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by DAVID HALL

A Monument for Sir Thomas

Whatever Sir Thomas Beecham may have been for the personality columnists of the world press—or for the concert audiences to which he sometimes directed acerb comment, he was for lovers of records the perfect recording conductor. During an era that saw the prime of such giants of the baton as Toscanini, Stokowski, Koussevitzky, Furtwängler, Mengelberg, and Bruno Walter, Sir Thomas surpassed them all when it came to documenting on records a personal kind of musicianship. Indeed, his only rival in this regard was Stokowski in his days with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

What was the special nature of Sir Thomas's musicianship? At its best, during the final fifteen years of the 78-rpm era, it added up to a miraculous synthesis of classic proportioning of phrase, animal vigor of rhythm, and exquisite poetry of sound. With these qualities, Beecham made the Mozart G Minor Symphony something manly, passionate, yet free of hysteria. The Schubert Fifth Symphony could emerge from under his baton as a delectable creation of marvelous lift and plastic resiliency. A Haydn symphony was suffused with warmth as well as with high spirits. Berlioz and Sibelius were possessed of irresistible momentum and dramatic power. Beecham was likewise able to endow with new life and interest such a faded period piece as Liszt's A Faust Symphony, to say nothing of a whole roster of concert stand-bys—the Suppé overtures, Rossini’s William Tell curtain-raiser, Chabrier's España, Grieg’s Peer Gynt Suite.

Where the Beecham poetry flowered in its most ravishing form, however, was in the music of his fellow-Englishman, Frederick Delius, whose cause he single-handedly championed for half a century. In this connection, it is interesting to note that among the more than two hundred works by more than fifty composers that Beecham recorded during the electrical era, there is no other impressionist or post-impressionist music of consequence, unless one chooses to regard Debussy’s Afternoon of a Faun as an example of the style.

In addition to composers already mentioned, the other be淡kuwts of the Beecham recorded repertoire, which had its beginnings in 1910, were Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner, Richard Strauss, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and of course, Handel—the last more often than not in Beecham’s own fascinating transcriptions from half-forgotten operas. Of twentieth-century music, the Beecham discography is almost bare—no Stravinsky, no Bartók, only the memorable 1935 collaboration with Szegi in Prokofiev’s First Violin Concerto. As for English music, Elgar is the only composer of consequence represented by Beecham, except for his beloved Delius.

Sir Thomas especially loved to try his hand at bringing life to neglected scores by the so-called second-rank composers. Thus we have had inimitable Beecham readings of Balakirew’s Symphony in C, Goldmark’s “Rustic Wedding” Symphony, and the Lalo Symphony in G Minor. Of the seven complete operas and three oratorios recorded under the redoubtable Beecham baton, the 1938 Berlin performance of Mozart’s The Magic Flute and the 1947 Handel (Continued on page 6)
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A cardinal feature of the plan is GUIDANCE. The Society has a Selection Panel whose sole function is to recommend "must-have" works. The panel includes: DEEMS TAYLOR, Chairman—composer and commentator; JACQUES BARZUN, author and music critic; SAMUEL CHOTZINOFF, General Music Director, NBC; JOHN M. CONLY, music editor, The Atlantic, AARON COPLAND, composer; ALFRED V. FRANKENSTEIN, music editor, San Francisco Chronicle; DOUGLAS MOORE, composer and Professor of Music, Columbia University; WILLIAM SCHUMAN, composer and President of the Juilliard School of Music; CARLETON SPRAGUE SMITH, former Chief of Music Division, New York Public Library; G. WALLACE WOODWORTH, Professor of Music, Harvard.

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Every month three or more 12-inch 33 1/3 R.P.M.
RCA Victor Red Seal records are announced to members. Usually they are selected from the record-of-the-month and, unless the Society is otherwise instructed (on a simple form always provided), this record is sent to the member. If the members do not want the work he may specify an alternate, or instruct the Society to send him nothing. For every record members pay only $4.98—for stereo $5.98—the manufacturer's nationally advertised price. (A small charge for postage and handling is added.)

Please note: Service is not available in Canada, its territories, and territories of the United States and its territories, and Canada. Members in these areas must order through their authorized RCA VICTOR dealer, or any other RCA VICTOR dealer. Please fill in here.

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Messiah: (the second of his three complete recordings) are truly great recording of the century.

To speak of Sir Thomas Beecham's indefatigable work as a musical organizer and administrator is beyond the scope of the present commentary, save to say that he probably did more than any other person to create a British public with genuine musical taste.

For discophiles, however, the most important product of Sir Thomas's organizing flair was the London Philharmonic, which during its greatest recording period—from 1935 to 1940—featured Léon Goossens as its first oboe and Reginald Kell as principal clarinet. In an epoch that boasted Stokowski's Philadelphia Orchestra, Koussevitzky's Boston Symphony, and Mengelberg's Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Beecham's London Philharmonic was perhaps the most beautifully polished and versatile instrument of them all. It is from the finest recordings done by Sir Thomas Beecham with this orchestra that we would hope to see created a true monument to his interpretive art as it was at its prime. We have heard some superlative reprocessing work done by Angel from 78-rpm masters as part of its Great Recordings of the Century series. Let us hope that there will be no delay in applying this treatment to the best of Beecham and the London Philharmonic in Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Bizet, Dvořák, Grieg, Delius, and of course, Handel-Beecham. Scarcely less remarkable are some of the Beecham performances with the Royal Philharmonic done just before the advent of LP. With a Delius centennial coming in 1962, we would also hope to hear for the first time on microgroove the Beecham performances of Delius' complete Village Romeo and Juliet, and the Violin Concerto, as well as a re-issue of Song of the High Hills and the American Negro-inspired Piano Concerto.

Unlike Arturo Toscanini, Sir Thomas Beecham had the good fortune to have had during his prime years of artistic and physical vitality the benefit of advanced recording techniques, which can stand up remarkably well to today's high-fidelity sound when properly processed to LP. With all respect to the many fine readily available recordings done during the past decade, let us hope that the recordings of his finest years will now be released as a fitting monument to a magnificent musical career.
the playback unit that enables you to enjoy all the quality of today's records

With the tremendous advances achieved in record quality, and in amplifier and speaker components, the playback unit assumes a role of unprecedented importance. It is the vital link between the record's promise of performance and its ultimate realization.

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TURNTABLE NOTES: (c) Hysteresis motor has dynamically balanced rotor and stepped, 3-speed pulley. (d) Neoprene-impregnated seamless belt is ground to uniform thickness ± .0005". (e) Turntable platter individually adjusted to dynamic balance. Weighs 6 lbs., and has dual rim for optimum flywheel effectiveness. (f) Lapped mainshaft rotates in micro-honed bearing-well. Tolerance is less than .0001".

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THE
spectrum   NEWS AND COMMENT
BY THE EDITORS

The new brooms that are currently sweeping in Washington seem to
have reached under the long-undisturbed carpet of the Federal
Communications Commission. This agency has never earned a reputa-
tion for either initiative or action. And when it has acted, it has often
been charged with regulating radio and television more in the interests
of the broadcasting industry than in the interests of the public.

Since the change of administration, however, there have been signs
that the FCC is at last going to take action on some of the problems that
it faces. For one thing, it has been announced that a recommendation
will be made that Congress enact legislation to require makers of TV
sets to include provisions for receiving stations that operate in the UHF
(ultra-high-frequency) range. Because the UHF band can accommodate
many additional channels, its wider utilization would make possible
broader cultural and educational uses of television.

This instance of affirmative thinking on the part of the FCC renews
hope for early action on the FM multiplex question. In fact, reliable
sources in Washington have it that some form of stereo multiplex broad-
casting will be authorized before summer—perhaps by the time you read
these lines. By all reports, the strongest contenders in the multiplex race
are still the Crosby and the Zenith systems. On the basis of what is
now known, it would appear that each of the systems has its advantages
and disadvantages. A final evaluation must be made by deciding which
has the most significant advantages and the least important disad-
vantanges. It seems, however, that both are capable of broadcasting
stereo with good quality. Consequently, all of us, as music listeners, will
benefit from the adoption of either system. Once a decision is made—and
let us hope it will be soon—new frontiers will open for FM broad-
casting and for stereophonic sound.

Before the March 4 Metropolitan Opera broadcast of Puccini's
Tosca, Leopold Stokowski, true to his reputation of being a stickler
for technical details, called the engineers together for a conference and
suggested sweeping changes in the microphone setup. The engineers
listened respectfully and nodded agreement; then they quietly left
everything as it was. In the darkened house, the conductor was presum-
ably none the wiser. Any credit for the sonority of music as it was heard
on the air must therefore go to Stokowski's prowess as a conductor rather
than to his acumen as a sound engineer.

As a matter of fact, the only really disturbing thing about the broad-
cast performance was that at orchestral climaxes the volume was abrupt-
ly turned down by the engineer who was riding gain on the program.
No one questions that a certain amount of volume compression is neces-
sary during most broadcasts of live performances to keep transmitters
from overloading or distorting; but such adjustments ought to be done
with the utmost delicacy. In this presentation, every time the music
built towards a soaring Puccinian climax, the level suddenly dropped by
about six decibels. This clumsiness deprived the big moments of their
natural impact and gave the whole performance a synthetic quality. We
can only hope that by the time the Metropolitan's next broadcast season
rolls around, more satisfactory engineering arrangements will have been
made by the people in charge of production.
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Record Shop Revival
- In your article on "The Sad Demise of the Record Dealer" (February, 1961) you raise the question how the species can be revived.

Being a record dealer myself, let me assure you that your observations are a hundred per cent correct. Conditions have become so confused that customers think a dealer is dishonest if he asks list prices for records. And no wonder! It is embarrassing to charge the inflated price of $6.98 for a stereo recording of a Broadway musical. But we have to sell at list because legitimate record dealers do not get the purchasing discounts offered to rack jobbers and other mass marketers. In effect, the legitimate dealer, instead of being encouraged by the industry, is deliberately handicapped.

The obvious solution to the record-retailing problems would be to set up realistic list prices that would be maintained at all outlets. My price suggestions would be $3.98 for both mono and stereo classical LP's and $2.98 for both mono and stereo popular LP's.

These lower prices would have the following effects:
1. Because the record companies would have to work within a tighter price structure, they would release a higher percentage of worth-while discs with a reasonable chance of selling.
2. People would cease bargain shopping and, instead, would favor stores with adequate stock and musically informed, helpful sales personnel.
3. The rack jobbers would concentrate on bargain lines priced at $1.49 and $1.98 (Richmond, Harmony, Parliament, etc.). A plan of this kind, if adopted by the record industry, would be an enormous help in getting the legitimate record dealer back on his feet.

Robert A. Jones
The Disc Shop
East Lansing
Michigan

Tape Recorder Comment
- "Tape Recorders '61," in your March issue, performs a needed service in giving the buyer much valuable information. However, our mail inquiries indicate that additional information on some points might be helpful.

For instance, it should be stressed that, in addition to a bias oscillator, properly equalized recording amplifiers are needed to convert a tape playback machine into a recorder.

Concerning the number of heads, it should be noted that two-head machines are not necessarily inferior to three-head units in frequency response. Thanks to careful equalization in the associated electronic circuitry, Bell has achieved response to 15,000 cps at 35 ips with a combined playback/recording head. Some three-head recorders cannot match this.

The discussion of pressure pads and tape lifters in your article leaves the impression that either one or the other is used in a given model. On Bell transport mechanisms, both pressure pads and tape lifters are used, each performing a different function.

David H. O'Brien
Bell Sound Division
Thompson Ramo Wooldridge Inc.
Columbus, Ohio

- May I add a commentary to Mr. De Motte's highly informative article on tape recorders in your March issue. The article states correctly that "the width of the (magnetic) gap is critically important," but the text seems to imply that narrow gap width is a vital factor in achieving extended treble response in recording.

This is a misapprehension. For good treble response, a narrow gap is necessary only in playback. At a tape speed of 7.5 ips, the playback gap width should not exceed 250 microinches; at 3.75 ips, 120 microinches. Some playback heads have gaps as narrow as 90 microinches.

For recording on the other hand, the optimum gap width is about 500 microinches, though narrower gaps can be and are being used. If the gap of the recording head is too narrow, however, the electromagnatic field jumps across the head instead of flowing through the tape, with resultant losses.

The effectiveness of both recording and playback heads depends on the linearity of their edges as much as on gap width. In consequence, a playback gap of 120 microinches with smooth, straight edges may provide better treble response than a 90 microinch gap with less carefully machined contours.

Herman Burstein
Wantagh
New York

Fiddling Argument
- Discussing the Brahms Violin Concerto in his "Basic Repertoire" column, Martin Bookspan refers to it as a "virtuoso's delight." Then he does an about-face in choosing a performance that is anything but virtuosic, namely the rather painful effort by Széradi.

It is quite true that Széradi was, at one time, one of the world's greatest violin virtuosos, as his many incomparable recordings of the 78-rpm era attest. But, unfortunately, executant skill sometimes declines with the years. Mr. Book-
*from the leading magazine in the jazz field:*

---

**MAY 1961**
span has pointed out in some detail the many technical failings of Szigeti's recent recording of the Brahms concerto, then completely ignored his own reservations in recommending the disc as among the best available. I assume his judgment was based on purely sentimental grounds.

In this context it is all the more surprising that Mr. Bookspan dismisses the Heifetz-Reiner recording as "bloodless and emotionally detached" after himself admitting that "Heifetz phrases much of the music with an elegance and poise beyond that of any of his colleagues." I believe that rehearsing the Heifetz recording in a more receptive frame of mind would convince Mr. Bookspan that Heifetz' approach, while not stickily sentimental, shows complete emotional involvement with the score.

Stewart L. Cohen
Urbana, Illinois

As C. P. Curtis once remarked, "There are only two ways to be quite unprejudiced and impartial. One is to be completely ignorant. The other to be completely indifferent. Bias and prejudice are attitudes to be kept in hand, not attitudes to be avoided."

Conservation Program

- I want to express my appreciation of David Hall's editorial, "New Deal for Old Artists," in the March issue. It is indeed important for future generations to have access to great performances of the past. The best discs of bygone years should not be allowed to become so rare that you have to pay $50 or $60 for a single scratched copy, as I was obliged to do recently for a 1904 Caruso record.

Walter Toscanini
New York, N. Y.

Mixed Bloody Marys

- In John Thornton's review of the new tape of the South Pacific (January 1961) movie sound track he says it's a shame that Juanita Hall has no credit listed although she turned in such a wonderful performance.

It seems that Mr. Thornton got his Bloody Marys mixed. Juanita Hall, who played the part on Broadway and also appeared in the movie, did not use her own voice in the screen version. The dubbed-in voice of Muriel Smith was correctly credited on the tape.

Scott Ross
New York, N. Y.

HiFi/Stereo
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YOUR GUIDE TO 12 CUSTOM ALTEC TWO-WAY SPEAKER COMPONENT SYSTEMS

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*Exclusive of Enclosure

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MAY 1967
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The demagnetizer operates on alternating current of either 50 or 60 cycles, weighs 2½ lbs., and erases any reel from 5 to 15 inches diameter. It is available in two models, one for operation between 100 and 180 volts, the other for voltages from 200 to 260. Price: $24.00. (Amplifier Corporation of America, 398 Broadway, New York 13, N. Y.)

- Harman-Kardon incorporates many operating conveniences in their Award Series FM tuner and stereo amplifier. Among these is the inclusion of a so-called ambiance control in the A500 amplifier, a center-channel volume control that may also serve to regulate the amount of signal fed to an external reverberation unit. Also provided is a front-panel output for stereo headsets. The A500 delivers 20 watts sine-wave output per channel at less than 0.5% harmonic distortion. A blend control provides continuously variable channel separation.

The F500 tuner has a sensitivity of 0.85 microvolts for 20 db of quieting (which corresponds to 3 microvolts usable sensitivity by the HFMM standard of 30 db total noise and distortion.) Discriminator bandwidth is one megacycle.

Controls include an AFC-defeat switch, an interchannel-muting-defeat switch, and an FM-FM multiplex selector. A large meter provides a clear indication of tuning.

The amplifier and tuner are styled to match and have identical dimensions of 15 ¼ x 5 ½ x 12 inches. Price: $199.95 (A500 amplifier), $129.95 (F500 tuner). (Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, N. Y.)

- Knight's new KN-775 stereo amplifier is rated 37.5 watts per channel (sine wave output) with a total music power output of 96 watts. Four EL34 tubes are employed in the output stages.

The KN-775 has a center-channel output from which a third speaker may be fed without the use of an additional amplifier. Dual phasing switches permit all three speakers to be phased for best bass reproduction. Another feature is a headphone jack on the front panel. Speakers are silenced automatically when headsets are removed.
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MAY 1961
Introduces

New S-7000 Stereo FM/AM Receiver
50 watts $299.50

... a triumph in combined components, the S-7000 brings together in one unit the incomparable features of Sherwood's FM and AM tuner circuitry along with two 25-watt amplifiers, two pre-amplifiers and stereo controls. The S-7000 needs only the addition of speakers to complete a basic stereo system. Overall size, just 16 x 4 x 14 inches deep.

... a dramatic new furniture concept—Sherwood Correlaire Modules—styled with a contemporary flair in hand-rubbed Walnut and Pecan woods. Sixteen interchangeable modules for truly flexible room arrangements, the perfect setting for your Sherwood components. Sherwood Electronic Laboratories, Inc., 4300 N. California Ave., Chicago 18, Illinois.

FOR COMPLETE TECHNICAL DETAILS WRITE DEPT. SR

are plugged in. The headphone circuit also employs a "safety-gate" that reduces headphone volume, regardless of amplifier volume control setting, to prevent possible overloads on the headphones.

Frequency response is 25 to 20,000 cps ± 0.5 db at full output. Harmonic distortion is less than 0.5% and IM distortion less than 2% at full output.

No fuses are required because the unit is protected by a circuit-breaker. Dimensions: 15¾ x 13¾ x 15¼ inches. Price: $109.50. (Allied Radio Corporation, 100 N. Western Avenue, Chicago, III.)

• Lafayette meets the rising demand for budget-priced FM tuners with a new kit, the KT-650, employing dual limiters operating in conjunction with a wideband Foster-Seeley discriminator. Other circuit features include a low-noise front end and a plate-follower output stage that permits the tuner to be located up to 50 feet from the amplifier.

Sensitivity is rated at 2 microvolts for 30 db of quieting; distortion and noise are claimed to be better than 55 db below 1.5 volts at 100% modulation. Frequency response is within ± 0.5 db from 15 to 35,000 cps.

Variable AFC and a visual bar-type tuning indicator are provided. Pre-aligned IF and discriminator coils and printed circuit boards ease the job of the kit builder.

Dimensions: 14 x 5½ x 11 inches. Price: $34.50. (Lafayette Radio, 165-08 Liberty Ave., Jamaica 33, N. Y.)

• Robins comes to the aid of the hapless tape recording fan who watches in impotent horror as his precious reels jump off the hub and tangle themselves off to far corners.

The new Robins tape reel holders will hold the reels firmly on the rotating shafts under all conditions. Price: 85 cents per pair. (Robins Industries Corp., Flushing, New York.)

• Sargent-Rayment has come up with a simplified approach to the all-in-one stereo receiver. On the assumption that most people get their stereo mainly from records and tapes rather than AM/FM stereo simulcasts, they have dispensed

with the AM section in their new SR-1040 receiver, which consists of a stereo amplifier (10 watts per channel), full control facilities, and an FM-only tuner. Facilities for plugging in a multiplex adapter are provided.

The FM tuner section is rated at a sen-
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Weight: 31 lbs. net
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Larry Zide
in
The American
Record Guide

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Herbert Reid, Hi Fi Stereo Review

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"The unit which we checked after having built the kit, is the best of all power amplifiers that we have tested over the past years."

William Stocklin, Editor, Electronics World

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Hirsch-Houck Labs, High Fidelity Magazine

"At this writing, the most impressive of amplifier kits is without doubt the new Citation line of Harman-Kardon... their design, circuitry, acoustic results and even the manner of their packaging set a new high in amplifier construction and performance, kit or no."

Norman Eisenberg, Saturday Review

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A compact stereophonic preamplifier designed in the best Citation tradition. It offers performance and features rivaled only by Citation I. The control over program material provided by the new Citation IV enables the user to perfectly recreate every characteristic of the original performance. The Citation IV—$119.95—Factory Wired—$189.95.

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The world's most sensitive tuner. But more important—it offers sound quality never before achieved in an FM tuner. Now, for the first time, Harman-Kardon has made it possible for the kit builder to construct a completely professional tuner without reliance upon external equipment. The Citation III's front panel employs the revolutionary Nyvistor tube which furnishes the lowest noise figure and highest sensitivity permitted by the state of the art. A two-stage audio section patterned after Citation II provides a frequency response three octaves above and below the range of normal hearing. The Citation III is styled in charcoal brown and gold to match all the other Citation instruments. The Citation III $499.95—Factory Wired—$529.95.

For complete information on the new Citation Kits, including reprints of independent laboratory test reports, write to: Dept. K-3, Citation Kit Division, Harman-Kardon, Inc., Plainview, New York.

All prices slightly higher in the West.

CITATION KITS

by

harman kardon
LAIRD OF WHARFEDALE

MANY summers ago, the people of Wharfedale were awakened by a strange racket that chased up and down the hunched streets of that dusty little English town. One by one the wool-weavers and their wives ran out of their houses to look up the gray, forbidding hill from which the noise came. The local constable was summoned, and after a frantic search he solved the mystery. "We might have known," said a town councillor, "there's only one fellow who could make a racket like that—yon radio chap Gilbert Briggs."

The racket in question came from a huge square-mouthed cast-iron horn, several yards long, which now lies in the deep grass behind the scattered group of stone huts on a pleasant hill that make up the Wharfedale Wireless Works. To G. A. Briggs, the head of Wharfedale, it is just another relic of an experiment in sound reproduction, the sort of experiment that has spread his fame far beyond his usually quiet valley to audio enthusiasts and music lovers all over the world.

Gilbert Briggs is a man of many facets. There is the Briggs who manufactures quality loudspeakers; there is the Briggs who writes audio handbooks and witty articles; and then there is the Briggs who plasters the famous concert halls of London and New York with posters announcing: "TONIGHT! ONE TIME ONLY! A SPECIAL DEMONSTRATION OF LIVE AND RECORDED MUSIC. PRESENTED BY G. A. BRIGGS."

Few in the audio field would fail to acknowledge the invaluable contributions Briggs has made. His specialty is loudspeakers. In fact, loudspeakers are his only specialty. "You cannot be a jack-of-all-trades in this business," he says, "it is too exacting. Decide on the aspect of high fidelity that interests you and stick to that. It is not only good sense technically; it is good sense financially." Apart from Donald Chave, of Lowther, or P. G. H. Voigt, there is no one man who has done as much to advance British loudspeaker design.

On his home ground, Briggs appears as the tall North Country gentleman, the grey-haired Laird of Wharfedale, though an impish quality in his finely drawn, elfin face makes a provocative contrast to the courtliness of his manner. clad in neat blue serge, with striped shirt and stiff white collar, he could be described as quaintly old-fashioned in dress. His voice has a softly emphatic quality as he speaks in the usual Yorkshire dialect.

But what he says is anything but old-fashioned, and his wit is lively and pungent. As his daughter Valerie says of him, "Father has never been one to wrap himself in a cocoon of wire and solder. I don't think he could live without continually refreshing himself with new people and new ideas. He always has respect for anyone, man or woman, so long as he has a sense of purpose and believes devoutly in what he is doing."

Throughout his varied life, Briggs has always responded to the stimulation of the people around him. This elasticity, no doubt, is what enabled him to change the whole course of his life in the early 1930's. "When I was younger," he says, "I was in the rag trade. You know, textiles. Started off at about a dollar a week. Well, it taught me two things—how to go about..."
Famous musicians first to hear remarkable new H. H. Scott speakers!

To assure perfection in his new speaker systems, Hermon Scott subjected them to home listening as well as technical tests. For the listening test he invited the most critical audience available...highly skilled professional musicians from Boston's famous symphony orchestra...to hear their own performances reproduced over the new H. H. Scott speakers. Here are their enthusiastic reactions:

"The closest I have heard to the true sound of the violin. I was not even aware I was listening to a recording." Leonard Moss, Violinist. "The trumpet sound was uniform and consistent in every range, from the lowest to the highest note...a feat virtually unheard of in any other speaker." Roger Voisin, First Trumpet; Recording Artist, Kapp Records. "I have never heard any reproduction of organ which sounded so faithful to the original. I felt I was sitting in the center of Symphony Hall." Jeri Zimkowch, Organist. "Every other speaker I ever heard sounded nasal and artificial. This was the first one that did not." Bernard Zighera, First Harpist and Pianist. "I was in the control room when this recording was made. Played through these new speakers, the reproduction was closer to the original performance than I've ever heard before." James Stagliano, First Horn; Recording Artist, Boston and Kapp Records. "The percussion came through with amazing clarity. The cymbals, the snare drum, the tympani and the bass drum all were equally true to the way they sound when I play." Everett Firth, First Tympanist.

As with its tuners and amplifiers, H. H. Scott uses new techniques in both construction and testing that represent a significant advance in the state of the art. New construction methods assure excellence in performance...New testing techniques and quality controls substantially reduce variations in quality from speaker to speaker, common until now.

Every H. H. Scott speaker is individually tested to assure rigid adherence to specifications. Each speaker carries a 2 year guarantee. Hear the new S-2 and S-3 at your dealer soon. We are sure you will agree that these speakers are the finest musical reproducing systems ever made.
business and how to buy a good suit. But it did not satisfy me. My hobby was listening to music. The sheer sound of it fascinated me. It always had, ever since I was a boy playing the piano and wondering if it would sound better with the legs off.

"As I grew older, I began to tinker with sound reproduction. I used to rummage around the radio shops for bits and pieces. Then, in 1932, I found a couple of inexpensive German speakers in a London junk shop. They were moving-coil types, then new, and quite good for their day, but they just weren't selling. One I kept as a museum piece; the other I took apart and put together about three dozen times and added a few notions of my own. When I was satisfied, I played it for a friend of mine who had a radio shop. After a few moments, he asked me how many I could let him have. That was how it started. Out I went to buy Sheffield magnets and chassis from Goodmans. In my cellar, with about four hundred dollars borrowed from a friend of mine, I was in business.

"Those were wild days, working on textiles during the day and speakers at night. My wife would help by making up the voice coils: after all, we were in business only to give her some pin money. She could solder coil wire to cone eyeslets better than anyone. And I would carry the finished units from home to our little workshop in an old habor. We sold all we could make. At the end of that year, we entered two speakers in a test run by the Bradford Radio Society. We won first prize. Next year, in the Depression, my rag firm gave me an ultimatum: put more money into the firm and take it over, or resign. I went straight out and bought myself another two haboxes, and it's been loudspeakers ever since."

The war diverted Briggs from the pursuit of musical fidelity. Orders from the Admiralty posed a somewhat different problem. "For once we tried to make our speakers sound as small as possible," Briggs recalls. "Horrific car-splitters to shatter the sleep of sailors at four in the morning. I don't think any British sailor will ever forgive me, and I am sure I have no customers among naval veterans."

After the war years, Wharfedale speakers regained their musicality and benefited from a rapid succession of engineering developments—the aluminum voice coil, the sand-filled baffle, and plastic-foam suspension. All these were Briggs specials, which he pioneered, along with multi-speaker systems and cross-over networks.

Wharfedale speakers were primarily responsible for introducing listeners in this country to what might be termed "the English sound." In the late 1940's and early 1950's, many popular American speakers had a brilliance that seemed to put the listener right in the center of the orchestra. In contrast, the Wharfedale design, with its broadly dispersed highs, smoothly balanced midrange, and mellow but not thumpy bass, seemed to place the listener in the first row of the balcony.

This more subdued sound is a kind of acoustic counterpart to the British tradition of verbal understatement. It is a manner, both in people and in loudspeakers, that engages affection rather slowly but is easy to live with in the long run. As one listener puts it, Wharfedale speakers sound "spectacularly unspectacular."

When the Wharfedale Wireless Works are running smoothly, Briggs seeks recreation in writing. The idea of writing came to him in 1947. He was visiting a London store when he overheard a customer complain about the scarcity of good textbooks on audio, and he decided to supply the lack. For all the apparent ease of his style, Briggs at first used to agonise over every sentence. "Then I hit on the idea of writing page after page of padding, leaving it to simmer for a day or two, and then cutting it down by fifty per cent. A further pruning the following day left a fair extract of anything that was worth printing."

More than 150,000 copies of books by Briggs have been sold, a fact doubly satisfying to him since he is his own publisher. So far nine books and scores of articles by him have appeared. Some of the books are rather technical—Amplifiers, which he wrote some years ago, and Sound Reproduction, which was begun as a supplement to Loudspeaker but quickly outgrew its original concept. Others are primarily popular handbooks—High Fidelity, now out of print, and his new Stereo Handbook.

In all of his writing, Briggs enlivens his dialogues with an awareness of the English language which is rare in the United States. Whatever else you can say about these books, nobody who has read them can call them shopworn. Briggs is not a good typist, but that does not matter. He has a way of writing that makes you feel that you are listening to him directly, as if he were sitting next to you in the room. He is a listener first, a writer second.
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Reprinted from Audio Magazine

CHESTER SANTON

Light Listening

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Cutting the master disc from the inside out has long been advocated as a solution to the problem now encountered in classical recordings wherever a symphonic work closes with a loud finale at the end of a lengthy side. Unfortunately, the four initial releases in this series do not contain classical material. We won't know how the theory works until some one puts out a stereo disc with an "1812 Overture" that starts next to the label. The Fortissimo series anticipates playback equipment considerably better than what we have today. Their master tapes are recorded at 60 inches per second with the heads oriented horizontally. Of even greater significance to the record fan are the measures that have been taken to improve the transfer from tape to disc. These include a 92,000 cps tone superimposed over the regular signal while cutting the master disc. It seems that the conventional hot stylus technique cannot do as good a job in the harder material they are using for this series. The finished pressings contain a new and harder compound called Polymax. All these steps produce a stereo disc unlike any I've heard before.

Of the four translucent discs released so far, these two records offer the most convincing evidence of the changes this series could make within the industry. Conventional surface noise is totally absent and response is phenomenal. The pipe organ played by Paul Renard is the second Wurlitzer located in the Radio City Music Hall building. This smaller version of the main theatre organ is located in a studio atop the building that was originally intended for radio broadcasts. Miked at extremely close quarters, the sound of the studio organ has a gleam impossible to capture in the vast auditorium. The music is sure-fire stuff by George M. Cohan. The 27-year-old Paul Renard doesn't have the polish and poise of the veteran theatre organists but he culls into these show stoppers with a complete quota of enthusiasm. This record won't be studied for the performance of the music. The attraction is the sound just as it is in the companion release of jet planes and a helicopter recorded at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. In high and low fly-by, take-off and landing, these jets have the "live" quality formerly available only on 15 ips professional tapes. Once the word gets around, these will be the test records in the months ahead.

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MAY 1961
It is a symphony about the spirit of man." The words are those of Serge Prokofiev, spoken in March, 1945, to Robert Magidoff, then serving as the Moscow correspondent of an American radio network. Magidoff and Prokofiev were discussing the composer's latest score, his Fifth Symphony, which had been played for the first time just a few weeks earlier in Moscow with Prokofiev himself conducting. In a dispatch to the New York Times, Magidoff wrote: "The Fifth Symphony, unlike Prokofiev's first four, makes one recall Mahler's words: 'To write a symphony means to me to create a whole world.' Although the Fifth is pure music and Prokofiev insists it is without program, he himself said, 'It is a symphony about the spirit of man.'"

Fourteen years had elapsed between the composition of Prokofiev's Fourth Symphony and his Fifth Symphony. The Fourth Symphony was one of ten works commissioned for the 1930-31 season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra to celebrate that organization's fiftieth anniversary. Among the others were Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms, Hindemith's Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Albert Roussel's Third Symphony, and Howard Hanson's Romantic Symphony.

When Sergei Koussevitzky gave the Fourth Symphony its premiere, in November, 1930, the reaction of the Boston press and public was rather icy. Seven years later, still smarting from that reception, Prokofiev tartly let it be known that his most recent work, an orchestral fairy tale called Peter and the Wolf, would not offend the sensibilities nor tax the musical intelligence of even Boston audiences.

Prokofiev was right, to be sure, but the bitterness of his observation just as surely represented an overstatement of fact, for by 1937 the Boston Symphony audiences had been thoroughly exposed to the orchestral music of Prokofiev by his most consistent and devoted champion in the Western world, Sergei Koussevitzky. It was only fitting, therefore, that in another decade the American premiere of the composer's Fifth Symphony should have been entrusted to Koussevitzky.

I, for one, can never forget the occasion of that first American performance, on November 9, 1945. In those days, hard on the end of World War II, the phrase "a symphony about the spirit of man" had a special meaning for us. The world had just emerged from its darkest hour, and as we sat in Symphony Hall in Boston and listened to this latest symphony by Prokofiev, many of us felt that it reflected the torture of our times, much as Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony reflects the torture of his times.

In fact, it may be said, with a good deal of truth, that Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony is his "Eroica." Like Beethoven's masterpiece of a century and a half earlier, also composed with the sounds of war ringing in its composer's ears, this work is an eloquent response to the struggles and aspirations of the human spirit. In the first movement there is churning turmoil and drama; in the second, an intense irony and
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sardonic bite. The slow movement is music of tension and tragedy, while the finale has an air of veiled buoyancy, beneath which the ominous threat of brutal warfare seems always to be lurking.

In Koussevitzky, its first spokesman in this country, the Fifth Symphony found an ideal interpreter. The "spirit of man" and its well-being was an abiding and lifelong concern of the conductor, and in conducting Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony he used to become possessed by the human implications of the music. The heartbeat of the score has never been more profoundly moving than it was under his baton. At the same time, the pages of affirmation have never rung out more proudly and triumphantly than they did when a red-faced and totally consumed Koussevitzky held his torch to the Boston Symphony Orchestra and set aflame that superb body of players an intensity of dedication unequalled in my experience.

Shortly after conducting the American premiere of the symphony, Koussevitzky recorded it with the Boston Symphony Orchestra for RCA Victor. The recorded performance — originally released as a 78-rpm set and later transferred to the LP catalog as LM 1045 — does not have quite the searing intensity I remember from some of the live performances by the same conductor and orchestra, yet no performance released since then has eclipsed it. Like nearly all the other Koussevitzky recordings — many of them matchless, as is this one — it is now no longer available. Clearly, RCA Victor must be made to feel duty-bound to restore it to currency, perhaps even in an electronic stereo reprocessing of the type recently applied to some of the Toscanini recordings.

Of the recorded performances that are presently in the catalog, Eugene Ormandy's with the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia MS 6004, ML 5260) comes the closest to being truly satisfying. He is particularly successful with the two outer movements, where he is quite persuasive in setting forth the essential tragedy that underlies the music. In the scherzo he doesn't communicate quite the degree of sardonic irony that I find in it, nor is his slow movement quite bleak or desolate enough. But the power and the passion are there, the orchestra plays superbly, and the engineers have recorded it most effectively.

Next in my own affections comes the performance recorded in the Soviet Union in 1959 by Leopold Stokowski and the USSR State Orchestra. This version, monophonic only, is available in this country as Arias MK 1551. The quality of the engineering is nowhere nearly as good as Columbia's for Ormandy, but Stokowski, too, reveals a deep and compelling feeling for the music, especially in his powerful readings of the slow movement and the finale.

Thomas Schippers, conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra (Angel stereo and monophonic 55327), also obtains a performance of considerable impact. He builds an impressive climax in the first movement, and is brilliant in his realization of the nervous propulsiveness of the demonic scherzo. His slow movement very successfully communicates a full measure of introspective understanding. It is only in the finale that there is a slight letdown; there should be more power and thrust here, more of a feeling of inevitability. The Angel recorded sound is exceptionally clean and natural, especially in the monophonic edition, and the dynamic range is most impressive.

None of the other four available stereo recordings seems to me to be worth much consideration. Antal Dorati (Mercury SR 50258, MG 50258), gives a cold, bloodless, rushed performance. Jean Martinon (RCA Victor LSC 2272, LM 2272) seems to have a keen awareness of the imposing grandeur of the music, but his performance is poorly recorded, with little if any bass. Sir Malcolm Sargent (Everest 5094, 6094) gets the best recorded sound of all, with especially clear reproduction of the important piano part and a really crisp share-drum sound in the scherzo, but the whole performance is pretty pallid. Finally, George Szell (Epic BC 1079, LC 8688), like Dorati, adopts such a brisk pace, especially in the first and third movements, that the music is projected with little of the throbbing emotional intensity it ought to have.

It is to the Ormandy recording, then, that I would direct the stereo listener for the most satisfactory realization currently available of the heroic and lyrical abandon of this masterpiece of our time.
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HAVE THE BIG BANDS—once fertile breeding ground for new musical ideas—outlived their usefulness, or can they become again a challenging force in popular music?

For well over ten years, a recurring chant among sentimentalists in jazz has been: "Bring back the bands!" Each small sign of a possible renaissance of the big jazz band is wishfully interpreted as being the start of a new trend. And whenever an established jazzman takes to the road with a new orchestra, as Gerry Mulligan did last year, the exhortations are intensified.

In any realistic sense, though, the big bands have not come back. Gerry Mulligan's big band lay dormant for most of the past winter. One reason was Mulligan's (continued overleaf)

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GERRY MULLIGAN:
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STAN KENTON:
Once an innovator of jazz concert techniques, he now plays safe with conservative arrangements.

MAYNARD FERGUSON:
Attempts to hide the clichés of his arrangements by playing at triple forte.

need to strengthen his repertoire and re-examine his personnel—but if the band had been hot on the road, all this would have been done on a band bus. Mulligan's first year was disappointing. Grosses were uneven, and the band did not draw any very striking response from either the jazz public or the critics.

There remain, in fact, only a few full-time big jazz bands. The rapidly aging Count Basie machine is the most successful, and Duke Ellington's orchestra still works most of the year. Stan Kenton keeps trying, but his units are becoming less and less distinctive. In recent years, even the indefatigable Woody Herman has had to yield to the economic facts and spend more and more time heading small combos.

Of the newer leaders, Maynard Ferguson works very hard and steadily with a loudly mediocre band, and Quincy Jones' new organization, though laudable in intent, is rather bland in result. The orchestras of Gil Evans and Bill Russo, and other similar arrangers' bands, are organized more for work in recording studios than for regular functioning on the traveling scene.

To be sure, the post-war inroads that television made on the popularity of ballrooms has weakened the economy of the jazz-oriented dance band. But at the root of the big band's fall from vogue is a shift in the nature of both jazz itself and the jazz audience. In the 1930's, audiences were interested in big bands because so much of musical interest was going on in them. Even though much of the big bands' work in those days was in filling dance and theatre dates, there was considerable jazz content in the music they played because most of the important jazz soloists—men like Lester Young, Johnny Hodges, and Bunny Berigan—were with them. Teenagers knew the personnel of big bands as well as they knew the rosters of major league ball clubs.

The better orchestras of the 1930's and early 1940's were as advanced as the small combos of those years, so their players could still feel that they were in the jazz vanguard. With the coming of modern jazz in the middle and late 1940's, however, the major soloists tended to move into combos—not, primarily, because there were not enough big bands to work in, but because there was much more challenge and opportunity for self-expression in the smaller groups.

During the past decade, the focus of jazz has changed, for better or worse, until now it is music for listening only. More and more jazz musicians insist on a working setup that does not require them to fill such secondary functions as playing for dancing or stage shows. The small combos fit in with this trend. The big bands do not.

In general, big bands try to have both a commercial repertoire, suitable for dances, and a purer jazz repertoire for club and concert dates. But the jazz public has become less and less tolerant of this fence-straddling, and concentrates its attention on the combos, which, theoretically, restrict the musicians' creative talents much less than the bands do.

Gerry Mulligan recognized the hazards of diffusing the
image and energies of an all-jazz band when he told an
interviewer from Down Beat why he was not planning to
book his 1960 band for dances: "... by taking the band out
on dances now, I would dissipate the band's power ... as a
listening, a show band ... at this point there would seem
to be a good field for a real out-and-out jazz band, which is
what I want. Most bands that have been put together lately
have been trying to reach a happy medium, and this doesn't
exist ..."

Stan Kenton, in a conversation with Ralph Gleason, indi-
cated his doubts that there is, in fact, much of a public
left for dance bands as such. "I think that the dance band
is a long gone thing," he said, "if we didn't belong to jazz, I
do not think we would be drawing anyone either."

Whether or not the future for dance bands is as gloomy
as Kenton believes, Mulligan's main point is beyond
dispute: There is no longer a happy medium for the big bands.
A Duke Ellington can still work dance dates and big clubs
in Las Vegas without diluting the personality of his band.
But this is true only because Ellington is nonpareil.

There has never been another big band with the range
and stability of Ellington's, and a new leader makes a basic
mistake in trying to reach both the jazz-listening and the
dancing public. Quincy Jones is a case in point. His first
three Mercury albums were intentionally diluted so as to
appeal to the widest possible audience. As a result, a band
that could have made a strong initial impression on the jazz
public did not. His engagement at the Basin Street East in
New York last winter was similarly miscalculated. Having
to play for dancing and to accompany Johnny Ray before
it could open up late at night certainly did not help the
band to make a distinctive impression.

But Jones's musicians needed work, and his booking
agency, geared to traditional ways, found no alternatives to
offer. Instead of promoting the Jones group as an all-jazz
band with brilliant soloists, and booking concert dates at
colleges and in major cities, the agency tried to sell it as an
all-purpose band that could work stage shows, dances, and
maybe even industrial exhibits.

Poor management, however, could not be blamed for the
rather mild impression made by the Gerry Mulligan band.

It did have the right kind of bookings. Mulligan's error is
an example of another common flaw in the big band come-
back campaign. Although the scores he chose were some-
times persuasively sinewy they were never as impressive as
might have been expected from Mulligan's mastery of the
small combo. There was an old-timey feel and a general
sameness of emotional level about much of the writing, and,
in a two-hour concert, there was just not enough musical
substance to hold the attention.

Mulligan's experience underlines the fact that the big
bands as a type have been obtusely slow in absorbing the
changes that have taken place in small-combo jazz during
the past ten years. As Marshall Brown pointed out in a
particularly trenchant article, "The Trouble With Big
Band Jazz," in Down Beat, "... today's top arrangers and
composers are not arranging or composing. They are merely
manipulating clichés. The root ... is back in the Count
Basic band of the late 1930's. But these clichés played a
very secondary role in that Basic band. When they appeared
at all, they were usually in the subordinate parts ... in the
backgrounds to solos. Today's writers have taken the
punctuation points ... and made a career out of them. The
effect of this type of writing has been to stabilize big-band
jazz writing. And even the sidemen are involved... Fre-
cently, if a sideman says he doesn't dig a score, he could be
that it doesn't have any clichés in it or has fewer than he's
accustomed to ... There has never been a fifteen-to-twenty-
year period in jazz when less growth took place... There
are a dozen or so composers and arrangers today whose
writing is much in demand by practically all the remaining
big bands. One usually thinks of jazz playing and writing
as being fields which have put a premium on individuality.
But ... we are living in the era of the interchangeable ar-
range..."

There are, as Brown also noted, exceptions. But the main
charge is true. For instance, I doubt if there has been as
thoroughly new Woody Herman arrangement in the past
ten years. Count Basie will not accept a score that deviates
too challengingly from the groove in which he has become
so comfortable. The Maynard Ferguson band appears to be
trying to draw attention away from the clichés of its arrange-

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Rx for the big bands:
Forget past clichés and produce modern music for modern listeners

menus by playing at an almost incessant triple forte.
Stan Kenton has long prided himself on the innovations he was bringing in. Most of them were pretentious and hollow, but Kenton’s band did, on occasion, indicate several provocative directions in which big-band writing might develop. Now, however, most of Kenton’s arrangements are all too safe.

Duke Ellington and his chief aide, Billy Strayhorn, continue to go their own way. It seems doubtful that many of Ellington’s originals from the past ten years will turn out to be among his most durable, but his writing does remain much more resourceful than that of the interchangeable arrangers for other bands. It is a reflection on the general conservatism that Duke Ellington, after more than forty years, still heads the most individual and imaginative of all regular big jazz bands.

What must the other bands do to become truly viable, contributing parts of jazz? First of all, they must concentrate on producing music for listening that incorporates the advances in jazz writing and instrumental techniques of the past twenty years. And then each band must achieve a musical personality of its own.

There is no reason, for instance, why little, contrapuntal writing in the small-combo vein of Gerry Mulligan, John Lewis, and even more daring arranger-composers cannot be adapted to a big band. And the possibilities of the concerto grosso approach—a small combo set against the text of a large band—have hardly been touched. Why must the big band so dependent on clichés of rhythm? The jagged, resiliently unpredictable rhythmic language of Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, and others can certainly be translated into big-band terms.

Monk’s own album of big-band music (“Thelonious Monk at Town Hall”) was intriguing, but not nearly as successful as it might have been, because Monk’s orchestrator, Hall Overton, mostly just inflated small-combo scores instead of finding ways to use Monk’s techniques in terms of the fresh possibilities of a big band. George Russell’s “pan-chromatic” improvisation has been limited, so far as big bands are concerned, to studio recordings directed by him, like “Jazz in the Space Age,” and “New York, New York.” In the latter, Russell says he tried “to force the soloist into polymodality. I gave him symbols which, when superimposed upon the music that’s happening under it, create a pan-tonal sort of effect. So I speak to the soloist in terms of his familiar symbols, but, as I like to say—you have to fool the soloist into playing out.”

And that—in a word—is what is needed in big-band jazz: Writers to challenge soloists with scores that will not let them fall back on familiar licks. Beyond that, there is need for writers who have a color sense more subtle than has been usual.

Duke Ellington is the pre-eminent master of color. He has long studied the many ways in which the timbres of instruments can be blended. Further, he has always been careful to note the individual sound of each member of his band, in each register and with each change of mute. Gil Evans, although his writing sometimes lacks drive and thematic iron, is another who is concerned with colors of a big band score. Yet even in Evans’ work for big bands there is less radical exploration of color combinations than is now possible.

There has not been enough thinking about the selective use of a big concert jazz band. The whole band must not play all the time. Sections and parts of sections can be

THE BEST OF BIG BAND SOUND

STAN KENTON: City of Glass: This Modern World. Capitol W-736.
JOHNNY GRIFFIN: Big Soul Band. Riverside 1170: 331.
THELONIOUS MONK: Thelonious Monk at Town Hall. Riverside 1133: 12-300.
GERRY MULLIGAN: Gerry Mulligan’s Concert Jazz Band. Verve 80898; 8588.
moved in and out, and soloists can be used in widely different groupings, all within the same arrangement. In short, a band need not be a massive block; it can become a very flexible, personal instrument.

Such a group could widen its appeal by having small combos from within the band perform during the course of a session. There could also be especially commissioned pieces for guest soloists, including such older musicians as Coleman Hawkins and Roy Eldridge, who could thereby be returned to at least some of the prominence that they deserve. Many of these ideas were suggested by Gerry Mulligan in a conversation several years ago; maybe he will be able to put some of them into effect when he regroups.

If a real concert big jazz band with imaginative programming does come into existence, the basic initial booking ought to be in colleges, where there are audiences that really listen and that have enthusiasm. But the college concert circuit has still not been intelligently developed. Almost without exception, the anachronistic agents of today wait for a group to become popular before booking it. They never try to develop programs or anticipate audience taste—or even, with big bands, to meet existing demands.

In the next decade, a new breed of agent-managers is bound to grow up in jazz. They will be men who know the music as well as they know how to read road maps and shout into telephones, men who have the background to help the leader plan the nature of his band as well as its route. It will take a whole new generation of such managers to realize the potential of bands whose playing is as surely geared for listening audiences as is the playing of chamber-music groups and symphony orchestras.

Admittedly, even with a sizable college-based concert circuit, it would still be difficult to keep a big band solvent. The most practical approach would be for a leader to conceive of a band that would only work parts of each year. Given the proper scores and an itinerary of three to four concerts a week, instead of the exhausting traditional one-nighter schedule, many major jazzmen would welcome a few weeks at a time on the road with a challenging band.

As it is now, a George Russell and a Gil Evans can assemble a crack band of New York musicians who make their basic livings in studio and recording work. The way things are now, these men will not tour continuously; but they would be willing to make relatively brief tours, and so give live audiences a chance to hear the quality of big-band work that they usually hear only in the results of infrequent recording sessions. A judiciously booked series of concerts, some on a subscription basis, would make such a venture financially possible—and jazz composers would be given a much greater stimulus to write ambitiously for large orchestras.

However, the economics work out, the big jazz bands from now on will have to be concert bands. The all-purpose dance band of the swing era is dead. The bands that survive will be the most uncompromising—those that will commission ingenious scores, scores with the breath of life, scores that demand the maximum concentration from both players and listeners. They will be bands playing new works by serious jazz composers, with first-rate soloists within the band and a compelling array of guest artists. Then the big band will once again be a key source of organic innovations in jazz.
by RICHARD ANTHONY LEONARD

ONE NIGHT in 1952, while the Korean War was still dragging on, a general of the United States Air Force stationed in the shattered city of Seoul got the surprise of his life. He stepped into a recreation hall at the Air Force base to attend a show being put on for the airmen. To his astonishment, he heard someone playing a Beethoven piano sonata and giving a beautifully expressive, technically immaculate performance. When the general saw who the performer was, he was left gasping. At the piano sat an eleven-year-old Korean boy.

Tong Il Han was the prodigy's name. Since he was four years old he had been learning to play the piano. His teacher was his father. The Seoul airmen raised a fund for Tong Il Han's musical education in America, and in 1954 he was brought to this country. A pupil of Rosina Lhevinne, at the Juilliard School of Music, in New York, he is now, at nineteen, on the threshold of a concert career.

The story of Tong Il Han brings to mind a number of often-asked questions about musical child prodigies: Are these Wunderkinder really rare, after all? Or are they the rule rather than the exception? And is such precocious talent likely to last, or will it probably dissipate itself in maturity? One thing is certain: today we are awakened to the enormous value of unusual musical talent in children. We have learned how carefully such talent should be nurtured, and we shudder at the way highly gifted children have been treated in the past.

What could happen in the eighteenth century is shown by the case of Mozart (pictured at the left in a highly romanticized nineteenth-century engraving). At the age of three he began to pick out chords on the clavier, and at five he started to compose. He wrote violin sonatas at seven, his first symphonies at eight, and at twelve had completed two short operas. Meanwhile, before he was eight, Mozart was a virtuoso on the clavier, the violin, and the organ. He could improvise on a theme for half an hour, he could play the most difficult music at sight, and he could write down from memory music that he had heard played but once.

Leopold Mozart, the father of this miraculous child, was a superb teacher, but he exploited his son shamelessly, dragging him around Europe and exhibiting him like a freak in a circus. The boy performed before numerous kings, queens, archdukes, and bishops. But his life was a nightmare of exhausting coach travel, of dirty inns where the food and
drink were foul, and of epidemics, especially smallpox, that threatened wherever they went.

Beethoven was almost caught in the same toils. In early childhood he was driven unmercifully by his drunken father, who hoped to make him another attraction like little Wolfgang Mozart. When he was eight years old he gave a public recital on the clavier, his father advertising his age as six. As a matter of record, Beethoven himself did not discover his true age until years later.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the social order had already changed considerably, and the spread of commercial concerts for the general public meant that many musicians no longer had to depend upon court or church appointments for a livelihood. But, by the same token, gifted children often got into the hands of unscrupulous concert managers, who treated them as little better than freaks. The childhood experience of Johannes Brahms was not uncommon. Born into a poor family in the slums of Hamburg, he began to play the piano in public at the age of ten, and at fifteen was playing regularly in cheap waterfront dance halls that were also houses of prostitution. Only in recent years and in a few countries have precocious children been put under the protection of laws to safeguard their health and well-being.

Chief among the popular misconceptions about prodigies is the notion that only a few of them make the grade as mature artists. The others are often thought of as mere automatons driven by dominating parents, and the expectation is that maturity will find them among the forgotten men in the back row of some second-violin section. The truth is quite different. Choose at random almost any big-name concert artist of today, and the chances are good that you will find a one-time child prodigy. A study of musical biography shows that the appearance of a true prodigy is nature's way of making known not just a quick-blooming talent, but one of enormous and long-lasting potency.

For example, among present-day violin virtuosos there is Mischa Elman—still active in his seventieth year—who first played in public at the age of five and began his professional career at twelve. At the age of seven Yehudi Menuhin played the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto before an audience of nine thousand people, and his fellow San Francisco Ruggiero Ricci did the same when he was eight. Isaac Stern was a concert performer at the age of eleven. Joseph Szigeti began making public appearances at thirteen, and Fritz Kreisler made his first concert tour at thirteen. A sensational Wunderkind was Jascha Heifetz, who began studying the violin at the age of three, and at six was playing concerts in public. *

Among the pianists, Artur Rubinstein began studying the piano at three, played in public at six, and at eleven played Mozart's A Major Piano Concerto in public. Rudolf Serkin was soloist with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra at the age of twelve. José Iturbi played the piano in a motion picture theatre in Valencia, Spain, when he was seven, and later played in cafés to finance his musical education. Guimon

* Heifetz' American debut in 1917, when he was sixteen, produced one of music's most famous wisecracks. Leopold Godowsky, the noted pianist (who was also an acid wit), was one of the many celebrities present in Carnegie Hall on that historic afternoon. During the first intermission Mischa Elman turned to him and said, “My, it's warm in here!” “Yes,” remarked Godowsky dryly, “but not for pianists.”
Novacek played in public at the age of seven, and Claudio Arrau made his debut at eleven. Many of the younger lions of the keyboard—Glenn Gould, Van Cliburn, Gary Graffman, Eugene Istomin, Eugene List, Leon Fleisher, and John Browning—rose from the ranks of prodigies. In the older generations, Josef Hofmann, Leopold Godowsky, Ferruccio Busoni, Moritz Rosenthal, Oskip Gabrilowitsch, Serge Rachmaninoff, and Teresa Carreño were youthful marvels, and so, of course, were Anton Rubinstein and Franz Liszt.

Among the cellists, the late Emmanuel Feuermann appeared with the Vienna State Symphony at the age of eleven, and Gregor Piatigorsky earned money for his needy family by playing in movie houses when he was nine. Among the conductors, Eugene Ormandy studied the violin at four and played in public at seven. Bruno Walter, George Szell, and Fritz Busch were all child piano prodigies, while John Barbirolli was a cello virtuoso at the age of eleven.

Among the composers the ranks of the prodigies are densely crowded. Excepting Richard Wagner, who at first wanted to become a dramatist, most of the great ones had childhood records of precocious musical talent in one form or another. For example, Henry Purcell composed at the age of nine, Franz Schubert began at ten, and Robert Schumann at seven. Frédéric Chopin played a piano concerto in

A Few Words of Advice to Parents of Gifted Children

If you are the parent of a young child who seems so gifted in music that you suspect he might have the makings of a prodigy, what should you do? How can you be sure that he is going to be properly taught and his talent fully developed—without his being exploited or his nervous system ruined?

One of the professionals most likely to know the answers to these knotty problems is Mark Schubart, Dean of the Juilliard School of Music, who has seen at first hand the progress of hundreds of musically gifted children. He estimates that at the present time in the Juilliard School there are at least twenty-five children of extraordinary talent (he avoids the word "prodigy"). Dean Schubart offers a five-point program for parents who suspect that the wonderful lightning has struck their child.

First, take the child to a music teacher of unquestioned integrity and good sense, or to a reputable school (like Curtis, Eastman, or Juilliard), and get an objective, professional evaluation of his talent.

Second, if he seems to have the prodigy type of talent, choose the very best teacher you can find. Put the child's music education completely in the teacher's charge. Don't interfere, even though you may be a musician yourself with positive ideas on the subject. A dominating parent is often bad for a child; an interfering one can be even worse.

Third, see that the child gets the best possible general education along with his musical studies. To become an outstanding musician, he must have a broad cultural background. This will not impose any undue strain on the child because most prodigies are also smart in fields other than music. The ideal school for Wunderkinder, believes Dean Schubart, would be one in which both music and a general curriculum are taught under the same roof; but as yet no such school exists in this country.

Fourth, try to provide the child with a normally happy emotional life at home. This is extremely important. When a brilliantly gifted child fails in maturity, it does not necessarily mean that talent has deserted him. Rather, the cause may be extra-musical. A home environment of constant tension and anxiety, with emotional upsets caused by excessively dominating or demanding parents, can be ruinous to any child, and especially to one with the sensitive nervous system of the budding artist.

Fifth, be sure the child is never made to think that he is a freak.

As to the wisdom of public appearances, the chief question is: Is the child musically ready? If the answer is yes, then public appearances, even at an early age, are good training, provided they are not overdone or forced. By the time he reaches the age of eighteen a young player should be completely equipped to start building his public career.

HiFi/STereo
public at eight. Hector Berlioz began to compose at twelve, and at fifteen he was already trying to get his works published. Giacomo Meyerbeer—which is to say, Jakob Liebmann Beer—played a Mozart piano concerto in public at the age of seven. Sir Arthur Sullivan got one of his anthems published at thirteen, and at sixteen Luigi Cherubini had already composed a whole flood of church music. Felix Mendelssohn began studying the piano at four, made his debut at nine, and began composing prolifically at ten. Among contemporary composers one of the most amazing prodigies was Serge Prokofiev. He improvised at the piano obviously gifted youngsters like Joey Alfidi, the prodigy from Yonkers, N. Y. Back in 1956, when he was seven years old, Joey conducted Toscanini's old orchestra in a man-size program that included Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Time magazine remarked that "the answer is the same for Joey as it has been for child prodigies from Mozart on: parental push." Time went on to point out that Joey's father, Frank Alfidi, an accordion teacher, had hired Carnegie Hall and the orchestra at a cost of $10,000 in order to launch his son's career.

The latest reports about Joey indicate that his father's faith in his ability is completely justified. Today, at the age of eleven, he is conductor, virtuoso pianist, and composer. Last December, in Brussels, he conducted the Belgian National Orchestra in Beethoven's Egmont Overture and Eighth Symphony, and as piano soloist played Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto and his own Second Piano Concerto. An audience that included the Dowager Queen Elizabeth received him with rapturous acclaim. The entire program was recorded and will shortly be released by Jubilee Records.

At the age of four, Joey astounded Guido Cantelli when, at a New York Philharmonic rehearsal, he displayed perfect pitch by instantly naming notes and even chords played by men in the orchestra. Today he studies music for about six hours each day (he has learned to play at least a dozen instruments besides the piano), but every afternoon he reverts to normal boyhood. He is a muscular, thoroughly masculine youngster, with an avid interest in such things as Little League baseball, model airplanes, and scientific gadgets. Offers for Joey's appearance have poured in from all over the world, including one for $6,000 a concert from Las Vegas. Joey's father has turned them all down. The boy will devote the next year to study only.

At least two former boy conductors of recent years have already confounded the skeptics on growing to manhood. One is Lorin Manzel, the French-born prodigy who created a stir back in 1939, when, at the age of nine, he led some of this country's top orchestras. Today, in Europe, he is one of the rising conductors, a status that is the result not only of talent but of hard work. While he was a student at the University of Pittsburgh, he also held down a job as a violinist in the Pittsburgh Symphony. He has learned to play every instrument in the orchestra, and he memorizes all his scores. "He is not sensational," Isaac Stern has said of him. "He is a little better than that. He is good."

Another former prodigy on the rise is Pierino Gamba. Born in Rome in 1936, he was not quite ten years old when he conducted a concert that created a prolonged riot in his native city. Four thousand people in the concert hall and thousands of others in the streets outside milled around little Pierino for hours, wild with enthusiasm. Since then, he has conducted more than seven hundred concerts all over Europe, and has grown into a mature, hard-working, and intensely serious young artist.

In a class by itself, fortunately, is the incredible story of the prodigy pianist, Ruth Slenczynska. Born in Sacramento,
California, in 1923, Ruth began playing the piano at the age of three. At four-and-a-half she gave her first public recital, and at seven she played Bach’s F Minor Concerto in Paris, under Monteux. Her virtuosity astounded even such pianists as Josef Hofmann, Alfred Cortot, Egon Petri, and Sergey Rachmaninoff. She also knew basic harmony, had perfect pitch, and could transpose to any key.

Ruth herself told the secret of her phenomenal talent in her book, Forbidden Childhood, published a few years ago. “What people thought was a miracle,” she wrote, “was nothing but a matter of relentless daily practice imposed on his own child by a harsh taskmaster.” Josef Slenczynski, Ruth’s father, decided when Ruth was three years old that he could make her into a super-pianist. At six o’clock one morning he dragged her out of bed, sat her down at a piano, and started to teach her to play. For nine hours that day the instruction went on. The next morning, beginning at six, it was repeated; for years thereafter that was Ruth’s daily life.

The father was a fanatical perfectionist. If the child made the slightest mistake he slapped her face; for a bad mistake he almost knocked her off the piano stool. Before she began playing in public he warned her that if she made a mistake people in the audience would pelt her with rotten eggs and vegetables. The next day at practice she struck a wrong note, and he promptly threw a tomato at her.

Day after day, year after year, the iron routine went on. Ruth had little play with other children, and nothing remotely resembling a normal childhood. Audiences in America and Europe showered the little girl with acclaim, never dreaming that she was in the hands of a sadist. One day, when she was six years old, Ruth’s father clubbed her mercilessly with a stick.

Ruth herself explains why she was able to endure this ordeal so long. She adored playing the piano; with her it was a consuming passion, and her one fear was that her father might not let her go on playing.

Inevitably, she broke under the strain. When she was fifteen, she suffered a complete nervous collapse, and her concert life seemed ended. There followed a long convalescence, her marriage, her father’s death, and finally the rebuilding of her life and career. Today she is once again on her way toward the top of the concert world.

A happy contrast to the troubled progress of Ruth Slenczynska has been the career of Lorin Hollander, who made a brilliant surprise debut in New York at the age of twelve and is now, at sixteen, firmly established as one of the best among the whole younger generation of pianists. The son of a violinist in the NBC Symphony, he was less than two years old when his parents first noticed him taking an interest in music, although it was not until he started to take piano lessons, when he was five, that they realized how gifted he really was.

The Hollanders sensibly refused to allow themselves to be swept away over enthusiasm or possessive pride. They saw to it that Lorin got the finest possible instruction, and they planned for his future; but they refused to let him be pushed too fast or exploited. At least partly as a result of their wisdom, their son has grown up to be an intelligent, healthy young man—and one who seems to be doing exactly what he wants to do. When he is asked what it’s like to be a prodigy, he answers that it’s great, except that he would rather not be labelled a “prodigy.” He just doesn’t like the word. He loves to play the piano, has never been nervous before an audience, and finds nothing important in his training or upbringing that he would change. He admits that it’s tough to handle six hours of practicing a day in addition to homework, but he manages to take it all in stride.

When musicians themselves talk about child prodigies, the topic of conversation not infrequently touches on one of the most intriguing questions of all: who, in the roll-call of talent, might be called the super-prodigies, the greatest of the great? For first place there would be little question that most votes would go to Mozart. In the second spot you would very likely find Mendelssohn, who began to compose with incredible fertility at the age of ten, and created an enduring masterpiece, the overture to A Midsummer Night’s Dream, when he was seventeen. The most astonishing prodigy of the more recent past would probably be Josef Hofmann. In 1887, at the age of eleven, his performance of Beethoven’s First Piano Concerto left the New York critics awestruck. He played with marvelous technical accuracy, exquisite tonal color, and complete mastery of style. The critic W. J. Henderson said that he performed “not only like an artist, but like a master.”

Here, as a matter of fact, is the clue that most professional musicians look for when they are judging child performers: not merely manual dexterity, which many youngsters have, but an innate musical sense, which prompts them to know intuitively many of the secrets of phrasing, the control of dynamics and rhythm, and above all how to make the instrument sing. Only the true prodigy has this “spiritual quality.” It is a quality as mysterious as it is revealing.
How to Choose a Hi-Fi Dealer

THE ART OF DOLLAR DIPLOMACY ON THE HI-FI FRONT

by JOHN MILDER

Whether your interest in high fidelity is casual or consuming, whether you demand “perfect” reproduction or simply want pleasant sound, possibly your most important choice is your selection of an audio dealer. The dealer’s sales policies, attitudes, and knowledge of audio are intangible but vitally important matters that deserve at least as much attention as the equipment he sells.

A good audio dealer can sharpen your appreciation of the important differences between components and help you focus on the factors that really matter in terms of your particular needs. A bad dealer can dull the edge of your interest, cause additional confusion in your mind, and, in the end, lead you to saddle yourself with a badly matched array of components that do not make for endurable, let alone pleasant, listening.

In marked contrast to the superabundance of advice about components themselves, there has been a surprising dearth of informed discussion about dealers and their practices. There are no neat response curves for dealers; human beings simply cannot be analyzed on graph paper. But there are convenient ways to size up an audio dealer and determine whether he will provide the kind of service you want and need. And there are equally simple ways in which you can promote understanding, rather than confusion, between yourself and a competent dealer.

When the time comes to buy a new car, you walk into a showroom with at least some idea of the differences between a Falcon and a Cadillac. At least you know that one costs over three times as much as the other, and you probably know the reasons fairly well. And you have an idea of which car is more in line with your inclinations and your budget.

To the high-fidelity novice, the criteria for selecting equipment may seem less clear. But you should have some knowledge of high-fidelity yardsticks before you approach a dealer. Information is plentiful; a glance at the advertisements in this magazine will give you an idea of the differences in price between “Falcon” and “Cadillac” sound systems, and some inkling of their differences in performance. You can go on to learn as much as you want to know—through articles in magazines like this one, and through literature available from manufacturers—before you ever see a dealer.

The amount of boning-up you feel is worth while as long as you avoid buying a car without knowing the differences between components. But the flexibility of audio components permits you to add program sources as you go, and you can decide whether to buy everything at once or to build a system in gradual steps as your interests and budget dictate. Gradual building is the painless way to acquire a system of higher quality than you would be able to afford if you had to pay for it in a lump sum. In any case, your first conversation with an audio dealer is likely to be more fruitful if you’ve settled in advance the questions of how much you are prepared to spend initially, and for what elements.

When you are ready to set out on your shopping foray, magazine and notes in hand, prices in mind—and checkbook in pocket—you will have several possible destinations. Your
choice is widest if you live in or near a big city, but even a town of modest size may have more than one audio dealer. If you live in a small town far from any large city, you will probably order equipment by mail, either from a special mail-order house or from a smaller dealer whose name has come to your attention. There may be a certain convenience in buying by mail, but it will be eminently worth your while to make at least one exploratory trip to the nearest town where there is an audio shop—particularly if you have never seen or heard any of the equipment that interests you.

Assuming for the moment, however, that your problem is not one of distance but decision, let us consider the various types of audio stores and their characteristic policies.

If you want to shop with a minimum of effort and a maximum of comfort, and have no budget problems, the custom audio salon may be your destination. It is easy to recognize, thanks to its sumptuous trappings. There are usually draperies in muted colors, stylish armchairs for comfortable listening, and a hushed, unworldly atmosphere. The only thing that differentiates such a salon from an elegant living room is likely to be a switchboard that permits comparison of the sound from various components, which are themselves generally hidden from view. As one might suspect, the word "custom" implies the planning and installation of fairly elaborate systems, with heavy emphasis on décor. If you are willing to pay the necessary premium for this kind of attention, including the cost of installation and cabinetwork, you can safely let the salon handle all details. But if your budget is restricted, there are other types of dealers whose services may prove better suited to your pocketbook.

The well-stocked showrooms of many big-city audio dealers have one element in common with the custom salon: the switching arrangement for comparison of equipment. But the atmosphere is far less refined. In fact, turmoil often prevails, and you will find yourself rubbing shoulders with aggressively vocal audiophiles who won't hesitate to break into your conversations with salesmen and dispense unsolicited advice. Yet, in spite of such disqualifying, it is usually possible to establish communication with a knowledgeable salesman.

Here your audio homework can prove very useful, since the tremendous variety of equipment on display permits you to explore some fairly subtle differences among components. If the salesman feels reasonably sure that you intend to buy, he will usually expend considerable effort in helping you bring your needs into focus.

In return for such attention and for the convenience of being able to choose from a large, immediately available stock, you usually pay the standard "audiophile net" prices. Any labor involved in installation is, as a rule, charged for at a reasonable hourly rate, but if you have special cabinet requirements you will generally be referred to a cabinetmaker or a furniture store.

Another type of audio outlet, the big-city discount store, contrasts sharply with the establishments described so far. Here, too, the stock is large, and there are some listening facilities. But there the resemblance ends. The discount-store atmosphere is best described as frantic, and the salesmen have an unmistakable air of urgency. There is not much time for contemplation or critical listening, and you can be fairly sure that the salesman is less interested in your needs than in the demands of the store manager, who must turn over his stock quickly in order to make up for his relatively small margin of profit. Noticeably absent from this stock are several fair-traded brands of high-quality components, whose manufacturers insist on maintaining what they feel to be realistic selling prices for their equipment, and so will not give a franchise to discount dealers.

Despite these drawbacks, a visit to a discount store can be profitable, so long as you retain an unshakeable idea of
what you want and don’t want. But the savings in initial cost that may be gained must be weighed against the dealer’s lack of service and repair facilities, which can result in a good deal of inconvenience if a component fails to work properly when you get it home.

In smaller towns or in the suburbs you may find the dealers harder to categorize than are the big-city types. The small-town dealer may be an audiophile who decided to make a business of his hobby, and he may be both knowledgeable and eager to help you find good equipment. On the other hand, he may be merely a household-appliance dealer who has taken on audio components in the hope of added profit. Then there are combination music and record stores, whose audio departments vary greatly in facilities and in the attitudes and competence of their personnel.

In case of doubt, the sensible thing to do is to determine the attitude of the store toward the equipment it sells. The first step is to find out whether most of the equipment displayed is up-to-date or outmoded. Next, explore the store’s variety of different labels. Does the dealer have only one or two brands of equipment, or is he franchised (with banners to prove it) to sell several lines that represent a respectable cross-section of the audio industry? Does he maintain a repair department? (This does not mean a salesman who specializes in repair units or paste, it means that the store, whose audio equipment it sells, is satisfied with the equipment the store and its personnel are able to repair.)

If you have sized up a store and are satisfied that it can offer the equipment and service you want, the next step is to communicate your needs to the salesman. Too often the first encounter between an unprepared shopper and a salesman fails to establish any realistic starting point for discussion of ends, let alone ways and means.

On the other hand, if you go audio shopping with your own pet notions of what components you want to buy, have patience with the salesman’s reactions when you mention them. If he attempts to steer you away from your original choices, you should probe your own motives as well as his.

Did you arrive with real information about the component you asked for, or were you just mentioning a magic name that had stuck in your memory? In his turn, does the salesman offer a cogent reason for trying to change your mind, or is he employing audio double-talk to obscure the fact that he’s not franchised to sell the unit you want? If both the concern and the knowledge of the salesman seem genuine, and if he doesn’t appear to be pushing his other unsalable stock at your expense, listen to what he has to say. He may point out particular liabilities in certain components—and there may be units in the repair department to prove his point.

Ask to make some direct listening comparisons among components—particularly speakers—but compare only two units at a time. When you’ve decided which of the two you like better, you can then proceed to compare it with a third, and so on. Listening to three or more units at once only breeds confusion and gives a smooth-talking salesman an opportunity to convince you that black is white.

If a salesman is obviously incompetent, or if he seems to be dispensing jargon instead of information, try somebody who knows how to change the needle in a portable phonograph or test a tube, but a qualified repairman with separate work space and the test instruments he needs. Finally, when you display whatever audio expertise you may have acquired, does the owner, or his salesman, know what you are talking about? Or does he look blank and answer evasively? These are judgments you will have to make on the spot, and they are important. If the dealer is a non-franchised type who specializes in anything that will sell, from tuners to toothpaste, you will do best to make a graceful exit. And if none of the stores in your neighborhood is any better, you will be wise to head for the big city or write to a reputable mail-order house.

The non-franchised audio dealer tends to specialize in everything.
else on the sales staff, or take your problem to the manager himself. If you get no satisfaction even from him, leave the store quietly.

Occasionally, a salesman who is himself an enthusiastic audiophile may suggest equipment that is out of your price range. If this happens, bring him up short and point out that he has passed the bounds of reality so far as your finances are concerned. You will be avoiding frustration for both of you.

If a salesman seems knowledgeable but harassed, particularly in a big-city store, reflect for a moment before you decide sulkyly that he is not concerned with your problems. Any audio dealer or salesman has to do a great deal of missionary work on behalf of high-fidelity components in general, and a considerable amount of time is often devoted to a single sale. In point of fact, the average purchaser of audio equipment spends more time on it than he would on the purchase of a new car. Small wonder that audio salesman occasionally develop frazzled nerves. This does not mean that you should settle for less than the necessary amount of attention to your needs; it merely means that a little patience will help assure that you get it.

There is no substitute for a truly helpful salesman, but if you cannot locate a satisfactory audio store in your vicinity, your best bet is to order your equipment by mail. Here, again, it is important to be aware of the difference between various kinds of mail-order operations. In general, you have the greatest assurance of satisfaction if you deal with a big parts dealer who does business on a national scale. Such dealers generally carry every component line, big and small, in their catalogs, and will guarantee to replace or repair without charge any defective equipment. They will, in most cases, also pay for reshipment.

If you deal with a respected mail-order house, the only real disadvantages are that you can't talk with the dealer and ask him for individual professional advice, and you can't actually hear equipment before you buy it. This means that your advance homework should be fairly thorough, even though the better mail-order houses will often exchange equipment that does not meet your expectations. One balancing advantage is the availability of the house-brand components marketed by a few large mail-order firms. These are often very good values, with prices that reflect the lower overhead involved in mail-order distribution.

Like any thriving industry, audio has its share of dubious characters. Fortunately, they are in a dwindling minority and relatively easy to spot. In the mail-order trade they can be recognized by such stigmata as suspiciously large discounts, offers of special presold packages consisting of obsolete or ill-matched units, ephemeral mailing addresses, and lack of manufacturers' franchises.

As far as pricing policy in general is concerned, the audio customer is fortunate indeed. Since the average hi-fi fan knows something about what is inside a piece of equipment, and hence has a fair notion of what it is worth, manufacturers have to provide equitable value. There are no wildly imaginative price tags in the tradition of refrigerators, kitchen ranges, air conditioners, and other mass-market appliances. Also, it is impossible to imagine the ruggedly individualistic members of the hi-fi industry ever getting together to fix prices in their market.

Once you are convinced of a dealer's competence, your choice revolves about the relation of available service to price. If a dealer shows genuine concern for your needs and provides informative and unaggressive sales service and a sufficiently wide choice of equipment, it may be well worth while to pay him the full "audiophile net" price. Many stores will help you install the sound system in your home. Most important, a dealer usually gives a store warranty, which means that he himself will handle any service problems that arise after the sale is completed, instead of referring them to the manufacturer.

If, on the other hand, you decide to deal with a discount house, you are entirely on your own if the equipment you buy doesn't work. Almost invariably, the discount dealer is forced to adopt a hard-boiled cash-and-carry approach and cannot provide either lengthy sales consultation or follow-up maintenance and repair service.

The difference between these two basic forms of audio merchandising can be summed up by saying that one is a personal service while the other is not. If your knowledge of components is such that you can dispense with a salesman's guidance, and you are willing to take your chances with the limited period of a manufacturer's guarantee, you may find satisfaction in dealing with a discount house. But if your trip to the hi-fi shop is largely of an exploratory nature, the price of a good dealer, like that of an honest woman, is not only fair but above rubies.

John Mildor's work as a free-lance writer revolves largely around his deep interest in music and sound reproduction. His article "The Big Loudspeakers" (HiFi/Stereo Review, April 1961) is currently stimulating much discussion. On his present topic he speaks with knowledge of both sides of the fence, having had ample experience both as audio customer and audio salesman.
THE FM ANTENNA: 
SENTINEL FOR BETTER LISTENING

It has been said that no tuner is better than the signal that feeds it. This is the truth, but not the whole truth, for a sensitive tuner gets better results from a weak signal than does an insensitive one. Still, by and large, FM quality depends on adequate signal strength. And to (continued overleaf)

PHILIP C. GERACI
obtain sufficient signal strength it is necessary to have an adequate antenna.

An antenna is adequate if (a) it brings in all the FM stations in its area, and (b) if it brings them in clear and free from background noise. In many cases a very simple, inexpensive antenna fulfills both requirements. In remote or otherwise difficult locations, however, more elaborate antennas are needed.

To determine what kind of antenna is best in your particular situation, it is helpful to understand how the FM signal travels from the transmitter to your house. FM waves travel in straight lines. Unlike AM radio waves, they do not follow the curved surface of the earth. This causes no problems if you live within twenty-five miles or so of a station. Even within forty miles of a station, a rooftop antenna will usually be in the line-of-sight of the transmitting tower.

The real problem begins fifty or sixty miles from the station. Like a ship sailing into the distance, your house disappears below the horizon, and the transmitter can no longer beam directly at you. A similar problem arises when your antenna is behind a mountain or hill, hidden from the transmitter in a so-called FM shadow.

To capture enough signal to operate your tuner properly, you must somehow raise your antenna high enough into the sky to catch the FM beam instead of allowing it to slip past overhead. Moreover, because the signal gets weaker, and hence more elusive, with increasing distance, at remote locations you must use a very sensitive antenna to capture enough of the signal to provide recognizable sound. Since "ultimate" antenna refinements can get quite involved, let us first consider some of the less complex situations.

Let us assume, to begin with, that you live in a big city that has a number of FM stations. Even the simplest type of antenna, a folded dipole, will bring in stations within a radius of about twenty miles in reasonably flat country. Such an antenna is made from the flat twin-lead wire that is commonly used to connect TV antennas. Cut to the proper length for the FM band, it is shaped like a T. In operation, it is important to stretch out its two arms horizontally, because FM waves are horizontally polarized. A simple dipole of this kind is slightly directional; that is, it favors stations located at right angles to the crossbar of the T.

If you live quite close to a station, its signal will usually be strong enough to make directional effects of little importance. But there are special situations where directionality can be a drawback. Suppose you live in a suburb some fifteen miles from several FM stations that are scattered around you in several different directions. Here you would be better off with a nondirectional antenna. Since you are in the paths of moderately strong signals from all the stations, you should get good results with either of two nondirectional variants of the simple folded dipole. The first is the S-shaped antenna; the second, two dipoles mounted at right angles, and sometimes called a "turnstile." Either, with its mounting accessories, can be bought for about ten dollars.

A typical way of mounting these antennas is on a short mast attached to the roof or to the chimney. If you have an attic, you can simply lay the antenna across the rafters, bring the lead-in down through a wall, and connect it to the tuner. Mounting the antenna on the chimney may give you slightly greater signal strength, but often you don't need it. The attic placement simplifies installation and also protects the antenna from the weather.
for improved FM reception

If you live in a city apartment you are likely to encounter another common difficulty. The steel skeletons of apartment buildings tend to soak up FM signals and so interfere with reception. The way to minimize this is to mount either an S or a turnsstile antenna on the roof and run a twin-lead cable down the outside of your building and in through a window. Often it is enough to stick a simple dipole antenna out the window, clear of the framework of the building.

So far, we have dealt only with locations in or near a city. But suppose you live in the more remote reaches of suburbia, some thirty to fifty miles from town. The chances are that you will need a more elaborate antenna to get good FM reception, but the investment in both time and effort will remain moderate. In fact, you may already have a very satisfactory FM antenna without realizing it.

If you have a television antenna on the roof, it very likely intercepts signals from FM as well as TV stations. Simply buy a two-set coupler, which will cost about two dollars. This device is designed to connect two TV sets to the same antenna, but it can also be used to connect a TV set and an FM receiver to the same antenna.

To test whether you can get good FM reception with your TV antenna, simply disconnect the antenna lead-in from your TV set and connect it temporarily to your FM tuner. Not all TV antennas give good results on FM. Check yours as suggested above, and if the FM reception is good, by all means get a coupler and use it.

Some FM problems in the outer suburbs require rather more special handling. One typical difficulty occurs when a local station interferes with reception of stations that are farther away. When you tune to a distant station, your tuner tends to be "captured" by a strong local station that oper-

A multi-element yagi uses reflectors and directors and is highly sensitive and directional.

ANTENNA STRATEGY

If your FM reception is poor, follow the routine below. To save time and money, start with the simplest and cheapest measures. If they do not suffice, go on to the next step.

1. Make sure that your tuner is in first-class operating condition before you spend money trying to improve your antenna system. Misalignment can lower sensitivity or make aural hash out of a clean signal.
2. Check, clean, and tighten the wiring connections at both ends of the antenna transmission line. At the antenna end, check to see that corrosion has not made an electric path across the insulator. Protect the connections by coating them with a plastic spray (such as Krylon). Simply cleaning connections often produces dramatic improvement in reception. A small bit of corrosion at a critical point can cancel all the benefits of a basically good antenna.
3. Check the antenna itself. If it is located near a chimney, soot may have collected on the elements, impairing their efficiency. Scrape or sand away soot deposits.
4. Be sure that the lead-in wire follows the most direct route from antenna to receiver, and that stand-off insulators of the proper type are used. Twin-lead wire should be twisted one turn per foot to minimize interference. If the lead-in wire parallels metal conduit, drain pipes, or similar signal robbers, change its position so that it crosses metal objects at right angles and as far from them as possible.
5. If there are considerable amounts of metal along the lead-in path, use coxial cable and the necessary transformers.
6. Consider replacing your antenna with a more sensitive type. If your neighbors get good reception, see what kind of antennas they have.
7. Mount the antenna higher if possible. Raising it just a few feet sometimes results in considerable improvement in reception. It is often less expensive to add height than to buy a more sensitive antenna.
8. If reception is still inadequate, install a signal booster at the antenna.
9. If reception is still poor, stack two yagi antennas on the same mast. (Be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions for installation.)
ates near the same frequency. You can solve this problem by investing six to ten dollars in a roof-mounted folded dipole antenna with a reflector element.

The reflector increases the sensitivity of the antenna in one direction and decreases it in the opposite direction. Thus, you can aim the antenna at the distant station and improve your reception of its signal while cutting down on your reception of the signal from the local station. The advantage given the more distant station by the directional characteristics of the antenna puts both stations on equal terms.

*Listener* who live even deeper in the country have to cope with still greater difficulties. If you live seventy-five miles or more from the FM station you want to hear, you may have to go to some lengths to get really satisfactory reception. The big problem, as mentioned earlier, is caused by the curvature of the earth. You are below the horizon as far as the FM transmitter is concerned. Thus, the first thing you need to do is to get the antenna high enough to catch at least a little of the signal. Also, the antenna must be sensitive enough to make the most of the relatively weak signal. The most sensitive antennas are of the "yagi" design. This kind of antenna still relies on the basic folded dipole as the central receiving unit, but it is backed up by a reflector and a series of precisely spaced director elements arranged so as to reinforce the signal received by the dipole.

If you live on a slight hill, getting the antenna up into the air is not too severe a problem. Mount a six-element yagi on a ten-foot mast attached to the chimney, aim it precisely at the FM stations, and music should pour in rich and clear. The total cost should be about twenty dollars.

But perhaps your situation is not so simple. Perhaps the stations you want to receive are at distances of seventy to a hundred miles and are scattered in different directions. In this case, you will need an additional item: an antenna rotator. This device, which costs about thirty dollars, allows the antenna to be oriented toward the desired station. The rotator operates by remote control, so you can turn it right from your listening chair.

If your location is even more difficult—both far removed from the transmitter and blocked by hills—you may draw encouragement from the success of a determined listener living in a fairly deep valley in the Berkshire mountains, a hundred and twenty-five miles from the New York stations he wanted to hear. Fortunately, his home was an old-fashioned two-story farmhouse, with high ceilings and a roof ridge forty feet above the ground. He installed a thirty-foot rotator-equipped mast on top of the roof. (Had he lived in a one-story ranch house, his only solution would have been to erect a tower at least sixty feet high, which would have cost him upwards of $100.) For his antenna he chose a ten-element yagi—who's most sensitive type available.

Since receiving conditions can change quite drastically within a few feet—because of the masking effect of hills and because of signal reflections caused by uneven terrain—he made listening tests before picking the exact spot for his antenna. While a friend monitored his FM tuner, he moved the antenna around on the roof until he found the strongest signal position.

With this arrangement, he achieved only limited success. He had fine reception from one station whose transmitter was located high on a mountain. He got two additional stations more or less regularly, but their sound was often blurry and clouded by background noise. As it turned out, this noise did not come in through the antenna, but was produced, because of the need to amplify a very weak signal, in the first tube of his tuner. Two remedial measures were called for. First, he mounted an antenna-mounted signal booster (at a cost of thirty or forty dollars) on top of the mast, next to the antenna terminals. This amplified the signal before any line losses occurred and, in effect, made the signal from the antenna strong enough to withstand the trip down the line without too much loss. Then he replaced the twin-lead line with a coaxial cable to shield the lead-in from any interference.

With the antenna-mounted booster and the coaxial lead-in cable, reception from the blurred stations became quite clear. However, reception of the two weaker stations was still not perfect.

Short of raising the antenna still higher (a difficult and expensive proposition) he had only one recourse: to buy yet another ten-element yagi and a stacking kit, with hardware for spacing and aligning the two antennas properly, one above the other, and linking them together on the same mast. Stacking the two antennas provided the additional gain necessary to assure satisfactory reception of all the stations in range. In this extreme case, the listener spent in the neighborhood of $125 on his receiving setup; but the results were worth it.

If you think your home is in an impossible location for receiving FM, the success of our determined Berkshire listener may help to convince you that a proper antenna can sometimes overcome the barriers of nature. Granted that such an elaborate antenna is expensive, the investment must be measured against the lasting returns in musical pleasure.

In all the situations that have been described, from the simplest to the most complicated, the pertinent point to recognize is that an FM tuner can function properly only if the antenna delivers sufficient signal. Unless you live more than a hundred and twenty-five miles from the nearest transmitter, you, too, can hope to enjoy the many and varied pleasures of FM—if you choose the right antenna.

*Philip C. Geraci has written about many aspects of electronic communication, both in his former capacity as staff member of Audiocraft and Hi-Fi Fidelity magazines, and in his present job as electronics editor of Airlift magazine. Our readers may remember his informative articles on "Stereo Recording at Home" and "Buying Guide to Stereo Recorders," both of which appeared in the March 1960 issue of Hi-Fi STEREO REVIEW.*
SOUND and the QUERY

AC Balance

My power amplifier—a custom-built unit—has an "AC Balance" adjustment that puzzles me.

The adjustment varies the plate load in the phase inverter to equalize the drive supplied by the phase inverter to the output tubes, but I can't figure out how to go about adjusting this to its optimum setting. The person who built the amplifier for me has moved away, so he can't help. Can you?

Tomas J. Donabedian

If you have access to a VVTVM and an audio signal generator, apply a 1,000-cycle tone to the amplifier input and adjust this to give I watt output from the amplifier to a resistive load. Use the VVTVM to measure the AC voltage between ground and the cathode-load output from the phase inverter to its output tube. Then connect the VVTVM to the other output tube's grid and adjust the AC balance control until both of these measurements give the same reading. Recheck the cathode output each time you adjust the balance control, because the control will have a slight effect on this.

To use a distortion analyzer for this adjustment, connect the analyzer as for a standard distortion test, set it for 1 watt amplifier output, and adjust the AC balance control for minimum distortion. (If the control setting seems noncritical, drive the amplifier to as high an output level as is needed to measure a significant change in distortion when the control is adjusted.)

Street Noises on FM

I am having a good deal of trouble with my FM tuner because of interference caused by passing automobiles.

I live in an extreme fringe area, and find that this interference—a prolonged rasp like tearing cloth—is most pronounced when I'm receiving weak stations. Any suggestions as to how I might get rid of this noise?

George Doskow
Croydon, Conn.

Most automobile-ignition interference is picked up not at the antenna but in the lead-in wires running down from it. There are two ways of minimizing the trouble, and since yours is a poor receiving location it might pay you to try both. First, replace your twin-lead antenna wire with coaxial (shielded) antenna cable. And second, install a broadband signal booster of the type that mounts on the antenna mast. The mast-mounted booster will give the signal enough additional strength to keep it well above the level of the interference.

Bear in mind that coaxial antenna cable is for a 72-ohm line, whereas most antennas and tuner inputs are for 300-ohm lines. Consequently, you will have to install matching transformers at both ends of the coaxial cable.

Loca1 Color

What is the RETMA color code, and what use is it?

Jacob Dwyer
Baltimore, Md.

There are several standard color codes listed by the Radio-Electronics-TV Manufacturer's Association, and all of them are to facilitate the identification of circuit components and wires without having to write on them or attach tags to them. The best-known color code is the one used to designate the values of resistors and capacitors. The code is as follows:

Black .......................... 0
Brown .......................... 1
Red .............................. 2
Orange .......................... 3
Yellow .......................... 4
Green .......................... 5

Blue ............................ 6
Violet ........................... 7
Gray ............................. 8
White ............................ 9

Small resistors and capacitors that would be difficult to print numbers on, are identified by three colored dots or stripes. The first mark indicates the first digit of the component's value, the second is the second digit, and the third is the number of zeros to be tacked onto the first two digits. For example, a resistor marked with yellow, violet, and orange would be a 47,000-ohm resistor. Capacitors are marked in terms of μfd. or μfd. (microfarad or micromicrofarad) values. There are also standard color codes for circuit wires (green for grid circuits, for instance), transformer leads, and so on, but an explanation of these is a project which we must forego here for the sake of brevity.

The Function of the Switch

Why do amplifier manufacturers recommend that the amplifier's function switch be set to the monophonic position when a monophonic disc is being played?

How does this affect the reproduction, and why wouldn't the sound be even better if the disc is played in stereo?

Marvin D. Crawford
Brownfield, Tex.

With the amplifier's function switch set for stereo operation, a stereo pickup will reproduce the grooves' vertical vibrations. On monophonic discs, however, all of the desired signal is represented by side-to-side motions of the groove. The only vertical modulations on them represent distortion and surface noise, so both of these disturbances are minimized when the pick-up does not respond to vertical vibrations.

The mono position of a stereo function switch parallels the pickup's two output channels, eliminating its vertical sensitivity and thus suppressing noise and distortion, and, perhaps most important of all, turntable rumble and mechanical feedback. In effect, the switch bypasses several sources of possible trouble by disabling the vertical channel when monophonic discs are played.
IN A SEA OF DUBIOUS BARGAINS, HEALTHY DIVIDENDS AWAIT THE CAREFUL SHOPPER

The housewife who shops at department-store bargain counters soon learns from experience the importance of close inspection and carefully selective buying, particularly when the merchandise does not carry the names of nationally known brands. But this kind of selective buying is not so easy when it comes to the recorded symphonic classics that are so temptingly advertised at $2.98 in stereo and $1.98 in mono. For one thing, most of these records are sealed in polyethylene covers and cannot be taken out and looked at—let alone listened to. And your chances of hearing these inexpensive LP's played over your local radio station are slim, since artists on regular-priced labels are inevitably favored.

In March, 1959, when we undertook a survey of the $1.98 classical disc repertoire, London records had just introduced its Richmond label, and RCA Victor was beginning to add freshly recorded material to its Camden catalog. Since then, there has been an increase in the number of inexpensive labels. Even more important, a sizable repertoire of low-price stereo discs has grown up.

There are now some forty record labels in the low-price bracket, and fifteen of them have significant representations of classical music. While fewer than half of these offer recordings that are likely to be of really durable interest, a listener who picks with care will find himself pleasantly surprised at the quality of the best performances and, in many instances, of the recorded sound.

Five of the more important low-price labels—Camden, Harmony, Perfect, Richmond, and Telefunken—are subsidiaries of three record-industry giants: RCA Victor, Columbia, and London.

The RCA Camden line was introduced into the classical record field in 1958, with a series of remarkably successful transfers to LP of 78-rpm material. Recordings by Arturo
Toscanini, Serge Koussevitsky, Leopold Stokowski, Emmanuel Feuermann, Joseph Lhevinne, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Moritz Rosenthal, Alexander Kipnis, and a host of other artists were offered at $1.98, although the names of some of the orchestras were disguised for a time for contractual reasons.

Most of the splendid antiquities resurrected by Camden in those days have since been deleted. Four LP's conducted by Toscanini, one or two by Stokowski, one by Koussevitsky—these are about all that remain of the early orchestral reissues. As the Camden catalog stands now, its classical repertoire is divided between best-seller reissues of such historic figures as Pinza, Rachmaninoff, McCormack, and Toscanini, and new stereo and mono recordings of standard symphonic repertoire, mostly by the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra under its regular conductors. Odd Grüner-Hegge and Divin Fjeldstad. These performances are never less than competent, and the recorded sound is generally good.

Harmony, one of Columbia's low-price lines, came by its present name when its Enrè label, which first appeared in 1952, was discontinued. At first, the Enrè policy was to reissue 78-rpm recordings by Artur Rodzinski, Dimitri Mitropoulos, John Barbirolli, and others, along with a few such venerable collector's items as the celebrated recording by William Mengelberg and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra of Litolff's Les Préludes.

By the fall of 1953, however, Enrè began to issue brand-new recordings (all now in the Harmony catalog), most notably a series in which Erich Leinsdorf conducted the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in works by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven. Indeed, the Leinsdorf "Eroica" still ranks as one of the best.

Three best buys—Bach's St. Matthew Passion with Kathleen Ferrier, Toscanini's version of Beethoven's "Seventh," and the complete Dvorak Slavonic Dances, with Tallich conducting.

Through its Epic subsidiary, Columbia launched another low-price series a year or so ago on the Perfect label. Here the emphasis has been on building a stereo repertoire, and, along with the late Walter Goehr and Pierre-Michel Le Conte, such conductors as Sir Adrian Boult and Pierre Dervaux have come into the scheme of things. Recording locales have included London, Vienna, Hamburg, and Paris, while the repertoire has been largely of music by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, and Mozart, with dashes of Bizet, Chabrier, and Glinka.

So far, the stereo sound of both the Harmony and the Perfect offerings has been extremely variable. Solid bass is wanting in most of the Paris-made recordings, but it is better in those made in Hamburg and London. Were it not for lack of bass and overbrightness in the upper-middle frequencies, Le Conte's splendidly conducted collection of pieces by Chabrier (Perfect) and his Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique would qualify as best buys. On the other hand, there are some excellent stereo buys on Perfect—including a splendid collection of Strauss dances, with Hans Swarowsky conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, and a very respectable recording of Vivaldi's The Four Seasons by the Frankfurt Chamber Orchestra.

It has been London, among all the record companies who have gone into the low-price market, that has made the most significant effort towards building a widely varied repertoire in first-class recorded performances. This has been done through the medium of two labels, Richmond, with emphasis strongly on reissues of some of the best London monophonic recordings (there are fewer than a dozen Richmond classical recordings in stereo), and Telefunken, once a regular-price label but now used chiefly as a vehicle for low-price stereo recordings. Space does not permit detailed enumeration of the many excellent recorded performances by Ernest Ansermet, Wilhelm Backhaus, Ruggiero Ricci, Eduard van Beinum, Erich Kleiber, and other artists in the Richmond mono catalog.

The Richmond stereo catalog is small, but some of the performances of Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Rossini, and Rachmaninoff under two gifted young conductors, Colin Davis and Kenneth Alwyn, are brilliant. Also, Peter Katin plays glitteringly in piano works by Rachmaninoff, Grieg, and Tchaikovsky, and the recording of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony by Carl Schuricht and the Vienna Philharmonic is nothing less than superb.

The Telefunken stereo repertoire is considerably broader in scope than is Richmond's, though it is not recorded with quite as much finesse. The programming is solidly standard.
—Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Dvořák, Schubert, and Johann Strauss. With such well-routined leaders as Joseph Keilberth and Franz André conducting, the performances are consistently honest and competent, if not subtle.

In general, Telefunken’s stereo sound is not quite as clean and well defined as is Richmond’s, but it is adequate for the most part, although some discs on both labels are excessively bright in sound. The Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings, the Beethoven String Quartet, Op. 127, (Telefunken), and the Johann Strauss Vienna Philharmonic New Year Concert mono disc, conducted by the late Clemens Krauss, all have this failing.

If London’s Richmond series can be said to offer the most consistent combination of varied repertoire, good performances, and good sound in mono, Vanguard’s SRV series, though it consists of just eighteen records at this writing (thirteen of them also available in stereo), comes a very close second, although occasionally there is some coarse reproduction, as in the coupling of Handel’s Water Music and Royal Fireworks suites, but, in general, Vanguard offers excellent value. Mario Rossi’s lively reading of Scheherazade, Vladimir Golschmann’s spirited conducting of Khachaturian and Kabelevsky, Anton Paulik’s delectable Strauss-Lehár disc, and Felix Prohaska’s vigorous Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven are all decidedly worth while.

Somerset/Stereo-Fidelity, whose recordings are sold mainly in chain stores, has made a huge commercial success out of its lushly recorded mood and light-classic series, done in Hamburg by the group it calls 101 Strings. About two years ago, the company made a serious venture into the classical field, with a series of standard works played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra with Sir Adrian Boult and Hugo Rignold conducting. The Boul’s performances of Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony, Sixth Symphony, and Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet, are rather too low-pressure and genteel, but the playing is first-rate and the sound luxuriant.

In general, the sound quality of the Stereo-Fidelity discs is rather problematic. Highly reverberent acoustics and a

Best of the Low-priced Records

**CONCERT FAVORITES**

- **BRITTEN:** Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum cond. **PROKOFIEV:** Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67. Frank Phillips (narrator); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Nicolai Malko cond. **RICHMOND** B 19040.

- **COPLAND:** Billy the Kid. **GERSHWIN:** An American in Paris. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein cond. **CAMDEN CAL** 459.

- **DELIBES:** Coppélia; Sylvia. Belgian National Radio Orchestra, Franz André cond. **TELEFUNKEN** 18006.

- **DUKAS:** The Sorcerer’s Apprentice. **RAVEL:** Bolero. **FALLA:** Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Belgian National Radio Orchestra, Franz André cond. **TELEFUNKEN** 18008.

- **DYORA:** Slavonic Dances. Czech Philharmonic Orch., Vaclav Talich cond. **PARLIAMENT** 121 two 12-inch discs.

- **ENESCO:** Romanian Rhapsodies: Nos. 1 and 2. **LISZT:** Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 5 and 6. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann and Anatol Fistoulari cond. **VANGUARD** SRV 119, SRV 119 SD.

- **GRIEG:** Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16. **LITOLFF:** Scherzo from Concerto Symphonique. Peter Katin (piano); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. **RICHMOND** B 19061, 29061.

- **KHACHATURIAN:** Gayne Suite. **KABALEVSKY:** The Comedians. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann cond. **VANGUARD** SRV 115, SRV 115 SD.

- **MOUSSORGSKY:** Pictures at an Exhibition; A Night on Bald Mountain. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Vladimir Golschmann cond. **VANGUARD** SRV 117, SRV 117 SD.

- **RACHMANINOFF:** Piano Concerto No. 2, in C Minor, Op. 18. Peter Katin (piano); New Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. **RICHMOND** 19059, 29059.


- **ROSSINI/SCADL:** La Bouquetta Fantasie. London Symphony Orchestra, Ernest Ansermet cond. **RICHMOND** B 19012.

- **JOHANN STRAUSS:** Dances. **LEHAR:** Waltzes. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Anton Pauflk cond. **VANGUARD** SRV 111, SRV 111 SD.

- **JOHANN AND JOSEPH STRAUSS:** Waltzes and Polkas. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hans Swarowsky cond. **PERFECT** 15016; 13016.

- **STRAVINSKY:** Petrouchka. Suisse Romande Orches- tra, Ernest Ansermet cond. **RICHMOND** B 19015.

- **TCHAIKOVSKY:** The Nutcracker, Op. 71; Suites 1 and 2. Paris Conservatory Orchestra, Anatol Fistoulari cond. **RICHMOND** B 19065.


- **LORIN HOLLANDER:** Discovering the Piano. Short pieces by Schubert, Granados, Rimsky-Korsakov, Chopin, Paderewski, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Liszt, and others. Lorin Hollander (piano). **CAMDEN CAL** 460, $ 460.

**NOTE:** MONO RECORDS ARE $1.98; STEREO RECORDS ARE $2.98.
Best of the Low-priced Records

MAJOR REPERTOIRE

- **BACH**: Viola Concerto No. 2, in E Major; Suite No. 1, in B Minor; Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, in F Major. Jas Tomaszow (violin); Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska cond. Vanguard SRV 105.
- **BEETHOVEN**: Piano Concerto No. 3, in C Minor; No. 4, in G Major; No. 5, in E-flat ("Emperor"). Wilhelm Backhaus (piano); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm and Clemens Krauss cond. Richmond B 19065, B 19017, B 19072.
- **BEETHOVEN**: Violin Concerto. Ruggiero Ricci, (violin); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult cond. Richmond B 19034.
- **HAYDN**: Symphony No. 100, in G Major ("Military"); Symphony No. 101, in D Major ("Clock"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Mogens Wöldike cond. Vanguard SRV 109, SRV 109 SD.
- **MOZART**: Symphony No. 41, in C Major (K. 551) ("Jupiter"); Overtures. Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Felix Prohaska cond. Vanguard SRV 118, SRV 118 SD.
- **SCHUBERT**: Symphony No. 8, in B Minor ("Unfinished"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Carl Schuricht cond. Richmond B 19062, 29062.
- **SCHUBERT**: Symphony No. 9, in C Major ("The Great"). Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Josef Krips cond. Richmond B 19078.
- **VIVALDI**: The Four Seasons. Sascha Gavriloff (violin); Frankfurt Chamber Orchestra, David Josefowitz cond. Perfect 15015, 15015.

Erich Leinsdorf—his Beethoven "Eroica" for Harmony is outstanding at any price.

Few obvious technical miscalculations combine to create a disconcertingly erratic orchestral perspective in some of the releases. In the Boult recording of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, for example, there is a clear case of reversed channels, and a good performance of the Offenbach-Rosenthal Gaité Parisienne is marred by an absence of center-fill effect.

A recent arrival on the budget LP scene is Forum, a subsidiary of Roulette, whose chief stock in trade has been pops and jazz. Despite a general quality of sound that is not the last word in refinement, and despite some peculiar-sounding stereo, the Forum issues are not to be dismissed lightly. Of the Forum conductors, John Frandsen and Harry Newstone are musicians of solid accomplishment, and George Hurst, the relative newcomer among them, seems to have the makings of a striking podium personality.

At about the same time that the Forum line was introduced, Westminster began to issue a series of some twenty LP's on the Whitehall label, mostly by a group styled the

Carl Schuricht—a poetic and powerful stereo recording of Schubert's "Unfinished" for $2.98.
Best of the Low-priced Records

HISTORIC PERFORMANCES

- **BACH**: St. Matthew Passion, Elsa Suddaby (soprano), Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), Eric Greene (bass), Henry Cummings (bass), William Parsons (bass), Bruce Boyle (bass), Gordon Clinton (baritone); London Bach Choir and Jacques Orchestra, Reginald Jacques cond. Richmond BA 43001 three 12-inch discs.


- **Fritz Kreisler**: Violin Recital. Fritz Kreisler (violin). Camden CAL 518.

- **LOTTE LEHMANN**: Lieder Recital. Lotte Lehmann (soprano). Camden CAL 378.


- **EZIO PINZA**: Classic Italian Songs. Ezio Pinza (bass). Camden CAL 539.

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Vaclav Talich—exceeds in Czechs and Tchaikovsky

Vienna Festival Orchestra, under Victor Desarzens. Herbert Grossmann, Kurt Adler, and others. Unfortunately, most of the performances seem to amount to little more than taped run-throughs. One exception is Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, in which Peter Rybar is an accurate soloist and Desarzens provides a conscientious accompaniment. The Whitehall stereo is adequate, but no more.

The most recent significant entry in the low-price disc field is Parliament, an offshoot of Artia, most of whose recorded material comes from Czechoslovakia, Russia, Hungary, and Roumania. The performances by the Czech Philharmonic under Vaclav Talich and Karel Ancerl are outstanding values.

These, then are the high points of the low-price disc repertoire. What general advice can be offered to the bargain-hunter. One rule of thumb: If in doubt, give first choice to recordings by artists and orchestras of established reputation. And if in doubt as to whether to buy a mono or a stereo low-price version, choose mono. To be sure, by no means all budget recordings are worth much more than the $1.98 or $2.98 they cost. But the best would do credit to anyone's record library.
BRUNO WALTER has recorded Schubert's "Unfinished" and "Great" C Major symphonies twice before—and in memorable readings. Now, returning to the scores once more, in the twilight of his career, he gives readings of them and the Eighth Symphony that are by turns gentle and lyrical, bold and dramatic. To a listener who has admired the earlier Walter recording of the "Great" C Major, made about fifteen years ago with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, this new issue of the giant work is most welcome. As with Otto Klemperer's new and remarkable recording of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony (see page 58), one of the most noteworthy things about Walter's reading is the increased breadth of his tempos. All told, the performance lasts 52 minutes and 10 seconds, as compared with the 46:46 timing of the earlier version. But—again as Klemperer does in his new "Eroica"—Walter imparts to Schubert's "symphony of heavenly length" a momentum that carries the music along unflaggingly. Without a doubt, this is a great performance, so spontaneous in feeling that one listens as though for the first time to this glorious work. The latter, more intense reading by Szell (Epic BC 1009, LE 3431) must now take second place.

Walter also obtains superlative performances of the Fifth Symphony and the Eighth Symphony. Here, too, his tendency toward slower tempos is manifest. The Fifth Symphony, that wonderfully naïve, gentle outpouring of sheer melody, receives a loving performance, while the darkly passionate "Unfinished" Symphony is given an appropriately more intense reading. Again the timings give a good clue to the character of the performance: Walter's second recording of the "Unfinished," made with the Philadelphia Orchestra almost fifteen years ago, runs 22 minutes and 29 seconds; this one plays two and a half minutes longer. The Fifth Symphony and the continued on page 58
Ninth Symphony are played by the hand-picked orchestra of West Coast musicians who have been Walter's companions in nearly all his recent recordings; the "Unfinished" was taped with the New York Philharmonic during the course of a brief guest engagement last season. Both orchestras give the conductor exactly what he asks for, and the recorded sound is both clear and rich. Here, in short, is a treasurable issue.

M. B.

SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 5, in B-flat; Symphony No. 8, in B Minor ("Unfinished"); Symphony No. 9 in C Major ("Great"), Columbia Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Bruno Walter cond. Columbia M25 618 two 12-inch discs $11.96

THE "EROICA" ACCORDING TO DR. KLEMPERER

A memorable reading in stereo

In 1956, Otto Klemperer's earlier recording of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony (Angel 135328) has seemed to me the best available version of the work. That performance was not available in stereo, however, a fact that accounts for this new recording of the conductor's monumental account of the music. More than any other conductor on record, Klemperer communicates the nobility and elemental grandeur of this transcendent score, yet always relating its shape to the period in which it was written. For the "Eroica" is essentially a classical symphony, and its drama and passion are expressed within that formal frame. In my experience, no one has realized the score with anything like Klemperer's degree of dignity and exaltation, and it is these qualities that place his performance on a peak by itself.

In this new recording the tempos are broader than those in Klemperer's previous one; as a matter of fact, this is probably the longest performance of the "Eroica" ever recorded. It plays 53 minutes and 40 seconds (the 1956 Klemperer version plays 48:59), while the timing of the previous record-holder, by Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Vienna Philharmonic, is 51:04. Yet never is there any feeling of slackness or foot-dragging. On the contrary, there is about the whole performance a sense of irresistible forward motion and cumulative tension that gives it stimulating drive and excitement.

The Philharmonia Orchestra plays magnificently for Klemperer, and Angel's recorded sound is full and resonant. The only blemish on an otherwise magnificent release is the disconcertingly ill-chosen side break—right in the middle of the funeral march. To be sure, the conductor's tempos may have made it impossible to get the entire funeral march on side 1, but a better spot for the break might have been found. M. B.


GEMS FROM GILBERT AND SULLIVAN

Contrasting approaches from London and Angel

With symphonies productions of Iolanthe and The Pirates of Penzance, London and Angel have taken giant steps towards completing their competitive projects: to put on disc stereo versions of all the Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

Both recordings are delightful. Gilbert's verses are delivered with affection and pearly clarity by both casts, and stereo does marvels for the recorded effect of Sullivan's orchestration. Although neither London nor Angel has gone as far as it might have in placing stereo facilities at the service of heightened dramatic illusion, the sound from both sets is warm, lively, and well-balanced within a not-too-wide dynamic spectrum.

As for the performances, Angel's The Pirates of Penzance seems to me the more appealing effort, for it has the distinct benefit of superior singing. In Iolan-
spoken dialogue, while Angel has included only the music of The Pirates of Penzance, and does not even supply a libretto.

**GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: Iolanthe.** John Reed (baritone), the Lord Chancellor; Donald Adams (bass), Earl of Mountararat; Thomas Round (tenor), Lord Tolloller; Kenneth Sandford (bass), Private Willis; Alan Styler (baritone), Strehlon; Gillian Knight (contralto), Fairy Queen; Yvonne Newman (soprano), Phyllis; and others. Chorus of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and New Symphony Orchestra of London, Isidore Godfrey cond. London OSA 1215 two 12-inch discs $11.95

**GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: The Pirates of Penzance.** George Baker (baritone), Major-General Stanley; Owen Branthagan (bass), Sergeant of Police; James Milligan (bass), Pirate King; Richard Lewis (tenor), Frederic; Elsie Morison (soprano), Mabel; Monica Sinclair (contralto), Ruth; and others. Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Pro Arte Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent cond. ASQA 5069 $12.95

## JAZZ

**ART FARMER SPEAKS FOR HIMSELF**

*Reflective, hauntingly beautiful music*

Stepping aside from his role as trumpeter and co-leader, with Benny Golson, of the much-praised Jazztet, Art Farmer has produced here a reflective, hauntingly beautiful collection, which Nat Hentoff's jacket notes describe very justly as "the fullest and most complete evocation yet of Art Farmer as a soloist."

The listener is struck immediately by the authority and conclusiveness of Farmer's playing on this disc. His fluent phrasing and warmly vibrant tone express a lyricism that is all the more affecting because of the economy of its statement. Pianist Tommy Flanagan is a very sensitive second, and his sparse, flowing choruses are of the same order as Farmer's. Tommy Williams and Albert Heath, both members of the Jazztet, give firmly resilient rhythm support. This is the Art Farmer album his admirers have been waiting for.

**ART FARMER: Art.** Art Farmer (trumpet), Tommy Flanagan (piano), Tommy Williams (bass), Albert Heath (drums). So Bents My Heart for You; Goodbye, Old Girl; Who Cares? and five others. ASQA LP 678 $4.98

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**MULLIGAN MEETS HODGES**

*Proof that good jazz is timeless*

The latest of a series of meetings arranged by impresario Norman Granz between Gerry Mulligan, one of the most tradition-minded of modern jazzmen, and a number of jazz's elder statesmen finds the young baritoneist paired off with Johnny Hodges, for years the featured altoist with the Duke Ellington Orchestra. In the past, these cross-generation encounters have had gratifying results, and so does this session. Hodges' lithe, sinuous playing seems a perfect foil for Mulligan's leathery noodling; between them they have produced half a dozen low-keyed and heartfelt classics of gentle swing.
GERRY MULLIGAN AND JOHNNY HODGES: Gerry Mulligan Meets Johnny Hodges. Gerry Mulligan (baritone saxophone), Johnny Hodges (alto saxophone), Claude Williams (piano), Buddy Clark (bass), Mel Lewis (drums). "Bunny: What's the Rush?; Back Seat; and three others. Verve MG VS 69967 $5.98

MINGUS' NEWEST EXPLORATIONS

Uncompromisingly inventive modern jazz

T he unconventionally, strongly emotive music of Charlie Mingus, one of the most uncompromisingly inventive composers in jazz, has seldom been so forcibly presented as in this impassioned and intense collection. For the past several years Mingus has emerged as a sort of Fauvist of modern jazz—the foremost exponent of a disciplined primitivism, a music of searing, violent emotional impact. This bent has led him and his followers into previously unexplored areas. Here, for example, so intense is the attempt to extend expressive potentials that at times the horns seem on the verge of breaking into human speech. Indeed, Mingus has experimented in fusing voice and music in ways new to jazz, as in the acid-sharp Original Faubus Fables, which is formally one of the most daring pieces in this set. Sudden accelerations of tempo, free-form interplay of lines and starting, unorthodox instrumental techniques are just a few of the elements that contribute to the emotion-charged urgency of the music. In these four extended numbers he is joined by alto saxophonist Eric Dolphy and trumpeter Ted Curson, two strong, fresh and impressive voices, and drummer Dannie Richmond. Mingus has much to say, and he says it with force, conviction and, occasionally, violence. He is an iconoclast, yet all his radicalism has a solid blues-rooted foundation.

P. J. W.

CHARLES MINGUS: Presents Charles Mingus. Charles Mingus (bass), Eric Dolphy (alto saxophone and bass clarinet). Ted Curson (trumpet), Dannie Richmond (drums). Folk Forms No. 1: Original Faubus Fables; and two others. Canon 8005 $4.98

ENTERTAINMENT

VICTOR HERBERT IN FRESH ARRANGEMENTS

H ere at last, is a Victor Herbert orchestral miscellany that is a complete joy. All of the selections are well known (including the habanera from the opera Nakoma, though few who hear it know where it comes from), but so skilfully are they treated that they take on new-minted freshness.

The arrangements, by Richard Hayman, remain well within the spirit of the original works, yet, without distorting tempos, they do take on individuality of their own. Nor does the expert stereo engineering knock the listener out with ping-pong effects. The Streets of New York, for example, after opening with the bustling beat of the city as it is today, then goes into a brief waltz motif that transports us to the city of the past as the brass takes up the familiar rollicking theme. Perhaps March of the Toys was a fairly obvious challenge, but Hayman has tossed in some delightful touches—the sound of the toys being wound up, the opening fanfare played by flutes rather than trumpets, and the full orchestra creating the illusion of the toys lining up for their march.
As it ought to, *Romany Life* has great sweep and abandon, and *The Irish Have a Great Day Tonight* employs both the rhythm of an Irish jig and the measures of a roistering march to achieve its effect. All the more tender expressions (*I'm Falling in Love with Someone, Sweethearts, and Kiss Me Again*) benefit from a purity that never lets them get too busy or pretentious. As an added fillip, the notes are a model of what liners should be but seldom are, and the cover caricature of Herbert Auerbach Levy is a beauty.

S. G.

**FREDERICK FENNELL:** Frederick Fennell Conducts Victor Herbert. Orchestra. Frederick Fennell cond. *The Streets of New York; March of the Toys; Italian Street Song; and nine others*. Mercury PVS 6097 $5.98

**GOLD RUSH DAYS**

*Burgess Meredith brings the Klondike to life again*

There seems to be a new North Country trend to contest the fashion for recording bongo-beaters, comedians, and other arrangements of TV private-eye themes. At any rate, this Epic release is the second recording in a month to be devoted to the folklore of the men who once panned for nuggets in California and Alaska, and unlike Stuart Hamblen's compilation of Robert W. Service poems and his own songs (*Columbia CS 8388*), it has a good deal of charm. Dickson Hall and Gary Romero have adapted authentic songs of gold-rush days to go along with two poems by the poet laureate of the Northwest. With this material and the musical collaboration of O. B. Masingill, they have produced a record that is first-class—unpretentious, dramatic, and infused with a remarkable feeling for time and locale. Much of the credit belongs to Burgess Meredith. Listen especially to the wealth of meaning he gives *The Letters*, a song of anguished loneliness told through the exchange of letters between a miner and his wife back home. It is simple, never mawkish, and profoundly affecting.

This, in short, is the kind of album that makes superb use of the long-playing record and its stereo. In addition to its considerable musical and historical values, it has a purposefulness and a cohesion of form that lift it well above the customary haphazard collection of pop or folk tunes.

S. G.

**BURGESS MEREDITH:** *Songs and Stories of the Gold Rush*. Burgess Meredith (vocals); the Quartettes; orchestra, O. B. Masingill cond. *Loaded Down with Gold; Carefree Miner; El Dorado*; and thirteen others. Epic BN 990 $4.98

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**THE RAUNCH HANDS FROM CAMBRIDGE, MASS.**

*A good time is had by all*

You can have the Kingston Trio, the Brothers Four, and all the other groups of post-scene balladeers. Just give me the Raunch Hands, Harvard's gift to the increasingly crowded world of crew-cut folk singers. For they don't pretend to be authentic folk singers, their humor is never self-conscious, and they take neither their material nor themselves too seriously. They are simply six talented, irreverent young men having themselves a while of a time.

Of course, they do some of the songs straight, but their strong point is parody and satire. For example, *A-Ravin',* that robust sea chanty, is sung as it might be done by a prissy Gilbert-and-Sullivan chorus. In "The Folk Take-Over," they trace the history of *The Riddle Song* as it begins its career as a pure folk song, then gets the hillbilly treatment, then goes through a Calypso phase, and eventually becomes the latest rock-and-roll horror. Their final number is an unbelievable medley of two quite genuine hillbilly items—*Thank You Dear God for Victory in Korea* and *My Tears Have Washed 'I Love You' From the Blackboard of My Heart.*

Nor are the Raunch Hands too modest to write their own topical folk songs. They go after psychoanalysis by attacking its toucher in *Doctor Freud* ("He adopted as his credo 'Down Repression, Up Libido'") and in *The Old H. U. A. C.* they spin a moaning psalm to, of all things, the House UnAmerican Activities Committee.

S. G.

**THE RAUNCH HANDS:** *Against the World*. The Raunch Hands. *A Horse Named Bill; Tomorrow, My Good Man; Yes Yes Yes;* and eleven others. Epic BN 586 $4.98
MUSIC for MAY

BRUNO WALTER’S BRAHMS
Bruno Walter, custodian of the true Brahms tradition, shepherds his orchestral music into the Age of Stereo, recordings charged with ever-youthful vitality as well as profound perception. Now available singly: Symphonies No. 2, 3 and 4, as well as the 4-volume complete works.

COMPLETE WORKS/MS 615/4ML 252* Symphony No. 2/MS 6173/ML 5573* Symphony No. 3/MS 6174/ML 5574* Symphony No. 4/MS 6113/ML 5439*

Gould’s First Brahms
Glenn Gould, genius of the classic and the contemporary, now records his first Romantic album: Brahms, Intermezzi, extraordinary performances that are warmly revealing of both Brahms and Gould. MS 6237/ML 5637*

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BRAHMS:
Symphony No. 2 in D Major
Tragic Overture
BRUNO WALTER
Columbia Symphony Orchestra

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Bruno Walter, custodian of the true Brahms tradition, shepherds his orchestral music into the Age of Stereo, recordings charged with ever-youthful vitality as well as profound perception. Now available singly: Symphonies No. 2, 3 and 4, as well as the 4-volume complete works.

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STRAVINSKY—A SELF-PORTRAIT
Igor Stravinsky—a Self-Portrait in 3 ½’s and a 14-page portfolio, Stravinsky conducts x-ray sharp, newly-recorded performances of his masterpieces—Le Sacre du Printemps and Petrouchka. Stravinsky writes about the creation of these epochal works, about places seen and cherished in a much-traveled life. As personal as his guiding hand on an orchestra is the sound of Stravinsky’s voice as he speaks about Le Sacre. Illustrations include snapshots taken by Stravinsky and his own hand-drawn map of old St. Petersburg. News: everything encased in a jewel of a lucite box, as clear-eyed and revealing as Stravinsky himself. D3S 614/D3L 300*

BRAHMS: Symphonies Nos. 1-4
BRUNO WALTER
Columbia Symphony Orchestra

BRAHMS: OVERTURES
THOMAS SCHIPPERS
COLUMBIA SYMPHONY

SCHIPPERS, VERDI & MENOTTI
Thomas Schippers, to the opera born, stages a dramatic new collection of Overtures, drawn from such spirited sources as Rossini, Mozart, Verdi and Menotti. MS 6238/ML 5638*

SERKIN PLAYS REGER
Rudolf Serkin crusades for Max Reger, a neglected but arresting Romantic, plays his rarely-heard Piano Concerto with powerful affection. Eugene Ormandy and The Philadelphia Orchestra are equally devoted collaborators...On a more intimate scale, Serkin joins pianist Leon Fleisher and a quartet of singers in Brahms’ beguiling Liebeslieder Waltzes, recorded at Serkin’s Marlboro, Vt. summer music school, Reger / MS 6235/ML 5635* Brahms/MS 6236/ML 5636*

BERNSTEIN ON TELEVISION
Humor in Music, one of Bernstein’s most celebrated TV programs, now on @. Along with his enlightening and entertaining discussion of “the game of notes— the sheer joy of perceiving music,” Bernstein conducts an exhilarating performance of Strauss’ Till Eulenspiegel. (Other Bernstein TV programs on Columbia records: What Is Jazz and Bernstein on Beethoven.) Humor in Music/MS 6225/ML 5625* What Is Jazz/CL 919*/BERNSTEIN ON BEETHOVEN/CL 918*

ON COLUMBIA RECORDS

REGULAR
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Beyond work self suggests cern. understood sense) arc charm, and expressivity "paper It is, in music" Emotional involvement, areas of serial complexity far yet to be assessed. Berg, was born in 1922, writes in a modified chromatic style that, while it is scarcely likely to win him immediate friends, it is a good deal more traditional than Babbitt's. Babcches', it would appear, is a considerable and forceful musical talent. He has a live car for instrumental color, and the propulsion that animates both the trio and the sonata recorded here is innate rather than superficially imposed. The sound of the music is, moreover, highly personal; the technique is undogmatic, if knotty; and the expression is fresh. The performances seem to me incommenly alert and communicative.

Nilton Babbitt's leadership of the American twelve-tone avant-garde, both as a professor of music at Princeton University and as a musical essayist, has until quite recently brought him more recognition in the musical world than actual performance of his small, intensely difficult catalogue of works. These commendable projections of his Compositions for Four Instruments (1964) and Composition for Viola and Piano (1950) are, then, long overdue, and CRI is to be congratulated for introducing to the recording-buying public the work of a man whose influence on the youngest generation of American composers is yet to be assessed.

Both pieces are very special dishes of tea, extending as they do the twelve-tone techniques of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern into areas of serial complexity far beyond the accomplishments of the original master-practitioners. Babbitt's interest in music at "color"—as pure, engaging aural matter—is minimal; the deployment of row materials with the maximum of contrapuntal complexity is his first concern. It is, in the first sense of the phrase, "paper music." Emotional involvement, charm, and expressivity (in the commonly understood sense) are Babbitt's last concern. A liner note by the composer himself suggests that the viola piece "usually has been regarded as a more 'accessible' work than that for four instruments . . ."

Reviewed by MARTIN BOOKSPAN WILLIAM FLANAGAN DAVID HALL GEORGE JELLINEK IGOR KIPNIS

SYLVIA MARLOWE: Guiding spirit for collaborative Bach close-to, sound rather clattery, with little depth of tone. In this respect, the Angel monophonic version, by Eileen Joyce, George Malcolm, Thurston Dart, and Denis Vaughan, of the concertos for three and four harpsichords provides better-defined and balanced performances. I.K.

Sylvia Marlowe: Performance: Perceptive Recording: Good

Leonid Kogan and his wife, Elizaveta, are the sister of Emil Gilels, recorded the Bach concerto for two violins in England in 1956, with the late Otto Ackermann conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra, and the reverse side of the disc (Angel 33345) was devoted to a Kogan performance of Bach's E Major concerto. This re-recording of the same repertoire presents what is basically the same conception on the part of the soloists. The big improvement is in the orchestral accompaniment, which is much more stylish than the earlier one. The interplay between the two soloists is a delight, and even without stereo one can easily distinguish which of the two is playing at any given moment, for their tones are cleanly contrasted yet beautifully blended. The sound is very good. Altogether, this is a most successful issue.

MAY 1961

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MAY 1961
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3, in E-Flat ("Eroica"). (see p. 58)

BEETHOVEN: Sextet. (see MOZART)

BERGSM: Chameleon Variations. (see DIAMOND)

BERLIOZ: Overtures: Roman Carni-
vival; The Corsair; Beatrice and Ben-
nett. Cellini. The Trojans: Royal Hunt and Storm. Boston Symphony
Orchestra, Charles Munch cond. RCA Victor LSC 2438 $5.98. LM 2439 $4.98.

Interest: Full-blooded romanticism
Performances: Whirlwind
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Fine

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vival; The Corsair; Beatrice and Ben-
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Interest: Full-blooded romanticism
Performances: Whirlwind
Recording: Good
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In the lean years that Munch has been
musical director of the Boston Symphony
Orchestra he has probably performed and
recorded more Berlioz than any other con-
ductor in the world. The music on this
disc has been sitting in the RCA Victor
files for more than two years, and its re-
lease is most welcome.

Munch approaches this music with un-
inhibited vitality and exuberance. In the
overtures the pace is fast—so fast, at
times, that one wonders how the string
players can articulate cleanly; but they do,
in a suitably diaphanous display of virtuosity
and polish. The poetry of the "Royal Hunt
and Storm" episode from The Trojans is
persuasively conveyed, though the choral
interpolations, which Beecham included in
his performance of the music for Angel
(35506), are missing. The recorded sound is
vibrant and exciting.

M.

BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 2, in
B-flat, Op. 83: Julius Katchen (piano);
the London Symphony Orchestra, Janos
Ferencsik cond. London CS 6198 $5.98.

BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 2, in
B-flat, Op. 83: Yakov Zak (piano); Len-
ingrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Kurt Sander-
ingling cond. Arteia MK 1517 $4.98.

Interest: Pianistic Gibraltar
Performances: Both rather ordinary
Recordings: Both adequate

During the past year there have been re-
 leased three really extraordinary ac-
counts of this monumental work—by Rubenstein
(RCA Victor LSC, LM 2296), Serkin (Co-
 lumbia MS 6156, ML 3491), and Richter
(RCA Victor LSC, LM 2466). The Serkin
version, as a matter of fact, is my personal
nomination for the concerto recording of
the year. Neither of the pianists in these
two new versions brings to the work any-
thing like Serkin's absorption and total
identification. Of the two, Katchen is the
steadier performer (Zak has some
moments of rhythmic waywardness), and he
receives the better reproduction, even
though there is a metallic harshness about
the London sound. Neither Ferencsik nor
Sanderling are very positive personalities
here, and there are moments of shaky
ensemble in both performances.

M.

BRUCH: Violin Concerto No. 1. (see MENDELSSOHN)

CARTER: Sonata for Flute, Oboe,
Cello, and Harpsichord (1952). Anabel
Bliznak (flute), Joseph Marx (oboe), Le
tin Bernsnon (cello), Robert Conant (harpsichord).

SHAPERO: String Quartet No. 1
(1941). Robert Koff and Paul Bellam (viola-
ins), Walter Trampler (viola), Charles
McCarrack (cello). Columbia MS 6176
$5.98.

Interest: American chamber music
Performances: First-rate
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Excellent

Elliott Carter (b. 1908) has matured slow-
ly as a musical creator, passing through
both an Americanistic stage and a neo-
classic stage, and emerging in 1951 with
his First String Quartet as one of the most
powerful voices in American music, in-
tellectually formidable, yet wholly person-
 al and immensely powerful.

Carter's mature music draws on the
whole armament of modern music, yet
it comes out not as an eclectic hodge-
podge but as pure Carter—logical, vital,
powerful, with an almost Beethoven-like
forthrightness. And like the more complex
Beethoven masterpieces, Carter's music
takes a lot of careful listening. It helps,
too, if one can follow with the score.

The secret of Carter's communicative
draft, despite his intellectual complexities
as the use of "metric modulation," stems
from his painting. The, "I regard my scores
as scenarios, auditory scenarios, for per-
formers to act out their instruments,
dramatizing the players as individuals and
participants in the ensemble."

Certainly the instrumental combination
chosen by Carter for this music (written
for Sylvia Marlowe's Harpsichord Quartet)
provides an ideally contrasted cast of
characters for an auditory scenario. The
resulting music is brilliant and often
stirring. The performance here is vital,
yet precise, and it is beautifully recorded.

With Harold Shapero's First String
Quartet, written during his student days
at Harvard, we come to a somewhat less
order of endeavor—skillfully eclectic writ-
ing in the neo-classic vein, but with con-
siderable lyric impulse. Again, both per-
formance and recording are first-rate.

D. H.

CASELLA: Paganiniiana. (see RACHMA-
NINOFF)

CHANLER: Nine Epitaphs (1937,
1940). TRIMBLE: Four Fragments from
The Canterbury Tales. Phyllis Curtin
(soprano), E. Ryan Edwards (piano), Adele
Addison (soprano), Robert Conant (harpsich-
ord). Charles Russo (clarinet), Martin
Orenstein (flute). Columbia MS 6198 $5.98.

Interest: Classy American songs
Performances: Could scarcely be improved
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Good

Theodore Chanler, born in 1902, is an
ever laten special figure among Ameri-
can composers. His reputation remains a
colossus one, even in face of the fact
that he has written no knotty string
quartets, no great-grand-pieces. Nei-
ther has he done anything fancy nor any-
thing even relatively advanced about Con-
temporary Musical Techniques. Rather,
he has given his career mostly to the com-
position of a collection of songs, only

THEODORE CHANLER
American art-song master

slightly more than a handful, that are among
the most sensitive and fastidious in the
international contemporary repertory.

His masterpiece in the medium is the
Nine Epitaphs, justly celebrated as an
orchestral work that Columbia has recorded
handsomely and faithfully. Here is the char-
acteristic Chanler: the uncanny sincer-
teness, the intensely personal attitude toward
"normal" harmony; the sure way with both
poetic inflection and personal melodic curve;
the wonderfully touching command of musical
understatement.

Such music is, naturally, of the sort to
which Phyllis Curtin, whose gifts as a
singer involve similar gifts for subtlety and
understatement, is ideally suited. She
brings the best of herself to the work, and
the goodness of Miss Curtin's best needs no
comment from me.

Leslie Trimble, another American, born
in 1923, has written an almost overpower-
ingly attractive cycle of songs in his Four
Fragments from the Canterbury Tales.
The Chaucerian English has a pungent,
verbal ring to it; the harpsichord-clarinet-

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States in 1945. The music on the present disc, which includes all twenty-two movements of The Great Elopement, has received its present title quite recently. Handel's theme in Sir Thomas' score has always been unclear; in general, the most that can be said for certain is that Beecham made very free arrangements rather than mere orchestral transcriptions... sometimes the basic melody is all that he adopted. But the music is first-rate Beecham, tastefully concocted and brightly rendered. The Hollweg sings her single solo charmingly, and the stereo sound, although not widely separated and a little distorted in certain, is otherwise good enough.

HARRIS: Elegy and Dance. (see DIAMOND)

HAYDN: Avita. (see MOZART)


Hindemith's little Sonata for Oboe and Piano, dating from 1938, stuns from the time when its composer was writing sonatas for virtually every known instrumental combination. Most of these works have by now become classics, and this one is no exception.

The Albatross born American composor Charles Martin Loefler (1861-1955) is best known for his Pagan Poem. His Two Rhapsodies for Oboe, Viola, and Piano were written in 1906 and are based on poems by Maurice Rohlman, entitled L'Elanget (The Pagan) and La Courtesana (The Lascivious). The music is warm, atmospheric, and rather Brahmsian harmonically, even though the style approaches that of impressionism.

The present recording is noteworthy not only as the first LP version of the impressionist Loefler works and as the only available performance of the Hindemith sonata, but also for the appearance of the late Dimitri Mitropoulos in the role of pianist. The celebrated conductor's superb playing accounts for much of the appeal of this enterprising recording. The recorded sound, natural and well-balanced, is an additional asset.

Josquin des Prés: Missa Pange Lingua; Fanfare for Louis XII; Fana Malum; Dulcis Exsultatio; La Bernadina; Tu Solis. ANONYMOUS: Heth Sphui Melus'; Si la fui... New York Pro Musica Mixed Choir and Wind Ensemble. Noah Greenberg cond. Decca DL 79410 $3.98, DL 9101 $4.98.

Josquin des Prés, born in Picardy near the French-Belgian border about the middle of the fifteenth century, is now considered to be the greatest composer of church and secular music of his time. His output was prolific, and he combined the earlier polyphonic style of writing with an expressive harmonic and melodic technique that reached new heights of composition. Among Josquin's twenty-old masses that have been preserved, the Missa Pange Lingua, to which most of this record is devoted, is one of his last and noblest works. Noah Greenberg achieves great rhythmic precision and contrapuntal transparency in this excellent perform-
flute accompaniments make sounds that are both forthright and pretty; and the vocal line, out of which Adele Addison sings the virtual daylight, curves eloquently and expressively.

W. F.

CIMAROSA: Il Maestro di Cappella. MOZART: Concert Arias; Per questa bella musica (K. 412); Rivelgete a lui il riscatto (K. 584); Così dunque tradisci...Aspri rimirati atroci (K. 432); Alleluia, la festa...Non so donde viene (K. 512); Un bacio di nino (K. 512); Revive il bring, o figlia (K. 919). Ferrando Corena (bass); Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Argo Quadri cond. London OS 25518 $5.98.

Interest: Amusing Cimarosa; great Mozart Performance: Best in buffet material Recording: Very good Stereo Quality: Very good

Among a select number of eighteenth-century musical parodies, Cimarosa’s delightfully The Maestro of the Chapel, which, seems pun at both orchestra and conductor, is one of the most entertaining. The maestro, admiral, sings for Corena the attempt to rehearse his ensemble, but suffers the frustration of having players who cannot count. Corena’s previous London recording of this intermezzo proved to be a best seller; hence the present stereo remake, which is a decided improvement. Unhappily, London has not provided a libretto.

The end of the first side and all of the second are devoted to six superb Mozart arias. Much of Corena’s singing here suffers from a lack of color and emotional projection, and his buffo pretentions are sometime obtrusive. The orchestral support throughout is extremely good, and the sound is natural and well-defined.

I. K.


Interest: Symphonic staples Performances: Don Juan superb Recording: Clean Stereo Quality: Good

Fritz Reiner gives us a taut, controlled performance of La Mer, one in which the individual strands of Debussy’s fine-textured orchestral palette stand out in microscopically clear detail. It amounts to something like a texture about the content of the score without any real absorption in it. Other conductors—most notably Toscanini (RCA Victor LM 1883) and Monteux (RCA Victor LM 1939—a collector’s item)—have given us La Mer recordings of more personal involvement and deeper penetration. Needless to say, the Chicago Symphony plays superbly for Reiner, and the reproduced sound is of great richness and brilliance.

On the other side, Don Juan is given a masterly performance, with an abundance of the very qualities lacking in this La Mer. Here is Strauss’s score in all its fiery virility.

M. B.


Capriccio, and Epigrams. Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra, Jacob Avshalomov cond. COMPACTA RECORDINGS CRI 140 $3.95.

Interest: Good American Performance: OK Recording: Adequate

The Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra, whose musical director is Jacob Avshalomov, is a forward-looking organization of youngsters whose ages range from twelve to twenty-one years. As a matter of policy, the group has taken to the commissioning of new American works that are within the practical technical range of the orchestra. The four pieces included here are the yield of the first four assignments.

David Diamond’s The World of Paul Klee strikes me as easily the most fanatical and smoothly oriented of the group. While the manner is modern-chromatic, the work carries it something of the fairy-tale atmosphere that one associates with some of Ravel’s music. For that matter, it is not dissimilar in feeling to the more diatonic Iberian staples. One notable is that Diamond has such great success with a decade or so ago. The piece is ever so delicately and expressively scored, and the music is quite imaginative and evocative as the paintings of the artist it describes.

William Berganza’s Chameleon Variations is a short, direct work of strong lyrical impulse, which, from the instrumental point of view, is as effective—if not so delicate and intriguing—as the Diamond piece. The work is essentially listenable and skillfully conceived, and it contains not an excess gesture.

There are few composers in America—or anywhere in the history of music—who have shown such capacity (or desire) for artistic accretion and development as Roy Harris. The same harmonic palette, the same melodic style that made Harris famous during the 1930’s can be found substantially unaltered in, for example, his Elegy and Dance, composed as recently as 1958. True, the rough edges that marred the work of the young Harris have been smoothed away, and the technique has been sharpened and now functions almost mechanically. The pleasure to be found in this work, then, is mostly relevant to one’s preoccupation with the Harris “sound,” and, even granting the preoccupation, this work perhaps lacks the distinction that compels interest.

Benjamin Lees’ Prologue, Capriccio and Epilogue is a frantic, motor-driven, rather coarse work whose principle section—the Capriccio—drags away at a monotonous predictable clip and suggests, at moments, a vulgarization of Mussorgsky’s A Night on Bald Mountain. It should be added that the orchestra does a smooth, expressive job on four scores that are far from easy.


Interest: For the Spinning Wheel Performance: Superlative Recording: Good

Antonín Dvořák’s last works for orchestra were five symphonic poems, four of them based on folk-inspired ballads by K. J. Erben. Of the Erben-inspired pieces, The Golden Spinning Wheel is the least dependent on its literary program and is the richest in musical substance. A veritably Schubertian melodic outpouring, instrumented in Dvořák’s richest manner, it is a delight to the ear, and far superior to the more melodramatic Wood Dance, with which it is coupled on this disc.

Talich’s performance of The Golden Spinning Wheel—and a magnificent one it is—was first issued on LP in this country by Urania in 1962, coupled with a pair of Dvořák waltzes and The Midsummer Night. The recorded sound was very good then, and it still sounds very good today—full-bodied and warm-toned, even if not the very last word in wide frequency and dynamic range.

D. H.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN: Iolanthe: The Pirates of Penzance. (see p. 58)

GOMBAU: Seven Airs of Aragon. ARAMBAII: Eight Basque Songs. Teresa Berganza (mezzo-soprano), Gran Orquesta Sinfónica, Gerardo Gomina cond. LONDON OS 25116 $5.98.

Interest: Contemporary Spanish song Performance: Ideal Recording: Good Stereo Quality: Outstanding on side 1

Teresa Berganza’s two earlier recital discs, both released in 1960, were both superb. And so is this one, which holds a program uniquely attuned to her voice and interpretive gifts. The vocal music of Gomina and Arambarri, like that of Falla and Turina, is rooted in the impressionist lilt of the early 1900’s. Both of these cycles are seasoned with strong national flavors, with Gomina’s Seven Airs of Aragon particularly captivating in its evocation of the moods, sounds, rhythms, and spirit of that colorful region. Both composers are expert in blending graceful vocal lines with imaginative orchestral settings, and both can thank their stars for having, in Miss Berganza, an artist with the vocal allure, temperament, and communicative power to do their music complete justice. The Best Airs of Aragon are recounted with the full splendor characteristic of London’s best efforts. Evidently the Basque songs were taped at another
LOEFFLER: Two Rhapsodies. (see HINDEMITH)
LEES: Prologue, Capriccio and Epilogue. (see DIAMOND)

© MARTINU: Bouquet of Flowers. Soloists: Czech Singers' Chorus, and children's chorus; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Karel Ancerl cond. SUPRAPHON LP 445 $5.98.

Interest: A real sleeper
Performance: First-rate
Recording: Excellent

Here is a real find. This cantata on Czech folk poetry was composed by Martinu in Paris in 1937, the year after Carl Orff composed his Carmina Burana. The two works have much in common musically. Like Orff, Martinu here employs a simple harmonic structure, and he is fond of a constantly reiterated rhythmic pattern. The result is a score of immediate and widespread appeal, with naive and contagious charm.

The work is made up of a series of ballads sung in Moravian dialect, and here again one thinks of Carmina Burana, for, like Orff, Martinu makes extensive use of declamation in his settings.

The performance here is obviously sympathetic. Ancerl is a first-class musician, and the associated soloists and choirs throw themselves into the music with abandon. The recorded sound is excellent. M. B.


Interest: Romantic classics
Performance: Consummate
Recording: Clear but unessential
Stereo Quality: Nothing special

Milstein's ways with these concertos are as masterful as they were when he first recorded them for Capitol in the identical coupling (P 8049) six years ago. Technical

ANCE, and he has obtained maximum variety by breaking up the vocal lines between the chorus and four soloists: Russell Oberlin (countertenor), Charles Bresler (tenor), Gordon Myers (baritone) and Brayton Lewis (bass).

The motet Tu Solem and the settings from Virgil's Aeneid, "Fama Malum" and "Dulces Exuviae," are equally well done, but for many the most fascinating music will be the four selections (two of them anonymous) played by medieval wind instruments. Utilizing a cornett, treble and alto shawms (ancestors of the oboe), plus alto, tenor, and bass trombones, Mr. Greenberg has provided an exciting ensemble of marvelous tone colors. The splendid Fanfare for Louis XII should interest many listeners whose tastes in music do not ordinarily run in this direction. The stereo pressing lacks depth, and bass boost must be supplied. The sound of Westminster's Pange Lingua (XWN 18836) is more characteristic of church sonority, but the New York Pro Musica sounds more starkly ecclesiastical, both in style and in texture. L. K.

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- Mozart: Concerto, Arias, (see GIMORA)
- Mozart: Concerto Arias: Ah, io prenderò... Ah, finirò a guazzo miei (K. 273): Ch'io mi scalderò di te... Non tenermi amato bene (K. 595).

Interest: Seldom-heard masterpieces
Performance: Dramatic
Recording: Better in Haydn Stereo Quality: Natural

Among Mozart's less familiar works are his many concert arias, two of which are heard on this recording. Both of these, as well as Haydn's moving Scena di Berenice, are really dramatic scenes that stand outside of an operatic setting. Mozart's lovely Ch'io mi scalderò di te, the least diarrhous of the three arias, is unusual in having a piano obligato, which the composer is said to have played for Nancy Storace, the first Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro.

Jennifer Vyvyan is an intelligent and persuasive interpreter of this music. She does not have the beauty of tone or warmth of Magda Laszlo, who recorded the same Mozart arias for Westminster (XVH 18545, a collector's item) a number of years ago, but, in spite of an edginess in her high register, one seldom hears this repertoire sung in such a dramatic fashion. Furthermore, the orchestral accompaniment is a model of stylistic elegance. The stereo recording is somewhat studen in the Mozart selections, and there is an annoying pressing fault at the beginning of each side. Texts and translations are included.


Interest: Modern masterwork
Performance: Intensely dramatic
Recording: A triffo coarse

Close to a dozen recordings of Prokofiev's monumental Fifth Symphony have been made since the original 1944 releases by Rodziniski and the New York Philharmonic for Columbia and by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony for RCA Victor back in 1947. Only with this new recording from an unexpected source do we find a version that matches the two initial readings. The dramatic intensity and soaring power that Leopold Stokowski brings to this 1969 recording with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra places it in a class by itself.

You will, however, have to put up with some pretty coarse and occasionally ill-defined recorded sound to experience Stokowski's way with this music. But on this matter, the music is strong enough to take it if your aural sensibilities are.

I have long considered the Ormandy-Philadelphia Orchestra recording for Columbia (mono and stereo) as the least disappointing of recent disc performances of this score; but I also know that it is the Stokowski that I shall be playing repeatedly.

D. H.
plink, plank, plink

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maninoff dedicated the score, played the premiere during the first week of 1941. Like all of the composer’s orchestral music, the Symphonic Dances are well suited to the Philadelphia Orchestra’s sound—rich, luxurious, and resonant. Needless to say, Ormandy and his orchestra luxuriate in the music and give it a performance of enormous conviction; Columbia’s engineers provide lush reproduction.

The sound itself is in Rachmaninoff’s richest romantic vein, with a sure command of form and surprisingly original orchestration. The score surely deserves better than the neglect that it has suffered during the two decades of its existence; perhaps this resplendent recording will help correct the situation.

Castelli’s Ragtime Variations, composed two years after Rachmaninoff’s Symphonic Dances, was likewise written with the sound of a particular orchestra in mind—this time the Vienna Philharmonic, which in 1942 celebrated its hundredth anniversary. In its tongue-in-cheek brashness it reminds me of Hindemith’s Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Karl Maria von Weber. The whole thing is strictly for fun, and it comes off very well. As in Hindemith’s score, the themes that are metamorphosed are pretty obscure and lend themselves to this sort of treatment very nicely. Again Ormandy and his orchestra give a sparkling account of themselves, but the reproduced sound is not as clear as it is in the Rachmaninoff.

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SCHUBERT: Symphonies. (see p. 37)

SHAPERO: String Quartet. (see CAR-TER)

R. STRAUSS: Don Juan. (see DEBUSSY)

© STRAVINSKY: L’Histoire du Soldat. Melvyn Douglas (narrator); James Mitchell (The Soldier); Alvin Epstein (The Devil); Members of the Kapp Sinfonietta, Emanuel Vardi cond. KAPP KDC 6004 S $5.98.

Interest: The G.I. Faust Performance: Theatrical Recording: Vibrant Stereo Quality: Effective

Stravinsky’s The Story of a Soldier has long been an object of controversy. Some critics feel that the Ramuz text is superficial, while others—as myself—think that the spoken parts provide dimension and meaning for the whole. Thus it was with eager anticipation that I listened to this Kapp recording, the first complete stereo version of the Stravinsky-Ramuz masterpiece about the returning soldier who is lured into a compact with the Devil.

There are two sharply opposed approaches to performing L’Histoire du Soldat: iconoclastic and understated, or melodramatic and theatrical; and the latter is the approach taken here. For home listening, however, I would definitely favor the understated, iconoclastic approach. Then there is the matter of the translation. The album employs “a new translation and adaptation” by Stella and Arnold Moss. What it amounts to is, rather, an elaboration; the tenorseness of the original is transformed into something that suggests a radio or TV daytime serial. Part of this impression derives from Melvyn Douglas’s highly theatrical delivery of the narration and dialogue with the soldier. Alvin Epstein is superb as the Devil—malicious, suave, and malignant by turn.

Mr. Vardi does a fine conducting job, notably in the famous tango, waltz, and rags, which is done with just the right kind of elegant schmaltz. For the more rhythmic and hard-foiled sections of the score, however, Stravinsky’s own monaural disc of the music only (Columbia ML 496) remains unsurpassed.

To conclude, Kapp deserves credit for a good try, but the success is something less than complete, for all the well-executed sounds. Perhaps the only possibility for a definitive Story of a Soldier on discs is to have Stravinsky himself direct a complete recording, with perhaps a fresh translation being commissioned from W. H. Auden and Chester Kahan, who did such a remarkable libretto for The Rake’s Progress.

© VIVALDI: Four Concertos for Two Violins, Strings, and Continuo: D Major (Pno. 1, No. 106); G Minor (F. 1, No. 12); G Minor (F. 1, No. 98); D Major (F. 1, No. 41). Isaac Stern and David Oistrakh (violinists), Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy cond. (Continued on page 76).

HIFI/STEREO
THE SOLTI-CULSHAW INTERPRETATION

IN his revealing article about the making of this new recording of Tristan and Isolde ("Staging the First Stereo Tristan," HiFi/Stereophile, March, 1961), John Culshaw, manager of classical recordings for London Records, summed up his approach to the artistic and technical problems this way: "The hard fact about Tristan is that here the orchestra is not only first but fundamental. More than in any other opera, the line and power of the orchestral writing carry the drama forward. It is remarkable how faithfully the results reflect the steadfastness with which Mr. Culshaw and his staff adhered to this promise. One could hardly ask for a more gorgeous reproduction of Wagnerian orchestral sound—clear in detail, admirably balanced for stereo, and meticulously faithful to the composer's dynamic markings. This, of course, implies admiration for Georg Solti's conducting as well. As might be expected from evidence already offered by the London Das Rheingold, Solti's Tristan, by its breadth of conception and rightness of interpretation, its lyricism and sustained intensity, confirms his place among the best of today's Wagnerians. And the many inspired engineering felicities of the recording—of which the brilliantly illusive reproduction of the hunting horns at the opening of Act II is only one stunning example—testify to London's mastery of the stereo medium.

However, there is one notion implicit in Mr. Culshaw's otherwise plausible thesis with which I, for one, am in whole-hearted disagreement: "The idea farthest from our minds was to reproduce a performance of the music drama as it is heard in the opera house." Even allowing for a dash of pardonable rhetorical exaggeration, this pronouncement seems to me to be laden with an excessive amount of presumption. Recorded stereo opera is certainly "an experience in my own right," but, in my view, if this experience is to be artistically valid, a recording ought to seek to approximate rather than violate, or simply ignore, the aural illusion inherent in opera as it is heard in the theatre. Essentially, the problem is how the singers should be related to the orchestral frame, and I can only say flatly that I think London's solution in this recording is courageously wrong.

The comparative ineffectiveness of Birgit Nilsson's Isolde is a good example of what I mean. In the theatre, her bright, brilliant, easily supported tones soar out over the orchestra. Here they are engulfed in luminous but nevertheless veiling waves of sound. Her mastery of the role is unquestioned, and even under such hampering conditions she comes through as an Isolde of dignity and strong human emotions, with a voice of imposing tonal range and considerable expressiveness. It is just possible that some effort may have been made here to scale down this unique Isolde to the less imposing level of her Tristan. For surely Fritz Uhl is not of fine Tristan stature, although it is remark-

able how well he works with the slender equipment at his disposal. He has a rather romantic, Lohengrin-like voice, capable of making its points in the lyrical passages of the first-act finale or the narrative "O Klings!" but lacking impact and conviction in the scenes where a heroic timbre and warrior-like vocal presence are required. His challenge to Melot in the final scene of Act II is ineffective, and the ecstatic "Insel konnt! Isolde shalt!" in Act III lacks the needed intensity. When not over-weighted by the part, Uhl used his agreeable voice with sensitiveness and intelligence, but one does get the impression that he frequently finds the tonal swathing thoughtfully provided by London's engineers exceedingly welcome.

The other principal roles are satisfactorily handled, but not a great deal more than that. A weightier, more imposing King Marke than Arnold van Mill can easily be imagined, but there is dignity and mellow wisdom in his narrative, and, apart from a few strenuous top notes, he vocalizes it smoothly. Tom Krause sings Kurwenal's music in tough and dry vocal colours that are sometimes appropriate to the character, but the subtleties of the role often escape him. Regina Resnik, as Brangäne, suffers from an unsteady tone production, but dramatically she is highly competent. Unfortunately, in the Liebesnacht scene the engineers have placed her so far out of range and surrounded her with so much artificial echo that to anyone asking me how she sings her crucial warning the only honest answer I can give is "I don't know."

There, then, are the strengths and weaknesses of the set. What it offers is a superb orchestral treatment of Tristan und Isolde, with the singers recorded in a way that will neither detract from the orchestral grandeur nor expose certain vocal shortcomings in a disturbing degree. However, I do prefer to have a selection cast of singers recorded in appropriate relationship to magnificent orchestral playing, you are likely to prefer the Angel performance, conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. The Angel cast has a properly heroic Tristan in Ludwig Suthaus, a marvelous Brangäne in Blanche Thebom, a more imposing-vocally than occasionally wobbly King Marke in Josef Greindl, and a Kurwenal, in Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, who can actually sing through passages that baritones only manage by barking. In varying degrees, all are superior to their London opposite numbers. And, with the greatest respect for Birgit Nilsson, the final measure of superiority is assured by the Angel Isolde—Kristen Flagstad.

WAGNER: Tristan und Isolde (Fritz Uhl (tenor), Tristam; Birgit Nilsson (soprano), Isolde; Tom Krause (baritone), Kurwenal; Waldfried Kunert (tenor), Sailer; Peter Klein (tenor), Shepherd; Ernst Bohm (baritone), Melot; Theodor Kisch (bass), Frickkaner, Siegmund, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Georg Solti cond. LONDON OSA 1302 $29.95, A 4505 $24.95, five 12-inch discs.)

By GEORGE JELLINEK
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Interest: Superior Baroque taste
Performance: Virtuoso
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Excellent

It is doubtful whether Visvaldi ever heard these four double violin concertos played in a manner quite as virile as they are in this recording, and one must not forget that the composer, among the outstanding masters of his day, was accustomed to a high degree of artistic skill. Alternating in the roles of first and second violins, Isaac Stern and David Oistrakh perform this vital music in a style so brilliant that one can overlook the fact that the tone of both soloists and orchestra is too heavy and the treatment overly romantic for the Baroque period. The stereo recording is rich and full. I.K.

© WAGNER: The Flying Dutchman.
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), The Norwegian National Opera and Orchestra, cond.: Kim Gjerset

Interest: Traditional Wagner
Performance: Best available Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Effective

Wagner's youthful The Flying Dutchman, like the gloomy Wanderer whose life it depicts, is fated in a wayward course. It is not a mature masterpiece like Tristan und Isolde or Die Meistersinger, nor does it bear the Wagnerian label so manifestly and uncompromisingly as to merit the admiration of those who preach opera according to the Bayreuth gospel. Its destiny, then, is to wander aimlessly on the seas of indifference in search of an inspiring performance that will bring about its redemption. Bayreuth has seen that miracle frequently during the past decades; the Metropolitan witnessed it last season, thanks to Leonie Rysanek, George London, and Thomas Schippers. Now, after several close attempts, the "wanderer" has come safely to port on recordings.

The most credit belongs to Fischer-Dieskau, whose awe-inspiring command of expressive subtleties places before us a masterful characterization of the haunted, suffering Vanderdecken. I don't know how this portrayal would fare in a theater, for Fischer-Dieskau does not command the power, weight, and dark colors of such born interpreters of this music as Friederich Schorr, Hans Hotter, or George London. His is not a Wagnerian voice in the commonly understood sense of the term. (Were this the case, Fischer-Dieskau could not be the artist who sings Schubert, Mahler, Verdi, and Debussy equally well. Thus, the climactic outburst of "Nirgend ein Grab, niemals der Tod!" does not ring with terrifying impact to match Hotter's. But there are only a handful of such phrases scattered through the opera, and the compensations are countless.

Where can one hear, for instance, the maestoso section of the same demonstrative ("Dich frage ich, gebzner Engel Geiter") or the opening lines of the second-act duet phrases with such melancholy tenderness and sustained tonal beauty? The vocal line is shaped with the polish, care, and profound insight that have long distinguished this artist's matchless resonant with Liebster.

The remainder of Angel's cast is strong, but on a somewhat less exalted plane. Gottlob Frick's boomy, solid tenor projects Daland's rough-hewn simplicity exceedingly well, but very little of the joviality that is also part of the man's makeup. It is good to have in Rudolf Schock a tenor who can combine firmness of tone with a true sense of lyricism. Erik is obviously a plot functionary rather than a convincing character, but Schock goes a long way towards disguising this fact.

In smaller roles, Sieglinde Wagner and Fritz Wunderlich are excellent. The set's only disappointment is Marianne Scheel, whose edgy Senta, while not really objectionable, is revealed in the palest possible color alongside Fischer-Dieskau's lofty adventuress. One must turn to Birgit Nilson (Angel 35540 and 35585) for an account of the way Senta's music ought to be sung.

Konwitschny carries the music with a sweeping, relentless momentum and builds his climaxes effectively, producing excellent performances from his orchestra and chorus. The engineering is, in the main, well-balanced, and the orchestral and choral passages are reproduced with fullness, power, and clarity. But when the voices are prominent one is acutely aware of Wagner's enveloping orchestration, and the strings have a tendency to go very dry on occasion.

In sum, an excellent performance, clearly superior to previous versions. G.J. © MUSIC FOR A GOLDEN FLUTE.

Interest: For flute buffs Performance: A bit stroll-laced Recording: A bit cozy
Stereo Quality: Adequate

The luminously impressionist Poem by Charles Griffes is particularly welcome in stereo guise, and it is good to have the Fairlawn Night Piece by Bostonian Arthur Foote (1853-1937) available once more, as well as the plenarily pungent Honegger Concerto da camera. Hanson's lustily pastoral Serenade makes a fine wind-up for this intelligently conceived program.

The rub comes with both performances, which verge on the prissy and stilted, and the recording, which could stand considerably more air around it than it has. Maurice Sharp's solo work is the acme of accuracy and precision, but sounds wholly monochromatic when compared to the work of William Kincaid with the Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia ML 4629) or even Joseph Mariano with Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Symphony (Mercury MG 50076). D.H.
COUNT BASIE: Kansas City Suite. Count Basie (piano) and his band. *Pine Street Rumble; Meetin' Time; Blue Five Line,* and seven others. ROULETTE BIRDLAND SERIES SR 30456 $4.98.

Interest: Among best recent Basie
Performance: Fawful
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Well-balanced

Benny Carter, once one of the most skillful of big-band arrangers, has spent most of his time in recent years doing relatively commercial work in Hollywood, although he has occasionally taken on playing and writing assignments. This suite, commissioned by Count Basie, is an attempt to reflect the night life and carefree, riff-built music of Kansas City thirty years ago.

There are two memorable tracks: the very witty *Katy Do* and the loping *Meetin' Time,* with its odd combination of a quasi-Western theme and the blues.

The rest consists of efficient but familiar themes, which suggest that Carter might well have taken more time in the writing. As for the playing, the band seems more relaxed and less mechanical than in several other recent albums, and there are good, though too short, solos. The liner notes fail to give personnel or solo credits.

N. H.

DONALD BYRD: *Byrd in Flight.* Donald Byrd (trumpet), Hank Mobley (tenor saxophone), Jackie McLean (alto saxophone), Duke Pearson (piano), Doug Watkins, Reginald Workman (bass), Lex Humphries (drums). *Ghana; Gate City; Jeep;* and three others. BLUE NOTE 4048 $5.98.

Interest: First-rate modern jazz
Performance: Enthusiastic
Recording: Clear, sharp

From his first recordings, young trumpeter Donald Byrd has played with full, round tone, thorough technical facility, and high-caliber inventiveness. And over the past five years he has continued to grow as a soloist. On this disc he plays with assurance, taste, and a rush of fertile ideas.

N. H.

Buddy DeFranco: *Live Date!* Buddy DeFranco (clarinet), Bob Hastings (saxophone), Herb Mann (trombone), Victor Feldman (vibes), Pete Jolly (piano and accordion), Bensey Kessel (guitar), Scott LeFaro (drums). *Lady, I Be Good; My Famous Valentine; Sains Doll;* and five others. VERVE MG VS 60385 $5.98.

Interest: Sensitive chamber jazz
Performance: Imperturbable
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Excellent

The crisply exuberant work of this group is reminiscent of the playing of several of Benny Goodman’s superb chamber groups of the 1940’s. De Franco’s unit plays here with much the same freshness and fine musicianship, though in a thoroughly modern groove. The numbers are relaxed, unabashedly happy, and completely enjoyable. The arrangements are uncluttered, with the chief interest being the impressive solo work by the participants, all of whom get plenty of opportunity to stretch out. Although this is a studio group, it achieves a delicacy of interaction that many a veteran outfit might well envy. The ballad performances are especially breathtaking.

P. J. W.

John Coltrane: *Coltrane Jazz.* John Coltrane (tenor saxophone), Wynton Kelly (piano), Paul Chambers (bass), Jimmy Cobbs (drums), McCoy Tyner (piano), Steve Davis (bass), Elvin Jones (drums). *Pillage Blues; Like Sonny; Some Other Blues;* and five others. ATLANTIC SD 1354 $5.98.

Interest: Major jazz tenorman
Performance: Forceful and personal
Recording: Good
Stereo Quality: Competent

As in the previous “Giant Steps” collection (Atlantic SD 1311, mono 1311), this John Coltrane album should present few problems for the jazz listener. In these two sets, Coltrane is not so prolific with notes nor so absorbed in complex harmonic explorations as he has been before. His own themes are clear and arresting, and his solos are intense and cohesive. Coltrane’s tone is urgent and contains more of the “cry” at the roots of jazz than the work of most of his contemporaries. Among other expressive performances, there is a brooding blues, an exceptionally tender ballad (“I’ll Wait and Pray”), and a fiercely yearning original, *Fifth House.* The notes, incidentally, refer to a soprano saxophone on one track. It’s not there.

N. H.

Herb Ellis: *Thank You, Charlie Christian.* Herb Ellis (guitar), Frank Strazzeri (piano), Harry Balasian (cello), Chuck Berghofe (bass), Kenny Hume (drums). *Pickle Weeds; Cook One; Kera;* and seven others. VERVE MG VS 60381 $5.98.

Interest: Pleasant modern swing
Performance: Effortless
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Fine

Like most modern guitarists, Herb Ellis is heavily indebted to the late Charlie Christian, one of the founding fathers of modern jazz guitar style. This disc contains some earthy, blues-rooted small-combo work that makes few demands on the listener, yet swings mightily in its own quiet way. Effective use is made of Harry Balasian’s cello as a second voice in the ensembles, but Ellis’ swingy guitar lines are the main show. There’s nothing very high-powered here—just a straightforward album of easy modern swing.

P. J. W.
ART FARMER: Ast. (see p. 50)

@ JOHNNY GRIFFIN AND EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS QUINTET: Tough Tenors. Johnny Griffin and Eddie Davis (tenor saxophones). Junior Mance (piano), Larry Gales (bass), Ben Riley (drums). Tickle Toe; Funky Flask; Soft Winds; and three others. JAZZLAND JLP #1 $4.98.

Interest: Two two-fisted tenors
Performance: Fierce
Recording: Good

Although Johnny Griffin is seven years younger and somewhat more "modern" than Eddie Davis, both are basically in the same groove. They swing hard, have robust tones, and are emotionally unfiltered. Of the two, I prefer the less florid conception and more muscular sound of Davis. Neither, however, is a grippingly original soloist. Both rely more on fire and drive than on freshness of ideas.

The rhythm section is equal to the front line in intensity and stamina, and Junior Mance has a particularly heated solo in Funky Flask. But an entire program of bellissimo tenors is something like a meal in which all the courses are steak. N.H.

@ NANCY HARROW: Wild Women Don't Have the Blues. Nancy Harrow (vocals); band, Buck Clayton cond. Take Me Back; Baby; All Too Soon; Can't We Be Friends; Sunny Side of the Street; and four others. CAXON 8008 $4.95.

Interest: Swing-era vocals
Performance: Bright and pulsant
Recording: Very good

Ably backed by an exuberant mainstream group led by ex-Basie trumpeter Buck Clayton, who has also done the arrangements, Nancy Harrow offers in her debut album a pleasant garland of tunes associated with the swing era. There is an unabashed naiveté to her natural, unself-conscious singing, and she phrases an effortless yet propulsive swing and a keen awareness of dynamics. Her dark, throaty voice, at times suggestive of blues singers Jimmy Rushing, and straightforward approach are in welcome contrast to the glib mannerisms of so many vocalists today. P. J. W.

@ MILT JACKSON: The Ballad Artistry of Milt Jackson. Milt Jackson (vibraphone); orchestra, Quincy Jones cond. The Cydell Album; Whoopee; Alone Together; Tenderly; and six others. ATLANTIC #1134 $5.98.

Interest: Superb ballad performances
Performance: Splendid
Recording: Exccellent
Stereo Quality: Superior

Few jazzmen have Milt Jackson's way with a ballad, and this album bears wit- nes. Vibraphonist Jackson's genius resides in his ability to penetrate to a song's core, violating its weaknesses and pointing up its strongest and most beautiful elements. He has bathed these ten selections with such a luminous, radiant, and unembarrassed romanticism that one can find no fault with them, for they are as firm and solid as they are ardent. The expressive arrangements by Jimmy and Quincy Jones reinforce their sensuous warmth. This album is a magnificent and fully realized collection by a consummate ballad interpreter. P. J. W.

@ AHMAD JAMAL: Listen to the Ahmad Jamal Quintet. Ahmad Jamal (piano), Israel Crosby (bass), Vernel Fournier (drums), Joe Kennedy (violin), Ray Crawford (guitar), Ahmad's Walls; Father's Love; Yesterdays; Tempo for Two; and six others. ARCQ LP #173 $4.98.

Interest: Deft chamber jazz
Performance: Assured
Recording: Topnotch

In one respect this is a disappointing album. No one could argue with its quiet simplicity or with the delicacy, discretion, and understatement that have become Jamal trademarks. What I object to is the way in which Jamal has employed the two instruments he's added to his successful trio format. For instead of taking advantage of the increased potential in terms of ensemble voicing and orchestral coloration, he has elected to use them in strict solo roles. Neither Kennedy nor Crawford have been integrated into the group; they've been grafted onto it, and their contributions have been kept to a bare minimum. Both are strong. Individual voices—especially Kennedy, who emerges as a resourceful jazz-orientated violinist—who could have added much if effectively used. P. J. W.

@ QUINCY JONES: I Dig Dancers. Quincy Jones Band, G'Waun Train; Chinese Checkers; Trouble on My Mind; and seven others. MERCURY SR #60612 $4.98.

Interest: Superior dance music
Performance: Band is under wraps
Recording: Generally good
Stereo Quality: Very good

Eight of these selections were recorded in Paris during the Quincy Jones Band's long European break-in period. The others were done in New York. Like the group's two earlier albums, this one is largely a diluted example of what Jones is capable of creating with his band, and, as such, it is a mistake on Mercury's part. Considering the first-rate soloists Jones has here (alto saxophonist Phil Woods, trumpeter Benny Bailey, French-born horn Julius Watkins, and trumpeter Clark Terry), there would be much more impact in an all-jazz album with extended solos and really substantial writing. Jones, after all, is never avant-garde in his scoring; even an uninhibited Jones set would not be restricted to a small in-group of listeners. And by muting Jones, Mercury fails to take full advantage of the uniquely buoyant tone he can give to a band. There are traces here of Jones' wit and melodic grace, but the band seldom opens up enough. The pieces, by the way, are by that celebrated jazz musician, Dorothy Kilgallen. N.H.

@ JUNIOR MANCE: The Soulful Piano of Junior Mance. Junior Mance (piano), Ben Tucker (bass), Bobby Thomas (drums). Playboue; Ralph's New Blues; Swingmation; and six others. JAZZLAND JLP #19605 $5.98.

Interest: Growing individuality
Performance: Invigorating
Recording: Live and clear
Stereo Quality: Well-balanced

Junior Mance, an alumni of the Dizzy Gillespie and Cannonball Adderley combos, is now leading his own trio, and it's about time. As he demonstrated in his previous album (Verse 68310, 8319). Mance is part of the blues-based soulful legation, but he is also distinctively himself. For one thing, he often projects a light-heartedness that most of the funky, pile-driving pianists lack. He also has above-average taste in repertoire, as is evidenced by his selection here of songs by Duke Ellington, Jay McShann, and Mary Lou Williams. Mance still occasionally laps into blues clichés when other ideal fall, but he is basically a steady, swinging soloist with authoritative rhythmic ease and an exuberant temperament. He gets excellent support, particularly from bassist Ben Tucker. N. H.

CHARLES MINGUS: Presents Charles Mingus. (see p. 60)

GERRY MULLIGAN AND JOHNNY Hodges: Gerry Mulligan Meets Johnny Hodges. (see p. 59)

@ THE POLL WINNERS: Exploring The Scene. Barney Kesel (guitar), Ray Brown (bass), Shelley Manne (drums), Little Sister; The Duke; So What; Mauy; and five others. CONTEMPORARY M #5581 $4.98.

Interest: Sensitive trio jazz
Performance: Impressive
Recording: Very good

Each year for the past four, Barney Kesel, Ray Brown, and Shelly Manne have taken first place on their instruments in the three major popularity polls conducted by the jazz press, and each year they have celebrated their victories by recording an album billed as "The Poll Winners." In this glowing program of modern jazz classics, these чувные qualities that marked their three previous albums—quiet intensity, solid musicianship, fine taste, and rapport that is amazing considering that the group was brought together
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HIFI/STEREO


Interest: An inflated gimmick
Performance: Skillful
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: First-rate

One of the biggest commercial successes in Victor's spotty jazz history of recent years was "The Drum Suite" (LPM 1279). In this sequel, five drummers are featured with a big band (Louis Hayes and Gus Johnson alternate). The first album struck me as being a stunt, and the sequel seems even worse. It's all done cleverly, but neither the themes nor their developments are imaginative. To its credit, the album is certainly more stimulating than most of the current spate of percussion releases. But, in jazz terms, a performance with five drummers requires a more radically new design than this long series of conventional exercises.

ORIT SPANN: Oris Span Is the Blues. Oris Span (vocal and piano) and Robert Lockwood, Jr. (vocals and guitar).

The recent emphasis on soul music has resulted in a revival of interest in the authentic down-home blues. One of the finer exponents of these vital Negro blues is thirty-year-old Otis Spann, for several years the pianist of the blues band of Muddy Waters. This is Spann's first vocal collection, and it shows him to be a husky and convincing blues shouter as well as a propulsive and inventive boogie-boogie pianist. Shaping the disc is the Lynn Lockwood, Jr., stepson of the legendary Robert Johnson, and himself an exciting, emotive performer. This is the raw stuff, with no punches pulled.

OTIS SPANN: Oris Span Is the Blues.

The avant-garde pianist Cecil Taylor is one of a clutch of younger jazz artists who are finding a fuller improvisational freedom in atonality. Without the restrictions of a constantly recurring harmonic sequence, Taylor and colleagues can spin out long-lined excursions in which the over-all musical shape and direction take precedence over the actual notes.

This music is quite naturally difficult to understand at first hearing, but listeners who can suspend their usual criteria and accept Taylor's rationale will discover in it integrity, vitality, and total emotional involvement.

RICHARD WILLIAMS: New Horn in Town. Richard Williams (trumpet), Leo Wright (alto saxophone and flute), Richard Wyand (piano), Reginald Workman (bass), Bobby Thomas (drums). I Can Dream, Can't I? I Remember Clifford; Ferris Wheel; and four others. CAzon 8003 $4.95.

Interest: Attractive modern jazz
Performance: Skillful but uninspired
Recording: Very good

Richard Williams is a young trumpeter who has showed considerable promise in earlier recordings, but this album, his first as a leader, is mostly just another example of competent, unexceptional blowing by a group of New York modernists. The arrangements, though some of them are quite attractive, merely serve as springboards for extended soloing. Williams, Wright, and Wyand. Williams himself plays with considerable warmth and taste; his greatest weakness is a lack of real melodic inventiveness, and he often relies too heavily on the singing, soaring quality of his trumpet to suggest a lyricism not implicit in his improvisations.

P. J. W.

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4-TRACK CLASSICS


Interest: Beethoven staples
Performance: Characteristic
Recording: Both good
Stereo Quality: Both OK

Neither of these tapes should cause neglect of the Monteux or Walter stereo disc versions of the "Pastoral" Symphony, let alone of the Walter or Toscanini (mono, Camden) versions of the Seventh Symphony. However, the London sound in the "Pastoral" is truly glorious. Ansermet's reading is a bit on the genial side, but not distressingly so.

Stokowski turns in a great performance of the first movement of the Seventh Symphony; but, after that, all rhythmic vitality seems to evaporate, and the finale is marred further by a couple of very mannered ritardos. The sound is good, but the tape hiss is rather high. Ansermet's reading of the Seventh Symphony is solid and gentlemanly, and again the sound is excellent. All things considered, the Ansermet reel is one of the better Beethoven symphonies buys on tape.

D. H.

@ BRAHMS: Piano Concerto No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 83, Sviatoslav Richter (piano); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf cond. RCA Victor FTC 2055 $8.95.

Interest: Great concerto and artist
Performance: Inspired
Recording: Spacious
Stereo Quality: Excellent

It has been suggested that Sviatoslav Richter's musical communication is of a provincial and isolated sort. The argument rests that Richter, having made only rather brief trips outside of Russia, had until last fall not been exposed to the thinking of musicians in the West, and that travel would broaden him into a more sophisticated and interesting pianist.

This may, in a sense, be true. Indeed, this recording, made two days after the pianist's American debut, in the same concert with the same orchestra, leaves the distinct impression that he has been distancing with the angels and is quietly eager to tell us what they had to say. Only in the opening minutes of the first movement do some unusual tempos break into the spell. Richter's vision of the slow movement transcends that of any other pianist on records, and to the finale he brings a lightness and grace that show where most of Brahms' "muddy" writing really is—in the fingers of lesser pianists. Erich Leinsdorf has shaped his orchestral collaboration sympathetically.

This is the concerto's first tape, and Victor has given it sound that is big and spacious, with good depth and effective instrument placement.


Interest: Violin staples
Performance: Tasteful
Recording: Problematical
Stereo Quality: Same

Ricci's reading of the Mendelssohn, while tasteful and uninflected, scarcely does homage to the concerto's inner elfin side. His playing here has mainly bland good manners, but at least the finale is played straightforwardly and with formidable technique. Ricci is closer to the spirit of the Bruch concerto, in particular to the weight and purple second movement, which he sets forth with passion and with a firm, clean touch. As with the stereo disc version, there is trouble keeping the soloist in the center of the stereo stage.

The Laredo tape is a hearthbreaker. The young man is a violent violinist first, as his warm-toned, exhilaratingly sung rendition of the Bruch concerto amply demonstrates. But the review copy of the tape offered only a faint and muffled sound on the left channel. Let us hope this is a processing error and has been corrected in subsequent copies. On the other channel, the soloist has simply not been audible, with Laredo snarling (and a bit too prominently) stage center in a performance that is pretty violent for Mozart, with a heavy, punched-in accompaniment by Howard Mitchell and the National Symphony. The bright Victor sound is marred by occasional background rumble.

Heifetz's playing of the Prokofiev is outstanding. He gave this gloriously score its premiere on records over twenty years ago, with Knousievs'ky and the Boston Symphony, and now this issue marks its first tape recording. Other violinists have done nobly by this concerto, but the authority and brio of Heifetz show him still its supreme exponent. The tape has the violin sounding strongly from the left channel; once this is put right, the sound is overwhelming. The Mendelssohn, with the soloist properly centered, is a rare disappointment—high-powered, heartless, and hectic. In addition, there is some slight going into the fast portion of the third movement.

MAY 1961

EDWIN S. BERGAMINI  DAVID HALL
PONCHIELLI: La Gioconda. Anita Cerquetti (soprano), La Gioconda; Franca Sacchi (contralto), La Cieca; Mario del Monaco (tenor), Enzo Cesare Stepi (bass), Allevi; Giulia Tavani (mezzo-soprano), Laura; Ettore Bastianini (baritone), Barnaba; and others. Florence May Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Gianandrea Gavazzeni. London LOR 90044 two rehs $21.95.


Amilcare Ponchielli’s blood-curdling piece (1876) on Inquisition-ridden seventeenth-century Venice has neither the impassioned genius of middle-period Verdi nor the refinement of mature Puccini, but, given a fine cast, it can still pack a mighty wallop.

This 1957 London recording, earliest of the three stereo versions currently available on discs—scores a near miss in this well-processed tape. For me, it is Ettore Bastianini’s suavely sinister, intensely musical impersonation of Barnabà that gives the performance its moments of greatest worth, though Giulietta Simionato’s Laura is also a shining light. Young Anita Cerquetti is surely a dramatic soprano to be watched, but here she is not quite the peer of either Calas (Angel) or Milianos (RCA Victor) in the title role. Franca Sacchi, as La Cieca, is something of a liability, with her wobbly voice and uncertain intonation. As Enzo, Mario del Monaco is mainy and heroic enough, but his voice sounds distinctly worn around the edges.

The contribution of Gianandrea Gavazzeni and the chorus is generally effective in its full-bodied vigor, though greater spaciousness would have enhanced the sound considerably. There is not much stereo movement in this production, but the directional elements are nicely handled, especially in the latter half of Act I.

PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA OF VENICE, KARAJAN. The Philharmonic Orchestra of Venice under Karajan has given it an excellent stereo production.

The tape has been well processed, with no perceptible cross-talk and minimal background hiss. This is a thoroughly good set in every respect, and one not to be missed by any opera lover. D. H.

STRAUSS: Die Fledermaus. Hilde Gueden (soprano), Rosalinde; Erika Köth (soprano), Adele; Regina Resnik (mezzo-soprano), Prince Orlofsky; Giuseppe Zangieri (tenor), Alfred; Waldemar K熹usfi (tenor), Eisenstein; Walter Berry (bass), Falke; Eberhart Wächter (baritone), Frank; Erich Kunz (bass), Frosch; Peter Klein (tenor), Dr. Falke; Renata Tesibaldi (soprano), Francesca De Vicco (soprano), Mario del Monaco (tenor), Teresa Berganza (soprano), Juan Sastre (tenor), Jean Poulin (tenor), Leonine Price (soprano), Giunlitta Simionato (mezzo-soprano), Ettore Bastianini (baritone), and Lidija Walsch (soprano). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karajan. London LOR 90030 two rehs $21.95.


If you prefer Die Fledermaus straight, hang on to the fine old 1958 London album with Clemens Krauss conducting and with Hilde Gueden and Wilma Lipp in the principal female roles. The recent Angel stereo disc set, conducted by Otto Ackermann, is not half bad either.

If you acquire this tape, however, you’ll be getting Die Fledermaus with lots of trimming, after the fashions of those opera houses that stage New Year’s Eve galas with all their leading artists doing a turn as guests at Prince Orlofsky’s party in Act II. If you can take your Strauss interlarded with some forty minutes of American and continental pop favorites sung by Renata Tesibaldi, the last menu歌舞, and this is a collection for you.

Of course you can go “fast forward” through the party high-jinks and get on with Strauss; the music is done with great spirit by Karajan and his colleagues. Indeed, there is more of this than usually in his phrasing through the whole of this recording. His singers do well for him too—or all save Erika Köth, in the crucial and virtuosic role of Adele. Her characterization is suitably brittle, but her singing is affected by a fast vibrato that becomes disconcerting when heard over any period of time. Hilde Gueden is a lovely Rosalinde, and the men are all splendid. The stage business in Act III involving Erich Kunz and Frosch, the slightly tipsy jester, is amusing farce and nothing more in its genre.

All things considered, this set could be summed up as a “commercial” Die Fledermaus.

HIFI/STERO
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TONY BENNETT: *A String of Harold Arlen.* Tony Bennett (vocals); orchestra, Glenn Osser cond. When the Sun Comes Out: Let’s Fall in Love; Fun to Be Fooled; and nine others. COLUMBIA CS 8599 $4.98.

Interest: Arlen assortment
Performance: Bennett’s best
Recording: Could use bass
Stereo Quality: Satisfactory

This recital finds Tony Bennett in superior form, perhaps because the even more superior quality of Harold Arlen’s songs furnishes the inspiration. At any rate, his interpretative gifts and obvious respect for the material should help the listener to overlook his rather weak vocal equipment. In addition to the more familiar songs, the disc offers such comparatively rare specimens as *House of Flowers,* *When the Sun Comes Out,* and a particularly appealing

© AL CAILA: *New Shows in Town—1961.* Orchestra; Al Caila; arranged: Make Someone Happy: Comedians: Artificial Flowers; and nine others. MEDALLION MS 7515 $3.98.

Interest: Quite high
Performance: Bright arrangements
Recording: Excellent
Stereo Quality: Obvious directionality

The dozen selections arranged by Al Caila represent seven different Broadway musicals, and almost all of them are turned into briskly swinging affairs that give all the instruments a chance to shine. Among the shows, the late Conquering Hero slipped into town without an original-cast recording; it is represented by the perky “Hail the Conquering Hero” and by “Rough Times,” whose inspiration apparently came to its composer while he was talking about in Rodgers and Hart’s Mountain Greenery. S. G.

© BING CROSBY: *Bing—A Musical Autobiography (1944–1947).* Bing Crosby (vocals) with the Andrews Sisters, Judy Garland, Les Paul and trio, Bob Hope, the Jesters, and Al Jolson. Swingin’ on a Star; It’s Been a Long, Long Time; Begin the Beguine; and nine others. DECCA DL 9077 $4.98.

Interest: Sure
Performance: Assured
Recording: All right

If you are especially keen on the Bing Crosby of 1944 to 1947, you may now purchase a sampling of his vocal output for those years alone, without being obligated to purchase memorials to the Bing Crosby of previous or following years that are contained in the five-record set DXK 151. The songs selected for this record offer a reasonably broad cross-section of Crosby’s work with the performers listed above. The sequences are bridged by his ever so casual commentaries. S. G.

© KIMIO ETO: *Koto and Flute.* Kimio Eto (koto) and Bud Shank (flute), Joyce Kato; Chi Dai; Lullaby; and four others. WORLD-PACIFIC WP 1209 $4.98.

Interest: For the adventurous
Performance: Expert
Recording: Fine

The koto is an ancient thirteen-string plucked instrument of Japan, with a deep, resonant, harp-like tone. Kimio Eto, presumably a master of the instrument, has joined with jazz flutist Bud Shank in a continually interesting program of Japanese music. Michio Miyagi’s Hattsumori Umi Suite, which occupies one whole side, is the most ambitious and best-realized selection in the group. S. G.

FREDERICK FENNELL: *Frederick Fennell Conducts Victor Herbert.* (see p. 60)

© STUART HAMBLEN: *The Spell of the Yukon.* Stuart Hamblen (vocals); orchestra and chorus. Shake the Hand of a Man; The Lure of Little Voices; Big Wicked Bill; and seven others. COLUMBIA CS 8388 $4.98.

Interest: He-man songs
Performance: Borders on parody
Recording: Satisfactory
Stereo Quality: Effective

Cheeky enough Yukon scenery to give anyone less steadfast a severe case of indigestion, Stuart Hamblen offers a program almost equally divided between the poems of Robert Service and his own musical inspirations. His interpretations of his own stuff come across better than the rest, and at times he even manages to evoke something of the Alaskan frontier. But unfortunately for this effort, he monts like a stock-company Hamlet when he gets to declaiming poetry. S. G.

© JOE HARNELL: *Naked City.* Paul Phillips and his Band. Joe Harnell cond., *Harlem Nocturne; Fever; I Cover the Waterfront;* and nine others. MEDALLION MS 7517 $3.98.

Interest: Musical metropolis
Performance: Tastefully stereophonic
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: High

Joe Harnell is a man of imagination and ideas. He has to be, for this is yet another one of those collections devoted to an aural portrayal of various aspects of a large city. Who else would use the generally soppy Tenderly theme to set forth the discordant, ominous sounds of a bustling metropolis, or In the Still of the Night to paint some of its livelier nocturnal activities? The arrangements are so tasteful, however, that such off-beat ideas never seem like mere attention-grabbing stunts. S. G.

© HANGNAHS HENNESSY AND WINGY BRUBECk: *Rides, Rapes and Rogues.* Hangnaeh Hennessy and Wingy Brubeck (pianos); Arthur Fiddler and the Boston Pops, Lindley Armstrong (conductor). LIBERTY LST 7185 $4.98.

Interest: Should be greater
Performance: Too obvious
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: High

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Peggy Stuart (piano); orchestra, Frank Hunter cond, Stella by Starlight, Laura; Where or When; St. Louis Blues; and eight others. Top Rank RMR $44 $3.98.

Interest: Attractive collection
Performance: Lush stuff
Recording: Nears basic

Peggy Stuart is a highly accomplished pianist of the Manhattan-and-martini school, and is also the composer of at least three genuinely attractive melodies—Smoky Eyes, I Need that Girl Around, and Melody Out of the Night—that are included in this recital. For the rest, the program consists of standard romantic items, played imaginatively but not flamboyantly. Yesterdays is given a "Moonlight Sonata" setting, while Laura is presented with Ravel's Bolero beat throbbing in the background. But it is when she gets to I'm Always Chasing Rainbows that Miss Stuart's subliminal self really gets the upper hand. After the strings have played the familiar melody in the introduction, the young lady promptly breaks right into the middle section of Chopin's Fantaisie Impromptu. Not badly played, either.

S.G.

@ CATERINA VALENTE: Caterina à la Carte. Caterina Valente (vocals); orchestra, Kurt Edelhagen, Paul Durand, and Armand Migani cond. Bouquet de Rêves; Moi, J'aimais l'amour; and ten others. DECCA DL 4050 $3.98.

Interest: Plenty
Performance: A pleasure
Recording: Good

Say a word for consistency. For surely Caterina Valente has demonstrated in all her many recordings that she is incapable of anything but a top-grade performance. Her well-controlled, slightly husky voice, which seems to be at home in any language, is heard here expressing a variety of emotions in French. Included are Complainte de Mecle, translated from the eternal saga of Mack the Knife; the rhapsodic Où en tu ma joie; and a charming little song-symphony. Une Fumée dans Paris. No translations are printed.

S.G.

@ SHIRLEY TEMPLE: Complete Shirley Temple Song Book. Sound-track recordings. Shirley Temple (vocals), with Bill Robinson, Alice Faye, Jack Haley, Bert Lahr, Joan Davis, Jack Oakie, Charlotte Greenwood, and others. 20th Fox TCF 1092 two 12-inch discs $7.96.

Interest: Nostalgia stuff
Performance: Cute kid
Recording: Acceptable

The first disc in this two-disc set was reviewed in the March, 1959, issue. Now, with twenty-three additional numbers jammed onto the second disc, 20th Fox can claim, with some justification, that the forty-two selections constitute a complete album of Shirley Temple songs. All of the numbers are from Miss Temple's seventeen films made between 1934 and 1940. The better-known items (On the Good Ship Lollipop, Animal Crackers in My Soup, Goodnight, My Love, and so on) are on the first record; the second fills in the gaps quite neatly.

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**THEATER**

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HIFI/Stereo
including *The Ten Trumpet* (incorrectly labeled *March of the Wooden Soldiers*), *Hey, What Did the Bluejay Say?*, *The Right Somebody to Love*, and a finale, apparently taken from *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, which reprises five of the songs.

The packaging could have been done with more care. Songs are not always listed under the proper movie, nor is there any credit given on the jacket to the song writers or to the other singers. And why couldn't all the selections from one picture have been grouped together? S.G.

**HAL HOLBROOK: Mark Twain Tonight! Vol. 2. Columbia OS 2050 $3.98.**

*Interest: May flag*

*Performance: Expert*

*Recording: First-rate*

*Stereo Quality: Couldn't be better*

Hal Holbrook is an extremely gifted actor, and his ability to get inside the character of Mark Twain is little short of uncanny. Yet this new release seems to lack the sustained interest of the previous volume (Columbia OS 2019, mono OL 5440). This is partly, I suppose, because so much of the material is so similar. Stereo movement is expertly handled throughout the program, which was recorded at an actual performance. S.G.

** Lionel Newman: Exciting Hong Kong. Orchestra, Lionel Newman cond. ABC Paramount ABC 367 $3.98. **

*Interest: Minimal*

*Performance: Does the job*

*Recording: Too much treble*

"Exciting" may well be the right adjective for Hong Kong, but it hardly applies to the routine background music that accompanies the TV series. Furthermore, I should think that the city has enough problems without having inflicted on it such inspirations as *Honorable Hong Kong Rock*, *Chinese Cha Cha*, and *Chop Chop Waltz.* S.G.

**Great Motion Picture Themes. Miscellaneous sound tracks; Ferrante and Teicher (pianos); orchestras conducted by Don Costa, Al Cohn, Nick Perito, and Mitchell Powell. Exodus: The Big Country: On the Beach; and thirteen others. United Artists UAL 3122 $3.98.**

*Interest: Screenland sampler*

*Performance: Mixed bag*

*Recording: Clean*

No fewer than sixteen background themes from United Artists films have been collected on this generally lively disc. Both sound-track excerpts and best-selling commercial versions are included: this may help sales, but the musical results are a stylistic hodgepodge. Incidentally, the theme from *I Want to Live* is supposed to feature Gertie Mulligan and Shefey Manne, but I couldn't find them. S.G.

** Hungarian National Ballet Company: A Program of Songs and Dances. Ancient Songs and Dances; Four Hungarian Folk Tunes; and five others. Erco BC 1102 $8.98.**

*Interest: Sophisticated folk stuff*

*Performance: Polished*

*Recording: Good*

*Stereo Quality: Adequate*

The Ballet Hungarikus, founded in 1950, consists of an orchestra, a chorus, and a dancing group. The aim of the company is quite clearly to use folk themes and instruments in a relatively formal, "artistic" context. The album, therefore, while occasionally invigorating, lacks the abandon of ethnic Hungarian folk music. It does, however, contain delightfully youthful dances on folk themes and robust choral singing. There is also a performance of the all-too-familiar Second Hungarian Rhapsody of Liszt in a quasi-gypsy orchestration that makes the work sound more limber than usual. N.H.

** Carlos Montoya: Granados: El Pito; Danzas Flamencas; and ten others. RCA Victor LSP 2251 $4.98.**

*Interest: Absorbing recital*

*Performance: Deeply felt*

*Recording: Beautiful*

*Stereo Quality: First-rate*

While other Flamenco guitarists may set your spine tingling with their graceful, colorful playing, Carlos Montoya on this recital is more interested in smoldering embryos than he is with flaming campfires. Here he is primarily concerned with the soul.

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of the Spanish gypsy—the tenderness, the melancholy, the poetry. As something of a contrast—though no less appealing—to the general theme are two medleys, Madrid 1860 and Regional Potpourri, which also emerge as very personal expressions of the remarkable Sr. Montoya.

S.G.

CARLOS MONTOYA AND SABICAS:
The Giants of Flamenco.

Carlos Montoya (guitar) and Sabicas (guitar).
Por Los Rincones; Temas en Favor; Arabian Fantasy; Ecos de Sierra Nevada; and six others. ABC-Paramount ABC 357 3.98.

Interest: Stirring Flamenco guitar
Performance: Passionate
Recording: Muffled in spots

This is not, as the title might seem to suggest, an album of duets. It is, rather, a program of effective solo performances by two of the foremost exponents of the exciting and emotionally charged guitar music of the Spanish Gypsies. Montoya emerges as the virtuoso of the two artists; Sabicas' playing is simpler and more directly communicative. Montoya's tone is far crisper and more vital; Sabicas' seems strangely muffled beside it, perhaps because of poor recording of several of his numbers. Most of the selections are attractive, with the zambra (showing the Moorish influences) especially interesting.

P. J. W.

ODETTA: At Carnegie Hall.

Odetta (vocals and guitar), Bill Lee (bass), Gallows Pole; Halt On; and thirteen others. Vanguard VSD 2072 $5.95, VSR 9076 $4.98.

Interest: Self-conscious folk song
Performance: Too rigid
Recording: Very good
Stereo Quality: Good

I cannot share the general enthusiasm for Odetta. This Carnegie Hall concert fortifies my resistance. Odetta has a strong voice but little capacity to shade or to communicate spontaneity. Unlike Joan Baez, Odetta rarely gets inside the song. She stands apart, self-consciously shaping the piece into her own stiff style. When she does project power, as in the unaccompanied spiritual, God's A-Gonna Cut You Down, her performance still lacks the overwhelming fervor the piece should have. On the last four tracks, Odetta is accompanied blandly by the Choir of the Church of the Master. There are a few effective moments in the program, but by and large, Odetta is insufficiently sensitive and flexible.

N. H.

MARATHA SCHLAMME: At Town Hall.
The Wiggly Tappy Gypsy; Everybody Loves Saturday Night; and sixteen others. Vanguard VSD 2063 $5.95, VRS 9070 $4.98.

Interest: Her most expandable
Performance: Uneven
Recording: Competent
Stereo Quality: OK

MARATHA SCHLAMME: Israeli Folk Songs. Milk and Honey; Sheil in the Field; and nineteen others. Vanguard VSD 2067 $5.95, VRS 9072 $4.98.
Martha Schlamme is multi-lingual but not always at ease in all the cultures she invades. In her February 14, 1960, Town Hall recital, she is most convincing in Jewish, Israeli, and Russian songs. In English folk tunes, she overemphasizes. Her Jenny The Pirate from The Three-Penny Opera lacks the smouldering rage of Lotte Lenya’s definitive interpretation. Miss Schlamme is particularly ill-advised to try Negro spirituals, for which she has neither the requisite rhythmic pulsation nor the appropriate timbres.

The worst and most surprising failure in the Town Hall album is Woman Go Home, an Austrian portrait of a cold, faithless wife. Miss Schlamme can learn from studying South African Miriam Makeba’s performance of the song in her first Victor album. Unexplainable to me is the inclusion of a pointless story about a taxi driver and of the irritatingly cute Minuety, I Want a Drink of Water.

In the Israeli collection, however, Miss Schlamme is much more satisfying. She understands the spirit of the music and sings with exhortatory passion and dramatic zest.

SVESNIKOV CHORUS: From a Far, For Country. Evening hell; If I Come, If I Go; The Blacksmith Shop: and eleven others, with ALP 100 $4.98.

Interest: Superior choral program
Performance: Supple

Ralph J. Gleason says this about new
Don Shirley L. P.

Interest: Broad
Performance: Flawless
Recording: Superb

This is an unusual sort of album, as most of Don Shirley’s are. It is not jazz, nor is it classical or pops. It is a sort of “good” music—if there is such a thing—that is melodic and well played and full of delightful little points of interest. Shirley has a beautiful touch, a fine sense of interpretation, and tremendous technique. The recording is excellent.

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