Pioneer has conquered the one big problem of high-priced turntables.
The best way to judge the new Pioneer PL-510 turntable is to pretend it costs about $100 more. Then see for yourself if it's worth that kind of money.

First, note the precision-machined look and feel of the PL-510. The massive, die-cast, aluminum-alloy platter gives an immediate impression of quality. The strobe marks on the rim tell you that you don't have to worry about perfect accuracy of speed. The tone arm is made like a scientific instrument and seems to have practically no mass when you lift it off the arm rest. The controls are a sensual delight to touch and are functionally grouped for one-handed operation.

But the most expensive feature of the PL-510 is hidden under the platter. Direct drive. With a brushless DC servo-controlled motor. The same as in the costliest turntables. That's why the rumble level is down to -60 dB by the JIS standard. (This is considerably more stringent than the more commonly used DIN "B" standard, which would yield an even more impressive figure.) And that's why the wow and flutter remain below 0.03%. You can't get performance like that with idler drive or even belt drive. The PL-510 is truly the inaudible component a turntable should be.

Vibrations due to external causes, such as heavy footsteps, are completely damped out by the PL-510's double-floating suspension. The base floats on rubber insulators inside the four feet. And the turntable chassis floats on springs suspended from the top panel of the base. Stylus hopping and tone arm skittering become virtually impossible. (Even the turntable mat is made of a special vibration-absorbing material.)

But if all this won't persuade you to buy a high-priced turntable, even without the high price, Pioneer has three other new models for even less. The PL-117D for under $175? The PL-115D for under $125? And the amazing PL-112D for under $100?

None of these has a rumble level above -50 dB (JIS). None of them has more wow and flutter than 0.07%. So it seems that Pioneer has also conquered the one big problem of low-priced turntables.

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Anyone can hear the difference.

**PIONEER**

CIRCLE NO. 48 ON READER SERVICE CARD

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To sound like a separate tuner and amplifier.

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We began by building an amplifier. An amplifier strong enough to drive even the biggest speakers. Without strain. Yet clean enough to keep distortion to a minimum.

An amplifier with 50 watts minimum RMS per channel (both driven into 8 ohms speakers, from 20Hz to 20kHz, and only 0.4% total harmonic distortion).

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You can afford a Toshiba Tuner/Amplifier.

Since every music lover has different needs, we took everything we learned from the 620 and applied it to a whole line of Tuner/Amplifiers.

So now everyone can have a receiver that looks and sounds like separate units. Without having to pay for separate units.

TOSHIBA

CIRCLE NO. 47 ON READER SERVICE CARD
NEW PRODUCTS
A roundup of the latest in high-fidelity equipment

AUDIO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Advice on readers' technical problems

AUDIO BASICS
Audio Education Continued

TAPE HORIZONS
Playback Equalization

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS
Hirsch-Houck Laboratory test results on the Sansui 9090 AM/FM stereo receiver, Netronics Iso-Mount Turntable Sub-base, AKG Model K-240 stereo headphones, ESS AMT-1a speaker system, and SAE Mark 2500 (and Mark XXV) power amplifier

CLEAN UP AND TUNE UP YOUR AUDIO SYSTEM
The ancient rite of spring housecleaning should include your hi-fi gear

MARIA MULDAUR
A singer whose repertoire has both breadth and depth

OPERA: HOW IT BEGAN
Once upon a time, in Florence, Italy

MUSIC & TV
Why is it that this odd couple can't seem to get along?

BEST RECORDINGS OF THE MONTH
Instrumental: pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Prokofiev piano concertos, guitarists Les Paul and Chet Atkins

POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES
Thoroughly Modern Maria Muldaur
Gary Wright's "Dream Weaver"
Bad, Bad Frances Faye

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES
Bicentennial Corner: A Sampler of American Music
Son of Command

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COVER: Design by Borys Patchowsky, photo by Bruce Pendleton.
OPERA AS A SPECTATOR SPORT

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John" is the answer. The question (or perhaps challenge is better), if you have a mind that works like those of Johnny Carson's gag writers, is: "Name three evangelists and one plumbing facility." Here's another: "Judith Blegen, Marilyn Horne, Beverly Sills, and Luciano Pavarotti." You can send me your own gag line for that one later; in the meantime I'll settle for a simpler formulation: "Name four Metropolitan Opera singers who have performed on the Johnny Carson Show." (There may have been others; I got started on this only recently.)

My mind slipped into this reverse gear as I was re-reading Noel Coppage's examination in this issue of the uneasy relationship that seems to exist between music and TV. It is his opinion (which I share) that popular music, contrary to mere appearances, actually gets very short shrift on the tube, that it is generally found playing second banana to Cher Bolegen's snub-nosed, chipmunk cuteness is box-office boffo? Are Marilyn Horne's down-to-earth womanly warmth, Beverly Sills' sexy allure, Luciano Pavarotti's witty struggle already discovered, classical music's shrift on TV is demonstrably even shorter—which makes it a mite peculiar that the Johnny Carson Show, an undoubted shrine of middle-American taste and, in most other respects, the very other of the industry, undertakes to entertain those four big (sorry, Luciano) "classical" artists repeatedly. Without meaning in any way to denigrate the musical taste of Carson Host or Carson Staff, I somehow doubt that they have fallen in love with, say, Horne's "Bel roggio" or Pavarotti's "Una furtiva lagrima," that their particular aesthetic delight is to be found in Blegen's work above the staff or in Sills' fortuna. I further think it unlikely that these stars come out in the Carson firmament just to add a little class to the act—there are, after all, any number of even "classier" acts available for the asking. Is it, then, that Judith Blegen's snub-nosed, chipmunk cuteness is box-office boffo? Are Marilyn Horne's down-to-earth womanly warmth, Beverly Sills' sexy allure, Luciano Pavarotti's witty struggle with the English language quantities measurable in points on the Nielsen ratings? If this were all, why have them sing? But sing they do, so the singing must count.

It is TV's habit, and one of its principal charms, to poke a little harmless fun at a number of things (opera included) we usually take with unnecessary seriousness. The number does not, however, include sports; that much of the American Way is sacrosanct. The world of sport is not to be kidded, it is not to be scorned, it is not, above all, to have its God-given time slot pre-empted by anything even remotely resembling Shirley Temple's Heidi. On some weekends an unbiased observer from Mars might conclude that the only cameras the networks can get to function are those located in the nation's sports stadiums. He might further be excused for thinking that the day's sports scores are a matter of greater import to humankind than news of any war, pestilence, or famine could ever be; and he might even be hard to persuade that the biggest hit of the past TV season was not the Winter Olympics. Haven't we, then, cornered a little something here we could cast in terms of the Carson-Show formula, to wit: "Name two pretty, young, American athletes." Answer: "Dorothy Hamill and Judith Blegen."

Critics long ago fell into the habit of using sports metaphors to describe the goings-on in the homosexual opera houses (a perfectly natural development, having nothing to do with the fact that some of their number may have been drafted into musical service from newspaper sports desks). Tenors became matadors, for instance, and the stage a bull ring simply because opera singers are athletes, competitors in a game of high stakes, pitting their physical gifts and their highly trained skills against impressive obstacles, trying to be the highest, the lowest, the fastest, the slowest, the loudest, the softest, the most expressive, the most unexpressive, the opinionated, argumentative, unreasonable, contentious, insatisfactory sports fans and writers of letters to the editor they are. Just you wait and see.
Blueprint for Flat Frequency Response

In the graph below, frequency response was measured using the CBS 100 Test Record, which sweeps from 20-20,000 Hz. The vertical tracking force was set at one gram. Nominal system capacitance was calibrated to be 300 picofarads and the standard 47K ohm resistance was maintained throughout testing. The upper curves represent the frequency response of the right (red) and left (green) channels. The distance between the upper and lower curves represents separation between the channels in decibels. The inset oscilloscope photo exhibits the cartridge's response to a recorded 1000 Hz square wave indicating its resonant and transient response.

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Stylus — 0.2 x 0.7 mil diamond
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Because if they’re constantly arguing among themselves, it could make for some terribly unpleasant sounds.

LETS ON THE EDITOR

Porgy and Bess

May I add one four-letter word to all the wonderfully perceptive ones that Eric Salzman gave us in his April review of the new London recording of the complete (at last!) Porgy and Bess? The word: Amen.

EDWARD JABLONSKI
New York, N.Y.

I found both Martha Bennett Stiles’ analysis of Porgy and Bess and Eric Salzman’s criticism of the new Lorin Maazel/London Records production of the opera (April) to be mis-leading in one major respect. Both assume that the opera is now receiving its first major recording. In fact, Mr. Salzman states, “Only now, forty years after . . . do we have the chance at least to hear the major masterpiece . . . in its entirety as [Gershwin] conceived it.” This statement is essentially incorrect, as Goddard Lieberson produced a mono three-disc set of the opera for Columbia Records (OSL-162) many years ago which included some of the performers from the 1935 stage version. Lieberson’s production is important, for it was not only the first to include the “Buzzard Song” but it was the first recording to utilize stage noises in an operatic setting, a technique that is sometimes thought to have been initiated by John Culshaw in his 1958 (and later) production of London’s Ring cycle.

KENNETH KULMAN
Carbondale, Ill.

The Editor replies: The operative word in Mr. Salzman’s review is “entirely.” According to Lehman Engel, conductor on the old Columbia set, a number of choruses and repeats were cut because of lack of space; the Maazel recording is essentially complete. The Columbia recording was, however, remarkable for its time, and it is still a treasurable musical document.

Bravo to Eric Salzman for making virtually all of the important points which ought to be made regarding the immense amount of misunderstanding, misconception, and outright condescension which the incandescent score of Porgy and Bess has endured during the past forty years.

Perhaps a few observations and bits of information might be helpful from the point of origin: it was Maestro Maazel’s intent that the chorus imitate each of Sportin’ Life’s differing repetitions in the scene on Kittiwah Island. This was brought out by choral director Robert Page during one of two interviews station WCLV did (with Maazel and Page) for the broadcast premiere on February 29. The chorus was almost entirely white, and Mr. Page directed them to simulate, but not copy, dialectic inflections. (It’s interesting to note, on this question of accents, that, try as he will, Willard White—Porgy—cannot entirely eliminate his Jamaican “singsong” . . . at some remove from Cufish Row.) Also, the recording was preceded by one performance given during July of 1975 at the Blossom Music Center, the Cleveland Orchestra’s summer facility, and recorded shortly after in the Orchestra’s first home, Masonic Auditorium.

It was Lorin Maazel’s work in cleaning up the score of an accumulation of performance “malpractice” and his painstaking elimination of errors that contributed in no small way to the success of this magnificent recording.

ALBERT M. PETRAK
Music Director, WCLV
Cleveland, Ohio

Hot Platters

Bravo for Ralph Hodges’ “Hot Platters” article in the April issue! I was glad to see due credit given to foreign pressings, to some small but very high-quality domestic labels, and to Bob Fulton. I would like to see a similar article published at least once a year, even if you could only discover two or three albums that approach the state of the recording-engineering art.

Here are two albums I have recently reviewed which (at least on my system) have outstandingly good sound: Penderecki’s Kosmogonia, Philips 6500 683 (stunning overall sound, extraordinary dynamic range) and Weather Report’s “Tale Spinnin’,” Columbia 33417 (clean percussion and sound effects).

AL HALSTEAD
Waverly, N.Y.

I was surprised to find no mention of the Musical Heritage Society’s recordings in Ralph Hodges’ enjoyable “Hot Platters” article (April). Although their quality of sound varies widely, depending on the master tapes, the standard of their pressings is above average for domestic product. And some of their releases offer superb sound: “Saudades do
Brasil" (Arion, MHS 3160); "Indian Flutes, Harps and Guitars" (Arion, MHS 3164); "The Unforgettables" by the Andreas Trio (MHS 3233); "Bax" (Lyrita, MHS 1769); Mozart’s Piano Concertos K. 246 and 537 by J. Demus and Collegium Aureum (Harmonia Mundi, MHS 1614). I find the Arion-derived recordings, in particular, unequaled in my collection for crisp, pure, undistorted, and unclipped percussive transients.

J. J. Russ
Los Altos, Calif.

It was gratifying to see a rating on quadraphonic discs (so rarely mentioned lately) in the article "Hot Platters" (April). But John Woram’s choice of "Tommy" as one of the four finest examples of QS-matrixed discs was astonishing, because I had expected more from Polydor on this quad recording and found it boring.

Larry Clifton
Capron, Va.

Concerning the excellent article "Hot Platters" in the April issue: King Crimson’s "Larks’ Tongues in Aspic" (Atlantic SD 7263) is a very good recording, but it doesn’t measure up to their first three, "In the Court of the Crimson King," "In the Wake of Poseidon," and "Lizard." One other recording not listed that would be of interest is "Wings" by Michel Colombier (A&M SPX 4281). It’s a hard album to come by, but the recording and the music are both excellent.

Stephen A. Hawk
San Dimas, Calif.

"Hot Platters" was the most useful article on records I’ve ever seen in your magazine. After all, what good is $1,000 worth of stereo equipment when recordings are of poor quality? How about letting Ralph Hodges write a one-page column on records of outstanding quality every month?

Richard Greene
Woodridge, N.Y.

I notice that a recording of mine, the Rachmaninoff Symphonic Dances, has made the "Hot Platters" listing in the April issue, where I am designated as tape and lacquer engineer. The first lacquers were indeed made by me, but subsequent cutting has been done by persons unknown to me, and my impression is that there is more on the original tape than current buyers are hearing. The original tape was made at 30 ips to a special curve, and most studios cannot handle it. As for ticks and crackles, the squeeze between economics and the special care required to produce quiet pressings make such things epidemic.

The original recording was made with two stereo pairs of microphones six feet apart each. The microphones were a modern ribbon type, the Cambridge C-3, designed by Charles P. Fisher of Framingham, Mass. The only reservation I have about the recording is that MacFarland Auditorium, where it was made, is a bit on the neutral side, and we were working, of necessity, across the short dimension of the hall.

There is one additional factor in no way related to engineering that tends to get overlooked in evaluating a recording. In the case of the Dallas Orchestra, the actual playing was on a very high level. Despite what might be loosely called a love-hate relationship with the conductor, the orchestra approached the recording in a spirit that could only be de-

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CIRCLE NO. 19 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Chromium Dioxide: Pro/Con

As Steve Simels did in his August 1975 column, I have been re-evaluating my feelings toward recent music and records. I protested Simels' review of the Eagles' "One of These Nights" as grossly inaccurate only to discover, after repeated listenings, that the album overall is bland and lacks energy. I still feel the Eagles are capable of that killer album some day, but "Night" sure isn't it.

BOB SILVER
North Hollywood, Calif.

Lee Lovers

Allow me to chastise Peggy Lee lovers for failing to acknowledge Peter Reilly's "Paean to Peggy" (March) in your letters column. If it's any consolation to Mr. Reilly, I shall make room in my personal time capsule and include his review along with some of Miss Lee's much-treasured albums. I'm still trying to complete my Peggy Lee collection, started when I was a disc jockey and thought the other albums are hard to come by. However, I've run across the same problem in Los Angeles. Will Decca and/or Capitol or somebody ever rerelease Miss Lee's tastefully produced albums in their original form—selections in their original sequence, original liner notes and album covers intact.

ENRIQUE R. TEVES
Hollywood, Calif.

Bicentennial Corner

In April's Bicentennial Corner review of the Goldman Band it was stated that "Columbia has put together an unusually thoughtful program here." The liner notes state that the contents are from the J. C. Penney Bicentennial Musical Celebration package created as a gift and already given free to over 20,000 schools by the J. C. Penney Company. The notes on the album cover are from the company's program notes. Columbia gets plenty of mention in Stereo Review; give some credit to J. C. Penney, which goes unnoticed in your pages.

RON STILL
Zelienople, Pa.

The March issue of Stereo Review was very welcome here at Nakamichi Research. We particularly appreciated Joseph Kempler's lucid article on cassette-housing problems and your debate-format article on chromium dioxide. However, there are gross inaccuracies in some of Andrew Petit's statements in the CrO2 debate. He clearly implied (1) that chromium dioxide and ferric oxide have approximately the same abrasiveness, (2) that CrO2 wears heads more evenly than ferric oxide, and (3) that if CrO2 wears heads faster than ferric oxide, then there is something wrong with the tape-deck design.

These views contradict everything Nakamichi has learned over the past two decades as the manufacturer of close to a million tape recorders. Our tests, conducted with chromium-dioxide and ferric-oxide tapes on the market (not samples supplied by the manufacturers), all show that the best CrO2 tapes are approximately five times more abrasive than the premium ferric-oxide tapes. And there is absolutely no evidence that CrO2 wears heads more evenly than ferric oxide. Even head wear is out of the question as long as the cassette housing continues to provide the built-in pressure pad. The unevenness of the pressure-pad surface is impressed through the tape to the head, and this is true no matter what brand of cassette machine is used.

In addition, as Tandberg's Sivertsen correctly pointed out, CrO2 cassettes suffer from
relatively high distortion and poor uniformity as well. Thanks to some excellent new alternatives available, we have discontinued our CrO₂ tape (which, as a matter of fact, was more expensive than most premium ferric-oxide cassettes because our quality control standards forced us to reject approximately sixty per cent of the CrO₂ supplied to us). In light of all this, we have taken steps to relabel the tape-selector switches on our cassette decks and to discontinue the recommendation of CrO₂ for use with our cassette decks.

Harbor K. Appleman
Nukan Research
Tokyo, Japan

Uncle Max(well)

I was dismayed to read in the text of the Sonab cassette-deck evaluation (April) that the machine has been adjusted for “Maxwell” tape. You know very well that the tape you use to test the potential of both cassette and open-reel machines is indeed Maxwell and not the same name as coffee that’s good to the last drop, or the Scottish clan with those eerie bagpipe recordings, or the great American playwright surnamed Anderson, or the lad with the silver hammer immortalized by the Beatles, or, for that matter, my uncle.

Jack Schrier
Union City, N.J.

What’s in a Name?

The Frazier Concerto speaker system is described in the March test report as a bass-reflex system in design. Technically, the Concerto is a modified Helmholtz resonator. That is, rather than tuning for a one-note bass as in a bass-reflex system, we tune for an additional octave of bass. In addition, the report states that at 4,000 Hz there is a second crossover to a horn-loaded, ceramic, piezoelectric tweeter. Actually, the piezoelectric tweeter is directly coupled in the system and utilizes no crossover network.

Todd Crane
Frazier, Inc.
Dallas, Tex.

Technical Editor Larry Klein replies: We suspect that our disagreements are mostly a matter of semantics, but in any case we are happy to present Mr. Crane’s point of view.

Steeleye Spanatics

On behalf of Steeleye Span fanatics who have experienced a veritable hell in obtaining the group’s ten albums, I heartily thank Stereo Review for the analysis in the April issue of “All Around My Hat.” With your help the constant confusion with Steeley Dan (with the second) and the virtual lack of Steeleye Span knowledge will eventually disappear. We might even convince record shops to carry more than one of their recordings. And will they ever tour the U.S.?

Al Eiben
Canton, Ohio

White Harmony?

After reading Joel Vance’s review of the Four Seasons’ latest album (March) I couldn’t help thinking what taste he has. None, apparently! The “white whine” of the Four Seasons is more correctly described as harmony. That distinct sound has been around for fourteen years, and in the past twenty years no American male vocal group has equalled the popularity attained by Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. That’s not a bad record, and neither is their new album.

Robert M. Boyer
Deer Park, Tex.

Cock Rock and Limp Excuses

I would like to take issue with Steve Simels’ March column. His interpretation of “cock rock” was valid, but his view of the implications suggests that he should come out from under his headphone over every once in a while and take a look at the world around him. Do we condemn rock as a menace to society? Do we call for a total ban against Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) and the rest? I think not. But neither should we try to excuse it with weak analogies and a half-hearted push under the rug. “Cock rock” is what it is. It is demeaning to women and indicative of many attitudes in our society that should be corrected. But . . . it is also fun. So with the passing of women will be putting it to us on the stage and on records with the same frequency that we are putting it to the broadcast band, and the question will then become: Until that time, perhaps should Steve like me, ‘fess up to the fact that he likes it even though it’s not such a good thing and quit trying to defend it with limp excuses.

David M. Cohen
Boston, Mass.

Roy Eldridge

Chris Albertson has mentioned, for the second time in seven months (September 1975 and March 1976) trumpet Roy Eldridge’s failing health. The only health problem Mr. Eldridge has had in the past few years has been cataracts, and they were successfully removed some time ago. In fact, though he recently celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday, Mr. Eldridge has been keeping an unusually busy schedule. During 1975 he made three European tours with various all-star combinations put together by Norman Granz. In the course of one of these he appeared at the Montreux Jazz Festival and, as can be heard on the recordings made there, was one of the sparkplugs of that event. He has also made several studio dates for Granz’s Pablo label and appeared at various concerts as a guest star while holding down his regular six-night-a-week post at Jimmy Ryan’s in Manhattan.

Playing trumpet the way Roy Eldridge does means taking risks, and he has his off moments, to be sure. But he’s on a lot more than off, and when he’s on, he is still the world’s most exciting jazz trumpet, as his Montreux LP with Dizzy Gillespie and Clark Terry demonstrates. You don’t hit that kind of note on a trumpet or exude that kind of performance energy when your health is failing.

Dan Morgenstern
New York, N.Y.

Latin American Wagner

Readers interested in Roger Wagner’s newly issued disc of early Latin American music (reviewed in March) might want to know about a similar collection Wagner made about ten years ago. Like the new disc, the old one was made under the auspices of the UCLA Latin American Center. It was issued as Angel 36008 but has been out of print for years. Perhaps if Angel won’t produce the long-overdue Seraphim reissue of this disc the UCLA Center could get the rights to the record and make it available again.

Edward Mendelson
New Haven, Conn.

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CIRCLE NO. 9 ON READER SERVICE CARD

JUNE 1976

9
The $900 Sony Turntable.
Why our tone-arm costs an arm and a leg.

After conquering the drive system, Sony sped along to the tone-arm. The problem: constructing a light, strong tone-arm that has a low resonance quality.

A high resonance quality means the tone-arm vibrates—performing a duet with whatever record is playing.

Sony wrestled with the arm problem and came up with a different material: a carbon fiber. The carbon fiber worked so well that it was even incorporated into the head shell of the PS-8750. But Sony didn't stop at the tone-arm. The problem: constructing a light, strong tone-arm that has a low resonance quality.

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Not for people who want the latest. But the greatest.

The PS-8750 represents a tonnage of innovation and a couple of real breakthroughs. It is not for those who want to spend $900 so they can say they spent it. It is for those who want to spend $900 so they can hear it.
**Stereo Cassette Deck**

Yamaha's designer-styled Model TC-800GL is well suited to both home and portable cassette-recording applications. It will accept power from the a.c. line, from nine internal "D" cells, or from an external 12-volt power supply. Its unusual sloping front panel is intended to improve control visibility and access. The principal controls of the TC-800GL consist of seven transport-operating push keys (including PAUSE) plus seven unique slider controls that independently adjust the two channels for playback and recording level (line and microphone controls are separate) and vary the speed of the tape over a ±3 per cent range.

The TC-800GL has built-in Dolby B-type noise-reduction circuits, plus switchable bass and equalization for three different tape formulations. In its normal position the equalization switch is correct for low-noise ferric-tape and 30 to 15,000 Hz with chromium-dioxide tape. For a 0 dB level the signal-to-noise ratio is better than 50 dB without the assistance of the Dolby circuits. Wow and flutter are less than 0.06 per cent. At high speed, a C-60 cassette can be run through in less than 70 seconds. The deck's headphone jack is said to provide an adequate listening level with virtually all types of dynamic headphones. The TC-800GL measures 12 1/4 x 3 3/8 x 5 1/2 inches and weighs just under 12 pounds. Price: $390. Circle 119 on reader service card

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**Realistic Mach One Speaker System**

The Mach One speaker system from Realistic employs a 15-inch woofer together with horn-loaded mid-range and tweeter drivers. The woofer is installed in a fully sealed chamber within the enclosure, while the large four-cell mid-range horn (mouth dimensions are 16 x 4 1/2 inches) occupies the entire top portion of the cabinet. The smaller tweeter horn (25 x 1 1/4 inches) is located just below, concealed by the removable grille. The grille also conceals output-level controls for the mid-range and tweeter, both of which are calibrated by the removable grille. The grille also conceals output-level controls for the mid-range and tweeter, both of which are calibrated by the removable grille. The grille also conceals output-level controls for the mid-range and tweeter, both of which are calibrated by the removable grille. The grille also conceals output-level controls for the mid-range and tweeter, both of which are calibrated by the removable grille.

The Mach One has 12 dB-per-octave crossover networks acting at 800 and 8,000 Hz. Nominal impedance of the system is 8 ohms, and power-handling capability is 100 watts of program material. Frequency range is given as 20 to 25,000 Hz. The cabinet, with overall dimensions of 28 3/4 x 17 1/2 x 12 inches, is finished in walnut veneers. Price: $199.50. Circle 120 on reader service card

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**Scotch "Master" Cassettes**

The 3M Company announces a new low-noise/high-output oxide formulation for cassette tape to be featured in the manufacturer's new line of "Master" Cassettes. The material is ferric oxide, compatible with the normal bias and equalization characteristics of all cassette decks but providing 10 dB more output at high frequencies than standard cassette tapes. The tape is back-coated with the Scotch "Positrak" backing that is intended to combat tape slippage and promote more uniform high-speed winding of the tape. The Scotch Master cassettes are available in C-45, C-60, C-90, and C-120 lengths; prices are, respectively, $2.29, $2.89, $3.59, and $4.99. For an additional 30 cents each the cassettes can be purchased in 3M C-Box interlocking-drawer storage-system modules.

Circle 121 on reader service card

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**Luxman MB-3045 Power Amplifier**

A mono vacuum-tube power amplifier is the latest product from Lux Audio. To implement the circuit design, Lux worked jointly with another organization to develop a new type of high-power triode vacuum tube for the amplifier's output stage and also created a new high-voltage valve for the driver section. In addition, the amplifier uses Luxman's quadri-car-wound output transformer.

Rated continuous power output of the MB-3045 is 50 watts into any impedance from 4 to 16 ohms at any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz. Total harmonic distortion is 0.3 per cent or less at rated output. The amplifier has a signal-to-noise ratio of 95 dB and a frequency response of 10 to 40,000 Hz ± 1 dB. An input of 700 millivolts into the amplifier's 100,000-ohm input impedance drives it to full output. The Luxman MB-3045 measures approximately 14 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches and weighs 40 pounds. Price: $445. Circle 122 on reader service card

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Submit your questions and comments to Stereophile, One Park Ave., New York, NY 10016. Subscribers receive the newsletter free of charge. Back issues sent to U.S. subscribers at $1.00 for the first issue, $0.50 for each additional. Single copy price $2.50. Please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.
WKLS, Atlanta, broadcasts 100% disc-to-air. That's why it uses Stanton's 681 series...

Top notch broadcasters who capture a large share of the listening audience, are critically aware of the necessity to achieve a superior quality of sound. Station WKLS is just such a station.

As Bob Helbush, chief engineer, states: "We broadcast 100% disc-to-air except for some commercials. So, for maximum quality sound and phase stability, we use the Stanton 681 SE for on-the-air use. We consider it the ideal answer for that application. And our program director uses Stanton's 681 Triple-E for auditioning new releases before we air them".

And Don Waterman, General Manager, added: "Today, every station in the SJR Communications group . . . all eight of them, all in Major Markets . . . use Stanton 681 cartridges on every turntable".

There are good reasons for this vast acceptance. Stanton's 681 Calibration Series cartridges offer improved tracking at all frequencies. They achieve perfectly flat frequency response to beyond 20 Kc. And the top-of-the-line, superb 681 Triple-E has an ultra miniaturized stylus assembly with substantially less mass than previously, yet it possesses even greater durability than had been thought possible to achieve.

Each 681 Series cartridge is guaranteed to meet its specifications within exacting limits and each one boasts the most meaningful warranty. An individually calibrated test result is packed with each unit.

Whether your usage involves recording, broadcasting or home entertainment, your choice should be the choice of the professionals... the STANTON 681.

Write today for further information to Stanton Magnetics, Terminal Drive, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.
You’re looking at our attitude about cassette decks. The HK2000.

We make only one cassette deck. We certainly are capable of making more. Perhaps some day we will. But it’s unlikely — unless there are compelling mechanical or sonic reasons for doing so.

We have an attitude about high fidelity instruments: to give the finest expression to every function of music reproduction. And wherever we feel we have something to contribute, to do so without compromise. The HK2000 (with Dolby*, of course), represents our attitude about cassette decks.

Its predecessor (the HK1000), was evaluated by High Fidelity Magazine as, “the best so far.” When our engineering explorations suggested that improvements were feasible, we replaced it. With the HK2000.

We consider that the cassette deck has a definite and honorable utility as a means of conveniently capturing, retaining and reproducing material from phonograph records, tapes or radio broadcasts.

With one major caveat. It must perform on a level equivalent to the source.

The HK2000’s specifications offer measurable evidence of its quality. For example: wow and flutter levels of 0.07%.

But performance specifications are only one influence on sound quality. Just as in all Harman Kardon amplifiers and receivers, the wide-band design characteristic of the HK2000 produces sound quality that transcends its impressive specifications.

It utilizes narrow gap, hard-faced, permalloy metal heads (the only heads used in professional studio tape machines) for extended frequency response and low distortion. Low frequency response is so linear that the HK2000 required the incorporation of a subsontic filter control that can be used to remove signals issued by warped discs.

These few factors, not individually decisive in themselves, indicate the attitude with which we conceived, designed and built the HK2000 — the only cassette deck we make.

There is, of course, a good deal more to say. Please write directly to us. We’ll respond with information in full detail: Harman Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, New York 11803.

*Dolby is a registered trademark of Dolby Laboratories, Inc.
Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein
Technical Editor

Component Evaluation-II

Q. I have the impression that the writers for Stereo Review by and large don't believe there are major differences in the sound of power amplifiers. Yet the other publications keep talking about them. Are you doing something different in your testing that provides different audible results?

ELLEN MILHAN
New Orleans, La.

A. When A-B'ing components, I find it useful to first "rough" match the relative volume levels as close as possible by ear and then make the fine adjustment while listening for—and attempting to eliminate—quality differences. I have proved to myself repeatedly that level differences too small to be heard as such are frequently heard instead as quality differences. When the relative levels are adjusted so that the quality differences disappear (or are very small), the ear does not hear a level difference.

This is not to say there are never objective and audible differences among components. But I'm convinced that the vast majority of those listeners, reviewers, critics, etc. who consistently hear distinct quality differences between power amplifiers are really responding to those minute level differences. The test for this is easy: simply raise the level of the "inferior" amplifier slowly by small increments while operating your A-B test switch. If at some level the sound of the "inferior" amplifier becomes indistinguishable from that of the "superior" amplifier and yet does not appear to be any louder, my point is proved. Three caveats: both amplifiers should, of course, be tested in advance for normal performance, they should be driving conventional speaker loads, and—most important—they should be monitored for clipping. (Clipping, if not too severe, will be heard as a loss of dynamic range before it is audible as IM or THD.) Incidentally, I suspect that this phenomenon results from something other than the ear's standard Fletcher-Munson response, but I have no idea what.

Taping Improvement

Q. I was recently making up a disco dance cassette using one of the new, expensive C-90 tapes. When I later played the cassette back synchronized with one of the original records I had used and switched back and forth between them, the tape sounded more open and had greater clarity than the disc. How can that possibly be? I thought there was always a loss in fidelity when transferring material to tape.

VINCENT FICARA
New York, N.Y.

A. How's this for a paradox? There was a loss of fidelity in the transfer and your cassette still sounded better than the original. "Fidelity" simply means a faithful reproduction of some original—in this case the disc.
However, I suspect that the original disc was weak in the highs, which is why it didn’t sound open and clear. When you dubbed your record onto a cassette with a rising high end, the net result was a more satisfactory sound.

In regard to the second part of your question, you are right: there must be some loss of fidelity when you dub something onto tape, but the loss of fidelity may occasionally provide a closer approximation of reality.

Low Phono Volume
Q. I have encountered a problem with my system which I hope you can help me with. The volume of the music coming out of the speakers is now markedly lower on phono than on tape or tuner. I thought it was my new turntable, although I bought a very expensive unit with a top-of-the-line cartridge. But some of my friends have the same problem with their systems. Is my amplifier at fault?

SAM CHADISH
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A. It seems to me that I answer this question or a variation on it about once every six months. The “problem”—and it really isn’t—an appears as a loss (or a gain) in volume when changing a phono cartridge, tape deck, tuner, preamplifier, or power amplifier—in fact, any component. The “problem” arises because for many audiophiles the setting of the volume control correlates directly with amplifier output power. It does not! Think of the amplifier volume control as the equivalent of a handle on a water faucet. If the pressure (signal voltage) is very high, then a slight twist will deliver a high volume of water (sound); if the water pressure is lower, then the faucet has to be opened further to get the same volume of water flowing out of the faucet.

In Mr. Chadish’s case, it’s safe to assume that his new phono cartridge delivers less signal voltage to the preamplifier for a given record-groove excursion. (By and large, the more expensive a phono cartridge, the lower its output signal because the mass of the generating elements has been reduced.)

You can see from the accompanying diagram of one channel of a conventional receiver that the mag phono preamplifier section is designed to provide both RIAA equalization and enough gain to raise the output of the phono cartridge to approximately the same level as that of a tuner or tape deck. Specifically, the gain of the phono preamp section is intended to boost the signal from the cartridge, say, 3 millivolts (0.003 volt), to the level of, say, the 0.3-volt or higher signal provided by the tuner or tape deck. If the cartridge had a 6-millivolt output (again, for a given record-groove excursion), then the volume-control setting for the tuner might have to be raised to bring it to the same sound level as the phono input.

When should you be concerned about volume level differences between components? The way I judge such matters is to play my phono as loud as I would ever want it, and then raise the tone arm off the record with its cue control. If the volume-control setting is higher than 1 or 2 o’clock, then I become concerned—not with power, but with whether I may run into a noise problem from the phono-preamp stages. However, if I don’t hear hum, hiss, or r.f. buzz, the required gain-control setting is within the proper operating area.

An excessively high setting (say, 3 o’clock) of your gain control during normal use may mean that your phono cartridge output is too low for the gain available from your preamplifier. Or it may mean that the input-level controls of your power amplifier (or other units such as a four-channel adapter or equalizer) are turned down, or that your equipment needs servicing.

The input-source switching circuits of most receivers look something like the diagram at left. The output of the phono-input section will vary with the cartridge used; the tuner output is more or less fixed.

SONY FRONT-LOAD CASSETTE DECKS
FEATURE PRESENTATION:

Dolby* Noise Reduction System
virtually eliminates high frequency tape hiss. Signal/noise ratio zipps up as much as 10 dB at 5 kHz and over with Dolby in. That’s impressive. There’s a 25 μs de-emphasis switch and rear-panel calibration controls for recording Dolby FM broadcasts.

Ferrite and Ferrite Head
lasts up to 200 times longer than standard permalloy. Provides wide, flat frequency response. And—the high density of the ferrite and ferrite material and Sony precision craftsmanship of the head gap make possible a feature we call Symphase Recording. Here, you can record a 4-channel source (S5*** or FM matrix) for playback through a comparable 4-channel recorder-equipped sound system without phase shift. This means that all signals will be positioned in the same area of the 4-channel spectrum during playback as they were in the initial recording.

Front Load convenience allows you to stack with other components.

Solenoid Operated Transport
means feather-light control. Jam-proof feature lets you switch from one source to another—bypassing stop—without damaging either mechanism or tape. (Available on the 209SD only.)

FeCr Equalization, when used with the new Sony Ferrite-Chrome tape, provides significantly improved dynamic range and signal/noise ratio, and optimum frequency response.

Level Measurement includes 2 VU Meters plus a Peak Limiter. Together, they eliminate sudden transient high level input signals that can cause distortion and tape saturation—without compromising dynamic range.

Mic/Line Mixing lets you blend signals from various sources for master quality recordings. (Available only on 204SD, 209SD.)

Sony front load cassette decks have the features you need for the recordings you want. Check them out at your Superscope dealer soon. He’s in the Yellow Pages.

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SUPERSCOPE.

Listen to us.

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Prices and models subject to change without notice.
Audio Basics

By Ralph Hodges

Audio Education Continued

Reader response to the article “Multitrack,” which John Woram and I co-authored in the March issue, has been especially heavy, with a generous sprinkling of the following sort of communication: “I want to become a sound engineer, but I don’t know anything about sound equipment. Will you write and tell me everything I need to know so I can get into this business?”

The idea that learning about the equipment is simply a short and incidental preliminary to the performance of multitrack marvels is misguided at best. It perhaps focuses on because of the commonly held misconception that a recording engineer functions on a level of creativity somewhere between the realms of pure, abstract thought and inspired, virtuosic knob-twirling. Actually, he is frequently found operating on a level somewhere between the alignment tape and the soldering iron. And if he does wish to avoid the studio’s mundane technical/mechanical chores, he had better have exceptional qualifications in other areas.

While there are a number of sound engineers who have the natural or acquired ability to assist the producer and performers in the creative planning of a recording venture, an engineer’s main job is that of midwife to the laboring equipment. In other words, he translates the producer’s demand for a “taut, gutsy sound” (or whatever else is desired) into types of microphones, mike placements, equalization, reverb devices, delay lines, compressors, noise gates, etc. Then he riggs all these elements together in the right way, and gets them to work properly in a reasonable amount of time. When not so occupied, he generally handles maintenance, the evaluation of new equipment, and the experimentation that may lead to a novel and useful sound “effect.” Occasionally he is also a competent electronics designer with innovative signal-processing circuits to his credit. But, in any case, he is always wrapped up in the equipment and probably never feels he’s learned “everything he needs to know” about it.

As I’ve mentioned before, there are a number of special schools in the U.S. that profess to teach the basics of sound engineering. As far as I know, all of them focus on the theory and nuts and bolts of the equipment: how to turn it on and off, how to connect it to the rest of the gear, and what to do when it doesn’t work right. They do not teach taste, musical sensitivity, or the instinct for a big hit. Of these schools, two of the largest and longest-lived are the Institute of Audio Research and the Recording Institute of America.

Although it has an extension division in Los Angeles, the IAR (64 University Place, New York, N.Y. 10003) is based primarily in Manhattan, where it has its own classroom facilities, control room, disc-cutting room, and testing/maintenance shop. The IAR’s curriculum is unusually extensive, with courses offered on all levels, and with a particularly distinguished faculty that, incidentally, includes John Woram. The RIA (15 Columbus Circle, New York, N.Y. 10023) works mainly through affiliated recording studios around the country where the studio personnel serve as instructors. Its basic offering is a ten-week program in multitrack skills and tape-recorder theory. While I cannot recommend either of these schools from personal experience, both have by now turned out graduates who endorse them enthusiastically. Many have even found jobs within the recording industry, although no school, of course, can guarantee this.

The most ambitious training now available in the sound field is at the University of Miami, where a four-year program has recently been instituted that leads to a bachelor’s degree with a major in music engineering. Besides the prerequisite of a strong background in music performance and mathematics, the curriculum involves three years of music theory (including orchestration and arranging), three years of principal instrument study, two semesters of music literature and history, two years of secondary piano (including jazz piano), four semesters of audio recording techniques (including studio practices), four semesters of electrical engineering, two semesters of calculus, two semesters of psychology, two semesters of business courses, two semesters of communications, a year of music merchandising (including the study of copyright practices), and courses in physics, sound synthesis, and acoustics.

I think I can safely say that precious few engineers working today can boast the formal background that this program provides. But, then again, the graduates of this degree program may well be your competition for recording-industry jobs tomorrow. Anyone wishing more information should write the University of Miami School of Music, P.O. Box 248165, Coral Gables, Fla. 33124.

For those who have asked about printed study materials, the two largest journals that serve the record-engineering crowd are db magazine (Sagamore Publishing Co., 1120 Old Country Road, Plainview, N.Y. 11803) and Recording Engineer/Producer (P.O. Box 2449, Hollywood, Calif. 90028). RE/P is the newsier magazine, usually providing “how-we-did-it” interviews with top-four producers and engineers, descriptive articles on interestingly designed recording studios, and an often-lively letters column. The content of db tends toward the technical side, both practical and theoretical, with useful supplementation by regular columnists Norman Crowhurst, Martin Dickstein, and (that name again!) John Woram. Both magazines will confront the beginner with the usual problems of unfamiliar concepts and vocabulary at first, but diligent study of the articles and the ads should orient him sooner or later. RE/P subscriptions are $7.50 per year (six issues); twelve issues of db cost $7. If you can prove you’re employed within the recording industry, you’re eligible to get RE/P free.

Sagamore is also the publisher of Woram’s forthcoming book, Recording Studio Handbook, about which many readers have asked, and offers through the mail a number of other texts that will be of immediate interest to aspiring audio engineers. You can request free, descriptive articles on interestingly designed recording studios, and an often-lively letters column. The content of db tends toward the technical side, both practical and theoretical, with useful supplementation by regular columnists Norman Crowhurst, Martin Dickstein, and (that name again!) John Woram. Both magazines will confront the beginner with the usual problems of unfamiliar concepts and vocabulary at first, but diligent study of the articles and the ads should orient him sooner or later. RE/P subscriptions are $7.50 per year (six issues); twelve issues of db cost $7. If you can prove you’re employed within the recording industry, you’re eligible to get RE/P free.

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Models 221, 331, 551, 661, 771, and 881

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661 - $350.00
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Each Number 1 in its class
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CIRCLE NO. 37 ON READER SERVICE CARD
PLAYBACK EQUALIZATION

As a recorded tape flows across the tiny gap between a playback head's pole pieces it exposes the head to a constantly varying magnetic field. Even a pure, steady 1,000-Hz tone, in its magnetic embodiment on the tape, fluctuates back and forth between magnetic "north" and "south" a thousand times a second, thereby generating the corresponding electrical "plus" and "minus" portions of the signal waveform in the head's coil. The amplitude (strength) of the voltage generated within the playback head depends, obviously, on the intensity of the magnetic signal recorded on the tape. In addition, however, the output voltage from the playback head depends directly on the frequency of the recorded signal. If a 1,000-Hz tone is recorded at a magnetic flux level that produces a one-millivolt (0.001 V) output, a 2,000-Hz tone recorded at the same flux level will generate two millivolts. This is because the head is an electromagnetic device that responds to the rate of change in the magnetic field it encounters, and there are twice as many plus-to-minus (and vice versa) changes per second at 2,000 Hz as at 1,000 Hz.

Now, if the head's output voltage doubles every time the frequency doubles, you have what is called a 6-dB-per-octave rising frequency response. Such a playback characteristic would be much too bright for music listening. But with a single resistor and capacitor combination you can create a 6-dB-per-octave falling response in the playback preamplifier. The head's output rises with increasing frequency and the preamp's output falls with increasing frequency, so when you put the two together the overall output is the same for all frequencies. That's basically what playback equalization (EQ) is all about.

There is more, however, to playback EQ than the simple, straight-line, 6-dB-per-octave bass-boost/treble-cut slope. For one thing, bass boost costs money in the form of amplifier stages needed to produce it. For another, carrying full bass boost down to the very lowest frequencies (as is done in some European open-reel machines) amplifies extraneous hum and other low-frequency noise. Therefore, the NAB open-reel standards (and the current cassette standard as well) call for a rolloff of the bass playback boost at 50 Hz (50 micro-seconds, the "time constant" of a suitable resistor-capacitor combination, is the so-called "turnover" frequency at which response begins to depart significantly from the straight 6-dB-per-octave slope; at 20 Hz this departure amounts to 8.6 dB). This rolloff eases the burden on the playback preamplifier, but it also means that the missing bass boost must be incorporated into the recording amplifier to obtain flat overall response.

The basic bass-boost/treble-cut curve is also modified at the high-frequency end. For ferric-oxide cassettes, the playback preamp is set to stop cutting the treble at 1,326 Hz (120 microseconds). Open-reel 3½ ips uses a 1,768-Hz (90 microseconds) turnover frequency, CrO₂ cassettes use 2,273 Hz (70 microseconds), and 7½- and 15-ips open-reel stop treble cutting at 3,183 Hz (50 microseconds). Above these frequencies, then, the natural rising response of the head is allowed to reassert itself, helping to compensate for some of the treble losses incurred in recording.

From the figures above you can see that except for chromium-dioxide and some of the other tapes that are very "hot" at high frequencies, the slower the tape speed, the greater the amount of effective treble boost used in playback. While this boost does not raise amplifier cost, it does come at a price: increased tape hiss. At 10 kHz the playback treble rise amounts to about 10.4 dB using 7½-ips equalization (50 microseconds). For standard cassettes, which begin their use at 20 microseconds, the rise is 17.6 dB. Head losses can also change these figures.
INNER BEAUTY
Brilliant new engineering for a bright new sound:
KENWOOD RECEIVERS FOR '76

KENWOOD introduces an all-new receiver line for '76—six high performance new models, created in the KENWOOD tradition of engineering excellence. The beauty of 'original-performance' reproduction starts deep inside each new model. Big new power ratings enhance performance right down the line, but power alone is not the whole story. KENWOOD engineers have carefully concentrated on total performance, with a host of technical refinements: Direct-coupled output stages with pure complementary symmetry for better bass response and crisp transient response. New distortion-cutting circuitry in the all-important preamp for increased signal-to-noise ratio. Advanced new tuner design for greater sensitivity, better capture ratio, and full stereo separation throughout the frequency range. Plus KENWOOD's new uncluttered internal layout that minimizes wiring to maintain optimum signal-to-noise performance. Six new receivers—with an inner beauty all their own—are waiting for you at your nearest KENWOOD Dealer.
The component look.

By design.
The 450 redefined the cassette deck as a true high fidelity component. That remarkable transport design generated a new found measure of respectability for the cassette format.

Our engineers then determined that a vertical transport was best suited for a front load application. In terms of overall design integrity and mechanical stability. So rather than adapt one transport design to fit another need, we produced a completely new, highly streamlined mechanism. From the inside out. It's called the A-400.

Twin rotary levers control the transport functions with smooth, positive cam action. Which means unnecessary mechanical linkages have been eliminated. You get peace of mind instead, because fewer moving parts assure greater reliability and long term dependability.

Since the cassette loads vertically into the A-400, the adverse effect of gravity on the cassette package itself is eliminated. So tape jams are prevented and smooth, even tape packs are predictable.

If new design concepts superbly executed appeal to you, put an A-400 through its paces. Just call (800) 447-4700* toll free for the name and location of your nearest TEAC retailer. You'll find that the A-400 delivers definitive TEAC performance with the added convenience of a front load component. All by design.

*In Illinois, call (800) 322-4400.
the pickup and turntable controls, but it also leaves the system more sensitive to feedback.

A simple isolating sub-base called the "Iso-Mount" has been developed by Netronics, Inc. Consisting of a panel of 36-inch particle board about 13¼ x 16 inches, it is supported on four specially shaped coil springs with plastic "feet" to protect furniture finishes (the board is finished in vinyl walnut). When the turntable, with its base, is placed on the board, there are two separate stages of compliant isolation between the mounting surface and the phone pickup.

Although the exact degree of isolation afforded by the Iso-Mount is a function of the record player's mass and suspension system, the device has been designed to such an extent that improvement is likely to take place with virtually any turntable. Price: $12 plus $3 postage and handling from Netronics, Route 6, Bethel Meadows, Bethel, Conn. 06801. An 18-inch-wide Iso-Mount sub-base is also available for $14 plus $3 postage and handling.

• Laboratory Measurements. We were able to measure the quantitative improvement afforded by the Netronics Iso-Mount by means of a test procedure suggested by Technical Editor Larry Klein. We have been applying this technique to all record players tested during the past two years. Essentially, it consists of placing the record player's feet on four small acoustic vibrators (they were originally designed to "turn any surface into a loudspeaker"). The four vibrators are driven in phase with a sine-wave signal sweeping from 20 to 1,000 Hz. The pickup is placed on a stationary record and its equalized output is connected to a graphic-level recorder synchronized with the sweeping signal generator. The resulting plot, after correction for the pickup sensitivity, not only shows the relative susceptibility of the system to base-conduct ed acoustic feedback, but in addition indicates frequencies at which feedback can be expected to occur.

When we made this test on a conventional record player installed on its base and repeated it on the same chart with the Iso-Mount placed between the exciting drivers and record player, the improvement was immediately apparent. A number of record players have been tested in this manner, and base vibration has been reduced in all cases.

In technical terms, this means that a record turntable can actually be placed directly on a solid cabinet with virtually no likelihood of feedback, even at a loud listening level. We have so operated a number of units, including direct-drive players that are frequently much more susceptible to feedback because the motor, platter, and arm are rigidly mounted on a common surface. The results were uniformly excellent.

• Comment. We doubt that any other $12 investment could make such an improvement in a record-playing system as the Iso-Mount. If you don't have a feedback problem, of course, it will do nothing for you. On the other hand, it is quite possible that your sound is being muddied without actual howling taking place, in which case a genuine improvement in clarity is possible. Incidentally, if your record player has a dust cover, it should always be lowered (or removed) during play. Our tests reveal that a raised cover will usually increase the susceptibility to feedback, especially from air-conducted signals.

Although acoustic feedback is often thought of as a low-frequency phenomenon (in which case it could not take place with speakers having limited low bass response), we have found that it is just as likely to occur at mid-frequencies between 100 and 500 Hz, where it is heard as a "singing" rather than a rumble or roar. The Iso-Mount appears to be effective throughout the entire range in which feedback can occur.

Circle 106 on reader service card.

AKG Model K-240 Stereo Headphones

The AKG K-240 phones have a nominal 600-ohm impedance and a nominal sensitivity of 1 milliwatt (mW) input for a 94-dB sound-pressure level (SPL). The maximum rated input for 1 percent distortion is 200 mW (Continued on page 34)
FACT 1. All records attract micro-dust when exposed to air. This dust is welded into record groove walls when a disc is played—regardless of equipment or record treatment.

FACT 2. Facts 1 and 2 above are the leading causes of record degradation when quality audio equipment is used.

FACT 3. RESEARCH DERIVATIVES: Only the patented Discwasher system removes micro-dust easily, quickly and effectively. Only SC-1 applies this technology to the critical stylus.

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

Discwasher System
a. Unique slanted fibers which pick up dust.
b. Capillary absorbency.
c. Non-extracting fluid.
(11 volts), which is rated to produce a 117-dB SPL in the wearer’s ear. The price of the AKG K-240 is $69.50.

• **Laboratory Measurements.** The AKG K-240 phones were measured on a modified ANSI headphone test coupler. The frequency response was measured with a constant 2.45-volt drive level, corresponding to 10mW. The variation of only ±2.5 dB from 20 to 3,000 Hz led to a flat curve as we have ever measured from a headphone.

Following a slight dip in output at 3,500 Hz (where the volume and shape of the coupler cavity begin to affect the measurements), the output rose to a broad maximum over the range of 6,000 to 15,000 Hz, where it averaged some 10 dB more than the mid-range output. The average SPL between 20 and 3,000 Hz was about 100 dB. When we drove the phones with an 11-volt signal, corresponding to the 200-mW maximum rating, the 1,000-Hz distortion was 0.7 per cent and the SPL was 113 dB. The impedance of each earpiece was between 600 and 900 ohms from 20 to 20,000 Hz.

• **Comment.** The sound of headphones, like that of loudspeakers, can be judged only approximately from the shape of the frequency-response curve. This is because (among other factors) the dimensions of the wearer’s ear cavity can have a profound effect on the frequency response, especially at middle and high frequencies.

In the case of the AKG K-240, however, the listening quality was not too different from what we would have expected from our measurements. The sound was extraordinarily clean and uncolored, with only a trace of background-hiss accentuation from the elevated top-end response. We were especially impressed by the total lack of bass coloration, a flaw in so many otherwise fine phones (to say nothing of speakers). The general effect is much closer to that of open-air phones, although the AKG K-240 is technically circumaural in design.

The sound of the AKG K 240 invited a comparison with electrostatic phones (it is undoubtedly at or near the top of the ranks of dynamic phones). We made such a comparison, although it must be realized that, like loudspeakers, no two headphone designs sound alike. With due allowance for that fact, we feel that the sound of the AKG K-240 is every bit in the same league as that of the better electrostatics—which is as high a compliment as can be paid to any phone.

When the very important matter of wearing comfort is considered, the K-240 takes second place to none. It is actually a pleasure to wear, which can hardly be said for the vast majority of headphones we have used. All factors considered, we know of no headphone at or near its price that can top the K-240 for a combination of comfort and sound quality, and few at any price that can offer it any real competition in both those respects.

Circle 107 on reader service card
Announcing

**PRO-DISC™**

The technology of the Discwasher Group announces a system—a protective environment—utilizing an improved dry friction reduction agent and a radically new application method.

Dry lubricants. ALL need the Discwasher system (see Audio, April 1976).

None can match the PRO-DISC™ environment.

(Soon at your Discwasher dealer)

Discwasher Group
909 University, Columbia, MO 65201
place, is 36 inches high and 16 1/2 inches square at its widest point. It weighs about 75 pounds. Price: $396.

**Laboratory Measurements.** Our “live” room measurements were made with several settings of the treble balance control to determine the flattest overall frequency-response setting. It was apparent (and confirmed by listening tests) that the indicated “normal” setting in our room produced a very hot high end, and we finally selected a control setting at 9 o’clock, nearly all the way off. The mid-range control, which had the specified effect on the response, was left in its flat position.

Following our usual procedure for vented systems, we measured the response of the driven cone and the passive bass radiator separately with a close microphone spacing and combined the results to derive a total bass response curve. The response of the driven cone was smooth, rising about 3 dB at 60 to 70 Hz before dropping very sharply to a minimum at 40 Hz (this is the normal behavior of a system such as this). The passive cone, on the other hand, delivered an almost flat response from 20 to 35 Hz, rising slightly to match the driven-cone output at their effective “crossover” frequency of 56 Hz.

When we combined the two bass curves with the reverberant-field measurement of the middle and high frequencies (as would be done by your ear), the result was a very smooth and extended frequency response. It was flat within ±3.5 dB from 20 Hz to beyond 17,000 Hz, and was within ±2 dB from 100 to 5,000 Hz. The bass response rose smoothly to a +5-dB maximum at 56 Hz, where both radiators contributed equally, before sliding off smoothly to a 20-Hz output that matched the mid-range level. The highs between 6,000 and 15,000 Hz were quite flat but elevated 4 to 5 dB above the mid-range level.

The bass distortion was measured at inputs of 1 watt and 10 watts, based on a 6-ohm load impedance. The 1-watt distortion was very low, under 1 per cent down to about 50 Hz and only 2 per cent at 30 Hz. At 10 watts the distortion was about the same down to 60 Hz, but it rose rapidly at lower frequencies, reaching 22 per cent at 30 Hz. We measured the distortion separately at the driven and passive radiators using the figure corresponding to the radiator delivering the predominant output at each frequency.

The very low distortion measured on this speaker may be due in part to our use of a newly acquired Hewlett-Packard 3580A spectrum analyzer instead of the usual null-type distortion meter. By excluding hum and noise, the spectrum analyzer gives a truer picture of the actual harmonic distortion, especially at low sound-pressure levels, and its readings are often substantially lower than those of a THD meter. Nevertheless, the bass distortion of the AMT-1a woofer was clearly lower than that of most good speakers we have measured.

The speaker impedance reached a minimum of 4 ohms at 100 Hz and varied between 4 and 8 ohms over almost the entire audio frequency range. However, if the treble control setting is turned to maximum, the impedance falls above 2,000 Hz, dropping to only 3 ohms in the 10,000 to 20,000 Hz range. In any case, we would give this system a 4-ohm rating rather than the 6-ohm rating chosen by ESS. The tone-burst response of the AMT-1a was good across its full frequency range, though not quite perfect anywhere. However, there was no ringing or spurious output from the system at any frequency, and the tone-burst shape was essentially independent of frequency (with allowance for the predictable effect of the crossover network on the first and last cycle of a burst).

Driving the ESS AMT-1a with 1 watt (based on a 4-ohm impedance) of random noise in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz produced a sound-pressure level (SPL) of 88 dB measured at a distance of 1 meter from the grille. This figure is comparable to those attained by other acoustic-suspension speakers, but it is lower than we usually find with ported systems. The speaker is rated to handle 75 watts of continuous pink noise input, with 350-watt peaks, for 8 hours without damage.

In the simulated “live-vs.-recorded” test, we immediately observed that the “flattest” setting of the tweeter-level control was still much too bright. We had to set the tweeter level to about the 7 or 8 o’clock knob position, and the sound in our room was still too bright. With a slight additional roll-off we achieved a nearly perfect match between the original and its reproduction through the AMT-1a.

We suspect that there would be few situations where one would need more than a fraction of the output available from the Heil tweeter. However, our live-vs.-recorded test does not evaluate the bass or lower mid-range performance of the speaker, and room arrangement and dimensions as well as speaker placement can have a profound effect on the overall tonal balance and the level-setting requirements.

**Comment.** ESS, in our view, has amply corrected the few weaknesses of the original AMT-1, and the new AMT-1a is without question an outstandingly fine loudspeaker. The horizontal dispersion of the Heil tweeter is excellent, audibly very uniform over more than 90 degrees. Vertically, the speaker still projects a rather narrow beam, but the extra height of the AMT-1a places the tweeter nearly at the ear level of a seated listener and virtually eliminates the problem.

The sound quality of the speaker can be described, somewhat paradoxically, as both “warm” and “crisp” (or “brilliant,” if the tweeter level is set too high). When correctly balanced, the highs are without any coloration. If turned up slightly, they have a trace of “sizzle” that may be preferred by many people, since it lends a sharply defined quality to high-frequency transients usually lost in the recording (and broadcasting) processes. The middles are almost totally free of coloration, which is rather remarkable since they are radiated by two very different drivers. The bass is very full and could easily become overbearing if the loudspeaker were placed in a room corner. We found that the AMT-1a should be

(Continued on page 38)
Record them over and over again.
The life of a Scotch® brand cassette is a long one. Even when you record on it time after time after time. Because there's a tough binder that keeps the magnetic coating from wearing off. So even after hundreds of replays or re-recordings, you get great sound quality.

We wish you a long and happy life. 'Cause you'll need it to keep up with your Scotch cassettes.

Play them back without jamming.
The life of a Scotch® brand cassette is a long one. Even when you play it time after time after time. Because there's a Posi-Trak® backing that helps prevent jamming and reduces wow and flutter. And the cassette shell is made with a plastic that can withstand 150°F.

We wish you a long and happy life. 'Cause you'll need it to keep up with your Scotch cassettes.

Scotch Cassettes.
They just might outlive you.
set, for best results, in the open and several feet away from room boundaries. Fortunately, its symmetrical shape and fully finished exterior make this a reasonable solution from an aesthetic standpoint.

The AMT-1a can handle a lot of power without distress. The only times we tripped the protective circuit breakers were when we deliberately overdrove the speakers and when an unexpected switching transient (are they ever expected?) occurred with the volume set high. The sound was perfectly clean when we drove the speakers with the full 150+ watts available from our amplifier, and we found listening at that level to be a most enjoyable experience—a statement we would not make about very many speakers.

Circle 108 on reader service card

SAE Mark 2500 (and Mark XXV) Power Amplifier

- The SAE Mark 2500 is one of the most powerful stereo basic amplifiers available to the public. It is designed for truly state-of-the-art performance under the most demanding conditions in professional as well as home applications.

The Mark 2500 is rated to deliver 300 watts per channel into 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz, with less than 0.05 per cent total harmonic distortion (THD) or intermodulation distortion (IM). It is also fully rated for driving 4-ohm loads, into which it will deliver at least 450 watts per channel over the full 20- to 20,000-Hz frequency range with not more than 0.1 per cent THD.

The amplifier rise time is specified as 2.5 microseconds, and it has an exceptionally high slew rate of 40 volts per microsecond. It is noteworthy that only 10 dB of negative feedback is used in the amplifier; this should minimize any tendency toward transient intermodulation distortion (TIM). The input sensitivity is rated at 1.5 volts for rated output, with the internal noise being at least 100 dB below full power. The input impedance is a constant 50,000 ohms. A relay protects the loudspeakers from damage by low-frequency transients or d.c. offset voltages and provides a five-second turn-on/turn-off delay to eliminate disturbing thumps through the speakers.

When the amplifier is turned on by pressing the square POWER ON button in the center of the panel, its two large panel meters are illuminated. They are directly calibrated in decibels relative to rated power. Four push-buttons in the lower center of the panel adjust the meter sensitivity, increasing it in steps of 2, 6, 12, and 24 dB (the latter permits power levels of only 10 milliwatts to register on the meters). Below each meter are four buttons that adjust the gain of that channel downward by 6, 12, and 24 dB (the latter permits power levels of only 10 milliwatts to register on the meters). Below each meter are four buttons that adjust the gain of that channel downward by 3, 6, or 12 dB. Unlike most amplifiers, whose effective gain is adjusted by a resistive attenuator in the input circuits, the overall negative feedback of the SAE Mark 2500 is switched to actually change its closed-loop gain (which results in a constant input impedance at all gain settings).

In the rear of the amplifier are the two pairs of heavy-duty binding posts for the speaker outputs, standard phono jacks for signal inputs, and the line fuse. The heavy-duty line cord is fitted with a three-wire molded plug (this amplifier was not meant to be switched on by the usual stereo control preamplifier).

The large output-transistor heat sinks in the rear of the amplifier are cooled by a fan that operates whenever the amplifier is on. Because of the full-time cooling system, plus a very conservative and well-protected circuit design, SAE is able to rate the amplifier for continuous duty at any power level within its ratings.

The Model 2500, which we tested, is the "professional" version of the amplifier. It is completely finished in matte black with contrasting white panel lettering. The front panel is slotted for rack mounting and fitted with rugged handles. An internally identical consumer version, the Mark XXV, has a gold and walnut-grain panel finish; it does not have the rack slotting or handles. An optional wooden walnut-finish cabinet is available for the Mark XXV. The overall dimensions of the SAE Mark 2500 are 19 inches wide, 7 inches high, and 153/4 inches deep (excluding handles and rear projections). Its net weight is 58 pounds. Price of the Mark 2500 or Mark XXV: $1,250. Walnut cabinet (fits both): $44.

- Laboratory Measurements. SAE points out that only by properly grounding the amplifier relative to the test instruments is it possible to fully validate their impressively low distortion ratings (typical distortion levels are well below 0.005 per cent at most frequencies and power outputs). By taking exceptional precautions in this respect, we were able to match their test data closely in most cases; even when our readings were slightly higher than theirs, however, they were far below the amplifier's published limits.

As might have been anticipated from the capacity of the cooling system of the Mark
The cooling fan for the SAE 2500 nestles amid the heat-sink fins. Toward the front of the amplifier are the power supply (covered by the flat plate) and the driver circuit boards.

2500, the unit was not in the least fazed by a preconditioning period—or by anything else we did to it during our tests. With both channels operating at 1,000 Hz into 8-ohm loads, the outputs clipped at 365 watts per channel. Into 4 ohms, the output was 484 watts per channel, and into 16 ohms it was 221 watts.

At the rated 300 watts, as well as at lower power levels, the Mark 2500 typically had less than 0.005 per cent THD from 100 to about 4,000 Hz with 8-ohm loads, reaching a maximum of about 0.035 per cent at 30 Hz and 20,000 Hz. At 1,000 Hz, the THD was 0.005 per cent at 1 watt; it fell to 0.0016 per cent at 100 watts and reached 0.01 per cent at about 350 watts. The IM distortion was about 0.1 per cent in the range of 10 to 100 milliwatts, 0.009 to 0.01 per cent from 5 to 200 watts, and 0.02 per cent at 350 watts. The noise level of the Mark 2500 was every bit as low as claimed, with the unweighted (wide-band) noise output being only 400 microvolts (87 dB below 10 watts, or 102 dB below the rated 300 watts). A signal of 0.33 volt was needed to achieve our reference 10-watt output.

The square-wave rise time was faster than 1 microsecond. The slew rate could not be measured because of the action of the protective relay when the amplifier was driven to clipping levels at 20,000 Hz. Checking the effect of the amplifier on square-wave symmetry (one of the suggested tests for TIM distortion), we found none. Our spectrum analyzer indicated that all even harmonics in the input square wave were at least 60 dB below the fundamental level, and the output of the amplifier showed no change in the spectral content of the signal.

Comment. The SAE Mark 2500 is, to put it mildly, an impressive amplifier. As far as we are concerned, it may be considered essentially distortionless. It should be noted that the grounding problems mentioned earlier affect only measurements in the range below about 0.01 per cent, and there are no such special electrical requirements for the normal installation and use of the amplifier. It is perhaps needless to add that the Mark 2500 has no sound of its own, and no transient effects, hiss, or hum either. The Mark 2500 inspired in us complete confidence in its abilities and ruggedness. As far as we could tell, it seems to be virtually indestructible, whether from being overdriven, improperly loaded, or for any other reason. Would that the loudspeakers it will drive were as rugged!

From loudspeakers where pride of craftsmanship is the by-word... superlative sound that is only Frazier.

There is truly a Frazier loudspeaker for every person.

From our fantastic Super Midget at under $60 to our elegant ELEVEN at $1,200, you're sure to find a Frazier loudspeaker that is perfect for you.

There's a Frazier loudspeaker for every person.

From our fantastic Super Midget at under $60 to our elegant ELEVEN at $1,200, you're sure to find a Frazier loudspeaker that is perfect for you.
Receiver offers audio tolerances that will satisfy the most intolerant.

The Onkyo Servo-Locked Stereo Receiver was engineered for the audio purist. Judge the features for yourself.

The new Servo-Locked circuitry automatically zeros-out drift and cancels out distortion to a degree that surpasses the requisites of the most demanding audiophile.

There are still more refinements. Multiple tape inputs to dub your own program material. A solidly built large flywheel tuning knob makes the tuning needle glide effortlessly over a wide, 8-inch linear precision divided tuning panel. Aluminum and brush aluminum panels and easy to operate controls for every function.

The TX-2500 provides superb performance. Tested according to precise FTC standards, the TX-2500 delivers 27 watts per channel, minimum RMS, both channels driven at 8 ohms, from 40Hz to 20kHz with no more than 0.5% total harmonic distortion.

The wide frequency response main amplifier provides exceptional transient response. Dual oscilloscope traces, with a 50Hz square wave fed through, have shown less than a 5% tilt (sag) as opposed to a 25-50% tilt (sag) found in conventional amplifiers tested under the same conditions.

Compare the Onkyo Servo-Locked Stereo Receiver on any basis, including value, and you see why audiophiles choose Onkyo.

For more information and the name of your nearest dealer where you can see a demonstration of the TX-2500, write to Onkyo today.
BEL CANTO AND TECHNOLOGY

As the bel canto revival approaches the end of its third decade, each new season brings ample proof of its continued vitality both in opera houses and on records. This year the New York City Opera added Donizetti’s Lucrezia Borgia (with Beverly Sills) to its repertoire, and the Met revived Bellini’s I Puritani (with Joan Sutherland and Luciano Pavarotti) for the first time since 1918. Among the newest bel canto recordings are Donizetti’s Maria Stuarda with Sutherland and Pavarotti on London Records and Bellini’s I Capuleti e i Montecchi (with Sills and Janet Baker on Angel).

Fashions in the arts change for mysterious reasons, and it is difficult to explain why the operas of Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini regained popularity in such a big way in the middle of this century. At the outset Maria Callas was so prominent in the revival that it is convenient to date its beginning from her first performance of a bel canto role (Elvira in I Puritani) in Venice on January 19, 1949.

That production of Puritani was planned for Margherita Carosio, who became ill a week before the first performance. Callas was in Venice to sing Brunnhilde in Die Walküre, and conductor Tullio Serafin invited her to substitute for Carosio if she could learn the role in a few days. She accepted the challenge, created a sensation in Puritani, and later gave some of her greatest interpretations in bel canto operas.

Some music critics and historians think the general public has credited the bel canto revival to Callas erroneously. Max de Schauensee, for example, has written: “While Callas did inaugurate a new trend in awareness of the obscure bel canto repertoire, the trend actually owed most to Tullio Serafin, who in Callas found the perfect soprano to give form to his ideas.”

I am convinced that the trend also owes something to such technological innovations as magnetic recording tape and the long-playing record. In 1934, Columbia in 1948, made it easier to manufacture and distribute them. That the beginning of the bel canto revival occurred simultaneously with public acceptance of the LP is not, I think, mere coincidence.

Record companies quickly began re-recording the standard repertoire plus whatever novelties they thought would sell. The first release of Angel Records (November 1, 1953) included a complete Puritani with Callas conducted by Serafin, and a Lucia with the same soprano and conductor followed a month later. Their Norma was issued in this country within a year. Circulated around the world, such recordings brought bel canto operas to the attention of enormous new audiences and stimulated their appetites for more. Callas was a controversial artist, and her recordings made it possible for people who never heard her “live” to join the fray.

Precisely ten years after Callas’ historic first Puritani, Joan Sutherland burst onto the international operatic scene in her first bel canto role, Lucia di Lammermoor, in London on February 17, 1959. Transatlantic jet passenger service had just been introduced (by British Airways on October 4, 1958), and it is intriguing to reflect too on the influence of the jet plane on opera: after recordings had created a sufficient public clamor for a particular diva, she could be quickly delivered by jet to any major city in the world.

More important to Sutherland’s career, however, was the advent of stereo, which, like the jet, was introduced in 1958. The record industry quickly took up to re-record the entire operatic repertoire in stereo, and Sutherland, who had just inaugurated the second decade of the bel canto revival, was ready. Since then she has recorded most of the bel canto operas associated with Callas and a number that La Divina never got around to—Semiramide, Beatrice di Tenda, L’Elisir d’Amore, and La Fille du Régiment.

With the LP coming in 1948, stereo in 1958, Callas in 1949, and Sutherland in 1959, it looked as though we were dealing with a couple of year cycles slightly out of phase. Although the four-channel record was introduced in 1969, the year that Beverly Sills inaugurated the third decade of the bel canto revival with her La Scala debut in Rossini’s The Siege of Corinth, quadraphonics have added nothing to her career.

Besides, the diva cycle had been interrupted by the unhallowed arrival in 1965 of Montserrat Caballé, who made a brilliant New York debut with the American Opera Society in a concert performance of Donizetti’s Lucrezia Borgia. Her first bel canto performance anywhere, it made her a star overnight.

Under the artistic direction of Allen Sven Ozenburg, the American Opera Society was an extremely influential organization that had a significant effect on the careers of many great singers besides Caballé. It also broadened public taste in repertoire by reviving unusual works from the seventeenth century through the twentieth—Monteverdi to Poulenec—with particular emphasis on bel canto. Would the New York City Opera have mounted the Donizetti “queen” operas for Sills in the 1970’s if the American Opera Society had not already proved those works could thrill modern audiences?

None of the Society’s performances were recorded commercially, but many were circulated on pirate discs for a few years, and those influenced the big companies. It is unlikely that RCA would have gambled on a complete recording of Lucrezia Borgia with Caballé in 1966 had there not been a thriving traffic in pirated recordings of her debut in that role.

At least one record company recently decided not to wait for the pirates to send up a trial balloon. This year the Opera Orchestra of New York under Maestra Eve Queler presented concert versions of Massenet’s Le Cid (Grace Bumbry, Placido Domingo, and Paul Plishka) and Donizetti’s Gemma di Vergy (Caballé, Plishka, and Louis Quilico). Columbia Records taped both for release later in the year. They will be the first complete recordings of both operas, and that should guarantee a certain number of sales. Like the latest Aida or Bohème, a recorded “first” generally sells well, and for that reason record companies search for such novelties. With Gemma, Columbia will fill one more gap in the bel canto catalog, but there are enough yet to be filled to carry the revival for at least another decade.
ALL THE CLASSICAL MUSIC YOU'LL EVER NEED

I

n the mass of decidedly hard-sell commercials that assault the ear whenever one tunes in a late-night broadcast or telecast is a recent one that goes: "All the classical music your family will ever need..." Amid stormy excerpts from such works as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, huckster Ed Herlihy goes on to tell us that every composer has written one special work that essentially sums up his life's labors. He assures us, first, that all these works are complete and not merely excerpts. No sale, and, second, that all the works in that set are included in the mass of decidedly hard-sell commercials that assault the ear whenever one tunes in a late-night broadcast or telecast is a recent one that goes: "All the classical music your family will ever need..."

Presumably, then, should buy this set of records for the family's sake, not for one's own—as, for example, one might buy life insurance. If that is indeed what is in the advertiser's mind, he is at least more honest and straightforward than the life insurance companies who try to sell you all the life insurance you will ever need. Perhaps it is delicacy on their part, but when the time comes, I won't need any life insurance; I expect to be quite oblivious to the whole matter.

Suppose we say, then, that Albert Jukes is considering the purchase of this set of records of classical music, not for his own sake, but for that of his family. Under those circumstances, may the family play the records when Mr. Jukes is at home? He is, at best, indifferent to it. Can he be indifferent to the Rachmaninoff Second Piano Concerto when he is trying to focus on Hawaii 5-0? And what of the family? We know nothing of Mrs. Jukes' taste, but presumably it does not tend toward classical music, for if it did, there already would be such records in the house, she having at least as much power of the purse as Mary Hartman. And if there are such records in the house, then we are obviously faced with a surfeit, since this album contains all the classical music she and her brood will ever need.

Armand Jukes is seventeen years old, and like all male persons of that age—according to the advertising media—he has no interest in anything but cars, girls, and hard rock. Does he have a need for an album of classical music? Unquestionably so. There has to be something, apart from mere longevity, that will rescue him from the state of being seventeen. But will he take his medicine like a good boy? Ah, there's the rub!

Emily Jukes is ten and wonders why Donny and Marie Osmond don't get married. Will Mozart soothe her jangled nerves and solve her problems? Perhaps—if he made a personal appearance on her favorite TV show. Then again, perhaps not.

L

eaving the Jukes family alone for a moment, suppose we turn to the contents of this album: one composition per composer, one work that sums up the life of a composer's work, the cream of the golden oldies. It is not even "Beethoven's Greatest Hits" any more, but Beethoven's greatest hit—and Mozart's and Schubert's and Tchaikovsky's, etc. But surely, somebody ought to be allowed to have more than one hit. After all, if everything Elvis Presley ever recorded is now a "classic" (as other commercials imply), Beethoven should have more than a single call on our attention—a couple, at least.

And then I wonder if the Fifth Symphony will always be the Beethoven piece that I need to keep from the Juke family. It is not so much, but there is something significant there, and it's obvious that the advertiser thought so too or he wouldn't have used it himself. Certainly you never hear the word applied to popular music. Popular music is something you want; classical music is something you need. Is that it? Like vitamins, perhaps; bubblegum and popcorn will go just so far.

All right. The Jukes family doesn't want this set of records, but they need it. They need it... for what? Why, to fill up the space at the end of the shelf where the books are always falling down and knocking over the lamp. So we have a use for the album: it is a stabilizer, even a tranquilizer, if you will. It sits there on the shelf, protecting the lamp, a stabilizer, even a tranquilizer, if you will. It sits there on the shelf, protecting the lamp, and proclaiming to all who visit the home that here is a family that knows what it needs and is alert enough to take advantage of an advertised bargain to obtain it.

D

o I find the prospect dispiriting? Not at all. A house with things on the shelf is better than a house without them, the Kalilikak residence, for there is at least the possibility of a temptation to remove them from the shelf and investigate them. Perhaps it may take a decade or two, an utter failure of the television set, the coincidental retirement of all purveyors of junk music, or some emotional trauma—like growing up—but someday... someday. No. What bothers me is, if this album will give me all the music I need, or even most of it, why do I have those six thousand LP's cluttering up my shelves and almost as many more piled up on the floor waiting for a more appropriate resting place? Why? That's what bothers me.

By James Goodfriend
Music Editor

STEREO REVIEW
TDK SA. WE DEFY ANYONE TO MATCH OUR VITAL STATISTICS.

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Two leading hi-fi magazines working independently tested a wide variety of cassettes. In both tests, TDK SA clearly outperformed the other premium priced cassettes.

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Or its vital statistics.

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Wait till you hear what you’ve been missing.
PATRI AGAIN

Originally, I wanted to do this month's piece as a sort of "Patti Smith Now That the Dust Has Settled" thing. She's been on the road for months, she's done a national-wide radio broadcast, people have had time (or so I thought) to get over the outrageous press blitz that's accompanied her, and I had received some very interesting reader mail, both pro and con, on the subjects of her album and her live performances. Also, she was making her return to New York the day before I planned to write this (which was late in March), appearing not at a club but at Lincoln Center, of all places, and it seemed like the perfect time for me to try to sum up all my reactions since I first started bothering her about her. I knew, basically, what I wanted to say. What I saw and heard at the concert, however, profoundly disturbed me, and I find that I've had to do a great deal of serious re-evaluating on the basis of it.

I didn't get to see any of her club appearances. My only live exposure to her previous work was at last September's Arista benefit, but I didn't get to see any of her club appearances. At Avery Fisher Hall, however, I was reminded of Paul Williams' observations about her and the late Jim Morrison (she opened the show by reading one of Morrison's poems—"They wouldn't let him read it at the Fillmore," she noted) to the effect that Patti, even before she became a rock star, had already achieved what Morrison so desperately wanted after he had become one—that is, serious recognition by the academic poetic establishment. He never got it, and we know what happened to him, especially if you ever saw the Doors toward the end, or even listened to their live album. Morrison, who had unwittingly created a monster (his public image as the Lizard King), began to brood about how foolish it all was, and eventually it and his efforts to dispel it destroyed him.

But that was a process that took years. Patti has been a star for mere months now, but what I saw seemed to me to be already something painfully similar to the Morrison saga. The road work has tightened her act, the band's playing has changed almost beyond recognition, she is still willing to take chances (she sang—are you ready?—Dolly Parton's big hit 'Jolene,' which I doubt more than a handful of her fans had ever heard before), but she seemed nonetheless on the verge of being devoured by the rock-and-roll success she has so desperately craved. Example: at one point, during one of her spoken recitatives (a part of Birdland, if memory serves), she was extemporizing, as she often does, and as she groped for an image she suddenly spaced out and lost whatever it was she was chasing. Immediately, she made a joke of it and went back to something she had done somewhere else before, something she knew would work. But for a brief second between I sensed real terror on her part; it was like one of those awful moments when a pitiful Judy Garland broke down in concert.

Worse, the crowd was merciless. There were far too many acid casualties in the audience screaming for her "hits" (or her blood, as it seemed to me), and they brought out a side of Patti I had never really seen before. Certainly there has always been an element of pent-up fury behind her work, but it has always been tempered with a kind of tenderness; it's what endeared her to me in the first place. This time, the fury seemed on the verge of explosion, and when she did her encore—a pounding, rampaging version of the Who's 'My Generation'—I half expected her to smash her guitar, not in the self-conscious, for-fun, tradition-demands-it way I had imagined from hearing her do it on the radio, but because she was really angry at her audience, frustrated by the trap they had forced her into. And, frankly, on the verge of a genuine collapse. It was a spectacle at once fascinating and appalling, a metaphorical Altamont, if you will, and, as much as I had been moved by most of the music that evening, I could not wait to get out of the building and away from rock-and-roll altogether.

Mick Jagger once asked, in song, "If I could stick my pen in my heart, spill it out over the stage, would it satisfy you?" But he, of course, was being ironic. For Patti, who has struggled for years to reach a position similar to the one Jagger has achieved, the question takes on dimensions far more sinister and real. How she chooses to deal with the answer to it is going to be a very difficult problem for her, thanks to the hype and the monster it has created for her and even, perhaps, of her. And let us make no mistake—she didn't go along with it because it was part of the game: she demanded it.

I still like Patti Smith, her music still touches me, and I even think I share her love for her guitar. But I want no part of making her another sacrifice on the altar of rock. As a writer who may in some small way be partly responsible for contributing to the hype that has created this deplorable situation, I can only hope she has the strength to cope with it. Six months ago, I would have staked my life on her. Now... well, let's just say the odds have changed.
There has never been anything quite like the new Nakamichi 600 Cassette Console, either in appearance or performance. Elegant functional styling, coupled with world-famous Nakamichi engineering, establishes standards that are unlikely to be equalled for years to come.

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The shape of the future

But the real news is in the increased dynamic range of the 600. The Nakamichi Focused-Field Crystal Permalloy head not only assures a remarkable frequency response of 40 to 18,000 Hz; it achieves superior penetration of the tape coating, producing a higher, undistorted signal level. Special IM Suppressor circuitry reduces saturation nonlinearities and increases dynamic range to an incredible 68dB at the standard 3% distortion figure with Dolby* on. Program material may be recorded at levels 3 to 4dB higher than previously possible.

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So visit your Nakamichi dealer soon, and get a glimpse of the future, or for additional information write Nakamichi Research (U.S.A), Inc., 220 Westbury Ave., Carle Place, New York 11514.
AROUSES

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By Martin Bookspan

FRANCK'S SYMPHONY IN D MINOR

A couple of months ago this space was devoted to a discussion of the Violin and Piano Sonata in A by César Franck, as good an introduction to that genre of music as one could find. Franck's one and only symphony, in the key of D Minor, may also be an ideal introduction—to French symphonic literature of the nineteenth century. This is so despite the fact that Franck was a Belgian by birth, for, from the age of twelve, when César and his family were settled in Paris by his ambitious father, he imbued French culture and became one of its most influential dispensers. He lived in Paris most of his life.

The sensuous and mystical in music appealed to Franck. These, along with harmonic daring, became the qualities most strongly felt in his own music, and the D Minor Symphony is a prime example of Franck at his most characteristic. At its first performance, in February 1889, the symphony became the rallying point for opposing forces: those allied with Franck and his music, and those against both. A particular thorn in the side of the detractors seems to have been Franck's scoring for solo English horn of the principal and unforgetable theme in the symphony's slow movement. Today, of course, we wonder how such a fuss could have been made over a simple table theme in the symphony's slow movement. Today, of course, we wonder how such a fuss could have been made over a simple table theme in the symphony's slow movement.

For thirty-two years, from 1858 until his death in 1890—a scant twenty months after the premiere of the symphony—Franck served the Sainte-Clotilde Church in Paris as organist. The sanctuary and remoteness he felt there became an integral part of his being, and the characteristics of the organ are germ-anne to all his thinking. There are many passages in the D Minor Symphony that call to mind the sound of an organ. It is even possible to find among the various interpretations of the symphony differences of approach that correspond to the different styles of organ composition and performance. Some conductors approach the score with a Baroque attitude: textures are clear and clean, with distinct colors and shading and with rhythmic buoyancy and snap. Others apply to it the thicker-textured conception of the nineteenth century, emphasizing the lush sound of Franck's orchestration and basking in the interpretive opportunities afforded by the score.

Two of the many available recorded performances of the Franck symphony strike me as ideal exemplars of the opposite attitudes; the recordings conducted by Pierre Monteux (RCA LSC 2514) and Leopold Stokowski (National RFC 2401, cass. 490613). The Monteux recording, made with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra during the 1960-1961 season, marked the third time the revered maître had begun a decade with a recording of the Franck symphony. The performance is the culmination and summation of his view of the music: it has fire and drive, and at the same time the mystical elements are given their full due. The orchestra plays supremely well, and the recorded sound is still vibrant. This is one of the most cherishable reminders of the combined passion and elegance that Monteux was able to command from the orchestras he conducted.

Stokowski, in his performance with the Hilversum Radio Philharmonic Orchestra of Holland, takes an altogether different approach to the symphony, reveling in the sensuous abandon of the music. Like Monteux, Stokowski had made several recordings of Franck's symphony before he made this one, which is a summation of his vision of the music. The Hilversum Radio Orchestra sounds for all the world like the great Stokowski Philadelphia Orchestra of the Thirties, and the recorded sound of the London disc is gloriously warm, vibrant, and detailed.

Among other commendable recordings of the symphony is that of Otto Klemperer, whose performance (Angel S 36416) reveals a different, more somber and noble outlook. Sir Thomas Beecham's reading (Seraphim S 60012) is smaller-scaled, characterized by elegance and taste. Beecham secures playing of unusual clarity and precision from the French National Radio and Television Orchestra, and the recorded sound, though a very early example of stereo technology, still holds up quite well.

The 1976 UPDATING OF THE BASIC REPERTOIRE is now available in convenient pamphlet form. Send 25¢ 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.
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The A.C. Power Line

• Is your system supplied with a.c. power by a couple of strung-together extension cords running out to so many cube taps that the whole thing looks like an octopus at the end of an umbilical cord? Do equipment pilot lights dim during loud musical passages? Are any of the a.c. wires frayed or cracking (especially near the plugs), and/or do any of the plugs make loose contact with their a.c. sockets? Makeshift or inadequate a.c. wiring can be more than just a visual mess; it can be a source of power loss, electrical shock, and fire hazard as well. It may also be the reason you’re hearing your electric blender, hair dryer, and dishwasher through your speakers. A separate line minimizes the chance of noise pickup, so your system should ideally have its own circuit wiring not shared by other appliances or even lights, especially fluorescents or lights controlled by dimmers. There is nothing wrong, of course, in using the “convenience outlets” provided at the rear of most components.

In less-than-ideal situations, available a.c. outlets may have to be shared with other electrical appliances. A good rule of thumb is to think of your audio system as you would an air conditioner (which, in a way, it is!) and use the same sort of wiring precautions for it. Most ordinary lamp cord is No. 18 gauge, No. 16 being a medium-heavy-duty size that would suffice for most systems. If your power amplifiers have

Now is the time to...

Clean up and tune up your audio system

Spring housecleaning is about as good an excuse as you’ll find these days to take care of those minor chores you have been neglecting all year

By Craig Stark

The payoff could well be a better-sounding, safer, and more convenient sound system, so roll up your sleeves, and let’s begin at the beginning:

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• Is each component plugged into its a.c. outlet in such a way as to minimize voltage potential on the chassis? Unless all your equipment uses three-prong plugs and is connected to three-prong grounded receptacles (see Fig. 1, page 50), you’ve got a fifty-fifty chance of making the chassis electrically closer to the “hot” side of the a.c. line than to the ground side. Failure to minimize chassis potential (by putting the plug in the “right” way) may induce unwanted
If your receiving point is connected properly with the component's ground and another ground point. If the only thing after that is a possibility (and a possible solution) present, the receiver's ground is.

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**STEREO REVIEW**

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**ORIENTING YOUR AC PLUGS**

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"There are several steps to determine when your AC plugs are used."
The Most FM

The FM receiver in your home or car may be a valuable asset, but if it is not well placed and not properly connected, it may not perform as well as you would like. Here are some tips for improving your FM receiver's performance and ensuring that it delivers the best possible sound quality.

1. **Placement:** Position your receiver on a flat surface, away from any obstacles that could block the radio waves. Try to place it near a window or in a corner, where there are fewer obstructions.

2. **Wiring:** Use high-quality coaxial cables for your FM connections. Avoid using ordinary speaker wires, as they can introduce unwanted noise into your system.

3. **Antenna:** Make sure your FM antenna is properly installed and is not obstructed. A good quality antenna will help improve the signal reception.

4. **Power Supply:** Ensure that your receiver is connected to a stable power source. A clean power supply will help reduce interference and improve sound quality.

5. **Cleaning:** Keep your receiver clean and free of dust and debris. Dust can accumulate on the receiver's components and reduce performance.

By following these tips, you can improve the performance of your FM receiver and enjoy better sound quality in your home or car.
The Clean Turntable

Though they are the mainstay of most home music systems, record players require remarkably little care. Manufacturers' instructions usually cover such user adjustments as establishing the point at which the stylus should set down (for automatic turntables), arm balancing, checking proper cartridge overhang, antiskating, and the like. All of these "set and forget" adjustments might be worth checking.

* When was the last time your turntable was lubricated? The main bearing (around which the platter itself rotates) should get a few drops of a high-grade light machine oil once or twice a year. (The manufacturer will indicate just how much and whether a highly specialized lubricant is needed; he can also provide instructions for removing the turntable platter, which is not always a simple job.)

While the platter is off, inspect the drive mechanism. Rubber idler pulleys ("tires") will, with age, harden, show signs of cracking, or develop worn spots. These parts should obviously be replaced. All rotating rubber parts will eventually pick up a visible film or "glaze" on their outer surfaces, and this can be removed either with alcohol (don't get just any "rubbing alcohol compound," for it might contain any number of odd ingredients; ask your pharmacist for a high-grade isopropyl alcohol) or, for an even more thorough job, with trichloro-trifluoroethene. Nortronics markets this latter in 2-ounce bottles as its QM-102 tape-head cleaner, but it is highly effective—and safe—on rubber too. Motor bearings should get a couple of drops of oil, and about one (small) drop each should go on other rotating-shaft bearings. Don't put any oil on rapidly rotating parts that may spray it around. An inexpensive "precision oiler" (from your local hardware store if your audio dealer doesn't have one) will help you mete out just enough without spilling it onto adjacent drive surfaces.

Are the motor mountings still resilient? If not, you're probably getting excessive turntable rumble. The manufacturer should have replacements available for all parts prone to aging or wearing. And, unless you are advised otherwise by the turntable's manufacturer, you had best leave tone-arm bearings unlubricated.

* Is your stylus force set within the cartridge maker's recommended limits? The springs that set stylus force on most arms can suffer fatigue with time; a stylus-force gauge will tell you where your arm is at with ease and precision. Shure Bros. and others have inexpensive and accurate gauges available. If in doubt, set stylus force toward the upper half of the suggested range, for too little force can damage record grooves more rapidly than too much.

* Could your system be suffering from unidentified acoustic feedback? With your amplifier's volume control set normally, put the tone arm on a non-rotating record and then tap the record-playback base. Do you hear a ringing, resonant sound rather than a single thump? A ringing sound probably means that your turntable setup is sensitive to feedback, and when playing a record the sound is probably somewhat muddied at high volumes as a result. Try isolating the record player by mounting it on soft foam—or check the test report on the Netronics Iso-Base in this issue.

* Is your turntable level—both front-to-back and side-to-side? Most turntables are quite tolerant of surprising degrees of tilt, but when a little bubble indicator is so insensitive in the hardware store, why not be on the level?

* Is your turntable mat clean and static-free? Foam-type mats seem to be the dirtiest, positively soaking up dust particles that lie waiting to be transferred to your disc surfaces. A light rinsing out with a little bit of mild detergent (a small plus: It will leave behind a slight antistatic trace) is probably called for. You might also think about trying the D-Stat mat from Discwasher: it neutralizes static electricity while the disc is on the turntable. Dust and static electricity are two of the main stumbling blocks to record enjoyment. If you haven't already installed a groove-tracking cleaning gadget such as a Dust Bug, it's about time you did. And for manual groove cleaning, check the Watts Parastat or the Discwasher groove-cleaning system with its elegant walnut stand. You should also consider the phono stylus and its pollution problem. Since a speck of dirt too small to be easily seen with the naked eye can foul up your record sound, Discwasher also makes a stylus cleaner with built-in magnifying mirror that will reveal (with one end) and remove (with the other) any dust or crud that may have accumulated.

Turning to Tape

The same kind of interior cleaning and lubricating instructions just given for turntables also apply to tape-deck mechanisms, so they need not be repeated. But a warning should: be sparing with lubricants; if you wonder whether you really put enough oil in that motor or on that shaft bearing, you did. Proper maintenance of tape equipment, however, involves some special cleaning procedures (which should be undertaken about every dozen hours of playing time, not put off until next spring!) as follows:

* Are your tape heads, guides, capstan, end-of-tape shut-off device in short, everything metal that contacts the moving tape thoroughly demagnetized? If
not, your tapes will increase in hiss level with each playing, and the high frequencies may be erased to some degree with each pass through the tape machine. It's that simple and final. If you want to know just how much residual magnetism has accumulated on these surfaces, you can get an inexpensive magnetometer that will indicate it ($7.80 for the Model 20/B5 from R. B. Annis Co., 1101 Delaware St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46202; this firm also produces the most powerful head demagnetizer on the market, the $24 Han-D-Mag). A reading on the magnetometer of 1 gauss or more should impel you to take a minute or so to demagnetize your unit. Procedure is this: with the machine turned off and all recorded tapes several feet away, turn on a head degausser at a distance of one or two feet from the deck. Slowly bring the degausser's probe end up to the head faces, the capstan, the guides—everything metal in the tape path—and move it up, down, and around the surfaces to be degaussed. Then slowly withdraw the demagnetizer from the machine area until you are a couple of feet away from the heads. Only after you are well away should you turn off the demagnetizer.

- Are all the head faces, guides, etc. free of any build-up of dust, dirt, lint, and flaked-off oxide particles? Again, the cleaning procedure is simple and will take only a few minutes. Since a built-up layer of oxide will cause loss of high frequencies, will result in dropouts, may scratch the tape surface, and could result in uneven head wear, it is foolish not to expend the little effort that will prevent it. A few cotton swabs and either alcohol or the fluorocarbon Nortronics head cleaner will do the job—the latter faster and more thoroughly. Simply moisten the swab in the solvent and rub on the head faces and guides (a wooden toothpick may help get caked-in material out of the corners of the guides). The capstan and pinch roller can be made to clean themselves: fool your machine into thinking a tape is playing when it isn't while you hold a moistened swab against the rotating parts. One word of caution: do not use acetone or xylene as head cleaners, for they can attack the resins used to hold some heads together. Check with the manufacturer if in doubt.

Final Touches

- Are the heads on your machine sufficiently worn to warrant replacement? A set of new heads is expensive, as is the cost of installing them, so if you need new heads you may wonder whether your deck is valuable enough otherwise to warrant it. The test for worn heads, however, is relatively simple: as you slide a fingernail up and down the head's surface, does it catch on a worn-in groove, or does it slide freely? If it catches, head wear has caught up with your deck, and that's the reason your highs aren't what they once were.

- Do you have a box of spare fuses of the proper type for every component in your system? A blown fuse on a Saturday night could easily kill your sound for the rest of the weekend.

- Do your volume knob, tone controls, and switches (particularly on older equipment) make odd noises when rotated, pushed, or slid? It could be that they are crying out for cleaning. The TV-tuner spray cans with extension tubes sold at electronic parts stores will do a good job, providing you can direct the spray into the offending parts. After spraying, move the controls rapidly back and forth several times to spread the cure and remove the source of the noise.

Now it's up to you to add all the other little things I haven't thought of and you have been putting off. Is this the time, for instance, to think seriously about putting all your components into a really good-looking set of shelves, a furniture unit, or a built-in? Should you...? Anyway, have a good weekend or two.
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MARIA MULDAUR, after spending a number of years struggling on the fringes of popular success, has lately edged more and more into the center-stage spotlight. Relatively untutored and relying heavily on instinct, she has brought with her a disarming love of music and the ability to deal with and compound its three essential elements—melody, harmony, and rhythm—in an open, unpretentious, often touching manner.

At a time when the trend in pop music is toward the synthetic, even the bizarre, Muldaur remains warmly natural and reassuringly human. Darkly attractive and modishly disheveled, she has about her a gypsy seductiveness that is in no way tempered by the flower strategically placed in the long, curly, difficult-to-control hair, the firm, curvaceous figure, and the provocatively rhythmic movements on stage.

While these Mediterranean delights do a little more than merely suggest the sexuality that is part of her performing image, they are, interestingly enough, just the extras. What Muldaur is really about is music, and her central concern is with the raising of standards in an area which for a while didn’t seem to have any. Her professional roots run deep into the folk movement of the Sixties, but, unlike a number of her contemporaries, she does not suffer from category-bound shortsightedness when it comes to choosing her songs, nor are her performances frozen into pious rituals of attitude, convention, and stagecraft. There is, rather, an abundant sense of theater, always employed in the service of the feelings evoked by her material.

In retrospect, the rising of Maria Muldaur’s star seems to have been almost inevitable. She answers the needs of a long-silent, increasingly large segment of the popular-music audience, an audience long since grown cold to the increasing grotesqueries of pop nihilism and looking for more positive reflections of themselves in our rich musical tradition. Muldaur works comfortably with the older forms such as blues and gospel songs, expressing through them a feeling of familiarity and love, much as one would for a big, old, many-roomed house in which more delight is always waiting to be discovered. She balances this with a keen sense of what is right for her in quality contemporary material, and the result, in her albums as well as her concerts, is not only depth but breadth.

A little time spent with her Warner Bros. recordings (“Maria Muldaur,” MS 2148; “Waitress in a Donut Shop,” MS 2194; and “Sweet Harmony,” MS 2235—reviewed in this issue) very quickly reveals how much ground she covers—and how easily. She moves confidently from something as basic, direct, and simply drawn as Dolly Parton’s country portrait, My Tennessee Mountain Home, to a bawdy, traditional New Orleans blues (Don’t You Feel My Leg), and is equally at home with Ron Davies’ deeply romantic Long Hard Climb. She displays as well an affinity for mainstream jazz and for gospel, the rhythmic music of faith that, as she says, “brings me the most solace and joy.” Those who have heard her stirring version of Rev. W. H. Brewster’s As an Eagle Stireth in Her Nest in her latest album are not likely to disagree. It is simply filled with the pulsation, the abandon, and the deep religious feeling this powerful music demands of its interpreters.

Considering the rather limited range and flexibility of the voice, it is surprisingly effective. Light, fragile, and small though it may be, it is also, as one critic has put it, “independent and special.” Like the late Mildred Bailey, the great jazz stylist she vocally resembles, Muldaur can sneak up on you with an unexpected gift of insight. In the midst of a concert or an album that has somehow failed to claim your complete attention she will suddenly, seemingly in mid-phrase, take you compellingly to the heart of a song with simply shattering immediacy.

Since bad performances are part of growing up in music, and since Muldaur is still growing, she can fail to reach her audience too. And when things are not going well, as they are occasionally wont to do, she will run and hide behind her ample attractiveness, hauling out a few vocal tricks, rolling those hips, and shaking that tambourine with immoderate enthusiasm. Some, put off by these lapses, have concluded that that’s all there is, that the façade is the reality. Muldaur knows, however, that the reality has to come from the material, and she constantly tries to establish communication through her songs. When the connection is successfully made, as it was for one whole evening concert in New York last year, one can only give oneself up entirely to the experience. And that is just what I, the rest of the audience, and the musicians did, progressively putting off behind her in approval and satisfaction. Benny Carter, the veteran jazzman who was her musical director on that memorable winter evening, contends that with time and love, much as one would for a big, many-roomed house, Muldaur nights will become routine.

Muldaur’s upbringing was, in many ways, crucial to her musical development. A product of an Italian background, she grew up in New York’s Greenwich Village where music of all kinds—folk, jazz, rock, old-time blues, and Italian accordion—was always at her doorstep. Everything was out in the streets or in the social clubs that are still fixtures of Italian neighborhoods. In the Fifties, when Muldaur was first becoming aware of herself as a musician, walking through the Village was fascinating.
"I was always open, eager to listen and learn," she says. "Country music came first; my aunt was deeply interested in it and she guided me. I fell in love with blues as soon as I heard Bessie Smith and Leadbelly. Appalachian folk music moved me so deeply that I went to North Carolina to learn to play fiddle and become more directly involved with the music. My former husband, Geoff Muldaur, exposed me to jazz—Duke Ellington, Django Reinhardt, Mildred Bailey, Billie Holiday. There are so many people who have had an effect on me—Dylan, Memphis Minnie, the Staple Singers, B. B. King, Dan Hicks—the list is endless and still growing.

"Every kind of American music is important," she insists, "each style is a vehicle for different feelings, a way of getting a look at yourself. I've found that the more I know about my music, the better; I wind up being that much more expressive.

"From the time I was a kid, singing rock tunes with other girls in school, throughout the years performing with bands, like the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, I sensed there was much more to music than just getting the notes right. As I continue to learn, it becomes clear that there's no end to the process."

An abiding concern for growth is unusual in pop music. Hits are usually an artist's central interest for the simple reason that without them survival is difficult. Building for a stable, fruitful future is therefore the exception rather than the rule. Muldaur, however, insists on it, and she insists as well on establishing a certain distance between business and "life as it really is." She retains a private side, principally devoted to the thoughtful care of her ten-year-old daughter.

Still, like most artists, Maria Muldaur came into prominence through a hit recording. Midnight at the Oasis, David Nichtern's romantic fantasy with humorous overtones, was sufficiently contemporary and catchy to find a large audience. It moved, it had a "sound"—and it was an excellent vehicle to display not only Muldaur's girl/woman vamp quality but the considerable musical talent that lay beneath it. She has not consciously sought another such hit, but rather songs that have meaning for her. An alert, intelligent woman, she probes all her material constantly, hoping to find in it some aspect of experience that we can recognize as particular to us all. And she continues to sharpen her musical tools, particularly her voice, trying to make it deeper, more pliant and colorful, more responsive to the demands of her art.

She is only now beginning to realize the real extent of her capacities. "If I continue working on my music, I have to keep getting better. But I know I still have a lot of homework to do. If I survive, it has to be as a musician."

In a field in which stars of greater and lesser magnitude spend themselves quickly and disappear, a few blessed not only with talent but with energy, integrity, and an accurate vision of themselves do survive; Maria Muldaur gives every indication of being one of them.
An on-the-spot visual record of the staging of II Combattimento d'Apolline col Serpente: etching by Agostino Carracci after the drawing by Bernardo Buontalenti, who created the staging.

“... no one has ever been able to dispute the claim that an aggregation of musical/literary talents called the Florentine Camerata invented opera in the palace of Jacopo Corsi in the declining years of the sixteenth century.”

It is current wisdom that history proceeds in small but inevitable steps. Thus Corelli did not invent the concerto grosso nor Haydn the string quartet nor Wagner the Leitmotif any more than Apollo invented the lyre. Who did? Why, historical evolution, of course. Historical evolution or not, no one has ever been able to dispute the claim that an aggregation of musical/literary talents called the Florentine Camerata invented opera in the palace of Jacopo Corsi in the declining years of the sixteenth century. Like Columbus, who thought he had discovered the back door to India, this hardy band of artists, intellectuals, and aristocrats set out for a known country and ended up discovering a continent.

What the aristocratic amateurs Giovanni de' Bardi and Jacopo Corsi, the composer and theoretician Vincenzo Galilei, the poet Ottavio Rinuccini, and the musicians Emilio de' Cavalieri, Jacopo Peri, and Giulio Caccini thought they were doing was reviving ancient Greek music and drama. But they ended up creating not merely a total theater of acting, singing, instrumental music, dance, visual arts, poetry, and declamation, but also inventing or paving the way for operatic and virtuoso singing style, recitative, aria and ensemble, accompanied melody, thorough bass, the modern idea of chord progressions and “functional” harmony, the basic principles of instrumentation and orchestration, and the foundations of both the Baroque and Classical styles. The forces set in motion dominated Western musical culture for almost two centuries, and their influence is hardly extinct even yet.

In actuality, the members of the Florentine Camerata knew very little about ancient Greek music, and that mostly from theoretical treatises (only one tiny fragment of music—from the Orestes of Euripides—actually survives today, and even that was unknown in the sixteenth century). Exactly how much of classical Greek and Roman theater was set to music is a matter of some dispute, but we are at least certain that song and dance were important elements. In nearly all ancient cultures theater has arisen out of religion, ritual, and community, and it was everywhere danced and sung before it was spoken.

After the demise of classical culture, theater actually rose again from ritual, this time in the bosom of the medieval church. The liturgical dramas and mystery plays of the Middle Ages were genuine music theater and they form a remarkable and extensive body of work that has only recently begun to be investigated again. The earliest secular musical play that has survived is the charming little Jeux (or, in the quaint old spelling, Gieux) de Robin et de Marion from the late thirteenth century (in these days of recorded riches
there are two versions: Telefunken 641219 and Turnabout 34439).

But secular dramatic theater had to wait for the Renaissance for a full-scale revival. The sumptuous Italian courts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries sponsored dramas, comedies, masques, ballets, and intermedii (intermezzi). Music, dance, and spectacle played a role in all these productions, but no more so than in your average Broadway show, Hollywood musical, or TV special. For extraordinary occasions something unusual might be called for: a comedy told in the form of madrigals, an elaborate dance work, or a commission for wedding festivities with entertainment in the form of songs, dances, scenic effects, and fireworks. Not much in the way of a "book," that is, but great production numbers.

Still, none of this was yet opera. What was needed was a kind of drama that could lend itself to musical treatment and a kind of music that could be dramatic. Our Florentine friends came up with the idea of telling a story in music, something fundamentally different from embellishing a story with music. As we have already noted, they had the idea that this was the basic plan of the Greeks. It is probably just as well that this idea was not very accurate, for if they had actually known anything about Greek music they might have ended up merely imitating it. Instead they had to invent their own procedures. The old contrapuntal style of the Renaissance had to go. The new music (Le Nuove Musiche is exactly what composer Caccini called it) had to be simple, declarative, and expressive of the words, which were to be audible and intelligible at all times. Melody accompanied by instrumental chords and, on occasion, embellished vocally or instrumentally was the key. The style and personality of the performers was an essential ingredient. Almost all the early practitioners of this new art were singers (and instrumentalists as well). They were interested not in an ensemble or multi-part style but in a soloistic one: forceful, dramatic, articulated. Behind that was the poetry, scenery, dance, whatever. But it was always the principle of telling a story in music that made the whole thing go, that made it work, made it The Work, L'Opera.

Florence in the late sixteenth century was already approaching the twilight of its greatness. The golden age of the early and high Renaissance was long since gone, and even the silver age of the late Renaissance and Mannerism was drawing to a close. The Medici had long since consolidated their power; under Francesco de' Medici and, after 1587, his brother Ferdinando, the city-state was relatively prosperous. A certain dignified, high-brow, courtly style was in vogue. The aristocracy was encouraged to take up intellectual and artistic pursuits (presumably rather than politics). Playing, singing, and even composing were common skills among the gentility. Equally important were the academies founded in the early Renaissance for the study and pursuit of various intellectual activities. These academies were more like discussion and study groups than educational or research institutes, and they played a major role in the culture of the time.

The most important predecessor of the opera was not the masque or the madrigal comedy or the ballet but the pastoral play, a very important genre in Renaissance Italy and the one that established the still-familiar conventions of nymphs and shepherds. The first pastoral was written by the Renaissance poet Angelo Poliziano on the subject of Orpheus and it was performed in Mantua in 1482 or 1483. As we shall see, the first operas were written on this same subject, and the first great operatic masterpiece, also an Orfeo, was actually produced in the same city. Many of the great poets of the day—most of them not Florentine, by the way—wrote pastorales, including Torquato Tasso and Giovanni Battista Guarini. The pastoral, liberally adorned with music, was the most popular dramatic form in Italy in the sixteenth century.

The so-called intermedio—usually a short intermezzo interpolated in a dramatic evening—was a popular setting for musical diversions in Florence. These intermedii often took the form of quite elaborate productions. At the marriage, in 1589, of Grand Duke Ferdinando to Christine of Lorraine—the Medici always made sure to marry the wealthiest and most powerful European royalty—Count Giovanni Bardi di Vernon was in charge of the six intermedii produced. More than forty of the best musicians in Florence took part as composers and performers, including Bardi himself, Peri, Caccini, Cavaliere, Luca Marenzio, Alessandro Striggio, Vittoria Archilei (perhaps the most highly regarded singer of her day), and many others. The poet Ottavio Rinucini wrote the most successful of these musical playlets: Il Combattimento d'Apolline col Serpente.

The palace of Count Bardi, built a century earlier by Filippo Brunelleschi (it is still standing), was the first home of the Camerata. The key figure in the early days of this literary and artistic club was Vincenzo Galilei, father of the famous astronomer. Galilei was a singer and composer, an excellent lutenist and violist as well as a critic and theoretician. He and Bardi were the instigators of the new movement, and, in a remarkable mixture of theory and practice, actually seemed to have brought about the creation of a new style. In 1580, Bardi published a treatise, On Ancient Music and Good Singing, which some critics think was ghost-written by Galilei. A year later, Galilei published his own Dialogue on Ancient and Modern Music, the first frontal attack on "the present way of composing and singing several airs in consonance at the same time"—that is, in Renaissance counterpoint. Galilei wanted every word of a text to be understood, and he insisted that the music must not illustrate just details, but express the feeling of the whole. To illustrate his points, he set a scene from Dante which he sang himself, accompanied by viol; unfortunately, like many works of the period, the music is lost.

Galilei died in 1591 and Bardi was called to Rome the following year, but
another aristocratic amateur, Jacopo Corsi, moved the club over to his palace. More works in the new style began to appear: songs and arias by Caccini, a pastorale by Cavaliere, and, at the very beginning of 1600, a religious/dramatic work by the same composer. This latter, *Il Rappresentazione di Anima e di Corpo (The Representation of the Soul and the Body)*, was presented in Rome in 1600 and more recently in a Deutsche Grammophon recording (ARC-2708016—just withdrawn).

In the meantime, Rinuccini had produced a kind of dramatic pastorale on the story of Dafne, and Peri set it to music some time before 1597 (the exact date is the subject of some debate). Count Giovanni Bardi's son later described the work: "...in few numbers and short scenes and recited and sung privately in a small room. I was left speechless with amazement. It was sung to the accompaniment of a consort of instruments, an arrangement followed thereafter in the other comedies." Rinuccini himself suggested that Dafne was an experiment and said that Peri's setting "gave pleasure beyond belief to the few who heard it." In fact, the work seems to have been given several times in different versions, and, sensational as it was, it seems never to have reached any kind of definitive form; not a note survives.

In the fall of 1600, the proxy marriage of Henry IV, King of France, to Maria de' Medici was celebrated in Florence. Here certainly was the opportunity for a performance of major import, and the Camerata was not slow to take up the opportunity. Rinuccini chose the popular story of Orpheus and Eurydice for the occasion; what better subject for a work intended to show the renewal of the power of music! Not one but two settings of this work—entitled *Euridice*—promptly appeared; both Peri and Caccini had put it to music. Although no one seems to have commented on this extraordinary circumstance, it would certainly seem as though we have, right at the start, the first of the many great rivalries that have enlivened the history of opera. It was Peri's work that was performed on October 6, 1600, but—apparently in a sort of compromise—some of Caccini's music was included. Vittoria Archilei was the first Euridice, and a number of aristocratic musicians, including Corsi, took part as singers and instrumentalists. Caccini managed to get his complete setting into print first, although it was not performed for at least two years.

The main musical burden in both Peri's and Caccini's settings of *Euridice* is nothing more nor less than recitative. The basic invention of the Camerata was a kind of supple, flowing, expressive style of intoning words accompanied by the so-called continuo instruments playing chords. (The system of accompaniment with the chords indicated by numbers under a written-out bass line—later called "thorough-bass"—was apparently first used by Cavaliere and Caccini, although others claimed the credit. It became a standard technique for more than a century and a half and has continued as an important aspect of musical life into our own day.) There is no clear distinction between pure recitative and the *arioso* that appears at certain expressive points. There are a few songs in regular rhythm—solas, solos with chorus, or choruses. There is no independent instrumental music, but we know that a harpsichord, bass lute, *lira grande* (a sort of bowed lyre), and a large lute were used for the accompaniments.

The history books often seem to suggest that Peri and Caccini were enthusiastic amateurs, but this confuses the composers with their princely patrons. Both were, in modern terms, professionals. Caccini, in particular, had a distinguished musical career. The prevalence of recitative in their work was a matter of conscious intellectual choice. Of the two, Peri is the more severe and the less adapted to the modern ear although, because he was the first, he still gets most of the attention and the occasional performance. Caccini, who was Galilei's true disciple, was a really key figure in the history of singing, and he heightened his expressive effects by vocal embellishment which very quickly became refined to a high art. The style of embellishment in Caccini's music is very different from later ornamentation, which is just that—ornamental: melodic variations or floritura over a set harmonic pattern. The "embellishment" of Caccini's music really is the music and the expression at the same time. It has a great deal in common with the ornamentation in Indian music; the ornaments are formed on certain modes and turns of phrase and they are meant to express certain emotional affects. In this vital area, Caccini had a tremendous effect on the history of opera through his concepts of the human voice and florid singing.

The success of these first works was astonishing, and their fame quickly spread throughout Italy and occasioned great excitement. Yet, curiously, few new works were added to the repertoire. Opera in its first stages was a highly aristocratic art form almost exclusively reserved for special occasions. In any case, musical leadership passed from the great city on the Arno just as it had already passed in the visual arts. When the young Florentine Giovanni Battista Lulli appeared on the scene in mid-century, there was very little action in his home town, and he had to move to Paris where he became Jean Baptiste Lully and created the prototype for French opera.

Two very important factors in the early development of opera were the
transfer of interest and patronage from the ancient aristocratic city of Florence to the princely families and clergy of Rome, and the entry into the field of the greatest creative mind of the era, Claudio Monteverdi. Monteverdi was a direct link with the older Italian musical schools. Born in Cremona in the heyday of the Amati, the Guarneri, and the Stradivari, he entered the service of the Dukes of Gonzaga at the highly cultured court of Mantua, one of the most brilliant in Italy, in 1590. Vincenzo Gonzaga was a sophisticated prince who was closely in touch with cultural developments all over Italy; he was particularly fond of music and theater and, quite naturally, took an interest in the new developments in Florence. In 1607, Alessandro Striggio, a Mantuan aristocrat and court official (and the son of a noted madrigalist) produced a libretto, once again on the favorite Orpheus subject.

Monteverdi wrote the music in the new style, and the work was produced under the auspices of a society much like the Camerata, the Accademia degli Invaghiti or Academy of the Inspired. A lead singer from Florence, Giovanni Gualberto, was borrowed from that city to sing the title role. Striggio and Monteverdi had a disagreement about the ending; Monteverdi wanted to show the transfiguration of Orpheus through a deus ex machina instead of his death, and he won out. The libretto was printed so that the cognoscenti could follow it during the performance (!) and the score was also published. An orchestra of extraordinary size was employed: harpsichords, double harps, bass lutes, citerns, gambas, wood-pipe and reed organs, a large string ensemble including small violins, four or five trombones, cornets, recorders, a high trumpet or clarino, and a set of soft or muted trumpets.

Monteverdi put these musicians to good use. The work begins with an instrumental flourish, and the score is full of striking ritornellos and sinfonias, several of which recur at key points in the opera. The story is told in an extremely powerful and flexible recitative that often rises to a melodic, arioso style. The composer further specified just exactly how each speech is to be accompanied so that the instruments are constantly helping to characterize persons or situations. There are also songs, duets, and choruses; many of the set pieces are accompanied by instruments, and, in some cases, they certainly accompanied dancing. "Possente spirto" is a bravura aria (one can call it nothing else) in six verses with instrumental accompaniment; Monteverdi gives both the plain, unvarnished version of the melody and then the ornamented form underneath, offering the singer a choice. This fantastic, ornamented version, which certainly owes a great deal to Caccini, gives us a good idea of what an accomplished singer of the period could produce in the way of expressive, florid—but not empty!—virtuosity. With Orfeo we can say that opera came into its own as a unique genre. (Three complete recordings are currently available: Telefunken 3635020, Deutsche Grammophon ABC-2710015, and Musical Heritage Society MHS 939/41; selections are available on Vox VSPS-18 and Orion 74159.)

In the year 1608, the Duke invited Ottavio Rinuccini to provide new operas for the festivities attending the wedding of his son and heir Francesco to Margaret of Savoy. One of these turned out to be his old libretto for Dafne in a new musical setting by Marco da Gagliano (currently available in two recorded versions—Musical Heritage Society MHS 1953/54 and ABC/Command 9004). Interestingly enough, this same libretto was later to serve, in translation, as the basis of the first German opera, by Heinrich Schütz. The second opera confected for the Duke was an entirely new work, Arianna (Ariadne on the island of Naxos), set
by Monteverdi. It was performed on May 28, 1608, before an audience estimated—unbelievably—at 6,000! A contemporary writer says that on account of the poetry alone and of the actors that took part, that opera could well be classified as a beautiful work; but the opera became the subject of the greatest admiration in conjunction with the music of Claudio Monteverdi, a man whose great capacities are sufficiently known all over the world, but who on this great occasion has surpassed his own faculty. The instruments, placed behind the scene, continually used for accompaniment, were varied with any change in the character of the vocal music and were adapted to the brilliant voices of the singers, men and women. The Lament of Arianna, abandoned by Theseus, was sung with so much warmth and feeling and represented in so moving a manner that all the listeners were most profoundly stirred and none of the ladies remained without tears.

This opera, which quickly became as famous as Orfeo, is entirely lost except for the Lament, which modern listeners can hear, in the composer’s own madrigal version, in a splendid performance by the Deller Consort (Vanguard S-297) as well as in a number of other vocal collections.

The first attempt to transcend the limitations of opera as an aristocratic entertainment took place, surprisingly, in Rome. Many of the first Roman operas were religious dramas presented on strictly private occasions. But in 1632 the Barberini family opened a theater holding more than 3,000 spectators—a veritable Lincoln Center of its day—with a performance of Santo Alessio by librettist Giulio Rospiglioni and composer Stefano Landi. Rospiglioni, a nobleman and friend of the Barberinis, later became cardinal and eventually, as Clement IV, pope. Interestingly enough, his treatment of the ancient legend of Saint Alexis was, for all intents and purposes, set in contemporary Rome and had a strongly popular character. Many features of later opera can be found in Santo Alessio, including the outlines of the standard Baroque orchestra and the inclusion of scenes that are unmistakable opera buffa. Rospiglioni, working with Landi and two almost forgotten contemporaries, Vergilio Mazzocchi and Marco Marazzoli, virtually created the genre of Italian comic opera. Another outstanding composer of the period was Luigi Rossi, who wrote still another Orfeo and an Enchanted Palace (Il Palazzo Incantato) after the epic poet Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. (Anyone looking for early undiscovered operatic material of high quality for performance or recording should examine the operas of the early Roman school.)

In the long run, the Roman opera did not flourish. Perhaps the popular nature of these works was ultimately objectionable to certain dignitaries of the church, or perhaps religious revival pushed out the secular forms. At any rate, Rossi turned from operas to cantatas (he is said to have been the first cantata composer), and Giacomo Casissimi invented the oratorio as a kind of dignified substitute for opera.

By this time, however, the focus of the operatic scene had shifted once again, this time to Venice, and it was Monteverdi who carried the ball. In 1613 he accepted the job of maestro di cappella at Saint Mark's Cathedral, a position he held for the rest of his life. All of Monteverdi's early Venetian operas are lost with the exception of Il Sturnoformato di Tamerlano e Clorinda, performed privately in a Venetian palace in 1624 (and in no fewer than four current recordings, choicest of which is Philips 6500457). Due to the nature of Venetian society and the relatively narrow structure of Venetian palaces (outdoor events were virtually impossible in the city itself), lavish private or semipublic spectacles were inconvenient. So, in 1637, the noble Tron family were invited to the fateful step of building and operating a public opera theater (Teatro di San Cassiano), initiating things with a Monteverdi commission, and the Barborini carried this golden apple of song (Il Pomo d'Oro was his most famous work) as far as Vienna. Centered in Venice but now European in scope and appeal, the new opera was no longer mythological but concerned itself with human figures drawn from history and legend. The heyday of virtuoso singing, of elaborate formal and florid arias, of the castrati, of machinery and perspective stage designs, of great spectacles and stage effects had arrived. It must really have been something. Here is a Frenchman's view (in a contemporary English translation) of Venetian opera in all its glory:

At Venice they act in several Opera's at a time; The Theaters are Large and Stately, the Decorations Noble, and the Alarments of them good: But they are very badly illuminated: The Machines are sometimes passable and as often ridiculous. These Opera's are long, yet they would divert the Four Hours which they last, if they were impos'd by force of the Rules of the Theater. The Charms of their Voices do make amends for all imperfections: These Men without Beards have delicate Voices besides which they are admirably suited to the greatness of the Theater. They commonly have the best Women Singers of all Italy. Their Airs are languishing and touching; the whole composition is ming'd with agreeable Songs that raise the Attention; the Symphony is mean, inspiring rather Melancholy than Gaiety: It is composed of Lutes, Theorob and Harpsichords, yet they keep time to the Voices with the greatest exactness imaginable. They that compose the Musick of the Opera, endeavor to conclude the Scenes of the Principal Actors with airs that Wonder and Elevate, so that they may acquire the Applause of the Audience, which succeeds so well to their intentions, that one hears nothing but a Thousand Benissimo's together; yet nothing is so remarkable as the pleasant Benedictions and the Airs that Wishes of the Gondoliers in the Pi to the Woman-Singers... for these impudent Fellows say whatever they please, as being assured to make the Audience rather Laugh than Angry.

In short, what it was, was Opera.
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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.

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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.

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.
Television and music go together like fried clams and chocolate sauce, like Lee Marvin and Amy Vanderbilt, like Archie Bunker and Mary Tyler Moore. One can discover several reasons why this is so; the dicey part of the business is contemplating what the long-term effects of this incompatible coupling might be. Something—perhaps the glassy-eyed state that television viewing induces—has lulled us into avoiding that. We tend to consider the source of, say, Tony Orlando and Dawn and become what the football coaches call philosophical about it: “It’s only television.” But I don’t believe it’s all that benign and harmless. Music and television are both enormously important elements in our culture, the one not only because it helps some of us make it through nights but because it, having come from inside us, us humans, may yet turn out to be the best evidence that each of us has a soul; the other is important because it’s there, everywhere, and ignoring it would be like crawling across the Sahara and remaining oblivious to vast wastelands.

Television is, in fact, the new champion of the media. Statistics more than adequately prove that, and so does the behavior of those who would advertise their products or themselves. “You’re nowhere without that tube,” as Lou Rawls told Henry Pleasants several years ago. Advertising experts turned campaign managers told the same thing to Richard Nixon. TV Guide, its now slick, now pulpy little pages extending Marshall McLuhan’s theme that TV-watching is an oddly “tactile” experience, reports on a recent survey that concluded most people would give up their radios, their record players, their newspapers, their magazines, the whole works, before they’d part with their TV sets, if they could (God forbid) keep just one thing.

And yet it’s so silly, so trivial. We just aren’t programmed to have this thing of unpredictable, unfathomable influence turn out to be such an apparent pussycat or, to be precise, Puddy Tat. TV Guide stays just about brim-full with mind-screwing little quotes from people on the inside, and then there’s the content of TV itself, most of it silly. Small wonder that the person who really loves music and cares what happens to it might overlook the insidiousness of television. The whole mess of television’s relationship with music has perhaps appeared to this person to have slunk into the most obvious kind of camp, and he or she may reasonably expect even the beer-can-and-under-shirt set to tire of that sooner or later. I mean:

“Comedy-variety-vaudeville,” said Michael Eisner, who is toiling for programming ace Fred Silverman to reorient ABC-TV toward more dealings with music (featuring, among others, such singers as Paul Lynde), “is the Tabasco sauce of television.”

Oh, how the impulse surges to make great sport of such quotes, which fairly bubble in TV Guide—but the specter of television’s influence is sobering. When Eisner’s boss Silverman (when he was what TV Guide called “the programming Wunderkind for CBS”) said of Tony Orlando and Dawn, “These kids are what this medium is all about,” I surely wanted to laugh... and I would’ve, too, if I could’ve stopped shuddering.

Radio—which we may assume a number of good Germans in the Thirties regarded as “just radio”—is a medium that, for me, helps set off the tricks of lighting or whatever it is that darkens the outlines of this specter of television’s influence. This is an acci-
dental approach, the result of my having been born into the car culture and being unable, to this day, to purge myself of the notion that the car radio is one of man's greatest treasures. Driving and listening go together for me like a Howard Johnson's devil's food cake thing with ice cream in the middle and chocolate sauce on top.

Since radio clearly extends only one of the senses, it's a good reference point for contemplating another medium that claims to extend two senses, and it also—thanks largely to TV—deals massively with music. Having become, through no fault of my own, sensitized in this area, I am vulnerable to the ever-sinking taste that comes to radio from somewhere. I didn't expect the taste to be lofty (partly because it is just radio now that there's television), but I'm sure I recall its once being whimsical, regional, varied, even having a chance of being funky on a good night. A night driver must have flirted with the viewing-with-alarm-the-impending-situation record many times in recent years, even if you count only the atrocities (shall we recall Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree, or shall we recall any given duet between Archie and Edit'?) you can link directly with television. Those who forget history, etc., so remember, I say, the Monkees, Jim Nabors, Tennessee Ernie, the Partridge Family, the Hudson Brothers, the Osmonds, Mac Davis, Cher, Tony Orlando, Frankie Avalon, all the Bobbies. It can happen here. And it does happen, in fact, with boring regularity.

My involuntary slant on this effect of TV is subject to manipulation by such extraneous (though indirectly, perhaps chaotically, related) affairs as the so-called fuel shortage. Perhaps the topic need not be such a downer. With any luck at all, there are moderating forces at work. Even I can see that television doesn't do too badly by music when it "covers" it in a journalistic way, or even when it stages it and then covers it in a pseudo-journalistic way. The television camera is a remarkably candid instrument, and such shows as In-Concert-cum-Rock Concert, Soundstage, In Performance at Wolf Trap, Evening at Symphony, perhaps on occasion such syndicated ones as The Porter Wagoner Show, and even the formula-dizzy Midnight Special manage to give performers a fairly neutral forum in which to show whether they're oriented toward making music or dancing to it. You always stand a decent chance of gaining some insight into how the act regards itself (not to mention a fair chance of an overdose of the shift in attitudes among performers as to which they really cherish most, music or show biz). These programs do some good in uncovering truth about this, and, while the direct good they do music may be left-handed—in that they at least don't attack music's dignity—it is, nevertheless, of some help.

These are not, however, the kinds of music programs one expects from the real power in television, the three big commercial networks. These mostly are, or are based on, package deals coming from promoters on the outside, like Don Kirshner, or they are low-budget public-television deals that perhaps tap a mild tradition of cooperation between poverty-stricken educational stations and some of the more serious musicians (Pete Seeger has earned a lot of points by ministering to the poor in this way). What one expects from the Big Three (which, incidentally, retreated from Seeger's politics not that many years ago; you may recall how Joan Baez refused to be on Hootenanny because of the way the networks treated
MUSIC & TV

"Your truly loyal vice president is constitutionally unable to decide which he likes best—cops, docs, jocks, or comedy-variety-vaudeville."

Seeger) is anything but low-budget, and it is to journalism as Walter Cronkite is to Tom Wolfe, as Ted Baxter is to Neil Sheehan. It is, this expectation we've come to form, all dessert and no main course, or all smoke (tinted, of course, for the color) and no bang . . . it is always the same thing, the variety show, the—how did the man put it?—the Tabasco sauce. Your truly loyal vice president of TV programming is constitutionally unable to decide which he likes best—cops, docs, jocks, or comedy-variety-vaudeville. We need not dwell on his indecision here, since the variety show is the only one declaring itself to be connected with music. Monday emphasis on comedy and represent themselves as not being very musical (The Carol Burnett Show) or have spotlighted a new kind of hell-for-leather (or, as the case may be, satin or rhinestone) egomania. We're in the era of the Horning-In Host/Hostess, who has (temporarily, I think) gotten the advantage over the Pointer. Garry Moore, reminiscing with Tom Snyder on Tomorrow, recalled Fred Allen's saying, "The people who are going to survive on television are the pointers, people like Garry Moore and Ed Sullivan, who point to a spot where the next act will appear and say, 'And now. . . ."" Allen said this at a time when, as Bob and Ray's Ray Goulding said, "Most of us thought of television as just radio with pictures." I think Allen was on a course that, had he pursued it, could have led to his scooping Marshall McLuhan in perceiving an important effect of the camera's relentless search for faces and personalities.

For a while, though, the prevailing idea has been that a television "presence" is something that screams—no matter whether it's ostensibly prattling stair-steps above me so my head wouldn't stick up higher than his." Anticipation that the public might soon join Diamond in becoming sick of this, I should think, would be quite a fearful notion in a conservative environment; it would mean that old bugaboo, Change, must be faced. If you reason that such an atmosphere would most likely yield, in such a moment of awareness, to Something That Worked Before (in the spirit in which vaudeville was exhumed in the first place), you might fancy you have a handle on the reunion, professionally speaking, of Sonny and Cher.

I like to look at what little positive side there is and think this at least indicates the era of the Horning-In Host/Hostess is starting to fade. Sonny and Cher can go back to their Bickersons-updated routine, and there is other evidence: Saturday Night Live with Howard Cosell was quickly canceled, Bobby Vinton and his honorary Poles never really had the muscle of a network show or even of some syndicated shows (loved The Avengers), and Manhattan Transfer and Joey Heatherton and Dad and similar dog-days items departed fairly soon after giving everyone a chance to take one last disbeliefing look at low camp, real low camp.

Still, even if it's rid of these boors/booresses, the variety show has something eerie and pathetic about it. It is, I think, an unfair thing to do to our culture this late into the future, and not simply because it treats music like a grubby stepchild; it is the kind of dirty trick that Dr. Frankenstein pulled on the good burghers in his neighborhood. The main difference is that his motives

Night Football, in fact, has done music lovers a great favor by selling commercial spots during the time The Star-Spangled Banner is played by some tin-horn band.

There haven't been quite as many variety shows in recent years (assuming this is read before ABC's "revitalization" program reaches full blast); there just hasn't been the time, as the network's cop-craze has been in the throes of a particularly prolonged and severe seizure. Those that have been on lately have tended either to put the about linebackers or cracking ethnic jokes with the ethnics themselves—"Me! Me! Look at Me!" This kind of presence not only entices Barbara Walters to sing but of course sings with her. "Being a guest star on a variety show is the lowest form of work a person can do," Neil Diamond once said to me. "They're going to insist that the host or hostess sing duets with you, regardless of how your voices blend or don't blend, and they have you in skits and production numbers and that's not what you do. I had them put the host on
were, in their twisted way, a little more honorable. The variety show, vaudeville, is a walking cadaver culturally; we know it’s dead, reliable witnesses saw it die—they were, as a matter of fact, still reporting on the final convulsions during my childhood, which was back before Ed Sullivan went around the bend on the little Italian mouse. Yet here it is.

Consider the power television must have, to have pulled this off as efficiently as it did. And consider music’s built-in trouble with power. Let’s trace back along just one of the branches. Television, the “trivial” medium, would be expected to favor blandness in musicians. Actually, the ones that have turned music into something sour through the years were only superficially bland; there is something behind the voices of such as Andy Williams, Jim Nabors, Wayne Newton, Mac Davis, Cher, Helen Reddy, and others, something somewhere in the personalities they project that is somehow arch.

Groups that are bland all the way through (the Carpenters, the Fifth Dimension) don’t have television shows. But abrasive personalities, which usually make the more interesting music, other factors being equal, are allowed on TV only occasionally in rock and roll—TV shows, and the implication on TV only occasionally in rock and roll—TV shows, and the implication of blandness, a stand of some sort. Theoretically we could have a good bland show—say, The Carole King Show—that would be a professional, sincere production, most of all a dignified association with music, but what we get is Cher. King is not technically a much better singer than Cher, but there’s a world of difference in their values. King simply has too much respect for her art or craft or whatever she deems it to be to treat music the way the Cher people treat it. It’s no accident, I think, that the ones like Cher show up with the power of television behind them. One of the things you wonder, of course, is whether the people, constantly being told in subtle ways that this croaking is music and that music is a lot less important than costumes anyway, are buying this the way they bought the argument that Bufferin is twice as fast as aspirin, that Coke is the Real Thing, and that their left sides will convince their right sides.

But abrasive personalities, which usually make the more interesting music, other factors being equal, are allowed on TV only occasionally in rock and roll—TV shows, and the implication persists that they’re just visiting. Roger Miller showed how long a real gadfly personality—one that deliberately toys with the mind instead of avoiding any acknowledgment that there is such a thing—is likely to last on television. In his set, blew up his train on the last show. I liked that.

So, expecting blandness, we get a like-it-or-lump-it-spit-in-your-eye kind of blandness, a stand of some sort. Consider the power television must have, to have pulled this off as efficiently as it did. And consider music’s built-in trouble with power. Let’s trace back along just one of the branches. Television, the “trivial” medium, would be expected to favor blandness in musicians. Actually, the ones that have turned music into something sour through the years were only superficially bland; there is something behind the voices of such as Andy Williams, Jim Nabors, Wayne Newton, Mac Davis, Cher, Helen Reddy, and others, something somewhere in the personalities they project that is somehow arch.

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This branch of television’s influence indirectly serves the main body of it, much of which deals with much more obvious and practical, here-and-now concerns. You don’t even have to turn the set on to start on those: all that space-age works-in-a-drawer circuitry that thinks in color, that leaps out at you and self-adjusts in accordance with the national something-or-other of eye doctors’ recommendations—that’s all concerned with the picture. The sound has to eke out as best it can through a speaker (and circuitry) barely worthy of the label Made in Hong Kong. That’s one aspect of a vicious cycle, the other being the production end of TV sound. Engineers tell me it isn’t very good mainly because there’s not much impetus to improve it until the hardware on the receiving end is improved. This state of affairs must reflect (and, at the same time, perpetuate) attitudes about just how important sound really is, relative to sight, in this particular imitation of life. Those who perform regularly in that environment are, ironically, regularly exposed as knuckling under to it by that hungry and single-minded camera. One recalls, for example, how Cher handled Geronimo’s Cadillac, Michael Murphey’s song about how the white man preposterously misinterpreted the Indian. Cher, as if to turn the thing into a parody, was dressed in a flashy, sexy “Indian maiden” costume. The words lost out to the outlandishly budgeted costume department headed by designer Bob Mackie, who tells TV Guide that Cher has “sensational armpits.”

How long does it take for the novelty of being able to send pictures through the air—even pictures of great armpits—to wear off? In real life, we might value vision over hearing if we could keep just one, but sight and sound overlap, work together—they are, in fact, in some ways almost as subtly interdependent as taste and smell are.

But ah, you say, this could all be tainted with the ravings of a car-culture kid just goosed by another gasoline price increase. Perhaps. There are, or seem to be, viewpoints that take television on its own terms and don’t see it,
"The people who are going to survive on television are those who point to a spot where the next act will appear and say, 'And now...'" as I do, as a distorted extension of the senses.

"I just never paid much attention to the sound on television, except when it was so bad I couldn't understand what was coming through," Haven't you?—there's a deal even if television uncharacteristically offered one where television's relationship with music is concerned. The closer they come to being actual poets, the more wary they are of throwing in with all that power. If poets have learned anything, they've learned that power corrupts. Sound recordings, and the attitudes surrounding them, have become an acceptable way of finding and communicating with your audience, the term "high fidelity" itself says something about priorities, connoting a subservience of engineering prowess to the real stuff coming from inside a warm-blooded human, the music itself. So if TV recordings could take on some of that kind of credibility, they'd produce several desirable side effects, the breakdown of the power question and the removal of identification with underarm deodorants and headache pills among them.

That's about as bright a prospect as I can find, although M*A*S*H and Saturday Night (the one on NBC with the National Lampoon people) are encouraging signs on nonsensical fronts, and the way the public stations have hung on is heartening. I could perhaps be more optimistic about the programming of television if I were not half persuaded, partly by McLuhan, partly by my own feelings, that we may not be able to change this beast even when we think we understand it. McLuhan believes, among other things, that the content is all but irrelevant as long as it is produced with certain understandings (which McLuhan believes are explained in the writings of Marshal McLuhan), and I think he believes that man does not have conscious control of a certain inner glow, fire, in television, something almost approaching free will in the atoms and energy running the picture tube, something he thinks massages the viewer's mind into (in time) a whole new perspective on the world and his or her place in it. How in the blue-eyed world of tinkering Westerners would we ever manhandle such a slippery rascal of a vagary as a massage that arrives visually? How, especially, if our only good look at it so far has come through McLuhan's slap-happy war with the English language? Surely we can agree that he has, at the very least, stirred up widespread suspicion that there is something about all this that is very mysterious.

Not much of what he says is provable in an empirical way, but you do know you feel dozy, drugged, after watching the thing a few hours, no matter what the programming was, and you can feel that its effect on the culture has been different from that of radio (whether you're a night driver or not), the movies, or any medium we've known before.

We are, that is, living in interesting times, and television—silly, trivial, not-algia-recycling, tedious, constant, omnipresent—may turn out to have been one of the most interesting phenomena of those times. It threatens music by threatening our sense of proportion—God knows what kind of job it's doing on taste in general—but realizing that and knowing what to do about it are two different things. One could, I suppose, keep after the networks and stations about programming, keep complaining to Zenith, Magnavox, et al., about speakers, keep banking on the video disc or other technical advances (cable, perhaps) to set the whole mess on its ear, keep encouraging the educational stations. . . . Still, it is going to get worse before it gets any better.

But I do have a sneaking suspicion (there is a perverse streak of optimism in me) that it eventually will get better; the signs seem to indicate that the power of television is going to be decentralized, and that's probably what it would take to make the thing actually start behaving like a medium instead of a hodgepodge of musical and television-silly, trivial, not-algia-recycling, tedious, constant, omnipresent—may turn out to have been one of the most interesting phenomena of those times. It threatens music by threatening our sense of proportion—God knows what kind of job it's doing on taste in general—but realizing that and knowing what to do about it are two different things. One could, I suppose, keep after the networks and stations about programming, keep complaining to Zenith, Magnavox, et al., about speakers, keep banking on the video disc or other technical advances (cable, perhaps) to set the whole mess on its ear, keep encouraging the educational stations. . . . Still, it is going to get worse before it gets any better.
The best kind of loudspeaker is one that plays back the music on the record or tape with the greatest degree of fidelity. The best value is the loudspeaker that comes closest to this ideal at the lowest cost. This is true whether it is the music of The Stones, Coltrane, or Stravinsky. What you want from the record is exactly what the musicians, composers, and engineers put there. Nothing more, nothing less.

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Seventeenth-Century Italian Monody: You've Never Heard Anything Like It

Dipping into that very special musical world of early seventeenth-century Italian monody, English tenor Nigel Rogers and Deutsche Grammophon Archiv have given us a splendid discful of passionate settings of ardent poetry by eight composers who flourished at about the time the foundations for that edifice we now call opera were being laid. Although Rogers' voice may be somewhat limited in robustitude, it is perfectly adequate for this specialized and largely sighing repertoire (tales of love unrequited), and his artistic achievement in handling the complex musical style must be considered a signal victory, one that has been won by very few.

The minute stylistic details through which this music lives and breathes have been well described by Giulio Caccini in the introduction to his Le Nuove Musiche, a collection of madrigals for sole voice and accompaniment. Rogers has absorbed them all, and more: he has also mastered the demanding technical details of the gorgie, the heavy ornamentation indulged in by the singer-composers of the period. Many performers, it must be admitted, sound embarrassingly awkward in this style, and most of them sound no less than silly when performing the notori-

Tenor Nigel Rogers, left, and Caravaggio's chitarrist, below
ous "goat's bleat" trill that is required. Rogers executes everything neatly and convincingly, though you may find that his avoidance of vibrato except as an ornament and his use of a rapid trillo (both historically justified) take some getting used to. At times the results seem more akin to Oriental music than to the vocal sounds we are accustomed to in this modern era, still under the continuing influence of bel canto. But monody is not bel canto, and Rogers' prime achievement here is in sounding so securely right.

The discreet support offered the soloist by the continuo instruments is commendable. It is a particular joy to hear a solid bass line and such a colorful timbre as are supplied by the chitarrone (a kind of double-necked lute beautifully illustrated on the album cover in a painting by Caravaggio). This is one of those rare releases that not only present an accurate reconstruction of long-forgotten performance practice, but are accomplished on the highest artistic level as well. Performances are uniformly brilliant, recording quality excellent. Notes, texts, and translations are supplied, but Archiv has resorted to the lamentable practice of giving no list of works on the record label and, in addition in this instance, of listing the works on the jacket cover in a different order from that in which they are sung. One must count texts to find which side and band offers which selection. Apart from that matter of packaging, though, the record is a triumph. Stoddard Lincoln

NIGEL ROGERS: Canti Amorosi. Caccini: Perdissimo volto; Belle rose porporine; Udite amanti; Amarlili mia bella. D'India: Crudà Amarilli; Intenerite voi, lagrime mie. Saracini: Io moro; Deh, come invan chiedete; Quest'amore, quest'arsura; Giovinetta vezzosetta; Da te purto. Peri: O durezza di ferro; Tra le donne; Bellissima regina. Da Gagliano: Valli profonde. Rasi: Indarno Febo. Turco: Occhi beli. Calestani: Danigella tutta bella. Nigel Rogers (tenor); Colin Tilney (harpsichord, positive organ); Anthony Bailes (chitarrone), Jordi Savall (viola da gamba); Pere Ros (violine). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 305 $7.98.

Previn & Ashkenazy: An Ideal Collaboration
For the Prokofiev Piano Concertos

The first integral recording of Prokofiev's five piano concertos with Vladimir Ashkenazy at his most brilliant and fluent as soloist is reason enough for any record buyer to sit up and take notice, but London's just-released package offers an extra as well: a "sneak preview" of Ashkenazy as conductor. He gives us a very elegant Classical Symphony, the amusing Overture on Hebrew Themes in its original chamber version, and a first recording of the broody Autumnal Sketch, a work dating from the composer's nineteenth year.

However, the main interest in this set clearly attaches to the pianist's performances of the concertos, five works as different from each other as one can possibly imagine, yet unmistakably from the same hand. Let it be said at once that André Previn and the London Symphony provide virtually ideal collaboration, as they did in Ashkenazy's set of the Rachmaninoff concertos (London 231) recorded in 1972. The youthful brio of the First Concerto emerges sparkingly in this partnership and makes for a fine curtain-raiser. In the decidedly more problematic Second Concerto Ashkenazy and Previn make the most of the wild contrasts between the bittersweet lyricism of the opening movement, the dazzling toccata style of the fleeting scherzo, the fantastic intermezzo, and the now eruptive, now unabashedly lyrical aspects of the finale.

The deservedly popular and oft-recorded Third Concerto gets a brilliant and unproblematic reading, Ashkenazy's articulation in the quasi-glissando episode of the finale being one of the high points. The last two concertos each present, in their different ways, performance problems. The Concerto for the Left Hand was written for Paul Wittgenstein in 1931 and promptly rejected; indeed, there was no first performance until the year 1956, after which the work became a regular part of the Prokofiev performance repertoire, even finding its way to disc through a most unlikely interpreter—Rudolf Serkin. That performance, a good one, is still available (Columbia MS 6405), but Ashkenazy here has a clear edge when it comes to volatility, both in the tersely motoric opening movement and the technical tour de force that rounds out the piece. The now-contemplative, now-intense middle movements contain what I consider to be the grotesquerie of the second movement and the ferocity of the finale, but Richter has the edge overall in either of his stereo recordings.

Save for a few minor details of balance (somewhat overprominent castanets in the Third Concerto and an uncomfortably overbearing touch of horn
unison in the third movement of the Fourth), London's recording is altogether splendid. The production as a whole, including the orchestral sides with Ashkenazy as conductor, is essential for any representative library of recorded Prokofiev, and no one who fancies the best in twentieth-century piano writing and performance ought to be without it. Mastering, say, the three Bartók concertos for concert performance and recording is no insuperable feat for today's young piano virtuosos, but doing the same for Prokofiev is a challenge considerably more demanding; it is one Ashkenazy has met in arresting fashion.

David Hall


LES PAUL AND CHET ATKINS: Sublime Time For Two Master Guitarists

I don't recall, up to now, ever having heard Chet Atkins playing the guitar with, so to speak, heart's blood and um... genital heat. He has been for years, and at all times, a highly skilled and impressively accomplished craftsman on his chosen instrument, but he has also been basically cautious. Not only has he never erred, in my hearing, on the side of excess, he has in fact seemed to have an active horror of it.

Les Paul, of course, has never suffered with any such problem. His basically Saturday night point of view and his yahoo personality were always evident in his bombastic playing style. He made several impressive contributions to the development of the electric guitar and, more important, to methods and means of recording it, but as a musician he was too often guilty of mere gimmickery (who can forget all that bathroom reverb?).

It seems almost too good to be true, then, that these two masters of the poet's instrument should meet, jam, flabbergast each other, and dash off to record a superb album of light jazz, Atkins becoming excitingly bold and Paul restrained enough that we can hear how daring his solo ideas really are. RCA's "Chester and Lester" has so many moments that cause both heart and feet to pound that it's useless to catalog them. Get it so you can hear Atkins playing what he wanted to—and Paul what he should have—twenty years ago. The pairing of the two is something very nearly sublime.

Joel Vance

CHET ATKINS & LES PAUL: Chester & Lester. Chet Atkins and Les Paul (guitars); instrumental accompaniment. It's Been a Long Time; Moonglow and Theme from "Picnic"; Caravan; It Had to Be You; Out of Nowhere; Avalon; Birth of the Blues; Someday Sweetheart; 'Deed I Do; Lover Come Back to Me. RCA APL1-1167 $6.98, APS1-1167 $7.98, APK1-1167 $7.98.

Legitimate, No-Fooling-Around, Rock-and-Roll Annie McLoone

Back in the April issue, I was ranting on about the possibility of finding a female rock singer who really was a female rock singer—that is, not just another sensitive folkie or chanteuse, but an out-and-out rocker who could take on the Roger Daltreys and Paul Rogers of this world and at least match them at their own game. "There are a few women who understand how rock operates, though they're few and far between at the moment," I opined, and went on to venture that the emergence of Patti Smith might open the door for other such creatures.

Well, no sooner had my typewriter cooled from writing that than I received a disc marking the recording debut of Annie McLoone—or of the Annie McLoone Band (take your pick; the cover says one thing and the label the other). Questions of nomenclature aside, this is the genuine article: a legitimate, no-fooling-around rock-and-roll woman. Vocally, Annie is vaguely reminiscent of some of the better Sixties Motown girl singers—Martha Reeves, perhaps, or Brenda Holloway—and there will doubtless be Janis Joplin comparisons. Mostly, though, she sounds like herself. She can belt and yet, when she has to, sing quite delicately. This is, however, most definitely a rock-and-roll voice—not a folk
Roy Harper: you're going to just love the tunes

Can't help but notice the wondrous turn of phrase. (Forgive me if I seem to be overusing that phrase, but the distinction is crucial.)

Judging from the cover photos, Annie McLoone has the looks to back all this up. She seems to be a tough, funny, street-wise little kid, perhaps a college drop-out, and something of a floozy. Granted all this may be wardrobe and make-up, but it's tastefully done. She also displays exemplary taste in her choice of material, all of it solidly rock-oriented: songs by Fleetwood Mac's great and vastly underrated Christine McVie, Eric Clapton, Grace Slick, Dylan, Jimmy Cliff, and even Christine Clark's immortal Party Lights, an early r- &- b classic (a knock-out version, by the way.)

Together, Annie and her musicians (an extremely solid mainstream rock band, verging on heavy metal, but with lots of flexibility and a knowledge of differing styles) have made one hell of a fine little album, and the only thing that keeps me from recommending it to you is its production. It's a gas of an album anyway, and one of the most promising debuts I've run across in a long time.

Steve Simels

ANNIE McLOONE: Fast Annie. Annie McLoone (vocals); John Fannon (guitars); Jimmy Waldo (keyboards); Peter Cohen (bass); Denny Carlson (drums). I Want You; The Bigger They Come the Harder They Fall; One Night Stand; Keep on Growin'; Ai Garimatsu; Party Lights; Spare Me a Little of Your Love. I Will Glide; If You See Him Say Hello; I Could've Loved You Forever. RCA APL1-1362, © APS1-1362 $7.98, © APK1-1362 $7.98.

ROY HARPER did the singing on Have a Cigar in the recent Pink Floyd album, and he was the subject of Hats Off to Harper in the third Led Zeppelin LP. "When an Old Cricketer Leaves the Crease" is his tenth album, but it is the first easily obtainable in the U.S. and Canada, and Ian Anderson, head of Jethro Tull and the main force behind Chrysalis Records, is promoting it for all he's worth—at least among reviewers and critics.

Well, Anderson's right; Harper's good. If "Old Cricketer" is any indication, he's extremely good at getting inspired stuff out of the musicians who record with him—the high marks I give this one are mostly for how fresh it all sounds. One can get lost in it and forget that rock is twenty years old and has been cuffed around a lot lately. The lyrics, another thing Harper's supposed to be good at, impress me less. A lot of them, in fact, elude me altogether because of the British penchant for mixing the instruments louder than the vocals. Not that I'd tamper with these arrangements, however; they are, let us say, more relevant to living day-by-day in the English class system than they are to living in ours.

Anderson has been known to compare Harper favorably with Bob Dylan. He certainly does do the wordy dada-hyperbole bit as well as Dylan used to, but he doesn't have the singing voice Dylan has, and it doesn't have the built-in irony-connoting inflections that come so naturally to Dylan's generation. Harper's voice is, when you get right down to it, rather thin, but it is dressed up technologically in several ways (none of which bothers me) and he manages to get by. But you're going to just love the tunes, and the instrumentation and production are going to rattle your timbers—or is that stick to your wicket? (The jacket notes, by the way, tell you a great deal more about the game of cricket than you're likely to want to know, including what "leaving the crease" means.)

Noel Coppage
Ask a friend to introduce you to a legend.

If you're thinking about stereo equipment, probably the single most important influence on your buying decisions will be the recommendations of friends whose judgement you respect.

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Besides two speakers, the 901 system includes a third part: the Active Equalizer. The 901 uses the Active Equalizer to automatically boost power at the frequencies where it's needed. The result is consistent sound output up and down the frequency range, with full, steady high notes and solid, powerful low notes.

Now that you've heard the story behind the 901, we invite you to go to a Bose dealer and listen. Compare the 901 to any other speaker, regardless of size or price. Then you'll know why the Bose 901 has become something more than a loudspeaker system for thousands of music lovers all over the world.

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Patents issued and pending.
MORRIS ALBERT: Feelings. Morris Albert (vocals and guitar); orchestra. Falling Tears; Christine; Gotta Go Home; Come to My Life; Gipsy; and six others. RCA APL1-1018 $6.98.  
Performance: Good  
Recording: Good

Here's some very pleasant sort of drifting, pseudo-Latin guitar work by Morris Albert, including his big hit, Feelings. His singing is utilitarian and not much more, but he can often manage some very pretty sounds. As seems almost obligatory in this sort of repertoire, he writes songs that try for sensuality but unfortunately only make it up to the point of languor. When he does allow himself to perspire a bit, as in Ways of Fire/Boom-bamakoo, the results suggest that it's time for him to move off the low burner and try a higher temperature more often. Nice, passive entertainment, however.  
P.R.

ROY AYERS: Mystic Voyage. Roy Ayers Ubiquity (instrumentals and vocals). A Wee Bit; Funky Motion; The Black Five; Life Is Just a Quoty (instrumentals and vocals). A Wee Bit; ROY AYERS: Mystic Voyage. Roy Ayers Ubiquity and Lester (see Best of the Month, page 73) 

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

The recording is utilitarian and not much more, but he can often manage some very pretty sounds. As seems almost obligatory in this sort of repertoire, he writes songs that try for sensuality but unfortunately only make it up to the point of languor. When he does allow himself to perspire a bit, as in Ways of Fire/Boom-bamakoo, the results suggest that it's time for him to move off the low burner and try a higher temperature more often. Nice, passive entertainment, however.  
P.R.

CHET ATKINS & LES PAUL: Chester & Lester (see Best of the Month, page 73) 

Performance: Disco loop  
Recording: Very good

Electric bass up front laying down a simple, repetitive figure against which conga drums beat a common pattern—sound familiar?

BAD COMPANY: Run with the Pack. Bad Company (vocals and instruments). Live for the Music; Simple Man; Honey Child; Love Me Somebody; Run with the Pack; Young Blood; and four others. SWAN SONG SS 8415 $6.98, © TP 8415 $7.98, © CS 8415 $7.98.  
Performance: Has its moments  
Recording: Excellent

I like this a little better than I thought I liked Bad Company. It doesn't stand particularly tall as an album, but the good parts—Simple Man, Honey Child, Silver, Blue and Gold—seem to be better singles and radio spots than the group has done before. To be fair about it, Bad Company has better vocals than many rock bands, and on occasion they can be inventive with the instruments. The element I can't find much of is charm; the people seem to let, or cause, the conventions of rock to overshadow their own personalities. They don't seem to have set out to take a lot of chances, either. But the handling of sound shows good judgment when they have a tune to work with; the thing starts to sound padded only when they don't have that—in, for example, Live for the Music and the title song. The production (the mix lets you hear the words) and engineering are quite good. I'd like to hear what they could do if they put this much energy into something that didn't stick so close to the pack.  
N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOAN BAEZ: From Every Stage. Joan Baez (vocals and guitar); other musicians. Stev Ball; Natalia; Joe Hill; Forever Young; Amazing Grace; and fifteen others. A&M SP 3704 two discs $9.98, © 8T 3704 $7.98, © CS 3704 $7.98.  
Performance: Lovely  
Recording: Good

Joan Baez, as meltingly persuasive as ever, is back in top form here in a series of selections from some recent live performances. There's nothing really new here, but we do get a gorgeous performance of Please Come to Boston and a Suzanne that will make your hair stand on end. Her audiences respond to her with the same rapture I feel when listening to her—which is to say a lot. This is a lovely album by a woman who couldn't sing an ugly note if she tried, and who gets better and better as the years go by.  
P.R.

BAY CITY ROLLERS: Rock n' Roll Love Letter. Bay City Rollers (vocals and instrumentals). Money Honey; La Belle Jeanie; Rock and Roll Love Letter; Maybe I'm a Fool to Love You; Wouldn't You Like It; and six others. ARISTA AL 4071 $6.98, © 8301-4071 H $7.98, © 5301-4071 H $7.98.  
Performance: Slightly improved  
Recording: Undistinguished

On this, their second American album, the Bay City Rollers put it together for one cut, the title song. Among the possible reasons for this success are (1) that Rock and Roll Love Letter was written by a talented fellow named Tim Moore and it is the only non-Roller composition on the record, and (2) that guest producer Colin Frechter makes his only appearance on the cut and seems to have helped things. The vocals (probably the Rollers' strongest point) are dominant, with Derek Longmuir's drumming pushing the song along at a faster clip than Moore's original. This is a pleasant, competent piece of schlock-rock that certainly should have been the single release. The only other standout of any kind is an entirely unexpected one: Eagles Fly works as a light Southern California rocker à la the Eagles.

The rest of the album runs together into one long harmonic blur. Regular producer Phil
Wainman's work, though improved since the last outing, is utterly undistinguished, and the Rollers' original material (written by Stuart Wood and Eric Faulkner) has at least one glaring weakness: catchy melodies, but weak (read dumb) lyrics. An ideal Rollers album, it seems to me, would consist of about one-third carefully chosen oldies/outside material and two-thirds group compositions. But the band's most desperate need right now is a new producer; it would be interesting to see what Dave Edmunds could do with them.

As for the Rollers being the Next Big Anything, this second album seems like the place to draw a few conclusions. First, merely selling records does not mean, perforce, changing lives. Second, interesting people are rarely manufactured, they simply are. For these reasons, the Bay City Rollers will never be the Beatles. With luck, attention to business, and a new producer, they could, however, be the Dave Clark Five of the Seventies. (Quick, now—who was the DC Five's bassist?)

—Chuck Limmer

PAUL BUTTERFIELD: Put It in Your Ear. Paul Butterfield (vocals, harmonica, keyboards); other musicians, Henry Glover arr. You Can Run but You Can't Hide; (If I Never Sing) My Song; The Animal; The Breadline; Day to Day; The Flume; and four others. BEARsville BR 6960 $6.98, © M5 6960 $7.98. © MS 6960 $7.98.

Performance: Ponderous
Recording: Very good

What Paul Butterfield wanted all along, apparently, was to lead a big, big band. Since those are just plain unwieldy, this puts him at the cool end of the blues, or out of it altogether, because his voice and his harp would seem to be better suited to personal, flexible, smaller things. Here he turns lyrical with Fred Carter's country-flavored (If I Never) Sing My Song and edges now and then into a lethargic near-jazz kind of thing, which is probably inevitable when one is using this U.S. Army approach of appointing twenty men to do something that could more easily be done by five. Ironically, Butterfield's harp—the thing that could more easily be done by five—is not a cool and melodic, Stevie Wonder, pop type of harp, but a gutsy, romantic and semi-raw type. Both it and his voice seem to want to be more emotional than these songs and these arrangements call for. Even so, he takes a couple of solos that sear a little bit. I don't know whether a big band can be made to do what he wants or not, but I wouldn't underestimate him. Let's see how the next one goes. N.C.

CY COLEMAN: The Party's On Me. Cy Coleman (keyboards); other instrumentalists and vocalists. Chloë; Love Will Keep Us Together; Touch Me in the Morning; The Party's On Me; Goin' Back Those Good Old Days; Speak Low; and six others. RCA APLI 1252 $6.98, © APS1-1252 $7.98, © AKPI 1252 $7.98.

Performance: Busy busy
Recording: Very good

This collection of a dozen items—some of them vintage and four of them Coleman's manages to hold together somehow at the pseudo-soul overtones, by Roger Glover. Mr. Plomer's fastidious dormouse, aloof mole, and inebriated newts are suddenly transformed into with-it swingers from a hyped-up part of the forest. Instead of preparing for the butterfly's ball, they get themselves together for it: "Ants and dormice/Open your eyes/Mobilize now! Get yourselves together for the feast and for the ball." And the ball itself, though still set in "Nature's countryside," seems to be taking place in an underground disco establishment with strobe lights. Even so, Glover's fast-moving version, employing a large force of singers and instrumentalists, stands up on its own terms, hard-driving as it is, and should appeal to its own kind of kids of all ages.

Both albums are handsome-ly designed to match the book, and both come with texts.

—Paul Kresh

ROD EDWARDS/ROGER HAND: The Butterfly Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast. Based on the book by Alan Aldridge and William Plomer. Judi Dench and Michael Hordern (narrators); Rod Edwards and Roger Hand (vocals and instrumentalists). This Is the Day; Harold the Herald; Mrs. Dormouse; Old Blind Mole; Dandy Rat and the Footpads; Harlequin Hare; Esmeralda, Seraphina and Camilla; and thirty others. ARGO ZSW 557/8 two discs $13.96.

ROGER GLOVER: The Butterfly Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast. Roger Glover (synthesizer); Helen Chappelle, Barry St. John, Neil Lancaster, others (vocals); instrumental accompaniment, Mike Moran, Del Newman, Martyn Ford, and John Bell cond. Dawn; Get Ready; Saffron Dormouse and Lizzy Bee; Harlequin Hare; Old Blind Mole; Magician Moth; No Solution; Behind the Smile; Fly Away; Aranea; Sitting in Dream; and eight others. UK RECORDS UKL 56000 $6.98.

The Lepidoptera Waltz, etc.
seams although it's constantly fighting itself. With its chorus of lowing voices and the nervous rush of its instrumental arrangement, it's hard to tell whether Coleman's version of "Chloe" has been issued in tribute to the romantic love song of the past or to Spike Jones. A tune as lovely as Karl Weill's "Speak Low" is offered without the tone. Bring Back the Good Old Days flirts with ragtime but never does settle on any particular idiom, nostalgic or otherwise. The Party's On Me comes complete with party sounds, but turns out to be not much of a bash after all. The problem with everything is bigness and busyness—too many kinds of tinkling, clanking, and buzzing going on at once, and everything on too large a scale; too many keyboards straining under Coleman's unrestrained fingers. The dreamy moments of Côte d'Azur, smooth, seductive, and relatively undecorated, arrive like a welcome holiday—but by that time the party is practically over.

P.K.

JESSI COLTER: Jessi. Jessi Colter (vocals, piano); Waylon Jennings (guitar); Larry Muhoberac (keyboards); Reggie Young (guitar); Ralph Mooney (steel guitar); other musicians.

The Hand That Rocks the Cradle; One Woman Man; It's Morning (And I Still Love You); Rounder; Here I Am; Without You; and four others. CAPITOL, ST-11477 $6.98. © 8XT-11477 $7.98. © 4XT-11477 $7.98.

Performance: Stylish
Recording: Excellent

Well, I liked I'm Not Lisa and I still think Jessi Colter is someone we ought to watch. She doesn't seem to have approached her prime yet, as singer or writer, although her singing is stylistically secure and distinctive and interesting. Her voice has that inbred, melancholy quality of Melba Montgomery's, but she's able to convey that it's coming through quite a different personality—and to convey it instantly; two notes and you know who it is. She's married to Waylon Jennings and she performs with the kind of intensity he's identified with; it's larger than life and yet it isn't exactly theatrical.

It's the lyric part of her songwriting that doesn't seem to have jelled yet. I keep sensing a greater awareness than she has actually articulated, and I keep speculating that something is straining to form itself. All My Life I've Been Your Lady is the prettiest thing in this batch, although, again, I think the words are a little more predictable than Colter's lines eventually will be. The sound is good, though; the lady can make a tune, and the people she's hired can play one. This is the kind of effort the lady can make a tune, and the people she's hired can play one. This is the kind of effort you drive a stake beside (since she is—nominally, anyway—a country performer, make that a stab) so you can check future progress.

N.C.

LYNSEY DE PAUL: Love Bomb. Lynsey De Paul (vocals and piano); orchestra. SUGAR SHUFFLE; DREAMS; CRYSTAL BALL; CENTRAL PARK ARREST; SEASON TO SEASON; and five others. MERCURY SRM-1-1055 $6.98. © MC8-1-1055 $7.98. © MCR4-1-1055 $7.98.

Performance: Indelible
Recording: Fair

Lynsey De Paul wrote, produced, and starred in this album. One can only hope that she has a lot of friends (judging by the ramshackle sexy cover pictures of her, she probably does). Perhaps they will enjoy her comic-strip melodrama ("Love bomb is gonna fall on everyone/Only one last solution/To put an end to war pollution...") , her gummy jazziness ("Sheepshodoo Wey Doobee How"), and her just plain hammy incompetence (Central Park Arrest, a song about a policeman who kills someone who fails to halt that is so incredibly bad in every department that it is almost a piece of surrealist-dada art). Ms. De Paul performs...
BO DIDDLEY: The Twentieth Anniversary of Rock 'n' Roll. Bo Diddley (vocals); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. Ride the Water (Parts 1 and 2); Not Fade Away; Kill My Body; Drag On; I'm a Man; Who Do You Love; Bo Diddley's a Gun Slinger. RCA APL 1-1229 $6.98, @ APS1-1229 $7.98.

Performance: Disappointing
Recording: Overloaded

Eugene McDaniels is one of the great originals of rock. He created for himself the mythical Bo Diddley figure, a direct descendant of the Jackstrapper, Little John the Conquerer, Stagger Lee, and other black folklore heroes who can fight, work, make love, and be cooler than anyone else. He is a thrilling guitarist, his single-string chorus on the original Who Do You Love is one of the most exciting in all rock, and his signature "shave-and-a-haircut-two-bits" rhythm figure is masterly in its controlled, sustained frenzy.

Though he flourished in the Fifties, Bo Diddley's career began to nosedive by the middle of the last decade, so that when he was brought back to fame via the Rock 'n' Roll Revival concert circuit a few years ago (he was running a chicken farm in New Mexico), he could step on stage and tell new fans who were barely born when his records first came out: "You are looking at a survivor of what I call the 'rock and roll crisis.' But I'd like to say that I've had eighteen great years in show business." In interviews prior to his return he was quoted as saying of British and American groups of the Sixties who appropriated much of his style: "I opened the door for everybody else to get in. They went through the door and just left me holding it.

He is still, in a way, left holding the door. The problem of recording Diddley since his return is that he is so much of an original that, despite the credit he gets for being a pioneer from the Golden Age, his former work is bound to be considered "old-fashioned." To make him contemporary, his previous label, Chess, produced a series of albums in which Diddley sang "modern" tunes with foxy chick back-up vocals or in which he was surrounded by admiring young British and American players for "all-star" sessions.

His debut on RCA combines the "modern" and "all-star" devices. The first side features the two-part production number Ride the Water, meant to be grandiose and funky. Unfortunately, it's neither. Not Fade Away, written in the Fifties and performed by Buddy Holly, copied the "Bo Diddley beat" and his sentiments. It was imitated in 1964 when the Rolling Stones did the tune. It seems pointless, even absurd, for Diddley to sing it now.

The second side has an "all-star" ram-session medley of three Diddley classics, on which assorted famed names twang and pound, but nothing amazing takes place. The new listener can't celebrate the twentieth anniversary of rock and Diddley's part in shaping it without a knowledge of the variety, folk wisdom, and rich humor in Diddley's best work. Much of it is collected on "Got My Own Bag of Tricks" (Chess 2CH 60005), officially out of print but still available in some stores, and I suggest you get it soon. J.V.

BO DIDDLEY: The Twentieth Anniversary of Rock 'n' Roll. Bo Diddley (vocals); instrumental and vocal accompaniment. Ride the Water (Parts 1 and 2); Not Fade Away; Kill My Body; Drag On; I'm a Man; Who Do You Love; Bo Diddley's a Gun Slinger. RCA APL 1-1229 $6.98, @ APS1-1229 $7.98.

Performance: Good fun
Recording: Muddy

Thousands in England must find life more enjoyable because of Dr. Feelgood, a pretty good rock dance band with a style based on American urban blues and rock novelty songs from the Fifties: Rolling and Tumbling is from the Muddy Waters catalog; Riot in Cell Block #9 is a Jerry Lieber-Mike Stoller standard; Don't You Just Know It was originated by New Orleans' Huey "Piano" Smith about 1958. The songs that the group has written are derivative, which is not surprising, given their influences. I would guess that they even take their name from that of Dr. Feelgood and the Interns, all a black group of the period mentioned who recorded a piece of superior jive entitled You Got the Right String but the Wrong Yo-Yo.

Nevertheless, the present Dr. Feelgood is long on beat and bravado, and "Malpractice" is a lot of fun. The album cover shows them looking ominous and inscrutable—rock dance bands always had a secret giggle about looking tough—but one of the nicer things about most dance bands, and this one in particular, is that they have few bowsey ambitions about becoming dignified. The Feelgoods have pro-

It all started in 1983 in St. Croix, Switzerland where Herman Thorens began production of what was to become the world's renowned Thorens Music Boxes.

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ELPA MARKETING INDUSTRIES, INC.

Pictured above: lower left—TD-125 AB MARK II. (Also available without tone arm TD-125 B MARK II) lower right—TD-115 C, top left—TD-160 C, top right—TD-165 C.

The Accent is on Quality.
"Something rare... a white girl singer who's actually funky."

Maria Muldaur technically qualifies to be called an old folkie, and she has a sound that's superficially old-timey, but she is a thoroughly modern Maria. It isn't just that she's a good example of a divorcée making it on her own in a time when a new kind of attention is being paid to women. There's something else here. If Muldaur feels defensive or self-conscious about riding point in that way, she keeps such feelings out of her music. She does not say between the lines as, oh, Helen Reddy does, "Respect me, damn you," nor does she constantly remind you how sincere and basically unthreatening she is, the way most old folkies do. She seems, at least in performance, to be past all that, able to assume one side of the court and let your best ball handler, your best one-on-one player, make his moves. Muldaur is like unto a good one-on-one player. She has the moves.

It's easy enough to find fault with several of the songs in "Sweet Harmony." The two by Wendy Waldman, Back By Fall and Wild Bird, are fairly tuneless and seem to advertise a profundity they don't actually have—but they do allow for the kind of instrumental and mood changes that, in turn, allow Muldaur to break matters up or fold them over. We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye, by Harry Woods, is not particularly strong either, but it seems just about right for its particular spot in the program; it has a chorus in which the vocal harmonies have to go lickety-split and be precisely enunciated, Dan Hicks-style—and one of the harmonizers there is Maryann Price, a graduate of Dan Hicks and His Hot Licks. (There are, as the title suggests, lots of harmonies here and they are sweet, with the hired help including Linda Ronstadt and Ellen Kearney, and with Amos Garrett singing bass the way he used to with Ian and Sylvia.) The semi-nutty gospel thing by the Rev. W. H. Brewster, As an Eagle Stireth in Her Nest, works only because this particular singer can put a move on you. In the end, the only combination of tune, arrangement, and placement in the album that doesn't work, I think, is I Can't Stand It, written by Smokey McAllister—and even there I may be reacting mostly against the phrase. That's always struck me as being out of joint and too easily dismantled: one can stand it, one does stand it, one is, after all, still here.

Muldaur's funkiness comes more overtly into play in her treatment of something like Hoagy Carmichael's Rockin' Chair, and in the zany-shrewd judgment involved in picking such a tune to record in the first place. She is able to kid the song and at the same time to convey respect for it. It comes out just right, one degree off center or (in the marvelous phrase of an anonymous good old boy quoted in Saturday Review) half a bubble off of plumb.

Well, Muldaur had a head start toward developing this family anarchistic whimsey. She first appeared on the scene in the early-Sixties folk boom, but not with a gut-string guitar and a sheaf of Childe ballads. She was in a jug band, and rather a socially portentous one at that, the Jim Kweskin Jug Band. It was quite well liked around Harvard Square for a time, but the interesting thing about it was the tangled question of where the authority lay—Kweskin, the leader, was an adored follower of one of the in-and-out sidemen, Mel Lyman, harmonica player and early commune chief. It would seem a better place than most for a young musician to learn how to stay loose and not take too much too seriously. Two members of the group, Maria and Geoff Muldaur, her husband then, seemed to me learning how to sing the number-one thing to concentrate on, and today it shows.

Today, Maria has a wild, gypsy voice that can take a good but not great song, such as John Harold's Jon the Generator, and turn it into a swinging, free-form experience—a style that makes even a Neil Sedaka song (Sad Eyes) seem to have some depth to it, and I never thought I'd perceive that in a Neil Sedaka song. She is loose but not out of control, unlike Pete Maravich flying down court on a fast break. Things seem always about to fly apart, but they don't. My latest assessment of all this is that I wouldn't trade one funky lady for a half-dozen of your funny ladies with their straight, standard, blue-eyed jokes, assuming you could round up that many to trade. And who'd have suspected that boop-boop-be-doop could grow up to be something worthy of a Ms?

—Noel Cappage

MARIA MULDAUR: Sweet Harmony. Maria Muldaur (vocals); Waddy Wachtel (guitar); John Girton (guitar); Amos Garrett (vocals); Gary Mallaber (drums); Willie Weeks (bass); JIm Gordon (woodwinds); Linda Ronstadt, Wendy Waldman, Ellen Kearney, Michael Finnegan, Arthur Adams (harmony vocals); other musicians. Sweet Harmony, Sad Eyes; Lying Song; Rockin' Chair; I Can't Stand It; We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye; Wild Bird; Jon the Generator; Back By Fall; As an Eagle Stireth in Her Nest. REPRISE MS 2225 $6.98, ® M8 2235 $7.98. © MS 2225 $7.98.

Thoroughly Modern Maria

Maria Muldaur technically qualifies to be called an old folkie, and she has a sound that's superficially old-timey, but she is a thoroughly modern Maria. It isn't just that she's a good example of a divorcée making it on her own in a time when a new kind of attention is being paid to women. There's something else here. If Muldaur feels defensive or self-conscious about riding point in that way, she keeps such feelings out of her music. She does not say between the lines as, oh, Helen Reddy does, "Respect me, damn you," nor does she constantly remind you how sincere and basically unthreatening she is, the way most old folkies do. She seems, at least in performance, to be past all that, able to assume one side of the court and let your best ball handler, your best one-on-one player, make his moves. Muldaur is like unto a good one-on-one player. She has the moves.

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J.V.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PETER FRAMPTON: Frampton Comes Alive!

Peter Frampton (guitar, vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Something’s Happening; Doobie Wah; Show Me the Way; It’s a Plain Shame; All I Want to Be (Is by Your Side); Penny for Your Thoughts; and eight others. A&M SP-3703 $7.98, © 3703 $7.98, © 3703 $7.98.

Performance: Very good

Recording: Good

Twenty-five-year-old guitarist Peter Frampton made a wise decision when he quit the stale and noisy Humble Pie. He has since become successful, writing and singing I-love-you-baby songs that individually amount to molehills but collectively are... well, not a mountain; more like a steep slope covered by sweet-weed tall enough to hide a few couples at play.

This live album, made up of excerpts from a recent concert tour, contains the screams, whistlings, roars, and cannibal chants of audiences who appear to be more whacked out on those songs that says almost perfectly what it is isn’t embarrassing; never mind—it soon becomes most welcome.

J.V.

GRAND FUNK RAILROAD: Born to Die.

Grand Funk Railroad (vocals and instruments). Born to Die; Dues; Sally, I Fell for Your Love; Take Me; Genevieve, and four others. Capitol ST-11482 $6.98, © 8XT-11482 $7.98, © 4XT-11482 $7.98.

Performance: Ree-goddamn-diculous

Recording: Good

It’s true. They play the instruments better than they used to. Still, as music, this album is the nearest thing I’ve heard lately to the old Edgar Bergen-Mortimer Snerd routine: “How can you be so stupid?” “Well, I got a fella helpin’ me.” The thing seems to make heavy-handed dumbness a paradigm, or maybe it’s still merely a political shibboleth as incompetence in general was in days of yore. Speaking of politics, “Mr. Politician please don’t deceive us, Mr. Politician you’re there to relieve us” is an example of the freshness Mark Farner brings to that theme, and a good enough example of how novel Grand Funk’s viewpoint is generally. About as novel as preachers at a funeral, to get on with the subject of Death, which is what the packaging leads you to believe the album is about. Only the title song is, in the narrow sense of the word—and it would have been better to avoid the theme altogether than deal with it in the insensitive, moon-June way Farner’s lyrics do. It’s all the more depressing since it may refer to an actual happening; the victim is identified as “my cousin” and the cause as a motorcycle accident. There’s a lot said about death indirectly, though, and the whole album seems to have been born that way.

LARRY GROCE: Junkfood Junkie.

Larry Groce (vocals and guitar); orchestra. Old Home Place; Calhoun County; Coal Tattoo; The Biggest Whatever; and six others. Warner Bros. BS 2933 $6.98, © M8 2933 $7.98, © M5 2933 $7.98.

Performance: Junkie fine, the rest poor

Recording: Good

Larry Groce’s hit single, Junkfood Junkie, holds up under repeated playings as one of those songs that says almost perfectly what it sets out to say in a funny and insightful way. The rest of this album, however, sags and descends, band after band, with all of the implausible determination of wet kederhosen on a mountain climb. The Little Old Lady in Cowboy Boots, for instance, is a one-joek idea that seems inordinately long even though its actual performance time is only two and one-half minutes. Overall, this is the kind of album that starts at the top and then goes down-
hill so quickly that one doesn't even hear it af-

After about the fourth track.

ROY HARPER: When an Old Cricketer

Leaves the Crease (see Best of the Month, page

74)

KANSAS: Masque. Kansas (vocals and instru-

mentals). Child of Innocence; It's You, The

Passacre; All the World; and four others.

KIRSHNER PZ 33806 $6.98, © PZA 33806

$7.98, © PZT 33806 $7.98.

Performance: Dank

Recording: Good

Kansas is one of those groups that give what's

left of rock a bad name. There isn't one at-

tempt at a fresh or vital musical idea offered

throughout this noisy, pretentious, self-indul-

gent disaster—only an endless rehash of ev-

everything that's gone on (too long) before it.

"Masque" is pop narcissism at its dankest,

most puerile level.

SPEEDY KEEN: Y' Know What I Mean?

Speedy Keen (vocals and guitar); other musi-

cians. Crazy Love; Almost Eighteen; The

Profit on Ecology; My Love; Nightmare; and

four others. ISLAND ILPS 9338 $6.98.

Performance: Relaxed and professional

Recording: Good

Here's Speedy Keen in a relaxed ramble

around the block. Always the pro, Keen plays

excellent guitar, and what he lacks in voice—

which is a lot—he makes up for in conviction.

His songs fall into the same easy, sus-

sempus, direction, and when he's spinning out

something such as Crazy Love or I Promise

You, he probably gets as close to rock-mood

background music as anyone ever will. Or

should, probably.

KGB. Mike Bloomfield (guitar); Rick Grech

(bass); Barry Goldberg (piano); Carmine Ap-

nice (drums); Ray Kennedy (vocals). Let Me

Love You; Midnight Traveler; I've Got a Feel-

ing; High Roller; Sail On Sailor; Workin' for

the Children; and four others. MCA-2166

$6.98, © MCAT-2166 $7.98, © MCAC-2166

$7.98.

Performance: Boys, you should know

better

Recording: Better than performance

Everyone in this band has been around for

quite a while and knows his stuff technically,

but they all seem to have run out of imagina-

tion. The songs are woefully mediocre, the

vocalist does a lot of hifalutin blues hollering,

and guitarist Mike Bloomfield plays with

meaningless intensity while the band lurches

and churns like a runaway tractor just about

out of gas. KGB, da? KGB, nyet! J.V.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD: Gimme Back My Bul-

lets. Lynyrd Skynyrd (vocals and instrumen-
tals). Give Me Back My Bullets; Every Moth-
er's Son; Trust; I Got the Same Old Blues;

Double Trouble; and four others. MCA-2170

$6.98, © MCAT-2170 $7.98, © MCAC-2170

$7.98.

Performance: Passable

Recording: Good

In the credits (and/or liabilities) here, there's a

to "acknowledge our kinship to the likes of the

Marshall Tucker & Charlie Dan-

els bands." Then it says, "Furthermore, in

agreement with all concerned the energy set

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forth," etc., and what I'd like to know, among other things, is what the hell kind of word is agreeance? Among the other things is why the likes of the Allman Brothers weren't cited, since aping their lead sounds seems to be a large part of Lynyrd Skynyrd's act. Behind that it is different, though, with the "cooking" kind of swamp-vamping you used to hear in Redbone, or behind Tony Joe White. Lynyrd Skynyrd is a tight band, but awfully definite about being a second-generation Southern blues-rocking band—it doesn't seem to try anything that didn't been market-tested in or around the region. Still, it's competent, not hard to take, for all my carp ing, and if this leads some kid to wonder about sources back beyond the Allman Brothers, it's done some good. N.C.

MELISSA MANCHESTER: Better Days & Happy Endings. Melissa Manchester (vocals). orchestra. Happy Endings: You Can Make It All Come True; Better Days; My Sweet Thing; Come In from the Rain; Rescue Me; and four others. ARISTA AL 4067 $6.98, © 8301-4067 H $7.98, © 5301-4067 H $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Very good

Usually you can tell what kind of audience a recording is aimed at, but I can't tell that in this case. Manchester is a tight-throated, in-control throwback to stylish singers of yesteryear—she has style without seeming to have to work at it—and she has a nice, smooth tone, but she seems neither as glib as this material wants her to be nor as intense as an occasional line of lyric and an occasional jostle of arrangement want her to be. It may be simply that it's difficult to write optimistic songs, which these mostly are (she and Carole Bayer Sager wrote most of them), or it may be that she's been Richard Perry-ed a little bit—this album was produced by Vini Ponia, an associate of Perry's. It strikes me as overproduced, yet warmly, benignly so; it's pleasant, but I still don't know any more about Melissa Manchester. N.C.

ANNIE McLoone: Fast Annie (see Best of the Month, page 73)

SERGIO MENDES & BRASIL '77: Home Cooking. Sergio Mendes & Brasil '77 (vocals and instrumentalists). Sunny Day; Shakara; It's Up to You; Hey People, Hey; and six others. ELEKTRA 7E-1055 $6.98, © ET-81055 $7.98.

Performance: Boring
Recording: Good

Sergio Mendes and his Brasil '77 group sound winded, tired, and bored in this collection of background music that gives no hint at all of the brilliant entertainment Mendes used to provide back in the Sixties. Ketchup, and

LAURA NYRO: Smile. Laura Nyro (vocals, guitar, piano); Chris Parker (drums); Richard Davis (bass); John Tropea (guitar); other musicians. Sexy Mama: Children of the Juks; Money; I Am the Blues; Stormy Love; The Cat Song; Midnite Blue; Smile. COLUMBIA PC 33912 $6.98, © PCA 33912 $7.98, © PCT 33912 $7.98.

Performance: Oddly impersonal
Recording: Very good

Laura Nyro, in her singing at least, always touched bases with jazz, but this first album after a four-year hiatus pushes the fascination with sound, the indirectness, the emotional understatement (qualities some associate with "modern" jazz) a bit further. For me, it doesn't work very well. I find it impossible to take through headphones—she isn't strident or harsh, exactly, but there's some kind of dissonance here that seems to make a savage (Continued on page 86)

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breast more savage. At times I wonder if I don't run into some kind of emotional barricade in her voice, or if it hasn't triggered some kind of defense mechanism in me; anyway, I can't seem to get close to it. *I Am the Blues* is a fine song, though, working in an abstract way—what the words say doesn't seem to matter at all—and I enjoy it the way I enjoy the Japanese instrumental thing at the end.

Perhaps Nyro is homing in on some kind of mysticism that suits her. Much of the album, however, is likely to have its words listened to and its melodies, down under all that real cool instrumentation, left uncovered—and much of it, in that context, sounds vaguely like something Joni Mitchell might do better. There are times, incidentally, when there's more melody than one suspected under there, as well as times when there's less. A Nyro fanatic will like all this, probably enough to at least read up on Oriental cultures a little bit. But anyone else might have trouble finding a handle on it.

**TONY ORLANDO & DAWN: To Be with You.**

Tony Orlando & Dawn (vocals); orchestra. *Talk to Me; Cupid; Selfish One; Happy Man; To Be with You; and five others.* ELEKTRA 7E-1049 $6.98.

Performance: *Torquemada time*

Recording: *Garish*

Like the dreadful family down the block, the appalling in-laws of bad jokes, or the gate crashers at a party, Tony Orlando & Dawn can be depended on to lend their ghastly presence at precisely the moment one is least able to cope with them. I was feeling elated and tranquil, having just listened to such goodies as the new Janis Ian (they, of course, have confected one of her songs, *When the Party's Over*, to wriggle through here), the new Baez, and the new Jimmy Buffett. And wouldn't you know that Tony Orlando and his two witting accomplices would turn up and spoil an otherwise lovely day? Yes, they're still at it—with even more elaborate arrangements, hammer vocal "stylings," and dumberness at all attempts at "excitement." Their "hit" here is *Cupid*. To listen to them mangie one song after another is torture of a kind so exquisite that I'm sure even Torquemada would smile.

**DORY PREVIN: We're Children of Coincidence and Harpo Marx.**

Dory Previn (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *The Comedian; Fours; So Much Trouble; I Wake Up Slow; Woman Soul; and four others.* WARNER BROS. BS 2908 $6.98.

Performance: *Soapy* 

Recording: *Good*

Any night now, I expect Mary Hartman to announce that she's inviting her new neighbor to dinner, and the neighbor will turn out to be old Fish-Eye herself, Dory Previn. I can see her now, sitting around the Hartman manse, quietly deploring Mary's consciousness Before It's Too Late. Until that night, I suppose I can always play Ms. Previn's latest caterwaul of vexation, complaint, and masochistic despair. *Wild Roses (Love Song to the Monster)* might be fun (she just knows he's gonna give her the kiss-off over dinner at a fancy restaurant), or *How'm I Gonna Keep Myself Together* (only with the greatest difficulty, apparently) might just add the right note of cheer. If you like this sort of thing, be assured that Dory's still holding the cruel world at bay with her rhyming dictionary and her guitar, and you'll love every lachrymose moment. **P.R.**

**CHRIS SQUIRE: Fish Out of Water.**

Chris Squire (vocals, bass, twelve-string guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Hold Out Your Hand; You by My Side; Silently Falling; Lucky Seven; Safe (Canon Song).* ATLANTIC SD 18159 $6.98, © TP 18159 $7.98, © CS 18159 $7.98.

Performance: *Blub blub blub* 

Recording: *Very good*

Chris Squire's solo album commits some, but not all, of the excesses routinely committed by his parent group, Yes, and by a certain kind of theatrical group such as Genesis. These excesses come together as a tendency, if not an obsession, to make abstract music for which an ideal audience would be computers. It is precise and regular and oddly monochromatic, which should make it approachable mathematically. Singers tend to affect the same semi-frustrated whining attitude toward every song; later you have the feeling that they all feel the same way about all songs. The instrumentalists are programmed to pounce on the dramatic parts and handle them ponderously, and soon you find it's more trouble than it's worth to try to locate just which are supposed to be the big moments. Squire doesn't stay stuck on that; Lucky Sev-
en is treated with restraint instrumentally and a few degrees warmer vocally, and after that there's some orchestral razzle-dazzle with an occasional snatch of melody in it that's quite pleasant. There's just enough mechanical pomp to wreck about half of it, for me, and to indicate that this fish hasn't flopped completely out of the sea of abstractions that in Yes language would have some fancy name like, oh, Topographic Oceans.

N.C.

SUTHERLAND BROTHERS & QUIVER: Reach for the Sky. Sutherland Brothers & Quiver (vocals and instrumentals). When the Train Comes; Something Special; Love on the Moon; Ain't Too Proud; Reach for the Sky; Moonlight Lady; and four others. COLUMBIA PC 33982 $6.98, ® PCA 33982 $7.98, © PCT 33982 $7.98.

Performance: Reach for the warm milk
Recording: Good

A British group that has done a lot of listening to "soft" folk rock as practiced by everyone from Peter, Paul & Mary to Neil Young, the Sutherland Brothers & Quiver are a rather passionless bunch who, with a little re-orientation, could probably turn into the Carpenters. Their proceedings here sometimes get ambitious, but they also often get stuffy and sometimes they're downright silly. Is it really necessary, in a song called When the Train Comes, in which the train is frequently mentioned, to have the background singers going, "Who000! Who000!"? Sorry, kids, I pass. J. V.

SWEET: Give Us a Wink! SWEET (vocals and instrumentals). Action; Yesterday's Rain; White Mice; Healer; The Lies in Your Eyes; Cockroach; and three others. CAPITOL ST-11496 $6.98, ® 8XT-11496 $7.98, ® 4XT 11496 $7.98.

Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Sweet is a pugnacious British quartet that probably cannot reproduce on stage all they do on this record, since it involves voice-pinchings, reverberations, and other whiz-bang stuff made possible by studio technical equipment. (And yet, a previous live album demonstrated that they can indeed do some spiffy four-part harmonizing.) Sweet tends to ambush the listener with surprises, and their material, though derivative, is better than average, especially Healer, which, with the drums miked very close and the guitar playing a catchy riff, is hypnotic. J. V.

(Continued on page 90)

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Gary Wright's
"Dream Weaver"

It says right there on the cover that Gary Wright's "The Dream Weaver" is "an album of keyboard music" produced mainly with various and sundry synthesizers, and as a rule I am rather less than enthusiastic about such things. I do make exceptions, of course: I'm quite partial to a lot of Genesis and Pink Floyd, and I've a few favorite Yes pieces, even though I can't stand Jon Anderson's singing and doubt that Rick Wakeman, poor sod, has done anything truly worthwhile since A Glimpse of Heaven with the Strawbs.

As for the rest, I could cheerfully live forever without hearing Tomita, or Emerson, Lake and Palmer, or most of those cloning hordes of Continentals (in this country, pubescent boys build model cars and airplanes, but in Europe they obviously design and construct their own lavish electronic gear) who mostly emulate British groups who were, in most cases, fairly blatant plagiarists themselves. I might feel differently if I ever got my hands on a synthesizer—I'm sure they're as much fun to play with as any other electronic gadget. But I see no justification for charging people money to hear spoiled children play with their toys, and that's what most of those people seem to be doing most of the time.

Gary Wright, though, is a slightly different story. He's not only a proficient keyboardist, but he is also a capable, experienced songwriter, a skill in which most of the synthesizer "geniuses" fall short. "Dream Weaver" is composed primarily of solidly crafted, intelligently executed pop songs, some with almost a disco flavor, but most strongly resembling latter-day Spooky Tooth, which is hardly surprising. Gary Wright was the main, perhaps the only, creative force behind that group (it started out in 1968 as a sort of cross between Procol Harum and the early Spencer Davis Group), especially in its later configurations.

Spooky Tooth, like a lot of bands, went through a variety of changes, but although they had a fair cult following and most people at least knew what they sounded like, they were never widely popular, probably because they produced only one consistently good album, "Spooky Two," for which Gary Wright composed or co-authored most of the material, played organ, and provided backing vocals. Around 1970 he left the group and released two solo albums ("Extraction" and "Footprint," both unfortunately deleted from A&M's catalog), but he rejoined (reformed?) Spooky Tooth a couple of years later and more or less led the group until its demise. Their later albums were pretty erratic, but all give evidence of Wright's increasing fascination with electronic instrumentation, which has culminated for now in "The Dream Weaver."

Despite the plethora of electronics involved, however, this is not a mere freak-noise record. The many synthesizers are marshaled quite effectively to enhance, not upgrade, the songs, and Man retains control of Machine most of the time, which is as it should be but seldom is. Nearly all the material is bright, catchy, and brief—no song is over five minutes long, most are under four—which helps make this a reasonably interesting record several cuts above the average in both concept and execution.

It's not perfect, of course. The music is extremely well played, but I find a couple of things, the Moog bass in particular, intrusive and irritating. Since most of the songs are so deftly constructed, the few inferior ones seem even weaker by comparison. And I thoroughly dislike the album's cheap science-fiction packaging—Flash Gordon cum David Bowie. Really now, people, this sort of thing has passed for ages!

But my chief disappointment with "The Dream Weaver" is that it simply isn't as good as Wright's previous albums. It is, with all its brisk, up-tempo numbers, similar in mood to much of "Extraction," but it contains no song with the dynamic or emotional impact of "Footprint." Two of the most haunting and beautiful songs I know of anywhere.

None of Gary Wright's compositions have ever dealt with any startlingly original concepts— "We need love to survive" is hardly a novel notion—but with simple, direct language and attractive melodies he somehow manages to communicate his ideas effectively without being preachy or dogmatic. "The Dream Weaver" certainly isn't the art-work he's done, but it does show his capabilities, and perhaps if we're very lucky and the current commercial success of the album's title track doesn't spoil him, the next Gary Wright effort may be his best ever. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

—Linda Frederick

GARY WRIGHT: The Dream Weaver. Gary Wright (vocals, keyboards); Andy Newmark, Jim Keltner (drums); Ronnie Montrose (guitar); other musicians. Love Is Alive; Let It Out; Can't Find the Judge; Made to Love You; Power of Love; Dream Weaver; Blind Feeling; Much Higher; Feel for Me. WARNER BROS. BS 2868 $6.98, © MS 2868 $7.98, © MS 2868 $7.98.
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VANGELIS: Heaven and Hell. Vangelis (keyboards); English Chamber Choir (vocals); orchestra. Heaven and Hell; So Long Ago So Clear. RCA LPL1-5110 $6.98.

Performance: Orffy derivative
Recording: Thunderous

Vangelis composed, arranged, and played "all kinds of keyboards, percussion and sundry instruments" here. Heaven and Hell, the biggie, is apparently some kind of tone poem in the manner of Richard Strauss filtered through Carl Orff filtered through you-name-it. The Orff influence dominates, with thunderous effects and a gummy sort of portentousness inflicted on the simplest musical ideas. Vangelis throws in the English Chamber Choir to chant and mutter whenever his own efforts at sonorous grandeur begin to overwhelm him. Also dropped in at the tag end of the recording is something called So Long Ago So Clear, with lyrics by Jon Anderson sung by Vana Varoutis. No comment is a comment.

Actually, all this kind of thing began with Kubrick's brilliant use of a Strauss theme in Space Odyssey, but that was several years ago. You'd think by now that everyone else would have caught on to the fact that you have to be a Kubrick to get away with that kind of almost hallucinatory grandeur. It would seem that Vangelis hasn't been keeping up with things the way he should. P.R.

HANK WILLIAMS JR. AND FRIENDS. Hank Williams Jr. (vocals, guitar); Jerry Wallace (guitar); Gary Boggis (steel guitar); Pete Carr (guitar); Lenny LeBlanc (bass); Roger Clark (drums); other musicians. Loxin' You; On Susan's Floor; I Really Did; Can't You See; Montana Song; and four others. MGM M3G 5009 $6.98, © M8H 5009 $7.98.

Performance: Good, solid
Recording: Very good

Hank Williams Jr. is no Hank Williams, but he deserves credit for realizing that and trying to find and improve his own voice. He rocks a little more than most straight country acts, doing a better than average job here with the Marshall Tucker Band's Can't You See, and he doesn't try to hide the fact that it's hard to keep this matter of being the son of a legend in perspective (check out Living Proof). His writing isn't as sharp as his eye for other people's songs, but Brothers of the Road resonates much the way truth does—however familiar the theme is, you have the feeling he actually wrote it from experience, from life. His singing style still doesn't seem quite set, although he has the equipment. I wouldn't break my neck trying to get a copy of this album, but it's worth picking up some time when you're at loose ends.

N.C.

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CIRCLE NO. 10 ON READER SERVICE CARD

THEATER FILMS


Performance: Echoes of ancient glory
Recording: Excellent

In the days when the great silent film features of D. W. Griffith were first enrapturing the nation's movie-goers, the theaters where they were shown were actually far from silent. Griffith commissioned composers to write special scores for his films, and the players were played on huge organs—sometimes by full symphony orchestras—as accompaniments to the action. When a revival of interest in old film classics developed in recent years, however, the "original" scores turned out not to hold up so well. For one thing, they weren't particularly original, depending all too often on quotes from The Ride of the Valkyries and the William Tell Overture; viewers often titrated when they were supposed to be gasping in amazement. Into the breach stepped Lee Erwin, who had started his career as a movie-house organist in the days of the silents. Mr. Erwin examined the old scores, borrowed what seemed still of value, and constructed new full-length accompaniments for various silent oldies. His earlier album, "Sound of Silents," offers a fair sampling of what he has provided for silent movies by other directors. In this one he devotes himself entirely to the works of Griffith. The score for America, a movie reviewed in the New York World back in 1924 as "the best picture ever made," offers "au-
Lee Erwin
New music for old silents

authentic melodies of the revolutionary period along with an original "love theme" by Mr. Erwin as an obbligato to the tale of a love affair between a Minute Man and a Royalist's daughter while the entire Revolutionary War is fought out behind them. For The Birth of a Nation, that still controversial super-epic about the Civil War from the South's point of view, the composer has combined folk tunes, melodies by Stephen Foster, and songs of the period with his own inventions to provide the proper ambiance and keep step with the action. The "love theme" this time is preserved from the original score of 1915 by Joseph Carl Breil; the Klan rides again to an original theme by Mr. Erwin. Finally, there is the music for Intolerance, a movie that undertook to illustrate practically the entire history of man's inhumanity to man from the days of Babylon down to the efforts of early twentieth-century industrialists to kill the labor movement. From the 1916 score by Breil, Erwin resurrected a cradle song, a waltz, and a "chicken trot," adding his own ideas and embellishments as he went along.

The results in all three cases sound like models of silent-movie accompaniment—changing moods, rhythms, and time periods with sure-footed smoothness—although it's a bit hard to tell how successful the music really is without being able to watch the movie at the same time. Then, too, there is always that diffident, almost vapid self-effacing quality in these scores as they strive, perhaps too hard, not to call attention to themselves, which makes concentrating on even these relatively brief excerpts a bit hard to do. The music was recorded on the Fox-Capitol Theatre Wurlitzer Pipe Organ (which is not in a theater at all but in the Maryland home of a Mr. Richard Kline, who reconstructed it); the organ sounds just great, but even with all the special effects Mr. Erwin manages to wring out of it, it still sounds, after all, like an organ. The total effect is a program that encourages the mind to wander more than to marvel at what Erwin has wrought.

P.K.

(Continued on page 93)
Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. How are you? I'm not well, so don't go by me..." Frances Faye, raising her stentorian tough-gal Brooklyn baritone as she pounds away on a concert grand, still starts her act in the style her fans have come to expect of her over the years. She introduces the musicians huddled about her on the stand (in this case a small combo made up of bass, drum, and flute) as former husbands, then settles down to the business of belting out songs, abusing the boys in the band and herself, and assulting the customers.

When I went to see her at the Spindletop, a West Side midtown restaurant in New York with an intimate cabaret on the second floor, the "mad gal from Gowanus" was re-released by Bethlehem recently) two marriages (no children), and, nowadays, a house in West Hollywood shared with a housekeeper and four French poodles.

In New York, she spent her days in her hotel room, taking aspirin for her healing hip, listening to soul music on the air (she's especially fond of Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, and Isaac Hayes), talking everything she can recall of her life into a tape recorder, and restyling her moods-the color of her hair ("it's none of your business" what name she was born with) through a spectacular night of everybody within earshot.

Georgy goes with orgy) to the boundless delight of everybody within earshot.

Frances has a tendency to change everything with her moods—the color of her hair ("When you’re young and pretty and Jewish, it doesn’t matter how you wear your hair"), her weight, and, right in mid-number, the very song she is singing. She was a short-haired blonde that evening, looking trim in a kind of spangled black pants-suit that glittered in the spotlight. I noticed that her fans ranged from teenagers all the way to couples heading clear out of middle age, all doting on every belted note and mumbled aside.

When I went to see her after the show, I told her how she had brightened many an evening for me at the Crescendo on the Sunset Strip during uneventful winters in Los Angeles in the Fifties, and I asked why she had stayed away from New York for so long. She explained that a broken hip (it happened when she tripped on a carpet at the Riviera in Las Vegas) had kept her out of circulation for several years but now she’s on the road again-

Helens and Helens go with Georgies (and Georgy goes with orgy) to the boundless delight of everybody within earshot.

"I'm writing it for Simon and Schuster. I'm in business for myself. Frances Faye, it is obvious is her version of Cole Porter's Love for Sale. She's Funny That Way; I've Got You Under My Skin—both done in her recent New York appearance, Bethlehem re-released another of her albums under the title "Bad, Bad Frances Faye." She's in a more formal studio setting here, accompanied by four trombones, a piano, guitar, bass, drums, and an orchestra conducted by Russ Garcia. She doesn't exchange insults with any of them but confines herself to expert, typically brash treatments of the old favorites—

These Foolish Things, Somebody Loves Me, I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate, Frances and Her Friends, and Drunk with Love. And, since her recent New York appearance, Bethlehem has re-released another of her albums under the title "Bad, Bad Frances Faye." She's in a more formal studio setting here, accompanied by four trombones, a piano, guitar, bass, drums, and an orchestra conducted by Russ Garcia. She doesn't exchange insults with any of them but confines herself to expert, typically brash treatments of the old favorites—

"... expert, typically brash treatments of the old favorites..."
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

PAUL BLEY: Alone, Again. Paul Bley (piano). Ballade; And Now the Queen; Explanations; and four others. IMPROVISING ARTISTS 373840 $6.98.

Performance: Haunting
Recording: Excellent

Canada-born pianist Paul Bley has been closely associated with the avant-garde for many years now. His former musical associates include Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman, and Sonny Rollins, and he has been an important member of the Jazz Composers Orchestra Association. In 1972 Bley recorded a solo album for ECM at Bendixen Studios in Oslo, and “Alone, Again” might well be volume two to that one. The Bendixen sound is the best thing that ever happened to piano recording, absolutely fantastic. Of course it helps when the man at the keyboard plays as beautifully as Bley. His music is deeply emotional and brooding, quite romantic for someone once so closely identified with the often neurotic avant-garde.

C.A.

CHICK COREA: The Leprechaun. Chick Corea (keyboards, percussion); Bill Watrous, Wayne Andre (trombones); Joe Farrell (soprano saxophone, flute, English horn); Eddie Gomez (bass); Steve Gadd (drums); Gayle Moran (vocals); others. Imp's Welcome; Nite Sprite; Pixieland Rag; and five others. POLYDOR PD 6062 $6.98.

Performance: Return from forever
Recording: Excellent

What all this has to do with an Irish fairy eludes me, but then leprechauns are elusive. Judging by the short sentences describing each piece here, Corea seems to have had a running theme in mind when he wrote this sometimes pretentious, sometimes thoroughly swinging, but never unpleasant music. Vocalist Gayle Moran is certainly an improvement over Flora Purim, and, although I consider this by no means an album representative of Chick Corea’s considerable talent, it is several notches above anything I have heard by his Return to Forever group. Let us hope it heralds a return from forever. (P.S. Dear Chick, did you have to chew gum while emceeing Down Beat’s awards show on TV? It smacked of... well, let’s just say it smacked.)

C.A.

MILES DAVIS: Agharta. Miles Davis (trumpet, organ); Sonny Fortune (soprano and alto saxophones, flute); Reggie Lucas (guitar); Pete Cosey (guitar, synthesizer, percussion); Michael Henderson (Fender bass); Al Foster (drums); Mtume (conga, percussion). Prelude (Parts 1 and 2); Theme from Jack Johnson; Interlude; Mﳌysha. COLUMBIA PG 33967 two

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discs $7.98, © PGA 33967 $8.98, © PGT 33967 $8.98.

Performance: Skimpy
Recording: Lacks presence

I don't believe it! Not only are we furnished with individual titles for the selections here, but the sleeve information also contains a complete listing of personnel and even goes so far as to tell us that these records were made at a concert in Osaka Festival Hall, Japan, February 1, 1975. That's more data on a Miles Davis album than we have had in a long time. But, quite frankly, I'd accept less data if it meant getting more music. There are moments, especially on Interblad and Theme from Jack Johnson, where more electronic sounds give way to some music, but, as in previous double albums, it's all a bit like a two-pound steak containing a one-and-a-half-pound bone.

HAPPY FEET—A TRIBUTE TO PAUL WHITEMAN. Joe Venuti (violin); New England Conservatory Jazz Repertory Orchestra, Gunther Schuller cond. Coquette; Happy Feet; My Blue Heaven; Changes; I'm on the Crest of a Wave; Sweet Sue; Makin' Whoopee; Nobody's Swindled; and seven others. GOLDEN CREST © CRKSAW 31043 $6.98.

Performance: Too pious
Recording: Excellent

When Gunther Schuller, who never does things by halves, decided he was going to duplicate the sound of Paul Whiteman's band, he set about obtaining copies of the actual arrangements Whiteman had commissioned from such composers as Ferde Grofe, Bill Challis, and William Grant Still. He deployed the forces of the "New England Conservatory Jazz Repertory Orchestra" to cover the entire six-octave range that Whiteman's band was able to manage in its day. And he called in Joe Venuti as "special guest artist" to add to the authenticity of the experiment.

The resulting record offers mainly the sort of music Whiteman had in his repertoire in the Twenties—such hits of the day as Dardanella, In the Mood, Happy Feet, and Sweet Sue; smoothed out in the silky Whiteman manner from bouncy little pieces of the period to musical manikins swathed in the sophisticated evening gowns of luxurious arrangements. Yet the sound is not Whiteman's; it's Schuller's—faster, harder, edgier. A quick check of one of those superbly reburnished Whiteman albums from Columbia containing the same arrangements confirmed this listener's impression that the "inimitable" Whiteman sound really can't be imitated. If the originals, as in this case, just happen to be still available in technically excellent reissues, why try to copy them? And since the Whiteman sound was such a slicked-up one to begin with, perhaps a bit of caricature in the copy instead of all that reverent replication (and over-reverent liner notes) might have been more interesting. The tunes are great, though, standing up well despite the cruel ravages of callous time.

PAUL HORN: In India. Paul Horn (flute); instrumental accompaniment. Raga Desh; Raga Kedari; Raga Tilang; Alap; and nine others. BLUE NOTE BN.1-LA529-H2 two discs $7.98.

Performance: 99 per cent Indian
Recording: 50 per cent mono

Pointing with pride to the Blue Note label's important-Jazz-since-1939 catalog, United Artists continues to give us "Blue Note reissues" of material from the World Pacific catalog. No, it doesn't make much sense to me either. However, World Pacific was a pretty good label too, so it doesn't really matter.

This set consists of two 1966 albums, "Paul Horn in India" (World Pacific WPS-21447) and "Paul Horn in Kashmir" (World Pacific WPS-21445). The music is not a jazz/raga hybrid, but rather, Indian music with a modicum of Paul Horn, who adapts his playing to the form of his Indian colleagues. Thus, it is more for people who like Indian music than it is for the Paul Horn fan, and it is about as far removed from the music normally identified with the old Blue Note label as apples are from oranges. Do I like it? Yes.

C.A.

CIRCUIT No. 15 ON READER SERVICE CARD

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HUMAN ARTS ENSEMBLE: Under the Sun. Human Arts Ensemble (vocals and instrumental). Lester Bowie (trumpet); Oliver Lake (alto saxophone). A Lover's Desire; Hazrat, the Sufi; Arista Freedom AL 1022 $6.98.

Performance: Exciting
Recording: Very good

If you read these pages regularly, you probably know that I often write unfavorably about the sound of such groups as the Art Ensemble of Chicago. But, should you be under the impression that free-form music in general turns me off, let me tell you that this album by the Human Arts Ensemble contains some of the most exciting new music I have heard in a long time—even trumpeter Lester Bowie, for whom I have had few good words in the past, sounds fine on these recordings made in St. Louis some years ago.

Sure, there are moments when things seem to fall apart, but drummer Charles Bobo Shaw revs up and propels it all together again. There is no great individual musicianship detectible here, but there is a collective spirit and drive that more than makes up for any weaknesses. I don't know why the album took almost three years to be released, but I'm glad it has finally made it.

C.A.

IDRIS MUHAMMAD: House of the Rising Sun. Idris Muhammad (drums) and instrumental groups and vocalists. Baina; Hey Pocky A Way; Sudan; and three others. KUDU KU-27 $7.98.

Performance: Repetitious
Recording: Very good

If Idris Muhammad has had any other albums of his own released I am not aware of them, and if he hasn't I am not surprised. Frank Floyd's vocal on House of the Rising Sun is about all I can recommend in this album, most of which is monotonous formula stuff. I have heard some fine arrangements by Dave Matthews, but this assignment obviously did not inspire him—perhaps because Muhammad himself is a rather dull performer who has done better work as a session drummer than he does here. Other than routine drumming, Muhammad's only input here seems to be Sudan, a composition of equal blandness.

C.A.

ESTHER PHILLIPS: Confessin' the Blues. Esther Phillips (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. Confessin' the Blues; Romance in the Dark; Cherry Red; I Love Paris; Bye Bye Blackbird; C. C. Rider; and seven others.

Performance: Very good
Recording: Excellent

The recording is a very good one, and Esther Phillips is in fine form. Her voice is clear and true, and she handles the material with grace and sensitivity. I only wish she had found a way to avoid some of the more hackneyed songs, but overall this is a very enjoyable album.
JUNE 1976

Pablo's house annotator, Benny Green, is remarkably candid in his notes for this album: "I would be very surprised if a single octave did not encompass all his (Joe Turner's) requirements with room to spare...he has a strictly limited range, a strictly limited choice of keys, strictly limited vocal effects..."

Green goes on to point out that guitarist Pee Wee Crayton's tone is flat and bland, that Turner does nothing here that he hasn't done before, etc. He then proceeds to justify the recording of this album, but one has a feeling that what he is really trying to justify is his own involvement as annotator.

Milt Jackson is fine and Roy Eldridge has his moments, but both are available on good albums, so why bother with this remnant of a singer who wasn't particularly exciting to begin with?

C.A.

**RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT**

**CLARK TERRY:** Clark Terry and His Jolly Giants. Clark Terry (trumpet, flugelhorn, vocals); Ernie Wilkins (soprano and tenor saxophones); Ronnie Matthews (piano); Victor Sproles (bass); others. The Hymn; Flintstones Theme; Straight No Chaser; Never; On the Trail; and five others. VANGUARD VSD 79565 $6.98.

**Performance:** Worthy reissue

**Recording:** Good mono

They were known as Jay and Kai, the "in" trombonists of the Fifties, and two of the finest musicians jazz has seen on that instrument. Between 1954 and 1957 they made a series of highly successful records for four different labels, the selections here being their total output for Bethlehem. Recorded on two consecutive days in January 1955, they represent a time when jazz was virtually all acoustical, bop had become respectable, Cannonball Adderley was about to make his record debut, Miles Davis would soon form his famous quintet with John Coltrane, and Hollywood had people believing that Benny Goodman discovered Lionel Hampton working as a performing waiter in a greasy spoon. A lot has happened to jazz in the intervening twenty years, but good music is never really dated, and this is good music—not innovative or history-making, just good, swinging, small-band jazz played by men who know their craft. I am happy to see the return of the old Bethlehem label, but I do wish they wouldn't give us the original liner notes. They are dated, and they're inaccurate as well. C.A.

**JOE TURNER:** Nobody in Mind. Joe Turner (vocals); instrumental sextet including Roy Eldridge (trumpet) and Milt Jackson (vibraphone). I Want a Little Girl; How Long, How Long Blues; Juke Joint Blues; and five others.

**Performance:** Familiar

**Recording:** Fair

Eldridge (trumpet) and Milt Jackson (vibraphone); Ronnie Matthews (piano); Victor Sproles (bass); others. The Hymn; Flintstones Theme; Straight No Chaser; Never; On the Trail; and five others.

**Recording:** Good

**Performance:** Familiar

If you like music that swings madly, if you think a group ought to play together as if they actually enjoyed their work, if you crave performing excellence and don't have an aversion to inspired solos, if you would like to hear a group give new life to a Charlie Parker classic and accomplish the feat of turning a warhorse into a musical delicacy, then don't miss this album by Clark Terry.

C.A.

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95
THE QUARTETS OF FRANZ SCHUBERT

Few events in music are more remarkable than the phenomenal growth of Franz Schubert's compositional skills over the span of the fifteen string quartets he wrote between his fifteenth and thirty-first years. It is a maturation that might be likened to that of a child who began by modeling fanciful sand castles and grew up to design another Taj Mahal. In Schubert's case there is a touch of God-given inspiration evident in the material as the strength and resourcefulness of the human hands that shaped it. They have now found their re-creative counterparts in the hands of the Melos Quartet, whose matchless performances are newly available in a seven-disc release (Deutsche Grammophon 2740 123) of recordings made from 1971 to 1974.

At the outset, in No. 1 (in mixed keys), No. 2 (C Major), and No. 3 (B-flat Major)—all new to me—one is captivated, seduced to slavish attention by the dewy, youthful power that courses through the music. These three quartets date from 1812— which is to say from Schubert's sixteenth year, when he was a student at Vienna's Konvikt (music school). The first of them is a total—if miniature—success, while the second betrays some little concern about direction; shall it be along the path of Haydn, that of Mozart, or the trail Beethoven was blazing even as Schubert bent over these student chores? For a while, it is some of each, a little of all, a gush of productivity no doubt stimulated by the prospect of immediate performance by a family quartet of which the composer was violist.

In the last of the 1813 quartets (No. 10), however, we encounter a work good enough to represent any young master. It was in circulation for many years as Opus 125, No. 1, and accepted as a work of Schubert's maturity until a manuscript discovered early in this century left no doubt that it was written in November of 1813. It is Schubert's first quartet with a scherzo rather than a minuetto, an adagio rather than an andante. Above all other distinctions, it brings to light, in its 2/4 allegro finale, a melodic idea that can only be called "heavenly." It is an inspiration of such simplicity (two half-notes on D and F rise to a quarter on "high" C, followed by a retreat to an eighth on B-flat) that most other composers, if they'd had the luck to invent it, might have lacked the wit to preserve it. Schubert had not only the luck and the wit, but the imagination to lead his discovery through a series of sequences that are as satisfying as they are unexpected.

In the printed (Breitkopf und Härtel) edition the work is noted as "Componirt im 1817" and assigned No. 10. Deutsche Grammophon puts it seventh in its recorded order but retains the numerical designation—which means that Nos. 7 in D, 8 in B-flat, and 9 in G minor (written in 1814 and 1815) must be mentally realigned unless you do a little shuffling. Each, however, has its appeal, especially the G Minor, in which the major-minor changes begin to attain the insistence that would soon become an obsession with Schubert.

At this rate of production—ten quartets in less than four years—the next dozen years of Schubert's life should have produced at least twice as many more. But there are only five more, of which No. 12 is that great single quartet movement in C Minor the Germans call simply the Quartettsatz (D. 703). The shift from abundance to scarcity in the quartet form is accounted for by the enlargement of the Schubert family quartet into a small orchestra of friends, relatives, and professional enthusiasts. As a result, the single symphony Schubert wrote in 1813 was joined—between March 1815 and October 1816—by four others, including the C Minor (No. 4, sometimes called the "Tragic") and the beautiful B-flat (No. 5). In 1817 came the merry E-flat Quartet (No. 11), and in 1818 the "Little" C Major Symphony (No. 6).

For the most part, 1818 and 1819 were piano years for Schubert, the time of a love affair following his acquaintance with a new instrument. Fortunately, Schubert did not believe this commitment had to involve complete fidelity, and so he was able to share his passion with other instruments, most productively in the superl Trout Quintet of 1819. And, of course, there were always songs, dearly loved songs. It was a form of composition in which Schubert reveled and—not unimportant—one whose products were readily marketable.

The almost limitless vista opened up by the early quartets might have vanished tantalizingly into the thin air of the Quartettsatz (1820) had not Schubert decided, in 1824, to undertake a symphony on a larger scale than anything he had so far attempted. Why this should lead to a renewed interest in quartet writing is explained in a letter the composer wrote to a friend outlining some of his recent and forthcoming involvements. Referring to the period since they had last communicated, Schubert notes: "I wrote two quartets... and an octet, and I want to write another quartet... to pave my way towards [a] grand symphony."

The octet Schubert refers to is a source of endless pleasure, and so is the A Minor Quartet (No. 13), which had its first performance in the same month in which the letter was written. But where is the companion piece Schubert says he "wrote"? The one that was to follow the A Minor could very well be the incomparable No. 14, Tod und das Madchen, begun later in 1814 but not finished until 1826.

"...the way to deal with a composer committed to song is to sing."
One can readily accept that turbulent work as the product of a composer thinking in terms of orchestral strings—but the lovely, gentle, introspective A Minor? How could it qualify as part of a procedure that would lead to a symphony? It is, interestingly enough, a question that can be answered in performance, in this case by the extraordinary combination of insight and persuasiveness the Melos Quartet brings to it, fashioning a surging drama of conflict out of the first movement's major-minor vacillations, after which the superb C Major subject is like oil poured on troubled waters. The cantilena leader Wilhelm Melcher draws from his Montagnana instrument in the slow movement is a perfect voice for the embellishments Schubert imposed on the subject he derived from the third entr'acte of his Rosamunde music. And all this is but a prelude to the most telling transformational strokes of all: the deliberate tempo chosen for the menuetto and the careful stressing of the moderato in the finale's allegro moderato designation. All these factors bind the work together and sustain its character from first to last.

With this instance of independent thinking and artistic enterprise as an example, one is prompted to demand a high standard of performance in the very greatest of Schubert quartets, Death and the Maiden. The Melos Quartet does not fail us, summoning a breadth and richness of sound that puts it on a plane with such contemporaries as the Juilliard, the Guarneri, and the Cleveland Quartets and matching the dramatic magnitude of Schubert's thought note for note. The phrasing and molding of the great slow movement with its variations leave little doubt that the quartet knows the best way to deal with a quintessential work by a composer committed to song is to sing. That includes bow pressure (it is like breath in the voice), vibrato (shading of the sung tone), and an unremitting attention to such detail as the reference in the finale to the line "Du liebes Kind, komm geh mit mir" from the Erkönig. How much Mahler was to make of such quotations and allusions! And how much he undoubtedly learned from Schubert's practices when he had the strings of the orchestra he conducted in Hamburg in November 1894 perform, of all possible quartets, Death and the Maiden.

The Melos group's performance of the G Major (No. 15), vibrantly responsive to the rhythmic vitality that flows through the work, is final proof that we can celebrate here the art of the orchestra he conducted in Hamburg in November 1894 perform, of all possible quartets, Death and the Maiden. The Melos Quartet does not fail us, summoning a breadth and richness of sound that puts it on a plane with such contemporaries as the Juilliard, the Guarneri, and the Cleveland Quartets.

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CIRCLE NO. 45 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Performance: Elegant
Recording: Excellent

French harpsichord music, like French cooking, is inundated with so many sauces and frills that it is, at times, almost impossible to tell what one is actually consuming. This is especially true of the music of the late seventeenth-century master Jean-Henry d'Anglebert, whose repertoire of ornaments includes some twenty-five signs, each indicating a different figuration. Add to that the notorious but authentic French practice of rhythmic alterations of the written notes and the freedom offered the performer in the unmeasured preludes, and it is easy to understand why this must be a very special record. D'Anglebert's output consists almost entirely of somber ludes, and it is easy to understand why this must be a very special record. D'Anglebert's output consists almost entirely of somber dance music; even the gigue barely rise to a stately allegretto. Nonetheless, the pieces are elegantly crafted, highly sophisticated, and well worth acquiring a taste for.

Mr. Gilbert, playing an extremely rich-sounding Delin harpsichord of 1768 from his own collection, gives these works the full treatment. He faces squarely up to the overwhelming plethora of ornaments and the ambiguous convention of notes inégales as well as anyone can. Any fussiness and lack of line, perhaps, dubious, and the practice certainly destroys the flow of this graceful dance. The same mannerism also debilitates the virility of the courante. Certainly Mr. Gilbert is to be praised for his research and accuracy, but the result is that all of the pieces come out sounding alike.

BERIO: Agnus; Air; O King; El Mar la Mar; Melodrama; E Vo. Elise Ross, Mary Thomas (sopranos); Gerald English (tenor); Afide Maria Salvetta (singer). London Sinfonietta, Luciano Berio cond. RCA ARL1-0037 $6.98.

Performance: Composer's own
Recording: Excellent

This album, awkwardly entitled "The Many Voices of Luciano Berio," consists of four sections of Berio's meta-opera Opera, the original version of his tribute to Martin Luther King (which later became the second movement of his Sinfonia), and an early work for voices and instrumental ensemble. Of these, the Opera excerpts command first attention. This work, premiered several years ago in Santa Fe, interweaves episodes from the inevitable Orpheus legend (itself the earliest opera subject), the sinking of the Titanic (undoubtedly a metaphor for the state of things), and part of the Open Theater's production dealing with the terminal ward of a hospital.

The Sinfonia is, like Berio's Recital for Cathy, a performance by a singer who is playing a singing attempt to give a performance. Like Recital, it is amusing, full of intentional pretensions, clichés, and jargon but very little actual music; unlike Recital, it does not have Cathy Berberian to put it across. The other excerpts are briefer and more effective: an Agnus for two women's voices and three clarinets revolving around a single pitch, an evocative setting of a Sicilian lullaby; and a setting of a text from Monteverdi's Orfeo in a rather curious style of vocal repetition and instrumental interference.

The original version of O King, written in response to the news of King's assassination, was scored for voice, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano. This is one of Berio's simplest and most successful word/sound/music pieces and is perhaps different enough in the chamber version to warrant the new recording. The early El Mar la Mar, settings of Spanish texts by Rafael Alberti, was written in the early 1950's, on the edge of serialism. Two beautifully evocative movements are followed by a light-fingered atonal scherzo that almost comes off. These works are heard in outstanding performances by Elise Ross and Mary Thomas with the London Sinfonietta under Berio's direction.

The recording of the singing voices seems too laid-back to me, but perhaps that's what Berio wanted. The production of the record seems designed to obscure rather than show off the major interest of the recording. The excerpts from Opera are scattered, and there is a very misleading suggestion that the record constitutes a survey of Berio's vocal music over the last twenty years instead of what it mostly is: a series of very particular responses-almost like studies—to very specific expressive and conceptual impulses of recent vintage.


Performance: Good, but . . .
Recording: Rich and warm

The Israel Philharmonic has a splendid first violist, and both he and the orchestra itself are shown to great advantage in the rich, warm acoustics of the Binyanei Ha'ouma in Jerusalem, which must be a fine recording site. Mehta, however, does not seem to have sold himself on the work, though I would have thought he would have a natural affinity
The Bicentennial Corner

A Sampler of American Music

This intriguing collection, according to the notes, is "based on" a concert given at the University of Washington in 1973 by musicians who were all at that time members of the university's faculty. It is a very thoughtful program, the vocal items interspersed with the instrumental; there are a few familiar pieces, but many more will be "discoveries" for most listeners. In the latter category, the Carpenter and Griffl es songs are especially worthwhile, and I liked Kenneth Benshoof's settings of three Roethke poems and two folk songs (the only recent material here, dating from the Fifties and Sixties). Everything is done with apparent affection and no trace of condescension—the two Carrie Jacobs Bond songs, in fact, are genuinely touching here. Stuart Demperst provides a euphonium obbligato in A Perfect Day, and he and Victor Steinhardt provide vocal assistance in Some Folks. It is all very endearing, and it has been beautifully recorded by Glenn White, who made those fine recordings of the Seattle Symphony ten or twelve years ago. The Washington State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission used its funds well in supporting this recording. —Richard Freed

For it. His tempos are reasonable, his marsha-
ling of his forces is always polished, but he moves from episode to episode with no sense of the sweep or personality of the work, none of the flair he exhibits so convincingly in, for example, descriptive works of Liszt and Strauss. For all its age, I feel the Harold of Primrose and Breecham (Oklahoma) is still the indispensable version. R.F.

BLOCH: America—Epic Rhapsody. American Concert Choir; Symphony of the Air, Leon-
pold Stokowski cond. Introductory comments by Ernest Bloch. VANGUARD SRV 346 SD $3.98.

Performance: With conviction
Recording: Good

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) is known best for a handful of masterpieces reflecting his Jewish heritage, but he was a craftsman of the first order, and many of his works not of specifically Jewish inspiration deserve a lasting place in the working concert repertoire: his Concerto Grosso No. 1 and virtually the whole of his splendid chamber-music output—the two violin sonatas, the Viola Suite, the Piano Quintet, and the five string quartets.

Would that America, written as a tribute to his adopted country, could take its place among the Bloch masterpieces. But, despite the cunning interweaving of American Indian, Negro, and other American melodies of the past, all bound together by a germinal motto reaching fruition in a final choral anthem, the work simply is not a convincing whole.

Stokowski, Margaret Hilfiger's American Concert Choir, and the lamented Symphony of the Air (once Toscanini's NBC Symphony) gave their all for this 1960 recording, and it stands up very distinctly after more than fifteen years. Whatever one may think of its musical content, this disc is a unique document, not least because of the introductory track with Bloch himself speaking to a concert audience about his hopes for America. One cannot listen to this without being deeply touched—and indeed, if the music had measured up to Bloch's commentary, it would have been a masterpiece. D.H.

BOCCHERINI: String Quintet in C Major; String Sextet in D Major, Op. 24, No. 3. Ses-

Performance: Winning
Recording: Warm

The Quintet in C Major is not identified by an opus number because, like the famous Boccherini Cello Quintet in B-flat, it is a synthetic work, in this case compiled by Johann Christo-
ph Lauterbach (1832-1918) from no fewer than five separate Boccherini quintets (the Menuet and Trio are from different works). It is a flavorful concoction, not otherwise adul-
terated (as Grützmacher's arrangement of the Cello Concerto is); the especially ingratiating final Rondo, taken from Op. 37, No. 7, is one of the pieces Jean Francaix orchestrated for his ballet Scuolo di Ballo. The performance here is a much more engaging one than the only other known to me—by the Stradivari Quartet and Harvey Shapiro on the same label (MHS 694)—and the warm sonic frame enhances the spirit of good cheer emanating from the performances.

The Sextet does not appear to have been recor-
ded before; it is a very worthwhile discovery, with an especially interesting Menuet (set off by one of Boccherini's "Spanish" trios) and a particularly dashing finale. A most enjoy-
able release, whetting the appetite for more.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BRAHMS: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77. Nathan Milstein (violin); Vienna Philhar-
monic Orchestra, Eugen Jochum cond. DEUT-
SCHER GRAMMOPHON 2530592 $7.98. © 3300592 $7.98.

Performance: Sinewy
Recording: Very good

Nathan Milstein is now more than seventy years old and conductor Eugen Jochum is two years his senior, but, believe me, this is no old men's performance. Indeed, some hearers may complain of its lack of sentiment. I myself lean toward the musical views espoused here, which I find essentially in accord with those of Szegeti and Sir Hamilton Harty in their classic 1928 recording. Sinewiness in this context does not mean briskness. It does mean enormous tensile strength of phrase, tremendous rhythmic surge—Jochum contrib-
utes greatly here—and an eschewing of the obviously sentimental. Take care of the archite-
cture and the phrasing of the melodic line, and the sentiment will take care of itself. Not that this is a cold performance. There is plenty of warmth in Milstein's exquisite molding of the pieces Jean Francaix orchestrated for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Eugen Jochum cond. DEUT-
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Recording: Very good

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SCHER GRAMMOPHON 2530592 $7.98. © 3300592 $7.98.
STEREO REVIEW

CHABRIER: Villa-Lobos) Harp and Chamber Orchestra, Op. 93 (see CAS I ELNUOVO-TEDESCO: and not really informative. to the liner notes, which are wordy, rambling, with great precision and tonal sheen. gel, and all receive topnotch engineering as-
tion behind them. Nearly three hours of them, and the arrangements manage to sound sim-
jects of German lore, the songs are lovely, lieder
delicacy. My current comparison disc is Clau-
realization of this music-in a word, its
recordings, what is really indispensable to full
involvement with the music, and the result is

Performance: Loving and enjoyable
Recording: Excellent
For a composer endowed (and burdened) with
Brahms' acute sense of self-criticism, even the simplest song had to be a refined work of
art. We can therefore take it for granted that
great care went into the folk-song arrange-
ments that occupied Brahms from early youth
to late maturity. This elegantly produced al-
bume offers all fourteen of the Volkskinderlied-
der dedicated to the Schumann children in 1858, nine of the fourteen choral songs from 1864, and forty-two of the forty-nine Volks-
lieder published by Simrock in 1894.
Ranging over themes of love, nature, faith,
kinship, the hunt, and other familiar sub-
jects of German lore, the songs are lovely,
and the arrangements manage to sound sim-
ple, concealing the great art and sophistica-
tion behind them. Nearly three hours of them, however, make for exhausting listening-I
recommend small helpings for optimum nour-
ishment. The performances are exemplary: Edith Mathis and Peter Schreier sing with
unaffected simplicity, endowing these songs with tenderness and flowing lyricism. They
are sensitively supported by pianist Karl En-
gel, and all receive topnotch engineering as-
istance. The Leipzig Radio Chorus sings with great precision and tonal sheen.
My reference to the "elegant production"
pertains to the artistic layout, complete texts, and attractive illustrations; it does not extend to
the liner notes, which are wordy, rambling, and not really informative.

G.J.

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Concertino for Harp and Chamber Orchestra, Op. 95 (see VILLA-LOBOS)

CHABRIER: Trois Valses Romantiques (see SAINT-SAENS)

CHOPIN: Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28; Ber-

Performance: Hard
Recording: Very good

CHOPIN: Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28; Prelu-
date Major, Op. Posth. Murray Perahia (pi-
tiano). COLUMBIA M 33507 $6.98.

Performance: Extrovert
Recording: Good

Nothing Alicia de Larrocha does can be with-
out interest, but that quality tends rather to di-
minish as this sequence of preludes unfolds, and the sheer excitement of the last of the
twenty-four does not compensate for the hard-
ness and lack of variety in what has gone before. There is a good deal of beautiful play-
ing, but a good deal, too, that seems simply relentless, and, with all too few exceptions
(like a performance of No. 15 is one), the music simply isn't given a chance to breathe.
Perahia, too, who has shown himself so ex-
ceptionally sensitive in all of his earlier re-
cordings, is disappointing here in his unex-
pectedly extrovert approach, given to muscu-
larity and overamplification where one wants delicacy. My current comparison disc is Clau-
dio Arrau's (Philips 6500.622), which offers the same program as Perahia's. While both
Larrocha and Perahia (uncharacteristically, perhaps) seem content here with insistent
driving vigor, there is a world of subtlety in
Arrau's phrasing and dynamics; Arrau pro-
vides just what is missing in these two newer
recordings, what is really indispensable to full
realization of this music-in a word, its
poetry.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DUFAY: Messa Ave Regina Coelorum. Cle-
menic Consort, Rene Clemencic cond. Har-
MONIA MUNDI HMU 985 $7.98 (from HNH
Distributors Ltd., P.O. Box 222, Evanston, Ill. 60201).

Performance: Exciting
Recording: Splendid

Although Guillaume Dufay employed the
Gregorian Ave Regina Coelorum as the basis
for this Mass, the spirit of the chant has very
little to do with the magnificence of fifteenth-
century Burgundian polyphony. Dufay en-
thusiasts used to hearing this master's Masses
performed a cappella with discreet use of a
few instruments will certainly be startled by
Clemencic's bold concept of this work. An
ensemble of three countertenors, tenor, and
bass is supported (if not actually over-
whelmed) by two bombardes, two sackbutts,
trumpet, viola, lute, organ, and kettledrums,
and many sections are played by instruments

alone. The delicate duets and trios, shared by
various singers, vielle, and lute, are contrast-
ed with the exciting sonorities of the entire
ensemble. Taking contemporary accounts
that "during the customary pause in the sing-
ing, the kettledrums and wind instru-
ments are sounded" to heart, Clemencic has
added striking fanfares to such places as the
finale cadence of the Gloria and during the held
chords of the Credo. The purist may raise his
eyebrows, but the results are stunning. Here,
then, is a performance that stresses the secu-
lar ceremonial splendor of Dufay's music mo-
tility in splendid churches as opposed to
mystic monks meditating the mysteries of the
unknown. Approve or disapprove, this disc
will certainly cause one to reconsider the
fifteenth-century Mass.

S.L.

ELGAR: Symphony No. 2, in E-flat Major,
Op. 63. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir
Georg Solti cond. LONDON CS 6941 $6.98.

Performance: Superb
Recording: Very fine

The Elgar Second Symphony, with its luxuri-
ant and completely textured outer movements,
can prove tough going on initial hearing. But
gradually, through an understanding of the in-
ner movements, one comes to realize that El-
gar's themes, embedded in the Richard Straus-
sonian exuberance of the opening move-
ment, are not as important in themselves as
they are in terms of what happens to them
throughout the whole of the symphony. The
theme associated with the epigraph from
Shelley, "Rarely, rarely comest thou, Spirit of
Delight" recurs in somewhat the same vi-
sonary, almost hallucinatory fashion as the
great tune with which Elgar begins his First
Symphony. An assertive figure becomes the
basis for the slow-movement main theme,
while a slow undulating theme gravitating in
downward progression, which seems in the
first movement like a mere clouding of a pre-
dominantly bright harmonic atmosphere, not
only becomes the basis for the scherzo, but
assumes in the terrific central section a
guise of absolute evil. The very last pages of
the finale, which bring the main themes
together in a Brahmsian sunset glow, include
some of the most moving and masterly music
in the Elgar testament.

Sir Georg Solti and the London Philhar-
monic have given this music a realization of
surpassing brilliance and passionate vitality,
matched in my opinion only by the earliest
of Sir Adrian Boult's recordings (done with the
BBC Symphony in 1945 and regrettably never
issued in LP format). Elgar himself recorded
the Second in 1927, and Solti hews close to
the composer's own basic tempo. Add to this
Solti's virtuosic flair and clearly impassioned
involvement with the music, and the result is
the kind of performance this score needs-
crystal-clear exposition of its architecture and
polyphonic interweavings, fiery rhythmic
impulse, phrasing that grows naturally out of hu-
man organic roots-and, of course, this vir-
tuoso ensemble can respond instantly and un-
tiringly to the demands placed upon it. Inter-
pretive self-indulgence is fatal to this music;
there is none here.
Fine as London's recording is-and it is
very fine in this instance-I have one tiny res-
ervation about the sonic realization of this
music: a curious lack of expansiveness in the
major climaxes. This small reservation aside,
however, this is a great record of a fascinating late-Romantic masterpiece.

FRANCK: Symphony in D Minor (see The Basic Repertoire, page 46)


Performance: Good
Recording: Mostly good

Reinhold Glière (1876-1956) is for many of us associated with the musical culture of the Soviet era, but his best-known large-scale work, Ilya Murometz, is actually a product of the Tsarist epoch, having had its world premiere in March of 1912 in Moscow. It takes the form of a massive narrative symphony built around legendary exploits of Ilya of Murom which were handed down in ancient folk tales (we would call them “tall stories”) known as bylina. The musical language in which Glière has clothed the adventures of this Russian Paul Bunyan might best be described as Rimsky-Korsakov with post-Wagnerian trimmings, which makes for a great orchestral showpiece.

Nathan Rakhlin is one of Russia’s foremost conductors of the post-World War II era, and his reading is noteworthy for both musical and dramatic coherence. While he gives all his reading is noteworthy for both musical and dramatic coherence. While he gives all

HAYDN: Divertimento in C Major for Piano, Strings, and Two Horns (Hob. XIV/4); Piano Concerto in D Major (Hob. XVIII/2); Piano Concerto in F Major (Hob. XVIII/3); Piano Concerto in G Major (Hob. XVIII/4); Piano Concerto in G Major (Hob. XVIII/9); Piano Concerto in D Major (Hob. XVIII/11). Ilse von Alpenheim (piano); Bamberg Symphony, Antal Dorati cond. Vox QSVBX 5136 three discs $10.98

Performance: Past and dry
Recording: Thin

HAYDN: Piano Concerto in D Major (Hob. XVIII/11); Piano Concerto in G Major (Hob. XVIII/4). Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano); Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Edmond de Stoutz cond. ANGEL S-37136 $6.98

Performance: Heavy
Recording: Tubby

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT
HAYDN: Harpsichord Concerto in D Major (Hob. XVIII/11); Overture in D Major (Hob. 1a/7). J. C. BACH: Harpsichord Concerto in A Major. George Malcolm (harpsichord); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner cond. LONDON STS 15172 $3.49

Performance: Sparkling
Recording: Clear and crisp

The kindest thing one can say about Haydn’s concertos is that the genre does not bring out his best. More bluntly, with the exception of the well-known concertos in G and D Major, they are downright silly and not worth bothering with. The omnivorous Vox Box, however, has found new fodder in this dubious repertoire and presents the Viennese pianist Ilse von Alpenheim (Mrs. Antal Dorati) in six concertos. Her approach is an expedient one: play as fast as you can. Thus, in the fast movements she eliminates all musicality and sounds like a machine. Her slow movements are better, but she doggedly shuns the rubato so necessary for the style. The best parts of this album are the charming cadenzas for the aforementioned Concertos in D and G Major. I wonder who wrote them.

On the other side of the coin we are offered an assault on the D and G Major concertos by Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. His playing is on a Lisztian scale that quite destroys the original quality of these fragile works. This is bolstered by a thick sounding orchestra best suited for a Brahmsian or Tchaikovsky concerto. If one accepts this style, these are fine performances. However, the tediously pompous cadenzas by Nino Rota (for the G Major Concerto overweight the work by sheer length and are rivaled only by the absurdly spastic anonymous cadenzas of the D Major Concerto. Although the D Major Concerto

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void where prohibited by law.


Performance: Good
Recording: Good

Ives' Holidays Symphony is a kind of orchestral suite of what they used to call characteristic pieces: Washington's Birthday, Decoration Day, The Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving, one each for the rites of each of the seasons. Thanksgiving, now usually placed last, was first done in 1904 (it grew out of earlier organ music); the others were written between 1909 and 1913 at the peak of Ives' creativity. Ives himself could never make up his mind as to whether the four works really constituted a whole. One worry was that the earlier Thanksgiving did not quite belong with the others. But, in fact, if anything pulls it all together, it is Thanksgiving, music that is outstanding for its intensity and spirituality. The hymn-tone entrance of the chorus (how typical of Ives to have a chorus sitting around all night just to sing a few bars—but what a few bars!) is one of the most shocking and moving moments in orchestral literature. The real weakness of Holidays is in the similarity of the first three pieces. They all follow a typically Ivesian pattern of a moody slow opening followed by a build-up to a smashing, dancing explosion of one kind or another; there is always a short, quiet, moving coda that dissipates the energy into the night. Washington's Birthday is a cold New England winter landscape melting into a barn dance to end all barn

FRANK MARTIN (1890-1974)
Handsome works, distinguished performances

STEREO REVIEW

The New Basic Repertoire
STEREO REVIEW again presents the annual revision of the Basic Repertoire. In pamphlet form, it includes 1976 disc and tape recommendations for 175 standard musical works. For your copy, send $25 in coin, plus a stamped, self-addressed No. 10 envelope (9 ½ x 4 ½ in.), to Esther Mal- donado, STEREO REVIEW, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

best on the piano, George Malcolm turns in a sparkling performance of the work on the harpsichord. This is a witty reading filled with marvelously outrageous decorations and finished off with Haydn's own cadenzas. The orchestral accompaniments are crisply played, and a clear sound is achieved through the proper Classical balance of winds and strings. The Haydn Overture in D Major is also superbly performed, and listening to it reminds us, after all those concertos, that Haydn was indeed a top-drawer composer. His weakness in the concerto genre is emphasized by the Bach concerto that Malcolm includes on his disc. Despite the dubious authenticity of the A Major Concerto (I believe it was written by the young J. C. Bach under his brother's tutelage), it is a strong work, and it is sensitively played here. S.L.
dances. Decoration Day is another masterpiece: a loving, moving in memoriam, taps and all, followed by the damndest quickstep explosion you ever heard. After this The Fourth of July is bound to be anticlimactic. Ives could push a good thing just a little too far—too many tunes, too many beers, too many firecrackers, too much celebration altogether. But then there is Thanksgiving.

These performances and recordings are good, but I have one or two reservations. Ormandy lacks something in exuberance at the big "up" moments. And I think the close mixing of one or two of the special instruments—notably the jew's-harp in Washington's Birthday and the celeste in Thanksgiving—is overdone. Outside of that, hurray for Ives! E.S.

MARTIN: Concerto for Seven Wind Instruments, Timpani, Percussion, and String Orchestra; Etudes for String Orchestra. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet cond. LONDON STS-15270 $3.98.

Performance: Authoritative
Recording: Good

Ansermet was a distinguished advocate for the music of the late Frank Martin, and this disc is especially welcome in the continued absence of any other recording of either of these handsome works. The slow movement of the concerto is especially effective here, the sound (dating from 1962 or earlier) is good enough, and the production carries the imprimatur of the composer in the form of his own annotation. Until RCA reinstates Jean Martinon's superb Chicago recording of the concerto and Philips reissues the excellent one of the études by I Musici—and neither gesture seems very likely, unfortunately—this inexpensive STS package is a most attractive proposition.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: Six Notturnos (K. 346, 436, 437, 438, 439, 549); Five Divertimentos (K. 439b, I-V); Twelve Duets for Two Horns (K. 487). Elly Ameling and Elisabeth Cooymans (sopranos), Peter van der Bilt (baritone); members of the Netherlands Wind Ensemble. PHILIPS 6747 136 two discs $13.96.

Performance: Outstanding
Recording: Ideal

This set has been dubbed "Mozart Miniatures": the six notturnos are short vocal trios (set to Metastasio texts) with clarinet and bassett horn accompaniments, the five divertimentos are scored for the combination of three bassett horns only, and the twelve duets (ranging from less than a minute to three minutes in length) are for two horns.

For all the skill and invention expended on them, it is hard to take these unpretentious trifles seriously; I doubt that Mozart did. He probably dashed them off in the instant of inspiration. Just the same, they are eminently enjoyable in small portions.

I recommend this set as a gift to Mozart lovers who think they have everything by their favorite composer. The singing is delicate and admirably harmonious, the playing is virtuosic and (virtually) flawless, and the recorded sound is immaculate.

G.J.

POULENC: Sonata for Two Pianos (see RACHMANINOFF)

(Continued overleaf)

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CIRCLE NO. 26 ON READER SERVICE CARD

JUNE 1976 105
PROKOFIEV: Peter and the Wolf (see SAINT-SAËNS)

PROKOFIEV: Piano Concertos Nos. 1-5; Autumnal Sketch, Op. 25; Overture on Hebrew Themes, Op. 34 (see Bed of the Month, page 72)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT


Performance: Gripping
Recording: First-rate


Performance: Bright
Recording: Good

The young Rachmaninoff’s First Suite for Two Pianos, subtitled “Fantasy” and complete with programmatic titles (Barcarolle, A Night for Love, Tears, and Russian Easter) is music drenched in adolescent romantic sensibility. There are Lisztian influences in evidence, particularly in the nightingale evocations of the second movement. The Rachmaninoff of the Second Suite was seven years older and finishing off his Second Piano Concerto. Here the virtuoso is much more to the fore, and the music as a whole is more outer-directed. I particularly like the gorgeously stylized second-movement waltz and the stunning tarantella finale.

The team of Ashkenazy and Previn offers virtually ideal performances of both works—“gripping” is the word that applies here—and I was completely caught up in the magic of the playing and the music. London’s recording is superb.

The young Gordons, a husband-and-wife team, respond more effectively to the contrasted mock-gravity and sauciness of Poulenc than to the romanticism of Rachmaninoff. A hearing of the funeral coda of the Tears movement should be enough to prove the point. Klavier’s recording is bright and full-bodied; though one is more aware of room coloration here than on the London disc, this factor is not unduly obtrusive. D.H.

RAVEL: Boléro; Rapsodie Espagnole; La Valse; Ma Mère l’Oye (complete ballet); Menuet Antique; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Daphnis et Chloé (complete); Valses Nobles et Sentimentales; Alborada del Gracioso; Une Barque sur l’Océan; Pavane pour une Infante Déflue. Tanglewood Festival Chorus (in Daphnis); Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seiji Ozawa cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2711 015 four discs $31.92.

Performance: Brilliant, sometimes hard
Recording: Mostly excellent

RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

RAVEL: Ma Mère l’Oye (complete ballet); Tzigane; Valses Nobles et Sentimentales. Itzhak Perlman (violin, in Tzigane only); Orchestre de Paris, Jean Martinon cond. ANGEL S-37149 $6.98, © 8XS-37149 $7.98, © 4XS-37149 $7.98.

RAVEL: Le Tombeau de Couperin; Pavane pour une Infante Déflue; Alborada del Gracioso; Menuet Antique; Une Barque sur l’Océan. Orchestre de Paris, Jean Martinon cond. ANGEL S-37150 $6.98, © 8XS-37150 $7.98, © 4XS-37150 $7.98.

Performances: Superb
Recordings: Rich

The late Jean Martinon’s Ravel cycle on Angel is complete now, except for a final disc of the two piano concertos with Aldo Ciccolini, which will be along shortly and is, in any event, rather outside the context of the “complete orchestral works.” Two of Seiji Ozawa’s four discs have been available individually for some time, and the other two, presumably, will be issued on their own in due course. In the meantime, DG’s release of the boxed set is stimulus for going through the entire cycle with both conductors, and doing this confirmed my nagging feeling that I had overpraised Ozawa’s Daphnis et Chloé when it was issued on DG 2530 563, and undervalued the level of the Orchestre de Paris’ playing for Martinon on Angel S-37148. Ozawa’s Daphnis is “individualized” chiefly by way of a very streamlined approach that is exciting, but also rather hard and inflexible, with little of the highly appropriate sumptuousness Martinon allows. Ozawa is more convincing in most of the other works than he is in Daphnis, but Martinon maintains a remarkably high level throughout his four discs.

While Boulez, Monteux, Skrowaczewski, or Bernstein may have a bit of an edge in this or that particular work, Martinon’s Ravel cy-

(Continued on page 108)
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SCHUBERT: Complete Quartets (see Choosing Sides, page 96)

SEVERAC: Le Soldat de Plomb (see SAINT-SAENS)


Performance: Overindulged

Recording: Excellent

This is a sumptuous performance, sumptuously recorded, but I wonder if unrelied sumptuousness is really what the Sibelius Concerto calls for. There are moments, to be sure, in which the work opens out for all the world like the most impassioned of romantic virtuoso concertos, but these moments are set off against a background of frosty colors and lean textures. There is just no leaness here, no reticence where it might help. It is all very intense, with slower tempos than the work can sustain without sacrificing its nobility (in the first movement) and its excitement (in the last). The Beethoven Romances, all but un

(Continued on page 110)
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known a couple of decades ago, are rather overexposed now and stand up even less well under the hyper-intense treatment they are given here. For gorgeous fiddling, it is an impressive display, and DG's orchestral sound is exceptional in its clarity (though Zukerman is a little too much in the spotlight for ideal balance), but more satisfying is Sibelius may be had more economically in the form of the recently reissued Francescatti/Bernstein recording (Odyssey Y 33522) or in any of a half-dozen other versions. R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

J. STAMITZ: Symphony in G Major; Sinfonia Pastorale in D Major, Op. 4, No. 2; Symphony in D Major, Op. 3, No. 2; Clarinet Concerto in B-flat Major. Alan Hacker (clarinet); Academy of Ancient Music, Christopher Hogwood cond. L'Oiseau-Lyre DSLO 505 $6.98.

Performance: Vibrant
Recording: Bright and clear

Johann Stamitz, not to be confused with his two sons Carl and Anton whom Mozart referred to as "two wretched scribblers," was the founder of the celebrated Mannheim Orchestra. The Berlioz of his day, he introduced such startling instrumental effects as the Mannheim steamroller, the Mannheim sigh, and the Mannheim rocket and he made use of orchestral diminuendos and crescendos—all taken for granted today, but quite novel in the mid-eighteenth century. Although every college course in music history dwells at length on the Mannheim School, its glory has not, in the past, been convincingly documented by the record industry. That situation is now remedied. The Academy of Ancient Music has not only caught the glory of Mannheim but it has also caught its sound by using authentic instruments and revitalized its excitement through vigorous performance.

The Academy of Ancient Music, named after Dr. Pepusch's venerable society circa 1725, is a group of about twenty-five players of old instruments which duplicates, with astonishing accuracy, a typical but excellent orchestra of the late eighteenth century. It must be realized that most research on and usage of old instruments today has been devoted to music of the Baroque era or earlier. Few musicians realize that the late eighteenth century was a period of difficult transition to the modern instruments we play today. This orchestra, that of Mozart and Haydn, is unique. Also unique is Alan Hacker's Miller clarinet. The ensemble sound is a bit raucous with its preponderance of snarling woodwinds, white strings, and bleating horns, but what it lacks in homogeneity of sound is balanced by the clarity of the inner parts. True, there are certain problems of intonation involved with old instruments, but the striking sound and straightforward performance here more than compensate for any roughness. This album, then, is a milestone in historically oriented performance of Classical and pre-Classical music. It brings to light, in a most enjoyable way, the innovations of the Mannheim School and the joyous sound of the Classical orchestra which is, after all, the basis of most of the music we hear today.

S.L.


Performance: Brilliant
Recording: Impressive

I'm not about to turn in my two-channel Karajan and Haitink recordings of Zarathustra, but Ormandy's RCA Quadri-disc does offer its own special enticements, including a brilliance of orchestral performance in general and of string playing in particular that recalls Koussevitzky's Boston Symphony in its path-breaking recording of forty years ago.

RCA's quadraphonic disc still plays back at a lower level than the two-channel norm, but the orchestral sound generally seems more vivid and less washed-out than was the case with the earliest CD-4 discs. The frontal spread and depth perspective are altogether splendidious, while the back channels contribute a highly effective sense of space and semi-surround throughout the performance. And in the muted motival fragments in the muted brass which succeed the great opening sunrise episode, the mix (at least as heard on my equipment) achieves an effect whereby the "muttering" appears to be coming from nowhere—the nowhere in this instance being...
the rear channels. In the Convalescent episode also (at the beginning of side two), the "surround" element was very evident on my equipment, particularly in the French horns.

D.H.

STRAVINSKY: Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments; Ebony Concerto; Symphonies of Wind Instruments; Octet for Wind Instruments. Theo Bruins (piano); George Pieterson (clarinet); Netherlands Wind Ensemble, Edo de Waart cond. PHILIPS 6500841 $7.98.

STRAVINSKY: Octet for Wind Instruments; Pastoral; Ragtime for Eleven Instruments; Septet; Concertino for Twelve Instruments. Boston Symphony Chamber Players. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 551 $7.98.

Performance: Both first-rate
Recording: Both fine, Philips warmer

Both of these collections are as attractively played as they are sensibly programmed—the one a convenient package of Stravinsky's major work for winds, the other an intriguing assortment in which each item calls for a different group of instruments. Both discs are crammed with first-rate music-making; the delicious presentation of the under-three-minute Pastoral for violin and wind quartet by the Bostonians is the sort of thing of which best-sellers are made, and no one attracted to either program is likely to be disappointed. Comparison of the two versions of the Octet (the one title common to both collections), though, does point up the advantage of having a conductor for this composer's chamber music: the phrasing is ever so slightly more relaxed and assured, and the instrumental balance just that much more successful, on the Philips disc—whose somewhat warmer sound quality is a further plus. (For more than twenty-five years I have cherished an early RCA LP of the Octet played by a different group of Boston Symphony men, but that version does have a conductor—Leonard Bernstein.)

The Dutch performance of the Piano Concerto must yield top honors to the more brilliant one by Stephen Bishop and Colin Davis on the same label (Philips 839.761LY), but it is fully satisfying in its own right. The new version of the Ebony Concerto is at least competitive with either of the other current ones, and Edo de Waart's handling of the Octet and the Symphonies of Wind Instruments strikes me as the most eloquent statement of either of those works available now.

R.F.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TCHAIKOVSKY: Songs. Was I not a little blade of grass?; Believe me not, my friend; The Fearful Minute; Sleep, my wishful friend; In this moonlit night; Cradle Song; Why?; At the Ball; If I'd only known; It was in the early spring; Again, as before, alone. Galina Vishnevskaya (soprano); Miştia Bakstropovich (piano). ANGEL S-37166 $6.98.

Performance: Compelling
Recording: Excellent

Galina Vishnevskaya is such an intensely expressive artist, so alert to the dramatic possibilities in a song, that every one of her recordings is an Event! Granted that she has been rather uneven vocally for the last five years or so; granted, too, that her top range has become hard-edged and sometimes strident. Still, she has a way of communicating...
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applying (vibrato-less) sound in Again, as before, alone musing, mournful, or just airily suspended, perb interpretive instincts. Her dynamic shad-achievement. Along the way we do encounter a few to an overpowering climax, and the "white" studied superficiality in At the Ball, a deliber-are telling dramatic touches: carefree, almost tropovich plays the piano parts with color, this otherwise superb album is that the harpsi-ments and is a joy to hear in the three concertos. The only criticism I can make of are bored by it. Pimpinone's story is about the same as that of La Serva, but the music is far should like Pergolesi's La Serva Padrona but works (1953), a bit overlong and less in movement concerto is one of Villa-Lobos' considerably below his best form. Moments of extraordinary insight are evident—in the darkly evocative Der Jäger and the urbanely sardonic Bei einer Trauung, among others. But the high tessitura of some of the songs is troublesome, interpretive points are frequently overstressed, and toneless declamation is sometimes chosen over singing on exact pitches. And Fussreise and Auf einer Wan-derung, two disarming songs, are delivered with a rather mannered artificial jollity instead of the natural charm the same artist brought to them in his recently issued Mörike collection (DG 2709 053) with Barenboim.

**COLLECTIONS**

**COURTS AND CHAPELS OF RENAISSANCE FRANCE. Dufay: J'attendray tant qu'il vous playra; F'ay grant doleur; Gloria ad modum tubae. Lassus: Je l'ayme bien; Quand mon mari vient de dehors. Guédimet: Prié avant le Repas; Psalms 77, 86, and 137. And seventeen others. Boston Camerata, Joel Co-ohen dir. TITANIC T14 $5.98 (from Titanic Rec-ords, 43 Rice Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02140).

**Performance:** Straightforward **Recording:** Intimate

In recent years Boston has become a capital of early music. The number of concerts of Renaissance music offered in that city of tradi-tion is staggering, and one wonders what the overall quality is really like. Judging only from the few groups that have been recorded and especially from this disc of the Boston Camerata, Bostonians enjoy concerts of re-straint and good taste.

This album offers the listener a well-chosen selection of French Renaissance music that beautifully demonstrates the remarkable ar-tistic contributions of that time and place. Be-ginning with music of the Burgundian school, we move to the ditties of a garden party in the Loire Valley, sample the seriousness of French Protestant psalms, and thence to the court music of Henry IV and finally to some joyous Christmas music from the Avignon Cathedral. The most delightful aspect of this record is the simple, straightforward ap-proach of the musicians. The singing is nat-ural, not projected or precious. The instrumen-tal playing is clear and in tune. The percus-(Continued on page 117)
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.

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...out for adventure, frequently in the realm of the recondite

Son of Command

ABC/Command is a new, serious—dead serious—budget line launched by ABC Records, produced and generally directed by ethnomusicologist Kathryn King. The company has revived the name "Command" deliberately, to recall the quality of its classical Command catalog in the 1950's, but this new series, rather than concentrating on standard repertoire in demonstration-type recordings, is out for musical adventure, frequently in the realm of the recondite.

The eclectic first release of six albums makes for absorbing listening in unexpected areas, reaching back 368 years for an opera by the first composers of opera. Robert White's clean-lined but ardent tenor treatment of Apollo's arias and Mary Rawcliffe's florid yet immaculate soprano in the role of Dafne are the most dazzling gems in a jeweled setting further ornamented by ensemble playing under Paul Vorwerk's sensitive musical direction. The quadrephonic (QS) recording lends a brilliant sheen to the whole splendid production, and complete texts and abundant notes are supplied.

"Spell" is an album of twentieth-century music for a trio of clarinet, cello, and piano. The title work, by Per Nørgård of Denmark, is a fascinating series of patterns that push the resources of chamber music to its limits, sometimes calling upon the players to handle several tempos simultaneously. With its shifting rhythms and tones, Spell is difficult but truly magical music.

Barney Childs' Trio, composed in memory of the poet Paul Blackburn, is partly original, partly eclectic in manner, a lovely work in its own chilling way, making use of the spoken word—including lines from Blackburn's own enigmatic poems—for novel effects. Unfortunately, while the musicians are able to sing on their instruments, their untrained and dull voices make the spoken passages sound amateurious and intrusive. The record concludes with Daniel Lentz's Songs of the Sirens, in which whispered "phonemes" are woven together with sensuous instrumental writing to evoke, less yearningly than Debussy did but still rather effectively, those sounds with which the Sirens might have tempted Homer's hero had he not stuffed his ears with wax. The pianist, although her role is a modest one, matches the cellist throughout in taste and vitality.

The field recordings of folk music, I'm afraid, will be of much more interest to the ethnomusicological specialist than the general listener, and the ten-thousand words' worth of notes that accompanies each of these discs tends to reinforce that observation. Although the Sikkim recording contains some of the eeriest chanting ever recorded and a morning hymn most hauntingly played on enormous copper trumpets and shawms, most of the other material is so primitive that to unscholarly ears it frequently approaches a point of excruciation rather than pleasure.

All told, then, ABC/Command has made an auspicious and multidirectional beginning, and we can look forward with considerable curiosity and interest to what will follow.

—Paul Kresh

Gagliano: La Dafne. Robert White (tenor), Apollo; Mauritia Thornburgh (soprano), Venus; St. Harmon (soprano), Cupid; Mary Rawcliffe (soprano), Dafne; Dale Terbeck (counter-tenor), Thysius. Musica Pacifica, Paul Vorwerk cond. ABC/COMMAND □ COMS 9004 two discs $6.98.


Music of Guatemala. The San Lucas Band, Bernardo Mejia cond. Chufa; El Son de Los Altos; Las Tres Botellas; La Chirimia; and four others. ABC/COMMAND □ COMS 9001 $3.49.


The Traditional Music of Chile. Various singers and instrumentalists. El jardín; El Carretera; Con arpa, guitarra y piano; Tu eres como el picafor; Me gusta ver a los huasos; Versos por nacimiento; Marcha; Huaino; Tarquirari; Cueca; Huaino. ABC/COMMAND COMS 9003 $3.49.
tion is used with, thank heavens, discretion. All in all, this is aristocratic music making, free of the gimmickry and coyness so frequently used to "sell" early music.  

S.L.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LOUIS DANTO: None But the Lonely Heart.

LOUIS DANTO: None But the Lonely Heart.


Gounod: Serenade.
Godard: Berceuse.
Denza: Si vous l'avez, compris!
Handel: Jehovah, to my words give ear. Tchaikovsky: None but the lonely heart. Gluck: Gaspard de la nuit; 

Performance: First-rate
Recording: Good

This is an old-fashioned recital reminiscent of the era when the likes of Fritz Kreisler and Mischa Elman would lend obbligato support to the likes of John McCormack and Enrico Caruso. Annotator Harold G. Byrnes, well known in record-collecting circles, aptly describes it as "... a very special record ... a splendid recital by three outstanding musicians, each a superb artist in his own right."

Tenor Louis Danto gives renewed evidence here of the extraordinary qualities I admired in his previous record recitals: a sweet, fine-spun lyric sound produced with smoothness and pure intonation, enriched by uncommon technique that includes a facile command of ornamentation and an expert use of the voix mixte (a blending of chest and head resonances in the upper register). He sounds more idiomatic in the Russian repertoire than he does in the French, but his work is tasteful and skillful throughout. Only in the ending of the Rimsky-Korsakov song is there a slight suggestion of a cantorial overemphasis.

Minor reservations aside—erratic rhythm in Glinka's Doubt and an engineering balance that sometimes relegates Jascha Silverstein's exquisite playing far into the background—this is a very enjoyable presentation of popular yet elusive material. The Handel aria seems oddly placed in this sequence, but it too is well performed.  

G.J.


Performance: Mary Garden she ain't
Recording: Very good

Barbra Streisand has a good voice, and she is an exceptionally intelligent woman, but treading here where angels like Maggie Teyte walked only with trepidation, she is vanquished by the assignment. She not only lacks
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The power amplifier delivers extended frequency response.

This capacitor keeps it happening with low distortion.


Performance: Good or better

Recording: Fair

About two years ago, I praised an operatic recital by the late Latvian tenor Janis Zabers (1935-1973) wholeheartedly. Part of my review now appears on the jacket liner of this follow-up release (with my name misspelled, but you can't have everything . . .). Zabers' bright, ringing tone and sensitive artistry are still much in evidence, though his top range appears less free in some of these songs than it did in the first sequence. Zabers must be regarded with Lipatti, Kapell, Neveu, Wunderlich, et al. as among music's tragic early losses.

The recital, however, is not all pleasure. The instrumental accompaniments are only mediocre or worse (for example, the two lullabies are accompanied by a saccharine instrumental trio). Many songs are sung in Latvian, which, while not familiar to most listeners, may be all the good because the singer's German is poor in the Schubert arias, matters only grow worse. What starts as an intriguing attempt to apply the Streisand intensity under rarified musical conditions ends up simply as amateur night. She doesn't exactly turn out to be the Florence Foster Jenkins of the art song but she comes dangerously close at times.

I cannot quite go along with the alarm sounded by Speight Jenkins in the New York Post that the sales of "Classical Barbra" (the number already sold is reputed to be over six figures) could result in a general debasement of the American musical scene—what would be wrong, after all, if we sang lieder in the streets? And I really would rather hear Barbra Streisand sing "Me and My Gal" than hear Dorothy Kirsten sing The Darktown Strutter's Ball. But the buyer should know, if he acquires this one, that what he is getting is a well-packaged curiosity, not a serious contender in the art-song sweepstakes. A complete text, in English and all the other languages, is supplied, along with earnest notes by Homer Dennison and an endorsement by Leonard Bernstein ambiguously praising La Streisand's "sensitive, straightforward, and enormously appealing performance."
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—Ed.

Contributing Editor

Paul Kresh

I was born in the Bronx and grew up in Washington Heights, where the wind blew up from the Hudson and winter always seemed to last forever. My father's windup phonograph, with the inevitable Caruso and Galli-Curci records, and books I began reading early were bulwarks against a buffeting world.

My teachers at George Washington High School encouraged my notion of myself as a would-be writer, but after attending New College at Columbia University and City College, I took such Depression jobs as cutting rhinestones into patterns at a jewelry factory and typing in the advertising department of the New York Times.

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After writing several unpublishable novels...
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