Falla's wonderful puppet episode from Gervantes, Master Peter's Puppet Show. The late Attilio Argenta did an ideal performance for London (CS 6028) with a fine cast of Spanish soloists, and the stereo sound is splendid from every point of view.

Carl Orff's Der Mond (Angel S 3567 B/L) and Die Kluge (Angel S 3551 B/L) strike me as being music strictly for confirmed Orffians, despite the delightful characterization by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in Die Kluge. Likewise, Weill's original-German version of The Three-Penny Opera starring the composer's wife, Lotte Lenya, on Columbia (OS 201) seems more dated than Marc Blitzstein's American adaptation of the libretto—not yet on stereo.

If a modern-music aficionado reads these lines and tends to fill the repertoire gaps in his own mind, it seems plain that the plight of 20th-century opera in stereo is about the same as that which presently obtains for the French and Russian repertoire. Columbia promises us the exciting and spectacular space opera, Aniara, by Sweden's Karl-Birger Blomdahl; but we'd like to feel that we might someday get in stereo Berg's Wozzeck, Britten's Billy Budd, the better Menotti operas (not even "Amahl" is on stereo)—at least The Medium, The Consul, and The Old Maid and the Thief, Gershwin's Porgy and Bess (in its entirety), Ravel's L'Heure Espagnole and L'Enfant et les sortilèges, Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex, Le Rossignol, and The Rake's Progress, Dallapiccola's The Prisoner, Martinu's Comedy on the Bridge—the list could be extended for another dozen items or so. Yet, for all the worth of these fine works, it must be agreed what a higher priority should go to masterpieces like The Magic Flute, Fidelio, and Pelléas et Mélisande, to say nothing of Die Meistersinger, Bohemian, Parsifal, and Die Götterdämmerung.

What has been done well in stereo opera has been done superbly well—notably by London and RCA Victor—but it should be clear from the foregoing that much remains to be done by those record companies who have the financial means and the technical know-how to give us great operatic productions in the stereo medium. It is a job worth doing, not merely for "cultural prestige," but also because it is in the realm of opera that the stereo medium has proven its special worth in bringing vital musical theater into the living rooms of thousands who seldom have the chance to hear opera in the opera house.
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Herbert Reid—Hi Fi Stereo Review

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62
BEST OF THE MONTH...

\[\text{\textbullet\space Capitol has issued one of its finest discs by Stokowski—Schönberg's Verklärte Nacht coupled with Loeffler's A Pagan Poem... "This is impassioned, voluptuous music, and Stokowski is in his element. The playing is marvelous, and both works are splendid in their stereo richness and depth. (see p. 79)\]}

\[\text{\textbullet\space Mercury's opera recordings continue to score bullseyes. This time it's the half-forgotten but delightful Barber of Seville by Paisiello. "There can be nothing but high praise for the singers. Fasano's reading is precise, vigorous, and thoroughly delightful. A notable contribution... for which Mercury deserves the highest encomiums." (see p. 82)\]}

\[\text{\textbullet\space Columbia offers one of the finest testimonials to Eugene Ormandy's mature conducting with Tchaikovsky's Pathétique Symphony. "This is a superb performance, one that approaches the score with dignity and devotion. The playing of the orchestra and the engineers' reproduction of the whole are models. (see p. 83)\]}

Records reviewed in this section are both stereo and monophonic. Versions received for review are identified by closed (\(\Delta\)) and open (\(\triangle\)) triangles respectively. All records are 33⅓ rpm and should be played with the RIAA amplifier setting or its equivalents. Monophonic recordings (\(\triangle\)) may be played also on stereo equipment with resulting improvement in sound distribution quality. Stereo recordings (\(\Delta\)) however, must not be played on monophonic phonographs and hi-fi systems.

\[\text{\textbullet\space BACH: Keyboard Concerti—Vol. 1—Concerto in D Minor; Concerto in E Major—Vol. 2—Concerto in C Major for two Keyboard Instruments; Concerto in C Minor for two Keyboard Instruments; Concerto in F Minor: Concerto in A Major. Paul Badura-Skoda and Joerg Demus (pianos) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Kurt Redel cond. Westminster WST 14109/10 2 12" \$5.98 each.}

Interest: Very high
Performance: Adroit
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

The devotee of Bach's keyboard music should be well served by these discs, since so many of that composer's concerti are gathered in one place. However, the listener will have to decide whether he prefers these works with the harpsichord or the modern piano. I prefer the authentic instrument. But these performances are certainly sufficiently idiomatic in their conception to be accepted on their own terms.

These discs contain much that is of interest, aside from pleasures that the compositions themselves afford: many of the movements were used by Bach in his other works, and some of these concerti were originally conceived for other instruments. The opening movement of the D Minor Solo Concerto was used in toto as the introduction to the Cantata No. 188, with the keyboard solo part assigned to the organ. Similarly, the C Minor Concerto for two keyboard instruments has become known in its other version, in which the solo roles are taken by the violin and the oboe.

A more unusual substitution is represented by the E Major Keyboard Concerto,
whose Siciliana was used in the Cantata No. 169, with the voice featured in a solo role. The duets do not represent all the instances in which Bach has re-used the material contained in these concerti.

Comparison of the performance of the D Minor solo concerto with the Glenn Gould–Bernstein version on Columbia reveals, I think, that while the Columbia team has the edge in the quieter, more introspective sections of the work, the Westminster artists get the nod in the faster portions.

All these performances leave nothing to be desired in matters of technical competence. Both Westminster soloists are fully equal to the stylistic demands of the music as well, and in those works in which they play together, their sense of ensemble is entirely admirable. Aside from a momentary brittleness of piano tone, especially in the opening movement of the D Minor Concerto, the recording is fine. The Westminster version of that work, incidentally, gives slightly greater prominence to the piano than does its Columbia counterpart.

In the concerto for two keyboard instruments, there is nice separation of the two pianos. Thus, the stereo recording is definitely desirable.

D. R.

**BACH:** Clavier Concertos—No. 1 in D Minor; No. 2 in E Major. Christopher Wood (harpsichord), with the Goldsboro Orchestra; Lawrence Leonard cond. Forum SF 70003 $2.98

*Interest: Certainly Performance: Idiomatic Recording: Varied Stereo Directionality: Varied Stereo Depth: Limited*

There are some very fine things about these performances, particularly in the familiar D Minor Concerto. The slow movement emerges at a nicely poised tempo, and there is excellent articulation in the strings in the closing movement. Generally speaking, all the performances are quite admirable.

The recording has both good and bad characteristics. The setting places the listener up close—almost in the orchestra. Despite the lack of room sound, this close placement is, to my ears, a distinct advantage, especially in music of this sort, where one wants to hear the lines with maximum clarity. Although stereo is somewhat lacking, the directionality is satisfactory, except for the fact that the harpsichord seems to be located on the left in the fast movements of the D Minor Concerto, in the center for the slow movement!

Curiously, the recording seems to be more limited, from the tonal standpoint, in the Concerto No. 2. The overall sound here lacks the realism it has in the Concerto No. 1.

**BARTOK:** Divertimento (see p. 84)

**BEETHOVEN:** The Nine Symphonies; Overtures—Leonore No. 3; Egmont. London Symphony Orchestra; Josef Krips cond. Everest SDER 3065/6 $12.98

*Interest: Nine symphonic cornerstones Performance: All full of insight*

**Recording:** Excellent Stereo Quality: Good Stereo Depth: Good

During the past several summers at the Lewisohn Stadium in New York, Krips has been offering Beethoven Festivals with the Stadium Symphony Orchestra that have been welcomed enthusiastically by audiences as around the world. Krips' has done Beethoven cycles in London in recent years and there, too, he has been hailed as a Beethoven conductor of perception and power. Hence, Everest, in this set, has felt it worthwhile to preserve the Krips conceptions of the Beethoven Symphonies which have given such enormous satisfaction to countless thousands of listeners on both sides of the Atlantic. Further, it has afforded to the performances a sonic backdrop of clear resonance and finely detailed definition.

In general, the orchestral balances are extremely well adjusted, with only now and then, perhaps, an occasional reticence of woodwind sound—as in the Finale of the Seventh—to cause regrets. More disturbing, however, is the fact that in the set sent for review there was a surprisingly high incidence of crackly, swishy surface noise. Hopefully, this is not true of all the pressings, but I'd advise you to check the surfaces before you buy.

Now, a brief description of each performance:

**Symphony No. 1—Bumptious joviality is the chief element of Krips' performance. Tempo are very well chosen to fall within the framework of such an approach, for they have an easy, unstrained, frontiersmanship. The final movement caps the whole in a civilized, nicely controlled rump.**

**Symphony No. 2—A similar effective attitude is adopted for the performance of the Second. The drama of the first movement, lyricism of the second, swagger of the third, and exuberance of the finale are all tellingly conveyed, if without the full measure of heartiness to be heard in the rival Klemperer or Beecham versions for Angel.**

**Symphony No. 3—A sense of momentum is conveyed by Krips in his adoption of tempi that are on the brisk side. This is true of the Funeral March especially. The interesting thing, however, is that the tempi are brisk without sounding hurried; in short, they work. Especially noteworthy is the playing of the horn section—full toned and superbly inflected—in the trio of the Scherzo.**

**Symphony No. 4—Here again the dominating impression is one of briskness but not Headlong. In the final movement there is really superlative woodwind playing and marvelous definition in the recorded sound.**

**Symphony No. 5—This is for me the surprise of the set. Not from Krips did I anticipate such powerful drive as we get here. The plungsing into the second half of the opening phrase after the fermata on the fourth note reminds me of Kleiber's way with this music in his memorable Munich version with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra (London CM 908) of about 8 years ago. Also, Krips contrives a strong momentum for the eruption of the fourth movement out of the bridge passage from the Scherzo.**

**Symphony No. 6—Again one has a feeling of well-sustained forward motion. The most impressive section is perhaps, however, in the Storm of the fourth movement, with sharp, percussive, and altogether right claps of thunder from the timpani. The Finale is a truly satisfying conclusion.**

**Symphony No. 7—In this winged Symphony Krips gives us a reading of surge and propulsion, and again without creating an effect of breathlessness. This is not as easy to accomplish as one might think. Witness Toscanini's headlong plunge to disaster in his 1951 recording of the music with the NBC Symphony Orchestra (RCA Victor LM 1750), as contrasted with the contained momentum of his 1956 recording with the New York Philharmonic (Columbia 552). Krips' basic tempo in the final movement is about as fast as Toscanini's NBC performance, but in character it is far less tense and hurried than that of the Italian Maestro.**

**Symphony No. 8—In the performance of this music, Krips reverts to the grace and charm which characterized his readings of the first two symphonies. At the same time, he underlines the robust nature of the Allegretto and Menuet.**

**Symphony No. 9—A deep feeling of strength and solidity pervades this entire performance. There is the personality in the first movement, maturerly in the second, serenity in the slow movement, and exalted catharsis in the Finale. In this Finale, Krips has the benefit of a superb chorus (that of the BBC) and four well-matched soloists (Jennifer Vyvyan, soprano; Shirley Verrett-Carter; mezzo; Rudolf Petrelius; and Donald Bell, bass). If this performance doesn't have quite the monolithic nobility of Klemperer's Angel recording (S 597 B), it is head and shoulders above it in engineering and impact of recorded sound. When Krips' chorus sings out, it makes a thrilling and vibrant sound.**

Everest has scrupulously adhered to a maximum playing time of about twenty-five minutes per side in the interest of maintaining as wide a range as possible in the mastering. Room is also found to fill out two of the sides with fine performances of the Third Leonore and Egmont Overtures.

As a totality, this eight-record set presents unusually satisfying accounts of the nine cornerstones of the symphonic repertoire. Krips is now the third conductor to be represented in the catalogs with a one-album collection of the Beethoven Symphonies—Toscanini (RCA Victor LM 1750) and Klemperer (Columbia DTS 1750, 171, 205) having preceded him. Curiously, though, Krips does not give us a single great performance—as does Walter, for example, in the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies. However, I find the overall conception of Krips' accomplishment more consistently rewarding than that of either of the two rival integral sets.

M. B.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60; Consecration of the House Overture, Op. 124. Philharmonia Orchestra, Otto Klemperer cond. Angel S 35641 $5.98

*Interest: A jovial rump (Continued on page 72)*

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This completes Klemperer's cycle of the Beethoven symphonies for Angel, though I understand he is re-recording Nos. 5, 7 and 7, made before the advent of stereo. In general, I find Klemperer's the most consistently rewarding of all the recordings of the Beethoven symphonies—with the exception of the Fifth and Seventh—where I would-'like more abandon. Perhaps his forthcoming performances of these two will be more pleasing.

When Angel does the inevitable and gathers the Klemperer performances in a single package—as RCA Victor has done for the Toscanini performances (LM 6901), Columbia for the Walter readings (DYL 265, DTS 610) and Everest for the Krips performances reviewed on page 68 in this issue (9065; Mono 9065)—then the Klemperer package will very likely assume the Number One position. For as no other conductor who has ever recorded all the Beethoven symphonies, Klemperer is able to communicate the essential sweep and grandeur, nobility, and humanity of these works.

It is so with Klemperer's performance of the Fourth Symphony. The Fourth is no lightweight work; it is a marvel of symphonic form and packs a cumulative power and vigor so less effective—if of a totally different kind—than either of the two more imposing symphonies which flank it. Klemperer brings abounding energy and strength to his performance and affirms the ruggedness of this music more successfully than I've ever heard before. As you might expect from a conductor so keenly responsive to the organic structure of Beethoven's music, Klemperer not only observes the repeat of the first movement exposition as well as all repeats in the Scherzo, but he also repeats the exposition of the last movement which practically everybody else ignores. And yet to ignore it is to unbalance the symmetry by making the finale too short for what has preceded. Bravo Klemperer!

As usual, the Philharmonia Orchestra plays magnificently for him and the Angel engineers give him full, resonant reproduction. Room has also been found on the disc for an absolutely magnificent statement of the Consecration of the House Overture. This is truly a memorable disc.

\[ Ernest Ansermet cond. London CS 6183 $5.98 \]


- *Interest: Supreme*
- *Performance: Surprisingly good* 
- *Recordings: Bernstein's is fine, Ansermet's outstanding*
- *Stereo Directionality: Both fine*
- *Stereo Depth: Both good*

Here are two surprisingly good performances. "Surprisingly" for this I should have thought Ansermet would give a priz, scadate account of this Beethoven symphony, while from Bernstein I anticipated a rather mannered, fussy reading. Actually, both conductors respond to the spirit as well as the letter of the score and they give us performances of great vitality and drive—more so in the case of Ansermet than in the competing Bernstein version.

There is a greater feeling of assurance in Ansermet's performance. Both conductors have pretensions to the same ideals concerning the tempi in this symphony, except for the last movement where Ansermet adopts a swifter, lighter tempo than his younger colleague.

Both performances benefit from fine sound, with Ansermet again having the advantage: there is a warmth and brightness to the stereo reproduction, and the elements of depth and spaciousness are so natural-sounding that this becomes one of the outstanding sonic achievements in the London catalog.

Conclusively tipping the scales in favor of Ansermet is the fact that his disc contains more music. Not only does he include a splendid performance of the Fidelio Overture (Bernstein's entire disc is devoted to the Seventh Symphony), but the Swiss conductor also goes Bernstein one better by observing the repeats in the Scherzo (not too unusual) and in the Finale (very unusual!).

Among current stereo editions, I continue to prefer Walter's overwhelming performance of this score (Columbia MS 6082), but this new Ansermet ruts it a very good second with Bernstein's not too far behind.

**BERGSMMA: Quartet No. 3 [see p. 85]**

**BIZET: Carmen Highlights [see Offenbach]**

**BRAHMS: Double Concerto In A Minor for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra, Op. 102; Tragic Overture, Op. 81; Zino Francescatti; and Pierre Fournier with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. Columbia MS 6158 $5.98**

- *Interest: Almez-vous Brahms?*
- *Performance: Strong and serene*
- *Recordings: Very good*
- *Stereo Directionality: Good*
- *Stereo Depth: Fine*

Walter presided over a previous recording of the Brahms Double Concerto for Columbia with Isaac Stern and Leonard Rose as the soloists. In this new one, the soloists are even more finely mated, for there is a graciousness, warmth, and humility in the collaboration of Francescatti and Fournier which makes of this recording something special. At the same time, Walter moulds a performance of imposing grandeur and strength. Brahms' autumal score emerges more effectively from this performance than from any other I've ever heard.

In addition, we are given a Tragic Overture performance of remarkable conviction and passion. The work of the pick-up orchestra which Columbia assembles for this tour's West Coast recording dates is exemplary throughout both works, and the recorded sound is rich and vibrant. M.B.

**BRAHMS: Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 83; Rudolf Serkin with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. Columbia MS 6155 $5.98**

- *Interest: Masterpiece*
- *Performance: Grand*
- *Recordings: Rich*
- *Stereo Directionality: Reasonable*
- *Stereo Depth: Good*

Serkin's, and I assume Ormandy's, view of this concerto seems to be that it is a close brother of the First Symphony. They play it with tremendous breadth and vigor, with heroic grandeur and drama. Admittedly, they make a good point of view, but I think a better case can be made for the music if it is related instead to the Second Symphony.

It seems to me that the essence of the B-flat Concerto is lyricism, that Brahms was dealing more with spirit than with muscle in conceiving it. The music, to me, sounds more convincing when it flows congenially than when it storms the heavens. It seems forced when it is asked to portray conflict. I find more of the spirit of tranquillity, even resignation, in it, more of the German Requiem and the late Intermezzi.

Serkin plays with absorbing fervor and intensity, and Ormandy is an able and willing collaborator. The performance is massive, dynamic and unflinching and over-powering. It is immensely impressive, but it is not as lovable as Rubinstein's more autumnal ministrations on RCA Victor LSC 2296.


- *Interest: Walter-Brahms testament*
- *Performance: Lyrically intense*
- *Recordings: Full-bodied*
- *Stereo Directionality: OK*
- *Stereo Depth: Adequate*

Those who own the Bruno Walter-N. Y. Philharmonic recordings of this music, done for Columbia during the pre-stereo era, know that Walter's way with Brahms is immensely lyrical and grandly and full-blooded in dynamics. If there is any weakness in his readings, it is in the direction of occasional rhythmic slackness. Regrettably, the weakness in question is more evident in these brand-new stereo performances than in the older mono versions.

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ing here, while the middle movements are endowed with poignant lyrical beauty. The more episodic finale, which most conductors turn into a dramatic showpiece, fails to hold together under the 84-year-old Walter’s baton, save for the final third of its course. The predominantly sunny D Major Symphony gets a rather low-pressure, easy-going treatment throughout; but the surging pages of the F Major turn out in better shape. Indeed, in this and in the Tragic Overture, Walter is at his most satisfying perfection. An example of this particular set—second only to those by Klemperer on Angel.

The magnificent Fourth Symphony, which Walter played so well on the old N. Y. Philharmonic records, comes off splendidly for its first three movements, but a disturbing tempo shift at Variation 4 robs the great passacaglia movement of its cumulative impact.

As for the shorter pieces, the Tragic Overture, as we have already indicated, is made even more impressive by its somber impact; but we wish the carefree Academic Festival had been given more zip, precision, and brightness in both performance and recording. The so-called Haydn Variations proceed in leisurely fashion under Walter’s hands until the ground-bass finale, which he proceeds to build to a splendid climax. The recorded sound from Columbia’s engineering staff and the level of performance by Walter’s picked West Coast players is, for the most part, very good. The out-sized solo flute in the finale of the First Symphony and a certain lack of sonic impact in the Academic Festival Overture are the only technical aspects with which we would take issue. Stereo factual spread and depth illusion are generally satisfactory.

So far as Brahms in stereo is concerned, I find myself most fully satisfied with Otto Klemperer’s dramatic monotonic approach to the four Brahms symphonies, despite the less-rich sound of his recordings as compared to Walter’s. So far as mono goes, Toscanini (RCA Victor), Eduard van Beinum (Epic), Felix Weingartner (Harmony), and Walter himself with the N. Y. Philharmonic have done the whole series to at least as good, and in most instances, better, interpretive effect. Over more than 25 years of listening to Bruno Walter’s conducting in the flesh, as well as on records and radio, I have been given many cherishable musical experiences. I am thus wont a recorded manifestation of the Bruno Walter way with Brahms, the N. Y. Philharmonic discs would still be my choice, and I trust that Columbia will keep them available as a permanent documentation of Walter at his interpretive prime.

**BRAHMS:** Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73. Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. Columbia MS 6171 $5.98

Interest: Repertoire staple
Performance:Variable
Recording:OK
Stereo Directivity:OK
Stereo Depth:Good

This disc marks the debut on Epic of one of the fastest-rising young conductors in Europe (his previous American representation was on the Angel label). Sawallisch has not yet reached his 40th birthday, but already he has received signal honors in most of the leading musical centers of Europe and is currently principal conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. He has not yet conducted in this country—not because he has not been asked, I hasten to add, but because he has been immersed in commitments in Europe and elsewhere.

This is a young man’s performance of the Brahms Second: carefully studied, intense and rather obvious in its stress upon the dramatic elements of the music. The overall tempi are a bit on the slow side, but the performance never drags. What one misses here is the feeling of absolute assurance and authority found in versions by Klemperer (Angel 55535), Toscanini (RCA Victor LM 1731) or the quixotic but fascinating performance Furtwangler recorded with the London Philharmonic (RCA, Victor, 1871). Recorded sound is adequate. M. B.

**BRUCKNER:** Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. Columbia MS 6171 $5.98

Interest: Bruckner’s greatest
Performance: Devoted
Recording: Warm, but lacks impact
Stereo Directivity: Good
Stereo Depth: Adequate

Bruno Walter and the apocalyptic, vision- ary Bruckner—for how many years have we pleaded in and out of print for Columbia to record Bruno Walter and the N. Y. Philharmonic in the Fourth, Eighth, and Ninth symphonies?—will last receive a stereo recording of the Austrian master’s unfinished Ninth (he worked on it from 1887 till his death in 1896)—by Bruno Walter, indeed, but with his pick-up West Coast orchestra rather than the N. Y. Philharmonic which has the full string body and brassy lung power that this mighty score needs.

The first movement is music of Judgment Day; the scherzo bespeaks a Sartanic lance macabre; while the slow movement is a paeon of passionate aspiration for the heaven of peace. The span of Bruckner’s melodic line is unfolded superbly in this recorded performance, as is the inner detail of his instrumental texture. What is missing almost entirely is the shattering impact of the climaxes that Bruckner wrote into the score.

As a reading, the first movement comes off best here. The scherzo sounds a bit tame, while the Adagio is curiously lacking in cohesion despite the entrancingly beautiful phrasing of its melodic content. I fear that with this Bruckner “Ninth” under Walter, it’s a case of too little (the orchestra) and too late. As a first and presently only stereo version of this music, this disc is well worth the owning; but I’d supplement it with one of the good mono performances by Jochum (Decca), Horenstein (Vox), or the late Eduard van Beinum (Epic).


Interest: Chopin cross-section
Performance: Uncharacteristic
Recording: Fair
Stereo Directivity: Not needed
Stereo Depth: Fair

Neither the poise he exhibited in his recordings of music of the classic period nor the coloristic abilities he displayed in his recordings of impressionistic music comes to Rosen’s aid in this program. His playing is correct and mercurial, but with none of the stylistic finesse required by Chopin’s music. The performances are square, without grace or flavor, and are hardly representative of Rosen at his best.

**CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11. Oreste Frugoni (piano) with Vienne Volksorchester, Michael Gianell cond. Vox STPL 511460 $5.95

**CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21. Oreste Frugoni (piano) with Vienna Volksorchester, Michael Gianell cond. Vox STPL 511470 $5.95

Interest: Concerto favorites
Performance: Not characteristic
Recording: Unappealing
Stereo Directivity: Yes
Stereo Depth: Yes

Gradually, the lesson is being learned that stereo, of itself, cannot substitute for basically poor recording or an inferior performance. In some instances, the lesson is a hard one. Unfortunately, this is one of those instances. The sonics here are cavernous. Neither Gianell shows any special aptitude for the music of Chopin. Can’t Vox get Novaks before a microphone again for new recordings of these compositions? It will be a crying shame if she is not prevailed upon to do them once more. And please—recording techniques such as these do demand serious re-study.

**CHOPIN:** Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21; **SCHUMANN:** Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 54. Eugene Istomin with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. [Chopin] and the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter cond. [Schumann]. Columbia MS 6159 $5.98

Interest: Romantic staples
Performance: Communicative
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directivity: Reasonable
Stereo Depth: Good

Istomin made his professional debut in 1943 when he was eighteen, playing the Chopin F Minor Concerto with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. This recording, then, marks the resumption of an old association in a familiar work. The orchestra is more sumptuous than the music demands, but sumptuousness is, of course, pith and substance of the Philadelphian way. Istomin’s way is sensitive and alert, with here and there an extra flash of color and spirit to personalize the performance.

In the Schumann, the pianist enjoys the collaboration of perhaps the Number One romantic conductor of our times. This is all to the good, of course, and the performance that Bruno Walter elicits from...
the Columbia house orchestra is lyrical, warm and spontaneous.

The Istomin-Walter is not as dramatic a performance as the Fleisher-Szelig (Epic BC 1080) nor as broad as the Cliburn-\Reiner (RCA Victor LSC 2455), but it has more charm than the Richter-Rowicki (Deutsche Grammophon 188077) or the Rubinstein-Krips (RCA Victor LSC 2256). Cloaked in recorded sound that is rich and well-balanced, this is quite the most attractive of the stereo versions of the Schumann Piano Concerto.

I. D.


Epic LC 3633 $4.98

Interest: Classic Chopiniana
Performance: Nothing special
Recording: Could be better

In my review last October of the recordings made by the winners of the 5th Concerto International, Warsaw, 1965 (Pathé DTX 171-175), I wrote "I would be inclined to rate Ashkenazy over Harasiewicz. They both play with poise and polish, but Ashkenazy has more temperament." Harasiewicz was first in that competition and Vladimir Ashkenazy was second.

This record bears me out, at least as far as his current abilities may be judged. Ashkenazy has grown considerably in musical stature; he is universally acknowledged as a front-rank pianist destined for pre-eminence. Harasiewicz does not indicate that he will attain such high heights. He is a dependable executant rather than a brilliant re-creator, saying nothing that is distinctly personal in these performances. Epic has recorded the piano more effectively on other occasions. W. D.


Interest: Classic Chopiniana
Performance: Imaginative
Recording: Good

Although the liner notes refer to Pianistino as "the renowned Italian pianist," that is all the annotator seems to know about him, and a phone call to Roulette brought me no further biographical information. However, he recorded a splendid performance of Schumann's Carnaval (Forum 70007) not long ago, and this disc discloses further evidence of his superior and individual pianism.

These are not ordinary interpretations of the Preludes. Pianistino plays many of them with a freedom few pianists would attempt, but he has such a grasp of the music and its style that the liberties he takes do not detract from the merits of his performances. For instance, he plays the familiar seventh Prelude, in A Major, as a light waltz, a variation from the interpretive norm that comes off only because of its bold imaginativeness.

The two Preludes not in Opus 28 are relatively minor additions to the Chopin

DECEMBER 1960
REPERTOIRE: Clarinet Sonatas (see p. 85)

DALLAPICCOLA: Five Fragments of Sappho; Two Anacreon Songs; Five Songs; Goethe Songs; Christmas Concert for the Year 1956; Elisabeth Soederstrom (soprano); and Frederic Fuller (baritone) with Instrumental Ensembles, Luigi Dallapiccola, Frederick Praunitz cond., Epic BC 1088 $5.98

Interest: Definitely specialized
Performance: Seams idiomatic
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

Luigi Dallapiccola, born in 1906, has been an important figure on the contemporary music scene since the early 1930's when he became the Italian delegate to the International Society for Contemporary Music. His Songs of Prospero of 1938-41 for mixed chorus and orchestra (once available on Angel 35228) is probably his best-known work, to record collectors. It is a powerfully moving score of a hypnotic intensity. The present disc gives us five works that 'cover Dallapiccola's progress from 1942 to 1958.

In the brief notes that accompany these performances, Dallapiccola informs us that the Five Fragments of Sappho and The Two Anacreon Songs are two-thirds of a trilogy composed between 1942 and 1945. They represent, in Dallapiccola's own words, "my first step on the road to dodecaphony." The Goethe Songs were written in 1953 and the other two works on the disc in 1956.

I find my interest in the music running inversely proportional to its sweetness. The vocal writing throughout is reminiscent of Ravel and Stravinsky, but no more so than the declamatory style of Berg's Wozzeck, but what strikes me as bold and inventive in the 12-tone writing of the two earliest cycles emerges as artificial, sterile and affected in the later ones. It must say that I find it strange for a composer of Italian heritage to be writing in the abstruse and unpleasant 12-tone idiom—light-years away from the cultural tradition of Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi and Puccini. If I felt that dodecaphonism was the natural musical speech of Dallapiccola, I'd be less disturbed by it. As it is, however, I cannot escape the feeling that he has merely subscribed to a currently fashionable fad and is doing the best he can in an effort to conform to it. Like nearly all the other 12-toners around, Dallapiccola seems to have forgotten that it is substance, not style, which lends distinction to a musical work; craftsmanship is no substitute for creativity.

The performances seem to do for the music all that is possible to do for it. Miss Soederstrom reveals a surprising affinity for the idiom, and the recorded sound is exceedingly clear and well-balanced. M.B.

DAQUIN: 12 Noëls. E. Power Biggs (organ), Columbia MS 6167 $5.98

Interest: Christmas delights
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Crystal clear
Stereo Directionality: Minimal
Stereo Depth: Good

Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772), a younger contemporary of Cameau and Organist of the Chapel Royal from 1739, is justly remembered today for his delectable organ settings of French Christmas choral melodies—the Noëls.

His variation treatments are by turns of naïve simplicity, of enchanting color, and sometimes of genuine poignance; and so varied are they that they hearling twice in a row, as on this E. Power Biggs disc, affords a full measure of listening enjoyment without a trace of monotony.

This experience is abetted by the lovely classic-style tracker action instrument used by Biggs—the one recently built by D. A. Fentrop at the Harvard University Busch-Reisinger Museum. The choice of registration comes out as a joy to the ear; Biggs plays superbly and the recorded sound is perfection itself, a delicately disc, not only for Christmas, but for any season of the year.

D. H.

DEBUSSY: The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian. Philadelphia Orchestra and Chorus, with Vera Zorina (narrator); Hilde Guaden (soprano); Ethelwyn Whitmore and Natalia Moccia [mezzo-sopranos]; and Musical Art Society of the Episcopal Church of Ormond cond. Columbia M2S 609 2 12" $11.96

Interest: Mixed at best
Performance: Variable
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: Good

The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian continues to be one of Debussy's most puzzling scores. It was composed in 1911 to a Mystery Play of the Italian dramatist, Gabriele D'Annunzio, on commission from the d'Annunzio Foundation to use a nearly twenty years later was also responsible for commissioning Ravel's Bolero. The story deals with the conversion of Christianity by the Emperor of Rome, and his eventual martyrdom by the arrows of his own men.

The score is in five acts, or "mansiones," as they are called, each one introduced by a prelude. There is an extended spoken commentary as well as solos for a soprano and two concertos, with chorus and orchestra.

The whole has a curiously raptorial, quasi-erotic flavor, closing with a Hollywood kind of rainbow glow—atonal chords of heavenly hosts as the spirit of the martyred saint is received.

A previous stereo release by Amerstat (London OSA 1104) omitted the role of the narrator, although two earlier mono releases—by Inghelbrecht for Ducretet-Thomson and Munch for RCA Victor (LM 2050)—did include narration. The Munch version is doubly interesting, for the conductor was his own narrator in the recording and he infused a reverent, passionate intensity into his performance which Vera Zorina does not approach in this new one.

O'Mordian does very well, but again Munch's performance had a special aura about it which one does not find quite here. The "choral parts are sensitively sung by the combined Philadelphia Orchestra Chorus and Musical Art Society of Camden, and the vocal soloists sound fine.

The recorded sound is excellent.

M.B.

DENNEY: Partita for Organ (see p. 85)


Interest: Masterful Czech symphony
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

Mercury's stereo sound shows continuing improvement. The harsh, tearing string sound of so many early releases is by and large a thing of the past, and the brass reproduction is now a good deal warmer and less shrill.

Mercury has had in its catalog a spindletop account of Dvořák's Fourth Symphony, by Barbieri and the Hallé Orchestra but in mono only (50165). Barbieri gives a glowing performance, at once heroic and poetic. If Dorati, in this new version, fails to equal Barbieri's very personal involvement with this music, he nevertheless does turn in a reading of surprising suppleness and charm—attributes not normally associated with a Dorati performance. The tempi throughout are on the brisk side and the orchestra plays extremely well for him. I continue to prefer the greater freedom and mood-painting of Barbieri and Silvestri and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

The Carnaval Overture, which fills out the second side, is given a highly virtuoso performance and is quite a dazzler.

M.B.

FINNEY: Piano Quintet (see p. 85)

FOSS: Quartet No. 2 (see p. 85)

GERSHWIN: Rhapsody in Blue; Concerto in F. André Previn (piano), with Andras Kostelansky and his Orchestra. Columbia CS 8286 $5.98

GERSHWIN: Rhapsody in Blue; An American in Paris; Slightly Singular; American in Paris (piano), with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg cond. Everest SDBR 3067 $4.98; Mono LBR 6067 $4.98

Interest: Familiar and favorite couplings
Performance: Symphonic superb, Previn superb
Recording: Everest has it
Stereo Directionality: On all counts, good
Stereo Depth: Everest has it

Given some of Everest's best engineering.

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  - Stanley Black and His Orchestra. *Melody In My Heart, Andalousia, La Comparsa, High In The Sierra, Sydney, Danza Lecuma, Jungle Drums, Gigantolas, Maria, My Own.*
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For selection of the remarkable technical excellence of his records, we recommend the new London-Scott stereophonic Pickup and Arm.

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**DECEMBER 1960**

Concerto out choosing it music cloth

He dedicates character—But

Concerto Orchestra

Where Sanroiti injects the pose

Previn by

play the Rhapsody

Performance:

Recording: Good

by

in the opening pages

But here, too, sentiment is lacking.

The saucy, hip-swinging, smoky blues character so necessary for these Gershwin period pieces is just not there. The Everest sound is slightly better than Columbia's, and spatial spread is well realized on both stereo issues, while the Steinberg-Sparberg recording is a real stunner of its kind.

J. T.

**GROFE: Grand Canyon Suite**

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. Jesús María Sanromá [piano] with the Philharmonic Orchestra, Ferde Grofé cond. Everest SD 3044 $4.98; Mono LP 6044 $4.98

Internet: Grofé premiere

Recording: Good

Performance: Adequate

Stereo Directionality: Nicely balanced

Stereo Depth: Good

Grofé began his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra while he was with Paul Whiteman in the early 1930's, but he put the score aside and didn't finish it until 1960. It is a one-movement affair, with two subjects, two main themes and subordinaries. He dedicates the music to the soloist, who records it for the first time with Grofé leading the Rochester Philharmonic.

A relatively short work (1:55), the Concerto is old-fashioned by modern standards—music from the same piece of clay as the *It"s Only A Paper Moon*. It is a commercial-sounding vehicle splashed with bellowing orchestral climaxes that will have mass appeal; but it is certainly not music to be taken seriously. Sanromá plays it well, and easily, for this is not a technical-taxing score.

Grofé directs a surprisingly weak account of his celebrated "Grand Canyon," choosing a slow tempo for *On the Trail* and reading his most successful score without a shred of vitality. Everest engineering is good, as usual, but here the music falls far short of the engineering effort. If you want a "Grand Canyon" to command attention, either the Mercury disc with

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**OBERRETT MEMORIES**


**A MONASTERY GARDEN**


**GREAT FILM THEMES**


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Mono LS 2654

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**Wagner: DAS RHEINGOLD—Complete**

Kristen Flautone, George London, Sir John Barbirolli, Jean Modelet, Kurt Bohme, Gustav Heilingel, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—Georg Solt

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Wilhelm Backhaus—Vienna Phil. Orch.—Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt

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Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra—Karl Münchinger

(3 records) CS 2001

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**OFERRETTA MEMORIES**


**A MONASTERY GARDEN**


**GREAT FILM THEMES**


Stereo PS 112

Mono LS 2654


In reviewing Epic BC 1074 combining Concerti Nos. 1, 2 and 3 of this series done by the same artists, I remarked: "It is a pleasure to be listening to these without a single reservation. The music is among the most delightful ever written. The performances seem to be done with a loving and a skilful hand." Upon listening to the second volume in the series, I see no reason for altering the above opinions. Highly recommended. D. R.

HANDEL: Violin Sonata No. 1 in E-flat; Sonata No. 9 in G Major; Sonata No. 10 in C Major; Sonata No. 1 in F Major. Julian殴ský with Fernando Valenti (harpsichord), Martin Orn- mundy (cello). Westminster XWN 18872/74 3 1/2" $4.98 each

Interest: Unusual and high Performance: Devoted and skilled. Stereo Directionality: Excellent. Stereo Depth: Excellent.

As with Vivaldi, whose output seems to have known no bounds, the fecundity of Handel is likewise amazing. There is a tremendous variety of musical ideas and moods in these sonatas. The fact that fifteen sonatas are contained on six record sides makes it apparent that these are not the extended forms of the Beethoven era. Each work consists instead of three or more relatively short movements, many of which are idealized dance forms.

The listener who may be familiar with Handel as a composer of large works for chorus and orchestra will find an entirely different facet of the composer's genius. Here is Handel writing in the Italianate style of such composers as Corelli. The instrumentation also gives us an idea of the style of the music. Note that a cello is included in what purports to be a group of sonatas for the violin alone. The accompaniment was written for the harpsichord, whose carrying power was limited by its relatively weak tone, it was the custom to reinforce the bass line with cello. Thus, these performances are done in the authentic fashion for the cello was limited in duplicating the lowest line of the harpsichord part. (It might be argued that, since modern recording techniques can place the harpsichord on an equal footing with the violin, the reinforcement of the bass line by the cello becomes unnecessary. However, there is also to be considered the fact that the cello adds not only strength to the bass line, but also a sustained line of tone, since the harpsichord, being a plucked instrument, is incapable of sustaining the notes.)

Handel borrowed the fugal subject of the Sonata No. 13 and re-worked it in his oratorio Solomon. It is fascinating to see how the same melody is treated, first, in the relatively small chamber ensemble as recorded here, and then, as it is given to the full chorus and orchestra, in the orato- torio. Curiously, at the time these records arrived, your reviewer had just conducted two performances of Solomon, using Handel's original orchestration. Thus the com- parison of Handel's two treatments of the melody was of great interest.

The performances of the sonatas on these discs are excellent. Olevsky's playing is characterized at all times by a "singing" tone. There is none of the thin, "wiry" tone that is sometimes used in the performance of old music. Yet at no time is he guilty of the "lush" tone to these works. Thus, these performances are very satisfying to the ear. In addition, the violinist's intonation is faultless, and he has technical skill to spare. The col- laboration of Messrs. Valenti and Orn- mundy (brother of Eugene) is all that might be desired. The works are played with all the verve that one could ask for.

While the recording, as such, is technically faithful, your reviewer found himself wishing that the harpsichord had been placed a little closer to the microphone. Too often it was placed to such an extent on the violins that the ear missed the necessary "filling in" of the keyboard, between the top and the bottom. In some of the movements, when the harpsichord was sufficiently in evidence, the tonal effect was quite felicitous. Despite this minor criticism, though, these three discs can be highly recommended. D. R.

HAYDN: Symphony No. 103 in E-flat ("Drum Roll"); Symphony No. 94 in G Major ("Surprise"); Philharmonica Hungarica, Antal Dorati cond. Mercury SR 90209 $5.98


The presence of the Drum Roll Symphony on both discs affords us an opportunity for direct comparison. The differences in interpretations and in recording charac- teristics are actually summed up in the opening unaccompanied drum roll. Markevitch calls for more dramatic contrast; the crescendi and diminuendi are more extreme. Dorati's dynamics move within a smaller range. Epic's recording has the drums—and the entire orchestra—closer to the micro- phone. As a result, both orchestral instrumen- tental parts are more clearly etched. Mer- cury's recording, since it places the orches- tra at a greater distance, produces a some- what warmer over-all tone, but does not achieve the same degree of clarity. Let me state immediately that both are soni- cally perfectly satisfactory.

In the Allegro of the opening move- ment, Markevitch's tempo is much faster than Dorati's. This situation obtains dur- ing the very fast sections, with the result that the entire movement emerges with more vitality under Markevitch. Dorati's approach is suaver and more restrained.

In the second and fourth movements, the tempi adopted by both conductors are practically identical. Whatever differences there are in the fourth movement result from the greater dynamic range employed by Markevitch. This difference is es- pecially evident in the third movement minuet.

It should be born in mind, of course, that some of what emerges as a larger dynamic range may be attributed in part to closeness of microphone placement.

Each of the other works on the two discs is given similarly skilled and polished performance. Markevitch's dynamic ap- proach is again in evidence in the opening of the London Symphony, which emerges in his hands with more drama than usual. The close-to-recording occasionally gives the strings a slight hard sound in the low portions, but this is compen- sated for by the clarity with which the other parts—notably the flutes—emerge.

D. R.

IMBRIE: Piano Sonata [see p. 85]

IVES: The Unanswered Questions [see p. 84]

LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1, 4 & 5; The Battle of the Huns (Symphonic Poem), [1]; Vienna State Opera Orches- tra, Hermann Scherchen cond. Westminster WST 14100 $5.98


Liszt's orchestral music, by and large, is a mixture of old-fashioned tumult and soaring melody, mostly of secondary inter- est when compared to his piano scores. However, the Hungarian Rhapsodies lend themselves marvelously to the enormous variety of sound contained in the sym- phony orchestra, and Scherchen's warm readings make the most of them. The Battle of the Huns, eleventh of Liszt's thirteen tone poems, is a musical account of the struggle between the ghosts of slain Hungarian Romanow brothers. Let matters lie, the spirits arise and stage a real melee. Just when you think it's over, and a small church organ intones a few measures of suggested peace, the battered ghosts struggle to their feet and resume the brawling.

They may still be at it, for Liszt ends his musical nonsense in a blaze of orchestral tumult. The music is loud; the sound will shake the walls, but genuine sub- stance is hard to find.

J. T.
programming gives Fiedler a very thorough knowledge of the Liszt scores, favoring his Pops versions, and he conducts most of the repertoire here with an ear sympathetic to inherent dramatics. But even the Boston Pops brilliant sound cannot always overcome those black thundercloud bars, as waves of billowing tumult splashed with free abandon in Les Preludes and Massepois. Great climaxes shiver and groan, seem to call forth the Wolf Man from under the bed, summon Dracula from a cobwebbed lined casket, sounding humorless and rigid, old-fashioned and dull. There are a few bright moments of sensitive beauty in the familiar Hungarian Rhapsody, but it is hard to find in those gloomy valleys of sound. Good engineering captures the admirable acoustics of Symphony Hall at Boston.

*LOEFFLER: A Pagan Poem; SCHÖNBERG: Verklärte Nacht, Leopold Stokowski conducting his Orchestra; Robert Hunter (piano) and William Kosinski (English horn) in the Loeffler, Capitol SP 8433 $5.98

Interest: Fascinating Stokowski
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Fine
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Excellent

A couple of generations ago, Charles Martin Loeffler was one of the most prominent men of music in this country. A native of Mulhouse in Alsace, he came to this country as a violinist in his early twenties, became an American citizen in 1887 when he was 26, and lived in the environs of Boston for nearly a half century afterwards (he died in 1935).

A Pagan Poem, composed in 1906, is probably his best-known work today, but even this is relative; for all practical purposes Loeffler’s music has passed into oblivion. This is a pity, for he was a brilliantly colorful orchestrator and a man of ideas. If A Pagan Poem is reminiscent of d’Eldy’s Symphony on a French Mountain Air in its texture and harmonies, it is nevertheless a colorful and artful work that deserves to be heard. It is a literary program based upon the Eighth Eclogue of Virgil, telling of a faithless lover who is finally brought back to the side of the sweetheart he has forsaken by the magic spell of a sorceress. Roger Sessions’ Idyll of Theocritus (Louisville 57-4) sets the Greek version of the same tale for voice and orchestra.

If the mere recitation of this program suggests to you that the music would be tailor-made for the conducting talents of Leopold Stokowski, you’re absolutely right! This is impassioned, voluptuous music and Stokowski is in his element. Furthermore, the orchestra assembled for the recording—made on the West Coast—is superb and responds to his conducting with enthusiasm and excitement. Whoever thought of uniting Stokowski and this score deserves a vote of gratitude.

As to the much more familiar Schonberg score, a comparison with Stokowski’s RCA Victor recording of the music made about a decade ago reveals the extent to which Stokowski has refined and polished his art in recent years. The earlier performance abounds in the lush, over-ripe sonorities which used to be an obsession with the conductor. In the new performance, the sound is still gorgeous, but the breaking, shivering, and exaggerations of the Stokowski of ten years ago are gone. In their place, one gets a free-flowing, spontaneously felt account of the music. As in the Loeffler, the playing is marvelous, and both works are splendid in their stereo richness and depth.

This disc is a major addition to the record catalogs.

M.B.


Interest: Melodious and charming
Performance: Sensitive

Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Reasonable
Stereo Depth: Good

It is easy to be beguiled by the sheer melodiousness of Felix Mendelssohn’s chamber music. The profundities in the music are few and the conflicts even fewer. There is little drama and less sorrow. But there is a wealth of charm, elegance, and spontaneity.

These sonatas are among the loveliest for the cello. The composer does not grapple with the instrument. Cumber- some for others, it is as graceful for him as a violin. The music radiates well-being and graciousness, dignity and sparkle. What it says is said with aptness and wit. Soyer’s tone is pleasing and the ensemble is nicely balanced. Stereo adds to the illusion of realism.

W.D.
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MILHAUD: Little Symphony No. 4 [see p. 61]

ALP 154 $4.98

Interest: Caviar
Performance: Excellent
Recording: Very good

The Moussorgsky presents the enigmatic Richter, who alternates moments of real inspiration with moments of frustration. It is a beautifully played performance, with a sparkling Tulli, a vivacious Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks, a scintillating Linares and an eerie, unearthly Caincoons.

However, the opening Promenide is played very fast, portraying poor Moussorgsky rushing about and you among the water colors and architectural drawings of his dear departed friend's memorial exhibition. Byebo is also played fast. I cannot imagine even pulling a clumsy cart at a smart gallop. Also, I much prefer the soft opening and gradual crescendos usually heard in this section to the unvaried loudness of Richter's opening; even though he plays it as the composer was supposed to have played it and did mark it, I do feel the crescendo is more imaginative and interesting.

Unfortunately, the otherwise very good recording does not permit the full power of Richter's playing to be heard in the closing Great Gate of Kiev. Undoubtedly, Richter's tone in that section was larger than the record grooves could convey. The recording engineers have resorted to monitoring and the final pages are compressed in sound. This is a pity, for instead of an exciting aural climax, we are left with rather monotonously level sound.

The Prokofiev is a joy from beginning to end. This is a splendid performance, rivaling the deleted Horowitz recording for RCA in excitement and insight. Richter makes more of the lyrical slow movement than Horowitz did and plays the intense finale just a shade faster, but not quite as dynamically. In this piece, the recording throughout is superior to that in the Moussorgsky.

W. D.

MOZART: Clarinet Concerto in A Major (K. 622); Horn Concerto No. 1 in D Major (K.417); Horn Concerto No. 3 in E-flat Major (K.447). Gervaise De Peyer (clarinet); Barry Tuckwell (horn). The London Symphony Orchestra, Peter Maag cond. London CS 6178 $5.98

Interest: Certainly
Performance: Exemplary
Recording: Rich
Stereo Directionality: Fine
Stereo Depth: OK

Mozart's two-movement Horn Concerto No. 1 is a wonderful work, despite its lightness. This is one of four concertos that Mozart wrote for Ignaz Leutgeb, a member of the Salzburg Orchestra. Throughout the score, he included a number of mock instructions for "that ass, ox and fool" (Leutgeb)!

The other two works on the disc are acknowledged masterpieces. The less familiar of the two, the E-flat Horn Con-
Both soloists turn in fine, expressive performances, most sensitively seconded by Peter Maag and the orchestra. Barry Tuckwell is, to my ears, a worthy successor to the late Dennis Brain. Maag's conducting and the response he elicits from the orchestra make for fine Mozart playing indeed. D.R.

**First American recording of the distinguished Danish baritone**

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Those who own Mr. Schiøtz's European recordings will welcome this opportunity to bring their collections up-to-date. Those who are hereby introduced to the art of Aksel Schiøtz will remain forever in our debt. Included in this new recording are songs by Schubert, Brahms and Wolf, with Paul Ulanowsky, piano; also a group of rarely-heard songs by the great 18th Century Swedish minstrel Carl Michael Bellman, with Richard Dyer-Bennet, guitar.

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the newest in a series of lifelike recordings featuring the lyric voice of Richard Dyer-Bennet as he accompanies himself on the classic Spanish guitar. Songs recorded for the first time and often-requested favorites from the British Isles, Europe and America include: The Laird o' Cockpen, The two sisters of Binntrie, Early one morning, The Pride of Petravore, Gently Johnny my jingalo, The British light dragoons, Schneiders Hollenfant, Der tod von Basel, Le joli tambour, The buffalo skinners, John Riley, The cherry tree carol...

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tremendous technical and interpretive problems in performance.

Risorgimento recorded the whole set for London on two discs (LL 252 and LL 254) almost ten years ago. This new version is more refined in sound. It also presents a subtler, more assured artist.

The passage of time and technology has enabled London to put all 24 Caprices on one disc, although they cannot be individually handed in this economical format. However, they are divided in groups of three, with bands between the groups, so finding an individual Caprice is not too difficult.

H. D.

PAISIELLO: The Barber of Seville [complete opera] (see Schicchi (opera)—Rosino: Nicolò Monti (tenor)—Count Almaviva; Rolando Panari [baritone]—Figaro; Renato Capocchi [bass]—Dr. Bartolo; Mario Petri [bass]—Barilla & others. Virtuosi di Roma. Renato Fasano cond. Mercury SD 2-5010 $11.96

Interest: Comic opera landmark
Performance: Expert
Recording: Outstanding
Stereo Directionality: Restricted
Stereo Depth: Excellent

Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816) composed his Barber of Seville to a text the Roman publisher Giuseppe Petrusini fashioned from Beaumarchais' comedy in 1782. The opera was first presented in the same year in St. Petersburg, under the patronage of Catherine the Great, to whom it was dedicated. Mozart saw it in Vienna a year later—a circumstance that propelled him toward the composing of The Marriage of Figaro, based on Beaumarchais' sequel to "The Barber." Thanks to this welcome and beautifully recorded documentation, we can now simultaneously discover both the magnitude of Paisiello's skills and the extent of his influence on Mozart.

Petrucciplini's book, which follows Beaumarchais very closely, parallels the better-known Sterbini-Rossini version. The stage action is a bit more restrained, less suitable for English. Old-fashioned humor is a hilarious bit involving Dr. Bartolo's two endearing moronic servants who alternate sneeze and yawn their master to distraction.

Paisiello was a marvelous craftsman. His treatment of the orchestra was vivid and bold, as witnessed by the second act's storm scene and the orchestral background to Basilio's "La Calunnia." As for his command of the vocal ensembles, it was probably unparalleled in opera buffa until the "natural" works of Mozart. They are seen to instantiate much of Mozart's indebtedness, and none better than Rossini's aria "Giu riede primavera" which foreshadows the melody in the "Figaro" garden scene, recalling as it does the music of both Barbarina and the Countess.

The inevitable comparison with Rossini cannot, of course, turn out in the older composer's favor. For all his expert ensembles and pleasant arias, Paisiello possesses nothing of the sparkle nor the flair of Rossini's less inhibited comic genius.

The performance recorded here of Mer- cury is exceptionally fine, due largely to the presence of Renato Fasano and his Virtuosi di Roma (evidently enhanced for the occasion). As belcanto a musician of his proven authority, Fasano's reading is precise, vigorous and thoroughly delightful.

There can be nothing but high praise for the singers who are all from the front rank of Milan's Piccola Scala. Scuiti and Panari are among Italy's leading Moz- artians. Mosti has few equals in similar repertoire, and Capocchi is a remarkably expressive and versatile buffo artist. Petri is not quite their equal, but he is always competent.

The warm, luminous sound results in velvety reproduction of tones and fullness of sound. It also gives us clear articulation in the important vocal ensembles, otherwise directionality is not emphasized until we reach Side 4.

This album is a notable contribution, for which Mercury deserves the highest encomiums. Harold Lawrence's illuminating essay, which comes with the sets, adds the finishing touch to an excellent production.

G. J.

PROKOFIEV: Lieutenant Kije (see Shos- takovich)

PROKOFIEV: Piano Sonata No. 7 (see MOUSSORGSKY)


Interest: Late and lyrical Prokofiev
Performance: Intense
Recording: Better than USSR average

Only In his Fifth Symphony did Sergei Prokofiev achieve a grand synthesis of the lyric and heroic. In his Sixth Symphony of 1947, Prokofiev has given us music less impressive in structure, but very intense in its lyrical introspection. The lyrical strain holds throughout almost all of the long first movement and somewhat shorter Largo. Only in the finale does the special Prokofiev brand of rhythmic dynamism manifest itself.

At one time, both Eugene Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Ernest Ansermet with the Suisse Romande en- semble recorded versions of the Prokofiev Sixth Symphony; but both have fallen into the "deleted" category, leaving the field wholly to Mravinsky and his Leningraders.

Mravinsky emphasizes the lyrical-expressive aspect of the music throughout, and to impressive effect—thanks to the Leningrad Philharmonic's superb string section. The recorded sound lacks very slightly in bass; but the room acoustics are good and the overall sound is the best we have heard on any large-scale orchestral disc originating in the Soviet Union.

D. H.

ROSEN: Clarinet and Cello Sonatas (p. 89)

SCHÖNBERG: Verklärte Nacht (see LOEFFLER)

SCHUMANN: Piano Concerto (see CHOPIN)


Interest: Modern and tuneful
Performance: Lyrical
Recording: Brilliant
Stereo Directionality: Proper
Stereo Depth: Good

The Shostakovich Ninth Symphony is a cheerful, lyrical composition, and perhaps that is why it is not accorded much critical consideration. In this age when the labor pains of symphonic creation are deeply traumatic, it seems almost like sacrilege to write a symphony that is not wholly serious.

About a year after its successful 1945 premiere, the symphony and its composer were attacked by the artistic pundits of the Russian Communist Party for having "failed to reflect the true spirit of the Soviet people." It may be well to remark that the composers who jumped on Shos- takovich have yet to write a successful symphony.

Sargent's performance is virile and compelling. The work is tuneful and the melodies are given full play.

The more subtle Prokofiev masterpiece is also performed with spirit and genius. Sargent is not the most searching of conductors, but he knows how to make an orchestra sing. The players respond enthusiastically to his beat and the Everest recording is a model of clarity and balance, with no thickness of texture in the mono, and fine spread in the stereo.

SKALOTTAS: Little Suite (see p. 84)

SMITH: String Trio (see p. 85)

J. STRAUSS: Die Fledermaus [complete opera] (see Sterbini-Rossini), Karl Telski (tenor)—Von Eisenstein; Fred Liewehr (dialogue only)—Von Eisenstein; Gerda Scherly (soprano) —Rosina; Anton Demus (baritone) —Alfred; Willa Lipp (soprano) —Adelgunde; Walter Berry (baritone) —Eyesermann; Eberhard Wächter (baritone) —Dr. Falke; Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano) —Mimi; Otto Orff, Ernst M. Major (tenor) —Dr. Blind; Erich Kunz (speaking only) —Fron; Luisa Martini (speaking only) —Ida; Philharmonia Orches- tra and Chorus, Otto Ackermann cond. Angel S 3581 12" $12.96

Interest: Chambord opera
Performance: Not bad enough
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

There is no doubt that this is an opera with a plot, even a philosophy. We seem to have all of the dialogue in this recording to insure us of this. But the music that smothers the gaiety of this gay masterpiece. Instead of lending continuity to the story, it merely slows the flow of the proceedings.

The late Otto Ackermann leads a competent musical performance. He does not have the subtlety of the late Clemens Krauss, and this new version of Die Fledermaus does not challenge the pre-eminen- ce of the old one, without spoken dialogue, that Krauss conducted for London (LX 681-1928). This recording is more classic, less subjective, and perhaps more accurate. In the Krauss set were joined by genius.

Anton Dermota, as Alfée, is the star of this show, just as he was in the old one. He sings with style and vitality. Wilma Lipp is not quite the Adele he had been.
was in the Krauss performance. Her coloratura lacks some of its former crispness, although her singing in general is still beautiful.

Of the new singers, Eberhard Wächter and Walter Berry do their parts very well. Christa Ludwig rather overdoes the boredom that characterizes Prince Orlofsky, while Karl Terzal and Gerda Scheyer do not, unfortunately, seem to be in the same class as Julius Patzak and Hildegard of the old album.

I think Angel gave us too much of a good thing with the spoken dialogue. Julliet's cutting would still preserve continuity, while the action would be speeded up advantageously, and musical numbers would not have to suffer cuts. Some charming music had to go in order to make room for so much talk. Frohch's drunken scene at the beginning of Act 3 seems endless; one-third of it would be sufficient and more effective.

Stereo effects aid in "seeing" the action and the recording is rich in sound and very well balanced. However, the dialogue at Prince Orlofsky's party has no sounds of revelry behind it. There is much talk in this opera of champagne and the joy of living, but the bubbles and sparkle are found in rather small quantity in this performance. We shall be interested to hear the forthcoming London stereo recording under the formidable baton of Herbert von Karajan.

**TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6 in B Minor, Op. 74, ("Pathétique") Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. Columbia MS 6160 $5.98**

- Interest: Certainly
- Performance: Superb
- Recording: Excellent
- Stereo Directionality: Excellent
- Stereo Depth: Fine

If I remember correctly, the "Pathétique" was the first music Ormandy ever recorded with the Philadelphia Orchestra back in the 1930's (Victor 78-rpm set M 257). As an indication of Ormandy's growth as a conductor in this, his 25th anniversary season in Philadelphia, this new "Pathétique" is startling. This is a superb performance, one that approaches the score with dignity and devotion. For once, the finale, instead of the more obvious and militant third movement March, emerges as the true emotional climax of the music. Without slighting the earlier movements, Ormandy builds his entire performance to an Adagio lamento of rarified spirituality.

It is probably superfluous to say so, but the playing of the orchestra and the engineers' reproduction of the whole models are excellent. This is the recording of the "Pathétique" I now would recommend above others.

**VERDI: La Traviata [complete opera]. Victoria de los Angeles [soprano]-Violeta Valery; Carlo del Monte [tenor]-Alfredo García; Maria Sereni [baritone]-Giovanni Garcia; Santa Chiara [soprano]-Flora; Sergio Tedesco [tenor]-Gastone; Vico Poli [baritone]-Doughal; Silvio Maioni [bass]-of Obigny, & others. Orchestra and Chorus of the Rome Opera, Tulio Serafin cond. Capitol SGC 7221 3 12" $17.94**

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Capitol's new La Traviata rates very highly on performance values, quite apart from the advantages deriving from its presently unique position as the only stereo version of the opera now in existence. It is extremely fortunate that this is so, for while the recorded sound is warm and brilliant, the stereophonic results are generally undistinguished.

No need to dwell on the negative side, however. The musical performance is excellent, in many ways the best of all available choices. Victoria de los Angeles, after a moment of edginess in "Ah, fars è lui," dispenses of the florid requirements of "Sempre libera" in impeccable style and sings with effortless purity and exquisite phrasing to the end. Even if she does not exploit the dramatic possibilities of the role to the fullest, and seldom if ever allows herself a real pianissimo (most noticeable is her slighting the ppp marking in "Alfredo, di questo cuore"), one must rank her Violetta with the best to be heard today.

The admirable soprano receives outstanding support from Carlo del Monte, an ardent and strong-voiced, yet reasonably pliant, tenor and Mario Sereni, a Gérard of dignity, tenderness, and good vocal resources. While neither commands a luxuriant vocal quality, both are intelligent, laudably musical artists. The Act II duet between de los Angeles and Sereni is exceptionally fine.

It would hardly be faire to dismiss Tullio Serafin's contribution with two or three standard laudatory adjectives. A remarkable conductor when he first conducted La Traviata at the Met thirty-six years ago, now, at 82, he displays an unimpaired mastery of the best Italian traditions—clarity and rhythmic vitality, a natural sense of balance, discipline without rigidity, rubato without disturbing excesses and masterful pacing and support for his singers. Capitòl has included a highly entertaining bonus disc with the set, taken at one of the orchestral rehearsals. Here Serafin shows not only his amazing authority and quicksilver alertness but also a somewhat worn but indomitable coloratura-baritone with which he places before us all personalities of the opera, from Violetta to the servant Giuseppa.

The Rome Opera's comprimarii are a well-rounded lot, the chorus outstandingly good. The unimaginative use of stereo, with practically no illusion of space and movement, is the only disappointment. Surely, something could have been made of the stage business in Act III simply by following the libretto's instructions concerning the card game on the right, Violetta's withdrawal and subsequent return, and, particularly, Gérard's sudden and dramatic appearance with "Di sprezato adegno . . ."

Well, anyway, it is a fine performance, and on that level it can be wholeheartedly recommended.

G. J.

WILDER: Suite for Brass Quintet (see p. 85)

COLLECTIONS

BARTON: Divenimento for Strings (1939); IVES: The Unanswered Question (1908); MILHAUD: Little Symphony No. 4, for Strings (1921); SKALKOTTAS: Little Suite for Strings (1942). Zimbler Sinfonietta, Lutes Foss cond. Siena $ 100-2 $4.98

Interest: Modern varieties
Performance: Precise
Recording: First-rate

One of my favorite discs on the new de-funct Unicorn label was this fine collection of 20th century music for chamber orchestra; and its resurrection under the Sieira aegis (P.O. Box 91, Boston, Mass.) is most welcome.

The Zimbler Sinfonietta is made up of Boston Symphony Orchestra players; Lucas Foss is not only a skillful director but a fine conductor: of modern music; and the engineering was done in Boston's Symphony Hall by that redoubtable genius in the field, Peter Bartók, son of Béla Bartók. The recording sounds fresh and clean when first issued in 1956 and it has not lost one whit of its freshness and clarity since. Until we get a stereo version, this recorded performance of Charles Ives' mystical coloquy is likely to remain unequalled in both the expression of uttermost and evocative power. The Milhaud "Symphony" is, save for its slow movement, a fairly inconsequential essay in polytonality; but the Little Suite by the gifted Greek composer, Nikos Skalkottas (1904-1949), is quite another matter. Its intensity of expression and richness of structure produce a combined impact in the hearing that makes immaterial such considerations as its being composed in 12-tone idiom.

The Béla Bartók "Divenimento" is an altogether splendid work, when played with precision and intensity. Some may find this performance a trifle icy; but it does have power, lots of it. Only Donati and the Philharmonic Hungarica (Epic LC 3513) and the Angel stereo disc of Silvestri and the Philharmonia (S 5569) are in the same league.

D. H.


Interest: Fiddle-orchestra grab-bag
Performance: Stimulating
Recording: Good, but lacks bass
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: A mite shallow

On this release, ambigiously entitled "Milstein Masterpieces," Capitol presents one of the greatest living artists playing a scattering of pleasant, somewhat neglected scores (except for the Saint-Saëns) and he dashes them off with a fine display of technical proficiency, but without much vivacity of tonal character. His account of the Mozart pieces, for example, sounds in style and manner like his playing of the Beethoven Romance, and the only per
ceptible broadcasting of tone-cones in the Stravinsky Berceuse.

Elsewhere, Milstein's playing leaves nothing to be desired (he is a magician in the delicate spiccati bowing of Perpetuum Mobile).

Perhaps the general sound of this Capitol disc can be held partly responsible for the seeming lack of warmth in Milstein's playing. The engineering results in an exceedingly clear sound filled with crisp detail, but lack of bass makes also for lack of tonal warmth.

J. T.

BERGSMAN: Quartet No. 3; FOSS: Quartet No. 1, The Judiwall String Quartet (Bergsma), The American Art Quartet (Foss). Columbia ML 5476 $4.98

FINNEY: Piano Quintet; SEEGER: Quartet (1931). Stanley Quartet of the University of Michigan with Beveridge Webster, Amatz String Quartet, Columbia MS 6142 $5.98

Interest: Major American chamber music
Performance: Excellent, authoritative
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: Sufficient
Stereo Depth: Good

These releases are products of the Modern American Music Series sponsored by Columbia Records. The works recorded are chosen by a committee consisting of Virgil Thomson, Chairman, with Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, Goddard Lieberson and William Schuman. The performances are by artists selected by the composers, who are also given the opportunity to supervise the recording sessions.

Ruth Crawford Seeger was born in 1901 and died in 1953. Ross Lee Finney was born in 1906. William Bergsma in 1921 and Lukas Foss in 1922. Their music is strong in character, and in the case of the Bergsma and the Finney, decidedly significant in style and content. Virgil Thomson's committee has chosen composers and compositions characteristically modern and important. The performances are brilliant as well as authentic, and Columbia, of course, is according the project superior engineering.

W. D.

ELKUS: After Their Kind; CYR: Peter Quince at the Clavier; CUSHING: Sonata for Clarinet and Piano. Edgar Jones (Bartone), Jerome Rosen (clarinet), Nathan Schwartz (piano), Helen Cyr (piano). Fantasy 5008 $4.98

IMBRIE: Piano Sonata; ROSEN: Sonata for Clarinet and Violoncello, Almog: Six Moods of Love. Dorothy Renzi (soprano), Jerome Rosen (clarinet), Helen Stross (violoncello), Raylene Pierce (piano), Andrew Imbrie (piano). Fantasy 5009 $4.98

CLARKE: Chamber Music; DENNY: Partita for Organ; SMITH: String Trio. Dorothy Renzi (soprano), Nathan Rubin (violin), Mary James (viola), Bonnie Hampton (violoncello), Nathan Schwartz (piano), Lawrence Moz (organ). Fantasy 5010 $4.98

Interest: Representative American chamber music
Performance: Dedicated and authoritative
Recording: Very good

If few American composers are recorded in depth, it must nevertheless be admitted that more and more of them are at least — and at last — appearing on records. Of the nine composers here represented, five (Jonathan Elkus, Gordon Cyr, Charles Cushing, Laurence Clarke, Leland Smith) SYSTEMATED... a new concept in stereo record changers! World-famous Italian craftsmen have designed the LESA CD2/21 to make it compatible with any cartridge, amplifier and speaker. Whether your budget is high, low or in the middle... select the CD2/21... you'll find it a perfect mate for the rest of your system. $44.50 (Slightly higher in the West) ELECTROPHONO & PARTS CORP. 530 Canal Street, New York 13, N. Y. Imported by Lesa of America, 11 W. 42nd St., New York, N. Y.
make their initial appearance in the current Schwann catalog, and of the other four (Andrew Imbrie, Jerome Rosen, Roger Nixon, William Denny), only the first has more than one previous listing. Imbrie has two.

This series of records is an outgrowth of the Composers' Forum, which was organized in San Francisco fourteen years ago for the encouragement and performance of contemporary music. Chamber music concerts are regularly sponsored by the Forum, and it may be assumed that the compositions which are recorded are the pick of those concerts.

The level of composition exhibited here is high. There is creative competence aplenty; these composers know their craft. Of course, not all of the works are outstandingly individualistic, but they do maintain listening interest.

The dedicated performances do much to project the maximum effectiveness of these pieces. All of the performers give the impression of utmost belief in this music. This is as it should be, and the clear, well-balanced recording also is an asset.

W. D.


Interest: For brass buffs
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Mostly good
Stereo Directionality: Moderately defined
Stereo Depth: OK

Golden Crest has made something of a minor specialty of recording brass and percussion repertoire; for these two discs bring up to four the number of chamber brass discs in their catalog, while the recent percussion LP with Warren Benson allows the label to boast of two rather interesting discs in this medium.

The New York Brass Quintet, made up of gifted young players trained in or near Manhattan, plays with brilliance and vitality throughout both of these discs and has the benefit of clean and bright recorded sound. However, it is the anthology of early (Pezel, Gabrieli, Holborne) and modern (Haines, Harris, Bozza) pieces which is the one worth getting, especially for the charming dances by the Elizabethan Anthony Holborne (d. 1602), and for the spicy Sonatine by the Frenchman, Eugene Bozza (b. 1905).

Alec Wilder, who has a nice flair for lyrical miniatures, is dull as dishwater throughout the six movements of his Brass Suite. His younger colleague, Don Hammond, displays more competence in conservative-modern vein than originality in his Quintet, though the Hymn and Variations movement does make one prick up the ears to some extent.

The "compatible" stereo is adequate, but hardly outstanding as such, though the overall sound is quite good. D. H.
BEST OF THE MONTH

△ Epic's fast-growing library of historic old and modern jazz recordings boasts a distinguished entry in the Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers Paris Concert. "The music is strong, vibrant, and exciting... modern jazz, alright, but it is also hot music in the good old-fashioned sense." (see p. 88)

△ Decca has made a major contribution to the documenting of new paths in jazz via the album George Russell—Jazz in the Space Age. "... a much more diversified tonal spectrum than exists in customary jazz writing. The soloists... are challenged by the increase in freedom demanded by Russell's writing." (see p. 91)

△ Decca's second prize album of the month, Sal Salvador's The Beat for this Generation, marks Mr. Salvador as one of the label's most consistently excellent jazz artists. "The band is apparently one of the big rehearsal groups that musicians periodically assemble. One might hope this group will... become a permanent part of the jazz scene." (see p. 92)

Records reviewed in this section are both stereo and monophonic. Versions received for review are identified by closed (△) and open (△) triangles respectively. All records are 33⅓ rpm and should be played with the RIAA amplifier setting or its equivalent. Monophonic recordings (△) may be played also on stereo equipment with resulting improvement in sound distribution quality. Stereo recordings (△), however, must not be played on monophonic phonographs and hi-fi systems.

△ CANNONBALL ADDERLEY QUINTET IN CHICAGO. Julian Cannonball Adderley [alto saxophone], John Coltrane [tenor saxophone], Wynton Kelly [piano], Paul Chambers [bass], Jimmy Cobb [drums]. Limehouse Blues; Webbs; The Sleeper; Stars Fell Over Alabama; You're A Weaver Of Dreams; Grand Central. Mercury SR 60134 $4.98
Interest: Top modern jazz
Performance: Less than their best
Recording: Bright
Stereo Directionality: Pronounced
Stereo Depth: Shallow

These men are all members of the highest echelon of modern jazz musicians and were actually working when the LP was made. 2% of the Miles Davis Sextet, the most important jazz combo of its time. However, they do not, on this album, measure up to the excitement and the intensity of emotional charge that they had when Davis was present, or, for that matter, when various elements of the group have recorded elsewhere. It is just one of those things that this particular session did not seem to jell despite the array of talent. There are two John Coltrane originals here and any album he plays on is worth owning, so don't pass this up. It's just that it's less than it might have been.

R. J. G.

△ JOE ALEXANDER—BLUE JUBILEE. Joe Alexander [tenor saxophone], John Hunt (flugel horn), Bobby Timmons [piano], Sam Jones [bass], Albert Heath [drums]. Weird Beard; Terri's Blues & 3 others. Jazzland JLP 23 $4.98
Interest: Strong potential
Performance: Intense
Recording: OK
Jazzland, the Riverside subsidiary, deserves credit for giving Cleveland-based Joe Alexander a debut album. It's a loosely arranged "blowing" session in which Alexander swings hard in a shouting, emotional style characteristic of a tangy, vigorous tone. John Hunt, a regular member of Ray Charles' band, is not as powerful as Alexander but he's also worth keeping track of. Both are quite affecting in the ballad I'll Close My Eyes. There is good, full-strength rhythm section support. N.H.

## 1. COUNT BASIE—"NOT NOW, I'LL TELL YOU WHEN." Count Basie [piano] and his Band. Rare Butterfly; Swingin' at the Waldorf & 7 others. Roulette R 53044 $4.98

Interest: Precision swing
Performance: Predictable
Recording: Good

The current Count Basie band loses flexibility and freshness as it increases the massiveness of its attack. The arrangements here are all of a piece—functional blueprints with only limited challenges for the band and soloists. The solos are short and although occasionally vivid, are too quickly swallowed up in the mechanical ensemble. The nadir of Basie on record in the past decade is the ridiculous shallowness of Old Man River which most assuredly does not deserve to be in a jazz album.

Basie has finally achieved financial success; but twenty years from now, collectors will be listening to the Basie of the Thirties and Forties when the band could still surprise. The TaddITO自媒体 articles. The notes fail to list full personnel and to identify all the soloists. N.H.

## 2. PARIS CONCERT—ART BLAKEY'S JAZZ MESSAGERS. Art Blakey [drums], Benny Golson [tenor], Lee Morgan [trumpet], Bobby Timmons [piano], and Jimmy Merritt [bass]. Just By Myself; I Remember Clifford; Are You Real; Moonin'; Justice. Epic LA 10609 $3.98

Interest: Fervid modern jazz
Performance: Intense
Recording: First Rate

This is another live album, a concert by the Jazz Messengers recorded in Paris. It was during the period of the best of the Messengers' work and includes versions of two great numbers, I Remember Clifford and Moonin'. The music is strong, vibrant, and exciting and the soloists are so immediate in their impact that this strikes us as one of the very best examples of this group's work. They are, one might as well say, as far from the cool sound of some modern jazz as Bessie Smith was. This music is modern jazz all right, but it is also hot music in the good old-fashioned sense. R.J.G.

## 3. JAZZ SONG BOOK—LES BROWN. Buddy DeFranco [clarinet], Frank Rosolino [trombone], Terry Gibbs [vibraphonist], Don Fagerquist [trumpet], Ronnie Lang [alto and baritone saxophone], Zoot Sims [tenor saxophone]. I Remember You; Apple Honey; The Claw; Willow Weep For Me & 8 others. Coral CRL 5 75311 $4.98; Mossa Coral CRL 5731 $3.98

Interest: Good dance band
Performance: Slick
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

The device here is to have the usual Les Brown band augmented by some players with a more solid jazz background, such as Mel Lewis (drums) and then to feature soloists brought in for various tracks. The soloists, all of whom were from outside the current band, exhibit a higher level of jazz performance than the Brown band usually offers and thus makes it one of the most interesting of his packages in some time. Zoot Sims plays absolutely beautifully on Willow Weep For Me, and Frank Rosolino contributes an excitement in his trombone solo that has never been present in the Brown band before. Quite frankly, if I were Les Brown, I wouldn't take a shot at albums under the label of jazz. As a dance band, and a better than average one, Les Brown always makes it. As a jazz band, there are more exciting reissue bands in half a dozen cities right now.

## 4. THE BROTHERS CANDOLI SEXTET. Pete and Conte Candoli (trumpets), Jimmy Rowles (piano), Max Bennett (bass), Frank Gapp (drums), Howard Roberts (guitar), Caravan; Richard Diamond's Blues & 8 others. Mercury SR 60191 $4.98

Interest: Good fraternal jazz
Performance: Tasteful
Recording: Very good
Stereo Directionality: Excellent
Stereo Depth: Adequate

Considering the color limitations inherent in a two-trumpets-plus-rhythm combination, this is a surprisingly varied album. The brothers Candoli imaginatively change moods and timbres and bring in, with shades of muted and open horn playing. They are sustained by a flowing rhythm section, fused by the continually underrated Jimmy Rowles. All in all, however, the two-trumpet interplay becomes a bit wearisome over an entire album. The brothers would have been wise to have incorporated for contrast a non-familial reed player. N.H.

## 5. THE COOL SCHOOL—JUNE CHRISTY. Baby's Birthday Party; Small Fry; When You Wish Upon A Star & 8 others. Capitol ST 1398 $4.98

Interest: Hip kiddie songs for adults
Performance: Spotty
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: OK

On some of these tunes, Miss Christy gets that lovely, lost-in-the-fog sound that she has made famous—with all its flat, bittersweet overtones. On these she successfully communicates the poignancy of reluctant adulthood. On some others, though, she suffers from the insecurity and uncertainty that has plagued her in recent years and the all too faithful reproduction of it by Capitol's engineers does her no service. R.J.G.

## 6. AL "JAZZBO" COLLINS presents SWINGING AT THE OPERA. Arrangements and Orchestra conducted by Fred Karlin. Women Is Fickle; Grand March & 8 others. Everest SDR 1972: $3.98

HIFI STEREO
The concept of making quasi-jazz arrangements of familiar operatic pieces is somewhat similar to having Eileen Farrell sing the blues. Just as Miss Farrell is no jazz singer—in spite of the many homosexuals with which her recent Columbia "jazz" set was greeted—opera played by a big jazz band doesn't work. When both are successfully blended on any level, the best one can say is that a slick trick has been performed. Fred Karlin, clearly a skilful arranger, seems to have accomplished just that.

There are some substantial solos, particularly by trombonist Bob Brookmeyer, but the experience as a whole is so obviously synthetic that the album has no durable value. Everest would do better to commission Mr. Karlin to compose works of his own invention. The notes by disc jockey Al Collins are as self-consciously unfunny as any in the whole grim history of liner-note writing. N.H.

A PETE FOUNTAIN SALUTES THE GREAT CLARINETISTS. Woodchopper's Ball; Fresnel; Begin The Beguine; My Inspiration & 8 others. Coral CRL 75733 $4.98

Interest: Big band swing
Performance: Professional
Recording: Brittle
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: OK

Fountain (who once was with the Lawrence Welk band) plays a series of tunes associated with great jazz clarinetists such as Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Jimmy Dorsey, Irving Fazola, etc. It's pleasant, the band swings lightly and Fountain is a facile clarinetist. However, like most gimmicky albums, there isn't enough happenings musically to justify the fancy packaging. R.J.G.

JAZZ SUR SEINE—MILT JACKSON, BARNEY WILEN, PERCY HEATH, KENNY CLARKE. Philips (imported) P 77 127 L $4.98

Interest: Broad
Performance: Striking
Recording: Fine

Here is another excellent LP from Europe. This was made at a Paris studio and includes two members of the Modern Jazz Quartet (Milt Jackson, Percy Heath) plus French tenor sax Barney Wilen and the expatriate American drummer, Kenny Clarke. Jackson plays piano, not vibes, and Heath, of course, is on bass. It is pleasant, earthy and warmly moving music, part of which is standard American blues and jazz originals, and part French numbers. Wilen is a remarkable tenor soloist who can hold his own in any company as far as communication goes. He gets to you right away and keeps your attention. This album, I should judge, will stand up against the average American jazz recording quite well. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that it's well above the average, both in performance and in engineering. R.J.G.

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This is the second of four volumes recorded during a 1969 Shelly Manne engagement at the Black Hawk in San Francisco. It's more stimulating than the first, but hardly an important event. Of the two horn-men, Kamuca is competent but thoroughly undistinctive. Trumpeter Gordon is more directly emotional and exciting, but not notably imaginative. As before, Victor Feldman is adequate on piano but would have contributed more as a vibist. Monty Budwig shows a marked increase in ability in this series, most impressively illustrated by his long solo in Vamp's Blues. Mr. Manne is intelligent and steady throughout.

N. H.

- LES McCANN LTD. PLAYS the SHOUT. Les McCann (piano), Leroy Vinnegar (bass), Ron Jefferson (drums). But Not For Me: Jubilation & 6 others. Pacific Jazz 7 $5.98

Interest: Medicine show jazz Performance: Pretentiously simple Recording: Exceptional Stereo Directionality: Excellent Stereo Depth: Good for location

Pianist McCann indicated in his first album (Pacific Jazz 2) that he could project considerable vitality even if his invention was limited. This set reinforces my initial suspicion that McCann is a distinctly minor talent capitalizing on the current hunger for "soul" jazz.

His "soul" music is predictably earthy and gospel-echoey, but it's also dully repetitious. There is more than a slight tinge of the side-show Barker as well. McCann's rhythm section, however, is superior and the album is almost worth having for Leroy Vinnegar's bass work.

N. H.

- COUNTIN' — JOE NEWMAN IN CONCERT. Joe Newman (trumpet), Frank Wess (tenor), Al Grey (trombone), Nat Pierce (piano), Eddie Jones (bass), Sonny Payne (drums), Slots: Easy Living; Cute; Feathers Nest & 4 others. World Pacific 1288 $5.98

Interest: Pleasant swinging jazz Performance: Warm Recording: Not good Stereo Directionality: OK Stereo Depth: OK

The music on this LP is consistently pretty good. Newman is an excellent trumpet player, and he has very capable assistance from a group of fellow-members of the Count Basie band. The recording is from a series of Swedish concerts. Everyone plays well together, as might be imagined. The spirit is delightful and the solos are full of fun and good ideas. They are not very adventurous but are consistent and amusing. The whole LP is uniformly good.

N. H.

- JAZZ IN THE SPACE AGE — GEORGE RUSSELL. George Russell (composer) and his Orchestra featuring Bill Evans (piano). Chromatic Universe; Dimensions & 2 others. Decca DL 79219 $5.98; Mono DL 9219 $4.98

Interest: Provocative writing Performance: Expert Recording: Very good

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Stereo Directionality: Well-balanced
Stereo Depth: Good

Writing for large bands is the most stagnant area of contemporary jazz. Accordingly, Decca merits appreciation for having commissioned another album by composer George Russell, one of the few jazzmen currently working on enlarging the manifold possibilities and challenges of big band scoring.

Russell does not believe jazz will go through an atonal stage. "It's going," he predicts, "to be a pan-rhythmic, pan-tonal age. I think that jazz will by-pass atonality because jazz actually has roots in folk music, and folk music is scale-based music; and atonality negates the scale. I think that jazz will be intensely chromatic, but you can be chromatic and not be atonal."

My own feeling is that both atonality and pan-tonality will co-exist for a time in jazz. This is to a degree attested by the fact that in Russell's Greenwich Village bullwink, John Brooks is currently re-hearing an atonal jazz unit.

In any case, Russell's intense chromaticism results in a much more diversified tonal spectrum than exists in customary jazz writing. The soloists, moreover, are challenged by the increase in freedom demanded by Russell's writing. In the first part of Chromatic Universe, for example, the soloists, according to Russell, "were not victim to the tyranny of the chord or a particular meter. In essence, this is musical relativism. Everything can be right. The idea takes over. They worked in ideas, projecting one upon another. This is pan-chromatic improvisation."

It's all absorbing, although I would have wished for a more imaginative tenor saxophonist than Dave Young. The other soloists, particularly Bill Evans, are excellent. Russell, by the way, may give more thought to some of his titles next time. These would be better adapted to science fiction. N.H.

THE BEAT FOR THE GENERATION—SAL SALVADOR AND HIS ORCHESTRA. That Old Feeling: Satin Doll; The Mad Pad; The Continental & 8 others, Decca DL 74026 $4.98; Mono DL 4026 $3.98

Interest: Swinging modern jazz Performance: Spirited Recordings: Bright Stereo Directionality: OK Stereo Daphk: OK

Once again Decca has brought out a good jazz package with Sal Salvador. The stereo is good and doesn't disturb the natural sound of the band. The mono version is quite satisfactory also. The arrangements, by such men as Hank Levy, Ray Wilcock, and George Roumanis, are first-rate. The soloists, especially Eddie Bert (trombone) who has a fine statement on That Old Feeling, are all good men whose personal enthusiasm comes through in their playing. The band is apparently one of the big rehearsal groups that musicians periodically assemble. One might hope this group will pass the occasional playing-recording stage and become a permanent part of the jazz scene. They are really that good.

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(R.S.J.)

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(Seal)
Young Started. Others. Epic LA which Jack Jamal Here, Full and sainpling of Barley which features Good Columbia, Sophisticated Lady; Good Basic’s (under nicely isolated and the mood strikes him. The tenor, Don Wilkerson, does not strike me as having anything particularly individual to say, which seems unfortunate in view of the generally high performance level of the group. R. J. G.

COLLECTIONS

△ JAZZ SCENE 1. I Can’t Get Started; Sophisticated Lady; Lady Be Good; Delta Mood; Just You Just Me & 7 others. Epic LA 16001 $3.98

Interest: Broad Performance: Varied Recording: Non-hifi

This is a sampler of re-issues from the Columbia, Okeh and Vocation files, most of which dates back quite a few years. There are some classics included, such as Bunny Berigan (with Artie Shaw and Jack Teagarden) playing I Can’t Get Started. Though not the famous version, which is on RCA Victor, it is in some ways a better one. There’s also Lady Be Good from the first Count Basie session (under the name of Jones-Smith, Inc.) which features an electrifying Lester Young solo, Cootie Williams’ Delta Mood, Barney Bigard’s Caravan and Count Basie’s Blow Top (ca. 1940). It’s a fine sampling of the mid-swing era in jazz and a welcome addition to the jazz shelf. Full personnel should have been listed for each track.

R. J. G.

△ JAZZ SCENE 2. Don’t Blame Me; On A Riff; Love Is Here To Stay; T.N.T. & 6 others. Epic LA 16001 $3.98

Interest: Modern Jazz sampler Performance: Spotty Recording: Good

This is the second of this series and this one is concerned with modern jazz. Parts of 1950 up on. It offers such contemporary stars as Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Phil Woods and Herbie Mann in some of their less outstanding work, as well as a couple of nice things by the Ray Bryant and Ahmad Jamal Tria’s done a few years back. This is a bland sampling of modern jazz, and is of real concern only to the hard-core collector. Even so, it is useful as a secondary introduction to the entire era. Again, full personnel should have been included on the album line for each track. R. J. G.

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A BIZET: Symphony in C Major; GOUNOD: Symphony No. 1 in D Major. New York City Ballet Orchestra, Robert Irving cond. Kapp KT 49001 $7.95
Interest: French symphonic bonbons Performance: Best in Gounod Recording: Cavernous Stereo Directionality: OK Stereo Depth: Too much
Despite the airplane hangar quality of the recording, this tape is more than usual musical interest; for a hearing of these charming French symphonies of the 1850's certainly bears out program annotator Howard Shanet's contention that the 17-year-old Bizet took Gounod's 1855 score as the model for the C Major Symphony that he wrote at about the same time. This, says Shanet, is why Bizet suppressed the work, so that it did not come to performance until Felix Weingartner discovered it in 1935.

Both scores have provided the basis for New York City ballet productions to Balian's choreography, which explains the performers on the present recording. Couched in a Mendelssohnian-cum-early-Beethoven style, the Bizet and Gounod symphonies make fine companion pieces and altogether delightful listening.
In this performance, the somewhat simpler-textured Gounod fares better than the Bizet. D. H.

Interest: Hindemith—young and mature Performance: First-rate Recording: Good Stereo Directionality: OK Stereo Depth: OK
This tape is of annual musical interest in that it reveals two opposite facets of a major contemporary composer. In the Solo Viola Sonata we have Hindemith the hot-blooded expressionist of inflation-ridden Germany in the 1920's. The Octet, on the other hand, gives us the mature craftsman, the modern classicist—utterly sincere in the cunning that he brings to bear on his musical materials.

Quite frankly, I find the brilliant and often savagely indignant Viola Sonata the more exciting of these two scores, especially in the superb recorded performance that it gets here from Irving Ilmer.

Stereo may add little or nothing to a work for solo viola, but it helps immensely in clarifying the texture of the Octet. This music begins in rather dry fashion, but gathers interest as it progresses through its 5-movement course, becoming by turns witty, affectingly expressive, bitter, and gay. This may not be major Hindemith when placed alongside Mathis der Maler or the E-Flat Symphony, but it makes for stimulating listening in the best modern-classic manner.
D. H.

Interest: Young Mendelssohn Performance: Near Recording: Good Stereo Directionality: Nicely spread Stereo Depth: Sufficient
Like Schubert's Trout Quintet and Beethoven's Septet, this music from the pen of the 18-year-old Mendelssohn makes a delightfully easy introduction to chamber music for those who may be intimidated at first by the more intellectually exacting string quartet medium.

The music of the Mendelssohn Octet has an easy lyrical flow in the best early romantic manner, achieving true magic in the famous scherzo which the composer himself later scored for orchestra.

The Fine Arts Quartet players and their colleagues deliver a nearly turned performance, a stirringly imaginative and rhythmic tension in the stereo disc issued by Westminster (WST 14082) featuring the combined Janacek and Smetana quartets.

The Concertape recording is intimate in sound, yet it offers a nice "spread," as though the players were encompassed comfortably at one end of the living room.
D. H.

Interest: Romantic period pieces Performance: Stunning Recording: Superb Stereo Directionality: Excellent Stereo Depth: Plenty
From the stormy opening of the terse and fiery G Minor Concerto as played on this tape, one senses that Serkin and Ormandy are going to "make the fur fly." This they do throughout the course of both Mendelssohn works, and the result is tremendously exciting music-making—the very essence of early romantic passion.

The music itself offers some of Mendelssohn's most enchanting lyrical writing, and is for the most part reasonably free from the rhetoric and "noodling" that pads out a good deal of the piano writing of this period (the finale of the G Minor Concerto is a good example of the type of music I am talking about).
Mr. Serkin's hummings propensities intrude occasionally into the musical texture, but otherwise the recording is superbly fine in its presence and sense of space. The processing to 4-track tape has been well handled—thus making an auspicious classical repertoire debut for Columbia in the 4-track tape field. This is an absolutely first-class item for anyone's tape library.
D. H.

A MOZART: Flute Quartets-D Major (K. 285); G Major (K. 285a); C Major (K. 285b); A Major (K. 298). Samuel Baron with Members of the Fine Arts Quartet. Concertapes 4T 4008 $7.95
Interest: Charming lightweight Mozart Performance: Tops Recording: First-rate Stereo Directionality: Good Stereo Depth: Excellent
Here is some of the most delectable lighter Mozart to be heard anywhere—music written when the 21-year-old composer was travelling between Munich, Mannheim, and Paris in the hope of finding a job that would free him from the toils of the episcopal court at Salzburg paradise.

Samuel Baron's flautistic prowess, as exhibited on this tape, matches that of anyone anywhere in the world today; for his phrasing, rhythmic sense, and inflection throughout these four brief works is a constant delight to the senses and the intellect. The Fine Arts players give him splendid backing and the recorded sound gives one a real "you are there" feeling. A fine tape, this one.
D. H.

A MOZART: Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds (K.452); BEETHOVEN: Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds, Op. 16. Frank Glazer with the New York Wind Quintet. Concertapes 4T 5009 $8.95
Interest: Chamber wind classics Performance: Sensational Recording: Excellent Stereo Directionality: Good Stereo Depth: OK
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these works exist on the London and Vox labels, this recording is the only one available on 4-track tape, and it’s a very good one so far as sound is concerned.

The performances of these pleasing minor masterpieces by the mature Mozart and young Beethoven come off nicely here; but they lack something of the coloristic subtlety and humor necessary to relieve the prevailing monochromatic instrumental timbre that begins to pall on the ear after awhile.

D.H.


Interest: Hi-R show pieces
Performance: The end!
Recording: Brilliant but overloaded
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Impressive

The end of the Pines of Rome in this recording is a real window-rattle; but, it overloads badly on my review tape. Presumably, later tape copies will be free from this defect.

Otherwise, it must be said that Reiner gets not only huge sonorities from his massive orchestral forces, but also extracts a wealth of musical poetry from the middle movements of “The Pines” and from the opening and closing of “The Fountains.”

If possible, you should check the ending of The Pines of Rome for overload distortion before purchasing this tape. If you get a clean copy, you’re in for quite a listening experience!

D.H.

▲ Stravinsky: Petrouchka (complete ballet). Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux cond. RCA Victor FTC 2007 $8.95

Interest: Stravinsky masterpiece
Performance: Conscientious
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: OK
Stereo Depth: Good

This is the third complete Petrouchka on tape, done this time by the conductor who gave the work its world premiere nearly fifty years ago. Nevertheless, a choice between Ansermet (London), Goossens (E. Victor), and Monteux is not as easy as it might seem.

Monteux has the finest orchestra and splendid engineering, but his reading has neither the drama of Ansermet’s nor the color sense of Goossens’. The Ansermet tape, however, is troubled by “crosstalk” from its Sacre du printemps coupling.

So far as I am concerned, it’s a toss-up between Goossens and Monteux for sound; but my preference is still with Ansermet for the fullest realization of musical and dramatic values.

D.H.


Interest: Baroque nature painting
Performance: Precise
Recording: Close-up
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Not much

Rhythmic vitality and precision are the hallmarks of this performance of Vivaldi’s once esoteric but now immensely popular
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(a practice which should be discouraged anyway) all of a sudden he turns out to be smack-dab in the middle. There's an unidentified singer present who is not bad and the big band is a good one. However, the unorthodox commitment to a strong after-beat makes the whole thing sound more like rhythm-and-blues than jazz. At that, there are some good solo spots by trumpeters Cat Anderson and Donald Byrd. Hampton, himself, is still one of the most thrilling of all vibraphone players. When he is soloing, everything's all right. And for this alone the tape is well worth owning. R.J.G.

**THE INCOMPARABLE HILDEGARDE.**
Lili Marlene; I Love You In Any Language; Check To Check; Madameisselle de Paree & 8 others. Livingston 47 27 $5.95

Interest: Great performer
Performance: Unique, charming
Stereo Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Fine

Hildegarde is like Chevalier. The more seasoned she becomes as a performer, the better she delivers. Her voice is somewhat limited in range, but it has a pleasant quality, and she uses it intelligently. With her flair for languages, she uses a half dozen or so in one number (including Chinese). Her way is to put over a song intimately, sophisticatedly, cleverly, and musically. The accompaniment on this tape is adequate but hardly imaginative. The sound is good. J.T.

**THE KINGSTON TRIO—HERE WE GO AGAIN.**
Molly Dae; Haul Away; Oleanna; Son Miguel & 8 others. Capitol ZT 1258 $6.98

Interest: Broad interest pops
Performance: Slick
Recording: First-rate
Stereo Recording: Good
Stereo Depth: Good

A pleasant collection of folk songs and folk-flavored songs sung in ice-cream-and-cookies style by the Kingtons. It's rhythmic, slick, and mass-produced, and should serve well for community singing and entertaining teen-agers. The voices are split neatly, and the background is spread out evenly. Not a vital listening package, but pleasant enough. R.J.G.

**ALL AMERICAN SHOWCASE—SIGMUND ROMBERG, IRVING BERLIN, VICTOR HERBERT, RUDOLF FRIML.**
Mano-veni and his Orchestra. London LPK 70004 $11.95

Interest: Variety of favorites
Performance: The Mano-veni standard
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Directionality: Good
Stereo Depth: Excellent

A glance at the list of composers and the nearly two hours of playing time makes this Mano-veni offer one of the best bargains so far issued on 4-track tape. Two dozen selections representing some of the best tunes by four top showtime composers all add up to over an hour's entertainment. The engineering is well-nigh per-

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△ Elektra, that enterprising specialty label, has a fascinating satire album in its Presenting Joyce Grenfell. “I love Joyce Grenfell! There is no more charming or versatile comedienne ... Miss Grenfell ... has a particularly engaging manner with American folk songs, and does a beautiful job here.” (see p. 105)

△ Kapp’s Medallion series has a real winner in The Sound Of A Marching Band. “There is an unquenchable feeling of excitement all through ... but what really gives it a unique flavor is the lack of pause between selections ... there is a brisk roll on the drums, the crowd cheers, and with a fanfare the boys are off again.” (see p. 107)

△ Monitor’s disc survey of national songs the world over does especially well with Scandinavian Folk Songs Of Sweden, Norway, Finland featuring two top singers, Saga Sjöberg and Arne Dorumgaard. “Both performers sing with warmth, accuracy, and intelligence ... Monitor is to be congratulated for an exceptionally attractive program ...” (see p. 107)

DECEMBER 1960

Reviewed by
RALPH J. GLEASON
STANLEY GREEN
NAT HENTOFF

POP

△ VICKI BENET A PARIS—With Orchestra, Nick Perito cond., Under Paris Skies; I Wish You Love & 9 others. Decca DL 78987 $4.98; Mono DL 8987 $3.98

Interest: Absolument
Performance: Charmante
Recording: Bien
Stereo Directionality: Pas nécessaire Stereo Depth: Assez

Though it required no great programming gifts to round up a dozen songs about Paris for a French singer, there are enough original touches to make Mlle. Benet’s recital an altogether delightful one. Although most of her pieces are by French composers, the young lady has included two by Americans—an affecting French version of Jerome Kern’s The Last Time I Saw Paris, and Cole Porter’s rather tender little torch ballad, You Don’t Know Paris. Most of the authentic Parisian items are sung in both French and English, and they are quite charming. S.G.

△ DARIN AT THE COPA—Bobby Darin (vocals) with Orchestra conducted by Richard Bahke. Love For Sale; Bill Bailey & 14 others. Atco SD 33-122 $4.98

Interest: Making the big time
Performance: Very self-assured
Recording: Fair
Stereo Directionality: Adequate Stereo Depth: The band is distant

Bobby Darin is a success by all the hard, tangible criteria of show-biz. He wows them at the Copa; he’s signed for a series of TV spectaculars; he sells large quantities. (Continued on page 104)
LET'S GET LOST—Johnny Nash (arranged & conducted by Sid Feller)

POPS A LA RUSSÉ—Various Russian Soloists and Orchestras

OPENING NIGHT—Starlight Symphony Orch. conducted by Ormandy

PLEASE SAY YOU WANT ME—Various Vocalists and Vocal Groups

ROY HAMILTON AT HIS BEST—Roy Hamilton

SUBWAYS OF BOSTON—The Coachmen

JOHNNY SMITH/GUITAR AND STRINGS—Johnny Smith

LATIN CAMEOS—The Knightsbridge Strings

PLEASE HELP ME, I'M FALLING—Hank Locklin

SONGS OF LOVE—Jesse Crawford at the Pipe Organ

FLIVVERS, FLAPPERS & FOX TROTS—Del Wood and Accompanists

"GONE"—Ferlin Husky

A GUITAR TO REMEMBER—Bill Faith and Accompaniment

OUR LEADER—Paul Miller (banjo) and Accompanists

HAWAIIANETTE—Annette and Accompanists

THE MAGIC PIANOS OF LIBERACE AND GORDON ROBINSON

DANCING ON THE RIVIERA—Bob Azzam and his Orchestra

Music Interest: Excellent ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ; Good ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ; Fair ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶ ; Disappointing ▶ ▶ ▶ ▶
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(Continued from page 90) ties of records; he's in the movies; and he's beginning to care less about music as such. This sort of recording "live" at New York's Copa, is a semi-documentary in "making it."

Darlin has considerable talent. He possesses a strong beat, a keen comprehension of what can be done with lyrics, real musicianship, and the capacity to project large-sized emotion. But now that he's a step away from the top, there's also a touch of arrogance in some of his work, a feeling of "I can grab this audience any time I want to." This is reflected on occasion in gratuitously clever phrasing, and in the lame byplay between Darlin and the audience, preserved here for future sociologists.

Yet the man certainly sings effectively, especially when he's not admiring himself in a mirror of his audience. As noted here before, Darlin should proper for a long time, but none more as a "personality." I fear, than as the uniquely musical pop singer he might have become. N.H.

△ △ I GOTTA RIGHT TO SWING! Sammy Davis, Jr. (vocal) with Orchestras directed by Morty Stevens, Jack Pleis, Sy Oliver. The Lady Is A Tramp; I Got A Woman & 10 others. Decca DL 78951 $4.98; Mono DL 8981 $3.98

Interest: A costume party
Performance: Varied
Recording: Good
Stereo Directionality: Clear
Stereo Depth: Adequate

I become increasingly convinced that Sammy Davis' most productive future role will be as an actor rather than as a singer-dancer-entertainer. Visually, he is certainly a furiously energetic performer, but the cutting depths of intelligence and emotion of which he is certainly capable are most effective in his straight acting roles.

As a singer, Davis remains diffuse in his impact. In this album, for example, he plays several roles, but there is no basic Sammy Davis singing style. He interprets, for instance, four numbers associated with Ray Charles and he turns in a perceptive imitation of Charles, but little of himself shows. On the other tracks, he belts out the production numbers in an eclectic style that ranges from the singer behind the dancing line at the Copa to an emulation of Frank Sinatra. On ballads, Davis overemotes as egregiously as the lover in a silent film. Most of his supporting personnel is from the Basic band. N.H.

△ △ △ NELSON EDDY AND GALE SHERWOOD with Harry Sosnik and his Orchestra. 1936. Night Of Love; Shall We Dance?; One Alone & 9 others. Everest 8002 $1.98; Mono LPBR 9002 $3.98

Interest: Square-shaped recital
Performance: Pear-shaped tones
Recording: Splendid
Stereo Directionality: They're center
Stereo Depth: Slight

Nelson Eddy and Gale Sherwood have become a top attraction in night clubs throughout the country, but if this recording is to be taken as any criterion, their success must depend on factors other than their singing. For this is a completely soporific program of standard pop tunes, sung in a tense, unrelenting manner, accompanied by stodgy arrangements. Bring back Jeanette! S.G.
Presenting Joyce Grenfell, with George Baker, piano. Hello Song; Life And Literature: Thought For Today: Two Songs My Mother Taught Me; Nursery School; Life Story; I Like Life; Time To Waste; The Brothers; Artist's Room; Mademoiselle Waltz; Committee. Elektra 184 $4.98

Interest: Quite a bit
Performance: Delightful
Recording: Good

I love Joyce Grenfell! There is no more charming or versatile comedienne currently performing on either side of the Atlantic than this gifted English actress. The program is composed of both songs and monologues, and there are some wonderful things in it. Miss Grenfell, whose mother was a Southern belle, has a particularly engaging manner with American folk songs, and does a beautiful job here on Hand Me Down My Burrito and Goodbye, Miss Lisa Jane. ("I'm sorry she didn't include The Yellow Rose Of Texas, which she does in a different version from the one Mitch Miller uses). Of the four other songs on the record (all with music by Richard Addinsell and lyrics by Miss Grenfell), the best is probably Three Brothers, a rather pathetic saga of the compensations of spinsterhood.

The most fully developed monologue, is a wonderful bit about a lady interviewer on a small Southern radio station who is far more concerned with selling the products of her sponsor, a local paint company (with their "Cathedral Stained Glass Window Colors"), than in talking to her guest. S.G.

Eartha Kitt Revisited—with Orchestra, Maurice Levine cond. Uska Dare: Apres Moi! I Want To Be Evil & 9 others. Kapp KL 1197 $3.98

Interest: Superior specialty stuff
Performance: Good Eartha
Recording: Fine

In Just An Old Fashioned Girl, Miss Kitt expresses her longing for a cerise Cadillac, Tiffany diamonds, two apartment buildings, oil wells, and wall-to-wall money: In C'est Si Bon, it's a Mercedes-Benz, mink coats, and les bijoux; In Santa Baby, she wants a sable coat, an outerspace convertible, a yacht, a duplex apartment, and some more items from Tiffany's. She is, in short, a pretty mercenary dame; but with her sly, "purr-tussive" voice and her quite inimitable technique, she manages to make all such desires seem rightfully hers.

Of course, Miss Kitt is not limited in repertory. This collection goes back to a dozen of her most famous numbers, including the tantalizing Uska Dare and James Shelton's delicate Little Wine. All of them benefit from their long association with the singer. S.G.

Carol Lawrence—Tonight at 8:30—with Orchestra, Peter Matz cond. It's Good To Be Alive; Tonight; Lazy Afternoon; Do Us Again & 9 others. Chancellor CHL 919 $3.99

Recording: Very nice

With her performances in West Side Story and Satirago, Miss Carol Lawrence has established herself as one of the most talented young actresses on the musical stage. In this first album all to herself, she reveals an attractive, "legit" singing voice that she uses intelligently. The songs in her repertoire have all been culled from works of the masters (Gershwin, Bernstein, Arlen, Weill, etc), and while I have some reservations about one or two interpretations, it is, on the whole, a tasty package. S.G.

The Best Of Peggy Lee. Peggy Lee (vocals) with Orchestras directed by Hal Mooney, Sy Oliver, Sonny Burke, and others. Lovers: Black Coffee; Never Mind; Love Letters & 20 others. Decca DX 164, 2 12" $7.96

Interest: Major pop stylist
Performance: Best on ballads
Recording: Competent

Decca has taken 21 Peggy Lee sides from previously released material to make this two-disc set. Miss Lee has worked for years to perfect a consistent, personal style, and she has succeeded.

This, however, is a mixed collection. There are a number of transitory novelties that no one could save from deserved oblivion; but there are also a number of ballads which Miss Lee performs with comminuate taste and affecting poignancy. She's also delightful on several medium-tempo swingers. It's too bad Decca didn't trim this package into one substantial album; but if you don't own such performances as Black Coffee and Love Me Or Leave Me, the set is worth investigating.

Johnny Mathis—the Rhythms And Ballads Of Broadway—with Glenn Osser and his Orchestra & Ralph Burns and his Orchestra. Moonin' Low; I Have Dreamed; I Married An Angel; Spring Is Here; Don't Blame Me & 19 others. Columbia CL 17 2 12" $7.98

Interest: The songs are fine
Performance: Masterful
Recording: Needs bass

The wispy, tissue paper voice of Johnny Mathis has won him a wide following within a relatively short period. Such popularity must be deserved, I guess, but I fail to find any reason for it. Mr. Mathis' approach to ballads is one of oozing softness, something more as if his notes had been squeezed from a tube rather than sung. On the rhythm numbers, he is more nervous than rhythmic and, at times, even gives the impression of frothing at the mouth.

In this current two-record set, the ballads are on one record (backed by the Glenn Osser Orchestra) and the rhythms (this is their name for the up-tempo numbers) on the second (backed by the Ralph Burns Orchestra). What constitutes a ballad or a rhythm seems to be in the hands of the arrangers: On The Sunny Side Of The Street falls into the category of the former while I Am In Love is speeded up to qualify for the latter category. I'm not even sure what all these songs have to do with Broadway. Dancing On The Ceiling was in an English show; Don't Blame Me...
In January HiFi/STEREO Review, Critic Nat Hentoff takes you behind the band-stand...fills you in with colorful, vibrant pictures of the jazzman off-stage...tells you how such performers as Bix Beiderbecke, Benny Goodman, Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, and Ornette Coleman got started.

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was never sung on the professional stage: Let's Misbehav e was cut before Paris reached New York: I Just Found Out About Love was from a musical that folded on the road; and Jane Is A Camille was first sung in an industrial show. S.G.

△ JANE MORGAN—THE BALLADS OF LADY JANE. The Riddle Song: Ten Thousand Miles: Scarlet Ribbons & 9 others. Kapp KL 191 $3.98

Interest: Yes Performance: Appealing Recording: Rich sound

Jane Morgan's elegant approach to a dozen folk and folk-type ballads may be akin to wearing a tiara in the hayloft, but, possibly because of this, it has a decided appeal. Folksong purists will, of course, give this one a wide berth; others, however, should welcome it as a pleasant change of pace. S.G.


Interest: Quite a bit Performance: Dramatic Recording: Satisfactory Stereo Directionality: She's left Stereo Depth: Effective

You can always depend on heavy dramatic doings when Felicia Sanders comes to grips with the more anguish-ridden expressions of love. Here her dark, throaty voice takes on a dozen songs by the late Kurt Weill, most of them well suited to the emotional intensity of the renditions. Upon occasion, however, she does go overboard, as in O Henry Of Love and Remember That I Care, and I can't imagine what prompted her to take the plaintive Thousands Of Miles at a kooky Latin beat. But the recital in unearths some fine, long-forgotten numbers, and, as usual, there is evidence of the singer's careful preparation on each selection. S.G.

△ THE SOUND OF CONVERSATIONS IN MUSIC—THE JOHN PARKER ORCHESTRA. Makin' Whoop: Go To Sleep: Left's Put Out The Lights & 9 others. Kapp Medallion MS 7504 $5.98

△ THE SOUND OF DYNAMIC WOODWINDS—THE JACK ELLIOTT ORCHESTRA. Fascinating Rhythm: The Trolley Song: The Song Is Ended & 9 others. Kapp Medallion MS 7505 $5.98

△ THE SOUND OF A MINSTREL SHOW—THE MEDALLION MINSTRELS. Men, John Krance cond. Are You From Dixie: Dixie: When The Saints Go Marching In, etc. Kapp Medallion MS 7506 $5.98

△ THE SOUND OF A MARCHING BAND—THE MEDALLION MARCHING BAND. David Tompsett, Anchors Aweigh: King Cotton: Washington Post March, etc. Kapp Medallion MS 7507 $5.98

Interest: For the stereo set Performance: 7505 & 7507 recommended Recording: All first-rate Stereo Directionality: Very pronounced on first two Stereo Depth: Splendid on all

DECEMBER 1960

Kapp's special Tiffany line, which I first reviewed in the September issue, continues to provide awfully impressive releases. Musical interest, however, varies with each album. Medallion 7506, titled The Sound Of Conversations In Music, does not exactly live up to its title, unless you substitute "Ping-Pong" for "Conversations." The brass and the woodwinds lob the melodies back and forth, but the effect of using both sections as "voices" in duets is pretty well lost.

Oddly, the conversational approach is better achieved on a few numbers in the set devoted to woodwinds. Elliott's arrangements are always bright without going overboard on special effects, and the emphasis on saxophones, oboes, flutes, and the like, is achieved without sacrificing musical content.

The Sound Of A Minstrel Show is, unfortunately, dull. Most of the tracks are devoted to instrumental medleys, bearing little feeling of authenticity or gaiety. What a chance they milled for some genuine Tambo and Bones dialogue from the right and the left.

There is an unquenchable feeling of excitement all through Medallion 7507. The marching band performs frivolly and with spirit, but what really gives it a unique flavor is the lack of pause between selections. After each song or medley of songs, there is a brisk roll on the drums, the crowd claps, and with a flair the boys are off again on another Sonsie collegiate march. All in all, it keeps things pretty lively.

S.G.

△ FOLK

△ △ △ SCANDINAVIAN FOLK SONGS OF SWEDEN, NORWAY, FINLAND. Saga Sjöberg (soprano), Arne Dorphagard (baritone) with Orchestra, Robert Commn cond. The Old Woman With Her Stick: Spin, Spin & 22 others. Monitor MF 333 $4.98

Interest: A superior selection Performance: Excellent Recording: Very good

Monitor is to be congratulated for an exceptionally attractive program of Scandinavian songs. They date from the beginning of the sixteenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries. Both performers sing with warmth, accuracy and intelligence. (Dorphagard is also an expert on Scandinavian music and a leading contemporary classical composer.)

The songs are mainly of country life, death, poverty, and celebrations such as a wedding feast and Christmas. Several of the lyrics have considerable intrinsic value, having often been rewritten by later poets.

There is the raggedy fairy tale contained in the Norwegian song, My Name Is Anne Krutstoddet. (. . . We die of hunger. In the past, we have fun, in shells and bowls gathering berries in the woods . . . My father is a peddler. He looks like no one, goes to the devil.) From the same country, a gargantuan wedding is remembered as having been so big "that it took place in three valleys and lasted a full year." There is also an unusually disquieting, somber song from Norway, Sleep

COME To Me. The voices contain full translations. Definitely recommended. N.H.

Among many individuals, there is a need to minimize on the space to be devoted to a component stereo system. A rash of "bookshelf" types have appeared in an attempt to meet this need. In practice, however, they seem neither fish nor fowl...either too large for compactly spaced bookshelves or too small for use as free-standing units.

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We don't pack an engineer into each new Citation Kit but...

...the engineering built into each kit is so precise that the unit constructed in the home will be the equal of the factory-produced instrument.

It is far more difficult to design a kit than to produce a completely manufactured product. In the plant the engineer can control his design from the moment of inception until the final packaging. The kit builder has only his tools, his ingenuity and little, if any, test equipment.

Therefore, the complex process of in-plant production and control which guarantees the fine finished product must somehow be embedded in the kit design. The Citation engineering group at Harman-Kardon, headed by Stewart Hegeman, has succeeded in doing just this in the design of the new Citation I, Stereophonic Preamplifier Control Center and Citation II, 120 Watt Stereophonic Power Amplifier.

Only heavy duty components, operating at tight tolerances, have been selected for the Citation Kits. As a result, even if every component is operated at its limit — remote as this possibility is — the instruments will perform well within their specifications.

Rigid terminal boards are provided for mounting resistors and condensers. Once mounted, these components are suspended tightly between turret lugs. Lead length is sharply defined. The uniform spacing of components and uniform lead length insure the overall stability of the unit.

Improper routing of leads, particularly long leads, can result in unstable performance. To prevent this, the Citation II is equipped with a template to construct a Cable Harness. The result: each wire is just the right length and in just the right place to achieve perfect performance.

These truly remarkable achievements in Control Engineering are only a few of the many exciting new developments in kit design from the Citation Division of Harman-Kardon.

THE CITATION I, Stereophonic Preamplifier Control Center, is a brilliantly designed instrument, reflecting engineering advances found only in the best professional equipment. The control over program material offered by the new Citation I enables the user to perfectly re-create every characteristic of the original performance. (The Citation I — $159.95; Factory-Wired — $249.95; Walnut Enclosure, WC-1 — $29.95.)

THE CITATION II, 120 Watt Stereophonic Power Amplifier, has a peak power output of 260 Watts! This remarkable instrument will reproduce frequencies as low as 5 cycles virtually without phase shift, and frequencies as high as 100,000 cycles without any evidence of instability or ringing. At normal listening levels, the only measurable distortion in this unit comes from the laboratory testing equipment. (The Citation II — $159.95; Factory-Wired — $229.95; Charcoal Brown Enclosure, AC-2 — $7.95.) All prices slightly higher in the West.

Harman-Kardon has prepared a free detailed report on both of these remarkable new instruments which we will be pleased to send to you. Simply write to Dept. R-6, Citation Kit Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Westbury, L. I.
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AR-2a prices range from $109 to $128, depending on cabinet finish. Except for the pine model, cabinets are finished on all four sides. Further information is available on request.

*On-axis response from 7,500 cps to 20,000 cps up ± 1½ db; maintenance of excellent (although somewhat attenuated) response off-axis, both horizontally and vertically, is inherent in the use of the very small, stiff diaphragm as a direct-radiator.

We invite you to hear this and other models of AR speakers at the AR Music Room, our permanent display on the west balcony of New York's Grand Central Terminal.

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