WHAT KIND OF SPEAKERS SHOULD YOU USE FOR QUADRA PHONICS?

SPECIAL SPEAKER ISSUE
phase distortion, plus substantially better stability with four double tuned phase linear ceramic filters and four monolithic IC's in the IF section.

6-stage limiters
The IF section includes 6-stage limiter circuits. Used in conjunction with differential amplifiers in monolithic IC's, noise interference is completely eliminated with a signal to noise ratio of 75dB.

Exclusive Phase Lock Loop (PLL) IC circuitry in the TX-9100 multiplex section
Developed and used for the first time by Pioneer, the Phase Lock Loop (PLL) circuit is actually an electronic servomechanism. It maintains continuous and precise phasing between the pilot signal and the subcarrier, supplying optimum channel separation. Completely drift free, no alignment is ever required.

The PLL cannot be affected by humidity or temperature since there are no coils or capacitors to be detuned. This provides complete stability and reliability.

New pulse noise suppressor in the TX-9100 operates with computer control
This circuit operates automatically when it is switched on. It effectively blocks radiated noise from airplane and auto ignition systems, neon and traffic lights, etc. It does not interfere with frequency response and stereo separation. Whether the signal is weak or strong, this automatic 'brain' decides when the PNS gate circuit is to operate.

Unique muting control
A 2-position variable muting control uses electronic switching as well as reed relay switching. This eliminates interstation noise and the popping noise of tuning and detuning.

Complete command with a wide variety of controls
Whether it's for AM, FM or headset output levels, Pioneer provides greater operating precision with three independently operated output level controls. A headset may be used without a following power amplifier. Precision tuning is achieved with the aid of signal strength and tuning meters.

AM section highlights IC's
The entire AM section, following the front end, is a unitized IC. A monolithic IC replaces 84 individual components plus a ceramic filter. By using a differential amp circuit and a balanced mixing circuit, there are better spurious characteristics and special AGC amplification.

Great specs for great performance

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The Amplifiers: SA-9100, SA-8100, SA-7100
Two separate power supplies utilize 30,000 uF total capacitance
You read it right. The power supply in the SA-9100 uses a total capacitance of 30,000 uF, 15,000 uF each for the balanced positive and negative power supplies. This completely eclipses anything now available in integrated amplifiers. This super high capacitance results in an absolutely pure DC voltage supply. There's constant DC voltage regulation regardless of line voltage changes and signal input. Even at extremely low frequencies there's stable power output, excellent transient response and minimum distortion — only 0.1% at any frequency between 20-20,000Hz for 60 watts output per channel.

These positive and negative power supplies provide absolute stability in all stages, even in the equalizer amp and proceeding to the control and power amps. Therefore, the signal lines become zero potential to completely eliminate the usual (and annoying) click noise of operating controls and switches.

Stability is increased even further by the differential amplifier used in the first stages of the equalizer and control amplifiers (also the power amp.) 100% DC negative feedback supplies excellent stability and transient response; it also eliminates distortion. To further increase

Two 15,000uF power supplies eclipse anything now available in integrated amplifiers.
Announcing a major breakthrough that will have universal impact on all future high fidelity components and their performance.
The time has come to completely re-evaluate the standard you now use to judge high fidelity performance.

With this new line of tuners and amplifiers, Pioneer presents many ingenious innovations in circuitry that are being used for the first time. However, this exclusiveness is only secondary. While each new circuit can be considered revolutionary by itself, what is even more important is that their combined capabilities achieve precision and performance heretofore unattainable.

**The Tuners: TX-9100, TX-8100, TX-7100**

**FM front end — an engineering triumph**

The height of sophistication, the TX-9100's stabilized, drift-free front end replaces printed circuit boards with completely metallized construction. The same used in high precision communications equipment. Employing three dual gate MOS FET's and a buffer circuit in the local oscillator, there's exceptionally high gain with extremely low noise. Two tuned RF stages with a 5-gang variable tuning capacitor contribute to the highest selectivity (90dB) and astonishing FM sensitivity (1.5μV). The exclusive use of a heavy gauge die cast aluminum housing assures uncanny stability.

**IF section — the epitome of advanced research**

In the pursuit of excellence, significant new IF section technology was developed. The result is optimum selectivity with minimum
stabilization, special electronic regulator circuits are used.Transient response is also improved with a superb damping factor of 70.

The unique equalizer amplifier
To make certain that extraneous signals do not interfere with the input signal, the equalizer amp is totally enclosed and sealed to shield it against leakage.

There's also extra assurance of precision with special low noise metal film resistors and styrol capacitors. Both are manufactured under continuous computer control to highest laboratory test equipment tolerances: ±1% for resistors, ±2% for capacitors. Until now such precision has been unheard of in hi-fi equipment. Deviation from the ideal RIAA curve is only ±0.2dB.

Because of the extremely wide variety possible by the twin tone controls, the tone defeat switch adds extra flexibility. Adjusting the tone controls to your satisfaction, you can flip the tone defeat switch. Bass and treble responses instantly become flat. When it is switched off you return to the original tone control settings.

The power amplifier
To sustain the ultra sophisication of the equalizer and control amp sections, the power amp has a direct-coupled pure complementary SEPP circuit, double differential amplifiers and two constant current loads. The combined effect is the achievement of wide power frequency range and excellent transient response. 100% negative DC feedback is supplemented by 66dB dynamic negative feedback for minimum distortion and absolute stability. The pre and power amps can be used independently with a separation switch.

Exclusive direct-coupling in all stages
Until now, direct-coupling has been used only with the power amplifier. Pioneer takes it a dramatic step further in the SA-9100 and SA-8100. Direct-coupling in all stages from the equalizer amp to the control amp to the power amp. More effective? Absolutely. It achieves the finest transient response, wider dynamic range, THD and IM distortion of only 0.04% (1 watt). It's an incredible achievement.

The control amplifier: Twin stepped tone controls

The control amplifier: Twin stepped tone controls custom tailor your listening.

Now you can make the most critical bass and treble adjustments with supreme ease. In fact, there are 5,929 tonal combinations to suit your listening room acoustics and to compare or compensate for component frequency response.

On the SA-9100 and SA-8100 four tone controls (two for bass, two for treble) make 2dB (2.5dB with SA-6100) step adjustments for the entire audio spectrum. Working together with the tone controls is a buffer amplifier with 100% negative DC feedback. The main bass control governs ±10 dB at the sub-bass, ±6dB at 50 Hz. The main treble control governs ±10 dB at 10KHz and the sub-treble, ±6dB at 20 KHz. This, plus the tone defeat switch (described in the next paragraph) makes the SA-9100 the most exciting-to-use amplifier that has ever powered any hi-fi system.

New tone defeat switch
Because of the extremely wide variety (5,929) of frequency adjustments made possible by the twin tone controls, the tone defeat switch adds extra flexibility. Adjusting the tone controls to your satisfaction, you can flip the tone defeat switch. Bass and treble responses instantly become flat. When it is switched off you return to the original tone control settings.

Level set, volume and loudness contour controls adjust to listening preference
Three controls working together adjust to any degree of loudness. The level set control is the primary volume control. Its maximum loudness setting is 0dB.

Successive settings of -15dB and -30dB result in lower gain. Once the desired volume is obtained, the volume control is used for fine adjustments within the given range. While the loudness contour boosts bass and treble, it may also be used with the level set control. The more advanced the position of the level set control, the lower the effective range of the loudness contour.

The original and positive speaker protection circuit
Since the signal is fed directly to the speakers because of direct-coupling, an automatic electronic trigger relay system is incorporated into the power amplifier. This protects the speakers against damage from DC leakage which can also cause distortion. It also prevents short circuits in the transistor sections.

Maximum convenience for program source selection
While there is a multiple function rotary switch for microphone, phono 2 and two auxiliaries, Pioneer has included an additional convenience. A separate flip type level control switch for microphone, phono 1 and any other single program source. Incidentally, both switches are shielded to protect the input against undesirable extraneous signal pickups.

Two-way tape duplicating and monitoring
There are two separate flip type switches on the front panel of the SA-9100 for tape-to-tape duplicating and monitoring. Two tape decks can be connected for recording, playback and duplicating in either cirection, with simultaneous monitoring.

Level controls for phono 2, aux 2
In order to match the level of various inputs, individual level controls are provided for phono 2 and aux 2.

Speaker B control
This special control helps in the use of two pairs of speaker systems of different efficiencies. There is no sacrifice of damping or distortion when switching from one pair to the other.

Impedance selector for phono 2
An easy-to-use switch allows you to employ any phono cartridge input (25K, 50K, 100K ohms).

Two-position high & low filters
The low filter switch on the SA-9100 and SA-8100 has subsonic (below 8Hz) and 30Hz positions. The high filter switch has 12KHz and 8KHz positions.

Maximum versatility in program sources

This new lineup of Pioneer tuners and amplifiers is unquestionably the most advanced available today. Yet despite this overwhelming sophistication, they're sensibly priced.

See your Pioneer dealer. He'll show you how this series of fine instruments can outperform any units in their price range. All prices include walnut cabinets. SA-9100- $199.95; SA-8100- $129.95; SA-7100- $99.95; TX-9100- $299.95; TX-8100- $229.95; TX-7100- $179.95.

While not discussed here, Pioneer is also introducing the SA-5200L stereo amplifier and the TX-6200 stereo tuner for high quality hi-fi on a low budget. Only $129.95 each with walnut cabinet.

U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., 178 Commerce Rd., Carlstadt, New Jersey 07072
West: 13300 S. Estrella, Los Angeles 90248 / Midwest: 1500 Greenleaf, Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007 / Canada: S. H. Parker Co., Ont.
HERE IS THE WORLD’S ENTIRE SELECTION OF AUTOMATIC TURNTABLES WITH ZERO TRACKING ERROR.

There they are. All one of them.
Garrard’s Zero 100, the only automatic turntable with Zero Tracking Error.
Not that there haven’t been attempts by other turntable makers. Many have tried. This is the first to succeed. And it has succeeded brilliantly. Expert reviewers say it’s the first time they’ve been able to hear the difference in the performance of a record player...that the Zero 100 actually sounds better.
It’s all because of a simple but superbly engineered tone arm. An articulating auxiliary arm, with critically precise pivots, makes a continuous adjustment of the cartridge angle as it moves from the outside grooves toward the center of the record.
This keeps the stylus at a 90° tangent to the grooves. Consequently tracking error is reduced to virtual zero. (Independent test labs have found the test instruments they use are incapable of measuring the tracking error of the Zero 100.) Theoretical calculations of the Zero 100’s tracking error indicate that it is as low as 1/160 that of conventional tone arms.
Zero tracking error may be the most dramatic aspect of Zero 100, but it has other features of genuine value and significance. Variable speed control; illuminated strobe; magnetic anti-skating; viscous-damped cueing; 15° vertical tracking adjustment; the patented Garrard Synchro-Lab synchronous motor; and exclusive two-point record support in automatic play.
The reviewers have done exhaustive reports on Zero 100. We believe they are worth reading, so we’d be happy to send them to you along with a color brochure on the Zero 100. Write to us at: British Industries Co., Dept. H33 Westbury, N.Y. 11590.

GARRARD ZERO 100 $199.95
less base and cartridge

GARRARD ZERO 100 $199.95
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THE MUSIC

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COVER: Design by Borys Patchowsky; photo by Bruce Pendleton

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EDITORially speaking
By WILLIAM ANDERSON

AUDIO QU(A)NDARY

It cannot have escaped the attention of even the most casual observer that the audio industry has been in labor again, or that the issue of its latest confinement has proved to be the most problematical of all. As the beneficiaries of what begins to look like a ten-year gestation cycle, we have welcomed into this musical world the bright and booming technological innovations called the long-playing disc (1948), the stereo disc (1958), and now the quadraphonic disc, whose first theoretical, if not commercial, manifestations became visible in 1968-1969. Those blessed with either a long memory or a talent for history know that neither Long Play nor Stereo were uneventful deliveries, the first having been complicated by the unattractively wasteful "war of the speeds" between RCA and Columbia, and the second turned into high comedy when an intrepid upstart of a record company (Audio Fidelity) simply kidnapped the baby from under the noses of the haggling industry mothers and rushed it to the waiting market. The present quadraphonic situation is even worse: the Cæsarean section of a perfectly legitimate audio concept ripped untimely from the nappes of the haggling industry mothers and rushed it to the waiting market.

...
Experts Agree: the Dynaco A-25 loudspeaker is unquestionably the best!

"... (The Dynaco A-25's) are quite probably the best buy in high fidelity today."

The Stereophile Magazine

"... The Dynaco had a remarkably neutral quality... The A-25 had less of this coloration than most speakers we have heard, regardless of price... Nothing we have tested had a better overall transient response... Not the least of the A-25's attraction is its low price..."

Julian Hirsch in Stereo Review

"... it was its outstanding transient response which really impressed us. Tone bursts throughout the meaningful frequency range showed up its excellence. In truth, the A-25 produced the finest tone-burst response of any speaker in this manner, regardless of price."

Audio

Dynaco A-25
$89.00
**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Indoor FM Antennas**
- Leonard Feldman's article on indoor FM antennas (June) was a most gratifying and helpful treatment of an important and seriously neglected subject. Over the years I've been aware of the paradox that $1.29 can equal $200 when the lack of a cheap, proper antenna can negate the potential excellence of a few hundred dollars' worth of sophisticated FM tuner circuitry.

As Mr. Feldman wrote, for many city dwellers the combination of high signal strength and a complex multipath situation makes their reception problem worse than that of suburban listeners. At the same time, regulations often forbid roof installations. I have found that in such cases the directional effectiveness of a rabbit-ears antenna (which I agree is the most efficient indoor solution) can be greatly diminished because of the additional signal picked up by the antenna's nondirectional flat-line lead-in. I've achieved considerable improvement in signal quality by cutting off the supplied twin lead close to the base of the rabbit-ears and then using a length of 75-ohm coax (shielded) cable with 75-300-ohm matching transformers at both the receiver and the antenna. This expedient keeps an shielded lead-in to an absolute minimum (no more than a few inches in all) and makes a surprising difference. Since even a couple of feet of unshielded twin lead can pick up disruptive amounts of unwanted multipath signal in high-signal-strength areas.

**Christopher Hamlin**
New York, N.Y.

Technical Editor Larry Klein replies: I wonder if Mr. Hamlin has tried replacing the regular rabbit-ears flat-line with 300-ohm shielded lead-in? (The shield should be grounded to the tuner chassis.) This should work as well as the coax cable, he easier to handle, and avoid the extra complications and cost of the matching transformers.

- Leonard Feldman and Stereo Review are to be congratulated for the article "Indoor Antennas for FM" which appeared in the June issue. As an apartment dweller who could not erect an outside antenna, I searched in vain for over ten years in your publication and many others for some solid information on how to solve my FM reception problems.

Now that I finally own a house, I can solve this dilemma in the conventional manner. But I certainly sympathize with the plight of those millions of Americans who are stuck with indoor-only antennas. Your article will probably create a great deal of controversy, but at least it is a valid starting point for the further development of information in this long neglected area.

**George Costello**
Kansas City, Mo.

**Music and Publicity**
- There is so much material on "Music and Publicity" that would make fascinating reading. But Stephen Rubin's job in your June issue was so stimulating and witty that I can't find it in my heart to criticize what was omitted: lack of space always modifies the ideal.

May I simply note, then, that the one who actually started the entire business should be credited—Constance Hope. Miss Hope, who trained most of the publicists specializing in musicians today, began her career with Lotte Lehmann as her first client in 1933. Other musical clients have been legion, including the Met, the Manhattan School of Music, Jascha Heifetz, Lily Pons, Roberta Peters, and the Musicians Emergency Fund. Her book Publicity Is Broccoli is still the trade's primer.

**Robert Cumming**
Editor, Music Journal
New York, N.Y.

**Bizarrock**
- Noel Coppage aptly strips most of the varnish from the super-'now' P. T. Barnum of the bizarre-rock medicine show ("Bizarrock," June), a thoughtful debunking much needed if this latest industry-managed trend is to be kept from getting out of hand.

Still, one might have expected more careful discrimination among the grab-bag of groups, and some deeper delving into the historical origins—so deeply and thoroughly British—of the whole thing. It might just be that the demonic energy of Van Der Graaf Generator is the result of solid musicianship and appropriate integration of technology in the studio. At any rate, their albums (yes, albums) are certainly not of the deadly boring snake-and-incantation variety. And, after all, the real "gypsy-doctors" are those who continue to create emotionally convincing illusions; behind the sad and tattered lot Mr. Coppage mentions you will find the piercing lyricism of Pink Floyd and the jazz-frontier sound of Soft Machine. Both groups have been unostentatiously making avant-garde music for seven years now without studio self-flagsellation or stage exhibitionism.

**Robert Bray**
Bloomington, Ill.

Mr. Coppage replies. You see if, Mr. Bray, I see it, and Michaelangelo Antonioni saw it (he used Pink Floyd music in the soundtrack of his movie Zabriskie Point), but the fact remains that it is not easy to see what's behind the sad and tattered lot because of the pile of dead rats, snakes, mutilated dolls, and hundred-dollar bills they've built up. My idea was that, first, we ought to torpedo that pile.

**The Real Rachmaninoff**
- Your May issue on Rachmaninoff was a perfect tribute to a great musician; many thanks to Victor Seroff. The portrait by Alan Magee, by the way, is a great character study. Rachmaninoff always came on stage head bent forward and with a shuffling walk. I know this, being nearly eighty and having seen and heard him and a lot of the great and near great in my time.

**Walter P. Bruning**
Beaumont, Calif.

- I was happy to see the centennial memoir of Rachmaninoff in your May issue. I hope many more such articles will appear in American publications because Rachmaninoff was as much a part of the United States as he was of Russia. He became a citizen of this country and is buried together with his wife Natalia Satina and his daughter Irina Wolfsky in Kensico cemetery, New York. For most of his exile period (1917-1943), "home" for Rachmaninoff was the U.S. I am certain that he loved this country.

The Library of Congress has set up a splendid exhibit on Rachmaninoff. The Library is also the repository of the Rachmaninoff Archive, a collection indispensable for any investigation into his life and work.

**Alberto D. Fajardo**
Washington, D.C.

**Camelot Correction**
- In a review of Richard Harris' latest album "Slides" (June), Paul Kresh comments: "Richard Harris has fluttered pulses ever since he sang If Ever I Would Leave You in the movie of Camelot." Harris played the role of King Arthur in that film. If Ever I Would Leave You was sung by Lancelot, acted by Franco Nero (with singing dubbed).

**Wayne Wilkinson**
East Peoria, Ill.

Mr. Kresh replies. So that was Franco Nero with a dubbed voice, was it? I saw Camelot on a shaky little slip playing through the Aegean one summer. They showed it in three parts, mostly out of focus, and the sound wasn't too good; it was a little difficult to tell King Arthur from Lancelot, but whoever dubbed the song did a beautiful job.

**A Swedish Mahler**
- Bravo to Lester Trimble for his glowing review of the Pettersson Symphony No. 7 with the Stockholm Philharmonic under Amtal Donati (May). For over two years I have thrilled to the unusual approach used by this brilliant composer in creating something surely is (Continued on page 8)
The classics from KLH. Four bookshelf loudspeakers of such extraordinary quality that each has set the standard of excellence in its price range. Pictured to the far left, our popular little Thirty-Two ($55.00†). Next, one of the best selling loudspeakers in the country, the Seventeen ($79.95†). Up front, everybody’s favorite, the Six ($139.95†). And finally, our most spectacular bookshelf model, the Five ($199.95†). If you really want to know what KLH is all about, we suggest you listen to any one or all of these fine loudspeakers. And when you do, we’re sure you’ll agree that KLH is about the best thing to happen to bookshelves since books.

For more information, visit your KLH dealer or write to KLH Research and Development Corp., 30 Cross Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

What’s a bookshelf without the classics?
An Education in Elgar

Bernard Jacobson's thoughtful review of three major Elgar pieces in the May issue should serve as an introduction to those unfamiliar with this music to become familiar with it. Detractors consider Elgar's music derivative, and his high praise for its creator, whom he referred to as "a kind of Swedish Mahler," is not to my taste even after being played once a week for eight years. I suspect it would win me to tears even after being played once a week for eight years. I was extremely gratified to find the new recordings of the symphonies so comprehensively reviewed in your May issue. The First Symphony is the only work I know that can still move me to tears even after being played once a week for eight years. I suspect it would win my "desert island" sweepstakes hands down.

As an Elgar devotee since my teens, I was managing editor William Livingstone replies. I appreciate Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with.

Classipop Quandary

I wish to add one more view to the illuminating remarks of Ron Eyer and the editorial commentary on them in the June "Letters" column. A melody is a succession of symbols (notes) arranged in a certain manner on the staff. Bach or Mozart arranged these symbols differently than some popular contemporary composer has done. The manipulations of these symbols by Bach or Mozart produces in me pleasure and a feeling of exaltation. The manipulation of notes by the popular composer generates in me distaste, and I unconsciously reject it as vulgar, trite, and without merit.

David Fonseca

Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Editor replies: Without meaning any disrespect, I would say that reader Fonseca has been brainwashed, that his sensibilities, not being his own but an unfortunate characteristic of our culture, are neither subjective nor objective. To paraphrase Keats, the best way of strengthening one's taste is to make one's mind permanently about nothing, to let it be a thoroughfare for all experience. Granted, there is vulgarity, triviality, and a lack of merit in much popular music, but the same qualities may easily be found in much classical music as well (though perhaps not in Mozart or Bach). Classical music has no patent on virtue, and popular none on vice. Both have their particular excellences and their particular uses. They are parts of a whole, they complement each other, they need each other, and they are not in competition. It is elitist mischief (on both sides) to suggest otherwise.

Discography Roundup

As an aid in preparing a ten-year supplement to Braun and Gray's Bibliography of Discographies, the compilers would appreciate receiving any information on privately published or unpublished discographies. Works on all subjects are acceptable. Any citations will be acknowledged.

Michael H. Gray

Gerald D. Gibson

Library of Congress

Washington, D.C. 20540

Latin Letters

For many years I have read your magazine. For my greatest passion is music. Your articles have generally been good—some were poor and a few were extraordinary. Among these few must be included the superb article by William Livingstone, "A Latin Postscript," in your May issue. For the first time I have had the pleasure of reading in an American publication an article by someone who understands the music of the South American continent, someone who knows that Argentina is different from Puerto Rico.

What thrilled me most was the mention of Carlos Gardel, a musician whose voice and songs are unrivaled. Fifty years after they were composed and despite great changes in taste and styles, Coroza Alenta, Yira Yira, and his other immortal tangos still have the power to make my heart ache whenever I hear them.

But there is a great difference between the article by Joel Vance ("The Latin Connection," also in May) and the one by Mr. Livingstone. The music that Mr. Vance discusses is "Latin" in name only. This music is of purely African origin and does not have the slightest relation to the Latin music that can be heard in Argentina, Chile, and parts of Colombia and Venezuela.

Guillermo J. Lepera

McMinnville, Ore.

I enjoyed William Livingstone's article on Latin music very much, and I am very happy to see some magazine coverage of this kind of music. However, I was disappointed that Lola Flores was not discussed in greater detail. In Spain she is known as "Lola de España," or often simply as "Lola." It would have been nice if at least one of her many albums had been recommended.

Cesar Guerrero

New York, N.Y.

Until I read the very interesting article "A Latin Postscript" in your May issue, I had thought that "Ramonina and In a Little Spanish Town" were authentic Spanish or South American songs. I was surprised to learn that they were written by an American, Mabel Wayne. Can you tell me something more about this composer?

Vivian Russo

New York, N.Y.

Managing Editor William Livingstone replies. I appreciate Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with Mr. Lepera's kind remarks about my article, but I would like to take issue with.}

Barry Margolis

Minneapolis, Minn.

Stereo Review
Dedicated to the proposition that an enlightened listener is a happy listener.

You've got a really great receiver. With an air of confidence, you switch it on, prepared to demonstrate the soul-stirring quality of the FM Stereo. And get, instead, an embarrassing silence. Because the source switch is on phono.

It won't happen with the new Sony 7065, because it keeps you informed. Enlightened. With easy-reading function lights on the dial. AM, FM, Phono, Aux, Tape, Mic. You always know where you are, at a glance. Without squinting or stooping.

But that's just the beginning. The 7065 delivers its full rated power at each and every frequency across the entire audio spectrum (60+60W RMS into 8 ohms, from 20 Hz to 20kHz). You don't lose the power you paid for when you need it, particularly for those gut-stirring lows.

You can pluck FM stations from even the most crowded dials, or from fringe locations. And AM is quiet and sensitive.

The controls make that superb performance easy to enjoy. You can click in your choice of 3 speaker pairs, monitor two tape recorders, dub directly. You're ready to add SQ or any other matrix system at any time.

The enlightened price includes a handsome walnut finished cabinet. The 7065 is Sony's top-of-the line receiver. Sony Corporation of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

Buy a Sony and see the light.

CIRCLE NO. 40 ON READER SERVICE CARD
The first NEW amplifier design since

the ORIGINAL Super Amp

You remember the first superpower amplifier—the Crown DC300. Well, most of its competitors are still using those six-year-old circuit designs pioneered by Crown. Most every amp but Crown’s new DC300A—a totally redesigned amplifier inside and out. Frankly, the DC300A is not created for the hi-fi mass market, but for demanding commercial and professional applications. However, there are discerning audiophiles, perhaps like yourself, who can appreciate the difference.

The new DC300A has double the number of output transistors, effectively twice the muscle of the old DC300 for driving multi-speaker systems. Each channel has eight 150-watt devices for 1200 watts of transistor dissipation per channel. Advanced electronic output protection permits the DC300A to drive the toughest speaker loads at higher outputs before going into protection, and even then there are no annoying flyback pulse noises or DC fuses to blow.

The new DC300A has unprecedented signal purity. IM and harmonic distortion ratings are 0.05%, although typically below 0.025%. Hum and noise rating is 110dB below 150 watts, while typically 122dB. The difference in increased listening comfort is impressive.

Although totally new, the DC300A has inherited some important traits from its predecessor.

- **PRICE**—still under $700
- **WARRANTY**—three years on all parts, labor, and round-trip shipping
- **POWER RATING**—150 w/ch continuous at 8 ohms, power at clip-point typically 190 w/ch at 8 ohms, 340 w/ch at 4 ohms, 500 w/ch at 2.5 ohms, or plug in two parts for 600 watts continuous mono power at 8 ohms.

There are many new super-power amplifiers. But when you buy a Crown DC300A, you’re buying more than just an amp. You’re buying the Crown company—a professional audio equipment manufacturer with a 26-year reputation for solid quality and lasting value. There are thousands of Crown amps in the field still working to their original specifications, and still outperforming most new amps. Visit your Crown dealer to hear the difference. For detailed product data, write Crown International, Box 1000, Eikhart, Indiana, 46514.
The seven-year itch.

Since 1966, our design engineers have been relentless in their pursuit of a worthy successor to the best cartridge the world had ever heard: the Shure V-15 Type II Improved. Now after seven years of exhaustive laboratory work, they have prevailed. A new cartridge is ready for the connoisseur’s stereo system. We call it the Shure V-15 Type III Super-Track “Plus.” You’ll call it an extraordinary listening experience.

The Type III was designed, of course, for home stereo systems, not for laboratory exercises. The net result of our engineers’ labors are these: (1) higher trackability than ever, at light tracking forces (1/4-1 1/4 grams); (2) an astonishingly flat frequency response with no noticeable emphasis or de-emphasis at any frequency; and (3) a significantly extended dynamic range—beyond that of our V-15 Type II Improved. And all without loss in output level.

Paradoxically, the sound from the V-15 Type III is due in large part to an absence of a sound of its own. Its sound is so neutral and coloration-free that your finest recordings can be reproduced precisely as they were recorded, without peaks, frequency boosts and roll-offs.

Among its most notable design achievements are an entirely new laminated core structure, and an ingenious new stylus assembly that reduces the effective stylus mass of this critical sub-system by 25%. And, since Shure engineers have long known that isolated improvements in individual design parameters don’t necessarily produce significant changes in the sound, these improvements were brought into perfect equilibrium with each other; ergo, each performance factor enhances every other performance factor so that the total audio effect is greater than the sum of its individual performance factors. (To science, this phenomenon is known as a synergistic reaction; therefore, we call the V-15 Type III The Synergistic Cartridge.)

The Shure V-15 Type III Cartridge is available now. Hear it soon, and listen carefully. You’ll recognize it instantly as the finest pickup instrument we’ve ever built. Yours for $72.50.

Shure Brothers Inc.
222 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60204
In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Ltd.
**Fisher ST-400 Speaker Systems**

- A trio of new speaker models—two three-way designs and one two-way—

**Sansui AU-9500 Integrated Stereo Amplifier**

- The new top-of-the-line integrated amplifier from Sansui, the Model AU-9500, has a continuous power output of 75 watts per channel into 8 ohms across the full audio bandwidth with both channels driven. The unusually complete control facilities include step-type bass and treble controls effective over a range of ±15 dB in 3-dB steps, and a mid-range control with ±5 dB range in 1-dB increments. Each of three controls has its own three-position inflection-point selector with a fourth DEFEAT position. The power switch is integral with the speaker selector, which switches up to three pairs of speakers singly or in combinations of two pairs. The high- and low-cut filters have 12-dB-per-octave slopes and a choice of two -3-dB points: 6,000 and 12,000 Hz, and 100 and 50 Hz, respectively. Tape-monitoring facilities are present for two tape decks, plus an additional special switch for dubbing from either deck to the other. There are also switchable inputs and outputs for an external four-channel adapter, a noise-reduction unit, and other accessories. Remaining controls are volume, balance, input and mode selectors, loudness compensation, and a -20-db level-switching switch for brief listening interruptions. There are two front-panel headphone jacks, one of which silences all speakers when used. The rear panel carries the necessary inputs and outputs (including two phono inputs, one of which has a three-position input-impedance selector, and two microphone inputs), four a.c. convenience outlets, and PREAMP-OUT/MAIN IN jacks. There are also input-level controls for both tape inputs and the auxiliary inputs.

Further specifications include harmonic distortion and intermodulation distortion of less than 0.1 per cent at rated output and signal-to-noise ratios of 75 and 85 dB for the phono and high-level inputs, respectively. The amplifier's IHF power bandwidth is 5 to 40,000 Hz, and the frequency response is 15 to 40,000 Hz ±0.1 dB (30 to 15,000 Hz ±0.5 dB for the phono inputs). Overall dimensions, with the metal cabinet supplied, are about 19 1/4 x 5 1/4 x 13 3/4 inches. Weight is 51 1/4 pounds. Price: $519.95.  

*Circle 116 on reader service card*

**Nakamichi 1000 Cassette Deck**

- Nakamichi Research, a well-known manufacturer of cassette machines, has developed a high-performance stereo cassette deck with, among numerous other features, separate erase, record, and playback heads. Two motors, dual-capstan differential tape drive, and two separate built-in noise-reduction systems. In the Nakamichi configuration, the playback head occupies the space opposite the cassette pressure pad where the combination record/playback head goes in conventional machines, while the small adjacent slot in the cassette shell admits the record head: the erase head shares the capstan access slot with the first capstan in the tape path. The two capstans rotate at slightly different speeds, which controls the tension of the tape passing the heads and helps eliminate any adverse influences of the cassette cartridge mechanism. The capstan motor is a d.c. servo-controlled unit with speed variable over a range of ±6 per cent by means of a pitch-control adjustment. A separate spooling motor is employed to turn the tape hubs. All the transport functions are solenoid controlled and activated by means of light-touch pushbuttons; the switching is under the command of a logic system that governs the sequence and timing of switching events.

The two noise-reduction systems—B-Type Dolby and the DNL system developed by Philips—can be used independently or in combination, a technique which is said to provide a reduction in audible hiss of as much as 13 dB or more. With Dolby, the signal-to-noise ratio (weighted) exceeds 60 dB for a recorded level producing 3 per cent distortion. Frequency response is 35 to 18,000 Hz ±3 dB with low-noise iron-oxide tape, and 35 to 20,000 Hz ±3 dB with chromium dioxide. A switch selects the appropriate bias and equalization for the two types of tape. DIN weighted wow and flutter are less than 0.1 per cent. Harmonic distortion is under 2 per cent for a 0-VU recording level at 1,000 Hz. A unique feature of the Nakamichi 1000 is the provision for azimuth adjustment of the record head by means of circuitry that detects phase differences between the two stereo channels. Two large peak-reading meters are provided for monitoring.

(Continued on page 14)
THE LAFAYETTE LR-4000

Don’t just take our words for it, take someone else’s...

“... Lafayette’s wave-matching logic circuit... represents the state of the SQ art...”
—Modern Hi-Fi & Stereo Guide, Feb. '73

“The LR-4000 epitomizes the art of matrixed 4-channel sound.”
—MARTIN CLIFFORD, FM Guide, Nov. '72 & March '73

“Enough power there to give you all the decibels of hi-fi sound you could conceivably crave.”
—HERBERT FRIEDMAN, Hi-Fi Stereo Buyers’ Guide, Spring '73

“... the decoding is essentially the ultimate that can be expected of a matrix system limited to a 20- to 20,000-Hz bandwidth. The listening effect is almost that of discrete surround sound.”
—ROBERT ANGUS, Modern Hi-Fi & Stereo Guide, June '73

“... It is evident that the designers of the LR-4000 have done a remarkable job of producing the “most” SQ receiver for the money we have yet seen... We were impressed also with its human-engineering aspects: the controls are laid out in a simple and functional manner, without sacrifice of flexibility. Its quadraphonic performance was outstanding, as was its overall sound quality and general ease of operation. All in all, the LR-4000 is a most impressive achievement — especially so considering its price [499.95].”
—Stereo Review, April '73

CBS, the developer of the SQ system, uses the LR-4000 when monitoring 4-channel program material. As do thousands of people to whom sound really matters. But, listen to one for yourself. Then you won’t have to take anybody’s word for it!

Lafayette: If sound matters to you, listen to us.

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Send my FREE LAFAYETTE 1973 Catalog to:

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NEW PRODUCTS

Concord Model CR-400
AM/FM Four-Channel Receiver

- An inexpensive four-channel receiver with CBS SQ decoding, a synthesizer circuit for four-channel effects from two-channel material, and complete facilities for discrete four-channel sources has just been brought out by Concord. A cluster of three slider controls adjusts left-right and front-rear balance, while an adjacent master volume control affects all four channels. Concentric bass and treble knobs provide separate control of the front and rear signals. Loudness compensation, tape monitoring, and mode (MONO, STEREO, and SQ 4 CH) are pushbutton-switched. The input selector has—along with positions for phono, FM, and AM—two additional positions for external four-channel sources. A signal is available at a special FM output jack to feed some future four-channel FM adapter.

Continuous-power output for the CR-400 is 37 watts total in four-channel operation and 44 watts total for two channels, both with 8-ohm loads. Harmonic distortion at rated output is under 1 per cent. The signal-to-noise ratio for the phono inputs is 65 dB. FM specifications include an IHF sensitivity of 2.3 microvolts, 1.5-dB capture ratio, an alternate-channel selectivity of 46 dB, and image and i.f. rejection of 53 and 85 dB, respectively. A front-panel tuning meter reads channel center for FM and signal strength for AM. There are separate front-panel headphone jacks for the front and rear signals, and an illuminated four-channel output display. Dimensions are 20¾ x 3⅞ x 15¼ inches. Price: $299.95.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Pioneer RT-1020L
Stereo Tape Deck

- The RT-1020L, Pioneer's finest tape deck, is a three-head, three-motor, 10⅛-inch reel design that records in stereo and plays back both two-channel and discrete four-channel quarter-track tapes. A lever switch on the control panel activates the two extra playback-head gaps and playback preamplifiers necessary for four-channel reproduction, and the large recording-level meters can be switched to read playback levels of the front or rear channels. Light-touch pushbuttons control the transport through special switching circuits that permit going directly from one transport function to another. Recording bias and equalization are independently adjustable to suit a variety of standard and low-noise/high-output tapes. The recording-level controls are separate for microphone and line inputs, and permit mixing. Additional operating features include a pause control, sound-on-sound and echo facilities, tape-monitor switching, and a tape-tension selector. The front-panel headphone jack is designed for phones of 4 to 16 ohms impedance.

The RT-1020L is a 7⅛- and 3⅞-ips machine with frequency responses of 40 to 20,000 Hz ± 3 dB and 40 to 12,000 Hz ± 3 dB for the two speeds. Wow and flutter (rms) are 0.1 per cent (7⅞ ips) and 0.13 per cent (3⅞ ips), and the signal-to-noise ratio exceeds 55 dB for a recorded level producing less than 1 per cent harmonic distortion. The bias-signal frequency is 125 kHz. Overall dimensions are approximately 17¾ x 17 x 9 inches. The machine comes with a walnut-finish wood base. Price: $599.95.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Bose 1801 Stereo Power Amplifier

- Bose's new 1801 stereo power amplifier, the company's first electronic consumer product, is designed to deliver 250 watts continuous per channel into 8 ohms, or 400 watts per channel into 4 ohms. Bose does not provide other performance specifications for the amplifier. Instead, the company lists the minimum standards it believes will result in no audible degradation of the reproduced sound, and guarantees that the performance of the 1801 falls within these limits. They include a frequency response within ±0.25 dB from 30 to 10,000 Hz and ±0.7 dB from 10,000 to 15,000 Hz, and ±1 dB from 20 to 30 Hz and 15,000 to 20,000 Hz. The signal-to-noise ratio meets the more-than-adequate figure of 100 dB, and harmonic distortion is under the inaudible levels of 0.5 per cent below 5,000 Hz and 1 per cent between 5,000 and 10,000 Hz. Intermodulation distortion is less than 0.5 per cent. Bose also states that amplifier damping factor should exceed 40, overload recovery take less than 25 microseconds, and input impedance be over 50,000 ohms.

The 1801 has front-panel switching and rear-panel connectors for two stereo inputs and main and remote speaker pairs, plus gain controls for the two channels. The amplifier has two types of visual indicators for monitoring output levels: a pair of large calibrated meters that read average levels, and twin rows of fast-acting light-emitting diodes that register program peaks up to waveform clipping in 6-dB increments. Internal construction is based on two unitized subassemblies, each one carrying a complete stereo channel and operating from a common power supply. Large finned heat sinks surround three sides of the chassis. The amplifier has both electronic and thermal protective circuits and a turn-on delay circuit that prevents excessive current surges. Dimensions are approximately 18 x 7⅛ x 18⅞ inches; weight is 82 pounds. Price: $798. A "basic" version without the visual displays costs $799. The 1801 carries a five-year warranty on parts and labor.

Circle 120 on reader service card

STEREO REVIEW
$1000 worth of electronics can sound like $99.95 if you use the wrong speakers.

No matter how much you've paid for the electronics in your stereo system; even if you have a $1,000 tape deck and a $800 receiver, if you cut corners on your speakers, you may as well have bought a $99.95 portable record player.

Because only AR speakers, priced from $65 to $600, have the wide, flat frequency response, minimal distortion, and high power handling capacity that can show how good the rest of your stereo is.

If you thought it was important to pay the big dollars for a zillion-watt amplifier with frequency response from D.C. to ultrasonic, if you can appreciate what makes a tuner worth $500, if you will gladly pay $100 for a phono cartridge... you appreciate music—and technology—enough to insist on AR. The speakers preferred by professionals.

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CIRCLE NO. 2 ON READER SERVICE CARD
The Mind Changer

ELAC/MIRACORD 50H MARK II

The Elac/Miracord 50H Mark II, with hysteresis synchronous motor, is certain to change your way of thinking about automatic changers. Featherweight pushbutton controls start, stop, even replay a record without dropping the next. A gentle flick of the cueing lever floats the viscous damped arm up from the record and floats it down again in the same groove or anywhere or the record. Also, effective anti-skate, precise tracking below ½ gram, variable speed control, built-in illuminated strobe, and a simple, exclusive lead screw with built-in guide post gauge for proper and critical stylus over hang adjustment! And lots more! The Elac/Miracord 50H Mark II! There is a difference in record players. See it. Hear it. Today.

ELAC DIVISION, BENJAMIN ELECTRONIC SOUND CO., FARMINGDALE, N.Y. 11735

Audio Questions and Answers

By Larry Klein, Technical Editor

Classical vs. Rock Speakers

Q: I have heard it said that one should use one type of speaker for classical records and another type of speaker for rock, yet neither you nor Julian Hirsch has ever mentioned such a thing. Do you think it is practical?

A: I'm not sure what those who espouse such views have in mind. Except under very special circumstances, it seems to me that what you want is a speaker system that can deliver an accurate acoustic analog of the mechanical undulation of the record groove. It appears that those who are pushing the concept of different speakers for different music are saying, in effect, that certain music requires more or less distortion from the speaker, requires mid-range peaks, or bass peaks, or treble peaks, or something other than a flat, accurate response. It seems to me that for best reproduction of any kind of music you want low distortion and an extended, smooth, non-peaked frequency response from all your equipment. If the musical instruments have been recorded with a specific loudness with regard to each other, you want your speaker to reproduce those levels accurately, no matter what kind of music is involved. If the recording has been engineered so that the brass has an extra "nasal" quality, the bass extra "sock," and the strings extra "bite," the speakers should deliver those qualities—neither more nor less. And the only way a speaker can do that is if it doesn't have built-in "nasality," "sock," or "bite."

I can see a situation in which a speaker that does a fine job reproducing string quartets is not suitable for rock, but only because it lacks the efficiency and acoustic output capability to achieve the sound-pressure levels desired. If the effort to achieve the desired loudness level for rock (or contemporary electronic music) drives either your amplifier or speakers into distortion because of (1) inadequate amplifier power and/or low speaker efficiency or (2) inadequate power-handling capacity on the part of the speakers, then other speakers of greater efficiency and power-handling capacity would, of course, do a better job. However, all other performance criteria in respect to frequency range and smoothness, distortion, dispersion, etc., continue to be valid. For that reason, a speaker that is able to deliver the high volume levels desirable for rock reproduction, if it is in truth a high-fidelity reproducer, should do just as good a job reproducing the more moderate levels of a string quartet. Fidelity is fidelity—and either you have it or you don't.

The Best Speaker Design

Q: Can you give me a relative evaluation of the best speaker-system designs in respect to their mode of operation? I'm referring to acoustical-suspension vs. aperiodic vs. transmission-line vs. any other kinds of design you may know of.

A: I can't, but I'm sure that the proponents of each of the particular designs can. Our main concern at Stereo Review is not how a system works, but rather how well it works, and we have tested and heard excellent systems employing a wide variety of internal design approaches.

I think it is a mistake to get excessively hung up on a speaker's theory of operation as one of the factors in making a buying decision. There are many other considerations—such as size, appearance, frequency response, dispersion characteristics, potential loudness, efficiency, distortion, etc.—most of which will have far greater practical significance for a given individual than the design principles involved. This is not to say that some designs aren't easier and

(Continued on page 20)
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Attention Professionals... Model SR12 is also designed to be used as a highly efficient design and measurement tool. Tests below have been controlled to laboratory tolerances—affording accurate numerical evaluation when used with oscilloscope, chart recorder, output meter, intermodulation-distortion meter and flutter meter.

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- 1,000-Hz reference tones to determine groove velocity.
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MAIL ALL ORDERS TO: RECORDS. ZIFF-DAVIS SERVICE DIVISION, 595 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10012. OUTSIDE U.S.A. RECORDS ARE $8.00 POSTPAID.
We tried. With pictures. Words. Graphs.

But you were skeptical. So you spent two solid weeks trotting from dealer to dealer. Listening. Scrutinizing. Comparing.

And now you're a little sore. But satisfied. Because that AKAI cassette deck you just bought has these exciting extras:

- AKAI's exclusive GX (glass and crystal ferrite) Head for the most efficient sound recording and reproduction possible. It's virtually dust and wear free!
- an Over-Level Suppressor Circuit to minimize the usual distortion caused by high volume input.
- a Dolby® Noise Reduction Circuit to banish all audible tape hiss.

Plus all the other features you’ve wanted:

- Automatic-Stop
- Pause Control
- Headphone Jack
- Direct Function Change Control
- Keys
- Tape Selector Switch
- 3-Digit Index Counter

After all your efforts, you proudly call your AKAI GXC-38D: "The best darn cassette deck for the money!"

And we have to agree.

Because really, we couldn't have said it any better ourselves.

"Dolby" is a Trade Mark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.

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Feel what you hear on Superex Quadphones.

On Superex QUAD-TETTE four-channel phones, you don't just hear music. You feel music. All over your body. Even four of the finest speakers can't touch the physical sensations of Superex.

It's feeling a drum roll up and down your spine. A tamborine over your right eyebrow. A singer breathing at the nape of your neck.

Try the QT-4B QUAD-TETTE. Four-channel phones with a stereo/quad switch. No matter what you've heard from quadraphonic sound, our sound, for $65.00 will astonish you. We engineer Superex so you get the most sensation for the least amount of money. Audiophile, have a good listen.

What you feel comes from four dynamic, mylar diaphragms. Two in each earcup. A 20-18,000 Hz frequency response. And 4-16 Ohm impedance that works with discrete or matrix systems.

The QUAD-TETTE's comfort comes from replaceable Con-Form ear cushions, on a double post and yoke headband. And 15 generous feet of coil cord. So you can move with the music. All of this fine design and engineering, Superex guarantees for one year.

Compare the QUAD-TETTE's cost and performance with any other quad phones, or any four fantastic speakers, and you'll get the feeling. We have the best sound investment around.

OT-4B QUAD-TETTE
Sugg. retail price $65.00

OT-4 QUAD-TETTE
Sugg. retail price $50.00

Superex Stereophones
Feel what you hear cheaper to manufacture, more reliable, more efficient, and so forth. These are factors that might indicate better value for the money spent, and should therefore influence your decision.

If the intent of your question is to determine how close a particular design concept comes to achieving some ideal of "absolute fidelity" (cost no obstacle), we really cannot help you, since we know of no way to establish the absolute best among the many high-accuracy reproducers we have tested. All we can—and do—say is something like "this is one of the finest speakers available." It may be that among the group of the best we have tested there is one that comes slightly closer to perfection than the others. But we have no way of scientifically making such a fine distinction. And in any practical listening situation, variations in program material, the associated equipment, the acoustic environment, and even room placement will introduce far more variation in the audible outputs of two excellent speakers than will result from the differences in their measured results. But if there were to appear on the market a speaker system that sounded as good as the best and was half the price, half the size, and had twice the efficiency, both Julian Hirsch and I would be inclined to judge it the best.

Speaker Tone Bursts

Q In every one of the loudspeaker system test reports, Julian Hirsch writes something like: "Oscilloscope photos showed very good tone bursts." What should I look for in tone-burst photos? What is ideal?

DON CAFFERY
Lexington, Va.

A Abrupt stops and starts—and very little jiggle in between. The idea behind a tone-burst signal is that it tests a speaker system's ability to respond precisely to abrupt changes in level or stops and starts in the signal. If a speaker cone cannot follow the electrical audio signal without either lagging behind its onset or continuing to vibrate after it is gone, then the speaker probably cannot provide clean, clear reproduction of high- or low-frequency transients. Tone-burst photos, in and of themselves, prove nothing, because with practically any speaker it is easy to find some frequencies at which the bursts look fine, despite the fact that they may be a mess at other frequencies. That is why our reports indicate that the tone bursts shown are "typical," or that "overall" the tone-burst response is fine.
The best time to upgrade your component system is before you buy it.

If you're a typical reader of this magazine, you most likely have a sizeable investment in a component system. So our advice about upgrading might come a little late. What you might have overlooked, however, is the fact that your records are the costliest and most fragile component of all. As well as the only one you will continue to invest in. And since your turntable is the only component that handles these valuable records, advice about upgrading your turntable is better late than never.

Any compromise here will be costly. And permanent. Because there is just no way to improve a damaged record. If the stylus can't respond accurately and sensitively to the rapidly changing contours of the groove walls, especially the hazardous peaks and valleys of the high frequencies, there's trouble. Any curve the stylus can't negotiate, it may lop off. And with those little bits of vinyl go the high notes and part of your investment.

If the record doesn't rotate at precisely the correct speed, musical pitch will be distorted. No amplifier tone controls can correct this distortion.

If the motor isn't quiet and free of vibration, an annoying rumble will accompany the music. You can get rid of rumble by using the bass control, but only at the expense of the bass you want to hear. Experienced component owners know all this. Which is why so many of them, especially record reviewers and other music experts, won't play their records on anything but a Dual. From the first play on.

Now if you'd like to know what several independent test labs say about Dual, we'll send you complete reprints of their reports. Plus a reprint of an article from a leading music magazine telling you what to look for in record playing equipment. Whether you're upgrading or not.

Better yet, just visit your franchised United Audio dealer and ask for a demonstration. You'll find Dual automatic turntables priced from $109.50 to $225.00. That may be more than you spent on your present turntable, or more than you were intending to spend on your next one.

But think of it this way. It will be a long, long time before you'll need to upgrade your Dual.
Alignment refers to any of several different kinds of electrical and/or mechanical adjustments that must be made on certain audio components if they are to achieve their potential performance. For example, the various circuits of a tuner are aligned for optimum performance at the specific frequencies they must operate at. The heads of a tape recorder are precisely aligned so that their physical relationship (contact angle) to the tape conforms to industry standards and permits efficient pickup of the highest recorded frequencies. Incorrect alignment of an audio component will degrade its performance in one way or another. As a rule, the equipment's manufacturer performs any necessary alignments before it leaves the factory, but with some types of components it is advisable to have the alignment checked periodically as part of a regular maintenance schedule.

AM (amplitude modulation) is the transmitting system that has been in use in public broadcasting since the early Twenties. It employs a carrier signal of fixed frequency, the amplitude (strength) of which is modulated (constantly varied) in accordance with the audio frequency and strength of the program material being transmitted. In the U.S., commercial AM stations are allotted broadcast frequencies anywhere from 535 to 1,605 kHz (kilohertz). Unfortunately, atmospheric and man-made interference is also a form of AM modulation, and it comes through on AM broadcasts as noise or "static." The FM (frequency modulation) broadcasting and reception system is not, by its very nature, as susceptible to this kind of interference, so it is-down as being good--properly anechoic, that is, down to some given frequency. Engineers refer to chambers whose walls, floor, and ceiling have been treated to absorb (rather than reflect) almost (nothing's perfect!) all sounds that impinge on them. Engineers refer to chambers as being good-- properly anechoic, that is.

Amplifier denotes any device that increases the strength of an electrical audio signal. Various audio components with specific amplifying tasks go by the names preamplifier, power amplifier, and integrated amplifier.

Amplitude is a quantitative term that means about the same thing as magnitude. In audio, amplitude can refer to the loudness of a sound, the strength of an electrical audio signal, or the extent of the physical excursion of a record groove or speaker cone. When an audio signal is displayed on an oscilloscope or graph, its relative amplitude is usually indicated by the height of the waveform.

Anechoic, literally, "without echoes." A perfect anechoic environment can be achieved only by the elimination of all surfaces that might reflect sound waves--the best example of such an environment would be a point high in the air above an open field. As a more practical substitute, acoustic specialists have long relied on a type of room, called an anechoic chamber, whose walls, floor, and ceiling have been treated to absorb (rather than reflect) almost (nothing's perfect!) all sounds that impinge on them. Engineers refer to chambers as being good--properly anechoic, that is.

Ambience, in the audio sense, refers to the acoustic properties of any environment in which sound is produced or reproduced. The word has been used most recently to describe the type of four-channel recording in which the rear channels are devoted exclusively to reproducing the sound reflections (reverberation) from the interior surfaces of the concert hall or recording studio with the aim of communicating to the listener their acoustic contribution to the sound and the spatial sensation of the actual performance.

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS - 2
Lend us your ears and we’ll give you a TDK® C-60SD Super Dynamic Hi Output Cassette Tape FREE!

You've been reading a lot about cassette noise reduction systems lately. At JVC, we think we've developed the finest, most advanced system available — ANRS (Automatic Noise Reduction System). It's the ultimate answer to crisp, clean "reel-to-reel" reproduction. Listen to the JVC 1667 cassette deck. Look at these outstanding features: 2 studio-type VU meters, accurate enough to be used for studio recording ... 3 digit counter with a memory ... tape selector switch, for either chrome or normal tapes ... long life cronios heads ... hysteresis synchronous motor to insure accurate rotation, reducing wow & flutter to 0.13% RMS ... an automatic eject system with photoelectric cell ... automatic eject ... 100% solid state construction ... precision slide controls ... push button function control panel ... frequency response of 30-19,000 Hz ... and more!

Hearing is believing! Prove it to yourself! Listen to the JVC 1667 Cassette Deck ... and just for that we'll give you a FREE TDK C-60SD Super Dynamic Hi Output Tape. For the name and address of your nearest participating JVC Dealer, call this toll free number, 800-243-6000. In Connecticut call 1-(800) 882-6500, or write JVC America, Inc., 50-358 56th Road, Maspeth, N.Y. 11378.

JVC Hi-Fi
The ADC-XLM "...in a class by itself."

That's the way Stereo Review described our XLM. High Fidelity headlined their review, "Superb new pickup from ADC" and went on to say, "...must be counted among the state of the art contenders." And Audio echoed them with, "The ADC-XLM appears to be state of the art."

With the critics so lavish in their praise of the XLM, there's hardly any necessity to add anything. Far better to let the experts continue to speak for us.

**Frequency response** The CBS STR-100 test record showed less than ±1.5dB variation up to 20,000Hz. *Stereo Review*

- response is within ±2dB over the entire range. *Audio*

Frequency response is exceptionally flat. *High Fidelity*

**Tracking** This is the only cartridge we have seen that is really capable of tracking almost all stereo discs at 0.4 grams. *Stereo Review*

- The XLM went through the usual torture test at 0.4 grams (some top models require more than a gram). *High Fidelity*

The XLM is capable of reproducing anything found on a phonograph record. *Audio*

**Distortion** Distortion readings are almost without exception better than those for any other model we've tested. *High Fidelity*

The XLM has remarkably low distortion in comparison with others. *Audio*

- At 0.6 grams the distortion was low (under 1.5 per cent). *Stereo Review*

**Hum and noise** The XLM could be instrumental in lowering the input noise from the first stage of a modern transistor amplifier. *Audio*

- The cartridge had very good shielding against induced hum. *Stereo Review*

**Price** This would be a very hard cartridge to surpass at any price. *Stereo Review*

- We found it impossible to attribute superior sound to costlier competing models. *High Fidelity*

Priced as it is, it is a real bargain in cartridges. *Audio*

The Pritchard *High Definition* ADC-XLM $50.
LIVE-VS.-RECORDED SPEAKER TESTING:

From time to time, we hear from readers and manufacturers who criticize (usually on the basis of a misunderstanding) the simulated live-vs.-recorded listening test used as part of our speaker-evaluation process. It has been several years since we described this test in detail, and a review would probably be helpful to new readers. Also, our additional experience in applying it to many types of speakers has provided some new insights into its strengths and weaknesses.

First of all, it must be stressed that this is not a test that compares the sound of a speaker under test with that of some "perfect" reference speaker in an attempt to reveal the shortcomings (if any) of the former. The fact is, we have never encountered a speaker we would care to refer to as a "perfect" reproducer, and, as far as we know, no such device has yet been created. In spite of our efforts to make this fact perfectly clear, some people continue to believe that the imperfections of the reference speaker restrict the application of this test to those speakers that are of lesser quality than the reference. This is simply not the case, even though we have found that certain characteristics (dispersion, mostly) of the reference speaker can influence the results of the test to some degree.

The purpose of any live-vs.-recorded procedure is to test how closely a speaker can imitate some "real" (or live) sound when both the speaker and the original sound source are brought together for a side-by-side comparison. Obviously this has to involve making a highly accurate preliminary recording of the live source, which will then serve as comparison program material for the speaker. Several companies (most notably Acoustic Research) have conducted public demonstrations of live-vs.-recorded tests before large audiences, using anything from a solo guitarist to a full orchestra.

As a rule, the live performers lead off. At an unspecified moment, a special recording of the same piece made some time earlier takes over, while the musicians continue to go through the motions of playing without actually doing so. The switch between the live and recorded performances (and back again) can take place any number of times. If no one—or few—in the audience can detect the switchovers or hear any significant difference between the real and reproduced sounds, the test is a success; that is, the recording-reproducing chain including the speaker can be assumed to be accurate. (The technical problems involved in making an "accurate" recording in the sense required by this test are enormous, but we need not go into that here.) In principle, this sort of test is attractive and logical, and it neatly avoids all questions of individual taste in sound quality. It would seem unarguable that a speaker whose sound reproduction cannot be distinguished from that of some original performance is, at the very least, a very good reproducer.

Our simulated live-vs.-recorded test is based on the same theoretical grounds, except that it avoids the necessity of having live musicians on hand at all times by assuming that any sound source—musical or not—can serve as a "live" source, as long as it can be accurately recorded and is precisely repeatable whenever a comparison is to be made. We use as our "live" sound source the output of a "reference" hi-fi speaker fed a variety of taped program material. Remember that there is nothing special about the reference: any speaker capable of producing reasonably loud, wide-range sounds could have been used with equally valid results. Diagram (A) shows how an accurate recording of the sonic output of the reference speaker was made, employing an anechoic chamber to eliminate the effects of room acoustics. The sound of the speaker was picked up by a microphone carefully located in the chamber.

(Continued on page 28)
ESS ••• the perfectionist line

ESS designs and manufactures all products to recreate the brilliant, clear, and dramatically powerful music that gives excitement and meaning to your life. Perfection is our goal, a goal requiring ceaseless commitment to new horizons in state-of-the-art engineering, reliability, and performance.

Discover the exciting clarity of sound that imagination in design created — ESS sound, sound as clear as light. Hear it at the franchised ESS dealer in your area — one of only a handful qualified for the ESS line by their courtesy, knowledge and integrity.

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clearly superior

imaginative design for sound as clear as light
and recorded on channel 2 of the tape machine. Simultaneously, the program material driving the speaker was recorded on channel 1 so that it would be present on the same tape as the "live" sound and conveniently in synchronization.

The actual test procedure is illustrated at right (B), with the speaker supplying the "live" sound designated REF (for "reference") and the speaker being evaluated labeled TEST. Note that in one position the switch drives the reference speaker with the original program material recorded on channel 1 of the tape machine, while in the other position (where it is shown) the recorded sound of the reference system (on channel 2) is fed to the speaker being tested.

In our listening room, we place the two speakers as close together as possible and play the original program from channel 1 through the reference speaker. The "live" sound is now playing in our own room, at a volume level under our control. Then the switch is thrown and channel 2 is played through the test speaker. If the speaker under test is perfect, it should sound exactly like the reference speaker playing the original program. By switching from one speaker or the other, the two can be compared at will. The characteristics of the listening room do not enter into the picture, since they will affect both the original and reproduced sounds in

---

The perfect roommate.

If music went from your speaker system right into your ears, you'd never lose a single note. But it doesn't. It ricochets off walls, windows, ceilings, floors—until your room is filled with sound waves criss-crossing and clashing with each other.

The result: unnatural reinforcement of some frequencies and complete cancellation of others. A case of musical robbery that every speaker manufacturer knows about, but most simply ignore because they can't do anything about it.

Altec has done something about it. Concept EQ.

Concept EQ begins with a pair of superb 3-way speaker systems—speaker systems critically designed to deliver flawless reproduction in any flawless acoustical environment. But not many rooms are acoustically flawless. So Altec engineers developed something called Controlled Variable Speaker Contour and wrapped it up in an amazing little box that rediscovers the music your listening room hides from you.

The sound of experience
1515 S. Manchester, Anaheim, Calif. 92803

For complete information on Concept EQ, please write to the Audio Information Group at Altec.

CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD
the same way. To demonstrate the fact that the reference speaker need not be perfect, it is possible to arrange the switching so as to switch the reference speaker from the REF to the TEST position and back again. Our reference speaker, because of minor frequency-response inadequacies (it rolls off gently at the high end), is not able to imitate itself as well as some other speakers with a flatter response can. In other words, an accurate speaker without built-in dips, peaks, and distortions is able to imitate anything, but a speaker with defects will add those defects to whatever sound it is trying to reproduce.

In most cases, our simulated live-vs.-recorded test works exactly as one would hope. We find it easy to identify small variations in response at middle or high frequencies (we have been able to hear as little as 1-dB average difference in one or two frequency octaves). The strength of this comparison lies in the manner in which it removes personal listening preferences from the evaluation process. For example, on some of our program material, the reference speaker produces some highly irritating sounds, but the speaker under test should sound exactly as unpleasant. If it sounds "better" (because, for example, it is unable to reproduce some high-frequency distortion in the program material), it is obviously not an accurate reproducer.

Unfortunately, the size of the anechoic chamber used for our original recording limited the test to frequencies above 200 Hz, and lower frequencies have therefore been filtered from the original program. So, to a certain degree, we are still at the mercy of the listening-room resonances and the program material in judging bass performance.

There are, of course, several other objections that could be raised to the underlying principles of our simulated live-vs.-recorded comparisons, but I think it is fair to say that these would also apply to similar tests using on-the-spot musicians. First, there is the problem of making a precise recording of the live sound. Ideally, the miking should be done under anechoic or open-air conditions, so that when the material is played back in a room, there will be no recorded room reverberation on track 2 to add to the sound of the test speaker when the reference speaker is playing the nonreverberant track 1. The proper placement of the microphone must be carefully determined so that the mike picks up a representative sample of the acoustic field produced by the live source. This involves the question of directivity—the uniformity of output in different directions over the operating frequency range of any sound source. In a normal listening room, we hear an integration of the output of a speaker (or other source of sound) as radiated in all directions.

Now, through Concept EQ's electronic frequency contouring, you can mate your speakers perfectly to the unique characteristics of your listening room. Bass you've never heard before suddenly appears as big as life—in your room. Midrange becomes as mellow as it should be—in your room. Highs purely sparkle as highs are supposed to—in your room. Music becomes a totally new adventure—in your room.

Listen to your music, not to your room. Listen to the perfect roommate. Listen to Concept EQ from Altec.

The difference you'll hear is the sound of experience.
and reflected by the room boundaries. This integrated output is essentially what we measure in our frequency-response tests. However, when making a recording of a speaker in open air—or in an anechoic chamber—the recording microphone receives only the energy radiated in one specific direction, and the frequency response of a speaker in any one direction is not necessarily identical to its integrated energy-response curve. When making the recording, it is therefore necessary to determine by trial and error the microphone location at which the shape of the speaker's pressure-response curve approximates the shape of its total reverberant-field energy response. Obviously, human judgment is required at this point; but, on the whole, judging from our test results, we feel that the recording was done successfully.

Another aspect of the same problem affects our listening comparisons. The reference speaker is a more or less conventional acoustic-suspension, three-way system with a wide frequency range and good dispersion. If the test speaker has a roughly similar polar-dispersion pattern, the comparison process is simplified, and sometimes the imitation of the original program is literally perfect. If the speaker under test has much better dispersion in the forward hemisphere than the reference speaker, it will never sound exactly the same, since our ears will receive different proportions of direct and reflected sound from the two speakers. In the extreme case of a 360-degree (omnidirectional) speaker, the effect is even more pronounced. We are still able to make valid judgments of overall frequency response and detect rather subtle colorations, but exact facsimile reproduction of a reference that has a more or less directional sound character by one with wider dispersion appears to be impossible. On the other hand, a test speaker with narrower dispersion than the reference speaker can be evaluated easily, since it may be very good "on axis," but will always sound dull when it is rotated slightly away from the listener.

An interesting adjunct to—and test of the validity of—the live-vs.-recorded technique was suggested by Technical Editor Larry Klein. His idea was to insert a 1/3-octave band equalizer in the signal path feeding the reference speaker and adjust it by ear so as to achieve the closest possible correspondence between the sound of the test speaker and that of the reference speaker. If our approach is correct, then the resulting equalizer curve should be identical to the frequency-response curve (obtained during our other tests) of the speaker being evaluated. An alternate technique would be to put the frequency equalizer in the signal path of the speaker being tested. In that case, the "correction" curve applied by the equalizer would be the inverse of the test speaker's curve. Mr. Klein's test works, but it is difficult to apply because the listener must be able to estimate at 1/3-octave intervals what frequencies need correction, to what degree, and in what direction. However, if we could bring a computer into the act......

Although the live-vs.-recorded test, like any other, has its limitations, it remains a major part of our speaker test procedure—perhaps because it is so much more fundamental and relevant to a home high-fidelity speaker's real purpose than most of the "objective" tests that have been devised. In addition, the test should minimize the debate as to the significance of a particular design or performance parameter. If a speaker manufacturer claims that his designs are superior because he has eliminated some old—or recently discovered—form of distortion, the test should show up whatever audible improvement is attained—at least within the limitations discussed above.

Ideally, it would probably be best to have three reference speakers and test tapes—one "normal" forward-facing speaker, one with 180-degree dispersion (covering the front hemisphere), and one 360-degree (omnidirectional) speaker. In the meantime, we have learned to interpret the data provided by our existing setup, and are reasonably satisfied with the validity of the results.

---

**EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS**
By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

**Fisher 504 AM/FM Four-Channel Receiver**

- **Fisher** states that the "Studio Standard" receivers were designed to meet the requirements of both current and future four-channel technology with a minimum of compromise. The three receivers—Models 304, 404, and 504—share the same FM and AM tuners and basic overall design. The principal differences are in their audio power outputs and control features. For this report, we tested the Model 504.

(Continued on page 34)
Whatever your world of sound, find it in our world of tapes.

You're particular about sound. You want the very best reproduction you can get.

But you know different types of recording require different types of tape.

There's music you have on while you're working, and there's the music you really sit down and listen to. Very closely and critically.

Recording voices calls for a different kind of tape. And recording sounds may call for yet another.

But no matter what you're recording, "Scotch" makes a tape for it that's unsurpassed.

Consider our 206 and 207 High Output/Low Noise, for example. These are our best reel-to-reel tapes. They provide an improvement of 3 db in signal-to-noise over standard tapes, resulting in an actual 50% increase in output. Or consider "Scotch" High Energy, our finest cassette tape. It's designed for your most important cassette recording needs.

Remember, "Scotch" tapes are the overwhelming choice of professional studios for master recording.

So no matter what kind of recording you're doing, and no matter whether it's reel-to-reel, 8-track cartridge or cassette, there's only one name you need to remember: "Scotch."

You're particular about sound. But no more than we.

"Scotch" Brand Tapes.
Better tapes you just can't buy.
Our new receiver can demodulate or decode any kind of 4-channel including some that haven’t been invented yet.
The Technics SA-8000X is a 4-channel expert. Not just one kind of 4-channel. All of them. And it translates each one accurately.

We are particularly proud of its discrete capabilities. Because it has a demodulator for CD-4 records. Built in! And it adapts to any CD-4 cartridge instantly. Via front-mounted carrier level and separation controls.

The SA-8000X has an exclusive combination of controls and circuitry that adjusts to the coefficients of any matrix method. The Acoustic Field Dimension (AFD) controls and the Phase Shift Selector provide a variety of blendings that encompass every popular matrix system. Even some that haven’t been tried yet. And the same controls can compensate for poor room acoustics. Or undesirable but unavoidable speaker placement.

The Technics “Total 4-Channel” concept shows just as clearly in the rest of the front panel. A well-thought-out set of controls manage both volume and balance. There's a large master gain surrounded by separate controls for each channel. And any balance set with the individual knobs is maintained when the master is adjusted.

The rear panel reflects the same versatility. With plug-ins for three 4-channel tape decks. Plus provisions for future discrete FM.

Technics’ attention to detail continues inside the SA-8000X. With sophistications like a pair of 4-pole MOS FETS and a 3-gang linear tuning capacitor. A trio of 2-element ceramic IF filters, a new type of epoxy resin coils as well as monolithic IC’s in the multiplex circuit.

The four directly coupled amplifiers are very gutty in the bottom end and can be “strapped” together. So that in stereo, four amplifiers work as two, which more than doubles per-channel wattage in that mode.

The combined effectiveness of the whole design produces specifications like these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM TUNER SECTION</th>
<th>AMPLIFIER SECTION</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>1.9µV</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>S/N Ratio</td>
<td>65 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture Ratio</td>
<td>1.8dB</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 kHz RMS Power</td>
<td>64W (all ch. driven at 8Ω)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-channel operation</td>
<td>84W (all ch. driven at 8Ω)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-channel operation</td>
<td>160W (all ch. driven at 8Ω)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Bandwidth</td>
<td>Power Bandwidth</td>
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<tr>
<td>IHF Music Power</td>
<td>Power Bandwidth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-channel operation)</td>
<td>Power Bandwidth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5Hz-40kHz, -3dB</td>
<td>5Hz-40kHz, -3dB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The concept is simple. The execution is precise. The performance is outstanding. The name is Technics.

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FOR YOUR NEAREST AUTHORIZED TECHNICS DEALER, CALL TOLL FREE 800 447-4700. IN ILLINOIS, 800 322-4400.
The 504 is a large unit, measuring about 21 1/2 inches wide, 7 inches high, and 17 inches deep, and weighing 43 pounds. The tuning dial scales, lit in blue, occupy the upper center of the front panel, with the two tuning meters (relative signal-strength and zero-center tuning) at their left and the large tuning knob at the right. A red light in the zero-center meter indicates stereo FM reception.

The lower section of the front panel contains all the receiver's operating controls. The pushbutton power switch is at the left, together with separate front and rear stereo headphone jacks. Five vertical sliders adjust bass, mid-range, and treble for the front channels, and bass and treble for the rear channels. For matrix four-channel material, processed through the built-in SQ decoder, the three front-channel controls affect all channels and the two rear-channel controls are inoperative.

The center of the panel is dominated by a smoothly operating "joystick" four-channel balance control, which is probably the simplest and most logical system for adjusting the relative levels of four output channels. Four pushbutton switches to the left of the balance control provide a reduction of audio level for temporary listening. The decoder, and provide noise reduction for stereo FM re-

The rear of the receiver is dominated by the finned heat-sink radiators for the output transistors, which ran quite cool under all conditions encountered in our tests. The AM and FM antenna terminals can be used for connecting external antennas: or, with the jumper links provided, the internal ferrite-rod antenna (nonadjustable) can be used for AM and the line cord for reception of local FM stations. Except for the phono inputs, all signal input jacks are in quadruplicate. An FM DETECTOR OUT jack is provided for use with a possible future FM dis-
We invented the first high-fidelity speaker. Now we've invented the MAX12.

In 1915, our Mr. Pridham built the first moving-coil loudspeaker, true ancestor of high-fidelity horns. We've been improving sound ever since. And everything we've learned in the intervening years has gone into our new MAX Series 3-way speaker systems. So that you can get everything out of them: completely natural uncluttered sound, good presence, smooth, clean dispersion and response.

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Maximum power-handling capacity: 75 watts rms.

Minimum power requirements: 10 watts rms.

Level controls: Separate treble and midrange rotary step switches.

Frequency response: 25 Hz to 20 KHz.

Walnut veneer instead of vinyl.

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Midrange: 2" hemispherical dome.

Woofer: 12" acoustic suspension.

15-3/4" x 25-3/4" x 13-1/4"
Meet the creator.

It creates echo, cross echo and rotating echo.
It overdubs, mixes down and masters.
It produces "backwards" recordings and pan-pot effects.
It turns one musician into a whole group.
It does just about everything a studio does—except hand you a bill.

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The 3340 is a skillful blend of advanced electronics and precision mechanics that reflects professional sophistication: 10½" reels. Quick and smooth three-motor transport. Four studio-calibrated VU meters. Eight input controls for mic/line mixing. Dual bias. 7½ and 15 ips studio accurate speeds. And Simul-Sync™.

Simul-Sync is TEAC's unique electronic system that eliminates the time lag you get with conventional record-playback monitoring. Which means that each track you lay down will be in perfect sync with the next one, and the next, and the next. And it opens up a realm of creative sound limited only by the borders of imagination.

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*For two full years from date of purchase, any TEAC TAPE DECK returned with warranty card and freight prepaid by the original registered purchaser to TEAC or its nearest authorized service station will be repaired free of charge for defects in workmanship or material. This warranty applies only to TEAC products purchased in the United States.

TEAC Corporation of America Headquarters:
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TEAC offices in principal cities in the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico and Japan.
crete four-channel decoder. The speaker connectors are spring-loaded clips whose close spacing requires some care to avoid short circuits. The main speaker outputs are also very close to the heat-sink fins, calling for some manual dexterity during installation.

Fast-acting electronic circuits that silence the affected channel protect the output stages against overloads or shorts. Switching the receiver off for about one minute and turning it on again restores normal operation if the fault has been removed. There is one switched a.c. outlet and a single power-line fuse. The Fisher 504 is supplied complete with a handsome walnut-finish wooden cabinet. Price: $599.95.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** It should be noted that we are now using a Sound Technology 1000A FM signal generator, which allows us to make meaningful measurements of low-level distortion both in mono and stereo, as well as more accurate measurements of stereo FM channel separation. The Fisher 504 is the first receiver we have tested with the new generator, so that its tested FM performance numbers in these areas cannot be compared directly with the results of previous tests we have made on other receivers.

The FM sensitivity (1HF) was 1.7 microvolts (rated 1.8). A 50-dB signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio was achieved at an input of 2.3 microvolts (mono) and at 28 microvolts (stereo). The ultimate S/N ratio was about 71.5 dB in mono (above 100 microvolts) and 69 dB in stereo (above 1,000 microvolts). FM distortion was -55 dB (0.17 per cent) in mono and was actually lower in stereo, measuring -59 dB, or 0.13 per cent. The frequency response was well within ±1 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. Stereo separation exceeded 40 dB from 30 to 2,600 Hz (reaching 50 dB in the 100- to 200-Hz range), and was better than 25 dB at all frequencies up to our measurement limit of 15,000 Hz. Other FM performance parameters included: capture ratio, 1.2 dB at 10 microvolts and 1.3 dB at 1,000 microvolts (very good); AM rejection, 40 dB (fair); image rejection, 68 dB (good); alternate-channel selectivity, about 60 dB (good); 19,000-Hz stereo pilot carrier leakage, -71.5 dB (good). The muting and automatic stereo/mono switching thresholds were each 2.7 microvolts.

The AM frequency response was typical of most AM tuners, being down about 6 dB at 45 and 2,500 Hz. However, the “sensitivity and selectivity on AM were excellent, and background noise between stations was exceptionally low. The “DNL” system appeared to function as an interstation-noise muting device, also introducing some apparent reduction in high-frequency response. On strong signals it introduced audible distortion, but Fisher recommends its use only during reception of weak signals.

The audio amplifiers had good tone-control characteristics. The bass turnover frequency varied with the control settings. The front-channel mid control action, which centered at 1,500 Hz, affected frequencies over a four-octave range, providing a maximum of about 10 or 12 dB of boost or cut. The loudness compensation mostly boosted low frequencies, although there was also a slight high-frequency boost at low volume-control settings. The filters had 6-dB-per-octave slopes, with the -3-dB frequencies being about 60 and 3,000 Hz. The RIAA phono equalization was within ±2 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz.

An input of 86 millivolts (Aux) or 1.2 millivolts (PHono) produced a 10-watt output, with the noise being about 74 dB below 10 watts on any input. Phono overload occurred at 65 millivolts, and the high-level inputs overloaded at 4.8 volts—both quite safe values for any program source likely to be used.

In the 4 CH mode, with all channels driven, the output waveform clipped at 44.7 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz with 8-ohm loads. Fisher’s rating for this type of operation is 40 watts per channel, and this conservatism appeared to apply to the other audio-output ratings as well. When we drove only the two front channels under these conditions (our usual procedure), the output was 50 watts per channel. Into 4 ohms, it was about 80 watts per channel, and with 16-ohm loads it was 29 watts per channel.

We used 50 watts as a reference full-power output for distortion measurements over the full audio-frequency range—although that is higher than Fisher’s rating. At full power, the distortion rose at low frequencies to 1 per cent at 30 Hz, but, in general, at all power levels and across most of the audio band, the distortion was between 0.05 and 0.1 per cent. At 20,000 Hz it was about 0.3 per cent at 25 watts or less, and 0.8 per cent at 50 watts. With a 1,000-Hz signal, the harmonic distortion was between 0.06 and 0.1 per cent from 0.1 watt to 50 watts, increasing rapidly at higher powers. The intermodulation (IM) distortion was equally low over the same power range.

One of the Fisher 504’s special features is its "strapped" output circuit for two-channel operation. The strapping provides a greater power output in each of the two used channels than the sum of the combined front and rear channels. In this mode, the maximum output is obtained with 8-ohm loads and is rated at 110 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz, or 90 watts over the full audio range. We measured the clipping point at 132 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz and used the 90-watt rating for our other tests, which yielded results generally similar to those obtained in the four-channel mode. Distortion was typically 0.1 per cent or less, and never exceeded 0.45 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz at any power from 9 to 90 watts per channel. The only measurement adversely affected in the strapped mode was the IM distortion at very low power outputs, which was about twice as high as in the four-channel mode. The maximum reading was about 2 per cent at 100 milliwatts output. However, we did not hear any difference in program quality when switching between the two modes of operation. (The article by Robert Carver in the May 1973 issue of STEREO REVIEW explains the lack of audible differences despite the measurement difference.)

- **Comment.** We have two minor criticisms of the Fisher 504, both related to its functional design rather than to its performance. The great variety of auxiliary devices and program sources with which the receiver can be used would seem to indicate the need for more than a single a.c. convenience outlet, although a short extension cord with a multi-tap a.c. outlet could be plugged into the Fisher’s single outlet. Second, the FM dial scale is difficult to read more closely than about 500 kHz.

(Continued on page 42)
Now you can create your own 4-channel world with the incomparable Sansui vario matrix QRX series of 4-channel receivers. Sansui's source controls enable you to mix your own 4-channel sound according to your own musical preference in ways you have never experienced before. Dollar for dollar, ear for ear, the vario matrix QRX series gives you greater power, better separation and superior, truly musical 4-channel reproduction from all sound sources: records, tapes, FM, 8-track cartridges or cassettes. The unique Sansui QS vario matrix gives you richer, fuller 4-channel sound from QS (Regular Matrix) as well as SQ (Phase Matrix) sources, plus CD-4 discrete demodulated sources. And with its superior QS synthesizing section, it creates thrilling 4-channel sound from conventional stereo. Get a demonstration today from a franchised Sansui dealer—anywhere.

*Sansui ORX Vario Matrix Series: ORX-6500, ORX-3500, ORX-3000

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All models in both series reflect TDK’s determination to offer cassettes capable of capturing and faithfully reproducing the subtle harmonics, overtones and transient phenomena that give hi-fi music it’s unique human qualities: richness, depth, timbre, fullness and warmth. They reflect TDK’s dedication to leadership in the continuing development of new and better tape products to take full advantage of the performance capabilities of the latest and most sophisticated recording equipment.

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ED EXTRA DYNAMIC offers an entirely new dimension in cassette recording fidelity for the discriminating audiophile. Recording characteristics are vastly superior to any other cassette on the market, for unmatched performance on any cassette deck. Incomparably fresh, sharp and rich sound. Available in 45, 60 and 90 minute lengths.
dynamic new world of cassettes

...plus a whole new way to evaluate tape performance.

The ability of a tape to provide high-fidelity sound reproduction depends not only on the familiar frequency response characteristics, but also on a number of other electromagnetic properties. TDK has selected twelve of the most important characteristics and arranged them on the exclusive CIRCLE OF TAPE PERFORMANCE permitting a direct comparison of the properties of various recording tapes. Each of the twelve "spokes" of the wheel (polar co-ordinates) represents one of the twelve factors; the outer circle represents the ideal characteristics of a "perfect" tape. When we plot the properties of a cassette tape on the circle, the closer these characteristics approach those of the ideal tape — that is the larger and more regular the resulting pattern, the better the sound reproduction capabilities of the tape. The goal is to reach the outer circle.

Shown below are CIRCLE OF TAPE PERFORMANCE characteristics of TDK's ED, SD, D and KR-series cassettes; on the right are the properties of two leading "premium-quality" competitive cassettes. Judge for yourself which cassettes provide the best balanced hi-fi performance.

ED Extra Dynamic

SD Super Dynamic

Ideal Circle

D Dynamic

KR Krom

Competitor's Circle

**ED** EXTRA DYNAMIC, the tape that turned the cassette into a high-fidelity medium. Very high maximum output levels (MOL) and very broad dynamic range assure outstanding reproduction of the complex characteristics of "real life" sound. Clear, crisp, delicate sound reproduction. Available in 45, 60, 90 and 120 minute lengths.

**SD** SUPER DYNAMIC, the tape that turned the cassette into a high-fidelity medium. Very high maximum output levels (MOL) and very broad dynamic range assure outstanding reproduction of the complex characteristics of "real life" sound. Clear, crisp, delicate sound reproduction. Available in 45, 60, 90 and 120 minute lengths.

**D** DYNAMIC series is the entirely new hi-fi cassette from TDK, offering excellent quality at moderate prices with well balanced performance characteristics superior to most "premium" cassettes. New coating formulation assures bright, warm and mellow sound reproduction. Available in 45, 60, 90, 120 and 180 minute lengths, world's only 3 hour cassette.

**KR** KROM cassettes, available in 60 and 90 minute lengths, are the "more than equal" chromium dioxide cassettes for those who prefer its brilliant, crisp, sharp sound. For use only on decks equipped with a bias or tape type selector switch, KROM cassettes offer unequaled response and outstanding linearity at high frequencies.
We appreciated the ease of changing from separate to strapped amplifiers by the turn of a knob. Since most commercial program material is still in two-channel form, many listeners with low-efficiency 8-ohm speaker systems can now experience firsthand the benefits of a truly powerful amplifier. And, of course, for four-channel listening, a total of 150 to 200 watts of clean power should more than suffice.

We have not commented on the SQ decoder because we made no measurements per se of its performance. We did listen to a number of SQ records, and we would judge this decoder to be the equivalent of the other widely used "front-back" logic decoders we have used. It does as good a job as any of them, but it is not the equal of a "full-logic" decoder. The SQ decoder will also do a reasonable job of "synthesizing" material for the rear channels from conventional stereo discs, tapes, and broadcasts. Since there is no other matrix provided in the 504, Sansui QS records cannot be heard to best advantage without the use of an external decoder.

Otherwise, the versatility of the Fisher 504 is exceptional, as a review of its features will show. Our test results speak for themselves. Space limitations prevent us from commenting in greater detail on its performance, except to say that it was entirely "bug-free," everything operated in its intended manner, controls were clearly marked, tuning was smooth and noncritical, muting action was excellent, etc. In other words, it is a superior product which does everything Fisher claims for it and then some. All in all, the Fisher 504 is a first-rate receiver and an impressive achievement.

For more information, circle 105 on reader service card

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**Superex PEP-79 Stereo Headphones**

- **The Superex PEP-79 electrostatic headphone system** uses the same drivers, headband, and cups as the more expensive PEP-77 system. The cost saving has been realized by using self-energized instead of a.c.-line-powered operation and by eliminating the headphone volume controls. Like other electrostatic phones, the PEP-79 cannot be connected to the normal headphone outputs of an amplifier or receiver. It operates through a small control box (the CC-79) driven from the amplifier's loudspeaker outputs. The speakers can be connected to terminals in the rear of the control box, and either speakers or phones can be activated by a rocker switch on its panel.

Electrostatic drivers require a high d.c. polarizing voltage and a comparable signal voltage of about several hundred volts. Unlike some other phones that use a separate a.c. power supply, the PEP-79 control box develops these voltages, using step-up transformers to boost the audio signal and then converting part of that signal to the d.c. polarizing voltage. The chief disadvantage of self-energized operation is the need for a fairly loud signal to "charge" the system initially; in most cases, normal program levels will then maintain an adequate polarizing voltage in the headphones. The left-channel input to the control box supplies the polarizing voltage for both channels in the PEP-79 system.

The Superex PEP-79 headset is light in weight (12 ounces) and has a 15-foot coiled cord fitted with a five-pin plug for the socket on the panel of the CC-79 control box. An optional 15-foot extension cable is also available. The CC-79 control unit is housed in a walnut-grain, vinyl-clad steel cabinet measuring 7 inches wide, 2½ inches high, and 4 inches deep. It requires a nominal amplifier power of at least 5 watts per channel and will accept a maximum audio input of 15 volts. An automatic protective circuit prevents damage to the system from excessive input voltages. The two speaker-input channels are electrically independent (no common ground), and each is internally loaded with 120 ohms to prevent accidental open-circuit operation of the amplifier. The price of the Superex PEP-79 system is $85.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** We measured the frequency response of the PEP-79 with a slightly modified ANSI standard earphone coupler. The drive level was 3 volts. This produced an average acoustic output of 107 dB sound-pressure level (SPL) in the low- and mid-frequency ranges, where the coupler characteristics have little effect on the measurements. From 20 to 1,200 Hz, the measured output varied only ±2 dB.

Like almost every other headphone tested with this type of coupler, the PEP-79 exhibited response irregularities at the higher frequencies, caused by resonances and standing waves in the air volume enclosed by the headphone ear cushions. Since these effects change when different couplers are used (and exist even when the phones are measured directly on the user's head), we have always found it difficult to judge their audible significance. With the PEP-79 they took the form of a regular series of peaks and dips roughly a half octave to an octave apart and having an amplitude range of about ±7 dB.

The useful frequency range of the PEP-79 exceeded the range of our test microphone. Our curves showed a slightly rising high-frequency response that was strong all the way up to our measurement limit of 20,000 Hz. The electrical impedance of the PEP-79 system varied from a minimum of 9 ohms at 20 and 15,000 Hz to a broad maximum of about 90 ohms at 1,000 Hz. In view of the rather loud 107-dB output from a 3-volt drive level (corresponding to an output of about 1 watt into an 8-ohm load), any amplifier should be able to drive these phones without difficulty. At a 110-dB (very loud) sound-pressure level, distortion was quite low—1.3 per cent at 1,000 Hz and 3.5 per cent at 50 Hz.

- **Comment.** It is always difficult to describe the sound quality of a good headphone, and the PEP-79 is no exception to the rule. Unlike the case with speakers, there is no reference (such as a live sound source) for comparison.

(Continued on page 44)
Beethoven heard his music better than you do.

Beethoven was nearly deaf when he wrote many of his greatest compositions. Yet he heard every note, every phrase in the genius of his mind.

Today, when you listen to a recording of his music, you are not able to hear its full, original dynamics. Every conventional speaker, when placed in your home, falls prey to the “standing wave” problem. Sound waves in a fixed pattern reflect from your walls to “add and subtract” from the true original signals. In this way, standing waves alter the true dynamics and reduce the “live qualities” of the music.

In 1971, the Leslie Speaker group of CBS applied for patents on special designs which—for the first time—effectively dealt with the standing waves. These patents are used exclusively in the Leslie Plus 2 Speaker system.

Here is what this breakthrough means to you. Now, you can hear music with a realism that is unmatched. You literally feel that you’re in third row center of your favorite concert hall—no matter what part of the room you are sitting in.

Also, you can achieve this effect with either stereophonic or quadraphonic recordings!

For further information on this unique system, just send in the coupon, or visit your authorized Leslie dealer. Sixty seconds of hearing the Leslie Plus 2 Speaker system will prove everything we say about it is true. Hear it for yourself...soon!
purposes, and the test conditions for headphones are, if anything, even more artificial than those used for loudspeaker-response measurements.

To our ears, the Superex PEP-79 delivers a very wide, clean, and smooth frequency response, with no audible distortion at any reasonable listening level (we do not consider levels of 120 dB and more to be reasonable!). We also compared them with the best of the electrostatic models evaluated in our tests of thirty-three headphones in the July 1972 issue. Whatever differences we heard were minor, and in fact much less than those existing between two top-quality speaker systems. At any given drive level, the PEP-79 produces a considerably higher acoustic output than any other electrostatic phone we have tested, and it can generate levels up to about 120 dB without excessive distortion or risk of damage (to the phones, that is).

The light weight of the Superex PEP-79 headset will be appreciated by anyone who has worn some of the heavier headphones, both dynamic and electrostatic. The ear cushion seal, though tight enough to exclude external sounds effectively and maintain a strong low bass response, does not exert undue pressure on the wearer's head, and we would rate these phones better-than-average in comfort when worn for extended periods.

The question of whether to buy electrostatic or dynamic phones requires an individual decision. Personally, we find the clarity of electrostatic sound to be unequalled, although a few dynamic phones offer strong competition. A major obstacle to the widespread use of electrostatic phones has been their high cost, typically between $120 and $160. The Superex PEP-79, though one of the lowest-priced electrostatic headsets we know of, sounds about as good as the best and most expensive ones we have tested thus far—and that is no small achievement.

For more information, circle 106 on reader service card.

Heath AD-1530 Stereo Cassette Deck Kit

The electronic controls, at the left of the panel, include separate recording-level controls for the two channels and two illuminated meters. There is also a pushbutton-reset tape-index counter and three toggle switches, one paralleling the two inputs for making mono recordings, one controlling the Dolby system, and the last changing recording bias and both recording and playback equalization for either standard ferric-oxide or CrO₂ tapes.

The auxiliary inputs and the outputs are recessed into the rear of the base, together with a switch to inject a Dolby-calibrating tone for adjusting recording levels with different tape formulations. Along the lower front edge of the base are two ¼-inch phone jacks for low-impedance microphones and a switch to transfer the recording inputs from the auxiliary to the microphone inputs. The Heath AD-1530, on its walnut base, is about 14 inches wide, 5½ inches high, and 9½ inches deep; it weighs 14 pounds. Price (kit): $249.95. An accessory dust cover costs $4.95. Electret condenser microphones intended especially for the AD-1530 are available from Heath at $39.95 each.

- Laboratory Measurements. The playback frequency response, measured with a Nortronics test cassette, was flat over most of the audio range, rising to +5 dB at 10,000 Hz and +8.5 dB at 40 Hz. According to Heath, the low-frequency boost in the playback equalization is an intentional departure from the Philips equalization standards. Many tape duplicators are reportedly cutting back on low frequencies on prerecorded cassettes to reduce the effects of overload distortion. The low-frequency boost introduced by the AD-1530 during playback is intended to compensate for this.

With the Heath cassette (ferric-oxide tape), the record-playback frequency response was ±5 dB from 40 to 15,000 Hz and ±1.5 dB from 70 to 14,000 Hz. Like most cassette machines, the Heath AD-1530 exhibited some low-frequency "fringing"—a periodic fluctuation in the frequency-response curve below about 200 Hz, which reached a maximum amplitude of about 6 dB at 40 Hz. This effect, which is not audible, is independent of the tape used. Our response readings are based on an average of the variations.

The record-playback response with CrO₂ tape was

(Continued on page 46)
The KENWOOD
‘Two-Four’ Receivers give you all the great new 4-channel sounds, plus the finest 2-channel reproduction!
A unique ‘strapping’ circuit more than doubles the RMS output per channel when you turn that simple switch from 4- to 2-channel mode. For example, 17 watts x 4 (RMS Power at 8 ohms, 20-20kHz) automatically becomes 40 watts x 2 for the KR-6340. Just one of the many features that make switching to 4-channel with KENWOOD completely irresistible:
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CIRCLE NO. 24 ON READER SERVICE CARD
slightly better at the high end, varying ±3 dB from 45 to 17,000 Hz. We also made measurements with several grades of ferric-oxide tape. TDK-SD showed a slightly rising high end, to +4 dB at 13,000 Hz and extending to beyond 17,000 Hz. When played back with the tape switch set to CrO₂, giving additional high-frequency roll-off in the playback equalization, the overall response with TDK-SD was much flatter—with ±1.5 dB from 80 to 15,000 Hz. A typical “standard” tape, Memorex, produced a response to 16,000 Hz, with a slightly better high end than the supplied Heath cassette. Premium tapes such as TDK-ED are somewhat underbiased in this machine as normally set up, although using CrO₂ playback equalization gives reasonably flat response to beyond 17,000 Hz.

The Dolby circuits “tracked” well at all signal levels, affecting the overall frequency response by less than 2 dB at levels between -20 and -40 dB. The playback distortion reached the 3 per cent reference level at a +2-VU recording input with regular tape, and at +3.5 VU with CrO₂ tape. The corresponding signal-to-noise ratios were 50.5 dB and 58 dB without the Dolby, and 58 and 63.5 dB with it. Distortion at 0 VU was 2.4 per cent with regular tape and 2 per cent with CrO₂. All these measurements were substantially better than Heath’s published ratings.

The required input for a 0-VU recording level was 0.04 volt through the auxiliary inputs and 0.16 millivolt through the microphone inputs. The 0-VU playback output was 0.53 volt. When the recording gain was set so that 3 millivolts at the microphone input produced a 0-VU level, there was no measurable increase in noise. At maximum gain, however, the noise was 19 dB higher through the microphone inputs than through the auxiliary inputs.

The tape speed was 0.5 per cent fast, and 40 to 43 seconds was required for a C-60 cassette in fast speeds, which is about twice as fast as most other cassette decks. The unweighted wow and flutter were 0.02 and 0.23 per cent with our Information Terminals test tape, and 0.02 and 0.19 for a test tone recorded and then played back.

On the rear edge of the AD-1530 are the outputs and auxiliary inputs, as well as the recording-calibration adjustments (separate for CrO₂ and ferric-oxide tapes) and test-tone switch.

Comment. The fine electrical performance of the Heath AD-1530 testifies to the success of the “no external instrument” alignment procedure. In its overall performance this recorder ranks with today’s best commercial units. Our kit builder required about 14½ hours to assemble the kit, and encountered no difficulties.

As usual, Heath’s instruction manual provides a complete analysis of the operation of all circuits, including the Dolby system, and a very comprehensive adjustment and troubleshooting procedure. However, since the setting of recording bias is done entirely with the recorder’s own test meter, there is no procedure for optimizing it with any specific tape. Also, there is no mention that many high-performance tapes can be equalized more accurately if played back with CrO₂ equalization. We would suggest that AD-1530 owners keep this in mind if they discover that some tapes sound a little “bright” after recording.

We were also surprised to find that the manual made no mention of head alignment—a significant omission in our case since the physical shocks of shipment had evidently misaligned the record/playback head of our test unit. Fixing this was a simple matter—so simple that we suggested to Heath that they provide a high-frequency test tone for such adjustment on the calibration tape that comes with the machine. They agreed, and both the recorded tone (Continued on page 48)
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and instructions for using it will be made available in the future. These facilities should be of considerable interest to serious cassette recordists wishing to keep their equipment in top operating condition.

To sum up, although there are no special features in the Heath AD-1530 that are not available from other manufacturers (at a somewhat greater cost, however), we suspect the familiarizing experience of building and adjusting it oneself will prove invaluable to many owners during the machine's operating life. What is more, the end result is the equal of any cassette deck we have tested, and offers the convenience and ruggedness of the fine Wollensak transport, about which we remain highly enthusiastic.

For more information, circle 105 on reader service card.

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**Tandberg 9000X Stereo Tape Deck**

- The Tandberg name has long been associated with single-motor tape decks, but the company's new Model 9000X departs from tradition by offering a three-motor transport that has a unique and highly sophisticated integrated-circuit (IC) logic control system. The 9000X is a three-speed (7 1/2, 3 3/4, and 1 3/4 ips) machine with separate record and playback heads (and preamps) that permit off-the-tape monitoring. Like the other Tandberg recorders, this one uses a separate cross-field head to apply the recording bias to the tape. With this technique, relatively little high-frequency boost in the recording equalization is necessary (only 6 dB at 20,000 Hz and 7 1/2 ips). This means that there is a substantial improvement in recording "headroom" before signal saturation (overload) occurs. The capstan is driven by a hysteresis-synchronous motor, and separate motors are used for the tape hubs, which accept reels of up to 7 inches in diameter. A photocell system stops and disengages the transport at the end of a tape or at any point where a piece of clear leader tape has been spliced into the reel.

In the rear of the 9000X are the line inputs and outputs (and a DIN connector). Twin front-panel slider controls set recording levels, and another pair adjusts the playback-output levels. Signals applied to the two front-panel microphone jacks mix with the line inputs and share their level controls; there is no provision for separate adjustment of microphone levels. Microphones with rated impedances of 200 to 700 ohms can be used, and the input circuit automatically adjusts the preamplifier characteristics to suit the microphone impedance, maintaining an optimum signal-to-noise ratio.

During recording, the two level meters read the input recording levels, whether or not off-the-tape monitoring is used. When the PLAY button is pressed, the meters are electrically switched to read the actual output levels under the control of the playback-level sliders. Meter circuits are designed to have the same response characteristics as the equalized signals fed to the tape head. This minimizes the possibility of tape saturation with high-frequency signals of the sort that conventional meters don't respond to. In addition, the meters are fast-acting, reading the signal peaks within 40 to 50 milliseconds.

Below the meters are two red RECORD interlock buttons. Two other buttons (labeled SOURCE/TAPE) connect the line outputs to the program source or to the playback amplifiers. A small switch connects the playback from either channel to the other channel's recording input for making sound-on-sound or echo recordings. A headphone jack drives stereo phones with impedances ranging from 8 to 2,000 ohms.

The upper portion of the panel, finished in black like the lower control section, contains the reel hubs, a green pilot lamp for the power switch, and a four-digit index counter. At mid-height on the panel are the five feather-touch pushbutton transport controls, the power switch, and a tape-speed selector lever.

![Tandberg 9000X Record-Playback Response](image)

The logic-controlled tape transport system is one of the most fascinating features of the 9000X. Fifteen integrated circuits (equivalent to about seven hundred transistors) are devoted to this function. The user can switch directly from any mode to any other, except that RECORD can only be engaged when the tape is stopped. For example, during fast forward and rewind, pressing the PLAY button stops the tape almost instantly, and in less than two seconds the transport resumes operation at the selected playing speed.

The RECORD function will not operate unless one or both of the interlock buttons is engaged. Since its action is virtually instantaneous, there is no need for the separate pause control found on most recorders. Once the input levels have been set, the 9000X is ready to record at the touch of a single button. If the PLAY button is touched while recording, the transport switches instantaneously from record to play (if the RECORD button is pressed while the tape is playing, nothing happens). Each button is illuminated in green (except for the red RECORD button) when activated; it is dark at all other times.

The foolproof design of the 9000X transport, especially of its braking system, is illustrated by the fact that shutting off the power while the tape is in fast forward or rewind brings the machine to a smooth stop, with no tendency to spill or break tape.

The Tandberg 9000X is mounted on an attractive wooden base, and can be installed vertically or horizontally. Spring-loaded reel-lock hubs eliminate the need for (Continued on page 50)
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All Stanton cartridges are designed for use with all two- and four-channel matrix derived compatible systems.
rubber reel holders during vertical operation. Its panel dimensions are 16 1/8 inches by 15 3/4 inches; the deck is 7 inches deep and weighs 34 pounds. Price: $649.50. An optional remote-control unit with special provisions to facilitate use of a timer costs $79.90. Dynamic microphones are also available at $49.80 each. A carrying case is $40, and a dust cover costs $12.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** The playback frequency response of the Tandberg 9000X, over the full range of the Ampex test tapes, was well within ±2 dB from 50 to 7,500 Hz at 3 3/4 ips, and from 50 to 15,000 Hz at 7 1/8 ips. The record-playback frequency response, with the recommended Maxell UD35 tape, was typical of Tandberg machines: ±1.5 dB from 30 to 25,500 Hz at 7 1/8 ips; ±2 dB from 30 to 22,300 Hz at 3 3/4 ips, and ±2 dB from 42 to 9,500 Hz at 1 7/8 ips.

An input of 110 millivolts (line) or 0.07 millivolt (microphone inputs, 600-ohm source impedance) produced a 0-VU recording level at 1,000 Hz. The corresponding maximum playback output level was 1.9 volts. These measurements were made in stereo; when only one of the channel recording interlock buttons is depressed, the gain is reduced by about 8 dB. Headphone listening volume was good.

The meters of the Tandberg 9000X are peak-indicating devices that read either -8 or -11 VU (depending on the tape speed) for levels that would produce a 0-VU reading on conventional meters. As a result, the 3 per cent reference-distortion point is reached at ±2 VU on the meters at 7 1/8 ips. We measured slightly over 2 per cent distortion at Tandberg's 0-VU level at the two higher tape speeds, and 4.3 per cent at the 1 7/8-ips speed. The 3 per cent distortion level corresponded to ±1.5 VU at 3 3/4 ips and -2 VU at 1 7/8 ips.

Referred to the 3 per cent distortion levels, the unweighted signal-to-noise ratios were 70 dB at 7 1/2 ips, 66 dB at 3 3/4 ips, and 57 dB at 1 7/8 ips. These are equivalent to the best figures we have ever obtained on a consumer tape machine. The noise-level increase through the microphone inputs was not significant for any settings of the recording-level controls likely to be used. The gain of the microphone preamplifiers increases as the source impedance decreases, making the 9000X a good choice for making live recordings with high-quality, low-impedance microphones.

The wow was 0.025 per cent at the slowest tape speed and 0.01 per cent (the test tape residual) at the other speeds. Unweighted flutter was 0.075 per cent at 7 1/2 ips, 0.10 per cent at 3 3/4 ips, and 0.17 per cent at 1 7/8 ips. The tape speed, as determined by a stroboscope test wheel, was exact. A 1,200-foot reel of tape ran through in fast forward or rewind in 56 seconds.

- **Comment.** The performance of the Tandberg 9000X was as nearly ideal as any we have seen. Not only was there no audible change in the sound of records or FM broadcasts when recorded and played back at 7 1/2 or 3 3/4 ips, but even "pink" or random noise came through unmodified. This is an extremely severe test, particularly of a recorder's dynamic range at the highest audio frequencies. At 1 7/8 ips, the overall performance was quite close to that of a top-quality cassette recorder, and the usable signal-to-noise ratio was comparable to that of a Dolby-equipped cassette machine.

Because of the special meter calibration and response characteristics, recordings are made at a somewhat lower level than with most tape recorders. With average readings of about -10 VU, the full dynamic range of the machine is realized, and peaks to 0 VU or slightly higher do not cause significant distortion.

The transport controls operated smoothly and flawlessly during our tests and use of the recorder, and we had no problems in adjusting to their characteristics except for the close spacing (and identical size, shape, and color) of the four basic transport control buttons. Our only criticism (a minor one) of the functional electrical design of the 9000X relates to the lack of separate level controls for the microphone and line inputs. If you wish to use the line inputs when the recorder is connected into a music system, it is necessary either to switch your amplifier to an unused input or disconnect the recorder's line-input plugs.

The tape-loading path is direct, essentially in a straight line, with a single tensioning arm adjacent to each reel. One-handed tape threading is not only possible, but practical. The Tandberg 9000X, which is priced only about $100 higher than the manufacturer's best single-motor recorder, offers equal or better electrical performance in every respect and essentially represents the current state of the art for consumer tape recorders.

*For more information, circle 108 on reader service card*
Some expert opinions on the Heathkit "Computer Tuner" and AR-1500 Stereo Receiver:

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GoINg ON RECORD
By JAMES GOODFRIEND
Music Editor

REPAYMENT IN KIND

The current weakness of the American
dollar on the world's money mar-
kets is likely to have eventual repercus-
sions on the American musical scene. A
major purpose of any devaluation of cur-
cency, whether it is a fixed devaluation or
simply a currency left free to find its own
value relative to others, is to raise the
price of imports in the country whose
currency is devalued and to lower the
price of that country's exports, thus
(the theory goes) equalizing the balance
of payments through more selling and
less buying. Of course, some people
must or will buy imported goods no mat-
ter what the national balance-of-pay-
sments situation may be. But what they
face—what they must already contend
with—is a whopping increase in the price
of the goods they buy. To a certain ex-
tent now, classical music, particularly
on records, is an imported product in the
United States. How will it be affected?
Actually, classical music has a long
history as an imported item here. From
colonial days we have brought in most of
our music from abroad, whether in the
form of compositions to play and listen
to and published music to play them
from, or the actual persons of composers
and performers. Records are only a rela-
tively recent addition to the list. In the
more distant past the reasons for this
were valid. This was a new country with
far too much to do founding an economy
rather than to develop the talent we had
at home.

Obviously, all that changed. America
for some years now has possessed a
musical establishment that, in all ways,
rivals if not surpasses that of any other
country. But recordings of classical mu-
sic still tend to be imported items, so
some other reason must be involved.
And one reason is that it is cheaper,
sometimes far cheaper, to produce those
recordings anywhere else than in the
United States. As extreme examples one
can hardly forget that the American
Recording Society, whose purpose was
to record and make available American
music, made virtually all its recordings
with a pickup orchestra in Vienna, or
that the music of contemporary Ameri-
can composers on the CRl label features
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last few years, mostly because the British pound has weakened with the dollar. The Austrian schilling has gained in relation to the dollar, and orchestral rates have gone up in Vienna, but they are still lower than here. Perhaps orchestras in other countries whose currencies have also become more valuable—France, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, Poland, Hungary, Spain—are still cheaper than here.

But they are no longer that much cheaper. For the currencies of all those countries, as of this writing, are anywhere from a few percentage points to 25 per cent more valuable in dollars than they were one short year ago. Foreign orchestras may no longer look like such a bargain to American record executives.

The whole financial game will probably not do much to the retail cost of records, unless all companies decide together to raise their prices. The retail price of a record is now an established thing in most markets, and it is doubtful that any single company or even a group of companies could compete at a much higher price. Collectors used to paying a dollar premium for an imported disc are likely to rebel at the idea of paying three or four dollars more—that is, unless the quality difference becomes far greater than it is at present, or unless American companies virtually cease making classical records.

The most interesting possibilities inherent in the situation are those involving the European companies and American musicians. Obviously, the weakness of the dollar had little or nothing to do with Deutsche Grammophon's decision to record Carmen in the United States, or, of course, with DG's recording of the Boston Symphony, Angel's of the Cleveland and Chicago, and London's of the Chicago and Los Angeles. Those steps were taken when the projected expense was known to be high, and whether they have proved out, or will prove out, is up to the individual companies to decide. But it is interesting to note that if DG were to record that same Carmen today it would cost them about seventeen percent less, in terms of German currency, than it did before. Such a discount is not to be despised.

Should the dollar fall even lower in relation to the Deutschmark, the United States might seem to be a very ripe field for musical exploitation by European companies. That it would be a considerable financial boost to the musical establishment here is unquestionable. But won't it look strange to see premiere recordings of works by Heinrich Marschner, Werner Eck, Max Reger, Franz Schmidt, and the like coupled with the exotic-sounding names of such performing ensembles as those of Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, New York, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and San Francisco?

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IF OUR $1000 SPEAKER DOESN'T GET YOU, MAYBE OUR $55 ONE WILL.

People who hear about the Linear Sound of EPI invariably ask, "How much?" To which we respond: "It depends." If money is no object, we're only too happy to recommend our Model 1000. "The Tower," we call it. This is a $1000 item (each), and it is the absolute epitome of EPI's Linear Sound. (The Tower is The Stereophile's most recent addition to its select list of five Class A speakers.)

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In short, what you hear is something rather sensational. (At $1000 a crack, you might say it ought to be sensational. It is.)

But since, for most people, money is an object, you'll be happy to know our Model 1000 is just one of eight Linear Sound speakers from EPI.

In the middle of the line, for example, you'll find our Model 400, "The Mini Tower," at $389. Of this speaker, Stereophile said, "The airy, open quality... in our view earns it a place in the select group of superb speaker systems."

Then, for the budget-minded, is our Model 50 at an attractive $55 each. Don't let the price fool you. The EPI Model 50 produces a true linear sound. It has the same 1" air spring tweeter you'll find in the Tower and the same 6" long-throw woofer you'll find in the Mini Tower.

When Audio Magazine reviewed the Model 50, it recorded a response that "extended from 45 to 16,000 Hz ±3db, and dispersion was excellent." When Audio tested 14 small speakers for dispersion, our Model 50 beat the pack of them.

So, getting back to the question of the cost of EPI's Linear Sound: How much did you want to spend? (You can reach us at Epicure Products Inc., Newburyport, Mass. 01950.)

THE LINEAR SOUND OF EPI.
When Henrik Ibsen wrote the philosophical fantasy *Peer Gynt* in 1867, he was still a comparatively unknown young playwright. Not until a decade later, when in rapid succession he produced *Pillars of Society, A Doll's House, and Ghosts*, did the full force of Ibsen's social conscience explode upon a largely unprepared and self-righteous society. Yet *Peer Gynt* displays some of the same revulsion against hypocrisy and inequity that permeates the later plays.

It was Ibsen himself who invited his compatriot, Edvard Grieg, to compose incidental music for Peer Gynt. Grieg's initial impulse was to decline; he felt that the nature of the play made music a questionable addition, and, perhaps more important, he was put off by the playwright's attacks on the apathy and vacillation of the Norwegian people. Nevertheless, Grieg took up the task of composing the music in the summer of 1873. Progress was slow and spasmodic, and it was not until the summer of 1875 that he completed the score. The first performance of the Ibsen-Grieg *Peer Gynt* was given in February 1876 in the Christiania Theater in Oslo. Grieg was then in his early thirties, and this music, so reluctantly composed, established his name the world over. A dozen years later, Grieg extracted an orchestral suite of four numbers from his score and had it published as his *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*, Opus 46. Five years after that, in 1893, he put together a second suite from *Peer Gynt*, which became his Opus 55, but it never achieved anything like the popularity of the first.

Grieg himself paraphrased the action of Ibsen's play in the preface to the published score of the second suite:

*Peer Gynt*, the only son of poor peasants, is a character of morbidly developed fancy and a prey to megalomania. In his youth he has many wild adventures: for instance, he goes to a peasants' wedding and carries the bride off to the mountains, where he leaves her to roam about with wild cowherd girls. He then enters the kingdom of the mountain king, whose daughter falls in love with him and dances to him. But he laughs at the dance and the droll music, whereupon the enraged mountain folk wish to kill him. He succeeds in escaping and wanders to foreign countries, among them Morocco, where he appears as a prophet and is greeted by Arab girls. After many wonderful guidings of Fate he returns home as an old man, and, having suffered shipwreck on his way, he is as poor as when he left. The sweetheart of his youth, Solveig, who has stayed true to him all these years, meets him, and his weary head at last finds rest in her lap.

There are in the catalog no recordings of the complete score of *Peer Gynt*, which consists of twenty-three individual pieces. In the early days of long-playing records, Mercury released a disc (MG 10148, mono) containing thirteen of them, which featured a short performance by Alfred Maurstad, Norway's leading interpreter of the title role, but that recording has long been unavailable. Of the three available discs that contain more of *Peer Gynt* than just the suites, Sir John Barbirolli's (Angel S 36531) is the one I recommend. Not only does it include the most music (all but one of the pieces of the earlier Mercury release), but it offers highly sensitive, poetic performances and luminous recorded sound. More, the soprano soloist in the two songs of Solveig is the splendid Sheila Armstrong.

Angel has also wisely issued the Barbirolli performances in a sequence that embraces only the eight sections that make up the two suites, along with vigorous and graceful performances of Grieg's four Norwegian Dances (S 36803). Of the recordings containing both the suites, I would again recommend Barbirolli's performances, or, alternatively, the lyrical performances conducted by Gennady Rozhdestvensky (Melodiya/Angel S 40048), with Grieg's *Lyric Suite* as disc companion. Where just the First *Peer Gynt* Suite is concerned, no other recorded performance can touch that of George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra (Columbia MS 6877), a rare example of near-perfect ensemble balance and refinement. Of all Szell's recording triumphs, this is one of the most treasurable, the more so because it is in unexpected repertoire.

Of the available reel-to-reel releases, the most dependable is Oivin Fjeldstad's (London L 80020), which contains the two suites plus the Prelude and *Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter*. Barbirolli's set of excerpts from the score is available in an excellent cassette issue (Angel 4XS 36531), and for a cassette issue of the two suites alone, I recommend the straightforward if unsubtle versions conducted by Richard Kraus (Deutsche Grammophon 921-015).

**Grieg's**

**PEER GYNT**
The diagram at right as well as the photograph on the opposite page show the novel disposition of both instrumental and microphonic forces for Columbia Records' quadraphonic SQ recording (reviewed in this issue) of Bax's Concerto for Orchestra. Pierre Boulez conducting the New York Philharmonic. This is certainly an extreme — perhaps even a unique — case, but it illustrates the probable outer limits of the kinds of demands four-channel recording will soon be placing on the reproduction chain, of which not the least important links are the loudspeaker systems.

Julian Hirsch discusses

CHOOSING SPEAKERS FOR

When we are asked— as we increasingly are these days—"What rear speakers should I use in my four-channel installation?" it is tempting to give the "safe" answer: the same ones you are using in front. From the standpoint of four-channel listening quality at least, there is little doubt that four identical speakers would be the best solution. But there are other factors besides listening to be considered, some of them indicating that you might want to use different speakers in front and rear (though not from left to right!).

Assuming that you are starting from scratch, and that you intend to listen only to four-channel, then four small, high-quality acoustic-suspension speakers would probably give you the best overall sound per dollar of speaker investment. But what about our present two-channel stereo, certain to be the major program source for some time to come? The four small speakers, with front and rear channels coupled for two-channel stereo, could not equal the sound quality (specifically in respect to bass reproduction) of two front speakers with the same total cost. It might therefore be wiser for now to buy two better-grade speakers for the front channels and two lower-price units with compatible sound characteristics for the rear. In most cases, mixing low- and high-price speakers from the same manufacturer will give satisfactory results.

Since this approach admittedly favors two-channel reproduction, it is reasonable to ask to what degree it compromises four-channel reproduction. This question will most likely concern those who already have a satisfactory two-channel setup and are considering adding four-channel capability. If
A FOUR-CHANNEL SYSTEM

considerations of available space, decor, and pocketbook can be ignored, it is tempting to avoid any compromise by simply duplicating the front speakers for the rear. For most people, however, cost and other considerations will be important, and the question for them comes down to deciding just what they expect from four-channel sound.

So-called "surround sound" recording techniques, widely used for popular music and to a lesser extent with classical works (see review of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra in this issue), places groups of instruments in a circle drawn about the listener, and it can readily be seen that proper reproduction of this situation will call for identical sound capability from each of the four speakers. If, on the other hand, four-channel sound is seen principally as a means of recreating and reinforcing those elements of concert-hall acoustics (echo, reflection, and "ambiance") that contribute to a sense of the space in which a musical performance is taking place, satisfactory rear-channel results can be achieved at appreciably lower power levels and within a more restricted frequency range.

In all probability, four-channel systems will eventually have to cope with both of these recording techniques, which makes the answer to the question of compromise on the rear-channel speakers even more critical for the long term. Since we have been listening in four channels almost exclusively for about a year, our practical experience in this area is now extensive. It is, furthermore, gained from listening to a wide variety of both matrixed and discrete program material. At least six very different types of rear speakers have been used, in all possi-
able combinations, with several times that number of equally diverse front speakers. Oddly enough, the only combination we have never tried is four identical speakers!

It should surprise no one to learn (it didn't us) that poor speakers used in the rear sound just as bad there as they do up front. The sole possible justification for interior rear speakers is that their purpose is ambiance reproduction only (whether from real four-channel or synthesis techniques). Since the level of the signals then fed to the rear speakers is low, one should not, ideally, even be consciously aware of their presence. Unfortunately, the greater part of the sense of "liveness" imparted by rear-channel ambiance reproduction is contributed (contrary to popular impression) by the lower frequencies, and it is precisely at these frequencies that cheaper speakers are most wanting. The so-called "passive" four-channel systems (such as the popular Dynaquad) that work from a conventional stereo amplifier require that the rear speakers used be at least as efficient as those in front. This is because such passive systems allot only a certain amount of the total signal to the rear speakers, and there is no way of increasing the "drive" they receive beyond this.

Once a reasonable level of quality has been reached, however, we have found that the specific choice of rear speakers has remarkably little to do with the overall four-channel listening experience. Generally speaking, there are speakers costing as little as $60 that are fully suitable for use in the rear channels, no matter how good the front speakers may be. Some of the most extreme price pairings of speakers have produced a thoroughly pleasing four-channel effect for us. These combinations included a pair of $600 speakers in front with a pair of $70 bookshelf systems in the rear, a pair of very expensive omnidirectional in front with a pair of well-known direct/reflecting speakers in the rear, and numerous other unlikely combinations. There were, of course, substantial differences in sound quality per se and some other differences in "imaging," but we felt that each of the various combinations nonetheless did justice to the program material.

The situation was quite different when we reversed the sound field, however, using the lesser speakers in front and the better ones in the rear. It would appear from our experiments that the dominant sound character of a four-speaker system is determined by the front speakers, regardless of the distribution of the program material among the four speakers. There seemed to be a disturbing spatial anomaly when the rear speakers were audibly superior in terms of frequency range and smoothness of response. (It would be well to interject an important point just here: keep in mind that, throughout our discussion, we are assuming the use of speakers selected from among the best performing units at the particular price level. With speakers, there is no necessary correlation between price and performance, and it is therefore possible to buy a pair of speakers for, say, $150 that perform better—or, of course, worse—than another pair selling for perhaps twice that amount.)

Mixing omnidirectional or reflecting speakers with conventional front radiators might seem to be as unwise as mixing gin and scotch, but in practice we found that the results were far from unpleasant and did not cause sonic upset. Nevertheless, based on our experience with a limited number of such combinations, we would suggest that the use of four speakers with approximately similar dispersion characteristics is advisable. In fact, given reasonably wide-range units, we suspect that polar dispersion is one of the factors that must be most carefully matched for four-channel reproduction. As for the omni-vs.-directional speaker argument, the new battle lines with respect to four-channel have scarcely been drawn, and it is sufficient to say that if you prefer one or the other for two-channel listening, you will probably be happiest with the same type for four.

Another factor somewhat related to the choice of rear speakers is their placement in the room. It is a large and complex subject, involving as it does not only room size and shape, but extremely intricate questions of speaker phasing as well. It deserves and will get—separate treatment at a later date, but we would like to make one small point here: the conventional or idealized rectangular configuration with the listener in the center may not always be practical in a room (it was not, in our case), but this should not deter you from placing the rear speakers wherever they will fit. Fortunately for all of us—listeners, record companies, and equipment manufacturers alike—four-channel programs so far are not nearly as "discrete" as the optimum use of the medium allows even now, and it is of course still undergoing further development. The localization of sound sources is usually rather vague, even with elaborate electronic hardware, and it often makes very little difference whether a rear speaker is behind you, beside you, or along a side wall. By my ears at least, even less-than-optimum four-channel sound is far better than no four-channel, and it is well worth the effort and expense required to achieve it.
(Q) RODRIGUES looks at four-channel
STEVIE WONDER

“I never expected things to be this pleasant”

By JOEL VANCE
Stevie Wonder, born blind and black, has been a force in the music industry since he was a young child. His early years were marked by his virtuosity and his ability to produce hits. His greatest hits include "Uptight," "My Cherie Amour," and "Signed, Sealed, and Delivered I'm Yours." Wonder's music has been consistently popular, with albums like "Talking Book" and "Music of My Mind" reaching platinum status.

Stevie Wonder's creative process is often spontaneous. He often wakes up with a tune in his head or a story he wants to tell. Wonder's music is often inspired by his personal experiences and the world around him. He uses his voice, clavinet, and drums to create a sound that is both personal and universal.

Wonder's music has had a significant impact on the music industry, and his contributions have been recognized with multiple awards and honors. His talent and dedication have made him a beloved figure in the music world, and his influence continues to be felt today.
Stevie Wonder is soundly bussed by his mother on the occasion of his graduation in 1969 from the Michigan School for the Blind in Lansing.

Right, two generations of music makers: jazz's first horn Miles Davis congratulating Stevie backstage after the youngster's Copacabana opening in 1970.

Below, Stevie and Syreeta Wright married in 1970 and later divorced, but there is talk of a reconciliation.

ly I think they get pleasure from my music. I try to pass on a little awareness to them—get them to think about new things... even controversy, to an extent. All this is important. I remember a girl came up to me once and said she had been going to commit suicide, but then she heard some of my music and she changed her mind. I told her, 'I'm glad you did, and I'm glad the music helped.' You've got to take responsibility, you've got to be there to help the people who listen to you when they need help—I mean, they made you; there has to be a reason why they made you.'

Perhaps inspired by this line of thought about the often complicated relationships between the performer, his audience, and his fame, Wonder abruptly turned the tables: 'What do you think—I'm asking you questions!—what do you think would happen if the Beatles got back together? Would it be the same?'

I told him I thought not, that it would be rather like meeting a woman you had loved some years before: no matter what you'd had together, too many things had happened to you both in the meantime to start up again. Wonder agreed—it was obviously something he had been giving some thought to, something that had some personal meaning for him.

'No, I don't think the Beatles would happen again. Everybody has to find his own way. I have a song, All Is Fair in Love, on the new album... 'All has changed with time/The future none can see/The road you leave behind/Ahead lies mystery.'... This may sound crazy, but what happened to all the beautiful souls? Clyde McPhatter... after he died this song came to me and it would have been perfect for him. His talent should live on in some kind of way. And Nat Cole. He could have made a very positive contribution to the black movement; he would have had a lot of good things to say.'

Wonder had grown pensive, so I asked him what next, what happens after he finishes "Inner Visions"?

'I'd like to take off for awhile. Rest some. I'd like to go to Africa, do an acoustic album. I have thoughts about the outside. Do an album outside—open-air music.'

The answer was typically Wonder: 'rest' in one sentence, and right back to work in the next. It is a little difficult to realize that, at only twenty-three, Wonder is a ten-year veteran of professional music, that he has had a great track record, and that his talent is only now—now that he has sole control of it—reaching white heat. In a period when "black" music is at once the biggest moneymaker and the most prestigious popular form, when superior, mediocre, or even bad black musicians are therefore assured of an audience they could not have counted on as little as four years ago, and when so much black music remains mired (perhaps for the very same reasons) in pedantic claptrap or a variation on the Endless Funk Figure, Stevie, as befits his name, continues to be a pure Wonder. He refuses to categorize himself or his sound, and is perfectly capable at this time of writing a stage musical, a movie score, or anything else he wants. (He turned down a commission to do the score for Black Caesar, an almost villainously exploitative trash movie: 'I saw it and I didn't like it.') He is dead sure of his outlook, absolutely confident of his talent.

'I just try to be me, let what is within me come out. I feel like I'm here... things are pleasant. I never expected them to be this pleasant.'

Stevie took another sip of his orange juice and egg. "I'll be here until I die."
IS SPEAKER PREFERENCE A "MATTER OF TASTE"?

Technical Editor Larry Klein comes down on the side of accurate reproduction

If you’ve been interested in high-fidelity for more than about fifteen minutes, you should by now be aware that there is no speaker system so bad that someone won’t love it, and no speaker so good that someone else won’t hate it. This has led some pundits to proclaim that speaker preferences are all a matter of taste and that the proper goal of a successful speaker designer is simply to determine what the average taste is and then cater to it.

Most designers would agree that the major audible differences among speakers arise from frequency-response variations. In fact, the audible irritants known as harshness, nasality, boominess, muddiness, dullness, shrillness, and so forth, commonly thought of as colorations or “distortions,” are almost always the result of one or more major frequency-response aberrations. These large dips and peaks in response arise from a number of causes having to do with how well the drivers, the crossover, and the speaker enclosure itself have been designed not only individually, but as an interacting team or system. Assuming that the speaker designers know this as well as we do, why do some speakers at a given price level sound so good and others so bad? Why is there no direct correlation between the price of a speaker system and the quality of its sound?

At least part of the explanation can be found in the amount of technical skill possessed by the speaker-design engineer. But the major part of the answer lies in the designer’s personal “taste” in sound and/or in the marketing “philosophy” of his company’s sales department. We need not spend much time on the question of engineering know-how—though it may come as a surprise to some readers to learn that there are no books to read or schools to attend that will teach you the specifics of speaker-system design. It is valuable, of course, to have a working knowledge of electronics and acoustics, but as far as I’ve been able to determine, the best way to learn how to be a speaker designer is to work with someone who is designing speakers.

Assuming that most speaker-design engineers have enough knowledge to do their job as they see it, how then can we account for the large differences in sound quality among equivalently priced speaker systems? The key is in that phrase “their job as they see it”—which comes down, of course, to “as they hear it.” Speaker designers tend to fall into one or the other of two major schools of thought. One group takes the position that since most recordings are artificial products assembled in a recording studio, there is therefore no original sonic reality for the speaker to reproduce. An engineer of this persuasion tends to design his products to have an “impressive” or “popular” sound according to his notion of what those qualities may be. To accomplish this, he may, for example, build a response peak into the lower-mid bass, or into the upper bass, the mid-range, the upper mid-range, or even a combination of these. The easiest approach, of course, is simply to let the speaker’s drivers do their own things, letting the peaks and dips fall where they may. In general, however, when an engineer isn’t trying for a wide, flat frequency response, the tendency is to put a peak into the mid-range or upper mid-range, which provides a “more efficient,” “up-front,” or “louder” speaker with plenty of “projection” and “bite.”

Speaker designers of the second school of thought operate on the thesis that for a speaker to be good, it must be “accurate.” To achieve accuracy a speaker must have a reasonably flat and extended frequency response throughout the audio range. A speaker system with a flat frequency response is a good deal more difficult to design than one with random—or selected—dips and peaks. Furthermore, the attainment of a flat response almost always involves unhappy trade-offs in size, efficiency, and/or power-handling capacity.

Many of the major Japanese designers appear convinced that speakers should be designed to “taste.” Not too long ago in Japan I had the opportunity to participate in a computer-assisted speaker-testing session. Visualize, if you will, a room seating perhaps forty people. On a slightly raised dais to the front is a stage with several speaker systems posi-
tioned on the periphery of a large electrically driven "lazy susan." One speaker is always at stage-center position. A push of a button rotates the assembly until the next speaker in line is centered. On the arm rest of each of the forty or so chairs for the audience is a small box with a pilot light and seven pushbuttons labeled respectively −3, −2, −1, 0, +1, +2, +3.

An acoustically transparent curtain is then drawn over the stage to hide the speakers, and the speaker-positioning button is pressed to bring one of the now hidden speakers into playing position. After a few moments of light-classical program material, the button is pressed again, a different speaker moves into playing position, and the program material is repeated. The pilot light on our individual response boxes then lights up, and we (the audience) are instructed to push one of the numbered buttons to indicate the degree of our preference between the first and the second speakers. Pushing the zero would indicate no preference, pushing one of the plus numbers would indicate how much more you like the second speaker than the first, and pushing a minus number would indicate how much less you like it.

I must confess that I didn’t much care for the sound produced by any of the speakers, so I was hard pressed to choose in each case the lesser of two evils. At the risk of offending my hosts, I finally settled on pushing −1 or −2 for almost everything. Where did the computer come in? It simply tabulated the results. The pushbutton data from the audience’s response boxes was fed to the computer, which then provided an instantaneous readout on how many preferred which test speakers, to what degree, and with what kind of music. I asked who normally filled the chairs during an evaluation session and was told that since the goal was to design speaker systems that would appeal to a large cross-section of the public, the audience was carefully chosen to be representative of that cross-section.

Another Japan-based speaker manufacturer, according to a recent newsletter, has divided its line of speakers into two categories, one type having what they call the “British/New England” sound and the other having the “U.S. West Coast” sound. (The geographical designations derive from the locations of the manufacturers of the various best-selling U.S. speaker brands.) The sonic characteristics of each type were defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British/New England</th>
<th>U.S. West Coast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Precise, satisfying sound</td>
<td>Bright, dynamic sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide frequency response</td>
<td>Excellent tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious, exact reproduction</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High acoustic energy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Although I do not subscribe to the implications of the geographical categories—nor, indeed, to the ambiguity of the descriptive phrases—it is clear that the “West Coast” sound is meant to represent those speakers designed to taste, and the “British/New England” sound designed for a flat frequency response. Here, then, is a manufacturer who apparently feels that both categories of reproducer have validity—which implies that a preference for reproduction accuracy is as much a matter of mere taste as a preference for “bright, dynamic sound.” As I mentioned earlier, this stance is often defended by reference to today’s recording techniques, in which there is often no original concert-hall reality.
THE
THOMPSON
MODIFIER

No. 20K5375 This instrument softens the tone, eliminates the metallic sound, takes all the scratch out, and makes the reproduction as soft, smooth and harmonious as the original. Modern disc records are frequently so true to the original, reproducing the sound practically in all its original volume that they are too loud to be pleasant in small rooms, and this Thompson Modifier inserted in the horn of the machine softens the sound, making it pleasant and agreeable even in the smallest of rooms. The Thompson Modifier is strongly and substantially made of brass, nickel plated, fitted with rubber at points where it touches the horn, and instantly put into place or as quickly removed. There is no talking machine included with this modifier. It is simply an attachment to put into the horn of your own machine.

Price.................. 75c

While browsing through the music section of a 1908 Sears, Roebuck catalog, I came across, if not the very first, at least one of the first commercial audio-equalization devices. "Strongly and substantially made," Thompson's nickel-plated brass Modifier was designed to be stuffed down the throat of an overloud morning-glory "amplifying" horn on an acoustic "talking machine."

Several of the claims made for the Modifier strike a familiar chord. For example, the statement that "Modern [1908] disc records are frequently so true to the original . . . that they are too loud to be pleasant in small rooms . . ." I suspect it wasn't the excessive dynamic range that bothered these early audiophiles, but the fact that most of the acoustic phonographs lacked means of regulating volume.

Apparently the Modifier also eliminated some acoustic-pickup and horn resonances, which moved the ad writer to the hyperbolic claim that the Modifier would provide "reproduction as soft, smooth and harmonious as the original." However, his conscience—or perhaps some primitive truth-in-advertising rule enforced by Sears—led him to warn that, for the 75¢ spent, "There is no talking machine included with this modifier." L.K.

to be reproduced. By the time a typical multi-track tape has been mixed down, possibly with a different frequency equalization applied to each track, there would appear to be no point in a speaker engineer's knocking himself out to attain a super-flat response when the program material has God knows what kind of equalization built into it.

On the face of it, this position has a certain plausibility, but carried to its logical extreme it puts the speaker designer in a position not unlike that of a clothing designer: find out what this year's fashion is, and design accordingly. One year, speakers with booming bass might be "in," the next year tight bass and/or suppressed treble might be all the rage. Given a situation in which there are no objective standards, any taste, subject to the style whim of the moment, becomes just as valid as any other.

Opposed to this position of critical chaos are those loudspeaker engineers who steadily pursue the goal of accurate reproduction in their designs. Their view is that even if most recordings have no original concert-hall reality to be reproduced, there is a specific signal embodied in physical form in the record grooves (and in magnetic form on tape) that can and should be translated accurately into electrical waveforms by stylus, tape-head, and amplifier and thence into analogous acoustical waveforms by the speaker system. If a flat, wide-range response is a desirable characteristic in a phono cartridge and an amplifier, why should it not be as desirable in a speaker as well? Further, despite the absence of any "original concert-hall" live sound, performing artists, engineers, and producers have nonetheless worked together to get a specific sound experience into the record grooves. For the speaker designer to willfully second-guess the sonic intentions of those who are producing the music seems to me to be not only arrogantly presumptuous, but questionable aesthetics as well.

In my view, it is almost self-evident that a fine loudspeaker should have absolutely no sound quality of its own. It should not have "presence," but "absence." It should sound "warm" only when the music it is playing is warm, it should sound "bright" only when the music is bright. Insofar as a speaker has any sonic character of its own, it will add that character to whatever material it tries to reproduce. There are undoubtedly isolated instances in which the sonic qualities of a given recording might be improved coincidentally by the individual coloration of a particular speaker, but such gratuitous "enhancement" would in the vast majority of cases be artistically inappropriate and serve only to degrade the complex process of high-fidelity reproduction.
KNOWLEDGE of classical music and those things that go to make it up is not an accomplishment to be perfected in a mere few months of study. Music is an almost endlessly complicated field in which fact abuts on fact and opinion on opinion, and sometimes one on the other, the collision producing a displacement of both and changing our entire view of musical history and technique. Truly, the study of the history of music is a study of the changes in meaning, across the centuries, of things whose meaning was once thought to be fixed. As Berlioz recognized in his use of the term idée fixe in connection with his Symphonie Fantastique. That term was once thought to refer to a musical motif, but, in fact, it has to do with form. A symphony, after all, was looked upon as a fixed form in Berlioz’s time, an orchestral work in several movements prefaced by a number, a key, and an opus number, the number and the opus number almost never coinciding, and always ending with a finale. Berlioz broke the mold, composing a work that had neither key nor any sort of number but still ended with a finale—really a caricature of a finale—and the symphony has never been the same since; the idée was no longer fixe.

One of the special difficulties in learning about music is that so much of the terminology is in one or another foreign language, and even in those languages the particular expression may be an ancient one, one whose meaning is no longer clear even to a native speaker of that language. If these two grids (to speak in the scientific manner) representing exotic language and outdated expression, respectively, are now superimposed upon the one that represents continual change in meaning and significance, we can see that the difficulties of the layman’s reaching a proper understanding of practically anything in music are all but insurmountable.

Nevertheless, there is hope. If we take things one at a time, step by step (vide capitum), searching, as Bernard Russell would have said, for “areas of reality,” we may eventually attain to a knowledge of music that, if not exhaustive, is at least useful for the purposes of relatively abstruse discussion. With such an aim in mind, I propose a group of musical terms, in various languages, to discuss and, perhaps, in a sublunary way, define. The terms have been selected on one or more of the following criteria: they are frequently encountered in the musical literature; they are almost always misinterpreted; they are rarely encountered in the musical literature; their meaning has changed drastically in recent years; or the terminology is sufficiently exotic to be exciting.

- A CAPELLA. Literally, from the head, thus meaning, in actual practice, to improvise, to fake it, to “wing it.” The best jazz is almost always a capella, and a portion of the Baroque and Romantic organ repertoire began life as a capella music, later to be written down in concrete form (see Musique Concrète).

- ACCIDENTAL. The generic term for a sharp or a flat. The term began with the growth of solo song in the sixteenth century, when the vocalist would, on occasion (and perhaps by chance), sing a note either flatter or sharper than the one intended, and the people would comment, “Oh, she has had an accidental.” A more modern development of this—referring, of course, to notes not available on keyboard instruments (see Just Intonation)—is called singing, or playing, “in the cracks,” and for this style the new musical signs of the double-cross and the semi-detached flat have been developed.

- AMBROSIAN CHANT. Any of a large variety of ancient drinking songs. Long thought to be related to the church, Ambrosian chant is actually a pagan survival, ambrosia being of Graeco-Roman origin rather than Hebraic.

- BAROQUE ORNAMENTATION. Baroque derives from the Portuguese Barocco, meaning a deformed pearl, and Baroque ornamentation refers then to the pearls and, by extension, to all other forms of jewelry worn especially by female performers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to distract audiences from these singers’ inability to execute a passable trill or properly belabor a melismatic roulade.

- CANTUS FIRMUS. A firm song, a strong song, such as The Marseillaise or The Star-Spangled Banner. Canti firmi have been of enormous importance in the political and social history of the world,
rallying the people to unpopular causes and, in general, doing more than any C.I.A. could to lower the incidence of sedition ("Let me make a nation sing and I care not who makes its laws"—Joseph R. McCarthy).

- **CHANSON DE GESTE.** An early type of troubadourian song in which is enclosed a funny story (jest).
- **COR ANGLAIS.** The English core. This refers to a particular quality of the music of born or naturalized English citizens which seems to have no relation to French, German, Italian, or other traditions of music, but which is, as the poet said, "forever England." The expression is in French so as to make it seem more believable.
- **DUMP.** Sometimes spelled dumpe or dump. An English tune of parting (sixteenth century). The dump was a musical equivalent (the English being highly musical people in those days) of a "Dear John" letter, in which the loved one was told firmly, if wordlessly, that he or she was no longer needed. Some of the nobility, having continual need of such musical messages, hired eminent composers to write them for them as, so to speak, a trademark. Thus we have such compositions as My Lady Carey's Dump, by Anonymous, and such pieces of general usage as The Irish Dump (whether this was to be to or from the Irish is not known) found in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book.
- **EXPOSITION.** That portion of a musical composition in which both the composer and performer are expected to "show off" whatever they've got. The most recent developments in the art of exposition have been put forward by a bare-breasted young American cellist; her unique expositions have been recapitulated da capo al fine in the press.
- **FALSO BORDONI.** An Italian castrato singer of the eighteenth century active in England (original name unknown). He got the name Falso Bordoni because of his continual attempts to insinuate himself into operatic casts disguised, in women's clothes, as Faustina Bordoni. Due to the fact that he was a tritone (q.v.), he only rarely succeeded, and his appearance was often greeted with opprobrium. Handel, who was aware of this, wrote for him the aria "He was despised."
- **GROUND BASS.** A bass line supplied by a barrel organ, a hurdy-gurdy, or any other hand-turned instrument.
- **HOMOPHONY.** Music sung by an all-male choir.
- **IDIOPHONE.** Any musical instrument, such as a tambourine, designed to be played by one of low intelligence.
- **JEW'S HARP.** A species of lyre, especially that one played by David for King Solomon, as illustrated in many antique works of art, and, therefore, the only authentic instrument for the accompaniment of psalms.
- **JUST INTONATION.** A term of mild protestation used by singers when they have been accused of singing an accidental (q.v.), as in, "That's not wrong, that's just intonation."
- **LAUDA.** A term of great antiquity, but still frequently used today, meaning fortissimo.
- **LUDUS TONALIS.** Scatalogical songs.
- **MAJOR AND MINOR.** Terms used by composers of the late Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods to designate and distinguish their more important works from their less important ones. Thus, Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor was intended as a work of less significance than his Symphony No. 4 in B-flat Major; Chopin's three sonatas for piano are all, by his own titular admission, negligible music; and Mozart's Symphony No. 25, which is known as the "Little G Minor," is even less important than his general run of minor works.
- **MONODY.** Music meant to be heard from a single sound source. When more than one instrument or voice is involved, various juxtapositions of the performers are necessary, although sometimes a barrier is erected between performers and listeners and the music is funneled through a hole incised in the wall, which has become known as a "speaker."
- **MUSICA FICTA.** Make-believe music, or music that exists in reputation but not in actuality, such as Sibelius' Eighth Symphony, Mozart's Lullaby, and the compositions of Terry Riley.
- **MUSIQUE CONCRÉTE.** Concrete music—real music—the opposite of Musica Ficta above; in
other words, music that exists in actuality if not in reputation, such as Peter Warlock's *The Curlew*, Francis Poulenc's *Elegy on the Death of the Princess de Polignac*, and the compositions of Arnold Schoenberg.

- **NEAPOLITAN SIXTH.** That fraction of Vienna—comparable to the Latin Quarter in Paris—occupied by Italian immigrants. The music these Italian immigrants brought with them had a great effect upon certain Viennese composers, Schubert in particular being known for his extensive forays into the "Neapolitan region," which is, doubtlessly, where he contracted the disease that killed him.

- **ORGANUM.** Any of several species of music associated with the sexual experience. On the basis of extensive historical evidence there seem to be four major varieties, each presumably related to a specific variety of experience, and known, respectively, as (1) parallel, (2) free and contrary, (3) measured, and (4) melismatic. These terms being sufficiently implicative, it is felt that no further explication is necessary or proper here.

- **PARODY MASS.** Music composed for the celebration of Hallowe'en.

- **PLAINSONG.** Music of the people; *ergo*, folk songs, singing commercials, and the like.

- **POLYPHONY.** Music sung by people of all sexes. Many works composed before 1750, though including parts for soprano and alto, were meant to be sung by boys or by castrati. Such music, then, cannot properly be called *polyphony*; it is, rather, *monophony*, or, at best (in the case of the castrati), *heterophony*.

- **SECONDA PRATTICA.** A charitable criticism given of musical performers who demonstrate an excessive level of incompetence, as in "He really does not lack talent, but he needs a *seconda prattica* (and maybe a *terta*)."

- **SERIALISM.** A general term referring to music that is composed in installments.

- **SUSPENSION.** The interval of time between two installments of a serial composition.

- **SWELL.** A term of appreciation, probably dating into antiquity, used for some reason exclusively with respect to organs.

- **TIERCE DE PICARDIE.** The Picardy Third. A descending interval of a minor third as in, and deriving from, "Roses are flow'ring in Pi-car-die."

- **TRITONE.** A person who is capable of singing only three notes, as distinguished from those who can sing only two (*duotones*). The individual who can sing all the chromatic tones is known in some quarters as a *dodecaphonist*.

- **TROMBA MARINA.** That instrument, often pictured in Italian Renaissance paintings, and looking very much like a conch shell, said to have been played by the minor ocean deities who accompanied Neptune when he rose from the deep.

- **UNISON.** General agreement between conductor and orchestra as to which piece is to be rehearsed or played.

- **VIRGINAL.** Music to be played when the wedding has been called off. A large collection of such music was published by a Mr. Fitzwilliam (see *Dump*).

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**GRADUS AD PARNASSUM!** Steps to Parnassus! It is only by taking one step at a time that we may proceed from ignorance to knowledge. As those ancient and pitiable Greeks, expatriated against their will to Rome and the ultra-Roman colonies, thought of their dear cottages on the slopes of Mt. Parnassus, knowing that the return to their homes could be accomplished only through long and arduous hikes, one step at a time, we too must have the patience to approach the tonality of musical knowledge one step, or even a half-step, at a time. Though the modulations be Wagnerian, still, the tonic is always in sight.

And when we have learned what there is to learn, we too may be greeted by the Maestro, as was that singer who had sung her entire aria in accidentals (*q.v.*) and finally come to rest in the proper key: "Welcome home, Mrs. Worthington."

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*Frederick Beckmesser has been, for many years, an eminent music critic. Though much maligned in the past for his conservative views, his special insights are those of a good friend of music.*

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*August 1973*

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SIMON ESTES, a young American bass, has accumulated a formidable list of successes, including four recordings on top labels, in only seven short years. Estes made his initial impact on the operatic world in 1965. "It began in Berlin," he explains, "because I was there. I'd followed a girl friend from Juilliard who had gone to Germany to audition. She had me sing for her agent, Frede- rich Paasch, who suggested that I audition for the Berlin State Opera. I did and received a contract to sing Ramfis in Aida. It was my first professional appearance on any stage."

It happened with almost dazzling speed. Estes arrived in Berlin on Christmas Day, 1964, auditioned in January, and sang in March, receiving fine reviews that brought him more engagements. In addition to Ramfis, he has sung many other leading bass roles with the Berlin company, and with the Hamburg State Opera he sang the role of Uncle Albert in the world premiere of Gunther Schuller's The Visitation. He has been heard throughout Germany, Italy, and Switzerland and in Great Britain. In his own country, he has sung with many leading opera companies, including the Chicago, Philadelphia Lyric, and Boston. With the San Francisco company, he sang the multiple bass leads in Tales of Hoffmann and the leading role of Carter Johnson in the first American production of The Visitation. Last season he appeared with the San Francisco company as Raimondo in Lucia and as Don Pedro in the company's revival of L'Africaine.

Among the recordings Estes has made are the award-winning Shostakovich Fourteenth Symphony, for which he received a Grammy for his contribution as one of the two vocal soloists. He has also appeared in RCA's recording of Handel's Judas Maccabaeus. For Angel (EMI) he sang Il Frate in the Caballé-Domingo Don Carlo, and for Columbia he recorded an excerpt from Rachmaninoff's opera Aleko.

"I like to make records," he said. "You can learn from recordings while you're making them. In fact, they can
When Charles Kellis, a voice teacher at the university, for three years and theology for one at the University of Iowa, you make is musical and if the voice is in line."

The suggestion appealed to Estes, who had always loved to sing. As a young boy, gifted with an exceptional high soprano voice of the type that sometimes presages a fine bass in later maturity, he had possessed a high C that many a prima donna might covet. He had sung in church and with various amateur groups. When his voice changed, at eighteen, he became a tenor and went right on singing in glee clubs and with a university group called the Old Gold Singers. All this experience was beginning to add up to something, so Kellis' estimate of his talent was not entirely a surprise. It did spark his determination to become a professional singer, however, so Estes began vocal studies. After four months, at Kellis' suggestion, he auditioned for the Juilliard School in New York. He received a full scholarship, and was in his second year at the school when he went to Berlin and plunged into the professional world of music.

Every opportunity that has come to Estes seems to have come quickly. His American career was launched after he auditioned for a grant from the Institute of International Education, for which he had been sponsored by the American consul in Berlin and by Gunther Schuller. When he received the grant, he was asked to participate in the 1966 Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. It brought him a silver medal and subsequent engagements in the United States with the Boston Symphony, the Hollywood Bowl, and other major organizations.

Today his career seems to be established and still expanding. In addition to the orchestral and operatic appearances he makes in the United States, he sings some twenty to thirty recitals per season here and spends six months fulfilling opera, concert, and recital engagements in Europe, where he has appeared at many prestigious music festivals. He has even sung in New Zealand and Australia. He is a gifted musician and a linguist—he speaks fluent Italian and German and not-so-fluent (by his own admission) French, and while in Moscow for the competition he learned to speak and write Russian. On the surface, it looks as if Estes were enjoying all the fruits of success. He is not.

He is one of perhaps half a dozen black male artists in the entire world of opera, and he has had some bitter experiences. For example, a Southern opera manager once planned to engage Estes for a leading role only to have a woman who helped subsidize the company threaten to remove her support if a black were engaged. "So what happened? I didn't sing. What could the manager do?" said Estes, who has had other similar encounters in his native country. He continued, "Then there are the opera managers who are willing to engage you, but only want to pay you peanuts, managers who think they are doing you a favor if they let you sing at all."

But what about the black female singers who are doing so well, such as Leontyne Price, Martina Arroyo, Grace Bumbry, and Shirley Verrett? "Yes," Estes acknowledges, "black women have always done better than men. It's a throwback to the slave society where, in order to keep blacks in line, the black man was robbed of his dignity and pride. I'm not saying that this current attitude toward the black male singer is a conscious attempt to rob him of his dignity; it's unconscious, and mixed up with it is another unconscious prejudice: the dislike of seeing a white woman with a black man, even on stage.

"It's a great shame, too, because I am not the only black artist who has suffered or is suffering because of this. Bill Warfield should have had the chance to sing something besides Of Man River and Porgy. There are other great black male singers who just don't get ahead. Don't imagine that I want any favoritism because I am black. I only want equal opportunity."

"I feel that I have something to offer. I am grateful to the foundations and the people who have helped me develop my career, and now I would like to express and display what I have learned. I am a religious person, you know. I believe in God and I think my voice is a gift from God. I want to share it with His people, and I also feel I have a mission to help my own people to progress in this profession."

"Black children should have more of a direction, should be initiated into opera. We are a musical people. When I was little, there was always music in my family. We—my mother, my sisters, and I—used to stand around a grand piano that my older sister had received as a gift. She had a really beautiful voice. Anyhow, we used to sing hymns and other music at this piano. My mother had a beautiful voice, too. But of course no one in her native town of Centerville, Iowa, was interested in a black soprano. Nobody knew she might have been an opera singer. Nobody there knew anything about opera, for one thing. Until my teacher said I had an operatic voice, I had never even thought about opera. Now I realize that I was probably born to sing it—my gift for languages, for instance, and my memory. I can learn an opera in five days. Furthermore, if I hadn't come upon this music so late, I might have been able to be a conductor. I love to watch conductors at work, and I would love the feel of having an orchestra at my command—all those marvelous sounds meshing together. But that opportunity was denied me because of my background, because of my poverty.

Today I live in New York. I am based in this country, but I sing more opera in Europe than in the United States. My ambition is to sing as much in America as I do in Europe, to open doors for my people. For as you help the blacks, you also help the whites to get more opportunities. My colleagues, I must say, are eager for me to succeed. People like Placido Domingo—a great man, a great singer, and a great musician—they help me, and I want to help myself and other blacks.

"Don't get the impression that I'm being neurotic. I am not neurotic; I am human. You can only improve when you feel you are growing; if people beat you down, then you get complexes." Currently, Simon Estes is remarkably free of complexes, and, in spite of the frankness with which he states his problem, there is no vindictiveness in his approach. It is easy to believe him when he says, "I love music and I love people. I am unable to hate anyone."
My friend Ben, the world's most devoted Gordon Lightfoot fan, paid John Denver the ultimate compliment one night by jumping up in the middle of Denver's Aerie to blurt out: "That guy sounds like a Canadian!"

Ben has not, to my knowledge, threatened to move to Canada and start over if the United States drops one more bomb, pollutes one more river, builds one more parking lot, or whatever, but he is aware that a growing number are making such threats every day, and he is aware that there is something different about Canadian musicians.

Canada has become the Great, Good Place in the minds of some itchy Americans: quite suddenly, it seems, Canada has come to represent the purity and innocence we as a nation have lost. People whose counterparts years ago thought of moving to California or Australia are thinking of moving to Canada. It offers a recognizable life-style without the problems a large, complex population causes—particularly crowding, pollution, manic capitalism, and the hot and cold warring and braggadocio that go with being a world power. Canada offers a sort of civilized frontier existence that looks more and more attractively loose as life is viewed as increasingly constricted in the States.

Canada's pop musicians, meanwhile, have quietly climbed to high places in our hearts. Neil Young, Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell, Ian and Sylvia, Leonard Cohen, Anne Murray, Gene MacLellan—where would "American" pop music be today without such figures?

Obviously, part of the appeal of Canadian musicians is connected somehow to the lure of Canada itself, which means the music has somehow summed up that attraction. It also means a large number of Americans are more susceptible to that kind of appeal than before. We are, to invoke the words in a Neil Young song, "ready for the country"—and Canada is it. We know this because the music tells us about Canada, and the music has country in it. It conveys to us the spaciousness, the airiness, the simplicity of attitudes toward God, Nature, and the elements that we used to identify as Western.

The lure of the frontier is nothing new to Americans, of course; when Dan'l Boone got to feeling crowded and overcivilized, he struck out for Cumberland Gap, thus acting out a strictly American scenario. Years later, people were still doing the same thing, except Kentucky was nearer the starting point than the goal, which had shifted to California or Colorado, and an old Ford had replaced Shanks' mare.

The unique appeal of Canadian musicians is nothing new either. Many years ago, Hank Snow came down from the North Country to make a name for himself in Nashville's Grand Ole Opry. He didn't sound quite like anything they had heard before, but his Canadian style was so compatible with their
country style that he slipped into the Opry lineup almost casually. But the majority of us weren’t ready for the country then. We were still thinking about migrating from the country to the city instead of vice versa. Snow’s appeal was restricted to the traditional country-music audience. Now, however, Ian and Sylvia and Gordon Lightfoot are making essentially the same kind of music and we are ready for it. A passion for the outdoors, whether it be the *Four Strong Winds* or *Short Grass* of Ian Tyson, the “blue, blue windows behind the stars” of Neil Young’s *Helpless*, or Lightfoot’s *Early Morning Rain*, seems to keep Canadian songwriters cleaner and closer to the basics than their counterparts in the States.

Leonard Cohen, being Jewish and a city (Montreal) boy, might seem at first glance to be an exception to this. Indeed, as an acquaintance wrote to me, “It is always night in Cohen’s songs: there is a disfigured icon on the bare wall; there is a flash of bodies on the bed. Love is bisexual ectoplasm.” But Cohen is actually an old folkie at heart—it’s just that he’s addicted to certain minor-key gimmicks and to romanticizing his own moody, self-centered mutterings. Space is the main attraction in the lure of the frontier, and there is a kind of openness in Cohen’s best songs (*Suzanne*, *Bird on a Wire*). Cohen’s lyrics often trip over their own super-effete feet, and his melodies have become almost a yowl of self-parody, but his songs still provide an after-taste of virgin country and uncorrupted experience. The best evidence of this is the surprising success of the soundtrack of Robert Altman’s superb film, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*. Altman’s choice of Cohen to sing his songs behind pictures of the most authentic frontier-town setting Hollywood has ever achieved was no fluke, but a fine stroke of musical awareness.

Neil Young chose to open his first solo album with a brief instrumental entitled *The Emperor of Wyoming*. The title just about said it all concerning where Young’s head is, but he has said it time and again with such songs as *Here We Are in the Years*, *Helpless*, and *After the Gold Rush*. He was largely responsible for the porous texture that let daylight into the sound of the late, great group Buffalo Springfield, and his own albums have been given progressively simpler, more spacious arrangements. This reached some sort of peak in “Harvest,” much of which, with its harmonica and steel-guitar backbone, would have been considered out-and-out country music in the years before the Canadians refined our definitions.

Ian and Sylvia have steered the opposite tack, moving from an acoustic to an electric band, but they still achieve a country sound. And they still sing about antelopes, rodeos, salmon, Calgary, truckers’ cafés, and flies in the bottle. I recall the early-Sixties folk snobs being a little suspicious of
ian and Sylvia because they sounded too much like Wilma Lee and Stoney Cooper or Lula Belle and Scotty or some of the other known "hillbilly" musicians. Thankfully, there don't seem to be many such purists on the loose these days, but Ian and Sylvia still have to avoid disappointing those (including me) who vaguely want them to go on sounding "Canadian." No problem, though, because the Tysons could scrap their basic flavor about as easily as they could shed their skins.

Anne Murray's austere, unadorned singing style speaks tomes about a background where people regard Godliness and frills as being mutually exclusive. Gene MacLellan's songs often reveal a similar fundamentalism. One of the critics commented that Put Your Hand in the Hand probably could not have been written and launched in the United States, notwithstanding the noise the Jesus People were making. Joni Mitchell's ornamentation, on the other hand, is artful. She knows exactly what she is doing—and whatever she does must be reviewed in the context that she is probably a genius—but the patented Canadian country ambiance comes through in her songs, especially in the melodies, which are as gentle, timeless, and colorful as a field of wildflowers.

And Gordon Lightfoot is an absolute must for anyone who would learn about Canada by listening. His preoccupation with the images of summer is a Northern predilection. His songs such as Love and Maple Syrup and Redwood Hill are specifically concerned with both Northern and country folk hardware. Outdoor imagery ("Peekin' through fields of grain . . .", "Ten degrees and getting colder . . ."). "Sailin' down the summer wind/I've got whiskers on my chin/And I like the mood I'm in . . .") predominates in his lyrics, and his melodies are purified and refined country melodies. His perspective is reminiscent of that of rural people in the States twenty years ago—a bit defensively testy when any country-vs.-city comparisons come up, and always putting in a plug for the country when they don't: "Born in the country and I like that country song," he'll sing, or "I'm on my second cup of coffee/And I still can't face the dawn/The radio is playing a soft country song . . ." The city's good points he concedes grudgingly, as in: "The skyline of Toronto/Is something you'll get onto/They say you gotta be there for awhile . . ." (this, remember, inside a song about going back to Alberta after giving it a reasonable try in the not-so-big city).

When you hear Canadian voices singing, you don't hear the deliberately unwashed hillbilly country sound that, say, Johnny Paycheck makes, but you hear the same big skies, wheatfields, and moun-

tain streams that get into the Canadian songs. Neil Young's nasal whine is as lonesome as the howl of a wolf. Lightfoot's vocals are rugged, manly, and show the country singer's concentration on style—they stand out among those of his peers just as Marty Robbins' style is unique among his gentry. Ian Tyson has the most outdoorsy of all voices; it's impossible for me to listen to him on record and not picture him wearing a mackinaw. Joni Mitchell's voice, even as it artfully dodges into falsetto, counts most on the long, lonesome lines in the upper register. Cohen's mixture of vulnerability and resignation shows the same scars that marked the styles of such pioneer country boys as Jimmie Rodgers and Woody Guthrie.

One obvious thing is that Canadians don't sing successfully in groups very much. Lighthouse has had only fleeting success at juggling its trumpets and its vocals, and the most successful Canadian group, the Guess Who, is from its name on down a carefully contrived imitation American group, with all Canadian flavor ruthlessly washed out. There may be several reasons why Canadian musicians don't bunch up, either as an in-group or an out-group, for self-protection. For example, Canada has no black experience to speak of, and without that the States might not be so group-oriented either. Another way of looking at it is that groups and crowding are simply Un-Canadian. A man or woman with space around him or her is no doubt closer to the Canadian vision than anything that would suggest collectivism is.

So we here—polluted, crowded, mugged, pick-pocketed, tired of engaging in stupid "races" with the other superpowers but apparently unable to stop, forced to earn too much money in order to spend too much—we hope we see a better land in the music of Tyson and Lightfoot, because on some level we assume their perspective is Canada's perspective and that it is a real one: that trees, clouds, meadows, prairies, mountains, and rivers are more important than skyscrapers, parking lots, and the endless, badgering cacophony of non-stop merchandising.

To us here, it appears that the young musicians of Canada are the products of fewer and purer influences than the number and kind that bombarded the kids with the guitars in the States. It appears that Canadians' love of real things (most of which are still outdoors, despite the best efforts of Andy Warhol and Hugh Hefner) is what makes their music so refreshing, and is also what makes the music, like the country, beckon. And we are ready for it. In increasing numbers, we are ready for the country.
FOR MOZART LOVERS: A LITTLE-KNOWN OPERA DELIGHT

La Finta Giardiniera will probably never be better done than in the new Philips recording

La Finta Giardiniera, an important yet virtually unknown Mozart opera, has suddenly re-entered the recordings catalog after a long absence. Before some well-earned praise is lavished on Philips Records’ remarkable new production, a few words about the work itself may be to the point.

La Finta (or Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe in its German rendering) was completed in December 1774 and first performed in Munich in January 1775. Although it was presented in Italian, the autograph score contained a German translation in the hand of Leopold Mozart, which would seem to indicate that a German-language performance was also contemplated. That plan, if plan there was, was never carried out in Mozart’s lifetime, but after the inexplicable disappearance of the Italian manuscript of Act 1, the only authentic vocal score that could be compiled and published (1839) by Breitkopf & Härtel was the German one, and, with a few revisions, this is the edition used in the Philips recording.

Mozart was only eighteen when he wrote the opera, but we know enough not to speak condescendingly of “youthful” Mozart works (Exsultate, Jubilate, K. 165, the Concertone, K. 190, and the five violin concertos all date from this period). Some of Mozart’s biographers nevertheless deal with La Finta very casually, though Wyzewska and Saint-Foix appraise it in perceptive detail, drawing attention to its delights without losing sight of its weaknesses. Going a step further—perhaps a bit too far—W. J. Turner states that “it has an inimitable charm and gaiety, tenderness and fertility of invention, allied to such musical science that I personally prefer it even to the later Die Entführung aus dem Serail.”

There is no denying the beauty and inventiveness of Mozart’s music in this work, but it does suffer from two crucial weaknesses. Excessive length is one of them. The first two acts, in particular, are considerably overwritten, and the set numbers are not only too numerous but also too long individually. The other failing—a faulty sense of musical/dramatic balance—can be laid to the young Mozart’s still unformed skills as a musical dramatist.

The opera consists of twenty-eight set numbers, all but seven of which are arias; however expertly contrived these arias are, and however numerous the characters who sing them, they follow one another in a manner that soon produces predictability and monotony. This is made all the more noticeable by the fact that when Mozart does get around to writing a duet (No. 27 in Act 3), it is breathtakingly beautiful. The mastery of his ensemble writing in La Finta is, in fact, nowhere in doubt: the finales to all three acts are brilliantly written.

This is essentially a comic opera, but some of its scenes are quite serious and Mozart’s music for them occasionally becomes overdramatic. For
DAVID RHODES: swelling the lutanists’ ranks

me, this is not a critical weakness, but simply indicates the overpowering superiority of the musical contribution to the slender dramatic one — I would, as a matter of fact, advise paying as little attention as possible to the cumbersome, complicated plot.

Erik Smith’s outstanding annotations reveal the far from widely known fact that, though the late Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt (the conductor here and Mr. Smith’s father) was justly honored as a Beethoven interpreter, Mozart was his “greatest enduring passion.” Furthermore, his Ph. D. thesis was on the subject of Italian influences on the orchestration of Mozart’s early operas. The musical leadership of this performance unquestionably bears out the conductor’s lifelong dedication to the music of Mozart. The orchestra of the Norddeutsche Rundfunk sounds like a major performing body under his baton, bringing the music to life with lightness, buoyancy, and full attention to the score’s descriptive and other felicities. The solo singers are treated with consideration, the ensembles sparkle, and everything is in perfect balance. The performers are all expert Mozartians; there is not a weak link in the lot. Except for some tightness in the sound toward the centers of the discs (which at times contain more than thirty minutes per side), the technical production is clean and well spread out for effective stereo. This kind of artistic and technical effort lavished on, say, Le Nozze di Figaro would have produced the recording of a decade. As an opera, La Finta Giardiniera is not in Figaro’s league, but it has nevertheless been treated to a generous and triumphant production by Philips. I doubt that it will ever be done better.

George Jellinek

MOZART: Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe (La Finta Giardiniera, K. 196). Gerhard Unger (tenor), Podesta; Helen Donath (soprano), Sandrina; Werner Hollweg (tenor), Belfiore; Jessye Norman (soprano), Armina; Tatiana Troyanos (mezzo-soprano), Ramiro; Ileana Cotrubas (soprano), Serpetta; Hermann Prey (baritone), Nando. Chorus and Orchestra of the Norddeutsche Rundfunk, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt cond. PHILIPS 6703 039 three discs $20.94.

MUSIC FOR LUTE BY SYLVIUS LEOPOLD WEISS

A delightful program cannily assembled from the works of an eighteenth-century master

Sylvius Leopold Weiss, who was born in Breslau in 1686 and held a succession of court posts in Düsseldorf, Rome, Dresden, Vienna, and Prague, died in 1750. He was the greatest lutanist of his day, a veritable Froberger of the lute in scope, technical interest, and expressive power, though his seventy-year juniority puts him in a different position historically. Our knowledge of his life is sketchy. There were some meetings and perhaps a friendship with J. S. Bach, and the two men are alleged once to have engaged in a friendly performing competition. And there is also the story, well known but good enough to repeat, that a jealous French violinist tried to bite Weiss’ thumb off, and came so near succeeding that Weiss was unable to play for almost a year.

So much for picturesqueness. The music’s the thing, however, and we have been given precious little chance to hear it on the instrument it was originally written for. A few tantalizing snippets of Weiss have been recorded on the guitar by Julian Bream, Narciso Yepes, and others, but the just-released “Music for Lute” album on the Cambridge label is the first, so far as I know, to be devoted entirely to Weiss pieces played on the lute.

It is also a record that I have been looking forward to, quite specifically, for some time, since I have had the pleasure of hearing the album’s soloist, David Rhodes, play in that best of all settings for this eloquent, civilized, and supremely intimate instrument — my own living room — and of examining some of his meticulously prepared performing copies of the tablature sources that make the lute literature relatively inaccessible to the general mu-
sician. The finished product, put together in close collaboration with producer Charles Fisher of Cambridge Records, is every bit as good as I had hoped it would be.

Rhodes, a young American who lives in Boston and combines scientific and musical careers, shows himself in this recording debut to be an artist of considerable stature. He plays with something of the sobriety of the late Walter Gerwig, but with none of the mechanical quality that spoiled the German lutanist’s performances. Thus, though the registrational extremes of the Bream style are avoided, there is ample sense here of the rhetoric of the music and of its substantial emotional and intellectual content. In other words, it is middle-of-the-road playing, but free of the dullness that the phrase might suggest.

The performer has himself grouped the music on the disc in a pair of suites, from various sources, separated by two shorter sets of pieces likewise unified in tonality. The effect is convincing, delightful, and worlds away from the boredom that non-devotees of the instrument might fear from a whole disc of the solo lute.

The recording is ideally rich if not quite ideally clear, and the record is cut at rather a high level, so that you will have to set your volume control much lower than usual to get a lifelike sound. The sources of the individual pieces are not given on the jacket, and it’s a pity, in dance movements like these, that the performance omits some of the repeats. But gripes are incidental—this is a major achievement, and it marks the emergence of an important new talent in the sparse ranks of master lutanists. Another disc, devoted to the French lute, is apparently being planned by Cambridge. It, too, will be welcome.

Bernard Jacobson


R- &- R JOLLIES FROM THE J. GEILS BAND

“Bloodshot,” their latest for Atlantic, is a cheerful burlesque of rock idols

THE J. Geils Band is basically a white blues band—and a superior one. The group’s latest album for Atlantic is called “Bloodshot,” and I’ll just have to say that I haven’t enjoyed myself so much in years. The organist plays a little like Booker T. Jones, and the harmonica man has taken the best of two major harp stylists, Jimmy Reed and Little Walter, and added something of his own. And Geils himself has the spooky knack of playing every guitar solo I have ever dreamed of playing. Added to all this is the band’s refreshing and cheerful burlesquing of every major rock figure of about the last twenty years. There is, I would hope, little malice in this, but there’s certainly a fine ear for the musical excesses of the holy men and a wicked ability to reproduce them.

James Brown gets quite a treatment on Don’t Try To Hide It, which parodies his endless riffs and his call to the audience on one of his singles, “Are you ready for the bridge?” But where Brown’s band at that point plays a couple of different notes and then goes right back into the endless riff, Geils’ band answers, “Aw, throw it off the bridge!” and slides into an ensemble vocal of a ditty you will recognize (if you went to some of the same schools I did) as cherishable grade-school-playground porn. The feeble writing and relentlessly tinny vocals of the Mick Jagger of the mid-Sixties get the front end of the boot on Start All Over Again, a tune based in part on the Stones’ Good Times, Bad Times. Presley’s famed sex appeal and the unique sound of his records during his well-known cheesy period (late Fifties to late Sixties) take a fall on Hold Your Loving. And the latest pop fad—reggae—gets a dig on the group’s Give It to Me (the single version, edited for airplay, is bereft of its meaty middle section in which the band is just being itself).

J. Geils’ straight material isn’t exactly what you’d call Great, but it is Good, and played with such spunk, such surety, and such a wealth of sheer r- &- r fun that it is absolutely convincing—so convincing.
that I was mighty sorry when the needle ran into the run-out on side two. Gimme more, please—and soon.

Joe! Vance

J. GEILS BAND: Bloodshot. J. Geils (guitars); Stephen Jo Bladd (percussion, vocals); Seth Justman (keyboards, vocals); Magic Dick (harmonica); Daniel Klein (bass); Peter Wolf (vocals). Ain't Nothin' but a House Party; Make Up Your Mind; Back To Get Ya; Struttin' with My Baby; Don't Try To Hide It; Southside Shuffle; Hold Your Loving; Start All Over Again; Give It to Me. ATLANTIC SD 7260 $5.98, ® TP 7260 $6.98, © CS 7260 $6.98.

JOHN COLTRANE: ICING ON THE CAKE

With Prestige, Riverside, Blue Note, and a handful of other jazz-dedicated labels building up their artist rosters, the late Fifties/early Sixties proved to be a productive period in jazz recording history. Those were the days when night clubs could still thrive on a jazz policy, and there were therefore more working groups; America's popular music was either bland middle-of-the-road stuff or rock-and-roll, which was then of so low an order that it hardly inspired assimilation by more skilled musicians.

For the time of that nadir of pop music, jazz nursed the musical intellect and underwent its final pre-electronic development. It also bloomed with what may well have been the last crop of truly great jazz individuals, performers who attracted attention with their musical ideas and their ability to execute them, performers who relied on talent rather than gimmickry. One cannot deny that there are some extraordinarily capable new musicians on the scene today, but Armstrong, Tatum, Lester Young, Miles, Parker, and Coltrane all became major influences before their thirtieth birthdays, and one is hard put to find anyone of comparable stature in that age category today.

I hope it isn't so, but John Coltrane may well have been the very last of these jazz immortals to emerge, the last of that handful of performers who set the pace and kept the music young and vibrant. But if it is true, it gives me another reason to hail Prestige's excellent new "Jazz Junction," featuring the Red Garland Quintet of which Coltrane was so important an ingredient—he is the delectable top-

ping on a cake that is itself delicious. Originally issued as two separate releases ("All Morning Long," Prestige 7130, and "Soul Junction," Prestige 7181), the two-disc set includes all but two selections from a highly successful 1957 quintet session.

It was a "blowing session," to be sure, but with none of that apathy that so often marks such get-togethers—everyone has something to say, and they say it eloquently. Coltrane—who, with Garland, was a member of the Miles Davis group at the time—had found his direction at this point, and he was beginning to be regarded as the Pied Piper by just about every new saxophonist; Donald Byrd, who had been critically acclaimed two years earlier while a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, sparkles with the fire of Dizzy Gillespie and the cool of Miles; Red Garland, who had been called "a cocktail pianist" by a tin-eared critic, displays his characteristic locked-hands chord style as he gets alternately tinkly and funky; and George Joyner and Art Taylor provide excellent rhythmic support throughout. It's good to see Fantasy bringing back such Prestige sides as these. May they inspire the unplugging of at least a few of those amplified tambourines the air seems to be so full of right now.

Chris Albertson

RED GARLAND QUINTET: Jazz Junction. Red Garland (piano); Donald Byrd (trumpet); John Coltrane (tenor saxophone); George Joyner (bass); Arthur Taylor (drums). Woody'n You; Birk's Works; Hallelujah; Our Delight; Soul Junction; I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good; All Morning Long; They Can't Take That Away from Me. PRESTIGE ® PR 24023 two discs $6.98, ® M 82423DP $6.98, © M 52423DP $6.98.
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CHARLES AZNAVOUR: I Have Lived.

Charles Aznavour (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. The Old Fashioned Way. No. I Could Never Forget: I Have Lived; The Happy Days; To Die of Love; and five others.

MGM SE 4875 $5.98.

Performance: Flat champagne
Recording: Over-engineered

You might as well cast Dolly Parton and Johnny Cash in an English-language country-music version of Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande as expect Charles Aznavour to make hearts throb when he sings in English the way he does when he sings in his native tongue. Like the best French vin du pays, Aznavour does not travel well. In his new record, packaged in Hollywood by MGM, he seems to be bidding for a title as some sort of imported Rod McKuen, but the ersatz Parisian product he delivers on this occasion only does disservice to his own reputation as Aznavour. Now, this gentleman's stock-in-trade always has been regret over lost loves, and when he sighs out a bit of sympathy from the soul of the most lovely ladies gone from his life he can bring on the human pulse the same effect on the human pulse as when Aznavour sings it in his own sweet tongue.

BECK, BOGERT AND APPICE: Jeff Beck (guitar, vocals), Tim Bogert (bass, vocals); Carmine Appice (drums, vocals). Black Cat Mourn; Lady; Oh To Love You; Superstition; Sweet Sweet Surrender; and four others.

COLUMBIA KC 32017

Performance: Proficient
Recording: Good

Jeff Beck is one of the Big Brothers of rock guitar, along with Clapton, Hendrix, and a few others—and he knows it. But where Hendrix flailed and sometimes swung blindly through sheer exuberance, and Clapton imposed self-discipline, Beck just hams it up. Of course, when he takes off his Deputy God badge he really is very good, as in his guest performance of Lookin' for Another Pure Love on Stevie Wonder's "Talking Book" album—where he managed to restrain his usually unrestrained ego.

Beck hardly restrains himself on this album, but there is more silver than dross here. For one thing, he returns the compliment to Wonder by recording Wonder's tune Superstition—which brings up a good question: why don't more rockers record other people's tunes? It would give everybody a chance to hear how good they can be as interpreters rather than fast-buck artists. It is too easy for rockers (major or minor) to whip up ten mediocre tunes and cover up their deficiencies with technical fireworks or hombose vocals. Let them lay it on the line by recording a recognized tune of worth written by someone else. Beck does well in such a situation. Strip him of the excess ego, put him in a position where he can't get away with vaudevillian bluster, and you reaffirm his reputation and talent.

At any rate, on this album Beck is given more than loyal support by Tim Bogert (bass) and Carmine Appice (drums), the two most valuable and reasonable members of that most overblown of rock groups, Vanilla Fudge, who later went on to Cactus. Appice is a fluent drummer, and Bogert is probably the best musician of the trio—if you define "musician" as one who plays his part well and is a fluent drummer, and Bogert is probably the best musician of the trio—if you define "musician" as one who plays his part well and hasn't slipped the spotlight man an extra twenty bucks. Apropos nothing in particular, I had the pleasure of meeting Bogert some years ago. Over a few beers he told me of the time when, as an apprentice technician for NBC, he accidentally pulled the big plug and canceled all TV programming on the East Coast for nearly an hour. Were it only for that, I would love him.

BLUE OYSTER CULT: Tyranny and Mutation.

Blue Oyster Cult (vocals and instruments). The Red and the Black; O.D.'d on Life Itself; Hot Rails to Hell; 7 Screaming Diz-Busters; Baby Ice Dog; Wings Wetted Down; and three others.

COLUMBIA KC 32017

(Continued on page 83)
The first thing most people noticed about modern British string-band music was the perfect pair of legs belonging to one Jacqui McShee of the Pentangle.

And now that I’ve got your attention in just about the same way the Pentangle did, let’s dance sideways a bit and avoid speculation how much Fairport Convention or someone indirectly owes the miniskirt. Then the thing the Pentangle—and, in its way, the Incredible String Band—labored to perfect has become a healthy, lively sub-genre of pop music. The distinctively British way of spiking folk or folk-like music with rock instruments and techniques has resulted in several fine albums by such groups as Fairport, the Incredibles, Steeleye Span, Lindisfarne, String Driven Thing, Strawbs, and Fotheringay, and by such individuals as Bert Jansch, Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, and Ian Matthews, who are or were members of such bands.

The newest offerings from four fairly reliable practitioners—Fairport, the Incredible String Band, Steeleye, and Strawbs—taken collectively, help illuminate the problems of growth, change, and personality cleavage that lurk in this kind of music. “Parcel of Rogues” is the second excellent album in a row by Steeleye Span for Chrysalis, easily the standout among the four new ones, and the only one not recorded during some sort of shake-up. “Rosie” (A&M) finds Fairport adjusting to two new members, American electric guitarist Jerry Donahue and Australian singer-songwriter-guitarist Trevor Lucas, both members of Sandy Denny short-lived but lovely Fotheringay (Sandy, to complete the cycle, was a founding member of Fairport). “No Ruinous Feud” (Reprise) seems to be the Incredibles’ way of trying to make their music more “accessible.” and also finds them adjusting to a new member, Gerard Dott, who plays reeds and keyboards and contrives crazy but effective sax arrangements. And “Bursting at the Seams” (A&M) is, for the Strawbs, a definitive step toward mainstream rock.

Steeleye is the inventive folk-rock group at the moment, and "Rogues" is crammed with arrangements so wildly spontaneous and yet so sympathetic they make a good case for adding electricity to any song. Steeleye also is the only band of the four still adhering to two key precepts of the Pentangle formula: have a clear-voiced girl singer lend class to your vocals, and spend your creative energy on arranging, not writing. Maddy Prior is the third great lady of this kind of music. Her vocals don’t have the textural styliness of Jacqui McShee’s or the warmth and richness of Sandy Denny’s, but Maddy sings with sterling clarity and his tremendous high notes. Purely, not embellishment, is what this music wants from girl singers. From boy singers, it seems to opt for nasality and a working-class accent. This princess-commoner contrast is (no doubt unconsciously) part of the whole scheme. It surfaces in a different guise as the contrast between the quiet dignity of M. Childe ballad and the screaming cultural politics of an electric guitar; it is, to get down to it, the very protoplasm of the contrast between folk and rock. Total purity would equal no style, of course, and Maddy’s style comes from her quest for purity—as accents (the only way he played for Fotheringay); these are distinctive, while a Donahue lead break is just another guitar lead break. In Lucas, however, the band has added a dependable songwriter and a sturdy, rich, baritone solo voice. The latter could be especially valuable as the Convention comes to order yet again.

Fairport seems at last agreed on a meaty role for original material; senior member David Swarbrick, a fiddler and therefore a suspected traditionalist, threatens to be a prolific writer. The band still responds to the folk impulse and tries to keep its sound open and predominantly acoustic.

Strawbs feels the pull from that side less than ever, and in “Bursting at the Seams” has all but embraced a certain kind of British big-melody/big-production rock. Lead singer and guitarist Dave Cousins (who sounds like a rock singer, except that he also sounds something like Tom Rapp) has led this turnabout, even though he is the only remaining member of the original bluegrass-purist trio that started recording in 1968 under the name of the Strawbery Hill Boys. "Bursting" has the lyricism befitting such a background, however—and although the arrangements are infinitely more conventional than Steeleye Span’s, they still involve countless tricky maneuvers that would dumbfound your Grand Trucks and your Alice Cooper’s. It is a quite melodic album, not very deep but consistently pleasing. I like "Lay Down" (which seems to be all chorus) best of the songs. A pub rocker called "Part of the Union" kicked up a Labour-Conservative tuss in Britain, but it’s not much of a song.

Strawbs has, in any case, met and answered the question that always bazookas such a band: where does all this lead? The Incredible String Band once proved to my satisfaction that it can lead to no definite place and still be somewhere. The Incredibles always did a lot of writing, most of it obscure, and have consistently made their arrangements so otherworldly that the path back to their folk roots is discernible only after a dry, academic examination of the various parts of their music. They make use of folk guitar, mandolin, and fiddle techniques, and of phrases and intervals familiar to folkish folk songs, but they have been the most frenetically experimental band to survive the last six or seven years.

Nevertheless, “No Ruinous Feud” seems to indicate that the Incredibles are trying to move their own vaguely planted anchor. The album trots out everything from a Dolly Parton country song to a Caribbean number tapping the talents of a rigidly disciplined reggae group called Greyhound—and the original lyrics are more about concrete people, place, and things and less about abstracted theological vagaries. It may sound better in print, but it doesn’t on the record. Most of Robin William’s songs here sound as if he’s making up the melody as he goes along, with an air of impatience. "Pa Ti" is especially good. "No Ruinous Feud" is not very deep and sometimes too quirky, but at least it is consistent. A riskier approach than anything yet from Fairport, the Incredibles, Steeleye, and Strawbs—taken collectively, help illuminate the problems of growth, change, and personality cleavage that lurk in this kind of music. “Parcel of Rogues” (A&M) is the second excellent album by Steeleye Span for Chrysalis, easily the standout among the four new ones, and the only one not recorded during some sort of shake-up. "Rosie" finds Fairport adjusting to two new members, American electric guitarist Jerry Donahue and Australian singer-songwriter-guitarist Trevor Lucas, both members of Sandy Denny’s short-lived but lovely Fotheringay (Sandy, to complete the cycle, was a founding member of Fairport). "No Ruinous Feud" (Reprise) seems to be the Incredibles’ way of trying to make their music more “accessible,” and also finds them adjusting to a new member, Gerard Dott, who plays reeds and keyboards and contrives crazy but effective sax arrangements. And "Bursting at the Seams" (A&M) is, for the Strawbs, a definitive step toward mainstream rock.

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peal to a broader, presumably dumber audience. One of the great things about this band, back in the days of Job's Tears and such, was the way their wit and intelligence compelled them to point out their own (and, by implication, our) foolish seriousness. For example, in their short folk-song-rewrite melody and suddenly it would turn back on itself, knock out its own pins, and make one of its own banal (but, you had thought in passing, acceptable) passages the subject of deft ridicule—all the more remaining considerably subtler than, say, Victor Borge's clumsy use of caricature to deflate (as he thought) Mozart. That doesn't seem to happen much nowadays—and but I can't believe the Incredibles' music has saddled up her broom. When they again decide to settle for a small, alert audience, they'll again be free to make the unruly, unearthly music they make best. Only close friends, after all, will tolerate a wild ride on a fragile whim, and that's the kind of exercise the Incredibles need.

Random disappointments aside, it remains true that the musicianship in all four albums is far better than average—and this is usually so in British string-band music. Perhaps this is related to the fact that the British way of merging folk and rock is simple and direct: they just bang them together. The American idea of buffing the collision with some third element such as the plasticized schmaltz that once did time in Tin Pan Alley is not even considered. In practicing the British method, the musicians have to keep their wits about them, else the disparity between the elements of their music would take over and blow the whole business apart.

Steeleye Span: Parcel of Rogues. Steeleye Span (vocals and instrumentalists). One Misty, Misty Morning; Alisson Gross; The Bold Poachers: The Ups and Downs; Robert with Violins: The Wee Wren Man: The Weaver and the Factory Maid: Rogues in a Nation: Can Ye O'er frae France: Hares Bold Poachers: The Ups and Downs; Rob-}


$5.98. © CA 32017 $6.98. © CT 32017 $6.98.

Performance: Okay
Recording: Very good

There is nothing to distinguish Blue Oyster Cult from any other band you can hear in dance joints and local concerts. Taking into consideration that the general level of musicianship in rock has risen greatly over the last five years, it is fair to say of this band that their drummer is fast and accurate, that their guitarist is fluent if hackneyed in his ideas, and that the vocalist affects the standard "mutilato" voice now used by many white singers.

Their material is blowsy and meandering, filled with what are no doubt "deep" images that are open to multiple interpretations—it is the old college poet syndrome of the mid-Forties and early Fifties, when obscurity in symbolism was given serious and even reverent attention by college students, professors, and those enterprising fellows who concocted the New Criticism. But if we are going to have blowsy and meandering "poetic" rock lyrics, why not call in Jack Bruce?

The "Cult" part of the band's name is related to the current goings-on among what has been described as the "rock intelligentsia." There is a clique in New York composed of professional journalists and sometime record producers who imagine themselves to be a kind of Algonquin Round Table. They have access to some rock publications and are not shy about calling on their friends and fellow journalists to write "hype" reviews of the clique's current darlings. Hence the flood of critical hosannas that greeted the first Blue Oyster Cult album. This clique tried the same thing with the Flammin' Groovies, a fine band which the clique admired, and an abysmally amateur group called Hack amore, Brick, now mercifully returned to the concrete basketball courts of Brooklyn.

Blue Oyster Cult, whatever their musical merits (and they are far from overwhelming), is a joke on the group itself, a joke on the music industry, and a joke on the public. But it's not funny. J.V.


Mr. Cash apparently is determined to sustain his dubious reputation as the John Wayne of song. The title song on this disc is a ballad about a "restless woman" whose ambition in life seems to be to join all those lonely men who have abandoned their women and are slogging across the West on the road to Phoenix. "She'll go sailin' off on any old wind that blows," Mr. Cash confides, as if he is filled in the portrait of a faceless lady who will come to no good—unless she makes it to the charts before she runs out of bus fare. He then does an about-face, describing his wife as a
Kentucky Straight, which is presumably the highest praise a member of the Cash family can bestow on a female of reliable habits. The air then grows increasingly thick with gush, as Mr. Cash and June Carter Cash join in handling the country corn with *The Loving Gift* ("You gave me a blanket/To keep me from the cold/This gold watch/Down-home philosophy for farmers", and *Best Friend*, sung for some reason to the tune of *Chim Chim Cheree*—are our songwriters running out of tunes? Then there's one about the bitterness of job retirement, complete with clichés about the "old gold watch" and the oppressive foreman who's finally going to get him. Finally, as seems to be the fashion on the commercial side of the folk-singing country street these days, Mr. Cash gets down on his metaphorical knees in *Welcome Back Jesus* and the whole thing turns into a revival meeting. I haven't even mentioned *The Ballad of Annie Palmer*, the terror of Jamaica. Maybe I'd better not.

The Dolbyized cassette is practically indistinguishable from the disc in quality. P.K.

JIM CROCE: *Life and Times*. Jim Croce (vocals, guitar); Maury Meuhleisen (guitar); Tommy West (piano); Joe Macho (bass); Gary Chester (drums); other musicians. One Less Set of Footsteps: Roller Derby Queen; Dreamin' Again: Alabama Rain: A Good Time Man like Me: and five other new compositions. (vocals, guitar); Maury Meuhleisen (guitar); Orchestra. One Woman: Talk to Me: All Mine: Summer Song: Polecat Blues; Better Than Average: and seven others. ABC X 769 $5.98. © M 5022 769 $6.98. Performance: Variable Recording: Very good

If you can accept the mechanizations that go along with Jim Croce's anti-glitter image and his concomitant self-appointment as laureate to the greasers, you'll find he's improving as a songwriter, at least in technical terms, and is once again fronting an open-but-not-loose acoustic band. There is something hard in his voice, and his lyrics are neurotically self-centered taken as a crop, but if you can listen abstractly, perceiving it as sounds, it's well worth listening. Jim Croce seems here to have wriggled out from under the crushing over-influence of certain elevated troubadours of the day—and regardless of what real greasers think of him he has developed an excellent ear for the lift and casual patter of beer-joint talk. That he can put that to good use in this fashioning *bulldogs* (and not dogs but bablies of some prettiness, like *Next Time This Time*) as well as the obligatory malarkey about bar-room hostesses who finally get theirs in. you've got to admit, a sign of some versatility. It's an OK album, and the question of who Jim Croce really is can wait. It doesn't exactly burn, anyway. N.C.

DR. JOHN: *In the Right Place*. Dr. John (vocals); instrumental accompaniment: Right Place Wrong Time; Same Old Same Old; Just the Same; Qualified: Traveling Mood; Shoo Fly Marches On: Life; and four others. ATCO SD 7018 $5.98. © IT 7018 $6.98. © CS 7018 $6.98. Performance: Very good Recording: Superior

New Orleans music is so rich in all its forms that a musician can flourish within it for years, altering his style slightly from time to time, so that a swimmer might try different strokes in a king-size pool. Dr. John is a valuable zany; his last album, "Gumbo," made me ecstatic, and his previous albums (where he concentrated on voodooistic gris-gris music) fascinated me. On "In the Right Place" he is trying straighter, white funk material, the same kind of move that Captain Beefheart made with his "Clear Spot" album.

His material (almost all the tunes are his) is better than average, and it is delivered in the familiar and personal experience comes through clearly. He is aided by his fellow New Orleansian, the remarkable pianist-composer-arranger Allen Toussaint, whose arrangements are witty, tasty, and colorful—Toussaint's tune Life is by far the best here. I always find Dr. John interesting, but in the first place he has not been totally satisfying. He is good here, very, very good, and the album shakes me up a mite, but it don't kill me none. Perhaps this is his "in-between" album, before his next trick. But even when he takes a breather, he breathes heavy.

J.V.

FANNY
Gusto and professionalism


Fanny is a solid band, each member of the quartet filling her role with gusto and professionalism. I am particularly attracted to Nicky Barcay's songs, her descriptions of bewildered, feckless, self-defeating lovers exchanging tentative endeavours and passing the whips to each other are reminiscent of Dorothy Parker.

June Millington has contributed the delightful Polecat Blues ("Bitch, bitch, bitch!") to the album, and drummer Alice de Buhr takes a vocal on *Solid Gold* that sounds like a ghastly mistake until it is revealed towards the end that it is meant to be a ghastly mistake. There is something garish about that note she can't hit for beans. The cool, calm, calculated—and calculating—voice of Jean Millington is heard to advantage on some of the Barcay tunes.

The only thing occasionally annoying about the album is the hippy-dippy boy-genius engineering and production by Todd Rundgren—which it gets out of hand. But in general he serves the ladies well. J.V.

J. GEILS BAND: *Bloodshot* (see Best of the Month, page 77)

STEVE GOODMAN: *Somebody Else's Troubles*. Steve Goodman (vocals, guitar); Steve Burgh (guitar); Hugh McDonald (bass); Steve Mosley (drums); David Bromberg (mandolin, dobro); other musicians. *The Dutchman*: Six Hours Ahead of the Sun: Song for David: Chicken Cordon Bleu: Somebody Else's Troubles: The Loving of the Game: and five others. BUDDAH BDS 5121 $5.98. Performance: Disappointing Recording: Very good

Vocally, Steve Goodman is about equidistant from sounding like a genuine song stylist, as we used to call them (check *The Dutchman*), and sounding totally ridiculous (*The Ballad of Penny Evans*). The jury, I suspect, will remain out on that one for a while. There is a ratily, fresh but suspect quality about his voice, and it could go either way. But it is his writing that has been hurriedly and resolutely tossed and it is his writing that is ultimately disappointing here. There's a teasing quality in tunes such as *Chicken Cordon Bleu* (which quickly sets up a funny premise—old man finally gets fed up with old lady's evangelical vegetarianism—and then goes on and never gets funny) and *Somebody Else's Troubles* (Bob Dylan somewhere in the background: it has a going-places story—Dr. John's essential selfishness—but it doesn't have nearly the strength of imagery to illuminate that theme and make it vivid). Only *The Lincoln Park Pirates* is as good as or better than the implied advertisements for itself, being a truly inspired sea-chantey approach to reporting on some hearty car thieves. Interesting problem this kid has—but note also his interesting mind and quantity of apparent talent. This album, you can listen to the problem; maybe next album you can listen to the solution.

N.C.


Mr. Sound and Fury has quieted down considerably since last heard from. He's now a rhythm-and-power-blues act. However, he still emits an occasional perspiring, agonized yowl, although at a lower decibel range, and he still maintains an "ooohhee-haayybee" semi-organic approach to almost every song. The best track here is *One Woman*, a soap opera about run-away love, in which he generates some real emotion. The rest is in his familiar style, now subdued, of sandblasting every lyric in sight and musically conveying profound despair about life in general. P.R.


Performance: Improving Recording: Very good

The Guess Who have been changing lately. Progress is difficult to follow because they
were never very secure in one place to begin with, but they have been chipping away to make the edge a little rougher. They've also enlarged their style like Led Zeppelin—to do their best and their worst stuff in the same song. But this is a culminating album, of some sort. The packaging, a caricature of those "You may have already won!" junk mailers, has its childish lapses but is funny enough to make the disc an obvious choice over the cassette (in addition to which the disc sounds noticeably better). The songs encompass a wide variety of styles—and they're not just nods at different styles that the group has used since the "Wheatfield Soul" days, but real exercises. They include, even, a sort of calypso, *Follow Your Daughter Home*, which is one of two or three places here that may mark the first time the group ever looked upon the American Dream, explicitly rejecting the nine-to-five strain-jacket life in a steady job and whines, "There must be a place for me! Just to be what I want to be! Is this just a fantasy?" Since I don't recall offering Mr. Kaplan a job, or inviting him, for that matter, to stand around singing Chassidic chants under my window, or even telling him to get married in the first place, I really don't know what he wants from you and me. But if you like to be nagged into being concertinaed, all writing, all painting, and so forth. But some performances exaggerate the "Wow, look at me" aspect of it and an uneasiness settles on the throng. I think that happens here; Ellen McIlwaine's mastery of vocal technique is flawless, just a bit, and a suspicion builds that something is happening to erode taste. I can't imagine, for example, why these particular songs would be recorded all at once except as showcases for vocal excellence. A singer with the extraordinary control and monolithic authority that Ellen has should, in my judgment, sing songs that need to be heard, not smug little exercises in difficulty. Doing the old hymn *Farther Along* without accompaniment is part of the same conceit, although on another album it might work well. The place where I think all this unnecessary muscle-flexing is dropped for the moment is in *I Don't Want to Play*, a sort of charmingly demented country satire for which Ellen rears into an aching falsetto on the chorus and mumbles a fine *Fed Up Mama Mum-ble* between the lines. She does plenty for the song that a lesser vocalist could not do, but the point is that the song deserves it, and it

**ELLEN McILWAINE: We the People.**

Ellen McIlwaine (vocals, guitar); various other musicians. *Ain't No Two Ways to It; All to You; Sliding; Never Tell Your Mother She's Out of Tune; I Don't Want to Play,* and five others. POLYDOR PD 5044 $4.98.

**Performance:** Flashy

**Recording:** Very good

Well, it's all exhibitionism, isn't it?—all performance, all writing, all painting, and so forth. But some performances exaggerate the "Wow, look at me" aspect of it and an uneasiness settles on the throng. I think that happens here; Ellen McIlwaine's mastery of vocal technique is flawless, just a bit, and a suspicion builds that something is happening to erode taste. I can't imagine, for example, why these particular songs would be recorded all at once except as showcases for vocal excellence. A singer with the extraordinary control and monolithic authority that Ellen has should, in my judgment, sing songs that need to be heard, not smug little exercises in difficulty. Doing the old hymn *Farther Along* without accompaniment is part of the same conceit, although on another album it might work well. The place where I think all this unnecessary muscle-flexing is dropped for the moment is in *I Don't Want to Play*, a sort of charmingly demented country satire for which Ellen rears into an aching falsetto on the chorus and mumbles a fine *Fed Up Mama Mum-ble* between the lines. She does plenty for the song that a lesser vocalist could not do, but the point is that the song deserves it, and it

**ARTIE KAPLAN: Confessions of a Male Chauvinist Pig.** Artie Kaplan (vocals); horns, strings, and voices. Chris DeCritck cond. Con-

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**85**
J.L. MALLAY: Down the Line. John Mayall (vocals, guitar, harmonica, organ, piano, harmonium); instrumental and vocal accompaniment: Broken Wings: I Started Walking: Somebody Aft Awhile: Oh Pretty Woman; Stormy Monday Blues: Put Your Hand in the Hand: Time Alone, Crawling Up a Hill: When I'm Gone: Crocodile Walk: and thirteen others. LONDON £ 6183 two discs $7.95, @ L 72198 $7.95, © L 57198 $7.95. Performance: Conscientious Recording: Variable

John Mayall is one of the most conscientious of white blues singers. He is absolutely devoted to the form, emotionally and intellectually, he has gone out of his way many times to enhance or call attention to the reputations and contributions of dead or ignored blues men such as J. B. Lenoir. He has been working hard at doing the blues for more than ten years; the personnel of the various bands and combos he has maintained have included among others. Eric Clapton and Mick Taylor. Unfortunately, however, this two-record set, a semi-reissue of material he recorded for London, demonstrates what his current recordings on Polydor do: he just isn't that good. But even if his gravelly voice is not really popular by all means, but not really exciting. An urgently concerned evangelist for the recognition of the blues, Mayall's biggest fault is that in everything he does you can hear him working at it. He works too hard. He is a dynamite drone.

The first disc of the set is reissued material. Two tracks: Stormy Monday Blues and Hideaway—feature Eric Clapton playing blazing, bravura solos. Mick Taylor, pre-Rolling Stones, is heard on several tracks but he does nothing outstanding. Mayall himself roams through a variety of attempts at the blues; he seems to have tried everything, and listening to this disc is rather like reading a list of the Howard Johnson ice cream flavors.

The second disc of the set, previously unreleased in the United States, was recorded live at a London club in 1964. Mayall's band at this time, based on the recorded evidence, was little more than a typical club combo, it reminds me of the "Live at the Peppermint Lounge" album by Joey Dee and the Starliters of the same period, when the twist was all the rage here. It also reminds me of an English Dixieland king of the time: like Mayall's vocals and instrumental work, Collyer's trumpet was technically accurate but emotionally lacking.

Judging from his record sales and the number of people who turn out for his concerts, Mayall is doing fine. His fans will doubtless be interested in this album. I am not.


Despite all the harsh edges, Bill Medley is a very romantic singer. He has a worn, observant style with lyrics, and the voice sounds like that of experience. The semi-Motown production job is a great plus—"semi," since Medley is white and it isn't quite the same Granada as when one who has truly had it gets on. But there is a lot of real and deep feeling here. Best is The Greatest Performance of My Life, which for some arcane reason reminded me of Bogart telling Lupino that she "better beat it, kid, before the coppers get here" in all those old Warner Bros. melodramas that keep showing up on TV and that seem more and more impressive As Time Goes By. If you dig the fatalistic loser-hero that those films chronicled so romantically, then you'll dig Medley. Meanwhile, back to Raymond Chandler.

L.I. MINGNELLI: The Singer. Liza Minnelli (vocals); orchestra. You're So Vain; Use Me; The Singer; Where Is the Love; I Believe in Music; and six others. COLUMBIA KC 32149 $6.98.

Liza Minnelli is not a star. She is an ambitious and confabulated creation of canny show-business management. The blatant final touch here is the cover photo of Minnelli in a trendy T-shirt adorned with—guess what?—a pin in the form of a star.

Along with Ann Margret (who did deserve her Academy nomination for Carnal Knowledge), poor Liza Minnelli has been trapped into being a living parody of herself. P.R.

ANNE MURRAY: Danny's Song. Anne Murray (vocals): Pat Riccio Jr. (piano); Skip Beckwith (bass); Andy Cree (drums); other musicians. Killing Me Softly with His Song; He Thinks I Still Care; I'll Be Home; Use Your Pain: One Day I Walk; and five others. CAPITOL ST 11172 $5.95, © 8XT 11172 $6.98, © 4XT 11172 $6.98. Performance: Good Recording: Very good

Anne Murray's latest has few flaws, but it has one flaw that bothers me so much it doesn't need any others. That one has nothing to do with the performance of the musicians. Producer Brian Ahern for some reason has elected to put all the soft songs on side one, all recorded in the studio, and all the big beat numbers on side two, all recorded at an Ottawa concert. An album set up that way doesn't give the artist a fair chance; few listeners can tolerate minutes of a soft song then a tempo without squirming a bit. Side two is the more interesting, if I must choose, even though Barbara George's I Know and Gene MacLellan's Put Your Hand in the Hand (Gawd, am I tried of that song) are unworthy of the voice like Anne's. And a lot of stuff going on in the instrumentals, and the backbone of each arrangement is quite striking. Bass player Skip Beckwith and pianist Pat Riccio Jr. are almost perfect sidemen here, both managing to be flashy without drawing too much attention away from the singer. The strings on side one are sweeter than I like, and the horns on sides two are, well, horns. Anne's version of Scott MacKenzie's What About Me doesn't merely prove that she can tear up an album with an up-tempo—l it might send a shiver through the Northern Lights.

This is one smoohoo singer, and one frustrating record. What I'm going to do is transfer it to tape, rearranging the sequence of songs as I go. That'll probably wear out the "pause" button on my machine, but the way Ahern has done it is wearing me out. N.C.
Randy Scruggs' excellent accompanying work in *Just Can't Seem To Care*. The Memphis-flavored choruses, with an over-dubbed Tracy, here in some of them, are a little less routine, although they too drag at times. But the songs sound much too like the sort they pick out for Rita Coolidge; something that proceeds straight ahead, and has a point to make, would help. Tracy's singing, predictably, is infinitely better than anything else on the record—it's so good you listen to the album more than you want to, if you know what I mean. She may be so good that she scares producers. Something makes them blow it. Tracy's long overdue for a chance at something other than a salvage operation. N.C.

LAURA NYRO: *The First Songs*. Laura Nyro (vocals); orchestra, Herb Bernstein arr. and cond. Stoney End; Buy and Sell; Lazy Susan; Billy's Blues; Blowing Away; and seven others. COLUMBIA KC 31410 $5.98, ©CT 31410 $6.98. 

Performance: Excellent but imitative
Recording: Excellent

Laura Nyro's first album, previously on Verve, has been re-released by Columbia, and it is as impressive now as it was five years ago. The big performing jump that Nyro made almost immediately after this album's release was to discard all of the Streisandisms that are so easily identifiable. But then Stoney End was such an enormously powerful force in pop singing that her style almost had to filter through, even down to a (probably) scared kid making her first record. And that basically is what is so disarming about this album: you can hear a tough-minded street kid with a truly creative imagination laying it out as it was in a series of songs that reflected, poetically but realistically, her particular world. *Buy and Sell* remains one of the best drug-culture songs ever written. *Stoney End* has deservedly become a classic, and I'd still trade such romps as *Flin Flum Man* and *California Shoeshine Boys* for any or all of Nyro's later pretentious pronouncements on Humanity's Problems. Somewhere along the way Nyro seems to have convinced herself that she's got the-world-in-her-hands and the result has been an ever-thickening haze of moral sanctimoniousness in everything she does. Undoubtedly spurred on by her cult audiences, she is, in 1973, a self-aggrandized cartoon of "involvement." Some people see Joan Baez in much the same light, but I do not agree with that.

What we all might agree on, however, is that this is one hell of an album and one that you should own, regardless of my own complete turn-off on Nyro's current downhill slide into Relevancy. P.R.

PAN. Pan (vocals and instrumentals). *Long Way Home: Lady House; The Puppet; Sad Rug Doll;* and six others. COLUMBIA KC 32062 $5.98, © CA 32062 $6.98, © CT 32062 $6.98.

Performance: Classy
Recording: Excellent

This album is billed as "A new blend of acoustic and electric guitars with complex, soaring vocal harmonies, built on a foundation of uniquely structured songs which span a range of emotions." What one actually hears is as super-smooth and lubricating as one of those hundred-thousand-dollar TV commercials. Pan seems to be not so much a group as a collective figment of the impoverished imagination of the music-biz equivalent of Madison Avenue; that is, Class all the way. And Class is what you get here. Everything, including the lead vocals by Keith Barbour and the backup by musicians of market-tested quality, is ninety-nine per cent pure—pure goulash. *Deliria De Mattei* is a bold-faced rip-off of the "I'd like to buy the world a Coke" commercial, and by the time the group gets to *Love Glow* (*Calamity Jane*), in which the chorus echoes "calamity, calamity, calamity," the album has become funny in a surreal way.

Needless to say, it's all immaculately and sumptuously produced, very well performed, and about as memorable or involving as a visit from Josephine the plumber.

GRAM PARSONS: *GP*. Gram Parsons (vocals, guitar); James Burton (guitar); John Conrad (bass); Ronnie Tutt (drums); Byron Berline (fiddle); other musicians. *Still Feeling Blue; We'll Sweep Out the Ashes in the Morning: A Song for You; Streets of Baltimore; She: That's All It Took;* and five others. REPRISE MS 2123 $5.98, © M 82123 $6.98, © M 52123 $6.98.

Performance: Floundering
Recording: Excellent

Remember the old Naked City introduction? Well, there are eight million solo albums by former group members that prove such people were better off in groups, and this has been one of them. But that's unfair. What I mean is, pop music would be better off with
Gram Parsons singing in the Byrds or Burritos than it is with him singing solo. He’s so unsteady as a vocalist that his singing is a constant distraction. Beyond that, “GP” is one of those steel–guitar rock/steel–guitar country (the terms are just about interchangeable) albums in which several people avoid doing any real work on the arrangements because one person (here it’s sometimes Al Perkins, sometimes Buddy Emmons) is willing to toil tirelessly over a pedal steel. Still Feeling Blue, the first song encountered, is the only spot where Parsons’ new country solo style really does anything for me. Beyond that, it’s a case of too much of my prejudices being bated at the same time.

PINK FLOYD: The Dark Side of the Moon. Pink Floyd (vocals and instruments). Speak to Me; Breathe; On the Run; Time; The Great Gig in the Sky; Money; and four others. Harvest SMAS 11163 $4.98, @ 8XX 11163 $6.98, @ 4XX 11163 $6.98.

Performance: Etoain shrdlu and all that
Recording: Good

It is difficult to comment on Pink Floyd as a band playing music: generally they don’t. They wallow in technology. One of their album covers showed all their equipment laid out in a doily design, but it looked like the incidental impediments of a panzer division. In between the huffings and puffings (electronic) on this album (plus the cosmic giggles, Arp-synthesizer Bronx cheers, and something that sounds like a man suddenly waking up and remembering he has tied a pillowcase over his head), there are some comatose vocals. The whole thing—and this is not a knock—would make an excellent score for a horror movie (in black and white, like Night of the Living Dead).

I suppose I am an old fudge, but I think this group has never explored its early single, Arnold Lavine, which, as far as I know (mark this down), was the first rock-and-roll song about a transvestite.

BILL QUATEMAN. Bill Quatem (vocals, piano and guitar); orchestra. My Music; Circles. Keep Dreaming; Only Love; and five others. Columbia KC 31761 $5.98, @ CA 31761 $6.98, @ CT 31761 $6.98.

Performance: Spotty
Recording: Excellent

Here’s another premature one-man show by someone who should stay in the background until he gets it all together. Instrumentally Quatemian is already a pro. As a songwriter he is halfway there, although it does take some effort to overlook such lines as “I’m just a pirate/With a lend lease life at sea.” That’s from What Are You Looking For, one of the several songs here that feature Quatemian singing solo to his own piano accompaniment. These tracks are unmitigated disasters, since he is a musicologist whose talent is to find some sort of reward at any plateau. Can’t explain that. But people who are more heavily into Eastern Thought than I am are continually doing things that affect me in ways I can’t explain.

SEALS AND CROFTS: Diamond Girl. Jimmy Seals (guitar, alto sax, vocals); Dash Crofts (mandolin, guitar, vocals): Louie Shelton (guitar); David Paich (keyboards); other musicians. Diamond Girl; Standin’ on a Mountain Top; Wisdom; Intone My Servant; Robe Jean and Billie Lee; Jessica; Nine Houses; Rust. Your Music; Time After Time; I May Never Pass This Was Away; It’s Gonna Come Down. Warner Bros. BS 2699 $5.98. @ M 2699 $6.98. @ M 2699 $6.98.

Performance: Polished
Recording: Very good

Radio listening can create the impression that Seals and Crofts have a narrow, restricted style: the core of it being a kind of low-keyed preachiness couched in high-toned harmonies. In fact, their work is eclectic, or extraordinarily varied, and this album is especially so. An insistent but fairly tasteful electric guitar kicks along such rockers as Standin’ on a Mountain Top (written in 1964) and It’s Gonna Come Down (on You), which are worlds removed from the Seals sax solo also included, or the tongue-chewing cowboy song, or the ballads that are as secular and girl-chasing as anybody’s ballads, or the pastel waves of unrecognizable music that are built upon Crofts’ mandolin lines in such pieces as Nine Houses.

You’re almost certain to like some of it, almost certain not to like all of it, but likely to admire, in any case, the way Seals and Crofts manage to sound like Seals and Crofts through all these changes. Myself, I like the guitar- mandolin arrangements, the lyricism, and the taste—and I grow a little weary of the momentous truth that he was, with the thin open face and the bow tie and the pen in hand signing autographs at the stage door, this is the album for it. Columbia has trotted all the old Axel Storcharl arrangements out of the archives and put them together into a kind of portrait of Sinatra. “In the Beginning, 1943-1951” should help explain the phenomenon of what he was to those too young to have been around, and serve as a refresher course for the rest of us. The creamy, velvety voice, the feeling of ease and repose which he later developed and carried over into his mature style, his way of slowing down a tempo so that you had to feel he felt what he was crooning—these are the qualities of the early Sinatra that abound on these two discs. Some of the songs, like the one Jimmy Van Heusen and Phil Silvers wrote for him with his wife Nancy, are downright dopey, but most of the material is worthy of the effort Crofts lavished on it. I’ve Got a Crush on You and Saturday Night and Day by Day all benefit from Frank Sinatra: In the Beginning. 1943-1951. Frank Sinatra (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. If You Are But a Dream; The Girl That I Married; My Heart Was Young; The Moon Was Yellow; I Couldn’t Sleep a Wink Last Night; Time After Time; I’m a Fool To Want You; Five Minutes More; Sunday, Monday and Always; and ten others. Columbia KG 31358 two discs $6.98.

Performance: Cream for your coffee
Recording: Good remastering

Frankie! Frankie! I can still hear the screams in my ears. I was a lowly typist on the New York Times, and he was the idol of every teenage girl in town, packing them in around the corner at the Paramount. Who could have guessed he would turn into one of America’s most stylish balladeers—and an excellent actor besides, with time—so young? Does anyone know how much money from investments? Frankie! If you want to remember him as he was, with the thin open face and the bow tie and the pen in hand signing autographs at the stage door, this is the album for it. Columbia has trotted all the old Axel Storcharl arrangements out of the archives and put them together into a kind of portrait of Sinatra. “In the Beginning, 1943-1951” should help explain the phenomenon of what he was to those too young to have been around, and serve as a refresher course for the rest of us. 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I’ve Got a Crush on You and Saturday Night and Day by Day all benefit from
his unforced approach. Mean to Me brings a hint of the mockery, the cynical quality, that was to creep in later and relieve the relentless projection of "sincerity" (he learned early how to bend not only his notes but the shape of a song to his style). And then there was the socially conscious side of Sinatra, as reflected in The House I Live In, a plea for mutual tolerance among Americans that comes off, sadly, as both wishful thinking and naiveté in today's explosive world. When he dripped, he really dripped—although it's unfair to blame entirely on the singer the icky effect of Full Moon and Empty Arms, written in the days when lyric writers were all putting words to piano concertos. On the lighter side, The Coffee Song ("They've got an awful lot of coffee in Brazil") comes as a welcome relief from relentlessly slow tempos and solemnities. As for Ol' Man River, it's less the Mississippi than some sort of Old Mill Stream in the Southland (maybe the Sewanee) the way Sinatra approaches it, and yet, before he's through, he makes you hear it his way and believe it. Finally, there's Dreams, a lovely, escape: tune that sticks to the ears like marshmallow and seems to summarize that whole period when the bow-tied boy from Hoboken, whose jacket always looked too big on him, held the females of America in sway.

P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Warm and wise
Recording: Excellent

Lonesome John has a way of producing, not theme albums, but albums whose songs make good sense together and in whose lyrics certain references do recur. The background throw-away motif in the last one was light: in this one it's weather, wind and rain. Perhaps he's working on some complicated and subtle multi-volume study of the natural environment. Anyway, he continues to sing with one of the most stylish and distinctive (and least flexible) voices in pop music, a deep, beat-up sort of rasp that goes well with old pickup trucks and faithful mongrel dogs. There's some posturing in his lonesome travelin', of course, but I say if you're posing, know you're posing (John does, as you'll concede after hearing a couple of these selections) and do it with style—and John does that: nobody carries off the tough but hurt look for an album jacket better than he does. And nobody wears a cowboy hat as well as he does.

He's had some of these songs on hand for a while—Chilly Winds, for instance, was written with Papa John Phillips back in 1962, the era of Stewart's association with the Kingston Trio. The song quality is uniformly high, though with better-than-necessary melodies and some of the best lyrics recorded this month. Stewart, in such songs as Spirit and Armstrong, particularly, may not be artistically ambiguous but he is consistently and knowingly ambiguous—you just don't catch him sounding trite, or smug, or sophomoric, or any of those other things that are widely considered endemic to folkies who never duck the issues. Add to that the merits Fred Carter
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the "discounters". Call or write for our newest
at Wholesale prices. Prices even LOWER than
Dixie Hi-F1 really
The thing about this album is the enlargement
of persona it documents — Paul Stookey going
publicly to "Noel Paul Stookey" and hinting that
"Paul" may be dropped entirely. A man
should not go on forever being identified as
one-third of Peter, Paul and Mary, or any
other nonexistent group, and this should help
free his music from old preconceptions and
put him squarely on his own. And stuff like
that. Personally, I always found Noel such a
rare, off-the-wall name that I felt self-con-
scious about. Mr. Stookey's trouble with it
so far, has been in part fiscal: the album was
recorded at a "Noel P. Stookey" Carnegie
Hall concert whose audience had to be salted
with 1,400 freebies because so few people
would buy tickets to hear a Stookey whose
first name was Noel.
Side two is where the sound changes to
complement the name change: Noel Stookey
jumps into hard rock with both feet and stays
there right on through an electrified Jingle
Bells. The album is not terribly impressive for
Noel does (as Paul did) keep too many
time-wasters in his program; and by any name
he tries too hard to pander, in the form of
cuteness, to the snobish underground aspira-
tions of most rock audiences. The pastoral-
folkie image hasn't been sufficiently altered,
however, and the recording does have its
moments—in Edward and One Note Melody
when it rocks, and in The House Song, partic-
ularly, when it doesn't. Brightest of all is the
way Noel/Paul keeps his perspective: open
the fold-out jacket and the picture of the band,
with names printed under each person's
likeness. Under the image of the barding fel-
low on the right it says "Neal Stookey." N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SWEET THURSDAY. Sweet Thursday
(vocals and instrumentals). Dealer: Jenny;
Laughter at Home; Colwyn's; Rescue Me;
Molly Wheels; Sandy's; Slow Moments; and
The Poor Ditching Boy: Weave Me
Together: Who Love the Girls: Weave Me
Black and White: Joy to the World: An Old
Humor. I can say that. But mostly the lyrics
My Racehorse Away is my kind of British
workout. His piano work is just about the model
for my kind of British work-out, and he digs fairly
deeply into his bag — with 11 overdubs. His
joust with acoustic guitarists Alun Davies
(Cat Stevens' accompanist) and Jon Mark (of
Mark-Almond) in Jenny is particularly lacy
and lovely. Brian Odgers, as usual, is solid
and intelligent on bass and where he dubs in
some woodwind accent now and then that
should make every producer and arranger
who hears them break out in the cold shivers.
Harvey Burns' drumming seems a little harsh
for some of the songs, but it is economical and
steady. Mark and Davies sounded too much
alike then (Davies has since matured nicely as
a singer) to provide anything approaching the
balance a two-vocalist band needs, although
each does at least one fine job as a soloist.
The songs, except for Rescue Me and the fact
that Gilbert's rewrite and Jon Mark's improve
on a few cuts are as in a few cases. A single
melody can stand, are two or three cuts above
the song quality you'll find in most albums
these days. This was, in its day (or two), a fine
band.

RICHARD THOMPSON: Starring as Henry
the Human Fly. Richard Thompson (vocals,
guitar, accordion); Pat Donaldson (bass);
Andy Roberts (dulcimer); John Kirkpatrick
(accordion); Sue Draheim (fiddle); other mu-
sicians. Roll Over King William: Nobo-
y's Wedding: The Poor Ditching Boy;
Shaky Nancy: The New St. George: Painted
Ladies: Cold Feet: Twisted: and four others.
REPRISE MS 2112 $5.98.
Performance: Very good
Recording: Very good
Fairport Convention graduates continue to
make good music in their separate ways.
Richard Thompson, whose guitar made him a
force to be reckoned with (even as Sandy
Dittray and Ian Matthews seemed to be apenly
in Fairport's early days, has gone
solo with a complicated, intelligent, and some-
times tedious album. The Old English folk
ambiance is there (indeed, so is Sandy, for
some limited piano and vocal backing, and so
is Pat Donaldson, Sandy's bassist in her suc-
cessor group, Fotheringay), and so is Thom-
son's curious, convoluted, vague way of say-
ing things. So is his guitar, in wave upon wave
of overdubs, but the arrangements are busy
work, and at times they make the band seem
dense. Guitar work that is downright excel-
ent is sprinkled throughout, although it sel-
dom calls attention to itself—it is in some
unaccustomed stuttering licks and some Town-
send-like tolling-chiming chords that are not
missed—and Thompson's taste as a gui-
tarist is flawless. But his melodies are a little
dreamy; too often he sounds like he's rewriting
Sandy's rewrite of some venerable refrain
about one more fair maiden's life and
hard times. As for his lyrics, it is almost as if he
were trying to live with them a little longer. They're not
dumb, I can say that, and The Angels Took
My Racehorse Away is my kind of British
humor, I can say that. But mostly the lyrics
wash over me like a flood and I am unable to
concentrate on specific words or even think I detect, a generally gentle but reproach-
ful tone that may or may not someday start
to bug me. But mark ye: a fine album is a fine
album for a' that.

THREE DOG NIGHT: Around the World with
Three Dog Night. Three Dog Night (vocals
and instrumentals). Never Been to Spain:
Black and White; Joy to the World; An Old
FASHIONED LOVE SONG; Pieces of April; Eli's Comin'; Family of Man; Liar; Mama Told Me Not To Come; Jam; and seven others.

DUNHILL DSY 50138 two discs $9.98. © W 0023 50138 $9.98. @ Z 0023 50138 $9.98. © Z 5023 50138 $9.98.

Performance: Why?

Recording: Good

There really is no musical reason for this album to be released. The performances are good enough—the band is professional—but could have been captured in a Connecticut college gymnasium as "around the world" (which appears to be mostly Japan, judging by the photos on the lavishly packaged album—the printers must be making a fortune on the die-cuts). Almost all the material has been recorded before; it is, in fact, a "greatest hits" album except that these songs were recorded live and the band is not as good live as it is in the studio. Their genius comes through in the studio, where they can use all the available techniques of modern recording—always assuming (as we can with this group) that their material will be superior and their performances equal to the material.

I imagine that the rationale behind the release of this useless album is that the group was touring or had been on tour, or on vacation, or in rehearsal, or looking for new material to match the high standard of their previous songs and recordings (such a search, in this case, requires patient and ruthless good taste). So this is a "filler" album of no great service to either the group's fans (of whom I am one), though doubtless many dealers will pass over the counters of your local record shop. Me, I'm staying home.

J.V.

THE WAILERS: Catch a Fire. The Wailers (vocals and instrumental). Concrete Jungle. Slave Driver: 400 Years: Kinky Reggae; and five others. ISLAND SW 9329 $5.98. © 8XW 9329 $6.98. © 4XW 9329 $6.98.

Performance: Flat

Recording: Excellent

"Reggae" is a Jamaican rhythm, first heard here on a national scale in 1968 when Johnny Nash, an American singer, recorded "Hold Me Tight" and "Cupid." More recently Paul Simon and Band used the instrumental backup for his hit "Mother and Child Reunion." American and English artists are now visiting Jamaica to record there, much as they visited Memphis a few years ago. Reggae itself is a rhythm, which is infallible, stily provides more than just rhythm. Weissberg is also an excellent, somewhat clinical, fiddler. And since the graft didn't cover it up, you can hear the "other" version of Dueling Banjos.

The marketplace is vulgar, isn't it? Deliverance was, I thought, one of the better films of recent years, but it quickly became encircled by a gang of gamy and resolve hucksters playing ring-around-the-dollar. The hawks' cluster is a sort of dissonant counterpoint to the film's own sensibilities, and James Dickey and John Boorman must be shaking their heads. Eric Weissberg, too, for that matter. He and Steve Mandel, the now-famous pickers behind that strange scene with the in-bred clatter is a sort of dissonant counterpoint to Dickey's sensibilities, and James Dickson is, in fact, a reissue of the Weissberg-Brickman Elektra album of the hopelessly hopeful title, "New Dimensions in Banjo and Bluegrass."

The problem now is to avoid being turned off by all this. Weissberg (like Dickey and Boorman) deserves all this attention, however it came about. For years, he has been capable of playing every instrument in a bluegrass band—so well that he could step into just about any such band, at any position, and improve the sound. The banjo is probably his favorite instrument, and he must surely be one of the first banjo players alive. He isn't gifted with Scruggs' instincts, but his approach to an old tune usually involves a unique mix of purist's reverence and tinkerer's curiosity. Brickman's rhythm guitar, which is infallible, stily provides more than just rhythm. Weissberg is also an excellent, somewhat clinical, fiddler. And since the graft didn't cover it up, you can hear the "other" version of Dueling Banjos, appearing as the first cut on side two under the more likely title End of a Dream. There it really is a pair of banjos dueling—both played by Eric, I think—instead of the more famous banjo and guitar. Reissue or not, the album deserves to be heard. And Weissberg deserves whatever positive rewards come of all this.

KAREN WYMAN. Karen Wyman (vocals) orchestra. Something Tells Me, My World; Just a Little Love: Stay with You; and seven others. COLUMBIA KC 31704 $5.98.

Performance: Standard

Recording: Good

There's very little to say one way or another about Karen Wyman. She sings. Not always well, but competently; not particularly engaged with the lyrics, but not oblivious to the music. The result here is a "girl singer" album of a kind I had thought almost extinct. Probably in clubs Miss Wyman, who possesses that honed sort of good looks that often passes for beauty, is pleasant enough for an opening act, but on record it all seems like a protracted audition. The production is very stately, and perhaps you could enjoy it if you had a seeing-eye ear.

P.R.

(Continued on page 92)

AUGUST 1973

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SHUCKIN' THE CORN; PONY EXPRESS; OLD JOE CLARK; EIGHT MORE MILES TO LOUISVILLE; FAREWELL BLUES; ELL'S BREAKDOWN; and ten others.

WARNER BROS. BS 2683 $5.98.

Performance: A deliverance of sorts

Recording: Very good

The marketplace is vulgar, isn't it? Deliverance was, I thought, one of the better films of recent years, but it quickly became encircled by a gang of gamy and resolve hucksters playing ring-around-the-dollar. The hawks' cluster is a sort of dissonant counterpoint to the film's own sensibilities, and James Dickey and John Boorman must be shaking their heads. Eric Weissberg, too, for that matter. He and Steve Mandel, the now-famous pickers behind that strange scene with the in-bred clatter is a sort of dissonant counterpoint to Dickey's sensibilities, and James Dickson is, in fact, a reissue of the Weissberg-Brickman Elektra album of the hopelessly hopeful title, "New Dimensions in Banjo and Bluegrass."

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P.R.
Treasures from the Atlantic archives: SIX VOLUMES OF THE BLUES

Reviewed by CHRIS ALBERTSON

The founders of Atlantic Records, Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegun, started out in the record business as collectors of black music. That was back in the Forties, when rhythm and blues, itself an extension of earlier efforts by black performers of the two previous decades, was laying what became a foundation for much of today's popular music. Almost totally ignored by white promoters (and thus by white audiences as well), black artists of the Forties and Fifties repeatedly saw their creative efforts gain national and international popularity only after a white artist had "covered" their record with what was generally a bastardized rendition. Lil Green's "Why Don't You Do Right" became a Peggy Lee/Henry Goodman hit; Big Mama Thornton saw Elvis Presley take the honors for "Hound Dog"; and Little Richard's material was what kept the fans waiting for Hound Dog; and Little Ritchie Valens' "Be My Baby," which contains in its entirety the famous "Drifting Blues," the album is an exercise in changing moods and blues artistry of the highest order.

Good as the best pieces of the other volumes are, the gem of this series is Volume 6, which contains all its entirety the famous July 18, 1951 session with Jimmy and Mama Yancey. It is ironic that Jimmy Yan-
The Mahavishnu Orchestra deserves the praise and attention it has been getting. It is a first-class group that gets better with each passing year. All music critics agree on the description, but the totally cohesive sound of this five-piece orchestra simply forbids any attempt to silence it. Suffice it to say that John McLaughlin—who first gained wide attention with Miles Davis—is an exciting guitarist who spurns the spotlight (which could be his for the asking) to blend his statements with those of his four fellow musicians, all of whom ride the border between jazz and rock. The resulting music is, however, neither—it stands on its own as an unclassifiable contemporary music entity beyond the highest composer.

There is a great deal going on within each track, and repeated listening constantly reveals nuances that previously escaped my ears. “Birds of Fire” is a highly spiked brew that I strongly recommend you sample. C.A.

JAZZ

RED GARLAND QUINTET: Jazz Junction
(see Best of the Month, page 78)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BOBBY JONES: The Arrival of Bobby Jones. Bobby Jones (clarinet, tenor and soprano saxophones); Charles McPherson (alto saxophone); Juki Byard (piano); Bob Dorough (electric piano); Richard Davis (bass); Mickey Rivers (drums); Sue Evans (percussion). Thanks to Trane. Ballad for Two Sons; Stone Buena; Blues for the Brown Buddah; Waltz for Joy; Keepin' Up with Jones. As the Crow Flies. COMHISTONE C.9022 $5.98.

Performance Memorable
Recording Excellent

The "arrival" of Bobby Jones seems a bit late, considering that his professional career dates back to 1949 when he joined the Ray McKinley band, but to my knowledge this is the first album to appear under his own name and it compels me to say better late than never.

An overnight arrival in the arts often is followed—in very short order—by an overnight departure, so in that sense perhaps Mr. Jones is better off being late. He certainly has a wide variety of experience to draw from, having run the gamut from Fifties rock-and-roll with Boyd Bennett and His Rockets (Seventeen—She's a Hot-Rod Queen) to the Seventies jazz of the Charlie Mingus Sextet. Some of what this experience has taught him is reflected in the present album.

The album gets off to a lively start with Jones' nod to Coltrane, his virile, melodic, and fully mastered tenor paving the way for excellent work by Byard and Davis. Jones displays taste and good soprano sax tone on Ballad for Two Sons and plays clarinet on Stone Buena, which also gives us a bass solo by McPherson, one of the finest alto players on the scene today: Blues for the Brown Buddah (Charlie Parker) is a fitting tribute. Jones' soprano Solo integrating comfortably with McPherson's alto as it so often did when both men worked for Mingus. Waltz for Joy is just that, and Keepin' Up with Jones, the only piece here Bobby Jones did not write himself, is hard-driving and full of excellent solo work.

As the Crow Flies is sixteen minutes of fooling around in a hillbilly-ragtime vein wherein the players had. I suspect, more fun in the studio than you will have listening at home.

The last track notwithstanding, this is a thoroughly enjoyable album that, unlike so many "blowing sessions" of late, will stand repeated listening for years to come. With more albums like this, me and Mr. Jones could do with some rap lessons from Isaac Hayes or Irene Reid. I am not yet equipped to play quadruphonic records (of which this is one). Q.S matrix but I doubt that two additional channels would help much in this case.

C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA: Birds of Fire. John McLaughlin (guitar); Jerry Goodman (violin); Jan Hammer (keyboards, Moog); Rick Laird (bass); Eddie Gómez (bass); Franklam Cobin (drums). Birds of Fire: Miles Beyond; Celestial Terrestrial Commuters; Sapphire Bullets of Pure Love; Thousand Island Park: Hope; One Word: Sanctuary; Open Country Joy; Resolution. COLUMBIA K.C. 3.I996 $5.98.

Performance Contemporary
Recording Excellent

The Mahavishnu Orchestra deserves the praise and attention it has been getting. It is a first-class group that gets better with each passing year. All music critics agree on the description, but the totally cohesive sound of this five-piece orchestra simply forbids any attempt to silence it. Suffice it to say that John McLaughlin—who first gained wide attention with Miles Davis—is an exciting guitarist who spurns the spotlight (which could be his for the asking) to blend his statements with those of his four fellow musicians, all of whom ride the border between jazz and rock. The resulting music is, however, neither—it stands on its own as an unclassifiable contemporary music entity beyond the highest composer.

There is a great deal going on within each track, and repeated listening constantly reveals nuances that previously escaped my ears. “Birds of Fire” is a highly spiked brew that I strongly recommend you sample. C.A.
Ethel Waters had many great years after these 1925-1934 recordings were made, but she had entered another field, so the title of this album is appropriate as far as her recorded music is concerned. She was a contemporary of Bessie Smith, and her early career took her over the same trail of broken-down T.O.B.A. (Theater Owners’ Booking Association) theaters, and brought her together—in Columbia’s studio—with many of the same accompanists. Unlike Bessie Smith, though, Ethel Waters came to Columbia with a number of recordings under her belt. These early efforts, made between 1921 and 1924 for the Cardinal, Black Swan, and Paramount labels, are nearly all available today on the Biograph albums, but they only hint at what was to come.

What did come during the next ten years—two distinct stages of Miss Waters’ development—is well represented in this Columbia reissue. First, the early; ghetto humor songs that T.O.B.A. audiences loved, and then the more sophisticated torch songs that appealed to whites and that led to Miss Waters’ hobnobbing with European nobility and to a stage and screen career. An interesting thing about this chronologically programmed album is how it reflects the abrupt change from uptown to downtown.

My Baby Knows How To Love, recorded in August 1928, literally ended Ethel Waters’ “black” period. Starting with her next recording session, in May 1929, her accompaniment became all-white, her style and repertoire changed, and Columbia no longer released her records in their 14000 (race) series. In this set, the change begins with True Blue Lou, where she is accompanied by Ben Selvin’s orchestra, which includes Benny Goodman and the Dorsey brothers. It is quite a change; at times she is very reminiscent of Ruth Etting, who was then at the peak of her success.

Actually, both of the Ethel Waters here—the lower and upper extremes of the set—are magnificient, and the accompaniments are, for the most part, first-rate. Pianist James P. Johnson’s accompaniments on three tunes by the late Andy Ruftal and Joe Smith’s pungent trumpet solo (and subsequent obbligato) on I’ve Found a New Baby are among the instrumental highlights. Miss Waters’ irresistible charm oozes out of the grooves throughout, as, for instance, on Come Up and See Me Sometime, wherein she offers Moe West folowers a tempting alternative. You’ve Seen Harlem at Its Best, a blatantly racist song by the team of Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh, is, however, of historical value only for its reinvigoration of attitudes we’d rather forget: “Southern darkies plant the corn till every acre’s filled, but things are different right uptown: Harlem darkies only plant the corn that’s been distilled.”

Finally, there are producer Frank Driggs’ excellent notes, packed with information, they give us a well-written capsule biography of an extraordinary career without going into details of the individual recordings. The only details we really need are in the accompanying discography. Music speaks eloquently for itself. I only wish more care had gone into the technical clean-up process, but the occasional surface noise is easily overshadowed by Miss Waters’ artistry.

**THEATER • FILMS**

**THE HARDER THEY COME.** Original-soundtrack recording. Jimmy Cliff (vocals); various guest artists; instrumental accompaniment. You Can Get It If You Really Want, Many Rivers To Cross: The Harder They Come; Sitting in Limbo; Draw Your Brakes, Sweet and Dandy, Pressure Drop; Rivers of Babylon; Shanty Town; Johnny Too Bad. MANGO SMAS 7400 $5.98, ® 8XW 7400 $6.98, ® 4XW 7400 $6.98.

**Performance: Compelling**

Recording: Variable

I am sorry not to have seen the movie from which this music is taken. In it, Jimmy Cliff, a real-life “reggae” star, plays a young man from Kingston’s Shanty Town (equivalent to Harlem or Watts) who knows full well that there are for him only two ways into a higher income bracket: pop stardom and crime. He tries both, becomes famous and infamous, and is destroyed in the end.

Whatever the political and social situation in Jamaica—and it seems to be a mess—the music on this album is fascinating. Its dominant gene is gospel, not the American kind, but the High Anglican kind as reinterpreted by black Jamaicans in a winning vocal combination of proper British speech and native slang. Cliff’s selections are heavily influenced by American black music and can be classified as pop-reggae, but Johnny Too Bad by the Stickers is at once a charming and chilling combination of outlaw ballad and prayer for the about-to-be-dead. Rivers of Babylon by the Melodians is moving and embraceable: Sweet and Dandy and Pressure Drop by the Maytalls and Shanty Town by Desmond Dekker (who had a hit here a while ago with Israelites) are eerie little foot-tappers—like Death asking for the next dance. This music, reflecting the theme of the film and the problems of the Shanty Town people, is much more effective than the generally bra-"vura decalcarations of pain in American soul music because it is so laid-back and successfully disguised as entertainment. The most convolvulous emotions are declared politely. Perhaps that is the British influence: some C. Aubrey Smith old boy in his tuxedo, looking out across the lagoon at a legation soree and murmuring, “I find myself in a bit of a state of flux, as it were. Don’t want to get droopy, old thing, but lately I’ve taken to thinking of blowing my brains out; then again, I’ve also considered blowing your brains out.”

**ON YOUR TOES.** Selections from the Rodgers and Hart musical comedy, performed by Jack Whiting and the New Mayfair Orchestra (vocals and instrumental). EVER GREEN, Selections from the Stephen Sondheim musical comedy, with additional songs by Harry Wood from the film version, performed by Jack Payne. Jessie Matthews, Van Phillips, BBC Dance Orchestra, Van Phillips Dance Orchestra (vocals and instrumental.) ANYTHING GOES. Selections from the musical comedy by Cole Porter, performed by Jack Whiting and Jeanne Aubert (vocals) with instrumental accompaniment. MONMOUTH-EVERGREEN NES 7049 $5.98.

**Performance: Insipid**

Recording: Poor

This month’s latest musical-comedy history lesson takes us back to the 1930s for a nostalgia trip with shows of the period as sung in London by the stars who once appeared in them. By awakening from archival sleep old dance records, and such voices from the past as those of Jessie Matthews, who rose from the London slums to become the reigning queen of Gaumont British movie musicals from 1934 to 1938, and that of Jack Whiting (”clean-cut, sharp-feathered, nimble-toed Smiling Jack,” as Stanley Green describes him in the program notes), Monmouth-Evergreen has managed to reconstruct the skeletons of these ancient productions, much as a natural history museum assembles a dinosaur out of old bones. On Your Toes, a delightful spoof of ballroom choreography by Balanchine himself, boasted a Broadway cast that included Ray Bolger and Monty Woolley, the full-length ballet Slaughter on Tenth Avenue (a satire on gangster movies), and songs that threaten to live forever—There’s a Small Hotel, Glad To Be Unhappy, It’s Gotta Be Love, and Quiet Night among them. Although there was no original-cast recording made in New York, issuing this sluggish London version with its silly medley and Mr. Whiting’s sillier versions of its songs is a bit gratuitous, since a perfectly wonderful recording of the score is still available from Columbia (OS 2590) with Portia Nelson, Jack Cassidy, and a complete Slaughter on Tenth Avenue under the capable Lehman Engel’s vigorous baton.

As for Ever Green (or Evergreen, as the movie version was called) and the voice of Jessie Matthews—who studied under Gertrude Lawrence, but who has always struck me as a bit of Angloici, recelye-codified Jeanette MacDonald, who has been a fugled devotee of camp indeed to put up with her and her silly leading man Jack Payne. Their dreadfully recorded and ill-restored renditions of In the Cool of the Evening, Dancing on the Ceiling, and other intermittently scintillating numbers hardly do justice to the songs. The pieces added for the movie version by composer Harry Woods were anything but “evergreen”—decidedly ridiculous, rather, and quite dead now. The excerpts from Anything Goes are amusing.

P.A.

**WATTSTAX.** Original-soundtrack recording, with performances by the Staple Singers; Eddie Floyd; Carla Thomas; Rufus Thomas; the Bar-Kays; Albert King; Soul Children; Bobby Womack; the Bar-Kays; Albert King; Soul Children; Bobby Womack; the Staple Singers; the BBC Dance Orchestra; Jack Whiting; Jeanne Aubert (vocals); James P. Johnson (vocals and instrumentals). FILM: The story of the 1969 Wattstax concert which took place in the Watts area of Los Angeles. It was the first large-scale outdoor concert in the Watts area, and featured many of the top black musicians of the time, including the Staple Singers, the Bar-Kays, Albert King, and Soul Children. The concert was organized by Stax Records and was a huge success, attracting a large crowd and generating a lot of interest in the Watts area.

**Performance: Exceptional**

Recording: Excellent

Stax/Volt, a Memphis label founded in the early Sixties that recorded the authentic Memphis sound—white and black—during that sound’s great days, threw a party for 100,000 people from the Watts section of Los Angeles. They filled a stadium, and Stax trotted out most of the people it has under-con
The superb Staple Singers, blessed with the canny direction of Roebuck "Pop" Staples and the trampoline voice of Mavis Staples, open the album. Their segment includes one of the most genuinely touching and heartfelt songs ever written—Roebuck Staples' "I Like the Things About Me That I Once Despised." For the shimming original, get a copy of "The Staple Swinger" (Stax STX 2034); the version on this present album is interrupted by a long rap, which is understandable under the circumstances, but which prevents the real, subtle power of the song from coming through.

Isaac Hayes closes the show. He has been Stax's biggest-selling artist since the late Sixties, when his album "Hot Buttered Soul" zoomed onto the charts and stayed there. There is an earlier Hayes album, recorded deep into the morning of the previous night, where he sings four tunes while nodding out over the piano on good Tennessee sour mash, and it proves his charm. But since then he has unfortunately taken this persuasive, accidental idea and gooped it up with strings, horns, ooo-eee background singers, and all kinds of claptrap, stretching the songs unmercifully beyond their intent, hamming it up, and saying all the right things. A black artist is supposed to say to his audience to the point where he rivals James Brown in sanctified jive. Perhaps he does this because, before he became famous, he was a house songwriter at Stax in partnership with David Porter (they wrote several fine tunes) and cannot bear to sing a song as written unless he so arranges and performs it as to make it his own. His ordinarily criminal trespassing on other people's tunes (poetic license, after all, has a limit) is somewhat mitigated in Bill Withers' Ain't No Sunshine—a deliberately succinct and desperately tender tune—by the performance of Hayes' backup musicians and the holiday circumstances under which it was recorded. As documentaries go, then, a pretty good one.

J.V.
Eight Exceptionally Clear Quotes from Reviewers on the Advent Model 201 Cassette Deck:

"The Advent 201 easily met its specifications and established itself—at least for now—as the best cassette recorder we know of. Having used it to evaluate the forty types of cassette tapes in a survey report, we have a familiarity with, and a respect for, its capabilities."

Julian Hirsch, STEREO REVIEW

"Well, I have tested it and used it. And I can state categorically that it represents the finest cassette deck available—one that is not likely to be surpassed in the near future."

Larry Zide, STEREO & HI-FI TIMES

"In addition to the Dolby circuitry and the special bias and equalization control for Crolyn, the deck was the first we had come across in which a properly recorded cassette could be made literally indistinguishable from the sound source."

HIGH FIDELITY

"It is difficult to restrain our enthusiasm for the Advent 201. The unit came with a demonstration tape that had been dubbed onto Crolyn tape by that specific machine from a Dolby "A" master tape. The sound quality, especially with the finest playback amplifiers and speakers, was literally awesome, as was the total absence of hiss or other background noise."

Julian Hirsch, STEREO REVIEW

"The 201 is a superlative tape deck. That it is a cassette unit with these qualities is something that would not have been believed just one year ago."

Larry Zide, STEREO & HI-FI TIMES

"In making recordings from discs and FM—both at the time of preparing the original report and in the intervening months—we find that the 201 documents the premise that the sound of state-of-the-art cassette equipment need make no apologies whatever to the better open-reel decks."

HIGH FIDELITY

"Summarizing, the Advent 201 is a tape deck of superlative quality. It is difficult to imagine how its sonic performance could be substantially improved."

Julian Hirsch, STEREO REVIEW

"All told, the 201 represents the present state of the cassette art."

Larry Zide, STEREO & HI-FI TIMES

The only important fact that those quotes (and a dozen more like them) don't fully indicate is the special, almost addictive, pleasure that cassettes provide when used with a tape machine as good as the 201. There is something just right about being able to put the latest Stones recording or a Beethoven symphony into your shirt pocket. And there is a real joy in knowing that locked in these little cassettes is music of unsurpassed quality that you can hear again and again—easily, conveniently, and without concern about scratches, loss of quality and the other ills that discs are heir to.

We believe the Advent Model 201 will give you more pleasure than any piece of equipment you have bought (or are likely to buy) for a long, long time.

If you would like more information, including a list of Advent dealers, please write us at the address below.

Thank you.

Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.
BACH: St. John Passion (BWV 245). Peter Pears (tenor), Evangelist: Gwynne Howell (bass). Jesus: John Shirley-Quirk (bass), Philip Ledger (harpsichord continuo; bass), John Russell (cello); Adrian Beers (double bass). Wandsworth School Boy's Choir, Benjamin Britten cond. LONDON OSA 13104 three discs $17.94.

Performance: Distinguished
Recording: Very good

As a performance, this recording is excellent in every respect: the vocal soloists are splendid, the instrumental playing superb, and the all-male choir really fine. Benjamin Britten treats the score with wonderful understanding of its lyrical as well as its dramatic properties; there is nothing stodgy or sanctimonious about his view of the piece, and the pacing of recitatives, arias, and choruses is exceptionally satisfying. From the standpoint of affect, indeed, this is one of the most successful realizations of the St. John Passion ever recorded.

This version is sung in an English translation devised by Peter Pears and Imogen Holst. With relatively few exceptions, the recitatives are identical to translations Pears made and sung for the London English-version recording of the early Sixties (OSA 1320, conducted by David Willcocks). But the arias are not at all the same. Evidently, Pears had still been dissatisfied with the matching of the English words to the pitch and rhythm of Bach's German original in the arias, and there have been substantial changes from the translation (by Andrew Raeburn) of that previous version, already quite different from the standard 1929 Novello translation. Thus, for instance, the "Es ist vollbracht" text in Raeburn's translation read: "All is fulfilled. O rest for all afflicted spirits. This night of woe makes me aware of the hour of living. Now Judah's champion mounts on high, and ends the fight. It is finished."

The newest translation of this alto aria is: "The end is nigh! Release for all the sick and afflicted spirits. This night of woe makes me aware of the hour of living. Now Judah's champion mounts on high, and ends the fight. It is finished."

How does all of this work out musically? Well, except for the recitatives, an awful lot of text simply falls by the wayside, and this is the fault neither of translation nor of diction on the part of singers or choir; it is simply the nature of the beast. Mainly, however, I find I miss the guttural quality of the German, which as a sound fits the pungency of Bach's setting. I can understand the need for an English translation of this type for concert audiences not familiar with the German. But for a recording, where it is perfectly possible for the listener to follow a two-way text, it seems to me that a translated performance is gratuitous and that having the words sung in English is not worth losing an important element of Bach's original music. The Harmonicon recording on Telefunken, which involves a close approximation of the kind of performance Bach himself must have desired with old instruments and chamber forces, still continues to be my personal favorite, and the sound there is far clearer than the somewhat swanny acoustics of the new London version.

For all of that, however, this is still a distinguished performance that has great appeal. A text leaflet is included.

Pierre Boulez
A rhythmic, vital Bartok Concerto


Performance: White-hot
Recording: Excellent two-channel; intriguing four-channel

Pierre Boulez gives this popular Bartok work the white-hot cutting edge that is really implied in the score, his reading, precise in line, balance, and dynamics, imbued with the utmost rhythmic vitality, allows the music's own expressive intensity to emerge. As with many other works, there is no need to gild the lily to help the music make its full effect, and this Boulez performance is one with which I'll be able to live for a long, long time.

There is one point, however, that puzzles me about almost every performance of this music: why does everybody (except Dorati) disregard the accelerando work-up to the final bars clearly indicated in the published score? You will recall the great full-brass peroration of the fugato tune, the quick pause followed by the pellmell rush of the string-woodwind...
body, a big ritard, and then the final bars which almost everybody simply slams into, even though the score indicates that the last tempo is to be reached by way of an accelerating. Boulez follows the crowd in disregarding the letter of the score—a surprise to me—and it is the only musical criticism I have of this otherwise superb performance.

That said, I marvel at the skill of the Columbia post-mix crew in being able to come up with a result from a twenty-six-microphone pickup that complements in every way the clarity and brilliance of Boulez's reading. There is tremendous impact in the two-channel playback, which is what I have been referring to in the performance part of this review. But the controversial aspect of this particular recording, of course, resides in what emerges from the four-channel (SQ) playback. And it has nothing whatsoever to do with the concert-hall listening experience. Only violins, cellos, harps, timpani, and part of the metallophone percussion emerge from the front channels (the harps are divided extremely left and right), while string basses, trumpets, and tuba's drum are heard from the right rear. Horns and bassoons from the center rear, and flutes, oboes, clarinets, trumpets, and tuba's from the left rear. This has resulted from no "mix" but from an actual physical "surround" orchestra setup, which is shown, along with the extreme four-channel recording arrangement, on the elaborate double-fold record jacket.

The thing does work technologically, but musically I find it, though initially intriguing, in the end just plain disconcerting if not downright annoying. This is not because I am intolerably opposed to the surround concept; it's just that the Bartok Concerto for Orchestra, in my opinion, is not a score to which it can be applied with any genuine aesthetic validity or hope of success. There is a fair amount of music for which surround techniques can be very effective—Gabriel, the Mozart Naturino for Four Orchestras, and Ives' The Unanswered Question, for instance—but this work is not part of that repertoire. So I shall continue to enjoy this otherwise splendid recording in two-channel playback. And I hope that Columbia will in the future use their obviously effective surround recording techniques on music that will achieve genuine aesthetic enhancements, and that they will come up with something more appropriate for such works as this one.

BAX: November Woods (see HOLST)


Performance: Goody

Recording: Good

Beyond the familiar overture, there is a wealth of moving, even great, music in Beeethoven's set of pieces for Goethe's Egmont. The place to hear it, however, is not in this recording. Like so many composers, Beethoven emerges from Karajan's ministrations sounding like a gluttonous cross between Bruckner and Cesar Franck. It is, indeed, a superbly recorded, and yet it is hard to imagine a conductor who could make it sound more plodding. All the tonal and dynamic planes are very easily distinguishable parts. The performances are superb. The disc's other side is the multi-movement Grand Duo for violin, double-bass, and Strings. ROSSINI: Sonata No. 5, in G Flat Major; Sonata No. 6, in G Major. Luciano Visconti (violin). Lucio Boccaccia (double-bass); I Musici. PHILIPS 6500 245 $6.98.

Performance: Very fine

Recording: Very fine

With this disc, I Musici completes its recording of the six string sonatas credited to the twelve-year-old Rossini. The two included here are absolutely delightful, fluffy pieces that are captivatingly melodious and, as in the last-movement Tempesta of No. 6, effectively programmed with rain and storm effects. The performances are superb. The disc's other side is the multi-movement Grand Duo for violin, double-bass, and strings by the Italian double-bass virtuoso, Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889). This, too, is great fun to hear, though its amusing operatic-like permutations can hardly be described as more than an entertaining Romantic period piece. The solo playing here is deftly virtuosic, and the sound overall is gorgeous. I.K.


Performance: Excellent

Recording: Excellent

This is a beautifully told and equally well recorded. I eagerly await the quartet's later Beethoven, for, on the basis of Op. 18, this ensemble can be ranked one of the handful of great string quartets around.

E.S.
If memory serves me, the Bruch G Minor Concerto was the version for Yehudi Menuhin's first full-scale recording with orchestra, done in 1931 or thereabouts with Sir Landon Ronald and the London Symphony. Since then Menuhin has recorded the G Minor Concerto with Pierre Monteux, Charles Munch, and Walter Susskind. With this, his fifth recording of that music, Menuhin also gives us the first domestically issued stereo recording of the "other" Bruch violin concerto, the D Minor, composed for Pablo de Sarasate a dozen years after its more celebrated predecessor.

For all the sterling musicianship and loving care that Menuhin and veteran collaborator Sir Adrian Boult lavished upon the D Minor, the music seems to me—save for the dramatic recitative middle movement—pretty heavy going compared with the unadorned lyricism and vigor that suffuse the music Bruch composed back in his twenties. I still find the G Minor Concerto, especially in a properly realized, 1968 recording, but do splendidly by its broadly lyrical warm and spacious character, Maurice Ravel Anne (soprano); Anna Reynolds (mezzo-soprano); Robert Tear (tenor); Marius Rintzler (bass); New Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim cond. ANGEL $36921 $5.98.

Performance: Superior

Among the many previous recordings of the complete Chopin Op. 10 and Op. 25 Etudes, including such distinguished versions as those by Cortot, Arensky, and Vásáry, Maurizio Pollini's must take a high place if only for the incredible technical mastery by displays. This is not the sort of thing anybody can fake or get around through judicious tape splicing; it is really all here, immaculately clean, totally controlled, and brilliant beyond belief. Listen to the opening C Major Etude for some idea of the effortlessness of Pollini's technique, or Op. 10, No. 4, or the "Black Key," or the final three of Op. 25. The twenty-four Etudes have seldom before been recorded to such stunning, brilliant technical effect. Yet, as much as I admired Pollini's playing, I felt emotionally cheated by his cool, sentiment-less, and anti-Romantic approach. This is not to say that the rhythm is metronomic; on the contrary, there is rubato. But there is precious little warmth, charm, or sense of personal involvement to go with it. It is something like a beautifully recorded, well-oiled, perfect machine. I.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Very impressive

Recording: Very good

Andrew Watts' first all-Chopin recital (his only previous large-scale Chopin recording was the F Minor Concerto) must be described as an unqualified success. The program reflects the pianist's seriousness of purpose—no easy crowd-pleasers here. Nor does Watts give in to obvious sentimental effects. Rather, he has his own ideas (for example, the pedaling in the Fantasy's second theme after the agitato section) and more than a modicum of technical resourcefulness, to project all this with a feeling of controlled individuality that never really departs from the composer's purpose. Always there is sensitivity, and there is an overriding honesty in his approach (that includes, for the sake of completeness, I presume—a few minor missed passages that might otherwise easily have been edited out) that has made these interpretations more and more attractive to me with repeated hearings. I don't think that Watts has as yet found the ideal tonal approach to Chopin, for there is not enough of the variety of nuance, shadings if you like, at the moment, and his tone has a tendency at times to become a trifle hard. But overall this is a highly impressive contribution to the Chopin discography, one that can be recommended for that reason alone to any piano collector. Columbia's sound is very good on the disc version and almost as impressive on cassette; the latter, however, is recorded at such a low level that when the volume is raised some of the benefits of Dolby are vitiated and hiss becomes evident. I.K.


Performances: Excellent

Recording: Okay

Expressionism is truly the "conservative" music of our time, and here are some good examples. David Diamond and David Del Tredici are composers of different generations—Diamond, born in 1915, is Del Tredici's predecessor by twenty-two years—and there are major differences in their music. Diamond's Ninth Quartet and Nonet are chromatic string music—free chromaticism combined with some serialism—that is based on traditional procedures. David Del Tredici's Expressionism, however, is far more intense, dissonant, "psychological." As such, it seems to be personal and more contemporary—as contemporary, that is, as a young composer working directly in the tradition and even the idiom of Berg and Sessions can be. It is hard to know how to place a composer like Del Tredici; he seems born out of his time. But, after all, what does the listener care about chronology? I Hear an Army—set to words by James Joyce and well sung by Phyllis Bryn-Julson—is an example of dramatic music, and personal (I would almost say "neurotic") kind of large-scale piece that never lets up on the intensity of its vision.

Not that any of this is easy to take in. The very intensity and commotion of I Hear an Army gives it a kind of dramatic Tyrannosaurus Rex quality missing from the other pieces here. The Composers Quartet is excellent in this work and in the Diamond String Quartet, but the string Nonet seems slightly under-rehearsed. Del Tredici and Robert Helps are the excellent pianists in the former's Scherzo. A curious oversight: there is no clear band between the end of I Hear an Army and the beginning of the Diamond Quartet. It is ac-
RECORDING: String Quartet No. 9; Novet (see DEL TREDICI)


Performance: Good
Recording: Good

This disc presents the music of a composer born in South Wales in 1929 (Alun Hoddinott) and another born in England in 1911 (Phyllis Tate). Hoddinott shows every sign of solid training and craft. His first piece, Roman Dream, tends toward the combination of "post-Webernism" and "post-Bartókianism" practiced by some Americans these days. It is an effective fusion, especially when it is used to evoke a musical dream or nightmare as it is in this case. Hoddinott's Trio, however, is pretty dull, academic stuff.

Phyllis Tate's Apparitions use harmonica and piano as accompanying instruments, playing (apparently) to evoke a sort of Olde English atmosphere (though Bax himself was not of Celtic ancestry). But the sheer richness of Bax's harmonic texture tends to obscure whatever musical substance there is to the piece. I find the Bax of the symphonies (he wrote seven, and six have been recorded in stereo on British labels) far more interesting, especially Symphony No. 3, which has been beautifully recorded by RCA on its English label.

Ernest J. Moeran (1894-1950) is virtually unknown in this country, except to 78-rpm disc collectors who own the String Trio and the curiously imposing G Minor Symphony recorded just after the War on the British Columbia and HMV labels respectively, and to those who may own the MHS disc of the Cello Concerto. The Sinfonietta presents Moeran in his most attractive light and with his craft at its peak. The music is warm and exuberant, a nice mix of the folky and the Waltonian-cosmopolitan. Moeran did have this album of his piano pieces for "advanced youngsters" Khachatryan proves himself worthy of their attention. This collection may not be fine enough to take its place beside Debussy's Children's Corner or Schumann's Kinderscenen, but it is fresh and engaging and authentic in its own right. Pieces like The Birthday and Little Leopard on the Swing are full of mischief and high spirits. Skipping and Horseman's March make use of literal allusions to reassure the listener by letting him know precisely where he is. Invention and Eastern Dance are in the familiar Armenian idiom identified with Khachatryan's adult style. Intermezzo, in fact, is the reproduction of a segment from Gayne. Book One, originally published here with the unauthorized title The Adventures of Ivan, is simpler and less demanding in tone than Book Two, with its rhythmic complexities, more daring dissonances, and greater stress on thematic development. Most delightful in the second series is a musical portrait of two chattering, vehement ladies called The Two Funny Aunties Have Quarreled, and the program ends with a dazzling Toccata.

Khachatryan not only knows what he wants as a composer, but has strong opinions about the interpretation of his work as well, which he feels should be virile and unman-nered, devoid of pretension. Sahan Arzruni, who knows his fellow Armenian personally and has talked to him at length on the subject, is all these things.

KODALY: Hary János (see PROKOFIEV)


Performance: Unsatisfactory
Recording: Very good

The story of Giovanni Battista Lully (he changed his name early on to Jean-Baptiste) Lully is one of the most fascinating in the annals of music. Born in 1632, he was barely into his teens when he was taken to France to serve as an instrucor in Italian to a Mme de Montpensier. His employer did not at first care for him and installed him in her kitchen, but he seems eventually to have become her music director. Then his talents as a violinist, actor, and dancer brought him to the notice of the young Louis XIV, whereupon he became a member of the King's orchestra. He soon rose to become one of the most influential personalities at court, composing opera-ballets with librettists such as Molière and Machavelli-like organizing and directing the state of theater music in France. Lully's death in 1687, curiously, came about through an infection caused by his having hit his foot with a conducting staff during a rehearsal of his Te Deum. Among his musical achievements are not only thirty ballets and fourteen operas, but also the introduction of stylized declamation as recitatives and the French ouverture. Considering the man's colorful personality and musical innovations, it is all the more surprising that so little Lully is available on records: a handful of examples of his sacred music, some marches for outdoor ceremonies, and, from his stage works, a skimpy few arias in anthologies and some selected dances.

STEREO REVIEW
The verdict is in. Hirsch-Houk Laboratories for Stereo Review (March '73) and High Fidelity (May '73) say that the TX-666 is a winner! Said Hirsch-Houk: "... a first-rate tuner and powerful, low distortion amplifier... with (fine) operating 'feel'. Everything works smoothly... Mutating is flawless, free from noise or "thumps". Dial Calibration is unusually accurate... FM Frequency Response and Stereo Separation are exceptionally uniform... Selectivity is excellent... Amplifier ratings are quite conservative... Phono-overload capability is extraordinary." High Fidelity highlights these comments: "The TX-666 is a solidly built, well-planned unit... distortion readings are exceptionally good... excellent harmonic distortion... and the amplifier section proved a hard act to follow." Audition this fine instrument. Its "pretty face" is in a smartly styled, walnut cabinet with a brushed black gold panel. The price is $469.95. A 43W (RMS) per channel model, the TX-555, is available at a lower price.

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Performance: Dazzling
Recording: Superb

Peter Maxwell Davies is a young English composer (born 1934) with a brilliant imagination and two distinct styles, one of which I like enormously. Two of the four pieces on this record—From Stone to Thorn, a sort of cycle or extended song for soprano and in—

(Continued on page 105)
SERGEI PROKOFIEV was one of the twentieth century's most prolific, gifted, and influential composers, and one of the truly great technicians as well. It is impossible to listen to his symphonies without marveling at his adroitness in shaping his materials to his purposes. Occasionally, however, one can be disappointed, for Prokofiev sometimes settled for a fabrikant attitude toward the orchestral form that has carried many of the most profound ideas and emotions in Western music.

Without belittling his achievements in the symphonic genre in any way, it should be pointed out that in his middle career (and sometimes in his later career) he seemed to make very little distinction between the symphony and any other kind of music for orchestra. Certainly the fact that he could with equanimity (and with faultless technique) transfer massive chunks of material from his opera The Flaming Angel to the Symphony No. 3, and from his ballet The Prodigal Son to the Symphony No. 4, seem balletic in spirit, despite the way the composer altered the material.

Vox's new two-volume compendium of all seven of Prokofiev's symphonies and two overtures presents a portrait of the composer, but one, I think, that is not as revealing as it might have been. Conductor Jean Martinon does a fine job with a number of the symphonies, particularly those that stem from Prokofiev's period of living in France (and Prokofiev was tremendously—if temporarily— influenced by that experience). Martinon seems to understand exactly what the expatriate Russian had in mind, and he brings out the qualities of brute force and lyricism that are at the heart of the music's vigor.

I am one of that odd minority of people who feel that Prokofiev's Second Symphony ranks with his best. Of its two movements (it was modeled on Beethoven's Op. 111 Piano Sonata), the first drives forward with inexorable energy and almost flawless logic, while the long set of variations that make up the second carries on through changing, contrasting, unpredictable moods without losing either perspective or consistency of purpose on the way.

Martinon is hampered in his performance of this work, as in all the others, by the fact that the National Orchestra of French Radio is not a first-rate ensemble. It has long been a management tradition in Paris to overwork and underpay orchestral musicians, and the result has been a parallel tradition amongst the players of indifferent slowness despite terribly good musical training. That, perhaps as much as anything else, is what these performances are about. Complex rhythms challenge the orchestra more than they should, fast tempos are likely to bring forth raggedness in the ensemble, and even intonation occasionally leaves something to be desired. But, withal, this orchestra is what the French would call a "musical" ensemble, and with such expertise as it cares to muster added to Martinon's sensitive, intelligent (if not always stylistically aware) leadership, the performances throughout the two volumes are communicative, and sometimes they are even exciting.

Prokofiev's First ("Classical") Symphony, for instance, receives a bright and vivacious performance, fast in tempo and full of delicate Haydnesque charms. Martinon plays its little musical game with subtlety and grace. The Second Symphony, one into which Martinon seems to have special insight, comes off beautifully. Whether this work is indebted to Honegger or vice versa is hard to tell, but it has much in common with that composer's gutsy, thick-textured
orchestral style. I find it a very satisfying piece, and this is a fine performance. The Third Symphony is in part, like the Second, a work "as hard as iron and steel" (the description is Prokofiev's). I have always found its organization disconcertingly episodic, as it does little to link one piece together. He plays each subsection for its own momentary character rather than trying to relate it to the whole. Inevitably, therefore, the piece moves in fits, starts, and what seem to be sentimental paroxysms. Symphonies written by Prokofiev other than the Third, has the same flaw of episodic organization—which, again, Martinon does not or cannot disguise. The orchestra plays more satisfactorily than in the Third, but is even so a bit dilatory. (This performance, by the way, is of the original score of 1939 rather than the revised version of 1947.) Filling out portions of Volume I are Prokofiev's Overture on Hebrew Themes, arranged by the composer from his original sextet version of the same music, and the Russian Overture, Op. 72.

Volume II begins with Prokofiev's most nearly perfect venture in symphonic writing—the Fifth Symphony—which is, in my opinion, one of the finest twentieth-century works in its genre. Unfortunately, after a well-played first movement, Martinon's interpretative abilities and the orchestra's tenacious hold on professionalism give out. The conductor makes the chauvinistic and provincial error of superimposing his French orchestral style, and the players do their bit by dropping back into their normal lattitude. The Sixth Symphony, a less watertight but at times even grander utterance than the Fifth, escapes full expression throughout this performance for many of the same reasons. So does the Seventh. In the latter, Martinon makes the complicated mistake (which he has made in other works) of playing it as if it were a ballet composed by Tchaikovsky and orchestrated by Ravel with the help of one of those provincial error of superimposing his French orchestral style. The orchestra plays more satisfactorily than in the Third, but is even so a bit dilatory. (This performance, by the way, is of the original score of 1939 rather than the revised version of 1947.) Filling out portions of Volume I are Prokofiev's Overture on Hebrew Themes, arranged by the composer from his original sextet version of the same music, and the Russian Overture, Op. 72.

Performance: Outstanding
Recording: Very fine

Although both The Combat Between Tancred and Clorinda and The Dance of the Ungrateful Women come from Monteverdi's eighth book of madrigals, both works can be described as dramatic recitatives for solo voices set to a conventional opera. The first is devoted to the highly emotional and affecting story of how Tancred unknowingly slays his beloved, having taken her for a Saracen soldier. Ballo is part dance and allegorically condemns women who won't submit to their lovers by drawing on the example of those ensnored in hell for their lack of feeling. Each is a superb work, and each has often been recorded. The present performances, which were taken from a five-disc "Monteverdi Madrigals" album (Philips 6799 466), are among the best I have ever heard and may be recommended without reservation. The only reason for not acquiring this particular disc would be that you already own (or intend to purchase) the complete five-record album. The sonics are superb, and complete texts and translations are included.

1.K.

MOZART: La Finta Giardiniera (see Best of the Month, page 75)

OVERTON: Pulsations (1972), TRIMBLE: In Praise of Diplomacy and Common Sense (1965). Richard Frisch (baritone); The Ensemble, Dennis Russell Davies cond. COMPOSERS RECORDINGS INC. SD 298 $5.95

Performance: Expert
Recording: Crisp and clean

Hall Overton's premature death last year deprived American music of one of its most stimulating presenters on both the creative and the teaching scene (he taught at both Juliard and Yale School of Music). Pulsations, for a mixed chamber ensemble of strings, winds, and percussion, sums up in a sense Overton's preoccupation with achieving a personal creative synthesis of jazz and the so-called advanced contemporary idiom. Taking Pulsations on these terms, I'm not sure that he has succeeded, but the results, in any event, are fascinating and brilliant, especially in the jazz-style outbursts that emerge from recurrent serial and melodic motifs. Lester Trimble's In Praise of Diplomacy and Common Sense, for baritone and percussion (predominantly) ensemble that functions also as speaking-singing chorus, is up against the same problem of overweening banal journalisitc coverage of crisis events. In this instance we have a montage from the 1960's of the horrors of the Congo and the Near East.
The performances are altogether superb, this recorded sound a bit dry but very clean. Baritone Richard Frisch is to be commended on his performance. The recording is neither a surround job nor a stereo one: you are not dropped into the middle of a whirling mass of music. The recorded sound itself is first-class—clear, sharp, pleasing in tonal quality. Some of the balance problems I mentioned in June are still present (in stereo playback, at least), but most seem to have been adjusted. The orchestra sounds marvelous in both stereo and quadraphonic playback, but the solo voices, particularly in the recitatives, still seem slightly distant in stereo. Though not so much so in four-channel. All in all, this is technically a superb job, and it is capped by some of the finest pressings I have heard from an American company. Vanguard really took extra care on this one, and it shows.

Eric Salzman

STEREO REVIEW
songs, and it is an eminently sensible one. It is the only all-Schiller collection known to me. Since, however, Schiller's poetry did not possess in abundance the simplicity and natural songfulness of, say, Heine, Eichendorff, or even much of Goethe. These songs are likely to be of more interest to the specialist than to the general aficionado.

There are, of course, several surefire songs here. The stormy and majestic Gruppe aus dem Tartarus is a masterpiece by any yardstick, and, in its own way, the yearning, idyllic Die Göttler Griechenlands is no less so. Two songs related in atmosphere and style, Selbstenacht and Der Pilgrim, express the poet's yearning for a world of idealism, a world whose unattainability is summed up in the final line of the latter: "Und das Dort ist nie-mals hier" ("And that place is never here").

The main problem is Die Bargschrifi, a long narrative poem about friendship and selfless sacrifice. It is one of the treasures of German literature, but even Schubert is defeated by its length and by its poetically perfect but musically limiting strophic construction, and the song remains, for all the mastery of these superb interpreters, a lengthy and not particularly absorbing musical recitative. An die Freude is Schubert's catchy and lightweight 1815 treatment of the Ode to Joy lyrics that Beethoven was to treat more profoundly a few years later.

The performances are outstanding in terms of clarity, poetic insight, and collaborative rapport. In the lyrical and contemplative songs Fischer-Dieskau has no peer. He can be excessively dramatic for the song's purposes (as in Der Jangling am Bach), and some climaxes find him straining for range and volume, but his superior interpretive gifts generally triumph over vocal limitations to achieve the essence of poetic and musical truth. Gerald Moore's contribution is above criticism.

G.J.

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCHUBERT: Sonata in A Major (D. 959); German Dances ("Landler"), Op. 171 (D. 790); Alfred Brendel (piano). Philips 6500 284 S6.98.


Performances: Alt Wien
Recordings: Seductive

Whatever is left of the old Classic-Romantic tradition is so suspect at this point that one approaches recordings like these with a certain sense of disbelief. Brendel is no old-timer—he was born in 1931—but his background just about covers the old Austrian Empire and his roots are impeccably alt Wien.

I don't know any other pianist with such a total sense of identification with the long and late Schubert sonatas. Everyone agrees that the B-flat and A Major Sonatas of Schubert are masterworks, but how often do they turn out (if they turn up at all) to be meandering, faintly boring, and not quite in focus? Here they have their full status: their supple and songful poetry, their divine and epic simplicity—a plain way of speaking poetry. Brendel has the special gift for catching the beauty of the Schubert moment without losing the flow and the sense of the larger Classical form.

(Continued overleaf)
The "Wanderer" Fantasy is more than just a bonus on side two of the B-flat Sonata. Its concision and overarching virtuosic qualities are in curious contrast to the larger, more introspective flow of the sonatas. If there was any doubt that Brendel is the master of these aspects of Schubert as well, it should be quickly dispelled. The "Wanderer" is as strong, concentrated, and outgoing as the sonatas are subtle, reflective. However — there is one weakness in Brendel's approach — the German dances on the overside of the A Major Sonata lack a distinctively dance-like impulse. Both of these recordings are attractive sonically.

E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Wonderful
Recording: Fine

This disc concludes young Israeli conductor Eliahu Inbal's traversal of the four Schumann symphonies with the tricky "Rhenish" and a fascinating bit of juvenilia heretofore virtually unknown and of course unrecorded.

Now, only Brendel can claim he has played through the New York Philharmonic recorded it thirty years ago I have heard a reading of the "Rhenish" that moves and breathes as beautifully as this one by Mr. Inbal. In general, I find, the majority of readings of the "Rhenish" tend on the one hand toward the lumpy and sentimental, or, on the other, toward being overwrought in the fast movements and ill at ease in the slow ones. But by some miracle of musical alchemy, Inbal makes everything work: the music moves without seeming jumpy, the middle movements have warmth without sliding into gooey sentimentality, the "cathedral" movement is suitably imposing without becoming stuffy, and the finale fairly seethes with joie de vivre without being manic about it.

But as of now, the second side of the disc concludes with part of Schumann's first attempt at a symphony, begun in Heidelberg in his twentieth year and actually performed in Zwickau, thanks to the good offices of Friedrich Wieck, then Schumann's mentor and, in time, to become his violently unwilling father-in-law. A major masterpiece this music is not, but it has a fine surge and swing — with an occasional Weberian tincture — that presages the mature composer to come. (There is a new recording of this work on BASF due next month, which will, apparently, include more of the music than is given here.)

The New Philharmonia players respond superbly to every nuance of Inbal's conception of the music, and the whole musical achievement is suitably glorified with flawlessly beautiful recorded sound.

D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Superb
Recording: Good

Were I told that my proverbial "desert island record library" could include only a single disc of Scriabin's music, this latest from Vladimir Horowitz certainly would be it — and not only because of the phenomenal performances it contains, but also because virtually the entire range of Scriabin's musical language is represented on its two sides.

Horowitz begins with the lyrical and very slight Album Leaf in E-flat, then turns his attention to some of the best post-Chopin-style pieces from the Op. 8 Etudes; the lovely No. 8 in A-flat and the No. 10 in D-flat, whose chromatic chordal passages are played here with extraordinary mastery, are the high points of this group. Side one concludes with three prime samplings from the middle-period Op. 42 Etudes, progressing from gossamer delicacy through the lyrical to the passionately assertive. It is the gossamer piece, No. 3 — sometimes called the "Mosquito" Etude — that offers some of the most extraordinary pianism on this extraordinary disc. Such staccato-pianissimo playing must be heard to be believed.

Side two is devoted wholly to the last major Scriabin piano works, beginning with the Tenth Sonata, which was originally issued as part of the two-disc set from Horowitz's 1966 Carnegie Hall concert. It is good to have a remastering minus the intrusive applause that marred the original issue, and there can be no doubt that this stands as one of Horowitz's most impassioned, brilliant, and poetic performances. The music itself is essentially metamorphic development of an initial "call" motif and is less of a sonata in the Classical sense than one in the generic sense of a "sound piece." The Horowitz rendering of the enclosed trills at the sonata's climactic peak simply beggars description. The Two Poems, Op. 69, are slight, evanescent affairs, one quietly enigmatic, the other with a suggestion of fireworks display (this is a first LP recording, to the best of my knowledge). As if the performance of the Tenth Sonata were not enough, Horowitz finishes off his program with Vers la Flamme (Toward the Flame), a sort of crescendo piece related in spirit to the Tenth Sonata, in which he almost literally burns up the keyboard in a stupendous display of combined dynamic wizardry and high-voltage intensity of phrasing and rhythmical pattern.

All told, this is an extraordinary recorded performance, marked by good, clean sound throughout, and adding up to just about an ideal introduction to the music of Alexander Scriabin.

D.H.

STOLZ: Blumenlieder, Op. 50 (see Collections — ROBERT STOLZ)

TATE: Apparitions; Three Gaelic Ballads (see HODDINOTT)


Performance: Expert
Recording: Very good

Originally written for a benefit concert whose purpose was to make the composer's own financial condition a little more stable, Tchaikovsky's First Quartet has become famous for its andante cantabile, which has been murdered by almost every combination of instruments imaginable. Let the listener hear it, in the composer's presence, tears streamed down his face, and Madame von Meck (later to become Tchaikovsky's patron) was "filled with longing for something mysterious, inexplicable and at the same time marvellous," which took back her away and sent "a shiver through me from head to toe." The famous andante is perhaps too familiar to evoke such reactions in us any more, but this quartet has other virtues. The folkly third movement is particularly delightful, and the whole work is given expert treatment on this recording by the Borodin Quartet, whose members have been playing in Russia and touring the world to acclaim for a quarter of a century. The Drole Quartet's razor-sharp performance on Deutsche Grammophon is perhaps a mere stimulation, but the Borodin musicians do right enough by their countryman.

Filling out the second side of this disc is the Quartet in B-flat, a student work of a far more introspective and intimate — almost religious — nature. All that survives of the original manuscript is the allegro, but that is a substantial piece of writing in itself. Here Tchaikovsky turned to a folk tune, as he was later to do for the andante cantabile of the First Quartet, transmuting the raw material to a poignantly eloquent piece in a treatment which, even though he was still a boy when he worked on it, is instantly recognizable as his own. The playing here is appropriately subtle.

P.K.

TELEMANN: Concerto in F Major for Horn, Flute, Harpsichord, and Bassoon (see BOISMORTIER)

TRIMBLE: In Praise of Diplomacy and Common Sense (see OVERTON)
opera, following Ernani and I Due Foscari, both introduced in 1844. The libretto came from the facile hands of Temistocle Solera, on whom Verdi generally called when he wanted a sprawling epic reduced to manageable di- mensions. Verdi's close work with his later Atti- lia, Solera pursued his task with excessive zeal: his libretto bears hardly a trace of its literary source, Schiller's The Maid of Orleans. Historical inaccuracies are not the point (the Schiller drama itself was far removed from history), but the book dominated the dramatic personae, eliminated much of the pageantry, and, in fact, reduced the action to the level of a domestic tragedy. Aside from two roles of small consequence, the opera's cast consists of Joan of Arc (Giovanna), her peripetized, hostile, but eventually contrite father, Jacques (Giacomo), and the young King Charles (Carlo), who in this opera represents such love interest as Joan of Arc is allowed to have in pursuit of her heroic mission.

Musically, Giovanna d'Arco is a mixture of soaring melodies, unmistakable signs of su- perb theatricality, and occasional crudities— all characteristic of early Verdi. There is a fine overture, several outstanding arias for the three principals, some moderately effective finales, a domestic tragedy. Aside from two roles of small consequence, the opera's cast consists of Joan of Arc (Giovanna), her peripetized, hostile, but eventually contrite father, Jacques (Giacomo), and the young King Charles (Carlo), who in this opera represents such love interest as Joan of Arc is allowed to have in pursuit of her heroic mission.

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trendy variety of tonal shadings and articulations. One wonders how the man is able to breathe. Some of his long-line phrases do run counter to Baroque performance aesthetics: otherwise, however, stylistic requirements, including some effective if not fully exploited (that is, conservative) embellishments of the solo line, are well taken care of. The choice of tempos throughout is excellent, the orchestral contribution is splendidly vital, transparent, and dance-like, and the audible, well-balanced harpsichord continuo is most engagingly handled by Holliger’s Swiss companion, Christiane Jaccottet. The recorded sound is richly detailed, warm, and impeccably clean, beautifully complementing one of the most exquisite oboe performances I have ever heard.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**


**Performance:** Lustrous

**Recording:** Excellent

Spectacular is the word for Marilyn Horne’s achievement here. These Rossini excerpts offer the most coloristically contrived, the most excessively ornamented, and the widest-ranging vocal music imaginable, replete with hazardous leaps, trills, and roulades. Miss Horne triumphs over them fearlessly, without compromising either tonal beauty or musical exactitude, in this splendid display of golden age quality singing. It is not without a certain degree of exhibitionism, but can we blame a singer for showing off skills she alone possesses to such a virtuosic degree?

Oh yes, the music. La Donna del Lago (1819) and The Siege of Corinth (the 1826 revision of the earlier Muametto II) are obscure but far from undistinguished Rossini. (Rumor has it that the latter work—which was rescued from oblivion by Thomas Schippers in 1969 and became a vehicle for Beverly Sills—is due for a Met revival.) Both operas are represented here by music allotted to Neocle’s Scene, which takes up the entire first side, seems a bit long for its musical interest! The Prayer is quite beautiful, recalling certain better-known passages from Norma—except that it antedated the Bellini opera by more than a decade. “Tanti affetti” is a brilliant rondo finale Miss Horne has been using as an insert number for the Lesson Scene of The Barber of Seville.

The glorious voice is treated to worthy support from conductor Lewis, who realizes the orchestral felicities with a sure hand. G.J.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**


**Performance:** Exceptional

**Recording:** Excellent

This is a superb collection of music associated with the Spanish court of Ferdinand II, King of Castile, and his wife Isabella, patron of Columbus. The works contained here are not all in chronological order, and among them is the music somewhat past the time of the two rulers (for example, the instrumental recerca- das published mid-sixteenth century by Diego Ortiz). The variety is extraordinary: pieces for outside festivities and more intimate indoor entertainment, religious songs and light-hearted frottolas, individual voices and combinations of voices as well as instrumental pieces played on the vihuela, harpsichord, clavicembal, regal, viol, recorder, and consort of Renaissance wind instruments. The performances (no individual participants are named, which is a shame) are quite marvelous, but then one may expect that from David Munrow and his group—he was responsible for the “Henry VIII and His Six Wives” television production soundtrack.

Not only are all the works sung and played with unusual sensitivity, but there also has been far more attention paid to stylistic requirements than on many Renaissance discs, certainly more than on any previous Spanish anthology from this historical period. A good example of this is the beginning of the disc’s second side, a villancico by Luis de Milán in which the solo tenor adds some extraordinarily well-conceived florid embellishments to his part. But this is far from the only example of this kind of stylistic expertise: the album abounds with such niceties. The instrumental playing and singing are vivid, colorful, and appropriately intense and striking. Texts, translations, and excellent annotations are provided. Most highly recommended. I.K.


**Performance Competent**

**Recording:** Very good

This curious collection would appear to be an album in search of a proper title. The cover and album spine proclaim Dufay as the principal composer and Donwemhoutette for Flor- ence (Motes for the first five years of the Cathedra1 of Florence, Italy) as the chief work, but Dufay’s “Nuper rosarium flores” is the only piece here written specifically for that Florentine event of 1436, and it is not one of any great duration. The program talks vaguely about fifteenth-century art, but fails to connect the other composers with any logic, although Johannes de Limburgia, who may have lived in Italy, and John Dunstable, an Englishman, were contemporaries of Dufay. Nor do the notes, which are trival but do not include any texts at all, provide the information that the Gregorian introitus, “Terribilis est,” serves in fact as the tune for the lower vocal parts of the Dufay consecration motet, which follows it on the disc. There is as well no itemized list of what performers sing what pieces (instruments are used exclusively in the anonymous Salve Regina; the Boys Choir soloists are heard only in the Dufay isorhythmic motet), and even the performances, though perfectly suitable, have no special features to recommend them other than that they are earnest. The tempos throughout are rather slow and pleasantly lyrical, but more varied pacing might have prevented the program (which incidentally has been assembled from several Har- monia Mundi collections previously issued in Europe) from sounding so dull. I.K.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

LEONTYNE PRICE: Puccini Heroines. La Bohème: Si, mi chiamo Mimì; Dondi lieta usci; Quando me’n vo‘. Edgardo: Addio, mio dolce amor. La Rondine: Ora dolci e divine. Tosca: Vissi d’arte, Maron Lescas; In questo angolo; Sola, perduta, abbandonata. Le Villi: Se come voi piccina. Mado- ma Butterfly: Un bel di; La fanciulla del West: Laggiù nel Soledad. Leontyne Price (soprano); New Philharmonic Orchestra, Edward Downes cond. RCA LSC 3337 $5.98.

**Performance:** Stunning

**Recording:** Excellent

Leontyne Price has not been as much in view in recent seasons as her many fans have wished. There have been no recordings to be sure, but some of these have shown the sopranos her best form. The doubts and concerns may now be laid to rest: in her latest
recorded recital the diva emerges in absolutely stunning form. Her "juicy lyric" tones (the artist's own description) have taken on a new lightness: they are produced effortlessly and soar into the high register with the familiar sovereign freedom.

Lest one dismiss the disc as just another Puccini recital, it should be made clear that the music includes not only Price specialties (Tosca, Butterfly, Fanciulla), but also selections from roles she has not previously essayed (Mimi, Manon Lescaut, La Rondine) and even arias from Puccini's still relatively unfamiliar earliest operas, Le Villi and Edgar. The entire program is sustained on an exalted artistic level, tonally luminous, refined in phrasing, sensitively controlled in dynamics from ethereal piano to triumphant and undistorted forte. There is always an intelligent projection of character: Miss Price's Mimi is delicately poised and poignant, her Manon is fervent and desperate, her Tosca—in the "Vissi d'arte," at least—is humbly immersed in prayer. Only Musetta's Waltz does not come off with a total spontaneity, but there, too, the singing cannot be faulted. And in purity, security, and marvellous control Miss Price displays strength after strength in this exceptional program. "Puccini Heroines" offers the rare phenomenon of a great artist artistically rejuvenated at the peak of her career.

Ordinarily I distrust liner notes of such effusive praise as islavished upon this record by Speight Jenkins, but I cannot take issue with his observations. The finely detailed orchestral accompaniments match the unusual sensitivity of the vocal performances: the sound is excellent, and texts are supplied with the disc. G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

Performance: Rousing, and more
Recording: Excellent live

Here is another massive dollop of mass hysteria from London's famous Promenade Concerts, and in spite of myself I enjoyed every minute of it. The first such disc, released a year or so back, must have been a great success; or it would not have had a successor. Most of the music included in this second volume is new, so collectors need not be afraid of duplication. Essentially, this is a record you buy for atmosphere rather than purely musical considerations. But there are artistic rewards here too. Unlike his predecessor at the Proms—Sir Malcolm Sargent—Colin Davis is not only a charismatic figure but also a first-rate musician, and his performances on this record, always good, rise in the Mendelssohn and in one or two other pieces to a rare level of poetry and imagination. And then it was a stroke of something like genius on the part of
the BBC, which runs the concerts, to commis-
sion Malcolm Williamson to write a sort of
mini-opera, The Stone Wall, for the 1971 Last
Night. His piece, a paradigm of telling simp-
licity, employs the full resources of the audi-
ence of 6,000, and Davis puts it together with
fascinating skill.

There are some minor annoyances. The
words in the vocal pieces, not given anywhere
on the jacket, are hard to catch. But in Rule,
Britannia the audience, as always, can be
clearly heard singing "Britannia rules the
waves." That's not what it says: the correct
text is "Britannia rule the waves," an oper-
ative or a subjunctive or something, and I keep
wishing Davis or someone would make a
short adumbration to this effect. But don't wor-
ry about nasty, pedantic old me. As a sheer
breath-catcher, and as a taste of a real war-
and-all musical culture, the record will be
dy well as it is.

ROBERT STOLZ: Gala Concert. Stolz: Gross
aus Wien; Senker Mit Dein Herz; Vor
Meinem Vaterhaus. Johann Straus: Die
Fledermaus: Overture. Johann Strauss, Sr.:
Rudetsky March; Lehár: Gold and Silver
Waltz; Friederike: O Mädch'n, Mein Mäd-
chen; Kálmán: Der Zigeunerprinz: Walzes.
Jurek: Deutschehurster Reigen; March;
Heinz Hoppe (tenor); symphony orchestra,
Robert Stolz cond. BASF KBB 21121 $5.98.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Excellent

I am always intrigued by the difference be-
 tween performances of operatic music done
by conductors who function primarily in the
theater and those by conductors whose home
is the concert hall. One hears the same notes,
but different music!

This recording is a good case in point. You
would not have to read the inner notes to be
aware that the ethos of these performances is
theatrical. The atmosphere of each overture
clearly implies that a curtain is about to rise,
evoking the image of an orchestra pit, dim
lighting, and the high reaches of darkened boxes where an audience listens,
eagerly anticipating the stage action.

The performances are all exciting. They
are surcharged with drama, tend toward fast
tempos, and (as is usually true in the opera
house) sometimes sacrifice polish to thrust.
I don't think I've ever heard the Roslan and
Ludmilla overture played so fast, and I'm
glad I don't have to play it myself. But it's all
functional and very musical as well.

B.J.

RENATA TEBALDI: In Concert. Donizetti:
Mio volgo fa'na casa. Mascagni: La tua rela-
tu, Serenata. Tosci: Sogno. Rossini: L'Invito-
Bolero. Zandonai: L'Assiulo. Cimara: Storm-
nello. Ponchielli: Non leggiamo insieme.
Pergolesi: Se tu m'ami. Paradisi: M'ha presa
alla cattura. Scarlatti: O cessate di piagarmi.
Glučk: O del mio dolce ardor. Ricci: Il
carriere del Vomero. Marcadante: La sposa
del marinero. Bellini: Malinconia, ninfa gen-
tile. Puccini: E l'Uccellino. Renata Tebaldi
(soprano); Richard Bonynge (piano). LON-
dell 26303 $5.98.

Performance: Enjoyable
Recording: Good

"Tebaldi in Concert" offers a program similar
to the one given by the diva in various Ameri-
can cities during the 1972-73 season. This
is music of Romantic sentiments and strong
emotions, requiring an interpretation of flow-
ing, Mediterranean lyricism. The songs have
been carefully chosen to explore the so-
praner's mellow range, which is warm, rich,
and beautifully expressive. It is easy to see
that the positive aspects of her kind of vocal
art combined with the glowing Tebaldi stage
presence can work a great deal of magic on a
concert audience.

But the dazzle is somewhat muted in the
absence of the visual element, for many of
the songs are musically unsubstantial and not
very satisfying. A few of them, though, are of
unusual interest. The unfamiliar Sogno car-
ties the usual stamp of Tosci's insinuating
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ni's L'Uccellino are little gems, and, of course,
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unwise procedure if this new label wishes
to build an American following.

G.J.

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THE PHILADELPHIA
ON QUADRADIscS

Philadelphia's Town Hall, 1973: conductor Ormandy and the orchestra at play in the multitudinous forest of the microphones.

RCA has been putting out its compatible discrete four-channel CD-4 Quadradiscs since mid-fall of last year, and I have commented on several of them on the basis of two-channel stereo playback. I have finally been able to hear these discs and the three others listed below in four-channel playback with the proper CD-4 demodulation equipment, and I must say that the playback results, as sheer sound, are simply stunning. In general, and with the exception of the "Bach's Greatest Fugues" album, which divides wind-brass choirs into left and right components, the same basic orchestral setup seems to have been used for all the Philadelphia Orchestra recordings: violins to the left, woodwinds spread across front center, percussion placed rear center, brass to the right rear together with string basses, and cellos and violas right front. (It should be right rear together with string basses, and cellos and violas right front. (It should be understood that the "rear" referred to here is the rear of the orchestra in its normal stage position as heard by the listener in front of it, not the area behind the listener.) There has been no attempt to produce a "surround" sound here. Even the Bach disc, with its divided wind choirs, limits itself to a sort of "U"-shaped sound-source arrangement in which the orchestral spread at its extremes emerges very sharply from left and right in dialogue episodes. The sound coming from the rear speaker, then, is essentially supportive and ambient, and it materially enhances the space illusion without in any way falsifying the orchestra's position or muddying the musical texture.

As heard through a Panasonic SE-405 CD-4 System disc demodulator and its associated EPC-450C phono cartridge, the sound of these performances comes forth with astounding transparency and body. In short, the system works — and superbly. The above comments can be applied just about equally to all the Quadradiscs I have heard thus far. Musical evaluation of the discs is a more individual thing, however — as is, to a certain extent, the recorded sound when not heard through CD-4 equipment. These matters I'll take up for each disc separately.

The Bach fugues, heard even in four-channel stereo, make glorious sounds. Whether one is for or against orchestral transcriptions of Bach organ works in general, one must admit that this four-channel disc makes the most of the music's antiphonal potentialities. The Arthur Harris transcriptions are generally lighter and more Baroque-organ-like in texture than most of the well-known transcriptions of the past by Elgar, Respighi, Schoenberg, Wood, Calliet, Stokowski, and Ormandy himself, except for some rather understandable moments of over-flamboyance, such as in the cadenza episode of the A Minor Fugue. The performances are turned out with the highest possible Philadelphian tonal gloss and super-brilliant execution. The recorded sound matches these qualities in every respect, with full-bodied presence, a warmly reverberant acoustic, and clarity of texture. But not even the "fabulous Philadelphians" can match a first-rate Baroque organ when it comes to bringing punch and rhythmic vitality to this particular music.

Together with its companion pieces, the Capriccio Espagnol and the Russian Easter Overture, Scheherazade represents the peak of Rimsky-Korsakov's achievement as virtuoso composer and orchestrator, and, understandably, the work has remained a special challenge for many conductors, orchestras, and even recording teams. This has been so from the earliest Stokowski-Philadelphia Victor recording of the late Twenties right up to this latest Philadelphia venture with Ormandy conducting.

As heard in two-channel stereo, the recording seems to demonstrate the broadest possible "spread" of string tone, with the multiplicity of solo episodes in the Kalendar Prince movement particularly — emerging as points and lines of brightness on the luminous string-tonal canvas. In general, there seems to be a tendency to soft-pedal low percussion transients (I don't hear much bass drum impact in the Festival at Bagdad) and to rely on the string body and mid- and low-range brasses to sustain the tonal body as a whole.

The Ormandy performance stresses the languor and sensuality of Scheherazade rather than its animal excitement, let alone its subtleties (such as they are). Listeners demanding these other qualities should look into the Stokowski London Phase 4 issue for the first and the Angel recording by Beecham with the Royal Philharmonic for the second. Despite the latter's age (it was released about fifteen years ago), it holds up astonishingly well by any standards.

This is the third time around for Eugene Ormandy with the Scheherazade, and it is by far the most broadly expansive reading of his three recordings. While it may lack the cagginess of George Szell's performance with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw for Philips and the fierce intensity of Koussevitzky's 1950 mono recording with the Boston, this latest Ormandy performance must take a place among the best of the more recent recorded renditions.

As with the Scheherazade, the recorded sound, when heard in normal stereo, spreads itself over a very broad horizontal canvas and does not come across with quite the impact of at least some other recordings I have heard whose orchestral layouts and microphone setups were designed for two-channel stereo only. But the CD-4 playback, as described above, is something else, and in musical terms this is Ormandy's best realization yet of this staple of the repertoire.

In conclusion, then, I am mightily pleased with what I have first heard of CD-4 playback. I wonder what problems may arise in the future as the result of less than perfect quality control in pressing. Discs made by the discrete four-channel system will obviously need superior quality control, and it remains to be seen if it can be consistently supplied. But, to my ears, CD-4 and RCA pass the first tests with flying colors.

BACH: Fugues (arr. Arthur Harris). E-flat Major (from BWV 522, "St. Anne"); G Minor (BWV 578, "Little"); D Major (from BWV 532); G Minor (from BWV 542, "Great"); A Minor (from BWV 543); C Minor (from BWV 549); C Major (from BWV 564). Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy cond. RCA □ ARDI 0026 $5.98, □ ARTI 0026 $7.95.


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INSTRUCTION


IN THE AIR AND ON THE TAPE

You may have noticed, while listening to music with a lot of bass in it, that some low tones seem to stand out while others are barely audible. And, puzzlingly, sometimes just moving your position in the room slightly will make the same note sound alternately loud and soft. To paraphrase the Bard, "The fault, dear reader, is not in our speakers, but in our rooms, that they are too short." Which brings us, in a roundabout sort of way, to an elementary confusion many recordists have encountered: the difference between acoustical and recorded wavelengths.

Consider a sound wave which, at room temperature, travels through the air at about 1,130 feet per second. When you hear an organ pedal note of 20 Hz, the physical distance between corresponding condensations and rarefactions of the air is then 1,130 divided by 20, or 56.5 feet. That is the acoustical wavelength of the 20-Hz note. A 20,000-Hz overtone from a piccolo, in contrast, has an acoustical wavelength of 1,130 divided by 20,000, or 0.0565 foot (0.678 inch). Clearly, then, the higher the frequency the shorter the acoustical wavelength.

Tape recorders, of course, don't run at the 1,130 feet per second speed of sound, or you'd get little more than a second of music on the normal 1,200-foot reel. (Imagine trying to run a machine at 13,560 inches per second!) But at the more usual speed of 7 1/2 ips, the organ pedal note recorded on the tape is 7.5 divided by 20, or 0.375 inch, while the piccolo overtone is 7.5 divided by 20,000, or 0.000375 inch. The 1,000-to-1 ratio between the two tones, whether recorded or acoustical, remains the same, but what takes place in the air in a distance of 56.5 feet is translated electromagnetically into about 1/5 of an inch of tape—at 7 1/2 ips. And, of course, if you have a cassette machine, the recorded wavelength of all notes will be reduced by a factor of four: the wavelength of the 20,000-Hz piccolo overtone becomes 1/4 divided by 20,000, or 0.00009375 inch (93.75 millionths of an inch).

In either the living room or the recorder's playback head, one-half a wavelength becomes a really significant figure, for the lowest frequency (the longest acoustical wavelength, determined by the room length) at which a room will resonate helps the speaker radiate sound by adding the first return bounce of the air wave from the rear wall to reinforce the corresponding part of the next wave generated by the speaker. For 20 Hz, that means a listening room at least 28.25 feet long for maximum efficiency in bass propagation. On tape, the problem is the high frequencies, since the playback head puts out its greatest signal when the two pole pieces that form the head gap are separated by no more than one-half the recorded wavelength. Thus, the longer the room, the better the bass reproduction, and the narrower the playback-head gap, the better the high-frequency reproduction. The large acoustic spaces required for efficient low-bass reproduction are costly, and so also are the precision methods needed to make small-gap heads that reproduce the short high-frequency wavelengths on cassettes.
I bought a Marantz 4 channel receiver because I refuse to be stuck with an electronic antique.

Not one to tolerate obsolescence (planned or unplanned), I considered the stereo vs. 4-channel question carefully, then purchased a Marantz receiver for three compelling reasons.

One. Marantz has Dual Power. This means you get full power of four discrete amplifiers working all the time. When you’re listening to regular 2-channel tapes and records you can combine the power of all four channels into the front speakers. This means even if you’re not ready to commit yourself to a complete 4-channel system, you can buy Marantz now and when you get the other two speakers just flip a switch. You have 4-channel. Meanwhile, you’re not compromising 2-channel because you’re getting more than twice the power for super stereo.

Reason number two. Marantz receivers feature the exclusive snap-in snap-out adaptability to any 4-channel matrix decoder. This means that your Marantz stereo will never be made obsolete by any future 4-channel technology because the Marantz snap-in SQ module is designed to keep up with the changing state of the art. What’s more, Marantz receivers have Vari-Matrix—a built-in circuit that will synthesize 4-channel sound from any stereo source (including your stereo records and tapes) and will also decode any matrix encoded 4-channel disc or FM broadcast.

Reason number three. Marantz receivers, from the Model 4230 up, feature built-in Dolby** noise reduction to bring you the quietest FM reception ever. And you can switch the built-in Dolby into your tape deck for noise-free, no-hiss recording from any source. A real Marantz exclusive.

I chose the Marantz Model 4270 because it suits my needs perfectly. It delivers 140 watts continuous power with under 0.3% distortion. And it’s literally loaded with features. However, your requirements may be more modest than mine. In which case you can own the Marantz Model 4220 which delivers 40 watts with Dual Power. Or you can go all the way and get the Marantz Model 4300 with 200 watts. It is the very best. Choose from five Marantz 4-channel receivers from $299 to $799.95.

The point to remember is this—whichever model Marantz 4-channel receiver you do buy, you can buy it today without worrying about its being obsolete tomorrow. Look over the Marantz line of superb quality receivers, components and speaker systems at your Marantz dealer. You’ll find him listed in the Yellow Pages. Think forward. Think Marantz.

We sound better.

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A breathtaking performance deserves a breathtaking performance.

Slip on a pair of Koss K2+2 Quadrafoines™ and slip into the closest thing to a live performance you'll ever hear. Because unlike speakers, the Koss K2+2 mixes all four channels in your head instead of on the walls of your living room. So what you'll hear is a 4-channel sound so breathtaking, you'll feel the deepest bass all the way down to your toes and the highest highs running up and down your spine.

And because all Koss Quadrafoines feature volume-balance controls on each ear cup, you'll have any seat at the opera at your fingertips. A twist of your fingers will put you front row center one minute and in the middle of the opera house the next. And all without moving from the comfort of your easy chair.

But even more importantly, Koss has added a 2-channel to 4-channel selector switch on the left ear cup. In the 4-channel position, two 1½-inch dynamic driver elements in each ear cup deliver breathtaking quadraphonic sound from either matrix or discrete systems. In the 2-channel position, both drivers in each ear cup are connected in parallel for an unparalleled sound of 2-channel stereo. Either way, the switch to Koss Quadrafoines is worth it. Ask your Audio Specialist for a live demonstration. Or write for our free full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm. The Sound of Koss Quadrafoines will take your breath away, but the price won't. . . . from $45 to $85.

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