### A COMPARISON THAT'S NO COMPARISON.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PIONEER SN-1250</th>
<th>MARANTZ 2325</th>
<th>KENWOOD KR-9400</th>
<th>SANSUI 9090</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POWER MIN RMS</td>
<td>160W+160W</td>
<td>125W+125W</td>
<td>120W+120W</td>
<td>110W+110W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHONO OVERLOAD LEVEL</td>
<td>500 mV</td>
<td>100 mV</td>
<td>210 mV</td>
<td>200 mV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INPUT PHONO/AUX/MIC</td>
<td>2/1/2</td>
<td>1/1/no</td>
<td>2/1/mixing</td>
<td>1/1/mixing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAPE MON/DUPL</td>
<td>2/yes</td>
<td>2/yes</td>
<td>2/yes</td>
<td>2/yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONE</td>
<td>Twin Tone</td>
<td>Bass-Mid-Treble</td>
<td>Bass-Mid-Treble</td>
<td>Bass-Mid-Treble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONE DEFEAT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEAKERS</td>
<td>A.B.C</td>
<td>A.B</td>
<td>A.B.C</td>
<td>A.B.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM SENSITIVITY</td>
<td>1.5µV</td>
<td>1.8µV</td>
<td>1.7µV</td>
<td>1.7µV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECTIVITY</td>
<td>90 dB</td>
<td>90 dB</td>
<td>80 dB</td>
<td>85 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPTURE RATIO</td>
<td>1.0 dB</td>
<td>1.25 dB</td>
<td>1.3 dB</td>
<td>1.5 dB</td>
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</table>
One look at the new Pioneer SX-1250, and even the most partisan engineers at Marantz, Kenwood, Sansui or any other receiver company will have to face the facts. There isn't another stereo receiver in the world today that comes close to it. And there isn't likely to be one for some time to come.

In effect, these makers of high-performance receivers have already conceded the superiority of the SX-1250. Just by publishing the specifications of their own top models.

As the chart shows, when our best is compared with their best there's no comparison.

160 WATTS PER CHANNEL: AT LEAST 28% MORE POWERFUL THAN THE REST

In accordance with Federal Trade Commission regulations, the power output of the SX-1250 is rated at 160 watts per channel minimum RMS at 8 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion.

That's 35 to 50 watts better than the cream of the competition. Which isn't just something to impress your friends with. Unlike the usual 5-watt and 10-watt "improvements," a difference of 35 watts or more is clearly audible.

And, for critical listening, no amount of power is too much. You need all you can buy.

To maintain this huge power output, the SX-1250 has a power supply section unlike any other receiver's.

A large toroidal-core transformer with split windings and four giant 22,000-microfarad electrolytic capacitors supply the left and right channels independently. That means each channel can deliver maximum undistorted power at the bass frequencies. Without robbing the other channel.

When you switch on the SX-1250, this power supply can generate an inrush current of as much as 200 amperes. Unlike other high-power receivers, the SX-1250 is equipped with a power relay controlled by a sophisticated protection circuit, so that its transistors and your speakers are fully guarded from this onslaught.

PREAMP SECTION CAN'T BE OVERLOADED.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the preamplifier circuit in the SX-1250 is the unheard-of phono overload level of half a volt (500 mV).

That means there's no magnetic cartridge in the world that can drive the preamp past the point where it sounds strained or hard. And that's the downfall of more than a few expensive units.

The equalization for the RIAA recording curve is accurate within ±0.2 dB, a figure unsurpassed by the costliest separate preamplifiers.

THE CLEANEST FM RECEPTION THERE IS.

Turn the tuning knob of the SX-1250, and you'll know at once that the AM/FM tuner section is special. The tuning mechanism feels astonishingly smooth, precise and solid.
PIONEER HAS DEVELOPED A RECEIVER EVEN MARANTZ, KENWOOD AND SANSUI WILL HAVE TO ADMIT IS THE BEST.
The perfect Bicentennial souvenir.

A B·I·C (bee-eye-see) Multiple Play Manual Turntable is one of the finest turntables you can buy at any price.

It also happens to be the only multiple play turntable developed and built entirely in the USA, and we think it has a lot to say about some particularly American qualities we're celebrating in this bicentennial year:

It's innovative. When it first appeared it did things no other turntable could do. Today it's still miles ahead of the competition from abroad.

It's tough and honest. There are no frills for the sake of frills. Just a rugged instrument that does what it's supposed to do...superbly.

Technologically it's a masterpiece, a true combination of design sophistication, production wizardry, and quality control.

And in the best American tradition it's priced so that anyone seriously interested in good music can afford one.

There are three models: the 940 — about $110, the 960 — about $160, and the 980 — about $200. See them at your audio dealer's. Or write for information to B·I·C Turntables, Westbury, N.Y. 11590.
# Stereo Review

**April 1976 • Volume 36 • Number 4**

## The Equipment

### NEW PRODUCTS
A roundup of the latest in high-fidelity equipment

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Advice on readers' technical problems

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COVER: Illustration by David Chestnutt
THE ENTERTAINMENT OF HISTORY

ONE takes one's pleasure wherever one can find it in these Days of Winding Down. so I was mightily amused by a London Times clipping a friend sent me the other week. Seems a reporter was sent into the street to interview a giggle of eight-, nine-, and ten-year-olds on the subject of the Beatles. Ten years ago, just before the release of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," the quartet of upstart moneymakers was at the peak of its powers and its popularity, and pop-culture pundits, futurists, sociocritics, and other fevered Utopians were calling them the Saviors of Music, the Wave of the Future, the Heirs of Schubert and Shakespeare, the Champions of the Oppressed, the Enemies of Privilege, and even (extravagantly, of course) Man's Last. Best Hope. You may remember all that, but the Times' ten-year-olds don't. For them, John Lemon, Paul Watchamacallim, George Harris, and Ringo ("the best looking") have fallen into history's dustbin, relics of a time when "people chucked rubbish out the windows and the ladies all wore old-fashioned dresses and they trailed in it." One interviewee observed that his mum takes Beatles records with her to parties ("the Beatles are still popular at things like that"), another that three of the Fab Four died in a plane crash. A third put it, with a child's brutal succinctness, "They're in history, aren't they?" Yes, honey, they are. And how quickly they got there, how rapidly the record is smudged.

The only people who have a good word for history are the historians. Oscar Wilde called it gossip, Henry Ford called it bunk (though he later recanted), and someone else once characterized it as something that never happened written by a man who wasn't there. As the Times' little experiment shows, history has already been operating on the Beatles, and evidently the eventual record will contain less truth than ho-kum. But if history is really too inaccurate to serve as a trustworthy guide to future conduct (granted that we have any inclination at all to so use it), what is the source of its undeniable attraction? The answer, I think, is that it is a splendid form of entertainment, and that it is entertaining for the same reason the other arts are: it furnishes its undeniable attraction? The answer, I think, is that it is a splendid form of entertainment, and that it is entertaining for the same reason the other arts are: it furnishes the immense intellectual pleasure of lending form to chaos.

Macmillan Library Services (a division of Macmillan Publishing, 866 Third Avenue, New York 10022) has recently produced a real handful of "oral history" called "Voices of World War II." Twelve cassettes are mounted in a book-style binding, and they offer a mind-boggling collection of speeches, newscasts, reminiscences, and eye-witness accounts covering everything from Churchill's November 1934 "causes of war" speech to the September 1945 surrender of the Japanese in Tokyo Bay. There are also two addenda—a cassette devoted to The Lessons of Nuremberg and another to Media in Wartime—plus a Listener's Guide detailing the contents of each cassette and furnishing maps of the war theaters. All in all, just the kind of virtuous enterprise I usually salute with feeling as I slide it unplayed onto a shelf. Duty bade me at least to sample, however; I did, and I was hooked. Hours later I was still "following the war," pleasurably sorting out and ordering in my mind events and chronologies that had previously been only a hurra's nest of fact, fiction, and impression in the barracks bag of my war memories (Air Force, South Pacific). Through this is oral history, I am under no illusion that I now have the last word on what actually happened. As every good reporter knows, omission, inclusion, order, and emphasis can be powerful tools of subjective presentation. But I was intensely interested, vastly entertained, and I prefer this ordered view of the events concerned to the disordered one I had before. The project was executed for book-publisher Macmillan by the Visual Education Corporation. All there is no book and no "visuals" except for that flimsy Listener's Guide. What this project needs, and what I banked for as I listened, is a big, comprehensive picture book illustrating these fabulous goings-on. Not too much to ask, it seems to me, for $119.
Blueprint for Flat Frequency Response

Smooth, flat response from 20-20,000 Hz is the most distinct advantage of Empire's new stereo cartridge, the 2000Z.

The extreme accuracy of its reproduction allows you the luxury of fine-tuning your audio system exactly the way you want it. With the 2000Z, you can exaggerate highs, accentuate lows or leave it flat. You can make your own adjustments without being tied to the dips and peaks characteristic of most other cartridges.

For a great many people, this alone is reason for owning the Z. However, we engineered this cartridge to give you more. And it does. Tight channel balance, wide separation, low tracking force and excellent tracking ability combine to give you total performance.

See for yourself in the specifications below, then go to your audio dealer for a demonstration you won't soon forget.

The Empire 2000Z.

Already your system sounds better.

**Frequency Response**—20 to 20KHz ± 1 db using CBS 100 test record

**Recommended Tracking Force**—1/2 to 3/4 grams

(specification given using 1 gram VTF)

**Separation**—20 db 20 Hz to 500 Hz

30 db 500 Hz to 15K Hz

25 db 15K Hz to 30K Hz

**I.M. Distortion**—(RCA 12-S-105) less than 0.08%

2KHz to 20KHz = 3.54 cm/sec

**Stylus**—0.2 x 0.7 mil diamond

**Effective Tip Mass**—0.2 mg

**Compliance**—lateral 30 x 10^{-6} cm/dyne

vertical 30 x 10^{-6} cm/dyne

**Tracking Ability**—0.9 grams for 38 cm per sec @ 1000 Hz

0.8 grams for 30 cm per sec @ 400 Hz

**Channel Balance**—within 1/2 db @ 1 kHz

**Tracking Angle**—20°

**Recommended Load**—47 K Ohms

**Nominal Total System Capacitance**—required 300 pF

**Output**—3mv @ 3.5 cm per sec using CBS 100 test record

**D.C. Resistance**—1100 Ohms

**Inductance**—675 mH

**Number and Type of Poles**—16 Laminations in a 4 pole configuration

**Number of Coils**—4 (1 pair/channel—hum cancelling)

**Number of Magnets**—3 positioned to eliminate microphonics

**Type of Cartridge**—Fully shielded. moving iron

CIRCLE NO. 21 ON READER SERVICE CARD
Your ears are burning with amplified noise. Even though your system is delivering sound accurately, it's also doing an efficient job of pumping out noise ... accurately. Ideally, music should be recreated against a dead silent background. The Phase Linear 1000 accomplishes just that with two unique systems: The Auto Correlator Noise Reduction and the Dynamic Range Recovery Systems.

- It improves the overall effective dynamic range and signal/noise ratio 17.5 dB in any stereo system with any stereo source.
- The Auto Correlator reduces hiss and noise 10 dB without the loss of high frequencies and without pre-encoding.
- The Dynamic Range Recovery System restores 7.5 dB of dynamic range without pumping and swishing.
- Plus, it removes hum, rumble and low frequency noises, without the loss of low frequency music.
- WARRANTY: 3 years, parts and labor

Even the finest stereo systems are limited in performance by the quality and nature of the recording. With the Phase Linear 1000, these limitations are overcome. Added to any receiver or preamplifier, it gives you the following:

- The Auto Correlator reduces pitch as the difference between frequency components in a complex waveform. While this is true in some cases, it is not always the case. In the late 1930’s, J. F. Schouten in the Netherlands showed that while a waveform with components at 1,000 Hz, 1,200 Hz, 1,400 Hz, etc. had a clear pitch of 200 Hz, a waveform with components at 1,040 Hz, 1,240 Hz, 1,440 Hz, etc. had a pitch of 205 Hz. The frequency difference in both cases is 200 Hz. Pioneering experiments such as Schouten’s have brought about the downfall of the “acoustical laws” of several prestigious men in the science, most notably those of G. S. Ohm and H. Helmholtz, whose incorrect theories were accepted until as late as 1954. However, a coherent theory of pitch perception has yet to be developed which accurately predicts the response of the auditory system.

W. MARSHALL LEACH
Atlanta, Ga.

- The introduction of “Hard Rock/Soft Ears” (February) implies that there is disagreement among “experts in hearing damage” about the damage risk from the levels described in the preceding sentences. My understanding is that once the level, spectral distribution, and exposure time and pattern are known, there is general agreement among scholars about damage risk. The emergence of hearing impairment for any one individual cannot be predicted (some people resist the onslaught of sound more than others), but the statistical probabilities can be calculated.

I would assume that the first persons to suffer hearing damage would be musicians. Fortunately, the kind of deafness likely to result includes recruitment, which means that they become increasingly less deaf as the level of sound is increased, so that the deafness of musicians is not likely to make them demand even more intense sound.

EDGAR VILLCHUR
Foundation for Hearing Aid Research
Woodstock, N.Y.

Hmm... wonder whether that would have been any consolation to Beethoven...
Is it live, or is it Memorex?

We proved it in our latest television commercial with Ella Fitzgerald. Whatever Ella can do, Memorex with MRX2 Oxide can do. Even shatter a glass!

MEMOREX Recording Tape.
Is it live, or is it Memorex?

© 1976, Memorex Corporation, Santa Clara, California 95052

April 1976

CIRCLE NO. 31 ON READER SERVICE CARD
monic version. After reading the review of the Boulez recording in the November issue, I quickly obtained a copy of this latest venture. I wasn’t so surprised at Boulez’s achievement, considering his reading of the Suite No. 2 issued a couple of years ago, but none of the previous versions of *Daphnis et Chloé* quite prepared me for the revelations of this new one. The word “definitive” is overworked, but it seems to be appropriate here.

Catherine Di Boer
Fresno, Calif.

I cringe that Stereo Review included such bubblegum hokum as “Red Octopus” and rave that you excluded such great 1975 albums as “America’s Choice” and “Country Life” in the Record of the Year Awards (February), but I am very glad that you relegated to Honorable Mention the most overrated of 1975 albums, Springsteen’s “Born to Run.”

LARRY JOHNSON
Knoxville, Tenn.

**S & G**

- Steve Simels’ “just terrible” comment about Paul Simon’s “Still Crazy After All These Years” (February) seems a bit unfair. Although this album may not be up to Simon’s top level—which, for me, was reached with “There Goes Rhymin’ Simon”—the results are far from “vile.” Perhaps Mr. Simels felt no need to deflate Simon’s “inflated reputation” but did he have to use a harpoon?

DON SHIPMAN
Los Angeles, Calif.

Growing Old in Rock

- Regarding Steve Simels’ Bay City Rollers (October), that a lot of critical reaction is based on indignation that the band’s music and image are seldom filled, I do remember the much the same type of reaction started out this far into the Seventies. But performers put forward as the forerunners of the Decade: Bruce Springsteen (in inordinate fashion), Elton John (who now bores me to tears), and the City Rollers (at whom I once laughed and now worry me). The source of concern is that the Rollers, or some group like them, will be the Next Big Thing, and they will do to me what the Beatles did to the folkies in the early Sixties. In short, they are Kiss freaks, I am afraid that I’m going to be past the point where the prime force in rock can reach me, and I won’t know what it is.

Chuck Limmer
Arcadia, Calif.

Patti Smith

- Steve Simels states in his January column that the average kid might be able to go back to 1967 in terms of rock history and at least know about “Sgt. Pepper.” Well, being the only fifteen-year-old kid I know who realizes there was a “British Invasion,” I can justifyly say that Mr. Simels has overestimated by a good three years. Most of my friends have a lot of trouble going back to 1970! Most of them are Kiss freaks (dear God, if I hear the words “Rock and roll all night and party all day” once more, I do not wish to be considered responsible for my actions) and the rest are Zeppelin fans. I am alone in my love for the City Rollers (at whom I once laughed), who now worry me. The source of concern is that the Rollers, or some group like them, will be the Next Big Thing, and they will do to me what the Beatles did to the folkies in the early Sixties. In short, they are Kiss freaks, I am afraid that I’m going to be past the point where the prime force in rock can reach me, and I won’t know what it is.

Jeff Zang
Beltsville, Md.

**OVERSEAS ORDERS?**

- In the issue of Aug. 1, Larry Johnson refers to the “two basic definitions: ‘Basics’ and ‘Partialis’. (Audio Standards) and the ‘Basics’ definition is seldom used by the American audio fraternity in favor of the American International Audio Standards’ ‘Partialis’. (Audio Standards) and the former is more widely used than the latter.”

His comments are interesting, but why did he use the word “dull” to describe the record? The record is dull in no sense, but it is dull in the sense of a dull thud. Her lyrics are the soundtrack to a Freshman Comp. class. She has a lot of ideas, but no mastery of her craft. She has abandoned the structure in hopes that this will make her lyrical (Continued on page 10)
KENWOOD puts power in your hands...

120 Watts per channel

...with the exceptional KR-9400 Stereo Receiver

With almost twice the power of any previous KENWOOD receiver...with control flexibility usually found only on the most expensive separate components...with features and performance never before associated with a stereo receiver, the sophisticated, top-of-the-line KENWOOD KR-9400 puts the power of unprecedented stereo enjoyment in your hands.

*120 Watts per Channel. Min. RMS into 8 ohms at any frequency from 20 to 20kHz, with no more than 0.1% total harmonic distortion.

New Triple-Function Meter. Converts from Signal Strength to Multipath Detector to Deviation Meter at the touch of a button.

Unique Tape-Through Circuitry. Permits tape-to-tape dubbing to continue even while you listen to another program source.

New Injection Circuit. Introduces sound from any source into the tape dubbing process, with level control for perfect mixing.
Thir...protectr your molt empervive hi-fiv inveitment.

Recognizing that a penny saved is a penny earned, may we suggest that trying to economize by putting off the replacement of a worn stylus could be like throwing away five dollars every time you play a record. (Multiply that by the number of records you own!) Since the stylus is the single point of contact between the record and the balance of the system, it is the most critical component for faithfully reproducing sound and protecting your record investment. A worn stylus could irreparably damage your valuable record collection. Insure against this, easily and inexpensively, simply by having your dealer check your Shure stylus regularly. And, when required, replace it immediately with a genuine Shure replacement stylus. It will bring the entire cartridge back to original specification performance. Stamp out waste: see your Shure dealer or write:

STEREO DIRECTORY & BUYING GUIDE

FREE!! 1976 Stereo Directory & Buying Guide when you purchase Shure cartridges (see details below)

Shure Brothers Inc.
222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60204
In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Limited

* FREE! 1976 Stereo Directory & Buying Guide with the purchase of a Shure V-15 Type III, or the M95 series, M75 Type II or M91 series of cartridges. Simply send us your warranty card with the notation "Send Free Buying Guide." Hurry—offer subject to supply.

CIRCLE NO. 36 ON READER SERVICE CARD

This...protects your most expensive hi-fi investment.

SAM KIMBALL
Havre de Grace, Md.

The Classical/Popular Nexus

- Re William Anderson's February editorial on the relationship (if any) between classical and popular music: please count me as a Type III (they are two different things but they feed upon each other). There are many reasons for this, but one recent case may sum them up. While casually changing the dial on the radio, I stumbled on an unusual arrangement of a popular song without words that was every bit as lovely as any classical concerto could be. Someone was playing the horn with an orchestra or band noodling quietly in the background and occasionally in the foreground. What they were playing was unmistakably "I'd like to get you on a slow boat to China." yet a slight change in form and dispensing with the lyrics had changed it into something that Mozart would have been proud of!

CHARLES J. SHEEDY
Woodhaven, N.Y.

- I modestly submit the following addendum to William Anderson's February editorial on musical attitudes: Type V: (1) All types of music exist. (2) Attitudes on anything are about as easy to classify as raindrops.

DANIEL JONES
Memphis, Tenn.

- Re the February editorial: AHHHhhhh!!! Marilyn Monroe did not say it. The words came from the mouth of Judy Holliday; they were written by Garson Kanin for the play Born Yesterday. If I "vibrate," I would do so between Types III and IV. It may depend on how craftily you choose to define each of the categories.

J. F. WEBER
Utica, N.Y.

- I like both classical and popular music, so I'm neither Type I nor Type IV in William Anderson's classification system (February). When the pop world "feeds" on the classics (Type III), it's like Dracula feeding on fair young maidens: he may be enriched, but the young maidens are greatly changed for the worse.

Rock generally strikes me as subliterate caterwauling. A few exceptions have found their way into my collection: Janis Ian, Dory Previn, some Simon & Garfunkel, etc. But what I hear on the radio does not inspire me to sink more money into it. Margaret Halsey, in her hilarious book With Malice Toward Some, said that English shoes looked as though they had been made by people who had heard of shoes but had never seen one. Much of rock music sounds like stuff written by people who have heard of music but have never actually listened to any.

Therefore, I'll join Steve Simels in Type II, but I don't want the "pulp." either Mick Jagger or Monk Lewis. That marvelous Beethoven cartoon with his February column says it all.

DAVID PIERCE
Vero Beach, Fla.

- As a longtime collector of Fifties and Sixties popular music, I was a bit amused and

(Continued on page 12)
Many receivers may give you all this. But they cost a lot more.

**Technics SA-5150: Power and Price**

At $229.95, the SA-5150—one of four new Technics stereo receivers—gives you more power and less THD than the five best-selling brands do at a comparable price (16 watts per channel, minimum RMS, into 8Ω from 40Hz to 20kHz, with no more than 0.8% total harmonic distortion).

**Large Capacitors in Power Supply**

You'll hear all the lows of the bass guitar and all the highs in the crashing of cymbals the way many receivers won't let you hear them—without distortion. Because the SA-5150 uses 4700µf electrolytic capacitors in the balanced positive and negative power supplies. So you get the reserve power you need when you need it most.

**Direct Coupling**

For a tighter, cleaner, more rounded bass. Because the SA-5150's amplifier output is directly coupled to the speaker terminals with no capacitors in between. So you get more power output as well as a higher damping factor in the low frequency range. And the SA-5150 is one of the few receivers in its price range with direct coupling.

**Phased Lock Loop IC in FM**

PLL improves stereo separation by maintaining precise phasing in FM. And to help keep distortion down to a point where you won't hear it (0.4%), the SA-5150 uses flat group delay ceramic filters in the IF section. There's also a sophisticated front end that delivers a selectivity of 70dB, 1.9µv sensitivity and a capture ratio of 1.8dB.

So if you want a receiver with large capacitors in the power supply. Direct coupling. Phase Lock Loop in FM. And 16 watts RMS at $229.95. There's only one receiver you want. The SA-5150.

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

FOR YOUR TECHNICS DEALER, CALL TOLL FREE 8:10447-4700. IN ILLINOIS, 800 322-4400.

Technics by Panasonic
Saving the best for last.

The chances are good that when you first bought a stereo system, it was a “package” that included a receiver, 2 speakers, and a record player with cartridge. But how much time was spent selecting the cartridge? Most probably it was just a minor element of the package. Even if it had a famous name, it probably was not a truly first-rank model.

Yet the cartridge is more important than that. It can limit the ability of the entire hi-fi chain to properly reproduce your records. It can affect how many times you will enjoy your favorite records without noise and distortion. And it can determine whether you can play and enjoy the new four-channel CD-4 records.

Consider the advantages of adding an Audio-Technica AT15Sa to your present system. You start with response from 5 to 45,000 Hz. Ruler flat in the audio range for stereo, with extended response that assures excellent CD-4 playback if desired. Tracking is superb at all frequencies and distortion is extremely low. The sound is balanced, transparent, effortless. Stereo separation is outstanding, even at 10kHz and higher where others fall short. Our Dual Magnet design* assures it.

And the AT15Sa has a genuine nude-mounted Shibata stylus. Which adds a host of advantages. Like longer record life. Better performance from many older, worn records. Exact tracking of high frequencies, especially at crowded inner grooves. And tracking capability—at a reasonable 1-2 grams—that outperforms and outlasts elliptical stylus trying to track at less than a gram.

We’re so certain that an AT15Sa will improve your present system that we’d like to challenge you. Take several of your favorite records to an Audio-Technica dealer. Have him compare the sound of your present cartridge (or any other) with the AT15Sa. Listen. We think you’ll be impressed. And convinced.


The AT15Sa. Very possibly the last phono cartridge you’ll ever need.

audio-technica
INNOVATION • PRECISION • INTEGRITY
AÚDIO-TECNIKA U.S., INC., Dept. 46F, 33 Shlwaysee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313
Available In Canada from Superior Electronics, Inc.

astonished at Steve Simels’ singling out Elvis Presley as “the man who invented rock ’n’ roll” (January). Has Mr. Simels ever heard of Alan Freed?

Mr. Simels replies: The late Mr. Freed certainly popularized the use of the term rock ’n’ roll, but he did not invent it—it was used in certain rhythm-and-blues records at least as early as 1948. And although he is nominally credited as a co-writer of Chuck Berry’s first hit, Maybellene, he can hardly be considered for that the inventor of rock ’n’ roll music. That honor, I insist, belongs to Elvis.

Everybody into the Shower!

• The Rodrigues cartoon of a man planning to shower with headphones on (January) hit home with me. I have two twenty-five-foot-long extensions that enable me to wear headphones while soaking in the tub, but I must confess that I never thought of using them while taking a shower. Tomorrow I’m going to buy a shower cap!

ELMER C. MONTE
Houston, Tex.

Performers I Hate

• Thank you for the interesting and instructive cross-section of reader opinion on “Ten Performers I Hate” in the February Letters column. Critics of this generation are right—it has no sense of humor. It still amazes me, however, that so many people continue to believe that whatever sells the most just must be good. Can fifty million American teenagers be wrong? You bet your hippie!

TED JOHNSON
Chicago, Ill.

• At one time I felt Stereo Review was a really excellent periodical, but after reading “Ten Performers I Hate” (headed up by none other than Steve Simels, who has such an acute case of encephalocolonitis that he needs a glass navel to see his way about) I have decided otherwise. The point is not that I disagree with some of the critics’ descriptions, but that S.R. would have the nerve to print such an utterly tasteless collection of the babblings of bored and/or unqualified music critics (there was, however, one small bit of humor that deserved a good laugh—Lester Bangs’ description of David Bowie’s singing). What I cannot understand is the great amount of criticism for very successful artists. Who is one S.R. “critic” to downgrade an artist millions of music lovers really enjoy—a fact made obvious by record sales alone, not to speak of many sold-out concerts?*

WAYNE ROBERT RICHARD
Cullowhee, N.C.

* My initial reaction to the February Letters section was shock at the outrage expressed by the majority of your readers because their “fave” performer was slighted in “Ten Performers I Hate.” On second thought, I find the reactions either sad or humorous. Having known several music critics, and having read Stereo Review for over three years now, I am inclined to believe that at least 60 per cent of critical writing is subjective. That being the case, I generally find critics’ comments either inspirational or thought-provoking. The December article was both.

JEFFIE PEAR
Indianapolis, Ind.
Beauty in sound. By Fuji.

Every Fuji cassette means beauty and purity in sound. No hiss, no dropouts. Widest frequency response and dynamic range. Total reliability. Fuji high-fidelity cassettes such as the FX will give you the best performance possible on your tape recorder. Already widely recognized by experts as the finest cassette in the world. Fuji. The cassette of the pro.
The attitude is consistent.

High fidelity engineering, to justify its name, has one goal: to reproduce music in the listening room with unqualified accuracy. Undistorted. Undiminished.

At Harman Kardon, we explore new technical directions not solely for their inherent challenge, but as methods of predicting and improving music quality.

Specifications are supposed to serve the function of predicting performance. Yet two competitive instruments with exactly the same set of conventional specifications often sound vastly different. Obviously, the reasons for this difference lie elsewhere. Conventional specifications are necessary. Necessary, but not sufficient.

Our 730 receiver meets specifications equalling or surpassing those of the finest individual component units. Yet it achieves a quality of transcendent realism which these specifications alone cannot explain.

To predict musical accuracy, we have found it necessary to go beyond conventional specifications. We test, rigidly, for square wave response. We monitor, strictly, slew rate and rise time. These tests account for the sound quality of the 730—not in place of conventional specifications, but beyond them.

The 730 goes beyond the conventional in other ways. It is driven by two complete, discretely separate power supplies, one for each channel. Even when music is extraordinarily dynamic, the energy drawn by one channel will in no way affect the other. The music surges full. Unconstrained.

Any fine tuner measures signal strength. The 730 incorporates a patented system which measures not strength, but signal-to-noise ratio. As a result, it can be tuned to the precise point where the signal is purest for listening or recording.

Equally important, the twin-powered 730 has all the basic design elements that identify it as a Harman Kardon instrument: wide bandwidth, phase linearity, ease of operation and a wide range of input and output elections.

All of this suggests further discussion. If you are interested in such an exploration, please write us (directly, since we imagine you are impatient with coupons and "reader service" cards, and so are we). We'll certainly write back, enclosing a brochure also unconventional in its detail. Just address: The 730 People, Harman Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, New York 11803.
The expression is new.
DCE Dreadnaught 1000 Stereo Power Amplifier

Dunlap Clarke Electronics has announced the availability of the Dreadnaught 1000, a high-power basic stereo amplifier specially designed to handle “difficult” loudspeaker loads. Rated at 250 watts per channel continuous into 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz, the amplifier will deliver 500 watts per channel into 4 ohms or 800 watts into 2 ohms without being troubled by power-supply limitations or activation of its protective circuits. At rated power, harmonic and intermodulation distortion are respectively 0.25 and 0.1 percent maximum, and typically 0.025 percent. Signal-to-noise ratio is at least 100 dB. The amplifier has an input impedance of 100,000 ohms and is driven to rated power by a signal input of 1.75 volts.

The Dreadnaught 1000’s front panel is distinguished by a pair of large output-level meters calibrated over a 23-dB range, together with meter-sensitivity switches with positions for 0, -3, -10, and -20 dB, and off. Separately controls for each channel adjust the input sensitivity of the audio circuits. Behind the panel two heat sinks extend the entire depth of the amplifier on either side, with two-speed cooling fans between each pair. A switch on the rear panel sets the speed or turns the fans off. The amplifier’s protective circuits act by interrupting the drive signals before the output stages. They respond to short circuits at the speaker terminals, voltage and current interrupting the drive signals before the output stages. The amplifier’s protective circuits act by interrupting the drive signals before the output stages.

NEW PRODUCTS

Magneplan MG2167-F Speaker System

The Magneplanar speaker systems from Magnepan resemble full-range electrostatic loudspeakers but are actually dynamic devices in their operating principle. A thin plastic diaphragm is used, to which is bonded an electrical conductor in a zig-zag configuration. The interaction of the audio signal passing through the conductor with a large-area magnetic field (created by closely spaced permanent bar magnets) produces diaphragm motion and hence an acoustic output. The Magnepan MG2167-F (or simply Model 2) has diaphragms that provide a total radiating area of 500 square inches at frequencies below 2,400 Hz and 85 square inches above. The tweeter diaphragm is only ½ inches wide to provide good high-frequency dispersion. Frequency response is 50 to 15,000 Hz ±4 dB, and the speaker produces a sound-pressure level (at 1,000 Hz) of 85 dB at 3 feet with an input of 1.5 watts. Power-handling capability is 200 watts rms on program material. A conventional passive crossover network is employed with slopes of 6 dB per octave. The impedance is said to be 6 ohms at any frequency and is purely resistive in nature.

The Model 2 is 7.1 inches high, 22 inches wide, and 2 inches deep, supported by a flat 22 x 14-inch base. Light-colored grille cloth is used on both front and back (the system radiates equally in both directions), surrounded by a walnut-finished hardwood frame. Weight is 40 pounds. The Model 2 is sold in stereo pairs at a price of $625 per pair.

Uher SG-560 Stereo Tape Recorder

The “Royal” SG-560 is a four-speed (7½, 3¼, 1½, and 15/16 ips) single-motor stereo tape recorder at the top of the Uher line. The transport takes reel sizes up to 7 inches and option- al, user-replaceable head assemblies permit operation of the machine in quarter- or half-track stereo. The assemblies each contain four heads: erase, record, playback, and a special “Dia-Pilot” head that can be used to synchronize a tape with a slide or movie projector when one of the tracks is used to record a “keying” signal. The SG-560 has unusually complete sound-on-sound, sound-with-sound, and echo facilities, with a separate control to adjust the signal levels of the added material or echo. Dual concentric recording-level controls for each channel permit mixing of inputs. The recorder also contains a stereo power amplifier (rated at 10 watts per channel) into 4 ohms at any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz with less than 1 percent total harmonic distortion, and speakers for stereo playback radiating through the two sides of the recorder’s cabinet. Concretically mounted bass and treble controls are provided, as well as a dual volume control for playback. The transport is operated through a rotary selector (stop, pause, start), with a separate sliding lever for the fast speeds.

Frequency responses for the four speeds, in descending order, are 20 to 20,000 Hz, 20 to 11,000 Hz, 20 to 6,000 Hz, 20 to 1,000 Hz. Wow and flutter, in the same order, are 0.02, 0.04, 0.15, and 0.3 percent. Signal-to-noise ratios are 68 (7½ ips), 67 (3¼ ips), and 66 (1½ ips) dB, all “A” weighted. The micro- phone jacks are DIN types with an input impedance of 200 ohms. The nominal signal level at the output jacks (for feeding an external audio system) is about 0.8 volt. With the transparent dust cover supplied, the SG-560 measures 17¾ x 13¼ x 7¾ inches. It can be operated horizontally or vertically. Price: $950.95. Among the optional accessories offered are remote control start/stop switches for hand ($9.50) or foot ($19) operation; a sound-activation accessory is also available. An extra head assembly, either half or quarter track, is $152.50.

AKG Model K-240 Stereo Headphones

The AKG division of Philips announces a new stereo headset, the Model K-240, that is claimed to be uniquely effective in providing correct stereo localization. According to theory, the human auditory system is capable of judging the direction of sounds because of phase, amplitude, and frequency differences at the two ears. The frequency differences result from the different angles at which sounds impinge on the special shapes of the outer and inner ears. In the Model K-240, AKG has tried to simulate some of the frequency-discriminating resonances and other effects that the listener to live music typically experiences but which are interfered with by conventional headphones.

Each earpiece of the K-240 contains a small dynamic driver and six small passive diaphragms. At most frequencies above 200 Hz the diaphragms are said to be acoustically transparent, in effect converting the K-240 into an “open-air” headset. At lower frequencies the passive diaphragms—together with special acoustically resistive elements—function as tuned vents that smooth the bass response. (Continued on page 18)
Elegant Protection

Record quality is most jeopardized by two conditions: micro-dust becoming welded into the grooves; and by abrasive styli coatings which erode vinyl discs.

Powerful scientific effort has produced the Discwasher System and the only Stylus Cleaner.

Elegant products which have function documented by research.

SC-1
a. Calculated density cleaning fibers.
b. Magnifying viewing mirror.

Discwasher System
a. Unique slanted fibers which pick up dust.
b. Capillary absorbancy.
c. Non-extracting fluid.
Tandberg Model 10XD Stereo Tape Deck

The leader of the line of Tandberg open-reel tape recorders, the Model 10XD, has such standard Tandberg features as cross-field biasing and peak-reading recording-level meters that allow for recording equalization, plus the bonuses of 10½-inch reel capacity and Dolby-B noise reduction. The Dolby facilities consist of four modules, permitting the recording to be monitored in decoded form while it is being made.

The 10XD employs a three-speed (15, 7½, and 3⅞ ips), three-motor transport with three quarter-track heads and a fourth cross-field head to apply the bias signal. (A half-track version of the machine is available on special order for an additional $100.) The capstan motor is a brushless d.c. servo design employing Hall-effect devices. The servo loop involves a reference oscillator frequency that is compared with a reference oscillator frequency producing 2 per cent distortion on playback (approximately 0 dB on the machine's meters). Maximum wow and flutter (weighted, rms) for the three speeds are 0.04, 0.06, and 0.11 per cent, respectively. The characteristics of the microphone inputs are self-adjusting according to the impedance of the microphones. The nominal line-output level is 1 5 volts; the stereo-headphone jack is designed for phone impedances of 8 ohms or higher, with an output of 5 milliwatts per channel. Without reels, the Tandberg 10XD measures 17¾ x 17¾ x 7¾ inches. Price: $1,399. Optional accessories include a dust cover ($15) and a remote control unit which will work in conjunction with a timer ($99.50). A variable-speed version with remote control is also available.

Rectilinear 7 Speaker System

In a new four-way floor-standing speaker system, the Model 7, available from Rectilinear Research the driver complement consists of a 12-inch woofer, a 7-inch bass/mid-range driver with a "whizzer" cone, two 1½-inch dome tweeters, and two 1-inch dome super tweeters. In keeping with Rectilinear's current design philosophy, all drivers except the woofer are permitted to operate full range above the frequencies at which they are brought into play. These frequencies are 300 Hz for the 7-inch driver, 1,800 Hz for the 1½-inch dome, and 10,000 Hz for the 1-inch dome. The filters that prevent lower frequencies from reaching the drivers have slopes of 12 dB per octave. The electromechanical responses of the drivers—in some cases augmented by special damping—determine their performance at higher frequencies.

Frequency response of the Rectilinear 7 is rated at 32 to 20,000 Hz ±2 dB, and the nominal impedance is 6 ohms. Amplifier power of 30 watts per channel is the minimum recommended by the manufacturer, and the speaker can be used with amplifier powers of up to 350 watts per channel continuously for reproduction of music. The system employs a ported enclosure and is fused to limit inputs to a safe level. No controls are provided; the balance between drivers is preset at the factory to provide flat response. Overall size of the Rectilinear 7 is 35 x 18 x 12 inches. Finished is oiled walnut with a black grille. Price: $399.

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Sams Book Catalog

A new edition of the Howard W. Sams catalog of technical books is available from the publisher. The catalog lists over four hundred hardcover and paperback titles, a significant number of which deal with audio, video, or electronics subjects. Selections include basic guides to choosing, installing, and maintaining stereo and four-channel systems, tape recording, component repairs, FM tuners and antennas, speaker-system construction, and electronic musical instruments. There are also books on test equipment, electronic-circuit design and theory, professional recording techniques, and professional sound-system installation. The Sams offerings range from very elementary texts to highly technical treatments and reference volumes. The catalog, which is in newspaper format, runs sixteen pages and includes a mail-order form. It is available free of charge from: Robert W. Soel, Advertising Coordinator, Howard W. Sams & Co., Dept. SR, 4300 W. 62nd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE: Recent fluctuations in the value of the dollar will have an effect on the prices of merchandise imported into this country. So, please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.

STEREO REVIEW
As soon as Wayne Wong got his Aspen RT he flipped over it.

Excitement breeds excitement. Just as R/T excites one of the world's leading freestyle skiers.

This compelling new car boasts racing stripes and sensual lines, and comes equipped with such performance standards as a 318 CID V8 engine, heavy-duty suspension, and rallye road wheels.

R/T's options are both pleasurable and practical. Please yourself with bucket seats and a sun roof.

Display your practicality with a fold-down rear seat that provides over six feet of fully carpeted cargo area that's perfect for two pairs of skis. And there's Overdrive-4 floor-mounted transmission* available.

You might not show your excitement like Wayne Wong, but then you never know who might flip over your Aspen R/T.

DODGE ASPEN RT
For the person with driving ambitions.

*Not available in California.
Infinity reshapes the state of the art. Again.
Announcing The Infinity FET Preamplifier.
A product of computer science and Infinity obstinacy.

By now you'd expect it of Infinity: a totally new and highly advanced approach to the concept of preamplification. Our refuse-to-compromise attitude has indeed produced a proper companion to our DSP Switching Amplifier, "the world's first consumer application of Class D amplification."

The Infinity High Resolution FET Preamplifier "is advanced in every way: in Field Effect Transistor gain stage design, in circuitry, in styling and in features.

The result is an FET Preamplifier whose musicality, warmth of tone and accuracy of transient response combines the best features of the finest triode tube preamplifiers (with their warm, mellow, liquid musical qualities) and the finest transistor preamplifiers (with their articulation and clarity); but without the significant limitations of both tube and transistor devices.

The gain stage design.

Our concept for the ideal gain stage design employed an esoteric mathematical formula known as the Calculus of Variations. We then utilized the computer to optimize the parameters we had defined for this concept. Over a period of years and fourteen iterations of computer optimizations, hypercritical listening tests, engineering changes, more hypercritical listening tests, more engineering changes and more hypercritical listening tests—we feel we've arrived at our goal: the world's finest preamplifier for high quality systems.

The circuitry.

A time delay relay circuit allows other circuits to stabilize before opening the outputs. This allows the preamp to be turned on or off without putting pulses through the system. (You hear no pops, clicks or thumps.) The voltage is precisely regulated; regardless of fluctuation in line voltage the biases never change; the device is always to specification.

The styling.

A single PC board contains two rows of feather-touch switch controls in a slim compact configuration. Unobtrusive edge-lit illumination allows you to read the modes in a darkened room.

The features.

We wanted everything: a built-in 8 watt per channel headphone amplifier allows you to plug headphones into the front panel and listen directly from the preamp. (Those 8 watts will also drive a modest set of speakers!) There is a pre-preamp for moving-coil cartridges, which can be plugged directly in. Input impedance characteristics can be adjusted; from 10 ohms to 500 ohms.

You have tremendous flexibility; a source signal can be simultaneously recorded on two tape decks, or dubbed from L to R or R to L. Infinity tone controls give you optional turnover frequencies, extending bass boost from the normal 100 Hz down to 50, and from 5 kHz on the high end, to 10 kHz.

We believe our dogged obstinacy has paid off in a superb instrument—one that will demonstrate the stunning difference a state-of-the-art preamplifier can make in the enjoyment of music, even with an average system.

And you don't have to have audiophile ears, either. Just patch in the Infinity Preamplifier and listen to your favorite and most familiar records. We guarantee you'll be hearing them for the first time.

©1976 by Infinity Systems, Inc.
Ground Loops

Q. I have been told by some of my friends that I should be careful to ground all the components of my stereo system at only one point. They tell me that if I don’t there will be “ground loops” which will produce hum. Could you tell me just what a ground loop is?

A. “Ground” in electrical circuits is a common point that theoretically is at ground or earth potential. This means that if a measurement is made between a true earth ground and an electrical ground, no voltage potential should be read. However, for a variety of reasons—some accidental, some purposeful—there usually is some voltage difference between true earth ground and both a.c. electric power-line grounds and chassis grounds.

Ideally, the metal chassis of all the components in an audio system should be at the same voltage potential (zero is preferred) in regard to ground. If the chassis differ in a.c. potential, then the voltage differences between them may be interpreted as a signal by high-gain stages and come through as hum. This problem can occur not only between separate components but also between separate stages within a single component. Since the voltage-potential differences are usually very small (particularly when you’ve taken the trouble to orient your a.c. plugs in their sockets for the lowest hum levels), hum will usually occur only when there is a high-gain stage involved. This is one reason why phone preamplifiers produce hum and tuners don’t.

The term “ground loop” came about probably because of the hum produced by, say, connecting ground leads from one component to another in series (thus forming a loop) rather than leading the ground connections of all the components to one common point. As a rule of thumb, the separate ground lead on your record player should always be connected to the ground terminal on the equipment it is plugged into. An external ground is seldom required (and in new apartment buildings may be difficult to find). Equipment with three-prong plugs will be correctly grounded automatically. Ground terminals on tape recorders or tuners usually need not be connected—and, as a matter of fact, a hum-producing ground loop might be produced if you do connect them.

Four-ohm Speakers

Q. Since a receiver can deliver more wattage to a 4-ohm speaker system than to an 8- or 16-ohm system, how come manufacturers don’t make all their speakers 4 ohms?

A. Because 4-ohm speakers, if connected in parallel, present about 2 ohms of impedance to the amplifier. Most amplifiers will react badly to that low a load, and most components that have main-plus-remote speaker switching connect the speakers in parallel.

In addition, a published impedance rating is almost always referred to as “nominal.” This means that the impedance may vary considerably above and below the given rating at various points within the frequency range of the speaker. The use of a nominal “design center” of 4 ohms for a speaker system makes the crossover network somewhat more difficult to design, since, from the amplifier’s point of view, it is desirable that the impedance never get much below 4 ohms. I don’t know of any other reasons for not designing speaker systems with a 4-ohm rating.

Speaker Rotation, Round II

Q. In reference to the question from Mr. Philip Hunt of Cambridge, Ohio, concerning speaker rotation in your “Audio Questions and Answers” column in the January 1976 issue, I would like to refer you to a statement I read recently in How to Build Speaker Enclosures by Alexis Badmaieff and Don Davis and published by Howard W. Sams & Co. On page 131 there are instructions for mounting speakers and then this statement: “By doing this, the drivers or drivers can be rotated at regular intervals (about once a year), which prevents excessive cone-sag particularly among heavy woofers.” Is it possible that the person who informed Mr. Hunt was referring to this type of speaker rotation?

A. Although aware of the possible alternative interpretation suggested by Mr. Cordle (and about a dozen other readers), I chose not to refer to it simply because the cone-sag problem (which would result in voice-coil rubbing) has long been solved. The material now used in the voice-coil centering (Continued on page 24)
Recently a panel of independent test engineers rated 22 cassette machines from all over the world for the German technical journal "Hi-Fi Stereophorie.'


They gave their top rating for best recording and playback performance to the Tandberg TCD-310. We don't like to use superlatives in describing our equipment. But then what do you call the machine that beat the best?

Here are some of the many features that make TCD-310 so outstanding:

- Three motors: One hysteresis synchronous drive motor for constant and accurate speed; two servo-controlled direct drive DC spooling motors.
- Excellent signal to hum ratio. (Unweighted signal/noise.)
- Expanded range peak-reading meters that accurately read your recording and warn you about distortion before it happens.
- Two flywheels and dual capstan closed-loop tape drive for absolute stability and tape guidance.
- Guaranteed performance, 2 year warranty.

We believe TCD-310 can produce the quietest cassette recordings in the industry. Ask your dealer for a demonstration of TCD-310 and all the other fine Tandberg equipment. We think you'll give Tandberg your top rating too.
Who's #1 in audio equipment?

Three famous national component brands, each with fine equipment at all the traditional price points, each with fine magazine ratings and lots of customers. Naturally we at Radio Shack like to think Realistic® is top dog. Our reasoning goes like this:

Realistic has over 4000 stores—the entire worldwide Radio Shack system—and 21 years of manufacturing experience. Realistic has exclusive Glide-Path® and Auto-Magic® controls. An audio consultant named Arthur Fiedler. Service like no tomorrow. And prices like yesterday.

Maybe a better question is who's #2?

Radio Shack A Tandy Company Great sound since 1923

Over 4600 Stores - Dealers - USA, Canada, England, Australia, Belgium, Germany, Holland, France, Japan

CIRCLE NO. 34 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The Avid 103.

Few people would expect more in a loudspeaker.

For most people, the Avid Model 103 really is the ultimate speaker. Not that you can't pay more for a speaker. You can. A lot more.

But, for most audio enthusiasts any difference between the Avid 103 and more expensive speakers just isn't going to justify the added cost. As it is, the 103 clearly outperforms speakers costing up to twice their price.

The Avid 103.

You owe it to yourself to find out why it is rapidly becoming the popular new reference standard for 3-way systems. For your nearest Avid dealer, please write:

AVID CORPORATION
10 Tripp's Lane, East Prov, R.I. 02914

Sound products for Avid listeners.
The Garrard 990B.

And the argument ends.

There are almost no limits to what you can spend for a turntable. Nor to the refinements that can be built in.

The argument has been whether you can find a turntable at a sensible price, that really performs—giving away nothing important. Now with the belt-driven 990B, the argument is over. The 990B gives nothing away in any vital area, yet is priced to make it eminently accessible.

We believe the 990B is the best value Garrard has ever offered in its quarter century of designing and manufacturing high fidelity turntables.

The 990B is a single-play/multiple-play turntable and is fully automatic in both modes. That is, its arm indexes, returns to its rest and shuts off automatically. All of which is more dependable than a hand . . . that can be shaky or careless. And the mechanism that does all of this is disengaged during play. You get the gentlest handling of records plus convenience.

But more. In the multiple-play mode, your records rest on a two point support. You don’t have to balance them on a single center support. And pray.

And still more. A precision anti-skating device eliminates distortion and record wear caused when the stylus is forced against the inner wall of the groove by rotation of a record. Even cueing is viscous damped in both directions.

All well and good. But what about performance?

A glimpse at some specifications tells the story. Rumble: $-64\text{dB}$. Wow: $0.06\%$. Flutter: $0.04\%$. These are possible because your records are cushioned on a full size, 5 lb., die-cast, dynamically balanced platter —belt driven by a motor that combines an induction rotor for starting power and a synchronous section for constant speed. You can even solve the problem of off-pitch recordings with the variable speed control monitored by a strobe disc.

One final word. The S-shaped, lightweight, aluminum tonearm boasts low mass and low friction. But here’s the thing. The 990B’s tonearm can track as lightly as $\frac{1}{2}$ gram. Protection and performance indeed.

There are other turntables in the price range of the 990B that offer some of these features and specifications. The 990B has them all and at a price that’s sensible—under $170! Which clinches the argument.


Garrard
The Automatic Choice
SONY 880-2
THE WORLD'S BEST.

DIRECT DRIVE SERVOCONTROL SYSTEM.
The name may be long — Close-Loop Dual Capstan Tape Drive — but the concept is simple: one capstan is just an extension of the motor shaft itself (the other connects through a belt-drive inertia fly-wheel). Gone are the intervening gears that can often impair optimum operating reliability as well as speed accuracy. The result — almost nonexistent wow and flutter — a mere 0.02% @ 15 ips.

PHASE COMPENSATOR CIRCUIT.

Ideally, what you want on recorded tape is a “mirror image” of the original signal. No more. No less. Problem: the very nature of the recording process causes phase distortion. Solution: during playback, Sony's exclusive Phase Compensator Circuit compensates for phase distortion. Result: sound quality that's virtually identical to the original source. (REFER TO OSCILLOSCOPE READINGS.)

SYMPHASE RECORDING.
Thanks to the durability of Sony's Ferrite and Ferrite Heads and incredible precision fabrication and alignment of the head gap, you can record any matrix 4-channel signal (like SQ** or FM), play it back through a 4-channel decoder/amplifier, and retain the exact positioning of signal throughout the 360° 4-channel field. What started out in right front channel stays there. What began in left rear doesn't wander over to right rear. There's no phase shift whatsoever.

PEAK READING VU METERS.
They're versatile. Accurate. And incredibly informative. 1. You can set for standard VU operation to determine recording level. 2. Set to display transient peaks only (up to +15 dB). 3. A third display, Peak Hold, retains transient reading, letting you accurately measure audio input and adjusts accordingly with 2dB Stepped Record Level Attenuators.

SYNCRO-TRAK.
This means you can lay down two individually recorded tracks in perfect synchronization with each other. Record head has playback-monitor function in record mode. This eliminates time lag that occurs when monitoring through playback head. Thus both tracks can be first generation, keeping noise levels at minimum. Flashing Standby Signal alerts you that the unrecorded channel is record-ready. And Punch-In Record puts you into record mode instantly, without stopping tape.

SONY Ask anyone.
Brought to you by SUPERSCOPE

*1000 Hz @ 0.5 ft./sec. **FM DBS, inc. Parts and models subject to change without notice. Consult the Yellow Pages for your nearest Superscope dealer.
Sensible alternative.

The Uher CG 320 is unlike any other stereo cassette machine, even a Uher.

We built the CG 320 to be an exceptionally reliable two-motor machine with the performance and features to match the world's finest.

- Electronic tape flow indicator.
- Clutchless tape drive system.
- Self-contained stereo power stage.
- Internal loudspeakers—or use it as a deck.
- On-off automatic level control.
- Dynamic Noise Limiter (DNL).

Plus

- Automatic EQ switching for chrome tape.
- 3-digit counter with memory circuitry.
- End of tape switch off.
- Optional power cable for 12-volt power supply.
- Easy-to-read level meter with gauged dB scale.

Two separate sliders for independent record level control of the two channels, two sliders for independent replay level control of each channel and a slider tone level control to assure optimum operating conditions. Low distortion and top specifications are the hallmark of this quality product.

The Uher CG 320 offers the high technical quality, versatility and design to suit truly demanding tastes.

AUDIO BASICS
By RALPH HODGES

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

- **Phase-locked loop (PLL)**, a relatively recent introduction to high-fidelity technology, is an electronic circuit that has the ability to detect the instantaneous difference between an incoming signal and some reference signal, usually one generated by a local oscillator. (Actually, most PLL's are designed to ignore amplitude differences and respond only to phase differences.) The output of the PLL is a d.c. signal that is proportional to the difference between the two signals being monitored. This d.c. output can be used as a control signal to regulate some tunable circuit or oscillator or even the speed of an electric motor.

Within the field of consumer audio, most PLL's are found in the multiplex sections of FM tuners and in CD-4 demodulators—both devices in which phase is critical. However, there is also at least one tunable whose speed is regulated by a phase-locked loop.

- **Picofarad** is a unit of capacitance equivalent to one million-millionth of a farad, or one millionth of a microfarad.

- **Piezoelectric effect** refers to a special property of quartz and certain other crystalline substances. When an electrical voltage is applied to these materials, they physically flex, deform, or otherwise change in dimensions. Conversely, if they are physically flexed or deformed they will generate an electrical voltage. This makes piezoelectric substances natural transducers (converters of one form of energy into another), and as such they are used widely in inexpensive phonograph cartridges and microphones, and even in some special types of loudspeakers.

The piezoelectric effect is also exhibited by specially processed ceramic materials, and recently a flexible polymer film with piezoelectric properties has been developed for use in headphones, loudspeakers, and ultimately microphones.

- **Pitch** is the perceived sensation of tonal value that is associated with the frequency of a sound. The sensation of pitch goes up as frequency rises and down as frequency diminishes, but not at a proportional rate. The sensation of pitch also changes with the intensity of a sound, generally going up for high-frequency sounds and down for low-frequency sounds as intensity increases.

- **Polar response** is a specification—often taking the form of a plotted curve—that describes how the frequency response of a microphone or speaker system changes with angle. A speaker system does not have the same frequency response in all directions; dispersion tends to narrow at higher frequencies (high frequencies may not be heard by a listener who is not directly in front of the speaker), and other effects take place. Polar-response data provide quantitative information on these effects. With microphones, the polar response indicates sensitivity to sounds of various frequencies coming from different directions.

Polar-response curves are often plotted on special graph paper that shows lines radiating outward from a common center. Each line represents an angle, with 0 degrees being on the axis of the device. The lines are calibrated along their lengths in decibels (output from the speaker). To make a polar measurement on a speaker system, the speaker is circled, either horizontally or vertically, by the test microphone (a more common practice is to keep the microphone stationary and rotate the speaker), and the sound pressure at each angle is plotted on the polar graph. This gives a picture of the speaker's lateral or vertical dispersion characteristics for whatever frequency is being used in the test. As a rule, the curves for additional frequencies are then plotted on the same graph to round out the portrait of the device. Also, angles lying outside the lateral and vertical planes may be investigated when they are of interest.
For a winning deck, pick a Sansui.

With the development of the Sansui cassette decks, the cassette can truly be called a high fidelity medium. Only with the technical accuracy and near perfection of these Sansui models can the musical recording and reproduction do full justice to the capabilities of the cassette being used.

The new Sansui vertical front-load series has achieved extremely low wow and flutter by isolating the capstan drive from the reel drive. This is accomplished by a slip-free drive belt coupled to a mirror finish, extra large flywheel. Our new decks incorporate the newest Dolby* IC chip technology to give you a full 10 dB improvement in signal-to-noise ratio. All mechanical controls are inter-locked so you can go directly from any mode to any other without going through stop, to prevent damaging valuable tape.

The SC-3000 and SC-3003, top-of-the-line models with 0.09% (WRMS) wow and flutter are stacked with attractive features: front-access tape compartment positioned right-side up, fully automatic stop-shut/off, a reliable and easy-to-read 3-digit tape index counter with a very useful Memory Rewind Section, highly accurate VU meters, peak level indicator, extremely hard Permalloy record/playback head for long life and outstanding performance.

All four models in this Sansui series, from under $290.00** to under $370.00**, share many of the same outstanding features for true high fidelity performance at attractive prices.

The Sansui SC-636 at under $280.00,** a leading all-around deck, delivers fine quality sound without costly frills. As with the higher priced models, the SC-636 offers fully automatic stop/shut/off, illuminated VU meters, built-in Dolby* Type B Noise Reduction System, low wow and flutter and an excellent signal-to-noise ratio.

Sansui has stacked its decks. Stop in at your nearest franchised Sansui dealer today and buy one of these outstanding new Sansui series to stack yours.

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In Canada: Electronic Distributors
CIRCLE NO. 38 ON READER SERVICE CAFD
I've frequently described the simple yet crucial procedures for tape-head cleaning and demagnetizing. If you neglect these routine chores (they take only a few minutes every dozen or so hours of machine operation), high-frequency losses and even damage to your recordings may result. There comes a time, however—one a year is a good general rule—when your recorder's internal mechanism should be checked out and lubricated. If you're at all handy, chances are you can save a trip to the service shop by doing the job yourself. Of course, many "factory adjustments" do require specialized knowledge and equipment, but there are many maintenance chores that can be done at home.

Your first move should be to obtain the manufacturer's servicing instructions for your unit. This manual will contain exploded diagrams, replacement parts numbers, adjustment locations, recommended tensions, lubrication points, and a wealth of other vital information. Many companies are very good about this. They will send you the manual for free or at nominal cost. Others are not—then they may be out of business. Fortunately, you can almost always get the information you need from the Sams Photofact series available through many radio/TV parts stores. (If you can't find the information you need locally, write to Sams Photofact, Attn: J. Groves, 4300 West 62nd Street, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206. Be sure to list the brand, model, and serial numbers of the equipment in question and enclose a stamped return envelope.)

Once the covers are off and the machine is set up so that it can be operated with its innards visible, put on an old reel of tape and put the transport through its paces, familiarizing yourself with just which belts, pulleys, rubber drive wheels, solenoids, or any various other parts are in operation. (Until a replacement can be obtained, a judicious application of Robins Non-Slip fluid may help.) In general, all rubber drive surfaces should be cleaned. A lint-free cloth wetted with alcohol does the trick, but make sure you use isopropyl 90 (or more) percent, not "rubbing" alcohol compounds that may have lubricants in them. Nortronics has a special fluorocarbon cleaner which is excellent for both heads and rubber surfaces. All rubber parts should be inspected to determine if they are still "live" and have not developed flats, glaze, or cracks.

If the reels come to a smooth, gentle halt from the high-speed modes, there's no need to touch the brake system beyond, perhaps, lightly buffing any felt braking pads with a stiff-bristled brush. On the other hand, if the machine throws loops or snaps tape when you hit the stop button, something's wrong. Though easy to adjust on some recorders (those least likely to need it!), many brake designs are tricky, so if there's trouble you may end up in the service shop in any case.

Proper tape tensions, supplied by the take-up and supply reels, will be specified in the service literature together with appropriate adjustment procedures. Again, don't ask for trouble if all is working well. Tape slippage during play, however, indicates clutch or pressure-roller tension problems.

Lubricate the rotating parts, but only when the service notes call for it—and do it sparingly. Make sure no oil gets on drive components, brakes, clutches, or the puck roller. I've found a 50:50 mixture of motor oil and STP very effective. I use a dentist's hypodermic syringe (or a toothpick) for drop-by-drop application in hard to reach places. Use grease even more sparingly, and only where the manufacturer recommends it.
Introducing an evolutionary idea.  
The New Empire 698 Turntable

Great ideas never change radically. Instead, they are continuously refined. Cultivated to become more relevant with time. So it has been with our turntables. Our latest model, 698, is no exception. Basically, it's still the uncomplicated, belt-driven turntable we've been making for 15 years. A classic.

However, we're not just introducing a new number. We're introducing improvements. The lower mass tonearm, electronic cueing, quieting circuitry and automatic arm lift are all very new.

The rest is history.

The Tonearm

The new 698 arm moves effortlessly on 32 jeweled, sapphire bearings. Vertical and horizontal bearing friction is a mere 0.001 gram, 4 times less than it would be on conventional steel bearings. It is impervious to drag. Only the calibrated anti-skating and tracking force you select control its movement.

The new aluminum tubular arm, dramatically reduced in mass, responds instantly to the slightest variation of a record's movement. Even the abrupt changes of a warped disc are quickly absorbed.

The Motor

A self-cooling, hysteresis synchronous motor drives the platter with enough torque to reach full speed in one third of a revolution. It contributes to the almost immeasurable 0.04% average wow and flutter value in our specifications. More important, it's built to last.

The Drive Belt

Every turntable is approved only when zero error is achieved in its speed accuracy. To prevent any variations of speed we grind each belt to within one ten thousandth of an inch thickness.

The Platter

Every two piece, 7 lb., 3 inch thick, die cast aluminum platter is dynamically balanced. Once in motion, it acts as a massive flywheel to assure specified wow and flutter value even with the voltage varied from 105 to 127 volts AC.

The Main Bearing

The stainless steel shaft extending from the platter is aged, by alternate exposures to extreme high and low temperatures preventing it from ever warping. The tip is then precision ground and polished before lapping it into two oilite, self-lubricating bearings, reducing friction and reducing rumble to one of the lowest figures ever measured in a professional turntable; -68 dB CBS ARL.

The Controls

Electronic cueing has been added to the 698 to raise and lower the tonearm at your slightest touch. Simple plug-in integrated circuitry raises the tone arm automatically when power is turned on.

A see-through anti-skating adjustment provides the necessary force for the horizontal plane. It is micrometer calibrated to eliminate channel imbalance and unnecessary record wear.

Stylus force is dialed using a see-through calibrated clock mainspring more accurate than any commercially available stylus pressure gauge.

A new silicon photocell sensor has been added to automatically lift the arm at the end of a record.

New quieting circuitry has also been added. Now, even with the amplifier volume turned up, you can switch the 698 on or off without a "pop" sound to blow out your woofers.

At Empire we make only one model turntable, the 698. With proper maintenance and care the chances are very good it will be the only one you'll ever need.

The Empire 698 Turntable

Suggested retail price $400.00

For more information write:
EMPIRE SCIENTIFIC CORP.
Garden City, New York, 11530.

CIRCLE NO. 99 ON READER SERVICE CARD
A -2300W
Music minus hiss.

Signal vs. noise. The one aspect of sound reproduction that makes all the difference between a clean tape and a hissy one. Even at 7½ ips.

That’s why we decided to mate our 20 years of 3-motor, 3-head TEAC open reel experience with the 7 year record of the B-type Dolby* noise reduction system. The result is our new A-2300SD, a truly audible improvement.

The 74 dB signal-to-noise ratio** is indeed a meaningful specification, because the difference it makes is demonstrable. And it doesn’t take golden ears to hear it...just an appreciation of music minus hiss.

Ask your TEAC retailer to demonstrate the new A-2300SD. If you don’t know where he is, just call toll-free (800) 447-4700 or (800) 322-4400 in Illinois. You’ll find complete integral Dolby flexibility, including FM copy, precisely matched to the kind of quality and reliability that’s come to be known as TEAC. A perfect example of totally clean performance.

** Actual measurements will vary with record levels and brands of tape. Our published specification of 74 dB or greater is referenced to 3% T.H.D. at 7½ ips with the NAB A-Weighting Curve and B-Dolby circuits, using Maxell UD-35 tape. In maximizing signal-to-noise performance at 7½ ips, we have recorded measurements of up to 80 dB with Ampex 456 tape.

TEAC
The leader. Always has been.
TEAC Corporation of America/7733 Telegraph Road, Montebello, CA 90640/©TEAC 1975

* Dolby is a trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.
• POLISHING THE GOLDEN EAR: Recently an acquaintance who is blessed with extraordinary hearing acuity took me to task for my wholehearted approval of a recently reviewed product. While conceding that it did essentially what was claimed for it, he said that it introduced an upper mid-range coloration which made it (in his words) "completely unlistenable."

Naturally, I was disturbed by my apparently divergent views. Could I possibly have developed a "tin ear," as has been insinuated by some of my critics? Or was his sample defective in some way? I carefully re-auditioned the product in question, not to judge its overall performance, as is my usual custom, but to concentrate on the upper mid-range, where the supposed deficiencies existed. Finding nothing obviously wrong, I switched it in and out of the system to judge its effects in an A-B fashion. Somewhat to my surprise, I could hear the effect he mentioned. I would have described it as a very subtle "brightening" or "hardening" of the sound—but hardly to such a degree that the sound could be said to be "unlistenable." In fact, I could detect its presence only by switching the component in and out of the system, using specific program material, and concentrating my attention on one particular, limited aspect of its total performance.

I think our different conclusions from the same data can be explained quite simply—and aside from the fact that we had different samples of the same product. Although my friend does indeed have quite remarkable hearing, I apparently can hear most of the subtle qualities that he does, especially if we are focusing on the same area of performance. The basic problem is that we are listening for different things in the reproduced sound, and are not necessarily disturbed "in the same manner" by any given anomaly even if we both hear it.

I touched upon this very important factor in my somewhat light-hearted treatment of the pitfalls of subjective comparisons between nearly equal products (Stereo Review, November 1975). Let us concede that some differences exist, in general, between any two products, and perhaps even between different serial numbers of the same product. Let us also assume that these differences are frequently audible to reasonably critical participants in a properly conducted "A-B" test. However, consider that (particularly when it comes to transducers) we are usually comparing products that in some way fall short of absolute perfection—and that those imperfections are reacted to differently by different observers.

There is an unfortunate impulse among many audiophiles to place a vehemently expressed value judgment on any difference perceived. But is a "trace of "hardness" better or worse than an equal amount of "softness"? What about "warmth" and "dryness"? Will these characteristics be perceived in the same way by another listener? If, as may easily happen, the same unit whose sound pleases you in some respects comes off second-best in other respects, how do you decide if it is better or worse than another piece of equipment having complementary characteristics?

I don’t know about you, but when I listen to music, I listen to the whole, rather than to the many individual signals that combine to form it. A spectrum analyzer is much more convenient for analyzing the details of a complex signal, while the combination of human ears and brain is unequalled in its ability to evaluate an entire panorama of sound. True, evaluating audio components calls for a more analytical approach than listening to music for enjoyment. Nevertheless, one must never forget the true nature of the program he is hearing. Whatever it is, it is not a real "live" performance. It is not even very close to being one. It is an ingeniously assembled array of sounds designed to "suggest" to the listener that he might be hearing "the real thing."

I go on the assumption that the creation of that believable illusion is the purpose of a high-fidelity system. Anything that contributes to its success is good (including various forms of signal processing, dynamic-range restoration, noise reduction, quadraphony, and the like). Anything that diminishes the illusion is bad, including audible forms of non-linear distortion, hum, hiss, compressed dynamics, and unnatural frequency or spatial characteristics.

In my opinion, the greatest obstacle to complete fidelity of music reproduction in the home (judged by the criterion of believability) is the recording process. I would say that at least 90 per cent of the problem lies in the recording. If you doubt that, listen to some of the finest recordings, which can project a remarkable sense of realism through almost any reasonably competent speaker. Then listen to almost any run-of-the-mill product of the record industry through the finest speakers you can muster, and you will find that the sound is mediocre at best. For that reason, I would give the speaker "blame" for any lack of realism in home sound reproduction. That leaves 2 per cent to be accounted for, and, for want of more accurate data, I would say that the amplifier and its active accessories

**TECHNICAL TALK**

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

**TESTED THIS MONTH**

Garrard 990 B Record Player
E-V Interface:B Speaker System
Sonab C500 Cassette Deck
Phase Linear 1000 Autocorrelator

STEREO REVIEW
can claim only about 1 per cent of the blame for the bad things we may hear from our audio systems.

I am sure that many people will disagree, perhaps violently, with my assessment of the situation. But I do know that I, and many others who are reasonably familiar with reproduced sound, can walk into a room and judge in a moment, without seeing the equipment, whether the sound is good, bad, or undistinguished. This, after all, is what happens at any hi-fi show. Furthermore, I have no difficulty distinguishing between two recordings of the same work made under different conditions. And, if the speakers are switched, I am in no doubt that a switch has been made and may have some idea as to its relative merits.

If the amplifiers are switched in a proper manner, however, with careful gain matching, I usually cannot tell that a switch has been made, much less decide that one sounds better or different from the other. If I walk into a room without prior knowledge of the situation, there is no way I can tell what kind of amplifier is being used (although there is a better than statistically random probability that I can guess the speaker type). My point is that real sonic differences between some components can be heard, unequivocally, by almost anyone. Preferences can vary, of course, but at least one can say that A is not the same as B.

On the other hand, if the difference is such that not one person in a thousand can detect it, or extended arguments develop as to its significance or very existence, I say it is not enough of a difference to be concerned about. We are, after all, probably haggling about a minuscule fraction of that 1 per cent or so that the entire amplifier contributes to the total sound effect. Is it reasonable to assign such importance to a trivial aberration?

Try to remember that the criterion for judging an audio component good or bad is the degree to which it contributes to or diminishes a believable illusion of reality. Even many of the acknowledged imperfections of loudspeakers fade into insignificance beside the huge differences in sound balance that are heard in different concert halls or studios, different seats in the same hall, or those you create yourself by moving your speaker or listening location at home by a few feet. Calm judgment and judicious language serve us best in the world of hi-fi. Some audiophiles insist on calling a flaw "serious" when it takes hours of listening to discover it. I don't.

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

**Garrard 990B Record Player**

- **Garrard's** new Model 990B record player employs a combination of belt and idler-wheel drive in which the shaft of the synchronous motor turns a conventional rubber idler wheel (similar to the drive system employed in most automatic record changers). However, instead of the idler's contacting the inside of the platter rim, a separate pulley on the idler shaft turns a belt which drives a smaller-diameter section beneath the platter.

  This system affords the superior vibration isolation between motor and platter that typifies a good belt-drive player, with less possibility of belt slippage due to the relatively large diameter of the belt-drive pulley. This is an important consideration when a recording-changing mechanism must also be operated by the drive system. In addition, the idler wheel can be moved up and down on the tapped motor shaft for vernier speed adjustment, which is usually obtained in belt-driven turntables by some form of electronic motor control.

  The heavy (5-pound) cast nonferrous platter turns at either 33⅓ or 45 rpm, the speed being selected by a knob on the motorboard. The three-position speed switch also selects the arm indexing diameter for 10- or 12-inch 33⅓-rpm records or for 7-inch 45-rpm records. The concentric vernier speed control has a nominal range of ±3 per cent. Strobe-scope markings in the central (label) area of the platter are used for setting exact speed. They require external illumination and cannot be viewed while a record is being played.

  The Garrard 990B has the same triple-lever control layout used on their other top-ranking record players. The AUTOMATIC lever initiates a complete playing cycle which terminates in full shutdown at the end of the last record. If the changer spindle is in place, a stack of up to six records can be played in sequence. The record edges are supported by a column outside the platter diameter. By inverting the short single-play spindle, which rotates with the record, a single disc can be played automatically in the same manner. The separate MANUAL lever can be used, if desired, to start the motor, and the arm can be positioned manually. End-of-play shut-off is still automatic and can also be initiated at any time by pushing the AUTOMATIC lever. The third lever is the CUE control, which has damped action in both directions.

  The tone arm is a conventional S-bend pivoted tubular design. The threaded counterweight carries a tracking-force scale calibrated from 0 to 3 grams at intervals of 0.25 gram. Antiskating is applied by a lever carrying a sliding weight, with separate scales for conical and elliptical styli. The slide-in cartridge carrier is slotted for setting stylus overhang with the aid of a supplied plastic jig. The basic player is priced at $169.95. The teak-finish wooden base and hinged, removable plastic dust cover are respectively $15.95 and $9.95.

- **Laboratory Measurements.** With a typical high-compliance phono cartridge installed in the tone arm, the low-frequency resonance was at 8 Hz with an amplitude of 7 dB. This indicates that the effective arm mass is typical of today's better record players and is compatible with modern high-compliance cartridges. The arm and cable capacitance of 130 picofarads is also compatible with most CD-4 cartridges.

  The tracking force was fractionally higher than the scale calibrations, with a maximum error of 0.2 gram. The force at the top of a six-record stack was only 0.15 gram higher than on a single record. The maximum tracking error of the arm was 0.8 degree per inch of radius, an acceptable figure. At a 1-gram tracking force, the antiskating device had to be set between 2 and 3 grams for optimum correction. However, it produced absolutely
no lateral drift during the arm descent (the Garrard cueing system has been consistently outstanding in this respect since its original introduction in the Zero 100 model some years ago).

The turntable speeds could be varied over a +3.5 to −4 per cent range at 33⅓ rpm, and ±2.8 per cent at 45 rpm. The vernier speed control moved much more freely in one direction than in the other, and some care was needed to avoid accidentally displacing its setting when changing operating speed. Playing speed did not vary detectably with a 95- to 135-volt line-voltage shift. The combined wow and flutter (unweighted rms) was 0.06 per cent at 33⅓ rpm and 0.07 per cent at 45 rpm. The unweighted rumble was −30 dB (−34 dB in the lateral plane), and with ARLL distortion weighting it was a good −55 dB. The change cycle of the 990B was exceptionally rapid, requiring only 8.5 seconds at 33⅓ rpm.

One of our standard tests measures the susceptibility of a record player to base-conduct ed vibration, which could cause acoustic feedback if the player were located too close to a loudspeaker. We found the Garrard 990B to be outstanding in this respect. Not only was it by far the best-isolated automatic record player we have tested (and better than virtually all manual units as well), but its margin of superiority over its peers was typically 20 to 40 dB! Presumably this results from an optimum matching of mounting-spring compliance to the overall record-player mass, a characteristic for which record players in general are not noted (with some exceptions).

Comment. The bare performance specifications of the Garrard 990B make it clear that it is a first-rate record player, and especially so at its (by today's standards) relatively modest price. The ease of handling and the essentially perfect cueing-lift system of this unit can be appreciated without even listening to it, but so far as we can determine, its audible performance should be solely a function of the cartridge and record. And if, for some reason, you have been plagued by acoustic feedback problems with your record player, we suggest that the outstanding isolation of the 990B may be just the cure you've been looking for.

Circle 105 on reader service card

Electro-Voice Interface:B Speaker System

Just over two years ago (March 1974) we reported on an unusual new speaker system from Electro-Voice, the Interface:A. In it were combined an 8-inch woofer, a 12-inch "passive radiator" (which E-V prefers to call a "vent substitute"), and two small 2-inch cone tweeters, one of which faced to the rear. An active equalizer in a separate small cabinet provided the bass and treble response modification needed to produce a remarkably wide and flat frequency response from this true bookshelf-size speaker system.

Electro-Voice has now added the Interface:B to its loudspeaker line. The two speakers and their associated equalizers appear almost identical. A close comparison between them reveals the following physical differences: the cabinet of the B is about 1 inch longer and 1½ inches deeper than that of the A, and it is covered with wood-grain vinyl laminate instead of walnut wood veneer. There is no rear-facing tweeter in the B. Although both use the same-size woofer (but not the identical driver unit), the B has a smaller vent substitute with a nominal 10-inch diameter instead of the 12 inches of the A, and its center is not loaded by the "plug" needed to add mass to the vent substitute of the Interface:A.

There are other minor differences, both electrical and acoustical. The deep-bass response of the Interface:B is rated to 36 Hz instead of the 32 Hz of the A, and the Interface:B is about 2 to 3 dB more efficient than the A. The omission of the second tweeter causes a very small reduction in energy output at the highest frequencies.

On the whole, the most striking difference between the two systems is in price. The B is a full $100 cheaper, although it retains virtually all the features and fine acoustic qualities of the A. The E-V Interface:B measures 14 x 23 x 9½ inches and weighs 27 pounds. It is nominally an 8-ohm system (with a 5-ohm rated minimum impedance) designed for use with amplifiers delivering from 5 to 180 watts per channel. The equalizer, which is designed to be inserted into the tape-monitor loops of a receiver or amplifier, has its own tape-monitor facilities plus a high-frequency level control with three switch positions for treble adjustment. An optional TS-1 "Tweeter Saver" accessory is available to protect the tweeter from damage by excessive long-term signal levels. The price of the complete Interface:B system (two speakers and the equalizer) is $325.

Laboratory Measurements. The frequency response of the E-V Interface:B was measured in the reverberant field of our test room using the equalizer ahead of the driving amplifier. Bass response was measured separately for the driven cone and the vent substitute, and the two curves were combined to obtain an equivalent response that was then "spliced" to the higher-frequency curve to derive a composite overall curve. This curve was quite remarkable for its range and flatness, even without regard for the small size of the Interface:B. It was within ±3 dB from 36 to 16,000 Hz, with a notable absence of the usual bass resonance rise that causes many speakers to sound unnaturally heavy or muddy. The only identifiable deviations from a virtually flat response were a "bump" of about 4 dB at 600 Hz and another of about the same magnitude at 13,500 Hz.

The equalizer's frequency response was designed to be flat over most of the audio range, rising at low frequencies to a maximum of +6.5 dB at 40 Hz before dropping off rapidly at lower frequencies. It serves not only to maintain a reasonably flat response to the lowest audible frequencies, but also to roll off the response at infrasonic frequencies that could produce audible rumble or intermodulation effects. The "normal" high-frequency response setting of the equalizer (position 1) gave a gentle boost above 4,000 Hz to a maximum of +4 dB at 20,000 Hz. The position 2 setting gave a reasonably flat electrical response (±1 dB to 20,000 Hz), while position 3 rolled off the highs to −5 dB at 20,000 Hz. This switch gives the user some of the control capability afforded by tweeter-level adjustments on conventional speaker systems.

Our low-frequency distortion measurements cannot be readily compared with those made on other speakers, since the equalizer was used to simulate actual operating conditions. The signal drive level to the equalizer was maintained constant at a value corresponding to 1 watt delivered to the speaker at 1,000 Hz. Thus the actual low-frequency power to the speaker was considerably greater than 1 watt (more than 4 watts at 40 Hz).

(Continued on page 38)
JVC introduces five new stereo receivers that carry the unmistakable stamp of high fidelity professionalism. Starting with clean cut laboratory styling, precision, linear slide tone controls and direct-action pushbutton function selectors, the professionalism of these outstanding components continues every step of the way with JVC's innovative, pace setting engineering. Each model shares much of the uncommon in common with the top professional—the S600. Expensive and sophisticated phase lock loop circuitry, Center-of-channel and signal strength tuning meters, Quadrature detector circuitry, And smooth, gyro-bias tuning.

Whichever new JVC professional you select, you can be sure it's a feature-packed receiver. If you're planning to spend about two hundred dollars for a receiver, or as much as seven hundred and fifty—think like a professional. Think JVC.

Call for the name of your nearby JVC dealer. He's professional, too.
The distortion was measured separately at the woofer and vent-substitute cones. Since the two measurements cannot be combined simply to obtain a single distortion figure, we have given them separately. The woofer distortion rose below 60 Hz to 5 per cent at 53 Hz and 10 per cent at 46 Hz. However, the distortion from the vent substitute, whose output predominated below 55 Hz, was 5 per cent at 39 Hz and 10 per cent at 31 Hz. At higher power inputs, the distortion curves rose more abruptly, but they were not radically different from the 1-watt curves when we used an input of 5 watts (which actually drove the woofer with more than 22 watts at 40 Hz).

The tone-burst response of the Interface:B was especially good in its freedom from ringing or spurious effects at the beginning or end of a burst. The detail differences between the input burst and the acoustic response were for the most part inherent in the characteristics of a conventional crossover network such as the one used in the Interface systems.

The electrical impedance of the speaker system was about 4 ohms at 35 Hz, 5 ohms between 150 and 300 Hz, and 6 ohms at 3,000 Hz. It reached 23 ohms at a secondary peak near 1,700 Hz (apparently due to the crossover network, since the crossover to the tweeter is at 1,500 Hz), and increased smoothly above 3,000 Hz to a maximum of 30 ohms at 20,000 Hz. Electro-Voice rates the minimum impedance of the speaker at 5 ohms, which is close to our findings. We would consider this to be more realistic rating than the "nominal 8 ohms" of their specification. The efficiency of the Interface:B was relatively high for a small enclosure, with a 1-watt input in the mid-range producing a 91-dB sound-pressure level at a distance of 1 meter from the grille.

Comments. When we compared the response curves for the E-V Interface:B with those we obtained two years ago on the Interface:A, we were struck by their virtual identity. This, of course, is consistent with E-V's ratings and published specifications. The only significant differences between the A and B models were a more rapid fall-off below 30 Hz and above 15,000 Hz in the B, and these effects are readily explained by the design difference between the two systems. The "bump" in the response curve at 600 Hz was common to both speakers.

In view of this, we were not surprised to find that the two sounded remarkably similar (we did not have the Interface:A on hand for a comparison, but our notes on the sound of the two systems agreed closely). In the simulated live-in-recorded test, the Interface:B was a highly accurate reproducer of the upper mid-range and above 15,000 Hz in the B, and these effects are readily explained by the design difference between the two systems. The "bump" in the response curve at 600 Hz was common to both speakers.

The dispersion of the highs was excellent—easily as good as we have ever heard from a forward-facing cone driver and rivalling that of most dome radiators. Evidently the felt "acoustic lens" over the tweeter cone does just what is claimed for it. The bass was true and powerful indeed when the program material called for it. We appreciated the relative freedom from bass coloration, the result of the flat response in the upper bass.

The tape-monitor switch on the equalizer inserts a tape deck in the signal path ahead of the equalization circuits. On the assumption that the equalizer will be powered from an a.c. socket on the receiver, it carries an unswitched a.c. outlet on its rear panel so that there will be no loss of system flexibility in its use. The only criticism we can make of the E-V equalizer—and it is not a significant one—is the lack of any self-contained bypass provision. If other types of speakers are used in the system (for remote listening locations, perhaps), the equalizer cannot be conveniently eliminated from the circuit for tape sources.

Electro-Voice has demonstrated with the Interface speakers that it is possible to generate an extended, flat bass response in a small system speaker—and without sacrificing efficiency—by the intelligent use of active equalization. Of course, this does limit the maximum power-handling ability of the speaker to some extent, but we were able to produce sound-pressure levels exceeding 103 dB in the reverberant field of the listening room without any audible signs of distress from the speakers.

The amount of equalization used is not extreme, and it should not tax any reasonably good amplifier. Nevertheless, one should be aware that, as with any equalized speaker system, special demands are made on the amplifier in certain areas of the frequency spectrum.

The choice of the Interface:B, the amplifier power requirements in the 40-Hz region are quadrupled, which suggests that very inexpensive receivers with limited low-frequency power-handling ability would not produce the overall bass performance of which these speakers are capable. But for the listener with adequate amplifier power reserves (say, 25 watts or so per channel), the Interface:B will produce an impressive amount of clean, low-frequency energy and fine overall sound.
POWER

IN DRESS ATTIRE.

There’s plenty of power packed in this beautiful receiver. Muscle your receiver needs for more than just sound volume. Power produces clear distortion-free sound. And it gives it to you even at low volume.

The Lafayette LR-3500 has a well-developed 47 watts per channel minimum RMS. Both channels driven at 8 ohms from 20-20,000 Hz with no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion.

The top of the Lafayette line, the LR-3500 AM/FM stereo FM receiver has all the features you’ve come to expect as the trappings of power. It has state-of-the-art electronics complete power controls to personalize the sound. And many convenience features like dual tape monitors, and FM mute.

Power is yours with the Lafayette LR-3500. It’s $399.95 at your Lafayette dealers. There are dealers coast to coast. Or shop from our free catalog.

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The rear panel of the Sonab C500 has a playback-level control, parallel standard and DIN line inputs and outputs: recording calibration controls permit separate adjustment for CrO₂ tape.

On the front edge of the deck are the three microphone jacks (L, C, and R) and the headphone output jack, which is designed to deliver up to 2.5 volts to phones having a rated impedance from 8 to 600 ohms. In the rear of the recorder are the line inputs and outputs, a DIN connector, Dolby recording-level adjustments for ferric and CrO₂ tapes, and a line-voltage selector. The C500 can be operated from line voltages of 100 to 240 volts, either 50 or 60 Hz.

The tape is driven by a servo-controlled d.c. motor, and the heads are of permanently construction. The rated frequency response (±3 dB) is 3 to 15,000 Hz with ferric tape and 30 to 16,000 Hz with CrO₂ tape. With the Dolby system in use, the signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) is rated at 88 dB with ferric tape and 60 dB with CrO₂ tape. Wow and flutter are rated at 0.03 per cent (weighted peak). The Sonab C500 is 15 inches wide, 10 inches deep, and 4 inches high; it weighs 10 pounds. Price: $399.

Laboratory Measurements. The instruction manual, and a card enclosed with the recorder, make it clear that the C500 is factory biased for Maxell UD (ferric) and TDK KR (CrO₂) tapes and these were used for our tests.

The playback frequency response, measured with Teac standard test tapes, was within ±0.5 dB of the ideal response from 40 to 9,000 Hz and down only slightly (3 to 4 dB) at 10,000 Hz. At a -20 dB recording level, the overall record-playback-frequency response with Maxell UD tape was ±3 dB from 23 to 16,000 Hz, and it was exceptionally flat (+0.5 dB) from 57 to 10,000 Hz. The response with TDK KR tape was quite similar: ±3 dB from 22 to 16,000 Hz and essentially ±4 dB from 42 to 15,000 Hz.

At a 0 dB recording level, the expected tape saturation reduced the high-frequency response, but it was still very good; the 0 dB response curves intersected the -20 dB curves at 13,000 and 14,000 Hz, respectively, with the UD and KR tapes.

The rear panel of the Sonab C500 is excellent. At levels of -20 and -30 dB, the difference between the overall response curves made with and without the Dolby system was less than 1 dB up to 15,000 Hz, and over most of the audible range it was less than 0.5 dB. To reach a 0 dB recording level, a line input of 38 millivolts (mV) or a microphone input of 0.11 mV was needed. The microphone circuits overloaded at 19 mV indicating that recordings of loud program material should be made with a tape line output microphone or with an external attenuator in the microphone inputs. The playback output from a 0 dB recording level was 0.59 volt with UD and 0.64 volt with KR tape.

A standard Dolby-level tape (200 nanowatts, per meter) drove the meters off-scale. Output measurements indicated that the recorder's meters are calibrated with their "0 dB" marks about 4.4 dB below Dolby level. The meters have approximate peak-reading characteristics; they indicated 100 per cent of steady-state values on 0.3-second tone bursts. The playback harmonic distortion for a 1,000 Hz recorded signal was 1.4 per cent with UD and 1.6 per cent with KR tape at an indicated 0 dB recording level. The "distortion" was principally random noise, and the actual harmonic content was appreciably lower in each case. To reach the 3 per cent distortion level, we had to record at +8 dB with UD and +14 dB with KR tape.

The signal-to-noise ratios with the two tapes at the 3 per cent distortion level were 54 and 54.5 dB (unweighted, respectively IEC "A" weighting improved these readings to 58 and 59.5 dB, and with the Dolby system they were 66 and 65 dB. The noise level increased by 7.5 dB through the microphone input at maximum gain. However, the high microphone sensitivity makes it possible to operate at the gain control well below maximum in most cases, so that negligible noise is added during live recording.

The wow was a negligible 0.02 per cent, while unweighted rms flutter was a very good 0.11 per cent. It is clear that slightly less than 0.2 per cent was obtainable in a combined record-playback measurement, which gave a 0.09 per cent flutter reading. In the fast speeds, a C-60 cassette was wound in 75 seconds.

Comment. The Sonab C500 easily met or surpassed all of its published ratings. In addition (this does not necessarily follow from the simple fact of having good ratings or even good measured performance), its sound quality was exceptional. Not only did the frequency content of the input and output programs sound exactly alike when dubbing from phonograph records, but the freedom from noise and distortion, or any obvious compression of dynamics, was as good as we have ever heard from a conventional two-head cassette recorder. Also, the tape transport (Continued on page 42)
THE END OF THE DOUBLE STANDARD.

OUR LEAST EXPENSIVE RECEIVER HAS THE SAME
LOW DISTORTION AS OUR MOST EXPENSIVE RECEIVER.

At Yamaha, we make all our stereo receivers to a single standard of excellence.
A consistently low intermodulation distortion of just 0.1%!
A figure you might expect only from separate components. Maybe even from our $850 receiver, the CR-1000.
But a figure you'll surely be surprised to find in our $330 receiver, the CR-400.
So what's the catch?
There is no catch. Simply a different philosophy. Where high quality is spelled low distortion.
You'll find Yamaha's single-mindedness particularly gratifying when compared to the amount of distortion other manufacturers will tolerate throughout their product lines. (See chart.)
Particularly gratifying and easily explained.
Less of what irritates you most.
While other manufacturers are mostly concerned with more and more power, Yamaha's engineers have concentrated on less and less distortion.
Particularly intermodulation (IM) distortion, the most irritating to your ears. By virtually eliminating IM's brittle dissonance, we've given back to music what it's been missing.
A clear natural richness and brilliant tonality that numbers alone cannot describe. A new purity in sound reproduction.
A musical heritage.
Our seeming preoccupation with low distortion, in general, and the resulting low IM distortion, in particular, stems from Yamaha's own unique musical heritage.
Since 1887, Yamaha has been making some of the finest musical instruments in the world. Pianos, organs, guitars, woodwinds, and brass.
You might say we're music people first.
With our musical instruments, we've defined the standard in the production of fine sound. And now, with our entire line of receivers and other stereo components, we've defined the standard of its reproduction.
Four different receivers, built to one standard.
Between our $330 CR-400 and our $850 CR-1000, we have two other models. The $460 CR-600 and the $580 CR-800.
Since all are built with the same high quality and the same low distortion, you're probably asking what's the difference.
The difference is, with Yamaha, you pay for the power and features that you need.
Unless you have the largest, most inefficient speakers, plus a second pair of the same playing simultaneously in the next room, you probably won't need the abundant power of our top-of-the-line receivers.
Unless you're a true audiophile, some of the features on our top-of-the-line receivers might seem a bit like gilding the lily. Selectable turnover tone controls, variable FM muting, two-position filters, even a special five-position tape monitor selector.
However, you don't have to pick one of Yamaha's most expensive receivers to get a full complement of functional features as well as our own exclusive Auto Touch tuning and ten-position variable loudness control.
The End of the Double Standard.
Just keep in mind that all Yamaha stereo receivers, from the most expensive to the least expensive, have the same high quality, the same low distortion, the same superlative tonality.
It's a demonstration of product integrity that no other manufacturer can make. And, an audio experience your local Yamaha dealer will be delighted to introduce you to.
controls operated easily and the mechanism was quieter than most.

However, we were much less enthusiastic about the level meters and their calibration. The recording-level peaks can safely be allowed to exceed the +3-dB (full-scale) meter reading without encountering serious distortion, but when this is done one has no way of knowing the actual recording level. We noted, when playing some of the Advent CR/70 pre-recorded cassettes, that the meters were often "pinned," although there was no sign of distortion from tape head or amplifier saturation. Since the meters cannot read a standard Dolby-level signal, and since there is no Dolby test-signal generator in the recorder, anyone tampering with the Dolby calibration adjustments in the recorder's rear would have difficulty restoring the machine to proper calibration. The Dolby adjustments should be covered or otherwise made inaccessible.

To offset these criticisms, we must add that the Sonab C500 is the only cassette recorder we have ever used that really delivers a useful headphone volume, even with 200-ohm phones (which are useless on most cassette-deck headphone outputs). For example, we were able to drive Koss HVS-1 phones to an uncomfortably loud volume level. We don't know if Sonab was intentionally aiming at the headphone-listening market, but the placement of the headphone volume control and the unusual output capability of this machine make it a "natural" as a complete tape-playing system for anyone who wishes to listen in private.

We also commend Sonab for being one of the very few recorder manufacturers to state, in unmistakable terms, which tapes their machine is biased for. As we have pointed out on several occasions, no cassette recorder can deliver its full performance unless it is used with the tape for which it was biased. In this case, the owner of the Sonab C500 can enjoy the bonus feature of having a machine capable of outstanding performance on most premium-grade tapes without any readjustment.

Circle 107 on reader service card

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Phase Linear 1000 Autocorrelator Noise-reduction System

- When we tested the Phase Linear Model 4000 preamplifier (STEREO REVIEW, November 1974), we devoted considerable time to its unique signal-processing circuits. These can reduce both hiss and rumble and provide a worthwhile enhancement of dynamic range with any program material. We were especially impressed by the fact that these benefits were obtainable without prior signal encoding (such as is required by the Dolby and DBX systems), and yet were essentially free of audible side effects. Some eighteen months of living with a Phase Linear 4000 has further reinforced our admiration for its capabilities.

Since many people already have excellent preamplifiers or integrated amplifiers, and since the signal-processing section of the Phase Linear Model 4000 is entirely separate electrically from its conventional preamplifier circuitry, we assumed that the company would eventually package it as an "add-on" accessory for use with other amplifiers. This has been done, and it is now available as the Model 1000 autocorrelator noise-reduction system. The Model 1000 actually contains two separate functions that can be controlled individually or used together for maximum effect. The autocorrelator is a form of signal-controlled (dynamic) filter that is able to differentiate between "discrete" program material and random noise and adjust its bandpass to the minimum needed to pass the program content. It is easiest to understand its action by considering it as a series of contiguous bandpass filters (the number is not specified) covering the range from 2,000 to 20,000 Hz. The filters are controlled by voltages derived from an analysis of the frequency components in the signal between 200 and 2,000 Hz. Since most musical fundamentals lie in this range, it can be assumed that any discrete signal in the control band will also have harmonic components in the range above 2,000 Hz.

The autocorrelator "opens up" only those high-frequency bandpass filters corresponding to harmonics of discrete signals present in its control band. Random noise, or hiss, is present over the entire frequency range, but the only noise allowed to pass through the filters is that portion close enough to the frequencies of the musical harmonics to be substantially masked by them. This is, of course, an oversimplified explanation of the autocorrelator operation. It is a dynamic circuit, constantly responding to the changing program content in such a way as to minimize noise without any audible reduction of program high frequencies, and without the "swishing" and other side effects common to voltage-controlled low-pass filters. Depending on program conditions, it can provide about 10 dB of hiss reduction—roughly comparable to what the Dolby "B" system affords, but without the encoding needed for the latter.

Coupled with the autocorrelator, but functionally separate, is a dynamic high-pass (lowcut) filter that attenuates signals below 200 Hz unless they exceed a certain threshold level. When properly adjusted, it can give as much as 20 dB of rumble reduction at 20 Hz but will "open up" to pass any low-frequency program signals exceeding the average rumble level. The Model 1000 also has a fixed passive filter with a rejection of 35 dB at 5 Hz.

The second basic function of the Model 1000 is its "peak unlimiter," a form of dynamic volume expander that restores up to 7.5 dB of the dynamic range that has been sacrificed in practically all recorded and broadcast music by the use of compressors and limiters. Paradoxically, the mark of success in expander operation is the listener's inability to detect the fact that it is working, and Phase Linear's expansion technique satisfies that requirement admirably.

For high-level signals, the expander increases the gain of the system by only 1.5 dB, which is a small enough increment to be undetectable by most listeners. At slightly lower levels the device is linear, with no expansion, while at still lower levels it begins to have a gradual expansion slope of 1 dB for each 10 dB of level change, to a maximum of 3 dB. Finally, at the lowest signal levels, the "downward expander" reduces the gain by up to 3 dB. The total expansion range of 7.5 dB is quite modest compared with what many other expanders provide, and it is so distributed over the amplitude range of the system that one cannot hear its contribution except by switching the circuit in and out. Combining the two functions of the Model 1000, a total dynamic-range expansion of 17.5 dB is possible (10 dB by noise reduction and 7.5 dB by volume expansion). The downward expansion also serves to suppress noise by reducing the system gain during soft passages.

The Phase Linear Model 1000 is a compact unit with a 9/2 x 5-inch front panel finished in satin gold to match the company's other components. It is just under 12 inches deep and weighs 6 pounds. On the front panel are four black pushbuttons controlling the a.c. power, the autocorrelator, the peak unlimiter, and the tape-monitoring switching (replacing the amplifier's tape-monitor connections, through which the Model 1000 is normally

(Continued on page 44)
When a good friend tells you "I can’t afford Interface:A," tell her about the new Interface:B.

Our new Interface:B is a way of acquiring most of the excellence of our vented, equalized Interface:A speaker system for much less money. Interface:B is friendly advice in another way too; we designed it to work with lower powered electronics and still provide superior sound at satisfying levels.

**Flat, accurate response here.**

**Less than 2¢ a Hz.**

Below the lowest reach of a bass guitar is a whole acoustical world that’s costly to reproduce. And most speakers miss it. Yet down there, Interface:B responds with startling accuracy to a 36-Hz tone. We used an Interface:A technique to achieve this; it is not unlike squeezing a 16-foot organ pipe into a box of true bookshelf size. The device that enables this is the same vent substitute we developed to meet the design goals of the Interface:A. It looks like an extra woofer, but it duplicates the function of a column of air ten inches in diameter and nearly 20 feet long.

**Highs the way the composers wrote them.**

In the midrange, most high-efficiency bookshelf speakers in the Interface:B price class come on strong. Overly so, we think. On top of that, many don't disperse their high-frequency output uniformly, either. We haven’t resorted to these design tradeoffs in Interface:B. Interface:B puts out an earful of uncommonly uniform acoustic power because, first, its midrange is radiated by a relatively small diameter driver, plus it has a simple but effective acoustic lens on the tweeter combined with a compensating amount of high-frequency boost from the equalizer.

**We mixed the equation so that B equals A, nearly.**

So that lower powered receivers could be used with Interface:B, we altered the mathematics of Interface:A’s enclosure. About an inch increase in size all around permits, with only a 4-Hz change in low-frequency limit, a conversion efficiency fully 3 dB higher than Interface:A. So it takes half the power to drive Interface:B’s to the same volume level.

And so that subsonic signals such as record rumble don’t distort the flat response of Interface:B, we designed the equalizer to roll off sharply below 36 Hz.

**A-B our new Interface:B against the higher priced systems.**

For accurate response, superior dispersion, and deeply satisfying levels, we think practically nothing beats our Interface:B (except our Interface:A). Give us a hearing.

**Free manual.**

Send for our free Interface information package. It includes an Interface:B Owner’s Manual that is practically an education in vented speaker design and application.

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**Specifications**

**Interface:A**
- **Response:** 32 - 18,000 Hz, ±3 dB
- **Power Output:** Hz, ±3 dB
- **Sound Pressure Level:** (1 Meter, 1-Watt) 89 dB
- **Suggested Amplifier:** Minimum: 10 Watts
- **Peak Power Handling:** 250 Watts
- **Dimensions:** 14” x 22” x 7.5” deep
- **Suggested Retail Price:** $450.00 per pair (including equalizer)

**Interface:B**
- **Response:** 36 - 18,000 Hz, ±3 dB
- **Power Output:** Hz, ±3 dB
- **Sound Pressure Level:** (1 Meter, 1-Watt) 92 dB
- **Suggested Amplifier:** Minimum: 5 Watts
- **Peak Power Handling:** 18 Watts
- **Dimensions:** 14” x 27” x 9” deep
- **Suggested Retail Price:** $325 per pair (including equalizer)

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**Electro-Voice** INC.

CIRCLE NO. 19 ON READER SERVICE CARD

APRIL 1976
connected to the system). A large knob sets the autocorrelator operating threshold and another matches the sensitivity of the expander circuits to the incoming program level. When this is set correctly, a red light on the panel flashes on the loudest program peaks. The autocorrelator adjustment is simple and noncritical. As the knob is rotated counterclockwise from maximum, the hiss level suddenly drops. Further rotation will cause a noticeable loss of high frequencies in the program. The correct setting is between these limits. The last control is a small knob that sets the dynamic rumble filter's sensitivity to match the characteristics of the record player and cartridge. When it is set correctly, the subsonic rumble drops radically, as evidenced by the lack of woofer-cone "bobble" when playing quiet grooves. The rear of the Model 1000 contains only the signal and tape-recording input and output connectors. Price: $349.

Laboratory Measurements. As with the Phase Linear 4000, we were unable to measure most of the Model 1000's characteristics directly. A dynamic device such as this requires separate access to its control and signal circuitry for meaningful measurements. We did determine that the peak-unlimiter light would flash with signals as low as 0.15 volt (rated 0.2 volt). It should never be necessary to operate the threshold control in the lower half of its range since with as much as 10 volts applied only a 12-o'clock setting was needed to operate the signal light. The gain was exactly unity (1), and the output clipped at 7.7 volts (rated 8 volts). Distortion was not measurable below 1 volt. However, between 1 and 7 volts output it increased smoothly from 0.01 to 0.04 per cent—a clear indication that the Model 1000 is effectively a distortionless device with steady-state signals. Rough measurements with a wave analyzer indicated that the autocorrelator noise reduction was negligible below 2,000 Hz, about 4.5 dB at 3,000 Hz, and 7 to 8 dB at 5,000 Hz and higher frequencies. The unit's frequency response was down 1 dB at 20 and 70,000 Hz and down 3 dB at 10 and 90,000 Hz (rated ±1 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz).

Comment. We connected the Phase Linear Model 1000 into a high-quality system and gave it an extended use test, including a side-by-side comparison with the original Model 4000 preamplifier. As far as we could tell, the two were identical in their noise-reduction and dynamic-range-expansion characteristics.

The subjective hiss reduction afforded by the autocorrelator is about the same as that for a properly adjusted Dolby "B" system, although the Phase Linear system has the additional virtue of requiring no critical adjustments or level matching. Like every noise-reduction system we have used, it is at its best with reasonably quiet program material. The Model 1000 cannot convert a noisy 78-rpm record or a weak stereo FM signal into a fully quiet high-fidelity signal, although it will provide some improvement. However, with any ordinary tape or disc recorded program, or a reasonable FM signal, becomes startlingly quiet when another 10 dB of noise is removed. The most impressive demonstration of the Phase Linear system is using it on a program that has received Dolby encoding and playback processing, since there is nothing incompatible about combining the two systems. It is safe to say that a large part of today's recorded programs can be made essentially noise-free with the aid of the autocorrelator.

A listening appraisal of the Model 1000 must take into account a psychoacoustic phenomenon that causes us to interpret a moderate amount of hiss as a confirmation of high-frequency program content (or an absence of hiss as signifying a lack of highs). Removing the hiss suddenly gives the impression that the highs have been attenuated. This effect first came to our attention with the introduction of the Dolby "B" system, which at first listening seemed to dull the highs. Measurements and more critical listening proved otherwise. The same situation exists with the autocorrelator. We have experimentally added a small amount of hiss (equivalent to the amount removed by the device) to the program following the autocorrelator, and the "missing" highs suddenly reappeared. Phase Linear warns of this effect in the instruction manual accompanying the Model 1000. We would like to emphasize that it is not a "cop-out" on their part.

The peak-unlimiter/downward-expander is more subtle in its effects. As we stated earlier, one cannot detect its presence except by switching it out of the circuit. Turning it on during a quiet passage produces an impressive drop in program (and noise) level (although it is only a few decibels, it sounds like considerably more). Turning the circuit on during a loud passage gives a slight but audible increase in volume. If your power amplifier has output-level meters, the increase of 2 or 3 dB is clearly visible. Under most intermediate program conditions, there is no audible difference when the expander is turned on. At no time could we hear any unwanted effects or unnatural qualities resulting from the expander operation.

Our extended experience with the Model 1000 (and with the 4000 as well) suggests that the dynamic rumble filter is almost an equally important factor in the total performance of the system (although only when playing records, of course). Aside from the quality of your turntable, almost all attention should be paid to the audible low-frequency noise. Eliminating this removes much of the "muddiness" that we might otherwise attribute to some other system component, and the improvement is certainly as beneficial as the area as the circuit is in theirs.

The Phase Linear Model 1000 is not inexpensive (it is far from a simple device, as may be judged from its semiconductor complement of twenty-eight transistors, eight integrated circuits, and ninety-one diodes). However, for any already top-quality music system, we doubt that a $350 expenditure in any other system component could match the audible improvement made possible by the Phase Linear 1000.

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Photographed at 200X magnification with 1.5 grams tracking force, you can see record vinyl being worn away.

This is what happens every time you play a record.

Introducing Sound Guard.

The first product ever that protects records against wear, without resulting loss in frequency response or fidelity.

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Until now, no product could protect records against wear without interfering with sound fidelity.

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From Ball Corporation research into dry lubricants for NASA's Orbiting Solar Observatories came a new technology, one derivative of which is now known as Sound Guard.

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But does Sound Guard adversely affect frequency response or fidelity? For conclusive proof, we asked the most respected of the independent audio laboratories for an exhaustive evaluation. Their results were astonishing!

Test results

1. The application of Sound Guard to a stereophonic or CD-4 quadraphonic disc does not in any way degrade audible frequency response.

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A 12-page report of the complete test results will be mailed with every order.

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Turntable used: Empire Model 598111.

*Sound Guard is Ball Corporation's trademark for its record preservative.

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It's remarkable, but—at least on the basis of some of the reader mail garnered by our recent "Ten Performers I Hate" feature—a surprising number of folks still subscribe to the canard that people are motivated to become critics solely out of jealousy, because they are failed artists meanly revenging themselves on their betters. The plain truth of the matter is, however, that it rarely if ever works that way in real life; if anything, the reverse is more often true. There have been several really fine critics who have made their major successes as artists. In classical-music criticism Berlioz, Schumann, and Debussy come to mind, not to mention G. B. Shaw, and Edgar Allan Poe was quite a successful literary critic. And yes, it works both ways; literary critic Edmund Wilson was a perfectly louche short-story writer, but that hardly invalidates what he had to say about others. The point is that critics—just like everybody else, really—may indeed wish they had been born with the talent to be working artists, but the number of them who have actually bomed out in some artistic area and then resorted to criticism out of spite is too small to warrant serious discussion.

Rock critics just may be another breed entirely, however, and I know of at least two theories that purport to cover their case. The first is that they are all the kind of guys who used to go to high-school dances and sit around reading the liner notes to albums while everybody else was making out in the balcony (the few female critics, of course, are the girls who never even got invited). That may or may not be true—I can't speak for all my colleagues, of course—but I have absolutely no doubt whatsoever about the second theory: to wit, that all rock critics secretly want to be rock stars. It is incontrovertible fact that there's not a one of them who, if pressed, would not admit to having stood alone in front of a mirror occasionally pretending to be a teenage idol.

There's another, seemingly unrelated, theory promulgated by Andy Warhol to the effect that in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes. Again, I can't absolutely guarantee the accuracy of such a dictum, but—well, you be the judge. You see, through a variety of bizarre circumstances, the Rock Dream came true for me recently, for somewhat longer than fifteen minutes. When I found myself playing lead guitar at two major New York area night clubs as a member of the back-up band for RCA recording artist Lucy Simon (sister of Carly, a stigma the lady in question will no doubt eventually overcome). Since my "professional" musical career up till this point has consisted solely of rocking out at a succession of high-school dances and college frat parties, you can imagine I was somewhat pleased with myself.

I found that stardom, however fleeting, is not all it's cracked up to be. To be brutally frank, no groupies! Although I cut, I fancied, a rather dashing figure (my eye make-up was tastefully applied. I jumped around a lot à la Pete Townshend, and I even got to do a couple of hot solos), not a single female reacted with the frenzied enthusiasm I have been led to believe is a guitarist's due. The most flattering attention I got, in fact, was from a waitress, who whispered suavely, "Ya want dat cheeseburger medium or rare?"

Overall, of course, the experience was really fun—I got to sneeze some Starship guitar licks into one of Lucy's as yet unreleased numbers, and I was even recognized by a few of our very own readers. But the most interesting aspect of it all was having, at last, to face reviewers myself. After all these years of dishing out unflattering remarks about a variety of pop performers, the prospect of facing similar abuse filled me, understandably, with a dread I can only compare to that I felt whenever I received a communication from my local draft board.

But I learned something from it, something I have suspected all along—namely, that most rock critics don't know what the hell they're talking about (myself, at times, included). The reviewer from Billboard, for example, caught the act at the only substandard show we did. I broke a string, we had P.A. problems, and even the electric piano went out of tune. During one number things got so hopeless that I just turned my guitar off and simply pretended to play. Naturally, the critic in question noted that that particular song "would have benefited from more imaginative instrumental coloration from the ensemble." Hah!

Where all this will lead I haven't the foggiest idea. Dylan hasn't yet invited me to be part of the Rolling Thunder Revue, the Stones have given Ronnie Wood the vacant berth as second guitarist, Kraftwerk told me my English was too good, Bryan Ferry thinks I'd upstage him, and Bruce Springsteen says my home town of Teaneck is much too middle-class to fit in with his Working-Side-of-the-Tracks image. So I guess it's back to the type-writer and this monthly column unless I can interest someone in my home-recorded solo tape "Give 'Em Enough Rope."

Speaking of rock critics not knowing what they're talking about, here we go with another chapter in the continuing saga of "Simels Has Second Thoughts on David Bowie." This time I chanced across a bootleg of what I thought was David's televised "retirement" concert, the one featuring special guest Jeff Beck, whose splendid guitar solo on "Jean Genie" I recalled as being one of his best ever. To my chagrin, the record turned out instead to be culled from another Bowie television effort, the "Live at the Marquee" production broadcast on the Midnight Special. As a bonus, the disc contained the 1971 single of "Hang On to Yourself" that was remade for the "Ziggy" album (the same one Mark Giangrande mentioned in these pages last month). Unlike the remake, which was standard heavy metal, this one is done almost as rockably, with a lot of aggressive acoustic guitar and echoed drums. The lyrics are different and much less pretentious. David sings it utterly charmingly, and the whole reminds me quite favorably of—believe it or not—Eddy Cochran's original "Summertime Blues." It's that good, and for the moment, at least, it's my favorite record. Since from an ethical standpoint I can't endorse a bootleg, I can only urge you to beg, borrow, or steal a copy of the original British pressing. And you can be sure I never thought I'd be saying that about anything by Darling Dave.
"When the Model 301 project came into the engineering department, our goal was to design a bookshelf speaker with minimal placement constraints, that sold for less than $100, yet had the unique spatial qualities characteristic of the Bose 901 and 501 Direct/Reflecting speakers.

"Initially, two quite unconventional design concepts evolved. First, we deliberately operated the woofer and tweeter simultaneously over a significant portion of the mid-range. This Dual Frequency Crossover network gave us very smooth midrange response and an open spatial quality.

"Second, we perfected a very precise asymmetrical configuration, with the woofer radiating straight ahead, and the tweeter angled to the side, to reflect sound off the room’s side wall and into the listening area. From our experience with the Bose 901 and 501 speakers, we knew that this combination of direct and reflected sound would give us the open, spacious sound we wanted.

"At this point, we felt we had an extraordinarily fine loudspeaker. But we were also aware of a problem. Since this design relied on side wall reflections to maintain its spacious sound, what happens in a room with no convenient side wall?

"We felt this was a crucial problem, since we wanted this speaker to sound very good in any listening room.

"The solution was the Direct Energy Control — an adjustable deflector in front of the tweeter and hidden behind the grille. The Control can be set to reflect sound off a side wall, or, if there is no side wall, it can deflect high frequency sound back toward the center of the room, so energy balance is maintained in the listening area.

"Beyond that, the Control lets the listener adjust the spatial qualities of the speaker for different types of music: very spacious for an orchestra, or a much more intimate sound for a soloist.

The solid line is the polar characteristic for the Model 301 with the Direct Energy Control set for maximum direct energy and a more intimate sound. The broken line is the polar characteristic with the Control set for maximum reflected energy and a more spacious sound. Frequency is 8 kHz, bandwidth is 1/3 octave.

"The Direct Energy Control is deceptively simple: of all the things we did in the Model 301, it’s the one I get most excited about, because I’ve seen how people react when they hear the unique dimension it produces in a speaker priced under $100."
TOMORROW'S SUPERSTARS

W

When an opera fan realizes that his favorite singers are retiring (or at least aging) and he doesn’t see any rising new stars on the horizon, he gets a little panicky. A fan I know recently held forth on this subject: "Callas is long gone," he said, "Elisabeth Schwarzkopf has practically retired, and Renata Tebaldi cancels more recitals than she sings. There are rumors that Birgit Nilsson will never sing in this country again, Leontyne Price is curtailing the number of her engagements and her repertoire, and to top it off Montserrat Caballé, now in her prime, is threatening to retire. It's depressing to contemplate. Where is the next generation of stars coming from?"

As his remarks reveal, this fan is primarily interested in soprano superstars. While I hasten to point out that opera requires more than such divas, I agree that the retirement of a queen of song is a sad occasion, and it's saddening to realize that time has robbed one great soprano or another of the high notes that helped to make her famous. But I am less pessimistic than the complaining fan. There are only so many superstar crowns to go around, and whenever one of them comes up for grabs, it seems to me that there is usually a singer waiting in the wings practicing bows for her coronation.

At least some of the superstars of the next generation are probably singing for us right now with their true potential unrecognized. Remember that Joan Sutherland spent seven years as a house soprano at Covent Garden singing a repertoire that included an assortment of Rhinemaidens, woobirds, and priestesses before she dazzled London audiences with her Lucia di Lammermoor, the role that made her a leader in the bel canto revival. Now she is slowly building her repertoire with such roles as Marguerite in Faust, Amelia in Simon Boccanegra, Elvira in Don Giovanni, and Pamina in The Magic Flute. On disc she is best heard on Mozart recordings on the Philips label, notably as Elvira in Don Giovanni. Has she the talent, ambition, and staying power to become tomorrow's superstar lyric-dramatic soprano? Perhaps. She will be interesting to watch.

The career of the lyric soprano Evelyn Mandac has developed quite differently. Born in the Philippines, she completed her musical education in this country. And she has sung such roles as Susanna in The Marriage of Figaro, Mimi in La Bohème, and Liu in Turandot with the opera companies of Santa Fe, Seattle, Miami, Washington, San Francisco, Glyndebourne, and the Netherlands before making her debut this season at the Metropolitan where she sang Lauretta in Gianni Schicchi and Gretel in Hansel and Gretel. In addition to the standard repertoire, Miss Mandac has sung a good bit of contemporary music, and the young composer Thomas Pasatieri has tailored certain roles specifically for her. She can be heard on RCA recordings of Mahler's Second Symphony conducted by Eugene Ormandy and Offenbach's Carmina Burana conducted by Seiji Ozawa, and she will sing Sophie on the forthcoming Philips recording of Der Rosenkavalier. The possessor of a small, very pretty lyric voice, Miss Mandac has been compared to the Brazilian soprano Bida Sayao. Will she achieve stardom in the light lyric repertoire? Wait and see.

The Octavian on the Philips Rosenkavalier will be the mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade, who comes from a background no more exotic than New Jersey. After a few seasons singing tiny roles at the Met, Miss von Stade hit the international circuit and made her bid for one of those spare queen-of-thespoes crowns in such roles as Cherubino in The Marriage of Figaro. She returned to the Met triumphantly in leading roles in The Barber of Seville, Don Giovanni, and Norma. Record companies have big plans for her in the next few years, but you can hear her now on Columbia recordings of Haydn's Harmoniemusik conducted by Leonard Bernstein and a recital disc with Judith Blegen.

I had the good fortune to hear Kiri Te Kanawa as the Countess the year she first sang the role at Covent Garden, and I've had my eye on Miss Mandac and Miss von Stade for some time. But a young debut artist at the Met this season who took me completely by surprise was Leona Mitchell, who sang a few performances as Micaela in Carmen. It is difficult to make a strong dramatic impression in this role, but she managed to hold her own with such seasoned professionals as Regine Crespin and Placido Domingo. Her voice is surprisingly big for a young singer, and it has an interesting timbre and a pleasing warmth. Trained in Oklahoma and now only twenty-five, she has sung with some of the world's leading orchestras, and her many operatic credits include a European debut in Barcelona as Mathilde in Rossini's William Tell! Her debut recording is the new London album of Porgy and Bess reviewed in this issue. We'll be hearing a lot from Miss Mitchell.

I congratulate myself for having spotted Frederica von Stade as a comer when she was singing bits at the Met (I won't name some others I spotted who have disappeared). This season I find myself paying more and more attention to Betsy Norden, a pretty young Met soprano with a pretty young voice. Hired in 1968 as a chorister, she became a soloist in 1972. This year she was a very sweet Dew Fairy in Hansel and Gretel and a charming Nella in Gianni Schicchi. She's married to a member of the Met orchestra and may be quite happy with the repertoire she now has. You never know. But having failed to foresee Beverly Sills' great career when she was a house soprano at the New York City Opera, I'm keeping a sharp eye on everybody.
If you’ve got the salt, I’ve got the Sauza.

Nothing gets a good thing going better than Tequila Sauza. That’s because Sauza is the Número Uno Tequila in all of Mexico. And that’s because Tequila Sauza—Silver or Gold—does best all the things anybody would want Tequila to do.

Try it the classic down-Mexico-way: in a shot glass, with salt and lime on the side. Or in a Margarita. Or in a Sunrise. Who knows where it will all lead?
You'll appreciate some things about Dual right away. Others will take years.

Unlike receivers and speakers, whose operating elements are completely concealed, much of what a turntable does—and how well it does it—can be easily evaluated on the dealer's shelf. The mechanical feel of the control levers, smoothness of tonearm movement and overall evidence of solidity and precision are excellent clues to the turntable's general performance.

For many consumers, their own sense of quality is all it takes to decide on a Dual. And considering the many years that Dual has been the first choice of audio experts, nothing more is really needed. However, we'd like you to know about the differences between Duals and other turntables that are not so readily apparent.

The true measure of a turntable's quality and long-term reliability is not simply in its features, but is inherent in the materials used, the care in their manufacture and the quality control employed in assembly and testing.

As an example, consider the Dual tonearm. The same engineering approach is applied to all models: straight-line for maximum rigidity and lowest mass.

Stylus force is set by a long coiled spring centered around the vertical pivot, and its accuracy is maintained independently of record warps or turntable level. Anti-skating, however, does change during play—automatically, to compensate for the inherent change in skating force that occurs as the stylus moves inward.

The tonearms of the five top Dual models pivot in a four-point gyroscopic gimbal suspended within a rigid frame. Each gimbal is hand-assembled, and special gauges are used to measure lateral and vertical friction to assure that each will conform to Dual's stringent specifications. Only by such rigid quality control can tonearm calibration be set and maintained with the accuracy required by today's finest cartridges.

Every one of the component parts in Dual turntables is built with similar care and precision. For example, the rotor of every motor is dynamically balanced in all planes of motion. And the motor pulleys that drive the belts or idler wheels are individually machined and examined with precision instruments to assure perfect concentricity. Thus the virtual absence of drive system vibration, the primary source of rumble.

Despite all this precision and refinement, Dual turntables are designed to be rugged; they need not be babied, by you or anyone else in your family. Chances are your Dual will outlast all your other components, so you should carefully consider which of the three types of Dual you want: semi-automatic, single-play, fully automatic, single-play; automatic single-play with multi-play facility.

When you visit your United Audio dealer, don't be in a rush to decide, since you're likely to own your Dual a long, long time—and appreciate it more, play after play, day after day, year after year.
The Dual tonearm is centered within a four-point gyroscopic gimbal and pivots horizontally and vertically on identical sets of precision low-friction bearings. The metal used for the bearings is first hardened, then honed; a process which produces microscopically smooth surfaces. (Dual models with gimbal-mounted tonearms: 1228, 510, 601, 1249 and 70.)

Motor pulley used in Dual's belt-drive models (1249, 601 and 510) is individually machined for perfect concentricity and balance. The drive belt is also precision-ground to close tolerances, contributing further to the smoothness of the drive system.

Stylus pressure is applied by long coiled spring, centered around vertical pivot. This system applies stylus pressure perpendicular to record and thus maintains the pressure equally on both groove walls even if turntable is not perfectly level.

Ideally, the stylus angle in play should be identical to the angle used in cutting records. This is accomplished in the Dual 1249 by the Mode Selector (A) which moves the tonearm base (B) up or down according to the mode of play: in single-play the tonearm is parallel to the record; in multiple-play, parallel to the center of the stack.

A) Dual’s anti-skating system is located within the tonearm system. It applies the necessary counterforce around the pivot and directly opposite to the skating direction. B) The system also provides automatic compensation for the inherent change in skating force that occurs as the stylus moves toward the record center.

Multi-scale anti-skating provides accurate settings for all stylus types—conical, elliptical and CD-4—assuring perfectly balanced tracking pressure on record groove walls.

CIRCLE NO. 50 ON READER SERVICE CARD
THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF LAZAR BERNAN

The name Lazar Berman first appeared in this column in July 1975; it had not been seen in the American musical press for years before that. We last left our hero in Moscow, seated, presumably, at the piano, and perhaps wondering what quirk of fate had provided the impetus for him to travel from the Soviet Union and look forward to the first American concert tour of his life—at the age of forty-five. It was, after all, more than twenty years since Richter and Berman had been seated side by side in New York. Mr. Berman may well wonder about such things; so may we. But it is doubtful that any of it.

Peculiar legends began to grow up about Berman: that he was a raving maniac kept under lock and key for his own safety and that the difficulties of the first two of the new records, at least, Berman is a somewhat different pianist from what he was, as noted, eight years ago. On the evidence of the first two of the new records, at least, Berman is a somewhat different pianist today.

It would be impossible for him to have added to the virtuoso equipment he then possessed, and I hasten to say that he has not lost any of it. But his musical personality has changed—or is in the process of changing—and if we allow that he is intrinsically neither better nor worse than before, he is, altogether, less astonishing and more mature. He still has the Lisztian flair. But that diabolical element, the surging, sensual torrent of sound, seems to have been replaced by something else: transparency and perfection of balance. And the dynamic range seems to have been extended downward—to more and more gradations of pianissimo.

Berman's new recording of the Liszt Sonata is one of the greatest performances of that work I have heard, and I have heard a lot of it. It is a distinctly unmannered performance (compare Horowitz's old one on Sera phina, for example), lacking any sense of struggle and perhaps lacking also, therefore, the virtuoso quality of triumph over near-insurmountable difficulties. The difficulties are in hand from the start; the triumph is predetermined. Berman is in total command throughout, and what we are given is not a "recording without orchestra" but an expression of musical personality—Liszt's, that is—something occasionally achieved in other ways by other pianists but probably never with such perfection of detail.

Venezia e Napoli shows Berman stepping perhaps gingerly into Romantic lyrical phrasing, that facet of the Romantic movement perhaps most opposed to virtuosity. One makes points in a different way here, which is why so many pianists who can tear down the house with the Liszt Sonata cannot transfer that assurance to the Schumann's Kinderszenen.

Berman's is easily the most spectacular performance I have ever heard of the Mephisto Waltz. But what is spectacular about it is not its diabiria or bravura, but its utter transparency and control. If there are three things going on simultaneously in the music, you hear three things, in almost inhumanly perfect balance with one another. No effort. No challenge either, but what perfection!

If I save the Tchaikovsky Concerto (which is, by the way, spectacularly well recorded) for last, it is because there is a "why" to be included in any evaluation of it. A copy of the Transcendental Études recording was rushed to Von Karajan and a decision was made to record the Tchaikovsky Concerto. That is all I know about it. It will sell, of course (all recordings of the Tchaikovsky sell), but what does a pianist of Berman's current qualities do with the piece? What he does, I think, is to play Von Karajan's interpretation. Technically, he works no problems for him (perhaps never has the passionate, deli cate, ideally so exactly, or the finale with such ample ease of power), but the piano never roars in challenge. Berman seems to be looking for values beyond the obvious ones, and, in this piece, they are just not there. Lacking the youthful urgency of the performances by Ted Joselson, for example, or Nelson Freire, the work gains little in exchange. I think it would have been different in Berman's hands ten years ago.

But hearing such a performance makes it tantalizing to look into the future. Given, now, a pianist of immense technical resources who has left bravura behind him, who is more intuitive than intellectual, who seems to lean more toward the romantic than toward the sensual and coloristic, what repertoire does one want to hear him do? To me, the Schumann of the Toccata and the Kreisleriana come first to mind. Balakirev's Islamey, of course, but only for the experience of hearing someone play it who really can play it. Yes, Scriabin, if you want to hear anyone play the complete works of Liszt? I wonder.
THE TOUGHEST PROVING GROUND ON EARTH.

Since the beginning of time, men have tested themselves against the sea.

At sea, there are no free rides. Every mile you travel is paid for in skill, courage, grit and ingenuity. There are no excuses or second bests. The sea asks the limit of your ability and accepts nothing less.

This is why the Navy is more than just a job. No matter what you do, you're being challenged every day. You're being asked to give that little bit extra. Not everyone can meet this kind of challenge. But maybe you'll surprise yourself.

Proving yourself is worth some effort.

The Navy has training in more than sixty different career fields—training you can use for the rest of your life. You'll have an opportunity to see the world, make new friends, continue your education, and learn to be a leader. Speak to your Navy Recruiter. He can tell you more—including what training you qualify for. Or call toll free 800-841-8000, anytime. (In Georgia, 800-342-5855.)
The Sherwood 9910
Everything you hear is true.

It has all the power you need (at the lowest achievable level of distortion): 100 watts per channel, minimum RMS [both channels driven at 8 ohms, 20-20,000 Hz; with total harmonic distortion no more than 0.1%]. The componentry used to achieve this rating features exceptional stability characteristics: a paralleled OCL direct-coupled output configuration...twice 15,000 μF filter capacitors...and a zener regulated secondary power supply.

It has all the controls you need for fully flexible centralized operation: 5-position Mode switch, 6-position Selector switch, 5-position Speaker switch. Two Tape Monitor circuits [with a two-way, inter-deck dubbing capability]. Front-panel Mic Input and Mixing, with a frequency response suitable for use with a professional caliber microphone. And a Main-In/Pre-Out switch, which allows independent usage of the main amplifier section. You can operate two speaker groupings, two turntables, three tape decks and any auxiliary equipment—with no discernible white noise.

It has State-of-the-Art tuner specs: an IHF FM Sensitivity rating of 9.9 μV. Four-ganged tuning capacitors, dual-gate MOS FET’s provide superior image rejection and spurious response rejection, with minimal cross modulation. The digital detector introduces absolutely no distortion to the signal, and never requires alignment. The Ceramic FM IF Filters are matched for optimal phase linearity. The Phase Lock Loop integrated circuitry in the multiplex decoder improves separation and SCA rejection, while limiting distortion.

It has all the features you need for the purest sound: Loudness Compensation and Hi-Filter switches; separate detented Bass, Midrange and Treble controls (each with exceptional variance characteristics); and a master Tone Defeat switch, for instant reference to flat response. FM Stereo Only and FM Muting devices. Dual tuning meters. And a Positune™ Indicator light, which visually signals perfect tuning.

It has switchable FM de-emphasis [25 μsec and 75 μsec], to accommodate an outboard noise reduction unit. A built-in Ambience Retrieval System, which adds much of the extra coloration you get with true 4-channel sound. And a 4-channel adapter circuit, which makes it easy to convert to the real thing.

It has plug-in driver boards [to facilitate servicing], which feature a single package differential amplifier, for stable operation regardless of temperature fluctuations.

It has relay speaker protection circuitry, which automatically disengages your speakers, if a potentially damaging situation arises.

It has everything we’ve mentioned. It has some features we haven’t mentioned.

It has a price of less than $700.* Your Sherwood Dealer will have it on his shelf soon. [Or if you’re impatient, get all the facts sooner, by writing to us at the address below.]

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Sherwood Electronic Laboratories
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*The value shown is for informational purposes only. The actual resale price will be set by the individual Sherwood Dealer in his region. The cabinet shown is constructed of plywood with a walnut veneered covering.
Ten years after the revolution.

In 1966, Sony brought you the world's first commercially available turntable with a DC servo motor. This effectively slowed motor speeds from 1800 to 300 RPM, producing the lowest rumble figures measured till then. The servo system also drastically reduced wow and flutter, thus giving you a chance to hear what 33-1/3 records sound like at 33-1/3. Quite a revolution.

But we haven't been sitting on our laurels since then. Introducing the PS-4750.

Overlooking the fact that the PS-4750 is so pretty we could sell it through interior decorators, here are its technical innovations.

It has a direct drive servo motor that gives you incredibly low rumble, wow and flutter levels. Plus total immunity from line voltage and frequency variations. That's because the PS-4750 has a unique system that, in essence, consists of a sensitive magnetic head (with eight gaps instead of the normal one) which monitors platter speed by picking up a magnetic coating on the outside of the platter. This speed data goes through a small computer connected to the motor, instantly compensating for variations.

The PS-4750 is also ultra insensitive to outside vibrations (which causes intermodulation distortion and acoustic feedback). Sensitivity to outside vibration shows as "Q." And the PS-4750 has a platter and case made of SBMC, a Sony developed compound which has one third the "Q" of aluminum or zinc.

We've even done something about the resonance caused by warp in the record itself. Those round doohickies on the platter are rubber suction cups that actually provide greater contact surface, reducing the longitudinal vibration caused by warp. The end result is a cleaner sound.

So, all in all, our engineers think the PS-4750 is pretty nifty. But don't take our word for it. Just stop into your Sony dealer and show your independence by listening for yourself.
FRANCK’S SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

As a one-time violinist, I have a particular weakness for the literature for that instrument. Through the years, from the eighteenth century until today, there have been composers who have reserved for the violin some of their most deeply felt and inspired music. Indeed, the violin is second only to the piano in terms of the quality as well as the quantity of music written for it. In any list of masterpieces for the instrument, surely César Franck’s Sonata in A Major must rank very high.

It was not until 1879, when, at the age of fifty-seven, he produced his Piano Quintet in F Minor, that Franck dispelled his earlier image as the ascetic “Seraphic Father” who inhabited the remote organ loft at the Church of Sainte-Clothilde in Paris one or two removes from the real world. The quintet was an unbridled Romantic work full of fervor and passion, and it pointed Franck in the direction he was to pursue during the remaining eleven years of his life. The works of his last four years, especially, proclaimed in their turbulence and strong emotions the emerging voice of the self-assertive creator.

Franck composed the A Major Sonata for Violin and Piano in 1886 as a wedding present for his renowned compatriot, the Belgian violin virtuoso Eugene Ysaÿe. Its lyrical strength and beauty reach out and involve performers and listeners alike. Cyclic form—the quotation in later movements of musical material from earlier ones—was a favorite device of Franck’s, and we now find it operating in the sonata with tremendous effect: the first three notes played by the violin serve as a motif that recurs in all four movements. The crown of the sonata is its magnificent last movement, a soaring dialogue between the two instruments in canon that rises to the heights of exultant liberation.

Vincent D’Indy, pupil and disciple of Franck, left a vivid description of the first performance of the sonata. It came at the end of a long program given in the afternoon in one of the rooms of the Museum of Modern Painting in Brussels. By the time the first movement ended, the room was quite dark. Regulations forbade the use of candles or gaslight in rooms that contained paintings. The musicians were barely able to see the music on their stands, but they proceeded with the final three movements, playing from memory “with a fire and passion the more astounding to the listeners in that there was an absence of all externals which could enhance the performance. Music, wondrous and alone, held sovereign sway in the darkness of night.”

The power and beauty of the Sonata for Violin and Piano have caused other instrumentalists to appropriate the music for their own use. Thus there are available recordings of the music as a Sonata for Flute and Piano (James Galway and Martha Argerich, RCA LRL1-5095) and for Cello and Piano (Jacqueline du Pré and Daniel Barenboim, Angel S 36937, or Zara Nelsova and Grant Johamessen, included in Golden Crest 4099). There is more than curiosity value attached to these performances, for they are all first-rate, but the former violinist in me puts up rather a strong resistance to this glory of the literature being played by instruments other than the one for which it was written.

And there are a number of superb violin and piano recordings available, among them those of Jasha Heifetz and Brooks Smith (included in Columbia M2-33444), David Nadien and David Hancock (Monitor S 2017), David Oistrakh and Sviatoslav Richter (Angel S 40121), Itzhak Perlman and Vladimir Ashkenazy (London CS 6628, reel E 80219, cartridge O 67219, cassette M 10219), Isaac Stern and Alexander Zakin (Connoisseur Society CSQ 2050, SQ quadraphonic). Both the Heifetz-Smith and Oistrakh/Richter recordings derive live performances, the former from the now-famous concert played in the Los Angeles Music Center in October 1972, the latter from a December 1968 concert at the Moscow Conservatory. If Oistrakh’s is the more hot-blooded of the two, Heifetz’s glows with a more subtle intensity. And Brooks Smith, though not nearly as famous as Oistrakh’s partner, Sviatoslav Richter, yields very little to Richter in terms of thoughtful rapport with his violinist. Both performances, in short, are fully worthy of Franck’s inspired music.

The 1976 UPDATING OF THE BASIC REPERTOIRE is now available in convenient pamphlet form. Send $2.50 and a stamped, self-addressed No. 10 envelope (9½ x 4¼ in.) to Esther Maldonado, Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 for your copy.

CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD

April 1976
HOT PLATTERS

Associate Technical Editor Ralph Hedges presents a carefully chosen selection of twenty-five discs that represent the current state of the recording art.
I t has been, amazingly enough, seven years since Stereo Review last offered its readers a list of records recommended for their technical excellence. Quite a lot of vinyl has flowed across the presses in the intervening years; there have been a number of significant developments in disc technology (including quadraphonics), and the subject therefore seems more than ripe for an update.

Aware from past experience that such a survey could not be undertaken lightly, we began by marshaling our forces. We first recruited the help of Arnis Balgalvis, an electrical engineer and devoted audiophile who has long kept an eye on record quality as reported in reviews and elsewhere, and he in turn canvassed audio clubs, equipment manufacturers, dealers, and other quality-conscious audiophiles for their recommendations. In addition, the record-review columns of magazines both here and abroad were combed for supplemental suggestions.

Two copies of each of the nominated discs were then obtained (where possible), and each was carefully auditioned to evaluate its sonic merit. Finally, the two of us having independently listened to all the nominations, each prepared a list of tentative "winners." These were brought together, and the last weeks of the project were spent resolving the differences in our selections (there were gratifyingly few) and in agreeing on the phrasing of the comments on individual records. We estimate that the listening-evaluation process alone came to a total of well over a hundred hours between us.

Since we early realized not only that the survey had to include a examination of quadraphonic discs but that these posed some rather special problems of their own, we called upon recording engineer and educator John Woram to attack this part of the catalog separately, knowing that his professional concerns had already involved him deeply in keeping abreast of developments in the field. His "winners" are listed separately on page 63.

As we proceeded with the stereo evaluations, we quite deliberately employed an extensive array of playback equipment not only to sharpen our evaluative abilities but to include as representative a cross-section of listening conditions "out there" as we could. At different times, therefore, both dynamic and electrostatic loudspeakers and headphones were used, as well as transistorized and vacuum-tube electronics; phono cartridges of various makes, models, and designs; conventional and straight-line-tracking tone arms, damped and undamped—in short, almost every device and wrinkle that excites the enthusiasm (or the disdain!) of serious audiophiles.

As for the records themselves, they presented another set of complications. More than once a highly touted recording fell substantially short of our standards, a development that could not help but be confidence-shaking. And occasionally a disc that was quite impressive on some bands—or on one—turned out to be mediocre on others; this was even true, in some cases, from band to band of long classical works.

As listening became more concentrated (four to eight consecutive hours per day), the work began to go faster. At first we relied heavily on a check list with entries for noise, audible distortion, frequency range and balance, apparent dynamic range, stereo imaging, etc. It is of course the sum total of all these factors (plus a few others of exotic singularity) that makes a recording sonically good or bad. However, we soon found that we were reacting to the truly outstanding discs long before any systematic analysis could take place in our minds or on our check lists.

This is not to say that any of the recordings on this list instantly transported us to Row G in a favorite concert hall. Far from it. Many of the classical recordings we listened to, for example, gave evidence—sometimes obvious—of close multi-miking, though we believe that none of our final selections were compromised by the technique, and some may have benefited.

... Manufacturers upheld the reputations they earned in Stereo Review's informal poll on record quality in May of 1975.

There are, of course, larger musical questions raised by modern recording techniques (and by the tastes of modern recording producers) that have to do with the composer's intentions—questions involving the blending and balancing of orchestral sounds, for example, or the "closeness" of the listener to the actual music making. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that the differences between live concert-hall sound and most recorded sound are immediately apparent to anyone who has heard both, and these differences will probably be recognized by experienced listeners without any further assistance from us.

This listening project was begun with several subsidiary motives in mind, and we would like to think we have achieved them. First, we wanted a list containing records readily obtained in the U.S.—as long as no compromise of our standards was necessary. Second, we wanted records that would be outstanding in every important respect—wallowing bass drums as well as bright, glorious violins and cymbals, for example. Third, we wanted a list that was musically balanced and interesting. Leaving room for a few possible quibbles, we believe we have succeeded in satisfying all three.

On the brighter side, this project has shown us that the art of recording is still progressing, and while we have not been able to listen to every recent recording, we can say with confidence that certain of these discs represent pinnacles of achievement in the art for our time. You can therefore perhaps consider the purchase of one of these recordings a vote, in hard cash, for higher standards for the industry. There are, after all, real people involved, and perhaps some of them are listening. To place the credit where it belongs, we have listed the names (when available) of both producers and engineers for each listed record. And if you have found some record in your listening that has impressed you with its sonic excellence, we'd like to hear about it so we can check it out the next time around. (Continued overleaf)
HOT PLATTERS

- J. S. BACH: Goldberg Variations. Gustav Leonhardt, harpsichord. Telefunken 641198. A breathtakingly fine harpsichord recording, miked at a sensitive distance and in a believably acoustic. With four-channel synthesizer enhancement you almost expect to hear programs rustling around you. The pressing is exemplary.

- BEETHOVEN: String Quartets Nos. 1 and 3. Quartetto Italiano. Philips 6500 181. This fairly close-up recording manages to convey both the bite and the body of the strings. Mechanical bowing and fingering noises are masked by the tonal richness. Vittorio Negri, production.

- BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5. Vienna Philharmonic, Carlos Kleiber cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 516. At first the dense texture of the music may tend to obscure the subtleties of this marvelously analytical recording, but after a short time the exacting balances and highly natural tone color should become apparent. Near-flawless processing permits an impressive dynamic range. Werner Mayer, production. Hans-Peter Schwegmann, engineer.

- RIZET: Carmen. Forces of the Metropolitan and Manhattan Opera Companies, Leonard Bernstein cond. Deutsche Grammophon 2709 043, three discs. This well-known production of the opera Carmen has its faults: voices are occasionally indistinct and/or muddy, and the bass sometimes all but disappears. Fortunately, these are problems the live opera-goer also experiences, and they detract hardly at all. The performance seems to take place within a bright ball of ambiance that subtly softens and flatters the sound. Thomas Mowrey, producer; Gunter Hermanns, sound engineer.

- BERNARD HERRMANN: Citizen Kane. National Philharmonic Orchestra, Charles Gerhardt cond. RCA ARLI-0707. This is not a soundtrack recording but an entirely new production of Bernard Herrmann film scores. The sound is superbly engineered throughout, very massive and brassy in the background hiss-probably the result of frequency balances. Furthermore, the engineer's boosting of the higher frequencies too much.

- PROKOFIEV: Romeo and Juliet (complete ballet). Cleveland Orchestra, Lorin Maazel cond. London CSAD2312, three discs. A razor-edged portrayal of a highly kinetic score, very close up and somewhat lurid in life. Occasionally the timbres are the tumult of side one and the Dance of the Knights on side two, scored for violins and Hollywood tradition. One of our copies did not escape a token RCA pressing defect (apparently a small gas bubble that affected both sides of the disc), but the surfaces were otherwise excellent. There is some recorded hiss in the disc George Korngold, producer; K. E. Wilkinson, engineer.

- MAHLER: Das Klagende Lied. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Haitink cond. Philips 6500 587. The Concertgebouw's hall impacts a mellow, almost mysterious spaciousness to the orchestra's sound, which is at the same time clear and brightly sweet. Except for the voices, which are too close and widely spaced to be natural, this is a dramatic demonstration of stereo's ability to suggest spatial depth and "air." The disc has some recorded hiss. J. Van Ginnekten, production.

FOREIGN PRESSINGS

As serious record collectors know, the present slump in disc quality has driven many music enthusiasts to seek groovers (or cleaners) pastures in the form of imported records, which they feel are better in technical execution. Some imports—Deutsche Grammophon and Philips, to name two of the most prominent—are of course widely available here. However, the mark of a true discophile is his willingness to spend $8 or more (plus infinite patience) to obtain overseas copies of recorded material that is already available in the U.S. on domestic labels. More than a few of these imports originate in England, where some (the English included) believe the best record production in the world is taking place. We were naturally curious to learn what these people are getting for the time and money spent, so we got our hands on some domestic and foreign versions of the same records and compared.

Our first comparison involved André Previn's stunning performance of Holst's Planets with the London Symphony Orchestra, which is sold as Angel S 36980 and EMI ASD 2917. However, we felt the Angel pressing's shortcomings in this case were less detrimental to Shostakovich's music (and one of us found EMI's more brilliant treble a little too piercing in some of the violin passages).

From there we moved on to Cat Stevens' "Tea for the Tillerman," which is on A&M 4780 here and on Island ILPS-9135 abroad. This time the situation reversed itself. The A&M version was the definite winner in low-frequency response and overall fullness and warmth of frequency balances. Furthermore, the imported version had an exasperating background hiss—probably the result of the engineer's boosting the higher frequencies too much.

Finally, we decided it would be cute to turn the tables and compare the English version of Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" (EMI SHVL 804) with the West German pressing of the same thing (EMI Harvest C062-05249). There were definite differences. The German disc was balanced to favor the high frequencies, which were audible clearer and more distinct. Surface noise was also lower. However, the German engineer somehow left out the bass—including the important "heartbeat" pulse we felt was vital to the artists' intention.

What are the sources for hard-to-find imported discs? As a rule, if the recording has been released on a domestic label, the foreign version(s) will not be readily available. However, a few specialty record shops regularly import the better ones in modest quantities. The Discount Record and Book Shop (1340 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20036) will fill orders by mail out of stock, and it is willing to special order as well. This source is very free with advice as to which imports are popular among its regular clientele—an important service, since all imports are not automatically an improvement over domestic versions. Another popular source is The Record Collector, P.O. Box 43, Paramus, N.J. 07652. Be sure to inquire in advance about prices, which vary.

As a last resort, you might try ordering records directly from a dealer or manufacturer overseas. However, delays in correspondence and order fulfillment are not unusual, and prices are difficult to determine in advance.

—R.H.
In the nooks and crannies of the recording industry there are a few small operations that work assiduously, and more for love than money, at producing discs of the highest possible technical quality. Many of them function with borrowed equipment and almost nonexistent budgets, but the results, if not consistent, are frequently gratifying and sometimes even spectacular. All of these producers, however, have highly individual ideas about what makes a good recording. Some, for their own good reasons, reject Dolby noise reduction and other signal processors, and live with tape hiss as the lesser of two evils. Others are inclined to place their microphones well away from the stage or the performing artists, giving a back-row perspective on the performance which is not at all what buyers of commercial recordings are used to. Nevertheless, many are certain to find satisfaction and even delight in these offspring of gifted amateurs-and of gifted professionals yearning to be amateurs once again.

Sheffield Labs, in the few years of its existence, has become one of the standard-bearers for low-noise, high-dynamic-range disc recordings. Sheffield engineers cut their discs directly from the output of the mixing console, bypassing the tape-recorder step completely. The result—as dramatically demonstrated in their latest production “I’ve Got the Music in Me,” with Thelma Houston and the Pressure Cooker—is sound of ferocious impact against a background of dead silence. Some mediocre playback systems have had trouble measuring up to the disc’s extremely high levels, but the problem seems to be in the systems and not the recording. Because of the production processes used (there is no tape version from which new master discs can be generated when the old are used up), Sheffield’s discs are truly limited editions, but new off rins take the place of the old when supplies are exhausted.

Bob Fulton, besides making loudspeakers that are highly esteemed among audiophiles, operates a small, high-quality record company that has eighteen current releases. Fulton’s label, Ark, is devoted to the classics, both heavy and light. There are two organ recordings with absolutely overwhelming bass, some magnificently recorded choral music, and even some works for chorus and full orchestra. Write Fulton Electronics, Dept. SR, 4426 Zane Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minn. 55422 for a catalog and price list.

Insight Records, the creation of Douglas Erickson, has two current offerings of jazz New Orleans style: “An Unheard Experiment” and “Pigs Eye Jazz” [sic]. The first gives an excellent feel of a live performance (with audience present) in an auditorium setting; the second is even better. Erickson keeps track of the dynamic and frequency ranges on his recordings with a real-time analyzer, so you know his intentions are serious. Write: Insight Records, Dept. SR, 7726 Morgan Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55423.

At this writing Mark Levinson, the manufacturer of some very exotic audio electronics, has three recordings in his catalog, with more to come. The first is a splendid presentation of various works for chorus and organ, the second contains works for piano by Haydn and Ravel, and the third an original composition for percussion that, although a little abstract, is extremely intriguing and very, very clean. Levinson builds his own recording electronics and calibrates everything to the nth degree. Write: Mark Levinson, 55 Circular Avenue, Hamden, Conn. 06514.

Another Minnesotan, Russ Borud, is a confirmed amateur, but every once in a while he turns a particularly good tape into a disc—usually to satisfy the demands of friends and admirers. Any press overrun is sold through a local record shop equipped to handle mail orders. Of the current Borud titles, the most notable are “Organ Recital” (Earl Barr, organist), which some experienced ears think is the best organ recording they’ve ever heard, and “Zgodava,” a keyboard artist who plays piano and an electrifyingly recorded harpsichord. There is also a new Zgodava piano recording that should be ready by the time you read this. The discs are available for $7 postpaid from: The Sound Environment, Dept. SR, Butler Square, First Avenue North at Sixth Street, Minneapolis, Minn. 55403.

Finally, records from Discos Ensayo, a Spanish record company, are not readily obtainable in the U.S., but where they are known they are widely admired for their technical and artistic excellence. Fortunately, Acoustic Research offers a demonstration record (“The Sound of Musical Instruments,” Volume 1) that can serve as a sampler of the Ensayo catalog. Its content is mostly small-scale classical pieces, with one tremendous jazz selection and an excerpt from an Albeniz piano composition that is likely to prove the most challenging thing your phono cartridge has ever encountered. The disc is pressed by Ensayo in Spain, and the surfaces are flawless. AR reportedly has plans for future Ensayo releases and may hurry up about it if they are encouraged. Write: Acoustic Research, Dept. SR, 10 American Drive, Norwood, Mass. 02062.

—R.H.
HOT PLATTERS

Weisberg cond. NONESUCH 71281. Weill's familiar pieces and Milhaud's jazz-flavored tone poem are gloriously recorded here with spectacular sparkle and crash. We find the prominence of percussion entirely appropriate and quite natural. The handling of the stereo provides a highly satisfying sense of depth and solidity. Marc Aubort and Joanna Nickrenz, engineering and tape editing.

● EARLY MUSIC IN ITALY, FRANCE, AND BURGUNDY. Secular polyphonic works from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. Studio der Frühen Musik. TELEFUNKEN 641068. The recording acoustic is open and reverberant, the miking very close, and the tone quality of voices and instruments is truly exciting in its purity and naturalness. The pressing is first-rate.

● VIRTUOSO OVERTURES: Works by Rossini, Wagner, Johann Strauss, and others. Los Angeles Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS6858. The orchestral sound here is as attractive as any we've heard. The violins are (in the best London manner) almost too glamorous to be believed, the brass, percussion, and woodwinds are rich and sharply etched, and the stereo is highly convincing. This is a recording anyone could love. Ray Minshull, producer; James Lock and Gordon Parry, engineers.

● GEORGE BENSON: White Rabbit. CTI 6015. This relaxed jazz outing is complemented by a recorded sound that is somewhat distant and pleasantly spacious. Most prominent is Benson's electric guitar (smoother and flatter than the typical rock instrument), along with a warm, full bass and good percussion. The highs are subtle, delicate, and precise. Start with side two. Creed Taylor, producer; Rudy Van Gelder, engineer.

● STANLEY CLARKE: Stanley Clarke. NEUMANN NE 431. A stimulating amalgam of jazz elements and hard rock, recorded with chilling impact and clarity. Percussion is excellent, and the prodigious acoustic bass that begins side two is by itself worth the price of admission. Ken Scott, engineer.

● BY COODER: Paradise and Lunch. REPRISE MS 2179. Ry Cooder sings rather funny country-style songs, and his voice on this recording sounds just as we imagine it would in real life. Almost everything else sounds excellent as well, particularly Earl Hines' piano on the final cut, which is as smooth and cool as cream. Lenny Waronker and Russ Titelman, producers; Lee Herschberg, engineering.

● LARRY CORRELL: The Restful Mind. VANGUARD 79135. Correll's guitar is the principal attraction in these graceful reworkings of several classical pieces and themes, but the sidemen also come off very well. The guitar is recorded almost completely out of phase on a number of bands, and at times it sounds almost like two instruments. Vanguard tells us that this is a result of the way the instrument was miked. In any case, it should not deter anyone from buying the record, since the effect (quite spacey) can almost always be diminished or eliminated by reversing the phase (switch your speaker leads) on one channel of the playback system. Danny Weiss, producer; David Baker, engineer.

● KING CRIMSON: Larks' Tongues in Aspic. ATLANTIC SD 7263. Brutal electronic rock—some strikingly recorded natural sounds together with relentless, outrageously gimmicked jazz guitars and numerous in-describable effects. This is definitely not for everyone, and some will find it hugely obscurous. However, our general impression is of brilliant, clear highs (though there is some hiss) and seemingly enormous dynam-ic range. (This is the one recording on which the reviewers could not fully agree. One doubted that the recording is "clean" throughout, another found the distortion remarkably "undistorted." We would be interested in readers' reactions.) Nick Ryan, engineer.

● THE HOLLIES: Hollies. EPIC KE 32574. For the soft-rock crowd there is this immaculate recording. The drums are a little anemic, but the cymbal—the kind with the jangly rivets in it, we suspect—sounds fine, and the back-up instruments are quite good if slightly bodiless. Even the (essentially monotonic) electric bass is well handled. A professional job. Ron Richards and the Hollies, producers; Allan Parsons, engineer.

● MODERN JAZZ QUARTET: The Art of the Modern Jazz Quartet/Atlantic Years. ATLANTIC SD 2-301; two discs. During its years with Atlantic the venerable MJQ benefited from some of the best engineering of the day. This is a compilation of about a dozen different recording sessions spread over nine years, and the differences between them are quite interesting. The recording's one serious flaw is the few moments of severely distorted vibraphone at the end of side one, band two (Corrige). Engineers include Tom Dowd, Phil Lesh, and Gusta Wholorn, among others.

● JONI MITCHELL AND THE L.A. EXPRESS: Miles of Aisles. ASYLUM AB 202. Two discs. This is a live-concert album, and it is easy to visualize yourself on an enormous stage standing just in front of the perimeter, who are clustered in the middle. You're hearing the music from the stage monitors, speakers, from the comparatively remote concert-sound system (with a touch of howlback now and then), and even some directly from the performers themselves. A four-channel synthesizer enhances the illusion tremendously, but stereo playback works well too. Start with side four to get into the spirit of things. (For comparison, listen to some of this material in studio-recorded versions on "Ladies of the Canyon." Asylum 6376.) Henry Lewy, engineering and coordination.

● TOM PAXTON: Tom Paxton 6. ELECTRA 74066. Paxton is an admirable troubadour who has a pleasing way with humor light and raih. Thanks to reverberation (probably artificial), his voice here is a little too large and full to be natural, but the back-up instruments are recorded with clarity and aliveness. Milton Okun, producer; Phil Ramone, David Green, and Dennis Murphy, engineers.

● HORACE SILVER: In Pursuit of the 27th Man. BLUE NOTE BN-LA054-F. A small jazz ensemble, tightly recorded in a relatively intimate environment. Numerous instruments shine here, but a constant fascination is the variety and delicacy of the high-hat cymbal, played with sticks and both ends of the wire brush at different times. George Butler was the producer. Rudy Van Gelder the engineer.

● CAT STEVENS: Mona Bone Jakon. A&M SP 4260. We generally like the engineering Cat Stevens gets, and we particularly like MBJ, although there could perhaps be a little more reverb on the piano. The close-up guitars are captured with meticulousness and delicacy, the drums and cymbal are clear and crisp, the bass is varied and clean, and Stevens' voice goes through all kinds of changes through the courtesy of the studio's black boxes. A&M's surfaces are quite good. Paul-Sumwell Smith, producer.

● RALPH TOWNER: Solstice. ECM 1060. This seems to be a grafting of some newwave European jazz onto American jazz roots. The recorded sound is hard—even a little piercing—but the detail is splendid, the sound is full-bodied, and the stereo image has excellent depth. The U.S. pressing was fully the equal of its West-German counterpart. Jan Erik Kongshaug, engineer.
THE records below are representative examples of the best of each of the principal competing disc quadraphonic systems—SQ, QS, and CD-4. The SQ and QS popular and classical releases listed are all splendid examples of the best in modern recording technology, and listeners equipped with the appropriate decoder(s) should not hesitate to buy any of them. There appears to be some problem just now with CD-4 classical releases, however, though CD-4 popular material is usually good and often simply sensational.

**GERSHWIN: All the Works for Orchestra and Piano and Orchestra.** St. Louis Symphony, Leonard Slatkin cond. Vox QSVBX 5132, three discs. With one exception, the music is all up front in this set, the rear channels being reserved for ambiance. (The exception is the Cuban Overture, which moves the percussion section to the back of the room.) This is one of the finest classical recordings I've heard in a long time, especially in quadraphonic—too many productions get carried away with simply dividing the orchestra into four equal parts just to show it can be done. The emphasis here is on superb sound, with the rear channels contributing that extra sense of spaciousness that is not quite attainable in stereo.

**RAVEL: All the Works for Orchestra.** Minnesota Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski cond. Vox QSVBX 5133, four discs. Another brilliant QS recording with an exceptional dynamic range—something of a rarity these days. Like the Gershwin album above, this one was produced and engineered by Elite Recordings' Marc Aubert and Joana Mickrenz, who seem to have a talent for turning out consistently excellent sound.

**SYNERGY: Electronic Realizations for Rock Orchestra.** Larry Fast on the Moog, Oberheim, and other synthesizers. Passport PPSJD 9809. This one doesn't write any new pages in the history of electronic music, but there's enough rear-channel action to convince you that leftfield rock recording is working properly. With the exception of Slaughter on Tenth Avenue, all the compositions are by Fast, who does much better with his own stuff than with Richard Rodgers'. Mr. Fast also handled the production and engineering.

**TOMMY.** Original-soundtrack recording. Polydor PD 2 9502, two discs. Don't look for any QS identification on this album. For reasons best known to themselves, Polydor has gone to the trouble of turning out a four-channel production but is keeping quiet about it. As you must surely know by now, the album features not only the Who, but also the Who's Who of the pop world: Tina Turner, Eric Clapton, Elton John, and a few friends. The rear-channel sound is for the most part ambient, with the exception of some of the synthesizer lines and a guitar part here and there. Pete Townshend and Ken Russell, producers; Ron Neison, engineer.

**STRAVINSKY: The Firebird (original 1910 version).** New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez cond. Columbia MQ 33508. Many purists get incensed when the orchestra is split among four speakers, but here's one of those cases in which it works very well. There's a lot of action written into the score, and it would be foolish not to use the extra channels to advantage. Accordingly, Ivan Tsvarevich is pursued around the quadrants of the stage by trumpets on all sides, with bells and other percussion spotted here and there in the rear. Andrew Kazdin, producer; Edward Graham and Raymond Moore, engineers.

**BARTOK: Concerto for Orchestra.** New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez cond. Columbia MQ 32132. This recording has been around for some time, but it remains one of the best of the surround-sound demonstrations. The album comes complete with some fancy art work showing just how the orchestra was arrayed: brasses in the rear, winds to the left rear, low strings in the right rear, and so on. There's also an interesting photo of Boulez conducting the orchestra, half of whose members are behind him; I guess it takes a little practice. Thomas Z. Shepard was the producer; Edward Graham and Raymond Moore, the engineers.

**HOLST: The Planets.** New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein cond. Columbia MQ 3 1125. One of the tricks of successful quadraphonic recording is knowing when to stop, and I'm glad to report that this album does not have the planets spinning all around us. With admirable restraint Bernstein has left the orchestra on stage, giving us an excellent example of the best of the hall-ambiance type of recording. John McClure and Richard Klillough, producers; Edward Graham and Larry Keyes, engineers.

**THE O'JAYS: Ship Ahoy.** Philadelphia International, ZQ 32408. Sigma Sound in Philadelphia turns out some of the best matrix records around, and this is one of the best of their best. If you like rear-channel action, there's plenty of it here. Ken Gasson and K. Huff, producers; Joe Taraska and Don Murray, engineers.

**DAVID GATES: Never Let Her Go.** Elektra EQ-1028. Here's a beautiful production of nine forgettable tunes, plus Playin' on My Guitar, which made it to the charts some time ago. As a demonstration of the CD-4 system, this is one of the best albums around. Drums are in the rear on all cuts, along with chorus and other odds and ends. David Gates, producer; Bruce Morgan, engineer.

**MIKE OLDFIELD: Tubular Bells.** Virgin QD 13-105. One-man-band Mike Oldfield and friends have a field day as they run amuck through a recording studio piled high with guitars, keyboards, miscellaneous hardware, and, of course, tubular bells. Needless to say, the rear speakers are kept busy. Tom Newman, Sim Hayworth, Mike Oldfield, sound.

**CARLY SIMON: The Best of Carly Simon.** Elektra EQ 1048. They're all here: Attitude Dancing, Anticipation, You're So Vain, and others. Carly stays front and center, and she should be almost inaudible when you listen to just the rear channels (in case you're still testing your demodulator). One notable exception: in Markingbird, Carly sings from both the right-side speakers and James Taylor from the left. If it doesn't work out that way, check your wiring again. Eddy Kramer, Richard Perry, and Paul Samwell-Smith, production.

**B. W. STEVENSON: Calabascas.** RCA APDI 0410. After repeated listenings, this remains one of my favorite CD-4 demos. The recorded sound is quite good, and the rear-placed instruments are exceptionally clean and well defined. David M. Kershenbaum, producer; Rick Ruggieri, engineer. Envelope, please.

—John Woram
Joni Mitchell would seem to be all there, in black and white, in her own words. She has made a hardheaded, crusading effort to describe intimate feelings in her songs, and her candor covers style as well as content. The popular-music audience has seldom encountered a songwriter so open about the specifics of personal hopes and fears, or a writer-performer so overt, as Allen Willis said, about her artistic pretensions. No wonder Time observed in 1974: “Everyone seems to know Joni. She is the rural neophyte waiting in a subway, a free spirit drinking Greek wine in the moonlight, an organic Earth Mother dispensing fresh bread and herb tea, and the reticent feminist who by trial and error has charted the male as well as the female ego.” Also, for good measure: “...a modern Isadora whose life is a litmus for the innocent and the imaginative.” But there’s too much color, too much contrast in all these images and “everyone” is too many people; we have so much information from Joni and her Muse that we’re back where she was after she’d seen both sides of clouds, after she’d seen both sine qua nons, since the business of producing food is an absolutely vital one and the song of diesel engines out on the highway: “Diesels sing of bright spots with colors running wild— ‘Follow me where the evenings overflow.’”

Saskatoon was a stop for the semis, but not the mecca they sang about. Joni Mitchell the teenager—known then as Joan Anderson—had access to juke boxes, trucked-in rock-and-roll and folk music, but she was surrounded by the ordered, sectioned, organized life of farming country deep in the continent’s interior. She has talked and written little about Joan Anderson’s days there—Urge for Going, which Tom Rush recorded, could be taken as pertinent—but it seems clear enough that she wanted to follow those diesels. She was rebellious, she says, and spent a lot of time staying up late and drawing pictures. Just about the time she was becoming interested in expressing herself musically, she was doing the at-once romantic and mundane thing of being a waitress in a coffeehouse—one named after Louis Riel, one of Canada’s favorite heroes and, better still, one of its favorite outlaws. He led the local half-breeds, the French and Scottish métis, or part-Indians, in two rebellions against the government. The second one in Saskatchewan resulted in his capture, trial, and execution for treason, and in his becoming a martyr to the fledgling cause of French-Canadian nationalism. Joan Anderson’s own hero in those coffeehouse days was that rebel said to be without a cause, James Dean.

“It was then and still is a constant war to liberate myself from values not applicable to the period in which I live.” Mitchell told Time. A flight from someone else’s values is, as a practical matter, a flight from someone else’s rules. Farm country and the interior are fraught with rules, and there are literally few places on the prairie for a born rule-breaker, or rule-ignorer, to hide. The rules started for mostly valid reasons, since the business of producing food is an absolutely vital one and since the frontier, which this was not long ago, could kill you if you slipped up; but sometimes it is the lot of the innocent and the imaginative to be ahead of the crowd in spotting rules that have outlawed their usefulness and now are mischief-prone taboos. Mitchell, if she did feel penned in, is to be complimented for her restraint with her own kind of pen. A more typical reaction against

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“...we have so much information from Joni and her Muse that...
...we really don’t know her at all...”

roundings—agriculture, prairie, sky, lonely distances and wheat. A flood of imagery from Ian and Sylvia Tyson suggests this, in lyrics about blue evening shadows forty feet long, night rushing fast because the land is flat, lonely girls lingering in the doorways to watch headlights and listen to
farm country (in the U.S., anyway) is that of the not-so-innocent but fairly imaginative H. L. Mencken: "What lies under [prohibition], and under all the other crazy enactments of its category, is no more and no less than the yokel's congenital and incurable hatred of the city man—his simian rage against everyone who, as he sees it, is having a better time than he is."

What Joni Mitchell did was to choose to live in a canyon (topographically: relief, not readily available on prairies) in a sprawling hodgepodge of a city famous for throwing the old rules out the window. Most of the resentment the rest of the country feels for Los Angeles is translated as the informed suspicion that they practice unrestrained hedonism out there and probably are raising up a new breed of pagans. Behind that, I think, is a kind of shock at how they treated the old rules, and a fear of anarchy. Police chiefs, perhaps sensing this on some level, always seem to talk extra tough and look extra mean in Los Angeles. In fact, of course, Los Angeles has many different sets of rules—it's the compatibility, the overlap, of these sets that's so confusing to people in places that never had to deal with, among other things, a fantasy factory like Hollywood in their midst. I fancy I see what Joni Mitchell sees in such a place, and where do you think Eve would have headed if she'd had the chance?

PRAIRIE girl Joan Anderson left Saskatoon after high school to attend art school briefly (her drawings regularly play strong thematic roles on her album covers) in Calgary, where the Rockies give relief to Alberta, but she was only thirteen when she followed the diesels' song to a spa of the night, Toronto, to practice art with music. By the time she had a career rolling, an album on the market, she had spent time broke and scuffling, had met and married singer Chuck Mitchell, had lived (and performed) with him for a year or so in which they were based in Detroit—and had gone through a divorce and moved to New York. These are experiences that rattle off a lot of innocence, but a learner, an examiner, emerges from them on a different plane where new stuff is going on and is, relatively and functionally, innocent again.

The thing one noticed about Joni Mitchell was how visible this process was; trying to obscure it by being cool was not in her. She came along with these guitar tunings she had figured out on her own, without compromise, and with a spirit that reflects the excitement she must have felt at the time: "I'm just living on nerves and feelings... with a weak and a lazy mind." Joni Mitchell somehow kept herself from hearing "you can't do that," a sound as familiar to most of us as the refrigerator motor kicking on—and this was at once a romantic and realistic deaf ear she managed to turn. Being romantic, taking chances—Playing Cowboy, I call it—is a practical matter for an artist. The one old rule Mitchell did overtly and constantly invoke was the one against being coy. She has not hidden her ambition to make art any more than she has hidden her hopes and disappointments. Or her terrors: no matter how scary it is, she'll say it. We who live by our wits worry most, probably, about our minds drying up, and there's Joni: "I'm just living on nerves and feelings... with a weak and a lazy mind." That really isn't her, is it?

The way she was feeling at a particular time; she was ignoring the political rule, in and out of music, to present a single image free of inconsistencies. When she does have a feeling, she presents that, too—she has regularly looked for strength in a mate, for example: "I went looking for a cause, or a strong eat without claws" and "Send me someone who is strong and somewhat sincere" and "It takes a heart like Mary's these days when your man gets weak..." And she has noted with due irony the situation men are in nowadays where strength in a mate is concerned: "You don't like weak women, you get bored so quick... You don't like strong women, 'cause they're hip to your tricks." She does not, in short, nail much of anything down; she just does not like to generalize.

Very romantic and very practical of her. Taking shortcuts others have discovered and marked, and arriving at aphorisms, would be the surest way for her to get lost. Someone else is always ready to sum it up, to write "Everyone's lookin' for some kind of love" and "I'm going to keep falling in love until I get it right," which cover the thrust of what she's saying, but her way is more specific. It's just as practical, though. "Joni exercises her demons by writing these songs," Stephen Stills said. Start with someone who's really innocent, a child, and watch it grow, and you'll see every day the power of language, words, labels, in the dehorning of demons. No thought is quite as scary put into words as it was before in its formless, elusive, dark state.

A writer without her commitment to, as Hemingway put it, "writing what you truly felt rather than what you were supposed to feel," would turn out something with the same flavor of True Confessions if he tried what she does. Generalizing and short-cutting would plant a snigger of sensationalism be-
tween the lines if not right in them. Few songwriters, even in this so-called post-sexual-revolution period, can actually communicate something without a wink in it on the subject of sex. Mitchell looks you straight in the eye and deals with one of its crazy-making aspects: "You hurr. To the blackness. And the blankets. To lay down an impression. And your loneliness."

The naïveté of her discovering nature also gives vitality to the technical side of her writing and performing. She doesn't seem to know how "basic" and semi-mandatory the three-chord melody is; she can't even make what you could readily identify as tonic-dominant-subdominant chord relationships with some of those guitar tunings. The counterpoint she sometimes uses on the piano is so farfetched you wonder how she keeps in her head the tune she's singing. And, speaking of singing, there's a taboo against cheating into falsetto too often, and she (although she has smoothed it out somewhat recently) has made doing that a basic part of her style. Most trained musicians and English majors dislike the songwriting practice of putting words in a melody that bends them into more than their natural number of syllables. It's the kind of thing that calls undue attention to itself and interferes with the listener's concentration on the sense of the statement—as certain abominations by Handel graphically demonstrate—but that's just another generality you wouldn't want to wrap around Joni Mitchell. The Arrangement, for example, starts out, "You could have been a name on the door on the thirty-third flo-o-o-o-or in the a-i-ir," with floor waving erratically into five syllables and air into three. But can't you just feel that old skyscraper, and the "success" it houses, swaying in the wind?

Sometimes, of course, one does sense a degree of California School of Pointless Insight in her work. Sometimes I feel I've put myself through all manner of tortuous self-analysis with her and am no closer to knowing what to do about it, and the vehicle of escape—whether it be a big yellow taxi, the pick-up pitch of a fast lady trying to compete with the hockey game in the bar of the Empire Hotel, or a street corner where someone is providing free clarinet music—is not always there when I need it. And sometimes one discovers too much artful dodging in the melody these insights are, ah, couched in, and Joni Mitchell's voice is the only one that can get anything out of it. Friends (two or three of mine consider her "shrill," but the rest are ardent and long-time admirers) are complaining about "The Hissing of Summer Lawns." Pretentious, some say, meaning (I gather) not artistically but intellectually. Others claim that the less serious parts of it are too full of jive—including too much use of jive and words like it—and they don't want her making what she does jibe with this label someone pinned on her, Queen of Rock. Others object to her trafficking with jazz affectations or taking Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross too serious—without giving much warning in previous work, she slips—in ambitious songs like Don't Interrupt the Sorrow and Shadows and Light—into a sort of Joycean stream-of-consciousness way with words, and a job of making grammatical sense of them must be done before one can start to cogitate upon what they mean. Did she conclude there was no way to be more direct about these things, or did she, consciously or unconsciously, court mystery—was she consciously or unconsciously, trying to impress those academic types who like to have things as abstract as possible so the rabble can't unscramble them? Too soon to tell. I think, but keep in mind that the simplest answer sometimes is the best, and the simplest answer is that she was again flying in the face of, trying to fly away from, a set of rules.

There will be other albums, anyway, that can't help but put this one in better perspective. Mitchell seems to be looking out at sociology more, without leaving the rough stuff of one-to-one relating unattended, and a good observer is a good observer. She seems now to be interested in the feel of Suburbia and what that does to a person, and she seems to be checking her tentative findings against what she had caught of the feel of Bohemia. But she seems to realize that an artist can't be either Suburbanite or Bohemian ("The streets were never really mine... Not mine, these glamour gowns"), so I won't worry too much about her fleeing from the monster that sits beside observers and examiners—loneliness—and into some kind of trumped-up Identity.

As to how it is to be that kind of observer and examiner, to be Joni Mitchell nowadays, my guess takes off from Shadows and Light and ricochets with contrast. I still see her as a somewhat shy and private person whose boyfriends nonetheless get listed in Rolling Stone (which once named her "old lady of the year"), who everyone knows wrote Willy about Graham Nash, who had the nerve to write "pack up your suspenders, I'll come meet your plane," when another celebrated ex, James Taylor, was being photographed wearing suspenders and planning to marry Carly Simon. And so forth. I still see her as a naive person who knows more than the sophisticates do, a person who may have picked up, on the prairie or in Los Angeles or in between, something from the Indians, Western and Eastern, about truly being able to have something only when you can give it up. For verily, as Eve's chronicle would say, Joni Mitchell has a great stake in innocence—and that's why she has to keep putting it on the line.
Stereo Review Throws a Party...

...to celebrate this Record of the Year Awards for 1975, and a good time was had by all, including: (1) Metropolitan Opera soprano Evelyn Montello Mancuso, who is flanked by Stereo Review Editor William Anderson and Publisher Edgar W. Hopper. (2) F. Scott Mange, Vice President of Phonogram, Inc. (Philips) with James Frew, Vice President, Classical Division, Polydor, Inc. (Deutsche Grammophon). (3) Fans Boon of London Records' classical division and the Met's Regine (Carmen Crespin. (4) The New York Post's Hammett Johnson, dean of the city's music critics, with Frank Milburn, Music Administrator of the New York Philharmonic, and Oliver Daniel, Vice President, Concert Music Administration. (5) Editor Anderson greets songstress Trudy Hudson, just off the cast of the Broadway show Very Good Eddie, and cabaret favorite Ronny Whyne. (6) Metropolitan Opera soprano Bernarda (Suor Angelica) Scotto poses with her Stereo Review award, Marvin Saines, Vice President of Columbia Masterworks, and Stereo Review Publisher Hopper. (7) Good vibes: Publisher Hopper congratulates Bill Jackson on his Record of the Year Award as CTI Records' publicity director. (8) A trio of New York Post personas: critics Speight Jenkins, Hammett Johnson, Robert Kimbell. (9) George Simon, author and special consultant to the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (also uncle to Janis, Carly, and Lucy), with Robert Silverman, program director of New York radio station WQXR, author Al Simon, Janis's uncle, and John Coveney, Angel's Director of Artistic Relations. (10) Stereo Review's Managing Editor William Livingstone with Miss Scotto and Mr. Saines. (11) Editor Anderson presenting the Record of the Year Award (for the Broadway hit Chicago) to composer John...

On the second page are (5) Editor Anderson, Barry Altshul, Robert Hurnik, director of a-s-r for ECM and Verve Records, and Stereo Review's Record of the Year Award to Circle (Altshul is the jazz quartet's percussionist) for the album "Paris-Concert." (6) Nathaniel Schenker, director of East Coast Publicity for MCA, Ida Langsam, National Public Relations Director for A & R Records, John David Keddy, of Atlantic Records, and Sheryl Feuerstein, East Coast Publicity Director for Phonogram-Mercury. (7) June LeBell, WXR air personality, with Popular Music Editor Simels. (8) Joe Porter of Cue magazine David Ruben and Joanna Fiedler of the Met's press office and Charles Grice, Director of Public Relations and Promotions for the New York Philharmonic. (9) Regina Crespin with artists' manager Herbert Breslin. (10) Stereo Reviewer Joel (The Profile) Vance with Music Editor Goodfriend. (11) Jazz singers Susannah McCorkle and Sylvia Syms (who has a new record just out). (12) Stereo Review's Production Editor Paullette Weiss and Editorial Coordinator Louise Boundas. (13) The Certificate of Merit declined by Jascha Heifetz was taken off our hands by RCA's Thomas z. Sheard, Division Vice President, Red Seal a, s. r., and turned over to Stereo Review Contributing Editor J Marks-Highwater, who remarked that it will very likely be all the American Indian will be getting in this Bicentennial Year. (14) Publicist Ken Griffith chats with Stereo Reviewer Joel Vance and Steve Simels (ibid). (15) Stereo Review's scanning Technical Editor Larry Klein with Amy Sperling, publicist with Columbia Artists Management, and WXR's Robert Sherman. (16) Barbara King, Manager of Classical Publicity, Columbia Records, and J Marks-Highwater bury the tomahawk or something. (17) Managing Editor Livingston chats with Broadway's vivacious Tamara Geva. (18) Editor Anderson greets: Thomas Pasatieri, composer (at last count) of no fewer than we've operas, all of them produced. (All photos by Erika Davidson except No. 6, by Bill Yoscary.)
ONE nice effect of the Bicentennial has been its encouragement to revivals and reminiscences in a country which has always been more accustomed to looking ahead than to looking back, and proud of it.

"The winter of 1924, when father was still vice president of the South Carolina Poetry Society," my mother reminisced to me en route to one of these revivals. "He asked Johnny Farrar to come down and speak at one of their meetings." ("Father" was the late writer John Bennett; his friend John Farrar was the editor of the Bookman and a representative of New York's George H. Doran Publishing Company.) "So while Johnny was in Charleston, he asked if Father knew of any unpublished novel manuscripts Doran ought to read, and Father said 'DuBose Heyward's got one in his bureau drawer.' Harcourt had rejected it, but Father didn't tell Johnny that." 

The manuscript in DuBose Heyward's drawer was Porgy, the story of the not wholly fictive Charleston beggar which became a Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller for Doran Company in 1925, a sensation which successful play two years later, and finally, in 1935, the opera Porgy and Bess.

Though the first production of the Gershwin-Heyward opera closed fast and lost money, its revivals have all been triumphs, and today it is the most popular American opera. As a salute to our Bicentennial, the Michigan Opera Theatre presented Porgy and Bess as its first production of the 1975-1976 season—production my mother and I were fortunate enough to see when the University of Michigan Musical Society, as part of their Bicentennial observance, brought it to Ann Arbor.

Mother was in China in 1935, so though she had stood up with her sister and brother eight years earlier in New York's Guild Theater and cheered top voice for the play Porgy, she had never seen the opera Porgy and Bess. No more had I. The story is strong stuff, revolving around a whore, a cocaine-pushing pimp, two on-stage murders, a hurricane as awful as anything in Conrad—in short, more than enough of the violence and melodrama that opera lovers hold dear.

Most Americans know the plot from the 1959 movie starring Sidney Poitier and Dorothy Dandridge, with Sammy Davis, Jr. playing Sportin' Life, the happy-dust dispenser. Bess' man, the stevedore Crown, kills Robbins, another stevedore, over a crap game. Crown flees, abandoning Bess. No one will shelter the promiscuous, hard-drinking, drug-taking Bess except the crippled beggar Porgy. Love for Porgy seems to reform Bess and she is gradually accepted by his pious neighbors, but then Crown comes back for her, and Porgy kills him. When by chance Porgy is hustled off to identify Crown's body, Sportin' Life convinces Bess that Porgy will never return, and persuades her to go with him to New York City.

Informed that DuBose Heyward was a Charleston aristocrat (his great-great-great-grandfather Thomas Heyward signed the Declaration of Independence), few opera-goers would guess that in producing the story of Porgy DuBose was obeying the ancient dictum "write what you know." Eight of Porgy and Bess' nine scenes take place in Catfish Row, and the review of the MOT production my mother and I read before going described Catfish Row as "the black quarter of Charleston in the 1920's." A natural question would be, how much could Thomas Heyward's great-great-grandson know about that?

"There was no 'black quarter' in Charleston in the 1920's," my mother declared. "We all lived on 'integrated' streets—always had, from 1670.

"A family's slaves lived in the backyard, naturally. After Reconstruction, those outbuildings were rented. Your own servants wouldn't rent from you, because they didn't want to live so close you could impose on them in 'emergencies,' but they lived within walking distance. And they had their own community buildings, like churches—and saloons. There was a saloon on the corner of King and Tradd, two blocks from our house."

Two blocks east of that saloon was Church Street, on which—at Number 98—the Heywards were living when DuBose conceived the character of Porgy. Number 87 was "Thomas the Signer's" mansion, and next door, Number 89-91, was Cabbage Row, a black tenement consisting of three interconnected houses and their outbuildings. The fishermen of DuBose Heyward's novel therefore inhabit the Cabbage Row of his own street, rechristened and relocated two blocks east at Vanderhorst Wharf because his story needed to be on the waterfront.

Besides his lifelong familiarity with the servants and vendors of Cabbage Row, young Heyward acquired a less typical familiarity with the stevedores who loaded and unloaded Charleston's coastwise steamers. His father had died when DuBose was two, and, like George Gershwin, DuBose quit school at fourteen to help support his family. At twenty, after a three-year interruption caused by the polio which left him with partially but permanently atrophied arm and hand muscles, DuBose signed on as cotton checker and time-keeper for a steamship line. Though the company failed within the year, owing him several months' pay, he more than

PORGY & BESS

The best art imitates nature, and that may be why the real time, the real place, and the real people of the most American of grand operas still exert their mighty pull

A reminiscence by Martha Bennett Stiles

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recouped twenty years later when he drew on what he had learned on the waterfront and wrote Porgy.

Today, Cabbage Row is a shop and Vanderhorst Row is upper-class apartments, but Catfish Row lived on undiminished in the sets designed for the Michigan Opera Theatre by Paul Norrenbrock. As the curtain rose on the first of these ingeniously evocative sets, people were drifting home from work. A woman with laundry on her head carried her bundle up rickety stairs. One look at the pump in Norrenbrock’s courtyard primed my mother’s:

“Yes, the washing went home with the laundresses to tenements like that where the water had to be hand-pumped and heated in tubs.”

After the laundress exited there came the street-call of Charleston’s honeyman, preceding him home to Norrenbrock’s rebuilt Catfish Row—yes ma’am, he had honey, honey in the comb.

My mother’s face went all melancholy-euphoric. “He was a real person!” she whispered. “And that’s exactly what he sang!”

“But there was a lot more,” she added at intermission. “A lot. Two things he always had were ‘Adam and Eve’—that was a powder put out by a Baltimore firm—you can still see it advertised—and ‘Big John Conker.’

“Big John the Conqueror was another powder, recommended to make you victorious in all sorts of situations—asking for a raise, telling your mother-in-law to shut up, haggling over prices. ‘Adam and Eve was more specific.’

The MOT’s honeyman was outstandingly performed by Melvyn Hardiman, the soloist at Detroit’s Unity Temple. Mr. Hardiman, who supplements his singing income by guarding a Pontiac, Michigan, medical building from two to eight every evening, was one of six hundred Detroit-area amateur and semiprofessional auditioners. Only the roles of Porgy, Bess, Crown, and Sportin’ Life were played by professional outsiders; the other sixty-nine were chosen by director Ella Gerber from these six hundred.

Ms. Gerber was also imported: this was her twentieth Porgy and Bess, and she had demonstrated her skill with amateur casts before—once twelve years ago in New Zealand with an all-Maori production, but most notably in 1970 when the city of Charleston celebrated its Tricentennial with the only amateur production of Porgy and Bess the Gershwin Foundation has ever permitted in the United States. In that presentation, the honeyman was sung by Charleston College dramatics teacher Eugene Hunt, whose grandfather was president of the Charleston Butlers’ Association and knew DuBose Heyward—and probably the honeyman—well.

The late Mr. Hunt is much less likely to have been acquainted with Samuel Smalls, the crippled black beggar whose astonishing vitality inspired Heyward’s novel. Hunt would of course have known Smalls by sight—which was as well as Heyward knew him—because the man’s aspect was unique. His means of transportation was a cart made of an overturned soap-box pulled by a most feisty malodorous billy goat.

“The fumes were lent a certain pi-quancy,” said my mother, “by the soapbox’s legend, which was Pure and Fragrant.”

By day “Goat Sammy,” as all but his mother called him, stationed himself at likely begging places or followed one of the three boys’ bands which regularly issued from the Jenkins Orphanage on Franklin Street. These musical hustlers played for contributions up and down the streets of Charleston and were loved by everyone. “We always drew a big crowd,” says the Reverend John Dowling, who managed the orphanage band which appeared in the original Porgy and who, with his wife, runs the orphanage today. “Big crowds, and Goat Sammy liked to tag along because he could get a little something.”

By night Smalls led a less suppliant life, and discovering that was an inspiration to Heyward. Samuel Smalls, the Charleston News and Courier reported one morning, was being held on an aggravated assault charge. It is alleged that on Saturday night he attempted to shoot Maggie Barnes at number four Romney Street. His shots went wide of the mark.

Smalls, the astounded Heyward learned on inquiry, had attempted to escape the police in his wagon, and had to be run down.

Heyward himself was in delicate health all the fifty-five years of his life; close friends describe him as “a shell of a man.” The vigor and virility imputed to the beggar he had once thought pathetic understandably appealed forcefully to his imagination. Porgy was the result.

Mother was accordingly amused to read the Ann Arbor News reviewer’s criticism of the MOT’s two (alternating) leading men. “I kept thinking,” he wrote, “there was no reason on earth why an ablebodied [Robert] Mosely couldn’t get up and walk about—he gave that impression as Porgy.” Mosley, he admonished, should learn “to become a more pitable Porgy, which I think is crucial to appreciation of the opera.” As for Benjamin Matthews, he “sings the role superbly, but is not con-

Facing page: early view of the DuBose Heyward house. Cabbage Row is a few doors away on the same Church Street in Charleston, South Carolina.

PORGY & BESS

vincing as a cripple as he scoots around the stage on a wheeled platform. This, however, seems to be a problem with most productions of Porgy and Bess, finding a strong leading man who will look virtually helpless.

"Goat Sammy," objected my mother, "was a very powerful man, though as he aged he did put on weight. But he had a broad chest and conspicuously powerfully developed arms—the man who sang Porgy for Charleston’s Tri-centennial [Reuben Wright, music supervisor for the Charleston County Consolidated School District] started a regimen of jogging and exercising the day he was given the role!

The Porgy who first convinces a skeptical Bess that he can protect her from the murderous Crown, and then does so, is not a pitifully helpless man. Maybe what is really "crucial to the appreciation of [any] opera" is knowing something about it.

Lacking the money to bury Crown’s victim, the widow falls back on the traditional “contribution” saucer. Scene 2 takes place in her room, where she sits beside her husband’s corpse, which "got to be buried tomorrow or the board of health will take him and give him to the medical students." One by one friends enter, put a few pennies in the dish, and join their neighbors sitting on the floor keening spirituals, which are meant not just to comfort the widow, but to enspirit more coins out of more pockets.

When Bess enters, Robbins’ widow says, "I don’t need your money for to bury my man," but after Bess pleads "Dis ain’t Crown’s money. Porgy give me dat money now," her contribution is accepted. Irene Oliver and Leona Mitchell alternated as the MOT’s Bess; we saw Leona Mitchell, and those who may have seen her December debut at the Metropolitan (as Micaela) will not need to be told that she is attractive and has a lovely voice. Aside from filling her pail at the courtyard pump and then carrying it off on her arm like a flower basket, she gave an irreproachable performance as Bess.

One role which has never been irreproachably performed yet is that of Porgy’s goat.

"Before the play opened in 1927," recalled my mother, "the theatrical guild threatened to strike if the producer used a live goat instead of a costumed per-
When I was little I used to ride with Grandfather in the buggy to the covered market. The streets on each side were still dirt, and everybody threw his trash right into the street, including the butcher. Buzzards, being scavengers, were protected, and except when they were flying down for scraps they lined the roofs shoulder to shoulder.

"One time the city's water tasted awful for a week, and finally turned a funny color. They drained the tank and found several dead buzzards in it."

No sooner has the bird which seemed to threaten Bess been driven off and Bess recovered than the waterfront alarm bell begins to ring. The United States flag over the nearby Customs House goes down, and the hurricane flag goes up.

It might have been expected that Heyward would write effectively of the dread into which this plunges Catfish Row, for he experienced the east coast's great hurricane of 1911. The port of Charleston being located "where the Ashley and Cooper Rivers meet to form the Atlantic," any storm off the Carolinas is apt to be hell on Charleston. Fort Sumter, Charlestonians will tell you, is what holds the Atlantic back, but, like more than one invader, the Atlantic has not found Fort Sumter invincible.

"One time," recalls my mother, "the water was so high that, when it went down, people in a great big columned house with really tall front steps, on Ashley Street, found a boat lodged on their front porch!"

"Another time waves picked up Al- lard Heyward's anchored sailboat and heaved it right up and over High Battery [the breakwater] and pulverized it on East Bay Street!"

Porgy and Bess' hurricane is perhaps its most effective scene, as Catfish Row cowers praying for its fishermen. The real hurricane was effective in its way...
trained in European operatic traditions. The production—the choral singing, orchestral playing, London recording, and, above all, Lorin Maazel’s firm direction—are straight, authentic Urtext. Gesamtausgabe, echt operatic, as much so as any Bayreuth Ring of the Nibelung. Farfetched? It ain’t necessarily so. Porgy, in which he says that his favorite composers are Debussy, Berg, and Stravinsky. But you don’t have to take Gershwin’s word for it; every page of this score is full of the sound and fury of grand opera. Don’t mistake me. I’m not putting it down. There are problems, but I think that this recording proves beyond a doubt that Porgy is a work of really epic-tragic dimensions, and that only snobbery and the restraint of conventions, genres, and pigeonholes can keep us from recognizing that Gershwin had the genius not just to turn out a few hit tunes, but to create a fine, moving, epic-dramatic work on a really large and powerful scale.

Porgy was originally a book on Negro life in old Charleston by DuBose Heyward, an aristocratic Southerner. It was later turned into a successful play by Heyward and his wife and finally, with Ira Gershwin, into a very effective opera libretto. It is brilliantly done—with sentiment but without sentimentality, with a deep social conscience but without awkward social consciousness. Few scripts of the Thirties hold up as well, and the heroic but still objective view of black people, although obviously a product of the sensibility of the times, suits our modern view quite well. Certainly there are awkward and even awful moments—but compare the view of black people here with the depiction of blacks in any Hollywood movie of the time. The biggest problem is, I think, that we cannot quite overcome a bit of distaste—or at least queasiness—at the idea of white people creating a picturesque and exotic spectacle out of the miserable and raunchy life of poor Southern blacks—sex, violence, dope, and all—and then putting it on with black people singing and dancing for a sophisticated white Broadway audience. I almost hate to say it (since I am a strong advocate of opera as music theater), but playing Porgy as a very operatic opera helps to sort out this problem by giving the work a necessary aesthetic distance and therefore a clearer sense of its artistry. But it also creates its own set of subsidiary problems. For example, this wonderful and talented cast is put in the anomalous position of having to play operatic “darkies.” The accents alone are a constant struggle. Even Barbara Conrad, the performer most successful in combining the acting and singing domains, has a noticeably different accent when she sings

...this recording proves beyond a doubt that ‘Porgy’ is a fine...

Porgy & Bess: A New London Recording

MAYBE you think you know about Porgy and Bess—Summertime and all that. Well, try putting on London’s new recording of this apparently hackneyed piece of Americana—the opening or, in fact, anywhere—and treat yourself to a bit of culture shock. Porgy and Bess was first presented by the Theatre Guild at the Alvin Theatre in New York on October 10, 1935. It was not, in this or any subsequent production, an unqualified success. A lesser work would undoubtedly have fallen back into obscurity long since. Porgy survived and, in its parts at least, has installed itself as part not only of the American Musical Consciousness but (if one dare use the word these days) its Heritage. And yet the truth is that we do not know and never have known until now the Porgy and Bess that Gershwin wrote.

In giving a little research on the question, I came across a line (by myself) in which I described Porgy as “in spite of its ambitions, a masterpiece of musical comedy.” Well, I really ought to have known better. Porgy, modestly described by Gershwin himself as a “folk opera,” is really a grand opera which has been consistently and awkwardly cut back to Broadway-musical proportions by the realities of American cultural life. No American opera house would or could have touched this music or this theme, and no American producer would or could have dreamt of a production approaching the operatic dimensions of the original. Only now, forty years after (and thanks to a European record company and a Europeanized American conductor!) do we have the chance at least to hear the major masterpiece of one of our most beloved and popular composers in its entirety as he conceived it. It is, to put it mildly, a surprise.

The London recording is, no doubt, the full operatic treatment. The cast, with one partial exception, is made up of resoundingly operatic voices—black singers probably couldn’t follow them now if there were any. Charleston’s newest city ordinance—that her five carriage-horses must wear diapers in the city—has in deference to the hooraw it raised been suspended in favor of a rule that every time a horse makes a deposit on a city street, its driver will summon by two-way radio a motorized city-employed scooper (which only goes to prove that it is possible to clean up following the horses). A healthy remnant being little more or less than a constantly operating conveyor belt. Goat Sammy would require his own personal scooper.

Porgy and Bess is an opera. It is not an operetta, a musical comedy, nor is it a jazz drama. Black Blues, or pre-Soul. We performed and recorded it as an opera, as one worthy of the same care and devotion we would have accorded any operatic masterpiece. Gershwin’s compassion for individuals is Verdian, his comprehension of them, Mozartian. His group of folk-spirit is as firm and subtle as Moussorgsky’s, his melodic inventiveness rivals Belcini’s, ingenious and innovative are his compositional techniques. How glorious it is to hear the entire opera, without the dozens of cuts which have mutilated form, flow, dramatic tension. The reinstated sections are of the richest inspiration, and serve to realign the internal balance of the work. Love for the opera felt by cast, chorus, and orchestra imbued the recording sessions with a fervor, I believe, the microphones have caught. May the listener share our joy. —Lorin Maazel
But Porgy thrives as ever, or perhaps more so. Even before his opera, DuBose Heyward discovered that in Charleston "the romantically inclined have forgotten that there was a beggar named Small's, and speak of him only as Porgy, and the story to which I have given that name has assumed the signif-icance of a biographical sketch." Today I can find almost no Charlestonian, black or white—even among those who can personally remember seeing Goat Sammy—who call him anything, or can remember his ever being called anything, but Porgy. Porgy, as Heyward's widow wrote in 1953, has joined the "company of people who, born in their authors' brains, have come to walk the earth. And, once one of these characters has crossed over, his author might as well let him go; he will never shut him up again between the covers of a book."

...epic-dramatic work on a really large and powerful scale."
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A Superb Realization of Elgar's Oratorio

The Kingdom by

Sir Adrian Boult

After achieving international renown through his Enigma Variations and the oratorio The Dream of Gerontius, Edward Elgar addressed himself to a supremely ambitious project: a set of oratorios that would sum up his reflections on Christianity and its founders. The planned trilogy was to cover the last days of Christ's ministry, including the penitence of Mary Magdelene, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension; the Acts of the Apostles through and after the Pentecost miracle; and, finally, the Last Judgment. The first two oratorios, The Apostles and The Kingdom, were completed and performed in 1903 and 1906, respectively, but nothing came of the third beyond scattered fragments and sketches.

Though The Dream of Gerontius, based on Cardinal Newman's mystical poem on the life of the soul after death, has had three excellent recorded performances, The Apostles and The Kingdom have had to wait for the Elgar renaissance of recent years (it has already seen numerous neglected Elgar works come once again into their own) for their disc realization. We can be grateful to Connoisseur Society for making available in this country just now the 1969 EMI recording of The Kingdom, and a 1974 taping of The Apostles should be out on the same label by the time this review sees print.

Sir Adrian Boult, a sterling Elgarian if ever there was one, was approaching his eightieth year when he recorded...
The Kingdom, but I would rate it as the finest of his many superb achievements accomplished in some forty-five years of recording activity. The recording also sets the seal—for me, at least—on Christopher Bishop as the ablest producer in the business in the difficult area of choral-orchestral repertoire.

As for the music itself, The Kingdom is of an essentially reflective character, and it begins with a prelude cast in Elgar's most richly woven harmonic texture shot through with splendid melodic surges. (One does not have to be aware of the intricate network of leitmotifs employed to respond to this musical utterance, but it does add an unmistakable dimension of pleasure.) A striking a cappella entry by the chorus then sets the scene in which the Disciples choose, after prayer, a successor to the traitor Judas. The succeeding episodes include the Pentecost miracle and the public amazement (and hostility) over the gift of tongues displayed by these heretofore simple and uneducated men; Peter's healing of the lame man at the temple gate; the Virgin Mary's haunting aria of meditation, "The sun goeth down"; and a concluding convivium sacrum of the Disciples, the Virgin, and Mary Magdalene that includes a choral setting of The Lord's Prayer whose simple sincerity does much to erase the memories of (too many) other pompous and/or mawkish ones.

The soloists here are never less than very good, individually and as a team, but it is John Shirley-Quirk who steals the show, delineating the role of Peter as a whole person, a man of commanding power and presence, yet one of infinite compassion. Margaret Price does very beautifully with her great aria of the Virgin, but she still fails to achieve all the otherworldly, transfigured quality that is implicit in the music and the words. Despite occasional and inevitable imprecisions in the matter of consonants and sibilants (mercilessly picked up by the microphone but usually dissipated under concert conditions), the London Philharmonic Choir sings beautifully throughout, with sumptuous tonal body and excellent intonation. The orchestra, under Boult's guiding baton, accomplishes its important role with the loving care that all concerned have so evidently lavished on this undertaking.

Those who may not have been able to respond wholeheartedly to The Dream of Gerontius will find, I think, much to cherish here, perhaps because it is the lyrically reflective rather than the overtly dramatic situation that Elgar responds to best. Connoisseur Society's recording quality is of surpassing richness of body, completeness of detail, and spaciousness of ambiance. It can stand, with Boult's recording of Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony for Angel, as a standard against which similar efforts must be measured.

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Bellini's Version of The Romeo and Juliet Story in Its First Recorded Incarnation

Vincenzo Bellini, who wrote ten operas in that many years of his short (thirty-four years) life, took only six weeks (January to March 1830) to write I Capuleti e i Montecchi, his version of the Romeo and Juliet story. The opera was enthusiastically received at its Venice premiere, but, after some twenty years of fairly regular stagings, it disappeared from the repertoire until the current bel canto renaissance.

In his notes for this, the opera's first recording, Prof. Philip Gossett observes: "Invoking the sacred name of Shakespeare, critics lambast Felice Romani's libretto on totally inappropriate grounds. Deploring the convention by which a mezzo-soprano sings Romeo, conductors revise the role for tenor, upsetting Bellini's entire conception."

All this has been true in the past, beginning with Hector Berlioz, who saw the opera in 1831 and dismissed it as a travesty of Shakespeare, ignoring the fact that Romani's libretto was based not on Shakespeare but on some of the English dramatist's older Italian sources.

In any case, the outlook for this star-crossed opera is brighter now, and deservedly so, for it is decidedly worthy of being ranked beside the two more familiar Bellini operas which were to follow it within a year: La Sonnambula and Norma. Bellini's preference for a mezzo-soprano Romeo, however, is an undeniable handicap. However beautifully the voices blend in the numerous joint scenes, dramatic credibility does suffer.

But... the music is undeniably beautiful. The arias flow with that characteristic melting Bellinian lyricism, and, though not all the ensembles are on the same high plane, the first-act finale is powerfully effective. Its seemingly hasty concoction notwithstanding, there is nothing careless or superficial about this opera. The orchestral writing in particular—with some marvelous exposed passages for solo cello, clarinet, and French horn—is of the kind Bellini himself seldom surpassed.
Steelye Span: An Awfully Good Idea Just Awfully Well Executed

Steelye Span was, in the first place, such a simple good idea: "You want folk-rock, beeg boy? I geev you folk-rock." They just took some old folk songs and played them in rock arrangements. Still, it wouldn't have been such a good idea if they didn't, in the second place, execute it so well. "All Around My Hat" finds them back in top form, and in that condition they are really something special. Somehow they can still manage to startle me all over again with their arrangements—it's the restraint they exercise with the electric stuff, I think, that makes it so effective in their hands. And they've selected an exceptionally strong and tuneful (tending toward the plaintive branch of tuneful) batch of songs that seem to encourage more vocal harmonizing than usual; of this I approve. The harmonies in Hard Times of Old England and Cadgwith Anthem, coming back-to-back, can make your hair stand on end at the right time of night.

Will old England run out of such songs for Steeleye? Well, the folk process keeps changing the songs; you may find unfamiliar melodies here attached to such familiar names as Black Jack Davy and Gamble Gold/Robin Hood. Old-timers who remember Ed McCurdy's versions are therefore advised to try to avoid reacting against these melodies; I think they're actually more entertaining than his.

My only complaint is about the pictures on the jacket. They show the band members' faces all stretched out sideways, and to find out what they actually look like you have to put the edge of the jacket up to your eyes and gaze down at an angle. I, of the generation that remembers Ed McCurdy very well, am lately having trouble focusing my eyes on anything that close up—and who wants to be reminded of that? The thing that takes my mind off it is marveling at how clear Maddy Prior looks, considering how blurred she does.

Gilbert Kalish
Presents Haydn Piano Sonatas with a Sense Of Delighted Discovery

Gilbert Kalish is a pianist most of us associate with twentieth-century material because of his recordings of music by Ives, Schoenberg, Grumb, et al., both as a member of the Contemporary Chamber Ensemble and with various other collaborators. In his sensitive accompaniments to Jan DeGaetani's Schubert and Wolf songs on Nonesuch, however, Kalish gave notice that he is not to be pigeonholed as a
contemporary specialist, and for his very first solo recording (also on Nonesuch) he has gone back still farther in time to the keyboard sonatas of Haydn. Though the year is still young, I doubt that it will hold many happier surprises.

Haydn himself, of course, is still filled with surprises for us, and the sonatas constitute a vast and largely unexplored area for most listeners, even those acquainted with all the symphonies and string quartets. In terms of imaginative programming alone, Kalish’s Haydn package is exemplary, comprising three stunning but relatively unfamiliar works together with the well-known Sonata in E Minor (identified as No. 34 in the Hoboken listing and No. 53 in the edition of Christa Landon, which Kalish used for his performances). Sonically, too, the handsome realism with which the Baldwin SD-10 has been captured by Marc Aubert and Joanna Nickrenz may represent a new level of excellence in the art of recording the piano. But of course resourceful programming and fine sound alone do not add up to a musical experience; what is most remarkable is Kalish’s altogether extraordinary identification with the music, one suggesting a lifelong intimacy compounded by an ever-deepening respect and affection, by a continuing sense of delighted discovery that is unfailingly communicative in performance.

Is the concluding Presto of the two-movement Sonata No. 51 (Landon 61) in D Minor a little too relaxed for that marking? The Hungarian musicologist László Somfai, during last fall’s Haydn Festival in Washington, pointed out that in many cases Haydn’s tempo markings had more to do with spirit than with speed; in any event, Kalish’s pace is an effective one. The finale of No. 32 (Landon 47) in B Minor, another Presto, is played about as fast as possible, and yet the playing is more striking for its unfussy poise, subtlety, and wit than for its speed—and these qualities are evident everywhere in all four works. In terms of “discovery,” the B Minor and the very substantial No. 46 (Landon 31) in A-flat (an early masterwork contemporaneous with the Maria Theresia Symphony) may be the most exciting segments of the collection, but everything here qualifies as a discovery because everything is so astoundingly fresh—particularly the E Minor, which has never been more splendidly presented on records.

No one with ears should think of doing without this record. I only hope Kalish and Nonesuch will honor the obligation implicit in producing it by giving us more of the same.

Richard Freed

Nostalgia’s Zenith: Roy Wood’s Gaudy Re-creations of a Vineyard Vintage

Roy Wood’s is an odd and special talent. He writes all his own material, plays all the instruments, and does all the vocals. His specialty is emulating a particular musical period and its performers, and he is willing—even eager—to go to great lengths to create a stereo album that will convince the listener he is listening to vintage 1956 mono.

His previous album, “Eddy & the Falcons,” done with a nominal assist from his group Wizard, was an eerie masterpiece that might have led you to suspect that Wood has somehow brought together the talents of Rich Little and Dr. Frankenstein. You would swear that was Neil Sedaka singing a Paul Anka-type song, that it was Gene Vincent himself delivering a glottal essay on his busted leg in his teen-hood persona. Del Shannon, the Four Seasons, Elvis Presley, Bobby Rydell, Jerry Lee Lewis, Freddie Cannon, and the middle-period Rolling Stones were called from the shadows and made to walk again, zombies all.

Although Wood’s newly released “Mustard” doesn’t cut quite the figure "Eddy,” did there are two numbers on it that would be outstanding in any company. One is You Sure Got It Now, in which Wood simply becomes, believe it or not, Tina Turner! The other, the title track, is a hilarious reproduction of a completely undistinguished jazz date designed to sound as though it were recorded around 1947 and subsequently reissued in a potpourri album together with lovingly detailed liner notes by some hired gun of a jazzbo critic/coroner. A sappy girl trio, whose abrasive harmonies grate like a dull blade against a heavy morning beard, sing a novelty number about “mustard” while a bunch of strung-out, hungover fugitives from a big swing band play comatose riffs. Wood completes this gaudy, zany, ghastly recreation by playing two thoroughly limp solos on tenor and baritone sax. Never since Mozart has so much talent and dark wit been deployed to portray such total musical impotence.

There are no other such bravura jokes on “Mustard,” but the other selections are all clever, there are a few moments of brilliance, and maybe even a couple of genuine passion. No matter. Wood sometimes has trouble making up his mind whether he’s laughing at or paying tribute in his satires, but he is obviously some kind of latter-day genius, perplexing, a little scary, and marvelous.

Joel Vance

ROY WOOD: Mustard. Roy Wood (vocals, instruments, arrangements). Mustard; Any Old Time Will Do; The Rain Came Down on Everything; You Sure Got It Now; Why Does Such a Pretty Girl Sing Those Sad Songs; The Song; Look Thru’ the Eyes of a Fool; Interlude; Get On Down Home. UNİTED ARTISTS UA-LA575-G $6.98, @ UA-EA575-H $7.98.
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CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD
ACE: Time for Another. Ace (vocals and instrumentals). I Think It's Gonna Last; I'm A Man; Tongue Tied; Does It Hurt You; Message to You; and five others. Anchor ANCL-2013 $6.98, © 8308-2013H $7.98, © 5308-2013H $7.98.

Performance: Superb
Recording: Clean

Ace is the delightful English quintet who scored here last year with How Long (Has This Been Going On). About equally influenced by the Beatles' song construction and the beat of American black music, Ace has added the charm of playful, sinuous, light jazz elements. The group has arrived at a sound that is fluid, understated, and very persuasive. Although the lyrics to Tongue Tied and No Future in Your Eyes, the standout numbers on this album, contain such teeth grinders as "You are my hope and inspiration" and "heart/paltry rhymes, the performances are so straightforward and accomplishment that you easily overlook the cliches.

Among the delights of Ace is the way they change rhythm patterns in the middle of songs—I Think It's Gonna Last starts out in a meandering way, then moves into a bump-and-slide black dance figure. Ace comes on as a band, an entity composed of five persons. The interplay between the instruments is meticulous and considered: the guitar solos are sensitive, peaceful comments on the melodies. Ah, this is a band that gladdens the heart.

N.C.

RITA COOLIDGE: It's Only Love. Rita Coolidge (vocals); orchestra. Born to Love Me; Star; Am I Blue; Late Again; Mean to Me; and five others. A&M SP-4531 $6.98.

Performance: Adequate
Recording: Good

I tell you, folks, the times they are a-changin'. Seems only yesterday that Rita was wandering around with Kris looking like she was doing a twenty-four-hour-a-day audition for the role of Pocahontas and sounding, on record, like an Erskine Caldwell character in search of a consciousness-raising group. Now here's Rita on her new album, replete with fancied-up orchestrations, echo chamber, and a repertoire that any chanteuse along the lines of, say, Evie Gorme might be happy to dish up. The results are mainly ho-hum. Most of the time, in relatively unfamiliar material such as Born to Love Me or Keep the Candle Burning. Coolidge is adequate in a limp, show-biz, demo-singer kind of way. But when she tackles two standards, Mean to Me and Am I Blue, she's in her way, way over her head. She has scarcely any idea of the kind of phrasing, skill in projection of mood, or just plain musicianship that are basic necessities in any interpretation of a pop classic. She sings one song by Kris, Late Again, in good enough style, but one track out of ten does not an album make. Speaking of Kris: wonder what his new image plans are? Well, I've always thought that if he cut his hair, perhaps grow a small moustache, and bought some expensive sport clothes, he might just be able to pass himself off as an interesting anomaly, like maybe a Rhodes scholar even. But that's probably too far out. What would a Rhodes scholar be doing in pop music?

P.R.

DEEP PURPLE: Come Taste the Band. Deep Purple (vocals and instrumentals). Comin' Home; Lady Luck; Gettin' Tighter; Dealer; I Need Love; Drifter; and four others. Warner Bros. PR 2895 $6.98, © M8P 2895 $7.98, © M5P 2895 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Believing they were purple was always a lot easier than believing they were deep, eh? Well, flashy guitarist Richie Blackmore and his ego are gone from old DP, and now the band strikes me as one that distinguishes itself from the average dead-end kids who play for $25 a gig by doing the little things a lot better. They certainly don't do the big things a lot better. The songwriting is in a rut, the lyrics are a mishmash of half-finished images, disconnected thoughts, and run-on sentences, and most of the tunes are showing the strain of being on the forty-first lap. Glenn Hughes is one fine bass player, though, and he does a lot of little things that set up and enhance the solos. Ian Paice runs the beat the way a rock drummer should, and David Coverdale's are good rock vocals, no matter how tired I may
be of trebly English boy voices. This is a straightforward, basic album—something you can’t take for granted with Deep Purple—but it is a lot more hard-working than inspired.

N.C.

Earth, Wind & Fire is a show band. A show band is an organization whose main features are precision of execution and crowd-pleasing ability. These down-home ladies, a certain flinty-eyed approach often prevails, as it does with all these down-home ladies, a certain flinty-eyed approach often prevails, as it does with all these down-home ladies, a certain flinty-eyed approach often prevails, as it does with all these down-home ladies, a certain flinty-eyed approach often prevails.

Still, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Chicago, the Mahavishnu Orchestra, the old Sly and the Family Stone, the Ohio Players, the Average White Band, and many others are all show bands. Most of them have gotten away with the idea that they’re doing something more significant and important because they’re playing rock mixed with jazz, America’s Only Native Art Form, Inc.

Earth, Wind & Fire is a good show band as those things go; their execution is admirable, their energy is high-voltage, their vocals are sturdy, their material is dreadful, and listening to them soon becomes deadly dull. J.V.

Donna Fargo: Whatever I Say Means I Love You. Donna Fargo (vocals); orchestra. Hello Little Bluebird; Rain Song; One More Memory; 2 Sweet 2 Be 4 Gotten; and seven others. ABC/DoT DOSD-2029 $6.98, © 8310-2029 H $7.98, © 5310-2029 H $7.98.

Performance: 2 much
Recording: Good

Here’s li’l’ ol’ Donna Fargo pickin’ her way through the okra patch and into your hearts with another album of her own brand of down-home phonographing. Her peak, perhaps, is 2 Sweet 2 Be 4 Gotten—“So until you find another playground/You’re welcome to play on my mind/Why should I try to forget you;/you’re/All that I left behind” —a concoc-tion so yeasty that it makes the Liebestod sound like a one-night stand. Of course, as with all these down-home ladies, a certain flinty-eyed approach often prevails, as it does here in 1 Have the Strangest Feeling and Whatever I Say. But most of the time ol’ Donna is just Hip on Happiness or out enjoyn’ nature as is Hello, Little Bluebird. Ever since I saw Nashville I know that I’m supposed to give Donna and her sisters their due as serious pop creators, but I still find myself petrified with boredom at most of their output. Well, anyhow, I can pass along the tidbit that Ms. Fargo’s publishing company is called “Prima-Donna Entertainment Corporation.” Hmm.

P.B.

Rory Gallagher: Against the Grain. Rory Gallagher (vocals, guitar), Gerry McAvoy (bass), Lou Martin (keyboards), Rod de’Ath (drums).”

“Peter and the Wolf Again”

Looking through the latest catalogue listings, it seems to me that everyone with the possible exception of Tristan Capote and Fanny Fox has his/her own performance of Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf. (My own favorite is — no kidding — Beatrice Lillie’s deadpan, vaguely disapproving and Mary Poppins version on London, although Jacques Brel’s narration, in French, on a recording as yet unavailable here, runs a close second.) That it has been able to survive the mauling it has received at the hands of so many is ample testimony to the fact that it is a work of pre-eminent charm, a charm that never seems to thin or pall. It and Britten’s Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra are probably the two most valuable pieces in the repertoire for introducing young people to the pleasures of music (the introduction and development of themes, the capabilities and possibilities of the modern symphonic orchestra, etc.) without in any way affecting their ability to entertain as well.

Not content, thank goodness, to leave well enough alone, two young Englishmen, Jack Lancaster and Robin Lumley, have had the audacity to tamper with and often mostly ignore Prokofiev’s familiar score, substituting for it an electronic-tinged rock one of their own devising. What gall, say you. What fun, say I. Lancaster and Lumley, who also produced the record (and superbly), have here gathered together some of the best pop musicians in England for a romp that is a joyous exercise in creative record making. The narration is by Viv Stanshall (Viv’s a he, in the English manner of giving odd names such as Beverly and Evelyn to men), who is fairly well known in England since his days with the lamented Bonzo Dog Band; it is thoroughly traditional and recounts the same story familiar to us all. The music, however, is a loony mélange of sounds and effects that couldn’t have been created in any time but the Seventies. Those responsible include Manfred Mann and Eno on the synthesizer, Gary Moore and Chris Spedding on guitars, Cozy Powell on drums, Keith Tippett on piano, and (1) Stephane Grappelli (representing “Cat,” naturally) on a very odd violin indeed.

Perhaps the masterpiece here is Threnody for a Duck, an ostentatiously goofy lament that uses the English Chorale to mourn the disappearance of poor Duck into Wolf’s gullet. It is an original work by Lancaster and Lumley (as, indeed, are most of the numbers here; out of the twenty-one episodes, only seven use Prokofiev’s music, and even that is heavily “arranged”), and it has all the poignancy of a picture of the disappearance of poor Duck into Wolf’s gullet. It is an original work by Lancaster and Lumley (as, indeed, are most of the numbers here; out of the twenty-one episodes, only seven use Prokofiev’s music, and even that is heavily “arranged”), and it has all the poignancy of a picture of the disappearance of poor Duck into Wolf’s gullet. It is an original work by Lancaster and Lumley (as, indeed, are most of the numbers here; out of the twenty-one episodes, only seven use Prokofiev’s music, and even that is heavily “arranged”), and it has all the poignancy of a picture of the disappearance of poor Duck into Wolf’s gullet.

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Steve Howe is the Yes guitarist, and the main difference between this and a Yes album is not how it sounds but how the lyrics read. Howe's words aren't quite as pretentious; they don't deal so much with the universe and metaphysics and such, being vague and awkward on a more personal level. "The first time I took this girl's hand," he writes, "She was as if for whom I was born." Not surprisingly, the better stuff here is instrumental. That part is vague, too, but Howe is an interesting guitarist and, like other Yes people, has a flair for orchestral colors. Rain shows this off to good advantage. Everything else is best approached with a numb consciousness, and you can get that by listening to a Yes album. And try to stay away from the words; the first time I put this record on the turntable, I read something or other, I forget what exactly. "I (T for Texas); St. Louis Blues; Lonesome Whistle; Basin Street Blues; Blue Yodel No. 1 (T for Texas); St. Louis Blues; Night Life; and four others. MONUMENT KZ 33802 $5.98, © ZA 33802 $6.98, © ZT 33802 $6.98.

Performance: Superb
Recording: Very good

Ah, the things I put myself through for you, reader. This time I sat down and figured out Lovesick Blues on the harmonica, just to see how difficult it was—it's nothing less than what they call in Nashville a pure-dee bitch. The melody is inside-out most of the time and you have to go quickly from one bent note to another and God knows what all. Charlie McCoy is always doing that, playing tunes that "can't" be played on the diatonic harp, so it isn't really surprising that he should do it again in a blues album—where lesser mortals would simply take advantage of the chummy relationship between the construction of the harp and the usual construction of the blues. Blues, as Charlie means it, is as varied as the people who might feel blue. Lovesick Blues, along with Hank Williams' Lonesome Whistle and a couple of others here, are what I'd call country-music blues, meaning they were thought up by Southern white men, as distinguished from the basic form most people call country blues, thought up by Southern black men. McCoy handles that, too, of course, in an amplified-harp tribute (he normally plays into a mounted mike) to Little Walter, and he plays Dixieland and upriver jazz with Al Hirt and Pete Fountain, and all sorts of other things; there's no need to worry about the twelve-bar blues you can get from listening to nothing but twelve-bar blues on the typical "blues" album.

As for how McCoy plays the blues, the simplest way to put it is better than anyone else; he's not only versatile and fast but has a distinctive sound of his own and still manages to make the thing sound idiomatic. He also surrounds himself with some of the finest musicians alive. When he's flanked by Josh Graves on the dobro and Kenny Baker on the fiddle, you just may have three instruments being played better than anyone else can play them, and in Ray Edenton on rhythm guitar you may very well have a fourth. With or without the blues, you can improve your day by settling down with this album—with or without a fifth. N.C.
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MELANIE: Sunset and Other Beginnings. Melanie (vocals and guitar); orchestra. Perceive It; What Do I Keep; Loving My Children; Afraid of the Dark; I've Got My Mojo Working; and seven others. ARISTA NL 3001 $6.98, © 8022-899H $7.98.

Performance: Buried
Recording: Noisy and muddy

This is supposed to be black gospel music, but it is so smothered in black commercial pop arrangements that the gospel content has been fatally compromised. About four years ago there was an attempt among younger gospel groups to incorporate certain elements of pop-jazz-rock into their music to win a larger audience. This was not a bad idea, but it has gotten entirely out of control. To commercialize gospel music is to rob it of its passionate innocence. Suttcnsing gospel in "soul" music makes me much in the abstract, doesn't seem complete without the pictures. He's quite a talented musician and producer, too, he plays a whole slew of instruments and has superb control over the engineering of his much-dubbed sound. Still, one of these days I shall shoot this album.

N.C.

QUEEN: A Night at the Opera. Queen (vocals and instruments). Death on Two Legs/ Dedicated to . . . , Lazing on a Sunday Afternoon, I'm in Love with My Car, You're My Best Friend, '39, Sweet Lady, and five others. ARISTA NL 3001 $6.98, © 8022-899H $7.98, © TCS-1053 $7.98.

Performance: Mechanical
Recording: Clean

Queen is a British group that plays with fine precision; technically they are admirable. But they have no personality of their own because they are so busy taking on everyone else's. At times they sound like Alice Cooper, at others the later Beatles, any "heavy-metal" rock group of the last decade, the Kinks deliberately being cute, or half a dozen current "country-rock" outfits. The meaning of the lyrics is lost. They are delivered in a variety of screams, sneers, swags, and glottal tremolos. Queen seems to be trying its best to sound significant and, whenever possible, ominous. Mostly they sound silly and hollow.

J.V.

KENNY RANKIN: Inside. Kenny Rankin (vocals, guitar); John Guerin (drums); Willie Weeks (bass); other musicians. Creepin'; Inside; Lost Up in Loving You; Sunday Kind of Love; She's a Lady; and four others. ABC AB 33913 $6.98, © PZA 33913 $7.98, © PZT 33913 $7.98.

Performance: Kampy Kool
Recording: Good

Kenny Rankin sounds about half committed to being a cabaret singer, and he's about halfway to being marked down in my book as just another pretty voice. He has exceptional vocal equipment, and his control over it is just about absolute, but what he does, for me, is get in the way of the song. I don't hear much if any emotional attachment to the lyrics here; what this reminds me of is the Fifties, piano bars, absent-minded crooners, the Seventies, and other depressing matters. Every time I

MIGHTY CLOUDS OF JOY: Kickin'. Mighty Clouds of Joy (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Mighty High; Leanin'; You Are So Beautiful; I Got the Music in Me; and four others. ABC ABCD-899H $6.98, © 8303-3001 H $7.98.

Performance: Paper serviettes
Recording: Excellent

Now wouldn't you just know that old mush-mouthed Melanie, that one-woman sensitivity training course, would kick off her new album with a slice of Limburger like Perceive It? "Perceive it and say goodbye to it/Don't hold on to any one moment/You've got to love it". Typically, Melanie rejects the direct, communicative street phrase "dig it," requiring instead that we "perceive it," as befits her position as a recording artist.

Look, this kid knows kalass, and if you doubt it just check out Where's the Band ("Darkness mining vision and light . . ."); or People Are Just Getting Ready ("Living our nights with dark passion and our days with a burning glow . . ."). Heady stuff indeed, but also a bit unnerving in its ricketyness, climbing grandeur—like people who call napkins "serviettes," who talk about their "maidservant" when they mean their cleaning lady, or who present elaborately engraved calling cards with their business and home telephone numbers. Of course, Melanie's been dishing up this kind of high-toned dribble with enormous success for several years now, and who am I to challenge success—or "fulfillment," as Melanie would probably call it? The recording itself is handsomely and carefully produced to challenge success—"fulfillment," as Melo.

Mike Oldfield without the pictures

MIKE OLDFIELD: Ommadawn. Mike Oldfield (harp, guitar, bass, mandolin, Bodhran, bazouki, keyboards, percussion); David Strange (cello); Clodagh Simonds, Bridget St. John, Sally Oldfield (voices); other musicians. Ommadawn. VIRGIN PZ 33913 $6.98, © PZA 33913 $7.98, © PZT 33913 $7.98.

Performance: Ommagawd
Recording: Excellent

This is a subjective business, and I may still be reacting against all things connected with The Exorcist, although I'm trying to make allowances for the fact that Mike Oldfield's first forty-minute epic, "Tubular Bells," already existed before William Friedkin Options part of it onto the soundtrack of that calculated rip-off. I read the book and felt foolish and cheap for having done so, but, worse than...
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Because the ear is sensitive to phase distortion mainly in the lower frequencies, Phase-Link is used between the low-frequency driver and the mid-range unit in the high power, 3-way systems (M-70, S-60) but not between the mid-range and tweeter. In medium-power, 2-way systems, one Phase-Link driver is used in 12dB/oct. filter combinations (S-45, P-45). Low-power, 2-way systems (S-30, P-30) do not utilize a Phase-Link driver but instead eliminate phase distortion through a sophisticated 6dB/oct. filter technique.

Bang & Olufsen speakers include the M-70, shown on trumpet stand (supplied); three bookshelf models, the S-60, S-45, and S-30; and two wall panel speakers, the P-45 and P-30.

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APRIL 1976
Dylan's "Desire": Not Exactly a Second Coming

Disliking Bob Dylan used to be rather fun, back in the days when the slightest criticism of the man or his music could provoke fierce, interminable arguments if not outright fist fights. But lately any such iconoclasm is somewhat more commonplace—it's almost respectable, and even vicious, premeditated insults elicit only shrugs, yawns, patient sighs, and an occasional raised eyebrow.

To what may we attribute this unexpected moderation of feeling? Has Dylan suffered such an artistic decline that his erstwhile admirers have abandoned him? Have his supporters simply become more tolerant in their old age? Perhaps, but I suspect that the most significant factor here is apathy, which has all but supplanted enthusiasm throughout our society, particularly among the generation most deeply involved with, and affected by, the myth and music of Bob Dylan. I wish I understood this phenomenon more fully. I can't quite convince myself that it's merely the result of that creeping inertia and conservatism which seem to come as one grows older, nor can I believe that everything is a plot (by the Russians, the Arabs, the Government, the Venetians, or whatever) designed to render us all passive and mindless, ripe for easy conquest.

Whatever its cause, our psychological depression has certainly been reflected in rock-and-roll, not to mention other forms of entertainment. Or did it work the other way around, and we're depressed because our music and movies are so abominable? And that, of course, could simply (or complexly) be a matter of economics: in critic Nik Cohn's axiom, "Entertainment gets sloppy when times get tough." If that is indeed the case, then let us all hope and pray fervently for continued and greater improvement in our economy. I could probably stand being unemployed and penniless a bit longer, but I am fed up to here with bland, boring, silly, irritating, and merely mediocre music. Thank God (or someone like Him/Her/It/Them or Us)—isn't semantics wonderful?—things do seem to be picking up again, and not a second too soon for my taste.

What has all this to do with Bob Dylan's latest album? Possibly very little, but, on the other hand, throughout "Desire" Dylan does seem at least cognizant of our (and his own?) acute lethargy. In Hurricane he seeks to arouse our indignation over yet another Great American Injustice, though for my part I find the whole thing too earnest and preachy, the narrative too flat for the song to have much emotional impact. Somehow, Rubin Carter never seems like a real, much less sympathetic or heroic, character to me, and I think that's mostly because the language used is so ordinary, almost hackneyed. Perhaps this was done deliberately for effect, but it weakens what might otherwise have been as poignant and powerful as, say, Dylan's earlier Percy's Song, which always leaves me raving at the Fates and the impersonal, inexorable forces of Justice. But Hurricane only makes me wonder why, if the case was so flagrantly misconducted, the press and the civil liberties people haven't made such a stink that, in this post-Watergate era of hypersensitivity to corruption anywhere in government, they'd be forced to straighten the mess out posthaste.

Dylan approaches the subject of apathy more directly with Black Diamond Bay, a neatly executed disaster story complete with earthquakes and erupting volcanoes. In the final verse, he switches from third- to first-person narration, recapitulating the story as an item on the seven o'clock news:

It seems there was an earthquake that
Left nothing but a Panama hat and a pair of old Greek shoes.
It didn't seem like much was happening,
So I turned it off and went to grab another beer.

Seems like every time you turn around
There's another hard luck story that you're gonna hear.
That's it exactly—it doesn't affect me, and there's nothing I could do about it, so why should I care? Even the disaster victims were too busy with their petty preoccupations to see what was coming, or to try to help each other when the catastrophe did come. The jarrringly cheerful melody adds the final touch of irony.

Storytelling, rather than songwriting as such, seems to be Dylan's strongest point these days—perhaps it always was. Practically the only song of his from the last few years that I can recall offhand (besides the schmaltzy, overplayed Forever Young) is Like Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts, which I've always thought would make a perfect Western. Dylan's melodies have never been anything special, either: they work in context or they don't, and that's that.

The one thing Dylan has been consistently good at is the manipulation of language, his unusual, occasionally interesting, use of...
words. At least for me, that element is missing in much of this album: several of the lyrics are borderline clichés, in fact. The one song I can't fault on this count is Joey, a biography in song of a gangster. The line "Always on the outside/Of whatever side there was" strikes me as one of the better descriptions of how it feels to be a misfit. Strangely enough, Joey Gallo, a man who surely broke many of the laws of our land, here becomes a far more likable character than the putatively blameless Rubin Carter. Quite simply, Joey's story is recounted more effectively, and with rather more understanding and compassion, than Rubin's.

The other songs don't work quite so well. Isis seems mostly an exotic fantasy, filled with grave-robbing and icebound pyramids. Mozambique is a musical picture postcard, and there's an odd, ominous feel to One More Cup of Coffee that's never really developed. According to Allen Ginsberg's incoherent liner notes, Oh Sister may, or may not, be addressed to all of us "good citizen sisters" too busy exploring our new-found independence to meet the emotional needs of others. It is not only sloppy, but sappy: "Oh sister am I not a brother to you? And one deserving of affection? And is our purpose not the same on this Earth; To love and follow his direction?" Whose? Where? Too mystical for a literalist like me. Romance in Durango has a nicely evocative arrangement and rather reminds me of Marty Robbins' old, best-forgotten El Paso in its gaudy Southwestern trappings and tragic romanticism.

That leaves us with Sara, which I think may have been a mistake for Dylan. A fair amount of his success has been a result of his ability to keep people guessing and wondering about him, after all. Only a fool tells all he knows or feels, and Dylan has never been that, but he may well have revealed more of himself here than was either necessary or wise. I can think of nothing more boring than omniscience.

All things considered, "Desire" isn't nearly as bad as I'd expected, but then you'll have gathered that I had no great expectations. The production is a vast improvement over "Blood on the Tracks," as is the instrumental work. Far be it from me to disparage competent musicianship; frankly, I think Dylan's voice and guitar can use all the assistance they can get. Howard Wyeth's drumming is particularly commendable. The violin doesn't always fit into the arrangements, but it salvages at least one song from total forgettability. Emmylou Harris' backing vocals don't sound as good on record as they do in theory; her voice just doesn't seem to blend all that well with Dylan's. More's the pity. And so, the Second Coming this isn't, thank the Lord, but at least it's not trying to be. Who ever wanted that to begin with except those lunatics panting for the Last Judgment?

---Linda Frederick

BOB DYLAN: Desire. Bob Dylan (vocals, guitar, harmonica); Emmylou Harris (vocals); Rob Stoner (bass); Howie Wyeth (drums); Scarlet Rivera (violin); other musicians. Hurricane; Isis; Mozambique; One More Cup of Coffee; Oh, Sister; Joey; Romance in Durango; Black Diamond Bay; Sara. COLUMBIA PC 33893 $6.98, © PCA 33893 $7.98, © PCT 33893 $7.98.

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APRIL 1976
The economy is depressed this kind of glossy singing seems to get a new foothold, and it takes technically inferior singers years to get the credibility back. I'm convinced that being cool and glib is not good for you—but you should decide what's good for you, so you'll have to make allowances for my tendency to be preachy on the subject.

N.C.

LOU REED: Coney Island Baby. Lou Reed (vocals, guitar); other musicians. Crazy Feeling; Kicks; Charley's Girl: A Gift; Coney Island Baby; and three others. RCA APL1-0915 $6.98, APS1-0915 $7.98, APK1-0915 $7.98.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Excellent

I've always had the feeling that there is considerably less to Lou Reed's work than meets the ear. Members of the "thinking" pop press—often down in the depths of the nineteenth floor, at least in regard to their own social consciences after one lavish publicity lunch too many—immediately took to Reed from his earliest days with the Velvet Underground, and they seemed to fall all over each other in proclaiming him some new kind of 33 1/2-rpm Francois Villon, alternating their tsk-tsks with a goggle-eyed attention to his every new grunt. This must have been because his songs often dealt with drugs or homosexuality or the bitterly desperate street life of teenage-burnt-out cases. That the songs often had what seemed to be autobiographical tidbits strewn through them served only to add to the titillation, and consequently Reed has been the reigning in-house decadent for some time now.

Well, I'm here, fresh from the haunt of the cool and the tern, to tell you that his newest album strikes me as an extremely patchy effort, intermittently entertaining, and about as distasteful as a waffle bake over at Mary Hartman's. The songs, considerably more upbeat this time out, include two that are very good—Coney Island Baby, a song about the search for personal values, and the charmingly bad-ass Charley's Girl. Reed's guitar work is very fine to excellent, and he's able, once in a while, to drop the irritating monotone "yeah-man-ey-babe" vocal style that sounds so "authentic." Not that he ever quite brings himself to sing (too uncool, possibly), but at least you don't feel like you're huddled in a doorway, passing a roach back and forth, discussing the social life of Eighth Avenue.

Reed does have an offbeat talent as an actor-narrator of his own material, and at times it comes across in a powerful way, as it does in the early parts of Coney Island Baby. But he spends too much time embroidering mood onto what are basically very simple and direct rock ballads. The result is often an indigestible mess such as the chimes, gongs, and God-knows-what-else piled on to Crazy Feeling.

His admirers seem to find him a significant mixture of William Burroughs, Jean Genet, and Bob Dylan. To me he seems more like a gifted actor who is never comfortable for too long in one role (thus the radical changes from album to album) and whose roots are in the urbane silliness of Chats, the chic drugging of Cocteau, and the performing style of one of the better Brechtian character actors from the Berliner Ensemble. The production, by Reed and Godfrey Diamond, is first-class in every respect, as is the sound.

RUFUS: Rufus Featuring Chaka Kahn. Rufus (vocals and instrumentalists); Chaka Kahn (vocals, orchestra, Fool's Paradise; Circle; On Time; Live Talking; Sweet Thing; and five others. ABC ABCD-909 $6.98, 8022-909 H $7.98. 5022-909 H $7.98.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Good

This album is good, musically fun. Rufus is Tony Maiden, Andre Fischer, Kevin Murphy, and Bobby Watson, and they form a tightly knit, versatile, and super-professional group of singers and instrumentalists. Chaka Kahn is...well, she's something! She can out-shout and out-vamp Tina Turner in something such as Have a Good Time and then switch into the coolest of cool ballad singers on Fool's Paradise, and yet always, hot or cool, she maintains an enormously high level of performing velocity. Her only problem seems to be a certain uneasiness as to whether the message is in the lyric or in the sound. Usually she settles for the sound. After all the excitement is over you sort of wonder where you've been (the songs are all painfully run-of-the-mill), but you're very glad you were there. It's probably a dynamite club act, but in recording, at the moment, Rufus and their resident hurricane are stymied because of really lousy material.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BOBBY SHORT: Bobby Short Celebrates Rodgers and Hart. Bobby Short (vocals and piano); Beverly Peers (bass); Richard Sheridan (drums and percussion). On Your Toes; Medley-Hollywood Party No. 1/Hollywood Party No. 2; You Mustn't Kick It Around; Where or When; Have You Met Miss Jones; Hallelujah, I'm a Bum; Johnny One Note; and nineteen others. ATLANTIC SD 2-610 two discs $13.96, TP2-610 $12.97. 8CS2-610 $12.97.

Performance: New heights in elegance
Recording: Excellent

After polishing off songs of sophistication from other sources in "Bobby Short Loves Cole Porter," "Bobby Short Is Mad About Noel Coward," and "Bobby Short Is K-Razi for Gershwin," Mr. Short, who may well be the suavest singer alive, comes up with a sure thing in this two-record set of Rodgers and Hart hardly perennials. The program, for one thing, couldn't have been more attractively assembled. Popular favorites from Broadway and Hollywood hit shows and movies are placed in discreet contrast with lesser-known but invariably first-rate selections from the R&H repertoire. The clever, sometimes icy, but mostly affecting lyrics of Lorenz Hart inspired Richard Rodgers to fashion tunes of a sort that such more sentimental collaborators as Oscar Hammerstein II never seemed to stir in him. The scores for Babes in Arms, On Your Toes, and Be Jupiter seem never to flag; song after song bubbles up as though drawn from an apparently bottomless well of inspiration. The sprightly ballad It's Got to Be Love has your spirits high one minute, the next you are brought low by the musical masochism of Glad to Be Unhappy. Spring Is Here offers a title song drenched in self-pity, then segues into the sun in With a Song in My Heart. And so it goes. And many of the best are here, along with such classics of urbane silliness as Have You Met Miss Jones? and Hollywood (Continued on page 92)
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Plywood construction
The splendor of the songs themselves only partly accounts for the excellence of this album. There is also the crystal clarity of Bobby Short's articulation, the perfection of his tempos, the absolute focus he achieves with everything. He may sound a mite precious at times, but he has a real voice, and he knows how to sing out (hear him in Johnny One Note) when the occasion calls for it. He can be cynical, smart, and mocking, but never hard and certainly never perfunctory. This is ideal fare for Short, and he does it no less than total justice. P.K.

SOPHY: Sentimientos (Feelings). Sophy (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Adentro Tuyo; Libertad; Y Todavía Te Quiero; Sentimientos (Dime); and six others. Velvet LPV-1494 $3.98.

Performance: Ay, Mami, otra vez! Recording: Fair to good

The doings on this record are a mixture of Latin oomph and faddish approximations of American pop glop—sighing strings and intrusive rhythm section. What distinguishes the album are Sophy's vocals, excellently phrased and delivered with confidence. In general, many Latin women singers are successful artistically because they are unashamedly female, they carol a worldly knowledge. Latins are not much given to introspection—not the defeatist, suicidal American kind, anyway—and in Latin music romance is a common sense. Euro-American music may have produced some of the great songs about losing at love, but it tends to get necrophiliac on the subject. Latin music assumes, quite correctly and sensibly, that love is the only fact of life worth knowing; all other aspects of life derive from that supreme premise. Sophy's album is about equal in style and content (once again, roughly speaking) to those of Anne Murray or Karen Carpenter: a delicate, whimsical feel for melody, position leading up to punchlines that never happen. The Mael's become less interesting as they become more fascinating to themselves. J.V.

SPARKS: Indiscreet. Ron and Russell Mael (vocals); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. Hospitality on Parade; Happy Hunting Ground; Without Using Hands; Get in the Swing; How Are You Getting Home?; and eight others. Island ILPS 9345 $6.98.

Performance: Silly Recording: Soupy

This is the third Sparks album of satirical songs I've heard. The first was a delight, as if Gilbert & Sullivan had written the score for a musical treatise on the lunacy of the last two decades...something that King Kong could walk to. The second album was a joke taken beyond the crucial moment of the delivery of the punchline, and therefore a flop. Comedians in love with themselves or unaware of their audience often have a problem of timing. This third album shows Sparks—Ron and Russell Mael, two Americans resident in England—abandoning all pretense of providing the payoff, concentrating instead on the ex-
anyway. Pythagorean's greatest discovery probably was the arithmetic relationships of musical intervals, specifically the sounds produced by the vibration of related lengths of string at a given tension, 2:1 giving the octave, 3:2 the fifth, 4:3 the fourth, and so on. From this and other hard facts emerged the Pythagorean idea that "all things are numbers," and that's approximately where this album comes in—it's the music to a story about the people of a small planet that exists to give numbers to the universe. A book by Chris Bryant and Allan Scott, based on an idea of Stevens', no doubt clearly and correctly does, the songs dwell on characterization and on simplifying certain situations and ideas connected with it.

All in all, this is better music than Stevens has made since "Teaser and the Firecat," and it seems to show, once again, that he does his best work when he doesn't become so intense about it. When he's really hammering away at Truth, the result simply sounds too much like hammering. When he relaxes a bit, he can charm you with songs like "Moonshadow" or, in this case, "Banapple Gas." And by intense, I don't necessarily mean serious, as Nilsson's "Nighttime," which is that, is energized by Stevens' delicate, somewhat whimsical feel for melody. "Drywood" finds him concentrating too hard and is the kind of racket that gives me a headache. I took two aspirins and then realized I might have run afoul of the spirit of the whole thing, since the Pythagoreans held that one is the point, two is the line, three is the surface, and four is the solid. Then I got to wondering whether this necessarily contradicts the Nilssonian theory that "one is the loneliest number that you'll ever do." Then I got engrossed in playing with a pocket calculator. I guess this album affected me, affected me all right. N.C.

STEPHEN STILLS: Live. Stephen Stills (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. Wooden Ships; Four Days Gone; Jet Set (Sigh); Change Partners; Crossroads; 4 + 20; and five others. ATLANTIC SD 18156 TP 18156 $7.98, © CS 18156 $7.98.

Performance Offhand Recording Good

Steve Stills seems to me the sort who has to hike up his britches and clear his throat good to make a proper recording—and that means making one in a studio, not on a stage. This once-over-lightly, hit-or-miss package seems to confirm that. It has an acoustic side and an electric side, and I found myself doing the uncharacteristic thing of liking the electric side better. That's partly a matter of Stills' having back-up musicians on that side, in addition to having a more palatable electric picking style than most, and partly a matter of there being fewer holes on that side for him to noodle around in with his voice. On the other side his vocals remind me a little of Jose Feliciano's, which never leave well enough alone. Stills is a valued entertainer, but a live album is a live album is a greatest hits album is a quick way to fulfill a contractual obligation. N.C.

SUPERTRAMP: Crisis? What Crisis? Supertramp (vocals and instrumals). Easy Does It; Sister Moonshine; Ain't Nobody but Me; A Soapbox Opera; Another Man's Woman; Lady; and four others. A&M SP-4560 $6.98.

Performance Variable Recording Clean

Supertramp is a quintet of young Englishmen who are potentially accomplished musicians but who play as if they were child prodigies in search of adulthood. The vocalists have an unfortunate bent for trying to sing in registers their voices can't carry or sustain.

The group presents an amalgam of all the failed stylistic ventures of British and American groups of the last ten years: they come on alternately as hey-nonny-no folkies, pale jazz cats, early Beatle pop-rockers, and gee-whilikers white kids who've just heard their first black blues. Trying to be everyone at once, Supertramp becomes nobody or anybody. There are moments when things almost work; the group gets together and bites down on a figure or a riff and it seems they are going to get something done, that they are going to sound like a band. But these moments are betrayed by the vocals. The stale and predictable material doesn't help either. J.V.

THE TEMPTATIONS: House Party. The Temptations (vocals); instrumal accompaniment. Keep Holding On; It's Just a Matter of Time; You Can't Stop a Man in Love; World of You, Love and Music; and five others. GORDY G-973 $6.98, © G-973H $7.98, © G75-973H $7.98.

Performance Good Recording Good

This is the unnumbered Temptations album. With better than average songs to sing, and with a good producer, the Temptations have shown, time and again, that they are hard to beat for bravura and polish. If they can't give...
life to dead material, they can at least provoke reflex-like twitches. Unfortunately there is spotty, however, and the album lacks cohesion because so many different producers were called in, among them Holland-Dozier-Holland (Motown's original golden boys, recently returned to the fold after a long dispute), Steve Cropper (master guitarist from Booker T. and the MG's editor of Otis Redding's posthumous tapes, and producer of a dynamite Sam & Dave comeback album), and, of course, the Temptations themselves.

The Temptations are interpreters rather than creators. They need a solid "script" with a beginning, middle, and end. They need to be directed by one hand instead of a dozen (including their own). Otherwise, their considerable talents are diffused and wasted. This album sounds like pieces from other puzzles. Everything is professional, but everything sounds like pieces from other puzzles.

Performance: Exuberant
Recording: Good

Here's another super-sharp bundle of commercial goodies from Paul Williams, and they're all performed with his customary self-assured exuberance. That some of them, Flash, for instance ("Blackberry blue/Strawberry sad/Give 'em flavors/And feelings/Don't hurt so bad"), sound a bit like shorthand notes in search of an idea, or that the three "theme" songs from films (Lonely Hearts from Day of the Locust, Old Souls from The Phantom of the Paradise, and Ordinary Fool from Bugsy Malone—one of those drawing-room comedies, obviously) are gaudy haguelites of the silliest sort, doesn't really matter all that much. It's jive, but it's friendly, pleasant jive. Williams is currently coasting on his enormous popularity and, apparently, enjoying the ego trip. His early work revealed a real enough talent and an offbeat lyrical sensibility, but the Garden of Moolah seems irresistible to him. The result has been a slide into the most vapid kind of commercialism. Yet, his performances continue to make a hell-of-a-good-time-is-being-had-by-all professionalism, so who am I to complain?"
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"Huge coils of self-important surrealism unwind aggressively..."

**Patti Smith's "Horses"**

If critics are having nightmares these days, one of the worst of them will undoubtedly be about not liking "Horses." Patti Smith's ubiquitous debut album. Without missing a beat, the nation's linotypers seem to have shifted from Springsteen to Smith, and there is no escaping this strange New Jersey Nightingale. Sneakers are out, Rimbaud is in, and I feel so poeticized I could die. However, after listening to the record a dozen times, not only do I not like "Horses," I never want to hear it again—these days a difficult admission to make.

"Horses" is so clearly a classically idiosyncratic "first" album that perhaps the artist's subsequent records will illuminate its not inconsiderable virtues and make it seem much better in years to come than it seems now— even the mistakes of heroes can be heroic. I doubt it, but I hope so. Inwardly vulnerable and outspokenly naive, Patti Smith is after all the upper cases hang out, they still measure her look. Thus Patti can prattle. "That's just an artistic statement. It has nothing to do with me personally. You can't worry about gender when you're doing art on its highest level." We are expected to either edit out or swallow whole the sophomoric nonsense in this and similar "I was always into art" proclamations. That may be easy enough to do in the permissive, one-to-one situation of an interview, but such uninformed and uninform ed grandiloquence on a disc, innocently unconscious though it may be, sets up a resistance that is much harder to ignore.

While "Horses" was being made, writer/singer Smith and producer John Cale reportedly had long, "totally creative" arguments about how to record almost everything. That the singer won most of the battles but lost the war seems a safe conclusion since the disc's production content is generally as minimal as that of a demonstration tape. Granted that no member of Smith's band is a virtuoso. Cale has often in the past done fine work with less-than-professional musicians (the Stooges and the Modern Lovers, for example). Here he appears to have been needlessly handcuffed—he has never, after all, been guilty of over-production—while the artists had their way, neither wisely nor well, with both the sound (thin and brittle) and the music (slight and uninteresting). It seems reasonable to expect that studio veteran Cale might have whipped even these musicians into shape, especially since he was a charter member of the Velvet Underground. The group they so slavishly imitate, but he evidently didn't get the chance—"Horses" plods far more than it prances.

Poet Patti Smith loved rock-and-roll long before she decided to become a rock-and-roll singer. And once the decision was made, I suspect, she accepted it as already accomplished fact, rushing through her first album as if some kind of transition or training period were unnecessary. She can talk all she wants about actually being the Rolling Stones record or a Rolling Stones record or a poetry reading at the local "Y." She may look, she may even think, rock-and-roll, but more often than not her carefully precise recitations lack the craziness of the real pandemonium she is striving for. Right now, it's all too serious, not enough fun.

Try as I might, I simply cannot warm to the music and poetry of "Horses." I respect the effort behind it, but how much can you respect a record you wouldn't dream of playing for pleasure? "Patti Smith is nothing if not new" is the line of defense her admirers offer to mockers, but the album sounds to me like a mor bid, pretentious rehash of Jim Morrison and Lou Reed. Smith's two major late-Sixties influences. Even Land, the best song in it, said to be based on a vision of Jimi Hendrix's last hours, metamorphoses from the Velvet Underground into the Doors for one of its neatest tricks. Free Money, another of the better cuts, cleverly wedds love to money, making all the double entendres triple, but musically it is again derivative of the late, lamented Underground.

But the Velvets could play, and they didn't sound as if they were recorded in a separate room down the hall from the singer. On most of "Horses," Smith's voice is placed so far front that she sounds strident and affected even when she isn't. Thus isolated, anyone's singing is likely to appear spoiled, precious, arrogant without reason; Patti's does.

**POETRY, I suppose, is the part which defies translation. Patti Smith is a good poet, but even the best of her work seems—I've struggled hard to characterize it—pointlessly pregnant. "Horses" is too pregnant to be taken seriously, yet it is surely not funny nor meant to be. It is expectant past the point of aesthetic return, so heavy at times that it cannot make the simplest movement with grace. And when those huge coils of self-important surrealism unwind aggressively toward me, I find it urgent to look for a way out of this place. I've been here before, and it hasn't aged well. Razorblade Alley and Eyeball Lane still look the same, and over there on Arcane Avenue at the Dying Swan Motel and Piano Shop, where only the upper cases hang out, they still measure a man by the width of his donkey and the height of the A in his Art. And you never could get a good meal there anyway. In the early Sixties, I had a friend on Philosopher's Row; he used to play all his "serious" records in a dark room lighted only by black and purple light bulbs and iridescent art. Incense burned. Nancenae reigned. He would have loved "Horses."

—Paul Nelson

PATTI SMITH: Horses, Patti Smith (vocals); Lenny Kaye (guitar); Richard Sohl (piano); Ivan Kral (bass); Jay Dee Daugherty (drums); other musicians: Gloria; Redondo Beach; Birdland; Free Money; Kimberly; Break It Up; Land; Elegie.

STEREO REVIEW
marooned in monotony. Particularly fascinating is a stretch associated with the rites of the Mevlevi sect used for dances similar to those of Morocco's whirling dervishes. In all, a musical journey worth taking. P.K.

THEATER • FILMS

LISZTOMANIA (Franz Liszt-Richard Wagner-Rick Wakeman). Original-soundtrack recording. Roger Daltrey, Linda Lewis, Paul Nicholas (vocals); David Wilde (piano); English Rock Ensemble; National Philharmonic Orchestra, George Michie cond., Rick Wakeman arr. Rienzi/Chopsticks Fantasia; Love's Dream; Dante Period; Orpheus Song; Hell; Hibernation; Excelsior Song; Master Race; Rape, Pillage and Clap; Funerailles; Free Song; Peace at Last. A&M SP4546 $6.98, © 4546 $7.98.

Performance: Fevered and foolish
Recording: Maddeningly good

In his frantic film biography, or antibiography, of Franz Liszt, Ken Russell depicts the composer of Les Préludes as "one helluva guy"—the "popstar" of the nineteenth century, in fact, and a performing exhibitionist according to this album's liner notes, with "the creative goods to back up all the flashiness." As Lisztomania staggers from one overblown fantastic sequence to the next, it is accompanied almost incessantly by music. Separated from the movie, the musical soundtrack is still powerful enough to make your head spin. Here are themes by Liszt and his son-in-law Richard Wagner tricked out to rock beats complete with sickening effects on every electronic instrument that could be crowded into a recording studio. Huge piano keyboards seem to be dumping their chains of ivory oblongs right into your lap. The National Philharmonic abruptly spews forth great Lisztian and Wagnerian stretches and is as suddenly silent. The English Rock Ensemble seems out to deafen the world. The songs are decked out in "arrangements" (they sound more like derangements) by Rick Wakeman, who was asked "to crank up his many synthesizers and keyboards in order to update and sci-fi the music of Liszt and Wagner." Mr. Wakeman certainly took the assignment to heart. As for the lyrics, if that is what they are ("Oh, love, as long as love is young/As long as life shall last..."), they are variously credited to Roger Daltrey and somebody named Benson (no Christian name supplied) and tossed at your ears like grenades by Mr. Daltrey, Linda Lewis, and several others. Wagner's orchestral music is equated throughout with Nazi marching songs, and there's a Chopsticks to drive you and your neighbors to drugs. In short, Love's Dream has turned unaccountably into a nightmare. P.K.

(Continued on page 99)

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APRIL 1976
In Lucky Lady, the people who wrote American Graffiti (Willard Huyck and Gloria Katz) have come up with a picture about running running circa 1930 during which Gene Hackman and Burt Reynolds vie for the affections of Liza Minnelli as an overdressed floozy of a singer in a blonde wig.

The picture, which cost more than $13,000,000 to make, has already been panned by practically everybody, including its stars, but the period in which it is set did give Ralph Burns, who was in charge of the music, an opportunity to try to come up with a score that would rival the success Marvin Hamlisch had with his treatments of Scott Joplin's rags in The Sting. Burns produced Arista's soundtrack record and arranged and conducted everything on it with the exception of two songs delivered by Bessie Smith (what an exception!), and he has managed to put together an album rather more entertaining than the film itself.

In keeping with the current custom of adding retroactively to the popular musical literature of bygone days, Burns himself has contributed a period piece called Chirisy McTeague that emerges with just the right sort of orthophonic-like sound, woven the Dies Irae into a treatment of "My Saint Go Marching In (it makes for bemusing listening), added adreamy saxophone-mellow interlude called Portobello Waltz, and turned Zez Confrey's breezy Dizzy Fingers into a sort of miniature Paul Whiteman esque piano concerto. All this is apt and makes for pleasant listening. The songs John Kander and Fred Ebb wrote to measure for Minnelli are less inspired—definitely not in the Cabaret category. Minnelli makes the most out of "While the Getting Is Good, a jazz hymn to the virtues of materialism ("Let go and get it while the getting is good") and sings the title song, in which the heroine is compared to a yacht decked out with "diamonds on her bow" and "emeralds on her stern" as though it were destined for the greatest glory since Hello Dolly—which I don't think it's going to achieve. Even so, the fervor and sincerity that are this singer's hallmark are especially contagious here.

Then there's the inevitable boop-boop-a doop treatment of two real hits of the period, If I Had a Talking Picture of You and All I Do is Dream of You, which deserve more loving care than they get when they're kidded by Vangie Charmichael (Helen Kane she isn't). And there's a silly one-minute off-key treatment of Fats Waller's Ain't Misbehavin' by Burt Reynolds (he plays the kind of lovable do in Lucky Lady that he managed to bring off better in At Long Last Love) which only goes to prove that on a phonograph record even a minute can be too long.

The album does hold up as a fairly diverting musical evocation of the era it's meant to evoke. In the course of the movie, however, Liza Minnelli is given to playing Bessie Smith records, and the inclusion of these makes for something of a jolt. Smith's Young Woman Blues and her own freewheeling treatment of Hot Time in Old Town Tonight take you into another musical dimension—the world of genuine jazz, alongside which even the best-synthesized reconstructions of the pop music of those days just sound hollow. It's not fair.

—Paul Kresh

AIRTTO: Identity. Airto Moreira (vocals, percussion); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. Flora on My Mind, Wake Up Song (Baião Do Acordar)/Café; Encounter (Encounter No Bar); Tales from Home (Lendas); (Baião Do Acordar)/Cafe; Encounter (Encounter No Bar); Tales from Home (Lendas); and three others. ARISTA AL 4063 $6.98.

Performance: Variable
Recording: Good

Airto Moreira has been in this country for several years; he was one of a group of progressive Brazilian musicians, most of them influenced by jazz, who immigrated to this country, among them keyboardist Deodato, guitarist Sivuca, arranger Hermeto, and vocalist Flora Purim (now Mrs. Moreira). Airto toured with Miles Davis and was a sensation when he demonstrated his collection of and skill with primitive rhythm instruments; he made two solo albums for Buddah around 1971, several for CTI, and has been a frequent sideman in both East and West Coast jazz sessions.

Airto is a soft-spoken fellow who is passionate and naive in some ways and who believes that jazz is the music that will save the world. His music depends to some extent on his passions, and, though he is undoubtedly sincere, he tends to gush. That might be all right if he were gushing in his own language, but, unfortunately, most of the vocals on this album are in English, of which Airto and his co-writers have a limited command. At first the results are just slightly embarrassing; soon they seem banal, and finally, inevitably, they become hilarious.

If this is the first Airto album you will hear, be careful to separate what Airto the rhythm mist is doing as opposed to what Airto the jazz crusader thinks he should do. Much of what he does on his own is amazing; most of what he burdens himself with is forgettable. For Airto's devotion to jazz sidetracks his real talent. Brazil is hardly a musically underdeveloped nation, and Airto is an amazing native son. Jazz takes away from him what he chose to title this album with: identity. J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
DAVE BRUBECK AND PAUL DESMOND: 1975: The Duets. Paul Desmond (alto saxophone); Dave Brubeck (piano). Blue Dove: Balcony Rock; Koto Song; Stardust; and four others. A&M/HORIZON SP-703 $6.98.

Performance: Excellent
Recording: Excellent

Dave Brubeck and Paul Desmond have spent at least as much time playing together as Ferrante and Teicher. The rapport was always there, but it has never been quite as apparent as in these duet recordings. When it is not competing for volume with a bass and drums, Brubeck's piano style is more delicate than usual, perfectly complementing the cool, ethereal playing of Desmond. The idea of playing without a rhythm section started abroad the SS Rotterdam during a filming for a BBC-TV series; Brubeck and Desmond played You Go to My Head, which not only (in mono) ends this album, but gave birth to it. Inspiring producer John Snyder to follow up with the studio recordings that complete this delightful set of musical dialogues. Let's hope for more.

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES. Children of All Ages (vocals and instrumentals). Jubilee Morning; Yawn Song; Plenty of It; and two others. DIFFERANT DRUMMER DD 1005 $6.98.

Performance: Half and half
Recording: Very good

One of the titles on side one of this album is Yawn Song, which aptly describes that entire side. Side two, a fifteen-minute piece entitled Journey to the Center of the Universe, has some redeeming qualities apart from sparing us the idiotic lyrics gruesomely rendered on...
the other side by Bob Durrough. Arnie Lawrence makes side two listenable, but don’t expect to hear more from this assembly of studio musicians—at least, let’s hope and pray we don’t.

C.A.

CHRIS CONNOR: The Finest of Chris Connor. Chris Connor (vocals); the Ralph Sharon Group; Ellis Larkins Trio; the Vinnie Burke Quartet. Lullaby of Birdland; What Is There to Say; Try a Little Tenderness; Spring Is Here; Gone with the Wind; Lush Life; and fourteen others. BETHLEHEM 2BP 1001 two discs $9.98.

Performance: Refreshing
Recording: Very good

Chris Connor is what used to be known as a “song stylist.” Back in the Fifties, she made the brave decision not to sound like anyone but herself, and she developed a warm, highly personal quality in her husky voice that is really delicious to hear, especially today, when a little style is more than welcome. She started as a band vocalist with such orchestras as Claude Thornhill’s and Stan Kenton’s, but she broke out of that and found her audience in the cramped rooms of clubs from whence her admirers spread the word of her talent.

This album is a reissue of an earlier Bethlehem release that gave Miss Connor’s public the songs they especially liked to hear her doing two decades ago—Lullaby of Birdland, Spring Is Here, The Thrill Is Gone—ballads mostly in a melancholy vein, although she can also raise your spirits a notch or two in a jov-

CHRIS CONNOR
A delicious, husky voice

ier mood with numbers like It’s All Right with Me and Ridin’ High. Connor’s range is not immense, and she tends to take her own sweet time a bit too much, trying to wring more emotion out of a piece than sometimes is really in it. And although she bends a note or two here and there she never does depart far from the conventional pattern of a tune. But, on the whole, it is refreshing to hear her now, especially against the flow of a first-rate jazz instrumental background.

P. K.

CHICK COREA: Return to Forever. Chick Corea (electric piano); Joe Farrell (soprano saxophone, flutes); Stanley Clarke (bass); Airto Moreira (drums, percussion); Flora Purim (vocals, percussion). Crystal Silence; What Game Shall We Play Today; Return to Forever; Sometime Ago/La Fiesta. ECM 1022 $6.98.

Performance: First and best return
Recording: Excellent

As an individual, Chick Corea is a very gifted pianist and composer, but his group, Return to Forever, as heard on a series of Polydor albums, has proved to be a great disappointment, representing as it does Corea’s admitted search for wider appeal (translate money). Like his former colleague from the Miles Davis group, Herbie Hancock, Corea began to dress his performances in unbecoming cloaks of electronic gimmickry, added a bitter dash of vocals by the impossible Flora Purim, and veiled it all in that pseudo-spirituality designed to make us think commercial ventures are some sort of religious experience. Though it has reached the American market several albums later, this is the first recording by Return to Forever, and, even apart from the technically superb sound that marks all ECM products, it is also the best one. In fact, it might still have been an excellent album had it not been for the grating, anemic vocals of Flora Purim. On the positive side there’s Crystal Silence, a delicate Corea composition that was beautifully executed as a duet with Gary Burton on another album, which is given a most sensitive reading here by Joe Farrell on

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soprano saxophone and Corea on electric piano. The spell woven by Corea and Farrell is broken, however, by Ms. Purim on the next track, an inanity called What Game Shall We Play Today. Sometime Ago/La Fiesta takes up all of side two; except for a mercifully short vocal, it is a most prepossessing track featuring Corea in fine form throughout. So, out of nearly forty-seven minutes, this album contains about a half-hour of good music, which is more than one can say for any of the group’s subsequent efforts on Polydor. C.A.

GEORGE DUKE: I Love the Blues, She Heard My Cry. George Duke (keyboards and vocals); other musicians. Chariot; Sister Serene; Prepare Yourself; Someday; and six others. BASF MC 25671 $6.98.

Performance: Likable
Recording: Excellent

Pianist George Duke dedicates this album to his former boss, the late Cannonball Adderley, but any similarity between what Duke played with Adderley and what he plays here is hard to find. Some of this is a bit on the gimmicky side, none of it is music that will live forever, but there’s a nice feeling here, and even Flora Purim—who happily makes but a cameo appearance—is better than bearable. Sixteen people join Duke in various combinations, and a prevailing good spirit makes the trek from down-home blues to rock to soul to Hancockmania quite pleasant. C.A.

HERBIE HANCOCK: Man-Child. Herbie Hancock (keyboards); Wayne Shorter, Bennie Maupin (saxophones); Stevie Wonder (harmonica); others. Hang Up Your Hang Ups; Sun Touch; Bubbles; and three others. COLUMBIA PC 33812 $6.98, O PCA 33812 $7.98, C PCT 33812 $7.98.

Performance: Assembly-line stuff
Recording: Very good

Ho-hum, another session, another album. Well, at least each new release has a different-looking cover. Tone-deaf disc jockeys will play this because it’s by Herbie Hancock, but I wouldn’t advise you to do that. C.A.

GEORGE DUKE
Prevailing good spirits

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
MILT HINTON: Here Swings the Judge. Milt Hinton (bass); John Faddis (trumpet); Budd Johnson, Frank Wes (saxophones); John Bunch (piano); Jo Jones (drums); Ben Webster (tenor saxophone, piano). Blue Skies; Sophisticated Lady; Strudin’ with Ben; and three others. FAMOUS DOOR HL-104 $7.00 (from Harry Lim Productions, 40-08 155th Street, Flushing, N.Y. 11354).

Performance: From good to goody
Recording: Good

Bassist Milt Hinton became widely known and admired as a member of the Cab Calloway Orchestra from 1936 to 1951. Since he is musically versatile and can always be relied upon to give an excellent performance and to show up at an appointed hour (jazz musicians have never been known for their sense of time, though their sense of timing is another matter altogether), Hinton has been in great demand as a free-lance musician since leaving Calloway, and he has performed with virtually every major player. This album—I believe it’s his first as a leader—in about twenty years—consists of a sextet session recorded last year and some private recordings made in 1964 at Hinton’s house with tenor saxophonist Ben Webster just prior to his departure for Europe. The sextet selections, which take up side one, are good examples of small-band swing as it is still played by such notable exponents as Budd Johnson and Frank Wess. A bit of Gillespiana is aided...
by newcomer Jon Faddis, and there’s some solid percussion work by Jo Jones, who is probably the greatest living drummer of the swing era. What separates this album from the ordinary, however, is side two, a seemingly very private session in which Hinton’s lightly swinging bass supports a very relaxed Ben Webster embossing *Sophisticated Lady* and *All the Things You Are* with characteristic battery smoothness. There is also a track entitled *Stridin’ with Ben*, which features Webster solos on piano in a Wallerish style—good fun, but the piano was not his forte, so to speak. An album with charm and a timeless quality.

**THAD JONES AND MEL LEWIS: Suite for Pops.** The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, *Meetin’ Place; The Farewell; The Summary; The Great One*, and three others. A&M/Horizon SP 701 $6.98.

Performance: Suite for whom?
Recording: Very good

Jazz does not have many big bands left, but of those that do exist, the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra is unquestionably the best. Now ten years old, its growth is well documented on records and its reputation firmly established throughout the world.

Louis Armstrong died in 1971, and if this tribute seems to be a little late, it is because all but two of the selections have been in the can since 1972. Commissioned by Jazz Interactions, Thad Jones wrote *Suite for Pops* in 1971 for a performance at New York’s Lincoln Center. It was in three “movements” originally, *Meetin’ Place, The Summary,* and *Farewell,* but three more selections were written to achieve album length, and—since that apparently was still not enough—Gary McFarland’s *Toledo by Candlelight* is also included in this album. What all of this has to do with Louis Armstrong is not clear; the suite and its various additions might just as appropriately have been called a tribute to any other jazz man or woman, or, for that matter, to National Apple Week. In fact, I’m not even so sure that Armstrong would have liked this music, but it’s a nice thought and I like it. I’m glad the tribute isn’t just the orchestra playing old Satchmo favorites, but there might have been something included to identify the music, however vaguely, with the man it was intended to honor. As it is, *The Farewell* (heard here in a 1975 re-recording) sounds more like a tribute to Duke Ellington. Oh, what the heck! It’s an enjoyable album, and it’s full of good solos.

**BARNEY KESSEL: Blue Soul.** Barney Kessel (guitar); Jimmy Rowles (piano); Teddy Edwards (tenor saxophone); other musicians. *Shufflin’; Frank Mills; Quail Bait; On a Clear Day;* and four others. Black Lion BL 310 $6.98.

Performance: A drag
Recording: Good

Don’t let this awful album fool you. Barney Kessel is really an excellent guitarist, far too good to be teamed up with mediocre London dance musicians, which is what these London rhythm sections sound like on the 1968 sessions that take up half of *Blue Soul.* Kessel fares better in the 1969 Hollywood sessions that fill side two, and I say “fill” because the album sounds like one of those pieced-together collections of session scraps (Teddy Edwards sounds as if he’s playing in the next room on Comin’ Home). If I were Barney Kessel, the release of “Blue Soul” would send me into a blue funk.

**AZAR LAWRENCE: Bridge into the New Age.** Azar Lawrence (soprano and tenor saxophones); Woody Shaw (trumpet); Julian Priester (trumpet, flugelhorn, flutes); Hadley Caliman (piano, banjo, blues); Joe Bonner (piano); Billy Hart (drums), Nulugu (drums); Mtume (conga drums, percussion); others. *Fatisia: Forces of Nature; Warriors of Peace;* and two others. Prestige P 100 6 $6.98.

Performance: From bad to better
Recording: Very good

I must confess that I know of saxophonist Azar Lawrence only in connection with this album, which mysteriously reached me for review about a year after its release. If Lawrence has made more records since I have not heard of them. There are good musicians here, such established men as Julian Priester, Woody Shaw, and Hadley Caliman, and such newcomers as the excellent Joe Bonner, but there is also a dreadful vocalist by the name of Jean Carn, who is featured on two odious odes to some sort of love spirit, the kind of pseudo-religious nonsense followers of Coltrane seem to find necessary. A certain Ray Strachan, who also plays wood flute on one selection, takes responsibility for the two vocal selections, *Bridge into the New Age and The Beautiful and Omnipresent Love,* the latter being the more nauseating of the two.

*Forces of Nature* is a very good track with fine solo work, but Azar Lawrence—although he is a good musician—fails to come across as a leader with anything out of the ordinary to offer. He is not the individualist that some of his sidemen are, and this seems to be yet another time producer Orrin Keepnews has backed the wrong horse.

**FRANK LOWE: Fresh.** Frank Lowe (tenor saxophone); Lester Bowie (trumpet); Joseph Bowie (trumpet); Abdul Wadud (cello); Steve Reid, Charles Bobo Shaw (drums). *Epistrophy; Play Some Blues; Fresh;* and two others. Aristal/Freedom AL 1015 $6.98.

Performance: Low
Recording: Good

In programming an album, most record producers select as an opener what they consider to be the session’s strongest track. Unfortunately, Thelonious Monk’s *Epistrophy,* which begins this album by Memphis tenor saxophonist Frank Lowe, is the only listenable part of the entire record. Abdul Wadud’s driving cellos and Steve Reid’s drums pulsate comfortably, and even trumpeter Lester Bowie manages to get in some musical moments on this cut, but leader Lowe interferes before it’s all over. Lowe is even worse on the tracks that follow, emitting sounds that undoubtedly set the remains of Adolphe Sax to rotating madly. I have a desk chair that produces a very similar sound when it needs to.

*Play Some Blues* might be interesting but for a high-school-hunk roughness; *Chu’s Blues*—on which Lowe is accompanied only by a group called the Memphis Four—is meant as a tribute to the late Chu Berry, but is, instead, a desecration of his name; and *Fresh,* a Lowe “composition,” is nonmusicality carried to the extreme. Frank Lowe calls what he does “spontaneous improvisational music”—it is both spontaneous and improvisational, but that’s about it.

C.A.
THE NEW PAUL WHITEMAN ORCHESTRA. The New Paul Whiteman Orchestra (instrumentals); Chris Ellis and the New Rhythm Boys (vocals). Louisiana; You Took Advantage of Me; China Boy; I've Found a New Baby; Runnin' Wild; When?; and six others. MONMOUTH EVERGREEN MES/7074 $6.98.

Performance: Ersatz ersatz
Recording: Very good

Re-creating the sound and arrangements of the old Paul Whiteman Orchestra seems to have been the brain child of author Richard M. Sudhalter, whose book Bix: Man and Legend was published in 1974. Mr. Sudhalter assembled this orchestra of English musicians for a London concert in the fall of 1974, and the album was recorded four days later. But the burning question is not "how?" or "when?" but "WHY???

Except for some solos, most notably those of Bix Beiderbecke, there is little merit in the old Whiteman recordings, and if it's nostalgia you're after, the original Victor and Columbia performances have been reissued; they, at least, have solos by the real Bix and vocals by the real Bing Crosby. Like the Time-Life "Swing Era" series of re-creations, which came out a few years back, this is, at best, a poor substitute. And the fact that there was really nothing here to begin with makes it all the more perplexing.

C.A.

THE NEW TONY WILLIAMS LIFETIME: Believe It. Tony Williams (drums); instrumental accompaniment. Snake Oil; Fred; Proto-Cosmos; Red Alert; Wildlife; Mr. Spock. COLUMBIA PC 33836 $6.98, PCA 33836 $7.98.

Performance: Flat
Recording: Sharp

Beware of groups that are led by drummers. Such organizations, no matter how many bodies are blowing and pressing on diverse other instruments, are always subordinate to the leader, who is usually obtrusive for commercial purposes or simply a spotlight hogger. The drums, dammit, were meant to support a band, not overpower it. Instead of taking advantage of their ability to put the right surprise in at the right time, leader/drummers are forever throwing in fills where fills are not needed, taking long pointless solos, and intimidating the other members of the group.

The proceedings on this Williams album are pretty grim. Williams has tried to strike a pose between jazz and rock for several years now; Eric Clapton briefly played with him after the breakup of Cream. The present members (hence the "New" Tony Williams Lifetime) hack away at half-riffs as loudly as possible; the guitarist is particularly atrocious. Finally comes the big moment when Williams lets go with the crash-boom. But the biggest moment comes when you take the needle off the record and say to yourself, "File and forget."

J.V.

OREGON: In Concert. Oregon (instrumentals). Summer Solstice; Undertow; Tryton's Horn; and four others. VANGUARD VSD 79358 $6.98.

Performance: Delicate blend
Recording: Excellent

Oregon, an offshoot of the (Paul) Winter Consort, plays intense, improvisational chamber music that is better suited to concert audiences than to the cabaret. Since first hearing
Oregon—by way of its last album, "Winter Light"—I have sought out the two previous albums and derived great pleasure therefrom. The group is consistently excellent: guitarist Ralph Towner's full-bodied acoustic twelve-string and classical guitars provide blessed relief from the overly amplified, souped-up guitars that dominate the scene today; Paul McCandless' woodwinds, which he handles with conservatory expertise, make a sound for sore ears; Glen Moore—whose ECM album with Ralph Towner will, I hope, find its way to the American market soon—plays bass, flute, violin, and piano with compatible artfulness; and Collin Walcott's sitar and tabla performances continue to be an indispensable ingredient of this tight-knit group.

This album was recorded in April of last year before an invited and rightfully enthusiastic audience. The compositions are all original, written by either Towner, McCandless, or the group collectively, and, as in Oregon's previous albums, the music is omnidirectional, which is to say that it draws from various and diverse sources. Simply put, it is modern music which is as close to the sort of thing one might hear at an ISCM concert as it is to music associated with Greenwich Village jazz lofts. When I hear Oregon I am often reminded of the Coster Quartet, an obscure group that performed a fusion of swing and classical music on a series of Danish Columbia records in the early Forties. Such idiomatic amalgams were considered a novelty in those days, but the Oregon fusion is so right that many so-called "third-stream" efforts sound gimmicky by comparison. C.A.

DICK WELLSTOOD: Live at the Cookery. Dick Wellstood (piano). Paganini's Thing; If You Knew; Theme for Ernie; Let's Get Lost; Search for Peace; Snatches; and five others. CHROMOSCOPE CR 139 $6.98. Performance: Pleasant Recording: Good

The food at the Cookery in Greenwich Village, New York, which seems always to contain some faint trace of processed plastic in its flavor, is not really what draws people to the place. They come to hear the music, which is supplied courtesy of Barney Josephson, the same impresario who for so many years made the Village Vanguard what it was. Listening to such as Mary Lou Williams and Marian McPartland makes Cookery customers forget the taste of the food in front of them. Dick Wellstood is another of the keyboard artists who helps serve this purpose. This program, as producer Hank O'Neal reveals in his notes, was not taken from the taping of a single session but pieced together out of a number of them. In any case, the feeling of being in that restaurant is very much preserved, rattling crockery and all.

The program is varied—there's a delightful rag called Jim Jams composed by, of all people, the same Roy Bargy who used to be Paul Whiteman's official pianist; nostalgic standards along the lines of I Concentrate on You; a sweet, singing stretch in If Dreams Come True; and enough changes of tempo and idiom to keep the record continuously diverting. The only serious exception to constant pleasure is when Mr. Wellstood opens his mouth to talk. His introductions and commentaries are the only blemishes on an otherwise flawless track. P.K.

LENNY WHITE: Venusian Summer. Lenny White (drums, piano); instrumental accompaniment. Chicken-Fried Steak; Away Go Troubles Down the Drain; The Venusian Summer Suite (Parts I and II); and three others. NEMPHEROR NE 435 $6.98, TP 435 $7.98, CS 435 $7.98. Performance: Jive Recording: Good

As I mentioned somewhere else about hifalutin album titles, they usually signal wretched excess or unjustified self-importance on the part of the artist. In jazz, Vance's Rule about...
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The reperture is varied, or as varied as the ragtime repertoire can get (there’s an unavoidable sameness), and we are not left with the impression that Scott Joplin (whose Entertainer Rag prompted renewed interest in ragtime music when used as a theme for a movie called The Sting) was this music’s sole purveyor. Thus, Luckey Roberts, James Reese Europe, Arthur Marshall, James Scott, and the indestructible Eubie Blake are also represented, and both the music and its composers are dealt with in scholarly detail in the illustrated six-page insert and back cover. Of the new ragtime recordings, this one is definitely the best.

C.A.

THE ROAD FROM RAGS TO JAZZ. New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble. Gunther Schuller cond. Harlem Rag; Swipesy Cakewalk; Frog Legs Rag; Kinklets; Silver Swan Rag; Grace and Beauty; and eighteen others. GOLDEN CREST CRS 31042 two discs $13.96.

Performance: Syncopated survey
Recording: Superb

Gunther Schuller, who seems to have been neglecting his own career as a composer to devote himself in recent years to the advancement of the ragtime revival, has come up with a really ambitious project here. He attempts to show, by word and by example, how ragtime took hold in the early part of the century, acquired a European accent for a while, influenced serious concert music, and also metamorphosed into jazz. Schuller’s album notes, written in the evangelistic style of a missionary tract, are long and printed in the tiniest type imaginable. They are worth reading as history, though, despite the hyperbole: everybody from ragtime composer Thomas Turpin to blues writer Charles Luke is canonized as a genius, and Zee Confrey’s Kitten on the Keys is described as “one of the greatest and longest lasting piano sheet music hits in American musical history.”

But the musical program is something else again. It is not a stolid historical plop through the material, but a lively, unconventional concert taking pains to be unpretentious and thoroughly making free with chronology. The first side goes back to the beginnings of ragtime, with solid treatments of Swipesy Cakewalk (a collaborative effort by Scott Joplin and Arthur Marshall), Turpin’s Harlem Rag, and less familiar contributions by Marshall and James Scott. Side two offers crisp, clean treatments of ragtime-influenced classical works in brief explicit doses (the Rags from Satie’s surreal ballet Parade, Stravinsky’s Ragtime), Gottschalk’s Ojos Criollos, and miniatures by Louis Chauvin, Robert Hampton, and Charles Ives. On then to the contributions of Artie Matthews, Eubie Blake, the aforementioned Mr. Confrey, and Jelly Roll Morton. As treated here, the piano-playing kitten sounds bigger than life, more like a lion cub on the keys than a household feline, and the attempts to reconstruct the orchestral ways of men like Jelly Roll Morton are simply too shi-ny—never funky or low-down as we know the real thing. And Charles Luke’s Smokehouse Blues could use a little more smoke. Luckily, the last side takes us back to Lamb, Scott, and Joplin again, and here Schuller is on solid ground in his treatments. The colors may be too bright at times, but at least they’re not runny, the tempos are right, the spirit breathes, and the quadraphonic (SQ) sound is utterly alive.

P.K.
CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN

SIR GEORG SOLTI AND THE BEETHOVEN NINE

A LISTENING project that takes in, during a three-day period, all nine symphonies of Beethoven as recorded by the same orchestra and conductor can be an experience not unlike the one that befell the one who welcomed Sheridan Whiteside to dinner—they discovered they were to be his hosts indefinitely. It poses, in other words, the possibility of pain as well as pleasure, of the discovery that a guest's famously attractive attributes may prove to be disturbingly unattractive, that an orchestra equal to this one in even excellence, plus the total musical culture it brings to the greatest works of the repertoire, may be outdistanced by disturbingly unattractive foibles, and that the time may therefore occasionally pass with agonizing slowness.

The problem is of universal application, whether the musical "dinner guest" be some giant of the past such as Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler, George Szell, or Felix Weingartner, who blazed the way in the Beethoven cycle nearly fifty years ago, or the present Sir Georg Solti, the most recent conductor to essay this challenge. In his journey across the nine discs of a new release from London Records (CSO-9), Solti is at once dependent on and glorified by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Of the six American concert orchestras now represented on disc with this classic monument (the Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, New York Philharmonic, and NBC Symphony have all run the course previously), the achievement of the Chicagoans is not only the latest but, in my opinion, the greatest.

Their success is to some extent a matter of spiritual interaction and temperamental affinity between leader and led. And it is also, in considerable measure, a consequence of the technical progress that qualifies these discs as examples of the state of the recording art even though they were accomplished in two places in Illinois and one in Vienna. What has been fleetingly apparent "live" to non-Chicagoans from the orchestra's tour appearances as well as from their great Mahler recordings is steadily confirmed in this Beethoven set. Generalizations about orchestras are always invitations to controversy, but I will venture to state that I have never heard an orchestra equal to this one in even excellence from the bottom to the top of the tonal range, in the responsiveness of its rank and file, the distinction of its solo personnel, plus the total musical culture it brings to the greatest works of the repertoire.

Assets though these are, the sum of them all could, in some circumstances, be a liability. Given so much to work with, the man with the baton might be tempted to conduct the orchestra rather than the music. Solti is all but immune to that temptation. He carries within him a mental image of the sound he prefers for the work in which he is engrossed, and it is almost never corrupted by mannerism or by "improvements" on the specifics of Beethoven's scores.

To be sure, we are dealing with nine different works, each of which is representative, in some measure or other, of a different aspect of Beethoven's personality. To expect one man to embody a total solution to all the problems they present (plus those to be found in the Coriolan, Egmont, and Leonore No. 3 overtures London's engineers have seen fit to include to round out short sides) is to deal in fantasy. For my taste, Solti's gets a little carried away in the first two symphonies by a conviction that Beethoven is already BEETHOVEN, laying on volume and breadth to a degree that strikes me as excessive. The voluminous carpet of sound disposed by the Chicago basses in the Fifth Symphony is simply too regally sumptuous for the First. The razzle and the dazzle of the Second under Solti's propulsive leadership is all but irresistible, but when I think of Beecham's humor and sparkle or Bernstein's lightning flashes of insight in the same work I can resist.

Beyond the first two symphonies is the verdant terra cognita over which orchestral and conductorial generations have marched and skirmished for decades and which, at some point in the past, were parceled into odd and even lots. This numerical "system" might have been thrown seriously out of whack had not the composer's original designation of the Pastonie as No. 5 and the C Minor as No. 6 (in an advertisement prior to the December 22, 1808, concert in Vienna in which they were both included) been altered by a printer to bear the numbers by which they are known today. But the groupings do serve a purpose. Within its limits Solti is definitely more an odd than an even man: Symphonies No. 3 (Eroica), No. 5 (C Minor), No. 7 (A Major), and No. 9 (D Minor) are unquestionably the towering "landmark" works to which his inclinations and preferences are most appropriate, and Nos. 2, 4, 6, and 8—all in major keys—are the more temperamentally relaxed, smiling, equitable ones to whose ebb and flow he is less responsive. (Symphony No. 1 is, of course, customarily excluded from the sequence.)

One disservice rendered by Solti's partiality to a big sound in Nos. 1 and 2 is to narrow the stylistic gap between the final chords of No. 2 and the first of No. 3. As he orders it, the Eroica becomes less the "leap forward" in symphonic history than it is commonly held to be, for it is not even a giant step beyond its predecessor. Also, for lack of such acoustical contrast, the rising chorus of choirs piling upon each other in the recapitulation of the Eroica's first movement does not become quite the shout of affirmation one anticipates. But then the breakthrough! The opening of the Marcia funebra, in C Minor, is suitably brooding and weighty, and it is with the turn to the consoling, solacing strain in E-flat (at measure seventeen) that I finally encounter

"individual brilliance mellowed into a family of sonorities..."
the real Solti, the line held steady in perfect tempo, the single descending notes carefully broadened (with a slight nudge that never quite becomes a ritard) and treasured, each for its own heartwarming effect.

It is here, too, that one becomes aware most clearly of the special distinction that sets the Chicago Symphony apart from the other great orchestras of our time. As the principals of the woodwinds, brass, and strings respond to the roll call of responsibilities in the forward trudge of the funeral march, we hear not only individual brilliance but the seasoning and the weathering that have mellowed that brilliance into a family of sonorities. First it is the oboe of Ray Still, warm and plaintive; then the bassoon of Willard Elliott, strong and supple; the flute of Donald Peck; the clarinet of Clark Brody. Add to them (in the Scherzo) the fearless, free-blowing horn section led by Dale Clevenger, and the anticipation of six symphonies still to come boasting this kind of solo input is almost unbearably exciting. As if all that were not enough, there is still the presence, in the solo passages for cello, of Frank Miller, who now has the unique status of having been section leader in two of the greatest recordings of this cycle (the other was, of course, the Toscanini/NBC set).

As a result of all this instrumental excellence, each of the symphonies to follow has at least one movement of the highest interpretive distinction. I refer not exclusively to the first movements (in which Solti is often a leader of demonic energy) or even the finales (where his sense of climax is rarely found wanting), but inclusively to the slow movements, those stretches of sublimity at which Beethoven summons us to commune with him and the chosen voices of his thought: solo oboe, flute, bassoon, clarinet, horn, etc.

The coda of the Andante con moto in No. 5, the "Scene am Bach" in No. 6, the Allegretto of No. 7, the Tempi di minuetto in No. 8 (the nearest thing to a slow movement this symphony contains), in which the lightly vibrant drum tone of timpanist Donald Koos should be added to the catalog of aural blessings enumerated above, and, above all, the Adagio molto e cantabile of the Ninth are of a musical quality that makes "Solti/Chicago" a synonym for outstanding. In the Ninth's slow movement Solti comes close to equaling Furtwängler's virtuoso hand-held control of the long-drawn string sound of the first and second violins. It is because of moments like this that this Beethoven set ranks first among those of recent date.

Let others rejoice in the great bass voice of Martti Talvela in the quartet of the Ninth (his companions are Pilar Lorengar, Yvonne Minton, and Stuart Burrows). I will lend ear to, and sing the praises of, the low rolling thunder of the string basses in support of the cellos in the recitative earlier in the finale. The mighty Talvela is a moderately portable banquet to be enjoyed wherever he performs, but the Chicago bass section can be heard only "live" or in such exceptional recordings as this—likewise the fine chorus trained by Margaret Hillis. Sheridan Whiteside's final insult to his hosts was to prolong an unpleasant visit by slipping and falling as he was about to leave. Sir Georg and the Chicagoans are not the kind who slip, and they are always welcome for another extended visit. Perhaps they will bring Beethoven's Missa Solemnis with them next time they come.
The level of playing is consistently high, the 6, a violino piccolo and valved horns in No. 1. The performances wear well; I would not hesitate to rank them with the best now available. Virtually all of Somary's tempos are on the brisk side, and many listeners, I'm sure, will feel the first movement of the Concerto No. I is not merely a matter of buying a score and playing 'them, but rather a matter of scholarship, are definitely authenticated: Messrs. Rampal, Preston, and Murray, as can be seen from the listings, have come up with different solutions, all justified. All three play the four authentic sonatas, including a reconstruction of the first movement of the A Major (Murray's) and Veyron-Lacroix, both thoroughly twentieth-century musicians, playing at modern tempo assures us that the second volume will in fact be published.

RECORDINGS: Respectively, dry, excellent, all right.

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

BACH: Complete Works for Solo Flute. Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord in B Minor, E-Flat Major, and A Major (BWV 1030, 1031, 1032); Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord in G Minor (BWV 1020); Sonatas for Flute and Continuo in C Major, E Minor, and E Major (BWV 1033, 1034, 1035); Partita in A Minor for Solo Flute (BWV 1013); Partita in C Minor for Flute and Continuo (BWV 997); Sonata in G Major for Two Flutes and Continuo (BWV 1039); Sonata in G Major for Flute, Violin, and Continuo (BWV 1038). Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute); Alain Marion (flute); Robert Yevron-Lacroix (harpsichord); Jordi Savall (viola da gamba); Robert Gendre (violin). RCA CRL3-5820 three discs $20.94.

BACH: Flute Sonatas. Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord in B Minor, E-Flat Major, and A Major (BWV 1030, 1031, 1032); Sonatas for Flute and Continuo in C Major, E Minor, and E Major (BWV 1033, 1034, 1035); Partita in A Minor for Solo Flute (BWV 1013). Stephen Preston (Baroque flute); Trevor Pinnock (harpsichord); Jordi Savall (viola da gamba). CRD RECORDS LTD. CRD 1014/5 two discs $13.96 (from HNH Distributors, P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60204).

BACH: Music for Solo Traverso, Volume I. Sonata in B Minor for Flute and Harpsichord (BWV 1030); Sonatas for Flute and Continuo in E Minor and E Major (BWV 1034, 1035); Partita in A Minor for Solo Flute (BWV 1013). Alex Murray (Baroque flute); Martha Goldstein (harpsichord). PANDORA PC 176 $6.98 (from Pandora Records, 318 N. 36th Street, Seattle, Wash. 89103).

Performances: Respectively, accurate, marvelous, brave.

Recording: Excellent.

Performance: One of the best.

The new set is enormously attractive in its own right, though, and surely the more satisfying of the two now offered quadrphonically.

R.F.

REVIEWED BY
Richard Freed • David Hall • George Jellinek • Paul Kresh
Stoddard Lincoln • Eric Salzman

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Recordings of Special Merit


Recording: Excellent.

Performance: One of the best.

Another set of Brandenburgs may not have seemed our most urgent need when there were already more than twenty current versions, but there is always room for performances as invigoratingly appealing as these. Virtually all of Somary's tempos are on the brisk side, and many listeners, I'm sure, will feel the first movement of the Concerto No. I and the last of No. 3 are too zippy by half, but the performances wear well; I would not hesitate to rank them with the best now available. Recorders are used in No. 4 but not elsewhere; gambas and a violone are used in No. 6, a violino piccolo and valved horns in No. 1. The level of playing is consistently high, the sound is up to Vanguard's current standard (which is to say excellent), and the side layout is all right, though, and surely the more satisfying of the two now offered quadrphonically.

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pitch on modern instruments. Rampal is technical perfection itself, playing crisply with a clear silvery tone. Veyron-Lacroix's playing is also accurate, but the engineers have put him too much in the background; the overall result is somewhat icy because of rapid and unyielding tempos. On the other hand, we have Murray playing an original Baroque transverse flute and a reproduction thereof, both at low pitch (approximately a half-tone lower than modern) and using mean-tone tuning. Although the sound of the instruments is quite beautiful, the intonation is far from perfect. The E Major Sonata, in fact, is so excruciatingly out of tune that one cannot in all fairness attribute it to PURPOSEFUL mean-tone tuning alone. Martha Goldstein, claiming the authority of C. P. E. Bach and others, attempts so-called Baroque articulation on the harpsichord, but her playing is very choppy and incessantly staccato. The result is unmusical enough to turn even the most knowledgeable musician off authentic performance practice for all eternity.

Preston presents the perfect compromise between the dry twentieth-century approach and the doggedly authentic documentary approach. He uses an authentic Baroque flute tuned at old pitch and what is referred to on the jacket as "unequal temperament." The sound is breathtaking, and the flavor—but not the agons—even of an impractical old tuning is captured. Trevor Pinnoch is a superb harpsichordist, and in this instrument, a modern one built in the Ruckers tradition, it is full and rich. He, too, uses the older Baroque-style articulation, but he also has a superb legato and a sense of phrase. As a result, these two artists create a feeling of warmth. They are not afraid of rubato, rounded-off phrases, or leisuredly tempers. When Savall joins in on the viola da gamba, the sound is even better. Especially effective is the bold solution offered for the first movement of the C Major Sonata: the harpsichord is omitted and the gamba accompanies the flute alone, filling in the harmonies with double-stops.

These three albums are excellent examples of three possible solutions to the complex problems of performing old music. Rampal's is to ignore what the musicologists have brought to light and to play excellently according to modern standards. Murray's is to be so authentic that the results are unpalatable to the modern musician. Preston's is the perfect compromise that takes both into account, a solution that can be brought off only through a deep understanding of the period and an inborn musical sensitivity.

If you are interested in having the complete catalog, so to speak, you will naturally get to the easily available Rampal album. If, however, you want a truly musical experience and are willing to forgo a sonata or two, it is well worth the effort to secure the Preston album put out by CRD. S.L.

BEETHOVEN: Piano Concertos Nos. 1-5. Stephen Bishop (piano); BBC Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. (Nos. 1-4); London Symphony Orchestra, Colin Davis cond. (No. 5). PHILIPS 6747 104 four discs $23.95.

Performance: Odd numbers better Recording: Good

The Bishop/Davis recordings of the three odd-numbered concertos have been available individually for some time, and they have made a generally strong impression, though I would not place any of them at the very top of my own list. Although the new set of all five concertos is offered at the same price as those three discs alone. I'm not sure the two even-numbered concertos in this case add up to a better bargain than the sonatas that were included with Concertos Nos. 1 and 3 as issued separately. Bishop is a marvellously skilled pianist, and a thoughtful one, too, and the partnership is surely a sympathetic one (though the orchestral contribution does not always represent Davis at his best). But there is something so determinedly earnest about these performances that their joylessness becomes almost depressing. Perhaps Bishop and Davis felt the B-flat Concerto would have been cheapened by an acknowledgment of the wit, grace, and charm that are elemental to its character, and that the G Major is really a tragic work. There is, in any event, an abundance of brilliance, but no sparkle at all. Phillips has managed to get the whole G Major on a single side and has followed a sensible manual sequence, but the Ashkenazy/Solti set (London CSA-2404), even with its less convenient layout, is quite incomparable among the vast stock of various "integral" offerings of these works, not to mention the outstanding performances available singly.

BEETHOVEN: Symphonies (see Choosing Sides, page 108)

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RICHARD FRANKO GOLDMAN

A Program of Spirit by the Goldman Band

Richard Franko Goldman

if the very word "bicentennial" soon becomes a good reason to seek cover (some of us have already started), the record companies will have to accept a considerable share of the blame. Countless miles of vinyl grooves have been given over to both spoken-
excellent recording, and, all in all, it would be hard to imagine any of this music much more persuasively played—especially the Op. 120 viola sonatas.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**BRUCKNER:** Mass No. 1, in D Minor; Edith Mathis (soprano); Marga Schmili (contralto); Wieslaw Ochman (tenor); Karl Ridderbusch (bass); Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Eugen Jochum cond. **DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON** 2530 314 $7.98.

**Performance:** Very fine
**Recording:** Excellent

**BRUCKNER:** Mass No. 2, in E Minor; Gächinger Kantorei; Gächinger Chamber Choir of Stuttgart; Spandauer Kantorei; Stuttgart Bach Collegium Wind Choir, Helmuth Rilling cond. **ORYX** 3C 220 $6.98.

**Performance:** Luminous
**Recording:** Cathedral acoustic

**BRUCKNER:** Requiem in D Minor; Four Orchestral Pieces. Barbara Yates (soprano); Sylvia Swan (contralto); John Steel (tenor); Colin Wheatley (bass); Alexandra Choir; Robert Munns (organ); London Philharmonic Orchestra, Hans-Hubert Schönzeler cond. **UNICORN** UNS 210 $6.98.

**Performance:** Affectionate but a bit rough
**Recording:** Good

All of Bruckner's Masses date from the period of his first two acknowledged symphonies, which is to say between 1864 and 1868. Like the Third Mass, in F Minor, the First, in D Minor, is on a truly symphonic scale and dramatic almost to the point of militancy. Indeed, the treatment of the "Judenbarsch" section of the Credo more befits a Dies irae than a solemn high Mass. In any event, the First Mass as a whole is vital and beautiful, and this splendid Eugen Jochum reading, which has been available in Europe and England for the better part of three years, is the first U.S. stereo release of it.

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The "neo-Renaissance" E Minor Mass, without soloists and accompanied only by wind choir, is one of Bruckner's most beautiful creations. There is nothing of the grandiloquise here, just unalloyed beautiful sound woven into harmonic strands—now monophonic, now intricately contrapuntal—that set off with exquisite sensitivity and apposition the words of the liturgical text. The performance issued by Oryx is identical with the Musical Heritage Society one reviewed here last October, but in this instance the mastering and pressing seem marginally superior, adding clarity to Helmuth Rilling's remarkably luminous reading.

A most unusual sport in the recorded Bruckner canon is the early Requiem in D Minor, the composer's first major work (1849). While by no means on a par with the masterpieces of the 1860's and thereafter, Bruckner's Requiem, with its occasional echoes of Mozart's, is no negligible essay. The Kyrie, with its marching bass reinforced by organ continuo, sets a suitably imposing atmosphere; the double fugue on "Quam olim Abrahae" is masterly and effective; the hushed Sanctus and the tender Benedictus are worthy of the mature masterworks to come. Of less moment are the four orchestral pieces from 1862, pleasant preparatory essays coincident with Bruckner's orchestration studies, the most striking of which is the March in D Minor.

The recorded performances by Hans-Hubert Schönzeler (also the author of an excellent book on Bruckner) are clearly affectionate and competent, though details of the Requiem are occasionally rough and ready and the soloists are rather undistinguished when judged against the superbly matched quartet that graces the Jochum recording of the D Minor Mass. The sound of the 1970 recording is full-bodied and well-balanced, if not quite the equal, in terms of impressive sonority and wide dynamic range, of that achieved by DG.

**D.H.**

**BUXTEHUDE:** The Final Judgement. Annemarie Gruenwald (contralto); Margarethel Lecher, Ingrid Rattunde-Wurtz, Sabine Kirchner (sopranos); Ruimond Gilvan (tenor); Traugott Schmoll (baritone); Mannheim Bach Choir; Heidelberg Chamber Orchestra, Heinz Markus Göttsche cond. **ORYX** 1702/3 two discs $13.96.

**Performance:** Good
**Recording:** Fine

That Bach walked two hundred miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear Buxtehude has always struck me as an act of madness, but listening to this kleine Meister's oratorio, The Final Judgement, has finally explained things to me. The oratorio proves that Buxtehude was a master of instrumental as well as vocal music and was also able to blend its rehearsal of the chorale into a cohesive whole the national styles of Germany, France, and Italy. This is a serious work, containing sections of great beauty and breathing an air of deep contemplation.

The solo writing is modest in its demands, and in this recording all the soloists perform their parts with the devoted fervor so necessary for North German religious music. The choice of various instrumental groupings to accompany such varied allegorical figures as Avarice, Lust, and Pride on the one hand and the Righteous, Soul and God on the other is both imaginative and effective. Also, the chorale sound is smooth and the performance precise and clear. Although we may find the text a little naive today, Buxtehude obviously felt it very strongly, as is evident in his poetic treatment of traditional chorale melodies, melodious arias, striking instrumental interludes, and even a tender organ chorale-prelude. This welcome addition to the recorded oratorio...
repertoire will certainly add stature to Buxtehude’s rank in his own right rather than merely as a precursor of Bach.

S.L.

ELGAR: The Kingdom, Op. 51 (see Best of the Month, page 77)

FRANCK: Sonata in A Major for Violin and Piano (see The Basic Repertoire, page 57)

HAYDN: Piano Sonatas in E Minor, B Minor, A-flat Major, and D Major (see Best of the Month, page 79)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: First-rate

Recording: Excellent

Cziffra has been missing from our concert halls and from records, too, for the last few years, and it is good to hear from him again. Although he had recorded both the Liszt concertos before, the remakes more than justify themselves. Since Cziffra’s last U.S. release, his son has grown up to be a conductor, and Cziffra Sr. has grown, too, it would seem; they do each other proud here, and Liszt, too, in performances that are unrestrained in their romantic sweep but also eminently musical, showing none of the waywardness that disfigured some of this pianist’s earlier efforts, but unstinting in expressiveness and fire. Here Cziffra is 101 per cent at the service of the music, instead of vice versa, and the intensity and excitement sustain themselves most convincingly with repeated hearings. This goes right up there with Brendel/Haitink and Richter/Kondrashin (both on Philips) at the head of the list, and the convenient layout of the part of the discography in the last few years, and it is gratifying to have some of this material available here. All four of these concertos will qualify as “discoveries” for most of us; all of them

many conductors today with an ear for orchestral sound, but none with quite the same approach. Stokowski never based his concept of orchestral sound purely on sonority (the “modern” approach) but, using the classical string section as the foundation, on the phraseology and movement of the music. This is exactly why he is so suited to Mahler; this is music that, for all its overwhelming use of sound, is ultimately based on line and movement in time. And Stokowski is a master, not just of phrase, but of the inner or large rhythm of the music. This is really what makes his climaxes so damned exciting; they are built on the dynamics of long-range rhythmic tension.

Well, as I said, the Mahler Second is a great case in point. It is passionate, apocalyptic, human, and terrifically well performed by a group of outstanding singers and instrumentalists who obviously rise to the old Stokowski magic. I know I did.

E.S.

MANTLER: 13 for Piano and Two Orchestras (see BLEY)

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

MARTINU: Cello Concerto No. 1; Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra. Josef Chuchro (cello); Nora Grumlikova (violin); Jaroslav Kolaf (piano); Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Zdenek Kolář cond. SUPRAPHON 1 10 1348 $6.98.

MARTINU: Violin Concertos Nos. 1 and 2. Josef Chuchro (violin); Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Vaclav Neumann cond. SUPRAPHON 1 10 1535 $6.98.

Performance: Committed

Recording: Good

Bohuslav Martinu’s name has always been more or less familiar in this country—where, after all, he spent some of his most productive years—but his music never became really well known here; it has all but disappeared from our concert programs since his death in 1959, and very little remains now in Schwann. In the composer’s homeland, though, Supraphon has been building up a sizable Martinu discography in the last few years, and it is gratifying to have some of this material available here. All four of these concertos will qualify as “discoveries” for most of us; all of them

are works of genuine substance and charm. The two violin concertos are especially attractive and effectively contrasted: the First, composed for Samuel Dushkin between 1932 and 1934, is neo-Classical in spirit, while the Second, produced a decade later for Mischa Elman, is more lyrical and expansive—almost “neo-Romantic”—with an idyllic slow movement in Martinu’s most personal idiom. Suk’s affection for both works is readily apparent, and his partnership with Neumann is a very happy one.

The same level of commitment and expertise is evident on the part of Zdenek Kolář and his three soloists in the two works on the other disc. The First Cello Concerto, composed for Gaspar Cassado in 1931 and originally scored for small orchestra, was rescued for a larger orchestra eight years later and revised in its final form in 1949; it is very aptly described by the anonymous record annotator as “a work of high tension, a truly classical concerto, filled with a genuine Czech spirit.” The same elements illumine the Double Concerto, a particularly impressive work composed for Benno and Sylvia Rabinoff in the winter of 1952-1953; as in the Second Violin Concerto, it is the slow movement that is the crown of this work.

The sound quality is generally very good (brighter, curiously, on the B sides than on the A sides of both discs), and the clean surfaces show how much Supraphon has improved in this regard.

R.F.

(Continued overleaf)
**MOZART: Cosi Fan Tutte.** Gundula Janowitz (soprano), Fiordiligi; Brigitte Fassbaender (mezzo-soprano), Dorabella; Hermann Prey (baritone), Guglielmo; Peter Schreier (tenor), Alfonso; Hermann Prey (soprano), Despina; Rolando Panerai (baritone), Don Alfonso. Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Karl Böhm cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 059 three discs $23.94.

Performance: Good with reservations
Recording: Actual performance

*Cosi Fan Tutte,* an exquisite opera but never a “box office” one, has been lavishly treated on records. The current catalog offers six more or less complete stereo recordings, all acceptable or better, including two led by the eminent Karl Böhm, whose third authoritative reading is now offered to us by DG. While a fairly strong case could be made for not releasing a seventh *Cosi* under the circumstances, I should perhaps point out that the new set is unique in one respect: it is a “live” recording, taped at the Salzburg Festival of 1974 honoring Dr. Böhm’s eightieth birthday. That “uniqueness,” however, is of doubtful advantage, for it makes for some unsatisfactory sonic perspectives, and, while the applause occurs only at the conclusion of the two acts, stage noises of various kinds intrude a great deal of time. From the engineering point of view, the new set cannot match the excellence of its studio-made competitors. Nor can it match their completeness, for three of them (London, Philips, and RCA) are virtually or entirely complete, while two others (Angel and the previous DG set under Jochum) offer more than the rather severely cut version presented here.

These are severe handicaps, and the performance, while unquestionably good, cannot quite overcome them. Karl Böhm’s alert and incisive pacing is a constant source of joy, and, working with a handpicked cast, he gets excellent ensemble work. Gundula Janowitz is undoubtedly one of the best Fiordiligis on records, absolutely ravishing in her “Per pietà, ben mio” aria, and enchanting and musically (though unobservant of trills) everywhere else. She blends exquisitely with Brigitte Fassbaender’s Dorabella. The latter is a competent performance but not in any way an outstanding one. Of course, since the numerous cuts include Dorabella’s important second-act aria “E amor un ladroncello,” the part is thereby rendered less significant. Rerum Grist’s small-toned but charming and resourceful Despina rounds out the female trio.

I am less happy with the men. Peter Schreier is a good Mozart stylist and he sings “Una aura amorosa” meltingly. (His second-act aria is also cut.) His tone quality, however, turns nasal at times, and his Italian pronunciation borders on the painful. Hermann Prey handles the text more idiomatically and creates a lively, swaggering Guglielmo while allowing his warm baritone to surround the tonal focus with an excessive vibrato. I find this persistent mannerism quite annoying, but others may not. Working with less impressive vocal equipment, Rolando Panerai turns in an entertaining and quite likable Don Alfonso—and pronounces his lines in clear and impeccable Italian.

In sum, this is a good performance, but several others are preferable, including Dr. Böhm’s excellent version on Angel S-3631.


Performance: Lacks something
Recording: Good

Is the Prokofiev Fifth the most frequently performed twentieth-century symphony? It is easily the most popular work of its genre written in the last half-century. This popularity undoubtedly stems from the deep spiritual connections between the work and World War II. In a sense, the supreme struggle against Germany and fascism allowed Prokofiev to reconcile his own personal manner with the demands of socialist realism—something he had found very difficult to accomplish a decade earlier. The artistic and the popular are fused in the Fifth Symphony as they rarely have been in this century of introversion and alienation.

It is understandable that this combination should appeal to composer-conductors with something of the same ideals. The Prokofiev Fifth was a notable Bernstein specialty, and it is also a favorite with Previn (who has by now compiled quite a recorded catalog of Russian music). Yet this performance, although a model of clarity and musicality, lacks some kind of spiritual dimension. Perhaps repeated exposure has desensitized me to the intrinsic merits of the music so clearly set forth in this reading. On the other hand, there is a special Prokofiev quality of mystery and uplift that takes a little evoking and never quite gets evoked here. In other words, an okay Prokofiev Fifth, but nothing transcendental. E.S.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**PUCCINI: Mass (“Messa di Gloria”).** William Johns (tenor), Philippe Hutttenlocher (bass); Symphonic Chorus and Orchestra of the Gulbenkian Foundation of Lisbon, Michel Corboz cond. RCA FRL-5890 $6.98.© FRK1-5890 $7.98.

Performance: Juicy
Recording: Very good

As is well known, Puccini came from a long line of maestros in the town of Lucca and more or less inherited the job of organist and choirmaster from his forebears. In 1880, at the age of twenty, he composed a grand Mass for feast of San Paolino, patron saint of the town. This work scored a notable success and apparently convinced one of Puccini’s relatives to advance him the money to go to Milan to study. The Mass, however, disappeared until 1951, when it was rediscovered by Father Dante del Fiorentino, an American priest who was working on his Puccini biography *Immortal Bohemian* (“Immoral Bohemian” might have been more appropriate, but the good Father seems to have glossed over some of the more unconventional— rakish—aspects of the composer’s career).

The Mass is more or less what you might expect, and to our ears it sounds terribly operatic and pagan. Well, why not? To an Italian, love is love, joy is joy, and the sacred and the profane have never been too far apart. The real point is that this is an extremely fine work, mellifluous, genuinely inspired, lyrical and dramatic, and of excellent craftsmanship. It is sumptuous and expressive but never sentimental. Best of all, it is simply beguiling to listen to. It has a young man’s emotions and high spirits, and why should these sentiments be inappropriate to an Italian feast day? Or to any day you’d like your mood uplifted by just the right combination of tradition, sentiment, and melodic outpouring?

The amazing thing is the maturity of the work both musically and technically. Of course, this is music composed in the wake of late Verdi and without the sophistication and “up-to-dateness” of works composed even a few years later. But it is also fresh and full of distinctive character. The question is: besides getting familiar with European trends, what did Puccini learn in Milan? On this evidence, not much; the basic stuff was all there at age twenty.

The Gulbenkian Foundation has sponsored an important festival in Lisbon for many years, and the performing group under Michel Corboz is superb—full of life and fire. The recording, part of RCA’s Erato series, is of excellent quality, with a rich, large-scale, well-balanced approach that is perfect for the work.
The Reger Clarinet Quintet, still so seldom performed as to be unknown to most listeners, may not be on the same level as those of Mozart and Brahms, but it is about as close to them as anyone else has yet come in writing for this intrinsically beautiful combination of instruments. Rudolf Gall made his recording for this intrinsically beautiful combination of instruments. Rudolf Gall made his recording with the Keller Quartet in 1961, the year before his death at the age of fifty-five; it is a good performance in every respect, but the sound is a little boxy and the pressing is so disfigured by humps, pocks, pits, and gouges that listening cannot be pleasurable. (Curiously, while all four members of the quartet are identified by name on both sides of the jacket, the name of their ensemble itself and that of the clarinetist turn up only in the liner notes, which are otherwise of little value.)

Between these two releases, the one on Deutsche Grammophon is easily worth the additional dollar. Karl Leister and the Drolo Quartet play with greater polish, they are much more handsonely recorded (though the clarinet is overly prominent at times), and the disc has impeccable surfaces. This is the sort of presentation that no one could fail to enjoy, and which could help put any neglected material into more general circulation. There is still more pleasure to be had, though, from the exceptionally communicative performance by the Bell' Arte Ensemble in Volume I of the Vox Reger series (SVBX-586). Clarinetist Serge Dangain has the warmest tone of all, while all four members of the quartet are achieved through the addition of a piccolo (Andrew Lolya), a trumpet (Ray Crisara), and a snare drum (Morris Lang).

The nine individual songs on side two were written between 1893 and 1903 and are equally unfamiliar, but of a different nature: they are straightforwardly romantic settings of poems by Goethe, Heyse, Hofmannsthal, Dehmel, Lenau, and two anonymous poets. There are no masterworks among them, perhaps, but there is some pretty enchanting material nonetheless, and the sequence has been so arranged as to provide not only effective contrasts but a steady heightening of appeal from one song to the next. The performances on both sides are about as authoritative as could be, since Leonard Stein, a former associate of Schoenberg's and now the director of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, is the one who found these Songs and edited them for publication (only one of them, Gedenken, had been published before); he and Marni Nixon have performed together frequently, and they project a sense of happy involvement with these seventeen songs that goes beyond questions of authority and skill to make them simply irresistible (an odd word to be using about Schoenberg, but it fits). Stein's comprehensive annotation is no mere icing on this delectable cake, but really essential to full enjoyment. Bilingual texts are included, and the sound is just fine.

(Continued overleaf)
STEREO REVIEW

SONGWRITERS:

TCHAIKOVSKY: Pique Dame. Vladimir Atlantov (tenor); Herman; Vladimir Valitais (baritone); Tomsky; Andrei Fedoseyev (baritone); Yeletsy; Valentina Levko (mezzo-soprano). The Countess; Tamara Milashkina (soprano); Lisa; Galina Borisova (mezzo-soprano). Pauline, Makvala Kastravshili (soprano); Prilepa; others. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Mark Ermler cond. COLUMBIA/MELDIA M33828 three discs $20.94.

Performance: Vital and authentic

Recording: Okay but undistinguished

Pique Dame is a work of unflagging interest, rising to points of chilling intensity—to say nothing of its uncommon musical riches. It may be years before the Bolshoi returns with its excellent production, but meanwhile we can console ourselves with two authoritative versions on records. The 1967 Melodiya/Angel set (S-4104) is by no means outdated: it is a fine performance enriched by some of the principals of this new presentation who were shaped into a strong ensemble by the late Boris Khaikin. The new Columbia/Melodia set, however, starts with a considerable advantage in that it presents the opera complete on three discs against the former’s four. Sonically, there is no noticeable improvement. Neither set is representative of the best Soviet technology: the voices are too forward in relation to the orchestra, there is a certain coarseness to the orchestral sound that does not fit in with the memories of the great Bolshoi Orchestra as heard in the theater, and stereo possibilities have not been explored with great imagination.

Tenor Vladimir Atlantov in the tragic role of the haunted Herman is another distinct asset of the new production. He is a powerhouse tenor with a clarion sound, abundant reserves, and an impressive if at times unruly technique. His singing lacks subtlety and, what with scooping and other offenses, leaves him open to criticism. I suspect, however, that he will be forgiven because he is something rarely encountered today: a genuinely exciting performer who is dramatically involved and who carries you along with his ringing tones and visceral intensity.

Tamara Milashkina, repeating her previous recorded interpretation, is still, as was nine years ago, a somewhat uneven singer who has a few precarious moments of unsteadiness, but she sings with full commitment, movingly and sensitively. Another repeat performance from the earlier set is the Countess of Valentina Levko, rich-toned and, if possible, even more authoritative than it was before.

The Columbia set has a new Yeletsky in Andrei Fedoseyev, whose rich and fervent baritone recalls his two memorable recorded predecessors Pavel Lisitsian and Yuri Mazurok. His singing of Yeletsky’s show-stopping aria, however, lacks the absolute steadiness of the other two. The supporting cast varies, ranging from the absolutely splendid mezzo Borisova and the vigorously authoritative Tomsky of Valitais (both participate in the Mozartian pastoral interlude of Act II) to a number of comprimarios afflicted with various degrees of shakiness. The male chorus in the last scene’s gambling episode is excellent. Ermler directs with a fine dramatic sense, obtaining orchestral playing of great tension and expressiveness.

G.J.
As far as I am concerned, the important thing is to have a recording of A Child of Our Time in one's library. It is, unhappily, even more timely now than when first written. So, whether you choose the new Philips recording or the older Argo version, I urge you to get one of them.

D H

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: English Folk-Song Arrangements; Greensleeves; Ward, the Painter; The Unquiet Grave; The Seeds of Love; and ten others. London Madrigal Singers, Christopher Bishop cond. Saphrim 6-60249 $3.98.

Performance: Beautiful
Recording: Very good

In the days before tape recorders, collecting folk songs was hard work. Researchers roamed the countryside, tracking their quarry through fields and into taverns and private houses, copying down tunes and lyrics that nobody ever seemed to remember the same way twice. At the turn of the century, one of the most intrepid collectors in England was Ralph Vaughan Williams. He later made use of the gold he had mined not only in orchestral settings of folk tunes but, in this case, in a series of vocal arrangements for unaccompanied voices. These madrigal-like transformations are indescribably beautiful, especially if you are susceptible to the kind of somber modalities that are the Vaughan Williams hallmark. The group begins with an arrangement of Greensleeves almost exactly the same as the composer's setting for orchestra—yet how different, how much more yearning and haunting it sounds this way! As the program ranges on through some of the most beautiful songs of the British Isles, the settings grow increasingly absorbing, calling on intricate vocal combinations and the composer's highly individual technique of counterpoint to build rich webs of sound, while somehow never violating the essential simplicity of the folk materials. The London Madrigal Singers under Christopher Bishop seem to know at every instant what the composer had in mind, and to convey it to perfection.

P.K.

VIVALDI: The Four Seasons. Konstanty Kulka (violin); Igor Kipnis (harpsichord); Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger cond. London CS 6809 $6.98.

Performance: Energetic
Recording: Superb

In this brilliant recording of The Four Seasons, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra more than proves its utter virtuosity. Except for one arranger of the harpsichord, handsomely played by Igor Kipnis, the performance is thoroughly twentieth-century—no ornamentation (so needed in Vivaldi's bald melodic writing), but imbued with vigor, drive, and projection. Fortunately, Vivaldi's imaginitive if over-popularized work can take this treatment, and fine string playing will always be a genuine thrill.

S.L.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: Juditha Triumphans. Birgit Flinn (contralto); Juditha; Ingeborg Springer (mezzo-soprano), Abra; Julia Hamari (mezzo-soprano), Holofernes; Elly Ameling (soprano), Vagaus; Annelies Burmeister (contralto), Ouzis. Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Viti-

From the virtuoso family of Romero guitarists...
Although Vivaldi has enjoyed a tremendous revival as an instrumental composer (we all now recognize both his strong and weak points), we know very little of his vocal music save for his Gloria. Philips' exciting new recording of his oratorio Juditha Triumphans, then, is a welcome addition to the catalog. Juditha Triumphans is something of a sleeper. If I may be permitted to step out of the impersonal role of a critic and refer to my performance experience with this work, the first time I played it in 1981, I hated it. Not with a passion. When it first appeared on recordings (RCA Victrola VICS-6016) I achieved a state of loathing for it that I did not believe possible. It seemed to be nothing more than one hack Baroque formula after another: endless, repetitive da capo arias; and all in impossibly stilted Latin. Needless to say, I listened to this "first complete recording" with a prejudiced ear. After the first side, I was in a state of disbelief: I had to admit to myself that the work is superb and that this performance (which is complete to the 11th degree) demonstrates beyond a doubt that the Venetian master took full advantage of his pupils' talents. We have obligatos for theoeboes, mandolins, clarinets, oboe, and organ. Add to this Vivaldi's usual deft string writing, and one can imagine the rich and varied palette of sonorities.

Once Baroque operatic conventions are accepted, the drama becomes valid because of the vivid portrayal of the characters. Judith and her servant Abra, personifying noble and humble Latin language, but Vivaldi undoubtedly capable of a more accurate interpretation of their roles. When it first appeared on recordings (RCA Victrola VICS-6016) I achieved a state of loathing for it that I did not believe possible. It seemed to be nothing more than one hack Baroque formula after another: endless, repetitive da capo arias; and all in impossibly stilted Latin. Needless to say, I listened to this "first complete recording" with a prejudiced ear. After the first side, I was in a state of disbelief: I had to admit to myself that the work is superb and that this performance (which is complete to the 11th degree) demonstrates beyond a doubt that the Venetian master took full advantage of his pupils' talents. We have obligatos for theoeboes, mandolins, clarinets, oboe, and organ. Add to this Vivaldi's usual deft string writing, and one can imagine the rich and varied palette of sonorities.

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"combining historical imagination and a lot of self-confidence"

LOUDLY invite your attention to a piano recording so good—and good, too, in a way so unlooked-for—that I rather expect to be still celebrating its merits next December among the centennial year's best. This quite unexpected dazzer is a London release by Ivan Davis called "Great Galloping Gottschalk, America's First Superstar," and, given the special finesse of the Davis musicality, the desperate whimsey of the title could not be more misleading. Ah well, I'll assume you can survive that—and I'll also assume that in this year of Gottschalkian grace you imagine you have already got Louis Moreau's number. If such is the case, perhaps your biggest musical surprise in all of '76 will be what Mr. Davis has come up with here. The release is by way of being a stylistic tour de force, and the sparks fly mainly as a result of the audacious application of a personal point of view to some piano pieces that are, after all, no longer novelties. For the moment I'll simply say that with Mr. Davis' opening selection, a totally ravishing performance of Souvenirs d'Andalousie, we have for all practical purposes turned a corner in time and are back among the wondrously odd virtuosos of the Edwardian era—many of them highhanded eccentrics, most of them pianistic whizkies, and all of them greater enchanters than you'd believe possible. I can't begin to guess how Mr. Davis got into that crowd, but there he is, and nothing could promise more for the future health of the Gottschalk performing tradition.

About that, more in a moment, but let me first note that Mr. Davis' illuminating performance of Le Mancenillier is the only recording novelty on his program, and those Gottschalk aficionados who sometimes wonder why this piece is not performed often can now figure it out handily. The piece is not at all a folksy miniature, for its gorgeously colored combination of force and filigree takes (to begin with) a pair of almost painterly hands, in the Lisztian sense. Which is another way of saying that it calls for the kind of sustained narrative coherence (as distinguished from mere structural logic) that drove purists up the wall in the case of the above-noted Edwardian giants—and also, for that matter, in the case of Gottschalk himself.

Now, then. This is certainly not the place to discuss the historical mischances that deprived Gottschalk of a "school" and us of a time-honored Gottschalk performing tradition. But these lacks have been serious, and the rediscovery of the several elements of a legitimate Gottschalk style would have been all but impossible without the enterprise of some recording artists who combine a certain amount of historical imagination and a lot of self-confidence.

BRIEFLY sketched, the central position in this effort, much to our good fortune, is occupied by the ground-breaking work of Eugene List, whose Gottschalk style combines considerable health and power on the one hand and a high degree of polish, elegance, and real humor on the other. Somewhat to the left of Mr. List, as emphasizing Gottschalk's more extroverted, robust, broad-light-of-day aspect (including a straight-faced and remarkably effective treatment of his frequent heroics) are a remarkable pioneer recording by Jeanne Behrend, long out of print, and two big-scale releases by Leonard Pennario discussed in these pages in November 1974 and December last year.

Until this moment, however, nobody has appeared on Mr. List's right. Yet those familiar with Gottschalk's purely pianistic legend know that few performers had more feeling for the nocturnal and spellbinding (or, as some say, charmante) side of Romanticism—particularly its highly personalized seductions, its special hypnotic devices, its fre-

quent disdain for the workaday conventions of collectivist musical ideologies. And it is precisely in this occasionally spooky part of the forest that Mr. Davis has hung out his Gottschalkian sash, one which simply says MAGIC. Nobody who listens carefully to his ruggedly individual versions of such Gottschalk standards as The Banjo, Souvenir de Porto Rico, Le Bananier, and Pasquinade will question his license to do so. He is in no sense an old-fashioned pianist, but not since the wild and woolly days of de Pachmann, Paderewski, et al. have we heard such explicit rubato, such arresting ritardandos and accelerandos, such an unmistakably rococo ideal in phrasing. He is perfectly capable of opening in a deliberate, muted, almost detached way—and then, thanks to outright tempo changes in mid paragraph, winding up in a headlong sprint to a photo finish.

The main thing to be said about this kind of unorthodoxy is that when it works it works very well indeed. Most of the time with Mr. Davis it works. It turns his Grand Scherzo, for example, into a coruscating lapidary marvel, the song theme all melting tone and indescribable color, the passage-work glittering like salt spray in a wintry sun. But, then again, in Manchega it doesn't work at all. This marvelously spirited piece calls for something besides clockwork precision and controlled delicacy of detail, and here I'm afraid it sounds much too pale and finicky.

A S is often the case with artists who take the longest chances, however, Mr. Davis' lapses are more than redeemed by his successes. Of the latter, several are unqualifiedly major, and of these none is more newsworthy than what must be described as his total rehabilitation of The Dying Poet as a prime-time pianistic event for modern ears. With the greatest gravity, without once raising his voice—and, indeed, investing the whole performance with a kind of hushed, almost hallucinatory calm—Mr. Davis proves this much-derided relic of silent-screen sentimentality to be a moving and utterly absorbing masterpiece of its genre. He should be warned that if he goes about playing this old tear-jerker as superbly as he does here, he may well find, as Gottschalk himself did, that audiences won't let him play anything else.

It is perhaps not entirely irrelevant to add that, with Mr. List at my center, Mr. Pennario on my left flank, and Mr. Davis on my right, I am now prepared to march against those Hessian giants at Trenton and wherever else they may have gotten to. Will somebody please blow a bugle?

—Robert Offergeld


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Introducing the Staff...

Since readers from time to time understandably display a natural human curiosity about the backgrounds of the writers and editors who bend their ears each month, we are offering a series of capsule biographies and autobiographies designed to satisfy that expressed need and at the same time to circumvent some of the hazards of mere speculation. —Ed.

Contributing Editor

Roy Hemmings

SOMETIMES it seems there must be two Roy Hemmings. First, there's the music-scene writer whose reviews and interviews appear regularly in Stereo Review. Then there's the editor-correspondent whose by-line appears frequently in other publications on a wide range of nonmusical subjects from political and economic affairs to social problems.

Actually they're the same Roy Hemmings—although the slightly built, soft-spoken editor with just a little more hair than Kojak seems to have enough energy for more than two people. "I'm a Gemini (May 27)," Roy says, "so maybe that explains some of the duality.

"I guess I began combining different types of journalism back in high-school days," Roy reports. That was in New Haven, Connecticut, where he was a part-time copy boy for one of the city's major dailies and doubled as movie and record time copy boy for one of the city's major dailies. "Growing up in New Haven, I also became a show addict as a kid," Roy adds. "Practically every Broadway show in those days had its tryout in New Haven, especially the musicals. I started interviewing some of the shows' stars for my school paper.

It was about this time too, Roy recalls, that he "discovered" classical music. "It was mainly from WQXR broadcasts out of New York," he says. "Those were pre-FM days when WQXR reached New Haven with as much static as music, but I was seduced anyway. The weekly broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic, the NBC Symphony, and the Met Opera did a lot to hook me, too."

While attending Yale (class of '49), Roy got a job with a local radio station (WAVZ) as an early-morning news editor. When he discovered the station had no classical-music program, he talked the manager into letting him do a daily, hour-long one ("at no extra pay, of course!"). Within a short time, Roy was also hosting a jazz program, and then a daily hour of classical music, along with Boston Pops recordings and movie background music. By age twenty he was the station's program director.

"But the newsman side of my nature was always strongest," Roy says, "so after Yale I went west—to Stanford's graduate Institute for Journalistic Studies. There was also a year of graduate study at the University of Geneva in Switzerland.

After college, Roy worked briefly in New York for the NBC news department and the Voice of America, and then joined Scholastic Magazines in 1954 as a news and feature writer. He moved quickly up the editorial ladder to become editor of Senior Scholastic and World Week, both current-affairs weeklies for U.S. high schools, as well as taking on a number of major overseas assignments for Scholastic in the 1960's—in Vietnam, Berlin, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, Peru, and Ethiopia, among others.

During this period Roy still found time to be chief record reviewer and music interviewer for five of Scholastic's publications. "Frankly, as a hi-fi nut, I found the best way to unwind from all the national and international problems I was writing about was to shift gears into musical subjects," Roy says. Some of this led to a book, Discovering Music: Where to Start on Records & Tapes (Four Winds Press, 1974), part of which originally appeared in Stereo Review.

Last year Roy shifted professional gears even more dramatically, leaving Scholastic to become editor-in-chief of Whitney Communications' monthly magazine, Retirement Living. As he puts it, "I'm fascinated by the whole problem of how our youth-oriented society treats its non-youths—especially when the youth population is declining every year and the number of elders is going up. Today more and more people are living longer and in better health, they retire earlier with more resources and education—but not always with all the up-to-date information they need. So, journalistically, the change makes sense and is exciting for me. Of course, I can see my epitaph: He had a youth and an old age, and not a damned thing in between!"

—Buzz Hamilton
"The Marantz 1070 integrated amp is close to optimum in performance and the low price makes it an even better value."

In December, 1974, sound engineers and audiophiles were invited to examine and discuss the new Marantz Stereo Console Amplifiers featuring models 1040 and 1070 and the new Marantz 112 AM/FM Stereo Tuner. The following comments were taken from that taped discussion.

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"I feel strongly about the preamp out jacks. You can re-equalize tape recordings, insert equalizers or even add electronic cross-overs into the chain."

"One major feature that I like in the 1070 is its ambience circuitry. Essentially it's a speaker matrix or pseudo 4-channel. This means you can get into simulated 4-channel sound by just adding a second pair of speakers."

"In addition to the step up in power to 35 watts minimum continuous power per channel with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion, 20 Hz to 20 kHz, both channels driven into an 8 ohm load, the circuitry is direct coupled.

The 1040 Stereo Amp

"The new 1040 integrated amp is rated at 20 watts minimum continuous power per channel with no more than 0.3% total harmonic distortion, 20 Hz to 20 kHz, both channels driven into an 8 ohm load."

"It also has the ambience circuitry for simulated 4-channel. Most all of the features of the 1070 are on the 1040."

"It's an excellent performance component for a modest price."

The 112 Tuner

"It's got phase lock loop, a Dolby® de-emphasis switch and a number of other high-performance features. There're no gimmicks in it. Every feature is practical."

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